

PENGUINS OF MADAGASCAR

OPERATION: SMILE AND WAVE



The One-Shot Adventure "Operation: Smile and Wave"

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CHAPTER 1: CAMPAIGN

As the first light of dawn creeps over the skyline of New York City, the tranquil setting of Central Park Zoo is aglow with the promise of a new day. As the bells of the Central Park Zoo chime to signal the official opening of the day, a sense of unease hangs heavy in the air. The wrought iron gates, adorned with intricate animal motifs, stand ajar, welcoming the non-existent throngs of visitors who should be streaming in. Yet, eerily, the pathways lie empty, devoid of the usual chatter and excitement.

A Welcome Tranquillity. Skipper, Kowalski, Rico, and Private, the quartet of penguins known for their daring escapades and ingenious schemes, find themselves oddly content in the absence of the usual noisy visitors and screaming children.

While Rico diligently tinkers away, perfecting his craft of creating explosions with a determined gleam in his eye, Kowalski furiously scribbles notes, engrossed in his latest research endeavour. His musings are bound to culminate in another of his spectacular inventions, destined, no doubt, to crash or explode in a most spectacular fashion.

Meanwhile, Private, the gentlest soul among them, can't help but feel a pang of sadness at the deserted zoo. His heart aches for the laughter of children, the joyous squeals that once filled the air. Yet, even in his melancholy, he remains steadfast by his comrades' side.

And there's Skipper, perched nonchalantly on an inflatable rubber island, relishing the simple pleasure of a meal of fresh fish. With a contented sigh, he watches the sunlight dance across the tranquil waters, savouring the peace - wait fish? FISH!

A Stark Realization. His beak opens in surprise as he scans the empty expanse of the once-bustling enclosure. The absence of their human caretakers dawns upon him, and with it, the stark realization that the zoo's larders remain untouched. There is no fish. No food at all. The tranquillity of the morning shattered by the pang of hunger, Skipper's gaze shifts to his comrades. Without a word exchanged, a silent agreement passes between them - **Operation: Search for Food** is underway.

Optional: Agent Ringtail. As the penguins ready themselves, their preparations are interrupted by an unexpected sight in their midst. King Julien, accompanied by his loyal followers Mort and Maurice, scours the penguin's habitat and base in search of sustenance. Initially, Skipper's irritation flares at the intrusion, but Kowalski interjects with a surprising perspective. He points out that in their quest for food, having additional pairs of eyes and, more importantly, hands with opposable thumbs could prove to be a considerable advantage. Reluctantly, Skipper acquiesces, recognizing the potential benefits of an alliance with "Ringtail" and his cohorts for their mission. With a nod of agreement, the penguins and their unlikely allies set out together, united in their common goal of survival amidst the abandoned zoo.

SEARCH FOR FOOD

STARTING POINT: PENGUIN HABITAT

The players find themselves in the familiar confines of their own Penguin Habitat ①, where the rays of sunlight cast a golden hue over the zoo.

GOAL: FIND SUSTENANCE

Their primary objective is clear: to secure food for themselves and their fellow zoo inhabitants. With the zoo's storage, nestled within the Souvenir Shop ⑧, rumoured to hold provisions, it becomes their initial target. Yet, the players also recognize the potential for sustenance scattered throughout the vast expanse of the zoo grounds. (The number of rations a certain sustenance item provides is always stated)

③ MONKEY HABITAT

Within the confines of the Monkey Habitat, players encounter the duo, Mason and Phil, who hold the key to unlocking valuable information hidden within written documents. However, the monkeys are not easily swayed from their own hunger pangs, and the players must find a way to gain their cooperation.

Deciphering the first half of the *New York Times* newspaper, detailing the Grand Opening of the Botanical Garden, requires either to hand over the "Hot Coffee" or a successful Persuasion Check (DC 20).

To uncover the complete contents of the document, players must surpass an even greater challenge. A Persuasion Check with a formidable DC 30, or the combined effects of the "Hot Coffee" plus a more modest DC 15 Persuasion Check, are necessary to coax Mason and Phil into divulging the remaining details.

⑤ OTTER HABITAT

Players encounter Marlene, a spirited and agile otter with a playful gleam in her eye. Eager for entertainment in the desolate zoo, Marlene challenges the group to an acrobatic contest, her favourite pastime. In order to take part the group must wager an item of their choice.

Marlene, with her natural affinity for acrobatics, enjoys the advantage of both skill and experience. Her nimble movements and confident demeanour give her an edge, represented by a substantial +5 bonus to her Acrobatics skills and advantage on the roll.

If at least one player manages to surpass Marlene's impressive performance, the group is awarded one fish (one ration) as a token of their achievement. Should more than half of the group outshine the otter in the acrobatic display, an additional fish (one ration) is added to their prize. However, failure comes at a cost. Should the group falter and fail to best Marlene, the item provided to partake in the contest is forfeited.

⑥ MAIN GATE

A keen eye and a bit of luck may lead the players to uncover hidden treasures scattered amidst the abandoned artefacts. With a DC 10 Investigation Check, they may stumble upon a discarded sandwich (2 rations), its contents surprisingly intact despite the passage of time. Nearby, nestled amongst a pile of forgotten souvenirs, lies a plush hippo toy, its once vibrant colors faded but its whimsical charm enduring.

For those who dare to delve deeper, a more tantalizing discovery awaits. A careful inspection, with a DC 15 Investigation Check, reveals a vial labelled "Shot against Brown Spots," its purpose shrouded in mystery. Is it a forgotten remedy from days gone by, or perhaps a concoction with more peculiar properties?

⑦ POLAR BEAR HABITAT

The treacherous landscape is rife with hazards, from hidden powdered snow holes that threaten to ensnare the unwary, to icy patches that make every step a precarious endeavour. With each passing moment, the players must steel themselves against the biting winds and biting cold, lest they succumb to the frost's cruel embrace. Any animal without resistance or immunity against cold damage has to make a DC Constitution Saving Throw, taking 1d4 cold damage on a failed roll.

Yet, amidst the icy perils, a formidable guardian watches over the habitat - Ted, the polar bear. Though not inherently hostile, the massive creature is easily agitated by intruders in its domain. It tolerates the presence of the players, but its patience wears thin at the slightest provocation.

TED (POLAR BEAR)

Large Beast, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 68 (8d10 + 24)

Speed 40 ft., swim 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 20 (+5) | 10 (+0) | 16 (+3) | 2 (-4) | 13 (+1) | 7 (-2) |

Skills Perception +3

Damage Resistances cold

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Keen Smell. The bear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Snow Hide. While the polar bear is in a snowy environment it gets a +2 to AC.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The bear makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claw.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d8 + 5) piercing damage.

Claws. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage.

Should the players find themselves in peril, stuck in the icy depths or threatened by the unforgiving elements, the polar bear may come to their aid - provided they offer a suitable tribute. A promise of food is the key to securing the bear's assistance, a bargain struck amidst the frozen wastes.

