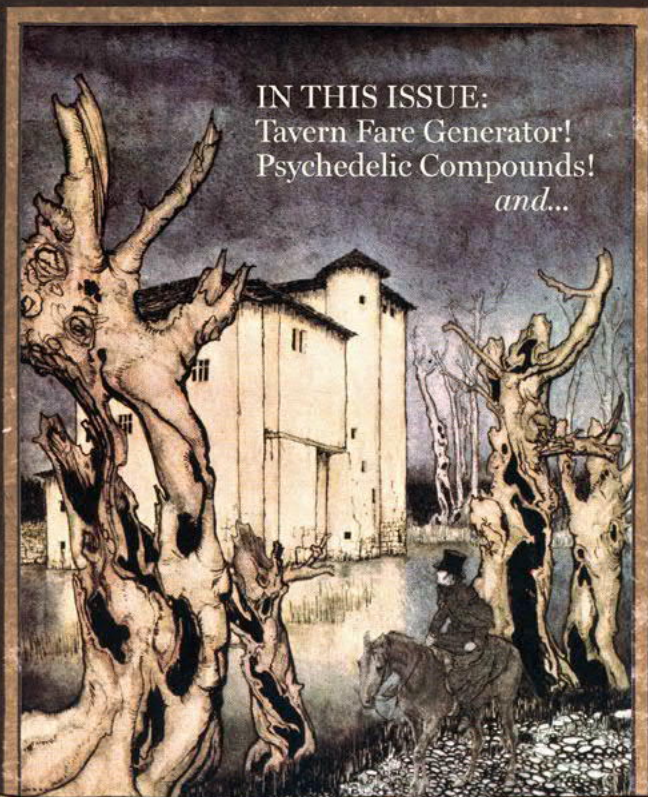


WORMSKIN

No. 2 SPRING EQUINOX 2016

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and...



LANKSHORN



WORM SKIN



NORMAN & GORGONMILK



with original illustrations by



Nicolò MAIOLI *and* Anxious P

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Wormskin—Issue Two

This issue focuses on a specific corner of the monster haunted forest called Dolmenwood: the region which lies to the south of Lake Longmere and to the west of the River Hameth, known to men since ancient days as the *High Wold*. The character of this region is divulged, along with game-ready descriptions of the contents (and monstrous denizens) of a cluster of seven hexes on the campaign map (see *Wormskin* issue one)—those around the village of Lankshorn, on the verge of the forest.

Material in *Wormskin* is designed for use with B/X, *Labyrinth Lord*, and other old-school adventure games.

A note on treasures: Monster hoards are listed with the B/X treasure type (a letter code from A-V) followed by the equivalent *Labyrinth Lord* hoard class (a Roman numeral, from I-XXII). A descriptor is also listed for some hoards; these hoard variants will be discussed in a future issue of *Wormskin*.

Contributors

Greg Gorgonmilk [cover & graphics]

gorgonmilk.blogspot.com

Greg started playing D&D (Mentzer Red Box) at the age of 12 and no one has seen him since.

Nicolò Maioli [illustrations]

satanisjoy.tumblr.com

Nicolò is just a simple guy with an appetite for pizza and fine crafted beer, and an unsettling sympathy for the Devil.

Gavin Norman [words & layout]

the-city-of-iron.blogspot.com

Gavin recently escaped from the dungeons of Lord Malbleat and has begun to wean himself off adder-corn.

Anxious P [illustrations]

cuticlechewerswellpissers.blogspot.com

Eat the Heart.

Common Tavern Fare

At the end of a hard day's adventuring, what band of wandering ne'er-dowells does not relish the return to the comforts of home—even if "home" be the weatherbeaten, rustic hospitality of temporary lodgings beneath the eaves of Dolmenwood. For, even in the tangled depths of the wood, inns, taverns, and public houses may still be found.

When adventurers pay visit to such an establishment, the referee may wish to summarise the ensuing events with a simple statement that the night passes in safety, setting the characters back such-and-such an amount of coin. At other times, the referee may prefer to play out some of the opportunities presented by a public gathering place: chance meetings, bartering and conniving, tavern brawls, acquiring the services of hirelings, and so on. The following table may serve, in such situations, to add flavour to the proceedings by detailing the culinary offerings provided by the guest-houses of Dolmenwood.

As with all of the d30 "generator" tables in *Wormskin*, the table can be used in two ways. A quick roll of 1d30 generates a meal by reading across the columns. Alternatively, a separate d30 roll may be made on each column, for a greater range of possible combinations. Each meal costs 1d6sp per serving.



Common Tavern Fare (1d6sp)

d30	Main	Form	With
1	Amethyst orb (mushroom)	Roast	Larks' tongues
2	Artichoke	Soup	Lard dumplings
3	Bishop's hard (cheese)	Pudding	Ale gravy
4	Blackbird	Braised	Pickled onion
5	Boar chop	Baked	Buckwheat grits
6	Bogswine sausage	Boiled	Buttery mash
7	Butter beans	Aged	Minty peas
8	Chestnut	Broth	Blood pudding
9	Chicken wing	Pickled	Bubble & squeak
10	Eel	Sandwich	Mallow and butterbur
11	Giant puffball mushroom	Marinated	Blackberry jam
12	Goat's tongue	Spit-roast	String beans
13	Hameth sprat	Pastie	Parsnips and burdock
14	Hen's eggs	Smoked	Garlic butter
15	Lamb's kidney	Sugared	Button mushrooms
16	Loch trout	Breaded	Apple sauce
17	Mutton	Dried	Cinnamon sauce
18	Pike head	Stuffed	Boiled nettles
19	Pork shank	Crumble	Beech nuts
20	Pumpkin	Grilled	Roast tatties
21	Rabbit	Battered	Vinegared oak leaves
22	Red cabbage	Jellied	Mugwort greens
23	Rosy apple	Fry-up	Ewe's milk
24	Ruddy chad (cheese)	Steamed	Codswallop
25	Snails	Fermented	Whipped cream
26	Sparrow brain	Pie	Congeaed pork dripping
27	Squirrel heart	Gruel	Pickled eggs
28	Stag rump	Stew	Fried leek
29	Stankton blue (cheese)	Roll	Forest shoots
30	Turkey giblets	Porridge	Custard

Psychedelic Compounds

The glades, soils, roots, and waters of Dolmenwood are infused with magical energies of many different origins. Fairy roads and ley lines, sacred groves and standing stones, abandoned chapels and abbeys, wizard-warped dominions—all lend their unique supernatural character to the wood. (That is even before one considers the chaotic strangeness leaked into the land by the beast Atanuwe¹, in recent centuries.)

All of these factors combined, Dolmenwood is a weird place. It is not surprising, therefore, that the plants and animals which grow and breed there, steeped in this abnormality, are eminently suited for use in concoctions of alchemy, potion-craft, witchery, and mind-alteration. Indeed, many practitioners of esoteric chemistry are attracted to the region for precisely this reason, locating their laboratories and workshops within the forest's bounds for easy access to the bounty of unusual ingredients which grow there.

One result of this is the profusion of mind-altering substances which are distilled in Dolmenwood and its immediate surrounds. Some were invented by design while others were originally the result of accidents—magical or alchemical experiments gone awry, but producing some interesting compound as an unexpected result. This article presents a table detailing some of the most commonly found psychoactive compounds in Dolmenwood. The table may be used in two ways:

- As a single-roll, d30 table, with each numbered row describing a well-known (and perhaps infamous) compound. This is the usual (and quickest) way of using the table.
- As a multiple-roll psychedelics generator, allowing the creation of unique, new compounds by rolling once in each column, ignoring the first (“slang name”).

¹ A petty trickster deity in nine-legged unicorn-form, squatting in Dolmenwood and leaking its psychic sludge into the roots of the forest. The origins of Atanuwe are obscure and its name and identity are known to few mortals, though its influence is felt (whether consciously or not) by all who step foot into the wood. The beast and its doings in the wood are of great interest to those who concern themselves with arcane matters—the secretive Drune and the sorceress Ygraine, for example.

Identification

As psychedelic compounds are not naturally occurring, the likelihood is that PCs will come across them either in the possession of intelligent foes or in the hands of a vendor (see *Buying and Selling*). In the latter case, the identity and effects of the substance will most likely be well known (if, perhaps, somewhat exaggerated). On the other hand, when a compound is encountered without the guidance of one who knows its effects and procedure for ingestion, players must recourse to identification by the description of the substance's tangible properties, which the referee should provide in a neutral, hint-free manner. In this way, the players may come, in time, to recognise certain substances merely by their appearance.

It is generally assumed that no player character classes have innate knowledge of psychedelics enough to have a chance of automatically identifying unknown substances. Should this form part of a specific character's background (e.g. a PC alchemist or botanist specialising in mind-altering substances), the referee may grant a 2 in 6 or 3 in 6 chance of success at recognising such compounds.

Consumption

Unless otherwise noted in a compound's description, the effects will kick in one turn after consumption and last for 1d4 hours. When dealing with an unknown substance, an identification is usually required, though players may wish to experiment. Each compound has a specific and idiosyncratic procedure for use; without knowing this, it is unlikely that pure experiment will yield much result. The referee must rule here as to whether PCs' experiments activate the substance's psychedelic properties and to what degree.

