

Perilous Almanacs



Adventure-ready regions
for *Dungeon World*



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a Lampblack & Brimstone publication
September 2015

Introduction

This book collects six “almanacs,” or regional outlines, for use with *Dungeon World* and the overland adventure rules supplement *The Perilous Wilds*. It is intended primarily for GM use.

These almanacs are all organized using the basic categories of Details, Discoveries, and Dangers, but the specific application of that structure varies depending on each author’s intent. The primary goal of this collection is to demonstrate how the loose template presented in *The Perilous Wilds* can be adapted, embellished, and modified to suit a range of needs.

Details are things that may be encountered or noticed at any point during exploration of the region. A detail may be a bit of background color, described by the GM as the characters traverse the landscape (“Against the white sky, you see birds wheeling in and out of nests in the cliff face”); or something that encourages further investigation (“A weird, fluting call echoes off the canyon walls, with no clear point of origin”).

Discoveries are anything the party finds that is interesting, but not immediately threatening. A Discovery might be beneficial, like a freshwater spring or patch of healing herbs; something worth investigating, like an overgrown ruin or cave mouth; or an obstacle, like a bog or chasm.

Dangers are anything which, if left unchecked or unnoticed, may be harmful to the characters. Traps and hostile creatures are the most common types of Dangers, but a Danger might also be something like a rockslide or region-specific disease.

Using an almanac

These almanacs are intended as examples, but they’re also ready-to-run regions that can be dropped into play.

Each has a specific terrain and climate, as indicated by its tags, so take these into account before you choose where to place it in your game world. Several (notably “Kirotoki Marsh,” “The Paths of Ateşkazé,” and “Vannrik, the Lake Kingdom”) have specific cultural/linguistic flavor, which may impact or affect nearby regions.

Keep in mind that specific geographic relationships between places in a given region are not pre-defined; they’re usually nailed down during play. Although as GM you are of course free to define that stuff ahead of time, the map of a region usually gets filled in at the table, heightening the sense of exploration and discovery for all concerned.

Finally, remember that an almanac is only a kind of outline, and a region is always bigger than what’s written on the page. When the characters encounter Discoveries and Dangers in a pre-written region, you have three options:

- 1) **Refer to the almanac.** Use one of the Discoveries or Dangers created by the almanac’s author.
- 2) **Make something up.** Improvise a Discovery or Danger based on the context provided by the almanac.
- 3) **Roll something up.** Use the tables in *The Perilous Wilds* to roll a Discovery or Danger, and integrate the result into the context provided by the almanac.

Happy exploring!

—Jason

Kirotoki Marsh

Temperate, Wetland, Difficult, Perilous, Neutral

Written & illustrated by Donna Almendrala

Details

- * Extremely humid
- * Insect hum, amphibian croaking
- * Thick mist obscures everything
- * Abundant peatland, hanging moss
- * Cypress groves carpeted with fern
- * Dark sap, weeping from odd plants

Discoveries

AREA • KIROTOKI RIVER

Unsafe, Neutral

While foot travel on patchy land or through shallow water is possible, the furthest reaches of the Marsh would be most swiftly reached via the river. But instead of a single course, this waterway offers a myriad of interconnected streams, channels, and kettle ponds. Negotiating these confusing waterways proves difficult without a map.

- * Why do locals from outside the Marsh shun travel on the River?
- * What here are indigenous creatures rumored to protect?
- * What is unusual about the insects of the Kirotoki?

SITE • ROOT HOLLOW

Unsafe, Neutral

An enormous, moss-covered tree lies toppled across part of the Kirotoki River. Faint animal tracks run to and from a dark opening amongst the roots at one end, on the other side of which is a damp, rocky burrow.

When you *crawl into the Hollow*, roll nothing: **on a 10+**, You find something—roll 1D8 on the table below; **on a 7-9**, roll 1d12 on the table below.

1d12 FIND

- 1-2 an animal skeleton, in repose
- 3 a broken tool (spade, axe, etc.)
- 4 1D4 rations wrapped in oilskin
- 5 a bracelet worth 1D6x10 coins
- 6 a sealed bone tube holding a scroll
- 7-8 a tunnel leading deeper
- 9-10 a trap, natural or constructed
- 11-12 a dangerous creature

AREA • THE CORPSEWAY

Perilous, Chaotic

Decaying corpses and moss-covered skeletons of various shapes and sizes hang on braided vines from the trees, appearing every few hundred feet to those who penetrate the deepest parts of the swamp. The freshest are dined upon by carrion monkeys; the next-freshest in the process of being scoured clean by buzzing clouds of swamp-flies.