However, the players must tread carefully, for forgetfulness carries consequences. Should they neglect to uphold their end of the bargain, the DM takes note, and the polar bear's goodwill may quickly turn to hostility.

Amidst the frost and peril, a glimmer of hope awaits those brave enough to seek it. With a keen eye and a bit of luck, a DC 15 Investigation Check may reveal a cache of 5 Arrows of Frost, hidden amidst the icy terrain.

⑧ SOUVENIR SHOP AND CAFÉ

In the seating area outside the café and souvenir shop, a cursory search reveals a newspaper, its pages yellowed with age, waiting to be rediscovered with a modest DC 5 Investigation Check. Nearby, a tantalizing aroma wafts from a forgotten cup of "Hot Coffee," its warmth offering comfort amidst the chill of the abandoned zoo. With a bit more effort, a DC 10 Investigation Check.

Within the cosy confines of the café, a more enticing discovery awaits - a lone lollipop, its vibrant colors a stark contrast to the muted surroundings. With a careful eye and a bit of luck, a DC 15 Investigation Check unveils this sweet treat, beckoning the players to indulge in its sugary allure.

Yet, caution is advised, for beneath its enticing exterior lies a hidden danger. Those who succumb to the temptation of the lollipop must face the consequences, as a failed DC 20 Constitution saving throw leaves them poisoned for an agonizing hour.

However, amidst the trinkets and treats, lies a more crucial discovery - the animal food storage. Hidden away in the back of the building, its door remains securely locked, guarding its precious contents from prying eyes. Only with the proper key or a stroke of luck in a one-try critical success Sleight of Hand lock-picking attempt can the players gain access to this bountiful storehouse of sustenance, ensuring the welfare of the zoo's animal inhabitants for days to come.

⑨ LION HABITAT

Within the majestic Lion Habitat, players encounter a scene of primal chaos amidst the once-regal surroundings. Alex the Lion, once a proud and noble creature, has succumbed to the ravages of hunger-induced delirium, his once-keen senses dulled by starvation. In his frenzied state, he perceives every living creature as a succulent steak, his instincts driving him to attack anything that dares to approach.

As the players navigate the perilous confines of the habitat, they must tread carefully to avoid arousing the lion's ire. With each step, they risk provoking Alex's ferocious instincts, risking life and limb in the face of his unrelenting hunger.

Yet, amidst the chaos, a glimmer of hope remains. The players hold the key to quelling the lion's insatiable appetite and restoring reason to his frenzied mind. By offering him a steak or a fish, they can appease his primal instincts, convincing him to spare them from his voracious wrath.

ALEX (LION)

Large Beast, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 52 ($8d10 + 8$)

Speed 50 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 17 (+3) | 15 (+2) | 13 (+1) | 3 (-4) | 12 (+1) | 8 (-1) |

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +6

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Keen Smell. The lion has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Pounce. If the lion moves at least 20 ft. straight toward a creature and then hits it with a claw attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the lion can make one bite attack against it as a bonus action.

Running Leap. With a 10-foot running start, the lion can long jump up to 25 ft..

ACTIONS

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 ($1d8 + 3$) piercing damage.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 ($1d6 + 3$) slashing damage.

(13) CROCODILE HABITAT

Amidst the murky waters and tangled reeds of the Crocodile Habitat, players encounter Mario, the formidable crocodile whose imposing presence guards the entrance to the Reptile House. Here, amidst the eerie stillness of the swampy enclosure, players face a daunting challenge - gaining passage through Mario's domain.

With his sharp eyes and powerful jaws, Mario stands as an unwavering sentinel, his gaze fixed upon any who dare to approach. To secure safe passage into the Reptile House, players must negotiate with the formidable crocodile, offering a suitable tribute in exchange for access to the hidden depths beyond - preferably food.

(14) REPTILE HOUSE

Within the dimly lit confines of the Reptile House, players encounter Barry, the colourful Poison Dart Frog whose vibrant hues belie his deadly nature. Amidst the flickering shadows and eerie silence, Barry awaits, his gaze fixed upon the newcomers with a mixture of curiosity and anticipation.

As players approach the diminutive amphibian, they are met with a proposition - one that promises to unlock the secrets of his potent venom in exchange for a humble offering of sustenance. With a playful flick of his tongue, Barry gestures toward a collection of small vials (4 ($1d4 + 2$)), each brimming with the deadly toxin that courses through his veins.

(15) RHINOCEROS HABITAT

Within the imposing confines of the Rhinoceros Habitat, players confront Roy, the formidable guardian of the enclosure whose ferocious demeanour strikes fear into the hearts of all who dare to approach. Here, amidst the dusty earth and towering vegetation, players face a daunting challenge - a horned monstrosity who does not like visitors.

Stealth becomes their ally as players carefully navigate the treacherous terrain, their movements shrouded in shadows as they seek to evade Roy's watchful gaze. With each cautious step, they edge closer to their goal, their fate hanging in the balance as they strive to out-maneuvre the fearsome inhabitant of the enclosure.

For those who prefer a more direct approach, confrontation becomes inevitable as players face off against the mighty rhinoceros in a battle of strength and skill. With weapons drawn and nerves of steel, they must confront Roy head-on, risking life and limb in pursuit of victory.

Yet, amidst the chaos and danger, lies the promise of reward. With a careful eye and a bit of luck, a DC 10 Investigation Check may reveal a "KEY ITEM".

For those who emerge victorious in their confrontation with Roy, an even greater prize awaits. Defeating the rhinoceros rewards players with a key to the food storage room.

(10) GIRAFFE HABITAT

Though prone to exaggerated fears and unfounded anxieties, Melman's keen intellect and extensive knowledge about disease, potions, and poisons make him a valuable ally in the players' quest for survival. With a cautious approach and a bit of diplomacy, they may be able to strike a bargain with the giraffe, trading their own possessions for his invaluable potions.

For the prized possession of the "Hippo Plushy," Melman offers a generous exchange - two Potions of Healing, potent elixirs capable of mending wounds and restoring vitality. And for the vial containing the mysterious "Shot against Brown Spots," he offers an even greater reward - three Potions of Greater Healing, rare concoctions imbued with the power to mend even the most grievous injuries.

(12) ZEBRA HABITAT

In the vibrant surroundings of the Zebra Habitat, players encounter Marty, the spirited zebra whose boundless energy and adventurous spirit embody the essence of freedom. He offers the players to increase their base speed in exchange for food. Players that have eaten can make a DC 10 Strength Check to increase their speed by 5 ft - or 10 ft on a critical success.

