



THE SPECTRES OF MIDWINTER

5TH, 9TH, AND 14TH LEVEL

HE'S MADE A LIST AND WON'T CHECK IT TWICE.
HE DOESN'T CARE IF YOU'RE NAUGHTY OR NICE.



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INTRODUCTION

The Spectres of Midwinter is a 5th edition hunt optimised for **four** characters with an average party level (APL) of **5, 9, or 14**. Characters who complete this hunt should earn enough experience to progress one-third of the way to 6th, 10th, or 15th level. The ghost of Baron Bodrum's former business partner haunts his manor every midwinter, hoping to catch the baron in a trap. The adventurers find themselves at the mercy of the ghost, and his trio of spectres bent on teaching them a lesson on morality. Characters able to resist being frightened and that can deal thunder or psychic damage will find these abilities advantageous during this hunt.

The party learns of a haunting taking place in Bodrum Manor each year at midwinter. Encouraged by Bucket, the mechanical butler who manages the estate, they explore the rooms of this worn-down mansion and uncover clues that help them in the upcoming battles. At the stroke of midnight, a ghost appears, intending to show Baron Bodrum the error of his ways with the help of a trio of spectres eager to taste the industrialist's soul. The characters must defeat three midwinter spectres to banish the manor ghost and end its yearly haunting.

BACKGROUND

Baron Bodrum Businesses Inc. is famous throughout the realms for using automatons to elevate peoples' quality of life—if they can afford the services. Baron Bodrum is an industrialist, and progress, above all else, is his philosophy. This ethos raised the baron from his poor upbringing to his present planes-hopping days of immense wealth. It was also the philosophy of his former business partner, Makob Jarley, who passed away seven years ago.

Makob and Bodrum worked together as artifice apprentices in their youth, honing their skills as cutthroat businessmen along the bleeding edge of technology. The eldest of the pair, Makob took Bodrum under his wing, teaching him the methods he employed as a successful confidence trickster. These lessons stuck with the future baron and would become the cornerstone of their business dealings.

The rising fortunes of Bodrum and Jarley Inc. seemed to have no limit, and for many years the pair enjoyed a fruitful partnership as they built their small company together. Unfortunately for Makob, his greed would be his downfall; having pushed away those he once called friend and family, there was no one to help him when he choked on an errant chicken bone while eating a midwinter feast fit for a king.

Baron Bodrum was never one to mourn for long and quickly changed the company name, buying Makob's shares and his estate from his ambivalent family. Free from the partnership, the baron catapulted his fortune to astronomical levels. Baron Bodrum Businesses Inc. became a household name as its catchy slogans echoed across the multiverse, while few remembered and even fewer celebrated the achievements of Makob Jarley. However, Makob's ghost was not so easily forgotten.

While Bodrum calls Bodrum Manor home, his discovery of interplanar travel means he is rarely, if ever, present. Baron Bodrum always schedules an annual midwinter trip home, noting it in his calendar each year. In preparation, the angry ghost of Makob Jarley plans an intricate haunting of the manor each year on the night of the midwinter festival. However, for the past half-dozen years, Bodrum has found other, more interesting diversions; Marley's ghost grows more livid with each missed 'appointment' and believes Bodrum is intentionally 'ghosting' him.

Hearing tales of these hauntings in his absence, the baron went so far as to hire an experienced occultist in an attempt to exorcise the ghost. Bucket reported that the clergyman took the downpayment and absconded, but, in reality, the clergyman's heart gave out when confronted by vengeful ghosts and the body lies undiscovered in the estate's disused chapel. This year, as in previous years, Makob waits patiently to enact his revenge on the baron. Each of the three spectres he has now hired has a hunger for living essence and creates nightmarish visions specifically designed to torture the baron—if he ever decides to show up!



BODRUM CREST

SUMMARY

Here's a quick summary of the vital information about this hunt:

- **Which Monster?** Makob Jarley, a ghost, has brought three spectres to Bodrum Manor to feast on the baron's soul.
- **Monster's Motivation.** Only in midwinter can the spectres feast on souls to continue their ghostly existence, and they are eager for the opportunity Makob Jarley has presented.
- **Monster's Previous Actions.** They have devoured untold souls over aeons with only one failed attempt when a banker named Ebenezer gave them the slip; his soul was so small that they couldn't find it before he managed to escape, having undergone a dramatic alignment shift. The banker's story—depicted in the works of Darles Chickens, famous gobboc author—spread, and mistakenly portrayed the spectres as helpful.
- **Where's the Monster?** Each spectre resides on the Ethereal Plane until their time comes to bring alive a twisted memory of Baron Bodrum's past, present, or future. The visions turn into nightmares while the spectres eat their victim.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Below are a few examples of ways to get your characters hooked onto this hunt and ready to face the spectres of midwinter past, present, and future.

- **Curiosity: Grave or Gravy.** Bodrum Manor has loomed over Bodrum Town for years, a constant reminder of its absentee owner's wealth and power. The townsfolk sometimes smile when the occasional candlelight flickers in a window, evidence of local children daring each other to sneak into the house at night. As midwinter approaches, some swear they have seen a different kind of glowing light: a spectral figure that stares through the windows at midnight. Most dismiss the claims as nonsense but still avoid looking at the manor directly. Is there a ghost in Bodrum Manor, or is it just a burglar? Is anyone brave enough to investigate?
- **Morality: Humbug.** Midwinter festivities are well underway, leading to a feast this evening. Cleansing rituals have begun, a thick blanket of snow has gripped the town of Bodrum, and children roam between households to trade songs for roasted, candied nuts. All was well until three child carolers, including Big Jim, a local child with a penchant for mischief and a heart of gold, went missing. The locals followed tracks to Bodrum Manor, an abandoned mansion rumoured to be haunted. The

children's tracks vanished, and the robot butler wouldn't let the parents search the home, as it was "impossible for children to get past him." The desperate parents are pleading with anyone willing to help rescue the children and save midwinter for the whole town!

- **Compensation: Fifteen Bob.** A representative of the esteemed Baron Bodrum has placed a flyer on the notice board of the Loot Tavern. The baron requests the assistance of hunters able to end the haunting of his manor home on midwinter night. The posting instructs the reader to see "Bucket" for further information and includes directions to the manor with an invoicing reference number for tax purposes.

HUNT REWARDS PER PLAYER CHARACTER

Hunt Level	Gold Reward	XP Reward*
5th	750 gp	1,900
9th	2,300 gp	4,200
14th	5,750 gp	8,000

*Includes all encounters, monsters, and puzzles, averaged for 4 characters

THE ROBOT BUTLER

Bucket is an advanced automaton from Baron Bodrum Businesses Inc.'s Buddy Bot line, who most recently worked as a secretary for the mayor of Cordette, a nearby town. After an unfortunate incident (see *Dream Weaver* hunt), he was decommissioned and rebuilt for his current role as the butler of Bodrum Manor. As Baron Bodrum rarely visits the manor, he relies on Bucket to maintain and protect the estate. Bucket's behavioural enchantments result in a dry sense of humour, especially when responding to inane questions or observing what he deems 'crude, biological behaviour'. A previous manor guest once described his acerbic commentary as 'more passive-aggressive than my mother-in-law'.

Appearance & Behaviour. Bucket is a bipedal automaton made of metal and wood that wears a tuxedo. He meticulously keeps himself well-oiled to maintain the utmost quiet in the home. The snooty butler speaks overly politely and is strict about maintaining high-class etiquette.

DREAM WEAVER

Bucket is also the main NPC in the *Dream Weaver* hunt. If your party has already completed that hunt, you can decide whether Bucket remembers the characters or if the reconstruction has wiped Bucket's memory of them completely. If the characters haven't completed that hunt, Bucket could be reassigned following this hunt, becoming the mayor of Cordette's secretary.

BUCKET THE BUTLER

Automaton, butler, he/him

Personality. Calm and collected. Subservient with a side of snark.

Appearance. Bipedal construct made of metal and wood. Eyes glow from an arcane power source, wears a tuxedo.

Desire. To provide excellent service to the baron and ensure the future of his construct cousins

Fear. Becoming obsolete.

"Yes, of course, I do not mind doing that simple task for you at all. I understand living can be difficult for organics. I'm here to..." sighs "...help."



BUCKET



KNOW THY ENEMY

The characters can explore the manor and find information about the hauntings and Baron Bodrum's past. Three clues in particular can prove helpful in the upcoming battles:

- The spectres' ability to remain incorporeal is interrupted when they take thunder or psychic damage.
- The spectres are Undead creatures that use fear-inducing attacks and abilities.
- The spectres are **resistant** or **immune** to effects that turn Undead.

