

THE DM TOOL CHEST

THE SHACKLED RAM INN



A RUNDOWN WINTERY INN IS HOME TO SPIRITS AND
DARK SECRETS HIDDEN IN THE BAEMENT



THE SHACKLED RAM INN

The *Shackled Ram Inn* is a Fifth Edition adventure for **three to five characters**, optimized for a party of **four characters of 3rd level**. This adventure takes place in a small arctic town beset by a seemingly endless winter of polar nights, where the sun shines dimly for only four hours each day. Its formal location is left intentionally blank, so you can easily insert it into any campaign of your choice.

The inn in a lonely wooded town in the northern tundra has been abandoned for two years. Locals believe it is haunted. How did the owner really die, and what other mysteries does this ramshackle structure hide?

BACKGROUND

The most recent owner of the Shackled Ram Inn was Dee Grütt, who was deeply indebted to the local chapter of a large crime syndicate. He was made to harbor criminals on the lamb, from unrepentant thieves to coldhearted killers hiding from authorities to the south. The syndicate also lent his basement to a secret cult of devil-worshippers, who eventually moved to a castle in another town.

Then the syndicate sent a special Transporter to bring the kidnapped and petrified scion of a wealthy and powerful noble family from the south to be hidden in this remote location. The syndicate murdered the Transporter, Grütt, and his staff to cover their tracks. For a while, the fugitive guests of the inn secretly stayed behind to create the appearance of haunting, but it wasn't long before real apparitions of their victims materialized and chased them away. Up until now, this has

preserved the network's secret, but the time approaches when they will need access to their prisoner.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

These are a few ways to draw your characters to Grütt's Inn (they can even be combined):

A FREE ROOF

The characters have spent time in the region and could use a warm, dry place to stay without paying high local accommodation fees. This ramshackle abandoned inn near the lonely woods offers a free alternative—so long as it doesn't harbor any harmful spirits.

GHOST STORIES

The town's elders, concerned about growing reports of menacing manifestations from the inn and its environs, would like the characters to investigate and, if possible, put the spirits to rest.

HEROES FOR HIRE

Grütt's niece, a dwarf named Brigitta, has arrived at this lonely woods town with plans to restart the inn she inherited, hiring the characters (for a total of 50 gp per day) to guard her while she investigates the purportedly haunted premises.

IMPORTANT NPCs AND ORGANIZATIONS

The following individuals and organizations may interact with characters in this adventure.

BRIGITTA

If you are using the Heroes for Hire adventure hook, the syndicate is manipulating the party to clear out the undead; Brigitta (lawful evil dwarf **spy**) is an imposter with a forged letter. (If asked why a dwarf is a human's niece, she curtly replies, "that's private family business.") She pushes the characters to destroy any undead spirits. If they discover the basement or the truth of Grütt's death, she slips off at the first chance to trigger "The Syndicate Shows Up."

DEE GRÜTT

Following Grütt's murder, his angry, miserable spirit stayed behind as an incorporeal phantom haunting the Inn who will manifest if visitors disturb the Inn sufficiently, appearing as a ghostly hanged man. His negative energy has animated certain things in or near the Inn. If his phantom is destroyed, his buried corpse reanimates in the Privy Yard (see The Shackled Ram Inn, area 7).

KASPARA THE FRIENDLY GHOST

The family who previously owned the Shackled Ram had a young, rambunctious daughter. While climbing the tree in the yard, she fell and broke her neck, dying instantly. Not fully grasping her demise, she remains at the Inn as a playful poltergeist. Horrified by the recent murders and repelled by the undead Grütt and Transporter, she went dormant but awakens when the characters arrive and—at the GM's discretion—invisibly helps them find clues, such as with sound effects or by wiggling a painting or opening a door. She uses **specter** statistics but is chaotic good, invisible, and has no attacks. If attacked, she retreats through walls, floors, or ceilings.

STINKIE THE FIENDLY BAT

Stinkie the **quasit** spends most of its time in bat form, luring a **swarm of bats** into mischief. Stinkie's favorite tactic is to direct them to attack, blending in to poison-bite a victim, turn invisible and retreat, or try to Scare a lone victim. Stinkie uses the same tactics with centipedes. If directly attacked, Stinkie turns invisible and flees. Stinkie can replace a defeated swarm of bats every 24 hours.

