The Great Dale is the long, windswept gap between the Forest of Lethyr and the northern Dunwood (formerly called Rawlinswood). Rumpled ridges of bare rock rise from the thin soil, growing steeper and more rugged to the north and south as one climbs toward the forests that flank the vale.

Fierce winter winds scour the land during the cold months, and all year long the Great Dale is a desolate land. Leaving aside trade towns, the only major settlement is Yeshelmaar.

**Great Dale Lore**

A character knows the following information with a successful skill check.

**History DC 20:** In the Year of Rogue Dragons (1373 DR), the Rotting Man, a servant of Talona ensconced at Dun-Tharos in the center of Dunwood, was foiled in his plot to suckle an abomination on divine blood. For all his evil, though, Talona's champion had watched over the ancient Nar capital's ruins, much as the druidic Nentyarchs of previous years had done before him. The failure of the Rotting Man's mystical machinations and his demise woke long-quiescent demons beneath the ruins of Dun-Tharos. Since then, the Dunwood has become a far more dangerous realm of evil-looking trees.

**Streetwise DC 15:** The unforested portion of the Great Dale has never been much more than a wide range for goats and other hardy livestock. With threats from Narfell in the north and the demons of Dunwood, few communities remain. Yeshelmaar, home to the druids of the Circle of Leth, is the Great Dale's center of civilization.

**Settlements and Features**

Tiny holds ruled by druids or tough foresters exist here and there, mostly at the eaves of the Forest of Lethyr.

**Bezentil**  
**Trade Post; Population 200**  
Mostly overgrown now, the Great Road runs through the dale from Uthmere to the crossroads of Kront. It passes through this walled village, which serves as a waypoint for travelers and caravans. Five-foot-high stones, carved with a tree-in-circle mark, stand on the road to Bezentil, signifying that the crossroads is under the protection of the Circle of Leth.

**Dunwood**  
**Demon-Haunted Northern Forest**  
The Dunwood forms the northern border of the Great Dale, weaving its way south of the Giantspire Mountains and the plains of Narfell until it peters out near the Cold Road in the east. Once the Dunwood was a northern twin to the Forest of Lethyr, but then the Rotting Man disturbed the wreckage of Dun-Tharos, the ancient Nar capital.

Now the blightlords and the Rotting Man are no more; ageless demons in their hundreds stir within Dunwood instead. The Nentyarch of Yeshelmaar is occupied in a fierce contest against the demons of Dun-Tharos. His greatest wish is to eliminate them entirely, but this goal is slow in coming.

**Forest of Lethyr**  
**Druid-Guarded Southern Forest**  
The Forest of Lethyr occupies the southern half of the Great Dale and provides a natural boundary between the Great Dale and Thesk. The forest is rich in wildlife, including bears, wolves, big cats, deer, rabbits, and all manner of birds, squirrels, and other tree-loving animals.

Druids, rangers, and other folk of the woodlands answering to the Nentyarch guard the boundaries of the Forest of Lethyr. Several treants also roam the wood, dedicated to finding and dispatching demonic infections from the north. A few secretive villages of elves exist in the woodland. Human settlements are limited to the forest’s southern edges, in Theskian land.

**Kront**  
**Trade Village; Population 400**  
The first glimmer of civilization along the Cold Road from N’Jast in Narfell, Kront stands on a crossroads that leads to Two Stars in Thesk. Despite raids from far-roaming Nars, the rough frontier village still stands. No lord higher than the current Lady Chinilvur, of an Impilturan noble line, claims dominion over Kront. The Chinilvurs would have built the town in the Ashanath on Lake Ashane, but that stretch of land is prone to unnaturally regular and severe tornadoes.
Uthmere
Trade Town; Population 400
The Easting Reach withdrew as the Sea of Fallen Stars receded, leaving this former port landlocked. A major earthquake then finished the city. Most citizens fled to Impiltur.
A walled trading post still stands along the Great Road and the Dalestream here, surrounded by small farms. The Hall of the Just, once a temple to Tyr, is the town’s authority. Uthmere’s streets are safe, and a traveler can expect fair treatment in the village.

