

Harrowings: From The Rime



"An RPG Zine to Steal your Soul!"

HARROWINGS ISSUE #01: FROM THE RIME!

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Editor's Note

I have this theory about gamers. It seems to me that, in general, an affinity for the imaginative (such as gamers possess) would predispose a person to be a dreamer, innovator, and in general, just an all-around big thinker.

Isn't this exactly the quality that so many motivational speakers continually endeavor to deposit into their audiences? And is it not the exact quality for which so many business owners are looking when it comes to their next new recruit? And again, is this quality not the one most enduring quality that so many, or dare I say, ALL, individuals possess who rise to the upper echelons of success within our society?

I do believe it is. And this is why I am here to make the case, or rather to present the fact, that individuals who engage in gaming as part of their daily lives, as part of their recreation, or as a part of their business, are actually predisposed to succeed.

As you peruse the content of this zine and enjoy the scenarios presented within, heed the words of the Game Master. The voice inside is the true, wise soul. Follow its lead and you will avoid grave trouble. Conversely, if you allow your attention to be divided among outside distractions, you will fall. Do not become the prey of life's threatening hordes.

"I am only limited by what my mind can think. I am capable of anything I decide I can do. The only thing that limits me is my decision to continue on or to leave the endeavor which I began. If I make up my mind to complete the task, no matter how long it takes for me to realize the goal I have set before me, I will finish. I am victorious. Any obstacles I may encounter, I have already overcome. There is nothing this game of life can throw at me that I have not already conquered."

Now, mighty warrior, what lands will you explore? What high and lofty prize will you pursue?

Your vision for your future is like a net that you cast into the universe. What kind of net are you casting? Is it even big enough to accommodate your dreams? If you're trying to catch a whale, but you're only casting a trawl, then you are short changing yourself! Don't just hope that some opportunity is going to land in your lap! Cast that net wide and deep, go after the big fish, and don't settle for anything less than a FULL catch.

Oh, and never stop your boat for a mutilated walrus.

—Bridget Querns



DMC

ORLANG OF THE PEAKS

By Guy Sciancalepore

"Come children! Gather 'round!"

A shriek, not of the wind, interrupted the playtime of the four Yutert younglings. Sullenly they laid down their sticks that only moments ago they used as staves and spears to defend the village against imaginary raiders and made their way to the bonfire from which Shaman Pita had been screeching at them.

"Yes, Wise One?" Juter answered confidently as he took his place at the foot of the fire, staring intently into the flames.

The other children followed silently and took their places as well, arranged in an arc near the other side of the fire. Talia, daughter of a local fisherman and weaving woman, was Juter's sister. Sitting next to him, she placed her hand on his arm, squeezing tightly.

"You called us, Shaman?" Talia pleasantly called in an effort to cover for her insolent brother.

"Yes, Elder, you called." Echoed the Eyuit twins, almost as if they were of one voice; for as the shamans decreed on the night of their birth, so they were.

"You children are always so eager for adventure, for terror and thrills! Tonight by the light of the Great Eye you will know more of our tribe's history," the Shaman intoned in a deep voice as she threw handfuls of sage and other herbs into the fire. Oohs and aahs were heard as the children enjoyed the spectacle, and passersby remembered their first Telling, with rueful smiles.

The wise one, the elder, the shaman gestured with her bird bone and birch wood staff as a gust of wind—as if off of Ancestor Top itself—tore into the bonfire, and ended the light show as soon as it had begun. The children's once glee-filled eyes shut with terror and they huddled together as she spoke again.

"Tonight you will learn that we of the Yutert Clan, the largest and most respected Clan of the Floes, are not as perfect as our oral history would portray. Our hidden history is much deeper and darker than that, and tonight you will begin the process of learning that history."

The shaman gestured once more; time slowed and the children witnessed the gust that had blown out her fire moments before gently roll back through, re-lighting the fire and moving away, back out of their small camp. Juter, who only minutes before had looked upon Pita with annoyance, now looked at her with newfound respect and admiration. Talia was stuck to the floor, eyes wide and focused. The twins gripped each other, but not in fear.

"Tonight, you will hear the story of Orlang of the Peaks, and how we as a people created this fearsome monster!"

Orlang of the Peaks was said to have once been like any man of the commons; peaceful and wanting only to provide for his family, by way of the tradition of his people. He was one of us; of the Yutert clan, the largest clan of the Ice Floes of the Northern Rim, and like his tribesmen he followed the Bear, who followed the Walrus, who followed the Fish. He was known as an average fisherman, never coming home empty but never coming home with the biggest catch either. He was content with his lot in life and he looked forward to the day his infant son was old enough to hold a harpoon, that he might pass down his tools and skills the same way his father had done, and his father's father before him.

Although Orlang was happy enough, his wife was far from content. Known this day only as Ona, she used every opportunity to needle her husband and poke at his vulnerabilities. She emasculated him in public and at home, she talked down to him and was disrespectful, and she was violent, having once stabbed him in the hand with a fillet knife.

This day Orlang had joined his fishing hex at the earliest hour, eager to begin his work.

"Oi, Orlang! It's good to see you here this early. I needed a man to help me on a little side job." Orlang's hexmate, Torpo, was dressed in a similar gray sealskin suit, holding a harpoon as he gestured to a hidden canoe, snuggled amongst the rocks near the ice floes.

"Well you know what the elders say..." Orlang began.

"Yes, yes the early Orca gets the seal pup. Now help me get this down to the water. The salmon will be spawning soon and are just off shore. We can fill three nets for ourselves before the day's work even begins. Come!"

Stepping lightly between the rocks and loose stones, the hunters carried the canoe to the water's edge as fast and silently as they could. Side jobs weren't taboo, but the elders frowned upon them. They were seen as inherently selfish, and so, discretion was paramount.

They lowered the canoe and gently placed it in the eddy produced by the current. The bottom of the canoe scraped against the beach floor as the two men pushed it into the tide, and hopped aboard.

"Quickly now! Or, if the Hex-Captain catches us, we will be out the salmon and our share for the day!" Torpo muttered under his breath as he cast anxious glances back to the shoreline.

"Being that it is Ildar's Day, I think we have more time..." Orlang cast his old mate a wink and he threw his back into his oar, pushing the canoe out past the waves into waters teeming with salmon.

"Ancestor's Tears, a Holy Day! I'd forgotten about that old tradition." Torpo eased into a relieved smile as he recalled the tradition from the days of his youth. Attendees would be busy at the sage burning for another shell or so – plenty of time to bring in the fish.

"In fact, I" Torpo's smile warped into a grimace as the canoe rocked violently back and forth, as if it was struck by something large and predatory.

"Torpo! Hold on!" Orlang leapt into action. He stowed his nets and grabbed both sides of the canoe, steadying himself to peer over the edge. Peering back were two eyes, red as blood, and two immense tusks that were barbed and rubbed with the flesh of previous victims.

"It's a walrus, but of a kind I've never seen before!" Orlang sat back down with a thud and looked at his hexmate.

"We need to kill it."

"Kill it? We need to get out of here and tell the Elders. They need to know about this!"

"Be that as it may, Torpo, we've little choice—" As Orlang spoke, another violent seizure rocked their tiny canoe; this time accompanied by the beast itself. Shoving itself over the side and tipping their precarious vessel, a giant walrus glistened red in the moonlight, as if made of blood itself. Roaring,

it launched itself at Torpo, grabbing the unfortunate fisherman by the hood of his sealskin coat.

"Don't leave me Orlang!" Torpo screamed in despair as he held onto the oar, kicking and struggling, trying to remain above water as the monstrous beast dragged him down. Orlang freed his oar from its mooring, and holding it as a club, he proceeded to bash the aberrant walrus over the head repeatedly. Down and down again went the oar head, each time seeming to hit with more force. The beast's flesh appeared almost claylike, and each strike seemed to land as if Orlang was striking mud.

The walrus gave a shrill scream unbefitting that large a beast, as the oar head shattered, leaving behind a spiked protrusion. His hexmate now freed, and with a more familiar tool in hand, Orlang saw his opportunity. With a shout of defiance Orlang thrust his makeshift harpoon, praying his ancestors would guide his hand.

The broken shaft hit the bloody walrus in its left eye, and shrieking like the spirits that made it, the creature's claylike flesh began dissolving. Heaving itself to and fro, keeling like a lost babe, it sank slowly beneath the waves; the essence of the angry spirits seeping out of its one good eye, locked and staring accusingly at its killer.

"Walrus! It's always Walrus!" Ona lamented.

"Why can't you be like Irla's husband who took down a mammoth last hunt?! He took home enough meat that he and his family need not worry for many—"

"Honored Wife, do you even know what occurred on the Floes this morning?" Orlang calmly asked as he stripped out of his sealskins for the night.

"Oh, did you help 'carve' the walrus again? Perhaps you and Torpo carried the nets and boats back in?" Ona asked condescendingly as she skirted 'round the fire, taking his sealskins and hanging them to dry.

"Hardly. Torpo and I got an early start this morning. As we headed out for the grounds, a giant walrus attacked us. The Elders believe that we encountered the Blooded Walrus."

Orlang's voice quieted down. He subconsciously patted his rucksack as he avoided his wife's icy glare.

"The Blooded Walrus? That's nonsense. One hasn't been spotted in the Floes since I was a little girl." Ona replied flippantly, "It's more likely the [vodka] had yet to leave your system and you and Torpo were seeing things. It's a miracle you managed to save your hides with the tale you told."

Orlang merely stared at his wife as he drew out the three-foot length of Walrus tusk he had cut off of the dissolving corpse, naturally barbed and grimy with the day's dirt it gleamed red in the firelight.

"You, you actually slayed it? You, who is too timid to challenge Hirku for Hex-Captain, and would rather gather flowers in spring and summer instead of hunting mammoth on the steppe?" Ona stammered, her disbelief interspersed with her usual patronizing tone.

Orlang merely nodded and began to whittle the tusk into the shape of a useable hunting knife, starting with a handle and sharpening the edges, tuning out the words of his nagging wife as he worked.

"Forget Hex-Captain, you could go straight to the council with that story! And with the tusk to back it up, finally you will make something of yourself! I will live the prestigious life of a councilor's wife!" Ona yammered on with a dreamy look in her eyes.

"Are you listening!?" she shouted across the hut at her husband. With a noncommittal grunt Orlang continued to work on his knife.

"You imbecile! Don't you understand? No more living in a dirt floor hut! No more walrus blubber every single night! Maids and servants at our command, but only if you take the initiative! Orlang! Come back here!" Ona shrieked as her husband gathered up his cloak, tusk, and whittling knife, leaving with barely a glance over his shoulder.

"You wastrel, vagabond, you utter loser!" Ona screamed as she sank to her knees, hearing only the words "not for me" fluttering in the wind.

That night the tent Ona and her husband shared saw more destruction than a tidal zone after a tsunami. At her wits end, she sulked amidst the broken pottery and overturned cots. Once more she thought of her husband and the great prize he had won. She understood its importance, both literally and spiritually.

Recently, Ona had made treks to Gyulik, the tribal shaman, paying him what she could to learn all she could. In her time she learned to call on the spirits of the land, but not to control them, as Gyulik had not thought her ready.

Throwing on her cloak she went to the tent of her teacher, passing through his warding fetishes as easy as he. Creeping over his mismatched furniture, and tip toeing around the foot of his bed, she stole three scrolls of summoning. Gyulik knew her to be unprepared for the demands the spirits would make of her, but she could wait no longer. She would implore the spirits to embolden her husband with ambition and strength, believing his artifact was a conduit to the spirit realm. Taking the scrolls, she left her former teacher's hut, as Ona knew he would not have her back after this treachery. She began her trek to the Floes to implore the spirits there.

Ona crested a small hill as she shielded her eyes from the blazing sun of the early morning. She began her preparations. The candles were lit and arranged, the sacrifice of a fresh fish was laid in their center, and she began to read the scroll.

"Old Ones of the Floes, hear my call! My husband Orlang is an inadequate one, he embarrasses me and wants nothing more for himself. Give him the spirit he needs, I beg you!"

She waited in patient silence, and as the old shaman had taught her, turned her ear to the whisper of the wind against the ice, for the subtle sound of ripples in the water.

"Orlang is a respectable man, he provides and asks for little in return. Honor him, for I will not aid ye." The candles were snuffed out, and the fish had become a bloody puzzle. The rite confirmed her fears. The spirits had answered and would not help her.

"I will not disparage you spirits, but I am disappointed! Where shall I turn?" Ona asked herself, not expecting an answer. A cool breeze rushed in off the Ice Floes, pushing her hair into her eyes. Angrily she wiped it away, and opening her eyes she saw the limitless expanse of the steppe. Understanding the message, she thanked the spirits, and made her way to the steppes her people had hunted for generations.

Ona arrived home in the early evening. Hurriedly, she made similar preparations, substituting the

fish for a tundra hare she had killed herself. She unfurled the mystical commands and began.

"Great Ones of the Tundra, hear my plea! My husband is an embarrassment to all men and I tire of babying him; give him the resolve he needs to become great like Kursk the hunter!" The dead grass swayed in the wind, and listening hard enough, she heard her response.

"Woman, we of the steppe know Kursk and admire him for his qualities, but we do not know your husband. We will not help you."

Letting out a sob of despair, she struck the candles and disturbed the mystic patterns, and with the hair on the back of her neck rising, she turned to face the largest Direwolf she had ever seen.

Standing at the height of a plow horse and just as wide, it let out its breath in her face. The fetid stink of death and decay overwhelmed Ona, and the world spiraled away into black fear that overloaded her senses. She awoke on the back of the giant wolf near dusk, and looked around to see herself at the foot of Mt. Poggaki, colloquially known as Ancestor Top. She gazed in admiration at the Top, but took longer than she should've to dismount the wolf, as her erstwhile companion demonstrated by dumping her to the ground.

"Hey! You—" Ona began as she picked herself up, but before she could admonish the wolf it disappeared into a cloud of dust down the trail.

Ona gazed once more up the mountainside and feeling as though she was truly in the hands of her Ancestors, she took the first step towards her glory. It was midnight by the time she surmounted the Top, and although she was exhausted, she lit her candles and arranged the patterns. Looking down, she realized she was missing an offering, and knowing she had few options on the top of this lonely Mount, took up her small field knife. Placing her hand in the center of the pattern, she delicately laid her blade at the first knuckle of her little finger.

"Ancestors, guide me!" and with that invocation, she drove the blade down and drew it across, nearly severing the finger. Stomaching her queasiness at the sight of her own blood and flesh, but eager with the knowledge of her destiny at hand, Ona sang the spell.

"Spirits of the Mountain, aid me! Make my husband a man of strength, give him the quality of ambition, make him see why he must want for more! Please, I beg you!"

In a flash her digit disappeared, leaving only clean ground. Smoke drifted up lazily, and she waited. Silence greeted her, until a great crack in the face of the mountain split apart, as if struck by lightning. From within the crack issued forth a voice:

"Woman, we of the mountain have watched as you asked our fellows for aid, and we wept to see them refuse you. We will grant your request, and the others as well, but you must bring Orlang to our summit on this hour tomorrow night, the Tusk in his hand. We have spoken!"

Elated, but burdened with the knowledge that she must concoct a scheme to get Orlang to the Top, she arranged her implements into a makeshift shrine to their Ancestors. Satisfied, she bandaged her hand and made her way down the face. Each step seemed easier than the last, and with the breeze at her back, it felt as if the spirit of the Top was blowing her back to the Yutert summer camp in record time. It was barely morning when she arrived, and although she had been awake for over a day, she had energy enough for both herself and her husband. Knowing she must not run into Gyulik for fear of his anger, she took an unfamiliar route back to her hut, arriving just as Orlang awoke.

