

Once Upon... A 5 Room Dungeon

By Darren Christie

Introduction: This adventure requires the D&D Curse Of Strahd campaign book, plus the usual D&D core books.

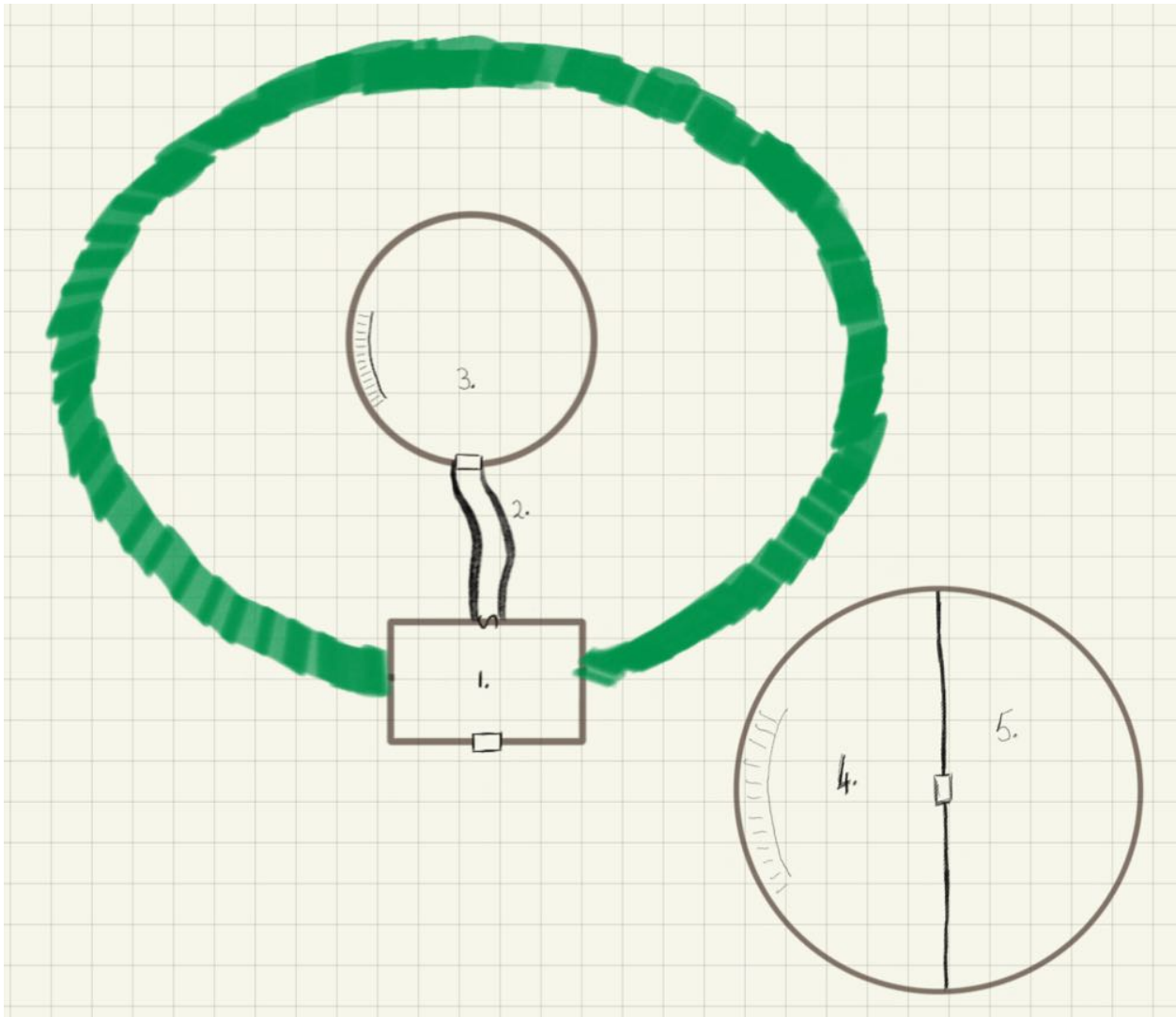
The adventure starts with the DM reading out the opening text from the Creeping Fog adventure hook from Chapter 1 - Into the Mists page 22.

No matter which direction the party go, the party come to a lonely dirt path that cuts through the woods, leading to a tall thorn bush wall that fades into the mist. The only gap in the wall of thorns seems to be just enough for the thatched roof cottage, which it has overgrown. A dark towering shape can be seen emerging from the midst of the thorns, with a yellow flickering glow detectable from the top.

