

For Characters Levels 5–9

9419

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®  
2nd Edition

# Ravenloft®

Official Game Adventure



## DARK OF THE MOON



# DARK OF THE MOON



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# INTRODUCTION



he land of Vorostokov is haunted by a dark and terrifying evil. In the snowy woods of this frozen domain, hunters take on the shapes of savage wolves and stalk the forests with evil bloodlust and hunger. In this land of endless frozen wastes and haunted fir forests, men learn to wear the shapes of bloodthirsty beasts in order to survive.

*Dark of the Moon* is

designed for four to six player characters of 5th to 8th level. The adventuring party should be well balanced and well equipped, since this will be a difficult adventure. However, the DUNGEON MASTER™ (DM™) should not over-equip the PCs with magical items and weapons; part of the challenge in facing werecreatures lies in finding weapons capable of harming them or alternate means of combating them.

Before beginning play, the DM should skim the adventure to get a feel for how it should run and then read it in detail. A review of the RAVENLOFT® boxed set is also a good idea. It is also suggested that the DM become familiar with the NPCs to better understand their motivations and mannerisms.

## Fear and Horror Checks

From time to time during the course of this adventure, situations will arise where a fear or horror check is appropriate. However, rather than instantly reducing the outcome of such an event to a simple die roll, give the players an opportunity to role-play the scene. Players who can effectively role-play fearful or horrified reactions will add flavor and realism to

the adventure, making the gaming more intense. In addition, the players get to maintain control over their own characters, rather than force the DM to dictate their actions through die rolls. Nevertheless, if the players do not or will not effectively role-play their characters in the face of fear and horror, then those checks should be made for them.

## Running the Adventure

Since this adventure is designed for characters of medium level, the party may not be able to revive characters killed in combat. If a player character is killed, the DM should consider allowing the player to continue to play, perhaps by assuming control of a henchman or hireling. Another option would be for the player to create a new character, native to Vorostokov, who could then join the party as a guide or an ally.

There are several key elements to this adventure that the DM should try to keep in mind. The first is the low-level population of Vorostokov; the PCs can find safe harbor in any of several small villages, but there is no one around who can heal the PCs or provide them with any real assistance.

The second consideration is the weather and the difficulty of traveling and finding food. The players should fear and respect the wolves of the forest for their ability to move and hunt over terrain that the characters find to be barely passable. The DM should make sure that the players don't take the setting for granted; setting out on a 20-mile journey to the next village is a life or death undertaking in Vorostokov's cruel weather. Keeping track of the party's food supplies and the effects of exposure and starvation will help make the players feel more vulnerable and weak in the face of Vorostokov's evil masters.

The third and most important element of *Dark of the Moon* is the horrible affliction of lycanthropy. It should be portrayed as a horrible doom for its victims, but with a sinister

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temptation or allure that the PCs will find hard to resist. Infected characters *know* that they will become bloodthirsty, murderous beasts, but they also know that they will be strong and fast, capable of hunting and surviving in Vorostokov's winter. Lycanthropy is a form of power, and the DM should not be afraid of allowing a character to willingly choose this particular doom.

Remember, there are three things about lycanthropy that players fear: the loss of control of their character, the difficulty of finding a cure, and the uncertainty of whether they have been infected and when the disease might manifest. The DM should play upon these fears.

The DM should customize this adventure to suit the balance and power of the campaign. New encounters can be added and existing ones modified. Red herrings and subplots can be inserted into the adventure. Secondary plots could revolve around a search for herbs needed by Natalya and Elena, or the PCs could be sidetracked to a village where the folk are plagued by these witches' spells.

## DM™ Overview

The rest of this introduction contains an adventure outline, a background story, a few notes on lycanthropy, and finally a possible means of getting the adventure started. At the end of the booklet are some appendices that include rules for cold weather exposure and survival, two new MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM® entries, and a player handout.

## Adventure Outline

In **Chapter One**, the adventurers arrive in Vorostokov, a land frozen in perpetual winter and ruled by the boyar Gregor Zolnik. Gregor is a loup du noir, a skin-changing werewolf. Soon after the PCs wander into the domain, they are attacked by a fierce pack of common werewolves. In their human shapes, the werewolves are Gregor's boyarsky, or Lord's

Men, a band of warriors and hunters loyal to the lord of the domain.

The player characters escape from the pack or drive the werewolves off, but are still lost in the endless forests of Vorostokov. Fortunately, they are found by the woodsman Mikhail Zolnik. Mikhail leads the party to the village of Torgov. The heroes learn that the village is in revolt against the boyar and his warriors, and is preparing to make a stand against Gregor's boyarsky. As **Chapter One** ends, the PCs help the villagers fend off the boyar's attack.

In **Chapter Two**, the heroes and Mikhail journey to the village of Kirinova, searching for allies against the boyar and his followers. When they reach Kirinova, they find a horrible slaughter. All the people in the village have been torn apart by wild beasts. Following the trail of the killers, the PCs blunder into the clutches of Gregor and his men.

Gregor and his boyars offer the heroes a terrible choice—join the boyarsky as fellow werewolves, or die. If the PCs accept, they are lost, but if they refuse to ally with Gregor, the boyar offers them a chance to run for their lives. As the PCs flee through the forests without weapons or armor, the boyarsky assume their wolf-shapes and hunt them.

Fortunately, the heroes are aided in **Chapter Three** by the sisters of the boyar, the witches Natalya and Elena. They hate their brother for the murder of their mother. Natalya and Elena see the PCs as a weapon to use against Gregor. The sisters also tell the PCs that the curse of Gregor is nearly upon them—any PC who has been wounded by a werewolf will become a lycanthrope at the dark of the moon, and will fall under Gregor's sway forever.

The heroes must steal into the village of Vorostokov and gather information and allies to take on Gregor in his own stockade. A confrontation with the ghost of Antonina, Gregor's mother, provides them with the last piece of the puzzle to defeat Gregor. The adventure ends as the PCs track Gregor to his secret lair and confront him for the final time.

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## Gregor's Tale

**A**s a young man, Gregor was a proud and skillful hunter. He was the strongest and bravest man in Vorostokov. One year winter came early. Snow ruined the crops that were still in the field and covered the hamlet with drifts so deep that ponies could not drag sleds through it.

The early snowfall soon deepened into the darkest and coldest winter the villagers could remember. Months passed with not the slightest hint of relief, and Vorostokov's stores of food began to dwindle. As the dead of winter approached, the folk of Vorostokov were facing starvation. The men of the village hunted each day, braving the cold and the ice, but found nothing but the leavings of wolves' kills.

Near midwinter, Gregor Zolnik was making his way home after a fruitless day of tracking in the forest. No sun had risen that day and the shadows were colder than death itself. As he struggled toward home, he came across a black wolf that had been injured taking down a bull elk.

Gregor watched the dying wolf, considering the speed and strength of its kind. "If I had your stamina and your keen senses, I would not be starving now," he told the wolf. "I would kill enough to feed my mother and sisters—and then I would kill some more."

In the dark and the cold, Gregor recalled a legend his grandfather had told him years ago, a tale of men who could change into wolves by dressing in the beasts' skins and calling on the magic of the night. Gregor was near the end of his strength, and he decided to follow the old legends and see if they were true. When the moon rose, he cut the black wolf's throat and drew a circle in the snow with its blood. Kneeling in the center of the circle, he skinned the wolf and donned its hide. Then he ate the wolf's brain, to gain its cunning, and its heart, to gain its strength.

For a moment, Gregor thought nothing had happened. Then he felt his skin begin to grow

hot. The wolf skin was fusing to his own! Gregor's cries of agony became the throaty howls of a powerful wolf. The ancient magic had worked, and Gregor had taken the wolf's form. He bounded off to hunt, tracking down a large caribou and killing it with ease. Gregor dragged the heavy carcass back to Vorostokov and left it by his mother's house.

With his family provided for, Gregor went to a secret cave he knew of and removed the skin. When he returned to the village the next morning, exhausted, he told his mother where to find the caribou and went to bed.

When he awoke at dusk, Gregor found that his mother had shared the caribou with the whole village. At first, Gregor was furious, since he had wanted the meat for his family only. Then he realized that with the wolf's skin, he could hunt and kill again.

Each night, Gregor slipped away from the village to put on the wolf's skin and hunt, feeding the community for the rest of the winter. He never told anyone of his secret.

When spring finally came, Duke Andrei Vladimir came to meet the man who had single-handedly saved Vorostokov from starvation; many other villages in the duke's land had not fared as well. During this visit, Gregor met the duke's daughter Ireena. The two fell in love and were married, returning to the duke's castle.

Unfortunately, Gregor found that the wild call of the wolf still surged in his blood. Under the pretext of visiting his mother, Gregor returned to Vorostokov and donned the wolf skin. That night he hunted and killed, and when he returned to Ireena he brought his wolf skin and hid it in a grotto near the castle.

Gregor would wait until Ireena fell asleep, and then slip out into the night to don the skin and stalk the forests. Ireena soon discovered Gregor's absences, and assumed that he was dallying with a peasant girl. She took a lover of her own to avenge Gregor's faithlessness.

Ireena's betrayal drove Gregor into a bestial rage. He murdered her lover and then burst into her chambers and slew her as well.

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Ireena's screams awakened a maidservant, who came to investigate. Gregor murdered the innocent servant, and became maddened by the scent of blood. He stalked through the castle corridors, killing the duke and his retainers as they slept.

In the morning, Gregor awoke to find himself in Vorostokov in his human form. Winter had returned, and the village was starving again. Gregor found that the forests were again empty, the elk and the caribou somehow eluding him. The only prey he could find lived in the other villages of the area and walked on two legs.

### **Gregor in Ravenloft**

When Gregor murdered the duke and his family and servants, the dark powers claimed him for their own and carried the hunter and his home to Ravenloft. Gregor was free to become the beast and hunt again, but he was cursed never to find prey in the dark forests.

Gregor still believed himself a hero and a provider for those unable to survive alone, but he became a monster even more terrible than he had been before. Unable to find game in the forest, he turned to another source of food. The other villages lived in fear of the black wolf of the forest, and the people of Vorostokov began to harbor dark suspicions about the meat that Gregor brought them.

### **The Making of the Boyarsky**

Gregor refused to allow other hunters in the forests, so he tracked and killed them in wolf form. Eventually, the situation grew intolerable. A courageous young man named Yuri managed to secretly unite a large band of loyal men, who confronted Gregor and demanded to know where he went and what he hunted in the forest. Gregor wanted to kill Yuri and his followers for daring to challenge him. His mother Antonina opposed him, calling him

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a fool. "These are all the menfolk of Vorostokov," she said. "If you kill them, who will be left? Will we all vanish into that black hunger of yours?"

Gregor listened, knowing that he alone could not break the curse of winter on Vorostokov. In desperation, he decided to heed his mother's advice and spare Yuri and his followers. He decided to make allies of them.

Gregor led Yuri and the others into the deep woods, far from Vorostokov. In a dark clearing, he built a blazing bonfire, and then wrapped his wolfskin around himself, transforming before the eyes of the men of Vorostokov. Gregor leaped upon Yuri and tore him to pieces, and then set upon the others, slashing and tearing with his horrible fangs.

The men found that they could not hurt the wolf with their weapons and scattered, fleeing into the forest. One by one Gregor hunted down the survivors. Cowards he killed without a word, but he offered a choice to the brave men who stood against him—swear loyalty to him and follow him faithfully, or die.

Gregor tested the courage and strength of each man who swore loyalty to him by mauling them savagely in his wolf form. If they survived the wolf's attack, he accepted them as followers. Many of the men died or refused to submit to such a test. But each of the hunters who survived the attack became werewolves themselves, infected by lycanthropy from Gregor's bite.

Gregor had not known that they would become lesser wolves loyal to him. Hunting the deep forests as one strong pack, they brought down a bull elk and feasted. For two full weeks they hunted.

Gregor had forged an unbreakable pact with his new followers. Returning to Vorostokov, he soon came to rule it as *boyar* with his *boyarsky* at his side. He built a great lodge for himself and his men, who were soon feeding the nearby villages as well as Vorostokov itself, and Gregor's rule was acknowledged in Novayalenk, Siverski, and Oneka.

## Sasha of Torgov

One day, as Gregor traveled from village to village, he found himself in the tiny hamlet of Torgov. There he met a beautiful girl named Sasha, daughter of the village's headman. Gregor knew at once that she was the most beautiful woman in all the land, and he decided to make her his wife. Although she was terribly frightened by the boyar's strength and vile temper, Sasha consented to return with him to his lodge in Vorostokov.

The boyar doted on his wife, and his savage temperament was restrained by her purity and gentleness. Despite this, the boyar still left each night to roam the forests in his wolf shape. Sasha wondered where he went, but he forbade her to speak of or acknowledge his absences.

Eventually, Sasha gave birth to Gregor's first son, Alexei. Gregor loved his wife and son, but Antonina and his sisters Elena and Natalya were beside themselves with jealousy. Matters did not improve with the birth of Gregor's second son, Mikhail. Alexei was a headstrong and willful child who took after his father in many ways, but Mikhail was quiet and shy—his mother's son in both features and temperament.

On the day of Alexei's 18th birthday, Gregor decided that he would bring his son into the ranks of the boyarsky. Mikhail was in Torgov, visiting his mother's kin. While Gregor and Alexei were away, Antonina came to see Sasha. "It is time you knew Gregor's secret and what he plans for Alexei," the old woman spitefully told her. "Tonight, you and I shall follow Gregor into the forest, and I will show you where he has been going all these years."

Sasha agreed, and as night fell the two women trailed stealthily after Alexei, Gregor, and his boyarsky. The boyar led his son and his warriors to a clearing in the woods, and there he gave a wolf skin to Alexei. Together, father and son donned the skins and transformed into great black wolves. The boyarsky changed as well, and the night was full of the howling of the pack.



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Sasha was horrified and fled into the woods. The keen ears of the pack caught the sounds of her flight, and in a moment the wolves were bounding after their prey. The wolves chased Sasha to a steep ravine, and there she slipped and fell to her death in her attempt to escape.

Coming up behind the boyarsky, Gregor and Alexei in their wolf-shapes beheld the broken form of Sasha, lying in the snow-covered rocks. Gregor smelled the scent of Antonina on his dead wife, and in a moment of terrible understanding he knew that Sasha had been encouraged to spy on him. He raced off to track down his mother, his rage unspeakable, Alexei a step behind him. The boyar found Antonina near the clearing, and unable to contain his anger, he tore Antonina's throat out with his terrible fangs while Alexei howled in grief and rage.

## The Boyar Today

Gregor's sisters, Elena and Natalya, disappeared after Antonina's death. Their spells and divinations told them everything about the events of that day. They live together in the forest, powerful witches who are feared by the common folk. More than anything else, they hate Gregor for the murder of Antonina.

Mikhail still lives in Torgov with his mother's family. He is the leader of the village's hunters and quietly opposes his father's power.

The endless winter of Vorostokov is beginning to tell on the forest. The boyarsky are finding kills fewer and farther between, and the day is not far off when they will have to resort to Gregor's old tactic of finding prey in the outlying villages. For now, Gregor is fending off hunger in Vorostokov by demanding stores of food from the other villages as tribute.



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## The Domain of Vorostokov

**V**orostokov was first described in the RAVENLOFT® accessory RR1, *Darklords*. Since the events of *Dark of the Moon* occur many years after Vorostokov's introduction, the information presented here supercedes that presented in *Darklords*.

Vorostokov is a vast domain more than 300 miles across. It consists of icy plains and frozen coniferous forests, with many small lakes and rivers scattered throughout. The land is locked in a dire, endless winter, and the tiny villages of the domain constantly struggle to survive on their dwindling food stores and their hunters' successes.

Daylight is a precious commodity in Vorostokov. The sun barely peeps over the horizon during the course of about six hours before disappearing for the night. Sunrise and sunset are preceded and followed respectively by periods of twilight lasting two to three hours each. The shadows are long, dark, and cold beneath the snow-covered trees.

The plains and forests of Vorostokov are ringed by impassable peaks that form the border of the domain. The border is sealed against any escape, although Gregor does not realize that he is responsible for this. There are rumors of high passes that lead out of Vorostokov, but anyone who attempts to trek out of the land will find snowstorms and avalanches barring the paths. The only way to leave Vorostokov is to destroy Gregor Zolnik.

The powdery snow that covers the land makes travel extremely difficult, and most natives use snowshoes or skis for long trips in the wilderness. The forest can be treacherous and it is very easy to become lost or blunder into dangerous deadfalls.

A fair amount of small game still survives in the woods, including rabbits, squirrels, pikas, ptarmigans, and a variety of snow quail. Small scavengers and predators include foxes, wolverines, martins, owls, hawks, and ravens. Larger animals include herds of elk and caribou,

a few deer, and large (and very dangerous) bears. However, the most dangerous and prevalent predator of the forest is the wolf. Aggressive and powerful packs of common wolves range freely throughout the domain, and will not hesitate to attack even a large group of humans.

Monstrous denizens of Vorostokov are rather rare, but a few do exist. Undead can be found in various places, the restless spirits of those killed by Gregor and his pack or frozen as they traveled in the woods. A rare breed of white cloaker can be found in the deep woods, and the snowy wastes are haunted by a few leucrotta. Some of the elk, bears, and wolves of the domain approach monstrous proportions. The folk of the villages also tell horrible tales of the *arayashka*, the snow-wraiths who freeze and devour hapless travelers on the icy moors.

However, the creatures that rule Vorostokov without challenge are the werewolves. No other animal or monster dares defy the great black wolf and his pack of savage killers.

## People of Vorostokov

The domain has a total of about 1,000 human inhabitants, dispersed in more than a dozen small villages and hamlets. A few people live outside the villages in woodcutters' cottages or hunting lodges, but many of these remote locations have already fallen prey to Gregor and his boyarsky. The village of Vorostokov itself is the largest in the domain and is located near its center. Other villages include Kirinova, Nordvik, Torgov, Voronina, Oneka, Siberski, Novayalensk, and Kargo, plus some tiny hamlets.

The people of Vorostokov tend to be stocky and strong with dark hair and eyes. They are farmers and foresters, with few craftsmen and little or no trade. A few gold coins can be found here and there, but for the most part the people get by with a system of barter and obligations. Even in the days before Gregor's curse isolated Vorostokov in the mists of Ravenloft, this was a backward and rural area.

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The men usually dress in buckskin and wear heavy fur coats. Before Vorostokov's winter set in, linen and wool were more common, but now only a few people still have bolts of the rare cloth. Heavy beards and drooping mustaches are favored by all who can grow them, although they must be carefully tended when out in the cold—otherwise heavy condensation will freeze through the facial hair and cause frostbite.

The women wear long wool, felt, or suede dresses, with several layers of under-skirts. Small blankets are worn shawl-style outdoors. The dresses often feature beautiful embroidery or brocade. Generally, women look after most household chores while the men tend to their trade, various crafts, or hunting. The folk of Vorostokov are very conservative and practical.

Wood and bone carvings, colorful woven blankets and shawls, and song are the chief artistic expressions of the Vorostokovians. Literacy is rare among the common people of the domain, but there is a rich oral tradition of song and folklore. Most of the people of Vorostokov spend their free time visiting the houses of friends or gathering at the sweathouse or alehouse to trade stories and enjoy a song or two. The long years of winter have worn on their spirits, though, and the mood of such gatherings is much more somber and restrained than it once was.

## Gregor's Realm

As boyar of Vorostokov, Gregor physically rules a large portion of the domain. The seat of his power is the village of Vorostokov itself, which is located near the center of the domain. He views the village as the only settlement of importance in the land, and uses the outlying villages to feed his own home. See **Encounter II: The Village of Vorostokov** in **Chapter Three**.

Other villages loyal to Gregor and his boyars include Novayalenk, Siberski, Oneka, Voronina, and Nordvik. These villages are very similar to Vorostokov in population and organization. They are unlikely to become part of the

adventure and are not described in detail here. If it becomes necessary to map out or describe one of these villages, make a few small changes to the village of Vorostokov and change some names and characters to create a "new" village.

Several villages have not sworn fealty to Gregor or are in rebellion against him. These are Kargo, Kirinova, and Torgov. Torgov is described in detail in **Chapter One** of this adventure, and the PCs travel to Kirinova in **Chapter Two**.

Gregor's enforcers and bodyguards are the boyarsky. There are more than 30 of these warriors, but a number of them are away hunting or visiting far villages at any given time. At least 10 to 12 warriors of the boyarsky accompany Gregor at all times.

## A Note on Lycanthropy

Gregor Zolnik is not a true werewolf, but is instead a loup du noir—a skin-changing werebeast. (The loup du noir is described at the end of this adventure.) He transforms by donning the skin of a black wolf, which magically changes him into a huge, powerful wolf. His sons Alexei and Mikhail are also loup du noir in nature and transform similarly.

Gregor's boyarsky are common werewolves, who transform in the conventional manner. The bite of the loup du noir in its wolf form can inflict normal lycanthropy on its victims, just as the bite of a common werewolf can. Gregor created his boyarsky by choosing the strongest and bravest hunters of Vorostokov and attacking them while in wolf form. A loup du noir is considered a master lycanthrope and can control the changes of its victims.

Gregor's victims have only two forms: human and beast. None of the infected lycanthropes can assume a hybrid form. Gregor's servants tend to develop a violent temper and taste for raw meat, but most of the people of Vorostokov assume that these are mannerisms the boyarsky adopt to distinguish themselves as especially tough or dangerous

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warriors. Like other werewolves, Gregor's victims are vulnerable to silver or magical weapons. Unlike other werewolves, those infected by Gregor or anyone he has infected are triggered by the dark of the moon, and not the full moon. When the boyarsky are in wolf-form, Gregor can control their actions. Characters witnessing the transformation of either a common werewolf or a loup du noir must make a horror check.

Gregor's bite has a 3% chance per point of damage of passing infected lycanthropy to his victims. Wounds inflicted by lycanthropes that he has created have a 2% chance per point of damage of inflicting lycanthropy on the victim. Once infected, the victim can be forced to change by Gregor, and will change automatically on the three nights of the dark of the moon. (The dark of the moon is the night when no moon shows, plus the nights immediately before and after.)

## Curing Lycanthropy

A *cure disease* spell or ability will not cure lycanthropy; instead, a much more difficult process is required. First, the master lycanthrope must be slain. Then the victim must perform a ritual of purity to cleanse the body of the curse. The details of the ritual are left to the DM, but it could be made into an adventure itself. Next, the victim must assume the beast form while a priest casts *atonement*, *cure disease*, and *remove curse* upon the victim. Note that player characters of a level suitable for this adventure are unlikely to have an *atonement* spell available, and will have to find an NPC priest to aid them in their efforts.

If these steps are followed, the victim receives one saving throw vs. death magic to endure the cure. If it fails, the victim is doomed as a werebeast forever. A successful saving throw means the victim is cured.

Lycanthropy is discussed in detail in the RAVENLOFT® boxed set (pg. 25–27) and in the DUNGEON MASTER™ Guide in Chapter 15.

## Starting the Adventure

**D**ark of the Moon begins with the heroes being transported by the mists of Ravenloft into the domain of Vorostokov. The PCs should be well-rested and equipped for a journey, but beyond those requirements the adventure can start almost anywhere. They may be involved in a journey toward some other goal or adventure, resting in a familiar tavern, or visiting a friend or advisor of some kind.

When the PCs are all gathered around their campfire or their table, begin by reading the text below to the players. If the adventurers are in a tavern or otherwise indoors, the hapless traveler pounds on the door before collapsing into the room. If the PCs are camping outside, the fellow staggers up along the road or trail they are following. Modify the text as needed.

