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EDITION

ADVENTURE

HARVEST OF OATHS



STEPHEN CHENAULT



HARVEST OF OATHS

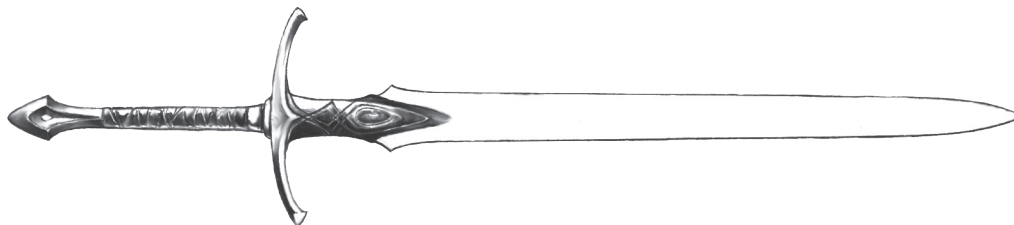
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Harvest of Oaths is designed for 3-5 characters in the mid-level range. It takes place in the Darkenfold Forest. It begins at the confluence of the two rivers, the Powder and the Mistbane, follows the northern bank of the latter into the deeper forest and ends at the Lake of Nunt. The journey starts at Bent's Trading Post.

This adventure combines over-land travel from the Trading Post, it involves challenges both combat and role playing. It is not a traditional adventure module that consists of one dungeon or one goal, but rather consists of a series of short adventures, which in turn offer the enterprising Castle Keeper the opportunity for numerous side treks and adventures of their own design. It is easy to port into any game, and sections can be played or skipped over as needed. Though set in the official **Castles & Crusades®** world of Aihirde, however, it is a complete stand alone adventure or can be used as a series of encounters. It can be adapted to any homebrew or other outside, published setting. As with **Upon the Powder River**, **Harvest of Oaths** consists of numerous, short-encounter areas.

INTRODUCTION

The adventure begins either on the banks of the river, in a canoe or at Bent's Trading Post, whichever fits best for the Castle Keeper. The Trading Post is a quiet refuge in the wilderness, home to two retired adventurers, that allows for resupply and rest. How and why the characters leave the Post is entirely up to them and circumstance, but the adventure carries them south into the River Basin country.

OVERLAND ADVENTURE

An over-land adventure is far less scripted than a dungeon or city encounter. Rooting the evil out of a dungeon is simple, offering the most basic of struggles. Over-land is another animal entirely. It pits the characters against all manner of hazards, from the mundane to the extraordinary. A great deal of fun can be pulled from the day to day arrangements. Marching orders are constantly adjusted, dangers lurk everywhere. Night watches are, themselves, an adventure.

While running **Harvest of Oaths**, the Castle Keeper can hop from encounter area to encounter area with a simple "a few days later and you come to a path." Or, they can travel the path less known and plunge into a day to day journey, where wandering monsters become a real item of threat and can shift and guide the adventure into new avenues the CK may never have considered. It is strongly recommended that the CK follow this latter course, marking time and distance on a sheet of paper, rolling encounters, requiring the players to explain how they travel, their watches, how they cross streams swollen with rain, set up camp, their marching order, and whatever other smaller items of note we all must struggle with while outdoors in the wild world. Here, a simple river crossing becomes a challenge and an adventure in and of itself.

Over-land is the best type of adventure, because the variables, from weather, to terrain to wandering monsters and planned encounters are almost countless.

NOTE: The encounter in the previous adventure, **Upon the Powder River**, may have set the party at odds with the Green Wizard, however they should not be pitted against that formidable foe, for he is very powerful. This battle should be saved for a later day. For more information on the Green Wizard, see below.

ABOUT THE DARKENFOLD

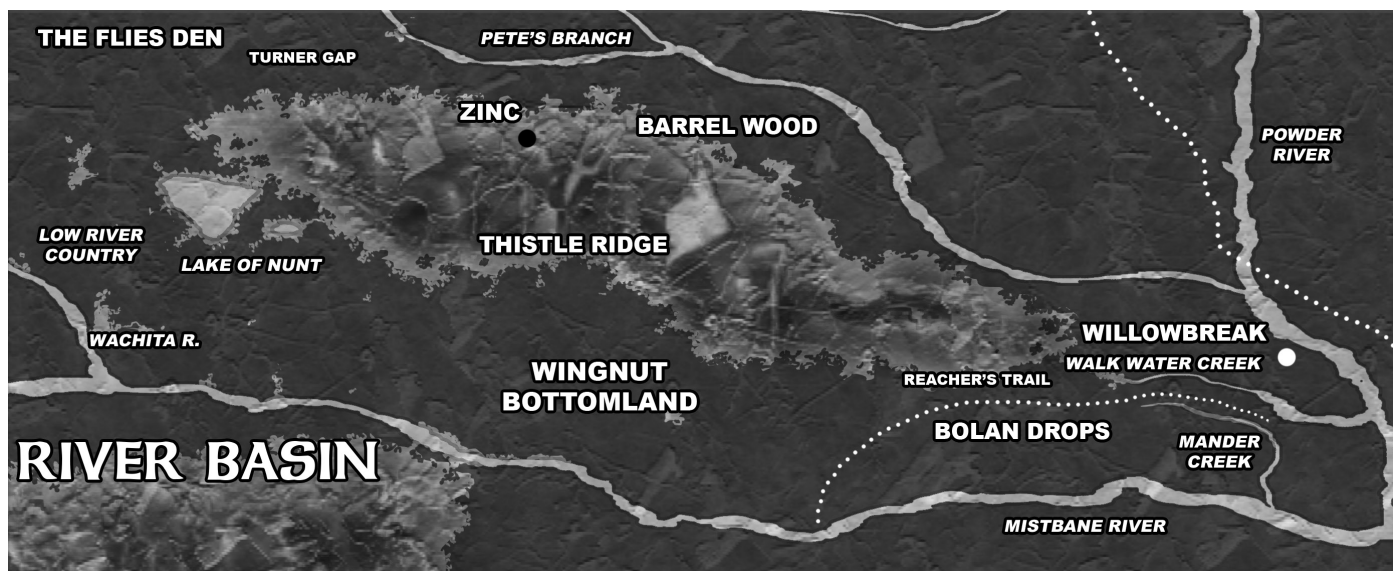
The Darkenfold Forest is a remnant of the ancient and vast Ethvold, a forest which spanned across the southern reaches of the Valley of Kayomar, from the Rhodope Mountains in the west to the Ardeen River in the east. It ran from the sea in the south to the Wilds of Gottland in the north. Little remains now but for two sprawling woodlands separated by the Danua River. The Eldwood, to the east, holds the heart of the Ethvold of old, but the Darkenfold, upon the west, holds its dark memories. The Darkenfold is an evil wood, possessed of its own wild abandon and home to many creatures of ill intent. Those who live there know that the trees and the soil hold memories of their past glory and do not forget the axes of men, orcs, dwarves, and goblins that have plundered them of their wealth and life.

The Darkenfold is divided into regions. The most trafficked are the Uplands where the town of Ends Meet stands. The Troll Glades to the east are wild and deep. The Millorian in the south and east and the Downs to the south mark the southern boundaries. But, through it all, lays the River Basin.

The River Basin is a long, narrow stretch of river country carved out of the Darkenfold by the Mistbane River. It begins roughly where the Watchita River feeds into the Mistbane and ends with the confluence of the Powder and Mistbane Rivers. The river marks the southern boundaries, and the Inigg Gorge the northern. It is a wild country and home to all manner of creatures. It is said to be the haunt of the Og Aust god, Let, that mighty stag, a lord of the ancient Ethvold and consort of the Val Eahrakun Tefnut. Few come here but those who desire peace, quiet, or refuge, or to be forgotten. It is dangerous and aside from the river, there is no easy avenue to civilization. There are no roads, towns, or villages . . . at least not ones that offer hope.

The Mistbane River serves as the only easy avenue of egress to this portion of the Darkenfold. Stalwart adventurers, traders, and travelers make their way along its slow moving course, seeking to travel from Ends Meet in the west to Haverstraw in the east, or seeking a quick way into the heart of the forest to try their hand at plundering its wealth in ancient treasures.

The trees in the River Basin are much like the other regions of the Darkenfold. Old oaks and beech, short, averaging about 60 feet high dominate the rolling valleys. Their wide, mountainous canopies carry one into the other, and all blot out the sun and moon and keep the forest in a perpetual shadow. Beneath the canopies, what little light filters down, lances a soil enriched with thousands of years of deadfall, giving birth to a carpet of thick mosses and broad leafed plants that grow along a forest floor, rent almost impassable by tree roots, and tangle with long creeping, black-veined vines.



There are many trails that wind their way through the deep woods, but most of these are animal tracks and do not offer travelers easy passage. They crisscross the country, many leading to the river itself, or to any number of small streams and ponds. Other roads, more often used by the knowledgeable lie in the multitude of creeks and small streams that wander their way through the wood before they end their babbling course, falling into the deep, green river.

ABOUT THE MISTBANE

The Mistbane River, or the Blue Creek, has its headwaters in the distant Rhodope Mountains, where it begins as little more than a trickle. It tumbles and flows, following many courses through the Shelves of the Mist, where it gains more strength from tributaries and earns its river name. It breaks free of those hills just north and east of the small town of Petersboro. The river widens here and slows its pace considerably, before it drifts down beneath the eves of the Darkenfold where it continues its southern journey. The river is slow, ranges from 80-120 feet wide, and is rather deep except in the few fords that interrupt its travel. Heavy fog reduces visibility considerably and accompanies the Mistbane's flow. Considered by many of the locals to be dangerous, they avoid the fog at all costs. They speak of tales of ghosts who snatch the unwary from their roosts and carry them to the seas beyond.

The river continues its course through the Darkenfold by turning sharply west in the Millorian, where the Watchita River joins its course. Here, the Mistbane, strengthened in its flow and widened to about 160 feet, passes into the River Basin country, and on past the Downs, an even more dank and deadly portion of the Darkenfold. At last it flows into the Danau River near Haverstraw and the sandy beaches of Lawn.

The banks of the river sport many wonderfully tall and full-bodied willow trees. These trees often reside on small grassy knolls at the water's edge, allowing their branches and leaves to brush the water. They are vaguely-sentient relatives of the older sentient trees and treants. These willows serve the river as guardians of sorts, offering refuge from the river or the forest, or both.

For more on the mists, the banshees that inhabit them, and the healing power of the willows, see the adventure *Shades of Mist*.

GETTING STARTED

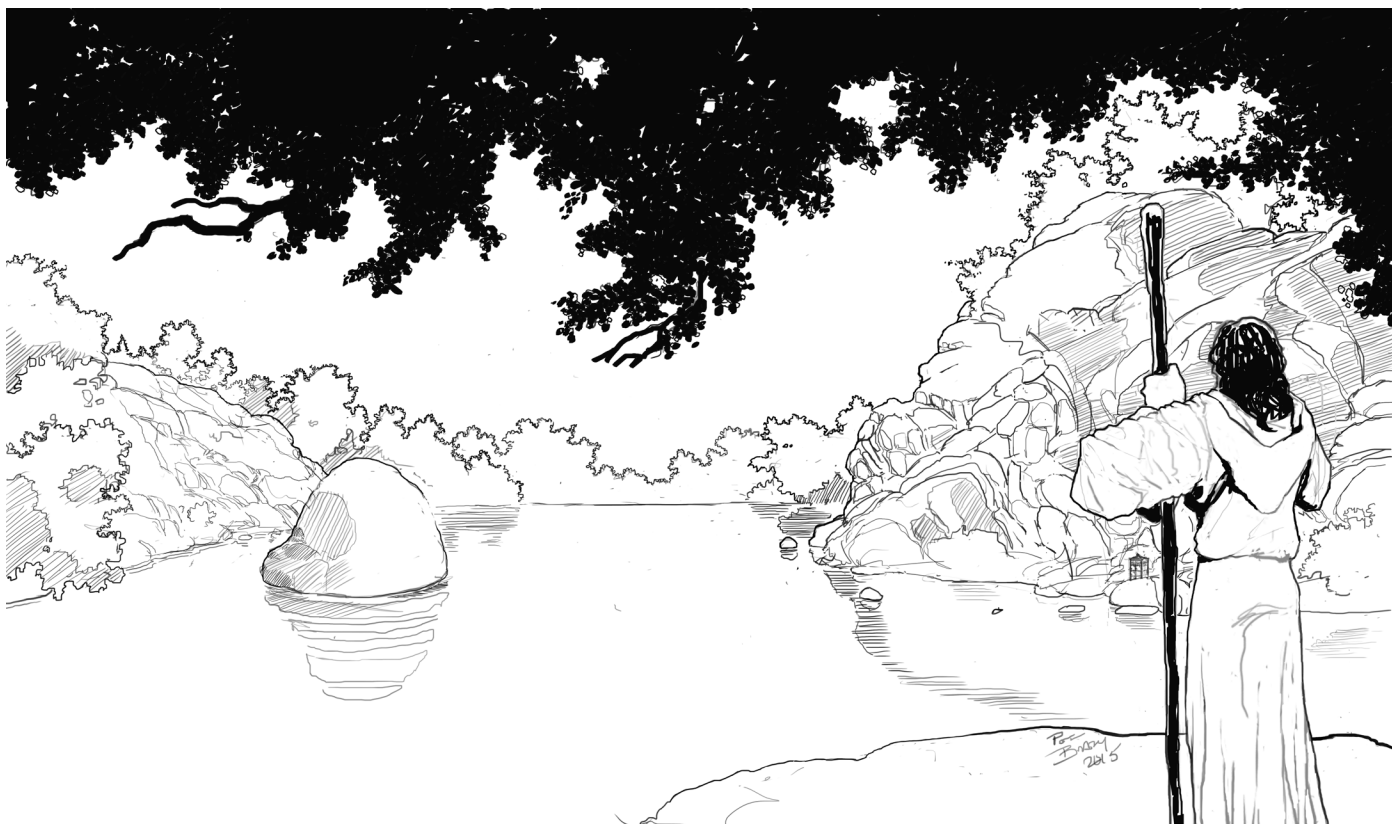
Harvest of Oaths begins in and around Bent's Trading Post. The characters are set to cross the Darkenfold for any number of reasons of the CK's or their own choosing. Here are a few sample reasons to explore the Darkenfold's River Basin.

- 1) The Darkenfold is known for its rich history, where dwarves built ancient roads and men cities of gold. Here they worshipped the Val Eahrakun with magic and wealth. The danger is great, but the promise of treasure greater.
- 2) The characters are hired by the owners of Bent's Trading Post to carry a letter to Ends Meet. The letter can be one of simple greetings, or one more complex, explaining the growing powers of the Green Wizard.
- 3) Picking up from *Upon the Powder River* the characters are pursuing several of the Green Wizard's underlings. Whether they find them or not, dead or alive, is entirely up to the Castle Keeper.
- 4) The PCs hear from someone at Bent's Trading Post of an old abandoned watch tower that lies upon the southern bank of the Mistbane River. It is reputedly the haunt of a wood spirit that none has mastered and hold a treasure that any would desire.

