

# Crawl!

No.9: The Arwich Grinder



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The Curwen Family have lived up among the pine woods on the outskirts of Arwich Village for as long as the oldest village gaffers can remember. The beautiful Bessie Curwen's bonnet is found in a strange creature's grasp. The village owes much to her family, so someone must go up into the dark pine-clad hills to make sure that the Curwens are all right. After all, the Curwens saved the village from starvation two winters ago. If you do not go, who will?

*The Arwich Grinder* is a Lovecraftian 0-level funnel for the DCC RPG written by Daniel J. Bishop.

What in the name of heaven or hell could be happening up there?

Also included, *But He Sure Had Guts!*, a gruesome short encounter.



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# Crawl!fanzine

**No. 9**

Digital Edition

## The Arwich Grinder

*A 0-level Funnel Adventure*

by Daniel J. Bishop

*But He Sure Had Guts! A short encounter*

by Daniel J. Bishop

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## **Submissions!**

Original submissions are welcome. Everything that gets published will belong to the author, artist and creator. For art submissions, send a link to some samples. We prefer old-school "D&D" style black and white line-art with hatching or halftone. Smaller, incidental fantasy themed pieces are always needed. If you have a brilliant idea or proposal, I want to see it, but make sure you use a short and informative subject line. Include a quick blurb or sample text in the email. Don't send attachments until requested. All contributors will get a free print copy of the zine. Email [\*\*crawl@straycouches.com\*\*](mailto:crawl@straycouches.com).



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## Introduction

*The Curwen Family have lived up among the pine woods on the outskirts of Arwich Village for as long as the oldest village gaffers can remember. They raise pigs, hunt, and trap among the wooded hills. Talk in the village is that they are quiet and clannish – perhaps something odd in their makeup – but they are well enough regarded. Seldom are the Curwens seen in the village, most often to sell furs or game, or to purchase supplies, but when famine hit Arwich hard two winters ago, it was they who kept many here gathered alive.*

*Arwich Village has a single tavern, known locally as The Hound, and you are gathered there one evening, drinking and talking away the vexations of another day's labour, when a Very Large Man stumbles through the door to collapse on the floor. The Very Large Man is not tall – he barely tops five feet – but he is of enormous girth, seemingly equal parts fat and muscle. His arms and legs are so short in comparison that it is a wonder he could walk at all. He is naked, and when examined, dead. There is no obvious sign of a wound.*

*"His ticker must have gave out," ventures one neighbour. No one in the tavern has ever seen a man like this before.*

*“That’s Bessie Curwen’s bonnet!” Jonas, the old tavern keeper gasps when they roll him over. “She was wearing it when she came in with her father for a bag of salt!” And, sure enough, the Very Large Man clutches a blue-white bonnet decorated with embroidered roses in one fat dead hand. “He must have come from the Curwen’s. What in the name of heaven or hell could be happening up there?”*

*The village owes much to their reclusive neighbours. And now, at last, a chance has come to repay that debt. Someone must go up into the pine-shrouded hills to rescue the Curwen family. There are eight Curwen’s: The elderly Grandfather Ike; Uncle Charles Curwen, who lives with his brother as a confirmed bachelor; Ward and Caroline Curwen – she having married into the family from nearby Ipsam; their son Wilbur; their older daughter Eliza and her husband Allen Merritt; and their beautiful younger daughter Bessie, who cannot be more than sixteen, and who has set many a village lad’s mind to courting.*

*Saving them is up to you.*

## Judge’s Notes

Some players may ask for other villagers to aid them. Most of the people in the tavern are not destined to lives of adventure – they take one shuddering look at the pine hills under the darkening sky, and turn back to beer and fire, no longer willing to meet the PCs’ eyes. If pushed, they simply go home.

If the Very Large Man is examined, the PCs may note that his tongue was cut out a very long time ago. The wound has long since healed. His skin is pasty white, like it had never felt the touch of sun, but there are deep marks from a collar around his neck. The collar is no longer there.

It is about two hours’ brisk walk to the Curwen residence, up in the forested hills. It is doubtful that the Very Large Man covered the same distance as quickly. Whatever is happening there has had time to progress, and any delay could be crucial.

This adventure assumes that the PCs leave almost immediately. If they do not, dawn will find the Curwen household in order, the adventure having passed the characters by. Maybe some irregularity will cause the PCs to investigate further. In all likelihood, though, this group is simply no better than the rest of the villagers, and is not destined for greatness.



# Through the Pine Woods

The song of the whippoorwills forms a sinister chorus as the PCs set out toward the Curwen homestead. The night is dark, and the PCs may wish to use lanterns or torches to traverse the darkly wooded hills. Shadows pool beneath the trees, and common spider webs strung along the trail offer startling moments to the unwary.

The judge knows his players best. Either move them directly to the Curwen homestead without incident, or use one of the encounters below. Either select the encounter that would be most effective for your players, or roll randomly. Unused encounters can be worked into other game sessions in the days and weeks to come.

**1 Very Large Men:** Two of the Very Large Men are attracted by the PCs' lights, and come lurching out of the darkness towards them. Like the Very Large Man in the introduction, these are naked and pasty-skinned. They come forward with their arms outstretched and moan loudly (as they have no tongues). Each wears a poorly-made leather collar. These creatures have no effective attacks, and are easily cut down. If met with violence, they attempt to lumber away. They are not intelligent enough to communicate very much by gesture and cannot write.