The night is cold and damp, and frigid mists blanket the countryside. A rime of clear ice has settled over the branches of the trees, and the ground is covered with white frost. The warmth of the fire is a comfort against the chill of the evening.

In the distance, the ghostly howl of a wolf rises. Its forlorn cry seems to sap the warmth from the fire as an icy chill permeates the [camp/room]. Even with weapons close at hand, there is unease in the misty darkness away from the fire—something is not right.

The mists swirl and eddy, and then a dark shape emerges and stumbles forward. It is a strangely dressed man, and he totters forward and collapses. He is wearing thick furs and a hooded cape, and his boots are made from buckskin. Broken snowshoes are strapped to his back, and clutched in his hand is a blood-stained hatchet.

His face is ghostly white, and a pattern of deep blue wounds surrounded by patches of white frost mark his throat and his arms. A long, flowing beard and drooping mustache frame his swarthy face. His skin literally

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burns with cold to the touch.

The silence is suddenly pierced by the haunting howl of a wolf, much nearer than the last one. A great white wolf with red eyes emerges from the mists a few yards away. The mists cling to it, and with a quick twist it is gone, padding off again into the fog and the cold. It turns and glances back once, and then the mists roll in to conceal it once more.

There is nothing to be done for the stranger—he is frozen through and quite dead. A thorough search of his pockets and gear turns up a parka, the pair of snowshoes, a composite short bow, a quiver with no arrows, a hunting knife, and the hatchet. A backpack holds a few scraps of dried meat.

The stranger was a hunter named Igor Rikorsky who was trying to escape from Gregor in the forests when the mists descended on him and carried him away. A *speak with dead* spell works normally; refer to **Encounter II: Igor's Campsite** in **Chapter One** for more information on Igor's background and motivations.

The white wolf is a malicious manifestation of the mists of Ravenloft. If the heroes try to follow, continue reading the text below. If they refuse to follow the creature, it returns suddenly and attacks them.

The wolf drifts in and out of vision, darting and disappearing in the mists and the shadows. The air around it is amazingly colder, and every breath drawn in burns nostrils and lungs with its frostiness. Suddenly, the wolf turns to attack!

In a lightning-swift leap, the wolf attacks, silently snapping and lunging as the mists close in. The wolf seems almost spectral, taking form from the mist, then disappearing again in a swirl of fog, only to reappear and attack from another direction. The surrounding shouts and sounds of struggle seem strangely distant and weak.

# INTRODUCTION

**Mist Wolf:** AL NE; AC 4; MV 18; HD 6; hp 32; THAC0 11; #AT 2; Dmg 2d4 + special; SA mist; SD evade; MR standard; SZ M; ML 20.

The mist wolf's bite causes frostbite (see **Appendix B: Exposure and Survival**, page 58) unless the victim rolls a successful saving throw vs. paralyzation. It can only be harmed by magical weapons. If the wolf wins initiative in a round by 3 or more, it is able to attack and vanish into the mists before the PCs can attack. Each time a character is bitten, read the following:

Waves of cold numb your whole body as the wolf's fangs find their mark. The pain and darkness overcome you, and you fall to the ground racked by horrible chills. As you collapse, the mists rush in to cover your body. You see your companions watching you, but then they disappear.

Each time the wolf hits, the character who is struck is automatically transported to Vorostokov by the mists of Ravenloft. If the wolf is killed, the survivors will find that it disappears in a puff of white mist that suddenly engulfs them and transports them as well. The strange ground mists will capture any characters who manage to escape.

*Note:* At the DM's option, more than one wolf may attack to speed up the process of sending the PCs to Vorostokov. This may prevent problems that could arise from a player feeling like there is nothing to do once the character has been bitten. However, the disappearance of characters one by one is always fun. . . .

## The Arrival

Once all of the PCs have been engulfed by the mists, read the following to them:

Darkness and cold swirl about, and all sense of direction is completely obscured by the mists. Heartbeats slow and stop in the numbing emptiness. Time seems to hang suspended, and the darkness lasts but a moment—or perhaps for an eternity—before white, blinding light erupts everywhere. In the next instant, reality returns in the form of cold, dry snow.

There is a bitter, biting cold that, unlike the frigid night mists from before, is obviously not supernatural. It is, however, more numbingly icy, more absolutely arctic, than seems possible. Exposed hands and faces are already becoming clumsy and painful, with needles of searing cold piercing the skin in a maddening assault.

Several varieties of evergreens—mostly pine, spruce, and fir—stretch on as far as the eye can see. Powdery snow lies over the branches and in deep drifts beneath the boles of the trees, creating an eldritch realm of sparkling ice and delicate white sculptures. It would be quite beautiful if it were not so bitterly cold.

The sky is deepening toward twilight, and the approaching night is likely to bring unendurable cold. Coats and furs, adequate for the winter of the realm left behind, will not be enough protection in this frozen place.



## CHAPTER ONE



In this chapter, the heroes are introduced to the domain of Vorostokov. They arrive in **Encounter I: The Forest** as night is falling in Vorostokov. Fortunately, **Encounter II: Igor's Campsite**, is nearby. The PCs can learn a lot about Vorostokov from Igor's journal. **Encounter III: Surviving the Night** describes the PCs' struggle to endure the bitter cold of Vorostokov's winter.

As the sun rises, the PCs will probably begin to head for the village of Torgov, described on Igor's map.

Torgov is about three days' journey away. During their trek, they encounter some of the forest's dangerous denizens in **Encounter IV: The Yeneskyy**. As the PCs weaken from the effects of exposure and frostbite, **Encounter V: The Black Wolf** occurs.

Chapter One ends with the PCs fortunately meeting a guide and ally in **Encounter VI: Mikhail**. Mikhail leads the heroes to **Encounter VII: Journey to Torgov**. There, the PCs get a brief chance to rest before **Encounter VIII: The Boyar**.

### Encounter I: The Forest

The heroes arrive in the trackless wastes of Vorostokov, brought here by the mists of Ravenloft. Refer to the map of the domain of Vorostokov on the inside front cover; the adventurers begin near **Igor's Campsite**.

Before beginning play in this chapter, the DM should refer to **Appendix B: Exposure and Survival**. Unless otherwise stated, the PCs are assumed to be dressed in normal cold weather clothing—heavy cloaks, woolen shirts, and sturdy boots—but not well dressed enough to be out and about in Vorostokov. Consider the PCs to be **unprepared**, unless some other factor

comes into play, such as a PC with a *ring of warmth* or a *bag of holding* that just happens to have a parka in it.

The immediate surroundings hold nothing but dark, brooding forest and deep drifts of snow. No landmarks of any kind can be seen in the frozen wilderness. The cold, dry air leaves throats and noses burning. The wind carries on it from far away the howl of a wolf. The sun has dipped below the horizon, and although it is barely imaginable, it is growing colder.

A more careful search of the hauntingly quiet area reveals a set of tracks in the snow, leading to a small clearing nearby. They are the footprints of a single man, with numerous animal tracks overrunning the man's prints. The human footsteps appear to end in the middle of the clearing.

If the player characters follow the tracks back the way they come, they discover Igor's campsite about 200 yards away. The tracks end at the trapper's camp; a light snow and wind-drifts have covered the path that Igor used to reach his campsite. It is important that the PCs find Igor's camp pretty quickly; they will not know where to go or what to do until they find his journal.

A ranger or other character with the tracking proficiency can tell that the animal tracks are wolves' prints. Any efforts to scout the surrounding terrain reveal only trackless wilderness with occasional game trails. The nearest village is more than 20 miles away, and no smoke or other indications of civilization can be seen.

### Encounter II: Igor's Campsite

The tracks the PCs discovered in **Encounter I** lead to Igor Rikorsky's campsite, which is only a couple of hundred yards away. When the PCs follow the tracks, read the boxed text on the following page to the players:

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The air is unnaturally still and clear in the frozen woods. The only sounds are the crackle and rustle of boots in the snow and ragged, steaming breaths. Exposed hands and faces are throbbing with pain. Near the tracks in the clearing lie scattered packs and gear, apparently an abandoned campsite. A heap of cold ashes and half-burned logs is surrounded by packs, a crude set of sleeping furs, and a pair of skis.

It is obvious that someone left in a hurry, without bothering to take any of the supplies or equipment. From the condition of the packs, it would seem that wild animals discovered the camp.

The campsite belonged to Igor Rikorsky, who fled when the boyarsky began to close in on him. A search will turn up 10 days' rations (dried meat and cheese—the boyarsky would

not eat it), two frozen waterskins, skis, enough extra furs to manufacture one parka, a tinder kit and kindling, and a tattered journal lying in the cold ashes of the fire.

The journal is largely destroyed, but a patient reader can piece through it. In the back of the journal there is a sturdy map inked on caribou hide. Give the players the **Handout: Igor's Journal and Map**. Parts of the journal were damaged by the campfire, but most of it is still intact. The journal was tossed into the fire by one of the boyarsky when they overran Igor's camp and drove him into the forest.

Igor's map and his journal notes should provide the PCs with a goal. If they fail to pick up on the fact that they should go to Torgov, **Encounters IV, V, and VI** still occur in order. **Encounter VI**, the meeting with Mikhail Zolnik, should put the player characters back on track regardless of which direction they decide to travel.





## CHAPTER ONE

### Encounter III: Surviving the Night

Night is falling in Vorostokov, and the PCs find that the bitter cold tests their endurance and their resourcefulness to its limits. Fortunately, Igor Rikorsky's campsite can provide some basic shelter and supplies to get the party started.

The temperature is dropping rapidly, and fingers and feet no longer hurt. In fact, they cannot be felt at all. The wounds from the white wolf of the mists ache as though liquid fire had been poured into them. No one could travel far in this darkness and the cold; the only hope for survival is a shelter from the cold.

If the party does not bother to build a fire or construct a shelter of some kind, they will be *unprotected* against the cold damage and effects that will accumulate throughout the coming night. Refer to the Winter Survival notes in **Appendix B: Exposure and Survival**.

If the party attempts to travel in the darkness, they are reduced to one-half their normal movement. In addition, they are without shelter and are *unprotected* against the elements. The heroes are faced with a difficult dilemma: they can travel, or they can keep warm with a fire and a shelter. They can't do both at the same time.

The PCs should be able to easily construct a makeshift lean-to, snow cave, or bower of pine boughs to provide rudimentary shelter—but don't assume that they do. If the players don't think to create shelter of some kind, their characters should be susceptible to damage.

If the DM is feeling generous, knowledgeable characters such as rangers or wilderness warriors can be granted an Intelligence check to "realize" that the party should be putting together a makeshift shelter.

Characters who are not vulnerable to cold

damage (i.e., characters who remain in the shelter and have a good fire nearby) recover from frostbite effects as described under **Appendix B: Exposure and Survival**. However, characters who continue to sustain cold damage through lack of fire or shelter do not recover from their frostbite.

### Improvising Equipment

The players may insist that they can make blankets out of fir needles and tree bark or construct working skis from the materials at hand. The DM should use personal judgement in deciding if the player has actually hit upon a good idea or if the proposal is ridiculous.

If there is doubt over whether or not a character might have the knowledge to make winter equipment, allow the PC an Intelligence check with a penalty assessed for the difficulty of the feat and the likelihood that the character would have the knowledge. A warrior portrayed as a jungle savage from a tropical paradise might have a -10 penalty for a roll to suddenly "invent" snowshoes.

The night lasts forever, or so it seems. When the sun finally rises, it is dim and weak, and from the way that it barely clears the southern horizon, it is obvious that there will be less than five hours of sunlight. Perhaps, with the twilight that lasts for a few hours before dawn and after sunset, there will be eight hours of usable light during the day.

### Trek to Torgov

Presumably, the PCs will decide to try to reach civilization after the night passes. Referee the journey to the village as normal overland travel. If the PCs are still *unprotected*, they continue to suffer cold damage as they make their way through the forest. Continue with **Encounter IV: The Yeneskyy** toward the end of the first day of travel in Vorostokov.

## CHAPTER ONE

The constant struggle to walk through the thigh-deep snow is rapidly exhausting. The forest has the maddening tendency to conceal the path and force travel to go from side to side, and the silent malice of the trees weighs on spirits.

From time to time, the unearthly stillness is broken by the mournful howling of wolves in the distance. At times it seems that dozens of the animals are calling to each other through the empty forests, their voices rising and falling.

### Encounter IV: The Yeneskyy

Cold and hunger are not the only dangers of the Vorostokovian wilderness. The woods are the hunting-grounds of the *yeneskyy*, or forest-haunts. The *yeneskyy* are a breed of white cloaker that use drifts of snow and their moaning powers to stalk and kill travelers in the forest.

This encounter occurs toward the end of the first day of travel in Vorostokov. Read aloud the following to the PCs:

The wind changes and begins to moan with a low, chilling tone. It is difficult to keep thoughts from returning again and again to the mesmerizing sound. Exhaustion is really setting in now, and it is hard to keep moving. Limbs seem heavy and bodies ache with pain and weariness. It is almost as if the moaning of the wind is draining away the strength and will to go on.

The party has encountered two cloakers, although they may not realize it yet. The cloakers begin their attack with a subtle moan, creating unease and numbing the minds of the PCs. The moan is pitched to resemble the sighing of wind in the trees and the heroes may not realize they are under attack.

Any of the PCs who has encountered a

cloaker before recognizes the sound after 1–2 rounds. Other PCs require 1–4 rounds to realize that something is wrong. Once a PC understands that the moaning is not natural, a Wisdom check may be attempted each round to discern the fact that the moan is creating unease and is numbing thoughts. When the PC succeeds with a Wisdom check, the cloakers can be spotted.

The cloakers lurk in the shadows beneath the trees, and attempt to moan for 6 rounds unopposed. If no PC stops them from moaning by attacking, the party trudges to a halt and is unable to attack or defend itself as long as the moaning continues. One cloaker keeps up the moaning while the other selects a character and attacks.

As cold, thick lethargy descends over everyone, the sinister moaning fills all thoughts like gelid ice, numbing away all other sensations. A ghoulish white shadow drifts into view from beneath the pine boughs and enshrouds a companion in its horrible embrace!

As long as the other cloaker keeps the heroes entranced, they are helpless to aid their friend—a situation that could certainly call for a horror check. After a couple of rounds of this, the second cloaker moves in to select a victim of its own, but in doing this it stops moaning and releases the party to act.

If the adventurers detect the cloakers before 6 rounds pass, the cloakers change to one of their other moaning intensities and attempt to cause *fear* or *nausea* in the heroes. Once the heroes engage the cloakers in combat, the creatures use their shadow manipulating abilities to create illusions of more cloakers beneath the trees, hoping to scare off or confuse any would-be rescuers.

The cloakers flee to their lair, a small snow cave about 400 yards away, if reduced to  $\frac{1}{4}$  of their starting hit points.

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**Cloakers (2):** AL CE; AC 3 (1); MV 1, FI 15(D); HD 6; hp 29, 25; THAC0 15; #AT 2 + special; Dmg 1d6/1d6 + special; SA moan; SD shadows; MR standard; SZ L; ML 14; XP 1,400.

The cloakers' snow cave is well kept and floored with warm pine needles. The remains of their past victims have been carefully removed, but some gear remains. Two parkas, two sets of snowshoes, and a sturdy pack can all be salvaged from the leavings. The cloakers have a small hoard of 215 sp and 35 gp, plus a *dagger +1* and a *ring of jumping*.

## Encounter U: The Black Wolf

**G**regor Zolnik and his boyarsky were enraged by Igor's miraculous escape. After many hours of fruitless efforts to track down the trapper, they circled back to his campsite. There they found the player characters' trail and picked up the party's scent. In their wolf shapes, the boyar and his men set out in pursuit of the strangers. Begin this encounter by reading the following boxed text to the players:

For some time now the howling of wolves has been plain to hear. By now it is obvious that the beasts are following behind, hot on the scent of the group.

Allow the players to take any actions or make any preparations that they desire. Unless they do something really extraordinary, continue with the next box. If the PCs manage to take cover or disappear (for example, by casting a *rope trick* or *invisibility, 10' radius* spell) the wolves are confused for 2d10 turns before returning to the site of the PCs' disappearance and resuming the chase. Wolves rely on scent for tracking prey, and it is nearly impossible to elude them for more than a couple of hours.

If the PCs stop to create some kind of barrier,

such as building a ring-shaped fire, the wolves wait patiently if the barrier is temporary or begin looking for ways to circumvent it if it is not. They may let the firewood become exhausted or wait for cold and hunger to force the party to abandon its strongpoint. Remember, the wolves are led by werewolves with full human intelligence in their wolf forms, and they are able to think of things and try tactics accordingly.

To either side, dark shapes flit through the trees, darting and disappearing in the shadows. The crunching of paws on the snow and the sudden snaps of twigs and branches can be heard. The wolves are circling, and it is only a matter of minutes before they close in to attack.

The only defensible ground is an open clearing where it will be easy to see the wolves coming. It seems that the forest itself is alive with menace. Suddenly, a great black wolf is there, watching with keen, human intelligence from the edge of the clearing. Its yellow eyes burn with hunger and hate.

The power and malice of the black wolf inspires awe. It turns and abruptly vanishes into the woods—just as its pack mates dash in, faster than the eye can follow!

Roll for surprise for the attacking wolves; with the PCs watching the great black wolf, they may not see the others coming. If any of the characters stated that they were keeping watch behind the party, the PCs are surprised only on a roll of 1. Have each of the characters make a fear check due to the shocking swiftness and ferocity of the wolves' attack. The wolves attack from all directions.

Gregor waits, watching the melee for several rounds to measure the strength of the heroes. He leaps in to attack at a dramatic moment, sprinting forward with terrifying speed to leap for a character's throat.

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**Wolves (10):** AL N; AC 7; MV 18; HD 3; hp 19×3, 18, 17×2, 16×2, 14, 12; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 + 1; SD +1 vs. *charm*; SZ S; ML 10; XP 120.

**Boyarsky (werewolves) (6):** AL CE; AC 5; MV 15; HD 4 + 3; hp 28, 26, 23, 22, 21, 18; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SD hit only by silver or +1 magical weapons; SZ M; ML 12; XP 420.

**Gregor (wolf form):** AL CE; AC 0; MV 15; HD 10; hp 48; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 2d12; SA seize throat; SD immune to *charm*, *sleep*, *hold*, hit only by silver weapons; SZ L.

The wolves attack viciously, snarling and snapping as they charge the PCs. The werewolves fight by their side in wolf-form; lycanthropes created by Gregor do not possess a hybrid form. The werewolves appear to be huge, foul-tempered wolves with glowing red eyes and unbelievable savagery.

The PCs should make a fear check if they do not have silver or magical weapons and realize that their weapons cannot harm the werewolves. They should also make fear checks on the round that Gregor joins the fight and if one of the party is pulled down by the wolves. If any character fails the check and flees, one or more wolves bound off in pursuit, snapping at their heels and preparing to bring them down.

The goal of this encounter is to let the players know that they're up against tough opposition, and to instill the fear of possible lycanthropy in them. Try to wound as many characters as possible without cheating so that the players are not sure who may or may not be at risk. While this encounter is meant to be tough and to inspire fear, it is not necessarily lethal; however, the DM should not be afraid to get the players' attention by killing off a character if the dice and the player tactics dictate that result.

The DM should make a note of checking for lycanthropy with each wound a character sustains. Don't let the players know if they have been wounded by a normal wolf or a werewolf,



and don't let them know if they were actually infected. (They'll find out soon enough.) The standard chance for contracting lycanthropy with any given wound is 2% per point of damage, but the chance rises to 3% per point of damage if Gregor inflicts the wound. Keep the lycanthropy rolls and their results secret so that the players don't know who was infected and who was not.

If the heroes manage to stand their ground, they can drive off the pack by killing or driving off eight or more of the attackers. Characters who fled and were pursued can try to lose their pursuers in the forest. Individual wolves and werewolves flee when they have suffered more than 75% damage. When the heroes are victorious, continue the adventure with **Encounter VI: Mikhail**.

If the heroes do not drive off their attackers and are beginning to suffer serious damage (several characters reduced to 25% of their starting hit points), one of two things happen:

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either the wolves manage to pull down and kill a character, or the PCs are forced to flee for their lives. In this situation, it may become necessary to let the dice dictate the death of a character if the PCs keep fighting on against these odds.

**The PCs stand:** The party can go on fighting as long as they want, but sooner or later a character will be reduced to 0 hit points or less. When this happens, the wolves swarm over the fallen character and devour the body. The surviving heroes are able to attack the preoccupied wolves with a +2 bonus on their attack rolls, and they are not counterattacked for 1d3 rounds. The survivors may also choose to flee and escape the fight. Characters who watch one of their comrades get torn apart by starving wolves should make a horror check. Skip down to the boxed text below and read it to the players.

**The PCs flee:** Trying to outrun a pack of wolves in deep snow is a bad idea, and nothing good will come of it. The wolves concentrate their attacks on the rearmost character until that PC falls. Attacks on fleeing characters are made with a +4 bonus to hit. When a character does fall, the wolves devour the hapless PC as described above. Read the text below to the players:

Wolves lunge and snap from every side, growling and snarling. The icy air sears throats as gasps of breath and cries of pain rise all around. An awful shriek arises from a comrade, and suddenly the wolves are no longer nearby. The pack swarms over the fallen companion, rending limb from body. The animals watch warily with feral eyes as they begin to feed, but they no longer seem interested in attacking.

If the player characters insist on repeating this scene with another member of their party, let them. Eventually they'll manage to kill enough wolves to drive the pack away, or they'll be forced to flee for their lives. After the encounter ends, the heroes can continue on

their way or hole up somewhere—but constantly remind the players of the howls of hunting wolves on the wind.

## Encounter VI: Mikhail

**A**fter the fight with Gregor and his pack, the heroes meet Mikhail Zolnik, a potential ally. Mikhail is described in detail in the NPC section at the end of the adventure. This encounter begins during the night, after the PCs stop and find a place to camp.

Again, the night is bitterly cold. It is unnaturally still and quiet, and the forest is flooded with silver moonlight, making it easy to see. Off in the woods there is a dim, orange glow—the light of a campfire.

The fire was built by Mikhail for his own campsite. If the PCs choose not to investigate, Mikhail approaches them later in the night. If they do scout out the campfire, continue with the text below:

The fire is about a half-mile away, through the forest. Finally, there is a small clearing, and the campfire crackles there before a small lean-to made from pine boughs. A dark-haired young man sits before the fire, warming a cup of steaming tea. The fellow is wearing weathered buckskin, with a great parka of fur hanging over his shoulders. A sturdy bow and a large battle axe lie close to his hand. A pair of rabbits are roasting on a spit over the fire.

Mikhail is a warm and friendly person, and freely offers to share his meal and his hot tea if the PCs approach him openly. He is well traveled and knows most of the people of Vorostokov, and he can tell at a glance that the PCs are not natives. Naturally, he is intensely curious about where the PCs came from.

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**Mikhail Zolnik (6th-level ranger):** AC 4 (*studded leather armor +2, Dex*); MV 12; hp 44; Str 13, Dex 16, Con 17, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (axe); AL LG; THACO 15.

Mikhail wants to know who the characters are, where they came from, where they are going, and whether or not they are allies of Gregor Zolnik, the boyar of the land. If he is satisfied with the answers, he offers to guide the PCs to Torgov for supplies and shelter. Mikhail realizes that he and his fellow villagers need help against the boyarsky, and he hopes that the PCs may turn out to be the allies he was looking for.