THE SYNDICATE

If using the Free Accommodations or Ghost Stories adventure hooks, the crime syndicate's local agents keep an eye on the characters. They don't care if the characters chase off (or are chased off by) the undead spirits, but if anyone discovers the hidden basement or the truth of the syndicate's crimes, it triggers "The Syndicate Shows Up." (see page 10)

THE TRANSPORTER

The agent known only as "The Transporter" specialized in swiftly, securely, and discreetly transporting goods along dangerous routes or without notice of authorities and two years ago was hired to deliver a petrified captive. To keep their caper secret, the syndicate shackled and murdered him in the Secret Chamber (see The Shackled Ram Inn, area 16). On the anniversary of his death, his hateful corpse arose with one year to take revenge on his killers. However, he spent most of that year breaking free of his shackles and wearing down the chamber's bricked-up entrance with his bare undead hands, leaving only a few days to complete his task. He has no quarrel with the characters unless they try to stop him from taking revenge on his killers, who are in a town 6 hours' walk from here.

LOCAL INFORMATION

If the characters seek information from residents in this lonely woods town (such as by asking at the Liar's Luck tavern), they can learn the following:

- Dee Grütt most recently owned the Shackled Ram Inn. He ran it with the live-in couple who worked for the previous owners cooking and cleaning, and part-time local wait staff.
- There were always rumors of a mischievous ghost playing pranks.
- Out-of-towners would often come for extended stays at the inn, despite not having any discernible business in the area.
- Almost two years ago, Grütt was found hanging from the rafters, an apparent suicide. His permanent employees seemed to have left, and there were no guests in the inn the morning his death was discovered.
- Loggers hoped to use the abandoned inn to store lumber but were scared off by menacing sounds and visions.
- Some nights, strange lights flicker or shine inside the inn, or horrible sounds emerge from inside. Locals are afraid to enter or approach the inn.

The only other place in town outsiders can stay is in the cozy attic of the town's mayor Nipsy Cuddle, a lawful good lightfoot halfling **commoner**.

If characters ask Nipsy about Grütt or the Inn, she shares the above information and shows them the note found in his pocket (see Handouts).

If Brigitta hired the characters, then she shows Nipsy Grütt's letter to claim the Inn (see Handouts); a comparison with the note shows the handwriting matches. (They were both written by the same syndicate forger).

SHACKLED RAM INN

Upon approaching the Inn, read aloud the following:

The Shackled Ram is a large two-story wooden building with a stone foundation barely perceptible above the snow that has drifted against the walls. Both stories feature windows with glass panes, some of which are broken or missing, and some cedar shakes have blown off the roof, leaving tiny holes. A separate carriage house sits to the left of the main entrance.

There is a basement entrance outside the north end of the west wall the syndicate hid under a pile of logs after they disposed of the Inn's staff. Snow and ice have built up over the logs, concealing the entrance. Removing the snow and logs requires two hours of one person's labor using shovels and tools (or twice as long without), revealing the door. It is fastened from the outside with a stout wooden bar and from the inside by a metal latch. The uncovered door can be forced open from either side with a successful DC 15 Strength check.

GENERAL FEATURES

The following features are common to the Shackled Ram Inn unless otherwise noted in the adventure text.

Ceilings, Floors, and Walls. The Shackled Ram Inn is a two-story building of wooden beam and plank construction with 10-foot-high ceilings. Walls, floors, and ceilings are made of planks, and the furnishings are wooden. The floors and other surfaces are dusty.

Doors. The Inn's doors are made of wooden planks, 1 inch thick, 4 feet wide, and 7 feet tall. They have AC 15, 18 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. A stuck door can be forced open by succeeding on a DC 15 Strength check. A locked door can be forced open with a successful DC 20 Strength check. A locked door can be opened using thieves' tools and a successful DC 15 Dexterity check.

Due to the hauntings, doors randomly lock or unlock themselves, stick, or swing open. Roll on the Inn Door table any time the status of a particular door is observed, regardless of how it was previously left.