"Good morning, Honored Husband." Ona crooned sweetly as Orlang ate his breakfast. Peering over the rim of his bowl of rice and dried fish, Orlang narrowed his eyes in consternation, knowing she only spoke to him like that when she was in dire want.

"Dear wife, what do you need of me?"

"Only to accompany me to the Top tonight. Husband, our lives have irrevocably changed after what happened, and though we disagree on how to proceed, are we not obligated to appeal to our Ancestors for guidance?" Ona fluttered her eyelashes in the way she knew Orlang liked, and smiled her most enrapturing smile.

Orlang merely rolled his eyes and put his bowl down, but he knew his wife was right. He was undecided on how to proceed. Although he desired no more responsibilities, he was being approached by those who had previously never even spoken to

him. Every Hex from the fishermen to the soldiers wanted him to join them, and even the Elders asked for his advice. He was confused by his newfound respect.

"You've once again used your charms to manipulate me, but I concede that you are right," Orlang sighed and Ona chirped with cheer.

"Oh thank you, Honored Husband! Thank you!" Ona clasped her hands in a sign of supplication, and Orlang noticed her bandaged hand with a narrowed eye.

"Ona, how did you come by that ghastly wound? What did you do to your hand?" Orlang went to remove her bandages.

"I merely cut myself skinning fish this morning while you slept; nothing to concern yourself with!" Ona replied with a suspect tone. Not desiring a fight when they had finally come to an agreement, Orlang relented and began to pack for their journey to Ancestor's Top.

Day turned to night as the couple traversed the tundra on the backs of two plow horses they had borrowed from their neighbors. Although they spoke, little was amicable. His wife did her utmost not to break the illusion, even puckering up for a kiss when Orlang approached her after they stopped to make dinner. Mt. Poggaki loomed straight ahead as they racked up their horses and began their trek up the face with their rucksacks full of offerings and fetishes.

"Ah, it looks like half of our work is done for us dear wife! Some soul left us a shrine!" Orlang announced with tired cheer as he reached the summit.

"Indeed Orlang, but we must work fast. We begin at Fulldark."

"Fulldark? But aren't we supposed to wait for the first light of the morning sun?" Orlang asked with a touch of uncertainty in his voice.

"Traditionally yes, but tonight's ceremony is a special one, for we ask for guidance as always, but we temper that with the request for a blessing as well." Ona busied herself with preparations for the ceremony, while Orlang helped unpack their belongings and set up camp.

The Great Fire Spirit descended and the Great Night Spirit arose. At its zenith, Ona began her chant.

"Oh great spirits, I have returned! Orlang is with me with his tusk as you requested, fulfill your pact as you've promised!"

She raised her hands in supplication, and as she did, Orlang felt a twinge of fear as the cloth bandage wrapping her wounded hand fell away. Blood pumped rapidly from the stump of her finger and gathered itself in a small depression Ona had dug.

"Ona, by the Ancestors, what are you doing?!" Orlang desperately tried to pull his wife away from the shrine, but she only collapsed with a tender sigh.

"It's too late, Dear Husband." She smiled her venomous smile as the blood within the depression spiraled up, higher and higher, until it reached the clouds.

From within the crack on the Top echoed forth- "It shall be done."

The sky turned red, and blood rained down upon the mountain. From the scarlet shaded clouds issued forth a bolt of lightning composed entirely of blood itself. It swirled down from the sky, and as Orlang opened his mouth to scream, it forced its way in. In a blind panic, Orlang stumbled towards the cliff's edge, Ona vainly attempting to pull him to safety.

Orlang plummeted to the sea far below. Ona, in disbelief and rightful rage, screamed at the injustice of it all. She had followed all instructions and even maimed herself only for the spirits to fool her! "Calm, Woman!" the spirits seemed to scream, "your husband returns even now."

Ona crawled to the trailhead and peered into the fog rolling off the mountain. Squinting she saw a large shape rapidly approach, the shape of a very large man with something strapped to his back. In mere moments he arrived, and standing before her was her husband, greatly changed.

Now more beast than man, the pig-faced monster stood ten feet tall. Skin formerly pristine was now a shade of red, and his muscles bulged with every movement.

"Hhhh-Husband?" Ona timidly asked. Screaming with unbridled fury, Orlang of the Peaks snatched his giant bone scimitar, made from the tusk of the Blooded Walrus, off of his back, decapitating his former wife with one stroke.

"Thus the legend of Orlang of the Peaks, a giant Ogre-like man with a sword of bone, was born and has remained with us for many generations. Even now some brave young hunters try to make their name by killing Orlang. Although many have returned claiming the honor, Orlang always seems to re-appear, larger and more fearsome than before."

The wind whistled past the children as they huddled together, eyes wide, digesting the tale. Even Juter, ever the arrogant one, held his elder sister close. "Wise one, is the tale over with?" The twins echoed as they rubbed the bare skin of their arms, trying in vain to rub off the goosebumps.

"The Tale of Orlang has yet to find an end, children. Perhaps one day, one of you will join the ranks of our vaunted protectors and drive a spear through his rotten heart. Or perhaps you will take to mysticism, and learn the proper way to disperse his spirit, or bind a more potent one to aid you." Shaman Pita busied herself with tidying up around the dying fire, her demeanor inviting more questions.

"But Elder, why did he kill his wife?" Talia asked innocently, Juter rolled his eyes as if the answer was obvious.

"Well young Juter, why don't you answer your sister, as you clearly know why..." Pita crooned with mock sincerity.

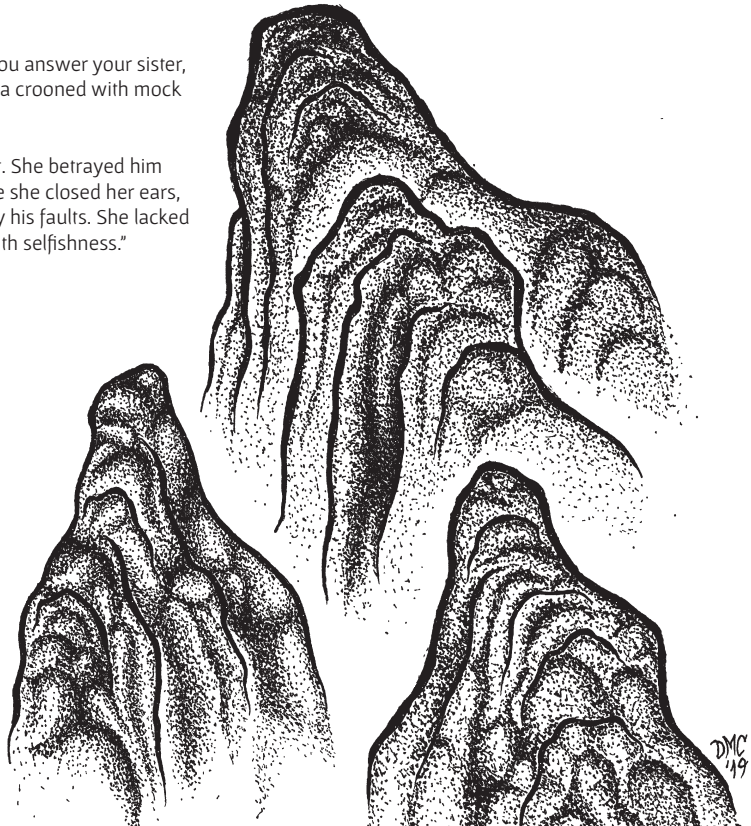
"Well it's obvious why he did it. She betrayed him body and soul! When he spoke she closed her ears, when he did well she saw only his faults. She lacked respect and was consumed with selfishness."

Shaman Pita's eyes widened as she looked upon the young one with newfound respect. "Indeed Juter. Ona's hubris was her downfall. She didn't believe in her husband, and had no respect for him or the lifestyle he provided. But she was not the only one at fault. Orlang was the one who was punished most severely. And do you children know why?" She looked them all in the eyes, and even bright Juter lacked the acumen to connect the dots.

"They punished him for his lack of determination and gullibility. Of course the spirits have patience for fools, but Orlang knew better. In his heart he knew his wife would betray him, but his blind love for the way things used to be, and his hope for better days drove him to catastrophe. So children, before you are sent to your bed mats, say this with me..."

And together they intoned:

"Do not question the voice inside, for often times IT is the voice that counts. It will never betray you."



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SIEGE OF THE ICE LORD

By Aaron Cordiale

Siege of the Ice Lord is a survival horror hex-crawl OSR adventure that takes place far in the frozen north of The Rime, specifically at The Horn. The Horn is an ancient tower set at the edge between The Kingdom (ask the players to name the kingdom) and the White Wastes. With a seven-year war won in the South by a rival kingdom, unbeknownst to the players who have been stationed at the Horn for eight years, supplies are low. The supply caravan is extremely late, and winter is setting in. Danger surrounds all in a land of primal wilderness, polar cold, and unknown horrors.

This adventure is geared towards a small party of Level 2 or Level 3 soldiers (fighters or other martial warriors) who will pit themselves against the wilderness surrounding the tower; as well as the Ice Lord, an ancient troll shaman from the Wastes with an eagerness to destroy any semblance of civilization.

The goal of this adventure is to survive the winter and the siege of the Ice Lord as he builds an army of the wild to assault The Horn and kill anything living within.

Mechanics

SotIL is a micro hex-crawl focusing on survival through bitter cold using tables to generate daily weather conditions, resources, and creature encounters for each hex passed through, as well as a wandering path for the Ice Lord.

Resource Die

To limit time devoted to resource management, it is recommended that players use the resource die chain mechanic implemented by many OSR systems, starting at a **d6** for food, firewood, and other necessities. Missile weapons can be refilled to **d8** in the tower, as it has not seen battle in a long time and contains many weapons for back-up. A Search roll is required to find and gather sustainable resources in the wilds. It only takes one successful search roll to move a **d6** to a **d8**, but every die type above **d8** takes an additional successful search (**d10 = 2 successes, d12 = 3 successes, etc.**). If searching for resources at night or during a blizzard, characters must make the search check with the appropriate penalty rule for your preferred system.

The base of the soldiers is The Horn, and every day they need to venture to find resources to survive. After a full day has passed, the resource die should be rolled for whatever was used that day (food & firewood are mandatory to prevent cold and exhaustion).

Travel and Exposure

The map is small because of the harsh weather and encumbrance of clothing and supplies to survive. Travel is dramatically slowed down as characters trudge through the snow. In calm weather, the normal travel pace is 2.5 km/hr, and 2.0km/hr in harsh weather or transporting large game animals (caribou, moose, etc). If characters are outside for over six hours straight in harsh weather, or four hours in the blizzard condition without a rest near a fire for at least one hour (See Weather Table), they must roll a Constitution check. If they succeed they suffer no harm. If they fail, characters suffer **1d3** cold damage or exhaustion (player's choice). The sun is only out for six hours during the day this far North during the winter. GM's should consider the possibility of encounters at night if a fire is made outside of the tower.



For ease of access, specific stats are only laid out for the unique Ice Lord in this adventure. Any creatures not given specific HD are recommended to have the following; 1 HP for small creatures, HD for creatures up to human size, 1 HD for creatures of human size and larger, and average stats for monsters pre-existing within your preferred ruleset.

Players should keep in mind that The Horn is their shelter and if they don't return to rest indoors overnight, they have to roll an additional Constitution check and extra Resource die for their food and firewood.

The map is made up of six hexes. Every hex is 4km to cross and contains its own ecology in the forms of resources, creatures, hazards, and/or other unique features.

The Ice Lord



The Ice Lord is an ancient troll shaman from the Age of Blood, a time when the peoples of the world were nearly exterminated by hordes of monsters and other terrors. While nearly all the horrors were eradicated from the world, those that did survive fled deep; either beneath the seas, in vast pits below the earth, or far into the poles of the world, where nothing good can dwell.

The Ice Lord hates any form of order and civilization. He once commanded a great host of horrors but is now the only remaining survivor. Having ages to dwell in frozen exile, his hate has grown as bitter and cold as the White Waste. Hearing a call of chaos ring out in his black dreams, he knows the time has come again for the world to run red with blood of civil folk. And so, he heads South to the place where he was defeated by the hero Brigid and her mighty weapon Hearth.

The Ice Lord is pale, drooping, and practically translucent. He has great antlers that stick out from his head, and wears a frozen bloody pelt sewn with the bones of hundreds of animals that he can rally to his aid using blood magic.

When the Ice Lord is in any hex, that hex automatically has the Blizzard weather condition. Also, while in a hex the Ice Lord replaces the creature in the 6th position on the creature encounter die for that encounter table.

Alignment:	Chaotic
Armor Class:	16
Hit-Die:	6+4
Attacks:	+6 to hit

Damage:

Crude Bone Sword	2d6
Antlers:	1d6-1
Claws:	1d6
Size Category:	Large
Movement speed:	30 ft

Special Moves:

Regeneration- Regenerates 5hp per round unless dealt damage by fire or magic.

Force of Nature- The pelt of the Ice Lord is sewn with the bones of hundreds of animals. All creatures located in the Hex become unnaturally aggressive

and change their alignment to chaotic due to his unholy influence. Using the blood magic of the cloak, he can bind one creature species (roll on table for the creature type and number) in his occupied hex to his call and use them to fight the Players. These creatures are then conscripted into his army and gathered for the siege of The Horn for the final battle.

Ice Lord Objectives

The objective of the Ice Lord is to destroy the tower and kill any civilized folk he finds. However, The Horn is protected from him by the same magic that defeated him ages ago, a mighty weapon known as Hearth hidden somewhere inside (**The Horn**). To break the enchantment he must gather a special ingredient from each environment to bind a charm allowing him passage; the root of an ancient elm tree grown on the bones of a dead man (**Forest**), a stone of the same type as the tower that has been touched by sunlight (**Caves**), the straw of an abandoned eagle's nest (**Snowfield**), and the blood of someone who has slept under the roof of the tower (**The Horn**).

