

DUNGEONS & LAIRS #56: ZOMBIE FARMHOUSE

Zombie Farmhouse is a Fifth Edition plug-in adventure for **four characters with an average party level (APL) of 1, 3, 5, or 8**. This document offers a general guideline on scaling the adventure for each level. Following a strong lead, the characters investigate a recently abandoned farmhouse in a region overrun by the undead. Soon, they find themselves surrounded by ravenous zombies with no way to escape.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

To run the adventure, you need the three Fifth Edition core rulebooks. You can access a free basic ruleset from the official source if you don't have a copy.

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

When a creature's name appears in **bold type**, that's a visual cue pointing you to its stat block to

CREDITS

The following creators made this adventure possible:

Design and Writing. DMDave

Editing and Layout. Tony Casper

Cartography. Tom Cartos

Artwork. Midjourney

say, "Hey, game master, make sure you get this creature's stat block ready—there's going to be an encounter!" If the stat block appears in the appendix of this adventure, the text tells you so; otherwise, you can find the stat block in the core rulebook.

Spells and non-magical equipment mentioned in the adventure are described in the core manual for players. *Magic items* are described in the core manual for game masters unless the adventure's text directs you to an item's description in the appendix.

LEVEL SELECTION

Before playing, know the level at which you wish to run the adventure. Overall, the adventure's locations and descriptions remain unchanged throughout the



levels. However, most encounters, hazards, traps, and treasures scale with each level of the adventure. The keyed locations will present the differences between each level.

Also, the adventure works for more than just the listed levels. If you wish to run this adventure for levels other than 1st, 3rd, 5th, or 8th, the chart below shows you which version of the adventure you should select for each level. A given adventure version might be easier or more challenging for a given party. The adventure is designed to place the characters in the middle of a significant threat, a zombie horde. Likely, characters of the 11th level or higher will not have the same thrilling experience as characters of a lower level.

Scaling the Adventure

Average Party Level	Recommended Adventure Version	Relative Difficulty
1	1st-Level	Deadly
2	1st-Level	Hard
3	3rd-Level	Deadly
4	3rd-Level	Hard
5	5th-Level	Deadly
6	5th-Level	Hard
7	5th-Level	Medium
8	8th-Level	Deadly
9	8th-Level	Hard
10	8th-Level	Medium

BACKGROUND

A little over a month ago, the nearby city of Medrok fell to a dark entity known only as the Queen of the Shadows. Balaspatak's army clashed with the shadows but quickly discovered that the shadows could convert the fallen soldiers into new shadows. Mages and priests in the area tried to fortify their defenses during the day when the shadows couldn't operate, but the Queen's army expanded to include corporeal dead. She raised zombies and skeletons from the cemeteries and reanimated the strength-drained corpses of her army's victims. Even local adventurers—what few there are—couldn't stop the all-consuming darkness.

Recognizing defeat, Balaspatak's cowardly king called for an evacuation of all the villages and towns within 50 miles of Medrok. Now, dozens of homesteads across the country lie unoccupied. Most Balaspatakians tried to gather their valuables before they fled, hoping it could buy them passage into the Empire, but many had to abandon even their most prized possessions.

Of course, these undefended homes create an excellent opportunity for rogues. Now, the lands surrounding Medrok are ripe for the picking. So long as you aren't worried about the undead hordes, of course.

ADVENTURE HOOK

The Hofsteder family was among the first to leave the Empire's protected lands and try to make a new life in the Balaspatak Kingdom to the east. Life was hard at first, but they quickly learned the best ways to use the available resources. Eventually, what started out as a small wooden house with a couple of sheds grew into the extensive ranch that stands on the same site today. The Hofsteder clan successfully converted dozens of acres around the ranchable land. Before the region fell into shadow, the farm successfully supplied most of the local settlements with grain, cattle, milk, horses, and meat.

Little did the Hofsteder's neighbors know they were more than just simple farmers. They were Imperial nobles fleeing old enemies and carrying considerable wealth, much of it stolen from the Emperor's vaults. Those who know the Hofsteders' secret identity theorize they may have over 100,000 gp hidden somewhere on the farm.

All the Hofsteders were killed during the initial shadow invasion, dying in their beds. Only their farmhand, Gus, escaped. And while he knows (or at least suspects) that the treasure is there, he isn't exactly sure where they hid it. Gus offers his information to any party willing to take the risk to recover it, asking 20 percent of the take as a tip.

If the characters agree to help Gus, he gives them directions to the Hofsteder's homestead.

ZOMBIE FARMHOUSE

The Hofsteder Ranch is a 130-acre piece of land. Most of the land is dedicated to the Hofsteders' crops. However, a handful of buildings are close to a well-traveled dirt road. The tallest of these buildings are a pair of loft barns and a 30-foot-tall grain silo. A one-story home featuring a wraparound porch stands at the forefront, surrounded by smaller gardens.

