

THE SORROWS OF SOUTHSWARD KEEP

A 3RD – 5TH LEVEL ONE-SHOT ADVENTURE



THE FIRESIDE GM

An adventure of dark fantasy and tragedy
for the world's greatest roleplaying game



THE SORROWS OF SOUTHSWARD KEEP

*An adventure of tragedy and dark fantasy by
Isaiah "The Fireside GM" Lee*



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The Fireside GM, otherwise known as Isaiah Lee, is an English graduate with a love of games. He currently works in an educational setting while pursuing creative endeavors on the side. *The Sorrows of Southward Keep* is a labor of love, and he hopes you enjoy this adventure.

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *The Sorrows of Southward Keep*. This is a *Dungeons & Dragons* adventure suitable for characters of 3rd-5th level. You can expect this one-shot adventure to run for about a single 3-5-hour play session. While potential adventure hooks and adventure continuations have been suggested, the adventure requires no greater context to run and is entirely setting neutral. Southward Keep can simply be a random dungeon that your players stumble upon amid other adventures.

While this adventure does include an involved backstory and a mystery to solve if your players are so inclined, none of it is strictly necessary for the adventure. If you wish to skip over most of the story, this adventure can simply be a mildly creepy dungeon in the forest. However, if your players want to get the “best” ending, paying careful attention to the story clues they get throughout the adventure will be vital.

Thank you for considering my adventure! I hope you and your players enjoy it. If you end up running this, please let me know how it went in the comments! I am always looking for feedback and enjoy hearing how different playgroups handle my adventures.

CONTENT WARNING

This is a tragic adventure that contains elements of horror and dark fantasy. There are themes such as murder, torture, corruption, and undeath. Some aspects of the adventure, such as Arthur’s obsession with Freja, may be triggering to certain individuals. Please read the adventure fully and consider whether this story is a good fit for your table.

If you are looking for lighter fare, check out my free adventure, *Lost and Found*, also on the DMsGuild.

NOTE: No animals die in the course of this adventure!

USING THIS ADVENTURE

Don’t forget to download **Map Pack 01 – The Fall of Southward Keep** from my DMsGuild page! These free maps can be used for online VTT play or just as a reference for running in meatspace.

- Immediate, important, and interactable encounter information is always listed in bullet points.
- **Bold Text** refers to an **Adventure Location**, a **Monster/NPC**, or **Treasure**.
- Monster stat blocks are inlaid in the text next to the encounter they will be used in, but they can also be found in **Appendix A**.
- Detailed descriptions of treasure can be found in **Appendix B**.
- Player handouts can be found in **Appendix C**.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Southward Keep, a ruined remnant of a bygone age, lies hidden within Mosswind Wood. As the heavy winter snows begin to melt and the spring flowers bloom, your party stumbles upon the tower. As they explore, they will find evidence of Southward Keep having been occupied over the last winter by a party of knights taking shelter from the elements. However, they also encounter dead bodies killed in so gruesome a manner as to have left undead specters haunting the grounds in their wake.

The party will have to fight past these spirits to explore the tower, earn treasure, and uncover the mystery behind the tragedy that befell the denizens of the keep. If the party are thorough in their investigation, they may find some or all the answers to this mystery. Why did these knights come to occupy the tower in the first place? What led to their tragic demise?

Depending on how thorough the party is during their investigations, they may be more or less prepared when they reach the top of the tower, the **Arcane Workshop**, and face the screaming specter, still haunting the place that she died. If the party has the resources and inclination, they may either destroy the banshee, or convince it to depart peacefully. The choice is up to your players.



ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Southward Keep is an abandoned ruin at the edge of the Mosswind forest, a remnant of the old Southward Empire. Now, the stone tower has become an object of folklore and mystery. The denizens of the nearby town, Lantern's Cross, claim that it is haunted. Forest dwellers know to steer clear of the ruin. For who knows what dark magic the corrupt mages and summoners of old got up to in that place?

SNOWED IN

Last autumn, a court mage and her most trusted knights were caught in an unseasonably early blizzard as they patrolled Mosswind Wood. They sought shelter in Southward Keep, where they planned to wait for the snow to melt. But winter was here to stay, and the party resigned themselves to an extended stay in the abandoned keep.

The mage, Freja, kept mostly to the arcane workshop on top of the tower, poring over lost artifacts and spell scrolls that were discovered there. Meanwhile, the knights worked together to fix up Southward Keep and gather enough provisions to survive the season.

