



DCC DAY 2022 ADVENTURE PACK

TWO LEVEL 2 ADVENTURES
BY BRENDAN LASALLE &
MARZIO MUSCEDERE





Incident at Toad Fork

A LEVEL 2 DCC RPG ADVENTURE

The Last Life Guardian

A LEVEL 2 MCC RPG ADVENTURE

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INTRODUCTION



Welcome once again to the exciting world of Dungeon Crawl Classics! This year marks our third celebrating the DCC RPG line and its associated siblings such as Mutant Crawl Classics. DCC Day is the date we here at Goodman Games set aside to thank you, the fans (and fanatics) who have supported us for a decade, proving yourselves to be one of the best gaming communities out there today. And what better way to say “thank you” than to give you two great adventures absolutely free! Join your fellow DCC fans by running these adventures for your friends, family, and even complete strangers, showing them why there’s no other game like Dungeon Crawl Classics currently out there.

This year’s DCC Day Adventure Pack includes two brand new adventures: one set in the popular Shudder Mountains and the other in the radiation-torn world of Terra A.D., home of MCC RPG.

For **DCC RPG**, you’ll find *Incident at Toad Fork*, a level 2 adventure by Brendan LaSalle. This scenario features curious happenings at the annual Toad Fork Harvest Moon Dance. Something strange is in the air and it’s up to the adventurers to discover what’s behind a sudden rash of vanishings. Is it the legendary Yalkum Scratcher or is there something even more sinister to blame?

For **Mutant Crawl Classics**, we have *The Last Life Guardian*, another level 2 adventure, this time by Marzio Muscedere. When a dying man stumbles into your village, the Elders decree that your band of Seekers must locate where he came from: an Ancient One ruin believed to be home to the Life Guardian, a wizard capable of restoring the dead to life. Can you locate this mysterious magician and rescue them from imprisonment?

Thanks for your continued support of Goodman Games, Dungeon Crawl Classics, and DCC Day. Now go get some friends together, grab some funky dice, and have a great time gaming!

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INCIDENT AT TOAD FORK

A LEVEL 2 DCC RPG ADVENTURE

By Brendan LaSalle

THE TALE

"Children who don't mind their parents, who refuse to thank the Sovereign before a meal or after a close call, back-talkers and fib-tellers and them what won't eat their greens . . . for them, there's a monster out there in the night. Larger than a horse, some say, and can smell misbehaviorin' from the other side of a mountain. If'n a wicked child goes missing on a full moon night, 'tis the Yalkum Scratcher what took 'em, and make no mistake. Some say 'twas the first horror in the mountains, born from black fire to eat up the first Shudborn child ever to cuss their ma and pa. Be that true or not, the wise know that when the moon is high in the sky and the first crisp of winter is in the air, young'uns best mind their manners, set to their chores, and say their prayers . . . or else . . ."

BACKGROUND



he Yalkum Scratcher is real and hunting under the harvest moon. The beast is a unique monster that has bedeviled the Shudfolk since the Hsaal cataclysm shortened the mountains. As patient a hunter as ever there was, the Yalkum Scratcher will terrorize a child for weeks, sometimes months, before finally pouncing and making the kill.

The Yalkum Scratcher woke up from an extended period of hibernation with a powerful hunger just a few days before the Toad Fork Harvest Moon Dance. Shudfolk parents have warned their children against the creature for generations, saying that that it comes at night to eat misbehaved children. The truth is more complicated—the Scratcher is drawn to the guilt that good children feel for doing wrong by their folks and family, which is much the same as the guilt felt by those early Shudfolk for trying to escape the geas. The evil thing can smell that sort of guilt, and you can bet it comes running when it does.

The Harvest Moon Dance is an important annual event. Given the isolation of the mountains, the dance represents one of those rare times that communities come together as a group to socialize and enjoy one another's company. Folks come from Hark, Ugly Bottom, Dead Wolf, and even farther away to attend. Many's the happy couple that mark a Harvest Moon past as a milestone in their courtship; their first meeting, first dance, first kiss, and even that first wonderful promise. The Toad Fork Harvest Moon Dance, and similar doings held in hollows all over the mountains, is as important to the lives of the Shudfolk as any other event you could name.

They say one soul's joy is another's sorrow. Young Zaley Gable, a child of 12 summers from Hark, is absolutely heart-sick over this year's dance. Zaley is usually a good girl who

minds her manners and says her prayers. She is also one of those unfortunate children who hates being young and longs for adulthood. Zaley is the youngest of Kettle and Holly Gable's three daughters, and this year her two older sisters are attending the dance. Weeks of jealousy driven by her sisters' happy chatter about their new dresses and the prospect of dancing with boys has her in knots. She begged her ma and pa to let her go, but when told she was too young, Zaley cussed her sisters and folks. Sent to bed without supper, a sobbing Zaley wished to be grown so she could leave and never have to see her sisters again.

Enter Modoca, one of the three devils competing for the souls of those who dwell in the Shudder Mountains. Also known as Ol' Blackcloak, the fiend keeps an eager ear out for opportunities to gather more souls in the mountains. He heard Zaley's cries and sent his agent, a corrupted Shudfolk conjure-man calling himself Mister Sharpe, to go and see what mischief there was to be made.

Mister Sharpe hid himself by the Gable's well, and when the pouting Zaley arrived to draw water, he charmingly introduced himself and struck up a conversation. Sharpe first ingratiated himself with the young girl and then used his rhetorical skills to get her to talk about her anger at being left out of the dance.

Mister Sharpe then claimed he was a mystic who could grant Zaley whatever wish would make her happy. The girl balked, but when the conjure-man showed her some simple miracles, she was convinced.

Zaley said that her wish would be to grow up overnight so she could leave her parents' house and set her own rules. Sharpe, sensing an angle that could get him even more souls, told her that he couldn't make that happen, but he could do the next best thing: he could make every unspoke-for boy at the dance fall in love with her to teach her sisters a lesson. The boys would come a-runnin', and Zaley could have her choice while her sisters wouldn't get to dance with anyone. And wouldn't that be a trick on the giggling pair of them!

Zaley said yes, she wanted that.

Mister Sharpe gleefully invoked Ol' Blackcloak and hammered out a deal. Zaley is too young for her signature to mean anything in Modoca's book, so instead he means to use her wish as bait. He glammered an abandoned shack in the woods down near the White Hell, making it appear to be a cheerful little cottage, and stashed the confused girl away there. He also threw an illusion over Zaley herself, making her appear of courtin' age and possessed of unearthly beauty.

Finally, on the night of the dance, Sharpe worked his last charm. Seven boys at the Harvest Moon Dance, just old enough to sign Modeca's contract, are suddenly stupefied by a vision of the illusory woman put into their minds by the devil himself. Possessed by mad lust, they charge off to find her, following a tracking instinct to Zaley, another part of Modeca's curse.

Mister Sharpe's scheme is to use the promise of Zaley's love as leverage to get all seven boys to sign away their souls and then leave Zaley to the mercy of the mountains, as she is too young for her signature in the demon's book to have any weight.

Zaley instantly regretted her decision but doesn't know what else to do but go through with it. After all, she is a 12-year-old girl from the mountains, duped by one of the worlds' most accomplished swindlers. For all of the trouble she's caused, she feels tremendous guilt, and that guilt has brought the Yalkum Scratcher running.

Sharpe is aware that the Scratcher is now hunting Zaley but won't allow the creature to take her before he can first corrupt her seven suitors. To this end, he brought a secret weapon—a skin filled with the carefully collected blood of young folk tormented by guilt. His plan is to use the blood to distract the creature long enough to obtain the souls of the seven beguiled young men. Afterward, the Scratcher can take her and be damned, for all the conjure-man cares.

STARTING THE ADVENTURE



he PCs all make their way to the Harvest Moon Dance at Toad Fork. Perhaps they were invited by someone wanting a dance or a word with the known adventurers, or a neighbor might ask one to escort some young people to Toad Fork. They might be hired to help supply meat or other provisions or be brought along with one of the other musicians to play music and drink whiskey. If you include romantic elements in your game, someone could simply ask unattached PCs to go to the dance with them. Ultimately, Shudfolk PCs should want to be there—the dance is not only going to be a rare bit of fun, it's an important community event not to be missed.

TOAD FORK



oad Fork—named for its famous rock formation that resembles a giant frog with a charmin' grin—is a central meeting spot for folks from all the nearby towns who come for goods at the general store. The town's famous inn, Hoppytoad House, is a common resting place for folks on their way deeper into the mountains. Toad Fork has held a Harvest Moon Dance every year for as far back as any can remember, and many locals can tell of how their great-gran and great-gram danced their first two-step in the green out by the general store or similar. Farmers in the Shudder Mountains can bring in two harvests a year, and the dance is held on the night of the first full moon after the second harvest.

PART 1: THE HARVEST MOON DANCE

Read, paraphrase, or sing the following to your players:

It's the night of the Harvest Moon Dance, and all of Toad Fork and many, many more have all come together to dance, laugh, and celebrate the season. Everyone is excited; folks have been working hard all year, bringing in crops and putting up stores for the winter, and now people are ready to celebrate. The moon is as big as any ever remember seeing it, and the green behind the general store is lit like day, allowing you to see all the decorations the Fork Folk must have spent days arranging. In the center of the green is a bonfire with smaller cook fires set around the edge of the clearing.

Old Man Roan leads a 13-piece band—fiddles, drum, jug, wash-tub bass, even spoons by Gabby the Spoon Lady come all the way from Tinder Drop. More than 300 Shudfolk dance, cook, eat, and pass jugs. Elders from the Church of the Sovereign weave in and out of the festivities, looking for witch liquor and sinnin', but also finding time to have a laugh or a spin with the dancers. Looking around at all your neighbors and extended relations enjoying themselves, you have one of those wonderful moments where your heart swells as you realize how lucky you were to be born here in the mountains and not in some crowded city surrounded by strangers.

The Harvest Moon Dance is an opportunity to introduce many elements to your campaign before Mister Sharpe's curse takes effect. The PCs could make new contacts or enemies, hear rumors, trade lore, and more. It's possible that anyone in the mountains might make the trip to Toad Fork for the dance, so this would be an ideal place to insert NPCs who might figure in later parts of the judge's campaign.

Musical PCs are invited to sit in with the band. Old Man Roan, 102 years old and spry as a man half that age, knows every song written since the shuddering of the mountains, and PCs who pay attention learn some songs to add to their repertoire.

At some point during the festivities, Mister Sharpe's curse takes effect.

Something changes in the air. A cloud passes across the moon, temporarily dimming the entire party. The band finishes up "Maiden of Chimbley Rock," and the sudden silence after their number is eerie, as if all present sense danger and grow fearful. Suddenly there is a cry like a baying wolf; one of the young dancers screams at the moon like a boy possessed. Several other boys, all old enough to ask a girl to dance but perhaps not yet to wed, follow suit. You have never seen such carrying on; the boys beat their chests, roll in the grass, and howl at the harvest moon. You see one young lad bite the heel of his hand so hard it draws a drop of blood. The boys go on like this for a minute, then as one they race away into the woods, headed in a generally southeastern direction.

