



MASQUERADE OF THE VIERMES

Baroness Anastasia DeCobray's disappearance after a masquerade at Vierme Manor plunges you into a quest to find her and unveil the dark secrets hidden within the Count Iblis's grim estate.

By Brian Huonker

MASQUERADE OF THE VIERMES

Masquerade of the Viermes (worms) is a single-session adventure for five or six players of 1st-level characters using the fifth edition of the world's greatest role playing game.

*By [Brian Huonker](#), Dungeon master, Game master, Story guide, and sometimes player.
Based upon the adventure [Masque of the Worms](#) by Kelsey Dionne
with the [Skin Kites](#) created by DMDave Publishing.*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	2
The Baron's Beloved	3
Travel	4
Dark and Dreary	5
In Halls of Gloom.....	6
A Madman	7
Manor.....	8
The Pit.....	10
Aftermath	11
Appendix a: Maps.....	12
Appendix B: New Monsters	15
Appendix C: New Items	16
Appendix D: Mad Monologue	17
Appendix E: Combat Cards.....	18

The air hangs heavy with dread. Baroness Anastasia DeCobray, a beacon of grace and kindness, has vanished into the night. Two evenings ago, she attended a grand masque at the imposing Vierme Manor, but she never returned home. Whispers speak of foul play, of unspeakable horrors lurking within the Count's foreboding walls.

Gather your courage, adventurers. The Baroness needs your help. Can you navigate the treacherous halls of Vierme Manor, confront its sinister secrets, and bring Anastasia back safely? The fate of the Baroness, and perhaps even the realm itself, rests in your hands.

SYNOPSIS

- The group begins in the meeting hall of Baron Daniel DeCobray. The baron asks the party to bring his wife home from Vierme Manor. Baroness Anastasia attended a masquerade there two nights ago and hasn't yet returned.
- The characters arrive at Vierme Manor, the estate of Count Iblis Vierme. They explore the estate, learning more about the horrific events that happened the night of the masque.
- The characters find their way to the wine cellar below the manor. There, they confront a brood of Vierme's Slither that burrowed through the floors and claimed the lives of the masquerade attendees, including Anastasia Rennet.

BACKGROUND

- Two nights prior to the start of the adventure, Baron Daniel DeCobray's wife, Anastasia Rennet, attended a masquerade at Vierme Manor in honour of the newly ennobled Count Iblis Vierme.
- Count Iblis Vierme threw the masquerade to celebrate his inheritance of his father's title. Unbeknown to anyone, Iblis murdered his father after being driven mad by echo fever. In his madness, Iblis believed his father's blue glass eye watched him day and night through the floors and walls of Vierme Manor.
- A subterranean brood of Vierme's Slither, drawn to Iblis's insane presence, erupted through the floors in Vierme and slaughtered the masqueraders and household staff.
- The stench of the slaughter has attracted a skin kite to the upstairs where it killed a survivor hiding in the master bedroom, afraid to come downstairs.
- A few of Vierme's Slither remain in the cellar. They view Count Iblis as kindred and won't attack him.

A WORD TO THE GM

This adventure is meant to be run at a glance with minimal preparation and a natural delivery. This required re-thinking the normal adventure presentation a bit. Here's what you'll find included:

- Each encounter contained on one page.
- Bullet lists. **Bold** keywords.
- Printable cards for each monster and PC so you can run encounters using a card stack. A short video walk through of this method can be found [here](#).
- Printable cards for special treasure handouts.
- Short room and area descriptions. No paragraphs of droning flavor text — set the scene naturally and embellish as desired.
- Briefly explained non-encounter rooms. Again, embellish as desired!

PACING/TRANSITIONS

A dramatic question is presented with most scenes. Once that question has been answered, the tension of the scene is resolved. That's your cue to work toward the **transition** provided at the end the scene — even if that means summarising the end of a clearly decided combat, or in the case of clever players, skipping combat altogether. Keep the game moving toward the next challenge!

Room descriptions that are usually long blocks of literary read-aloud text have been left short and informational in this adventure. Many Game Masters prefer to paraphrase read aloud text and set the scene based on what tone and level of detail his or her group finds engaging. Anything listed before the **Development** sections is safe to share however you prefer to do so.

THE BARON'S BELOVED

The characters begin in the sunlit meeting hall of Baron Daniel DeCobray, the well-respected lord of the nearby towns and farm holds. The baron sits in his chair with his head in his hand,

Baron Daniel DeCobray, LG human noble
"Without Anastasia, I am a lion made a mouse."

- Appearance. Red beard and strong jaw. His tall, commanding presence is crumpled by worry for his wife.
- Does. Places his head in his hand when talking about Anastasia's safety.
- The Baron was friend with the elder Count Vierme's but has never like his son, Iblis. Always thought he was trouble.
- Count Vierme has mentioned his son's erratic behaviour has been getting steadily worse. He was going to send for a doctor soon if it does not get better.
- The Baroness did not want to go to the masque, but felt like it was an obligation. The Baron refused to go and tried, but failed, to stop his wife.
- Secret. The elder Count Vierme was hinting at a marriage alliance between his son and the Baron's eldest daughter, Elisa. But Elisa was killed a year ago in a horse riding accident. One where the Count's son, Iblis was accompanying her. The Barron is still suffering from the sadness of this.

"Ah, you have arrived. Thank you.

I know my message filled you in but let me start from the beginning. Three days ago, my wife left for a masquerade ball to celebrate Count Iblis inheriting his father's title and lands after his father's death. Well, if you believe he's dead. That is another story in and of itself. The poor man.

Anyway, the masquerade at Count Iblis Vierme's estate, Vierme Manor, was two nights past. She has not returned home, nor has any word arrived from the manor.

I would ask you to go to Vierme Manor and escort my beloved wife back, ensuring her safety. I fear something terrible might have happened. "

Ask the players what their characters' relationships are with the baron and why he has chosen them from his people to help. Then present one or more of the following hooks:

APPEAL TO REWARD

Baron Daniel DeCobray asks the characters to go to Vierme Manor and bring his Anastasia home. He offers them a pardon for any crimes they have (or might) commit and 100 gp each if they accept.

He also will reward them an additional 50gp (total) if they uncover any information that might shed light on the mysterious death of former Count.

