

Dead World: Growlock's Grove

A short exhibition game of *Dead World* for 4 players (hereafter referred to as **adventurers**). The time limit for the game is 45 minutes; the timer pauses during Game Master narration.

Main Objective

You are accosted by a filthy man in rags, Growlock, the Mushroom Addict. Once, he was a respected wizard and alchemist, but since the passing of his friend, Spenser, he has become a shadow and wreck of his former self. Growlock is asking you to fetch him a rare type of mushroom that grows in the north-east. He's prepared to pay you an obscene sum of 1 gold if you can acquire this mushroom. For that money, you'd do it in a heartbeat, but the problem is you've been hearing rumours of a terrible beast out in the woods surrounding Bastard's Brink. It's claimed the life of one hero. Will yours be next?

Secret Objectives

There are four secret objectives which are handed out randomly to each **adventure** before the journey begins (preferably in sealed envelopes).

1. **Alliance of the Ooze:** You are on the side of the protozoan ooze, ancient lifeforms and parasites that have infiltrated every strata of civilisation. Your character is not truly who everyone thinks they are, but one of the protozoans. You are therefore allied with the monster out in the woods of Bastard's Brink, for it is also one of your kind. Your secret objective is to kill all the other **adventurers**. If you are the only **adventurer** remaining at the end of the game, you win.
2. **Curiosity Killed The Cat:** You have heard rumours of a special statue in the north-west that can grant a blessing known as "The Rapid Curse of Stone". Obtain this blessing to fulfil your secret objective.
3. **Kleptomaniac:** You have heard rumours of a magical weapon—an artefact that will fetch a high price on the black market—*The Flail of Excoriation*. You know it is sealed away in a shrine to the south-east. Obtain the flail to fulfil your secret objective.
4. **'Cos I Got High:** Find a way of getting high with Growlock (without dying).

Inclement Weather

This story takes place in Winter in the Disputed Lands. Not perhaps as harsh as the frost-bitten wastes of the north, but still a challenge to overcome. Every three turns, **adventurers** must make a **percentile roll** with a 4% chance of success per point of Constitution. If they fail, they suffer **frostbite** (-2 speed, -50% movement).

Locations

Bastard's Brink

Bastard's Brink is one of the many strange places located in the Disputed Lands. This town has seen better days. Though it was always run-down, the home of those ostracised and rejected by normal society, and hence populated by brigands, thieves, prostitutes, madmen, saints, desperate lovers, and altogether "stranger folk".

The River Hedgethon

This river meanders around Bastard's Brink, separating it from the wilderness beyond, which has increasingly encroached upon the town's borders in the absence of loyal knights to defend it. If **adventurers** explore the river in a south-easterly direction they will find 2d6 portions of Red Moss growing just beneath the scummy surface of the river. If they cross the river in a north easterly direction they will encounter a Great Bear.

The Temple of St. Spenser

The great knight, Spenser, was a hero of Bastard's Brink. Though his body was never recovered, such was his heroic prowess that a temple was raised in his honour, and his mighty flail, known for its flaming tongues which excoriated his foes, enshrined within. A magical seal was placed upon the temple after his death by the wizard Growlock, who was Spenser's only friend, though now Growlock's intellect has been so damaged by his addiction—an addiction born out of grief—that he cannot remove the seal.

- **Magical Trap:** **Adventurers** must make a **percentile roll** upon entering the Temple of St. Spenser with a 3% chance of success per point of Intelligence. If they succeed, they gain access to The Flail of Excoriation. If failed, they are **knocked back** (2d6) feet, **dazed**, and suffer **magical damage** at **power level** (8).

Stone Statue

Located in the north-western corner, this appears to the **adventurers** like a stone statue, though in truth it is an iron golem, created by an artificer long departed from the Disputed Lands, and frozen in stone by a dreadful curse. The golem will speak if approached, and will offer to share the curse with the **adventurers**.

An **adventurer**, character, or creature with **The Rapid Curse of Stone** immediately suffers ill effects:

- The **adventurer** slowly begins to turn to stone. This process is gradual, but over time becomes totally fatal. Each turn, the **adventurer** reduces their Strength, Dexterity, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma by (1) point. However, they may increase their Constitution by (+1) as their flesh hardens into stone. Once they reach a Constitution of 24, they are completely immobilised and turned into a statue. At this point, the "cure" for the curse must be brought to the **adventurer**, if indeed it can be reversed at all.

The Clearing

This is where the **adventurers** will encounter the Bog Fiend. The only other important feature of note is a particularly magnificent corpse—albeit decayed—laid out beneath a tree. This is the hero Spenser. At first, the Bog Fiend will appear to the adventurers as simply a powerful undead warrior. Only when they kill the Bog Fiend will its true nature be revealed. Once the Bog Fiend is "killed", the **protozoan ooze** will attempt to leave the body and enter the body of Spenser. Alternatively, it

might also seek out the body of the Great Bear if they decide to kill this creature, and if it is within range. At the back of the clearing, a glowing mushroom can be seen: Growlock's prize.

