

INTO THE PALE TOWER

AN ADVENTURE FOR 1ST-LEVEL CHARACTERS
SET IN RHUNE: DAWN OF TWILIGHT



\$7.00



BY WILL COOPER
& JAYE SONIA

INTRODUCTION

Like many writers, I often find myself writing forwards and introductions to the pieces I'm working on long after I've finished them. In a way, it's a milestone; it's that moment when you know you're finally done. I suppose it goes without saying that it's a great feeling. So, in a word—thanks.

This adventure (the first of many) represents a lot to me. It was a collective effort and everything you're about to read comes after months of hard work, play testing, and a lot (and I mean a lot) of writing. It's beautifully laid out, filled with great art and cartography, and represents everything we hope to put forward in our future products. It really is a great representation of what we hope to bring to you at Storm Bunny Studios.

Into the Pale Tower is the first part of larger adventure arc we have planned for **RHUNE: DAWN OF TWILIGHT**. We plan to follow up *Into the Pale Tower* with *The Rune of Hope* (part 2) and *Frigid Reflections* (part 3). These adventures, when completed, will take the PCs all across the lands of **RHUNE: DAWN OF TWILIGHT** and into the realms beyond. To say we're excited to share the full scope of just what Stormpunk is would be a massive understatement at this point—so I'll just invite you now.

As for this adventure, it wouldn't be what it is if it weren't for the hard work of Will Cooper, Joshua Kitchens, Allison Tsatsa, Stephen Wark, and all of those who contributed art and cartography. Finally, I would like to thank everyone who play tested this adventure—at Gen Con, at Total Con, and in Kuwait. All of your feedback has been invaluable.

May the Æssinyr bless you and all those who dare to stand against the Thrall Lords!

~Jaye Sonia
April, 2014

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SUMMARY

This adventure begins with the player characters attending the public viewing of the newly renovated Hanging Gardens of Clan Hammerfall in the heart of Union City. While the PCs are touring the gardens and enjoying its many unique features, a group of hired thugs posing as anti-technology activists begin to assault the attendees. As the guards (and the PCs?) respond to the thugs, Grey Navash, an agent of the Black Hand, works in the shadows. After dealing with the thugs, the PCs have only a few moments to notice the real threat—the scuttlebombs drilling into the superstructure. The PCs have a few precious moments to herd the innocent attendees out of the hall, to deactivate the scuttlebombs, or to otherwise deal with the crisis before the scuttlebombs explode—raining down glass and debris on the panicked guests.

A few moments later Clan Hammerfall's elite guard, led by Vitkarr Kellak, arrives. When it does, Grey Navash strikes from the shadows, hitting the noble dwarf with a poisoned dart before fleeing. And like that, the chase is on!

After the chase (and possibly a difficult battle), the PCs learn that Gray Navash is an agent of the Black Hand, although some believe he's been acting on his own, settling an old debt with an ally from Northgard. In the wake of the disaster, several interested parties—including Clan Hammerfall—approach the PCs. Each has his own interests, and all of them lead the PCs north.

The player characters then travel to Northgard. There, they meet a number of the fort's personalities, each with pressing problems of their own. Stuck in the fort awaiting the return of the *White Jarl*, the PCs have an opportunity to help those individuals and learn more about the dangers of the North. They may also, if they elected to, pursue any faction missions they accepted in Union City.

After a series of short side missions, the PCs are formally introduced to Drothgar Norwode, Commander

of Northgard, who thanks them for their service. Sensing greatness in them, he requests their aid. He informs them he needs them to go further north, as his normal rider from Fort Blitzkrieg is days late. They are given a day to rest and gather supplies before traveling north.

Their journey north is filled with discoveries and enemies alike. However, just as they discover the body of the fallen soldier, the clouds clear and the weather starts to chill - promising a dangerously cold night for those who turn south. Left with little choice, the PCs head for the only real shelter within miles—Fort Blitzkrieg.

Upon reaching the outpost, the player characters discover the front gate ajar and all of the guard posts abandoned. As they cautiously explore the outpost, they discover several grisly scenes, all of them eventually

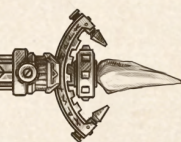
leading them to the barracks. There, they discover the remainder of the company, murdered nearly to the man, by one another. They search the outpost, looking for clues, and eventually learn that several men have survived—three that appear to have traveled north to the Pale Tower.

Finally, either at the command of Northgard or on their own initiative, the player characters travel north, following the trail of the survivors. Upon reaching the Pale Tower, they discover it open to the elements, the trail leading inside. They explore the tower, discovering the Gallery of the Frozen, as well as several other strange rooms dedicated to the perverted Thrall Lords. Finally, the trail takes them to a single chamber with

no discernible exits. Before the player characters can fully examine the room, however, the remaining soldiers (now horribly twisted into servants of the Thrall Lords) attack!

After defeating the twisted soldiers and their leader, the player characters learn that the Pale Tower holds a dimensional gate to Nieflæheim—the Land of the Long Winter. The player characters also discover a strange axe, etched with fell runes – a strange prize.

The adventure concludes with the surviving player characters returning to Northgard, where they learn that



barbarians have attacked in their absence. Worse, the barbarians have laid siege to the city and rumors abound that Commander Drothgar's own daughter—Ice Keeper

Issadora—is defending the city in place of her father, who some whisper has been infected with *rage fever*.

BACKGROUND

Grey Navash, an agent of the Black Hand, has no love for the City-States of Vallinar or the Trade Families that run them. But his dislike for the City-States pales in comparison to the hate he harbors for the dwarves of Clan Hammerfall, whom he blames for the death of his parents. Bound and determined to bring the dwarven clan and all it holds dear to ruin, Navash has marshaled some of the darkest minds of Union City—including the infamous Gæric “Dreadgear” Gorrum—to do them harm. His plan is simple; he intends to blow up the Hanging Gardens of Clan Hammerfall!

Those who would be allies, however, were not without their own goals. In seeking aid for his own plans, Navash has called upon his childhood friend Adennyia to help. After hearing his plans, Adennyia—herself a follower of Mhamnoch, Lord of the Long Winter—agreed to go north and take over Fjord's Wake mine. She recruited a company of miners from Union City to do this, and once she had safely reopened the mine, she sacrificed these men—trading them to wandering barbarians on the shores of Icewall Bay to secure future passage in and around there lands for her allies. Then, Adennyia waited.

While Adennyia saw to mine, Navash contacted Gæric Dreadgear Gorrum, a clockwork adept of questionable motives, to aid him in planning his attacks on the Hanging Gardens. Together, the two planned a series of minor attacks that would distract the city guard, ensuring that security in the Hanging Gardens was at a minimum. But Navash and Dreadgear were not done. They knew that Northgard was only hours away and could easily aid the city, so on the day of the attack, Dreadgear was to travel north and sneak into the city. There, he would contact Adennyia and the two would, from the inside and outside, hold Northgard at bay while Navash activated his agents around the city.

