



Welcome to My Parlor

Copyright (c) 2024 by Basement Games Unlimited. All rights reserved.

Murders in the Shallows is a Dungeon Architect supplement. When your players decide to travel down a path you did not expect, or they finish the main adventure with time left to play, you can use one of these maps to provide a reprieve while you create something more substantial for them to explore so that the fun does not end too soon.

Please keep in mind that a Dungeon Architect supplement provides a theme and a location but only suggestions for the types of creatures and rewards that may exist. You, the game master, must change these to suit the strength of your players' characters and adapt them to whichever fantasy role-playing system you are playing.

Game Master Notes

The adventure contains information for both the game master and the players.

Information written in ***bold and italics*** should be read out loud to the players. This information is usually descriptive text that outlines things the characters can observe.

Information written in *italics* should be read out loud to the players but only after a specific event. These events could be a sprung trap, a conversation with an NPC, text found on scrolls, etc. The game master should review this carefully and present it when appropriate.

Welcome to My Parlor

You spent the last few days regaling the people of a small village with tales of your exploits. A group of five teenagers, wanting to emulate you, explored a nearby ruin. Only one of them returned. They say a giant, furry, black

spider captured their friends, and they need your help. Are you ready to save the children and prove you are as great as you say?

The village of Brumberry rests on the Rundain River, a slow-moving waterway that snakes its way through the countryside. The hamlet is small and populated with nearly two hundred people. Most of the buildings are shabby wooden houses, but a stone building functions as the local store, tavern, and town hall. Brumberry has a diverse culture, and the residents are friendly, independent, and resourceful.

Nearly a decade ago, an old recluse lived in a house a few miles downriver. He would only visit the village once a month with his donkey to purchase supplies. When he stopped his monthly visits, some farmers went to investigate and found that the old man had died. They buried him behind the house. His valuables were brought to Brumberry for storage. A few years later, a relative of the deceased, who only visited twice in all the time the old man lived there, came and collected the crates but never visited the house or the grave.

Because the house was too far away from communal protection, it was left abandoned. Over time, the house fell into disrepair. Wild animals used it as a den from time to time. Sometimes humanoids would camp within its confines. Recently, it became the lair of a giant spider.

The giant spider is unique. Its poison does not kill. Instead, it paralyzes its victim so that the spider may cocoon it and keep it for several days before digesting its meal. The arachnid is also highly intelligent, capable of speaking, and knows the common language. It will use this ability to lure victims into its clutches.

When nothing enters its lair for some time, the giant spider will hunt in the lands surrounding the house but never ventures more than a half mile in any direction.

Before the arrival of the teenagers, the spider had captured two goblins, and it plans on feeding on them before the children, so the characters have a few days to make the rescue.

The house has been abandoned for a decade. The windows are broken. Most of the doors and furniture have been turned into kindling by traveling humanoids and burned in the fireplace. The humanoids searched the rooms and removed almost everything. There is a gravestone behind the house where the previous owner lies buried.

The only treasure is the dried husks of humanoids the spider discards in a room. These bodies have some gear that the spider disregards. There is also a secret door that leads to the deceased man's treasury, which remains undiscovered.

The Quest

The villagers, especially the parents of the four missing teenagers, will beg the characters for help. The town does not have much to offer as a reward, but they will offer two mules and as much food as they can carry.

The teenager who returned, a human named Relm, can provide the following information:

We followed the Rundain River until we found the structure.

We were so excited. We had a torch, a tinderbox, and some wooden clubs.

We entered the building, eager to find the glory and treasure that awaited us.

We passed through the foyer into the main room. We did not hear it. We did not see it. It attacked us before we could do anything.

It was a monstrous spider. As big as a man. It was black, furry, and fast. Before we could do anything, Armin was down and not moving. Keldridge and Timon screamed and ran. I am not sure where. Balik tried to defend us by attacking it with his club, and I didn't know what to do. So, I ran for help.

The characters are given the exact location of the house. Some of the villagers will follow them to the structure but will not, under any circumstances, enter the building.

The House

The house is a single-story stone house with several windows along the west and north walls and one main door. The windows are broken, and the shutters hang on rusted hinges. Although they allow light into the house, the windows are small and prohibit man-sized and larger creatures from entering them. The house has a fireplace and a chimney flue. The exterior door was reinforced, but it has been removed and lies in the grass outside. The roof is twelve feet off the ground. It has remained intact but may be dangerous to walk on. A character weighing more than three hundred pounds might fall through the roof and sustain damage.

Outside the House

You have arrived at the one-story building. The Rundain River gently flows to the south. High grass surrounds the building. You can see windows along the north and west walls, but the glass is broken, and the openings are very small. The main door lies on the ground, with the dark opening standing before you.

