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DRETTCHES IN A GARDEN

A BOTANICAL GARDEN HAS BEEN CORRUPTED BY DEMONS!

DRETCHES IN A GARDEN

PREVIEW

PREVIEW

PREVIEW

Adventure Primer

CREDITS

Cover Illustration: Matias Lazaro

Story, Mechanics, and Map: Corvid's Emporium

Interior Illustrations: Publisher's Choice Quality Stock Art @ Rick Hershey / Fat Goblin Games

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RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

To run this adventure, you need the Fifth Edition core rulebooks.

Text that appears in a box like this is meant to be read aloud or paraphrased for the players when their characters first arrive at a location or under a specific circumstance, as described in the text.

The core 5th Edition monster book contains stat blocks for most of the creatures found in this adventure. Monster stat blocks created specifically for this adventure will be included at the end. When a creature's name appears in **bold** type, that's a visual cue pointing you to its stat block in the core monster book. If the monster is not included in the core monster book, it will be included in the appendices of the adventure.

Adjusting Encounters

This adventure contains advice for adjusting encounters based on the number of characters in the party. You are empowered to modify the number of enemies in an encounter and their hit point totals as you see fit. If you need to adjust the difficulty of an encounter during combat, you can alter hit point totals without the player characters ever knowing and have enemies retreat or reinforcements arrive as needed.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used throughout this adventure:

hp	hit points
AC	Armor Class
DC	Difficulty Class
XP	experience points
pp	platinum piece(s)
gp	gold piece(s)
ep	electrum piece(s)
sp	silver piece(s)
cp	copper piece(s)
NPC	nonplayer character
LG	Lawful good
CG	Chaotic good
NG	Neutral good
LN	Lawful neutral
N	Neutral
CN	Chaotic neutral
LE	Lawful evil
CE	Chaotic evil
NE	Neutral evil

Dretches in the Garden

Dretches in the Garden is a Fifth Edition adventure for **three to seven characters of 1st to 2nd level**, and is optimized for **four characters with an average party level (APL) of 1**. Characters who survive this adventure should earn half of the XP required to reach the 2nd level.

This adventure takes place in a recently abandoned botanical garden. This adventure assumes placement in the DMDave Worlds' Blutstrom campaign setting. However, it can just as easily be placed in any campaign setting that has a moderately wealthy city or the ruins of one.

BACKGROUND

This adventure takes place in a botanical garden named "Blackwood Gardens" after the Blackwood noble family. In recent years the old garden has fallen into disrepair from neglect. A local druid named Clover has been quietly tending to its plants.

Now, a pack of dretches have holed up in the old botanical garden, cultivating demonic plants and animals at the behest of a lamia named Castys. The demons proved too difficult for Clover to deal with on her own.

You can learn more about Castys in the follow-up adventure *Snakes in a Bar* where she is featured.

