

The Faerie City of Embra: Embra - Winterset

As described in the separate “Official Guide to Embra” Atlas map notes, getting to or from Embra City proper usually means first passing through one of the eight village-sized manifestations where the Faerie and Mortal Realms meet in the Clack Valley of southeastern Errynor in Alarius. Embra - Winterset is the version of the Village ordinarily encountered when approaching from, or going out from the City to, the southwest of Embra’s location. From here, and again as suggested by the Official Guide notes, it is possible to pass into the City by various means using the Official Guide map, once a suitable access-point has been located in the Village. If leaving Embra by this route, simply moving beyond this map’s bounds sees those involved returning to the Mortal Realm in the Clack Valley (in the Atlas, simply return to the Official Guide map from the Village one, and then to the Clack Valley parent map).

The map is set within a circle whose edge shows a palely colourful mistiness, indicative that this place is liminal between the Faerie and Mortal Realms. The various features of the map - some notes on the labelled ones follow - may seem superficially normal, but often are not. A house with no chimney may have a roaring open fire in a fireplace inside, for instance, or a crop-field may be growing impossible crops - such as toffee-apples on sticks - or where animals graze contentedly on what look to be ripening crops, while the “farmer” rests smilingly watching them by the field gate. Faerie is not “normality” as most would understand it, after all! Trees and the wilder shrubs are the closest to what would be expected in the Mortal Realm, though even these commonly seem very fine specimens, or show unusual activity - fruit trees with both fruit and blossom on simultaneously, say - while some “plants” may be fully alert, mobile and conversational, just as others may contain tiny houses in their trunks or stems with doors, windows and internal walls, homes for Faerie creatures.

Although the map has two scales and an (unlabelled) compass-rose, distances and directions can be equally variable in Faerie, as the GM may require in all cases. The scales are however accurate for the map as drawn, where precision may be needed.

Below the scales and compass-rose are some text notes, drawn from an interpretation of some Faerie-inspired tarot card artwork, as also mentioned in the Official Guide notes. As ever, these may be used or ignored as the GM may see fit.

Three toggles are available in the Atlas FCW file, one to turn off the labels on the map, to make features on it easier to see complete. The second toggle shows the basic surface level internal layout for all the buildings on the map (although only doorways, not windows, are illustrated in the walls). The third toggle illustrates the layout of the upper level for Branwen House and one of its adjoining neighbours. This helps clarify where these structures are, and their natures. Once more, these may be used, adapted or ignored as best suits the GM’s requirements.

Named Feature Notes

* **Aine’s Pastures:** Two large, open areas of grassland surrounded by dense thorny hedges, with a bridge arching over the road into the Village from the north between them. The area west of the road can be reached only via this bridge from the hedged area east of the road. There are no other structures, landforms or vegetation in either. Within the hedges, everything seems brighter than normal and more colourful, almost as if it were glowing.

- * **Babal Hill:** A heavily-wooded hill southeast of the Village, right on the map's southeastern edge. Wild Faerie cattle may sometimes be glimpsed grazing in the woods.

- * **Branwen House:** The Village consists of extensive structures huddled together in five areas, separated by roads. Branwen House is the largest property in the more southerly of two triangular building groups on the east side of the Village. With the adjoining property immediately to its west, it forms the Village's only two-storey structure. The Branwen House name is also used for this whole triangle. Life-sized, carved white stone ravens adorn the eaves just below the roof of Branwen House itself.

- * **Dagmor Rise:** Another hill south of the Village, on the southwestern map edge, this time with only scattered trees on it.

- * **Donnbo Woods:** The edge of woodlands lying northwest of the Village are right on the map's edge. Somewhere within these woods is a singing, severed humanoid head, known as "Donnbo".

- * **Glenda's Cross:** The east-central crossroads in the Village, with a large freshwater pool and fountain in its middle.

- * **Kenneth's Cross:** The west-central crossroads, with a smaller open fountain-pool.

- * **Meav's Buildings:** The large southern rectangular block of buildings, with an internal "T"-shaped paved alleyway. Three of the properties are taverns that provide excellent quality wines, spirits and ales.

- * **Oak Corners:** The large rectangular block of buildings on the northwest corner of the Village.

- * **Owain's Angle:** The more northerly of the two triangular clusters of buildings to the northeast of the Village. Larger, more impressive-looking shops and houses are here.

- * **Sinach Edge:** The smallest, diamond-shaped, block of structures, on the southwest corner of the Village. The buildings are notable for the elaborate carvings of sea creatures and monsters all across their exteriors.