



Fabelstein's
Melody of a Dead Woman

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Introduction

The short adventure *Melody of a Dead Woman* is made for level 1. It is set in an area that is not in any particular world. It can be placed as you wish. In the adventure, a reference is made to a city that is a few days away. The players could be on their way to this city, for example. Everything in this adventure is a suggestion and you can make adjustments as best suits you and your players.

The adventure should create a quiet, lonely, and less hopeful atmosphere. Therefore, it is a good idea to point out that it is night when possible. Should the players decide to take a *Long Rest*, which should not be necessary, it can of course be daytime. To keep the atmosphere, the sky should be covered with thick dark clouds.

The [Prologue](#) serves as background information and immerses you in the atmosphere of this story. At the end of the [Prologue](#), you will find a box that summarizes all the important background information chronologically.

The adventure contains 4 chapters. All chapters must be played one after the other. Be aware that the players can enter the second chapter [The Coachman](#) very quickly if they ignore most of the first chapter [Solmenheim](#). In [Appendix A](#) you will find a roadmap. It will help you keep track of where in the story the players are.

The appearance of the plant [White Bat](#) and [Black Bat](#) featured in this adventure is inspired by the real-life plant [Tacca Nivea](#) and [Tacca Chantrieri](#).

Prologue

Solmenheim is a small, lonely village surrounded by grain fields. It was founded a few generations ago by a blacksmith and a miller. Once there lived humans, dwarves, elves, and gnomes; maybe 40 in number. Among them was the natural healer **Nadja**. A young woman who took care of the sick in the village.

One day she was once again in the nearby forest. An idyllic forest. The dense vegetation of the forest offered mushrooms, berries, fruits, herbs, roots. Everything a healer like **Nadja** needed. **Nadja** loved nature and nature knew it. Little birds chirped in the treetops above her and deer grazed near her without being afraid. She found the berries and herbs she was looking for, but also something that claimed her attention: An unusual white flower. She had never seen anything like it before. Two large snow-white leaves spread from a tall stem. At its lower ends, many long thin arms hung down, almost like the tentacles of a jellyfish. The whole image reminded her of a flying bat. She sat cross-legged in front of it for a while and watched this wonderful creature. While she sat there she began to hum a melody. One she has never heard before. *A beautiful melody*, she thought. It reminded her of home, of concealment. At the same time a relaxing euphoria rose in her. The way the melody sounded, it was perfect, but still it should be more. Her body relaxed, but her mind was dancing. After a good while, she decided to take the plant with her. She got out her shovel and freed the roots of this bat flower from the earth.

It was late afternoon when she returned to **Solmenheim**. It had been a warm day and the cooling air did well. She greeted one or the other on the street before she disappeared into her house. As it turned out, forever. She processed her "harvest" that same evening and preserved the herbs. For the bat flower, she searched a pot and planted the flower in it.

This beautiful flower should be given a special place. She considered: in the kitchen, she was several times a day, but she was also in the lab for long periods of time. She decided upon the kitchen because she already had so many plants in the lab. She soaked the soil in the pot with plenty of water and then went to bed. Just before she fell asleep, she remembered that she had not yet documented the location of the wonderful flower she found. She took out a pen and ink from her nightstand but there was only one small piece of paper left. There was more in the lab. But it was already dark and now a bit cold in the house. She decided to make the entry tomorrow. The writing stuff lying on the nightstand she fell asleep. After all, tomorrow was another day.

The village of **Solmenheim** was asleep. It was deep in the night. The moon high in the sky was guided by a sparkling sea of stars. The wind blew softly over the fields and danced around the long hair of grain. It was quiet, far and wide no noise, no movement. But then something came to life. In **Nadja's** kitchen, small thin roots were growing out of the pot that held the bat flower. The roots grasped the edge of the pot and pulled the entire plant, including the flower, which looked like a ghost in the dim glow of the moon, out of the soil. The flower continuing its way, dragging itself with its vines across the ground. But what was its destination? Where was it going? The flower already sensed its target: a body. A body of a living being. The living being that was closest: **Nadja**. Eternally slow and yet fast enough, this ghost of roots and leaves moved through the house, where it was absolutely quiet. It was not seen and not heard. It had all the time in the world. It put its feet into the bedroom. There she lay, in peace, on her back, covered in sheets. The morning was still far away and the wind was whispering as if it wanted to give a warning without being too loud. On the sheets over **Nadja's** body, the plant now rested. And its roots sprouted, delving deep into the body of the woman lying beneath it, holding strong on the flesh.

The moon said goodbye and the sun gently woke up the villagers of **Solmenheim**. **Nadja**

also woke up. Not a moment passed before she understood what had happened. Panic seized her. She tried to get up, but her body remained where it was. She could only move her arms and hands back and forth with great strength. The plant had already reached her brain and so **Nadja** now knew everything about this bat-flower. Not a flower, a fungus! And she was its victim, its host. She looked around. The images before her eyes darkened on and off or disappeared completely for a few seconds. There was still the writing utensil next to her bed. Someone must come. Someone must rescue her. She screamed. She did not scream. Was she deaf? Or did she no longer have a voice? She heard nothing. More and more she lost control over her own body. She grabbed the pen with all the strength she could devoid and wrote the most important thing she had in mind on the small piece of paper.

free me

She embraced the note tightly as if this note was last hope. The ceiling above her and the room around her disappeared. She felt nothing anymore. Could she still move? She didn't know. With nothing but her thoughts, everything else had left her body. Only her mind, alone, knowing that this fungus would grow through her body.

And suddenly there was something. She could see something, feel something. Her feet felt something solid under them. She looked down at herself. A wooden platform. Above her a black sky. No sun, no moon, no star. In front of her an endless rocky landscape. Not a tree, not a bush, not a blade of grass. Cold wind blew through her hair. Something touched her neck. It was heavy and wet. She looked at herself. Her head was stuck through the loop of a gallows. Help! She needed help. She couldn't move her arms. There! Something was moving back there. At the very end of the horizon, there seemed to be an infinite number of people coming toward her.

The villagers of **Solmenheim** followed their normal work. They baked bread, they forged hooves, they fed pigs. And they greeted and

talked in the warm sunshine that slowly moved along the sky. And no one realized that **Nadja** was left alone, abandoned to a fungus that was slowly spreading roots through her body and her house. Just before the blood-red sun touched the fields, in the inn, they were wondering that **Nadja** had not left her house at all today. Rare, but not unusual.

The next day went by and again no one had seen **Nadja**. The villagers became worried. Although it was already dark, they decided to have a look. A small group, among them the butcher and dwarf **Garando**, knocked on her door. Several times and hard, but nobody opened it. They tried to take a look inside the house, but there was nothing unusual to see. They called for **Nadja**. Not only in her house, but in the whole village they sought for her, but she couldn't be found. The dwarf **Garando** then decided to go into the house. They were afraid that something had happened to her. The dwarf carefully opened the door. In **Solmenheim**, people did not lock their doors when they were at home. They stared into the dark empty hallway of the house. No clues. So the dwarf entered. He took a few glances at the rooms on his way to the upper floor. He sneaked up the stairs, listening at the same time to see if he could hear any sounds. He didn't want to scare **Nadja**. However, there was no sound. It was like being in a haunted house. When he reached the top step, he heard a pleasant melody. It had to come from the bedroom and it scared him despite the pleasant sound. Or maybe because of it. He first carefully took a look into **Nadja's** washing room. It was empty. Now only the bedroom lay before him, the door closed. Still the melody in his head. The dwarf shuffled his feet across the old floor to prevent any creaking until he was standing right in front of the door. The melody grew a little louder. He placed his cold sweaty hand on the doorknob and grabbed it tightly as if he would sway. He breathed, in and out deeply several times. Then he held his breath and pushed the door handle. The door swung open. At what he saw, his heart stopped beating. Black vines everywhere like thick snakes. They grew across the floor, hugged the bed, climbed up the

walls. In the middle of this abstruse prison: **Nadja**. She lay in her bed. Motionless and wrapped by countless vines. This melody seemed to emanate from her body. On her top: A white flower. **Garando** had no idea how long he stood there and looked at this nightmare that had become real. When he caught himself, he took a deep breath. He sucked all the air in the room into his lungs. Without giving the bedroom another glance, he turned and ran out of the house.

The others waited outside curiously. **Garando** took his time. In the moonlight, they came up with some theories. **Nadja** could have left **Solmenheim**. Or maybe she is working on a cure-all. Or she might have accidentally poisoned herself. In the silence, their murmurings were a gray spot in the clear firmament. Then they heard rapid feet from the house. Immediately they all fell silent and gazed, waiting eagerly, into the maw of the house. Out of the darkness, the dwarf came running out and fell exhausted on his knees right on the street. No one said anything. **Garando** seemed so shocked that everyone was afraid of his news. After a few moments the dwarf caught his breath: *Nadja is dead, plants everywhere. She was killed by a huge plant!* That night, no one dared to enter the house.

Nobody knew whether **Nadja** was dead or alive. Therefore, they tried to free her. During the attempts to remove the vines, black flowers on them, which looked similar to the white flower, spread a cloud of dust. The rescuers coughed so hard that they almost threw up. They made it out of the house gasping, only to collapse and die there on the street. Now no one entered the house for sure.

And so a few days passed until the first vines of the fungus reached out the windows. This at least partially confirmed the dwarf's story. But no one believed his claim that he had heard a melody in the bedroom. **Garando**, however, remembered this melody exactly and did not let go. He wrote his experience on tens of pieces of paper and spread them in the village so that everyone would read them.

I was with Nadja the only one believe me what I am telling you I was standing in her bedroom she was lying there in her bed entangled by this plant I heard a melody I don't know where it came from but believe me I heard it it was beautiful

A few days passed again. The villagers feared that the plant would spread to other buildings and afterward the entire village would be buried under it. Their fear was confirmed by the fact that the vines increasingly grew through the entire house of **Nadja**. The first villagers suggested burning down the house, but Mayor **Wilhelm Grindel** was able to hold them back for the time being. [Nadja's house](#) was bordered by the blacksmith's house, and thus the first house built in the village. Besides, they were not sure what was going on there in the house. Before any more attempts, he first wanted to request help from the city and so he wrote a letter. It should be delivered with the next mail coach.

It was the same postman as always who received the letter from the mayor. The postman was shocked by what had happened. His heart ached as if it would be torn apart. Secretly the postman was a lover of **Nadja** and to find her house like this was the most painful torment he could imagine. He left **Solmenheim** with the letter from the mayor. However, he did not intend to deliver it. Like the people of **Solmenheim**, the city would just burn down the house anyway. **Solmenheim**, a small and insignificant village in the eye of the metropolitans. No. He would take the problem into his own hands. In the city, he researched this mysterious plant. It took a few days of doing nothing but poring over books in libraries until he found a book that had a lot of information about this plant, which was actually a fungus called [White Bat](#). He had learned a lot, but a solution to the problem was far away and so he continued his research.

