# VILLAGE OF THE 'SHROOMS

illage of the 'Shrooms is a Fifth Edition adventure intended for three to five characters of 2nd to 4th level and is optimized for four characters with an average party level (APL) of 3. The characters investigate an isolated village inhabited only by children. There, they discover a carnivorous alien fungus that is

controlling most of the children in an attempt to spread itself far and wide and infest the whole kingdom. They must find a way to save the children and destroy the fungus before it escapes beyond the limits of the town. This adventure can be dropped into any campaign setting.

## BACKGROUND

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Two tendays ago, the residents of Kingston were startled by a blazing fireball that hurtled from the night sky and crashed into the cornfields south of the village. Those that saw and heard ran from their homes to investigate the thunderous boom and found a glowing meteorite embedded in a roughly circular, fifty-foot-wide, smoldering clearing. Heat washed off the eight-foot meteorite like a wave, while faint wisps of smoke rose into the night sky from the charred corn stalks on the edge of the crater. The villagers poked and prodded at the rock but eventually, when the last dull glow had gone and the steam stopped rising, they retreated into their homes, satisfied that there was nothing to fear.

No one had witnessed the glowing ember that shot from the fireball a few seconds before it crashed into the dirt. No one had seen it streak over the village and plummet into the grounds of Kingston Manor. No one saw the glowing rock crack, or the puff of spores that burst from it and settled on the soil where they took root.

No one saw anything, until little Isaac Kingston limped from the manor and found the strange purple-capped fungi that had sprung from the soil overnight. Nor did anyone see the reaction from Jeremiah Kingston when little Isaac showed his father the strange crop that had sprouted. No one saw the red angry welts rising on little Isaac's face left by his father's hand, or the tears that fell from his eyes as he sobbed on his knees in the dirt. But the spores, released when little Isaac fell, that invaded his body and were carried to his mind, could feel his pain and anger and confusion. And the fungus knew that it could work with this.

Jeremiah Kingston was enraged when little Isaac disturbed him an hour later by entering the sanctum of his study. Even as he rose to his feet, harsh words already spewing from his lips, he realized something was wrong. Little Isaac was not cowering as he approached him, not even when Jeremiah lifted the cane he always kept by his desk. He raised it above his head, but Isaac simply glared up at him with a steely gaze and menacing smile. Jeremiah's anger burned ever brighter until his arms fell limp as a force choked his neck, dropping him to the ground. Gasping as he lay on the floor, looking up at his son, his final thought before the darkness swallowed him was that his son did not look so little anymore.

Isaac was thrilled with the power the fungus had given him, so he never questioned the instructions it issued. One by one, he brought the children of Kingston to the garden, where the fungus assimilated them and turned them into more of its willing puppets, the so-called myconkids. Five days later, most of the children were under its control, so it put the next phase of its plan in motion. That night, the children used their new-found powers to lead the adults of



the village to the cornfields to be infected, and tied them to stakes driven into the ground. The fungus did not need them as puppets, at least not while they lived. Instead, it required nourishment to feed and spread. The adults were consumed quickly, and with their dying breaths, they cast the spores far and wide, leaving their husks hanging from the stakes like macabre scarecrows. That night, every adult in the town was culled and the fungus spread throughout all the cornfields surrounding the town.

The fungus began to infect other creatures (birds, wolves, and fish) in an effort to spread further but these hosts proved poor incubators, though they were useful puppets in a pinch. The fungus realized it needed more humanoids in order to spread itself farther. In the meantime, it would hunt down the last of the children so that no one in Kingston was beyond its control. And so, the fungus waited.

#### **Adventure Summary**

The characters will be drawn into the strangely empty town of Kingston where they discover the alien fungus and its host of puppet animals, scarecrows, and myconkids, and the small group of uninfected children still surviving in the village. They will have to find a way to destroy the fungus and escape the village, perhaps rescuing the children as they do so. If they don't, the characters will simply end up as fertilizer for the alien fungus.