Mikhail is patient and polite and answers most questions put to him. If the heroes seem determined to grill him for information without revealing anything about themselves, Mikhail begins to get suspicious of their motives and stops talking. Some specific questions and answers are listed below.

**About the land:** "This land is known as Vorostokov. I am from the village of Torgov, which is not very far from here. I have visited the villages of Voronina, Kirinova, Nordvik, and Vorostokov—the boyar's hall. There are several other villages, but some of these are very far and would take weeks to reach."

**About the weather:** "This winter has lasted all the days of my life. No one knows why spring has not come in a generation, but the village elders say that some awful curse lies over the land. I wouldn't know—I have never seen a spring, and sometimes I don't believe the old stories the elders tell. Just be thankful that you haven't seen a *zilinya neshka*." (See **Appendix B: Exposure and Survival**.)

**About the wolves:** "They are the masters of the forest. You want to avoid them—they have been known to attack even large and well-armed parties. There is a great black wolf, the grandfather of all wolves, that leads them with a devil's cunning."

**About the rulers:** "The most powerful man in

Vorostokov is the boyar Gregor Zolnik. He is an evil man, and his warriors—the boyarsky—enforce a reign of terror over the other villages. The boyarsky demand tribute from the other villages and take it back to Vorostokov, starving the rest so that Gregor's favorites may be fed. My village refused to send tribute when the boyarsky came last week, and I fear that the boyar will make us regret our decision."

**About Igor Rikorsky:** "I know of him, but we have never met. He was a trapper from Kirinova and was respected by many of the people of the land. I am sorry to hear of his death. It is said that he and his brother Ivan attempted the passes to go seek help for Kirinova, their village. If what he writes is true, I must return to Torgov and warn the others."

**About himself:** "I am Mikhail Zolnik. I live in the village of Torgov with my mother's kin. I am Torgov's *marshkovik*, leader of the village's warriors. I can see by your faces that you have noticed that I share Gregor's surname. He is my father, but I haven't seen him for years."

**Can you help us?:** "It is fortunate for you that I was out hunting today. If you had not seen my fire, you might have frozen to death. I will take you to Torgov in the morning—it is about a day's march away. For tonight, I would be honored to share my extra food and supplies with you."

If attacked, Mikhail defends himself or tries to flee. He is an excellent skier and has a pair of skis nearby. If the PCs manage to completely alienate Mikhail, they'll find a very cold welcome in Torgov. Mikhail can lead the PCs to Torgov in one day, as promised. When the PCs finally reach the village, continue with **Encounter VII: Journey to Torgov**, below.

## Encounter III: Journey to Torgov

**T**he village of Torgov is struggling to survive. Between the harsh winter and the boyar's depredations, Torgov is reaching the end of its strength. Despite this, the people are willing to offer the PCs what help they can.

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The twilight is fading as the trail ends at Torgov. The trek has been exhausting. Mikhail's home is a tiny little hamlet nestled in the shadow of a barren, snowy hill. A dozen small cabins sit in a circle in the center of the village, and about a dozen more small farmhouses and workshops are scattered around the general area. Farmland covered by a blanket of snow surrounds the sleepy village. The granaries and livestock pens are almost empty.

Mikhail leads the way to a small cabin and enters, stomping the snow off his boots and shaking the ice free from his parka. Inside, warm firelight fills a cozy taproom. A handful of villagers are drinking hot tea or hard cider, with somber expressions on their faces. They acknowledge Mikhail with smiles and handshakes, but watch the group with suspicion.

"Anna, Pyotr, Kerin, these are strangers I met in the forest," Mikhail says, making introductions all around. "They are exhausted and half-frozen, but they have an odd tale to tell. Bring cider, bread, and blankets for them."

The villagers want to know the same things Mikhail asked of the party, and can tell the PCs about as much about Vorostokov. Refer to **Encounter VI: Mikhail** for details on what the villagers know and don't know. Warming up in the taproom begins to reverse any hypothermia effects and remove frostbite penalties, and the villagers provide enough food for a day's meal.

Food is very precious to the people of Torgov and they ask the adventurers if they have anything to trade for their bread and cider. (If the player characters refuse, the villagers point out an extra weapon, a cloak, or some boots and observe that one can't eat these fine things.)

Some of the people of Torgov include the following:

**Anna Karelia:** A good-looking young woman with an easy laugh and dancing eyes, Anna is Mikhail's fiancée. She does her best to help any injured PCs (she has the healing nonweapon proficiency) and is a friendly, cheerful person. Anna begs the PCs to consider helping Torgov against Gregor's boyarsky.

**Pyotr Bolshoi:** Surly and morose, Pyotr is a hopeless pessimist who informs everyone around him that resisting the boyar is useless. He is a grizzled old farmer who has taken up smith-work to keep himself busy. Despite his words, Pyotr fights courageously on the village's behalf.

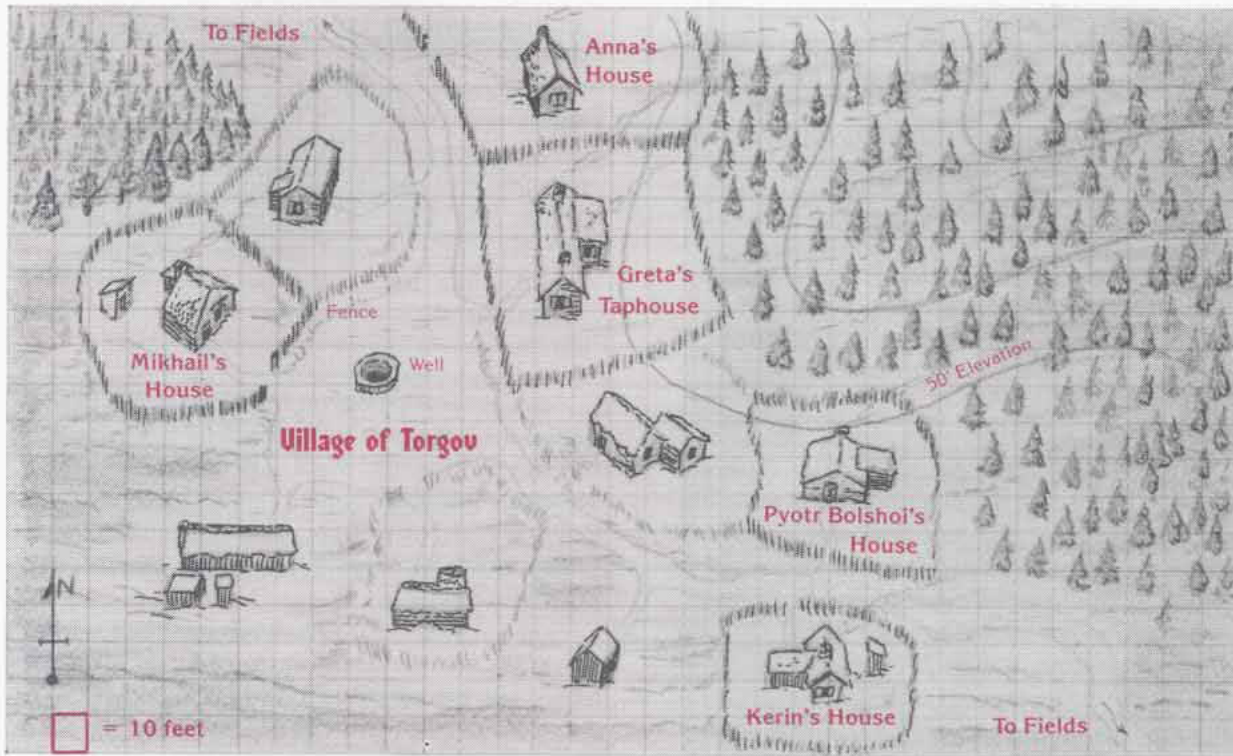
**Kerin:** A tall youth with keen eyes and a cat's grace, Kerin is known as the finest archer in the village. He is easily impressed and hangs on every word the PCs speak. Kerin throws in his pleas with Anna's.

**Greta:** Kerin's aunt is the owner of the taphouse. She is a kindhearted gossip who begins filling the PCs' ears with news about other villagers. Greta feeds and boards the PCs for a reasonable exchange of goods, but if they are completely destitute she considers putting them up for a day or two.

After Mikhail relates the story of his meeting with the PCs, he arranges for the party to be put up in the taproom if they desire lodgings and asks them what their plans are. Any proposal that the PCs develop that includes escaping the region, defeating the boyar and/or the wolves, or lifting the curse of eternal winter meets with approval by Mikhail, who is willing to accompany them under the condition that he can make arrangements for the the defence of the village first.

When the PCs have finished making plans or speaking to some of the NPCs about Vorostokov and their own experiences, they find it necessary to sleep and regain their strength. Greta shows the PCs to a comfortable room with clean straw-pallet beds and heavy sleeping furs. The player characters are able to rest, heal, and

# CHAPTER ONE



memorize or pray for spells. Penalties incurred from frostbite or hypothermia are reduced by the normal rate. The players may insist on posting a watch; if they do, have the character make a Wisdom or Constitution check (whichever is higher) every hour to avoid falling asleep from exhaustion. The events in the next encounter are not affected either way, but the players might be terrified by the idea that their guard dozed off.

## Encounter VIII: The Boyar

**B**efore dawn of the morning following the PCs' arrival in Torgov, Gregor and his men attack. The boyar has no particular quarrel with the PCs, but instead is here to intimidate the people of Torgov and re-establish his power over the village. However, once he realizes that the PCs are here, he wants to capture and interrogate them to find out where they came from.

The adventurers have been in the village for about eight hours, and the DM should allow the characters to have healed some amount of damage, recovered from some of the effects of cold, or possibly regained a few spells.

Sleep is interrupted by the sounds of fighting outside. Men are yelling and cursing, and the clang of steel on steel is clear. The wind howls terribly, and the sun has not yet risen. Only blackness and frost can be seen outside. The village must be under attack!

The outcome of the battle depends upon the PCs' actions. There are three courses of action that the adventurers are likely to follow: they may help the villagers; they may avoid getting involved; or they may try to escape from the village.

If the heroes throw in with the villagers, proceed with the rest of this encounter as it



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appears here. Unless the player characters suffer from catastrophic lack of luck or tactics, they'll be able to turn the boyar and his men away.

If the adventurers stand aside or try to talk to Gregor, the boyarsky defeat the villagers and capture Mikhail. Gregor interrogates the characters extensively. Once Gregor has questioned the PCs, he "invites" them to come to Vorostokov. The DM will have to skip the opening scenes of **Chapter Two** and go on to **Encounter V: Gregor Again** to keep the adventure going.

If the heroes flee, they may get caught up in the battle. However, with a little luck and a good plan, they can avoid trouble and get away clean. Gregor and his men overpower the villagers as described above, but in this situation Mikhail eludes capture and finds the PCs later. The DM should be able to run **Chapter Two** as it is written, although Mikhail is much cooler toward the player characters.

Assuming that the players decide to help the village, continue with the following:

*Outside, there is chaos. Wind stings eyes and the frantic shouts and cries of the wounded are confusing. It takes a moment to make sense out of the scene.*

One of the peasant's huts near the center of the village is burning brightly, and tall, powerful warriors in chainmail are preparing to burn other cabins, torches flaring in their hands. Villagers are attacking the warriors with whatever weapons they can find—pitchforks, hammers, hatchets, and hunting bows. The warriors are cutting them down in a battle-rage.

In the middle of the fight Mikhail frantically hews at the warriors with his axe. "To me! To me!" he cries to the villagers. The men of Torgov are outnumbered and outclassed, but their anger has lent them strength and they are managing to hold their own. More warriors are pouring into the fray, though,

and the peasants will surely be defeated if they do not get help.

Overseeing the attack is a stocky, broad-shouldered man with a bushy beard and a great fur cape. He holds a bastard sword by his side, and directs his followers with hoarse shouts and gestures. Beside him stand a tall, slender youth dressed similarly and a wiry guard with a great battle axe. Their attention is obviously still elsewhere.

As a general guideline to the progress of the battle, the boyarsky kill one villager for each two boyarsky each round. The villagers kill one boyarsky for every eight villagers each round. Boyarsky who are engaged in melee with the player characters or Mikhail do not count for purposes of villager losses.

**Boyarsky (3rd-level fighters) (14):** AC 5 (chain mail); MV 12; hp 18 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 + 1 (long sword, Str); AL CE; THAC0 18.

**Villagers (0-level humans) (24):** AC 9 (furs); MV 12; hp 4 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (hatchet, club, or pitchfork); AL N; THAC0 20.

**Gregor Zolnik (8th-level ranger):** AC 2 (chain mail +3); MV 12; hp 55; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 15; #AT 3/2; Dmg 2d4 + 4 (bastard sword +3, Str); AL CE; THAC0 13 (10 with sword).

**Alexei Zolnik (5th-level fighter):** AC 3 (chain mail, Dex); MV 12; hp 31; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 16; #AT 1 (3/2 with long sword); Dmg 1d8 + 4 (long sword +2, specialist); AL NE; THAC0 16 (13 with sword).

**Dmitri Dneprov (6th-level fighter):** AC 7 (studded leather armor); MV 12; hp 49; Str 17, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 12; #AT 1 (3/2 with axe); Dmg 1d8 + 4 (battle axe +1, Str, specialist); AL LE; THAC0 15 (12 with axe).

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If the PCs do not get involved, Gregor, Alexei, and Dmitri join the fight once half the boyarsky have been killed. If the PCs do get involved, Gregor and his boyarsky retreat once half of their number have been killed.

The text below assumes that the player characters are helping the villagers and that together they have forced the boyar and his men to retreat.

With the additional swords thrown into the battle, the tide is turned in favor of the villagers. The boyarsky fight fiercely and neither ask nor give quarter, and the villagers manage to hold their ground. With an awful oath, the burly man in the rear—the boyar Gregor himself, if Mikhail's description was accurate—orders his men to withdraw. The villagers are too spent to follow, and Mikhail stands in their front rank, sword raised in defiance.

Gregor turns and cries, "Listen to me, people of Torgov! If you surrender, I will spare your village, but if you make me return to Vorostokov to gather my warriors, not a soul among you shall survive."

"Go back to Vorostokov, then!" Mikhail replies. "We have seen your mercy, father! We will die free rather than live beneath your heel!"

"You have not seen the last of me, my son," growls Gregor. "Your outlander allies will not be around to save you the next time we meet, Mikhail. I've let you be for far too long."

The boyar turns his back on the village with contempt and stalks off into the darkness, his men following. The village falls silent, save for the moans and cries of the wounded.



## CHAPTER TWO



n Chapter Two of this adventure, the PCs continue to seek escape from Vorostokov and contend with the boyar. This chapter begins with **Encounter I: Making Plans**. Mikhail wants to journey to Kirinova to find allies in **Encounter II: Mission to Kirinova**. In **Encounter III: The Arayashka**, the PCs run afoul of more of the forest's dangerous inhabitants. After an arduous trek, the heroes reach **Encounter IV: Kirinova**.

In Kirinova, the adventurers discover an awful slaughter and tracks leading into the forest. Unfortunately, they meet the boyar in **Encounter V: Gregor Again**. Gregor reveals his true nature to the heroes in **Encounter VI: The Hunt**. If the characters survive, they can find help in **Encounter VII: The Witches of the Woods**.

### Encounter I: Making Plans

**A**fter the heroes help drive off the boyarsky, the PCs must decide what to do and where to go next. Ideally, they should decide of their own volition to travel to Kirinova with Mikhail. This is the next step for the PCs if they are looking to take down Gregor or if the PCs are simply seeking escape from Vorostokov.

If the players hit upon another idea, don't force them to conform to the adventure. Allow them to try to walk out of Vorostokov (it's impossible) or take any other actions that they wish. Give them a fair shot to do whatever they are trying, and when it fails, resume the adventure with **Encounter V: Gregor Again**. Sooner or later, the boyar will track down the PCs, no matter where they are in the domain.

If the PCs refuse to have anything to do with Mikhail, the hunter states that he intends to travel to Kirinova with or without them to rally support for the revolt against Gregor. (The DM

should enforce rules for getting lost if the players decide they don't need a guide.) Mikhail turns up as a prisoner of Gregor when the characters run into the boyar in **Encounter V: Gregor Again**.

The PCs may rest and heal in Torgov, regardless of what they decide to do. If they helped the people of Torgov and decide to head for Kirinova with Mikhail, read the following text to the players:

The folk of Torgov are very grateful for the assistance in their battle against the boyar. Although they do not have much to give, the people collect a set of winter furs, a basic set of rations, and gear to aid in surviving the harsh climate.

Towards the end of the day after the battle, Mikhail comes to the tavern. He has spent most of the day checking to make sure that Gregor and his men are heading back to Vorostokov.

"I think the village will be safe," he says. "Gregor does not have enough men with him to risk returning—he will have to return to his hall to get more warriors. It will take him ten days or more to get there, depending on the weather."

Leaning forward, the young hunter speaks with an intense look. "I want to go to Kirinova and persuade the men of that village to help us fight off Gregor. I'd like you to come with me—we cannot spare any more of Torgov's menfolk, and you are great heroes. We can go to Kirinova and return before Gregor even reaches Vorostokov. There is safety in numbers, and who knows? You may find some answers to your questions there."

If Mikhail is having difficulty in persuading the PCs to come to Kirinova with him, he mentions that Igor Rikorsky lived there. He also tells them of a wise priest named Sergei Ikoviev who may be able to help them. Mikhail plans to leave within a day or two, but delays a little

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longer if the party requests more time to rest and prepare themselves.

If asked, Mikhail or another of the villagers instructs the PCs in the use of snowshoes or skis and includes a set in the PCs' gear.

### Encounter II: Mission to Kirinova

**T**he journey to Kirinova is no easy trip. Even though the PCs are better equipped and better prepared than they were when they first arrived, the wilderness of Vorostokov can challenge even the most powerful parties. Refer to **Appendix B: Exposure and Survival**.

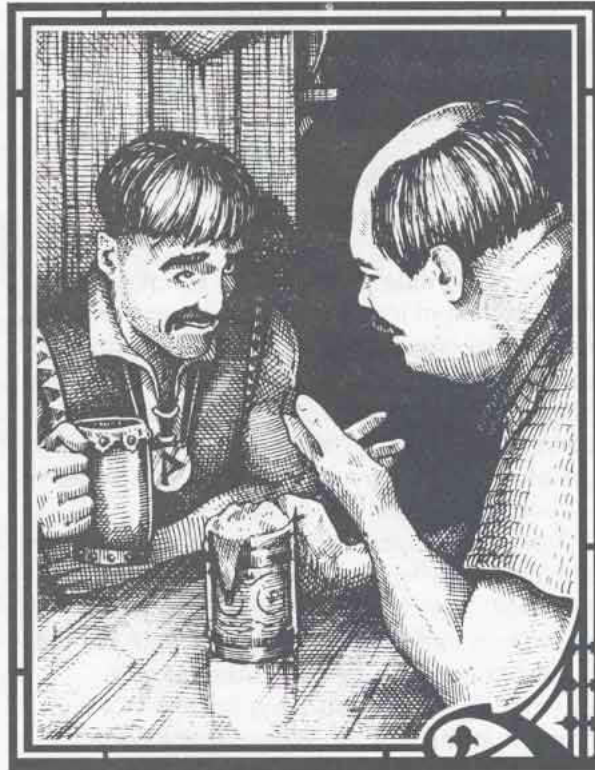
If the PCs are accompanied by Mikhail Zolnik, they do not get lost and are able to reach Kirinova in about five days. Two days into the trek, the party runs across some bad weather—a *zilinya neshka*.

The going has been easy so far, and the weather has been clear and still, although it is still quite cold. Toward the end of the second day of travel, the sky begins to grow very dark and clear, almost as if night is falling—but the sun is still shining. The temperature is dropping rapidly.

A keening wind springs up, rising from nothing to howl ferociously, driving stinging particles of ice before it. Mikhail screams above the noise, "It is the *zilinya neshka*! We must seek shelter at once, or we will surely die!"

The party is caught on an open plain, about two miles from shelter. However, if the PCs make for the nearest cover or come up with a resourceful way to stay warm, they should be able to get out of the storm before they risk cold damage or frostbite. If the PCs try to push on, assess cold damage as described in **Appendix B: Exposure and Survival**.

The *zilinya neshka* lasts for 12 + 1d12 hours before dissipating. During the course of the storm, the arayashka attack. See **Encounter III: The Arayashka**.



### Encounter III: The Arayashka

**W**hile the party is immobilized by the *zilinya neshka*, a band of *arayashka* or "snow-people" tracks them to their camp and attacks.

The fire that has been built provides only minimal warmth against the storm. Worse yet, the air is growing colder and colder, despite the additional fuel heaped upon the flames. Inexplicably, the fire begins guttering and dying out. In a moment, it is gone. In the next instant, sinister shadows surround the camp, patches of blackness in the driving sleet and howling wind of the *zilinya neshka*.

Mikhail leaps to his feet, his cape fluttering behind him in the gale. "The *arayashka*! We are doomed!" he cries.

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The arayashka are described in *New Monsters* on page 62.

**Arayashka (6):** AL NE; AC 3; MV 9; HD 5; hp 26, 23, 22, 22, 21, 19; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2-7 plus drain; SD hit only by silver or +1 magical weapons; SZ M; ML 12; XP 420.

The screaming winds raise a stinging, blinding hail of ice crystals that obscures vision beyond 20 feet. The arayashka are immune to this effect, but the PCs may lose their camp by blundering out of sight in the white-out conditions. Missile attacks suffer a -4 attack penalty, and melee attacks by the PCs suffer a -2 penalty to hit in the swirling winds.

When an arayashka is slain, it leaves a stain of black snow where it was standing when it perished. The creatures give up and retreat if more than half their number are killed, but the survivors continue to harass the party by attempting to extinguish any fire the PCs light. (Note that the PCs are vulnerable to cold damage without a fire.) The arayashka have no lair and vanish once the *zilingya neshka* abates.

### Encounter IV: Kirinova

**A**fter the adventurers have weathered the *zilingya neshka* and the attack of the arayashka, no other obstacles stand between them and their destination. Unfortunately, Gregor and his men have beat the PCs to Kirinova. They fell upon the village in wolf form, slaughtering most of the inhabitants, and now lie in wait for the heroes.

After days of trekking through the frozen forests and the icy plains, the village of Kirinova lies just over the next hill, waiting with a hot meal and warm beds. At the top of the ridge the open farmland that surrounds the tiny hamlet can be seen ahead.

Wolves howl in the forest behind, not too near, but not far enough for peace of mind.

Still several hundred yards from the village, it becomes obvious that something is terribly wrong—there are no fires burning and no lights showing in the dark cabins. The village is still and quiet.

The wolves fall silent. A glance behind reveals dozens of them watching from the edge of the woods. The great black wolf is there! Instantly they sprint silently from the forest and begin to give chase.

The nearest buildings in the village are only about fifty yards away, and the wolves are probably a quarter of a mile or more behind.

The wolves are Gregor and his boyarsky. After leaving Torgov, Gregor and his men made it to Vorostokov in a couple of days in wolf-form. The boyar summoned as many of his warriors as he could find and set out again. First he stopped at Kirinova to punish the rebellious village, and then he set out for Torgov. The boyarsky traveled a day or so when they came across the party's trail and began to track them.

