

# House of the Hunter

REVEAL THE HIDEOUS SECRET HIDDEN IN THE TORMENTED HUNTER'S HOUSE



# MonkeyDM

# House of the Hunter

AN ADVENTURE FOR 5E DESIGNED FOR 3-6 LEVEL 8 CHARACTERS, FOR USE WITH THE 5TH EDITION RULESET.



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### Note

Within the MCU (MonkeyCampaignsUniverse) this adventure deals with the Almendrud Academy, more specifically, it deals with the elderly Wolfstein Almendrud, the orcish gentleman who helmed the academy for a while, until his daughter took over. If your players have played through a few of the Almendrud Academy adventures, this adventure will make more sense, especially with Almendrud as the head NPC. Otherwise, you can choose to replace him with any other NPC from your campaign or a brand new NPC. It works just as well.

In terms of gameplay, this adventure also deserves some notes. It is heavily inspired by the *Hide and Seek* movie, as well as Critical Role's Campaign 3 Episode 20 (*Breaking and Entering*). What this means is that almost the whole adventure takes place within a single location, that being a gigantic house. The players will be tricked by a Hunter From Beyond into joying him for dinner, then tell them he'll hunt them throughout the house. I recommend you discuss the nature of the adventure with your players beforehand, or they'll try to fight their enemy head-on. Doing so will result in almost immediate death, as the creature is stronger. They're meant to run from it, hide from it, avoid it and overall play stealthily.

# Background

For a long time, the party has enjoyed a profitable and enjoyable partnership with the Almendrud Archeology Academy, most often working together with their leader, Wolfstein Almendrud. However, since time is merciless, Almendrud is now at the end of his lifespan and has retreated to his old country estate, away from society, where he enjoys the fruits of his labor. He rarely accepts visits, as he has ruffled some feathers throughout the years. He is only joined by his butler, Eugene Erlenstein, a very polite human man and a very apt warrior.

Unbeknownst to even Eugene, Wolfstein Almendrud has been captured by a Hunter From Beyond, an aberrant creature of pure chaos and madness, whose only goal is to tear society apart from the inside. It has subsequently messed with the Academy's efforts, redirected funds, intervened in expeditions and the like. Now, as a "treat" to themselves, the Hunter wants to take the party on a "trip".

# Plot Hook

The party has been invited to a fancy dinner by who they believe to be Wolfstein Almendrud. They are asked to come alone and given the address to the hidden house in the countryside. They are told there is no other property within miles and miles of the house, so they have no need to worry, only come speak with him. He has important news for them.

# Chapter 1. Dinner

In which the party arrives at Lord Wolfstein Almendrud's estate.

## Chapter 1.1. Take A Seat

#### **GM NOTE:**

This whole adventure revolves around the party being tricked/betrayed by an entity masquerading as one of their most-trusted companions/NPCs. This might still work in the context of a one-shot, but it is best as a detour of long-spanning campaigns. That being said, the NPC in question for this adventure is Lord Wolfstein Almendrud, but feel free to replace him. If you do choose to do so, the time to do so is now.

To start this adventure, if you are playing it as a one-shot, give the party some context on where they are headed, as well as Lord Wolfstein Almendrud. He is an orcish archeologist and gentleman with a stern demeanor. He wears a monocle, smokes a pipe,

#### Read this:

'The trip to Lord Almendrud's estate was not as long as you expected to be. Though it may be far from any remnant of society, the roads to the estate are set up in such a way that you have no trouble staying the course. You reach it around 6, knowing that dinner is to be served at 6:30. Right as you arrive, you see Eugene, Lord Almendrud's butler, wait for you in front of the house, in his traditional garment, smiling ear to ear. As you get closer, he greets you warmly. "You all are a sight for sore eyes! It's been so long since the master has had any visitors, good to see you." He smirks, eyeing you up and down.'

