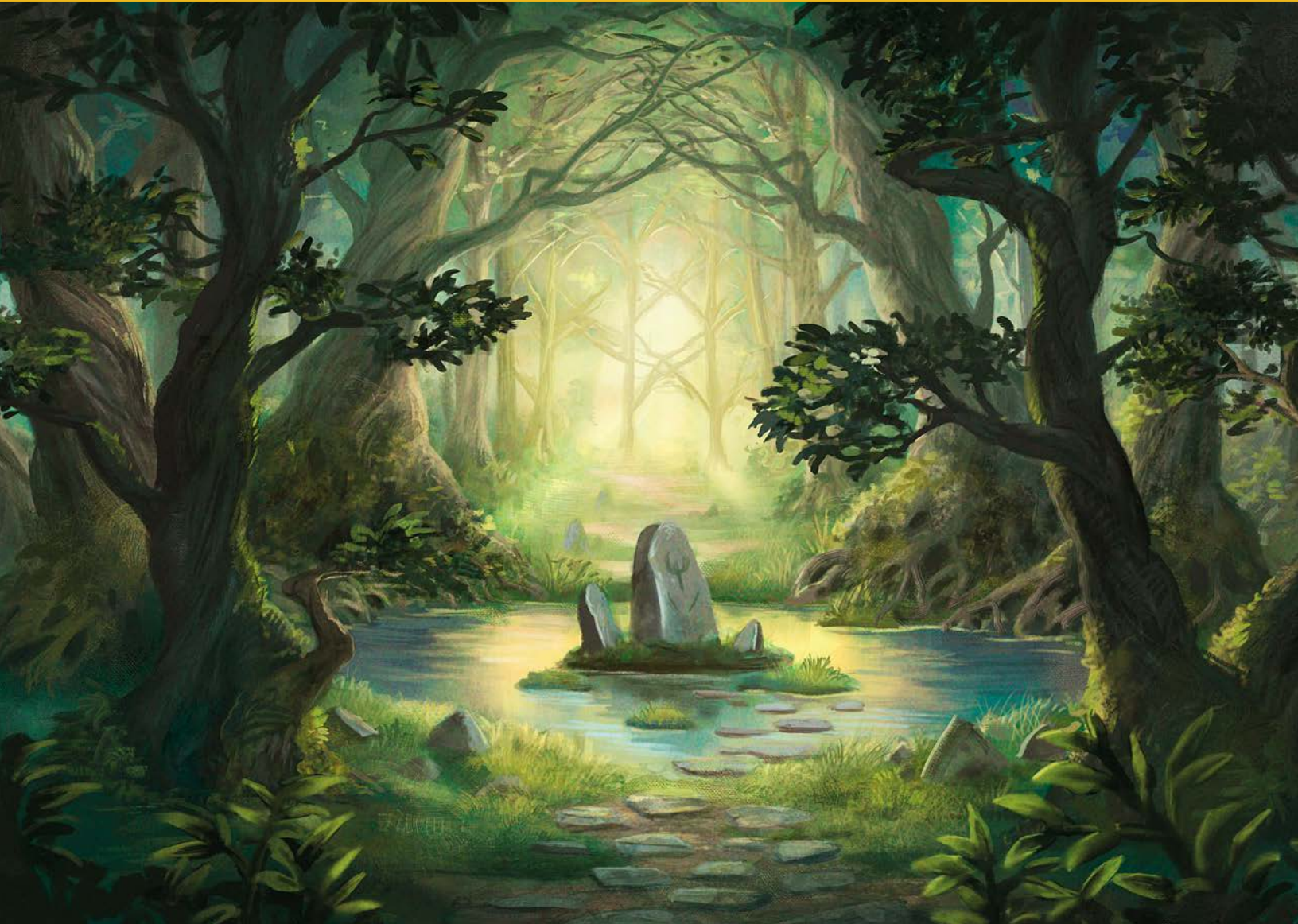


COMPATIBLE WITH THE FIFTH EDITION OF DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

# MARAUDERS OF THE MARGREVE



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**KOBOLD**  
Press

# MARAUDERS OF THE MARGREVE

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## A FOREST OLDER THAN GODS

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In many ways, Midgard's Margreve Forest is the apotheosis of the dark, enchanted woods. It is ancient, more ancient by far than the gods, and the oldest forest in the Crossroads. It is vast, an ocean of trees that have choked out the sun and ground down the mountains over eons. It is dangerous, a path that travelers take only out of ignorance or desperation. It is wondrous, containing secrets, spirits, and natural beauty as old as the world.

In all these ways, the Margreve Forest can be readily adapted to all manner of games, slotting into the archetype of magical forest. But the Margreve also has its idiosyncrasies. The forest long fell under the grasp of the noble House Stross, the rulers of Zobeck until they were overthrown, and their former influence left a lingering sense of nobility in the forest. But the Margreve possesses a life and a primordial will all its own. They say it is three-quarters location and one-quarter magical beast, and the denizens of the forest survive by carefully heeding the Old Ways of the wood.

Whether you're running a Midgard campaign and your players are exploring the Crossroads, or you're homebrewing your own game and are seeking inspiration for an enchanted woods, heed the Old Ways and explore the following resources.

