

MURDER AT MOONVEIL MANOR

A MURDER MYSTERY 5TH LEVEL ADVENTURE BY VALL SYRENE AND MOGMAN J. DUBLOON

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INTRODUCTION

Melcome to the Murder at Moonveil Manor. This murder mystery action packed adventure has been designed for a party of between 4 and 6 5th level adventurers, and should take around 6 to 8 hours to complete.

As Dungeon Master for this adventure, you have the responsibility to guide players through the Manor in whatever way you see fit. Maybe the characters will discover the deadly mystery surrounding the manor? Or maybe, your dastardly villain will manage to take apart the party one by one until there are no more characters left to solve it - it's all down to you.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

Murder at Moonveil Manor is a murder mystery short story, presented here as an RPG adventure for a party of various characters. A balance of classes is not essential, however it is advised, due to the variety of challenges the party will face.

This book is meant for you, the Dungeon Master, alone. We recommend you read the entire adventure before attempting to run it. It assumes that you have the fifth edition Player's Handbook, Dungeon Master's Guide, and Monster Manual to refer to throughout the story.

Spells and nonmagical equipment mentioned in the adventure are described in the Player's Handbook. Magic items are described in the Dungeon Master's Guide, and all monsters will be marked in **bold** type, and will give you a page number reference within the Monster Manual.

STORY OVERVIEW

The adventurers, after recently garnering a small amount of fame within the city of Everhast, have been invited to a weekend dinner party in their honour at the Manor of Lord Berkestaff. The Manor is located on the outskirts of the city within its own estate, complete with gardens, family crypts and lake. Unknown to the party however, Lord Berkestaff is not at all the rich, upstanding member of society he seems, and has invited the group to his Manor in order to appease the demonic spirit housed within it - by feeding them to it, one by one.

Everhast is a bright, happy city, filled with joy and great trade from neighboring towns. Lord Berkestaff is well known as a very charitable man, if slightly eccentric in his decorative tastes. The most action Everhast had seen in a number of years was the brutal Ettin attacks along its western roads through the forests; however after the creature was defeated by a number of brave adventurers, life for the citizens has since returned to normal.

ADVENTURE STRUCTURE

Most of the adventure is structured around Lord Berkestaff and his attempts to feed his dinner guests to the Manor in various unnoticed ways. The NPCs the party will meet during their weekend stay can also fall victim to the hunger of the Manor, and a clever Dungeon Master will utilize this to keep the party guessing who the true culprit of the murders is.

Chapter 1 outlines the meeting and introductions of each NPC that has also been invited by Lord Berkestaff, as well as the Lord himself. Players should be allowed a fair bit of time to explore the Manor if they wish, as well as roleplay their characters interacts amongst themselves and with the various NPCs before sitting down to Dinner, before retiring to their respective guest bedrooms.

Chapter 2 outlines the first night within the Manor. You as the Dungeon Master, or the players may choose to simply sleep through the night. If this is the case, then continue on to Chapter 3 as normal, but remember what information the players may have missed out on during this time. The first night is a simple introduction to the strange noises and creaks of the Manor, and will result in the first NPC death of the adventure. Consider the way in which the other NPCs will respond to the characters disappearance or demise, especially Lord Berkestaff, as to not arouse suspicion from his guests.

Chapter 3 outlines the discovery of the body of Harriet Lockwell, who will have been murdered by Lord Berkestaff, but failed to be eaten by the Manor before her body was discovered. This chapter is designed to prompt investigation from the party, so be prepared for each NPC to have reactions and their own suspicions about who may have committed the crime, and why they cannot simply involve the town guards in the murder. Remember that the Manor itself is sentient but also very intelligent, and will try many strange methods to prevent the remaining characters from leaving - from mysteriously locking doors to creating overgrown woodland around the estate. Be inventive in your methods - it's very likely your players will be in their attempts to escape!

Chapter 4 outlines the introduction of the parties first real combat. This chapter relies mostly on the player choices to both enter the bedroom of Harriet Lockwell and go through her items. Be prepared to introduce an NPC to do this instead if the players decide to avoid it. The Mimic should still attack, regardless of who is searching the room at the time, but also understand that Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 could happen simultaneously, due to the manner at which events unfold.

Chapter 5 outlines a particular attempt at the life of a party member. Whilst this may not outright kill the character, there is the possibility of the event doing so, especially if the character is alone during it. Be prepared for the character death, and consider ways in which the player can continue to contribute to the game, even after their player may have been consumed by the Manor. If the player does indeed survive, then consider how their reaction can be used by Lord Berkestaff to turn the party against one another or move the blame onto another NPC.

Chapter 6 outlines the finale of the adventure: finding the heart of the Manor and destroying it. This will be the second and final planned combat in the adventure, and as such you, as Dungeon Master, should be sure to use every trap and trick both Lord Berkestaff and the Manor has to combat and consume the adventurers before the manage to destroy the heart.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER.

It is important to note that once the adventure reaches **Chapter Three**, the players have many different avenues of approach to completing the story. The subsequent chapters have been designed to be played in any order, however depending on how your players decide to complete the adventure there may be chapters that the party never gets to experience. This is completely fine. The major event that you as Dungeon Master should remember when running this adventure is that if the party reach **Chapter Five: An Unfortunate Accident** before completing **Chapter Four**, the difficulty of the combat in that chapter will be much more difficult, as the Manor will have awoken, and all traps will have been activated and ready to catch out the NPCs and party members alike.

Be prepared for chaos to ensue relatively quickly after the reveal in **Chapter Five**, and make sure to have all traps pre prepared ahead of time to ensure that if the players do jump through the adventure faster than expected, they can still experience the full mayhem of the Manor with little interruption.