As the days grew shorter, darker, and lonelier, the party began to spend more time together. Two men, Sir Arthur, and Sir Gammond, both fell for the eccentric mage. Eventually, Freja reciprocated Gammond's feelings, and the pair became inseparable. Arthur chose to withdraw to the old hunting cabin next door, preferring to sulk in solitude.

UNCOVERING THE FIEND

Exploring the cabin, Arthur discovered a hidden root cellar. There, caged by some previous inhabitant of the keep, was a devilish imp. The imp, Scoza, goaded Arthur into talking to him about his bruised feelings – hoping to corrupt the knight and eventually persuade him into freeing the imp. Scoza listened to Arthur, subtly manipulating his resentment into hatred.

Eventually, Arthur was persuaded by Scoza to confront Gammond on the issue of their competing love for Freja. He called Gammond to the cabin, and the two argued. Their argument led them to the cellar, where Gammond discovered the existence of Scoza. Bewildered by why Arthur would keep such a thing alive,

Gammond drew his weapon. Arthur defended himself, but let his rage blind him. When Arthur regained his senses, he chained the beaten and unconscious Gammond to the wall, trying to work out what to do.

A TRAGIC END

Scoza seized the opportunity to play on Arthur's fear and anger. He told Arthur that this could be the solution to his heartbreak. Persuaded, Arthur forged a letter from Gammond to Freja, claiming that Gammond had abandoned his post and his love for Freja. Heartbroken, Freja retreated to her study to focus on her work alone.

Emboldened, Arthur climbed the tower and forced his way into Freja's study. When he proclaimed his undying love for the mage, Freja rejected Arthur, as gently as she could.

Unwilling to reign in his already out of control violent tendencies, Arthur slew Freja in the wake of her rejection. Their fight was loud enough to rouse the other knights of the keep: Sir Farren and Lady Carina.

Battle ensued, and Arthur cut down Farren and Carina. Badly injured and stricken with guilt, Arthur was unable to live with himself. He impaled himself on his own sword shortly after, leaving Southward Keep abandoned. It was not long after that Gammond, too, succumbed to death.

These souls, unable to seek proper rest due to their tortured end, rose again as specters haunting the floors of Southward Keep. Scoza – though unsuccessful in escaping his prison – lived to corrupt souls another day.

A NOTE ON SCOZA

While Scoza certainly played a role in the tragedy of Southward Keep, it should be noted that Scoza did not magically influence Arthur. He used evil words, yes, but just words. That was all that was required to push Arthur to the edge of sanity. There are elements of Arthur's character one may sympathize with, but overall, he is meant to be a horrible villain.

SETTING THE STAGE

If you would prefer to lead into this adventure with more panache than simply plopping the tower in the path of your players, try using any of the following adventure hooks instead.

TREASURE

Megaera, a local mage, suspects there may be undiscovered spell scrolls and other treasures held in Southward Keep. She will pay a premium price for any spell scrolls recovered from the tower.

MYSTERY

The local village people swear they have heard unsettling moans come from the ruins of Southward Keep late at night. Locals know to stay clear of the area.

ALTRUISM

A local farmer has not seen his knightly wife, Lady Carina, since last fall. She was last known to be patrolling the woods near Southward Keep. He fears the early blizzards caught her party, but holds onto hope that she may still be alive somewhere.

In addition, here are some details you may choose to sprinkle into your play session leading up to the one-shot.

- **1d4 chestnut mares** may be encountered in Mosswind Wood. Any characters who approach a horse and are proficient in **Nature** or **Animal Handling** may note that it appears too calm and well trained to be a wild horse.
- Legend has it that the ruins in Mosswind Wood were a part of the ancient Southward Empire. A powerful people who were ultimately brought down by their hubris and willingness to summon devils and demons to perform services for them.

Keep in mind, none of these details are strictly necessary. Southward Keep works just as well as a dungeon you surprise your players with. See what happens!

THE CLEARING

An ancient stone tower stands near the center of a small clearing, the dusty-rose tiled roof reaching just above the surrounding tree line. Weathered stone bricks and chipped wooden window frames betray the keep's long forgotten state. Near its base lies an exterior log cabin that appears just as abandoned, with piles of dead vegetation piled onto its flat roof, almost obscuring it to the untrained eye.

A narrow footpath links the tower and the cabin to the edge of the clearing. The rest of the glade has been overtaken by a hostile mess of blackberry thorns and creeping vines – many of which have started to encroach upon the tower causing the stonework to crumble where the growth is thickest.