## LANDMARKS OF THE GREAT NORTHERN ROAD

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On the journey from Zobeck to Castle Valach, or further out to Bratislor, you simply must take the Great Northern Road and see the landmarks along the Margreve's preeminent roadway. Because if you don't, you might die.

The road cuts a narrow path, little more than a wagon's width through much of it, like a thin scar down the forest's face that refuses to heal. This road and the landmarks that dot it will be the first taste of life in and near the Margreve for most adventurers, offering opportunities for plot hooks and rumors of the dark wood.

## THE MARGREVE'S EFFECT ON ROAD TRAVEL

The Margreve seems unwilling, or perhaps incapable, of overtaking the old carriage track that slices through it. Most believe that old House Stross struck bargains with the Shadow Fey to ward the road against the Margreve's influence. However, the forest edges on either side of the road often shift, closing up like a blasphemer's threaded mouth by a suturefly or widening out like a relaxed leavesrot ooze after a delicious meal of gnome.

The Margreve decides what travelers see as they pass through it, and navigating the Great Northern Road by landmarks is unreliable, at best. Here are a few landmarks most travelers agree exist, though a traveler shouldn't count on seeing them all in one trip.

### LANDMARK: GRAMSEN FIELD

Downhill and a day's walk from the Griffin's Nest Inn sits Gramsen Field, a defunct logging camp notable for eighteen and a half stumps freshly cut, untouched by time for three generations. The site is named after House Stross retainer Henny Gramsen, whose untimely demise came when the nineteenth tree he attempted to fell broke his axe, felling him instead.

Henny Gramsen's grandson, Hauke Gramsen, lives today in Zobeck's outskirts. He claims that it wasn't just the tree that did him in, but fey angered by his work. He refuses to go anywhere near the field.

### POINT OF INTEREST

Those foolhardy enough to travel the Great Northern Road by night find that under moonlight, the stumps sprout ghostly trees that fade upon daybreak. Disembodied chopping sounds and a wooden keening drive away all but the most stalwart of investigators.

### ADVENTURE HOOK

While camping beneath the Margreve canopy, the PCs are terrorized by the ghost of Henny Gramsen wielding a broken, but still deadly, axe. Clues from the encounter lead the PCs to Gramsen Field, where they must locate and reassemble Henny's broken axe and cut down all eighteen (and a half!) ghost trees in a single, harrowing night to free Henny's tortured spirit.

### LANDMARK: GREAT BALL OF SILK

Off the road from the Devil Hoof Inn, an enormous silken ball of thick, sticky thread, hangs from the treetops. Birds, leaves, branches, and small rodents are caught up in the ball.

Few know the origin of this wondrous object. Only magical communication or divination of the nearby,



hidden giant spiders reveals it. The spiders, addled by a fateful mushroomfolk feast, wove the giant ball of silk in a moment of shared oracular purpose. Forever enlightened by this spiritual experience, the Orbweavers, as they call themselves now, hunt only mushroomfolk, seeking to regain the lucidity they once achieved in building this bizarre landmark.

### POINT OF INTEREST

All sorts of fungi grow near the Great Ball of Silk, sprouting from the desiccated and long-buried remains of the spiders' mushroomfolk victims. A single griffon knight and the picked-clean skeleton of his griffon mount hang from the backside of the enormous ball of webbing. His courier's satchel still dangles a few yards off the ground.

### ADVENTURE HOOK

The PCs have a need for oracular guidance and are directed to seek the Orbweavers' divinations. But conversing with the spiders and earning their aid requires both the ability to speak with animals and a mushroomfolk victim or other psychotropic offering to sacrifice.

Once sated, the Orbweavers can weave the answers to powerful auguries in the Ball of Silk, though their patience is as fickle as the Margreve's.

## LANDMARK: THE THREE-CARRIAGE PILEUP OF 77

A jumbled mass of broken, overgrown carriages slowly rots about two hundred fathoms out from the Ruined Griffon Tower. Three caravans set out from the neighboring inns and converged violently in the winter of the year 77 FY (Zobeck Free Years). Survivors of the catastrophe cited intense blizzard conditions, misleading sounds in the snow, and monstrous roots erupting from the ground as the cause.

In truth, the caravans had no business being on the road that time of year, but the local Griffon Towers had dire need for supplies. Brave, doomed folk took action.

The pileup killed seven people and maimed four more. Only a hedge witch named Patrycja survived unscathed. Through hedge magic and dumb luck, she alone delivered vital supplies to the nearest Griffon Tower and rescued the other four survivors.

### POINT OF INTEREST

While little of interest remains among the wreckage, the surrounding area and a narrow trail leading to the nearby tower are excellent spots to forage for magical plants. Treants, pineys (see *Margreve Player's Guide*), and awakened trees are sometimes encountered here, crushing the wreckage with prejudice. Goblins and other scavengers usually lurk all around the site as well. The wreckage makes excellent cover or even an impromptu fort for the crafty and diminutive.

### ADVENTURE HOOK

Every winter, before the Great Northern Road closes until the spring thaw, the local coaching inns hold a memorial race from the Eye of the Forest Inn to Rivensky Brewery and back. Sadly, this year's race is canceled unless someone deals with the robber goblins who have fortified the pileup.

## MINOR LANDMARKS

The following landmarks have less history, but make great rest stops and ambush points.

