

LEGENDARY ADVENTURE 5



# Cold Mountain



by Jason Nelson





# Cold Mountain



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# WHAT YOU WILL FIND INSIDE COLD MOUNTAIN

A mother's love is stronger than death, but love and death walk hand in hand when mortals cross paths with the immortal fey. Something has stirred up a fell and bloodthirsty power in the depths of the forlorn forest, and a bitter wind and mournful howls echoing from a lonely mountain bring a chilling dread to the wilds beyond the borderlands. A goddess is angry, and her wrath heralds doom in the unforgiving lands of a savage frontier. Can the heroes find a way to make peace with the warlike clans of the lonely hills and quell the frightening powers of nature that threaten to rise up and devour scattered clan and nascent frontier kingdoms alike? With triumph and tragedy in the balance, do they dare ascend Cold Mountain?

**Cold Mountain** is a 5th Edition adventure for 4th-level characters that takes the heroes past the reach of civilization, coming face to face with strange and primitive folkways and faerie powers. This adventure brings an evocative atmosphere of Dark Ages-style barbarism and mysticism into a traditional fantasy campaign, delivering challenges to overcome with words and deeds as well as on the field of battle. Your players will need cunning, guile, and a silver tongue to succeed where their magic and their sword arms may not prevail. The Legendary Games tradition is to combine rich story and background, innovative layout, beautiful aesthetics, and excellence in design that is second to none. This product is the latest in that tradition, and we hope you enjoy using it as much as we enjoyed making it. Game on!



# Cold Mountain

*Cold Mountain* is an adventure set in the backcountry of the rugged frontier lands that PCs are in the process of exploring and perhaps even claiming as their own. It is designed for characters of 4th level who have begun to achieve some success with adventuring, and ideally the PCs should have some kind of home base, whether it is a town on the borderlands, or perhaps a ruined keep or stronghold they are building or repairing. While their achievements may be modest in the grand scheme, the PCs are regarded as local heroes and looked up to by the locals as the sort of folks who can get things done and who are willing to look out for those in need. The adventure works even better if their exploits have attracted the notice of a wealthy or noble sponsor who has granted them a charter to explore the wilderness and lay claim to it as a fiefdom for their liege, or if the heroes have taken it upon themselves to begin carving out a domain in the lawless lands where civilization has yet to take root.

As for the adventure location itself, generic place names are used but it can be set in any area of rugged and forested mountains or hills that is suitably remote and isolated from civilization, though there may be monster lairs and dungeons in the wilderness. This adventure is intended to occur just as winter turns to spring, as rivers are thawing and kingdom exploration may be resuming after a hiatus for the weather.

Completing the adventure gives characters a deeper look into the character of the fey, and a potential source for information and lore later in the campaign. As the heroes may encounter other fey adversaries, Istria, the “goddess of the mountain,” may be able to offer advice and assistance through dreams or personal contacts, foreshadowing future campaign events involving greater powers from the faerie realms. She and the Ughar tribes also may be a source for future quests and adventure hooks, warning the PCs of dangers that may threaten their domain or helping them explore the far reaches of the map and find rare opportunities for marvelous rewards in the hidden corners of the wild.

## Adventure Background

The southern reaches of the PCs’ home territory are far from pleasant in terms of establishing their new dominion. The Gnarled Forest is a place of tangled and ancient patriarch trees and silent groves of hardy spruce, stately pine, and dusky fir, and the Kammel Hills rolling eastward are windswept and lonely, ranging from badlands to high prairie to scrublands to well-forested hills and valleys scarcely less dense than the Gnarled Forest itself. Few outsiders come here apart from prospectors and trappers, plus the occasional treasure-hunter searching for a lost elfhold, dwarven delve, or forgotten bandit cache. However, these are the lands granted in the PCs’ charter, and if they are to stake their claim to rulership they will need to do more than just vanquishing the Bandit Lord who once

terrorized his lands. Their new land will be only as strong as its rulers, and any stability they create is tenuous at best until they subdue the wild things that abound and discover who and what already lives in the hexes they would claim.

At the fringes of the lands the PCs have adopted dwell the Ughar clans, insular barbaric villages eking out a harsh living under the forest eaves and remote hills and having little truck with the outsiders who have ventured now and then into this savage land trying and failing at the task the PCs have set for themselves: taming the wilderness and establishing a lasting kingdom. Perhaps the Ughar are long-lost kin to the Tiger Nomads to the northwest or the tribes of the Ibar Plains to the east, or refugees from the centuries of civil unrest in the Broken Kingdom or some fallen petty state of the Riverlands. Or perhaps they have always been here, keeping to themselves in the forlorn wild, paying homage to the fey as their gods and keeping to the old ways as the world moved on without them. With the advent of the PCs and the foundation and expansion of their kingdom, however, that isolation cannot endure forever, and when a tragic accident turns the heart of a fey “goddess” cold, she unleashes a bitter vengeance that threatens to spread into the civilized lands beyond, destroying the PCs kingdom while it is still in its cradle. Ancient legends and folkways there stay forever much as they always have, always with a watchful eye on the natural world and the spirits that dwell therein, for life is not easy, is not meant to be easy, and no true Ughar would wish it so. But sometimes the spirits of nature become angry, from cold to cruel, and at those times the ancient ways may not be enough.

As winter comes to an end, as the valleys begin to blossom, terror stalks the land. Traders, trappers, and prospectors from the PCs’ kingdom have been found horribly mauled. It may be some savage beast that walks unseen, but no tracks have been found at the scene of any attacks, not even a sign of a flying creature landing to feast. For that matter, the bodies have not been eaten at all, simply torn apart. Bandits seem unlikely, as nothing has been taken from the victims, though possessions have been torn apart or destroyed seemingly at random. Some settlers point their finger at the mysterious Ughar hillfolk, but those pointing fingers were surprised when unbidden and unlooked-for emissaries have come from the Ughar villages into the PCs’ lands carrying tales of the same predations among them and looking for aid from outsiders, an unheard-of request from such insular people.

According to the Ughar messenger, the tribe’s wise woman believes that Istria, the goddess of the mountain, is angry. While some of the PCs’ advisors scoff at the Ughar superstitions, at least two other hunters’ reports describe strange rumblings from the same mountain where she is said to dwell. The Ughar emissaries report that a delegation was sent with an offering to appease Istria, to try to find her ‘palace of glass and gold’ if they could, or if not just to leave the offering and burn the sacred incense to her at the ancient dolmen at the mountain’s foot, near the waterfall where the goddess is known to walk. That delegation never returned. The villages are considering

their last resort, a lottery to choose a sacrifice from each village to be bound to the dolmen and offered up to the Istria's wrath. However, these emissaries come from Ganec Trom, the elder of Gloym, the village nearest Istria's mountain, who has gone against tribal custom and sent out a call for heroes from outside the tribe to seek out the goddess, thinking that perhaps outsiders of great skill and daring might succeed where the Ughar, raised in the shadow of the mountain and reverence of the goddess, could not.

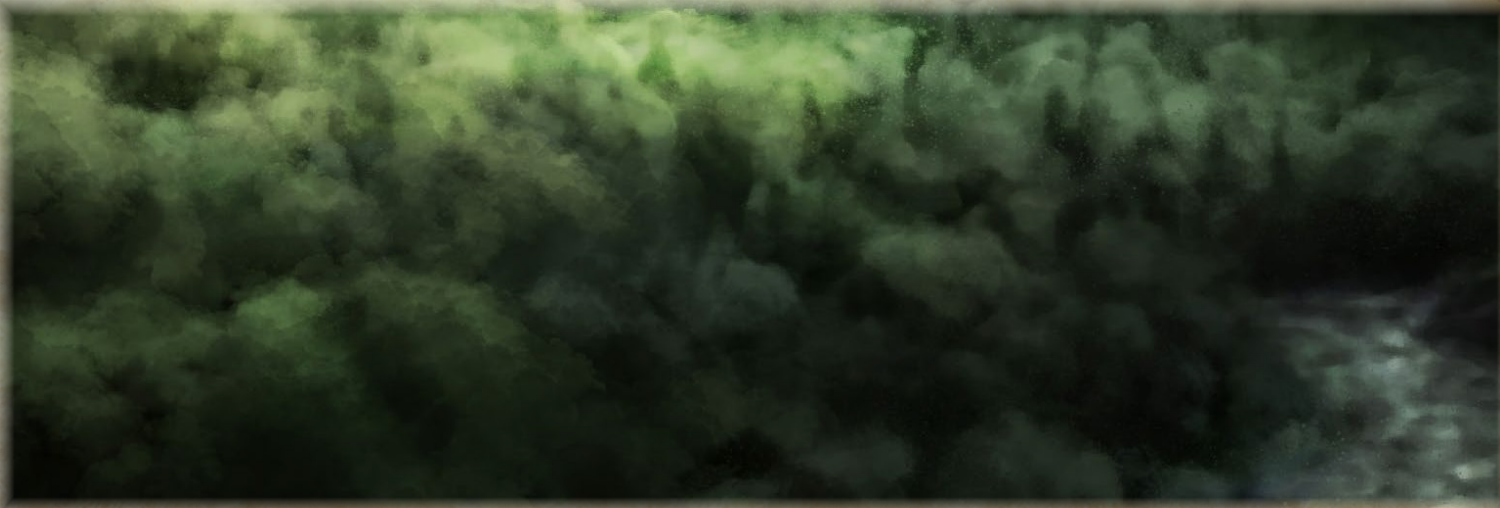
## GAI's Background

Priya Nizolek was disconsolate when her only daughter, Fanya, took sick with a fever that would not abate, no matter how she prayed to the goddess of the mountain for healing. Long days and nights she prayed, but the village healers could do nothing and Fanya's life slipped away. Pioska, loyal Pioska, ever her dutiful son, had sworn he would take an offering to the Istria's mountain, imploring the goddess to restore his little sister, but she forbade him. Drowned in her grief, however, Priya never even noticed Pioska steal away to Istria's Dolmen... not until three days later when a hunter brought back his garments, torn and bloodied where a wild beast had fallen upon him in the wood. Mad with grief, Priya seized her daughter's dead body and her son's bloody clothes to take them the goddess' mountain, to demand satisfaction. The goddess *would* answer to her! She would answer for abandoning her faithful servant Priya in her greatest need, leaving her desolate and alone. Delirious from hunger and exhaustion, Priya deposited her grisly burden upon Istria's Dolmen, barely clinging to sanity in her grief and anger. As Priya started to pray, a raven circled down from the rocks, alighting on Fanya's corpse. Appalled as the carrion bird began to feast, Priya leaped up in a blind rage and hurled herself at the raven, in heedless pursuit as it flapped wildly trying to escape. In her headlong rush, Priya scarcely noticed when the snow-shrouded scree atop Falls of Istria gave way and she plummeted to her doom. But sometimes a mother's grief and rage are stronger than death...

Byard Mager, the spirit of the waterfall, came to investigate the sad village woman who had plunged into his waterfall, and Priya's tormented spirit rose up as a ghost and possessed him. Unfortunately, even having transcended death she was trapped. As a ghost, she could not leave the place of her death, and her stromkarl host could not stray far from his waterfall. She has thus been trapped here for most of the winter, stewing with rage and frustration that even in death her longing to face the goddess and demand justice cannot happen. The best she can do is tend to her broken body and hope that, should the goddess show herself, she will at least be presentable.

Little did Priya realize that in fact she has met the goddess; really not knowing what she would look like, she did not recognize Istria when she came to the waterfall in person. Istria, the 'goddess' of the mountain, is a stern-hearted fey who was quite displeased at seeing her stromkarl lover carefully and lovingly tending the dead body of a village woman. Not only did he fail to meet her for their usual trysts, but when she came to confront him he did not respond to her calling his name in the Sylvan tongue (which Priya, inhabiting his body, did not understand). "He" behaved rudely and cursed her with the vile village speech when she tried to approach him. She even tried magically charming him into loving her, but to no avail, as Priya's deathless spirit could not be swayed with such magic.

Istria's anger was kindled against the village folk, blaming this village woman even in death for her sorrow and loss, and therefore she has unleashed a terrible curse in revenge. Since she doesn't know from which village the woman came, she has decided to punish them all in a petulant act of spite. As the villagers have made her suffer, she has now brought suffering to them. She cares nothing for other travelers through the rugged lands she claims, but certainly she would do nothing to spare them if they got in the way of her vengeance. Since she is the spirit of the mountain and cannot venture far from it to punish the villages herself, she has called upon the icy heart of the mountain to transform the animals of her domain into a ravaging, terrifying scourge of hunger and pain-wracked madness: wiitikowan!







## Chapter 1: Into the Wild

Characters wishing to investigate the rumored killings in the high hills near the Ughar villages must first track down the source of the rumors, as few people visit the Ughar or know precisely where their villages lie. A DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check to gather information reveals that most of the rumors are second and third-hand accounts passed among travelers, but a **thug** named **Trindon Mosley** is still in town and has regaled several ale-sodden audiences with his tales. Trindon can easily be found with a DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) or Charisma (Deception) check to ask around for his whereabouts.