**Very large men (2):** Init -6; Atk none; AC 6; HD 1d6; hp 5, 4; MV 20'; Act 1d14; SV Fort +0, Ref -4, Will -4; AL N.

**2 Wolves:** A group of three wolves pull meat from the corpse of a Very Large Man. They won't attack if left alone, but if approached or threatened, they will defend their prey. These are natural animals, though, and can be driven off if two or more take damage equal to half their hit points.

**Wolves (3):** Init +3; Atk bite +2 melee (1d4); AC 12; HD 1d6; hp 5, 2, 3; MV 40'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +1; AL L.

**3 Bear Trap:** A heavy bear trap is set along the trail here. Because of the darkness, and the skill of the trappers, it is hard to see. Have everyone roll a 1d20 + Luck modifier – the one who fails (DC 15) by the most steps into the trap. If everyone gets 15+, the trap is spotted instead. The trap does 1d6 damage (DC 15 Reflex save for half), but does not reduce a PC below 1 hp. Any excess damage is taken to Strength, Agility, or Stamina (equal chance of each, per point). For each point of ability damage, the character must succeed in a DC 10



Fort save, or the damage is permanent.

**4 Wild Men:** Three hunters in ragged garments are out looking for the Very Large Men. These are members of the Curwen family not known in Arwich, for the Curwens are a large, closely inbred family. Their names are **Sammel**, **Dannel**, and **Jeb** – they are strangers to the PCs, and want to keep it that way. They will discourage the PCs from continuing on to the Curwen Homestead, by talking about bears, wolves, and assorted devils. If confronted with Bessie Curwen’s bonnet, they will say it was lost in the woods, “where the big devil must have found it.” They will not explain how they know this, or, if the PCs have not mentioned it, how they know about the big devil. They have strong halitosis.

They flee if any of them are wounded or killed. If the judge can make the players believe that these fellows seem human, but are not, all the better. Apart from their clubs, they have nothing of value.

**Sammel, Dannel, and Jeb Curwen:** Init +0; Atk club +0 melee (1d4); AC 10; HD 1d4; hp 2, 3, 1; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will -1; AL C.



# The Curwen Homestead

*When you finally reach the yard before the house, you can hear pigs squealing somewhere in the dark to your left. Closer to you, you can see two smaller buildings – an abattoir and a smokehouse, most likely. Directly before you is a well with a heavy winch; beyond it the Curwen Homestead – a large house shaped like an L, heavily shuttered and mostly dark, although you can see candlelight through the seams of a few shuttered windows on the upper floor.*

As the pigs squeal in the darkness, it should become clear that something is disturbing them. Two winters ago, the Curwens brought in barrels of salted pork, and pork sausages, which saved the town from famine. It is incumbent upon the judge to make sure that the players are aware of this, because it is important to what follows. If the judge desires, a pig may go squealing past the PCs into the darkness, having escaped from area 1 by the damage to the southern fence.

At this point, one or more players might declare that one or more of their characters never ate the food the Curwens brought. A cool solution to this, if you are willing to allow a small amount of player vs. player conflict in your game, is to simply pause, breathe out slowly, and say, “That’s right. Joe the Farmer and Bob the Tailor died in the famine, two years ago. *What strange creatures are travelling with you in their place?*”

These “fellow adventurers” are then revealed as un-dead famine spirits. Either they defeat the party, or the party defeats them. Let the players battle it out, noting only who defeats each of the spirits. Each of these characters gains 1 point to a random attribute at the end of the funnel. If they survive. If the famine spirits win, they get to take over the lives of the ones they defeated, taking those character’s Strength, Agility, and Stamina scores. Although now “alive”, the famine spirits are forever Chaotic, and can be turned by Lawful clerics.

The PCs arrive from the north. Although not shown on the map, there is a path downhill from the western side of the house leading to a normal outhouse partitioned into two sections. There is a sinkhole 250 feet beyond the house to the south, which has released the Very Large Men into the countryside.

**Area 1-1 – Pig Pens:** This area is fenced off for the Curwen pigs. It is muddy and foul with pig droppings. A Very Large Man (AC 6, hp 5) has gotten within, and is eating slops from the pig trough. If the characters

approach, the Very Large Man sees their lights, arises, and comes towards them, slop dripping from his chin and mouth (which, in the darkness, seems like some form of blood or gore). In one hand, he clutches a human rib. This Very Large Man has only a leather collar on, but it has a short leather lead that has been snapped. There is some damage on the south side of the fence where the Very Large Man broke into the pig pens. Examination of the slops trough shows human remains, and uncovers a silver ring with a green gem made of paste (worth 5 sp).

**Area 1-2 — Pig Shed:** This is simply a shelter for the pigs – low and walled only where necessary. The bottom part is made of stone, set five feet deep, to keep the pigs from digging out, but the rest is made of wood.

**Area 1-3 — Abattoir:** This dark wooden house has a floor of blood-soaked earth. Narrow slits high on the walls let in some light during daylight hours. Here there are many iron hooks on walls and ceiling – some of them with a pig carcass draining its blood upon the floor. An iron axe rests in a notched wooden block. Iron butcher's knives hang from places on the wall. Ceramic vats rest below each carcass to catch the blood, and there are several sealed ceramic urns containing pigs' blood (which is used as a dye) in the northeast corner. Beneath these urns, and under a thin layer of dirt, is a trap door with an iron pull ring. A narrow tunnel set with iron rungs leads down 30 feet to Area Area 2-6.

**Area 1-4 — Smokehouse:** This is a smokehouse for ham and bacon, several of which are curing here.

**Area 1-5 — Well:** If the well is examined, it may be noted that there is no water within it. After about a 40-foot drop, a dropped object hits the stone floor of Area Area 2-2. The bucket is blood-stained, but not damp from water. The rope is a heavy coil, and both rope and winch apparatus are strong enough to lower a single average-weight human. The well shaft is about 2½ feet in diameter.

