



Scribe
Of
Orcus



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The Pumpkin Lord of Shady Hollow

By Daniel Proctor

The Pumpkin Lord of Shady Hollow is an adventure for 4-6 characters of 1st or 2nd level, and is for use with the *Labyrinth Lord* fantasy role-playing game (and compatible systems). With very little effort, this scenario could be used with *Mutant Future*, *OSRIC*, and *Advanced First Edition* games. The adventure takes place in the village of Shady Hollow, and can be situated in any fantasy world. If playing in the Known Lands, this village could be located in the hills about 30 miles east of the small town of Larm.

This adventure constitutes a mini-setting, in that the village of Shady Hollow is described, as well as key inhabitants and the main adventuring location. A nearby halfling community is also mentioned in passing, which might be a consideration in choosing a location for the village of Shady Hollow. This village could be used as a staging point for additional adventures.

Background

The chill of fall was in the air the night that a fiery ball fell from the sky near Shady Hollow. There were few witnesses to this event, but by late morning all of the residents of the village had learned of the occurrence and many had looked for where this meteor from the heavens had fallen.

The great pumpkin field 1 mile north of Shady Hollow, owned by one Merle Branbrook, became the object of much speculation when it was discovered to be the crash site. In the center of the field was a large, charred pit too hot for anyone to approach. There was an ominous cloud over the field that gave the uneasy feeling that the crater stood for something sinister. All through the day the crater smoked, and old Merle scratched his head at the loss of over half of his pumpkin patch. If the residents of Shady Hollow were apprehensive about the crater, they were downright fearful the morning of the following day.

At dawn, Merle made his rounds to feed the livestock. When he went out to the pumpkin field, a dozen villagers and several halflings from the nearby halfling village of Willow Nook were already there gawking at an immense, tangled vine dome that had sprung up in the night.

The pumpkin vines at the periphery of the crater had grown to great proportions, and twisted into an impenetrable mesh of vine, leaf, and pumpkin. They had completely encompassed the smoking pit discovered the day before. That is, except for one small opening, about the size of a doorway, on the south-east side of the green dome.

For days the cursed place drew much fearful curiosity, until a band of brave adventures happened by, and decided to

enter the green doorway. The villagers gave up hope of their return when they failed to emerge after one week.

It is at this point that the PCs should happen upon the village of Shady Hollow, and learn of recent events. The characters might be passing through, staying at the village's single inn, when they learn from locals about the bewildering fire from the sky and the pumpkin patch dome. The PCs might even be locals who decide to team up to investigate the structure. The local lord is offering a sum of 400 gp to pay any group of adventurers who successfully clears the evil out of Merle's pumpkin field.

Labyrinth Lord Information

The meteor from the sky contained an alien, intelligent, and evil life force from another world. An entity with no material form of its own, it assembled a form based on available living material when it came to this new environment. In this case, that environment was a pumpkin patch near the village of Shady Hollow.

The alien used the available pumpkin plants to craft a material form, a humanoid carnivorous plant-creature with the head of a pumpkin and a body of thick, interwoven pumpkin vines. Thus was born the Pumpkin Lord. It found pumpkin material to be highly desirable and versatile as a living medium, and began to reproduce itself in this form. It extended its will to influence the pumpkin plants around its crash site, which had mutated from the strange radiation that emanated from the collision blast. In this way the Pumpkin Lord was able to form the upper level of its lair. The lower layer consists of tunnels excavated through the creature's will over pumpkin vines. Note that the conscious ability to manipulate the surrounding pumpkin plants is a slow process, and not useful in combat.

The primary goal of the Pumpkin Lord is to survive and reproduce. To this end it has fortified its lair against intrusion, and will continue to reproduce in the depths of its new home. It will eventually send new shoots out into the world.

