
WINTERWOLD



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For better or worse, this is one of those adventures that imposes itself on party whether they like it or not; the companions are simply in the wrong place at the wrong time. Once inside Winterwold's borders, the PCs will have to find a way to deal with the crisis as best they can. The undead don't care how the adventurers arrived, or where they came from. They just want to eat them.

House of the Undying

It is said that the last of the elves died in the Second Age, eradicated by the serpentmen in their genocidal war against the fey. Whilst it is true that no living elf remains in the Midlands, that is not to say they are without presence; for not all who died deigned to remain so.

Gilchanar Laeril, long exiled by the *Elf Queen Ninsrova* for experiments calculated to restore the animus in dead flesh, was never one to bow to fate. As the elves fell in great numbers, it became clear to the apostate that the only means of winning the war against the cursed *Aregass* would be to turn the dead against them. And so it was in *Winterwold*, *Laeril's* secret refuge, that the sorcerer perfected his potent but forbidden rites, transforming large numbers of fallen into risen avengers.

But magic is an unforgiving mistress. The infusions took a toll far greater than *Laeril* had bargained for, siphoning his own vital energies until he too joined the ranks of the unliving to finish his crucial work.

Despite the necromancer's sacrifice, the undead proved too little too late; and in time there were no living elves left to defend. Gripped in ever tightening grief and madness, *Laeril* sealed *Winterwold* against the outside world, binding himself and the last unliving elves into stasis.



Just Lucky I Guess

Laeril's abjuration has kept the grove hidden and in stasis for millennia, causing travellers to circle by and forget any trace of its existence. But the magic has a dual purpose; in addition to confounding humans, it traps reptile kin inside *Winterwold's* borders, then awakens the occupants to feed upon them in grisly retribution.

When this adventure begins, the party happen to be passing by the outpost when a band of *serpentmen* are entering from the opposite side. This highly unfortunate coincidence causes both parties to be trapped within *Laeril's* barrier, with only a short time to decipher the mystery of their containment, and perhaps find a way out. Whilst not apparent at first, time will be of the essence as more and more undead wake from the crypts beneath the necromancer's sanctuary.

Forest Encounters

The GM is free to drop *Winterwold* into any forest or woodland of their choosing, although remote locations would be more consistent with the site's original purpose. The Midland's *Forest of Drelnor* or *Wistwood* would certainly suffice.

The GM decides how many days pass before the party stumbles upon the outpost (or alternatively 2d6 days). Each day of travel requires a roll on the *Overland Events* table (LFG p.131), or alternatively there is a 30% chance of a random encounter each day. If an encounter occurs, roll 1d10:

1. Thundering feet foreshadow two immense, dark coloured beasts breaking out of the trees: a bloody beaked *Owlbear* and roaring *Hookfurgle!* The two monsters are clearly in the midst of a savage melee and bleeding from several cuts. There is a 50% chance the creatures view the party as further challenges to their territory, and also attack them. A character with the Animal Lore skill might know the right postures to avoid confrontation.
2. A giant serpent skin, some 17 ft long, is wound through the limbs of a nearby tree. A 10 HD *Giant Serpent* with *Off Turn Attacks* is nearby, and will attack from the trees later that night.
3. Distant sorcery has inadvertently summoned cursed weather, causing a diseased rain to fall for several hours. A Perc (Detection) or Perc (Wilderness Lore) test notices the water is tinged with yellowed, phlegm like specks. A *Luck* (Con) save is required to avoid a random disease (with advantage, if the PCs take precautions to minimise contact).

4. A pack of 4d6 wolves begin tracking the party, following from a distance. The beasts are hungry but will not attack unless one of the PCs is already wounded. There is a 50% each night the wolves disappear by dawn, switching to easier prey. If the party provides them with food, they are suspicious, but will take it with minimal convincing. If so, at the GM's option, the pack will turn up at some later point in the adventure (or later adventure in the same forest) to help the party.
5. A solitary wolf begins following the party, keeping to distant undergrowth and dark shadows (disadvantage on Perc checks to spot it). The beast is a relatively new *Werewolf*, waiting for an opportune time to launch an attack. If the PCs approach it, it howls, as if summoning others to its side, then flees (a ruse; the creature is a lone wolf, it killed its non lycan packmates during the last full moon).



