

DWARVEN FORGE® WILDLANDS



Fifth Edition Encounters

PART 3 OF 3: BLEAKMYRE SWAMP

Ten Treacherous Quests for Level 5 Players

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MAP OF THE WILDLANDS





INTRODUCTION

The sloshing muck and mire grip to your boots, as the caustic air chokes your lungs. Scatterings of broken stone litter the area. Curious, as you can't recall any civilization resting this far south. A lingering humidity taxes the senses with its oppressive monotony, with every croak and trill of wildlife giving an unnatural cadence to the area.

These are not the sounds of any civilized creature, but made from a carnivorous and carnal symphony. It hungers. It grasps and claws. Then, silence...a disquieting calm as the eyes of the marsh wait with bated breath. But those eyes...why do they burn so brightly? Before you have had time to contemplate existence, your legs freeze and plant. The mud has—no, not mud. Your form continues its paralyzation, turning to stone, as from the depths of its burrow the massive Bleakmyre basilisk unfurls its hood and bares its fangs, enjoying its first meal of the day...

Welcome to the Wildlands! This is Dwarven Forge's third foray into written adventures (following *Dungeon of Doom* and *Caverns Deep*) for the 5th edition of the world's most popular fantasy role playing game. Our past two adventures were sprawling journeys taking you through every encounter in their respective Kickstarters. However, as *Wildlands* was structured differently than the projects that came before it, we thought it only fitting to push into some new territories ourselves. In this book you'll find two separate five-part adventures, helmed by two different designers but utilizing the same setting—the dank Bleakmyre Swamp.

When designing our terrain, one of our key guiding principles is modularity, and that carries over to these adventures as well. Every chapter of these modules is designed to be played either in order or as standalone trials, to be played as a one-shot or dropped into your existing campaign. Although they were designed with our pieces in mind, they can be played on any terrain or graph paper you like, even the *Theater of the Mind*. Ours is not to tell you **what** to play with, but to help you enhance your tabletop experience.

As such, we invite you to consider our designing principles as we were creating the Bleakmyre Swamp. Chief among that, was the nature of any marshland or swamp: water. Utilizing pieces that don't have a square or man-made like termination was a huge factor in helping create the gentle slope of the swamp banks that are the dominant builder of the Swamp line. Pair that with our new 24-in. Texture Mats and freestanding trees, and you can build so many variations on islands or river banks or breaks in the landscape to keep the party bobbing and weaving through a maze of bogland.

The team at Dwarven Forge makes terrain because we love to play these games, and this book is an extension of that love. Chris, Tyler, and Monty let their creativity flow onto the page, and as long as their ideas are able to fuse with your own and create a memorable night at the table, we consider this a success. We hope to hear tales of your adventures in the Wildlands, and above all, we hope you have fun!

- Chris London & Tyler Ankenman

BLEAKMYRE SWAMP

THE BALEFIRE PLOT

BY MONTGOMERY MARTIN



FOR 3-5 5TH-LEVEL PLAYERS



STORY & SETTING

Summary. An illness has fallen over the land, causing decay and death to those who fall victim to it. Alchemists and healers have gathered to search for a cure, but there is a problem: the ingredients needed to cure this illness are only located in the depths of the Bleakmyre Swamp. But something sinister brews through it all, something with long machinations in play. A looming shadow hangs over the villages that border the great Swamp...one that may bring more than pestilence if given the chance.

Encounter 1 (Starter Set). The local alchemists guild have hired groups of adventurers to venture into the dangerous swamp to seek out these rare specimens and return them safely!

Encounter 2 (Wargame Scatter). In order to combine the mystical ingredients into an alchemical formula capable of consumption without the natural toxins corrupting it, a ritual must be performed using a Seal of Binding. Sadly, only one Seal, lost in the Bleakmyre Swamps some years ago, is known to still exist.

Encounter 3 (Explore the Swamp). The haunting tales of a powerful ghost has made travelers uneasy, but great secrets await any who can put Lady Blackrot to rest, the ghostly terror of the swamp. With her end, maybe it could help explain Bleakmyre's caustic nature, and bring it to a close.

Encounter 4 (Heart of the Swamp). Successfully obtaining the Balefire Lantern, it is time to put this powerful artifact to

use but it needs proper fuel to do so: Midnight Oil. The secret to creating Midnight Oil is now known only to a trio of green hags known as the Swampheart Coven.

Encounter 5 (Sorrow Isle). It has all come from this place: Sorrow Isle, lair to a ferocious black dragon and their undead minions. The climactic end to the Bleakmyre scenario pits the adventurers in a last ditch effort to stab at the heart of Bleakmyre, and maybe rid this area of its corrosive influence forevermore.

ENCOUNTER 1: SEARCH FOR A CURE

SWAMP STARTER SET

Hook. An illness has set in over a few townships around Bleakmyre, indicating a possible plague outbreak. Given the desperate situation, the Alchemist's Guild has offered a reward to any assistance that can be given.

DM NOTES

Dr. Shosana Balewyn (a half-elf mage) contacts the characters on behalf of the Alchemist's Guild. She is a studious and gruff potion maker, fascinated by all manner of ingredients, having studied for years under some of the best practitioners this land has to offer. Unfortunately, it seems even those skills aren't quite enough to heal the current affliction making its way through the countryside.

Something is odd about this sickness as well; it does not seem to be airborne, doesn't seem to be in the water supply or the crops, it doesn't even seem to be buffeted by her best salves and tonics. For this level of persistence and permeation, it must be something of a greater power than a typical sickness. Lucky for them, the Bleakmyre Swamp houses some of the most rare and valuable ingredients for making powerful antidotes.

She offers each character a *potion of greater healing* in advance to help them on their quest, and will create one rare potion for each hero as a reward when they return should they return with her whole list.

RUNNING THE ENCOUNTER

Bleakmyre Swamp is expansive, and the adventurer's may not find all of the ingredients in the same place. As such, this encounter has been made with 5 variations in mind, to help characters explore the swamp and find all the ingredients they need.

The list of ingredients are as follows:

- Ancient moss growing on the bark of a healthy Slinkroot
- Spores from a Sorrow Nest
- Petals from a blooming Mephit-Reed
- Flesh of a Viscid plant

Dr. Balewyn can provide a detailed description of each ingredient, so no ability checks are required to identify the correct plants. Once harvested, the ingredients lose their magical potency within a day unless properly stored using the arcane process of the Alchemist Guild. They could be tended by a trained druid to extend that by 1 day per successful **DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) check**. Only 1 check may be made per day.

Hunting for Ingredients. Dangers creep behind every tree and beyond every babbling brook. For every hour of adventuring, roll a d6 or choose randomly from the list below:

1. A Troll and his Croc
2. Bloated Dead
3. Flock of Stirges
4. The Living Swamp
5. Lizardfolk Territory
6. No danger, only 1 ingredient
7. At your discretion, place one or two of the needed ingredients per encounter, with the increase of ingredients increasing the difficulty.

1. A Troll and his Croc. A troll, Flygut, and his pet **giant crocodile**, Pickle, are scavenging in the swamp looking for food. Flygut sits by the edge of the water with a crudely made fishing rod and an old banjo, a wide brimmed straw hat shading his eyes, as he plucks away singing to his pet Croc. Along the bank by the troll is one of the rare ingredients that the party needs.

Should either notice their approach as hostile, they will defend themselves. However Flygut is happy to let the characters go if they offer something better to eat than a group of tasty adventurers. If Flygut is reduced to a quarter of his hit points, he picks up Pickle and flees into the swamp. However, if Pickle is killed, he enters a mad frenzy and will pursue the group until vengeance is won.

2. Bloated Dead. The watery passage before you has a dozen floating bodies between either end of the swampy banks. Resting in the middle of the watery passage is one of the rare ingredients needed nestled at the base of an old tree. If the players enter the water or disturb it in any way, **2D6 zombies** emerge from the water and attack.

The zombies are bloated and blue being victims of the wild plantlife of the swamp which drowned them. Crafty heroes may find a way to gather the ingredients without disturbing the water, but even a small splash will wake the dead.

3. Flock of Stirges. This area of the swamp is filled with a thick mist that makes it impossible to see. Visibility is reduced to only 10 feet unless anyone has a light source on them, in which case their visibility increases to a total of 20 feet. The tops of trees seem lined with dozens of leathery wings.

If the players ignite a light source they are met with many beady red eyes peering through the mist at them. **2d6 stirges** attack the party, swooping in and latching on to them to drink their blood. Amongst the mist filled swamp is another of the ingredients needed but it requires a **DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check** to spot without a light source, **DC 12** if they have a light source.

4. The Living Swamp. A moss covered Slinkroot tree rests in the middle of this swampy clearing. Once an individual comes within 5 ft of the Slinkroot, the moss shudders and gathers into a **shambling mound** that attempts to drag the heroes into the swamp.

If the shambling mound is reduced to below half its hit points, it collapses into swampy foliage as its roots burrow and attempt to regroup. The players are now able (if not already attempted) to remove fresh moss from the Slinkroot. Should they not be swift about collecting their ingredients and moving on, the mound may attempt to attack again.

5. Lizardfolk Territory. In the middle of this swampy alcove, **8 lizardfolk** are gathered around a small fire, a large boiling pot wafts the smell of stew across the area. They clearly have some of the needed ingredients and are utilizing them for cooking.

While wary if approached outright, if they are offered an exchange, or if other food sources were given freely, the lizardfolk are likely to give up some of their ingredients, but if the party tries to steal them the lizardfolk attack them in hopes of adding them to the menu.

WRAPPING UP

Once all the ingredients are gathered, they can travel back to Dr. Balewyn, who quickly starts brewing. If playing an interconnected game, the mixture is not binding correctly, creating a need for a special binding agent.

If playing an independent adventure, the antidote is made within a day to much acclaim.

SETUP

The variations to this encounter don't depend on any specific configuration with the terrain, so you can easily rearrange the pieces between each encounter to create several different areas in the same overall location. The only rule should be, place only one or two of the following each time:

- Hanging Moss
- Viscid
- Mephit Reed
- Sorrow Nest

These will physically represent the ingredients needed to complete the quest.

CREATURE STATISTICS

All enemies within this encounter use the base characteristics and stats of their listed monster in the Monster Manual.

- **Troll** (*MM*, pg. 291)
- **Giant Crocodile** (*MM*, pg. 324)
- **Zombie** (*MM*, pg. 315)
- **Stirge** (*MM*, pg. 284)
- **Shambling Mound** (*MM*, pg. 270)
- **Lizardfolk** (*MM*, pg. 204)



ENCOUNTER 2:

BINDING SEAL

SWAMP WARGAME SCATTER SET

Hook (interconnected). Though the heroes have gathered the ingredients needed to fashion the cure, the resulting mixture is unstable. A special catalyst is needed to merge the alchemical components. If Dr. Balewyn had a special alchemist's stone known as a Seal of Binding, she could stabilize the mixture. A former apprentice found evidence of it within the swamp and went looking, but never came back.

Hook (independent). The alchemist, **Dr. Shosana Balewyn**, needs help stabilizing a cure for a mixture of antidotes. If she could be given a Seal of Binding she could finish the concoction and end an illness swarming the countryside.