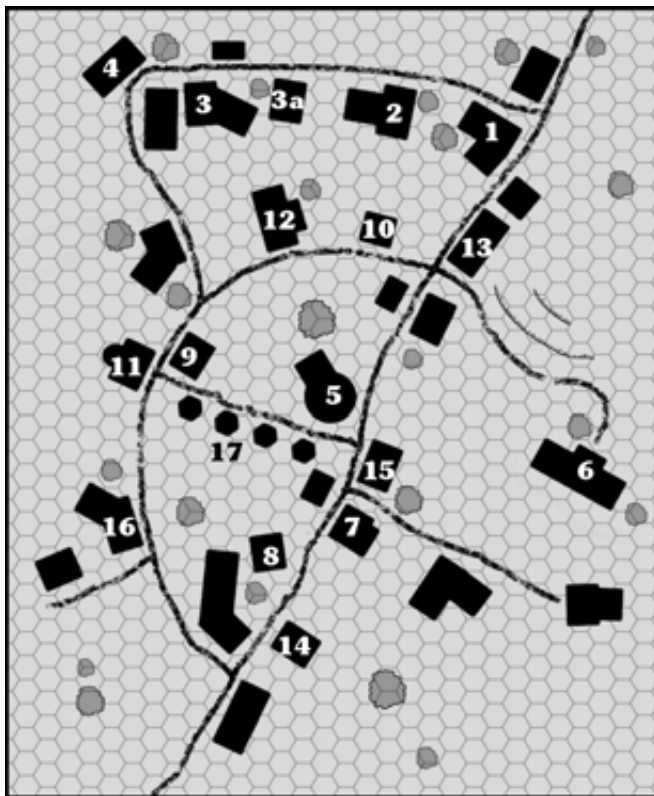
The Village of Shady Hollow

The village has a population of approximately 250, including townsfolk and nearby farming families. The population is predominantly human, but a few halflings also call Shady Hollow home. The community is economically connected by extensive trade to the nearby halfling village of Willow Nook. There is a standing militia of four individuals, but they are capable of calling up 60 in the event of a crisis. The town is ruled by a local lord, Brady Granstead, who oversees commerce and justice for the village.

The village is primarily dependent on farming for livelihood, with a large local brewery that supplies fine ale to nearby villages and towns. Shady Hollow has one inn,

the Oak Barrel, which has six rooms. The inn houses the local pub, and the few travelers who rent rooms are usually on their way to more exciting locations.

The village has a small general store that fills most needs, a blacksmith, and other trade people. Refer to the village map for prominent business locations. Unlabeled buildings may be private residences, or they can be additional businesses assigned by the Labyrinth Lord.



Shady Hollow Map Key (1 hex = 50')

- 1. Hort's General Store
- 2. Hollow Brewery
- 3. Oak Barrel Inn (3.a. Inn stables)
- 4. Brand's Smithy
- 5. Town Hall
- 6. Lord Gransteed's Estate
- 7. Potter
- 8. Shoemaker
- 9. Tailor
- 10. Furrier
- 11. Militia/Jail
- 12. Church
- 13. Wood seller
- 14. Jeweler
- 15. Barber
- 16. Cooper
- 17. Grain storage

Important Village Personalities

Only the most prominent people, or people most likely to be met by the PCs, are described here. Many more village residents can be designed if the need arises.

Lord Brady Gransteed

4th level fighter
Neutral

STR	12	INT	16
DEX	14	WIS	13
CON	12	CHA	8
hp	17	AC	7

Lord Gransteed is a lesser lord and the ruler of Shady Hollow. He is charged with managing the surrounding farmlands, many of which belong to his estate. Although he is a fair ruler, he is somewhat neglectful of managing the local economy, and does not keep up on recent events. Although he is aware of the situation at the Branbrook farm, he is content to wait it out to see if it amounts to anything. Granbrook had a brief adventuring life in his youth, but has now become lazy and gluttonous. When out, he is likely to wear leather armor and carry a short sword that hasn't been removed from its scabbard in over ten years. He may have up to 300 gp on his person at any time. If approached and pressed about the pumpkin patch situation, he will be willing to double the offer to 800 gp to have the evil cleared out, if only to keep the village off his back.

