

A ONE-SHOT FOR LEVELS 1, 3, 5 OR 10

The Haunting of Mar-thatch



*Ghosts that aren't ghosts, and a village
that forgets a little more every night*

THE ORIGINAL
**The basis for
The Echoes of
Mar-thatch**
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A FREE ONE-SHOT FROM

JAY'S RP CORNER

COMPATIBLE WITH FIFTH EDITION

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The Haunting of Mar-thatch

Something walks the streets of Mar-thatch after dark, and every morning the village remembers a little less.

The original adventure that became *The Echoes of Mar-thatch*.

The Haunting of Mar-thatch is a one-shot adventure for four to six characters of 1st, 3rd, 5th or 10th level, designed to be played in a single session of about three hours. It isn't tied to any setting: Mar-thatch can be any market village on the road north, a day's ride from a larger city. Everything the Game Master needs, including every stat block, is in this booklet.

The basis for *The Echoes of Mar-thatch*

***The Haunting of Mar-thatch* is the original adventure on which *The Echoes of Mar-thatch* is based.** I wrote it in under a day to run at my local gaming store for new players and club regulars, and later reworked it into *The Echoes of Mar-thatch*, set in the Heartlands of Karn.

The two share a village, an inn and a few familiar faces, but the mystery underneath is different, so you can run both for the same group.

Running this adventure

Choose a tier. Before play, choose the party's level: 1st, 3rd, 5th or 10th. Each encounter has a table giving the right opponents for that tier, and the final battle changes with it.

Short on time? The adventure is built in self-contained parts. You can skip the night attack in Part 1, interview only one villager in Part 2 (the one who matches your tier), or skip the wagon in Part 3 entirely. Any of these cuts keeps the story intact and keeps the session to three hours or less.

Stat blocks. Every creature used is in the Bestiary at the back of this booklet, in the 2024 fifth edition format.

Adventure Background

This section is for the Game Master only.

Mar-thatch began as a roadside inn, a waystation for travellers heading north to the towns and cities. Over the years the farmers, villagers and small merchants of the surrounding valleys started meeting there to trade with the big merchants rather than make the trek to cities alien to their quiet, country sensibilities. Now, once a month, the village becomes a rambling hub of carts and stalls for the festival of Market Day, when anything produced in the valley can be bought or sold, and frequently is. Its innkeeper isn't simply the owner of the inn: the post is elected, like a mayor or first citizen, and all of the inn's profits are invested back into the community.

About three months ago, a heavy prison wagon passed through Mar-thatch on its way to the city. Inside was an **oblex**, a cunning ooze that feeds on memories and can shape copies of the people it has eaten from, along with its spawn. Three adventurers had been hired to guard it: a human ranger, a dark elf wizard and a dragonborn priest of the Hidden One. West of the village, the wagon was attacked and forced off the road into the river rocks. The horses died, the bars gave way, and the oblex got loose. The ranger and the wizard died in the attack; the priest staggered into the village square, desperate to reach the capital "before it was too late", and was killed there.

The oblex made its lair in the old mausoleum under the hill south of the village, and it has been feeding ever since. It eats the villagers' memories, leaving gaps they can't explain, and it has taken control of some of them outright. By night its puppets, the village's missing guards and townsfolk among them, put on grave shrouds and stalk the streets as "ghosts", dragging people and goods back to the mausoleum. Because the

oblex has eaten different pieces of the same memories from different people, every villager remembers the murder in the square differently, and each is sure they are right.

The oblex isn't working alone. A shadowy figure, nearly seven feet tall, comes to the mausoleum by night to direct it. Who he is, and what he wants with the creature, is left for you to decide (see "Further Adventures").

Adventure Summary

- **Part 1: One Night in Mar-thatch.** The characters arrive after dark, meet the sheriff and face the "ghosts" if they linger outside.
- **Part 2: The Mar-thatch Inn.** The innkeeper and two villagers tell their stories, and the characters find that nobody remembers the murder the same way.
- **Part 3: The Abandoned Wagon.** The wreck of the prison wagon, now home to a frightened and dangerous beast, reveals what was being transported.
- **Part 4: The Graveyard Caves.** The trail leads to the ruined graveyard and the mausoleum beneath the hill, where the creature hoards stolen keepsakes and the bones of its meals.
- **Part 5: The Mausoleum.** The characters face the oblex or one of its puppets, depending on their level, and may break its hold on the village.

Part 1: One Night in Mar-thatch

The characters are travelling north after several weeks in the wilderness, and they reach Mar-thatch after dark. Read or paraphrase:

For weeks you have slept rough, deprived of every basic comfort. For some of you that has been fun, even preferable; for the rest, the sight of the market village of Mar-thatch is a welcome relief. Hot food, cold drinks and actual beds. As you crest the hill, lush green grass gives way to wheat fields and apple orchards rolling out below as far as the eye can see, and to the north the far larger city sprawls across the view. At the bottom of the valley, trees on one side and green fields on the other, lies the small but always vibrant village of Mar-thatch.