### THE LOVER'S SHRINE

This small stone arch and paved path encircle two entwining Derende trees, one pointing and one articulating, that seem to caress each with intimacy. The foolish and undeterred use this landmark as a destination for weddings and handfastings. Robbers lie in wait for just such occasions.

## FOREST KING'S THRONE

This great stone chair observes the Forest King Inn and the intercepting roadway from the top of a small, lumpy hill. Children like to play on the chair, though it makes their parents uneasy.

### SPELLSCAR DUELING FIELD

This thirty-paces-long track outside the Witch's Teat Inn tells the tale of magician Reymonde Rudzka's duel with Hegedüs the Harrier. Remonde lost, but Hegedüs was forever haunted thereafter. The Margreve feasted exceptionally well that day. Echoes of the spells cast during the duel sometimes still ripple over the field.

## SIDE QUEST: THE RELIC HUNT

To encourage and reward the PCs' exploration the Margreve, use the following NPC and corresponding tables, which detail a side quest to collect lost relics for a mysterious benefactor known as the Vagrant Sage.

You can tack a relic discovery onto whatever else a party is doing in the Margreve. Relics aren't a whole adventure unto themselves. Rather, they can be used to spice up a slow moment in the main adventure. Place such relics on the other side of a skill check or encounter. Getting one doesn't need to be complex, just interesting. In return, PCs get money and learn some history of the Margreve.

## STARTING THE HUNT

To start, PCs must either stumble over a relic or meet the Vagrant Sage.

To find a relic, drop a common relic from the **Margreavian Relic** table into play by means of a convenient ability check, loot from an encounter, or an NPC reward for some minor service rendered.

Alternately, the PCs can meet the Vagrant Sage first, or hear tales of him.

### THE VAGRANT SAGE (HE/HIM, FOLK OF LENG)

*Patchwork robes. Hunched shoulders. Carries his small home on his back. Endless pouches and packs.*

**Personality Traits:** Atypically solitary **folk of Leng** (see *Tome of Beasts 1*). Asks many rhetorical questions. Deeply knowledgeable, self-proclaimed historian. Head in the clouds. Likes to show off seemingly worthless trinkets.

**Bonds:** His precious relics.

**Flaws:** Has a hard time staying in the here and now.

**Wants:** To acquire relics and learn more of the history of the region.



**Talking to the Vagrant Sage:** He is taciturn and cagey at first, though can be drawn out of his shell if the PCs willingly sit through at least 1 hour of his ramblings on the history of the Margreve, the Crossroads, and House Stross. Once they have gained his trust, he offers the following:

- Though unwilling to divulge why he seeks these relics (a motive you can develop as you play), the Vagrant Sage pays fairly for relics according to their rarity. Use the **Relic Payout** table as a guide.
- If given a relic, he muses on its historical significance (see **Margreavian Relics**).

#### RELIC PAYOUT

Relic Rarity	Sage's Reward	XP	Acquiring Difficulty
Common	25 gp	100 XP	DC 13 or a trivial encounter
Uncommon	125 gp	500 XP	DC 15 or an easy encounter
Rare	500 gp	2,000 XP	DC 17 or a moderate encounter
Very Rare	1250 gp	5,000 XP	DC 19 or a hard encounter
Legendary	3000 gp	12,000 XP	DC 25 and/or a deadly encounter

## MARGREVIAN RELICS

The Margreavian relics sought by the Vagrant Sage are valuable but have no magical features (though this could change at the GM's discretion). The following relics are presented by rarity. PCs can find them throughout the Margreve, wherever the GM wishes. There might even be multiples of a relic, though typically the greater the rarity, the scarcer the relic.

Each relic is accompanied by the Vagrant Sage's musings, which he may share if the PCs inquire. A GM might also insert their own lore here, as a vehicle for storytelling or advancement of other plots.

### Derende's Fist

*Common*

An arm's length branch with an angular L-curve in its middle and a tip that coils around itself in a fist-shaped knot.

**Vagrant Sage's Musings.** *"The fingers of Derende are curious trees, said to be living embodiments of a Margreavian spirit. How odd that this fist-shaped branch which, while containing none of the tree's magical resiliency, appears to be more direct in intent than gesticulating varieties."*

### Repurposed Spearhead

*Common*

This rusty spearhead still shows evidence that it was once a farm tool.

**Vagrant Sage's Musings.** *"A relic of the Zobeck Revolution. Curious that in the end, House Stross wasn't conquered with magic treasures looted from dragon hoards but brought low by rabble and improvised weaponry."*

### Tasseled Epaulet

*Common*

A shoulder patch of golden tassels with green and blue detail, denoting membership in a once-prestigious knightly order.

**Vagrant Sage's Musings.** *"The Griffon Knights once kept station here, out of the many watchtowers erected under House Stross dominion. Now the order's current iteration harbors behind the walls of Zobeck while their presence in the Margreve is swallowed by primal appetites."*

### House Stross Insignia

Uncommon

This torn and faded officer's patch still bears intact embroidery depicting three black wings arranged like a triskelion.

**Vagrant Sage's Musings.** *"For 600 years, House Stross ruled with iron fists and silvered tongues. Their retainers and footmen enforced their will when coin couldn't buy it. Now, that noble merchant house is little more than a footnote."*

### Scrimshaw Horn

Uncommon

Intricate depictions of battles, voyages, and snapshots of life cover this ivory horn from some large beast.