Trindon begins with an indifferent attitude, though his attitude is hostile if he is aware PCs are working with the government, both because he mistrusts nobles and rulers in general and because he is irritated that he dropped off a package to be delivered to the leaders and they never contacted him about it. A DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) or Charisma (Deception) with 1d4 hours of asking around reveals that Trindon's tale is true, as the officious guard lieutenant who talked to him dismissed him as a shiftless vagrant and deemed whatever he had to say or deliver unimportant. He took the package and sent him on his way but dumped the package into a storeroom for some lesser soldier to inspect later and then promptly forgot about it.

The package can be recovered from the guardhouse storeroom. It contains a bear pelt wrapped around a red-painted arrow, to which are bound seven eagle feathers. Trindon says the chieftain of the village of Gloym gave it to him and said it signified dire danger, and a great reward. The superstitious Ughar wouldn't stand for one of their own to be sent to beg aid from outsiders, but they hoped this would make clear their need for heroes to deal with a situation they could not themselves. Furthermore, should this tribal fetish be displayed by outsiders, it would be accounted a good omen by the Ughar, making them more likely to be forthcoming in conversation and accepting of their intrusion.

If made friendly, Trindon can give directions to PCs seeking the village of Gloym and allow them to automatically find the proper hex where you wish to place the Ughar villages. If the PCs perform exceptionally well, he offers to accompany them as a guide, obviating the need for Intelligence (Geography) or Wisdom (Survival) checks to locate Gloym (though they are still necessary to avoid becoming lost in bad weather, gather food in the wilderness, or for other purposes), though he requests a stipend of 5 gp per day of such service.

### Traveling the Hill Country

The adventurers begin their journey to Gloym from any of their towns, either in company with Trindon Mosley on their own, following his directions. The adventure is intended

to occur during the latter stages of winter just as spring is breaking forth but before a full thaw. Mornings remain frosty and chill, with ice riming water buckets in the PCs camp, and the low sun does little to warm the landscape though it is enough to cause the trees to slough off their coats of winter white, often in noisy cascades of slush. In any case, the well-used roads and wagon tracks of settled hexes should soon give way to haphazard trails and natural landmarks whose descriptions have been provided by the Ughar messenger.

Check for random encounters once per day prior to reaching the Fords of Ansit, and twice per day thereafter (once during the day, once at night). You may use the tables provided for hill terrain in the second chapter of the Adventure Path or you may use the table provided below.

## Ansit Ford (1,800 XP)

The first major landmark is Ansit Ford, which can be found automatically with the Ughar guide. If no guide is present, PCs must make a DC 10 Intelligence (History) or DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check to locate the ford. Each failed check results in a half-day delay and a check for wandering monsters. The

river runs fast and cold here, flowing downstream at 40 feet per round. Creatures attempting to swim must make a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check to avoid being pulled downstream, but creatures wading at the ford can resist being pulled along with a DC 5 Strength check. Creatures larger than Medium have advantage on these checks, and creatures smaller than Medium have disadvantage.

Walking through the waters and slippery rocks of the ford functions as moving through **difficult terrain** within 10 feet of the shore, and as an aquatic environment in the center of the stream. Large creatures move normally within 10 feet of the riverbank and treat the deeper waters at midstream as difficult terrain.

Creatures unable to take actions are automatically swept downstream, though an adjacent ally can try to grab a creature being swept away as a reaction by making a DC 10 Dexterity check, or DC 15 if the creature only has one hand free. A creature may drop items held before making this check. Dropped items end up 1d10 feet downstream if they are metallic items, 10d10 feet downstream if made of wood or other buoyant material. A creature unable to take actions can still hold its breath.

### Table 1-1: Random Encounters

% Roll	Challenge	Encounter	Senses <sup>1</sup>	Perception	Stealth <sup>2</sup>	Attitude <sup>3</sup>
01-50	—	No encounter				
51-60	—	Noises in the distance (animal calls, ice cracking or small landslides, the scream of an animal killed at the end of a hunt, mysterious fey music)				
61-65	4	2d4 <b>bandits</b> led by a <b>bandit captain</b>	—	10	11	Hostile
			—	10	13	
66-68	4	2 trappers ( <b>bandit captain</b> )	—	10	13	Indifferent
69-70	3	<b>satyr</b> with a charmed <b>trapper</b>	—	12	15	Hostile
			—	10	13	
71-75	1	1d6 <b>wolves</b>	DV, keen scent	13	14	Hostile
76-78	2	1 <b>giant elk</b>	—	14	13	Indifferent
79-83	4	1 <b>ogre</b> 1d4 orc <b>barbarians</b>	DV DV	8 10	9 11	Hostile
84-86	—	2d4 <b>sprites</b>	—	13	18	Indifferent
87-91	5	1 <b>troll</b>	DV, keen scent	12	11	Hostile
92-95	5	1 <b>wereboar</b> mounted on 1 <b>giant boar</b>	— —	12 8	8 10	Hostile
96-98	2	1 <b>griffon</b>	DV, keen sight	15	12	Hostile
99-00	4	The <b>Bloody Beast</b> <sup>4</sup>	DV, keen sight	13	15	Hostile

<sup>1</sup> DV indicates darkvision

<sup>2</sup> Average encounter distance is 2d6 x 10 feet, increasing the Wisdom (Perception) DC by 1 per 10 feet of distance.

<sup>3</sup> Indifferent creatures ignore the PCs unless the PCs attempt to interact with them. If made friendly, they may be able to provide information or a boon of some kind.

Hostile creatures adopt a threatening pose and may challenge PCs, demanding to know their business in these lands, as well as their destination. They may also demand gifts or tribute in exchange for passage. PCs can attempt to calm them with Charisma checks or bluster their way past, but a failed check in either case usually results in an attack by the hostile creature. Some hostile creatures, such as the orcish barbarian party, may attack without warning or a chance to talk.

<sup>4</sup> If met as a random encounter, the Bloody Beast behaves as described in the **A Late Frost** encounter below.

**Note:** The map markings G, O, U, and the ferry refer to an encounter that occurs in the same location in this adventure's epilogue, as the PCs return home. When the PCs are traveling toward Gloym, the only creatures present are described below.

**Creatures:** With the spring melt, a number of creatures are coming out of hibernation, and a **chuul** lurks here in the shallows at location **V**, catching fish in its jaws, though it is intrigued by larger prey coming nearby. It will wait stealthily (10 passive Stealth) until PCs are partially across the ford before attacking, hopefully as part of a surprise round. It will then rush in to pounce on a Small target if available (if not, the smallest of the Medium PCs). If multiple PCs converge on its position, the chuul will swim away and dash in again to pounce upon stragglers or any creature isolated from its allies. The chuul will stay in the water when it attack, giving disadvantage to attackers on shore. If brought below 10 hit points, it swims away and does not return.

In addition, the struggle attracts the attention of an **owlbear** that is roaming the thickets on the east side of the river and arrives 3 rounds after the chuul attacks. The owlbear is not particularly stealthy; however, the distance and the sound of the river gurgling over the ford masks its approach. On the first round of its approach, PCs notice something moving in the trees about 150 feet away on the far side of the river with a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check. On the second round, they can notice that it is Large and furry less than 100 feet away with a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. On the third round, they catch a glimpse of the creature 30 feet away in the blackberry bowers on the far shore with a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check. The owlbear happily plunges into the river, as its strength and size allow it to easily withstand the current.

**Rewards:** The wandering chuul has no treasure; however, if the owlbear is tracked for 10 minutes (DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) check), PCs discover a well-gnawed corpse with a breastplate, wooden shield, and scimitar lying nearby. A DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals lying a bit farther away a bone scroll tube containing scrolls of *longstrider* and *shillelagh*, along with scattered and somewhat corroded and muck-encrusted coins totaling 92 cp, 27 sp, and 43 gp.

**Development:** Beyond the ford, the party enters little-traveled lands beyond, which are considered difficult terrain, reducing their overland movement, and each day of travel requires DC 10 Intelligence (History) or DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) to keep on the trails; if the result of the Survival check is less than 10, the party becomes lost. Each failed check to find their way results in a half-day delay and a check for random encounters. Becoming lost results in a full day's delay and three checks for random encounters.

## A Late Frost (450 XP)

In addition to the rugged terrain, the PCs must face the lingering chill of winter. While the evergreen trees and shrubs remain lush and thick and the first bright shoots of foxglove

and snowberry are blooming, the weather in the hills is cold: PCs not dressed for cold weather must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or gain one level of exhaustion per hour. In addition, the day after crossing the fords, they are caught in a spring snowstorm lasting 4d6 hours that deposits a foot of snow. The poor visibility gives the PCs disadvantage on rolls to avoid getting lost. Overland travel speed is halved for the day of the snowstorm and the day following; in tactical situations, treat all squares as difficult terrain. PCs can predict the storm's onset with a DC 15 Wisdom (Survival check), granting them enough advance warning to construct rudimentary shelters that grant advantage on Constitution checks and saving throws related to the cold weather as long as they remain stationary.

**Creatures:** While the snowstorm rages, a hungry grizzly bear (use **polar bear** stats) as recently awakened from its hibernation nearby and is looking to fill its belly after its long sleep. Allow PCs proficient in Intelligence (Nature) to make a DC 10 skill check (no action required) to notice scratched patterns on tree bark and interpret it as evidence that they are in bear country. If they succeed by 5 or more, however, they also notice that some of the claw marks seem unusually high up on the trees, and where those marks are seen the trees are blackened, as though both blighted and burned.

If PCs press on through the storm, they encounter the bear at a distance of 2d4 x 10 feet, as the bear has caught their scent and begins following them. The Wisdom (Perception) DC to notice the bear is 7, +1 per 10 feet of distance. If PCs remain at least 20 feet from the bear, its attitude is hostile but it will do nothing but bellow at them and try to frighten them off; however, it will follow them as stealthily as it can, hoping to raid their food stores at night or attack and eat a pack animal. If PCs take shelter through the storm, the encounter distance is the same but the Perception check to notice the bear gains disadvantage. Allow pack animals a Wisdom (Perception) check to notice the bear; animals not trained for combat become frightened as long as the bear remains within 60 feet. The bear will move in to attack a random pack animal if one is available, and if not will try to force its way into one of the PCs' tents looking for food.

If PCs move closer than 20 feet, the bear feels threatened, attacking immediately if any creature moves adjacent to it or remains within 20 feet for more than 1 round. The bear focuses its attacks on a single target, in the hope of killing and eating it. If reduced below 10 hit points, the bear flees. However, its wounds heal naturally and the PCs may encounter it on their return trip and must avoid or neutralize it again.

If the bear is made indifferent or better, such as with *animal friendship*, it loses interest in the PCs and wanders off.

**Development:** If any creature is killed or dying as a result of this encounter, the bloodshed attracts the attention of the **Bloody Beast**. It does not attack directly but instead approaches by stealth during the snowstorm, using its nightmare stalker ability against a random PC before retreating, allowing its

# Arsif Ford

10 FEET

TREES

U

FORD

O

TRAIL

BEACH

TRAIL

BEACH

10 FEET

G

20 FEET

G

10 FEET

ONE SQUARE = 10 FEET



madness to work its way into the psyche of its target. Once the nightmares have begun, it will seek out its quarry and swoop in to bite its victim and inflict wendigo fever, turning gaseous and *wind walking* away without a trace other than the bloody wounds it has left behind.

## Bloody Victim (1,400 XP)

*As the path wends its way higher into the cloven hills, the rock face to your right splits in a narrow cleft, with signs of being worked into a crude stair onto the shelf above. At the foot of the cleft, clearly visible in the frozen lumps of snow not yet melted, is a booted foot.*

A DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) or Wisdom (Survival) check reveals faint spatters of old blood on the rocks of the cleft. If the PCs climb up (DC 5 Strength (Athletics) check through the cleft, DC 20 to climb the 15-foot-high rock face), the party comes upon the grisly remains of a prospector (A) that was set upon by one of the wendigo and torn apart.

*Scattered beneath the boughs of a moss-shrouded pine tree, you find pots, pans, mining gear and camp supplies shredded and scattered, and amid the detritus dozens of bloody gobbets of some poor unfortunate, torn limb from limb, with human remains as well as those of some pack animal evident.*

They find the bloody gobbets of this unfortunate scattered beneath the boughs of a pine tree, ripped to shreds as he slept along with a pack mule. A DC 15 Intelligence (Medicine) or Wisdom (Survival) check discerns that whatever killed this man apparently did it with jaws and fangs alone, and that the creature was no larger than Medium. A DC 20 Intelligence (Nature) check can identify within the frozen blood and dismembered bits of flesh a strange foamy residue (now frozen), combined with the nature of the attack, as possibly being the work of the wendigo, a fell spirit of the frozen north, which walks on feet of mist and would explain why no tracks were seen at the scene.

The PCs are not the only creature to have discovered this grisly site; however. A pair of moss trolls happened upon this site and, unimpressed with the quantity of meat, decided to use it to bait other creatures into their clutches. They lurk in *tree shape*, disguised as pine trees, one atop the cleft near the prospector's remains, the other at the base of the cleft (B). They will wait to see if the party separates, or if they leave pack animals at the base of the cleft while they climb up,

**Creatures:** 2 moss trolls

## MOSS TROLL (2)

*Large giant (shapechanger), chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 85 (10d10+30)

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +5 (+7 while in vegetation)

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** Giant

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**False Appearance (Tree Form Only).** While in tree form the moss troll is indistinguishable from a normal tree.