DM NOTES

The past day has proven tiring and trying for the good doctor. While the ingredients are powerful and have mixed well together, she's afraid it's unstable in nature and will not make an effective cure at this time. If she had a binding agent to match the power of the ingredients she is using, that may be enough to enact a stable mixture.

She knows of only one such binding agent: an old alchemist's stone, called a Seal of Binding. Its latent power is capable of great feats of alchemical wonders, but sadly they are a rare commodity these days. Even the Guild only has a handful, and they rest in the hands of the guild leaders - all of them are days away at this point, and given the volatile nature of the ingredients, this concoction is only good for another 24 hours, at best.

Dr. Shosana gives the group an area of Bleakmyre Swamp to search for the Seal based on her apprentice's notes. Additionally, the notes indicate that the Seal should give off a strange magical hum that grows in strength the closer you are. Her hope is they will not only find the Seal, but her apprentice as well.

RUNNING THE ENCOUNTER

Follow the Thrum. For every hour of adventuring, roll a d6 or choose randomly from the list below:

1. Basilisk Den
2. Misleading Witchlights
3. No danger, short rest
4. The Tree who Speaks
5. The Dark Lake
6. The Watchful Serpent

Once they have searched at least 3 (or more) areas, roll or choose one final time from the leftover options, then read from the “Final Resting Place” section.

1. Basilisk Den. Entering the dank clearing in the swamp the sounds of crunching and slurping can be heard, the defining sounds of large animals feasting, but a whimper pierces through the noise - someone still lives.

The party finds **two basilisks** feasting upon the stone corpses of an unfortunate adventuring group. Among the corpses, a whimpering gnome lays beneath the pile of rubble of their former party members. They go unnoticed by the feasting basilisks, but for how long?

The gnome will not be able to leave the spot until the enemies are taken care of. If threatened, the basilisks will defend their meal, but could perhaps be distracted long enough for the gnome to escape.

If the characters save the gnome, they introduce themselves as Willowreed Dewdrop. As thanks, they offer the party *2 potions of healing*, and set to work getting out of this wretched swamp.

2. Misleading Witchlights. The adventurers come across a dark path through the swamp, the overhanging trees and haze of swamp gas make it feel like dusk even during the bright of day. After following the path, **1D4+1 will-o-wisps** begin to float along the path granting illumination to the party. The wisps move in various directions, lighting new paths and trying to mislead the party deeper into the dangerous swamps.

If the players follow the will-o'-wisps path without question they are led into a trap, as a **flameskull** emerges from the mire, looking to add another wisp to its collection. The wisps are now hostile toward the group.

If the wisps are ignored, or they engage in combat before reaching the trap, they can find their path forward without being led astray.

4. The Tree Who Speaks. A blackened, rotted tree stands threateningly, the antithesis of the pleasant and peaceful clearing it inhabits. The calm, knee deep waters around the tree are filled with reeds and lily pads, bugs and amphibians littering the landscape.

Once in its clearing, a voice bellows forth (read the following aloud):

Who enters this land, that which is guarded by the Great Watcher? Are you here to pay tribute?

The blackrot tree creaks and groans, as it reveals itself to be a **treant** by the name of Blackbranch who has sat here for over a century and deems himself the protector of the wilds. He has grown accustomed to wanderers, travelers, and local sentient creatures leaving him offerings of flowers, treasures, or rare plants and has grown arrogant with his forced reign over these swamps.

He offers the party free passage if each will leave behind something of value, especially rare plants or magical trinkets. He will accept offerings of gold or beautiful flowers, but if the tree sees any rare ingredients the party is carrying, or a magic item, he will push for them to offer that instead. Without tribute, Blackbranch will strike out in anger, screaming of using their bodies as fertilizer.

However strong Blackbranch is, he is still keen to live, so if reduced below half of his hit points he will bargain with the party, asking for a smaller offering of only a few gold.

If it seems he is bested and facing defeat, he will plead to let the party take his gold offerings as payment for his continued survival, as they matter to him the least. The tree is resting upon 400gp worth of silver and copper left by previous travelers.

5. The Dark Lake. A 20-ft radius break in the mire houses a brackish pool of deep water, whose depths reveal nothing but darkness. Near the center of the pool is a lone tree perched on a small bit of ground protruding from the mucky swamp. Resting at the base of the tree is an armored skeleton clutching a silvery longsword glistening in the swamplight.

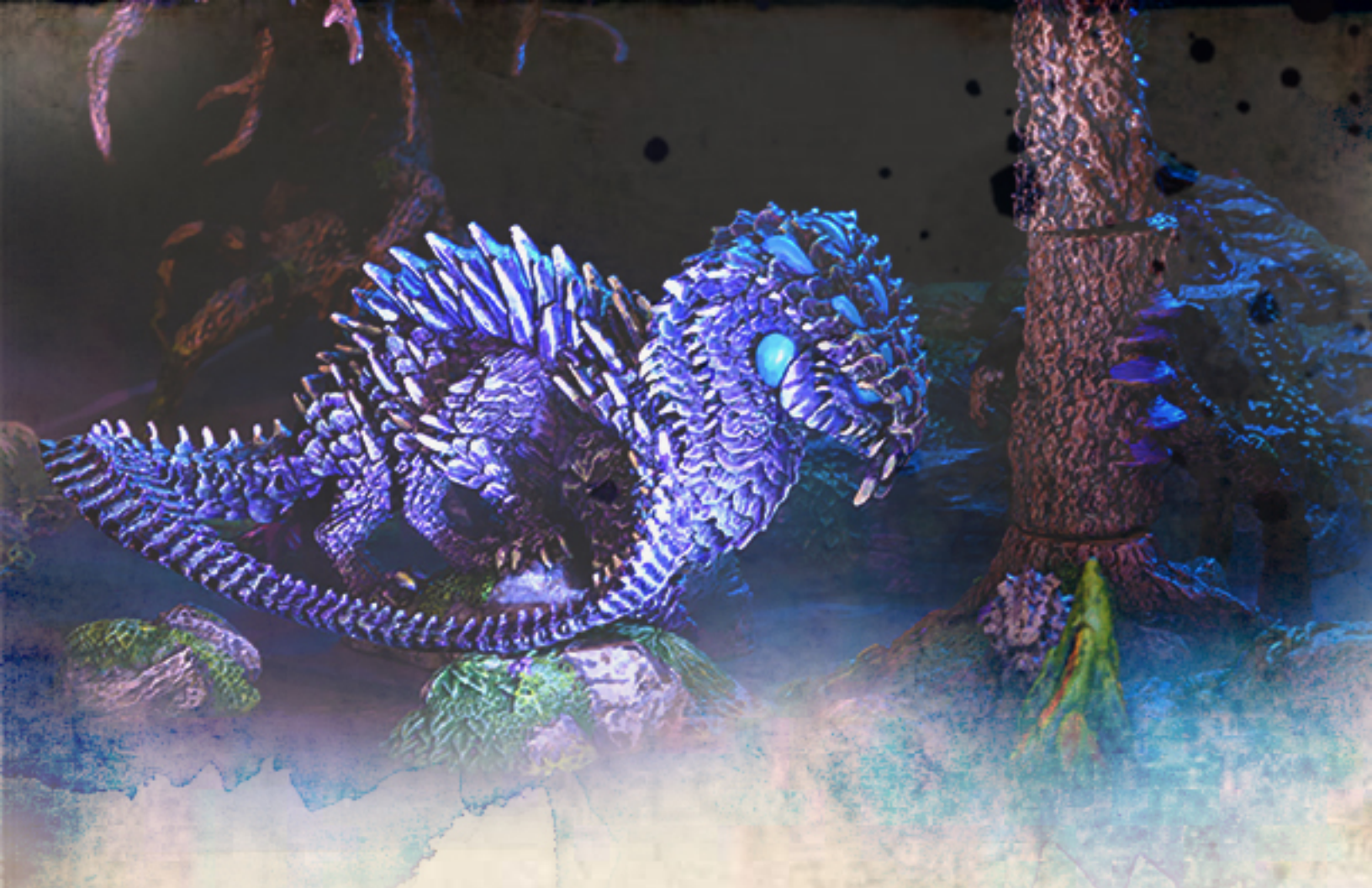
If the water here is disturbed, the skeleton at the base of the tree grips its sword and stands up, revealing a **wight** who bangs the sword to its armor, summoning **2d6 skeletons** who rest under the surface of the water. They attempt to drag creatures below the depths of the water and kill them there, but will pursue characters out of the waters as well.

6. The Watchful Serpent. As the party trudges along, something moves through the brush and in the water, watching from the darkness. A sense of dread fills the already foul air of the swamp, the mist foreboding, unforgiving. No sound of wildlife can be heard as all turns to an eerie silence.

A **spirit naga** hunts this area of the swamp and watches the party intently, hoping to remove trespassers. The Naga revels in confusing its prey, turning them on one and other and watching them scramble before picking them off and devouring them. Choose either to:

- Cast *sleep* on the party
- Cast *dominate* on one of the party members, forcing them to hurt their allies

If any party member fails their saving throw, the naga will begin its assault and strike from the shadows, targeting those that have failed first. Regardless of whether or not the spell was successful, once it is cast any party member not under either spell's influence will roll a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check**, and then begin initiative. Anyone who fails the skill check is considered **surprised** as combat begins.



FINAL RESTING PLACE

The thrum of the seal has brought them here, this final location within the muck. Its ever present noise emanates from a skeleton in wizard's robes, lifelessly clutching the seal itself. A **DC 13 Wisdom (Medicine) check** shows the skeleton looks almost picked clean, rather than natural rot. Something caustic ate this being's flesh from the bones. Once the seal is touched, the skeleton stirs and cracks, as a **ghost** rises from its bones - the dead apprentice enraged and hurt at their passing.

WRAPPING UP

The *Seal of Binding* found and the ghost of the apprentice defeated, it is time to return it and the remains of her apprentice to the good doctor. With the seal the antidote is finished, and the people of the surrounding countryside are free from plague...at least for the time being. Dr. Balewyn notes that as she has had more time to study and see its effects, it seems less of a natural affliction and one of arcane manipulation - so who is manipulating it?

If playing an independent adventure, Dr. Balewyn takes the seal and finishes the antidote, noting that she had great faith in their abilities - however much she doubted that they would ever return. She also agrees to make any two rare or one very rare potion the party wishes.