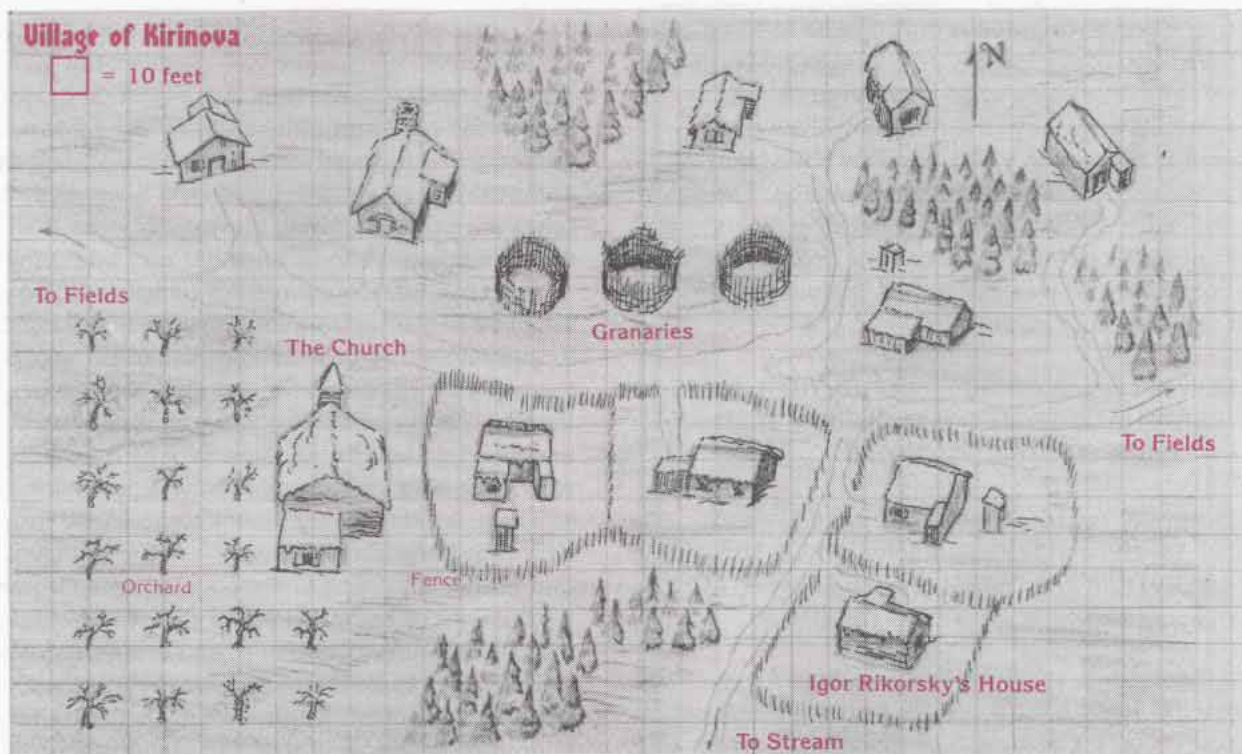
If the characters were badly defeated or had one of their number killed in **Encounter V: The Black Wolf in Chapter One**, a fear check is appropriate at this time.

The PCs have two basic options: stand their ground and fight, or flee to Kirinova. There is no place to hide on the open fields, and Gregor doesn't want to talk to the party until he feels certain that they are in his power.

If the party fights, the wolves arrive in three rounds. They attack savagely, and once any PC is reduced to 10% or less of total hit points, the next successful attack by a wolf inflicts no damage. Instead, the wolf knocks the PC to the ground and seizes the throat in its jaws, trying to subdue the character. Explain to the player that the wolf is gripping the PC by the throat but isn't biting down yet. If the character continues to struggle or tries to escape, the wolf attacks successfully, automatically inflicting maximum damage.

Remember to check for infection with

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lycanthropy when a character is wounded. To keep the players uncertain and nervous, roll dice every time a character is injured by a wolf, whether or not it is really a werewolf.

If the party flees towards Kirinova, read the following to them:

The cover of the buildings seems miles away. Behind, the wolves close silently, flitting over the field like graceful gray shadows, while the deep snow makes movent nearly impossible. A terrible mistake has been made—it seems that there is no way to outrun these pursuers—and then a building is directly ahead, the wolves still fifty yards off.

The door has been knocked off its hinges. The inside of the cabin is dark and cold, but not too dark to hide the horror that lies within. An entire family lies sprawled in death inside, torn to pieces by some savage attack. Outside, many of the nearby houses and

buildings are also dark and cold, with doors swinging in the wind.

The soft pad of paws on the snow signals the arrival of the first of the wolves!

Any character who views the carnage in the homes of Kirinova should make a horror check. Several people did escape the slaughter in Kirinova, but none are here now—they all fled into the woods or are hiding in remote cabins.

The village is completely abandoned. Most of the cabins have been forcibly entered in some way; doors have been splintered open, windows shattered, or even walls broken through. The adventurers can slam a door shut or block a window, but the only advantage they will gain is limiting the number of wolves that can come at them at once.

If the heroes manage to make an effective stand inside a building, Gregor orders some of his boyarsky to assume human form and set fire

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to the player characters' stronghold to force them out.

The battle ends when more than half of Gregor's boyarsky (the normal wolves don't count) have been killed, the PCs have been subdued, or the PCs somehow escape. The boyarsky only withdraw on Gregor's orders and fight to the death unless commanded otherwise, but normal wolves flee if they sustain 75% of their hit points in damage.

**Wolves (12):** AL N; AC 7; MV 18; HD 3; hp 15 each; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 + 1; SD +1 vs. *charm*; SZ S; ML 10; XP 120.

**Boyarsky (werewolves) (10):** AL CE; AC 5; MV 15; HD 4 + 3; hp 24 each; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SD hit only by silver or +1 magical weapons; SZ M; ML 12; XP 420.

**Alexei Zolnik (loup du noir):** AL CE; AC 3; MV 15; HD 6 + 3; hp 38; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6; SA seize throat; SD hit only by silver weapons; SZ M.

This should be an extremely difficult battle for the PCs. If the party fights very well, they have a small chance of driving Gregor off, but otherwise they are pulled down and subdued by the powerful werewolves. When the party (or most of it) has been captured, proceed with **Encounter V: Gregor Again**. Don't worry too much if some characters escape capture; presumably, they'll follow the boyarsky and try to rescue their comrades later.

If the player characters defeat Gregor, they can explore Kirinova. Afterward, they will likely either pursue the wolves or begin heading back to Torgov. Either way, go to **Encounter V: Gregor Again**.

If the PCs somehow evade the wolves, Gregor and his boyarsky hunt for them tirelessly for days. A clever party might be able to avoid the boyar indefinitely, in which case the DM will have to pick up the adventure with **Encounter VII: The Witches of the Woods**.

### Clues in Kirinova

The player characters may get a chance to search the ruins of Kirinova if they are off the beaten path of the adventure, or have somehow defeated or avoided the boyar and his forces. It takes about half a day to thoroughly search all of the buildings in the village.

A search turns up about 45 villagers' bodies, all killed in the same manner as the first the PCs found; enough stores and supplies to provision the party for 20 days; enough skis, snowshoes, blankets, and parkas to equip any character; and several short bows, dozens of arrows, and sturdy hunting knives and hatchets.

There are three major clues to be found in Kirinova: Gregor's trail, Igor Rikorsky's house, and Sergei Ikoviev. If Gregor and his men break off the fight, they head for the village of Vorostokov. (The trail is marked on the DM's map.) The trail appears to be the tracks of many wolves heading out of the village, and leads the characters to **Encounter V: Gregor Again**.

Igor's house can be identified by Mikhail, if he is with the party. Igor lived alone and his cabin has been thoroughly ransacked. Inside, the PCs find the usual assortment of furs, blankets, furniture, and so on, but there are several unusual finds. A corner has been cleared to use as a small forge, and it is obvious that Igor was engaged in making silver arrowheads—there are eight intact arrowheads scattered about the place. Behind a loose stone in the hearth there is a silver *long sword +1*, a *potion of healing*, and a *scroll of protection from evil*.

Last but not least, another portion of Igor's journal can be found in the wreckage. Igor writes of a failed attempt to find a path through the mountains, stating that "so long as this winter persists, the mountains will be impassable." He intended to seek out the witches Natalya and Elena, to find if they knew a way to escape Vorostokov. The last entries reveal that Igor came across the boyarsky in the forest and witnessed their transformation into a pack of wolves. Notes indicate he was desperately

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searching for information on werereatures.

The third clue to be found in Kirinova is the priest, Sergei Ikoviev. He is badly wounded and near death in the church, but the PCs can help him if they act quickly. Sergei is a thin old man with a flowing white beard and a stuffy manner. He was an eyewitness to the attack on the village, and can tell the PCs what happened. Sergei was one of Igor's confidants, and tells the heroes to search Igor's house.

Sergei is too old and frail to accompany the party, but he is happy to provide them with any information that he can. He tells the heroes of the boyar's men attacking several weeks ago, only to be beaten back by the men of the village. The folk knew that the boyar would be back, but they never saw Gregor again—instead, a pack of wolves descended on the village two nights ago and slaughtered all the people that they could catch.

Sergei tells the party that they cannot try the mountains until the winter passes, which will never end until some awful curse is undone.

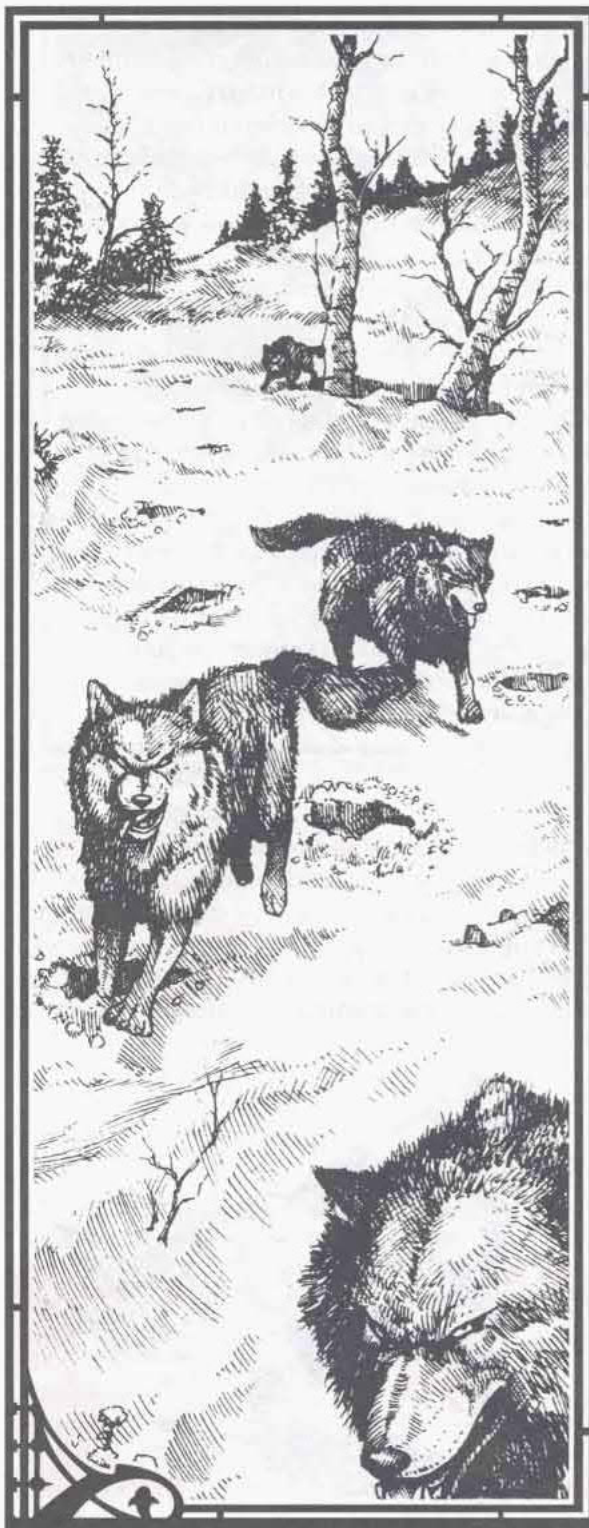
### Encounter V: Gregor Again

If the PCs were captured by Gregor in Encounter IV, skip down to **In Gregor's Power**. The boyar and his men bind and gag the characters securely, traveling to the place marked as **The Clearing** on the map before Gregor speaks to them.

If the PCs were not captured but were instead following Gregor's trail, begin with the following:

The wolves' trail leads southeast from the ruined village of Kirinova. Fortunately, the snow has not been disturbed and it is easy to follow the animals' tracks.

The trail wanders for ten miles or more when it leads into a broad clearing in the forest. Darkness is settling over the woods, and the stars are bright and cold. The wolf tracks enter the clearing but do not leave again. Instead, the barefoot prints of a number of men intermingle with the wolf tracks and head off in the opposite direction.





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Gregor and his boyarsky cached their weapons and armor here before transforming into werewolves to attack Kirinova. The cache itself is a few dozen yards down the new trail, hidden beneath a tree in the forest. No gear remains, but it is obvious that someone excavated a large hole in the snow and covered it with fir boughs.

While the PCs are examining the area for clues, Gregor and his men double back on their trail and come across the party in the clearing. A check for surprise is appropriate.

Gregor has learned that the PCs are a tough fight, and he attempts to capture them by forcing characters who have contracted lycanthropy to change. Any character who was infected by this point in the adventure assumes a werewolf form, requiring 1–3 rounds to change and suffering 1d4 points of damage from armor constriction. During the time of the change, the victim is completely helpless, but changing characters heal 10–60% of their accumulated damage during the transformation.

If none of the PCs are infected, the DM may want to consider infecting a couple of characters to make this scene interesting. Do this only to a character that received damage from a wolf; otherwise, it will be obvious that the DM is cheating.

Once infected characters have transformed, they are under the command of Gregor and can

be controlled by him. Naturally, he turns them against their companions who were not subjected to the transformation.

Gregor wants to capture as many PCs as possible for questioning and to possibly recruit new boyarsky. His men move in to the fight, striking to disarm, pin, sap, or overbear the characters, if the DM wishes to use the optional rules from *The Complete Fighter's Handbook*. Otherwise, the boyarsky simply attack until the characters are rendered unconscious.

*Note:* If Mikhail is with the party, he does not change. He fights as long as he is able.

**Boyarsky (3rd-level fighters) (12):** AC 5 (chain mail); MV 12; hp 18 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 + 1 (long sword, Strength); AL CE; THAC0 18.

**Alexei Zolnik (5th-level fighter):** AC 3 (chain mail, Dex); MV 12; hp 31; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 16; #AT 1 (3/2 with long sword); Dmg 1d8 + 4 (*long sword* +2, specialist); AL NE; THAC0 16 (13 with sword).

**Dmitri Dneprov (6th-level fighter):** AC 7 (studded leather armor); MV 12; hp 49; Str 17, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 12; #AT 1 (3/2 with axe); Dmg 1d8 + 4 (*battle axe* +1, Str, specialist); AL LE; THAC0 15 (12 with axe).

**Werewolves (PCs) (?):** AL CE; AC 5; MV 15; HD 4 + 3; hp ?; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SD hit only by silver or +1 weapons; SZ M; ML 12; XP 420.

Gregor was able to gather some reinforcements after the battle in Kirinova. If some of the PCs manage to escape from this encounter, the boyar orders some of his men to transform and give chase. Any PCs who avoid capture (or the entire party, if they somehow defeat Gregor again) can resume the adventure in **Encounter VII: The Witches of the Woods**.



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### In Gregor's Power

Once all of the PCs have been transformed or subdued, Gregor forces those characters who did transform to change back into their normal shapes and has his men take them prisoner while they are helpless changing. (Again, changing characters heal 10–60% of their accrued damage.) Once the PCs are securely captured, Gregor questions them to find out who they are, where they came from, how they arrived in Vorostokov, and so on. When he finishes with his interrogation, continue with the text below if Mikhail is in the party. Otherwise, skip down to the next section of boxed text.

Gregor steps over to face Mikhail. The young hunter struggles against the boyarsky who hold him. Gregor smiles malevolently and speaks. "I have left you alone for too long, my son," he says quietly. "It is not good for a father to let his children grow up without a hand in their raising. I never thought you'd turn out to be much, but you've surprised me. You're more of a man than I expected."

"Let me go, and I'll show you what you've missed, Gregor," Mikhail spits.

"It doesn't matter whether you hate me or not," the boyar counters. "We are of the same blood, you and I. You hear it too, don't you? The pounding of your heart in the chase, the pleasure of the kill, the desire to be strong and free."

"I do not! I have none of your vile blood in my veins!"

"Perhaps it is time you learned otherwise," Gregor says in reponse. He summons Alexei, who brings a wolf pelt to the boyar. Gregor nods at the boyarsky, who strip Mikhail to the waist. Gregor steps to Mikhail's side and throws the skin over his son's shoulders.

The instant the pelt touches his skin, Mikhail howls in pain and collapses to the ground. The hunter thrashes and screams,



his body changing. In a moment he is gone, and a huge gray wolf snarls and snaps at the men encircling it. With a powerful bound, the wolf springs free and darts off into the forest.

Gregor laughs deeply. "He will be back," he tells his men.

Once the boyar has dealt with his son, he turns his attention to the PCs. Gregor admires courage and fighting skill, and he would like nothing more than to make allies out of the characters who have opposed him.

"As you can see, I have proven that you are already my servants. I can take you anytime I wish. However, I like to test my boyarsky, to see if they truly deserve to be counted among my warriors."

Gregor smiles wickedly. "So, here is your

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test: if you can reach my hall in Vorostokov, I will let you live as new boyarsky. If you do not reach Vorostokov, well . . . then it is clear that you were unfit to be my warriors. I shall give each of you an hour's head start. You will find my hall a day's journey to the southeast, on the banks of the River Trau."

Gregor removes weapons, armor, spell components, and all gear except for basic clothing. He might miss a magical cloak, ring, or pair of boots. The characters are not released together, but instead one at a time, with 1d3 boyarsky and 1d3 normal wolves in pursuit of each individual.

If any character refuses to participate in Gregor's test, the boyar kills that character matter-of-factly and continues with the next PC in line. Go to **Encounter VI: The Hunt**.

### Encounter VI: The Hunt

**T**his scene describes the PCs' flight through the forest with Gregor's boyarsky in pursuit. Each character was released separately, so none of the players know where their character is in relation to the others. Worse yet, the PCs have been stripped of their winter gear and are now considered to be **exposed** for purposes of cold damage.

As each character is released to flee into the forest, take the player aside and ask for a strategy. If a player comes up with a particularly ingenious idea, reward the resourcefulness by allowing the PC to elude the wolves. On the other hand, if a player does something really stupid, then it is very possible that the witches do not arrive in time to save that PC from the wolves. If the PC successfully avoids the wolves, the witches show up in 1d6 hours. Otherwise, the wolves catch up in 1d3 hours.

For those characters that do not escape the wolves, read the following text, altering the circumstances of the meeting to reflect the character's situation:

The forest itself has won. Exhaustion and disorientation have taken their toll, and the howls of pursuers grow louder and louder. In a moment, there is crashing in the undergrowth and the sound of wolves snapping and growling as they close in.

The wolves are all around, their fangs bared and their yellow eyes glowing like hateful coals. They stalk forward, muscles coiling for the kill.

From a distance something shrieks, "Begone!"

A ball of snow comes hurtling out of the shadows to strike a wolf square in the nose. It yowls and backs away, a patch of white frost on its muzzle. Another snowball strikes its haunches, and it turns and slinks away. A pair of stooped old women are advancing, screaming horrible oaths and hurling snowballs with unerring accuracy. The snowballs aren't completely natural—bursts of numbing cold radiate outward as each one strikes its target.

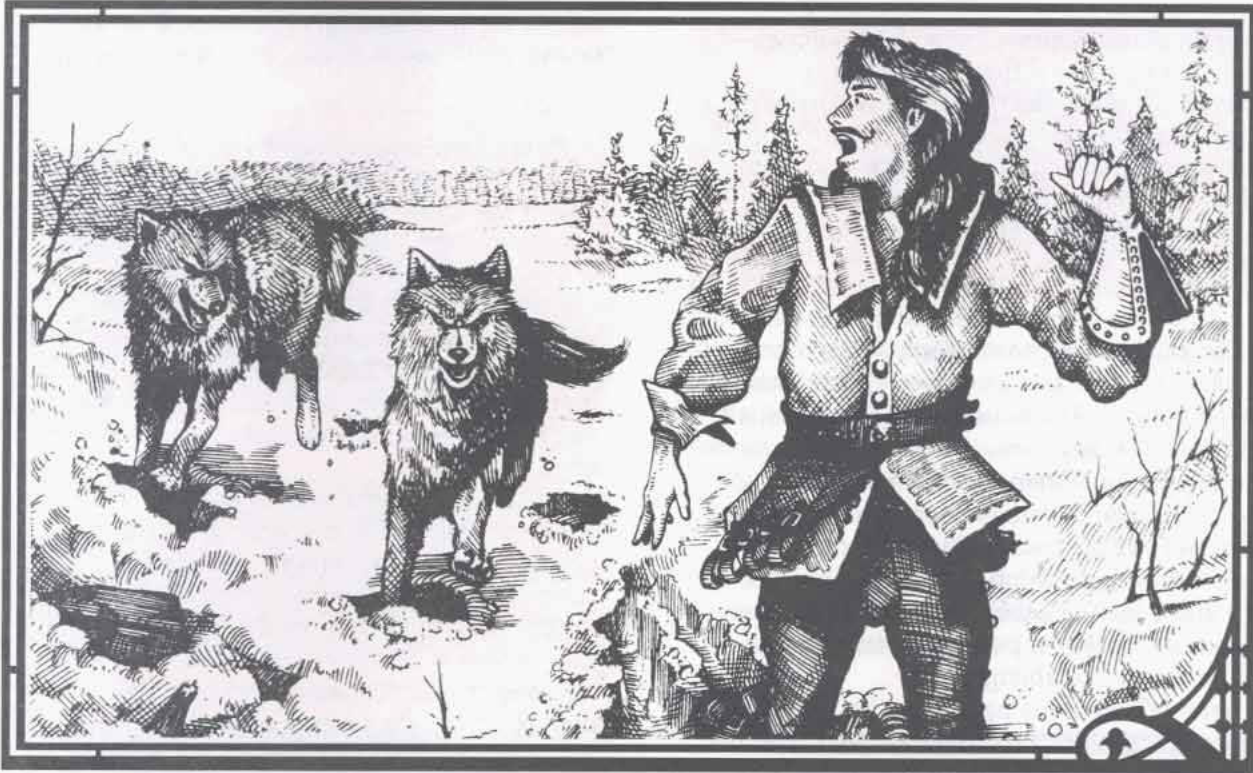
As the wolves retreat, the women turn and speak, wheezing and cackling. "So, you're Gregor's prizes, eh? Well, come with us if you want to live. These woods are full of Gregor's boyarsky."

The two old women are Natalya and Elena, Gregor's sisters. They rescue the PCs one by one, using divination spells to locate each of the characters and then bringing them back to their house. If any PC refuses their aid, they shrug and leave—the wolves return in a round or two. Continue with **Encounter VII: The Witches of the Woods**. If any character manages to evade the wolves and survive the cold but still refuses the witches' aid, they tell the PC that the other characters wait back at their house. If that doesn't do the trick, they leave.

### The End of the Hunt

Gregor was sincere in his offer. If a PC makes it to the boyar's hall without getting killed, the

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boyar accepts the character's service. Of course, Gregor makes sure that he can force the PC to become a werewolf at any time, and he is also able to control the PC's actions while the PC is in wolf form.