Tonight it is sleepy and quiet. A large market square sits at its heart, ringed by houses, shops and small storehouses, and by the road stands a large three-storey inn simply named the Mar-thatch Inn. It is clearly the oldest building in the village, modified and added to over the years; parts of it look as if they were once other buildings, joined to it by later construction.

Ask each player what their character intends to do first. What have they missed most? What will they do when they get to town?

The characters have very few options for rest. Camping in the market square is forbidden and considered bad luck. If they try to rest there, loiter or make any undue noise after dark, they meet the first of the village's three key villagers: **Sheriff Runaar Garhold**, who insists that they quiet down, leave the village, or head to the inn, where it's fine to "make such a bloody racket" at this time on a quiet week.

Having entered the village, the characters are now caught in the web of the haunting. If they try to leave Mar-thatch after dark, or investigate the figures moving between the buildings, they are attacked by a wave of "undead" slipping quietly through the village under cover of darkness. If they head straight to the inn, a character who succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check glimpses the ghosts in the distance, half seen in the night, slipping silently between the buildings. Characters who investigate are attacked as above; otherwise, move on to Part 2.

The Ghosts

The ghosts are living people in grave shrouds: villagers, the village's missing guards and unlucky travellers, all puppets of the oblex. They attack in waves for as long as the characters keep trying to leave. Use the table below for each wave.

Tier	Each Wave
1st level	8 Shrouded Cultists
3rd level	6 Shrouded Gnolls
5th level	3 Shrouded Berserkers
10th level	4 Shrouded Veterans

They aren't ghosts. A character who succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check during the fight realises that the ghosts aren't undead at all, but living humanoids. A character proficient with a Disguise Kit has Advantage on this check.

Taking a prisoner. If the characters work out the truth and defeat an entire wave, they can carry one of the bodies, or a survivor, to the inn. The inn is the only place in the village the ghosts won't attack.

Smoke and fire. If the characters break into another building and shelter there, the ghosts attack it and set it alight. A character who succeeds on a DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check notices small fire damage already

on several of the smaller buildings: the ghosts have been smoking people out of the homes they want emptied.

Clearing the dead. If the characters keep fighting, each later wave includes two extra ghosts who don't fight, but simply drag away their fallen allies.

The sheriff. If Runaar is with the characters, he joins the fight, mercilessly cutting the ghosts down without a flicker of recognition on his face. Unless the characters work it out, he never realises they aren't ghosts. He insists on retreating to the inn; if the characters refuse, he curses them for fools and retreats alone at the first gap between waves, and he remembers their foolishness.

Surviving the night. If the characters survive the night outside the inn, the sheriff is waiting for them when the sun comes up, with several large villagers who insist, forcefully, that the characters come to the inn to be questioned.

Part 2: The Mar-thatch Inn

Whether the characters come to the inn with the sheriff after the fight, are marched there in the morning, or arrive on their own (in which case Runaar arrives right behind them), **Sheriff Runaar Garhold** nods curtly to the innkeeper and heads straight down to the cellar. From below rise the cries, chatter and hubbub of the people of the village. The cellar door is closed and locked behind him, and the characters are left alone with the innkeeper. Read or paraphrase:

The large taproom is empty but for a roaring fire that throws out so much heat you can feel it even by the door. Behind the bar a lizardfolk glares across the room at you with piercing eyes. Nearly seven feet tall, slender and agile, dressed in a humble tavern-keeper's smock, they stand washing dishes, and as you watch, a loud, high-pitched squeak rises from a plate as the innkeeper wipes it down. The squealing seems partly deliberate and partly repressed anger. Then you notice that the innkeeper's other arm isn't flesh and bone: it is mechanical, and with every movement it whirs and clicks and hums. The innkeeper's stare is unblinking, unchanging, and fixed on you, the strangers in the room.

Innkeeper Ssilas Sslitherfin listens carefully and answers curtly. If the characters ask for rooms, Ssilas gives them one shared room for 10 GP. If they won't or can't pay, Ssilas lets them spend the night in the common room, but insists they must eat and drink, since the inn isn't a charity.

If the characters ask about the ghosts, or are brought in by the sheriff and the villagers, Ssilas tells them this:

"Ssince the lasst Market Day fesstival, there wass a bloody murder in the ssquare, and the ghosst of the victim hass haunted our village. We are cursssed, not jusst by the ghossts but by a foul darknesss we cannot shake. People are lossssing time, memoriess. Sstrange goinggss on. You have sstumbled into our darkesst hour. When the ssun comess up iss the only ssafe time in Mar-thatch, and as ssoon as it doess, you sshould flee for your livess."

If the characters press, Ssilas shows them evidence: pages missing from the inn's ledger and entries scrubbed out. Ssilas explains that the innkeeper of Mar-thatch is an elected post, and that all of the inn's profits go to the community so that everyone can thrive.