- The keep has three floors of exterior windows.
- A footpath allows easy access from the edge of the glade to the front doors of the keep and the hunting cabin.
- Everything off the footpath is difficult terrain.
- Any character proficient in **Survival** can tell that the footpath has been in use by humans within the last year.
- Download **Map Pack 01 – The Sorrows of Southward Keep** for a maps of these buildings.

HUNTING CABIN

This rustic cabin, once used as a place of trade, storage, and hospitality for wandering hunters doing business with the denizens of Southward Keep has long since been neglected. While the area directly in front of the door has been cleared, the rest of the cabin seems as though it might collapse under the weight of the ivy that chokes its walls.

- The door is swollen shut and requires a **DC 12 Athletics (Strength)** check to open.
- Gaining access to the cabin by making a loud noise (such as breaking down the door), will cause the **Spectral Knight** in the basement to hide and attempt to ambush the party.



1. MAIN CABIN

The covered windows suffocate this musty room in a dreary darkness. The air smells of mold and spoiled food – and a nasty chill seems to permeate every surface. Uncomfortable wooden furniture sits in front of an ashen fireplace. On the low table in the center of the room sits an unfinished plate of rotten food, a small lock box, and several charcoal portrait drawings. Beneath the table lies a shoddy travel pack and a bug-ridden bedroll.

- The travel pack contains: 8 moldy rations, 2 torches, a **Bejeweled Dagger**, a quill and ink, and a set of fine clothes.
- The lock box is open, containing **Arthur's Confession**, 27 gp, 44 sp, and 32 cp.
- The charcoal drawings are of a woman holding a staff, dressed in thick robes. Any arcane spellcasters in the party recognize the garb as that of a local court mage.
- A rug has been pulled askew in the corner, revealing a trapdoor leading to the **Root Cellar**.
- The trapdoor is locked and can only be unlocked with a **DC 18 Thieves Tools (Dexterity) Check** or **Arthur's Key**.

EXITS

- The trapdoor leads to the **Root Cellar**.
- The north-western door leads to the **Cabin Larder**.
- The south-western door leads to the **Cabin Privy**.
- The southern door leads to **The Clearing**.

2. CABIN LARDER

This space has been kept relatively dry compared to the rest of the cabin. The window at the far end of the room shines light on the thick layer of dust which covers the room. Some hunting gear is bundled next to the door. Otherwise, the shelves are bare save for a sack of grain or box of spices scattered about.

- Investigating hunting gear yields a **Fine Yew Quiver**.
- Investigating the rest of the room yields a **Box of Sassafras**.
- If a character succeeds on a **DC 12 Investigation Check**, they will uncover a coin pouch hidden beneath the bottom shelf. It contains: **15 gp, 27 sp, and 53 cp**.

EXITS

- The eastern door leads to the **Main Cabin**.

3. CABIN PRIVY

A bucket stands upturned in front of a circular hole cut into the floorboards. The room is empty save for a buzzing fly and a horrific stench.

EXITS

- The eastern door leads to the **Main Cabin**.

4. ROOT CELLAR

Steep stairs lead down to a stone cellar – perhaps used for the storage of food or spirits in years past, now a prison for the dead and demonic. The cellar stinks of death. Characters can hear a faint scratching sound coming from the end of the room. No light makes its way down to the root cellar.

- A **Spectral Knight** is pacing the room, or if alerted, is hiding behind the staircase. It will attack once the party reaches the bottom of the stairs.
- A few dusty crates are stacked in the corner – they are mostly filled with cheap rum and rations – searching them thoroughly uncovers a **Casket of Fine Wine**.



SPECTRAL KNIGHT

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (scale mail + shield)

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)

Damage Resistances Acid, Cold, Fire, Lightning, Thunder;

Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks

Damage Immunities Necrotic, Poison

Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhaustion, Grappled,

Paralyzed, Petrified, Poisoned, Prone, Restrained, Unconscious

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Understands all languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The spectral knight can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The spectral knight makes two attacks with its longsword.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

REACTIONS

Parry. The spectral knight adds 5 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it.

GAMMOND'S BODY

The rags of a simple tunic and pants remain draped around Gammond's decomposing flesh. Putrid ooze spoils the area surrounding the body with a nauseating scent. The body is turned away from the cage, looking down at its right hand.

- Cursory medical inspection reveals splintering in the skull due to a blunt impact by club or similar weapon.
- A character who succeeds on a DC 15 **Medicine Check** discovers that Gammond did not die from his physical wounds. Judging by the emaciated state of the body, he starved to death within the last month.
- Clutched in the skeleton's right hand is **Gammond's Gold Locket**. The initials GS + FA are crudely etched on it.