Unbeknownst to Navash or Dreadgear, Adennyia had devised plans of her own. With the mine secure, she traveled further north, to the city of Icewall. Once there, she communed with her patron Thrall Lord Mhamnoch and learned of the Pale Tower and its portal to Niflæheim. The Thrall Lord gifted her with the vision of a foul ritual, one that would transform hers into a Winter Hag. She would only need to activate the old portal and conduct a special ritual there. Adennyia, however, knew she couldn't get people to willingly go to the Pale Tower. So, she developed an even more devious alternative. She secured the supplies she would need and headed for the Pale Tower. She entered

the tower, activated the portal within, and built a hidden altar to channel the portal's power. Then, she traveled south to Northgard, disguised as a gifted prospector, and recruited more men to work her mine—promising them all the wealth they could carry. With these men in tow, Adennyia returned to the mine and immediately started work on a second altar, a larger mirror to the first in the Pale Tower, to act as the focal point for her ritual. Once the altar was complete, she enslaved the miners, creating a series of thralls to guard the mine while she started the slow process of becoming a Winter Hag.

Her actions, however, did not go unnoticed. Sea Wardens patrolling the coastal waters northwest of Union City quickly started seeing a series of strange lights around the Pale Tower. While these were initially minor, they grew in intensity and, after a few weeks, became visible as far south as Northgard, prompting the fort to send several companies of men to investigate. The men occupied Fort Blitzkrieg, reinforced it, and began to once again watch the alien tower on the horizon. Nothing happened for several weeks and the men began to relax, their officers eventually sending reports requesting to stand the fort down. Still concerned, the Northwatch Commander, Drothgar Norwode, ordered a single company remain at the outpost, keeping in regular contact.

The strange lights—themselves the side effects of Adennyia's ritual—attracted more than just the Sea Wardens or Northgard's attention, however. Wandering barbarians, already informed by Adennyia that things were afoot in the south, took notice of the remote fort. Realizing only a single company of men held the fort, the barbarians attacked. Caught relatively unaware, the soldiers had little time to react before a full third of their company was slaughtered. Worse, the marauders had secured the service of a lesser giant with a taste for horseflesh. It took them no time to batter down the gate and take the main yard.

Unable to stand against a giant (which, unbeknownst to them, wandered off shortly into the battle after killing and eating their horses), the remaining company barricaded itself in its barracks and tried to wait out the siege. The siege lasted days. However, after several attempts to beat down the reinforced doors, the barbarians finally moved on, leaving those inside to their fate. Unbeknownst to the survivors, the last soldier to make it inside had borne a terrible injury, one that had infected him with *rage fever*. As the hours wore into days, things inside the barracks deteriorated. The first man, mad with fever, attacked three others. Infected, they slowly succumbed to the disease and spread it in turn. Within a week, nearly all of the soldiers had it to some degree or another. A single soldier, Sörer, however, remained uncontaminated. Realizing that the fort was lost, the company's commander—Sir Vogel—ordered the lone, uninjured man south with the dire news.

As the majority of the men in the barracks fought and



killed one another, a separate group—now fully enflamed with madness—left the barracks, tracked their former comrade south, and hunted him for sport. Try as he might, Sörer could not evade his pursuers. They caught him a day north of Northgard and easily killed him. After propping his body against a tree, they used him for target practice before finally wandering back north, called to the Pale Tower by some mysterious, vile force. When they finally arrived at the base of the Pale Tower, these three men found the gate at the tower's base wide open. Weakened from the disease, they were easily ensnared by the tower's dark magic. Like so many before them, they blindly walked in.

Two days later, the marauding barbarians returned to Fort Blitzkrieg. The remaining soldiers, some of them now mad themselves, threw open the eastern door to the barracks. By the end of the day, not a single soldier remained. The barbarians looted the fort, dined on the dead, and eventually marched off, now reinforced with new soldiers to aid them—but not before setting several wicked traps for the next company.

Knowing none of this, Navash set his plan into motion.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

While this adventure is set in **RHUNE: DAWN OF TWILIGHT**, it can easily be placed into any setting that embraces clockwork or steampunk themes (although you must admit, *Stormpunk* just has a nicer ring to it). It's perfect for a setting like Wolfgang Baur's **MIDGARD** or Privateer Press's **IRON KINGDOMS**, although individual GMs will need to make several adjustments if they transport it outside of Rhune.

If you are running this in **RHUNE: DAWN OF TWILIGHT**, you have a unique opportunity to showcase a number of key themes that are pivotal to the setting. These themes include: personal honor, the technological divide, the wicked barbarians of the North, the secret cults in the south, the mysterious Pale Tower, the much-feared *rage fever*, and the shadow war that some of the factions—namely the Black Hand—are waging against the civilized folks of the City-States of Vallinar. Of course, there will also be automata, mythical heroes, and runes!

While any number of these themes might be enough to drive an individual campaign, we wanted to weave an intricate web that involved as many of these themes as

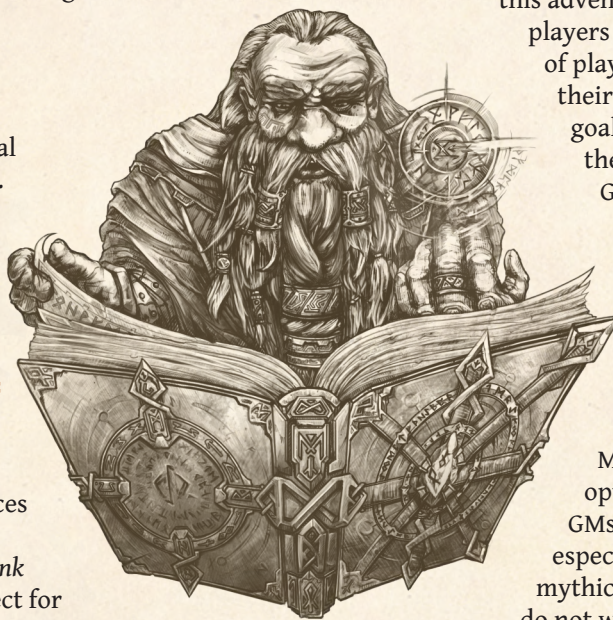
possible so that people new to the setting could get the best possible look at it. If you do find your interest peaked, check out our website and download the **RHUNE: DAWN OF TWILIGHT STORMPUNK CHARACTER PRIMER** so you can learn more!

Before starting this adventure, GMs should note the following:

First, this adventure features several factions, each with missions matching their particular agendas. Some of these are in direct conflict and will require subtly. GMs should be warned that this could result in player conflict. If a group of players is prone to inner-party conflict but normally resolve it well, this should not be a problem. Should the GM elect to include these faction missions, he should give players a chance to review some of the featured factions in this adventure before starting. If, however, players are not accustomed to this style of play (or have a hard time placing their personal goals behind the party's goals), GMs are encouraged to exclude these faction missions. In this case, GMs are encouraged to develop these missions as additional plot hooks that can be pursued at the conclusion of the adventure, instead.

Next, GMs should note that some of the encounters herein have sidebars labeled 'Making it Mythic!' These sidebars include optional descriptions or hints that GMs can use to enhance the game, especially if they plan to introduce the mythic option to their game. GMs who do not want to run a mythic campaign set in **RHUNE: DAWN OF TWILIGHT** or who are not using those rules in their game, are welcome to disregard these sidebars. Alternately, they can be used to add additional flavor to the adventure, but without transforming the PCs into mythic heroes.

Finally, GMs will notice that encounters have a slightly different layout, with some awarding honor alongside treasure and experience points. In **RHUNE: DAWN OF TWILIGHT**, honor is earned and spent differently than in a standard **PATHFINDER ROLEPLAYING GAME** adventure. In addition to changing the starting attitude of NPCs dealing with PCs (for better or worse), it can be spent to secure favors, gifts, and to secure oaths. GMs who do not wish to use honor need only omit these awards from their game. Brief rules for honor are outlined in the appendix of this adventure. There will be thoroughly explained in the upcoming **RHUNE: DAWN OF TWILIGHT: STORMPUNK CHARACTER PRIMER (VERSION 2)**.