**Fear of Fire.** The moss troll becomes frightened as long as it is within 30 feet of a visible fire or an open flame at least the size of a torch.

**Keen Smell.** The moss troll has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Regeneration.** The moss troll regains 5 hit points at the start of its turn. If the moss troll takes fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the troll's next turn. The moss troll only dies if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

**Tree Climber.** While climbing in trees the moss troll's climb speed increases to 30 ft., and it gains advantage on initiative checks.

**Tree Shape.** The moss troll can use its action to polymorph into a moss-covered tree. In tree form it gains resistance to bludgeoning and piercing damage, its speed becomes 0 and it can't benefit from increases to its speed.

## ACTIONS

**Multiaction:** The moss troll makes three melee attacks: two with its claws and one with its bite.

**Claw.** Melee Weapon Attack, +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., 1 target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4+3) slashing damage.

**Bite.** Melee Weapon Attack, +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., 1 target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

## REACTIONS

**Slow Fall:** When the moss troll falls while climbing trees, it can reduce the effective distance it falls by 30 feet for determining fall damage. If this reduces the fall damage to 0, the moss troll lands on its feet.

**Rewards:** Besides investigating the victim's remains, if the party sifts through the remnants of her camp they can find what is left of her equipment, though most has been broken, shredded, or otherwise ruined. A DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check will turn up an iron pot, a small box of 20 fishhooks, flint and steel, a hammer, a set of mining tools (pans and sluice grates for panning for gold), and a small pouch of tiny bits of gold worth a total of 85 gp. If Trindon Mosley is with the PCs, he can identify the prospector as Old Meg Maces, an acquaintance of his that he saw a few months earlier, at the beginning of winter, and who said she was going to hunker down in the mountains while she checked on a number of gold-panning sites.

# Bloody Victim

TRAIL

B

15 FT CLIFF

TRAIL

A

B

ONE SQUARE = 5 FEET



The moss trolls left no obvious footprints nearby, as they traveled by climbing through the trees, though a thorough search of the area (DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check) reveals several spots where they left the trees to cross a clearing or area of rocky scree. The two were wanderers and had no established lair. Between them, the trolls carry 595 sp intermixed with 12 pp (Wisdom (Perception) DC 10 to notice the platinum), 2 green spinels (50 gp), a brown garnet (80 gp), a large aquamarine (550 gp), a *potion of healing*, and a scroll of *tongues*.

## The Village of Gloym

*The village before you is surrounded by a low palisade of rough-hewn logs. Within this simple protection lies a small cluster of crude huts, barely more than a dozen of various sizes. A modest corral holds goats, sheep, and a few ponies, while barking in the distance suggests a kennel, with several clapboard lodges adjacent to it. A high-beamed longhouse dominates the center of the village, butted up against an embankment behind it. On this rise stands a circle of standing stones surrounding a bonfire, and beyond that a second gate in the palisade, giving egress into the dark woods beyond the wall.*

The overland journey to Gloym should take about a week, possibly longer if the party becomes lost. Once they arrive, they are looked on with some suspicion by the Ughar. The Ughar's initial attitude is hostile, and few if any are interested in talking to the outsiders. For that matter, most Ughar speak only their tribal language, a dialect of the Halat tongue, though a DC 15 Intelligence check allows rudimentary communication. If Trindon Mosley is with the PCs, he can translate for them and provides advantage to Charisma (Persuasion) or Charisma (Intimidation) checks used to improve reactions with the Ughar of Gloym.

### GLOYM

N Village

**Qualities** Superstitious

**Government** Council

**Population** 57 (57 human)

**Notable NPCs**

**Speaker Ganec Trom** (N male human ranger 5)

**Doomsayer Lysis Redav** (N male human cleric 3)

**Elder Arin Scliswe** (N female human bard<sub>1</sub>/rogue<sub>2</sub>)

**Elder Leal Phars** (N male human commoner 2)

**Elder Woula Stepan** (N female commoner 2)

### TOWN KEY

1. **Palisade:** A 10-foot log palisade of 6-inch logs surrounds the village (Strength (AC 15, hp 60).
2. **West Gate:** A heavy gate made of the same logs offers entry into the central village lawn.
3. **Corral:** Several dozen goats are penned here. If PCs have

horses or mules, a section of the corral will be roped off and their mounts will be lodged there.

4. **Village Lawn:** This is the public meeting place of Gloym, where visitors are met and pronouncements are made.
5. **Simple Hut:** These small huts, 10 to 15 feet across, each host a lone **tribesman** (use tribal warrior stats) or a pair of **commoners**, who keep goats for the village. These huts have simple wooden doors (hp 10).
6. **Phars Lodge:** This wooden building, shaped like a rounded cone about 25 feet across, holds the family of Speaker Leal Phars, his wife and five children (treat all as **commoners**). The lodge has a good wooden door with a simple lock (hp 15, DC 15 Dexterity check to pick).
7. **Scliswe Lodge:** This building is identical to area 6 and is the home of Arin Scliswe, a wanderer (use **spy** stats) and **tribesman** husband, Bardi (both are middle-aged) and their three children (statistics as above).
8. **Redav Lodge:** This building is identical to area 6 and is the home of Lysis Redav, an **acolyte** and his wife, Tabba, a **commoner**. Both are old and have no family living with them.
9. **Stepan Lodge:** This building is identical to area 6 and is the home of widow Woula Stepan and her three children (statistics identical to Elder Leal Phars and family).
10. **Trom Lodge:** This building is identical to area 6 and is the home of Ganec Trom and his sons, Barruk and Truni. Their statistics appear in the Chapter Three of the adventure.
11. **Kennel:** This open enclosure contains the hunting and working dogs used by the people of Gloym. At any time, the kennel contains 3d6 **dogs** (use wolf stats) in the kennel.
12. **Smokehouse:** This building is filled with hanging preserved meats which are smoked here when game is plentiful and stored here for the long months when game is scarce.
13. **Cistern and Barrelhouse:** This building contains a well for keeping good access to fresh water even in harsh weather. Lined with hay bales and always cool, it is also used for fermenting casks of mead and ale and for pickling barrels of ice peppers.
14. **Storage Shed:** This building stores spare tools, plows, carts, and is used as a workshop during the cold months. At any given time during the day, 2d4 villagers are usually at work here on various crafts.
15. **Longhouse:** This great hall is the meeting hall for the village elders and for any events of great import to the village as a whole, including storytelling and religious observances. The longhouse is built set into the embankment on the northeastern end of the village. A great firepit runs down the center of the hall, with long trestle tables to either side. The council sits in a raised platform on the northeast end of the building, where a small good wooden door provides egress to 16.
16. **The Goddess' Garden:** Tradition holds that the goddess of the mountain stood upon this spot and blessed the first builders of Gloym, and that with her aid a small stone cromlech circle was raised. Considered sacred ground, no houses are built here and this part of the village is maintained as a pleasant garden, redolent with alpine

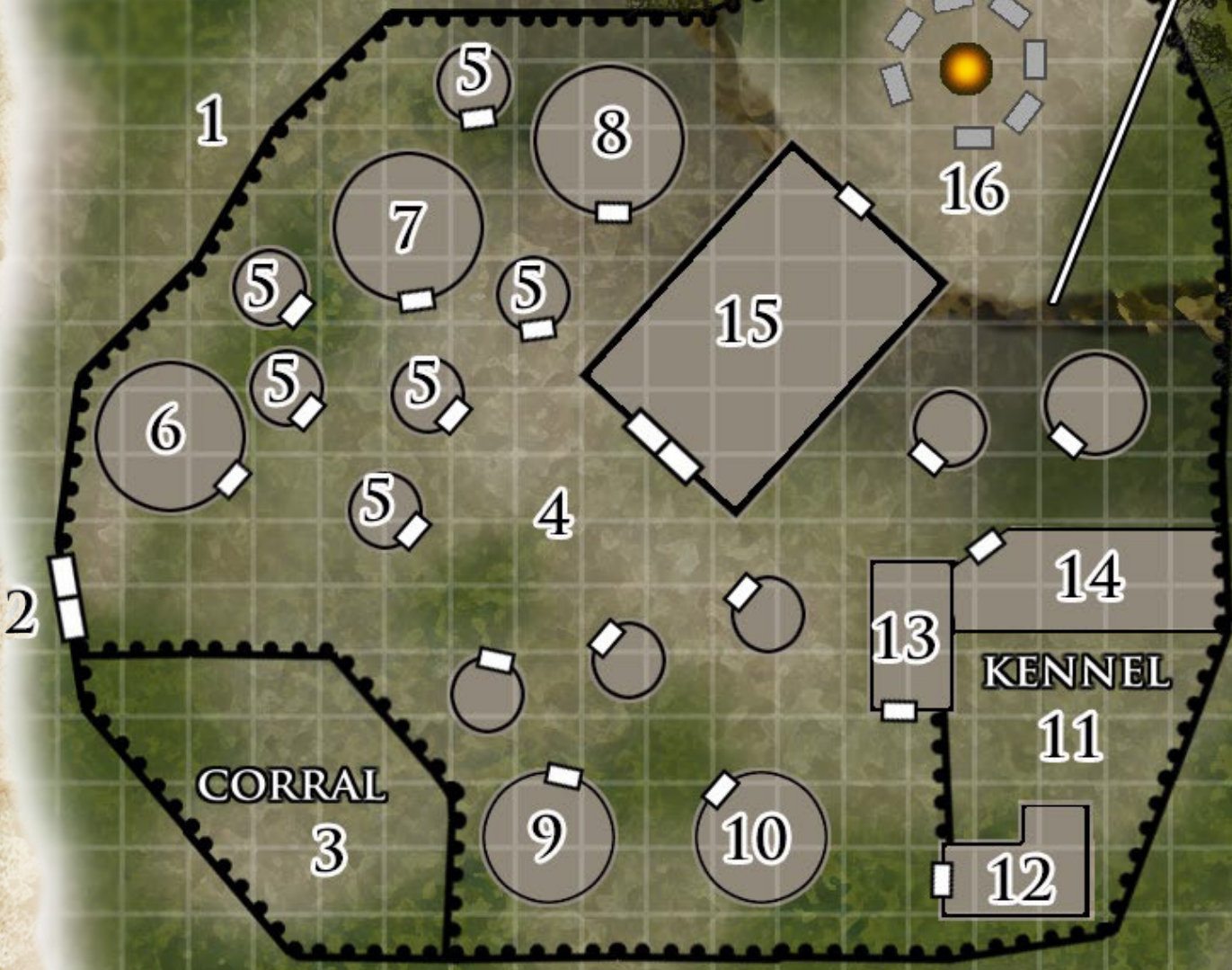
# Gloym



ONE SQUARE = 10 FEET

10 FOOT HIGH BANK

LOG PALISADE





flowers in summer but even now with the first few blossoms bursting into bloom. A stone-ringed firepit within the stone circle is used for solemn ceremonies, such as marriages and the blessing of children or the dead.

17. **East Gate:** This gate leads opens onto a forest path that leads toward the Falls of Istria and the Goddess' Dolmen, sacred to all of the Ughar.

## The Test

Within a few minutes of their arrival in Gloym, the PCs are confronted by the village elders of Gloym. While their faces remain impassive, a DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals barely concealed hostility from most of them, not only directed towards the party but also towards the man who steps forward as their spokesman. Speaking Common with passable fluency though a heavy accent, **Ganec Trom** introduces himself and thanks the PCs to replying to his request for aid.

*I would say you are welcome here, but you can see that is not so. The others, they think it is a bad thing I have done. If the goddess is angry, we must accept it. We cannot speak ill of the goddess. They think you will make her even more angry. You are not us. But there is a way to make them accept you. If you ask for Ipsanaio, they may think you mad, but they cannot refuse you. If you succeed, it shows your strength of body, mind, and spirit as it purifies you, and they must accept that you may walk among us as brothers until the next turning of the moon.*

If asked exactly what *ipsanaio* is, Ganec explains that it is the Ughar name for the “ice peppers” that they sometimes trade. A DC 10 Intelligence (Nature) check reveals that ice peppers grow in the foothills of the Eastern Tors during the late summer and early autumn months. They are harvested after the first snows and are pickled in clay jars with a mixture of brine, alcohol, and certain herbs and packed in ice throughout the winter, during which their color leaches out and their flavor intensifies, leaving them nearly bone-white and unendurably spicy by the end of winter. A DC 10 Intelligence (History) check reveals that *Ipsanaio* is the “test of the ice peppers,” a sort of initiation rite practiced among the Ughar as a ritual of purity and toughness, though sworn by some trappers (including Trindon Mosely, if present) to simply be a sadistic prank the Ughar play on outsiders.

PCs do not need to accept the challenge to gain acceptance; they can also earn it by improving the attitude of at least 3 of the 5 village elders (other than Ganec Trom) to indifferent or better, requiring a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) or Charisma (Intimidation). Each time the PCs use Intimidate to improve an elder's reaction, it increases the DC of subsequent Persuasion checks in Gloym by 2.