TRAVELING THE RIVER

There are several options for following the course of the Powder or Mistbane Rivers. One can go on either bank, or one can float down the river. Consult the appropriate rules to determine travel speeds. There are plenty of canoes at Bent's Trading Post for sale or trade. Older canoes go for half the cost of that listed in the *Players Handbook*.

The confluence of the two rivers is roughly 20 miles from Bent's Trading Post.



By Boat

Travel downstream by boat is relatively easy. The wide, deep water makes passage fast. Traveling at a normal speed, the boat can cover about 20 miles per day. This takes into account running into sand bars, and other normal stops and starts on a river. If the conditions are right, the characters can move much faster, up to 36 miles per day.

By Land

Traveling the banks of the Powder River overland is much more difficult. On trails or paths it is normal, but off trail it can be arduous. The country is old, broken, and filled with natural obstacles. These obstacles include fallen trees, deep ditches, huge thorn patches, creeks, etc. These hazards are not encounter areas, but do serve to slow the party down. The Castle Keeper should make the party aware of the difficulty and why their movement is so slow. For example "The bramble catches on the shoulder strap of your pack and as you step forward it jerks the strap back, twists the pack around your torso and nearly pulls you off your feet." That and similar descriptions make the trek through the forest all the more real.

When on a trail, covering 15-16 miles a day is normal, assuming an average walking speed of roughly 3 mph, and 8 hours of travel time with about 2 hours for meals and rest scattered throughout the day. On rougher terrain where trails haven't been blazed, making 10 miles is a good day. If you don't want to track whether the heroes are on difficult terrain or smooth, simply roll 4d4 to see how many miles the party makes on any given day's travel; this should give a fair average. The trails leading out from Bent's are few, and those that do exist are narrow. There is one southern trail that the Green Wizard's people use to move back

and forth between their master's castle and the Post.

WALK WATER CREEK

The Walk Water slips into the Powder from the west. Its headwaters lie in the upper reaches of the Bolan Drops, a stretch of the River Basin dominated by moss covered boulders, tangled grasses, large flat rocks jutting from the forest floor at one angle or the other, and the usual spread of oak trees with a heavy dose of sycamore growing throughout.

The creek is shallow, rarely over a few inches deep, with a bed marked by smooth, round stones and sand. Sprinkled amidst the normal brown and gray rocks are bright green stones, prized in the far east for their beauty and magical qualities. When damp and held in the light they become luminescent and cast back a pale, greenish light. The captured light remains in the stone half as long as the stone was exposed to outside light source.

The Walk Water is long, stretching about 40 miles up into the River Basin country. The forest grows thick overhead, often hanging down to within 3 or 4 feet of the water. Travel on the creek, by foot, is more difficult than in the forest that surrounds, for the overhanging branches and the loose rock.

It is rumored to harbor gold in the sandy soil that flanks the creek and lies beneath the water.

For this reason it is the haunt of an old dwarf, Craigsbone by name. He has tramped much of the Powder River country, on both banks and has settled into panning the Walk Water. He works closely with another dwarf, a cousin of his, Beric Woodeneye (see **Upon the Powder River**), though Craigsbone rarely leaves the Walk Water.

Craigsbone is old, roughly 400 years old, but he has long since forgotten his age and his given name. He well remembers the Winter Dark, the Long Centuries, and is well traveled, though in truth the world has changed much since his youth, so much of his information from the outside world is not terribly useful. He is friendly enough to strangers, unless he feels threatened in some way.

He has lived in the forest for close to 70 years and is in tune with its normal rhythms. He is fast to pick up on strange sounds, animal behavior, smells, and anything that might break the norm. For this reason, sneaking around him, hiding in shadows, etc. are difficult (DC 25). He speaks a variety of languages and knows a bit about the forest. He has many friends in the forest, most notably the Eschl.

Craigsbone is chaotic good. He carries a magical +2 battle axe, wears a +1 chain shirt, a +1 shield and has a +2 ring of protection. He also carries a ring of invisibility. There is no reason the characters should fight him. If it is necessary to stat him out, treat him as a 7th level fighter with abilities Str 16 Dex 15 Con 12 Int 10 Wis 10 Cha 13.

Craigsbone travels with an enormous backpack full of all manner of gear and equipment.

If the party befriends Craigsbone, he welcomes them to his camp, which is a few hundred yards west of the Powder beneath a large overhang of a rock. He offers advice freely. These are some of the tidbits he offers:

ABOUT THE MISTBANE: Be wary of that river, the mists that float its surface are haunted and the open water brings the attention of unwanted predators. If in trouble, or doubt, seek for the safety of the willow trees.

ABOUT THE CONFLUENCE: It's too open and there are too many predators. Be wary.

GREEN WIZARD: He's a bastard and a slaver. Avoid him at all costs or you'll end up in the pits.

THE WATCH TOWER: It's a strange place, haunted by some foul tempered spirit that is somehow connected to the Green Wizard, though he'll never go the tower nor send his men.

CONCERNING TRAVEL IN THE DARKENFOLD: Use the rivers for roads, it's the best way to get around, but be careful of the giant gar, they feed on almost anything that hits the water.

THE LAKE OF MUNT: There is a wizard that dwells there, Drusus by name. He is of the order of the Umbrian wizards, though he claims to have left those people and dwells now in peace. He is not all that he seems, I cannot figure out what, but something is amiss with him.

WHERE RIVERS MEET

The Powder River narrows just before it meets the Mistbane. On the eastern bank of the River a low bluff, some 30 feet high, of porous rock hems the river in, and on the west bank a gigantic

stone sits in the bend, the very end of Bolan Drops that begin far to the north. The water forced between these two stone walls becomes violent as it spills into the Mistbane. But for its part the Mistbane consumes the Powder's flow, taming its mad rush.

Travelers on the Powder are often propelled onto the Mistbane, slowing roughly at the river's center. Here they turn their craft east and to civilization or west, into the heart of the forest.

THE ROPE BRIDGE

A rope bridge exists east of the confluence and stretches from the north bank of the Mistbane to the south. It consists of one lower rope to walk upon and two upper ropes to offer balance. Crossing it takes some skill. It requires four successful dexterity checks (DC 15 each) to get across. If one check is failed the individual falls into the river below with all the unfortunate consequences such a swim may or may not include.

The river confluence is a favored hunting ground for perytons who come from the distant Rhodope Mountains to hunt people. They linger on the southern bank, just west of the confluence, where they can see any creatures coming down or up the Mistbane, as well as those coming down from the Powder. It gives them the perfect vantage to spy anyone attempting to cross the Powder on the Rope Bridge.

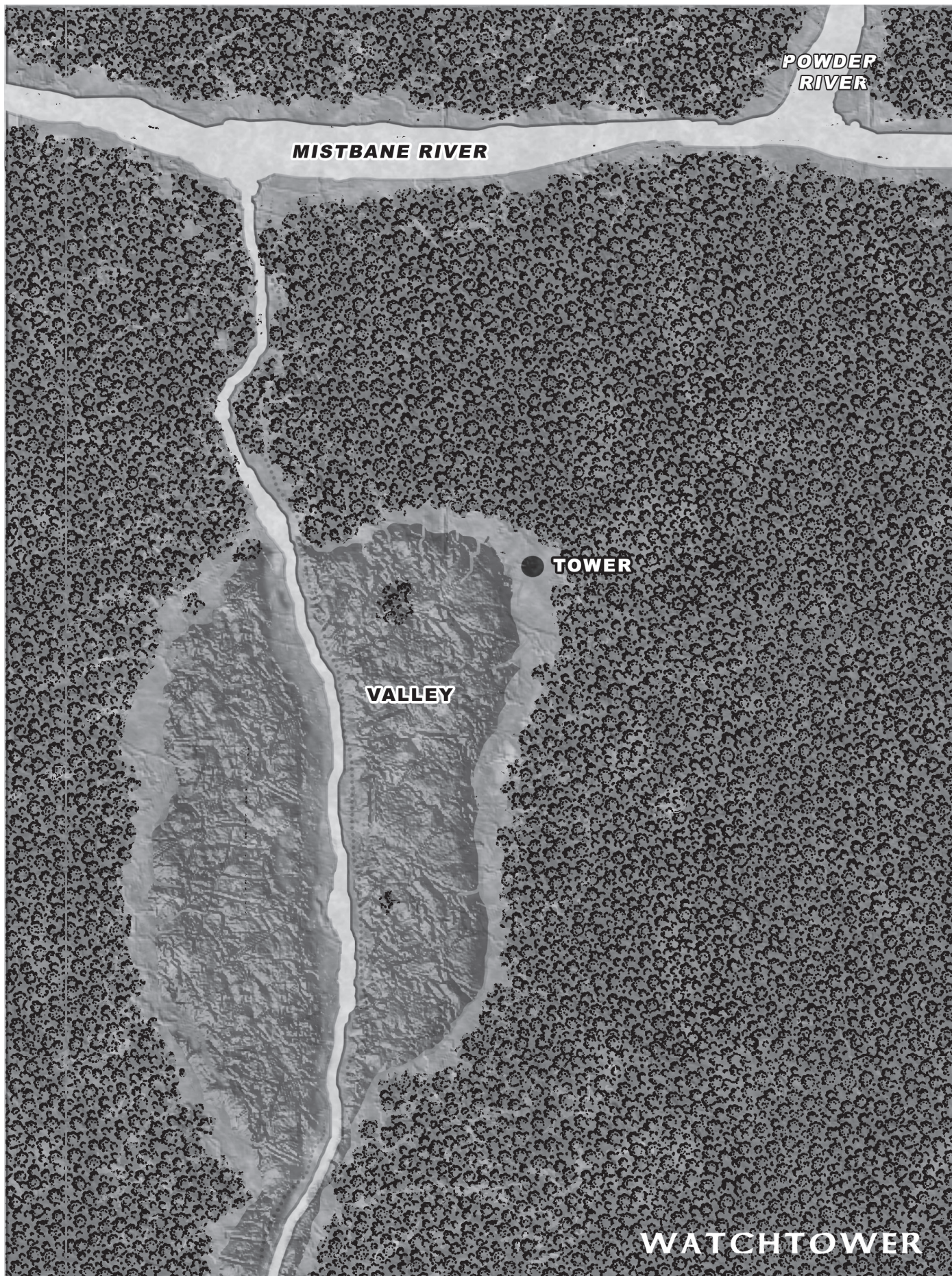
The perytons are perched along a low tree line and are somewhat visible from the river and the north shore. Upon a successful Wisdom (perception) check (DC 15), they are spotted, though making out that they are anything other than a few deer, however requires a DC 17 check. Alternately, a Wisdom (survival) check at DC 13 may offer a better chance of both seeing the creatures and determining that they are not deer.

The perytons have recently killed a human, a druid from the Green Wizard's motley crew, but are still on the lookout for more, both to eat and bring back alive to their mates in the far off mountains.

The Castle Keeper should determine how many perytons there are based on the size of the party.

PERYTON (CE Medium Monstrosity) HP 51 (HD 5d8+15), AC 17, Spd 30ft/60ft (fly). Str 17 Dex 16 Con 17 Int 11 Wis 14 Cha 12. Perception 16(+3). Stealth +5. Gore +5 (1d8+3); Talons +5 (2d4+3). SA Darkvision 60ft, Immune to bludgeoning, slashing, stabbing from nonmagical weapons, Multiattack (gore, talons), Flyby (doesn't provoke opportunity attacks), Improved critical (18-20), vicious dive (if it dives at least 30 feet, it gains advantage on its gore attack), shadow mimicry (its shadow looks like that of a normal man, and it smells like a normal man to those with the scent ability).*

**This version of the Peryton is different than that in the core 5e Monster Guide, which is not currently open content; instead, we offer this alternate that has been adapted from other OGL sources for the purposes of including a stat block here. This version is still a Challenge 2 (450 XP) creature. GMs who prefer to use the core version, however, should feel free to do so.*



TREASURE: The perytons slew and have half eaten a druid. His body lies in the brush on the south bank where the perytons originally were. He is wearing *+1 leather armor* (the perytons have eaten around this, washing it in the gore of their kill), a *potion of superior healing*, 42gp in assorted coin, four sets of iron manacles with slave colors. The druid's clothes are an utter ruin, but his high hard boots are in good shape. A golden armband lies in the muck and blood next him. It sports a carved image of a sickle upon it.

THE GREEN WIZARD

The symbol of the sickle is that of the Green Wizard, feared and hated by the denizens of the River Basin. The Green Wizard dwells further east upon the south bank of the Mistbane River. He reportedly dwells in a castle, one that floats upon the air, and from there operates a bustling slave trade. His minions search the forest for antiquities, and pay for the endeavor by capturing the unwary and the native eschl (the wild humans that live in the Darkenfold) and selling them into slavery in the east.

RIVER BANK ROAD

On the south bank of the Mistbane is the River Bank Road. It is a road in name only. It runs from the castle of the Green Wizard, about 5 miles east of the confluence, to about a quarter of a mile west of the confluence. There it ends. It is about 15 feet wide, open and allows for quick and easy passage for its whole length.

Close to the Wizard's tower, within a half mile or so, the road is watched by his minions.

THE PECKINSAW TRAIL

There is one spur off the road, a few hundred yards west of the confluence, near where the perytons feed and the Rope Bridge. It is fairly easy to find, noticeable from the River Bank Road or the river itself. It leads south to a long low valley over which an abandoned watchtower looms. The valley is a natural road into the southern country below. The trail winds into it, emerging at the southern end of the valley and leading into the Two Dogs River County and the Downs.

It is about a half day's walk from the river to the watchtower.

THE WATCHTOWER

The watchtower was built on a rise, on the northern end of a north-south running valley. Long years ago the valley was occupied by settlers, who planted crops and ran some livestock there. They built the watchtower as a place of refuge, but also as a sign of strength. Though they have long since vanished, and the valley returned to its natural state, the watchtower and some few of their houses remain.

The trail gives way to a broad, open valley flanked by two ridges and covered in a deep, rich grass. The ridges to the east and west rise suddenly, breaking free of the deep grass of the valley to push the forest floor up and arrest the approach of the Darkenfold, like a castle's walls. The

trail itself peters off into the loamy grass, but is replaced by a broad creek that meanders its way through, passing through the valley before it veers west just before the trail, on its leisurely way to the river beyond. Above it all, on the eastern ridge stands a lonesome tower. Tall and gaunt, its gray stone seems out of place in the sea of greens, the grasses and trees beyond. Vines crawl up its flanks, clinging to the stone and carpeting its lower hall in green before they slip into its dark windows.