SITE • KERKASHI'S NEST

Unsafe, Neutral

What looks like an enormous wasp's nest made of sticks and mud in the high branches of a cypress tree is actually the home an aged, brown-skinned toadman called Kerkashi. Living out the remainder of his days in solitude, this erstwhile trickster might reveal a useful secret in return for a special favor.

SITE • THE BLACK STUMP

Ancient, Elemental, Neutral

An ancient black cypress stump, wide enough for an adult human to lie across, crouches in the center of a dense grove.

The stump's perfectly even surface is split across the middle by a black fissure, as if a giant hatchet had been brought down upon it; and is completely covered by a dense pattern, seeming to have

been carved by wood-worms—until scrutiny reveals the twisty lines delineating a ring of runes or glyphs along the outer edge. Moss grows up from the forest floor to within an inch of the surface of the stump, where it stops in a clean line as if cut away.

Some powerful elemental force permeates the entire area.

Dangers

HAZARD • SWAMP TAR

Poisonous

A viscous, dark ooze covers the trees and ground in some areas, possibly indicating an infection from some dark source.

When you *come into bare-skin contact with swamp tar*, it burns you; you will suffer 1 point of damage every few moments until you find some way to remove the glue-like substance.



MONSTER • ABNAI

Group, Intelligent, Organized, Stealthy

Damage Crab claws 1d8 (*close, reach, forceful, 1 piercing*)

HP 8 Armor 2 (exoskeleton)

Special Qualities Amphibious

The Abnai are a tribe of crab-people who dwell in the the murky depths. When an Abnai's exoskeleton is penetrated, it is overcome by a frenzy for blood.

Instinct To hunt down intruders

- * Drag them underwater
- * Sever their limbs
- * Blood frenzy

MONSTER • KUSHIKA, THE LOST SOUL

Sectatory, Magical, Intelligent

Damage Plant surge 1d10+2 (*reach, near*)

HP 12 Armor 0

Special Qualities Insubstantial

Kushika was a druid who became lost in the Marsh while seeking THE BLACK STUMP. Unable to find her way out even in death, she drifts with the mist through the hanging moss, seeking to vent her frustration and anger on the living, commanding plant life in the vicinity to rise up and do her bidding.

While mundane weapons cannot harm her, locating and removing her remains from the Marsh will grant her passage through Death's Black Gates. And who can say what items of interest a powerful witch might have had on her person before succumbing to the wet and rot?

Instinct To express undying anger

- * Entangle them
- * Choke them
- * Rend them limb from limb

The Ancient Alvar

Temperate, Sparse Woodland, Windy, Perilous, Neutral

Written & illustrated by Rachel Kahn

Details

- * Rounded rocky hillocks
- * Pits and cave openings
- * Starved trees, clinging to rocks, to each other
- * Fluting, booming sounds from wind blowing across holes in the rock
- * Echoes bounce uncannily or fall flat

Discoveries

AREA • THE FLATS

Perilous, Chaotic

A level expanse of limestone in the midst of the otherwise uneven landscape, scoured by a powerful and chaotic wind. Trees here are no more than 3 feet tall and bent completely sideways in one way or another.

When you *brave the chaotic wind*, you *roll* *anything other than heavy armor*. Roll

*CON: on a 10+, you keep your footing and stay your course; on a 7-9, roll:

1d12 EFFECT

- 1-3 You draw the attention of a flock of MAGPIE HAWKS.
- 4-6 You're blown off course and become lost
- 7-9 You're knocked down
- 10-12 You're temporarily blinded by a flurry of pinecones, limestone dust, and animal bones

AREA • THE MURK

Perilous, Neutral

An expanse of dark water, from which protrude a scattering of rocky islets colored gray, orange and pink by mineral deposits and lichen. Home of the fearsome MURK TURTLES.

AREA • CRYSTAL CAVES

Unsafe, Neutral

A skeletal system of crystalline caves, connecting the islets of the Murk below the water level. Dangerously unstable to explore, rich with crystals that can be chipped or pried free. Their deepest rooms are grown from oldest rock; somewhere within lies the EYE OF THE EARTH, a scrying stone from the dawn of time.

