



WEREWOLF CREATURE GUIDE

This document contains a collection of resources to help you run adventures heavily featuring werewolves. These resources are divided into Encounter Guides, Loot Guides, and Example Encounters. Encounter Guides will help you understand the mindset, motivations, and tactics of the creatures, so you have a better idea of how to play them. Loot Guides provide alternate ways to provide treasure found after defeating these enemies. Example Encounters will provide encounter scenarios involving these creatures and instructions on how to run them.

ENCOUNTER GUIDES

These guides explore the motivations and tactics of specific creatures to help provide richer roleplaying experiences when using them. Motivations determine the priorities the creature has and what goals it is likely to form based on them. Tactics determine the means through which the creature is most likely to achieve those goals. Motivations and tactics apply when roleplaying wild beasts looking for their next meal, as well as major characters serving as antagonists for an entire campaign.

MOTIVATIONS

Understanding a creature's motivations will help you give it goals that may put it into direct conflict with the players. If players can discern that a creature has goals that aren't just "be an enemy for the players to defeat," it will breathe more life into the world and give the players a chance to make more informed decisions as to how to deal with the creature.

This section of the guide will provide examples of common motivations for these types of creatures in general and specialized motivations for more unique creatures.

TACTICS

Understanding a creature's preferred tactics will help you form a strategy for how the creature will attempt to achieve its goals and guide you in making the most of the creature's abilities. Players who can recognize a creature's tactics will then have a chance to make note of them and attempt to adjust their own tactics accordingly.

This section of the guide will provide examples of how the creatures prefer to initiate combat, what tactics they use during combat, and what they will do if they are losing.

LOOT GUIDES

The DMG contains Individual Treasure tables listing the number of coins that can be dropped by creatures of different CRs. However, many creatures have no reason to carry coins or even have them within their vicinity. Other creatures may carry wealth in the form of items whose value isn't apparent at first glance.

And sometimes, items are hidden away in nearby areas that are difficult to spot. How different CRs are split among the tables also results in creatures of wildly different power levels dropping the same amounts of wealth.

You can use these loot guides if you wish to provide your players with alternate sources of wealth when they slay monsters that don't carry money, let players use their skills to collect wealth, or just provide treasure that scales more closely with creature CR.

The guides provide rules for allowing players to loot valuable goods from their foes' corpses or the surrounding area after an encounter. This looting can be done using a skill check made by one of the players, with the type of check required dependent on the type of item the player wishes to collect and how the item is being collected. The more successful the check, the more goods the player is able to collect.

WHAT'S ALTERNATE LOOT GOOD FOR?

Treasure other than coins, gems, and art objects can be used to provide forms of wealth that better fit the context of the current environment. Players with the right skill sets might also be able to use valuables they find this way to craft useful items. These could be handy mundane items or even magic items. Hide and bone could be crafted into weapons and armor, while potent plants or liquids could form the base for a potion.





WEREWOLF ENCOUNTER GUIDE

Werewolves are the most common and iconic of lycanthropes, and players might encounter them while traveling through lonely roads and settlements along wild frontiers. They usually dwell in areas where civilization is at odds with the wilds, though some werewolves trying to avoid harming humanoids may dwell in the deep wilderness, and some brazen werewolves may live in the heart of civilization.

Sometimes players will face werewolves who have unwillingly transformed during a full moon. They will lack the tactical options of a werewolf who has mastered its curse but will still use the wolfish tactics that come naturally to them. Werewolves who have embraced their curse are far more dangerous, as they can pass for humanoids until the time comes for them to reveal their deadly nature.

WEREWOLF MOTIVATIONS

Because lycanthropes retain the intelligence of humanoids, their motivations can be broad and complex. Still, a werewolf's nature will inevitably shape its motivations and goals. Werewolves feel an innate drive to hunt and kill, with their ire directed towards humanoids of their own species in particular. Those who embrace this nature may seek the destruction of all things civilized. Those who reject their curse will have goals focused on suppressing their nature.