During this time, the villagers of **Solmenheim** became impatient. Once again, the city was not interested in them. People

became nervous and the first ones, who had not lived in the village for too long, left. The innkeeper especially had a hard time. The sight of the overgrown house was attracting but creepy enough to keep travelers here not longer than necessary. The innkeeper was angry at the mayor, who seemed to be doing nothing. And so one night he secretly sneaked to the house equipped with a torch. It took him a lot of effort to approach the house. Not a good place for a night. When he finally stood in front of the overgrown door, it was pulled open by a magical hand. Like an invitation to his intention, he threw the torch into the hallway. Like a flash, the vines entwined around the burning torch and before it could set anything on fire, they smothered it. The door slammed shut and a cloud of dust covered the innkeeper. He coughed violently and left the house.

The innkeeper was sick and remained in bed for a few days, but he had not died. A plant that could not be burned down and oozed deadly dust. Now it was finally over. The innkeeper also left the village, furious with the mayor. Little by little, more and more followed him until finally only a few were left. The mayor had to realize that this was the end of their village and so he left with the last remaining ones, leaving **Solmenheim** to its fate.

A few weeks after the village was completely abandoned, the postman came back. He knows that the village was forsaken. However, one person was still there. The woman he would give anything for. The woman who holds the broken pieces of his heart together. **Nadja**. He read books, considered, tried, but he just couldn't find a solution to destroy this fungus. So he decided to literally take matters into his own hands. He entered the house, fought his way through the jungle to **Nadja's** bed. There she lay, motionless but pleased, overgrown with vines. His reason to live. With a beautiful melody in his ears, the postman tried to pull apart the vines from **Nadja** with his bare hands. He inhaled the poisonous dust of the fungus dozens of times, coughed, but did not stop. **Nadja** had to be freed. But he couldn't

do it. He got weaker and weaker, the coughing turned into stifling breathing, until finally, he collapsed on the ground, where he lies to this day. However, only his body lies there. **Nadja** was good to nature, and the postman, out of pure love, tried to free **Nadja** until his death. And so nature assimilated the spirit of the postman so that he could always watch over the woman, from whom a melody emanated.

Chronological sequence

- **Solmenheim** is a small village, which mainly takes care of grain fields.
- The villager and natural healer **Nadja** finds a special white flower in the nearby forest and takes it home, humming a beautiful melody that she has never heard before.
- The villagers of **Solmenheim** see her that evening.
- That night the white flower sets up on its own, climbs with its vines into **Nadja's** bedroom, and bores its roots into the woman's body
- The next morning **Nadja** wakes up and knows that the white flower is a fungus, that the fungus feed on her, and that she has no chance of escape. A neuronal link to the fungus tells her this information.
- She writes a note before all her senses and strength fade. She holds it in her hand: *free me*
- Two days later the villagers are worried and the dwarf and butcher **Garando** is looking for **Nadja** in her house.
- **Garando** finds **Nadja** overgrown with black vines, he also hears the melody. In fear, he runs out of the house.
- The next day two villagers try to free **Nadja** from the vines, but in the process, they inhale spores, start coughing and choking, run out of the house and drop dead in the street.
- The vines reach out of the windows after a few days, but no one believes in the melody that **Garando** is supposed to have heard.
- **Garando** writes notes that he spreads in the village: *I was with Nadja the only one believe me what I am telling you I was standing in her bedroom she was lying there in her bed entangled by this plant I heard a melody I don't know where it came from but believe me I heard it it was beautiful*

- The villagers are considering burning the plant, however, the founder's house is adjacent to it and they do not know if **Nadja** is still alive.
- The mayor writes a letter to the city and asks for help.
- The postman, however, is a secret lover of **Nadja**, which she did not know, and does not deliver the letter, but does his research, fearing that the city will simply burn down the house.
- The first inhabitants leave the village.
- The innkeeper has trouble getting guests and tries to single-handedly torch the plant, but the vines grab his torch and smother the fire before it can set anything on fire.
- The innkeeper also comes into contact with the poisonous spores but does not die.
- Thereupon the innkeeper also leaves the village and after a few weeks everyone, including the mayor, follows him.
- Meanwhile, the postman has found out that the plant is a fungus called [White Bat](#).
- The postman returns to **Solmenheim** and tries to free **Nadja** himself, but during his attempt, he dies from the spores.
- In thanks, nature assimilates the spirit of the postman to watch over **Nadja**.

Solmenheim

In the evening the players are traveling on a road. The road runs between fields of grain. A closer look shows that those fields have not been maintained for a while. It is cool and damp, light fog lies on the ground, but the sky is starry. The players soon come upon **Solmenheim**. No light can be seen. Read the following:

It is late evening and the sun has long vanished behind the horizon. Above you, a starry night. On the ground, a blanket of fog. Fresh, humid air rises to your nose. You are walking along a street. To your left and right, endless fields of grain. The long stalks dance slowly in the wind. The atmosphere seems meditative and it is like a silence echoes over the open meadow. The horizon is wide and empty, when you spot a few houses ahead in the fog.

Solmenheim has been abandoned for one and a half years and it looks like that. Windows and doors are partly open or broken by the wind. Weeds grow up on the walls. The scene continues in the houses. Where doors or windows are open, nature has invaded the interior. The furniture is rotten due to wetness, some are damaged. However, the rooms that were at nature's mercy are still intact and only covered by a thick layer of dust. Most houses have been emptied when they were abandoned. Other houses have been looted. Nevertheless, now and then something can be discovered that was left behind. Whether forgotten or because it brings no value. On the roofs of the houses a few ravens bustle, which let you hear some cawings.

As soon as the players leave or pass the [House of the Mayor](#), now and then they catch a glimpse of a blue-ish shadow flitting between the houses. It is the [Spirit of Nature](#) of the postman. The players only ever see him beckon them to him before he disappears behind a house. He beacons the players to the [Windmill](#). When the players see the door of the [Windmill](#), the door slams shut. From that

moment on, the [Spirit of Nature](#) stays in the [Windmill](#). He wanted the players to find the information they need inside the [Windmill](#). If the players enter the [Windmill](#), continue reading in the chapter [Windmill](#).

Butcher

The house of the butcher has two floors. The butcher lived on the upper floor and had his store and kitchen on the lower one. The entrance to the upper floor is on the backside. Also on the backside, there is an entrance to the butcher's shop. The front entrance and the entrance to the upper floor are closed and locked. The back entrance is broken open. Two windows on the street side allow a view inside.

Store

If a player looks into the store, read the following.

The bare, tiled room is crossed by a counter. To the left of it, a door stands open, leading into another room. A row of butcher hooks of various sizes hanging on the wall. The wind seems to be blowing into the store from somewhere, as the hooks swing slowly, making a soft tinkling sound in the silence, almost like wind chimes. Brown streaks can be seen on the counter itself.

The brown streaks on the counter are dried blood. The store was not cleaned very well when leaving the village. Upon entering the store, the players notice a scrap of paper on the floor, which belongs to the note from the dwarf **Garando** (see [Prologue](#)). On it is written.

I was with Nadja the only one believe me

A rusty and blunt cleaver still lies under the counter. Otherwise, the room is empty.

Treasure

- paper scraps
- blunt cleaver
- 12 butcher hooks of various sizes

Kitchen

In the kitchen, the sight of the store continues similarly. On some still smeared work surfaces lie a few old used butcher tools. A sooty stove stands in one corner. In one place, a thick hook hangs from the ceiling. Below it, a gutter soaked in old dried blood leads through some bars to the outside. Above it is a window. A door stands open, leading outside. Another door is open just a crack; behind it, darkness.

Treasure

- sharpening steel
- skin knife
- meat mallet
- slaughter mask
- barrel with salt (500g)

Cold Room

In the cold room, 5 pigs hang on hooks from the ceiling. Their state of decay ranges from rotten meat to visible bones. Rats have taken up residence here. When the door is opened further, it makes a terrible squeaking sound, which stirs up the rats. They also start squeaking and run towards the opened door to attack everything they find there.

If a player with a light source (torch, candle, daylight, etc.) takes a look into this room, read the following.

The smell of wet grass and feces rises. The floor is littered with dirt and manure. Five carcasses hang down from the dark ceiling. Black parched flesh, like a leathery sack. Bones stick out here and there. From the kitchen, a breeze pours into the room. The carcasses swing back and forth. The ropes on the hooks make a grinding sound.

House of the Mayor

The home of Mayor **Wilhelm Grindel** and his wife has almost been emptied. Only bulky furniture has been left in the house. The couple left with the last inhabitants of **Solmenheim**. Since this house is of higher quality, no door or window was destroyed here. However,

something with tar was smeared on the front door.

Coward Pig

When the village was already abandoned travelers left this message after reading the letter (see [Office](#)) from him. No door including the front door is locked but closed. In front of the windows hang old grayish pastel-green curtains. These are drawn so you can't see in. Inside the house, everything is covered with a thick layer of dust. The mayor himself was the last person to have been in the house, apart from looters, who, however, could not find anything of value.

Office

In the office, there is an old desk and a chair. A parchment lies open on the desk, with a letter written on it.

Solmenheim was abandoned. After Nadja, our healer, passed away, her house was infested by a plant. Its flowers seem to be poisonous. We asked for help in the city, but none came, as many times. More and more people are leaving Solmenheim. The plant scares them and without a healer, life here has become more dangerous. We can no longer do our work with so few. Fewer and fewer travelers spend the night here. Most of them just want to pass Nadja's house quickly and leave it behind, almost as if there is a curse on Solmenheim. We have to give up our village. I have asked the citizens to leave a letter as well, should anyone ever want to know what happened here. I will leave with the last wagon. The rest of us will go to the city. Solmenheim is dead.

Wilhelm Grindel, Mayor of Solmenheim

Next to the signature of the mayor is a wax seal. The symbol in it is difficult to recognize. It could be an emblem. The letters **Solmenheim** are still decipherable.

Dining Room

In the dining room, there is a large table with 6 chairs. A thick layer of dust has settled on the

floor, table, and chairs. Nothing is hanging on the walls except the gray-green curtains.

Bedroom

There is a large bed in this room. A mattress still lies in it and on it, lonely and abandoned a dirty rag doll. It is partially stained with old blood and one finds dried skin remains on it. The story of this remains unknown. In the spacious closet, there is nothing but dust.

Kitchen

In the kitchen, there is only a work table and a stove. Not even a sink is here anymore. The cupboards are empty. However, two barrels are still there. In one of them there is foul water (see the box in chapter [Well](#)). In the other barrel is wine, which is still edible, but extremely sour.

In the storeroom, there is an empty shelf and an empty barrel. Flour was stored in the empty barrel. With a *Survival Check 10*, the remains of it can still be seen.

