SOFTWARE & TECH

Something Wicked Dragon Age

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Unraveling the Mystery of Something Wicked in Dragon Age: Inquisition

The world of Thedas is filled with ancient secrets, moral dilemmas, and encounters that challenge a player's perception of right and wrong. Few quests in *Dragon Age: Inquisition* capture this tension as perfectly as the side quest "Something Wicked." Found in the haunting swamps of the Fallow Mire, this mission pits the Inquisitor against a terrifying spirit, a desperate Avvar clan, and a choice that resonates long after the battle is won. For fans of the series, "Something Wicked" is not merely a combat encounter; it is a deep dive into the lore of spirits, the nature of fear, and the cost of survival. In this article, we will explore every facet of the quest, offering a comprehensive guide that honours its narrative weight and gameplay significance. Whether you are a first-time player or a seasoned veteran seeking to revisit the Fallow Mire, understanding **Something Wicked Dragon Age** lore will enrich your experience and help you make the most impactful decision.

The Setting: The Fallow Mire and its Haunting Atmosphere

The Fallow Mire is one of the earliest open-world areas available to the Inquisitor after leaving Haven. Unlike the lush forests of the Hinterlands or the sun-scorched deserts of the Western Approach, the Fallow Mire is a region defined by perpetual rain, murky waters, and an oppressive sense of dread. The area is infested with undead—corpses animated by the lingering blight of the Breach—and navigated via treacherous paths and abandoned settlements. It is here, amidst the ruins of a once-thriving Avvar holding, that you encounter the "Something Wicked" quest. The Avvar tribe, a proud and spiritually complex people, have been driven to desperate measures. Their chieftain claims that a "great beast" has taken refuge in the old Avvar fortress of Stone-Bear Hold, and they need the Inquisitor's help to rid them of it. However, as you soon discover, the beast is no ordinary monster—it is something far more sinister and far more intelligent.

The Avvar People: Believers in Spirits and Survival

To fully appreciate the stakes of **Something Wicked Dragon Age**, one must understand the Avvar. Unlike the Chantry-worshipping lowlanders, the Avvar live in the mountains and hold a deep reverence for spirits of the Fade. They do not see all spirits as demons; rather, they view them as forces of nature to be respected, bargained with, or defeated. This worldview is central to the quest. The Avvar chieftain explains that their hold was overrun after a mage summoned something that went terribly wrong. But the truth, as you uncover through conversations and codex entries, is far more complicated. The Avvar are not merely victims—they are participants in a cycle of belief and fear that has given birth to a new kind of terror.

The Quest Begins: Receiving "Something Wicked"

The quest triggers automatically when you explore the Fallow Mire and speak with the Avvar chieftain near the entrance of Stone-Bear Hold. He tells you that a "beast of the deep earth" has been slaughtering his people and that they cannot reclaim their stronghold without outside help. The Inquisitor can agree to assist, and the quest marker leads you into the dark, foreboding halls of the hold. Immediately, the atmosphere shifts. The interior is dimly lit, filled with disturbing murals and the sounds of dripping water. Red lyrium crystals—the corruptive mineral that fuels the game's main antagonist—glisten on the walls, hinting at a deeper connection to the Blight. As you

progress, you encounter spectral voices and visions that suggest the “beast” is not a physical entity but a powerful spirit of Fear that has manifested in the real world.

The Nature of the Beast: A Spirit of Fear

Upon reaching the heart of the hold, the Inquisitor comes face to face with the spirit. It appears as a hulking, nightmarish creature wreathed in shadow, its form shifting between that of a bear, a dragon, and a vaguely humanoid shape. This is no mindless monster; it speaks. It reveals that it was summoned by the Avvar themselves, not through a failed ritual, but through their overwhelming fear of losing their home. The Avvar’s belief that a great beast lurked in the mountain gave that belief power, and the Fade responded by birthing a spirit that incarnated that fear. The creature calls itself the “Terror of the Frostbacks” and taunts the Inquisitor, offering a twisted logic: it feeds on fear, but it also protects the Avvar by giving them a defined enemy to rally against. Without it, their culture would collapse into chaos. This moral dilemma is the heart of **Something Wicked Dragon Age**. Do you kill the spirit, knowing it may doom the Avvar to internal strife? Or do you let it live, allowing the cycle of fear to continue?

Key Choices and Their Consequences

At the climax of the quest, the Inquisitor is given two clear paths. Each leads to a different outcome, both with ramifications for the Fallow Mire and beyond. Your choice here will shape not only the immediate fate of the Avvar but also your reputation as a leader.

Option One: Defeat the Spirit (Kill the Terror)

The first option is to engage the spirit in combat. This is a challenging fight, as the Terror of the Frostbacks is a high-level demon with powerful area-of-effect attacks, summoning abilities, and a tendency to vanish and reappear. You will need a balanced party—tanks to absorb damage, mages for support, and rogues for burst damage. If you manage to defeat it, the spirit dissipates, and the Avvar chieftain thanks you hesitantly. He is relieved but also worried about what comes next. Without a common enemy, the clan may turn on itself, and the fear that defined them will need a new outlet. The quest concludes with the Avvar returning to Stone-Bear Hold, but their future remains uncertain. This choice aligns with a pragmatic or righteous Inquisitor who sees all spirits as dangerous.

