THE HUNTER IN THE TIENPEST

CHRISTOPHER HARDING

A chilling adventure for a Tier 2 party, that will leave you frozen with fear and longing for home.

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Beware, the frost bites...

CREDITS

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RPG WRITER WORK SHOP



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INTRODUCTION

Hunter in The Tempest is a short adventure for a party 4 - 5 characters of 7th to 9th level. It is optimized for a party of 4 7th level adventurers. As a standalone, this adventure can be completed in 4 to 8hours. Additionally, this would fit in well with any Icewind Dale adventures, or snow/tundra-based ones, as despite being in Icewind dale, the geography makes no mention of preestablished places. The adventure has a loose narrative, with key locations and encounters, but is aimed more at traversal and survival than it is combat. As such, each are will have descriptions of the environment, key locations, or markings to pick up on, and a key encounter that the chapter focuses on. The aim for this adventure is to be an open sandbox environment to allow the DM to gain some experience with weather effects and running a survival horror adventure. Opportunities for interaction with NPC's is extremely limited once the party leaves Barrowhearth

WHAT THE GM GETS

- 5 new NPC's and a redeemable villain
- Environmental effects for snowy mountain terrain
- Weather that impacts travel conditions
- 1 new curse
- 5 Unique creatures such as the Snowdrop Angler and the Boreal Displacer Beast (found in the Appendix at the back)

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The desolate tundra of Icewind Dale, settled only by the hardiest folk in small pockets in the region, is a land fraught with perils. From the near everlasting dusk, and the predatory wildlife to the extreme weather and distinct lack of resources living here is nigh on impossible. From the middle of the mountain right to its peak an immense snowstorm rages on making passage or pilgrimage extremely difficult. As of late a strange illness has befallen the crops and cattle that already struggle to survive and thrive in the harsh climate. As if this was not enough of a challenge, a terrifyingly deadly monster roams the mountainside leaving only two things behind, devilish footprints, and blood. These two phenomena seem to be unrelated to the blizzard that has been raging for decades, though the blizzard seems to be growing and is consuming most of the mountain.

While the party is in town, they are asked to investigate these strange disturbances – they look like the type of hardy bunch that could help them. While the village can handle most problems, these are far beyond their capabilities. From corrupted magic, the perils of the storm, and a miasma that's sweeping the land, the adventuring troupe have their work cut out for them.

The party will face boreal displacer beasts, snowdrop anglers, wendigos, and all manner of deadly creature perfectly adapted to survive in the harsh land. At the top of the mountain is the root cause for this mayhem – Dròttinn, a corrupted mage-turned-nothic, who removed his own soul and gave it form, so that his body would not be affected by the wendigo curse.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

- The commune of Barrowhearth is on the way to their current destination. The party is approached by a man sobbing over the fate of his livestock. A great curse has been placed on them and they may not survive the winter.
- Barrowhearth sits at the bottom of a mountain, a mountain that is steeped in ancient magics and once a meeting place for mystics. The residual magics have called the party here from afar, ripping them from their beds while they sleep and planting them into the town.
- A great treasure lies at the apex of the mountain, or so the legends say. Once a wizard's tower, now a crumbling ruin unseen from the foot of the mountain. An intense storm and, clusters of blizzards shroud it from view, its secrets never to be known by those without the strength to ascend the mountain.
- The party received a letter to rendezvous with Haskill, a local guide to the region at a village called Barrowhearth. An evil creature roams the wilds, preying on the farm animals and anyone who dare leave the safety of the village for too long. The party have been scouted as brave adventurers (and the only ones to have responded to the call to arms).

KEY LOCATIONS

BARROWHEARTH

The commune of Barrowhearth sits at the foot of the mountain, surrounded by woodland and snowy ground for most of the year. There are three roads that intersect with Barrowhearth, although the mountain road peters off into a trail within an hour of leaving in that direction. With a low population of a couple hundred, resources are usually easy to manage under normal circumstances.

THE UMBRAL SNOWFIELDS

Surrounding Barrowhearth and comprising of the bottom half of the mountain, The Umbral Snowfields are home to some of the rarest and well adapted creatures in the region. The harsh climate, rough terrain, and mystical energies that permeate throughout have made it easy for certain predators to rise. From the frost lynx to the snowdrop ambusher, a variety of fascinating and deadly creatures call this chilling biome home.

GLACIAL RISE

Edging up the mountainside the vegetation begins to lessen, leaving naught but snow, ice, and jagged rocks. Cover from the raging blizzard is scarce, with only boulders and shallow caves spread far and few between. The perilous trek up the mountain is made even more dangerous, as apex predators hide lying in ambush, waiting for the unsuspecting deer to stray from the pack.

GROTTO OF WILTED HOPE

Once a respite from the harsh weathers for travelers and animals caught in a storm, the grotto holds a false promise. A false promise of safety. The cave extends a few hundred feet into the mountain before it opens into a 50 ft. by 50 ft. room strewn with rags, adventuring equipment, and piles of bones. The scent of decay fills the air, rotten meat, and blood coagulating into rancid mounds of offal.

APHELION CREST

The highest point of the mountain, Aphelion Crest is shrouded in mystery and is the origin of the blustery storm that encircles it. The eye of the storm, so calm and quiet, yet the aura of untold misery and desperation seeps into the land. Nearly barren of life, the dangers here are the razor-sharp rocks, avalanches, and high winds strong enough to knock one off their feet. The horror that haunts the peak, and indeed the crumbling tower, is one of great tragedy, isolation, and last resorts. Here the storm is quietest, but the silence betrays its true self, the stillness allows for the wails and groans to carry from the tower.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

To add additional challenge to the adventure without simply throwing more enemies at the party use these environmental and weather conditions to alter the way the players can approach situations and navigate the perils of the mountainside.

