THE HAUNTED MANSION A Deadly OSR Adventure By the Basic Expert

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Introduction

The player characters are sent by a patron (or some other individual who has hired them) to investigate a haunted mansion. Weird things have aone on in the area and in relation to the mansion itself. Perhaps people disappear, previous adventuring parties have never returned. No matter what, the mansion is an old and terrifying place to the local populace. Sometimes in the evening faint green glows and supposed apparitions appear in the windows. The long shadows of multi-legged creatures pass on a far wall through a window. Screams are heard from time to time. No one dares to investigate because those who do are often never seen again or found mad and incomprehensible in their babbling. This adventure can be somewhat of a challenge. The PCs have a chance of dying... But that should be a given when exploring a haunted mansion.

What is Really Going On

The house is the abode of a long dead sorcerer named Zephyrinus. He once lived in the mansion and performed research and rituals in his laboratory and basement. During life, Zephyrinus was a cruel man who tortured and kidnapped locals for his rituals and experiments. His ultimate goal was immortality. He was attempting to find another path to keep his consciousness alive that would be different from a traditional lich and other more common paths magicusers take. Zephyrinus always had an affinity for insects and used his magic to allow his consciousness to live on in a swarm of tiny biting bugs which infest and animate his flesh. He still performs his rituals and experiments by capturing unlucky travelers that pass by his mansion or who are foolish enough to enter his home. The players may or may not know of Zephyrinus. It is probably best if the players do not and instead learn of this sorcerer as the investigation of the mansion proceeds.

Random Encounter Table

GMs should use this table to determine when encounters occur. GMs should roll 1d6 and consult the chart, based on the level of the mansion, to see what kind of creature is encountered. Some encounters are just spooky occurrences like hearing or seeing an object be pushed from a shelf (typical haunted house spooky stuff). Zephyrinus is protective of his home and so random encounters occur on a 1 to 3 on 1d6 every other turn while exploring the mansion and the basement. Sta tblocks for these creatures are not given as they are common in older editions of the game as well as OSR rule systems. All creatures listed below can be found, for example, in OSRIC and other such clones.

Roll 1d6	Level 1 Encounter	Level 2 Encounter	Basement 1 Encounter
1	Spooky Occurrence	Spooky Occurrence	Spooky Occurrence
2	Ant, Giants	Giant Spiders	Coffer Corpse
3	Centipedes, Giant	Ghouls	Poltergeist
4	Spooky Occurrence	Zombies	Giant Spiders
5	Zombies	Ghost	Ghouls
6	Skeletons	Skeletons	Zombies

Spooky Occurrences

Sometimes an encounter will be a spooky occurrence which Zephyrinus and his minions employ to terrorize the unfortunate victims that enter the mansion. Use the chart below to determine what kind of spooky encounter occurs if it is rolled on the random encounter chart. Whenever a spooky occurrence happens, the affected characters affected must save vs. fear (spells). Characters that become afraid must flee in the opposite direction of the fearful effect for two turns. Creatures with 6 HD or more are unaffected.