Hort the Merchant

1st level thief
Neutral

STR	8	INT	9
DEX	12	WIS	12
CON	10	CHA	13
hp	3	AC	9

Hort is in his early 40s, married, and the owner of the general store. He was very young when he was a practicing thief in Dolmvay. Luckily, his short career came to an end when he made a big score. Rather than continue with the risk of a life of crime, he collected his take and started his own business in the backwater country of Shady Hollow. He is a sly businessman. If wealthy-looking adventurers happen into his store, he'll generally try to charge them 20% above regular prices for any goods. If called out on this, he'll claim the mark-up is due to slow business in the area, which is not entirely true since a fairly steady stream of adventurers trickle through the village.

Merle Branbrook, Farmer

0 level human
Lawful

STR	11	INT	17
DEX	11	WIS	13
CON	9	CHA	7
hp	2	AC	9

Merle is a simple farmer, despite his highly shrewd intelligence. He is famous for his abundant crops, and in the fall people come from many miles around to buy his large pumpkins for the Hallows Eve pumpkin festival. He is married and has two teenage sons who help tend the farm. Merle is very upset about the situation in his pumpkin field (understandably), and will do anything he can to help adventurers who try to do away with the menace.

The Labyrinth Lord could up the stakes of the adventure by having Merle's sons slip past the guard and into the pumpkin lair to take care of the problem themselves, only to go missing. This would add extra incentive to the village to aggressively pursue hiring a party to clear the lair of evil. In such a case, it is up to the Labyrinth Lord to decide the fate of the boys.

Barby, Owner of the Oak Barrel Inn

2nd level fighter
Lawful

STR	13	INT	6
DEX	9	WIS	12
CON	14	CHA	14
hp	7	AC	9

Barby is the typical jolly, large barkeep. He is a family man and delights in new tales of adventure throughout the Known Lands and beyond. He collects exotic trinkets and stuffed monster heads brought to him by various adventurers. These are mounted and displayed on the walls and ceiling throughout the inn's common room. His inn is famous for his spicy hard-boiled eggs that are pickled in oak barrels. They are provided complimentary in large clay pots at the bar. He has a standing bet that no person can eat more than five eggs in a row, without needing to take a drink of some stout beverage to ease the culinary flames. So far, no one has succeeded in this, but Barby will offer to treat anyone to a week of free meals who succeeds. At any time his inn is usually half full, and about half of his rooms are rented. During village festivals he will be booked well in advance. His rates are a standard 3 sp a night per person, with complimentary breakfast.

Lair of the Pumpkin Lord

All mutant pumpkin vines are impervious to fire, whether mundane or magical. This makes it impossible to burn the lair down, should this be attempted. The scale for each

level map is 1 square = 10'. Unless otherwise noted, all ceilings are approximately 10' high. The entire structure seems to emanate a dull hum, and the air is crisp with the smell of ozone.

Level 1

The floor, walls, and ceiling of level 1 are entirely composed of thickly entangled mutant pumpkin vines, leaves, and the occasional pumpkin or pumpkin blossom.



1. **ENTRANCE:** The opening to level 1 is approximately 7' wide. One of the Shady Hollow militia members is stationed here at all times, primarily to prevent curious children from entering the sinister construct. He will not impede the adventurers if they choose to enter, but he will try to talk them out of it. Should they persist, he wishes them well and says a brief prayer for their lost souls.

Militia Guard (1) [Fighter 1; AL L; MV 120'; AC 7 (leather armor); 6 hp; #AT 1; DG 1d6 (short sword); SV F1] 50 cp, 12 sp.

2. **OBSERVATORY:** This room contains hundreds of marble-sized pumpkins on the walls and ceiling, each glowing with an orange light. Observant characters

might notice that the small pumpkins mimic the constellations in the night sky. One "star" glows more brightly than the others, and this represents the alien world of the Pumpkin Lord's origin. The small pumpkins are harmless, and if cut from the vine they will continue to glow for a month before they lose potency and begin to rot. Ingenious players might make these into a paste that can be used to create temporary glow-in-the-dark passage markings that will glow for 5 hours before fading.

