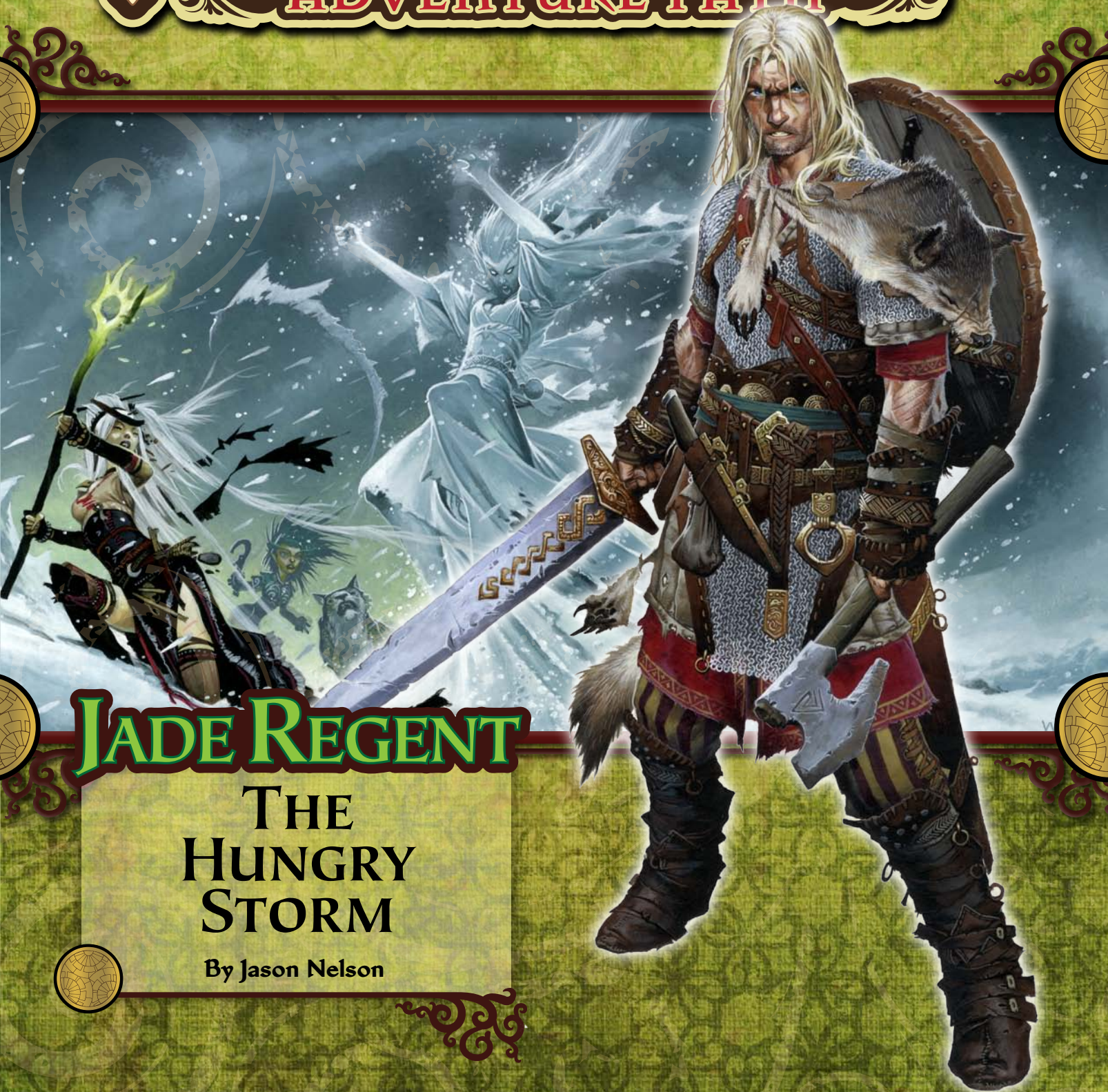


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JADE REGENT

THE HUNGRY STORM

By Jason Nelson



YETIS

The people of the high mountains often speak of yetis, mysterious creatures as white as the snow and as large as bears, which walk like men and leave distinctive footprints. Though many fear the beasts, whose huge claws rend livestock in devastating raids, the truth is that the solitary creatures who leave bloodstains on the snow are outcasts—mad hermits driven from their hidden communities on account of their insanity. Where this horrific rage comes from is unknown, but there are those who believe the yetis live too high on the mountains, where the barriers between worlds grow as thin as the air and strange powers reach through from beyond.



IMPERIAL DRAGONS

The lands of Tian Xia are known as the Dragon Empires—and for good reason. The dragons of Tian Xia are called imperial dragons, creatures with serpentine bodies who are often regarded as benevolent guardians or supernatural blights, depending upon the nature of the dragon involved. Imperial dragons interact with humanoid societies much more often than their western kin, and thus play a larger role in Tian culture—yet such interactions are not always to the humanoids' benefit. Five varieties of imperial dragon exist—the underworld dragon, the sea dragon, the sky dragon, the forest dragon, and the sovereign dragon.



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THE HUNGRY STORM



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"The Hungry Storm" is a Pathfinder Adventure Path scenario designed for four 7th-level characters.
By the end of this adventure, characters should reach 10th level.

This product makes use of the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook*, *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Advanced Player's Guide*, *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game GameMastery Guide*, *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary*, *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 2*, *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 3*, and *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat*. These rules can be found online as part of the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Reference Document at paizo.com/pathfinderRPG/prd.

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MONSTER MYTHOLOGY

It's no mystery that I like my fantasy, and especially my monsters, with a heavy dose of history. Sometimes that means drawing inspiration straight from the headlines—even if those headlines are a century old—with cases like Spring-Heeled Jack (in volume #43) or our infamous vision of the Jersey Devil (all the way back in volume #1). More often, it means going to the deep well of world folklore and mythology and heaving up fantastic ideas with centuries-old pedigrees by the bucketful. Whether they've been passed down by word or page, such stories, possess a cultural resonance, embodying ideas and themes that in the best cases resound with the particular plots and feelings we're trying to encourage with our adventures. Longtime readers are likely familiar with this, whether from the preponderance of Middle Eastern creatures that filled the Legacy of Fire Adventure Path, the mysterious beasts from across Africa that spanned the Serpent Skull Adventure Path, or the exotic menaces scattered throughout dozens of other past volumes. Often I end up choosing such

creatures based on research on the relevant stories or such beings' history in past roleplaying games, and then assign authors to do further investigation and ultimately interpret the creatures into the terms of the Pathfinder RPG. Or I just do it myself. After several weeks or months of work, I typically end up with a passel of thematic and culturally evocative beasts ready to slip right into the volume's adventure, or to serve as a resource next time a GM plans to blaze his or her own trail across similar ground.

Let me tell you, though, this has been a huge challenge with the Jade Regent Adventure Path.

The issue has largely been one of option paralysis. To a degree, I'd always rather have too many options than not enough, but on a giant monthly project like every volume of Pathfinder Adventure Path is, any sort of paralysis is a dangerous thing. You see, rather than having a whole series to dig up the perfect fits from one region's or culture's legends, we've been on a sprint through some very diverse societies in these past few volumes, and it's not about to slow down. With

“The Brinewall Legacy,” we’ve got pretty familiar ground with the denizens of Varisia, shades of Lovecraft, and our first hint of the Asian creatures still to come. “Night of Frozen Shadows” is where it really started getting tricky though, giving me one volume to tackle Scandinavian mythology. If we did an entire Lands of the Linnorm Kings Adventure Path, the Bestiaries of that whole series would barely scratch the surface of those cultures’ tales. But the real hit comes this month, with our journey over the Crown of the World.

For this volume, I wanted the Bestiary and much of the work of the month’s adventure and Crown of the World article to take inspiration from the legends of the Inuit peoples. This is a bit of a trick, though, as I can claim hardly any familiarity with the myths of these peoples. It’s always one thing to tinker with the creatures and characters of classical mythology, especially with our readership’s familiarity with these stories and the regularity with which they appear in roleplaying games and other works of fantasy. It’s quite another when presenting figures from stories less frequently represented in the genre. I feel like we could change every head on a chimera and people would still recognize it as a chimera, but if we significantly changed the shtick of the qallupilluk, I suspect few people would ever know. And, to my mind, that would be a major disservice and insult to the legendry and culture that birthed that character. If it’s possible what people read here could be their only interaction with the creatures and themes of a culture’s legends, then it’s our responsibility to—in as much as the restrictions of our roleplaying game medium allows—present them as faithfully as possible. At times we might take creative license when assigning statistics and special abilities to make such creatures work within the strictures of an RPG, but if we’re going to borrow a creature from a culture’s myths, we’re going to make sure our presentation supports the tales of that being as best we can.

With this volume I feel like we get our one shot at Inuit folklore. I’m not saying we’ll never present creatures or themes from Inuit culture in any Pathfinder product besides this, but our chances to do so are relatively limited. Arctic exploration isn’t a typical feature of most players’ Pathfinder campaigns, and thus opportunities to visit the Crown of the World are few and far between. As such, the likelihood of seeing a Crown of the World Adventure Path or future stories set in this region is less than the possibility of plots particular to the heart of the Inner Sea and the core assumptions of the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game. I’m not saying we’ll never return to the Crown of the World—we certainly will someday in some manner—but plots centered there are going to be much less frequent than those dealing with Cheliax, Varisia, Osirion, goblins, warriors, and dragons.

So this month more than half of our Bestiary and themes throughout the volume are dedicated to the creatures and dangers common to Inuit tales. Most visibly you’ll see this in

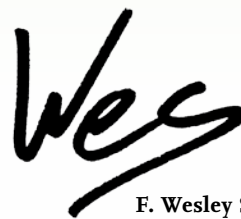
ON THE COVER

Ulf Gormundr, the viking guide the PCs had dealings with in last month’s adventure, “Night of Frozen Shadows,” returns this month as he leads the party on the path to wonders, dangers, and a mysterious new land. All he and his companions have to do is survive the journey across the Crown of the World, Golarion’s merciless polar continent.

the Erutaki people of the Crown of the World and monsters like the qallupilluk and saumen kar. In another happy twist, you’ll also see this inspiration in the work of Eva Widemann depicting many of these creatures. Aside from being one of our favorite artists, Eva has done some fantastic work for Inhabit Media, an Inuit-owned publishing company that has been collecting, illustrating, and publishing the folktales of the arctic. Her work appears in *Arctic Giants* (available in English) and *Unikat Inukpasugjuut Miksanut* (*Stories of Giants*; presented in Inuktitut), both available at inhabitmedia.com. So knowing her experience with these stories, Art Director Sarah Robinson cagily assigned her the Inuit creatures in this volume, to truly fantastic results. I also can’t understate the value of the website inuitmyths.com in preparing this volume and introducing me to several of the creatures appearing within it. With numerous art resources, fascinating stories, and free PDF downloads—presented largely in both English and Inuktitut—this resource has greatly inspired and enriched our work, and the creators, custodians, and contributors have my sincerest thanks. GMs and players interested in further exploring Inuit folktales and the Crown of the World are thus emphatically encouraged to check out these sites for a wealth of additional inspiration.

As for the rest of the Jade Regent Adventure Path, in the coming months we leave the myths of the North behind for the ancient and varied folklore of Asia, with a particular focus on Japan, the culture most reflected in the soon-to-be-revealed lands of Minkai.

Three volumes left in this Adventure Path and dozens of fascinating Asian cultures to represent. It surely won’t be an all-inclusive overview of these cultures’ myths and legends, but at the very least, I know we won’t be wanting for incredible inspiration.



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JADE REGENT

THE HUNGRY STORM

● PART ONE: TO THE WORLD'S END

The PCs face the many dangers of the polar north as they embark upon the Path of Aganhei across the Crown of the World.

PAGE 8

● PART TWO: THE HIGH ICE

The PCs must save an Erutaki village from the attacks of a white dragon before heading to the North Pole in search of the strange ruins that are the source of the morozkos, or hungry storms, that block the Path of Aganhei.

PAGE 27

● PART THREE: A DARKER ROAD

With their path to Tian Xia blocked by blizzards and avalanches, the PCs must venture into an ancient necropolis to win their way through the Wall of Heaven. But a powerful enemy will stop at nothing to prevent them from reaching their goal.

PAGE 43

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

“The Hungry Storm” uses the medium XP track.

7 The PCs begin this adventure at 7th level.

8 By the time the PCs enter Katiyana’s Storm Tower near the North Pole, they should be 8th level.

9 Before venturing into the Uqtaal Necropolis beneath the Wall of Heaven, the PCs should be 9th level.

The PCs should be 10th level by the adventure’s end.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Eons ago, the demon lord Sithhud ruled the frozen Abyssal realm of Jhuvumirak, until he lost that realm to the demonic armies of the demon lord Kostchtchie. Stripped of much of his power, Sithhud was reduced to the status of a nascent demon lord—mightier than any normal demon, but far less powerful than the fully-fledged demon lord he once was. Since that time, Sithhud has tirelessly sought to regain his lost powers and stolen Abyssal domain, but none of his plans have come to fruition.

But the Frozen Lord has a new gambit to restore his lost power: enlisting the aid of the half-fiend sylph Katiyana, daughter of a sylph wizard from the Crown of the World and a succubus in the service of Sithhud. To help restore her demonic lord, Katiyana, herself a high-ranking priestess in the cult of Sithhud, returned home to the Crown of the World and took up residence in an ancient ruin known as the Storm Tower. Katiyana worked tirelessly for several decades, erecting black basalt monoliths across the Crown of the World and infusing them with eldritch power—power that allowed her to control the movements of the supernatural blizzards known as morozkos. While the morozkos were normally restricted to the most remote reaches of the Crown of the World, Katiyana was able to direct the “hungry storms” farther and farther south into Avistan and Tian Xia. Until all of the monoliths were in place, however, her control of the morozkos was incomplete, and the Erutaki village of Iqaliat stood at the exact location where a key monolith needed to be placed.

Fortunately for her, Katiyana soon found an unwitting ally in Iqaliat’s shaman, Tunuak, an oracle of the wind. Old and bitter, and no longer as loved and respected by his people as he once was, Tunuak had embarked on a vision quest to beg favor from the spirits of the wind he believed resided in the ancient ruins. Posing as one of these wind spirits, Katiyana was able to corrupt Tunuak and turn him to the worship of Sithhud, convincing him that his village stood in the way of his new god’s return. The Erutaki are familiar with the danger of the morozkos, however, and Tunuak knew that Iqaliat’s chief and hearthmistress would never allow him to erect the monolith in the village.

But Katiyana had a plan that would allow Tunuak to finally gain the respect he craved. For almost a century, the white dragon Veksundvaag had laired in a glacial rift not far from Iqaliat. Thus far, the dragon had satisfied herself with hunting the beasts of the North, occasionally taking lone human travelers, but otherwise leaving the village alone. If Tunuak could somehow trick the dragon into attacking Iqaliat, Veksundvaag would do his work for him, and the deaths of the villagers would be a worthy sacrifice to show Tunuak’s devotion to his new god.

Using his oracular abilities, Tunuak snuck into Veksundvaag’s lair while the dragon was out hunting and smashed her eggs, leaving behind evidence that it was the handiwork of Iqaliat’s hunters. When she returned to discover the destruction of her eggs, Veksundvaag was filled with rage, and swore vengeance on the villagers. The dragon soon began a series of attacks on Iqaliat, allowing Tunuak to simply wait for the dragon to kill or drive off his kinsmen.

Once the village is empty and all of the black monoliths are in place, Katiyana will have full control of the morozkos, which she intends to send south into more populated regions of Avistan and Tian-Xia, where the frozen storms will slay enough mortals that Sithhud can use the destruction to fuel his return to prominence as a true demon lord.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The PCs and their caravan head north into the Crown of the World, under the guidance of Ulf Gormundr. The initial passage beyond the northern mountains of Avistan is surprisingly easy, but the caravan must make choices about how best to proceed—should they take the easier road following the Path of Aganhei, likely much faster but perhaps more exposed to unfriendly eyes, or a more difficult shortcut through the rugged wilderness?

To obtain information about conditions on the road ahead, Ulf detours to the Erutaki village of Iqaliat, where the PCs discover that the Path of Aganhei is blocked by morozkos, and that the village is suffering from the predations of a white dragon. The village shaman, Tunuak, tries to blame the attacks on the PCs, and the party has the opportunity to uncover Tunuak’s corruption and his hidden shrine to Sithhud, the fallen demon lord of blizzards and the frozen dead, before journeying to the dragon’s subglacial lair to end the attacks on Iqaliat.

Returning to the village, the PCs find clues pointing to the source of the shaman’s corruption and the increased danger of the morozkos. If the full brunt of the storms is unleashed, the caravan will never make it across the Crown of the World, so the PCs and their caravan must travel across the High Ice to the strange ruins at the North Pole. In the ancient spire called the Storm Tower, the PCs meet the frozen undead servants of Sithhud as well as strange alien creatures that inhabit the ruins, culminating in a battle against the half-fiend sylph Katiyana at the top of the tower.

Once Katiyana is defeated, her tainted spirit is torn loose from her body as she dies, but her malice is not ended. As the PCs descend from the High Ice, Katiyana’s ghost reveals her mastery of the morozkos, and as the caravan nears the last pass through the Wall of Heaven that leads to Minkai, Katiyana unleashes the hungry storm upon them, blocking the pass and threatening to consume them.

The PCs piece together ancient lore leading them to a secret passage beneath the mountains through the necropolis of the long-extinct Uqtaal nomads and thence into Tian Xia. Enraged at their escape, Katiyana possesses the chieftain of the yeti tribe living in the caves adjoining the necropolis and lays an ambush for the caravan. The PCs must face Katiyana once more and destroy her ghost, ending the threat of the hungry storm once and for all.

PART ONE: TO THE WORLD'S END

The agents of the Five Storms seeking Ameiko Kaijitsu have been thwarted, and the PCs' caravan has set out on the long frozen road to Minkai—the Path of Aganhei—to claim her birthright. Their new guide, Ulf Gormundr, promises to lead them through landscapes more desolate than any they have ever known, yet at the end lies the promise of justice for the Kaijitsu family, and fortune and glory in a realm unlike any in Avistan.

The adventure begins as the PCs and their caravan, under Ulf's guidance, cross the Arctic Circle and enter the Crown of the World. To reach this point, the PCs left Kalsgard and traveled through the Thanelands of the Linnorm Kingdoms before following the line of the Stormspear Hills to reach the taiga and tundra beyond the Stormspear Mountains. At that point, the two Avistani ends of the Path of Aganhei (the western route from Kalsgard and the eastern route from Icestair in the Realm of the Mammoth Lords) join together to cross the Rimethirst Mountains. It is assumed that the journey from Kalsgard to the Rimethirst Mountains—a trip of about 1,160 miles that takes at least 36 days—was relatively uneventful, though you can expand upon this section if you wish, or if the PCs need to acquire more experience points.

TIME AND TRAVEL

The PCs' journey across the Crown of the World is not a race against time; in fact, it is the opposite. The goal of "The Hungry Storm" is to safely escort Ameiko to Tian Xia over the Crown of the World, a journey of over 3,000 miles across unforgiving terrain and through both bitter weather and extremes of light and darkness, while dealing with the icy continent's dangerous inhabitants. In the best of conditions, at a standard speed of 32 miles per day, an average caravan takes a minimum of 94 days, or just over 3 months, to make the journey, and often takes half a year or more—a significant factor in most caravan masters' decisions to make the crossing only once a year in the height of summer. The PCs' journey could even take over a year if they take breaks to craft magic items, explore, or simply rest during the journey—and that is just fine!

In fact, as an in-game rationale, the more time the PCs spend atop the Crown of the World, the more likely the oni of the Five Storms are to believe the adventurers dead and

let their guard down. If the PCs were to make a mad dash across the pole immediately in the wake of "Night of Frozen Shadows," they would find the Five Storms armed and ready, having been alerted by their agents in Avistan that Ameiko and her allies are on the way. By taking a measured pace across the pole after eliminating the Five Storms' agents in Kalsgard, and by traveling during the off season of the traditional transpolar trade, the PCs allow time for the situation in Minkai to cool down. Thus, when they do arrive, they will be better able to slip into Minkai unnoticed.

The PCs can use Craft skills or item creation feats during their journey. Interruptions are frequent during the trip, however, so each day allows only half as much progress as normal (requiring 2 days of effort for each 1,000 gp in a magic item's price). PCs engaged in crafting while the caravan travels count as heroes but cannot fulfill other caravan jobs.

The Crown of the World gazetteer in this volume provides information on running a campaign in the Crown of the World, including locations of interest to adventurers and advice and rules regarding weather and the polar environment, while the *Jade Regent Player's Guide* presents full details on the caravan rules used extensively in this adventure. Besides the obvious unrelenting cold, a major difference with polar adventuring is the radical variation in night versus day depending on time of year. As this adventure assumes a journey lasting many months, the balance of darkness to light will shift substantially, and this should be accounted for when managing both overland travel time and the logistics of combat in blinding day or frigid night.

CARAVAN ENCOUNTERS

Although the PCs will experience several set-piece encounters during their trip across the Crown of the World, you can enliven their long journey with random encounters along the way. In addition to standard random encounters appropriate for the terrain, you may also substitute or alternate them with the following caravan encounters. Regardless of the type of encounter, there is a 10% chance of an encounter each day. This chance increases by 10% for each day without an encounter, but once an encounter occurs, the chance resets to 10% the following day. Events indicated with an asterisk (*) have a 50% chance of occurring while the caravan is camped. All other encounters occur while the caravan is on the move. No encounters occur if the caravan camps at a settlement. When rolling for caravan encounters, add +25 to the roll in the High Ice, and +50 to the roll in the Boreal Expanse. Note that some of these encounters incorporate or lead into other encounters, as indicated in their descriptions. Rules for handling caravan-based encounters, including caravan combat, can be found in the *Jade Regent Player's Guide*.

THE HUNGRY STORM

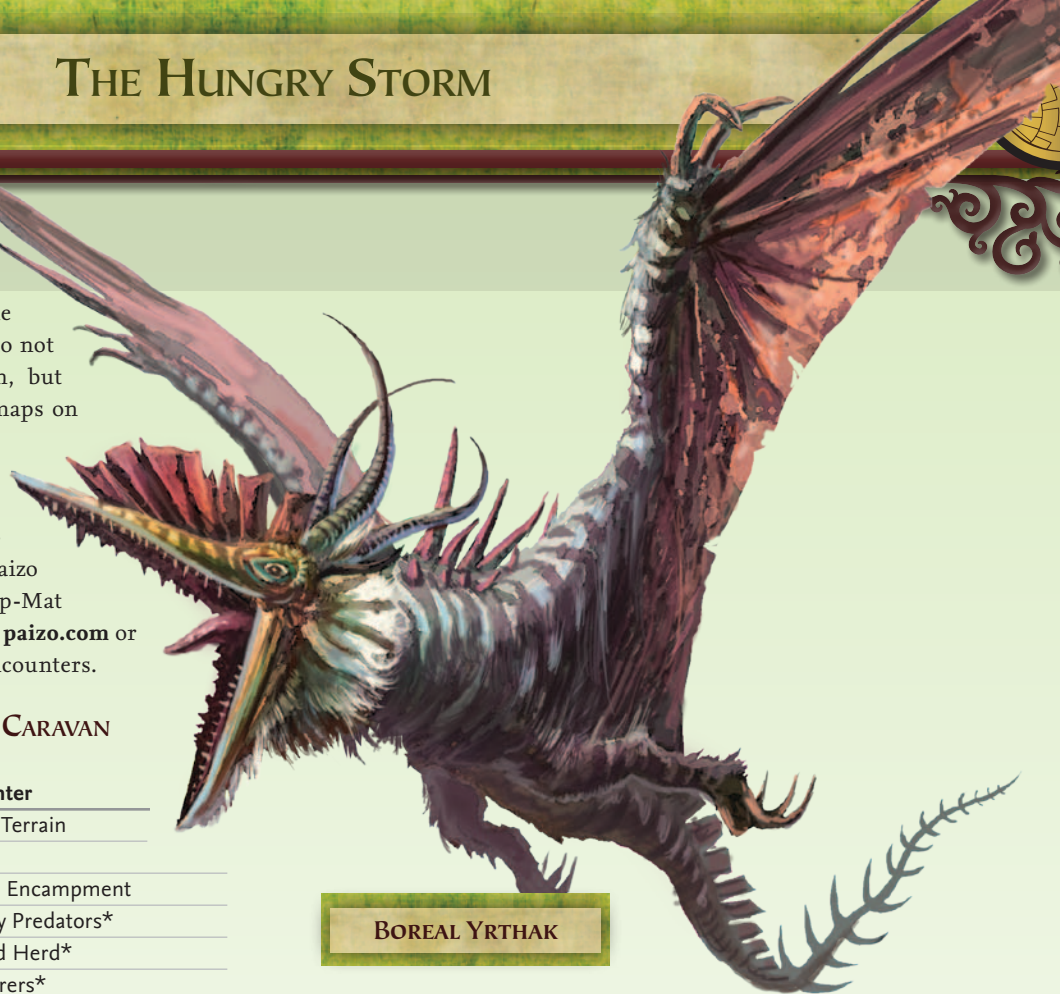
The descriptions of the encounters are presented in alphabetical order after the table below. Most of these encounters do not have maps associated with them, but we have presented a few generic maps on page 10 that can be used as you see fit for encounters in the Crown of the World. In addition, you can use the *GameMastery Flip-Mat: Mountain Pass* or one of Paizo Publishing's numerous other Flip-Mat or Map Pack products, available at paizo.com or quality gaming stores, for these encounters.

CROWN OF THE WORLD CARAVAN ENCOUNTERS

d% Roll	Encounter
01–05	Rough Terrain
06–10	Cabin
11–15	Erutaki Encampment
16–20	Hungry Predators*
21–25	Horned Herd*
26–30	Wanderers*
31–35	Wrecked Caravan
36–40	Dragon Sighting
41–50	Blizzard
51–55	Aurora
56–60	Wings of Hope
61–65	Death from Below*
66–70	Creeping Rot
71–76	Wagon Damage
77–80	Ice Hunters*
81–85	Pleasant Weather
86–90	Polar Pudding*
91–100	Frozen Dead*
101–105	Black Monolith
106–110	The Lonely Maiden*
111–115	Northern Lights*
116–120	Rough Terrain
121–125	Crevasse
126–130	Polar Mirage
131–135	Black Slush
136–140	Auroral Flight*
141–145	Cold Gate
146–150	Hunting Party*

AURORA

The wondrous polar aurora ripples overhead at night for 1 week. This good omen grants the caravan a +2 bonus on Resolve checks for the duration of the aurora, and the caravan's fortune-teller can use her reroll ability one additional time that week.



BOREAL YRTHAK

AURORAL FLIGHT* (CR 9)

Creature: The caravan sees a strange, blue-green light on the northern horizon, sometimes streaking at high speed in straight lines, and at other times soaring in broad circles. This is a boreal yrthak, a flying reptile that has adapted to life in the cold skies above the frozen wastes of the Crown of the World. The caravan can make a DC 24 Security check to avoid the boreal yrthak; otherwise, the creature notices the caravan and swoops in to attack, targeting individual creatures rather than the caravan itself.

BOREAL YRTHAK

CR 9

XP 6,400

Variant yrthak (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 290)

N Huge magical beast (cold)

Init +6; **Senses** blindsight 120 ft.; Perception +18

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 10, flat-footed 20 (+2 Dex, +12 natural, –2 size)

hp 114 (12d10+48)

Fort +12, **Ref** +12, **Will** +8

Defensive Abilities aurora; **Immune** cold, gaze attacks, sight-based attacks, sonic, visual effects and illusions

Weaknesses blind, vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

Melee bite +17 (2d6+7), 2 claws +17 (1d8+7)

Ranged sonic lance +12 ranged touch (8d6 sonic)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

JADE REGENT



THE HUNGRY STORM

Special Attacks explosion

TACTICS

During Combat The yrthak attacks from the air, wheeling around to repeatedly target opponents with its sonic lance. It uses its explosion attack to target massed groups of foes. If brought to the ground, the yrthak attacks with its bite and claws.

Morale The yrthak takes to the air and flees if reduced to fewer than 30 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 14, **Con** 18, **Int** 7, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +21; **CMD** 33 (37 vs. trip)

Feats Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perception), Wingover

Skills Fly +7, Perception +18

Languages Draconic

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Aurora (Su) A boreal yrthak is surrounded by a glowing blue and green aura of electrically charged particles that blurs and conceals the creature's form. The yrthak takes a –5 penalty on Stealth checks in dim light or darkness, but gains concealment (20% miss chance).

BLACK MONOLITH (CR VARIES)

The caravan approaches a monolith of black stone that rises out of the ice to a height of 20 feet. This is one of the monoliths Katiyana has been placing across the Crown of the World to cement her control over the morozkos.

Creatures: A Frozen Dead encounter (see page 13) always accompanies the discovery of a black monolith. In addition, there is a 50% chance that it is accompanied by a Blizzard encounter (see the next column).

BLACK SLUSH (CR 7 OR CR 10)

The caravan encounters a wide area of tainted snow and polluted effluent. This acts as an open Crevasse encounter (see page 12), though casting *water walk* grants a +2 bonus on Security checks to cross the area. In addition, the caravan must make a DC 23 Security check once per hour while crossing or become poisoned by the toxic slurry, taking a cumulative –1 penalty to AC and on Attack checks for each failed check. These penalties can be removed with a successful DC 23 Security check when the caravan rests. Each healer in the caravan grants a cumulative +1 bonus on this check, and each casting of *neutralize poison* grants a +2 bonus on the check.

Creatures: In addition, there is a 50% chance that an area of black slush is the hunting ground of a mated pair of chardas, xenophobic monstrous humanoids from the depths of the earth, who attack the caravan (AC 23; hp 115; Attack +18; Damage 8d8+4). The chardas can be avoided with two successful DC 19 Security checks. The chardas fight to the death.

Treasure: The chardas maintain a lair in an ice cave below the black slush, which can be found with a DC 25 Survival check. Inside the lair are 34 uncut diamonds (worth 100 gp each), one of which is actually an *air elemental gem*.

XP Award: Award the PCs 3,200 XP for a black slush encounter, and an additional 6,400 XP if they defeat the mated pair of chardas.

BLIZZARD (CR 7)

A bitter storm of driving wind and snow engulfs the caravan for 1d4 days. During this time, the caravan takes a –2 penalty to AC and on Attack and Security checks because of poor visibility and hostile weather. The caravan can make a DC 22 Security check each day to move at half speed during the blizzard. If the caravan fails the check by 4 or less, the caravan moves at one-quarter speed. If the caravan fails the check by 5 or more, it makes no progress. Casting *control winds* grants a +2 bonus on this check, while *control weather* grants a +4 bonus. When the blizzard ends, the deep drifts of snow it leaves behind are considered a Rough Terrain encounter (see page 17) for 1d4 days.

XP Award: Award the PCs 3,200 XP for a blizzard encounter.

CABIN (CR VARIES)

The caravan encounters a single isolated cabin, built to provide shelter for trappers, prospectors, and other wanderers. Cabins may be solid lodges of fieldstone or hewn logs, sod dugouts, or clapboard shacks.

Creatures: Such cabins are frequently empty, but sometimes they are occupied by any of a variety of creatures. When a cabin is found, consult the following table to determine its occupants.

d% Roll	Cabin Occupants
01–50	Unoccupied
51–80	1d4 trappers (also gold-panners, fur-trappers, seal-hunters, etc.)
81–90	1 guide
91–95	Evidence of violent death (broken doors or windows, corpses or bloodstains, claw marks, etc.); double the normal chance for random encounters for 1d3 days
96–00	Monster (the cabin contains a random encounter appropriate for the terrain; disregard any encounter too large to fit inside the cabin)

GUIDE

CR 7

XP 3,200

hp 40 (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* 277)

TRAPPERS (1–4)

CR 3

XP 800 each

hp 30 each (*Pathfinder GameMastery Guide* 276)

Development: If a cabin is unoccupied, the caravan can scavenge its contents and materials for 1 cargo unit of repair materials, stores, or trade goods (equal chance of each being present) with a special DC 20 Resolve check.

If the cabin is occupied, the caravan can buy or sell 1 cargo unit of repair materials, stores, or trade goods (or trade one type of cargo for another) with a special DC 20 Resolve check. A successful check also enables the PCs to gain information about the surrounding territory—for the next 1d3 days, the caravan may roll twice for caravan encounters, choosing the less dangerous (or the more beneficial) of the two results.

COLD GATE (CR 9)

The caravan passes near an elemental gate that reduces temperatures in the surrounding region by one category (see page 63) for 1d4 days. The caravan must succeed on a DC 23 Security check every 12 hours (whether moving or resting) or take 1d6 points of damage. The caravan takes a –2 penalty to its AC and on Attack checks until these hit points are restored.

Creatures: The caravan has a 25% chance of encountering a group of ice elementals each day it remains within the reduced temperature zone near a cold gate. The caravan can avoid the elementals with two successful DC 19 Security checks. The elementals are not immediately hostile, however, and have a starting attitude of indifferent. If the PCs can speak Aquan (or use *tongues*) and succeed at a DC 15 Diplomacy check, the ice elementals become friendly and travel with the caravan for a time, granting it a +2 bonus to AC and on Security checks for as long as the caravan remains within the cold gate's temperature zone. If the PCs fail the Diplomacy check by 4 or less, the elementals ignore the caravan unless attacked first. If the PCs fail the check by 5 or more, the elementals become hostile and attack (AC 23; hp 115; Attack +17; Damage 8d8+4).

XP Award: Award the PCs 6,400 XP for dealing with the ice elementals or defeating them in combat.

CREEPING ROT (CR 6)

The caravan's provisions somehow become tainted, spreading sickness in the caravan. Each day the creeping rot spreads, 1 cargo unit of provisions is destroyed and the caravan takes a –1 penalty to AC and on Attack and Resolve checks. In addition, the caravan's speed is reduced by 25%. These penalties are cumulative, and after 4 days, the caravan is stranded and cannot move. Each day, the caravan can make a DC 25 Security check to contain the creeping rot. A successful check halts the spread of the taint for that day. After two consecutive successful checks, the creeping rot is ended—the penalties are removed and the caravan's speed returns to normal. Each

healer in the caravan, each PC able to cast *purify food and drink*, and each casting of *remove disease* grants a +1 bonus on these checks.

XP Award: Award the PCs 2,400 XP for dealing with creeping rot.

CREVASSE (CR 6 OR CR 8)

A rift in the ice blocks the caravan's path. There is a 50% chance that the crevasse is open and obvious, and a 50% chance that a crevasse is hidden by unstable ice or snow. If the crevasse is open, a DC 21 Security check is enough to devise a means of bypassing the crevasse. Doing so requires 1d6 hours of work + 1 hour per wagon. Casting *air walk*, *dimension door*, *floating disk*, *fly*, *levitate*, or *shrink item* grants a +1 bonus on this check per spell or effect. The caravan can make this check as many times as necessary, with the same expenditure of time for each check.

If the crevasse is hidden, the caravan must succeed at a DC 23 Security check to detect the hazardous terrain before the caravan blunders into it. If the check is successful, the caravan can bypass the crevasse as outlined above. On a failed check, the unstable ice collapses under part of the caravan.

If the caravan fails the check by 4 or less, one random wagon falls into the crevasse, and the caravan takes 4d6 points of damage. If the caravan fails the check by 5 or more, it takes 8d6 points of damage. Extricating a wagon from the crevasse follows the same rules as bypassing an open crevasse, but uses 1 cargo unit of repair materials per check. Alternatively, the caravan can simply abandon the trapped wagon and continue on at normal speed.

XP Award: Award the PCs 2,400 XP for an open crevasse, or 4,800 XP for a hidden crevasse.

DEATH FROM BELOW* (CR 7 OR CR 11)

Creature: A burrowing beast erupts from below and attempts to devour pack or draft animals. In the Outer Rim, the creature is a bulette (AC 20; hp 85; Attack +13; Damage 6d8); in the High Ice, it is a remorhaz (AC 20; hp 85; Attack +13; Damage 6d8); and in the Boreal Expanse it is a young frost worm (AC 25; hp 145; Attack +19; Damage 10d8+5). Each time the creature makes a successful attack against the caravan, the caravan must succeed at a DC 22 Security check or lose a random wagon's draft team (or a random horse train). Once it seizes prey in this fashion, the creature retreats. A wagon without a draft team cannot move on its own; the draft team must be replaced with a new horse train. Alternatively, the wagon can be hitched to another wagon and team, but doing so reduces the entire caravan's speed by 25% until the wagon receives a new horse train.

XP Award: Award the PCs 3,200 XP for defeating a bulette or remorhaz, or 12,800 XP for defeating a frost worm.

DRAGON SIGHTING

The caravan sees the white dragon Vegsundvaag (see page 58) flying through the sky some distance away. Fortunately, the dragon is far enough away that it poses no physical threat to the caravan at this point, but the sighting unnerves the caravan, which must succeed at a DC 17 Resolve check or it makes no progress for the rest of the day and gains 1 point of Unrest.

ERUTAKI ENCAMPMENT

The caravan comes across a small, semi-permanent encampment or village of nomadic Erutaki. Alternatively, this encounter could be with an isolated village of Snowcaster elves. If desired, the caravan can make a DC 22 Security check to avoid the encampment without being noticed by the inhabitants. Use of magic such as *fog cloud*, *invisibility sphere*, or *sleet storm* grants a +1 bonus on this check per spell or effect.

If the caravan decides to visit the encampment, a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check (modified by the encampment's Law modifier) secures permission from the encampment's chief for the caravan to shelter inside the camp for up to 1 week. A caravan has no encounters while sheltered inside an encampment and gains a +2 bonus on any Security checks to repair wagons. The caravan can also consult with the encampment's shaman, allowing the caravan's fortune-teller to use her reroll ability one additional time, and the shaman can brew 1st- or 2nd-level potions for purchase.

If the PCs fail the Diplomacy check by 4 or fewer, it gains no special benefits or disadvantages. If the PCs fail the check by 5 or more, there is a 50% chance that the Erutaki sell the caravan shoddy trade goods (–5 penalty on future checks to sell them in other settlements) or tainted stores (each cargo unit of stores counts as only 5 units of provisions, and there is a 10% chance of a Creeping Rot encounter—see page 12). The shoddy goods or tainted stores can be detected before purchase with a successful DC 22 Security check.

TYPICAL ERUTAKI ENCAMPMENT

N hamlet

Corruption –2; **Crime** –3; **Economy** –2; **Law** –1; **Lore** +0;
Society –2

Qualities insular

Danger –5

POPULACE

Government autocracy

Population 60 (60 human)

Notable NPCs

Chief (N old human ranger 3)

Shaman (N old human druid 3)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 200 gp; **Purchase Limit** 1,000 gp; **Spellcasting** 2nd

Minor Items 1d6 (usually potions)

Development: Each time the caravan stops at an encampment, there is a 25% chance that an agent of the Five Winds stirs up trouble for the caravan—the next time they have a caravan encounter, roll twice and use the more dangerous result.

FROZEN DEAD* (CR VARIES)

Creatures: The caravan encounters several frozen bodies—either dead corpses or undead creatures. Determine the exact type of frozen dead encountered on the following table.

d% Roll	Frozen Dead
01–25	Dead animal remains
26–50	Dead human remains
51–60	Gang of frostfallen skeletons
61–70	Gang of frostfallen zombies or 2d4 hoarfrost spirits*
71–75	1d4 frostfallen bison
76–80	2d4 frost wights
81–85	2d4 hoarfrost spirits
86–90	1 frostfallen mastodon
91–00	1 frostfallen mastodon and 4 hoarfrost spirits

* In the High Ice, there is a 50% chance of encountering 2d4 hoarfrost spirits rather than frostfallen zombies; in the Boreal Expanse or at a Black Monolith (see page 11), this chance is 100%.

Dead animal or dead human remains are the heaped corpses of animals or humans, frozen solid and displaying gaping wounds—victims of Katiyana and her undead minions in their efforts to control the morozkos and restore Sithhud's power.

Most frozen dead attack the PCs and ignore the caravan. The exceptions are the gangs of frostfallen skeletons or frostfallen zombies, which attack the caravan in CR 8 armies of two dozen human walking dead with the frostfallen template (AC 21; hp 100; **Attack** +15; **Damage** 10d6). Each character with the channel energy ability grants the caravan a +1 bonus on Attack checks made against these undead foes.

In the tundra or the Outer Rim, frozen dead, whether corpses or undead, have a 10% chance of being marked with the three-fingered icy claw symbol of Sithhud. This chance increases to 50% in the High Ice and 100% in the Boreal Expanse. Hoarfrost spirits are always marked with Sithhud's symbol.

FROSTFALLEN BISON (1–4)

CR 5

XP 1,600 each

(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 174 and see page 84)

NE Large undead (cold)

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., lifesense 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 9, flat-footed 21 (+12 natural, –1 size)

hp 27 each (5d8+5)

Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +1

DR 5/bludgeoning; Immune cold, undead traits

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee gore +11 (2d6+9 plus 1d6 cold), slam +11 (1d8+9 plus 1d6 cold)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

Special Attacks cold, stampede, trample (2d6+9, DC 21)

STATISTICS

Str 29, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 10

Base Atk +3; CMB +13; CMD 23 (27 vs. trip)

Feats Toughness

FROSTFALLEN MASTODON

CR 10

XP 9,600

hp 91 (see page 84)

FROST WIGHTS (2–4)

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

hp 34 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 276, 294)

HOARFROST SPIRITS (2–4)

CR 3

XP 800 each

CE Medium undead (cold) (*Tome of Horrors II* 94)

Init +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft., heatsense 60 ft.; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+2 Dex, +5 natural)

hp 32 each (5d8+10)

Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +6

Immune cold, undead traits

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +6 (1d4+2 plus 1d6 cold and glaciante)

Special Attacks cold (1d6), glaciante (DC 14)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd; concentration +5)

1/day—*cone of cold* (DC 17)

STATISTICS

Str 15, Dex 14, Con —, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 14

Base Atk +3; CMB +5; CMD 17

Feats Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills Acrobatics +7, Climb +10, Perception +13, Stealth +10

Languages Abyssal

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Cold (Su) A hoarfrost spirit's body generates intense cold, dealing 1d6 points of cold damage with each claw attack. Creatures attacking a hoarfrost spirit with unarmed or natural attacks take 1d6 points of cold damage each time they hit.