ROY (RHINOCEROS)

Large Beast, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 150 (20d10 + 40)

Speed 40 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 21 (+5) | 8 (-1) | 15 (+2) | 2 (-4) | 12 (+1) | 6 (-2) |

Skills Perception +1

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Charge. If the rhinoceros moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a gore attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 9 (2d8) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Rampage (Recharge 5-6). The rhinoceros charges forward in a straight line, bashing everything and everyone in its path. Each creature in a 60-foot line must make a DC 15 Dexterity Saving Throw, taking 18 (3d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage and being knocked prone on a failed save. On a successful save the creature takes half damage and is not knocked prone.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The rhinoceros can make two Gore attacks each round.

Gore. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 19 (2d8 + 5) piercing damage.

17 OSTRICH HABITAT

Players encounter Shelly, the lovestruck ostrich whose heart flutters at the mere mention of Rico's name. Here, amidst the golden sands and gentle rustling of the grass, players become embroiled in a whimsical tale of romance and adventure.

Infatuated with Rico's daring exploits and unwavering bravery, Shelly longs for nothing more than a chance to share a moment of bliss with her beloved. With a flutter of her feathers and a twinkle in her eye, she implores the players to stage a performance that will sweep Rico off his feet and win his heart.

To fulfil Shelly's romantic fantasies, players must summon all their talents, crafting a spectacle that will rival even the grandest of love stories. With each participant lending their unique skills to the performance, they embark on a quest to captivate Rico's heart and fulfil Shelly's deepest desires.

A DC 15 Performance Check becomes the measure of their success, as players strive to dazzle and delight with their talents. With each roll of the dice, the fate of the performance hangs in the balance, as success hinges on the collective efforts of all who take part.

Should more than half of all participants succeed in their Performance Checks, the whole performance is deemed a resounding success. Shelly's heart sings with joy as she shares a romantic picnic with Rico, their laughter mingling with the gentle rustle of the breeze as they bask in the warmth of each other's company.

However, failure carries its own consequences, as the weight of disappointment hangs heavy in the air. Should the performance falter and fall short of Shelly's lofty expectations, the ostrich's frustration boils over, her disappointment manifesting in a dramatic display of despair.

With a resounding thud, Shelly buries her head in the ground, unleashing a hidden entrance tunnel to the nearby arsenal - a testament to the lengths to which love will drive even the most unlikely of creatures. As players pick themselves up from the dust and debris, they are left to ponder the unpredictable twists and turns of romance amidst the whimsical confines of the zoo.

18 ARSENAL

Along with the Main Gate the Arsenal is a sight to behold and its mesmerizing architecture awe-inspiring. Its entrance sealed tight by a formidable portcullis that bars entry to all - even the most determined adventurers. Yet, within the depths of the Ostrich Habitat, a hidden tunnel offers a clandestine passage into the heart of this old armoury.

Amidst the dusty shelves and cobweb-covered crates, players discover a key - a small but invaluable token that grants access to the food storage, ensuring the welfare of the zoo's animal inhabitants for days to come. With this new-found treasure in hand, they move with purpose through the Arsenal, eager to uncover the secrets hidden within its shadowy depths.

Yet, the Arsenal holds more than just keys and provisions. For each player, there awaits a personalized cache of equipment - weapons, tools, and gear tailored to their unique skills and abilities. From sturdy shields to razor-sharp blades, from arcane tomes to alchemical concoctions, the Arsenal offers a wealth of resources to aid players in their quest for survival amidst the abandoned zoo.

Moon-Touched Sword (Skipper). In darkness, the unsheathed blade of this sword sheds moonlight, creating bright light in a 15-foot radius and dim light for an additional 15 feet.

Eyes of Minute Seeing (Kowalski). These crystal lenses fit over the eyes. While wearing them, you can see much better than normal out to a range of 1 foot. You have advantage on Intelligence (Investigation) checks that rely on sight while searching an area or studying an object within that range.

Bracers of Defense (Rico). While wearing these bracers, you gain a +2 bonus to AC if you are wearing no armour and using no shield.

Medallion of Adorableness (Private). While wearing this medallion the wearer gets a +1 to Charisma (Persuasion) Checks and the Hyper-Adorableness Spell (Eldritch Blast) gets a +1 to attack and damage rolls.

Optional: Bracers of Archery (King Julien). While wearing these bracers, you have proficiency with the longbow and shortbow, and you gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls on ranged attacks made with such weapons.

Optional: Insignia of Claws (Maurice). While wearing the insignia, you gain a +1 bonus to the attack rolls and the damage rolls you make with unarmed strikes and natural weapons. Such attacks are considered to be magical.

(19) ELEPHANT HABITAT

Burt, ever the benevolent guardian of the habitat, stands ready to assist those who approach him with respect and humility. To gain access to the precious peanuts that lie within his domain, players must navigate a delicate balance of negotiation and diplomacy.

With a convincing argument or a show of force, players may attempt a DC 15 Intimidation or Persuasion Check, seeking to sway Burt's generous nature and secure a bountiful supply of peanuts to feed the zoo's hungry mouths. Those fortunate enough to have Mort in his "Buffed Up" state at that moment gain advantage in their endeavour, as the lemur's imposing presence lends added weight to their negotiations.

However, for those who prefer a more direct approach, confrontation becomes inevitable. With weapons drawn and adrenaline coursing through their veins, players may choose to engage in battle with the mighty elephant, risking life and limb in pursuit of victory.

Should they emerge triumphant in their struggle against Burt, players are rewarded with a plentiful bounty of peanuts - enough to feed eight animals and ensure their continued well-being amidst the challenges of the abandoned zoo.

BURT (ELEPHANT)

Huge Beast, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 95 (10d12 + 30)

Speed 40 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 22 (+6) | 9 (-1) | 17 (+3) | 3 (-4) | 11 (+0) | 6 (-2) |

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Trampling Charge. If the elephant moves at least 20 ft. straight toward a creature and then hits it with a gore attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the elephant can make one stomp attack against it as a bonus action.

ACTIONS

Gore. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 19 (3d8 + 6) piercing damage.

Stomp. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one prone target. Hit: 22 (3d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

MYSTIC TEMPEST

After approximately 60 minutes of real game-time, a phenomenon of unknown origin unfurls above Central Park - a swirling vortex of dark red, purple, and green hues that casts an ominous shadow over the once-peaceful landscape. The tempest appears to originate from somewhere within the heart of the park, its exact source shrouded in mystery to the players below.

This enigmatic disturbance manifests in three distinct stages, each marked by a surge in intensity (every 30 minutes) that heralds the onset of increasingly turbulent conditions. As the storm's power grows, so too does its influence over the behaviour of the zoo's inhabitants and the nature of the encounters that unfold within its shadowy embrace.

A small glimmer of hope emerges amidst the chaos, however, as players discover a potential reprieve from the tempest's wrath. By ensuring the well-being of all the zoo's inhabitants and feeding them in a timely manner, players may succeed in delaying the effects of the phenomenon for a brief respite, buying precious moments of clarity and calm in the face of the Mystic Tempest's relentless advance.

