

Melchinion's Garden

by Kyle Marquis

A splendid celebration of something forgotten, in a garden that always changes and never ends

Origin: Melchinion van Stelp, a competent but unexceptional aristocrat-sorcerer in life, had neither the stomach nor the skill for lichdom. He sought a different path: when his family's personal god dispatched a death to retrieve him, he would seduce and bamboozle this death, freeing himself from the bonds of mortality, at the small price of entertaining his death for a few hours a day.

To this end, Melchinion plundered the *Pavilion Stave* from a long-abandoned elven ruin and created a pocket dimension where he could bewilder his death. Five years ago, his death came for him after a long illness, and from his manor house, he put his plan into action. He jumped into his garden world, charmed the troublesome death, and tried to get back to his research.

Unfortunately, the death soon proved more than he could handle. After centuries of dull service, the death demanded constant entertainment and diversion. One hour stretched to two, then eight, then 24; now Melchinion, sustained

by magic, spends all his time entertaining the death, always returning to his

Observatory once every 24 hours. There, Melchinion makes his death look through the telescope at the Moon of Forgetfulness that always hangs in the sky. His death then forgets his purpose for another 24 hours, and the horrible cycle begins again.

Too frightened to abandon the project, too busy amusing his death to find another loophole, Melchinion is trapped in a private hell of his own creation.

Meanwhile, the death gods are getting angry. They've sent grave hounds and shadow cats to torment the van Stelp family. When Melchinion's wife **Gabatha** found a way to enter the Garden, she disappeared and did not return. Now their daughter **Lersa**—a fighter-sorcerer of minor accomplishment—needs help learning what happened and freeing Stelp Manor of its curse, before grave hounds and shadow cats kill anyone else. She seeks the PCs' help.

Melchinion's Garden is designed for a low- to mid-level party of roughly 4th to

8th level.

Entering the Garden: You enter Melchinion's Garden by sitting down at a seance table in Stelp Manor. When *sleep* is cast on you (or you cast it on yourself), everyone at the table awakens at a near-identical table around the **Lawn**. Lersa will cast *sleep* once per day but fears entering the Garden. Her research has determined a few things about Melchinion's Garden:

- How to enter it (as described above).
- How to exit it: you need to eat a **black quince**. Lersa says they are in the **Orangerie**. (They are not, though the party may eventually learn that there's a supply in the **Practical Garden**.)
- What Melchinion has done: he's captured his death, Lersa explains. Every van Stelp is assigned a death at birth after one of their ancestors tried to become a lich. Lersa believes Melchinion has somehow imprisoned it. Deaths look like animal-headed shadowy humanoids; free it, and it should be able to kill Melchinion for good.
- How he did it: he used a magical item called the *Pavilion Staff*. If (and only if) the party can free the death, the party can have it and anything else they retrieve in the garden. Lersa has five retainers (5th level fighters) to back up her insistence that the party finish the work before they're allowed to

take any treasure they find from her estate; that may or may not be enough. However, she keeps her word.

Transit: You enter and exit with whatever you can carry (up to about 250 pounds), so you can take treasures and other valuables out of Melchinion's Garden. You physically appear in the garden and reappear around the seance table in the manor house; it's not some kind of astral journey.

Moving Around the Garden: Narrow black rivers separate zones of the garden. These are—strangely—totally impassable unless you walk along a **lightpath**. Lightpaths are created in the **Grotto** and in the **Observatory**. Lightpaths form straight lines that go either north-south-east-west or northeast-southeast-southwest-northwest.

When the party first enters Melchinion's Garden, the **Grotto** generates light to the west (creating paths from the **Grotto** to the **Lawn** to the **Duck Pond**), and to the south (**Grotto**, **Fountain**, **Stables**, **Observatory**). The **Observatory** generates light to the west (**Observatory**, **Menagerie**, **Orangerie**) and to the north (**Observatory**, **Stables**, **Fountain**, **Grotto**). Explanations for how to move the lightpaths are in the individual zone descriptions. The map depicts open pathways as Os and closed ones as Xs.

Light: Dim light pervades Melchinion's Garden from the faintly luminous planets overhead. There is a sun in daytime, but it's a hazy thing that provides almost no additional light.

Don't Look at the Moon!: The constantly-shifting moon here has forgetfulness powers. If you stare at it for more than a few seconds, you become *confused* (as the spell) unless you make a save. Keep staring and you'll end up losing your memory and your sense of purpose, which is what happened to the death.