Gregor spends the next two to three days searching the forests for the other PCs before returning to Vorostokov in disgust. He spends about a week assembling another force of boyarsky to strike at Torgov again if the PCs do not show themselves.

This could be a very interesting role-playing scenario, but it would be very difficult to referee. A player may try to gain Gregor's confidence, hoping for a chance to turn against him. Each night, Gregor and his men hunt as wolves in the surrounding forest. The strength of Gregor's enchantment eventually wins over any PC; each time the character becomes a wolf, a successful saving throw vs. spells must be rolled or the character effectively falls under a *charm* spell, losing sight of the original purpose in joining the boyar.

### Encounter VIII: The Witches of the Woods

**N**atalya and Elena Zolnik have saved most of the PCs from a horrible death at Gregor's hands, but they expect payment for their assistance. In this encounter, Natalya and Elena explain how the PCs can help them by helping themselves.

The old women wander through the woods, muttering to each other. Only a few of their words are understandable. They seem to be following no particular trail or path, but they soon arrive at a small cottage in a clearing. Yellow light flickers behind the windows, and an inviting curl of smoke rises from the chimney.

They enter and pass out blankets for keeping warm before the fire. "I am Natalya, and this is Elena," one of them says. "The

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people of this domain know us as witches—"they both cackle at that—"but for now it serves our purposes to aid you. We must go find your companions now. Stay here, and do not touch anything or go outside—no matter what you think you hear or see."

The witches bundle up again and then go outside into the snow.

The witches' hut has a single living room, a small root cellar, and a couple of partitioned sleeping areas. The house is cluttered with all kinds of odds and ends, including a large stock of roots, various dried or smoked meats, pots and cauldrons, caged mice and rabbits, thick pelts and furs for use as blankets or shawls, a shelf with magical supplies (eye of newt and so on), and a locked cabinet that contains three *potions of healing*, a *potion of vitality*, and a *potion of invulnerability*.

Natalya and Elena have a pet by the name of Treshka, a sly leucrotta that has been *charmed* by the witches. The creature watches over their house and ensures that no one who finds the place finds their way home. Treshka does not enter the house without his mistresses' permission, but he tries to lure characters out into the snow while the witches are gone by imitating the sound of a child wailing in the cold. Treshka fights to protect Natalya and Elena if they call for him.

**Leucrotta (1):** AL CE; AC 4; MV 18; HD 6 + 1; hp 32; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 3d6; SD kick in retreat; SZ L; ML 14; XP 975.

When the witches have rescued all of the PCs, they go to find Mikhail and bring him back. The hunter is shaken and exhausted by his experience, and claims that he can't remember much of what happened after Gregor put the wolfskin on him. He has not been charmed or controlled by the boyar yet and wants to continue with the PCs in whatever course they decide to take.

Once all the characters are assembled in Natalya and Elena's house, read the following:

Natalya pulls up a stool by the fire and speaks. "We have watched you for some time now. It has been many years since anyone stood against Gregor. My sister and I hate the boyar and want to see him dead for his crimes, so we will aid you against him. At the same time, we are aiding ourselves."

"Years ago that fiend murdered our mother," Elena says, her eyes blazing. "You can help us exact our vengeance against the boyar."

Mikhail still seems weakened and confused, but as Elena speaks he raises his head, his eyes smoldering. "He killed Antonina? Another murder at his hands!"

"By now you have seen the kind of man that Gregor is," Natalya continues. "You have also seen the dark magics that he commands, taking the form of a great black wolf when he wants, and forcing his boyarsky to serve him. He is an evil creature, a creature of darkness. If his rule continues the day will come when Vorostokov is empty save for the howling of the hungry wolves."

"Besides, if you do not strike now, you will never be able to," cackles Elena. "Gregor's curse has touched several of you, and he can force you to change at will. But once your change is ruled by the moon, you will never be able to break the curse. The dark of the moon is only three days away. If Gregor is not dead by then, you will become his servants."

"I will die before I become another of his boyarsky," Mikhail mutters.

"Gregor has returned to his hall and awaits your return. He knows that your efforts to avoid his hunt were futile—no matter what happened, you would be his in a matter of days," says Natalya. "We think he took your weapons and equipment with him. Mikhail knows the way to the boyar's hall."

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"You owe us your lives," Elena says. "You can repay us by destroying Gregor—something that is in your own best interests to do."

"If you do not undo Gregor's curse by the dark of the moon, you will be his forever," Natalya repeats, rising. "You may rest here for the night. We can give you furs and supplies. Mikhail can probably find weapons or allies in the village, but you shouldn't trust anyone you meet in Vorostokov. Many of the people are under Gregor's sway."

As promised, Natalya and Elena allow the party to rest in their cabin. If the party refuses to go along with their demands, the witches curse them for ungrateful wretches and throw them out in the snow with no supplies or furs. They defend themselves with all of the magic at their

disposal if attacked, and summon Treshka to their aid.

If asked for healing, Natalya and Elena give the PCs two of their potions and tend to any injured characters. Both witches have the healing and herbalism nonweapon proficiencies. In return for their assistance, the witches demand something valuable in trade from the character they aided. They can also provide most material spell components from their stores of magical supplies, again charging the PCs dearly for their assistance.

If the PCs question the witches about any of the goings on in Vorostokov, refer back to **Gregor's Tale** in the **Introduction** and feed the players bits and pieces of it.

The next morning, the witches turn the PCs out of their house at first light. They provide directions and the promised supplies. The village is only about a day's march away.



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In this chapter, the PCs race against time to defeat Gregor and undo the curse on Vorostokov (and quite likely themselves) before their doom is sealed by the dark of the moon. Gregor Zolnik must be destroyed if the PCs are ever to be free of Vorostokov.

**Chapter Three** begins with **Encounter I: Journey to Vorostokov**. In **Encounter II: The Village of Vorostokov**, the PCs arrive in the village and get a chance to recruit allies and rearm themselves. **Encounter III: The Boyar's**

**Hall** describes the PCs' confrontation with Gregor in his own hall. In **Encounter IV: Dark of the Moon**, the PCs fight their climactic battle against Gregor Zolnik.

In this last chapter of the adventure, the DM should begin to keep careful track of the time as the dark of the moon approaches. Make a point of informing the players of the phase of the moon each night that their characters camp. The moon wanes from a quarter-moon to a crescent to a bare sliver by the night before the new moon. Feel free to move the actual date of the dark of the moon a day or two to increase the tension and pressure.

### Encounter I: Journey to Vorostokov

**T**his encounter is provided to shake up the player characters and make them wonder if they are in command of themselves. The witches' hut is about a day from the village of Vorostokov, and this encounter occurs when the party is about halfway to their destination.

If Mikhail is not with the party, substitute one of the PCs who is infected with lycanthropy for his part in the following scene:

The parkas and furs provided by Natalya and Elena are barely adequate, but by now the forests of Vorostokov almost feel like home. Still, not having weapons and armor is unsettling, although it does make traveling easier. The woods are quiet and dark, but there is a distinct sensation of foreboding.

Without warning a group of wolves bursts out of the underbrush up ahead, snarling and yapping. They sprint toward the attack, fangs bared. Mikhail suddenly clutches his head and falls, screaming, "No! No!" He thrashes about in the snow, snarling and foaming at the mouth. His eyes are yellow and feral, and his hands are reaching for the wolfskin in his pack!

If the party was disarmed by Gregor and has no weapons to face this attack, a fear check is definitely called for. The power of Mikhail's curse is at work on the hunter, and he is barely able to resist the urge to don his wolf's cloak and join the pack that is attacking the party. (If it is a PC who is affected, the character begins a lycanthropic change to wolf form.)

These wolves are normal, but an attack on the PCs without their normal armaments could prove to be deadly. Reward players who respond with innovative ideas, and let the dice fall where they may for characters who try to pummel the wolves to death.

**Wolves (7):** AL N; AC 7; MV 18; HD 3; hp 15 each; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 + 1; SD +1 vs. *charm*; SZ S; ML 10; XP 120.

Individual wolves flee if they suffer damage from fire or are reduced to 25% or less of their total hit points in damage, and the whole pack flees if four of them are killed or driven off. Characters who can communicate with animals may be able to talk the pack out of attacking. Once the attack is over, any character affected by a lycanthropic fit returns to normal, recalling nothing but an insane desire to to hunt and kill.

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### Encounter II: The Village of Vorostokov

This encounter consists of several linked scenes and clues that will help the player characters when they enter the boyar's hall. The DM should be familiar with the information in the key. The map of Vorostokov is on the inside cover.

After the first scene, these may be run in any order that the DM desires. This encounter assumes that either the PCs have Mikhail with them or that they have received information from Natalya and Elena pointing them towards Marik or Andrei. If the party has no leads, the DM can force a meeting with Andrei or Brother Terensky. The NPC stumbles across the party while they are near his house. Read the following as the PCs reach Vorostokov:

Night has settled over the land, which may be a blessing; the shadows, along with the parkas and furs, hide identities well. The village is surrounded by snow-covered fields, and the glittering band of a frozen river winds past the sleeping cottages.

Across the river from the village, there is a large wooden palisade and the peak of a high roof is visible behind it. Guttering torches flare before an open gate. "Gregor's hall," explains Mikhail. "We should ask some of the villagers if the boyar has returned. We may be able to collect a few weapons—there are many in Vorostokov who have no love for Gregor's rule."

The village (map, inside back cover) was once a small but prosperous farming community, but the fields and orchards that once surrounded Vorostokov have been turned into icy plains by the endless winter. The river Trau flows past the village, a ribbon of white ice. Although the river should be frozen solid, its ice is weak and treacherous.

The houses are built from spruce and white fir logs, insulated by thick mud mortar. Most homes are single-room affairs with heavy decorative blankets used to separate the sleeping areas from the living spaces. Large hearths made from fieldstone and mortar dominate the interior, and sizable fires are kept burning around the clock to ward off the cold. Furnishings are all homemade.

Most of the households have fields near the village that are theirs to tend and reap, but in wintertime the people content themselves with indoor crafts and animal husbandry. Few livestock of any kind remain in Vorostokov; a few goats, sheep, and oxen are all that are left of the village's herds.

### Key to Vorostokov

**1. Smokehouse.** Owned by Tasha Torbachek, the smokehouse is idle these days. In better days the smokehouse was used to preserve salmon caught in the Trau or to smoke meat for the village hunters. Currently there is nothing being smoked, although the building still smells strongly of smoke and fish. It is a good place to hide; the smell will conceal the PCs from the keen senses of the wolves.

**2. Andrei the Furrier.** Andrei is a grizzled old trapper who gave up the trade a few years ago. He now earns his keep by buying pelts from other trappers and curing them. His home is full of martin, beaver, and bearskins. Four complete fur parkas and the makings for about six more can be found here.

Andrei's wife is a thin and quiet woman named Miri. The two have no children, but Miri's sister Anna is the wife of Leonid the smith and the mother of Pyotr the boyarsky.

Andrei is the most outspoken opponent of the boyar remaining in the village. Although he is well past his prime, he is still fit and hardy. Andrei despises the swaggering boyarsky, and considers Gregor a dangerous madman. If the PCs make it clear that they are no friends of the



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boyarsky, they find Andrei to be a loyal and stalwart ally. He gladly parts with his parkas for a reasonable compensation and acts as a guide if asked. Andrei is described in his own scene later in this encounter.

**3. Mother Tasha's House.** Tasha Torbachek is an aging widow who lives here with her grown daughter, Ivinia, and her daughter's husband Grigori. Mother Tasha is renowned as a fine cook, gossip, and midwife. She also brews various home remedies and potions. Tasha is a talkative and likable woman who is far shrewder than she first appears.

Ivinia and Grigori are an argumentative couple who herd goats and gather herbs in the forest. Grigori suffered a badly broken leg as a youth and is lame. He spends his time looking after the animals and carving wooden tools and utensils. Ivinia is a gaunt young woman with a fiery temper.

Tasha is skilled in the healing and herbalism non-weapon proficiencies and helps anyone in need. Tasha has wolfsbane and belladonna in her cellar, and also has two doses of a potent sleeping potion (save vs. poison or fall asleep for 4d4 turns) that she parts with if she is convinced that its use will not be traced to her. All three villagers are deathly afraid of Gregor and his boyarsky.

**4. Katerina the Trader.** Katerina is the widow of Nicolai, a brave man who dared to defy Gregor years ago. Nicolai met Gregor on the village green and defeated him, but the boyar disappeared in a wisp of mist. The next night, Nicolai was killed by a wolf, and Gregor returned unharmed.

Katerina is a sturdy woman of middle years, with a permanent scowl and a suspicious nature. She continues to run Nicolai's business, trading various goods. There is little barter in deep winter, and Katerina has to settle for whatever she can get. She has several bolts of cloth, a couple of sacks of grain, and numerous furs, blankets, tools, and household items.

Katerina also has several sets of snowshoes and skis for sale.

In a trunk beneath her bed, Katerina keeps Nicolai's chain mail, long bow, and *spear +1*. She will loan the weapons to a character who promises to use them against Gregor.

Katerina's oldest son is a broad-shouldered hunter and trapper named Mastislav. He is easily impressed and wants to become one of the boyarsky. Katerina discourages this, but Mastislav spends most of his time in Gregor's stockade, trying to fit in with the boyar's men. Any plots against Gregor that find their way to his ears will be reported to the boyar.

**Mastislav (1st-level fighter):** AC 7 (leather armor, Dex); MV 12; HD 1; hp 7; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 7, Cha 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (hand axe); AL CN; THACO 20.

**5. Oleg the Woodcutter.** Oleg is a giant of a man with the strength and disposition of a wounded bear. He is in his 40s and sports the largest, thickest beard of any man of the village. Oleg's wife Natasha lives with him, but both of his sons have joined Gregor as boyarsky and live at the stockade. Oleg is proud of his sons, but in his heart he can tell that there is something wrong with them. Oleg feels that Gregor is too arrogant and violent, but he also feels that it is better to bend rather than break beneath the boyar's rule.

Oleg has little time for conspiracies or idle talk, but he answers most direct questions put to him. He will not confide in strangers.

**Oleg (0-level woodcutter):** AC 10 (8 with parka); MV 12; hp 8; Str 18, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 9, Wis 13, Cha 6; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 + 2 (double-bladed axe); AL LN; THACO 20.

**6. Dmitri Dneprov's House.** One of the wealthier and more successful farmers of Vorostokov, Dmitri served in the army of the tsar as a youth. He was one of the men who accompanied Yuri and confronted Gregor in the

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forest. Dmitri was one of the first boyarsky to be claimed by Gregor, and is now completely loyal to the boyar.

Dmitri is a short, wiry man with an iron-gray beard. He lives here with his wife, Mara, and their five children. Dmitri spends much of his time at the boyar's side and is often gone for weeks at a time. (He is not here now, in fact.) Mara is a plump woman with a warm and friendly smile, but deep inside she is very concerned—she can tell that Dmitri is not the same man she married.

**7. Ivan the Strong.** In his youth, Ivan Torsakov was known as the strongest man of the kingdom. He wandered widely in search of adventure, and defeated many monsters and bandits. Ivan is now old, with a house full of grandchildren, and he loves to tell outrageous tales of his own strength and skill as a younger man to any who will listen.

Ivan's wife is a good-natured woman named Ingrid. Their daughter Eva and her four children live with them, but Eva's husband Turik is one of the boyarsky. Ivan can sense the violence in Turik's soul and the rest of the boyarsky, but he knows that his days as a hero are long past. Ivan makes sure that he watches Turik closely when he visits.

Ivan resents the boyar and his men, but he also advises caution and restraint. For all his boasting, his success as an adventurer came from his patience and cunning. Ivan knows that an open move against the boyar would result in many deaths, and he wants to wait and watch for a good chance. He loans his sword to a PC if convinced that it will be used it for good.

**Ivan the Strong (5th-level fighter):** AC 10; MV 9 (age); hp 22; Str 15, Dex 11, Con 8, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 14; #AT 3/2; Dmg 2d4 + 1 (*bastard sword* +1); AL LG; THACO 14.

**8. Leonid the Smith.** Leonid is a stocky, balding man with a quiet and retiring manner. He has been the village smith for many years. Leonid



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supports Gregor's rule, believing that the boyar is "putting things to right," and "getting things organized." Most of the other villagers dislike Leonid; he is known to have killed a man in a brawl over a woman when he was younger, and carries grudges for a very long time. Leonid is married to a silent woman named Anna, who is Miri's sister. Their son Pyotr is one of the boyarsky.

**Leonid (0-level smith):** AC 10 (8 with leather apron); MV 12; hp 6; Str 17, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 7; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 + 2 (hammer); AL LE; THACO 20.

**9. Gregor's House.** The boyar abandoned this cottage several years ago, when he finished his new hall north of the town. For many years Gregor Zolnik lived here with his mother Antonina and his sisters Natalya and Elena, but after Gregor killed Antonina his sisters left. A few odds and ends can still be found here, but most of Gregor's possessions are now in his chambers at the stockade.

The villagers avoid this place because they know that Gregor is very sensitive to disturbances or invasions of his old home. It is also rumored in the village that the ghost of Gregor's mother Antonina can be found here sometimes, weaving a cloak of ice to give to her treacherous son. See **Scene E: Antonina** on page 47.

If the PCs search the house, they come up with a number of interesting finds, including cutlery and crockery, needle and thread, decorative blankets, furniture, and snowshoes and skis. This is another good place to hide, since no one will disturb it for fear of angering Gregor.

**10. Sweathouse.** Many of the villagers are fond of gathering in this sauna to discuss the day's events. In recent years it has seen less use, since the boyarsky tend to drive out the other users. The sweathouse consists of a small, wood-floored room with benches that sit around a pit containing an iron stove. Heavy rocks

insulate the building from the direct heat of the stove and hold the warmth. Before Gregor's rule, men and women would alternate days in the sweathouse.

**11. Vladislav the Trapper.** Vladislav is a barrel-chested outdoorsman with bright red hair and a boisterous manner. He is one of the boyarsky, but spends much time pursuing his trade as a trapper. Vladislav was once a good man who opposed the boyar's rule, and was Yuri's closest ally. His good-natured openness conceals a pit of hatred and self-despite; Vladislav hates what he has become and hates Gregor for making him into a werewolf.

Vladislav has no wife, but lives here with his younger brother Olaf. He had two other brothers who accompanied him and Yuri when they confronted Gregor, but the boyar chose to kill them rather than make them into boyarsky. Olaf cannot understand why his brother will not confront Gregor again, not realizing that Vladislav is certain that Olaf will be killed if he dares to turn on Gregor.

Olaf is here now, and Vladislav can be found at the boyar's stockade. Olaf is a red-haired youth, taller and leaner than Vladislav. He is eager to take on Gregor and demands to join any expedition against the boyar.

Vladislav and Olaf have a number of furs and hides that they sell to buyers who have something of interest to swap.

**Olaf (0-level furrier):** AC 10 (8 with heavy furs); MV 12; hp 5; Str 13, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 9, Wis 7, Cha 12; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (hunting knife) or 1d6 (bow); AL NG; THACO 20.

**12. Pavel's Alehouse.** Pavel Cherenky has operated this tavern for many years. The village cannot support a full-time alehouse, so Pavel also maintains fields outside the village. In better days, he brewed beer and vodka from his own fields, but as the winter has worn on, Pavel has exhausted his supplies. His alehouse now functions as a town hall and meeting place.

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Pavel is a pudgy man of middle years who kowtows to Gregor and his boyarsky. His wife is a serious woman named Katya who constantly nags Pavel. Their children are twin girls just approaching marriageable age, and Pavel is seeking someone to marry them off to. He wants to find an available boyarsky, but Katya understands how violent Gregor's men can be and she does not want her daughters to marry one of them.

During the day, there are usually six to ten Vorostokovians gathered here, playing chess and drinking tea. Any plans or conversations held in the alehouse find their way to Gregor's ears, courtesy of Pavel.

**13. Pavlova the Weaver.** Pavlova Tupolek is the widow of Yuri Tupolek, the man who challenged Gregor before the creation of the boyarsky. She is graceful and was a dancer in her youth. Pavlova is cheerful and talkative. The death of her husband was hard on her since she never found out how he perished, but she is a strong woman who overcame her grief. She knows that Gregor was responsible for Yuri's death, but also believes that the hot-headed Yuri probably brought it on himself.

Pavlova has the largest store of cloth left in Vorostokov, hoarding linen and wool until it is absolutely necessary to use it. She repairs old clothing to conserve the precious fabric. Despite her efforts, Vorostokov is exhausting the remaining bolts of linen and bags of wool. Pavlova is aided by her son Tarak, a strong young lad who harbors an intense hatred of Gregor and the boyarsky. Tarak is a rash and emotional youth, and Pavlova fears that her son will meet his father's end if he is not careful. Tarak eagerly joins with anyone who claims to oppose Gregor.

**Tarak Tupolek (1st-level ranger):** AC 8 (Dexterity); MV 12; hp 8; Str 13, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 12; #AT 2, or 1 and 1; Dmg 1d6 (bow) or 1d6 (hand axe) and 1d4 (hunting knife); AL NG; THACO 18; species enemy: wolves.

**14. Anatoly the Carpenter.** Anatoly Zamyatik lives here with his sisters Vanda and Ilya, their husbands Russek and Fyodr, and his three nieces. Anatoly is much older than his sisters and is the patriarch of the family. Both Russek' and Fyodr are boyarsky, and they often leave Anatoly to look after their families. Anatoly is a gloomy fellow who resents life in general and Gregor and his boyarsky in particular.

Anatoly's skills are not often called upon, but he does keep busy with minor repairs and patchwork. He is the best builder in the village, and he works at patching and filling the mud mortar of his neighbor's cabins, or adding new layers to their roofs. Anatoly worked on Gregor's hall and knows of its secret passages. He aids anyone who opposes Gregor, but only if he feels that the PCs are competent and responsible; he doesn't want to be caught backing the losing side.

**Anatoly (0-level carpenter):** AC 10; MV 12; hp 4; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 8, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 7; #AT 1; Dmg 1d3 (knife); AL LN; THACO 20.

**15. Dvorak the Tanner.** This ramshackle cabin is the home of Dvorak the tanner, an ancient peasant with a vile temperament. Dvorak lives alone, having outlived his wife and both of his sons, who perished at Gregor's hands during the making of the boyarsky. Dvorak's sanity is slipping away, and he does not bother to maintain himself or his cottage. The vats, tools, and hides of the tanner's trade lie scattered about his workshop in disarray.

Dvorak spends his days peering out of his dirty windows to keep an eye on Gregor's stockade and on the village children, whom he refers to as "vile little devils." He is spiteful and ornery, and only survives because a few of the kinder villagers remember his better days and look out for him. Dvorak assumes that strangers are thieves and brigands, and defends himself with a dangerous old crossbow.

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If a PC manages to get into Dvorak's home without getting shot at and convince the old man that he means no harm, Dvorak is able to spell out details of the boyarsky's comings and goings. He also tells the heroes that he suspects that Gregor "guards his house with wolves," and that each night the men leave to go into the forest.

**16. The Trau Bridge.** Built with solid stone abutments and a sturdy wooden frame, the bridge sees little use since the Trau is frozen over. The Trau bridge was built by Anatoly and an old stonecutter more than 40 years ago.

**17. Marik the Mouse-eater.** Marik is the village's hedge wizard, a role he jealously guarded from the Zolnik witches when they lived in the village. He is a strange man, dressing in ragged hides and living apart from the rest of the Vorostokovians.