**Area 1-6 — Porch:** A long wooden porch wraps around the front of the house. It has a slanted roof, with a gutter designed to channel rainwater into the easternmost of five barrels likes up along the eastern portion of the porch. The barrels have closed wooden lids. Two (the easternmost and westernmost) are partly filled with water, one is empty, and the other two are filled with water. The lid of the easternmost barrel is removed when it rains, so that the water can be stored in the barrel. There is also a rocking chair on the porch, just



north of the door to area 1-7.

**Area 1-7 – Sitting Room:** The front door to the house has a latch, but a pull-cord goes through the door to lift the latch from outside. (To “lock” the door, the pull cord is simply drawn in through the hole.) Within is a modestly-furnished sitting room, with coals still burning in the fireplace. The room smells of age and mildew. A small lamp (unlit but still slightly warm) is placed on a table near a shelf containing a few mouldering books. A volume (*Travels Among the Savages* by Sir John Greyingville) is on the table near the lamp. The fireplace poker can be used as a weapon (1d4 damage).

This book is in very poor condition, being half-eaten by mould, but it is heavily illustrated. Many of the illustrations are licentious in nature or quite gruesome. The book falls open naturally to a plate depicting a man being butchered by a huge, hairy northern wildman. There are seven other books, all of which are in even worse condition than *Travels*. Only one of them, *Husbandry of Ye Pigs and Swine*, shows signs of having been opened recently. The others are completely destroyed, and only one even has a title that can be deciphered: *Goodeman’s Manual of Household Games*. References to other potential adventure locations may appear in *Travel Among the Savages* at the judge’s discretion.

A hallway leads to the south, and a stair goes up to the second floor.

**Area 1-8 – Downstairs Hallway:** None of the doors leading off this hallway is, or even can be, locked. The hallway is carpeted with a reddish-brown dyed wool carpet, spongy and mouldy from the dampness. Yellow paper hang from the walls, and there are signs of water damage.

**Area 1-9 – Kitchen:** This is the Curwen’s kitchen – the odours of rotting vegetables and mouse are strong here. The vegetable odour comes from a large open bin where slops are composted for the Curwen livestock. The kitchen is slovenly – mice run from light brought in here, and cockroaches can be seen scuttling into cracks in the wooden walls. Herbs and smoked meat hang from the ceiling. The cutting board has not been cleaned after bloody meat was cut on it, and now there is a loaf of bread on the stained board. Mice have been nibbling from the loaf.

**Area 1-10 – Bunks of the Young Curwen Boys:** This room contains a six crude bunks around the walls, with garments strewn haphazardly on floors and wall pegs. This is obviously the room of young boys and men, from about 6 years old to the early 20s, and among the personal

items are several animals made of wood and leather, such as pigs, goats, and cows. This is the room of **Sammel, Dannel, and Jeb** from *Through the Pine Woods* encounter 4, as well as **Hershel, Wade, and Balmer**, who are located in area 2-13. There is nothing of value here.

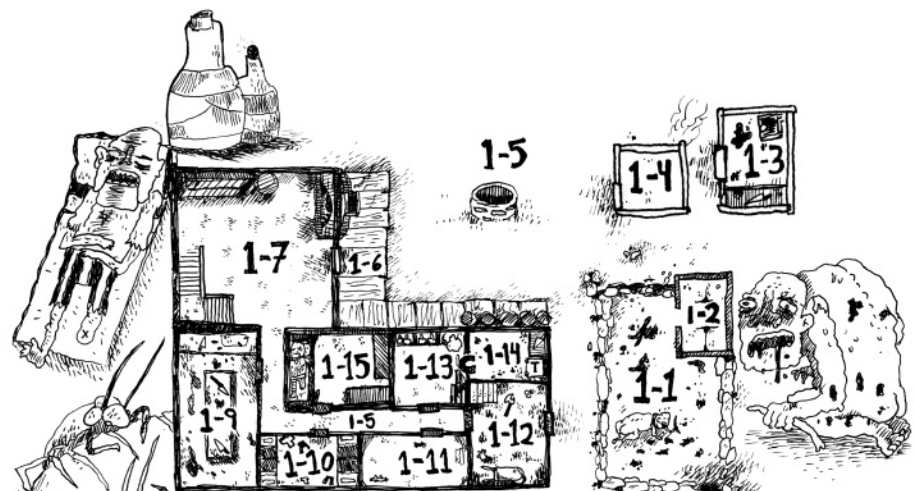
**Area 1-11 – Storage Room:** This room is a jumble of old furniture, dust, and cobwebs. The furniture is not well made, and is gnawed by the mice. Searching uncovers only mouse droppings and mouse nests.

**Area 1-12 – Mud and Tool Room:** This room is used to keep tools, muddy boots, and slops intended for the pigs. Tools kept here include a wooden wheelbarrow, three axes (1d6), and six five-foot-long poles with dull iron hooks at the end of them. There are several buckets here, some of which contain kitchen waste, and firewood stacked along the north end of the room. Searching the slops buckets uncovers some human remains – a few fat fingers, a large toe, and an ear.

**Area 1-13 – Pantry:** This area contains shelves of flour, as well as dried fruits and nuts, and even a few jars of honey and preserves. There is a table with a large sausage grinder, and several hams and sausages hang from the ceiling. Lengths of cleaned intestine for natural casings are in a cask beneath the table. An ill-concealed door leads to area 1-14 – shelves have been attached to the door to make it inconspicuous to a casual glance. Anyone who looks automatically finds the door.