There appears to be no signs of life in the cottage.

If examined the thorn bush wall looks really deep and impenetrable. The thorns look long and sharp enough to shred anything trying to get through. It has a magical glow.

If the party try to cut their way through the thorn bush wall, as quick as they do any damage to it, it grows back.



Room 1: The Cottage

Inside the cottage is a single room, it looks like there has been a struggle. The table and chairs in the middle of the room have been knocked over. Food and plates strewn across the floor. The 3 beds on the left side of the room looked slept in. On the right wall is a mirror above a chest of drawers. On the north wall is a sideboard and a stove.

The southern wall with the door in has two small round windows either side. If the players look out of them all they see is mist after 100 yards.

Around the room on the walls are a couple of embroidered pictures. If examined the pictures portrayed are as follows:

Picture 1: a small cottage with the words "there is no place like home" around it.

Picture 2: some dwarves chopping down apple trees. If asked there are 7 dwarves in the picture.

On top of the chest of drawers is a small poster advertising a royal beauty contest with the tag line “Who is the fairest in the land?”

If examined the stove is still warm.

If the characters examine the floor (**DC 12**) amongst the food they find a red substance and locks of flaxen hair, scuff marks at the base of the sideboard as if it had been moved. If the characters examine the red substance they recognise it as blood. Any attempt to move the sideboard fails.

If the characters look in the mirror they see an older version of themselves reflected back.

If a character when looking at the mirror says “mirror, mirror, on the wall...” The sideboard swings open revealing a secret opening.

Room 2: Path to tower

The characters emerge from the cottage into a clearing behind the wall of thorns, with the tower in the middle, in front of them. A faded yellow stone slab path leads from the cottage to a door at the base of the tower.

About half way between the tower and the cottage next to the path is a stone brazier. Lying at the base of the brazier is the corpse of a flaxen haired halfling.

If the party examine the corpse they find a short sword, bear trap, dagger, 2gp, 5sp, 4cp. The halfling didn't die of nature causes. There are what look like claw/teeth marks on the body.

A successful **DC15 Intelligence(Arcana)** check identifies the brazier as magical. Any non magical weapon or armour submerged in the water for at least 5 minutes becomes a +1 weapon or +1 armour, respectively, for 1d12 hours. After two items have been magically empowered the water disappears.

As the party get closer to the base of the tower they can see what appears to be vine growing around the tower base and the frame of the door.

Whichever member(s) of the party attempt to examine the door is attacked by **vine blights**.

Room 3: Inside the Tower

Inside the base of the tower on the left is a spiralling stair case ascending the

inner wall of the tower.

If any of the party have a passive perception of 13 or greater the DC of the group challenge is reduced by 1.

The sound of running footsteps can be heard from above. From around the corner of the stairs comes an animated door lock.

The party perform a Group challenge Dexterity check with a **DC 13** to try and capture the animated door lock.

If the party succeed they capture the lock, and it becomes inanimate. When they examine the lock, it's legs were made of keys.

If the party fail the lock escapes out of the door never to be seen again.

At the top of the stairs is a door with a gap where the lock should be. If the party have the lock and place it in the gap, the door becomes unlocked using one of its legs. Otherwise the party have to breakdown the door with force. The door has **AC14** and **HP10**.

Room 4: Top of Tower

If the party had to force open the door they lose any element of surprise. Inside the room is a **Barovian Witch** and **3 Bugbears**.

Once defeated the party notice a door, it is locked. It has a **DC14** to open. The door has **AC14** and **HP10**.

The rest of the room is empty and covered in dust and cobwebs. There is a window with a lit candle in it.

Room 5: Locked Room

Inside the locked room is a floor length mirror and a glass casket. This room too is covered in dust and cobwebs.

The glass casket contains what appears to be a sleeping maiden with red shoes and blue and white chequered gingham dress. There appears to be a small terrier dog asleep at her feet. They are unable to wake either up.

If anyone removes the red shoes and puts them on they magically fit the feet of the wearer.

If the party examine the mirror, it appears normal. If they examine it for magical properties a successful **DC15 Intelligence(Arcana)** reveals it to be a magic mirror. When they look in the mirror they see the camp site they had fallen asleep in before the mists arrived.

If examined the red shoes appear magical.

If one of the party stands in front of the mirror wearing the red shoes, clicks them together and says "there is no place like home", a portal opens up in the mirror that they can step through to return back to the camp site.

Thanks to Duncan, Scott and Jacob for the feedback.