

# The Blighted Warren - 516SuBlWa

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The quiet town of Sprin has always had a mystical connection with the land which is thanks to the Moonburrow Hare. This mystical creature is not quite a hare as it lays eggs throughout its warren which when ready the hatching of the creature fertilises the land and enriches the soils like nothing else.

However the town's in trouble as their crops wither, their animals thin and their way of life is threatened.

**DM:** (The hairs eggs are being taken by poachers and their trained weasels. The elder of the village suspects something is wrong but the connection between the people of Sprin and the land is so strong that its people wither with the plants.)



The party approach Sprin as the sun rises and its first rays capture the sight of the village. A thick blanket of mist covers the land and crops can be seen poking through the carpet of mist towards the morning sky. Sprin was known for being a quiet, mist-laden town on the edge of the Knotwood, a sprawling and ancient forest known for its knotted and sturdy trees.

As the party got closer and the sun pushed back the tides of mist the party slowed their steps as the first signs of problems were revealed. The crops that grew on the plains around this valley were wilting, dying and the animals that moved near them appeared to be starving despite the vegetation that grew within reach.

Entering the town a few withered looking farmers moved about as they led their sickened beasts of burden to help drive plow and cart. The mayor, an elderly elf named Seraine, approached the party as one of the few villagers, a young adult, rushed to alert her of the party's arrival. She explains that the town is blessed by the **Moonburrow Hare**, a mystical rabbit-like creature that lays eggs beneath their fields. She suspects that the hare is the cause of the problems but she and the villagers are too weak to try and locate the swift creature. She mentions something about having to resort to having to ask for help from Mr B. but won't go into it further.

The party is directed to where the hare has been seen before, which is near one of the crops or carrots and other root vegetables at the edge of the forest.



**DM:** (The hare has been taken and its eggs collected by trained weasels owned by a band of poachers. The party finds tracks of the weasel's that lead to cart wheels and hoof prints of a mule.)

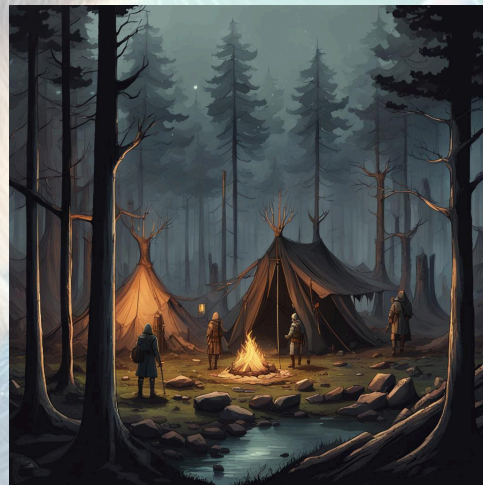
As promised the party comes across a large burrow that leads underneath the crops. However as they are looking for signs of the hare or its eggs they find a smashed colourful

eggshell amongst pawprints that belong to a fox or a large weasel or ferret. The party follow the pawprints which leads them to a set of cart wheels and hoof prints that likely belong to a mule that lead deeper into the Knotwood.

As the party follows the cart tracks deeper into the Knotwood they begin to notice a different, unusual footprint scattered amongst the others. A large rabbit's footprints followed the cart and scattered occasionally amongst the footprints was silver hairs.

As they continued loud voices could be heard from up ahead in excited chatter. 'Finally got it. Just as dumb as any other beast.' a woman's voice said with a laugh. 'Kug, take this to the camp. The boss will be expecting us later. We'll take the eggs with the wagon but the hare should go first.' The party crossed over the bushes just in time to see a half-orc grab a large squirming sack before jumping on the back of a horse and taking off. Half a dozen more men and women are busy lifting cages with giant weasels locked inside onto the back of a cart. Amongst the already loaded cages are boxes of multi-coloured eggs, **Moonburrow Hare** eggs.

**DM:** (The encounter should be moderate with the weasels also posing a threat if released by the poachers as an action. The cart is in the middle of a small clearing with trees and bushes around the outside which can provide cover. However, the poachers may decide to take off if the party doesn't stop the driver quickly or find another way to disable the wagon.) After the final poacher falls backwards he pleads for his life offering them anything. He tells them about Bugs, the merchant who is going to blackmail Seraine into giving the villages harvest to him exclusively in exchange for the eggs to be given over - but not the hare. He also tells the party where to find Bugs and the poachers camp and offers to take them there if he is spared.



The party makes haste in following the tracks from the outrider back to the poachers camp. A series of tents, camp fires and cages with more hunting weasels surround a large lavish tent in the middle of the small tent village. There are a lot of empty or vacant tents and a man can be heard complaining about the missing men and women that did not return to camp.

**DM:** (The final encounter lies within the tents of the camp. See map on next page. This encounter should be challenging with a gladiator-esque half-orc providing the largest physical threat with a few other poachers attacking with poisoned crossbows and bows. MR Bugs has some training with a sword but will order the poachers to move even outside of their normal turn order.)

Begging for his life, Bugs attempts to deceive the party into sparing him in exchange for the hare. But as he goes to open the cage the party sees a blade flash as he goes to murder the mystical creature. The party reacts in time as as the horrid man breathes his last breaths the Moonburrow Hare sniffs his hands and hops off in the direction of the cart where its eggs still lay.

They return to the town after the Moonburrow Hare takes the eggs and returns to the burrow beneath the fields. As if by magic the plants start to stand taller in the dusk light and the villagers start to look healthier, a call of celebration and praise breaking out across the land.



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