ACT 1:

HANGING GARDENS, HIDDEN SPIDERS

The player characters begin this adventure as part of the public that has gathered to witness the grand opening of the newly renovated Daegr's Hall, itself an important part of the fabled Hanging Gardens of Hammerfall. While the gardens would normally be off-limit to the general public, Clan Hammerfall recently decided improve its reputation in the community and, as a result, opened the hall to outsiders. Some have whispered that this is a politically motivated event, but Clan Hammerfall vehemently denies it. Regardless, the event is intended to be a memorable event, held atop one of the clan's many multi-story building, and is only accessible by way of lift, stairs, or a very long climb (DC 25).

Daegr's Hall's rests in the southeastern corner of the Hammerfall Estates, along the eastern edge of Union City. While the property easily covers several city blocks, the most prominent of the Hanging Gardens are located on the eastern side of the estates, just inside the estate walls. In all instances, particular gardens are higher than the buildings around them, ensuring the maximum amount of possible sunlight at all times. As a precaution, Clan Hammerfall has purchased most of the property surrounding its estate (which it lets out) to ensure that no one builds above its fabled gardens.

While nearly all of the Hammerfall villas (and support buildings) are crafted from the finest stone (hewn stone, hardness 8), the iron and glass domes that rest proudly atop these sturdy foundations are a much different affair.

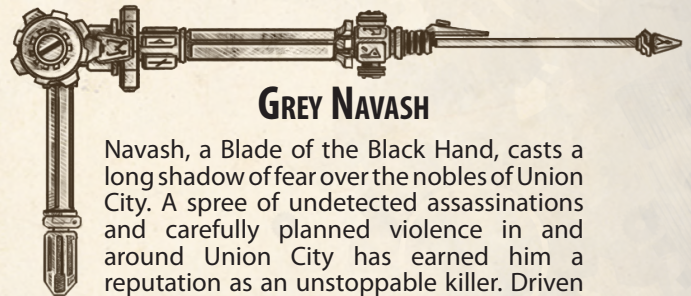
Unless otherwise noted, the dome is framed from iron (hardness 10) that has been plated in polished brass and fitted with panes of alchemically treated glass (hardness 3). The dome is 60 ft. at the pinnacle of its inner arch, but all of the surrounding halls and walkways stand at a normal height of 8 ft. All of the doors in and around the dome are made of strong wood, banded in iron and alchemically treated (hardness 7). Breaking these doors down requires a Strength check (DC 23).

For their part, the gardens that fill Daegr's Hall are incredibly well groomed. Each area is marked by a small, raised marble wall that divides the vegetation from the paths that coil between, under, and around it. Although anyone could easily move up and through the patches of vegetation, Clan Hammerfall guards are quick to intervene if the general public tries to. Anyone moving through this vegetation quickly discovers it is incredibly thick (treat each square as difficult terrain). Currently, none of the plants on display have particularly damaging qualities, Clan Hammerfall having chosen to show off its more beatific or fragrant varieties instead.

As the players enter the dome for the first time, read the following:

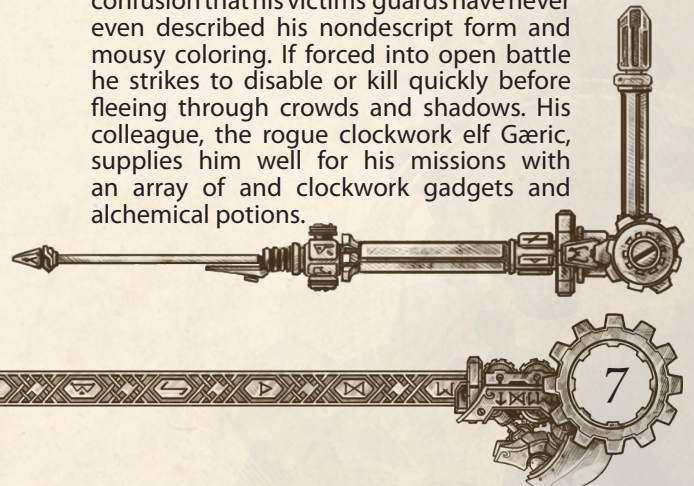
The magnificent crystal and brass roof of Daegr's Hall— itself the center of the fabled Hanging Gardens of Clan Hammerfall—shines like a beacon in the middle of Union City. This sixty foot high metal and glass dome holds the most famous alchemical garden of Clan Hammerfall. An entire park rests nestled within its decorated walls and grows strong in in the light of the sun, refracted and concentrated by the cunningly wrought crystal roof. The clan has opened its doors to the public for this day only, showing off its newest alchemical inventions to the citizens of Union City. Rich merchants from the Sunspires and poor commoners from the Delves mingle beneath the great trees and enjoy the bounty. Subsidized stalls offer roast meat and rare fragrant fruits. In one corner a popular dwarven band plays their latest grinding percussive music.

What the PCs do not realize, of course, is that the Hanging Gardens are on the precipice of a disaster, as Grey Navash (see the sidebar) and a gang of his hirelings, are about to bring the roof down on this gala—quite literally. Using a series of explosions as cover, Navash will then assassinate his true target—Vitkarr Kellak Hammerfall.



GREY NAVASH

Navash, a Blade of the Black Hand, casts a long shadow of fear over the nobles of Union City. A spree of undetected assassinations and carefully planned violence in and around Union City has earned him a reputation as an unstoppable killer. Driven by vengeance, Grey Navash truly believes in the goals of the Black Hand. Some say he sacrificed his own family to the Thrall Lords in return for the power to overthrow House Hammerfall and all the City States of Vallinar. Slim, meticulous and precise, Navash plans cautiously and always knows his escape routes. He revels in creating such confusion that his victims' guards have never even described his nondescript form and mousy coloring. If forced into open battle he strikes to disable or kill quickly before fleeing through crowds and shadows. His colleague, the rogue clockwork elf Gæric, supplies him well for his missions with an array of and clockwork gadgets and alchemical potions.



Although both Navash and his thugs are present when the PCs arrive, they are awaiting word of the arrival of Vitkarr Kellek Hammerfall. Thus, the PCs should have some time to wander around. So, unless the players are chomping at the bit, GMs should give PCs a chance to walk around the garden, meeting with any NPCs the GM might wish to introduce (or one another), as well as both Lyda Hammerfall and Dane “Blackstyx” Korvald. PCs with enough coin might even get the opportunity to buy a few of the newest in alchemical wonders available. GMs wishing to throw the PCs right into the fire might consider the alternate beginning in the Hail the Guards sidebar.

MEETING LYDA, MEETING DANE (CR ½)

At any point during the PCs initial investigation of the gardens, Lyda Hammerfall calls out from her booth in the northeastern corner, inviting the PCs to sample her wares. When she does, read the following:

“Aye! Aye! Yes, you, the charming looking one! I’ve a whole booth of the finest alchemically infused fruits this side of the city, all of them grown under my gentle touch. Come have a taste of the sweetest Silkwood Berries you’ll ever crush under your tongue! Let the aroma of a fresh cutting of Daggerfire Grass clear your eyes, ears, and nose! And, if you’ve marcs to part with, I’m easy to barter with!” The dwarf behind these words is young, possibly even ambitious. Her bright red hair says little, but her clean, pressed tunic with its noble emblem easily betray her noble heritage—she is one of Hammerfall’s own.