### Adventure Hooks

If you require some adventure hooks as to why the party would be journeying to Kingston, choose from the following:

*Strange Behavior.* Reports of animals acting strangely around the village of Kingston have filtered through to neighboring towns. Wolves have been seen prowling around the roads and fields of Kingston, stopping anyone from leaving (even during daylight hours), and strange murders of crows have been seen circling the village, as if searching for

something. These animals need to be dealt with so that the town is no longer cut off from the realm.

*Missed Deliveries.* Members of the local merchant's guild approach the characters with a job they need doing. Regular shipments from the Kingston distillery have not turned up as expected. Initially, they thought there was simply a delay, but a messenger dispatched to enquire about the disruption has not returned and now they are worried that something more ominous is afoot. They will pay the characters 100 gp each if they travel to Kingston and discover what has happened to the deliveries, and an extra 100 gp if they get the deliveries flowing again. To this end, they suggest the characters search out distillery owner Jeremiah Kingston when they reach the village.

*Shooting Star.* A blazing object was seen streaking through the night sky two tendays ago. Observers who saw it reported that the object was hurtling from the heavens at great speed and surmised that it came to rest somewhere near the village of Kingston. Being the curious sort, the characters decide to journey forth and find and investigate this strange heavenly object.

## KINGSTON

The village of Kingston is a farming community that grew around the original Kingston family farm. Later generations added the Kingston mill and distillery after they created a delicious whisky from the various local crops. Nowadays, the Kingston family doesn't run the farms by itself but has attracted tenant farmers to work the land, while the distillery has become the main source of income. The village grew from the banks of the Maine river as it was a plentiful source of water to irrigate the farmlands, as well as a source of power for the mill.

A dozen or so homes and farmsteads line the road or are scattered throughout the area, as well as the mill, distillery, general store, local tavern, and Kingston Manor which sits on a rise at the northern edge of the village. Though there is no militia, there was a village constable who had a small guardhouse to deal with the occasional drunk or vagabond the village might suffer.

The village is now largely abandoned, inhabited by just fifteen myconkids at Kingston Manor and the six remaining uninfected children who have taken refuge in the mill. The remains of the adult population are spread throughout the cornfields as the scarecrow-like, undead sporehusks.

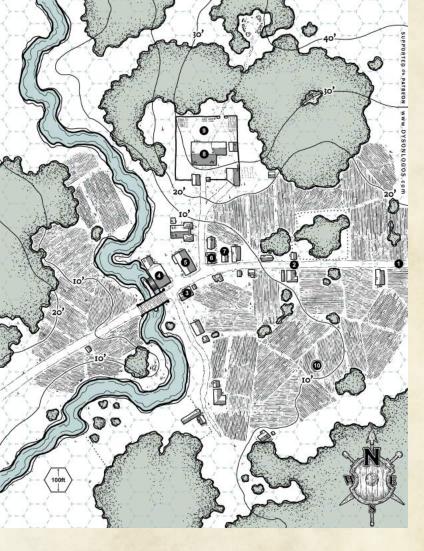
#### **General Features**

Unless otherwise stated, areas of Kingston have the following features:

**Buildings.** The many buildings spread throughout the village are constructed from wooden planks. Building stories are a standard 10 feet in height. All of the buildings are built on a stone foundation with wooden planks used for floors and roofs. Almost all of the buildings are unlocked and abandoned with no signs of recent life. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check will reveal that there are small humanoid footprints in the dust in the kitchen areas. The pantries and cupboards have been emptied of all food.



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*Doors.* Doors are made of solid oak and have an AC of 15 and 18 hit points, with immunity to poison and psychic damage. Any locked doors require a DC 12 Dexterity check by someone proficient with thieves' tools to open, or a character can break the door open with a successful DC 15 Strength check.

**Illumination.** All of the buildings in the village are unlit as the myconkids do not require light to see in the dark, and the uninfected have learned that the light just betrays their location to the creatures hunting them down.