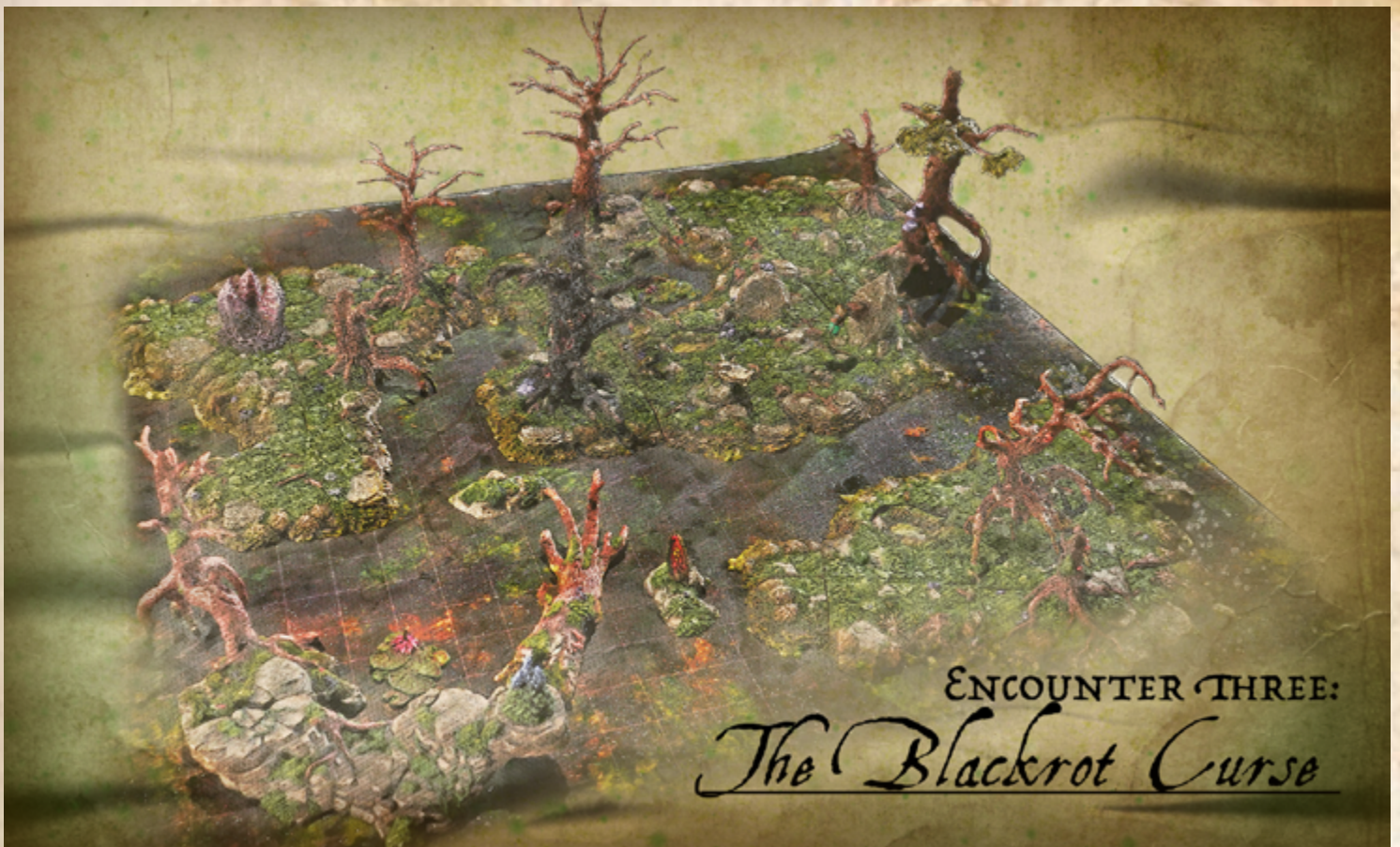
SETUP

These encounters don't depend on any specific configuration with the terrain, so you can easily rearrange the pieces between each encounter to create several different areas. Once in the "**Final Resting Place**" section, place the *Seal of Binding* next to where the skeleton wearing wizards robes will be, as that will be the ghost's starting point.

CREATURE STATISTICS

All enemies within this encounter use the base characteristics and stats of their listed monster in the Monster Manual.

- **Basilisk** (*MM*, pg. 24)
- **Flameskull** (*MM*, pg. 134)
- **Will-o-Wisps** (*MM*, pg. 301)
- **Treant** (*MM*, pg. 289)
- **Skeletons** (*MM*, pg. 272)
- **Wight** (*MM*, pg. 300)
- **Spirit Naga** (*MM*, pg. 233)
- **Ghost** (*MM*, pg. 147)



ENCOUNTER 3: THE BLACKROT CURSE

EXPLORE THE SWAMP SET

Hook (interconnected). Dr. Shosana has been tirelessly working on ways to understand what is going on in the swamplands, and currently believes she has a lead. Legends tell of a passage through the Bleakmyre haunted by the ghost of Lady Blackrot, who may have been the very reason Bleakmyre exists as it is now. If she can prove the Lady is responsible, she may be able to reverse engineer a path to the end of Bleakmyre's terror.

Hook (independent). The haunting tales of a powerful ghost has made travelers uneasy and a bounty is out for any who can put an end to the terror of the swamp and put to rest the Lady Blackrot.

DM NOTES

Legends have persisted for centuries of a passage within Bleakmyre Swamp that is haunted by the ghost of Lady Blackrot. The legends tell conflicting tales about this spirit: some say she was a necromancer searching for rare ingredients in the swamp, others claim she was a princess fleeing her kingdom, and a few believe Lady Blackrot may have created Bleakmyre Swamp as a curse upon those who wronged her.

Each legend ends with her untimely demise, and a horrific tree marks the spot where she fell. It is said you will know the tree by the lantern of balefire which hangs upon its boughs. Her spirit haunts the woods, terrorizing people and monsters alike, claiming many souls who are all then bound with her to the Blackrot Tree. It is said that her skeleton still rests under that tree, draped in a moss and fungus covered black dress, howling curses and defamations at the living.

RUNNING THIS ENCOUNTER

Read the following aloud:

This area of the swamp is eerily silent; no birds or frogs, the water is still. Instead, the only sound is the creaking of ancient branches, and a cold, damp wind moves from deeper in the murky bog. A thick layer of mist hangs over the waters like soup, as the mist seems to reach out with spectral hands and twisted faces mock and jeer at your approach. The cold air and mists seem to spill out of an ancient black tree, twisted and gnarled, that stands tall in a central clearing in the swamps ahead. The branches wave and sway, beckoning you towards it

THE BLACKROT TREE

Dark and foreboding, its gnarled branches extend like skeletal arms reaching out towards the living who come near. Its twisting boughs and crooked frame make all the appearance of a group of people in agony. This in itself presents a conundrum; at first glance these knots and twists simply appear as bends of the tree, but on closer inspection, are eerily lifelike. At the foot of the tree, twisted in the roots is an ancient and moss covered skeleton, wearing tattered remains of a black dress, a low hook-like branch grows above her head.

Upon approaching the solitary tree, the roots of the Blackrot tree move and twist to form a sort of green gateway from which **2d4 specters** and **Lady Blackrot** pour out. Under the command of Lady Blackrot, these spirits cry out at any living creature that they hold them personally responsible for her demise. Lady Blackrot holds her lantern, guiding her guardians to strike out at those who would uproot their tree, their only saving grace in this cruel world.

Playing Lady Blackrot. A flowing black dress covers her withered features as she skirts the water's edge. Her long bony fingers carry the balefire lantern, clawing and grasping at the mist and water of the swamp, hunting and searching for a living soul. (see *Appendix A – Creature Stats*, pg. 36)

Lady Blackrot is jealous of the living for being able to come and go as they please and blames all living souls for her demise, seeing their mere living as an insult to her form she grows ever hateful of the living. She came to the swamp in search of something but can not remember what, but is determined to remember and find what she sought. She will look for eternity until she recalls.

Only her balefire lantern is real - a tangible item held by a desperate soul. A **DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check** can parse through this detail and see it for what it is.

The Lady is vain and is terrified that her beauty has been stolen by the ravages of time. To see her own reflection would send her into a rage, but to be complimented and told she is beautiful might calm her anger for a moment.

If Lady Blackrot is destroyed and the lantern is not used to end the curse, she returns 1D4 days later from the tree and continues haunting the area.

Playing the Guardians. The souls of those that Lady Blackrot has taken from the swamplands are conscripted to do as she asks, to say what she wants, to believe what she believes. If any of the specters or ghosts are slain, they return the following round, emerging from the tree.

The Balefire Lantern. The *balefire lantern* flickers with no visible flame, merely an eerie green witchlight striking out at the depths. To use the lantern, one must first remove it from Lady Blackrot's gnarled, ghostly fingers. Once they have the lantern in hand, a whisper reaches the creature's mind, speaking of its true purpose: to usher the dead on to the next life, and protect the living from their influence.

Lady Blackrot has perverted its purpose, and must be put to rest, for a great evil now resides within the swamp and it must see it destroyed. (See *Appendix B – Handouts*, pg. 38)

Given her long connection to the lantern, if its Turn Undead ability is used against her Lady Blackrot instead takes 2d12+8 radiant damage, and is stunned until the end of her next turn. If this damage is enough to destroy her, she is destroyed permanently (feel free to allow a character to make a **DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana) check** to piece this together as well).

WRAPPING UP

Regardless of how Lady Blackrot and the rest were destroyed, the lantern pulses out one last time with that green glow, as the massive Blackrot tree is broken and burnt in a screaming emerald inferno. As quickly as it appears... it is over. Within a few minutes the sounds of croaking frogs, and squawking crows fill the swamp again and the thick fog resting on the water begins to dissipate.

If playing an interconnected campaign, all that is left after the tree is in cinders is a semi-burnt journal, the front cover embossed with gold lettering: "Lady M. Blackrot".

SETUP

Place the Blackrot Tree as the focal point of the scene, using the various trees and swamp floors to arrange several islands around that central location.

For a more difficult challenge, use the various dangerous plant life or the Grasping Hands provided to add extra hazards to the environment.

CREATURE STATISTICS

The **specters** in this encounter use the typical statistics in the Monster Manual (*MM*, pg. 279).

Lady Blackrot uses custom stats (see *Appendix A – Creature Stats*, pg. 36).



ENCOUNTER FOUR: *The Coven's Goodness*

ENCOUNTER 4: THE COVEN'S GOODNESS HEART OF THE SWAMP SET

Hook (interconnected). The Balefire Lantern now in their possession, albeit empty of its fuel, the heroes bring it back for study by Dr. Balewyn. After surmising that it must be a powerful artifact against whatever forces are still lurking within Bleakmyre, she sends them to meet with the Swampheart Coven, a trio of hags long rooted in the area.

Hook (independent): Segwyk Greenthumb (a gnome druid) has requested the party obtain the balefire lantern and midnight oil from the hags of the Swampheart Coven. It once belonged to his druidic circle before being traded to the hags, who promptly betrayed them and took it for themselves.

DM NOTES

The Balefire Lantern is a powerful artifact, but it needs the proper fuel: Midnight Oil. Dr. Balewyn knows of only one way to properly obtain said substance, and it will not be easy. The secret is known only to a trio of green hags known as the Swampheart Coven. Given how useful it may be in continuing their fight against this Vencurra labeled in Lady Blackrot's notes, she sees it as the only way forward, and gives them the location of the hags' den.

Once the party has properly prepared for their journey, the trip through the swamp is one of low danger or circumstance, until they near the coven's home. A haze rings in the air, the acrid smell of iron and heat sting above all else. Read or paraphrase the following out loud:

As the sun descends into the horizon, the sloshing steps of the muddy waters break way to a plank walkway, all leading past the fog and mist to a central hut. The large ramshackle cabin is two stories high, with mold caressing the each crooked end.

An iron cauldron some 5-ft wide rests in the lawn outside above an open flame, while three figures stand around it, each chanting and stirring, while bickering and gnawing at one another. A large patchwork of a person shamles about, the crooked crones beating it away with a distasteful wave.