CLUE 1: GHOST TONE

The years the midwinter spectres have spent roaming the estate has allowed them to tap into the ambient magic of the location (see "Lair Actions" section, page 14) and has also weakened them to specific effects that can interrupt their incorporeal state. Typically,

the spectres move to the Border Ethereal to escape harm. However, when a spectre takes thunder or psychic damage, it is pulled back to the Material Plane and prevented from entering the Ethereal Plane for a brief moment.

FLASH AND BANG

A book entitled *A Beginner's Guide to Ghost Hunting* was taken from the manor's drawing room by a mischievous boy who recently snuck into the mansion on a dare. He and his friends accidentally locked themselves in the basement and await rescue. If the characters find the children, the boy gives the book to the party as a reward, and they learn that loud noises can hurt ethereal beings.

Using the Clue. The characters can find a magic item that deals both thunder and psychic damage in a hidden tunnel (see 11a. Escape Tunnel Entrance, page 12): *krampus' fork* (page 23). Creative characters may try to use the environment, such as by using the broken organ in the drawing room, to their advantage (page 17).



HANDOUT 1. GHOST HUNTING

JESSE JACKDAW BURNS

CLUE 2: FEAST FOR THE DEAD

Fear is a delicacy to the spectres and their midwinter spirits. They have the innate ability to frighten their victims using Primal Scream (see Midwinter Spectres & Spirit Minion sidebar, page 15). The spectres use this tactic to scatter targets and pick them off one by one.

FEED THE FEAR

The characters can bolster their resistance to being frightened by preparing a bowl of *dragon bone broth* (page 10) or a *cup of midwinter tea* (page 10). The ingredients and recipes for the broth and tea can be discovered while exploring the manor grounds.

Using the Clue. Eating the broth or drinking the tea gives a creature a better chance at resisting the spectres' fear abilities. Alternatively, the party could prepare other defences (such as the *calm emotions* or *dispel evil and good* spells) to fend off the upcoming fear effects.



HANDOUT 2. BONE BROTH RECIPE

JESSE JACKDAW BURNS



HANDOUT 3. USELESS HOLY SYMBOLS

CLUE 3: DIVINE RESISTANCE

The midwinter spectres and their midwinter spirits have a natural resistance against effects that turn Undead. The manor staff tried using holy symbols to cleanse the home without luck; and even an experienced exorcist (see 15. Chapel, page 13) failed miserably. The higher-level spectres and spirits (as determined by the hunt's level) are outright immune to features that turn Undead, making their swarming attacks more difficult to counter.

BODRUM MANOR

Bodrum Manor sits on a small hilltop overlooking Bodrum Town, less than a mile's walk from the city centre. The baron took over the home as a summer estate after his business partner's passing. He used to host corporate events and lavish parties until his explorations into ancient tombs, conflicts in sunken lost cities, and other adventures pulled him away for long periods of time. The baron hasn't visited in years and left the regular maintenance of the forlorn estate to Bucket and several Buddy Bots after dismissing the living servants to save on costs. All the buddy bots except Bucket were decommissioned after a disastrous flaw was found: their behavioural enchantment was modified and they started giving away the baron's possessions! While the robot butler has been enthusiastic and dedicated, he's barely been able to keep the estate from collapsing altogether; last year it almost burnt down!

REGIONAL EFFECTS

The presence of the midwinter spectres has created one or more of the following effects around the manor:

- **Midwinter Wonderland.** The area within 1 mile of the manor is irregularly hit with heavy snowstorms, no matter the season.
- **Time Rifts.** Items of little value (less than 1 sp) have a slight chance of disappearing inside the area within 1 mile of the manor. These items eventually return to the exact place they vanished from in either brand-new or heavily worn-out condition.
- **Spirited Revelry.** While within 1 mile of the manor, midwinter carols are occasionally heard carried on the wind from a distance. A creature that hears the songs must succeed on a **VDC Charisma saving throw** or be **charmed** by the merry sound for **1 hour**. A charmed creature feels the intense desire to sing carols non-stop, and its singing makes it impossible for it to move stealthily or cast spells with verbal components. If the creature's saving throw is successful, or if the effect on it ends, it is **immune** to the carols for the next **24 hours**.

If the midwinter spectres are destroyed, these effects fade over the next **24 hours**.

GENERAL FEATURES

These general features are prominent throughout Bodrum Manor unless otherwise noted in an area's description.

Ceilings, Floors, and Walls. The ceilings throughout the manor are 12 feet high. Gold-leaf decorative moulding lines the tops of the redwood panelled walls, and thick burgundy carpets cover the floors of most chambers.

Doors. Most of the manor's doors are built of dark stained oak bound in iron and they open easily on well-oiled hinges. Locked doors can be opened with a successful **DC 15 Dexterity (thieves' tools)** check or forced open with a successful **DC 15 Strength (Athletics)** check. Each door has AC 15, 18 hit points, and **immunity** to poison and psychic damage. Bucket strongly discourages breaking through any doors.

Lights. The manor is brightly lit by oil lanterns with glass sconces on the walls.

Climate. The manor grounds are covered in a blanket of fresh snow, and the air is crisp and cold. Warmth is distributed throughout the manor by furnaces in the basement. As the metal venting in the walls heats and contracts, the building comes alive with creaks and groans.

Decorations. Bucket has spent the last few days festooning the estate with handmade midwinter decorations he created from wood, twine, and bits of glass. His craftsmanship is on par with that of a young child, and the shoddy quality of the bits and pieces contrasts sharply with the faded grandeur of the property.



1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

CARTOGRAPHER:
CZE & PEKU

MAP 1. BODRUM MANOR

OPTIONAL EVENT: HAUNTINGS

As the characters explore the estate, you may include random hauntings from Makob Jarley's ghost to enhance the atmosphere. Whenever the party finishes exploring a room, you can roll a **d8** and consult the table below. Bucket is oblivious to these occurrences and refuses to acknowledge any supernatural events, citing a 'logical explanation' as the cause.

d8 Haunting

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | The sound of children running and giggling comes from a neighbouring room. |
| 2 | All flames, magical and mundane, waver as if blown by a heavy wind. Nonmagical flames in the room then suddenly extinguish. |
| 3 | A random character catches sight of their reflection in a wall mirror, and it waves at them with a wicked smile before returning to normal. |
| 4 | The smell of burning herbs wafts through the area, quickly followed by the stench of soured milk. The scent lingers and slowly fades away over the next 10 minutes. |
| 5 | A random character hears whispering from a nearby wall, but they can't quite make out the words, and only they can hear the sound. If they listen at the wall, the whispering stops and says "run" before falling silent. |
| 6 | Picture frames and other objects are rattled by a heavy thump from below the floor. |
| 7 | The characters start tasting smoke and ash, coating their tongues to the point of gagging. The taste vanishes, leaving their mouths suddenly dry and scratchy. |
| 8 | The temperature in the room suddenly drops below freezing for 1 minute before returning to normal. |

Bucket. As the main point of contact for this hunt, Bucket follows the party and shares commentary on the manor's history throughout the party's exploration (see page xx). Each room has an optional scripted comment from Bucket. These can be used to help the characters notice hints about the fight ahead, or just as introductory speeches giving flavour to each room.

The following information corresponds to the keyed locations on Map 1. Bodrum Manor (page 7).

1. MANOR ENTRANCE

When the characters arrive at the manor, they find Bucket decorating the front doors with midwinter ornaments. Read aloud the following:

Snowflakes drift lazily by the massive manor that looms over the town below. It is apparent from a closer look that the once-grand architecture is deteriorating; the moss-covered walls and flaking paint tell a tale of poor maintenance. On the second floor, stained canvas tarps cover charred wooden beams, evident signs of a past fire's damage long in need of repair.

A bipedal automaton constructed of metal and wood is hanging a wreath made of pine boughs on the manor's frontage. The construct wears a bow tie and a neatly pressed, if slightly worn, tuxedo. It turns at your approach, eyes shining with arcane light. "Greetings and welcome to Bodrum Manor. I'm afraid the master of the house is not presently at home to receive guests. If you do not have official business here, please vacate the premises at once."

If the characters inquire about the missing children, Bucket is unaware they are trapped in the manor basement (see page 10). Because this is the second inquiry (Bucket previously turned away the kids' parents), he invites the party to have a look for themselves (with his supervision). The butler mentions the manor is under the attention of an irritating ghost and inquires about the party's experience with such beings. If the characters are responding to Baron Bodrum's flyer or mention the rumours of ghosts, Bucket welcomes them into the manor. He encourages them to solve the problem quickly and leave quietly "before the baron arrives."

Bucket shares the following four pieces of useful information:

- The ghost manifests each midwinter night (tonight). In previous years, before Baron Bodrum replaced them with Buddy Bots, it terrorized the staff.
- All the Buddy Bots bar Bucket were decommissioned after a flaw in their behavioural enchantment caused them to give away the baron's possessions.
- Baron Bodrum hasn't visited in years. He schedules an annual midwinter trip to the manor in his

calendar but never shows up. Bucket is the only staff remaining to care for the estate.