Buying Psychedelics

The availability of psychedelics varies from village to village. In some locations—Castle Brackenwold, for example—they are frowned upon as immoral, while in others—the port of Dreg, for instance—they are a part of everyday life. Unless specifically stated in a village's descriptive text, there is generally a 2 in 6 chance of PCs being able to locate a local vendor of psychedelics. This will typically be an apothecary, herbalist, local hedge wizard, or travelling pedlar.

Selling Psychedelics

When attempting to sell psychoactive compounds, two general approaches are available to player characters:

- ***Peddling***: Players may simply announce, in a public location, that they have such and such a substance for sale. Varying degrees of subtlety are, of course, applicable—ranging from brazen hawking to furtive rumour. The referee should determine, based on the approach used and the prevailing social situation, whether any interested buyers emerge. A process of haggling will likely ensue, but PCs can, in principle, sell items for their full price, in this manner—drugs are treated as trade goods, with no inherent depreciation in price for being “second hand”.
- ***Selling to a vendor***: Professional sellers of mind-altering compounds are usually a more reliable way to off-load unwanted substances. If such a person can be located, they will usually be willing to buy good quality (that is, readily identifiable and unadulterated) psychedelics for up to 80% of their market value. (The exact price may be determined by a reaction roll. The table presented in *Wormskin* issue 1 for use in selling fungi may be used, for example.)

Manufacturing Psychedelic Compounds

Players may become interested in the origins of psychoactive compounds and their processes of manufacturing, hoping to be able to profit by gathering and selling the required ingredients. As these substances are derived from ingredients which, for the most part, are to be found uniquely in Dolmenwood, this can lead to many interesting opportunities for exploration and adventure in the forest.

The origins of the thirty most common psychedelics are as follows:

1. ***Ambrosia***: The sap of the midnight pines which grow primarily in the hexes around Droun Loch (0407) can be extracted and compressed, under the weight of granite blocks, to produce this drug.
2. ***Angel dust***: Many types of unicorn exist in Dolmenwood. The horns of all but the corrupted *atacorns* have the qualities required to produce this psychedelic effect, when ground.
3. ***Azoth***: The crystals originate in the caves around Fog Lake in hex 1207.

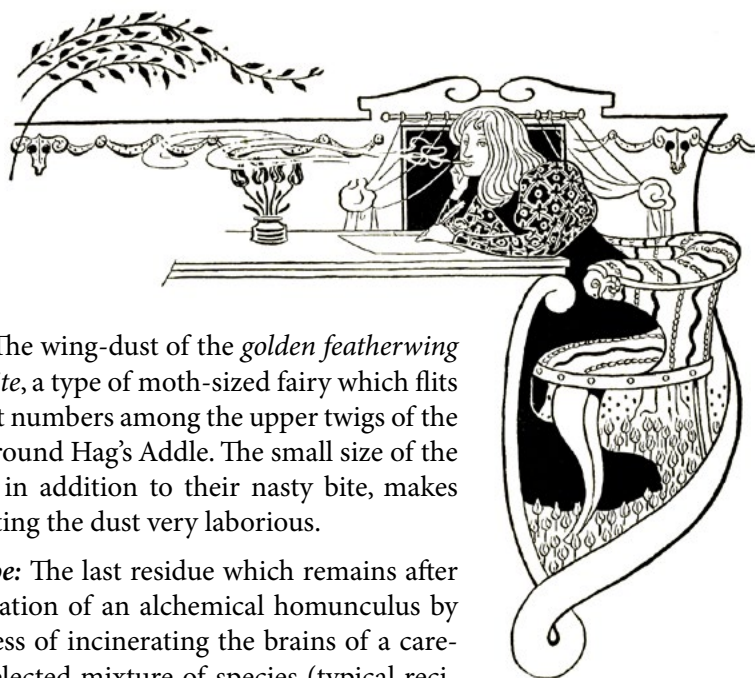
4. **Black clover:** The common name is a complete misnomer: the leaves are those of the *adder's ivy*, a poisonous, climbing vine with milk-white leaves and berries. Only when the leaves are dried and crumbled do they turn black. The vine grows about the site of betrayals and is most prolific in hex 1404, in the glades around the reputed site of the martyrdom of St Abthius¹.
5. **Celestial:** Vertebrae of the ghost crows which lurk in the grounds of the ruined abbey of St Clewd (hex 0906).
6. **Clarky cat:** On certain nights of the year, the constellation known as Yurl, the catlord, produces an emanation which can be perceived and gathered by those who have mastered certain esoteric procedures.
7. **Cobbers:** The sap of the thick-trunked, succulent shrub known as fe-nob, gathered upon a new moon's night and allowed to ferment for a full month in chalices of amethyst.
8. **Crake:** Certain types of lunatic, when imprisoned for prolonged periods, may be "milked" for their chaotic psychic emanations. This requires advanced knowledge of astral alchemy and the use of a golden helm in which the emanations must be distilled.
9. **Drake:** The mashed flesh of a *root thing* (see *Wormskin* issue 1), fermented with nag's urine.
10. **Ear slime:** The trout of Lake Longmere exhibit the tendency to develop pendulous sacs, in the shape of human hands, on their bellies. When sliced open, this precious pink goo oozes out.
11. **Ectoplasm:** Forest toads have a tendency to come into contact with fairies². The skins of toads which dwell exclusively within fairy glades possess the qualities required to produce a psychedelic effect.
12. **Ether lily:** The petals of the miniature, yellow lilies which bloom in the upper reaches of the River Hameth in late summer.

1 St Abthius was killed by a fairy prince (variously referred to as Prince Mallowheart and Prince Seven-Past-Noon) who tricked him into attending a ball, under the pretence of an opportunity to preach the psalms before the fey host. In fact, the hapless saint was intended rather as an entertaining demonstration of the art of man-carving.

2 Some speculate that this is due to the proclivity, possessed by both species in equal measure, for resting atop colourful, large-capped mushrooms (i.e. *toadstools*).

13. *Formula*: While the name (most likely deliberately) implies an alchemical origin, this substance is actually necromantic in origin: it is distilled from the hyperactive adrenal glands of ghouls.
14. *Frisk*: This substance is actually the seminal fluid of the *night-boars*³ which frequent the hexes around the village of Odd (hex 1403). In their breeding season in the springtime, the stuff can be found dripping from rocks and tree trunks around Stirge Isle (hex 1304), where they come to court.
15. *Funky froth*: Scum which is skimmed off the top of the simmering alchemical healing formula known as *Orgon's scintillating philtre*. The stuff partially crystallises when dried.
16. *Grobbage*: Eggs harvested from the nests of blue forest hornets, before the grub has begun to develop. Hornets of this kind are known to nest primarily in the Valley of Wise Beasts.
17. *Hag tears*: Extracted through a narrow hole, bored through the skull and (carefully) into the tissue of the brain, the tears of the human pineal gland may be enticed to flow by the induction of a deep trace-state via music of drum and bagpipe.
18. *Hydra*: The congealed grains of the pollen of the purple ha'penny bush which grows profusely around the banks of Lake Longmere. The bushes flower and pollinate in late spring.
19. *Lethe*: Distilled from the still-pulsating brain of one who has bathed in the Lethean Well (hex 0209).
20. *Mister Tickle*: This substance is produced from an adroitly balanced mixture of crushed whole pink, azure, and mauve sprites captured in their breeding season—high summer—when Dolmenwood is awash with the pests.
21. *Muddle*: The spores of a cultivated variety of the *mottlecup* mushroom (see *Wormskin* issue one). Muddle-manufacturers are a secretive bunch, rumoured to operate subterranean facilities concealed in Dolmenwood.

3 A species of giant, gelatinous grazers which spend most of their time browsing the delicate petals of the holbab trees in the near-astral. They seldom venture into the physical world, but seem to have a liking for the region around Odd. The reason for this attraction is not known.



22. **Puck:** The wing-dust of the *golden featherwing minimate*, a type of moth-sized fairy which flits in great numbers among the upper twigs of the trees around Hag's Addle. The small size of the fairies, in addition to their nasty bite, makes harvesting the dust very laborious.
23. **Sage toe:** The last residue which remains after the creation of an alchemical homunculus by a process of incinerating the brains of a carefully selected mixture of species (typical recipes specify a mix of newt, adder, and human).
24. **Saint grapes:** The wild-bletted fruits of the *hoarth-holly*, which grows around the borders of the Fever Marsh, in northern Dolmenwood.
25. **Shloop:** Smoke-dried shoots of the mushroom known as *hobble-whim*, which emerge from bog soil in deepest winter.
26. **Spangle maker:** The furled tips of the bronze-coloured ferns which grow along the banks of the Hameth close to the port of Dreg.
27. **Spore (aka jive dust):** This mould may be found on stone cellar floors beneath casks of aging wine.
28. **Triple-sod:** The hairy, black, star-formed seed pods of the *arsinone violet* which grows atop sandstone cliffs in the western reaches of Dolmenwood.
29. **Tweak:** Blood harvested from the severed hands of executed murderers.
30. **Witch dust:** This powder may be scraped from the surface of the stones of the *witching ring* (also known as the "summerstones"). Its origin is unknown, but it regrows via some supernatural process, forming like rime on the stones at night.