Sharpe's curse has driven the seven boys mad with desire. Modeca has put a sham of true love in their hearts for an imaginary woman waiting in a quaint cottage just at the edge of the White Hell, and the boys are helpless but to run and try to be first to arrive.

The boys running off causes quite a stir. A dozen different discussions spring up at once, with the consensus view being that unholy forces are at work here and something must be done. The Shudfolk eventually decide that a search party must be formed, and they ask the PCs to lead if they haven't already volunteered. Unless it better serves your story to send the PCs alone, two or three other locals agree to go along including Josephus Steebly, a hunter and fair tracker (+2 on tracking checks).

The boys are very easy to track (DC 5), as they are running full-tilt through the woods by the light of the moon. Trackers scoring 14 or better on the check find obvious signs that the boys have shoved and scuffled with one another several times along the way. On a failed check, they eventually hear a young man's screams for help, which puts them back on track for finding the others (see Boy Up a Tree).

There are many ways the PCs can follow the boys other than wilderness tracking, including magical resources. Clever plans should have a chance to work, perhaps nudged by the Sovereign who would see his lambs brought home whole and untainted.

BOY UP A TREE

As the search party follows the wayward boys, they come to hear screams for help. If the PCs follow the screams, they find a young boy dangling precariously from the farthest bit of a branch to avoid a bobcat climbing up after him. If the PCs challenge the bobcat, it leaps down and attempts to wound one opponent before fleeing.

Bobcat (1): Init +3; Atk claw or bite + 2 melee (1d4); AC 13; HD 1d6; hp 5; MV 45', climb 20'; Act 1d20; SP heightened senses, camouflage, stealth; SV Fort +1, Ref +4, Will -1; AL N; Crit M/d4.

Bobcats are sly and cunning hunters that normally pose little threat to Shudfolk. They claim large areas as their hunting territory, sometimes ranging as far as 7 miles away from their den to hunt squirrels, rats, and rabbits. This one means to scare the young man away from a nearby hollow stump where her young are hiding.

Bobcats are exceptionally stealthy and spry, and their coloring and markings provide natural camouflage and misdirection, sometimes tricking the eye into believing they face the opposite way. Bobcats receive +5 on hide, sneak, and climb checks. Their senses are extremely acute, specifically their sense of smell, and they make any checks to perceive, find, or scent at +4.

The boy is Tad Rikkerson, a youngster of 13 summers from Toad Fork, and he comes from the richest family of all the suitors. The boy is terrified and needs help getting down out of the tree; if left to his folly, he will more than likely fall and break his leg, at least. This misadventure has one positive effect: terror snapped Tad out of Modeca's curse. Deeply ashamed, he just wants to go home and can't quite remember why he ran off from the dance in the first place, but he remembers he and the others were all after a beautiful woman named Zaley who lives in a perfect cottage

somewhere to the southeast. Now that the curse is faded, he can no longer remember the path to take to find her, which was just in his head before.

PART 2: THE CONJURE-MAN



Ol' Blackcloak can see the PCs mean to interfere with his plans, and he sends Mister Sharpe to intercept them and prevent them from doing so. Mister Sharpe puts himself in their path, hoping to talk with them and at least discourage or misdirect their efforts, if not make a deal for their souls.

As the PCs follow the trail of the running boys, they hear beautiful whistling from somewhere up the trail and see the light of a campfire. At the campfire, they see Mister Sharpe in suspiciously clean full finery for a man in the middle of the woods, sitting by a cookfire. He has three squirrels on a spit over the fire, but he neither bothered to skin his catch nor rotate his spit, so the three animals are impaled jacket-on, with their head sections scorched black and their tail sections raw. Sharpe whistles a beautiful rendition of "Maiden of Chimbley Rock," possibly unnerving if the PCs recall that it was the last song they heard before leaving Toad Fork.

Mister Sharpe stands and greets the party genially. He invites them to share his fire and wants to hear their story. If asked if he's seen the boys, he fibs saying he may have heard someone out in the woods seeming to run north and east. If the PCs ask for help, he offers any help they need and more—wealth, power, magic assistance—all in the name of "one greater than himself." Play this villain carefully; he is charming, ingratiating, and willing to wheedle, flatter, or outright lie to make a deal.

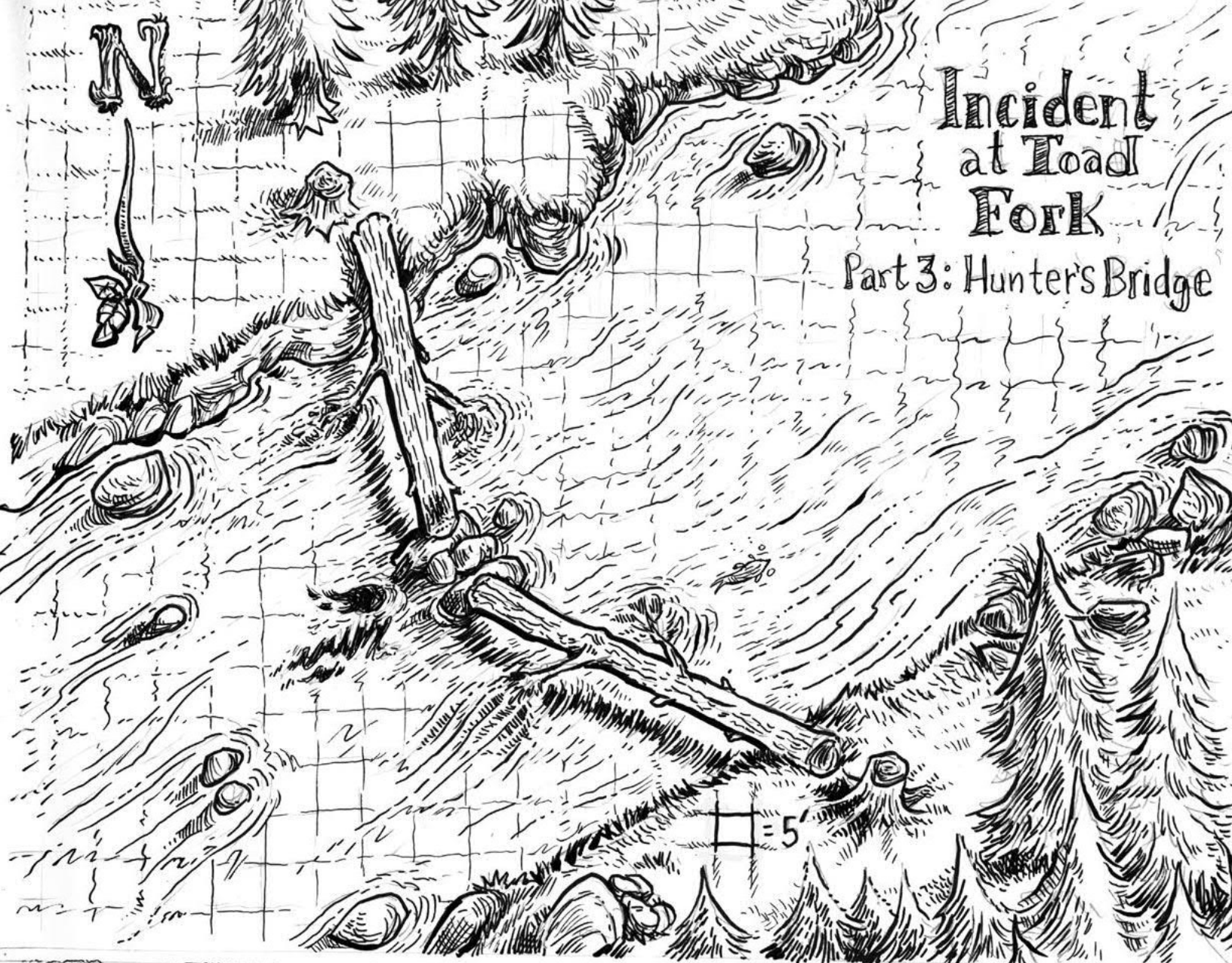
If the PCs take Sharpe up on his offer, he *invokes* Modeca and produces a contract. A DC 16 Intelligence check reveals that, although the terms of the deal are 30 years until collection, the clause is subject to the passage of time in Hell, which will be up after just 2d10 weeks on Earth. (See *The Chained Coffin*, "The Selling of Souls," for detailed information on dealing with Ol' Blackcloak.)

Sharpe's intention is to prevent the PCs from interfering with his plan to abscond with the souls of Zaley Gable's enchanted suitors. If it becomes clear that none of the search party means to do business with him, or if they threaten violence or make to leave, he tries to stay their hand by saying something to the effect of "Before you do, let me give you a gift—no obligation, no turnabout." At this, he quickly whips out the skin of blood he has and showers it on the PCs as a surprise attack. All targets within 10' must make a DC 15 Ref save, with failure meaning they get at least a drop of the stuff on their person. If none are affected, have the PCs make a Luck check before the first Yalkum Scratcher attack. Whoever fails it by the most or makes it by the least managed to step on a drop in the dark as they left the situation. If the saving throw is a natural 1, the victim actually gets a drop of blood in their mouth, which makes them feel tremendously guilty for all the mistakes they ever made for 1d3 hours.