APPEAL TO HEROISM

Baron Daniel DeCobray appeals to the heroic nature of the PCs, saying that Anastasia is his life and greatest love. He needs her by his side in order to lead the barony with a true and honest heart. For the good of he and his people, he begs them to bring his Anastasia home.

A while they are at the Counts manor, see if they can discretely discover any evidence of foul play in the death of the former Count. If they do, Baron Rennet will arrange for an investigation into the death.

APPEAL TO DISCOVERY

Baron Henrik says Vierme Manor is shrouded these last years in dark rumour and mystery. The death of the former count, Fortuno Vierme, was sudden and suspicious. Anastasia attended the masquerade only out of duty to the newly ennobled Count Iblis. Baron Henrik fears Fortuno met his fate due to foul play, and the truth, whatever it may be, must be brought to light.

TRANSITION

After answering their questions, Baron Henrik supplies the characters with horses and directions for the full-day journey to Vierme Manor. The roads are safe and the group arrives without incident. Go to *Journey to Vierme Manor*.

JOURNEY TO VIERME MANOR

The players will encounter to obstacles on their journey. There is a random obstacle table if more are desired.

STUCK CART

- An old man, Herbert, is met by the party along the path.
- His cart filled with wood carvings to sell at the festival in town of Berkshire is stuck in a mud hole.
- The man was a stable hand and his wife a house servant to the Count.
- They used to work for the Baron but the husband was discharge week ago by the Count son, a rude child, for perceived “slights” by the wife during the course of her work.

DEVELOPMENT

- If the party chooses to help the man, the will tell the party about the Count erratic behaviours since the Count death. And getting more so.
- The Count was know for being polite and decent to the staff but you still needed to be careful of what you said on the manor grounds. The Count always had a way of know what was happening.

MYSTERIOUS TRAVELLERS

- The party meets a wagon with 4 people and 2 horsemen.
- They are rough looking commoner with torn cloaks.
- On a successful passive perception check (DC12), the party notices one with a sword sticking out of his cloak and a nasty stench coming from the cart.
- The travellers are carrying the body of the elder Count in the wagon.

DEVELOPMENT

- If the party engages in conversation, the travellers will get nervous and attack the next round.
- If the party interrogate the travellers, they learn that Iblis hired them to transport his father’s body to the city of Berkshire and leave it in the basement of the cities hall of records (library).
- If the party inspects the elder Count’s body, they see an eye missing and a knife wound in the belly.

THE PATH

- The weathered, **gloomy manor** sits among dense, sickly trees. Dark mold and moss collect along its stone walls and under the eaves.
- High, **tall windows** ring the manor’s walls. The wooden front door is closed.
- **Stables** and additional **housing** lurk along tree-covered paths behind the manor.
- **A dark pond** next to the manor ripples in the chilly wind. Low clouds gather overhead.

DEVELOPMENT

- The **front door** of the manor is unlocked.
- Players can climb the **damp walls** with a DC12 Strength (Athletics) check. All **windows** except those in Area 3 are barred and shuttered, requiring a DC 20 Strength check to **open**.
- A well-kept **garden** of carrots, peas, and potatoes grows behind the house.

TRANSITION

After the two required encounters re completed and any optional encounters, the players arrive at Vierme Manor. Go to *Dark and Dreary*.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Use the following table if random encounters are needed.

1	The group encounters a group of wandering monks who offer some refreshments and company. If they accept, they wake up with each person 3 gp short.
2	Nothing
3	You notice round rocks subtly pointing towards a tree. If investigating the tree, roll a D6. On a one, you are bit by a squirrel. 2-5, nothing, 6 5hidden in a bag are 5 gp in bag.
4	Nothing
5	An inky, black, 8-foot tall monster appears gurgling horrific nonsense from between some trees. It turns out to be two children, beneath a black sheet, on each others shoulders just looking for a laugh.
6	Nothing
7	Nothing
8	A white rabbit crosses the road. If you follow it deeply into the woods, you will become impossibly lost and see wild, colourful visions. After a few days, you will find yourself back on the road.

DARK AND DREARY

VIERME MANOR

- The weathered, **gloomy manor** sits among dense, sickly trees. Dark mold and moss collect along its stone walls and under the eaves.
- High, **tall windows** ring the manor's walls. The wooden front door is closed.
- **Stables** and additional **housing** lurk along tree-covered paths behind the manor.
- A **dark pond** next to the manor ripples in the chilly wind. Low clouds gather overhead.

DEVELOPMENT

- The **front door** of the manor is unlocked.
- Players can climb the **damp walls** with a DC12 Strength (Athletics) check. All **windows** except those in Area 3 are barred and shuttered, requiring a DC 20 Strength check to **open**.
- A well-kept **garden** of carrots, peas, and potatoes grows behind the house.

Echo Fever

- The ancient, twisted presence of Vierme Manor can provoke an unusual disease from those who are experiencing mortal fear.
- A humanoid creature who is on the manor rounds and experiences strong fear (gauged by the GM) must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, the target contracts echo fever. If already ill, the target's disease progresses by one failure instead.
- The disease begins with a fever and the victim hearing a soft, pounding heart. The target repeats the saving throw each day, with the disease ending on a success and the pounding heart becoming louder on a failure. Each failed save after the third inflicts a random form of long-term madness.

STABLES

- Fifteen **horses** are tethered here. Some have died from terror; the others spook easily.
- **Horse tack** and **carriages** from various noble houses line the walls. Baroness Anastasia's tack and carriage are present.

STAFF AND GUEST HOUSING

- Rows of stone buildings house seven **apartments** for Vierme staff and guests.

Hera Agatha, NG human commoner

"Is mommie coming home soon?"

- *Appearance.* Curly brown hair. Torn and stained nightgown.
- *Does.* Won't come out of her hiding place unless offered food and water.
- *Secret.* Worries her mom was taken by "The Willowman" (a story) because Hera stole cookies.

DEVELOPMENT

- **Internal doors are unlocked.** Each apartment has 4 gp worth of mundane valuables.
- A **six-year old girl hides** under the bed in one of the rooms, shivering in fear. Players whose passive Perception is 12 or higher hear her. She is slowly succumbing to echo fever.