Psychedelic Compounds

d30	Slang name	Substance	Procedure for use
1	<i>Ambrosia</i>	Black, resinous block	Chewed
2	<i>Angel dust</i>	Ground unicorn horn	Moistened with wine, bound to the forehead
3	<i>Azoth</i>	Transparent crystals	Cast into a raging fire
4	<i>Black clover</i>	Dried leaves	Fed to an animal whose urine is subsequently consumed
5	<i>Celestial</i>	Ground bone	Steeped in spirits
6	<i>Clarky cat</i>	Cosmic dust	Rubbed into raw skin (abraded with sand paper)
7	<i>Cobbers</i>	Collected sap	Dissolved in acid, the fumes inhaled
8	<i>Crake</i>	Psychic residue	Mixed into hot water in which one must bathe
9	<i>Drake</i>	Fermented root mash	Smoked in a pipe
10	<i>Ear slime</i>	Pink jelly	Dissolved in fragrant oil which is then dripped into the ear

Primary effect (value per dose)	Side-effect
Gain awareness of the consciousness of the universe and all things in it, including inanimate objects. (25gp)	Warps the probabilistic fabric of the universe. In a disadvantageous way. Major bad juju. Save versus spells or suffer disadvantage on all rolls (roll twice and keep the lowest result) for the following day.
Massive ego expansion. Feels amazing. Godlike. (80gp)	Eyes take on an unnatural hue. Intensifies with continued use.
Full out of body experience. The soul may drift where it will. 2 in 6 chance of being attacked by an astral monster. (20gp)	Ability to empathise with others is dulled for 1d4 days.
Communication channels with non-sentients forged. (45gp)	Psychic receptiveness enhanced. -4 penalty to resist psionic attack. Plagued with telepathic babble.
Dream of otherworldly paradise. Save vs spells or become obsessed with the quixotic quest of finding this obscure realm. (20gp)	Stomach cramps.
Psychic blur. Can read others' thoughts (within 10') but cannot prevent own thoughts from also flowing outwards. (50gp)	Site of ingestion swells, blisters, and welts.
Overcome with sentimentality. (5gp)	Pounding headache.
Time dilation. The effects last only 1 turn but feel like 1d6 hours. (15gp)	Unable to sleep for 1d6 days.
Violent psychosis. The more depraved the better. (6gp)	Wrecks the adrenal system. Save vs poison or lose one point of CON. Can be recovered at a rate of one point per month of abstinence.
Shifting fractal patterns overlay normal perception. Can stare for hours at walls. (11gp)	Grinding teeth, psychotic gurning.

d30	Slang name	Substance	Procedure for use
11	<i>Ectoplasm</i>	Toad skin	Rolled with pipeweed and smoked
12	<i>Ether lily</i>	Delicate petals	Slow-burned over charcoal
13	<i>Formula</i>	Adrenal fluid	Inserted anally
14	<i>Frisk</i>	Luminescent paste	Snorted through a tube
15	<i>Funky froth</i>	Fine, crystalline grit	Simmered to produce a brew
16	<i>Grobbage</i>	Insect eggs	Baked into cakes, scones, or wafers
17	<i>Hag tears</i>	Pineal tears	Placed under the tongue
18	<i>Hydra</i>	Congeaed pollen grains	Ground with salt and snuffed
19	<i>Lethe</i>	Neural extract	Vaporised
20	<i>Mister Tickle</i>	Crushed sprites	Distilled and dripped onto the eyeball

Primary effect (value per dose)	Side-effect
Gain partial awareness of a border plane (shadows, ethereal, faerie, etc). (15gp)	Lose the ability to see anything that is not green.
Enter a trance of cosmic communion. Make a Wisdom check. Failure indicates a hellish experience causing long term trauma (roll on the insanity table). Success indicates insightful communication with higher beings. (50gp)	Sound amplified to painful levels.
Body hyper-awareness. Can go both ways. (6gp)	Rather moreish. Save vs poison or do anything to use the drug again the next day.
Cannot lie. Can detect lies of others (50% effective). (40gp)	Constant, insatiable sexual arousal.
Cannot distinguish good from evil. All acts take on a ravenous intensity. (3gp)	Leaves purple stains.
Totally disoriented but loving it. (5gp)	1 in 6 chance of permanent addiction.
Sound intensely enhanced. (8gp)	1 in 6 chance of a physical dependency. When in effect, the character must use the drug every day or suffer -2 to all attacks and saves.
Pain receptors disabled. All damage reduced by 1, but the referee should track the character's hit point total in secret. (10gp)	Preliminary vomiting.
Intense introspection and questioning of life motives. (9gp)	Fly into a violent rage at the drop of a hat.
Potent aphrodisiac. Mind filled with visions both erotic and gruesome. (8gp)	Accelerated pulse.

d30	Slang name	Substance	Procedure for use
21	<i>Muddle</i>	Cultivated mould spores	Heated between two hot blades
22	<i>Puck</i>	Fairy wing dust	Rubbed into the gums
23	<i>Sage toe</i>	Alchemical ash	Bound between the toes
24	<i>Saint grapes</i>	Dodgy looking berries	Bandaged around scalded skin
25	<i>Shloop</i>	Dried mushrooms	Steeped in noxious solvent, fumes inhaled
26	<i>Spangle maker</i>	Fern fronds	Mixed with food
27	<i>Spore (or jive dust)</i>	Virulent mould spores	Coated onto fine needles which are jabbed into the skin
28	<i>Triple-sod</i>	Pulverised seeds and seed pods	Washed down with liquor
29	<i>Tweak</i>	Coagulated blood	Placed over boiling water, the steam is inhaled
30	<i>Witch dust</i>	White powder	Absorbed into a grease which is applied to the genitals

Primary effect (value per dose)	Side-effect
Blurring of self and other. Interior voice goes public. (7gp)	Intense paranoia. Trust no one.
Warm, glowing, oceanic coma. (4gp)	Obsessively evangelise this wonderful compound to all and sundry.
Hyper accelerated information uptake. (50gp)	Unable to think or speak straight.
Universal love followed by deep, bitter depression. (18gp)	Emaciates the body with prolonged use.
Every touch is orgasmic. (12gp)	Opens the mind to malign psychic forces. 1 in 4 chance of becoming host to a trans-dimensional entity. Once possessed, save vs spells each day or come partially under the invader's control.
The sensation of limbs floating disconnected from the body. The whole universe is at peace. (10gp)	Involuntary shouting and moaning.
Groggy and blissed out. (10gp)	Can't stop dancing.
Beautiful geometric visuals. (9gp)	Sentiment reversed. That which is normally beloved perceived as hateful, and vice versa.
Gain a hallucinatory third hand which can act remotely (up to 10' away). Per action, there is a 50% chance of the hand being purely imaginary. (15gp)	Breath smells like fairy dust. Highly erotic to fey beings.
Massive tracers. (3gp)	Maniacal laughing fits.



"A morning dose of triple-sod and an ectoplasm-laced cigarillo really does set one up admirably for a long day on the road."

The High Wold

The corner of Dolmenwood that lies to the south of Lake Longmere and the west of the River Hameth is part of a larger region—known as the High Wold—that extends south of the forest for some further forty leagues. This area of wild, rolling hills and rustic meadows has been long inhabited; the folk who now dwell there regard themselves, indeed, as the original and true inhabitants of Dolmenwood. Despite this independent spirit, the High Wold has been officially, since several centuries, an annex of the Duchy of Brackenwold, being now regarded as a barony under the Duke's dominion.

Some facts about the region:

- **High-Hankle**, the largest settlement of the High Wold and its seat of administrative power, lies to the south of Dolmenwood, beyond the bounds of the campaign hex map. The Baron Hogwarsh is renowned for his lax attitude to the law, being more interested (it is said) in wine and debauchery than in the maintenance of order. The barony has thus become somewhat wild in recent years: bandits and highwaymen ply their trade with increasing boldness, pedlars and charlatans bring brews and herbs of questionable morality to market, and the hand of the Drune of Dolmenwood claws ever southwards.
- The largest settlement of the region of the High Wold which falls within the Dolmenwood hex map is **Lankshorn** (hex 0710), a village-cum-market town which lies within bowshot of the forest's southern edge. Some of the most prominent people and places of Lankshorn, as well as the character of the surrounding hexes, are described in the following section.
- The High Wold has an unusual political structure, whereby the land and titles of the **goatman aristocracy**, who have their estates within the forest's bounds, are respected by the humans of the region. The roots of this relationship are now lost in antiquity, but it is peculiar to this region—goatmen are hunted as vermin in other parts of the forest. In the High Wold, intermarriage between aristocratic goatmen and humans is a respectable tradition which is still practiced to the modern day. The folk of the High Wold are, however, not so naive as to think that their traditions are understood and accepted by those from outside the region: strangers will seldom hear more than rumours.