6. As night falls, panicked bleating can be heard in the trees ahead, until suddenly cut off. The long banished thuel sorcerer *Slegmod* is in the midst of performing a 1d4 hour blood ritual, offering a goat's corpse to *Nen'thopargaa of the Five Shands*. If the intricate ceremony is interrupted, several horrible creatures break through the Veil to attack! (Treat as DDM entry 11, but 2d4 creatures instead of 1).

7. A band of capricious *Forest Sprites* have taken an interest in the blundering big folk and constructed a trap for them: a spider silk trip wire, connecting to a hornet's nest in the high branches. A *Luck* (Perc) save at disadvantage is required to avoid the wire, else the unfortunate PC is struck by the falling nest and enveloped by the angry swarm! (1 hp damage, and 1d2 Dex loss due to painful swelling). After the commotion has settled, high pitched, mocking laughter can be heard from high in the trees (2d6 sprites).



8. 2d6 *Ogres* are singing a war chant, their spirits high on bloodlust after having recently defeated a *skorn* hunting party. A few ogres are gnawing on some tasty limbs, while another is dragging a large sack (an unconscious *skorn* female; a snack for later).

9. 1d6+2 *Giant Worker Ants* are scavenging nearby, the clicking of their mandibles audible over the usual forest sounds. If the party have any smaller animals they attempt to take one each and leave (or if there are horses, one horse). Fighting causes 2d4 *Giant Solider Ants* to appear in 1d6 x 10 seconds. The hive is quite distant, some 2d6 hours away.

10. A colossal oak tree with a man size hollow is nearby. Tinkling sounds can be heard emanating from within, and upon closer inspection, a woven ladder can be seen, dropping down into the earth beneath the tree...



WINTERWOLD



Passing Through the Ward

Laeril's ward is invisible to normal vision and all magical divinations other than *Wodon's Eye*. The barrier is a circular dome about 1 inch thick, covering most of the mapped area. Any sentient creatures observing from the outside see only thick forest, and thoughts of entering are moulded into circumnavigating instead.

The only exception is with respect to sapient reptile kin; *Serpentmen*, *Iguaato*, *Dracor*, and so on. For these creatures, the barrier allows entry, then traps them inside.

For the purposes of this adventure, the PCs happen to be around the southern Area 1 at the same time a party of *serpentmen* move through the north western forest. Whilst this is happening, the barrier is briefly suspended, felt as a gentle rippled in the earth (Perc (Detection) check at disad to notice) allowing both parties to enter before becoming trapped. Within a minute the forest illusion lifts from the travellers' minds, and the hidden settlement is revealed.

Those trapped within find that leaving the mapped area is impossible. The invisible dome dims sunlight within, and quietens all sounds from outside. Most tellingly, it is physically impossible for anything to move through the barrier. If caught in the river, the circular barrier shunts swimmers and rafts etc off to the eastern bank.

Destroying the Barrier

There are three ways to destroy or suspend the barrier long enough to escape *Winterwold* (the barrier is otherwise indestructible short of a *Forbidden Wish*).

1. If *Laeril* is destroyed, so is the barrier (see Area 12 and *Aftermath*).
2. If the *Serpentmen* are killed, the barrier malfunctions and is lifted for 1d4 hours,

allowing the party to make a hasty retreat (see *Enclave Encounters* and *Aftermath*).

3. Destroying the *Tree of Awakening* with the oil barrels from Area 5 destroys the barrier (see Area 3 and *Aftermath*).

If the PCs somehow manage to avoid entering *Winterwold* they bypass this adventure, and may continue on to wherever it was they were going!

Winterwold

The elven enclave of *Winterwold* has stood for thousands of years, more or less preserved by *Laeril's* magical dome. The buildings are primarily wood, with leaf, tree and moon themes, as well as the *Laeril* family crest (a white tree fashioned of tiny bones, set upon a yellowed curtain). The sorcerer and his extended family of forty or so sheltered here during the war (see Area 7).

Whilst the necromancer's exclusory ward continues to operate strongly, the preserving effect has grown increasingly unstable over time. All magic use in *Winterwold* increases the user's DDM tally by 2 instead of 1. The buildings still stand, but centuries of weather have left them in varying states of disrepair (washed out colours, warping wood, leaky roofs, stuck doors, etc).