DISCUSSION WITH HERA

Hera will share the following information with anyone who treats her kindly:

- She has been hiding for two days after she heard a lot of **screaming** in the manor house.
- Her **mom** worked in the kitchens. Her name is Sharon. She hasn't come home yet. She has curly brown hair like hers plus a large, old burn mark on her left forearm.
- **Count Iblis** is mean and strange. His dad was nicer, but he had a scary, blue glass eye.
- Lots of important grown-ups came to the masquerade and made lots of noise, but now the only sound she hears is the **loud heartbeat**.

TRANSITION

When the characters enter Vierme Manor, go to *In Halls of Gloom*.

IN HALLS OF GLOOM

AREA 1: ENTRANCE HALL

- Vierme Manor's doors open to a wide **entrance hall**. Dark tapestries, curtains, and suits of armour decorate it.
- A **passage** leads into the great hall.
- A **pale man** in a torn costume lies on the floor on his back. **Blood** pools around him. He clutches a **bottle** of Amontillado wine.

DEVELOPMENT

- The man is Duke Alden, a masquerade attendee who is nearly dead from Vierme's Slither **bite** on his back. He suffers from **echo fever**.
- Duke is very **drunk** on wine. Even if healed, he remains almost incoherent.
- Between gales of laughter, he mutters about "the **beasts** in the cellars" and the "ungodly beating of the heart."

Duke Alden, LN human noble

"I wish only to die laughing! Ha ha — ugh..."

- *Appearance.* Long-nosed raven mask and black, shredded robes.
- *Does.* Demands to be told jokes. Raves about how excellent the Amontillado wine is, but won't share it.
- *Secret.* Takes false credit for his dead brother's poetry.

AREA 2: GREAT HALL

- The **hall** is draped in fine white curtains; the walls are freshly painted white to match. Red smears and hand prints dot the walls.
- Chairs and musical instruments are **broken** and strewn around the room.
- Long **tables** are laid with rotting food. Black **rats** squirm on top of the plates.
- Five bloody, costumed **bodies** lie on the floor.
- Three **doors** lead from the main hall.

DEVELOPMENT

- The bodies are masquerade attendees who have died from jagged, circular **wounds** the size of plates. Baroness Anastasia is not among them.
- If the characters **touch** the bodies, all five rise as Slither Fiends (*Appendix B: New Monsters*) and attack.

DRAMATIC QUESTION

Can the players survive the Slither Fiends?

COMBAT

- The Slither Fiends each take turns using their *Mask of Violence* action on players within range.
- In the second round of combat, the **rats** coalesce into a **swarm of rats** and attack. The swarm flees if reduced below **half its hit points** or if damaged with fire.

TREASURE

The Slither Fiends wear masquerade finery and jewellery worth a collected 120 gp.

TRANSITION

Go to *A Madman* if the players continue exploring the manor, or return to *Dark and Dreary* if the characters go outside.

A MADMAN

AREA 3 - 4: KITCHEN (3), BUTLER'S PANTRY (4), BUTLERS ROOM (5)

- Rotting **food** congeals inside pots and pans hanging over a cold hearth.
- The high **windows** are open, bringing in cold air.
- Three dead **cooks** and one masquerade attendee lie on the floor. They all have large, circular wounds.
- The kitchen has a door in the floor under a rug going down into a wine and cold storage.
- Butler's pantry is filled with broken dishes and glasses scatter about.
- Butler's room has a broken bed and bookshelf.

DEVELOPMENT

- Among the dead is Sharon Agatha, Hera Agatha's mother. The bodies twitch if touched, but do not rise as Slither Fiends.
- If inspected, the **door frame** has gash marks as if something large forced its way through.

AREA 5: LIBRARY

- The library is furnished in all **black**.
- A massive **pendulum clock** clatters and hisses along the middle of the rear wall.
- The **Diary** of Count Fortuno is open on the reading desk. He writes of the erratic behaviour of his son.
- Diaries of past counts are on the shelves, going back 200 years. (Hook for next adventure)

DEVELOPMENT

- If a character opens the clock door, a harmless swarm of **rats** boils out and flees.
- A **secret door** that leads to Area 6 is behind a bookshelf. Characters can find it by passing a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

TREASURE

A magic dagger called Ghost Eye (see Appendix C: New Magic Items) is inside the clock cabinet.

AREA 6: GRAND DINING ROOM

- A huge, broken table sits in this **dining room**, with rotting food on it and the floor.
- A **young man** sits at the table, hands over his ears.

He rocks back and forth and mumbles.

- A five-foot wide **hole** surrounded by rubble sits in the middle of the floor.

DEVELOPMENT

- The man is **Count Iblis Vierme**. When he notices the PCs, he jumps to his feet. Characters may be able to reason with him.
- The count has a severe case of **echo fever**.
- The **hole** in the floor is gently sloping, 30 feet long, and leads to Area 6.

Count Iblis Vierme, LE human noble

"You think I am mad? A madman cannot plan!"

- *Appearance.* Twenty years old. Short, black hair. Vivid blue eyes.
- *Does.* Flinches and slaps his ears. Raves to himself (see Appendix D: Mad Monologue).
- *Secret.* Murdered his father, Fortuno, and sent the body to Berkshire to destroy the library.

DRAMATIC QUESTION

Can the group reason with Count Iblis?

REASON WITH A MADMAN

Success if the conflict score reaches 0. Iblis flees down the hole in the floor if it reaches 4.

- Iblis begins with a conflict score of 2.
- Agreeing with him that there is an audible heartbeat reduces his score by 1 (once only).
- Iblis is craven. A successful Charisma (Intimidation) check reduces his score by 2, while a failure increases it by 1.
- Any other DC 15 Charisma check reduces his score by 1. A failure increases it by 1.
- Wisdom (Insight) DC 13 reveals one of the above details or his current conflict score.

SUCCESS

In a moment of lucidity, Iblis reveals any information from the adventure **background** section the players wish to know. He won't resist or fight the characters.

TRANSITION

Go to *In Halls of Gloom* if the PCs go to the main hall, or *The Pit* if they go to the cellar.

SECOND STORY

7. HALLWAY

- An empty hallway with dust beginning to settle.

DEVELOPMENT

- On a successful passive perception check (DC10), the player will hear a rustling sound coming from the Master Bedroom area.