GENERAL WEREWOLF MOTIVATIONS

- Hunting for food
- Satisfying bloodlust
- Protecting territory
- Aiding packmates
- Ravaging civilization
- Hiding or suppressing curse

MOON MYSTIC MOTIVATIONS

- Anything in the pursuit of primeval spiritualism, including:
 - Serving nature deities
 - Providing spiritual leadership to other werewolves
 - Recovering ancient druidic relics

TACTICS

Werewolves instinctually utilize many of the same tactics of ordinary wolves. However, their humanoid intelligence and shapeshifting abilities allow them to implement these tactics in much more sophisticated ways. The specifics of these tactics will depend greatly on the types of werewolves and how much control they have over their shapeshifting abilities.

ENGAGEMENT

Like wolves, werewolves prefer to stalk their prey, closing in as close as possible before their presence is known. When operating as a pack, they will surround their quarry to cut off as many avenues of escape as possible. If they can assume their humanoid forms, they may use deception to lure victims into isolated locations before shapeshifting and unleashing a surprise attack. However, this tactic doesn't provide as much satisfaction as hunting in their bestial forms and is usually reserved for especially dangerous enemies.

COMBAT

Werewolves are highly aggressive combatants that leverage regenerative abilities to survive what would otherwise be reckless head-on assaults. A werewolf that picks its prey is relentless in its hunt. Enemies wielding silver or thunder magic may be avoided or singled out by a werewolf, depending on whether it is looking for an easy kill or the slaughter of its enemies entirely.

COMBAT: PACK WEREWOLVES

Werewolves operating in a pack will fight much the same way as wolves. When spotted by foes, they will attempt to drive their enemies into fleeing so they can run them down. Once werewolves close in on their prey, they will focus on a target that appears most vulnerable and attempt to isolate and surround it so they can utilize their pack tactics.

These targets are most often enemy spell casters or other soft targets who can cause a lot of trouble for the werewolves. If there are enough pack members, the werewolves may send some of their group to harass and distract other foes while they finish off their priority victims. Any enemy wielding a silvered weapon or capable of dealing thunder damage becomes a priority target for werewolves, and they will surround and kill such a foe as quickly as possible.

COMBAT: PACKLEADERS

If a packleader is present, it will usually use its Hunters Howl to force its foes to flee and to help its pack close the distance. The packleader will also be the one to set high-priority targets for the pack, and its Dogpile trait enables the werewolves to take down these targets that much faster.

COMBAT: LONE WEREWOLVES

Lone werewolves lack access to the group tactics of pack werewolves but will otherwise use the same general tactics of other werewolves. They may work with other types of creatures in combat but don't rely on having allies present to be effective at taking down soft targets.

COMBAT: MOON MYSTICS

Moon mystics will generally stay out of melee combat and hurl lunar bolts at high-priority targets that might be staying out of reach of the rest of the pack. They will, in turn, utilize their pack to keep enemies from reaching them so they can better utilize their ranged attacks and avoid losing concentration on Searing Moonlight.

If the opportunity presents itself, it is most efficient for moon mystics to start combat with their Searing Moonlight so they can use their bonus action each subsequent turn to control it while making other attacks. If one or more enemies are tied up in melee combat with other werewolves, the mystic will use its Searing Moonlight on those enemies to help whittle them down since it won't damage other werewolves. They may also use their Searing Moonlight on casters hiding away from combat in an attempt to force them to lose concentration on any ongoing spells. The mystic's Pale Hex trait means Searing Moonlight can also be used to hamper the ranged abilities of snipers.

RETREAT

Despite their bloodthirsty natures, werewolves have a strong sense of self-preservation. Their ravenous natures and regeneration will keep them fighting longer than wolves, though most werewolves will attempt to flee if they are reduced to less than half health or outnumbered by well-armed opponents. If a powerful figure such as a packleader or moon mystic commands the pack and is still in the fight, the other werewolves may continue fighting even if wounded or outnumbered. However, most werewolf leaders will attempt to withdraw their pack if they sense they are losing.

