

ROSE AND THORN

If either the dollhouse or the chest is disturbed, the ghosts of Rose and Thorn appear in the middle of the room. Use the **ghost** statistics in the *Monster Manual*, with the following modifications:

- The ghosts are Small and lawful good.
- They have 35 (10d6) hit points each.
- They lack the Horrifying Visage action.
- They speak Common and have a challenge rating of 3 (700 XP).

The children don't like it when the characters disturb their toys, but they fight only in self-defense. Unlike the illusions outside the house, these children know that they're dead. If asked how they died, Rose and Thorn explain that their parents locked them in the attic to protect them from "the monster in the basement," and that they died from hunger. If asked how one gets to the basement, Rose points to the dollhouse and says, "There's a secret door in the attic." Characters who then search the dollhouse for secret doors gain advantage on their Wisdom (Perception) checks to find them.

The children fear abandonment. If one or more characters try to leave, the ghost-children attempt to possess them. If one of the ghosts possesses a character, allow the player to retain control of the character, but assign the character one of the following flaws:

- A character possessed by Rose gains the following flaw: "I like being in charge and get angry when other people tell me what to do."
- A character possessed by Thorn gains the following flaw: "I'm scared of everything, including my own shadow, and weep with despair when things don't go my way."

A character possessed by the ghost of Rose or Thorn won't willingly leave Death House or the dungeon below it. Both ghosts can be intimidated into leaving their hosts with a successful DC 11 Charisma (Intimidation) check made as an action.

A ghost reduced to 0 hit points can reform at dawn the next day. The only way to put the children's spirits to rest is to put their skeletal remains in their tombs (areas 23E and 23F). The children don't know this, however.

DEVELOPMENT

If the party lays the children's spirits to rest, each character gains inspiration (see "Inspiration" in chapter 4, "Personality and Background," of the *Player's Handbook*).

21. SECRET STAIRS

A narrow spiral staircase made of creaky wood is contained within a 5-foot-wide shaft of mortared stone that starts in the attic and descends 50 feet to the dungeon level, passing through the lower levels of the house as it makes its descent. Thick cobwebs fill the shaft and reduce visibility in the staircase to 5 feet.

The secret door and shaft don't exist until the house reveals them, which can happen in one of two ways:

- The characters find Strahd's letter in the secret room behind the library (area 9).

DUNGEON FEATURES

The dungeon level underneath Death House is carved out of earth, clay, and rock. The tunnels are 4 feet wide by 7 feet high with timber braces at 5-foot intervals. Rooms are 8 feet tall and supported by thick wooden posts with crossbeams. The only exception is area 38, which has a 16-foot-high ceiling supported by stone pillars. Characters without darkvision must provide their own light sources, as the dungeon is unlit.

As the characters explore the dungeon, they see centuries-old human footprints in the earthen floor leading every which way.

- The characters find the replica secret door in the attic of the dollhouse (area 20).

Once the house wills the secret door into existence, characters find it automatically if they search the wall (no ability check required). Characters who descend the spiral staircase end up in area 22.

22. DUNGEON LEVEL ACCESS

The wooden spiral staircase from the attic ends here. A narrow tunnel stretches southward before branching east and west.

GHOSTLY CHANTING

From the moment they arrive in the dungeon, the characters can hear an eerie, incessant chant echoing throughout. It's impossible to gauge where the sound is coming from until the characters reach area 26 or 29. They can't discern its words until they reach area 35.

23. FAMILY CRYPTS

Several crypts have been hewn from the earth. Each crypt is sealed with a stone slab unless noted otherwise. Removing a slab from its fitting requires a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check; using a crowbar or the like grants advantage on the check.

23A. EMPTY CRYPT

The blank stone slab meant to seal this crypt leans against a nearby wall. The crypt is empty.

23B. WALTER'S CRYPT

The stone slab meant to seal this crypt leans against a nearby wall. Etched into it is the name Walter Durst. The crypt is empty.

23C. GUSTAV'S CRYPT

The stone slab is etched with the name Gustav Durst. The chamber beyond contains an empty coffin atop a stone bier.

23D. ELISABETH'S CRYPT

The stone slab is etched with the name Elisabeth Durst. The crypt contains a stone bier with an empty coffin atop it. A **swarm of insects** (centipedes) boils out of the back wall and attacks if the coffin is disturbed.