Hearth

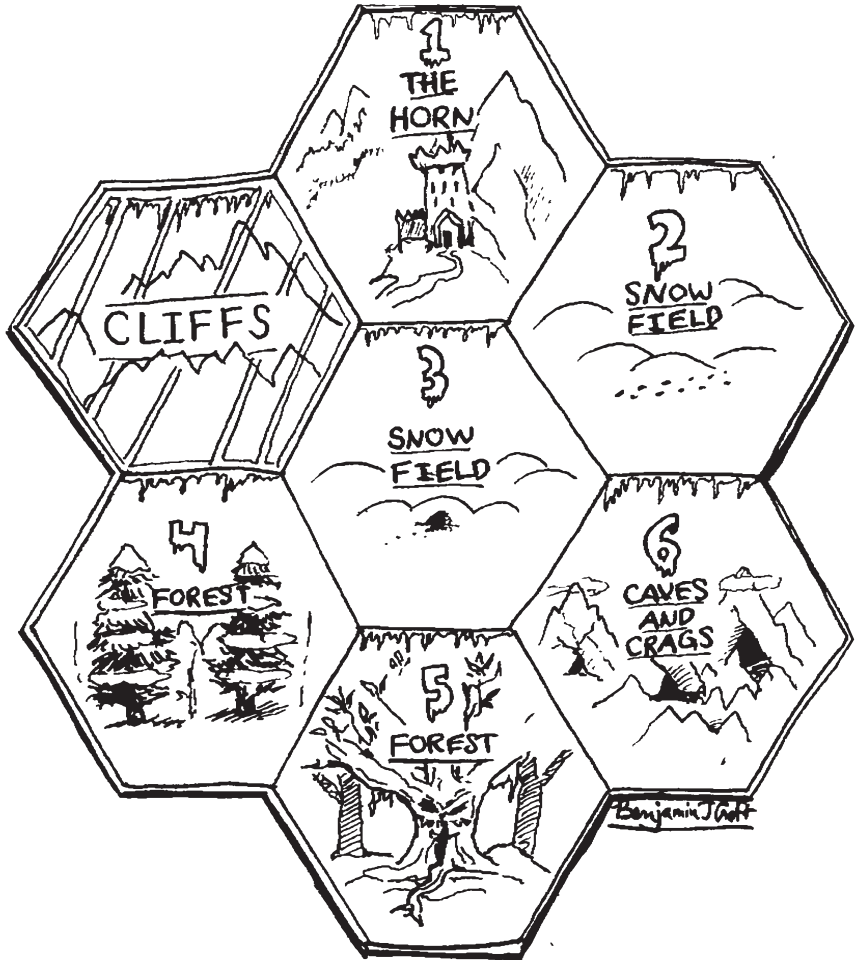
Hearth is a powerfully enchanted longsword that was once the weapon of the hero Brigid during the Age of Blood. It is the enemy of chaos and was the bane of the Ice Lord and his legions. It is a beautiful blade whose crossguard is in the shape of an eagle with outstretched wings, whose talons are holding a winding snake that forms the hilt. In the eagle's chest is fastened a ruby that glows even under direct sunlight. Hearth is a +2 longsword that also does an additional **1d6** damage to chaotic aligned creatures. While wielding this weapon the character does not suffer penalties from cold effects. Characters can also choose to sacrifice the additional 1d6 damage die to turn any weather condition in an occupied hex to the Calm and Clear state once per day, including blizzards caused by the Ice Lord. This charge is reset at sunrise on the following day

Map of the Crown

The Horn juts from the top of what is known as The Crown, the lands surrounding The Horn. The lands of The Crown include The Horn, the Snow Fields, the Forests, and Cave/Crag areas. Each of these areas have unique locations for characters to explore, hunt, and encounter strange parts of the wild. As they explore each area for resources, reveal 1 unique location (listed as a bullet point) to the Players they didn't know before. If the weather conditions are Clear, instead reveal 2. If in a Blizzard, reveal nothing.

Hex Grid Numbers: 1.) The Horn, 2.) Snow Field, 3.) Snow Field, 4.) Forest, 5.) Forest, 6.) Caves and Crag

D6	Weather
1	Clear&Calm
2	Biting wind
3	Freezing Rain
4	Medium Snowfall
5	Ice Storm
6	Blizzard



The Horn (1)

The Horn is a five-story tower bordering the fringes between The Kingdom and the White Wastes. It is seamlessly connected to the stone of the mountain from which it was carved. Legend says this was done through ancient Earth Magic. Insert any items and equipment you and the Players find feasible for the adventure in the tower. Have Players choose and explain the banner of their kingdom hanging from The Horn.

Floors of the Horn:

Top Floor: Is open to the elements, surrounded by parapets and a large pit for a signal fire.

4th Floor: An armory of bows and arrows, spears, swords, shields, as well as murder holes along the stone walls, a large coal pit and bellows for heating sand to pour on attackers outside the walls (3d6 fire damage). Hidden in the ceiling above this floor is the weapon *Hearth*.

3rd Floor: The barracks of the soldiers, it contains a large fire place, heavy furs, foot lockers, a table, and other simple accommodations.

2nd Floor: Larder containing food stores, water barrels, kitchen, and a stone oven.

1st Floor: Sturdy oak and iron banded doors with ready barricade materials, murder holes, a small table and chair, and a small fireplace.

D6	The Horn (1)
1	Eagles (d6)
2	Snow Hare
3	Arctic Fox
4	Lemmings (d20)
5	Caribou (d12)
6	Wolf Pack (d6)

Snowfield (2)

This snowfield is a large raised plateau full of grazing wildlife, wind, and other strange sights.

Unique Locations in the Snowfield (2):

- One raised portion of the plateau contains large standing stones. If characters rest there, they will become exhausted instead of rested, unless they leave an offering of food (roll resource die).
- On the South side of the plateau, there is a patch of land with a singular tree, where many eagle nests are housed to hunt upon the plain (**Ice Lord spell component location**).
- The center of the plateau contains a herd of musk oxen headed by an ancient Aurochs (3 HD) that acts aggressively to any intruders in their midst.

D6	Snowfield (2)
1	Snow Hare
2	Arctic Fox
3	Eagles (d6)
4	Caribou (d12)
5	Wolf Pack (d6)
6	Musk Oxen (d12)

Snowfield (3)

This snowfield borders the forests of The Crown and is littered with abandoned human dwellings.

Unique Locations in the Snowfield (3):

- A ten-foot diameter well surrounded by dead trees (anything dropped into the well will cause 1d3 giant spiders to climb out and attack the party).

- A long-abandoned hunting lodge that can be used for shelter. Whispers may be heard when burning wood in the fireplace.

- Hot Springs and small geothermal pools where wildlife likes to congregate. These can also substitute a fire for warmth if the characters are sitting near to them.

D6	Snowfield (3)
1	Snow Hare
2	Arctic Fox
3	Eagles (d6)
4	Caribou (d12)
5	Musk Oxen (d12)
6	Giant Spiders (d3)

Forest (4)

This forest is a deep maze-like wood of sylvan beauty and danger.

Unique Locations of the Forest (4):

- A pine tree stripped of all its bark where 1d6 Winter Sprites like to congregate. They will try to magically disorient PC's to becoming lost in the wood (1/2 HD each).
- A fast-moving stream for fresh water with overhanging ledges offers protection from the elements and a good hiding place that gives the characters a bonus to hiding from enemies.
- A stone cairn the size of a human, frozen together. Who knows what lies underneath?

D6	Forest (4)
1	Snow Hare
2	Snow Owl
3	Arctic Fox
4	Moose (d3)
5	Giant Spiders (d3)
6	Winter Sprites (d3)

Forest (5)

This section of forest is on a decline from the rest of The Crown, and the closest area south towards The Kingdom.

Unique Locations of the Forest (5):

– A large stone statue covered in icicles and snow of a warrior (**Brigid**) pointing her sword towards the northern sky. When resting in this area, the characters feel at peace, and make their checks with a bonus. If there is a blizzard in this hex from the Ice Lord, it does not affect this area.

– An Elm Tree of great size and strange shape. The boughs move strangely, as if by a breeze, even if there is no wind. If the characters search in this area, they can find a hollow under the tree where nine skeleton remains are attached to its roots (**Ice Lord spell component location**).

– A sinkhole deceptively hidden under snow. The sides of it are covered in ice with some roots sticking out. Requires a hard check to escape from. Falling does 1d6 damage or makes characters' speed halved until a rest is completed (Player's choice).

D6	Forest (5)
1	Snow Hare
2	Snow Owl
3	Arctic Fox
4	Moose (d3)
5	Gaint Rats (d6)
6	Winter Sprites (d3)

Caves and Crag (6)

This area is filled with jutting rocks and cave systems covered in slick ice, and many dangers above and below (**Ice Lord spell component location in any of the caves in this region**).

Unique Locations of the Caves (6):

– A small cave system that can be crawled into and contains a partially frozen giant rat king (3 HD) whose bite can cause a chill that cannot go away without a full day of warmth and rest. The characters bitten must rest indoors with a fire or suffer 1d6 cold damage or two levels of exhaustion (Player's choice).

– A deep cave system containing cave paintings depicting what seem to be great monsters and beasts of the wild. One of the paintings appears to be a large antlered man looming tall over the characters.

– In a recess among the many crags is a stone altar surrounded by various bones of animals and people, brittle and sun-bleached in age. Humans are not welcome here. If a camp is set here the party will be set upon by 1d6 wolverines drawn to the chaotic nature of this area (1 HD).

D6	Caves & Crag (6)
1	Eagle (d6)
2	Arctic Fox
3	Musk Oxen (d12)
4	Wolverine
5	Gaint Rats (d6)
6	Gaint Spiders (d3)

Conclusion

If the characters defeat the Ice Lord they will begin to rebuild and recover, but in a few days' time a regiment of soldiers arrive from the rival kingdom (ask players the name of the kingdom and describe the banner it flies). They ask for the soldiers to surrender themselves and The Horn explaining that the two kingdoms have been in a great war for seven years and that the characters' king has been killed and his kingdom conquered

BeCrofty

art and games

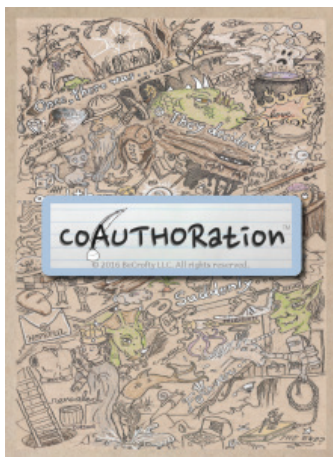
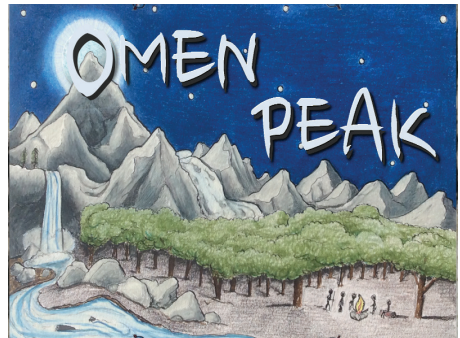
BeCrofty is the art and indie games of Benjamin Croft and his collaborator Norfrid (an art-loving Norwegian troll). We're all about creating awesome experiences, whether that be a fun board game, an inspiring image, a story that stays in the heart. We believe art comes in many forms, but has only one purpose: to let people share the joy of being alive.

And that's why we make stuff people can enjoy together.

To date, BeCrofty has three self-published tabletop games (with more on the way):

Omen Peak

This co-op tribe survival game pits you – the Ancestor Spirits – against the natural perils of a mountain journey and other supernatural foes. Band together to help your Descendants survive to the summit of Omen Peak. Collect supplies, avoid bad omens, and fight evil spirits in this dice-rolling pilgrimage for 1-6 players.



CoAUTHORation

Our popular co-op card game is a blast of creative possibilities for 1-6+ storytellers! Using a deck of just three suits, tell the amazing tale of a misfit fantasy character on a quest for ... a suitable ending. Take turns being the Author, to add cards to the tale, and the Editor, who rewards the Author for their sheer awesomeness. But make sure the character sticks to their quest, because when any Author runs out of cards, the game and the story come to an end! Will your story feature a cowardly pirate? Giant dwarves? A vengeful unicorn? Love-struck zombies? Why not all of them at once? Because this storytelling adventure is different every single time.



HOW TO DIE: A SURVEY OF DISEMBOWELMENT

BY JIM KOWALSKI



You ever get stabbed in the stomach and casually turn to your stabber and say; "Golly, how many hit points is this gonna cost me?"

Nah. Never. That's not reality. It's bullshit. I love Gygax, believe me, but we're better than that. **Welcome to How to Die: A Survey of Disembowelment.** We're going to defuse the wiring of your RPG-addled brain and show you that death isn't a matter of number systems, but rather a biological business of pain, color, and loss of functions. Better yet, we're going to show you how to use this science shit to make your own games shine with all the glamor of gore and death: a noir rainbow. *EDGY.*

This session we're talking about the world of freezerburn. Here are common ways to die while being harrowed by the Rime...

Common Ways To Die In The Arctic Wastes

These are listed in no particular order. They are historically pervasive. It turns out, in Siberia and other similar tundras, you don't pick your poison, but your poison picks YOU.

Falling Down A Crevasse

A lot of people don't know this about glaciers and icy wastes – it's hard to see sometimes. It's windy, really white, and everything is visually screaming at you. Another thing a lot of people don't know is that, especially in glaciers, because the ice is sorta 'flowing' while in a solid state, it tends to get smushed and elongated. During this elongation, because the glaciers are still solid, the ice will cleave, creating fissures called Crevasses. Many explorers back in the day (and today), would walk into a Crevasse without knowing, because they couldn't SEE anything, fall a good uneven 10–20 feet, snap their leg in half, and bleed out because they couldn't climb back out and treat themselves. This may also occur more frequently due to a similar symptom of arctic exposure: Snow Blindness. Because of the reflectivity of snow, it reflects over 80% of UV rays. When Snow Blindness occurs, it will blind a person either partially or fully, and make them feel like someone is rubbing their corneas with SANDPAPER. If untreated, it can last up to three DAYS!

Hypothermia

98.6° Imperial. This is the standard internal body temperature of a human. Hypothermia sets in at the loss of a mere 4°. As the internal temperature leaves the body, its critical organ functions begin to shut down in an inefficient attempt to conserve energy (this process is also given NITROUS OXIDE when your bod gets wet in the cold). The first defense against this is also the first real symptom; frostbite.

When your internal temp gets too chilly, your vasoconstriction process kicks in, conserving heat from your skin and extremities and keeping it close to your vital organs. When this isn't enough, the body begins to freak out, trying to keep all your organs afloat and warm without enough energy to do so. During this time, your brain begins to fog, your organs shut down one by one, you get amnesia, you black out, and finally, your heart stops. Then, at twilight your heart becomes literal ice, and you become a fucking WENDIIGO. All because you got sweaty.

Infection

The thing about the arctic wastes is that, well, it's an arctic WASTELAND. Food is hard to find, and so much can go wrong so fast. When you combine this with foolish monkey people who are probably already riddled with different strains of bacteria, it just makes everything worse. "Worse." Immune systems die down due to nutritional deficiency, people infect each other with their own brews, and it's just a real festival. Many explorers in the Arctic Wastes died from the amplification of botulism, dysentery, tuberculosis, scurvy, cardiovascular conditions, and fevers. Resources are scarce, and brutal exposure is imminent. Even the Black Plague made its way all the way through Norway.

Avalanche

First off: Avalanches are caused by hubris. Dumb people doing dumb shit. It's a fact. Don't act a fool, don't get avalanched. The days following a massive winter storm, new snow will sit on old ice at very uneven angles, with really sketchy weight displacement. If shaken by abrupt movement, the previous layers of ice and snow will break, and everything on top of it will give way to a massive flume of white death. Very hard to avoid. Whilst inside a moving avalanche, the matter

itself acts in a semi-fluid manner, and survivors should try to swim to the top before the snow settles – like concrete. Once set, an avalanche’s embrace will mark death upon those who cannot escape within the first half hour.

Altitude sickness

While not exclusive to the arctic circles, altitude sickness is a recurring factor during expositions into the Rime. Though it usually only takes place at Earth altitudes above 8000 feet, it can get pretty wild. The combination of general dehydration and lack of oxygen present at those levels will cause stress on the body that begins with headaches and nausea, and ends with edema (swelling/fluid retention). Edemas will cause their affected areas to take on excess fluid in the organ tissue. It’s pretty gross (gross-ome)! The coolest of these is cerebral edema, where your brain swells up, causing seizures and brain hernias, squeezing your brain so bad that blood begins to spurt out from your eyes. The worst is probably cardiac edema, because your heart stops, and you die.