Living Room

Four brown-red armchairs stand around a low table. They are decayed by beetles and worms and emit a cloud of dust should anyone sit down in them. Apart from that, there is an empty bookshelf in this room.

Washing Room

In the washing room, there is a toilet, an empty tub, and an empty basin.

Grain Store

The grain store has three entrances. Two of them are locked doors. The third is a gate made of metal. A padlock once locked it. However, it has been broken open. The players can look through it. Hay everywhere. Only a few tools can still be found.

Treasure

- destroyed wagon
- a rope

- 3 pitchforks
- 2 brooms

Windmill

If the players did not follow the [Spirit of Nature](#) here, they will now see him disappear through the door.

The windmill has two floors. The postman, after everyone left **Solmenheim**, lived on the lower floor before he died in [Nadja's house](#).

Lower Floor

If one of the players enters the lower floor, read the following.

The door swings open. Only a blink passes, and the blue-ish figure standing in the room with its back turned to the door vanishes.

A narrow staircase winds up in the center of the circular room. Around the stairs a circular groove in the floor. You can see a broken millstone. Besides moist haystacks to the left and a few smashed crates, there is a long burned-out fireplace to the right of the stairs. Hay lies folded up next to the stairs to make a sad place to sleep. Behind it are a crate and two barrels.

The [Spirit of Nature](#) has disappeared and doesn't return until chapter [The Coachman](#).

In a bucket, there is only a puddle. The postman used it to catch rainwater to drink it. Both barrels are empty. In the crate, there is stuff from the postman. Next to it, a bag lies open, from which a few coins have rolled out. The postman had not taken his things with him when he left for [Nadja's house](#).

Treasure

- 12 Copper
- Hood
- Diary
- Cord
- 3 candles
- 1/2 ounce of ink and a quill pen
- pot
- tinderbox

In the diary, players will learn the following information:

- a city, which is not mentioned by name, would burn down some house, the author claims, if he delivers a letter
- the author himself wants to try to free someone called **Nadja**
- the author camps in **Solmenheim** while making a plan to rescue this **Nadja**
- the author is in love with the woman named **Nadja**
- the page after the last entry is ripped out

Upper Floor

If a player enters the upper floor, read the following.

It's damp and it's drafty. A lot of hay is stored up here. Opposite, at the other end of the circular room, a bunch of grain sacks pile up. A puddle on the wooden floor reveals that the roof above is leaking. One can look out into the starry sky.

Bakery

The baker's store consists only of a single wooden counter. Behind it, a single scrap of paper hangs on the wall; wedged behind a wooden shingle. Most of the paper is torn off and impossible to find. It belongs to the note from the dwarf **Garando** (see [Prologue](#)). It says.

entangled by this plant I heard a melody

In the bakehouse itself, there is a large oven, old grain sacks that are partially torn open, and a pile of ash which are remains of the last cleaning of the oven.

House of the Innkeeper

The innkeeper's house has been completely cleared out. Only the toilet and a stove are left behind. When a player enters the house, read the following.

Right behind the door, a note is fixed with a nail on the wooden floor of what is by far the bleakest room. No chair, no cabinet, no vase, nothing can be found. An open door reveals a toilet on the right. A layer of dust covers the floor, no one has been here for a long time. The windows are still intact and have stopped the weather.

The letter was written by the innkeeper at the request of the mayor and left here.

The mayor wants us to leave a letter. As he wishes. A house is overgrown by a plant that has already killed two of us. And he's not doing anything. I don't get any more guests. People are leaving. The village is getting more and more empty. And the mayor does not put an end to it. Supposedly he has written a letter to the city. Even if. That's not enough. He has to stop the panic. I tried to torch the plant, but the plant just put out my torch and almost killed me. I'm leaving Solmenheim before any hope is gone. No business can survive under such a mayor. Whoever is looking for me: I'm in the city.

Well

Water can be found in the well in the center of **Solmenheim**. The rope of a winch protrudes into the well. When the winch is wound upwards, there is a brief resistance, as the bucket hangs in the water and is full. Shortly afterward, the rope relents as it breaks. A soft splash sounds from the well. The water in the well is foul water (see box).

Foul Water

A creature who drinks this water makes a *Constitution Saving Throw 12*. On a fail, the creature gets a fever after *1d4* hours. A creature who gets a fever in this way has *disadvantage* on *Strength Checks*, *Strength Saving Throws*, *Dexterity Checks*, *attacks* made with *Strength* or *Dexterity*, and *Perception Checks*. The fever heals itself after a *Long Rest* or can be cured by other effects that cure diseases.

There are some coins in the well, which travelers threw into it to protect themselves from the curse (which, of course, is useless, since it is not a curse).

Treasure

- 1 old bucket
- 264 copper coins and 8 silver coins

The Inn

The inn has no name. The door hangs only in the upper hinge and stands open pressed inward. The floorboards near the door are rotten.

Taproom

If a player has a look in the inn or steps inside, read the following.

Chaos reigns in the large room, which seems to take up almost the entire lower floor. Rotting round tables and chairs are standing around in no particular pattern. A piece of paper is jammed under a chair's leg. The open door has invited the weather, which has soaked floorboards, tables, and chairs in no time. Everything in this room is hopelessly rotten. To the right, in front of a bar, are a few bar stools that surely no one wants to sit on anymore. Behind the counter is a passage. The wind whistles through a broken window. On the left, a rotten staircase leads up. Below it are two narrow doors. Both are open. Behind them are dark niches.

When the innkeeper left, he took all but a few of the inn's inventory with him. The doors to the toilet are open, the door to the kitchen is destroyed. Only the remains lie on the floor in the kitchen. The shelf behind the counter, where once stood glasses, jugs, and bottles, is dusted and rotten. The toilets are quite intact, as they are well protected in the corner.

The piece of paper stuck under the chair leg is of the note from the dwarf **Garando** (see [Prologue](#)).

what I am telling you I was standing in her bedroom

Kitchen

There is a work counter in the kitchen. In one corner there is a stove and an empty sink on the countertop. Under it are cabinets, which are emptied. A dented kettle and wooden cooking spoons can still be found. An empty barrel that once held water is also in the kitchen.

The door to the storage room is open. Inside are three barrels. They are almost full of wine. It is sour but edible. The boxes and the shelf are empty.

Upper Floor

The staircase is covered with a wall on the right. It leads to the upper floor and is so rotten that careless stepping on it will cause it to collapse. Describe the condition of the staircase to the players as follows.

The stairs to the upper floor have passed their sell-by date long ago. The swollen cracks are partially covered with moss. The steps no longer look much confidence-inspiring.

If a player steps on the staircase like any other, it collapses. If a player steps on the stairs carefully, he makes an *Acrobatics Check 12* (the check applies to each player every time he wants to cross the stairs, including down). If successful, he can climb the stairs, otherwise, the stairs collapse. If a player steps on the stairs on the far left or right edge, the stairs bear up, but spout creaking sounds and the player feels the steps give way slightly.

If a player collapses with the staircase, he will fall on more steps and thus tear a bigger hole in the staircase so that it cannot be used at all. The players must find an alternative way up (which may well be in the place of the stairs themselves).

Empty guest rooms will be found on the upper floor. The windows are closed. The doors are open. In each room, there are the same single beds. In each one there is a damp mattress, blanket, and pillow. Some of them are decayed by moths or other small animals. There is one large wooden chest per bed in the rooms. They all have broken padlocks, stand open but are empty. If a player enters the back room, read the following.

There is a faint sweet smell of decay. In one of the beds, two ravens are pecking at something. You can see a corpse. It has probably not been lying here too long. Its eye sockets are empty. The ravens tear scraps of skin and pieces of flesh from the body to greedily swallow them. When they notice you, they caw loudly and try to chase you away with spread wings.

Nadja's House

Nadja used to live in this house. The black vines of the [White Bat](#) stick out from the house, studded with black flowers. If a creature approaches within 50 feet of the house, it is affected by the [White Bat's](#) hallucination.

A closer look reveals a slight trembling of the flowers. The windows are overgrown, but still offer gaps to get a look inside. The door into the house is completely covered by vines. Read the following.

In front of you lies an absurd-looking house. Dark vines reach out from the windows, studded with black blossoms. It seems the vines embrace the house from the inside out. At the back of the house, a second floor rises. There the vines are denser than on the lower floor. An alien body in the otherwise dead village.

If one of the players steps in front of the door or the group passes the house, the vines pull the door open as if they were one's arms. Now and then, the fungus opens the door to bait creatures inside, hoping they will die in the house so they can nourish the fungus. The players can see along a corridor, which is also

overgrown by vines. Even the floor is covered. At the end of the corridor lies the fallen corpse of a woman under the vines which is used as a [Consumed Guard](#). It is not **Nadja**, but a looter. She wears a pale yellow dress. The fungus has digested all the innards, leaving only the woman's body. Next to her, on a leather strap, lies an open waterskin and a machete. The furniture of the house is completely rotten, even if it is still like **Nadja** had last seen it. The doors have been destroyed by the vines and the weather has done the rest to them. If at all, only a few remains of wood can be found on the ground between the vines.

Since the vines immediately suffocate any lantern or torch (see [White Bat's vulnerability to fire](#)), players must enter the house in the dark. The vines make it difficult to move without touching flowers. The ground is *difficult terrain*. If a creature runs, tries to touch something entangled by the vines or otherwise risks touching the vines it must succeed on an *Acrobatics Check*. The *difficulty class* varies depending on the action (examples: running: 15; climbing the stairs: 10; free an item from the vines: 12).

Treasure

- waterskin without top
- machete

Dining Room

If a player takes a peek into this room, read the following.

In the center of the room are four chairs at a round table. Although only a few vines cover the floor and the windows, it is very gloomy. In front of the table lies a body entangled by black vines, as if they were reaching for him. The house has kept the weather at bay. On the right wall hangs a beige canvas with small needles stuck into it.

The canvas is stretched over a wooden frame, which is hung on the wall with a nail. On the canvas, **Nadja** had hung dried leaves as decoration. With a successful *Investigation* or *Survival Check 12*, the remains of leaves can

be found. The corpse is that of a man which is used as a [Consumed Guard](#). He is wearing a long brown tunic. The skin is completely sunken, as the fungus has consumed all the innards and left only the dried body. A rusty machete hangs in the vines next to his right hand. A belt hangs around the man's waist. On it is a waterskin full of foul water (see the box in chapter [Well](#)) and a leather bag with a few copper coins.

Treasure

- 21 simple needles
- rusty machete (usable)
- waterskin
- $2d4+2$ copper coins

Kitchen

If a player takes a peek into this room, read the following.