INN DOOR

d6 DOOR STATUS

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Slightly ajar |
| 2 | Open |
| 3 | Shut but can be opened normally |
| 4 | Unlocked but stuck in the frame |
| 5 | Locked |
| 6 | Appears to be locked when tried but then opens itself when no one is touching it |

Lighting. During the day, the interior is dimly lit by faint sunlight falling through windows and cracks in the ceiling or walls. There is no other lighting.

Climate. The Inn is unheated and as cold inside as the winter outside, but less windy. If fires are built in the hearths, the Inn gradually heats up, but areas of temporary chill are randomly encountered.

Hauntings. The Inn is replete with various haunting effects, mild during the day but very intense at night (when the victims were murdered), caused by Grütt, Kaspara, or Stinkie. Choose from or roll on the Hauntings table any time characters enter/leave a room or spend significant time in one area. (In the daytime, an effect occurs every half hour). Fresh food or drink brought into the Inn will appear to be spoiled but will cause no harmful effects if consumed.

HAUNTINGS

d20 EVENT

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1 | Two voices are heard in muffled conversation from the next room |
| 2 | Indistinct whispering voices come from a corner |
| 3 | The sound of sobbing comes from behind some furniture |
| 4 | Screams of fear come from the distance |
| 5 | Shouts of enraged ranting come from somewhere far away |
| 6 | A child's giggling is heard nearby |
| 7 | A faint but constant scratching noise comes from somewhere in the walls |
| 8 | Faint sounds of chains rattling against a wall come from somewhere far away |
| 9 | Quickly moving footsteps are heard from a room ahead |
| 10 | The sound of slow, heavy footsteps comes from the area the characters just left |
| 11 | Upon returning to a room, there is an extra set of footprints in the dust |
| 12 | Bloody footprints appear on the floor ahead of the characters |
| 13 | A door opening or closing on squeaking rusty hinges is heard from no particular direction |
| 14 | A door within sight of the characters creaks open but slams shut when they approach |
| 15 | One of the doors' handles keeps rattling loudly but stops when characters approach |
| 16 | Someone (or something) knocks on the other side of a nearby closed door |
| 17 | Candlelight glows faintly from a corridor or room ahead but vanishes if investigated |
| 18 | An object moves or falls over on its own |
| 19 | A character feels something moving under their clothing, but nothing is there |
| 20 | Someone notices a knife or dagger missing; it turns up in another room stabbed into the floor |



Paintings. Many paintings hang on the walls of the Inn, most painted by the previous owners of the Inn (Kaspara's parents). They include portraits, landscapes, and interior scenes. Eyes in portraits follow observers as they move around; facial expressions shift subtly on second glances. Other paintings also show subtle changes after characters look away. Close inspections reveal disturbing details, such as horrific faces peering from windows or shadows or severed body parts in the background.

If a painting is described in the adventure text as containing a clue, it can be discovered with 1 minute's careful examination, possibly requiring a successful Intelligence (Investigation) check at the GM's discretion. However, anyone looking closely at a painting for a minute must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom save or take 3 (1d6) psychic damage. If the Investigation check fails, the character can spend another minute and make another check but must also save again or take damage.

HAUNTING ESCALATION

When characters arrive at the Inn, Grütt's phantom avoids them, and the Transporter is still scraping away at the bricked doorway. Kaspara starts following the characters, possibly helping with clues as they explore the Inn.

Once characters have been in the Inn for at least 6 hours (or sooner if they find his journal or ledger), Grütt decides they are intruders and loudly manifests in the common room (area 1) or balcony (area 8) complaining of unwelcome guests and attacks as described in that encounter when characters approach.

Sometime during the first night after the characters arrive at the Inn (you can choose the precise time as suits the adventure's progress), the Transporter finally breaks down the doorway from the secret chamber. A crash of bricks sounds from below the floor, then banging from the kitchen floor (or the basement exit, if cleared of logs).

KEYED LOCATIONS

The following locations are keyed to the map of The Shackled Ram Inn.

1. COMMON ROOM

The double doors to the main room have been boarded over; the boards can be pried off using just about any conceivable tool (such as a crowbar or bladed weapon). Upon entering or looking through windows, read aloud:

This large common room has many tables with benches, a bar with stools to the northwest, and a large hearth in the east wall. A flight of stairs in the southeast climb to a second-story balcony encircling the room on three sides. To either side of the bar are doorways that lead to darker backrooms; a door with a moon symbol is on the north wall. The entire area is gloomy, dusty, and festooned with cobwebs in the corners. There are various paintings on the walls.