The Schedule:

As his death becomes ever more entranced by having a good time, Melchinion has had to spend more time (and more arcane power) amusing the death. Here's the current schedule.

Dawn (5 am to 11 am): Breakfast. Melchinion and the death enjoy pastries near the **Duck Pond**.

Noon (11 am to 4 pm): Adventure. Melchinion and the death go to the **Stables** (during the 11 am hour) and then ride around the **Menagerie**.

Afternoon (4 pm to 8 pm): Tea. Melchinion and the death relax in the setting sun near the **Fountain**.

Evening (8 pm to midnight): Soiree. Melchinion and the death dance with beautiful fey around the **Lawn**.

Night (midnight to 5 am): Astronomy. Melchinion and the death watch the stars in a way that scrambles the death's memories in the **Observatory**.

Melchinion: A 12th level sorcerer, but he has been forced to expend all his magic except a few cantrips and first-level spells

on entertaining his death. He carries the *Pavilion Stave* and wears a *robe of useful items* and *bracers of armor*. Melchinion can't actually die unless his death wills it: he regenerates 20 hp/round and recovers from death or other terminal status effects (like being turned to stone) in a few minutes.

Pavilion Stave: The stave's main function is to let the bearer and up to thirteen other willing companions travel between this garden and wherever they left in the material world. This can be done three times per day. The *stave* does not grant any powers over the garden, though it also can cast the following spells, each 1/day: *deep slumber*, *greater teleport*, *wall of thorns*, *invisible servant*.

The Death: A dapper, coyote-headed figure in a shifting black robe. Stats as a hound archon, except 1) it regenerates after a few minutes if destroyed, and 2) any physical touch attack, including with a weapon, causes instant death as the *wand of Orcus*. The death will apprise parties of this power and strongly encourage them not to attack. Self-indulgence has made the death louche, corpulent, and sarcastic.

Dealing with Melchinion and the Death: Melchinion is half mad from exhaustion—so frantic and deranged that he basically can't talk or speak coherently. The death is a little more lucid, but totally given over to the pleasures of dalliance and dance. Neither wants their experience to end, for different reasons.

Ending the Reign of Pleasure: There are several ways to rescue Melchinion from his fate.

The best way is to discover how Melchinion keeps his death's memories scrambled (using the telescope in the **Observatory**) and bar them from access by moving the lightpaths around. Melchinion has no special control over the lightpaths, so it's possible to trap him. If 24 hours go by without the death getting scrambled, he instantly understands what's happened and kills Melchinion.

Alternatively, the party can infuriate the death so badly that he destroys Melchinion. This involves systematically ruining every event planned that day, starting with breakfast and ending with the planet-viewing. This solution is left to the ingenious and malicious role-playing of your players.

One final possibility is somehow tricking or convincing Melchinion and the death to return to physical reality using the *Pavilion Stave*. If that happens, every grave hound and shadow cat in the manor will converge on his location, and the howling will forcibly return the death to lucidity. The party can try illusions or swindles to manage this.

What *won't* work is trying to beat them up: neither can die, and even without most of his spells, Melchinion is still dangerous—and the death kills with a touch.

THE ZONES

Lawn

Manicured, striped, dotted with white lawn chairs. Looks hastily abandoned.

Evening: From 8pm to midnight, Melchinion and the death dance with 3d4 **veil golems** attended by 2d6 **flowerfaces**. Melchinion's magic provides drinks and music.

Duck Pond

Complete with ducks. Mostly harmless.

Missing Wheel: Visible in the pond is a pristine steel wheel, untouched by rust. This is the **missing wheel** you need to operate the switch in the **Grotto**.

Hole in the Sky: When Melchinion killed his wife Gabatha, her death crashed right through the sky here, smashed Melchinion's sanctum, and retrieved her soul. You can climb out into the astral plane from the hole in the sky, though dark rifts crackle everywhere that lead directly to Hades. The Hadean impact is what knocked Pelwicker in the **Practical Garden** off-course and caused his ship to crash.

Ruined Sanctum: The remains of a sorcerous *sanctum sanctorum*, utterly flattened and broken to pieces by now. Without this sanctum, Melchinion was not able to improve his sorcerous skills and gain the upper hand against his ever-needier death.