WEATHER EFFECTS

D8	Weather
1	Blizzard
2	Thunderstorm
3	Heavy Rain
4	Snow
5	Avalanche
6	Heavy Clouds
7	Freezing Cold
8	High Winds

HEAVY CLOUDS

The sky is obscured by dark clouds. High flying aerial creatures have total cover, and outdoor light does not count as sunlight (for the purposes of sunlight sensitivity and similar traits). Checks using Navigation Tools to determine your location based on the position of stars are made with disadvantage.

AVALANCHE

An avalanche consists of two distinct areas: the bury zone (direct path of the falling debris) and the slide zone (the area the debris encompasses). Characters in the bury zone will take damage from the avalanche; characters in the slide zone may be able to evade the debris. Characters in the bury zone take 5d6 points of physical damage, or half that amount if they make a DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) save. On a fail they become buried (see below). Characters in the slide zone take 2d6 points of damage, or no damage if they make a DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) save. Those who fail their saves are buried.

Buried characters take 1d4 points of damage per minute. If a buried character falls unconscious, they must make a **DC 15 Constitution** check or take 1d6 points of damage each minute until freed or dead.

HEAVY RAIN

Heavy rain pelts the region. If you attempt to take a long rest without cover, you must make **a DC 16 Constitution** saving throw to gain the benefits for a long rest. If Heavy Rain occurs two days in arow wagon travel becomes impossible in a wagon or on a mount until one day without rain occurs. May cause flooding.

FREEZING COLD

If you attempt to take a long rest without cover and a source of heat, you must make a **DC 15 Constitution** saving throw to gain the benefits for a long rest. If you fail by 5 or more, you gain an additional level of Exhaustion.

SNOW

Unpleasant to travel in. All travel speed is halved. If snow occurs for two days in row, all terrain is difficult terrain and wagon travel is impossible until one day without snow passes. Also has the effect of Heavy Clouds and Freezing Cold.

HIGH WINDS

Turbulent gusts sweep across the land. Select a wind direction based on locale or roll a d4 and consult the table. Flying creatures gain +10 movement speed when moving with the wind, and -10 movement speed when moving against it. All ranged weapon attacks have a -2 to attack rolls, and their range is reduced by half when shooting into the wind.

D4	Direction
1	North
2	East
3	South
4	West

THUNDERSTORM

Lightning flashes and thunder crashes. All creatures are partially obscured if they are more than 20 feet from you. If you travel for 4 or more hours during a Thunderstorm, roll a d20. On a 1, you are struck by a lightning bolt dealing 3d12 lightning damage. Also has the effect of Rain, High Winds, Heavy Clouds.

BLIZZARD

At the end of every hour spend in a Blizzard, make a **DC 12 Constitution** saving. On failure, you take 3d4 cold damage and gain one level of exhaustion. You make this check with advantage if you have proper gear. All creatures are heavily obscured if they are more than 20 feet from you. All terrain is difficult terrain. Also has the effect of Snow, High Winds, and Freezing Cold.

UNIQUE PHENOMENA

In the mountains, strange magics both natural and not are at work here. The spirits of travelers of years gone by reside in this frigid land. The magics permeate into the sky and ground, causing strange phenomena to appear seemingly out of nowhere.

D4	Unique Phenomena
1	Wild Magic Storm

2	Malevolent Storm
3	Photoboreal Distortions
4	Solar Flare

SOLAR FLARE

For 3 hours during the day, it becomes extremely bright, lighting up the region leaving no shadows. The light seems to envelop everything. Exposure to this light can cause headaches and small blisters to form after more than an hour in direct contact. If blisters form, the character takes 1d6 fire damage from the burns, and a subsequent 1d4 physical damage when they burst.

PHOTOBOREAL DISTORTIONS

Strange swirling lights fill the sky, swirls of green, blue, pink, and purple. Night becomes dim with a strangely hued light until the effect ends.

MALEVOLENT STORM

Has the effects of a Thunderstorm, but the lightning seems to seek creatures out. While outside during this storm, roll a d20 every 1 hour you outside without shelter. On a 2-5, you are struck by a lightning bolt dealing 3d12 lightning damage. On a 1, you are attacked by an air elemental.

WILD MAGIC STORM

Fluctuations in the weave drive strange flashing lights and odd phenomena sweeping across the world. Rain falls upwards, plants bloom unseasonable, and people see apparitions of the dead and gone. High chance of encounters with sentient plants, ghosts, and strange illusions. All spells cast are naturally cast at 1 level higher, but trigger a Wild Surge as per a Wild Magic Sorcerer class feature until the storm subsides (or a table of similar effects including, spirits, ghosts, apparitions, illusions, and magical mysteries).

MOUNTAIN ENCOUNTER TABLES

Throughout the adventure there will be opportunities to swap combat encounters in and out, or to add additional ones in to alter the difficulty. CR5 tables are aimed around a party of 4 at 5th level, and the amount of challenge the party would have with the encounters. As this is the case, bear in mind the capabilities of your party and choose a table that is fitting for your group.

CR5 - EASY

D6	Encounter
1	8 Ghouls
2	2 White Dragon Wyrmlings
3	1 Hill Giant
4	1 Earth Elemental
5	2 Griffons
6	3 Giant Eagles and 7 Eagles

CR5 – Medium

D6	Encounter
1	1 Young White Dragon
2	1 Young Silver Dragon
3	2 Yeti

4	1 Cyclops	
5	4 Apes and 4 Worgs	
6	1 Wight and 1 Banshee	

CR5 – HARD

D6	Encounter
1	14 Giant Goats
2	1 Frost Giant
3	4 Griffons
4	4 Peryton
5	8 Giant Eagles
6	4 Silver Dragon Wyrmlings

CR6 – EASY



60	The Ma
D6	Encounter
1	1 Air Elemental
2	1 Cyclops
3	5 Hippogriffs
4	2 Displacer Beasts
5	1 Troll
6	2 Phase Spiders

CR6 – MEDIUM

D6	Encounter	
1	1 Wyvern	
2	17 Giant Wolf Spiders	
3	2 Ettins	
4	11 Giant Goats	
5	1 Troll and 1 Goblin	
6	10 Skeletons	