A large shadow standing directly in front of you on the wall threatens the entire room: a massive stone fireplace. The black soot in the fireplace and on the wall around it tells that it was often used. However, this must have been long ago, because apart from a thick layer of soot, no remains of wood can be seen. To the right of the fireplace is a countertop, with a wooden tub on top. Opposite it is a high shelf on the wall filled with wooden cutlery and dishes, a few glasses and clay cups, and books. All long forgotten. Right next to the door hangs a holey apron.

The books on the shelf are cookbooks. The players will find a few kettles, wooden bowls, and a copper distillery under the countertop. In the cupboard are a few towels, aprons, and rotten barrels. In the barrels is swollen flour and bone remains. The bone remains are from corned beef. Rats live in these barrels and run out into the kitchen through a hole at the bottom as soon as someone opens the cupboard. The rats run across the vines in panic, releasing umpteen blooms. The entire room is infested with spores before the rats fall dead on the floor just outside the kitchen. Still, everyone in the room takes 1 *poison* damage.

Treasure

- 7 wooden plates
- 4 small wooden bowls
- 2 large wooden bowls
- various wooden cutlery
- 6 goblets
- 5 clay cups
- 3 cookbooks
- 3 aprons (1 of them is holey)
- 3 kettles of 5 liters
- small distillery

Lab

Some of the room can only be seen when a player looks around the corner or steps into the room. Read the respective section only then.

Here the floor is covered with vines as well. On the walls are high shelves with all kinds of stuff in them: books, reagents, small boxes, jars filled with various stuff, loose papers, kettles, bottles, candles, and candlestands. In the middle of the shelf is a window to the outside.

Around the corner, a shocked grimace with a wide-open mouth and deep empty eyes looks at you. The head hangs on a horribly twisted humanoid body, which is held in the air by the vines. A few bones poke out through the almost green sunken skin. There is a stone workbench against the wall and a desk in one corner. On the workbench, the chaos from the shelves continues: mortars, knives, candle remains, reagents, and bottles stand wildly around. In between, patches of thick black dirt. A few books lie on the desk, with a magnifying glass on top. On the wall are candlestands whose candles have burned out completely.

Between the desk and the workbench, a thick vine breaks through the wall into the room.

This is the room where **Nadja** made her healing substances. There are all kinds of information about the local flora and vegetation (common occurrence of a mixed forest) in the books. Some of these books are written by **Nadja** herself: Records of finding places of certain flowers, mushrooms, or fruits, recipes for their preparation, and courses of

diseases of villagers of **Solmenheim**. She was unable to enter the location where she found the [White Bat](#). The reagents are all empty. If there are any leftovers to be found, it is no longer possible to tell what they used to be. The bottles, on the other hand, are still sealed and thus partially filled. Some of them contain pure alcohol, others gross smelling, brownish to black liquids, or thick light-yellow syrups. The black mess on the workbench is decayed plant and fungal remains (*Nature or Survival Check 12*). The canning jars contain mushrooms, berries, and flowers in turbid liquid. They have held up well over time. The cadaver was once an elf mage which is now used as a [Consumed Guard](#). He fought the poison and the vines but lost obviously. Below him, his backpack is stuck in the vines. There are all sorts of things in it (see treasure).

Treasure

- 2 potions of healing (1d4+1)
- 3 blunt knives
- 2 mortars
- 9 candles
- a handful of candle scraps
- quill pen
- 3 bottles of ink of 1 ounce each
- 14 empty reagents of 1 ounce each
- 18 empty reagents of 3 ounces each
- 9 empty reagents of 5 ounces each
- 6 bottles filled with pure alcohol of 1 liter each
- 11 bottles filled with gross herbal teas of 1 liter (disgusting, but edible)
- 1 bottle filled with honey of 1 liter
- 3 bottles filled with flower syrup of 1 liter each
- 4 empty bottles of 1 liter each
- 4 canning jars filled with mushrooms (total 2 day of ration, edible)
- 2 jars filled with flowers (edible)
- 7 jars filled with berries (total 3 day of ration, edible)
- 4 kettles of 2 liters each
- 2 kettles of 5 liters each
- 8 candlestands
- 3 empty small boxes
- magnifying glass
- Spell components in small bags (backpack)

- Spell book (backpack)
 - *Cure Wounds*
 - *Speak with Animals*
 - *Fire Bolt*
- Water bottle full of foul water (see box in chapter [Well](#)) (backpack)
- Dagger (backpack)
- Sleeping bag (backpack)
- Cook's utensils (backpack)
- Tinderbox (backpack)
- bullseye lantern (backpack)

Upper Floor

The vines here are extremely dense and not only the feet, but also the upper body must be moved around the vines.

Next to the closed door to the bedroom lies a shoulder bag made of leather. The postman put it there. In it is the letter from Mayor **Wilhelm Grindel** to the city, as well as a thick book bound with fabric. Its title says *Botanics of extraordinary-rare Occurrence*. The letter says the following.

Dear Sirs,

my name is Wilhelm Grindel. I am the mayor of Solmenheim. In our modest village, which tills large fields, there is an unusual incident. In the house of our healer vines of a mysterious plant are spreading. It is already growing out of the house. One of our citizens has discovered our healer locked in her bedroom. We do not know if she is dead. The plant seems to be poisonous. Two of our citizens have already died. Solmenheim is threatened with ruin. The first citizens have already left our village. We ask for quick help.

Respectfully

Wilhelm Grindel, Mayor of Solmenheim

A bookmark is stuck into the book. The marked pages reveal the following information.

- The flower, which looks like a white bat with jellyfish-like tentacles, is a fungus called [White Bat](#).

- The fungus requires a humanoid or animal host to grow beyond its original size.
- The *White Bat* sprays out hallucinogenic spores that manifest as a pleasant melody in humanoids and a pleasant smell in animals. Too far away, the hallucination wears off. The desire for it is strong.
- If eaten it sprouts as soon as the animal lies down to rest.
- If picked, it moves with its roots as soon as it is dark to the nearest living creature and anchors its roots in it.
- The *White Bat* does not kill the host. It consumes the body without damaging important organs.
- To keep control of the body, the fungus creates a nightmare for the host's mind which is so demanding that the fungus can sprout undisturbed.
- The host is conscious the entire time of the infestation. However, it is blind and deaf.
- Black vines of the fungus can grow up to 100 feet. They consume dead bodies within reach or use them as guards.
- Black flowers grow on the vines, which spread poisonous spores when touched.
- If the white flower is separated from the host, the fungus and host die within a day.

Washing Room

If a player takes a look in this room, read the following.

The vines mainly cover the floor. They climb over a dresser and in an empty tub.

The dresser is full of clothes, which have been damaged by insects and the vines.

Treasure

- 6 damaged simple clothes
- backpack
- bush knife
- dagger
- winter clothes
- boots
- rope of 50 feet

- lantern

Bedroom

If a player takes a look in this room, read the following.

*In the bedroom, a pitch-black bunch of vines with umpteenth blossoms piles up above a bed that can barely be seen. In front of it, partially overgrown by vines, a humanoid skeleton wrapped in clothes. In the bed the motionless body of a woman. The woman looks pleased. She lies on her back, her shoulders framed by eternally long black hair. The hands folded on her belly, holding a piece of paper. Her eyes are closed and her mouth almost seems to smile. The skin, pale, like that of a corpse, streaked with black veins. The vines form a kind of cave above her. In it, a white flower sprouts from her belly, which looks very similar to the black ones. Despite so many vines, only one thick one leads directly to **Nadja's** body.*

The woman in the bed is **Nadja**. Her body is amazingly well preserved. The black veins are tendrils of the fungus lying just under the skin. If someone touches **Nadja** or the white flower, **Nadja's** milky eyes open and seem to search for something in a panic. However, since she is blind and deaf, the eyes will not find anything. The skeleton is that of the postman and secret admirer of **Nadja**, who tried to free her. This corpse was protected by Nature so it can not be used as a *Consumed Guard*. Next to him lies a large rusty kitchen knife.

A piece of paper peeks out from between **Nadja's** hands. To reach it, a creature must make a *Dexterity Check 14*. On a fail, the creature touches the vines (see *Black Blossoms of White Bat*) but still reaches the paper. The note says.

free me

The body of **Nadja** must be freed from the black vines. A central black vine leads out of

her body, from which all the other vines spread. This one must be cut. If that happens, the black flowers freeze and do not trigger for 1d4 minutes (see *Black Guardian* of [White Bat](#)). This applies to all the flowers in the entire house. The area causing the hallucination is now reduced to 20 feet around **Nadja** (the white blossom).

Tailor

The tailor, like most, has left **Solmenheim**. Only a few scraps of clothing remain in his store and workshop. Here, too, the dwarf **Garando** has left one of his papers, but there is also only a little piece left (see [Prologue](#)). It lies on the store counter.

I don't know where it came from but believe me I heard it it was beautiful

Treasure

- old frayed scraps of clothes
- a piece of the letter of the dwarf **Garando**
- 3 nails

Blacksmith

This is the first house ever built in **Solmenheim**. The blacksmith and his wife are the descendants of the founders of **Solmenheim**. They have also left the village, but intend to return one day. The blacksmith has also left a letter. He put it in a bottle, closed it with a cork, and hung it on a rope on the door handle.

Solmenheim has been around for generations. I have continued the tradition of my family: blacksmithing. At that time, one of my ancestors built a workshop for horses and wagons in this place. It was a welcome rescue for travelers who had suffered damage between the cities. A few years later, a family tilled the fields along the road and built a mill next to the workshop. A business relationship grew out of this, as the miller's family was in need of a blacksmith. Together they dug the well. With the well, people kept coming. An initially small inn was built, a baker, a

tailor. Everything a small village needed was gathering. And so the villagers of Solmenheim lived amid this idyll for many decades. A healer came to Solmenheim. She used the nearby forest to make her herbal teas and other medicine. Her name was Nadja. A few weeks ago, however, a poisonous plant with black flowers overgrew her house. Two of us had contact with the plant and died as a result. Garando found Nadja, presumed dead, in her bedroom. He is the butcher of Solmenheim. Finest craftsmanship as known from dwarves, bundled in delicious meat. My wife was one of the last ones who saw Nadja. She came back from the forest, humming happily, carrying an odd flower. The plant in Nadja's house still keeps growing. We become disquiet, the city does not help, the mayor does not know what to do. The first people are already leaving the village. The plant threatens to infest our house as well. We will probably leave soon, too. Not forever. My ancestors founded this village and I will return as soon as this problem is solved. Until then, I will earn my coin in the city.

They did not empty the workshop and their home when they left. They have boarded up their windows and locked the door with a solid lock. The lock can be picked with a *Dexterity Check 10*. Alternatively, the door or the wooden boards in front of the windows can be destroyed. The door has 3 HP and a *damage threshold* of 3. The windows have 5 HP and a *damage threshold* of 5.

Aside from the workshop, only furniture can be found in the house. The couple has taken all their belongings with them. If a player enters the workshop, read the following.