There are zombies everywhere.

GENERAL FEATURES

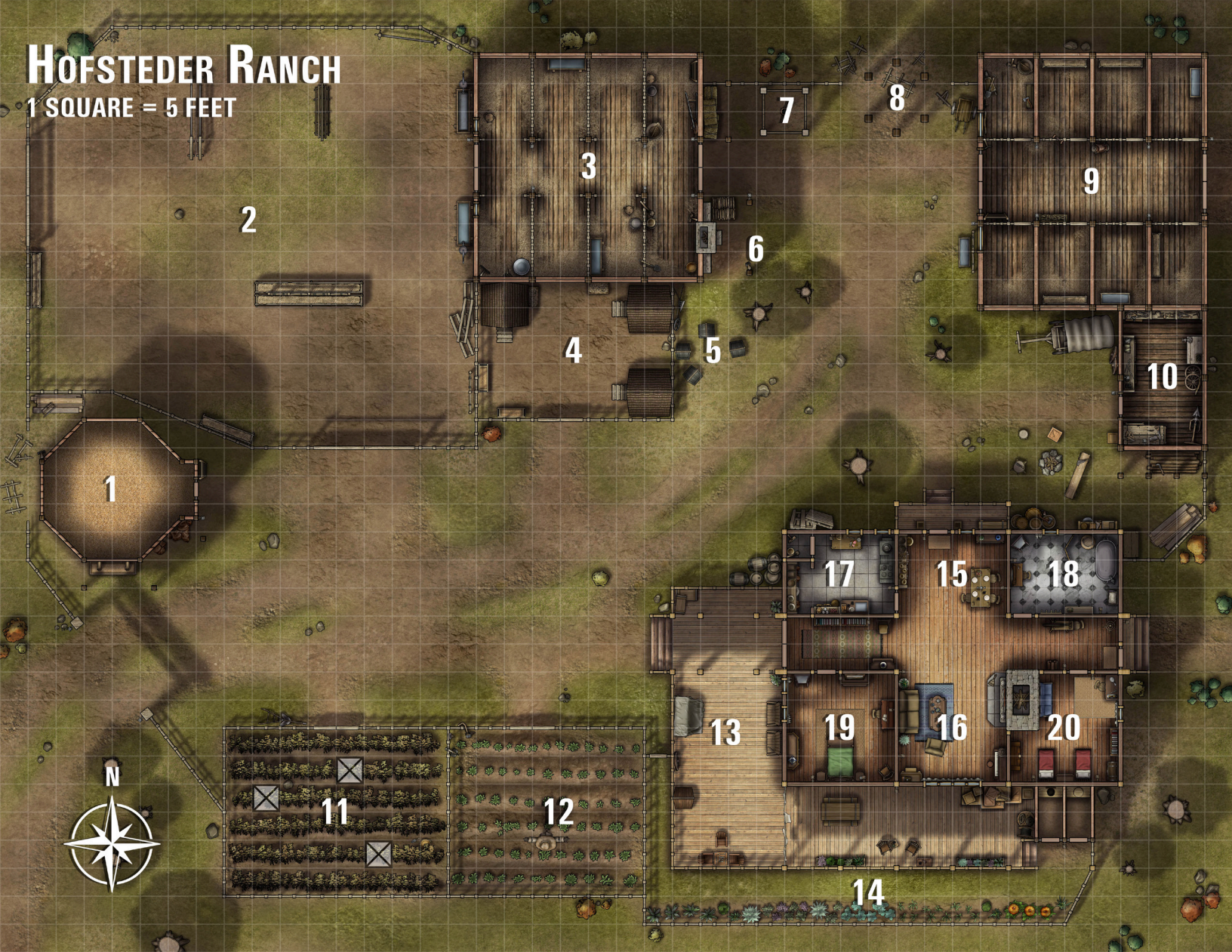
Unless stated otherwise, the Hofsteder Ranch has the following features.

Architecture. The ranch consists of one homestead, two barns, a silo, and a couple of smaller outbuildings. All of these buildings are made from wood. Ceilings in the homestead rise 8 feet, while ceilings in the barn are 10 feet high to their respective lofts and another 10 feet to the highest point of the ceiling. The silo stands 30 feet high.