Lankshorn and Surrounds

0609 – *The Trothstone and the Owl Cave*

An old path leads north-west into the forest from the western road out of Lankshorn. Those who follow the path about a mile into the tangled wood come upon a pine glade dominated by a dark stone plinth and a pair of guardian monoliths of ancient construction. The plinth is known to locals as the Trothstone, and it is traditionally here that the wedding of human woman and goat lord must take place (see *The High Wold*).

Those who venture beyond the Trothstone into the deep wood come within the territory of a group of *witch-owls* who make their lair in a stalactite-hung cave. At the rear of the cave stands a 5' high statue of roughly humanoid form, rimed with a sparkling crust of mineral deposits. Chipping away the outer coating reveals an effigy of Saint Nanya which was stolen from a neighbouring kingdom some centuries ago and hidden in this cave by its thieves (a band of delinquent friars). It is of great value (5,000gp), if identified and returned to its church of origin.

0610 – *Lankston Pool*

Under the eaves of the wood lies a region of marshland centred around a large, murky pool. A dilapidated, moss-covered sign bearing the inscription “Lankston” stands close to the south edge of the pool, indicating the former site of the town of that name, which is now wholly submerged in the sludge of the pool and the surrounding bog¹. The only hint of this, apart from the signpost, is a slime-covered stone spire rising out of the murk at the centre of the pool. This is the steeple of the submerged church. Adventurers with a penchant for aquatic exploration may be able to extract small trinkets from the sunken town, although most of the objects possessed of old by the inhabitants of Lankston are now reduced to sludge. The eerily throbbing left hand of Saint Howarth the Accursed lies, perfectly preserved, in the reliquary of the sunken church.

1 The miserable fate of this town was brought about by the presence of the relic of the now-accursed Saint Howarth, whose fall from grace caused an immediate reversal in the miracles associated with him.

Lankston pool is shunned by local folk, being regarded as haunted—and, in this respect, the locals are very much correct. The inhabitants of the town exist in a deathless state, lying in a dreamless sleep amongst the reeds and slime of the pool. At night, strange fires flicker over the waters and the *bog zombies* emerge, shambling through the woods in search of the living. Victims are dragged into the bog, increasing the “population” of the submerged town.

0709 – *The Road to Lake Longmere*

A light, airy wood of rolling hills, becoming more rugged and tangled to the north, where rocky cliffs and steep slopes dominate.

The Swart Gibbet

At one point, the road between Lankshorn and Lake Longmere passes by a wide, sandy clearing at the base of a pock-marked cliff. Crevices and small caves can be seen at the base of the cliff; these show no sign of use or habitation by either man or beast. On the eastern side of the clearing, opposite the cliff, hangs a rusty gibbet, housing a blackened skeleton. At night the skeleton is wreathed in a sickly green hellfire.

The Manse of Lord Malbleat

Situated in the far northwest of the hex, the manse of the goatlord Malbleat sits atop a rocky peak. It is an ancient building of tall wooden wings and steep gables, surrounded with a forbidding stone wall and guard towers. Some ten goatmen dwell here (3 *longhorns*, including Lord Malbleat, and seven *short-horns*), along with several dozen *addercorn thralls*, who are kept in pens in the gardens at the rear of the manor.

Lord Malbleat has seven wives—two goatwomen and five humans (the latter kept charmed or imprisoned). The numerous, moronic, half-breed offspring of his human wives have free rein of the manse, and are dressed in comical costumes and tormented by the master and the other goatmen of the household.

Among his extensive library of books on the subjects of philosophy, theology, poetry and foreign languages, Lord Malbleat keeps a tome, bound in man-leather, which contains the trapped soul of a necromancer. One who gains a familiarity with the tome’s contents can command the spirit, allowing a *geas* spell to be cast once per week.



Lord Malbleat: A mature, longhorn, goatman aristocrat of noble, philosophical air. He is tall (almost 7'), graceful, slender, and has black fur with a silver nose. Malbleat is renowned for his love of poetry, his elegance in the ball-room, and his love of taking human brides. He is a sadist, and delights in the debasing of humans. Lord Malbleat is the half-brother of the more powerful Lord Ramius (hex 0410), whom he envies and connives against.

0710 — *The Village of Lankshorn*

A large settlement of well-kept, stone-built houses, clustered around a tall-steeped church and a cobbled market square. At the rear of the village, a slope rises towards Dolmenwood, which looms ominously, a reminder of Lankshorn's position on the verge of the wild. A low hill is prominently visible, just before the eaves of the wood, upon which a ring of tall stones stands.

Located, as it is, on the verge of the forest, Lankshorn comes into close contact with the goatmen who dwell there. The folk of the village regard the goat-nobility with fear and respect (in the same manner as they view the human nobles who rule over them from High-Hankle and Castle Brackenwood). It is not uncommon for goatlords and their lackeys to descend upon the village at night, demanding impromptu taxes, lodging, feast, or the company of maidens.

Three roads meet in Lankshorn:

- The old north road, now little used, that leads past the standing stones and on to Lake Longmere in the heart of the wood.
- The south road winds through rustic farmland toward High-Hankle.
- The east-west road, known as the Ditchway. The western route is disused, passing by the haunted Lankston Pool (hex 0610), but the eastern road is frequented by much trade, leading to the port-town Dreg on the banks of the Hameth (hex 1110).

The locations and inhabitants of Lankshorn which are of most interest to wandering adventurers are described in detail later in this issue.

The Lankshorn Look

The partial inbreeding, since generations, of Lankshorn folk with goatmen produces the occasional odd mutation:

1. Goatee beard (also sometimes found on old women).
2. Goat eyes (sometimes a single eye only).
3. Goat's hoof in place of a foot.
4. Goat's hoof in place of a hand.
5. Small nubs on the forehead.
6. Rudimentary tail ending in a tuft of coarse hair.

0711 — *King Pusskin's Road*

A well-used byroad winds northwards through the hills and farmland of this hex, heading towards the village of Lankshorn (hex 0710). At one point, close to the eaves of Dolmenwood, a gloomy shrine stands by the roadside beneath a weather-beaten wooden roof. Inside can be found an old lacquered portrait of a fluffy pussy cat wearing a plush crown, bearing the inscription

“King Pusskin's Road—travellers upon the road must leave tribute in the form of milk or mice.”

Beneath the portrait, a small table houses an array of mouse skeletons and chipped china saucers (also enamelled with images of the regal cat). Although travellers often scoff at the shrine, dismissing it as rustic nonsense, the power of King Pusskin is very real. Anyone passing along the road without leaving a fitting tribute in the shrine will suffer one of the following afflictions upon awakening the following morning:

1. Feverish dreams of being trapped in the claws of giant cats.
2. A dead mouse discovered on the pillow.
3. Cat-scratches on hands and arms.
4. An item of clothing shredded by cat claws.
5. Coughs up furballs.
6. Attacked by any dogs encountered this day.



0809 – *The Ditchway*

Pleasant, mixed deciduous woodland, becoming denser to the north. The well-trodden and signposted path between Lankshorn and Dreg, known locally as “the Ditchway”, makes its winding way through a broad channel with sandy banks on either side.

The sandy soil around the road and in the forest to the north is riddled with thin, red worms. At dusk they rise to the surface and writhe across the mould and leaves in great multitudes. As night takes hold, ever larger worms emerge from the soil and slither through the undergrowth in search of prey. Humans and their mounts are well within the appetite of these mature *nightworms*.

0810 – *King’s Mounds*

In the decrepit old woodland close to the north of the hex lies a series of long, low mounds, clearly of human construction. These are burial mounds, housing the remains of ancient warrior-chieftains. The mounds are now home to two-dozen *barrowbogeys*—led by one named Thrattlewhit—who make their quarters among the tombs of the dead and the dusty passages which extend beyond, into the near reaches of the Otherworld¹.

The barrow lairs contain the bogeys’ treasures—buried in jugs and urns in the sandy soil—including a wide-bladed, antique longsword engraved with seven runes whose meaning is no longer commonly understood. The runes spell the name Alfhame and bear an enchantment granting its wielder a +1 bonus to hit in combat (+3 vs undead) and a degree of protection from energy drain, allowing a saving throw versus death to avoid the loss of levels. The sword is psychically tainted by the fate of its original owner, who was made drunken and assassinated by a treacherous rival: anyone who possesses the sword takes on an intoxicated and suspicious air.

Thrattlewhit: The chief bogey wears a curiously large brass basin on his shoulders. Thrattlewhit is of mercurial spirit, but is constant in one feature: his love of the Braithmaid Pollith (see hex 0910), upon whom he spies at night. He would give anything for her hand in marriage. In battle, he bears the sword Alfhame, which he brandishes two-handed.

¹ The term *Otherworld* (note the spelling) refers to the fairy lands and spectral dominions which lie parallel to the Wood which mortals perceive in their waking lives.

People and Places of Lankshorn

The Hornstoat's Rest Inn

Situated on the market square, opposite the church, the village inn is a high-gabled, wooden building of overhanging eaves and many-hued, lacquered panels. Above the wide, rounded front door hangs the sign—depicting a white stoat with prominent red horns¹ reclining on a luxurious purple couch—and the skull of a goat.