**Vagrant Sage's Musings.** *"Impressive! I've heard of a cavern, fed by plunging waters, where primal and prehistoric beasts still graze. Did this horn come from one of them I wonder? Or perhaps from a sea beast of the Middle Sea or the Nieder Straits? If so, who might have brought it here of all places?"*

### Solar Burst Pendant

Uncommon

A tarnished pendant stylized like a sun bordered by silvered lances of starlight. Sockets for gems or crystals contain crusts of loamy dirt.

**Vagrant Sage's Musings.** *"The Order of the Undying Sun has always been committed to thwarting corruption and the forces of shadow, but where were their oaths when House Stross ruled with silver-coated corruption? What are those oaths worth now?"*

### Broken Steering Lever

Rare

Grimy oil coats this ruptured brass lever assembly. Dwarven runes denote direction at equal points around an attached flywheel.

**Vagrant Sage's Musings.** *"Ah yes, the fabled craftsdwarfship of Templeforge. Judging by the state of disrepair, it would appear that not even Volund's blessings could keep aloft the airship this part once belonged to."*

### Hedge Mage's Cookbook

Rare

This well-used, leatherbound journal is less a collection of recipes and more a series of fieldnotes on the Old Ways, the curiosities of the fey, and the intricacies of witchcraft and hedge magic.

**Vagrant Sage's Musings.** *"I wonder what arcane secrets reside within these pages. And I worry whether the owner of this little tome wants it back, what cost there may be in keeping it."*

### Green Knight's Favor

Very Rare

This moss-soft handkerchief is darkly stained as if it were pressed between fresh green leaves. Airing it out releases puffs of stale pollen.

**Vagrant Sage's Musings.** *"A champion's trifle, likely a favor passed from an aristocrat, or a Fey Lord or Lady. Does possessing such a trinket denote the honor and dignity a green knight is meant to embody? Or is it a beacon in the wood to bring its owner forward?"*

### Onyx Mirror

Legendary

This flat, inky-black stone fits into an open palm. Light seems unwilling to grace its surface despite reflections showing readily across its plane.

**Vagrant Sage's Musings.** *"Have you heard tale of the Weft of Shadows? He was a master thief who purloined fey treasures from the Summer Lands centuries ago. Some speculate that the Weft of Shadows keeps in contact with his agents still, using mirrors crafted of pure shadow made solid."*

## CONCLUDING THE SIDE QUEST

The relic hunt needs no explicit ending. It can stop any time. However, when you're done, you can cap it off with the Vagrant Sage revealing the location of a rare and mighty magic item as a final reward for the opportunity to tell stories. Perhaps amassing these objects garners the attention of a Fey Lady or some other powerful and curious entity who wants them as well.

## AGENTS OF THE MARGREVE

If you were the Margreve, an antediluvian forest with ancient, expansive power, you would probably have a few underlings working for you, right? The Margreve certainly does. Treants and wolves are common agents, but more tread beneath its storied boughs.

But just what is an agent of the Margreve? What do they do? What are these agents responsible for?

## WHO BECOMES AN AGENT?

The Margreve typically chooses agents to address threats to the natural order or the longevity of its borders. An agent is bound to the forest, connecting with a wellspring of primeval power that provides extraordinary powers.

The Margreve prefers beasts to sentient folk. Although fey, humanoids, and even dragons have been counted among the Margreve's agents, these creatures do so of free will or under binding oath. Of course, many plants serve the Margreve without fail, especially if they are Margreve-born.

## THE WOODCURSE

Being an agent of the Margreve is surely a curse. Though potent power comes with the appointment, the will of the Margreve is iron, and the consequences of being chosen can be deadly.

Agents cannot exit the Margreve without perishing, collapsing into piles of viscera-soaked leaves as soon as they step out of the forest border. Agents also feel what the Margreve feels, suffering its attitude, awareness, and pain (all too often more than a mortal being can handle).

Agents frequently go berserk, overwhelmed when the Margreve bristles with fury or is struck by loggers or wildfire, even miles away. And agents have little control over their own actions when the Margreve commands, throwing away their lives at the forest's behest.

## THE WOODCURSE

### Curse

Through the bond of spilled blood, the Margreve chains a creature to its service.

**Trigger:** The blood of a Beast or Monstrosity spills within the borders of the Margreve Forest. This trigger can occur once per week per square mile of the Margreve.

**Effects:** The triggering creature can make a DC 19 CHA save to resist the compulsion of the Margreve. If the creature fails its saving throw or willingly accepts the compulsion, it gains the following features and obeys the will of the Margreve for a year and a day. Increase the creature's CR by 1. A Humanoid can only willingly be affected by the curse, dripping their blood and swearing fealty to the forest.

**Resolution:** The agent can attempt to break the compulsion early, making a DC 19 CHA save once a day until three consecutive successes are made. A *remove curse* spell or similar magic grants advantage on one saving throw to break the compulsion, but only a *wish* spell can break the curse immediately, removing all benefits.

An agent of the Margreve gains the following features:

**Enhanced Senses.** The agent gains bloodsense or tremorsense at 60 feet. If it already has one of these senses, the distance is doubled.