If you are playing this adventure as a one-shot, this is the perfect time for the party to introduce each other. As they're not exactly low-level, it is assumed they've worked together in the past and have built up a rapport of sorts. For this reason, have them describe their appearance, abilities and elaborate on any connections they might've built with each other through their adventuring time.

If you are playing this adventure as part of an on-going campaign, proceed normally.

Now that the party is face to face with Eugene, he'll have a brief discussion with them.

#### **EUGENE ERLENSTEIN**

**Information:** An older human gentleman, with a receding hairline, a wide smile and a fit body hidden underneath a butler's outfit. He always carries a knife in his boot, to protect his master in case he needs it, but otherwise he is straightforward, onest and dependable.

Eugene will ask the party to hand him their weapons, as the master doesn't like them at the dinner table. He'll asure the party they have nothing to worry about and/or fear, as the house is hidden to most, if not everyone, and is far enough that no threats can get here. In addition, it is enchanted to be unseen to otherworldly creatures. The party can roll

**Wisdom (Insight) checks** against him. No matter the result, they'll feel as if he is telling the truth. If they roll above a 15, they'll also notice he is distinctly confident in his abilities to take care of security on his own.

#### **GM NOTE:**

An experienced party might feel somewhat reticent to give someone all their weapons. This is to be expected. If this situation comes up, push for trust, but give up before the players get suspicious. It's alright if some of them keep their weapons, it should not matter too much.

Once that has been dealt with, Eugene will lead the party through to the dinning room (area 1 on map 1). As this is happening, describe the layout they pass through in great detail, but **DO NOT** show them the map. Maps usually alert parties that something bad is about to happen, so just make it seem as you're describing the home in detail. Though they may not know it yet, it's in their best interest to pay attention.

Finally, as the party arrives in area 1, read this:

'You are led inside a large dinning room. Directly in front of you, an elongated dark oak table, set up with enough chairs for all of you and more, as well as a large chair on the end of the table, where your trusted friend, Lord Wolfstein Almendrud, awaits with a wide smile. Past the table, on the opposite wall, two large windows, which let in the last light of the day. You also spot a small side table, on which are sprawled a few drinks. Lord Almendrud stands up, his old figure barely holding him, but he seems overjoyed to see you.'

The party now meets the **Hunter from Beyond**, who is disguised as Lord Wolfstein Almendrud (or whatever NPC you chose, if you decided to switch it up). Any **Wisdom** (**Perception**) **check** or **Intelligence** (**Investigation**) **check** will spot nothing wrong or odd with the appearance. In terms of knowledge, the Hunter has used otherworldly technologies to extract Almendrud's memories, so he knows things only he and the party will know. He is as good a replica as can be.

Once Almendrud greets the party, he'll ask them to sit down at the table. You may proceed to the next chapter.

# Chapter 1.2. Food Is Served

#### Read this:

'You all sit down at the table, looking at the much older Almendrud. It doesn't feel like that long ago when you first met this man and helped him and the academy he used to run. Now, older and no longer in charge of anything, he looks like a shell of that authoritative figure. That being said, he maintains the passionate eyes, the monocle and the pipe. He looks at you, then gestures to Eugene, who begins handing out glasses and asking you what you wish to drink. As this happens, he takes in a deep breath. He hesitates to speak, clearly moved by seeing you.'

To begin, the Hunter will "play with his food", asking the party about their recent happenings and the like, while they eat and drink. During this interaction, the party can make **DC 20 Wisdom (Insight) checks** to see if something is off. On a success, they notice Almendrud is struggling not to smile or laugh, almost like he's happy to a disturbing amount.

#### **GM NOTE:**

This interaction is meant to give the party time to become suspicious, but it should also be the time you use to try and assure them. Try to make Almendrud as likeable as possible and elude that he has a task for the party, though he's not ready to tell them just yet. Flex your roleplay and improvisation muscles.

As they are served food, the party can try to detect if anything is off about with a **DC 25 Wisdom (Nature) check** or with a *detect poison and disease* spell. On a success, they'll find that all of the food is poisoned, including Almendrud's portion. If they call out Eugene for this, simply move to the Hunter revealing himself, killing Eugene, then proceed normally.