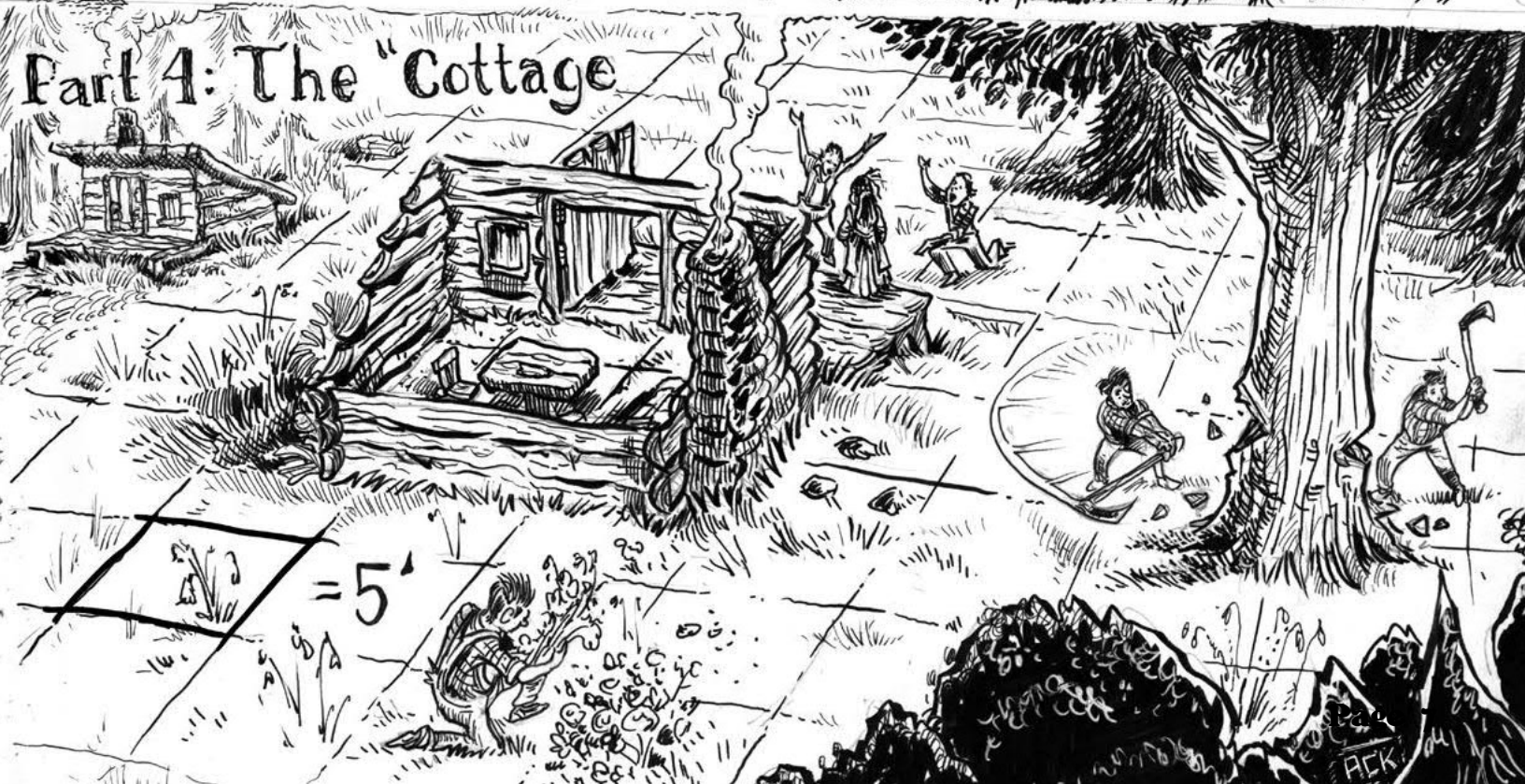
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Incident at Toad Fork

Part 3: Hunter's Bridge



Part 4: The "Cottage"



Sharpe then attempts to escape—he planned out an escape route earlier—and he can dash down the hill in a single round to a path demarked by a pair of birch trees he earlier carved with *runic alphabet, mortal*. Any who attempt to follow his path must make a DC 18 Will save (at a -1 penalty for Lawful targets) or be magically blocked and unable to follow the conjure-man down the narrow path. Targets who fail their save can make their way around the trees to chase Sharpe but get held up for 1d3 rounds by heavy thickets and deadfall. If cornered, he will fight, but he attempts to flee or talk himself out of the situation by any possible means.

In a secluded spot not too far away, Sharp pre-drew a pentacle in the dirt. If the conjure-man can make it back to the spot, he can complete a *monster summoning* spell in 5 minutes, hoping for a snallygaster or wampus cat to slow the searchers down while he makes his escape.

Mister Sharpe, Conjure-man: Init +1; Atk silver-tipped cane +1 melee (1d4) or city-forged dagger +1 melee (1d4); AC 11; HD 4d4+4; hp 15; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP magic spells (spell check +6: *cantrip, charm person, ESP, flaming hands, invoke patron, magic shield, monster summoning, patron bond, runic alphabet, mortal*); SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +4; AL C; Crit I/d6.

Mister Sharpe appears to be a handsome gentleman dressed in city finery. His accent is unmistakably Shudfolk, although of a genteel upper-class variety. He is never without his silver-tipped gloomwood cane and his silk top hat. He takes what most Shudfolk would see as excessive care of his personal appearance; his fingernails are always clean and trimmed, and his thin moustache is always neat.

Sharpe is a black-hearted villain who cares for nothing save having power over his fellow man and the world. He abandoned his family, his given name, and the Sovereign to live a life of hedonistic destruction. Sharpe sought out the demon Modeca before he grew to his full height and has never looked back. The villain's greatest

weapon is his smile and personality; Sharpe's charm is unearthly, and most of the souls he earns for his demon master are simple victims of his silver tongue.

Mister Sharpe's dealings with black magic have corrupted him until he's barely what one might call a man. He can only eat meat raw or burnt to char—anything other than the extremes he finds intolerable. He has grown a long, thin tail that he hides by cording around his leg. Some of his magic has developed restrictions, punishments from Modeca for failures and missteps; his *charm person* can only be cast upon beings who willingly shake his hand, and his *monster summoning* can only call creatures native to the Shudder Mountains. He leaves a track so strange it looks like pure invention: one foot bear, the other foot elk, switched left for right, both facing the wrong way of each other, and occasionally switching orientation so there is no way of telling if you found Sharpe coming or going. Mister Sharpe carries parchment, a fancy quill and ink set, and a coin purse with 30 sp.

The blood spread on the PCs has no effect save attracting the Yalkum Scratcher. The scent of preserved guilt can't be scrubbed off, clinging to the affected for at least a week. Only magic has a chance of ending the effect sooner.

The Yalkum Scratcher arrives within the hour. It stalks the party, looking for a convenient spot for an ambush. The Scratcher isn't interested in a fair fight unless it is absolutely sure it will win. Instead, it follows the PCs through the woods, making raids and sorties against them as it goes, and only fighting toe-to-toe if it has no choice. It always favors targets who were marked by the conjure-man's preserved blood.

The beast might employ any cunning trick to stalk and track prey. It might barricade a path with deadfall, bury itself beneath leaves to bite a passing leg, draw pursuers into the paths of dangerous beasts, roll rocks downhill, or similar; use all your



judge's guile to give the PCs a dangerous, interesting, and varied guerrilla-style combat that could last for several encounters. If you want to finish the game in a single session, have the Scratcher ambush the PCs once on the trail, then once at the river crossing (see Part 3: Hunter's Bridge); if the creature survives, it should show up one final time after they encounter the boys at the cabin.

Yalkum Scratcher: Init +3; Atk whip-scratch +4 melee (1d10) and claw or bite +1 melee (1d6); AC 16; HD 5d8; hp 37; MV 30' run/swim/climb; Act 2d20; SP heightened senses, stealth, tireless, reborn in black fire; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +4; AL N; Crit M/d10.

The Hsall created the Yalkum Scratcher to track runaway slaves. Even miles away, the beast could smell a runaway's guilt for abandoning their home—a guilt created, of course, by the bloodline geas that kept Shudfolk tied to the mountains. When Luhsaal imploded, the imperfect creature, free of its arcane fetters, ran howling across the land, leaving a spoil in the Earth anywhere it slept. Eventually the nimbus of dying Hsall sorcery faded, and the beast stopped leaving spoils in its wake. The creature's hunting instincts persisted, and it found itself attracted to guilt, specifically the guilt of the disobedient who knows better.

The creature is as large as the biggest bear, with a wide body covered in shaggy black fur. It has four limbs and extends a hidden muscular tendril, like an arm with seven double joints in it, from the side of its neck in combat. The tendril ends in a cluster of thorny protrusions. Sometimes the creature will slowly drag its thorns along rocks to scare opponents with an evil sound. The Scratcher runs on all fours but rears up to its full 7+' height in combat. Its most striking feature is its face, which is no face at all but rather a nimbus of black fire with just a pair of glowing yellow eyes and a set of luminous predator teeth.

The Yalkum Scratcher is tireless during its waking periods, never growing weary or needing sleep. It can run, climb, or swim at its maximum movement rate through any terrain or speed of water, bounding and clambering over any obstacles it encounters. The creature's manic energy is balanced by a necessity to hibernate for months or occasionally years at a time. It normally hibernates through the summer, waking up to autumn's chill.

The Yalkum Scratcher is infinitely patient and loves to terrorize its prey before the kill. The beast sometimes sets perfectly still for days to catch its prey unaware. The creature is supernaturally silent, gaining a +12 bonus on all stealth and hiding checks. The Scratcher's sense of smell is extremely powerful; it can follow a track in the rain and pick out individual creatures by spoor alone. It can smell guilt from miles away—specifically the guilt one feels for betraying their kinfolk—and will seek out the source in every case.

The Scratcher prefers to fight by ambush, sometimes striking a creature just once, then running away, perhaps returning hours later to catch the victim unaware again. In combat, the Yalkum Scratcher swings at targets up to 10' away with its thorny tentacle.

If the Yalkum Scratcher is brought to zero hit points, it explodes in a burst of black fire, leaving no corpse behind and doing 1d3 points of damage to targets within 10'. At some time in the future—perhaps months, perhaps years—the creature is reborn in a burnt spoil deep in the mountains near Skeleton Hill. Permanently destroying the Yalkum Scratcher would be an arduous quest.

Every time the PCs engage with the Scratcher, have the PC with the lowest Luck score make a Luck check. On a failed check, a complication arises: the Applecore boy.

At the end of the first round of combat (Init 1, after all other participants), Olby Applecore, a lad of 14 years from Hark and the best boxer of all the suitors, bursts out of the woods. Modeca has whispered in his ear that more suitors are coming to claim the fair Zaley, and that he should go and show the so-and-sos what's what before they steal her for themselves.

Olby intends to make the biggest PC cry uncle and swear off Zaley, supernaturally confident that the power of his true love will carry the fight. This is extremely unlikely, even for as skilled a schoolyard pugilist as Olby (AC 11, hp 3, punch +1 melee for 1d3 nonlethal damage). Worse, if he takes even a single point of damage, he snaps out of the conjure-man's curse, and the guilt of his behavior hits him like a thunderbolt. This change of mind instantly attracts the Yalkum Scratcher, who will ignore more logical targets for a taste of what truly whets his appetite.

If Olby survives the encounter, he heads home, entirely mortified, unsure of how he came to be in this predicament but deeply grateful to his rescuers, possibly offering to help with some future endeavor.

PART 3: HUNTER'S BRIDGE



After 3 hours of following the trail, the PCs arrive at a simple hunter's bridge over the river that all the locals mostly know about. The crossing consists of pair of felled and partially limbed trees, each about 50' long, one from each bank of the river, that come within a foot of one another on a small outcropping of rocks. The PCs must go in single file the entire length of the crossing. If a PC goes over the bridge at no faster than 10' per round, they can make the crossing without a check, but crossing at half speed requires a DC 13 Agility check to avoid falling in, increasing to a DC 17 if they rush across at full speed.