**Area 1-14 – Secret Room:** Beyond the door is a smaller room containing a butcher's block, several iron butcher's knives and cleavers, and iron hooks in the ceiling. Some of the hooks have cuts of smoked meat on them, preparatory to making sausage, but the cuts are clearly taken from enormous humans – the very large men. There is also a barrel containing more intestines for sausage casings, although these have not been cleaned yet, and a basin of water (still warm). A trapdoor on the floor is opened with an iron pull ring – a narrow tunnel with iron rungs leads down to area 2-1.

**Area 1-15 – Uncle Charles's Room:** This large room contains a comfortable bed, and a reasonably well-made dresser and wardrobe containing sundry unremarkable garments and personal items. This is the room of **Uncle Charles Curwen**, who, having lost his left leg at the knee, no longer wishes to climb up the stairs. He is old, with only a few wisps of white hair left on his bald and wrinkled pate. He sleeps almost all the time now, and is currently abed. If awakened, he calls the PCs “Jeb”, “Eliza”, or “Gabrel”, and asks for a chamber pot, or “some-at to eat”. If asked about the very large men, he asks about how



LOWER



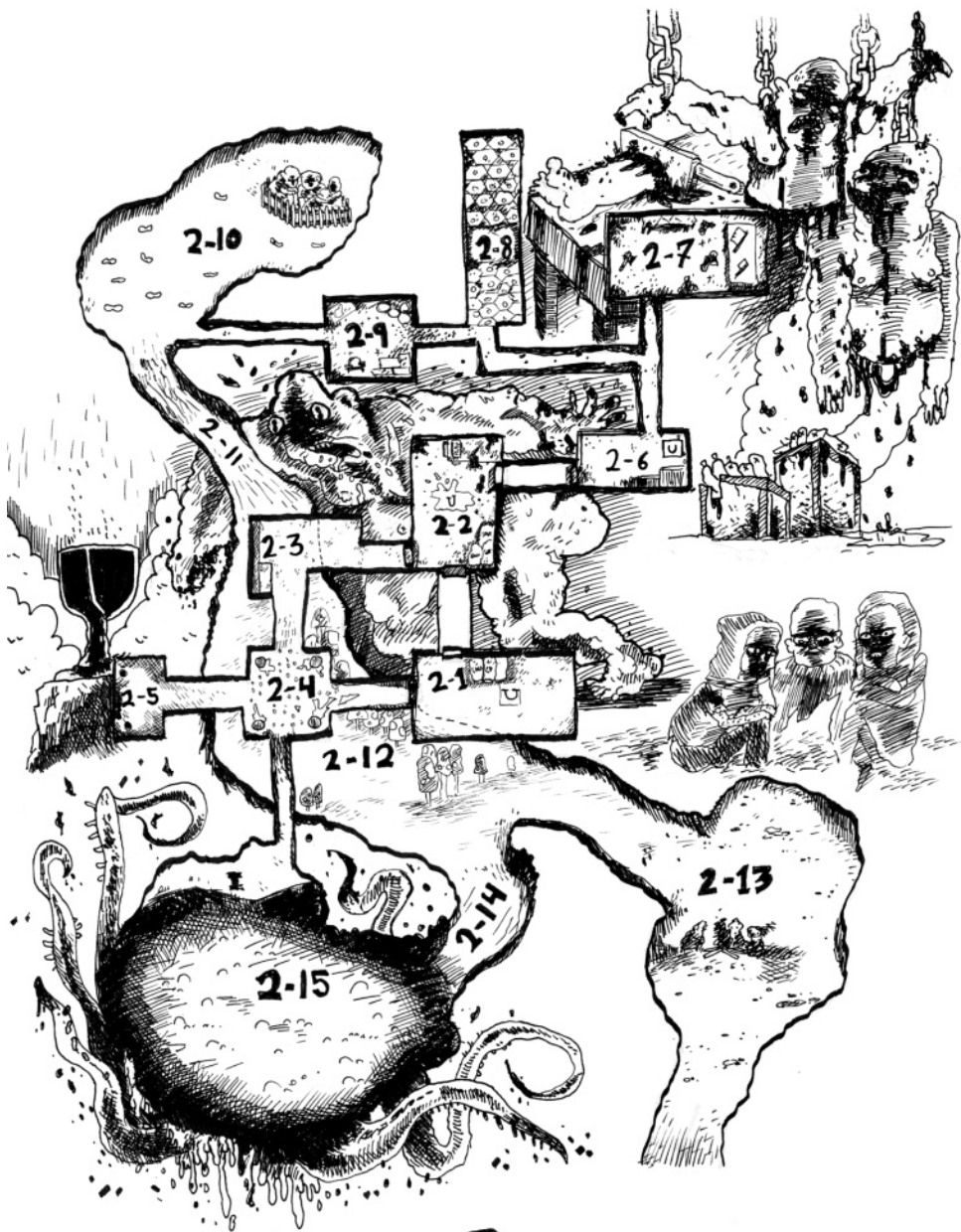
UPPER



ATTIC

THE GURWEN HOMESTEAD





# THE GRINDER BELOW

the pigs are doing, or if they've been given their slops. He is demented, and has no idea what has been going on recently. Of course, he knows the Curwen's generations-long secret.

**Area 1-16 – Upstairs Hallway:** The upstairs hallway has peeling yellow wallpaper. Once characters are upstairs, they begin to hear the occasional elephantine tread of something enormous above them. Sometimes the ceiling bulges ominously from some great moving weight.