CR6 – HARD

D6	Encounter
1	6 Griffons
2	2 Bulette
3	3 Basilisk

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4	3 Displacer Beasts
5	2 Trolls
6	1 Wendigo



CR7 – EASY

D6	Encounter	
1	2 Displacer Beasts	
2	3 Phase Spiders	
3	1 Young Silver Dragon	
4	1 Werebear	
5	2 Werewolves	
6	3 Silver Dragon Wyrmlings	

CR7 – MEDIUM

D6	Encounter
1	1 Boreal Displacer Beast
2	2 Werewolves, 1 Dire Wolf, and 3 Wolves
3	1 Wendigo
4	12 Wolves
5	8 Giant Eagles
6	5 White Dragon Wyrmlings

CR7 – HARD

D6	Encounter
1	4 Wereboars

2	1 Frost Giant	
3	1 Abominable Yeti	
4	4 Yetis	
5	11 Ghouls	
6	4 Wights	

CR8 – EASY

D6	Encounter
1	1 Wendigo
2	1 Young White Dragon
3	6 Skeletons, and 4 Ghouls
4	4 Peryton
5	8 Hippogriffs
6	1 Chimera

CR8 – MEDIUM

D6	Encounter	
1	3 Phase Spiders	
2	1 Frost Giant	
3	2 Girallon	
4	6 Peryton	
5	4 Wights	
6	1 Young Silver Dragon	

CR9 – HARD

		-
D6	Encounter	
1	1 Girallon	
2	1 Adult White Dragon	
3	9 Griffons	
4	1 Adult Silver Dragon	
5	1 Roc	
6	4 Ghosts	

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW Chapter 1 - Misfortune on the Mountainside

The party arrives at Barrowhearth following the previous events (use the plot hook as reasoning). They are approached by Vanja who is back from a wander in the forest and asks the party of their business. After this, they are taken to see Ganna and told of the blight on their limited crops, the ever-growing storm, and the predator that lurks outside their commune. She mentions that at the top of the mountain a wizard used to live there and there must be some book or incantation to rid them of this storm, or at the very least something to slow the spread of the blight. Many have tried to reach the mountain but never returned. If the party can complete this task, they will forever have a home here (once it is built) and 500gp of collected artefacts usually saved for merchants that pass through. They travel through the Umbral Snowfields in search for clues and direction but find very little aside from some strange footprints.

CHAPTER 2 - THE DEVIL'S PASS

After travelling for some time in the umbral Snowfields, they can now begin their ascent further up the mountain and out of the forested areas towards Glacial Rise. The trees begin to reduce in number the higher altitude you go, the snow becoming less and less until it just patches remain. Shards and slabs of ice coat the land, the jagged and sharp rocks make for difficult terrain to overcome. Out in the open the wind chill hits even harder than before, the only respite from the blizzard are the odd boulders here and there and a small cave in the side of the mountain. If the party has been paying attention, they would have noticed freshly savaged and frozen corpses peeking out of the snow, and footprints larger than any man being left in the snow. The cave they find, while a respite from the wilds, appears to be home to some predator. Bones and rags are thrown about the room haphazardly. Let's hope that whatever takes residence here doesn't come back for a while.

CHAPTER 3 - DEATH ON THE WIND

With the devil's footprint defeated or evaded, the party can leave the grotto of wilted hope and continue up the mountain provided the weather is safe enough to travel in. Further up the mountain they start to see rubble and old stone slabs and remnants of what a group of buildings was once. The more they follow the trail the clearer to storm is, the blizzard easing off as they near its center. Sat just below the summit of Aphelion Peaks is a crooked spire reaching into the heavens, assumedly this is the wizard's tower the party was informed of back in town. Inside the crumbling tower are destroyed books, bones, and frightful aura. Dròttinn, a bastardization of a wendigo and a nothic resides here, a once great wizard before a tragedy befell him.

The blizzard has kept him trapped in the tower for decades, his flesh and soul becoming warped by various means. He can still be reasoned with and helped, provided his wendigo soul projection does not return, or the nothic side of him switches on. There are many resolutions to this encounter as shown at the end of Death on the Wind. Once the blizzard has been lifted, Dròttinn unleashes a great cry of relief, piercing and horrendous to listen to. The earth begins to rumble – the scream triggered an avalanche! The party must make it down the mountain or seek refuge until it subsides. This old tower won't survive the snow and rockfalls.

Chapter 1 -Misfortune on the Mountainside

This chapter involves meeting some of the townsfolk, getting acquainted with the town, and learning about the mysteries and threats that are posed to Barrowhearth. The party will meet the seer Ganna, and then prepare and embark on the ascent up the mountain. The terrain is difficult to navigate in some spots, and the weather can be a great hindrance to any progress.

Roll on the Weather Effects table once every 6 hours to determine the weather conditions at the current time. While travelling through the Umbral Snowfields, roll 1-3 encounters from the mountainside encounters table at the level of the party, or for more challenge increase the difficulty or CR of the encounter. Alternatively, multiple smaller encounters combined into one would work quite well.

A STORM ROLLS IN

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The party arrives at Barrowhearth, a small rural village at the base of the mountain. Its commune surrounded by tall, pointed stakes to form a wall, protecting them from the harsh elements. Strong wooden cabins made from dark red logs are packed tightly and vary in shape and size to suit their function. Multiple houses, a smithy, and other such common amenities can be found here, though the selection of wares is limited. The buildings are arranged in concentric circles, huddling together to negate the wind chill and keep the small area warm. The vast pine forest stretching for miles in all directions, a blanket of snow coating the scenery up to 2 feet deep in places. Upon their approach they noticed that day started to turn to dusk, and then night, despite arriving in the middle of the day. Straight away they figured something was not quite right. If the party asks about this, whichever NPC they spoke to makes mention that at this time of year they get maybe 2 hours of dawn-like light, but the

region is plummeted into darkness for 3 months at a time.