Yeshelmaar
Trade Town; Population 2,000
Near the center of the dale, a great tor rises from the forest. A pristine lake of clear, cold water stands at the foot of the hill. Carved into the tor is an old strong hold known as Yeshelmaar, built in a day when the Lethyr fey faced off against threats from Narfell.
During the wars with the Nar, Yeshelmaar grew higher and deeper, until the original tor was obscured. Now it is difficult to pick out the transition between the natural stone of the hillside and elven engineering. Slender walkways thread the tallest spires, and curling stairways provide external access to many of the towers and lower balconies. Trees root in earth-filled stone planters on nearly every level surface, providing soothing breaks in the otherwise stern stonework. Green ivy grows over the sides of every wall.
The Nentyarch and his Circle of Leth formerly dwelled at Dun-Tharos, but the Rotting Man and his blighthords drove them out. Yeshelmaar became the Nentyarch’s seat-in-exile.

Plots and Adventure Sites

Dun-Tharos: This half-buried ancient city sprawls for miles through the pines and bogs at the heart of the Dunwood. It was once the seat of a great and terrible realm of dark keeps and sinister lords. In a war between ancient Raumathar and Narfell, some mighty spell of unspeakable power leveled the entire area. So ended the demon-haunted kingdom of Narfell.
Nentyarchs of ages past raised a living fortress of magical trees over the ruins of Dun-Tharos, chasing off explorers lest they awaken the dire forces buried beneath. Treasures of Narfell’s baleful lords lie in deep storehouses and conjuring chambers under the old ruins. The Rotting Man drove out the Nentyarch and the Circle of Leth, disturbing those ancient secrets and, before his fall, unleashing an even worse power.
Now demons of every shape move through the catacombs of Dun-Tharos and the forest above. Any creature that comes looking for ancient Nar treasures risks much.
The Mucklestones: The northeastern caves of Lethyr hide the fabled Mucklestones—a number of weathered stones covered with nature runes that stand in a cleared circular declivity. The stones shift around the clearing at times, and the whole area sometimes migrates short distances.
Guardians of the forest keep close watch on the Mucklestones. The Spellplague destroyed many of the portal connections that the stones once housed, and twisted others so that they lead to unfixed and dangerous locales.
Oracle of Fortress Clymph: The rocks and bricks of these ruins glow red with heat, and the crackling of massive flames emanates from a central fortress. The stones of the keep are imbued with powerful protection magic, transforming the perimeter of the building into a massive magic circle. Before the Spellplague, the magic barrier contained a portal that opened to the Abyss. Though that gate has been closed for nearly a hundred years now, and most of the demonic hordes within have succumbed, fiendish presences yet linger here.
In recent years, Clymph has become known as an oracle site. Those brave or desperate enough can approach the fortress’s front gate, knock three times, and wait to be addressed by a booming voice from the earth. The petitioner is allowed one question, but the answer is whispered so quietly that an ear must be laid to the gate to hear the answer. Many supplicants leave unharmed, happy with what they have learned. Others are absorbed through the gate into the fortress’s interior, never to be seen again.
Val-Murthag: This sprawling city was leveled by the Raumathari long ago. Its cyclopean walls and shattered towers lie in a wild and lonely corner of the Great Dale. Little is left on the surface, but deep vaults filled with imprisoned demons and restless Nar ghosts lie beneath the city’s numerous keeps.

PETTY DEMON LORDS
Several powerful demons claim territory above and below Dunwood. Two of them are briefly described here.

Eschar: A powerful demon who commands others of its ilk in Dun-Tharos, Eschar is similar in form to a big, scaled ogre. A crown of horns protrudes from its head and glows with fiendish light. Evil pulses from Eschar like a heartbeat ringing up from the depths.
The Queen Abiding: Also claiming power in Dun-Tharos, the Queen Abiding is a blot of darkness a dozen yards across when she expands to her full diameter. The chill of coldest winter ensnrods her.