



the women had made flowered streamers that filled the air with color. The chill of winter had almost gone and on newly growing grass the town danced and celebrated. Cornelius and his family were there and he loved seeing his mother and father smile and laugh together. It made him feel like there was nothing out of place with the machinery of the world. Then in a moment it was all undone.

Someone was yelling in the street and as the music died down the whole town could hear a booming voice calling out, "**Alester! Alester! I know you're here!**" Cornelius's parents looked at each other before his mother forcibly grabbed his hand. His father looked resigned and sad as he left them to go towards the yelling. Cornelius struggled to help but his mother was walking calmly away in the other direction, dragging him with her. The loud voice continued.

**"Alester! Come out and face me, or I swear I'll burn this village to the ground and these people with it."** Cornelius broke free and ran towards the Main Street. He arrived at the back of a gathering crowd and saw a magic user in a black robe standing in the street shouting. "**Alester!**" He cried again banging his staff in the dirt. "**Don't make me find you...!**..." He was interrupted by Cornelius' father Hemot who emerged into the street to face the mysterious wizard in black.

**"You're quarrel is with me,"** Cornelius' father said, **"Whatever sin you are here to punish, and there are many, it does not involve the good people of this town."**

**"At last,"** the strange wizard said in recognition. **"I have you, betrayer of the light, murderer..."**

**"That and much more,"** Hemot confessed, **"and I'm sorry for what I did to you."** The wizard recoiled from the unexpected admission. **"Your words can't save you this time,"** he responded, raising his staff to cast.

Hemot held out his arms as if to embrace his fate before

looking back directly at Cornelius through the crowd. Their eyes met on last time. **"Think different,"** Hemot said before the roar of magic fire consumed him.

### THINK DIFFERENT

Cornelius took his father's death hard with the pain and confusion compounded by the fact his parents had been lying to him their whole lives. In his grief, he shut himself away and wouldn't take food or comfort. He refused to even speak to his mother who now found herself unwelcome in town. Like her own son, the people of Cena didn't trust her anymore as wild and unfounded rumors began to circulate. Perhaps if she too was gone, the people wouldn't hold it against her son and he would be able to stay in the home they built. She finally left one night and went north, disappearing into the wilderness. She tried to say goodbye to Cornelius but had to be satisfied with simply knowing he was still alive.

Cornelius finally came out of the house, unofficially declaring his mourning over. The townspeople were grateful that the young man could move beyond his troubled past and they welcomed him back into the community. Cornelius tried to take up the family business and fish the lake himself, but he lacked the aptitude and patience for the job. After several days of fruitless work on the boat, Cornelius began to think different about the situation. The process of fishing with all timing and simple actions so surely a mechanism could be made that could sit on the boat and hold the rod for him.

When he returned home, he stripped the house and workshop for parts and began bringing his vision to life. With self-made springs, gears, pulleys and levers, he hammered and sawed through the night. In the morning he was ready to test his invention. It looked like an floating outhouse with fishing rods, nets and a set of mechanical hands sticking out from it. Cornelius placed it into the boat and attached the oars to a bottom set of pegs. He put in his metal crank and wound up the machine tight before sending it on it's way out onto the lake.

When it returned by midday it had caught dozens of fish, more than his father would have caught in a month. After a few days, Cornelius had more fish than he could sell or even give away. His house was surrounded by baskets of soon to be rotting fish.

When the local wood cutter saw what he had done, he ask Cornelius to help him with a machine that could cut wood faster. So Cornelius built him a water wheel and set it in the largest stream that poured into the lake. Then he and the blacksmith created a saw in the shape of a circle and now boards were being fashioned day and night. Cornelius even added a set of mechanical arms that could hold the wood and



### CAUTION: STAY OUT OF THE MACHINERY

Getting caught in the machinery causes 2d8 damage and players must *Save vs Death* for half damage until freed... possibly missing a body part.