This dark tiled workshop looks like the craftsman who works here will be back the next morning. Besides the stove and an anvil, tools are lying around everywhere. To the left of the door is a pile of logs.

The workshop is cleared but shows no signs that anyone has been here recently. The fires have been out for ages and there is not even a puddle of water in the bucket next to the anvil.

Treasure

- 9 horseshoes
- 1 forge hammer
- 2 pliers
- 1 bucket
- 1 whetstone

Stable

A padlock locks the gate. The stable itself is almost empty. The skeleton of a horse lies next to a wet haystack. The horse has been dead for a long time. It was left behind and died of thirst. In one of the boxes hangs a saddle on a nail.

Treasure

- a saddle

The Coachman

A few minutes after the first player disappears into [Nadja's house](#), a car arrives from the south. If one of the players is outside, read the following:

Creaking, a carriage approaches from the well and slowly pushes through the thin air. Pitch-black with dark windows. Along the road, it is pulled by a trotting, stocky steed. In front, a dark person sits at the reins.

The coach approaches [Nadja's house](#) and stops right in front of it. The coachman remains seated until someone brings **Nadja's** body out. If that does not happen, he continues to sit there. He does not speak and does not look at anyone.

It is the [Spirit of Nature](#). The spirit of the postman. He guards **Nadja's** soul, which is still in her body. **Nadja** was always good to nature. She only took what she needed and otherwise always made sure that her plants and the forest were doing well. However, the [Spirit of Nature](#) cannot intervene in nature itself and free her from her pain. The fungus also belongs to nature.

*The [Spirit of Nature](#) was the postman in his former life and therefore often passed through **Solmenheim**. He was a secret lover of **Nadja**, although she did not respond. **Nadja** was aware of the postman and knew his name, but the two had never exchanged more than a greeting. He was deeply shocked to find the vines in [Nadja's house](#) and inquired with the mayor who explained the situation to him and gave him a letter. The letter was a request for help from the city. The postman took the letter but did not deliver it immediately. For the time being, he did some research in the city to find out what [Nadja's house](#) might be about. He found out that it was the fungus [White Bat](#) and he suspected that*

*the city would simply burn the house down. He kept the letter from the mayor of **Solmenheim** with him and so no one in the city found out what was going on. When **Solmenheim** was abandoned, he tried to save **Nadja** himself. The door opened for him as well. He carelessly climbed through the vines and made it to the upper floor. However, while trying to remove the vines from **Nadja**, he was covered with the spores of the [White Bat](#) and died next to her. Being the only one to seriously want to rescue **Nadja**, nature assimilated his spirit to watch over **Nadja**.*

As soon as someone brings out **Nadja's** body, read the following text. Adjust it if you have already read the text above.

In front of [Nadja's house](#), as if it were a matter of course, stands a pitch-black coach. On it is written in golden curved metal letters: Mail Coach. Pulled by a stocky black horse, whose reins are held in the hands of an equally dark figure. The figure lets the reins slip from his hands and slowly dismounts in flowing movements. Where the gray clothing leaves the skin uncovered, silvery-blue translucent skin shines out. Beneath shaggy longer hair, a slightly sunken face. Blue-gray eyes look sadly at the ground. As the human figure approaches with all the time in the world, the door of the coach opens and a book flies out, showing some pages. It remains floating right in front of you. The coachman holds his arms forward, ready to receive the body of the woman.

In the open book the players can see six runes. They can also read the following headline:

Exorcism of plants

The players may read more information but the [Black Bat](#) will interrupt them shortly. They may read none, one or some of the following information.

- a ritual is described
- this ritual requires a special ritual circle to channel nature magic
- the ritual should help to enter the mind of another person to drive away evil spirits
- the ritual is also described but in a language and script not known to the players

When the players hand over **Nadja's** body, it floats a finger's width above the arms of the nature spirit. At the same time, the book will fall to the ground if it is still floating, since the [Spirit of Nature](#) can levitate only one object at a time.

He lays her down inside and then climbs back up in front to take the reins. If the book is lying on the ground, it will fly back into the coach. The doors of the coach remain open as an invitation for the players to get on as well. After they have done so, the doors close. Unlike from the outside, the players can look through the windows from the inside. At this point, at the latest, each player must resist the melody of the dead woman.

There is not much time in this situation, because the roof of the house shatters with a loud crash. The [Black Bat](#), a vine-golem, rises from the house. Due to the influence of the melody on the players and the rage of the [Black Bat](#) caused by the white flower, this fight is far too risky at this point. The postman will mean the players to get in by all means. Read the following.

A loud crash breaks the silence. Splinters of wood fly through the air and hit the coach. The roof of the overgrown house shatters. The vines form a huge creature that protrudes from the house. The monstrosity starts to move. The house gives way under its weight. It collapses. The top of the huge creature can still be seen. It moves in the direction of the coach.

As soon as the players are inside the coach, the postman hits the reins and accelerates away. The [Black Bat](#) is too slow but takes up the chase.

In the coach are two comfortable benches opposite. Between them lies the woman on the floor. On one of the benches lies a scroll (*Protection from Poisons*, any player can use it). Now the players can take a closer look at the book. It is titled *Magic of Nature*. The players have time now to read all information as the coach leaves **Solmenheim** along the road. Succeeding an *Arcana Check 18*, a player can tell that the script is similar to the one arcane spells are formulated with.

The Glade

The coach leaves **Solmenheim** heading north. To the right and left are the wide fields, but soon a forest touches the left side of the road. Read the following.

Densely filled with leaf and fir trees, moss-covered stones, grasses, and bushes, a dark forest lies to your left. After a few moments, the coachman steers the wagon into it. The space between the trees is just wide enough to fit the coach through, the ground uneven and barely passable for a wagon. Nevertheless, you move smoothly through the forest, as if on a plain road.

About an hour passes while the coach winds around the trees. The players can do a *Short Rest*. Then they reach a small shallow valley, 300 feet in diameter, which is free of any trees and brush. A meadow covers the ground. Down in the middle of the glade are a few stone cubes. The coach stops just beyond the tree line. The doors of the coach open. As the players step out, read the following.

You are standing in a large, circular glade, the bottom of which sinks evenly toward the center. Apart from the melody: absolute silence. It smells like spring. Your feet bouncing on the meadow that fills the whole clearing. In the middle of this glade, a handful of stone cubes, probably reaching your knee, stand together, too far away to see any detail.

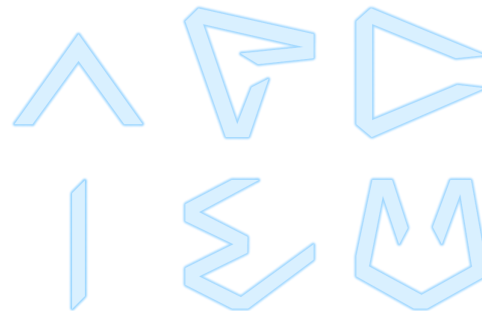
In the direction from which you came, you can see traces of moss. Matching the gauge of the coach, they lead out of the forest like the tracks of a railroad and end exactly at the coach wheels. The tracks further into the forest are disappearing.

The forest provides a moss rail for the coach of the [Spirit of Nature](#).

If no player has brought **Nadja** out with him, the [Spirit of Nature](#) takes her body out of the

coach. He carries her down to the stone cubes. Either he puts **Nadja** in the middle of the formation or points to it, should a player carry her. While the [Spirit of Nature](#) is in the glade, animals (deer, birds, badgers, foxes, etc.) keep gathering, relaxing, grazing, lying down, or watching the players with interest. An unusual picture for a night.

When the players arrive at the circle of stone cubes, the [Spirit of Nature](#) shows another page inside the book *Magic of Nature*. The page describes that he is not allowed to intervene in natural phenomena as he himself is a piece of nature. If he does anyway, nature may manifest in the form of energy to set things straight or to hinder or punish him. This form of energy should not harm others by intent.



The stone cubes are arranged nearly in a circle around **Nadja**. The cubes are about one and a half feet high. They are not fixed and can be tilted by two adult humanoids. Five cubes have a circle with a dot in its center, each on a different side. The sixth cube has the same symbol on it, but this side is faced down and cannot be seen. From this cube, a furrow the width of a finger leads towards **Nadja** and then around her in a stepped partial circle. One automatically travels from every other cube once the symbol on it is facing down. If all the cubes lie on the correct side and all the furrows have appeared, new symbols appear on the top of the cubes (see above and the map *The Glade with Runes*). The runes emit a moon-colored glow. The solution for this riddle is to touch the symbols in ascending order of their number of edges. If a correct symbol is touched, it glows purple-white. If a wrong symbol is touched, all symbols change to the moon-colored glow.

If the players do not come up with the solution on their own, the [Spirit of Nature](#) can give minor assistance via gestures but he holds back so as not to intervene too much. As soon as a player touches the first two symbols in the correct order, the [Spirit of Nature](#) halts and asks the players to come to the center with his hands and points to the imaginary circle formed by the stone cubes. The players are supposed to be inside the stones. Once the fifth symbol has been touched in the correct order, they are interrupted by the [Black Bat](#). Read out the following.

*A stomping and bending of the trees in the direction of your coach disturb the meditative aura. Out of the forest steps the behemoth of three or four men height, which you have already seen in **Solmenheim**. The umpteen vines almost form the silhouette of a huge bat against the dark forest. The creature lunges with one of its arm-like limbs and smashes the coach. Scraps of paper fly out of it into the air and are carried away by the wind.*

Give players time to touch the last symbol before the creature charges at them.

*All the symbols light up green. The same green light slowly flows out of the cubes through the furrows. The creature races on all fours down from the forest in your direction. The furrows around **Nadja** gradually fill up. Almost there, the creature goes onto its back limbs and lunges with the other two far behind it, ready to bring its vines down in your midst. All the furrows are completely soaked with light. Then a greenish transparent sphere shoots up from the stones above you. The creature's vines bounce off it with a fierce rumble and the creature slams into it. It recoils backward, but at an unusually slow speed. The animals also move extremely sluggish, as if time were passing more slowly.*

The sphere cannot be passed by plants. All other creatures are free to walk through it. If a

player is outside the sphere, the events in the sphere happen so fast that he can hardly notice them. During the whole time the sphere exists you may give players outside 2 or 3 rounds to act (which should be enough to reach the sphere but keep in mind that in this time a lot of things happened inside it already).

The [Spirit of Nature](#) now begins to levitate, hovering over **Nadja's** body so that they face each other and their closed eyes gaze at each other. The air between them begins to flicker. The flickering spreads and reaches the players. The [Spirit of Nature](#) sends the players into **Nadja's** mind to eliminate the mind of the fungus. The following event happens to all players who are in the sphere. It is written from the point of view of an individual. In front of their inner eye, they see the following.