Glaciante (Su) A creature hit by a hoarfrost spirit's claw must succeed at a DC 14 Fortitude save or take 1 point of

Dexterity damage and be paralyzed by bone-numbing cold for 1d4+1 rounds. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Heatsense (Ex) Hoarfrost spirits can detect heat (such as that generated by living creatures) within 60 feet, including the heat of invisible creatures. Heatsense functions as blindsense in regard to any nonvisible heat sources within its range.

Development: Anytime the caravan encounters frozen dead, the caravan must make a Resolve check (DC 15 for normal remains, DC 20 for undead). If the caravan fails this check, it takes a –2 penalty on Resolve checks for 1 week.

Treasure: Any group of humanoid corpses, whether dead or undead, has a 50% chance of having 1 cargo unit of trade goods preserved in the ice along with them. Dead animal remains or undead animals have no treasure.

HORNED HERD* (CR 8)

Creatures: The caravan encounters a herd of elk, musk oxen, or woolly rhinoceroses. The caravan can peacefully bypass the herd with a successful DC 18 Security check. If the caravan fails the check by 4 or less, it can wait 1d4 hours for the herd to move on without incident. If the caravan fails the check by 5 or more, the herd becomes aggressive and charges it (AC 21; hp 100; Attack +11; Damage 10d6). The herd attacks for 1d3 rounds before fleeing.

If the caravan succeeds at the Security check by 5 or more, it brings down part of the herd, gaining 5d6 units of provisions. If the caravan succeeds at the check by 10 or more, it can collect 10d6 units of provisions or capture animals to train as draft animals. A character with ranks in Handle Animal can attempt to train a captured herd for heavy labor with a DC 15 Handle Animal check. If the check is successful, the caravan can add a free horse train at the end of 2 weeks.

XP Award: Award the PCs 4,800 XP for dealing with the herd.

HUNGRY PREDATORS* (CR 7 OR CR 8)

Creatures: A group of hungry animals catches the caravan's scent and begins tracking it, hoping to devour the caravan's travelers or draft animals. The predators might be a pack of wolves or dire wolves, a family of snow leopards, or a pair of grizzly bears or dire wolverines (AC 20; hp 85; Attack +13; Damage 6d8+3). Whatever their type, the predators flee if reduced to fewer than 30 hit points. The caravan can avoid this encounter with a successful DC 22 Security check. Offering the animals 1d6 units of provisions grants a +2 bonus on this check, and each character with wild empathy or the ability to speak with animals adds an additional +1 bonus on the check.

Alternatively, hungry predators can be magical beasts such as a trio of snowy owlbeats, a pair of winter wolves, or a single frost drake (AC 21; hp 100; Attack +15; Damage 10d6). This encounter can be avoided with a

THE HUNGRY STORM

successful DC 23 Security check, but only characters with wild empathy can modify this check.

XP Award: Award the PCs 3,200 XP for defeating animal predators or 4,800 XP for defeating magical beast predators.

HUNTING PARTY* (CR 9)

Creatures: Frozen undead servants of Sithhud prowl the pole, preying on whatever living creatures they can find. Eight hoarfrost spirits assault the caravan, fighting until destroyed (AC 23; **hp** 115; **Attack** +17; **Damage** 8d8+4).

XP Award: Award the PCs 6,400 XP for defeating a hunting party.

ICE HUNTERS* (CR 8)

Creatures: The caravan encounters a group of ice trolls (AC 21; **hp** 100; **Attack** +15; **Damage** 10d6). If encountered while the caravan is active, the trolls attempt to follow the caravan and ambush it while the caravan camps. If active, the caravan can make a DC 23 Security check to detect the trolls' presence before they attack; if camped, a DC 20 Security check is necessary to avoid being surprised. If reduced to fewer than 40 hit points, the trolls forfeit their attack and attempt to retreat on their next turn. The caravan can prevent their escape with a DC 23 Security check.

Development: If the trolls escape, the caravan can easily track them and engage them in combat again. However, half of the trolls' damage has been regenerated. If the caravan chooses not to track them, the trolls escape, regenerate their full hit points, and attack 1d4 hours later, attempting to ambush the caravan again. If the trolls are reduced to fewer than 40 hit points a second time, they retreat but do not return again if they escape.

The Erutaki hate ice trolls, and anyone bearing the head of an ice troll (burned with fire or acid to ensure it cannot regenerate) gains a +2 circumstance bonus on Charisma-based skill checks or on caravan Resolve checks when dealing with Erutaki.

Treasure: A band of ice hunters carries 1 cargo unit worth of treasure (typically fur pelts, gold or silver nuggets, crude bracelets, scrimshaw, or polished semiprecious stones) worth 1,200 gp.

XP Award: Award the PCs 4,800 XP for defeating the ice trolls.

THE LONELY MAIDEN* (CR 8)

Creature: The caravan encounters a yuki-onna—the restless spirit of a woman frozen to death in the snow and never given a proper burial—known as the Lonely Maiden. Appearing as a beautiful but sad ghostly woman surrounded by swirling mists of snow and ice, the Lonely Maiden seeks to impose her own cruel fate upon the PCs, attempting to lure them away from the caravan to an icy death with her fascinating gaze. Once her victims are away from the caravan, she attacks.

THE LONELY MAIDEN

CR 8

XP 4,800

Yuki-onna (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 287)

LE Medium undead (cold, incorporeal)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +17

Aura snowstorm (200 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 21, flat-footed 16 (+6 deflection, +4 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 94 (9d8+54)

Fort +9, **Ref** +7, **Will** +11

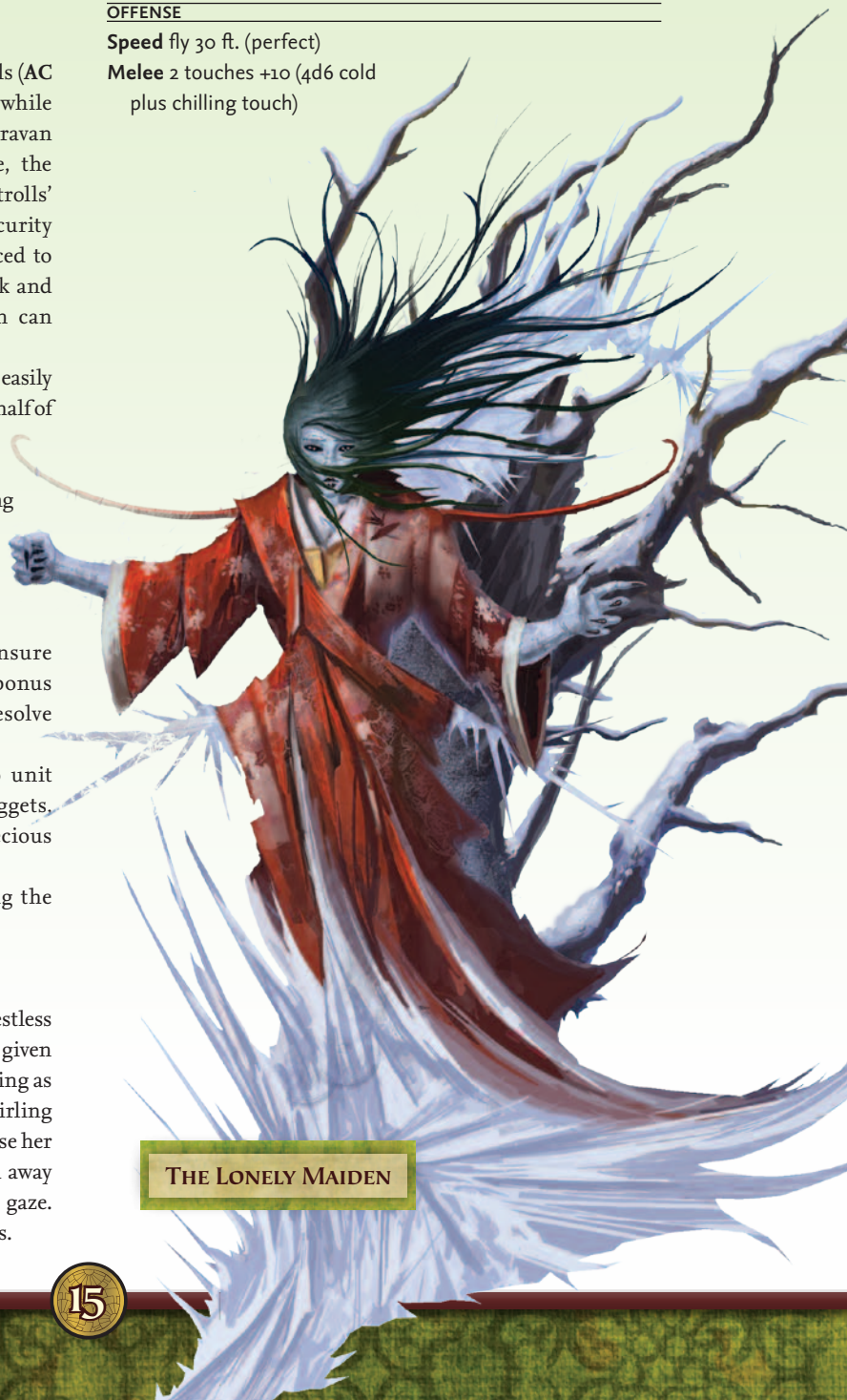
Defensive Abilities incorporeal; **Immune** cold, undead traits

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire, snow dependency

OFFENSE

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Melee 2 touches +10 (4d6 cold plus chilling touch)



THE LONELY MAIDEN

Special Attacks chilling touch, fascinating gaze

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +16)

Constant—*blur*

3/day—*cone of cold* (DC 21), *eyebite* (comatose and panicked only, DC 22), *ice storm*

TACTICS

During Combat The Lonely Maiden casts *ice storm* on massed foes and targets individual male opponents with *eyebite*.

In melee combat, she casts *cones of cold* followed by her freezing touch attacks.

Morale The Lonely Maiden fights until destroyed, quickly melting until only a small pool of water remains.

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 18, **Con** —, **Int** 17, **Wis** 21, **Cha** 22

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 27

Feats Combat Casting, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spring Attack

Skills Bluff +15, Fly +12, Intimidate +18, Perception +17, Sense Motive +17, Spellcraft +15, Stealth +16, Survival +14

Languages Common

ECOLOGY

Environment any cold

Organization solitary

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Chilling Touch (Su) A yuki-onna's touch causes 4d6 cold damage. Whenever a creature takes cold damage in this manner, it must make a DC 20 Fortitude save to avoid being staggered by the supernatural cold for 1 round. This duration stacks. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Fascinating Gaze (Su) Fascinated for 1d4 rounds, 30 feet, Will DC 20 negates. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Snow Dependency (Ex) A yuki-onna is staggered if she is ever in an area without snow while her snowstorm aura is suppressed or otherwise not functioning.

Snowstorm (Su) A yuki-onna is surrounded by whirling blasts of snow, even in areas that wouldn't allow for such weather, that comprise a 200-foot-radius spread. Within this area, the snowfall and wind gusts cause a –4 penalty on Perception checks and ranged attacks. The wind itself blows in a clockwise rotation around the yuki-onna, and functions as severe wind (*Core Rulebook* 439). A yuki-onna is unaffected by snowstorms or blizzards of any kind. Any effect that causes these winds to drop below severe (such as *control weather* or *control winds*) cancels the snowstorm effect entirely.

NORTHERN LIGHTS* (CR 10)

This encounter begins as an Aurora encounter (see page 9), but the caravan soon sees a pair of glowing orbs slowly descending from the aurora.

Creatures: The balls of light are actually will-o'-wisps masquerading as helpful spirits. They offer to guide the

caravan safely past several local hazards, but actually attempt to lead it into danger. The caravan can make a DC 23 Resolve check to see through the will-o'-wisps' deception. Each character able to detect evil grants a +1 bonus on this check. The Erutaki are familiar with the treacherous "spirits," so any Erutaki with the caravan grant a +2 bonus on the check. If the Resolve check fails, the will-o'-wisps lead the caravan into a hidden Crevasse encounter (see page 12) and then attack (**AC** 21; **hp** 100; **Attack** +15; **Damage** 7d8+4).

Treasure: At the bottom of the crevasse is a broken supply wagon. The wagon can be salvaged, looted, or repaired as a Wrecked Caravan encounter (see page 17), but with no chance of a Frozen Dead encounter. In addition, among the shattered and useless junk at the bottom of the crevasse is 1 cargo unit of treasure, consisting of 1,397 cp, 3,224 sp, 697 gp, 47 pieces of unpolished amber (worth 10 gp each), and a *minor ring of cold resistance*.

XP Award: Award the PCs 4,800 XP for defeating the will-o'-wisps, and an additional 4,800 XP if they encounter the crevasse.

PLEASANT WEATHER

Temperatures are one category warmer (see page 63) for 1d4 days. Thanks to the good visibility and milder conditions, the caravan gains a +2 bonus on Security and Resolve checks. In addition, the caravan's speed increases by 25% for the duration of the good weather.

POLAR MIRAGE (CR 8)

The caravan drivers and guides become obsessed with a mirage of a landmark and diverge from their course. The caravan must make a DC 23 Resolve check to realize they are chasing a mirage. This check can be made multiple times, but the caravan wastes 1d6 hours of travel time going the wrong way for each failed check. On a successful check, the caravan realizes the error but must make a DC 23 Security check to find the proper course again (+2 to the DC for each failed Resolve check). On a failed Security check, the caravan becomes further lost, wasting another 1d4 hours.

XP Award: Award the PCs 4,800 XP for encountering a polar mirage.

POLAR PUDDING* (CR 7)

Creature: Amorphous scavengers of the North, white puddings look like harmless patches of snow and ice, but these variant black puddings consume organic and inorganic material alike. The caravan must make a DC 22 Security check to avoid blundering into a hidden white pudding (**AC** 20; **hp** 85; **Attack** +13; **Damage** 6d8+3). If the caravan fails the Security check, it is considered surprised, and takes a –2 penalty to its AC and on Attack checks for the

first round of combat. If the pudding makes a successful attack, the caravan must succeed at a DC 22 Security check or become mired in the pudding, unable to move and taking a –2 penalty to its AC and on Attack checks. If the caravan does not become mired, it can forfeit its attack to attempt to escape the encounter with two DC 17 Security checks.

XP Award: Award the PCs 3,200 XP for defeating the white pudding.

ROUGH TERRAIN (CR 6)

The caravan encounters a region of unexpected difficulty, such as bogs in the lowlands, swift rapids and landslides in the highlands, or deep snow or unstable ice across the pole. This rough terrain forces the caravan to move at half speed for 1d4 days. Each day, the caravan can make a DC 21 Security check to move at three-quarters speed through the rough terrain.

XP Award: Award the PCs 2,400 XP for a rough terrain encounter.

WAGON DAMAGE (CR 6)

Broken axles or wheels force the caravan to halt until they can be repaired. A wainwright must succeed at a DC 21 Security check to repair the wagon. Casting *make whole* grants a +1 bonus on the check, *minor creation* or *wood shape* grants a +2 bonus, and *fabricate* or *major creation* grants a +3 bonus. Each Security check, whether successful or not, takes 1 day and uses 1 cargo unit of repair materials. If the caravan simply abandons the damaged wagon (determine which randomly), it can continue at normal speed.

XP Award: Award the PCs 2,400 XP for successfully repairing the wagon damage.

WANDERERS* (CR VARIES)

Creatures: The caravan encounters a lone guide or trapper, or a small group of trappers, traders, or Snowcaster elves. Roll on the following table to determine the nature of the wanderers.

d% Roll	Wanderers
01–50	1 trapper
51–60	1d4 trappers or Snowcaster elves
61–80	1 guide
81–00	1 traveling merchant, 1 guide, and 2 trappers

GUIDE CR 7

XP 3,200

hp 40 (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* 277)

SNOWCASTER ELVES (1–4) CR 3

XP 800 each

Trapper (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* 276)

hp 30 each

TRAPPERS (1–4) CR 3

XP 800 each

hp 30 each (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* 276)

TRAVELING MERCHANT CR 5

XP 1,600

hp 31 (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* 285)

Development: If made friendly with a successful DC 22 Diplomacy check (an offering of 1 unit of provisions per wanderer grants a +2 bonus on the check), the wanderers can give clues about the road ahead and warn the caravan of danger. For 1d6 days, the caravan may roll twice for any caravan event and choose the least dangerous event. A traveling merchant allows the caravan to buy or sell goods as if at a settlement, or to buy or sell goods up to 500 gp (GM's discretion as to limits on what is available). The caravan can trade 1 cargo unit of stores for 1 cargo unit of trade goods with any wanderer.

If the PCs fail the Diplomacy check by 4 or less, the caravan gains no benefits. If the PCs fail the check by 5 or more, there is a 50% chance that the wanderers attempt to steal 1 cargo unit of stores or trade goods, or sabotage the caravan, causing a Wagon Damage encounter (see the previous column). A successful DC 20 Security check prevents their mischief and allows the PCs to engage the wanderers in combat or allow them to flee. A Security check result of 25 or better allows the PCs to take the wanderers prisoner without a fight.

WINGS OF HOPE

The caravan sees a beneficent creature (such as a giant eagle, giant owl, or silver dragon) flying overhead. The caravan is heartened by the sight and gains a +2 bonus on its next Resolve check. The creature also keeps a lookout for danger and warns the caravan of dangers ahead, granting the caravan a +2 bonus on Security checks for the next 1d4 days.

WRECKED CARAVAN

The caravan finds abandoned, broken-down wagons along the path, possibly including the remains of its former drivers or passengers. The caravan can spend 1 day scavenging the wreckage for 1d6 cargo units of repair materials, or a wainwright can attempt to repair the wreckage into a functional covered wagon or supply wagon with a DC 20 Security check and 1 cargo unit of repair materials. If the caravan fails this check, the wreckage cannot be salvaged.

There is a 25% chance that the wrecked caravan also contains 1d6 cargo units of trade goods. There is also a 25% chance that a wrecked caravan contains a Frozen Dead encounter (see page 13).



CROWN OF THE WORLD ENCOUNTER AREAS

In addition to caravan encounters and other random encounters, the PCs will also come across a number of site-based encounters during their journey across the Crown of the World. The remainder of this adventure details these encounter areas. Note that in some cases, the PCs have a choice as to which route they will take, and will therefore not face all of these encounters. As a result, you can either ignore those encounters the PCs bypass, or repurpose them to expand the adventure and further challenge the PCs as they follow the Path of Aganhei to Tian Xia. You can use the sample site maps on page 10 or Paizo's Flip-Mats or Map Packs for those locations without maps.

A. THE GIANT-DOWNS OF URJUK (CR 9)

As the PCs descend the northern flanks of the Rimethirst Mountains that form the frontier of the Crown of the World, they enter a rugged hill country. The blustery, wind-carved badlands and folded hills of Urjuk were once home to a collection of giant realms, before their inhabitants relocated into the mountain peaks to establish grander lodges or migrated farther south into warmer lands. While some giants still wander the tundra or the High Ice farther north, the Giant-Downs themselves lie desolate and occupied by few humanoid inhabitants. Still, Urjuk is remembered as an ancient homeland, and many giants go there to die or be buried in the lands of their ancestors.

Creatures: An ancient, exiled frost giant sorcerer named Kjaerulff has appointed himself the guardian of the giant barrows. Dressed in ragged furs and wielding a notched and rusted greataxe, Kjaerulff wanders the barrow-lands, accompanied by his sole surviving friend, a winter wolf named Mistivir. Although he has seen over 200 winters, the aged giant is still prodigiously strong, and he and Mistivir keep a close watch on the road for intruders into the sacred burial hills of the frost giants.

PCs on the road have a 20% chance per day to be spotted by Kjaerulff or Mistivir, though as long as they stay on the road they are not likely to be attacked. If pack animals are left unguarded, Mistivir may attack by night to slay one and drag it off into the hills.

If the PCs leave the road, there is a 50% chance per day that they are accosted by Kjaerulff and Mistivir. The giant hides and uses his *scroll of ventriloquism* to challenge the PCs in his hoarse and rasping voice, claiming to be a spirit-guardian of the ancient giant-kings. He demands to know why the PCs have violated the sacred lands of the giants and commands them to leave at once, lest the spirits of the valiant dead rise up and destroy them. He uses *Intimidate* to convince them to leave, likely inducing Ameiko or other NPCs in the party's caravan to suggest

a retreat. If the PCs comply, Mistivir shadows them until they return to the road. If the PCs balk at retreating, Kjaerulff and Mistivir attack.

Use the Giant Barrow map on page 10 for this encounter.

KJAERULFF

CR 8

XP 4,800

Male venerable frost giant sorcerer 2 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 149)

CE Large humanoid (cold, giant)

Init -3; Senses low-light vision; Perception +23

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 6, flat-footed 19 (+4 armor, -3 Dex, +9 natural, -1 size)

hp 86 (16 HD; 14d8+2d6+16)

Fort +10, Ref +1, Will +11

Defensive Abilities rock catching; Immune cold

Weaknesses venerable, vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee greataxe +16/+11/+6 (3d6+9/x3) or
2 slams +16 (1d8+6)

Ranged rock +8 (1d8+9)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Special Attacks rock throwing (120 ft.)

Bloodline Spell-Like Abilities (CL 2nd; concentration +6)
7/day—cold steel* (1 round)

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 2nd; concentration +6)

1st (5/day)—*enlarge person*, *mage armor*, *obscuring mist*

0 (at will)—*arcane mark*, *detect magic*, *light*, *ray of frost*,
read magic

Bloodline Boreal*

TACTICS

Before Combat Kjaerulff casts *mage armor* before confronting any strangers.

During Combat Kjaerulff casts *obscuring mist* over his opponents, then charges into combat to overrun foes with his Charge Through feat. He uses Arcane Strike and cold steel to make his axe into a +1 *frost greataxe*, focusing his attacks on spellcasters. If disarmed, he uses his *wand of elemental touch* to make cold attacks with his slams.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 40 hit points, Kjaerulff casts *enlarge person* and uses Power Attack. He pursues enemies until they are in sight of the road but does not follow them onto it. As long as intruders are trespassing in the barrow-lands, he never surrenders, fighting to the death to protect this sacred ground.

STATISTICS

Str 22, Dex 5, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 19, Cha 18

Base Atk +11; CMB +18 (+22 overrun); CMD 25 (27 vs. overrun)

Feats Arcane Strike, Blind-Fight, Charge Through*,
Eschew Materials, Greater Overrun, Improved Overrun,
Intimidating Prowess, Martial Weapon Proficiency
(greataxe), Power Attack

Skills Bluff +15, Climb +15, Intimidate +29, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Perception +23, Spellcraft +16, Stealth +9 (+13 in snow)

Languages Common, Draconic, Erutaki, Giant, Hallit

Combat Gear scroll of ventriloquism, wand of elemental touch* (12 charges); **Other Gear** greataxe, gold-plated astrolabe (worth 500 gp)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Venerable (Ex) Kjaerulff is of venerable age. The resulting adjustments to his ability scores decreases his CR by -2.

* See the *Advanced Player's Guide*.

MISTIVIR

CR 5

XP 1,600

Male winter wolf (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 280)

hp 57

TACTICS

During Combat Mistivir flanks opponents

with Kjaerulff and attempts to trip them, using his breath weapon against massed or prone foes.

Morale As long as Kjaerulff is alive, Mistivir fights to the death. If the giant is slain, Mistivir flees if reduced to fewer than 15 hit points.

Treasure: Kjaerulff retains no treasure other than the gold-plated astrolabe he took from a passing wizard, which he enjoys as a curiosity. However, a successful DC 20 Survival check allows the PCs to find Mistivir's den, which contains two broken dog sleds and a broken armored wagon. The wagon has only 20 hit points remaining, and only grants a +1 bonus to the caravan's AC until repaired by a wainwright (see the *Jade Regent Player's Guide*). Inside the wagon are the gnawed remains of a human man, whom Ulf recognizes as a rival guide named Kargun Yaremchuk. Among the guide's ruined possessions are a rusted scroll tube containing his *map of the High Ice* (see page 62).

Development: As long as the PCs' caravan remains on the road, Kjaerulff does not pursue them. Mistivir is less discriminating, however, and if Kjaerulff is slain, the wolf harries the party to exact vengeance for his friend's death. Each day for the next 2d6 days, the PCs have double the normal chance of a random encounter with Mistivir and 1d4 additional winter wolves.

LEAVING THE GIANT-DOWNS

Once the PCs leave Urjuk, they have a choice of routes to take. The primary route of the Path of Aganhei runs northwest through the Erutaki lands of Hasanaliat, skirting the Bearleg Lakes and the Gaarjuk Hills. North of the hills, the path follows the Taraska River through the high tundra of the Hoarwell March toward the town of Unaimo, the last major trading village before the path climbs onto the High Ice through the Koumssa Gap. This path is easier and generally faster, but the lands it crosses are more inhabited, potentially exposing the caravan to unfriendly eyes.

As an alternative route, the caravan could head due north through the Gaarjuk Hills, cutting off a wide bend of their route and avoiding more "civilized" lands. However, the hill country is far more rugged and remote,

KJAERULFF

with fewer chances to resupply or seek help if trouble should ensue. The caravan would still need to ford the Taraska, with greater difficulty than along the main route, and link back up with the Path of Aganhei before it swings north through the Koumssa Gap and climbs onto the High Ice.

If the PCs follow the Path of Aganhei into Hasanaliat, see The Lake Country below. If they instead cut through the Gaarjuk Hills, see The Hill Country on page 23.

THE LAKE COUNTRY

If the PCs follow the traditional route of the Path of Aganhei, their caravan leaves the hills of Urjuk, crossing a wide tundra basin before turning northwest. The path skirts the Gaarjuk Hills and heads into the eastern lake country of Hasanaliat. Ulf Gormundr suggests a course that skirts the foothills, taking the caravan into the less settled Bearleg Lakes region and enabling them to avoid concentrated settlements but still find ample supplies and provisions. The caravan would then ford the Taraska River at Serech Ford and follow the river north and east to the Koumssa Gap.

While the larger Erutaki settlements—like the coastal city of Aaminiut at the mouth of the great Taraska River—lie to the west, even the central territories of Hasanaliat are more settled than the south and east highlands. In addition to the Erutaki inhabitants, numerous small cabins and seasonal camps of trappers, traders, and trappers can also be found in this region. As a result, there is a 50% chance each day that the caravan comes upon a Cabin encounter (see page 11) or Erutaki Encampment encounter (see page 13; equal chance of either). These encounters are in addition to the normal chance of caravan encounters. Because these settlements are used to visitors, caravans gain a +2 bonus on Resolve checks in these areas.

B. BEARLEG LAKES (CR 7 OR CR 8)

A broad, marshy moor of wide lakes and streams known as the Bearleg Lakes lies just under the sheer bluffs of the northwestern Gaarjuk Hills. Erutaki villages are less common here, though scattered camps, lodges, and cabins dot the landscape. The lakes and streams teem with seasonal spawning salmon runs and the influx of thousands of migratory birds that nest in the cliffs. These twin migrations bring predators in great numbers to feast upon the abundant prey, especially the bears that give the lakes their name, but they attract more exotic predators as well. The Erutaki sometimes hunt the lake country during this “beast run,” but are wary of the predatory feeding frenzy that accompanies it.

Scouts can collect 2d4 units of provisions per day of hunting here in the summer months, or 1d4+1 units of provisions per day in the winter by ice fishing.

Creatures: The Bearleg Lakes area is rich in wildlife, mostly birds like eagles, fish, and small predators like foxes, martens, but larger predators also abound. The chance for encounters or events is doubled in this region, using the table below.

BEARLEG LAKES ENCOUNTERS

d% Roll	Encounter
01–50	Use normal encounter tables
51–60	2 giant pikes (encounter occurs while the PCs are crossing or adjacent to a lake or stream)
61–70	2 Taraskan bears
71–80	1 dire bear
81–90	Bugbear ambush (see below)
91–95	3 forest drakes
96–00	1 frost drake

Bugbear Ambush (CR 8): Bugbears do not attack the PCs directly but stalk and ambush the caravan as a group (AC 21; hp 100; **Attack** +11; **Damage** 8d6). The bugbears are expert hunters and the caravan must succeed at a DC 23 Security check or be ambushed. The bugbears are bandits, and if the caravan tracks them to their lair with a DC 15 Survival check, they can find the bandits’ stolen goods—10 cargo units of treasure worth a total of 3,000 gp.

DIRE BEAR CR 7
XP 3,200
hp 95 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 31)

FOREST DRAKES (3) CR 4
XP 1,200 each
hp 42 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 107)

FROST DRAKE CR 7
XP 3,200
hp 84 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 108)

GIANT PIKES (2) CR 6
XP 2,400 each
Giant gar (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 128)
hp 73 each

TARASKAN BEARS (2) CR 5
XP 1,600 each
Advanced grizzly bear (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 31, 294)
hp 52 each

C. WARM WELCOME (CR 9)

Parties of hunters and trappers (consisting of both Erutaki and southerners) have built a number of small cabins and lodges near the Bearleg Lakes, where they reap the summertime bounty of the lake region and spend

weeks skinning and smoking meats for preservation during the long dark winter months. Most lodges are empty in winter, but firelight twinkles in the windows of one cabin year-round.

Creature: For years, a hag named Old Maguyu prowled the lake country, disguising herself as a trapper and befriending those who came to the lakes before turning on them and adding their flesh to her cookpot. A few years ago, a passing hunter proved too canny for the hag's tricks and turned the tables on Old Maguyu, not only slaying her but burning her body and scattering the ashes in hopes of laying her menace to rest forever. Sadly, Old Maguyu's malice endured even after cremation, and a year after her death she rose again as a witchfire to resume her reign of terror.

Still able to disguise herself, Old Maguyu visits cabins disguised as a trapper, or takes up residence in a cabin and uses *ghost sound* and *dancing lights* to give the appearance of cheer and welcome, inviting guests to join her fire and shelter for the night. Before approaching PCs or trying to lure them in, Old Maguyu tries to summon a pair of will-o'-wisps, who turn invisible to ambush prey.

OLD MAGUYU

CR 9

XP 6,400

Witchfire (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 284)

hp 115

TACTICS

During Combat Old Maguyu begins combat with *pyrotechnics*, trying to block the party's escape route so that they must pass through her witchflame to get away. If possible, she also sets cabins, tents, or wagons on fire with her witchflame. She does not fear melee, as creatures attacking her are subject to the spread of her witchflame. She spreads her attacks among opponents, but once a victim has been engulfed in witchflame she flies out of reach, throwing fiery bolts or casting *ray of enfeeblement* to hinder melee characters.

Morale Old Maguyu fights until destroyed.

Treasure: The cabin Old Maguyu occupies contains 10 5-gallon kegs of ale (worth 1 gp each; each weighs 40 pounds and counts as 1 unit of provisions) and salmon and bear jerky equivalent to 3 cargo units of stores. These are all destroyed if the cabin burns down. In addition, a DC 30 Perception check detects a loose floorboard in the floor of the cabin. In the cavity beneath lies a +1 *adamantine light mace*, coated in bear fat and securely wrapped in a bearskin to protect it from the elements, left here long ago by a hunter who never returned from her hunt.

D. QOPUK FORD (CR 8)

Leaving Hasanaliat, the Path of Aganhei leads to Qopuk Ford, the easiest and most traveled crossing of the Taraska River. To successfully ford the river, however, the caravan must make two DC 17 Security checks, each requiring 1 hour. The first check is to find a suitable spot to cross and the second is to ford the river itself. A failed Security check means the caravan is unable to cross the ford and must either retreat (taking 1 additional hour per step of the fording process it has already completed) and find another spot to cross, or press on with another Security check (the DC increases by +4) to complete the failed step. While fording the river, the caravan takes a -4 penalty to its AC and on Attack checks, and a -4 penalty on Security checks for any purpose other than fording the river.



OLD MAGUYU

Magic can assist in fording the river. Each casting of *air walk*, *fly*, *levitate*, *water breathing*, or any spell or ability that grants a swim speed grants a +1 bonus on Security checks to ford the river, while casting *water walk* grants a +3 bonus on the checks.

When foraging near the river, scouts can gather double the normal provisions.

Creatures: There is a 20% chance each hour spent fording the Taraska of attracting the attention of a family of merrow raiders, who attempt to steal wagons and carry off draft animals and passengers to eat.

FRESHWATER MERROWS (6)

CR 3

XP 800 each

hp 30 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 189)

E. WANDERING HERD (CR 8)

After the party fords the Taraska, the Path of Aganhei follows the river's northern bank through the Hoarwell March. As the river bends eastward toward its source, the high flatlands become home to numerous herds of musk oxen. There is a 50% chance each day of a Horned Herd encounter (see page 14), in addition to other events or encounters. However, the first herd the PCs kill or capture belongs to an ettin named Gorkuk, which the PCs discover 1d4 days later when the ettin tracks down the caravan to take vengeance.

Gorkuk has a pair of trained hunting bears, and each of the ettin's heads considers one bear "his" personal pet, barking out instructions in a pidgin tongue and occasionally taunting the other head about which bear is more ferocious in battle. Gorkuk and his bears attack the PCs while they are encamped, hoping to take the caravan and its animals back to his herds.

GORKUK

CR 6

XP 2,400

Male ettin (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 130)

hp 65

TACTICS

During Combat Gorkuk attempts to disarm opponents when he first advances into combat, thereafter alternating trip combat maneuvers with attacks in subsequent rounds.

Morale Gorkuk flees if reduced to fewer than 20 hit points.

GRIZZLY BEARS (2)

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

hp 42 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 31)

Treasure: One of Gorkuk's javelins is actually a *javelin of lightning*, and he carries a *horn of fog*. In addition, his pouch contains 284 gp, 700 sp, six polished quartzes

(worth 10 gp each), and three bloodstones (worth 50 gp each). Gorkuk wears a cold weather outfit over his armor.

THE HILL COUNTRY

If the PCs turn off the primary Path of Aganhei to travel through the Gaarjuk Hills and avoid the lake country, their route passes through the following encounter areas.

F. LOST LAKE (CR 9)

The small Erutaki village of Rimakak lies at the foot of a waterfall flowing into Lake Nallishoot, and might offer a haven to rest and resupply the caravan. Ulf Gormundr has visited Rimakak in the past, but when the caravan arrives they find Rimakak's lodges and huts deserted. Last autumn, the village was visited by a qallupilluk named Arnaalak who resided in the lake. To appease the "water spirit," the residents of Rimakak invited the qallupilluk to a village feast. Arnaalak accepted and demanded the honored portion of the villagers' autumnal feast, but the young mother serving her stumbled and spilled food all over the qallupilluk. Enraged at the insult, Arnaalak cursed the villagers and fled back to the lake, taking her vengeance by stealing the children of the village one by one. The village's warriors tried to mount a rescue, only to discover that the children had been transformed into merrows by Arnaalak's fell curses. Overcome by the qallupilluk's magic and the grasping, clammy claws of their former children already turned against them, the surviving warriors and villagers fled Rimakak forever.

Creatures: Arnaalak rarely wanders the shore, though occasionally one or more of her merrow "children" can be found in the ruined village. If confronted by armed strangers, they flee to the lake to warn their "mother," who rallies her children to drive out encroachers. Arnaalak tries to lure opponents out onto the ice and reaches up from hiding to pull victims into the freezing cold water. Her merrow children have made hollows in the ice in a number of areas and can break through this thin ice with a DC 10 Strength check or when a Medium or larger creature walks over the ice. When the ice collapses, creatures standing on a broken section may leap to an adjacent square with a DC 20 Reflex save as an immediate action.

ARNAALAK

CR 7

XP 3,200

Qallupilluk (see page 88)

hp 76

FRESHWATER MERROWS (4)

CR 3

XP 800 each

hp 30 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 189)

Treasure: Arnaalak and her children have despoiled all of the huts of Rimakak, throwing refuse, offal, and filth over all and smashing anything of value that was too big to steal. In a watery bower beneath the lake's surface, however, the qallupilluk has gathered a considerable treasure hoard, including a +1 *breastplate*, a masterwork fishing net, a collection of 13 glass bottles, a clay jug of firewine (worth 20 gp), a waterlogged masterwork heavy crossbow (treat as broken), five thunderstones, five pieces of polished amber (worth 100 gp each), 14 rose quartzes (worth 10 gp each), 1,490 sp, and 4,302 cp.

Development: If PCs tell the tale of liberating Rimakak to other Erutaki, they may make a DC 24 Resolve check. If they are successful, the Erutaki reward them with 2,000 gp of caravan improvements to their wagons or a single new wagon of their choice.

G. AVALANCHE AMBUSH (CR 9)

North of Lake Nallishoot, the hills become more rugged, with cliffs and wind-carved badlands laced with rocky streambeds. These countless, nameless streams, including those draining Lake Nallishoot and many smaller lakes, gather themselves together to form the Kluani River, a rock-strewn watercourse that flows north out of the hills to join the Taraska River in the tundra beyond. The curious echoes and labyrinthine pathways of the badlands impose a -4 penalty on all Security checks made by the caravan, as travelers rarely have the opportunity to see danger before it is upon them.

Creature: While navigating these badlands, the caravan's route leads along the base of an east-west ridge that shelters it from the ever-present northern winds. This site, however, is the hunting ground of a cunning arctic chimera. This beast has the white-furred body of a powerful polar bear (granting a racial bonus on Stealth checks in snowy conditions, rather than scrubland or brush) and a white dragon's head, wings, and tail. Instead of a goat's head, the creature has a tusked walrus head, and a polar bear's head replaces its lion's head (the chimera's attacks remain the same). The arctic chimera dwells atop a 100-foot-high ridge that parallels the trail, and it has learned the trick of triggering avalanches in the snowpack along the ridges. If the chimera sees a large group approaching its den, it unleashes an avalanche to bury them, then flies overhead to pick off survivors before digging out and devouring those buried by the avalanche.

When the caravan first approaches, the chimera is hiding in the snow atop the ridge (Stealth check +8). Allow the PCs to make Perception checks to detect the chimera (+1 to the DC per 10 feet of distance from the top of the ridge). If spotted, or once the first wagon in the caravan is directly below its position, the chimera roars loudly, signaling the beginning of a surprise round. Individual characters can act only if they spotted the chimera or have an ability allowing them to act during a surprise round. On its turn, the chimera triggers an avalanche (see

Hazard on page 25). Use the Cliff map on page 10 for this encounter.



ARCTIC CHIMERA

Hazard (CR 7): The chimera triggers an avalanche (*Core Rulebook* 429) in an attempt to bury the caravan. Once the avalanche is triggered, it moves on the chimera's turn, racing to the bottom of the ridge in 1 round. The avalanche is 120 feet wide, consisting of two 30-foot-wide slide zones on either side of a 60-foot-wide bury zone.

As soon as the avalanche begins, the caravan must immediately make two DC 20 Security checks to detect the oncoming avalanche (with the -4 penalty from the terrain). If it succeeds at both checks, the caravan manages to avoid the deadly slide of snow and ice. If the caravan fails the first check but succeeds at the second check, it is caught in the avalanche's slide zone. Each wagon takes 3d6 points of damage and is buried. If the caravan succeeds at the first check but fails the second check, it is partially caught in the avalanche's bury zone instead. Each wagon takes 4d6 points of damage and is buried. If the caravan fails both checks, the caravan is fully caught in the avalanche's bury zone, and each wagon takes 8d6 points of damage and is buried. The PCs, and significant NPCs not riding in the caravan's wagons, must make DC 15 Reflex saves as normal to avoid the avalanche.

ARCTIC CHIMERA

CR 7

XP 3,200

Variant chimera with white dragon head (*Pathfinder RPG*

Bestiary 44)

hp 85

TACTICS

Before Combat After the avalanche, the chimera swoops down the ridge to within 20 feet of the ground, where it hovers to create a cloud of debris to gain concealment (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 315).

During Combat The chimera uses scent to target prey in the debris cloud with its breath weapon while continuing to hover. If forced to fight on the ground or against isolated foes, the chimera lands to bring its full attacks to bear.

Morale The chimera flees back to its lair atop the ridge if reduced to fewer than 20 hit points.

Development: Characters who were not buried in the avalanche can easily free buried creatures (*Core Rulebook* 415), but buried wagons are more difficult to free. Digging out buried wagons requires a Security check with a DC of 20 + 1 for each buried wagon. Each such attempt takes 1d12 hours.

Treasure: The chimera has collected a substantial treasure horde in its den in a cave atop the ridge. If an avalanche was triggered, the cliff face is easier to climb (DC 20 Climb check) and the PCs may begin their climb 1d4x10 feet up the cliff at the top of the snowdrift left after the avalanche. The chimera's hoard consists of a suit

of +1 silver dragonhide banded mail, an elixir of fire breath, three sets of cleats (see page 67), a jar of frostbite ointment (see page 68), 139 sp, and 789 gp.

H. CANNIBAL CAMP (CR 8)

While many tribes in the Crown of the World gather and hunt to sustain themselves, a few choose a more readily available source of meat: other humans. Some of these cannibal tribes were corrupted by whispering wendigos, dread cannibal spirits of the North, while others have suffered such desperate privations that they feel they had no other choice to survive. Still others hunt their own kind for pleasure, the thrill of the chase made all the more delightful for the knowing terror in the eyes of their victims. Cannibal tribes are shunned and despised by their kin, yet it is often less than obvious when a tribe has broken this taboo, especially to outsiders.