### WANDERING MONSTERS:

Use these monsters as you see fit to heighten the danger throughout the maze. Roll a D6 or pick from the table:

1. **Swordsman** - (#1): AC: 0, MV: 120 ft, HD: 6 HP: 60 each, #AT: 4 (Swords), D: 1d8 / 1d8 / 1d8 / 1d8, SZ: Man-sized, MR: 40%, AL: N/A, Level/XP: 6/300 + 6/hp

2. **Maze Roller** - (#1-2): AC: 3, MV: 120 ft (360 Rolling), HD: 7+1, HP: 8-50 each, #AT: 2, D: 2d6, 2d6, SA: Juggernaut Attack, Crushing Hands, SZ: Large, MR: 40%, AL: N/A, Level/XP: 7/950 + 10/hp

3. **Tunnel Crawler** - (#1): AC: 3, MV: 120 ft, HD: 6, HP: 36, #AT: 4, D: 1d6 / 1d6 / 1d6 / 1d6, SZ: Medium, MR: 40%, AL: N/A, Level/XP: 6/300 + 6/hp

4. **Disposal Unit** - (#1): AC: 1, MV: 120 ft, HD: 5, HP: 40, #AT: 2, D: 2d6, 1d12, SA: Flamethrower, SD: Incinerate, SZ: Large, MR: 40%, AL: Neutral, Level/XP: 5/200 + 4/hp

5. **Gretzel** - (#1d4): AC: 3, MV: 90 ft, HD: 4+2, HP: 32 each, #AT: 3 (claw/claw/gore), D: 1d4, 1d4, 1d4, SZ: Man-sized, MR: Standard, AL: Chaotic Evil, Level/XP: 4/400 + 4/hp

6. **Grimlocks** - (#1d8): AC: 5, MV: 120 ft, HD: 2, HP: 16, #AT: 1 (claws), D: 1d6, SZ: Man-sized, MR: Special, AL: Neutral Evil, Level/XP: 2/28 + 2/hp

For detailed descriptions see "Monsters from OSRIC" on pages 32-33 and "Mad Master and Minions" on pages 34-35.

### GETTING THE PLAYERS INVOLVED:

The player's background as written starts with the party reaching Cena which has been recently raided. This was the Mad Master's hometown and the frequent target of his abuse. The people here can dispense some of the back-story from their biased point of view, and the party can rest up and gather supplies before beginning.

The town itself and the travel between it and the maze is too much of a time-consuming distraction, feel free to move things around and engineer the adventure as you see fit. Here are some other ways to hook the players:

1. **Dying Man** - The players come across a mortally wounded man lying in the road who claims he fought a famous armed swordsman that stole his weapons and went north into the Hindalund. (*Along the Way p.8*)

2. **Hostage** - A party member or important campaign character has been kidnapped by "metal men" and taken north (to the maze).

3. **County** - The party is hired by a royal or local magistrate to hunt down and kill the Mad Master so he will stop the periodic attacks.

4. **Magic Guild** - An organization of magic users task your group with stopping the Mad Master who they believe how can suppress their powers and perhaps end magic for all time.

5. **Invitation** - The party has made quite a name for itself. The Mad Master sends one of his clockwork crows to challenge the party to test his maze. Great treasure will be your reward pass or fail.

### RUMORS TABLE:

1. There is a wizard hiding alone in the wilds making statues of gold and bringing them to life to do his evil bidding.

2. The deep forests and foothills of the Hindalund hide ancient ruins full of treasure but guarded by monstrous half-breeds.

3. The Iron Syndicate is faking attacks up and down the Longway Road. They dress up in costumes and pretend to be monsters in order to charge protection money from the villages.

4. You can enter the Hindalund by boat if you know the proper tributary of the river, but no expeditions have ever returned.

5. The Mad Master was unfairly exiled and spurned by the town of Cena and all the humans of the area. They deserve whatever he wants to do to them.

6. Posted signs looking for magic users for hire was a trap. Everyone that responded to the notice disappeared soon thereafter.