The paintings are all portraits of local people or past guests. The cubby under the stairs contains spare dishes and cleaning supplies.

Clue: *Employees of the Month.* Behind the bar is a labeled portrait of the two permanent staff, Karl and Karen Popper, from their younger years, their occupation indicated by the embroidered Shackled Ram aprons they wear. Close investigation of the painting reveals shadowy figures of armed thugs sneaking up behind the Poppers with deadly intent.

Encounter: *Don't Be Our Guest.* When triggered as described under Haunting Escalation, Dee Grütt's chaotic evil **phantom** (see New Monsters) floats into the room and attacks, accompanied by two **animated armor** and two **flying axes** (they use **flying sword** statistics) from the balcony level (area 8). Grütt floats near the ceiling using its **lair** action to create fog around the animated objects, and **Chilling Moan** until the animated objects are destroyed. He then engages in **melee** range of the characters and fights until destroyed.

2. KITCHEN

There are heavy cabinets above thick, scarred wooden countertops in this large kitchen. A cooking hearth sits in the east wall, alongside an exit, and two doors and an open doorway line the west wall, leading to the bar and common room to the south. Broken dishes lay scattered across the floor, covered with a thick layer of dust and ashes that have blown out of the hearth.



KASPARA

Whenever characters enter this room, roll a d6 to determine what they smell in the room. On 1-2, rotting food; on 3-4, food cooking; on 5-6, slightly musty.

Hazard: Sharps. The broken dishes act as caltrops unless they are swept aside.

Clue: Scored Floor. Sweeping aside the dust and ashes reveals deep scrapes in the floor that show the section of counter and cabinet that reaches into the center of the room initially stood against the north wall. It was dragged around to its current location, and is now blocking a trap door in the floor. The heavy cabinet can be moved with the effort of creatures with a combined Strength score of 30 or higher.

Bam-bam. If the bricked archway (area 15) has been broken (see Haunting Escalation), but both basement exits remain blocked, loud banging and muffled shouting comes from below the trapdoor.

3. PANTRY

Describe as much as the characters can perceive.

This windowless pantry is quite dim, with thick shadows in the corners. Shelves laden with food stores line the walls, and a large wine cask stands in the center.

The food appears edible, but this is an illusion. Anyone eating or drinking anything from here must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution save or be poisoned for 1 hour. Examination and a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Survival) check reveal the food is spoiled.

Encounter: We Will Sell No Wine. The wine cask is a **mimic** that attacks anyone touching or moving past with surprise.

4. POPPERS' QUARTERS

Dim light from the window on the far side of this room illuminates a couple of simple beds and associated furniture.

A wardrobe beside the door contains several aprons embroidered with the name of the Shackled Ram Inn but no other clothing.

5. DEE GRÜTT'S ROOM

Dim light from the window on the far side of this room illuminates a simple bed and basic furniture, including a desk and chair by the door.

Clue: Under the Table. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check of the desk reveals an empty secret drawer. (Kaspara hid Grütt's ledger and journal upstairs before the syndicate could find them). If the drawer is found, Kaspara loudly runs up the stairs and

around the balcony and slams the door of the deluxe room (area 11).

6. CARRIAGE HOUSE

Tools hang from the walls of this dirt-floored shed, and a large covered wagon sits parked toward the back. There is a faint sound of barking and the whinnying of horses.

If a character is holding the Transporter's whip, the hound and horses just lurk. Otherwise, if anyone touches the wagon, his faithful steeds and hound manifest and fight to the death. They consist of two **warhorse skeletons** and an **undead hound** that uses **dire wolf** statistics with the following modifications:

- Its size is Medium.
- Its Type is Undead.
- It can move through creatures or objects as if they were difficult terrain but takes 5 force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Treasure: Needful Things. Anyone searching the front of the wagon discovers a short sword and a light crossbow with 10 bolts tucked behind the driver's bench. Shovels and other tools hanging on the walls are suitable for removing the snow, ice, and logs burying the basement entrance. The wagon is a *wagon of transporting* (see New Magic Items).

7. PRIVY YARD

This yard contains two back-to-back outhouses shaded by a large tree and some shrubs. Amazingly, near the kitchen door remains a supply of cut firewood, more than enough to heat the inn for several days.