Inside, the common room is cramped and, of an evening, packed, with high stools crammed against the walls and a cluster of three small tables in the centre. In the late evenings, the tables are pushed together and used as an improvised stage for dances or musical performances. The following facilities are provided:

- Lodging for 3sp a night in a private room or 15cp in a common room.
- Stabling for 5sp a night (including fodder).
- Meals of common quality (see *Common Tavern Fare*).
- Local ales and ciders for 1sp a pint.
- The inn also has a couple of bottles of the infamous spirit *green aspintheon*, imported from the brewmasters of Prigwort (hex 1105), at the cost of 5sp a glass (10gp for a whole a bottle). Upon consuming a glass of this spirit, a character must make a CON check. Failure indicates that the character has succumbed to the spirit's odd effects, incurring complete drunkenness and the effects of the magic-user spell *reveal the liminal*.

Reveal the Liminal

Level: 1st

Duration: 6 turns

Range: Touch

The sensory boundaries of the subject of this spell are loosened, opening the sensorium to normally inaccessible or subconscious perceptions of borderline realms. This includes the ability to perceive ethereal and astral creatures lurking close to the border with the material world, but also reveals creatures of fairy origin who are normally invisible to mortal eyes. At the referee's discretion, the borders of other planes or dimensions may also be revealed by this spell.

¹ The hornstoat is a fairy creature of local legend which is said to live in the hearts of great oak trees and mock the foolish behaviour of humans as they toil and labour.

Proprietor

The inn is owned and run by Margerie Stallowmade, her twelve-year-old daughter Willow (who is notable for having a goat's hoof in place of her left hand) and three of her five sons. (The remaining two sons died in a pointless war, a decade ago, along with her husband.)

Margerie Stallowmade: A woman of some sixty years, with twinkling eyes, a broad grin, copper hoops in her ears, and a figure plump with decades of pie-eating. She presents herself to strangers as a harmless bumpkin, but is known to have a keen ear and a sharp memory. Since the death of her husband, Margerie has taken to wandering deeper into the Wood and is fascinated by its strange secrets. She is acquainted with the fairy Thrattlewhit (see hex 0810), with whom she shares foraged blackberries and silly stories of comings and goings in Lankshorn.



Rumours (d16)

One of the following rumours may be heard of an evening, in the inn's common room. Each is denoted as T (true), t (partially true with elements of falsehood or miscomprehension), f (false with elements of truth), F (false).

1. (t) The gibbet hanging in 0709 is haunted by the ghost of the infamous highwayman Red Heinrick. The phantom attacks any who linger there in the dark hours. The location of Heinrick's hoard of stolen gold was never discovered.
2. (T) The sludge-rimmed pool along the western road contains the remnants of the accursed town of Lankston (see 0610).
3. (t) The mounds in the woods to the south-east are haunted by a rabble of fairies. Their chief is a bowl-headed scamp known as Thraggletwist, whose lecherous advances towards young ladies cause some consternation to travellers along the Ditchway.
4. (T) The King's Mounds, which lie in the woods to the south-east, were originally built by the folk of the ancient King Hoarth, who would inter honoured warriors in woodland graves.
5. (t) His Lordship has been organising clandestine shipments of food and supplies to be delivered to an isolated hut in the forest to the north-east. Rumour says that they are destined for his mistress and second family, whom he keeps hidden away.
6. (f) The secluded people of Prigwort, who dwell deep in the wood, are said to consort freely, and in a most intimate manner, with fairies.
7. (f) The lord secretly keeps a strange prisoner in his attic.
8. (T) If you travel south along the road, be sure to take a tribute of milk or mice for King Pusskin (see 0711).
9. (T) Crying the name of Shub's Nanna (Leeleeglablea—see hex 0911) on a moonlit night will summon the crone to whisk away an unwanted child. In return, her servants will leave thirteen silver pieces on the doorstep of the house of the one who summoned her.
10. (t) The bladesmith, Jorye, has fairy blood and practices a fey smith-craft taught to him by his grandfather.

11. (F) The “servants of the wood” (a euphemism used by rural folk to refer to the Drune², whose name they fear to speak) lurk under the eaves of the wood on moonlit nights, watching the merrymakers in the inn with loathing. They plot to turn the roots of the trees against the town and replace Lord Barrathwaite with their own dark hierophant.
12. (F) The stones behind the village were once the site of a great summoning gone awry, whereby a black unicorn spirit was allowed to escape from its prison in hell³. The beast has lurked in the heart of the wood ever since, spreading evil and discord.
13. (T) The goat-lord Malbleat, whose manor lies in the forest to the north, possesses a tome of black magic which he uses to enslave the minds of any who cross him.
14. (t) The great stone slab which lies in the woods to the west of Lankshorn, known as the Trothstone, is a site at which mortals may marry beings of other stock, including fairies.
15. (t) A statue of the obscure Saint Nanya was taken by a company of friars into the forest to the west and lost, some centuries ago.
16. (F) The galleon of the mad Duke Pole (the great-grandfather of the current Duke of Brackenwold), which he sailed up the Hameth and into Lake Longmere, lies sunken in the mud at the south of the lake, close to Wight Falls. The Duke’s fabled planetary clock was aboard the galleon when it was sunk, though lake-beasts have most likely made off with it by now.

2 The Drune are a proto-druidic brotherhood of ascetic pagans / occultists who see themselves as “curators” of Dolmenwood. They are primarily interested in using the power of the wood for their own ends and have monopolised the major ley lines which run through the forest, as well as many of the standing stones and sacred groves. The people of Dolmenwood, for the most part, know very little of the Drune, but regard them with great fear. (The Drune will be discussed in detail in a future issue of *Wormskin*.)

3 This legend among the folk of Lankshorn is entirely unfounded in fact, being likely inspired by the sickly presence of Atanuwe, whose influence in these southerly regions is but faintly perceptible.

Jorye the Bladesmith

The local blacksmith earns his daily living shoeing horses, mending pots, and forging farm tools: the meat and bread of a rural smith. His passion, however, is the forging of artisan blades—here in the rustic northern corner of the High Wold can be found a bladesmith of quality seldom found even in towns of great renown. All of his blades carry his hallmark, which may be recognised by one knowledgeable in fine weapon-craft. The bladesmith offers the following services:

- **Standard blades:** Finely crafted steel blades may be purchased at 25% above the normal price.
- **Iron blades:** A small number of iron daggers are also kept in stock at all times, for a cost of 4gp. (People fear the fairies of the wood and keep such weapons at hand as a deterrent.)
- **Silvering:** Silvered daggers and swords may be purchased at ten times the cost of a plain, steel blade. (Only silvered daggers and shortswords are kept commonly in stock.)
- **Custom engraving:** Commissioned blades may be engraved with patterns, script, or runes, as the patron wishes. This typically doubles the basic cost. The bladesmith's work is detailed and beautiful.
- **Moon-forging:** A highly specialised craft of obscure origin, now practiced by very few. A properly trained smith who forges blades by the light of the full moon can cause them to be imbued with minor enchantments. Moon-forging takes much preparation and is only performed to special order, costing 200gp or more, depending on the specific enchantment.
- **Foe-binding:** The bladesmith is privy to a second craft of fairy origin: that of binding a new-forged blade to smite a particular foe. This requires a piece of the flesh, blood, or hair of the target, which is folded into the surface of the blade. A blade thus created will inflict +1 damage against the specific foe. Such blades are only made to order, and only for the most trusted customers. The cost of the blade is increased by 200gp.

Concealed in a back room (which is secretly warded by a fairy rune of paralysis), the bladesmith has the following swords, for sale to the discerning customer:

- A long, silvered dagger engraved with the name Haxallya and a series of fine moon-runes along the blade. The runes grant the wielder +1 to-hit an opponent who has already wounded him. 100gp.
- A shortsword with a gold-threaded hilt and wavy blood-grooves, named Lamaë. A small rune on the pommel grants a +1 bonus to hit a foe who flees in melee. 250gp.
- An exquisitely crafted longsword, engraved with fine oak leaf motifs and the name Orydnae. Speaking the weapon's name causes it to emit moonlight (equivalent to a torch) for one hour. It must then be recharged by bathing it in moonlight for a night. 400gp.

Jorye Whilpston-Puddingfoot: A man in his late forties, with black, slicked-back hair and odd-looking, wide apart eyes. His speech is quiet, confident, waxes easily lyrical, and carries a lilting quality which fascinates listeners and fills their minds with glimpses of glittering caverns. Jorye's grandfather was raised by Lankshorn folk, but was sired by a wandering fairy.

The Man of Gold Apothecary

A squat, stone building with a wooden, two-storey tower lies in a narrow alleyway at the rear of the inn, cramped between a fishmonger's and a butchery. The sign of a smiling, golden sun announces the name and function of this store.

The store has been in the Maldwort family for three generations (the current proprietor being Sydewich Maldwort) and has an excellent reputation for the quality of its herbs (which are carefully air-dried in the tower above the shop). Sydewich has, in recent times, begun to expand the store's selection, branching out into stocking exotic herbs and compounds of psychedelic effect and dubious morality. It is said that he makes regular trips to the port of Dreg to acquire these compounds (and doubtless to also take advantage of that town's other ill-reputed services).