**Agent of the Forest.** While in the Margreve, the agent has advantage on all Perception, Stealth, and Survival checks.

**Bark and Bite.** The agent's natural weapons and armor grow shaggier and more deadly. The agent's AC can never be lower than 16 and its attacks deal an additional 7 (2d6) damage of the same type as the attack.

**Forest's Fury.** Whenever the agent or a part of the Margreve takes at least 10 damage, the agent flies into a rage for 1 minute, gaining resistance to all damage (except for psychic damage) and gaining advantage on the first attack it makes on its turn.

**Woodcursed.** The agent is immune to charm, compulsion, or enchantment imposed by anything other than the Margreve. The agent is unable to work against the Margreve's goals or pursue its own goals, including its own instincts or needs.

## SAMPLE AGENTS OF THE MARGREVE

Because of the curse, powers, and unpredictable tempers, agents are given a deferential berth by others of their kind. Even pack-mentality creatures avoid one of their kind when it is woodcursed, whether by cognition or instinct. Here are a few agents to include in your game, complete with their own history, motive, and adventure hook.

### SAOIRSE HONEY-FRIEND

Saoirse was an **alseid grovekeeper** (see *Tome of Beasts 1*) undergoing a divine rite when the Margreve drew her into a conflict with intruding woodcutters. Though her actions benefitted both the Margreve and the woodcutters (and earned her favor with a fey queen), Saoirse returned home to calls for exile rather than open arms.



Now Saoirse keeps to the Heart of the Western Margreve, tending to the forest until it calls for action again. Blaming the woodcutters for their exile, Saoirse's views of outsiders have grown more prejudiced with time.

**Adventure Hook.** Despite fulfilling her year of service over and over again for nearly two decades, the Margreve refuses to release Saoirse. Desperate for freedom, Saoirse sends out a small clockwork creature (a rusty gift from one of the long-ago woodcutters) to find someone powerful enough to break the curse or to take her place.

### THE FOGROLLS SPHINX

They say a sphinx lurks in the Fogrolls of the Central Margreve, quizzing prey with cruel jokes rather than riddles before pouncing. Truthfully, the Fogrolls Sphinx is a **vapor lynx** (see *Tome of Beasts 1*) whom the Margreve cursed to disrupt a hag coven's disastrous dinner. Now the Fogrolls Sphinx revels in its powers to terrorize the lost and lonely.

**Adventure Hook.** Jedza Wiara needs a brave group of clever heroes to get a broom, ladle, and garden shears back from the thief who stole them. The thief taunted Jedza as he took her things and then absconded into the morning mist. If brave heroes would go into the Fogrolls to retrieve her belongings, Jedza Wiara promises to make them dinner upon their return. The thief has fallen prey to the "Sphinx," which now looks to torment the PCs.

### THE SHAMBLING WOOD

Along the conifer-thick ridgeline of the Black Hills roams a legion of **giant walking sticks** (see *Tome of Beasts 3*), unwavering in service to the Margreve. These massive beasts move as one, swaying and jerking with mesmerizing grace as they patrol the region. Fast and seemingly precognitive, only the fiercest dragons and most cunning witches have eluded ambushes by the Shambling Wood.

**Adventure Hook.** Minstrels in local coaching inns sing of vast wealth and imperial might thrown at the Margreve in attempts to tame it. One ballad tells of princess Zosia, eager for more than courtly appointments, who stormed the Black Hills to find and chop down the Harktree. As the ballad ends, the princess is never seen again, nor her kingdom's magic axe or the trio of knights named Sir Baer, Sir Altan, and Sir Körbl who sought to retrieve her.



## HUNTS AND CHASES

Ask any local woodsman or merchant caravan where to find good hunting in the Margreve and you get the same sorts of answers: hushed denials, vague warnings, and heaps of superstition. "The Margreve won't forget those who spill blood," they say, and, "You don't go taking from the forest unless you want Baba Yaga's eye along with it."

Such fears are well-founded. Too many people fail to come back from great hunts.

### THE THRILL OF THE HUNT

To succeed at hunting in the Margreve, you must observe the Old Ways. While the Old Ways vary by region, some consistent beliefs persist. Should the PCs seek such wisdom from a denizen of the forest, they are likely to be confronted with opaque riddles.

**Before the Hunt.** *"If appease Old Margreve be thy desire, spill thine blood with thine hunting blade at prey's spoor first descrial. Let Old Margreve know thine honesty whether for survival, sport,*

or vengeance may be. Only after can thee hope to hunt unfettered within Old Margreve.”

**After the Hunt.** “Once thine prey art caught, work quick to spill tis bludt beneath nears’t trees both vernal and eld. Let Old Margreve see thine fatal work and drink first from worthy kill. Only after can thee hope to leave unfettered of Old Margreve.”

The Old Margreve is, at its core, a primal place. And no act is more primal than a contest of predator and prey. Hunting is as natural an aspect of the wild forest as spring’s new growth from autumn’s deadfall.

What the Margreve does not tolerate is defying or defiling the natural order. Destroy wantonly, violate the laws of nature, fey, and the balance of all things, or wreak havoc on flora and fauna within the forest’s borders at your own peril. The eldest forest does not suffer such transgression for long.