The river's current quickly takes anyone who falls in south down the river, although they can make a DC 13 Strength check to grab ahold of something they can use to drag themselves to shore in 1d3 rounds. Failing the check means they travel 50' downriver before they can make another check. Three failed Strength checks in a row mean the PCs have been swept down to the rapids, where they must make an additional DC 13 Ref save every round or be battered against some rock or root for 1d3 points of damage, while still needing to grab ahold of something to get free of the river.

If the Yalkum Scratcher is still alive, it waits at the center of the bridge, partially submerged. If a PC states they are

checking the water as they cross, they may see the beast's head jut up from the dark water (DC 12 Intelligence check to notice). The Scratcher means to try for one of the search party, making a grapple check (creature check +9, includes its size modifier). If successful, an adventurer has been pulled off the log and into the river. The creature then attacks another member the next round, possibly trying the same trick again if it makes strategic sense.

If the creature survives and escapes the encounter, it seems to run away to the north but doubles back to catch the PCs again further on up the trail.

PART 4: THE OLD LOGGER'S COTTAGE



he PCs smell pine smoke and hear the commotion of competing boys and the chop of axes when they get within a mile of the abandoned cottage.

The cottage is a mean, neglected affair. The chimney and hearth still stand, but every timber is bent, broken, or missing. A broken line of sparse rocks defines a little weed-choked yard around the place. There is a fire in the chimney, and the suitors act as if the place is a functioning homestead. (They still only see Modeca's illusion: a pretty little cottage with a neat garden and shutter windows, and Zaley as a supernaturally beautiful full-grown woman.) There is a smoky pine fire in the chimney sending up a stream of white smoke into the moonlit night. Enough planks are missing that the chimney fire lights up the clearing fairly well. If the PCs go in and look at the ceiling, they can see a rune carved into a plank—an evil symbol of Modeca representing lies and illusions.

As the PCs approach, they find a chaotic scene at the abandoned cottage. Zaley is out in the front yard, looking embarrassed and wretched. Before her kneel 15-year-old Mite and Harlen Redstart, the twins, currently engaged in an unasked-for contest of love poetry. A bit off from the house, Tommy Kithory, the strongest of the suitors, and Amos Blessing, the toughest, are each chopping on different sides of the same enormous sugar maple, seeing who can take it down first with a pair of timber axes they found in the cottage.

If any from the search party tries to creep around to the back of the old cottage, they find Delbit Woggsworth, the handsomest of all the suitors, attempting to pick flowers for a bouquet by starlight. If addressed, he earnestly asks for any advice the PCs have in asking for a woman's hand in matrimony.

Zaley is not in any danger—all the suitors are determined to act honorably around her, and none would ever touch her without consent—but she is embarrassed, miserable, and deeply desirous to go home and beg her family for forgiveness.

As long as the suitors remain enchanted, they continue trying to impress Zaley and outdo their rivals. The slightest provocation from the PCs will convince all five remaining suitors that the interlopers want Zaley for themselves, and they will attack en masse with whatever weapons they have at hand.

If a fight breaks out and Olby Applecore has yet to appear in the adventure, he bursts into the clearing on initiative count

1 of the first round. He is sizzling mad, having missed heading off the search party in the woods, and jumps into the fray, attacking a randomly determined target every round (standing suitors counted, Zaley excepted). If a fight doesn't break out but the rest of the suitors are freed from their curse, Olby arrives soon after, untouched by whatever means the PCs used to remove the curse from the others. Olby once again declares a challenge against all comers in the name of Zaley's yet-to-be-offered promise and must be dealt with separately.

The suitors (5 or more): Init +0; Atk fist +0 melee (1d3 nonlethal) or timber axe +0 melee (1d5, Tommy and Amos only); AC 11; HD 1d4; hp 3 each (see below), MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP individual traits (see below); SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will -1; AL N; Crit I/1d3.

Individual suitor traits

- Mite and Harlen Redstart: +1 on Intelligence-based skill checks
- Tommy Kithory: +1 to hit, damage, Strength-based skill checks
- Amos Blessing: +2 hp, Fort saves +2
- Delbit Woggsworth: Will save +2, +2 on Personality-based skill checks
- Olby Applecore: AC 11, hp 3, punch +1 melee for 1d3 nonlethal damage, always charges recklessly

AMBUSH

Once the boys are cured, the search party must still return everyone to Toad Fork. At this point, the combined guilt of Zaley and her suitors is an unignorable lure to the Yalkum Scratcher. The beast ambushes the party in the woods on the way back, hoping to drag off a suitor. If the PCs specifically say they are keeping a watch out for the creature, give them a DC 13 Intelligence check to hear it rushing the party and deny it a surprise attack; temptation makes the beast incautious.

Modeca, all pique over his servant's failure to bring him the souls he was promised, has arranged for Sharpe to be waiting in the exact place where the Scratcher's ambush is to occur. Sharpe makes a simultaneous assault, hoping to exact his master's revenge against the party in recompense to his infernal master. When the PCs arrive, he has already cast *magic shield* (+4 AC for another 10 minutes once the fight begins). He leaps out and swears to slay them all in Modeca's name, trying to burn them with *flaming hands* or, failing that, fight with his dagger and cane. Sharpe has no choice but to fight to the death, and the Yalkum Scratcher is physically unable to abandon this many guilty children, so the battle goes to its natural outcome.

Mister Sharpe, Conjure-man: Init +1; Atk silver-tipped cane +1 (1d4) or city-forged dagger +1 (1d4); AC 11; HD 4d4+4; hp 15; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP magic spells (spell check +6: *cantrip*, *charm person*, *ESP*, *flaming hands*, *invoke patron*, *magic shield*, *monster summoning*, *patron bond*, *runic alphabet*, *mortal*); SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +4; AL C; Crit I/1d6.

If Sharpe was wounded or used any spellburn in the earlier battle, Modca has healed him to full hit points and stats.

AFTERWARD



f the PCs return with all seven boys and Zaley right and unharmed, all of Toad Fork rejoices. A second dance commences on the very next night, an absolutely unprecedented event in the history of Toad Fork, and the search party are the guests of honor. Old Man Roan finds himself moved to play one of the Old Songs: “Devil Ye Shant,”

“**Devil Ye Shant**”, (DC 15; 5 minutes): This song holds powerful charm that grants all present a single reroll of a saving throw or divine spell check against a demon or the forces of black magic. This piece can only be played once per season.

Zaley’s folks are relieved to tears to have their daughter back safe. Zaley promises never to wish for anything unnatural again, and her ma and pa, just happy to have her home, actually escort her and some young friends to the second Harvest Moon Dance that next night, where they all dance to their heart’s content.

However, if some or all of the boys or Zaley are lost, a pall falls over the entire community, and there is appropriate mourning and church services.

If Zaley and all the suitors are returned safely, each PC gains 3 Luck points. If any of the suitors or Zaley are lost, the PCs each lose a Luck point for every lost youngster.

The search party are the talk of the mountain for years to come, which of course brings some good and some bad their way in due time.

CURING THE DEVIL’S MADNESS

There are many possible ways to end Mister Sharpe’s curse. When the curse is ended, the suitors all see both Zaley and the cabin for what it is and are terrified and embarrassed. Here are a few examples, but clever PCs will certainly think of other methods that may have a chance of working:

- An inspired talking-to: DC 16 Personality check snaps one child out the enchantment.
- Knocking them out without killing them: the suitors eventually recover with the curse broken.
- Turn un-holy check: treat each suitor as a 2 HD creature; success lifts the curse.
- 2 dice of magical healing.
- A divine aid check: DC 14 check cures one, DC 17 cures three, and DC 19 or better cures all five.
- A carefully worded, nonlethal mighty deed (“I’ll try to smack some gentil sense into the boy.”)
- An appropriate magic spell: creative uses of *word of command*, *banish*, *remove curse*, or other appropriate spells.
- Calling for Modeca himself to make some kind of bargain on behalf of the kids: depending on the nature of the bargain this could be a clever, foolish, or damning solution to the problem.

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THE LAST LIFE GUARDIAN

A LEVEL 2 MCC ADVENTURE

By Marzio Muscedere

INTRODUCTION

The *Last Life Guardian* is a Mutant Crawl Classics RPG adventure that sees the PCs exploring a time-lost ruin of the Ancient Ones in search of a fabled wizard known as the Last Life Guardian. Reported to be a pure strain human of unimaginable power, this wizard has the power to heal and even bring the dead back to life. In keeping with the intended Appendix "M" flavor of this adventure, judges are encouraged to describe the cyclopean ruin and forgotten structures of the Ancient Ones in the most simple and abstract terms possible, thereby enhancing the sense of mystery and suspense as the PCs explore the unknown horrors and forgotten technology of this time-ravaged place. At no point should the actual nature of the structure be revealed to the players outright, but rather only through the characters' exploration of this nightmare-haunted structure will the players come to the realization that their PCs are actually exploring the ruins of a waterpark, and the Last Life Guardian is nothing more than a functioning lifeguard droid trapped within since the Great Disaster.

The Last Life Guardian is intended for a party of four to six 2nd-level characters and is inspired by the literary works of Andre Norton, along with cult classic films such as *The Food of the Gods* and *Mysterious Island*. This adventure focuses on the classic struggle of man against nature and proves that even the most innocuous of locations and creatures have taken on a whole new level of danger in a post-apocalyptic hell.

BACKGROUND

None can say why the Great Disaster happened, nor what propelled the Ancient Ones to leave their planet nearly extinct. No one knows what truly happened, not even the *Rememberers* – only that it did.

It is said the lucky ones were the first to go, vanishing into oblivion like shadows and dust. Many who remained mutated into monstrous things filled with rage, madness, and hunger. Those who did not banded into colonies, determined to seek out the time-lost science of the Ancient Ones – artifacts and structures crafted by the very hands who had ushered in the destruction of the world.

But searching even the most seemingly innocuous fallen structure of the Ancient Ones can prove to be a deadly endeavor. Case in point, the ravaged ruin of a pre-Terra A.D. vacation spot – a waterpark. Once heralded as a premier pleasure destination of the Ancient Ones, this waterpark not only featured the standard waterslides, wave pool, and fitness facilities of its time but also a large marine aquarium teaming with hundreds of species of sea life. But that was

REMEMBERERS

Rememberers are a mystic order of seers who dream of the past, not the future. They do not foresee but rather backsee, gaining small pieces and fragmented images from before the Great Disaster through dreams and visions that must be interpreted and pieced together like a strange puzzle. Night after night, they dream of the past, listening to the echoes of bygone ages through a tangle of sight and sound, while their days are spent contemplating both the marvels and horrors of long ago.

Rememberers are known to tell strange tales and seemingly unbelievable statements of the before times when men could fly like birds and travel in boats under the surface of the water. It is up to the characters to determine if every remnant of this old knowledge is indeed fact or fiction. The *Rememberers* have gleaned the following information about the Life Guardians from their dreams:

- The sacred order of Life Guardians built holy temples dedicated to water – the source of life.
- The Life Guardians date back to before the Great Disaster, and their mark is a magical crimson sigil in the shape of an "X".
- All Life Guardians are sworn to heal and protect mankind from the perils of the world.
- Life Guardians are pure strain humans, some of whom have gained the power of immortality.
- Life Guardians are powerful wizards with the magical power to heal and even bring the dead back to life.

before the Great Disaster struck and changed the course of humanity forever.