Immediately apparent is the complete lack of inhabitants. Apart from surrounding forest sounds (including the river *Belsuva*, which is fast flowing and loud), *Winterwold* is seemingly long abandoned. Nothing stirs but the leaves, dancing to the jig of the forest winds.

Enclave Encounters

As the PCs explore the outpost, the *serpentmen* are also scouting the area, and the *undead* gradually awakening in Area 11. As time moves on, the party will encounter ever increasing numbers of *undead*, and eventually face either the *serpentmen* or *Laeril* (or both). If either are defeated, the barrier will fail, allowing the PCs a chance to escape (see *Aftermath*).

Roll 1d6 on the following table as the adventurers visit each numbered location, and/or every half hour or other time interval the GM determines. Add 1 to the roll for each location visited or time interval passed.

- 1-3 Strong winds cause the trees to bend and the old buildings to creak, but nothing else seems to stir.
4. A faint snarling can be heard from the western outpost (*flesh feasters* waking from stasis, and venturing out).
5. An *Animus Husk* is thrashing about nearby, caught on a low tree branch it accidentally impaled itself on. It can't get free without help.
6. A series of rasping barks reverberates through the complex 1d4 minutes before 2d6+3 *Ghoul Hounds* thunder around a corner to attack the party!

Ghoul Hound, AC 14, HD 3, Bite 2d4+1 + paralysis, 19: 1d4 *flesh feasters* charge from nearby cover to attack! S17 D14 C18 I2 P12 W- Ch4, L6, 60 ft. *Ghoul hounds* are *Undead*. Their bite causes magical paralysis for 1d6 x 10 minutes (*Luck* (Con) save resists).

7. 2d6 *Flesh Feasters* come running into view, mouths open wide, their arms flailing behind them as they sprint towards the party! If this encounter occurs again, add 1d6 *Flesh Feasters*.
8. 2d6 *Ghouls* appear from a neighbouring building or forest, loping across the grounds in search of living things to devour. They have not spotted the party yet, but will do any moment if the PCs don't action immediately. If this encounter occurs again, add 1d6 *Ghouls*.



9. 5d6 *Flesh Feasters* burst from nearby cover, snarling viciously as they drive towards the adventurers, jaws stretched to gorge on their flesh! If this encounter occurs again, add 1d6 *Flesh Feasters*.
10. 2d6 *Shadow Fey* glide from between the trees or under the door of a building, unerringly moving straight toward the adventurers... If this encounter occurs again, add 1d6 *Shadow Fey*.
11. 2d6 *Serpentmen Ssurlocs* (hybrid) and 1 *Razkarrt* (noble caste, sorcerer) can be seen nearby, perhaps moving between distant trees or around another building (50%) or fighting off a small band of *Flesh Feasters* (50%). They have not noticed the party as yet.

Ssurloc, AC 16, HD 6+3, Bite 1d6 + Poison or Spear 1d6+3 + Poison, 19: tail whip 1d8 and knocked prone, S18 D16 C14 I10 P11 W13 Ch10, L8, Mv 40 ft. *Ssurloc* poison causes 1d6 damage and 1 Dex loss (*Luck* (Con) save resists).

The scaled ones are led by the cruel sorcerer *Nepher'Aat*; an arrogant and skilled sorceress of many years. *Nepher'Aat* loathes the *Tah Krii* (fire

monkeys, aka humans) like all her kin, but might in desperate circumstances be persuaded to join with them to stave off the undead (she speaks some common, and the *Serpentmen* tongue). At least until they figure out a way to escape.

Nepher'Aat, Razkart, AC 18, HD 9+4 (48 hp), *Magic Staff* 2d6 + special, 19: the *Razkart* unleashes a potent charm effect, *Luck* (Will) save or *Malediction of Lunacy*, S12 D19 C14 I18 P16 W18 Ch14, L10, Mv 30 ft. *Nepher'Aat* has *Major Exploit Protection* and *Stronger Luck*. She may spend an action to shift between human, noble and hybrid forms. May choose from the following spells five times per encounter (8th level): *Gaze of Beguilement*, *Fusing of Flesh*, *Pierce the Veil*, *Mantle of Many Faces*, *Arcane Aegis*, *None Shall Pass*, *Inescapable Unmasking*, *Waking Dream*, *Bestial Communion*, *Nightcrawler's Boon*, *Spectral Transfixion*, *Channel Lightning*, *Gift of the Fiery Furnace*, *Riddle of Bones*, *Soothing Edict*, *Wall of the White Wastes*.