- An exorcist named Gerald attempted to cleanse the manor of the ghost last midwinter and vanished without completing the task (see "Gerald the Exorcist", page 13).
- Bucket has seen the effects of the ghost but not the spirit itself. He asserts that he is extraordinarily observant and speculates that this failed perception is due to his lack of a soul.

2. FOYER

This circular chamber holds several busts all claiming to be Baron Bodrum. Every bust is different, from dissimilar facial features to obviously different races and genders. According to Bucket, many famous sculptors are competing for the lucrative opportunity to design the baron's next bust.

Bucket's Comment: "As you can see from the baron's majestic profiles, his visage is so impressive that it has proven difficult to accurately capture by even the most esteemed of sculptors."

3. DINING ROOM

Intricately carved chairs surround an ornate dining table in the centre of this dusty dining hall; their red tufted cushions match the windows' thick velvet drapes. Stone pedestals holding large bones are decoratively tucked into the corners. A successful

DC 11 Wisdom (Nature) check recognizes they are dragon bones, while a successful **DC 11 Intelligence or spellcasting ability (Arcana)** check recognises the bones as magically-preserved monster components. These bones are the main ingredient in the recipe for *dragon bone broth* (see 6. Kitchen, page 10). The benefits of this meal are useful against the spectres' fear-inducing abilities (see "Clue 2: Feast for the Dead" section).

Bucket's Comment: "Have you ever been in the presence of a dragon before? I hear it is a frightening experience; I'm sure you would be terrified. Creations like myself are built to never experience this unfortunate, organic emotion."

4. DRAWING ROOM

Bookshelves filled with volumes covering various topics line the walls of this large chamber. An enormous pipe organ made of mahogany and brass dominates the northern wall. The organ is out of tune, and a character who investigates the instrument finds a folded piece of parchment tucked between two pipes. The document is a repair request to fix the "mind-splitting noise" the organ makes when certain notes are played (see "Spectre of Midwinter Past" section, page xx).

Bucket's Comment: "Magnificent parties filled this room not so long ago! The baron would play such majestic music as to make you weep with joy. 'Pipe up or Pipe down, it's time for a Bodrum Song,' as the baron says. Now the blasted thing just screeches loud enough to wake the dead."



DRAWING ROOM ORGAN

5. MAIN HALLWAY

Paintings of landscapes and portraits of wealthy aristocrats adorn the walls of this carpeted hallway. A flight of stairs at the southern end leads up to the fire-damaged second floor. Bucket explains that a blaze caused by an errant candle almost burned down the entire manor last midwinter and he believes the exorcist Gerald (see area 15) was to blame. The second level mainly consisted of bedrooms that have since been cleared of furniture, leaving nothing behind except charred walls and canvas tarps that leak melted snow onto the floorboards.

Bucket's Comment: *"It's so hard to find good help these days. Why, just last midwinter, a rather pompous fellow came to rid us of our little ghost problem. He nearly burned the whole manor down! I hope you prove more capable than this."*

6. KITCHEN

This long-disused kitchen holds cupboards filled with dried herbs, spices, and preservatives sealed in glass jars. Pinned to a cabinet is a piece of parchment with the recipe for *dragon bone broth* (see the "Cooking" chapter in *Heliana's Guide to Monster Hunting* for specifics on cooking magical meals) with the word 'Courage' scrawled above in Common.

- 1 pickled hag's ear
- 3 dried treant leaves
- 2 quarts of fresh water
- A pinch of salt
- 1 *dragon bone*

Searching the cupboards yields salt and fresh water from a water pump. A *dragon bone* can be found in the Dining Room (page 9) and the hag's ear, fire beetle, and treant leaves are in the pantry. Eating the *dragon bone broth* grants **advantage** on saving throws against the frightened condition for **8 hours**; a useful boon against the midwinter spectres' fear-inducing abilities (see "Clue 2: Feast for the Dead" section).

Bucket's Comment: *"Would you like me to prepare a meal? Nothing like a hearty dinner to lift your spirits! It might take your mind off whatever is making you scrunch your face in such an unattractive way. I did not think it could look worse, but you have proven me most wrong."*

6A. BASEMENT

Bucket has the key to the locked door of the basement. While he explains it's empty except for the manor's furnaces, a character that succeeds on a **DC 15 Intelligence or Wisdom (Investigation or Perception)**

check hears the muffled sound of children's voices coming from the other side. Three village children named Marcy, Percy, and Big Jim snuck into the estate last night on a dare after spending the day singing midwinter carols (see "Humbug" hunt hook, page 2). They avoided Bucket while "ghost hunting" in the manor and got locked inside the basement after pursuing the furnace's noises, which they mistook for ghostly sounds.

The thankful children rush home after being set free and promise to tell their parents of their rescue. Big Jim—a mischievous young male halfling with rosy cheeks and a slight limp—gives the characters a book entitled *A Beginner's Guide to Ghost Hunting*, which he took from the drawing room during their "exploring." A blue ribbon marks a chapter describing how ghosts and other ethereal beings can be driven away by loud noises and psychic attacks (see "Clue 1: Ghost Tone" section). The basement is otherwise bare, just as Bucket described.

Bucket's Comment: *"I thought the rats sounded bigger and more eloquent than usual this year!"*



PANTRY SUPPLIES

CHAOUKI "CIAO" TROUHI

7. PANTRY

The pantry door is locked (see "General Features" section). Most of the food and supplies stored in the various crates and barrels here are expired or about to spoil. The exceptions are some dried herbs and spices on a high shelf, which include the pickled hag's ear, powdered fire beetle, and dried treant leaves for the *dragon bone broth* (see 6. Kitchen).

Bucket's Comment: *"Tsk. Life is just so wasteful. Food spoils, people age, and souls return as ghosts to bother the rest of us! I am so happy to not have a soul; they are such an impedance to efficient, logical existence."*

8. WOODSHED

Piles of seasoned firewood are stacked into corners, and disassembled automaton parts litter the floor of this woodshed. Searching the room with a successful **DC 15 Intelligence or Wisdom (Investigation or Perception)** check uncovers a crumpled piece of parchment tossed into a corner behind the stacks of firewood piled along the walls of this room. The page lists crossed-off names with strings of letters and numbers—the former staff and the serial numbers of the Bodrum Buddy Bots that replaced them. Bucket explains the baron decommissioned the Buddy Bots after discovering a post-production design flaw.

Bucket's Comment: *"My ability to take care of the estate on my own is obvious, so these inferior constructs were put to a better use: heating the manor."*

9. COURTYARD

A few days ago, Bucket decorated the oak tree in the courtyard with dozens of makeshift ornaments taken from a small crate still sitting on the snowy ground. Wooden boxes stacked against the walls contain construction tools and building materials in various states of rust and decay.

Bucket's Comment: *"The other servants just loved decorating the tree for midwinter. See this one here? Little Susie and her mum made that for the baron. That was just before he let the staff go, now that I recall. How ironic."*

9A. WASH ROOM

A thick layer of dust covers everything in this stone scullery room, from the scattered grimy dishes to the impressive cobwebs in each corner. A character searching the room who succeeds on a **DC 15 Intelligence or Wisdom (Investigation or Perception)** check finds a golden wedding band (worth 5 gp) on the dusty sink, the initials B.B. + B.N. engraved along its interior. This ring was intended for Baron Bodrum from his former

betrotted, Bille Newcastle, whom the baron abandoned in his pursuit of wealth and adventure (see "Spectre of Midwinter Past," page 16). Bucket is unaware of the baron's past and is unsure to whom the initials refer.

Bucket's Comment: *"Oh, it is such a mess in here! I will get right on cleaning this up! 'Be more than just clean, be a Bodrum Sparkling Dream'. But don't actually use Bodrum Dream Cleaner, it can remove everything—even your thoughts."*

9B. BATHING ROOM

Mould that smells like foetid swamp water grows thick in the upper corners of this room. A character searching the room who succeeds on a **DC 15 Intelligence or Wisdom (Investigation or Perception)** check notices the bottom of the washtub makes a distinct hollow noise when struck. The tub is attached to a trapdoor locked from below, and it can be forced open with a successful **DC 13 Strength (Athletics)** check. Below the tub is a short ladder leading down into the baron's escape tunnel (see 11a).

Bucket's Comment: *"Smell? You do realise I am incapable of smelling anything, do you not? What a completely unnecessary sense."*

10. SERVANTS' QUARTERS

The former staff's quarters contains five threadbare-but-usable blankets and mattresses and a scattering of cheap pine furniture. Searching the room with a successful **DC 15 Intelligence or Wisdom (Investigation or Perception)** check uncovers a loose floorboard with a small diary hidden underneath.