Doors and Windows. All of the doors around the farm are made from wood and hung on iron hing-

HOFSTEDER RANCH

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



es. Most of the doors were left unlocked but could be barred or locked. A locked door requires a successful DC 14 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves' tools to unlock it or a DC 18 Strength check to break it open. Barred doors can only be broken open. A door has AC 15, 15 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

Windows are unlocked but can be locked. A locked window requires a successful DC 13 Strength check to break open. A window has AC 13, 5 hit points, vulnerability to bludgeoning and thunder damage, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

Reinforcing Doors. A character can use their action to reinforce a door or window further. Doing so requires a successful Strength check using whatever tools the GM deems appropriate. The DC for the reinforcement check depends on the portal's DC to break open. A successful reinforcement check increases the door's break-open DC by 2 to a maximum of 21. Creatures cannot open reinforced doors and windows by picking locks.

Door Reinforcement

Break DC	Reinforcement Check DC
10 or lower	10
11–15	15
16–20	20
21 or higher	25

Optional: Zombies and Passive Break Checks. To simplify things, zombies that end their turn next to a door or window automatically break the door open so long as their passive Strength score is equal to or greater than the DC required to break the door open. Individual zombies have a passive Strength score of 11. If two or more zombies start their turn within 5 feet of the same door, they gain a +5 bonus to their passive Strength score for a total of 16. Zombie mobs have a passive Strength score of 19.

Fences. The fences surrounding the farm are approximately 3 feet tall. A character can move

HOFSTEDER RANCH

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



past the fences without a check, treating them like difficult terrain.

Illumination. No lights or fires are lit throughout the home beyond what the characters bring themselves. Besides, characters would be wise to travel during the day before the shadows rise.

Optional: Timed Module. So long as the characters enter the forsaken lands of Balaspatak at sunrise, right as the shadows enter hiding, they arrive at the Hofsteder Ranch by noon. This gives them approximately four hours to search the farm for the lost Hofsteder treasure and another four hours to make it out of Balaspatak before nightfall. Set a timer for four hours. When the characters enter combat, stop the timer. After the four-hour mark, the characters will need to leave the ranch, or they will get caught in Balaspatak after dark.

Zombies Appear. During the day, the zombies that infest the land linger in and around the Hofsteder Ranch. If the characters aren't careful—and quiet—they may soon find themselves mobbed. Every 15

minutes, roll a d20 and refer to the Zombies Appear table below, referencing the appropriate column depending on the adventure's level. Whenever the characters do something loud—break down a door, cast an explosive spell, cry out, etc.—roll another d20.

Creatures marked with an asterisk are new monsters appearing in the appendix.

Zombies Appear

Zombies Appearing	1st	3rd	5th	8th
None	1–15	1–12	1–10	1–7
1d4 zombies	16–17	13–16	11–14	8–11
2d4 zombies	18–19	17–18	15–17	12–15
1 zombie mob*	20	19–20	18–19	16–18
1d4 zombie mobs*	—	—	20	19–20

If the characters spend 8 hours without making a sound or taking any actions, you may halve the zombies present on the board.

New zombies appear from a random side of the board. Roll a d4 to determine which side—1 for the north, 2 for the east, 3 for the south, and 4 for the west. Zombies always move toward any living creature that they can see. If they can't see any living creatures, they move toward the last loud sound they hear. If there are no living creatures in sight and no recent sounds, the zombies move in the direction of other zombies, becoming mobs when appropriate (see below).

The Shadows Return. The zombies are the least of the characters' worries. When night falls over the lands surrounding Medrok, shadows rise from the dark recesses of the land, hungry for fresh victims. In addition to the zombies that appear (which roam day and night), shadows arrive, too. When you roll for **Zombies Appear**, if the result is 15 or higher, **1d4 shadows** appear, too. Balaspatakian shadows are only interested in draining strength from good- and neutral-aligned creatures. They ignore evil-aligned creatures.

Optional: Zombie Mobs. When six or more zombies start a round within 10 feet of each other, you can replace them with a zombie mob. Using the zombie mob will help you streamline the adventure a bit.

Additionally, an individual zombie within 5 feet of a zombie mob can use half of its movement to join an existing zombie mob. When it does, the individual zombie disappears, and the zombie mob regains 10 hit points.

The zombie mob is a new creature included in the appendix.

Optional: Zombie Horde. When there are six or more zombie mobs on the board at the end of a turn, you no longer need to roll for **Zombies Appear**. Instead, all zombie mobs regain 10 hit points at the

start of each of their turns so long as the mob has at least 1 hit point remaining; this regeneration-like effect represents new zombies joining the mob.

SHAKING THINGS UP

If you find that the characters are having an easy go of stealing the treasure at the farm and dealing with the undead hordes, introduce some of the complications below. Roll a d4 to determine the complication, or choose the one you like.

1 – Cloudy Day

A storm rolls in, blotting out the sun. The shadows lingering in the dark corners of Balaspatak start to rise from their hidey-holes, ready to find fresh victims. This complication works best with parties that aren't evil-aligned.