Not long after arriving they are approached by Vanja, a tall, wide set human with long brown dreadlocks reaching halfway down her back. She greets the party, asking if they are one of the people that received a letter. She directs them to Ganna, the mayor and seeress of Barrowhearth. The town hall is larger and longer than the other buildings, chandeliers hang from the ceiling and animal furs adorn the walls like trophies, or possible just to some extra much needed insulation. Ganna sits at the far end of the hall in a trance like meditation. When the party approaches the prayer mat, she speaks one of their names, and after confirmation she opens her eyes and smiles widely:

"Ah just as the fates told me. It seems we are in luck after all."

She continues to tell them of the blight on their crops, the ever-growing storm, and the predator that lurks outside their commune. She mentions that at the top of the mountain a wizard used to live there who experimented with natural magics and caused the blizzard. They believe there must be some book or incantation to rid them of this storm, or at the very least something to slow the spread of the blight. Many have tried to reach the mountain but never returned. If the party can complete this task, they will **forever have a home here (once it is built) and 500gp of collected artefacts** usually saved for merchants that pass through.

The party is given some rough directions to navigate through the snowfields around them, but many do not go further due to the dangers. From there they will be on their own in the frigid wilderness. Ganna reminds them that the weather is a greater danger than anything out there, and so the part should prepare for that with extra layers and insulation. The edge of the Umbral Snowfields will be easy to determine – the tree line thins out considerably and the snow lessens in place of ice.

INTO THE WILDS

The crew adventure on, leaving the comfort of Barrowhearth and heading up into the snow-covered woods, the crisp mountain air keeping them awake and alert. From Barrowhearth to the edge of the Umbral Snowfields will take approximately a day and a half in good weather. If it weren't for the potential dangers they could face, the forest would be beautiful and serene, but these brave adventurers surely know better than that. Birds chirp and sing in the trees, rabbits hop around on the snowy ground, while deer gallop off into the distance away from the commotion. The party was advised to stick to the more open part of the forest as it makes it harder for predators and monsters to sneak up on them.

The journey from Barrowhearth to the farthest outskirts of the Umbral Snowfields takes close to a full day's travel in good conditions. They will have to rest at some point during the day and find some kind of shelter from the elements. During their travels the party come across blood spatters on the snow, glistening pools as black as the abyss in the moonlight as they start to coagulate in the frozen air. Prints have been left atop the snow, deep set and undisturbed, approximately the same shape as a human but elongated and twice the size, though this isn't the strange part. The footsteps appear in the middle of the snow. No tracks leading from or going to anywhere, the trees seem undisturbed. It's almost as if a few sets of footprints just materialized and then disappeared without a single trace. The only slight explanation of this could be a flying creature but prints this crisp and no struggle makes it seem unlikely.

As progress is made through the snowfields the players come across a patch of flowers that seem to have freshly bloomed. Bright blue and red petals stand out from the start white ground, spreading out 15 feet from a central collection of snowdrops. If a creature is within 15 feet of the snowdrop, they must make a **DC 15 Wisdom** saving throw or else they are charmed and begin to make their wait over to investigate the snowdrop. When a character is within 5 feet of the snowdrop the snow begins to shimmer and shake, the ground rumbling as it moves. 3 giant yellow eyestalks unfurl from the ground as a giant gaping maw opens up to ingest the character whole. All characters within 5 feet of the snowdrop must make a **DC 14 Dexterity (Acrobatics)** saving throw to dodge the surprise attack from the creature.

Once the encounter has been resolved or avoided, the party can continue their way up the steep mountain. After a few more hours of travel the party comes to the edge of the snowfields – the snow lessens, and ice appears more often underfoot. The mountains grow barren as trees struggle to put roots down in the dense rock base. It appears that the party are approaching Glacial Rise, as told to them by Vanja. In this local, because of the lack of cover from the elements and the difficult footing, creatures have 5 feet less movement speed from now until they return to the snowfields and below.

Chapter 2 - The Devil's Pass

Now into Glacial Rise proper, the stark contrast between the glistening white snowfields below, brimming with life, and the near barren, ice covered rock faces is apparent. From the Umbral Snowfields to the Grotto of Wilted Hope in Glacial Rise, the journey will take approximately a day in good weather From the Grotto of Wilted Hope to the edge of Glacial Rise. The party will face a boreal displacer beast, and if they are unlucky enough, the devil's footprint itself. This segment contains a strong encounter with the devil's footprint, a powerful Wendigo variant, so bear that in mind when adding more challenges.

Roll on the Weather Effects table once every 4 hours to determine the weather conditions at the current time. While travelling through the Glacial Rise roll 1-2 encounters from the mountainside encounters table at the level of the party, or for more challenge increase the difficulty or CR of the encounter. Alternatively, multiple smaller encounters combined in one would suffice.

LUCENT LIGHTS

A strange darkness covers this part of the mountain, completely unlike the dark beforehand. Something about the way shadows are cast make everything seem slightly washed out and drained of vibrancy. Even the scarce plant life added a splash of color, but here that is not the case. Something magical must be causing this weird effect on the land, or is it just a trick of the light? As the party presses on the feeling of unease grows – as if something is watching them from afar as a wolf would with a doe. After travelling for a few hours, the harshness of the wilderness causes the party to stop and take a break. The darkness not only makes it uncomfortable to constantly travel in and begins to give the party eye strain from trying to focus on the path ahead in the near impenetrable night.

While they take a rest, the party rolls a DC15 Wisdom (Perception) check to see if they notice the movement of a large creature around the campsite. Those that succeed can just about make out some shifting of the snow and rocks, though with the current conditions it's hard to tell - that is until a pulsing blue light appears, and then another, and then a red one, and then a purple one... Dazzling light flickers within view, dancing around and attracting the gaze of the party, almost entrancing them. If the party listens closely, they can hear the crunching of ice and snow behind them. On a successful DC15 Wisdom (Perception) check, the party can hear the creature and can now see this grey and white jagged patterned creature slinking its way towards them, its tentacles flailing as it begins to snarl. Not one, but two boreal displacer beasts have been pursuing the party for who knows how long, waiting for them to drop their guard. The duo is ready and primed to strike at the party from behind the veil of snow.