The people of Vorostokov tend to avoid Marik, but seek him out on rare occasions when they need advice about unusual signs or events. Despite his suspicious ways, Marik freely dispenses his cryptic wisdom. Marik is very observant and insightful, and he is the only villager who realizes that Gregor and his boyarsky are actually werewolves. He keeps this knowledge to himself because he believes that he will be killed if he speaks against the boyar and his men.

Marik advises the heroes to flee while they can, rather than confront Gregor—he is convinced that supernatural forces guard the boyar. Marik has a small supply of wolfsbane and belladonna, and his greatest treasure is a pouch of 12 silver sling bullets that he keeps under his bed.

If the PCs ask Marik about the disappearance of Gregor's body, or ask how Gregor may be destroyed, Marik suggests that they may find answers to their questions about the boyar in Gregor's old house. Marik suspects that the ghost of Gregor's mother haunts the house. He does not volunteer this information.

Marik gained his name because he refused to eat any of the meat provided by Gregor, hunting field mice instead.

**Marik the Mouse-eater (2nd-level wizard):**  
AC 9 (skins); MV 12; hp 5; Str 8, Dex 9, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 10; #AT 1; Dmg 1d3 (knife); AL CN; THAC0 20; spells *affect normal fires, sleep; potion of healing, potion of gaseous form, potion of poison.*

**18. The Boyar's Hall.** Surrounded by a sturdy palisade of leather-bound logs, Gregor's hall is a grand building. Thick fir-log beams support a high roof shingled with bark. A foundation of fieldstone and wood-plank flooring make the boyar's home the strongest and most luxurious building in the entire domain.

Gregor's hall and its residents are described in detail in the next encounter.

**19. The Church.** Constructed from thick wooden planks, this building is obviously different from the log cabins of the villagers. The church is small, with only two rooms: a worship hall and the priest's personal quarters and sacristy. A small bell tower rises from the peak of the roof. The building is brightly painted with colorful and intricate religious designs, but these have faded and it is clear that the building has not been maintained. Several windows of real glass have been boarded up or stuffed with old blankets.

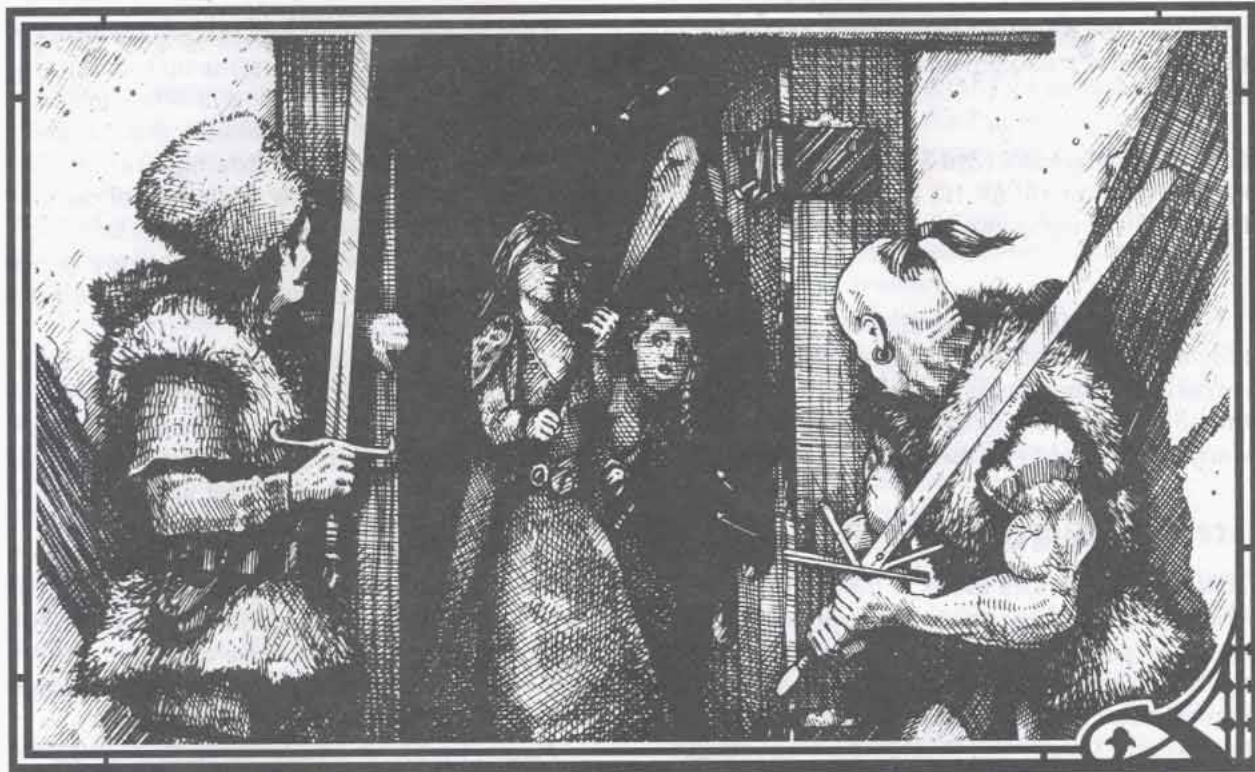
The village priest is an aging fellow named Brother Terensky. Over time, many of the villagers, including Terensky himself, came to believe that the gods had turned away from Vorostokov. Only a handful of people still come to the church to pray and reflect.

Terensky is an excellent source of local lore, as described in **Scene D** on page 47.

### Scene A: The Boyarsky

This encounter occurs as the PCs are out and about in the village. It can be used as the party

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first enters Vorostokov to set up a meeting with Andrei or Brother Terensky, or it can be used as an obstacle after the party has met these NPCs. Most of Gregor's boyarsky have family in the village, and the party accidentally runs into a pair of the warriors.

The lights of Vorostokov's cabins are yellow and dim, and the shadows are deep in the village's alleys. The wind is gusting, bringing forth icy tears. Suddenly a pair of large men in furs round a corner! They draw swords from their sides and advance. "Who are you?" one demands. "I haven't seen you around here before."

The party can avoid a fight with a quick and clever answer. The boyarsky accept most reasonable stories, such as a claim to be traders or furriers from another village. (Mikhail or any allies from the village pass the party off as

visiting cousins from Oneka.) They will not believe any story in which the PCs portray themselves as boyarsky or natives of the village. If any of the PCs are wearing heavy armor or carrying any weapons besides bows, staves, or knives, the boyarsky realize that they are not legitimate travelers.

The boyarsky attack any party that they have caught in a lie after demanding the party's surrender. They fight until seriously wounded and then retreat back to the boyar's hall to raise the alarm and gather reinforcements. If the PCs allow them to escape, one-half of all the boyarsky currently at Gregor's hall (see **Encounter III: The Boyar's Hall**) form into a warband and come to the village to search for the PCs.

If the PCs manage to capture either of these boyarsky, they are able to question them. The warriors resist giving out any information that is outright treason, but they can be tricked into telling the party that Gregor still has warriors

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searching the forest for them. They also know that the party's equipment and weapons are in the hall.

### **Sturm and Marksha (3rd-level fighters):**

AC 5 (chain mail); MV 12; hp 21 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 + 2 (long sword, Strength 18); AL CE; THACO 18.

Sturm and Marksha are the sons of Oleg. If they are killed and Oleg finds out the PCs were responsible, he informs Gregor and the others at the boyar's hall, bringing back a contingent of warriors to apprehend the PCs.

### **Scene B: Andrei the Furrier**

This scene describes the PCs' meeting with Andrei, one of Gregor's most outspoken opponents. If Mikhail is with the party, he urges them to seek out Andrei when they first arrive in Vorostokov. Other NPCs inclined to be friendly to the party (Marik and Brother Terensky) also refer the PCs to Andrei.

If the PCs don't have a guide with them, the other NPCs simply tell the party how to find Andrei's cabin. It is also possible for the player characters to meet Andrei by accident in the street.

Mikhail leads the way to a large cabin with a snow-mantled roof and knocks softly on the door. A moment later, it is opened by a thin old man with white hair and a face like seamed leather. "Mikhail," he says, surprised. He looks the group over, and then motions for everyone to come in.

Inside, the cabin is filled with all kinds of cured pelts and skins, as well as raw skins stretched on racks to dry. A gaunt woman sits by the fire, sewing several pelts into a warm cape. The host straddles a chair and speaks. "I am Andrei. My wife is Miri. I can see that you are strangers to Vorostokov. Who are you, and why have you come?"

If the PCs make it clear that they are no friends of Gregor, Andrei warms up to the party. He offers to help them in their efforts against the boyar. Some of the assistance that Andrei can provide includes the following:

**Parkas, furs, and snow gear:** Andrei can outfit the party, if necessary. He loans the equipment to characters who cannot pay, but he would appreciate some item of reasonable value in exchange for his furs.

**Weapons or armor:** Andrei can gather half a dozen hunting bows (treat as short bows) and three score arrows from his neighbors. He can also provide the raw materials for clubs, staves, and slings, as well as a knife for any character who wants one. Again, these weapons are considered to be on loan. Andrei also knows of the weapons kept by Katerina the trader and by Ivan the Strong, and can guide the PCs to their homes if the PCs ask for more weapons.

**Healing or provisions:** Andrei refers the party to Mother Tasha or Brother Terensky.

**Magic, herbs, or advice:** Andrei refers the PCs to Marik the Mouse-eater, or to Brother Terensky, depending on the nature of the assistance requested.

**Allies:** Andrei helps the PCs if asked, but he also recommends that they talk to Tarak Tupolek and enlist his help. He hints that very few of the other villagers can be trusted. Andrei would prefer to be used as a lookout or scout.

**The boyar's hall:** Andrei can tell the PCs that Anatoly the carpenter oversaw the hall's construction and knows a lot about it. Andrei recommends using the back entrance to get in rather than the front door. He also tells the party to look for a "big, red-haired boyarsky—that's Vladislav, and he's not a bad fellow. He might help you if you can talk him into it. Bring his brother Olaf with you."

**Andrei the Furrier (2nd-level fighter):** AC 10 (8 with heavy parka); MV 12; HD 2; hp 13; Str 13, Dex 9, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 9; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (hunter's knife); AL NG; THACO 19.

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### Scene C: Pavel's Treachery

Run this scene any time the PCs are traveling from one building to another. Pavel Cherensky, the owner of the tavern, catches wind of strange doings in the village and decides to investigate. If the PCs do not stop him, he warns the boyarsky in an attempt to curry favor with Gregor.

This encounter can also be used if the adventurers visit the alehouse—a course of action that Mikhail or Andrei strongly advise against.

Pavel Cherensky is not particularly skilled at trailing or observation. (If a PC thief succeeds in an Intelligence check, it is obvious that they are being followed by a complete amateur.) Any reasonable plan to double back on Pavel or to set up an ambush will work, but if the PCs simply turn and confront him, the pudgy innkeeper flees shrieking.

**Pavel (0-level villager):** AC 10; MV 12; hp 3; Str 9, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 6, Cha 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d3 (knife); AL NE; THAC0 20.

More than anything else, Pavel doesn't want to get hurt. He may make a show of defending himself with his knife if suddenly set upon, but once it is clear that he is outnumbered he tries to run away. If captured, Pavel first insists that he was doing nothing wrong. If the party persists, Pavel then tells them that he has already sent for help and that Gregor and his boyarsky are on the way. This is a lie; Pavel has not had a chance to raise the alarm yet. Of course, the PCs don't know that. . . .

If the party lets Pavel go, he goes to the boyar's hall and alerts the warriors to the PCs' presence in the village. Pavel can easily be bound and kept someplace out of the way, but if the PCs kill him Andrei and Mikhail become much cooler towards the party. (*Note:* Killing a prisoner to make sure he doesn't warn one's enemies is an evil act and should be treated as such with dark powers checks.)

### Scene D: Brother Terensky

Mikhail or Andrei lead the PCs to Brother Terensky's church if the PCs ask for more information about werewolves, old legends, or simply request healing. At the DM's option, Terensky can be encountered elsewhere in the village if the party needs to be put back on track for the adventure.

Terensky provides shelter or healing if the party requires it, but he has something of even greater value—information. He can tell the PCs much about the career of Gregor, from his days as a simple hunter through his confrontation with Yuri and marriage to Sasha. Refer to **Gregor's Tale** in the **Introduction**. Terensky does not know that Gregor is actually a werewolf or that Gregor actually killed his rivals, and his telling of the boyar's story is somewhat incomplete.

If asked about lycanthropy or werewolves, Terensky proves to be quite knowledgeable. He can sketch out the basic details of skin-changing lycanthropy (the kind that Gregor and Alexei suffer from), as well as normal lycanthropy. If asked about a cure, Terensky does not know what needs to be done, but that the legends all agree on one point: the first lycanthrope that started the infection must be found and slain, or none of his bloodline will ever be free.

**Brother Terensky (1st-level priest):** AC 10; MV 12; hp 4; Str 7, Dex 12, Con 9, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 12; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; AL LG; THAC0 20; *cure light wounds* (x2), *bles*.

### Scene E: Antonina

This encounter occurs when the PCs visit Gregor's old house in the village. If the PCs investigate this place before they go to the boyar's hall, Antonina only shows herself if Mikhail is with the party. Otherwise, she waits until the party has proven that it can defeat the boyar by besting him in **Encounter III: The Boyar's Hall**.



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If the PCs do not have Mikhail with them, the DM may need to work this encounter back into the adventure. Antonina is the only one who knows how Gregor may be truly destroyed, and if the players don't get to this encounter they will not be able to complete the adventure.

The wind moans eerily within the silent ruin of Gregor's home. The door is standing open, and snow has drifted in to cover the floor. Few furnishings are left—an old rocking chair by the cold fireplace, a battered trunk by the window, and a few hides hanging on the walls. Some odds and ends such as clay jars, iron pots and knives, and needle and thread litter the earthen floor of the house.

The musty smell of long disuse is strong, and the place seems dank and small. The wind moans higher, and suddenly a terrible chill descends. There is another presence in here.

The battered old chair by the fire begins to rock, slowly creaking back and forth, and a faint cackling laugh can be heard.

Give the PCs a chance to run away. If the players seem unimpressed, a round of fear checks may be called for. If the PCs have already played out **Encounter III: The Boyar's Hall**, Antonina tells them to go to Gregor's cave, where they will find the black wolf. To make him vulnerable to their weapons, they will need to make a potion of snow, wolfsbane, and salt and then dip their weapons into the mixture. If they have not yet killed Gregor, read the text below:

In the rocking chair a ghostly glimmering of a white, crystal net of glittering ice takes shape. A pair of pale hands appear next, working the net, weaving it. In a moment, the

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rest of the apparition becomes clear. An ancient crone rocks back and forth, cackling and muttering as she weaves the powdery snow into a spider's web of ice.

"Welcome, Mikhail, welcome," she whispers. "Come and give your grandmother a kiss, my boy."

Mikhail's face is slack with terror. "*Bolzhoi moi!* It is Antonina."

"Twelve years ago your father murdered me, Mikhail," the spectre continues. Her voice is as faint as the wind in the snowdrifts. "There is a power in this land that sustains his curse, that gives life to him now. Gregor cannot be destroyed. If you kill him, his curse will only bring him back stronger than before. His curse must be broken if you are to finally kill him."

"The curse of the wolf-skin?" Mikhail asks, his voice tight.

"It is Gregor's source of power, and his only weakness. Sprinkle the skin with salt and wolfsbane, and when next he dons it he will become the black wolf again, but he will be vulnerable to your weapons. Kill him while he is caught in this form, or you will never be able to defeat him again.

"If Gregor is killed in man-form his curse will carry him off to a secret cave in the forest. If you are quick you will be able to poison his skin before he vanishes. His cave lies three miles to the south, beneath a black and rotten oak."

"Will this break the curse that he passed to me?" Mikhail asks, desperately. But the apparition is fading again, already. The witch's laughter echoes like shattered icicles and is gone.

Antonina responds to no other questions. She becomes enraged if attacked, and defends herself to the best of her abilities. Her touch does not age its victims, but inflicts 1d10 points of damage, drains one level, and inflicts frostbite on the victim.

**Antonina (ghost):** AL LE; AC 0/8; MV 9; HD 10; hp 41; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 + special; SD special; SZ M; ML 14; XP 7,000.

### Encounter III: The Boyar's Hall

In this encounter, the PCs enter Gregor's stockade to confront the boyar at last. If the party has gotten off track in the adventure and did not lose their equipment, the DM should compensate by making this portion of the adventure tougher by increasing the numbers of boyarsky encountered. Similarly, if the players role-played well and used their wits, this portion of the adventure might be a little easier for them.

The best plan for the PCs is to sneak into the stockade, recover their gear, and then go after Gregor. The DM should be prepared to improvise if the PCs try some other method of confrontation. Whatever occurs, Gregor is tired of dealing with the PCs and will do his level best to kill them this time around.

Mikhail or any of the other NPCs from Vorostokov can act as guides inside the hall, describing the rough layout and where things are. Anatoly is the only person besides Gregor who knows of the secret passages.

If the players are completely at a loss when Gregor's body disappears (i.e., they have not yet played out **Scene E: Antonina**), Mikhail or another Vorostokovian NPC suggests that they return to the village to seek advice and understanding.

### The Stockade

Gregor's hall is surrounded by a sturdy wooden palisade 12 feet in height, with sharpened logs to discourage climbers. Most characters can scale it with care. Inside the palisade there is a catwalk seven feet from the ground, allowing defenders to fight over the top of the wall. There are no guards on the walls at the moment, but if the alarm was raised in the village, eight boyarsky (from area 5) patrol the

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walls in groups of two.

The front entrance to the stockade is a sturdy swinging gate, usually left open. It is guarded by two boyarsky who challenge all visitors. If the PCs bring Olaf, Vladimir's brother, with them, they can bluff their way through the front gate. There is a smaller rear entrance that is unguarded but usually closed and barred.

**Boyarsky (3rd-level fighters) (2):** AC 5 (chain mail); MV 12; hp 19 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 + 1 (long sword, Str); AL CE; THAC0 18.

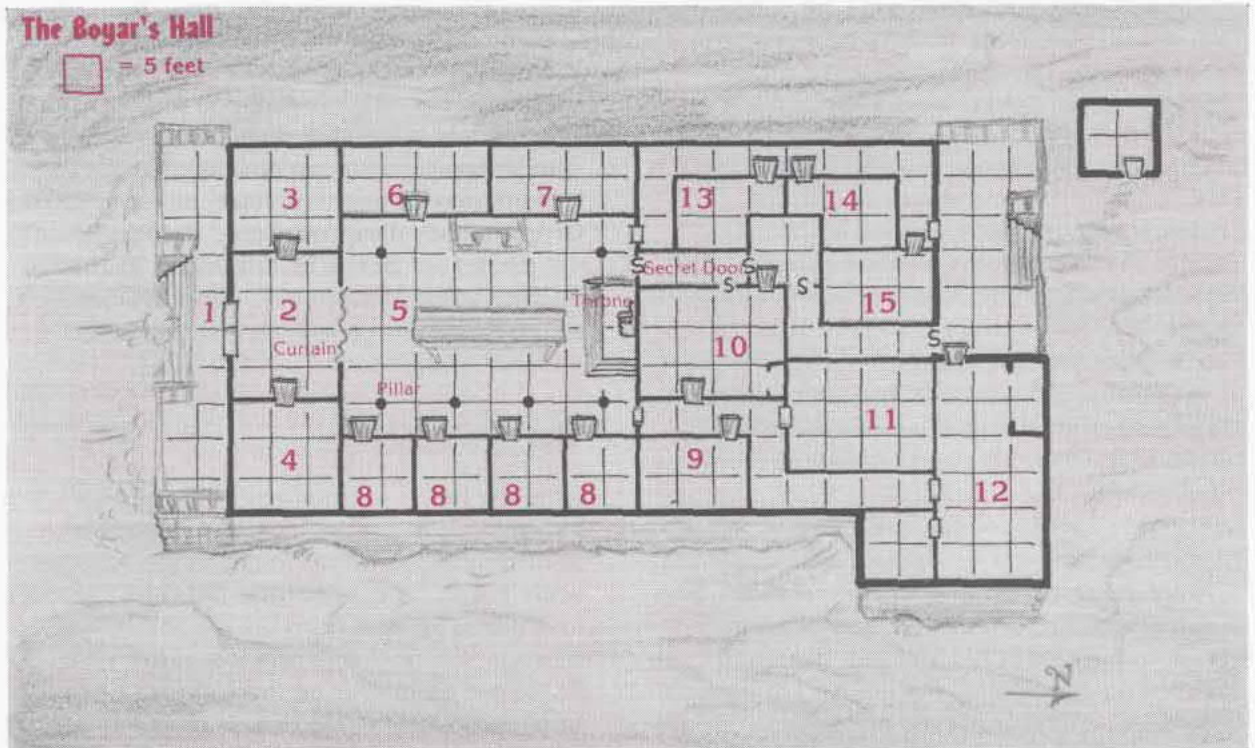
Inside the stockade, there are several small sheds and storage buildings on the grounds. Gregor's hall is obviously the only building of importance inside. Characters moving around inside are easily spotted by any guards on the catwalks unless they take some kind of reasonable precautions.

## The Hall

The boyar's hall is a large, strong building made from huge spruce logs. It sits on a fieldstone foundation. The hall has no windows, but there are several chimneys on the roof. One is large enough for a skilled climber to descend, and leads into area 5. Unfortunately, a good-sized fire is kept going in the hall all night long.

The front of the hall is surrounded by an expansive porch and a small flight of wooden stairs leads up to the front door. There are two small entrances in the back of the hall. The door to the kitchens is unlocked, but the door just outside area 14 is usually locked and barred from inside.

If the PCs enter the hall by night, they do not have any random encounters with the hall's residents. If they come in broad daylight, they find the hall to be quite busy, with people coming and going all the time. The PCs are



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certain to encounter both boyarsky and servants in **areas 2 and 5** and servants in **area 12** if they enter the hall by day.

**1. The Outer Porch.** A few benches and chairs line the front of the hall. Several deer carcasses and game birds hang from the beams, waiting to be cooked. The door leading to **area 2** is left unlocked and unbarred. If the alarm has been raised, the guards from **area 3** are here.

**2. Antechamber.** This small room is used as a dressing area for people going out into the cold. Benches line the walls, and a number of fur boots are lined up beneath them. A large curtain of caribou-skin is kept tightly closed to insulate this room from the great hall.

**3. Guard Chamber.** Four boyarsky are posted here to keep an eye on the hall. From time to time they also make rounds of the grounds and the interior of the hall. One or more of the guards was with Gregor the last time he met the PCs, so they attack immediately.

**Boyarsky (3rd-level fighters) (4):** AC 5 (chain mail); MV 12; hp 21 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 + 1 (long sword, Str); AL CE; THAC0 18.

**4. Cloak Room.** Bulky winter furs hang from pegs in the wall, almost filling this small room.

**5. The Great Hall.** By night this chamber is often deserted. To one side, a great hearth rises to the ceiling. Wooden pillars and thick spruce beams support the roof over this majestic hall. A great table runs down the center of the room, with enough benches for 30 or 40 warriors. At the far end of the hall is a raised dais with a throne carved of oak. Hanging over it is a banner showing a snarling wolf's head.

Five visiting boyarsky are sleeping in here. They are not particularly alert and the PCs can sneak past with care.

**Boyarsky (3rd-level fighters) (5):** AC 10; MV 12; hp 22 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (long swords by pallets); AL CE; THAC0 18.