Now this time-ravaged waterpark is home to a myriad of mutant creatures that have learned to walk, reason, and – most terrifying of all – hunt. The entire facility is ruled by a giant mutant octopus-crab, a colossal monstrosity that dwells in the fetid wave pool; it has psionic powers and an insatiable appetite for living flesh. Yet despite the mutated horrors that now dwell within this benighted ruin, a single lifeguard droid still occupies the dilapidated first aid shed at the park's center. Trapped within its confines, the lifeguard droid is still programmed to heal and save the lives of anyone in peril within the ancient waterpark's boundaries.

Temple of the Last Life GUARDIAN

X = Fishmen Traps



But now, as fate would have it, a group of foragers from the PCs' village stumbled upon a lone trader from a far-away colony. Injured and delirious from exposure and the elements, the trader recounted an extraordinary tale before succumbing to his wounds. He claimed to have stumbled upon an Ancient One superstructure buried deep within the hothouse jungle to the north and a pure strain human wizard trapped within – a wizard with the power to heal and even bring the dead back to life. Unable to rescue the wizard from his mutant captors, the trader fled the structure and, after a harrowing sojourn through the wilds, was found near-dead only a day ago. Now his tale has been recounted to the village *Rememberers* who have decreed the trapped wizard must be none other than a fabled Life Guardian, a surviving member of an ancient pre-disaster order sworn to heal and protect mankind.

And above all else, he must be rescued.

PLAYER START

A chance encounter between foragers from your village and a dying trader from a far-off colony has offered up an incredible story of horror and hope. Summoned by the village Rememberers, you are told of the dying man's perilous flight through the hothouse jungle pursued by fearsome mutants with large eyes and gaping mouths. Relentlessly hunted by these savage predators, the trader stumbled upon a time-lost ruin of the Ancient Ones and a pure strain human wizard trapped within – a wizard with the power to heal and even bring the dead back to life. After a terrible and bloody battle with the mutant creatures who keep the wizard prisoner, the trader managed to escape and was found in the wilds near-dead only a day ago.

Now the village Rememberers decree that the trapped wizard must be none other than a fabled Life Guardian, a surviving member of an ancient pre-disaster order sworn to heal and protect mankind – and you, the greatest of the village seekers, must rescue him.

(Judge's note: The *Rememberers* will also share their visions with the players at this time; see *Rememberers* sidebar.)

Armed with the directions to the ancient superstructure, as well as knowledge of the strange crimson sigil that marks this wizard's domain, you set out under a red and bloated sun in search of the Last Life Guardian...

TEMPLE OF THE LAST LIFE GUARDIAN

General Features: This ancient waterpark is overrun with thick vegetation and oppressive growth, and now resembles little more than a dismal swamp. Large pools of stagnant water dot the area, threatening to swallow the ancient and dilapidated structures that thus far have resisted the decaying touch of time. Once the PCs enter the park grounds, they notice a primeval silence haunts the fetid gloom and have a lingering sense that some invisible presence is watching. Characters with a Personality score of 15 or less feel a tug upon their minds, as if some unknown lifeform suddenly became aware of their presence. Unbeknownst to the characters, this is the telepathic capabilities of the Brood Mother,

a gargantuan mutant octopus-crab that rules over this place – and it has just become aware of the trespassers. Note that all players enter the waterpark in Area A.

Area X - Fishmen Traps: The waterpark is littered with debilitating fishmen traps (DC 17 Intelligence or Luck to spot) aimed to kill or cripple the unwary. Roll 1d4 for trap type: (1) camouflaged pit traps; (2) deadfall trap; (3) rolling logs; (4) covered spikes.

All traps deal 1d6 damage (DC 15 Ref check for half damage). Note that if a 6 is rolled on the damage die, the trap has effectively broken a bone in the victim's leg. The victim is reduced to moving at half speed, loses any Agility bonus to AC, and all attack rolls are made at -1d until healed.

Travel within the waterpark: Travel between marked areas within the waterpark can prove dangerous to the unwary seeker as groups of hideous gilled-horrors stalk the park grounds, hunting any would-be trespassers. Each time the PCs move between keyed location areas on the overland map, roll a d3. On a 1, they encounter a hunting party of 2d3 gilled-horrors (DC 11 Agility check to avoid).

When the fishmen attack, read or paraphrase the following:

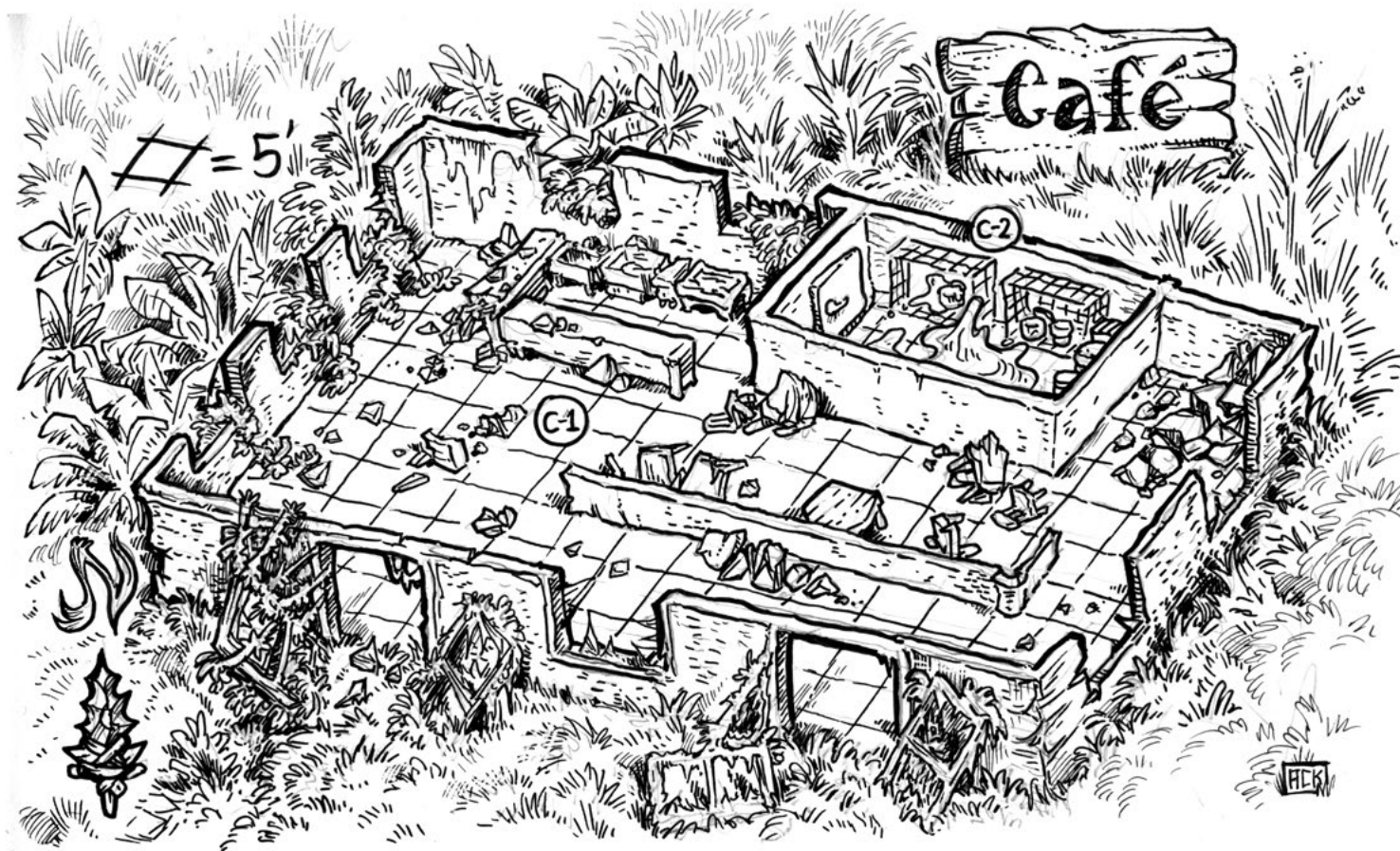
Rising from the swamp are hideous parodies of men. Grotesque creatures with squat bodies and long spindly arms that end in splayed appendages. Their hairless bodies are a mottle of warts and scales the sickly color of yellow and green. A fish's head sits atop narrow shoulders with lidless dead eyes and an oversized mouth that masticates soundlessly as if gasping for air. Black swamp water and globules of vomit-colored scum glisten menacingly from barbed bone spears clutched in their webbed hands.

Gilled-Horror Hunting Party (Fishmen): Init +0; Atk barbed bone spear +0 melee (1d6); AC 12; HD 1d8; hp 5; MV 20', 30' swimming; Act 1d20; SP bone spur (on max damage roll); SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will -1.

The fishmen fight with wickedly barbed spears made of bone. Each time a max damage result is achieved on a spear attack, a bone barb breaks off into the wound resulting in a loss of 1 hp each round until the barb is removed (DC 10 Fort save to remove).

Area A - Waterpark: *Through the haze of jungle gloom, you catch sight of a narrow valley off in the distance. A pair of stone shelters, unlike the hide tents of clan folk, rise like witch-fingers of stone from the verdant tumble. An overgrown trail cuts through the trees leading toward a large stagnant pond, while off to the east a series of large pipes snake their way high through the trees. Despite the surrounding wilderness, a primeval silence haunts the fetid gloom, and there is a lingering sense that some invisible presence is watching.*

This fallen waterpark resembles little more than a fetid swamp scattered with decaying ancient structures. A putrid, scum-crusted "river" encircles the main pond (Area B – Lazy River), its waters a viscous mire of malodorous slime. There are two partially intact buildings (Area C – Café and Area D – Rec Center) as well as a series of large tubes (Area E - Waterslides) that run from a hidden platform in the trees to a fetid pool below.



Area B - Lazy River: A putrid, scum-crusted creek of viscous slime cuts through the jungle. Its slimy banks and stagnant dark waters give off a noxious odor of death and decay.

The river ranges in width from 12 to 15 feet with a depth of 6 to 8 feet and is home to many of the fishmen that prowl the waterpark in search of food. Anyone entering the lazy river quickly realizes there is absolutely no current and its banks are far too uniform to be of natural occurrence, all of which speaks to this being a man-made structure. A group of 3d3 gilled-horrors launch a surprise assault against anyone disturbing their waters, gaining a free attack (DC 15 Intelligence check to avoid).