THE BEAST THAT LIES IN WAIT

After the boreal displacer beast is dispatched the party continues their evermore dangerous ascent to Aphelion Peaks, a destination that from here still seems so far away. The weather seems to stay moderately stable, however the ground is becoming increasingly slick and slippery with ice, in addition the sharp angle of ascent and uneven rocks that "pave" the way. More and more the trees and flora disappear, with no mention of any signs of life from the bustling snowfields below. This part of the mountain is both deadly and barren, a dangerous combination if one were to get caught in a storm. At this point in the journey after fighting the boreal displacer beast and travelling for a few hours, it is probably about time to start searching for a place to rest away from the elements. An hour or two further up the mountain, on a DC12 Wisdom (Perception) check, the characters who pass this can just about see a change in terrain, a recess in the mountain. On a DC16 Wisdom (Perception) check, the characters notice more of these strange footprints resting on the snow with speckles of blood spattered around them. Whatever is making these marks, the party seems to be following in its steps, for better or for worse.



The party makes their way to the cave, the Grotto of Wilted Hope that stretches only a 10-minute walk into the mountain. Across the walls of the cave is dirt, grime, and scratch marks both large and small. At the back it opens into a rounded chamber, though this is a natural formation. Yet more scratches and dirt cover every surface, but that is the least of their worries. Blood, half devoured remains of both humanoid and monster, and decaying corpses litter the floor, some fresh and some frozen from the chilling frost that has crept in. Whatever makes this place their den is surely a fearsome foe. Staying in here is a risk, as the creature could return at any point during their stay. As such, for each hour the party remains in the Grotto of Wilted Hope, roll 1d20. On an 11 or below, the devil's footprint does not return. Each roll made after the first, and +1 to the final roll. If the devil's footprint appears, the party rolls a DC12 Intelligence (Arcana) check, to see if they can sense any strange magics, or shifts in the air. Those that do can feel the presence of something coming closer towards them, but unsure of what direction. The devil's footprint can travel through the cave walls, materializing seemingly out of nowhere.

CHAPTER 3 - DEATH ON THE WIND

The party approaches the blizzard and passes through into the eye of the storm to find a spiraling tower, presumably that of the wizard they were told about. As they get closer to the tower, they get a bad feeling, a sinking sort of feeling. A sickness hangs over this place, and whatever lurks inside must surely be driven mad by the isolation. The tower looks like it has been ransacked, with books thrown about, tattered rags scattered on the floor, and even bones are found. Hanging on the ceiling is a strange one-eyed creature, observing the party in the shadows. This creature is the physical form of Dròttinn, now some malnourished nothic. He drops down from his perch, somehow his faculties still about him, but not altogether there. From here the party can fight him, talk to him, or take what they need and leave. If the party defeated the devil's footprint less than 2 days ago, Dròttinn is much more accepting and persuadable. If not, then the ethereal wendigo phases through the walls and begins to attack the party. At the end of the encounter, the magic keeping the blizzard up and the tower stable is waning. They have 1 day to make it to the bottom of the mountain before an avalanche happens, upon which time they will have 1 hour to escape or be engulfed in the snow.

THE TWINNED FACES OF EVIL

Roll on the Weather Effects table once to determine the weather conditions at the current time. While travelling through across Aphelion Peaks, roll 1 encounter from the mountainside encounters table at the level of the party, or for more challenge increase the difficulty or CR of the encounter.

It takes approximately 6 hours of travel from the top of Glacial Rise, to Dròttinn's tower in Aphelion Peaks. The snowfields lie far below them as the party navigates closer to the blizzard, the hail and intense gales nearly knocking them off their feet. Creatures in the blizzard must succeed **a DC 13 Strength** saving throw to keep their footing in the high winds here. From the top of glacial rise the party has an amazing view of the vistas around them despite it being a constant dusk-like state – they can see towns at the base of the mountain, the tops of other peaks around, and ever so faintly a sliver of sea at the edge of the horizon. All views aside they should not dally too long in the weather. A quick change in wind direction could sweep them off their feet and send them plummeting down the mountain.

They push ever on and past the raging storm and into the eye. Here the light has returned to what it normally would be at this time of year, and the wind is more or less gone. It is eerily calm and quiet, yet the atmosphere here is almost deafening, the tension palpable. Just ahead in the midst of some ruins, right at the center of the blizzard stands a tower, semi-destroyed and leaning, the base buckling under its own weight and its great singular spire reaches to the heavens, almost to the peak of the mountain itself. The size of the blizzard is so immense and vast that the eye must have at least a 200ft. radius, the tower in comparison seems to be approximately 80ft. in radius. When the party begins to approach, they can sense a strange disturbance in the air, something isn't quite right, and they can't put their finger on it. The tower should be abandoned after this long, especially up at the summit of the mountains. Nothing could survive on the Aphelion Peaks for more than a week without having to resupply or forage for food.

The door to the tower is broken open from the inside out – something must have tried to escape. It's black as the abyss inside the crumbling, ice covered tower, but as the party climbs up the stairs they can see a slight green glow, and the "scent of magic", like electricity crackling in the air. Someone or something is clearly home. The party must make a **DC14 Wisdom (Perception)** check to see if they notice anything strange or indicators of life. If they succeed, those characters pick up on scratches and markings on the walls and ceiling, accompanied by frostbitten footprints of some 3-toed being. It takes about 5 minutes to fully climb to the top of this tower, the winding staircase is steeper than usual and coated with ice. Each party member must make a **DC13 Strength** (Athletics) saving throw to keep their footing steady during the ascent.