3. **AXE LEAVES:** Guarding the opening to the north passage, there is a vine on either side of the tunnel opening. They are as thick as a human's thigh, and 20' long. At the end of each vine there is a hard, stiff and serrated blade-like leaf. These vines will attack characters as a 1 HD monster, dealing 1d8 damage as a battle axe. They may not be surprised. Each vine may sustain 6 hp of damage before being destroyed, and has AC 9.

4. **SPIDER PUMPKINS:** The walls of this room are littered with 1' long red pods (about four dozen), resembling giant pea pods, that are growing from red vines which are interwoven among the green vines of the walls and ceiling. The red vines seem to emit a small discharge of harmless electrical energy at intervals. When the characters enter, 4 creatures slowly descend from the foliage on the ceiling. They have pumpkin bodies about 2' in diameter, with vicious thorn-like mandibles and eight vine-like legs. They will attack immediately, and fight to the death.

Spider Pumpkins (4) [AL N; MV 120'; AC 7; HD 1; #AT 1; DG 1d8; SV F1; ML 11].

Should the characters open the pods, they will find that each pod contains five amber-colored crystals. The crystals are very warm to the touch, and contain the energy necessary to fuel the large "brain" (area 22) and

the Pumpkin Lord's observation screens (area 23). They have no real value to the PCs, except that their unspent energy will cause the amber stones to emanate heat for 1d4 years, and can be used to ward off the effects of cold temperatures. Any character with one or more stones will automatically receive a +1 saving throw bonus against cold-based attacks.

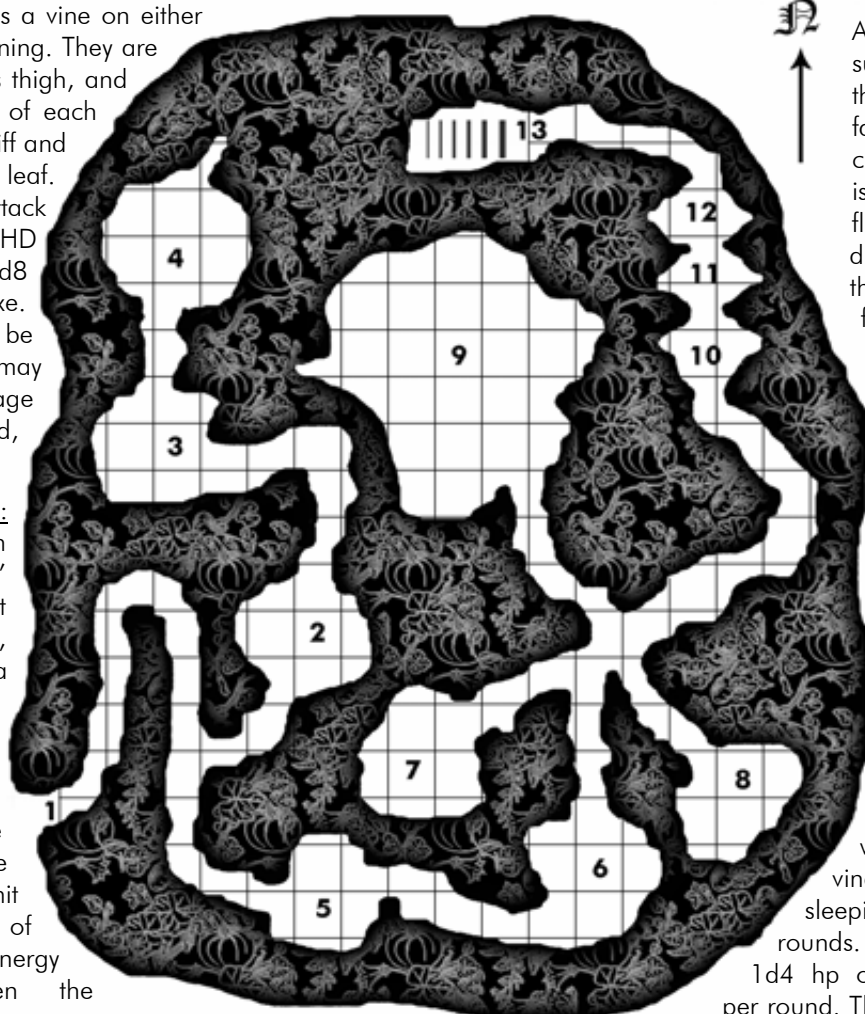
5. **SLEEP SCENT:** The walls and ceiling of this room are lined with large, beautiful pumpkin blossoms of various shades of yellow and orange. Their lovely scent beckons.