The presence of silvered weapons or thunder magic amongst their enemies will make werewolves more likely to flee if they are unable to put a stop to the source of the damage. However, even foes without silver or thunder may be able to beat werewolves into submission. And, a werewolf is unlikely to continue fighting an enemy if it can't gain the upper hand, even if that enemy has no clear way to slay it outright.



WEREWOLF LOOT GUIDE

Because lycanthropes revert to their humanoid form when they are slain, most of the valuable items players can collect from them will be worn items or items dropped by their former victims. These valuables may include standard coinage.

LOOTABLE WEREWOLF ITEMS

Most dropped valuables can be found using the same methods, but mystical objects may require different skills to identify, as described in the following table. If the player has proficiency in more than one skill that can be used for gathering the type of item they're looting, you can give them advantage on the check.

WEREWOLF LOOTING CHECKS

Type of Item	Skill Used to Loot Item
Coins or Other Obvious Valuables	Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception)
Moon Mystic Items	Intelligence (Religion)

The number of items looted and the value of those items will depend on how well the players do on their skill check. You can give the different types of items unique names based on their material and value to help differentiate them from one another. The following table provides some example names.

EXAMPLE ITEM NAMES

GP Value	Moon Mystic Item
5sp	Sylvan Charm
1gp	Pale Totem
5gp	Lunar Idol
10gp	Moon Stone

LOOT TABLES

The following tables describe the number of items and value of those items the players are able to harvest depending on the result of their check. You can have them make a separate check for each creature they're harvesting or use one check for multiple creatures at once to save time.

LONE & PACK WEREWOLF LOOT TABLE

Looting Check Result	Werewolf Loot
1-5	Nothing
6-12	1d4(2) gp worth of Coins/Items
13-16	3d6(10) gp worth of Coins/Items
17-20	6d6(20) gp worth of Coins/Items
21+	2d6 x 10(70) gp worth of Coins/Items

PACK LEADER & MOON MYSTIC LOOT TABLE

Harvesting Check Result	Pack Leader Loot	Moon Mystic Loot
1-9	Nothing	Nothing
10-12	1d6(3) gp worth of Coins/Items	2d4(5) 5sp Moon Mystic Items
13-14	2d6(7) gp worth of Coins/Items	2d4(5) 1gp Moon Mystic Items
15-19	3d6 x 2(20) gp worth of Coins/Items	1d4(2) 5gp Moon Mystic Items
20-24	1d6 x 10(35) gp worth of Coins/Items	2d4(5) 5gp Moon Mystic Items
25+	2d6 x 10(70) gp worth of Coins/Items	1d6(3) 10gp Moon Mystic Items



EXAMPLE WEREWOLF ENCOUNTERS

LYCAN UPRISING (PLAYER LEVEL: 12-14)

In this encounter, the players follow the trail of a rampaging werewolf to the wreckage of a village it recently demolished. Shortly after the players' arrival, the mangled remains of the village's former inhabitants violently begin transforming into werewolves.

ENCOUNTER CONTEXT

This encounter begins with the assumption that the players are on the trail of a monstrous werewolf. They have heard tales of a werewolf savaging the countryside or been assigned the task of hunting down the renegade werewolf directly. Under these circumstances, the players should have had an opportunity to arm themselves properly for their hunt before this encounter.

If you wish to truly put your players on the back foot, you can instead have them stumble upon the town with no fore warning of what has happened or what they're about to face. This will increase the odds of them needing to retreat if they have no means of slaying the werewolves.

LEAD UP

The werewolf's trail leads the players to the burning wreckage of a small hamlet it has recently decimated. It is after dark in the dead of winter, and the only illumination is provided by the burning wreckage, which illuminates mangled and motionless bodies strewn across the ground.

The werewolf markers on the encounter map indicate which bodies aren't truly dead but instead infected with lycanthropy. If the players attempt to inspect such a body before entering the town square, it will spring to life with a snarl and flee toward the center of town as it transforms into its hybrid form.