If they fail,

their overall movement speed is halved during the climb as they must put more effort into staying balanced. At the top of the tower is a large and open circular room, the edges lined with arcane and alchemical devices and tables, books and scrolls are strewn about the floor. On a successful **DC14 Wisdom (Perception)** check, the character notices a silhouette clinging to the rafters of the tower, even in the darkness it is just visible. As soon as the creature is noticed, a large yellow-green eye opens, piercing the darkness with its glowing glare. Suddenly a voice enters the minds of the party: "Who are ye to venture to my tower, come to steal my secrets?".

The creature reveals itself to be a nothic, but not a fully-fledged one, like the transformation has begun but the creatures mind is still its own. They are capable of conversation and rational thought, but this is clouded by bouts of rage and confusion. The creature was once a wondrous local wizard called Dròttinn, but after a series of tragedies befell him over a century ago, he had to turn to older and stranger magics to save themselves. Depending on the outcome of conversations or combat, the party can have multiple resolutions. Dròttinn's soul (the devils footprints) can return if it has been more than 2 days since it was slain or returns if it has not been defeated. Dròttinn has an alchemy book that can come in useful for removing the blight from the crops. However, his wendigo spirit can still roam, and while it does, he cannot focus on reversing his condition, if that is even possible. The blizzard is intrinsically linked to him and his soul, either he loses his soul entirely, leaving him a vague consciousness in a body that is not his own, or his body and the phylactery are destroyed and that will cause the intense storms to subside. The immense output of magic that this will cause will trigger an avalanche to happen. If this is the case, the party will have to either find a suitable shelter or outrun the avalanche.

THE DESCENT

Roll on the Weather Effects table, and the Unique Phenomena table to determine the weather conditions at the current time. Roll 1 encounter from the mountain encounters table. The party leaves the tower with the cure for the blight and new knowledge on how the situation can be handled. This information is invaluable for the townspeople and will likely allow them to resolve the effects of the storm and assist Dròttinn (if he remains alive). But for now, leaving the mountainside and descending back to Barrowhearth is the main priority for them. Without the alchemy book the town is surely doomed, least of all because of the blight, but if this nigh on unending storm does not give in, nothing will grow again. The entire ecology of the region is at stake, not to mention the spirit of Dròttinn that could still be wandering, preying on those brave enough to venture up the mountain in search of food. If an avalanche has been triggered, the party has 15 minutes to make their way to either the cave where they discovered the rags and bones, or to work their way around the mountain and avoid the avalanche entirely. If they end up being caught in the avalanche, follow the rules set in the avalanche section of weather effects.

Provided they survive the snowy landslide, roll once more on an encounter table to round off the threats as they arrive back at the Umbral Snowfields, their quest nearing its end. Even from here the air feels more natural, and the chaos of the blizzard, while not entirely dissipated, is noticeably less harsh.

CONCLUSION

Once the party makes it back to Barrowhearth from their extremely intense travels and encounters they are greeted by Vanja almost as soon as they arrive. Vanja explains that she was keeping watch on the mountain as since they left there have been no more attacks one the livestock or the other hunters. She was especially concerned when she felt the earth rumble and saw a torrent of snow cascading down the mountainside, so much so that she spoke to Ganna about possibly evacuating! Vanja escorts the party to Ganna, chatting as they make their way over. Ganna, still meditating, stands up and approaches the party and thanks them for their services. Their seer abilities allowed them to sense a change in power in the region, the magical essence that was raging at the summit suddenly waned. As promised, the party is given 500gp of artifacts and precious stones, as well as a writ of ownership entitling them to a property in town. However, as it is the winter months, construction hasn't been started, but if the group comes back in 6 months, the house will be built. If they currently have someone in a city that can relay a message to them, Ganna can send a courier to notify them.

And with that, the cozy town of Barrowhearth can make headway on eradicating this blight and rebuilding. What is to come of Dròttinn none can say, but for now Barrowhearth is at peace once again in this isolated, and cold place.

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APPENDIX A: Monsters

BOREAL DISPLACER BEAST

BOREAL DISPLACER BEAST Large monstrosity, lawful evil

Large monstrosity, lawratevit

	ss 14 natura 105 (10d10 t.	•			
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	16 (+3)	16(+3)	6 (-2)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages --

Challenge 5 (1100 XP)

Avoidance. If the displacer beast is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a saving throw to take only half damage, it instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails .

Displacement. The displacer beast projects a magical illusion that makes it appear to be standing near its actual location, causing attack rolls against it to have disadvantage. If it is hit by an attack, this trait is disrupted until the end of its next turn. This trait is also disrupted while the displacer beast is incapacitated or has a speed of 0.

Pack Tactics. The boreal displacer beast has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the boreal displacer beast's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

False Appearance. While the boreal displacer beast remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from snow laden rocks.

Surprise Attack: If the boreal displacer beast surprises a creature and it hits it with an attack during the first round of combat, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) damage of the same damage type as the attack.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The boreal displacer beast makes two attacks with its tentacles.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit*: 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.

Tentacle. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage plus 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

DEVIL'S FOOTPRINT

DEVIL'S FOOTPRINT

Large elemental, neutral evil

Armor Class 14 natural

Hit Points 112 (16d8 + 32) Speed 50 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	СНА
16 (+3)	20 (+5)	15 (+3)	10 (+0)	15(+3)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dexterity +6, Con +3, Wis +5

Skills Perception +8, Stealth +11

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities cold, poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 18

Languages Auran, Abyssal, understands common but doesn't speak it Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Shimmering Visage. The devil's footprint is invisible and incorporeal, but refractions of light, snow, and dust for example can make it shimmer and become easier to spot. While it is unseen, attacks targeting the devil's footprint have -2 to hit.

Soulbound. The devil's footprint cannot be truly destroyed until the phylactery that contains its essence is destroyed. After 2 full days the devil's footprint can reconstitute itself and hunt again.