Ssilas tells them what they know. The hauntings and memory lapses started after a ranger, a human, was murdered in the village square. The killer was never found, and neither was the thing the ranger was hunting, though the ranger said it was the most dangerous creature he'd ever hunted. If asked where, Ssilas says to the west and south of the village (where the abandoned wagon and the graveyard are). With people's memories failing, nobody can say for sure whether things, or even people, are going missing.

Ssilas won't let the characters question the townsfolk in the cellar, but encourages them to investigate the hauntings and lets them speak to two people: **Sheriff Runaar Garhold** and **Grammy Wislow**.

Sheriff Runaar Garhold

Runaar is reluctant to speak to the characters: he doesn't like outsiders, especially not with everything that's going on. If the characters already know the ghosts aren't real and confront him with it, he looks a little confused. *"Uhhh. No one has faced or defeated one up till now."*

As sheriff, he has been trying to keep people alive and safe, but it's hard, because he keeps losing time and finding his cell doors unlocked with no memory of opening them. Asked how the hauntings started, he talks about the murder, a few weeks ago, of a visiting **dark elf wizard** who was taking goods to the city in a large wagon. He doesn't remember what happened to the wagon; he assumes the wizard's companions took it west with them when they left after the murder. The wizard's body, he says, is in the village graveyard, a small field at the foot of the hill just south of the river.

The empty barracks. A character who wanders the village notices that there should be far more guards here: Mar-thatch is a major hub of commerce, and the jail and the barracks are far too big for the handful of

guards left.

Grammy Wislow

Grammy Wislow is the matriarch of the oldest and largest family in Mar-thatch. Despite her age, the wizened firbolg has all her faculties and makes a perfect interviewee: she knows everything about Mar-thatch and welcomes the characters into her home. She has eight children, she says, and innumerable grandchildren, and her mind is sharper than any sword. She has had no memory lapses at all.

Some things don't add up:

- **Missing pages.** A character who searches her home finds pages missing from some diaries in her dresser. This is automatic if they look through the books in the room, or needs a DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation) check if they are searching at random.
- **Ten children, not eight.** A character who studies the family portraits and keepsakes, and succeeds on a DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check, can clearly see that there are ten children. No amount of questioning makes Grammy admit it, though she looks misty-eyed and far away if pressed.
- **Admitting the gaps.** A DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check convinces her that there are gaps in her memory. She insists they must be magical, since she has the mind of a great power and, despite her age, still has all her "rocks upstairs".

Asked about the murder, Grammy says with certainty that the victim was a **dragonborn priest of the Hidden One**, the god of secrets, mysteries and freedom. She knows only that he was distracted and in a great rush: he had to get to the capital, he told her, before it was too late. His body is in the cemetery. She doesn't remember him travelling with a wagon, but there is an abandoned one outside the village on the west bank.

What the Villagers Remember

Each villager remembers a different victim. All three are half right: they are remembering pieces of the deaths of the wagon's three guards, and the oblex has eaten the rest.

Villager	Remembers the Murder Victim As
Innkeeper Ssilas Sslitherfin	A human ranger hunting "the most dangerous creature" he'd ever hunted
Sheriff Runaar Garhold	A dark elf wizard taking goods to the city in a large wagon
Grammy Wislow	A dragonborn priest of the Hidden One, desperate to reach the capital "before it was too late"

Where Next

After talking to the three villagers, the characters can wander the village checking whatever they like and picking up a few clues. All of them should lead to either the abandoned wagon (Part 3) or the village graveyard (Part 4).

Part 3: The Abandoned Wagon

Even in daylight, this stretch of the west bank is gloomy, lying in the shadow of the giant hill south of the village. The characters see the wagon before they get close. Read or paraphrase:

As you follow the west bank of the river, you see a large wagon lying with its front end crashed into the rocks: sturdy, reinforced wood and strong iron bars, covered by thick velvet curtains. The wood is cracked and the bars have been gnawed at. The curtains are ripped and torn, and in places things are growing on them; moss and settled plants suggest the wagon has been here far longer than a couple of weeks. As you approach, the thick stench of decay hits you, quickly explained by two dead horses, bloated and rotten, lying in the river. The entire front of the wagon has been ripped open, perhaps by the rocks as it careered out of control into the shallows. Perhaps not.

A character who examines the wreck can learn the following.

Check	What It Reveals
DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) or Wisdom (Animal Handling)	The horses have been dead for months. With a 20 or higher, about three months, though the river has bloated them badly.
DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation)	The rocks didn't open the wagon. Though no arrows remain in the wagon or the horses, an attack forced it off the road.
DC 15 Wisdom (Survival)	The fast-growing local moss covers only parts of the wagon: something has been coming and going from it in recent months.
DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation)	Tiny trails of blood and drag marks: something has been dragging its food inside to eat.