2 – Competition

Another group of treasure hunters—possibly another posse sent by Gus, the farmhand—arrive at the farm. The nature of this group depends on the level, as shown in the table below.

Competition

Adventure Level	Competition
1st	1 thug, 1 acolyte, 1 spy, and 1 druid
3rd	1 veteran, 1 priest, 1 spy, and 1 druid
5th	1 gladiator, 1 priest, 1 spy, and 1 mage
8th	1 gladiator, 1 priest, 1 assassin, and 1 mage

The competition is evil-aligned and able to avoid the shadows. This gives them a decided advantage over neutral- or good-aligned groups. It also means they aren't up for negotiating.

3 – Giant Problem

A giant stumbles onto the farm, smashing through fences and even walls. Three **zombies** cling to the giant's feet, trying desperately to down the hulk. This ruckus causes two **zombie mobs** (see the appendix) to investigate the farm.

The nature of the giant depends on the level of the adventure.

Giant Problem

Adventure Level	Giant
1st	1 ogre
3rd	1 troll
5th	1 frost giant
8th	1 storm giant



4 – Fire

A fire breaks out in one of the barns. Roll on the table below to determine where the fire starts. If the characters don't deal with the fire, it could spread across the farm and make finding the treasure impossible. Plus, it could attract even more undead.

Treat the fire as a Medium object with AC 12 and 50 hit points. It is immune to all forms of damage except cold. It also has the following traits.

Regeneration. The fire regains 5 hit points at the start of each of its turns so long as it has at least 1 hit point remaining. If the fire starts its turn with 0 hit points, it is destroyed.

Snuff It Out. A creature within 5 feet of the fire can use its action to cover the fire with a blanket, bucket of sand, or another object capable of completely covering it. The creature makes a DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check. The check is made with advantage if the fire has only half its hit points or fewer. On a successful check, the fire is destroyed.

Spread. There is a chance that the fire will spread. Roll a d20. Make this check with advantage if the fire is within 5 feet of flammable objects, such as cloth, dry hay, lantern oil, etc. On a result of 15 or higher, the fire spreads. A new fire appears in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the fire.

Water Susceptibility. For every gallon of water splashed on the fire, it takes 10 cold damage.

Fire Starting Location

d6	Fire Starting Location
1	Area 1
2	Area 3
3	Area 9
4	Area 10
5	Area 13
6	Area 15

KEYED LOCATIONS

The following locations are keyed to the maps of the Hofsteder Ranch on pages 3 and 4.

01 – Grain Silo

This 30-foot structure holds the farm's grain stores.

02 – Corral

This corral was used for grazing cows, horses, and sheep and training young horses.

Encounter: Zombie Bulls. A few zombie bulls are "trapped" within the corral's fence. Although the bulls seem trapped, inevitably, they discover that they can leap over the fence. The number of zombie bulls depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the table below. Zombie bulls are a new creature featured in the appendix.



Area 2 Encounter

Adventure Level	Encounter
1st	1 zombie bull
3rd	2 zombie bulls
5th	3 zombie bulls
8th	4 zombie bulls

03 – Cow Shed

This large barn boasts eight wide stalls. Bones, bloodied leather, and glistening hay are all that remain of the cows that the Hofsteders once stored here.

04 – Dung Burner

The Hofsteders used this sizable outdoor oven to burn dung.

Investigation: Furnace Key. A character who spends at least 15 minutes investigating the dung burner and succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check discovers that one of the four silver keys needed to access the Hofsteder treasure is buried under a stone right in front of the furnace. If the characters have the embroidered cloth clue from area 25, they make this check with advantage.

05 – Chicken Coops

These three chicken houses are empty.

Encounter: Engorged Zombie. A zombie with a grotesquely extended stomach sits against the barn wall. Chicken feathers and blood cover its face and chest, clues to its most recent meal. The zombie's speed is reduced by half. Two rounds after the zombie notices the characters, its stomach bursts open, and its guts tumble onto the filthy soil. An undead chicken leaps out and attacks. The chicken uses the same statistics as a **giant rat** except its type is undead, and it is immune to poison damage and the poisoned condition.

06 – Bee Hives

The bees that live in this hive pay no mind to the existence of the undead.

07 – Water Pump Mill

This wind-powered pump pulls water from the ground. A creature can quickly climb to the platform surrounding the windmill via the mill's wooden base.

08 – Water Tank (Base)

This small water tower holds approximately 50 gallons of water. A character must succeed on a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check in order to climb the tank's post to the platform surrounding the tank.

09 – Horse Stables

A horrible stench comes from this large horse barn. All eight stalls hold desiccated horses drained of their strength. A ladder near the western door leads up to **area 24**.