Incorporeal Movement. The devil's footprint can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 8 (2d8) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

False Voice. The wendigo can mimic animal sounds, as well as humanoid voices, luring their prey into a false sense of security. A creature that hears the sounds made can tell they are imitations with a successful **DC 14 Wisdom** (Insight) check.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The devil's footprint makes three attacks, two with its claws and one with its bite. Whenever possible, the devil's footprint uses its Harrowing Wail instead of a Bite attack.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit*: 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage and 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. The devil's footprint regains hit points equal to necrotic damage dealt unless the target is a construct or undead.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit*: 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature that the devil's footprint already hit with two claw attack this turn, the target is grappled (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, the creature is restrained, and the wendigo cannot use its claws against another target.

Harrowing Wail (Recharge 5-6). The devil's footprint emits a piercing scream. Each creature within 30 feet of the devil's footprint must succeed on a **DC 14 Wisdom** saving throw or take 14 (4d6) psychic damage and be stunned for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

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DRÒTTINN

DRÒTTINN

Medium aberration, neutral evil

Hit Points 47 (6 Speed 30 ft., 30		,			
	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
	6(+3)	14 (+2)	18(+4)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)

Damage Resistances magical damage Senses Truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 15 Languages Undercommon Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Antimagic Cone. Dròttinn's central eye creates an area of antimagic, as in the *anti-magic field* spell, in a 50-foot cone. At the start of each of its turns, Dròttinn decides which way the cone faces and whether the cone is active.

Keen Sight. Dròttinn has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Magic Resistance. Drottinn has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Innate Spellcasting. Dròttinn's innate spellcasting ability is

Charisma (spell save DC 12). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *dancing lights* I/day each: *darkness, faerie fire, levitate* (self only)

Spellcasting. Dròttinn is a 10th -level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 16, +5 to hit with spell attacks). Dròttinn has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): mage hand, minor illusion, poison spray, ray of frost

1st level (4 slots): mage armor, magic missile, shield, witch bolt 2nd level (3 slots): alter self, misty step, web

3rd level (3 slots): fly, *lightning bolt*

4th level (3 slots): *Evard's black tentacles, greater invisibility* 5th level (2 slots): *cloudkill*

ACTIONS

Multiattack.Dròttinn makes two claw attacks.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Rotting Gaze. Dròttinn targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must succeed on **a DC 12 Constitution** saving throw against this magic or take 12 (3d6 + 2) necrotic damage.

Weird Insight. Dròttinn targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must contest its Charisma (Deception) check against Dròttinn's Wisdom (Insight) check. If Dròttinn wins, it magically learns one fact or secret about the target. The target automatically wins if it is immune to being charmed.

SNOWDROP ANGLER

SNOWDROP ANGLER

Huge monstrosity, neutral

	ss 15 natura 75 (9d10 + ft.					
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA	
18(+4)	18(+4)	14 (+2)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	8 (-1)	

Saving Throws Dexterity +6 Damage Resistances bludgeoning, cold

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages --

Challenge 6 (1,800 XP)

Floral Bait. The flower that the snowdrop angler uses to lure prey into its gaping maw emits pheromones in a 15 feet radius of its position, attracting creatures to investigate. A creature that is caught by the pheromones must succeed **a DC 15 Wisdom** saving throw, or else they find themselves strangely intrigued by the flower and begin to make their way over to it.

False Appearance. While the boreal snowdrop angler remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from snow on the ground.

Surprise Attack: If the snowdrop angler a creature and it hits it with an attack during the first round of combat, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) damage of the same damage type as the attack.

ACTIONS

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit*: 21 (3d10 + 5) piercing damage. If the target is a large or smaller creature, that creature is swallowed. While swallowed the creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the snowdrop angler, and it takes 17 (5d6) acid damage at the start of each of the snowdrop angler's turns. The snowdrop angler can only hold one large, or up to four medium or smaller creatures inside it at a time.

If the snowdrop angler takes 20 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside it, the snowdrop angler regurgitates all swallowed creatures, that then fall prone within 5 feet of the snowdrop angler. If the snowdrop angler dies with a creature still inside it, the swallowed creature is no longer restrained and can escape from its bowels using 10 feet of movement, landing prone 5 feet from the corpse.

Slam. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit*: 7 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage plus 3 (1d6) cold damage.

WENDIGO

WENDIGO Large undead, neutral evil						
Armor Class 15 Hit Points 110(17d10 + 17) Speed 40 ft.						
STR 14 (+2)	DEX 19 (+4)	CON 13 (+1)	INT 10 (+0)	WIS 14 (+2)	CHA 12 (+1)	
Saving Throws Con +4, Wis +5, Cha +4 Skills Perception +4, Stealth +6						

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +6 Damage Immunities cold, poisoned Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14 Languages Abyssal, Common Challenge 7 (2, 900 XP)

False Voice. The wendigo can mimic animal sounds, as well as humanoid voices, luring their prey into a false sense of security. A creature that hears the sounds made can tell they are imitations with a successful **DC 14 Wisdom (Insight)** check.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The wendigo makes three attacks, two with its claws and one with its bite. Whenever possible, the wendigo uses its Harrowing Wail instead of a Bite attack.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage and 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. The wendigo regains hit points equal to necrotic damage dealt unless the target is a construct or undead.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature that the wendigo already hit with two claw attack this turn, the target is grappled (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, the creature is restrained, and the wendigo cannot use its claws against another target.

Harrowing Wail (Recharge 5-6). The wendigo emits a piercing scream. Each creature within 30 feet of the wendigo must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or take 14 (4d6) psychic damage and be stunned for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Curse of the Wendigo (Recharge 5-6). Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit*: 12 (2d6 + 5) piercing damage. The wendigo lunges at the target creature readying its toothy maw for a bite. On a successful hit, the target must succeed on a **DC 14 Constitution** saving throw or else they are afflicted with the curse. The curse manifests after 2d4 days, though the full transformation takes 30 days. First there is a heightened sense of smell, picking up on humanoids much more clearly. Next, the complexion becomes paler, the eyes start to dim, and slight hair loss occurs. The final stages involve bones growing, stretching the skintight over it, an increased vision on the dark, and a nigh on insatiable hunger for humanoid flesh.