THE CHARACTERS OF MOONVEIL MANOR

LORD BERKESTAFF

Lord Berkestaff is the Lord of MoonVeil Manor. He is an eccentric High Elf Arcanist living under the guise of a charitable, caring man, however he harbours a dark secret - He is an immortal, sustained the Manor in which he resides for as long as he continues to provide it with a steady supply of souls to consume. The Manor requires souls once every five years, and Lord Berkestaff has made it his living to not only provide adequate sustenance for it, but to also answer questions to any potential disappearances with confidence and charisma; ensuring that nobody in Everhast has ever found him suspect for wrongdoings.

Lord Berkestaff is a powerful 10th level spellcaster. He is Lawful Evil and very intelligent. His statblock, alongside the other Non combat NPCs, can be found in Appendix A of this adventure.

LADY SILVERHALL

Lady Silverhall is a reputable, if opinionated, human noble from the upper classes of Everhast. She is selfish, ill tempered and prone to assumptions. She has a tendency to look down on those from lesser backgrounds than hers, and talks behind her back to those she believes to be from her equal standing. She was invited by Lord Berkestaff to the celebratory dinner more upon her own insistence than that of the goodwill of the Lord, though he certainly doesn't mind the extra guest within the Manor.

THE FAIRBRAND BROTHERS

The Fairbrand Brothers are known for their joyous laughter, positive attitudes and eccentric personalities. Neither brother knows the name of the other, and it is often assumed they have both forgotten their own names entirely due to old age.

They are always seen together, and often tell poorly timed jokes. They, alongside Lady Silverhall, were invited at the request of Lord Berkestaff due to their work within Everhast. Both brothers work the mills and farmlands around the city outskirts, providing job security and very cheap produce for the working class. Alongside their jovial nature, they are renowned for their kind heartedness.

DETECTIVE RHUBARB

A seemingly bumbling Kobold detective from outside of Everhast. Hearing of the disappearances over the years he, alongside his assistant Constable Custard, have spent time becoming very good friends with the Lord over the months in order to gain access to one of his famous celebratory dinners.

He is a friendly and intelligent character, that plays himself off as the 'bumbling buffoon' in order to get closer to suspects and catch them off guard. He is the most amicable of the NPCs the players will meet, and will happily converse with them and aid them later on in the adventure where he can. When at a loss, the players can rely on his intuitive nature to point them in the right direction.

CONSTABLE CUSTARD

An aid to Detective Rhubarb, Constable Custard is a small, odd gnome with bright, custard yellow hair and a perpetual, slightly lost look in his eyes. While not the brightest and most intelligent of gnomes, he does what he can to aid Detective Rhubarb, and will point things out of interest if the party is at a complete loss, or simply repeat back to them ideas that Rhubarb has already put forward.

AMY O'HARE

Amy is a young Tiefling waitress from the middle class families of Everhast. She was unfortunate enough to be 'hand picked' for the dinner event by Lord Berkestaff after serving him at an upper class restaurant in Everhast. She is friendly, nervous and relatively shy, but shares an interest in adventuring as a way to escape her mundane routine based lifestyle. She is fairly perceptive, but easily panicked. If the party can stop her panicking and earn her trust, she can be a valuable member to help spot traps or hidden doorways throughout the Manor.

HARRIET LOCKWELL

Harriet Lockwell is a tight lipped, strict noblewoman from the high class families within the city. She doesn't talk much, and judges everyone she sees with harsh stares. She has a racial dislike of Half Orcs, believing them to be an 'inferior breed', and will actively avoid any Half Orc characters she may come across within the Manor. She is a talented cook and amateur cryptographer, and can be often found within the kitchens or reading in the Grand Library. She has a tendency to write things in her notebook in a cryptographic sense, for practise, though will always remain subtle when doing it, so not to draw attention to herself.

Harriet is a non combat character, and will likely draw a lot of attention due to her death and cryptographic notes. If deciphered, these notes will be nothing more than simple observations of other guests, though if the players continue along this line of intrigue a clever Dungeon Master may use her notebook as a way of bringing players back on track, or casting the blame against someone else within the Manor.

CHAPTER ONE: MEETING AT THE MANOR

PLAYER INTRODUCTION

What is set out here is a great introduction to read out to players, to help them get a feel for the beginning of the adventure.

You walk over the cobblestone streets of the bustling city, following the hastily scribbled map in your hands. Stepping past the large collections of market stalls, vendors and tradesmen, you exit the beautiful, vibrant city of Everhast through one of its many archways; the cobblestones giving way to natural dirt roads that meander across the green countryside. Looking out over the hills, you can see many fields full of livestock, grazing away happily amongst the wildflowers that border the forest. Along your way, you notice the crowds thinning, until finally you are left alone with these strangers that walk beside you, following their own maps, until you all realise you're seemingly heading towards the same destination - a heavy wrought iron gate, open and leaning against 2 large, gnarled oak trees grown through the railings. A few awkward moments pass as you all exchange glances, before an excitable shout rings down the lane. "Welcome! Welcome! So glad you could all make it! Albeit a little late, but that's understandable given my terrible directions!" A tall, elderly high elf greets you, gesturing to you all further up the lane, towards the grand Manor sitting within the trees. The air, thick with musk and lavender hits you as you all step onto the wooden floors in the reception. Without a beat you are all quickly ushered into a quiet sitting room; books lining a few of the walls and multiple armchairs, sofas and general seating scattered oddly around the room. Sitting in one of the armchairs closest the fire, you see a human woman glance up at you before going back to her notes, whilst an older looking noblewoman scoffs at your late entry from across the room. Lounging back on one of the sofas, you see two elderly gentlemen laughing together, much to the disgust of the haughty noblewomen picking through the books behind them. Opposite, you see a meek - but smiling - young Tiefling woman perched on the edge of another armchair, clearly invested in whatever conversation had brought the gentlemen to laughter. The high elf smiles as he ushers you all forward. As you take your respective seats around the room, you hear the old man clear his throat. Spreading his arms out wide, he nods across to all of you in appreciation. "Well, now that the rest of our guests have arrived - I suppose I should introduce myself formally! My name is Lord Berkestaff, and welcome to Moonveil Manor!"