Roll 1d12 Spooky Occurrence

- 1 A loud scream or screech is heard behind the party. It sounds as if it is right behind them. If they turn around, nothing is there. It will be an inhuman scream that chills a character to his bones.
- 2 A cold chill wind or breeze passes over the players. They will feel chilled to the bone as the temperature drops a great many degrees.
- 3 If the players pass through a doorway, have them appear at a random location other than where the doorway appears to lead. For instance, a GM can have a player enter through the door and appear back down the hallway while the rest of the party enters the room. A particularly mean GM can use this to split the party by having a character appear on a different level entirely.
- Blood begins to ooze from the walls and down the floor. The floor becomes slick with crimson red which will cause characters to move at half speed. Any character that attempts to move at full speed has a 50% chance of falling prone do the slick bloody floors. The blood will disappear after 1d8 rounds.
- 5 Various doors will lock or unlock. Or perhaps a door will entirely disappear from where it once was and move to some other part of the room, confusing player characters.
- 6 Objects in a room or area will begin to swirl around in a violent fury by some unseen force. Damage will be dealt by what objects are being thrown and how many objects there are. For instance, a room with furniture like chairs and end tables may cause 2d6 damage every round to any creature caught in the swirl of objects. The characters can flee or dispel the flurry of objects. Objects will swirl in an area for 1d6 rounds or until the characters move away (GMs discretion).
- 7 A character will hear the voice of a loved one or someone close to them that he knows. This can be a friend, a relative, a lover, or someone else. The character, if he fails his save vs fear (spells) is compelled to rush towards the sound of their loved one's voice for 1d6 minutes. This loved one may be someone who is alive or is dead in relation to the character.
- 8 An overwhelming sense of dread befalls the characters. The hair on the back of their necks stands on end. Shivers and goosebumps overtake them. All characters have percentage skill checks reduced by 20%, d6 roll ranges reduced to 1, and a -3 penalty to all d20 rolls for 1d6 turns.
- 9 A randomly determined character is paralyzed and suspended/levitated in the air. He feels as if cold and icy hands are violently cinched around his throat. This character takes 1d4 damage every round until the effect is dispelled. A holy symbol, holy water thrown on the character, or a spell that dispels magic will end the effect. This effect lasts for 1d6 rounds.
- 10 The characters see some kind of illusion or spectral entity move between doors or fly by in the peripheral of their vision. It has a humanoid shape and always seems just out of the center of a character's vision.
- Bugs will crawl out of holes in the wall. Worms, maggots, beetles, cockroaches, and other unsavory bugs will fill the hallway or room. It will be impossible to move without the crunching sound of bugs underfoot. The area will fill with bugs above the characters heads in 1d6 rounds. As the level of bugs increases, movement speed will be reduced until the characters cannot move at all. Once it seems that head of the tallest character is about to be enveloped by a sea of bugs, the insects will disappear. No remnants of the bugs, both alive and smashed, will remain.
- 12 The area around the players will feel as if gravity has doubled or that their boots are filled with lead weights. Speed is cut down to ¼ normal speed. This effect lasts for 1d4 turns and remains in effect even if combat with a creature occurs.

Mansion Level 1

The maps for the mansion and the various levels are presented at the end of this supplement. The first level is dark and lit by a few torches and candles that seem to be lit despite the appearance of mansion being abandoned. If a character were to run his hand



over the flame of a torch, flame, or other similar kind of light source, he would see no heat emanates from the fire. Light is produced by some kind of strange ghostly magical flame. spider webs litter the area and the place is crawling with bugs. In fact there are so many bugs in this house the players will be crunching on

them as they walk. Many of these bugs are part of Zephyrinus's "body". Zephyrinus will use these bugs to spy on intruders as well as mess with and terrify trespassers with supernatural and spooky occurrences (if he can). One thing GMs can do that can terrify players is to have all doors and windows magically lock once the players enter the mansion. This can explain how Zephyrinus is able to so effectively trap and torture victims in his home.

L1-1: Entrance

An old dusty and dirty rug lines the floor. The door into the mansion is unlocked. Zephyrinus wants victims to enter his abode. Straight ahead of the door in and across the rug is an archway into a large room (L1-2).

L1-2: Library and Lounge

Zephyrinus was a man who loved knowledge and books. This room is full of old tomes books. Some of them are occult in nature while others deal with forgotten history and lore. If a GM is running a specific setting, this could be a good place to insert interesting setting backstory elements that may be of interest to the PCs or a seed for future adventures (if the character's survive the mansion). There is a 20% chance that a book holds unspeakable knowledge. If a book does, any character that opens and reads a book must make a save vs spell or go temporary mad. If a character goes mad, he will temporarily come under the control of the GM who must make the PC do something that is probably not good for that character and the group as a whole. For instance a character can drop his weapons and babble inanely as he bolts into the next room without caution. Or he can begin to scream and curse which may draw the denizens of the mansion to the PCs. Once the character performs this simple foolish act of madness induced by knowledge he was never meant to know, he will return to his normal state of mind. But at that point, the consequences may already be upon him and the group.