**Purple Fungus.** The alien fungus has spread throughout the cornfields surrounding the village, growing in clusters of purple-capped mushrooms that pose a danger to all uninfected creatures that disturb them. Any creature that touches or disturbs a patch of the fungus causes a puff of spores to be released. It takes 3 (1d6) poison damage and must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be infected by the spores. Any character that is wearing a mask or some type of protection over their mouth and nose will have advantage on this saving throw. It takes 1d4 + 1 hours for the first symptoms to show in infected creatures. The symptoms include fatigue and cramps. The infected creature suffers 3 (1d6) poison damage and incurs one level of exhaustion. The cycle then repeats until the creature is cured or dies from the infection. The only way to cure the infection is through magical means such as lesser restoration or heal, or by destroying the fungus completely throughout the village. Any

creature that dies from this infection is raised as a **sporehusk** (see Appendix). Should an infected creature die by other means, the disease will continue to consume its body, but it will not rise as a sporehusk. The fungus can be destroyed by fire, but all infestations have to be destroyed before any infected creatures are cured and the now-dead spores flushed from their bodies.

*Cornfields.* For every hex within the cornfields that the characters enter, roll a d20 for a random encounter. An encounter occurs on a roll of 15 or higher. Roll on the table below for encounters:

d4	Encounter
1	1d4 swarms of crows (using swarm of ravens stat block)
2	3 wolves
3	1 <b>sporehusk</b> & 1 <b>myconkid</b> (see Appendix for both)
4	2 <b>sporehusks</b> (see Appendix)

**Perimeter.** The alien fungus has infected the local wildlife and is using them as puppets to patrol the village and stop anyone from escaping. All **crows** (use **raven** stat block), **wolves**, and **quippers** in the vicinity of the village are under the control of the fungus and will attack any creature that tries to escape Kingston, fighting to the death. The stat blocks for the **myconkids** and **sporehusks** can be found in Appendix D. If any characters try to escape, use the following table for the encounter, based on the location:

Round	Road	Fields	Woods	River
٦	1d4 + 1 <b>wolves</b>	1d4 swarms of crows	1d4 <b>wolves</b>	1d4 + 1 swarms of quippers
2	1d4 swarms of crows	2 wolves	1d4 swarms of crows	1d4 swarms of crows
3	2 wolves	∃ sporehusk	1 wolf & 1 swarm of crows	1d4 <b>swarms</b> of quippers
4	2 sporehusks	2 swarms of crows & 1 sporehusk	ا sporehusk	1 myconkid
5	2 myconkids	ז <b>myconkid</b> & א <b>olf</b> ו	ا <b>myconkid</b>	2 swarms of quippers
6	ا sporehusk	2 sporehusks	1 sporehusk & 1d4 wolves	1 myconkid & 2 swarms of crows

If the characters retreat back into the village, the animals will stop attacking, and only the sporehusks and myconkids will give chase.

The following locations are keyed to the map of Kingston village:

#### 1. EAST ROAD

The east road is a packed-dirt road that runs for a mile from the main caravan road to Kingston. Travellers know they are approaching the village when they encounter the fields full of corn that press tightly on both sides of the road. This gives the road an oppressive, claustrophobic feel in the summer when the crops are high. There are a large number of crows circling overhead.

**Encounter: Bait** When approaching the town, the party hears the cries of frightened children. Rounding the bend, they see two **myconkids** (see Appendix) surrounded and being menaced by five **wolves**. The wolves, like all the wildlife around Kingston, are under the control of the fungus, and this is just a trap to lure in unsuspecting travelers. The wolves will attack any character that intervenes, but if they are moderately hurt, they will flee. The myconkids will play the part of helpless children in order to lure the characters into helping them. They will ask the characters to escort them back into town, claiming they need help after the adults disappeared on the night the meteorite crashed nearby.