Creatures: The Silver Marten clan inhabits buried sod huts along the Kluani River, where the Gaarjuk hills slope down to the Taraska floodplain. Their leader is a witch named Taranaak, who gave into his dark hunger and ate the flesh of fellow humans in the depths of one polar winter. Now approaching middle age, Taranaak has recruited a group of younger warriors to follow his example, promising them that the forbidden practice actually makes them stronger and more powerful in the midst of battle.

When travelers first approach, the cannibals greet them with an offer of fire and food. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (local) or Survival check identifies the proffered meat as being human, but only if someone specifically tries to identify it. Once visitors have partaken of the meal, the cannibals happily reveal the meat's origin and invite those who ate to join their clan. If asked, Taranaak extols the virtues of cannibalism and the necessity of not wasting precious meat in the arctic. If the PCs reject the cannibals' gift or display revulsion about the tribe's lifestyle, the cannibals immediately become hostile. If the PCs do not leave immediately, the cannibals gather up their weapons and attack.

CANNIBALS (8)

CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 25 each (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* 306)

TARANAAK

CR 5

XP 1,600

Male human witch 6 (*Advanced Player's Guide* 65)

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; Senses Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural)

hp 53 (6d6+30)

Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk spear +6 (1d8+3/×3)

Ranged sling +5 (1d4+2)

Special Attacks hexes (blight [60 feet], cauldron, evil eye [–2, 6 rounds], slumber [6 rounds])

Witch Spells Prepared (CL 6th; concentration +9)

3rd—*lightning bolt* (DC 16), *pain strike** (DC 16), *summon monster III*

2nd—*bear's endurance*, *feast of ashes** (DC 15), *fester** (DC 15), *hold person* (DC 15)

1st—*endure elements*, *ill omen**, *mage armor*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 14)

o (at will)—*bleed* (DC 13), *resistance*, *spark**, *touch of fatigue* (DC 13)

Patron Endurance

TACTICS

Before Combat Before visitors arrive, Taranaak casts *bear's endurance* and *mage armor*.

During Combat Taranaak casts *summon monster III* on the first round of combat to summon a fiendish wolverine. He then supports his fellow cannibals with spells and hexes, focusing on effects that weaken or paralyze foes, such as *hold person* or *ray of enfeeblement*.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 10 hit points, or if all of the cannibals are killed, Taranaak attempts to flee into the tundra.

Base Statistics Without his spells, Taranaak's statistics are

AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 11; hp 41; Fort +6; Con 12.

STATISTICS

Str 15, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 16, Wis 8, Cha 10

Base Atk +3; CMB +5; CMD 18

Feats Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Toughness

Skills Craft (alchemy) +16, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (nature) +12, Perception +5, Survival +5

Languages Abyssal, Erutaki, Common, Giant, Skald

SQ witch's familiar (weasel named Ranaak [stores all prepared spells and patron spells, plus *alter self*, *cure moderate wounds*, *rage*, *sleet storm*, and additional spells of your choice])

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of rage*, *scroll of secure shelter*; Other Gear sling with 10 bullets, masterwork spear, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *cloak of resistance* +1, cauldron, furs, spell component pouch

* See the *Advanced Player's Guide*.

Treasure: In addition to their gear, the cannibals have a great stock of supplies taken from their past meals. They have 20 5-gallon casks of ale (worth 1 gp each; each weighs 40 pounds and counts as 1 unit of provisions), three cold-weather outfits, four climber's kits, four

healer's kits, four sets of skis and poles (see page 68), and a sack containing 569 sp and 345 gp in Taranaak's hut. The cannibals also have enough preserved human meat to make 7 cargo units of stores, but if the PCs take these provisions, even to feed to their carnivorous animal companions, the caravan takes a permanent –2 penalty on Resolve checks due to their fellow travelers' repulsion at their actions.

Development: The Silver Marten clan's encampment is considered a settlement, and the caravan may rest here without threat of encounters and, if a trader is present with the caravan, may sell trade goods with a successful Resolve check. If the PCs trade with the Silver Marten clan, the cannibals offer advice on the best places to ford the Taraska River, granting a +2 bonus on Security checks made for that purpose (see area I). In addition, conversation with the cannibals reveals that they have discovered several frozen corpses with an unknown three-clawed symbol (the mark of Sithhud) carved into their foreheads.

This encounter can be reused in the High Ice region, with a similar group of cannibals dwelling in snowy dugouts and igloos. Their advice grants the +2 bonus on Security checks to avoid natural hazards for 1d3 days of travel.

I. FORDING THE TARASKA (CR 8)

Descending from the hills into the northern tundra of the Hoarwell March, the caravan must journey 60 miles to the great Taraska River. If the caravan follows Ulf's recommendation and travels along the Kluani River, they automatically locate the ford near the two rivers' confluence. Alternatively, they can strike out on their own and try to find an alternate ford, which requires a DC 22 Security check.

Finding the best spot to ford the river, however, takes great care. Fording the river here is much like doing so at Qopuk Ford (see page 22), but the caravan must make four DC 22 Security checks, each requiring 1d4 hours—the first to find a suitable spot to cross, the second to navigate the marshes south of the river, the third to ford the river itself, and the fourth to cross the northern marshes and reach dry land to rejoin the Path of Aganhei.

Creatures: There is a 10% chance each hour spent crossing the ford or marshes of attracting the attention of a pair of giant pikes that prowl the river and adjacent marshes. If the river has frozen over completely, the PCs instead encounter a pair of glacier toads making their way across the ice.

GIANT PIKES (2)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

Giant gar (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 128)

hp 73 each



GLACIER TOADS (2)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 73 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 268)

Treasure: There is a 50% chance that each such creature encountered possesses 2d6 gemstones (worth 100 gp each) or a small indigestible magic item such as a ring or weapon lodged in its gullet from creatures previously swallowed.

Development: Once the river has been successfully forded, the caravan can easily rejoin the primary route of the Path of Aganhei, following it upstream to the village of Iqaliat without difficulty.

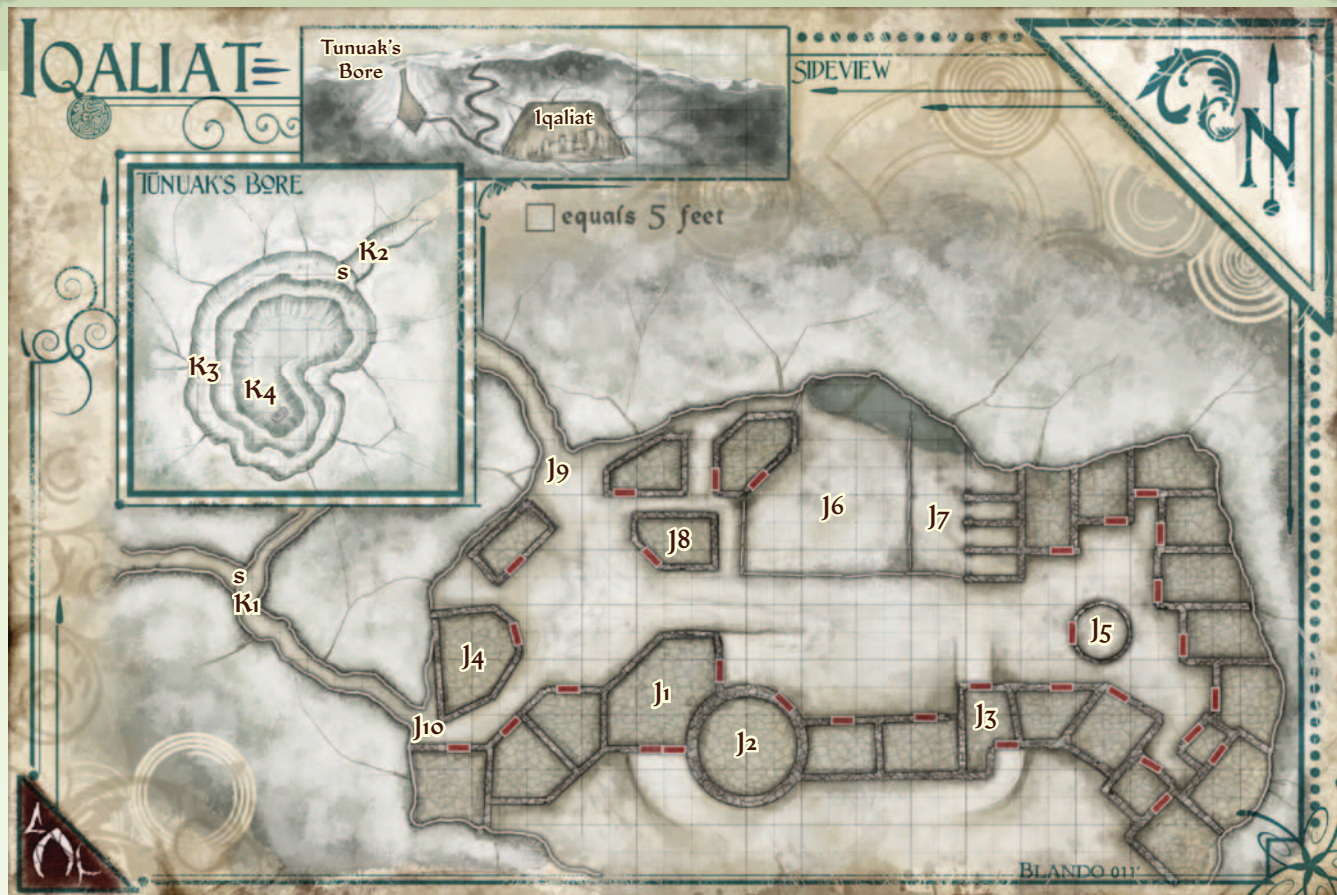
PART TWO: THE HIGH ICE

By this point, the PCs have completed a long journey across the tundra but are reaching the farthest extent of regular human habitation. While hunters, hermits, and caravaneers sometimes foray onto the High Ice, and a few brave (or mad) individuals venture near the true pole, there are few if any permanent settlements beyond this point. Ulf Gormundr suggests that the PCs

avoid the primary caravan route that passes through the trade-town of Unaimo for the time being and instead journey to a cliff-village he knows of some miles to the west, called Iqaliat. Ulf possesses a tribal talisman made of remorhaz scales that is a symbol of friendship from the hearthmistress of Iqaliat and should guarantee them safe conduct. As it is the off season for travel across the Crown of the World, Ulf would like to get a better idea of the prevailing conditions from those he knows and trusts before deciding on the best path for the caravan to take.

J. IQALIAT

The village of Iqaliat is built into the overhanging cliffs of Alasek Ridge, at the southern edge of the polar plateau known as the High Ice. During the summer melt, waterfalls by the hundreds pour down the icy cliff face for hundreds of miles to either side, but Iqaliat draws water year round through a subterranean stream that runs through cracks in the rocky schist of the cliff. Most of Iqaliat's buildings are 10 to 20 feet tall, crafted of stone and clay brick fired in kilns during the warm season.



Their outer faces are clad in harder rock cleaved from the schist, fitted with mortar or sculpted with *stone shape* cast by generations of shamans.

IQUALIAT

N village

Corruption -1; **Crime** -2; **Economy** -4; **Law** -6; **Lore** -1;
Society -1

Qualities insular, strategic location

Danger +20; **Disadvantages** hunted

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government council

Population 134 (121 humans, 13 dwarves)

Notable NPCs

Chief Nalvanaq (N old female human barbarian 5)

Hearthmistress Sonavut (N old female human bard 3/expert 3)

Shaman Tunuak (CE old male human oracle of the wind 9)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 450 gp; **Purchase Limit** 2,500 gp; **Spellcasting** 3rd

Minor Items +1 leather armor, +2 spear, *potion of fly*, *potion of water breathing*; **Medium Items** +3 white dragonhide breastplate, +2 dagger, *oil of dispel magic*, *ring of animal friendship*, *scroll of lesser geas*, *scroll of polymorph*

While normally a safe haven, Iqaliat is currently under siege. The village's hearthmistress is friendly enough, but both the village's chief and shaman are standoffish and unfriendly, as are the insular villagers. The caravan may rest and conduct repairs in the village, but all checks to buy or sell goods are made at a -5 penalty.

A DC 10 Diplomacy check to gather information is enough to reveal Iqaliat's plight, though the villagers are loath to discuss their problems with outsiders. Nevertheless, the PCs can soon learn that the white dragon Vegsundvaag has been terrorizing the village and its surroundings, carrying off and slowly killing its populace.

Unknown to the villagers, their own shaman, Tunuak, is actually responsible for the dragon's attacks. While on a vision quest to the pole, Tunuak fell under the corrupting sway of the half-fiend sylph Katiyana and became a devout follower of the nascent demon lord Sithhud. Tunuak stole into the dragon's lair and smashed her eggs, leaving behind evidence suggesting that Iqaliat's hunters were behind the attack. Believing the villagers responsible for the destruction of her eggs, the bereaved dragon swore vengeance upon all the inhabitants of Iqaliat and their kin. Meanwhile, Tunuak returned to Iqaliat to spread

conflict and discord, corrupting a few Erutaki hunters with demonic possession while blaming the dragon's attacks on the villagers' faithlessness in the old gods of the polar wind.

In honor of the talisman that Ulf carries, Iqaliat's hearthmistress, Sonavut, welcomes the PCs' caravan to the village, and invites the PCs and their companions into her home (area J8) for cups of hot fermented goat's milk. Ulf questions her about the conditions on the trail ahead, only to receive bad news: The primary route to the east, past the village of Unaimo and through the Koumssa Gap, is blocked by the "hungry storms," or morozkos, which have swept down from the High Ice and blocked all travel along the Path of Aganhei. Sonavut informs them that it is not the normal season for these storms, and that the morozkos have been venturing farther and farther south than they ever have before. In addition, the Erutaki have heard tales of strange black pillars, guarded by the walking frozen dead, appearing all across the Crown of the World, though what connection there may be between these mysterious monoliths and the abnormal storms none can say. Nonetheless, the presence of the morozkos on the Path of Aganhei means that way is closed to the PCs and their caravan.

If the PCs have not yet heard about the white dragon terrorizing Iqaliat, or if they question Sonavut about it, she can relate the following information. The villagers have sent several hunters to slay the dragon, but none have returned, and Vegsundvaag continues to attack the village with impunity. Many of Iqaliat's warriors have died defending the village from the dragon, and there are too few left now to risk sending more out in search of the creature.

As to why the dragon is attacking, neither Sonavut nor the chief has any idea. They have been aware of the dragon ever since she first appeared in the region almost half a century ago, but until now, she has never plagued the village. Sonavut tells the PCs that the village shaman, Tunuak, blames it on the villagers' lack of faith in the spirits of the wind that have always protected Iqaliat, and has even gone so far as to accuse Sonavut of leading the villagers astray, a charge the hearthmistress vehemently denies.

Sonavut informs the PCs that they are welcome to stay in Iqaliat for as long as they wish, but that if they stay, they are in danger from the dragon as well. Unfortunately, she has no solutions for them; the dragon blocks the way north, and the morozkos block the way east.

THE SACRIFICE (CR 8)

When the PCs leave Sonavut's home, they find a crowd has gathered in the square outside, led by the village shaman, Tunuak. An aged man, though still hearty,

LOCATIONS IN IQALIAT

The village of Iqaliat includes the following areas (see the map on page 28).

J1. Gatehouse: Wagons and dogsleds enter Iqaliat through this 30-foot-tall gatehouse. Earthen ramps lead up to the gatehouse from the tundra outside and down into the village's central square. The few wagons that visit Iqaliat park in the village square if not encamped outside the village.

J2. Watchtower: This 40-foot-tall watchtower guards Iqaliat's central gatehouse. Six foot soldiers armed with longswords (*GameMastery Guide* 286) ward the tower at all times, guarding the gate and keeping a sharp lookout for the dragon Vegsundvaag.

J3. Side Gate: Visitors on foot enter the village through this smaller gatehouse, which is staffed with four foot soldiers (*GameMastery Guide* 286) during the day.

J4. Tunuak's Tower: Iqaliat's shaman, Tunuak, lives in this 30-foot-tall tower in the west of the village.

J5. Chief's Tower: This 30-foot-tall tower houses Iqaliat's chief, Nalvanaq.

J6. Goat Pen: Pens for Iqaliat's goat herds occupy the center of the village, though most of the village's goats have been carried off and devoured by the dragon.

J7. Dog Kennel: The village's sled dogs are kept in these kennels, though many dogs also live within family homes.

J8. Hearthmistress's Home: Hearthmistress Sonavut lives in this unassuming house near the goat pen.

J9. Cistern Tunnel: A narrow cleft in the cliff leads down to the village's subterranean cistern.

J10. Cliff Top Tunnel: A second crevice in the cliff winds up to altars dedicated to the Erutaki wind spirits on the cliff top above the village. These altars take the form of *inukshuks*, vaguely humanoid-shaped cairns of stacked stones. Unknown to the villagers, a secret door in the tunnels leads to Tunuak's Bore (see area K).

Tunuak leans on a twisted staff, wrapped in a heavy gray cloak decorated with Erutaki tribal designs. His brown eyes are yellowed with age, as are his few remaining teeth, and his balding head is a patchwork of short, wiry white hairs around his temples and the back of his head. Tribal tattoos decorate his liver-spotted pate and face, wrinkled and worn by wind and sun. He carries himself with an air of importance, expecting to be heard.

Addressing the crowd, Tunuak proclaims that the PCs' intrusion will only inflame the dragon's anger. The villagers have turned away from the spirits of the wind and invited outsiders into their midst, and the spirits will

repay such faithlessness by sending the dragon against Iqaliat once again. Now, even the traditional sacrifices to propitiate the wind spirits will not suffice. The outsiders' taint can be removed only by sacrificing one of them, and the rest must leave at once.

Anticipating combat, Tunuak has observed the PCs' meeting with Sonavut using wind sight. As outlined in his Tactics section, he casts *eagle's splendor* and several other preparatory spells before making his speech. To counter Tunuak's harangue, the PCs must make an opposed Bluff, Diplomacy, and Intimidate check against Tunuak (one of each). See page 58 for Tunuak's skill bonuses. Only one PC (or significant NPC) may attempt each check, though one other character may use the aid another action to assist each check. The hearthmistress Sonavut argues on the PCs' behalf, providing a +2 circumstance bonus on one of the PCs' checks (players' choice). As a native of Iqaliat and the village's shaman, Tunuak gains a +5 circumstance bonus on all three checks. Chief Nalvanaq sits in judgment and does not take a side.

If Tunuak wins all three opposed checks, the Erutaki villagers demand that the PCs leave at once and give up one of their number for sacrifice. If the PCs refuse, the villagers attack the caravan as a mob (AC 19; hp 70; Atk +12; Damage 7d6). The Erutaki mob is not evil, and Sonavut urges the PCs to use nonlethal attacks to subdue them; doing so imposes a -4 penalty on the caravan's Attack checks.

If Tunuak wins two of the opposed checks, the villagers do not demand a sacrifice but insist that the PCs leave Iqaliat immediately. If Tunuak wins only one check, the villagers permit the PCs to stay the night, but ask them to leave the following morning. If they want the assistance of the Erutaki, the PCs must earn their welcome by slaying the dragon (see page 33). If the PCs refuse to leave, they are attacked by the mob as above.

If the PCs win all three opposed checks, the villagers hail them as heroes. Sonavut and Chief Nalvanaq rebuke Tunuak for his insistence on the ancient rites, as the villagers assert that the PCs were sent by the wind spirits to free them from the dragon. Enraged and outnumbered, Tunuak activates his invisibility revelation and flees through the tunnel at area J10 to his hidden shrine (area K4).

Development: Regardless of how many opposed checks the PCs win, they can make DC 20 Sense Motive checks to get a hunch that there is more to Tunuak's actions than a simple desire to protect his village from the dragon. If the PCs share their suspicions with Chief Nalvanaq or Sonavut, they agree to accompany the PCs to Tunuak's tower (area J4) to demand the shaman explain himself, only to discover that Tunuak did not return to his tower. However, the shaman's apprentice, Gluktok (who knows

nothing of Tunuak's betrayal), can inform them that Tunuak has been spending much time among the wind altars lately, though the last time Gluktok went to the cliff top in search of his master, Tunuak was not there, even though Gluktok had seen him enter the tunnel. This is a hint that there might be a secret entrance in the tunnel leading to the wind altars (see area K1). Alternatively, a DC 15 Perception or Survival check made while searching the cliff top above the village discovers the crack in the ice above the bore.

If the PCs fought off the Erutaki mob with nonlethal attacks, their mercy grants their caravan a +2 bonus on any Security or Resolve checks made in Iqaliat. If they used lethal attacks against the mob, the caravan takes a -2 penalty on such checks in the village.

Story Award: If the PCs win all three opposed checks against Tunuak, award them 4,800 XP. If they won two checks, award them 2,400 XP. If they defeated the Erutaki mob with nonlethal attacks, award them 2,400 XP. At the GM's discretion, the PCs receive no XP for fighting the mob with lethal attacks.

K. TUNUAK'S BORE

Unknown to the rest of Iqaliat, Tunuak has crafted a secret shrine to Sithhud beneath the cliff (see the map on page 28). The tunnel at area J10 winds hundreds of feet through clefts and tunnels up to the top of the cliffs above Iqaliat and the altars of the wind spirits, but a secret door in the tunnel leads to Tunuak's Bore.

K1. OUTER ENTRANCE (CR 8)

A DC 25 Perception check discovers the secret door in the tunnel that bars entry into Tunuak's Bore.

Trap: The secret door contains a floor-pivot mechanism that drops all creatures in a 10-foot-square area into a 50-foot-deep cleft full of jagged rock if not deactivated before the door is opened.

CAMOUFLAGED SPIKED PIT TRAP

CR 8

XP 4,800

Type mechanical; Perception DC 25; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset manual

Effect 50-ft.-deep pit (5d6 falling damage); pit spikes (Atk +15 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d6+5 damage each); DC 20 Reflex avoids; multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-square area)

K2. INNER DOOR (CR 7)

Past the trapped outer entrance, a narrow tunnel slopes upward 100 feet to the west and south before ending at a blank wall containing another secret door (DC 25 Perception check to find).

THE HUNGRY STORM

Creature: An Erutaki man stands in front of the secret door, blocking the way forward. A respected hunter in the village, Naquun was one of the first of Iqaliat's inhabitants to be corrupted by Tunuak. The shaman arranged for a quasit to secretly possess Naquun, and the hunter can only stand by helplessly as the quasit controls his body. Naquun feigns friendship as the PCs approach, offering his assistance in tracking down Tunuak. He follows them down the ramp in area K3, waiting for the hoarfrost spirits there to attack the PCs before ambushing them from behind.

NAQUUN

CR 7

XP 3,200

Male quasit-possessed human ranger (guide) 7 (*Advanced Bestiary* 51, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 125)

CE Medium humanoid (chaotic, evil, human)

Init +5 (+7 in cold); **Senses** Perception +12 (+14 in cold)

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 16, flat-footed 14 (+3 armor, +5 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 shield)

hp 71 (7d10+28); fast healing 2

Fort +7, **Ref** +10, **Will** +4; +2 vs. poison

DR 5/cold iron; **Resist** electricity 20

Weaknesses spell vulnerability

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 handaxe +14/+9 (1d6+2/x3 plus 1d6 profane) or +1 handaxe +12/+7 (1d6+2/x3 plus 1d6 profane) and mwk handaxe +12 (1d6/x3 plus 1d6 profane)

Ranged mwk spear +13 (1d8+1/x3 plus 1d6 profane)

Special Attacks profane attacks, ranger's focus* (+4, 3/day)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th; concentration +6)

At will—*detect good*, *detect magic*

2/day—*invisibility*

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 4th; concentration +6)

2nd—*protective spirit**

1st—*endure elements*, *feather step**

TACTICS

Before Combat Naquun casts *feather step* before taking position in front of the door.

During Combat Naquun casts *protective spirit* on the first round of combat. He activates his ranger's focus ability on the first foe to attack, making the majority of his attacks against that opponent. If surrounded by enemies, Naquun casts *invisibility* to better position himself and attack from surprise.

Morale As long as he is possessed, Naquun fights to the death. If freed from his possession, he immediately surrenders and offers to help the PCs find Tunuak and bring him to justice.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 21, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 24

Feats Dodge, Endurance, Quick Draw, Toughness, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (handaxe)

Skills Acrobatics +12, Climb +9, Handle Animal +9, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (geography) +5 (+7 in cold), Knowledge (nature) +5, Perception +12 (+14 in cold), Stealth +17 (+19 in cold), Survival +12 (+14 in cold), Swim +5

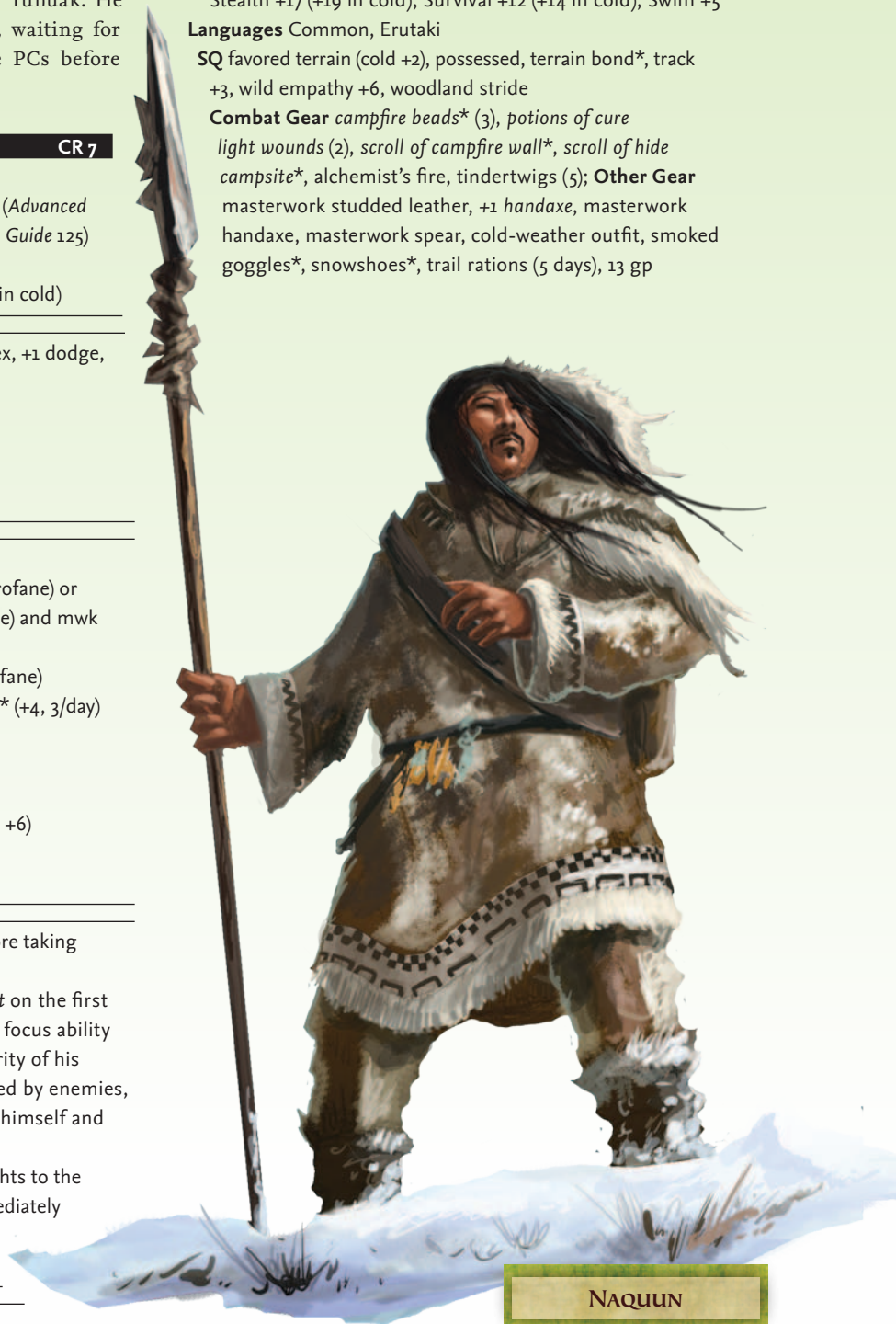
Languages Common, Erutaki

SQ favored terrain (cold +2), possessed, terrain bond*, track +3, wild empathy +6, woodland stride

Combat Gear *campfire beads** (3), *potions of cure*

light wounds (2), *scroll of campfire wall**, *scroll of hide campsite**, alchemist's fire, tindertwigs (5); **Other Gear**

masterwork studded leather, +1 handaxe, masterwork handaxe, masterwork spear, cold-weather outfit, smoked goggles*, snowshoes*, trail rations (5 days), 13 gp



SPECIAL ABILITIES

Possessed (Su) Naquun is possessed by a quasit named Eguriak; the quasit can take no actions other than communicating with its host and using Intelligence-based skills. It can be detected by divinations but cannot be targeted by spell effects (except as described under spell vulnerability below). Damage to Naquun does not harm the quasit. If Naquun is killed, Eguriak appears in his square. If the possession is ended without killing Naquun (see below), the hunter's alignment returns to neutral.

Profane Attacks (Su) Naquun's melee attacks deal an extra 1d6 points of damage to creatures of good alignment. In addition, his weapons are treated as evil-aligned and magic for the purpose of overcoming DR.

Spell Vulnerability (Ex) If Naquun is targeted with a *banishment* or *dismissal* spell, he must succeed at a Will save or the quasit is banished back to the Abyss. If Naquun is targeted with *dispel chaos*, *dispel evil*, *protection from chaos*, or *protection from evil*, he must also make a Will save. On a failed save, the quasit is driven out of his body and appears in the nearest open square. It cannot possess a new host.

* See the *Advanced Player's Guide*.

EGURIAK

CR 2

XP 600

Quasit (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 66)

hp 16

TACTICS

Morale If driven out of Naquun's body, Eguriak turns invisible and tries to flee, if possible.

Story Award: If the PCs end Naquun's possession without killing him, award them XP as if they had defeated him in combat.

K3. ICY RAMP (CR 7)

The inner door grants ingress into a wide irregular pit in the upper cliffs, open to the sky above through a crack in the ice, with a ramp circling its way down to a slushy basin 60 feet below. The path is narrow and slick with ice, requiring a DC 15 Acrobatics check to navigate at half speed without slipping and falling (DC 25 to move at full speed).

Creatures: Four hoarfrost spirits lurk in rocky niches above the path (DC 20 Perception check to spot). The undead wait until the PCs venture onto the slippery path before leaping down to attack or bull rush opponents into the pit below. Remember that characters using Acrobatics to move safely on slippery surfaces are considered flat-footed and lose their Dexterity bonuses to AC.

HOARFROST SPIRITS (4)

CR 3

XP 800 each

hp 32 each (see page 14)

K4. ALTAR OF SITHHUD (CR 8)

Dimly lit by daylight from the crack in the ceiling high above, the slushy basin at the bottom of the ramp is filled with hundreds of bones, all marked with a curious rune like a frost-rimed, three-fingered skeletal hand. To the south, dozens of skulls have been piled into a crude altar. Painted along the icy walls of the pit are Erutaki pictograms, scattered among many more of the strange runes.

A DC 20 Knowledge (planes) or Knowledge (religion) check recognizes the three-fingered hand as the symbol of Sithhud, the nascent demon lord of blizzards and the frozen dead. One of the pictograms along the walls shows strange black standing stones rising from icy hills, another displays a cluster of towers glowing with a strange blue light, and a third shows a single monolithic tower rising above what seems to be a black lake, with white mountain peaks behind it. A fourth pictogram depicts a spiraling storm with long arms ending in ice-fanged jaws devouring Erutaki villages, but with longer jaw-arms reaching toward forests, crudely drawn castles and cities, and what may be ships at sea. Warriors are shown trying to fight the storm with spears before being engulfed and sealed in tombs of ice. The final pictogram shows a blue-skinned woman with dark wings and hair, wearing a silver crown or circlet. Her hand grasps one of the claw-symbols like a scepter, and spiraling streaks of silver and white curl from it in every direction.

Creature: Tunuak waits at the bottom of the bore for the PCs. He attacks the PCs as they make their way down the slippery ramp, or any PCs who are knocked off the ramp by the hoarfrost spirits at area K3.

TUNUAK

CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 80 (see page 58)

Development: A quick search of the basin reveals a number of white shards, similar to ceramic, piled before the altar. A DC 19 Knowledge (arcana) check identifies them as fragments of white dragon eggshells. The pictograms of standing stones are easily identifiable as the black monoliths that the PCs have possibly already encountered on their journeys. A DC 15 Knowledge (geography) check recognizes the blue-limned towers as the Nameless Spires, an ancient ruined city at the North Pole, while a second DC 15 Knowledge (geography) check recognizes the white mountains behind the single tower as the Alabastrine Peaks. A DC 15 Knowledge (nature) check likewise can identify the fang-armed spiral as representing the morozkos, or "hungry storms," the legendary blizzards that rage across the Crown of the

World. Anyone who speaks Erutaki or succeeds at a DC 20 Linguistics check can decipher scrawled notes beneath the picture of the winged woman that speak of an obsessive love for “Katiyana, who speaks to me on the winds from her tower in the Storm.”

If shown the pictograms, either Chief Nalvanaq or Hearthmistress Sonavut can also identify the Nameless Spires, where the Erutaki believe the wind spirits reside—a dangerous place, but a source of great visions for those brave enough to seek it. Tunuak himself undertook a vision quest within the last year; most likely he fell under the spell of this winged woman. The standing stones are strange to them, but a few hunters on the High Ice have reported seeing such monoliths in recent months. They are also familiar with the fang-armed spiral of the morozkos, the seemingly living storms that can devour entire villages and that almost seem to seek out their victims like living things. Neither Nalvanaq nor Sonavut recognizes the winged woman figure illustrated in the pictograms.

HUNTING THE DRAGON

The dragon eggshells found in Tunuak’s Bore point to the shaman as the one responsible for the dragon’s attacks, but even with Tunuak defeated, Iqaliat is still in danger from the predations of the dragon Veksundvaag. The PCs have already done the village a great service by exposing Tunuak’s treachery, but both Chief Nalvanaq and Sonavut would greatly appreciate their aid if they are willing.

If the PCs agree to hunt the dragon, Sonavut gives them each a set of *claws of the ice bear* (see page 62) or an item of equal or lesser value from those available in Iqaliat. Chief Nalvanaq offers to provide a guide to take the PCs to the dragon’s lair while the caravan stays behind in Iqaliat. If you need statistics for the guide, use the stat block for the trapper on page 276 of the *GameMastery Guide*.

If the PCs refuse a guide and try to seek the dragon’s lair on their own, they can find it by making three consecutive DC 20 Survival checks requiring 8 hours each. The villagers provide them with landmarks and directions for finding it that grant a +2 circumstance bonus to these checks.

If the PCs decline to slay the dragon on behalf of Iqaliat, the villagers are saddened, and do their best to convince the PCs to move on. With the Path of Aganhei closed, they will have to strike out north across the High Ice. In this case, you can still run the encounter with Veksundvaag by having the dragon attack the PCs’ caravan as they pass near her lair. Likewise, their path will also take them close to Katiyana’s Storm Tower (area M), where they can encounter the half-fiend sylph.

LOCATIONS IN VEGSUNDVAAG’S LAIR

The glacial rift of the dragon Veksundvaag consists of the following areas (see the map on page 34).

L1. Veksundvaag’s Cave: Veksundvaag (see Creature on page 34) resides in this long cave, which she once shared with her mate Narmurvik. The cave’s ceiling is approximately 20 feet high, except in the very rear of the cave, where it extends upward 40 feet. Veksundvaag has created an escape tunnel in the ceiling of the cave to the north (area L1a), concealed by a thin crust of ice (DC 15 Perception check to notice) that exits into the glacial rift 20 feet above the cave. A similar escape tunnel (marked L1b) lies at the bottom of the 30-foot-deep crevasse that separates the rear of the cave from the front, exiting into the rift 40 feet below the cave.

L2. Veksundvaag’s Nest: Veksundvaag laid her eggs in this cave, until Tunuak found and destroyed them. The cavern floor is littered with smashed eggshells, along with a stone hammer. A DC 20 Perception check finds a tribal talisman made of remorhaz scales among the ruined shells. Similar to the hearthmistress’s talisman possessed by Ulf, it was left behind by Tunuak to incite the dragon to attack Iqaliat. In all, the remains of five eggs may be found here (Tunuak took the pieces of the sixth shell with him to his secret bore (area K4).

L3. Veksundvaag’s Hoard: Veksundvaag’s hoard is in this cavern below her nest (see Treasure on page 34).

L4. Narmurvik’s Remains: Among the jagged rock spires at the very bottom of the glacial rift lie the remains of Veksundvaag’s mate Narmurvik. Scavengers have reduced the once-proud dragon to little more than shattered bones, but examination of the skeleton with a DC 20 Heal or Knowledge (arcana) check reveals that the dragon was mortally wounded by another dragon before falling to his death at the bottom of the chasm.

L. GLACIAL RIFT OF THE DRAGON (CR 9)

The white dragon Veksundvaag makes her lair underneath the icepack about 60 miles north of Iqaliat, in a vertical rift that spans a vast gulf over subglacial rock-spires. During sunny periods, meltwater slicks the icy walls of the rift before cascading in an algid spray into gravelly pools below. The 20-foot-wide rift stretches over 100 feet long at ground level but narrows to half that width below before widening into a massive subglacial chasm 400 feet deep. Creatures using *feather fall* must be mindful of the spell’s duration, as it may not suffice to get them all the way down safely.



Creature: Vegsundvaag lairs on the eastern side of the rift in area L1. If the PCs venture into other areas first, Vegsundvaag can make Perception checks to notice intruders in her lair, at which point she leaves her cave to investigate, approaching by stealth (including by burrowing) to surprise the intruders.

Vegsundvaag is a Large dragon with scales glittering like polished ice edged with silver. Her scaled face is marred with claw marks, and the horned frill surmounting her head is tattered and scarred, enhancing the menace of her dark, deep-set eyes. Her body is stout and muscular, and measures about 15 feet from her snout to the base of her thick tail.

When she engages the PCs, Vegsundvaag shrieks at them in Draconic, calling them murderers and dupes of the hateful two-legs who killed her unborn children. If the PCs converse with her, even in the midst of combat, Vegsundvaag tells of returning to her lair to find the smashed remains of her eggs, along with a hammer and a tribal talisman “marked with the filthy scrawlings” of Iqaliat. On that terrible day, she swore vengeance on the humans, and vowed to devour every “hot-blooded ape” in Iqaliat until her thirst for vengeance is sated.

Vegsundvaag uses flight, burrowing, and icewalking to avoid getting cornered by multiple foes, and *fog cloud* to screen herself from ranged attacks. If enemies are near the edge of the rift, she uses *gust of wind* or bull rush maneuvers to knock them off the edge, flying down with them to attack them as they fall or after they land. If reduced to fewer than 60 hit points, Vegsundvaag uses one of the two escape tunnels in her cave to circle behind invaders and take them again by surprise.

VEGSUNDVAAG

CR 9

XP 6,400

hp 115 (see page 60)

Treasure: Vegsundvaag’s hoard, collected in area L3, consists of the following: one *lesser dragon slaying arrow*, a +2 *short sword*, a *potion of protection from arrows*, a *ring of feather falling*, a *horse terra-cotta talisman* (see page 63), a *wand of ray of enfeeblement* (15 charges), a masterwork light steel shield, a masterwork cold iron spiked gauntlet, a masterwork composite shortbow (+2 Strength) with 11 arrows, a masterwork spear, a climber’s kit, 200 feet of silk rope, a piece of amber (worth 100 gp), three

bloodstones (worth 50 gp each), a blue sapphire (worth 500 gp), a leather quiver decorated with winter wolf fur and tooled with Snowcaster elf designs (worth 500 gp), 3,104 cp, 2,521 sp, 594 gp, and 202 pp.

Development: If the PCs slay Vegsundvaag, they can return to Iqaliat in triumph. The Erutaki hail them as mighty heroes, and hold a great feast of caribou, goat, and fish taken from the riverlands. During the feast, Chief Nalvanaq and Sonavut take the PCs aside. The elders have studied the pictograms in Tunuak's Bore and believe they have discovered more of the shaman's plans. Ancient tales say that the morozkos were the roaring scourge wielded by the demon lord Sithhud, who ate the flesh of the dead and bound their bones to serve him in ages past. The three-fingered skeletal claw is Sithhud's mark, and the pictograms suggest that the dark-winged woman may have found some way to reclaim the demon lord's ancient power, perhaps using the strange black monoliths or other ancient magics discovered in the Nameless Spires. The elders believe that the third pictogram shows a place that the Erutaki call the Storm Tower. So named because of the storms that always seem to swirl above its pinnacle, this spire is similar to those found in the Nameless Spires, but it stands alone near the Alabastrine Peaks. The morozkos have already been awakened, but if the woman gains full control over the hungry storms, none will be able to stand before them, and the PCs and their caravan will never make it across the Crown of the World. If they hope to make the crossing, they must journey to the Storm Tower and deal with her before her designs are complete.

The PCs can rest at Iqaliat for as long as they wish. With Vegsundvaag defeated, Iqaliat loses the Hunted disadvantage, increasing its Economy, Law, and Society modifiers by 4, reducing its Danger value by 20, and increasing the village's base value to 550 gp. Recovery of village offerings hoarded by Tunuak also temporarily increases Iqaliat's purchase limit to 10,000 gp. The villagers repair any damaged wagons in the PCs' caravan and equip all of the caravan's wagons with cold weather gear at no cost, and the PCs may purchase other caravan equipment (though not new wagons) at a 25% discount. In addition, Hearthmistress Sonavut gives them a *sashimono of comfort* (see page 62) and two fully charged *wands of endure elements* to help the caravan survive its trek across the High Ice. Rescuing Iqaliat grants a permanent +2 bonus to the caravan's Morale, and the advice of Iqaliat's guides grants a +2 bonus on Security checks for 1 week after the caravan leaves the village.