APPENDIX B: CHARACTERS

BAENLIN (HE/HIM, CG WEREBEAR FIGHTER)

Baenlin is one of the toughest, most resourceful folks in town, and while he does have a residence there, he travels and wanders the wilds. He enjoys being at one with nature, immersing himself in the land around him.

- *Personality:* Peaceful gentleman, albeit doesn't like his peace disturbed. He can be
- *Ideal*: He wishes to move to a more moderate climate one day, but with his current condition and the storm that rages the land, it won't be for a long time coming.
- Bond: Dvalin, his soulmate, is the main person that tethers him to this town. He would do anything for them both to be happy and properly settle down.
- *Flaw*: Baenlin struggles in social situations and large gatherings and as such removes himself from group events to wander, sometimes for many days. He worries it puts a strain on his relationship, but Dvalin just wants Baenlin to be comfortable, no matter how he expresses it.

VANJA THE HUNTRESS (SHE/HER, CG SHIFTER RANGER)

Vanja is the local hunter, both of wild game to bring back and any threats that may be stalking too close to town. Jovial and a shining beacon of personality when in the tavern, but a stone-cold and deadly precise killer when the time calls for it. She teaches folk how to hunt, find tracks, and survive if they are ever caught in a bad situation outside of town.

- *Personality:* An utter professional on the job, lovable goofball at heart.
- *Ideal:* She believes everything has a right to live and return to the land but will protect those she cares for when the time comes.
- Bond: Her son Harwulf drives her to be a better person each and every day. He is her top priority, and since his father passed away, she fights that much harder to keep him safe.
- Flaw: Being a local legend, teacher, hunter, and single mother is hard enough, let alone in this region of the world. She sometimes gets overstressed and snaps at people, rather viciously on the odd occasion, but always apologizes for her mistakes.

DVALIN THE INKEEPER (HE/THEY, NG TIEFLING)

Dvalin owns and runs the inn at Barrowhearth, The Sleeping Doe Inn. His inn is the heart and soul of the town, providing merriment and warmth to all from dawn until dusk.

• *Personality:* Stoic and well-mannered but doesn't tolerate harassment or rudeness in

their establishment. He takes care of his patrons as if they were family or friends.

- *Ideal:* Everyone deserves a roof over their head and food in their bellies, and he is happy to provide that for those down on their luck.
- **Bond:** His partner, Baenlin is the light in his life, and while he is always working and tired, Dvalin enjoys nothing more than spending his time with Baenlin.
- *Flaw*: Dvalin can be a bit of a buzzkill sometimes, especially in the busy months.

GANNA THE WATCHER (SHE/THEY, NG GITHZERAI)

Ganna is the "mayor" of the town, having lived here for years and years and becoming appointed due to their innate ability to solve problems and gaze into the cosmos searching for answers. They have been dubbed The Watcher, and sometimes Seer by the townsfolk, trusting in their judgement and following their path. So far, Ganna hasn't been wrong.

- **Personality:** Somewhat aloof, and interrupts people when they have a vision. Despite this, when not in a trance or meditating, Ganna is talkative and calm, like a wise sage.
- *Ideal:* Ganna believes that they are here for a purpose. Githzerai are very rarely left behind, and as such She bides her time, guiding those that she can while waiting for their purpose to be revealed.
- Bond: Ganna's main bond is to her fellow gith, but until they are reunited, they found a love of card games, especially ones with high stakes.
- Flaw: They see visions of the future and uses them to guide their townspeople, going so far as to invade privacy and approach folk in the street. While most are used to this, the seeming lack of respect is jarring to those not in the know.

TORVI THE MERCHANT (SHE/HER, NG KOBOLD)

Torvi is a long way from home. Her old home had tunnels that expanded for miles and miles underground, a thriving metropolis filled with every kind of person and store one could imagine. She left in search of an escape from the hustle and bustle, and now she has found just that in Barrowhearth. She returns home periodically to visit family, friends, and trade wares with the locals a few times a year.

- *Personality*: Excuberant and excitable at new possibilities, Torvi is a shining beacon and a pleasure to do business with.
- Ideal:
- Bond: She misses her home of
- *Flaw:* She can be very stubborn when it comes to getting information from her. She holds her secrets dear and will only let them go for a price they deserve.

DRÒTTINN (THEY/THEM, CE NOTHIC HYBRID)

Dròttinn was once a great mage, striving for a greater connection with nature and becoming with the powerful forces that tie the universe together. Driven to a frenzied break after an accident, some remnants of Dròttinn still remains trapped and trying to break free of this psychic cage and reverse the effects.

- Relatable: Their thirst for knowledge, knowing where we truly came from and how the world works.
- Antagonistic: Their wendigo spirit haunts the countryside
- Threatening:
- Special: Once extravagantly dressed and one of the greatest mages in the land. After a fateful experiment they became trapped in their tower to wait out the unceasing storm they created. With nothing but knowledge to gain and food quickly running out, they were forced into a coma-like meditation to search for answers from the cosmos, but the hunger was growing. Their only way to survive was to kill and eat their own apprentices, draining them of their magical essence for mental sustenance, and then their lifeless bodies. Not even that was enough and so drastic decisions had to be made. As the curse of the Wendigo was brought on by devouring their apprentices, the curse of the Nothic began to manifest itself. Dròttinn is now a creature of two halves forever battling of the duality of their mind. Their study of ancient magics and soul projection has resulted in a great horror that roams the land - the corrupted soul of a wendigo, impervious to nonmagical attacks, unrelenting even when even upon death it is ripped back into the phylactery stored in the tower, guarded by its unstable and enraged other half.