How to Not Die In The Arctic Wastes

If you want to be a stick in the mud, here are some ways you can try to delay the inevitable. First things first: bring extra snacks. Seriously. Lack of food and water leads to people needing to go and find said food and water. The less travel you need to do the better. At night you may freeze to death in the subzero temperatures, and during the day you might not be able to even see things that are right in front of you. Anything you can do to limit exposure, do it. This includes wearing adequate clothes and staying dry. If you get wet, you’re probably going to die. It significantly increases your chances of cold exposure, and generally makes every little thing a lot more difficult to withstand. Two other extremely important resources are firewood and toboggans. If you do

not have enough stuff to make fire, you will inhibit your ability to keep warm. Toboggans are great, and have a two-fold purpose. One, they help you carry all this stuff through the tundras with ease, and can even help transport your person without needing to walk all the time. Second, due to the length of the toboggan, one could, in a pinch, use it as a bridge to safely cross a small-to-mid-sized crevasse (alternatively, hardwood ladders are mighty utilitious for other purposes as well as this). Burkas and similar headwear to limit overexposure to sunlight are also very helpful. As always, rope, tackle, knives, and standard adventurer tools will find their place here, and could even save your pitiful little life.

Death of Natural Causes Chart

Use this Chart to determine incurred ailments when losing Survival or Endurance Checks, taking considerable health damage, or misfortunes (or consequences of doing stupid things) incurred while travelling. Choose (alternatively, roll a d4) the level of danger appropriate to the event taking place (from Weenietown to Insta-Death), then roll a d4 to determine what befalls your sorry fools. The Chart can also be used to keep track of disease progression. Remember, if you torture them too badly, your sausage friends won’t play pretend games with you anymore.

Good luck, and remember:
EVERYONE DIES AT THE END.
Make it colorful, and make it count.

**With love,
Jim Kowalski**

Cause of Death	Precipitation	Foolishness	Hypothermia	Infection	Altitude Sickness
LvL1	Ice Slip: DEX Save. DC [Meh] Fail: Fall prone, take 2d8 damage. Bitch.	Lil Sweaty: You have overexerted yourself, and are now WET	Frostbite: 1d4 phalanges become swollen; -2 to all rolls involving your hands	Catarrh: You're a ball of mucus. Like the sniffles, but you're hacking and wheezing all gross and shit. Booger city.	Exhaustion/Dehydration: -2 to CON Stat.
LvL2	Snow Blindness: 1d6 hours	Incite Taboo: The spirits of the land are poised against you for your hubris. Misfortune follows your heels.	Advanced Frostbite: 1d6 phalanges fall off. Roll a d20 to determine which, for each.	Boils: Boils. All over your body. 1d4 Damage whenever something touches you.	Peripheral Edema: CON Save [A Good'un] Fail: Your face, hands, and feet swell up like balloons. -4 to all that.
LvL3	Advanced Snow Blindness: 1d3 Days	John Darnielle Special: DEX Save DC [Decent] Fail: a Mountain Goat kicks you off the mountain peak.	What? Who? Why?: Amnesia for 1d6 days	Dysentery: CON Save. DC [Decent] Pass: Shit yourself, puke everywhere, become WET and SOILED. Fail: All that stuff again, and you die in 1d6 days.	Cerebral Edema: Massive headache, 1d4 hours. CON Save DC [Decent] every round. Fail: Seizure. Lose your action. After 3 failures, your brain swells, you bleed out your eyes, and die.
LvL4	Fall into Crevasse: DEX Save. DC [Really Fucken High] Pass: keep 1 HP, break 1d2 legs. Fail: YOU DIED	Incite Avalanche: Try to run away, or get buried alive. (Buried lifespan = 30 minutes)	Wet Hypothermic Shock: CON Save. DC [Really Fucken High] Pass: Amnesia for 1d6 days Fail: Heart Stops. DEAD	Botulism: CON Save. DC [Really Fucken High] Fail: Gradual paralysis, and you die in 1d6 days. Pass: DEX is 4 for 1d6 days	Pulmonary Edema: CON Save DC [Really Fucken High] Fail: Your lungs swell with fluid and you drown. Pass: Wicked high fever, incapacitated 1d3 days

Chart: Death of Arctic Causes

Ísvandamaður

-a 5E Villain,

By [Ian Rollins](#)

Medium Undead, Chaotic Evil

Far to the North those who survive near the Ice Seas tell stories by the campfire. These epics are crafted to inspire bravery and hope during the long dark evenings when all such feelings can fade just as the sun. There is one such tale, however, that sends shivers down the spine of even the most stalwart warriors in spite of the cold. The tale of Ísvandamaður, the Ice Wanderer.

"It is told Ísvandamaður was not always known by this title. Some say ages ago he was an errant Knight of noble origin who wandered North, intent on proving his honor to a maiden from warmer lands by defying the odds and overcoming the perilous terrain. Others say he was a warlord who battled giants and other entities of frost, defending the last bastion of a lost kingdom long claimed by a mile of blue ice."

Whatever or whoever Ísvandamaður was no longer matters. That being has been lost to time and pain; all that remains is a creature of incredible strength and will. A man dressed in rotting furs and a heavy, rusting plate, dragging a spear through the snow, his pupils burned away by snow blindness leaving his eyes an aimless milky white. A quick glimpse at his skin reveals the mottled greys of a man long dead, yet preserved by the cold.

The stories are often a forewarning. Those who take no heed are destined to find themselves among empty encampments, places where the ground is painted red with Ísvandamaður's work, and bodies lay

frozen over in horrific poses. He will arrive as the sun sets low, watching from atop ridges, motionless. That is your moment to flee before the slaughter begins.

Still, some say Ísvandamaður protects some great treasure deep below the ice. A handful of adventurers have trekked deep into the North to seek out the truth. They track Ísvandamaður for days, and are quickly fooled into confidence by his slow movements and blind eyes. If they try to sneak past or challenge the Ice Wanderer the result is always the same, another mound of bodies swiftly forgotten beneath the drifting snows."

Ísvandamaður

Medium Undead, Chaotic Evil



Armor Class: 20 (+2 Plate Armor)

Hit Points: 187 (17d10 + 85)

Speed: 30 ft.

Strength: 21 (+5)

Dexterity: 8 (-1)

Constitution: 20 (+5)

Intelligence: 15 (+2)

Wisdom: 18 (+4)

Charisma: 10 (+0)

Saving Throws

Str: +10

Dex: +4

Con: +10

Wis: +8

Skills: Arcana +7, History +7, Perception +9, Survival +14

Damage Resistances: Poison, Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities: Charmed, Exhaustion, Frightened, Paralyzed, Poisoned, Cold Senses, Tremorsense 120 ft., Passive Perception 17

Challenge: 19 (26,000 XP)

Legendary Resistance: (3/Day).

If **Ísvandamaður** fails a saving throw it can choose to succeed instead

Innate Spellcasting: **Ísvandamaður**'s spellcasting ability is Wisdom (Spell Save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components.

Cantrips (at will): Ray of Frost, Chill Touch

1st Level Spell (4 Slots): Shield, Fog Cloud

2nd Level Spell (3 Slots): Detect Thoughts, Misty Step

3rd Level Spell (2 Slots): Sleet Storm

4th Level (1 Slot): Ice Storm

5th Level (1 Slot): Cone of Cold

Turn Resistance: **Ísvandamaður** has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Actions

Multiattack: **Ísvandamaður** makes three Spear Attacks

Spear; Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 14 (1d10+9) piercing damage plus 12 Cold (2d10). This is a magic weapon attack.

Paralyzing Touch; Melee Spell Attack: +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature (Hit) 10 (3d6) Cold Damage. The target must make a DC 17 Constitution Saving Throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Legendary Actions

Ísvandamaður can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turns. **Ísvandamaður** gains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Attack: **Ísvandamaður** uses his "Spear" attack action.

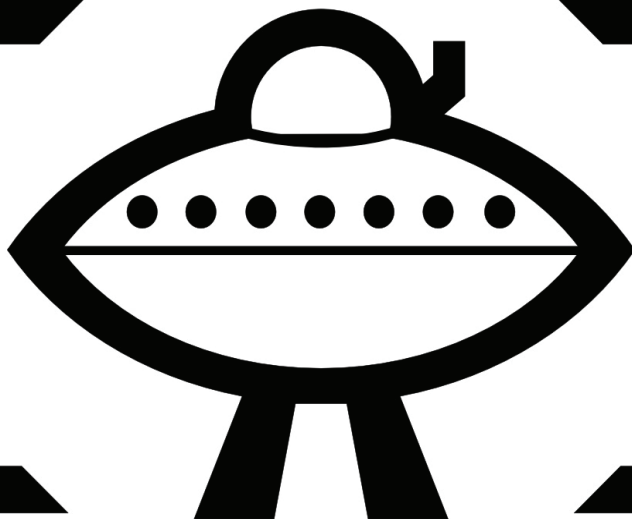
Paralyzing Touch (Costs 2 Actions):

Ísvandamaður uses his Paralyzing Touch.

Ice Shield (Costs 3 Actions):

Ísvandamaður surrounds himself with a thick block of ice. In this state he cannot take actions or reactions, he automatically fails Dexterity Saving Throws, his speed is reduced to 0, his AC increases by 4, and he gains immunity to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non magical weapons. Heal **Ísvandamaður** for 40 (10d8) when he emerges at the beginning of his next turn.

FREAKOPOLIS



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TOMB OF THE FROZEN PHAROAH BY AMANDA KAHL AND DOUG SHUTE



Tomb of the Frozen Pharaoh

By Amanda Kahl and Doug Shute

One of the greatest Sorcerers in the land has sent a group of adventurers to retrieve a powerful relic from a hidden pyramid at the farthest ends of the earth. He promises that when they bring the relic to him, they will be rewarded with lands and riches. Little do they know the perils that await...

After being given their mission by the Sorcerer, the Party encounters a guide that will bring them to the pyramid they seek...for a price.

Roll D6 for Guide Backstory:

- 1 – Guide is an old friend of one of the adventurers
- 2 – Guide is a local townspeople
- 3 – Guide is an adventurer that backed out from a previous party
- 4 – Guide is a respected scholar
- 5 – Guide is secretly the Sorcerer's apprentice

The guide leads the party to a stone doorway set in the side of a small knoll. The stone door is surrounded by intricate carvings of insects, jackals, birds of prey, and mysterious symbols. The guide points to the door and tells the party that this is the entrance to the pyramid, but they will follow the adventurers no further. The guide insists that the place is cursed and filled with evil. When pressed, the guide will provide the following information:

The relic the adventurers seek is so powerful that brave explorers from every kingdom have attempted to retrieve it, but none have returned.

Legend says this mighty relic let the Pharaoh draw power from the sun itself. He used this power to enforce a brutal reign for thousands of years before the relic was stolen from him by his priests. The Pharaoh was still too powerful to truly kill, so both he and the relic were entombed in a frigid prison. They were buried deep in the earth, far from all sunlight, to keep the Pharaoh from regaining his power.

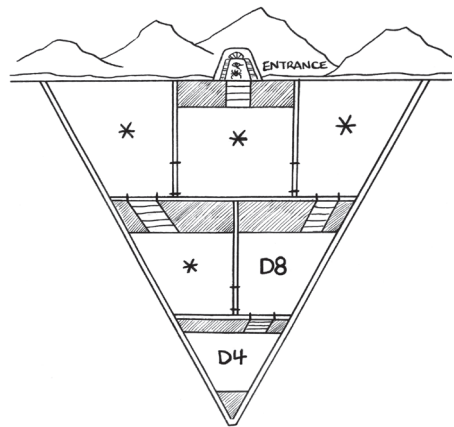
The pyramid the adventurers were brought to is actually buried upside-down, and the stone door is only the entrance to it.

Dice Drop Pyramid

Once your players arrive to the pyramid, roll to construct the pyramid's layout!

Drop 6 different polyhedral dice. Form a pyramid the players have to traverse, with the 4-sided die being the bottom of the pyramid. The D6 should be in the second tier along with any other die. The top tier is any combination of the three remaining dice.

- D4 – The Pharaoh's Tomb
- D6 – The Queen's Chamber
- D8 – The Armory
- D10 – The Throne Room
- D12 – The Altar Room
- D20 – The Shrine Room



Place the above-ground entry on one side of the top tier. From here the adventurers will have to snake their way through each level of the pyramid until they reach the bottom, the Pharaoh's Tomb.

Hallways connect each room. Some hallways are set with traps to prevent thieves from breaking in. If you roll a trap you've already used, re-roll until you have one the players haven't encountered.

D10 Table for Traps:

1	Razor sharp icicles fall from the ceiling
2	Blades of ice rise from the floor
3	The floor starts falling away in sections
4	The hallway starts collapsing
5	A massive piece of ice slowly falls from the ceiling
6	The walls start moving in
7	Arctic blast steals the players' warmth, 2d6 Damage
8	Adventurers' feet start freezing to the floor
9	A gust of wind blows out all torches and light sources
10	A terrible howl causes temporary deafness to all

Rooms of the Pyramid

The Shrine Room:

The Shrine is a large room with ornate decorations, celebrating the accomplishments of the Pharaoh. The players can see an altar with a carved bust of the Pharaoh in the center.

This is where the devout followers of the Pharaoh came to pay their respects and honor him after his power was broken.

Zealots

Zealots of the Pharaoh still come to worship him to this day and protect his tomb from intruders and would-be thieves.

HP: 5 **AC:** 10

Level	1-4	5-10	11-16	17-20
DMG	1	6	10	14

The Altar Room:

The Pharaoh's devoted zealots also honor their master with rituals and sacrifices. This is a smaller room and not as decorated as the shrine room. The floor is littered with frozen remains of sacrificial animals.

Frozen Undead

Animals weren't the only sacrifices to the Pharaoh. The zealots now also sacrifice intruding adventurers and unwary townsfolk! Now those cursed human remains are trying to regain the life stolen from them by feeding on thieves and adventurers.

HP: 7 **AC:** 10

Level	1-4	5-10	11-16	17-20
DMG	1	6	10	14

Frozen bite: when the undead have a player pinned they can immediately roll to bite them. If a bite is successful the adventurer is poisoned for 1d4 hours. (Number = Players +1)

The Queen's Chamber

The Pharaoh wasn't the only one entombed in the pyramid; his queen was imprisoned here as well. The queen's body is lying on a large ice pedestal in the center of the room. She is covered in fine jewelry and surrounded by rich grave goods. Her final resting place looks more like the room of a palace than a tomb.

The Queen

The players must be quiet and endeavor not to create any noise in this room otherwise the queen will arise. If the players do not awaken the queen then she will arise when/if the players encounter the Pharaoh.

HP: 33 **AC:** 14

Level	1-4	5-10	11-16	17-20
DMG	6	10	14	18

Regeneration: 1d6, regains 1d6 HP at the start of each round.

The queen does have a pendant of healing

around her neck and if it is taken off her she shall crumble to ice fragments. If a player is able to acquire the pendant they will have resistance from ice, poison, or cold conditions.

The Armory:

This large room is lined with skeletal warriors of the Pharaoh's army, frozen at attention. The Pharaoh's ghastly host seems too numerous to count. Almost as unnerving as the army are the icy walls of the room, which look as if they are beginning to melt. When an adventurer catches a glimpse of their reflection in the glistening ice, the face that stares back at them is that of a grinning skeleton. The players may find an etched +1 greatsword with +1d8 against undead.

Skeleton Warriors

HP: 5 AC: 7

Level	1-4	5-10	11-16	17-20
DMG	1	6	10	14

Frenzied: Attacks any creatures nearby – friend or foe.

(Number = Players x6)

The Throne Room:

The throne room is a great, cavernous space lined with rows of carved pillars. The walls are painted with images of the glory of the Pharaoh's reign. At the far end of the room are two ornate thrones made of ice. As the players approach, a man appears before them and bellows: "Intruders! You shall go no farther. You are not worthy to stand in the Pharaoh's divine presence. The sentence for your trespass into his great hall is DEATH!"