FIRST STAGE: THE UNRAVELING

As the Mystic Tempest forms, the tranquil atmosphere of the Central Park Zoo undergoes a dramatic transformation, plunging into a realm of chaos and discord. In the first stage of the storm, the very essence of the zoo's inhabitants becomes twisted and distorted, their once-docile nature giving way to primal aggression and hostility.

Small animals, once beloved denizens of the zoo, now emerge as harbingers of chaos, their eyes ablaze with unnatural hues of purple and green. Otters dart through the water with menacing intent, their playful demeanour replaced by a ferocious hunger for violence. Chimpanzees swing from branch to branch with frenzied abandon, their once-curious gazes now fixated on the players with an unsettling intensity. Even the seemingly innocuous creatures of the zoo - Poison Dart Frogs and Flamingos - succumb to the storm's influence.

Amidst the chaos, a new threat emerges from the heart of the zoo - eight small potted plants (*Sproutling*), animated by dark magic and driven by a malevolent desire to snuff out all who dare to oppose them. With tendrils of ivy writhing and twisting, these once-innocuous decorations become instruments of destruction, their leafy appendages lashing out with deadly precision.

Private's eyes alight with the same ominous hues that taint the storm above. Drawn inexorably towards the center of the tempest, his sight mostly fixated onto the eye of the storm.

Even larger animals exhibit equally bizarre behaviour, their actions defying logic and reason. Alex the Lion, once a fearsome predator, now grazes idly on tufts of grass. Throughout the zoo, other creatures display similar aberrant behaviour - Roy's aggression becomes tempered rather than charging blindly at intruders, he hesitates, his movements marked by a hesitant uncertainty as if wrestling with unseen forces that pull him in conflicting directions.

⑩ GIRAFFE HABITAT

Unaffected by the storm's eerie dark magic, Melman remains trapped in a world of his own making, convinced that the bizarre events unfolding around him are nothing more than a hallucination brought on by the countless medications he's forced to ingest. To rouse him from his delusions, players must employ all their powers of persuasion, engaging in a delicate dance of words and reason to coax him back to reality.

With a successful DC 15 Persuasion Check, players succeed in breaking through Melman's fragile façade, convincing him of the truth that lies beyond his medicated haze. As clarity washes over him, Melman's eyes widen with shock and realization, his mind racing to make sense of the chaos that surrounds them.

With new-found lucidity, Melman becomes a wellspring of information, offering insights into the nature of the Mystic Tempest and the enigmatic forces that drive it. He reveals that Private is inexplicably linked to the phenomenon, his magical inclinations drawing him ever closer to the heart of the storm.

SECOND STAGE: STORM'S SURGE

As the Mystic Tempest intensifies, its dark tendrils weaving ever deeper into the fabric of reality, the once-subtle whispers of chaos erupt into a cacophony of discord and despair. In the second stage of the tempest's wrath, the very essence of the zoo undergoes a profound transformation, as medium-sized animals join the ranks of the storm's unwitting agents, their once-docile nature twisted by the storm's malevolent influence.

No longer content to merely observe from the sidelines, the inhabitants of Central Park Zoo are drawn into the maelstrom, their eyes alight with the same ominous hues that mark their smaller brethren. Zebras charge with reckless abandon, their once-graceful strides now fuelled by primal aggression. Lions, once the undisputed kings of the savannah, now stalk the corridors of their enclosures with a predatory hunger that knows no bounds.

Amidst the chaos, one notable absence stands out - the enigmatic Ted, the polar bear whose imposing presence once loomed large over the Arctic Tundra exhibit, is nowhere to be found. Whether he has succumbed to the storm's influence or vanished into the shadows of the abandoned zoo remains a mystery, his fate intertwined with the ever-growing tempest that grips the land.

THIRD STAGE: TEMPEST'S FURY

As the Mystic Tempest reaches its zenith, the zoo descends into a realm of unbridled chaos and despair. In this final stage of the tempest's fury, all semblance of order is cast aside as every creature within Central Park Zoo becomes an unwitting pawn in the storm's relentless onslaught.

No longer bound by the constraints of their enclosures, the zoo's inhabitants roam freely, their once-docile nature replaced by a primal hunger for violence and destruction. Large animals, once the pride and joy of the zoo, now break free from their confines with terrifying ease, their massive forms wreaking havoc upon everything in their path.

Amidst the carnage, one notable absence looms large - Burt, the gentle giant whose presence once brought a sense of calm to the Central Park Zoo, is nowhere to be found. In his wake, he leaves behind a gaping hole in the habitat's wall, a testament to the tempest's unstoppable power and the havoc it has wrought upon the once-tranquil landscape.

WILD CENTRAL PARK

As players brave the treacherous journey towards the heart of the storm, they find themselves navigating the now chaotic expanse of Central Park. Each step brings them closer to the epicentre of the tempest, yet with every passing moment, the perils that await them grow ever more formidable.

RANDOM ENCOUNTER

ZOO MAIN ENTRANCE PATROL

Their first trial comes swiftly, mere steps beyond the Main Entrance Gate of Central Park Zoo, where the tranquility of the past has given way to a realm of chaos and uncertainty. However, this ambush is only active if the Mystic Tempest has begun its onslaught, transforming the once-familiar surroundings into a battleground of primal aggression and supernatural forces.

The nature of this initial ambush is determined by the stage at which the Mystic Tempest currently resides, with each encounter presenting its own unique challenges and threats.

First Stage. In the first stage, players find themselves beset by a horde of *Sproutlings* (5 (1d6 + 2)), their tiny forms brimming with malicious intent as they launch themselves into the fray with reckless abandon.

Second Stage. As the tempest's power intensifies, so too does the ferocity of their assailants, with *Flower Behemoths* emerging from the shadows to join the fray alongside their diminutive brethren. In the second stage, players must contend not only with the relentless assault of *Sproutlings* (2 (1d4)) but also with the cunning and guile of these woodland spirits (2 Dryads), whose mastery of magic makes them formidable adversaries indeed.

Third Stage. Yet, it is in the third and final stage of the tempest's fury that players face their greatest trial yet, as the combined forces of *Sproutlings* (3) and *Flower Behemoth* (3) converge upon them with unyielding fury.

THE BERRY AMBUSH

As the players trek through the Central Park, their journey leads them to a towering, overgrown elephant statue. The imposing homage to the majestic creature looms large, its weathered features obscured by a thick layer of tangled vines and foliage. However, their attention is quickly drawn to the cluster of berry bushes surrounding the statue, their vibrant hues contrasting sharply with the muted tones of the surrounding landscape.

For any player who has yet to satisfy their hunger, a sense of primal longing stirs within them, urging them towards the tantalizing promise of sustenance offered by the ripe berries (DC 15 Constitution Saving Throw).

First Stage. Two Berry Terrors launch a surprise attack, their twisted forms springing to life with malevolent intent. But they are not alone in their assault, for from the nearby foliage emerges a **Flower Behemoth**, its towering form wreathed in blooms of sinister beauty as it joins the fray.