As you reach the end of the planks, a crooked finger from the eldest (though it's tough to tell the difference) points to your party, as a slithering voice chokes from her throat.

"Gretchin, Wrenn...we have visitors, and what a pretty little lantern they carry."

RUNNING THE ENCOUNTER

Playing The Swampheart Coven. The coven is made up of **3 green hags**: Auntie Gretchin, Granny Glytta, and Mother Wrenn. In their natural forms, they appear as monstrous creatures with sickly flesh, grotesque features, and matted hair. As wily as they are vicious, the Swampheart Coven loathes only those who seek to disrupt their work or those who do not abide by the "old ways of doing things".

They believe they can outwit any creature that comes crawling up to their step, as mortals always do foolish things when they need something desperately. A perfect triumvirate, each sister shifts readily between these three emotions: greed, gluttony, and wrath. Only one is one thing at one time, so either shift as you so choose or think of rolling a **1d3** before the encounter to determine their moods.

Because of this, they bicker constantly and get distracted by their inner turmoil at inopportune moments. For all of their bickering though, they are dangerously loyal to one another to a fault, and truly when they are together, not much can stand in their way. Should one be attacked, the others will strike back with a vengeance.

Normally they would use their Illustory Appearance ability to appear as three gracefully aged human women, but since this group holds the Balefire Lantern, it pierces their veil.

Bogdan, the Flesh Golem. The Swampheart Coven are protected by a grotesque and waterlogged flesh golem who they affectionately call "Bogdan" (said like, "Bog Dan"). The hags have been working on stitching together the golem for some time, but it is unfinished and lacks important parts: an eye, an ear, a nose, a tongue, and a finger. In their words, it remains a "senseless idiot". Lacking these body parts, the golem has disadvantage on attack rolls, saving throws, and ability checks.

It takes the hags one hour of work to attach a body part to the golem.

If the golem is given a body part, whenever the golem takes damage, half the damage taken is instead taken by any creature who gave it a body part.

NEGOTIATING WITH A HAG

Willing to negotiate for draughts of Midnight Oil, the Swampheart Coven has only one request as payment: body parts to complete their golem. However, they explain that "Dead flesh will not do, only fresh flesh willingly given will suffice for our purpose!"

The hags wish to personally harvest the flesh from a live willing creature, and they won't accept body parts from an aberration, beast, monstrosity, or undead. Furthermore, they demand a different donor for each body part, rather than a single creature.

However, they'll accept an offer to take multiple body parts from a single impressive "specimen" with a successful **DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) check**. A humanoid creature with a Wisdom, Intelligence, or Charisma score of 18 or higher would be suitable, but the hags can be bargained into accepting a creature with an 18 or higher in any attribute by making another successful **DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check**. In this case they demand the tongue of the well-spoken individual as well!

- The hags could be tricked via cunning into accepting a cleverly disguised fake, such as offering a sausage or carrot in place of a finger, a cabbage or cauliflower for an ear, mushrooms or fungi as a nose, grapes or olives for eyes, a slug or leech for a tongue.
- The party could convincingly pantomime the decoy as being taken from their actual bodies by using disguise kits, sleight of hand, or outright deception.
- The green hags make ability contests against the creature's ability check results or Spell Save DC, using their Insight (+2), Perception (+4), or Investigation (+1) as appropriate. While the hags are examining the specimens, the party may attempt to distract them by some creative means, causing the hags to make their checks with disadvantage.
- The hags giggle with delight if they detect a fake or decoy, and chide the characters like a knowing aunt or grandmother. The first such deception impresses the hags, but demands a genuine offering. On a second, they become irritated, quipping "*Fool me thrice, and shame will befall us both.*" Should they detect a third, they become enraged, screeching, "*You can't trick a trickster, so we'll take what's due and promised to us!*" Roll initiative.

NEGOTIATIONS WERE SHORT

If the hags are ambushed or attacked unexpectedly, they immediately flee using their "Invisible Passage" ability. Should the hags successfully escape, they'll regroup and plan their own ambush. They may invisibly stalk the group through the swamp until an opportune moment.

If the hags attack because the party failed to negotiate with them, their goal is to incapacitate as many of them as possible. They cast hold person or polymorph spells to transform characters into feeble woodland creatures such as a field mouse, toad, or snail. Once incapacitated, they immediately take them as captives.

Should any of the hags be reduced to 20 hit points or fewer, or when any of the other hags are slain. However, they will remain if they have already incapacitated one or more of the party.



WRAPPING UP

If the characters offer fresh body parts to the hags, the trio rewards the party with three freshly-brewed vials of midnight oil for the Balefire Lantern. If they gave up their own parts, they are now eternally bound to the flesh golem and the hags will use their parts to scry on them – and might attempt to further manipulate them in the future.

If the players tricked the hags with false body parts, it may only be a matter of time before they realize the ruse, and seek vengeance on the players. The hags will ask for what they are owed ten fold.

If the players refuse the hags, they will attempt to trap the players and take what they need anyways.

A single flask of midnight oil can be recovered from the cauldron if the hags are driven off, tricked, or defeated. See the description of the Balefire Lantern for how the midnight oil may be used.

SETUP

This encounter uses the “Heart of the Swamp” main build with the following adjustments. Attach the Balefire Lantern to the Vertical LED Socket Rock, and place this piece on top of the Stepped Rock. This is where the hags gather to practice their magic.

You may wish to rearrange some of the trees around this pool to form a grove or circle around this focal point. Add other arcane accessories, such as a cauldron, containers with alchemical ingredients, or a stone slab where the flesh golem is placed.

CREATURE STATISTICS

All enemies within this encounter use the base characteristics and stats of their listed monster in the Monster Manual.

- **Flesh Golem** (*MM*, pg. 167)
- **Green Hag** (*MM*, pg. 176)



ENCOUNTER 5: DEEP-ROOTED MACHINATIONS

SORROW ISLE SET

Hook (interconnected). Dr. Balewyn has spent a long week collecting and deciphering as many texts as she can to attempt to find the “heart” of Bleakmyre. All evidence points to a massive arcane presence to the southwest depths of the swamp, something that exerts its will over the land simply by existing. It has come to this: she believes this to be the end of Bleakmyre, should the party succeed.

Hook (independent): Legends tell of a great horde of treasure resting deep within the Bleakmyre, consisting of vast amounts of knowledge and wonders collected from anything lost within the waters of the marshland. Something foul resides at the heart of “Sorrow Isle”, a despot of lost trinkets, seeking to spread its dominion beyond the borders of the swamp. The party has been paid a handsome bounty to rid the swamp of this creature, and return the lost goods.

DM NOTES

Dr. Balewyn has done it! She has pieced together whatever clues and writings exist, both from the local area and Lady Blackrot’s journal, to discover at long last what may be the “heart” of the swamp. Something has placed all of the swamp under its influence, a massive arcane signature rests within the very water and plants of the swamp.

Balewyn says:

I had been hemming and gnawing at the cause of that sickness for some time now. I tested the plants, I tried the air, but nothing. It wasn't the water that passed on that plague either - but the Culicidae (mosquitos) that preside over its entirety! What little living creatures there are on the outskirts taught me as much from their corpses.

She continues to theorize that whatever could create those minute changes, such deliberate influence over other creatures, would easily be capable of shaping the marshland to its own ends. That degree of strength made it likely to come from one source: a dragon. All of Lady Blackrot’s notes seem to indicate the same, with how lovingly and almost obsessively she indicates the power and authority of her instructor Vencurra.

She knows what she is asking, but she has been able to trace its influence to the southwest depths of Bleakmyre, at the farthest edges of the swamp. Using the Balefire Lantern should guide them through the treacherous landscape, as its light will glow brighter the closer the group comes to the dragon's home.

There is bound to be treasure and knowledge beyond compare within its lair, but even beyond that she knows the party has the tenacity to pull through and prove victorious.

RUNNING THE ENCOUNTER

At least the start of the journey into Sorrow Isle will require the party to be riding the Bayou Barge, given the swaths of water that pool around it. Once you have deemed the party fit to arrive at Sorrow Isle, the home of Vencurra, read or paraphrase the following out loud:

The slosh of the oar in the brackish water never seems to hit soft enough. Knobbled trees with skeletal branches cling to the water's edge. Hanging moss and sickly foliage are draped from their limbs like sheets of wretched and rotting flesh sagging from gnarled bones. The green light from the Balefire Lantern exposes thick masses of algae collected on the water's surface, as the putrid stench of decay hangs within the humid swamp air. A loud toad croaks amidst the sloshing and gurgling of the swamp water.

Upon a muddy isle are ancient arcane arches. Though damaged, the majestic runes still glimmer upon the marbled surface, though the stone is unlike any native to the region - as if it was ripped from its original place and slammed into muck. Shimmering coins from a pile of treasure heaped within the ring of arches.

TERRAIN FEATURES:

Vencurra has shaped and molded Bleakmyre Swamp into her own plaything, experiments and hypotheses run to the core of every plant, of each carefully crafted undead minion. Nowhere is this more exemplified than the half mile surrounding her lair. The Balefire Lantern may have led past the other dangers... but here there be a dragon, ready and waiting to expand her collection of petri dishes known as mortals.

The very earth of Sorrow Isle viciously lashes out at the party, seeking to protect the secrets held within the horde of coins and books.

Watery Depths. Water-filled areas within 5 feet of an area of dry land are shallow enough for medium-sized creatures to stand. A creature that ends its turn within this 5 foot area must make a **DC 15 Strength saving throw** or be **restrained** within the mud. A creature can spend an action

to repeat the saving throw, breaking free from the mud on a success.

Beyond that 5 foot distance, creatures must swim to be able to move through the water. The drop goes to 30 ft immediately after that 5 foot distance. A creature under the water's surface is treated as having three-quarters cover from any creature above the water. A creature which is 5 feet or more below the water's surface has total cover from any creature above the water.

The murky depths of the water impairs any submerged creature's vision, treated as total darkness beyond five feet.

Floral Dominance. The malevolence of the green dragon has given some semblance of sentience to the plants and trees of this area. While they are not fully animate, once Vencurra reveals herself and combat is initiated they act on initiative count 10. See "**Playing the Plant Life**" for more information.

Bayou Barge. Two medium-sized creatures can take up the oars to row the barge. A rower may spend an action to row the boat on their turn, which moves the barge up to 10 feet. If a third creature spends an action to operate the tiller in the back, the boat moves an additional 10 feet.