At the end of the corridor, there is a trapdoor in the ceiling with a pull rope. This opens into area 1-27, and a wooden ladder is attached to the trapdoor which can be pulled down to allow access.

**Area 1-17 – Grandpa Ike's Room:** This room is noisome with the foul reek of sulphur and other scents less identifiable, but more disturbing. Apart from the expected furniture, there is a small shelf of mouldering books...even though only a third of the words of any of these are legible, they are disturbing to look at. The mould seems to have gotten into the illustrations not randomly, but to highlight certain disgusting abnormalities of the creatures depicted in. These books are *The Booke of the Gates of Life and Death*, *Wonders of ye Darke*, and *The Book of Eibon Stars*. A wizard or elf who reads these books (and each takes a week to read) must make a Will save or lose 1d3 points of Personality permanently, but gains the chance to learn a spell from each. The DCs for the save are 5, 10, and 15 – it does not matter which order the books are read in; the cumulative knowledge creates this danger. It seems to the reader that the mould, more than the original writing, reveals these secrets.

Unless the judge determines otherwise, the books can be used to learn the following spells: **Consult Spirit** (*The Booke of the Gates of Life and Death*), **Invisible Companion** (*Wonders of ye Darke*), and **Chill Touch** (*The Book of Eibon Stars*). Although there is no indication to the reader, anyone who learns these three spells from these books automatically suffers greater corruption when the third spell is learned. There is no save, and Luck cannot be spent to avoid it.

**Area 1-18 – Closet:** This musty chamber is used to keep bed linens, brooms, and the like.

**Area 1-19 – Wilbur's Room:** This is the room of **Ward** and **Caroline's** 1Area 2-year-old son, **Wilbur**. It contains a bed and a chest with clothing, as well as a few treasures (poorly carved wooden soldiers, a collection of pine cones, and a ratty squirrel's tail).

**Area 1-20 – Ward and Caroline’s Room:** This large room contains somewhat better furnishings than the rest of the house. The bed has curtains drawn around it. In a vanity, with an actual glass mirror, can be found a collection of jewellery – 4d8 pieces worth 3d5 sp each and 3d3 pieces worth 2d8 gp each. These were taken off travellers captured by the Curwens over the generations, and some are quite old. There is a 10% chance that a PC will recognize one of these pieces, if he has an appropriate background (a jeweller, moneylender, or anyone who would be in contact with travellers).

**Area 1-21 – “Guest” Room:** This room is made up for “guests” – anyone too powerful to simply capture, but who might be taken in his sleep. The door has a bolt, but there is a catch in the door which allows the bolt to be drawn from outside (DC 10 to spot if looked for).

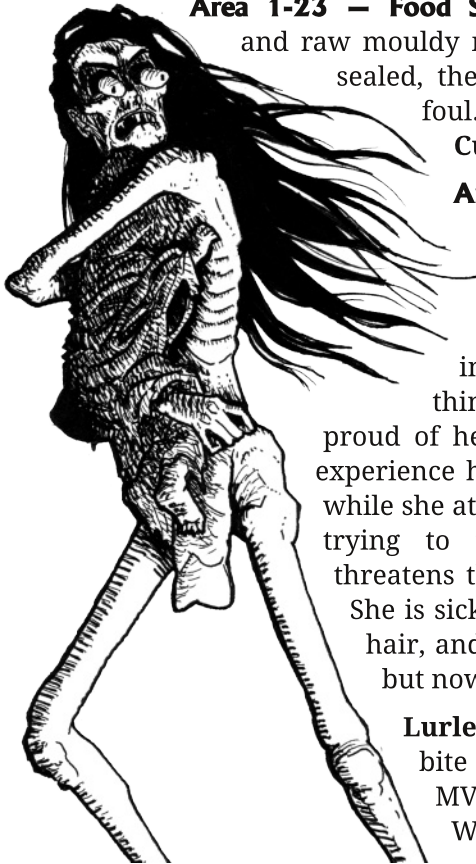
**Area 1-22 – Bessie’s Room:** This room is obviously occupied by a woman, but is unremarkable except for the rotting-meat odour that seeps in from area 1-23.

**Area 1-23 – Food Stores:** Several barrels of blood and raw mouldy meat are stored here. Although sealed, the smell escapes to make the air foul. These are to feed **Junior Curwen** in the attic (area 1-27).

**Area 1-24 – Lurlene’s Room:**

This filthy room belongs to **Lurlene Curwen**, who went out into the pine hills alone a year ago, and returned impregnated by some inhuman thing she encountered there. She is proud of her child (see area 1-27), but the experience has broken her mind. She raves while she attacks strangers, accusing them of trying to take or hurt her baby, and threatens that “his father will do for you!” She is sickly looking and skinny, with lank hair, and her abdomen flaps like a large, but now empty, bag.

**Lurlene Curwen:** Init +2; Atk nails or bite +1 melee (1); AC 8; HD 1d4; hp 3; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref -2, Will +4; AL C.





**Area 1-25 – Empty Room:** This room is empty, as not even the Curwen's wish to share a wall with Lurlene and hear her ravings in the night. Any who listens at the wall, if Lurlene has not yet been encountered, should hear disturbing hints of her story.

**Area 1-26 – Eliza and Allen Merritt's Room:** This room is for **Eliza** and her husband, **Allen Merritt**, who was brought into the clan. There are all the signs of preparing for a baby to arrive, including an unused bassinet, cloth diapers, swaddling cloths, and so on.