The *Razkart* has studied the barrier and understands it is linked to them. *Nepher'Aat* already tried killing one of her *Ssurlocs* to no effect, but suspects the truth (that all of the scaled folk must die before the ward will lift - clearly a pathetic attempt by the *Sithru* (old rot; aka elves) to exact a sliver of revenge against them).

An Int (General Lore) check at disadvantage recalls the serpentmen wars, and the extinction of the fey. *Pierce the Veil* reveals a barely perceivable link between the serpentmen and the barrier; a faint synchronizing of auras suggestive of connection. In addition, if a situation arises in which the undead may choose between attacking humans or serpentmen, they always target the reptiles first (perhaps even breaking off from attacking humans to assault the scaled folk). The above might provide some inkling as to what is going on.

The sorceress won't volunteer her suspicions to the PCs under any circumstances, but will watch them carefully for signs that they might already know.

Any bargain with the PCs will be temporary at best, however. The *serpentmen* race remains in hiding deep in the *Suurat Jungle*, and it is far too early to reveal themselves to the wider world.

Nepher'Aat's Staff requires two hands, has a 10 ft reach, and causes 2d6 damage on a hit. The staff is enchanted and allows the user to spend a point of *Luck* to paralyse the target for 2d6 rounds (*Luck* (Con) save resists). This effect may be used up twice per 24 hours.

12. On a 12+, *Laeril* (Area 12) appears from around a nearby building, corner or copse of trees, running towards the PCs at unnatural speed. The PCs are not the *serpentmen* he expected to reap vengeance upon... but he will gladly drink their blood just the same.



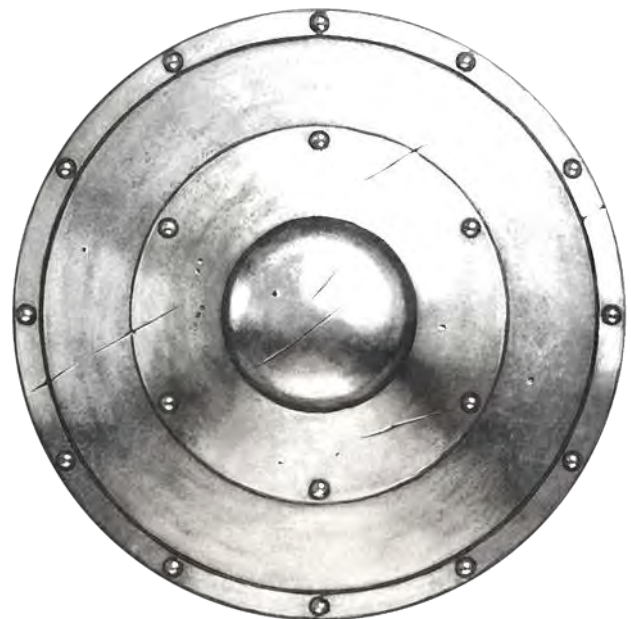
Elven Trinkets

As the party investigates *Winterwold* and its surrounds, the GM might substitute a 1d12 roll on the following table instead of the usual LFG *Carry Loot* or *Trinkets & Curios* tables:

- (i) A bronze dagger with a T-Rex handled motif (8 gp).
- (ii) A 60 ft coil of elven rope (imposes a -2 penalty on checks to break it, and weighs only a third of silk rope).
- (iii) A life sized hummingbird carved from a piece of fine willow (34 gp).
- (iv) A pair of elven made leather boots, strong and supple, with silver tracings on the heels. When attempting to move silently, a user unskilled in stealth gains access to their *Reroll Pool*. A skilled user may access their *Reroll Pool* up to twice (78 gp).
- (v) An elven cloak; dark green, almost black cloth with a high collar and intricate embroidery. When attempting to hide, a user unskilled in stealth gains access to their *Reroll Pool*. A skilled user may access their *Reroll Pool* up to twice (244 gp).
- (vi) A rough cut, bright yellow gemstone of unknown species. If the exposed to the sun during the day, the stone glows dimly in the dark (weaker than a candle). The next time the user is struck by an *undead* attack with a drain effect, the drain is negated, and the stone shatters (90 gp).
- (vii) A waterproof satchel contains a series of unbound pages detailing the last days of *Winterwold*. The account is amateurish, perhaps written by a child, but clearly conveys the terror and despair of residents as *Laeril* fell

