

The Secret of the Blackwoods

Megalos is certain the Blackwoods threat is the work of “dark elves”; most other elves agree, although any who enter the woods come to think that their brothers must have gone stark mad. The dark elves themselves, with their paranoid distrust of outsiders and evil reputation, find it impossible to make anyone believe the truth.

The shady, tangled Blackwoods have indeed long been a home to the shadowy offshoot of elvendom. This is where most of them retreated after the Bane went horribly wrong, and where many recent recruits, converted by human expansion and the deforestation of their homelands, have mustered. However, 30 or 40 years ago, this hideout became a trap.

Something appeared in the heart of the Blackwoods – perhaps wrought by another failed experiment or simply left there by a minor banestorm. No elf can understand it, though they know enough to hate it. There are a few relevant hints in the darkest myths of the people of Loren’dil, although most of those tales were forgotten centuries ago on Yrth.

The thing itself seems a great tree, though close up it is more a tangled thicket, its twisted branches, long creepers, and fungal growths black and dripping with slime. It is sentient, magically powerful, and relentlessly hostile. It can create or twist the shape of living things, direct them with its thoughts, and slowly, overwhelmingly warp reality. Its venom is forcing the Blackwoods to expand at the outer edges while the forest’s center reshapes into something unpleasant to contemplate. While the unnatural menace appears not to be able to manipulate sapient beings, it may just be a matter of time.