Breakfast: From 5 am to 11 am Melchinion

and his death enjoy pastries created by Melchinion's magic, attended by 1d4+1 **flowerfaces**.

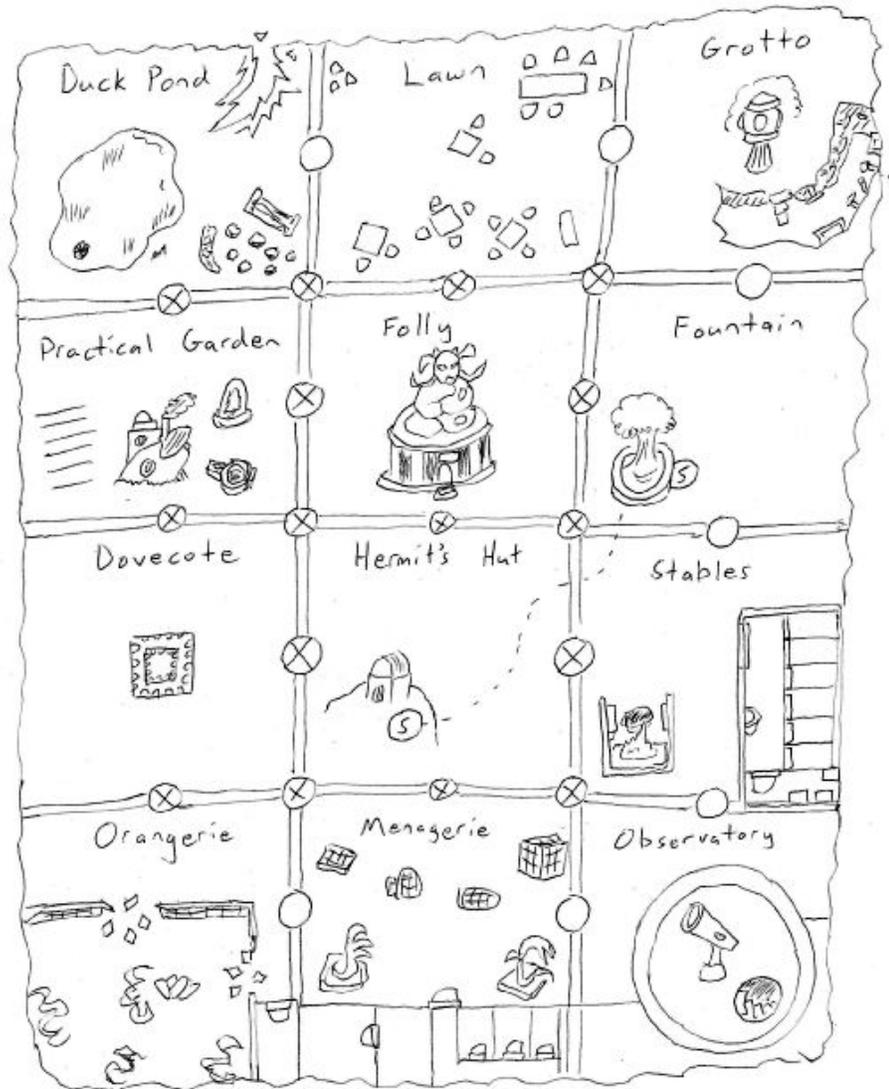
Grotto

A cave like a slash in the earth, red from iron oxide, full of strange and unfinished machines.

The Great Lamp: A square lamp that projects light north, south, east, and west (when you first encounter it). You can turn the wheels down below to swing it around.

Great Switch: You can throw a massive switch, which causes lots of wheels to spin. But it looks like one wheel is missing. If you add the **missing wheel** found in the **Duck Pond** (or if you're a skilled blacksmith who's able to fabricate a copy), throwing the switch causes the Great Lamp to turn 45°, so instead of creating a lightpath to the west (so you can walk to **Lawn** and then **Duck Pond**) and the south (so you can walk from **Fountain** to **Stables** to **Observatory**), it now points southwest, creating a path to the **Folly** and the **Dovecote**.

Melchinion's Garden



Switch Notes:

- 1) If the Goat King is on top of the folly, he gets in the way of the lightpath, meaning you can't access **Dovecote** until you throw the switch *and* get rid of the Goat King.
- 2) You can still make the **Grotto/Fountain/Stables/Observatory**

walk if there's a lightpath coming from the observatory.

