

The Mystery of Crellion Manor

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Introduction

A TTRPG adventure compatible with Dungeons and Dragons 5e for a party of level 2+ characters.

Crelion manor was a splendid building overseen by the Crelion family. Lord Crelion however was extremely lonely after the death of his childhood love and wanted someone to share the empty halls with.

However, as time went on his loneliness disappeared with the arrival of his lady and they were soon wed. But on the night of their wedding a terrifying storm struck the manor. So terrible and ferocious the people that lived there died and the bodies of the Lord and Lady of the Manor were never found.

Years later and the Manor has new owners who rent out rooms as a half-way inn between two large cities. But those who travel the roads are often preyed upon by terrifying creatures and flash storms that have fuelled the rumours of the manor being under a curse.

The Road

The Wooded Road



The road was long and as night was quickly approaching the party of adventurers quickly found <https://brazenwolfetabletop.com/>

that they were running out of options for safety. Thick clouds were forming overhead and the gusts of winds were increasing by the minute. The road had swerved into a small forest a few miles back and gradually an uneasy feeling had grown within them as they began to doubt the traveller's advice.

‘There’s an inn along this road, a few miles down the road. If you make haste you should be able to get there before the weather hits’ the man had said. The party had thought it odd since there was not a cloud in the sky, but the man had been right as quickly the wind had picked up and the clouds had rolled in. Then, as if on queue a sign appeared staked next to a tree. “Crelion Manor – Inn and Lodgings” they sign said with an elegant writing that spoke of pride and elegance. Up ahead the dark silhouette of a building suddenly flared into life as a glowing light appeared in several windows.

The unease grew and the snapping of twigs sounded from somewhere behind them but when they whirled around there was nothing in the growing shadows as night encroached.

Making a dash for the light spewing from the windows the sound of heavy frantic footsteps could be heard nearby, but still no sign of pursuer. Passing the open gates the pounding of earth suddenly vanished and the creaking of a sign hanging from the front porch heralded the appearance of the Crelion Manor.

NPC's:

- Jane Dottery
- Tom Dottery
- Traveller on the road - Bill Turner

Encounter: Chased through the woods:

Creature: Unseen (N/A)

Map - N/A

The flight encounter here isn't so much one for combat but it's for driving the story forward. Have the party make a save vs Fear (wisdom save, Soul-Determination, etc.) The chance of success should be low and any ability to deduce the nature of the creature will result in it being something monstrous. The one exception is that abilities that detect magic can sense a powerful source of it in the direction of the creature and swarming around

them like fireflies. Players who want to sense or detect an illusion are bombarded with contradictory images, smells, and sights - the only thing that resonates as not an illusion is the Manor in the distance.

The idea is that it starts to herd them towards the manor.

Arrival at the Manor

The building was three stories high and big enough to house a few dozen people at most. There was a small stable to the right of the entrance and the warm glow of lanterns and candles beckoned them onwards, the sense of unease dwindling as they walked into the light of the lanterns.

The door swung open slowly but forcefully and a large, heavyset man with a mighty moustache looked down at the party. As he stood there he didn't say a single word and stared them down, grunting in response to the parties questions he strode into the building leaving the door open. Entering after the man the inside was cosy, warm and inviting. A sense of warmth was present in the building and unlike the man who now sat behind a desk with a large ledger they felt welcome.

'Hello travellers! Welcome Guests!' a shrill and excited voice sang out from behind them as a thin woman stood in the doorway to a sitting room that housed a roaring fire. 'Don't just stand there. Welcome! Close the door dear if you will - you'll let the cold in.' she said as she moved to stand next to the large man.

'Welcome to Crellion manor'.

NPC's:

- Jane Dottery
- Tom Dottery

Crellion Manor

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Fitful Rest



Throughout the manor, as the party moves through the halls the walls are decorated with portraits or landscape paintings of the manor on a large expansive field. The rolling hills of grass touched by sunlight gave the paintings of the Manor a wondrous appearance. Further down the halls portraits of Jane and Tom were hung on the wall, proudly sitting in chairs and looking fondly outwards.

