

Eerie silence. The loose soil seethes with carnivorous beetles.

Terrain: Tangled forest, High Wold

Lost/Encounters: 2-in-6. Encounters are 2-in-6 likely to be with a **2 HD insect swarm (OSE)**—the flesh-eating beetles that swarm this hex.

Ley line Ywyr: Arcane spell-casters perceive the distant moaning of the dead. (See pXXX.)

Mounds and Boulders

Scattered throughout the hex are earthen mounds, some up to 10' high, devoid of any vegetation or fungi. They are topped with clusters of large boulders.

Carved faces: Every boulder has a side covered by a carved face, invariably a visage depicting at once torment and wickedness.

Foreign stone: Those who have spent time in the hills and crags of the High Wold may notice that the stone is not of local origin.

History: Chiselled in ancient days by the wicked Drune, these boulders were carved in effigy of woods-folk chiefs who bowed to the Cold Prince and refused to join the Triple Compact (see **History**, p16). By use of most horrendous ritual the Drune pulled the souls from these chieftains and their heirs and bound them within the stones to scream silently until the sun grows cold. The Drune dub this prison the “Craven Mounds”.

At Night

When night falls, the tormented spirits of the fallen chiefs begin to drip from the maws and eyes of the effigies. They seep down into the cold, loose earth in hopes of finding mortal bodies to infest and use as temporary hosts with which to take out their fury on the Drune. Most have little luck beyond parleying with the petty minds of beetles.

Possessed in sleep: Any mortals or demi-fey who would be so foolish as to rest here must **save versus death**. Those who succeed retch up the gruesome spirits attempting to possess them; those unfortunate souls who fail become thralls to the liquid slithering shadows (see **Shadow's Thrall**) until dawn or until dragged from this hex.

The Shrine to St Elsa (Hidden)

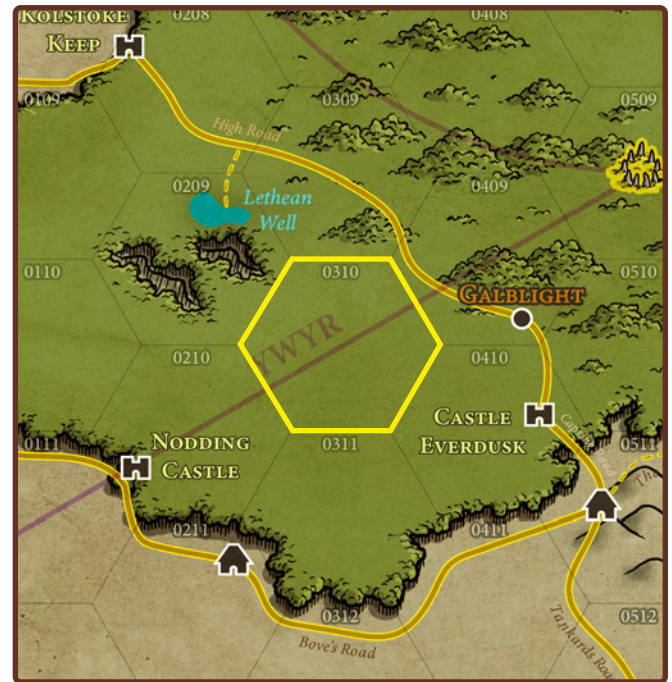
The point of a tiled roof is all the remains visible of the lost shrine to St Elsa, submerged beneath a mound of loose soil, writhing with carnivorous beetles.

Clearing the shrine: Treat the swarming beetles as a **4 HD insect swarm (OSE)**.

Structure: A simple wayside shrine with wooden sides and a tiled roof.

Statue of St Elsa: A wooden carving depicting St Elsa atop a tall tower, gazing up to heaven.

Prayer: If the shrine is cleared, a cleric or friar of the One True God who prays for 1 hour receives the blessing of St Elsa: the ability to cast *commune* once within the next 24 hours.



Shadow's Thrall

Those possessed by the dripping shadows are drained of colour, and appear as amalgams of spectral and rotten flesh.