Fountain

A permanent source of fresh water.

Hidden Well: The fountain contains a crack in the foundation. If you swim down to it, you appear in a damp but not flooded tunnel that leads to a door in the **Hermit's Hut**.

Tea: Melchinion and the death relax in the setting sun here, with refreshments created through Melchinion's magic. $1d_{4+1}$ **flowerfaces** attend them.

Stables

Four elegant, deer-like creatures (stats as race horses) in stalls, a *pocket horse* in a locked vitrine, an old **riding coat** hung on a wall, and an **everfull bucket**. Tack and other riding gear in an unlocked side room that contains the **telescope notebook**. $1d_{4-1}$ (minimum 0) **flowerfaces** guard the animals. A **forge** around back.

Deer-like Creatures: Docile and eager, but you can't take them out of this pocket realm.

Vitrine: Attached to the wall and made of near-indestructible glass. Elaborate art nouveau designs of masks and faces. One is conspicuously missing; the **ivory mask** in the **Menagerie** unlocks the vitrine. A skilled rogue can also pick the lock.

Pocket Horse: Looks like a big pocket watch when folded up. When unlocked with the **horsehead key** (see below),

unfolds into a mechanical horse (stats as a heavy war horse, but a construct, and too heavy to swim) for 24 hours.

Riding Coat: Mundane. Contains the **telescope instructions** and the **horsehead key** for the *pocket horse*. The death wears this while riding (see below).

Everfull Bucket: Is always full, but also only contains deer feed.

Forge: A small forge is here with all the tools and supplies a skilled blacksmith needs to make common items. A trained blacksmith might be able to fabricate the **missing wheel** needed to activate the switch in the **Grotto**, for example.

Pelwicker Pelwyn: 10% chance the gnome from the **Practical Garden** is here filling up a basket from the Everfull Bucket.

Telescope Notebook: Written in Melchinion's hand. Contains the following (accurate) information:

Moon: *Disguise self*. Lightpath north to **Stables, Fountain, Grotto**.

Viewing the Moon through the telescope eventually causes memory loss.

Red World: *Magic missile*. Lightpath west to **Menagerie and Orangerie**.

Viewing the Red World through the telescope grants you resistance to fire for 24 hours.

Blue World: *Grease*. Lightpath

northwest to **Hermit's Hut** and **Practical Garden**. Viewing the Blue World through the telescope cures disease.

Green World: *Comprehend languages*. Lightpath off. Viewing the Green World through the telescope lets you *commune with nature* once, and the effect only works once per month.

Yellow World: *Fog cloud*. Lightpath off; creates a *wall of force* around the observatory. Viewing the green world through the telescope grants you immunity to forced teleportation or plane shifting for 24 hours.

If you cast *detect magic* or *read magic*, you can move the telescope around freely.

Noon: Melchinion and his death spend the 11 am hour suiting up for a ride here. They then take two deer-like creatures and suitable equipment for their ride in the **Menagerie** until 4 pm.

Observatory

A three-story structure. The first two floors have mostly been stripped of valuables. The third floor contains the domed observatory itself with the telescope.

First Floor Star Pool: A shimmering pool on the first floor that generates the lightpath. Otherwise functions like a

regular freshwater pool.

Second Floor Fresco: Once depicted the five planets (Moon, Red, Blue, Green, Yellow) as goddesses defeating the Goat King. Now massively damaged; the action is illegible, but "women in colored gowns fight a demon" is obvious enough.

Telescope: Different spells turn the near-indestructible telescope to different sights in the sky, which in turn realigns the lightpaths that emerge from the First Floor Star Pool.

Moon: *Disguise self*. Lightpath north to **Stables, Fountain, Grotto**. Viewing the Moon through the telescope eventually causes memory loss.

Red World: *Magic missile*. Lightpath west to **Menagerie** and **Orangerie**. Viewing the Red World through the telescope grants you resistance to fire for 24 hours.

Blue World: *Grease*. Lightpath northwest to **Hermit's Hut** and **Practical Garden**. Viewing the Blue World through the telescope cures disease.

Green World: *Comprehend languages*. Lightpath off. Viewing the Green World through the telescope lets you *commune with nature* once, and the effect only works once per month.