Story Award: Award the PCs 4,800 XP for freeing Iqaliat from the predations of Vegsundvaag.

ACROSS THE HIGH ICE

The journey from Iqaliat to the Storm Tower is 700 miles across the High Ice and into the Boreal Expanse, bearing

north and west of the Alabastrine Peaks rather than following the Path of Aganhei eastward. Ulf has never been that close to the pole before, but he has heard stories and seen enough maps (including Kargun Yaremchuk's *map of the High Ice*, if the PCs discovered it at area A) that, using the mountains as a landmark, he is confident in his ability to bring the caravan there, and afterwards guide it beyond the far end of the Alabastrine Peaks to rejoin the Path of Aganhei at Dead Man's Dome.

Because of the distance and difficulty involved in crossing the High Ice, caravan encounters and other random encounters should be made on a weekly, rather than daily, basis while in this region. There are no set encounters along the desolate march to the pole, though if Tunuak or Vegsundvaag escaped, they are likely to follow the caravan and attack.

Traveling across the High Ice is more difficult than the tundra, both because the terrain is more rugged and because it is more desolate, and thus harder to navigate. Each week, the caravan must make a DC 23 Security check. If successful, the caravan finds a usable track and it travels at normal speed. If the caravan fails the check, its speed is reduced by 50% for the week. Once the caravan is within 100 miles of the Alabastrine Peaks, it gains a +2 circumstance bonus on these checks.

The environment also becomes more extreme the farther north the caravan ventures. One hundred miles north of Iqaliat, the elevation passes 5,000 feet, subjecting the PCs and their caravan to altitude sickness (*Core Rulebook* 430). In the thin air at this altitude, the caravan becomes fatigued. It takes a –2 penalty on Attack, Security, and Resolve checks, and cannot make a forced march. PCs and significant NPCs get their normal Fortitude saves against altitude sickness. At the end of 1 month, both the PCs and their caravan are considered acclimated to the altitude, and no longer suffer any adverse effects. The caravan can even camp for a month to acclimate before setting out across the High Ice, if the PCs wish.

Extremes of light and darkness are also exaggerated as the caravan approaches the pole. As the PCs' caravan is likely traveling across the Crown of the World during the winter off season, they will likely find themselves traveling through the polar night. It is assumed that the PCs have lights, either magical or mundane, to illuminate their caravan. If they use no light, the caravan's speed is reduced to half in the uninterrupted darkness.

Conditions also become dangerously cold near the pole. In the polar winter, temperatures range from –40° to –94° F, making *endure elements* less than adequate. Fortunately, cold-weather outfits or furs, cold weather gear for the caravan, and the *sashimono of comfort* given to the PCs by the Erutaki are sufficient to protect the

caravan while encamped. While traveling, however, the caravan requires a number of *endure elements* spells equal to its consumption to be cast per week, either using wands from the Erutaki or the PCs' own resources. Even with these precautions in place, however, temperatures are so extreme that the caravan must make a DC 25 Security check each week or take 1d6 points of damage and become fatigued until the damage is repaired. As long as they stay with the caravan, the PCs or other creatures are effectively protected from the cold. As soon as they leave the confines of the caravan, however, they must make normal saves against the extreme cold (*Core Rulebook* 442).

M. THE STORM TOWER (CR 9)

The clues found in Tunuak's Bore point to the Storm Tower, one of the "Nameless Spires" created by some ancient race in ages past, though standing about 150 miles from the Nameless Spires that loom atop Golarion's North Pole. Katiyana, the half-fiend sylph who is working to engineer Sithhud's return as a full demon lord, has claimed the Storm Tower as her headquarters and is using it as the focus of the eldritch energies channeled through the black monoliths scattered across the Crown of the World, carefully placed and attuned to the network of elemental energies of wind and cold that empower the morozkos.

When the PCs get within 50 miles of the Storm Tower, they can see a bluish glow at the northern horizon that intensifies as the tower comes into view. Within 10 miles, they can see the massive black spire itself, and the strange blue light emanating from its apex. The Storm Tower is a hexagonal spire of black basalt, towering hundreds of feet into the air. The tower is mired in a lake of black slush, with a shattered stone causeway leading across the lake toward a gaping hexagonal opening in the wall at the base of the tower. A huge, crackling ball of blue light floats just above the tower's roof, while a raging white storm turns in an expanding spiral overhead.

The tower is 300 feet tall. The ceilings on each level are 100 feet high. The walls of the spire (both exterior and interior) are uncannily smooth and coated with ice, requiring DC 30 Climb checks to scale.

High winds endlessly encircle the Storm Tower. At ground level, winds are considered severe within 100 feet of the tower, increasing to windstorm strength at 100 feet or more above the ground (*Core Rulebook* 439). In addition, the uncanny, force-infused construction of the Storm Tower prevents astral or ethereal travel into or through the tower, as well as teleportation into or out of any portion of it. Teleportation effects do function within the tower, however, as long as the caster has line of effect to the destination.

Creatures: If the PCs send out scouts to investigate the tower, they find a large number of skeletons roaming around the enormous spire. The PCs can approach the tower with their caravan or they can leave it behind and approach themselves. Keeping the caravan hidden while moving requires a DC 20 Security check once they approach within 10 miles of the tower. The caravan must make a Security check each mile to stay hidden, and the DC increases by +1 for each mile closer it approaches. If the caravan is spotted, it is attacked by a hunting party of eight hoarfrost spirits (AC 23; hp 115; **Attack** +17; **Damage** 8d8+4). If the PCs leave the caravan to approach on foot (or by other means), they must make Stealth checks at the same DC instead. If the PCs are spotted, they are attacked by hoarfrost spirits as well.

HOARFROST SPIRITS (8)

CR 3

XP 800 each

hp 32 each (see page 14)

M1. CAUSEWAY (CR 9)

The remains of a great causeway of white stone leads up to the base of the tower, though it has long since succumbed to time and elements, leaving only a few ruined spans standing exposed above the black slush surrounding the spire. A wide gap separates the end of the causeway from a hexagonal portal in the tower's wall.

The ancient causeway once connected the Storm Tower to its sister spires to the north, but little of it has survived the ages. The causeway stands just 5 feet above the level of the lake of black slush. Katiyana has cast an *unhallow* spell on the doorway into the tower, tied to a *dispel magic* effect (caster level 9th) that exempts those who worship Sithhud (including the undead in area M2).

Hazard: If the PCs explore the edge of the black slush or venture into the lake (requiring a DC 10 Swim check), they are exposed to blackfrost (see page 66).

Creatures: Two chardas lurk in the black slush beneath the causeway. They attack anyone who enters the black slush. If the PCs remain on the causeway, the chardas stealthily climb up the bridge's pylons to attack, making bull rush or trip attacks to knock opponents into the toxic black slush below.

CHARDAS (2)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

hp 85 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 55)

M2. ENTRY HALL (CR 8)

Windblown snow has drifted into the corners and along the walls of this trapezoidal chamber, piling up in deep drifts.

THE HUNGRY STORM



Identical hexagonal openings exit the room to the south, north, northeast, and northwest. A strong wind blows out of the northern hexagon.

Creatures: Four advanced frost wights hide in the snowdrifts piled along the walls, leaping out to attack any living creature that passes through the entrance. The wights gain the benefits of the *unhallow* effect on the entrance at area **M1**.

FROST WIGHTS (4) CR 4

XP 1,200 each

hp 34 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 276, 294)

M3. HUNGRY FUNGI (CR 7)

Pale white mushrooms grow in profusion along the walls of this dark room, popping out of drifts of windblown snow.

Creatures: A pair of frost phantoms have taken root in this chamber. These variant phantom fungi have adapted to the polar climate of the Crown of the World, and deal cold damage with their bites. The tripedal carnivorous plants are both invisible, and lurk in wait for edible prey

beside each doorway. The frost phantoms attempt to move stealthily behind victims to attack with surprise while simultaneously blocking any escape routes.

FROST PHANTOMS (2) CR 5

XP 1,600 each

Advanced variant phantom fungus (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 219)

N Medium plant

Init +6; **Senses** blindsight 30 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft.; **Perception** +12

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17 (+2 Dex, +7 natural)

hp 52 each (7d8+21)

Fort +8, **Ref** +4, **Will** +4

Immune cold, plant traits

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee bite +10 (1d6+6 plus 1d6 cold)

Special Attacks phantom flesh

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 14, **Con** 16, **Int** 2, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 21 (23 vs. trip)

Feats Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perception), Skill Focus (Stealth), Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Climb +12, Perception +12, Stealth +15; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Phantom Flesh (Su) As a move action, a frost phantom can turn invisible as if using *greater invisibility* (caster level 7th). A moment after it attacks invisibly, the creature appears briefly as a transparent version of its normal self. This allows any viewer with line of sight to the frost phantom to pinpoint its location at the time of the attack (though if the creature moves after it attacks, opponents have to pinpoint it again). An opponent can ready an action to strike at the fungus when it momentarily appears, in which case the creature only has concealment instead of invisibility (20% miss chance). The fungus can turn completely visible as a move action, though it normally remains invisible all the time. If killed while invisible, it becomes visible 1d4 minutes later.

M4. ALIEN VISITOR (CR 8)

A tangle of roots and leaves covers the floor of this chamber, dusted with snow and ice that have blown in through the room's open portals.

Creature: A moonflower has taken root in the center of this chamber, attracted by the arcane energies of the storm atop the spire. While the strange, powerful emanations infusing the tower are enough to sustain the alien plant, it eagerly attacks living prey in hopes of spawning new moonflowers.

MOONFLOWER

CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 104 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 192)

TACTICS

During Combat The moonflower triggers a light pulse before attempting to capture a blinded foe in a pod prison.

Morale The moonflower tries to flee if reduced to fewer than 30 hit points, but if unable to escape, it fights to the death.

M5. REAR HALL

Katiana uses this small chamber as both a storeroom and a midden.

Treasure: One minute of searching through the detritus in this chamber with a DC 20 Perception check turns up 1 cargo unit of treasure consisting of curios and artifacts from the Nameless Spires, worth 5d6x100 gp in total.

M6. CENTRAL CORE

Two hexagonal openings to the north and south exit this twenty-foot-wide hexagonal chamber. The room has no ceiling, instead forming a smooth-walled shaft that rises through the tower's interior. A crackling blue sphere of energy hangs in the air high above the shaft.

This central shaft connects all three levels of the Storm Tower, but the Storm Sphere above sends winds of windstorm strength (*Core Rulebook* 439) howling down the shaft, making flying difficult in this area. The smooth, slippery walls of the shaft require a successful DC 30 Climb check to scale, with a -4 penalty due to the strength of the winds in the shaft.

A crystal control panel sits in the wall outside each doorway at the point marked a. The mechanism requires a DC 25 Disable Device or Use Magic Device check to operate.



FROST PHANTOM

If the check is successful, a hexagonal platform of blue force forms on the floor of the shaft and lifts anything on the platform toward area **M7** 100 feet above at a rate of 50 feet per round. The force-platform disappears 1d4 rounds after reaching area **M7**, and the mechanism requires another 1d4 rounds to recharge before another force-platform can be created.

M7. THE WINTER WORM (CR 7)

This chamber is significantly warmer than the other rooms in the spire. The tower's central hexagonal shaft is open to this chamber on three sides, but its other three sides continue up toward the blue sphere above. To the northeast and northwest, two hexagonal portals stand in the walls, filled with featureless opaque crystal.

A crystal control panel similar to those found below is embedded in the wall at the point marked **a**. These controls are more complex, requiring two DC 25 Disable Device or Use Magic Device checks to operate. If both checks succeed, another force-platform forms at floor level in the shaft, surrounded by a silvery-blue *tiny hut*, and lifts anything standing on it toward area **M9** 100 feet above at a rate of 50 feet per round. If only one check succeeds, the platform rises but without the *tiny hut*, forcing Small or smaller creatures to make DC 15 Strength checks each round to avoid being blown off the platform during transit. If both Disable Device checks fail, or both Use Magic Device checks fail by 9 or less, nothing happens. If either of the Use Magic Device checks fails by 10 or more, the control panel releases a burst of magical energy, dealing 2d6 points of damage to the operator. Like the first platform, this force-platform disappears 1d4 rounds after reaching area **M9**, and the mechanism must recharge for 1d4 rounds before another platform can be created.

Creature: Katiyana has convinced a remorhaz to help guard the Storm Tower, and the creature has taken up residence in this chamber. An eager convert to the cult of Sithhud, the remorhaz has had the three-fingered hand of Sithhud branded into the plates on its back with acid. The remorhaz attacks any living creature other than Katiyana that enters this room.

REMORHAZ **CR 7**
XP 3,200
hp 94 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 233)
TACTICS

During Combat If faced with multiple foes, the remorhaz uses Awesome Blow to knock opponents into the shaft, biting and attempting to swallow whole any remaining foes.

Morale The remorhaz fights to the death in honor of its demonic god.

M8. CHAMBER OF CRYSTALS (CR 8)

The two hexagonal doors leading into this chamber are made of a rare crystal with the strength and hardness of steel (hardness 10, hp 60, Break DC 40). In addition, both doors have been sealed with *arcane locks* (caster level 20th). A crystalline control pad adjacent to each door can be used to open the door with a successful DC 35 Disable Device check. When opened, the hexagonal portals retract into the walls in six equal triangular sections. Katiyana has not yet had the time or the inclination to break through these doors, so the contents within are much as their creators left them millennia ago.

If the PCs break through or open the doors, read or paraphrase the following:

A bewildering array of crystals and metallic tracery are embedded in the walls of this chamber. A low humming noise fills the air, and the crystals flash with incomprehensible colored lights at irregular intervals.

This ancient circuitry, created by the strange builders of the Nameless Spires and the Storm Tower, once monitored, recorded, and transmitted information to and through the Storm Sphere. Over the eons, knowledge of the exact function of this strange machinery has been lost, except to the room's peculiar inhabitants.

Creatures: Six crysmals, elemental creatures that look like crystalline scorpions, scuttle about the room, engaged in inscrutable tasks set to them by the builders of the tower ages ago. They ignore intruders, unless the intruders touch or interfere with the room's machinery or attack first, at which point the crysmals defend the room to the death. Forbidden from gathering crystals from the circuitry in this room, the crysmals focus their attacks on anyone they detect to be carrying gemstones or crystals with their crystal sense.

CRYSMALS (6) **CR 3**
XP 800 each
hp 26 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 61)

Treasure: If the crysmals are defeated, 5,000 gp worth of valuable crystals and gemstones can be pried from the walls. One of these crystals is a crystalline *cube of frost resistance* and another is a *gem of brightness*.

M9. THE STORM SPHERE (CR 11)

A twenty-foot-wide hexagonal hole lies in the floor of this huge hexagonal chamber. Four stone platforms jut from the walls fifty feet above the floor. Above these platforms, a pair of open windows in each wall look out over the icy landscape outside. Six large crystals are embedded in the walls between

the windows, glowing with a blue radiance. High above, a wide hexagonal opening pierces the ceiling. Beyond this opening, a massive sphere of blue light sheds a dazzling radiance. Bolts of crackling electricity join the crystals in the walls with the ball of energy. A howling gale sweeps downwards from the sphere, carrying a rumble of distant thunder.

The machinery here was once part of a vast network of weather control systems used by the builders of the Nameless Spires. Combining her divine and arcane insights with the skills of several expert rogues (long since stripped of flesh and turned into undead), Katiyana deciphered enough of the arcane mechanism to activate the Storm Sphere and use it to amplify her communion with the polar winds. In concert with the basalt monoliths she has spent decades erecting across the pole, she is now very near to realizing her goal of mastering the morozkos.

The entire upper chamber is warded with an *unhallow* spell, tied to an *invisibility purge* effect (caster level 9th) that exempts those who worship Sithhud (including the hoarfrost spirits here).

The temperature in this chamber is extreme cold (*Core Rulebook* 442), and the winds howling through the chamber from the Storm Sphere above are of windstorm strength (*Core Rulebook* 439), blowing downward and outward toward the walls of the room (checking or blowing away creatures and forcing flying creatures to make Fly checks to move upward or toward the center of the room).

A crystal control sits in the floor next to the shaft, warded with a *glyph of warding* (*bestow curse*; DC 19 Will save negates). The panel can be operated like the one in area M7, causing a force-platform to appear and rise to the opening in the ceiling 100 feet above at a rate of 50 feet per round, where it remains for 1d4 rounds before disappearing. This temporarily blocks the winds coming from the Storm Sphere, which hovers 5 feet above the tower's roof.

The wall platforms are 50 feet above the floor, but there is no way to reach them from the bottom other than flight, magic, or climbing the walls (which requires a successful DC 30 Climb check with a -4 penalty due to the strength of the winds in the room).

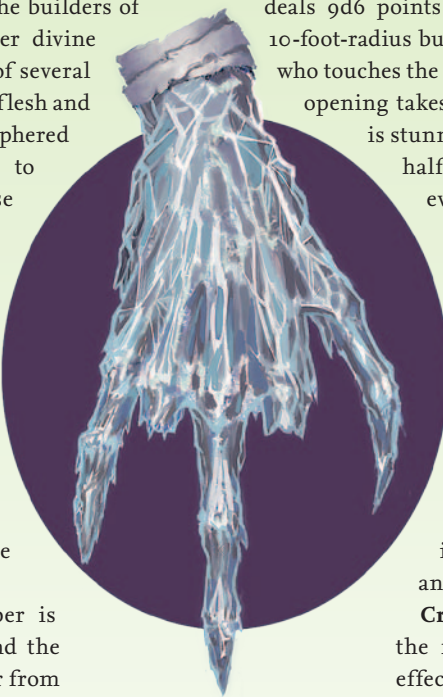
The six crystals in the walls constantly channel energy into the Storm Sphere above. Anyone who touches one of the lightning bolts emanating from a crystal takes 9d6 points of electricity damage and is stunned for 1 round (a

successful DC 23 Reflex save halves the damage and negates the stunned condition). Only by destroying the crystals can the Storm Sphere be deactivated, but they are placed high on the walls. Only two of the crystals are accessible from the platforms; the other four are embedded in the walls 55 feet above the floor. The crystals are also difficult to destroy (hardness 10, hp 90 each). When a crystal is destroyed, it shatters in a burst of electrical energy that deals 9d6 points of electricity damage to anyone in a 10-foot-radius burst (DC 23 Reflex save for half). Anyone who touches the Storm Sphere hanging above the ceiling opening takes 18d6 points of electricity damage and is stunned for 1d4 rounds (DC 23 Reflex save for half). This damage is reduced by 3 dice for every crystal destroyed.

Each time a crystal is destroyed, Katiyana takes one negative level because of her connection with the Storm Sphere. When all six crystals are destroyed, the Storm Sphere implodes, quickly dwindling away into nothingness. If Katiyana is still alive when this happens, her spiritual communion with the Storm Sphere proves too strong to break, and her soul is torn loose from her body, killing her and leaving her soulless husk behind.

Creatures: Four hoarfrost spirits patrol the floor of the chamber, in the area of effect of the *unhallow* spell. They attack any intruders entering the chamber. The half-fiend sylph Katiyana stands atop the northern platform, meditating on the Storm Sphere to bind the morozkos to her

will. When intruders first enter the chamber, Katiyana casts *desecrate* to aid her hoarfrost spirits. Her *freedom of movement* allows her to fly through the room unhindered by the winds, and she casts *dispel magic* on opponents who also seem able to fly unhindered. Katiyana casts *darkness* or *obscuring mist* to help hide her movements, using the edges of the platforms to gain cover against attacks from below. The Storm Sphere enhances called lightning as if the caster were outside during a storm, so early in the battle, Katiyana casts *call lightning storm* or *call lightning* to attack foes, in addition to her usual tactics.



SYMBOL OF SITHHUD

HOARFROST SPIRITS (4)

CR 3

XP 800 each

hp 32 each (see page 14)

KATIYANA

CR 10

XP 9,600

hp 93 (see page 54)

Development: If Katiyana is slain, either in combat or because of the destruction of the Storm Sphere, news of her demise heartens the PCs' caravan, granting a permanent +1 bonus to the caravan's Morale score and a +1 bonus on all caravan checks for 1 week. The storm overhead also breaks at once and the caravan enjoys a Pleasant Weather encounter (see page 16).

Katiyana's threat is not yet ended, however, though it is unlikely that the PCs will realize it at this point. When Katiyana died, her spirit was torn loose and drawn into the Storm Sphere to be scattered upon the polar winds. So deeply had she invested her soul into attempting to master the morozkos that her death has allowed her to transcend the limits of her living body. She no longer seeks to attempt to command the morozkos, for she can now be the hungry storm. The PCs will encounter Katiyana again as a ghost in Part Three.

Exploration of the Nameless Spires is beyond the scope of this adventure. You can certainly detail more of the strange city at the top of the world if the PCs wish to explore the ruins; however, Ameiko favors pressing on toward Tian Xia, and Ulf points out that they are now halfway to their goal, and their road to Minkai will be far easier without Katiyana's evil forces on the prowl. His plan is to continue following the Alabastrine Peaks and then rejoin the Path of Aganhei at a landmark called Dead Man's Dome.

N. DEAD MAN'S DOME (CR II)

It is a 500-mile journey from the Storm Tower to Dead Man's Dome, where Ulf hopes to find the Path of Aganhei. As the caravan draws within 50 miles of Dead Man's Dome, however, it soon becomes apparent that a small army of undead is forming around the caravan, sent against the PCs by Katiyana's ghost. Ulf suggests making a stand at Dead Man's Dome, relating its legend (see page 74).

Creatures: Dozens of undead soon surround the caravan, which must make a DC 25 Security check to reach the high ground of Dead Man's Dome before the undead completely encircle the caravan. If successful, the caravan makes it to Dead Man's Dome before the undead attack. The fortifications on the hill are ruined but provide enough cover to grant a +4 bonus to the caravan's AC, and a +2 bonus on its Attack, Security, and Resolve checks. If the check fails, the undead attack the caravan in the open.

Regardless of where the attack takes place, the undead attack in two waves of two dozen frostfallen skeletons each, interspersed with frost wights and hoarfrost spirits (AC 23; hp 115; Attack +17; Damage 8d8+4). As each wave of undead attacks, a cold wind rises, and the PCs hear a mocking feminine laugh, rising into a keening wail, as Katiyana's spirit briefly manifests. Each character with the channel energy ability grants the caravan a +1 bonus on Attack checks

against the frozen dead. Magical barriers such as *create pit*, *spike stones*, or *wall of fire* grant a +1 bonus to the caravan's AC, and a +1 bonus on Attack checks if the spell deals damage.

Each time the undead army hits, the caravan must make a DC 18 Resolve check as the waves of undead threaten to overwhelm the defenders. A failed check results in a cumulative -1 penalty on the caravan's Attack checks for the duration of the battle.

On the second round of combat, the spirit of the Dead Man rises and begins to fight to protect the caravan (Attack +10, Damage 1d10+3). The Dead Man attacks independently every round (the PCs can roll for him, if you wish) and cannot be damaged.

After each wave of undead is defeated, the caravan has a brief respite. The caravan can make a DC 23 Security check for each healer and wainwright in the caravan; for each successful check, the caravan regains 1d6 hit points from healing and emergency repairs.

Use the Giant Barrow map on page 10 for this encounter if needed.

Treasure: Once the undead are driven off, the Dead Man leads the PCs to the place where he fell. Although his body and gear were destroyed long ago, he points out a *warrior terra-cotta talisman* (see page 63) that was missed and lies unclaimed. Saluting, his spirit sinks into the ground, returning to his eternal vigil.

XP Award: Award the PCs 12,800 XP for defeating the frozen dead.

O. UL-ANGORN (CR 8)

After the battle at Dead Man's Dome, the PCs and their caravan soon descend from the High Ice into the basin surrounding Ruun Uvas, where they can rest in the village of Ul-Angorn, perched on the shores of the Saltsea Lake.

UL-ANGORN

CN Village

Corruption -1; **Crime** +0; **Economy** +0; **Law** -1; **Lore** +0;

Society -2

Qualities Prosperous, Rumormongering Citizens

Danger +0

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government autocracy

Population 626 (585 humans, 23 dwarves, 10 halflings, 8 elves)

Notable NPCs

Headman Ordos (CN male human expert 5/rogue 2)

Salt-Speaker Khorokh (N male dwarf druid 5)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 650 gp; **Purchase Limit** 3,750 gp; **Spellcasting** 3rd

Minor Items bracers of armor +2, elixir of hiding, scroll of barkskin, scroll of true strike, wand of faerie fire, wand of shield of faith; **Medium Items** +2 ghost touch splint mail, +1 ki focus nunchaku, scroll of enervation

Creature: Ul-Angorn's citizens are very inquisitive and talkative, and the caravan must make a DC 23 Security check each day it spends in the village to avoid the inhabitants discovering something about the caravan. Each time the caravan fails this check, there is a cumulative 10% chance that this information finds its way to an agent of the Five Winds. One day after the Five Winds hear of the PCs' presence, an ogre mage named Sejiro attacks the PCs and their allies, attempting to kidnap Ameiko or another significant NPC by stealth or magical charm. If caught and forced into combat, Sejiro fights to the death.

SEJIRO

CR 8

XP 4,800

Male ogre mage (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 221)

hp 92

P. OVORIKHEER PASS (CR 8)

South of Ul-Angorn, the caravan must traverse the 20-mile-long Ovorikheer Pass, which rises above 5,000 feet. If the caravan has been out of the High Ice for more than 2 months, they have lost their acclimation to high altitude, and the journey through the pass provokes altitude sickness again (see page 35), but only until the caravan descends the far side.

Ascending the pass, the caravan must negotiate the geothermally active vales of Baruun's Breath with a DC 23 Security check. If the caravan fails the check, the caravan is sickened by the noxious fumes (–2 on all caravan checks) for 1d3 days; this duration is reduced by 1 day for each healer in the caravan.

Creature: Once atop the pass, the caravan passes through the ice-sheathed Domagalki Forest, known as the Wood of Winter's Deadly Roar, where one of the giant, white-furred spiders that inhabit the woods attacks the PCs. The spider flees into the forest if reduced to fewer than 30 hit points.

GIANT SNOW SPIDER

CR 8

XP 4,800

Giant tarantula (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 256)

hp 115

TO THE WALL OF HEAVEN

Once the caravan descends from Ovorikheer Pass, it enters the lands of the Osman Confederation surrounding Lake Buriyim. The town of Jaagiin stands square in the Path of Aganhei. Unlike Ul-Angorn, the citizens here have little interest in the PCs or their caravan.

JAAGIIN

N small town

Corruption +0; **Crime** +0;

Economy +2; **Law** –2; **Lore**

+0; **Society** +4

Qualities prosperous, strategic location

Danger +0

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government council

Population 1,371 (1,224 humans;

69 elves; 31 tengus; 19 gnomes;

18 dwarves; 10 halflings)

Notable NPCs

Elder Sarai (N female elf witch 8)

Village Councilors (typically N human aristocrat 1/expert 5)



GIANT SNOW SPIDER

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 1,400 gp; **Purchase Limit** 7,500 gp; **Spellcasting** 4th
Minor Items +1 shortbow, +2 punching dagger, bead of force,
 ring of force shield, scroll of heal, wand of rope trick, wand
 of scorching ray; **Medium Items** +2 spell resistance (15)
 chainmail, +2 hide armor, major ring of electricity resistance

For 50 miles after the caravan leaves (or bypasses) Jaagiin, there is a 50% chance per day of a Cabin encounter (see page 11) or Erutaki Encampment encounter (see page 13). The Path of Aganhei soon exits Osman lands, however, and heads straight across the empty tundra to the Wall of Heaven Mountains, where the pass called the Altan Zuud cuts through the mountains and leads down into Hongal.

Q. THE LAST PASS

As the PCs approach the Altan Zuud, also known as the Last Pass, the temperature steadily drops and ominous storm clouds dominate the southern horizon. As the caravan ascends toward the pass, the PCs clearly see storm clouds racing overhead, swifter than the wind, and hear a fell, feminine laughter mocking them from the clouds, interspersed with peals of thunder. The mountain peaks ahead are swallowed up in a roiling blizzard as avalanches cascade down the mountain faces to block the pass. Katiyana has returned, and the full fury of the morozko has been unleashed. The blizzard's fury seems restricted to the pass itself, for the moment at least, but if the caravan remains in the open, the hungry storm will engulf it in turn. Though under Katiyana's control, the morozko is still a storm—it is not a monster that the PCs can fight, any more than they can fight a hurricane.

The PCs must decide where to go. With the pass ahead blocked, Ulf suggests making for the Erutaki town of Ketskerlet, 200 miles to the east, and from there trying to cross the Gulf of Khorkii, or at least taking shelter in the dwarven delves on this side of the mountains, but he is not hopeful that the caravan will make it before the storm catches them. Shalelu recommends scouting out other passes through the Wall of Heaven, even though Ulf claims that no other passes are traversable at this time of year. Sandru wants only what's best for the caravan, and none of the suggestions so far seem to offer much chance of the caravan surviving.

But Koya Mvashti offers another solution. She has studied the history of Desna's worship in many cultures, past and present. She recalls the account of a traveler from long ago who traversed the Crown of the World and spoke of the Uqtaal clans—tundra nomads who worshiped Desna as the Queen of the North Star, their guide and protector in the long arctic night. The Uqtaal believed that souls sought to follow the North Star even in death, and through long years they excavated

a subterranean necropolis within caverns at the feet of the Wall of Heaven. Beyond the stony tombs of the fallen, the Uqtaal carved a passage—called the Path of Spirits—for the souls of the dead to make their way onto the High Ice to follow the North Star to the top of the world, where Desna would carry them home into the stars. The account was hundreds of years old, but the traveler claimed the necropolis was very real and that he had found the northern exit of their tunnel, as wide as a highway, flanked by twin stone statues of Desna. By using the landmarks recorded by the traveler, it might be possible to find this pathway. With few other tenable options, Ameiko suggests following Koya's guidance.

If Koya has been slain, then you should provide this information to the PCs in another way. Maybe *Suishen* knows of this secret passage through the Wall of Heaven, or perhaps Ulf has heard tavern tales from other guides about the route. Alternatively, the PCs could obtain clues pointing toward this path with divination magic.

WHICH WAY?

With Katiyana's morozko blocking the Last Pass through the Wall of Heaven, the PCs must decide which way to go. They might want to wait for several weeks or months for the avalanche to settle and melt enough to cross, but the danger of the morozko ahead still exists.

If the PCs decide to go to go to Ketskerlet or look for other passes through the mountains, it quickly becomes apparent that the morozko is following them, and growing bigger. The hungry storm expands by 1d6×10 miles each day. On any day that the morozko moves faster than the caravan, the caravan must make a series of three DC 25 Resolve checks and DC 25 Security checks. Each failed Resolve check imposes a cumulative –2 penalty on all future Resolve and Security checks until the caravan escapes the morozko. Each failed Security check means the caravan's speed is reduced by one-third and takes 5d6 points of damage. Failing all three Security checks means the caravan makes no progress.

It should quickly become apparent that escaping or surviving the morozko's onslaught will be extremely difficult, if not outright impossible, making Koya's Path of Spirits the best, if not the only, option. If the PCs decide to take the Path of Spirits through the mountains, go to Part Three.

PART THREE: A DARKER ROAD

The PCs and their caravan have finally reached the Wall of Heaven Mountains, their last barrier before Tian Xia, only to find the pass blocked by avalanches and Katiyana's morozko. Their only chance to safely cross the mountains is to find the Gates of Desna and the underground passage known as the Path of Spirits.

R. THE GATES OF DESNA

The Gates of Desna lie 30 miles west of the Last Pass. The PCs may begin heading westward at once, but they must make a DC 20 Security check every 10 miles to keep to the proper course. A failed check indicates that they have missed a landmark (or it has been eroded or destroyed by the passage of time) or had to leave their course to bypass impassable terrain and that they must make another Security check to regain their bearings and find the route again, traveling an additional 10 miles. If the PCs are forced to rest before finding the pathway, the morozko expands by 1d6x10 miles as noted on the previous page. PCs caught by the morozko must make DC 25 Resolve and Security checks each hour to successfully press on despite the difficulties of the mounting blizzard, though the caravan gains a cumulative +2 bonus on any checks the PCs must make each time they succeed at a Security check to stay on course to find the Path of Spirits.

The Gates of Desna are named for the statues of the goddess that flank the entrance to the necropolis between two arms of a rugged peak. One statue is broken off at the pedestal, but opposite it still stands a primitively carved statue of a woman with butterfly wings eternally facing north, with a roughly carved eight-pointed star graven into her forehead. A quarter mile beyond, a cave mouth yawns at the head of the valley, with a carved stone lintel and doorposts etched with faded stars: the entrance to the Path of Spirits.

If the caravan reaches the gates, it gains a +5 bonus on its next Resolve check. In addition, a fortune-teller who worships Desna can use her ability to reroll a caravan check one additional time during the current week.

If the PCs reach the shelter of the Path of Spirits, Katiyana rages at their escape from her grip, but as she roars through the peaks of the Wall of Heaven, she encounters Bormurg, the chieftain of the yeti tribe that dwells in the caves adjoining the Uqtaal Necropolis. When Katiyana reveals herself in all her terrible glory, the yeti chieftain is smitten by her fey beauty. Katiyana interrogates Bormurg about the Wall of Heaven, and discovering the hidden ways beneath the mountains, she resolves to destroy the PCs once and for all. Though she will be temporarily cut off from her communion with the storm, she risks the brief separation to take her vengeance upon the PCs and prevent them from warning the outside world of the wintry onslaught to come. Drawing the yeti chief into a wanton embrace, Katiyana's feigned passion is but the prelude to possession. Taking control of Bormurg body and soul, she ventures into the dark necropolis beneath the mountains to intercept the PCs and rally the yeti of the caves to finish them.

THE PATH OF SPIRITS

The long, dark Path of Spirits is a trip of approximately 50 miles from the entrance at the Gates of Desna to the Uqtaal Necropolis. The ancient nomads delved only where necessary, following natural faults, rifts, and cave systems. The tunnel has many steep slopes and narrow passages that can be traversed by lone humanoids but are difficult to navigate with wagons. Because of the darkness of the path and the close quarters, the caravan moves at only half its normal speed.

The hazards the caravan might face underground are different than those encountered in crossing the tundra and the High Ice. You can use the following encounters as you see fit to enliven the journey along the Path of Spirits to the Uqtaal Necropolis (area S).

CAIRN OF SKULLS

The PCs come upon a cairn of stones and skulls. The skulls are all embedded in the cairn's northward face and are painted with red demonic faces. A DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the red-painted skulls as symbols of Fumeiyoshi, the Tian god of dishonor, envy, graves, and the undead. While grisly, these cairns are merely harmless way-markers.

HEADLESS APPARITIONS (CR 8)

The caravan sights 1d6 faintly glowing spectral figures following the path (equal chance for them to be heading north or south). The apparitions wear nomadic tribal garb, but all of them are headless. The caravan must succeed at a DC 23 Resolve check or panic, fleeing away from the apparitions. The caravan can attempt a new Resolve check once per hour to stop its headlong flight. While fleeing, the caravan takes a -4 penalty on Security checks. If the caravan succeeds at the Resolve check, the apparitions ignore the caravan, silently passing by on whatever strange errand they are engaged in.

XP Award: Award the PCs 4,800 XP for a headless apparitions encounter.

HEADLESS WARDENS (CR 9)

Creatures: The caravan encounters a wandering patrol of four headless wardens (AC 23, hp 115; **Attack** +17; **Damage** 10d6+5) approaching from the Necropolis of Uqtaal (see area S3). Upon sighting the headless mummies, the caravan must succeed at a DC 24 Resolve check or be paralyzed with terror and unable to act for 1 round, taking a -4 penalty to AC. The caravan can make a new Resolve check at the beginning of each round to be able to act normally. This is a fear effect. A paladin's aura of courage grants a +2 bonus on the caravan's Resolve check, and each casting of *calm emotions* or *remove fear* or use of a bard's inspire courage grants an additional +1 bonus.

If the headless wardens successfully hit the caravan, it must make a DC 18 Security check or become accursed and diseased, taking a –1 penalty to AC and on Security and Resolve checks for each failed check. This cursed disease can only be removed by casting *remove curse* or *break enchantment*, followed by *remove disease*. Each casting of both spells removes 1 point of penalty until all penalties are removed (for example, a caravan that fails three Security checks and has a –3 penalty to AC and on Security and Resolve checks would require three castings of either *remove curse* or *break enchantment*, followed by three castings of *remove disease* to remove all penalties).

XP Award: Award the PCs 6,400 XP for defeating the headless wardens.

UNCERTAIN CROSSING

The tunnel splits and it is unclear which path to take. The caravan must make a DC 23 Security check to choose the correct path; failure indicates that the caravan is delayed for 1d6 hours by following a blind path to a dead end and then having to backtrack.

YETI SCOUTS (CR 9)

Creatures: A pair of yeti savages (see area S13) discovers the PCs' caravan (AC 23, hp 115; **Attack** +17; **Damage** 10d6+5). The caravan must make a successful DC 24 Resolve check or become frightened by the howls and terrifying eyes of the yetis, taking a –2 penalty to AC and on Attack and Resolve checks for 1d6 hours. A paladin's aura of courage grants a +2 bonus on this Resolve check.

XP Award: Award the PCs 6,400 XP for defeating the yeti scouts.

S. THE UQTAAL NECROPOLIS

After traversing the long, dark tunnels of the Path of Spirits, the caravan draws near to the Uqtaal Necropolis deep beneath the Wall of Heaven. Within 1 mile of the necropolis, the tunnel becomes wider and straighter, and rows of skulls, all facing due north, are laid in unbroken lines along each side of the passage.

While the Uqtaal who originally built the necropolis were worshipers of Desna, their descendants did not remain faithful to the goddess. A few hundred years ago, a new cult sprang up among the Uqtaal, soon supplanting the peaceful Desna-worshipers with their new god. This cult was dedicated to Fumeiyoshi, the Tian god of dishonor, envy, graves, and the undead, and they soon seized the necropolis in the name of their dark god to raise an undead army. The Uqtaal did not survive for long after the rise of the Fumeiyoshi cult, however, for the cult's depredations soon became too much for their neighbors. A coalition of Erutaki tribes rose up against the Uqtaal and destroyed them and their undead servants,

and the tribe's few survivors were assimilated into the neighboring Erutaki clans.

Centuries later, the Uqtaal are long gone from the Crown of the World, and their necropolis lies mostly forgotten by the Erutaki. But their subterranean burial ground remains, now holding not only the undead guardians of the Uqtaal, but also a tribe of yetis who have taken up residence in natural tunnels adjoining the necropolis.

The Uqtaal Necropolis has the following features.

Ceilings: Passages and caves normally have a height of twice their width. The main passage (areas S9 and S10—see the map on page 48) is 40 feet high. The large caverns at area S2 and S6 are 20 feet high at the walls and 50 feet high in the center. The cavern at area S16 is 40 feet high at the walls and 80 feet high in the center.

Crevasses: These chasms are 80 feet deep, their bottoms littered with thousands of bones (DC 25 Climb check to scale).

Ledges: These steep slopes are 20 feet high (DC 15 Climb check to scale).

Yetis: A total of 28 yetis led by their chieftain Bormurg (now possessed by Katiyana) inhabit the caves north of the Uqtaal Necropolis (this excludes the yetis in area S16). As the PCs explore the necropolis, keep track of the number of yetis killed. If the PCs defeat all 28 of these yetis, they will face far fewer opponents when Katiyana ambushes them in area S16. When the yetis attack, a DC 20 Knowledge (nature) check reveals that their actions are more aggressive than normal for yetis (because of Katiyana's influence). The yetis have a starting attitude of hostile, but if the PCs explore the yeti caves before Katiyana's ambush, they can use Diplomacy to talk to the yetis (though the yetis only speak Aklo), and might be able to gain free passage through the yeti caves, or even some temporary allies.

GRAVE ROBBING

Taking long-undisturbed grave goods does not sit well with some members of the caravan. Each time the PCs remove treasure from areas S4, S5, S8, S9, or S10, they must make a DC 20 Resolve check or the caravan gains 1 point of Unrest. Taking items from the open caves at areas S6 or S7, or from areas S11 through S17, does not require such checks.

S1. PILLARED PATH

The tunnel here is clearly worked, the floor and walls smoothed and decorated with faded cave paintings of starry skies, colorful auroras, and pale, headless shades marching along the path. Regularly spaced hewn stone pillars decorated with star carvings stand on either side of the tunnels. Atop each pillar

sits a bleached human skull, painted with a red demonic face, all facing north.

This tunnel marks the southern terminus of the Path of Spirits. The skulls belong to those interred in the necropolis, removed by the cult of Fumeiyoshi and placed here to guard the entrance to the graves of the Uqtaal. With a DC 10 Knowledge (religion) check, the PCs recognize the star carvings as symbols of Desna, while with a DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check, they identify the red-painted skulls as symbols of Fumeiyoshi.

S2. THE BRIDGE OF SOULS (CR 8)

A carved bridge spans a deep crevasse in this large cavern. At each end of the bridge, stone pillars support a flat lintel, carved with star-shaped niches

set with red-painted human skulls. On either side of the far lintel, a dusty portal of stone marks one face of an angular tower built into the rock, with narrow slit windows overlooking the bridge.