- **Fire the Harpoons!** The harpoon launchers are treated as ranged weapons with the loading, ammunition, and two-handed properties, 120 / 300 feet range, and deals 18 (4d8) piercing damage on a hit. In addition, a creature hit by an attack made with the harpoon launcher must make a **DC 15 Dexterity saving throw**. On a failed saving throw, the creature becomes harpooned.
 - While harpooned, a creature cannot move further away from the harpoon launcher. It can use an action to try to break the line and attempt a **DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check**. On a successful check, the harpoon line is broken and the creature can move again as normal.
 - Attacks can't be made with the harpoon launcher while it has a target harpooned. A harpoon launcher can only have one target harpooned at a time.
- **Reel Them In!** While the harpoon launcher has a creature harpooned, a creature can use an action to pull the harpooned target towards the launcher by reeling in the line. The harpooned target must make a **DC 15 Strength saving throw**. It is pulled 30 feet towards the harpoon launcher on a failed save, or up to 15 feet on a successful save. However, if the harpooned creature succeeds the save by 5 or more, it instead breaks the line and is no longer harpooned.
- **Release!** A creature can use a bonus action to release a harpooned creature from the line.
- **Cutting the Line.** The harpoon line can be attacked. It is an object with AC 20, 15 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

THE DRAGON OF SORROW ISLE

Once the party is near the center island structure, read or paraphrase the following out loud:

The surface of the lake breaks with a crash as an immense dragon launches from the depths and air. Thick water droplets fall from its batlike wings like heavy rain. The dragon's glistening emerald scales are covered in algae and moss, and with each breath it exhales billowing fumes of corrosive gasses from its nostrils. The gnarled horns upon its brow resemble the limbs of some dead tree, and its yellow-green teeth drip with ichor. It roars with a frothy and thick cadence, holding back a seething rage like water about to boil over. The dead begin to rise from the watery depths below, answering the call.

Playing Vencurra. Vencurra has been operating within Bleakmyre for just over a century. She's made this place not only a home, but a breeding ground for her experiments. As such, she values those experiments and trials more than the items or gold that litters her lair - but not by much.

Most of her wealth is hidden in a vast hoard beneath the murky waters, or trapped within dangerous plants that only she can soothe. Such is her great connection to the swamp that she considers even the plants and water to be part of that treasure. Anything lost within the depths of Bleakmyre eventually finds itself carried away by algae or her undead minions, like ants to a farm. Thoroughly meticulous, should anything go missing she would furiously search for it, possibly even ignoring other threats should it be of great enough value.

She wishes to not be bothered by this interruption to her great work - only one ever proved useful in her endeavors, and after her demise saw the Balefire Lantern going missing, her research has reached a plateau. But now... it has walked directly into her domain, freely. She will offer the party only one chance, one escape: hand over the Balefire Lantern, and never return. Could be a lie, could not be - she seems to be mulling it over.

If the party disagrees, she revels in their folly. Vencurra should immediately take advantage of her superior swim speed and flying speed to stage deadly hit-and-run attacks against the players.

This combined with the deep, murky waters of Sorrow Isle mean that these waters are a perfect hiding and ambush point. The dragon is able to fly out from the water, then dive back below the surface. Meanwhile, the hordes of the ancient dead defeated by the dragon spill out from the waterbanks to attack the player characters on the shore.

Playing the Drowned Dead Minions. The dragon's undead minions operate under their normal characteristics, but gain the following traits:

- Gain a swimming speed equal to their land speed
- Blindsight to a range of 10 feet
- While in the 5 feet of water next to dry land, they do not have to make Strength (Athletics) checks if they end their turn in the space.

Playing the Plant Life. While Vencurra lives, all the plant life within the area gains a degree of sentience. All trees and plants should bend and sway to the will of the dragon, lashing out or spraying toxins at her command. For more information about the unique abilities of the flora available in this encounter, use the Wildlands Bestiary.

Once initiative is rolled, all plants have the option to act on initiative count 10. For all plants or trees besides the slinkroot, they must have a creature within 15-ft of them to be able to act, and only three plants may act on initiative count 10 per round. As the **slinkroot** is capable of movement, it may utilize a turn on the initiative count to both move and attack.

Once Vencurra is defeated, all plant life in the area goes back to its original stasis, and unique plant life (such as the **mephit-reed** or **sorrownest**) is eradicated.

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

You can adapt Sorrow Isle to challenge parties of either 5th, 10th, or 15th level:

- 5th Level. A **young green dragon** is the ideal adversary for characters of this level. Her undead minions are **skeletons** and **zombies**.
- 10th Level. An **adult green dragon** is an appropriate challenge, and uses **ghouls** and **ghasts** for her undead minions.
- 15th Level. The true **Vencurra, Shadow Dragon** (see *The Wildlands Bestiary*, pg.) makes for a suitable threat to such powerful heroes. You'll want to use **wraiths** and **wights** for her undead minions.

In any case, this adventure is a challenging climatic encounter which expects the party to "pull out all the stops" to defeat the dragon. Vencurra will take every advantage of the favorable terrain offered in Sorrow Isle, so the player characters will need to likewise adopt a cunning strategy and use the environment and the Balefire Lantern to their advantage if they're to come out on top!

SETUP

This encounter uses the standard setup of the Sorrow Isle as shown in the set graphics. However, you may wish to consider a few modifications:

Depending on the dragon you're using, you may want to create more negative space in the water areas by moving the banks and land tiles further apart. Especially if you are running the encounter for 10th or 15th level characters, you should ensure there is plenty of space for a Huge or Gargantuan dragon. However, it's important to keep a good sized area of land in the middle of the set up. Don't push the bank pieces too close to the edge of the setup, as this might prompt the player characters to move "off the edge" of the terrain.

Optional addition for existing dwarven forge collectors: If you own other Dwarven Forge terrain pieces, a ruined tower created with the Castle Builder or City Builder pieces is a fantastic addition to this encounter. It's ideally placed in the middle of a large water area to create the impression of a tower sinking into the swamp, and filled with the dragon's treasure and nest.

WRAPPING UP

As the final strike tears through the mighty drake, a shrieking and pained roar echoes and vibrates through the fabric of Bleakmyre. The plants and trees, once animate from her magic, bend and break as they wither to the fetid soil. Even through all of her thrashing and whirling the party protects themselves from her death throes, until her body sinks into the bog, her head driving its weight into the bank.

Upon returning to town, Dr. Balewyn thanks the party for their perseverance and tenacity when dealing with such a grand foe. Finally, Bleakmyre may return once again to its natural state.

The party gains the following from the great Vencurra's horde:

- 200,000 gold pieces (split between coins and gems)
- A mid-size chest (protected from the water), full of research notes and 5 spell scrolls (your choice of what spells, but no higher than level 3). These research notes can be used to give advantage to Intelligence-based skill checks related to plants, trees, etc., both magical and non-magical.
- 4 minor magic items, chosen from the *DMG* (or other source of your choice)
- 1 major magic item, chosen from the *DMG* (or other source of your choice)



CREATURE STATISTICS

All enemies (unless otherwise stated) within this encounter use the base characteristics and stats of their listed monster in the Monster Manual.

- **Green Dragon** (*MM*, pg. 95)
- **Skeletons** (*MM*, pg. 272)
- **Zombie** (*MM*, pg. 315)
- **Ghouls** (*MM*, pg. 148)
- **Ghasts** (*MM*, pg. 148)
- **Wight** (*MM*, pg. 300)
- **Wraith** (*MM*, pg. 302)

BLEAKMYRE SWAMP

BASILISK DUNDASILISK

BY CHRIS LONDON AND TYLER ANKENMAN



FOR 3 TO 5 5TH-LEVEL PLAYERS



STORY & SETTING

Summary. A series of ghastly attacks have been happening in the swamps of Bleakmyre, threatening monsters and humanoids in equal measure. Every third night a terrible fog sets in, flashes of green light echo throughout its opaque mist, and a fresh set of dust is all that remains of your neighbor. The party is called to find the “legendary” hunter originally called upon to deal with the problem, and to help them finish their mission - catalog and defeat a unique mutation, the Bleakmyre Basilisk!

Encounter 1 (Starter Set). A city on the outskirts of Bleakmyre Swamp has been facing terrors and the party is approached by a lone figure - haggard and nervous - about a rescue mission that the traveling group seems to be well suited for.

Encounter 2 (Wargame Scatter). Moving through the murky and dangerous swamp, the party hears monstrous screeches mingled with screams. They rush towards the source of the noise to see if they can help.

Encounter 3 (Explore the Swamp). Having just rescued their hunter charge, Dundasilisk has informed the party that she knows of an herbal remedy for the Basilisk’s petrification that can save their crew. Unfortunately, the ingredients lie ever deeper within the swamp.

Encounter 4 (Heart of the Swamp). On the way to apply the antidote to their entourage, Dundasilisk stops and notices tracks on the ground. Shouting that it’s the basilisk

they’ve been hunting this whole time, she takes off into the night—along with the party’s reward if they don’t keep her alive.

Encounter 5 (Sorrow Isle). Having reached the petrified victims of the basilisk, the party has to make camp while Dundasilisk’s remedy takes effect. Night falls, and as they take turns on watch, the local wildlife suddenly falls silent. They know their true prey is still out there—but what if it’s aware of them as well?

ENCOUNTER 1: BEEAHLASCHTOCK & GLOOM SWAMP STARTER SET

Hook. While spending an evening in a swamp-side town, the party is approached by a lone figure - haggard and nervous - about a job that the traveling group seems to be well suited for.

DM NOTES

The dwarven figure introduces themselves as Max Beeahlaschtock, of Slievrwym Publishing. Whether the sweat on their brow is from wearing a three piece suit in the humid swamp or his current emotional state is left to anyone’s guess. He tells of how he is currently on the job with his usual discovery partner, collecting inspiration for a new series of adventure novels. The two sought out

Bleakmyre for its vast and unmapped landscape, as well as a host of terrifying and mutated creatures.

It should have been an easy affair - hire a group, go in, get the materials, recount the tale to as many as can hear it. Best laid plans, and all that. The matter at hand: his partner and the group of three others originally hired to trudge through the swamp have gone missing. While the safety of everyone is certainly a concern, Mr. Beeahlashtock is willing to pay a handsome reward for at least finding their leader, who he only ever says is a "renowned huntress" (**DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check** to discern he only cares about the huntress). He stresses this point heavily: their identity must be kept secret, as it would harm their reputation should people know something had gone wrong.

Once the party accepts and is prepared to go, they should find it easy enough to follow the trail left by the huntress' party (they left behind a trail of notches every few trees). If you want added danger, you can set a **DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check** to notice these notches and have random encounters along the way to keep them on edge. The creatures in Bleakmyre are strange and mutant - plants and animals alike have alien or caustic natures to them.

Either way, after a few hours of searching they'll come across a grisly scene. Read the following aloud:

Trudging through the muck, your feet find solid ground as you come into a clearing. There's a terrifying tableau before you; what looks like a statue of a halfling stands rooted to the spot, and her expression is one of pure terror.

Looking around, you see a gnarled tree with a stiff stone figure dangling from its branches. Just off the way, you see what appears to be a dragonborn on their knees, their head and shoulders inside of a bizarre purple plant, pulsing and undulating.

The scene is an unsettling one, but it stands out that there are only three humanoid forms - and no other bodies. Perhaps there are clues near the bodies or in the area as to the whereabouts of the fourth traveler. The halfling provides no further insight, while the purple plant appears to be slowly ingesting the dragonborn into its center. Fortunately, there seems to be something dangling from the body in the gnarled tree.

RUNNING THE ENCOUNTER

TERRAIN FEATURES:

The **slinkroot** and **sorrownest** work in tandem in this portion of the swamp, a symbiotic relationship helpful to each continuing to gather prey. The slinkroot the muscle, placing the bodies within the sorrownest's petals, and it in turn changing the soil in the area to feed the slinkroot's perpetually dead makeup. The party will need to defeat both plants to end the encounter, as neither stop fighting once the combat begins.