Second Stage. The players' attempts to harvest the berries are met with a sudden revelation. The two berry bushes are not what they seem, transforming before their eyes into **Woodland Guardians** that launch a surprise attack upon the unsuspecting players.

Third Stage. Yet, it is in the third and final stage of the tempest that the true horror of their situation is revealed. As the players approach the berry bushes, the earth beneath their feet begins to tremble, a tell-tale sign of the impending danger. With a deafening roar, the towering elephant statue lurches to life, revealing the zombified form of **Burt** overgrown by an unknown kind of plant.

Rewards. With the enemies defeated, the players find a cache of ripe berries amidst the chaos (4 rations) and 2 berry bombs. Plump and juicy, these berries offer a welcome reprieve, providing sustenance to fuel their journey onward. As they press forward, their resolve strengthened, they carry with them the memory of their triumph over adversity.

QUEST ENCOUNTERS

MOTHER GOOSE IN DISTRESS

The following quest is available if the storm has reached at most stage 1.

As players approach the tranquil shores of the lake in Central Park, their gaze is drawn to the figure of a distressed mother goose, her feathers ruffled and eyes filled with anguish. With a mournful honk, she implores the players for their aid, her maternal instincts driving her to seek out her missing brood.

Scattered around the perimeter of the lake, two of the mother goose's goslings can be easily spotted by keen-eyed adventurers, their fluffy down contrasting against the vibrant foliage that lines the water's edge. With a gentle coaxing, players can guide the wayward youngsters back to their anxious mother, their safe return met with a chorus of relieved honks and fluttering wings.

However, the quest is far from over, as the frantic mother reveals that two of her precious goslings remain unaccounted for, their fate uncertain amidst the dangers that lurk within the park. With determination in their hearts, players set out in search of the missing hatchlings, their eyes scanning the surrounding landscape for any sign of their whereabouts.

To their dismay, they soon stumble upon a scene of chaos, as a **Rabid Squirrel** stands guard over the cowering forms of the two remaining goslings, his chittering cries echoing across the water. Commanding a horde of **Sproutlings** ($3(1d4 + 1)$) to do his bidding, his madness driving him to desperate measures in his quest for dominance over the lake's inhabitants.

Rewards. Upon rescuing the all goslings and bringing them back to their mother, players find themselves presented with a choice: one of the goslings offers to become the loyal familiar of Private, forging a bond that transcends the chaos of the tempest. This offer can be accepted or declined by the players, each choice carrying its own consequences.

THE MONSTER OF THE LAKE

The following quest is available if the storm has reached at least stage 2.

As players approach the tranquil shores of the lake in Central Park, their senses are assailed by a sight both eerie and unsettling. The once-clear waters of the lake now churn with a deep crimson hue, a foreboding sign of the tempest's malevolent influence upon the land. Strewn amidst the surface are an assortment of feathers, fur, and twigs, forming a macabre tableau of nature's wrath.

Intrigued by the ominous spectacle, players venture closer to investigate, their footsteps echoing across the silent expanse of the lake. Yet, as they draw near, a sudden disturbance in the water catches their attention - a massive form rising from the depths below. With a deafening roar, a monstrous plant creature emerges from the crimson waters, its towering form reminiscent of a kraken from the depths of legend.

Using its sinuous vines and grasping tendrils, the plant monster ensnares its foes, pulling them inexorably towards a small island at the center of the lake. There, amidst the twisted foliage and choking vines, it prepares to unleash its fury upon the hapless adventurers, its rage fuelled by the dark energies of the Mystic Tempest.

Rewards. With the monstrous plant creature vanquished and the tainted waters of the lake restored to their former clarity, a sense of relief washes over the players amidst the tranquil shores of Central Park. Yet, amidst the aftermath of battle, a lone figure emerges - an orphaned gosling, its downy feathers ruffled and eyes wide with innocence.

Moved by the players' bravery and compassion, the gosling offers to become the loyal familiar of Private, forging a bond that transcends the chaos of the tempest. This offer can be accepted or declined by the players.

THE STORM'S EYE

CHAPTER 2: MONSTERS

SPROUTLING

These small, humanoid creatures use their whip-like vines to strike at opponents from a distance, while employing mystical abilities to entangle their foes, immobilizing them and leaving them vulnerable to attack.



SPROUTLING

Small Plant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (4d6 + 8)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 16 (+3) | 10 (+0) |

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +3

Damage Vulnerabilities Fire

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Exhaustion, Frightened, Poisoned

Senses Passive Perception 15

Languages -

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Nature's Embrace. The Sproutling regains 3 (1d6) hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point and is within 10 feet of plant life.

Photosynthesis. Whenever the Sproutling is ending its turn in direct sunlight, it regains 5 (1d10) hitpoints.

Thorny Vines. Each creature that is entangled or grappled by the Sproutling takes 2 (1d4) piercing damage at the start of its turn.

Spellcasting. The Sproutling is a 3rd-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The Grove Sentinel has the following druid spells prepared:

At will: Druidcraft

1st level (3 slots): Longstrider

2nd level (2 slots): Barkskin, Pass without Trace

ACTIONS

Vinewhip. Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 40 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (2d4 + 2) slashing damage. If the target is medium or smaller, it is pulled 10 ft. and is grappled (escape DC 15 Strength Roll) if the Sproutling is not already grappling a creature. Until this grapple ends the target is pulled 10 ft. towards the Sproutling at the start of each of its turn.

Entangle. The Sproutling causes plants in a 15-foot radius centred on a point within 60 feet to come to life and restrain creatures. Each creature within the area must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be restrained by the entangling plants. A creature can use its action to make a DC 13 Strength check, freeing itself or another creature within its reach on a success. The effect ends if the plants are destroyed (AC 15, 10 hit points, vulnerability to fire damage).

BERRY TERROR

Utilizing cunning tactics, these corrupted bushes attempt to lure opponents closer before launching explosive berries at them, causing devastating damage upon impact. Their tactics rely on deception and surprise, catching enemies off guard before unleashing their explosive onslaught.



BERRY TERROR

Small Plant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 39 (6d6 + 18)

Speed 20 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 16 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) |

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +6

Damage Vulnerabilities Fire

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Exhaustion, Frightened, Poisoned

Senses Passive Perception 14

Languages -

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Thorny Vines. Each creature that is grappled by the Berry Terror takes 2 (1d4) piercing damage at the start of its turn.

False Appearance. While the Berry Terror remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal plant.

ACTIONS

Berry Bomb. Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 30/80 ft., one target. Hit: 1 bludgeoning damage. When the berry hits a creature or falls on the ground it explodes in a 20 ft. radius. Each creature within the explosion radius must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution Saving Throw or take 7 (2d6) poison damage or half as much on a failed one.