Yellow World: *Fog cloud*. Lightpath off; creates a *wall of force* around the observatory. Viewing the Yellow World through the telescope grants you immunity to forced teleportation or plane shifting for 24 hours.

If you cast *detect magic* or *read magic*, you can move the telescope around freely, but there's not much to look at: this is a pocket dimension with little glowing balls

for “planets” in the sky.

Note that Melchinion knows all these spells and uses them to operate the device.

Moon Danger: If you look at the moon through the telescope, you don’t suffer from *confusion*, but you will gradually lose your memory. Melchinion makes sure that his death looks through the telescope at the moon every night.

Nighttime Astronomy: Melchinion and his death watch the stars here from midnight to 5 am. This scrambles the death’s memory.

Menagerie

Long-broken, gilded cages full of animals, monsters, and marvels. The two remaining creatures are a **green wyvern** and a **devil-marked chimera**. Both dwell in mangled, gilded palaces, atop heaps of other dead animals that cannot decompose, and both are highly aggressive.

Green Wyvern: Stats as a wyvern, except it regenerates as a troll.

Treasure: 550 gp, 1,020 sp, 4,250 cp, 3 jade rings worth 500 gp each, a *ring of shooting stars*, a tattered spellbook with the following spells still legible: *disguise self*, *comprehend languages*, *detect magic*, *sleep*.

Devil-marked Chimera: Stats as a chimera except its goat head cannot attack; instead, the head casts *cure serious wounds* or *bane* at will.

Treasure: 800 gp, 3,500 sp, 10,500 cp, a *wand of acid arrow*, an **ivory mask** worth

2,000 gp, the *Book of Five Planets*.

The Book of Five Planets: Verses about the five planet-deities of this pocket reality, describing how they helped bind the Goat God. Summarized:

The Moon Goddess disguised herself as a serving girl.

The Green Goddess learned his language so she could deceive him.

The Yellow Goddess hid their ambush in a bank of fog.

The Blue Goddess caused him to fall while dancing with a bucket of slippery grease.

The Red Goddess slew him with a bolt of arcane energy.

Southern Structure: There are some rooms and hallways in the “south” of the menagerie. They look like they connect to the **Orangerie** and **Observatory**, but there’s never any way through the Garden except the lightpaths, so you can’t actually reach the other zones.

Riding: Melchinion and his death are here from noon to 4pm, riding their deer-like mounts and watching the monsters.

Orangerie

Iron railings painted green that once held panes of glass. Most are now broken. The

Orangerie is supposed to contain the **black quinces** that let you return to the normal world; it does not. It contains plant monsters: **four assassin vines, a cerebral bluebell, and twelve flower zombies.**

Assassin Vines: Hidden throughout the Orangerie. One is wrapped around the *Adamant Bar* (see below). They only act if trod upon or damaged.

Cerebral Bluebell: A regular plant, not a creature. Anyone who steps on it triggers a flurry of sharp flowers to burst into the air within 5'. Saving throw or infected by *flower rot*.

Flower Rot: Make a Constitution save every day. Failure permanently removes $1d6$ Intelligence. Two successes in a row end the disease. If your Intelligence reaches 0, you become a flower zombie.

Flower Zombies: Big, swollen corpses with flowers growing in their brains. Technically plants, but can be turned as undead. Stats as a shambling mound, except replace lightning absorption with necrotic absorption. If engulfed by a flower zombie, save every round or be infected by flower rot.

Adamant Bar: Wrapped in one of the assassin vines. This bar functions as a $+2$ *spear* and can be used to pin the Goat King (atop the **Folly**) in place and prevent him from regenerating. In fact, any construct that is prone, dazed, stunned, or unconscious that is struck with the *adamant bar* is automatically paralyzed until it is removed and for one round more.

Fey Treasures: Hidden under another one of the assassin vines is a small locked onyx chest with ten gemstones of various kinds worth 500 gp each. The chest itself is very fine and worth another 1,000 gp.

Dovecote

Small, four-sided tower of shimmering quartz-like material, full of pigeons.

Rotating the Dovecote: You can freely rotate the dovecote using a crank at the base. The dovecote is reflective and can reflect light 45° . Since it doesn't generate its own pathlight, you need light from the **Grotto** to illuminate it. To get that, you need to throw the switch in the **Grotto** and remove the Goat King atop the **Folly** (he blocks the light).