23E. ROSE'S CRYPT

The stone slab is etched with the name Rosalinda Durst. The chamber beyond contains an empty coffin on a stone bier.

If Rose's skeletal remains (see area 20) are placed in the coffin, the child's ghost finds peace and disappears forever. A character possessed by Rose's ghost when this occurs is no longer possessed (see also the "Development" section in area 20).

23F. THORN'S CRYPT

The stone slab is etched with the name Thornboldt Durst. The chamber beyond contains an empty coffin on a stone bier.

If Thorn's skeletal remains (see area 20) are placed in the coffin, the child's ghost finds peace and disappears forever. A character possessed by Thorn's ghost when this occurs is no longer possessed (see also the "Development" section in area 20).

24. CULT INITIATES' QUARTERS

A wooden table and four chairs stand at the east end of this room. To the west are four alcoves containing moldy straw pallets.

25. WELL AND CULTIST QUARTERS

A 4-foot-diameter well shaft with a 3-foot-high stone lip descends 30 feet to a water-filled cistern. A wooden bucket hangs from a rope-and-pulley mechanism bolted to the crossbeams above the well.

Five side rooms once served as quarters for senior cultists. Each contains a wood-framed bed with a moldy straw mattress and a wooden chest to hold personal belongings. Each chest is secured with a rusty iron padlock that can be picked with thieves' tools and a successful DC 15 Dexterity check.

TREASURE

In addition to some worthless personal effects, each chest contains one or more valuable items.

- 25A.** This room's chest contains 11 gp and 60 sp in a pouch made of human skin.
- 25B.** This room's chest contains three moss agates (worth 10 gp each) in a folded piece of black cloth.
- 25C.** This room's chest contains a black leather eyepatch with a carnelian (worth 50 gp) sewn into it.
- 25D.** This room's chest contains an ivory hairbrush with silver bristles (worth 25 gp).
- 25E.** This room's chest contains a silvered shortsword (worth 110 gp).

26. HIDDEN SPIKED PIT

The ghostly chanting heard throughout the dungeon gets discernibly louder as one heads west along this tunnel. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals an absence of footprints. Characters searching the floor for traps find a 5-foot-long, 10-foot-deep pit hidden under several rotted wooden planks, all hidden under a thin layer of dirt. The pit has sharpened wooden spikes at the bottom. The first character to step on the cover falls through, landing prone and taking 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall plus 11 (2d10) piercing damage from the spikes.

27. DINING HALL

This room contains a plain wooden table flanked by long benches. Moldy humanoid bones lie strewn on the dirt floor—the remains of the cult's vile banquets.

In the middle of the south wall is a darkened alcove (area 28). Characters who approach within 5 feet of the alcove provoke the creature that lurks there.

28. LARDER

This alcove contains a **grick** that slithers out to attack the first character it sees within 5 feet of it. Any character with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score under 12 is surprised by it. The alcove is otherwise empty.

29. GOULISH ENCOUNTER

The ghostly chanting heard throughout the dungeon is noticeably louder to the north. When one or more characters reach the midpoint of the four-way tunnel intersection, four **ghouls** (former cultists) rise up out of the ground in the spaces marked X on the map and attack. The ghouls fight until destroyed.

30. STAIRS DOWN

It's obvious to any character standing at the top of this 20-foot-long staircase that the ghostly chants originate from somewhere below. Characters who descend the stairs and follow the hall beyond arrive in area 35.

31. DARKLORD'S SHRINE

This room is festooned with moldy skeletons that hang from rusty shackles against the walls. A wide alcove in the south wall contains a painted wooden statue carved in the likeness of a gaunt, pale-faced man wearing a voluminous black cloak, his pale left hand resting on the head of a wolf that stands next to him. In his right hand, he holds a smoky-gray crystal orb.

The room has exits in the west and north walls. Chanting can be heard coming from the west.

The statue depicts Strahd, to whom the cultists made sacrifices in the vain hope that he might reveal his darkest secrets to them. If the characters touch the statue or take the crystal orb from Strahd's hand, five **shadows** form around the statue and attack them. The shadows (the spirits of former cultists) pursue those who flee beyond the room's confines.

The skeletons on the wall are harmless decor.

CONCEALED DOOR

Characters searching the room for secret doors find a concealed door in the middle of the east wall with a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check. It's basically an ordinary (albeit rotted) wooden door hidden under a layer of clay. The door pulls open to reveal a stone staircase that climbs 10 feet to a landing (area 32).