## Ipsanaio (1,100 XP)

If PCs demand *Ipsanaio*, the village elders are at first incredulous but then begin laughing among themselves and chattering with amusement. Within a few minutes, a table



is set up and a barrel of ice peppers is brought, and the PCs are seated at the table. Every PC (and Trindon Mosley, if he is present) must eat at least one whole ice pepper, and in order to pass the test at least one PC must eat five whole ice peppers within one minute without passing out from the pain. Each ice pepper eaten requires a Constitution saving throw to avoid becoming wracked with pain, nausea, and cramps from the awful gastrointestinal burning caused by the ice peppers. The Constitution saving throw begins with a DC of 10 and increases by 2 for each ice pepper after the first. The first failed save causes the eater to become poisoned for one hour. A second failure leaves the eater exhausted (level 2), and a third failed save causes the eater to fall unconscious for one round. Any saving throw bonuses that apply against ingested poison or against pain, nausea, or sickening apply to this save; however, the effect is not actually poison and thus *delay poison* and similar effects are of no help in enduring the pain.

Using magic to pass *Ipsanaio* is considered cheating. **Elder Lysis Redav**, an **acolyte** (replacing *light* with *detect magic*) uses *detect magic* to watch for signs of spellcasting. Any spellcasting automatically makes Lysis hostile, and he loudly denounces the offending PC. He demands they be cast out of the village

unless they personally can prove their purity by completing *Ipsanaio* (even if another PC has already completed the ritual). If the PC fails, they are not allowed to sleep in the village unless Lysis can be placated (DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) or Charisma (Intimidation)).

If at least one PC passes the *Ipsanaio*, the party is accepted as worthy to act on the tribe's behalf. If none of them can complete the ritual, however, they can still attempt to adjust the reactions of the elders with diplomacy, gaining advantage on Charisma (Persuasion) skill checks for having been willing to endure the ordeal. If at least three are made indifferent, the elders grudgingly agree that while the PCs did not demonstrate themselves the equal of a true Ughar, they made a noble effort for a group of soft-skinned warlanders, and besides they provided an opportunity for laughter in the tribe at a time of much sadness. In either case, they are invited to stay as the guests of the elders in the village common lodge and may join in a feast of welcome, though the elders will apologize for the fare being somewhat meager here at the end of winter, and with the ravages culling the game and killing several hunters in the forest.

If both the ritual and diplomacy fail, Ganec Trom steps in to argue that the elders have offered the PCs food and are therefore obliged by custom to extend their hospitality for three days. They grudgingly admit this is so but demand the PCs be lodged in the smokehouse next to the dog kennels and locked inside at night (a simple lock, DC 15 Dexterity check and thieves' tools) so that they do not get out and cause mischief.

**Rewards:** Award 1,100 XP if the PCs successfully complete *Ipsanaio*. Award 550 XP if they attempt the challenge but fail to complete it.

## Investigations in Gloym (700 XP)

If PCs have completed *Ipsanaio* successfully, the attitude of the villagers in Gloym is improved to indifferent. Some villagers speak and understand more Common than others, but if any PC is fluent in Halat (or if Trindon Mosley is available to translate), if magic is used to communicate, or if a DC 15 Intelligence check is made with each attempt to gather information, the PCs can gather information using DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) checks. The following information can be learned with successful Charisma (Persuasion) and/or Intelligence (Religion)

**DC 10:** The goddess of the mountain is named Istria, and she has a sacred dolmen just above the Falls of Istra, named for the river that comes down the mountain. She is said to live in a palace of gold and glass high atop the mountain, at the river's source, in a sacred valley none have ever seen.

**DC 15:** Some in the village elders, when asked what happened to the victims of the attacks, say that it was the "breath of the goddess" that killed them—that when she is angry, her breath becomes alive as a spirit

of her vengeance that they call the *wiitikowan*, the 'mist-walker.' They say the mist-walker can take different shapes, or perhaps no one sees it the same way, or perhaps there is more than one if she is truly angry, but it walks on the mist and cloud and leaves no trace. It is spirit so it does not eat and it does not steal, but it can kill, and so horribly does it mangle its victims that legends name it "The Bloody Beast."

**DC 20:** The eldest in the village say that the legend of the wind-walker is close to the truth, but that truly the breath of the goddess is not alive by itself. Instead, it freezes and withers the soul of whatever she breathes upon and awakens within it the raw hunger and emptiness of the whistling mountain wind and the cold rage of winter's heart. This poor creature, be it man or beast, ceases to live as it once did and becomes 'wiitikowan,' the mist-walker. It is said to fear fire, as its heart is cold within it, but it can taste fear and blood on the wind from afar and hunt both waking and dreaming.

This investigation can answer the question of what is doing the killing, but not the why. A separate Charisma (Persuasion) check made to the village's holy women and men mostly turns up pieties about the villagers not being faithful enough, about the winter sacrifices of sweet cakes, ice carvings, and holly wreaths being blemished or of insufficient quality to please the goddess, or grouching about the presence of lowlanders in the forest stirring up the goddess' wrath. A DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check, however, reveals Priya's story in the GM's background above. No one in the village knows Priya's fate, but they know of the time and nature of her children's deaths, and how she went mad with death and was overheard cursing the goddess' name and muttering that she would go to the goddess and demand justice. On asking around about Priya's disappearance, it certainly precedes the onset of the attacks, so the potential connection is there. Those wishing to investigate Priya's fate are advised to look toward Istria's dolmen.

**Rewards:** Award the party 700 XP for their investigations in Gloym.

PCs may choose to simply investigate the forest on their own, hunting for signs of the killer creature. Each day they spend exploring the wild lands around Gloym, they have a 10% chance of encountering the **Bloody Beast** in addition to the chance of other random encounters. If encountered, the Bloody Beast behaves as described in the **A Late Frost** encounter.

## Chapter 2: The Mount of Sorrow

### The Falls of Istria (2,310 XP)

*The trail from the village to the Falls of Istria is well-known and well-worn by the passage of generations to give offerings to their goddess. A mountain bird circles lazily overhead as the tumbling stream pools a bit in the steep-walled valley above the falls, as the first spring shoots and blossoms break through the last clumps and crusts of snow. A great peaked dolmen spans the river just above the head of the falls, just before the river tumbles noisily more than 60 feet down to a rocky shelf and deep pool before gathering and flowing around a rocky islet at the far side and flowing away westward.*

The dolmen itself is a crude structure of massive stony slabs, marked with a handful of petroglyphs naming the Ughar villages (DC 15 Intelligence check) and the vows of the Ughar to serve the goddess and follow her wisdom and for her to heed their cries and shelter them from fire, storm, and danger (if the Intelligence check was successful, or if the writings are read magically, interpreting these passages requires a DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check).

If the PCs spend more than 1 minute examining the Dolmen, including making efforts to read the inscriptions and/or climb over the dolmen to cross the river, they attract the attention of a mountain raven afflicted with the wendigo curse. In fact, this is the selfsame carrion bird who drove Priya to her fateful madness, and she was the first creature upon whom Istria's anger fell when she decided to wreak her vengeance upon the uncouth villagers. The raven feels strangely bound to this place, however, caught up by the dying mother's curse that caused Priya to rise again as a vengeful ghost. If Priya is killed, the wendigo raven will be freed from his spiritual binding, and its cunning and hateful nature will impel it to spread its awful affliction. It is thus important for the party to destroy this creature, even though it has not been the creature directly responsible for the killings.

PCs scanning the area for enemies have little chance to spot the raven clinging to the cliffs 100 feet above (Wisdom Perception DC 25, including distance modifier).

#### WIITIKOWAN RAVEN

*Tiny fey, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 7 (3d4)

**Speed** fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
4 (-3)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	12 (+1)	2 (-4)

**Damage Immunities** cold

**Damage Vulnerabilities** fire

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened

**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +5, Survival +5

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**Mimicry.** The raven can mimic simple sounds it has heard, such as a person whispering, a baby crying, or an animal chittering. A creature that hears the sounds can tell they are imitations with a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check.

**Nightmare Stalker.** As an action, a wiitikowan can designate a creature within 120 ft. as its quarry. It has advantage on Perception (Wisdom) and Survival (Wisdom) checks to detect its quarry. Each night, the wiitikowan can contact its quarry in its dreams. Each night, the victim must succeed at a Wisdom saving throw with a DC of 11. If the victim succeeds three nights in a row, they are no longer treated as a quarry and cannot be contacted again. A *protection from evil and good* spell cast on the target prevents this contact, as does a *magic circle*. If the target fails the saving throw, they are frightened in the presence of the wiitikowan for 24 hours. A victim who fails the saving throw has dreadful visions unless they are immune to being frightened. If these visions last for at least 1 hour, the target gains no benefit from its rest, and its hit point maximum is reduced by 5 (1d10). If this effect reduces the target's hit point maximum to 0, the target dies, and the victim becomes a wiitikowan. The reduction to the target's hit point maximum lasts until removed by the *greater restoration* spell or similar magic, or until the victim completes a long rest after they are no longer the wiitikowans quarry.

**Regeneration.** The wiitikowan regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn. If the wiitikowan takes fire or radiant damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the wiitikowan's next turn. The wiitikowan dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

**Taste of Terror.** A wiitikowan is aware of the direction and approximate distance of any creature within 1 mile that is frightened. A wiitikowan can see any creature within 60 ft. that is frightened and pinpoint its location even if the creature is obscured.

**Wind Walker.** A wiitikowan may *wind walk* as a bonus action, affecting itself. In addition, a wiitikowan's movement, attacks, and senses are never impeded by wind or by natural or magical weather effects, including *fog cloud* and *sleet storm*.

## ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack.* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4+3) piercing damage and the target is exposed to wendigo fever. On a critical hit, a wiitikowan's bite deals triple damage rather than double.



**Development:** The passing winter has long since obliterated any footprints Priya had left behind en route to her tragic fall, but a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals fragmentary remains of a human child atop the Dolmen (Priya's dead son), and a DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check discovers faint traces that indicate the passage of some creature from the dolmen toward the falls. PCs climbing down or even standing at the cliff's edge can see the pale corpse of a woman, frozen and rimed with ice (DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check) and may hear a distant moaning cry echoing over the roaring of the falls (DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check).

If any living creature touches the remains atop the dolmen, or if blood is shed in or adjacent to the dolmen or the river (including any hit with a piercing or slashing weapon against a creature in those locations), a haunt is triggered. The haunt also triggers if a creature begins to climb up or down the cliffs within 30 feet of the waterfall.

The waterfall is cursed with Priya's grief and anguish. The curse activates when a PC enters the area 60 ft. wide by 60 ft. high, 10 feet from top and bottom of the waterfall, or within 10 feet of the dolmen. Any PC in the area may make a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to hear the waterfall's roar shift higher in pitch to the mournful wail of a mother in absolute suffering. One round later, any creatures still in the area must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. Creatures who fail are frightened for 1d4 rounds, and if they fail by 5 or more, they are overcome with hopelessness and seek to end their lives. Climbing creatures let go and fall to the bottom, while creatures atop the falls hurl themselves over the edge. After taking falling damage, creatures must make an additional Wisdom saving throw each round at the beginning of their turn or be stunned with anguish and hopelessness, unable to move. Creatures at the base of the waterfall take 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage per turn from the pounding rush of waters. Creatures who take falling damage are considered to be not holding their breaths, due to the force of the fall and the constant impact of the waters. Such creatures begin to suffocate after a number of rounds equal to their Constitution modifier.

The curse cannot be lifted unless Priya confronts Istria with her grievances, and she must be convinced to forgive the goddess.

## Getting Down

Climbing down the 60-foot cliffs is not tremendously difficult (DC 10 Strength (Athletics) without a rope, DC 5 with a rope), though if PCs climb within 30 feet of the falls the rocks are wet and even icy in places, increasing the DC by 5. However, the rocks atop the cliff are icy and treacherous, requiring a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to avoid slipping and falling whenever a PC moves within 5 feet of the cliff's edge (DC 15 if moving more than half speed). This check is automatically successful if a PC is crawling.

Alternatively, PCs can search for an alternate portage trail that bypasses the falls, requiring a DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check and 1 hour of time to find the path and return to the base of the falls.

## Below the Falls (1,100 XP)

The Falls of Istria plunge down onto a bed of rocky spires and shallows, spilling into a deep sapphire pool. The waters churn more strongly along the pool's southern edge, collecting into a stream

flowing westward past a pair of flat islets split by a narrow watery cleft. Upon the smaller islet lies a woman's body, clearly frozen stiff and bruised and broken, yet with her hair freshly braided and her clothing newly mended.

Priya floats aimlessly in the pool below the falls, sometimes tending to her frozen body and plying her seamstress skills out of habit, at other times simply sitting below the pounding waters, trapped inside the body of the spirit of the falls and thwarted in her efforts to reach the goddess. Her grip on sanity is tenuous at best, as she realizes that she is dead but cannot figure out what to do next.

If PCs devise some means of successfully banishing Priya from Byard, she manifests as a spectral village woman in soaked rags, bearing the body of her child in her arms. Unlike most ghosts, she lacks a withering touch and has no effective melee attack, but her wailing cries function as a horrifying visage and she is able to possess creatures. Her every effort is directed towards seeking out the goddess and demanding satisfaction for abandoning her. She will attempt to possess one of the PCs



and use their body to ascend the goddess' mountain, violating their strictest taboo to confront the goddess herself in her palace of gold and glass. She has already lost everything, even her very life; she has literally nothing more to lose.