The Diary. A note on the interior of the cover says "Susie's! Hands off!" The pages are filled with happy memories reflecting on how much she enjoys living at the manor. The later passages are stained with tears as she writes bitterly about the staff being dismissed and replaced by Buddy Bots. The final entry details how Susie plans to take revenge by sneaking into the baron's workshop and changing the Buddy Bot schematics. Bucket confirms that the original Buddy Bots had a design flaw which wasn't noticed until after production; the recall was costly, and they mothballed that version of the Buddy Bot line. Undaunted, a new, highly successful line followed, ending any hopes that the living servants would return to work.

11. MASTER BEDROOM

This bedroom is spotless, and its sparkling cleanliness stands out compared to the rest of the dilapidated manor—Bucket always keeps this room ready for the baron's visits. Searching the room with a successful **DC 15 Intelligence or Wisdom (Investigation or Perception)** check reveals a false bottom in the nightstand drawer containing a bundle of worn love letters tied with twine. The writer addressed each letter to "My darling B.B." and signed them with the initials B.N. Older letters are filled with loving prose that eventually turns into unopened queries begging for a response. The letters were written to Baron Bodrum from his former betrothed, Bille Newcastle, whom he scorned while pursuing his fortunes (see "Spectre of Midwinter Past," page 16). Bucket is unaware of the baron's past and doesn't know who authored the letters.

Bucket's Comment: "After the fire destroyed most of the master bedroom, I took the liberty of moving what few items survived into this chamber. I believe the baron will be pleased to have such a lovely room waiting for his next visit. Please touch nothing; it will take ages to clean up after you."

11A. ESCAPE TUNNEL ENTRANCE

At the back of a wardrobe filled with finely tailored clothing is a secret door that can be located with a successful **DC 15 Intelligence or Wisdom (Investigation or Perception)** check to notice the hollow noise behind the back. The door opens by pressing on one side, revealing a set of stairs leading into a 30-foot-long passage wide enough for Medium creatures. The dusty emergency escape tunnel is constructed of mortared bricks and leads to a ladder and trap door under the tub in the Wash Room (see area 9b). The trapdoor is held shut by a small iron pin.

Treasure. *Krampus' fork* (see Appendix A; uncommon, rare, and very rare at 5th, 9th, and 14th level, respectively) sits on a small ledge halfway down the tunnel. This magic item can prove useful against the midwinter spectres' ability to maintain incorporeal form (see "Clue 1: Ghost Tone" section).

12. GALLEY

A dusty silver teapot and a set of matching porcelain teacups emblazoned with the Bodrum family crest sit on the counter of this small kitchenette. Bucket mentions the former staff used a special blend of lavender and chamomile to help them sleep and calm their nerves during the yearly midwinter haunting. Searching the cupboard uncovers a collection of boxes filled with dried coffee beans and tea leaves. One container

is marked as *midwinter tea* and holds enough to prepare a single cup for each party member. A creature who drinks a cup of *midwinter tea* gains a **+1 bonus** to saving throws made against being frightened for the next **8 hours** (see "Clue 2: Feast for the Dead" section).

Bucket's Comment: "The baron says, 'A good cup of tea is the best way to start your day!' Although, the staff drank theirs at night to calm their nerves. You organics never cease to amuse with your idiosyncrasies."

13. LOUNGE

Lavish lounge furniture silently waits for guests to relax and enjoy a drink or conversation. The walls hold surrealist paintings of fantastical landscapes, such as an island floating above a lush forest and a lighthouse overlooking an ocean of lava. Bucket wistfully mentions the extravagant parties and riveting conversations held here in the past. Since Baron Bodrum began devoting his attention to work and "courageous exploits", his former peers no longer visit.

Bucket's Comment: "Please do not touch the paintings! I am sure the complexities of fine art are far beyond your understanding, but that does not mean you get to ruin them with your greasy fingers."

13A. RESTROOM

Searching this room with a successful **DC 15 Intelligence or Wisdom (Investigation or Perception)** check uncovers a small waste bin tucked under old laundry. A dozen different holy symbols of various good-aligned deities sit at the bottom. Bucket dismisses them as trinkets the staff tucked into various corners to keep the ghost at bay. Following the dismissal of the staff, he threw them away as junk because they were useless (see "Clue 3: Divine Resistance" section).

Bucket's Comment: "The baron puts his resources into arcane studies and mechanical innovation over any flawed faith in gods. It is thanks to this empirical strategy that superior beings like myself came to exist."

14. ATRIUM

Overgrown plants and herbs perfume the air in this room with an earthy and aromatic scent.

Bucket's Comment: "Little Susie and her mother Emma spent many hours lovingly tending to the garden here. Quite possibly one of the most inane activities that you organics seem to enjoy."



CHAPEL ALTAR

15. CHAPEL

The chapel—built by the Jarleys generations ago—has sat disused since Baron Bodrum shuttered it after Makob's funeral. On the altar are a few parchments with faded hymnals, 25 gp worth of incense, and a statue dedicated to the deity of merchants. A character who spends at least 10 minutes cleaning the altar and offering a prayer to the deity is blessed by a *bles* spell with a 24-hour duration. This effect can't then be granted by the altar for 30 days.

Gerald the Exorcist. Searching the chapel uncovers the desiccated corpse of Gerald, the exorcist who went missing last midwinter, tucked under a pew. Bucket hasn't entered the chapel since it was shuttered long ago, and assumed the exorcist fled with the security deposit after he was unsuccessful. Examining the black-robed exorcist's body with a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine)** check reveals he died of a fright-induced heart attack (see "Clue 2: Feast for the Dead" section). The truth, known only by the deceased Gerald, Makob, and his killer, is that he died while attempting to confront the spectre of midwinter past.

Bucket's Comment: "Oh, dear, I guess the poor man didn't disappear after all. I must remember to send a fruit basket to his family. I will need to ask for the deposit back as well, of course."

CHAPEL ALTAR

15A. TOMB

This musty tomb holds a stone coffin, and a faint scent lingers in the air that a successful **VDC Intelligence or Wisdom (Investigation or Perception)** check recognizes as burnt sage. Lifting the lid requires a successful **DC 15 Strength (Athletics)** check or the effort of multiple creatures with a combined Strength score of 30 or more. The tomb holds the desiccated remains of Makob Jarley, dressed in once-fine clothing, and a leatherbound book that the deceased exorcist Gerald (see area 15) accidentally dropped while examining the remains last midwinter. The book is a journal detailing Gerald's long history of exorcisms and the spirits he encountered. He appears to have had a highly successful career for years until he came to Bodrum Manor. The final entry mentions that 'attempts to turn the spirit have utterly failed. I fear this ghost more than any before' (see Clue 3: Divine Resistance on page 5).

THE BATTLE AHEAD

At midnight, Makob Jarley's ghost appears and wakes any sleeping characters. The adventurers' presence surprises Makob, who decides that the visitations will continue. The ghost transports the party to different pocket dimensions that resemble locations within the manor. The spectres of midwinter past, present, and future control these dimensions and construct a special scenario that the party must face in place of the absent Baron.

Waves. The battle is divided into three distinct phases called waves, each introducing new challenges and difficulties.

Pocket Dimensions. The locations in which each wave takes place are pocket dimensions that recreate specific areas of the manor or its grounds. Any doors are sealed and have immunity to all damage types. Nothing exists beyond the space each location depicts; planar travel and teleportation don't work; the characters are trapped within the pocket dimension.

REST & PREPARATION

The fight ahead is beyond deadly, and your characters will need a chance to take a long rest before they face off against the midwinter spectres. Manufacture the timings such that your party has time for a long rest before the fight occurs. During this period, the party can use the discovered clues to swap gear, adjust spells, and strategise for the upcoming battle.

THE MIDWINTER VISITATIONS

The scenario depicted by each midwinter spectre is designed to express a message of morality for Baron Bodrum. The ghost magically transports the party to each spectre's dimension in order: past, present, and future. Makob Jarley elaborates the meaning behind each scenario to the characters before leaving them to face the midwinter spectre. The scenes are meant to admonish Baron Bodrum for his greedy ways, and the party becomes the focus of the spectres' assault in his place.

Ghost of Bodrum Manor. Makob Jarley (ghost) appears to the party at the beginning and end of each wave, but otherwise uses his Etherealness trait to stay out of reach of any characters that may wish to harm him. His ability to stay in the Border Ethereal is unaffected by the *krampus' fork* (see page 23), and he retreats completely into the Ethereal Plane if targeted by the chime.

Baron Bodrum Substitute. At the start of each wave, pick a random character to act as the Baron Bodrum substitute. The midwinter spectres speak to this character as they fight, admonishing the substitute for Bodrum's actions.