Dee Grütt's body lies in an unmarked grave to the east of the privies. Just beyond is a large compost mound where the murdered Poppers were surreptitiously buried.

Encounter: All Rise. If Grütt's phantom was destroyed, his spirit now animates the **hanged man** (see New Monsters) buried in his grave, which rises to attack if characters enter the yard. The two Poppers also rise from behind him as **zombies** and attack, while Grütt stays in place and uses his Rope Attack to draw characters toward him and the **awakened tree** (located northeast of the privies and has a movement speed of 0), which slams any characters in reach.

Treasure: Restorative Gem. Inside the hanged man's stomach is a light blue gem the size of a robin's egg. This gem can be crushed and sprinkled over a petrified creature to remove that condition as if a *greater restoration* spell had been cast. A character proficient in Arcana or who succeeds on a DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana) check knows the properties of the gem.

8. BALCONY

A simple wooden balustrade surrounds this balcony overlooking the common room on three sides. Two cozy little tables sit beside a hearth to the east, while larger tables and benches line the north side. A hallway extends north, and three doors are on the western wall. There are windows on the other three walls with paintings between them. Two suits of decorative armor stand in the southwest and northwest corners; large woodsman's axes decorate the east wall.

Clue: Views of the Inn. The paintings on the walls are all studies of the Inn from different sides. Close examination of the northwest or southwest corner paintings and a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals a basement entrance located at the north end of the wall. If players ignore the relevant paintings, you may have Kaspara shift one to attract their attention.

Development: If the Don't Be Our Guest encounter already occurred while the characters were in the Common Room (area 1), the axes and armor are no longer in the corners and on the wall.

9. SUPPLY CLOSET

This closet contains linens and cleaning supplies.

Treasure: Retirement Fund. In the back of the closet is a case of scrub brushes with a fake bottom that can be found with a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Inside, Karen Popper hid various small items of jewelry filched from guests' rooms worth a total value of 50 gp.

10. BUNK ROOM

This room contains five beds.

Clue: Iron Chef. A painting here depicts the Inn's busy kitchen. Anyone spending a minute looking at it and has seen the kitchen (before or after) and succeeds on a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check notices the cabinets positioning in the kitchen don't match the painting.



11. DELUXE ROOM

This large room contains an extra-large bed and fancier furniture, curtains, and rugs than the rest of the inn.

Encounter: *Carpet Bagged.* A rug of smothering lying near the doorway attacks anyone entering this room.

Clue: *Bedtime Reading.* Grütt's journal (see Handouts) is under the bed. A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals the handwriting does not match that of Grütt's final note or the letter to Brigitta. A silk handkerchief worth 25 gp embroidered with the name "George" is under the rug.

12. DOUBLE ROOM A

This room is so thickly festooned with cobwebs that you can barely make out the shapes of furniture.

This room contains two beds. Nothing dwells in the cobwebs.

13. SINGLE ROOM

This room features a single bed, a small desk, and a broken window.

Encounter: *Flappers.* Hanging from the ceiling are two swarms of bats that attack anyone entering the room, along with Stinkie the **quasit**.

Clue: *Bedtime Reading.* Grütt's ledger sits under the bed. Anyone reading it learns he was in deep debt with several guests whose lengthy stays did not generate any payment but were assigned to "vigorish." A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals the writing does not match that of Grütt's final note or the letter to Brigitta.

14. DOUBLE ROOM B

This room contains two beds. Missing shingles have let water into the room, and the floor is covered with slush. Any weight of more than 100 pounds in the center of the room collapses the weakened floor; a creature must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or fall through, taking 3 (1d6) falling damage and landing prone outside the inn's front doors.

15. BASEMENT

To find and enter the basement, either the snow and logs blocking the outside entrance must be removed, or the cabinet in the Kitchen (area 2) pushed aside. When characters descend, describe as much as they can perceive.

This dusty basement smells of mildew and contains a row of casks beside scattered baskets, a shelf with jars, and spare furniture. Opposite is another stair rising out of the basement. To the south, an archway carved with sigils was bricked shut.

The basement's ceiling is 7 feet high. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals the sigils refer to the lord of the abyss.