THIS FIRST CHAPTER IS DEDICATED TO THE INITIAL MEETING OF THE PLAYERS.

Lord Berkestaff will usher them inside the Manor, and players will have a chance to roleplay their chosen characters. During this time, you should make sure to introduce all of the NPCs involved in the story and have each character bring something to the table the players can use to start discussion. Either opinions on the decor, why each character is here, what their occupation is or other simple conversation starters.

During this time the players will also be free to explore the many rooms within the Manor. While there may be traps and creatures setup around the rooms (as per the room descriptions under Appendix B at the end of the adventure) these traps will not be active or revealed until Chapter 2, when the Manor house awakens.

The Dungeon Master should simply treat this chapter mostly as a way of introducing the characters to the rooms of the Manor (including their assigned guest rooms), the characters and the general layout of the building. The rooms have been designed so you can connect them together however you see fit, allowing a lot of flexibility in map design and replayability.

Once the players are familiar with at least a few areas of the house, Lord Berkestaff will call them into the dining room for the celebratory dinner. Here he will recount their efforts at defeating the Ettin that plagued the lands around the city, and allow for any more small talk the players wish to engage in. There should also be animosity between both Harriet Lockwell and Lady Silverhall, as foreshadowing for Harriet's death. It is important at this time to use other NPCs to stir the animosity pot and take any suspicion away from Lord Berkestaff. Berkestaff should attempt to reason with the two women and try and calm down (or entice) the animosity if applicable, though any player or NPC could do this, depending on who the Dungeon Master wishes to be brought under suspicion later.

When the Dungeon Master feels that the information he can provide has been exhausted, or simply wishes to continue with the adventure further, the dinner will complete, and each guest will head to their respective bedrooms to get some well deserved rest.

CHAPTER TWO: THE FIRST NIGHT

INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER TWO.

This is a small descriptive section that can help set the scene for the first night within the Manor.

As you all retreat to your respective rooms, you hear creaks, groans and bangs from around the Manor. Naturally, with it being such a warm day and dropping so cold so quickly, it's not surprising that the building - old as it is - would be settling down alongside yourselves. From downstairs, you hear a few footsteps; most likely Lord Berkestaff making sure the doors are locked and the windows secure. Being this far out of the main city does make this place a good target for thieves, especially with the vast collection of eccentric items you remember seeing throughout the house. You all pull back the warm covers and climb into the soft, sinking beds; the mattresses stuffed with owlbear feathers and the pillows fluffed to perfection. It doesn't take long before each of you drifts into a deep, relaxed slumber, until a crash from somewhere within the Manor wakes you all with a start.

THE MANOR LIVES

Chapter 2 focuses on the strange events of the night as the Manor begins to awaken and feed on its innocent prey. The crash described can be used by the Dungeon Master to draw attention to the particular event listed below, or to simply allow the players chance to begin exploring the house at night. From the point of Harriet's death and the fight with the **Mimic** (detailed later in this adventure) onwards, each room that houses a trap or creature is assumed to now be active, as the Manor becomes alive.

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF LADY SILVERHALL

If the players choose to investigate the crash they heard, they will head downstairs to discover a very confused and panicked looking Amy holding a dustpan and brush, trying to clear up a broken vase from the floor in the Library. If the players question her about it, she will explain to them that she was simply up getting a drink and couldn't see where she was going. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check will reveal that she is lying, and that instead she broke the vase trying to reach a book on the top of the bookshelf, by climbing up it. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check will show the bookcase at an odd angle, and a number of other books pulled out slightly, supporting the true story that Amy did indeed try to climb the bookshelf.

When asked why, she will meekly explain that she spotted Harriet put back a book from her bag into the bookshelf, and she was wondering what book it was. If the party collect the book (a player with a character height of 6 feet or higher or magic can reach it) they will find it to be *The Beginner's Guide to Cyphers: A Study in Cryptography* by Martin Duskyville.

This will come in useful in Chapter Three later for the party if they choose to keep it.

The noise will have also woken the other guests in the house, who will slowly begin filtering into the Library as the players are discussing the book. Lord Berkestaff will be among them, slightly out of breath and dressed in his night gown. If none of the players bring their attention to it, Amy will bring to their attention the absence of both Harriet Lockwell and Lady Silverhall. Lord Berkestaff will state that it's likely they are simply tired and didn't get woken by whatever the noise was, before stating he is also going to retreat back to his chambers to rest, as it is late.

If he notices the vase, he will be upset, but maintain his composure with little difficulty. A successful DC 18 Wisdom (Insight) check will reveal that he is in fact furious about the broken vase, but is maintaining his composure well. A successful DC 15 Perception check will also show there is a slight stain on the back of his left shoe as he heads back up the stairs.

If the party decide to try and look for Lady Silverhall, she will have vanished without a trace. Skip to **Chapter Four**.

If, instead, they look through other areas of the house first and reach the Kitchen, they will come across the body of Harriet Lockwell, sitting beneath the back door to the Manor covered in blood. Proceed to **Chapter Three**.

CHAPTER THREE: THE MURDER OF HARRIET LOCKWELL

INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER THREE.