The tower itself is about 60 feet high and sits upon the eastern ridge overlooking the valley. The area around the tower is devoid of large vegetation. There are no trees in the immediate vicinity, only some shrubs and bushes. The tree line picks up about 100 yards east of the tower on the ridge. Long ago there was a low wall at the tree line that blocked the forest from the tower itself, but that has fallen over and lies beneath the deep green grasses.

There is a 30% chance that a hill giant, who dwells nearby, is in the valley hunting, fishing or just wandering about. If he is, he is easy enough to notice as he pokes along the creek bed, as he's huge, and isn't trying to be particularly stealthy. If, for some reason, he wanders into the valley while the party is at the tower, or they do not notice him when they first enter, he comes to the tower if there is any noise.

Though no forest spirit haunts the area, the tower is not completely unoccupied. Some years ago a nefarious thief and rogue, escaping the hangman's noose in the town of Haverstraw, fled up the Mistbane. By chance, he stumbled on Peckinsaw's Trail and followed it into the forest, fleeing his pursuers, who, unbeknownst to him, had long since given up the chase. He found the watchtower and took up residence in it. It wasn't long before he discovered the hill giant and settled into the tower with no better guard he could imagine.

Soon thereafter, while chopping wood, he was bitten by a forest adder and died. His bones lie scattered about the wood pile where he was eaten by wolves. His belongings remained hidden in the tower, watched over by the one creature he trusted to guard them: a mimic.

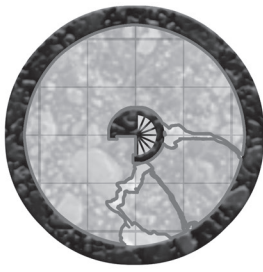
THE GROUNDS

The grounds are barren as noted. There is a well, a small hobbled together cart, and a stack of wood neatly arranged. Though there are no tracks about, the wood in the wood pile is only a month old. The well has a bucket and pulley rigged over it allowing for use.

WELL: The well has good, clean, fresh water in it, and the pulley system allows for easy extraction. The waterline is 50 feet down.

CART: The cart's axle is broken and it is unusable.

WOOD PILE: The wood is fairly dry and burns nicely. An upright stump sits next to the wood pile. There is a key on it. The key is to the tower door.



3rd Floor



2nd Floor



1st Floor

THE BONES: Not far from the tree line, just east of the tower, lie the rogue's bones. They are scattered about in the grass. His axe remains stuck in a log that he had been chopping upon. His clothing is long gone, but on his hand is a magical *ring of regeneration*. If a detailed search of the area is made it is found on a successful DC 15 Wisdom (perception) check or a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check. If the search is casual the check uses the Passive Perception scores of the PCs instead. If a *detect magic* is cast on the area, the ring is easy enough to find.

There is a battle axe in the grass as well. It lies not far from the hand; if it is found first (DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation)), the searchers have a +2 to their

checks in finding the ring, for it alerts them to the idea of other items in the grass.

THE TOWER KEYS: Sitting on the upright stump near the woodpile is a large iron key. It opens the tower door.

THE DOOR: The door is locked, but it can be picked on a successful Dexterity (thieves' tools) check at DC 14. The door itself is fairly stout, made of seasoned wood and bound with iron. Regardless, it is old and can be kicked in with a successful strength check (DC 17) or destroyed if 20 points of damage is delivered to it.

THE TOWER

The tower consists of three floors and a roof. It is round, 60 feet in diameter and owing to the vines that cover its flanks, relatively easy to climb with a DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check.

FIRST FLOOR

The door opens to a dark, windowless room. The air is stuffy but not unbelievably so. The rogue rarely used this floor, only passing through it. There are bits and pieces of broken furniture piled up along the walls, and some tattered pieces of clothing as well. The broken haft of a halberd leans against the stair.

Steps lead up to an opening in the floor above the second floor.

SECOND FLOOR

The room is relatively clean, with three open windows, though some attempt at hanging curtains over them is clear for any to see.

The rogue bedded down here. His pack and weapons lean against the wall and his sleeping mat, a bed of grasses, and blankets lies on the floor where he left it. Next to the bedding is a bottle of wine and two goblets. The wine is still good, if a little sweet. It is marked with the town symbol of Haverstraw. The goblets are empty, though worth about 5gp apiece. The pack has clothes in it, neatly folded, flint and steel, a whetstone, and a coil of rope 50 feet long with grapple. There is a set of magical thieves tools in there as well, which grant +1 to ability checks to use the kit. There is a short bow, 12 arrows and a thick-bladed knife by the pack.

THIRD FLOOR

This floor is much like the second, with three windows, though the windows are not covered. It is open, and the air fresh and clean.

Here lies the heart of the rogue's treasure, the item he stole that raised the town of Haverstraw against him. Hidden beneath a pile of debris is a trunk, and within it the fruit of his skills. However the trunk, and the debris, is not what it seems. It's a mimic, set here by the rogue to guard his treasure and paid in flesh for its service. It has remained here even after his demise, waiting patiently for its next meal. Though the mimic suspects the rogue is dead (for he would not have

left his treasure), he fears traveling in the open, and so has remained in the tower.

Anyone approaching the debris will discover what appears to be an old footlocker in among the junk. Upon examining the footlocker (checking to see if it's locked or trapped, for example) will deliver a shock: the PC is stuck, and attacked by the object, which is, in fact, a mimic! Any PC with a Passive Perception score of 15 or higher may notice some subtle twitch or other "off" detail that could warn them and allow a Dexterity save (DC 13) to avoid touching it in time. The creature launches an attack if it thinks it can get an easy meal. If not, it will seek to bargain with the party, for unlike normal mimics, this one has been taught to speak by its former friend and master. Its words are halting and in broken Vulgate, but understandable. It bargains for food, as it has sat for a long while without eating. It does not know much, as the rogue brought it to the valley, but it does know of the hill giant and it does know that in all the many months they were here not a soul came to the tower.

MIMIC (N Medium Monstrosity) HP 58 (HD 9d8+18), AC 12, Spd 15ft. Str 17 Dex 12 Con 15 Int 5 Wis 13 Cha 8. Perception 11(+1). Stealth +5. Pseudopod +5 (1d8+3), bite +5 (1d8+3, plus 1d8 acid). SA Darkvision 60ft, shapechanger (polymorph as an action; equipment doesn't polymorph; reverts to true form if dies), Adhesive (adhere to anything it touches; grapples huge or smaller—escape DC 13/disadvantage), False appearance (when object form indistinguishable from other objects), Grappler (advantage on attack rolls vs. creatures it grapples).

TREASURE: Beneath the mimic is a small bag. Inside is a stone and 45pp. Ingrained upon the stone are five names. The names are as follows: Drusus, Utz Two Souls, Teadora, Telma and Ferenck. The stone itself belongs to the town of Haverstraw and bound the oathtakers from exacting vengeance upon them for deeds beyond the understanding of the mimic or even the rogue. Oath stones are deadly to violate, but only if held by the one or ones who exacted the oath.

TOP FLOOR

This floor is home to only a few nesting birds, but gives a wondrous view of the whole valley and even a bend in the Mistbane River to the north.

ABANDONED VILLAGE

The village sits on the edge of the woods about a quarter of a mile south of the tower. It consists of four abandoned houses and a large communal barn. There is little left here but ruins. The roof of the barn is completely fallen in leaving a mangled pile of splintered timbers and molded grasses.

Of the houses, two are burned out by fire and a third suffered the wrath of a fallen tree that has virtually bisected it. The fourth is largely intact with a decent roof and walls. Its door is gone, though to where, none can say, but inside, it is in reasonable shape and the fireplace is intact and usable. The chimney however is clogged with bird nests. Any fire lit in

the chimney before it is cleaned causes the nests to quickly catch fire. This in turn heats the old mud mortar, cracks it, which causes chunks of the chimney to start coming down. If this is not contained, the fire spreads to the wooden walls and within a few rounds (2d4) the house catches fire. If allowed to spread the whole house will burn, filling the sky with a huge black cloud of smoke and signaling to the nearby hill giant that something is on the ridge.

There is a well here with drinkable water, though no way to get it. The water is about 50 feet down the well.

THE GIANT'S VALLEY

The valley is about a mile wide and several miles long. A creek wanders through it, until it tumbles into the Mistbane to the north. The valley itself is sparsely forested, with only a few copses of tress here and there. It is, by and large, dominated by open, grassy slopes. It is a favored grazing spot for any large number of forest herbivores, from elk to deer. It attracts predators too, the most notable a hill giant.

The giant lives on the western ridge about a mile down the valley, he wanders down to the tower end about once every 2 or 3 days. He usually comes to fill his water flasks, hunt, and lounge in the sun. He is extremely foul tempered and of an altogether evil disposition. If he spies people entering or moving through the valley he attacks them.

He has no lair, carrying his worldly goods on his back. He lives in a bed of rushes, beneath an old oak tree.

NOTE: Any loud noises at the tower attracts his attention and he comes to investigate.

GIANT, HILL (CE Huge Giant) HP 105 (HD 10d12+40), AC, 13 Spd 40ft. Str 21 Dex 8 Con 19 Int 5 Wis 9 Cha 6. Perception 12 (+2). Greatclub +8 (3d8+5). Rock +8 (3d10+5, 60/240ft) SA Multiattack (2 greatclub).

The giant carries a large bag with him everywhere he goes. It is filled with rotten meat, roots, a bundle of dark stained blankets, a stone dagger, and a golden circlet worth 500gp. The circlet is clearly of Ethrum make and old, dating from the time of the reign of the Tarvish emperors.

HAVERSTRAW

Trade from the kingdom of Kayomar follows the Danau River which skirts the Darkenfold and tumbles down into Lake Volkstagg at the small town of Crossed Fork. Beyond the lake, the river becomes impassable. Because of this, goods shipped down-river have traditionally been offloaded near the Red Mud River and ported to the Oth River, and carried on to the Bay of Lothian. Haverstraw was built on the banks of the Oth to accommodate this traffic.

At first it was a simple portage site. A few log structures, a tavern and inn, the Bend Back, and several piers. Raids from the Darkenfold led the pioneers to build a wall. More people settled as trade grew, and the town began to sprawl out. The

Maedrumaust Mountains supplied the young town with stone for their houses and cobbles for their streets. Soon, the town was walled and watched over by stone towers. In order to keep back the Darkenfold, a low wall was built, the Running Wall. It stretched the length of the portage, from the town to the Danau River, some 14 miles long. It stood 10 feet high and 5 wide.

During the Winter Dark, Haverstraw became a military outpost, one of several meant to hem in the Darkenfold. It was occupied mostly by men, but by some orcs and ungern as well (ungern do not figure into this particular module; their stats, if needed or desired, can be found in the **A2: Slag Heap** module, or in the forthcoming **Fifth Edition Monsters & Treasure of Aihrde**). When the Long Centuries ended, the garrison fled, many into the Darkenfold itself, to avoid being executed by the knights of Kayomar who were everywhere rooting out the evil of Aufstrag. The locals however gathered together, declared themselves independent of any overlords and created the Congress of Notables.

The town has since thrived, cornering trade from Kayomar and taxing anything that passes through the portage. The taxes are not unreasonable, so traffic continues to flow. But their wealth has put them in direct conflict with the other towns of the Oth River Valley, particularly Smythe and Hopkinsville. Several wars between the city-states have seen Haverstraw generally pitted against Hopkinsville and Smythe, but joined by the fiercely independent people of Pettigrew, Crossed Fork and New Edinburg, though the alliances are known to shift.

The town consists mostly of stone buildings with slate shingles and cobbled streets. There are four gates entering Haverstraw, all of which close one hour after the sun sets. The walls, 20 feet high, are punctuated by 40 foot high watchtowers. The streets are well lit at night and patrolled.

The main tavern and inn remains the Bent Back, but others thrive as well. The smaller Portage Way plays host to porters, bargemen, and the like. The Underrime is a small dive that attracts nefarious characters and is generally a place to sell stolen goods. A halfling tavern, the Skull's Cup, is more a gambling house than ought else, rough, but with good food and drink.

TOTAL POPULATION: 3000+

Human: 2600 +/-

Gnomes: 100 +/-

Halflings: 150 +/-

Dwarf: 50 +/-

Elf: 100 +/-

GOVERNMENT: The town is ruled by a governing body of magistrates chosen from the merchant houses. The body is called the Congress of Notables. The Congress consists of the leading tradesmen, guilds and other mercantile bodies in the town. It usually has about 15 sitting members of which one, the justiciar, is chosen each year and given administrative powers

over the Congress. The Congress votes on all issues from taxes, to war, to street repair to prices of commodities. The justiciar delivers sentences and judgments in all criminal cases that do not involve members of the Congress. Those cases are settled by simple majority vote.

MILITARY: Haverstraw has a strong economy that allows them to field an unusually large fighting force, which they need because of their proximity to the Darkenfold. Generally there are 300 men and women under arms here. These are foot soldiers, with pikes, steel hauberks and helms. These are augmented by about 20 light horse cavalry. These consist of the sons and daughters of the Congress; members are equipped as their individual purses allow. In times of war, the town hires mercenary soldiers to flesh out their ranks, whose numbers range from 3-500, depending on their need.

ECONOMY: Haverstraw benefits from the southern trade that comes down the mighty Danau River from Kayomar. Because the river becomes impassable at the Valley of the All Father, river traffic stops where the Red Mud River enters the Danau. There it is ported to Haverstraw, loaded back on boats and sent down the Oth River and on to the sea. Haverstraw enjoys the revenue in the guise of boat and transport fees, taxes on movable goods, etc. It also has a small, but thriving slave market. As one of the border towns they also enjoy the wealth that is plundered from the Darkenfold by those able to bring it out.

RELIGION: The Congress makes regular sacrifices to the river goddess, Tefnut, though there are a number of temples in the town to Ore-Tsar, Ealor, and other gods. The worship of the Og Aust, the old Gods of the Darkenfold, has recently spread to the town, brought by proselytizing clerics from that wood.

LANGUAGE: The Vulgate is the common language spoken here and throughout the region.

MAJOR GUILDS: The trade guilds are heavily represented here. The Cult of the Swords, as well as many mercenaries, find a home in the ever turbulent Oth River Valley. Muddles Inc. too thrives here.

The town recently ran into trouble with the wizard Drusus and the Four Magi. These Umbrians, magi from Aufstrag, attempted to seize control of the town, for what purpose few could guess. They succeeded for a very short while, but they were overthrown and jailed. Many feared killing them as it was believed that the wizard's spirit might linger and haunt the town. They were eventually forced to give their blood to an oath stone and then driven from the town. Several fled into the Darkenfold (see below).

DRUSUS AND THE FOUR MAGI

As a child, Drusus joined the Paths of Umbra. At the time, upon the eve of the Winter Dark Wars, that sect enjoyed immense power. In his homeland, in the Punj, the Umbrian wizards ruled supreme. There, he was schooled and joined the ranks of the initiates that were bound for the tower of Aufstrag. But this was even as Dolgan and the goblin Agmaur rose in rebellion, and the Trench Wars began. Thus, he found himself in the grueling

battles being waged beneath Aufstrag, which saw so many die and began the Winter Dark Wars. He proved himself clever and able to command men, and his mastery of the sorcerous arts were extraordinary.