#### 2. FARMHOUSE

While the characters are passing between two farmhouses on the eastern road, read the following text:

There's a sudden whistling followed by a crack, as a rock flung from the south smacks one of the children on the temple, stunning them and knocking them to the ground. More missiles fly, striking the children and knocking them to the ground. "Get away from them! They're going to kill you!" a voice yells. A figure emerges from behind the southern farmhouse, a boy of maybe fifteen years, a scarf tied over his lower face. He reaches his hand out to you and shouts, "Come with me if you want to live!"

*Encounter: Factions.* Three of the **uninfected** attack the **myconkids** with their slings and attempt to get the party to follow them. They will not attack the characters but will flee if they are attacked in return. The myconkids will attempt to capture the uninfected if they get the chance, though if they escape, they will then turn their attention to the characters and all pretence will be dropped.

The uninfected use **commoner** statistics with the following modifications:

- They have 9 Strength and 12 Dexterity rather than 10 and 10.
- They have proficiency in Stealth.
- Their club attack is replaced with the following action: *Sling.* Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit*: 3 (1d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

#### 3. THE GOLDEN SHEAF TAVERN

The tavern is empty, though the half-consumed food and drinks on the tables indicate that something unexpected caused the people to disappear. A few stools have been knocked over, as if whatever happened happened quickly. Dust has settled over everything showing little signs of life, though a few small humanoid footprints, like those of a child, can be found in the kitchen.

**Treasure: Ten Green Bottles.** Most of the food and drink has been pilfered from the tavern already, though a cursory search of the bar area will reveal ten full bottles of *Kingston Whisky* (see Appendix). This is a highly potent and highly flammable spirit. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a sack of 500 gp in a hidden cupboard beneath the bar.

#### 4. KINGSTON MILL

The mill is a large building that is split into two floors. The lower floor is home to the great millstones that are powered by the water wheel on the back of the building. Beneath the stones, which are elevated roughly 4 feet off the ground, are the bins to catch the freshly ground grains. There are stairs in the corner leading to the upper floor 20 feet above. This is the grain store, and there are many burlap sacks of wheat, barley, and corn waiting to be ground. There are two cutouts in the floor so that the grain can be tipped into the hoppers that feed into the millstones below.

Unlike most of the buildings in town the mill is locked up tight. The large double doors are barred from the inside making it almost impossible to break them down. It would require a successful DC 25 Strength check to break them open. There is another door on the upper floor where the grain pulley is located, though this door is blocked by many bags of grain on the inside. The only useable door is on the back wall and leads to a walkway that would be used to access the waterwheel.

**Encounter: Sanctuary:** This is where the six **uninfected** (see above) have made their home since the fungus has taken over the village. They will not attack any creature unless they know it is under the fungus' control, or to defend themselves if attacked first. They will ask the characters for help unless they have allied themselves with the myconkids. The uninfected have the following information to share with the characters:

- Always wear a mask or similar to protect your nose and mouth, as the strange purple mushrooms release spores that can take control of your mind.
- The adults were all taken into the crop fields fifteen days ago and have not been seen since.
- The myconkids have become monsters since they were infected by the fungus, and they have mind-control powers.
- The animals in the area have all been infected too and are controlled by the myconkids.
- The leader of the myconkids is Isaac Kingston, and they are in Kingston Manor.
- There was a meteorite that crashed from the sky into the south fields around the time that things started getting strange.

#### 5. KINGSTON DISTILLERY

The interior of the distillery is taken up with four great copper pot stills, two at either end of the room. Delicate copper piping leads from the top of one still into another sat



Sporehusk

beside it. Beneath two of the stills are braziers ready to be lit and begin the process, while there are water baths beneath the others to condense the vapors into alcohol once again. Even though this area has not been used in some time there is still the heady odor of alcohol hanging in the air due to the storage vats against the south wall.

**Treasure:** Moonshine. The storage vats contain 500 gallons of pure grain alcohol. This is highly flammable, and poisonous if drank in high volumes.