## PRIYA NIZOLEK

*Medium undead, neutral*

**Armor Class** 11

**Hit Points** 45 (10d8)

**Speed** 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)

**Damage Resistances** acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Damage Immunities** cold, necrotic, poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** Halat

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Ethereal Sight.** Priya can see 60 feet into the Ethereal Plane when it is on the Material Plane, and vice versa.

**Incorporeal Movement.** Priya can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

## ACTIONS

**Etherealness.** The ghost enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane, or vice versa. It is visible on the Material Plane while it is in the Border Ethereal, and vice versa, yet it can't affect or be affected by anything on the other plane.

**Horriifying Visage.** Each non-undead creature within 60 feet of the ghost that can see it must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. If the save fails by 5 or more, the target also ages 1d4 × 10 years. A frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the frightened condition on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to this ghost's Horriifying Visage for the next 24 hours. The aging effect can be reversed with a greater restoration spell, but only within 24 hours of it occurring.

**Possession (Recharge 6).** One humanoid that the ghost can see within 5 feet of it must succeed on a DC 13 Charisma saving throw or be possessed by the ghost; the ghost then disappears, and the target is incapacitated and loses control of its body. The ghost now controls the body but doesn't deprive the target of awareness. The ghost can't be targeted by any attack, spell, or other effect, except ones that turn undead, and it retains its alignment, Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, and

immunity to being charmed and frightened. It otherwise uses the possessed target's statistics, but doesn't gain access to the target's knowledge, class features, or proficiencies.

The possession lasts until the body drops to 0 hit points, the ghost ends it as a bonus action, or the ghost is turned or forced out by an effect like the *dispel evil and good* spell. When the possession ends, the ghost reappears in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the body. The target is immune to this ghost's Possession for 24 hours after succeeding on the saving throw or after the possession ends.

If freed from Priya's possession, Byard is angry and disoriented after his long possession, acting as if **confused** for 1d4 rounds, per the spell, raving that the PCs are out to get him or trying to control his mind. He calms down after this, and conversation with him is described below.

## BYARD MAGER, STROMKARL NIXIE

*Medium fey, neutral*

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 75 (10d8 + 30)

**Speed** 20 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	17 (+3)

**Senses** darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** Aquan, Sylvan

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Innate Spellcasting.** The stromkarl's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13). The stromkarl can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *create food and water* (water only)

1/day each: *control water*

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Byard makes two spear or two longbow attacks.

**Spear.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

**Longbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

**Luring Song:** Byard sings a magical melody. Every humanoid and giant within 300 feet of Byard that can hear the song must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed until the song ends. Byard must take a bonus action on its subsequent turns to continue singing. It can stop singing at any time. The song ends if Byard is incapacitated. While charmed by Byard, a target is incapacitated and ignores the songs of other stromkarls. If the charmed target is more than 5 feet away from Byard, the target must move on its turn toward Byard by the most direct route, trying to get within 5

feet. It doesn't avoid opportunity attacks, but before moving into damaging terrain, such as lava or a pit, and whenever it takes damage from a source other than Byard, the target can repeat the saving throw. A charmed target can also repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns. If the saving throw is successful, the effect ends on it. A target that successfully saves is immune to Byard's song for the next 24 hours.

**Minor Wish.** Once per day, Byard may create any magical effect of a spell level 3<sup>rd</sup> or less, in exchange for a gift or service from a humanoid.

**Development:** Priya ignores PCs investigating the dolmen or the upper cliffs, but every round any creature spends climbing down the falls she makes a Wisdom (Perception) check against the PCs' Dexterity (Stealth) to notice them. If they come more than halfway down, she swims over to them and uses her frightful visage to try scaring them away and then dives back underwater, as she just wishes to be left alone in her hopelessness. They are clearly not the goddess, and in her twisted thoughts they can offer nothing but misery to her.

*Talking with Priya:* If the PCs try speaking to Priya, her attitude varies. If they speak any language but Halat, she is hostile, for she understands no other tongues. If they speak in Halat, she is still hostile but less so, but if they mention her name or succeed on a 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check she becomes indifferent (if both apply, she becomes friendly). While she may be willing to converse, however, she is not entirely lucid and a DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check is required when conversing with her to cut through her more tangential ramblings and discern her real meaning. If her mood can be improved to helpful through a DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion, Deception, or Intimidation) check that the party can help her heal her pain, she will relate her entire story, as noted in the DM's background, including describing the creatures who have come to visit her, though she does not think any of them are the true goddess. She will be remorseful for having to possess the spirit of the waterfall, but she did it almost on instinct, she did not know what to do.

A DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that Priya has most likely become a ghost, and also that many ghosts have the power to move from body to body using their possession ability and can enter a new host without causing lasting harm, and a successful Charisma (Deception) check opposed by Priya's passive Insight of 11 convinces her that it is possible. However, she must be convinced that she should and that the PCs are willing to help her find the goddess and speak to her, requiring a second Charisma (Deception) check opposed by her Insight; the PC gets disadvantage on this roll unless one of the PCs volunteers to serve as her host. If the Charisma (Deception) check succeeds, she agrees, and she transfers her spirit into the willing PC. This frees Byard from her control, with consequences as noted above.

Once Priya enters the PC's mind, the PC's own personality is mostly subsumed within Priya's addled mind. The host PC is aware of her surroundings and can communicate with Priya

but cannot move or speak to others. The player of the hosting PC could be allowed to role-play the half-mad ghost-woman inhabiting his or her character, retaining her own physical ability scores, hit points, natural abilities, and automatic abilities while using Priya's mental ability scores, alignment, and purely mental abilities. Alternatively, you might allow the PC within to try to wrest control of herself temporarily, with a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw allowing the host to act as if confused for 1d4 rounds rather than remaining wholly in Priya's charge).

If the PCs cannot figure out how to transfer Priya's spirit or fail to convince her to do so willingly, they do have the option of killing Byard, which will automatically release Priya's spirit; however, if this happens the haunting of the waterfall intensifies, increasing its dimensions by 100% and increasing the saving throw DC by 2. There is also a 50% chance that Byard's dying spirit is driven mad by dying while possessed, transforming him into a *wight*.

The PCs can also ask Priya if she knows the way to the goddess' valley. While she does not know its exact location, she knows enough of the ancient tales of the goddess to give the PCs a reasonable sense of where to look and how to get there.

*Talking with Byard:* When Byard comes back to his senses he is initially unfriendly toward PCs. He is not at all certain what happened to him, but he is dimly aware of having been mentally controlled, and his first suspicion is that the characters have something to do with it. A DC 15 Charisma (Intimidation) check or DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check calms him enough to reveal that Istria, the goddess of the mountain, is his lover. While he cannot lead them to her sacred valley, as he has never been there (it is too far from his waterfall), she has said enough in conversation with him that he could give the party reasonably good directions as to how to get there (a DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check to avoid getting lost) and a braided ring of his hair; if cast into the waters pouring forth from Istria's valley, it will cause the waters to recede as if using *control water*, allowing them to enter her valley through the streambed. Priya is very much in favor of this approach, seeking the goddess' palace of gold and glass upon the mountain.

**Rewards:** Byard has a small store of treasure accumulated over the years from discarded votive offerings to Istria as well as things he himself has acquired. His trove includes 225 gp, 3 chrysoberyl (90 each), a large aquamarine (550 gp), a *wand of magic detection*, a *potion of climbing*, and a *rope of climbing*.

## Ascending the Sacred Mountain (2,300 XP)

Following either Priya's or Byard's directions will lead the party up the mountainside. The way is difficult, taking 8 hours. Each hour, characters must make Strength (Athletics) and Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks, beginning at DC 8 and increasing by 1 each hour thereafter. Each failed Strength

(Athletics) check indicates that the character has fallen at some point during that hour, taking 3 (1d6) points of damage. Each failed Dexterity (Acrobatics) check means that the character has slipped and fallen on jagged rocks and ice, taking 2 (1d4) slashing and piercing damage.

In addition, at the halfway point of their climb, the PCs ascend high enough up the peak that the air begins to thin. PCs become exhausted unless they make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw as long as they remain at this altitude.

**Avalanche:** Finally, during the last hour of their ascent, Istria (through her charmed animal spies) notices the party drawing near to her home and tries to drive them away by creating an avalanche with her *transmute rock to mud* and *move earth* abilities. The avalanche is 200 feet wide and is a mix of rock, earth, ice, and snow, moving at 300 feet per round. The party can first notice it with a DC 15 (Wisdom) Perception check when it is 1000 feet away. Those who fail to notice the avalanche may check again each round thereafter, and the DC for either check is reduced by 5 per round, with the party automatically noticing it when 100 feet away. When the avalanche forms, the party is approximately at its center. Characters able to fly or levitate can avoid the avalanche if they are more than 20 feet off the ground, while those on the ground can shelter behind large trees and boulders, granting advantage on saving throws against the avalanche. They can also try to move uphill or downhill out of the path of the avalanche. Those within the middle 100 feet take 28 (8d6) damage and may make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw for half. Those on the outermost 50 feet of the avalanche on either side take half damage, or none with a successful DC 12 Dexterity saving throw.

One round after the avalanche strikes, Istria sends her pet giant owl, **Bardiu**, down the mountain to observe the PCs directly.

**Creatures:** Bardiu simply circles overhead, watching the PCs to ascertain what he can about them and judging their character and intentions. He will circle and watch them for 2d4 rounds before flying away back up the mountain. While Bardiu cannot speak, he understands Sylvan (a DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check reveals this), and if a PC hails him in that tongue he will flutter down 20 feet from that PC and listen to what is said, considering their words and what they might mean for his mistress. Charisma (Deception) attempts against Bardiu are opposed by his 11 passive Insight. After listening to PCs, Bardiu flies back up the mountain path, pointing the way for PCs to follow.

If PCs attack Bardiu, he flies away.

## BARDIU

XP 50

Giant owl (SRD)

hp 19

**Developments:** If PCs survive the avalanche, Istria is impressed with their tenacity and her attitude shifts to

indifferent. If they attack Bardiu, she becomes hostile.

PCs can follow Bardiu up the final traverse of the mountain or can find their own way (Wisdom (Survival) DC 10 following Byard's directions, DC 15 using Priya's), following a winding path a quarter-mile before approaching a narrow freshet gushing forth from a high crack in the rocks ahead, with no apparent method to pass by it. If they have Byard's token, they can toss it into the water, causing the stream to abate and allowing them to walk up the watercourse with relative ease (Strength (Athletics) DC 5 to clamber over the wet rocks left behind for 100 feet before passing into the goddess' garden).

If PCs lack Byard's token, they can swim upstream (DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check) for 100 feet, or they can climb up and over the cliffs (DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check) to reach the valley beyond. If Bardiu returns to Istria and indicates that the PCs spoke to him in Sylvan, Istria comes herself via *passwall* to offer PCs a method to get through the mountain.

Award 2,300 XP for the ascent of the mountain.

## Valley of the Goddess (1,800 XP)

*This high-walled garden is bedecked with exuberant growth of flowering shrubs, berry bushes, and alpine flowers and is well-treed besides. A massive roosting perch stands in a small clearing, while beside a clear stream pebbled with crystals (some worn and dull, others faceted and sparkling) stands a curious crystalline pavilion seemingly twisted and woven together from veins of natural crystal, growing almost like a living thing. Rocky pillars of sparkling stone hold up gossamer-thin sheets of crystal plate for roofs. Gold tracings decorate every crystalline surface, and in places tiny teardrop globes and rough nuggets of gold sprout from crystalline flowers like tiny clusters of berries. The pavilion lies beside a large pool reflecting the uppermost peak above as well as the unusually verdant vegetation. Standing before the pavilion is a coolly regal woman with dark hair, draped in garments of crystal.*

Istria maintains the pleasant valley for her own pleasure and rarely if ever has visitors, though she is served by Bardiu and also by a pair of **sea hags**, **Gram** and **Garna**, whom she caught snooping around her valley and decided to keep as servants and has found amusing. The two hags are obsequious toward Istria but crude and occasionally surly towards her guests, covering up any verbal missteps with protests of only wanting to make sure guests respect their mistress as she is due.

In conversation, Istria should be played as distant and aloof. She may come off as intentionally mysterious, but it should be apparent that it is her essential nature to be distant and aloof; she is literally the spirit of the mountain, and her heart is as a heart of stone. Ideas or perspectives that might seem alien or strange to ordinary folk are a matter of course to one who has lived for untold years looking down on those around her. At the same time, the implied social niceties of community and society may not be obvious to her, and even if explained may leave her more baffled than sympathetic. She is logical and



matter of fact about the necessities of life. Nature is a harsh but ultimately fair mistress, delivering bounty and privation in equal measure.

At the same time, Istria is not truly emotionless. Her love for Byard is genuine, and her creation of the wiitikowan was an act of pure emotion; a combination of jealousy, wounded pride, spurned love, and vengeful hate. The PCs have earned her respect in braving her mountain, and she is amenable to conversation and persuasion by them. It is the players' task to appeal to Istria's mind and heart, convincing her to relent in whatever curse she has laid upon the villagers and to help them stop the rampage of the Bloody Beast.