Once the dovecote is illuminated, you can turn it to create a lightpath to either the **Practical Garden** or the **Hermit's Hut** depending on how you swing it.

Practical Garden

Tended by **Pelwicker Pelwyn** (male gnome rogue 7, chaotic good, $+2$ *broadsword, helm of telepathy*), an astral traveler and psychonaut who crash landed in this reality ten years ago and got trapped. He turned this ornamental flower garden into a pumpkin patch and corn field, and has lived well ever since, though he'd like to leave. Entering, you can see **fields of corn, the aquaculture pod, the crashed ethership, and the black quince tree.**

Fields of Corn: Not quite ready. Seed taken from the *everfull bucket* in the

Stables.

Aquaculture Pod: An old platform for viewing the flower garden, now full of wriggling eels. Pelwicker harvests one every few days for food.

Crashed Astral Ship: Turned into a house. Full of trashy novels in Gnomish, strange tools, and a spellbook Pelwicker can't use (includes the following spells: *grease*, *fog cloud*, *faerie fire*, *find familiar*). A locked, trapped chest (poison needle trap; 4d10 poison damage or half if you make your save) holds 4,000 sp, twelve pearls worth 500 gp each, and a *potion of healing*.

Black Quince Tree: Black quinces, at last! The tree is planted in a near-indestructible glass cloche and only Pelwicker has the **glass key** you need to open it. He'll give away one quince for free, but for full access, he wants your help escaping.

Helping Pelwicker Escape: To escape, Pelwicker needs:

1) A fuel source. He needs neural energy to power his engine. The **cerebral bluebell** in the **Orangerie** will do nicely. (So will an intelligent creature's brain, if you're offering.)

2) A way to avoid being pulled into those Hadean rifts he can see from the crack above the **Duck Pond**. The **telescope notebook** in the **Stables** reveals that viewing the Yellow World through the telescope protects against forced *teleportation* or *plane shift*—that'll do it!

Get him those two things and the glass key is yours; he'll also throw in twelve

pearls worth 500 gp each, and a *Writ of the 78 Nathnar Protocols*, which will get you out of trouble with certain gnomes, aberrations, psychics, and cosmic phenomena—it works once.

Folly

Temple to a fake sylvan god called the Goat King, who squats enormously atop the structure. The building is powerfully contemptuous of dignity and beauty. All divine spells may fail here (Wisdom save to resist); all attempts at sincerity ring false and faithless (no save).

The Goat King: A mechanical idol that sits atop the folly and blocks any pathlight as long as he's up there. His constant chuckling prevents taking rests in this location and makes concentration difficult (50% chance of failure every round).

The Goat King is a construct with stats as a hill giant and an unlimited supply of obscene statues to throw. He resists non-magic weapons not made of adamantium. He is reluctant to crawl off the folly, but will if threatened or angered. He fights until destroyed, and will regenerate in one hour unless pinned with the *Adamant Bar* (in the **Orangerie**).

Hermit's Hut

A rustic stone hut occupied for most of last year by Melchinion's wife **Gabatha**, who figured out the seance-table trick and then tried to save her husband. When she tried to free the death, Melchinion killed her. She's buried nearby. Melchinion missed her diary, which can be

summarized as follows:

- **My asshole husband has cheated death by getting his death drunk all the time.**
- **He's really not enjoying this. He's up to 15 hours a day of entertaining his death.**
- **Are they dating? Is it a dating thing? Not clear about that. Should I warn the death my husband is an asshole?**
- **He and his death are both insane. But I've learned that he mind-wipes his death using something in the telescope. The solution: use the lightpaths to prevent him from reaching the telescope.**

That's the final entry—Melchinion killed her when she tried to trap him and the death away from the telescope. He almost died when Gabatha's death crashed into the pocket reality.

Secret Tunnel: A tunnel under Gabatha's hut leads beneath the **Fountain** and is useful for quick getaways.

WANDERING ENCOUNTERS

A typical wandering encounter roll should be made every hour. Encounters generally won't enter buildings unless antagonized. If an encounter is generated, roll a d6.

- 1) Pelwicker Pelwyn
- 2) Bad Mood Birds
- 3) 1d6 Flowerfaces
- 4) Pandora pack (2d4+2 pandoras)
- 5) 1d3 veil golems
- 6) Drabbling peahen

Pelwicker Pelwyn: Details in the **Practical Garden**.