into madness. The last entry indicates *Laeril* has a plan to raise more immortal guardians, but just how is unclear (800 gp to the right collector).

- (viii) A pair of green saplings with curious purple veins growing in a small terracotta pot. An Int (Wilderness Lore) check great success identifies them as the rare *Violet Irifass* plant (once grown, its flowers may be turned into a tonic that boosts memory and resists dementia (66 gp).
- (ix) An old elven lute with many wonderful etchings of flying pteranodons, clouds, rivers and trees (40 gp). Still playable but needs a tuning.
- (x) A leather skull cap made of grey brown, noduled dinosaur hide (22 gp).
- (xi) A circular bronze shield with a studded rim in good repair (24 gp).
- (xii) A mummified raptor claw with a strap to hang from one's belt strap (10 gp).



Numbered Locations

Area 1 – Sentry Post

This arched wooden outpost is split and sagging, the front door swollen into the frame (Str check to open). A number of arrow slits cover each wall. The interior is mostly dark but a few sunbeams filter through the damaged roof.

Inside are 2d6 elves who were transformed into *Flesh Feasters*, a zombie variant. The elves are initially motionless but awaken if living creatures come within 60 ft. They are unable to make sense of the stuck door, and will instead bite at the arrow slits, snarling horribly.

Flesh Feaster, AC 11, HD 2+2, Bite 1d6+2 + infection, 19: special, S15 D10 C14 I2 P12 W-Ch-L5, Mv 30 ft. On a natural 19, another *flesh feaster* appears from nearby (or reanimates)! Immune to missile fire other than head shots (Major Exploit) which kill them instantly. Anyone bitten must make a *Luck* (Con) save at the end of the combat or transform into a *flesh feaster* in 2d4 hours (*Purge the Accursed*, or treatment with the rare *Desert Moon* flower within 2d6 days reverses the effect). An adventurer reduced to zero hp automatically fails the *Luck* save.

Unlike ordinary zombies *Flesh feasters* are fast and aggressive, driven by an overpowering compulsion to eat living flesh. They possess only the most basic animal intelligence, discarding weapons or tools to run at targets head first, jaws gaping wide.

If the feasters are cleared out, the sentry post contains 1 x Carry Loot, 1d6 swords, and 1d6+3 short bows (10 arrows each). To the north is a 90 ft cliff, with carved steps ascending to the settlement proper.

Area 2 – River Bridges

The northern and southern bridges are fashioned of stone and in good repair, wide enough for several people to stand abreast. The river *Belsuva* (in ancient elven) is powerful and loud, coursing

through the settlement to the south. Falling from a waterfall requires a *Luck* save to avoid being reduced to zero hp (dashed on rocks hidden in the depths, if successful 1d12 damage from being knocked about instead).

Area 3 – Tree of Awakening

A towering 50 ft oak tree looms over this pathed area, surrounded by eight evenly spaced gazebos. The tree is leafless and covered in a white, chalk like substance (the tree is made of it; with each raising of the dead, the tree “grows” a little larger). Scraping away the chalk reveals a hard, bone like structure beneath (cutting a branch is like cutting through ancient bone).

The bone tree is part of *Laeril's* raising ritual and radiates necromantic energy if examined with *Pierce the Veil*. Using any kind of magic here adds 3 to the caster's DDM tally. Whilst limbs may be broken etc, the trunk is impervious to weapons but is susceptible to a very large and ongoing conflagration of fire. Using all of the oil barrels in Area 5 will eventually cause the trunk to burn, destroying it in 2d6 x 10 minutes (see *Aftermath*).