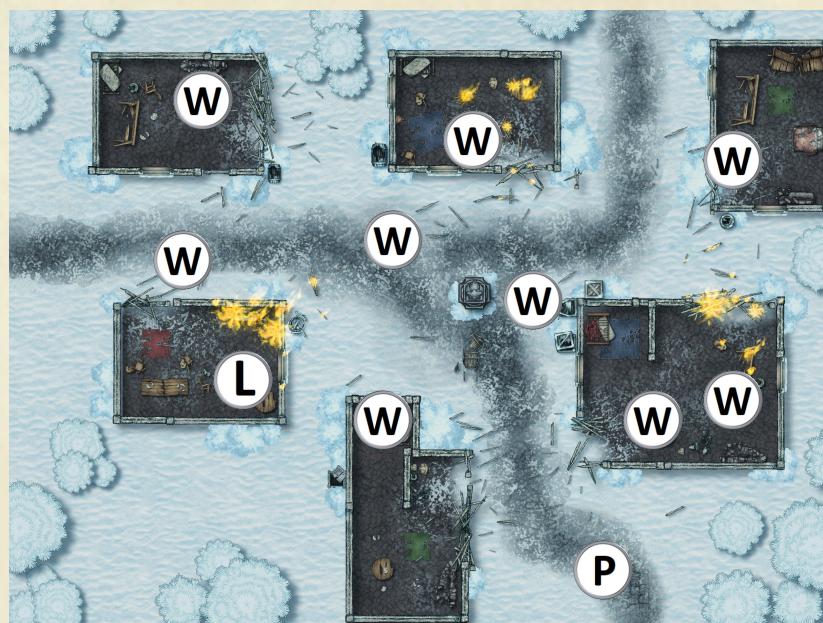
Once the players enter the town center or engage in combat with a werewolf they've managed to keep from fleeing, all of the werewolves will begin awakening.

When this occurs, you can read the following description:

ENCOUNTER START DESCRIPTION

A howl pierces through the night, quickly followed by a chorus of tortured growling and snarling. You see several of the villagers' bodies violently spasming as their lycanthropy overcomes them. The werewolves spring to action and waste no time in charging after you as the commanding howls of their new leader continue to echo through the village.

ENCOUNTER MAP: BURNING WINTER TOWN



MAP LEGEND

- P: Player Arrival Location
- W: Villager Body Ready to Turn into a Pack Werewolf
- L: Werewolf Pack Leader

MAP DESCRIPTION

- **Lighting.** The full moon casts the village in dim light. The house interiors without fires are obscured in darkness.
- **The Ground.** The ground outside is open terrain. The snowy areas are not deep enough to impede movement, and there are no significant slopes.
- **Buildings.** The buildings are made from light wood walls and thatch roofs. A creature can smash a Small hole through a wall with a DC 10 Strength check and a Medium hole with a DC 15 Strength check. Werewolves can automatically smash Medium holes through walls as an action. The rubble within the buildings is considered rough terrain, and any creature that moves within the fires for the first time on a turn or ends its turn there will automatically take 1d4 fire damage.
- **Trees.** The trees around the town have relatively thick bases and provide three-quarters cover to any creatures behind them. They can be climbed with a successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check.
- **Fountain.** The fountain in the center of town stands 15 feet high and can provide total cover to creatures that are Medium or smaller.

ENCOUNTER TACTICS

This fight combines the reckless brutality of freshly formed werewolves with the tactical guidance of an experienced pack hunter.

THE NEW WEREWOLVES

The werewolves that come to life possess a near-mindless bloodlust but still follow the orders of their pack leader. They will immediately try to surround the most vulnerable-looking party member to utilize trip attacks and pack tactics. Because they must use half their movement standing up, werewolves from the further edges of town likely won't reach players within the first round. This will give the players a chance to position themselves to avoid being surrounded.