The brass frame of the portraits was perfectly polished with not a speck of dust on it or the canvas itself. However on closer inspection Tom's portrait seemed to have suffered some damage and his last name "Dottery" has been scrubbed off. Either by accident or deliberately it's hard to tell.

The rain continued well into the night and while the party sat by the warm roaring fire they wondered when the storm would let up. The manor seemed to be equipped for just about all their needs and whenever they asked Jane about something of interest she would be able to provide some advice or tool to assist.

There was enough space for the adventurers to stay in a single room or in several and the beds were comfortable, much more so than the open road at least.

As the night continued onwards the party members retired for the night and the manor

was silent once more, except for the howling wind and battering rain. One by one they drifted off to sleep and one by one they suffered a nightmare that when they woke they felt more exhausted than they had in the morning. When they complained about their sleep they began to realise that they all suffered the same nightmare. The same creatures had attacked them in their dreams and where they suffered wounds they hurt the next morning but without physical harm. The innkeeper Tom stood at the doorway to where they were talking and, with a hint of sorrow to his frown filled face nodded towards the door once more.

NPC's:

- Jane Dottery
- Tom Dottery

Encounter: Leaving

Creature: See notes.

As the party moved to the front door of Crelion Manor Tom looked both sad and gleeful at their choice to depart. After the haunting night they could not be blamed after all. The day's sun barely pushed its way through the stormy clouds above and the rain and wind made it difficult to walk. But they continued outwards and beyond.

'See you real soon, take care!' Jane called as she leant against her quiet husband at the front door. As the wind whipped at the capes Jane had provided them for fear of their health. It wasn't long until the rustling of footsteps could be heard behind them but as with last time nothing could be seen. As the further they got from the manor the more frantic they became, desperate to reach the party. As they continued faster away from the hounding footsteps a crack was the last sound they heard as a branch from a tree fell down and hit them.

Soon they woke, the images and sounds of pursuit still haunting their waking thoughts. Sore but comfortable and warm, the sounds and smells of food cooking brought them back to the present. 'Hello dears. Oh you're lucky we found you when we did. Tom brought you back after you ran into

the woods in the middle of the storm. Don't you worry you are safe here with us.' Jane said as she came in with plates filled with delicious smelling food. Cured meats, eggs and bread piled up high.

This is a tricky one where we have

Discovery of the Book

As they looked at the food Tom appeared in the doorway and shook his head, sadness appeared in his eyes as he frowned at them and clutched his guest book tighter. But... was that a purposeful look at the book. Jane turned around at that moment. 'Tom... Oh yes that's right. They still need to sign the book with the duration of their stay, come in dear and give it to them. Make sure the ribbon is on the right page – we want to make sure the guest book is in good order now.' Jane said with a broad smile as she walked out of the room.

Tom brought in the book with an inkwell as well and slipped the quill into the back of the book before handing it to them. As the party grabbed the heavy, large leather bound book he stared at them and then the book as he adjusted the feather in the last page. Tom then stood and left them the book and the food.

As the party opened the guest book to the ribbon they noticed that there were hundreds of names in the ledger and each of them had a season and day listed down in there. Turning to the last page, where the quill was jammed into the book they noticed a different list.

Twelve names were on the page where eleven names ran down the page with a gap at the fifth line, each with a number next to their name. There was a blood smeared fingerprint on the page and the last name was separate and at the bottom of the page.

NPC's:

- Jane Dottery
- Tom Dottery

Encounter: Recurring Dream

Map - See book excerpt + 303ThReRe (1-3)

Each time they sleep they are in a different dream sequence. In a tavern having a meal before one of them splits into two and the two halves attack, or a peaceful creature or person attacks them violently. Each person watches as their party members stare at the horrors happening in front of them and act like nothing is happening. This leaves the characters to fight for themselves - waking on defeating the opponent (CR1/8-CR1 creatures) or on being reduced to 0 hit points.