Closer inspection reveals Erutaki pictographic runes on the pillars and lintel, stating, "Here the dead walk. Trouble them not, nor bar their path." Anyone attempting to cross the bridge discovers a permanent *antilife shell* (caster level 13th) blocking the bridge. A successful *dispel magic* casting suppresses the *antilife shell* for 1 hour, after which it reappears. Otherwise, the caravan must make a DC 23 Security check to bypass the crevasse, which takes 1d6 hours of work + 1 hour per wagon. Casting *air walk*, *dimension door*, *floating disk*, *fly*, *levitate*, or *shrink item* grants a +1 bonus on this check per spell or effect. The caravan can make this check as many times as necessary, with the same expenditure of time for each check.

The yetis normally avoid this area, but when needed, they climb the walls of the crevasse and along the walls of the cavern to bypass the bridge and avoid the towers' guardians.

Development: If the PCs approach the bridge or open either of the doors to area S3, the four headless wardens in those areas issue forth to attack.

XP Award: Award the PCs 4,800 XP if they safely get the caravan over the bridge or across the crevasse.

S3. WATCHFUL TOWER (CR 9)

This octagonal structure, half-buried within the stone walls of the cavern, rises twenty feet above the cavern floor. Inside, a narrow stair along the walls leads to a small balcony allowing observers to look out the tower's slit windows. A dark corridor leads deeper within the rock.

Two of these towers overlook the Bridge of Souls in area S2.

Creatures: A pair of decapitated mummies called headless wardens guards each tower. The headless wardens attack anyone entering their tower or attempting to cross the bridge in area S2.

HEADLESS WARDENS (2)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

- Advanced variant mummy (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 210)
- LE Medium undead
- Init +0; Senses blindsight 60 ft.; Perception +16

Aura despair (30 ft., paralyzed for 1d4 rounds, Will DC 17 negates)



HEADLESS WARDEN

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 10, flat-footed 22 (+2 armor, +10 natural)

hp 75 each (10d8+30)

Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +9

Defensive Abilities spirit wisps; **DR** 5/—; **Immune** cold, undead traits

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee slam +15 (1d8+10 plus mummy rot)

Special Attacks mummy rot (DC 17), spirit slam +9 (1d4+2 negative energy)

TACTICS

During Combat The headless wardens make slam attacks at the closest foe. If enemies are near the crevasse, they attempt to bull rush them into it.

Morale The headless wardens fight until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 10, **Con** —, **Int** 6, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 24

Feats Light Armor Proficiency, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness, Weapon Focus (slam)

Skills Perception +16, Stealth +11

Languages Erutaki

Gear broken chain shirt

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Spirit Slam (Su) Within the Uqtaal Necropolis, a headless warden is surrounded by spirit wisps that harass its foes. These spirits make one slam attack each round against a living foe that is adjacent to the warden, using the warden's full base attack bonus, plus its Charisma modifier. The slam deals 1d4 points of negative energy damage, plus additional negative energy damage equal to the warden's Charisma modifier (+2 in most cases).

Spirit Wisps (Su) Within the Uqtaal Necropolis, a headless warden is guided and warded by the spirits of the dead that swirl around the warden in pale glowing wisps. These spirits grant the warden blindsight 60 feet and make it difficult for the warden's enemies to see it. Ranged attacks and melee attacks made by creatures that are not adjacent to the warden (typically because of reach) have a 20% miss chance.

S4. CHAMBER OF REPOSE

Open niches line the walls of this narrow corridor, within which lie funerary biers and a scattering of ancient grave goods.

When not patrolling the necropolis, the headless wardens lie in repose in these niches.

Treasure: Each burial niche contains 2d6 small funerary items (such as bracelets and rings of copper and turquoise, beaten copper burial masks, spirit-fetishes of carved bone, and the like) worth 10 gp each.

S5. WARDENS' TOMB

Two funerary biers lie in this chamber. Pictographs of the dead rising from their graves to attack the living are carved and painted on the walls: on a twilight tundra on the left side of the room, before moonlit mountains in the center, and on a starry snowfield on the right.

These are the funerary chambers of the headless wardens in area **S3**, faithful warriors of the Fumeiyoshi cult who were tasked with guarding the necropolis even after death.

Treasure: Each bier holds 2d6 grave goods as in area **S4**, but worth 100 gp each.

S6. THE STONE TREE (CR 9)

A strange pillar, seeming almost a bare-branched tree, stands in the center of this arching cavern in the midst of a pool of still water. A faint violet radiance from beneath the pool lights the cavern, reflecting off the ceiling above like tiny stars. Beyond the stone tree, a pale light glints from one wall of the cave. To the northwest, a smooth passage slopes upward.

The Stone Tree is a darkwood tree grown here by the Uqtaal shamans and then petrified by the necromantic magic of the Fumeiyoshi cult. The tree and pool are a repository for the disembodied spirits of those Uqtaal who refused to convert to the worship of Fumeiyoshi. Their souls were captured for later use in creating new undead in the service of the cult, and bound here by a spirit-barrier in a 20-foot radius around the tree. The spirit-barrier is invisible and blocks the passage of incorporeal creatures, keeping them perpetually imprisoned within.

The water in the pool is normal, cold water, but it glows with a pale radiance that sheds dim light in the cavern, reflected by mica flecks in the ceiling. A body lies on the floor on the far side of the Stone Tree (see area **S7** for details of what occurs if the PCs disturb the corpse). To the northwest, a series of stepped clefts lead upward into the yeti caves (areas **S12** through **S17**).

Creatures: Over the centuries, the spirits bound here have given in to their anger, fear, and envy, becoming undead spectres. Each round a living creature spends inside the spirit-barrier, there is a cumulative 10% chance that two spectres emerge from the tree to attack; this chance is doubled if a living creature touches the tree or water.

SPECTRES (2)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

hp 52 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 256)

Development: There is a 25% chance that a single yeti savage (see page 50) lurks in the shadows of the northwest



corridor (DC 24 Perception check to spot for PCs at ground level, DC 20 if flying or climbing). If attacked, the yeti flees to area **S12**.

S7. THE GOLDEN DOOR (CR 9)

A gilded door engraved with a demonic, tusked skull face stands in the wall. Much of the gilt on its outer surface has been scraped off, but a flickering light gleams from the edges of the door. A withered corpse lies before the door.

This door, once magically trapped, was broken into long ago by a tiefling grave robber named Tuezarr. While he succeeded in breaking into area **S8** and even stole some of the treasures inside, Tuezarr fled in a panic when the greater shadow in that area manifested. Slain by the shadow but immune to its create spawn ability, he rose again as a revenant. Unable to kill or even hurt the incorporeal shadow, however, Tuezarr has remained here, bound to his murderer by impotent hatred and an unquenchable thirst for vengeance.

Creatures: Tuezarr lies dormant just within the spirit-barrier, but if his body is disturbed, he immediately rises to attack. After 1d6 rounds, the greater shadow Ivul Vuutiin emerges from area **S8**. While she cannot cross the spirit-barrier, Ivul attacks intruders outside the barrier, ignoring Tuezarr. If the PCs remain inside the barrier, however, more spectres continue to manifest from the Stone Tree in area **S6**.

If the PCs do not disturb Tuezarr's body, the revenant does not awaken. Once the PCs enter area **S8** and encounter Ivul, however, he rises and attacks.

IVUL VUUTIIN

CR 8

XP 4,800

Female greater shadow (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 245)

hp 58

TUEZARR

CR 6

XP 2,400

Male revenant (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 235)

hp 76

TACTICS

During Combat As soon as Ivul Vuutiin appears, Tuezarr gains the benefits of a *haste* spell from his reason to hate ability, and unleashes a baleful shriek. Unable to harm Ivul, Tuezarr lashes out in a rage against any opponent in reach.

Morale As long as Ivul exists, Tuezarr cannot be killed.

Once the shadow is destroyed, however, the revenant is immediately slain.

Treasure: Tuezarr had little time to steal anything before fleeing Ivul's shadow. He carries a +1 rapier, a cloak

of elvenkind, goggles of minute seeing, masterwork thieves' tools, and 47 pp. His pack also contains 250 gp worth of carved gold inlay he scraped off the door. The remainder of his gear has rotted into uselessness.

S8. TOMB OF THE SHADOW

Flickering firelight illuminates this octagonal room. Red demonic faces leer from the walls against a painted background of midnight blue. In the center of the room, seeming almost to swim in a sea of night, a bier of blue-painted stone bears a motionless skeleton, its face concealed beneath a golden mask.

This chamber is the resting place of Ivul Vuutiin, an Uqtaal priestess of Fumeiyoshi. Transformed into a greater shadow centuries ago, she was charged with overseeing and guarding the cult's sanctum, attacking any intruders threatening the necropolis. The room is dimly lit.

Creature: If the PCs did not encounter the greater shadow in area **S7**, she is found here.

Treasure: The room is lit by a *continual flame* inside a crystal lamp worth 100 gp. Ivul's corpse still wears the *ghost mirror armor* (see page 62) and *nine-fold spirit sword* (see page 62) that she stole from the Desnan priest who once oversaw the necropolis. In addition, it wears eight matching bracelets (worth 100 gp each), eight matching rings (worth 100 gp each), and a golden mask with eyes of jade (worth 1,000 gp).

S9. LOWER CATACOMBS

Numerous small side passages branch out from the main corridor, which slopes upward to the west. Hundreds of burial niches have been carved into the rock walls of the catacombs.

The dead of the Uqtaal are interred in these crypts. If the PCs explore the catacombs, they find plenty of bones, but no skulls—the cult of Fumeiyoshi removed all of the skulls for use in their grisly displays.

Treasure: A DC 15 Perception check reveals 1d6 burial goods (worth 10 gp each) for every 5-foot section of wall searched in the catacombs.

S10. UPPER CATACOMBS

The passage continues to slope upward here, flanked by more catacombs cut into the rock. On each wall of the passage, a huge red demonic skull face with short tusks is carved into the stone.

These catacombs are identical to those in area **S9** (including treasure), but the twin faces of Fumeiyoshi (identifiable with a DC 20 Knowledge [religion] check) at **S10a** create an *antilife shell* identical to the one at area

S2; however, this one blocks the passage and cannot be bypassed by the caravan. The PCs can dispel the *antilife shell*, circumvent it by passing through the yeti caves, or destroy either of the faces with ranged attacks (hardness 8, hp 180). A partially dug-out tunnel in the northern catacomb at **S10b** connects to the yeti caves, but a DC 25 Escape Artist check is required to squeeze through the passage.

S11. YETI TUNNEL

This uneven passage winds clumsily through the rocky mountain, climbing a number of cliff-like shelves as it passes.

The yetis use this tunnel to come and go between their caves and the Path of Spirits.

S12. COMMON CAVE (CR 9)

Rough nests of piled furs are scattered across this broad cavern. Scattered bones amid the stalagmites give mute testimony to past meals.

Creatures: Five yetis inhabit each of these caverns.

YETIS (5)

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

hp 45 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 287)

Treasure: Each yeti has collected 1d6 gemstones (worth 50 gp each).

S13. PRIVATE CAVE (CR 9)

This ledge overlooks the cave below. It contains a den of matted furs, rough seats carved from the stone, and a few crude tools.

Creatures: Mated pairs of yeti savages make their dens in these caverns. Not immediately hostile, the yetis warn intruders in growling, guttural Aklo to “get out!” They attack those who do not comply immediately.

YETI SAVAGES (2)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

Yeti barbarian (savage barbarian) 3 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 287, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 79)

N Large monstrous humanoid (cold)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 10, flat-footed 15 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +8 natural, -2 rage, -1 size)

hp 109 each (9 HD;

6d10+3d12+57)

Fort +11, **Ref** +8, **Will** +10; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities naked courage*, uncanny dodge; **Immune** cold

Weaknesses vulnerability to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee bite +11 (1d6+4 plus 1d6 cold), 2 claws +16 (1d6+8/19–20 plus 1d6 cold)

Ranged spear +10 (2d6+8/x3)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks cold, frightful gaze (DC 13), rage (12 rounds/day), rage powers (animal fury), rend (2 claws, 1d6+12 plus 1d6 cold)

TACTICS

During Combat The yeti savages rage and attack intruders, often bodily dragging foes up a wall or ceiling or to the edge of a shelf, pit, or crevasse before dropping them.

YETI SAVAGE

Morale While raging, the yeti savages fight to the death. If not raging, a yeti savage flees when reduced to fewer than 30 hit points.

Base Statistics When not raging, a yeti savage's statistics are **AC** 20, touch 12, flat-footed 17; **hp** 91; **Fort** +9, **Will** +8; **Melee** 2 claws +14 (1d6+6/19–20 plus 1d6 cold); **Ranged** spear +10 (2d6+6/x3); **Special Attacks** rend (1d6+9 plus 1d6 cold); **Str** 23, **Con** 19; **CMB** +16 (+20 to drag); **Skills** Climb +18.

STATISTICS

Str 27, **Dex** 14, **Con** 23, **Int** 7, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +18 (+22 to drag); **CMD** 29 (31 vs. drag)

Feats Cleave, Greater Drag*, Improved Critical (claws), Improved Drag*, Power Attack

Skills Climb +20, Perception +14, Stealth +10 (+18 in snow), Survival +8

Languages Aklo

SQ fast movement

Gear spear, *amulet of natural armor* +1

* See the *Advanced Player's Guide*.

Treasure: Each den contains 5d6 roughly polished gemstones (worth 50 gp each).

S14. RIFT CAVE (CR 9)

A deep crevasse dominates this sprawling cavern.

Each of these caves contains an 80-foot-deep crevasse, littered with bones.

Creatures: Three yetis and a single yeti savage occupy each of these caverns. They attack any intruders and attempt to drag or throw them into the crevasses.

YETIS (3) **CR 4**

XP 1,200 each

hp 45 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 287)

YETI SAVAGE **CR 7**

XP 3,200

hp 109 (see page 50)

S15. CHIEFTAIN'S CHAMBER

Many skulls of bears, wolves, woolly rhinoceroses, mastodons, and stranger prey—apparently hunting trophies—rest on large stones around the walls of this cavern.

This is the living chamber of Bormurg and his wives, though the yeti chieftain has spent little time here since Katiyana possessed him.

Treasure: A successful DC 15 Perception check discovers the collection of eight amethysts (worth 500 gp each) and four topaz crystals (worth 900 gp each) that Bormurg

keeps hidden behind a polar bear skull. A second DC 15 Perception check turns up the 21 hematites (worth 50 gp each) that one of his consorts concealed in her nest of smelly furs.

S16. THRONE OF THE YETI CHIEF (CR 13)

This wide cavern soars into darkness overhead. A deep crevasse plummets to the north, while to the south a broad switchback road climbs to a distant tunnel mouth. In the center of the cavern, skull-topped columns surround an octagonal dais. Age-worn steps lead to the top of the dais, where a stone seat rests between the tusks of a bull mastodon skull, a Tian-style banner draped over the top like a canopy.

The Uqtaal once performed their final rites in this cavern before laying the dead to rest, but it is now the site of Bormurg's throne and Katiyana's final ambush. Katiyana has constructed a small shrine to Sithhud atop the dais in the center of the chamber and cast *desecrate* on the altar there.

Creatures: The yeti chieftain Bormurg, possessed by Katiyana's ghost, inhabits this chamber, along with two of his yeti savage consorts. One of the yeti savages hides atop the ledge to the southeast, watching down the corridor to area S10 (DC 24 Perception check to spot her; DC 20 if the PCs are climbing or flying), while the other yeti savage lurks in the cave mouth above the crevasse to the northeast (DC 30 Perception check to notice; 26 if the PCs are climbing or flying).

When the caravan enters this area, the yeti savages howl a signal to attack, at which point a CR 9 group of yetis climbs out of the crevasse to attack the caravan (**AC** 23; **hp** 115; **Attack** +17; **Damage** 8d8+4). When the yetis attack, the caravan must make a DC 24 Resolve check or be paralyzed with fear (–4 penalty to AC, cannot move or attack) for 1 round. A paladin's aura of courage grants a +2 bonus on this check; a *bless* or *prayer* spell grants a +1 bonus. Each round of combat for 5 rounds, five yeti reinforcements arrive from the cave mouths to the north, until all 28 yetis have joined the fray. This effectively increases the yeti attack force's hit points by 20 each round, and the caravan must succeed at a DC 18 Resolve check each round to avoid the fear effect from the yeti reinforcements. For every five yetis the PCs have already killed in the yeti caves, subtract 1 round of reinforcements. If the PCs defeated all of the yetis in the caves, no reinforcements arrive.

While the caravan engages the yetis, the two yeti savages attack the PCs. The next round, the yeti chieftain Bormurg, possessed by Katiyana's ghost, emerges from the stone onto the southeast ledge. Run the two combats simultaneously—each round, play out the caravan combat against the yetis, then play 1 round of normal combat between the PCs and

NPC RELATIONSHIPS

If you're using the relationship rules presented in the *Jade Regent Player's Guide*, the PCs have the opportunity during this adventure to further increase their Relationship Scores with the significant NPCs traveling with them. The PCs can increase their Relationship Scores with the following NPCs by the listed amount for taking the following actions or completing the following tasks:

Ameiko Kaijitsu: slaying the dragon Vegsundvaag (area L): +1; safely escorting Ameiko all the way across the Crown of the World to Tian Xia: +1

Koya Mvashti: finding the *map of the High Ice* (area A): +1; taking Koya to visit the North Pole: +1; reconsecrating the Uqtaal Necropolis to Desna: +1

Sandru Vhiski: getting the caravan across the Crown of the World without losing a single wagon: +3 (reduce this award by 1 for every wagon lost, to a minimum of +0); making at least 500 gp through caravan trade: +1

Shalelu Andosana: arranging a peaceful meeting between Shalelu and Snowcaster elves: +1; giving Shalelu the Snowcaster quiver found in the dragon's lair (area L): +1; camping for at least 24 hours in a place of natural beauty (such as Lake Nallishoot [area F], within sight of the Alabastrine Peaks [area M], or the Domagalki Forest [area P]): +1

DESIGNER NOTE

Designing a stat block for the yeti chieftain Bormurg while he is possessed by Katiyana was a difficult proposition, especially when dealing with *magic jar* and similar effects. Although it functions in a similar fashion to the *magic jar* spell, Katiyana's malevolence attack is a unique ghost ability, so we built Bormurg's stat block from scratch, adding Katiyana's mental abilities to Bormurg's physical stats. As such, we took what seemed the most logical approach in mixing the two character's abilities together, rather than a direct application of mechanical rules from the *magic jar* description. We hope that the final result is a memorable and fun encounter that is also relatively easy to run.

Bormurg/Katiyana before returning to the next round of caravan combat. Note that what happens in one combat may affect the other combat (see below).

While fighting Bormurg/Katiyana, a DC 15 Sense Motive check is enough to notice that the yeti chieftain is under some sort of mental control or influence. Once the PCs realize this, a DC 22 Knowledge (religion) check recognizes possession by ghostly malevolence. *Detect evil* can also sense Katiyana's presence (though the PCs still might not realize

Bormurg is possessed), as can *detect undead* or *deathwatch* (which reveals both a living and an undead creature).

If the PCs cast *protection from chaos* or *protection from evil* to suppress Bormurg's possession, he receives a new Will save (Will +10) to break free of Katiyana's malevolence (DC 22). If successful, Katiyana casts *dispel magic* to try to overcome any *protection from evil* or similar effect blocking her possession. Temporarily freed from Katiyana's possession, Bormurg shouts that he was being controlled by a "bad, lying spirit" and commands the yetis fighting the caravan to stop attacking. Bormurg pledges to aid the PCs if they can free him of the spirit, even offering them his "magic rock" (his *ioun stone*) if successful.

If driven from Bormurg's body or if Bormurg is killed, Katiyana abandons the yeti chieftain and flies to the dais in the center of the cavern. There, in the aura of her *desecrate* effect, she gains a +2 profane bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws, and the DC to resist her channeled negative energy increases by +6.

When Katiyana reveals her true ghostly self, the yetis attacking the caravan flee. Katiyana floats 15 feet above the dais, trusting in her blizzard aura to keep flying enemies at bay while she taunts the PCs that she can never be killed, that she has become Katiyana the Eternal, the Avatar of the Hungry Storm, Handmaiden of Sithhud, and the Harrower of All Creation.

BORMURG (POSSESSED)

CR —

hp 142 (see page 57)

KATIYANA'S GHOST

CR 12

XP 19,200

hp 134 (see page 56)

YETI SAVAGES (2)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

hp 109 each (see page 50)

Treasure: Next to his throne atop the dais, Bormurg has a carved, polished stalactite that he uses as a scepter (and occasionally a club), inset with 14 pieces of amber (worth 100 gp each). A large amethyst geode (worth 750 gp) is set in the back of the throne. In addition, one of Bormurg's consorts wears a necklace of green and white jade circles (worth 600 gp) as a bracelet.

Development: If the PCs free Bormurg of his possession and destroy Katiyana, Bormurg offers the PCs his *ioun stone* as a reward, and allows the PCs' safe passage to the exit from the necropolis (area S17).

Story Award: If the PCs' caravan defeats or drives off the yeti attack, award the PCs 6,400 XP. If the PCs free Bormurg from Katiyana's possession, or if they defeat him in combat, award them an additional 6,400 XP.



SI7. BLOCKED EXIT

These ramps rise 20 feet with each switchback, culminating in a wide tunnel to the southeast. However, an 8-inch-thick *wall of stone* (hardness 8, hp 120, Break DC 36) blocks the exit tunnel a short distance within. The PCs can batter through this wall and continue to the tunnel entrance half a mile beyond.

Story Award: Once the PCs safely leave the Uqtaal Necropolis, award them 9,600 XP.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

With Katiyana's destruction, her threat is ended, as is that of the hungry storms. When the PCs emerge from the Uqtaal Necropolis, the storm overhead has broken, revealing clear blue skies above the Wall of Heaven. Once above ground, the caravan must travel approximately 150 miles through the mountains to rejoin the Path of Aganhei, but the most dangerous part of the trek across the Crown of the World is now past.

Their journey to Minkai is far from over, however, and now that the PCs are finally entering Tian Xia, new dangers await. The threat of the Five Storms soon returns, as the PCs find themselves in the oni's home territory. Before they

finally reach Ameiko's ancestral homeland, the PCs must traverse the nation of Hongal and the haunted Forest of Spirits. This journey is the focus of the next installment of the Jade Regent Adventure Path, "Forest of Spirits."

If the PCs did not destroy Katiyana in the yeti caves, her threat still remains. Though they might be able to exit the necropolis, the hungry storm still rages overhead. As a ghost, Katiyana can now only control one morozko, but she becomes obsessed with the PCs and determined to follow them into Tian Xia. She can be a recurring villain in the next adventure, as a freezing blizzard swoops down upon the PCs' caravan from nowhere while Katiyana possesses other creatures (or even allies of the PCs) to get revenge on her most hated foes.

By the end of "The Hungry Storm," the PCs have likely reached 10th level, and have surpassed their NPC allies in levels. At this point, you might want to consider leveling up Ameiko, Koya, Sandru, and Shalelu. They should not be as powerful as the PCs, but you can certainly add a few class levels to them, bringing them up to 7th or even 8th level. As the Adventure Path progresses, you can continue leveling up these NPCs, though we recommend keeping them two or three levels behind the PCs to allow the players' characters to shine!



KATIYANA



KATIYANA IS A LOYAL SERVANT OF SITHHUD, THE NASCENT DEMON LORD OF BLIZZARDS AND THE FROZEN DEAD. FROM HER STORM TOWER ATOP THE CROWN OF THE WORLD, KATIYANA DIRECTS THE MOROZKOS TO RESTORE SITHHUD TO HIS PREVIOUS STATUS.

KATIYANA

CR 10

XP 9,600

Female half-fiend sylph cleric of Sithhud 9 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 171, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 258)

CE Medium outsider (native)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 16, flat-footed 24 (+7 armor, +3 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 natural, +3 shield)

hp 93 (9d8+49)

Fort +8, **Ref** +8, **Will** +14; +1 vs. fear, +4 vs. cold-based attacks

DR 5/magic; **Immune** poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 21

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 40 ft. (good)

Melee bite +7 (1d6), 2 claws +7 (1d4)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 8/day (DC 19, 5d6), fury of the Abyss* 9/day (+4), gale aura* (9 rounds), scythe of evil (4 rounds, 1/day), smite good 1/day (+5 attack and AC, +9 damage)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +14)

3/day—darkness, poison (DC 19)

1/day—desecrate, feather fall, unholy blight (DC 19)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +15)

9/day—storm burst (1d6+4 nonlethal damage)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 9th; concentration +15)

5th—call lightning storm^D (DC 21), greater command (DC 21), summon monster V

4th—chaos hammer (DC 20), freedom of movement, sleet storm^D, spiritual ally*

3rd—blindness/deafness (DC 19), call lightning^D (DC 19), dispel magic, magic vestment, protection from energy

2nd—aid, cure moderate wounds, death knell (DC 18), fog cloud^D, hold person (2; DC 18), silence (DC 18)

1st—command (DC 17), cure light wounds, divine favor, doom^D (DC 17), entropic shield, protection from law, shield of faith o (at will)—detect magic, guidance, read magic, resistance

D Domain spell; **Domains** Evil (Demon subdomain*), Weather (Storms subdomain*)

TACTICS

Before Combat Katiyana casts *magic vestment* on her shield every day. Before combat, she casts *aid*, *call lightning storm*, *freedom of movement*, *protection from energy* (fire), and *shield of faith*.

During Combat Katiyana uses Flyby Attack to move to the

edge of cover and cast spells or unleash called lightning on her enemies before retreating back into hiding. She casts *chaos hammer* or *unholy blight* against groups, or *greater command* to force their obedience to her cruel whims. She casts *silence* against spellcasters, and casts *summon monster* V to summon a babau demon to attack melee combatants, along with *spiritual ally*. If enemies get too close, she activates her gale aura or casts *sleet storm* to hinder them. If forced into melee combat, Katiyana casts *divine favor* and activates her fury of the Abyss ability.

Morale Sure of her success and her demonic patron's favor, Katiyana fights to the death.

Base Statistics Without her spells, Katiyana's statistics are **AC** 22, touch 13, flat-footed 19; **hp** 80; **Melee** bite +6 (1d6), 2 claws +6 (1d4).

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 18, **Wis** 22, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 22

Feats Demonic Obedience (see below), Flyby Attack, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness

Skills Bluff +14, Diplomacy +14, Fly +10, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (planes) +14, Linguistics +10, Perception +9, Spellcraft +14, Use Magic Device +14

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Aquan, Auran, Common, Dwarven, Elven, Erutaki, Giant

SQ air affinity

Combat Gear scroll of cleanse*; **Other Gear** +1 breastplate, masterwork buckler, headband of mental superiority +2 (Use Magic Device), spell component pouch, unholy symbol of Sithhud

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Demonic Obedience This feat grants Katiyana a +4 profane bonus on saves against cold-based attacks, as long as she performs a 1-hour daily obedience to Sithhud (*Lords of Chaos: Book of the Damned*, Vol. 2 8).

* See the *Advanced Player's Guide*.

Katiyana is a sylph of the Alabastrine Peaks, one of the few sylphs that inhabit those frozen peaks at the farthest polar reaches of Golarion. Her father, Tornaq, was a wizard, and often traveled through the gates to and from the Plane of Air at the Crown of the World, visiting with relations among the djinn who marveled at his stories of the starkly beautiful

lands at the top of the world. The most wondrous tales of that realm were of the mysterious, phosphorescent blue Nameless Spires that lay to the north of the Alabastrine Peaks, from which he brought back unfathomable crystal devices. On one such visit to the ruins, Tornaq encountered a strange woman from the south, who appeared to be a scholar from her robes and books. Curious, Tornaq drew near the visitor. His heart pounded as the woman slipped off her robes to reveal her demonic horns, wings, and tail, but Tornaq's mind was already no longer his own, enslaved to the succubus's will. The demon carried him off by magic to parts unknown, and his few remaining years were a blur of misery and torment at the hands of his demonic captor as she interrogated the wizard to learn what he knew of the lost city and the secrets of the Crown of the World; in the end, his violation was total—mental, physical, spiritual, and carnal. It was not until the succubus showed Tornaq the cambion daughter she had begotten through his lustful compulsion that she finally granted him the release of death, and with his dying breath he named the demon-child Katiyana.

Katiyana's mother, the succubus Croicu, gave her to the cult of Sithhud, and the young half-fiend sylph proved a keen study with an affinity for necromancy and magical compulsions. Sly and duplicitous, with a clever mouth and an easy, mocking laugh, Katiyana was raised in the surety that the world wished her dead as an abomination, that none would or could ever love her but her true family in the cult, who had saved her from the father who abandoned her. Her hope of salvation was in the redemption and return of their forgotten master, the Frozen Lord, who had likewise been betrayed. Like Sithhud, Katiyana would endure and survive, and when Sithhud finally reclaimed his power and became a true demon lord once more, she would become his beloved handmaiden.

Returning north, Katiyana began preparing for her demonic lord's return, erecting basalt monoliths in Sithhud's name to control the powerful morozkos that rage across the Crown of the World. Once the monoliths are in place, she plans to send the morozkos south into more populated regions, where the frozen storms will slay enough mortals to fuel Sithhud's return to prominence as a true demon lord. To aid her in this task, Katiyana has allied with fell creatures of the icy north, raised frozen undead servants, and corrupted others to assist her, including the Erutaki shaman Tunuak. Those she cannot corrupt, Katiyana destroys, as remorseless as a polar winter.

Katiyana is a lithe and graceful woman with pale blue skin marked with white whorls. Her lustrous midnight blue hair drifts about her head like wisps of storm clouds, and wings of blue-black feathers spread from her back. Her silvery fingernails glint like razors.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Katiyana serves as the primary obstacle blocking the PCs' path across the Crown of the World, and if not stopped, her control of the morozkos might very well spell the end of trade across the Path of Aganhei, to say nothing of engendering the return of the nascent demon lord Sithhud as a full demon lord.

If Katiyana survives the fight with the PCs, she seeks shelter to heal and gather minions to prevent the PC from leaving the vicinity of the Nameless Spires. She dares not let them escape for fear that others will come and try to stop her plans. Her desperation to destroy the PCs makes her reckless, and she continues fighting even if low on spells and hit points. If clearly outmatched, she retreats only long enough to plot her next ambush.

Even if the PCs slay Katiyana, however, she remains a threat, returning to plague them anew as an undead ghost, still bent on her plans of destruction and demonic rebirth.

SITHHUD'S SUBDOMAINS

The nascent demon lord Sithhud grants the following subdomains to his clerics: Demon, Ice*, Storms, and Undead.

* Although this subdomain would normally not be available to worshipers of Sithhud, in this case an exception is made due to Sithhud's close association with this theme. The Ice subdomain's body of ice granted power replaces the lightning lord power of the Weather domain.





KATIYANA'S GHOST



REBORN THROUGH HER COMMUNION WITH THE STORM SPHERE AND THE MOROZKOS, KATIYANA IS EXULTANT IN HER NEW POWERS AS A GHOST, AND SHE QUICKLY POSSESSES THE BODY OF THE YETI CHIEFTAIN BORMURG.

KATIYANA'S GHOST

CR 12

XP 19,200

Female half-fiend sylph ghost cleric of Sithhud 9 (*Pathfinder*

RPG Bestiary 144, 171; *Bestiary* 2 258)

CE Medium undead (augmented outsider, cold, incorporeal)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +16

Aura blizzard aura

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 21, flat-footed 18 (+8 deflection, +3 Dex)

hp 134 (9d8+90)

Fort +14, **Ref** +8, **Will** +13; +4 vs. cold-based attacks

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, incorporeal; **DR**

5/magic; **Immune** cold, undead traits; **Resist** acid 10, electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 23

Weaknesses storm-torn, vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed fly 60 ft. (perfect)

Melee corrupting touch +9 (12d6, Fort DC 22 half)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 11/day (DC 22, 5d6), corrupting touch, fury of the Abyss* 8/day (+4), gale aura*, icy heart, malevolence (Will DC 22), smite good 1/day (+8 attack and AC, +8 damage), scythe of evil (4 rounds, 1/day)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +17)

3/day—darkness, poison (DC 22)

1/day—desecrate, feather fall, unholy blight (DC 22)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +14)

8/day—storm burst (1d6+4 nonlethal damage)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 9th; concentration +14)

5th—call lightning storm^D (DC 20), greater command (DC 20), summon monster V

4th—blessing of fervor*, divine power, sleet storm^D, spell immunity

3rd—call lightning^D (DC 18), dispel magic, invisibility purge, meld into stone, protection from energy

2nd—bear's endurance, bull's strength, eagle's splendor, fog cloud^D, hold person (DC 17), silence (DC 17)

1st—command (2; DC 16), divine favor, entropic shield, obscuring mist^D, protection from good, shield of faith

0 (at will)—detect magic, guidance, read magic, stabilize

D Domain spell; **Domains** Evil (Demon subdomain*), Weather (Storms subdomain*)

TACTICS

Before Combat Katiyana retains the spell effects she cast while possessing Bormurg. In addition, any other spells that she

cast while possessing Bormurg are no longer prepared.

During Combat Katiyana summons a Large air, ice, or lightning elemental or fiendish woolly rhinoceros on the first round of combat to attack her enemies. She uses Flyby Attack to move in and out of cover or concealment, using spells or called lightning against her enemies.

Morale Although unable to rejuvenate, Katiyana's fury overwhelms her and she fights until destroyed.

Base Statistics Without *eagle's splendor*, Katiyana's statistics are

AC 19, touch 19, flat-footed 16; **hp** 116; **Fort** +12; **Cha** 22; **CMD** 25;

Skills Bluff +15, Diplomacy +15; reduce all save DCs by 2.

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 16, **Con** —, **Int** 16, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 26

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 27

Feats Demonic Obedience (see page 54), Flyby Attack, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness

Skills Bluff +17, Diplomacy +17, Fly +17, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (planes) +13, Linguistics +9, Perception +16, Spellcraft +13, Stealth +11

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Aquan, Auran, Common, Dwarven, Elven, Erutaki

SQ air affinity

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Blizzard Aura (Su) Katiyana has become one with the morozko.

Her gale aura functions continuously, and any creature beginning its turn inside the aura is buffeted with howling wind and driving snow, causing it to take a –2 penalty on attack rolls for 1 round. Katiyana's blizzard aura does not function when she uses malevolence to possess another creature. *Dispel magic* or *control winds* suppresses the blizzard aura with a DC 20 caster level check for 1 round per level of the caster.

Icy Heart (Su) A heart of ice, pulsing with midnight blue radiance, beats within Katiyana's ghostly form, serving as her divine focus and granting her the cold subtype. In addition, whenever she deals cold damage to a creature with resistance to cold, half of the cold damage penetrates that resistance; the remaining damage is blocked normally. Creatures with immunity to cold are unaffected.

Storm-Torn (Su) Katiyana became a ghost when the Storm Sphere scattered her spirit on the polar winds. As a result, Katiyana does not have a normal ghost's rejuvenation ability, and is permanently destroyed when her hit points reach 0.

* See the *Advanced Player's Guide*.

Katiyana has possessed Bormurg, chief of the yetis in the Uqtaal Necropolis, deceiving them into believing that the PCs' caravan represents an invasion carrying plague, doom, and enslavement. As Bormurg, she claims to have received a holy vision in the high mountains and the blessing of the spirits, and vows to use these powers to defeat the invaders. The superstitious yetis accept her plan, but she is careful to hide her spellcasting around them for fear of pushing her deception too far, casting mostly subtle preparatory spells for her ambush while melded into the cavern wall.

BORMURG (POSSESSED)

CR —

Male ghost-possessed yeti ranger 5 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 287)
CE Large monstrous humanoid (cold)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 14, flat-footed 23 (+4 armor, +3 deflection, +2 Dex, +7 natural, -1 size)

hp 142 (11d10+82)

Fort +14, **Ref** +12, **Will** +18

Immune cold

Weaknesses vulnerability to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +14 (1d6+9 plus 1d6 cold)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks cold, frightful gaze (DC 21), rend (2 claws, 1d6+13 plus 1d6 cold), spellcasting

TACTICS

Before Combat Katiyana casts *bear's endurance*, *bull's strength*, *call lightning storm*, *eagle's splendor*, *entropic shield*, *protection from energy* (fire), *shield of faith*, and *spell immunity* (to magic missile and spiritual weapon) before entering combat. She uses *meld into stone* to hide on the ledge above area **S16** until alerted by Bormurg's consorts to the party's approach.

During Combat When the yetis attack begins, Katiyana casts *divine power* while melded into the stone. On the following round, she steps out of the stone and casts *blessing of fervor* on herself and her allies. She wades into melee, using her fury of the Abyss domain power every round (gaining a +4 bonus on attacks, damage rolls, and combat maneuver checks, and taking a -2 penalty to AC).

Morale Katiyana fights in Bormurg's body until he dies or she is expelled, then fights on in her ghost form until destroyed.

Base Statistics Without Katiyana's spells, Bormurg's statistics are **AC** 22, touch 11, flat-footed 20; **hp** 120; **Fort** +12; **Melee** 2 claws +12 (1d6+7 plus 1d6 cold); **Special Attacks** rend (2 claws, 1d6+10 plus 1d6 cold); **Str** 24, **Con** 19, **Cha** 22; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 26; **Skills** Bluff +15, Climb +15, Diplomacy +1.

STATISTICS

Str 28, **Dex** 14, **Con** 23, **Int** 16, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 26

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 31

Feats Alertness, Demonic Obedience (see page 54), Flyby Attack, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness

Skills Bluff +17, Climb +17, Diplomacy +17, Fly +6, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (planes) +13, Linguistics +9, Perception +13, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +13, Stealth +2 (+10 in snow)

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Aquan, Auran, Common, Dwarven, Elven, Erutaki

Gear +1 studded leather, dark blue rhomboid ioun stone

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Spellcasting (Su) While possessing Bormurg's body, Katiyana has access to all of her spells, spell-like abilities, granted powers, and special attacks, except her corrupting touch.





TUNUAK



ONCE THE HONORED AND RESPECTED SHAMAN OF THE ERUTAKI VILLAGE OF IQALIAT, TUNUAK WAS CORRUPTED BY THE SYLPH KATIYANA, AND NOW SERVES THE HALF-FIEND PRIESTESS AND HER DEMONIC LORD SITHHUD.

TUNUAK

CR 8

XP 4,800

Male old human oracle 9 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 42)

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; Senses Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 21 (+6 armor, +3 deflection, +2 natural)

hp 80 (9d8+36)

Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +11

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee staff of journeys +3/−2 (1d6−3)

Oracle Spells Known (CL 9th; concentration +16)

4th (5/day)—*cure critical wounds*, *river of wind** (DC 21), *spiritual ally**, *unholy blight* (DC 21)

3rd (7/day)—*borrow fortune**, *cloak of winds** (DC 20), *cure serious wounds*, *dispel magic*, *protection from energy*
2nd (7/day)—*bear's endurance*, *cure moderate wounds*, *eagle's splendor*, *gust of wind* (DC 19), *silence* (DC 19), *spiritual weapon*

1st (8/day)—*alter winds** (DC 18), *cure light wounds*, *divine favor*, *doom* (DC 18), *endure elements*, *obscuring mist*, *shield of faith*

o (at will)—*create water*, *detect magic*, *guidance*, *light*, *purify food and drink*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *stabilize*

Mystery wind

TACTICS

Before Combat Tunuak casts *endure elements* every day.

Before combat, he activates his air barrier and wings of air revelations; drinks a *potion of barkskin*; and casts *bear's endurance*, *cloak of winds*, *shield of faith*, and *protection from energy* (against a type commonly used by the PCs, likely fire). Before he makes his pronouncement against the PCs, Tunuak casts *eagle's splendor*.

During Combat Tunuak activates his invisibility revelation to gain *greater invisibility* and casts attack spells such as *unholy blight* and *silence*. He creates *spiritual allies* adjacent to spellcasters and multiple *spiritual weapons* (appearing as longswords, Sithhud's favored weapon). If several opponents are in a line, he casts *river of wind* against them.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 20 hit points or if all of his

minions are slain, Tunuak uses his invisibility revelation to flee Iqaliat entirely and harry the PCs' caravan on their further journeys. If confronted by the PCs before they venture into Tunuak's Bore, Tunuak uses his invisibility revelation or casts *obscuring mist* and flees to area K3 to set up an ambush with the hoarfrost spirits there.

Base Statistics Without his spells and revelations, Tunuak's statistics are AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10; hp 62; Fort +6; Spells concentration +14, reduce all save DCs by 2; Con 12, Cha 20; CMD 16; Skills Bluff +12, Diplomacy +17, Intimidate +10.

STATISTICS

Str 5, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 24

Base Atk +6; CMB +3; CMD 19

Feats Combat Expertise, Defensive Combat Training, Eschew Materials, Extra Revelation*, Iron Will, Toughness

Skills Bluff +14, Diplomacy +19, Fly +10, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (planes) +6, Knowledge (religion) +14, Perception +5, Sense Motive +13, Spellcraft +14, Stealth +10

Languages Abyssal, Auran, Common, Draconic, Erutaki, Giant
SQ oracle's curse (tongues; Abyssal, Auran), revelations (air barrier, invisibility, wind sight, wings of air)

Combat Gear *potions of barkskin* (2); **Other Gear** *cloak of resistance* +2, *ring of mind shielding*, *staff of journeys**, cold-weather outfit, unholy symbol of Sithhud

* See the *Advanced Player's Guide*.

Tunuak has been the oracular shaman of the Erutaki village of Iqaliat for two generations, since his mentor fell victim to a fever while still in her middle years. It was considered an ill omen for a shaman to ascend to the post before his hair had turned white, and the villagers were uneasy at the disturbing, incomprehensible language Tunuak reverted to in times of stress, but the young shaman had proved himself capable as a student of the mysteries and devoted to the ancient ways, erecting and maintaining the *inukshuk* wind altars that watch over the high cliffs of the Alasek Ridge. The chief and hearthmistress confirmed Tunuak's appointment, and he soon became invaluable to the settlement, ministering to the physical and material needs of the people of Iqaliat and helping to maintain the community in times of both plenty and desperate want.