The Vizier

The Vizier is the Pharaoh's most trusted advisor and chief justice. He is dressed in white robes and has a great staff.

HP: 33 AC: 15

Level	1-4	5-10	11-16	17-20
DMG	6	10	14	18

Magic: Ice Shard Scarab Storm – 2d8 bludgeoning damage and 2d6 cold damage.

The Pharaoh's Tomb:

It's colder in the Pharaoh's Tomb than anywhere else in the pyramid. As the party enters, they can feel the warmth seeping from their bodies. On the far wall of the tomb, they see the Pharaoh's seemingly lifeless corpse, laid out on a bare stone slab. In a scone on the wall not far from the Pharaoh is a scepter, faintly radiating with eerie power. The longer the adventurers stay in this room, the more intense the power radiating from the scepter becomes. Before long, the Pharaoh's body will sit up and grab the scepter from the wall. What the players don't know is that the heat from their bodies and torches is being drawn into the scepter – giving it power and summoning the Pharaoh back to life. If the players do figure this out, and leave with the scepter before the Pharaoh revives, have the guide betray them as they leave, and summon the Pharaoh to attack them then.

The Pharaoh

The pharaoh is dressed in Ancient Egyptian royal regalia. He has red-orange glowing eyes, is muscular, and very imposing.

HP: 100 AC: 18

Level	1-4	5-10	11-16	17-20
DMG	8	12	16	20

Multiaction: can attack twice each turn.

Revered: other creatures will sacrifice themselves to protect the Pharaoh and follow his commands. If the players can separate the scepter from the Pharaoh, his stats are reduced by half.

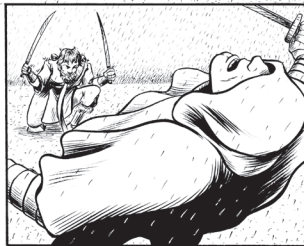
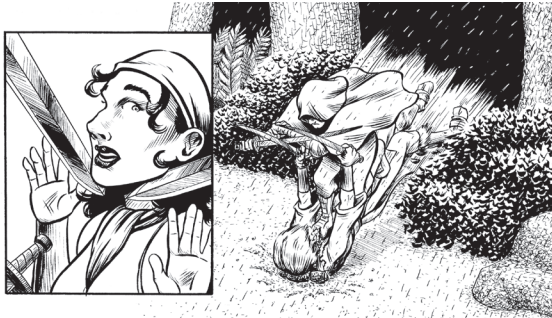
The Scepter

The Pharaoh's magic scepter is, in truth, the Scepter of Ra. If the party defeats the Pharaoh and the scepter is still in one piece, they must decide what to do with such a mighty artifact. The Scepter of Ra will grant any holder the ability to become a god. Will the adventurers destroy the scepter for being so dangerous? Will they deliver it to the Sorcerer who hired them? Or will one of them keep it for themselves, to become all-powerful...

Age of Night

Written and Illustrated by Amanda Kahl

A Fantasy Epic Webcomic - Updates Weekly!



Beneath The Glacier:

A Mysterious Cache

By Drew Cochran



Below ten leagues of ice you find two fully preserved people; an elderly woman and a young man. The face of the young man is hard. His eyes still search for something that lies across a horizon, long lost. The face of the old woman is anxious. Her hands still clutch firmly the furs enveloping her wizened frame.

Next to these stand an arctic hound, frozen the same as his master. His nose still peaks upward, trying to find a trail forgotten to the white waste. In his slender wooden sled lie some bags fastened on by lengths of sinew.

Who were these people? Why did they wander so far into the deathly rime?

Excavation

In order to learn of their origins or salvage their supplies, the duo must be properly excavated from the ice and thawed. This requires several ice picks, hammers, chisels, torches, and rope. The specimens (the Man, the Woman, the Hound, and the Sled), require 6 days of excavation each; one must carve through the ice with care and skill. For each able person working with a correct set of tools, this time is reduced by 1 day. Due to their positions in the ice, the Man or the Hound must be excavated first, before reaching the Woman or the Sled, respec-

tively. When the specimens are extracted, they mustn't be dropped or fall over, lest they smash into pieces. Roll a relevant Skill Check when moving the specimens every ten feet to keep them steady (this may be circumvented only with ample equipment and manpower). The main challenge during the Excavation of the cache will be sustenance, survival against the elements, and beasts or evils befalling the excavators during the delve.

Thawing

After each specimen is retrieved, it must be thawed so its contents can be appraised. The Man, Woman, and Hound will take 2 days of even warmth from a contained fire to properly thaw. The Sled's contents take 3 days to properly thaw. If, during the thaw, the specimens are overexposed to heat, they will rot and crumble into ash. Overexposure may come from the bonfire's fury, or the light of the sun, or bad positioning of the specimens. Roll a relevant Skill Check to monitor each specimen thrice a day to know how to place them. Roll again when moving every 10 feet



The Specimens and Their Contents

The Man

Beneath his **Sealskin and Caribou Fur Parka**, the man has a **Linen Tunic**. On his body are several scars, and on his neck is a tattoo of an elk antler. On his neck rests a **Bone Whistle**, and a **Many-Colored Scarf of Ritual Flags** (If worn, the wearer becomes stronger, and gains an urgency they can't shake. While wearing it, they can't fall asleep, though they still get tired). In his pockets are **Six Obsidian Arrowheads**, a **Sinew Bowstring**, a **Salt Stone**, a **Flint Stone**, a **Wad of Walrus Fat**, **Cured Walrus Jerky** and an **Ivory Dagger**. In his hands he holds a **Fat Lamp** and an **Ivory-Head Spear**. On his feet are **Two Sealskin Boots**.

The Woman

Beneath her **Polar Bear Skin Parka**, the old woman wears a **Shirt of Blue and Yellow Yarns** (If worn, a hawk will follow the wearer, and appear to them in their sleep). On her right arm are several tattoos of different animals. Beneath her parka is also a **Small Fur Satchel**. In the satchel are **Two Full Wineskins** (one with Water, the other with Jellied Bile), a **Blue and Black Ritual Flag** (If placed on one's face, they can see in the dark), an **Ivory Needle**, an **Obsidian Knife**, and a **Whalebone Ocarina**. On her feet are **Two Sealskin Boots**.

The Hound

On the husky dog is a **Sinew Sled Harness**, nothing else. If the contents of its stomach are opened, there is found **Seal Vertebrae**, **Bile**, and a **Gold Coin**. Its teeth are in good condition, as well as its fur, pending the successfulness of the thawing process.

The Sled

The Sled is made of **Whalebones**, with **Furs** lining the bottom. The cache itself is fastened on by **Sinew Cordage**. Beneath the cords on the sled rest **Two Darkwood Bows**, an **Ivory Harpoon**, a **Fat Lamp**, and **Two Large Sealskin Bags**.

The First Bag

In the first bag there rests a **Wedge-Shaped Stone Knife**, **Three Bundles of Animal Fat**, **Three Bundles of Cured Walrus Meat**, a **Whetstone**, **Two Sinew Ropes**, a **Fishing Net**, and a **Stone Club and Chisel**.

The Second Bag

In the second bag is the corpse of a male child in the fetal position. His face and fingernails are painted in many colors. His mouth is sewn shut, and there is a large laceration through his stomach, also sewn shut; both with skill and care. On the back of his neck is a tattoo of an elk antler. If the boy's mouth is opened, it is found full with **Half-Digested Rare Hallucinogens**. If the boy's stomach is opened, his entrails are missing, and in their place is found **Three Pounds of Numbing Spice and Salt**. On his left ankle there is an **Anklet Scarf** with a cloud symbol on it (If removed, after nightfall, a terrible snowstorm will begin to pick up). He has no shoes.



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THE LAZY GM'S GUIDE TO RUNNING A HORROR GAME

BY ALEX JARKEY

"It's dark. The cold air wraps around your exposed flesh, draining the heat and hope from your body. The shadows move and shift before you, slowly circling like silent hunters in the night. Suddenly, the ground before you opens up and a bloated, one-eyed bat-like creature launches towards you!"

"Uh, I attack it?"

"What? No, it's the monster! Your character would run away."

"Why?"

"It's a horror game ...you're supposed to be scared."

At first glance, it might seem easy to run a good horror game. The ingredients seem pretty obvious: darkness, monsters, violence, gore... How hard can it be? But just like cooking, it takes a lot of skill to combine those elements into a balanced experience.

It's easy to throw around terms like Suspense, Tension, and Terror without really considering the delicate interplay among these elements. Let's take a deeper look at what the horror genre is and what it really takes to invoke genuine feelings of fear in your players.

Creating Suspense You will die in 7 days.

This may surprise some of you, but just a single common ingredient defines the horror genre. It's not monsters. It's not darkness.

It's not violence or gore.

What makes a good horror game is a contract. Every story starts with a promise: something bad is going to happen. But here's the kicker: it can't just start happening arbitrarily. In order for the players not to feel cheated, there must be rules to the situation. At the beginning the players/protagonists just don't know what those rules are. The players bind themselves to the contract of the

story by breaking one of those rules, and the rest of the game is about them trying to discover and understand what the rest of the rules are so that they can extract themselves from the contract.

Using Suspense in Your Game

This formula works is because it builds suspense. You want your players to recognize that they are trapped in the situation because of their own actions, and the only way they can unbind themselves is through further acts. But of course, actions have consequences. The only way to find out is to experiment in order to reveal what they can and can't do within the rules of the contract. It's the anticipation of knowing that something bad might happen at any moment that invokes the feeling of Suspense.

To achieve this, make sure you frequently give your players choices. Initially, they might seem arbitrary and meaningless, but remember that the contract doesn't always need to be reasonable. Angry ghosts and spirits can get mad simply if you touch their belongings or trespass on their family's land. The key to making this work is that the players don't know until they try, and a feeling of suspense comes from knowing that making the wrong choice will lead to a horrific event.

Creating Terror You're Screwed.

For many years, the horror genre was used as a morality tale: the victims were often being punished for their sins or character flaws. The slasher killing teens who have sex before marriage, the ghost of a victim who haunts her killer – even Frankenstein's monster is a cautionary tale against the scientific advancement of the early 20th century.

Terror is the feeling you experience when you suddenly realize you've made a horrible, irreversible error. Looking back, you realize all the warning signs were there and now all you can do is face the consequences. Often in horror movies, terror is achieved through surprise: the door opens and an alien jumps out – oh no! You're screwed. The "bad thing" identified in

the contract has happened; your worst fears are about to become reality.

Using Terror in your Game

Jump scares and surprise might work in film, but they are almost impossible to use in an RPG – you'll need to rely on different mechanics to terrify your players. Remember that the feeling of terror doesn't come from the bad thing itself, but from the realisation that there is now no escape from the bad thing.

In order to make this work, it's important that you make the outcomes clear in advance so that your players immediately realize the full weight of the consequences.

You need to demonstrate the rules and effects of the horror contract beforehand – unfortunate NPCs who have made the same mistakes or having the players face a toned down version first (e.g. facing off against a single zombie before they accidentally alert the whole horde).

To execute on this setup, there also needs to be a clearly understood "trigger" that signals to everyone that the point of no return has been passed. Consider rolling the dice for key moments out in the open: "You want to sneak past the Alien Queen? Ok, if I roll a 9 or higher she will hear you and alert the Hive..."

Creating Tension

Don't fear the dark. Fear what's in the dark. You'll soon discover that you can't just constantly jump from spine-tingling Suspense to heart-pounding Terror over and over again without exhausting your players. It's important to allow moments of decompression and relief so that nobody "goes numb" to the important dramatic moments! During these phases, you want to control the Tension of a scene to ensure that things don't get too relaxed.

Using Tension in your Game

Never let your players feel like they are totally safe. Every moment they aren't directly in contact with the monster, remind them that they don't know where it's gone or what it's doing. If they can't see the danger, then danger could be anywhere... And a threat that could be anywhere is a

threat that is everywhere.

Tension comes from a lack of knowledge as well as power. Why is darkness such a standard in horror movies? Because we fear what we don't know, and we can't know what we can't see. When describing a scene, just explain that their characters can't make out what is in the shadows – the only way they'll be able to get more information is by getting closer.

This last bit is really important, so say it with me:

stop giving weapons to your players!

A critical part of horror is feeling exposed and vulnerable, and the fastest way to destroy that feeling is to empower them with effective weapons. Of course they will naturally want to find some, so use this as a reason for them to leave their "safe zone". You'll still get plenty of Tension if they want to use tools or improvised weapons – gently remind them that their armaments could break or jam at any moment.

About The Author

Alex Jarkey is the lead designer of Flashback RPG, a unique roleplaying game where players reveal events and characters from their past to advance their skills and abilities in the present.

Check it out at:

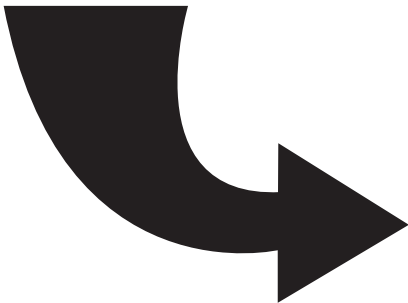
<https://www.flashbackrpg.com/>





In the midst of an industrial revolution, a strange new metal falls from the sky that changes everything it touches. As faith in the old ways fades and society struggles to adapt to the new steam-powered economy, a mysterious spore-sickness starts to spread from city to city. Even the Imperial Army is forced to retreat from the frontier when Titans, huge monstrosities forged from natural and elemental forces, appear and begin to rampage unchallenged throughout the empire.

The players must shed the chains of the past and change themselves to survive in this evolving world, but the blue-blooded aristocracy will do everything they can to hold onto their power.



A COLD HUNGER

BY EGG EMBRY



This far north, cold was a certainty that meant ice carvings never melted or aged. When I saw a mark upon the gleaming white, I wondered who cut it. My mother? Hers? Further back still? Was the groove made by an ancient tribe or hunters tracking a pod of seals? Seals...

"Gods Skating Upon The Ice, a seal would be my salvation! Please! I'm so hungry!"

Despite my appeal, these marks in the ice were not left by seals. They appeared to be gouges a tribe not mine, we had never trekked this far north left behind as they caravanned across the ice. How long ago did another tribe reach this deep into the white wastes?

As I pondered, I looked to the sun. After the long night of deep winter, the world turned to face the sun for the half-year day. During the

long day, the ice plains were blindingly white, and the hunting was choice.

However, this half-year day brought only seas without whales and ice floes bare of game. Starved, the elders consulted the Gods Upon The Wind who pronounced north to be our salvation. Thin and hungry, the tribe obeyed and journeyed for survival.

In the light of deepest day, the north was a flat, shapeless expanse bordered by sky. When I spotted a form along that horizon, my heart beat faster. I feared it might be a hunger-fueled mirage, but after I consulted Hannock, our best hunter, she confirmed it was real.

"Could it be a seal caught in the ice?"

On that possibility, the elder women who spoke for the Gods Upon The Wind ordered

Hannock, her brother, Hiniahni, and I to race ahead. With the tribe left behind, we unburdened our sleds of all save our tusk knives, Hannock's harpoon, Hiniahni's whale bone axe, and my driftwood bow.

As the dogs dragged the sleds far from the tribe, Hannock discerned the shape was a woman, long frozen. Her huddled form, a husk of human iced meat, and not a seal, made me cry. I was so hungry.

When we reached the frozen woman, I cringed as Hiniahni leaped from his sled and ran to her, some morbid desire for the ice woman in his eyes. Hiniahni was a capable hunter; but as a boy, he would wake screaming from nightmares of freezing to death. When an animal, or someone, died from exposure, he obsessed over their rigid carcass. His morbid curiosity tainted him, and, despite his hunting prowess, no woman favored Hiniahni; I know I did not.