8-11. BEDROOMS AND GUEST ROOMS

- Lavish beds and dressers fill this room along with a chair, mirror and vanity.
- Paintings adorn the walls
- The rooms appear not to have been slept in.
- Dust is starting to accumulate

DEVELOPMENT

- If the characters search the room, they find a variety of clothing and jewellery.
- Each room has 2 GP worth of jewellery.
- On a successful passive perception check (DC10), the player will hear a rustling sound coming from the Master Bedroom area. Unless the party has defeated the Skin Kite.

AREA 12: MASTER BEDROOM

- Luxurious carpets, paintings, and antiques adorn this shadowy **bedroom**.
- A large, decorative bed takes up the majority of space in the room.
- Wardrobe cabinets, dressers, a vanity, and chairs sit along the walls.

DEVELOPMENT

- If the characters search the room, they find a variety of clothing and jewellery.
- Each room has 8 GP worth of jewellery.
- As the players enter the room, a Skin Kite detaches from the wall and attacks.

DRAMATIC QUESTION

Can the characters defeat the skin kite or will they run?

COMBAT

- The skin kite was drawn to the manor from the stench of the bodies beginning to decay.
- It has just finished feasting on the flesh, it's offspring have left. Now, it's looking for the next food source.
- The Skin Kite will target the player with the highest Charisma.
- The Skin Kite will fight until 80% of it's hit points is lost, then it will retreat through the windows.

THE PIT (COLD STORAGE)

AREA 6: CELLARS (WINE AND COLD STORAGE)

- Casks and bottles of wine are stacked around the damp cellar. Several are destroyed. Pungent wine pools around the room.
- Various rotting meats, broken bottles, and vegetables are scattered about
- Two of Vierme's red Slither feast on the mangled bodies of twelve masqueraders.
- A blood-stained tunnel in the wall leads up to the ground floor of the manor. There's another tunnel in the floor at the rear of the cavern.

DEVELOPMENT

- If Count Iblis Vierme fled here, he rocks back and forth on the ground behind a wine rack. He screams for the Viermes to attack the characters.
- If Iblis is in Area 5, he climbs down the tunnel to watch the confrontation.
- Baroness Anastasia Rennet's body is here among the dead.
- The tunnel in the floor drops for 10 feet before hitting a severe collapse. It would take days to excavate.
- Iblis's murdered was being stored here, if the players search the area they will find the following message written in blood on a torn parchment stuffed in a bottle:

"My son...y poor son is going insane. He has contracted that cursed Echo Fever been noticing it for daysfound out I sent for a he has chained me in this cellar only days left kills me.

This place is cursed.

(Signed) Count Fortuno Vierme"

DRAMATIC QUESTION

Can the characters defeat Vierme's Slither?

COMBAT

- Iblis, if present, does not join the combat. Instead, he raves loudly during the fight (*see Appendix D: Mad Monologue*).
- Vierme's Slither lunge to attack, smashing any barriers out of their way. They attempt to swallow the largest characters and fight until slain.
- Every two rounds, two of the corpses rise at the beginning of initiative as Slither Fiends and join the fight. The Slither Fiends collapse into dead husks if Vierme's Slither are defeated.

A MOMENT OF LUCIDITY

- Once the characters defeat Vierme's Slither, if Iblis is present, he has a moment of lucidity where he reveals any information from the adventure background section the group wishes to know. He won't resist or fight the characters.

TREASURE

The surviving collection of fine wines in the cellar is worth a total of 250 gp.

TRANSITION

Once the group has defeated Vierme's Slither and dealt with Iblis Vierme, move to the *Aftermath* section.

AFTERMATH

NEWS OF ANASTASIA'S DEATH

Baron Daniel DeCobray thanks the characters grimly for bringing him the news of his wife's death. He rewards them as promised, adding an additional 50 gp each if they recovered her body.

IBLIS VIERME

The characters may have taken Iblis into custody. Baron Henrik will gladly imprison the mad count in his dungeons and offers the group an appropriate bounty in exchange for him.

THE VICTIMS OF THE MASQUERADE

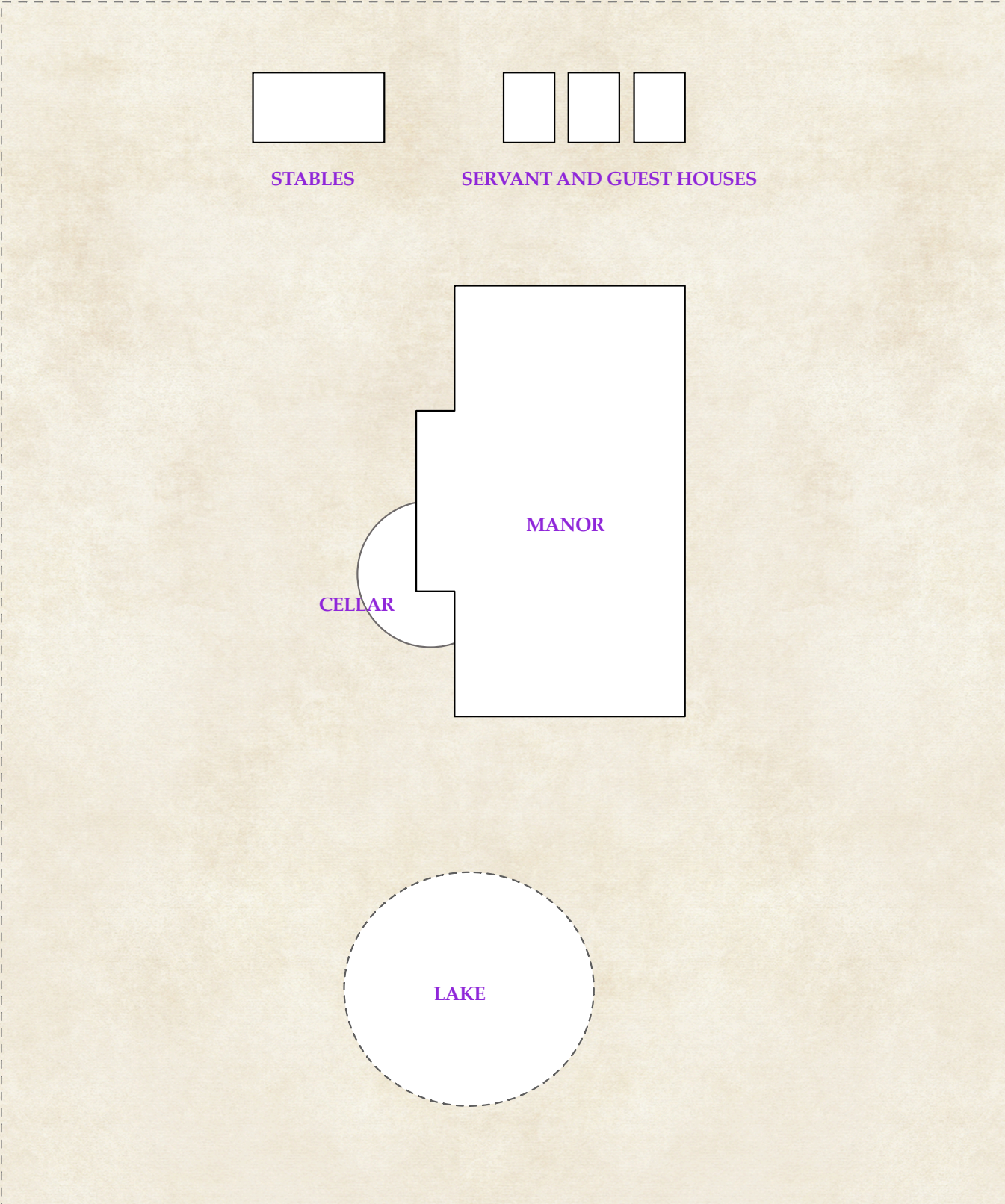
The characters may have rescued NPCs such as Hera Agatha or Duke Alden. Baron Henrik takes any injured or homeless NPCs into his charge and makes sure they are treated well.