LAIR ACTIONS

As their creator, each pocket dimension is considered Makob's lair. He uses the following lair actions while his spectres assail the party. The saving throw DC and damage of the lair actions depend on the level of the hunt, as shown in the Variable Lair Action Statistics table.

VARIABLE LAIR ACTION STATISTICS

Hunt Level	VDC	Vdam
5th	13	5 (2d4)
9th	15	10 (3d6)
14th	16	14 (4d6)

Lair Actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the midwinter spectre uses a lair action; the spectres can't use the same effect two rounds in a row.

- **Phantasmal Distraction.** The midwinter spectre manipulates the pocket dimension's sights, sounds, and smells in a way that is heavily distracting and disorienting. Each non-Undead creature in the dimension must succeed on a **VDC Intelligence saving throw** or have **disadvantage** on attack rolls and be unable to take reactions until initiative count 20 of the next round.
- **Midwinter Snows.** A blinding blizzard of snow and fog forms, and the pocket dimension becomes heavily obscured. Each non-Undead creature in the dimension must make a **VDC Constitution saving throw**, taking **Vdam** cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The blizzard disappears when the spectre takes another lair action.
- **Ethereal Veil.** The veil to the Ethereal Plane is opened briefly to the pocket dimension, and the spectre chooses up to two Undead creatures it can see to be pulled into the Border Ethereal. The creatures are visible on the Material Plane while in the Border Ethereal, and vice versa, but they can't affect or be affected by anything on the other plane. The creatures return to the pocket dimension of the Material Plane on initiative count 20 of the next round.

MIDWINTER SPECTRES & SPIRIT MINIONS

There are two types of creatures in each of these waves: the midwinter spectres, cruel phantasms who delight in torturing those trapped in their pocket dimensions, and their lackeys, the midwinter spirits. These Undead fight without any sense of self preservation and don't retreat. Each of the spectres and spirits use the referenced statistics in each wave, with the following modifications:

- Its creature type is Undead.
- **New Trait: Unstable Intangibility.** While the creature is on the Ethereal Plane, it can be targeted by spells and effects that deal thunder or psychic damage. Taking damage of these types while on the Ethereal Plane instantly pulls the creature back into the pocket dimension, and it can't enter the Ethereal Plane again until the end of its next turn.

In addition, the midwinter spectres each have the following additional modifications:

- **New Trait: Turning Defiance.** The spectre and any midwinter spirits within **30 feet** of it have **advantage** on saving throws against effects that turn Undead.
- **New Bonus Action: Etherealness.** The spectre enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane or vice versa. It is visible on the Material Plane while in the Border Ethereal, and vice versa, yet it can't affect or be affected by anything on the other plane, other than spells or effects that deal thunder or psychic damage (see Unstable Intangibility).
- **New Action: Spectral Scream (Recharge 5-6).** The spectre releases an ear-splitting scream of raw ferocity. Each non-Undead creature within **30 feet** of the spirit that can hear the scream must succeed on a **VDC Wisdom saving throw** or take **Vdam** psychic damage and become **frightened** of the spectre for **1 minute**. If the creature ends its turn in a location where it doesn't have line of sight to the spectre, the creature can make a **Wisdom saving throw**. On a successful save, the effect ends for that creature.

MEETING MAKOB JARLEY

Makob Jarley appears at the stroke of midnight. Read aloud the following:

A distant clock announces midnight's arrival. As the last chime fades, your breath begins to fog, a moaning wail fills the air, and a heavy thumping shakes the room. Wisps of fog gradually form into the ghostly figure of a wrinkled man with glowing white orbs for eyes. The ghost seems to be bowed under the weight of the thick, ethereal chains wrapped around his waist. He wears a business suit with a matching top hat and sports an impressive snowy beard across his jowls. The ghost rattles his chains and begins wailing once more. "Booooouuuuuu! I haaave retuuuurned... for my veeeeengeance upooon y... wait a minute. Who in the bloody Hells are you?! Where's Bodrum? That old bastard's calendar said he would be here. He's ghosting me again."

Makob Jarley (see "Ghost of Bodrum Manor" section, page 14) isn't pleased that the baron has (once again) skipped out on his midwinter punishment. Makob impatiently answers a few questions before deciding the party will stand in for the baron this year and initiates the first wave. If the characters show hostility towards Makob, he instantly initiates wave 1.



MAKOB JARLEY

WAVE 1: THE SPECTRE OF MIDWINTER PAST

The party is transported to a recreation of the Chapel (keyed location 15 on Map 1. Bodrum Manor, page 13) to confront the spectre of midwinter past. In the chapel is the scene of a wedding, one that Bodrum skipped many years ago—he was occupied signing a long-haggled, million-gold-piece deal with the deep dwarves and he couldn't make it. All the accoutrements associated with a high-society affair are displayed throughout the brightly lit chapel. The spectre of midwinter past plays the role of the baron's spurned fiancée, Bille Newcastle, who chastises the baron for breaking his heart for the sake of gaining wealth.

Once the first wave begins, read aloud the following:

A flash of light transports you into a cheerful chapel. The air is filled with the sickening scent of foul-smelling wedding cake; a neverending cloud of glitter that sticks to everything; and a grating, off-key rendition of the Wedding March. The organ disappears in a flash of mist at a glare from the well-dressed young man standing at the altar, who quickly resumes smiling.

The ghostly businessman suddenly appears and pats this groom on the back with a wicked grin. "This is Bille Newcastle, the love of Bodrum's life. Or so Bille thought, at least. The only thing Bodrum truly loved was money and success. He spurned Bille at the altar, leaving the poor lad devastated. Now Bille is going to teach Bodrum a lesson. Unfortunate that you won't survive to pass it on." With a twinkle in his eye, the ghost vanishes. Bille flashes with demonic fire as horns sprout from his forehead, and his rapidly expanding body tears the tuxedo to shreds.

ENEMIES

The spectre of midwinter past is accompanied by midwinter spirits (see *Midwinter Spectres & Spirit Minions*, page 15), and they use the statistics referenced below based on the hunt's level. The stat block used by the spectre is a modified incubus.

Level 5. At 5th level, the wave 1 combatants are:

- 2 midwinter spirits (**bearded devils**, CR 2)
- 1 spectre of midwinter past (**incubus**, CR 4)

Level 9. At 9th level, the wave 1 combatants are:

- 2 midwinter spirits (**bearded devils**, CR 2)
- 1 spectre of midwinter past (**incubus**, CR 8; AC 16, 115 hit points, proficiency in all saving throws, **save DC 17**, *Draining Kiss* deals 44 (8d10) necrotic damage)

Level 14. At 14th level, the wave 1 combatants are:

- 2 midwinter spirits (**chain devils**, CR 8)
- 1 spectre of midwinter past (**incubus**, CR 12; AC 17, 203 hit points, proficiency in all saving throws, **save DC 19**, *Draining Kiss* deals 66 (12d10) necrotic damage)

TACTICS

The spectre uses its Charm action on a character before using *Draining Kiss* on them, prioritising the Baron Bodrum substitute, if possible. Between charms, it uses *Etherealness* to manoeuvre around the room without being targeted. The midwinter spirits rush together towards the character designated as the substitute, attempting to overwhelm them with their numbers and multiple attacks.

END OF WAVE

The end of this wave is triggered when the spectre and minions have been defeated. The party has **1 minute** to catch their breath before the ghost of Makob Jarley appears. After a brief rant at the party for destroying the spectre ("It took me years to convince them to work with me!"), Makob transports the characters to a new pocket dimension and initiates wave 2.

WAVE 2: THE SPECTRE OF MIDWINTER PRESENT

The party is transported to a recreation of the Drawing Room (keyed location 4 on Map 1. Bodrum Manor, page 9) to confront the spectre of midwinter present. The room has been transformed into a sparkling entertainment area filled with music, conversation, and people wearing uniforms emblazoned with the Bodrum crest milling around. These are the staff and employees that Baron Bodrum dismissed and replaced with Bodrum Buddy Bots. The spectre of midwinter present takes the form of little Susie, the child who lived here with her mother, Emma, the former House Stewardess of Bodrum Manor. As Susie, the spectre admonishes the Baron Bodrum substitute for destroying the lives of those who were once loyal to him, casting them aside in the name of "progress" and wealth. The spectre's minions transform into hostile Buddy Bots.

Broken Organ. A character proficient with any musical instrument or who succeeds on a **VDC Intelligence or Charisma (Performance)** check can use an action to play the organ in this room to cause a thunderous noise. Each creature able to hear the noise must make a **VDC Constitution saving throw**, taking **Vdam x 2** thunder damage on a failed save, and half as much damage on a successful save. The organ can only be played in this way once before breaking down completely.