*You lose the awareness of your body but find yourself in **Nadja's**. You are her, you feel her, you think her thoughts. You are standing on a scaffold. Your head inside the noose. Left and right three more gallows each, all empty. The sky is covered with black clouds, freezing wind lets your long black hair wave around you. Your limbs hurt, your lips are dry, your eyes are burning. You can't blink. Your hands are tied behind your back. In front of the scaffold, an endless line of people leading across the barren, rocky landscape beyond the horizon. In the very front: a gnome. You can remember his life. He was a merchant of slaves. He whipped the slaves, let them starve and thirst, killed them if they were not obedient. No question about it. This gnome deserves death. You nod. He climbs up onto the scaffold and puts his head in one of the empty nooses. The next in the line: a woman. She was a wife, no children. She assisted her husband at the farm, wronged no one. Behind the woman: a little girl. Your heart hurts. Again your decision. Your burden to decide who can live and who must die. If you fill all empty gallows all will be hanged except you. If you decide upon the woman's life, the little girl behind the woman will be sacrificed*

and all on the scaffold will be hanged. Including you. But you won't die forever. It will start again, over and over. Countless people. The little girl with her braided pigtails and cute gray dress is certainly full of innocence. But you don't know. Far too young to have sinned. But you don't know! The woman in front of you does not deserve death, but the little girl should have deserved it? Under a silent scream, you shake your head tremblingly. The woman turns back and walks past the line until she disappears. The girl looks at you. Her face shows neither hate nor gratitude. You know exactly what is going to happen. Again. You want to close your eyes, but your gaze is fixed on the girl. Two vines shoot forward from under the scaffold, grab the girl by both shoulders and tear her body apart. Blood splatters around, the halves of the body slap on the ground. Then the vines pull the remains back with them under the scaffold. Just one damn tear. They all would have deserved it. A figure with a black pointed hood steps past you from behind. Black tentacles protrude from the long black sleeves. The figure lifts one of them into the air to let it flick down. The ground beneath your feet gives way. You fall. You feel the noose tighten and cut into your flesh. You can't breathe, you squirm, all light fades into a shadow. You find yourself back in your own body but standing in the line before the scaffold. All gallows but one are empty. A young woman with long black hair standing below one with her head stuck through the noose. Black vines hold her hands at her back. Below the scaffold a billowing sea of umpteen more vines. Behind the woman stands a black figure with a pointed hood.

The players have just witnessed the never-ending dream of **Nadja**. The dream strains her mind and serves as a distraction for the fungus to keep control (see *Shared Mind* of the [White Bat](#)). Her suffering is to decide about life and death. If she fills all the gallows

by deciding for 6 people to die, all 6 will be hanged but her. If she ever decides to spare someone's life, the person behind the fortunate one will be killed by the vines below the scaffold and all on the scaffold will be hanged including **Nadja**. She never dies definitively.

The players are the first ones in the line and are now free to act in **Nadja's** dream. Their condition is like after a *Long Rest*. They carry everything with them that they also carry in the glade. **Nadja** also remembers the history of the players. It is now in your hands for which player she presumes death. If a player is hanged, he wakes up in the glade having 1 HP.

If someone touches the black figure (even with a weapon or a spell) or frees **Nadja** from the vines that bind her, the black figure turns into the [White Blossom](#).

The figure freezes, tenses up, makes jerky twitching movements. His head tilts back and his hood flaps back. A snow-white blossom grows out of the exposed neck. Two tendrils sprout from his chest, curling around his body like a protective cage. His right vine grows almost to the size of a man and forms a wide, long blade.

Whoever dies in this dream wakes up again in the glade with 1 HP. If the [White Blossom](#) is killed, the dream ends. At that moment, the white blossom on **Nadja** withers and falls off. The melody slowly fades away until it is gone. All effects caused by the hallucination end. **Nadja's** soul is still trapped in her body. At the end of the battle, read the following.

The creature doesn't move, as do the people around you. The wind becomes stronger. The wind turns the bodies into dust and carries them away. Far back on the horizon, a wall of fire ignites, closing along the horizon into a giant ring. It gets dark. And silent. No wind. No fire. Just a plaintive female voice: "Kill me, save me." You're standing in the glade again. At the edge of the forest, you see a ring of fire enclosing the clearing. It is terribly hot and

*smoke floods the air. The stone cubes around you glow in bright green. The animals in the glade run around in panic, leaving the clearing. Where they must pass the fire, a passage briefly forms to give them safe escape. The ring of fire slowly approaches you. Before you on the ground lies the unconscious body of **Nadja**. The coachman stands in front of her with his eyes closed. Above the two, two arms of fire springing from the ring of fire and reaching for the woman's body. The coachman opens his eyes, the sphere explodes, hurling away the vine-golem. The stones go out, the green lines on the ground disappear. **Nadja's** body begins to levitate and the coachman tells you to follow him.*

Each player heals 2d4 HP, regenerates 1 spell slot (players choice), all abilities regenerated after a *Short Rest* are now available again and simple non-magical diseases are cured (like the fever caused by the foul water).

The [Spirit of Nature](#) did an intervention with nature he was not allowed to do, so nature manifests itself in the form of fire to put an end to **Nadja** as a balance. The ring of fire approaches **Nadja** only slowly, to allow the players to escape, as he does not want to kill them.

The [Spirit of Nature](#) runs in the opposite direction of the [Black Bat](#) directly towards the fire, behind him the floating body of **Nadja**. The smoke makes the players cough and limits the view to 20 feet. Close to the fire it gets unbearably hot. The [Spirit of Nature](#) steps in front of the hovering **Nadja** into the fire and stops exactly there. He does not catch fire but tears a narrow gap in the 20 feet high wall of fire, just wide enough for a humanoid to fit through. He lets **Nadja's** body slide through himself, to the other side of the fire. This is the sign for the players that it is a ghost and that they can step through him. Those who pass through must make a *Constitution Saving Throw 10* or suffer 1 fire damage. Those who pass directly through the fire automatically suffer *1d6+6 fire* damage. After the last player

has left the ring of fire, the [Spirit of Nature](#) also steps out of the flames and the gap closes again. After covering a few feet, the wall of fire chases and tries to encircle them. It approaches from behind as well as from the sides, driving them in one direction.

The Cliff

The *Spirit of Nature* leads the players through the forest for many minutes. The escape is exhausting. Both the rough ground and the heat of the fire bother them. Then the forest ends abruptly and they stand on a rocky outcrop. The open area forms half a circle 50 feet in diameter. At the end of the rocky outcrop, the cliff drops down vertically 100 feet into the depths. At the bottom is a river, and behind it, a wide field crossed by a road. Read the following.

You step out of the forest. You are freed from the burden of the dense leaf canopy. The sky is starry and the bright moon illuminates the scene. A few feet in front of you, the ground drops deep. The forest separates the open area like half of a circle. The coachman stops just before the cliff. Nadja floats to the ground near the abyss. The fire gets closer and stops at the edge of the forest, cutting off any way out.

The *Spirit of Nature* puts **Nadja** down on the ground near the cliff and then looks at the fire as if waiting for something. Only a few seconds pass. Give the players a maximum of two turns to act. Then a passage shows in the fire through which the *Black Bat* steps. It closes a moment after. The fire now waits to see if the *Black Bat* is successful. It comes to the final fight here and now. The *Spirit of Nature* will not intervene in the fight and will only observe. Both nature itself and the *Spirit of Nature* are now waiting, letting things taking course. The *Black Bat* will stay in the clearing and destroy everything, the last one being **Nadja**. Once the *Black Bat* is defeated, read the following.

The vines of the golem go limp and fall to the ground. A pile of mangled plant remains lies before you. No movement. It is still hot, the fire continues to block your passage. You look around. The coachman is looking at you. His face is pleased and

grateful at the same time. He turns to Nadja. Her body stirs. She stands up, looks over the cliff into the distance, and steps up to the edge. The coachman turns to her, steps to her side, and reaches for her hand. At the same time, again two arms of fire approach from the sides and try to reach Nadja. Her body tips over, but a ghostly image of her remains standing, gazes lovingly into the eyes of the coachman, and holds his hand. Together they take a step forward into the void and float over the abyss. The flames gasp the falling body and set it on fire. Before it falls into the river, it completely fades into ashes. Then all the fire disappears and it gets instant cool. The floating lovers move further and further away from you and slowly fade into none. A wind comes up. In front of the glittering night sky, you see a tail of ash being carried across the fields and slowly descends. You hear the melody of a dead woman, but only for a moment. Then it is silent.

Nadja's soul has been freed and reunited with the postman. The players are now free to continue on their initial path. As soon as they are back on the road outside **Solmenheim**, the wind blows a loose book page in front of them on their way. It is from the postman's diary. If one of the players has a look at it, read the following.

In beautifully curved lettering you read: "Once only the postman in the eyes of the healer, Nadja and I are now united. Freed from her endless dream. Nature has cost both our lives. Now we are part of it."

Appendix A - Roadmap

Exploring

The players can explore all the houses in the village.

Paper Pieces

4 pieces of paper are left in a house each:

- [Butcher](#)
- [Bakery](#)
- [House of the Innkeeper](#)
- [Tailor](#)

Laid together, they reveal the following message written by the dwarf **Garando** (the butcher):

I was with Nadja the only one believe me what I am telling you I was standing in her bedroom she was lying there in her bed entangled by this plant I heard a melody I don't know where it came from but believe me I heard it it was beautiful

Blue-ish Shadow

While exploring **Solmenheim**, the players will catch a glimpse of a blue-ish shadow flitting between the houses. It is the [Spirit of Nature](#) who was the postman and admirer of **Nadja** in his former life. He beckons the players to the [Windmill](#).

Messages from the Villagers

The players may find letters left from some villagers:

- from Mayor **Wilhelm Grindel** in his [office](#)
- from the innkeeper in his [house](#)
- from the blacksmith at his [door](#)

Approaching Nadja's House

Getting as close as 50 feet to [Nadja's House](#) the players start hearing the beautiful melody.

Nadja's House

Once entered the house, the players can no longer explore **Solmenheim**.

Dangerous terrain

The whole house is *difficult terrain* due to the vines covering the floor. Touching or shaking the vines causes them to deal *poison* damage.

Consumed Guards

On the lower floor, the players may fight up to three corpses which are [Consumed Guards](#).

Lab

In the lab, the players can find a lot of things; most important 2 potions of healing (1d4+1).

More Information

In front of the bedroom, the players find a shoulder bag. In it are a book and a letter.

The book is titled *Botanics of extraordinary-rare Occurrence*. A bookmark is stuck in the chapter where the fungus is explained.

The letter is from the mayor to the city requesting help.

Bedroom

The skeleton of the postman lies in front of the bed in which **Nadja** is lying. The players should free **Nadja** from the vines and take her outside.