## REVISITING MARGREVE STATUS

If you play using the status mechanic (see *Midgard Worldbook*), you might find that hunting within the Margreve can affect that score. See the **Hunting and Status** table for some relevant hunting actions and their effects on status. Note that the Margreve regards an act’s nobility or ignobility according to its own designs. Even the best intentions might be read differently by the forest.

### HUNTING AND STATUS

Action	Status Effect
Ignobly hunted or killed an agent of the Margreve	-1 to -4
Didn’t make an offering before the hunt in accordance with the Old Ways	-1
Nobly hunted an unaligned beast whose CR met or exceeded the lowest CR or level of the hunting party	+1
Nobly hunted an Aberration, Monstrosity, or intelligent Undead that threatens the balance of life and death	+2

## THE PERILS OF THE CHASE

The Margreve is the perfect setting for a good chase encounter, rife with opportunity for interaction with hazards, other creatures, and the forest itself. However you get into it, the **Chase Encounter Complications** table is tailored to the Margreve, replete with opportunities for pitfalls underfoot and predators in the shadows. Even if you don’t use it for a chase, it can still provide fodder for random encounters.

## OLD MEDICINE

Travelers are inundated with tales of the dangers of the Margreve. Yet there are those born to the forest, or eccentrics who are drawn to its call. How is it that they survive the forest’s many diseases, curses, and hazards? They would say the key is to diligently practice the Old Ways, rhymes and rituals to placate the Margreve’s foul tempers and sate its dark appetites.

But for every blood sacrifice and guardian effigy, a practical remedy exists for everyday ills.

## REMEDIES AND RISKS

Be careful with any remedy from the Margreve. The forest gives and takes, and often takes more than it gives. While these remedies and traditions promise to cure sickness, thwart disease, and even dispel curses, misuse leads to all sorts of risks.

The following herbal traditions of the Old Ways list how they’re used, how you can expect the Margreve or its agents to be involved, and what can go wrong. Mechanical benefits are hinted at or suggested to give GMs latitude in allowing consistency and effectiveness of remedies.

### ROSE HIPS

Rose hips are the small berry fruit from the wild dog rose, a fussy, thorny perennial that likes to grow around the bases of old griffon watchtowers. Cultivating wild dog roses is a difficult but rewarding endeavor for any gardener.

**The Remedy.** Rose hips are used to combat infection from dog and wolf bites and to treat stomach sickness. The mashed berry is typically used as both a poultice and a tea for maximum effect.

**The Risk.** Herbalists use meadowsweet, a similar plant in appearance, to treat skin problems and fever. Confusing the two can lead to ineffectual, potentially fatal, treatment.

### ADELBERT POTATOES

These locally grown potatoes earn their name for how they look like little humans, caused by multiple tubers growing from one potato that look like appendages.

**The Remedy.** Any hedge witch worth their salt knows to treat warts, skin conditions, and minor curses by rubbing split potatoes on the afflicted, and then burying the potatoes in a fallow field. There, the transplanted affliction harmlessly starves.

**The Risk.** If the field contains other flora, some spite-fueled fiend might sprout from the buried potato. **TuberKith** (see *Tome of Beasts 3*) sometimes react poorly to this tradition, for its superstition flies in the face of both tuberKith origins and insults the flourishing influence of the rootfolk.

## WHITE HOREHOUND

White horehound (also called frost puppy or bitter mint) is well known for its ameliorative properties. It is easy to find in the central, eastern, and western regions of the forest.

**The Remedy.** While used to treat a broad swath of ailments ranging from bronchial to digestive to dermal illnesses, horehound is best used to treat a lost voice. In this way, white horehound must be prepared with reduced wine and buttercream.

**The Risk.** Never confuse white horehound for pale horehound (also known as sidhe's foxglove or false horehound). If you do, you'll surely attract wolves, blink dogs, or the **dread hounds of the night** (see *Tome of Beasts 1*) along with the unwelcome attention of their shadow fey masters.