For this reason, after the Trench Wars, he was sent to Anglamay to help quell the growing unrest. In the city of Fiume he fought street battles, first with northern raiders and then with citizens. He was instrumental in keeping order there, but soon after was shunted to the south where he served a variety of posts and rolls. His record was exemplary, and he fought well and hard, but the tides of history were against him. His people and the Winter Dark Wars ended in the banishment of his god and the destruction of his order. Those like him who survived, scattered to the four winds. They were a hunted people, and they lived in fear, for if they were found in almost any of the realms, they were burned at the stake.

At that time Drusus found himself in the town of Freiburg. His order outlawed, he went into hiding. He could not easily book passage on any ship and the east was aflame in war so he sought to disguise himself. He lived for a time, passing as a merchant in the town, but eventually he was found out and fled into the Gelderland where he lived for many years. He rose to power amongst the Othine orcs and lay claim over them as their chief Shaman and a lord of Aufstrag. They served him willingly and, to this day, see him as a chief servant of Unklar.

He built a tower and housed it with wicked sorceries. He mastered some few of the Blood Runes and lengthened his life by many years. He summoned creatures from the Wretched Plains and sought allies to bring back his dread master. But the Gelderland proved too wild, and her people were never strong enough and he failed in all his attempts. It was here that he learned of the Darkenfold and that many of his master's people (the servants of Unklar) fled to that dark place to hide from the many hunters of the world. He heard too of a series of powerful towns, that lay south and east of that wood, that were ruled by no lords and these soon occupied his mind.

He gathered four of his followers, Umbrians like himself, and set off for the Oth River Valley. There was Utz of Two Souls, called thus for he had eyes of two different colors, and his friend Ferenck. The two sisters, Teadora and Telma, powerful Umbrians bound to each other, followed him as well.

In a few short months, Drusus and his four magi found themselves in the town of Haverstraw. There, they set about their foul purpose. Slowly, they ingratiated themselves with the Merchants. They cajoled, bribed, blackmailed, and murdered to gain a say in the Congress of Notables. They convinced the Congress to include wizards in their ranks so that all five soon had a vote. Drusus was made justiciar for life and the Umbrians found themselves in control of the rapidly growing Haverstraw.

But as in all things he tried, Drusus was on the losing side. A young warrior (the son of a boat merchant seeking to avenge his murdered parents) gathered a band of stalwarts about him and set about overthrowing Drusus and the magi. Ferenck they caught in the practice of the black arts and after taking him,

hewed off his hands and feet. They paraded him through the town, and the people rose against the magi. In a series of brutal battles over many weeks the magi were rooted out, their demon allies slain and their treasures taken. The magi themselves were bound and placed in irons.

But all feared to slay them, for killing a black priest of Aufstrag would surely bring a curse upon the town. So it was determined that the wizards would be bound by an oath stone, to never return to Haverstraw or to knowingly molest any of her people upon pain of judgment and death. All feared the oath stones, for these are made in the shadow of Corthain, and his word is judgment and law.

So Drusus was bound to it and his magi as well. When freed, the sisters fled north. Utz fled to the Darkenfold where it is believed he was slain in Green Lonesome by the halflings. Ferenck, mad as a hatter, was driven out, and he crawled away. It is said that he resides in Hopkinsville, completely insane, begging on the streets. But Drusus took what power he could away with him and vanished into the Darkenfold, where those in the know report he dwells still, upon the Lake of Nunt in the River Basin country.

The oath stone remained in Haverstraw for many years, until a thief stole it and took it into the wilderness, where he died, bitten by a poisoned adder. But few know of this, for the town fathers put a new stone in its place, to fool others, so that the rumor of it missing, would not leave the town. For it is feared that if the Umbrians found out, that they would return and visit their vengeance on the town.

ABOUT THE OATH STONE

The players should have found the oath stone in the Watch Tower. On it are carved the five names of the five Umbrian wizards. If an *identify* spell is cast upon it, the spell reveals what the stone is, but not the story behind it. The names on the stone are bound to it in some manner.

If the characters encountered Craigsbone the dwarf, they may have heard the name Drusus and know that he dwells upon the shores of Lake Nunt, otherwise the stone is a simple magical stone.

HAVERSTRAW AND THE OATH STONE

If perchance the characters determine the oath stone came from Haverstraw and return it to the town, there is a substantial reward, 5000gp and several very grateful townsfolk.

RETURNING TO THE RIVER

The characters should leave the tower and return to the Mistbane River at this point. However they maneuvered across the river previously, whether on the Rope Bridge or via canoe, they find the river a bit more hospitable. Presumably they have slain or scattered the perytons. Now they find a small riverboat anchored in the center of the Mistbane, and a lone fisherman casting a line.

ETHAN THE BOATSWAIN

Ethan has been plying the waters of the Darkenfold for many years. He trades goods he buys in Petersboro and Haverstraw with whomsoever he encounters on the river. His boat is well stocked with most supplies travelers would need: food, beer, packs, clothes, rope, etc. When he spies a potential customer, he uses his *ring of detect alignment*, determines their disposition and treats them accordingly.

Ethan engages the party, offering them wares from his store if they need or to ferry them over the river (if needed). He offers to join them for a meal as well (no matter what time of day it is) but does not wish to do it on the south bank of the river, as it is too dangerous due to the proximity of the Green Wizard.

Ethan is neutral. He carries a +2 longsword, a heavy crossbow and a +2 mace. He wears elven chain beneath his cloak and carries a +2 ring of protection and a ring of detect alignment. He speaks vulgate (common), elf, dwarf, eschl and several halfling dialects fluently.

Ethan is not intended as an antagonist, but if for some reason the PCs attack him or it is otherwise necessary to stat him out, Ethan has the abilities of a 14th level ranger and 15d8 hit dice with abilities Str 18 Dex 18 Con 14 Int 12 Wis 14 Cha 9.

Just about anything from the equipment list, except arms and armor, is in his boat. He does carry plenty of arrows and bolts. Ethan is particularly talkative and answers questions put to him as honestly as he can.

OATH STONE: He knows the story of Haverstraw, though not that the stone was stolen. If shown the Oath stone, he is truly surprised and amazed and recommends that the party venture to Haverstraw and return it. However he has this to say, “*Such an artifact is a powerful tool. If it were to fall into the wrong hands, it could mean death for the people of that river town.*”

If asked, he explains that he is heading down river, he was only waiting for the perytons to scatter. After, he intends to head up the Powder in order to avoid the unusually thick mist that has gathered just west on the Mistbane.

“Don’t go that way,” he explains. “Get off the river for awhile. Those mists are dangerous. They are, filled with the lost spirits of elves denied the Stone Fields of the dead. They are damned. No. You need to head up into the Bolan Drops on the north bank, strike out on Reacher’s Trail, and bypass the river and the mists. The trail, though dangerous, is easy to navigate and will land you on the edge of the Wingnut Bottom Lands many miles to the west.”

He supplies directions to Reacher’s Trail but mentions that the country is hunted by a number of creatures, including bugbears. He has this to say specifically:

“It is an old part of the wood and little traveled but for the eschl, the wild men. Be on your guard, for the forest is more aware than you know. It is thoughtful and in places filled with resentment, for the earth was once crowded with the voices of the trees when the Ethwold was young, and the forest here blames any and all for the loss.”

HEADING UPSTREAM

If the party heads up river, avoiding the Bolan Drops and the trail, they quickly run into a fog bank, thick with banshees. For more information on the Mistbane and the banshees refer to the adventure module **Shades of Mist**.

BOLAN DROPS

As is known, the Darkenfold is divided into two distinct geographic regions. The Northern Plateau consists of the Upplands, Troll Glade, and the Powder River Country. The Southern Plateau consists of the Millorian in the west and the Downs in the east, both comprising the heart of the Darkenfold. It is not always easy to tell where one begins and the other ends as the forest floor is broken by many lesser features. Alice’s Bluff divides the two in the west, but the bluff is only 25-30 miles long. The line however travels from the Bluff east to the Hollow, curves south to the long line of hills known as Mount Judy and the Inigg Gorge. These last mark the northern fence of the River Basin country, a low, flat region that stretches from Mount Judy to the Mistbane, known as the Wingnut Bottoms or Wingnut Bottomlands.

The Bolan Drops are part of this country. They are distinctive in the River Basin from the Wingnut because, where that region is flat, the Bolan Drops are not. The Drops are a series of ridges, each higher the further north one goes. The ridges themselves are roughly 40-60 miles long and run east-west, however, there are multiple shorter ridges that fan out north and south and along all points of the compass after that, making the entire country one of broken hills and ridges with a general line of march on an east/west axis.

The ridges are cut and splintered by a host of deep gulches, carved out of the land by years of rain and run off. Near the top, along the ridge lines the gulches are filled with tangled scrub, brush and small, dried up trees that eke a living out of the sparse soil. Deeper in the gulches where the sun struggles to reach there are older trees, far older trees. These well-watered treants feed on the rich soil and the water and grow fat, their girth at times a dozen feet or more. Their canopies are broad and thick and hang low to the ground. Oak vines thrive here, crawling across the ground and coiling around the base of the old forest giants.

Travel in the gulches is a little easier, the ground is soft and water plentiful, but anyone passing through feels the ominous presence of the trees.

CREATURES IN THE DROPS

Roll regular wandering monsters for the overland journey. Consult the chart at the end of this adventure.

Regardless of what is or is not encountered, the nights here are filled with strange noises and lights. Some of these are normal insects and other creatures that creep and crawl about the wood, but some will be will o’ wisps. These are unforgiving and altogether dangerous.

MOVEMENT IN THE DROPS

Travel in the Bolan Drops is difficult unless one follows Reacher's Trail that snakes along a central ridge line for some 40 miles. Leaving the hilltops finds one in thick, inhospitable environs.

If one follows Reacher's Trail, movement is about 15 miles a day. If one enters the gulches movement is effectively halved.

Once one leaves the trail, the forest becomes hostile and a danger in and of itself.

THE LIVING FOREST

The forest is vaguely aware of the world around it. The roots of many of these trees are old and deep in the ground, and they weave in and around one another in countless knots. They speak with each other through their roots and through the soil. They know vaguely what is passing on over them and when creatures they are not used to pass over them, particularly two-legged creatures, the forest awakens. When it does it tends to bend its will to the land, shifting the contours of the land with their many roots, pushing here and pulling there, just enough to cause confusion and misdirect unwary travelers.

Within the wood, the trees are able to darken the forest within 4 rounds, by turning their leaves inward and down. When they do this, it causes a slight creaking noise, and the light fails, dimming noticeably. When this happens all visibility drops to a few dozen feet. Beyond that it is completely dark and only those who can see underground can see through the forest.

The trees darken areas to push and drive victims forward and down into the deep gulches where the old treants live.

They also shape the land so that anyone attempting to track or find a trail must make a successful Wisdom (survival) check with a base DC 14. For every turn that has passed after leaving Reacher's Trail, increase the DC by 1, to a maximum of 25.

Once lost in the Drops the trees leave it to the will o' wisps and treants to finish off victims. Consult the 5e Game Master's Guide concerning becoming lost.

REACHER'S TRAIL EAST END

Leaving the north bank of the Mistbane, one follows Mander Creek up into the Bolan Drops. After a day's travel the creek vanishes beneath the flat slope of a hill. Reacher's Trail begins at the top of that hill.

The trail itself is long, crossing almost 40 miles of woodland. It is unpaved, consisting of a broad dirt path beneath the intertwining arched branches of the trees.

As you climb up the steep slope of the hill the tree line gives way to an open glade. On either side of the glade the trees pick back up as they crowd the edge of the glade. On the western edge a path opens up. Here the trees are pushed back in ordered ranks of two columns that wall in the path. Their branches grow on high and

intertwine a dozen feet or more above the path, making perfect arches. It seems a tunnel, sculpted in the trees by unknown hands. Its a path that offers passage through the forest.

It's a three to four day journey from the beginning of Reacher's Trail to where it ends in the Wingnut Bottomlands in the west. The journey is relatively easy, as the path is free of the normal twisted roots and oak vines that plague so many parts of the wood. In fact the stone of the hills has worn through in many places making travel down right easy. The trail is well watered as a number of small streams bubble up on its course, tumbling down below. Several are built up, rough walls of rock a few inches high, set by unknown hands, to pool the water.

Roll wandering monsters as normal, but the travel itself is free of the normal plagues of moving through thick forest.

Though the path continues beneath the arched trees for its entire length it is possible to leave it. The trees do not grow so close together that they prevent anyone from slipping off the trail. However, those that do, soon find it difficult to locate the trail again, for the Bolan Drops are haunted by deadly fey and, as in many places in the Darkenfold, the forest itself is alive.

WILL O' WISPS: The trail is haunted by will-o-wisps. They creep up from the gulches and lure victims into the darker forest where old, twisted oak live, treants of a foul disposition. There the wisps slay their victims and devour them as is their wont.

Within one day of entering Reacher's Trail at least one will o' wisp spies the party and begins following them.

WILL O' WISP (CE Tiny Undead) HP 22 (HD 9d4), AC 19, Spd 50ft (fly). Str 1 Dex 28 Con 10 Int 13 Wis 14 Cha 11. Perception 12(+2). Shock +4 (2d8 lightning). SA Darkvision 120ft, Immune lightning, poison, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious, resist acid, cold, fire, necrotic, thunder, and bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical; Invisibility (as an action; until consume life, attacks, or loses concentration); consume life (bonus action: one creature at 0 hp must succeed at DC 10 Constitution save or die; if it fails the Will-o-wisp regains 3d6 hp); ephemeral (can't carry or wear anything); Incorporeal movement (move through objects and creatures as difficult terrain; 1d10 damage if ends turn in an object); Variable illumination (sheds bright light in 5-20ft. radius at will, and dim light for the same distance beyond. Bonus action to alter the radius).

TREANT (CG Huge Plant) HP 138 (HD 12d12+60), AC 16, Spd 30ft. Str 23 Dex 8 Con 21 Int 12 Wis 16 Cha 12. Perception 13(+3). 2 Slam +10 (3d6+6) or Rock +10 (4d10+6; 60ft/180ft). SA false appearance, dmg x2 structures/objects, animate trees 1/day.

REACHER'S TRAIL WEST END

The trail ends abruptly, giving way to a wide open slope that slides gently down into the forest again. From the trailhead here one can see west for some miles, looking over the treetops. The shadow of the Rhodope Mountains loom in the distance, and



the rise of the land to the north is noticeable. In the south, perhaps a mile away, is a large cut in the tree line, clearly a river of some size. It is the Mistbane.

THE BOTTOMS

Reacher's Trail's west end lies just north of the Mistbane, on the edge of the Wingnut Bottomland. Travel in the Bottoms is markedly different than in the Bolan Drops.