The DCs to convince Istria to assist them are fairly high for this level, but they also assume that PCs will be aiding a primary negotiator. In addition, remember to reward players with bonuses to Charisma (Persuasion) checks for making cogent, eloquent, heartfelt, or even humorous arguments, especially if one of the players has allowed Priya's ghost to possess his character and is role-playing that experience well.

*Talking with Istria:* A DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check identifies Istria as being an orruol, a mountain fey with great power over the very living rock of her alpine domain, but tied to it as a dryad is to her tree or a stromkarl to his waterfall. It also indicates that orruols tend to be lawful in alignment, and not as given to caprice and impulsive behavior as most fey.

If the PCs attacked her giant owl, or otherwise seriously antagonized her, Istria she demands to know the PCs' business, interrogating them as to their reasons for violating her mountain home and revealing very little of herself.

If she is made at least indifferent, she invites the PCs to dine with her on nuts, berries, and eggs from the alpine birds that nest here in abundance. She speaks only Dwarf, Sylvan, and Terran, so conversation may be difficult if PCs lack facility in those languages. Still, she will share her version of the tale and admit that she unleashed the terrible curse upon the villages.

Istria can be made friendly through a DC 21 Charisma (Persuasion) check, with PCs spending 1d4 hours in conversation. Mentioning Byard Mager results in disadvantage on all Charisma checks for the party unless they brought some token from him and make apologies on his behalf, in which case it provides advantage. If PCs make up an apology without having actually spoken to Byard, they must make Charisma (Deception) checks opposed by Istria's and Bardiu's passive Insight.

If made friendly, Istria agrees to listen to Priya's tale of woe, though despite living among the Ughar for centuries she is not fluent in their Halat language, never having bothered to learn more than the rudiments of the tongue. If PCs help translate and interpret, Istria agrees that as someone the Ughar have adopted as their goddess, she does have a certain responsibility to them, to protect them. She admits that the source of her anger was misplaced, and she should not have loosed her vengeance upon all of the villages, or really on any of them. She apologizes to Priya for not answering her call, though to save her child was beyond her power. Though it

may be small consolation, she invites Priya to fetch her body and the remains of her child, that they may be interred here in the goddess' valley. Having been able to plead her case to her goddess, Priya is content and willing to be laid to rest here, which will end her ghostly existence as well as purging the haunted curse from the Falls of Istra.

**Developments:** By the end of her conversation with the PCs, Istria is likely to express deep regret for her actions. She wonders aloud whether having Gram and Garna nearby has tainted her judgment, as she knows that the hags are quite cruel and heartily encouraged bloody vengeance against all the villagers when she was in the throes of her anguish at what she believed was Byard's betrayal. She does not blame them for her own decision to unleash the wiitikowan curse,



but upon reflection decides to dismiss them from her service. She sends them away privately but informs the PCs of it later. If the PCs ask why she released two dangerous creatures, she states simply that they had amply fulfilled her need for punishment for their crime of trespassing and she had no compelling reason to keep them bound. She reassures the PCs that, should they encounter Garna and Gram at some later time and the two get into mischief and come to a bad end, she would shed no tears nor hold any grudges.

Istria can tell the PCs about the powers of the wiitikowan, especially its bloody bite, disease, and nightmare stalker abilities. She warns that it is able to regenerate but that fire can suppress its healing powers, and that if sorely wounded it will fade into mist and try to flee, and they must do all they can to prevent its escape. If they find victims left alive from its attacks but that are showing signs of madness, she recommends a swift and painless death followed by burning the body as the surest method of ensuring the taint does not spread. While it may be possible to heal both the curse, the disease, and the madness that come upon the victim, she herself lacks that power, and this far in the wilderness she doubts that anyone else could eradicate the taint before it progressed to its awful conclusion. Harsh and cruel as it may be, she suggests it is the most effective solution to the problem.

In terms of hunting the Bloody Beast, she states it was once a great grizzly bear that was attainted by the mountain raven upon whom she laid the curse initially. The grizzly's natural cruelty and cunning have made it a deadly killer, though it avoids Istria's mountain in favor of roaming the hills and wooded valleys where it can find easy prey. Istria describes how PCs might be able to use the wiitikowan's taste of terror ability to lure it into an ambush. It can sense both blood and fear up to a mile away. If they have some means of creating fear, whether upon one of their own number or even a captive animal, it may be enough to lure the Bloody Beast. If Priya has not yet been laid to rest, she volunteers that she could delay her repose and continue in possession of one of the characters in order to use her ghostly powers to induce fear if that would be helpful.

Istria can *teleport* up to 5 PCs to her dolmen at the base of the mountain to collect Priya's remains and those of her child and then return to her valley to have Priya select their final resting place. If Priya is temporarily remaining with the PCs, Istria states she will return at sunset each day to meet them and to take Istria to her final rest whenever she is ready.

**Rewards:** Istria provides PCs with as many *goodberries* as they wish while in the valley, and gives each of them a dozen more *goodberries* to take with them when they leave. If PCs are lacking in magical capabilities, she can provide them with a magic wand to use in hunting and confronting the Bloody Beast, a *wand of fear* (5 charges).

In addition, Istria is grateful to PCs for showing her the error of her ways and offers them a gift, a +1 *longsword* (or select another weapon appropriate for a PC) and matching Medium-sized +1 *breastplate*. Both are relics of some long-ago tribal hero. He was a man of the south, taken by the villagers in battle with an invading army that tore through the Lost Lands centuries ago (DC 15 Intelligence (History) check reveals these are antique arms and armor of the once-great Taldarius Empire to the south, which briefly occupied the Lost Lands at the height of its growth). She does not know if they will be of any use in hunting the wiitikowan, but she has no particular use for them and is happy to bestow them upon those that have proven themselves worthy.

**Attacking Istria:** Conversing with Istria is not intended as a combat encounter. As a CR 10 fey with allies, attacking her is likely to be suicidal. If PCs do choose to attack, the gazebo has hidden portcullis-like panels that slam shut, entrapping the PCs in the space between, though Istria can easily pass through them with her earth glide ability. She declares that she will decide their fate in her own good time. She uses her altitude alteration to increase the severity of altitude sickness, and each day she will place a *curse* (either a standard curse or one of the GM's devising, such as the curse that created the wiitikowan) on one of the PCs while charming the others, relenting only if they beg for mercy and offer suitable recompense for their offense of attacking her. Accursed characters may be released back into the wild, hauled down the mountain by Bardiu and deposited at her dolmen, while charmed characters may be kept as her pets for years under a constantly renewed *charm* until she tires of them.



## Chapter 3: Hunting the Bloody Beast

After returning from Istria's mountain, PCs may choose to return to Gloym or may simply begin their hunt. If they return to Gloym, they find that Ganec Trom has left the village with several hunters to talk with elders at the village of Voll a half-day to the south. PCs trying to recruit aid from the village will find the villagers generally terrified of anything to do with the Bloody Beast. However, a character fluent in Halat can attempt a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation) check to entice one **tribal warrior** to assist them for 24 hours, plus an additional warrior for every 2 points by which the character beat the DC. The superstitious villagers have disadvantage on saving throws against fear and to their saving throws against any of the wiitikowan's special attacks.

Since the Bloody Beast moves constantly through the air, either in mist form or in flight, it cannot be tracked in the conventional sense. However, given the hints from Istria about how to attract its attention, they can make Survival checks to lure it to them. This is a DC 21 Wisdom (Survival) check taking 2d4 hours, with the following bonuses to the check.

### Bonus Condition

- +2 Survival check undertaken at night
- +1 per creature bleeding (including dying)
- +2 per creature freshly killed
- +4 per creature frightened

If the PCs wish, they can hunt for some of the local river herd animals that roam the hills. A DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check taking 1d4 hours allows the PCs to locate 1d3 **river elk** at an encounter distance of 2d6 x 10 feet. If PCs can capture one or more of these animals, they can be frightened or slaughtered to

assist in attracting the attention of the Bloody Beast.

No map is provided for this encounter, as the PCs can choose the place they wish to try attracting the Bloody Beast's attention. The villagers of Gloym are horrified and appalled if the PCs suggest trying to draw the creature to the village, and will bolt the doors of their homes, hiding inside until the PCs leave. If the villagers are forced into the open, they flee in panic into the woods if they see the Bloody Beast or hear its awful cry. If they scatter in this fashion, 1d4 of them are killed by the Bloody Beast if it escapes the PCs while there is a 50% chance one more is injured but survives infected with wendigo fever.

More likely, PCs will choose to confront the Bloody Beast in a natural setting away from the village. Have players describe the kind of terrain, including slope, tree cover, and the like, appropriate to hilly terrain, and allow them to find an appropriate place to encamp and unleash fear and blood that will call out to the Bloody Beast.

The PCs can use the area around the goddess' dolmen and the Falls of Istria if they like, but if Istria is present (a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check convinces her to come with them and wait for the creature) the beast can sense her presence and will not come. After one fruitless Wisdom (Survival) check, Istria reasons that the beast can sense her and that her presence is spoiling their chance to lure it to them.

**Creatures:** If the Wisdom (Survival) check succeeds, the Bloody Beast arrives at some point during the PCs' stakeout (during the period of bleeding and/or fear, if those modifiers are being used). It arrives by stealth, wind walking to within 2d6 x 10 feet; be sure to adjust Wisdom (Perception) check DCs by +1 per 10 feet of distance. If the Bloody Beast notices the PCs without being seen itself, it uses its nightmare stalker ability on a random PC that is not currently affected by fear. However, while it would normally fly on, it cannot resist the feast of blood and fear the PCs have provided, and it swoops

in to attack with great savagery, flying into a rage after taking damage. If it is brought below 10 hit points (or under 20 hit points if it has been wounded by fire since its last turn), it flees by wind walking.

If the Bloody Beast escapes, PCs can attempt to lure it in with the same trick again. However, although its accursed nature drives it to respond to fear and blood, the cunning remnant of its mind becomes progressively more suspicious of such attempts. As a result, the DC for the Wisdom (Survival) check is increased by 2 for each attempt after the first, and the Bloody Beast gains an equivalent bonus to Wisdom (Perception) checks to notice the PCs when it approaches the area.

## WIITIKOWAN GRIZZLY BEAR

*Large fey, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 66 (7d10+28)

**Speed** fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	1 (-5)	13 (+1)	3 (-4)

**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +5, Survival +5

**Damage Immunities** cold

**Damage Vulnerabilities** fire

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Keen Smell.** The bear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Nightmare Stalker.** As an action, a wiitikowan can designate a creature within 120 ft. as its quarry. It has advantage on Perception (Wisdom) and Survival (Wisdom) checks to detect its quarry. Each night, the wiitikowan can contact its quarry in its dreams. Each night, the victim must succeed at a Wisdom saving throw with a DC of 11. If the victim succeeds three nights in a row, they are no longer treated as a quarry and cannot be contacted again. A *protection from evil and good* spell cast on the target prevents this contact, as does a *magic circle*. If the target fails the saving throw, they are frightened in the presence of the wiitikowan for 24 hours. A victim who fails the saving throw has dreadful visions unless they are immune to being frightened. If these visions last for at least 1 hour, the target gains no benefit from its rest, and its hit point maximum is reduced by 5 (1d10). If this effect reduces the target's hit point maximum to 0, the target dies, and the victim becomes a wiitikowan. The reduction to the

target's hit point maximum lasts until removed by the *greater restoration* spell or similar magic, or until the victim completes a long rest after they are no longer the wiitikowans quarry.

**Regeneration.** The wiitikowan regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn. If the wiitikowan takes fire or radiant damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the wiitikowan's next turn. The wiitikowan dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

**Taste of Terror.** A wiitikowan is aware of the direction and approximate distance of any creature within 1 mile that is frightened. A wiitikowan can see any creature within 60 ft. that is frightened and pinpoint its location even if the creature is obscured.

**Wind Walker.** A wiitikowan may *wind walk* as a bonus action, affecting itself. In addition, a wiitikowan's movement, attacks, and senses are never impeded by wind or by natural or magical weather effects, including *fog cloud* and *sleet storm*.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The bear makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack.* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d10+6) piercing damage and the target is exposed to wendigo fever. On a critical hit, a wiitikowan's bite deals triple damage rather than double.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack.* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6+6) slashing damage.



## Return to Gloym

When the PCs return to Gloym, they find the villagers hiding in their homes for fear of the Bloody Beast. They cheer lustily if PCs bring the scorched body of the beast into the village and call for the elders to honor them. Ganec Trom has returned from Voll with his sons, Barruk and Truni, having visited there to confer with the elders of that village about the Bloody Beast and how to stop its rampage if the PCs were not able to destroy it. By his report, the villagers of Voll were terrified of the goddess' wrath and unwilling to stand in alliance against her will, especially with outsiders. Ganec Trom had returned to the village in frustration, but now his anger has turned to delight at the PCs' triumph. He congratulates them on their victory and plans a great feast for the next night in their honor. However, the celebration is chilled when Lysis the village elder and his wife Tabba are found bloodily murdered in his home, their heads hacked off and hearts cut out and their flesh gnawed and mangled. Bloody human hand prints are everywhere in their home, but no tracks are seen. The villagers, if anything, are even more distraught than before, seeing now that the Bloody Beast was not their only worry.