The Nest

The creature is inside the wagon, in a deep sleep. The wagon is torn open but still in one piece, and with some inventiveness, and if they're fast enough, the characters can secure it before the creature attacks. It takes 1d4 rounds to wake up, but it wakes immediately if someone enters the wagon or a character touching or moving it fails a DC 14 Dexterity (Stealth) check. Then it believes it is under attack and fights furiously.

It can be calmed only by magic or a DC 19 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check, and then only enough not to attack. If the characters keep pressuring it or poking around what is now its nest, it attacks again. It is alone, frightened, and sees them as a threat to its new home; getting rid of it or befriending it should be near impossible.

Tier	The Nest's Occupant
1st level	Aldani
3rd level	Owlbear
5th level	Giant Crocodile
10th level	Young Green Dragon

Inside the Cage

Once the creature has been chased off, befriended or killed, the characters can search the wagon:

- A DC 14 Wisdom (Animal Handling or Survival) check shows that the creature living here is **not** what was being transported. It just wandered in and took the wagon as its home.

- Among the carcasses of its meals are signs of something far larger that once occupied the cage. A DC 16 Wisdom (Animal Handling) or Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals more than one set of teeth among the cage's original occupants.
- A DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check picks up the trail of the only thing left around here, which headed south once freed, towards the graveyard in the shadow of the hill. If the characters find no trail and have no other clues, they may need to return to Mar-thatch to question the villagers again.

Part 4: The Graveyard Caves

Whether they follow the trail from the wagon or the villagers' directions, the characters can tell as soon as they arrive that something is amiss. What used to be a trickle of mourning relatives has become a steady stream of people and things coming and going from the mausoleum, built into the overhang where the hillside turns rocky at its base. Read or paraphrase:

As you enter the graveyard you see considerable disturbance: gravestones smashed and the ground turned over. The small brick wall that once lined the field has been knocked down to its component parts. Beyond the churned earth, it is clear that there has been heavy traffic here for some time, all of it heading to the large mausoleum carved into the hillside, where a dark, dank set of steps leads down into the earth. With it comes the stench of death and, more unusually, the smell of fresh blood.

The Stair

If the characters go straight down the stairs, read or paraphrase:

Something that barely fits has disturbed this tunnel greatly. The walls are coated in a thick, viscous, partly clear slime that smells strongly of rotten flesh with hints of rotting seafood. Only the stairs are dry; so much has passed over them, walking or dragged, that they have been worn dry. At the bottom you find yourselves in a dank mausoleum. Antechambers to the east and west are piled high, one with goods, treasure and art and the other with bones. Something has been eating, and eating well. At the end of a short corridor, barely visible in the dark, is a large double wooden door leading to the main mausoleum. It is locked, and though the slime hasn't touched it, it is decorated with the horror of bloodstains and claw marks.

The west chamber is filled with mementos, personal items, gold, jewellery and keepsakes belonging to the people and merchants of Mar-thatch. Most of it is easily identified as belonging to people from the village, or is still in the chests and boxes it travelled in, plainly marked with the names of the merchant houses and governments that own it.

The east chamber is a far grislier sight. Something has been devouring people and livestock of every kind and age indiscriminately. Most of the corpses are unrecognisable: all that is left is bone and ragged patches of clothing, picked over and licked clean.

Check	What It Reveals
DC 14 Wisdom (Medicine) or Wisdom (Animal Handling)	Several sets of teeth have picked these bones clean; not all the corpses were eaten by the same mouth.
19 or higher on the same check	Three corpses don't fit in: a human, a dark elf and a dragonborn, whose tattered gear marks them as adventurers. These are the wagon's guards.
DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation)	There is far more treasure and goods here than there are corpses. Not everyone who has faced this thing has died, so some of the missing must still be alive.

The Doors

The door to the mausoleum is ancient, heavy and locked. A character can pick the lock with a successful DC 17 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check, or break it open with three successful DC 16 Strength (Athletics) checks, each taking an action. Breaking the door down makes considerable noise, and the creatures on the other side are ready for the assault.

Part 5: The Mausoleum

The final battle depends on the party's level. At 1st, 3rd and 5th level, the characters face one of the villagers, now a puppet of the oblex, while the creature itself has moved on. At 5th level you can instead have them face the oblex itself ("5th level, alternative"), and at 10th level they face an elder oblex.

1st, 3rd and 5th Level: The Puppet

Read or paraphrase, using the villager from the table below:

You enter a massive chamber. Once it was the mausoleum for the village's dead, carved deeper and deeper into the hillside over the years. Like the graveyard above, its stone coffins and places of mourning have been destroyed, ground to rubble by something huge and terrible and covered in the same foul, translucent ooze as every corner of this tomb. Instead, a familiar face stares back at you. Devoid of any recognition, it simply points at you, blank-eyed.