As Hiniahni caressed her icy exterior, Hannock and I melted away, disgusted by his inclinations. I left the dogs and sled to walk off my revulsion. I hunted the ground for animal tracks, but only found a pattern in the white: short, straight, and curved lines chiseled into the ice. As with anything this far into the frozen lands, it could have been cut during the long night or when the gods last skated across the ice. Each marking was a finger length high and as wide as the span from the ring finger to the index, all in a row as long as my forearm. To the left and right of the oddity, perhaps a shoulder's width away, there were additional sets of markings. I took down my hood and discovered a second row the height of an adult and a child away from the first, each marked with similar symbols. There were as many tiers as I had fingers, each running toward the horizon. The rows provoked questions. What was their purpose? Who could have carved them this far north? Was this the salvation the Gods Upon The Wind prophesied?

While contemplating this, I chanced upon a lump amid the white – a discolored hump casting a pale shadow in the daylight. Kneeling before it, I deciphered the lump to be a frozen, gnarled hand protruding from the ice. Ancient and crystallized, the gloveless appendage was cracked and black from frostbite and decay. It rose from one of the marked plots, and, on examination, I gasped as I saw the hand was connected to a body locked in the ice. Gawking at the rows, I realized each set of carvings was a grave marker with a frozen body beneath. Row upon row of graves, more dead here than there had ever been living. As I digested this, fear and excitement battled within me. Why had so many died here? Had this been the tribe that made the markings I saw earlier? Lost in my hunger-fueled speculation, only the rumble of my stomach broke my reverie.

No, not my stomach, but a snarl from behind me. I turned to the growl of the pack and saw their teeth bared. I searched for the source of their agitation until my eyes landed on Hiniahni and the ice woman. As I stared, my mind conjured a narrative composed of every dark dream I'd had about Hiniahni. From a distance, he appeared to embrace the frozen woman as a lover. He knelt, his arms wrapped around her torso, the hood of his parka pulled back, his neck pressed to her icy mouth in intimacy. I understood why the dogs yowled at this abomination: she was dead, and he defiled her. Horror with Hiniahni bubbled in the pit of my stomach.

However, that view of Hiniahni was a false narrative born of my prejudices. When I saw the blood, I realized the ice woman was not dead; he was not pressing his neck against its lips. Instead, this corpse had torn Hiniahni's throat out. Blood ran across his pale features and down his brown parka, freezing crimson on the white ground. Stunned, I watched motionless as Hiniahni died at the ice woman's hands. Hiniahni had not initiated some depraved act. He was the victim. I felt horrible

for my speculations about Hiniahni and for doing nothing as he bled out.

The ice woman rose up in a rigid, grinding motion that sounded like ice cracking. It split its icy lips into jagged, bloody shards torn back to reveal a horrific smile full of blood-dipped icicle fangs. It spoke with a voice like a demonic howl.

"Eat them."

Hannock's war cries woke me from my shock. Whooping, she turned her sled and drove at the ice woman. I ran to my sled, barked at the dogs, and attempted to string my bow; however, the pack moved faster than my famished hands worked. While I threaded, Hannock hurled her harpoon. The great whale bone punched through the ice woman's back and lodged in its chest, tip exposed.

Despite the harpoon, the ice woman advanced. I coiled the string, but I was too panicked to loop it onto the bow's other tip. I put the fingers of my glove into my mouth, bit down on the sealskin, pulled, and released my hand. With my fingers free, I manipulated the loop, nocked, drew back, and loosed. The arrow sank into its throat. Any other creature would have died from the arrow and harpoon. Undeterred, the ice woman extended its arms in an icy embrace meant to impale me on the weapon shafts.

From behind, Hannock grabbed and tore her harpoon free, toppling the icy corpse. Before my kinswoman could stab the ice woman, the creature rolled into her and knocked Hannock over. It clawed its way on top of Hannock and opened its mouth inhumanly wide. Its bite sounded like a bear snapping into a seal. Hannock screamed as its icicle fangs sank into her stomach. In torment, Hannock clutched at her tattered clothes and exposed intestines. With every remaining pump of Hannock's heart, the snow around her reddened.

Desperate to get the monster away from Hannock, I slid my bow beneath the ice woman's

chest then grabbed both ends and hauled back. Even as I pried it up, the creature ripped away more of Hannock's guts, too much for her to survive.

Tears in my eyes, I dragged the ice woman away from Hannock then collapsed atop its back, pinning it. I pulled my tusk knife and slammed it into the harpoon hole in the ice woman's chest. Digging repeatedly, I widened the pocket until it extended from armpit to spine. I hauled back on its arm until the shoulder and arm ripped off.

Icy remnants beneath me, it twisted until we were face-to-face. With its remaining hand, it forced my head towards its sharp icicle fangs and the shaft of the arrow in its neck. I grabbed the shaft and wretched it as hard as I could, shattering the neck; the head rolled away from the remaining shoulder.

My kinsmen died and the creature crumpled. As I lay on my back panting, the wind suddenly howled and the land glowed. An ominous brightness, brighter than the half-year day, radiated from the graves. In another sign of the gods, a voice spoke deathly cold words of wisdom.

"Eat them."

The wind faded, the glow ceased, and all that remained were the ice-cold words. Words I'd spoken. They crystallized as I realized salvation lay beneath the ice, these preserved corpses would feed the tribe. No matter how sacrilegious, I would unearth this frozen meat and eat.

I smiled at the gods' benevolence, yet my lips ground and jerked as they moved into position only with effort. They made a cracking sound like ice breaking, and my smile exposed a mouthful of icicle fangs.

"Yes, eat them."

THE END

POWERED BY THE DREAMER



Powered by the
Apocalypse RPG Zine

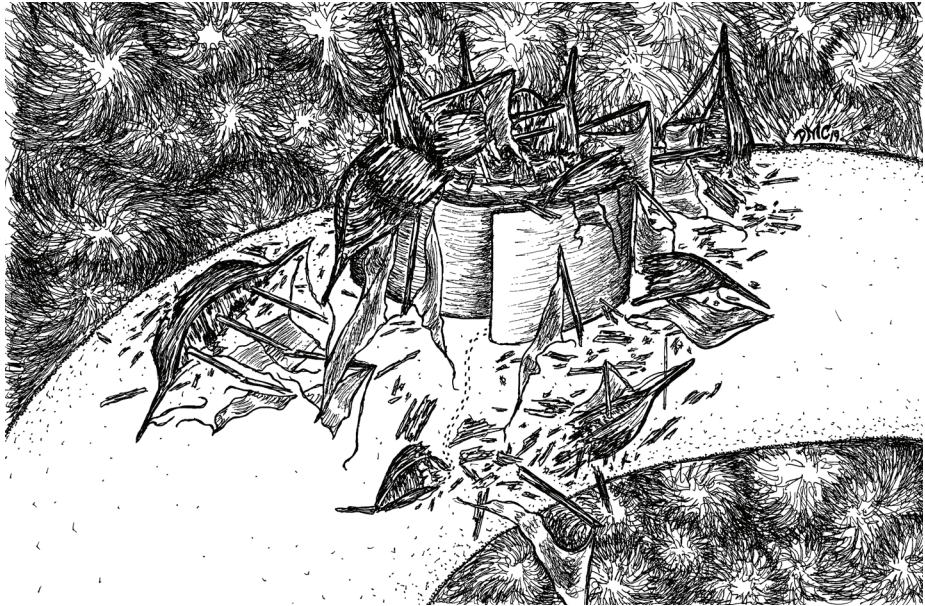


By
Egg Embry

THE DEVOURER OF FOOLS

"AN ADVENTURE, TO THE END"

BY CAMERON WELLER, AND DREW COCHRAN



Intro:

Deep in the Wild Seas of the Sacred Sun, on the outermost icy ring of the Savage Realm, there lay one mystery unsolved; The Devourer of Fools. This graveyard of galleons and caravels will, without fail, pull ships into its voracious mouth. Those who wreck there never return.

As your ship now sits on the edge, you see its mast burning. From the flickering loss are revealed several footsteps in the snow; many end at the edge, where their creators jumped to their doom. The freshest prints lead towards it; The Devourer of Fools. A giant temple of ice, covered in the broken hulls of ancient boats large and small; one small crack, with a large gateway leading inside.

Through the horror of the wreck, you feel two consuming impulses overcome your soul; jump off the edge to your doom, or walk inside the looming gate. Helplessly, you trod forth

About The Epic of Dreams:

The Epic of Dreams is a diceless roleplaying game with an old-school spirit, focused on cultivating immersive roleplay. It is rules-lite, and allows for modules to be ported into and out of other systems with ease. The random table mechanics of this dungeon operate by using the 'Consulting the Muse' mechanic. To Consult the Muse, the Game Master thinks of a random number between 1 and 20, and then asks a Player to give them a random number between 1 and 20. Add the numbers together, and if the result is greater than 20, subtract 20 from the score. This will give a randomized result between 1 and 20.

When porting monsters from The Epic of Dreams to other OSR Systems, double the level listed. If your system uses Hit Dice instead, this number is still correct.

About the Seas of Ayil:

The Seas of Ayil is a picturesque Space Fantasy setting where peoples of several worlds discover that they can sail upon the skies of the stars just as the seas of their planets. These people travel across their Sacred System trying to conserve or hoard 'Pieces of Her,' the cosmic Matron Tree who birthed each planet. The stars are living, immortal Djinn who are imperious and full of mystery.

Dungeon Lore (GM Eyes Only!):

At the center of the maze, encased in a giant icicle, lies the terrible Saguirin general Mardza Vol. In his hands he holds the jawless skull of his confidant and betrayer, the sorcerer Kenvig Saol. Due to the eldritch corruption, and the sheer will of these ancient vampires, they remain active in mind and spirit, ever locked against the other. Kenvig Saol's power created the ice maze; his power keeps Mardza Vol at bay, and he will destroy any who try to free him, for the greater good. Mardza Vol's power is why ships crash into the maze; he wishes to bring someone to free him from Kenvig's grasp, by any means necessary. These two forces will come upon the party, trying to keep them from enacting the other's will.

Dungeon Features:

The Devourer of Fools is an ice maze, partially destroyed by perpetual shipwrecks. Each Square listed is 10x10 feet. There are 3 Random Table Mechanics; 2 are different forms of Psychic Attacks, and the last is a Wandering Monster table. All are triggered on the map by walking into an area; though certain player actions might trigger a table.

There are two NPCs the party may find within the dungeon; The spirit of Kenvig Saol, or his great granddaughter Rhula Saol, a sorceress who shuns her duty of safe-keeping the ice labyrinth of her grandfather.

There are green portals in the dungeon, placed by Rhula Saol. Beings wander through often. Because of how they interact, backtracking may occur. Whenever the party re-crosses part of the map where a table is triggered or a room is described, roll the trigger again. Similarly, if a room is crossed again, describe the scene as they left it, and roll the correct tables listed.

If there are more than 4 players, always roll for each table twice.

Psychic Intrusions:

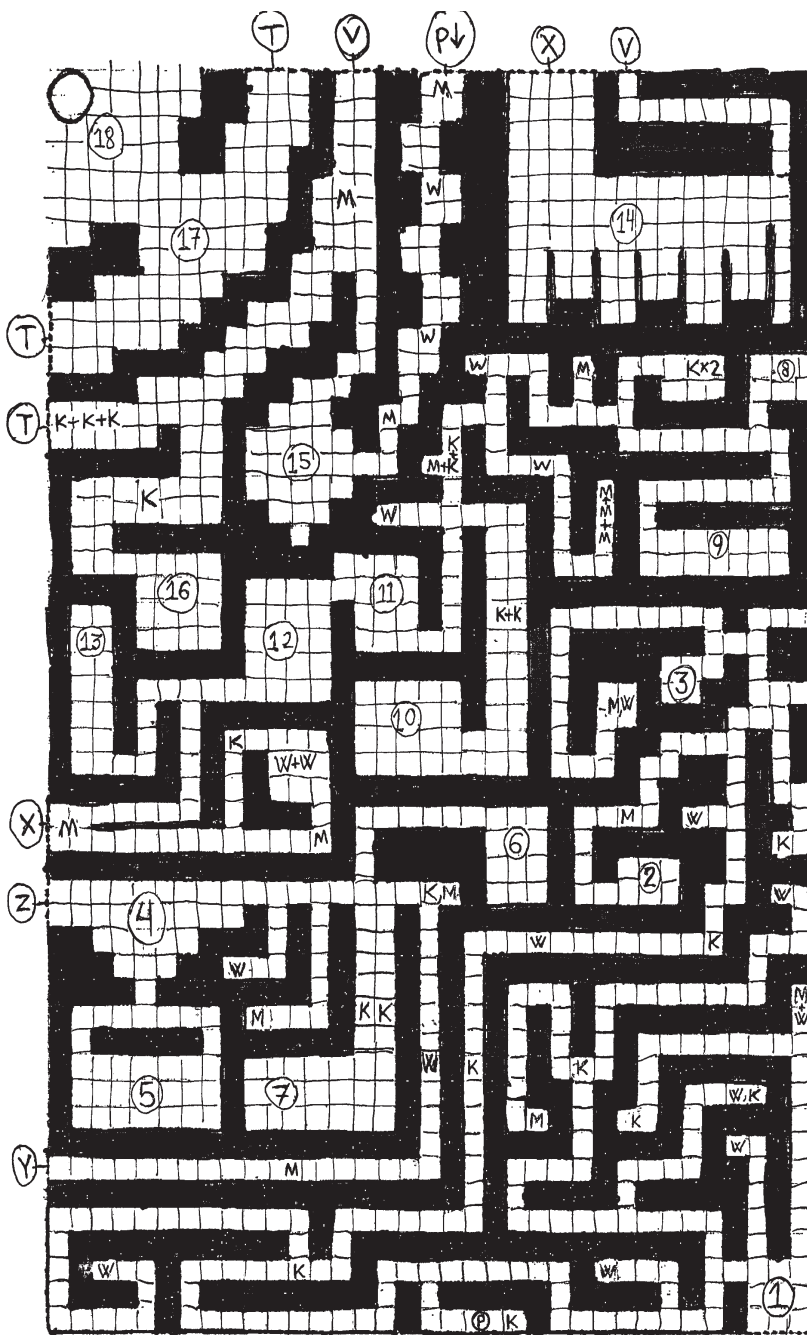
When inflicted, they take an Epic Falter Check (2 Successful Saving Throws). If they fail, they are subject to the effect. For each trigger, one player is affected. During the duration of these effects, they may try to resist, but when they do, they must take another Epic Falter Check. If they fail, they take 1 Damage (1d4 Damage for OSR).

After the party passes through Portal Y, the Psychic Intrusions become Epic Falter Checks requiring 3 Successes (3 Successful Saving Throws).

Kenvig Saol is an altruistic soul who has aimed the entirety of his remaining necromantic life force to keeping Mardza Vol trapped. He tries to kill any mortals who fall into Mardza Vol's trap so he won't trick them into freeing him. Kenvig's psychic attacks happen wherever an "S" is labeled on the map.

1- 2	Illusion: tons of spiders crawl on you. Disrobe armor and clothing to get them off! Cold Exposure, Disarmed.	11-12	Numbness: Everything becomes numb. Falter Checks require 1 extra roll, and can't take Reactions. 1 hour.
3- 4	Phobia: Corners. Cannot turn corners for fear of the unknown. If one does, they are sickened with terror. 1 hour.	12-13	Compulsion: To stave off the cold, you must steal all clothing you find and wear it. 1 hour.
5- 6	Tic: Must touch a wall every 30 seconds to keep stable. Lasts 1 hour.	14-15	Phobia: Betrayal. One among you is out to kill you, and you KNOW IT.
7- 8	Despair: This is hopeless. Falter Check to take any actions. 1 hour.	16-17	Compulsion: To forget your internal despair, you must sing loudly, and never stop. 10 mins.
9- 10	Mockery: The Skulls of the slain begin talking to you and laughing at you with the voices of your long lost family members.	19-20	Portent: You see a living eye in the right socket of a skull, and as you look into it, you are filled with sorrow. You know there is only one end. Can't take reactions.