This is a small descriptive section that can help set the scene for finding the body of Harriet Lockwell.
As you make your way carefully into the kitchen, the musky, lavender scented air becomes coated with a strange smell you are all too familiar with - the smell of fresh blood. You all look to each other, concern lining your faces as you all quickly draw your weapons. Looking over the counter, you see the limp, deceased form of Harriet Lockwell slumped against the wall, coated in blood. Amy lets out a scream and flees from the room, while Lord Berkestaff covers his mouth in horror and heads after the panicked Tiefling, while the Detectives start looking over the corpse.

THE MURDER OF HARRIET LOCKWELL

Harriet Lockwell was murdered by Lord Berkestaff after he snuck up behind her and stabbed her repeatedly with a carving knife. Harriet never saw her attacker, but did feel an elderly hand cover her mouth when she tried to scream. She remembers hearing a crash from the other room, and the hand quickly vanished, but she had already lost too much blood to call out for help, instead slumping down on the floor and bleeding out in a matter of minutes.

A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) Check will reveal that Harriet died from blood loss from multiple stab wounds. If the players leave the Detectives to examine the body, they will eventually discover that she was stabbed three times in the back with a large sized knife. If the players instead choose to examine the body themselves, a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check will reveal the same information, but will also reveal her book, still in her possession.

If the party have *The Beginners Guide to Cyphers: A Study in Cryptography* by Martin Duskville from earlier in the adventure, they can use this book to decipher Harriet's writings. There will not be much there, save for a mention about each NPC she had met before the players arrived. If the players do not have the book, succeeding on a DC 22 Intelligence (Investigation) check or Wisdom (Insight) check will yield the same results. These results are listed in Appendix A at the end of the adventure.

The knife will not be found in the Kitchen. Instead, it will be found in Lady Silverhall's wardrobe, beneath a collection of dresses. If the player's search Lady Silverhall's room, they should proceed to **Chapter Four: Mimics in the Bedroom**.

If they decide to continue investigating the body they should continue along the **Two Brothers** quest below. If players decide to follow Amy and Lord Berkestaff, proceed to **Chapter 5: An Unfortunate Accident**.

THE TWO BROTHERS

During these events of discovering Harriet Lockwell, the Fairbrand Brothers will have made a few terrible puns or jokes to attempt to lighten the mood, then slipped away to start packing their things in their room. If the party begin looking for them, they will find them both in their rooms packing. If questioned about it, they will answer honestly, saying that they don't want to be involved with a murder. If the party can persuade them to stay and help with a successful DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion) check, then the brothers will stay in the Library until they are called upon or spoken to by the party.

The brothers will both recount the tale of them readin in their room when they heard a crash, and footsteps heading down the stairs. They both decided to follow and find out what was going on, and by the time they had gotten downstairs, everyone else was already there. If the party press them for more information, one brother will remember seeing Lady Silverhall heading into her room earlier that night. The other, however, will deny this, saying that she never went to bed because her bed was still made.

A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check will reveal that both of them appear to be telling the truth. If the party have already been to the room and seen the bed is indeed still made, or have suspicions about why the brother knows this, then they can coax the information out of him with a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) or (Intimidation) check.

If successful, they will discover that the brother and Lady Silverhall were romantically engaged, in a manner of speaking, and that he had gone to her room to see her that night, but left disappointed when he found her not in her room, expecting to find her when the smell of Jasmine met his nose from the recently lit Incense stick.

DUNGEON MASTER NOTES

In regards to the Two Brothers section of this adventure, both brothers are telling the truth, and will be confused when the other challenges them for a brief moment before going back to making terrible puns or jokes about the situation.

The first brother did indeed see Lady Silverhall go into her room, and 20 minutes later, the other brother went in to see her, but found no evidence of her being there. The reason for this is because during that time, Lady Silverhall was attacked by a Mimic, controlled by part of the Manor, and eaten very quickly. As she was unprepared for the attack, it took her completely by surprise and there was no chance for a struggle. The Mimic in question is the Rug on the floor, which opened up into a mouth and swallowed her whole in a matter of minutes.

This is further explained in **Chapter Four: Mimics in the Bedroom**.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE MIMIC IN THE BEDROOM

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF LADY SILVERHALL (PART II)

DUNGEON MASTER NOTES

This section is for details on using the Mimic found in this Chapter.

There will be a **Mimic** (MM pg.220) disguised as a Rug on the floor in this room. While Mimics are not incredibly intelligent creatures, the Manor that controls the mimic is, and will only attack with the mimic once a player interacts or stands on the rug for any length of time. In addition to the standard rules found in the *Monster Manual*, the Mimic also has access to the following ability listed below.

MANOR MIMIC

Devour (Recharge 5-6) : The mimic can attempt to devour a grappled target as an action. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be devoured. The devoured target is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the mimic, and it takes 10 (3d6) acid damage at the start of each of the mimic's turns. The mimic can have only one target devoured at a time. If the mimic dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 5 feet of movement, exiting prone, or be dragged out of the corpse by another creature using 10 feet of its movement. If the devoured target dies inside the mimic, its body rapidly dissolves into liquid, which the mimic digests. All nonmagical items and clothing is also dissolved. The target can then only be brought back to life by a *True resurrection* or *Wish* spell. </div>

The party will enter Lady Silverhall's guest room, to be greeted by nothing more than a simple bedroom, similar to their own. There is a large, four poster bed, still made, a chest of drawers with a lamp sitting below the windowsill overlooking the grounds, and a large wardrobe opposite the drawers on the other side of the room. The room itself is only around 15 feet square and is clearly designed as an area in which to sleep and feel comfortable, but not spend any great length of time. The polished wooden floor is covered by a large circular rug with intricate woven patterns across it in various colours, and there is a gentle breeze flowing through the slightly open window, with what appears to be an incense stick of some kind recently burnt out on a small bedside table.