Narrate the following when the second wave starts:

A wind whips through the chapel followed by an explosion of light. As the light fades, the manor's drawing room emerges. A dinner party is underway, the smell of cigars and cooked meats thick in the air, which buzzes with the hum of conversation from several milling people. Though all wear neatly pressed uniforms bearing the logo of Baron Bodrum Businesses Inc., a small girl in torn clothes looks your way; she seems to be the only one who notices you. Streaks of soot cover her face, and her baleful eyes stare accusingly out of a face twisted with hate.

The ghostly businessman appears and places his hands on the little girl's shoulders. "This is Susie. She grew up in these halls back when this was my family's home. Bodrum didn't care about that when he replaced them with his Buddy Bots, though. Susie now begs on street corners for scraps." With a cackle, the ghost disappears. The little girl tilts her head to the side, and her eyes turn solid black with a single blink. Her smile reveals rows of fangs as green ooze dribbles down her chin. The partygoers freeze in place before snapping to attention with a clatter of wood and metal, transforming into wooden automatons.

BUDDY BOT
SPIRIT MINIONS



ENEMIES

The spectre of midwinter present is accompanied by midwinter spirits, which use the statistics referenced below. The midwinter spirits appear like Buddy Bots: wood-and-metal automatons whose eyes burn with a demonic fire.

Level 5. At 5th level, the wave 2 combatants are:

- 5 midwinter spirits (**bugbears**, CR 1)
- 1 spectre of midwinter present (**vampire spawn**, CR 5)

Level 9. At 9th level, the wave 2 combatants are:

- 5 midwinter spirits (**ghasts**, CR 2)
- 1 spectre of midwinter present (**shield guardian**, CR 7)

Level 14. At 14th level, the wave 2 combatants are:

- 5 midwinter spirits (**flesh golems**, CR 5; lack the Aversion to Fire trait)
- 1 spectre of midwinter present (**horned devil**, CR 11)

TACTICS

The enemies swarm the Baron Bodrum substitute, trying first to grapple and restrain them. The spectre positions its midwinter spirits to act as a barrier while it pursues the substitute.

END OF WAVE

The end of this wave is triggered when the spectre and all of the minions have been defeated. The party has **1 minute** to catch their breath before the ghost of Makob Jarley appears to teleport them to a new pocket dimension and initiates wave 3.

WAVE 3: THE SPECTRE OF MIDWINTER FUTURE

During this wave, the party is transported to a recreation of the Courtyard (keyed location 9 on Map 1. Bodrum Manor, page 11) to confront the spectre of midwinter future. There is a blanket of fresh snowfall, and dark clouds roil with lightning in the pitch-black sky, ready to erupt with another frosty deluge. The manor grounds appear completely abandoned, and the rusted remains of Bucket lay across a tombstone under the old oak tree. The spectre of midwinter future takes the form of a frightening reaper who has already taken Baron Bodrum's spirit to the next realm. The spectre shows that the baron's fate is to die alone and unloved, with only the cold company of his mechanical butler in the end. The spectre empowers the robot husk to fight against the party as a midwinter spirit.

Once the third wave begins, read aloud the following:

A dark miasma forms in midair, and its tendrils burst to surround you in impenetrably dark nothingness. You feel pinpricks of cold on your cheek as the darkness recedes to reveal a snow-covered courtyard. Snowflakes drift down as dark clouds flash above, promising more to come. The ancient oak tree looms leafless and groaning against the wind. Ornaments flutter in its branches, just above the crumpled remains of an automaton leaning against a tombstone etched with the words "Baron Bodrum".

With a smirk, the ghostly gentleman steps out of the tree trunk and stands behind the tombstone. "And at last we come to Bodrum's finale. All of his wealth and effort afforded him nothing in the end. No friends, no loved ones, nothing but a machine programmed to serve him until his death. Since Bodrum doesn't get to experience this learning opportunity, our friend has to make sure you all learn it instead." The ghost looks behind him with a smile and nods before dissipating into a swirling mist. A hunched figure steps from behind the tree, wearing a torn red robe and gripping a rusty scythe in a fur-covered claw. Two obsidian marbles glare from beneath ram horns curling from its forehead. The creature's furred snout twists into a grin filled with jagged fangs as its scythe sparks with arcane power. The magic arcs to the rusted automaton, causing it to rise with a cacophany of creaks.

ENEMIES

The statistics of the spectre of midwinter future are based on the hunt's level, and the relevant stat block is in Appendix C. The midwinter spirit (see Midwinter Spectres & Spirit Minion sidebar) takes the form of a demonic version of Bucket and uses the statistics referenced below.

Level 5. At 5th level, the wave 3 combatants are:

- 1 midwinter spirit (**wereboar**, CR 4; always in Hybrid form)
- 1 **Krampus of Midwinter Future** (CR 7; summons **ghasts**)

Level 9. At 9th level, the wave 3 combatants are:

- 1 midwinter spirit (**gladiator**, CR 5)
- 1 **Krampus of Final Destinations** (CR 11; summons **wights**)

Level 14. At 14th level, the wave 3 combatants are:

- 1 midwinter spirit (**stone golem**, CR 10)
- 1 **Krampus of End Times** (CR 19; summons **ghosts**)

TACTICS

The spectre of midwinter future uses its Summon Souls to summon normal Undead which act as cannon fodder and distract the party. The spectre focuses on the Baron Bodrum substitute; it uses its Spectral Scream to frighten other creatures and uses its Death Stare to frighten the substitute and gain advantage on its Scythe attacks. The spectre flies and uses Teleport to manoeuvre out of being pinned down, and it pressures whichever character it sees as the strongest.

END OF WAVE

The end of this wave is triggered when the spectre and the spirit have been defeated. As the last enemies fall, the ghost of Makob Jarley returns to complain about losing his allies. Read aloud the following:

The ghostly businessman stands above the remains of the spectre, his face twisted as he shakes his fists. "What have you done!? This is not the way it's supposed to happen! You've ruined everything!" He sighs before visibly deflating as if a plug was pulled on all his impotent rage. With a moan and one last reproachful glare, he stamps his foot. "Fine. That's it. I give up. I'm done with this place. You tell that no good, rotten Bodrum that he got lucky." The ghost stomps away, cursing Bodrum's name even as he fades into mist.

You return to the location from which you first teleported, the corpses of several creatures appearing around you: the fiendish groom from the chapel, the demon-girl from the drawing room, and the horned reaper from the courtyard.

AFTERMATH

As Bodrum Town wakes, the sounds of song and merriment drift up to the newly ghost-free manor. Several additional developments can occur after this hunt:

- Bucket was powered down the entire evening, and neither heard nor saw anything out of the ordinary last night.
- The party receives any rewards as promised (see "Treasure" section below).
- If the party used the manor's ingredients to make a magical meal (like the *dragon bone broth*), Bucket graciously waves the fees incurred.
- As a potential bonus, Bucket offers each character the chance to sign an official receipt along with a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA). The NDA includes a clause that the characters never speak ill of Baron Bodrum Businesses Inc. or use the company name to endorse themselves in future endeavours. In exchange, the party receives a discontinued model of a Buddy Bot incapable of speech (uses **animated armor** statistics). It acts as the party's ally in battle, rolling its own initiative and responding to the last command it received from a designated user.
- If the characters find and rescue the children from the basement, they return with their parents to sing carols outside Bodrum Manor and thank the party for their help. Big Jim's family invites the characters to a midwinter dinner at their home with the rest of their ten children, three aunts, four cousins, two uncles, and five nieces.
- The amount of ethereal energy devoted to Bodrum Manor by the spectres has thinned the veil between the planes at the estate. Baron Bodrum learns of this from Bucket and converts the former chapel into a laboratory, attempting to create a more permanent doorway into the Ethereal Plane that he can control.
- If the characters find Susie's diary in the Servants' Quarters, revealing the intentional flaw in the Buddy Bot design, Baron Bodrum offers to pay an additional half of the promised reward for the information. With the flaw now known, he begins production of a new line of Better Buddy Bots.

TREASURE

The party can find *krampus' fork* (page 23) in room 11a. Escape Tunnel Entrance. In addition, items can be crafted from the krampus in wave 3.

HARVESTING

The following unique components can be harvested from the remains of the krampus in wave 3, in addition to the components normal for an Undead.

MIDWINTER SPECTRE HARVEST TABLE

Component DC	Components
5	<i>Krampus' eye</i>
10	<i>Krampus' marrow</i>
15	<i>Krampus' skin</i>
20	<i>Krampus' undying heart</i>
25	<i>Krampus' soul</i>

CRAFTING

The following unique items can be crafted from the components harvested from the midwinter spectres.