The wooden gazebos are starting to rot, and contain piled elven corpses (2d6 per gazebo). The bodies were part way through the raising ritual (which takes several days) when the necromancer placed the settlement into stasis. The bodies are a mix of civilians and soldiers (according to their dress, they are unarmed). The vast majority of the civilians had their throat cut, but the soldiers appear to have died in battle.

Area 4 – Corpse Sheds

These two dilapidated buildings were once domiciles but were converted into corpse sheds during *Laeril's* efforts to mobilize as many fallen as possible. Inside the larger building are 5d10+50 bodies, and in the smaller 5d6+20. The bodies are laid out on the ground, on mildewed couches, etc, in various states of decay (some seem as if they died only today, whilst others are skeletal). Similar to Area 3 there is a mix of civilians and soldiers.

Standing to attention inside the entry hall and large common room are 2d6 *Animus Husks*. These elf zombie variants are charged with guarding the bodies and animate only if attacked or the bodies are damaged in some way.

Animus Husk, AC 11, HD 2+2, Bite or Claw 1d8, 19: special, S15 D10 C14 I- P12 W- Ch-L5, Mv 20 ft. Immune to missile fire. On a natural 19, an animated claw drops from the rafters to attack! When reduced to zero hp, an *Animus Husk's* clawed arms and head tear free of the body and continue to attack (same AC, crawling or rolling speed 20 ft). A single melee hit on a mobile appendage destroys it. An adventurer reduced to zero hp must be recovered from a *husk* in one round or they die.

Animus Husks are lifeless cadavers given motion by dark magic. They move in a jerky, unnatural manner, similar to ordinary zombies, but their limbs and head continue to attack even when the torso is destroyed. *Husks* are mindless in their assault, and will pound or scratch on doors rather



than open them with the handle, etc. They dismember a fallen victim before moving onto the next target. If searched top to bottom, each building contains 1 x Carry Loot and 1 x Elven Trinket.

Area 5 - Supplies

These two buildings contain supplies for the outpost; sacks of grain, crates of cloth, etc, as well as 2d6+6 barrels of oil (see Area 3). The goods are in relatively good condition, well preserved by *Laeril's* abjuration. There are 1d6+3 *Flesh Feasters* hibernating inside in separate rooms. They quickly awaken if any PCs enter the buildings.

Area 6 - Carpentry Hall

This old carpentry hall is particularly well crafted, with many intricate embellishments around the doorframes and pillars. Inside are half finished doors, mantles, and artworks of graceful elf warriors, soaring pteranodons, and lithe fey hounds. Woodworking tools (including 2d6 axes), glue and other supplies are scattered about on the many work tables.

3d6 elven *Ghouls* are stirring in the upper levels of the hall, swiftly reanimating if PCs make themselves known in some way (granting the *ghouls* a Perception check). The ghouls are ravenously hungry and will swarm the PCs as fast as they are able.

Ghoul, AC 13, HD 3, Claw 1d6+1 and Bite 1d4, 19: the target is subject to the equivalent of a *Incantation of Exhaustion* for 1d6 rounds (*Luck* (Con) save resists), S16 D13 C12 I10 P13 W14 Ch8, L6, Mv 40 ft. *Ghouls* are *Undead* with the usual benefits (LFG p.183). A touch magically paralyzes a victim for 1d6 x 10 minutes (*Luck* (Con) save resists).

If the upper level is searched, a locked strongbox contains 1 x Carry Loot and 1 x Elven Trinket is (Dex (Traps & Locks) check to open).

Area 7 – Domiciles

The north western domiciles held the last of the *Laeril* family, some 4d6+20 individuals transformed into undead terrors like everyone else (in this instance, *Flesh Feasters*). The monsters awaken if anyone dares to enter, descending from various bedrooms and common areas. Searching the two buildings garners 1 x Carry Loot and 1 x Valuables.

Area 8 – Chapel

This bronze domed chapel venerates two *Unseelie* spirits; the *Bruhga of Still Dreams*, and the *Exarg of Barren Skies*. An Int (Religious Lore) check at disadvantage recalls the pair are agents of unremitting hatred and retribution against *Rin Domû* (non fey). As is elven custom, the spirits themselves are not depicted in any direct manner, instead referenced by abstruse symbology (birds falling from the sky with broken wings, a triceratops trampling the moon, etc).