Pleasant Aroma. The Berry Terror creates an intoxicating aroma that fills the area within 30 ft. of a point it can see within 120 ft. Creatures in this area smell something they find so pleasing that it's distracting. Each creature in the area that makes an attack roll must first make a Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the attack is made with disadvantage. Only a creature's first attack in a round is affected this way. On a successful save, a creature becomes immune to the effect of this particular scent for 1 minute. Creatures with poison immunity are unaffected by this effect. This aroma disperses after 10 minutes or can be dispersed by a wind of moderate or greater speed (at least 10 miles per hour).

FLOWER BEHEMOTH

FLOWER BEHEMOTH

Medium Plant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)

Speed 20 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT |
|---------|--------|---------|---------|
| 16 (+3) | 8 (-1) | 16 (+3) | 10 (+0) |

Skills Perception +6

Damage Vulnerabilities Fire

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Exhaustion, Frightened

Senses Passive Perception 16

Languages –

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)



Nature's Embrace. The Flower Behemoth regains 7 (2d6) hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point and is within 10 feet of plant life.

Thorny Vines. Each creature that is entangled or grappled by the Flower Behemoth takes 3 (1d6) piercing damage at the start of of its turn.

ACTIONS

Vinewhip. Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, range 40 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage. If the target is large or smaller, it is pulled 10 ft. and is grappled (Escape DC 15 Strength Roll). The Flower Behemoth can grapple up to 2 creatures. Until this grapple ends the target is pulled 10 ft. towards the Flower Behemoth at the start of each of its turn.

Entangle. The Flower Behemoth causes plants in a 15-foot radius centred on a point within 60 feet to come to life and restrain creatures. Each creature within the area must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be restrained by the entangling plants. A creature can use its action to make a DC 15 Strength check, freeing itself or another creature within its reach on a success. The effect ends if the plants are destroyed (AC 15, 10 hit points, vulnerability to fire damage).

WOODLAND GUARDIAN

WOODLAND GUARDIAN

Medium Plant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | HA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 16 (+3) | 12 (+1) | 16 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 10 (+0) |

Skills Perception +6, Stealth +4

Damage Vulnerabilities Fire

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Exhaustion, Frightened

Senses Passive Perception 15

Languages –

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)



Nature's Embrace. The Sproutling regains 3 (1d6) hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point and is within 10 feet of plant life.

False Appearance. While the Berry Terror remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal plant.

ACTIONS

Vinewhip. Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 40 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (3d4 + 1) slashing damage. If the target is medium or smaller, it is pulled 10 ft. and is grappled (Escape DC 15 Strength Roll) if the Sproutling is not already grappling a creature. Until this grapple ends the target is pulled 10 ft. towards the Sproutling at the start of each of its turn.

Entangle. The Flower Behemoth causes plants in a 15-foot radius centred on a point within 60 feet to come to life and restrain creatures. Each creature within the area must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be restrained by the entangling plants. A creature can use its action to make a DC 13 Strength check, freeing itself or another creature within its reach on a success. The effect ends if the plants are destroyed (AC 15, 10 hit points, vulnerability to fire damage).

ZOMBIFIED AND OVERGROWN BURT

ZOMBIFIED BURT

Huge Beast, chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 126 (12d12 + 48)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 22 (+6) | 8 (-1) | 18 (+4) | 3 (-4) | 14 (+2) | 8 (-1) |

Saving Throws Con +8

Skills Athletics +10, Intimidation +3, Perception +6

Damage Vulnerabilities Fire, Radiant

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Exhaustion, Frightened, Poisoned

Senses Passive Perception 15

Languages -

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

False Appearance. While Burt remains motionless, he is indistinguishable from a statue.

Trampling Charge. If Burt moves at least 20 ft. straight toward a creature and then hits it with a gore attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the elephant can make one stomp attack against it as a bonus action.

ACTIONS

Gore. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 19 (3d8 + 6) piercing damage.

Stomp. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 22 (3d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

Entangle. Burt causes plants in a 15-foot radius centred on a point within 60 feet to come to life and restrain creatures. Each creature within the area must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be restrained by the entangling plants. A creature can use its action to make a DC 15 Strength check, freeing itself or another creature within its reach on a success. The effect ends if the plants are destroyed (AC 15, 10 hit points, vulnerability to fire damage).



Amidst the chaos of the Mystic Tempest's third stage, Burt, the gentle elephant of Central Park Zoo, fell victim to its dark influence. Driven by an insatiable hunger and warped by the storm's magic, he broke free from his enclosure and roamed into Central Park.

As the tempest's power grew, it twisted Burt's form, covering him in vines and foliage until he resembled an overgrown, zombified version of himself. Fuelled by dark magic, he became a monstrous guardian of the forest, driven by primal rage and a thirst for destruction.

When the players encountered him, they faced the twisted remnants of the once-beloved elephant, now a fearsome foe controlled by the storm's malevolent forces, ready to unleash his fury upon all who dares to oppose him.



THE RED SQUIRREL

The infamous Penguin Enemy Number One, the Red Squirrel is a mastermind of evil, orchestrating his plots with cruel precision from the shadows below Central Park. For many years he hid in his well hidden underground base. But when the mysterious storm arose he resurfaced. This surge of dark power caught the Red Squirrel's attention as he tried to harvest this most evil power to use it for his own malicious plans. Feeling safe from the storm's reach within his underground base he experimented with the sheer unmeasurable power the storm was howling over the Central Park. However, the Mystic Tempest sought not to destroy with wind or rain; its purpose was far more sinister. Recognising his leadership potential it infused The Red Squirrel with a darkness so profound that it eclipsed his own malice, ensnaring him in a web of vile whispers and promises of power. Giving himself into this vile darkness he became the commander of a horde of Sproutlings, to subjugate everything that stood in the storm's way. With thorny limbs and eerie grace, they heeded The Red Squirrel's every command, for he and the storm were now one - a commander of an army wrought from the tempest's chaos. Trying to form a more impressive horde of vile and darkness he is causing chaos throughout Central Park, eliminating everything and anything that will even dare to oppose him.



THE RED SQUIRREL

Tiny Beast, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 52 (15d4 + 15)

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 8 (-1) | 20 (+5) | 12 (+1) | 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 15 (+2) |

Saving Throws Dex +8

Skills Acrobatics +8, Perception +4, Persuasion +5

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Poisoned

Senses Passive Perception 14

Languages -

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Fearsome Agility. The Red Squirrel can take the Dash Action as a Bonus Action. Also, the Red Squirrel does not trigger opportunity attacks.

Keen Hearing and Smell. The Red Squirrel has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Missing Eye. The Red Squirrel has disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Indomitable 2/day. The Red Squirrel rerolls a failed saving throw.

Leadership. For 1 minute, the Red Squirrel can utter a special command or warning whenever a non-hostile creature that it can see within 30 feet of it makes an attack roll or a saving throw. The creature can add a d4 to its roll provided it can hear and understand the commander. A creature can benefit from only one Leadership die at a time. This effect ends if the commander is incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (2d4 - 1) piercing damage.