Tier	The Final Battle
1st level	Grammy Wislow (controlled) and 2 Zombies
3rd level	Sheriff Runaar Garhold (controlled) and 4 Zombies
5th level	Innkeeper Ssilas Sslitherfin (controlled) and 6 Zombies

The puppet freed. When the villager is defeated, killed or otherwise incapacitated, they are shaken free of the creature's influence. A flicker of recognition crosses their face before they fall unconscious (or die). "Warn them. It will take us all!" If they survive the battle, they tell the characters about a shadowy figure, nearly seven feet tall, who was directing the creature and controlling them and the others involved.

The empty lair. Searching the chamber, the characters find that something hideous and monstrous was here, but has recently moved. A fresh tunnel leads back up to the surface near the village. The characters can return to Mar-thatch and report what has happened.

5th Level (Alternative) and 10th Level: The Oblex

Read or paraphrase:

You enter a massive chamber. Once it was the mausoleum for the village's dead, carved deeper and deeper into the hillside over the years. Like the graveyard above, its stone coffins and places of mourning have been destroyed, ground to rubble by something huge and terrible and covered in the same foul, translucent ooze as every corner of this tomb. Instead, a giant, oozing thing with a thousand faces screaming inside it lumbers around the chamber, sickly and pale. Naked people, half conscious and half alive, amble about the room screaming silently, their faces frozen in hideous torment and covered in the same sickly white ooze as everything else.

Tier	The Final Battle
5th level (alternative)	Adult Oblex and 4 Oblex Simulacra
10th level	Elder Oblex and 10 Oblex Simulacra

The simulacra are the oblex's copies of villagers it has fed on. Each can attack on its own, but the oblex can also use any of them as a conduit for its Eat Memories attack.

Conclusion

If the characters slay the oblex, the villagers' memories come back over time. The dead stay dead, though, and the horrors that happened here will haunt Mar-thatch for years, if not decades. Pick one surviving villager whose memory never returns: a sign that there is another oblex, or something more sinister, still at work.

Rewards

The grateful villagers reward the characters as follows.

Tier	Reward
1st level	50 GP each, free room and board; the characters reach 2nd level
3rd level	150 GP each, free room and board; the characters reach 4th level
5th level	250 GP each, free room and board; the characters reach 6th level
5th level (alternative)	250 GP each and free room and board at the inn for life; the characters reach 6th level
10th level	One Uncommon magic item each (GM's choice) and free room and board at the inn for life; the characters reach 11th level

Further Adventures

d4	What Happens Next
1	The Tall Figure. The shadowy figure nearly seven feet tall comes back to the mausoleum for his creature and finds the characters instead. Who is he, and why did he want it?
2	The Last Memory. The villager whose memory never returned starts walking out to the hill at night. There is another oblex, or something worse.
3	The Priest's Errand. The dragonborn priest was desperate to reach the capital before it was too late. Too late for what?
4	The Owners. The merchant houses and governments whose goods filled the west chamber want to know what became of them, and who has them now.

Designer's Note

I wrote this adventure to be run as a one-shot at my local gaming store, potentially for new players or club regulars, which is why it scales to several levels. It is compartmentalised so that sections can be dropped if time is running short: question only one villager (perhaps the one who matches your tier), skip the encounter at the wagon or the wagon entirely, or skip the opening fight with the ghosts. Any of these will keep the adventure to three hours or less.

Bestiary

The creatures of this adventure appear below in alphabetical order. Initiative shows the modifier, followed in parentheses by the score to use if the GM doesn't roll.

ADULT OBLEX

Medium Ooze, Lawful Evil

A cunning ooze that feeds on memories and shapes copies of the people it has fed on. It came to Mar-thatch in a prison wagon.

AC 14 **Initiative** +4 (14)

HP 100 (13d8 + 42)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	19 (+4)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Int +7, Cha +5

Skills Deception +5, Perception +4

Immunities Blinded, Charmed, Deafened, Exhaustion, Prone

Senses Blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius); Passive Perception 14

Languages Common plus the languages of those whose memories it has eaten

CR 5 (XP 1,800; PB +3)

Traits

Amorphous. The oblex can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch without expending extra movement to do so.

Aversion to Fire. If the oblex takes Fire damage, it has Disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of its next turn.

Simulacra Conduit. The oblex can use Eat Memories as if it were in the space of any of its Oblex Simulacra within 1 mile of it.

Actions

Multiattack. The oblex makes one Pseudopod attack and uses Eat Memories.

Pseudopod. Melee Attack Roll: +7, reach 10 ft. Hit: 7 (1d6 + 4) Bludgeoning damage plus 5 (2d4) Psychic damage.

Eat Memories. Wisdom Saving Throw: DC 15, one creature the oblex can see within 5 feet of it or of one of its simulacra. *Failure:* 18 (4d8) Psychic damage, and the target becomes memory-drained until it finishes a Short or Long Rest. While memory-drained, the target subtracts 1d4 from its ability checks and attack rolls, and each time it fails this save again, the die increases by one size (d6, d8 and so on, to a maximum of d20).