If the party search the room and Lady Silverhall's belongings, they will discover a bloodied carving knife under a collection of dresses at the bottom of her wardrobe on a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check or Wisdom (Perception) check. Nothing else in the room appears to be out of place, though it is clear that Lady Silverhall must have spent at least some time in here as the Incense stick was lit recently.

THE MANOR ATTACKS

ATTACK!

This is a small descriptive section introducing players to their first proper combat - the Manor Mimic.

You stand in the room, confused. The incense stick still burning the last remnants of sweet jasmine through the air; the freshly made bed, and the densely packed clothes. Where could Lady Silverhall had gone? By all appearances, it seemed as though she was settled in here quite nicely, yet if that were the case, why had she simply vanished in such a peculiar fashion? As you turn to walk out the room, pondering to yourself any other locations in which she could be hiding, you feel your leg catch on the rug below you. You look down, only to see a collection of beady black eyes now looking hungrily back.

The attack from the mimic will class as a surprise attack, unless a party member had attempted to attack the rug before it was revealed, and will focus on whatever creature was standing closest to the middle of the rug. If there are multiple creatures on the rug at the time of its reveal, simply choose one creature the mimic will attack.

The mimic will attempt to devour targets as quickly as possible, and will fight off other adventurers while it does so, attempting to hide beneath the bed or other areas in the room in order to break up the party and attack them one by one. It will always focus its attacks on a singular creature, but will change its target if that creature fails to be easy to devour.

Once the mimic has been defeated, the players will have a chance to roleplay, theorize and decide where to go next. It will quickly become apparent that Lady Silverhall would have been consumed by the mimic, though whether or not she killed Harriet beforehand will still be up for discussion. A savvy player may work out that she couldn't have done it, as she when everyone went to their rooms, she never came back out. If the players do not work this out, however, then allow the Detectives to piece together what may have happened when the player's next speak with them and give out the information they have discovered.

Allow the players to explore the manor and proceed to Chapter 5: An Unfortunate Accident.

CHAPTER FIVE: AN UNFORTUNATE ACCIDENT

THE PANICKED TIEFLING

Amy will have ran into the Armoury to try and find somewhere quiet to herself. She will be met by Lord Berkestaff, who will be attempting to calm her down before anyone else arrives. If the players follow her or him, Berkestaff will help the players in calming her down, before entrusting her to the players and leaving to see if he can find the rest of his guests.

If the players do not follow him, or spend too long (DM's discretion) in other areas of the Manor, then Lord Berkestaff will trick Amy into looking at his collection of eccentric artifacts before leaving her to her own devices and closing the Armoury doors, locking them. This will activate the *Sinking Feeling* trap, listed in Appendix B at the end of the adventure and kill Amy instantly.

If up to three players are in the room with Amy, Lord Berkestaff will attempt to kill them all using the *Sinking Feeling* trap.

If there are more than 4 players in the room with Amy, Lord Berkestaff will leave, closing the door as he does so but not activating the *Sinking Feeling* trap. Instead, the Manor will animate 3 of the Armoured suits on the walls in an attempt to kill the party. See **Animated Armour (MM Pg.19)**.

BERKESTAFF'S BETRAYAL

Lord Berkestaff will then retreat into the Cellar to take cover while the Manor turns on all other traps. He will lock the Cellar door behind him. If he is followed, he will instead go to the Library and sit down in contemplation until he has a chance to slip away. If two or less players decide to follow him, he will lead them into the Cellar, locking the door and trapping them inside with himself and the Manor Heart, and attempt to kill them.

If the latter happens, it is advised that the Dungeon Master continue the adventure with the other party members until the reach Chapter Four before continuing with the players in the Cellar, as there is a large possibility that unless all players are present, Berkestaff will be able to kill the isolated players with little difficulty.

The Cellar door will be locked, but can be forced open with a successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check, or unlocked with a successful DC 20 Dexterity + Proficiency check, but only if the character is proficient with, and has a set of, **Thieves' Tools (PHB, Pg 154)**. The Cellar Door is made of unnaturally strong wood. If attacked, the Door has the following statistics:

CELLAR DOOR

Reinforced Wooden Door, Structure

- **Armor Class** 20
- **Hit Points** 30
- **Speed** 0ft. (*Immobile, Door*)

THE MANOR FEASTS

IT'S A TRAP!

This is a helpful description to set the scene to players once the Manor has fully revealed itself and Lord Berkestaff has retreated into the Cellar.

The floorboards beneath you creak and jolt as the walls begin to rumble. You feel the musty air begin to rise in temperature as the building itself springs to life! Clock faces shift into eldritch eyes and doors begins to gnash together menacingly as you look desperately around for a sign of escape. As the windows glaze over into hard steel you realize that you've been tricked! It certainly appears that Lord Berkestaff did invite you for dinner after all, but failed to mention you'd be next on the menu. You hear shouts and panicked screams from the other guests as the Manor begins its grisly feast, and wonder how you and your companions will be able to put a stop to this monstrous manor once and for all. As you draw your weapons, ready to fight off whatever throws itself towards you next, you swear you feel the floorboards beneath you pulse, as if timed to a heartbeat....

The players will, at this point, have to figure out where Lord Berkestaff had gone when he left the room. If they attempt to return to the Kitchen, they will find it transformed into a mass of teeth, currently gnashing away at the Detectives that were investigating the body. The Library will be filled with crazed book mimics, throwing themselves at the two elderly gentlemen with reckless abandon, while the Armoury will be covered in a quicksand like substance rapidly consuming everything within. A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check will reveal the bookshelves vomiting a limitless supply of books from within their shelves. If the players attempt to fight off the mimic books, then they will slowly get bogged down with more and more of them as their numbers increase. Destroying the bookcases will also allow more books to fall through the holes left in the wall.