Key Items

The Flail of Excoriation (d20, *long, flaming* (2), 2% chance of bleeding per point of Dexterity)

Red Moss A treacherous moss that grows underground, often near to water. The moss has potent healing powers, which makes it a key ingredient in healing potions, but is also exceedingly addictive. Potionmakers generally mitigate the addictive and hallucinogenic properties of Red Moss during process of distilling their potions and by combining it with other ingredients. Red Moss may be consumed raw, in which case it will restore d4 lost hit points. However, it will also confer **disease: "addiction"**. This is a key ingredient for **Alchemy**.

Chrysaor The Golden Blade (one handed, 2d6, **magic** (4), +2 on 'to hit' rolls)

Glorious Platemail (+11 AC, *heavy armour*)

Magical Mushroom If you successfully defeat the Bog Fiend, you will be able to claim the Magical Mushroom. If **adventurers** choose to consume the mushroom, they will have a divine vision and religious experience, then suffer **permanent death**, for the strength of the mushroom is too much for one who has not built up a tolerance. Handing the mushroom in to Growlock will earn +200 EXP and complete the main objective.

Growlock The Mushroom Addict

Hit Points: 40

Movement: 10ft per action

Speed: 4

Strength: 8

Dexterity: 12 (+1)

Constitution: 12 (+1)

Intelligence: 20 (+5)

Wisdom: 10

Charisma: 3

Mana Points (6)

Equipment: Dagger (d4, *one-handed*), Filthy Rags (+0 AC, *clothing*)

- **Gutter Existence:** **Growlock** can **resist poison** (3% per point of Constitution) and are **immune** to **dirty** and **wet** effects.
- **Poison Touch** (Ability / 1 mana point): This attack targets (1) enemy in melee range. Roll to hit as normal, if the hit is successful, then the target suffers **poison damage** at **power level** (4).
- **Fire Bomb** (Ability / 1 mana point): **Growlock** makes (1) ranged attack within **throwing** distance. The attack causes (2d6) damage and **flaming damage** at **power level** (6). In addition, if the target is humanoid, it causes the **dazed** effect.
- **Unstable Concoction** (Ability / 2 mana points): **Growlock** produces a vile and unpredictable brew he has contaminated with all manner of haphazard ingredients. This ability may only be used *once*. The brew is a (Consumable: Potion) that the Growlock immediately drinks; it has one of the following effects, determined by the roll of a d6:

(1) The Alchemist is instantly slain, as the potion is so toxic that virtually no living thing could survive it

(2) The Alchemist finds their **speed** increased by (+4) and their **movement** by (+6ft) as they obtain new vigour.

(3) The Alchemist's entire body begins to glow with rainbow light, granting them **resist magic** (100%), **resist fire** (100%), and **resist lightning** (100%). They may also restore (2) lost **mana points**.

(4) The Alchemist becomes disgustingly strong, their musculature ripping their flimsy robes, revealing a monstrous hulk beneath. The Alchemist restores all lost hit points and may increase their **maximum hit points** by 3d20. In addition, they increase their Strength characteristic by (2d6) points.

(5) The Alchemist increases their magical affinity to the point where their body enters another plain of existence. They become **spectral** (This enemy cannot be hurt by normal melee or ranged attack damage (any attack that hits them will cause (0) damage, regardless of modifiers or weapon stats). In addition, they are **immune** to all damage types, status and insanity effects except for the following: **magic**, **flaming**, **lightning**, and **holy**. This enemy may walk through solid objects such as walls or doors. They may also walk across pits or drops if they can clear the distance of the pit within a single **turn**.)

(6) The Alchemist has created a potion of meteoric power. The Alchemist may make (1) ranged attack on an enemy within 30ft. The attack hits automatically and is **flaming** (10). In addition, any enemies within (d6)ft + (1) additional ft per point of Intelligence Bonus the Alchemist has suffer a **flaming** (5) attack. The Alchemist is then slain.

Great Bear

Note, this creature will not attack the **adventurers** unless excessively provoked.