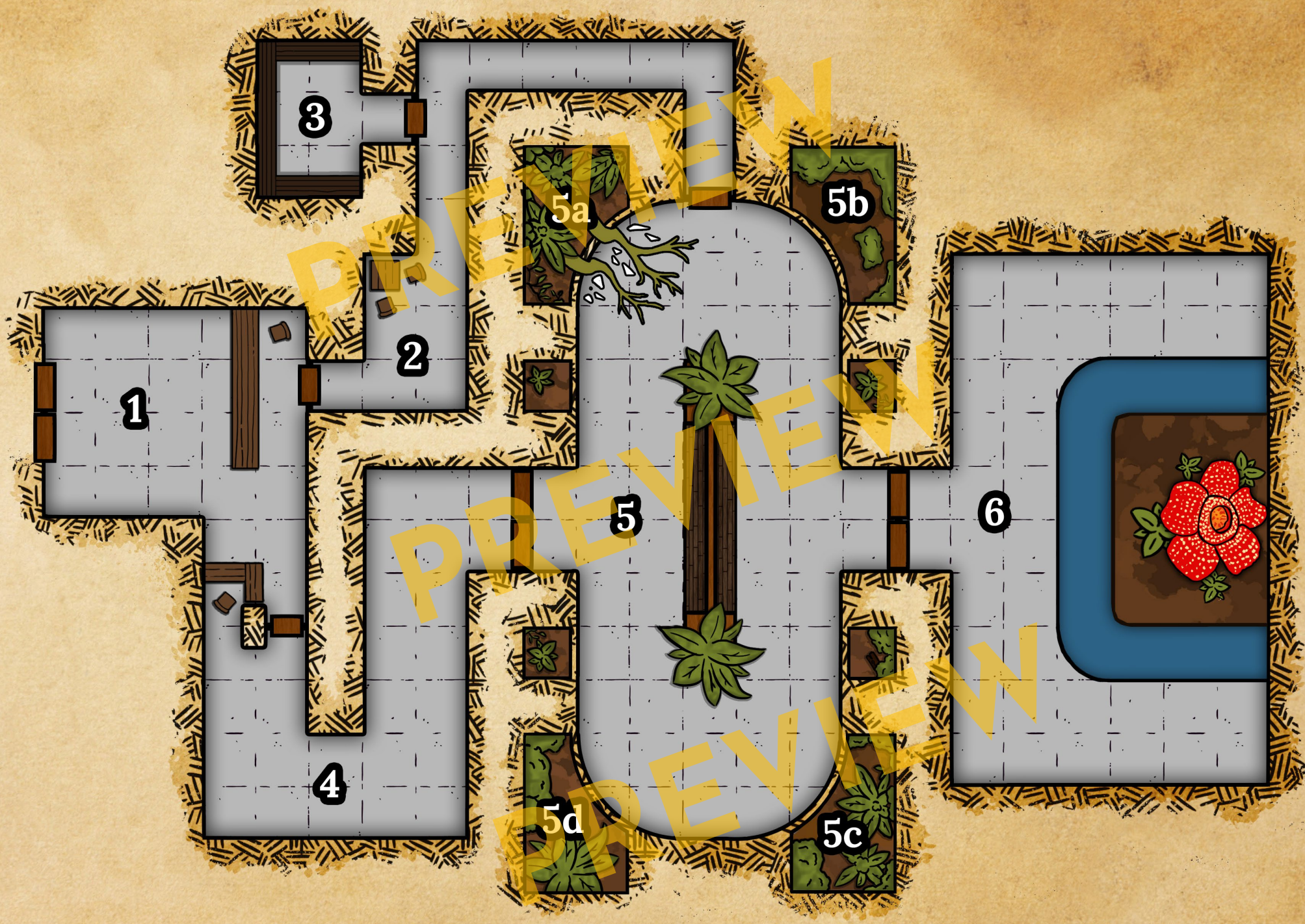
Adventure Hooks

Concerned Gardener. An energetic druid named Clover approaches the characters disguised as a humble gardener. She warns the players of demons lurking in the botanical gardens and offers them a *spell scroll of speak with animals* in exchange for clearing out the botanical garden.

Distraught Milkman. Rumors have been circulating that a milkman went to deliver to the botanical garden, not realizing they had closed, and found unspeakable horrors inside. The man has been openly begging for somebody to investigate, offering his paltry savings of 5 gp, so that he may sleep easy again.

Demons? Again?. Kessia, a member of the local clergy, has received word that there are demons coming and going from the botanical garden. She is offering 100 gp to anybody that can clear out the demons.





1

3

2

5a

5b

5

6

4

5d

5c

BLACKWOOD GARDENS

The botanical garden is a small, single-story structure nestled in the heart of the city. It has a collection of unique plants and critters. Its crowning exhibit is a corpse flower.

General Features

Unless otherwise noted, locations along the cobblestone street have the following features.

Ceilings. The arched stone ceilings of this illustrious garden are 12 feet high.

Floors and walls. Cold, stone floors and walls run the length of this building.

Doors. All of the garden's doors are made of wood and have AC 15, 18 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. None of the doors in this building are locked.

Light. The abandoned structure is dark inside. There are old, broken lanterns scattered around.

Climate. The air is thick with humidity, which solidifies in blood-red dew on the walls.

KEYED LOCATIONS

The following locations are keyed to the map of the botanical garden.

1 - Entrance

When the characters enter, read the following:

This dark, 20-foot-square room is quiet. There is a wooden desk against the north wall and a door behind it. Around the corner to the east is a countertop and doorway, perhaps once used as a security checkpoint.

Welcome desk. Characters that investigate the desk discover enchanted pamphlets. Read the following:

An animated sketch of a blooming corpse flower covers the front of the pamphlets. On the back there are several sketches of smaller plants and information on how to locate the botanical garden.

Northern door. Characters that succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check hear gnawing and chewing sounds through the door.

Security desk. Characters that investigate this desk find a burglar's pack without rations; two pairs of manacles; and one rotten, half-eaten orange. Additionally, if they succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check they notice small, humanoid-like footprints in the dust moving across the top of the desk.

2 - Staff Lounge

Read the following:

A few boxes are stacked on the floor around a small table in this 15-foot-wide, 10-foot-long room. A pale, green, and leathery creature sits at the table gnawing on some plant roots.

Encounter: Dretch. There is one **dretch** in this room. It attacks on sight, but retreats to **area 5** if it is clearly outnumbered.

3 - Storage Closet

Read the following:

The floor of this small room is covered with boxes, barrels, buckets, and watering spouts. Bare hooks line the walls where coats once hung. Sitting in the center of the floor is a crate with a black, grainy substance leaking through its slats.

Trap: Leaky Crate. A *glyph of warding* spell has been cast on the leaky crate. The glyph triggers a *stinking cloud* spell (save DC 12) when any creature moves the crate. The spell's cloud lasts for 1 minute or until dispelled.