WINGNUT BOTTOMLAND

The Wingnut Bottomland, or the Bottoms for short, extends from the Bolan Drops in the east, to the Lake of Nunt in the west. It abuts the Inigg Gorge and Thistle Ridge in the north and the Mistbane River in the south. As its name indicates, it is a low lying area that is as much a swampland as it is a forest. The ground, as well as the flora, is very different in the Bottoms than elsewhere in the Darkenfold.

The ground in the Bottoms is moist and rich in nutrients. It plays host to a wide variety of mosses, grasses and smaller wetland shrubs. The moss in particular grows everywhere, carpeting the ground, crawling up the boles of trees, and hanging in wads from the branches overhead. Silver maples dominate the Bottoms, spread out generously, allow easy passage between them. These tall, silver-white trees, with high canopies and bright green leaves grow throughout, thriving on the ample water and rich earth. Only a few of the forest's more dour trees, the oaks, grow in the Bottoms, and most of these lie in the north, along the edge of Thistle Ridge. There the oaks represent an old stand of trees and are very large and deep rooted.

The Bottoms are open and going here is easier than in other sections of the wood. Elsewhere tree roots cling to the earth like gnarled fingers, coiled in and out of the ground, creating many pitfalls and snares for the unwary; here however, the wet earth allows the maples to sink deep and their roots are rarely exposed, creating a largely flat expanse of bottom land. The aforementioned grass and moss creates an almost comfortable ground cover.

Despite this, the Bottoms are home to many thick-leaved bushes, berries and thorny vines. These grow wild and deep in the spring and summer, dying off in the fall. They are generally thin stalked and do little to impede movement, though they do restrict visibility due to their large leaves.

The Bottoms are not without their dangers however. Many fallen trees have submerged in the soil, tripping up those who move too fast and feeding a fierce species of tusked boar. But the ground is the real enemy, for the wet earth plays host to small grass-covered ponds, sink holes, quick sand and mud pits. Many fall afoul of these water traps and are consumed by the Bottoms, their flesh adding to the soil's thick nutrients.

TRAVEL: Travel is somewhat faster in the Bottoms. On a good day 15 miles is possible. Of course if the region is flooded, as frequently happens, travel is much slower, about 5 miles a day, often through water several inches to a foot deep.

VISIBILITY: During the spring and summer months, visibility is broken by the thick brush. Anyone attempting to hide in the warmer months gains advantage to all stealth checks. All Wisdom (perception) checks suffer disadvantage.

TERRAIN ENCOUNTERS

There are no permanent paths or trails in the Bottoms. The forest is open and does little to restrict the movement of animals, but beyond that the constant floods wash away any paths that do form. This creates an unusual danger in the Bottoms, for it is easy to stumble into a pitfall, mud pit or other such wetland danger, here referred to as quicksand.

For every 5 miles of terrain covered, roll a d6. If a one is rolled, the characters stumble across or into a hidden bog.

Any quicksand encountered requires a DC 12 Wisdom (survival) check by the lead member or members of the party, assuming the heroes are moving carefully. If the heroes are rushing through the Bottoms or not paying heed to the dangers around them, the check is made at disadvantage. A failed save means the advance members of the party fall into the quicksand and immediately begin sinking. A successful save means they notice the quicksand before they stumble into it.

PITFALL/QUICKSAND

If one falls into quicksand, they begin sinking immediately. To stay afloat they must make a successful Dexterity save (DC 15). To escape from the bog they must make a successful DC 15 Strength (athletics) check. If successful, they pull themselves free. For each round they remain in the quicksand the DC both to remain afloat and to escape increases by 1, until they slip beneath the quicksand in 6-12 rounds, at which point they begin to suffocate (see the Fifth Edition Player's Handbook for rules on suffocation).

ENCOUNTERS

Roll normal encounters in the Bottoms. Any deer or other herbivores should be considered wild boar or the large wild cattle that populate the Bottoms. The land is sacred to the native eschl.

THE ESCHL

The Bottoms are home to several bands of the Eschl. These wild men dwell in small groups throughout the Darkenfold, but the Bottoms are holy to them. Here, the many bands often come to trade goods, seek spouses, worship the Og Aust, exchange news, and muster for war.

They are a strange people, humanoids who dwell in the stone age. They are secretive, tribal and little inclined to trade with peoples outside their species. They are ruled by chieftains and shamans, and pay homage to the Og Aust, particularly Let, the Stag, but also Heth, Nunt and Kekki. They use magic in almost all that they do, from making weapons to growing crops and rely upon the Og Aust for much of it. Those who are strong rise to the top of the bands, and are able to guide, manipulate, or overpower their fellows.

The Eschl have suffered at the hands of slavers for many long years, scooped up when young and carted off to the east, most recently to Haverstraw upon the Danau River and for this reason

rarely show themselves to humans. They have some dealings with the wood elves of the Millorian, further to the south.

They are a primitive people, looking upon iron and steel, and any metal as magic, and rarely use it. They prefer the stone axe, spear, bow, and blow gun to anything offered to them. Those who do master metals do so by shaping it into wild and exotic forms or use it to decorate their bodies. They are skilled hunters and able to move through the forests with ease. They do not however hold either sex less or greater than the other, and women fight along men and children as well, after only a few years.

The Eschl wear little in the way clothing and armor, preferring to decorate their bodies with magical tattoos, magical arm bands (usually of some type of metal as noted above), earrings, and rings upon their tusks. Their most prominent feature is their hair, which they cut, grease with bear oil, and shape in many wild forms. It is a hairstyle that often marks a band.

HOLY LAND

As noted the Eschl look upon the Bottoms as holy land. Here, they say, dwells the Great Stag, Let, the god of Hope and securer of men on Aihilde. Also, Nunt, the god of death lies in the lake of the same name. The Eschl come here to hunt the wild boar and the bovine that dwell in the deeper portions of the forest as a rite of passage to adulthood. These are holy animals to the Eschl and are not hunted, but on special occasions. They do not generally allow others to freely hunt the bovine or the boars in the Bottoms and if they find someone doing so, they often attack them, to punish them for their sins. Though, at times, they treat with the interlopers and demand payment in one form or the other.

More information on the Eschl will be found in the forthcoming **Fifth Edition Monsters & Treasure of Aihilde**.

THE ESCHL CHILD

This encounter should occur at least 15 miles into the Bottoms.

Illpah is a child of the Eschl. She is young, six years old, but was gifted with 'the sight' by Nunt and she can see onto the Arc of the Time and to the Endless Pools (see the **Codex of Aihilde**). She is a holy child to her people, but recently she and her mother have become separated from their band and have wandered alone in the Bottoms for several days. Her mother was only recently killed by a giant boar. Illpah stands by, watching the beast devour her mother.

The underbrush gives way and you spy a wide clearing beneath the mighty bole of a gigantic maple tree. The ground here is slightly elevated and seems to avoid the normal flooding the region most certainly suffers. Leaf fall covers much of the ground, making it unusually barren of grass, so that the sandy soil of the earth is exposed. Standing in the clearing is a young child, perhaps six years old. The child is dark skinned, with long black hair. Beyond her, lying on the ground, is the body of a woman. Next to her is a long spear, broken in half. Feeding upon the corpse is a gigantic boar.

BOAR (Unaligned Medium Beast) HP 11 (HD 2d8+2), AC 11, Spd 40ft. Str 13 Dex 11 Con 12 Int 2 Wis 9 Cha 5. Perception 9(-1). Tusk +3 (1d6+1). SA Charge (if moves at least 20ft and hits with tusk, victim takes 1d6 extra damage and must make DC 11 Strength save or fall prone), Relentless (Recharge long or short rest; if damage of 7 or less would reduce to 0 hp, instead boar is reduced to 1 hp).

The boar does not immediately attack. Being a temperamental beast it slew Illpah's mother for no other reason than to show its dominance. It is not actually feeding on the corpse, it only appears to be doing so. It is continuing to gore the body however, and is slowly disemboweling it.

If anyone comes within 20 feet of the boar, it attacks, rushing to gore its opponents.

During any battle with the boar Illpah does not run away, nor does she cower. She fully expects to be slain by the boar and join her mother on the Arc of Time so, if a battle erupts, she ignores it and she moves to prepare her mother for the afterlife.

AVOIDING THE ENCOUNTER If the party avoids the child and boar and moves on, the girl remains near her mother's body. The boar does not kill her, but eventually grows tired of the body and moves on, and by nightfall the girl will have become the victim of another vicious beast, such as a nakal dragon.

RESCUING THE CHILD: Illpah evinces no surprise upon seeing the party. She doesn't move or speak until the boar is engaged. Once the party attacks, the child walks over to the body of her mother and begins preparing her for her journey. She lays her out, rolling her over on her back, straightening her legs, and placing her arms at her sides. She collects thorns from the brush and pins her mother's eyes open. All the while, she speaks to her in soft tones. If any can understand her speech she is reassuring her mother with the following words:

"Momma, have no fear for I have set you right in the world and you will not walk with broken step. Momma, have no fear for I have put your arms to rest and Nunt may not grab you. Momma, have no fear for I have pinned your eyes open and Nunt will not deceive you with his lies. Momma, have no fear for Heth will take you and guide you upon the River of Erde."

If anyone engages the child, she speaks to them in clear, concise tones. However she only speaks the eschl tongue. Unless someone in the party speaks eschl, a *comprehend languages* is cast, or the party has some other means of interpreting the child's language, they cannot understand her, nor she them.

If she is engaged while she is preparing her mother's body, Illpah stops, holds up her hand and speaks in her own tongue asking the party to stop. She then continues her work. When she is done, she walks away from the body and sits down. She will follow the party if she is asked or appropriate non-threatening gestures are made for her to do so. She has no fear of them if they are good, otherwise she refuses to go.

Illpah is chaotic good, with the statistics of a commoner, except as follows: She has no weapons, nor any skills to fight. She is

able to run as fast as any adult, but for only half the time. She speaks her own language. She has an inherent ability to detect anyone's alignment at will. She can also see into other planes and as a result can, once per week, contact other planes as per the spell. The planes she can contact are limited to the Wretched Plains, Endless Pools, and Stone Fields. When contacting other planes she is communicating with the god Heth.

Illpah belongs to the Manute people, a small band of about 80 men, women and children. They are presently in the vicinity, several miles from the tragic scene. They are unaware of the mother and child's absence.

Illpah is small, about 3 feet high with long, black hair. Her eyes are bright green, an unusual trait in her people. Her skin is dark olive color, bordering on brown. She is a comely child, though rarely smiles or laughs. Humor in the child is so rare that it terrifies her people when she does laugh.

ILLPAH'S FATE: Illpah has no idea where her people are. If asked she waves vaguely in a westerly direction. They are, in fact, north of her, working their way toward Thistle Ridge and the Bolan Drops. A ranger in the party can attempt to back-track the child. They can pick up her and her mother's trail on a successful Wisdom (survival) check (DC 15). Keeping the trail is not easy, however. The eschl are known for their abilities to move and hide in the forest. Every three hours a fresh tracking check must be made. Failure means the trail is lost. If there is no hero with proficiency in survival in the party, they can only guess at the direction the eschl have traveled.

The band is presently about 10 miles north and west, though the trail leads any trackers on a wild circuitous route that covers almost 12 miles of forest, requiring roughly 15 hours of travel and five tracking checks.

If anyone in the party offers to take the child, she joins the party and follows them wherever they go, whether after her people or with the party on their adventures.

If told to stay and she is abandoned, she remains behind. She does not look or act disappointed, only watches intently as the party leaves. If she is left behind, as noted above, a nakal dragon attacks and kills her at dusk.

ILLPAH RETURNED TO HER PEOPLE: If the party manages to take the child back to her people by back-tracking her trail, they first encounter a band of warriors who begin to flank them. The warriors are seen on a Wisdom (perception) check (DC 17). If they see the girl, they shout to her by name, without coming out. Illpah then communicates that the people are kind and bringing her back.

At this point one of the chieftains emerges and engages the party. Upon learning of their good intentions he'll offer them food and rest with the band, inviting them to their camp. There the party is surrounded by the tribe, who come out to see the strangers that have rescued Illpah.

The path you are on gives way to a wide-open space beneath the trees. A stream tumbles through the camp

of lean-tos and rough built yurts. The wild looking people come from all over, climbing out of hammocks, out of yurts, and from the surrounding forest. The light plays on their skin, casting them in a dark green. They are largely naked, wearing arm and leg bands, and are covered with tattoos. Their hair stands out above all else, being shaved clean on the scalp but for a long shock of hair, braided or hanging loose that starts above the left ear and drops to the shoulder or below. They carry a variety of weapons, mostly stone age tools. They are grinning and friendly.

The eschl welcome the strangers and feed them a wide variety of roots, fruits, berries and cooked meats. They continually thank them for returning Illpah to their band and offer to tattoo the party with bands markings. Anyone who accepts the tattoo gains proficiency in the survival and nature skills, permanently, from its magic. Those already proficient in these skills add double their proficiency bonus on all ability checks that use them in the future.

The eschl allow the party to stay with them as long as they like, but they are moving west, toward the Bolan Drops in the next few days.

ILLPAH AS A COMPANION: Illpah joins the party if offered, and she is not returned to her people. She is quiet, makes no disturbances, obeys almost any command (so long as it doesn't cause her any harm) and follows directions as best she can with the limited forms of communication available.

She is a quick study and is able to pick up languages rapidly. After a month of being with the party she is able to communicate with almost anyone in the Vulgate or Common speech.

Once she can communicate she does not hide her abilities, explaining to anyone curious that she is a holy child and has the Sight of Heth and is able to talk to the dead. She uses her ability to contact other planes if requested.

She stays with the party, treating them as her new band, as long as they will have her.

THE PATH AHEAD: If at any point Illpah is asked about the forest ahead she imparts what information she knows. She has little practical knowledge beyond gathering roots and berries. Though she traveled extensively, as is the want of her band, she doesn't have a clear layout of the land, being aware of the Mistbane and the Bottoms a little. However she warns them about the Lake of Nunt if she is able.

"The Lake of Nunt lies beyond the point of the northern ridge but before the small river and you must not go there. It is a black place where Nunt dwells, sleeping in the mud of the river. It houses the evil that resides in his belly. To drink the water of the lake is madness. To fish the lake is death. Do not go to the Lake of Nunt."

Despite her own warning, she will follow the party if they continue on to the Lake of Nunt and the Low River Country.



THE CROOKED HOUSE

Some years past a witch, Merovina by name, settled upon the far western edge of the Wingnut Bottoms. There she found a large oak, the bole of its stem almost 20 feet across, dwelling upon the banks of a stream. Merovina drew her power from water and with this she wooed the tree, waking it from a long slumber and she disabused the creature of any wholesome thoughts it had, though in truth, it had precious few of those. Woken, the tree grumbled its discontent, but she cared not, and continued to woo it. At last it opened to her and she convinced the tree to divert a stream of water that passed nearby, forcing the water to pass beneath it, so that in time it hollowed out a large chasm beneath the tree itself.