ACTIVATING MANOR TRAPS

The manor has numerous traps at its disposal with which to consume its unfortunate victims. Each room contains a trap that will activate once players move within that room, either determined by the Dungeon Master or by randomly rolling on the tables in **Appendix B** at the end of the adventure. Once a trap has activated, it will not activate again. After each trap has activated, the materials in that room will begin to transform into acid, dealing 6 (1d10) acid damage per round to any creature standing in it at the start of their turns. Once all rooms have been transformed into acid, it will begin to rise until it fills the entire manor. The Cellar will be the only place that is not trapped and covered in acid, as that is where the Heart resides.

CHAPTER SIX: THE HEART OF THE MANOR.

THE INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER SIX.

THE HEART BENEATH THE MANOR

This is a helpful description to set the scene for the finale of the adventure.

The door swings open, clattering against the stone wall. Before you lies a deep stairwell, descending into the cellar beneath the manor. Blood stains the tattered wooden stairs, while upturned barrels, crates, shelves and sacks litter the corners of a dusty room below. You hear muffled shouting and maniacal laughter from a voice you know all too well - the charismatic, caring, charitable old high elf you knew as Lord Berkestaff. As your feet meet the cold, twisting floor of the Cellar, you see the his humanoid form standing in front of a monstrous, pulsing, wall of flesh. He turns to you, arcane energy crackling at his fingertips. With a roar of frustration, the Cellar explodes in a flash of eldritch energies as the wall behind him shifts, forming a collection of black, domed eyes atop a cavernous maw. You ready yourselves as the creature drags itself out of the wall, vicious and hungry.

The party will come face to face with the heart of the Manor and Lord Berkestaff, who will attack the party in a bid to feed them to the Manor Heart. Once Lord Berkestaff and the Manor Heart are defeated, the Manor will return to its mundane form, and the adventure will be complete.

The statistics for the Manor can be found on the right:

LORD BERKESTAFF

Lord Berekstaff is a 5th level spellcaster who will try to defend the Heart in any way he can. If a creature is reduced to 0 hit points near him, he will attempt to drag it towards the Manor Heart so the Heart can kill them and consume the body. He is a dangerous foe that is not to be trifled with, and a powerful spellcaster. The party will have to work together to stop him, and the Dungeon Master should use Berkestaff's intellect to decide which party member threatens him the most, and take them out as soon as possible. His statistics are listed in Appendix A, at the end of this adventure.

MANOR HEART

Gargantuan Fiend, Lawful Evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armour)

Hit Points 93 (6d20 + 30)

Speed 0ft (fixed position).

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	8 (-1)	20 (+5)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Condition Immunities paralyzed, poisoned, prone,

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Understands Common and Infernal but can't speak

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Actions

Special Multiattack. The Manor Heart makes three attacks with its tentacles; one attack at the end of another creature's turn.

Tentacles. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 20ft., one target. Hit 9 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 14).

Drag. The manor heart drags one creature it has grappled 10ft towards it. If this would bring the creature within 5 feet of its maw, it can make a single Bite attack against the creature as a reaction.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5ft., one target currently grappled. Hit 22 (4d8 + 4) piercing damage.

COMPLETING THE ADVENTURE

If the party manage to defeat Lord Berkestaff and the Manor House, they will complete this adventure. A good way to end the session will be to read out the adventure aftermath description shown below.

ADVENTURE AFTERMATH

This is a description for the players after the adventure has been completed.

The rumbling beneath your feet calms as the fleshy mass screeches wildly; the tentacles battered and bloodied and the maw cracked and dry. The corpse of Lord Berkestaff lies broken at your feet, coated in blood. You look on, exhausted from the fighting, with relief in your heart as you see the fiendish hatred burning within blackened eyes of the Manor fade, slowly forming into simple burns in the wall as the flesh becomes stone once more. You take a sharp intake of breath, and cool, fresh air fills your lungs. As you turn away from the carnage, you all walk back up the mottled wooden steps and out onto the porch overlooking the estate, happy to breath real air once again.

APPENDIX A

LORD BERKESTAFF

Medium humanoid (human), lawful evil

Armor Class 14 (with mage armor)

Hit Points 65 (10d8 +20)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	19 (+4)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Skills Perception +5, Arcana +8, History +8, Investigation +8, Persuasion +7

Saving Throws Intelligence +8, Charisma +7

Senses Darkvision 60ft, passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Elvish, Sylvan

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Fey Ancestry Lord Berkestaff has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put him to sleep.

Trance Lord Berkestaff can meditate for 4 hours a day instead of sleeping normally, but still requires 8 hours of down time for a long rest.

Elven Weapon Training Lord Berkestaff has proficiency with the following weapons: longsword, shortsword, shortbow and longbow.

Spellcasting Lord Berkestaff is a 10th level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability modifier is Intelligence (DC 16, to hit with spell attacks +8)

Cantrips (at will): Blade Ward, Mending, Acid Splash, Mage Hand, True Strike

1st level (4 slots): Mage Armour, Shield

2nd level (3 slots): Scorching Ray, Darkness, Blindness/Deafness, See Invisibility, Misty Step, Crown of Madness

3rd level (3 slots): Blink

4th level (3 slots): Banishment, Conjure Minor Elementals

5th level (2 slots): Dominate Person, Bigby's Hand

Actions

Quarterstaff Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit 4 (1d6 + 0) bludgeoning damage. Properties: Versatile (1d8)

LADY SILVERHALL

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 4 (1d8)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Skills Deception +4, Persuasion +4, Intimidation +4

Saving Throws Charisma +4

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Elvish, Silvan, Dwarvish, Halfling

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Actions

Slap Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

AMY O'HARE

Medium humanoid (tiefling), chaotic good

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 5 (1d8)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Skills Perception +2

Saving Throws Intelligence +3, Charisma +3

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common, infernal

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Hellish Resistance. Amy has Resistance to fire damage.