#### 6. GENERAL STORE

The general store is a simple one-room store that has tightly packed shelves cluttered with everything you could ever need. Like the rest of the village, there is no sign of life, though there are numerous footprints in the dust, so someone has definitely been here recently. Common supplies can be found in the store, including anything on the Adventuring Gear table in the *PHB* worth 25 gp or less.

*Encounter: Stakeout.* One **myconkid** (see Appendix) and two **wolves** lie in wait ready to pounce on anyone that sneaks into the store looking for provisions.





#### 7. GUARDHOUSE

The guardhouse contains two iron-barred cells, each with a single cot and a bucket. The cells are locked. The rest of the room contains a locked roll top desk and leather backed chair, facing a fireplace.

*Treasure: Contraband* The desk contains the keys to the cells, and a finely crafted dagger in a leather sheath. This is a +1 dagger.

### 8. KINGSTON MANOR

The manor is a grand two-story building set atop a small rise overlooking the village. The building is open and largely disused, though most of the rooms are lavishly decorated with mahogany paneling, silk tapestries, paintings in gilded frames, and crystal chandeliers throughout the manor. Silver candlesticks and ornaments are in almost every room. Characters wishing to loot the manor may roll once on the Treasure Hoard: Challenge 5-10 table in the *DMG*.

Only two rooms are in use within the manor:

#### A. PARLOR

The parlor's fine decor has been tarnished by the large swathes of dirt that have been spread over half the floor in a thick layer leading from the back door to the fireplace on the south wall. The dirt is covered with the purple-capped fungus (see General Features).

*Encounter: Myconkids.* Four myconkids (see Appendix) are standing in the soil, their heads dropping and eyes closed. Thin tendrils extend from their feet into the soil gathering nutrients from the soil while they sleep. They will awaken if they or the fungus are disturbed.

#### **B. STUDY**

Read the following as the characters enter the room:

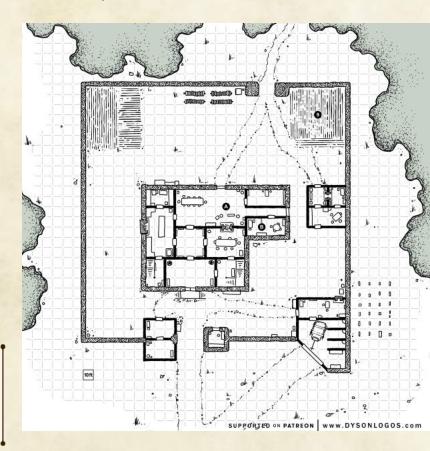
A putrid stench assaults your senses as soon as you open the door. Buzzing flies dart past as you step in, taking in the decor. A large mahogany table with ornate chairs sits opposite the door, and two bookcases rest against the south and east walls. A silk screen hides the rest of the room but behind it, you discover the source of the stench and flies; the bloated rotting corpse of Jeremiah Kingston lies in a crumpled heap before his desk.

A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check will reveal that the cause of death was strangulation caused by a crushed neck, and that death occurred around twenty days ago. If the characters search the body, they will find a gold pocket watch (50 gp) and a small key.

*Treasure: Recipe.* The desk has a locked drawer (the key is in Jeremiah's pocket) which holds a notebook that has the family recipe for *Kingston Whisky* (see Appendix).

#### 9. KINGSTON MANOR GROUNDS

There are two servants' quarters in the garden, as well as a coach house in the south-east corner. All of the outbuildings stand empty and disused. The area at the back of the house has two gardens in opposite corners. Both are festooned with the purple-capped fungus, though the northeastern one has many tendrils and vines twisting through the dirt. Isaac Kingston stands within, flanked by two wolves. When the characters appear, Isaac drops to his knees and plunges his arms into the soil, allowing the vines and tendrils to climb up and cover his body. Within seconds, his figure is completely obscured by the writhing, twisting limbs. A moment later, the mass stands, a large humanoid figure composed of the twisting vines and adorned with the purple capped fungus all over its body.