Once you feel the party has discussed enough with Almendrud, describe how Eugene puts down a silver plate, covered up, before attempting to leave, as Almendrud asks him to stay.

#### Read this:

'Lord Almendrud stands up, holding tightly onto his glass, looking at all of you and at his trusted butler. "I've never had many friends," he says. "You, Eugene, have been with me for the longest time. I've also had people I've enjoyed working with tremendously. You are those people. It is for this reason I've called you here tonight. You all are... my reward." He smiles and you watch as the smile stretches to an unnatural extent, reaching up to the ears. Before you get the chance to react in any way, blood is sprayed on your faces. Eugene stands before you, his throat slit wide open, blood gushing out of him. Lord Almendrud shifts in form, slowly turning from an old man to a tall mess of eldritch tentacles, with a white mask on its face, which has a large smile on it. You all hear a voice in your heads. "My reward to myself is the hunt. This is a mere example of my work." As Eugene falls to his knees, the figure waves to you.'

After describing how Eugene is killed, allow the party to react. Before they do anything, however, ask them if they've eaten or drank anything. Any that have must make a **DC 20 Constitution saving throw**. On a failure, they are paralyzed for the next minute, as the poison finally kicks in. (For the record, the Hunter is a smart enough creature to time his reveal perfectly, just as the poison kicks in).

Once the party has taken their initial reactions, you may roll initiative. The first thing the Hunter will do is take the lid off of the silver platter, revealing a note, before using his Etherealness ability. Then, he'll move as far away from the party as possible. He will not try to fight the party immediately, instead avoiding this for now.

Once the Hunter has successfully reached the ethereal plane and moved away, proceed to the next chapter.

# Chapter 1.3. Let's Play A Game

Bring the party to map 1. They are currently in area 1, next to a silver platter with a letter on it. Inside it, are the following:

#### 'Good evening!

Hope you enjoyed your meal. I decided we would enjoy some post-meal games. Here's the plan, we'll be playing Hide & Seek. You've got half an hour to hide, after which I'll begin searching for you. If I get bored, I might even begin searching sooner. If you trigger any of the traps, I will begin searching sooner. If you try to leave the house, I'll kill you. That being said, Hide & Seek is quite boring for those who

have to hide, so I've made you seekers too! You'll have to look for your weapons, as well as your old friend, Almendrud. He should be somewhere around here, if he hasn't died already. Hide if you wish, run around if you wish, look for your weapons if you wish! This house has plenty for you, both in terms of relics, as well as danger. May the luck be in your favor, for I will be watching. I haven't hunted in a long while. I needed it. Now...

GO!

Once the party has read the letter, you may proceed to the next chapter.

#### **GM NOTE:**

This would also be a proper time to consider the way you intend on running this adventure. How much would you like to have the Hunter show himself? Remember that he can come in, strike, then retreat in the blink of an eye. This helps him evoke that horror antagonist vibe. Have him be hidden, describe locations he might be, trick the party and only reveal him for brief instants. Because of his telepathy, he can also speak to them, laugh in their ears, annoy them, etc. The Hunter is a creature of pure chaos, so he should act in the way you as a DM want to, but try to make him scary and imposing, while not having him be always present or overbearing.

# Chapter 2. Hide & Seek

In which the party moves around the house.

# Chapter 2.1. Explore The House

The party can now explore all areas of the house. Bring them to map 1. Map 2 is the second level of the house, which they can access through the stairs (area 2). The second floor has its own numbered layout and own chapter (chapter 2.2.)

#### **GM NOTE:**

If you are playing this adventure on an online tabletop, we recommend you put the two maps next to each other (if at all possible) and having the party navigate between the two of

#### **GM NOTE 2:**

Before moving any further, look throughout the map. Decide where you'd want to hide the party's weapons. You can choose to put them all in the same place or spread them around. Also, not every chamber in the house is given a specific purpose and a trap, but I encourage you to get creative. Get as wild as you want.