THE PACK LEADER

The pack leader is more cunning and levelheaded than the freshly transformed werewolves. Its goal is to leverage the element of surprise so it can slaughter the players in an ambush and thus be rid of its pursuers. If this new pack of werewolves survives, so much the better. But, the pack leader has little attachment to them beyond their immediate usefulness.

The pack leader will burst through the window of its hiding spot and join the fray as soon as it detects that its pack is closing in on the players. It will utilize its Dog Pile ability to help its pack neutralize any dangerous spell casters as quickly as possible. If the players have positioned themselves in a way to gain the upper hand, the pack leader can use its Hunter's Howl to scramble their positions while allowing its pack to catch up to preferred targets.

RETREAT

The packleader's goal is to eliminate the players and hopefully come away with a new pack to lead. If players reduce the packleader to 50% health or less and are preventing it from regenerating reliably, it will prioritize escape. It will also attempt escape if more than half its pack is killed and the players are all in good shape.

When attempting retreat, packleader will take down a weakened player if given the opportunity, but not if it risks its life. It will also command other werewolves not engaged with a player to flee with it. Werewolves actively preoccupying players may be left behind to help buy the packleader time.

The new werewolves are too consumed by their bloodthirst to care about self-perseveration. They will fight to the death unless commanded otherwise. They may also flee if they are outnumbered and have been reduced to 0 hit points one or more times.

AFTERMATH

If all the werewolves are slain, the threat will be put down for good. But, if any new werewolves escape, there is the threat that other villages will come under attack as the lycanthropy spreads. If the packleader is among those that escape, it will continue its rampage across the countryside with the aid of its new werewolves. If the players were forced to flee, the packleader may even turn the tables and begin hunting them, swelling its ranks with new werewolves along the way.

If the players have the opportunity to search and investigate the village, they will find no survivors among the ruins. A chest in the town square belonged to a wealthy merchant who was killed while passing through town. Its locks were broken during the attack, and it contains 150 gp worth of gold bars. If the packleader is slain, the players will be able to loot a pair of gem-studded bracers he was wearing, each worth 750 gp.

XP AWARD: 8,800XP

The degree of success they had in defeating the pack leader can affect the XP players receive. You can use the following potential outcomes as guidelines to modify how much XP you award your players.

- **150% XP:** The pack leader and all werewolves are slain, ending lycanthropic threat for good
- **100% XP:** The pack leader is slain, but several werewolves manage to escape, risking the further spread of lycanthropy across the land
- **50% XP:** The players drive off the werewolves, but the pack leader escapes
- **10% XP:** The players are forced to retreat

ADJUSTING THE DIFFICULTY

The encounter assumes you are playing with 4 players in the suggested level range. If the players' levels are outside the suggested level range, or you have a different group size, you can adjust the encounter's difficult accordingly.

Easier Encounter. Stagger the pace at which the villagers are revived as werewolves, so only 2 attack at first along with the pack leader. Have a new werewolf revive and enter the battle at the beginning of each subsequent round. Change the XP Award to 4,800.

Harder Encounter. Have a new werewolf revive in a random location at the beginning of each round for the next 5 rounds after the encounter starts. Change the XP Award to 10,000.

ADVENTURE FOLLOW UPS

If you wish to connect this encounter to a larger adventure, the following hooks can help provide some inspiration:

d4

Adventure Hook

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | The pack leader serves a more powerful master who tasked it with raising a werewolf army for future conquest. |
| 2 | The pack master is acting in service of a vindictive nature spirit who wishes to drive all forms of civilization from its wilderness home, even if that means transforming all the humanoid inhabitants into vicious lycanthropes. |
| 3 | The pack leader fled from a group of vampire nobles who use werewolves as slave warriors. Its goal was to raise a rebel army of lycanthropes to overthrow its former masters. |
| 4 | The pack leader has a dark form of lycanthropy, keeping it trapped in its hybrid form at all times. Those it infects are inflicted with the same curse and stuck as bloodthirsty savages at all times. If this curse isn't stamped out, the entire countryside could soon be overrun with hordes of marauding werewolves. |

LUNATIC MOON

(PLAYER LEVEL: 9-11)

In this encounter, the players come across of group of unhinged moon worshippers performing a lunar ritual to transform themselves into werewolves, with the group's leader becoming a werewolf moon mystic.