SCOZA, THE IMP

A red-winged imp sits in the iron cage at the end of the cellar, trapped for well over one-hundred years, when the original inhabitants of Southward Keep left him for dead. He is an evil creature and desperate for freedom. His goal is to corrupt the party and break out of the cage by any means necessary.

Scoza, while desperate to escape, will also focus his energy on tempting moral degradation within the party, as doing so is within his nature. He will attempt to turn the party against Freja, and attempt to win the party's trust by offering them knowledge. If the party release Scoza, he may reappear as a villain in the future.

- Scoza uses the **Imp** statistics found on page 76 of the *Monster Manual*.
- Scoza has a grating, manic voice from so many years in solitude (think Gollum).
- Scoza will say things about Freja such as, "All this is the mage's fault," and "She is a cruel one."
- The imp volunteers that there is a powerful magical weapon hidden within the library. He can tell the party how to retrieve it if they free him from his prison.
- If freed, he will tell the party to place the book *Cervinus Mysterium* on the lectern, then turn invisible and fly away.



SOUTHWARD KEEP

Creeping vines and other plants have forced their way into the keep, breaking down the front door and overtaking the main hall. The party should experience the air getting colder and colder as they make their way towards the **Arcane Study**, where Freja's spirit resides. She is the most dangerous and most intelligent spirit in the keep. The characters should be aware of when they are making the choice to face her.

- The door to the keep has been busted open by aggressive ivy.
- Each room with a window in it can be considered dimly lit, otherwise the room is dark.
- A combination of creeping foliage and weathered stonework means that climbing the outside of the tower is feasible. A character must succeed on a **DC 12 Athletics (Strength) Check** to climb one story from outside the keep. If they fail the check by 5 or more, they take 2d6 fall damage per story.

1. FOYER

Tendrils of wild undergrowth have spread across the central hall, breaking up the tiled stone floor. A grand chandelier that once lit the room is now buried in a nest of ivy.

- Four **Vine Blights** (page 32 in the *Monster Manual*) rise out of the undergrowth as the party enters the room.
- Space that contains overgrown foliage is considered difficult terrain.

EXITS

- The southern entrance connects the **Foyer** to and from **The Clearing**.
- The spiral stone staircase leads up to the **Second Floor Landing**.
- The western door leads to the **Armory**.
- The eastern door leads to the **Dining Hall**.

2. ARMORY

A reinforced stone door bars the way into a cold stone room. Weapon racks full of neglected implements and pieces of rusty armor litter the space.

- The door is locked and can only be unlocked with a **DC 18 Thieves Tools (Dexterity) Check** or the **Armory Key**.
- A yellow glow emanates from the corner of the room – this is a **Sun-Touched Sword**.
- Quality supplies of interest include: 1 set of studded leather armor, two hand axes, 2 hunting bows, a quiver of 20 arrows, and a dagger.

EXITS

- The eastern door leads to the **Foyer**.



3. DINING HALL

Light filters in from the wide windows, highlighting a long mahogany table. Faded tapestries make these walls feel warmer and more inviting than the rest of the keep. A stock of firewood leans against the brick fireplace on the east side of the room.

- The north wall is covered in deep grooves from a blade or chisel. The scratches appear to be tally marks upon investigation. Scored lettering above the marks reads: *the long winter*.
- There are 63 tally marks in total.
- Faded lettering below the tally marks reads: *carina snores, her calendar bores*.
- More scratched lettering below that reads: *your knife is dull -c*.

EXITS

- The western door leads to the **Foyer**.
- The southern leads to the **Kitchen**.

4. KITCHEN

A cut of rotten venison lies on the counter, insects buzzing around the blackened meat. An unbearable stench fills the space.

- Most of the storage containers in the kitchen are empty, save for a couple filled with salted meat or nuts.
- The cupboards are filled with clutter, mainly chipped dishes, but a successful **DC 15 Investigation Check** reveals a **Silver Drinking Flask** hidden in the back.
- If the party chooses to investigate the cupboards, they will startle **1d4 rats** that flee the room.

EXITS

- The simple door to the north leads to the **Dining Hall**.
- The simple door to the south leads to the **Larder**.

5. LARDER

The squeaks of rodents echo in this cramped space. A distinct smell of old wood lingers in the air, and a fine layer of dust decorates the shelves. There is nothing of value here.