#### AREAS OF THE GROUND LEVEL

#### 1 - THE DINNING ROOM

The party starts in the dinning room. While here, they can look out the window with a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. On a success, they'll oberve that there's a slight tint to everything outside the window. That is because the windows are enchanted and incredibly hard to break. A DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana) check or a detect magic spell will reveal the enchantment makes it so no projectile can pass through the windows and there's also a keyword that makes them create an illusion of a different landscape.

The party can also investigate the drinks cabinet. A successful DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check will reveal it is trapped. The trap can be dispelled with a simple dispel magic spell. If they open the cabinet without dispelling the trap, a small shock of energy will go into the person opening the cabinet. They must succed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, they take 3d10 lightining damage and are paralyzed 1 minute. At the end of each of their turns, they may repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on a success. Inside the cabinet is a bundled bit of bloodied clothes, alongside a note that reads "Not blood, I assure you. It's paint. He's a marvelous painter!"

The door to the outside is locked with a magical lock that requires a DC 25 Thieves' Tools check to open. If they try to escape through it, the hunter from beyond will attack them.

They can move towards the main hall without issue.

#### 2 - STAIRS

Using these stairs, the party can move to the upper level. Unbeknownst to them, the traps throughout the house have been activated. As such, when a creature first attempts to walk on the stairs, the leviathan statue will turn around and blow flames in its direction. All creatures on the stairs must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, they suffer 6d6 fire damage. On a success, they take half damage. Once the trap has been activated, it needs to reload for 1d6 rounds before it can shoot out fire again, thus giving the party time to climb up.

When the party moves up to the upper floor, proceed to the next chapter.

#### 3 - STUDY

Read this:

'Moving past the large double doors from the dinning room, you enter a large and quite lavish study. A long leather sofa is joined by a few armchairs, with an ornate dark oak and gold plated table in the middle.'

With a **DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check**, the party can look underneath the table, where there's a **dagger o venom** tied to the bottom. They can take it and use it.

#### 4 - KITCHEN

Read this:

'The moment you move into the kitchen, you can't help but be saddened. It is filled to the brim with all manner of ingredients. Seemingly, Eugene was hard at work cooking something for you, but he's no longer there to do any of it.'

In here, the party can make a **DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check** to find a **bag of beans** hidden amongst the ingredients, which they can take and use.

#### 5 - Ox Rooм

The Ox Room is also locked, but can be unlocked either with a key (found in area 7) or with a **DC 20 Thieves' Tools** check.

Inside the room is a blade on display. The blade is a **flametongue longsword**. Its display is trapped. It can be dispelled with a *dispel magic* spell. If not, the first person who touches the sword must make a **DC 18 Constitution saving throw.** On a failure, they take 5d8 necrotic damage. On a success, they take half damage.

#### 6- POOL ROOM

Within the ballroom there is a bear statue. Once a party member steps within 10 feet, it animates, turning into a **brown bear**, which the party has to fight.

The party can also make a **DC 18 Intelligence** (Investigation) check to look in the room. On the pool table, nestled amongst the pool balls so that it is harder to see, are iron bands of binding.

#### 7 - BASEMENT ENTRANCE

This is the inside to the basement (map 3). A successful **DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check** will reveal that the locks look recent, as if they had been put in place recently. Each lock requires a different key.

The first key is inside the library next to area 6, inside a

book. It can be found with a *locate object* spell or with a **DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check.** 

The second key is inside the mouth of the **giant crocodile** upstairs (map 2, area 1).

The third is inside the painting upstairs. (map 2, area 3).

Upon the party having all three keys and opening the door, bring them to map 3, then proceed to chapter 3.

# Chapter 2.2. The Upper Floor

#### **GM NOTE:**

To make it easier to navigate this adventure, we've split up the exploration fragment into two chapters. The party can move between floors as they wish and they do not have to do it in a linear order, this is just to make it easier for you as a DM.