With this done she convinced the old forest man to divert the creek once more, so that the water flowed around the tree and back on its natural path. The ground dried in a few days and the tree rumbled in anger, threatening to pull the earth back to him and cover his naked limbs. But she promised to make all right, for what she had, was what she intended.

With roots for walls and the bole for her roof, Merovina made a home. She raised slabs of stone up to fill the gaps in her walls and set a window, if a bit lopsided, to overlook where the creek tumbled around the house and back into its normal course. Within she packed the dirt of the floor tight to the ground and spoke words of holding upon it so that her floor was solid and allowed no insect or errant root entry. She built a hearth of stone and set an old chimney in it, but made it so that the smoke of her fire passed beneath the ground and came out of

the earth 20 feet beyond the dome of the tree. She built a bed of thrush leaves and limbs, a table from a large slab of stone and in time decorated the wall with shelves and cupboards. On these she lined her poultices, salves, potions and elixirs.

There Merovina lived for many years, her only company, the dark hearted tree that was her home.

Merovina had two great joys. The first was to fish. She enjoyed fishing upon the banks of the Mistbane River and the small creeks and ponds around her forest domicile. But more than this, she loved to lure people to her home, lull them into senselessness with charms or poultices, and devour their souls. She buried their lifeless bodies in the mossy ground around her house, calling on them when and if she desired, for amusement or protection.

It was this latter action that led to her end. After poisoning a young halfling up from the deep south, she invited the wrath of his people. Finding her fishing upon the banks of the Mistbane they peppered her with arrows from afar. She tried to flee but, finding this impossible, she turned to fight. This proved fruitless and they fell upon her with axe and sword. After she was subdued, they took out her tongue, cut off her hands and feet and fed it all to the giant gar that hunt that mighty river. They then strung her up in a tree, hanging over the slow-moving water for all to see.

FINDING THE CROOKED HOUSE

The Crooked House lies about 2 miles north of the Mistbane upon the western edge of the Wingnut Bottoms. The trail that leads from one to the other is not difficult to see. Merovina used it for years, passing from one spot to the next. The characters, passing through the Wingnut country, should stumble upon the trail. They can go north to the house, or south to the river. If they go south see The Hanging Tree below, if they go north, see Merovina's House.

Either way the journey is easy and without mishap.

THE HANGING TREE

The path opens up onto a river bank a few feet above the Mistbane. The bank is dominated by a large tree, whose branches extend over the river. Merovina hangs from this tree. She is not dead, only seems so.

The path gives way to a wide, open bank, overlooking the lethargic waters of the Mistbane. The burbling river laps the pebble strewn shore and the feet of a massive quaking aspen, whose silver white bark and dark green leaves stand in contrast to all the forest green around it. But it is not the aspen's bark that draws your attention, but rather the lonesome body that hangs from the tree. A woman, shorn of her feet and hands, hangs from a branch, just over the shore. Her bloody stumps are naked and raw, her face torn in a grimace of pain. There seems little decay about her, though her clothes are ragged and worn.

Merovina has hung here for the better part of a year. Any and all who have seen her, have left her to her fate, not knowing what strange happenstance led her to this fate. Her flesh is not decayed, though the wounds are raw, as if they were recently made. Her clothes however, show the signs of age.

Anyone who approaches her notices that she is breathing, if only barely, upon a successful Wisdom (medicine) check (DC 12) or DC 15 Wisdom (perception). She cannot speak, but if she is spoken to, she opens her eyes and attempts to plead with them, through facial expressions and arm gestures, to cut her down.

Without her voice she has no ability to use her spell-like abilities. She is able to mask her alignment however, and unless a *dispel magic* is cast upon her any attempt to discover her alignment reveals only that she is neutral.

MEROVINA, GREEN HAG (NE Medium Fey) HP 82 (HD 11d8+33), AC 17, Spd 30ft. Str 18 Dex 12 Con 16 Int 13 Wis 14 Cha 14. Perception 15(+5). Arcana +3, Deception +4, Perception +5, Stealth +3. Claws +6 (2d8+4), Wild shape (as druid; giant eel shape only); Illusory appearance (Look like another creature of her general size and humanoid shape. The illusion ends with bonus action or if she dies. The changes don't hold up to physical inspection or with DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check), Invisible passage (invisibility as per spell at will as action). SA Amphibious, innate spell casting (Cha, save DC 12, at will: Dancing lights, minor illusion, vicious mockery), mimicry (animal sounds and humanoid voices. DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals imitations)

As noted, Merovina is not dead. She is very much alive and desires to be cut loose and hit the water beneath her, alter into a giant eel, go deep into the water and heal herself. If she is cut down she attempts to make for the water, acting as if she is thirsty. As soon as she touches the water, she alters form and wiggles her way into the river. She is very large, about 9 feet long and roughly 100 pounds of pure muscle.

MEROVINA, GREEN HAG (as giant eel) HP 11 (HD 2d8+2), AC 14, Spd 30ft, 30ft (swim). Str 10 Dex 18 Con 13 Int 13 Wis 14 Cha 14. Perception 15(+5). Arcana +3, Deception +4, Perception +5, Stealth +6. Bite +6 (1d8). SA Slippery skin (advantage on checks to escape a grapple; opponents have disadvantage to grapple); Quick riposte (as a reaction, may make a bite attack).

Anyone can attempt to stop her but doing so after she assumes eel form is difficult and any grapple checks are made at disadvantage due to her slippery skin. This results in a wicked bite. Anyone holding her must make a strength check each round to keep her from the water.

Once in the water she goes deep, sinking into the mud and heals herself. She waits until her rescuers leave to return to her house, but regardless, her embarrassment at being seen strung up is too much for her to handle so that she tracks the characters down and attempts to kill them if she can.

MEROVINA'S ESCAPE: If they do not cut her down she hangs there, but she makes note of their faces and will hunt them down and kill them later. For, indeed, she does escape. The rain that falls (see below) causes the river to rise enough to touch the stumps of her feet, allowing her to transform, break the rope, and heal.

KILLING MEROVINA: She is difficult to kill, as the halflings found out. Water heals her. If she is hacked to pieces while hanging in the tree she will eventually rise from the dead when the water rises and touches her. To kill her, she must be burned or buried in hallowed or consecrated ground.

MEROVINA'S HOUSE

As noted, the house sits beneath the bole of a large tree deep in the forest. A creek wanders around its flank, and the trail snakes around to the small door set in the wall of stone and root.

The trail ends upon the babble course of a small stream that seems to tumble around the feet of a giant tree. The tree itself sits astride a small house, its roots interlaced with the roof and walls. A small, crooked window looks out over the creek and trail, shutters closed. A stone window ledge contains a single pot with a small crop of mushrooms in it. On the other side of the narrow creek, a stone path leads up to a disjointed door made of flat boards. Several small pots of various nondescript plants sit around the doorstep.

The door is unlocked.

The plants in all the pots, inside and out are rare flowers and weeds that serve as ingredients for poisons, unguents, tinctures and potions of one shade or the other. A PC can determine their species with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (survival) or Intelligence (nature) or (poisoner's kit) check, and can harvest them, if desired. See the Jar Contents table below, or consult the section on poisons in the 5e Game Master's Guide for the kinds of mixtures Merovina made with these plants.

If the door is opened by any other than Merovina the bodies of her victims begin to crawl up from their shallow, moss covered graves. They attack any and all around them.

WIGHT (6-3) (NE Medium Undead) HP 45 (HD 6d8+18), AC 14, Spd 30ft. Str 15 Dex 14 Con 16 Int 10 Wis 13 Cha 15. Perception 13(+3), Stealth +4. Life Drain +4 (1d6+2 necrotic, plus DC 13 Con save or HP maximum reduced by damage taken until victim finishes long rest. Death if max HP = 0, and rises 24 hours later as a zombie); longsword +4 (1d8+2); longbow +4 (1d8+2, 150/600ft). SA Immune poison, exhaustion; resist necrotic and bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical or non-silver attacks); Sunlight sensitivity (disadvantage on attacks and Wis (Perception) rolls based on sight in sunlight).

MEROVINA'S LAIR: The house is very small, only about 15' x 15'. She has a small bed in the corner of sticks and leaves in

the corner, a table, and hearth. Still, it is an alchemist's dream. On the walls are her treasures, dozens of clay jars filled with all manner of potions and elixirs. There are 38 jars in all, each one containing a different substance. Roll 2d20 on the list below to determine the contents.

Each jar has 1-4 applications in it. Anyone subject to one application must make a successful Constitution save, if required. Unless otherwise noted, the save is DC 13.

TABLE 1: JAR CONTENTS

2D20	CONTENTS AND RESULTS
2	Aconite, liquid – DC 15 constitution Save or become drowsy, all attribute checks are at disadvantage for 1d4 hours.
3	Cowslip, salve - Helps one find what one is seeking, +1 on all search checks.
4	Poisoned Ash, liquid - Save or suffer nausea, -2 on all attribute checks.
5	Deerstongue paste - Consume to increase magic abilities for 1d4 rounds by one level.
6	Stickwort, liquid - Save or fall into a deep sleep. Sleep for 8 hours or until dispelled.
7	Bracken, dried leaves - Causes rain to fall if sprinkled on a running creek.
8	Arnica, cloves - Repels any lesser undead for one hour.
9	Castor, dust - Grants user +1 against spells for 1d4 rounds.
10	Rotted Lime, salve - Smear on wounds to attract flies. The flies clean the wound but lay larvae for disease (see sample diseases in the 5e Game Master's Handbook).
11	Strophanthus, liquid - Causes heart palpitations. All checks at -2 for 1d4 rounds.
12	Mountain Laurel, viscous liquid - Causes vomiting and diarrhea. Incapacitates for 10 rounds.
13	Hemlock, salve - Causes paralysis for 6 rounds.
14	Clematis, liquid - Burns the throat, causing coughing and thirst.
15	Glamorgyle - Causes one to fall into a light sleep for 4 hours or until awakened.
16	Cream Cheese
17	Nightshade, small pills – DC 15 Constitution save. On success, fall into a deep sleep for 12 hours from which cannot be awakened, and have nightmarish dreams. On failure, suffer 10d6 damage and be unconscious for 24 hours.
18	Butter
19	Lovage, liquid - Calms recipient down. Save or be affected as per the <i>friends</i> spell towards all people for 1d4 hours.

- 20 Baneberry, berries – Save or suffer stomach cramps, vomiting and diarrhea for one day.
- 21 Hellebore, paste, or jelly - Causes melancholy and weakness, act as *ray of enfeeblement* unless successful save is made.
- 22 Hops - For making beer.
- 23 Bryony, liquid - Causes one to fall asleep for 4-8 rounds unless a successful save is made.
- 24 Yew, salve - Makes one itch and become nervous. Disadvantage to all ability checks for 1d6 minutes unless a successful save is made.
- 25 Apple Jelly
- 26 Ivy, salve - Causes skin irritation for 2-4 days. All combat actions at -1 unless a successful save is made.
- 27 Dropwort, liquid - Causes confusion as the spell of the same name unless a successful save is made.
- 28 White Poppy, liquid - Save or fall into a coma for 4-8 days. Can only be woken by *remove curse* or similar spell.
- 29 Apple Butter
- 30 Foxglove, small pills - Dissolves in liquid. Causes headaches and thirst unless a successful save is made.
- 31 Gelsemium, gas - Breathing it causes respiratory paralysis for 4 rounds. Victim cannot breathe and is immobilized unless a successful save is made.
- 32 Copal, liquid - Makes one susceptible to charm. Save or suffer disadvantage on all saves against enchantment effects for 24 hours.
- 33 Clove, cloves - Makes someone of the preferred gender seem desirable, trustworthy and kind unless a successful save is made. Victim is charmed by the next person of the preferred gender encountered.
- 34 Grape Jam
- 35 Gardenia, liquid - Removes the effects of minor potions, elixirs and poultices.
- 36 Witch Hazel, paste - One drop on the tongue allows user to *know alignment* as spell for the standard duration.
- 37 Paul's Pot, thick liquid - Save or hallucinate for 24 hours. All attacks, saves and ability checks are at disadvantage.
- 38 Mugwort, liquid - Causes a curse to be placed upon the recipient, as the *bestow curse* spell.

Beyond the wights, there is nothing guarding her house. Anyone taking the jars can easily abscond with them. However, while many of them have magical effects, the exact mixtures of the potions and poisons are as important to their function as the magic, if not more so. As such, only an *identify* spell, or a DC 25 Intelligence (nature) or (poisoner's kit) check can fully discern the contents of each jar.

BEYOND THE BOTTOMS

The Bottoms end just south of the Lake of Nunt. Here the Low River Country begins. This is a dangerous place within the Darkenfold, sandwiched between the evil that resides in the Lake of Nunt and the distant Gurthap Falls that mark the beginning of the Upplands.

The character's path should lead them out of the Bottoms and into the Low River Country.

THE HARVEST OF OATHS

The Wingnut Bottoms give way to a country slightly higher in elevation, the Low River Country and the Lake of Nunt. The lake is named for the god of death of the same name and some believe he dwells there still. However, its most irksome inhabitant is the wizard Drusus, the very same whose name lies upon the oath stone.

THE LOW RIVER COUNTRY

The Low River Country includes a huge swath of forest that begins at Gurthap Falls, follows the course of the Watchita River to the Mistbane, angling bank north and east to Mount Judy and the Hollow and back again to Gurthap Falls. The ground here rises only a scant dozen feet or so from the Wingnut Bottoms, but does so quite dramatically on the north-east axis to Mount Judy.

The ground here rarely floods but does serve as something of a watershed from the higher plateau to the north. In the rainy season, the many creeks and streams swell, the depressions fill with water, and the whole area becomes a water-logged land where travel for anything heavy is difficult. The rain and water give birth to a plethora of plants, from trees to bushes, deep grasses, clinging mosses and the like.

Travel in the Low River Country is slow, generally allowing one to move 6 miles a day. If it rains the ground becomes soggy and the bushes hang low, decreasing visibility and slowing movement to 4 miles per day.

From Merovina's lair to the Lake of Nunt should take several days. One of the region's most ferocious predators is the iris dragon.

WHEN IT RAINS

Allow for a few days of travel into the Low River Country. The characters should run normal encounters, a pack of iris dragons if the CK is so inclined. The forest is thick and movement slow and difficult. Insects are constant and annoying, hounding the characters at every turn. On the third day it begins to rain.

A gentle rain begins to fall. It is cool and serves to scatter the insects who have been your ever constant companions. The water is too light at first to cling to you, but rather rolls off of cloaks and packs. But soon within half an hour it picks up, the rain begins to fall steady and hard. Within a few minutes, the skies seem to open up and the rain falls in torrents. Visibility is cut in half, the ground turns viscous, clinging on with each

step so that in short order you cannot tell where the ground leaves off and your foot begins.