All characters must succeed in a saving throw versus poison, or fall asleep. Any character that succeeds is immune to the flowers' effects for the duration of his stay in this room. If the roll is failed, a character will not awaken by any means, until his body is carried out of the room and away from the flowers' scent. Sleeping characters removed from the room will awaken after 1d4 rounds.

Any characters that fall asleep will begin to slowly be entangled in constricting vines that come from the walls and ceiling. The vines will entangle a sleeping character after 1d4 rounds. After which he suffers 1d4 hp of constricting damage per round. The previous adventurers met their fate here, and their bodies ended up tossed into the compost tank in area 19.

6. **EXPLOSIVE PUMPKINS:** This room contains dozens of large, bright orange pumpkins hanging by thick vines from the ceiling. As soon as any creature enters the room, one of the pumpkins explodes, dealing 1d6 hp of damage to any character in the room. Rock-hard pumpkin seeds fly like shrapnel in every direction. One pumpkin will explode every subsequent round, until the room is empty of living creatures. NOTE: The noise



produced by the pumpkins in this area may (1-3 on 1d6) attract the monster from area 9.

7. **COOLING TANKS:** The floor of this room is obscured due to a low, thick mist that is approximately 1' deep. There are ten orange translucent pods on the west wall, each about 7' tall and 2' wide. Red pumpkin vines lead to and from these pods, disappearing in the wall and floor. A bubbling liquid can be seen inside the pods. The translucent shells are very cold to the touch, and are easily damaged. The liquid in the pods is under pressure, and if a pod is punctured it will burst, dealing 2d6 hp of cold damage to any character within 15'. A saving throw versus breath attacks is allowed for half damage. The liquid quickly evaporates into a mist, and a burst pod will fill the entire room with a thick fog that obscures all vision.