FUTURE ADVENTURE HOOKS

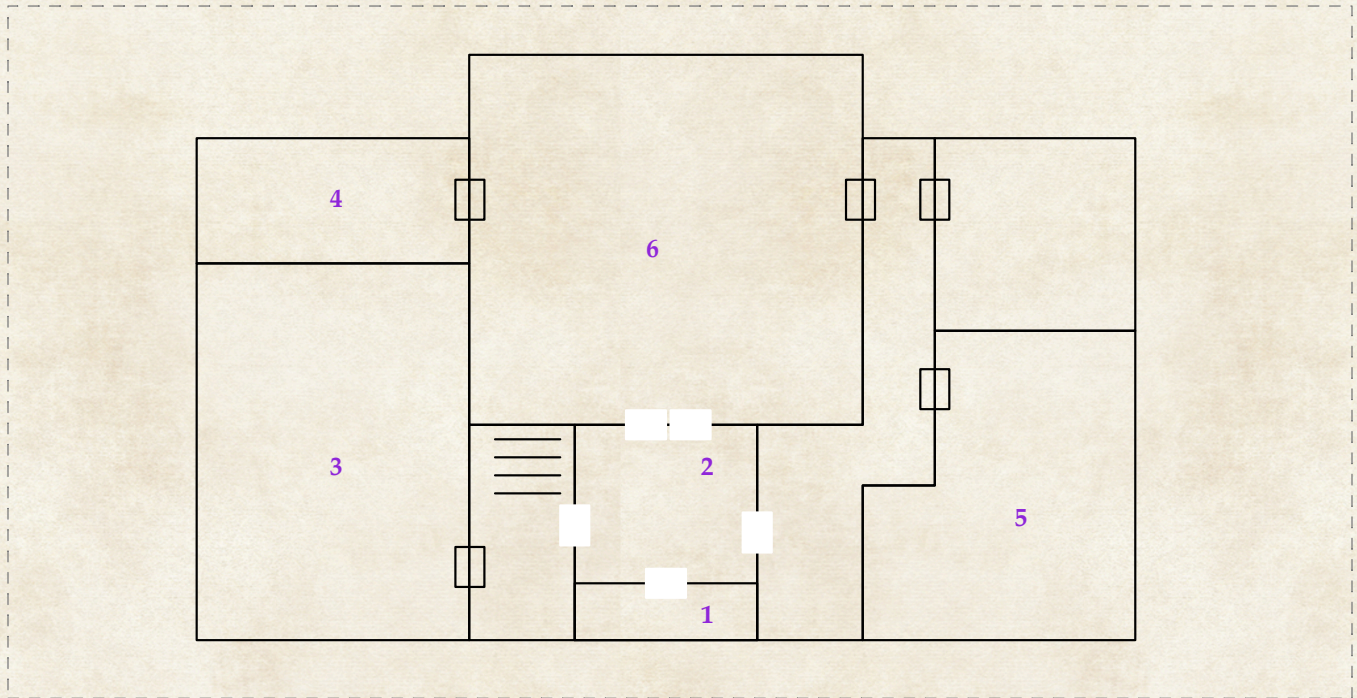
- After losing his wife, Baron Daniel DeCobray spirals into destructiveness and cruelty. His alignment changes to neutral evil over the next few weeks. The baron's closest associates may ask the characters to inspire his redemption by bringing a powerful paladin or priest to his side.
- If the characters saved Duke Alden, he seeks them out in the weeks following the masquerade. There are a few casks of Amontillado wine left in the cellars of Vierme Manor; he'd pay handsomely for them.
- Vierme Manor is now an open grave. Baron Henrik may ask the characters to return to the property and seal or explore any tunnels the Viermes left behind.
- Baron Daniel DeCobray ask the players to go to the library in a nearby city and research why the Count thought the manor was cursed. Then return and cleanse the manor of the evil causing the "Echo Fever".