**6. Trophy Room.** Several elk, bear, and caribou heads are mounted here. Other odds and ends include a banner of a sheaf of wheat (the emblem of Oneka, one of Gregor's conquests), a silver-headed ceremonial spear (from the village of Nordvik—the spear is a perfectly usable silver weapon), and a gem-studded hauberk of chainmail (a gift from Duke Andrei, worth over 450 gp). Most importantly, the PCs' weapons and armor are here in bundles.

**7. Armory.** The door to this chamber is locked; Gregor, Dmitri, and Alexei have keys for it. Inside are four suits of chain mail, three suits of studded leather armor, eight spears, five daggers, six long swords, and 120 arrows.

**8. Loot and Stores.** These chambers contain kegs of ale and mead, casks of vodka, sides of cured beef, spare boots and packs, sacks of grain and potatoes, cheese, and other miscellaneous items such as rope and tools. The doors are locked; the keys are held by Gregor, Dmitri, and the chief of the servants.

**9. Alexei's Chambers.** Alexei Zolnik is here, sleeping. He is awakened by any fighting in **areas 5, 10, or 11** and joins the fray after taking two rounds to get dressed. If Alexei is attacked while he is asleep, he awakens when he takes damage and calls for help at the top of his lungs, awakening anyone within 50 feet.

**Alexei Zolnik (5th-level fighter):** AC 3 (chain mail, Dex); MV 12; hp 31; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 16; #AT 1 (3/2 with long sword); Dmg 1d8 + 4 (long sword +2, specialist); AL NE; THAC0 16 (13 with sword.)

Alexei's chambers are very comfortable, with a real wooden bed and wall-hangings of embroidered caribou hide. His weapons and

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armor are in a trunk at the foot of his bed. There is a larger trunk by the wall with several changes of clothing and a hidden pouch containing four gemstones worth 50 gp each.

**10. Gregor's Chambers.** These are the largest and most luxurious personal chambers in the hall. A fire blazes in a small hearth by one wall, and rich furniture of oak (stolen from Nordvik) decorates the room. A door to the north leads to a large closet with several changes of clothing, plus a large amount of woman's dresses and shawls—Gregor never had the heart to throw out Sasha's belongings.

Gregor and Dmitri are here (See **Gregor** at the end of this section). If they hear any fighting in the hall, Dmitri investigates while Gregor goes to gather boyarsky from **areas 13 and 11** before heading off to confront the intruders. If they are attacked here, Dmitri and Gregor call for assistance and throw themselves into the battle furiously. Anyone within 50 feet of this room hears their cries for help and comes to their aid as soon as possible.

Gregor's wolfskin hangs from the wall above his bed. It disappears with him if he is killed. Other decorations include a heraldic *shield +1* (another gift of the duke's), a cabinet with a fine longbow (customized to take advantage of Gregor's 16 Strength), a canvas bundle containing 8 *arrows +2*, and a *potion of healing* brewed for Gregor by his sisters before their falling out.

**11. Boyarsky Chambers.** This bunkroom contains beds and lockers for eight boyarsky. Many of Gregor's warriors prefer to live in their home villages, but a few reside with the boyar. On the occasions when more of the boyarsky gather here, the visitors often bundle up in furs and sleep in the great hall. Six of the eight warriors who live in this room have guard duty tonight and can be found in **area 3** or outside. The remaining two are asleep. If attacked, they try to summon help and may awaken Alexei, Gregor, or the boyar's servants.

**Boyarsky (3rd-level fighters) (2):** AC 10; MV 12; hp 24 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 + 1 (long sword, Str); AL CE; THAC0 18.

The foot lockers contain various changes of clothing, blankets, extra weapons, and so on.

**12. The Kitchens.** Several servants are sleeping on pallets in the corners of this room. A warm fire is crackling in the hearth, and a pot of hot water and some stew are hanging over the blaze for anyone who wants some late-night tea and food. The servants awaken if the PCs make a lot of noise in here, but unless they are actually accosted most assume that the intruders are boyarsky and go back to sleep. If the PCs startle or alarm the servants, their cries awaken the boyarsky in **area 11**.

The servants include a couple of grooms, two scullery boys, and a cook. The small room off of the kitchen is a pantry, with a large store of dried meat, vegetables, and herbs.

**13. Boyarsky Chambers.** Four boyarsky share this room. All four of them are here now, engaged in a friendly game of knucklebones over a flask of vodka. Their reactions to the PCs and their equipment and belongings are similar to those of the boyarsky in **area 11**.

**Boyarsky (3rd-level fighters) (2):** AC 10; MV 12; hp 24 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 + 1 (long sword, Str); AL CE; THAC0 18.

If these boyarsky are responding to an alarm elsewhere, they take two rounds to don their armor and prepare themselves for a fight.

**14. Boyarsky Chambers.** Five boyarsky bunk in this room, but only three are at the stockade now, and two of those are on guard duty. The remaining warrior is Vladimir, Olaf's brother. If the PCs are accompanied by Mikhail or Olaf, Vladimir does not attack before asking why the party has come and giving them a chance to leave quietly. A persuasive PC can convince

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Vladimir to turn against Gregor and to help them destroy the boyar. If neither Mikhail nor Olaf has come with the party, Vladimir assumes the worst and raises the alarm while attacking.

**Vladimir (4th-level fighter):** AC 5 (chainmail); MV 12; hp 35; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 + 2 (battle axe, high Str); AL N(E); THAC0 17.

This room is similar to **areas 11 and 13.**

**15. Maids' Chambers.** Chambermaids and serving wenches share this small room. There are six of them sleeping here. Since the women are used to boyarsky trying to slip into their chambers by night, they awaken very easily and scream if the PCs come in here. The boyarsky from **areas 13, 14, and 11** come to investigate, but they do not take the women seriously and are not expecting trouble.

### Gregor

Use this scene when the PCs meet Gregor during their raid on his stockade. If he is given the chance, Gregor summons help by calling for his warriors. The text below assumes that Gregor has been caught in his own quarters and is surprised by the PCs.

The room is dark save for a crackling fire in the hearth. Gregor sits before the fire, brooding. A weathered warrior in chain mail stands beside him, scrutinizing a map. Both men look up, and Gregor rises slowly. "I should have known that there was more fight in you yet," he says. "Dmitri here thought that you had found a place to freeze to death in the forest, but I didn't believe you had died so easily."

"We'll be sure of it this time," Dmitri adds, his voice hollow and sinister.

Mikhail stands forward, his sword in his hand. "Your tyranny ends today, Gregor!" With a cry of pure rage, he flings himself into the fight.

**Dmitri Dneprov (6th-level fighter):** AC 7 (studded leather armor); MV 12; hp 49; Str 17, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 12; #AT 1 (3/2 with axe); Dmg 1d8 + 4 (*battle axe +1*, Str, specialist); AL LE; THAC0 15 (12 with axe).

If Gregor is reduced to 10 hp or less, he tries to flee through the secret door. He knows he cannot be killed, but he refuses to accept defeat and attempts to muster as many warriors as possible to help him finish off the PCs. If the boyar escapes, he uses his sword's power to *heal* himself and returns in 1d4 turns with an additional 6 boyarsky from the village. (If he flees, he leaves his pelt behind and gives the heroes a chance to salt it without his knowledge.)

When the party finally does catch up to Gregor and kills him, read the following:

Clutching his wound, Gregor topples with a great cry. For a moment he glares wickedly, his blood pooling around him. "You have not yet defeated me," he snarls. "I will kill you all!" Then he dies, still cursing.

As soon as Gregor falls, an eerie mist fills the room, rising from the flagstones of the floor like the icy breath of some unseen monster. It swirls around the boyar's body, and the image of a white, frost-covered wolf seems to glare from the vapors. Then, as quickly as it had come, the mist dissipates. Gregor's body has vanished!

His sword begins to sparkle, and it, too, dissolves into silvery mist that pours back down between the cracks in the stones. Finally, the black wolf pelt nearby begins to sparkle with the same silvery light. In a moment, it will vanish as well.

If the PCs have the mixture of salt and wolfsbane prepared, they can sprinkle it on the pelt as it is disappearing. If the party spoke to Antonina before entering the stockade, they knew to expect something like this, but if they

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didn't, the players may be very confused by the disappearance of Gregor's body. If necessary, one of the NPCs with the party suggests that they speak to Marik the Mouse-eater about Gregor's disappearance, pointing out that Marik "knows much of the unseen powers."

Gregor has not been defeated yet; he will reform at his secret cave, south of Vorostokov. Go to **Encounter IV: Dark of the Moon**.

### Encounter IV: Dark of the Moon

**T**he adventurers can easily find the black oak that conceals Gregor's cave if they bring a native of Vorostokov with them. If the player characters did not bring a guide, they must search for 1d4 hours to find the cave. Whether or not the PCs have to search for the cave, the DM should use the travel time to report the progress of the day and the imminent arrival of the new moon. Keep up the pressure on the party by making them wonder if they will find Gregor's cave in time. When the PCs locate Gregor's cave, the boyar emerges to challenge them in his wolf-form.

In the midst of a small clearing, growing from the side of a small hill, is a great, rotten oak. Beneath its roots a dark cave waits, just as Antonina said it would. There are no tracks leading to or away from the lair. Suddenly, the snow-filled entrance explodes outward and a huge, powerful wolf bounds into the middle of the party, snapping and snarling!

If the PCs salted Gregor's pelt before he vanished from his hall in Vorostokov, he is vulnerable to normal weapons. Otherwise, the PCs must first poison him with the salt and wolfsbane mixture before he is vulnerable. Gregor must be struck by a type S or P weapon coated with the mixture, and then he is allowed to roll a saving throw vs. poison to shake off the effects. If he fails the save, then he is rendered vulnerable to damage from normal weapons.

If the PCs somehow get him to ingest the salt and wolfsbane mixture, Gregor does not get the saving throw roll to avoid its effects. Even if he is not rendered vulnerable by the mixture, Gregor can be temporarily defeated by silver or blessed weapons. See his NPC description.

Allow the combat to proceed for several rounds, or until Gregor is seriously injured for the first time. At that point, the new moon finally rises and any PCs infected by lycanthropy begin their transformation. Gregor takes advantage of the confusion to try to flee.

Characters changing into werewolves require 1d3 rounds and suffer 1d4 points of damage from armor constriction, but the change heals 10%–60% of their accrued damage. However, they do not necessarily attack their companions—Gregor's vulnerability has rendered him unable to control the PC werewolves. The affected PCs may pursue Gregor, if the player has been role-playing an intense hatred for the boyar. If the player has not given any significant cues for the character, the DM should have the player roll a saving throw vs. spells to see if the PC is able to stay in control enough to go after Gregor (a successful save) or turns on the other PCs.

The great black wolf struggles in the snow, trying to escape from its pursuers. Bright blood stains the snow as he runs. Bursting through the trees, the black wolf leads its pursuers out onto the frozen river. The ice creaks and snaps, but it seems to be holding for the moment. Desperately, the black wolf turns, its fangs bared as it snarls savagely!

Gregor fights to the death at this point. The ice holds for the balance of the combat, although the DM can have some fun by having the PCs roll imaginary saving throws or Dexterity checks. Characters attacking as wolves are perfectly capable of striking him for normal werewolf damage. When the boyar is finally killed, continue with the following text:

## CHAPTER THREE



As the killing blow strikes home, the wolf lets out a human-sounding howl of rage and pain before collapsing. He shudders once, and where the wolf had been lying there is now a man—the boyar, Gregor—wrapped in a bloody wolfskin. The battlefield falls silent as the boyar breathes his last.

Suddenly, there is an ear-shattering crack. Black fissures in the ice are opening like gunshots, radiating from the place where Gregor lies. In the space of a heartbeat, the ice splinters into nothingness, spilling everyone into the dark, cold waters beneath!

Although you struggle valiantly, the waters drag you down farther and farther, until the light is gone and you are surrounded by black, numbing cold.

In the grayness that follows you see a vision. The land of Vorostokov, beneath its silver blanket of winter, begins to turn green.

The white wolf of the mists howls and twists about, then dissipates, surrounding you and bearing you away from the dark and the cold. . . .

This concludes *Dark of the Moon*. With Gregor dead, Vorostokov's winter lifts and the domain returns to the land from which it was torn by the dark powers. While Gregor's curse may be broken, its legacy may linger on forever. Mikhail is still a loup du noir, and for the rest of his life he must fight against the temptation of the wolf-skin.

The mists of Ravenloft carry the PCs to any point the DM chooses. Of course, they may have their own piece of Gregor's legacy; several characters may be infected with lycanthropy, a condition that manifests normally in whatever land they go to. Finding a cure could be the party's next adventure. . . .



# Appendix A: NONPLAYER CHARACTERS

## Gregor Zolnik

### Loup du Noir Werewolf 8th-level Fighter, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class	0 (2)	Str	16
Movement	15 (12)	Dex	14
Level/HD	10 (8)	Con	15
Hit Points	55 (55)	Int	12
THACO	11 (13)	Wis	8
No. Attacks	2 (3/2)	Cha	15

**Damage:** 2d12 (2d4 + 4 with *bastard sword* +3)

**Special Attacks:** see text

**Special Defenses:** see text

**Magic Resistance:** 20%

**Equipment:** *Chain mail* +3, *bastard sword* +3, furs, black wolf's pelt

**Note:** Numbers in parentheses reflect Gregor's human form.

Gregor is a barrel-chested man with powerful limbs and an arrogant, commanding manner. He has a thick beard and a heavy brow, and his eyes burn like coals when he is angry. Gregor is a shape-changing werewolf, or *loup du noir*, and is the lord of the domain of Vorostokov.

As a human, Gregor is an 8th-level fighter with the following ranger abilities: Hide in Shadows (49%), Move Silently (62%), and Tracking (10%). He wields a *bastard sword* +3 named Ilyana ("reaver") two-handed, but may also fight with a spear or bow. Ilyana has the power to *heal* its wielder once per day.

If Gregor is killed in human form, his body disappears from sight and is carried to



his secret cave. His sword and wolf skin come with him. Gregor has survived death in this way before and has almost no fear of being killed by any conventional means.

Gregor can transform into a wolf at any time, as long as he has his pelt with him. The process is acutely painful, and requires one round. Changing into a wolf heals all wounds he has sustained, but changing back does not cure him of any damage.

In wolf form, Gregor attacks twice per round with his bite, inflicting 2d12 points of damage with each hit. On a natural 19 or 20, Gregor seizes his victim by the throat, inflicting an additional 1d12 damage. When this happens, the victim must roll a successful saving throw vs. death or suffer a mortal injury (a torn throat or broken neck). The victim falls unconscious (0 hit points) and dies in 1d4 rounds unless aided by healing magic. Unlike other *loups du noir*, Gregor is considered a master lycanthrope, and thus he can control the changes in form of his victims, as well as their actions in wolf form.

In wolf form, Gregor is immune to *charm*, *sleep*, *hold*, and other mind-controlling spells. Only weapons made of pure silver or that have had a *bles* spell cast upon them can injure him, and even then they inflict only half damage if they are not both made of silver and blessed. Magical weapons inflict 1 point of damage per magical bonus (i.e., a *long sword* +2 inflicts 2 points of damage). Spells inflict no damage on him, but nondamaging effects such as *slow* still affect him. For example, Gregor is blinded if he fails a saving throw vs. a *cause blindness* spell.

If Gregor's wolf form is destroyed by forms of damage he is vulnerable to, his body dissolves only to form again in his secret cave the next day. The only way to truly destroy Gregor is to sprinkle his wolf pelt with wolfsbane and salt while he is in human form. The next time he dons the pelt, he is vulnerable to all weapons and spells. If killed in this state, his body does not re-form and he is truly dead.

# NONPLAYER CHARACTERS

## Mikhail Zolnik

### Loup du Noir Werewolf 6th-level Ranger, Chaotic Good

Armor Class	4 (3)	Str	13
Movement	12 (15)	Dex	16
Level/HD	6 (6 + 3)	Con	17
Hit Points	44 (39)	Int	12
THACO	15 (13)	Wis	14
No. Attacks	1 (1)	Cha	15

**Damage:** 1d8 with axe (2d6 bite)

**Special Attacks:** see text

**Special Defenses:** see text

**Magic Resistance:** 0%

**Equipment:** *Studded leather armor +2*, battle axe, long bow with 20 arrows, furs

Mikhail is a tall, lean young man with a clean-shaven face and clear, piercing eyes. He takes after his mother, and there is little similarity between him and his father Gregor. Mikhail tends to be serious and looks like a man who has forgotten how to smile—a sad thing in one so young.

Mikhail is a 6th-level ranger and enjoys all normal ranger abilities. His species enemy is wolves. He is extremely hardy and can be considered to have the running, survival, and endurance proficiencies if the Dungeon Master is using nonweapon proficiencies in the campaign.

Mikhail does not realize that he is affected by the loup du noir curse. Since he does not have a skin, he will only transform if given one. Gregor's bloodline is very powerful, and Mikhail can transform using any wolf pelt—not just one that he has prepared himself.

As the adventure proceeds, Mikhail may be forced to assume his bestial form. If he does, there is an excellent chance that he is driven by the curse to attack his allies, the player characters.

## Natalya and Elena

### 6th-level Mages, Lawful Evil

Armor Class	2 ( <i>armor spell</i> , Dex)	Str	11
Movement	12	Dex	18
Level/HD	6	Con	14
Hit Points	17	Int	16
THACO	19	Wis	13
No. Attacks	1	Cha	10

**Damage:** 1d4 with dagger

**Special Attacks:** spells

**Special Defenses:** see text

**Magic Resistance:** 0%

**Equipment:**

**Natalya:** Robes, shawl, *staff of striking* (12 charges), *periapt of health*, *potion of flying*, *potion of healing*

**Elena:** Robes, shawl, *dagger +3*, *boots of the north*, *wand of frost* (13 charges), *potion of human control*

**Spells:** *Charm person*, *chill touch*, *sleep*, *unseen servant*, *forget*, *summon swarm*, *monster summoning I*, *suggestion*

Natalya and Elena are the sisters of Gregor Zolnik. Natalya is the elder sister, but both have been treated unkindly by the passage of years. Once known for their beauty, they are now both withered crones. They are filled with malice, spite, and deceit, and view the player characters as the perfect tool to get at Gregor.

Natalya and Elena aid the PCs as they can, so long as the party is making clear progress toward the goal of destroying Gregor. If the PCs veer away from this goal, the witches attempt to persuade them to go after Gregor, explaining the nature of the PCs' predicament in Vorostokov. If that doesn't do the trick, the sisters do not hesitate to resort to mind-controlling magic such as *charm person* or *suggestion* spells to try to coerce the party into following their orders.

## Appendix B: EXPOSURE AND SURVIVAL

The domain of Vorostokov is a treacherous, frozen wasteland. A party of adventurers that is not used to such extreme weather may find that simple survival is a bitter challenge.

Daytime temperatures hover around 0 to 10 degrees Fahrenheit in Vorostokov. By night, temperatures often reach 20 to 30 below. The weather is usually clear and still, but on occasion the wind howls through the icy forests with a cruel edge. Blizzards sometimes occur, but a more common storm is the *zilinya neshka*, or “black-ice storm.” During a *zilinya neshka*, temperatures can drop as low as -50 degrees, and the wind can reach 70 to 80 miles per hour or more, scouring the land with a stinging spray of crystalline ice shards. Below are various effects of the weather. When assessing them, try to be descriptive in order to enhance the cruel feel of the realm.

### Cold Damage

It is assumed that most characters are prepared for normal winter weather, but that Vorostokov’s dark winter exceeds the preparations of most parties. There are three conditions of vulnerability to cold damage: *protected*, *unprotected*, and *exposed*.

*Protected* characters are dressed in heavy winter furs, and their face and extremities are protected against frostbite with mittens, masks, and good dry boots.

*Unprotected* characters are wearing normal clothing. When the PCs first arrive in Vorostokov, their normal winter gear is not suitable for the climate, and they are considered *unprotected*.

*Exposed* characters are characters who are completely unprepared for the weather or who somehow get wet.

Depending upon the conditions of the weather and the relative protection of the characters, special cold damage may be suffered. Cold damage differs from normal damage in that it can be regained at a much faster rate naturally by warming up.

The **Exposure Table** below reflects the possible combinations of weather and character protection. The results indicate the number of 6-sided dice that are rolled for cold damage every 6 hours.

### Exposure Table

	Zilinya	Night	Day
Protected	2	1	0
Unprotected	3	2	1
Exposed	4	3	2

For example, a group of characters is considered to be **unprotected** and has stopped to camp for the **night**. Every 6 hours, the DM assesses 2d6 points of cold damage to the characters as they try to sleep.

Any combination of building a fire or shelter helps reduce the effects of cold. For each special action the PCs take, reduce the number of 6-sided dice rolled by one.

To continue the above example, the characters decide to build a fire for the night. Therefore, the damage suffered every 6 hours is reduced by 1 die to 1d6. If the player characters also build a shelter of some sort, the damage is reduced by 1 more die to no damage suffered.

Certain spells or magical items prevent cold damage, including a *ring of warmth*, *boots of the north*, a *cube of frost resistance*, and the spells *resist cold*, *endure cold*, or *control temperature*, 10' radius. The DM should make a decision about other spells or tactics the players may try. Reward creative and inventive ideas on the players' parts.

Healing by normal rest and memorization of spells are impossible while characters are in a situation where they are suffering from cold damage. Whenever characters can warm up (i.e., they are in conditions where the number of cold damage dice on the **Exposure Table** is at 0 or less or they are indoors), cold damage heals at a special rate of 1 point per hour of rest.

# EXPOSURE AND SURVIVAL

## Frostbite

The extreme cold of Vorostokov can cause frostbite. Frostbite occurs any time characters suffer cold damage and have exposed hands, feet, or faces. Only *unprotected* and *exposed* characters may be vulnerable to *frostbite*—*protected* characters are assumed to have the prerequisite heavy winter boots, mittens, and head coverings. The DM should judge if *unprotected* or *exposed* characters' clothing resists frostbite or not.

When characters that are vulnerable to frostbite suffer cold damage, they must roll a successful saving throw vs. breath weapon or become *frostbitten*. Frostbitten characters suffer 1d3 points of regular damage (in addition to special cold damage) *each hour* and receive a -2 penalty to attack rolls and Armor Class due to the increasing difficulty of using their limbs. They also lose 25% of their original movement.

For each hour that the characters remain in *frostbitten* conditions, another saving throw vs. breath weapon must be rolled. If the subsequent saving throw is successful, no change occurs to the penalties (but 1d3 hit points of damage are still suffered for that hour, and the other penalties still apply). If the saving throw is failed, there is an increase in the number of 3-sided dice rolled for damage every hour, plus an additional -1 penalty to attack rolls and Armor Class and an additional 25% reduction in movement. Therefore, after two failed saving throws in *frostbitten* conditions, the characters suffer 2d3 points of damage every hour, a -3 penalty to attack rolls and Armor Class, and a 50% reduction in movement.

After four failed saving throws, characters lose the use of exposed extremities (in the case of frostbite to the face, the character is effectively blinded until cured). Frostbite damage is normal damage and must be healed as such. The other penalties are reduced by 1 (or 25% in the case of movement) per 8 hours of rest.

## Hypothermia

Hypothermia affects characters that have suffered significant cold or frostbite damage. Each hour that a character is at  $\frac{1}{4}$  or less of total hit points, a successful Constitution check must be rolled. Failure indicates that the character has become hypothermic. This check must be repeated every hour, with a -1 penalty.

Once the Constitution check is failed, the character begins to lose ability points from physical attributes (Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution) at a rate of 1 per turn. If any two scores drop to 3, the character becomes incapacitated and cannot move. The PC falls unconscious 1d3 turns later and dies 2d4 turns after that. These effects can be reversed only by getting the affected character into a situation where cold damage is no longer suffered (i.e., the number of cold damage dice on the **Exposure Table** is at 0 or less). Once the character begins to warm up, lost ability points are restored at a rate of 1 per hour of rest.