To circle back to some of the books available to the PCs, the GM should make one discovery safe and it should simply be a fragment of a diary written by Zephyrinus. The diary entry will detail how some foolish paladin entered his abode with a dagger designed to kill him. Zephyrinus will gloat about how he defeated this paladin and added his corpse to the many that lay about. This entry will not name Zephyrinus by name, but will show that whoever lives here is evil and has malicious intent.

L1-3: Kitchen

This kitchen is filled with the butchered bodies of victims. It reeks of death and rotting flesh. Within, 13 ghouls mill about feasting on the meager remains of old victims. They are hungry and the fresh meat that is the adventuring party will be of particular interest to their empty bellies. A search of this room will reveal **140cp**, and **1,100ep** scattered about the remains of the ghoul victims. A trap door in the south-east corner of the kitchen leads down into the basement (to area B1-1 on the Basement level). An evil and foreboding feeling emanates from that door and the ladder that leads down.

L1-4: Laboratory

The laboratory for Zephyrinus looks as if it is still in use. Glass vials sit over flames with bubbling liquids in them. Hacked human remains and strange fluids of odd and disgusting colors and smells cover various work surfaces. Books (which follow the same rule for insanity in area L1-2) lay open with hideous illustrations surrounded by infernal and demonic languages. Two large vats hold the bodies of decomposed humanoids within. They seem large and curled in fetal positions. In reality these are 2 flesh golems. If the characters are loud or (for some dumb reason) bang on the tanks, the golems will stir and flail. It will take each golem 1d6 rounds to burst from the vats and through the thick glass that surrounds them. The flesh golems will attack the PCs on sight. The players may wish to run which could create a tense slasher film style game of hide and seek between the PCs and 2 flesh golems.

Aside from this, the players should find a second diary entry (if they look) among the effects in the room. This entry can detail some startling facts. The entry will be recent. Much more recent than the entry found in the previous room. It will detail how Zephyrinus has employed either the PC's patron or the quest giver. This quest giver receives a kickback in exchange for sending adventurers to their doom in the mansion. If the PC's patron or quest giver for this scenario will not work, or you as the GM do not desire to do this, you can instead have it name some other individual in a nearby town who is doing the same thing (which can lead to a new adventure). Within this note, The name "Zephyrinus" will appear and now be known to the PCs.

L1-5: Stairs to Second Floor

The area to the back of the house is dimly lit by ethereal flames on sconces. It is covered in spider webs as well. Both sets of stairs lead up to the second floor. A railing is clearly seen above where the stairs end. The two sets of stairs are a trap. When a character steps on the stairs, the pressure plates below the stairs trigger the stairs into a slide trap. The trap is triggered on a roll of 1 to 3 on 1d6 when a character or creature steps on the trap. If the trap is triggered, a 10' pit opens at the base of the stairs for victims to fall into.

The walls of the pit are smooth and slick. There are not spikes or dangerous elements at the bottom. Generally Zephyrinus uses these traps to capture victims alive for his experiments.

The Mansion Level 2

The second floor of the mansion is even more thickly covered in spider webs. The lighting is the same as the first floor.

L2-1: Top of the Stairs

The top of the stairs reveals a room similar, though a bit smaller, than the room below. Some ornate pillars are evenly spaced apart on this floor. Both doors on either side of the stairs that lead into area L2-2 are trapped. Once again, these are traps designed to capture victims alive. The doors are closed. If the doorknobs are grabbed, a small needle will poke the hand of whomever grabbed it. The victim must make a save vs poison or fall unconscious for 1d6 turns.

L2-2: Long Hallway

This hallway is the abode of a giant spider that prowls the hallway. It keeps to darkened corners and ambushes prey. The insects of the mansion are the pets and allies of Zephyrinus. The spider will surprise on a 1 to 4 due to its tactics in ambushing prey.