...continued overleaf

The following items, of particular interest to adventurers, are for sale:

- *Psychedelic fungi*: 1d3 random types (see *Wormskin* issue one). Standard prices.
- *Psychedelic compounds*: 1d3 random types. 25% above standard price.
- *Memory dust*: Imported from the far east, there is only a 20% chance of the apothecary stocking this infamous and highly sought-after substance. It is a fine, pearlescent dust, renowned for its ability to expand the human mind's capacity for the arcane energies required by spell memorization. Taken as a snuff, the dust gives a magic-user the ability to memorize a single extra spell (of any level castable). The dust is highly addictive: after every usage, a WIS check must be made. If the check fails, the character will do everything he or she can to use the dust again in the next session. A roll of 20 indicates that the character's tolerance for the dust has increased and from now on must consume twice the quantity to achieve the same effect. 50gp per dose.
- *Alchemical tonic*: Brewed in-house, this clear, fizzing liquid may be used to rouse the unconscious or to grant an additional save against paralysis. 25gp per vial.
- *Amber nectar*: A thick, honeyed liquid, decanted into 1" spherical jars. Consuming a dose heals 1d4 hit points and brings on a heady euphoria lasting for a few minutes. A save versus poison must also be made, with failure incurring a deep, dream-filled sleep, lasting for 1d6 turns. 25gp per jar.
- *Orgon's scintillating philtre*: This iridescent spirit must be stored in crystal to retain its unusual properties. Drinking a dose heals 1d6 hit points. The substance is volatile, however, and does not mix well with other potions: mixing it (including with previous doses of the philtre) incurs a save versus poison, with failure indicating that the potion was vomited up, wasting it. 100gp.

Sydewich Maldwort: A sycophantic bachelor in his late thirties, with a fashionable moustache and long, blond hair tied in plaits. Sydewich is in love with the wife of the keeper of the Spawning Salmon tavern in Dreg and plans to sell the apothecary and elope with her.

The Lord's Manor

A tall, lime-white manor stands to the south of the village, beside a shallow lake ringed with storm-wracked elms. The lord of Lankshorn, Clewyd Barrathwaite⁴ (“His Lordship”), dwells here with his wife Almerie and their four children. Several informers and rumour-mongers in the village report to the lord of anything untoward.

Lord Barrathwaite harbours in his manor a young half-goat boy who stumbled out of the wood some months ago. Like most of his kind, the boy is a half-wit, but responds to the name “Billy” and evidences a great fear at the mention of Lord Malbleat. This fact, in conjunction with certain physical characteristics of the boy, lead the lord to believe that this half-breed is his own grandson. The lord has enlisted the aid of the vivimancer Merridwyn Scymes (hex 0808) to discover a means of curing the goat-boy’s mental deficiencies.

Clewyd Barrathwaite: A man of around 50 years, brusque in manner, secure in his power over the village and the respect of its inhabitants. Physically, he is tall and thickset, with densely curled auburn hair on his head, face and chest. He wears the silver boar’s head medallion hereditary to his station. Clewyd respects the aristocratic line of the goat lords but hates Lord Malbleat (hex 0709), knowing of his cruelty. The lord’s eldest daughter, Bronwyn, was married to the goat lord a decade ago—a decision which he now bitterly regrets.

Standing Stones

Looming above the village, visible against the sky, above the eaves of the forest, a ring of ancient, moss-covered stones stands upon a hill. A *detect magic* spell will reveal a latent magic about the stones of significant power but long dormant. One under the effects of a *reveal the liminal* spell who observes the stones will perceive a curious swirling of the ether, in pinkish and orange hues, above the stones, ascending into the sky. The villagers shun the stones, believing them to be associated with witchcraft and devil-summoning.

4 The Barrathwaite coat of arms is a red boar, stuck with seven golden spears, atop a white harp.

The Church of Saint Pastery

Amid the bustle of the centre, located directly on the market square, stands the village church: an antique, stone building with an strikingly pointy steeple and a riot of carvings of battling gargoyles and angels. The church is curated by Father Dobey, who lives in the vicarage, outside the village.

Saint Pastery is the patron of butchers and well-borers and is famed for having cured Good-Prince Wallobringe (of a little-known southern kingdom) during a plague epidemic by blessing the hands of all butchers and cow-herds within a ten mile radius.

The Vicarage and Graveyard

To the east of the village proper, a track leads southward from the Ditchway, winding through a sheep-grazed pasture to a small, thatched cottage which serves as the vicarage. The vicar, Father Dobey, lives here along with a maid-servant named Mabble.

To the rear of the cottage lies the village's graveyard, bounded by imposing, ivy-clad walls. Outsiders may note the presence of carved goat-heads atop many of the gravestones.

The Church of the One True God

The dominant religion of the High Wold is the Church of the One True God, a sect which was once widespread throughout all of Dolmenwood, but which has now largely fallen into dereliction. Most villages within the eaves of the forest still maintain a church, but the profusion of wayside shrines and chapels which once saw regular worship now stand—for the most part—in ruins.

Despite having One True God, daily worship focuses rather on the legions of saints and angels which litter the myths and scriptures of the church. This religion is left deliberately vague, allowing it to act as a placeholder for whatever evangelistic, monotheistic sect exists in the referee's campaign. In semi-historical campaigns, the real-world Catholic church is an easy match. (The saints of the church will be discussed in detail in a future issue of *Wormskin*.)



Father Eggwin Dobey: The vicar of Lankshorn is a scrawny, bespectacled, stooped man of advanced years with wispy pate and wavering voice. Despite the doddering impression Father Dobey makes, he has a sharp and conniving mind. He schemes to maintain the status quo of political power in the region, acting as a loyal servant of Lord Malbleat (hex 0709), whom he has married to several human women at the Trothstone (hex 0609). Indeed, Father Dobey wears a silver crucifix of value clearly beyond the usual means of a rural priest—a gift from his goat-lord patron.

Monsters of the High Wold

Barrowbogeys (*plague fairy, pot-head*)

HD: 3

AC: 6

Attacks: 2 × 1d4 (bramble darts, scratching)

Move: 120' (40')

Morale: 8

Number Appearing: 1-4: abroad (1d4),

5-7: lair (3d6), 8: lair (empty)

Alignment: C

Intelligence: Sharp-witted

Size: S (3' tall)

XP: 65

Possessions: Darts, trinkets (fairy)

Hoard: B/XXI (fairy), 4d20 pots or jugs

Waif-like fairies with repulsively wrinkled brown skin. They carry pots or jugs upon their shoulders in place of heads and speak with a tinny voice which seems to emanate from within the vessel. Barrowbogeys make their homes in mounds and small hills in wild areas, usually riddled with narrow tunnels extending into the fairy realms of the Otherworld. They seldom come into contact with humans, but occasionally creep into villages to steal earthenware vessels (they do not produce their own, but stockpile whatever they can pilfer) or pies, which they cherish. If a barrowbogy dies, its pot shatters instantaneously to dust.

Special Abilities

Curse: Once per day, a barrowbogy can pronounce a curse upon a dwelling, causing all within its confines to save versus poison or suffer a sickness of boils and warts. It is said that the only cure for this malaise is a porridge cooked in the pot stolen from the shoulders of the fairy who caused it.

Weaknesses

Susceptibility to cold iron: Like all fairies, barrowbogeys suffer double damage from iron weapons.

Traits

1. Stack of 1d4+2 pots, precariously balanced on shoulders.
2. Cheeky, grinning face painted on head-pot.
3. Teapot-head. Pours and drinks cups of tea.
4. Croaks like a frog.
5. Also wears pots on feet and hands, like shoes and mittens.
6. Hops on all fours, leaps, and tumbles.

Encounters

1. Arguing over who has the right to the largest slice of a freshly baked blackberry pie which lays on the ground between them.
2. Attacking a washerwoman by a small stream, attempting to steal her cauldron. The woman fights back with a broom.
3. Groping around as if blinded, pots tumbled into a nearby ditch. (It is likely that the bogeys got into this state due to the mischief of some other being, who may be nearby.)
4. Spying on a maiden bathing in a pool.



Lairs

1. An ancient warren-home, delved and shared by an unlikely consortium of foxes, moles, and rabbits over many centuries. The barrowbogeys live at the heart of the warren-hill and act as advisors to the animals.
2. Tiled passages delved into the side of a muddy, root-riddled bank. The bogeys spend much of their time excavating the ruins of an ancient village close by, providing them with an excellent supply of antique pots.
3. A lonely barrow, clearly of human construction. There is a 40% chance that the warrior buried in the mound is now undead (a wight). (Barrowbogeys cohabitate, on occasion, with undead. The two parties tend to simply ignore each other.)
4. A tunnel-bored mound of earth and stone excavated in old times from a nearby mine. The barrowbogeys' treasure is likely in the form of ores and nuggets from the mine.