The characters can attempt to track outside the house, but the only tracks they may find are the teenagers who went inside the house and one set of footprints running back to town. Any other tracks have been worn away over time.

Grave Site

A grave, obscured by tall grass and weeds, had been dug and lined with stones on the north side of the house. A wooden marker stands by the grave.

The name on the marker is Metis Dunrake. The grave remains untouched, but weeds and tall grass grow around it.

A good-aligned cleric who says a blessing over the untouched grave may gain some positive karma with their deity.

If the characters excavate the grave, they will find a corpse wrapped in blankets and a carpet. There is nothing of interest or value on the remains.

Room 1

The foyer contains a small wooden shelf for storing boots and hanging cloaks. There is also a clay firepot.

There is nothing of interest here.

Room 2

This room was the main living area. A fireplace stands along the southern wall. Charred remains of wood and debris fill its hearth. Soot and ash cover its stones. A pile of wood stands near the fireplace and shards of broken pottery cover the floor.

A search of this room will reveal two fresh bloodstains on the floor. One appears to be from a humanoid. The other is not.

The debris in the fireplace is bits of furniture that traveling humanoids used to fuel the fireplace before the spider took residence.

Previous travelers stacked the pile of wooden wood near the fireplace to use as kindling. An inspection will reveal the wood is pieces of broken furniture. A wooden drawer, buried in the pile, contains a secret compartment with an iron key (used to open the chest in the secret area in room 7).

The pottery on the floor is broken but was quite exquisite. If a character has any method of magically mending the pieces together, they can sell the pottery piece for a tidy sum.

Room 3

You are looking into the old kitchen. A few counters remain, though some have been removed, and a shelf hangs on the wall.

This room was used for cold food preparation, while the fireplace in room 2 served as the main source of cooking heat. There is nothing of interest here.

Room 4

This room is a bathroom. There is a toilet with a bucket and an empty barrel.

The bucket can be removed from the toilet and dumped outside the structure. There is nothing of interest here.

Room 5

This room had been a food pantry. There are shelves along the walls and fragments of wooden containers on the floor. In the eastern portion of the room are nearly a dozen humanoid husks jumbled together. Some of the remains are garbed in armor and have packs. Some are human, and others are goblins.

This room has become the dumping ground for the spider's victims. After the spider drains them of blood, it drags them here.

The bodies are the corpses of a few adventures, a couple of travelers, and several goblins. The gear they retain should be related to their calling, but there should be a map and a key on one of the adventurers.

Map and Key - The body has a map in a leather scroll case and an iron key. The map will show either the location of a dungeon to explore or rooms and hallways in a dungeon. The game master must decide what the map leads to and what the key opens, or they can remove them from the adventure entirely.

Room 6

Cobwebs stretched between the walls, ceiling, and floor of this room. Through the webs, you can see a few pieces of broken furniture.

This room was a bedroom. Some furniture served as firewood, but a few pieces remain.

Room 7

The dark hallway opens into a bedchamber that contains some broken chairs and the remains of a bed. Thick spider webs cover most of the room and almost obscure five cocoons and two egg sacks. A set of closet doors stands along the western wall.

This room is the lair of the **giant spider**. The creature has been trying to lure Timon out of the closet, but it will become aware of the characters as they walk down the corridor toward the room.

Armin, Keldridge, and Balik are cocooned in the webs. They are paralyzed and unable to speak or move. It will take one full minute to cut each child out of the cocoon. If the webs are set afire, the boys will die in the blaze.

Two goblins are also cocooned, but they are already dead. The spider is draining the last of their blood before it dumps them in room 3.

There are two egg sacks in the room. If they are not destroyed, they will hatch into more of the hideous, giant, talking spiders in a matter of weeks. The egg sacks can be destroyed by swords or fire.

There is a secret door in this room. It can be found with a successful search. The room contains an iron chest that is locked and trapped. The key to the lock is in room 2.

The trap is a poison needle trap that forces the victim to make a saving throw vs. poison or fall into a coma for 1d2 weeks.

The game master should decide what treasure is in the chest. It could contain money, a potion, a scroll, a spell book, or a valuable object.

Room 8

The closet doors are stuck. The characters will need to use physical force to break open the closet.

You break open the closet doors and find a room with a long shelf for hanging clothes and storing items. Curled up on the floor is a human boy who is shaking and crying.

The characters have found Timon. When the spider attacked the teenagers in the foyer, Timon ran. He ended up in the adjoining room and entered the closet to hide. The spider could not reach him and tried talking to him to lure him out. It almost worked. Timon will not open the door for anyone. Once rescued, he will suffer arachnophobia for the rest of his life. There is nothing of interest in the closet.