If the PCs approach Lyda, she straightens her red hair, pats down the front of her green and grey tunic, and smiles for the PCs. While most of her wares will likely be out of their price range, she is somewhat bored and readily makes small talk, asking responsive PCs where they hail from, what brought them to Daegr’s Hall, and so on. She refuses to talk politics, remarking it’s “for the stone-touched folks” and happily turns conversations back toward alchemy, gardening or herbalism. PCs that openly engage her in these topics by making a successful Craft (alchemy), Knowledge (nature), or Profession (herbalist) skill check (DC 15) win her favor (see Crystal Rain, below). Of course,

any PC that does win Lyda’s favor also earns a small discount on any of her wares—she immediately reduces her prices by 5% for a ‘fellow artisan.’ Unless otherwise noted, each piece of fruit retains its magic for 1d4+4 days. After that, it begins to decay, losing all of its alchemical potency.

Lyda’s many wares include:

Blue Heartberry

Aura faint transmutation CL 3rd

Slot none; **Price** 240 gp; **Weight** -

Description

This fist-sized purple fruit has delicate scented flesh and a crisp aromatic flavor. Eating the fruit as a standard action heals 2d8+3 hit points of damage. For one hour after eating the fruit, the eater gains a +5 alchemical bonus on saving throws against poison.

Construction Brew Potion, Profession (gardener) 3 ranks, *cure medium wounds, delay poison*; **Cost** 120 gp

Daegr’s Tears

Aura faint transmutation CL 3rd

Slot none; **Price** 240 gp; **Weight** -

Description

This small, golden fruit has segmented flesh and glows with a dim golden light, acting as a light source when held. Eating the fruit, as a standard action, grants darkvision for one hour as glittering motes dance through the user’s eyes. The user can end the darkvision effect at any time to breathe out a golden, 15 ft. cone of fire, dealing 2d6 damage to every creature in the area. A successful DC 13 Reflex save halves this damage.

Construction Brew Potion, Profession (gardener) 3 ranks, *darkvision, fire breath*; **Cost** 120 gp

Lyda’s Amazing Air Gourd

Aura faint transmutation CL 3rd

Slot none; **Price** 200 gp; **Weight** -

Description

This pale, fleshy gourd has silver-colored streaks running down its length, terminating at its ruddy stem. Although the gourd is large and appears as if it might weigh a pound or more, it does not. Instead, when released, it gently floats where released. When consumed (as a full-round action), this fruit grants the ability to float upward, as if under the effects of the *levitate* spell, for up to 3 minutes.

Construction Brew Potion, Craft (alchemy) 3 ranks, *levitate*; **Cost** 100 gp.

Silkwood Berries

Aura faint enchantment CL 3rd

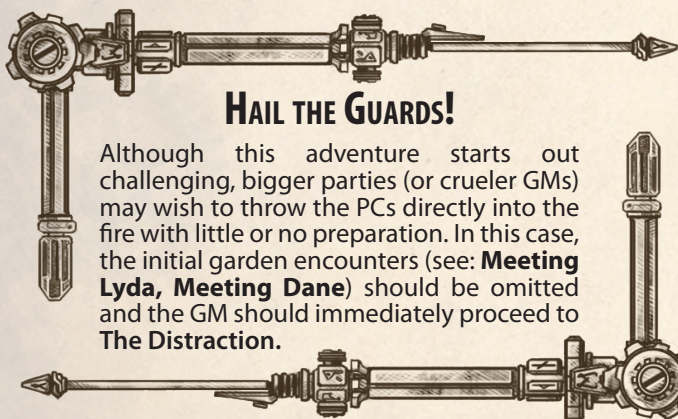
Slot none; **Price** 150 gp; **Weight** -

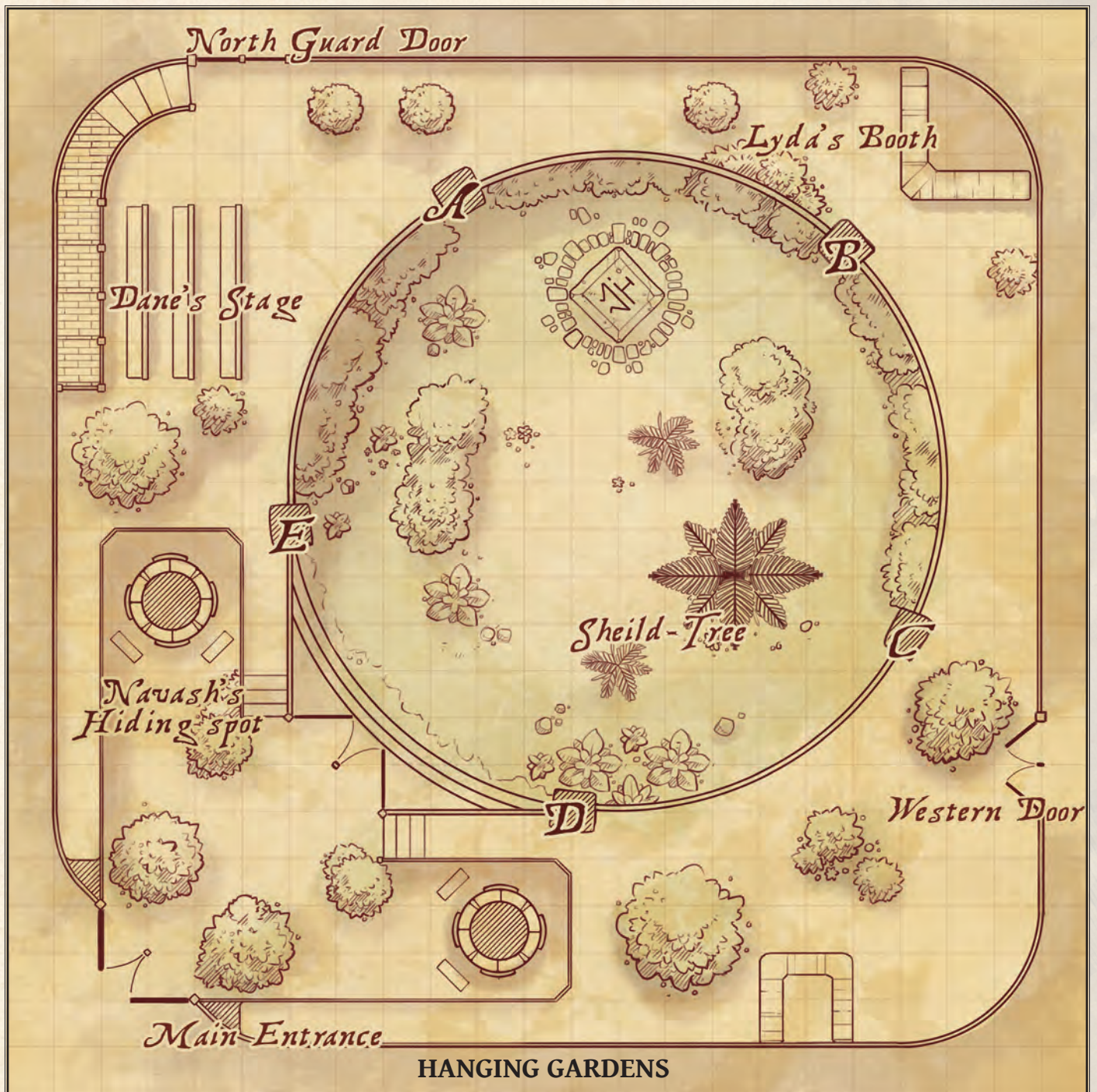
Description

These small, plump berries vary in color, ranging from delicate white to soft azure. Known for their sweet, creamy flavor, they are frequently infused with enchantments that improve the one’s ability to enchant and charm—which they release slowly over time. When eaten as a standard action, these berries bestow a +10 alchemical bonus to verbal-based Bluff skill checks. This bonus does not extend to passing secret messages with the Bluff skill, nor does it grant a bonus to feint in combat. This effect lasts for one hour.