Table: Kenvig Saol's Will



KEY:

M = MARDZA VOL'S WILL

K = KENIG SAOL'S WILL

W = WANDE-RING MONSTER SQUARES = 10x10 FT

PORTALS:

Letters Z, Y, X, V, T, + P.

Portal **P** is a TRAP that goes to **P**.

P doesn't go any-where.

THE DEVOURER OF FOOLS

AN ADVENTURE TO THE END



Mardza Vol is a fully Corrupted general of the Saguirin Empire, who desires to revive the empire to its former glory. If released, he would bring terror and destruction to the Sacred Seas. His psychic force is the one that crashes ships into his prison of ice, and leads survivors within, trying to get them to free him. His psychic attacks are meant to help the party survive, so they can free Mardza Vol when they get to the center of the maze. His psychic attacks happen whenever there is an 'M' labeled on the map.

1-2	Illusion: phantom of the sorceress leads the way to her abode. 3 flickers.	11-12	Whispers: Mardza Vol whispers a secret into the ear of the weakest survivor.
3-4	Compulsion: Hatred of skeletons and skulls. Must destroy all you find.	12-13	Hallucination: The smell of warm food fills your nostrils, leading you towards the right portal. 1 minute.
5-6	Astral Projection: see the next 2 layers of the maze from your ghost.	14-15	Zombie: A corrupted zombie appears at your side, ready to serve. OC 2 LVL 3
7-8	Compulsion: MUST eat flesh, either rotten or living. Regains ¼ health and becomes corrupted.	16-17	Compulsion: You begin laughing in crazed triumph. You feel bigger than you ever have, and have an insatiable desire for violence. +1 Vigor. Compulsion lasts 1 hour.
9-10	Seething Rage: Boosted damage during next fight. Adrenal chaos. Will attack ANYTHING THAT MOVES.	18-20	Dream of Glory: You look up into the ceiling where the seas should be, and believe in your heart that they all belong to you. No matter what, you must survive. +2 Vigor.

Table: Mardza Vol's Will

1-2	2 Skeletons OC 2 LVL 2 (Rm 6)	11-12	Simian Zombie OC 2 LVL 3 (Rm 16)
3-4	Undead Spider OC 3 LVL 4 (Rm 17)	12-13	Death Poison Worm OC 2 LVL 3 (Rm 5)
5-6	Corruption Ghast OC 3 LVL 3 (Rm 2)	14-15	Zombie: A corrupted zombie appears at your side, ready to serve. OC 2 LVL 3
7-8	2 Zombie Dvergar OC 2 LVL 3 (Rm 11)	16-17	Corrupted Vampire OC 2 LVL 5 (Rm 16)
9-10	Vampiric Ghost OC 3 LVL 5 (Rm 13)	18-20	. Bear Skeleton OC 3 LVL 4 (Rm 7)

Wandering Monsters:

Each monster's Forte is a Combat Skill if they are corporeal, and a Mystic Skill if they are incorporeal. Roll Twice for each trigger after Room 4. When using other OSR systems, use monsters that fit best, doubling the Level or Hit Dice shown on the Levels below. The bare stats are listed in the entry below, but a more developed statline can be found in the Room descriptions noted. Wandering Monster triggers whenever there is a "W" labeled on the map.

Room Descriptions:

1. As all souls tread within the unhallowed gate of ice, the snowy ground beneath your feet quakes, and the gate behind you has become one slick wall of ominous ice. Before you lie caked bloodstains, and the remains of one man, torn about the floor, strewn, misplaced. A placid draft desires to pull you forwards. (Trigger Kenvig Saol's Will)

2. Here, in the far corner, lies a stack of dead bodies, frozen atop a pile of goods. In the middle of the room a vampire sprawls, crazed and bound in chains.(OC 2 LVL 3 Prone, Bound in Chains, Psychic Attacks, Vampire Bite) It approaches to attack the living. (If the party attacks the vampire, two Corruption Ghasts appear, defending it. OC 3 LVL 3 Resistant to Mundane Damage, Inflict Psychosis,

Schizophrenic Voices) Loot: Furs, Buckler, Lantern, Flask of Oil, Flask of Wine

3. There is a vampire soldier's corpse frozen to the opposing wall. Its left hand is cut off from the body, also frozen, bearing a spear with an emer-

ald blade. The face of the corpse bears a happy grin, looking at its displaced spearhand. Its right hand has been stuffed into its ass. It was definitely arranged post mortem. The words "UNDERSTAND, OVERCOME!" surge through the guts of each living in the room. (Trigger Mardza Vol's Will.) Loot: Frozen Chainmail, Emerald Spear (Enchanted, Damage not mundane, but corrupted)

4. In the center one wailing seaman writhes, being devoured by seven different undead. The place smells of warmth, and death. Lining the left wall are remains of bodies whose guts have been eaten, their possessions lay rusty and forgotten. 7 Pirate Zombies (OC 2 LVL 2 Unarmed Unarmored) (Trigger Kenvig Saol's Will) Loot: 2 Rusty Scimitars, 1 Worn shield, 1 Flask of sour wine, Clean Jawbone (Of Kenvig Saol)

Jawbone of Kenvig Saol

When found by a living soul, this fanged jawbone will bring the focus of Kenvig Saol's Soul toward the party. In an instant, their prior psychic attack effects all vanish. When attached to a skull, he will talk to the party with semi-psychotic speech. He is kind and understanding, but firm in his resolve to slay the living who wander into his halls. While the Jawbone is in their possession, Kenvig's Psychic attacks require an extra Falter Check to resist, and an extra monster appears during Wandering Monster encounters.

5. Here, strewn across the floor, are planks of some of the ships which line the ceiling; in the wreckage there are shining trinkets below the frozen wood. If the party tries to uncover the loot

from below the planks, they will find 3 4-foot long Death Poison Worms (OC 2 LVL 3; Unarmored, Poisonous; Gain 'Poisoned' Wound on any skin contact, -1 to ALL CHECKS, and death venom upon successful bite, killing victim after 4 minutes. Constricting attacks before bite) **Loot:** Crystal Ball, 2 Good Wine Flasks, Frozen Solid Loaf of Bread, Frozen Brigandine, Unlit Shard of Her (Ironwood Katana)

6. In this empty room stand four gleefully dancing skeletons, with a pale green Corrupted ghost in the center. As they see you, their dancing ceases not, but come upon you they do, to take you and unmake you. 4 Skeletons (OC 2 LVL 2, Resistant to Blades) 1 Corruption Ghost

7. Down the long foyer, the frozen ground becomes slick and red. Turning the corner, you see a giant iron cage torn through, with skeletons strewn about. The bones of a giant beast skull forth, creaking, heavy, and fast. Bear Skeleton (OC 3 LVL 4 Resistant to Blades) Failed Falter Checks in this area cause automatic Prone Condition in addition to other penalties. **Loot:** Iron Bar, Bear Tooth

8. In this wide room across the portal lies a pit of snow, dug up by desperate mortals. Their bodies are frozen beneath, clearly outlined by the snow. On their graves rests a leather book (Trigger Kenvig Saol's Will). **Loot:** Journal of Captain Jar Breen, of The Holy Jeopardy. (His story tells nothing of his experience in the maze, but his life was one of loyalty, sacrifice, and generosity in spite of his uncouth profession.)

9. The entrance is boarded up with ice, ship planks, and makeshift pitch. If the barrier is broken, within is found a large chest, guarded by 4 Pirate Skeletons with golden teeth, clinging to the greed they once had in life. Pirate Skeletons (OC 2 LVL 3, Resistant to Blades, wielding Scimitars.) (Trigger Mardza Vol's Will) **Loot:** Blank Papyrus of Her, Phoenix Down, Wu Shao Gold, Ornate Falchion, 2 frozen Herbal Poultices

10. The ground here slopes down in a cone to the center, where a stone statue of a Glythen mermaid stands, blood flowing from her eyes. As the party nears her, her arms move forth to strangle them. The blood from her eyes wells up, making the floor slick as it pools. 2 Corruption Ghosts

possess the statue, and must be cast out for the statue to stop. Animated Glythen Statue (OC 3 LVL 2 Armor 4)

11. 3 Zombie Dvergar priests of the Reclamation appear, with their tools and instruments ready for battle. Ayil is long lost from their thoughts. Zombie Dvergar (OC 2 LVL 3, Cloth Armor, dual wielding Hammers and Picks)

12. This chamber is cluttered and draped with giant spiderwebs. Caught in the webs are several undead, vainly gnawing towards you. Their groans become louder as you near. Wading through this trap takes time, focus, and care. (Trigger Kenvig Saol's Will)

13. In the floor there is carved out in giant bloody Saguirin Script a terrible spell. At the end of the chamber is a makeshift shrine of wooden planks, with a golden fang resting on top. If tampered with, a Saguirin Vampire Ghost will appear, defending it. (OC 3 LVL 5, Resistant to Mundane Damage, Corruption Spells: Inflict Psychosis, Vampirism, Inflict Phobia) **Loot:** Golden Saguirin Fang (impale oneself to gain Vampirism)

14. Here are candles nailed into the walls, a wooden table, and stacks of books and scrolls. Inside the the sub-chambers are different rooms with luxurious purposes; a bedroom, a kitchen, a lavatory. The place is guarded with two Corrupted Vampire Thralls. As the party speaks to each other, Rhula Saol reveals herself. She is intrigued to find any mortals who survived this long. She can't help them exit, but she will give them food and rest, though she "Doesn't have much she can spare to damned folk like you." She doesn't travel with the party as they get to the center, but will show up if they get there. She is the 'Guardian of the Maze,' great granddaughter of Kenvig Saol. Her motive isn't to further Kenvig's crusade, but rather become a supreme Corruption sorceress, and learn ALL of Kenvig's secret spells. Rhula will help the party out initially, but will tire of them if they return, and may very well destroy them if annoyed.

15. A Warped Undead Horror bars the path. Blood coats the floor, and its many heads

chew on the flesh of those who fell before you. (OC 3 LVL 5, ARM 2, Wields Shield, Spear, Flam-berge, Noxious Breath)

16. In the hallway prior to the actual chamber resides a Zombie Chimpanzee, who acts comically and benign, hooting and squawking, leading the party to the chamber, as if towards treasure. In the chamber a Corrupted Vampire lays, drinking blood out of a pirate skull. The Chimp bars any from leaving as the Vampire casually devours them, one by one. Zombie Chimp (OC 2 LVL 3, Unarmored, Wields Shiv) Corrupted Vampire (OC 2 LVL 5, ARM 2, Wields Spear, Vampire Bite, Chainmail, MoP 3 Corruption Rituals: Inflict Psychosis, Inflict Paranoia, Psychic Shriek, Illusion, Flight)

The Party comes through the portal randomly divided, one half on either side. Before the final chamber, there rest swaths of webbing covering the walls and roof. Webbing litters the floor in different places, though the floor itself is icy and slick. The true guardians of Kenvig Saol make their appearance. 3 Undead Spiders (OC 3 LVL 4, Armor 1, Venomous Bite, Web attack)

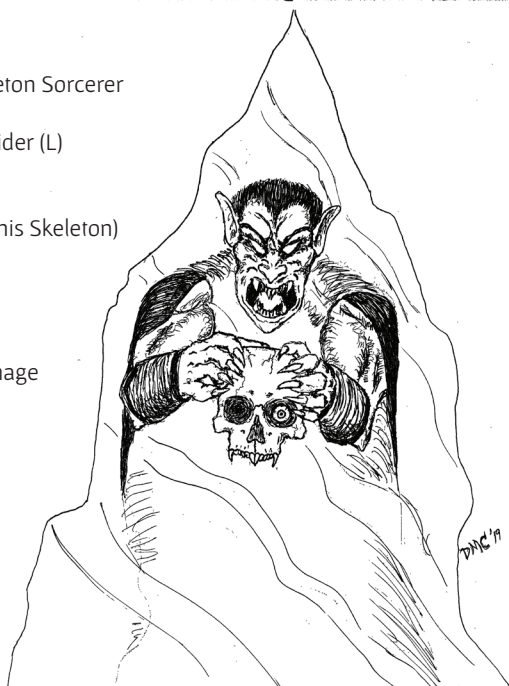
In the center of this room reside the interlocked hateful two; the General encased in his icy prison, holding in ire the skull of his betrayer, the sorcerer of the labyrinth. From Kenvig's right eye socket his own mortal eye still peers forth, scrutinizing each of you. Psychic voices, swollen with corruption, scream forth conflicting commands upon you. "DIE!" "FREE US!" The skull of Kenvig Saol unleashes his fully focused onslaught upon you. At the beginning of each round, Mardza Vol likewise enacts his Will each Exchange to aid the party in killing Kenvig Saol. If Kenvig dies, Mardza Vol is released on the realm. If the party escapes him, then they can try to exit by the way they came, without any psychic attacks.

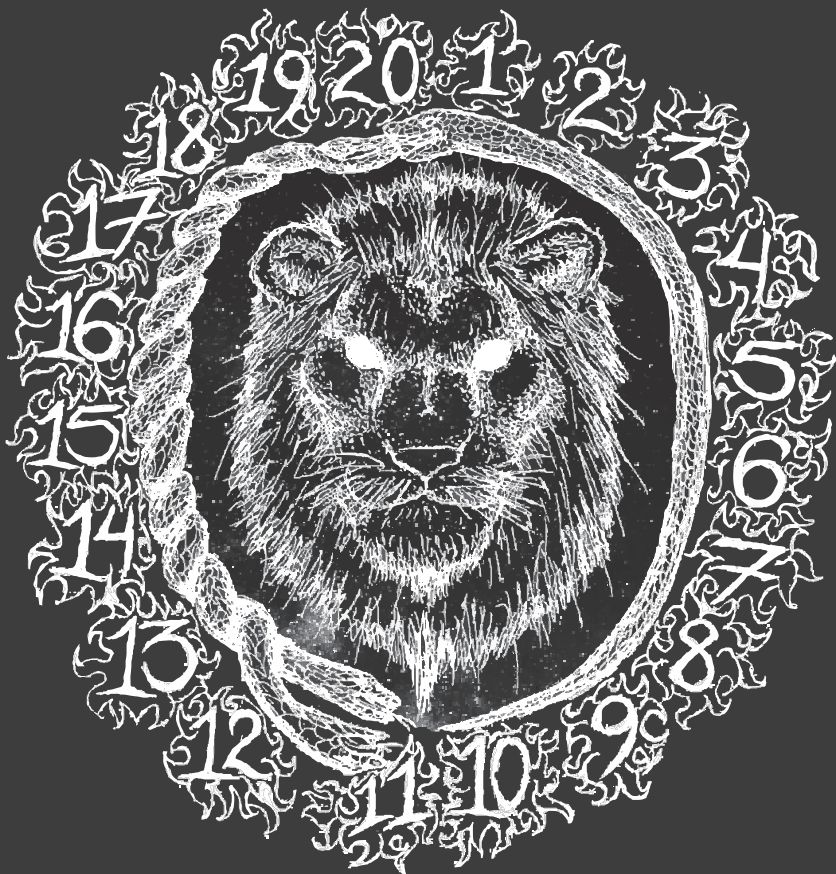
Kenvig Saol

9 Vig OC 3 LVL 6 Corrupted Saguirin Skeleton Sorcerer
Corruption Rituals:
Summon Corruption Ghast or Undead Spider (L)
Manipulate Ice (L)
Kenvig Saol's Will (L; Random table roll)
Summon Ice Plate and Sword (L; cast on his Skeleton)

Kenvig Saol's Skeleton

9 Vig OC 3 LVL 6 Resistant to Blades
With Ice Plate and Sword: 3 Armor, 4 Damage





The Epic of Dreams:

Unbound Fantasy Roleplay

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Bestiary of the Rime

Found within this tome are beasts, fiends, and their tales, all hailing from the terrible white wastes. They are presented without specific system stats, and are listed by Order Class, according to the Epic of Dreams.