**Area 1-27 – Attic:** When the trapdoor is opened, a loud, rushed stomping noise, as of two elephants, rushes towards the east end of the attic. If a character climbs the ladder, there is a loud squeal of alarm, like that of a frightened child, and a slow, ponderous movement heads to the west. This attic space is nearly empty, and the attic windows have been boarded over from within. A few barrels scattered here and there – many upended – still contain smears of blood or small gobbets of meat.

This is the domain of **Junior Curwen**, the son of Lurlene and some nameless thing that she encountered upon the pine-shrouded hills. Junior is an invisible baby, with two pairs of arms and legs, who is now 10 feet tall. Junior's teeth, could they be seen, are a double row of shark's teeth. His ears are large and pointed, and his eyes have double pupils like a goat's. He is harmless at the moment, unless attacked, but woe betides the characters that do so!

**Junior Curwen:** Init +0; Atk slap +2 melee (1d6); AC 8; HD 8d6; hp 26; MV 20'; Act 1d24; SP knock prone, iridescent vomit; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will -4; AL C.

Junior Curwen used 1d4 on Table G for critical hits. In addition to damage, any successful attack requires a DC 10 Strength check, or the target is knocked prone. Finally, the baby can vomit a mass of reeking iridescent bubbles at a single target, once per hour, that requires a DC 10 Reflex save to avoid. This mass causes any target that fails 1d3 damage per round until either the target is washed in alcohol or it completely dissolves. When the target dissolves, so do the bubbles, popping away into nothingness. Not even the target's equipment remains.

# The Grinder Below

All walls are carved from the solid stone of the hills, or are natural caverns. Floors and walls are worn smooth from countless centuries of inhabitation. Narrow stalactites are forming even on the areas of worked stone, mute evidence of how long the Curwens have been involved in their unique enterprise. All doors are heavy oak, reinforced by iron bands.

There are several narrow passages, a mere 3' wide and 8' high. Attack rolls for all but halflings and children are at -1d on the dice chain in these areas, and large weapons suffer -1d damage as well (if they can be used at all).

**Area 2-1 – Entry Room:** This area can be entered from area 1-14. The tunnel leads downward 30 feet, then an iron ladder takes characters to the floor of this chamber. An elf that climbs down this ladder is at -1d on the dice chain for all actions for the next hour from contact with iron. A few bags of salt lie on the floor near the north door.

**Area 2-2 – Sausage Grinder:** The floor here is damp and slimy from rain coming down through the well, which opens into the centre of the room like a chimney (see area 1-5). The northeast section of this room contains a large iron sausage grinder with a wooden hopper. There are bags of salt and various herbs piled neatly at hand – as well as barrels of cleaned intestines for casings and barrels containing salted meat. There is meat in the hopper as well.

**Area 2-3 – Storage:** This L-shaped room is lined with shelves along the west wall for various storage items used to make sausages and cure meat. The north wall is lined with empty, but blood-stained, barrels. There is a cot in the southwest corner where **Gabrel Curwen** sleeps – a drooling mass of muscle topped by a shaggy goat-eyed and chinless head. He is awake and alert now, coming in from the south.

**Gabrel Curwen:** Init +0; Atk club +2 melee (1d4+2); AC 10; HD 1d4+2; hp 5; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60'; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0; AL C.

**Area 2-4 – Echoes of Hell:** Narrow holes – no more than a foot in diameter – are drilled into the floor of this chamber, giving access to area 2-12 below. Buckets of slops are in all the corners – bits of meat and rotting vegetable matter, body parts that didn't get smoked or

turned into sausage, mouldy bread, and the like. Stains on the floor show that these slops have been poured down the holes for centuries. Rising up from below are wordless gibbering, cries of pain, and moans of hunger, and the stink of unwashed bodies and filth. PCs must make a DC 10 Will save or become unnerved, suffering a -1d penalty on the dice chains for all actions until they have been away from this area for at least 10 minutes.

After 1d5 rounds, though, torchlight is seen from the narrow passage to the south. This is **Ward** and **Caroline Curwen**. Caroline has the torch, and Ward is armed with a staff. If they can subdue one or two characters to add to the Curwen herd, they will do so. Caroline wears silver earrings worth 5 sp each and a silver necklace with a bloodstone gem worth 10 gp.

**Ward and Caroline Curwen:** Init +0; Atk by weapon +0 melee (1d4); AC 10; HD 1d4; hp 3, 2; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP torch (Ref DC 10 to avoid catching fire, 1d6 per round) or staff (1d3 subdual); SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; AL C.

**Area 2-5 – Dark Shrine:** This room seems to absorb light, making torches and lanterns dim. In the centre of the west wall is a shrine containing a black onyx cup before an amorphous image that seems like a vaguely toad-like cross between an octopus, a wolf, and a man. This is **Sliggeth**, a pre-human god of Chaos and cannibalism. Anyone who takes the cup is cursed (no save) with a craving to consume human flesh and must make a DC 10 Will save each time opportunity arises so long as the cup remains in his possession. Anyone who drinks from the cup suffers this curse for all time. The cup is worth 200 gp to the right buyer. Lawful or Neutral characters that destroy the cup gains 1 point of Luck.



**Area 2-6 – Beneath the Abattoir:**

This area can be entered from area 1-3. The tunnel leads downward 30



feet, and then iron rungs set in the east wall take characters to the floor of this chamber. An elf that climbs down this ladder is at -1d on the dice chain for all actions for the next hour from contact with iron. The area beneath the tunnel is stained with old blood that has dripped down from the abattoir above. Crates of finished sausages and smoked meat are piled neatly near the southeast corner.