Infernal Legacy. Amy O'Hare is an innate spellcaster. Her casting ability is Charisma (DC 11). She can cast the Thaumaturgy cantrip at will and the Hellish Rebuke Spell once per day as a 2nd-level spell without material components.

Actions

Punch Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

THE FAIRBRAND BROTHERS

Medium humanoids (human), chaotic good

Armor Class 9

Hit Points 9 (2d8)

Speed 25ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	9 (-1)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Skills Perception +4

Saving Throws Wisdom +4

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Brotherly Bond The brothers always choose which one of them takes damage from an attack, however they are still treated as a single creature for the purposes of armour class and hit points. Once per day, if their hit points are reduced to 0, one brother can choose to drop to 1 hit point instead.

Actions

Multattack Each brother makes a single Punch attack. **Punch** Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

CONSTABLE CUSTARD

Small humanoid (gnome), neutral good

Armor Class 13 (leather armour)

Hit Points 8 (1d8+3)

Speed 25ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Skills Deception +2, Perception +2, Stealth +4

Saving Throws Intelligence +4, Wisdom +4

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common, draconic, gnome, halfling

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Lost in Thought Constable custard has disadvantage on all ability checks due to distractions.

Actions

Punch Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

HARRIET LOCKWELL

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 5 (1d8)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)
---------	---------	---------	---------	---------	---------

Proficiency Bonus +2

Skills Perception +2

Saving Throws Intelligence +4

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common, dwarvish, elvish, giant, goblin, silvan, undercommon

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Racial Hatred (Half Orcs). When making weapon attacks or intimidation checks against Half-Orcs, Harriet does so with advantage.

Codebreaker. Harriet can spend 1 hour in quiet concentration to translate or decipher a page of writing, regardless whether or not she is capable of speaking the language.

Actions

Punch. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

DETECTIVE RHUBARB

Small humanoid (kobold), neutral good

Armor Class 13 (leather armour)

Hit Points 8 (1d8+3)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

10 (+0)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)
---------	---------	---------	---------	---------	---------

Proficiency Bonus +2

Skills Deception +2, Perception +2, Stealth +4

Saving Throws Intelligence +4, Wisdom +4

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common, draconic, gnome, halfling

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

***Bumbling Idiocy** Rhubarb has advantage on any deception check to appear foolish.

Actions

Punch. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

APPENDIX B

MANOR HOUSE ROOMS

The rooms within the Manor house can be laid out however the Dungeon Master feels is the best for their version of the adventure. Next to each sub-heading there is a set of traps designed for that particular room. A collection of randomized traps can be found at the end of this Appendix. Simply roll a d6 or choose from the list when attaching traps to rooms. These traps will not appear until the Manor awakens in Chapter Four.

THE MASTER BEDROOM

The master bedroom is a large, 30ft x 30ft room with vast bay windows overlooking the lake of the estate.

TRAP

"I call shotgun!"

This trap is a tripwire, rigged up to a blunderbuss hidden in an alcove in the ceiling.

Upon activating the blunderbuss fires, shooting all creatures within a 10ft cone. Creatures in range must succeed on a **DC 14 Dexterity saving throw**, taking 9 (2d4 + 4) piercing damage on a failed save, or half as much on a success.

TRAP SUMMARY

- Damage Dealt = 9 (2d4 + 4)
- Detection DC = 14
- Disarm DC = 12 (**Sleight of Hand**)

GUEST BEDROOMS

Guest Bedrooms each have a simple four poster bed, wardrobe, chest of drawers, and lamp around the room. The floor is covered with a circular rug with intricate, multicoloured woven patterns. The rooms are approximately 15-20 feet square. Four overlook the front of the manor and four overlook the back. Additional guest rooms can be added inside the Manor as the Dungeon Master sees fit.

THE LIBRARY

The Library is a circular room with bookshelves on most of its facings, stretching up towards the ceiling. Many sofas and armchairs are scattered around the room, with a small coffee table in the middle laden with books.

THE KITCHENS

The Kitchens are a small, 20ft x 20ft room separated in the middle by a serving counter. A few cupboards line the walls, and there are many cooking utensils scattered around various hooks protruding from the ceiling.

THE PANTRY

The Pantry is a small 5ft x 5ft room attached to the Kitchen. This houses many of the Manor's non perishable items, and can only reliably fit one person in it at any one time.

TRAP

"The Screeching Sack"

This trap activates once the door to the pantry opens. A large potato sack flies out and attempts to attach itself to the creature closest to the door. A creature can avoid the sack with a successful **DC 14 Dexterity saving throw**. If they fail, the sack wraps around their head and screams, dealing 9 (2d4 + 4) Thunder damage before falling to the floor, inert.

TRAP SUMMARY

- Damage Dealt = 9 (2d4 + 4)
- Detection DC = 14
- Disarm DC = 12 (**Arcana**)

ARMOURY AND TROPHY ROOM

The armoury is a long, 30ft x 40ft room with many glass display cabinets dotted around at regular intervals. Three suits of armour are propped up around the corners of the room, while a collection of swords hang over the double door exit. Two glass cabinets 10ft long each and filled with hunting equipment divide up the middle of the room.

TRAP

"The Bear Trap"

This trap shows a collection of hanging bear traps sitting in the middle display cabinets. If a creature attempts to interact with them, or they are disturbed and set off by any other means, they will activate. The trap vanishes, dropping a confused and rather angry brown bear onto the floor in its place, which immediately attacks!

The true nature of the trap can be revealed with a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check**.