Order of the Wolf

Golgrai Ice Hordes

By Ben Croft

Ice tunnels and caves in the Rime are also home to the Golgrai. These mammalian goblinoid creatures dwell in large, loosely organized tribes known as Ice Hordes. One Golgrai, though savage and hungry, is weak and ill-equipped compared to the average adventurer. Typical specimens are about chest- to waist-high and weigh about as much as a large dog. They are muscular and hairy, dressing in whatever skin or fabric they can scavenge. Their strength definitely lies in their vast numbers rather than their improvised spears.

Ice Hordes often raid settlements and trade caravans when hunting is poor. While other raiders seek metal and valuables, Hordes place a higher priority on edibles and novelties.

Like their distant goblin-tinker cousins, Golgrai are enticed by crafts beyond their ken and skill. Curiosity compels them to collect items of little practical value: buckets, mechanical toys, paintings, mirrors, glass beads, and lace parasols, to name a few. Adventurers who survive the encounter report that Golgrai caves remind them of a carnival that's been enthusiastically burglarized, set on fire, and carpeted in frozen waste. Actual treasures may be present among the detritus, but it takes a keen appraising eye to spot them.

A person skilled in languages may be able to trade with Golgrai, provided they offer sufficiently interesting items (and look intimidating enough to deter the initial fight). The goblinoids are excellent navigators and guides, but drive a hard bargain with strangers. If they trade anything of actual value, expect to pay at least double in return. However, the canny trader may profit from their strange preferences — the more novel and mysterious the item, the better.

The wise adventurer would do well to avoid harming the biggest Golgrai in a pack if possible, as these are the family-group leaders. Leaderless Golgrai are infinitely more dangerous: without someone to call the retreat from a superior enemy, they will charge, lemming-like, and fight to their own destruction.



Golgrai Ice Hordes

Slay Mimic

By Ben Croft

The glaciers and crevasses house various classes of undead, but none so common as the slay mimic. These ambushers are amalgamations of bone from the remains of dead creatures. Slay mimics can lie dormant almost indefinitely, but will awaken to attack when living heat is present. They are slowly drawn from miles around by the scent of blood and psychic distress.

These undead lurk wherever carcasses are plentiful: ancient battle sites, at the base of deadfall cliffs (where hunters drive numerous large beasts to their deaths), and even in small waste pits outside settlements. Weak young mimics may only animate a single skull, relying on surprise to administer a killing bite. As they acquire more vital energy from victims, they grow in size, power, and malice. The more ancient the mimic, the greater its self-organization. Not only can the elders create larger, more monstrous forms, but also scatter themselves more thoroughly amongst the camouflage. Additionally, all slay mimics possess an uncanny sense of what victims may desire, and project enticing illusions to lure them ever closer.

The best defense is a healthy skepticism of “unguarded” treasures. It is possible — but difficult — to detect mimics by careful observation. All slay mimics possess a seed hidden somewhere in their bodies: a small glistening crystal that houses the animating energies. The hasty and foolish mistake it for ice. Some scholars believe mimic seeds are a byproduct of necromancy, or shreds of the original creature’s restless spirit. Like most undead, slay mimics are vulnerable to purifying magics, fire, and crushing weapons. Having no eyes, they rely on heat-sense and smell to detect prey. Potions of heat-sealing (which prevent loss of body heat) and many layers of insulation can help adventurers escape detection.



The White Cart

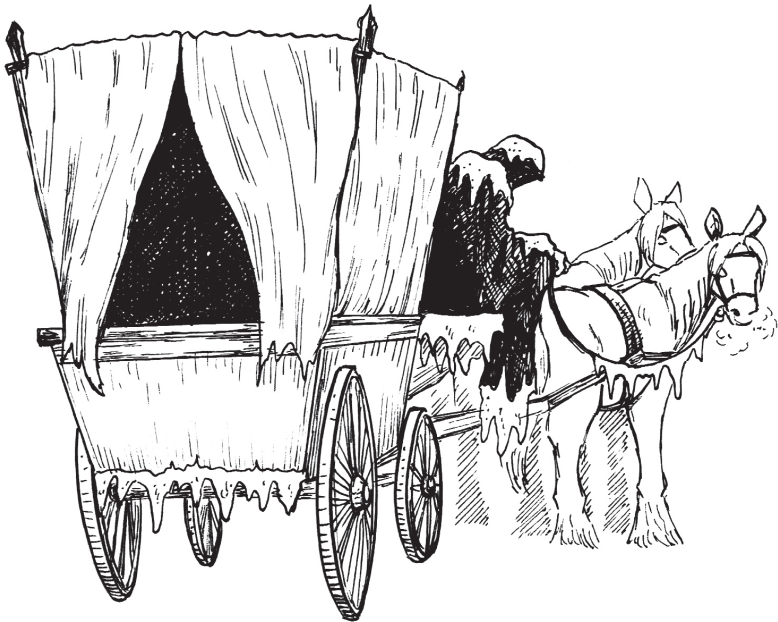
By Aaron Cordiale

The White Cart is a white covered carriage pulled by two albino horses, and driven by a rider in a black cloak covered in so much frost and ice that he appears to maneuver without ever touching the reins, almost as if the horses control the cart's navigation. The cart also does not appear to affect the land it is driven upon. For example, if driving through the snow, the snow is not disturbed at all. The White Cart dwells in the cold places of the world and offers salvation to those dying of cold and hypothermia. From the covered carriage, a radiating warmth can be felt that lures passerby ever closer.

When someone climbs into the back of it, their soul is torn out of their body and cast into the bellows used to heat the boiling cauldrons of the damned in hell.

When the cart pulls up to a person dying of the cold, the hand of the driver breaks the ice covering them and lifts them up, which seems impossible due to his perch high upon the cart. The victim then walks around to the back and enters the cart, which looks like a normal empty cart, except for the enticing warmth, but upon entering, befalls the fate stated above.

In some villages, it is believed that in times of desperation, if an animal is left out in the cold (as a sacrifice for the cart) and marked with the symbol of a three-spoked wheel drawn in ash, the wood in hearths will burn twice as warm and long, and even more so if the animal is an infant.



Order of the Bear

The Mourning Knight

By Aaron Cordiale

The Mourning Knight is a wandering and withered corpse clad in rusted and blunted armor from an ancient conflict in The Rime. It has no discernable motive but displays odd behaviors. For one, when it comes across any dead creature, it will pick it up and hold it against its chest, rocking back and forth while wailing and sobbing tears of blood. If there is an attempt to separate the knight from the corpse, it will madly swing the rusted claymore it drags in one hand at any creature nearby with great supernatural strength. If it kills a creature, it will immediately begin to mourn that new corpse. If left alone, it will pick up the corpse and move it to its lair, which is said to be a hole dug by hand adorned with the fallen it finds. The reason for this is unknown. Any attempts to communicate with the creature go unanswered as it continues to wail in agony. Anyone crossing close to the creature's mourning will immediately be assailed by absolute sorrow and nihilistic dread. When this happens, look your player(s) in the eye and explain to them that their character is overcome with the feeling that nothing they have done or will ever do matters; that their families, friends, and ultimately they themselves, will die and be forgotten, as well as other black truths. Any character who experiences this will also find themselves crying tears of blood. The creature cannot be destroyed. If it is defeated, it will return at the next moonrise to continue its mourning.

The Mourning Knight is seen as an omen of great despair to come, as well as a specter of remembrance, as it haunts old battlefields. There are multiple accounts of the knight passing by villages, and then in the coming weeks those villages being assailed by marauders, disease, or some other tragedy. Opinions on the creature vary widely. Some take pity on it, while others view it as a demon or revenant, but all are wary. Those who pity it will leave arctic roses in its wake as a blessing in the hope that it will pass peacefully to the next life. Some brave villagers will sacrifice their farm animals or hunted kills and leave them far away from the village to keep the knight away for fear of being cursed.



The Mutilated Walrus

By Drew Cochran

The low, long howl of the eve rumbles again. Full of vigor, full of weight. Pray it does not find you amidst the bitter wharfs. The Mutilated Walrus is a rare sight to behold. The consequence of the Wendigo's curse culminating with the pride of the ocean; the Mutilated Walrus makes even the blackfish flee in fear.

Where once the beast was slothful, now it is vigilant. Where once the beast was content, now it is ever in desire. Where once the beast was kind, now only cruel hunger remains. Without a shred of reason or remorse, the Mutilated Walrus will seek out the prey of its Wendigo heritage – the blood of foolish, wayward men. It will trod on it's ripped belly and entrails for miles, without regard for winter's chill, or it's now-lost mortality. For miles it will sniff out a huntsman's clan, to crush and devour all fair flesh.

From blubber to blubber, red marks its wake.

"I was riding down a road one day,
Saw something so bad – and I'd have to say:

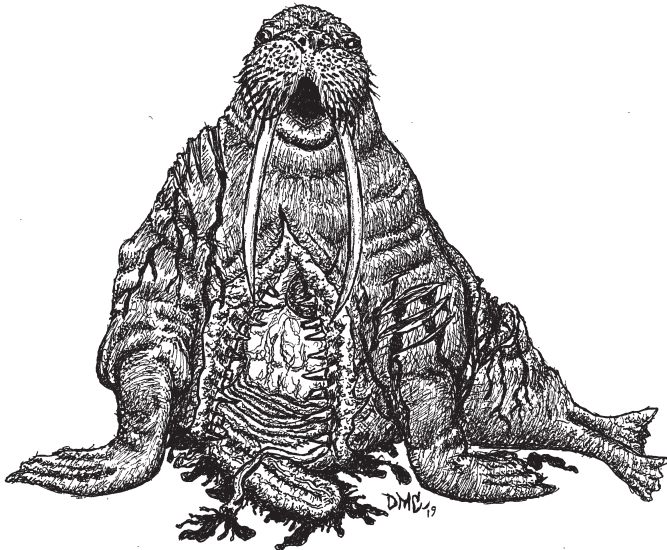
It was a Mutilated Walrus.
Dead on the side of the road.

I was driving down I95,
Saw a sight so sad that I'd have to cry;
It was a Mutilated Walrus.
Dead on the side of the road.

Flies were eating out its eyes
Ribs sticking out, and its guts was sliced
It was a Mutilated Walrus.
Dead on the side of the road.
So I said to myself:
'Why is there a Mutilated Walrus?
Dead on the side of the road?
Wouldn't somebody've seen it,
And have its stinking carcass towed?'

Oh yeah.

And I was driving away on that lonely day
And there the walrus did not stay.
There's a Mutilated Walrus
Dead in the back of my car."



Wight Widow

By Egg Embry

A figure awaits frozen in the ice and snow. On approaching, you see it's a woman, flash frozen and long dead, her skin is discolored and crystalized, her features are skeletal while her clothes were never adequate for the cold wastes. Around her, the ice is a vast web of carvings, cracks, and dark patches. It is only when you step onto those cracks and symbols that her icy eyes turn upon you in frigid hate and she attacks.

A frozen figure amid the ice, the Wight Widow uses her curious appearance to lure the unwary, lost, and starving into her trap. When a victim steps into her circle of ice, this undead monster shifts the ice of her web, catching feet in frozen traps so she may claw and feed upon her prey before burying their remains in the ice. Those who inspect the web closely realize there are corpses buried in the ice and, perhaps, other treasures. If attacked from outside her web, she will burrow into her ice web, only to rise and attack if its perimeter is violated.

If defeated, her murderous soul will attempt to possess her killer, or animate one of her victims buried in the snow, transforming them into a new Wight Widow.



Order of the Elephant

Orlang of the Peaks

By Guy Sciancalepore, the Heff of Singers

Orlang of the Peaks was once a humble man who worked hard to provide for his family, but he was betrayed by someone close to him, his body and spirit mangled beyond recognition. Today, you may see Orlang manifest himself in the fog that rolls off of the Great Northern Rim and down the steep sides of Ancestor Top. If you were to see him you would witness a giant Ogre of a man, bare chested with a scimitar of bone strapped to his back, pig-faced and muscled like a bear. You may also see mist mingling with the fog; a particular man-shaped cloud that moves against the rest of the water dense air. It is rumored he lairs at the summit within a giant fissure that is as deep as the mountain itself.

Orlang may take pity on those who have been betrayed or whose lives were ruined by the actions of selfish traitors, but most souls would be wary to venture near the summit of Ancestor Top or anywhere near the mountain on peculiarly foggy days. Ever in a rage he takes on all travelers as his foes and he will do his utmost to put an end to what he sees as eternal betrayers; the living. In his eyes, the living always betray the dead. They fail to follow last wishes, they fail to honor the memories of their ancestors and the worst sin of all, they spit on their legacies. His existence hinges on his understanding of the world. We're his perspective changed, his anchor to the world of the living would erode and he would find peace.

If one desires to commit themselves in combat against the Vengeful One, one must understand one thing: their victory will be temporary. Some have claimed to have vanquished him in combat but their claims were only half true. If he is killed in the real world his spirit manifests within the crack that spawned him. It is said that the Spirit of Ancestor Top makes him stronger with each rebirth and that the only way to truly end him is to extinguish the flames of revenge through contemplation or through mystical means. If a troop of young warriors of the Bear clan for instance were to accompany their shaman and protect him, he could enact the Ritual of Appeasement and temper the flames of the Ancestor Top, thus enabling a true "killing" of Orlang as the Spirit will not accept him again. Cut free from his cycle of revenge and rebirth, Orlang will finally find peace and The Monster of the Peaks will be no more.



Order of the Whale



The Yurfulgarh

By Drew Cochran

BEWARE THE YURFULGARH!

These snakelike weasel monstrosities are known to grow even as long as the Thousand Year Glacier itself! Their heads are as large as an iceberg, bearing the guise of a demon hound of many tusks. Their crests and horns resemble that of a pikeman's legion. The Yurfulgarh's many eyes glow and flash wicked purples, reds, and golds all aspiral, with which it steals the souls of cowards, drunkards, children, and sinners. Its many limbs stretch out vast, and its claws are known to pierce through even iron ore. Its tail is a living cedar, which it shakes and rattles with glee.

The Yurfulgarh reeks with horrible breath, from which it emits fetid plagues far and wide, spoiling forests, seas, and hollows with rot. It swims in the sea, dances across the sky, and hides itself in clouds, fog, and

mist. Its trail seems as the scratchings of a glacier, and in the southern realms bitter rivers oft form in its wake.

Each Yurhfulgarh has the soul of a miserly king; they seek to expand their territory vast and wide, and command forces to rival the Papacy. Their wit astounds even sphinxes, and with their many eyes they are able to peer out into the wastes, viewing the business and dramas of many mortals afar at once. They remember every middling act of treason against them. Each Yurfulgarh dreads the coming of the Aurora Borealis, and any sight of beauty which mimics its own glamour.

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For joining me on this wild adventure.
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