6. SECOND FLOOR LANDING

The staircase opens to a long landing with doors to bedrooms on one side. At the opposite end of the landing, another staircase leads upwards. Two chairs have been pulled out from a table near the window. An unfinished game of cards lies on the table.

- A few playing cards litter the ground beneath the table.
- A **Golden Pocket Watch** lies open beside the card game.
- A character with a **Passive Perception 14** or higher can make out metallic clanking from the floor above. It sounds like the movement of armor.
- Approaching the stairs to the **Third Floor Landing**, characters notice that light sources get dimmer, and the air grows chillier the closer they get to the third floor.
- At the stairs any light sources become half as effective, this includes magical sources such as *Light*.

EXITS

- The western stairwell leads down to the **Foyer**.
- The eastern stairwell leads up to the **Third Floor Landing**.
- The north-western door to the west left leads to **Carina's Bedroom**.
- The north-eastern door to the west left leads to **Farren's Bedroom**.
- The southern door leads to the **Library**.

8. CARINA'S BEDROOM

This room has been kept in pristine condition, albeit for the blanket of dust draped over its surfaces. A made bed faces a polished suit of scale mail erected against the wall. Beneath an orderly writing desk, several potion vials are organized inside a crate.

- A neat stack of papers on the desk are Carina's **Observational Profiles**.
- The **Armory Key** is found hidden beneath the papers.
- A complete set of **Alchemist's Supplies** is organized on the desk.
- A **Healing Potion** and a **Potion of Courage** are clustered in the crate, alongside three empty vials.

EXITS

- The southern door leads back to the **Second Floor Landing**.

7. FARREN'S BEDROOM

Dirty clothes are strewn about the room in a haphazard fashion. The bed is unmade, a set of uncared for chain mail lying in a heap at its head. A small wooden desk by the window is covered in whittled wooden ornaments, scraps of paper, and old books.

- A belt with a **Bronze Buckle** hangs off the side of the desk.
- **Farren's Travel Log** lies open on the center of the desk.
- A coin pouch rests on the bed, holding **30 gp**, **52 sp**, and **47 cp**.

EXITS

- The southern door to the east leads to the **Second Floor Landing**.



9. LIBRARY

Waterlogged books litter the floors and shelves. The southern window is shattered, and creeping ivy invades the room. An empty lectern stands out amongst the disarray.

- The chest by the broken window is a **Mimic**, using the statistics found on page 220 of the *Monster Manual*.
- A character succeeding on a **DC 18 Investigation Check** detects a draft emanating from one of the bookcases, indicating a secret room.
- The bookcase can be broken to reveal the entrance with a successful **DC 16 Athletics Check**.
- Breaking down the bookcase or making large amounts of noise in this room will draw the ire of the **Spectral Knights** on the **Third Floor Landing**.
- Placing the blank tome labeled *Cervinus Mysterium* on the empty lectern will cause the bookcase to slide into the floor, revealing the secret room.

THE SECRET ROOM

- A painted mural of an elf in forest-green hunting garb adorns the far wall.
- The engraving above the mural reads: *Ave, Founder of Southward Keep*.
- The **Longbow of the Hunt** is mounted beneath the mural.

EXITS

- The northern door leads to the **Second Floor Landing**.



10. THIRD FLOOR LANDING

On this landing, light sources flicker interminably, teeth chatter, and hair stands on end.

- Three **Spectral Knights** wander the landing aimlessly. They attack as soon as they become aware of the party.
- Three decaying corpses litter the floor between the stairwell and the door to the **Arcane Workshop**.

EXITS

- The stairwell leads down to the **Second Floor Landing**.
- The north-western door leads to **Gammond's Bedroom**.
- The south-western door leads to **Arthur's Bedroom**.
- The southern door leads to the **Arcane Workshop**.

SPECTRAL KNIGHT

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (scale mail + shield)

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)

Damage Resistances Acid, Cold, Fire, Lightning, Thunder; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks

Damage Immunities Necrotic, Poison

Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhaustion, Grappled, Paralyzed, Petrified, Poisoned, Prone, Restrained, Unconscious

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Understands all languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The spectral knight can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The spectral knight makes two attacks with its longsword.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

REACTIONS

Parry. The spectral knight adds 5 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it.

EXAMINING THE BODIES

Evidence of a brutal fight, through blood splatter, splintered wood, and scuffed floorboards, is evident throughout the landing. The two corpses closest to the stairs, Farren and Carina, are without armor and splayed across the floor. Arthur's body is clad in full armor and sits up against the door to the **Arcane Workshop**.