Leaving

Once leaving the house, the coachman awaits the players carrying **Nadja** outside. He invites the players to get away in his coach from the [Black Bat](#).

The Glade

Animals arrive shortly after the coachman appears.

Riddle

First, the players must solve a riddle.

Following steps are required:

- turning all stone cubes so that the dot in the circle on it is facing down
- touching the runes on the stone cubes in the correct order: ascending from less number of edges to more number of edges

Interruption by the Black Bat

The [Black Bat](#) interrupts the ritual by destroying the coach. A protecting sphere emerges above the players.

The Sphere

Inside the sphere, time runs very quickly. Until the sphere vanishes, players outside of it should only have 2 or 3 rounds to act.

The coachman starts the ritual. The players inside the sphere shift into **Nadja's** dream.

The Dream

Inside Nadja

First, the players see the dream from **Nadja's** eyes. They witness the process of deciding over death and life.

She sentences a guilty gnome to death and spares the life of an innocent woman by sacrificing a little girl. In the end, the gnome and **Nadja** are hanged.

Free to act

The players find them in front of the scaffold. They can free **Nadja** by killing the figure with tentacles which represent the fungus in her mind. If a player dies, he awakes inside the sphere with 1 HP. After killing the fungus, a ring of fire appears on the horizon. All players awake inside the sphere.

Final

Fire

The ring of fire surrounds the glade. Two arms of fire reaching for **Nadja**. It is nature who tries to set things straight after the intervention of the [Spirit of Nature](#).

Fleeing

The sphere explodes, hurling the [Black Bat](#) away. The coachman creates a gap in the fire, allowing the player to leave the glade.

They run through the forest pursued by the fire. The chase ends at a cliff.

The Cliff

The fire cuts the players off. The only way to escape is off the cliffs. The [Black Bat](#) steps through the fire. This is the final fight.

Appendix B - Creatures

Black Bat

The *Black Bat* can arise from the [White Bat](#). It consists of tens of black vines with black blossoms on them. It looks like an abstruse, giant bat. It senses a trail of the [White Bat](#) and follows it to reconnect with the host and the [White Bat](#).

All creatures that stand in the way of the *Black Bat* are destroyed. It always ensures that the host's body will take no damage.

If the white blossom is destroyed, the host is purposefully destroyed to serve as a food source for the next [White Bat](#).

If the host is destroyed, whether by the *Black Bat* or by other means, the *Black Bat* collapses on the spot in a cloud of poisonous spores (see *Death Cloud* in the box).

At the location where the *Black Bat* collapses, a new [White Bat](#) will arise in $1d20+30$ days.

The *Black Bat* is quite sluggish. Whenever it attacks with a vine, it sticks to the ground until its next turn. *Double Strike* is not available at the beginning of a battle. When *Double Strike* regenerates, show this to the players by having a vine immediately rise again, allowing it to attack with both vines in the next turn.

If the white flower still exists, the *Black Bat* is in rage and can use its abilities more often (see *Black Guardian*). It then attacks twice each turn (*Double Strike* can never be used twice a turn).

Consumed Guard

Consumed Guard

medium undead unaligned

HP 3 **AC** 9 **Speed** 20 ft.

St 10 **De** 9 **Co** 10 **In** 1 **Wi** 2 **Ch** 1

Language none

Life Sense The *Consumed Guard* is inactive until a creature steps in 5 feet of it. Then it attacks immediately.

Claw $1d4$ bludgeoning, (+2 to hit)

Spirit of Nature

Spirit of Nature

medium undead neutral

HP 0 **AC** 0 **Speed** 40 ft.

St 12 **De** 13 **Co** 0 **In** 17 **Wi** 14 **Ch** 10

Passive Perception 12

Language Understands any language, but can't speak

Untouchable Body The *Spirit's* body can't be touched. Vice versa, the *Spirit* can't touch anything.

Indestructible Body The *Spirit* can't be killed or destroyed. However, it can be banished to another plane.

Magic Hands The nature spirit can levitate, pull, push, or move objects and creatures it can see that match its strength and are within 150 feet of reach.

White Bat

Appearance

The fungus called *White Bat* is extremely rare. Without a host, it is only a single flower, which looks like a white bat with jellyfish-like tentacles.

Black Bat

large plant chaotic neutral

HP 40 **AC** 15 **Speed** 30 ft.

St 18 **De** 9 **Co** 16 **In** 1 **Wi** 1 **Ch** 1

Passive Perception 5

Language none

Black Guardian If the white flower from which the *Black Bat* emerges still exists, the *Black Bat* uses each round *Double Strike* (regenerates automatically) or once with *Rope* and once with *Vines*.

Damage Vulnerability fire

Damage resistance poison

Condition Immunity blind, deaf, charmed, frightened, poisoned

Death Cloud The *Black Bat* transforms into a cloud of spores when it dies. Anyone within 5 feet must make a *Constitution Saving Throw 14* or take *1d4+2 poison* damage.

Double Strike (5-6) The *Black Bat* attacks twice with *Vines* (this ability can never be used more than once each turn).

Spores (5-6) The *Black Bat* emits poisonous spores in a radius of 10 feet. All creatures within range must make a *Constitution Saving Throw 12* or start coughing and choking extremely. An affected creature can only use its *Movement* action until the end of its next turn when it takes *1d4+1 poison* damage.

Rope The *Black Bat* swings its vine in a 3 foot cone. A creature in range must succeed a *Dexterity Saving Throw 12* or is *knocked prone*.

Vines *1d6+2 bludgeoning*, (+4 to hit), range 3 feet.

Hallucinogenic Spores

The fungus continuously emits hallucinogenic spores that have an extremely pleasurable effect. In humanoids, the hallucination manifests as a pleasant melody. In animals, it manifests as a pleasant smell.

The spores spread out up to 20 feet. If a creature enters the range, it starts hallucinating.

If a creature leaves the spore's range, the hallucination stops.

Hallucination

The hallucination produces such a beautiful melody or alluring smell that the affected creature has an extremely strong desire for it. Once left the area of effect, the affected creature must make a *Wisdom Saving Throw 12*. On a success the creature can only use its *Movement* action. It must repeat the same *Saving Throw* each round. After succeeding 3 times without entering the area of effect the creature has no desire for the hallucination anymore. On failing any of those *Saves* the creature uses all its actions to get back into the area of effect.

Outside the range the affected creature has *disadvantage* on all *Attribute Checks* and *Attack Rolls* for 12 hours. After this time without entering the area of effect the creature has no desire for the hallucination anymore. Within the area of effect, the affected creature has no *advantage* or *disadvantage* caused by this effect.

Parasite

If the flower is removed from the ground, it remains inactive until it is dark and it senses no tremors. If an animal has eaten it, the flower becomes active as soon as the animal goes to sleep. Then it slowly bores its vines into the animal and the fungus continues to sprout. If it has not been eaten, it becomes active and approaches the next creature. It uses short roots to move. Once at the living creature, it anchors its vines and sprouts.

The fungus does not kill its host but takes over the body. Fine vein-like vines run through the body and consume the body without harming any vital organs. The host is thus always conscious; however, it goes blind and deaf.

Shared Mind

Everything the fungus is and knows, the host also knows. And because of the neural linkage between the fungus and the host, the host could have control over the fungus. However, the fungus drives the host's mind into an abysmal nightmare to weaken it. Thus, the fungus is too powerful and halts the host's control. This happens in the first days of the takeover.

If the white flower is separated from the host, the fungus and the host die after 1d12+12 hours.

White Blossom (Dream)

medium plant chaotic neutral

HP 20 **AC** 20 **Speed** 30 ft.

St 14 **De** 11 **De** 12 **In** 4 **Wi** 10 **Ch** 6

Passive Perception 10

Language none

Damage Resistance *bludgeoning*

Destructible Armor Whenever an attack that would cause *physical* or *force* damage misses the armor class, but the attack roll reaches at least 10, the armor class of the *White Blossom* is reduced by 1 to a minimum of 10.

Command Vines As an action the *White Blossom* can command the vines below the scaffold to grapple (DC 15) a creature within 30 feet of the scaffold. No action is required to keep up the grapple. If a creature is grappled by the vines they can be attacked. The vines have an AC of 13 and 11 HP.

Vine Sword *1d6+2 slashing (+4 to hit)*

Vines

The sprouting vines are black and grow up to 100 feet. They also carry black blossoms that look like the white one. These blossoms also emit hallucinogenic spores within a radius of 20 feet. However, this is only possible while the vines are in contact with the white flower. While the fungus grows more and more vines, the area causing hallucinations can exceed 20 feet.

Black Blossoms

The black blossoms tremble minimally in a rapid rhythm. If something touches the vines, the flowers spray poisonous spores at a range of 5 feet. Creatures in this range take *1 poison* damage, start coughing and choking extremely and can only use its *Movement* action for one round.

Food

Dead creatures within range are consumed by the black vines. If the creature was of medium size or bigger it will be used as [Consumed Guard](#). The corpse is dried so that it will get sharp claws with which it can attack intruders.

Fire Sensitivity

The fungus is extremely sensitive to fire. Therefore, the black vines can detect hot sources such as that of a torch or lantern within 5 feet. If a fire source is sensed, a few of the vines will sacrifice themselves to protect the others. They try to smother the fire by wrapping around it while detaching from the rest of the fungus. If the fire is too big, like that of a *Fireball*, the fungus has no chance to smother it and burns completely.

Black Guardian

If the host or white flower is separated from the rest of the vines, the black flowers freeze for *1d4+1* minute. During this time, they cannot emit poisonous spores.