L2-3: The Study

This study is again full of books and tomes pertinent to the studies Zephyrinus. Within this room, at the desk, another journal entry will be found. It will detail that research has been performed on the dagger the paladin had brought into his mansion for the purpose of slaying Zephyrinus. "I have determined that the blade this foolish paladin wielded was specifically enchanted to kill me," it reads. "I am also unable, try as I might, destroy the dagger. Because of this fact, it is best that I keep it with me below." Other books that can be found here have the same rules as in area L1-2.

L2-4: Guest Bedroom

This bedroom is rather large. At one point, it was obviously used for guests. Today it is a cobweb infested mess. This room is haunted by a poltergeist. The spirit belongs to Zephyrinus's first victim who stayed in this room ages ago before the sorcerer mutilated his body with his foul magic. The spirit was once a gambler and will harass the players. He will speak to the players with an incorporeal voice that seems to come from everywhere in the room.

"Are you the kinds of people that take chances?", the voice will say. "Let us make a wager." The poltergeist will explain that he hates Zephyrinus. But he is cursed as well due to his vices in life, namely gambling. If the players can beat him in a game of chance, the poltergeist will not attack them and will instead tell them exactly when the proper time would be to kill Zephyrinus. If the adventurers lose, he will attack the group.

The game that the poltergeist will employ is called "Raffle." It requires 3d6 to play. It is much like poker where the players are trying to roll a 3 of a kind or pairs. Higher pairs or 3 of a kind win. If a tie occurs on the pairs or 3 of a kind, it is down to who rolled the highest on the third die. The winner of the wager is whoever wins 3 hands or throws.

Players may want to cheat. Allow it. If gambling is a skill, make the player character perform a gambling skill check. Failure means the poltergeist is aware of the attempt to cheat and will immediately attack the party. Success means the spirit is unaware of the attempt to cheat. Alternatively, a game master could allow a character to re-roll dice equal to the level in an appropriate skill once per the whole encounter.

If the players are successful in winning the game of chance with the spirit, the poltergeist will explain that between the hours of 2 and 3 in the morning, Zephyrinus is deep in evil meditation down in the basement. Usually he does this by his alter. During this time, the players have an opportunity to kill him if they can.

Hallways

These hallways are filled with spider webs and are 10' wide. It is a perfect place to mess with players by having them walk down one hallway and appear back at the start or down some other unintended hallway (or into a room they maybe did not intend to go into). GMs can decided that all random encounters that would occur in this area are this supernatural effect if they wish the dice to determine this rather than arbitrarily doing so (this is what I would do).

L2-5: Storage Room

This room looks like it was once a bedroom. Now it is a storage room. Within are coffins and humanoid remains. 14 skeletons shamble about and will attack the adventurers on sight. Once combat has begun, 7 zombies will break out of the coffins and crates in the room and attempt to eat the adventurers. All of these undead are covered in insects that crawl in and out of open wounds on their bodies.

L2-6: Empty Room

This room looks like it was also a bedroom at one point but is now empty. This may be a good room for adventurers to barricade and recover strength if need be.

L2-7: Lavatory

This was once a bathroom. Now it is a nest for the giant spider Yglacth. Yglacth is capable of speaking common to the adventurers. She is very old and is a friend and official guest and resident in the home of Zephyrinus. With her is some of her brood that the players have no doubt encountered as a random encounter (or in room L2-2). She is hungry and so are her children. With her are 3 of her brood (Giant Spiders). She will taunt and harass the party during the conflict. She feels the stress before death makes a victim's juices taste better. Yglacth is presented below. Use typical giant spider statistics of your choice for her brood spiders.

If Yglacth and her brood are slain, there is treasure about in the room that can be given out as a search is made. These bits of treasure are all found within the webbing in the room. Characters may be able to see it glitter as combat occurs. The treasure is 2,300cp, 1,600ep, 800gp, 10 fluorspar gems worth 10gp each, 6 greenstone gems worth 100gp each, and 1 topaz gem worth 100gp.