APPENDIX A: MAPS

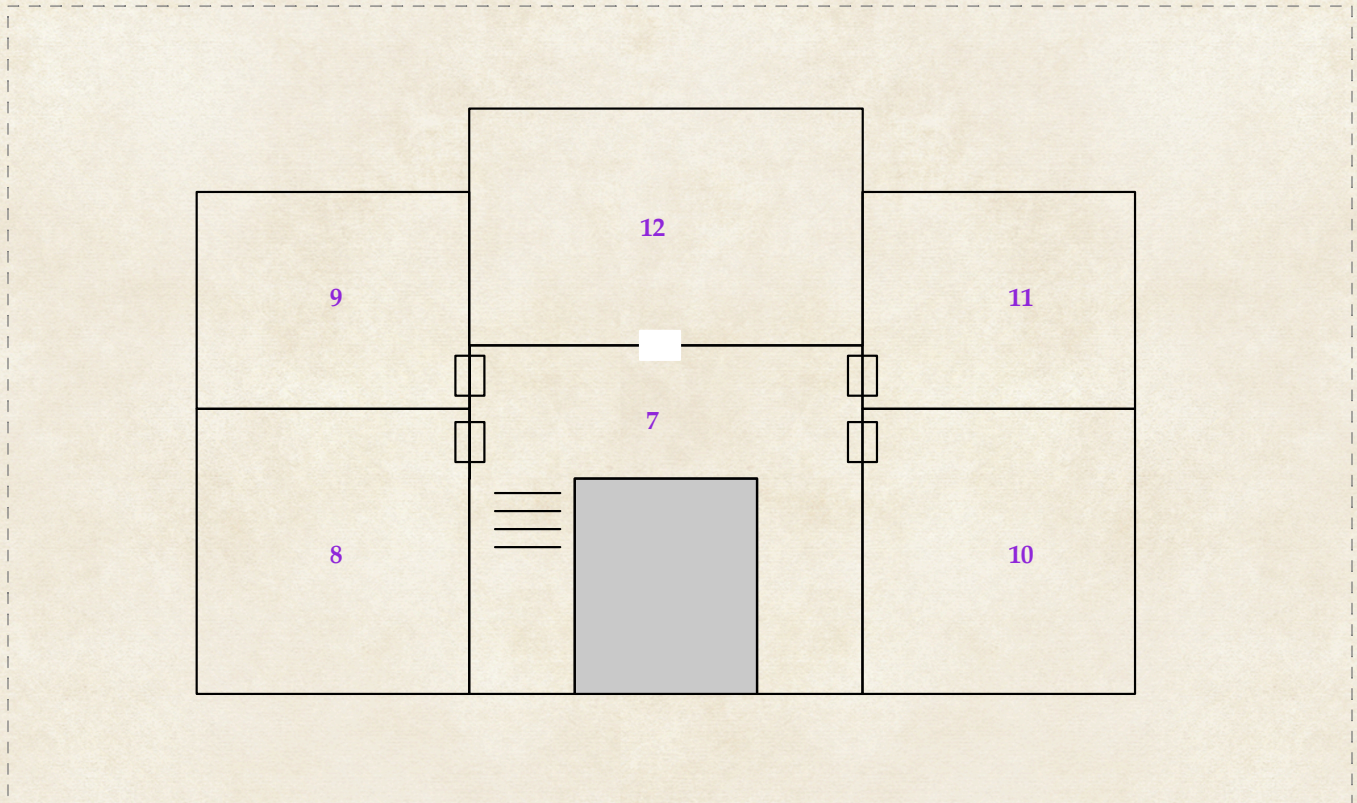
MANOR GROUNDS



MANOR, 1ST FLOOR



MANOR, SECOND FLOOR



APPENDIX B: MONSTERS

VIERME'S SLITHER

The floor erupts in a blast of rubble. A blood red Slither rears above you from the pit, its maw opening and closing like grasping fingers.

Drawn By Madness. Nobody is certain where Slither originated, but some scholars believe demons brought them to the Material Plane to aid in the destruction of organised societies. The Slithers are drawn to madness, and they show up in places where the rule of law and reason is already at its most fragile.

VIERME'S SLITHER

Large monstrosity, chaotic neutral

Armour Class: 13 (natural armour)

Hit Points: 32 (3d10 + 9)

Speed: 40 ft., burrow 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4+)	7 (-2)	16 (+3)	1 (-5)	8 (-1)	3 (-4)

Condition Immunity: frightened

Senses: Blind sight 30 ft., Tremor sense 60 ft., Passive, Perception: 9

Languages: —

Challenge: masquerade /2 (100 XP)

Servant of Madness. The Slither e can sense any creature within two miles that is suffering from any form of madness. It is drawn to such creatures and regards them as allies.

Tunneller. The Slither can burrow through solid rock at half its burrow speed and leaves a 5-foot-diameter tunnel in its wake.

ACTIONS

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., One target. Hit: 9 (1d10 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is a Medium creature or smaller, it must succeed on a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw or be swallowed by the Slither. A swallowed creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the Slither, and it takes 5 (2d4) acid damage at the start of the Slither's turns. Only one target swallowed at a time. If the Slither dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape by using movement, exiting prone.

SLITHER FIEND

Raw, circular wounds cover the body of the creature that writhes to its feet before you. It's neither alive nor dead, and red madness burns bright in its eyes.

Vessels Of Chaos. Creatures killed at the epicentre of a Slither attack sometimes rise again as vessels of madness and chaos. Fiendish power fills the victims' bodies as their souls depart, reanimating them into demonic puppets.

SLITHER FIEND

Medium fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armour Class: 12 (natural armour)

Hit Points: 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed: 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	10 (0)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)	11 (0)	10 (0)

Damage Immunity: poison

Condition Immunity: poisoned, frightened

Senses: Dark vision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages: understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge: 1/4 (50 XP)

ACTIONS

Mask of Violence. The Slither Fiend twists its face into a terrible portrait of hatred and violence. Each creature within 10 feet of the Slither Fiend must succeed on a DC 10 Charisma saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. A frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to all Slither Fiends' Mask of Violence for the next 24 hours.

Claws. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., One target. Hit: 6 (2d4 + 1) slashing damage.

SKIN KITE

A knot of flaccidly flapping membranes kites through the air, now drifting with the currents, now stooping swiftly through the air toward you.

Skin kites are undead creatures made up of the stolen skin of past victims. They feed on the skin of living beings, replenishing their own constantly rotting skin, as well as using new skin as spawning material for new skin kites.

No two skin kites appear the same. They display a range of different colours, hair, or fur depending on the creatures from which they were harvested. A skin kite has no body, only a wingspan, which is about 5 feet. It weighs about 5 pounds.

Undead Nature. The skin kite does not require air, drink, food, or sleep.