The main prayer room is decorated with wood panelling, bronze prayer wheels, and a living altar of shaped oak (still sprouting small green shoots). Humans entering here feel an immediate unease, but there are no undead to be found. Anyone defiling the temple must make a *Luck* save or immediately roll on the *Divine Rebuke* table. Looting the chapel turns up several valuable offerings (2 x Valuables, and a blessed seed in a silk pouch (if eaten, treat as a random Potion).

Making a heartfelt prayer or valuable offering to the spirits might just draw the attention of a curious spirit. On a *Luck* (Cha) save, the character finds one weapon of their choosing glows with momentary radiance (permanently gains the equivalent of the *cold iron* property, even if it already has other special metal properties).

Area 9 – Pool of the Fading Sun

This area contains a huge tiled gazebo (white and orange, with a fading sun motif) that covers a circular pool filled with opaque grey water. If tested the pool proves to be a uniform nine feet

deep. Mindless undead that fall in will likely become trapped (at least for a time, until there are so many inside that they climb up each other to escape). Alternatively, desperate PCs might be able to hide beneath the waters.

Area 10 – Barracks

These two domiciles were converted to barracks during the *serpentman* war. Prior to stasis, the remaining guards were transformed into *Shadow Fey*. The undead have no memory of their former lives, only an insatiable hunger for the life spark of the living.

Approaching either building or climbing the northern cliff steps summons the 2d6 *Shadow Fey*, which glide along the ground and/or up the cliff walls to attack!

Shadow Fey, AC 12, HD 4, Touch 1d6+1 + Str drain 19: the target's weapon or armour (50%) is transformed into shadow (*Luck* save resists), S-D16 C-I10 P13 W10 Ch7, L7, Mv 40 ft inc walls, ceiling, etc. *Shadow Fey* are immune to non magical weapons other than *cold iron* and fire (torches cause them 1d6 damage). On a hit, the target loses 1 Str. Targets reduced to zero Str are slain (50% chance rising as *shades*).

Searching the barracks reveals 2d6 swords, 2d6 shorts bows (10 arrows each), 3 shields, a suit of *nithral* chainmail, 4 fire pots, and 2 x Carry Loot.

Area 11 – House of the Undying

The largest and most decrepit building in the complex is *Laeril's* sprawling manor. The residence is two storey, with multiple bedrooms, sitting rooms and so on, appointed with what were once rich adornments, but the tapestries and paintings are long decayed. Nevertheless, precious vases, statuettes and other durable objects can be found on shelves, plinths, etc (worth 2 x Valuables).

The manor is conspicuously empty of inhabitants, and no undead occupy the ground or upper level.

However, beneath the manor, in a colossal underground network of caverns, are several hundred (if not close to a thousand) *Flesh Feasters* in hibernation. As noted on p.6, after first entering *Winterwold*, the *feasters* slowly emerge in greater and greater numbers to eat the intruders. Four different 10 ft wide stairwells lead to the caverns, none of them barred by doors or gates of any kind (removed long ago). Descending into the caverns with the intention of “clearing” them of monsters is certain death.

Area 12 - Laeril's Tower

Laeril lives in this 50 ft tower, which has three upper levels and a basement. Entry is via a heavy oak door at the base (unlocked) or by scaling the outside to reach the shuttered windows on each level. The tower is completely shut up.

The **Ground Level** is a large reception area littered with rotting chairs, couches, display tables with small trinkets, and so on. Wall paintings lie fallen on the floor, and the carpets are blood stained and moth eaten. Stone steps around the circumference lead to the second storey, and a pull ring trapdoor to the basement (barred from below; it cannot be opened except by breaking it, which would take some time and awaken *Laeril* if he is not already active).

The **Second Storey** is a bedchamber that has clearly been set on fire. A collapsed cot is set against one side, surrounded by charcoal bookshelves and the ashen remains of what must have been scores (maybe hundreds) of books. The stone steps continue to the top level. Searching the room locates a bronze tube containing 1 x Scroll.

The **Top Level** contains the ruins of *Laeril's* laboratory, which he destroyed in a fit of manic grief in the final days of the elven kingdoms. Burnt detritus, glass shards, and broken pottery occupy every corner. Locked in a bronze cage hanging from the ceiling is a 1 ft *Forest Gremlin* named *Quaglob*.