### CHASE ENCOUNTER COMPLICATIONS

#### d20 Complication

- 1 You crash into a marshy pond, a patch of deadfall, or especially tangled undergrowth which acts as difficult terrain for the next  $3d6 \times 5$  feet.
- 2 You pass through a nexus of potent primal magic that tugs at your clothing, weapons, and belongings. Any wooden objects (but not living wood) that you are carrying warp and bend. Ranged weapons and ammunition that become warped are ruined, while attacks with warped melee weapons are made with disadvantage. A wooden item that grants an AC bonus no longer does so and instead reduces your movement by 10 feet until you drop or remove it.
- 3 You trample into a **myconid** or **alliumite** (see *Creature Codex*) garden patch and must make a DC 13 CON save or be poisoned or blinded (GM's choice) for the next minute. If you fail the saving throw by 5 or more, 1d6 hostile myconids or alliumites join in the chase. If you succeed by 5 or more, the creatures are friendly instead.
- 4 The pursuit attracts the attention of a **giant owl**, **hawk**, or **forest falcon** (see *Margreve Player's Guide*). The bird considers you prey and enters the initiative order directly after your turn, harrying you until it is harmed or incapacitated. If the bird doesn't use its action to attack you outright, its harrying behavior imposes disadvantage on your next attack, skill check, or saving throw.
- 5 A spiny **erina** (see *Tome of Beasts 1*) suddenly emerges from a burrow in the path ahead. Make a DC 15 DEX save or take 7 (2d6) piercing damage and your moment speed is reduced by 10 feet until you (or someone else) spend 10 minutes removing the embedded spines.
- 6 Your chase takes you through a short tunnel of rock, dense trees, or thick brush. Make a DC 12 WIS save to avoid becoming frightened as you disturb an unexpected colony of bats. If you fail the check by 5 or more, a **swarm of bats** or 1d6 **strossen bats** (see *Margreve Player's Guide*) actively chases you, entering the initiative order directly after your turn.
- 7 The forest bursts into action, aligning branches, vines, and brush to disrupt your pursuit. Make three DC 11 STR (Athletics) checks to navigate the impromptu gauntlet. For every failure, your Initiative is reduced by 5. If you fail twice or more, you are knocked prone.
- 8 Another predator such as a **panther**, a pack of **wolves**, or a **grove bear** (see *Margreve Player's Guide* or *Tome of Beasts 2*) enters the fray, vying for supremacy, territory, or simply food.
- 9 An unexpected sinkhole swallows the ground beneath your feet. Make a DC 13 STR or DEX save or take 2d6 fall damage as you fall into a 15-foot-deep pit. Climbing out of the pit requires a successful DC 11 STR (Athletics) check.
- 10 You enter a field of magical plants or flowers and must make a DC 19 CHA save with advantage. On a failure, you are charmed by the Margreve and feel compelled to help it.
- 11–20 No complication. However, The Margreve takes notice. Your next check on this table is made with disadvantage.

## BARK BITING

The bark of some Margreve trees, namely white-and-crack willow, argent poplar (often found near the River Argent and its tributaries), and the Margreve's own Derende tree, are all used to chew on during long days of hard labor.

**The Remedy.** If you suffer pain and general malaise, chewing strips of willow or Derende tree bark helps ease even deep-set aches.

**The Risk.** Willow bark can cause nausea if chewed too long. Chewing Derende bark can also cause delirium, lucid dreaming, and in some rare cases, blindness. Unless the proper sacrifice is made beforehand (the planting of a sapling), stripping the bark from trees is a quick way to anger **dryads** and **crueler fey**.

## COWSLIP PRIMROSE

This butter-yellow bellflower tastes sweet as honey and is a favorite of **giant honey bees**, **grove bears**, and **Margreve stags** (see *Margreve Player's Guide*).

**The Remedy.** Tucking cowslip primrose behind your ear combats melancholy, paranoia, and lethargy, while ingesting cowslip extract is said to thwart fear itself, and soothes a persistent cough.

**The Risk.** Fey, for better or for worse, enjoy the flower and find themselves drawn to its presence. The beasts mentioned above present their own risks, especially during springtime mating season.

## GREVE COURSING

Though not herbalism, the **alseid** of the Margreve, elf-deer cousins to centaurs, swear by the act of running to solve problems. Perhaps it is their nature or their deep connection to the Margreve itself, but diseases seldom keep the **alseid** down for long.

**The Remedy.** Few deny the efficacy of burning out a virulent disease with strenuous exercise. Typically, this **alseid** remedy is done freeform amidst the trees, lasts for many minutes and miles, and doesn't end until the runner drops from exhaustion. Runners might be allowed a saving throw against a disease (even if they already failed their saving throw for the day) in exchange for accruing levels of exhaustion.

**The Risk.** Running full tilt through the forest poses its own set of challenges. Exhaustion, twisted ankles, and impromptu predator-prey situations are all real risks with **greve coursing**.