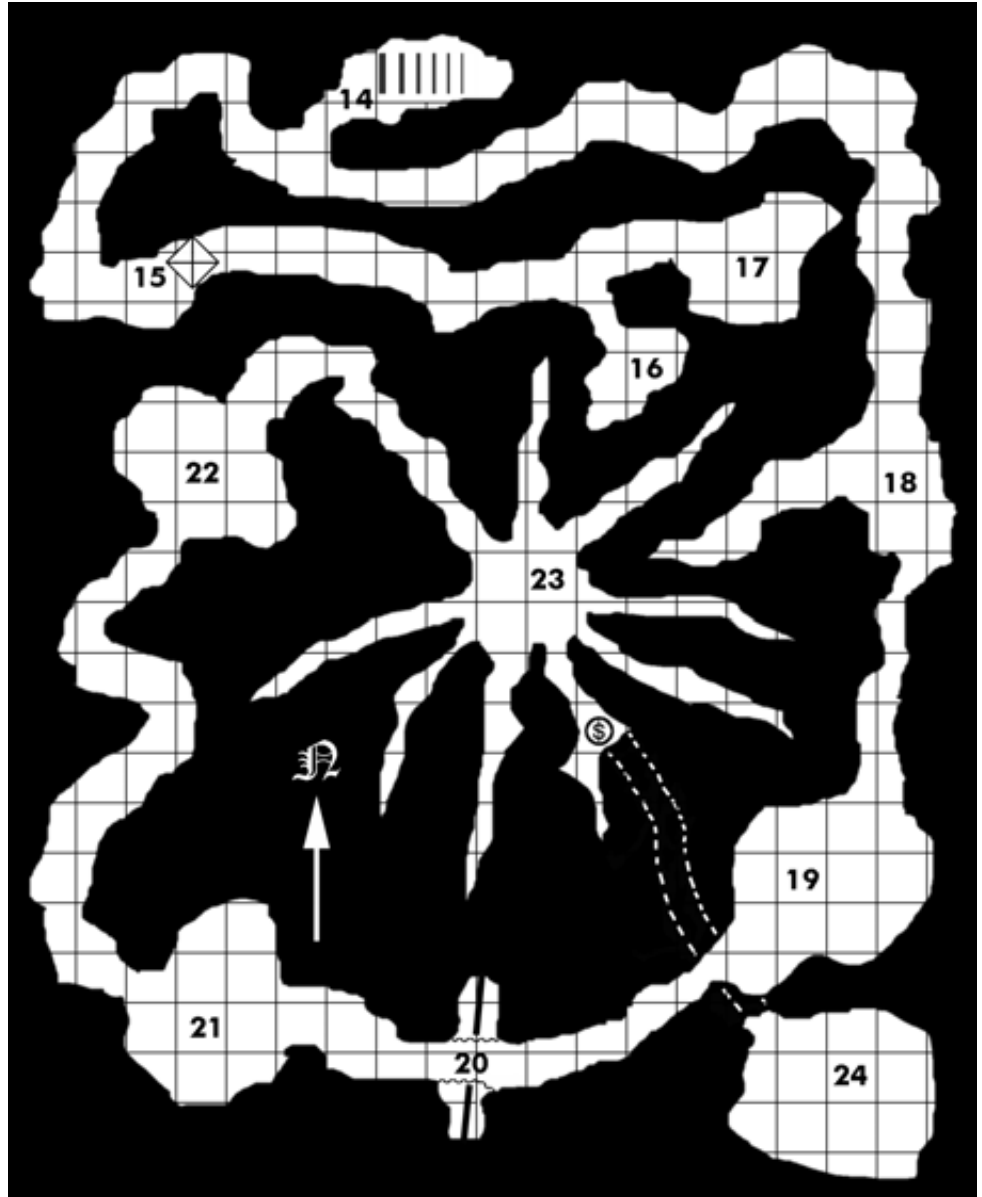
These pods are cooling tanks for the brain in area 22, and for the energy system of the lair.

8. **GIANT RAT NEST:** This room has been taken over by a pack of giant rats. A large pile of debris litters this room, with the distinct odor of rodent droppings. If the large nest is disturbed, the rats will automatically attack. Otherwise, they will attack characters passing by only on a roll of 1-2 on 1d6.

Giant Rats (9) [AL N; MV 120'; AC 7; HD 1d4 hp; #AT 1; DG 1d3, disease; SV F1; ML 7]. Within the refuse of the rat nest, there are 800 sp.

9. **SPIN BEAST:** This large room has a ceiling that is 30' high. A mutated beast occupies this area. This mobile plant creature has a "head" attached to a long stalk from a round, pumpkin-like central body. Four "fins," modified leaves, are razor sharp. The creature will immediately attack anyone who enters this room, and does so by lunging at an opponent and spinning at the same time, to lacerate with its sharp fins.

Spin Beast (1) [AL N; MV 90'; AC 6; HD 3; #AT 1; DG 1d8, SV F3; ML 9].



- 10, 11, and 12. **THORNY GUANTLET:** These three consecutive rooms are lined with vines bearing small dart-like thorns. As soon as a character enters the first room, all three rooms begin firing darts in all directions, and continue to do so every round until no living creature is inside any of these rooms. Any character within any of these rooms suffers 1d4 hp of damage each round.

13. **STAIRWAY:** This stairway is composed of packed earth and charred, glassy-looking stones. It descends at a 45° angle for a distance of 20 feet. Warm, humid air flows gently up the stairs.

Level 2

This level has a ceiling of thickly woven pumpkin vines, with a packed dirt floor and dirt walls that have vine patches interspersed at irregular intervals. Every so often

bright red vines descend from the ceiling, and disappear into the dirt walls. If severed, they will produce harmless sparks from their cut ends. The level is noticeably warmer and more humid than the level above.