But as the years passed and Tunuak grew older, he found himself withdrawing from the spirits he had always served. When Iqaliat truly needed the spirits' help, they were rarely there, and it took all of Tunuak's power to keep the village safe and secure. And for what? He had served the spirits and the village for over half a century, and what had he gotten in return? Had he not given enough of his service? Could not someone else be found to replace him? But among the Erutaki, shamans served their people until they died; retirement was not an option, and Tunuak grew increasingly bitter.

Tunuak prayed and sacrificed and developed the spirits' gift of wind sight, using it to eavesdrop on the conversations of others, but this only increased his bitterness and frustration, for to his dismay, he found that others in the village thought that he was too old and infirm, and no longer served the people as he once did. His heart darkened once more, especially when he heard Iqaliat's chief and hearthmistress joking about their aged shaman with visitors from another village.

His resentment growing, Tunuak decided the only solution was a true vision quest. The shaman set out for the Nameless Spires, the home of the spirits at the top of the world, to beg their favor. The journey was long and arduous, but Tunuak at last arrived at the legendary Nameless Spires. To his surprise, Tunuak found the ruins overrun with the frozen, walking dead, but before he fell prey to their icy claws, he encountered the half-fiend sylph Katiyana, who brought him to her Storm Tower. Entranced by the sylph's beauty and believing that she had saved him from the embrace of the walking dead, Tunuak soon came to believe that Katiyana was one of the very wind spirits he sought. Tunuak stayed in the Storm Tower for many days, questioning and being questioned by

Katiyana. The sylph soon convinced him that she was but a servant of a greater master of storms, who required Tunuak's service as well. Playing upon the bitterness and resentment in Tunuak's soul, Katiyana corrupted him into the service of the demon lord Sithhud, the Frozen Lord, and instructed Tunuak to erect one of the basalt monoliths for controlling the morozkos in the very heart of Iqaliat.

Knowing he would never be allowed to place a monolith in the village, Tunuak and Katiyana devised a plan to trick the white dragon Veksundvaag into attacking Iqaliat. When the dragon had finished its work, the village would be empty, the monolith could be erected, and the deaths of the villagers would serve as a grand sacrifice to Sithhud that would bring Tunuak great favor.

When the morozkos finally came to Iqaliat and the endless winter of Sithhud's return took hold over the Crown of the World, any surviving villagers in Iqaliat would look to Tunuak for aid, and he would give none. Oh, how they would suffer, not even realizing they had brought their doom upon themselves. Perhaps if they had treated Tunuak better, he would have been merciful, but cold bitterness they gave, and so they would receive, and Tunuak would sit at the right hand of his new demonic god.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

At Katiyana's behest, Tunuak is responsible for the white dragon Veksundvaag's attacks on Iqaliat. When the PCs arrive in Iqaliat, Tunuak sees a threat to his plans, and attempts to blame the dragon's attacks on them, hoping to sacrifice them to the dragon along with the rest of the village. Once Tunuak is defeated, the PCs find evidence tying him to Katiyana and the Nameless Spires at the north pole.

If Tunuak escapes, he pursues the PCs as they journey further north. If Naquun (see area K2) was slain, Tunuak joins up with another possessed hunter (use Naquun's stats) before confronting the PCs.

If able to shadow the caravan without attracting notice (DC 26 Security check each day to notice), Tunuak tries to attack the PCs immediately after an adverse caravan event.





VEGSUNDVAAG



ALTHOUGH LESS THAN A CENTURY OLD, VEGSUNDVAAG IS A POWER TO BE RECKONED WITH IN THE FAR NORTH, AND SINCE THE DESTRUCTION OF HER EGGS, SHE HAS RELENTLESSLY ATTACKED THE ERUTAKI VILLAGE OF IQALIAT.

VEGSUNDVAAG

CR 9

XP 6,400

Female young adult white dragon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 100)

CE Large dragon (cold)

Init +5; **Senses** dragon senses, snow vision; Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 10, flat-footed 23 (+1 Dex, +14 natural, -1 size)

hp 115 (11d12+44)

Fort +11, **Ref** +8, **Will** +8

DR 5/magic; **Immune** cold, magic paralysis and sleep; **SR** 20

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft., burrow 30 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor), swim 60 ft.

Melee bite +17 (2d6+9/19–20), 2 claws +16 (1d8+6), tail slap +14 (1d8+3), 2 wings +14 (1d6+3)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with bite)

Special Attacks breath weapon (40-ft. cone, 10d4 cold damage, Reflex DC 19 half, usable every 1d4 rounds)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th; concentration +11)

At will—*fog cloud*, *gust of wind* (DC 12)

TACTICS

During Combat Veksundvaag prefers to cover her approach with multiple *fog clouds*, or to burrow close to her prey before bursting out of the ice. She avoids directly engaging groups that might surround her, but targets them with her breath weapon, and makes Flyby Attacks at isolated foes. Veksundvaag typically reserves full attacks for enemies challenging her in the air, but foes who separate themselves from their allies also invite her to swoop close to bite with her great reach, then drop to the ground for a full attack on the following round.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 30 hit points, Veksundvaag attempts to flee, using *fog cloud* to cover her escape via flight or burrowing into the ice, but she may return later to wreak vengeance on her attackers.

STATISTICS

Str 23, **Dex** 12, **Con** 19, **Int** 10, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +18; **CMD** 29 (33 vs. trip)

Feats Flyby Attack, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Climb +15, Fly +9, Knowledge (geography) +14, Knowledge (local) +10, Linguistics +6, Perception +15, Stealth +11, Survival +10, Swim +14

Languages Common, Draconic, Erutaki, Giant

SQ icewalking, ice shape

Veksundvaag is a white dragon of the Crown of the World, born nearly a century ago in the high glaciers of the Whitefang Peninsula. As a wyrmling, she was taught how to recognize prey from above and below, flying in the sky high above or burrowing deep beneath the ice as she hunted across the polar plateau. Veksundvaag was a skilled hunter, and she led her clutchmates on many hunting forays; however, she frequently returned to the family's ice caves alone, well sated from her latest kill. It was not long before Veksundvaag turned her lessons upon her siblings, until through the work of her own claws she became an only child. Her last surviving brother proved more clever than his siblings and suspected her treachery, even trying to set up a rudimentary ambush of his own, but he was no match for Veksundvaag's savage counterstroke, and that he saw his doom coming only made her final victory feast the sweeter.

Veksundvaag's mother, who had betrayed and devoured more than one rival dragon during her youth, could not help but admire her daughter's naked aggression and ambition. While she had high hopes for each of her hatchlings, she thought it far better that one strong scion should arise than for a clutch of weaklings to struggle and scabble for the leavings of those more powerful and ruthless than they. Veksundvaag's mother took her down from the High Ice to the richer hunting grounds of the summer melt, where the two-legs came up the wide water in their bobbing boats, and mother and daughter alike grew fat. Whether it was underwater, digging through ice and earth, or swooping out of the polar sky, Veksundvaag soon mastered every form of hunting, and darkling thoughts of advancing her position in the family began to awaken in her heart again.

Before Veksundvaag could add matricide to her list of crimes, however, her mother taught her that she still had much to learn. Binding her daughter in her sleep with iron chains she had taken from a human ship, Veksundvaag's mother dragged the young dragon to the bottom of Whitefang Bay, and told her that if she could free herself, she must fly far from there and establish her

own hunting ground. Her mother would brook no rivals, and if Vegsundvaag ever showed herself in Whitefang Bay and the glaciers above, she would not live to regret it. As a reminder, her mother tore Vegsundvaag's glorious frill, leaving only a tattered remnant. Seething at her defeat, Vegsundvaag nonetheless saw the threat of death in her mother's eyes before she departed, and after gnawing through the chains and dragging herself out of the bay, she chose the path of caution. She went not to the smoking mountains of the west, nor to the desolate heart of the High Ice to the north, nor even to the fertile lands and waters of the south. Instead, she claimed her territory in the east, along the high cliffs at the edge of the ice.

In time, Vegsundvaag established her own lair and hunted both the ice and the riverlands to the south, marking out the boundaries of her territory. Few rivals dared enter her domain, but as she matured, her lustful urges began to awaken and she roamed in search of a mate worthy of her. Encountering a male named Narmurvik, Vegsundvaag began a violent courtship. After several years of running battles, boasting, and taunting, she won his favor and they merged their hunting grounds and carved out a suitable lair. Vegsundvaag made a nest and laid half a dozen eggs, but her natural jealousy and aggression soon rose to the surface. She began to suspect Narmurvik of unwholesome designs upon her eggs, and one evening when he returned to their lair from a long hunt, Vegsundvaag ambushed him and slew her erstwhile mate in cold-hearted murder.

Before her eggs could hatch, however, they fell victim not to another dragon, but to the humans who lived beneath the ice cliffs, who violated her lair and smashed her beloved eggs to shards. Vegsundvaag swore terrible vengeance against the humans of Iqaliat, and she will not rest until every sniveling two-leg has tasted the frozen

fire of her undying hatred. But she will drag out her revenge, taking them one by one and dismantling their pitiful village stone by stone, until the bones of the last few survivors crunch in her jaws and their hot, red blood stains the snow. A mother's love for her children is no small thing, even for a mother such as Vegsundvaag, and those who took them from her will learn the true meaning of vengeance.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

When the PCs encounter her, Vegsundvaag is just a patsy of Tunuak and Katiyana, who have tricked the dragon into attacking Iqaliat so they can eventually place one of Sithhud's black monoliths in the village to summon the morozkos. Nevertheless, the dragon blames all who walk on two legs for the destruction of her unborn children, and even if the PCs bring her proof of Tunuak's treachery, it will likely have little effect on the furious mother.

If Vegsundvaag survives, she seeks shelter to heal her wounds and plan a new attack on the PCs. There is a 50% chance that she finds a frost drake (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2108) and bullies it into assisting in her revenge. The frost drake is not entirely loyal, however, and if Vegsundvaag is reduced to fewer than 25 hit points, there is an equal chance that the frost drake either flees or turns on her.



JADE REGENT TREASURES



THE FOLLOWING UNIQUE TREASURES CAN BE FOUND IN "THE HUNGRY STORM." PLAYER-APPROPRIATE HANDOUTS APPEAR IN THE GAMEMASTERY JADE REGENT ITEM CARD SET.

CLAWS OF THE ICE BEAR

Aura faint transmutation; **CL** 3rd
Slot hands; **Price** 1,300 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

DESCRIPTION

Strapped to the hands, these spiked climbing claws crafted by the Erutaki grant a +2 competence bonus on Climb checks and Acrobatics checks made when using both hands to aid in movement, and allow the wearer to ignore the normal penalties on those skills for slippery or icy surfaces. In addition, up to 3 times per day, the wearer can activate the claws as a swift action to gain the benefits of *spider climb* for 1 round. The wearer cannot hold anything else in her hands while using *claws of the ice bear*. If used as a weapon, *claws of the ice bear* function as spiked gauntlets.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *spider climb*; **Cost** 750 gp

GHOST MIRROR ARMOR

Aura strong abjuration and transmutation; **CL** 15th
Slot armor; **Price** 22,675 gp; **Weight** 45 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

Crafted by Uqtaal spirit-shamans, this ancient +1 *ghost touch* four-mirror armor (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat* 128, or use breastplate) consists of four polished steel plates harnessed together with leather shoulder straps. Two round plates protect the wearer's front and back, while two smaller rectangular plates cover the sides of the torso.

The wearer of *ghost mirror armor* can cast *deathwatch* (caster level 1st) three times per day. In addition, when the wearer is attacked by an incorporeal undead creature, the armor automatically casts *protection from evil* on the wearer as an immediate action up to once per day.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *deathwatch*, *etheralness*, *protection from evil*; **Cost** 11,435 gp

MAP OF THE HIGH ICE

Aura moderate divination; **CL** 11th
Slot none; **Price** 3,000 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

DESCRIPTION

This vellum map depicts the Crown of the World, and delineates a path across the High Ice. Studying the map provides a +2 competence bonus on Survival checks to avoid getting lost and to avoid hazards in the High Ice region of the Crown of the

World, as well as a +5 bonus on caravan Security checks while on the High Ice (with the exception of checks made to avoid the effects of altitude, extreme cold, or severe weather).

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, creator must have 5 ranks in Survival, *find the path*; **Cost** 1,500 gp

NINE-FOLD SPIRIT SWORD

Aura moderate conjuration; **CL** 9th
Slot none; **Price** 28,800 gp; **Weight** 4 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

This broad-bladed +1 *ghost touch* nine-ring broadsword (*Ultimate Combat* 131, or use longsword) is crafted of silvery-gray steel, with nine golden rings threaded through its spine that glow with magical power. Streamers of blue and purple silk hang from the sword's pommel.

The *nine-fold spirit sword* has 9 charges, represented by its nine rings. As a swift action, the wielder can discharge the energy in these rings to create one of three effects.

By expending 1 charge, the wielder can add the *undead bane* special ability to the sword for 1 minute.

By expending 2 charges, the wielder can attempt to banish a creature possessing another creature (such as a ghost possessing a creature with its malevolence ability) with a successful hit on the possessed creature. The possessing creature must succeed at a DC 17 Will save or be driven out of the body of the creature it is possessing.

By expending 3 charges, the wielder can attempt to destroy a single undead creature with a successful hit. The creature must succeed at a DC 17 Will save or be utterly destroyed. Spell resistance does not apply against either the banishing or destruction effect.

Each ring holds 1 charge; when a charge is expended, one ring stops glowing. The sword recharges 1 charge per week.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *dispel evil*, *disrupting weapon*, *plane shift*, *summon monster I*; **Cost** 14,560 gp

SASHIMONO OF COMFORT

Aura faint abjuration; **CL** 1st
Slot none; **Price** 2,400 gp; **Weight** 3 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

A *sashimono of comfort* is a purple Tian silk banner, typically 3

JADE REGENT TREASURES



**NINE-FOLD
SPIRIT SWORD**



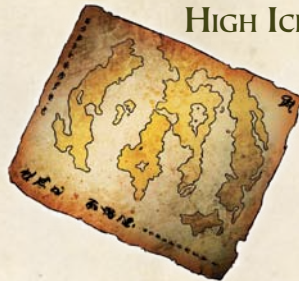
**TERRA-COTTA
TALISMAN**



**GHOST MIRROR
ARMOR**



**CLAWS OF THE
ICE BEAR**



**MAP OF THE
HIGH ICE**



**SASHIMONO OF
COMFORT**

feet tall and 1 foot wide, decorated with three stylized orchid flowers. The banner is attached to a lance, polearm, staff, or frame, which can be worn on the back of a creature, carried by a mounted creature, flown from a wagon, or planted in the ground. A *sashimono of comfort* keeps creatures comfortable in extreme weather conditions. It has no effect when not mounted properly or when lying on the ground.

When worn or carried by a creature, the banner grants the effects of *endure elements* to the bearer. When carried by a mounted creature, it grants both mount and rider this benefit. If it is flown from a wagon, the wagon's driver, passengers, and draft team all gain this benefit. If planted firmly in the ground, the banner grants this benefit to all creatures within 30 feet. In addition, a caravan equipped with a *sashimono of comfort* gains a +2 bonus on Security checks to resist the effects of severe weather.

These effects function at temperatures between -50° and 140° F. If conditions are beyond these extremes, creatures using a *sashimono of comfort* treat the ambient temperature as if it were 50° F warmer or cooler respectively, thereby possibly allowing additional castings of *endure elements* to work normally.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *endure elements*; **Cost** 1,200 gp

TERRA-COTTA TALISMAN

Aura moderate evocation; **CL** 6th (horse), 7th (warrior), 9th (hound)

Slot none; **Price** 13,000 gp (horse), 16,000 gp (warrior), 22,000 gp (hound); **Weight** 1 lb.

DESCRIPTION

These ceramic statuettes are molded in the likenesses of armored soldiers, horses, or dogs, and are considered symbols of good fortune in battle. Once per day, the possessor of a *terra-cotta talisman* can reroll a single attack roll as an immediate action, with a +1 luck bonus on the reroll, and keep the most favorable result. A *terra-cotta talisman* also contains the vestige of a spirit of an ancient warrior or warbeast that can be called upon once per day as a standard action to manifest itself as a spiritual force. The powers of the talismans are as follows:

- *Terra-Cotta Horse*: phantom steed
- *Terra-Cotta Hound*: mage's faithful hound
- *Terra-Cotta Warrior*: spiritual ally

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *borrow fortune* (see page 206 of the *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide*), *mage's faithful hand* (hound), *phantom steed* (horse), or *spiritual ally* (warrior; see page 246 of the *Advanced Player's Guide*); **Cost** 6,500 gp (horse), 8,000 gp (warrior), 11,000 gp (hound)



THE CROWN OF THE WORLD

FAR TO THE NORTH, BEYOND ALL OF THE NORTHERN KINGDOMS OF GOLARION, LIES A WIND-SWEPT WASTELAND OF PERPETUAL WHITE, DESOLATE IN THE EXTREME AND YET HOME TO MANY CREATURES THAT EKE OUT A LIVING IN A REALM THAT CAN KILL THE UNPREPARED WITHIN HOURS. THE CROWN OF THE WORLD IS AN ICY LAND OF NEAR-PERPETUAL WINTER, STRETCHING FROM THE BARRIER PEAKS AND GLACIERS OF THE LANDS OF THE LINNORM KINGS, IRRISEN, AND THE REALM OF THE MAMMOTH LORDS TO THE ENDLESS TUNDRA OF THE WORLDWOUND AND MENDEV'S FARTHEST REACHES, AND NORTH, UP TO AND BEYOND THE POLE ITSELF, A MASSIVE FROZEN LAND BRIDGE THAT SPANS NEARLY 4,000 MILES BEFORE ITS ALGID EMBRACE FADES ONCE MORE INTO THE FERTILE LANDS OF TIAN XIA.

THE CROWN OF THE WORLD

From simple snow fields to ice sheets 2 miles thick that bury entire mountain ranges, the Crown of the World is both deadly and beautiful in equal parts, its apparent emptiness a facade that hides a complex ecology.

POLAR REGIONS

There are three primary geographic divisions of the Crown of the World, based on their proximity to the North Pole: the Boreal Expanse, the Outer Rim, and the High Ice.

The Boreal Expanse: The area within 5 degrees of latitude (approximately 350 miles) of the pole itself.

The Outer Rim: The area within 5 degrees of latitude of the arctic circle, which is roughly equivalent to the line of barrier ranges of northern Avistan and Tian Xia and the coastal areas of the Crown.

The High Ice: The vast region of the Crown of the World covered by the polar ice cap.

ARCTIC TEMPERATURES

The dangers of cold weather are described on page 442 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*. Temperatures in polar regions usually err on the side of being extreme—temperatures on the Crown of the World almost never rise above the level of “cold,” and even then usually only in coastal areas.

Canny travelers know to arm themselves with both mundane and magical forms of protection to safeguard against the worst climate effects of the Crown of the World. Cold-weather outfits, furs, and spells like *endure elements* are vital for voyagers hoping to make their way through the arctic while avoiding the cold’s ill effects. Travelers who are part of a caravan equipped with cold-weather gear have all the necessary supplies to make the journey, and can safely endure most challenges presented by cold conditions. Only when a character strays from the caravan does she need to make saving throws against the effects of cold or exposure.

Frostbite and Hypothermia: As noted on page 442 of the *Core Rulebook*, creatures that suffer nonlethal damage from the cold climate become frostbitten or hypothermic, and are fatigued until the nonlethal damage is removed. It is possible for a character to undergo both frostbite and hypothermia simultaneously by failing two or more saves against cold or exposure, at which point she is treated as though suffering multiple fatigue effects, becoming exhausted.

Temperature Variation: The base temperature on the Crown of the World is in the cold range, and only during summertime in the Outer Rim is there any substantial increase in temperature. On the Crown of the World, most temperature change is governed by sunlight (or its lack), wind, and altitude. The entire High Ice region sits atop a frozen massif over a mile tall, often hiding subglacial mountain ranges. Its elevation alone plunges the average temperature into the range of severe cold, and during the perpetual dark of the winter or during bouts of severe weather, it can become

colder still. Assuming the baseline temperature of the Crown is cold (below 40° F), the following effects may increase the severity of the cold weather to either severe cold (below 0° F) or extreme cold (below –20° F).

TABLE 1: TEMPERATURE VARIATION

Severity Modifier	Condition
–1 step	Heat wave ¹
+1 step	Cold snap ¹
+1 step	Strong (or stronger) wind ¹
+1 step	Nightfall
+1 step	Low peak or high pass altitude (5,000–15,000 feet) ²
+2 steps	High peak altitude (15,000+ feet) ²

¹ See Table 13–9: Random Weather and Table 13–10: Wind Effects in the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*.

² See page 430 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*.

POLAR NIGHT AND THE MIDNIGHT SUN

The extreme latitude of polar regions causes a distortion in the normal pattern of sunrise and sunset experienced in more temperate climes. Near the pole itself, a single day may seem to last all year, with a slow and gradual ascent of the sun for months at a time, though it never rises very high in the sky. Eventually, the sun will slowly sink into the horizon as the paltry polar summer fades into a lingering twilight and lengthy winter night.

Near the pole, both day and night cease to have meaning, as many turns of the stars may pass without the sun ever making an appearance, or the sun may block out the stars for hundreds—if not thousands—of hours. The darkest time of year is around the winter solstice; likewise, the brightest time of year takes place around the summer solstice. Because a journey into the polar regions may span many months, especially a journey crossing from Avistan to Tian Xia, keep track of the passing of seasons to determine the gradual shift from perpetual day to perpetual night or vice versa. The lighting conditions described below are those that prevail in each polar region for a given portion of the year. Weather conditions (such as overcast) and the cycle of the moon may affect the total amount of light shed during any particular season.

Polar Day: At the heart of the midnight sun season, the sun remains fully risen and sheds its light all day and night, appearing to move in a circular pattern in the sky rather than rising and setting. This is treated as bright light during both the day and night.

Midnight Sun: During this time, the sun sinks only to or just below the horizon even in the middle of the night. This is treated as bright light during the day (which is usually about 20 hours long) and normal light during the night.

Normal: This is the normal pattern of distinct days and nights, though the length of these periods is as variable

as it is in any other part of the world, depending on the season, with bright light during the day and darkness during the night.

Polar Twilight: The sun ascends only to just at or below the horizon during the day, never truly rising; its refracted light faintly illuminates the sky, but brighter stars are visible. This is treated as dim light during the day (which is usually about 4 hours long) and darkness during the night.

Polar Night: The sun is far below the horizon during both day and night, and sheds little or no light, even at the southern horizon. Even faint stars are clearly visible. This is treated as darkness during both the day and night.

TABLE 2: SEASONAL LIGHTING PATTERNS

Month	The Outer Rim	The High Ice	The Boreal Expanse
Abadius (Jan.)	Polar Twilight	Polar Twilight	Polar Night
Calistril (Feb.)	Normal	Normal	Polar Twilight
Pharast (Mar.)	Normal	Normal	Normal
Gozran (Apr.)	Normal	Normal	Normal
Desnus (May)	Midnight Sun	Midnight Sun	Midnight Sun
Sarenith (June)	Midnight Sun	Polar Day	Polar Day
Erastus (July)	Midnight Sun	Midnight Sun	Polar Day
Arodus (Aug.)	Normal	Normal	Midnight Sun
Rova (Sept.)	Normal	Normal	Normal
Lamashan (Oct.)	Normal	Normal	Normal
Neth (Nov.)	Polar Twilight	Polar Twilight	Polar Twilight
Kuthona (Dec.)	Polar Twilight	Polar Night	Polar Night

WEATHER AT THE CROWN

The Crown of the World is distinct in its weather patterns because its unique environmental conditions produce a continental wind condition called a polar vortex. Because of this effect, weather fronts and air masses from outside the pole are deflected or diverted away rather than bringing moisture or warmer air into the Crown. The coastal regions of the Crown along its western and eastern edges may see very heavy precipitation in the form of snow (and, rarely, rain during the summer), as may the tundra regions along its southern edges on occasion, but the vast sprawling ice cap of the Crown is essentially a cold desert, receiving only scant precipitation that is always in the form of snow.

Random Weather: To determine weather effects at the Crown of the World, use the Cold Climate column of Table 13–9 in the *Core Rulebook* for areas within 100 miles of the western or eastern coastlines, the Rimethirst Mountains, or the Wall of Heaven. A roll of 81–90 (precipitation) has a 30% chance of producing fog, 60% chance of snow, and 10% chance of sleet or hail. Farther inland than this, the climate is much drier. Use the same column, but replace the result of 91–99 (snowstorm) with 91–99 (windstorm).

Whiteout: Severe or stronger winds on the Crown of the World carry gusts of snow and ice particles, creating

whiteout conditions that block vision beyond 5 feet, as per fog (*Core Rulebook* 439). Creatures in a whiteout move at half speed and take a –4 penalty on Dexterity checks and Dexterity-based skill checks as well as on vision-based Perception checks. Creatures native to cold environments or with the cold subtype take only half these check penalties, but still move at half speed. Creatures able to see normally in snowy conditions, such as frost drakes and white dragons, are unaffected by whiteout conditions.

HAZARDS OF THE CROWN

Besides the perils of keeping warm and navigating the Crown of the World, there are a handful of natural and supernatural hazards that are unique to this desolate land.

Blackfrost: The ancient race that built the eerie city at the North Pole (see The Nameless Spires on page 75) left behind strange arcane engines that still produce emanations of weird blue energy as well as a vile black sludge. This sludge oozes below the surface of the Boreal Expanse through subglacial channels, occasionally bubbling to the surface in pools of dark slurry. Arctic winds sometimes bear flecks of the viscous substance and deposit it as a residue of black frost on cliff sides and glaciers.

Bonechill: Creatures that take lethal damage from cold weather exposure may contract this debilitating ailment.

Ergia: Exposure to the strange arcane energies of the Nameless Spires taints those that come within 10 feet with their alien emanations and begins converting their vital tissues into liquefied blue energy. If a creature dies from ergia, its body dissolves and it cannot be raised.

Howl of the North: Creatures exposed to the long night of the pole can become disoriented and even slip into a complete and fearful madness.

Polar Mirages: Visions on the horizon often lead travelers astray, and this is doubly true at the Crown of the World. During any time when the weather creates bright light (such as during seasons affected by the polar day or during daytime of the midnight sun), characters are susceptible to mirages and must make a DC 15 Perception check at the beginning of each week in order to identify a mirage as such. If a character fails this check, he sees the mirage on the horizon as a body of water, tree line, or other geographic landmark, the specific details of which are subject to GM discretion. The character is not magically compelled to visit the location, but may convince his allies to head that way in hopes of reaching it or otherwise act accordingly if the mirage is tempting enough.

BLACKFROST

Type poison, contact; **Save** Fortitude DC 15

Onset 1 minute; **Frequency** 1/minute for 6 minutes

Initial Effect 2d6 hp damage (half acid, half cold); **Secondary**

Effect 1d2 Con damage; **Cure** 2 consecutive saves

BONECHILL

Type disease, injury; **Save** Fortitude DC 16

Onset 1 day; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d4 Dex damage, and any nonlethal damage incurred from being in a cold environment becomes lethal damage (though it can still cause hypothermia); **Cure** 2 consecutive saves

ERGIA

Type disease, contact; **Save** Fortitude DC 20

Onset 1 day; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d4 Str damage and 1d4 Con damage, target must make a second Fort save or 1 point of the damage is drain instead, and a creature that has suffered ability drain glows blue as if limned with *faerie fire*; **Cure** 2 consecutive saves

HOWL OF THE NORTH

Type insanity; **Save** Will DC 13

Onset 2d6 days

Effect –4 penalty on Will saves and Wisdom-based skill checks; target is shaken while animals are within sight or hearing (see below)

DESCRIPTION

This form of insanity has its onset after a character is exposed to polar twilight or polar night for the stated number of days. A character afflicted with howl of the north begins to fear even the tamest beasts, fearing for her safety while simultaneously becoming more animalistic and primitive herself. Whenever a character afflicted with howl of the north sees a creature of the animal type or hears a bestial call (such as a wolf's howling), she becomes shaken. Characters native to polar regions are immune to this affliction. For more information on sanity and madness, see pages 250–251 of the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*.

POLAR EQUIPMENT

Explorers in polar expeditions are well advised to bring specialized equipment in addition to their normal supplies.

COLD WEATHER GEAR

Item	Cost	Weight	Source
Astrolabe	100 gp	6 lbs.	APG* 185
Cleats	5 gp	2 lbs.	APG* 187
Cold-weather outfit	8 gp	7 lbs.	Core Rulebook 161
Dog sled	20 gp	300 lbs.	APG* 187
Frostbite ointment	50 gp	1 lb.	
Furs	12 gp	5 lbs.	APG* 187
Map maker's kit	10 gp	2 lbs.	APG* 187
Pack animal, musk ox	24 gp	—	
Shovel	2 gp	8 lbs.	Core Rulebook 157
Skates	10 gp	3 lbs.	
Skis and poles	15 gp	6 lbs.	
Snow goggles	12 gp	—	
Snowshoes	5 gp	4 lbs.	APG* 187

* *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide*

Astrolabe: Anyone who has been taught how to use this mechanical device can use it at night when the stars are showing to determine the date and time. This process takes 1 minute. An astrolabe grants a +2 circumstance bonus on Knowledge (geography) and Survival checks to navigate in the wilderness (and on Profession [sailor] checks to navigate at sea).

Cleats: These footgear spikes improve the wearer's ability to move across icy surfaces. Each square of icy terrain costs only 1.5 squares of movement rather than 2 (or 3 squares rather than 4, for sloped icy terrain).

Cold-Weather Outfit: This heavy, quilted outfit grants a +5 circumstance bonus on Fortitude saves against exposure to cold weather.



Dog Sled: This conveyance is typically pulled by 1 or more riding dogs; the sled and any cargo are counted against the total carrying capacity of all dogs in the team to determine encumbrance. If the party is using caravan rules, a dog sled has the following statistics: **hp** 10; **Traveler Capacity** 1, **Cargo Capacity** 2; **Limit** none; **Consumption** 1.

Frostbite Ointment: One hour after being applied, this alchemical salve cures any creature suffering from frostbite, though any nonlethal damage from cold or exposure remains until the victim recovers. A creature cannot benefit from frostbite ointment more than once in 24 hours.

Furs: These simple furs are worn over armor and other clothing and grant a +2 circumstance bonus on Fortitude saves against exposure to cold weather. This bonus does not stack with any bonuses gained from the Survival skill.

Map Maker's Kit: This kit gives anyone drawing a map as they travel a +2 circumstance bonus on Survival skill checks to avoid becoming lost.

Pack Animal, Musk Ox: These husky, shaggy beasts are sometimes domesticated as pack animals in the Crown of the World. Their statistics are identical to aurochs (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 174), but they are immune to cold weather effects (though not severe cold and extreme cold effects). Domesticated musk oxen have the docile special quality (see horse; *Bestiary* 177), and treat their gore attack as a secondary natural weapon. In the polar rim mountains of Tian Xia, yaks are used as pack animals and have identical statistics.

Shovel: This simple tool is useful for digging shelters or through drifts and other snow barriers.

Skates: These honed metal blades are worn on boots to enable swift passage over ice. The wearer may move (but not climb) at her full speed on level icy surfaces. Her speed is halved when moving up an icy slope, but she may run or charge downhill on gentle or steep snowy slopes at quadruple speed. However, any skill check penalties for traversing rough ice while wearing skates are doubled, and the wearer takes a –4 penalty on combat maneuver checks to bull rush, drag, or trip, and to CMD against these maneuvers. Donning or removing skates takes 1 minute.

Skis and Poles: These polished wooden slats enable the wearer to glide across level snowy surfaces at his full speed. His speed is halved when moving up a snowy slope, but he may run or charge downhill on gentle or steep snowy slopes at quadruple speed. Any skill check penalties for traversing rough snowy terrain while wearing skis are doubled, and the wearer takes a –4 penalty on combat maneuver checks to bull rush, drag, or trip, and to CMD against these maneuvers. Characters cannot climb while wearing skis. Donning or removing skis takes 1 minute.

Snow Goggles: These goggles, carved from bone with a narrow slit opening and held in place with leather straps, work as smoked goggles (*Advanced Player's Guide* 183). In addition, they provide immunity to polar mirages.

Snowshoes: This wide footgear made of gut or leather webbing laced across wooden frames improves the wearer's ability to move across snowy surfaces. Snowshoes reduce the penalty for walking through heavy snow by 50%; for example, if moving through snow normally costs you 2 squares of movement per square traveled, snowshoes reduce this cost to 1.5 squares per square traveled.

CROWN OF THE WORLD GAZETTEER

The following pages describe the major features of the Crown of the World, as well as its ecology and inhabitants.

THE NORTHERN OCEANS

The Crown of the World is bound on two sides by oceans, with sprawling ice shelves along each coast that expand and shrink with the seasons. Hence, the true shoreline of the Crown of the World may vary a great deal from winter to summer, as its landmass becomes sheathed in deep ice or grows warm enough to expose the tundra beneath.

Cholpod Gulf: This modest bay is cradled by the southern curve of the Stained Peaks where they meet the easternmost Rimethirst Mountains.

Gulf of Khorkii: This deepwater inlet of the Songil Sea is dotted with thousands of tiny islets, perhaps inundated mountaintops from a fallen reach of the Wall of Heaven. Massive glaciers descend from the end of the mountain range, and icebergs and floes are actually more common in the gulf than in the warmer waters of the Songil Sea.

Gulf of Svallmundr: This massive inlet stretches over a thousand miles inland from the western edge of the Rimethirst Mountains. While rocky islets and sea stacks are common close to the mountainous shore, the gulf has no major islands. The Ulfen of Cape Almhult often sail to the Taraska River Delta or (less often) to Whitefang Bay at the northern end of the gulf to trade with the coastal Erutaki.

Ivory Sea: This wide sea stretches northward from the western coasts of Tian Xia, below the shoulders of the Wall of Heaven. The abundant walruses of the coast and the narwhals that carve long migratory channels in the thinned summer ice are avidly hunted by the coastal Erutaki of Yumyzyl, as are the gleaming belugas, "ivory whales" that are common totem animals among the Erutaki.

Shining Sea: This usually turbulent sea gained its name in part from the reflection of the polar auroras upon its water; that light is echoed on calm nights after stormy weather by vast swaths of luminescent plankton (and, some say, a seagoing variant of the will-o'-the-wisp that Guran sailors nickname the will-o'-the-deep).

Songil Sea: This sea is unusually warm for its latitude, fed by a northerly current circling from the equatorial seas along the eastern shores of Minkai. Baleen whales migrate in large pods to the Songil Sea in the summer, but giant squid and dire sharks prowl the deep waters year-round.

Steaming Sea: This stormy sea, which constitutes the northern reaches of the Arcadian Ocean, is treacherous in the extreme. In deep waters, the sea is littered with icebergs year-round, calved from the vast Thremyr's Shield. Closer to the continental shelf, the abundant volcanism of the Hellrung Mountains extends out into the seafloor. Submarine volcanoes churn and burble the Steaming Sea continuously, and the seascape of underwater ridges, vents, and newborn volcanic islands (which occasionally burst in eruptive explosions) is constantly evolving through violent destruction and rebirth, making charting this sea almost impossible. Currents are similarly unpredictable, and underwater earthquakes lead to frequent tsunamis and fragmentation of the ice shelf of Thremyr's Shield.

Tashen Yakuta: This enormous glacial shelf stretches over a thousand miles from the Shining Sea to the Ivory Sea. In summer, the ice shelf—50 to 200 feet thick above the ocean's surface (and as much as 10 times thicker below the waves)—retreats to within 10 to 20 miles of the shore. In winter, however, the shelf can reach far out to sea, with the accreted pack ice stretching even farther beyond that.

Thremyr's Shield: The polar ice shelf encompasses myriad glaciers all the way to the seacoast and beyond. Thremyr's Shield is over 1,000 feet thick as it passes over the coastline, and in winter it extends hundreds of miles across the shallow northern ocean, dividing the Steaming and Songil seas. Even after summer calving, the ocean's shore remains buried beneath Thremyr's Shield, though vast colonies of ice trolls and scrags carve out dens atop, within, and under the ice near Trelheim Point and the frozen bays nearby.

Whitefang Bay: The northern extent of the Gulf of Svallmundr holds a great ice sheet hundreds of feet thick at the foot of the High Ice icepack. In summer, the ice sheets retreat just far enough that Whitefang Peninsula can be reached between the East Bay and the larger West Bay, but as the weather turns, the ice advances and the twin ice sheets merge once more, advancing dozens of miles down the gulf and pushing before them pack ice that can extend as far as Cape Almhult.

LANDFORMS OF THE CROWN

Not just a land of featureless ice, the Crown of the World encompass many varied regions.

Alabastrine Peaks: These towering mountains, some over 3 miles high, mark the midway point of the Path of Aganhei, sheltering the path on its nearest approach to the frozen heart of the pole. Stretching their perpetually ice-glazed spires up toward the auroras of the polar night, the Alabastrine Peaks are said to hold many rock-hewn tombs of an ancient race, long since lost to memory and history. The mountains are known to be the home of prides of white-plumed snow griffins, and it is rumored that some of the high mountain vales hold portals to the Elemental Planes.

Alasek Ridge: More a long fault-cliff than a simple folding of the land, the Alasek Ridge runs for hundreds of miles from the glaciers of Whitefang Bay in the west to the Koumssa Gap in the east. The ridge is nearly 1,000 feet high along much of its length. This imposing and unrelenting barrier between the tundra and the High Ice is pierced only occasionally with clefts and rifts; in colder months, these may offer shelter to travelers, but in the warmer months, they form spectacular waterfalls as the melting icepack cascades over the ridge to the tundra plain below.

Altan Zuud: The Path of Aganhei takes this route, which is sometimes called the Golden Pass or the Last Pass, through the eastern reach of the Wall of Heaven.

Cape Almhult: The southern tip of a mountainous subcontinent split from the main landmass of the Crown by the yawning Gulf of Svallmundr, Cape Almhult is home to scattered Ulfen settlements that are not technically part of the Lands of the Linnorm Kings, though the Ulfen here trade readily with their southern kin. North of the cape, the subcontinent is dominated by the volcanic Hellrung Mountains, spawned by tectonic pressures from the gulf and the Steaming Sea beyond.

Gaarjuk Hills: While not especially tall, the Gaarjuk Hills are extremely rugged, boasting myriad whitewater streams and falls that cut valleys and dales into the lake country of Hasanaliat below. The Gaarjuk Hills are rich in veins of silver and copper, and precious stones are occasionally discovered here as well, but the hills are most famous for the shining pebbles of gold sifted from their rocky streambeds. In the warmer months, gold-hungry prospectors comb the streams and innumerable small shantytowns sprout up, only to disappear as quickly when the chill grip of winter sets in. While a direct route through the Gaarjuk Hills could cut several hundred miles off the Path of Aganhei, nearly all travelers opt for the well-traveled route through the lowlands rather than one through the treacherous and trackless hills.

Hellrung Mountains: These rugged granite and basalt hills and peaks are arrayed in serried rows across the southern arm of the Crown that embraces the Gulf of Svallmundr. They were named for their jagged profile and for the mazelike rifts, ravines, and badlands that lie between the peaks and the simmering volcanoes that occasionally darken the horizon with sooty clouds, lighting it from beneath with an infernal glow. Earthquakes are frequent throughout the subcontinent, their epicenters typically along the fracturing and subducting coastal regions. The wide basin between the mountains is treeless in many places thanks to age-old lava flows, while in other areas ashfall and rain have created fecund forestlands. However, only an enterprising (or foolish) few dare the Hellrung Mountains' dangers to extract their natural riches.

The High Ice: This vast polar plateau, nearly 2,000 miles across, makes up most of the Crown of the World, and bears



an icepack over a mile thick. The plateau is worn smooth in places by the endless winds, but elsewhere remains jagged and scarred by glacial shifting, and riven with unstable crevasses. Entire subglacial mountain ranges barely breach the surface of the ice, if they reach it at all, and the elevation of the High Ice only intensifies the polar chill for travelers across the Crown.

Hills of Mournful Calling: These low, sparsely treed hills sprawl between the high tundra of the Hoarwell March and the mountains of Zavaten Gura. They are characterized by rugged vales and clefts, the relatively soft stone of these hills sculpted by wind and water and crushing ice into fantastic twists and whorls. The constant whistling of the wind would be reason enough to give these hills their name, but many attribute the incessant keening to the frustrated howls of giants, trolls, and bugbears alike expelled by the Gurans from the mountains and now reduced to raiding each other to eke out their meager survival, or the restless spirits of their forefathers slaughtered by the invaders from the south. According to the dwarves, however, the mournful cries are those of the honored dead of the generations of dwarves who once ruled these lands as well as their coastal and mountain holds, and whose barrows facing the endless waste were shattered and violated by the giants and their allies. Whichever tale is true, the hills are a dangerous place to wander, whether because of restless haunts, bitter weather, or dark-hearted exiles fighting for miserable scraps of shelter and sustenance.

Koumssa Gap: The Path of Aganhei follows the easiest path of ascent from the tundra lowlands to the high plains of the Hoarwell March, and it is at the Koumssa Gap that the encircling mountains and cliffs that bound the High Ice for much of its southward face give way to gentler tundra slopes that ascend gradually onto the permanent mile-high ice pack beyond. The trading town of Unaimo sits at the base of the Koumssa Gap.