- The corpse nearest to the stairs holds a longsword with the name *Farren* etched onto the blade.
- A successful **DC 10 Medicine Check** reveals that the unarmored corpses suffered violent head trauma.
- Arthur's body grips a bloodied war hammer in one hand, and longsword with the name *Carina* etched into the blade in the other.
- The area surrounding Arthur's body is covered in dried blood.
- A successful **DC 10 Medicine Check** reveals that Arthur's neck was slit.
- Searching Arthur's body recovers **Arthur's Key**.



11. GAMMOND'S BEDROOM

This room is nearly empty of personal possessions, save for some writing supplies on the desk. Dead leaves flutter around the room and a breeze comes through the open window.

- Arthur's fake **Scornful Letter** lies open on the desk.
- The handwriting seems familiar if the party examined **Arthur's Confession** previously.

EXITS

- The eastern door leads to the **Third Floor Landing**.

12. ARTHUR'S BEDROOM

Dark shades block out any natural light in this room. The deteriorating walls give the space a more sinister atmosphere than the other bedrooms, as black mold begins to grow along the cracks.

- Investigating under the bed uncovers a bedroll, a backpack of travel supplies, and a longsword with the name *Gammond* etched on the blade.
- Above the bed is a small hole in the wall that looks into the **Arcane Study**, which is pitch black.
- A successful **DC 12 Investigation Check** reveals scratch marks around the peephole, indicating that it was made intentionally.

EXITS

- The eastern door leads to the **Third Floor Landing**.

13. ARCANE WORKSHOP

The words *Arcane Workshop* are inscribed above the entrance, and a faint sobbing can be heard even through the door. Inside, the party will encounter a corpse, long workshop tables decorated with arcane symbols, and the glowing specter of Freja.

Freja does not immediately attack, although she warns the party not to get too close. She desires to be left alone and will attack if the party infringes on this wish for too long. She is only an echo of her living self, driven on by the sorrow and pain of her violent end.

FREJA, THE SORROWFUL SHADE

The specter can be either be fought and destroyed or she can be peacefully put to rest. How difficult it is to assuage the spirit depends on how well the party pieced together the story using clues scattered around the keep.

- Freja is a **Screamer**.
- Two successful **DC 15 Charisma Checks** are required to pacify Freja's spirit.
- First, the party must soothe her sorrow by convincing her that Gammond still loved her.
- Second, the party must assuage her guilt by convincing her that the deaths at Southward Keep were not her fault.
- Grant advantage if the party uses specific evidence in their arguments.
- Freja attacks after 3 failed charisma checks.

INVESTIGATING THE WORKSHOP

A bed and modesty curtain have been put up in the corner as a makeshift bedroom. The space looks neglected compared to the workshop proper. Investigating the bedroom area reveals the peephole in **Arthur's Bedroom**.

- A successful **DC 10 Medicine Check** reveals that Freja's chest was caved in.
- Freja wears an **Emerald Necklace**.
- A **Spell Scroll of Lightning Lure**, a **Spell Scroll of Shatter**, and a **Spell Scroll of Slow** can be found on the workshop tables.
- A large **Bloodstone** and an **Elvish Wand** are positioned underneath a magnifying glass stand.
- The runes covering the tables are Old Elvish, and roughly translate to prayers to the Goddess of the Hunt.

SCREAMER

Medium undead (banshee), neutral evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 105 (23d8 + 2)

Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
5 (-3)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Wis +5, Cha +5

Damage Resistances acid, fire lightning, thunder; bludgeoning piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Elvish

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Incorporeal. The screamer can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Tragic Visions. If the screamer moves through a creature that is not undead or a construct on its turn, that creature must immediately succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. If the save fails by 5 or more, the target also begins to cry uncontrollably, becoming incapacitated for the duration. A frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, and each time it takes damage, ending the frightened and crying condition on a success. The target has advantage on the saving throw if it is triggered by damage. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to the screamer's Tragic Visions for the next 24 hours.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The screamer makes two attacks with Bitter Grasp.

Bitter Grasp. *Melee Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (3d6 + 3) necrotic damage.

Sorrowful Scream (Recharge 5-6). The screamer releases a sorrowful scream. This scream has no effect on constructs and undead. All other creatures within 30 feet of the screamer that can hear it must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, a creature takes 14 (4d6) psychic damage and is pushed away from the screamer 15 feet. On a success, a creature takes half as much damage and is not pushed.

