

CULTISTS' HIDDEN FANE



Hidden in plain sight amongst the houses and shops of local neighbourhoods, cultists worship ancient beings and profane gods. Hidden cellars and secret rooms are the locales for their foul dens of worship and sacrifice.

OUTSIDE THE LAIR

1. Rain-soaked steps lead into the darkness of the cellar beneath a decrepit old building.
2. Heavy and reinforced with iron bars, a wooden door blocks access to a building.
3. In a boudoir, a secret panel in a wardrobe opens to a crawl space that leads to a hidden room of curious and strange dimensions.
4. A well-used ladder, bearing the cult's symbol, leads to a gloomy, vaulted cellar.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

1. The cultist scrapes a razor-sharp hooked blade down a screaming victim's shin bones, peeling away the flesh.
2. Cultists flail in a frenzy at a bound victim who writhes in pain and fear.
3. A cultist chants profane verses from a bloodied scroll.
4. Cultists chant under their breath as they cast finger-bones into a wooden bowl.

MAJOR LAIR FEATURES

1. Heavy crimson curtains hanging from the walls and over doorways block sight and muffle sounds.
2. Suspicious dark stains of brown and red cover the surface of a heavy wooden table and the stone plinth on which it stands.
3. Racks of robes with heavy leather hoods line the walls. Each robe has its wearer's initials sewn into the hood. Many robes have splatters of dried blood on their chests and hems.
4. Countless marks of kneeling worshippers are visible on the bloody and stained sawdust-covered floor.

MINOR LAIR FEATURES

1. A blood-covered apron lies next to a butcher's cleaver.
2. Bones are stacked into bestial skull-topped columns along the walls. The stacks collapse (loudly) if interacted with roughly.

3. Blood red candles litter the area, casting flickering lights but leaving the ceiling in sinister shadow. Some fill niches in walls while others stand atop bone candlesticks and other grotesque things.
4. Unreadable drivel is scrawled in blood on a wall.

CULTIST'S APPEARANCE

1. The cultist wears heavy robes to obscure their face and body from view.
2. A bronze demonic mask covers the cultist's head. The face is set into a horrible leer.
3. Wearing open robes and very little else, this cultist seems fanatical and wild, and wholly devoid of any sense of modesty or decency.
4. Wearing gaudy black robes covered in badly-made bone patches, the cultist looks faintly ridiculous.

TREASURE

1. This lyre comprises a human skull with sinew strings and golden teeth. (A wailing woman's voice accompanies it when played).
2. Fanged gloves of black leather are adorned with bestial symbols held together by sewn sinew.
3. This golden hook-nosed mask portrays an ugly goblin-like face. The mask grants its wearer the ability to see in the dark like a goblin.
4. This wickedly serrated dagger with a sharp gut hook is used to quarter sacrifices as part of the cult's ceremonies. It lies on a bloody beaten copper plate.

TRINKETS & TRASH

1. A cultist's robe, infested with fleas, scabies or even disease-carrying insects, hangs invitingly from a prominent hook.
2. A discarded dagger, chipped from cutting bone, lies on the floor.
3. These tattered and burnt paper once held details of the cult's members; unfortunately, they are now unreadable.
4. Scraps of paper hold old messages between cultists; unfortunately, they are written in code.

CREDIT

This is a short system-neutral extract from *Monstrous Lair #27: Cultists' Hidden Fane* by Steve Hood.