Hazard: Stench. The first time a creature enters the barn or starts its turn inside the barn, it must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned until the start of its next turn. A creature that succeeds on its saving throw becomes immune to this stench for 1 hour.

Encounter: Shadows. The shadows use this barn to hide from the daylight. The number of shadows present depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the table below. Creatures marked with an asterisk are new monsters featured in the appendix.

Area 9 Encounter

Adventure Level	Encounter
1st	1 shadow
3rd	2 shadows
5th	5 shadows
8th	1 shadow swarm*

10 – Workshed

Shelves choked with tools, nails, and kits for making repairs around the farm cover the walls of this dark, dusty shed.

Treasure: Tools. The shed contains carpenter's tools, leatherworker's tools, mason's tools, painter's supplies, potter's tools, smith's tools, tinker's tools, and woodcarver's tools.

Investigation: Hammer Key. A character who spends at least 15 minutes searching the shelves and succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check discovers one of the four silver keys needed to access the Hofsteder treasure hidden in a bucket of nails. The characters make this check with advantage if they have the embroidered cloth clue from **area 25**.

11 – Wheat Farm

Larger crops like corn and wheat grow here, likely for household use.

Trap: Hunting Traps. To deter gophers, the farmers set up a few hunting traps here (marked with

an "X" on the map). A creature that steps on a trap must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 2 (1d4) piercing damage and stop moving. After that, until the creature breaks free of the trap, its movement is limited by the length of the 3-foot-long chain attached. A creature can use its action to make a DC 13 Strength check, freeing itself or another creature within its reach on a success. Each failed check deals 1 piercing damage to the trapped creature. A character can spot one of the traps in advance with a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check.

12 – Vegetable Farm

Already starting to turn to rot from neglect, this garden seems to hold vegetables used as animal fodder. A scarecrow stands proudly at the garden's center.

Investigation: Scarecrow Key. A character who spends 15 minutes searching the ground near the scarecrow's post and succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check discovers one of the four silver keys needed to access the Hofsteder treasure. The characters make this check with advantage if they have the embroidered cloth clue from **area 25**.

13 – Porch

This massive outdoor area wraps around the western and southern sides of the house. Planters on the south side offer more herbs and small vegetables, while crates contain extra flour and grain. A small doghouse leans against the western railing.

Investigation: Dead Dog. A character who looks inside the doghouse discovers the broken remains of the family's household dog.

14 – Herb and Vegetable Garden

This small plot against the southern fence offers simple root vegetables and herbs.

Encounter: Skeletons. A character with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 13 or higher who comes within 20 feet of this area notices that there are two **skeletons** half buried in the garden. The skeletons animate whenever a target comes within 5 feet of them. The skeletons are armed with gardening tools (+2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target; 1d6 bludgeoning damage) and don't wear armor (AC 12). They have a CR of 1/8 (25 XP).

15 – Dining Area

The dining area features a table big enough for six people and a couple of shelves to hold plateware and utensils.

Encounter: The Hofstedeers. The deceased Hofstedeers lurk in this area. They attack anyone who comes into the room. Any noise here summons the crawling arm from **area 16** (see below).

The nature of this encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown in the table below. Creatures marked with an asterisk are new creatures featured in the appendix.

Area 15 Encounter

Adventure Level	Encounter
1st	3 zombies
3rd	2 zombies and 1 poisoned one*
5th	3 poisoned ones*
8th	2 poisoned ones,* 1 evil entrails,* and 1 floating head*

Investigation: Bad Dates. A strange aroma rises from a bowl of dates on the table. A character who inspects the bowl and succeeds on a DC 10 Wisdom check using proficiency in the poisoner's kit recognizes that the dates were laced with *assassin's blood*, a deadly poison.

16 – Living Room

This living area features comfortable furniture, a fireplace, and an upright piano.

Encounter: Crawling Arm. One of the Hofsteder's severed arms hides under the coffee table at the center of the room. It attacks any creature entering this area or joins any combats in **area 15**, using the **crawling arm** stat block featured in the appendix.

17 – Kitchen

The door to this room is stuck shut. The door won't open because a zombie is pressed against it (see below). To shove it open, a creature must succeed on a DC 13 Strength check.

This large kitchen features a large stove area, a sizable pantry, and plenty of counter space for food preparation.

Encounter: Tangled Zombie. The zombie here is tangled in the rope that used to hold the pots and pans above the stove. The rope doesn't affect the zombie's movement or actions but does cause a considerable racket every time it moves or takes an action, potentially drawing other zombies near.

Investigation: Claw Marks. A character who succeeds on a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check notices scrape marks on the floor near the piano, made from constantly moving it. If the characters move the piano out of the way, they discover a hidden compartment masked by a removable floor section. The compartment contains a large floor safe with four keyholes.