**Area 2-7 – Slaughterhouse:** This room is low, a mere 8' high. Several Very Large Men, halved or quartered, hang from iron hooks set into the ceiling. Thick wooden butcher tables are littered with filth and bits of human flesh. The group can scavenge 2d7 iron cleavers and 3d5 iron flensing knives here (1d4 damage each). As the characters examine this room, **Wilbur Curwen**, **Eliza Merritt**, and **Allen Merritt** come up from the south. Wilbur (12 years old) is carrying a torch, and Eliza is visibly pregnant. Both Eliza and Allen are armed with staves. They will subdue characters to add to the herd, if possible.

**Wilbur, Eliza, and Allen:** Init +0; Atk by weapon +0 melee (1d4); AC 10; HD 1d4; hp 2, 1, 4; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP torch (Ref DC 10 to avoid catching fire, 1d6 per round) or staff (1d3 subdual); SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; AL C.



**Area 2-8 – Oubliettes of the Damned:** This long, narrow room has a floor covered with hex-shaped stone tiles. In the centre of each 5-foot section, the tile has holes and can be lifted. There are 14 oubliettes here, each 15 feet deep (climb DC 15). Within each is a pale form that appears human, but somehow seems not to be. These are the cast-offs of Grandpa Ike's experiments with the "salts" in area 2-9. They can live without food or water, and are ancient although they appear youthful. They beg for release. Their teeth and nails are very sharp, and their eyes shine in the dark.

**Damned Things (14):** Init +2; Atk claw +2 melee (1d3) or bite +0 melee (1d5); AC 12; HD 1d6; hp 4 each; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60', regenerate 1/hp per round (even after death, fire destroys); SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +6; AL C.

**Area 2-9 – Grandpa Ike’s Workshop:** This room contains benches and shelves of alchemical equipment as well as several wooden boxes marked with names or initials. The boxes contain the “essential salts” taken from dead bodies, and are used in Grandpa Ike’s experiments to bring the dead back to life. He has had no true success, but studying his disjointed notebooks allows a wizard of elf to potentially learn *chill touch*, *comprehend languages*, and *find familiar*. For each of these spells the character attempts to learn, though, a DC 10 Will save must be made or the character’s Personality is permanently reduced by 1.

**Area 2-10 – Cavern of the Damned:** This is a large cavern whose 20’ high ceiling is lit by phosphorescent worms, creating an area where dimly seen shadows move in darkness beneath pinpoint lights in a fairyland sky. This is where the Curwens cull the **Very Large Men**, doing the initial slaughter in the cavern because the Men cannot fit into the narrow passage toward area 2-9. In a pen on the north-eastern part of the cavern, six Very Large Men are huddled.

**Very Large Men (6):** Init –6; Atk none; AC 6; HD 1d6; hp 3 each; MV 20’; Act 1d14; SV Fort +0, Ref –4, Will –4; AL N.

**Area 2-11 – Sloping Passage:** This passage slopes down toward area 2-12. Taking this corridor, characters hear the same noises as in area 2-4, with the same effects.

**Area 2-12 – Hell on Earth:** This cavern slopes gently down from north to south, and is rank with the smell of unwashed bodies. Characters hear the same noises as in area 2-4, with the same effects, save the Will DC is 15 and the effects last an hour. This cavern contains most of the Curwen “herd” of Very Large Men. Those who escaped were the most normal – centuries of inbreeding have created microcephalic creatures with almost swinish features. If the characters do explore this way, they will be swarmed by these creatures until they reach area 2-10, Area 2-13, or Area 2-15. 1d6 attack each round until all have attacked. They dislike bright light, and attack any creature holding a light source by preference, but with 1d12 for attack rolls. Note that towering fungal growths fester beneath the slop holes in area 2-4, but these are harmless.

**Very Large Men (45):** Init –6; Atk bite or nails +0 melee (1); AC 6; HD 1d6; hp 3 each; MV 20’; Act 1d14; SP light vulnerability; SV Fort +0, Ref –4, Will –4; AL N.

**Area 2-13 – Cavern of the Sinkhole:** This cavern gives way to a recent sinkhole, accessible through the southern passage. **Young Hershel, Wade, and Balmer Curwen** have been stationed here to keep more Very Large Men from escaping while the escapees are being sought by their kin. They are armed with staves, but will not attempt to subdue. They have built a fire here both to see and to help in keeping the Very Large Men out of this area.

**Hersel, Wade, and Balmer:** Init +1; Atk staff +0 melee (1d4); AC 9; HD 1d3; hp 2, 1, 2; MV 30'; Act 1d16; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +0; AL C.

**Area 2-14 – Sloping Passage:** This passage slopes steeply down to area 2-15.

**Area 2-15 – God of the Grinders:** Approaching this area, the characters can hear an aged voice chanting in a vile but unknown tongue. The floor of the chamber is covered with a thick, boiling mud, in which human blood has been spilt over centuries. Any character trying to walk in this mud must make a DC 10 Strength check to move 5'. If the check fails by 5 or more, the character sinks 1' into the mud, and the DC for that character to move increases by 2.

On a high ledge 40' above the roiling mud, **Grandpa Ike** offers **Bessie Curwen** as a bride to unnameable forces in exchange for the aid of Sliggeth the Hungerer to preserve his family and round up the escaped herd. A torch is in a wall sconce near the north exit. Bessie Curwen is a willing sacrifice (although she may pretend otherwise if it is to her advantage and Grandpa Ike is slain). After three rounds of chanting, or if Grandpa Ike is slain, the **Sending of Sliggeth** arises from the bubbling mud. Because of the mud, falling damage from the ledge is a mere 2d6 (Reflex DC 10 for half).