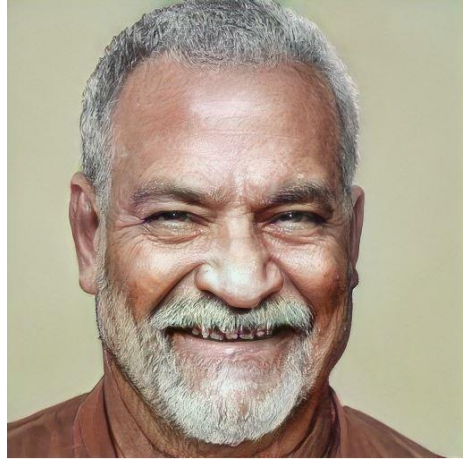
When they wake up it's evidently a terrible dream and they are exhausted (both the statistic as well as descriptively)

Lore & NPCs

The Dottery's run the Crelion manor inn and are an odd pair. Jane is warm, welcoming and motherly while Tom rarely says anything at all and always stares at people as if he wished they were elsewhere. Together though they have appeared to have maintained the manor to a high standard and the beds are certainly comfortable. Despite being situated near the woods that appear to be haunted, or worse the manor appears to be unaffected.

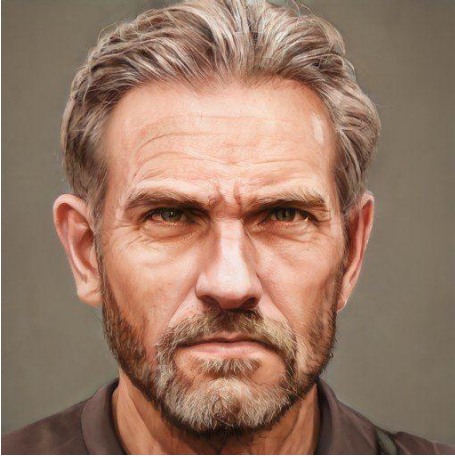
Jane can be found walking around the manor lighting lanterns and cleaning the house almost methodically while Tom never strays too far from the front door and a little desk where he keeps an ever watchful eye on the log book in front of him.

Bill Turner



Bill is a traveller who carries a half-laden cart behind him. He delivers food to the Crelion Manor and is the first NPC that the party meets. He is quick to offer aid and assistance but seems to not know of the troubles that surround the Manor-come-inn. He has also no exposure to the creatures in the woods but has heard rumours of a terrible creature that stalks the roads at night, or when a storm strikes.

Tom Dottery



Tom is well built and tall. The signs of his age are slowly appearing in his beard and hair but his eyes have lost none of their youth. During the party's interactions with him they don't believe they have heard him say a single word to him or Jane who hovers around him and talks enough for both of them.

Despite being quiet, and his face set in a constant stare of disapproval he is quick to help the adventurers when they need it. Just as quick as he leaps into action to assist he goes back to being quiet with a frown fixed upon his face. The party have caught him nodding towards an old guest book at his table and when his wife isn't around he appears to gesture silently towards the door as if asking the party to leave.

Jane Dottery



Jane is a small and frail looking woman with eyes that look almost too large for her face. The opposite of her husband, Tom, she is exuberant and always happy to talk. She is quick on her feet and has a bad habit of sneaking up on people due to how quietly she moves.

Despite her diminutive frame it is obvious to any who witness her that she rules the manor on a daily basis. She is quick to insist that the guests reach out for any little issue but organises Tom to rectify any issues.

Despite her warm and caring nature she shies away from physical touch and blames an illness she caught when she was younger for a fragile constitution that is quick to bruise and bleed from the smallest of touches.

Name	Nights Spent	Paid
Anja Turnkin	3	
Arnold Goonbry	1	
Constance Hart	7	
Rudey Wisspah	4	
Papi Cheer	5	
Harold Haroldson	7	
June Earlington	5	
Kate Karlson	8	
Pru Wiggins	5	
Winny Troin	8	
Luke Carson	10	
Thomas C Bettery	7	

Crelion Manor Guest Book

Each name on the page seems to have been carefully drawn out so that the handwriting on this page is far better than the other pages. There seems to be an emphasis on some letters as well, the C in the last name has a faint underline, the J in the 1st name seems to have been written once then had the letter re-gone over it.

Maps

303ThReRe-1



303ThReRe-2



303ThReRe-3



Monsters

Adventure Encounters

Tonight I am using Kobold Plus Fight club for a very specific reason. Looking for any creature(s) under CR1/2 (hard/ deadly) which each of the players will need to fight solo. It doesn't matter what it is, from a few goblins, kobolds to a single orc or gnoll as long as it's enough to pose a threat to our level 2 characters.