Unless the party takes shelter beneath a tent or magical device, there is nowhere to hide. The forest here has few caves, and the overhanging branches of trees do little to stop the downpour. The characters are soaked to the bone within 15 minutes, unless their gear is water resistant, and even then, eventually the water finds its way through, as it is always want to do.

In this condition they come to the first of two creeks, the Turtleneck and 14 Mile Creek. They are actually very close to the confluence of these two creeks, as they will soon find out.

TURTLENECK CREEK

Turtleneck Creek is easy enough to cross, being only a few feet wide. However, any druid or ranger can tell with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (survival) check that its levels are rapidly rising, and will be swollen any moment.

Assuming they cross the creek, they pass into a flat area that has signs of constant flooding. After crossing this area for 50 feet or so the characters may notice that it has flooded before.

About 200 feet further in from Turtleneck lies 14 Mile Creek.

14 MILE CREEK

Normally only 3-4 feet wide, and 1-2 feet deep, 14 Mile Creek has risen with the fresh rainfall. It is now 12 feet wide and some four feet deep. It tumbles in a maddeningly fast course as it heads south to join the Watchita River deep in the Low River.

CROSSING 14 MILE CREEK: Crossing the river is entirely possible. If they plunge in and attempt to cross without any safeguards, allow each character two Dexterity saves (DC 15). If they fail either one, they are swept off their feet and carried several hundred feet downstream when they are allowed another save at the same DC to pull themselves out of the water. Which bank they pull themselves out on is 50/50. The process continues until they either escape or fail four checks, at which point they fail to escape the water. At this point they begin to drown (per the rules for suffocation). Their body eventually washes out to the Watchita where it washes ashore.

Characters who tie themselves off to either side of the bank can avoid the tragedy.

FORD: There is a ford 7 miles north of the present crossing.

FAILURE TO CROSS: If the characters try to wait it out or spend too much time pondering their problem things will get much more difficult. Both creeks rise above their flood stages and soon spill into the area between them. It takes just shy of an hour for the water to flood the area. It comes up from the confluence first, backing up over where the characters are standing. Within a few more minutes a surge several inches deep washes over them from the direction of Turtleneck Creek.

In short both Creeks are forcing their hand either to flee north, make it across 14 Mile Creek, or attempt a crossing back the way

they came. Going back is next to impossible as the whole area is flooded for several hundred feet, and even finding the original creek bed is difficult. Follow the above, saves are at disadvantage.

They can still attempt 14 Mile Creek.

STAYING STILL: In the area between the two creeks, the water rises to about 2 feet but draws with it all the forest debris from north of the party down into the flooded area. It is possible to remain where they are, but they must make constant Dexterity (acrobatics) checks to avoid falling down.

Require a check every 15 minutes. The DC is 12, plus 1 for each hour that passes, up to a maximum of DC 20. If a character falls it is difficult to get back up (Dexterity (acrobatics) check at most recent DC, at disadvantage).

Or they can climb trees and wait it all out. The creeks recede in about 24 hours.

The rain stops in about 4 hours. The whole forest is a sodden mess and depending upon the condition of the characters the party may or may not be scattered all over the area.

IRIS DRAGON: The aforementioned iris dragons are in the area and hunt the trees for stranded meals. Within a few hours they have spied the characters, either forcing them to fight in the water or in the trees as best determined by them.

DRAGON, IRIS (ADULT) (N Medium Dragon) HP 45(HD 6d8+9), AC 15, Spd 20ft/80ft (fly). Str 15 Dex 18 Con 16 Int 10 Wis 15 Cha 7. Perception 16(+6). Stealth +8, Survival +6. Paralysis Breath (Recharge 5-6; 15ft cone, DC 15 Dex save or paralyzed; immunity to disease negates); Claw +6 (1d8+3 and DC 15 or poisoned and incapacitated); Blood drain (incapacitated victim suffers 1d8 necrotic damage until dragon is attacked, drains 2x hit points in damage or victim dies). SA Advantage on stealth checks.

APPROACHING THE LAKE

The characters are not far from the Lake of Nunt. In fact, 14 Mile Creek begins in the lake. After the party crosses 14 Mile Creek, they find that a great deal of forest refuse has built up to the south. It is all natural, caused by the flood. It covers several hundred meters.

Following the curve of the debris brings them to an uptick in the land, a small hill crowned by a large jumble of rocks. They cannot help but cross over this on their way either west, north or south. Once on top they are able to see the land for many miles around

The forest gives way beneath you as your path leads up to a small escarpment. The vantage allows you to see for many miles. To the south the forest is unrelenting until it breaks for what can only be the Mistbane River. To the west, another river crosses your path, moving south, no doubt to enter the Mistbane at some point. To the north, the forest is lighter. A range of hills in the far distance offers the first natural break. Some dozen or so

miles north from where you stand, there is a break in the forest. It gives way for many miles in all directions, indicating some large open area, whether a grassland, a lake, or human habitation is not easy to discern.

The lake is dominated by red maple trees. Upon a successful Wisdom (survival) or Intelligence (nature) check (DC 15) anyone with forest skills recognizes these trees, and knows that they commonly grow along the banks of lakes and ponds. From this they can infer that the break is actually a lake.

Assuming they travel north, continue on to the Lake of Nunt, if they plunge west, heading for the next river (which is, in fact, the Watchita) refer to the adventure module **Falls the Divide**.

THE LAKE OF NUNT

In the long ago Days Before Days, Nunt came to Aihilde. His path was a lonesome one, for his mind was twisted with visions of the River of Erde, which is the path the dead must travel. His thoughts were lost in the gloaming of life. At some point, he came to the Ethvold and there, beneath the cold dark eaves of that vast forest he found a sanctuary. He settled beneath the waters of the lake that now bears his name and took the guise of a large white fish. Settling upon the bottom of the lake, he became a conduit from this world to the next.

Or so the legends say.

What is known is that the Lake of Nunt lies deep in the Low River Country and is visited by few. The land about is dangerous, prone to flooding and filled with all manner of predacious beasts, dark hearted trees, and fae whose lust for distraction has led more than a few to their untimely deaths.

The lake itself is large, some 8 or 9 miles from east to west and half again the size from north to south. The waters are still, cool and deep, the center of the lake being roughly 420 feet from the surface. Very little plant life grows along the lake's edge, and the pebbly beaches that surround it afford little purchase. The plants that do grow are devoured by fish before they become much more than a small shoot. For this reason the lake remains the same size, year after year, swelling during the rainy season, and losing only a little during the dry.

Few creatures find purchase here, a dozen types of fish, frogs, and turtles. Beyond that, the giant carp keep all at bay, devouring the young of anything that attempts to settle in the lake itself. For this reason the lake offers good fishing for those brave enough to eat fish from the lake where a god of death is purported to dwell.

DRUSUS

After Drusus was driven from Haverstraw he wandered the wastes of the Darkenfold, penniless, without his staff or any of his ancient tomes. Like a dried leaf upon the water's flow, he was carried first south and then west into the deeper reaches of the wood. What adventures he had he tells few, if any, but at last he found himself upon the banks of the Lake of Nunt, utterly penniless and alone.

There, he built a cabin of sorts and a palisade around it. When the first flood came, he learned the hazards of the water and built his second house upon stilts 15 feet above the ground. Other houses followed until a small complex stood just off the northeastern shore of the lake.

Thus Nunt found him. The god, woken from his long slumbers, rose to the surface of the water and spoke with Drusus. The wizard was amazed and fearful, for Nunt's demeanor is cold and distant and he cares for little but his own melancholy. Drusus called him Master and sought to glean knowledge from the god. But Nunt of the Val Eahrakun was not fooled by the wizard's duplicity, and he knew his thoughts even before the wizard spoke them. Unaware of this, Drusus believed that he had snared the forest god in his web. Regardless, it amused Nunt to give Drusus power. To this end he gave the wizard a book, *Incantations, Enchantments, Charms, and Spells As Collected by Pappilion* filled with spells for the wizard to begin again.

Thus Drusus began again. As time passed, however, his bitterness grew. He has thought long upon the poverty of his journey and places the blame on Haverstraw and all her people. It is there that he wishes to return in order to put her people in bondage or beneath the earth in cold tombs. He believes his tomes and staff remain there, in the town's treasures. To this end, he sits upon the banks of the lake and ponders. For without the oath stone, he can do little in the way of revenge.

CROSSING THE LAKE

Drusus dwells in a cabin upon the northern shore of the lake. It is difficult to see from across the lake and will not be readily available unless the characters approach across the lake or around it. The lake itself is still and clear.

The forest gives way, opening up to a large lake whose shores are hemmed in on all sides by the Darkenfold. It is wide and clearly deep, for the lake's center turns a dark blue. Little disturbs the placid waters, and the whole scene seems to belie the danger of the forest that creeps up to the very water's edge. A few crows, black as night, take flight from the trees to your right and sweep off, over the lake in a leisurely manner, cawing to one another as they go. Their flight draws your eyes to a small column of white smoke that rises gently from the far northern shore. It holds in a steady column until snatched by a wind high above the trees and carried away to what adventures none may say.

CANOE: Wherever the characters come out on the lake, they find a large canoe tied off to a tree. It bobs in the water about 12 feet from shore. It was put here by the eschl, who come to the lake to sacrifice to Nunt. Crossing out over the water the place their offerings in the lake, make their prayers and leave.

There are paddles in the canoe. It sits 5 people, assuming there is not much in the way of armor and other very heavy equipment. Assuming the characters' desire is to approach the cabin, they can cross the lake in the canoe, or walk around it as they see fit.

DRUSUS

Drusus spends much of his day upon the porch of his cabin, watching the lake and brooding upon his misfortunes. He is not averse to company for his is a lonely existence. He is bitter, though, and always has his own plight in the back of his mind. For this reason, he is always searching out new opportunities, or at the very least, new information from any guests who stay with him, invited or otherwise.

A strange ensemble of buildings stands before you. The largest of five sits atop tall stilts, almost in the tree line. Other smaller buildings are on the ground. All are walled by a palisade, that is more a jumble of small trees and the like, loosely bound together. The buildings, particularly the large central one, are not well-built, though they seem to do the job required. There appears to be no one about.

Unless the party successfully sneaks up on the house, Drusus has spied them coming and cast *invisibility* upon himself. He waits for the party to arrive and uses *telepathy* to read their thoughts, finding out who they are, what they are doing, and (more importantly) if they have come from Haverstraw and plan to kill him or have heard of the stone. Once he is satisfied, he waits for an opportune time to slip away, enters the forest, and then emerges with a kindly greeting. If he discovered the stone, he casts *locate object* to find out who has it.

If discovered in his invisible state he drops the spell and confesses he was only taking defensive measures and being safe, which is part of the truth.

If the party attacks him, Drusus defends himself. Otherwise, he greets them in the Vulgate. He offers them hospitality if the promise to bring news of the outside world. As noted below Drusus has only a few spells, but three that he does have, and always has memorized, are *invisibility*, *telepathy* and *locate object*; the former in order to know the minds of his visitors, the latter to find the oath stone if ever opportunity should crop up.

As soon as he makes his appearance, Drusus invites the party to stay and dine with him. He produces a meal of fish, fruits, tubers, nuts, and an oddly bland beer he brews there upon the lakeshore. A large, if rough-looking, table beneath the main cabin serves as the dining hall. During the meal he presses them, for any news of the outside world, particularly of the Oth River Valley and the town of Haverstraw.

NOTE: Drusus is very clever and he intends to use *telepathy* on all those present. In order to mask the spell, he speaks very slowly and deliberately, with pauses between thoughts. He always makes eye contact. This is all done in order to mask his need to concentrate on a target to read its mind.

With a successful Wisdom (perception) check (DC 13) it is possible to see the tattoo of the Umbrians upon Drusus' hand. This reveals his origins to anyone familiar with the wizard guild, which is most everyone. If confronted about it, he freely

confesses that he belonged to the order in his youth, but left off the worship of the Horned God after he fled into the wilderness. Here, he explains he has found a new life, one in the service of Nunt the God of Death.

"I have sworn off all the evil days of my youth and have pledged myself to the quiet study of the River of Erde and the paths of the dead, for it will not be long before I partake of that journey. If ever I am to find peace beyond this world, it must be in the Stone Fields and not in the hell that is Aufstrag or the Wretched Plains beyond."

Any ability to detect lies reveals that he is not being entirely honest, some of what he says holds the germ of truth, but little else. He is still an Umbrian.

TELEPATHY: If the invisibility ruse fails, he attempts again to cast *telepathy* during dinner. Drusus uses *telepathy* that acts as a more powerful *detect thoughts* in order to glean any information about the eastern wood, but particularly the oath stone or Haverstraw. This is an active spell and a wizard or illusionist may be able to detect what Drusus is doing. Upon a successful DC 17 Intelligence (arcana) they see that he is casting a spell. If they achieve DC 20, they determine what it is.

THE OATH STONE

Getting possession of the oath stone is of paramount importance to the magi. If he has it, then he can destroy it. If he does not, then any time it is returned to Haverstraw it can destroy him. Though he could race to the town, hoping to get there before the characters, he would always be in fear of it turning up and destroying him.

With this in mind Drusus is looking for any thoughts that might conjure up the oath stone. If the party found the item in the watchtower back on the Mistbane, then he will surely discover something, even if they do not know what it is. If the party brings it up, he listens politely. But in either case he is determined to get the item from the party.

ASKED ABOUT THE STONE: If one of the party members brings up the stone and asks why his name is upon it, Drusus acts wounded, complaining of the bitterness of weak men. He tells that in Haverstraw a curse was set upon him and his companions. It was punishment, he says, for he and his friends had attempted to break the hold that the Council of Nobles had upon the people. If pressed he says it banished him and his comrades to a life of poverty and wretchedness . . . which is plain to see.

REVEALING THE STONE: If he discovers it by *telepathy*, he does not reveal this to them, he only attempts to get them to talk about any items they found on the way.

PAYING FOR IT: If this fails to get someone to mention the stone, he'll mention that he has been looking for a stone, which bears his name on it, for many years and would pay handsomely for it. It has been lost, he recounts, somewhere in the forest, and it is a family heirloom. He will pay up to 2000gp for the stone, for that is all he has in the world.

FIGHTING FOR IT: He will not attack the party, deeming them too strong and his spells too weak, unless of course the party is very weak. If he is attacked, he fights only so long as he thinks he can win, otherwise he seeks to escape into the forest as quickly as he can.

TRICKING THE PARTY: What he really wants to do is convince the party to go to Gurthap Falls and the castle that lies there. He mentions that it is filled with wealth, though probably much danger as well. His hope is that they are all killed there, or at the very least, weakened so he can slay them.

NOTE: Gurthap Falls is covered in the adventure module C5 Falls the Divide.