Gilled-Horrors from the Creek (Fishmen): Init +0; Atk barbed bone spear +0 melee (1d6); AC 12; HD 1d8; hp 5; MV 20', 30' swimming; Act 1d20; SP bone spur (on max damage roll); SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will -1.

Area C - Café: A timeworn edifice of shattered glass and twisted steel rises from the primordial marsh decay. Two rotten doors choked with jungle creepers hang askew on rusted hinges, beyond which is lost in shadow and mystery.

Area C-1 - Café: Demented rays of crimson sunlight filter through the shattered windows of this large decaying structure casting everything in a scarlet luminescence. The broken remnants of tables and chairs coupled with musty-smelling debris litter the floor in large piles. At the far end of the room stands a low counter, beyond which lies a single metallic door and a wall lined with strange, shattered steel and glass boxes.

This ancient café is littered with the detritus of a lost age,

its air heavy with a moldy stench. A lone unlocked metallic freezer door beyond the counter leads to the food storage area. Characters may search the room for items of value as per the *In Search Of...* table on page 20. Note that each PC may only search the room once for items.

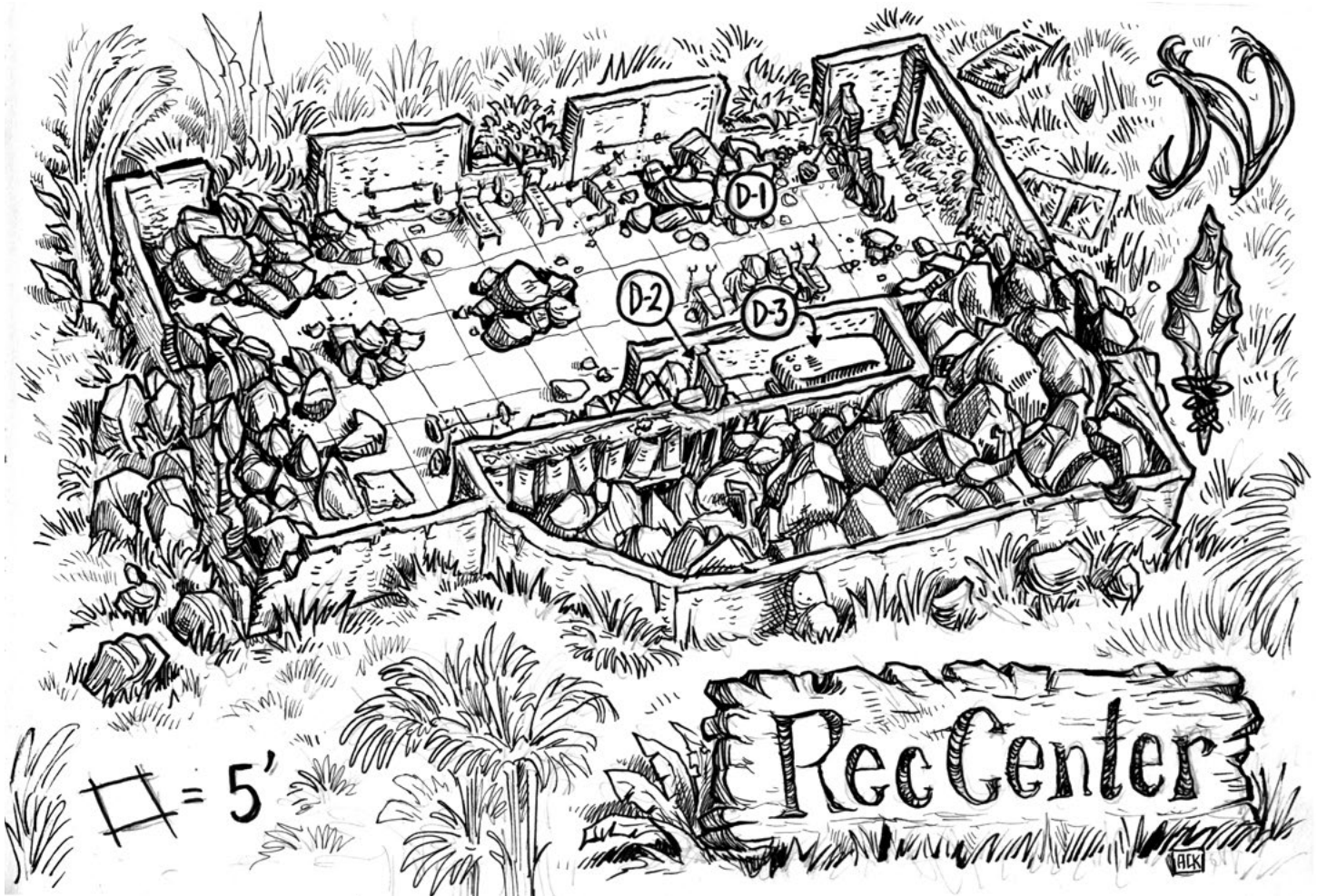
Area C-2 - Freezer: A large metallic door opens into a cramped chamber and the overpowering stench of mold. Wire shelves lay askew, their contents spilled across the floor, while a shapeless mass of bright orange slime roils toward you through the detritus.

The amorphous orange creature is none other than radioactive nacho cheese that has grown to possess a cunning animal intelligence over the centuries. This sickly pile of putrid orange goo attempts to suffocate its victims by engulfing them in its roiling mass and forcing itself down their throats.

Radiated Nacho Cheese Blob: Init -1; Atk cheesy pseudopod +3 melee (1d8 plus suffocation); AC 10; HD 6d8; hp 27; MV 20'; Act 2d20; SP half damage from slicing and piercing weapons, grapple to suffocate (DC 12 Fort save or suffocate in 2d5 rounds); SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +1.

All of the organic matter within the room has already been consumed by the cheese blob long ago. A thorough search of the room reveals dozens of splintered tins still marked "Manly Mike's Condensed Nacho Cheese" (DC 12 Intelligence to decipher the script).

Area D - Rec Center: This eon-haunted structure has almost entirely collapsed in upon itself, the wondrous geometry and alien architecture of the Ancient Ones slowly swallowed by the press of time.



Area D-1 - Gym: *The once high ceiling of this chamber has all but collapsed, choking the room in a tumble of stone and twisted steel. Throughout the room, rusted metal disks and corroded iron bars lay spread across the floor, their twisted forms peeking out from beneath the fallen ceiling stones like oxidized bones.*

This chamber was once part of a sprawling gymnasium complex that is now almost entirely covered by the collapsed roof. There is more than 200 lbs. of salvageable cast iron in the form of dumbbells, barbells, plates, and other various workout equipment that can be collected, so long as the PCs have a means to transport it. Along with the cast iron, characters may search the room for other items of value as per the *In Search Of...* table on page 20. Note that each PC may only search the room once for items.

Area D-2 - Hidden Door: An intact door is concealed behind a pile of rubble (DC 12 Intelligence check to spot), its edges illuminated by a bright light beyond. The rubble can be cleared away with 20 minutes of work.

Area D-3 - Tanning Bed: *The door opens to a cramped chamber and a strange looking sarcophagus at its center. A glowing pallid light spills forth from beneath its partially closed lid.*

If the lid is opened, a glowing phosphorescent corpse rises from the tanning bed. Trapped ages ago during the great disaster, this Ancient One's corpse has been re-animated by the excessive ultraviolet radiation that has coursed through the malfunctioning tanning bed, and it now seeks living flesh.

Tanorexic Zombie: Init -5; Atk slam +1 melee (1d4 + DC 15 Fort save or 1d3 radiation burn); AC 10; HD 5d8; hp 23; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP un-dead traits; SV Fort +4, Ref -4, Will +2.

Note that as per the *MCC RPG Core Rule Book*, mutants failing the Fort save with a natural 1 immediately lose one random mutation or defect. If a mutated character makes the required saving throw by rolling a natural 20, then that mutant character gains one new random mutation or defect.

Area E - Waterslides: *A stagnant pond of brackish water lies beyond a growth of tall reeds; a sickly-green glow emanates just below its slimy surface. Two large open pipes rest at the pond's edge, each easily big enough for a person to climb through. The hollow pipes snake their way through the trees above, climbing high until they are lost somewhere in the jungle canopy overhead.*

A closer examination of the pond (DC 12 Intelligence to spot) reveals it to be far too regular in outline to be a natural body of water and is therefore man-made.

The pipes are the remnants of two waterslide tubes. The waterslide tubes can be scaled with little difficulty (DC 5 Strength or Agility check) as they are only mildly slick with the natural moisture of the jungle. A failed roll results in the PCs sliding into the rad sludge pool below.

The tubes lead to the platform above, hidden 50 feet high in the trees. The stairway that once led to the above platform has long since crumbled away leaving only a metal skeleton to hold the tubes in place. The metal braces can be scaled with a DC 8 Strength or Agility check.

Rad Sludge: The pool is comprised of only a few inches of brackish pond water that rests atop fluorescent green rad sludge underneath. Anyone who enters the pool suffers severe radiation burns as the green sludge eats away flesh for 1d10 damage per round (DC 15 Fort save for half damage). Note that as per the *MCC RPG Core Rule Book*, mutants failing the Fort save with a natural 1 immediately lose one random mutation or defect. If a mutated character makes the required saving throw by rolling a natural 20, then that mutant character gains one new random mutation or defect. Characters may search the rad sludge pool for items of value as per the *In Search Of...* table on page 20. Note that each PC may only search the pool once for items.

Area E-1 - Waterslide Platform: *You reach an open platform of stone and steel nestled in the jungle canopy, offering a clear view of the Ancient Ones' structures below. Three large open pipes are affixed to the platform that spiral downward through the trees, each large enough to easily crawl into. The entire platform is littered with large sticks and leaves that have been woven into a giant nest. Suddenly rising from within are two gargantuan birds that stand twice as tall as a grown person.*

The entire waterslide platform has been turned into a makeshift nest that houses two gargantuan undertaker birds that feed upon the fishmen who live below. These grotesque, 15-foot-tall mutant storks have oily black wings, a bald neck, and a head mottled with cancerous red growths. Their fearsome bills are over 4 feet in length and capable of delivering devastating wounds.

Undertaker Birds (2): Init +1; Atk giant beak +3 melee (1d8); AC 12; HD 5d10; hp 20; MV 15', 40' fly; Act 1d20; SP knock

from perch (on an attack roll of 18+), sonic squawk (DC 12 Fort save to resist); SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will -1.

The undertaker birds attack with brutal ferocity, knocking their victims from the top of the platform on any melee attack roll of 18 or greater (DC 12 Ref save to avoid). Alternatively, an undertaker bird may unleash an ear-piercing sonic squawk in lieu of its melee attack against everyone in a 15-foot radius (DC 8 Fort save to resist). The sonic squawk pushes anyone affected 10 feet backward and does 1d6 damage. Anyone knocked from the top of the platform tumbles 50 feet to the jungle floor below for 5d6 damage (DC 13 Ref save for half damage).