The Sending is an amorphous column of mud that rises 50' from the mud below, and has seven writhing tentacles that can reach anywhere within this cavern. Any character struck by a tentacle must succeed in a DC 10 Strength check or be pulled from his feet and brought 10' toward the Sending. A character held by a tentacle takes automatic damage each round, and the Sending may use other tentacles to attack. Even if the character survives this, he might not survive the mud if the Sending is defeated.

Whether defeated or not, the Sending only remains a limited number of rounds after Grandpa Ike is slain. Each round thereafter, roll 1d5. On a roll of 1, the Sending departs, falling back into the mud. Any character still held gains a DC 10 Strength check to escape, or is lost in the dimension of Sliggeth.

**Grandpa Ike Curwen:** Init +2; Atk dagger -2 melee (1d4-2) or harmful spell; AC 8; HD 3d4; hp 6; MV 25'; Act 1d20; SP harmful spell 3/day (120' range, Will DC 12 or 2d4 damage); SV Fort +0, Ref -2, Will +4; AL C.

**Bessie Curwen:** Init +1; Atk dagger +0 melee (1d4-1); AC 11; HD 1d4; hp 2; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; AL C.

**Sending of Sliggeth:** Init +4; Atk tentacle +2 melee (1d3); AC 14; HD 5d6; hp 16; MV 0'; Act 3d20; SP detect living creatures 200', grab; SV Fort +6, Ref +0, Will +6; AL C.

## Concluding the Adventure

The best thing the PCs could do for their village is burn the house down, and then say they were too late to be of any use. This will probably destroy Junior Curwen, but if not, he may need to be tracked down in a future adventure. And what of Junior's father? He may or may not be developed further. Any Curwens that escaped can return to plague the PCs, or set up shop elsewhere. Finally, the Very Large Men who escaped and were not recaptured may be encountered (alive or dead) wandering the area over the next several months.





# But He Sure Had Guts!

A Short Encounter By Daniel J. Bishop

At some point, a PC is going to kill a foe with a disembowelling stroke. There is no reason to let the fun end there! The Dungeon Crawl Classics RPG encourages the judge to make the deaths of opponents as interesting as their lives, and that's exactly what this scenario does. It is designed for a 1st level character, but it can easily be modified for higher levels.

The night after an opponent is disembowelled, the PC responsible has a dream of that opponent's death. This time, though, as the opponent's entrails spill from his abdomen, they begin to writhe and twist like an enormous, slime-covered earthworm. Filth spews from the severed end of the intestines as the disgusting mass attempts to coil around the character. The character awakens with a start. Something slimy and foul has dripped upon his face, smelling faintly of feces and half-digested food. There is no obvious source.

Two nights later, as the character lies sleeping, he is awakened by a squelching, sliding noise moving around near his side and near his feet. Although seemingly awake, the character cannot move. Have the player roll a DC 15 Will save. If he succeeds, he breaks free of the paralysis with an uncontrolled shout. There is nothing there. There are neither tracks nor any other signs. If a sentry was posted, the sentry neither sees nor hears anything until the character shouts. If the character fails the save, he continues to lay awake, hearing noises until dawn or until someone goes to wake him, at which point the noises abruptly cease. The character gains no benefit from that night's sleep.

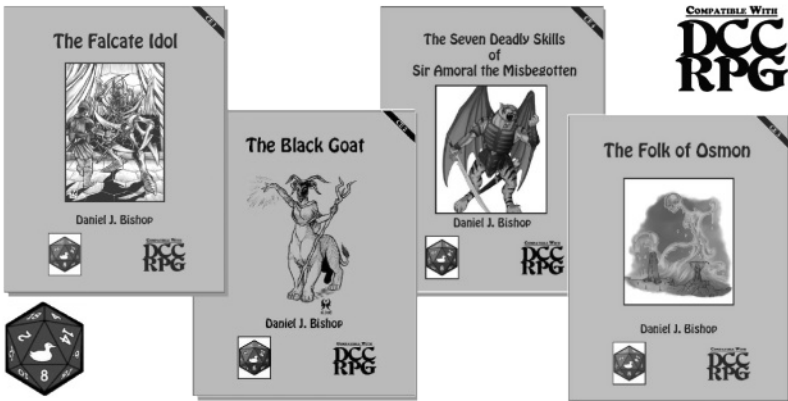
Three nights later, the character is awakened by the weight of a great coil of intestines settling on his body. The character cannot make a

sound, and no one notices a thing, no matter how intently they watch him. Perhaps it seems as if he is having a bad dream. The intestines attempt to wrap themselves around him, and if they do so the character must roll 1d20 and add his Luck modifier. If the total roll is under 5, both arms are pinned. If under 10, the dominant arm is pinned. If under 15, the off arm is pinned, and if over 15, no arms are pinned. Freeing a single pinned arm requires a DC 10 Strength check; freeing two pinned arms requires a DC 15 Strength check. Escaping constriction entirely requires a DC 20 Strength check. So long as a character is constricted, the un-dead guts do damage automatically each round.

If the character defeats the un-dead guts, he awakens as if from a bad dream. If he fails, it is discovered in the morning that he ripped his own intestines out with his fingers, slaying himself.

**Un-dead Guts:** Init +2; Atk loop +2 melee (1d4); AC 10; HD 1d8; hp 5; MV 15'; Act 1d20; SP constriction; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +6; AL N.

## Also by Daniel J. Bishop...



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