If the Transporter escaped the secret chamber, describe the bricks in the archway as having been knocked into this room as if something burst through the other side. If he has not escaped, he can be heard scraping and hitting the bricks from the other side, breaking through in 1d4+1 rounds after characters enter the basement.

Encounter: *Impeded.* Two swarms of insects (centipedes) emerge to attack anyone who approaches or examines the baskets. If Stinkie has not fled or been destroyed, then the **quasit** in centipede form also attacks.

Encounter: *Escape at Last.* The Transporter has become a **revenant seeker** (see New Monsters) intent on getting to his killers in the next town. He is in a hurry as he only has a few days left to take vengeance. Instead of a dagger, he carries a whip that controls the carriage house's magic wagon (area 6).

Treasure: *Grütt's Grapes.* There are nine wine and ale casks; one has leaked, but the others are worth 25 gp each to local establishments. The jars contain pickled fruits and vegetables and are mostly still edible; the supply is worth about 10 gp. The baskets have flour, fruit, and vegetables that have long spoiled.

16. SECRET CHAMBER

The archway opens into a low, natural cavern. Scrawled over the uneven walls are various profane symbols. A statue next to some shallow iron cauldrons is in the middle of the room.

A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals the symbols refer to the lord of the abyss.

The cauldrons (used by the cult for ritually melting ice) contain a thin layer of frozen seawater. In the deeper alcove to the east, a set of iron manacles attached to the wall have been worn until they broke open. In the cavity beside it is a pile of clothing laying dumped next to a travel pack.

The statue is a petrified female elf in travel garb. If the gem from inside Grütt's body (see area 7) is powdered and sprinkled over her, the petrification ends, and she awakens, confused about her surroundings. The last she remembers is being chased, a trusted (but, it turns out, treacherous) companion giving her a magic amulet to help her hide, then being grabbed and forced to look at a medusa. This event happened in a land far to the

south, and although she doesn't know it, over two years have since passed.

Encounter: Throwing Shade. Five **shadows** lurk near the walls and attack any humanoids who ente.

Treasure: Locket Away. The statue is wearing an *amulet of proof against detection and location*. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check finds 20 pp stitched into the emptied pack.

THE SYNDICATE SHOWS UP

Not wanting their secrets revealed, the syndicate sends three human **thugs** led by a single female dwarf **spy** (Brigitta) to try and eliminate the characters. If the characters are in the Inn, one thug goes near each exterior door, then all four use their crossbows through windows, granting three-quarters cover. If the characters are not in the Inn, the thugs try to surround or ambush them. Each is likely to retreat upon taking more than half their hp in damage; if two retreat, the entire group flees. If the Transporter has escaped the basement, two of these four (selected at random) are among his targets, and he attacks them if nearby.

CONCLUSION

If both of Dee Grütt's undead forms are destroyed, the disturbing haunting effects of the Inn, including animated objects, gradually fade over 24 hours.

Kaspara continues with her minor, harmless mischief. Stinkie, if not destroyed or driven off, remains to hassle characters if they use the Inn as a base or might follow them on their adventures, looking for mischief.

If the Transporter escapes the basement, he takes revenge on his killers in the nearby town, then passes from this world. If he remains trapped, he shouts to the characters to let him out. Failing that, he dissipates after a few days.

The elf noble, freed from captivity, will try to find a way to safely return to her family and promises the characters a reward if they escort her. If she remains petrified, but the amulet is removed, her family eventually discovers her location and sends agents to retrieve her.

ADVENTURE HOOK RESOLUTIONS

Here are the resolutions for the adventure hooks presented in the introduction.

A Free Roof. Cleared of Dee Grütt's presence, the Inn can serve the characters as a suitable base for forays in the region.

Ghost Stories. If Dee Grütt is destroyed, the town is pleased that someone can re-open the Inn and offers the characters free accommodations whenever they need them.

Heroes for Hire. If characters destroy both of Dee Grütt's manifestations but fail to find the basement or

his journal, Brigitta pays the agreed-upon fee. She then re-opens the Inn under direct syndicate control. If the characters kill or capture Brigitta, they can take their reward from her purse.

APPENDIX:

NEW MONSTERS

PHANTOM

The dark, vague outline of a person flickers in the gloom.