Playing the Slinkroot. The massive "dead" tree stays immobile until approached, though a successful **DC 20 Wisdom (Nature) check** reveals its false appearance. A creature that gets within 10 feet of the slinkroot to investigate, will be attacked and surprised by the tree. If its appearance is seen through, it will initiate combat as the adventurers keep their distance.

Dangerous Flora. The purple plant, the sorrownest, is a source of psychic terror, and as such if there are any psychic sensitive members of the party they should immediately feel a ping from its form. It wants to create confusion and panic, making the slinkroot more likely to win. If it is attacked by any creature within 5-ft of its position, or on **Initiative count 10** with a range of 20-ft, a psychic blast lashes out at the foe. The creature makes a **DC 13 Wisdom saving throw**, suffering 2d4 psychic damage and is **stunned** for one round on a failure, overcome with an insurmountable grief. On a success, the creature suffers half damage and is not **stunned**. Each sorrownest may only use this effect once per round.

WRAPPING UP

With the monstrous plants eradicated, a brief respite shows that none of the bodies hold any clues to who was who, but the one in the tree did have a small satchel with 2 potions of greater healing, which are free for the party to take for their own.

If the party is capable of using spells such as greater restoration, allow the unperturbed creatures momentary dialog describing their terror - a hooded lizard, like a snake, with glowing emerald eyes. They do not stay, and do not want to help find the huntress but will define the three members to not have been her.

Just as the investigation reaches a dead end, a shriek - followed closely by a fierce yelling! Off in the next landing of swamp-land someone seems to be in trouble. Could it be the fourth member of the unfortunate troupe? The party races forward as this chapter closes...

SETUP

As the Swamp Starter has no official set up, the important thing to do is to make sure to keep the Slinkroot (SP-710) separate from the Sorrownest (SP-713), as well as any other hazardous plant you put inside the area.

CREATURE STATISTICS

The creatures listed within this encounter can be found within the Wildlands Bestiary.

- **Slinkroot** (WB, pg. 21), with one notable addition: Add an additional 1d6 bludgeoning damage to the slinkroot's attacks by having it swing the petrified adventurer as a club. The statue has 10 HP, and takes half the damage the creature suffers from the attack. Once it reaches 0 HP, the statue shatters to dust. The slinkroot is then free to pick up the other statue (if close enough) and repeat the process.
- **Sorrownest** (WB, pg. 22)



ENCOUNTER 2: BIG TROUBLE IN LITTLE BLEAKMYRE

SWAMP WARGAME SCATTER SET

Hook (interconnected). Having just dispatched their foes, a shrill screech rings out through the swamp enshrined by expletives shouted in Common. Suspecting it might be the huntress they were meant to find, the party dashes toward the scene.

Hook (independent). Moving through a murky and dangerous swamp, the party hears monstrous screeches mingled with screams. They rush towards the source of the noise to see if they can help.

DM NOTES

As the scattering of trees and foliage rush past, the group finally breaks free from the line to more than they bargained for. Read or paraphrase the following out loud:

A human dressed in leathers and an outback hat adorned with teeth, stands atop a massive stone mound, cursing and shouting downward as an equally giant 8-legged lizard encircles the stone,

hungry for another meal. Various plants litter the marshes, gyrating and excited at the activity.

Something about the way the human on the stone moves and tracks the steps of the giant lizard seems to evoke an understanding of its predatory nature. This isn't some random person lost in the swamps - this is a hunter.

A snap! Its jaws inches from her legs, its claws grinding into the sides attempting to find purchase. Then, a flash! The hunter seems to have avoided the light. But for how much longer?

Immediately following the description, the party is allowed to attempt a silent or aggressive approach. A **DC 14 Intelligence (Nature) check** can determine the creature to be a basilisk, common to the swamps and most likely what caused the petrification. The basilisk is currently more preoccupied with the huntress on the stone to exactly notice the party, but has a **Passive Perception 14**.

Once the basilisk is alerted to the party's presence, it turns its attention to them and sets to work. The huntress takes notice as well, shouting out:

'Oy! My saviors! Watch out for the nasties eyes! And help me break this seal! It said to only break it in times of great need!'

RUNNING THE ENCOUNTER

The Opener. The basilisk will be using its turn to fight against the new arrivals, while Dundasilisk will use her spears to break the seal without leaving her spot (at **Initiative 1**). It takes three hits to break the seal, regardless of damage (although you can reason a particularly good hit can count for more than one). If the party does not break the seal by the end of the third round, Dundasilisk's spear breaks it releasing the myrmidon.

Playing the Basilisk. This **Swamp Basilisk** certainly knows it still has an advantage, even with the superior numbers of the crew. It will utilize its petrifying gaze and strength to grapple foes who are in the process of being petrified.

However, once the Seal of Binding is broken, it begins to see the difficulty in continuing the encounter against two forces and as such high tails it out of there at the **start of its second turn after the myrmidon is released**. It utilizes its ability to shift in the water quickly and stealthily to get away, but can be seen heading further eastward.

Playing the Myrmidon. Once the Binding is broken, the **fire elemental myrmidon** is finally freed from its long imprisonment. Shouting and cursing the arcanists who trapped it in Ignan (Primordial), it sees the humanoids in the area as convenient surrogates to the villains from its past. The basilisk is certainly the most deadly foe, however, and it will begin its turn by closing the distance and attacking it.

As the basilisk flees, the myrmidon immediately turns its attention back to the party and strikes as many of them as it can, favoring group attacks over singular targets. Attempting to do the most damage to the most targets it possibly can.

Upon defeat, the myrmidon bursts outward, causing all the plant life in the area to burn and wither, while dealing an additional 2d6 fire damage to any creature within 30-ft of it. This damage may be reduced to half with a successful DC 14 Dexterity saving throw.

Playing Dundasilisk. The huntress, Dundasilisk, should be a bombastic larger than life personality, with all of the skills to back it up. This encounter was more of a fluke than anything. Her attitude towards the party is one of genuine gratitude and excitement - it wasn't her goal to have her new crew all get toasted in their first outing.

She doesn't plan on leaving it there either. With or without this group's help, she plans on seeing this job finished; she's got a book deal to adhere to after all. Fighting basilisks? Scary. Disappointing her fans? Might as well end it there.

Once she sees she has backup against the basilisk (and after the myrmidon is released), she'll take shots at either foe... from the safety of her perch.

Dangerous Flora. Again, we see the **sorrownest** make an appearance, getting the opportunity to deal additional psychic damage to whichever creature comes within its range. If it is attacked by any creature within 5-ft of its position, or on **Initiative count 10** with a range of 20-ft, a psychic blast lashes out at the foe. The creature makes a **DC 13 Wisdom saving throw**, suffering 2d4 psychic damage and is stunned for one round on a failure, overcome with an insurmountable grief. On a success, the creature suffers half damage and is not **stunned**. Each sorrownest may only use this effect once per round.

Additionally, the **blackrot tree** should be placed on land far from the water, and can be referenced by Dundasilisk later.

ONCE THE FIGHTING STOPS...

With the myrmidon defeated and the basilisk on the run, the group has earned itself a small reprieve. A reprieve that is ended quickly by the huntress hopping down from her perch, snagging a pair of goggles from the ground and greeting the company with a hearty laugh and slaps on the back for all.

Dundasilisk:

'Well done, eh? That one nearly gripped my marbles and spat out sand, if'n ya catch my meaning. Can't thank yeh enough for all the trouble you went through. Crikey! Me arm!'

With a start, she gazes on how the petrification has spread all through her forearm up to her shoulder, uncorking a bottle and slathering the thick brew over the affected area. It sizzles and pops, as the stone peels from her skin as if it never existed. She seethes, saying:

'Damn! Was hopin' to save that, just in case.'

She then fully introduces herself as "Dundasilisk, famed and legendary (they're different) huntress of the wilds!". She was here collecting new exploits for her next set of adventure novels, following the traveling word of how Bleakmyre has become infested with basilisks. Intriguingly, there are even rumors of a mutated basilisk, more deadly and unimaginable than any other horror you've heard of. As the resident "basilisk expert", she can't help but be fascinated.

When pressed for more information, here are a few key bits of dialog to help:

- 'That potion was a little concoction I brewed up for just such an occasion - remind me to tell yeh all about the time I went claw to claw with a deadly Medusa. Straight terrifyin'.'
- 'The brew is only good at staving it off or stopping it in its beginning stages. Once a full petrification has taken root, only thing that'll satisfy that is the diluted blood of a basilisk. Still handy in a pinch though.'
- 'Nothin' else to do but tah grab more ingredients I'm afraid, as that was the last brew I had. See that dried out blackrot tree over there, and the sorrownests that got all burnt up? We're gonna need fresher samples.'
- 'If you all came from Maxy, then the ol' bugger should have filled you in better - I never quit a hunt. Not until the bastard is in the ground.'
- 'Just so happens, I know a place where we can snag a few more of them tasty treats. Whaddaya say?'

WRAPPING UP

If the group decides to press on right away, Dundasilisk excitedly agrees, ready for another bout with the dreaded basilisk. First, they'll need to gather ingredients to brew more of the petrification counteragent. She leads them further into the swamps, eagerly watching out for signs of the great predator...

If the group decides to first head back to Mr. Bee-ahlaschtock, Dundasilisk tries to stress that the longer it takes to follow the trail the less likely they are to catch it again. She'll acquiesce under a strong negotiation, otherwise she will press forward without them. Either way once they head back into the swamps, Dundasilisk clues them in to where to find the ingredients they'll need to brew more of that potion...

In either scenario, Dundasilisk is amenable to a short rest with no protest. Additionally, if the previous petrified people were cured of their petrification, Dundasilisk is still antsy to finish the job. She notes that basilisks usually keep statues as a food source, and who knows how many grateful nobles could be mixed up in the collection?

SETUP

Place the Titanstooth Base (FS-709) in a central location, with the rest of the trees and stump lumps providing ample cover and breaking sightlines as you can. The Slinkroot (SP-710) will not be an active combatant in this, however the two Sorrownests (SP-713) will be helpful in creating some additional points of interest so attempt to have them on opposite points of the board. Lastly, be sure to have the Magnetic Boulder (FS-702) in the nook of the Titanstooth Base, as that is where the Seal of Binding (AC-718) and the Reality Rupture (AC-722) will be placed.

CREATURE STATISTICS

All creatures within this encounter use their statistics from the Wildlands Bestiary.

- **Blackrot Tree** (WB, pg. 15)
- **Fire Elemental Myrmidon** (WB, pg. 08)
- **Sorrownest** (WB, pg. 22)
- **Swamp Basilisk** (WB, pg. 09)



ENCOUNTER 3: LITTLE SWAMP OF HORRORS

EXPLORE THE SWAMP SET

Hook (interconnected). Having just rescued their hunter charge, Dundasilisk has informed the party that she knows of an herbal remedy for the Basilisk's petrification that can save their crew. Unfortunately, the ingredients lie ever deeper within the swamp. *Depending on how the party decided to end the previous encounter, alter the introduction as necessary - whether they took a short rest, moved on immediately, or went back to town.

Hook (independent). An eccentric ranger is paying handsomely for escorts to guard them as they gather materials from a nearby swamp. It sure seems strange that nobody else seems willing to take such a lucrative job, but what's the worst that could happen?