#### AREAS OF THE GROUND LEVEL

#### 1 - THE TROPHY ROOM

Read this:

'You step inside a terribly small and cluttered chamber, the sheer magnificence of which doesn't escape. It is filled with all manner of skinned and animals, most of them gigantic, with plaques next to them, detailing where they had been hunted or captured. You take a brief look at all of them, only to find that one is meeting your gaze - A giant crocodile. You freeze.'

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#### MAP 1



The crocodile is actually a **giant crocodile**, which lunges at the party. They must take it down! Upon doing so, any party member with a **passive Perception above 15** will notice a shine inside its mouth.

#### 2 - STAIRS

Using these stairs, the party can move to the lower level. If a creature walks down the stairs while the statue trap is activated, it must make a **DC 16 Dexterity saving throw**. On a failure, they suffer 6d6 fire damage. On a success, they take half damage.

Once the trap has been activated, it needs to reload for 1d6 rounds before it can shoot out fire again, thus giving the party time to climb up.

When the party moves down to the base floor, go back to the previous chapter.

#### 3 - PAINTING STUDIO

#### Read this:

'You step inside an ornate painting studio, spread out over most of the top floor, which has an air of artistry to it. Was Almendrud always this skilled of a painter? Perhaps. That's interesting. You move closer to his easel, where you find he was working on a beautiful landscape. Looking around, there's plenty of paints and other knick-knacks.'

Any party member with a **passive Perception above 18** will notice a key appears in the painting. A **DC 16 Intelligence** (**Investigation**) **check** also reveals this. The check also reveals a pack of **marvelous pigments** the party can take.

The paitning is magical. Any creature that touches it magically enters the "painting dimension". In this dimension, all they see is a field full of flowers and a key on the ground, which they can grab. The only way to escape the dimention is to have someone from outside the painting paint over the people inside, which will spew them back outside.

A detect magic spell or a DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check will reveal the painting as magical.

#### 4 - OFFICE

The office is filled to the brim with scrolls, papers and a massive globe. There is also a large chest, which is locked, but can be opened with a DC 18 Thieves' Tools check. Inside it are 3 potions of healing, a ring of mind shielding, and a staff of power, which the party can all take and use.

# Chapter 3. Home (Plane) Invasion

In which the party reaches the Hunter's home plane.

## Chapter 3.1. The Endlessness

#### Read this:

'You step down into the basement only to find a body laid out on the ground. You kneel beside it. What you see is Lord Almendrud, wounded and unconscious. You breathe a sigh of relief once you check for pulse and find it's still there. Though, you can't waste too much time focusing on your friend. The reason for that is the massive whole in the middle of the room, which seems to lead to a void of blue and black light. You hesitate briefly, looking at the void, unsure if you should seek to step inside it or close it. Right as you're considering your options, you once again hear the voice of your Hunter inside your heads. "Ah, seems you've found your friend, as well as my entry point. You made it this far, so I might as well give you a reward. If you seek to kill me, the only way to do that is to meet me on the other side of this portal. I will be waiting for you." The figure laughs a final time, yet it does not reveal itself. The decision is yours.'

The party now has two options: to save Almendrud and attempt to flee or to go fight the Hunter on its home plane.

If they choose to try and flee, the portal will spew out **3 nothics**, who will chase the party through the house. The party will have to fight the **nothics** and the **hunter from beyond** all throughout the house.

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#### MAP 2



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#### MAP 3

If they choose to go through the portal, bring them to map 4. There, they'll see the **hunter from beyond** staring into the abyss, towards the destroyed planet. He'll lament that that used to be his planet, but it got destroyed, so this was his final "party", so he hopes the fight will be worth it. The part is locked on the map until they defeat him. This is also the hunter's lair.

#### LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the hunter takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects; the hunter can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

- The hunter extracts power from the abyss, creating two zones of magical darkness as per the *darkness* spell, which last until next round.
- The hunter makes rocks levitate and fly towards his enemies. Two creatures must make **DC 17 Dexterity saving throws.** On a failed save, they take 3d10 bludgeoning damage.
- Through the pit of the abyss, a **nothic** pours out, coming to help the hunter. Roll initiative for it.

Regardless of where they fight him, once the hunters is brought below 30 hit points, proceed to the next chapter.

# Chapter 3.2. The End

If the hunter is on his home plane, he'll be thankful to the party, telling them this is the most fun he's had in a very long while. After that, he'll advise them to take his mask, as it is quite the powerful relic. He'll continue fighting until death.

If the hunter is in the house, he'll say that in due time he'll return, before attempting to *plane shift* himself away. The party can try to interrupt it.

With the hunter gone, the party can proceed to the epilogue. They all return to the inside of the mansion (if they're not there already) and help bring Almendrud to health. The old man is saddened by the death of his butler, but thankful that the party saved him. He'll reward them by telling them they get to keep any of the magic items they came across in the house, while also giving them 500 gold each. He'll invite them to stay over for a much calmer breakfast in the morning, if they so wish.

The End.

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MAP 4



# HUNTER FROM BEYOND

Medium aberration, any non-good alignment

Armor Class 16 (natural armor) Hit Points 110 (17d8 + 34) Speed 40 ft.

STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA
11 (+0) 16 (+3) 14 (+2) 19 (+4) 17 (+3) 16 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Int +8, Cha +7
Skills Acrobatics +7, Deception +7, Perception +7,
Stealth +11

Damage Immunities psychic Senses passive Perception 17 Languages Deep Speech, telepathy 60 ft. Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Assassinate. During its first turn, the hunter from beyond has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn. Any hit the assassin scores against a surprised creature is a critical hit.

Evasion. If the hunter from beyond is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, the hunter from beyond instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

Innate Spellcasting. The hunter from beyond's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: misty step, tongues 3/day each: dimension door, scrying 1/day each: contact other plane, planeshift (self)

Maddening Whispers (Aberrant Form Only). Creatures that start their turn within 10 feet of the hunter from beyond, or enter that area for the first time on their turn, must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or become frightened of the hunter from beyond for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the Maddening Whispers for the next 24 hours.

Masked Creature. The mask gives power to the hunter from beyond. It can be destroyed to limit those powers. It has 18 AC and 25 hit points and is immune to psychic and poison damage. Area of effect spells that affect the hunter from beyond do not affect the mask. If the mask is destroyed, the hunter from beyond cannot use its Change Shape or Etherealness actions, nor can it enter the Ethereal Plane with its Vanishing Strike. The mask reforms after 24 hours.



Sneak Attack (1/Turn). The hunter from beyond deals an extra 13 (4d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 ft. of an ally of the hunter from beyond that isn't incapacitated and the hunter from beyond doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

#### Actions

**Multiattack.** The assassin makes two shortsword attacks, it can replace the second shortsword attack by a vanishing strike.

Shortsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Demented Gaze (Aberrant Form Only). The hunter from beyond stares down one creature it can see within 80 feet of it, and the visions of incomprehensible madness fills their mind for a moment. The target must succeed on a DC 16 Intelligence saving throw or take 23 (3d12 + 4) psychic damage.

Vanishing Strike (Aberrant Form Only). Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the target fails the saving throw the hunter from beyond enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane.

Change Shape. The hunter from beyond magically polymorphs into a small or medium humanoid, or back into its true aberrant form. Its statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment the hunter from beyond is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. If the hunter from beyond dies, it reverts to its true form.

Etherealness. The hunter from beyond magically enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane, or vice versa. When exiting the Ethereal Plane the hunter from beyond can do so as a bonus action.

# THANK YOU!

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OF THOSE WHO FOLLOW AND SUPPORT ME, WITHOUT YOU I COULDN'T HAVE BROUGHT THIS PROJECT TO LIFE.

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