Obstacle: The Safe. An effect similar to an *immovable rod* keeps the safe stuck in place; the lead lining prevents *dispel magic* from disabling it. Picking the locks requires four successful DC 25 Dexterity checks using proficiency in thieves' tools made within 1 round of each other. If a lock picker fails on one of the checks while trying to open it, all of the checks fail, and the safe won't open for 1 hour.

The safe is made from magically treated adamantine; it has AC 21, 100 hit points (damage thresh-

old 10), and immunity to acid, cold, fire, lightning, necrotic, poison, psychic, and thunder damage.

The best way to open the safe is to use the four silver keys hidden around the farmstead. The keys are located in **areas 4, 10, 12, and 18**.

Treasure: Hofsteder Treasure. The safe contains a single *bag of holding*. However, the *bag of holding* is stuffed with the Hofsteder's impressive fortune:

- ▶ 50,000 gp
- ▶ 25,000 pp
- ▶ 125 gems worth 100 gp each
- ▶ 10 art objects worth 2,500 gp each
- ▶ 10 pieces of jewelry worth 1,000 gp each
- ▶ 1 *armor of invulnerability*
- ▶ 1 +2 *longsword*
- ▶ 1 *helm of brilliance*
- ▶ 1 *rod of rulership*

18 – Bathroom

This impressive bathroom features a large clawfoot tub, vanity, and full-length mirror. An ornate wooden privacy screen divides the bathroom into two sections.

A bloodied handaxe lies on the floor a few feet from the tub. Blood splatters cover the nearby walls and the wooden privacy screen.

Horror: Tub Corpse. A headless, one-armed female corpse "rests" in the tub, the water darkened by its blood. It is a terrifying sight to behold. A character who sees this must make a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened of it for 1 minute. If the character fails the saving throw by 5 or more, they scream or otherwise cry out, drawing attention to themselves.

Investigation: Bathtub Key. A character who searches the bottom of the bathtub (yes, it's gross) and succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check discovers one of the four silver keys needed to access the Hofsteder treasure hidden in the tub's drain. The characters make this check with advantage if they have the embroidered cloth clue from **area 25**.

19 – Master Bedroom

This comfortable-looking room features a large, four-post bed, desk, and ornate armoire.

Encounter: Shadow. A shadow lurks here. It attacks any non-evil creature that enters the room. Otherwise, it remains hidden.

20 – Second Bedroom

Two small beds, toys, and other clues hint that this room once belonged to children.

21 - Outhouse

These two privies haven't been cleaned since the invasion; they reek.



Encounter: Giant Rat. A diseased giant rat is sniffing around the seat of the westernmost stall. It attempts to bite whoever comes through the door, then flees.

22 – Farmhands Break Area

The trapdoor leading up to this area is barred shut (see “General Features”).

This loft section boasts a small table covered in playing cards, a tankard of mead, and a few tools crammed onto a shelf. The farmhands used to gather here on their breaks.

23 – Additional Household Stores

Nonperishable food items and general homewares the farmers couldn’t store in the main house are kept here.

Encounter: Eli. A local farmboy named Eli hides here; a character with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 14 or better spots him. Eli’s family was killed by the Queen of the Shadows’ undead. Eli managed to survive thanks to his evil streak—he is a neutral evil **spy** armed with only a dagger. When the characters find him, he pretends to be terrified and mute, driven mad by the undead. He will follow the characters and use them to keep himself safe from the zombies. However, as soon as he learns about the treasure hidden on the farm, he will do whatever he can to dispose of the characters and take the treasure for himself.

24 – General Supply Storage

Sacks of flour, bales of hay, unweathered lumber, barrels of mead, and several other general supplies are stored here, hoisted up via the winch.

Encounter: Ravens. A swarm of ravens gathers here. When a character comes within 10 feet of the ravens, the birds shriek and flutter, creating considerable noise.

25 – Lead Farm Hands Lodging

Extra supplies, tools, and other resources crowd this section of the loft. The small, uncomfortable-looking bed where the farmhand Gus slept stands in the corner, still unmade.

Encounter: Zombie. A female **zombie** stumbles around this section of the loft. A scythe sticks out of her neck. She holds an embroidered piece of cloth in her hand.

Treasure: Embroidered Cloth. The cloth in the zombie’s hand is the same one Gus described. Show the players the “Gus’ Clue” handout from the appendix. The cloth shows the location of the four keys needed to access the Hofsteder treasure.