Command Plant. The Red Squirrel can command up to two friendly plants that can hear him to attack a target that it can see. The Plant can use its bonus action to attack that target.



MONSTER IN THE LAKE

SPIRACTOPUS

Huge Plant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 95 (10d12 + 30)

Speed 20 ft., swim 50 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 14 (+2) | 17 (+3) | 16 (+3) | 12 (+1) | 14 (+2) | 6 (-2) |

Saving Throws Con +7

Skills Perception +6

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Exhaustion, Frightened, Poisoned

Senses Passive Perception 16

Languages -

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Amphibious. The Lake Monster can breathe air and water.

Thorny Tentacles. Each creature that is grappled by the Lake Monster takes 2 (1d4) piercing damage at the start of its turn.

ACTIONS

Multi-Attack. The Lake Monster can make two attacks each turn.

Vine-Tentacle. Ranged Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, range 60 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage. If the target is large or smaller, it must succeed a DC 15 Strength Saving Throw or be grappled by the Lake Monster (Escape DC 15 Strength Roll). The Lake Monster can grapple up to 3 creatures..

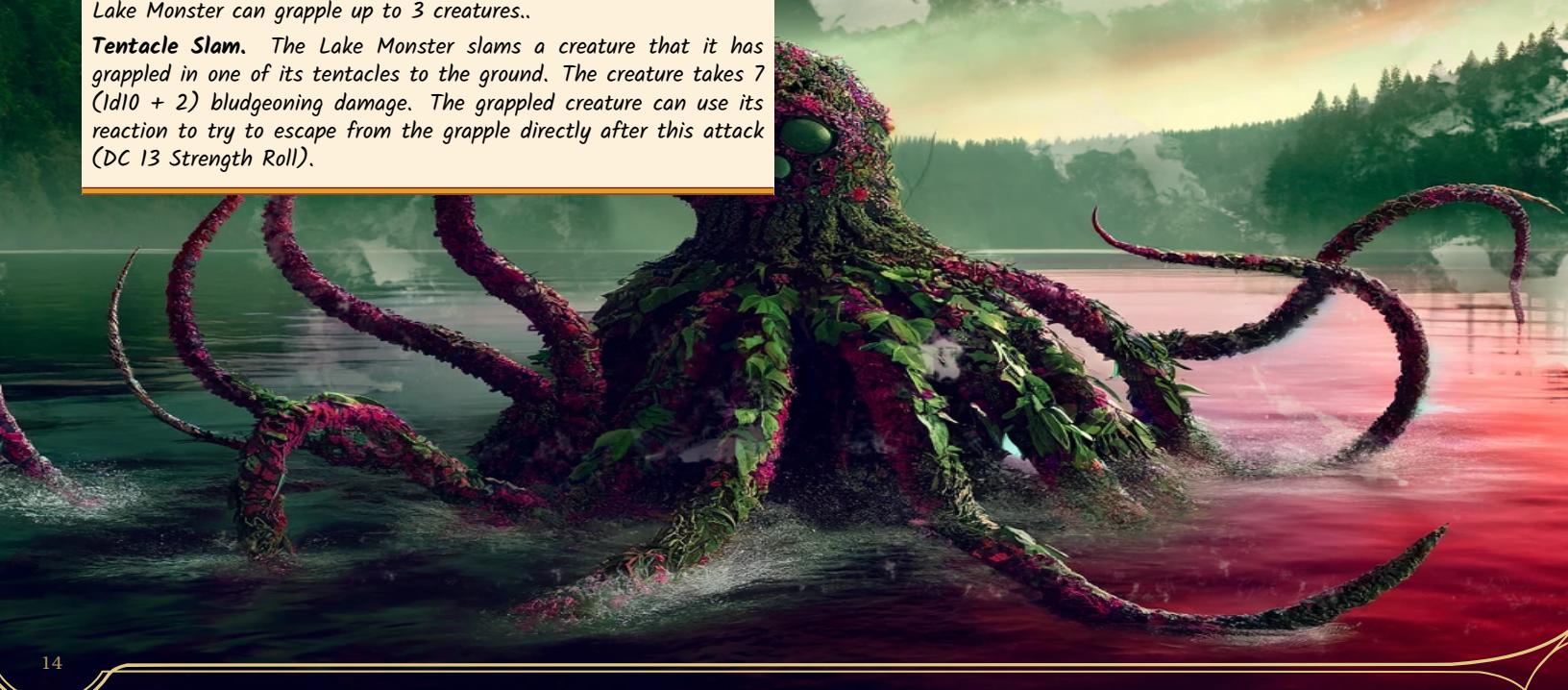
Tentacle Slam. The Lake Monster slams a creature that it has grappled in one of its tentacles to the ground. The creature takes 7 (1d10 + 2) bludgeoning damage. The grappled creature can use its reaction to try to escape from the grapple directly after this attack (DC 13 Strength Roll).



With a deafening roar, a monstrous plant creature emerges, towering above the waters like a kraken made of vines, roots, and leaves. Sinuous tendrils writhe and twist, reaching out to ensnare any who dare approach, pulling them towards a small island at the center of the lake.

There, amidst the twisted foliage and choking vines, the creature prepares to unleash its fury upon the hapless adventurers, its rage fueled by the dark energies of the Mystic Tempest. Caught in the clutches of this formidable adversary, players must fight for their lives, their every move hindered by the relentless assault of the plant monstrosity.

As the battle rages on, the waters grow darker still, the tempest's influence spreading like a festering wound upon the land. With each passing moment, the odds seem more dire, yet the players stand firm, determined to overcome this harrowing challenge and emerge victorious against the vile creature that lurks within the lake.



CHAPTER 3: MAGICAL ITEMS

ARROW OF FROST

This enchanted arrow features a jagged arrowhead crafted from a semitransparent pale blue material, evocative of ice. When drawn and activated, it emanates a faint, icy glow, signifying its potent magical properties.

As a bonus action, the wielder can focus on the arrow, infusing it with chilling evocation magic. Once charged, the next ranged weapon attack made with this arrow before the start of the wielder's next turn deals magical cold damage instead of its usual type.

Upon striking a creature, the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or become encased in frost, effectively petrified, until the end of its next turn. However, creatures with resistance or immunity to cold damage automatically succeed on this saving throw. Additionally, should the frozen target suffer any fire damage while petrified, the icy imprisonment immediately dissipates.

Once the Arrow of Frost strikes its target, its magical properties are expended, reverting it to a mundane arrow.

CHAPTER 4: HAZARDS

POWDERED SNOW

Powdered Snow is an amalgamation of ice crystals and fine, granular snow particles. It forms when the temperature drops to frigid levels, causing the snow to become powdery and light, almost like sand. This snowy terrain is particularly hazardous as it conceals the icy permafrost beneath its surface.