KRAMPUS CRAFTABLE ITEMS

Item	Item Type	Rarity	Attunement	Components	Essence	Value*
<i>Armour of the Giftmas Killer</i>	Armour (any)	Uncommon		<i>Krampus' eye</i> , <i>Krampus' skin</i>	<i>Frail</i>	650 gp
		Rare	Required		<i>Robust</i>	2,100 gp
		Very rare			<i>Potent</i>	11,500 gp
<i>Baumbles</i>	Wondrous item	Uncommon		<i>Krampus' marrow</i>	<i>Frail</i>	310 gp
		Rare	—		<i>Robust</i>	830 gp
		Very rare			<i>Potent</i>	6,650 gp
<i>Gift of Many Things</i>	Wondrous item	Uncommon		<i>Krampus' soul</i>	<i>Mythic</i>	33,230 gp
		Rare	—		<i>Frail</i>	310 gp
		Very rare			<i>Robust</i>	1,660 gp
<i>Winter Wondergarland</i>	Weapon (whip)	Uncommon		<i>Krampus' undying heart</i>	<i>Potent</i>	9,030 gp
		Rare	Required		<i>Frail</i>	1,180 gp
		Very rare			<i>Robust</i>	2,980 gp
					<i>Potent</i>	12,8500 gp

*This is the 'off-the-shelf' purchase cost and can vary significantly from the crafting cost.

APPENDIX A - MAGIC ITEMS

ARMOUR OF THE GIFTMAS KILLER

Armour (any), rare (requires attunement)

Component: Humanoid skin

The residents of Frostford awoke one Giftmas morning to a seasonal surprise beyond compare. / A bundle of new presents! For every child and grown-up! And no one had a clue who'd left them there. / But joy soon turned to horror, upon close examination: they were made of human skin and teeth and hair! / And news of nearby towns told of whole settlements slaughtered... butchered in their beds without a care.

The armour has **4 charges** and regains **1d4** expended charges daily at dawn.

Down the Chimney. While wearing this armour, you can move through and stop in a space large enough for a creature one size smaller than you without squeezing. Additionally, as a bonus action while wearing this armour, you can expend **1 charge** to make your body even more unnaturally malleable; until the end of your turn, you can move through spaces as narrow as **1 foot** without squeezing, and you have **advantage** on ability checks made to escape being grappled.

He Sees You When You're Sleeping. As an action while wearing this armour, you can cast the *scrying* spell (**save DC 15**). When cast in this way, the spell can only target a creature, and if the creature is awake, it automatically succeeds on its saving throw and you become aware of this. Once this property of the armour has been used, it can't be used again until the next dawn. If a creature succeeds on the saving throw due to being awake, the use of this property isn't expended.

Uncommon variant: Reduce the charges to **3** and the recharge to **1d3**. Remove the He Sees You When You're Sleeping property.

Very rare variant: Increase the **DC** to **16**. While wearing this armour, you have **resistance** to cold damage.



ARMOUR OF THE GIFTMAS KILLER

MATHEU CLOUGHARD

BAUMBLES

Wondrous item, varies
Component: Fey heart

One of many beautiful Giftmas tales tells the story of a child left alone in their home, who slaughtered a pair of burglars using convoluted booby traps made from holiday supplies. Not all children have quite as much guile or inventiveness, however, and to ensure their well-being, more straightforward ornamental explosives were developed. *Baubles* are so easy to use that even a toddler could massacre a band of would-be thieves!

As an action, you can light the fuse on one of these explosive devices and throw it at a point within **30 feet** of you, where it explodes in a **15-foot radius sphere** and is destroyed. The effects of each *bauble* depend on its rarity and appearance, as described below.

Mistletoe Mistbomb; Uncommon. This *bauble* is solid pink, with a grainy texture. Upon detonation, it fills the area with a rosy, mistletoe-infused mist that quickly dissipates. Each creature in the area must succeed on a **DC 13 Wisdom saving throw** or be **charmed** by another random creature in the area for **1 minute**. While charmed in this way, a creature can't willingly move away from the charmer, and can't target any creature but the charmer with spells and abilities that require a willing target. If only one creature is caught in the blast, this *bauble* has no effect. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Smo-ho-hoke Bomb; Rare. This *bauble* is pearly white, with wispy patterns. Upon detonation, it fills the area with thick eggnog fumes that heavily obscure it for **1 minute** or until dispersed by a wind of moderate or greater speed. A creature that starts its turn in the fumes or enters them for the first time on its turn must succeed on a **DC 15 Constitution saving throw** or be **poisoned** for **1 minute**. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Giftwrapper; Very rare. This *bauble* has stripes of red and green. Upon detonation, several strips of magically reinforced wrapping paper come flying out and attempt to constrict all creatures. Each creature in the area must succeed on a **DC 16 Dexterity saving throw** or be **restrained** by the paper, complete with a bow on top, for **1 minute**. A restrained creature or another creature within reach of it can use its action to make a **DC 16 Strength** check, ending the restrained condition on a success. On a failed check, the restrained creature takes **2d6** bludgeoning damage as the wrapping tightens around it.

Golden Gift; Legendary. This *bauble* has a golden outer shell in a square pattern. It detonates violently, and emanates an overpowering magical scent of frankincense and myrrh. Each creature in the area must make a **DC 18 Constitution saving throw**. On a failed save, a creature takes **4d6** force damage and is **stunned** by the smell until the start of your next turn. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't stunned. Creatures that have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell have **disadvantage** on the saving throw.

GIFT OF MANY THINGS

Wondrous item, uncommon
Component: pouch of Celestial dust / krampus' soul

Sure, you could go to the market and spend your hard-earned gold on *potions of healing*, but a *gift of many things* could be anything! Even *potions of healing*! Why not inject some fun and chaos into your holidays with the gift so secret, not even Santa knows what it holds?

Mystery Box. The contents of this magical gift are kept magically indeterminate, even against divination spells, until the box is opened as an action. Roll a **d6** and consult the table below to determine what you find inside. If a creature of evil alignment opens the box, it must roll the die twice, taking the lower result. After the contents of the gift are removed from within, the box disappears in a shower of colourful sparkles.

d6	Contents
1	A lump of coal
2	1d4 <i>potions of healing</i>
3	1d4 random 1st-level <i>spell scrolls</i>
4	1 random <i>potion of resistance</i>
5	1 random 3rd-level <i>spell scroll</i>
6	1 <i>potion of frost giant strength</i>

Rare variant: Replace the table with the one below and roll a **d8** to determine what you find.

d8	Contents
1	A lump of coal
2	1 random <i>potion of resistance</i>
3	1d4 <i>potions of greater healing</i>
4	1d4 random 2nd-level <i>spell scrolls</i>
5	1 random 5th-level <i>spell scroll</i>
6	1 <i>potion of frost giant strength</i>
7	1 <i>chime of opening</i>
8	1 <i>box of marvelous pigments</i>

Very rare variant: Replace the table with the one below and roll a **d10** to determine what you find.

d8	Contents
1	A lump of coal
2	1d4 <i>potions of superior healing</i>
3	1d4 random 3rd-level <i>spell scrolls</i>
4	2 random <i>potions of resistance</i>
5	1 random 7th-level <i>spell scroll</i>
6	2d8 + 5 +3 <i>arrows</i>
7	1 <i>box of marvelous pigments</i>
8	1 <i>potion of flying</i>
9	1 very rare <i>bauble</i> *
10	1 <i>ring of three wishes</i> , with only 1 wish left

*See page 22



MICHELE MUELLER



BENEDETTA ABBATE



KRAMPUS' FORK

KRAMPUS' FORK

Weapon (dagger), rare (requires attunement)
Component: Fiend horn

The visage carved into this dagger's hilt is remarkably unnerving. Its tongue is always unpleasantly slimy to the touch, and its eyes seem to follow you around, even if careful observation confirms beyond a doubt that they don't move. You might even get the feeling that there's something watching you through it... judging you... biding its time...

You gain a **+1 bonus** to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon, which has **3 charges** and regains **1d3** expended charges daily at dawn. In addition, this dagger can be used as the material component for the *plane shift* spell; it is attuned to the Elemental Plane of Ice, where the Krampus' lair is located.

Dooming Fork. As an action, you can tap this dagger against a metallic surface and expend **1 charge**, causing it to produce a sound in a manner similar to a tuning fork. Instead of a clear note, however, the dagger produces your choice of one of the following sounds.

- **Screech.** The dagger produces a blood-curdling screech. Each other creature within **30 feet** of you must make a **DC 15 Constitution saving throw**, taking **4d6** thunder damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.
- **Cackle.** The dagger produces a sinister, raspy cackle. Each other creature within **30 feet** of you must make a **DC 15 Wisdom saving throw**, taking **4d6** psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Regardless of what sound you chose, a creature that fails its save is also **frightened** of you until the end of its next turn.

Uncommon variant: Reduce the **DCs** to **13** and the damage to **3d6**. The Dooming Fork property can't frighten creatures.

Very rare variant: Increase the attack and damage bonus to **+2**, the **DCs** to **16**, and the damage to **7d6**.