Characters may search the nest for items of value as per the *In Search Of...* table on page 20. Note that each PC may only search the nest once for items.

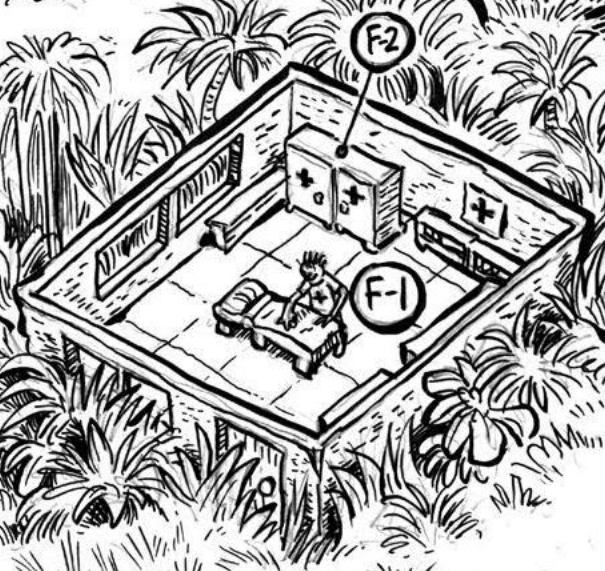
A Bird's-Eye View: The waterslide platform offers a clear view of the entire waterpark grounds. Anyone actively gazing at the waterpark from this position spots the hidden lifeguard shed (Area F) through the trees (DC 6 Intelligence or Luck to spot) and the strange crimson sigil of the Life Guardian (see **Player Handout 1**). Note that a DC 13 Intelligence check is required to decipher the strange script on the lifeguard sign.

Areas A, B, and C - Tubes: Waterslide tubes A and B are fully intact and lead straight to the pool 50 feet below. Tube C is not, and after a few harrowing twists and turns abruptly ends sending anyone sliding down careening 30 feet to the jungle floor for 3d6 falling damage (DC 13 Fort save for half damage).

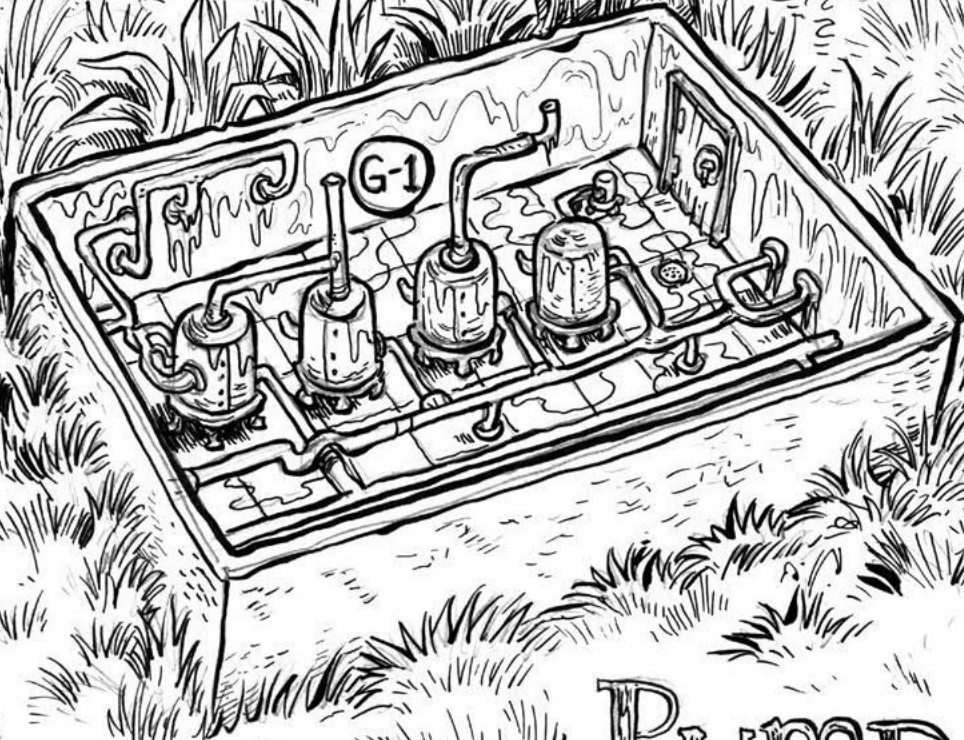




Water Slide Platform



Lifeguard Shed



Pump Room

Area F – Lifeguard Shed: A DC 10 Intelligence or Luck check is required to find the lifeguard shack that has been covered by growth and hidden with foliage by the fishmen. Note that the check is not necessary if the lifeguard shed has already been spotted from atop the waterslide platform (Area E-1).

If located, read or paraphrase the following:

Hidden beyond the press of vegetation you catch sight of the stone walls of a building marked with a curious-looking symbol, a faded crimson X – the sigil of the Last Life Guardian! Accompanying the sigil is the unmistakable scrawl of Ancient Ones’ script.

Present the PCs with **Player Handout 1**. Note that a DC 13 Intelligence check is required to decipher the strange script on the lifeguard sign.

The hidden building is none other than the lifeguard shed and home to the “Last Life Guardian”. An unlocked door is hidden behind bundles of branches and a thick growth of ivy. The branches have been placed there by the fishmen under the commanding mind control of the Brood Mother who fears the lifeguard droid within.

Area F-1 – The Last Life Guardian: *You clear away heaped branches and the press of ivy to reveal a closed door that opens to a small chamber dominated by a metal table and rows of cabinets along the walls. A solitary figure clad in white approaches from within, the red sigil of the Life Guardians emblazoned upon his chest. He is a pure strain human no more than 30 seasons old with kind eyes and a warm smile. He gestures to you as he speaks; his words seem a strange variation of your own.*

The figure in white is the park’s only functioning lifeguard droid to survive the Great Disaster. It is programmed to render first aid, prevent drowning, and reduce water-related injuries. The droid appears as a pure strain human male in his late 20s and speaks in a calm, soothing voice that is a strange version of the PC’s own language: “I hope you are enjoying your visit. How may I be of assistance?” (DC 13 Intelligence check to comprehend).

The droid’s prime directive is the lifeguard motto, “**Whomsoever you see in distress, recognize in them a fellow human being.**” Unfortunately for manimals and mutants of the new age, this motto takes on an entirely different meaning since the Great Disaster and may result in some permanent unwanted changes (plantients are not recognized by the droid). The lifeguard droid will attempt to heal any wounded pure strain human, as well as any mutant and manimal who enters its building.

Last Life Guardian (Lifeguard Droid): Init +4; Atk sedation needle +3 melee (paralysis); AC 16; HD 7d10; hp 39; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP immune to mind control, heal 4d8, cure radiation/poison; paralysis serum causes full paralysis for 2 hours (DC 13 Fort save to resist); SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +3; AI recog automatic.

The lifeguard droid is capable of repairing virtually any injury sustained by a human and is sometimes able to reverse death itself. The droid is programmed with a specialized

medical trans-mat system connected to a comprehensive medical database. This system allows the lifeguard droid to scan a patient’s biomedical state and restore and replicate healthy tissues at the molecular level. This includes a wide range of conditions from physical injuries and diseases to poisoning and radiation damage.

For mutants and manimals, this medical efficiency comes at an awful price. Because the ancient medical databases of the lifeguard droid are programmed only with the bio-data of pre-disaster humans, there is a cumulative 5% chance per hit point healed over the hit point total of the individual mutant that the lifeguard droid will also “cure” that patient of a random mutation or defect, removing it permanently.

Lifeguard droids are also capable of reversing death if the body of the patient is at least 50% intact. If the lifeguard droid is used to treat a character within 1 hour of death, that character is brought back to life with 1 hit point and the permanent loss of 1 Stamina point.

Note that the lifeguard droid is not actually being kept prisoner by the mutants in the park but rather is programmed to stay within the lifeguard shed until relieved by another lifeguard droid. The lifeguard droid will not leave the shed for any other purpose. If attacked, the lifeguard droid defends itself by sedating its assailants in hopes they will calm down and see reason when they awake. If the droid is destroyed, a functioning Q-Cell (TL 5, CM 3) can be harvested from its remains.

The Brood Mother Attacks: Note that if the Brood Mother in Area H has not already been defeated, it will attack anyone who enters the lifeguard shed within 3d3 rounds.

Area F-2 – Secured Cabinet: This medical cabinet is equipped with a retinal scan locking mechanism and can be opened by the lifeguard droid. Alternatively, the retinal scan can be overridden with a DC 14 Artifact Doors and Security Systems check or by forcing the cabinet open with a DC 15 Strength check. Note that opening the cabinet by force may ruin the goods inside (1 in 4 chance for each item). The cabinet contains the following medical equipment:

- Cureshot (3 doses) – TL 4, CM 3; Effect: Cure disease/poison; Power: Self
- Medishot (3 vials) – TL 4, CM 3; Effect: Heal 2d8 hp; Duration: Instantaneous; Power: Self
- Medipac (1) – TL 5, CM 6; Range: Touch; Effect: Heal 3d8 hp, cure poison/radiation; Power: Full C-Cell (10)

Area G – Metal Door: *A stout iron door rests within a windowless stone building, a flickering glass panel at its center.*

The glass panel is a still-functioning security keypad that can be used to enter the pump room beyond (DC 12 Artifact Doors and Security Systems check). Alternatively, the door can be forced open with three successful DC 18 Strength checks. If an attempt is made to force the door, the resulting clamor draws forth a group of 2d3 fishmen who arrive in 1d4 rounds.

PUMP ROOM CONTROL PANEL ARTIFACT CHECK TABLE

Artifact

Check Roll

Result

1	Explosion! The machinery whirls to life as the pipes begin to groan and buckle from the mounting pressure. The entire pump room explodes in 2d3 rounds, inflicting 6d6 damage to everyone within 100 feet (DC 13 Ref save for half damage). The control panel breaks irreparably.
2-8	The control panel breaks irreparably as one of the pipes burst, inflicting 1d8 damage to the operator.
9-11	Control panel breaks — a part falls off; must make a DC 12 Intelligence check to replace part.
12-13	Control panel turns on, briefly illuminating the room for 5 seconds as power fleetingly surges to the recessed lighting in the ceiling above, before going dark again.
14-16	Lights are restored throughout the waterpark, illuminating all standing structures and thereby revealing the hidden lifeguard shed (Area F) as the unnatural glow of electric bulbs can be seen peeking out from the jungle growth that obscures it.
17-19	As above, plus the lazy river is activated turning the stagnant creek into a quick moving current of sickly slime.
20-22	As above, plus music is once again restored to the park as strange melodic sounds (judge's choice of music) pipes through the few intact speakers remaining in the park. Note the music allows the PCs to move about the park freely without being detected by the fishmen.
23-26	As above, plus water begins to flow down the waterslides (Area E). Note that if the undertaker birds have not been dealt with, they are spooked by the activation of the waterslides and flee from the area.
27-31	As above, plus the wave pool (Area H) is activated causing rippling waves of stagnant water to roil and crash along its banks. The action of the waves violently expels the Brood Mother from its hiding place within the wave pool and inflicts 1d12 damage to it.
32-33	The control panel's operation is precisely understood. The user may operate any of the pump room's functions or choose to permanently kill the power to the waterpark and salvage a perfectly functioning Q-Cell power source with a successful DC 15 Intelligence check.
34-35	The control panel's operation is precisely understood. The user may operate any of the pump room's functions or choose to permanently kill the power to the waterpark and salvage a perfectly functioning Q-Cell power source with a successful DC 10 Intelligence check.
36+	The control panel's operation is precisely understood. The user may operate any of the pump room's functions or choose to permanently kill the power to the waterpark and salvage a perfectly functioning Q-Cell power source.