Construction Brew Potion, Profession (gardener) 3 ranks, *glibness*; **Cost** 75 gp

Later, while the PCs are exploring the northwestern portion of the gardens, they are nearly run down by a hearty dwarf, dressed in all black and wearing what can only be described as ill-conceived armor, who’s quickly heading for the stage in the corner of the gardens. Dane





“Blackstyx” Kardova is the lead drummer of the dwarven band *Midnight Thunder*, who is performing today.

When the PCs meet him, read the following:

“Oi! I didn’t mean ta run ya down. We’re working this show short-handed and I’m pressed for time! While ya certainly don’t look like the noble lot, I suspect none of ya are accomplished skalds, either! Oh, by Velash’s heavy hammer, where are my manners—name’s Dane, master skald and musician, at your service.” While the dwarf before you is easily the most absurdly dressed of his kind

you’ve seen, his demeanor is a shard more refined than most and, for what it’s worth, his smile strikes you as genuine.

While Dane is in a hurry, he’s keen to new prospects and easily takes interest in the PCs—especially those that look like they might be mercenaries or heroes. If any of them openly display holy symbols of Velash, he gives that PCs a curt nod and makes the sign of Velash as a symbol of solidarity. If any of the PCs are clerics of Velash, he defers to them almost exclusively, openly asking for their blessing before his show goes on. PCs that willingly start





THUGS AND EXPLOSIONS

The events listed in **The Distraction** and **Crystal Rain** may, at the GMs discretion, overlap some. Generally, however, they play out in this order:

Round 1—The scutebombs begin their ascent, climbing only 10 ft, just as the thugs start beating folks. (The surprise round for the PCs)

Round 2—The scutebombs continue to climb (a full 20 ft), potentially becoming visible (DC 21) at the end of this round. The thugs continue to attack innocent passersby.

Round 3—The scutebombs climb further (another 20 ft). The thugs notice the scutebombs and actively try to distract people with their performance. PCs that make a successful Perception skill check (DC 15) notice the thugs make a distracted glance at one of the columns.

Round 4—The scutebombs continue their climb, navigating a series of crossbeam at the base of the dome. At the end of the round, they do not advance. Thugs continue to be thugs.

Round 5—The scutebombs climb the final stretch, ascending another 10 ft. They begin to drill at the end of the round, likely alerting PCs (DC 10). The thugs, if still conscious, try to flee.

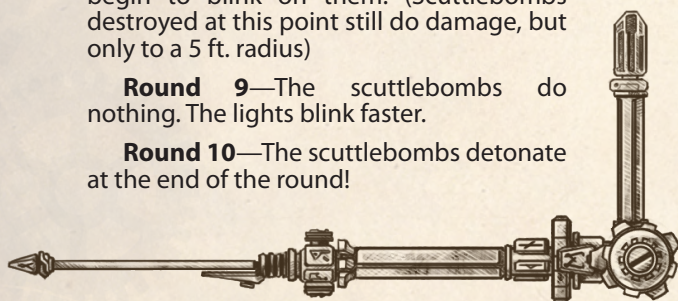
Round 6—If the PCs have not noticed the scutebombs, someone in the crowd screams and points them out. The scutebombs start drilling. The thugs flee!

Round 7—The scutebombs continue to drill into the iron columns. (Scutebombs destroyed at this point still do damage, but only to a 5 ft. radius).

Round 8—The scutebombs continue to drill into the iron columns. Small lights begin to blink on them. (Scutebombs destroyed at this point still do damage, but only to a 5 ft. radius)

Round 9—The scutebombs do nothing. The lights blink faster.

Round 10—The scutebombs detonate at the end of the round!



conversations dealing with any of his favorite topics may earn his favor by making a successful Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (religion) or Profession (musician) skill check (DC 15). Any PC that produces a musical instrument and plays a small piece by making a successful Perform (any instrument) skill check (DC 20) instantly doubles the bonus of his favor (see Crystal Rain, below).

A DISTINCT DISTRACTION (CR 2)

After getting word that Vitkarr Kellek Hammerfall has entered the building, Grey Navash gets to work. He immediately signals his man in the crowd and moves to the outer perimeter, quietly moving and activating the scutebombs. Once he's adjacent to the column in the southeastern corner (where the last scutebomb is), his men go to work!

Grey Navash's hired dupes start a brawl in the central court of the gardens (just south of the rune statue there) to draw the attention of Clan Hammerfall guards. Four burly humans in the middle of the crowd draw clubs from under their coats and begin beating people at random, shouting loudly and accusing them of destroying Ælveheim. They shout racial insults at the dwarves and accuse Clan Hammerfall of all sorts of depravities.

Read the following to the PCs:

Suddenly, violence explodes in the center of the garden! Five men, obviously laborers from their dress, pull clubs and begin to beat on anyone within reach! As the crowd scatters, the few guards begin to push their way inward. The men, however, do not look as if they'll be taken easily!

Hired Thugs (5)

CR 1/3

XP 135

Male human warrior 1

CE Medium Humanoid (human)

Init +1; Senses Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15 (+5 armor, +1 Dex)

hp 13 (1d10+3)

Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee club +2 (1d6+1/x2) or dagger +2 (1d4+1/19-20)

Ranged dagger +2 (1d4+1/19-20)

TACTICS

Before Combat Before combat, the hired thugs shout obscenities and attempt to intimidate passersby.

During Combat Once the PCs engage the hired thugs, they pair up, focusing on melee characters. The fifth thug goes after any obvious spellcasters.

Morale The hired thugs flee if reduced to 6 hit points or once the scutebombs become visible in the rafters (round 5).

STATISTICS

Str 13, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 8

Base Atk +1; CMB +2; CMD 13



Feats Iron Will, Toughness
Skills Intimidate +3, Perception +1
Languages Low Common
SQ none
Combat Gear club, dagger, *potion of cure light wounds*
Other Gear Scale mail, work boots, artisans outfits, 8 Dames (8 gp).

While his hired dupes cause a distraction and hopefully get themselves conveniently killed, Grey Navash creeps around the edge of the hall, positioning himself for his next strike. He moves carefully, avoiding guards and the PCs alike. He takes 10 on his Stealth skill check. With a +2 from his favored community bonus and another +4 circumstance bonus due to the distraction of the brawl, he easily disappears into the background. PCs can spot his actions only by making a successful Perception skill check (DC 25).

CRYSTAL RAIN (CR 4)

Navash deploys four clockwork scuttlebombs, one on each columns of the main hall (see the Hanging Gardens map on page X). Once the final one is deployed, the devices immediately begin climbing the iron pillars in unison, their many iron-clawed legs quietly moving upward. The scuttlebombs take five rounds to climb the crystal ceiling (navigating crossbeams and other obstacles) and their movement is relatively soft. PCs can spot (as early as round 2) a climbing scuttlebomb by making a successful Perception skill check (DC 21), but GMs should only have them check once they've ascended the first 30 ft. (and cleared the surrounding foliage). Once the scuttlebombs reach the roof, they begin to drill directly into the superstructure. This negates their stealth and PCs may make checks each round to notice them. This drilling echoes loudly and releases a fine stream of powdered crystal and iron. If the PCs still haven't noticed them, someone in the crowd does and exclaims, "*What in the name of the Great Tree is that?*" Many in the crowd look around in surprise. At this point, PCs can easily spot an attached scuttlebombs by making a successful Perception check (DC 10). At this point there are four rounds left before detonation.