Bog Zombie

HD: 2

AC: 8

Attacks: 1 × 1d6 (thumping / throttling)

Move: 90' (30')

Morale: 10

Number Appearing: 1-5: abroad 1d6,
6-8: lair (5d6)

Alignment: N(E)

Intelligence: Mindless

Size: M

XP: 29

Possessions: Trinkets (neglected)

Hoard: C/XX (neglected)

Sodden corpses of those hapless mortals who have died, accursed, in the bogs and swamps of the forest. Inhabited by the spirits of marsh-fires, they rise at night to wreak death and jealous vengeance upon the living.

Special Abilities

Throttle: Upon a successful hit with a damage roll of 4 or greater, a bog zombie clasps its hands around the throat of the victim, attempting to strangle it. The victim thence suffers 1d6 hit points' automatic damage per round, until the zombie is killed. A victim killed in this way will be dragged into the bog and will rise the following night as a bog zombie.

Encounters

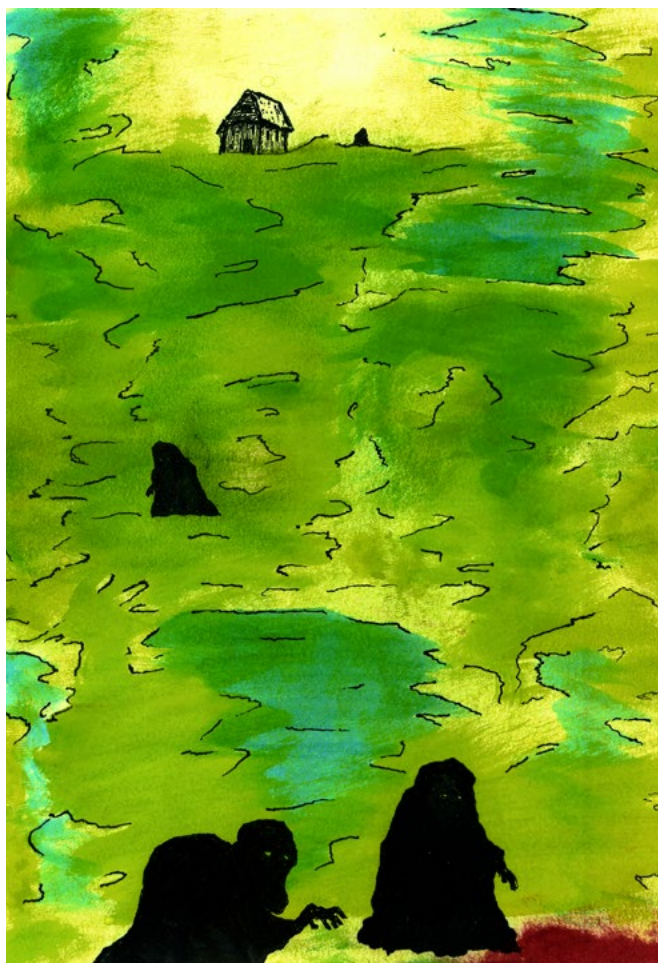
1. Dragging a freshly suffocated (though perhaps not quite dead) trapper into a bog.
2. Laying in wait in a muddy ditch beside a road.
3. Fleeing from a solitary friar who is stuck up to his waist in quicksand. His holy symbol, clutched in his quaking hand, has repelled the monsters, for now.
4. Fighting over the corpses of two woodsmen, who are being mindlessly torn limb from limb by two opposing gangs of zombies.

Traits

1. Headless.
2. Draped with dank pondweed.
3. Covered with crabs and bog-snails.
4. Flesh rotted away, almost skeletal.
5. Eyes burning with a flickering green light.
6. Swollen and leech-ridden.

Lairs

1. The half-submerged ruin of a wooden shack.
2. The waterlogged shrine of a long-forgotten saint, now defiled by necromancy. The zombies spend much of their time in prayer around the unholy altar, worshipping the decapitated head of a lord which rests there.
3. A prison cell, long sealed and now largely submerged. The zombies have been trapped within for many centuries.
4. Ritualistic bog-graves. The zombies are the victims of tribal sacrifices, buried in the marsh in order to appease ancient, heathen deities.



Goatman, Woldish

The goatmen of the High Wold are a race of evil humanoids with the fur, heads, horns, legs, and hooves of goats. Their wiry fur ranges in colour from black to grey to white, with dark brown or lustrous silver being seen occasionally. Goatmen are tall and slender, commonly surpassing 6 feet in height.

Equal to humans in wit and cunning, they speak the common tongue (after a bleating fashion) and their own language, the tongue of goats, which can also be understood by normal goats and sheep. The goatmen of the High Wold have a hierarchical, aristocratic society, living for the most part in isolated manor houses in the tangle of the forest.

Humans are, in the eyes of goatmen, a soulless animal species, to be freely used to their own ends. Human slaves are common among the aristocracy of the Woldish goatmen, who maintain stables of magically befuddled people (addercorn thralls), which they breed and trade amongst themselves. This, combined with the preeminence of cruelty and sadism in the goatman psychology, makes this race feared and often reviled by humankind.

Two types of Woldish goatman are discussed: the ruling class (longhorns) and the serving class (shorthorns). Shorthorns have no lairs of their own, always living together with longhorns.

Longhorn

HD: 5
AC: 8 (unarmoured) / 6 (man-leather armour) / 3 (engraved plate)
Attacks: 1 × 1d8 (butt) or by weapon (longsword) / gaze
Move: 120' (40')
Morale: 9

Number Appearing: 1-2: abroad (1d4),
3-5: abroad (1d4 + 2d4 shorthorns),
6-8: lair (1d10 + 3d6 shorthorns)
Alignment: L(E)
Intelligence: Scheming
Size: M (6-7' tall)
XP: 350
Possessions: Trinkets (noble), T/V
Hoard: E/XVIII (noble)

Wild Goatmen

In the northern and eastern reaches of Dolmenwood, another subspecies of goatman is found. These are wild and chaotic, largely living as bandits and robbers. Many serve or are enslaved by Atanuwe nine-legs, the nag-lord. This subspecies will be treated in more detail in a future issue of *Wormskin*.

The goatman elite, consisting of sadistic nobles and knights, have fully-developed, spiralled horns of up to 2' in length. These horns can be used as formidable weapons in melee. Like humans, longhorn goatmen breed horses, which they often ride or set to draw carriages.

Special Abilities

Gaze: The gaze of a longhorn goatman carries the supernatural power to charm victims into obeisance. A goatman may use this ability on each specific target once per day, incurring a save versus spells. Those who fail the save come under the goatman's sway and are unable to harm him or her (either directly or indirectly) until the sunrise of the following day.

Traits

1. Forward-pointing horns. (This is regarded, among goatmen, as an especially noble characteristic.)
2. Deep red eyes.
3. A golden or silver tooth.
4. Accompanied by a strange pet: a monkey, human midget, or fanged sheep.
5. Wears a monocle.
6. Long, beautifully groomed, lustrous fur.

Encounters

1. A goat-lord in a horse-drawn carriage, accompanied by goatlady nobles, on their way to a ball.
2. Knights and their knaves charging on horseback through the undergrowth in pursuit of a group of fleeing addercorn thralls.
3. Emissaries bringing news from one goat-lord to another.
4. A household fleeing a fire that is consuming their dwelling, clutching what few valuables they could carry.

Lairs

1. A small, stone keep atop a low hill, walled with a palisade of wood and thorny creepers.
2. A gentile villa set among a walled garden where herbs and vines are cultivated by enslaved humans.
3. An area of fenced-in woodland, used for hunting. The goatmen dwell in a wood-gabled hunting lodge at the corner of their land, beside a well-stocked stable.
4. A rambling manor house set among exquisitely tended gardens, mazes, and follies.

Shorthorn

HD: 2

AC: 8 (unarmoured) / 6 (man-leather armour)

Attacks: 1 × 1d6 (butt) or by weapon (spear, shortsword)

Move: 120' (40')

Morale: 8

Number Appearing: 1d8 abroad, no lair

Alignment: L(E)

Intelligence: Grudging

Size: M (5-6' tall)

XP: 20

Possessions: Trinkets, Q/II

Hoard: None

Members of the goatman serving class fill the roles of household servants, cooks, messengers, groundskeepers, man-herders, hunters, and guards. When equipped to fight, shorthorns wield long, gnarly spears or antique shortswords, and wear armour of man-leather. They have small nub-horns, no longer than an inch, atop their heads. Their butt attack is thus not particularly to be feared, although their thick, bony skull can still deliver a blow of some force.

Traits

1. Wears an eye patch.
2. Protruding fangs.
3. Fur and eyes of midnight black.
4. Wooden leg.
5. Three-horned.
6. Large, misshapen skull with odd lumps.

Encounters

1. Sitting wounded and forlorn by the wayside, crouched atop a stump. These are the survivors of a larger band; their companions were brutally slain by passing knights.
2. Crashing wildly through the undergrowth, dragging two human women along with them, in rusty chains.
3. Ringed around an enraged boar, tormenting it with spears and flaming brands.
4. Hiding in bracken, spying on a goatman knight, a servant of a rival aristocrat.

