

THE CANNIBAL DRUID



The wizened half-goblin druid Tal Nar has dwelt alone in the deep, trackless woods for decades. An outcast from his tribe, he has led a lonely life. With only the nameless, atavistic spirits of the primal forest, roving packs of wolves and the occasional bear for company Tal has sunk deep into insanity's black pit.

In the grip of his insanity, Tal has had several important revelations: he has come to believe that the real enemies of his way of life and the way of life of his animal friends are humankind (and their allies). Such folk encroach upon the wood and cut down trees, hunt the local animals and so on. It seems only fair, therefore, that he return the favour.

Tal has grown to like the taste of human flesh and enjoys feeding the friends who share his isolated home. His depredations have not gone unnoticed, though, as he has grown careless of late. Folk in the nearest settlements have noticed that travellers, hunters and loggers go missing in greater numbers in certain parts of the wood. One hunter has seen Tal capering through the wood while chewing on what looked to be a human arm. As the characters reach the region, the dark story of what the hunter saw Tal doing has begun to make its way through the local populace...

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

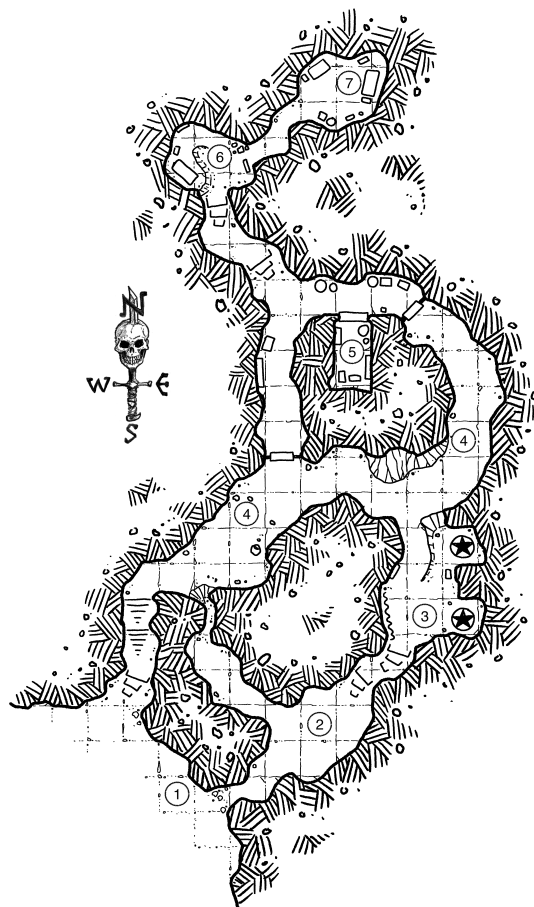
A character may know something about the Cannibal Druid of the Scorned Forest.

1. An old, mad and hideously ugly man lives in the deep woods, far from civilisation. Vague and unwholesome rumours circulate about the man, and no one has a good word to say about him.
2. Travellers have been going missing on a major woodland track linking several settlements of late in increasing numbers. The road has always been dangerous, but now travellers are grouping together for mutual protection.
3. The woodlands around here are ancient places populated by nature spirits and capricious fey. They remain a dangerous wilderness.
4. The local lord is aware of strange doings in the woods and the increasing disappearances. However, as long as they keep getting their required taxes and tithes from the merchants who can afford to travel with mercenary guards, it's not worth doing anything about it.

THE SURROUNDING LOCALITY

Tal Nar's home lies in a dense swath of isolated, hilly woodland miles from the nearest settlement close to an important track used by merchants and travellers. The track is the quickest route between two settlements. Dense woodland flanks the track, and in several places, it runs between steep-sided hills and through a narrow valley. It is in these hard-to-escape places that Tal normally strikes.

THE CANNIBAL DRUID'S LAIR



1. **The Scorned Approaches:** Tracks crisscross this area of low-lying, boggy ground.
2. **Chamber of the Favoured One:** Herein dwells the cannibal druid's favoured and largest pet.
3. **Aberrant Statues:** Two statues, laboriously crafted by the mad cannibal druid to depict atavistic nature spirits, watch over this chamber.
4. **The Den:** A pack of the cannibal druid's pets dwell here. They also serve as his "watchdogs".
5. **Larder of the Cannibal Druid:** If any of Tal's victims survive his initial assault, he keeps them here—until he or his pets grow hungry.
6. **Chamber of the Cannibal Druid:** The cannibal druid dwells in this noisome, dank chamber.
7. **Treasures of the Cannibal Druid:** The cannibal druid has taken many trinkets and suchlike from his victims. He keeps such treasures here.

CREDIT

This is a short system-neutral extract from *Dungeon Backdrop: Cannibal Druid of the Scorned Forest* by Creighton Broadhurst, which is available in 5e, Pathfinder, OSR and System Neutral editions. Cartography by Dyson Logos. Compass Rose by William McAusland.