Scuttlebombs (4)

CR 1

XP 400
hp 11 (see appendix)

TACTICS

During Combat The scuttlebombs climb relentlessly upwards unless someone physically tries to remove them. Otherwise, they focus on their tasks and ignore the PCs (the CR of this encounter is reduced to reflect this).

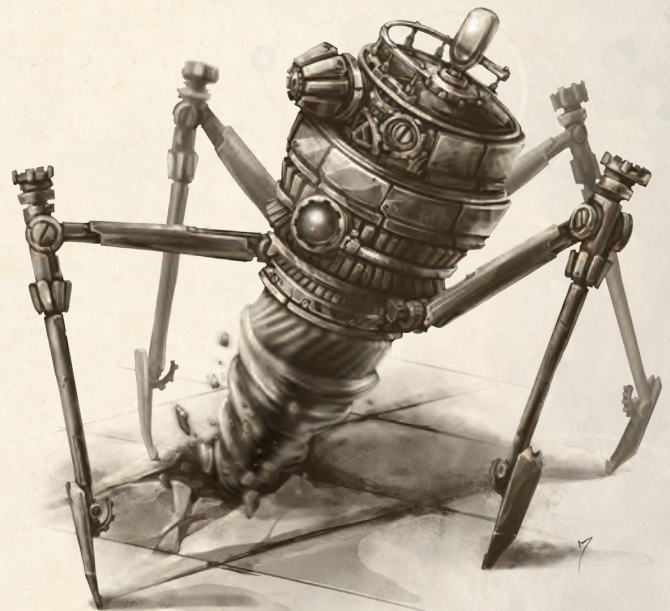
Morale The scuttlebombs continue to climb toward the roof until disabled or destroyed.

With less than a minute remaining until the scuttlebombs detonate, the PCs have very little time to make decisions about how best to deal with these new foes. GMs should emphasize the urgency, rolling initiative if the player characters dally. Ideally, only a minute of real time

(per round) should be spent in discussion. Scuttlebombs that successfully drill into the superstructure and detonate bring down the crystal ceiling around that particular column (within a 15 ft. radius), dealing 3d6 damage to everyone in that area and turning the whole area into difficult terrain. Player characters that successfully make Reflex saving throw (DC 16) reduce this damage by half, but that damage may still be enough damage to kill or maim the other attendees below.

With less than a minute remaining until they detonate, the PCs have very little time to make decisions about how best to deal with these foes. GMs should emphasize the haste required, rolling initiative if the player characters take too long to decide. Ideally, only a minute of real time (per round) should be spent in discussion. Scuttlebombs that are able to drill into the superstructure and detonate normally bring the crystal ceiling within a 15 ft. radius of that particular column down, dealing 3d6 damage to everyone in that area, turning the whole area into difficult terrain. Player characters that successfully make Reflex saving throws (DC 16) may negate this damage by ½, but it will still be enough damage to kill or maim the other attendees below.

Shoot em' down! Ranged attacks may deactivate the scuttlebombs, but only by reducing them to zero hit points. Worse, attacks that deal sonic or fire damage immediately detonate the bombs. If these bombs are detonated within 10 ft. of the crystal ceiling (or destroyed on rounds 7 and 8, before the bombs have fully locked into place), they still bring part of the roof down—but at a small radius. These scuttlebombs deal 3d6 points of damage to everyone in a 5 ft. radius around that column. Anyone that successfully makes a Reflex saving throw (DC 16) may negate this damage by ½.



Pull em' off! PCs able to reach one of the scuttlebombs may attempt to pull it free of the pillar, but doing so requires making a successful ranged touch attack (with a grappling hook or similar tool) or by climbing up and pulling them off by hand. Climbing the stone columns requires PCs to make a successful Climb skill check (DC 20), as the smooth worked stone offers very little in the way of handholds. Alternately, PCs able to reach one of the scuttlebombs who cannot pull it free from the column may elect to make either a Craft (clockworks) or Disable Device skill check (DC 15) to deactivate the device.

Get to the goard! PCs who gained Lyda Hammerfall favor prior to this encounter may, upon making a successful Perception skill check (DC 14), notice her pointing to one of the *air goards* she was demonstrating earlier in the day. PCs that make a successful Sense Motive skill check (DC 12) work out that she is suggesting they eat one of the goards at her booth (a full round action) to gain the ability to *levitate* (for one minute) up to one of the scuttlebombs. Because of where her booth is located (see Northeastern corner on the map), PCs will need to grab the goard and move to the closest column. Her booth is located next to column B on the map.

Bring the noise! Dane 'Blackstyx' Korvald can also be convinced to help. If the PCs make a successful Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate skill check (DC 11), he pulls out his *scroll of shatter* and uses it on the scuttlebomb closest to him (on column A), causing it to detonate prematurely. Additionally, PCs who gained his favor prior to this encounter gain a +2 moral bonus to move the crowds to safety, as he aids them from his stage.

Move it folks! Arguably the safest course, PCs may spend a full round action to safely direct the civilians away from the columns (and out of the danger zones). Doing so requires a successful Perception or Knowledge (engineering) skill check (DC 12) to identify a safe area. This is immediately followed by a Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate skill check (DC 12) to move the panicked crowds. PCs who make a successful Knowledge (nature) skill check (DC 12) identify the Shield-Leaf Tree in the south-central garden area as an additional safe zone. A total of eight successful skill checks are required to move the all of the panicked crowds to safety.

Each device that makes it to the ceiling and explodes

inflicts tens of thousands of gold pieces in damage on the building, so stopping all four is definitely ideal. If the PCs fail to do this, assume at least 1d2 of the remaining civilians are instantly killed and another 1d4 require immediate medical attention (each hovering near death with but a single hit point). Award the PCs full experience points for any of the devices that they stop from reaching the roof or for completely safeguarding the crowd below (even if the scuttlebomb successfully detonates). If the PCs manage to save all of the civilians below, either by deactivating all of the scuttlebombs or by moving 8 groups of people to safety, award them XP as if they had overcome a CR 5 encounter (instead of a CR 4 encounter).

CHASING ASSASSINS (CR 4)

Once the last scuttlebomb is deactivated (or detonates), the locked doors in the northwestern corner of the hall burst open, a full contingent of Hammerfall guards spilling out with Vitkarr Kellak Hammerfall at the fore, shouting orders. A few moments after that, Grey Navash (located in the foliage just west of the door and south of the stage) attempts to assassinate the old dwarven priest, firing and then shouldering a heavy crossbow. Once he sees his bolt strike true, he flees. He pushes his way through the doors to the southwest, likely leading the PCs on a dangerous chase across the rooftops of Hammerfall Estate and out into Union City Proper.