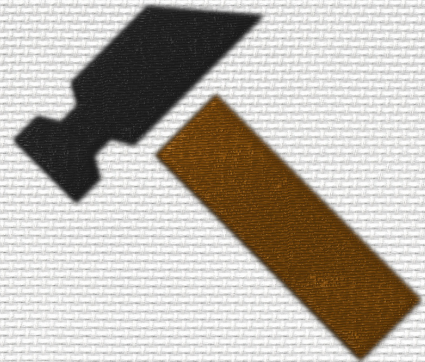
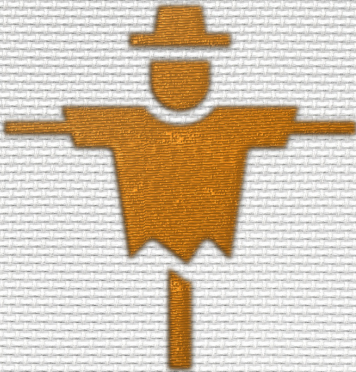
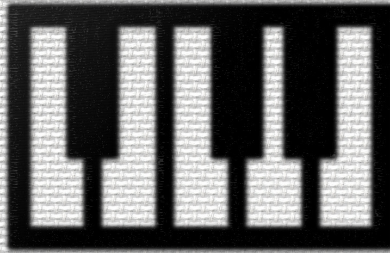
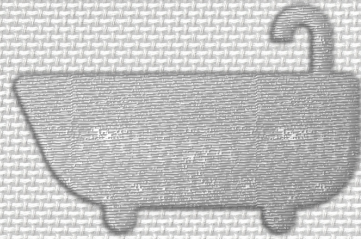
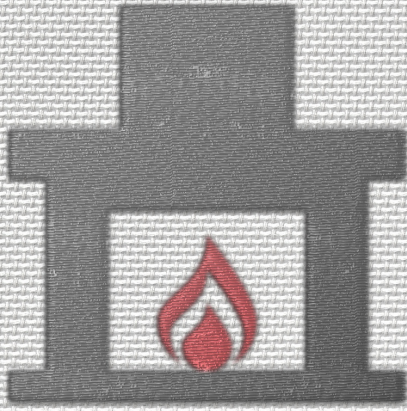
AFTERMATH

If the characters manage to secure the Hofstede’s impressive wealth and escape before the shadows return, they could almost retire. Of course, things never go that well. The characters aren’t the only ones who know about the Hofstede’s fortune. Soon, they will find themselves hunted by other treasure hunters and rogues who know that killing a handful of adventurers is much easier than dealing with the Queen of the Shadows’ minions. Ω

APPENDIX

The following pages contain the handout for the adventure and statistics for new monsters.

Gus' Clue Handout



Crawling Arm

Small Undead, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 6 (1d6 + 3)

Speed 10 ft., climb 10 ft.

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

Saving Throws Wis +0

Skills Stealth +0

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, poisoned, prone, unconscious

Senses blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8

Languages —

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Turn Immunity. The arm is immune to effects that turn undead.

Unusual Nature. The arm doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

ACTIONS

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, the arm attaches to the target. If the arm had advantage on the attack roll, it strangles the target; the target is unable to breathe while the arm is attached.

While attached, the arm can make this attack only against the target, and it has advantage on the attack roll. The arm can detach itself by spending 5 feet of its movement. A creature, including the target, can use its action to detach the arm by succeeding on a DC 13 Strength check.

Evil Entrails

Small Undead, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 13 (2d6 + 6)

Speed 20 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	2 (-4)	6 (-2)	2 (-4)

Skills Stealth +4

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, poisoned, prone

Senses blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8

Languages —

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Unusual Nature. The entrails don't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The entrails make two lash attacks.

Lash. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, the entrails attach to it. If the entrails had advantage on the attack roll, they attach to the target's head; the target is unable to breathe while the entrails are attached.

While attached, the entrails can make this attack only against the target, and they have advantage on the attack roll. The entrails can detach themselves by spending 5 feet of their movement. A creature, including the target, can use its action to detach the entrails by succeeding on a DC 12 Strength check.

Acid Spray (Recharge 6). The entrails spray acid in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in the cone's area must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 7 (2d6) acid damage on a failed saving throw or half as much damage on a successful one.

Floating Head

Tiny Undead, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 45 (10d4 + 20)

Speed 0 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
2 (-4)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	5 (-3)	14 (+2)	6 (-3)

Saving Throws Wis +4

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralyzed, poisoned, prone

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Eyes of Hate. When a creature that can see the floating head's eyes starts its turn within 30 feet of the floating head, the floating head can force it to make a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw if the floating head isn't incapacitated and can see the creature. A creature that fails its saving throw is charmed by the floating head for 1 minute. The charmed creature's speed drops to 0 and it is incapacitated and visibly dazed. The effect ends if the floating head moves more than 30 feet away from the creature, the creature can neither see nor hear the floating head, or if the creature takes damage from any source other than the floating head.