Spellcasting. The oblex casts one of the following spells, requiring no spell components and using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15):

- **3/day each:** *Charm Person* (level 5 version), *Color Spray*, *Detect Thoughts*, *Hold Person*

ALDANI

Medium Monstrosity, Lawful Neutral

A lobster-like river dweller that has crawled into the wreck and made it a nest.

AC 14 (Natural Armor) **Initiative** +0 (10)

HP 49 (9d8 + 9)

Speed 20 ft., Swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	9 (-1)

Skills Perception +4, Survival +4

Senses Passive Perception 14

Languages Common

CR 1 (XP 200; PB +2)

Traits

Amphibious. The aldani can breathe air and water.

Actions

Multiattack. The aldani makes two Claw attacks.

Claw. *Melee Attack* Roll: +3, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) Slashing damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it has the Grappled condition (escape DC 11). The aldani has two claws, each of which can grapple one target.

ELDER OBLEX*Huge Ooze, Lawful Evil*

An ancient oblex, swollen with a thousand stolen lives.

AC 16 **Initiative** +3 (13)

HP 150 (20d12 + 20)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	23 (+6)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Int +10, Cha +8

Skills Deception +8, Perception +5

Immunities Blinded, Charmed, Deafened, Exhaustion, Prone

Senses Blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius); Passive Perception 15

Languages Common plus the languages of those whose memories it has eaten

CR 10 (XP 5,900; PB +4)

Traits

Amorphous. The oblex can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch without expending extra movement to do so.

Aversion to Fire. If the oblex takes Fire damage, it has Disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of its next turn.

Simulacra Conduit. The oblex can use Eat Memories as if it were in the space of any of its Oblex Simulacra within 1 mile of it.

Actions

Multiattack. The oblex makes two Pseudopod attacks and uses Eat Memories.

Pseudopod. Melee Attack Roll: +7, reach 10 ft. Hit: 17 (4d6 + 3) Bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) Psychic damage.

Eat Memories. Wisdom Saving Throw: DC 18, one creature the oblex can see within 5 feet of it or of one of its simulacra. Failure: 44 (8d10) Psychic damage, and the target becomes memory-drained until it finishes a Short or Long Rest. While memory-drained, the target subtracts 1d4 from its ability checks and attack rolls, and each time it fails this save again, the die increases by one size (d6, d8 and so on, to a maximum of d20).

Spellcasting. The oblex casts one of the following spells, requiring no spell components and using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 18):

- **At will:** Charm Person, Detect Thoughts, Hold Person

- **3/day each:** Confusion, Dimension Door, Dominate Person (the target has Disadvantage on the save if the oblex is in combat with it), Fear, Hallucinatory Terrain, Hold Monster, Hypnotic Pattern, Telekinesis

GIANT CROCODILE

Huge Beast, Unaligned

AC 14 (Natural Armor) **Initiative** -1 (9)

HP 85 (9d12 + 27)

Speed 30 ft., Swim 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	9 (-1)	17 (+3)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)

Skills Stealth +5

Senses Passive Perception 10

Languages None

CR 5 (XP 1,800; PB +3)

Traits

Hold Breath. The crocodile can hold its breath for 1 hour.

Actions

Multiattack. The crocodile makes one Bite attack and one Tail attack.

Bite. Melee Attack Roll: +8, reach 5 ft. Hit: 21 (3d10 + 5) Piercing damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it has the Grappled condition (escape DC 16). While Grappled, the target has the Restrained condition.

Tail. Melee Attack Roll: +8, reach 10 ft. Hit: 14 (2d8 + 5) Bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it has the Prone condition.

GRAMMY WISLOW (CONTROLLED)

Medium Humanoid (Firbolg), Lawful Neutral

The wizened matriarch of Mar-thatch's oldest family, a 3rd-level cleric of death, now a puppet of the oblex.

AC 17 (Splint Armor, Shield) **Initiative** +1 (11)

HP 31 (6d8 + 3)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Wis +6, Cha +4

Skills Medicine +6, Religion +2

Senses Passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Elvish, Giant

CR 2 (XP 450; PB +2)

Traits

Puppet of the Oblex. While the oblex lives, this creature obeys it and can't be Charmed or Frightened by anyone else. When the oblex dies or this creature drops to 0 Hit Points, its mind returns.

Actions

Quarterstaff +1. Melee Attack Roll: +5, reach 5 ft. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) Bludgeoning damage.

Touch of Death (1/Day). Immediately after Grammy hits a creature with a melee attack, the target takes an extra 11 Necrotic damage.

Spellcasting. Grammy casts one of the following spells, using Wisdom as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks):

- **At will:** Minor Illusion, Sacred Flame, Thaumaturgy, Toll the Dead
- **2/day each:** Guiding Bolt, Inflict Wounds, Shield of Faith
- **1/day each:** Invisibility, Scorching Ray, Spiritual Weapon

OBLEX SIMULACRUM

Medium Ooze, Lawful Evil

A naked, ooze-covered copy of a villager the oblex has fed on, half conscious and screaming silently.