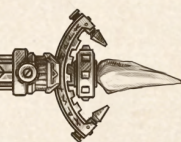
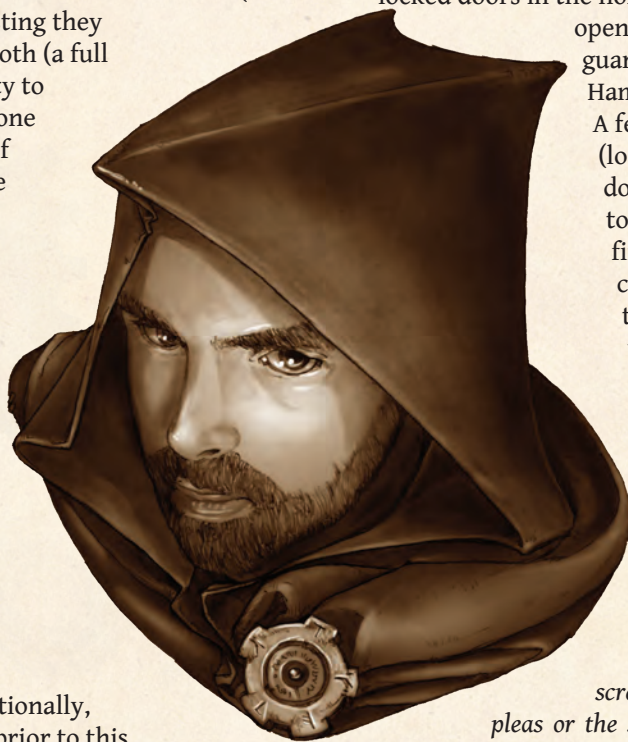
Once the PCs have started to relax or respond to Vitkarr Kellak's entrance, read the following:

And for a moment, there is absolute silence. Gone are the sounds of screaming crowds with their panicked pleas or the sounds of combat. Then, as quickly as it descended, the silence is gone as dwarven soldiers pour into the great hall from a set of doors in the north. A single dwarf, older and obviously stone-touched, yells orders from the front. His gruff voice is clear and loud.

"Aye, get these folks ta safety and secure the hall. I want to know who..."

Like a lightning strike, his command is cut off, replaced by the gurgle of blood. The fletching of a heavy, black crossbow bolt erupting from his neck immediately tells you what happened. Then, someone in the crowd to the south screams, "It was him!" A man flees through the main entrance, out into the dusk.

While the attack on Vitkarr Kellak looks deadly, it is not enough to kill him. The poisoned bolt does serious damage to him, however, instantly dropping him to his knees.



ROOFTOP ESCAPE

Diagram illustrating a rooftop escape route with dimensions and obstacles:

- Obstacles and Dimensions:**
 - Hanging Gardens:** 50' height.
 - Storm Platform:** 10' height.
 - Barracks:** 45' height.
 - Security Wall:** 35' height.
 - Storm Car:** 10' height.
- Clearances and Distances:**
 - 10' clearance between the Storm Platform and the Barracks.
 - 5' clearance between the Barracks and the Security Wall.
 - 10' clearance between the Security Wall and the Storm Car.
 - 15' clearance between the Storm Car and the tracks.
- Orientation:** A compass rose indicates North (N), South (S), East (E), and West (W).

While it is unlikely that any of the PCs will be able to delay (or neutralize) the poison, treating the poison with the Heal skill (DC 16) might be enough to help the Vitkarr until the clan's cleric arrives. PCs that stabilize, comfort, or heal him (again, either by using the Heal skill or with spells) earn the clan's favor and bonus experience points (treat as if the group had overcome a CR 1 encounter).

won't have a difficult time bypassing the challenges (since he possesses the mythic power Display of Dexterity), but that doesn't guarantee a clean escape. He must still wait for the stormrail car to arrive, giving the PCs a small chance to catch up. In this case Navash, his crossbow in hand, takes time to line up shots against enemies that are closing on him as he waits on the train. The chase itself is composed of the following challenges (each identified by letter on the Escape Map on page X), and must be completed within 10 rounds (1 minute) of beginning, lest Navash (or the PCs) miss the passing rail car.



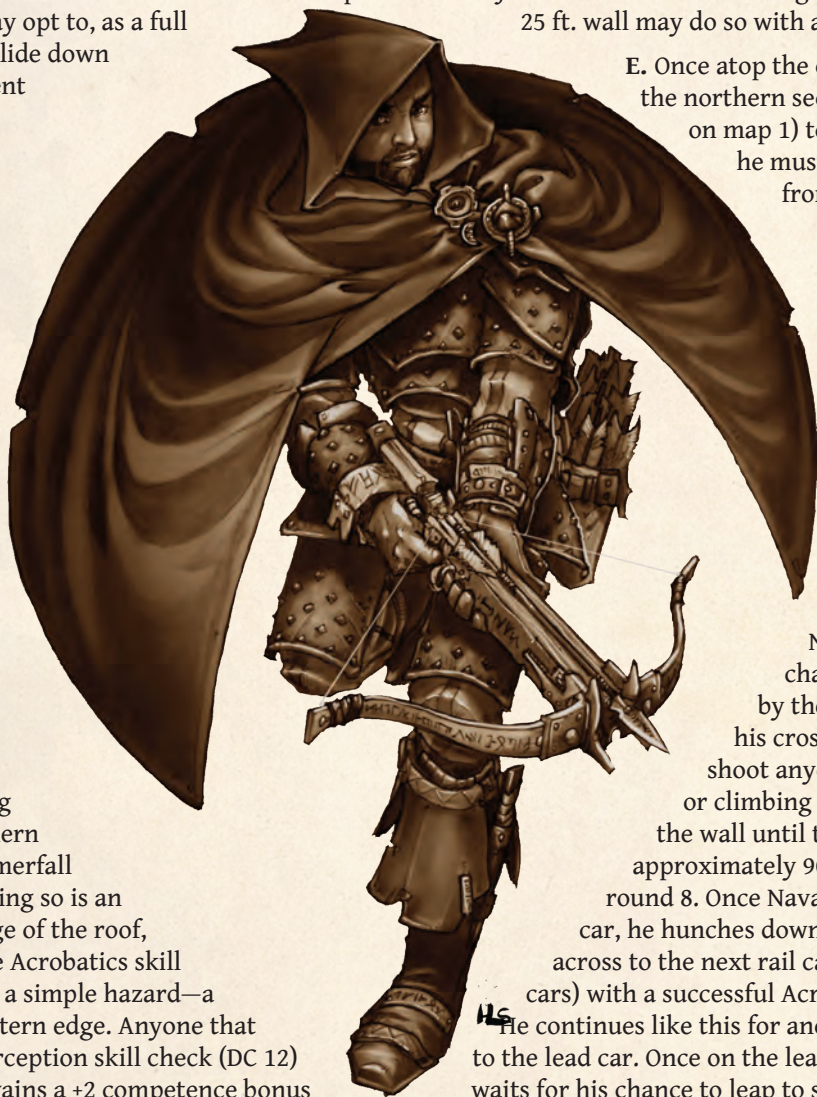
B. From the storm-tower's service platform, Navash (as well as the PCs) may either walk across the heavy storm cable, which is stretched downward to a nearby barracks or may simply jump across. Because of the downward angle and narrowness of the cable, a successful Acrobatics skill check (DC 23) is required to transverse it. Alternately, Navash (or a PC) can leap the 10 ft. gap downward, landing easily by making two successful Acrobatics skill checks; the first skill check (DC 20) is to jump across the 10 ft. gap and the second (DC 15) to reduce the falling damage he'd take when he lands on the barracks roof 10 ft. below. Navash, who is wearing *boots of the cat*, uses his mythic ability to make the second skill check, as he's not very concerned about the fall if he fails. As both of these options are dangerous, PCs may opt to, as a full round action, simply slide down the cable to the adjacent roof below. Doing so requires a single Climb skill check (DC 15). PCs that make a successful Knowledge (clockworks) skill check recall a service winch, standard on such towers that can be used instead. Locating this requires a simple Perception skill check (DC 10). Lowering this winch grants a +4 to all associated checks. Raising and lowering this winch is a move action.