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*Encounter: Fungal Mound.* The **fungal mound** has decided the characters are too dangerous to attempt to capture so will fight them to the death. It is accompanied by two **wolves** and uses the **shambling mound** statistics with the following modifications:

• *New Trait: Spore Cloud.* The fungal mound is surrounded by a spore cloud. A creature that touches it or that hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, the creature takes 3 (1d6) poison damage and is infected (see General Features).

#### **10. CRASHED METEOR**

A 50-foot clearing of broken cornstalks sits in the southern fields. At its center is the craggy silver-flecked meteorite that fell from the skies twenty days ago. Staked into the ground flanking the meteorite are two grotesque hooded scarecrows, with many crows sat on each.

*Encounter: Sporehusks.* The two **swarms of crows** and two **sporehusks** (see Appendix) will attack as soon as the characters near the meteorite.

## CONCLUSION

Should the characters survive and manage to completely destroy the fungus within the village, the infected animals and humanoids will suffer bouts of nausea for 24 hours as the spores are purged from their bodies, after which they will be entirely cured. The surviving children can be escorted to the next town where they will be taken in and rehomed with new families. If the characters were sent by the merchants guild, they can return and explain what happened in Kingston, though they can claim their extra reward if they found the recipe for *Kingston Whisky*.

If the characters should perish or flee the town without completely destroying the fungus, it continues spreading beyond the limits of Kingston and overwhelms the neighbouring towns and villages until it consumes the entire region.





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## APPENDIX

## Sporehusk

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 8 Hit Points 22 (3d8 + 9) Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

#### Saving Throws Wisdom +0

Damage Resistances fire

**Damage Immunities** poison **Condition Immunities** blinded, deafened, frightened,

poisoned

Senses blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8

Languages understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

### Traits

*False Appearance.* While the sporehusk remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary scarecrow.

**Undead Fortitude.** If damage reduces the sporehusk to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the sporehusk drops to 1 hit point instead.

### Actions

**Rotting Touch.** Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage and the target must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the target takes 10 (3d6) necrotic damage, and on a successful saving throw the target takes half as much necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken. If this reduces the target's hit point maximum to 0, the target dies. Otherwise, the reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest.

## Myconkid

Small humanoid (human), neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (natural armor) Hit Points 55 (10d6 + 20) Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	СНА
9 (-1)	12 (+1)	14 (+ <mark>2</mark> )	14 (+2)	9 (-1)	8 (-1)

#### Skills Perception +1

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11 **Languages** Common, telepathy 100 ft. (can

communicate with other infected creatures and give them instructions)

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

#### Traits

*Distress Spores.* When the myconkid takes damage, all other infected creatures within 300 feet of it can sense its pain.

**Innate Spellcasting (Psionics).** The myconkid's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately case the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: charm person, chill touch, command 3/day each: hold person

