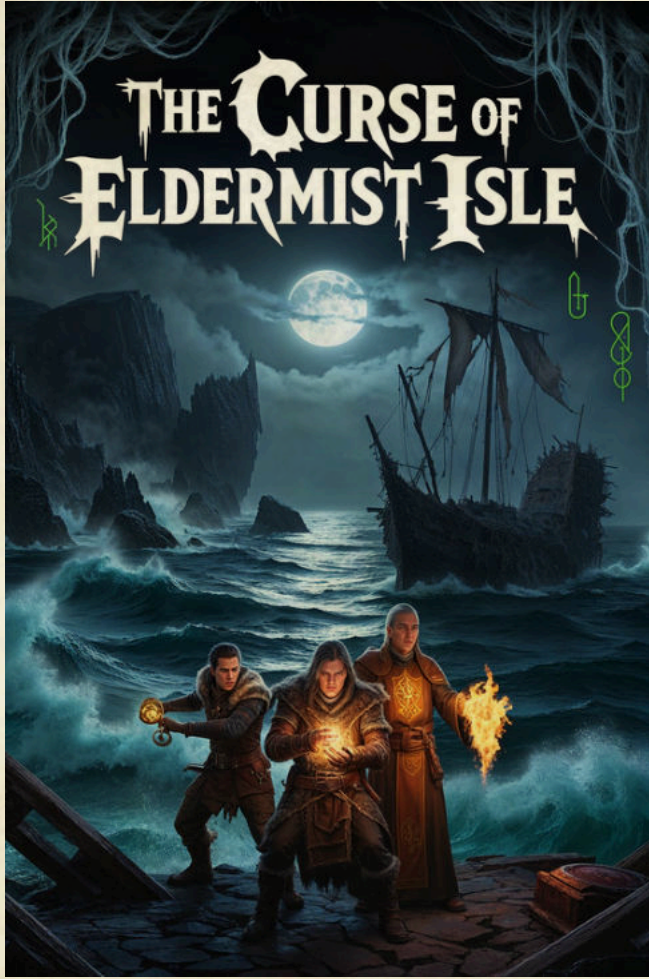


THE CURSE OF ELDERMIST ISLE



CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

Title: The Curse of Eldermist Isle

Theme/Genre: Gothic Fantasy, Mystery

Tone: Dark and Suspenseful with flickers of Hope

Target Level: Level 5

Expected Duration: 2 hours

Player Focus Preferences:

- Combat: Medium
- Roleplay: High
- Exploration: High

BACKSTORY AND SETTING

WORLD OVERVIEW

Eldermist Isle, a secluded land shrouded in mist, lies off the coast of a well-known empire. Once thriving with fisheries and trade, the isle's current state is dismal, inhabited only by those too afraid to leave due to an ominous curse. The bustling life that once characterized Eldermist has slipped away, leaving behind echoes of its former glory.

THE LOCAL AREA

The adventure begins in **Mourningfall Village**, the last bastion of settlement on Eldermist Isle. Its decrepit cottages, encircled by gnarled black trees and stagnant marshes, create a somber atmosphere. Nearby stand the **Ruins of Orndal Keep**, ominously perched on the central hill, rumored to be the source of the island's affliction. Offshore, the cursed wreck of the **Wraithmoor** lies ensnared among jagged rocks, where sinister sirens lure unwary souls to their doom.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The island's tale is rooted in the tragic downfall of the once-prosperous Orndal noble family. Known for their ambition and wealth, the family succumbed to a mysterious illness that seemingly erased their lineage overnight. Whispers claim they courted immortality through dark dealings, inadvertently cursing their homeland.

IMPORTANT NPCs

1. Mayor Greven Marrow

- **Description:** A harried, desperate figure striving to save his people.
- **Motivation:** To rid Eldermist Isle of its curse and protect his flock.

2. Elyra Tandril

- **Description:** A young and enigmatic herbalist with covert ties to the Orndal family.
- **Motivation:** Torn between reclaiming her heritage and aiding in its destruction, depending on the party's influence.

3. Aurek, the Drowned Soul

- **Description:** The tormented ghost of an Orndal family member bound to the Wraithmoor.
- **Motivation:** Seeks redemption and guidance for the adventurers to break the curse.

4. Lord Malrik Orndal (Boss)

- **Description:** The lich-like head of the Orndal dynasty, bent on evading death eternally.
- **Motivation:** To transcend mortality, regardless of the catastrophic price.

PLOT HOOK

Opening Scene:

The adventurers step onto Eldermist Isle from a small, creaking ferry. The fog hangs thick, wrapping around them like a damp shroud. At the pier, Mayor Greven and a handful of villagers await, their faces etched with desperation.

“You are our last hope,” pleads Greven. “People vanish into the mists, and even the land rejects us. Without your help, we’re doomed.”