14. STAIRWAY LANDING: This area is the beginning of level 2. Characters will immediately become aware that the air is charged with static electricity, causing their hair to rise slightly.

15. PIT TRAP: This pit trap is on the floor, and will always be triggered when a character walks over it. The trap door is made of woven vines, covered in earth. The pit is 10' deep and lined with sharp thorns. Any character falling inside will suffer 1d6 hp damage from the fall, +1d3 hp damage from the sharp thorns.

16. MUDDY ROOM: The floor of this room is muddy, and goes 12' deep. Any character walking over it will begin to sink at a rate of 3' per round. During the first round he may make a saving throw versus wands, with success indicating he has escaped the mud. Otherwise, he will sink and continue to sink each round, until reaching the bottom. Any character will begin to suffocate if he sinks below head level. A character may be pulled free by other characters if they have firm footing.

17. PLANT FOOD STOMACHS: This room is filled with large, 8' pods that hang from the ceiling and flex and bend continuously. They conduct the final processing of the acidic compost sludge from area 19, and render the sludge free of acid and other toxins. Each pod has a green tube at its bottom that snakes back up into the ceiling and disperses energy-rich sludge to the entire lair. If any pod is sliced open, thick, brown, smelly sludge will leak out. It is quite warm, but otherwise harmless.

18. TREAT ROOM: The walls of this room are completely covered in mutated pumpkin vines. Marble-sized, bright blue, berry-like pumpkins grow in abundant quantities from these vines. The berries have a thin skin, and are filled with a very sweet juice that smells and tastes vaguely like strawberries. The berries are harmless.

19. COMPOST TANK: This room has an irregularly shaped tank that is on the floor at the east side. The tank is wide open at the top. It is approximately 4' tall, 20' wide, 30' long, and is made of some opaque, amber-colored material that feels like glass. A watery

brown sludge constantly churns within, and a thick vine descends from the ceiling to dip into the sludge in the center of the tank. This vine is hollow, and it slowly sucks the sludge up for further processing by the pods in area 17. If characters watch the sludge for more than 1 round, they will notice that in the churning material, the occasional bone and small animal surfaces. They may see a human skull come to the surface, eye sockets oozing sludge briefly before it sinks again in the agitated muck. This sludge is highly acidic, and if touched it will automatically deal 1 hp of damage. If a character were to be immersed in it, he would suffer 1d6 hp of acid damage per round. The sludge loses its acidity 5 rounds after being removed from the tank.

20. BARRICADE: The entire length of the tunnel between areas 19 and 21 is covered with vines. The vines at area 20 can detect movement as beings pass by. Three rounds after movement is no longer detected (the whole party has passed by), two 1' thick walls of amber-colored hard resin spring from the north and south walls, and lock together to form a complete barrier. They will automatically retract after 24 hours. The walls are as strong as stone. They may be pulled apart with a combined STR of 45 or greater.

21. TRICK ROOM: This room has what appear to be several dozen pitchers made of very thin-walled purple plant material. A very pleasant scent fills the room, which is quite reminiscent of warm, spiced pumpkin pie.

The pitchers hang from the ceiling, and are open at the top. A number of "cups" litter the floor, and resemble cracked-open gourds. Should any characters drink the clear syrup-like fluid contained in the pitchers, it will taste like delicious pumpkin pie, and fill their stomachs with a warm, pleasant feeling. After 1 turn, however, they will be subjected to intensely painful cramps (-1 to attack for 3 rounds) and must succeed in a saving throw versus poison or die.

22. BRAIN ROOM: This room is completely empty save for a 10'x10' convoluted, soft and slimy-looking brain-like structure firmly rooted to the ground in the middle of the room, but linked to the ceiling by multiple red and green vines. This is in fact a plant-like brain, and although it is thinking at a relatively child-like level, it does regulate the various systems and processes at work in the lair. If the brain is destroyed, all of the energy and food-producing activities of the lair



will halt. The brain may regenerate, even from death, at a rate of 1 hp per turn. This regeneration is not possible if it has been destroyed by fire or acid. Otherwise, it will heal and reconnect with the lair. The brain is almost entirely helpless except that it can emit an electrical charge every three rounds. This charge inflicts 2d6 hp of electrical damage to all beings within 10'. A saving throw versus spells is allowed for half damage. It will emit this charge for the first time one round after it has first been attacked, but if unmolested it will not attack any creatures that come near. It enjoys being petted.