DM NOTES

The air continues its unrelenting humidity as the party pushes through thicket after thicket of ferns and thorns, the newly dense marshland breaking periodically for pools and ponds of stagnant water. Dundasilisk speaks of the difficulty of the task ahead, as the flora of Bleakmyre has grown to fight back against invaders and manipulate their food sources.

Two such plantae are the **blackrot tree** and the **sorrownest**. It just so happens that those two plants typically find symbiotic relationships to various other plants. The more of them around, the greater their influence. As luck would have it, they are also part of a basilisk's regular diet, helping the great lizard break down its main petrified food, and that is where Dundasilisk found a steady supply of antitoxin ingredients.

After a few hours travel, read the following aloud:

As they enter the glade, Dundasilisk issues a strong warning:

Dundasilisk crouches down, searching and combing through wetland grass for some unknown thing. Detritus films the top surface of the swamp water, a noxious and gassy steam rising just above it all. A moment of thought, then she removes a glass vial and carefully dips it in the water. A swirl of the vial, a focused stare, then a smirk - something has gone right. She looks to the party,

'Good news everyone - we've reached our destination.'

She pulls back a massive red fern, to reveal a morassed glade spattered with blackrot trees and sorrownests. The noxious smell only grows heavier as you step through the bushes - the rot and sulfuric gas impede every step.

there may not be any enemies present, but do not underestimate the viciousness of these inhuman plants.

RUNNING THE ENCOUNTER

The Task at Hand

Dundasilisk needs selections from both of the main plants in her formula. To make one dose of the anti-petrification potion, she needs:

- x1 stalk of fresh blackrot root
- x2 sorrownest bulb

She points out to the party where to find each, giving a brief overview of how to remove the ingredients (listed as the opening line for each plant's specific listing further on).

Having "thoroughly explained" the dangers in the area and believing the task to be well in hand, she announces to the group that she will continue on and attempt to find where the beast has trailed off to. Given the location of these dietary plants, it can't be far from their current location, and scampers off into the brush.

The Blackrot Tree

Dundasilisk indicates the roots of the blackrot, drawing a line into the opaque water it rests beside, stating how the roots run deep but wide. As such, they push from the ground fairly easily, giving the water its acidic nature. They are tough, and must be removed while in the water - once uprooted, the blackrot dries nearly immediately and becomes useless without the acidic base it soaks in.

Acid Bath. The water surrounding the tree, and in fact the whole glade, is caustic to the touch. Any creature that ends their turn within the water begins to burn and chafe at the corrosive liquid, taking 1d4 acid damage being submerged up to their waist, and 2d4 acid damage if fully submerged. Additionally, if a creature spends a collective 4 rounds within the water, they must succeed on a **DC 13 Constitution saving throw** or be *poisoned* until the end of a long rest, or until they receive any amount of magical healing.

Breaking the Root. The roots of the blackrot stretch far down into the swampland, only accessible starting at a depth of 15-ft. A creature must be within 5-ft of a root to interact with it. Even with a blade or destructive weapon, the blackrot tree feels as hard as iron.

To break or cut a root, a creature must succeed on a cumulative **DC 21 Strength ability check**, meaning a creature making multiple attempts sums together every check made until the DC is met. In this way, keep track of the total result of each hit, as anything that exceeds the target number carries over to the next attempt. (See the *Skeletal Hands* section for additional hindrances.)

Once the DC is met or exceeded, the root breaks free, sponging in the acid water it rests in. Each successful attempt retrieves 1 root from the wall, and a total of 10 roots can be acquired.

The Sorrownest

Dundasilisk advises the group to be careful where they step around the sorrownest, as it registers "sight" by thought patterns and is therefore sensitive to quick movements and an unfocused mind. The sorrownest cannot thrive in an alkaline-rich environment, its psychic energies feeding off the dissonance and pain the acid causes.

Static Defense. A creature who approaches within a 20-ft radius of the sorrownest must succeed on a **DC 13 Wisdom ability check**, to be able to stealthily approach. Additionally, a creature continuing to approach stealthily treats the spaces around the sorrownest as difficult terrain. The creature repeats this saving throw for each round it spends unnoticed by the sorrownest inside the 20-ft radius.

Removing Bulbs. To remove a bulb from the main sorrownest, a creature makes a **DC 15 Wisdom (Nature) check** while within 5-ft of the unaware plant. This DC increases to 20 while it is awake. Reward one bulb for a successful check, **two** bulbs should the creature achieve a total of 20 on their check (25 when awake), **three** bulbs should the total reach 25 and above (30 and above when awake). A total of 12 bulbs can be retrieved from the sorrownest. Once all bulbs are acquired, the sorrownest withers and becomes dormant.

Bulbpods. The sorrownest has begun populating itself surrounding the pool, resulting in small **sorrownest bulbpods** scattered about. While the bulbpods do not have the offensive capabilities of the larger sorrownest, they can still alert the "adult" to the presence of other creatures within a radius of 15-ft. Additionally, if a bulbpod is harvested for its bulbs, it can only produce a maximum of 1 regardless of the check result.

During Combat. If it is attacked by any creature within 5-ft of its position, or on **Initiative count 10** with a range of 20-ft, a psychic blast lashes out at the foe. The creature makes a **DC 13 Wisdom saving throw**, suffering 2d4 psychic damage and is stunned for one round on a failure, overcome with an insurmountable grief. On a success, the creature suffers half damage and is not *stunned*. Each sorrownest may only use this effect once per round.

Additional Flora. The **mephit-reed** and the **slinkroot** are good tools to add in this encounter for if things go sideways.

The slinkroot can be used in much the same way as Encounter 1 (albeit without a statue club), under the control and guidance of the sorrownest. It should only engage if the sorrownest is alerted.

The mephit-reeds are a great resource for added danger around the blackrot. Utilizing their ability to send spores of bursting flame is used best against clustered groups to help spread them out.

Skeletal Hands. Near the roots of the blackrot tree are the still dissolving **skeletal hands** of those that sought the roots before, undulating under the water like kelp. The hands are immobile, having been absorbed into the soil under the tree, but can still animate to prevent or inhibit a creature's ability to pull out or detach the roots. For every hand present, add 2 to the corresponding DC or opposed check made against the creature attempting to remove the roots. If a hand is destroyed, a new one bursts from the soil at the end of the following round.

WRAPPING UP

With all the materials in hand, the group flees the poisonous section of the bog, ready to mix up the next batch of potions for the dangers ahead. But first, they have to find their wayward ranger... except, what is that rustling? Something approaches... another bated breath, and Dundasilisk bursts through a collection of bushes, twigs and leaves now adorning her leathers and hat. She rushes the party forward, glad to hear they have completed their task, as she couldn't seem to find any tracks yet and it should give them time to fully prepare.

SETUP

This encounter uses the Explore the Swamp basic setup. Attempt to give distinction of the parts that are deep pools and what would be waist high.

CREATURE STATISTICS

All creatures within this encounter use their statistics from the Wildlands Bestiary.

- **Blackrot Tree** (WB, pg. 15)
- **Mephit-reed** (WB, pg. 20)
- **Slinkroot** (WB, pg. 21)
- **Sorrownest** (WB, pg. 22)
- **Sorrownest Bulbpods** (WB, pg. 22)



ENCOUNTER 4:

AVP: ALCHEMIST VS PREDATOR

HEART OF THE SWAMP SET

Hook (Interconnected). On the way to apply the antidote to their entourage, Dundasilisk stops and notices tracks on the ground. Shouting that it's the basilisk they've been hunting this whole time, she takes off into the night—along with the party's reward if they don't keep her alive.

Hook (Independent). A monstrously oversized basilisk has been ambushing travelers and devastating the local ecosystem. A ranger specializing in swamps has been tasked with taking it out, but due to the creature's unusual size has requested assistance—and of course, they'll split the reward.

DM NOTES

Dundasilisk should stop the party just on the edge of the map; the Basilisk is sleeping in the center of the swamp, and if the party makes a successful Stealth check against its passive perception, they can get a surprise round. Let the players make checks at your discretion to observe the battlefield, learn what plants are around—Dundasilisk has great knowledge of the wildlife here—and plan accordingly. They can enter the battlefield wherever they like; they

should feel like the ones springing a trap this time around.

If you haven't brought it up yet, this fight is a great time to demonstrate that Dundasilisk has goggles that prevent the basilisk's Petrifying Gaze. Although they should be able to win, there's a chance that a player could get fully petrified if they aren't careful. If this happens, Dundasilisk can restore them with the potions made in Encounter 3.

You dash through the muck after Basilisk Dundasilisk for several minutes, until you find her crouched behind the gnarled roots of a dying ash tree, fingers against her lips.

'Awright, take a ganda.' She whispers in hushed tones, gesturing into the clearing ahead of you. On an island surrounded by murky, toxic swampwater, the Basilisk is sleeping soundly.

'We move real careful-like, we'll catch 'er with 'er britches down.' She snaps her goggles firmly over her eyes and squints at the plant life around the swamp, muttering under her breath. You see a Blackrot tree, sorrownests, some mephit-reeds...all sorts of plants that gave you trouble before.

RUNNING THE ENCOUNTER

Useful Flora. Many of the plants in the Bleakmyre Swamp are dangerous—not just to the party, but the basilisk as well. Hitting a nearby **mephit-reed** with fire can deal distress and a fair amount of damage to the basilisk if they get nearby.

You can also hide the **bonebloom** somewhere on the field; don't physically place it unless someone in the party notices it with a perception or nature check during preparation. It can be a deadly trap if one of the players steps in it, but they can also lure the basilisk in to give it some extra trouble.

The Basilisk. Whether or not the Basilisk is ambushed, it's on its home turf and immediately takes advantage of this by slipping into the water at the first opportunity. While it will do everything it can to deal damage, its primary goal is to ambush and petrify the party.

Thankfully, as long as Dundasilisk is up, she's able to keep an eye on the creature. This makes her the primary target, and if the fight seems to be going too well for the party you can have the basilisk attempt to drag her underwater after grappling her with a Claw attack.

WRAPPING UP

Upon defeating the creature, Dundasilisk collects some samples of the venom, and comes to a sobering conclusion; this wasn't the basilisk they were looking for. Its toxins aren't nearly as potent, and its fangs are too small to match the bite marks found on the victims. Visibly shaken, Dundasilisk says they should hurry back to give the antidote to her petrified companions and get out of the swamp.

SETUP

This encounter uses the “Heart of the Swamp” main build, with the Basilisk on an island near the center. Feel free to rearrange the interactable plants however you like if you think it'd make a more interesting layout. Keep in mind that the water is crucial to the Basilisk's strategy, so if you rearrange terrain try to avoid having a large stretch of land where they won't be near the water's edge.

CREATURE STATISTICS

All creatures within this encounter use their statistics from the Wildlands Bestiary.

- **Swamp Basilisk** (WB, pg. 09)
- **Bonebloom** (WB, pg. 16)
- **Mephit-reed** (WB, pg. 20)



ENCOUNTER FIVE:

Last Night in Bleakmyre

ENCOUNTER 5: LAST NIGHT IN BLEAKMYRE

SORROW ISLE SET

Hook (Interconnected). Having reached the petrified victims of the basilisk, the party has to make camp while Dundasilisk's remedy takes effect. Night falls, and as they take turns on watch, the local wildlife suddenly falls silent. They know their true prey is still out there—but what if it's aware of them as well?