Yglacth the Giant Spider

.g	
AC:	4 [15]
Hit Dice:	8
No. of Attacks:	1 Bite/2 legs or 1 web
Damage:	1d8+Poison/2d4 (the web is special, see below)
Movement:	50′
Save As:	Fighter 8
Morale:	8
XP:	1,115

Yglacth can shoot the strong fibers of her web at potential victims. Treat this as an attack roll. Success means the target is trapped in the webs of the spider. A death save is allowed to break free of the webs. The venom of Tglacth is deadly. Victims are allowed a save vs. poison with a +2 bonus. Failure means the character will die in 1d12 hours and is paralyzed for the duration up until death.

L2-8: Master Bedroom

This was once the bedroom of Zephyrinus though it does not look like it has been used in ages. The bed sheets are frail and turn to dust when disturbed. Within the destroyed desk will be a letter from a person named Phaedrus. It reads:

Dear Zephyrinus,

You were one of my star apprentices so it is with a heavy heart that I must ban you from the college. You are stripped of all resources afforded to you from the college. For as long as you live, you may never set foot in here. I think you know the reason. Your work and research is simply unacceptable. You can never return to me or the college, but I hope you leave the path you are on for yourself and others.

- Phaedrus

Basement Level

The basement is where Zephyrinus spends most of his time these days. He ventures to the upper levels only to collect potentially trapped victims. Other than that, he spends most of his time in room B1-11. The area is lit with a ghostly green light from the ethereal torches and magical flames in the area. These flames function in much the same way as the magical flames on the upper levels.

B1-1: Below the Kitchen

The entrance into the basement is generally empty. Some ghoulish green torches burn much like the rest of the basement.

B1-2: Empty Room

Another empty room that is really more a connecting hallway.

B1-3: Secret Treasure Room

This room has a secret entrance that connects it to room B1-4. Within is a locked chest full of treasure consisting of **3,200**cp, **2,100**sp, **1,700**ep, **1,000**gp, **5 fire** opals worth 20gp each, **3 Topaz gems worth 500 gp** each, **6 Bloodstones worth 100gp each**, **5 diamonds** worth **75gp each**, **8 amethysts worth 10gp each**, **1** crown worth 900gp, **1 fancy gold and silver knife with** gems in the hilt worth 900gp, and **1 gold belt with** precious stones inset in it worth 500gp.

B1-4: Room with Secret Door

This room is empty. A brick in the wall on the wall that separates this room from B1-3 can be removed. Behind the brick is a pressure plate that can be depressed, opening the door into room B1-3.

B1-5: The Room with the Statue

This looks a regular room or hallway... except for the fact that the statue is enchanted. The statue is not alive but will swing it's stone weapon at any creature that goes within 5' of it. The statue attacks as a creature with 4 hit dice. The enchantment on the statue can be dispelled. The damage from the stone sword deals 2d6 damage.

B1-6: The Room of Undead Ghast

This room will appear empty. What unsuspecting adventurers will not know is that 4 malicious ghast haunt and lurk around the pillars in the room, ready to ambush. The room will be littered with the bones of previous victims. Zephyrinus will sometimes throw victims into this room to be eaten by the ghast that are held within. The door into this room is barred from B1-7's side.

B1-7: Empty Hallway

This is an empty room/hallway that merely connects larger rooms.

B1-8: The Well

This is a darker room with less in the way of light sources than many of the other rooms. Within is a deep dark well. When the party commits to the room by a good amount, 3 wraiths will spill forth from the well. Their forms will be a slithering mass of shadows as their forms take on a humanoid shape upon climbing out of the well. The wraiths will attack until the adventuring party is slain or the wraiths are killed or turned (back into the well).

B1-9: Empty Hallway

This hallway is empty. Not much is in here but it connects to B1-11 where Zephyrinus mostly lives and works. It also connects to B1-10.

B1-10: Empty Room

This room is also empty. But it reeks of death. Zephyrinus will often toss human remains here.