ENCOUNTER CONTEXT

This encounter begins with the players coming across the lunatic cultists performing a primeval ritual underneath the full moon. The cultists are from a nearby town that has been suffering from waves of madness sweeping across its population in tandem with the lunar cycles. The town's priest, who in his madness has forsaken his former god, now leads a small cult of deranged moon worshippers seeking to escape their weak human bodies.

The players may have visited the town before the encounter and learned about a strange group of unhinged individuals who regularly sneak into the woods. One of the remaining sane townsfolk may have even asked the players for help in finding a way to end the madness.

LEAD UP

The town priest is performing a lunar ritual in the woods surrounded by his most fearsome devotees (**thugs**) who are on lookout and guard duty. Regardless of whether the players are spotted when they approach, the ritual begins taking effect by the time they arrive, transforming the priest into a moon mystic. If the players are hidden but wait longer than a minute to make their move, they will witness the other cultists begin turning into werewolves one by one.

If the players are spotted or begin to attack, you can read the following description:

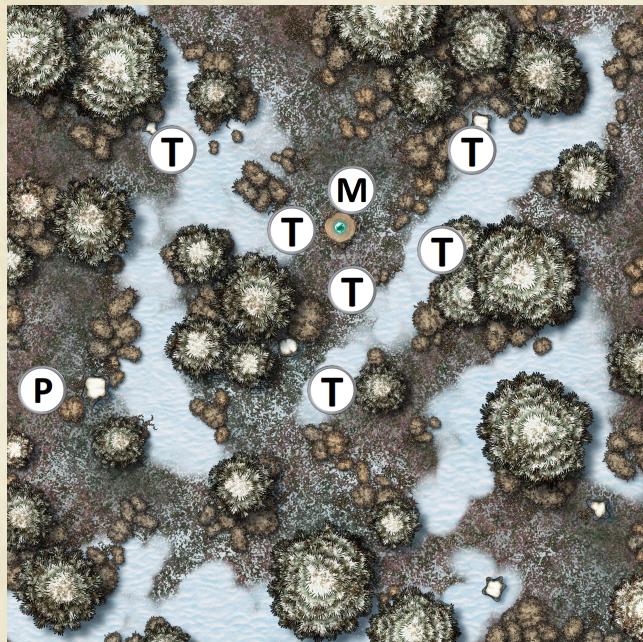
ENCOUNTER START DESCRIPTION

The former priest lets loose an unholy howl that threatens to overwhelm your sanity. His cultists respond with a wolf-like battle cry as they move to attack. You notice an unnatural gleam in their eyes as their once-human features begin to twist into a wolfish visage.

MAP DESCRIPTION

- Lighting.** The full moon illuminates the forest in dim light.
- The Ground.** The ground between the trees and bushes is mostly clear terrain. The snowy areas are not deep enough to impede movement, and there are no significant slopes.
- Trees and Bushes.** The bushes are very dense, and moving 5 feet through them costs 15 feet of movement. The lone trees provide three-quarters cover, and the tree clusters provide full cover.
- Ritual Altar.** A large wooden stump serves as the altar for the lupine ritual. Now that the ritual has been completed, the green crystal ball and other occult objects atop it no longer serve any active purpose.

ENCOUNTER MAP: FOREST ARTIFACT



MAP LEGEND

- P: Player Arrival Location
- M: Moon Mystic
- T: Cult Member (**thug**)

ENCOUNTER TACTICS

At the end of each round of combat, the moon mystic will choose a cultist to have transformed into a pack werewolf. This transformation causes it to regain all its health and be cured of any ailments it is suffering from that it could normally make a saving throw against at the start or end of its turn. If the moon mystic is slain, the ritual ends, and there are no further transformations.