AC 10 **Initiative** +0 (10)

HP 24 (7d8 – 7)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (–1)	10 (+0)	8 (–1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Immunities Blinded, Charmed, Deafened, Exhaustion, Prone

Senses Blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius); Passive Perception 10

Languages Speaks only in the voice of the person it copies

CR 1/2 (XP 100; PB +2)

Traits

Conduit. The oblex can use Eat Memories through this simulacrum (see its stat block). If the oblex dies, the simulacrum collapses into harmless slime.

Actions

Pseudopod. Melee Attack Roll: +7, reach 5 ft. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) Bludgeoning damage plus 5 (2d4) Psychic damage.

OWLBEAR

Large Monstrosity, Unaligned

AC 13 (Natural Armor) **Initiative** +1 (11)

HP 59 (7d10 + 21)

Speed 40 ft., Climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	3 (–4)	12 (+1)	7 (–2)

Skills Perception +5

Senses Darkvision 60 ft.; Passive Perception 15

Languages None

CR 3 (XP 700; PB +2)

Actions

Multiattack. The owlbear makes two Rend attacks.

Rend. Melee Attack Roll: +7, reach 5 ft. Hit: 14 (2d8 + 5) Slashing damage.

RUNAAR GARHOLD (CONTROLLED)

Medium Humanoid (Human), Lawful Good

Mar-thatch's sheriff, a 5th-level weapon master who fights with a longsword in one hand and a shortsword in the other, now a puppet of the oblex.

AC 18 (+1 Breastplate, Dual Wielder) **Initiative** +2 (12)

HP 51 (6d10 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Str +8, Con +5

Skills Athletics +8, Intimidation +6

Gear +1 Breastplate, Longsword, Shortsword of Sharpness

Senses Passive Perception 10

Languages Common

CR 4 (XP 1,100; PB +2)

Traits

Puppet of the Oblex. While the oblex lives, this creature obeys it and can't be Charmed or Frightened by anyone else. When the oblex dies or this creature drops to 0 Hit Points, its mind returns.

Actions

Multiattack. Runaar makes two Longsword attacks and one Shortsword attack.

Longsword. Melee Attack Roll: +8, reach 5 ft. Hit: 9 (1d8 + 5) Slashing damage.

Shortsword of Sharpness. Melee Attack Roll: +7, reach 5 ft. Hit: 8 (1d6 + 5) Slashing damage. On a 20 on the d20, the target takes an extra 14 Slashing damage; on a second 20 in the same fight, the GM may rule that the blade lops off one of the target's limbs.

Bonus Actions

Second Wind (1/Day). Runaar regains 7 (1d10 + 2) Hit Points.

Action Surge (1/Day). Runaar takes one additional action this turn.

SHROUDED BERSERKER

Medium Humanoid, Neutral

One of Mar-thatch's missing guards, hulking and silent beneath a grave shroud.

AC 13 (Hide Armor) **Initiative** +1 (11)

HP 67 (9d8 + 27)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

Senses Passive Perception 10

Languages Common

CR 2 (XP 450; PB +2)

Traits

Bloodied Fury. While Bloodied, the berserker has Advantage on attack rolls.

Puppet of the Oblax. While the oblax lives, this creature obeys it and can't be Charmed or Frightened by anyone else. When the oblax dies or this creature drops to 0 Hit Points, its mind returns.

Actions

Greataxe. Melee Attack Roll: +5, reach 5 ft. Hit: 9 (1d12 + 3) Slashing damage.

SHROUDED CULTIST

Medium Humanoid, Neutral

A villager or traveller in a grave shroud, a puppet of the oblax.

AC 12 **Initiative** +1 (11)

HP 9 (2d8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Deception +2, Stealth +3

Senses Passive Perception 10

Languages Common

CR 1/8 (XP 25; PB +2)

Traits

Shroud's Devotion. The cultist has Advantage on saving throws to avoid or end the Charmed condition and against magical sleep.

Puppet of the Oblax. While the oblax lives, this creature obeys it and can't be Charmed or Frightened by anyone else. When the oblax dies or this creature drops to 0 Hit Points, its mind returns.

Actions

Scimitar. Melee Attack Roll: +3, reach 5 ft. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) Slashing damage.

SHROUDED GNOLL

Medium Humanoid, Chaotic Evil

A gnoll raider taken by the oblex on the road, wrapped in a grave shroud.

AC 15 (Hide Armor, Shield) **Initiative** +1 (11)

HP 22 (5d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)

Senses Darkvision 60 ft.; Passive Perception 10

Languages Gnoll

CR 1/2 (XP 100; PB +2)

Traits

Puppet of the Oblex. While the oblex lives, this creature obeys it and can't be Charmed or Frightened by anyone else. When the oblex dies or this creature drops to 0 Hit Points, its mind returns.