What he does not reveal, since he does not even remember it, was that he and his hunters encountered the Bloody Beast several days ago on their way to Voll. It attacked them briefly and then moved on, content to sow its crop of misery, and all three now suffer from wendigo fever. He has been struggling with the disease and with pervasive nightmares ever since, but shortly after arriving home he was overcome by a bloodthirsty rage while he slept and awoke in a fevered haze, stealthily making his way to Lysis' nearby lodge and convincing him to let him in, overpowering and murdering him once they were safely inside and then fleeing into the wild for several hours before he came to his senses. Awakening covered in blood, he bathed in the river and was able to sneak back home and returned to his bed. He was awakened again when the PCs returned to Gloym.

PCs investigating Lysis' lodge may discover some clues as to the identity of the killer. There were several arrows found on the floor of the longhouse of a kind typical to the village's hunters, though Lysis himself did not hunt. A DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check indicates that there appear to be two different sets of handprints, as some are a bit larger than the others and appear to have claws at the end of each finger; however, a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check raises some doubt and indicates that perhaps the handprints were actually made by the same hand, either wearing a strange bestial glove or perhaps swollen and transformed in some bestial fashion. If PCs can convince village elders or hunters to place their hands near the bloody handprints (requiring a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion, Deception, or Intimidation) check), they will find a half-dozen men whose hands are close enough to the size of the normal prints and one or two whose hands are close to large enough to be the larger set to be reasonable matches, but all claim they had nothing to do with this horrible atrocity.

Each claims to have been at his home or working at their various crafts earlier that night. Ganec Trom was asleep in his lodge, resting from his trip back from Voll, and witnesses did see him return and report to the other elders and then return home. Lysis returned home later and no one saw Ganec Trom leave his house afterwards. Lysis did not come out of his house all afternoon, but he often spent long hours indoors consulting his sacred powders and bowls, looking for omens. A DC 10 Wisdom (Medicine) check indicates that most of the bite marks on the corpses appear to have been made by human teeth.

If closely examined, a DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) or Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that Ganec Trom appears to be somewhat feverish and ill, and if confronted with this fact he grudgingly admits that his trip to Voll was not only to consult with the elders about the Bloody Beast but also to seek the herbal skills of Old Redavel, their shaman and healer, to deal with a lingering illness he has battled on and off all winter and which he fears may be the wasting palsy that claimed a number of villagers in the late autumn and early winter (such as Priya's daughter). A DC Wisdom (Medicine) 20 Heal check identifies Ganec Trom's illness as wendigo fever, but a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) or Charisma (Intimidation).

## Blood in the Village (3,300 XP)

The following night, Ganec Trom's bloodlust comes upon him again as the wendigo fever continues to do its work. On this occasion, however, his two sons also succumb to the bloodlust of the hunt and begin their own prowl. This encounter may happen in one of several ways. If statistics for villagers are required, treat them as **commoners** though they automatically become frightened for 10 rounds if they witness the transformation of their village folk into hideous monsters.

**Beginning the Encounter:** When the encounter is ready to begin, the dogs in the kennel begin barking madly as they sense something terribly wrong with their usual masters as they begin to reek of animalistic rage and feral hunger.

**Creatures:** 4 *confused* (per the spell) dogs (use **wolf** stats).

**Adjustments:** The encounter may play out in several different ways, depending on the party's actions and preparations.

- If Ganec Trom's wendigo fever is identified and he is convinced of its reality, the strain on his mind causes him to spontaneously undergo a savage transformation (see the *wiitikowan* template for details). Witnessing his transformation, Barruk and Truni are likewise transformed 1 round later. Upon transformation, each pounces upon the nearest available target, whether the PCs or other villagers if they are present. Ganec Trom prefers to use his bow, while his sons fight in melee.
- If PCs can compel the villagers to all shelter together in the village longhouse (a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation)), Ganec and his sons climb up onto the

building's roof and break their way in through the roof. Ganec Trom perches above and rains arrows down on the PCs and screaming villagers alike while his sons break through and leap down into the longhouse to begin killing.

- If villagers sleep in their own homes, you should choose one of the sons to attack first, drawing the PCs' attention. Meanwhile, Ganec Trom can stalk the PCs when they respond the first cry for help, while the other hunter is drawn to the sound of bloodshed.

**Creatures:** The greatest threat at the moment is Ganec Trom himself, who is now far gone into the grip of wendigo fever. In another night or perhaps two, he will devolve completely into a wiitikowan.

## SAVAGE HUNTER (3)

Medium humanoid, neutral

**Armor Class** 14 (studded leather)

**Hit Points** 156 (24d8+48)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +4, Survival +3

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** Common, Halat

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Mobility.** The savage hunter can take the Dash action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

**Reckless.** At the start of its turn, the savage hunter can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls it makes during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

**Trackless.** The savage hunter no longer leaves tracks that can be followed without magic.

**Wendigo Fever.** The savage hunter suffers disadvantage on Wisdom ability checks (except Perception and Survival), and is frightened in the presence of the wiitikowan.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The savage hunter makes two melee weapon attacks or two ranged weapon attacks.

**Battleaxe.** *Melee Weapon Attack.* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d10+2) slashing damage, or 6 (1d8+2) if wielded one-handed.

**Gore.** *Melee Weapon Attack.* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage.

**Longbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack.* +4 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage.

**Handaxe.** *Ranged Weapon Attack.* +4 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) slashing damage.

**Development:** Ganec Trom and his two sons are not completely beyond hope. They fight until knocked unconscious or killed, but at that point their savage transformation fades and their humanity returns (though their memories disappear). Curing the wendigo fever is difficult but not impossible, but as long as it endures they are liable to transform and seek out human flesh to devour even if their ability damage is cured.

It is almost impossible to negotiate with Ganec Trom and his sons during combat. However, if Ganec Trom can be forced to spend a round losing his actions, including being stunned or incapacitated, or if he fails a saving throw against *calm emotions*, he must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or fall prone to crushing despair for 1d4 rounds as some vestige of his conscious mind realizes what is happening and he struggles to regain control. This gives him disadvantage on attack rolls. During this time, a DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check made as an action allows a PC to keep Ganec Trom's natural mind in control. If this check can be made in three successive rounds (the PCs have advantage on every round past the first), his savage transformation abates and he returns to himself, this time with shadowed memories of what he has done and what he is becoming.



If calmed in this fashion, Ganec Trom offers his thanks for the PCs trying to redeem him, and if they believe they can cure his disease he will accompany them, but will insist upon being manacled every night for fear of what he might become. In any event, he abdicates his position as village elder, declaring himself unfit to lead. If his madness cannot be cured, he states that he must be put to death and his body burned lest his tainted flesh carry on the legacy of blood. Barruk or Truni survived, they follow him in whatever fate he chooses.

If PCs suggest giving himself up to Istria, he willingly places himself in the hands of the goddess. While she is unable to undo the effects of the curse she bestowed, she honors their spirit of sacrifice and takes them to her hidden valley atop the mountain to end their misery and inter them with honor.

**Rewards:** Whether Ganec Trom dies or abdicates, his departure along with Lysis the doomsayer leaves the village of Gloym is left without its two most experienced elders and the Ughar in some turmoil. The surviving elders, sorrowful but also thankful to the PCs for ending the scourge of the wiitikowan, pledge their loyalty and allegiance to the PCs and their growing kingdom. Unless “civilization”, in the form of mines, forts, and other heavy industry or military establishments encroach on their lands and way of life, the town of Glorym will be loyal, dependable allies.

The PCs are each sent home with a small cask of ice peppers worth 100 gp, and offer to establish regular trading routes to supply the PCs and their kingdom with ice peppers. In addition, at their departure Bardiu brings a gift from Istria for each PC of a single gemstone of each PC’s favorite color, personally cut by her hand. The gemstone is worth 500 gp, but it also bears the mark of her favor and grants advantage to Charisma checks with creatures of the earth if openly displayed. Bardiu also extends his mistress’ invitation to return for a future visit whenever the PCs wish.

## Epilogue: The Road Home (1,450 XP)

On the road home, PCs may encounter Gram and Garna once again, desolate at having been discharged from the goddess’ service (they had become quite besotted with her while charmed). The surly hags have taken up with a third of their kind, Oobi (and her pet **worg**), who has encouraged them to turn to banditry now that they are free of Istria’s thrall.

The three hags have set up a crude ferry at **Ansit Ford** to lure people into the water during the runoff season, with the plot to have one of their number on each side of the river and a third on the ferry itself, all posing as ordinary ferrymen. At midstream, the sea hag on the barge will then capsize the ferry, dumping passengers into the water, and attack creatures trying to flee, while the two hags on the shore fire crossbows

**Creatures:** 3 sea hags and 1 worg

Sea Hag (3)  
XP 450  
hp 52 (SRD)

Worg  
XP 100  
hp 26 (SRD)

**Development:** Oobi and Ungip are on the near side of the river when PCs approach (O and U on the map), while Gram and Garna are on the far side with the ferry (G on the map). Oobi asks for a gold piece each for each traveler, and she can ferry over only two at a time because of their small ferry and the swift waters. She will allow PCs to bargain her down to half her asking price. When the ferry arrives, PCs can also attempt a DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check to recognize Gram and Garna from meeting them on Orual’s mountain, even though they are currently disguised. If they converse with her, she claims they are trying to turn over a new leaf as honest ferrypeople, but PCs can see through their lies with a DC 11 Wisdom (Insight) check. If PCs call the hags out on their lies, they go mad with rage and attack immediately, cursing the PCs for separating them from their true love. They try to force small or physically weak opponents into the rushing waters. Oobi reluctantly joins the fray, but flees if brought below 10 hit points. Gram and Garna, however, fight to the death.

**Rewards:** Gram and Garna carry no wealth but their gear, having yet to succeed at any banditry since being discharged from Istria’s service. However, Oobi carries a considerable amount of spoils with her, including 2,285 sp, 497 gp, 19 quartz crystals of various sizes and colors (worth 1d10 gp each), 5 bottles of fine wine, a green velvet dress sewn with freshwater pearls and a red silk topcoat embroidered with golden thread (each is slightly damaged and bloodstained, reducing their sale value to 10 gp each; a DC 15 Dexterity check or *mending* spell can repair them to full sale value, 50 gp), and a suit of plate armor.

# Creatures

## ORRUOL

This slender but solid woman has an air of distance and cold aloofness, her eyes glinting like cut gemstones. Her skin is smooth yet has a faint sheen, with jewels bedecking her throat. Her clothing, of a simple and even primitive tribal style, seems to flow into a weave of spun crystal before coalescing into a clinking cascade of faceted stones trailing behind her as she walks and briefly sprouting from the ground where her feet alight before crumbling away.

## ORRUOL

Medium fey, lawful neutral

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 150 (20d8+60)

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft., burrow 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)

**Damage Immunities** cold, poison

**Condition Immunities** petrified, poisoned

**Skills** Perception +6, Stealth +8

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

**Languages** Gnomish, Sylvan, Terran

**Challenge** 10 (5,900 XP)

**Earth Glide.** The orruol can burrow through nonmagical, unworked earth and stone. While doing so, the orruol doesn't disturb the material it moves through.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The orruol's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16). The orruol can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *minor illusion*

3/day: *flesh to stone*, *transport via stone* (like *transport via plants*, but only through natural stone)

1/day: *bestow curse* (as a 9th level spell), *commune with nature*, *earthquake*

**Magic Resistance.** The orruol has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Spellcasting.** The orruol is a 12th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). The orruol has the following druid spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *guidance*, *mending*, *produce flame*, *resistance*, *shillelagh*

1st level (4 slots): *animal friendship*, *create or destroy water*, *cure wounds*, *detect magic*, *faerie fire*, *purify food and drink*, *speak with animals*

2nd level (3 slots): *animal messenger*, *barkskin*, *chill metal* (like *heat metal*, but cold damage), *gust of wind*, *spider climb*

*spike growth*

3rd level (3 slots): *conjure animals*, *daylight*, *lightning bolt*, *meld into stone*, *plant growth*, *sleet storm*

4th level (3 slots): *dominate beast*, *freedom of movement*, *stone shape*, *stoneskin*

5th level (2 slots): *passwall*, *geas*, *screaming*, *wall of stone*

6th level (1 slot): *heroes' feast*, *move earth*

## ACTIONS

**Multiaction.** The orruol makes two slam attacks.

**Slam.** *Melee Weapon Attack.* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) bludgeoning damage.

**Fey Charm.** The orruol targets one humanoid or beast that she can see within 30 feet of her. If the target can see the orruol, it must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or be magically charmed. The charmed creature regards the orruol as a trusted friend to be heeded and protected. Although the target isn't under the orruol's control, it takes the orruol's requests or actions in the most favorable way it can. Each time the orruol or its allies do anything harmful to the target, it can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success. Otherwise, the effect lasts 24 hours or until the orruol dies, is on a different plane of existence from the target, or ends the effect as a bonus action. If a target's saving throw is successful, the target is immune to the orruol's Fey Charm for the next 24 hours. The orruol can have no more than one humanoid and three beasts charmed at a time.