## Starvation

**A** more insidious threat to the traveler's well-being lies in the possibility of starvation. There is little food in the forests of Vorostokov; hunting provides the only source of nourishment outside the dwindling stores of the villages. The DM should make the players keep track of their supplies as they journey through the domain; the grim specter of starvation represents an unusual threat to the typical adventuring party.

As long as a character receives one pound of food per day, starvation is not a threat. Over-eating one day and not eating the next does not confer any benefits.

Every character has a tolerance level for starvation equal to the sum of the Strength and Constitution scores, divided by 4. This is the number of days the character can go without meeting minimum food requirements with no real game effects. Stretching rations by eating

## EXPOSURE AND SURVIVAL

half a pound of food each day adds 2 days to this tolerance level.

*For example, a hardy warrior has a Strength of 18 and a Constitution of 15, for a total of 33. This PC's starvation tolerance level is 33/4, or 8 days. If rations are stretched, this is extended to 10 days.*

Once the character's tolerance has been exceeded, a Constitution check must be rolled each day, with a cumulative -1 penalty for each day after the first roll. The first time a roll fails, the character becomes *weakened*. The second time a roll fails, the PC becomes *incapacitated*.

Characters in a *weakened* condition suffer -1 penalties to all attack, damage, and saving throw rolls, and to Armor Class. The penalty increases by 1 point per day of being *weakened*. The penalty is reduced again by 2 points for each day of normal nourishment.

Characters *incapacitated* by starvation continue to suffer the effects of being *weakened*, but are also reduced to ½ of their normal movement, cannot regain hit points from resting, and actually lose 1d6 hit points each day. In addition, *incapacitated* characters must roll successful saving throws vs. death magic each day or fall unconscious, with death ensuing in 1d4 days.

Hit points lost from starvation cannot be remedied by curative magic—the character must begin to eat again to recover. Hit points lost to starvation return at the rate of 1d4 per hour after the player character starts to eat again, the combat penalties are reduced by one point per day, and movement is restored after one day.

### Winter Survival

**O**nce the players realize that their characters are in danger of perishing from cold or lack of food, they will probably have their characters begin to look around for shelter and food. The DM should not allow the players to downplay this part of the adventure by glossing

over the hardships of the Vorostokovian wilderness.

Shelter and firewood are not much of a problem in the forest, but if the party tries to camp on a plain or on a frozen lake they find no shelter or firewood nearby. At the DM's option, a character may upgrade the quality of the shelter with a successful proficiency check or creative use of a spell. For example, a party with a fire and no shelter may be able to rest as though they have both if a character with the fire-building proficiency succeeds in a check.

Finding food is more difficult. To forage for small game and edible plants, a character must be a druid or ranger or have one of the following proficiencies: herbalism, animal lore, hunting, set snares, survival, or tracking. Applicable secondary skills would include forester, hunter, and trapper. The character may attempt a proficiency check (an Intelligence check with a -2 penalty if no proficiency check applies) to successfully forage for food. A character who forages finds enough food for 1d6 meals.

### Overland Travel

**T**ravel from village to village can be handled using the overland movement system presented in the *DUNGEON MASTER™ Guide*. In Vorostokov, travel through the forests costs 4 MPs per mile, and travel over plains or frozen lakes costs 3 MPs per mile. These costs double during *zilinya neshka* conditions. A character equipped for travel with snowshoes or skis gains a -1 MP bonus.

A major consideration in traveling through Vorostokov's endless forests and snowy plains is the possibility of getting lost. Refer to pages 127 and 128 of the *DUNGEON MASTER Guide*. Vorostokov's forest is considered light (there is not much underbrush), but tends to be featureless. At the DM's option, druids, rangers, and characters with survival or direction sense proficiencies can be considered navigators.

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Boreal forest or plains
FREQUENCY:	Very rare
ORGANIZATION:	Pack
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any (nocturnal)
DIET:	Carnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Average (8–10)
TREASURE:	D
ALIGNMENT:	Chaotic evil
NO. APPEARING:	1d6
ARMOR CLASS:	3
MOVEMENT:	15
HIT DICE:	6 + 3
THACO:	13
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	2d6
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Seize throat
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Standard
SIZE:	M (6' long)
MORALE:	Elite (15)
XP VALUE:	1,400

The loup du noir, or skin-changer, is a werewolf that transforms by donning the skin of a wolf. In ancient times, some human hunters learned to assume the shape of a wolf to better stalk and kill their prey. A few skin-changers still linger in the world today, people with a dark and sinister ability to assume the form of a savage, murderous beast.

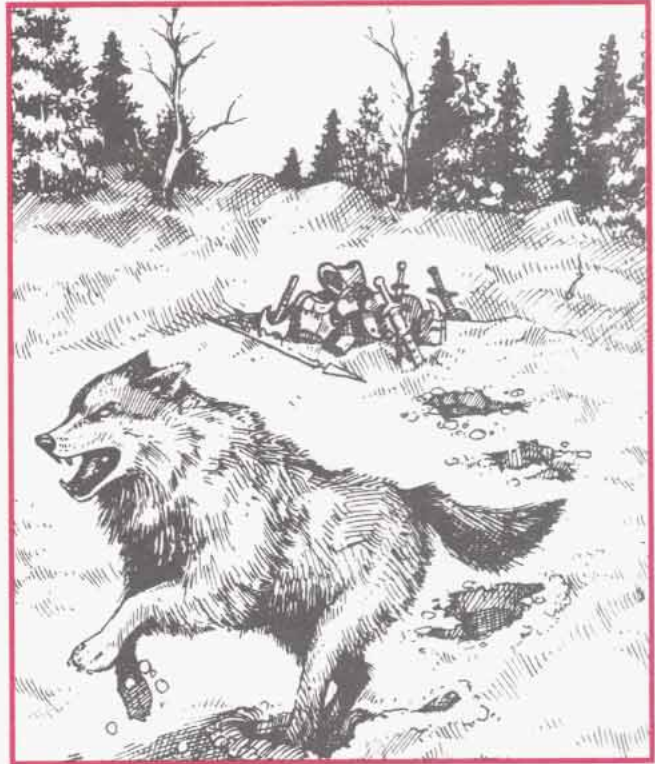
Loup du noir have only two forms: human or wolf. In their human form they possess a normal character class and abilities. The wolf-form is as large and foul-tempered as a dire wolf, and possesses several special abilities.

A loup du noir must have a special pelt that it can use to perform its skin-changing transformation into wolf-form. If the loup du noir cannot put on its wolf-skin, it is unable to become a wolf.

**Combat:** In human form, the loup du noir wears armor, uses spells, and attacks with weapons as normal. In wolf form, the loup du noir attacks with a powerful bite for 2d6 points of damage. On a natural roll of 20, the loup du noir seizes its victim's throat and inflicts double normal damage.

The dark sorcery that allows the loup du noir to assume its bestial form also protects it from many forms of attack. The werewolf is immune to all *charm* and *hold* effects, and receives a +4 bonus to saving throws against any other mind-affecting spell. It suffers damage from silver weapons or weapons that have had a *bless* spell cast upon them, but wounds from normal weapons heal too quickly to cause any damage. Magical weapons can harm the loup du noir, but unless they are made of silver or have had a *bless* spell cast upon them, the enchanted weapon only causes half damage.

**Habitat/Society:** The loup du noir is a solitary creature, but it is possible for several people (for example, all the members of a family or a band of hunters) to have learned the magic necessary for the skin-change. In



human form, the loup du noir is often a hunter or outdoorsman.

Loup du noir are unusual because they have brought their condition upon themselves. Whatever their motivation, they soon find themselves seduced by the power of their new shape. Once a character has tasted of the wolf's strength, the desire is strong to repeat the transformation. A character resisting the urge to transform must roll a saving throw vs. spells with a cumulative -1 penalty for each day that passed since the last transformation.

In wolf form, a loup du noir retains full human intelligence. This makes them cunning and dangerous opponents. However, their human judgment is clouded by an intense bloodlust that can turn them against any creature they encounter—even innocents or friends. If the loup du noir is driven to attack someone or something it might not want to, the creature may roll a saving throw vs. spells to attempt to resist. There is a cumulative -1 penalty to the roll for each day that the loup du noir does not kill something; eventually, the creature must give in to its killing urges.

**Ecology:** The loup du noir is not a natural predator and kills indiscriminately, despite its human intelligence. In wolf form the loup du noir can spread lycanthropy by wounding its victims; there is a 1% chance per point of damage that a character wounded by a loup du noir becomes infected. The loup du noir is not considered to be a master lycanthrope and cannot induce the transformations of its victims or control their actions.

The curse of a loup du noir is passed to its children. Its offspring in wolf form are wolfweres, and its human offspring have the potential to become loup du noir.

# ARAYASHKA (SNOW WRAITH)

9419

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CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any arctic
FREQUENCY:	Very rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any (blizzards)
DIET:	See below
INTELLIGENCE:	Average (8-10)
TREASURE:	C
ALIGNMENT:	Neutral evil
NO. APPEARING:	1d6
ARMOR CLASS:	3
MOVEMENT:	9
HIT DICE:	5
THACO:	15
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1d6 + 1
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Chilling touch
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Standard
SIZE:	M (6' tall)
MORALE:	Fanatic (17)
XP VALUE:	975

**A**rayashka are the undead spirits of travelers killed by cold and exposure in some arctic lands. A person must possess an intense strength of will and a purpose that is left unfulfilled by death in order to become an arayashka. Arayashka appear to be gray, misty shadows about the size of a man. They roam the icy wastes during fierce blizzards similar to the storms in which they themselves perished.

**Combat:** Arayashka are dangerous opponents that often choose the worst time to attack travelers, appearing out of a raging arctic storm to drain the warmth from their victims. The arayashka move and fight with no penalties for obscured vision, strong winds, or deep snow; they ignore the weather and terrain to press home their attacks.

Arayashka attack once per round with their freezing touch, inflicting 1d6 + 1 points of damage to living creatures. Each time an arayashka successfully attacks a character, the victim is affected as though hit with a *chilling touch* spell, losing one point of Strength. Lost Strength points return at the rate of one per hour. A character reduced to a Strength of 2 or less collapses and falls unconscious. A character reduced to 0 dies.

Arayashka have the ability to drain heat from a living target at range as well, although this is not as effective as their touch. The arayashka can drain 1 hit point per round from one character within 30 feet. A favorite tactic of the arayashka is to lurk in the white-out of a blizzard and attack travelers without ever showing themselves. Any character that loses more than 50% of total hit points to the attacks of the arayashka begins to suffer from hypothermia.

Lastly, arayashka can use their heat-draining ability against any open flame or source of heat within 30 feet. One arayashka can smother a normal campfire in 1d3 rounds, while three can extinguish a large bonfire.



Arayashka are immune to any *sleep*, *charm*, or *mind-affecting magic*. They are also immune to any cold attacks, as well as sleet, hail, or ice effects. They are vulnerable to fire attacks and suffer 2d4 points of damage from contact with normal fires, burning oil, hot coals, or even weapons warmed for a round or more in a fire. Otherwise, snow wraiths can only be harmed by magical weapons. They can be turned as wraiths.

Arayashka only appear in blizzard-like conditions. If the storm dies down, the snow wraiths retreat.

**Habitat/Society:** Arayashka are only found near the place where they perished, and then only if the weather conditions are right. A mountain pass might be safe during spring, summer, and fall, but is a deadly hazard by wintertime. Areas haunted by arayashka seem to be subject to storms of unusual strength, and it is possible that the snow wraith's spirit somehow causes bad weather.

**Ecology:** As with most other undead, arayashka exist on both the Prime Material and Negative Material Planes simultaneously. Their connection to the Negative Material Plane gives them their ability to drain heat and their immunities to many attacks. The snow wraiths' hunger for heat is almost insatiable.

Any character killed by an arayashka and interred anywhere near the location of death must be cremated while a *bless* spell is cast, or the PC rises as an arayashka the next time a winter storm rages. A character that is killed by an arayashka but is then interred in some warmer climate does not return as one.

# Handout: IGOR'S JOURNAL AND MAP



"... This being the journal of Igor Rikorsky, begun in the Year 1127 of the Patriarch's Calendar. I have chosen to record my journeys in Vorostokov, hoping that even if I do not discover a way to escape this cursed land, perhaps those who come after will. ..."

"... I returned to Kirinova to consult with Sergei (Kovier) concerning the location of the passes to the north, but I discovered that the boyarsky of Gregor had gathered outside the town. Their presence here can only mean trouble, and I fear for the folk of the village. ..."

"... the men of Kirinova took up arms against the boyar Gregor and drove him and his boyarsky off, refusing to pay his mad tribute. The boyar promised to return with more warriors and to put the village to the sword. ..."

"... at Sergei's request I followed the boyar and his men to Vorostokov, looking for an opportunity to spy on their camp. I was able to overhear the boyar plotting Kirinova's destruction. 'We will have to break Torgov, as well,' he said. Could it be that there is another village that rebels against his rule?"

"... they have discovered my eavesdropping, but I got away from their camp. The boyarsky shall not rest until they have found me. ..."

"... I must reach Torgov, to warn them of the boyar's men. I do not think that I will make it there. The wolves are stalking me—even now I can see their red eyes in the shadows, watching me. I may yet escape—a strange fog is rising and it is growing colder. I will try to lose them in the mists."



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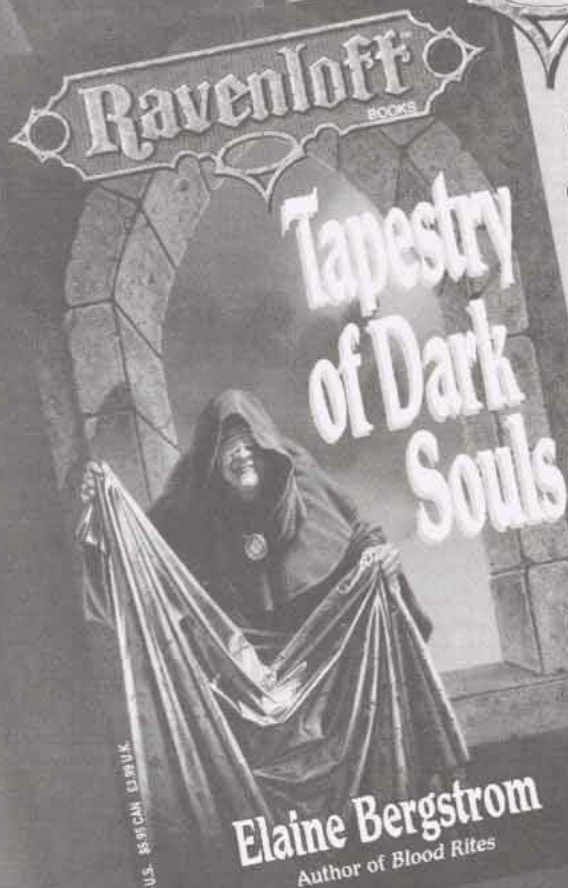
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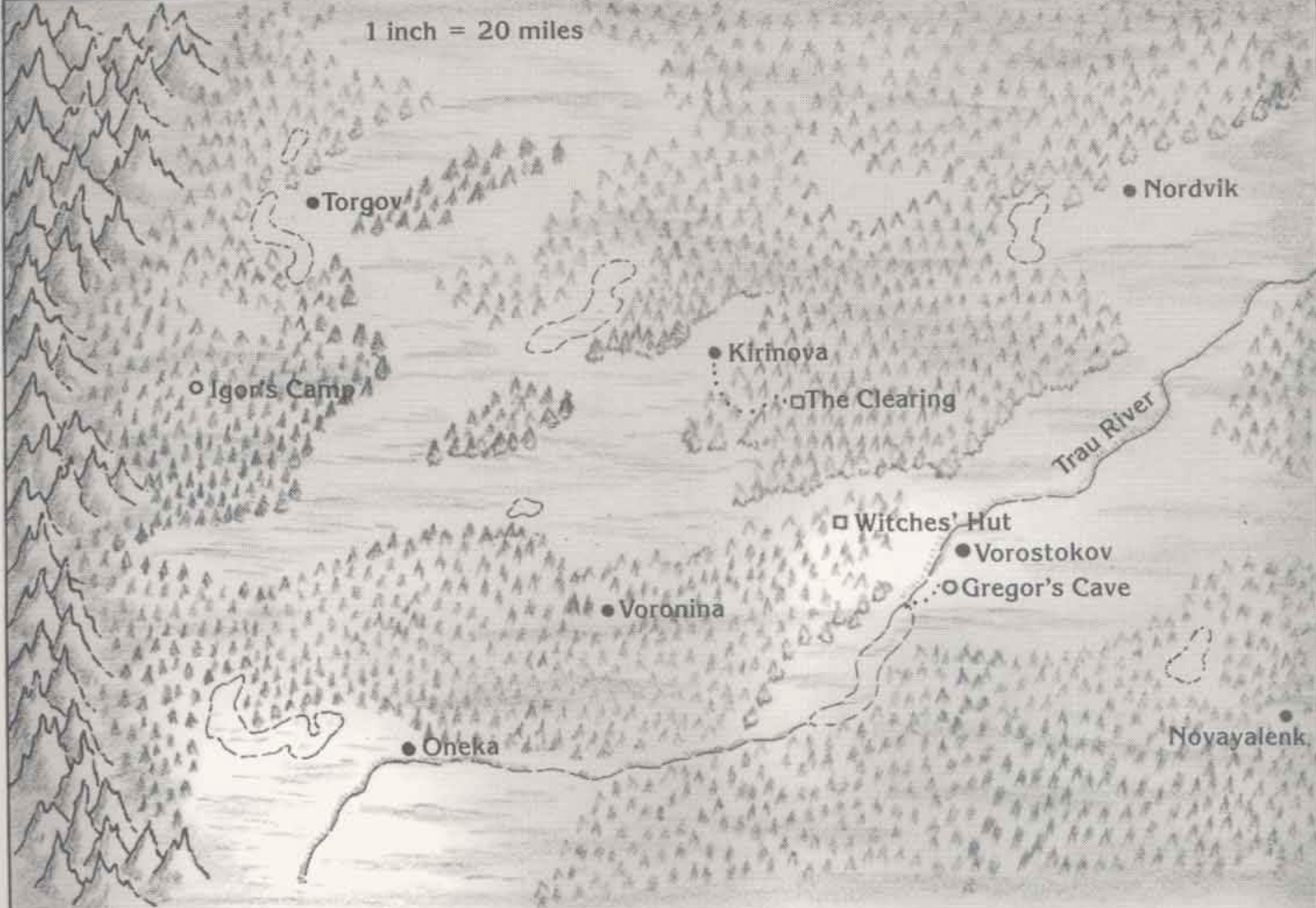
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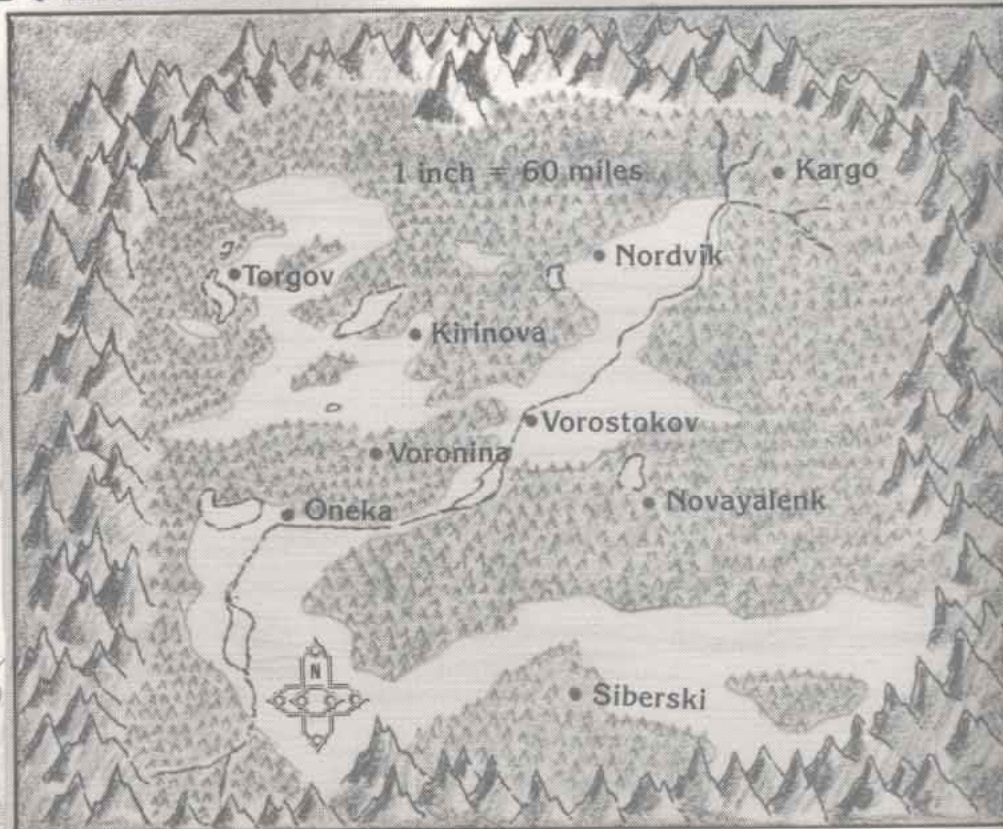
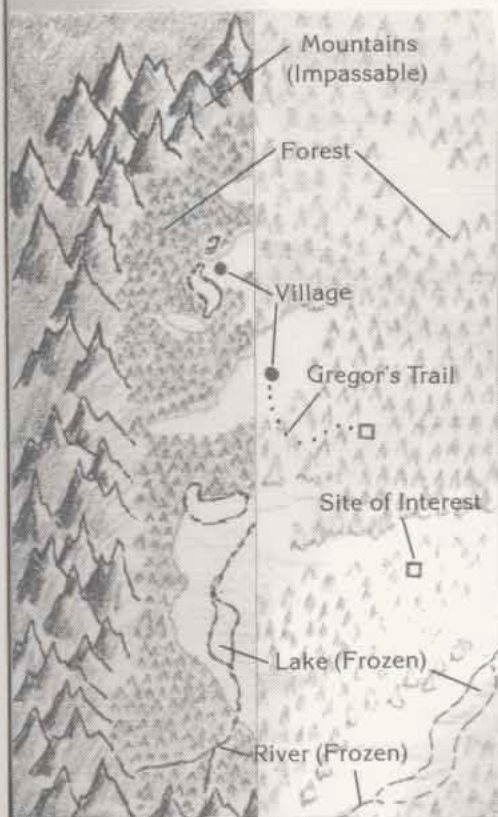
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1 inch = 20 miles



## The Domain of Vorostokov





# The Village of Vorostokov

0 100 200 feet

- |                           |                           |                           |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Smokehouse             | 8. Leonid the Smith       | 15. Dvorak the Tanner     |
| 2. Andrei the Furrier     | 9. Gregor's House         | 16. The Trau Bridge       |
| 3. Mother Tasha's House   | 10. Sweathouse            | 17. Marik the Mouse-eater |
| 4. Trader                 | 11. Vladislav the Trapper | 18. The Boyar's Hall      |
| 5. Oleg the Woodcutter    | 12. Pavel's Alehouse      | 19. The Church            |
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| 7. Ivan the Strong        | 14. Anatoly the Carpenter |                           |

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