Bad Mood Birds: Doves and ducks are common in the Garden (common enough that the party may have a regular supply of food if they're stranded). But sometimes the birds get in a bad mood. When this encounter is rolled, the birds swarm (treat as a **bat swarm**) and try to steal something valuable and/or shiny.

Flowerface: The Garden's servants once looked like beautiful elfin people in fine clothes. Now, after decades of interbreeding, modification, and genetic degeneracy, they barely resemble people. (Their generation tanks were destroyed alongside Melchinion's sanctum beside the **Duck Pond**.)

Puny (5' tall) 4 HD plant creatures, seemingly frail but tough as old wood (AC as plate). Vaguely intelligent but cannot speak. If aggressive, their once-pretty, oddly asymmetric faces peel apart to create 1d3+3 lashing tentacles.

Tentacles: 1d4 slashing damage, 1d10

poison damage, and *stumbling sickness* (Con save allowed every minute to end).

Stumbling Sickness: When you make an attack roll or Dexterity check and succeed, you instead suffer a critical failure if the d20 roll is odd.

Reaction:

Low: Immediate face-splitting attack.

Medium: The flowerface offers indifferent and sullen service if tipped regularly. It will not speak or help out except to perform simple physical labor. It remains for about an hour.

High: The flowerface is willing to help out and can point out threats and treasures. If tipped well, it will serve for up to one day.

Pandora: Like gorgons and atlases, pandoras are a race, not a person. Related to but larger than gremlins, pandoras can open any door or chest, but they're jinxes—all their botches, bad luck, and magical energy expenditures affect others. Semi-intelligent, curious, incredibly dangerous if there are a lot of doors.

Small 4 HD fey, about as tough as a dryad. They can cast *knock* and *dimension door* at will. Every time they open a door or other openable object, use their spells, fail a check, or take damage, everyone not a pandora within 30' gets a point of **jinx**. Pandoras never suffer botches, critical failures, or critical hits; if they do, they fail or get hit normally, and the nearest creature not a pandora gains 5 jinx.

Jinx: If your d20 roll when performing an action is less than the jinx you've accumulated and your action fails, it

becomes a critical failure and your jinx is reduced to 0. Jinx is also a curse and can be reduced to 0 by *remove curse*.

Reaction:

Low: Aggressive little thieves, they steal whatever they can get their hands on.

Medium: Suspicious, annoying, monkey-like.

High: Friendly, willing to trade. They don't actually have anything valuable but you might be able to use them as walking traps.

Veil Golems: Animated veils dropped by exotic dancers and woven together by a skilled elf wizard long ago. Their movements are hypnotic, and their edges razor-sharp; they'll charm you into slack-jawed stillness, then slice you up and power themselves with your blood.

Stats as a flesh golem, with the following exceptions: 1) vulnerable to magical slashing damage, 2) no lightning absorption, 3) can cast *hypnotic pattern* at will without spending an action, 4) slashing damage instead of bludgeoning, 5) blood drain.

Blood Drain: When a veil golem hits with a critical hit, it regains 10 hit points.

Reaction: Roll 1d6.

1-2: Dancing, no *hypnotic pattern*

3-4: Dancing with *hypnotic pattern*; will attack anyone hypnotized

5-6: Aggressive; immediate attack

Drabbling Peahen: Once, peacocks roamed the menagerie, but most have died. A few immortal peahens still wander—dangerously drab monstrosities

that suck the beauty from the world.
Dingy brown creatures with dirty feathers.

Stats as a cockatrice, except no petrification. Instead, they generate a permanent *drab barrier*.

Drab Barrier: Functions as an antimagic field that also causes 1 point of psychic damage per round per point of Charisma the target creature possesses to everything within.

Shadow Maker: A creature reduced to zero hit points by the drabbling peahen (in any fashion) becomes a shadow.

Peck Shadow: Attack hits automatically and causes psychic damage equal to the target's Charisma; save or be *slowed* (save ends). A drabbling peahen can peck a shadow (the creature) and eat it automatically (no save), regaining half its maximum hit points.

Vomitous Death: If reduced to 0 hit points, the drabbling peahen's slayer suffers damage equal to their Charisma. Further, the peahen vanishes and vomits forth 3d10 shadows.

Reaction: Always vaguely hostile.

END OF MELCHINION'S GARDEN