AC 5 [14] **HD** 2+1* (10hp) **Att** 1 × touch (1d6 + chill)
THACO 17 [+2] **MV** 90' (30') **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (2)
ML 12 **AL** Chaotic **XP** 35

Possessed: Despite its appearance, a shadow's thrall is possessed, not undead, and cannot be turned.

Chill touch: Victims lose 1 STR per hit. If reduced to 0 STR, the victim dies. Lost STR recovers at dawn.

Dawn light: The touch of the light of dawn will exorcise and defeat the shadow, ending the possession and returning the thrall to their normal state.

Dragging from hex 0310: Dragging a shadow's thrall from this hex also ends the possession.

TODO: Illustration

Clearings choked with towering sunflowers and dazzling poppies that stand defiant on even the coldest of days.

Terrain: Hilly forest, High Wold / Dwelmfurgh

Lost/Encounters: 2-in-6

Ley line crossing Chell/Ywyr: Arcane spell-casters perceive the curious, dual sensation of balmy heat and biting cold. (See pXXX.) The energies of the Ywyr are siphoned into Chell at this nexus, and so visitors feel no additional effects from its presence.

Within the ring of Chell: True fairies are afflicted with a spiritual malaise; teleportation and summoning are ineffectual; magic of illusion and charm has a 2-in-6 chance of failure. (See *The Ring of Chell*, p22.)

Woods of Perpetual Summer

The arcane energies of the nodal known as the Pelloryons, which lies at the centre of this hex, keep the surrounding woods trapped in nigh-perpetual summer.

Distracting drone: Bees buzz here, often and loudly, with a slow, almost hypnotic drone.

The Warding Maze

From the safety of a hidden fastness among the roots of the woods, the Pelloryons' guardian, the **Audrune Cadraigaunt**, oversees and maintains a series of wards structured to confound wanderers and destroy intruders.

Common travellers: Walk about three miles into the hex before realizing they have ended up back at whatever edge they entered from.

The Audrune Cadraigaunt

An ancient, hunchbacked Audrune who has guarded the Pelloryons for nigh five centuries, clinging to life by sheer force of purpose. An eye-like flame burns beneath his cowl and bees flit menacingly around him.

Demeanour (Chaotic): Ruthless, joyless, single-minded, gleeful in hunting and destroying those who trespass on his lands. The cruellest of the Drune.

Speech: A sinister rasp, underpinned by the eerie buzzing of insects. Woldish, Old Woldish, Drunic, Liturgic.

Desires: Above all, to maintain the secrecy of the Pelloryons. To wrest the soul of his friend Hemlack (former guardian of Sargstone) from the clutches of Atanuwe (see hex 0904).

Combat stats: Audrune (DMB) with the ability to cast additional spells: *continual darkness*, *death spell*, *polymorph self*, and *geas*.

Insect swarm: Cadraigaunt's symbiotic swarm of bees and stinging insects can attack opponents (HD 3, **insect swarm**—OSE).

Staff of mellification: Cadraigaunt wields a gnarled staff oozing with honey. A victim hit by the staff must **save versus death (with a +2 bonus)** or collapse into a honey-filled husk, sweet nectar oozing from its orifices.



Seekers of the Pelloryons: Sense the woods slowly closing in on them, eventually transforming into a twilight, phantasmagoric labyrinth haunted by gibbering spirits and mocking, human-faced trees as Cadraigaunt slowly twists the strands of reality. Party members must **save versus spells**: should all succeed, the labyrinth vanishes; otherwise, the interlopers are attacked by an **invisible stalker** (OSE). The maze evaporates if the stalker is defeated.

The Pelloryons

Beyond all the wards, in a glade nestled between hills at the hex's centre, stand the Pelloryons (the "three sisters"). They comprise the most crucial node of the warding ring.

Guardian: Should intruders reach this point, the Audrune Cadraigaunt will immediately arrive to dispatch them.

Appearance: The Pelloryons consists of three towering dolmens. Each is made from a single cyclopean pillar of chalky limestone, approximately 10' around and 18' in height, and is carved with figures representing elements of the Triple Compact (pXXX).

King stone: Carved on one side to resemble an ancient king and on its reverse to resemble a crone holding a chalice.

Friar stone: Engraved on one side with a towering friar holding a scrimshawed holy symbol, and on the other with a screaming elfin form locked in eternal torment.