TRAP SUMMARY

- Damage Dealt = Brown Bear x1
- Bear Trap Detection DC = 13
- Bear Trap Disarm DC = 13 (**Arcana**)

THE WINE CELLAR

This is a cold, dark cellar with many wine bottles stuffed into alcoves within the stonework. A set of wooden stairs leads below to a large rectangular room littered with crates, sacks and boxes.

Note: This is the showdown room for the finale, and as such requires no trap.

THE DINING ROOM

This room is a warm, inviting room, filled with many art pieces, trinkets and gold trimmed decor. An open fire sits in the far wall of the room, with a large dining table taking up majority of the floor space, atop a square, patterned rug.

THE ATTIC

A dimly lit, dusty room, requiring a small trip up a set of circular stairs to reach from the second floor. There are a multitude of boxes up here, mostly empty, moth eaten and useless. The most interesting thing players are likely to find are the cobwebs.

TRAP

"Suckerpunch"

This trap is a trip wire, located halfway up the staircase leading to the attic. A creature triggering this trap causes a board with nails in it to swing down from the ceiling and slam into its face. The creature must succeed on a **DC 12 Dexterity saving throw** or take 12 (2d8 + 3) piercing damage and get knocked prone.

TRAP SUMMARY

- Damage dealt = 12 (2d8 + 3) Piercing
- Detect DC = 12
- Deactivation DC = 14 (**Sleight of Hand**)

OPEN RECEPTION ROOM

This is an open plan, wide room used for greeting guests of the Manor at the front door. It is located on the ground floor, and has very little within it, opting instead for a few large oil paintings around the walls to attract attention. A fine golden trimmed staircase stretches upwards to the second floor.

TRAP

"Eskillator"

This trap is a tripwire located midway up the staircase. When triggered, the staircase begins to rapidly move downwards. A section of the floor at the bottom of the staircase will unfold, revealing a set of circular saws that whirr into motion.

Creatures attempting to move on the staircase must succeed on a **DC 12 Dexterity check** or move 10 feet backwards towards the saws. If a creature does not move on its turn, it automatically fails the saving throw. If a creature ends their turn touching the saws, they take 5 (1d8) slashing damage.

TRAP SUMMARY

- Damage dealt = 5 (1d8) Slashing
- Detect DC = 14
- Deactivation DC = 13 (**Sleight of Hand**)

TRAP LIST (D6)

1 "SPIRIT OF LARRY"

A rigged blunderbuss sits on a table pointing towards the creature with a tripwire 10ft in front of it. The blunderbuss and the tripwire are completely fake.

If a creature moves towards the blunderbuss they must succeed on a **DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check** or step on a pressure plate activating the real trap. A panel will open in the wall next to them, revealing a second blunderbuss that instantly fires. The creature must succeed on a **DC 14 Dexterity saving throw** or take 9 (2d4 + 4) piercing damage.

TRAP SUMMARY

- Damage Dealt = 9 (2d4 + 4)
- Detection DC = 12
- Deactivation DC = 13 (**Sleight of Hand**)

2 "Hot Box"

A pressure plate hidden in the floor, when stepped on, seals the room and begins firing streaks of flame into the room, increasing its heat to unbearable levels. Creatures within the room must succeed on a **DC 13 Constitution saving throw** or take 4 (1d6) fire damage.

For every 30 seconds creatures remain in the room, they must repeat the saving throw, taking an additional 5 (1d8) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much on a success.

TRAP SUMMARY

- Damage Dealt = 4 (1d6) fire damage initially, then an additional 5 (1d8) fire damage every 30 seconds thereafter.
- Detection DC = 12
- Deactivation DC = 14 (**Sleight of Hand**)

3 "THE PITS"

A Tripwire that, when triggered, opens a small extradimensional pit 10ft deep and 5 feet wide.

A creature falling into the pit takes 4 (1d6) bludgeoning damage, and can spend their action to climb out on their following turn.

TRAP SUMMARY

- Damage Dealt = 4 (1d6) bludgeoning.
- Detection DC = 12
- Deactivation DC = 13 (**Arcana**)

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4 "SLICE N DICE"

A Tripwire that emits a click and the sound of metallic wire being drawn out when activated. A creature triggering this trap must succeed on a **DC 11 Dexterity saving throw** or take 12 (3d4 + 4) slashing damage as two sharpened metal poles swing down either side of them.

If the creature is reduced to 0 hitpoints by this trap, they are killed instantly and their body remains solid for a few seconds before collapsing into a grotesque pile of bloodied chunks.

TRAP SUMMARY

- Damage Dealt = 12 (3d4 + 4)
- Detection DC = 8
- Deactivation DC = 11 (**Sleight of Hand**)

KNOCK KNOCK

A creature opening a room with this trap must succeed on a **DC 12 Dexterity saving throw** or take 7 (1d12) bludgeoning damage and get knocked prone as the door magically flies off its hinges and slams them onto the floor.

TRAP SUMMARY

- Damage Dealt = 7 (1d12) bludgeoning
- Detection DC = 12
- Deactivation DC = 14 (**Arcana**)

"THAT SINKING FEELING"

A 5ft x 5ft area of the floor is actually a pit of quicksand concealed beneath a false floor made of thin, brittle material. When a creature steps on this section of floor, it breaks beneath them and plunges them into the quicksand. The creature will be fully submerged in 3 turns and then begin to suffocate.

The creature can spend its action on subsequent turns to climb out with a successful **DC 15 Strength check**, or have another creature pull them out if they are within 5ft of them and not currently in the trap themselves. For every 5 they fail a Strength save by, the creature loses 1 turn from either being submerged or suffocating.

For example, if a creature would have 3 turns before suffocating, but rolled a 10 when attempting to escape, they would instead now have 2 turns left before beginning to suffocate.

TRAP SUMMARY

- Damage Dealt = Suffocation
- Detection DC = 12
- Deactivation DC = None, simply avoid the area.