THE MOON MYSTIC

The moon mystic will begin the fight by using its Searing Moonlight to begin whittling down the players that appear to be the highest threat. These targets will likely be players able to do high damage from a distance. He then focuses on utilizing his lunar bolts to either neutralize more fragile players who rely on ranged attacks or to give his minions advantage on attacks against players they are focusing on. While the moon mystic still has lunar bolts available, he will keep his minions between himself and melee-focused players and utilize the trees as cover from ranged attacks. He will only pursue melee combat once he no longer has ranged attacks available.

CULTIST THUGS/WEREWOLVES

The thugs will open combat with heavy crossbow fire if they have a clear shot and the players are still at a distance. They will continue with this strategy until the players demonstrate clear ranged superiority, the players close the gap, or the majority of them have turned into werewolves.

When the werewolves or the thugs engage in melee combat, they will move in groups of at least two to utilize their Pack Tactics and try to gang up on single targets as much as possible. Thugs who are low health or at risk of getting hit by the moon mystic's Searing Moonlight will be priority choices for werewolf transformation at the end of each round.

The thugs and werewolves will also do what they can to stop players who are posing the highest direct threat to the moon mystic. That may mean focusing their damage on a soft target to bring them down quickly or using trip attacks on a melee-focused player to make it difficult for them to reach the mystic.

AFTERMATH

If the moon mystic survives, he will continue his quest to convert the mad town to lycanthropy. If he is stopped, whether the madness afflicting the town ends or not depends on what you want the scope of this plot to be. If you wish this to be a one-off encounter, the mad priest may have been the source of the madness all along, having turned to the worship of an insane lunar deity who brought about this insanity. Otherwise, the priest may have been a symptom of the madness rather than the cause. In this case, the players will need to investigate further to get to the bottom of the town's lunar curse.

The crystal ball on the altar was used as a focus for the ritual but is no longer tied to the curse, and it is essentially an art object worth 500 gp at this point.

ART CREDIT

- Full Moon Gothic Landscape - Made with Midjourney
- The Risen Moon - Frederick Judd Waugh
- Full Moon, Limache, Chile - Alfredo Helsby
- Gold Coins on Forest Floor - Made with Midjourney
- Cottages in Snow - Seweryn Biesczad

XP AWARD: 4,800XP

The degree of success they had in defeating the cultists can affect the XP the players receive. You can use the following potential outcomes as guidelines to modify how much XP you award your players.

- **100% XP:** The moon mystic and all the cultists were neutralized
- **50% XP:** The cultists were neutralized, but the moon mystic escaped
- **10% XP:** The players retreated with the moon mystic and the majority of the cultists still alive

ADJUSTING THE DIFFICULTY

The encounter assumes you are playing with 4 players in the suggested level range. If the players' levels are outside the suggested level range, or you have a different group size, you can adjust the encounter's difficulty accordingly.

Easier Encounter. Reduce the number of thugs to 3. Change the XP Award to 3,600.

Harder Encounter. Have the thugs transform into pack werewolves two at a time. Change the XP Award to 8,000.

ADVENTURE FOLLOW UPS

If you wish to connect this encounter to a larger adventure, the following hooks can help provide some inspiration:

d4

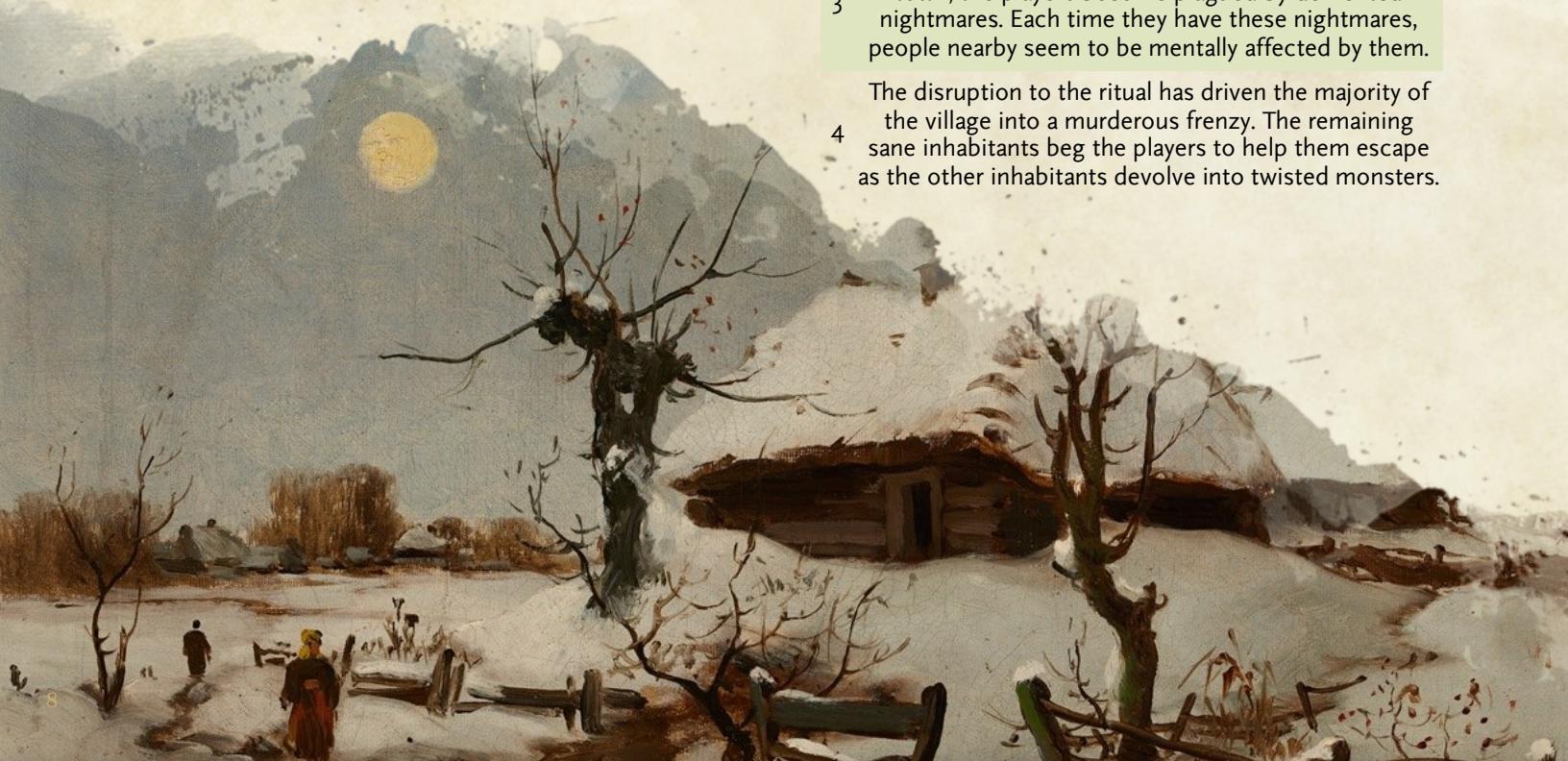
Adventure Hook

The priest began worshipping a lunar god of madness along with the rest of his clergy. They have been spreading their insane beliefs among the town in hopes of attracting the god's blessing.

1 The priest's ritual has resulted in permanent nightfall over the village with the full moon overhead. The 2 players must find the components for a corresponding sun ritual to restore the day and cure the town of its insanity.

3 Though the curse appears to have been lifted from the town, the players become plagued by demented nightmares. Each time they have these nightmares, people nearby seem to be mentally affected by them.

4 The disruption to the ritual has driven the majority of the village into a murderous frenzy. The remaining sane inhabitants beg the players to help them escape as the other inhabitants devolve into twisted monsters.



CHANGE LOG

1.0.0

- Public release