Drune stone: Carved in the crude likeness of a Drune's hood, while on its reverse is the sculpted form of the stag-headed god Howawi (pXXX).

Touching the stones: The stones' surfaces are warm and balmy to the touch, while the areas around the figures' eyes and mouths are unearthly cold.

Destroying the stones: Toppling them by brute force brings about the disastrous consequences detailed under *The Ring of Chell*, p22.

Sighing wind seems to emanate from face-like formations in the sides of ragged granite peaks.

Terrain: Craggy forest, Aldweald

Lost/Encounters: 3-in-6. Encounters are 2-in-6 likely to be with the **gloam** (DMB) that lairs in the abbey ruins.

Ley line Lamm: Arcane spell-casters perceive the sensation of being observed by a pitiless malevolence. (See pXXX.)

Abbey Hill

Close to the centre of this hex, Swinney Road passes around the base of a rocky outcropping upon which sections of tumbled stone walls can be spied among the trees.

Path upwards: A series of paved avenues and overgrown stairways winds its way up to the ruined abbey of St Clewyd.

The Ruined Abbey of St Clewyd

The path passes through the toppled frame of the old gate and enters the central courtyard of the former monastic complex, now overgrown with brambles and errant trees. Most of the buildings are reduced to blackened rubble.

Haunted bell tower: A tall, square tower stands largely undamaged, close to the toppled gate. Dark birds can be seen roosting in the belfry at the tower's summit. A **gloam** haunts this place, dwelling with three **charmed children**.

Chapel of St Clewyd: The main chapel is damaged but largely intact. A series of mosaics depicting the life and deeds of St Clewyd may be spotted beneath the tapestry of climbing plants that lines the walls. Stairs lead down to a solid stone door, magically sealed (as *wizard lock* cast by a 6th level caster), blocking the way to the chapel's crypts.

Disturbed graveyard: The graves of several hundred monks, surrounded by buckling, ivy-covered walls. The newest graves bear dates just over 100 years ago. Many have been carelessly dug up. There is a 2-in-6 chance of a **charmed child** being present here, digging.

The Chapel Crypts

An extensive series of tombs and catacombs extends beneath the chapel. The doors from the surface lead into a vast undercroft in the eastern half of the crypts.

Chaos cataract: The eastern crypts are wracked with chaotic energies and monsters, emanating from the dimensional rift caused by the ritual that brought about the abbey's destruction (see *History*, p16).

Revivifying tombs: Tombs of ten former abbots lie empty, their lids pushed aside. Fuelled by the energies of the cataract, any corpse placed in the coffers will be revived, though there is a 3-in-6 chance it becomes undead.

The order of wardens: The western crypts, free of the cataract's influence, are home to 70 monks—30 living, 40 undead. They have dwelt here since the abbey's destruction, swearing to remain until their "charge" can be healed.

The "charge": A wretched monstrosity formed of the amalgamation of St Clewyd and Sallowbryg (see *History*, p16). The beast is kept imprisoned, its mind shattered and hateful of all life.



Charmed Children

Three children live in the bell tower, in the gloam's thrall, tasked with digging up teeth from the graveyard.

- 1. Bilbry Worms:** A waif-like, blonde boy of 5 years.
- 2. Willy Hodgeheg:** A strapping lad of 8 years, whose matted black hair cascades over his glowering eyes.
- 3. Violet Harrowmoor:** A dark-haired girl of 6 whose dress and speech betray her aristocratic origins—she is the missing daughter of Lady Harrowmoor (pXXX). She secretly converses with her mother via a magical locket but—being charmed and unaware of her location—she cannot convey any useful information in this manner.

Mister Rag-n-Bone (Gloam)

A sinister agglomeration of ragged undead crows.

Demeanour (Neutral): Erratic, withdrawn, obsessive.

Speech: Grating whisper, clacking of beaks. Woldish.

Desires: The teeth of the holy. More charmed servants.

Inside the Bell Tower

Ground floor (chapel): A decaying chapel dedicated to St Woad, patron of bakers, bears, and hammersmiths.

1st floor (bedroom): The home of the three **charmed children**, living among the ramshackle remnants of the former gatewarden's residence.