Goatman Thrall (*Addercorn Thrall*)

HD: 1

AC: 9

Attacks: 1 (damage by weapon)

Move: 120' (40')

Morale: 6

Number Appearing: 1d6, no lair

Alignment: N

Intelligence: Befuddled

Size: M

XP: 10

Possessions: Trinkets

Hoard: None

Feeble-minded humans who live as slaves (either captive or bred) of the goatlords of the High Wold. Their diet is supplemented with a plant known as addercorn¹, which causes a listlessness of behaviour, a suppression of the will, and a confusion of the mind. Thus, addercorn thralls remain compliant to the whims of their goat masters.

Thralls are kept by goatmen purely as pets or mockeries; they are put to no practical work. They are sometimes displayed and traded among goat-nobles. The goatmen choose to “groom” some of their human slaves with brushes of *wisp-weed* (an abrasive and caustic marsh herb), causing their body hair to wither and drop out. The skins of the naked thralls are then flayed and tanned by the goatmen, who arrogantly decorate themselves with belts, chokers, gloves, and waistcoats of man-skin.

Encounters

1. A pregnant woman creeps through the undergrowth, clearly deranged, bleating like a goat.
2. Dazed among the wreckage of a crashed carriage. Their goat masters lying dead, the addercorn thralls know not what to do.
3. Running through the wood in chains, dragged along by their rescuer—a normal human. Goatmen are likely on their trail.
4. Leashed and tied to a tree. Yelping and fornicating like beasts.

Traits

1. Frothing at the mouth.
2. Unconscious babbling and outbursts.
3. “Groomed”: utterly hairless.
4. Wide-eyed and excitable.
5. Dressed in mock finery.
6. One-handed.

¹ The origin of addercorn is a mystery to human sages. It has never been found growing in any environment, wild or cultivated. Some theorise that it is of fairy origin. A human who has eaten a diet including addercorn will regain their mental faculties in 1d6 months.

Nightworm

HD: 3

AC: 8

Attacks: 1 × 1d6 (bite)

Move: 90' (30')

Morale: 9

Number Appearing: 2d6 abroad, no lair

Alignment: N

Intelligence: Wormlike

Size: M (5-10' long)

XP: 80

Possessions: None

Hoard: None

Long, thin, eyeless, red worms with rubbery, ribbed bodies and tooth-filled maws. Nightworms burrow into mud and sludge to sleep during the day, emerging at night to hunt warm-blooded prey.

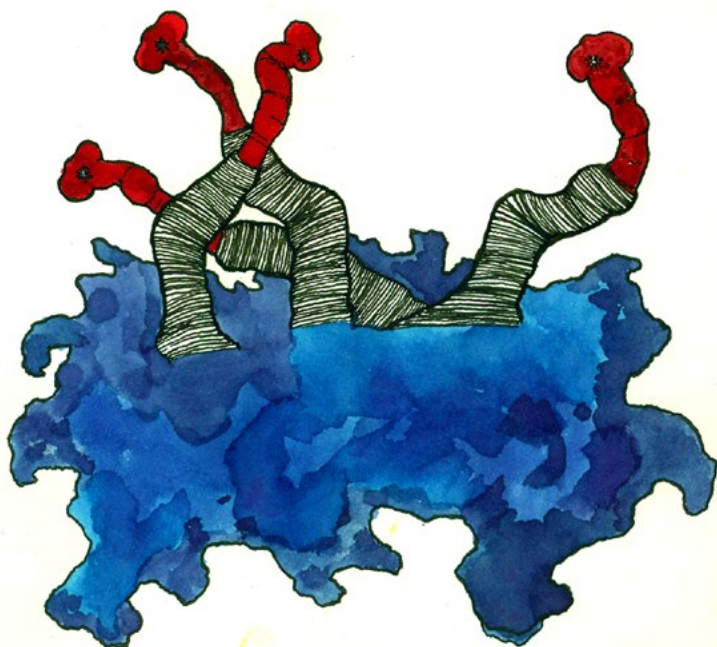
Special Abilities

Constriction: Nightworms are able, upon a successful bite attack, to wrap themselves around their victim. The victim may make a saving throw versus paralysis to avoid being enwrapped. If the save fails, the worm begins to exude a powerful acid which inflicts 1d4 damage per round. This damage is first applied to armour, reducing its effectiveness until it is completely eroded, at which point the acid begins to eat into the flesh of the victim. Note that, when entangling prey, the worm is also able to make a bite attack as normal each round.

Regeneration: Nightworms regenerate 2hp per round. Severed portions may reconnect.

Traits

1. Covered in writhing tentacles.
2. Odd, light-pink hue, organs visible through skin.
3. Three long, black tongues dart in and out of mouth.
4. Slug-like antennae.
5. Needle-like spines around mouth (+1 damage from bite attacks).
6. Two-headed; each head may attack once per round. (XP: 95)



Encounters

1. A seething mass of nightworms drags a lone horse into a slimy bog. The poor beast is saddled and bridled, but its rider is nowhere to be seen. If the saddlebags are retrieved, interesting trinkets may be discovered within.
2. Engulfing a wizard who clutches a gnarled staff of purple wood and frantically repeats a magic word. (The staff was supposed to have the power of worm-binding, but appears to be cursed, discharged, or defective.)
3. Slithering, spiral-fashion, up a tree trunk, pursuing two hapless adventurers who misjudged the agility of nightworms.
4. Gathered around a foetid pond, heads raised, swaying, in the air, as if hypnotised. Floating above the pond, a vague form of swirling, scarlet mist can be espied.

Witch-Owl

HD: 2

AC: 5

Attacks: 2 × 1d4 (claws) / screech / gaze

Move: 180' (60')—flying

Morale: 8

Number Appearing: 1-6: abroad (1d6),

7: lair (2d6), 8: lair (1d4 + 1d4 shadow-
owls)

Alignment: N(E)

Intelligence: Inscrutable

Size: S (3' wingspan)

XP: 47

Possessions: None

Hoard: L/XI (eerie)

Tall, milky-white owls with violet eyes and uncannily rotating heads, these beings go abroad at dusk to hunt. Rather than the flesh of rodents and lesser birds, witch-owls feed on the psychic bodies of the sentients upon which they prey. The sighting of a witch-owl in flight—even in the distance—is regarded by woodland folk as an ill omen of great portent.

Special Abilities

Gaze: A mortal who meets the gaze of a witch-owl at close range (within 30') must save versus spells. Failure indicates that the victim falls into a trance wherein awareness of the waking world fades, the soul instead entering an eerie dream-world where the witch-owls are masters. In this vision, the victim is a mouse lost in a haunted wood, hunted and eventually torn to shreds by owls under the gaze of the moon. The vision lasts for but a single round of real time, though perceptually several minutes appear to have passed. The aftereffects are, however, permanent: part of the victim's psyche is consumed. Roll on this table to determine what is lost:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. All memories of own parents. | 6. 1d4 points of WIS. A character whose wisdom is utterly drained, in this way, becomes a <i>shadow</i> (as the monster) in the thrall of the witch-owls. Such wretches are sent abroad to trick living men and women to venture into the domain of the witch-owls. |
| 2. Ability to love. | |
| 3. Desire to eat. | |
| 4. A significant goal, driving force, or dream. | |
| 5. Knowledge of own name. | |

Even if reminded of lost memories by others, the victim can never truly recall what has been consumed by a witch-owl. Only powerful magic (*wish*, *restoration*) can reclaim the consumed mind-form.

Screech: The alarm call of the witch-owl, which may be uttered once per day, has the effect of paralysing mortals within earshot who fail a saving throw. The paralysis lasts for 1d6 minutes.

Traits

1. Cyclops.
2. Feathers shimmer with moonlight (even when the moon is obscured).
3. Human mouth, is able to speak.
4. Haloed with eerie, purple light.
5. Silver antlers.
6. Wingtip feathers made of silver. (Such feathers are highly valued by witches for use in magic spells.)

Encounters

1. Perched atop a decaying signpost, heads turned away. If any mortals make an approach, the owls' heads swivel around, bringing their gaze upon the victims.
2. Fluttering around the shuttered windows of a small cottage, attempting to scare the inhabitants into allowing them entry.
3. Standing atop a dolmen, fixated by the crystal pendulum of a drune or witch. Any sound will break the enchantment.
4. Gathered in solemn council on the needle-littered floor of a pine-glade. Several shadows lurk among the trees. There appear to be at least two factions among the owls and a heated disagreement may be perceived in the tone of their hoots.

Lairs

1. The ruins of an old church steeple, standing alone among a maze of briars and wild roses.
2. A series of alcoves built into the shaft of an old well. Anyone looking down the shaft must save versus spells or be compelled to climb within.
3. A forest cave which exudes an unnatural and terrifying darkness. Even plants lean away, trying to escape the influence of this accursed grotto.
4. An ivy-clad mausoleum—the resting place of a witch—standing amid the ruins of a graveyard. The door to the crypt is slightly ajar. There is a 33% chance that the woman interred here is now undead (perhaps a banshee or vampire).



o one may harm a goat in Lankshorn. Such acts carry severe punishments in that ancient market-town where goat-folk have intermingled with mankind under the satyristic gaze of Lord Malbleat and his ancestors.



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