B1-11: Lair of Zephyrinus

This area is were Zephyrinus spends much of his time. Within here he spends his time meditating at his altar. Zephyrinus is a walking corpse filled with bugs. They crawl in out of of open sores and wounds on his body cadaver like body. The dagger that is designed to kill him rests on a the altar as well.

The room is littered with remains and smashed pottery. Two sarcophagi are in the room. Zephyrinus



sometimes rests and meditates in one of the sarcophagi (it feels more like home to him). If he is aware of the adventurers, he will attack and attempt to kill them. Another diary can be found in the pottery of on the north west corner. This diary will talk about how Zephyrinus stores a horde of treasure in room B1-3 which he takes from victims and will pay the traitorous quest giver mentioned in the previous letter.

Zephyrinus the Undead Sorcerer

AC:	1 [18] ‡	
Hit Dice:	10	
No. of Attacks:	1 touch, weapon, or spell	
Damage:	1d8 touch+drain, by	
	weapon or by spell	
Movement:	30′	
Save As:	Magic-User or Cleric by hit	
	dice	

Morale:	8
XP:	1,380

Zephyrinus is terrifying to behold. Any that look upon him must save vs spells or flee for 2d6 rounds. The gaze of Zephyrinus is terrifying and causes a target within 30 feet who is affected by his gaze to make a save vs spells or be paralyzed by fear for 1d6 rounds.

Zephyrinus will strike with his hand, when doing so, a foul insect will attach to the target and attempt to burrow into the targets body. This attack deals 1d8 points of damage. The insect that burrows into victim drains 1d4 points of constitution from the victim. In the next round the insect will leave the victim and return to to Zephyrinus and restore his hit points by the amount the insect drained in constitution points.

The lost constitution points are permanent more often than not. The points can be regained at a rate of 1 point per casting of a restoration spell or by using a wish spell. Zephyrinus can only be hit by magical weapons. Regular weapons will have no effect on him.

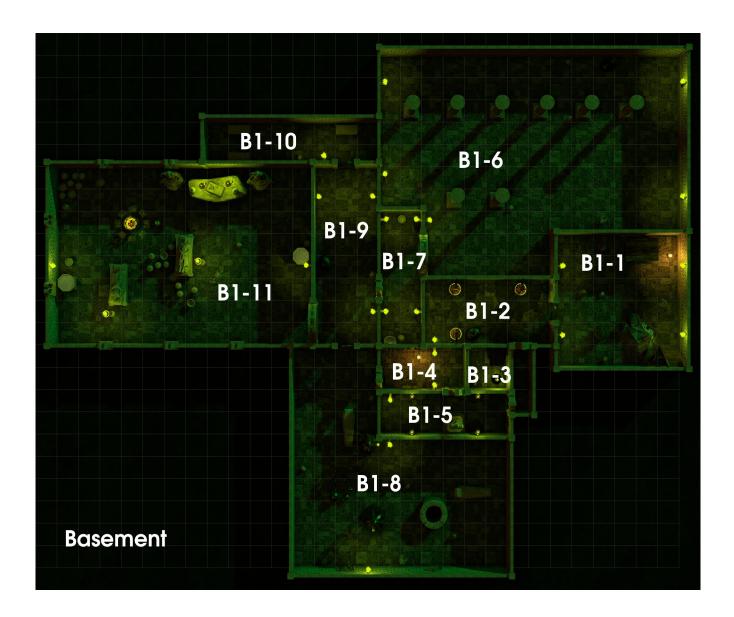
Zephyrinus is very hard to kill, even after reaching 0 hit points, Zephyrinus performs a save vs death. Success means he will rise again at the start of the next round with a number of hit points equal to 1 hit dice.

Zephyrinus is a powerful sorcerer. He has the following spells prepared: 2 Charm Person spells, 2 Magic Missile Spells, 2 Invisibility spells, Web, Haste, Fireball, Hold Person, Confusion, Wall of Fire, Animate Dead, and Teleport.

Maps







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