A villager presents an ancient brass locket bearing the Orndal family crest. It appeared mysteriously on a doorstep not long ago. Within it lies a riddle, referencing the Ruins of Orndal Keep, the Wraithmoor shipwreck, and the enigmatic “Chamber of Eternity.”

Primary Objective:

To unravel and dismantle the curse snaring Eldermist Isle by unmasking its mysteries, navigating its puzzles, and vanquishing the evil that sustains it.

KEY LOCATIONS

LOCATION 1: MOURNINGFALL VILLAGE (STARTING AREA)

Atmosphere:

Mist cloaks the village, eerily silent but for the creak of wood and distant wolves. Villagers navigate their daily lives with heavy caution, their eyes betraying dread and distrust.

Key NPCs and Possible Encounters:

- **Mayor Greven Marrow:**
Offers the main quest and impresses the urgency of their mission.
- **Rumors from Villagers:**
Share insights on local lore, disappeared individuals, and ominous superstitions.
- **Roleplay Challenge:**
Convince wary villagers to part with supplies or an heirloom pointing to a secret entrance to Orndal Keep.

LOCATION 2: WRAITHMOOR (INTERMEDIATE AREA)

Atmosphere:

Black-rocked crags steal upon the forlorn shipwreck, its broken form assaulted by the sea. Shadows flit about the deck whispering ominously.

Challenges:

- **Combat Encounter:**
Fight against ghostly sailors (4 Specters and 1 Wraith) determined to repel intruders.
- **Puzzle:**
Decipher Aurek Orndal’s diary to unlock a magical hatch. Align three mast-etched runes to form the family crest engraved on the locket.
- **Revelation:**
Aurek’s apparition emerges to guide the party, presenting a map to the Chamber of Eternity located beneath Orndal Keep.

LOCATION 3: RUINS OF ORNDAL KEEP (FINAL AREA)

Atmosphere:

Once-noble spires now crumble amidst flora-thick ruin. A chill seeps from its ill-lit bastions, casting shadows that flutter like living things.

Challenges:

- **Trap:**
A magical rune traps trespassers—a freezing glyph requiring an Arcana check (DC 15) or Dexterity saving throw (DC 14) to bypass.
- **Combat Encounter (Mini Boss):**
Shadows (6 shadows) lie in wait, exploiting dim light for ambush tactics.

Final Encounter: The Chamber of Eternity

An immense cavern resides under the keep, cloaked in spiraling mist and glowing with green glyphs. Lord Malrik Orndal, plotting to chain his essence to the isle, threatens its perpetual demise.

- **Boss Stats:**
Malrik uses a custom stat block (akin to an undead Archmage) with unique abilities in his lair, like summoning skeletal minions or warping the mist to hide.
- **Tactics:**
He shifts in and out of view, using the fog for cover while his minions besiege the players.

Resolution Options:

- Destroy Malrik and his phylactery, ending the curse permanently.
- Allow Elyra to command the Orndal legacy, saving her lineage though tainting her spirit.
- Form an alliance with Malrik, opening pathways to dark power at a costly moral price.

REWARDS

Loot:

- **Heart of the Mist Amulet:**
Grants advantage on saving throws against necrotic damage.
- Monetary treasure alongside the enchanted locket.

Story Rewards:

- Recognition for saving the island.
- Land grants or noble titles by an indebted empire.

SUPPORTING DETAILS

STAT BLOCKS

Custom Stat Block for Malrik Orndal:

As an undead Archmage, Malrik draws on spells and lair advantages, directing shadows to shield and misdirect his enemies. His power lies in necromancy, with abilities that manifest his dark legacy.

Other Creatures: Specters, Wraiths, Shadows, and skeletons.

MAPS

- Simple sketches of Mourningfall Village, the Wraithmoor shipwreck, and Orndal Keep.

PLAYER HANDOUTS

- Orndal Family Crest.
- Aurek's Diary Excerpt detailing ship coordinates and locket decryption.

MUSIC SUGGESTIONS

- Exploration: "Dark Hollows" by Midnight Syndicate.
- Combat: "Skull Island Requiem" by Two Steps from Hell.

FLEXIBLE OUTCOMES

- A pact with Malrik sets the stage for future dark legacy consequences.
- Saving Elyra offers continuing transformation themes as she grapples with her ancestry's dark past.

Tips for Improvisation: Prepare alternate paths for unexpected player decisions, such as pacifying Malrik or exploring off-course woods to discover side arcs.

POST-GAME WRAP-UP

Debrief Questions:

- What was your standout moment in the session?
- Did you always feel in control of your choices within the story?
- Were the obstacles appropriately challenging and engaging?

Epilogue Options:

- Eldermist Isle slowly rebirths, its past lingering as a cautionary tale.
- The curse's specter looms, hinting at evolving threats or haunting new channels.