REACTIONS

Sobbing Blast. The screamer releases a wretched sob in reaction to being hit with a melee weapon attack. The creature that scored a hit must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, a creature takes 7 (2d6) psychic damage and is knocked prone. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't knocked prone.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

The adventure may conclude either with Freja's spirit being put to rest in a difficult social encounter, or it may end in Freja's spirit being destroyed in a difficult combat encounter. In either case, the cold air and dim light effects that permeated the third floor previously are now gone. The party may continue to search the keep for treasure and clues about its history for as long as they wish.

At this point, if the party has not yet dealt with the imp, you may remind them of that. If the party chooses to free the imp, have it come back as an antagonist in a future adventure. Otherwise, Scoza remains trapped in its cage and is quite helpless if the party decides to dispose of him. There is also nothing wrong with the party leaving the imp to rot.

Depending on the adventure hook you chose, the party might want to visit a local town to sell treasures, collect a reward, or give someone closure. Make sure that the party gets a chance to unwind from the adventure. Give them some lighthearted fare in town and reward them with grateful patrons or generous merchants.

RESOURCES

- Check out *Lost & Found*, a 1st level one-shot of much more lighthearted fare than *Sorrows*.
- *Lantern's Cross* is a free supplement that details a trading town just outside Mosswind Wood. Use it as a starting and ending point for this adventure!

BATTLE MAPS

Don't forget to download **Map Pack 01 – The Sorrows of Southward Keep!** This free resource has battle maps for every floor of Southward keep and the hunting cabin.

THANK YOU FOR PLAYING!

APPENDIX A: MONSTERS

SPECTRAL KNIGHT

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (scale mail + shield)

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)

Damage Resistances Acid, Cold, Fire, Lightning, Thunder; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks

Damage Immunities Necrotic, Poison

Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhaustion, Grappled, Paralyzed, Petrified, Poisoned, Prone, Restrained, Unconscious

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Understands all languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The spectral knight can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The spectral knight makes two attacks with its longsword.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

REACTIONS

Parry. The spectral knight adds 5 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it.



SCREAMER

Medium undead (banshee), neutral evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 105 (23d8 + 2)

Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
5 (-3)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Wis +5, Cha +5

Damage Resistances acid, fire lightning, thunder; bludgeoning piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Elvish

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Incorporeal. The screamer can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Tragic Visions. If the screamer moves through a creature that is not undead or a construct on its turn, that creature must immediately succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. If the save fails by 5 or more, the target also begins to cry uncontrollably, becoming incapacitated for the duration. A frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, and each time it takes damage, ending the frightened and crying condition on a success. The target has advantage on the saving throw if it is triggered by damage. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to the screamer's Tragic Visions for the next 24 hours.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The screamer makes two attacks with Bitter Grasp.

Bitter Grasp. *Melee Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (3d6 + 3) necrotic damage.

Sorrowful Scream (Recharge 5-6). The screamer releases a sorrowful scream. This scream has no effect on constructs and undead. All other creatures within 30 feet of the screamer that can hear it must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, a creature takes 14 (4d6) psychic damage and is pushed away from the screamer 15 feet. On a success, a creature takes half as much damage and is not pushed.

REACTIONS

Sobbing Blast. The screamer releases a wretched sob in reaction to being hit with a melee weapon attack. The creature that scored a hit must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, a creature takes 7 (2d6) psychic damage and is knocked prone. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't knocked prone.



APPENDIX B: TREASURE

TRINKETS

Bejeweled Dagger.....30 gp

A small amethyst embedded in the hilt twinkles in the light.

Fine Yew Quiver.....5 gp

The stained silhouette of a deer decorates the treated wood.

Box of Sassafras.....10 gp

One cannot find a spice this fine and potent within one hundred leagues.

Casket of Fine Wine.....15 gp

A burgundy liquid reminiscent of a thick blood pours from the stopper.

Gold Locket.....25 gp

The initials make it a romantic keepsake, but those can be polished away.

Silver Drinking Flask.....60 gp

Unembellished quality silver makes for a princely flask.

Golden Pocket Watch.....75 gp

The polished surface is both pretty and useful.

Bronze Buckle.....5 gp

A well made piece of clothing, if a bit mundane.

Emerald Necklace.....100 gp

The cut green stone hangs heavily from a silver chain.

Bloodstone.....50 gp

Red flecks across dark stone give the impression of something sinister but beautiful.