### Actions

*Fling. Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

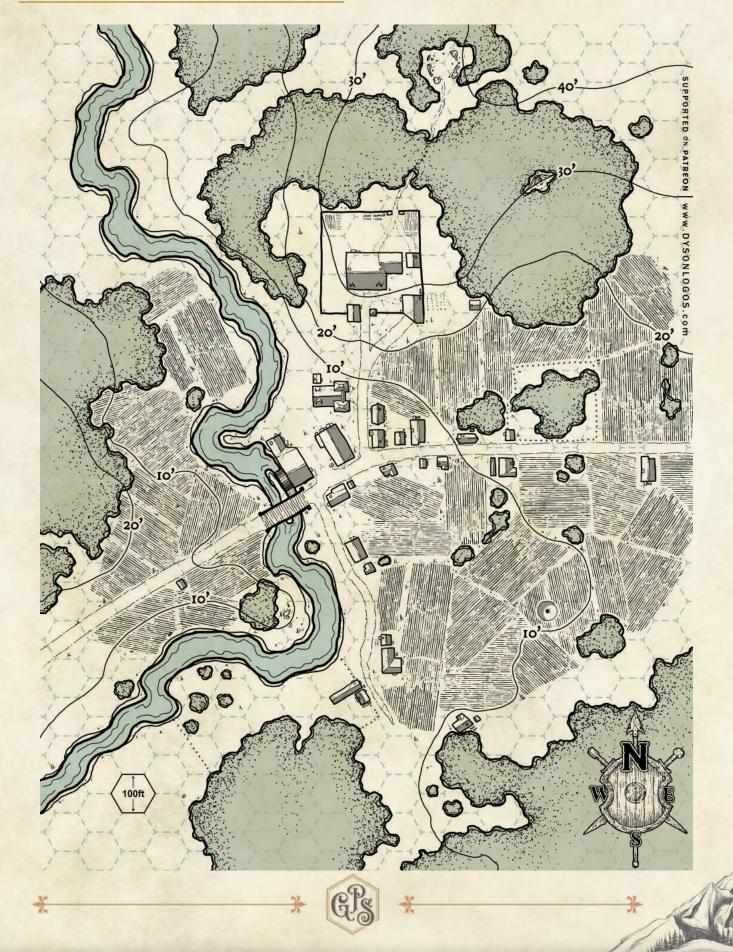
The myconkid hurls a small projectile at the target using the power of its mind.

#### KINGSTON WHISKY, potion, common

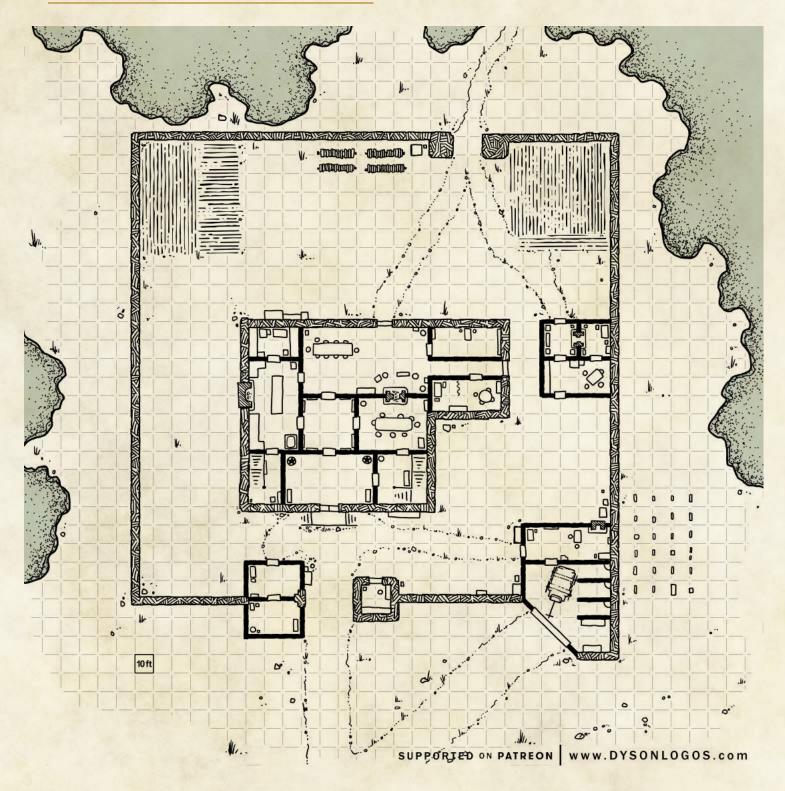
This spirit has restorative and medicinal qualities. When you drink one measure of spirit you regain 2d4 + 2 hit points. If you drink more than one measure within an hour then you are intoxicated and any attack rolls or Dexterity checks are made with disadvantage, though you do gain advantage on Charisma checks. These effects last for 1 hour.

GPS

## PLAYER MAPS KINGSTON VILLAGE



### KINGSTON MANOR





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