This works across systems that have ways of balancing encounters as well. Soulbound you can have 2 warriors or a single warrior and a swarm of 3-4 minions appear in the dreams to haunt the players. Pathfinder would be similar to orcs and goblins but making sure that it's balanced to be a hard or difficult encounter. Remember that the creatures aren't there to kill the party members.

They are there to create exhaustion and prevent a full night's sleep. This is what pressures the players to solve the riddle and escape, but more on that tomorrow night.

As I mentioned earlier this week, ([Haunting of the Inn](#)) the party is attacked in their dreams. Each night when they go to rest they dream of a strange, or familiar place where they are attacked. This prevents them from fully resting as each time they try to get back to resting they simply can't. These creatures may morph from their allies or randomly appear in a doorway but they need to be sudden and definitely out of place.

The maid that the bard was seducing may suddenly turn around and split into three goblins. Or the priest that the cleric was consulting may open a door and throw the party member in to be torn apart by zombies or skeletons. Whatever the creature, the difficulty doesn't matter and death shouldn't be the goal.

Final encounter - "Jane Dottery" (Jane Crelion)

DOPPELGANGER

Medium monstrosity (shapechanger), unaligned

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Skills Deception +6, Insight +3

Condition Immunities charmed

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Shapechanger. The doppelganger can use its action to polymorph into a Small or Medium humanoid it has seen, or back into its true form. Its statistics, other than its size, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

Ambusher. The doppelganger has advantage on attack rolls against any creature it has surprised.

Surprise Attack. If the doppelganger surprises a creature and hits it with an attack during the first round of combat, the target takes an extra 10 (3d6) damage from the attack.

ACTIONS

Multitattack. The doppelganger makes two melee attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Read Thoughts. The doppelganger magically reads the surface thoughts of one creature within 60 ft. of it. The effect can penetrate barriers, but 3 ft. of wood or dirt, 2 ft. of stone, 2 inches of metal, or a thin sheet of lead blocks it. While the target is in range, the doppelganger can continue reading its thoughts, as long as the doppelganger's concentration isn't broken (as if concentrating on a spell). While reading the target's mind, the doppelganger has advantage on Wisdom (Insight) and Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, and Persuasion) checks against the target.

This encounter has a time limit. 3 rounds and the Doppelganger fades away.

After the first round of combat the party notices that the creature is smoking and parts of it are dissipating into the room around them. After the second round one of its arms has disintegrated in addition to any damage it has suffered and the Manor is also disintegrating.

Upon its death the Manor starts to break apart and a ghostly Tom appears, smiles and thanks the party before he too disappears. This leaves the party in a peaceful clearing, feeling refreshed - as if they had rested for a week.

Random Encounters

When the party is fleeing the manor the below may be options for keeping the party where we need them to be.

At the end of each encounter they should black out to the vision of someone running towards them.

Encounter 1.

No matter how hard or fast they run they seem to be losing ground to the several footfalls behind them. The malicious energy that has been following them has been getting closer and closer. As the rain captures another brilliant flash of lightning a low growl comes from behind them.

The creature approaches as the shadows seem to swallow it up, hiding its form. Long, thin legs can be seen moving in the gloom, a lupine head the size of a dragon and glowing eyes meet the party's gaze.

Charisma saving throw DC:16 vs charmed or they fall unconscious. Otherwise the creature attacks (Statblock of a Doppelganger - but counts as having surprise on the party)

Encounter 2.

As the party is running the road suddenly slopes down as it passes a large hilly outcropping. As the party races across the levelled road a gush of water washes over the path threatening to knock them over and crash them against the trees on the other side of the road. (DC15 Dexterity saving throw). As they are recovering from the deluge the low grumble of earth moving resonates around them as the hill gives way and they are buried under the earth.

Encounter 3.

As the party rush down the road, the sound of the creatures' pursuit close behind them a crack of lightning is heard as a large branch from a tree ahead of them falls to block their path. A second crack heralds not lightning but the splitting of another branch as it falls on top of the party.