MATHIEU CLOCHARD



WINTER
WONDERGARLAND

WINTER WONDERGARLAND

Weapon (whip), uncommon (requires attunement)
Component: pouch of Plant leaves

Oh, the weather outside is frightful, and with the power of this seasonal whip, you can make it frightful inside as well. Crackling with electricity from a plethora of short-circuiting lights and covered with crusty fake snow, this flexible weapon can be used both as a last-resort Giftmas decoration and a festive implement of death!

Due to its sharp pine needles, this whip deals piercing damage instead of slashing damage.

Thundersnow. As an action, you can crack the whip at a spot you can see within **10 feet** of you, causing an unusual storm to form in a **20-foot radius sphere** centred on that point. Pick up to two of the options below. Each creature other than you in the area must make a **DC 13 Constitution saving throw**, suffering the effects of the options chosen.

Thunder. A thunderous boom echoes through the area. On a failed save, a creature takes **3d6** thunder damage and is **deafened** until the start of your next turn. On a successful one, it takes half as much damage and isn't deafened.

BENEDETTA ABBATE

Snow. Frigid snow whips around in the area. On a failed save, a creature takes **3d6** cold damage and its speed is halved until the start of your next turn. On a successful one, it takes half as much damage and its speed isn't reduced.

Lightning. Bolts of lightning arc erratically through the area. A creature takes **2d6** lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Creatures made of metal or wearing metal armour have **disadvantage** on the saving throw.

Hail. Large hailstones rain down from the sky in the area. A creature takes **4d6** bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

This property of the whip can be used twice, regaining all expended uses daily at dawn.

Rare variant: Increase the **DC** to **15**. The whip deals an extra **1d4** lightning damage to the first target it hits on each of your turns.

Very rare variant: Increase the **DC** to **16**. You can pick up to three options when using the Thundersnow property. The whip deals an extra **1d4** lightning damage to the first target it hits on each of your turns.

APPENDIX B - SPELLS

AVALANCHE

6th-level conjuration

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 300 feet (60-foot by 20-foot by 20-foot prism)

Components: V, S, M (a melted snowflake)

Duration: Instantaneous

Class: Druid, Sorcerer, Wizard

You conjure a landslide of snow and ice that crashes down on an area within range. The area can be up to **60 feet long**, up to **20 feet wide**, and up to **20 feet tall**. Each creature in that area must make a **Dexterity saving throw**. On a failed save, a creature takes **6d10** bludgeoning damage and is knocked **prone**. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't knocked prone. A 10-foot-thick layer of snow then persists in the area, acting as difficult terrain for the next **minute**, after which it melts. Each 5-foot-cube can be melted by being dealt 5 fire damage.

A creature that failed the saving throw or that was prone in the area when the spell was cast is **restrained** beneath this snow layer. At the start of each of its turns it must succeed on a **Constitution saving throw** or take **3d6** cold damage. A creature restrained in this way that uses its action to make a **Strength (Athletics)** check against your **spell save DC** can move up to **10 feet** through the snow on a success.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 7th level or higher, the initial and ongoing damage increases by **1d10** and **1d6**, respectively, for each slot level above 6th.

GIFTMAS CHEER

2nd-level enchantment

Casting Time: 1 bonus action

Range: 60 feet

Components: V, S

Duration: Instantaneous

Classes: Bard, Sorcerer, Tamer, Paladin, Warlock, Wizard

With a hearty *ho ho ho*, you jollify up to four willing creatures of your choice (other than yourself) within range. Each creature ceases being frightened, gains **1d4** temporary hit points, and can immediately make a saving throw against any effect that is causing it to be incapacitated, stunned, or paralysed.

KRISMAS CAROL

4th-level evocation

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Self (20-foot radius)

Components: V, S, M (a bladed weapon)

Duration: Instantaneous

Classes: Bard, Sorcerer, Warlock

You sing an a-rhythmic, discordant melody as you scrape your weapon along a hard surface within reach, magically amplifying the sounds. Each creature other than you within **20 feet** of you that can hear you must make a **Constitution saving throw**. On a failure, a creature takes **4d6** thunder damage, **4d6** psychic damage, and is **frightened** of you until the start of your next turn. On a success, a creature takes half as much damage and is not frightened.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 5th level or higher, you can increase either the psychic or thunder damage by **1d6** for each slot level above 4th.

SNOWBALL

3rd-level conjuration

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 120 feet (20-foot-radius sphere)

Components: V, S, M (a melted snowflake)

Duration: Instantaneous

Class: Sorcerer, Wizard

An icy pellet streaks from your pointing finger to a point you choose within range and then erupts with an avalanche-like rumble into an explosion of snow. Each creature in a **20-foot-radius sphere** centred on that point must make a **Dexterity saving throw**. A target takes **4d8** cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a success. The area is covered in snow and is difficult terrain for the next **minute**, after which it melts away.

The snow spreads around corners and douses non-magical flames in the area.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th level or higher, the damage increases by **1d8** for each slot level above 3rd.

APPENDIX C - CREATURES

THE KRAMPUS

He's made a list and won't check it twice. He doesn't care if you're naughty or nice. When the midwinter bell sounds, the Krampus comes to town.

Ambiguous Origins. How a krampus forms is a poorly documented area of anthropology. They are rarely spotted, residing beyond the reaches of time in pocket dimensions, planes of chaos, and even the distant Anomalies—the planes beyond planes. Folklore states that when a creature reaches peak miserly pettiness, a krampus will manifest unto the creature and invite it to join them in “the world beyond joy”. Arcanologists posit that this occurs during joyful holidays like midwinter's Giftmas due to the large

potential difference generated in the jolarity spectrum. In other words, when an especially grumpy creature is surrounded by those suffused with joy, the grampus causes a kind of ‘black hole’ in the joyscape, creating portals to the planes where krampi reside.

Undeath. Unlike a lich, a krampus achieves immortality through boredom. They engage in so few new and exciting experiences that life gives up on them and, when age should claim their soul, life simply forgets they exist. The longer a krampus has existed, the less alive it is, and the more powerful its necromantic abilities. Their one motivation is to erase any spark of joy, gratitude, or love they encounter, often with the aid of wicked scythe, or deathly stare.



KRAMPUS OF END TIMES

Large Undead, Neutral

Armour Class 18 (natural armour)

Hit Points 241 (21d10 + 126)

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	17 (+3)	23 (+6)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)	21 (+5)

Saving Throws Str +11, Con +12, Wis +9, Cha +11

Skills Intimidation +17, Stealth +9

Damage Resistances cold, lightning

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, stunned

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages all, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 19 (22,000 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +6

Fear Aura. Any creature hostile to the Krampus that starts its turn within **5 feet** of it must make a **DC 19 Wisdom saving throw**, unless the Krampus is incapacitated. On a failed save, the creature is **frightened** until the start of its next turn. If a creature's saving throw is successful, the creature is **immune** to the Krampus' Fear Aura for the next **24 hours**.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the Krampus fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Magic Resistance. The Krampus has **advantage** on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. The Krampus' weapon attacks are magical.

Turn Immunity. The Krampus has **immunity** to any effect that turns Undead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Krampus makes two Scythe attacks. It can replace one Scythe attack with a use of Reaper's Toll.

Scythe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d10 + 5) slashing damage plus 4 (1d8) necrotic damage.

Reaper's Toll. *Saving Throw:* **DC 19 Wisdom**, range 120 ft., one target. *Failure:* 18 (4d8) necrotic damage. If the target is missing any of its hit points, it instead takes 26 (4d12) necrotic damage. A creature frightened of the Krampus has **disadvantage** on this saving throw.

Death Stare (Recharge 5-6). The Krampus' eyes shine with a blast of unholy light in a **30-foot cone**. Each non-Undead creature in that area must make a **DC 19 Charisma saving throw**. On a failed save, a creature takes 42 (12d6) psychic damage and becomes **frightened** until the end of its next turn. On a successful save, the creature takes half as much damage and isn't frightened.

Summon Souls (1/Day). The Krampus magically summons one of the following: 1d8 zombies, 1d6 shadows, 1d4 ghosts, 1d3 wights, 1d2 ghosts, or one wraith. A summoned Undead appears in an unoccupied space within **60 feet** of the Krampus and acts as its ally. It remains for **1 minute**, until it or the Krampus dies, or until the Krampus dismisses it as an action.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The Krampus can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The Krampus regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Kill. The Krampus makes one Scythe attack or uses Reaper's Toll.

Teleport. The Krampus magically teleports, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, up to **120 feet** to an unoccupied space it can see.

Drain Life (Costs 2 Actions). Each non-Undead creature within **20 feet** of the Krampus must make a **DC 19 Constitution saving throw** against this magic, taking 21 (6d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the creature finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

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