Hit Points: 72

Movement: 10ft per action

Speed: 3

Strength: 18 (+4)

Dexterity: 10

Constitution: 18 (+4)

Intelligence: 8

Wisdom: 8

Charisma: 2

Mana Points (3)

Equipment: Savage Claws & Teeth (4d6, *one-handed*), Bristling Fur (+8 AC, *light armour*)

- **Determination** (see Special Rules)
- **Rideable:** This creature can be treated as a **mount** if successfully tamed. The Great Bear allows its **rider** to carry (5) additional inventory slots.
- **Rending Strike** (Ability / 1 mana point): The beast makes (1) attack which hits automatically. The attack causes **grievous bleeding** in addition to normal weapon damage.
- **Olfactory Senses:** If a character or creature within 40ft of a creature with “Olfactory Senses” is suffering from either the **bleeding** or **grievous bleeding** effects, then this creature may increase its **speed** by (+7) and **movement** by (+6)ft per **action**.
- **Trample** (Ability / 1 mana point): The monstrosity moves forward in a straight line up to their maximum move distance in one **action**, disregarding any intervening humanoid sized characters (but not impassable terrain). Any humanoid creature touched by the monstrosity as it moved suffer (7d6) points of damage and are **knocked back** (2d6)ft.

Bog Fiend

Hit Points: 30

Movement: 7ft

Speed: 4

Strength: 16 (+3)

Dexterity: 14 (+2)

Constitution: 22 (+6)

Intelligence: 10

Wisdom: 12 (+1)

Charisma: 10

Mana Points (3)

Equipment: Rusting Plate (+10 AC, *heavy armour*), Grubby longsword (two handed, 2d6)

- **Born of Filth:** The creature is **immune** to **dirty**, **poison**, and **venom** effects. All attacks cause **overpower** and **dirty**.
- **Marsh-dweller:** If a humanoid character suffers damage from a Bog Fiend, there is a 10% chance they will contract **disease**: “**Swamp Rot**”.
- **Ooze Sling** (Ability / 1 mana point): The creature is capable of spitting wads of vile black fluid at all foes within a 6ft radius of its location. Each foe within range suffers (1) attack from the ooze that automatically hits. Every target struck must make a **save throw** (Constitution versus Dexterity). If the target fails the **save throw**, they suffer (3d6) damage, the **wet** and **dirty** status effects, and must reduce their **speed** by (-3) until **combat** resolves.
- **Protozoan Life Force:** The creature in control of the host body is an extremely primitive and disgusting form of life. However primitive it may be, it still harbours that spark of instinct that drives it to survive at all costs. This creature’s stats are taken to be those of its host – when its host perishes, it forms a black ooze that can automatically sense all dead creatures and humanoids within 18ft. If there is an available corpse, it will flow over to the dead body (moving 6ft per **action**) and reanimate it as soon as it is able to do so, gaining the new host’s stats and equipment, as if the host were alive and at **maximum hit points**. If there is no dead body within range, the ooze becomes an inert liquid and suffers **permanent death**. If the ooze takes a single hit while moving to inhabit a new host, it automatically perishes. The ooze counts as having an AC of 18 and 1 hit point while moving in this form.

Spenser (Re-animated)

Hit Points: 60

Movement: 12ft

Speed: 8

Strength: 20 (+5)

Dexterity: 14 (+2)

Constitution: 18 (+4)

Intelligence: 10

Wisdom: 14 (+2)

Charisma: 10

Mana Points (6)

Equipment: Glorious Platemail (+11 AC, *heavy armour*), Chrysaor The Golden Blade (one handed, 2d6, **magic** (4), +2 on ‘to hit’ rolls)

- **Piercing Strike** (Ability / 2 mana points): Spenser makes (1) melee attack which automatically hits. The attack counts as a **critical hit** and causes an additional (+4) damage for each point of Dexterity Bonus the Spenser has (the additional damage is added *after* the initial damage is calculated and doubled, rather than *before*). In addition, the target’s AC is reduced by (-1) for each point of Dexterity Bonus the Spenser has.
- **Born of Filth:** The creature is **immune** to **dirty**, **poison**, and **venom** effects. All attacks cause **overpower** and **dirty**.
- **Ooze Sling** (Ability / 1 mana point): The creature is capable of spitting wads of vile black fluid at all foes within a 6ft radius of its location. Each foe within range suffers (1) attack from the ooze that automatically hits. Every target struck must make a **save throw** (Constitution versus Dexterity). If the target fails the **save throw**, they suffer (3d6) damage, the **wet** and **dirty** status effects, and must reduce their **speed** by (-3) until **combat** resolves.
- **Protozoan Life Force:** The creature in control of the host body is an extremely primitive and disgusting form of life. However primitive it may be, it still harbours that spark of instinct that drives it to survive at all costs. This creature’s stats are taken to be those of its host – when its host perishes, it forms a black ooze that can automatically sense all dead creatures and humanoids within 18ft. If there is an available corpse, it will flow over to the dead body (moving 6ft per **action**) and reanimate it as soon as it is able to do so, gaining the new host’s stats and equipment, as if the host were alive and at **maximum hit points**. If there is no dead body within range, the ooze becomes an inert liquid and suffers **permanent death**. If the ooze takes a single hit while moving to inhabit a new host, it automatically perishes. The ooze counts as having an AC of 18 and 1 hit point while moving in this form.