Ovorikheer Pass: The high icecap of the pole descends gradually into the catchment basin of Ruun Uvas; the basin is ringed with high hills, which the Path of Aganhei touches as it follows Ovorikheer Pass. The pass is lined in many places with hot springs that feed the Jorma River (which flows back into the Ruun Uvas). The geothermal activity along the pass includes the site known as Baruun's Breath, a desolate lava flow from a long-ago eruption that altered the course of the Jorma. The tumbled, blackened hillside still issues pale wisps of steam and noxious fumes from the bowels of the earth at unpredictable intervals, and wise travelers maintain a quick step when passing the area.

More spectacular is the high alpine scrub forest atop the pass, once nurtured by a family of fey who also cultivated warming springs. A generation ago, however, the fey disappeared and the springs failed. Now this forest is sheathed in thick ice, as the clouds of mist that billow

perpetually from lower in the pass are blown into these woods by the polar winds, blanketing them with an ever-renewing coat of ice. The Erutaki call this the Domagalki Forest, but upon seeing the flagging south-blown trees with their trailing streamers of ice, a nameless traveler thought it looked more as though a great beast had unleashed a hoarfrost tempest from the north. She dubbed the area the Wood of Winter's Deadly Roar, and the name has stuck with travelers ever since. The deeper dells of this frozen forest beyond the pass are rumored to contain huge furred spiders that spin webs of ice.

Rimethirst Mountains: These mountains separate the Crown of the World from the northern plains of Avistan. There are few routes through these mountains—the Path of Aganhei is the most well known.

Wall of Heaven: This forbidding range forms a barrier between the Crown of the World and the northern reaches of Tian Xia, Hongal, and Minkai.

White Wood of Malarkhan: This sprawling forest of aspen, pine, and the beautiful whitebark holly covers a sprawling expanse of hills and broken lands sweeping north and west from the Wall of Heaven. Whereas many northern forests are characterized by their brooding silence, the White Wood is alive with sound, the seemingly constant shrieks and howls leading travelers to nickname it the Roaring Forest or the Hills of Screaming Trees. In fact, it is not the trees themselves but the feral and savage inhabitants who hunt the wood—ravenous and bestial trolls and giants—that give the forest its fell reputation. Their hunting cries and battle songs echo throughout the wood as fervently as the howls of the beasts they hunt (or that hunt alongside them).

WATERWAYS OF THE CROWN

The Crown of the World runs between two oceans, and in summer the fringes of its unnumbered glaciers give birth to thousands of seasonal rivers that carve uncountable gullies, streams, bogs, and lakes into the tundra, before winter shrouds the land again in a blanket of white. This section describes the major rivers, lakes, and marshes of the Crown.

Espinar River: This silted flow cascades from the Steaming Pits of Gheit, its swift and heated torrent falling spectacularly from the Lustral Spires and cleaving canyons through ice and stone alike before slowing to a crawl across the eastern tundra of Avistan and flowing into the Shining Sea at Banuk Bay, which generally marks the southern extent of the Tashen Yakuta in Avistan.

Hazalin Marshes: These sprawling boglands surround the lower course and the delta of the mighty Taraska River and stretch far up the eastern shore of the Gulf of Svallmundr. While most of the marshes are freshwater, others are brackish bayous or pure salt marshes, especially when earthquakes in the Hellrung Mountains send tidal

surges deep into the marshlands. The marshes teem with fish, birds, and wildlife of all kinds, especially in the warmer months, and its pools and channels are rarely frozen as the marshes contain many hot springs. However, the deeper pools and ponds around the fringes of the marsh, far from such warmth or the river's flow, may freeze too deeply in the winter months for ice-fishing to be practical. The most famous product of the marshes is the ice pepper; when pickled, this piquant fruit turns a snowy white and its heat is intensified. These rare peppers command a great price in the lands of the south.

Lake Buriyim: This huge, double-armed lake dominates the tundra north of the eastern end of the Wall of Heaven. Its waters are fresh and deep but freeze to a great depth in winter. The Osman villagers who live on its shores traverse the lake with canoes in summer and bone-bladed sailing skiffs in winter.

Maganis River: This fast-flowing river descends from the Hellrung Mountains into the Gulf of Svallmundr, often carrying a flood tide of ash, mud, and uprooted trees from eruptions in the mountains upstream.

Moraghiin River: This river drains the northern face of the Wall of Heaven, looping northward across the lower tundra before flowing west through the White Wood of Malarkhan and into the Ivory Sea. The long canyon through which the river passes the White Wood was nicknamed Turnback Pass as a warning about its harrowing rapids—as well as about the feral tribes who hunt the heights above.

Niiran River: This broad river drains the southern arm of Lake Buriyim, before flowing southwest into the Gulf of Khorkii.

Niiset River: This long river flows eastward across the tundra, collecting summer meltwater from the High Ice before flowing into the Songil Sea at Ulaagor Bay.

Ruun Uvas (the Saltsea Lake): This vast, shallow lake in the midst of a great basin plateau is the last remnant of an ancient inland sea. Its waters are salty, and its lack of an outlet has created a high concentration of minerals. The lake is nearly 60 miles across but for most of its extent is barely 20 feet deep. A number of small fishing and herding villages have grown up around its fringes.

Steaming Pits of Gheit: The Steaming Pits of Gheit are a collection of natural springs atop a massive plateau to the east of the Path of Aganhei as it mounts the High Ice, nearly 2 miles above sea level. The valley of Gheit is cradled between peaks to the east and west. Its northern edge is sheltered from the endless polar winds by the spectacular Lustral Spires, which along with the ever-spouting plumes of the Steaming Pits is the first major way-marker along the Path of Aganhei.

The Steaming Pits themselves fill a sunken valley atop the plateau, 30 miles broad and 40 miles long, with a spectacular array of geysers, fumaroles, and simmering

cauldrons of bubbling mud, crisscrossed and carved by streams, rivers, and waterfalls of flowing water that virtually never freezes despite the altitude and latitude of this strange valley. The dozens of streams that cross the valley, spilling over obsidian cliffs and through multicolored canyons, gather in a broad marshland dotted with mangrovelike evergreens whose branches and roots tangle together such that it is hard to see where one tree ends and another begins. This marsh, known as the Wood of Mired Crowns, is broken in many places by slow-flowing sloughs and wide wetlands before giving way to Lake Espinar, which on the rare calm day perfectly reflects the white-crowned Lustral Spires to the north. The Espinar River descends in a series of half-frozen cascades down Paradise Ridge into the southern polar foothills and through the tundra beyond to the Shining Sea.

Taraska River: A long and meandering waterway, the Taraska's headwaters rise to the east of the Koumssa Gap, draining not only the High Ice but also the Gaarjuk Hills and even the western slopes of the faraway Stained Peaks. The Taraska snakes across the tundra for over a thousand miles, with many tributaries draining the lake country of Hasanaliat and the Bearleg Lakes before spilling through a trackless delta into the Gulf of Svallmundr. The river is sluggish but very wide, flanked by miles of marshes on either side in summer. The river's great size keeps it flowing year-round, though stretches of it have been known to freeze over in especially bitter winters. While the adjacent wetlands occasionally freeze, the ice is often weakened by heat from the rotting vegetation below.

The Witch-Fen of Azra Sahota: Not much is known about this mysterious marshland, and even its true location is a mystery. Some say it is just part of the Hazalin Marshes, while others claim it can appear first as a sinkhole in dry lands even in the midst of winter, growing swiftly into a seething mire teeming with rot, vermin, and worse, all apparently serving at the whim of the self-styled "Empress Hag," Azra Sahota. When sinkholes begin to develop, some folk throw in offerings of valuables or livestock; while some might consider them mad, they feel it a reasonable gamble if it might placate the hag's dark moods.

ECOLOGY OF THE CROWN

The subpolar tundra, taiga, and highlands of the Outer Rim of the Crown of the World are not radically different in climate and inhabitants from cold lands farther south, such as Irrisen and Mendev. The transition from thickly forested mountains and hillsides to the vast empty expanse of grassy permafrost plains is a gradual one. Herds of caribou, musk oxen, and even woolly rhinoceroses and mammoths roam widely, and nomadic herders follow these creatures in their migrations, as do wolves, bears, worgs, and more exotic predators. Rivers and lakes are

thick with salmon, trout, pike, and sturgeon, especially during spawning season, and migratory birds number in the millions during the warmer months, particularly along the coasts. Seals, walruses, and marine crustaceans abound, usually following the outer edges of the polar pack ice as it expands and contracts with the turning seasons.

Many of the larger animals keep to the tundra and boreal regions, though they may migrate into the High Ice uplands during the warmer months. Arctic fox, ermine, marten, fisher, lynx, hare, and sable may venture northward in search of prey, especially along meltwater streams, and trappers seek them out in turn for their valuable pelts. Thickly furred goats roam the highlands, surefootedly avoiding predators unable to climb after them, and are bred by polar Erutaki for wool and milk as well as meat.

While the mile-thick High Ice icepack, the bitter cold, and the extreme diurnal shifts of the Boreal Expanse are inhospitable to normal animals, they are hardly devoid of life. Besides the ever-present lichen, the blue polar ice is rich with tiny organisms that thrive in the cold and provide food in turn for tiny colorless bore-worms. The snowdrifts overlying the icepack are home to novosis—a flat-bodied, smooth-skinned amphibian that burrows through the soft snow, grinding the surface ice with bony mandibles and sucking bore-worms into its gullet. Erutaki sometimes dig shallow pits in the snow and release a handful of bore-worms into them, watching for the novosis to come close to the surface so hunters can spear them as they feed.

Khabas—soft-shelled crablike creatures—scuttle across or burrow through snow and ice, scavenging after larger predators or digging out their own tiny victims. Khabas may be found anywhere on the Crown, and in places where prey is plentiful, are known to swarm in the hundreds.

At the heart of the Boreal Expanse, and in particular among the Alabastrine Peaks, natural portals to the Elemental Planes of Air and Water can be found, and mephits and elementals (especially ice mephits and elementals) are commonly found in this area.

In terms of monstrous inhabitants, besides the deadly remorhazes and frost worms known to populate this region, white dragons are a common scourge on the Crown, as are their lesser kin, frost drakes (and sea drakes near the coastlines). Bulettes are occasionally seen crossing the permafrost tundra, and white-scaled variants have been known to burrow through the icepack. White-plumed or -furred snowy owlbeards, chimeras, snow griffins, giant owls and eagles, and other magical beasts are camouflaged in the snow but otherwise identical to their southern counterparts. In addition, many of those who wander the Crown are no longer living, but rather are the restless spirits or frozen flesh of the many creatures that have perished here and long to bring others down into death with them.

Ogres, bugbears, and trolls are numerous in the tundra and Outer Rim highlands, and ice trolls are common across the Crown. Frost giants are the most common of their kind on the Crown, though taiga giants and rare rune giants have also been encountered, usually leading bands of their less powerful kin. On the Tian side of the Crown, oni may be found in their natural form or masquerading as travelers or merchants to waylay the unwary.

INHABITANTS OF THE CROWN

The Crown of the World is a harsh environment, but hardly devoid of human habitation. Chief among the human inhabitants are the Erutaki, a catchall term for hundreds of local human tribes and clans, some nomadic and some settled, that dwell all across the Crown. While they refer to themselves by local clan and tribe names, and often speak distinct dialects and have unique local customs, they share enough of a common language and culture to function on Golarion as a single ethnic group. The Erutaki are most numerous in the forested taiga foothills of the barrier ranges, the lake country of the more southern tundra zones, and the coastal regions all around the Crown.

Dwarves also live in considerable numbers in the hinterlands of the Crown, especially in mountain holds in both the Stormspear Mountains of Avistan and the Wall of Heaven in Tian Xia. Tribes of a unique elven ethnicity referred to as Snowcaster elves reside in taiga regions in the southern parts of the High Ice, as well as in areas of the Outer Rim, just north of the border of Irrisen and the Crown of the World. Snowcaster elves are vigilant and protective of their lands, and while they will allow peaceful travelers to pass through unharmed, they may require a toll from those who wish to do so. Aside from these, few other humanoid races dwell here in any great numbers. The following groups come closest to what can be considered nations on the Crown of the World (with populations in parentheses).

Almhult: This civilization is less a nation than a collection of independent villages and towns clinging mostly to the coast. During the summertime, however, a meager inland farming community supplements the coastal communities' year-round fishing, sealing, and whaling. The largest settlement is **Helsingbyen** (4,575) at the tip of the cape. **Asre** (1,477), **Roshik** (998), and **Surtse** (512) are farther northwest along the cape's seaward coast, while **Snemmevik** (2,294) lies farthest north, at the head of a wide bay of the Gulf of Svallmundr, and serves as a base for prospectors mad or desperate enough to brave the rugged Hellrung Mountains in search of gold. The Ulfen of Almhult are kin to those in the Lands of the Linnorm Kings but consider themselves a separate people.

Hasanaliat: While most of the Erutaki are seminomadic or occupy tiny villages of fewer than 100 souls, the Path

of Aganhei northwest of Urjuk passes through a region of forested vales that is heavily settled by the Erutaki. Villages here are usually small, comprising extended family groups; some are close to the path, while others are well-hidden in the hills, but almost all are near the abundant lakes and streams. There is no central government of Hasanaliat, but chiefs and shamans often consult with nearby tribes to mediate disputes or cooperate in hunts, potlatches, and seasonal ceremonies to placate the spirits.

The largest single settlement of the Erutaki is **Aaminiut** (3,326), a stilt-city that sprawls across dozens of islets in the Taraska River Delta and the edges of the Hazalin Marshes. Aaminiut's population comprises numerous tribes, and each tribe usually claims its own islet, though smaller tribes may collaborate to build together. Aaminiut's population fluctuates with the seasons, but much of the populace remains year-round, as does a colony of Ulfen traders from Cape Almhult.

Osman Confederation: This alliance of Erutaki villages crowds the edges of Lake Buriyim and the surrounding river valleys. Each of the numerous villages has a speaker in the permanent assembly in the trade-village of **Jaagiin** (1,371), which lies along the Path of Aganhei at the lake's western end. During the summer months, the Osman clans disperse across the tundra with their herds, later driving them back to the villages as the dark and cold of winter begin to descend.

Urjuk: The Giant-Downs immediately north of the Rimethirst Mountains are considered a homeland for many of the frost and taiga giants of the mountains, and some clanholds remain within the region, though most giants have migrated into or beyond the mountains to the south. Others roam the tundra and High Ice as nomads, returning only periodically to this hill country. The Path of Aganhei passes through Urjuk; by ancient treaty the giants grant passage along this single road and still honor that compact, though any who trespass into the giantlands beyond the road do so at their peril.

Yumyzyl: This subgroup of the Erutaki have settled the long, curving coast of the Ivory Sea and have hunted blubber and ivory there since time out of mind. Their settlements stretch from the feet of the Wall of Heaven to the glacial margins of the Tashen Yakuta, typically arrayed along the mouth of seasonal rivers. **Kyzuv** (703), located at the mouth of the Moraghiin River, is centrally located, and as such is the usual site for the annual gathering of the clans that multiplies the town's population fivefold, but all tribal members make occasional pilgrimages to the traditional spirit-lodges of the ancient hold of **Darinkhuur** (1,255) among the forested foothills along the sea's shore, where the largest seagoing canoes are built and blessed.

Zavaten Gura: The most populated section of the Crown of the World lies within the Stained Peaks northeast of Avistan. Heavily settled by dwarves who mine its abundant

metals, the only nation worthy of the term at these latitudes is known for its cast-iron citadels. The development in this region has acted as a double-edged sword, however, as the centuries of mining have produced massive quantities of toxic efflux, making the already rugged terrain and hostile climate harsher still. The Gurans trade extensively with the eastern Erutaki (especially those living along the Espinar River) for food to supplement their own fisheries and fungus farms. The Utograf, a dwarf named Voislav, rules the land from the coal-fired citadel of **Visheksrad** (12,700). A half-dozen mining towns litter the mountainsides, but most trade passes through **Bovodport** (7,100).

More common on the Crown of the World are lone settlements in the midst of wide leagues of emptiness. Some such settlements are truly alone, while others serve as meeting points for a scattering of local villages beyond.

Ketskerlet (1,132): This settlement is the chief town of the Khorkii clans of the Erutaki. In the summer, the clans ply the adjacent gulf, even trading occasionally with Hongal, but in the winter, they retreat to stone-delved halls in the foothills of the Wall of Heaven, which are maintained by the one-third of the town's population that is dwarven.

Tuvar (574): Tuvar is the chief village of the Ulaagor clans of the Erutaki, a generally settled coastal people who hunt the waters and islands of the Songil Sea. Tuvar is the site of their moots and trade fairs.

Ul-Angorn (626): This village is the largest of the Erutaki villages in the Ruun Uvas basin, by the Saltsea Lake itself. Ul-Angorn is a stopover along the Path of Aganhei after it descends from the permanent icecap of the High Ice.

Unaimo (1,093): A mound-city dug into the bluffs along Lake Yamunag's shore, Unaimo is a trading town along the Path of Aganhei. Situated in the eastern Hoarwell March, Unaimo lies near the nigh-impassable Alasek Ridge that extends hundreds of miles to the west, allowing easier ascent to the icepack of the High Ice through the Koumssa Gap.

RUINS OF THE CROWN

Few races have ever tried to settle the Crown of the World in great numbers, and the crushingly hostile climate has erased all trace of most who have made the attempt to carve out territory for themselves here. However, a few notable ruins are known to still exist across the crown.

Dead Man's Dome: This bald hill was once a mighty watchtower that overlooked the rolling descent of the polar ice toward the tundra basin of Ruun Uvas, paid for by taxes levied upon merchant trains using the Path of Aganhei and sheltering under its protection. Two centuries ago, however, the tower and its grounds were attacked by an army of giants and undead. Many caravans were slaughtered, but a lone hero taken on as a guard led a charge that broke the enemy lines and then held off the enemy long enough to allow the surviving caravans to escape. The hero then fought his way

back and, according to the tale, lured the enemy inside the tower and collapsed it upon himself and them. None knew his name, so those who marked the fallen tower as his cairn simply called it Dead Man's Dome. While it still offers a commanding view of the surround, few willingly venture there during the dark night of winter, even though stories tell that the lone warrior still guards travelers who come there (as he does for the PCs on page 41).

Faded Hall of Lorngrim: The melancholy summer palace of a long-lost dwarven lord of Zavaten Gura, the Faded Hall was built to overlook a necropolis of barrows, tombs, and mausoleums for his kith and kin. Today, the mighty hall is home to the strongest giants remaining in the Hills of Mournful Calling. The necropolis below has been desecrated but not destroyed, instead being cleared and repurposed as sturdy dwellings for their new giant inhabitants and their slaves. To the northeast of the Faded Hall, bugbears congregate thickly around long-fallen **Zunderwal Hold**, hard by the foot of the Stained Peaks. Many bugbears have claimed the title of Huntmaster of the Hold, but few have held it for long before being laid low by the bold challenge or sinister treachery of their rivals.

Mantarin: This fortification was established by the First Mendevian Crusade as a penal colony, supplying salt to the crusaders. After the fall of Drezen, however, Mantarin was cut off. After fending off a demonic attack, the commanders realized staying at Mantarin was suicidal, and offered their prisoners a chance at freedom and survival if they would swear the crusader oaths and attempt a joint breakout back to crusader lines. Sadly, after surviving two harrowing nights, the crusader formation was overwhelmed before getting even halfway home. The few survivors of the penal colony sired a line of half-fiends who still rule this frozen fortress for their new masters.

The Nameless Spires: At the North Pole itself, beyond any human habitation, lie the ruins of a city ancient beyond telling. Many myths surround the city. Some say it was built by a race whose degenerate descendants became frost trolls or some more monstrous race, others that they were visitors from another world or another plane, and still others claim that they were the same "Founders" who delved the Vaults of Orv far below in the Darklands. What remains of the city are timeworn ruins of buildings carved of dark stone and metal, laid out in starlike patterns and linked by stony roadways or bridges. Evenly spaced around the outskirts of the lost city are six titanic spires—some have been sundered at various heights by the ages, but the tallest stretches over 2,000 feet into the polar sky.

In many places, the icy and stony foundations of the city have been undermined by pools of turbid black slush,

thought by some to be the toxic effluence of eldritch devices, though others have hypothesized a connection with the black blood found in the Darklands. This tainted slurry is known to erupt at times from subterranean cysts leagues away from the city, and a hazy blue fog that can only be seen in darkness floats above and around the city.

Erutaki pilgrims sometimes approach the spires as part of vision quests but rarely enter the city, as it is considered a place of the spirits. Few survivors have ever returned from the handful of expeditions that set out to explore the city itself; those who do speak of empty streets and massive stonework and metalwork of uncanny beauty and smoothness. Myths tell of strange plants flowering even in the chill of the Crown and of creatures of metal and ice (or perhaps crystal). None have dared return to the place, and what lies within remains a mystery.





FLOWER AND WILLOW PAVILION

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It's a whorehouse."

Kazuko coughed and retreated behind Inspector Second-Class Takeda. The samurai kept a straight face, but his men flushed. I tried to decide whether they were amused, angry, or ashamed. It's harder for me to read Minkai faces. Their eyes look so different, and they hardly ever look you in the face.

"What?" I said. Maybe the spell on my tongue didn't translate everything right. "Brothel? Bordello? Cathouse? Help me out here, boss. What do they call it in Taldor? A seraglio?"

The count shot me the shut-up look. I shut up.

Could be I was wrong about this Flower and Willow Pavilion, but I didn't think so. We had a first glimpse of the place as we descended the hill from Matano Hideo's house. The actor wasn't home, and his servants didn't expect him until morning. After some indirect questions, Takeda dismissed the servants and told us we would look for Matano at this Flower and Willow Pavilion.

At first glance, the place looked like a temple. Inside the inner courtyard stood six or eight willow trees, their tresses green while all the other trees we'd seen in the city of Oda remained winter bare. I decided some wizard had enchanted the trees, but then I thought of the plant

nurseries on the roof of Greensteeples. The boss had fooled plants into thinking it was summer all year even before he got his magic back. Maybe the gardeners here knew the same tricks.

The buildings formed two single-story squares with another narrow garden between the inner and outer halls. Leafless trees lined the avenue between them, but they looked like nothing I'd seen in Cheliox or Ustalav, or the handful of other countries I'd visited with the count.

Surrounding the outer halls was another garden, this one full of more bare-branched trees and ponds glimmering in the moonlight. Here and there lay patches of raked pebbles. Stupid as that sounds, they were kind of—I don't know. Soothing? Maybe the moonlight was screwing with me, but I liked the pattern the shadows made. It made me think of something I couldn't name, but a thing I wanted all the same. Somehow I knew I'd never get it.

I shook my head. If I didn't watch out, I'd get some philosophy on me. Or worse, some poetry.

A high stone wall surrounded the whole place, two sides facing streets of windowless buildings, the other two against narrow alleys across from the walled backs of row houses. The walls were made for privacy, not security. I could have slipped over the tops with one good jump and pull, but I wouldn't have to. Gates lined every side, each one with a big lock that I could have picked with my little finger. I'd seen something like this before. The brothel's customers bought a key from the owner of the house, the better to slip out from any side. Keep the wife's servants guessing which side to spy on, get home and say you lost track of time talking with an old friend you met on the way home.

If the boss had quizzed me on why I figured the place for a whorehouse—pleasure palace, lord's club, whatever—I had plenty more evidence. A line of one-man carriages drawn by lackeys stood a block away, just close enough to see someone waving from the front gate. Steam rose from a nearby building, and I smelled lye. Someone was working all night to wash the sheets and pillows. If the Pavilion was really a temple, it was dedicated to Calistria, goddess of that little pool of sweat that forms in the hollow of a woman's back.

So really I didn't care if the Minkai were squeamish about it. I know whorehouses, and this was definitely one.

At what I figured for the front entrance, a pair of gate columns supported sculptures of some kind of orchid in a pale green stone. Magical light emanated from deep inside them, revealing flaws of red and black. One look at the fancy lanterns made the boss crane his neck the way he does when he sees something new.

"Those are the most flawless jades I have ever seen," he said. The way his tone changed, I knew he started out

talking to himself but then directed the comment to Takeda so as not to seem peculiar.

Takeda nodded but didn't speak. Again, his men looked embarrassed or something. Maybe they were forbidden to visit brothels while on duty. I never knew that to stop a city guard in Egorian, but these samurai guys seemed wound up tighter than Hellknights. I was starting to think I wasn't going to like them too much.

The gate was open. The only guard was a woman who bowed at our approach, once for each of us. She was no beauty, and she was older than me. Even so, she was wrapped up tight in a silk gown whose fabric looked rich enough for a Chelish lady. It even had a neat little bundle tied with a bow in the small of her back, giving her silhouette a nice bump, the kind I'd like to pat as I went past. I figured her for a reserve, making herself useful the best she could until a busy day.

She faltered twice while greeting us. Once when she recognized Takeda, and once when she got a good look at me. I'm real pretty, but you don't have to be from Cheliox to see I got a little Hell in me. I tipped her a wink, but she was already looking at the ground. Polite maybe, or scared. I like to think my raw masculine charm turned her head.

As Arnisant padded in behind me, the greeter put her fingers to her lips to stop a shriek. Her eyes widened, and I gave her the little smile. "It's all right, sweetheart. Arni won't eat you unless I say so."

I didn't figure she could get any whiter with all that powder on, but she proved me wrong. Takeda turned to the boss and bowed.

"The presence of an animal here is unseemly. Perhaps you could—?"

"Of course," said the boss. He gave Arnisant the hand sign to stay. The Ustalavic wolfhound obeyed.

I let the others go through before fishing out a sausage I'd pocketed in Absalom. Ribbons of saliva poured from Arnisant's jaws as I broke the meat in two.

I tossed him half and watched it disappear. The boss ain't the only wizard in the company. "Be a good boy, Arni, and I'll give you the rest when we're done."

Arnisant turned around, keeping his butt planted on the ground as he turned sentinel toward the line of carriage pullers.

The word "rickshaw" came to mind, and I knew it was the spell working its whammy. I was still getting used to the boss casting spells on me, but so far I liked this one. It was a little confusing sometimes, but it beat spending weeks picking up enough words to negotiate more than finding a latrine.

Inside the outer building, an embassy of four women bowed low toward us. They kept their heads down as we walked along a lane lined with bare trees and empty

flowerbeds. The earth was dark and moist, but I hadn't seen any snow since we'd arrived. I wondered how far north Minkai lay on the map. I didn't think it would be as southerly as Absalom, where we'd been before the Pathfinder conjuror teleported us across the world. The night air was cool, but it felt more like spring than late winter.

Like the greeter at the gate, the women were gift-wrapped in silk. They wore no jewelry except for the combs and pins that shaped their glossy black hair into shovel blades or knots that would have driven a sailor mad to untie them.



"Beauty is relative, but Chiyoko's teeth-staining doesn't do her any favors."

As we drew near, the women raised their heads. Three were young and lovely, with red porcelain smiles. The fourth was older. One look at us, and her perfect smile shattered.

She seemed maybe fifty years old, maybe sixty, depending on how thick she'd laid on the paint. She'd exaggerated a mole on her powder-white cheek with a spot of kohl. She'd also blacked out her teeth, giving her the look of someone who'd been punched in the mouth too often. It exaggerated her grimace and made her look like a banshee about to shrivel us with her wail.

"You!" She sneered at Takeda.

The inspector bowed his head. I'd known the guy for less than two hours, and I didn't know much about Minkai customs. Still, I got the impression he was chagrined, not just being polite. Beside him, Osamu tensed, and Shiro's knuckles whitened as he gripped the scabbard of his katana.

"Official business!" Osamu barked. "Show respect."

Takeda raised his head and looked at his underling. I tried to read his face, but the spell didn't help me understand the emotions there before they settled. I looked to the boss and saw that he too was observing Takeda, even as he pretended to admire the girls behind the angry woman.

"The Flower and Willow Pavilion is the most respected geisha house in all of Oda. Who would send a disgraced petty samurai to disturb our customers?"

Osamu seethed, but Shiro touched his arm before he could speak again. I frowned over the word "geisha," which the spell told me meant something like "courtesan," but not exactly the same. The not-a-whorehouse business was getting confusing. Now even the boss's spell was contradicting what I'd seen with my own eyes.

"Madam Chiyoko, I regret the need to visit at such a busy hour. Urgent duty requires us to speak with Matano Hideo immediately." Takeda's voice was soft, as if he meant to tiptoe past a sleeping tiger.

"Madam," I thought. Unless the spell was getting it wrong, that's what you call the boss of a whorehouse. Either I was the only one who didn't know what was going on here, or else I was the only one who did.

Chiyoko narrowed her eyes as she considered Takeda's words. Instead of answering, she looked over the rest of us. I practiced reading her Minkai face as she considered each of us in turn. She showed obvious contempt and a little fear as her eyes slid past Osamu and Shiro. Whatever her beef, I figured it was with their boss, not the constables.

At the sight of the count, Chiyoko appeared surprised and curious. As she appraised his expensive Chelish clothes, I saw a glitter of greed in her dark eyes. That was something I could read on any face. She was figuring out whether he was a good customer.

Her expression wavered when she turned to me. The black leathers I'd bought in Caliphas were a poor substitute for the red Chelish jacket I'd lost, but they made me look plenty tough. People got out of my way on the streets of Absalom, merchants and guards alike. Chiyoko sniffed and spared less than a second's glance on Kazuko before returning her gaze to Takeda.

"The honorable Matano is not here. You must leave now and take these servants with you."

Osamu bristled, and I understood that Chiyoko was disrespecting everyone except maybe the count. Takeda showed the boss an apologetic smile. The boss nodded back, and some private message passed between them.

I hated that. After working for Count Jeggare for years, I could read the narrowing of one eye or the twitch of his thumb when he wanted to tell me something without anyone else catching on. Some of it was Pathfinder sign code that he'd taught me, but the rest was our private language. Whatever message the count sent to Takeda, it wasn't meant for me. They were communicating noble to noble. Despite a technicality I had to keep secret, that left me out of their fancy club.

Takeda bowed from the neck and said, "Allow me to present the most honorable Count Varian Jeggare of Cheliex, a powerful empire in distant Avistan."

The boss did one of his courtly bows, with extra flourishes to show off his jeweled rings. It was then that I caught on to what he and Takeda were up to. I felt stupid for not realizing it before. It was a good play.

And it worked. Chiyoko smiled at the count, showing off those ghastly black teeth. He didn't even flinch.

"Long have I wished to observe the chanoyu performed by a true geisha of Oda," said the boss.

Through the spell I understood he was talking about some sort of tea service. Running around Oda was thirsty work. I said, "A hot cup sounds good."

Takeda and the boss turned at the same time. Their expressions told me I wasn't invited to their tea party.

"On the other hand, maybe I'll stretch my legs." I saw by the way the boss touched the tip of his third finger to the base of his thumb that I'd guessed right. He wanted me to have a look around, and not just in the garden.

"Remain here," Takeda told his men. He and the boss followed Chiyoko and one of her girls into the outer halls. The other young women remained with Osamu and Shiro, flirting with them as the samurai scowled and blushed by turns. I left them to it.

Away from the entrance path, shadows provided plenty of cover between the building and the outer gate. I strolled toward the outer halls for a closer look. I'd gotten out of sight of the samurai before I realized Kazuko was following me.

"Desna weeps! Don't creep up on me like that, kid."

"I am not a child."

Her defiant tone threw me for a second, but I liked it. She'd never talk to Takeda or the boss that way, just me. I liked that, too. "Sorry, Kazuko."

"Where are you going?"

"I'm just having a look around while the fancy people sip their tea and hold up their pinkies." She blinked at my joke. Even through spells, some things don't translate. "What're you doing standing on my shadow?"

"You must not offend the geisha."

She was trying to keep me out of trouble. "You should be with the constables. You're only tagging along so they can keep you safe until we find the guys who killed your boss."

"I do not feel safe with them."

The little smile snuck out before I could stop it. I caught her meaning: she felt safer with me than with the samurai. "I won't let anything happen to you."

She looked a little reassured. I stepped closer, but she retreated. All right, I thought. I've got patience to spare. She's going to come around.

I went to one of the side doors. The keyhole was as big as the ones we'd seen on the wall. I scanned the edges of the doorframe. Nothing looked fishy, so I raked open the lock. It popped on the first tug.

"You are a burglar!" whispered Kazuko. Her shocked tone contained a hint of admiration.

"Nah," I said. "Not really. Not anymore, anyway."

"Your master knows this?"

"Listen, he's not my master. Got it?"

"He behaves like your master. But you do not behave like a servant."

"That's because I'm not a servant." I'd never liked that word. It wasn't much of an improvement over "slave." "I'm what you might call a freelancer."

"So you would work for others?"

"Well, no. The count has what you call an exclusive with me." I didn't like having to explain our arrangement. "Quiet, you. I'm concentrating."

From within the building I heard the sound of a stringed instrument and a woman's queer song. She wasn't out of tune, exactly. It was as if she were getting them all a little wrong on purpose. Or maybe not wrong, exactly. It was still pretty.

I eased open the door. Inside was a short passage leading to a hall running down the center of the outer building. When I stepped inside, Kazuko whispered, "Your shoes!"

"What?"

She demonstrated by removing her wooden clogs as she entered, stepping onto the woven mat in her stocking feet. The Minkai sure are fussy about footprints. Anyway, taking off my boots would make me quieter, so I did the same. I gave her a look that asked, "Satisfied?" She nodded that she was, barely.

Along the main hall stood sliding paper doors through which I saw the silhouettes of men and women sitting on the floor. Through one I saw a woman filling a tiny cup from a flask each time the man beside her drank. From another I saw the singing woman with the shape of a kind of lute on her lap. Her audience was three men who leaned toward her over their little table.

The paper doors weren't locked, but someone had laid a red silk cord over the knobs. It was no impediment hanging loose like that, but you couldn't miss seeing it there. I took that as a Do Not Disturb notice. It reminded me of the hat we'd hang on the doorknob back in my Goatherds days, when four of us shared a flat and somebody had a woman inside.

"Do you see?" whispered Kazuko. "Geisha are not prostitutes. They are performers, highly trained and much admired for their skills in music, poetry, and courtly behavior."

"All right, I got it. You're right and I'm wrong."

She said nothing, so I looked back at her. She stared at me, brows furrowed. I got the idea she was thinking intently, maybe deciding what to make of me. Maybe just judging me.

"Shut up," I said, even though she hadn't spoken.

She followed me to the nearest corner. I peered down the hall. A pair of young beauties knelt beside an open door, bowing to those within. I could barely hear the boss and Takeda talking with Chiyoko inside. They'd keep the madam busy for a while, so I padded back down the other way.

Between the rooms, paper scrolls hung on the walls. Each was a painting, not in the rich oils that decorate Greensteeples and the other noble manors in Egorian, but ink drawings brightened here and there with a few strokes of watercolor. Most showed steep mountains with streams and blossoming trees. A few included traveling figures in wide straw hats, or an old bearded fisherman. One showed a woman ravaged by a devilfish in the surf. I'd seen that image before, one of many exotic paintings in the boss's library.

I raised an eyebrow at that one. Kazuko lifted her chin, but her cool expression cracked. She shrugged, disavowing any personal responsibility for the lewd picture.

More than half the rooms we passed were occupied. Each time the shadows of the men and women inside revealed perfectly innocent behavior. Some of the geisha flirted with their customers, but more often they gossiped about local events, played music, sang songs, or even—I'll be damned—recited poetry. I guess there are guys who pay for that.

Around the far corner I spotted another short passage leading deeper into the compound. I was heading toward it when I saw a shadow against the far wall. I moved

back and peeked around the corner as a couple of geisha emerged from the opposite end.

They moved in tiny steps, seeming more to glide than to walk. The way they held themselves erect inside those tight silk clothes made me think moving at all had to be a struggle. These girls had to be strong and graceful, even as they appeared frail and delicate.

They carried ceramic flasks and steaming bamboo baskets on trays. When they reached the halfway point, I considered retreating to the closest exit. Before I had to choose, they knelt before one of the doors, scratched at the frame, and opened up. I watched as they bowed and dimpled, spoke some courtesies I couldn't overhear, and finally placed first their trays and then themselves into the room. Each gesture was a tiny ritual. I began to see they had more in common with priests than with prostitutes.

I turned to Kazuko and whispered, "I get it now. Geisha."

She rewarded me with a firm, affirmative nod. I gave her the little smile, and this time she didn't look away. If we hadn't been on the job, I'd have taken her chin in my fingers and tried my luck.

With the geisha out of the way, I cat-footed it down the hall. Kazuko kept up. I barely heard the whisper of her steps. I liked those little toe-socks. I wanted to pluck them off her feet the way a lady tugs off her white gloves, one finger at a time.

Much as I liked that thought, I put it out of my mind. The boss could talk for hours, but Takeda needed to find Matano Hideo sooner rather than later. If the actor wore one of the tattoos the Kappa gang were looking for, he'd be a lot happier to see us before he saw them.

The passage to the inner courtyard ended in a heavy door, this one with a serious lock. I couldn't see through the keyhole, but I heard laughter and music from the other side. I caught the sound of a woman crying, but I couldn't suss the direction. I listened for a few more seconds but didn't hear it again.

If I'd been alone, I might have slipped back to go over the roof. I didn't want to leave Kazuko, though, so I gave the door the once-over for security and set to work.

The lock was better than the ones outside, but it was nothing compared to the one I'd cracked on Ichisada's tattoo parlor. I had it open in just over a minute. I could have done it faster, but I liked the feeling of Kazuko's breath on my neck as she leaned over to see me work.

I felt new incentive to get this job done and escort the house servant back to her place. Maybe she'd make me some tea.

The path between the inner and outer courts was full of colorful lights from lanterns hanging beside more of those sliding doors. Those on the outer faces of the building were also made of paper, but the heavy stuff had been lacquered against the rain.

Behind us, a key turned in the lock. I slipped into the shadows beneath a tree, pulling Kazuko in after me. For a second I held her close. She tensed, but when she moved away she didn't go far.

A pair of geisha carrying refreshment trays entered, followed by two more who locked the door behind them. One of them frowned as the key stuck for a moment before she could pull it out. I must have left the lock a bit sticky with my hasty work.

As the four geisha passed, it occurred to me that the two who weren't carrying trays were a trifle taller, and one of them was a little horse-faced. They had plenty of grace, but not the kind I'd seen in the other geisha. These girls moved like street toughs. Then I noticed their hairpins were darts, and the folds of their sleeves concealed some knife-shaped weights.

I'd seen something like that in one of my favorite Trick Alley brothels. The working girls there elected a new boss every year, never the same twice in a row, and they hired no men to be their pimps. They took care of trouble themselves. It helped that they usually employed a sorcerer or two, and a couple of tough gals who came up in my neighborhood, scrapping and stealing to get by.

Seeing the muscle here confirmed my guess that, if the geisha were hiding anyone important, I'd find him in the inner court.

Four open passages connected this central path to the inner garden. After the geisha and their guards disappeared into the inner building, I led Kazuko into the center of the Flower and Willow Pavilion.

The place was bigger than I'd estimated. In addition to the seven willow trees, we found two tiny buildings and a small pond with a tiny bridge. The windows of both buildings were dark, but the door to one of them was tied shut with a thick red cord.

The cords on the other doors hadn't been tied, just draped over the knobs. I was getting a hunch.

I listened at the door but heard nothing. The knot in the cord looked elaborate. I tried to memorize its ins and outs so I could put it back the way I'd found it after I had a peek inside.

"Stop!" called a woman's voice. Two geisha hurried toward us, crossing the little bridge in long strides that showed their gowns weren't so tight after all. They weren't the ones I'd spotted earlier, but I knew these were the guards, not the performing geisha.

Dammit, I thought. I dropped my boots, drew the big knife.

One of the geisha guards drew a dart from her hair. It was longer than I'd guessed, and the gleam of moonlight promised a sharp tip. She said, "You have no right to disturb the water-raising ceremony."

I slit the red cord and slid open the door to the little room. "Oops," I said. "I slipped."

I turned, not sure exactly what I expected to see. A man and woman playing patty cakes, maybe. Matano alone, hiding from the assassins or the constables. No such luck.

The little room was barely bigger than the thick mattress on the floor. A stylized white demon mask with a long wig of silk hair hung on the wall beside a colorful robe. Nearby stood low tables holding up candles that looked like they'd been burning only a short time before getting snuffed.

They weren't the only things that had been snuffed.

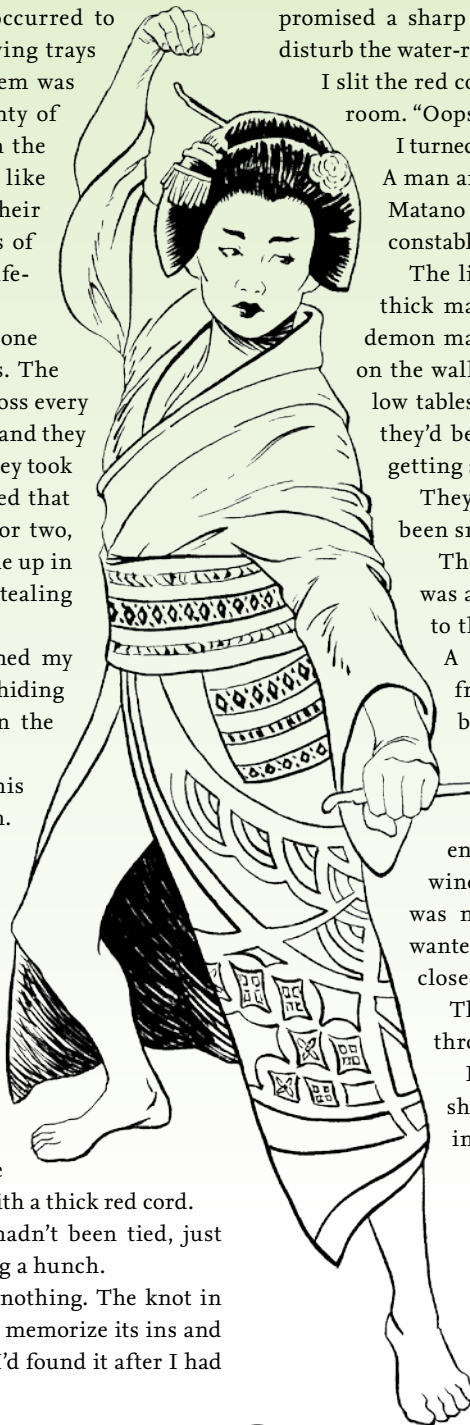
The naked man—Matano, I figured—was another story. He'd been skinned only to the waist, but he'd been stripped deep. A wide, irregular shape was missing from the skin of his back, the deep borders dark with blood that streamed into pools in the furrows of the mattress.