2nd floor (bell-ringing chamber): Macabre dioramas of stuffed woodland creatures with human teeth glued into their mouths, strung from the bell ropes. Disturbing the figures risks the wrath of the **gloam** that lurks in the belfry.

3rd floor (belfry): A great bronze bell (1,500gp). The **gloam** (DMB), "Mister Rag-n-Bone", perches in flock form among the rafters, filling the chamber with eerie shadows.

Little streams meander through idyllic glades of lantern elms, their seeds like lambent paper lanterns.

Terrain: Tangled forest, High Wold / Aldweald

Lost/Encounters: 2-in-6

Foraging: Successful foraging yields 1d4 portions of young lantern elm roots, used to brew *afteritch* (DPB), in addition to the normal results.

Dreg and Shantywood Isle

Sitting at the widest point of the River Hameth is the port-town and fishing village of Dreg, a major stopping point on the river trade that connects the High Wold, Castle Brackenwold, and the lands to the south of Dolmenwood.

Seedy reputation: Dreg has a reputation as a haunt for thieves, charlatans, and rascals of all stripes. Its many inns and taverns cater to the bawdy tastes of such folk.

Shantywood Isle: Opposite Dreg, the notorious pleasure isle of Shantywood sits amid the rushing waters of the Hameth.

Full settlement description: See pXXX.

Myrrsian's Mill

A rustic, two-storey, timber-framed watermill stands on the banks of the Hameth in the northeast corner of this hex, its paddles producing a cheery splashing that can be heard from some way off.

Entrance: A circular wooden door, painted purple, inlaid with thorn and leaf patterns in brass, with a brass knocker in the form of a smirking imp. The door is *wizard locked* (by a 6th level caster).

Dark glazed windows: The mill has four windows (two on each level), with panes of dark green glass, virtually opaque from the outside. All are *wizard locked* (by a 6th level caster).

Interior: Cosy gloom. Homely woodwork painted with floral designs. A jumble of pots, pans, pestles and mortars, and drying herbs strewn over all surfaces. Crystals hang from low beams, refracting shafts of forest sunlight.

Inhabitants: The magic-user **Myrrsian the Mutable** and 3 **sprites** (DMB)—a pink sprite named Tollowook, a blue sprite named Lillyshill, and a red sprite named Brigadoone—who act as servants and guest-wrangers, chittering and giggling in Sylvan.

Grinding sound: A low, grinding sound drones continuously, seemingly from below ground. The mill's inhabitants (if asked) confirm that the sound emanates from the grinding mill mechanisms in the cellar, which, they insist, are "purely decorative".

Secret trapdoor: The trapdoor to the cellar is concealed beneath a carpet and is *wizard locked* (by a 6th level caster).

Cellar: Gears and axles slowly turning glowing pink millstones wreathed in arcs of pale blue electricity. Sinister black forms can periodically be glimpsed in the lightning. Myrrsian's research focuses on attempting to use this device to open a dimensional portal to a shadowy plane of existence.



Myrrsian the Mutable (6th Level Magic-User)

A youthful magic-user who switches between two forms (equal chance of either when encountered): a dashing young man with profound blue eyes and impressive red moustaches / a dainty young woman with fine, silver hair and eyes of chestnut. Both forms are clad in robes of green velvet embroidered with golden primroses.

Demeanour (Neutral): Convivial but tricksome—enjoys leaving the room, changing form, then claiming to be "Myrrsian's sibling Vyridan", upon returning. (The names are not tied to either form; Myrrsian is simply whichever is encountered first.)

Speech: Melodious, eloquent. Woldish, Sylvan, a smattering of Mewl.

Desires: Magical crystals of all kinds, to act as fodder for the mill—willing to pay a handsome price. (Myrrsian believes that an exact balance of different types will open the portal.)

Possessions: A twisted brass *ring of duomorph*—grants the wearer the ability to shift at will into an opposite-sex alter-ego (exact appearance, voice, etc. determined by the referee when the ring is first used). An elf-bone *wand of fear* (6 charges). Scrolls of *web* and *confusion*. A spell book bound in brass-scaled leather: *charm person*, *magic missile*, *mirror image*, *wizard lock*, *clairvoyance*, *lightning bolt*.

TODO: Illustration