

Map Notes for The Bleakness

The whole island was the site of a prosperous civilization, with the main city at Trumpiton. Then about 250 years ago, volcanoes suddenly appeared in the mountain chains – now aptly named the Churning mountains. They continue to belch dust and sulphuric fumes, which are even carried as far west as the southern parts of Justice island. Civilization fell, and out from the depths, the caverns in the mountains and lairs in the forests, came crawling monstrous beings, wreaking havoc on the denizens of the island, once called the Blessed Isle, now renamed the Bleakness.

The only site of ‘normal’ life is in the village of Ashburton, which serve mainly as a base for fishing fleets from Justice island, and those who cannot abide the confining rule of the Hunters on Justice Island. So Ashburton is a fairly lawless place with many individuals pulling in all sorts of directions.

The rest of the island is poisoned, to say the least. Rivers are channels of toxic muck, mountains are ash-laden, the only trees that thrive are mutated conifers, and in the middle lies a murky cesspit of sludge – Lake Murky. In it, abominations live, but no normal life.

Caves and dungeons abound – in mountains, forests and the ruins of the once proud cities of Trumpiton and Donaldsey. Treasures are said to be undiscovered in the depths of the ruins, but it is either a very intrepid band of adventurers, or very stupid ones, that venture into the depths of these places. Strange obelisks, many hiding entrances to the underworld, dot the plains – no-one now remembers their purpose.

Rumours have it that a cabal of evil sorcerers fled Justice Island, and made their dwellings in tall towers on the island. Some surmise that it was they that were responsible for the sudden appearance and eruption of the devastating volcanoes, as a twisted revenge on humanity that had rejected them.

And to top it off, the reefs to west and east of The Bleakness are the graveyard of many shipwrecks – who knows what treasure now sits on the bottom of the sea? And the bitter south-east wind from the poles blasts the east shore with unparalleled fury every winter.