Quaglob was originally to be experimented on by *Laeril* but was forgotten about after the laboratory was torched. In stasis like the others, the *gremlin* awakens as the PCs observe the room. He is trapped in the cage and rattles it, motioning for the adventurers to set him free.

The *gremlin* understands fey and elven only (no common). If the party do not know these languages, interactions with him will have to be via sign language. *Quaglob* simply wants to be free, and will depart if given the chance (upon determining that he cannot leave, however, he will return to aid the party in bringing down the barrier, if possible).

Quaglob, Forest Gremlin, AC 13, HD 6 hp, Claws 1d2 + poison, 19: *Quaglob* channels a burst of uncontrolled magic, target rolls on the DDM table, S3 D15 C6 I14 P14 W15 C8, L6, Mv 30 ft inc walls, ceiling, etc, and leap 20 ft. *Forest Gremlins* gain advantage on stealth related checks and are innate magic users. May cast the following spells once per day (as 6th level): *Insidious Slumber*, *Lash of Unerring Pain*, *Writhing Fog*, *Arcane Aegis*, *Affliction of the Eyeless Host*, *Curse of Searing Steel*, *Waking Dream*, *Channel Lightning (outdoors only)*.

In terms of information, *Quaglob* knows that *Laeril* is a vampire, and destroyed his own lab, but is otherwise unfamiliar with what is going on in *Winterwold*.

The **Basement** has been turned into a small crypt, the trapdoor barred from below with a heavy wooden beam. *Laeril* sleeps in his stone tomb until roused (per the *Enclave Encounters* table or 2d6 rounds after the party enters the tower). Upon awakening, the insane vampire seeks out the adventurers and the *serpentmen* to feed upon. If he catches sight of the *serpentmen*, he flies into a bestial rage, ignoring all others to kill them first.

Laeril, Vampire Boss Monster, AC 15, HD 9 (94 hp), Bite 1d12 + level drain, 19: the bite is especially potent, draining 2 levels instead of 1, S20 D19 C17 I16 P18 W17 Ch16, L10, Mv 30 ft or 60 ft in gaseous form. *Undead Boss Monster* with all the usual benefits (LFG p.184). May spend an action to invoke *Cradle of Formlessness*, 30% recharge at the start of the *Laeril's* turn. Immune to non-magical weapons, except those of *cold iron*. Regenerates 1d12 damage at the start of his turn, fire or acid suspends this effect for 1d6 rounds.

If reduced to zero hit points, turns to mist and flees to the basement of Area 12, where he slowly regenerates over 1d4 hours. The only way to permanently slay *Laeril* is to drive a wooden stake through his heart (Major Exploit once *Staggered*, at the GM's option *Laeril* might get a *Luck* save to avoid, per the *Stronger Luck Boss Monster* trait).

Any spell casting ability the apostate once had was lost during his transformation into undeath. Located in *Laeril's* sarcophagus is 1 x Valuables, and a fire opal talisman (red colouration) with a spiderweb filigree (enchanted, upon attuning, once per week, the user may transform into a *Hook Spider* (treat as *Sudden Transmogrification*)).

If *Laeril* is destroyed, see *Aftermath*.

Aftermath

If *Laeril* or the *Tree of Awakening* are destroyed, the barrier ends. The effect is immediately observable (sunlight is no longer dimmed, and sounds from outside are unmuted). If all of the *serpentmen* are killed, the barrier is suspended for 1d4 hours instead.

Either way, the undead horde beneath Area 11 is immediately released, swarming out to kill the party in an unstoppable wave! Treat as a *Chase* scene (LFG p.69); if the party escape they survive to tell the tale with any loot they might have scavenged in the meantime. If not, play out the combat until the PCs either create another opportunity to flee, or are overwhelmed and die. If the PCs freed *Quaglob*, the GM might have him reappear at a timely moment to provide a secondary chance at escape.

Undead that venture outside *Winterwold* for more than 1d4 hours crumble to dust or otherwise vanish after 1d4 hours, leaving no trace of their passing.





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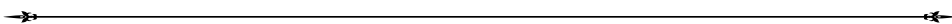
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