Drusus is lawful neutral. He has few worldly possessions. He carries a +2 dirk, his spell book “Incantations, Enchantments, Charms and Spells as Collected by Pappilion,” four black pearls worth 500gp, his clothing and other odds and ends. He does keep *locate object* and *detect thoughts* memorized. If a battle does occur he should be rolled up as a 12th level wizard with ability scores Str 10 Dex 15 Con 14 Int 19 Wis 12 Cha 12.

Spell’s in Drusus’ Book: 0: acid splash, blade ward, friends, mage hand, prestidigitation. 1st: burning hands, chromatic orb, comprehend languages, disguise self, expeditious retreat, floating disk, mage armor, magic missile, shield, unseen servant. 2nd: darkness, detect thoughts, invisibility, locate object, rope trick, shatter, web. 3rd: gaseous form, hypnotic pattern, stinking cloud, sending, water breathing 4th: arcane eye, locate creature, phantasmal killer 5th: animate objects, cloudkill 6th: arcane gate, eyebite.

CONTINUING THE ADVENTURE

What happens next depends upon too many variables. The overland journey can resume, whether the party is going to Gurthap Falls because of the magi or are just continuing their overland trek, both which continue westerly, toward where the rivers Watchita and Westerling tumble together at Gurthap Falls. West of that lies the Pigs Trail and the village of Alice (C2 **Shades of Mist**) and north lies Greenbriar and Westerling River Valley (C1 **Mortality of Green**).

APPENDIX A: NEW MONSTERS

DRAGON, IRIS WYRM

The smallest of dragons, the iris wurm is light green in color, thin and lithe. Broad, leaf-like scales cover its long form; its legs shaped like vines, and its head, long and thin is yellow. It has small claws, used to cling to the sides of trees, branches, or rocks. The iris dragon’s tail, long and thinning to a small taper, serves a similar purpose. It has razor sharp teeth that deliver a stinging bite, but its real weapon is the dew claw it possesses on each forward claw. This long appendage, several inches longer than its other claws, carries potent venom.

SWAMP DWELLERS. Iris dragons dwell in tropic, sub-tropic jungles and temperate deciduous forests. They are very social, pack oriented dragons, and travel in family groups of up to 10. The creature is moderately intelligent, with the older ones able to speak elf, the vulgate, or any other tongue with which it has had long exposure. The dragon takes up residence near water or cave entrances, trails and the like; anywhere that creatures may stop to find food or shelter. They take shelter in the trees and shrubs, disguising themselves as plants. When their prey enters the area, they wait for it to come within range of one of



its forefeet; using the claw they attempt to nip the victim. They wait until the paralysis takes effect and then come into feed. If discovered or disturbed the whole pack of them launch in a very aggressive attack on any and all targets in the area.

STEALTHY HUNTERS. The iris dragon is able to camouflage itself extraordinarily well. To the casual viewer the creature looks more like a vine snaking up the side of a tree or rock than a dragon. It moves slowly as well, using its ability to blend into the environment to hide it from the creature it is stalking. They prey primarily on humans, demi-humans, and humanoids. They feed through tubular protrusion that lies beneath their tongue. When a victim is gassed or paralyzed the dragon settles on them, the tube is driven into the victim and their blood drained.

The iris wyrm feeds on the paralyzed victim, so long as the victim is alive. If at any time the victim is viewed as dead by the iris wyrm it stops eating it. For instance, the monk's ability to feign death would stop the dragon from devouring the character.

IRIS DRAGON (ADULT)

MEDIUM DRAGON, NEUTRAL

ARMOR CLASS: 15 (Natural Armor)

HIT POINTS: 45 (6d8+9 HD)

SPEED: 20ft / 80ft (fly)

STR:	DEX:	CON:	INT:	WIS:	CHA:
15 (+2)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	10 (0)	15 (+2)	7 (-2)

CONDITION IMMUNITIES: Frightened, Paralyzed

DAMAGE RESISTANCE: Bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical weapons

SENSES: PASSIVE PERCEPTION 16

SKILLS: Perception +6, Stealth +8, Survival +6

LANGUAGES: Vulgate, draconic

CHALLENGE: 3 (700 XP)

Special Qualities

CAMOUFLAGE. They adapt colors to match its environment. The creature has advantage on all stealth checks.

Actions

CLAW. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 7(1d8+3) slashing damage. The target must make a constitution save (DC 15) or be affected by the creature's poison. The poison causes the target to become incapacitated. The target can repeat the save at the end of each of its turns, shaking off the effect and gaining immunity to the poison for 24 hours on a successful save.

BLOOD DRAIN. If the dragon has incapacitated a target, it will try to feed. The dragon lands on the target, injecting its mouth tube into the victim and sucking out blood. The target automatically takes 4(1d8) necrotic damage each round. The creature will keep drinking until attacked, its victim dies, or it consumes twice its hit points in damage. If the dragon consumes double its hit points in blood, it will immediately stop draining blood and fly away to digest its meal.

PARALYSIS BREATH (Recharge 5-6). The dragon exhales a cloud of spores in a 15 foot cone. Anyone in the area must make a Dexterity save (DC 15) or be infected by the spores and paralyzed. Anyone immune to disease automatically saves against the spores.

THE IRIS DRAGON IN AHRDE

The iris dragon is a favorite of wizards and illusionists as they are able to use the wyrms as guardians in and around their towers. In old Aenoch the practice of creating elaborate gardens of walkways, bridges, lawns, beds of flowers, etc. was common amongst the nobles; for a great while the fad of peopling those gardens with the iris wyrm allowed the creature to spread into most of the Lands of Ursal and beyond. The creature suffered greatly during the long winter dark and their numbers dwindled.

The people of Aufstrag saw the iris wyrm as a delicacy and served the creature with mounds of butter and gravy in their great feasts. To this day the Aenochians are very partial to the iris wyrm and the people of New Aenoch have revived the practice of making gardens to house the iris wyrm and the small dragon's numbers have increased, if only moderately.

APPENDIX B: NEW MAGIC ITEMS

OATH STONE

Wondrous Item, Rare (Requires Attunement)

These stones are blessed by the god Burol. They must have been in a stone giant's possession at some point and been purchased or stolen from the giant. Anyone who binds themselves to the stone via an oath is bound to that oath or they will be cursed (see below).

To bind someone to an oath via an oath stone, the name of the oath taker must be carved into the stone. The oath taker then spits upon their name and covers it with their hand, saying the oath aloud. They are then bound to the stone, so long as the stone remains in the hands of whoever administered the oath, the oath giver.

For example, if a king wants to bind a duke to him, he carves the duke's name into the stone. The duke spits upon it, grasps the stone and the recites the oath. The king takes the stone and safeguards it. If he loses the stone, its magic is broken and cannot be restored until the stone is returned to him.

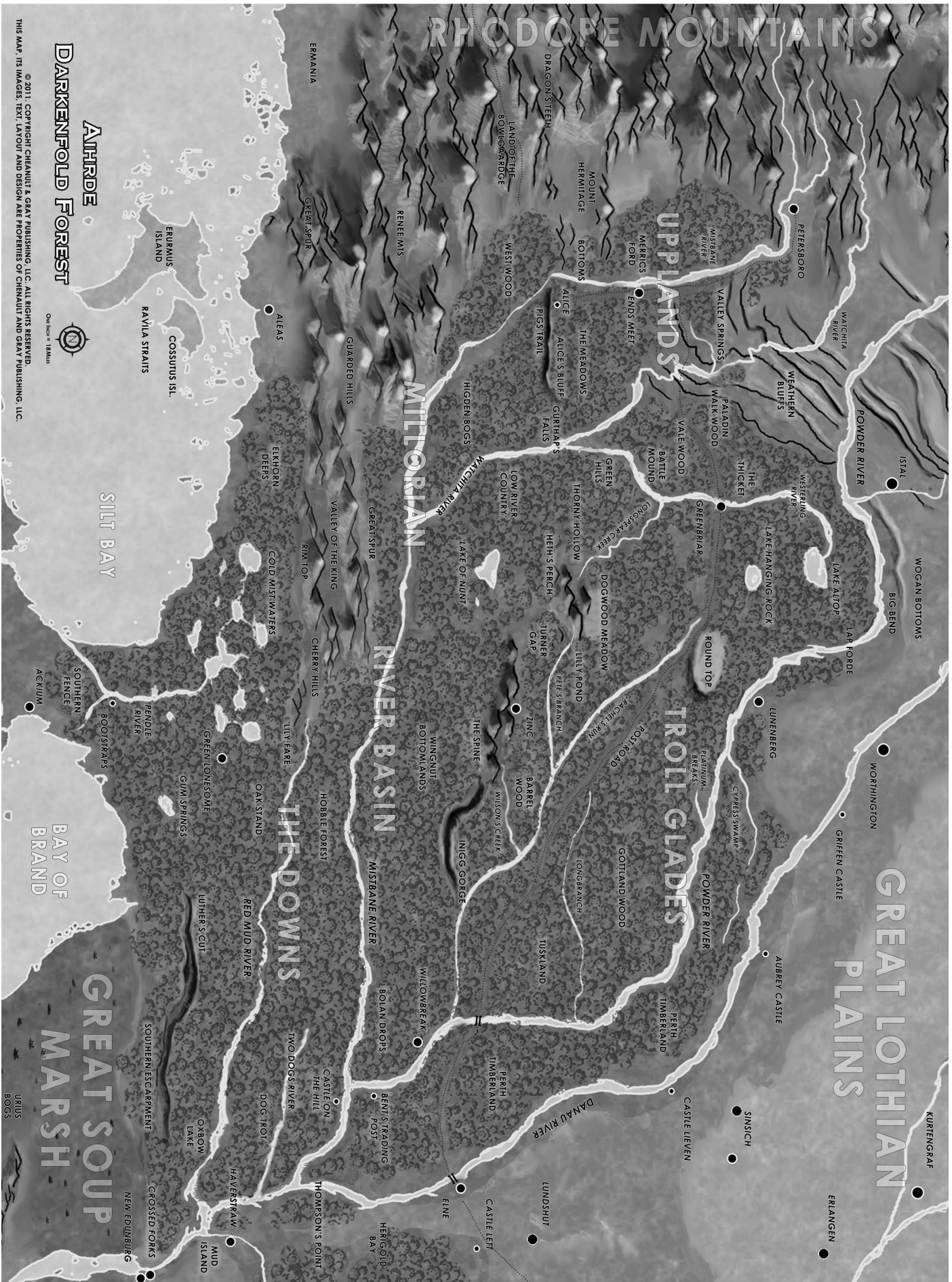
Anyone cursed by breaking an oath to an oath stone ages 1 year for every day they are alive until they die of old age. During this time, they suffer disadvantage on all attacks, ability checks, and saving throws. The only ways to reverse this curse are to take up the oath once more, or to be released from the oath through the loss of the stone by its possessor, or through the stone's destruction.

Encounters are governed by region. Though the adventures in Shades of Mist are of mid-level range the Darkenfold is a forest filled with limitless adventure possibilities.

TABLE 2: DARKENFOLD ENCOUNTER CHART

ENCOUNTER	UPPLANDS/TROLL GLADES	MILLORIAN/ DOWNS	POWDER	MISTBANE RIVER BASIN
ALLIGATOR	-	-	01-02	01-04
ALLIP*	1	1	-	05-06
ANKHEG	2	-	02-03	-
ASSASSIN VINE	3-5	2-3	04-06	07-10
BARGHEST, DEVIL*	-	4	-	11-12
BASILISK	6	5	-	-
BEAR, BROWN	7-9	6-8	07-10	13-15
BEHIR	10	9	11-12	16-17
BLINK DOG	11-13	10-11	-	-
BOAR	14-16	12-14	13-16	18-20
CENTAUR	17	15-16	17	-
CENTIPEDE, GIANT	18-20		18-21	
CHIMERA	21	17-18	22	21-22
COCKATRICE	22-23	19-21	-	-
DEMI-HUMAN	24-26	22-23	23-26	22-25
DRAGON	27	24	27	26-28
DRYAD	28-29	25-26	28-29	29-31
ETTERCAP	30-31	27-28	-	-
ETTIN	32	29-31	30-31	-
FROG, GIANT	33-34	32-33	32-34	32-34
FUNGUS, VIOLET	-	34	35-37	35-37
GIANT	35-36	35-37	38-40	-
GORGON	37	38	-	-
HAG, NIGHT	38	39	41	38-39
HARPY	39-40	40-41	42-43	40-42
HERD ANIMAL	41-43	42-44	44-45	-
HUMAN	44-46	45	46-49	43-46
HUMANOID	47-49	46-48	50-51	
HYDRA	-	49-51	-	-
JACULUS	50	52-54	52-53	-
LAMIA	-	55	-	-
LAMMASU	-	56-57	-	-
LION	51-53	58-60	54-55	47-49
LIZARD FOLK	54-55	61-63	-	50-53
LYCANTHROPE	56-57	64-65	56	54-56
MANTICORE	58-59	66-67	57-58	-
NAGA, DARK	60-61	68	-	-
NYMPH	62-63	69	59	57-60

OGRE	64-66	70-71	60-62	61-62
OWLBEAR	67-68	72-73	63-65	63-65
PSEUDODRAGON	69	74	66	-
SATYR	70-71	75-76	67	-
SHAMBLING MOUND	-	-	68-69	66-68
SNAKE, GIANT	72-74	77-78	70-71	69-72
SPIDER	75-76	79-80	72-75	-
SPRITE	77-78	81-82	76	73-75
STIRGE	79-80	83-84	77-79	76-78
TOAD, GIANT	81-83	85-86	80-82	79-81
TREANT	84-85	87-88	83-84	82-84
TROLL	86-88	89-90	85-87	-
TROLL LORD (AS OGRE WITH TROLL REGENERATION)	89	91	88	-
UNDEAD	90-92	92	89-91	85-89
UNICORN	93	93	92	90-92
WILL-O'-WISP	94-95	94-95	93-94	93-94
WOLF	96-98	96-98	95-97	95-96
WYVERN	99-100	99-100	98-100	97-100
DRAGON				
DRAGON, COPPER	01-20	05-15	01-20	01-25
DRAGON, GREEN	21-50	16-30	21-50	26-100
DRAGON, NAKAL*	51-99	31-89	51-99	-
DRAGON, RED	100	90-100	100	-
GIANT				
CLOUD	-	01-10	-	-
HILL	01-50	10-50	01-50	01-100
STONE	51-75	51-75	51-90	-
FIRE	76-100	76-100	91-100	-
DEMI-HUMAN				
DWARF	01-25	01-05	01-25	01-05
ELF	26-30	06-60	26-30	06-35
GNOME	31-75	61-80	31-75	36-60
HALFLING	76-100	81-100	76-100	61-100
UNDEAD				
BANSHEE	-	01-10	-	01-100
GHOST	01-05	11-25	01-05	-
SKELETONS	06-25	26-35	06-25	-
SHADOW	26-35	36-45	26-35	-
SHADOW MASTIFF*	36-50	46-66	36-50	-
WRAITH	51-75	67-87	51-75	-
WIGHT	76-100	88-100	76-100	-



OGL

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