Plant Brain (1) [AL N; MV 0'; AC 9; HD 30 hp; #AT 1 every 2 rounds; DG 2d6, SV F5; ML na].

23. **PUMKIN LORD'S ROOM:** The center of this room is slightly depressed, and the floor is glossy black heat-fused glass, rock, and dirt. Multiple dead-end tunnels radiate from this central area, having been broken open from the impact of the meteor that brought the alien seed that was to become the Pumpkin Lord. The remains of the meteor lie in the center of the room. They form a shape roughly resembling a charred iron throne, on which the mighty Pumpkin Lord sits in royal splendor. To the left and right of the throne there are panels of vegetation, with various pumpkin-like fruits that flash different colors. Multiple screens rest on the left panel, displaying moving, real-time pictures of several different scenes around the outer shell of the layer, on the ground surface, and of various rooms within the lair. If severed from the vegetation these screens cease to function.

The Pumpkin Lord is humanoid in form. Its body, arms and legs are formed from tightly interwoven pumpkin vines. Its head consists of a large, stark white pumpkin with insect-like eyes and a mouth lined by a row of sharp tooth-like thorns. Each of his "fingers" is tipped with a sharp talon.

When the PCs enter, the Pumpkin Lord will rise from his throne and seem to address them in the common tongue. He has the power to communicate with any intelligent being, and will claim to be peaceful. He will also claim that any casualties he has caused the PCs or other parties was purely out of self-defense. He may explain his origin as being from another place, but that he has come only to eek out an existence.

Of course, the Pumpkin Lord is pure evil and he is bent on destruction. If the PCs seem unconvinced of his good intentions after 4 rounds, he will engage in combat, using his *optic emission* attack first. The Pumpkin Lord will fight to the death.

A secret door in the floor of one of the side tunnels will reveal a tunnel leading down and through the ground to a secret room. The tunnel is only high enough for a human-sized being to crawl. This tunnel leads to area 24.

Pumpkin Lord (Unique) [AL C; MV 120'; AC 6; HD 26 hp; #AT 3/1; DG 1d3/1d3/1d6 or *optic emission*, SV F4; ML na]

The Pumpkin Lord's *optic emission* is a beam of intense damage-causing energy that shoots from his eyes to a range of 50'. Any character hit will suffer 2d6 damage. A successful saving throw versus wands reduces damage by half. This attack is only usable once every 5 rounds.

24. **NURSERY:** This room is bathed in an intense red light that emanates from multiple glowing pumpkin-like fruits on the ceiling. Six canisters, each 6' tall, stand in a semicircle facing the north wall. Each canister is connected to the ceiling by multiple red vines. Each canister is translucent amber, and contains a bubbling liquid with a small-plant like creature (1' tall) suspended within, and connected to the top of the canister by an umbilical cord-like pale orange vine.

These creatures are the Pumpkin Lord's young. If left undisturbed they will grow in these self-contained canisters until spring, when they will emerge as fully formed Pumpkin Lords. At this point they will each go their separate ways to create their own lairs. If this lair is unoccupied, one of the young will stay behind to rebuild it.

There is a large sack on the floor of the east side of the room, containing valuables from the last party that entered the lair. It contains the following items: *scroll of spells* (magic-user) with *floating disc*; dagger +1; 200 sp, 60 gp, 10 pp.

Concluding the Adventure

Should the adventurers succeed in clearing Merle's pumpkin field of the menace from the stars, they will be paid as promised and invited to stay on for the pumpkin festival. They can sample dozens of unique pumpkin-derived treats, that is, if the PCs have not already had all the pumpkin they can handle!

If the PCs fail to discover area 24, the village will have a threat on their hands again, as more than just Merle's pumpkins poke their heads from the thawed spring soil.



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