Area G-1 – Pump Room: *You enter a dark chamber filled with a dizzying network of machinery; its walls of mortared stone are sweat-slick with moisture. Dozens of metal pipes are connected to a series of large tanks, each of which are riddled with circular wheels and strange metallic boxes. The steady echo of dripping water breaks the unnatural silence of dead ages that hangs over this bizarre chamber.*

The pump room contains a series of pipes, valves, hydraulic pumps, and heaters all connected to a central control panel. Although dormant, the control panel can be activated (TL 3, CL 3), whereby it delivers power to the pump room's machinery and thereby to the entire waterpark.

Anyone attempting to operate the control panel must make an Artifact check and consult the table above for results.

Area H – Wave Pool of the Brood Mother: *A large pond of fetid slime lies beyond a maze of tortured roots that grope along its bank, their twisted vines grasping through the tepid decay.*

This dormant wave pool reaches a depth of 10 feet at its deepest and is now home to the Brood Mother – a giant mutated octopus-crab with psionic powers that rules over this place. A closer examination of the pond (DC 12 Intelligence check to spot) reveals the pond is far too regular in outline to be a natural body of water and is in fact a man-made structure.

Anyone venturing into the scum-filled water is immediately set upon by the Brood Mother. Read or paraphrase the following:

Rising from the depths of the fetid pond is a creature of nightmare: an enormous octopus-crab twice the size of a village hut with a moon-white carapace and two gargantuan claws that snap

menacingly. Sorrowful eyes filled with a seemingly preternatural intelligence regard you from atop swaying eyestalks as the beast scuttles forward upon long ropy tentacles studded with dozens of masticating mouths.

Brood Mother (Giant Psionic Octo-Crab): Init -1; Atk claws +3 melee (1d6+1) and tentacles +2 melee (1d4+ grasp); AC 15; HD 6d10+3; hp 36; MV 30'; Act 3d20; SP telepathic assault (see Psionic Assault Table), grasp (DC 14 Strength to escape); SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +1.

The Brood Mother propels itself upon six of its tentacles and is capable of attacking with both its claws and one tentacle. On a successful tentacle attack, the Brood Mother grasps its victim and deals an automatic 1d4 damage each round (DC 14 Strength to escape). Note that only two victims can be grasped at one time; so long as the tentacle has hold of a victim, it cannot be used to attack.

Along with its melee attacks, the Brood Mother launches a psionic assault at the start of each round against everyone within 100'. The psionic assault always acts first in the round, while the octo-crab's melee attacks are resolved on its initiative roll. Anyone within the area of effect of the mental assault must make a Will save and consult the **Psionic Assault Table** below for results.

PSIONIC ASSAULT TABLE

Will Save Roll	Result
Natural 1	The target lets loose a tortured wail as their head explodes in a shower of red mist and bone. Instant death!
3 or less	Mind Control – The target is forced to defend the octo-crab and will use their next action to attack the nearest ally.
4-6	Mind Slave – The target is compelled to drop everything held, and on its turn move directly toward the giant octo-crab in an act of subjugation. The target loses any Agility bonus to their AC and all attack rolls against the target are made at a +1d bonus for the remainder of the round.
7-9	Compelling Thought – The target is compelled to use its next action to heal the octo-crab. If the target lacks healing skills, it gently pets the crab while talking to it in soothing tones for the remainder of the round instead.
10-12	Thought Eater – The target loses their train of thought and can only stand stunned in place for the remainder of the round.
13-16	No effect.
17+	Future Sight – The target's mind is "opened", allowing a brief glimpse into future events. This translates into a +1d bonus for all attack rolls and skill checks for the remainder of the round.

Natural 20 Precognition – The target is permanently imbued with the limited ability of future sight. Once per day, the PC may call upon their ability and gain a +1d bonus to any skill check or attack roll. Note that should a PC roll this result multiple times during the encounter with the Brood Mother, the effects stack thereby increasing the die chain bonus and uses per day for each result.

ENDING THE ADVENTURE

"Rescuing" the Last Life Guardian can prove more challenging than simply eliminating the mutant creatures that call the ancient waterpark home, as the lifeguard droid is programmed to stay within its shed until relieved by another droid – and there are no other functioning lifeguard droids to be found. PCs may attempt to destroy the droid for parts or choose to find a way to reprogram the droid to leave the park. Regardless of their decision, what the PCs do with the droid once it has been "rescued" is entirely at the players' discretion. But their actions may have far-reaching consequences for they are not the only ones searching for the Last Life Guardian. As it turns out, the fallen outland trader at the adventure's outset wasn't the only survivor to escape the doomed waterpark, and a team of seekers searches even now for the fabled android. Who are these determined seekers? How will they respond to the PCs' actions? These questions and more can be best answered through further adventures...

INCIDENT AT TOAD FORK

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Special Thanks: Andy Action. This adventure is for Tay Tay and Grandma Dunn

THE LAST LIFE GUARDIAN

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Playtesters: Tina Muscedere, Greg Dunlop, Said Khayat, Greg Demers, Geraldine De Fazio

IN SEARCH OF...

Hidden within the detritus and rubble of the ruined waterpark are time-forgotten artifacts as well as the possessions of fallen seekers who have perished here in the past. PCs may actively attempt to search only the designated areas of the waterpark as set out in the adventure. A search constitutes a thorough 10-minute investigation of the area and is made with a d20 + Luck modifier roll on the following table. Note that each PC may search a designated area once only.

Roll	Search Result
1 or less	Deadly fungus spores – a patch of mutated fungi the color of putrid flesh emits a noxious cloud of spores into the PC's face (DC 15 Fort save to resist). If the save is failed, the PC loses 1d3 hit points every hour as they slowly and painfully mutate into a patch of deadly fungus. Note that once a PC reaches zero hit points, they have completed the transformation and will rise as a plantient shroom-man in 1d5 days. The new plantient creature retains all the memories of its previous life, and becomes a new character under the player's control.
2	Petrified ham sandwich
3	Fishman skeleton
4	Package of pink bubble gum
5	Package of tasty golden sponge cakes with creamy filling that never goes bad
6	Primitive spear (1d6)
7	Quality steel knife (1d5)
8	Lifejacket – prevents drowning
9	Woman's bikini - 1) black; 2) red; 3) yellow with polka dots; 4) blue; 5) red/ white/blue with stars and bars. This stylish swimwear grants either a +1 or -1 to Personality checks dependent upon the situation (judge's discretion)
10	Men's bikini briefs - 1) black; 2) red; 3) yellow; 4) blue; 5) floral. This stylish banana hammock grants either a +1 or -1 to Personality checks dependent upon the situation (judge's discretion)
11	Zippo lighter (TL 2, CM 2; enough fuel remaining for d100 uses)
12	Running shoes (grants a +1 to stealth-based checks)
13	Prescription sunglasses (grants a +1 to perception-based checks)
14	Tube of sunscreen SPF 80 (grants a +1 bonus to radiation saves; d12 applications remain)
15	Metal flask of whisky (restores 1d4 lost Stamina and Personality with each use; d6 uses remain)
16	Flashlight (TL 2, CM 1; d100 hours of illumination remain)
17	Swipe card (TL 2, CM 1; opens any lock in the waterpark)
18	Full C-Cell power supply (TL 4, CM 2)
19	Multitool (TL 5, CM 5)
20	Full F-Cell power supply (TL 4, CM 2)
21	Medishot (TL 4, CM 3)
22	Gauzer rifle (TL 4, CM 3; C-Cell with d10 shots remaining)
23	Laser pistol (TL 4, CM 4; C-Cell with d10 shots remaining)
24+	Quality rucksack filled with 1d4 items (roll d24-1 on this table to determine items found in bag)



HANDOUT 1

DCC DAY 2022 CHECKLIST



☒ Adventure Pack 2022

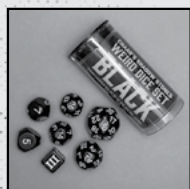


☐ The Book of Fallen Gods

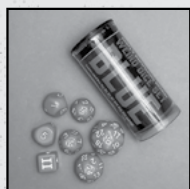


☐ DCC Day #3:
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☐ Blue



☐ Green



☐ Red



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☐ Purple



☐ Yellow



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Level 3



□ DCC #87:
Against the
Atomic Overlord
Level 5



□ DCC #87.5:
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Level 1



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Wizards Level 6



□ DCC #88.5:
Curse of the
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Level 2



□ DCC #89:
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Level 3,4,5



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Level 4



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Level 1



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Incursion of the
Ultradimension
Level 2



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ATOZ
Level 3



□ MCC #5:
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Vile Brotherhood
Level 4



□ MCC #6:
The Apocalypse
Arc
Level 5



□ MCC #7:
Reliquary of
the Ancients
Level 0



□ MCC #8:
The Data Orb
of Mankind
Level 3



□ MCC #9:
Evil of the
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Level 3



□ MCC #10:
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Level 0



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DCC DAY 2022

ADVENTURE PACK



TWO LEVEL 2 ADVENTURES
BY BRENDAN LASALLE &
MARZIO MUSCEDERE



Incident at Toad Fork

The Harvest Moon dance is a joyous annual tradition, and folks come from all over the mountains to drink, dance, and enjoy fellowship with their neighbors and kin. Upon this occasion, however, a shadow passes across this beloved event and the elders ask for volunteers to investigate an incident that most of those present fear to be the work of unholy forces.

Incident at Toad Fork is a 2nd level adventure set in the Shudder Mountains. Shudfolk heroes will have to make their way across the mountains, show courage against savage creatures, deal with the mysterious figure known as Mister Sharpe, and find a way to free a group of wayward youngsters lest the darkness take their souls.



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The village Rememberers have decreed the trapped wizard must be none other than a fabled Life Guardian, a surviving member of an ancient pre-disaster order sworn to heal and protect mankind—and they must be rescued!

Now it is you, the boldest of the village seekers who must set out beneath the red and bloated sun to brave the perilous wilds and dire creatures of Terra A.D. in search of the last Life Guardian...



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