## BONUS ACTIONS

**Petrifying Touch.** When the orruol hits a creature with a slam attack, she uses her *flesh to stone* on the target.

## REACTIONS

**Break Steel.** If the orruol is hit by melee weapon attack, using a weapon with a metal striking surface, the orruol reduces the damage by 1d10+4. If this reduces the damage to 0, and the weapon is non-magical, the weapon shatters and cannot be used again until it is repaired.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The orruol 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 turn. The orruol regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Detect.** The orruol makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

**Shift.** The orruol uses earth glide and moves up to half her burrow speed.

**Stone Shards (Costs 2 actions).** Creatures within 10 ft. take 21 (6d6) magical piercing damage. A successful DC 16 Dexterity saving throw halves this damage.



## AN ORRUOL'S LAIR

An orruol's lair is both fortress and soul for the fey. Forbidding, beautiful, and full of secrets, an orruol's lair poses many dangers.

### LAIR ACTIONS

Fighting an orruol in her lair challenges the full might of her fey soul. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the orruol takes one of the following lair actions:

- The ground shifts unpredictably. A 30 ft. radius area becomes difficult terrain because of soft soil, uneven rocks, and vibrations. The difficult terrain does not affect the orruol or other creatures with earth glide or a similar ability. The terrain remains for 24 hours or until the orruol uses this action again.
- A rain of rocks and pebbles. The orruol designates a 10 ft. radius. Creatures in the area take 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage. A successful DC 16 Dexterity saving throw reduces this damage to half.
- The floor twists and rumbles. All enemies must succeed at a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone, taking 5 (1d6+2) bludgeoning damage.

### REGIONAL EFFECTS

- When she is in the vicinity of natural stone within 1 mile of her lair, she gains information from the stone as though she were using *commune with nature*, but only things within 30 ft. that occurred in the last 24 hours.
- As an action, she can control the effects of high altitude within 1 mile of her lair, making it is as extreme as 20,000 ft. or as endurable at 5000 ft.

All of these effects end immediately if the orruol dies.

An orruol is a powerful fey that embodies the spirit of a great mountain. As befits their high and lofty home, orruols are aloof and cool towards lesser beings, considering themselves mistresses of all they survey. Some primitive tribes worship them as goddesses, venerating them for their power, their beauty, and their seeming immortality. Orruols may or may not acknowledge this worship; some enjoy the attention and may manipulate their "worshippers" to serve them in whatever ways they wish. Others may disdain this adulation, ignoring the cries of the faithful and their pathetic rituals or appearing to collect their offerings with diffidence and mysterious silence before returning to their lonely mountaintop haunts.

Orruols are often friendly with other fey that live on or near their mountains, and many cultivate the services of animals or magical beasts as servants, especially giant eagles, giant owls, griffons, and rocs. While most orruols live above ground in cultivated gardens and wild meadows, some delve into the stony heart of their mountain homes in search of isolated cysts and geodes and veins of crystal, and these orruols often have a pack of 5-10 pech as servants. If orruols choose not to

delve in their own mountain, however, they are typically very displeased with other creatures that do so and may choose to collapse their tunnels or seal them inside the mountain with their magic, or may curse or charm them as punishment. Delving an orruol's mountain does not injure the creature physically, but it may be that for most orruols it causes some kind of sympathetic spiritual discomfort that compels them to halt any disruption to their mountain's natural state. It is not unheard of for orruols to allow miners into their territory, exacting a high tribute and absolute fidelity to whatever rules they impose in exchange for the privilege. Even the tiniest transgression can see the miners exiled or enslaved, and few but the greediest prospectors are willing to take the risk of striking such a bargain.

Orruols enjoy the natural beauty of their mountain homes, but they often amuse themselves devising clever stonework traps that they craft with their magic to capture or kill those that violate their sacred refuges. Orruols are not cruel so much as they are largely without pity, seeing themselves merely as part of the harsh order of nature that embodies life and death, creation and destruction, beauty and ugliness. They are not wild and capricious as many fey can be, preferring to rely on logic and reason, though their tempers can be kindled by those that fail to show proper respect and their wrath can be terrible when aroused.

Orruols are 6 feet tall and weigh 150 pounds.

## STROMKARL

*Always male, stromkarls are human-sized nixies that dwell in and around waterfalls and rushing whitewater. A stromkarl's musical voice mingles with the sound of the waters, often accompanied by a stringed instrument like a harp or fiddle. Their music is enchanting, and some stromkarls are blamed for luring women and children to their doom. Stromkarls can be kindly, and are said to grant gifts to creatures they favor or who can perform a service for them. Some stromkarls may become patrons of heroes, aiding them or even tutoring them into a greater destiny. More whimsically inclined stromkarls sometimes set brave seekers of their aid on embarrassing tasks for their own amusement, while malicious ones may set rather cruel requirements, using their powers as a lure to inveigle lovers into their arms or setting up a tragically ironic fate for those who ask their aid one too many times.*

## STROMKARL

Medium fey, neutral

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 75 (10d8 + 30)

**Speed** 20 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	17 (+3)

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** Aquan, Sylvan

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Innate Spellcasting.** The stromkarl's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13). The stromkarl can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *create food and water* (water only)

1/day each: *control water*

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The stromkarl makes two spear or two longbow attacks.

**Spear.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

**Longbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

**Luring Song:** The stromkarl sings a magical melody. Every humanoid and giant within 300 feet of the stromkarl that can hear the song must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed until the song ends. The stromkarl must take a bonus action on its subsequent turns to continue singing. It can stop singing at any time. The song ends if the stromkarl is incapacitated. While charmed by the stromkarl, a target is incapacitated and ignores the songs of other stromkarls. If the charmed target is more than 5 feet away from the stromkarl, the target must move on its turn toward the stromkarl by the most direct route, trying to get within 5 feet. It doesn't avoid opportunity attacks, but before moving into damaging terrain, such as lava or a pit, and whenever it takes damage from a source other than the stromkarl, the target can repeat the saving throw. A charmed target can also repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns. If the saving throw is successful, the effect ends on it. A target that successfully saves is immune to this stromkarl's song for the next 24 hours.

**Minor Wish.** Once per day, a stromkarl may create any magical effect of a spell level 3<sup>rd</sup> or less, in exchange for a gift or service from a humanoid.

## WIITIKOWAN (LESSER WENDIGO)

### (TEMPLATE)

*The lined and weathered features of this tribal hunter are wracked into a feral rictus, as blood drips from his lips and hands, painting the tips of cruel antlers twisting up from his skull. He draws his bow with practiced skill, ready to rain death upon his targets and commence a bloody feast upon their flesh.*

A wiitikowan is the result when a living creature is spiritually consumed by a raw and hungry spirit of nature. Most common in cold, harsh lands where humanity and its kin sometimes teeter on the edge of relapsing into savagery and even cannibalism in order to survive, a wiitikowan may also arise as a result of a powerful curse. In any case, its appearance is wild yet haggard, its hair, fur, or feathers matted and its

skin scarred and tattered (or, in rare cases, completely falling out and leaving the victim utterly bald), scarcely hiding its bulging muscles within. Its mouth is always bloody as though continually in the midst of a feast of carnage. Its eyes hold a feral supernatural gleam and its feet end in bloody stumps or sometimes bony claws, the flesh melting away into a cold mist.

### BECOMING A WIITIKOWAN

Wiitiwowan is a template that can be applied to a beast, humanoid, or monstrosity.

**Challenge Rating:** If the base creature does not possess class levels, innate spellcasting, or spellcasting, increase the challenge by +2. Do not recalculate the creature's proficiency bonus.

**Type:** The creature becomes a fey.

**Alignment:** The creature becomes chaotic evil.

**Abilities:** Modify the creature's Strength by +2, Dexterity +2, Constitution +2, Intelligence -4 (minimum 1), and Charisma -4 (minimum 1).

**Armor Class:** If the creature has natural armor, increase its value by 1. If the base creature was wearing light armor, it instead gains natural armor with an Armor Class of 10 + the creature's Constitution modifier (minimum 1) + the creature's Dexterity modifier. If the creature wears medium or heavy armor, or armor of an unusual nature (such as a magic item), it retains that armor.

**Hit Dice:** The creature gains two additional Hit Dice added to its hit points.

**Speed:** The creature gains a flight speed of 60 ft. and loses other forms of movement.

**Damage Immunities:** cold.

**Damage Vulnerabilities:** fire.

**Condition Immunities:** charmed, frightened.

**Attacks:** The creature gains, as an action, a bite attack, if it does not already possess one. The base damage is equal to one of its Hit Dice. If the wiitikowan's CR is 3 or higher, it is equal to two Hit Dice; three Hit Dice if equal to 6 or higher; four hit dice if equal to 11 or higher.

If the creature already has a better bite attack, use the better numbers. On a hit, the bite deals piercing damage and exposes the target to wendigo fever (see below). On a critical hit, a wiitikowan's bite deals triple damage rather than double.

**Nightmare Stalker.** As an action, a wiitikowan can designate a creature within 120 ft. as its quarry. It has advantage on Perception (Wisdom) and Survival (Wisdom) checks to detect its quarry. Each night, the wiitikowan can contact its quarry in its dreams. Each night, the victim must succeed at a Wisdom saving throw with a DC of 8 + the wiitikowan's proficiency bonus + its Wisdom modifier. If the victim succeeds three nights in a row, they are no longer treated as a quarry and cannot be contacted again. A *protection from evil and good* spell cast on the target prevents this contact, as does a *magic circle*.

If the target fails the saving throw, they are frightened in the presence of the wiitikowan for 24 hours. A victim who fails the saving throw has dreadful visions unless they are immune to being frightened. If these visions last for at least 1 hour, the target gains no benefit from its rest, and its hit point maximum is reduced by 5 (1d10). If this effect reduces the target's hit point maximum to 0, the target dies, and the victim becomes a wiitikowan. The reduction to the target's hit point maximum lasts until removed by the *greater restoration* spell or similar magic, or until the victim completes a long rest after they are no longer the wiitikowans quarry.

**Regeneration.** The wiitikowan regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn. If the wiitikowan takes fire or radiant damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the wiitikowan's next turn. The wiitikowan dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

**Taste of Terror.** A wiitikowan is aware of the direction and approximate distance of any creature within 1 mile that is frightened. A wiitikowan can see any creature within 60 ft. that is frightened and pinpoint its location even if the creature is obscured.

**Wind Walker.** A wiitikowan may *wind walk* as a bonus action, affecting itself. In addition, a wiitikowan's movement, attacks, and senses are never impeded by wind or by natural or magical weather effects, including *fog cloud* and *sleet storm*.

**Proficiencies:** A wiitokowan adds double its proficiency bonus to Dexterity (Stealth) and Wisdom (Survival) checks.

## WENDIGO FEVER

Each night at sunset, the exposed creature must succeed at a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or suffer the effects of wendigo fever. On a failed saving throw, the creature suffers disadvantage on Wisdom ability checks for 24 hours, and becomes susceptible to a savage transformation. The affected creature must succeed at a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be overcome with an insatiable hunger for the flesh of its own kind, being compelled to stalk and kill the nearest creature of its own race and feast upon its flesh. As soon as the afflicted creature eats the flesh, it gains the following traits:

- **Senses.** Darkvision 60 ft.,
- **Reckless.** At the start of its turn, the creature can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls it makes during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.
- **Trackless.** The creature no longer leaves tracks that can be followed without magic.
- **Attacks.** If the creature normally has a bite attack, it gains the damage and critical hit multiplier of a wiitikowan, if that would improve its attack.

If the creature is a humanoid or similar creature lacking natural weapons, it may gain one or more attacks:

d%	Result
01-25	no additional attack gained
26-50	bite attack gained (damage and critical hit multiplier as a wiitikowan)
51-70	gore attack gained (the base damage is equal to one of the creature's Hit Dice)
71-95	claw attack gained (the base damage is equal to one of the creature's Hit Dice)
96	bite and gore
97	bite and claw
98	claw and gore
99-100	bite, claw, and gore

If the creature has the ability to make multiple attacks with the attack action, it may substitute bite, claw, and gore attacks for other melee attacks.

This transformation last for 1d4 hours, after which the afflicted creature returns to normal with no memory of events that transpired while affected by this effect.



# Can You Mend A Frozen Heart?



A mother's love is stronger than death, but love and death walk hand in hand when mortals cross paths with the immortal fey. Something has stirred up a fell and bloodthirsty power in the depths of the forlorn forest, and a bitter wind and mournful howls echoing from a lonely mountain bring a chilling dread to the wilds beyond the borderlands. A goddess is angry, and her wrath heralds doom in the unforgiving lands of a savage frontier. Can the heroes find a way to make peace with the warlike clans of the lonely hills and quell the frightening powers of nature that threaten to rise up and devour scattered clan and nascent frontier kingdoms alike? With triumph and tragedy in the balance, do they dare ascend *Cold Mountain*?

*Cold Mountain* is a 5th Edition adventure for 4th-level characters that takes the heroes past the reach of civilization, coming face to face with strange and primitive folkways and faerie powers. This adventure brings an evocative atmosphere of Dark Ages-style barbarism and mysticism into a traditional fantasy campaign, delivering challenges to overcome with words and deeds as well as on the field of battle. Your players will need cunning, guile, and a silver tongue to succeed where their magic and their sword arms may not prevail. Grab this 34-page 5E adventure today and **Make Your Game Legendary!**



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