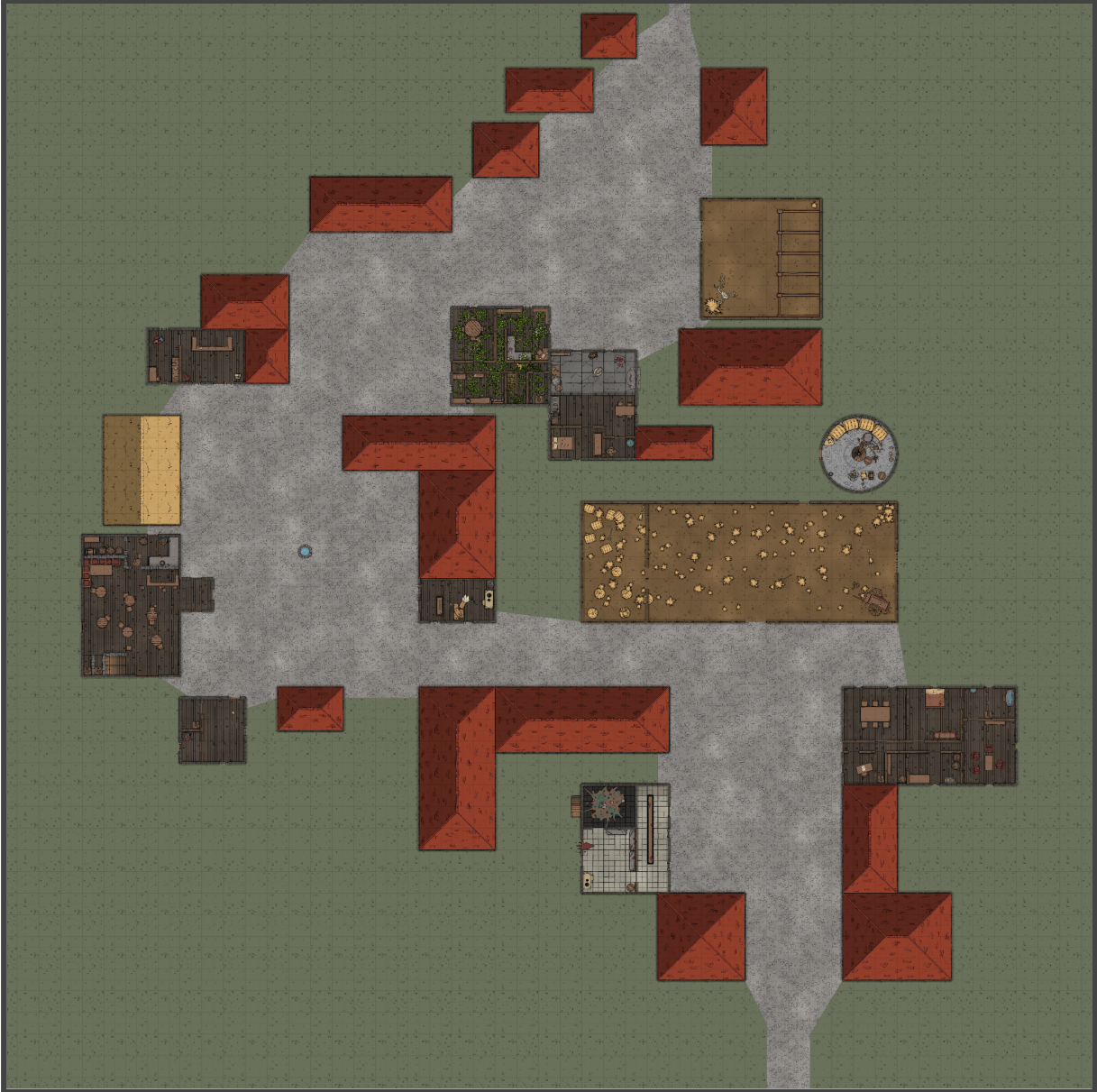
After this time, the black vines close the gap created and rear up into a kind of vine-golem; called [Black Bat](#).

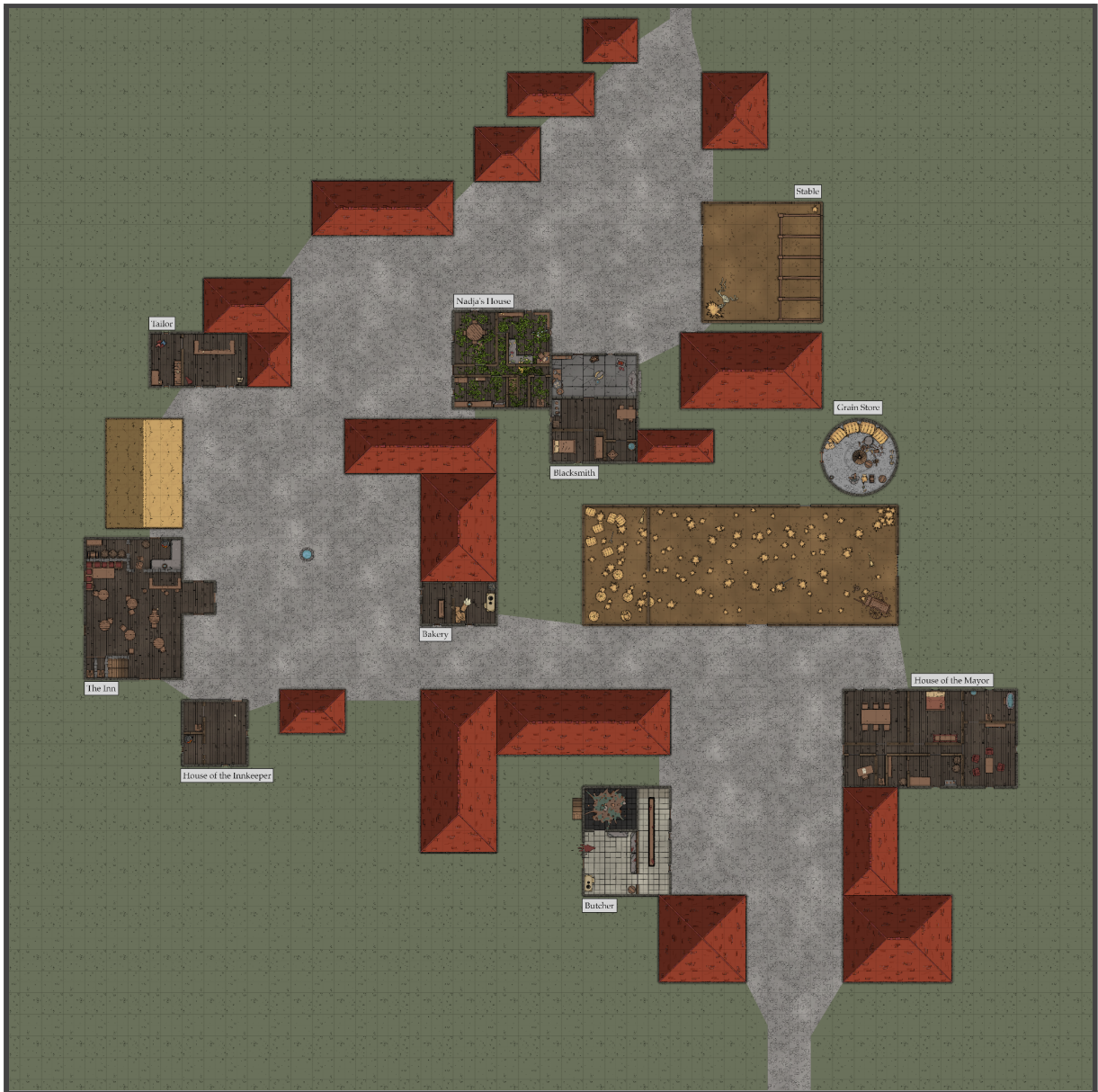
White Blossom (Dream)

The *White Blossom* is a deformed humanoid body. The face is covered with a huge white blossom, the right hand is formed into a long vine sword and vines spread from it, forming an armor. However, the vines can be damaged. As a result, the White Blossom's armor class is reduced.

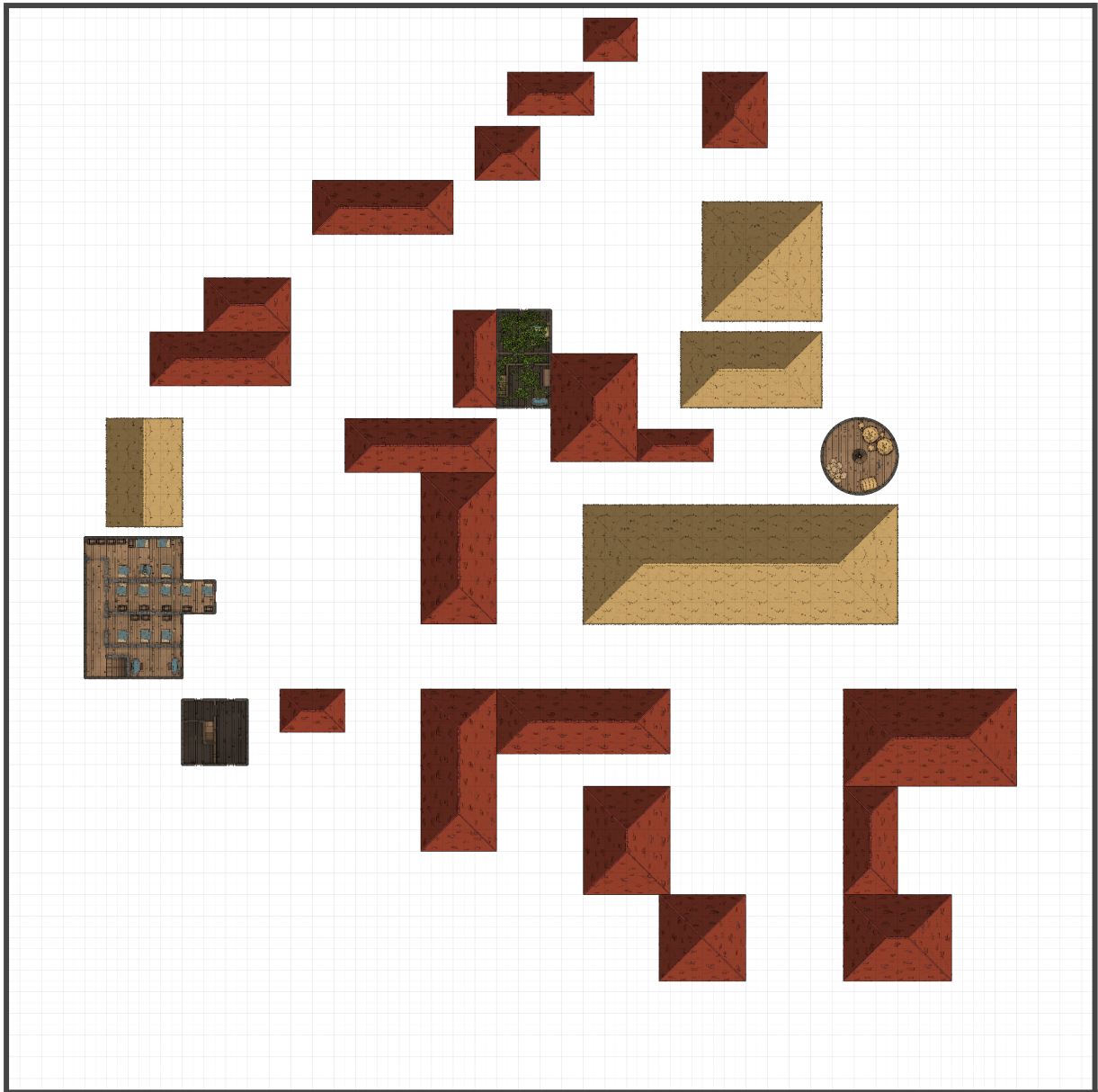
Appendix C - Maps

Solmenheim Level 0





Solmenheim Level 1



The Glade





The Dream



The Cliff