The restless, angry spirits of those who have met a violent end, phantoms wander the night, vacillating between confusion, outrage, and misery.

Bewildered Victims. Those who have attempted communication with phantoms report that the phantoms have little, if any, awareness of their undead state, and they seem disoriented and permanently trapped in the traumatic moments surrounding their deaths.

Accidental Killers. Phantoms often approach the living with what seems like benign intent, but, when they draw close, they grab hold of living creatures and give voice to a terrifying, unearthly moan. They seem to be attempting communication, but, when their actions lead to the death of the creature, they wander away to find another.

Undead Nature. A phantom doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

REGIONAL EFFECTS

An area haunted by a phantom is warped by by phantom's magic, which creates one or more of the following effects:

- Objects or plants animate as **animated objects** or **awakened plants** and are hostile to intruders or may attack at the phantom's command
- At random times, eerie sounds may be heard, lights may appear, flicker, or disappear, objects may move or fall over, doors may open or shut

If the phantom dies, these effects fade over the course of the next 24 hours.

LAIR ACTION

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the phantom creates fog as though it had cast the *fog cloud* spell. The fog lasts until initiative count 20 on the next round.

PHANTOM

Medium undead, any alignment

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages any languages it knew in life

Challenge 1 (200 XP) **Proficiency Bonus:** +2

Incorporeal Movement. The ghost can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Sunlight Weakness. While in sunlight, the Phantom has disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.

ACTIONS

Ghostly Grasp. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

Chilling Moan. The Phantom emits an eerie moan. Each creature within 30 feet that isn't an undead or a construct must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the target takes 9 (2d8) cold damage and is frightened until the end of the phantom's next turn. If the target fails the saving throw by 5 or more, it is also paralyzed for the same duration. On a success, the target takes half the damage and isn't frightened.

HANGED MAN

This creature has pale skin pulled tight over its bones. Its head hangs at an odd angle, unsupported by a broken neck. A rotted noose and many feet of rope hang from its neck and trail behind it. Its lifeless eyes stare unblinking into eternity.

A hanged man is the corpse of a hanged humanoid who was too evil to rest peacefully in the grave or who was wrongfully hanged for a crime that was actually committed by one of his or her executioners. It is a malevolent and vengeful entity that attacks living creatures on sight; it can't be reasoned with or placated. Like a ghoul, it devours the flesh of its victims, although it seems to draw no sustenance from them.

Hanged men are always encountered near the area where they were executed or where they were interred in a way that shames them (in unsanctified ground or in a mass grave for criminals, for example). Its "lair" is either this final resting place, if it is an accessible mausoleum, or a secluded area near the place of its death that is overgrown and choked with brush, thorns, and ancient trees. Its lair is marked by the scattered remains of its victims, including any treasure a former meal happened to be carrying.

The rope around the hanged man's neck is imbued with necrotic energy to such an extent that it acts like an extension of the undead creature. It is also the creature's weakness, however, because if the rope is cut, the creature is also destroyed.

Undead Nature. A hanged man doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

HANGED MAN

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 22 (4d8 + 4)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Wis +2

Damage Resistances necrotic; piercing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands Common but can't speak

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP) **Proficiency Bonus:** +2

Entangling Rope. The hanged man's noose is a 20-foot length of rope that moves on its own like an animated object to entangle opponents of any size. An entangled creature is grappled and restrained. If it is not already adjacent to the hanged man, the rope initiates a Strength contest against the entangled creature on each of the hanged man's turns. If the rope wins the contest, it pulls the entangled creature 10 feet closer to the hanged man. If the entangled creature wins the Strength contest, it stays at its current location. Only one creature can be entangled at a time. The rope can be attacked directly (AC 13); it is destroyed by 15 points of slashing or fire damage but is immune to all other damage. If the rope is severed, both it and the hanged man are destroyed. The rope becomes nothing more than 20 feet of rotted rope if removed from the hanged man.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The hanged man attacks once with its rope and once with claws.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

Rope. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) necrotic damage and the target is grappled (escape DC 12). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the hanged man can't use the rope on another target.