MAGIC ITEMS

SUN-TOUCHED SWORD

Weapon (long sword), common

In darkness, the unsheathed blade of this sword sheds sunlight, creating bright light in a 30-foot radius and dim light for an additional 30 feet.

HEALING POTION

Potion, common

You regain 2d4 + 2 hit points when you drink this potion. The potion's red liquid glimmers when agitated.

POTION OF COURAGE

Potion, uncommon

The bright orange liquid in this vial seems to swirl of its own accord. You gain immunity to fear effects for 1 hour after downing this potion.

LONGBOW OF THE HUNT (+1)

Weapon (longbow), rare

The shaft of the weapon is decorated with gold leaf and arcane symbols. You have a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. In addition, you have advantage on initiative rolls while carrying this weapon.

SCROLL OF LIGHTNING LURE

Scroll, common

A length of weathered parchment inscribed with long forgotten arcane symbols. This scroll can be used to cast the spell *Lightning Lure* as an action. After casting, the scroll disintegrates into dust.

SCROLL OF SHATTER

Scroll, uncommon

A length of weathered parchment inscribed with long forgotten arcane symbols. This scroll can be used to cast the spell *Shatter* as an action. After casting, the scroll disintegrates into dust.

SCROLL OF SLOW

Scroll, uncommon

A length of weathered parchment inscribed with long forgotten arcane symbols. This scroll can be used to cast the spell *Slow* as an action. After casting, the scroll disintegrates into dust.

ELVISH WAND

Wand (requires attunement by spellcaster), uncommon

A polished wand of carved yew wood and decorated with silver rivets. An attuned creature wielding this wand gains a +1 bonus on spell attack rolls.



APPENDIX C: HANDOUTS

ARTHUR'S CONFESSION

Gods above,



What have I done?

*He attacked me before I could give an explanation.
Accused me of being a devil worshipper or worse.
This is not true. I am not a bad man.*

But I had to defend myself. I did not mean to...

*I do not know how to heal the rift between us. He is
chained below. Have I already doomed myself?*

*I do not deny there is a part of me that would be
glad to be rid of him. But I fear that is the demon
speaking.*

Would now Freja see the real me?

Please guide me.

FARREN'S TRAVEL LOG

November 19th

We've not gone this far into the Mosswind before. Freja leads us on in the hopes of uncovering some magical artifacts. Carina is worried about the storm clouds. I'm worried about my dwindling ration pack!

November 23rd

The snow is a punishment from the gods for our hubris says Carina. I think Carina's righteousness is punishment enough for me. We've hunkered down in an old keep. Freja is delighted.

December 1st

Carina says it will be a long winter - so I've taken up woodworking. I can't believe I have taken up woodworking.

December 16th

Freja and Gammond better keep it down tonight or I will barge into their room.

December 18th

Poor hunt today. Carina scared away my rabbit.

December 21st

Someone should probably check on Arthur. He's been brooding in that cabin for weeks now. Someone. Not me.

December 24th

I knew it! I said it was a bad idea! Now Freja can't stop crying and Gammond's probably got himself frozen to death. And who is left to pick up the pieces?

December 26th

Arthur just went up to see Freja... I'm sure that will end well. Carina offered to busy ourselves with a game of cards.

OBSERVATIONAL PROFILES

November 22nd, our isolation begins. Our party must work together for the foreseeable future. documenting party profiles for later scientific review.

Sir Farren / aged 24 / a boisterous man who deflects with humor. will likely grow bored first. decent hunter. nice disposition. annoying.

Lady Freja / aged 28 / naïve and far too interested in artifacts over people. unaware that both Sir Gammond and Sir Arthur pine for her. isolation is nothing new to her.

Sir Gammond / aged 30 / a natural leader. his speech when we arrived at the keep was heartening. his combat skills are lacking. poses a problem for hunting this winter.

Sir Arthur / aged 31 / quiet and bookish man. snaps easily. I would be most concerned about his psyche over a long dark winter. seems to only care for Lady Freja's comfort.

SCORNFUL LETTER

To Freja,



I am afraid our little tryst must come to an end. I write to you on the eve of my departure so that I may avoid the sounds of your heartbreak. Such sparks are fun while they last, but fun they cannot remain.

I cannot give you what you ask of me. If I had such foresight to see what might come of this, I would never have entered your bedroom.

Your feelings came as a great surprise after our encounter. Believe me, there are other men who would conform to your expectations of a relationship. Alas, I am not what you thought.

I never loved you.

Regards,
Gammond