SKIN KITE

Small undead, neutral evil

Armour Class: 14 (natural armour)

Hit Points: 26

Speed: 10 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (0)	19 (+4)	16 (+3)	4 (-3)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills: Perception +3, Stealth +6

Damage Immunity: poison

Condition Immunity: poisoned

Senses: darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages: -

Challenge: 1/2 (100 XP)

ACTIONS

Slam. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d4 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a humanoid, the skin kite attaches to it. While attached, the skin kite can only make attacks against the target and has advantage on its attack rolls. The skin kite can detach itself by spending 5 feet of its movement. It does so after it steals 4 points of Charisma from the target or the target dies. A creature, including the target, can take its action to try to detach the skin kite by making a DC 16 Strength check. On a successful check, the creature takes 10 (3d6) necrotic damage and the skin kite is detached. On a failure, the creature takes half as much damage and the skin kite remains attached.

Steal Skin. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one humanoid the skin kite is attached to. Hit: 10 (3d6) necrotic damage, and the target's Charisma score is reduced by 1d4. The target becomes catatonic and is permanently incapacitated if this reduces its Charisma score to 0. Otherwise, the reduction lasts until a greater restoration or similar magic is cast on the target.

Launch Kite (After Stealing 4 Charisma Points).

When the skin kite has stolen 4 Charisma points of skin from a humanoid, it creates a new skin kite from the stolen skin. The new skin kite has hit points equal to the original skin kite's current hit points (the new skin kite's hit point maximum is equal to the original skin kite's full normal total, even if its current hit points are lower than that).

ADDITIONAL MONSTERS

Bandit. Cutthroats hired to transport the Count Fortuno Vierme's body.

Commoner. A child left left alone, scared by the attack.

Noble. Count Iblis Vierme and Duke Alden, attendee of the party

APPENDIX C: NEW MAGIC ITEMS

GHOST EYE

Weapon (dagger), rare

You get a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls with this bone-handled magic dagger. While holding this weapon, you have darkvision to a range of 60 feet. While this ability is active, your eyes are milky white as though covered in cataracts.

COUNT VIERME'S EYE

Magical Glass Eye

After spending a short rest studying Count Vierme Eye, the holder becomes attuned to the eye. Spell casting individuals will learn it with a "detect magical items" spell/ability.

Far Sight. Distance: +60ft from attuned owner, The owner can see through the eye for 3 minutes each charge. While doing so, the user will be distracted and at a disadvantage on all attacks. Charges: 3, resets every day.

Premonition. The owner can concentrate to get a "feeling" as to the outcome of a upcoming event. Charges: 1, resets every day.

The eye can "see" through all non-magical materials and walls.

APPENDIX D: MAD MONOLOGUE

Iblis Vierme is thoroughly insane and raves to himself day and night. Use the below categories as a guide for what he's saying.

For each round that Iblis rants unimpeded, he may target one character within 30 feet. That character must succeed on a DC 12. Constitution saving throw or contract echo fever. If the target already has echo fever, the disease progresses by one failure instead.

FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH PCS (RAVING)

- "I knew what I was doing when I killed the old vulture. I was so careful that night, so very careful not to make a sound as I entered his room. It had to be done. He watched me with his eye, watched me through the walls!"
- "The Viermes? You will like the Viermes. They are noble creatures. They will triumph in the end. They will reduce the world to red powder and white bone — and the blackness of the pit. Only then will the incessant heartbeat stop! Only then!"

LOST IN THOUGHT (MURMURING)

- "Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there, wondering, fearing, / Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before."
- "It is true! Yes, I have been ill, very ill. But why do you say that I have lost control of my mind, why do you say that I am mad? Can you not see that I have full control of my mind? Indeed, the illness only made my mind, my feelings, my senses stronger, more powerful!"

IN COMBAT (CHANTING)

- "It writhes! —it writhes! —with mortal pangs / The mimes become its food, / And seraphs sob at vermin fangs / In human gore imbued."
- "Through a circle that ever returneth in / to the self-same spot, / And much of Madness, and more of Sin / And Horror the soul of the plot."
- "While the angels, all pallid and wan, / Uprising, unveiling, affirm / The play is the tragedy, 'Man,' / And its hero, my Slither!"

ANGRY (SNARLING)

- "I killed him. But why does his heart not stop beating?! Why does it not stop?!"
- "So I am mad, you say? You should have seen how careful I was to put the body where none could find it!"

FRIGHTENED (WHIMPERING)

- "The eye, the eye, the hideous eye! It watches even now — it knows we are here!"
- "Louder it becomes, louder! I cannot bear it!"
- "Nevermore, nevermore, nevermore..."

APPENDIX X: COMBAT CARDS

VIERME'S SLITHER, l

1/2

NAME CR

13
AC

29
HP

9
PASSIVE PERCEPTION

40ft/30ft
SPEED

+4
BONUS

-2
BONUS

+3
BONUS

-5
BONUS

-1
BONUS

-4
BONUS

SKILLS / TRAITS

- Blindsight 30', tremorsense 60', immune: fright
- Servant of Madness:** Senses madness within 2 miles, regards as ally
- Tunneler:** Burrow thru rock half, 30ft
- speed, 5' tunnel

ACTIONS

- Bite:** +6, 1d10+4p, if smaller than L, DC 11 DEX save or swallowed, blinded & restrained, 2d4 acid on worm's turn,
- 1 target only, escape if worm dies

SLITHER FIEND, m

1/4

NAME CR

12
AC

11
HP

10
PASSIVE PERCEPTION

30ft
SPEED

+1
BONUS

0
BONUS

+1
BONUS

-2
BONUS

0
BONUS

0
BONUS

SKILLS / TRAITS

- Darkvision 60', immune: fright, poison

ACTIONS

- Mask of Violence:** 10', DC 10 CHA save or fright 1 min/until save, immune 24 hours
- Claws:** +3, 2d4+1s

SKIN KITE, s

1/2

NAME CR

12
AC

21
HP

10
PASSIVE PERCEPTION

10ft/40ft
SPEED

+1
BONUS

0
BONUS

+1
BONUS

-2
BONUS

0
BONUS

0
BONUS

SKILLS / TRAITS

- Deception +5, Insight +4, Persuasion +5
- Launch Kite.** After Stealing 4 Charisma Points, it creates a new skin kite from the stolen skin. The new skin kite has hit points equal to the original skin kite's
- Flying.** 40ft

ACTIONS

- Slam.** Melee: +6, reach 5 ft., Hit: 1d4 + 4) bludgeoning damage.
- Steal Skin.** Melee: +6, reach 5 ft., (the skin kite must be attached). Hit: 3d6 necrotic damage + CHA reduced by 1d4.