TRAP RUNNER • EYE OF THE EARTH

24 weight

A rough crystal the size of a human head, clouded with hairline cracks.

When you *gaze into the Eye of the Earth*, it shows you what you want to see, as long as the object of your desire is on land.

ENCOUNTER • TRAP RUNNERS

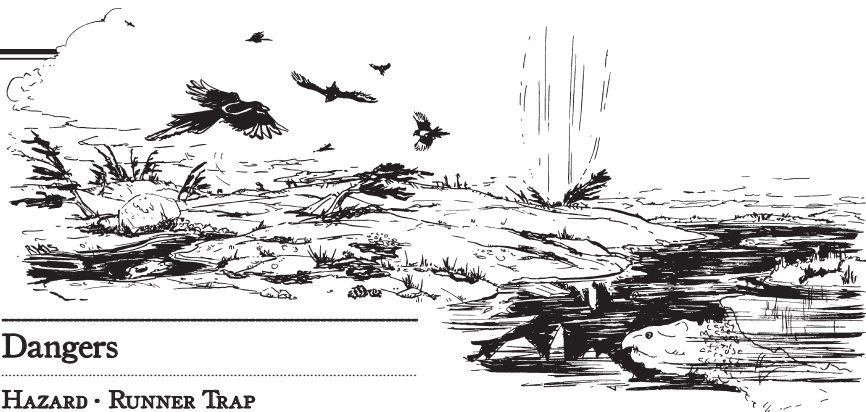
Neutral

Solitary trappers who criss-cross the alvar, recovering prey from pit and snare and deadfall, their handiwork creating a treacherous landscape for outsiders. They live solitary lives, and will trade for hunting equipment, food, or warm blankets. But they do not like talk.

SITE • REFLECTING POOL

Unsafe, Neutral

A clear pool much deeper than it looks, its bowl-like bottom lined with silver. Anyone attempting to reach the bottom will run out of air before doing so. Due to its shape, the pool acts as a lensed mirror, and even on cloudy days reflects a bright beam skyward, marking the spot for all who know it. TRAP RUNNERS use the pool as a shrine, and may sometimes be found praying at its edge.



Dangers

HAZARD • RUNNER TRAP

Concealed, Neutral

When you *step into a trap laid by a TRAP RUNNER*, roll +WIS: **on a 10+**, you notice in time; **on a 7-9**, roll below and suffer the trap's first effect; **on a 6-**, mark XP, roll for a trap, and suffer both effects.

1D12 TRAP & EFFECT

- 1-4 Deadfall: 1d8 damage; knocked unconscious
- 5-8 Pit: 1d6 damage; *poisoned* wooden stakes
- 9-12 Snare: *ensnared*; suspended from a tree at great height

MONSTER • THE GALE

Solitary, Cautious, Magical, intelligent

Damage Flock of magpie hawks 1d8+2 (*close, reach, near, far*)

HP 12 **Armor** 0

Special Qualities Spellcaster

Usually found in THE FLATS, the Gale appears as a humanoid silhouette of swirling leaves, grit, feathers, and sparkling treasures brought by its company of MAGPIE HAWKS. It will keep its distance, screaming warnings at outsiders over the howling wind. Uncannily sensitive to sound and smell, it may be approached only by the most stealthy means. It covets and has been searching for the EYE OF THE EARTH.

Instinct To drive off outsiders

- * Blind them with birds
- * Blow their belongings away
- * Scatter them like chaff

MONSTER • MAGPIE HAWK

Group, Small

Damage Beak and talons 1d4 (*hand*)

HP 2 **Armor** 0

Special Qualities Flying

Moving in pairs or flocks, these black raptors sometimes team up to move objects larger than one alone can carry.

Instinct To collect shiny things

- * Strike from the sky
- * Seize something shiny
- * Take wing and flee the scene

MONSTER • MURK TURTLE

Solitary, Large

Damage Beak 2d6 (*close*), tail swing (2d6, *reach, forceful*)

HP 16 **Armor** 3

Special Qualities Aquatic

Well-armored, slippery, slow on land, and able to extend their necks at lightning speed to snap up prey. Their shells are prized in some quarters, and some say they can be trained as mounts.

Instinct To find food and protect eggs

- * Seize them with beak
- * Drag them into the Murk
- * Retract and regenerate

TREASURE • MURK TURTLE SHELL

5 weight, 300 coins

An impenetrable shell as large as a horsecart, mottled with bright colors.