Unlike wet snow or slush, Powdered Snow lacks the cohesion to support weight evenly. When a creature steps onto the surface, the loose grains of snow and ice quickly give way, causing the unwary traveller to sink into the icy depths below.

In essence, falling into Powdered Snow is akin to stumbling into a hidden trap of freezing cold rather than merely sinking into fluffy snow. Seasoned adventurers learn to recognize the subtle signs of this lurking danger in their travels across icy landscapes.

Characters moving at their normal speed can notice Powdered Snow with a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check or with a passive Wisdom (Perception) of 10 or higher. However, those travelling faster than their normal speed might barrel right into the Powdered Snow, sinking into its chilling embrace.

When a creature steps on a Powdered Snow area it sinks 2 feet into the freezing depths and suffers 2 ($1d4$) cold damage, as the bitter cold seeps into their flesh. At the beginning of each turn after sinking into the Powdered Snow the creature takes 2 ($1d4$) cold damage. Provided the creature is not completely submerged, they can attempt to extricate themselves from the Powdered Snow with a successful DC 12 Strength check. If another creature is assisting the sinking creature, the base DC for the Strength check is reduced to 7.

CHAPTER 5: RESOURCES

NEWSPAPER (CIPHER)

New York Times

Monday
Sports p.4
Weather p.31

Business - Politics - Editorial - Obituaries -- TV and Radio - City Life

50 cents

The image shows a newspaper front page with a large title 'New York Times' at the top right. Below it is a horizontal line with five boxes containing symbols. The main headline is 'Business - Politics - Editorial - Obituaries -- TV and Radio - City Life'. To the right of the headline is the price '50 cents'. On the left side, there is a large column of dense, illegible cipher text. In the center, there is a photograph of a grand hall with a high ceiling, ornate decorations, and a large floral archway. To the right of the photograph is another large column of cipher text. At the bottom right, there is a smaller photograph of a large, spiky red flower in a pot, with a person standing next to it.

New York Times

Business -- Politics -- Editorial -- Obituaries -- TV and Radio -- City Life

Monday
Sports p.4
Weather p.31

50 cents

Central Park Botanical Garden Opens Its Gates

New York, NY - Central Park's newest attraction, a sprawling Botanical Garden, officially opened its gates to the public this weekend, unveiling a collection of the world's most exotic and newly discovered plants. The grand opening event, marked by vibrant ceremonies and attended by city officials, plant enthusiasts, and curious locals, has already been hailed as a landmark addition to New York City's green spaces.

The garden, designed to be a sanctuary within the bustling city, features an array of rare flora collected from the farthest reaches of the globe. Among the highlights are species that have never before been seen by the public, sparking interest and excitement among researchers and nature lovers alike.

"We are thrilled to introduce visitors to the wonders of our planet's biodiversity," said Dr. Helena Morris, the garden's head curator. "Each plant tells a story, and with some species being showcased for the first time, we're opening chapters of nature's book that were previously unread."



The meticulously landscaped grounds invite guests on a journey through different climates and habitats, from the humid tropics to arid deserts, each area presenting its unique collection of plants. Special attention has been given to the presentation and preservation of these botanical wonders, with state-of-the-art facilities ensuring their health and longevity.

One of the garden's standout features is the "Ominous Beauty" exhibit, which showcases plants that are as beautiful as they are rare and dangerous. This includes the newly named "Spiranthes Vexum," a plant with a captivating swirl of red and purple at its heart, drawing crowds eager to glimpse its unique beauty.

Educational programs and interactive tours are planned to enrich visitors' experiences, offering insights into the importance of plant conservation and the role botanical gardens play in environmental stewardship.

The garden is not only a place of beauty and learning but also a critical step towards the city's commitment to sustainability and biodiversity. "By bringing these plants to the heart of New York, we hope to inspire a deeper appreciation for the natural world and its preservation," Morris concluded.

With its doors now open, the Botanical Garden offers a serene escape to nature lovers and an educational adventure to those looking to learn more about the planet's diverse flora. The garden promises to be a cherished addition to Central Park, contributing to New York City's reputation as a vibrant, ever-evolving metropolis.



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Spiranthes Vexum

The opening of Central Park's Botanical Garden introduced the public to *Spiranthes Vexum*, a plant with mesmerizing red and purple swirls. Its extraordinary resilience and pest resistance, while impressive, have sparked concerns among experts about its potential to become invasive.

Dr. Helena Morris, the garden's curator, highlights its adaptability, and opportunities that research would bring with it. Botanist Dr. Alexei Petrov underscores the need for caution, pointing out the balance between admiration for its beauty and awareness of its potential danger. As *Spiranthes Vexum* draws visitors, it also prompts reflection on the unforeseen consequences of introducing such a powerful species into another ecosystem.



CHAPTER 6: CHARACTERS

KOWALSKI

PRIVATE

OPTIONAL: PRIVATE

MYSTERY

PRIVATE'S CHARACTER

DEVELOPMENT (IDEAS)

· **Hexblade Curse**

When Private misses an attack on a creature within 30ft of him, he will curse at the target that he missed, using some even for him unknown language. When the creature dies he will feel invigorated as he gains HP (level + Charisma Modifier - minimum of 1). Therefore, Private realizes that he can curse his target.

· **Hex Warrior**

When Private uses a martial or simple weapon that does not have the two-handed property and does damage to any creature, he realizes that it does much more damage than it usually would.

· **Investment of the Chain Master**

· **Pact of the Chain**

· **Spell Sniper**

· **Spells** As a Warlock Private can cast different spells. However, as he is not aware of those he will realize, most often just by chance, that he can use those, either by certain circumstances or by different opportunities in the game world.

· **Mage Hand**

· **Armor of Agathys (Glacial Wall)**

When Private is stuck in the powdered snow in the polar bear habitat for more than one turn, and successfully frees himself from this predicament he realizes that some snow particles are floating around him, forming a kind of shield or aura. This effect gives Private 5 Temporary HP and each creature that attacks him with a melee attack takes 5 cold damage. After this situation Private gains the ability to cast "Glacial Wall", which is indifferent from the effect of "Armor of Agathys".

· **Hex (Weakening)**

When one creature is successful on three ability saving throw checks within one round of combat, Private lashes out with unknown incantations, cursing the target. With this he successfully casts Hex with the targeted ability to be the last ability save that the creature was able to resolve.

A creature under the influence of this spell also takes additional 1d6 necrotic damage whenever it is hit by an attack made by Private.

When the target dies the curse can be switched to another creature within range as a Bonus Action.

· **Find Familiar**

After the random quest encounter at the lake in the Central Park was successfully solved, Private will befriend with one of the goslings realizing that he can cast the "Find Familiar" spell.

· **Darkness**

· **Invisibility**

RICO

SKIPPER

KING JULIEN

MAURICE