Once the effect ends, or if the creature succeeds on its initial saving throw against this effect, the creature is immune to the floating head's Eyes of Hate for 24 hours.

Magic Resistance. The floating head has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Unusual Nature. The golem doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The floating head makes two necrobolt attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +0 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage.

Necrobolt. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) necrotic damage.

Voice of Fear (Recharge 4-6). The floating head chants dark words. Each creature of the floating head's choice within 30 feet of the floating head that can hear it must make a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw. A creature takes 14 (4d6) psychic damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one.

Spellcasting. The floating head casts one of the following spells, requiring no components and using Wisdom as its spellcasting modifier (spell save DC 12).

At will: *bane*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*

2/day each: *enthrall*, *hold person*

1/day: *confusion*

Poisoned One

Medium Undead, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 51 (6d8 + 24)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	6 (-2)	18 (+4)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Wis +0

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

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

Challenge 2 (450 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Poison Splash. A creature that touches the poisoned one or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 7 (2d6) poison damage.

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the poisoned one to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the poisoned one drops to 1 hit point instead.

Unusual Nature. The poisoned one doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

ACTIONS

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) poison damage.

Spew Poison (Recharge 6). The poisoned one spews poison in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in the area must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 7 (2d6) poison damage and is poisoned for 1 minute. On a successful save, the creature takes half as much damage and isn't poisoned. A creature poisoned in this way can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Shadow Swarm

Huge Swarm of Medium Undead, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 82 (11d12 + 11)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (−2)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	6 (−2)	10 (+0)	8 (−1)

Skills Stealth +5

Damage Vulnerabilities radiant

Damage Resistances acid, bludgeoning, cold, fire, lightning, piercing, slashing, thunder

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +3

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

Disband. If the shadow swarm is reduced to 0 hit points, two shadows rise from its remains.

Shadow Stealth. While in dim light or darkness, the swarm can take the Hide action as a bonus action, and its Dexterity (Stealth) modifier is +8.

Sunlight Weakness. While in sunlight, the swarm has disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.

Unusual Nature. The swarm doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The swarm makes two Strength Drain attacks. If the swarm starts its turn with half its hit points or fewer, it can't use this action.

Strength Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 16 (4d6 + 2) necrotic damage, and the target's Strength score is reduced by 1d4. The target dies if this reduces its Strength to 0. Otherwise, the reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest.

If a non-evil humanoid dies from this attack, a new shadow rises from the corpse 1d4 hours later.

Zombie Bull

Large Undead, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)

Hit Points 38 (4d10 + 16)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	10 (+0)	19 (+4)	2 (−4)	6 (−2)	5 (−3)

Saving Throws Wis +0

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages —

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the bull to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the bull drops to 1 hit point instead.

Unusual Nature. The bull doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

ACTIONS

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) piercing damage. If the bull moved at least 20 feet straight toward the target immediately before the hit, the target takes an extra 9 (2d8) piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone if it is a creature.

Zombie Mob

Gargantuan Swarm of Medium Undead, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 150 (20d8 + 60)

Speed 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
28 (+9)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Wis +1

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

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

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +3

Mob. The mob takes up its entire space. Other creatures can enter the space, but a creature that does so is subjected to the mob's Engulf and has disadvantage on the saving throw.

Creatures inside the mob have three-quarters cover against attacks made from outside the mob.

A creature within 5 feet of the mob can take an action to pull a creature or object out of the mob. Doing so requires a successful DC 20 Strength check. If the target fails the check by 5 or more, it is pulled into the mob's space and is subjected to the mob's Engulf.

The mob can hold only one Large creature or up to four Medium or smaller creatures inside it at a time.

The mob can move through any opening large enough for a Medium zombie. The mob can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

Disband. If the mob is reduced to 0 hit points, four zombies rise from its remains.

Unusual Nature. The mob doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

ACTIONS

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 23 (4d6 + 9) bludgeoning damage.

Engulf. The mob moves up to its speed. While doing so, it can enter Large or smaller creatures' spaces. Whenever the mob enters a creature's space, the creature must make a DC 20 Strength or Dexterity saving throw (the target's choice).

On a successful save, the creature can choose to be pushed 5 feet back or to the side of the mob. A creature that chooses not to be pushed suffers the consequences of a failed saving throw.

On a failed save, the mob enters the creature's space, and the creature takes 23 (4d6 + 9) bludgeoning damage and is engulfed. The engulfed creature is restrained and takes 37 (8d6 + 9) bludgeoning damage at the start of each of the mob's turns.

An engulfed creature can try to escape by taking an action to make a DC 20 Strength or Dexterity check (the target's choice). On a success, the creature escapes and enters a space of its choice within 5 feet of the mob.

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