## QUILLPOINT

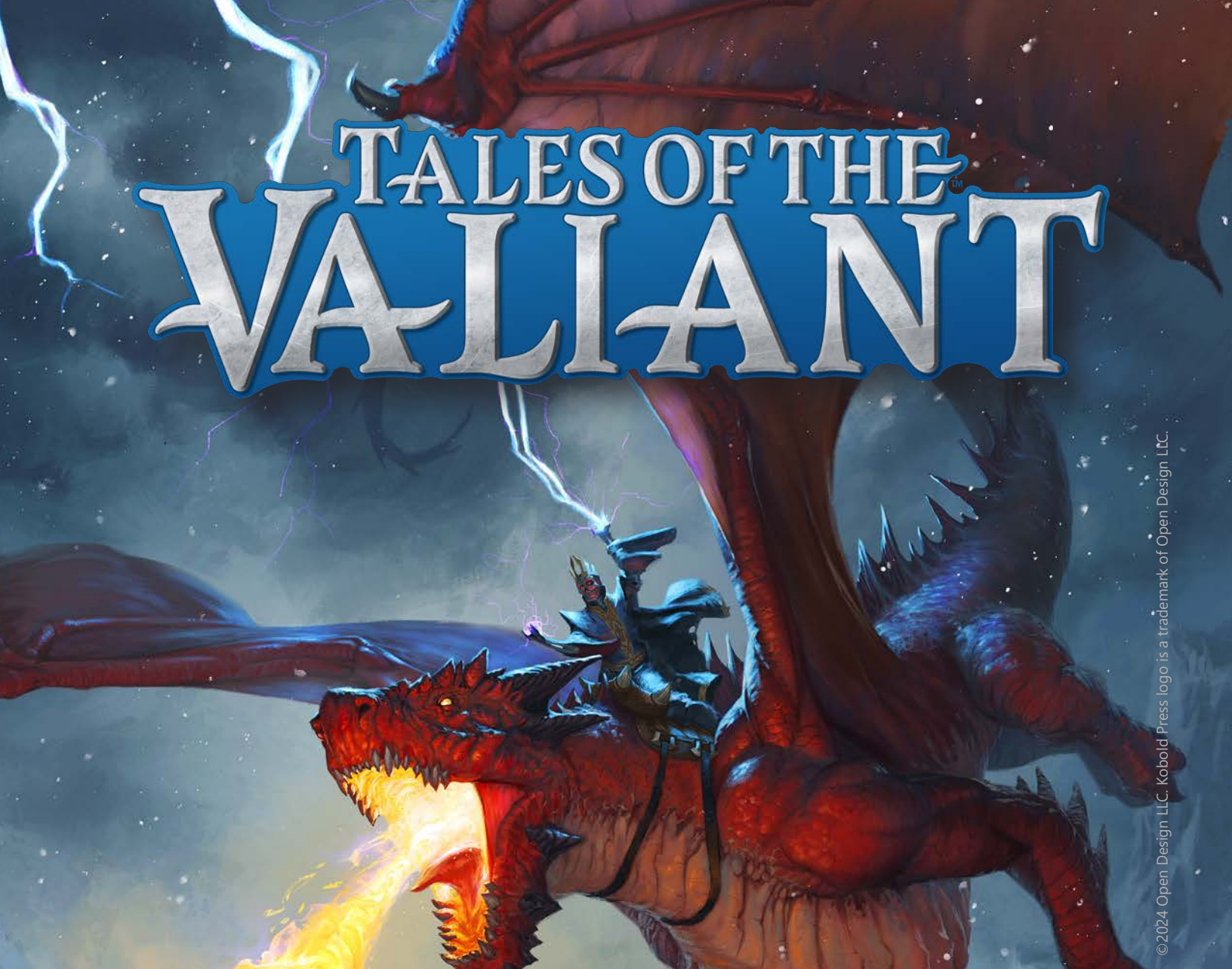
The quill-backed **erina** too have their methods for combating illness, using their quills for medicinal and therapeutic acupuncture.

**The Remedy.** Acupuncture of this sort typically takes an hour or more of concentrated effort from both the **erina** and the patient. Though painful and somewhat torturous, lasting benefits include increased alertness, peace of mind, and a heartier constitution. A character spending a short rest in acupuncture with an **erina** healer requires an appropriate WIS (Medicine) check from the healer, perhaps dealing damage to the patient while also healing a disease or condition, such as deafened, poisoned, or 1 level of exhaustion. Alternatively, this remedy can grant a brief bonus to the target's Perception, Initiative, or Wisdom saving throw, lasting no more than a day and not exceeding the **erina's** Proficiency Bonus in benefit.

**The Risk.** Pain and loss of hit points are obvious drawbacks. Some claim addiction is possible.



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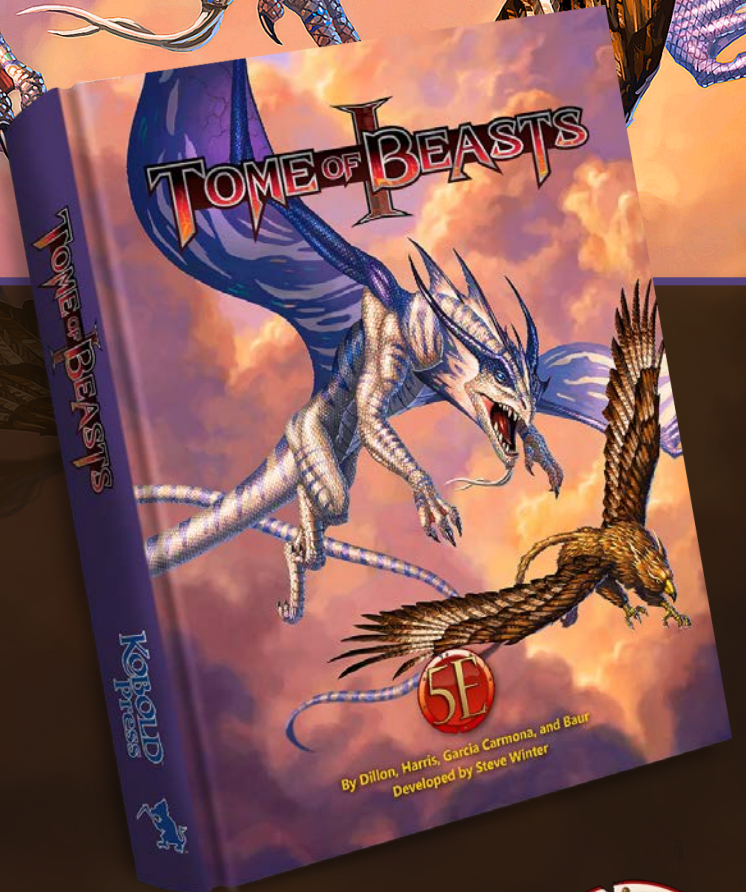
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