GHOST EYE

NAME

Weapon (dagger)

R

N

CATEGORY RARITY ATTUNE

SKILLS / TRAITS

You get a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls with this bone-handled magic dagger.

While holding this weapon, you have darkvision to a range of 60 feet.

While this ability is active, your eyes are milky white as though covered in cataracts.

+1
BONUS

SAVE DC

CHARGES

CHARACTER NAME

AC

HP

PASSIVE PERCEPTION

RACE

CLASS / LEVEL

SPEED

SPELL SAVE DC

PROFICIENCY BONUS

STR

DEX

CON

INT

WIS

CHA

PLAYER NAME

CHARACTER NAME

AC

HP

PASSIVE PERCEPTION

RACE

CLASS / LEVEL

SPEED

SPELL SAVE DC

PROFICIENCY BONUS

STR

DEX

CON

INT

WIS

CHA

PLAYER NAME

APPENDIX X: COMBAT CARDS

SWARM OF RATS, *m*
1/4

NAME CR

10
AC

24
HP

10
PASSIVE PERCEPTION

30
SPEED

-1
BONUS

+0
BONUS

-1
BONUS

-4
BONUS

0
BONUS

-4
BONUS

SKILLS / TRAITS

- Darkvision 30', resist: bps, immune: charm, fright, grapple, paralyze, petrify, prone, restrain, stun
- **Keen Smell:** Advantage on Perception for smell
- **Swarm:** Share another creature's space, pass openings as if T, can't regain HP/temp HP

ACTIONS

- **Bite:** 0', +2, 2d6p/1d6p if <13 HP

BANDIT, *m*
1/8

NAME CR

12
AC

11
HP

10
PASSIVE PERCEPTION

30
SPEED

0
BONUS

+1
BONUS

+1
BONUS

0
BONUS

0
BONUS

0
BONUS

SKILLS / TRAITS

ACTIONS

- **Scimitar. Melee.** Attack: +3, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 1d6 + 1, slashing damage.
- **Light Crossbow. Ranged.** Attack: +3, range 80 ft./320 ft., one target. Hit: 1d8 + 1, piercing damage.

NAME, *m*
1/2

NAME CR

00
AC

00
HP

00
PASSIVE PERCEPTION

00
SPEED

+0
BONUS

+0
BONUS

+0
BONUS

+0
BONUS

+0
BONUS

+0
BONUS

SKILLS / TRAITS

- Ability
- Trait

ACTIONS

- Ability
- Trait

COUNT VIERME'S EYE

NAME

Magical Glass Eye

R

N

CATEGORY RARITY ATTUNE

SKILLS / TRAITS

After spending a short rest studying Count Moldavia Eye, the holder becomes attuned to the eye. Spell casting individuals will learn it with a "detect magical items" spell/ability.

- **Far Sight.** Distance: +60ft from attuned owner, The owner can see through the eye for 3 minutes each charge. While doing so, the user will be distracted and at a disadvantage on all attacks. Charges: 3, resets every day.
- **Premonition.** The owner can concentrate to get a "feeling" as to the outcome of an upcoming event. Charges: 1, resets every day.
- The eye can see through all non-magical materials and walls

BONUS

SAVE DC

3/1
CHARGES

CHARACTER NAME

AC

HP

PASSIVE PERCEPTION

RACE

CLASS / LEVEL

SPEED

SPELL SAVE DC

PROFICIENCY BONUS

STR
BONUS

DEX
BONUS

CON
BONUS

INT
BONUS

WIS
BONUS

CHA
BONUS

PLAYER NAME

CHARACTER NAME

AC

HP

PASSIVE PERCEPTION

RACE

CLASS / LEVEL

SPEED

SPELL SAVE DC

PROFICIENCY BONUS

STR
BONUS

DEX
BONUS

CON
BONUS

INT
BONUS

WIS
BONUS

CHA
BONUS

PLAYER NAME

Notice of Open Game Content: This product contains Open Game Content, as defined in the Open Game License Version 1.0a, below. Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of the Open Game License version 1.0a. No portion of this work other than previously designated Open Game Content may be reproduced in any form without written permission.

Designation of Open Game Content: Subject to the Product Identity Designation herein, the following material is designated as Open Game Content. (1) all monster statistics, descriptions of special abilities, and sentences including game mechanics such as die rolls, probabilities, and/or other material required to be Open Game Content as part of the game rules, or previously released as Open Game Content, (2) all portions of spell descriptions that include rules-specific definitions of the effect of the spells, and all material previously released as Open Game Content, (3) all other descriptions of game-rule effects specifying die rolls or other mechanic features of the game, whether in traps, magic items, hazards, or anywhere else in the text, (4) all previously released Open Game Content, material required to be Open Game Content under the terms of the Open Game License, and public domain material anywhere in the text.

Product Identity Designation: This Product Identity Designation includes, but is not limited to, the following items that are hereby identified as Product Identity, as defined in the Open Game License version 1.0a, Section 1(e): All trademarks, registered trademarks, proper names (characters, artifacts, place names, new deities, monsters, organizations, etc.), dialogue, plots, story elements, locations, characters, artwork, sidebars, logos, and trade dress. These items are not Open Game Content. Elements that have previously been designated as Open Game Content are not included in this declaration.

OPEN GAME LICENSE Version 1.0a The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), notation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgement or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, story lines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product Identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.

3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.

4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty free, non exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open

Game Content.

5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.

6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.

8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

10. Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.

12. Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.

13. Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sub licenses shall survive the termination of this License.

14. Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

15. COPYRIGHT NOTICE Open Game License v 1.0a Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, LLC. System Reference Document 5.1 Copyright 2016, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Mike Mearls, Jeremy Crawford, Chris Perkins, Rodney Thompson, Peter Lee, James Wyatt, Robert J. Schwab, Bruce R. Cordell, Chris Sims, and Steve Townshend, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

END LICENSE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This adventure was inspired by the works of Edgar Allan Poe.

And a special thanks to the following folks who continually put up with my wild notions and are willing to play test my games. N/A

ART CREDITS

Design: Brian Huonker

Copyrighting: Brian Huonker

Editing: N/A

Images were generating with Google AI

MASQUERADE OF THE VIERMES

© 2024 *Brian Huonker*