Actions

Bite. Melee Attack Roll: +4, reach 5 ft. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) Piercing damage.

Spear. Melee or Ranged Attack Roll: +4, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) Piercing damage.

Bonus Actions

Rampage. Immediately after the gnoll reduces a creature to 0 Hit Points with a melee attack, it moves up to half its Speed and makes one Bite attack.

SHROUDED VETERAN

Medium Humanoid, Neutral

A seasoned soldier of the village watch, armoured beneath a grave shroud.

AC 17 (Splint Armor) **Initiative** +1 (11)

HP 58 (9d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +2

Senses Passive Perception 12

Languages Common

CR 3 (XP 700; PB +2)

Traits

Puppet of the Oblex. While the oblex lives, this creature obeys it and can't be Charmed or Frightened by anyone else. When the oblex dies or this creature drops to 0 Hit Points, its mind returns.

Actions

Multiattack. The veteran makes two Longsword attacks and one Shortsword attack.

Longsword. Melee Attack Roll: +5, reach 5 ft. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) Slashing damage.

Shortsword. Melee Attack Roll: +5, reach 5 ft. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) Piercing damage.

SSILAS SSLITHERFIN (CONTROLLED)

Medium Humanoid (Lizardfolk), Chaotic Good

The elected innkeeper of Mar-thatch, a 7th-level warlock of the Lost and Damned with a mechanical arm, now a puppet of the oblex.

AC 19 (Natural Armor, Mage Armor) **Initiative** +3 (13)

HP 53 (7d8 + 21)

Speed 30 ft., Swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Wis +6, Cha +8

Skills Deception +8, Insight +6

Senses Passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Draconic

CR 5 (XP 1,800; PB +3)

Traits

Puppet of the Oblex. While the oblex lives, this creature obeys it and can't be Charmed or Frightened by anyone else. When the oblex dies or this creature drops to 0 Hit Points, its mind returns.

Hold Breath. Ssilas can hold their breath for 15 minutes.

Actions

Multiattack. Ssilas makes one Mechanical Arm attack and one Bite attack, or casts Eldritch Blast twice.

Mechanical Arm. *Melee Attack Roll:* +5, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) Bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) Force damage.

Bite. *Melee Attack Roll:* +1, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 1 (1d6 - 2) Piercing damage.

Eldritch Blast. *Ranged Attack Roll:* +8, range 120 ft. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 + 5) Force damage.

Spellcasting. Ssilas casts one of the following spells, using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks):

- **At will:** *Prestidigitation, Spirit of the Damned, True Strike*
- **2/day each:** *Dissonant Whispers, Hellish Rebuke, Misty Step, Shadow Blade, Witch Bolt*
- **1/day each:** *Blight, Shadow of Moil, Sickening Radiance, Summon Undead, Whispers of the Damned*

Spirit of the Damned. *Wisdom Saving Throw:* DC 16, one creature Ssilas can see within 60 feet. *Failure:* 12 (2d6 + 5) Necrotic damage. (This spell appears in the free player handout *The Lost and Damned*.)

Whispers of the Damned. *Wisdom Saving Throw:* DC 16, each creature of Ssilas's choice within 30 feet. *Failure:* 18 (4d8) Psychic damage, and the target has the Frightened condition until the end of its next turn. *Success:* Half damage only.

YOUNG GREEN DRAGON

Large Dragon, Lawful Evil

AC 18 (Natural Armor) **Initiative** +1 (11)

HP 136 (16d10 + 48)

Speed 40 ft., Fly 80 ft., Swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Wis +4

Skills Deception +5, Perception +7, Stealth +4

Immunities Poison; Poisoned

Senses Blindsight 30 ft., Darkvision 120 ft.; Passive Perception 17

Languages Common, Draconic

CR 8 (XP 3,900; PB +3)

Traits

Amphibious. The dragon can breathe air and water.

Actions

Multiattack. The dragon makes three Rend attacks.

Rend. *Melee Attack* Roll: +7, reach 10 ft. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) Slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) Poison damage.

Poison Breath (Recharge 5–6). *Constitution Saving Throw*: DC 14, each creature in a 30-foot Cone. *Failure*: 42 (12d6) Poison damage. *Success*: Half damage.

ZOMBIE

Medium Undead, Neutral Evil

One of Mar-thatch's dead, dug up from the graveyard and set to guard the oblex's lair.

AC 8 **Initiative** -2 (8)

HP 22 (3d8 + 9)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Wis +0

Immunities Poison; Exhaustion, Poisoned

Senses Darkvision 60 ft.; Passive Perception 8

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

CR 1/4 (XP 50; PB +2)

Traits

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the zombie to 0 Hit Points, it makes a Constitution saving throw (DC 5 plus the damage taken) unless the damage is Radiant or from a Critical Hit. On a successful save, the zombie drops to 1 Hit Point instead.

Actions

Slam. *Melee Attack* Roll: +3, reach 5 ft. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) Bludgeoning damage.

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