There was no other entrance to the little house. Three little windows let in the moonlight, but none was much bigger than my open hand. I wanted a better look, but the geisha guards closed in. I turned to face them.

They held up their darts, poised to throw.

I raised my curved Chelish knife and showed them the big smile. If one didn't impress them, I hoped the other would.

"Not all geisha are performers."





BESTIARY

SO IHALIK CAME TO THE PLACE OF THE SNOW-PEOPLE. HE CAME WEARING THE PELTS OF THEIR GUARDIAN BEARS. HE CAME WITH THE SLIT-BONE THAT GUARDED HIS EYES FROM GLARE. HE CAME WITH THE AXE OF SKY-FALL IRON. AND HE DEMANDED THEIR HOSPITALITY.

THE SNOW-PEOPLE RAGED. THEY TRAPPED HIM IN ICE, BUT THE HEAT OF HIS BLOOD MELTED IT. THEY TURNED TO STORMS, BUT HE OPENED HIS MOUTH AND BREATHED THEM IN. THEY RAMMED WITH THEIR HORNS, BUT HE WAS THE SON OF THE MOUNTAIN, AND WOULD NOT BE MOVED.

WHEN THEY WERE THROUGH, THE SNOW-PEOPLE WERE FORCED TO CONCEDE, AND OFFERED HIM THEIR GREATEST GIFT: THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE SNOW-HOUSE, AND HOW ICE MAY TRAP HEAT AND KEEP A MAN ALIVE.

—GULAYUK STORM-SPEAKER, ERUTAKI STORYTELLER

This month's entry into the Pathfinder Bestiary largely takes its inspiration from the myths of the real world's Inuit peoples, drawing forth a host of menaces from such legends to populate the Crown of the World. New terrors, like the frostfallen creature template and the atamahuta oni, also add new dangers to these merciless reaches, dooming any who would trespass upon Golarion's frigid summit.

WANDERING MONSTERS

While new encounters to confound your PCs' caravan typically fill this space over the course of the Jade Regent Adventure Path, this month's adventure makes liberal use of such encounters already. Thus, presented here is an assortment of dangers PCs might face while trekking across the Crown of the World and its varied deadly environs. While the majority of these encounters are with the fearsome fauna of that icy realm, don't forget the real dangers of weather and temperature in such frigid lands. Chapter 13 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* offers rules for a wide variety of environmental dangers appropriate for arctic expanses (especially the section on avalanches on page 429, ice sheets on 430, and cold dangers on 442), while the Crown of the World gazetteer on page 64 of this volume suggests even more hazards. Also remember that more than monsters make the Crown of the World their home, with peoples like the Erutaki and snowcaster elves offering equal possibilities for either danger or aid.

TERROR ON THE ICE

Looking for more menaces to flesh out your arctic adventures? Both the qallupilluk and saumen kar come from Inuit folklore, but they're far from the only beasts to inspire dread in polar wanderers. Here are two fantastic resources for GMs looking to add new dangers to their adventures in the merciless North.

Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3: The third entry into the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game's line of creature collections presents hundreds of new monsters, dozens of which come from the folklore and mythologies of cultures from across the real world. The peoples of the arctic are well represented therein, with new beasts like the adlet, akhlut, and tupilaq (just to name a few) being drawn from Inuit folklore and adding further dangers to the world's harshest environment. *Bestiary 3* releases in November 2011 and may be ordered at paizo.com.

Inuitmyths.com: Discussed briefly in the foreword of this month's volume, the website inuitmyths.com is an ongoing effort by the Qikiqtani Inuit Association to collect the folktales and myths of Inuit peoples and share them with new generations and the wider world. Along with some fantastic art, readers can find details on creatures like the qallupilluk, the mahaha, the ijiraq (likely to appear in the Bestiary of an upcoming volume), the taqriaqsuit, and more. Readers also have their choice of language, as the whole site is available in both English and Inuktitut.

CROWN OF THE WORLD RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Aquatic	Forest	Hills	Mountains	Tundra	Creature	Avg. CR	Source
1-18	—	—	—	1-8	1 draugr	2	<i>Bestiary 2</i> 110
19-31	—	—	—	—	1 bunyip	3	<i>Bestiary 2</i> 50
—	1-16	1-11	1-7	9-15	1 hoarfrost spirit	3	see page 14
—	17-29	12-24	8-14	16-22	1 ice troll	4	<i>Bestiary 2</i> 271
—	—	25-32	15-43	23-29	1 yeti	4	<i>Bestiary 2</i> 87
32-59	—	—	—	—	1 orca	5	<i>Bestiary 2</i> 88
60-72	—	—	—	—	1 selkie	5	<i>Pathfinder</i> #50 88
—	30-58	33-42	—	30-40	1 winter wolf	5	<i>Bestiary 2</i> 80
73-84	59-68	—	—	41-43	1 glacier toad	6	<i>Bestiary 2</i> 268
—	—	43-51	—	44-49	1 woolly rhinoceros	6	<i>Bestiary 2</i> 35
—	—	52-59	44-56	50-54	1 frost drake	7	<i>Bestiary 2</i> 108
85-100	—	—	—	55-62	1 qallupilluk	7	see page 88
—	—	60-69	—	63-72	1 mastodon	9	<i>Bestiary 2</i> 128
—	—	70-75	57-69	73-79	1 frost giant	9	<i>Bestiary 2</i> 149
—	69-79	—	70-75	—	1 witchfire	9	<i>Bestiary 2</i> 284
—	—	76-79	76-84	80-84	1 frostfallen mammoth	10	see page 84
—	80-94	80-88	85-92	85-89	1 saumen kar	10	see page 90
—	—	89-92	—	90-94	1 white pudding	10	<i>ToH*</i> 276
—	—	93-97	93-100	95-97	1 frost worm	12	<i>Bestiary 2</i> 126
—	95-100	98-100	—	98-100	1 taiga giant	12	<i>Bestiary 2</i> 131

* See the *Tome of Horrors, Revised*.

FROSTFALLEN CREATURE

This frozen mammoth erupts into movement, its bones armored with plates of ice and eyes burning with cold flames.

FROSTFALLEN MAMMOTH

CR 10



XP 9,600

NE Huge undead (cold)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., lifesense; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 9, flat-footed 26 (+1 Dex, +16 natural, -2 size)

hp 91 (14d8+28)

Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +9

DR 10/bludgeoning; **Immune** cold, undead traits

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee gore +21 (2d8+13 plus 3d6 cold), slam +21 (2d6+13 plus 3d6 cold)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Special Attacks cold

STATISTICS

Str 36, **Dex** 12, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +25; **CMD** 36 (40 vs. trip)

Feats Toughness^B

SQ lifesense

ECOLOGY

Environment any cold land

Organization solitary, pair, or drove (3–12)

Treasure none

Frostfallen creatures are mindless undead infused with icy cold and animated by a hatred for all living things. Their bodies radiate a devastating chill that cloaks them in patches of ice that act as armor. Frostfallen creatures appear otherwise as they did at the time of their reanimation, except for a cold gleam in the eyes.

ECOLOGY

In the harshest reaches of the world, cold is an ever-present enemy. When a creature dies from exposure to such harsh conditions, bitter anger and the searing cold sometimes combine to reanimate the dead as one of the frostfallen. Once reanimated, frostfallen creatures prowl the cold lands in which they fell, wreaking indiscriminate vengeance on living creatures out of spiteful rage.

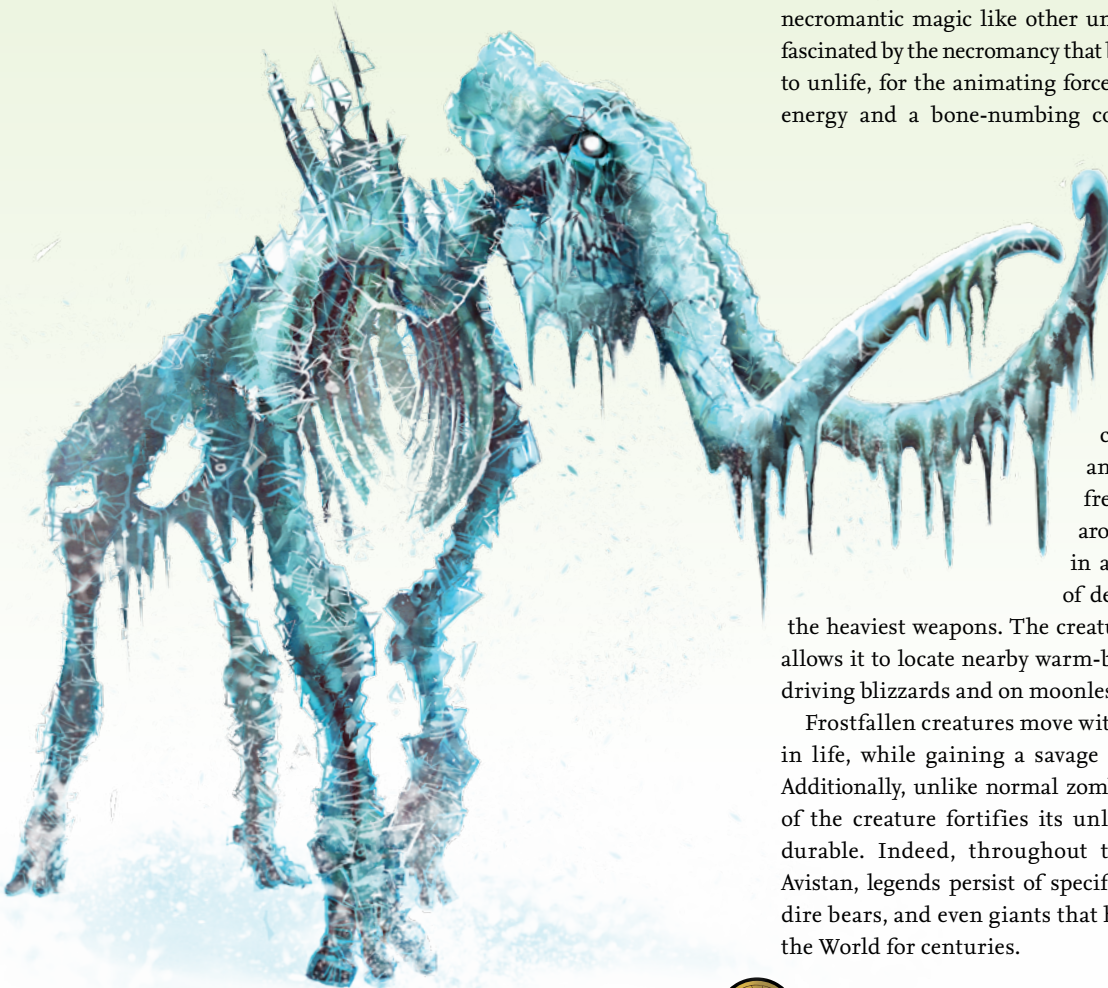
Although frostfallen creatures can be created through necromantic magic like other undead, arcane scholars are fascinated by the necromancy that brings frostfallen creatures to unlife, for the animating force is a synthesis of negative energy and a bone-numbing cold. This cold empowers

the creature's attacks, wreathing its natural weapons in a deathly chill. Those who have fought these creatures describe great wounds instantly numbed by the lethal touch of frostbite.

In addition, a frostfallen creature's body emanates an aura of cold that flash-freezes moisture in the air around it, coating the creature in a patchwork of ice capable of deflecting blows from even

the heaviest weapons. The creature's affinity for cold also allows it to locate nearby warm-blooded creatures, even in driving blizzards and on moonless nights.

Frostfallen creatures move with the same gaits they had in life, while gaining a savage surge in physical power. Additionally, unlike normal zombies, the frozen condition of the creature fortifies its unlife, making it extremely durable. Indeed, throughout the northern reaches of Avistan, legends persist of specific frostfallen mammoths, dire bears, and even giants that have hunted the Crown of the World for centuries.



HABITAT & SOCIETY

The corrupt animus that powers frostfallen creatures imbues them with a hatred of all living things, and most spend their time wandering wintry terrains near where they died, looking for life to snuff out. Sometimes, vestiges of behavior from their original forms lead to groups banding together, like frostfallen wolves that hunt in packs. Even those frostfallen that have never encountered others of their kind seem to instinctively recognize their own, and band together if prey is nearby.

In Irrisen, winter witches and other ice casters prefer creating frostfallen creatures, as such creatures' bodies more readily withstand the decay and brittleness often faced by skeletons and zombies in harsh northern climes. Casters who create frostfallen creatures often use minor magic to emblazon a creature's ice armor with carvings or specific colors, effectively branding the creature as a servant.

On rare occasions, casters will create frostfallen creatures in warmer regions like the Mwangi Expanse or the deserts of Thuvia. Despite the scorching heat of such places, frostfallen creatures retain all of their powers. In such cases, the undead's creator normally employs her minions against creatures that are susceptible to the frostfallen creature's freezing attacks. Some frostfallen creatures have even survived independent of their creators. When such a rarity comes to pass, the frostfallen creature simply begins hunting the region for fresh life to end, though it will often lie in wait in cooler places like deep caves, or under the water of an oasis so as to better ambush creatures and travelers who would never expect to see a frostfallen creature so far south.

ANIMATING A FROSTFALLEN CREATURE

A magic-user can create any form of frostfallen creature by casting *animate dead* upon the corpse to be animated and providing an amount of ice of equal weight, plus two blue topazes or turquoises worth at least 100 gp each. The creator can only create a number of Hit Dice of frostfallen creatures equal to the amount allowed by *animate dead*. Frostfallen creatures count against the number of Hit Dice of skeletons and zombies that can be created using *animate dead*.

CREATING A FROSTFALLEN CREATURE

"Frostfallen creature" is an acquired template that can be added to any corporeal creature (other than an undead), referred to hereafter as the base creature. A frostfallen creature uses the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

CR: As base creature + 1.

Alignment: Always neutral evil.

Type: The creature's type changes to undead and it gains the cold subtype. It retains any subtypes except for alignment subtypes (such as good) and subtypes that

indicate kind (such as giant). It does not gain the augmented subtype. It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Armor Class: The natural armor bonus improves by +4.

Hit Dice: A frostfallen creature drops any HD gained from class levels and changes racial HD to d8s. Creatures without racial HD are treated as if they had 1 racial HD. A skeleton uses its Charisma modifier (instead of its Constitution modifier) to determine bonus hit points.

Defensive Abilities: Frostfallen creatures gain DR 5/bludgeoning (or DR 10/bludgeoning if it has 11 HD or more). They are immune to cold.

Weaknesses: Frostfallen creatures gain vulnerability to fire.

Speed: A winged frostfallen creature's maneuverability drops to clumsy. If the base creature flew magically, its fly speed is unchanged. Retain all other movement types.

Attacks: A frostfallen creature retains all the natural weapons, manufactured weapon attacks, and weapon proficiencies of the base creature. It also gains a slam attack that deals damage based on the frostfallen creature's size, but as if it were one size category larger than its actual size.

Special Attacks: A frostfallen creature retains all of the base creature's special attacks and also gains the following.

Cold (Su): A frostfallen creature's body generates intense cold, dealing an amount of cold damage with its touch determined by its Hit Dice. Creatures attacking a frostfallen creature with unarmed strikes or natural weapons take this same cold damage each time one of their attacks hits.

FROSTFALLEN CREATURE

Hit Dice	Cold Damage
1–5	1d6
6–10	2d6
11–15	3d6
16+	4d6

Abilities: A frostfallen creature's Strength increases by +2 and its Charisma by +6. A frostfallen creature has no Constitution or Intelligence score, and its Wisdom becomes 10.

BAB: A frostfallen creature's base attack bonus is equal to 3/4 of its Hit Dice.

Skills: A frostfallen creature loses all skill ranks possessed by the base creature and gains none of its own.




Feats: A frostfallen creature loses all feats possessed by the base creature and gains Toughness as a bonus feat.

Special Qualities: A frostfallen creature loses most special qualities of the base creature. It retains any extraordinary special qualities that improve its melee or ranged attacks. It also gains the following special quality.

Lifesense (Su): The frostfallen creature notices and locates living creatures within 60 feet, just as if it possessed the blindsight ability.

ONI, ATAMAHUTA

This large humanoid creature has two heads, one brutish-looking, the other with three eyes and gems and tattoos decorating its forehead.

ATAMAHUTA	CR 11	  
XP 12,800		
LE Large outsider (oni, giant, native, shapechanger)		
Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +24		
DEFENSE		
AC 25, touch 10, flat-footed 24 (+7 armor, +1 Dex, +8 natural, –1 size)		
hp 147 (14d10+70); regeneration 5 (acid or fire)		
Fort +14, Ref +5, Will +12		
SR 22		
OFFENSE		
Speed 30 ft.		
Melee +2 <i>orc double axe</i> +22/+22/+17/+17/+12/+12 (2d6+12/19–20)		
Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.		
Special Attacks double weapon mastery, spellstrike		
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th; concentration +14)		
Constant— <i>see invisibility</i>		
3/day— <i>chill touch</i> (DC 14), <i>dimension door</i> , <i>fireball</i> (DC 16), <i>haste</i> , <i>rage</i> , <i>shocking grasp</i>		
1/day— <i>black tentacles</i> , <i>stoneskin</i> , <i>wall of fire</i>		
STATISTICS		
Str 25, Dex 12, Con 20, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 17		
Base Atk +14; CMB +22; CMD 33		
Feats Cleave, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Spell Penetration, Vital Strike		
Skills Bluff +20, Disguise +20, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (planes) +18, Perception +24, Sense Motive +20, Spellcraft +18; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception		
Languages Common, Giant, Orc, Tien		
SQ change shape (Large humanoid, <i>alter self</i>), ward off distractions		
Other Gear banded mail		
ECOLOGY		
Environment temperate mountains		
Organization solitary, pair, or cohort (1–2 plus 3–5 ettins)		
Treasure double (banded mail, +2 <i>orc double axe</i> , other treasure)		
SPECIAL ABILITIES		
Double Weapon Mastery (Ex) An atamahuta fights with an orc double axe. While making a full attack, an atamahuta controls its arms with both heads and does not take a penalty on attack or damage rolls for attacking with a double weapon.		
Spellstrike (Su) An atamahuta can imbue its weapon with magical properties using its spell-like abilities. Whenever an atamahuta casts a spell with a range of “touch” from its spell-like abilities, it can deliver the spell through any weapon it is holding as part of a free melee attack at its highest base attack bonus as part of casting its spell. If successful, this		

melee attack deals its normal damage as well as the effects of the spell. This attack uses the weapon’s critical multiplier (usually ×3), but the spell effect only deals ×2 damage on a successful critical hit, while the weapon damage uses its own critical modifier. An atamahuta cannot make a full attack during the same round that it uses a spell-like ability unless another effect would allow it to do so.

Ward Off Distractions (Ex) An atamahuta uses one of its heads to defend against attacks while the other is using a spell-like ability, giving it a +4 bonus to AC against attacks of opportunity while casting.

Atamahuta are immensely strong oni spirits who have donned the physical guise of ettins. Combining oni’s trademark guile with ettins’ unadulterated brawn, atamahuta use their two-headed forms to inflict as much damage as possible by fusing their arcane powers with their distinctive melee combat style.

Because of the raw power they infuse into the bodies they inhabit, atamahuta are slightly bigger than normal ettins. An atamahuta is 14 feet tall and weighs 5,500 pounds.

ECOLOGY

While many might think an atamahuta possesses two heads and is therefore made up of two distinct oni, each being is composed of only one oni spirit. When an atamahuta takes form, it divides its powers into two parts, granting one half of its being its ingenuity and magical prowess and the other its anger and savage strength. An ettin’s body is the most suitable for this division of powers, which manifests itself physically as one head having a seeming dominance over the other. The atamahuta’s right head most directly controls its actions in physical combat, and is also the only one that talks; the left head, meanwhile, constantly spills nonsense words and mutterings under its breath, and is the source of the oni’s arcane power. Oni scholars have speculated that an individual atamahuta’s underlying, unvoiced wishes and desires are encoded in the gibberish that bumbles from its left head, and that by listening closely enough, one can garner valuable information about the oni spirit, but few have survived an atamahuta encounter long enough to test this theory. Regardless of whatever babbling the left head produces, most witnesses agree that atamahuta strive for power and fear-induced respect more than anything else, and will go to grotesque lengths to garner them, through means both violent and utterly despicable.

Atamahuta possess the ability to change shape just as other oni, but the visage of an uncontrollably violent ettin is often even more horrifying to civilized creatures than that of an oni, whom most regard as equally evil but at least somewhat reasonable. Thus, most atamahuta find it beneficial to procure a silver-tongued ally who can act as a gateway to the more powerful and wise oni itself. Once they

have established control over a certain realm, atamahuta will usually either kill or enslave their allies, seeing the beguilers as potential threats to their rule. Atamahuta have little patience for any individual that wastes their time, and oversee their domain with an unforgiving and steadfast fist. Oni who inhabit the form of an ettin usually possess violent and unruly dispositions to begin with, but most know better than to act brashly when they first arrive in their physical forms and keep their rage at bay—at least until they establish their dominion over the lesser beings around them.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Atamahuta resemble ettins in both temperament and physical form, but their similarities end here. Most atamahuta look down upon the monstrous giants as barbaric, imperfect versions of an ideal form, and impose their superior strength and intellect upon the creatures in order to enslave them. While a single atamahuta can easily coerce and garner the aid of several ettins, the oni tend to establish elaborate slave rings in order to most effectively “recruit” high numbers of individuals, including ettins as well as other intelligent humanoids. Several atamahuta oversee the operation, while their shackled minions act as both enforcers of the slavers’ rules and prisoners themselves, hoping to garner some miniscule form of freedom through cooperation. Their sheer cunning allows atamahuta to trick their prisoners into thinking this, when in reality the only escape an atamahuta’s slave can hope to achieve is through transfer to another owner or death.

When atamahuta establish slave rings, they often make a business of selling their prisoners to the highest bidder in private auctions and black market deals. Occasionally, atamahuta will also run economically viable businesses on the side, putting their enslaved minions to work in remote fields or mines far from civilization. Atamahuta are rarely content to remain rulers over a stagnant position, and seek to advance their dominion as far as possible. Their prowess for ruthless business tactics and intimidating rivals into positions of subservience makes them potent forces in whatever realm they seek to control. Atamahuta often join merchants’ guilds and other such organizations after starting their slave rings, creating legitimate business fronts in order to infiltrate the guilds and wrest control of them. With this power, they can impose seemingly fair taxes upon their competitors, ultimately running them out of business and establishing themselves as the sole means of trade within a community. Of course, they must do this all through surrogates, as few trade organizations would permit an oni or an ettin into their ranks, and even then, many guilds have imposed

strict rules regarding representatives into their systems in order to prevent such atamahuta-run monopolies from developing in the first place.

Atamahuta are typically distrustful of other oni, as they see them as potential threats to their power, and thus only rarely ally themselves with other such beings. Occasionally, however, such alliances can prove to be mutually beneficial, and so atamahuta team up with weaker oni such as yamabushi tengus or kuwa, so that they can reap the rewards of such a coalition while still retaining the most power. More intelligent or powerful oni recognize atamahuta for their oblivious nature and will often manipulate the beings for their strength, tricking the ettin-shaped oni into thinking they are dominant in the friendship until the more powerful oni has used the atamahuta for their intended purpose, at which point the beings are swiftly discarded.



QALLUPILLUK

The lumpy, scaled hide of this monstrous humanoid woman drips with icy water, as do its lank, tangled black hair and ragged sealskin garments, both decorated with numerous shells and tiny living crustaceans. A curiously sweet smell wafts from her.

QALLUPILLUK CR 7 
XP 3,200

LE Medium monstrous humanoid (aquatic)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +13

Aura cloying scent (15 feet)

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17 (+2 Dex, +7 natural)

hp 76 (8d10+32)

Fort +6, **Ref** +10, **Will** +8

DR 5/cold iron; **Resist** cold 10, fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 40 ft.

Melee bite +12 (1d4+4), 2 claws +12 (1d6+4)

Ranged javelin +10 (1d6+4)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +11)

At will—*water breathing*

3/day—*charm animal* (DC 17), *charm person* (DC 17), *chill metal* (DC 18), *sleet storm*

1/day—*commune with nature*, *divination*

Special Attacks curse of scales

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 14, **Con** 19, **Int** 13, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 24

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Lightning Reflexes, Stand Still

Skills Knowledge (nature) +12, Perception +13, Stealth +13, Survival +13, Swim +23

Languages Aklo, Aquan, Common, Giant

SQ amphibious

ECOLOGY

Environment cold aquatic

Organization solitary, family (2–6 qallupilluks and 1–4 aquatic monsters)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Cloying Scent (Su) Qallupilluks exude a vaguely sweet and unexpectedly pleasant brine scent. This smell comforts and distracts humanoids and animals that come within 15 feet of the qallupilluk, causing such creatures to take a –2 penalty on saves against mind-affecting effects.

Curse of Scales (Su) A qallupilluk can turn its victims into a variety of horrible monstrosities. If a qallupilluk succeeds in grappling a Medium or Small humanoid opponent, that creature begins transforming into a monster. If the victim is freed from the qallupilluk's grapple before the end of 3 rounds, it returns to normal with no ill effects. If the qallupilluk manages to retain its grapple on the creature

for 3 uninterrupted rounds, the victim must succeed at a DC 18 Fortitude save or be afflicted with a curse that randomly transforms it into one of the creatures on the following table. The creature must make this save every round after the third round until it either fails or is freed from the qallupilluk's grapple. Once transformed, the creature is slavishly devoted to the qallupilluk for the duration of the curse and will fight on its behalf. If the qallupilluk is slain, the victim regains control of its actions, but its body does not return to normal until the curse is ended. The curse ends after 1 hour or if the victim is slain, causing it to revert back to its normal form. The curse can also be ended by any spell that removes curses. A qallupilluk can make this curse permanent by spending 10 minutes and sacrificing half its hit points in a brief ritual, though magic that removes curses can still end this effect. The save DC is Constitution-based.

1d6	Creature	CR	Source
1	grindylow	1/2	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 148
2	reefclaw	1	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 234
3	bunyip	3	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 50
4	merrow	3	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 189
5	scrag	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 268
6	saltwater merrow	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 189

Qallupilluks (kah-loo-PEE-look) are sinister and much dreaded haglike denizens of far northern seas. Inhabitants of coastal regions fear them as child snatchers who steal the young and drag them below the waves. Those stolen are rarely seen again, as they are transformed into horrible scaled monstrosities enslaved by their adoptive “mothers,” though they are sometimes turned against their former families and friends with a dreadful hunger if the qallupilluk becomes angered.

Qallupilluks are always female. Most stand about 5-1/2 feet tall, though their hunched posture makes them appear shorter. They typically weigh about 160 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Qallupilluks are most commonly found along the frozen shorelines and pack ice of arctic and subarctic seas and oceans, though they can occasionally be found in large coldwater lakes and rivers. During the warmer months, they may lurk in the dark and chilly depths of their watery homes, and likewise in the heart of winter, when pack ice is at its thickest, they are unlikely to venture too close to the surface unless some greater need drives them. During the seasonal transitions when the ice cracks and shifts, when it's treacherous even for experienced ice hunters and fisherfolk to travel, these vicious crones prove most dangerous. They wait near gaps and weak points in the ice and listen for the footsteps of creatures above, sometimes

humming or tapping insistently on the ice like trapped seals, in the hope of drawing the curious—especially children—onto dangerous ground.

When they hear victims approaching, qallupilluks usually hide to allay suspicion, at least long enough for the qallupilluk's supernaturally sweet scent to cloud the children's minds and leave them vulnerable to the qallupilluk's magical charm. Children venturing too near are snatched up in the qallupilluk's long arms and dragged below, thrust into the capacious hood of the qallupilluk's amautik (its hooded sealskin parka) and carried off to its subaquatic domain. While a qallupilluk's magic can sustain such lost souls underwater, it either lets its prey drown—saving it to be consumed later—or acts swiftly to transform the victim's mind and body into a monstrous servant that it treats as its own misshapen child.

Qallupilluks are always female and have great difficulty reproducing. They steal land-dwelling humanoid children whenever possible, in part to reduce their loneliness and to lash out at the surface dwellers that seem to have so easy a time of procreating. More importantly, however, they steal children in order to cultivate potential breeding stock. While attempts to breed with natural-born merrow and similar aquatic monstrosities have universally ended in failure, some unique factor in the nature and potential of other humanoids transformed into such beasts offers at least some chance of successful conception. Even then, success is hardly guaranteed, but those transformed unfortunate that breed true may allow the qallupilluk to birth another of her kind.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Qallupilluks live along the murky floor of their watery domains, but rarely dwell far from humanoid habitation. They may craft hovels or lodges from stone or coral on the seabed, or rarely from sunken logs, stumps, and snags in freshwater lakes. Some few craft semipermanent homes in the submerged recesses of icebergs floating through the cold seas. Qallupilluks are one of many dangers that arctic tribes use to reinforce their strong cultural and behavioral taboos and rituals. They feature in many tales of northern tribes as bogeymen—cautionary tales to warn children away from wandering alone, accepting gifts from strangers, venturing too close to the seashore, and especially wandering onto cracking or unstable ice. The dangers they present are all too real in the life of the tribes, and give ample force to the cautionary fables of village shamans.




Qallupilluks are known to possess fragments of ancient and obscure natural secrets, and those in search of such lore sometimes cast offerings into cracks in the ice in an effort to implore the qallupilluk to answer their request.

Qallupilluks favor offerings of beads, jewels, coins, and ivory carvings, though those offering them gifts must be careful to offer nothing that will reveal a reflection. Qallupilluks loathe their hideous appearances and do not wish to be reminded of them. Those foolish enough to offer a mirrored item do not generally live to regret their mistake. Still, for those whose offerings are sufficient, a qallupilluk may reveal herself to the supplicant and engage the creature in conversation. A wise supplicant will offer compliments and sweet-talk or offer up additional gifts of food and drink, or even an invitation to community festivities. Though they recognize their own hideousness and their reputation, qallupilluks are vain enough to fall prey to flattery and greedy enough to be taken in with promises of future rewards. They will abide by the letter of any covenant or promise they make, but are swift to take revenge on those they discover have tricked them or who renege on an agreement.



SAUMEN KAR

This hulking humanoid's dense fur is scored with rune-shaped brands. Skin cracked and blackened by frostbite stretches taught over a misshapen skull crowned with a pair of ivory horns.

SAUMEN KAR	CR 10	  
XP 9,600		
CN Large monstrous humanoid		
Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +21		
DEFENSE		
AC 24, touch 11, flat-footed 22 (+4 deflection, +2 Dex, +9 natural, –1 size)		
hp 136 (13d10+65)		
Fort +11, Ref +10, Will +9		
Defensive Abilities frostbite brands; Immune cold, Resist fire 20		
OFFENSE		
Speed 40 ft.		
Melee greataxe +21/+16/+11 (2d6+12/19–20 plus 1d6 cold), headbutt +15 (1d6+4 plus stun)		
Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.		
Special Attacks snowstorm (2d6 cold plus 2d6 slashing damage, DC 24), stun (1 round, DC 24)		
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th; concentration +13) 3/day— <i>wall of ice</i> (DC 14) 1/day— <i>summon nature's ally VI</i> (polar bear [dire bear] only)		
STATISTICS		
Str 26, Dex 15, Con 20, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 11		
Base Atk +13; CMB +22; CMD 38		
Feats Alertness, Diehard, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (greataxe), Self-Sufficient, Weapon Focus (greataxe)		
Skills Heal +3, Knowledge (nature) +13, Perception +21, Sense Motive +3, Stealth +14 (+18 in ice and snow), Survival +21;		
Racial Modifiers +4 Stealth in ice and snow		
Languages Giant		
ECOLOGY		
Environment cold plains, hills, or desert		
Organization solitary or family (2–5)		
Treasure greataxe		
SPECIAL ABILITIES		
Frostbite Brands (Ex) A saumen kar's brands infuse the creature with intense cold, so much that it gains resistance to fire 20 and its touch deals an additional 1d6 points of cold damage. A saumen kar's metallic weapons also conduct this chill. A saumen kar's brands can be removed by the spell <i>erase</i> as though they were magic writing with a caster level equal to the saumen kar's Hit Dice. If the brands are removed, the saumen kar loses both its fire resistance and its ability to do additional cold damage, until the following dawn when the brands re-etch themselves upon its body.		
Snowstorm (Su) In mimicry of its unforgiving environment, a saumen kar can transform into a living snowstorm of lethal power. This ability lasts as long and operates like the whirlwind special attack with the following changes:		

Creatures within the area of the snowstorm take 2d6 points of cold damage and 2d6 points of slashing damage and take a –20 penalty on Perception checks. A saumen kar gains a fly speed of 40 feet (perfect) while in this form.

Stun (Ex) While a saumen kar's horns are not large enough for a gore attack, they extend under the skin to form a bony plate. A creature struck by a saumen kar's headbutt must succeed at a DC 24 Fortitude saving throw or be stunned for 1 round.

This leathery-faced creature stands tall and upright, with long, simian limbs and a shaggy coat. Intelligent and powerful, saumen kars are not naturally aggressive, but the hostility of their environment forces them to defend the land that supports them with ferocity, even to the death. Their natural coloration and snow-packed fur make saumen kars almost invisible among the drifts of their icy homes, leading many arctic races to refer to them as “men of snow.” A long-forgotten deal made by their race in its infancy still brutally scars the body of each saumen kar, marking them with their distinctive frostbite brands—though if this debt is already paid, lapsed, or growing ever greater, none can remember. An adult saumen kar stands 12 feet tall and weighs almost 2,000 pounds, but the ice and snow matted to its fur for both insulation and armor add another 1,000 pounds to its bulk.

ECOLOGY

These solitary creatures eke out a bitter existence across the equally bitter landscape of the Crown of the World, their origins a mystery even to themselves. They are nomadic, roaming the wastes to settle temporarily where they are lucky enough to find food, shelter, or both. They are omnivorous, but the climate dictates that the lion's share of their diet is meat, and saumen kars consume the flesh of any creature but their own kind.

Generation to generation, saumen kars pass down the ice crafting techniques that supply them with weapons, tools, and art. Occasionally a saumen kar's lair contains crude ice replicas of common Erutaki implements, from storage jars to skinning tools, or even heavy-lidded ice chests. Finding their frozen works among the possessions of another race is rare, however, since saumen kar ice artifacts rarely last long outside of arctic environments.

The crude frostbite brands that mark every adult saumen kar's flesh are the gruesome expression of an ancient pact with an otherworldly being, still honored by saumen kars for both spiritual and practical reasons. The specifics of the pact are long forgotten, but some Erutaki elders believe the men of snow protect something in the wastes that they have themselves forgotten. While the meaning of the brands may have become lost to their wearers, scholars of language recognize the runes as a form of ancient Giant. Even still, only one well versed in linguistics can identify the sole rune still rendered well enough to read: “favored.” The runes' powers

lead many to believe the saumen kars owe their protection to one of the numerous powers of the North, such as Hshrha, the Duchess of All Winds; the Emphyreal Lord Tolc; or entities mysterious to natives of more temperate lands, though the implication of the runes being an ancient form of the Giant language also creates an unsettling link between these arctic warriors and the Deathless Frost, Kostchtchie. Whichever way other races choose to speculate, the saumen kars believe the brands' protections come from their reverence for the deadly forces of the world's summit, and they display their scars proudly, wearing no clothing or armor but the snow matted into their dense fur.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

The Crown of the World is an unforgiving place, and the saumen kars have learned that survival is best achieved alone or in very small groups. It is rare to meet more than one of their kind at a time, although folklore does tell of handfuls of saumen kars banding together against a particularly serious or wide-ranging threat. Wandering the wastes alone, they throw up temporary lairs wherever food or ice cliffs can be found, moving off when they have taken what they can from the land. A typical lair is little more than a rough-walled igloo or ice cave built by hefting large amounts of snow and packing it tight around the hemispheres of ice they create, before the magical effect expires.

Saumen kars' antisocial behavior is what keeps them rare, and indeed mating is almost incidental, occurring when a male's and favorably disposed female's paths happen to cross. New families rarely stay together for long, and for a creature with a lifespan of up to 300 years, their offspring grow at an alarming rate, and learn to fend for themselves early in life.

Saumen kars worship the land and the powers of the North rather than any specific deity, leading to a druidic dominance of their spiritual lives. In their final days, some saumen kars travel to sites of great natural beauty or power to die in a place where the blackened bones of many generations are tumbled together beneath ever-shifting ice and snow. From what little outsiders can gather, they are a loosely shamanic people, and some carry crude family reliquaries of teeth, bones, and fur for ancestral protection and guidance.

Saumen kars speak a dialect of Giant influenced by Druidic, though they rarely communicate with other races. Some saumen kars, through necessity, have picked up smatterings of the Erutaki languages and even a word or two of Common, but

their knowledge of such languages never extends beyond a handful of crude threats and warnings.

Survival in the wastes is about understanding its dangers, environmental or otherwise, and despite their primitive, animalistic appearance, saumen kars are canny combatants. Over thousands of years their proud race has learned patience and silence from the glaciers. Rather than risk a frontal assault, they utilize their natural coloration to hide in snow banks and their ability to summon powerful ursine aid to scare off enemies or track those who trespass upon their lands. Only if interlopers prove a match for their summoned allies will they cautiously join the fray, trapping physically stronger creatures in icy hemispheres or separating groups with freezing planes. They then wade in, the field rearranged to their advantage, to use their imposing size, savage axe blows, and incapacitating headbutts to cut down weaker opponents, or take snowstorm form to shred dangerous spellcasters with blinding, razor-sharp sleet.



FOREST OF SPIRITS

by Richard Pett

When the adventurers finally reach the wondrous land of Tian Xia, they make their way to Minkai through the supposedly haunted Forest of Spirits, where they befriend the mysterious Miyaro and acquire the aid of the shapeshifting kami who dwell there. The kami inform the heroes that in order to understand their enemy, the oni, the party must delve into a treacherous fortress that once contained the evil fiends—a palace known as the House of Withered Blossoms—and face off against whatever monstrous inhabitants now reside in its perilous dungeons.

ECOLOGY OF THE KAMI

Explore the origins and traits of the strange but kind spirits who oppose the evil oni and inhabit much of Minkai, supernatural beings collectively referred to as kami. Though each kami spirit possesses a vast array of druidic powers and a passion for protecting the balance of nature, no two are truly alike, and there is much more to these humble guardians than meets the eye.

WAY OF THE NINJA

Discover the ancient mysteries of the exclusive and deadly ninja clans of Minkai, find out what it takes to become a ninja, and explore the secrets that make these discrete political entities such an influential force within the Dragon Empires.

AND MORE!

Radovan and Jeggare explore the seedier side of Oda in the latest installment of “Husks,” the Pathfinder’s Journal by Dave Gross! Also, it’s a battle between the forces of nature as several of the benevolent kami and the destructive oni are detailed in the Pathfinder Bestiary.

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ERUTAKI

Those who don't understand how anyone could live in the biting snow of the Crown of the World lack both fortitude and imagination—or at least, that's how the Erutaki see it. From peerless mountaineers and migratory hunters to the fearless whalers who paddle through waters that freeze faster than they drown, each Erutaki is a picture of humanity's ability to conquer and adapt to the elements. These are the people who can read ice like a manuscript, telling you which is rotted and which harder than stone. An Erutaki guide is an incredible boon to those entering their homeland, and often means the difference between life and death for ill-prepared foreigners.



WINTER WOLVES

The howls of the winter wolves are a sound to chill the heart of any adventurer making his or her way across the bleak tundra and ice sheets of the Crown of the World. Far larger than an ordinary wolf, and with magically cold breath capable of freezing prey's blood in its veins, the winter wolf's true weapon is its mind. As smart as a human, and evil beyond all bounds of nature, the winter wolf is a cunning foe that often allies itself with even more powerful monsters, serving as a scout and vanguard for their raiding parties. In Irrisen, winter wolves have long been allied with the White Witches, yet in the icy Crown of the World their alliances are decidedly more tenuous.

THROUGH ICE AND FIRE

Though few would call the Crown of the World hospitable, the PCs have no choice but to brave this icy frontier if they are to get Ameiko to Minkai. As they battle their way past the fell beasts that inhabit the arctic wasteland, the heroes must unravel the mystery of the supernatural blizzards that have been plaguing the polar icecap, ultimately confronting the dark and otherworldly force behind the treacherous gales. Will the adventurers survive the terrors of the Crown of the World long enough to remedy the curse that haunts it? Or will they succumb to the icy wastes, as have so many before them?

This volume of Pathfinder Adventure Path includes:

- “The Hungry Storm,” a Pathfinder RPG adventure for 7th-level characters, by Jason Nelson.
- A look at the perils and hazards of the treacherous Crown of the World, by Jason Nelson.
- An exploration of Oda’s seedier side in the Pathfinder’s Journal, by Dave Gross.
- Four new monsters, by Jesse Benner, Jason Nelson, Patrick Renie, and Tork Shaw.



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