

OLD ALE HOUSE

AN INTRODUCTION

THE TAVERN'S INTERIOR IS DARK AND SMOKEY, LIT BY brass lanterns and a central fire pit over which a pig roasts. The air is filled with wood and pipe smoke, the aromas of roasting meat combine with stale beer and sweat, making for a heavy and slightly unpleasant atmosphere. Hay covers the wooden floors, soaking up spills of beer and darker stains which could be wine or, looking at the clientele, more likely blood. Rustic wooden tables and stools fill the room, around which sit every type of person you could imagine.

As you make your way to the bar you notice something strange. Many of the drinkers are wearing similar attire. Dark cloaks seem to be the style and more than a few are wearing daggers and shortswords at their belts. The bartender is stocky, middle aged and sports a scar running down the left side of his face. "You people lost?" he asks with a slight sneer. Your bard friend winks at you and whispers "I've got this". Turning to the barman he smiles broadly. "My dear man, we are weary adventurers in need of lodging. We have coin of course, but surely your clientele would prefer to be regaled with tales of our exploits? I am a renowned performer and have written many great ballads. Maybe you would like to hear of our latest exploits, in which we defeat the vile Viper Fangs, a gang of villains and rascallions that once resided just to the north of this very establishment?"

You realize the room has gone deathly silent. Someone coughs, there is some shuffling of feet. The barman looks at the bard with an almost pitying expression, then grins coldly. "We are truly honored to welcome such revered folk to our humble establishment. I hope you will enjoy your stay at the Viper's Nest Inn.

NOTES AND TIPS

- 30x45 grid map
- This is a two-level map, there is a balcony that circles the main drinking hall. To the right is a smaller room which contains a stage. There are private rooms towards the back and sleeping accommodation above.
- The drinking hall is circled with a balcony, defined by the wood and rock pillars around the floor.
- Use the balcony as a raised area for ranged attackers.
- Pair this with one of my earliest maps, The Haymaker, an underground fighting club below the tavern. Use the hatch next to the bar as the entrance.
- This could be used as a roadside tavern in the country or a city Inn.
- This is the unofficial tavern of a local gang, which don't take kindly to adventurers.
- There are tensions between local groups. Maybe this is the official drinking hole of the carpenters guild and the stonemasons just can't stand them. They come in looking for trouble.
- A party member bumps into a patron. He starts shouting at them in a language you can't understand. Casting a spell to understand him will only make it worse as he's been shouting about how

much he hates magic users.

- A rival tavern owner has cursed the ale in this place. Whenever someone drinks they must make a con save or be compelled to start a fight with the meanest looking person in the bar.

VARIANTS

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