4 - Painted Hall

Read the following:

This winding, 10-foot-wide hall is decorated with informational plaques and murals depicting a variety of plants and animals.

Encounter: Snakes. Two **poisonous snakes** are slithering around in the dark hallway. They hiss when a creature gets within 10 feet of them and lash out if any creature moves closer.

Murals. Characters who look at the murals more closely identify the following fauna:

- Ravens, owls, and bats are scattered throughout the mural.
- A tiny pseudodragon with garnet scales and a sharp stinger on a low-hanging branch is poised to strike a rat hiding in the undergrowth.
- A small, red-yellow-black banded snake is resting in a tree.
- Purple, porous fungus stalks with thin tendrils are scattered throughout the mural. Some of them are depicted lashing out at mice, bats, and other tiny creatures.

5 - Garden

Read the following:

This large, oblong room is 60 feet wide and 25 feet long. Two large plants accent a bench in the center of the room, and an assortment of exhibits line the perimeter of the garden. A small, pale creature is shoving four

dead shrubs around the room, which seem to inexplicably shuffle away.

Encounter: Herding Shrubs. There are two **dretches** and four **awakened shrubs** in this room. One of the dretches is attempting to line up the awakened shrubs in a row so that it can count them, albeit with little success. When the characters enter the room the awakened shrubs panic and begin lashing out at any creature that moves, but do not advance on any creatures. The dretch uses its telepathy to reprimand the characters for disrupting the headcount and yells at them to leave.

It is possible to calm down the awakened shrubs with a successful DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check. Once calmed, an awakened shrub settles down in place. Otherwise, the awakened shrubs calm down after 1 minute and retreat into the nearest exhibit (see below).

5a. Exhibit A

Read the following:

This exhibit is dominated by two purple fungi and several large roots that have broken through the glass.

Encounter: Violet Fungi. There are two **violet fungi** in this exhibit. They attack if a creature gets within five feet of the exhibit, but do not exit the exhibit.

5b. Exhibit B

Read the following:

Several overgrown bushes dominate this exhibit. A plaque in front of it reads "Flying Snakes."

Encounter: Flying Snakes. There are three **flying snakes** inside of this exhibit. One of them snaps at the glass if a creature approaches.

5c. Exhibit C

Read the following:

The plants in this exhibit are chewed to bits with holes. A plaque on the display reads "Dragon Earwigs."

Encounter: Dragon Earwigs. There is a swarm of dragon earwigs (treat them as a **swarm of centipedes**). They are on the verge of starvation, so if any creature opens the exhibit, they flood out and attack.

5d. Exhibit D

Read the following:

The plants in this exhibit are obscured by a thick purple fungus with long tendrils. The plaque that should be in front of this exhibit has been torn away.

Encounter: Violet Fungus. There is one **violet fungus** sealed behind glass. If a creature is within ten feet of the exhibit it smashes into the glass, breaking the glass after two rounds, and attacks, chasing after its targets.



6 - Corpse Flower

Read the following:

A bright red, blooming corpse flower and the repugnant smell of rotting flesh dominates this 50-foot-wide, 30-foot-long room. A 5-foot-wide pool of dark red liquid surrounds the corpse flower, the half-formed bodies of dozens of pale, leathery creatures are forming out of it. Two large constrictor snakes occupy either side of the room, one of them is gorging on a pale, green creature.

Encounter: Constrictor Snakes. There are two **constrictor snakes** in this room gorging on newly-forming dretches. They hiss at creatures that open the door to this chamber and attack any creatures that enter.

Hazard: Dretch River. Dretches are being spawned from this pool of water. Each patch of half-formed dretches occupies a 5-foot space. A creature that moves within five feet of a patch must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or become grappled. A patch of dretches has AC 11, 9 hit points, and immunity to poison damage.

Hazard: Corpse Flower. The corpse flower has AC 8, 10 hit points, and vulnerability to fire damage. While the corpse flower is alive, every 10 minutes a patch of dretches slides out of the flower's center and into the dretch river (see above), replenishing one 5-foot patch.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

By the end of this adventure the characters will have explored what remains of the botanical garden and have likely destroyed the dretch-spawning corpse flower. Hopefully they have destroyed the corpse flower, otherwise it may begin spawning more dretches.

Adventure Hook Resolutions

There were three adventure hooks mentioned in the introduction. Here is the resolution for each adventure hook:

Concerned Gardener. The disguised druid reconvenes with the characters only after they have successfully cleared the botanical garden. They give the characters a *spell scroll of speak with animals*, as promised.

Distraught Milkman. Depending on how much the characters divulge to the milkman, he may be relieved or even more anxious. In either case, he pays the characters the 5 gp promised for their trouble.

Demons? Again? Kessia is glad to hear that the demons have been dealt with and does not hesitate to supply the reward of 100 gp to the characters.

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