Hook (Independent). While camping in a swamp over-night, the local wildlife suddenly falls silent. You've heard rumors of a mysterious creature terrorizing merchants traveling through the area, and you feel a chill down your spine as you stare out into the pitch-black wilderness.

DM NOTES

This fight is supposed to be intense; there are a few things you can do to raise or lower the difficulty based on the party's preparedness. First off, depending on how late into the night you have the Bleakmyre Basilisk strike, you could prevent the party from getting the benefits of a long rest, although they should at least receive a short rest to use their hit dice before combat begins.

If it looks like things aren't going well, you can have the remedy finish curing the petrification on Dundasilisk's

entourage, adding more bodies to the fray. Feel free to make them whatever class would benefit the party best, but try not to let them steal the spotlight from your players.

Also, if you want to play up the camp/horror tone and make the fight more difficult, consider starting the ambush by having the basilisk leap from the shadows and behead the huntress. This ups the stakes, and hits home that no one is safe...although now they can take those anti-petrification goggles for themselves, granting one party member immunity to Petrifying Gaze.

This fight should incorporate everything learned from the last couple encounters; the battlefield is littered with special plants, and the powder from the Mephit Reeds can reflect the Bleakmyre Basilisk's Stunning Flash ability, potentially causing it to stun itself. If you'd like, you can also browse the Wildlands Bestiary for other uses for plants, or invent some of your own, and can also plant the Seal of Binding if you want to add a possible Fire Elemental Myrmidon to the mix!

Really lean into verbose, horrific descriptions of the basilisk's actions; tonight, this is The Scariest Monster Alive. And, of course, feel free to fudge the hit points on the beast in either direction to let the combat end when it feels right. Nothing feels more epic than the cleric landing a final blow as the basilisk looms over them, saving their petrified party.

It's a dark, muggy night, the air thick with awful smells and the sounds of insects. You pass the hours in shifts, watching over the petrified bodyguards,

their flesh slowly returning to normal, though they haven't regained consciousness yet. Soon, you'll be able to get back to Beeahlaschtock, claim your reward, and leave this dreadful swamp behind you.

Through the thick canopy above you, the sky starts to lighten ever so slightly—sunrise is coming. However, as the stars begin to fade...so does the monotonous droning of insects. You hear a loud yawn—definitely louder than necessary—and Dundasilisk stumbles out of her tent, having slept in her leathers. 'G'mornin', loves. What's fer brekkie?'

And then—a piercing screech, an eruption of water, and suddenly the hulking form of a massive basilisk leaps out of the swamp. Venom drips from its fangs as its forked tongue whips about, eyes glowing an eerie green as it barrels towards the camp.

RUNNING THE ENCOUNTER

The Bleakmyre Basilisk. This souped-up version of the basilisks they've faced so far has a few more tricks. It doesn't have a ton of hit points, so its win condition is to petrify the party by any means necessary. While it can deal some decent damage with its attacks, it's much more concerned with slipping into the water and surprising the party as much as possible. The basilisk is deathly intelligent, and if it can tell someone is immune to its petrification, it will focus its physical attacks on taking them out, relying on its gaze to disable those who are susceptible.

Because of the way its petrification works, consider this fight to be on a 4 or 5 round time limit; it takes three failed saves to become petrified, so by round 3 evaluate the health of the party; if a number of them are immobilized already and the basilisk isn't close to dead, consider having one of the newly cured NPCs join the fray to draw its attention.

WRAPPING UP

The beast finally felled, the sounds of nature come back to the swamp. Any partial petrification effects will wear off within a minute, and anybody who is fully petrified can be restored by any leftover antidote. The basilisk's fangs and poison sacs can also be harvested for potential use or sale. The party may also leave with leftover petrification antidote, and the knowledge of how to make more.

If Dundasilisk is alive, she'll thank the party profusely for their assistance in helping on the hunt—she may have a high opinion of herself, but that doesn't mean she has a low opinion of others! Getting her back safely will net a higher reward—and some signed copies of her books.

If Dundasilisk is dead, her remains can still be returned to Max; surely someone so important is worth the resources to resurrect. Of course, the party is forced to sign an NDA—while Dundasilisk would proudly tell the tale of her death, Max is worried her career—and his ten percent—would vanish if the public knew.

SETUP

This encounter uses the “Sorrow Isle” Mega Pledge. Feel free to rearrange the pieces in any way you see fit; the only thing necessary for this encounter to work is to ensure the basilisk has plenty of access to water. Try to position the Mephit Reeds strategically around the field so they can be used from pretty much any part of the map.

Reference the *Wildlands Build Guides* at bit.ly/WLBuildGuides for a detailed layout and add the modifications listed above.

CREATURE STATISTICS

All creatures within this encounter use their statistics from the *Wildlands Bestiary*.

- **Bleakmyre Basilisk** (WB, pg. 05)

APPENDIX A – CREATURE STATS

Lady Blackrot (Enc. 3A), pg.

Reference the Wildlands Bestiary for the following creatures

Blackrot Tree (Enc. 2B & Enc. 3B), WB pg. 15
Bleakmyre Basilisk (Enc. 5B), WB pg. 05
Bonebloom (Enc. 4B), WB pg. 16
Fire Elemental Myrmidon (Enc. 2B), WB pg. 08
Mephit-reed (Enc. 3B & Enc. 4B), WB pg. 20
Slinkroot (Enc. 1B & Enc. 3B), WB pg. 21
Sorrownest (Enc. 1B & Enc. 3B), WB pg. 22
Sorrownest Bulbpod (Enc. 3B), WB pg. 22
Swamp Basilisk (Enc. 2B & 4B). WB pg. 09
Vencurra Dragon (Enc. 5A), WB pgs. 10-11

Reference the Monster Manual for the following creatures

Basilisk (Enc. 2A), MM pg. 24
Flameskull (Enc. 2A), MM pg. 134
Flesh Golem (Enc. 4A), MM pg. 167
Giant Crocodile (Enc. 1A), MM pg. 324
Ghost (Enc. 5A), MM pg. 148
Ghost (Enc. 2A), MM pg. 147
Ghoul (Enc. 5A), MM pg. 148
Green Dragon (Enc. 5A), MM pg. 95
Green Hag (Enc. 4A), MM pg. 176
Lizardfolk (Enc. 1A), MM pg. 204
Shambling Mound (Enc. 1A), MM pg. 270
Skeleton (Enc. 2A & Enc. 5A), MM pg. 272
Specter (Enc. 3A), MM pg. 279
Spirit Naga (Enc. 2A), MM pg. 233
Stirge (Enc. 1A), MM pg. 284
Treant (Enc. 2A), MM pg. 289
Troll (Enc. 1A), MM pg. 291
Wight (Enc. 2A & Enc. 5A), MM pg. 300
Will-o-Wisps (Enc. 2A), MM pg. 301
Wraith (Enc. 5A), MM pg. 302
Zombie (Enc. 1A & Enc. 5A), MM pg. 315

LADY BLACKROT

Medium Undead, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)

Speed 0 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

Damage Resistances Acid, Cold, Fire, Lightning, Thunder; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks that aren't Silvered

Damage Immunities Necrotic, Poison

Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhaustion, Grappled, Paralyzed, Petrified, Poisoned, Prone, Restrained

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +3

Incorporeal Movement. Lady Blackrot can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, Lady Blackrot has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Innate Spellcasting. Lady Blackrot's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). She can innately cast the following spells:

- At will – chill touch.
- 1/ day each – blight, fear, spirit guardians (necrotic damage only)

ACTIONS

Life Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 21 (4d8 + 3) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

Create Specter. Lady Blackrot targets a humanoid within 10 feet of it that has been dead for no longer than 1 minute and died violently. The target's spirit rises as a specter in the space of its corpse or in the nearest unoccupied space. The specter is under the wraith's control. Lady Blackrot can have no more than seven specters under her control at one time.

APPENDIX B – HANDOUTS

Balefire Lantern (Enc. 3A), pg. 41

Lady Blackrot's Journal (Enc. 3A), pg. 42





The Balefire Lantern

wondrous item, rare

This magical lantern is made from iron-coated bones and glows with sickly green light, providing dim illumination to a range of 60 feet and bright illumination to a range of 30 feet. It also immediately detects undead within a half mile of its position, and any undead creature that benefits from incorporeality loses that benefit when in its bright illumination range. It also punctures through illusions used to disguise appearances on creatures.

When fueled with Midnight Oil, the Balefire Lantern can be used to turn undead. The lantern starts full of Midnight Oil, regardless of when it is picked up.

As an action, a character can present the lantern and speak a prayer. Each undead that can see or hear the bearer within 60 feet must make a **DC 18 Wisdom saving throw**. If the creature fails its saving throw, it is turned for 1 minute or until it takes any damage.

A turned creature must spend its turns trying to move as far away from the bearer of the Balefire Lantern as it can, and it can't willingly move to a space within 30 feet of the bearer. It also can't take reactions. For its action, it can use only the Dash action or try to escape from an effect that prevents it from moving. If there's nowhere to move, the creature can use the Dodge action. A single flask of Midnight Oil allows three uses of this ability, after which the lantern must be refueled with a new flask.

The lantern is also semi-sentient, able to state a purpose to its wielder of ferrying the souls of the dead, and protecting the living from their cold influence. It has no greater ambitions or thoughts, merely an awareness of the presence of undead.

Lady M. Blackrot's Journal

The journal is littered with several pages of notes of the swamp - and in its current condition, seems quite old. Many of the pages are direct references to utilizing the fetid expanse of swampland as a basis to study the effects of necromantic reversal. It seems she spent a good number of years depicting proper methods and formulas for how to enact bare minimums of necromancy to steadily and humanely undo decay.

Sadly, as the entries continue, they become more and more unhinged - something to do with a new instructor, someone who is opening her eyes to the reality of her work, to her slow progress. An instructor by the name of Vencurra. By the end of her journal, she has spoken extensively of all the ways she and her instructor have bolstered the growth and pestilence of the swamps, in an attempt to give her a large enough trial base for her experiments to flourish.

The last entry is dated almost a century ago, hastily written:

My dearest, Vencurra,

For 2 days they have pursued me - the uneducated swine, a mass mob of jealous and pious proletariats. They do not see or know what our great work will bring, what it can unlock. I write this to you certain that even with the might of our swamp to protect me, I will fall.

I hope with no reason to that it may someday find its way to you, to give you the solace to know I believed until the very end in our vision - a world free of sickness, free of moralistic vagaries that belittle the heart of science, of discovery. That I should give my life in service to this ideal means more to me than the ragged breath in my burning lungs.

But in this is where they will falter, and know not of what they do. For it is their fault, these walking contagions, that I must run and hide, to fear showing my face. No longer. It is they who should be made to live in fear, forever more.

I curse this ground, curse it in your name, to forever be a place that they will learn how to live in remorse. My sole regret in leaving will be never bringing the strength of the Balefire to you, but maybe in this I can make it serve a greater purpose - one that will protect you from prying eyes.

My heart is yours,

Lady Miriam Blackrot

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