Option Two: Reason with the Spirit (Let it Live)

The second option requires careful dialogue. The Inquisitor can persuade the spirit that it is not needed, that the Avvar are stronger than their fear. This is a speech check that succeeds if you have high dialogue skills or have gathered enough lore about spirits and the Avvar. If successful, the spirit acknowledges your wisdom. It cannot remain in the physical world if the Avvar no longer feed it with their terror. It retreats into the Fade, leaving the hold intact. The Avvar chieftain is grateful and amazed, and the clan begins a new chapter, learning to live without a symbol of fear. This choice rewards the Inquisitor with influence and often a unique amulet or weapon. It is the more diplomatic, compassionate route, reflecting a leader who understands the subtle nature of the Fade.

What Happens If You Fail the Persuasion Check?

If you attempt to reason with the spirit but fail the dialogue check, the spirit will mock your weakness and attack anyway. You will then have to fight it, but you will have missed the opportunity for a peaceful resolution. This makes the encounter harder, as the spirit may be enraged. It is advisable to bring companions with high Cunning or to have collected the relevant codex entries before entering the hold.

Gameplay Tips for Surviving the "Something Wicked" Encounter

Whether you choose to fight or negotiate, preparation is key. The Fallow Mire is a low-to-mid-level zone, but

“Something Wicked” can be challenging if you rush into it. Here are some practical tips to make the quest smoother:

- Level recommendation: Bring a party of level 8–10 or higher. The spirit is roughly level 12, so under-levelling makes the fight extremely difficult.
- Bring a mage: Barrier and Dispel are invaluable. The spirit uses Fade rifts to summon lesser shades, and Dispel can close them quickly.
- Use fire damage: The Terror of the Frostbacks is vulnerable to fire. Equip your warriors with runes of fire and your mages with fire spells like Fireball if you plan to fight.
- Watch for fear effects: The spirit can terrify your party, causing them to flee. Bring a templar or a mage with Cleanse to remove these debuffs.
- Explore thoroughly: Before entering the hold, search the Fallow Mire for codex entries about Avvar beliefs. These will boost your dialogue options and give you a deeper understanding of the lore.
- Save often: The game auto-saves before the boss arena, but it is wise to manual save before initiating the conversation with the spirit, in case you want to reload and try a different approach.

Lore Implications: Spirits, Demons, and Avvar Philosophy

The quest “Something Wicked” is a microcosm of one of *Dragon Age: Inquisition*'s core themes: the blurred line between spirits and demons. In Chantry doctrine, all spirits are considered dangerous temptations. But the Avvar teach a different lesson: spirits become demons only when they are corrupted by negative human emotions. The Terror of the Frostbacks is not inherently evil; it was created by fear. If the Avvar had channelled their belief into courage or hope, they might have summoned a spirit of Valor instead. This idea echoes throughout the game, especially in the companion quests of Solas and Cole, both of whom challenge the Inquisitor’s assumptions about the Fade.

This quest also ties into the larger narrative about the Breach and the Veil. The massive tear in the sky has weakened the barrier between the physical world and the Fade, making spirit manifestations more common. The events at Stone-Bear Hold are a direct consequence of this cosmic disturbance. By resolving the quest, the Inquisitor learns that even minor events in the war against Corypheus have deep spiritual ramifications. The Avvar, meanwhile, offer an alternative worldview that can enrich the player’s roleplaying experience. Choosing to spare the spirit is the only way to earn their true respect, as it shows you understand their culture rather than imposing Chantry dogma.

How "Something Wicked" Fits into the Larger Dragon Age Narrative

While “Something Wicked” is a side quest, it connects to several overarching threads in *Dragon Age: Inquisition*. First, it reinforces the idea that fear is the greatest weapon of the Elder One (Corypheus). Corypheus uses terror to control his followers, and the Breach itself is a symbol of world-ending dread. By confronting the Terror of the Frostbacks, the Inquisitor symbolically stands against that fear. Second, the quest provides insight into the nature of red lyrium, which is found in the hold. Red lyrium is an extension of the Blight, and its presence suggests that the Fear spirit may have been influenced by the Blight’s corruptive song. This foreshadows later revelations about the true source of the Blight and the origins of the darkspawn.

Furthermore, the quest is a precursor to the deeper exploration of the Avvar that occurs in the *Jaws of Hakkon* DLC. If you complete “Something Wicked” with a peaceful resolution, you will unlock special dialogue with certain Avvar characters in the later expansion. This continuity rewards players who invest in the smaller stories of Thedas. The quest also influences your Inquisitor’s reputation with the Hinterlands and other regions, as word of your actions spreads among the nomadic

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