REVENANT SEEKER

A revenant seeker springs up when a person is murdered and their strength of spirit brings them back to seek vengeance on their killer(s). From the time of their reanimation, the seeker has 1 year to achieve vengeance or their body dissipates and their spirit is lost. If they achieve vengeance, their body disintegrates and their spirit moves on to its final rest. The seeker bears no ill-will to anyone other than their target(s), and will only fight others if they attempt to thwart their vengeance.

Undead Nature. A revenant seeker doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

APPENDIX:

NEW MAGIC ITEMS

WAGON OF TRANSPORTING

Wondrous item, uncommon (requires attunement)

This is a 4-wheeled, canvas-topped wooden wagon pulled by a brace of draft horses. A driver attuned to the wagon's whip can drive it at fast pace without penalty, at normal pace in a stealthy manner, or at slow pace with advantage on stealth checks. In addition, once per day, the wagon can pass over difficult terrain without speed penalty for up to 1 hour.

REVENANT SEEKER

Medium undead, neutral

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 90 (12d8 + 36)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Con +5, Wis +4, Cha +5

Skills Perception +4

Damage Resistances necrotic, psychic

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned, stunned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages any languages it knew in life

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Proficiency Bonus: +2

Deadly Attacks. The seeker rolls its weapon damage dice an additional time and adds the result to the damage total. This bonus is already included in its attacks.

Regeneration. The seeker regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn. If the seeker takes fire or radiant damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the seeker's next turn.

Turn Immunity. The seeker is immune to effects that turn undead.

Vengeance Seeker. The seeker knows the distance and direction of any creature against which it seeks revenge, even if the creature and the seeker are on different planes of existence. If the creature being tracked by the seeker dies, the seeker knows and loses its Regeneration ability.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The seeker makes two melee attacks.

Fist. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature that the seeker seeks vengeance against, it deals an additional 7 (3d4) bludgeoning damage.

Whip. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) slashing damage. If the target is a creature that the seeker seeks vengeance against, it deals an additional 7 (3d4) bludgeoning damage.

Grab. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one Medium or smaller creature. *Hit:* The creature is grappled (escape DC 13). Until this grapple ends, the seeker can't grab another target, but it can make a fist attack against the grappled creature, as a bonus action. If the seeker seeks vengeance against the target, this attack automatically hits.

DEE GRÜTT'S JOURNAL ENTRY
DATED 2 YEARS AGO

It was bad enough when they made me let those devil worshippers use the cellar. Now what?

Last night the Transporter arrived with that poor stoned elf girl. At least all the other riff raff the syndicate made me harbor for free were willing guests! I think they've finally gone too far, I don't want to be a part of this anymore, debt markers be damned!

When they weren't looking I pocketed the gem to waken the girl; I'll swallow it so they won't find it.

It's been hours since the Transporter went to the cellar, and why did their thugs carry bricks and mortar down there after him? I have a really bad feeling about this. I hope it's not too late for all of us.

DEE GRÜTT'S LETTER
DATED 3 YEARS AGO

DEAR FREDRICK AND GAKKISTR,

I HOPE ALL IS WELL WITH YOU AND YOUR DAUGHTER BRIGITTA. I AM QUITE BUSY RUNNING THE SHACKLED RAM INN, SO I WON'T BE ABLE TO VISIT YOU ANY TIME SOON, BUT FEEL FREE TO COME TO MY NECK OF THE LONELY WOODS IF YOU EVER GET THE YEN TO TRAVEL. IN FACT, SINCE I HAVE NEVER ESTABLISHED MY OWN FAMILY, I INTEND FOR YOUR DAUGHTER BRIGITTA TO TAKE OVER THE SHACKLED RAM WHEN I PASS IT ALONG SOME DAY, AS I KNOW SHE IS LOOKING FOR A GOOD BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY AND I'M SURE SHE'D WELCOME THE CHALLENGE. BUT UNTIL THAT FARAWAY DAY, I HOPE ALL CONTINUES TO BE THE BEST FOR ALL OF US.

YOURS SINCERELY,
UNCLE DEE

I CAN'T GO ON WITH THIS DISASTER - TOO MANY EXPENSES AND NOT ENOUGH GUESTS. I'VE SENT MY EMPLOYEES AWAY AND NOW I TAKE MY OWN LEAVE. I CURSE THE DAY I BOUGHT THIS RAMSHACKLE INN!

- DEE GRÜTT

DEE GRÜTT'S NOTE

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