C. Once atop the barracks roof, Navash takes off again, moving eastward on the northern edge toward the Hammerfall Estate's outer wall. Doing so is an easy run along the edge of the roof, requiring only a single Acrobatics skill check (DC 12) to avoid a simple hazard—a wet spot along the eastern edge. Anyone that makes a successful Perception skill check (DC 12) to notice this hazard gains a +2 competence bonus to their Acrobatics skill check. Alternately, PCs may simply slow down and treat the hazard as difficult terrain. Anyone that slips in the wet spot falls a short 30 ft. (for 3d6 points of damage) unless they succeed on a DC 20 Climb skill check.

D. The next obstacle in this chase is a 15 ft. gap between the edge of the barracks and the outer wall. At a full run, this is an easy leap, requiring only a single Acrobatics skill check (DC 15) to succeed. If the PCs stop running (because they slowed to bypass the prior hazard), the difficulty doubles (DC 30), quite possibly stopping most PCs. Anyone on the ground (or stopped at the edge of the roof), however, that makes a DC 10 Perception skill check notices a small exit chute used for waste disposal at the bottom of the outer wall. After dropping down to the ground, this small door may be easily opened with either a successful Disable Device (DC 10) skill check or Strength check (DC 15), allowing player characters to crawl out and over to the adjacent rail line. PCs on the ground who elect to climb the 25 ft. wall may do so with a DC 15 Climb skill check.

E. Once atop the outer wall, Navash moves to the northern section of the wall (marked X on map 1) to line up his jump. Because he must time the jump and leap from a complete standstill, the 10 ft. gap requires a far more difficult Acrobatics skill check (DC 20). Once again, as he has it at his disposal, Navash uses his mythic power Display of Dexterity to gain an additional +20 bonus to this check, granting him a total bonus of +27. This guarantees the jump for him, a luxury the PCs do not have. Assuming Navash passes all of the challenges and is not stopped by the PCs before this, he readies his crossbow and attempts to shoot anyone jumping over the or climbing up the wall. He stays on the wall until the stormcar passes (at approximately 90 ft/round), jumping over on round 8. Once Navash makes it across to the rail car, he hunches down for a round before leaping across to the next rail car (there are a total of three cars) with a successful Acrobatics skill check (DC 17). He continues like this for another round, finally leaping to the lead car. Once on the lead car, he drops prone and waits for his chance to leap to safety (at approximately round 13).

Because of this excellent tactics and battlefield advantage, the CR of this encounter has been adjusted upward.



Grey Navash

XP 800

Male human urban ranger 4/trickster 1

NE Medium Humanoid (human, mythic)

Init +3; Senses Perception +9 (+11 in Union City)

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +3 Dex)

hp 40 (4d10+16)

Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +3

Defensive Abilities Hard to kill

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee Dagger +6 (1d4+6/19-20) or mwk lucerne hammer +7 (1d12+3/x2)

Ranged Mwk heavy crossbow +8 (1d10/19-20) or dagger +7 (1d4+2/19-20)

Special Attacks favored enemy (dwarves +2); mythic power (7/day; surge +1d6); trickster attack (fleet charge)

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 1st; concentration +3)

1st—*entangle*

TACTICS

Before Combat If combat looms, Grey drinks his potion of *blur*. If he has time, he drinks his potion of barkskin before entering melee combat.

During Combat If he's ahead of the PCs, he fires at the PCs with his heavy crossbow, targeting anyone that climbs the wall or tries to jump over to him. In melee combat, Grey immediately targets obvious healers or casters. He keeps distance between any obviously well armored foes.

Morale If reduced to 8 hit points or less, Grey immediately flees, using his mythic powers to leap vast distances, hopefully putting as much distance between his enemies and himself.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +4; CMB +6; CMD 19

Feats Extra Mythic Power, Far Shot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Reload (heavy crossbow)

Skills Acrobatics +7, Bluff +0 (+2 vs. dwarves), Climb +6, Craft (alchemy) +4, Craft (clockworks) +9, Craft (traps) +9, Disable Device +9, Escape Artist +3, Heal +6, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +4, Knowledge (geography) +4, Knowledge (local) +6 (+8 vs. dwarves, +8 while in Union City), Perception +9 (+11 to locate traps, +11 vs. dwarves, +11 while in Union City), Ride +3, Sense Motive +2 (+4 vs. dwarves), Spellcraft +4, Stealth +10 (+12 while in Union City), Survival +2 (+4 vs. dwarves, +4 while in Union City, +4 to track), Swim +2

Languages Low Common

SQ hunting companions link, combat styles (crossbow), display of dexterity, favored terrain (Union City +2), track, trapfinding +2, wild empathy

Combat Gear *oil of magic weapon*, *potion of barkskin* +2, *potion of blur*, *potion of cure light wounds*, *potion of enlarge person*, *potion of jump*, *potion of sanctuary*.

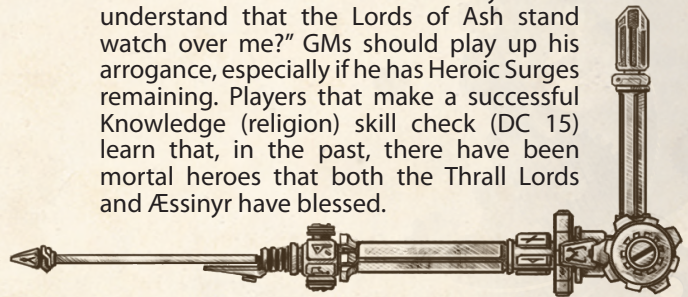
Other Gear *Studded leather armor* +1, daggers (x2), *boots of the cat*, fake coins, grappling bolt, mwk tools (clockworkers), mwk tools (trap-makers), mwk heavy crossbow, mwk lucerne hammer, *screaming bolt*, silk rope, thieves' tools, traveler's outfit, and 34 GP

CR 3



MAKING IT MYTHIC!

Navash is a mythic NPC that has just recently started to understand that some divine power—for good or ill—has blessed him. While he isn't a religious man, he wholly embraces what has recently happened to him and may say so much to the PCs if they engage him verbally during his encounter. If they do, consider phrases like, "Do you not know I am chosen?" or "Do you not understand that the Lords of Ash stand watch over me?" GMs should play up his arrogance, especially if he has Heroic Surges remaining. Players that make a successful Knowledge (religion) skill check (DC 15) learn that, in the past, there have been mortal heroes that both the Thrall Lords and Æssinyr have blessed.



If the PCs are unable to stop Navash before he makes it to the rail car, he looses his messenger bag just as he lands on the car, noticeably grimacing as it slides off the side of the car. He spares a quick glance, looks at the PCs, and then rides off. This bag, which hangs from the rail line itself, is easily recovered by the PCs and contains several simple items including; hand drawn maps of the Hammerfall Estate, hand-written notes outlining Vitkarr Kellak Hammerfall's schedule, a handful of coins (13 gp), and a simple letter (handout #1).

If the PCs are able to stop Navash, guards from Clan Hammerfall quickly arrive on the scene, apprehending him for questioning. While they take him and all his gear, they thank the PCs and request they return in the next day for their reward. Each PC is then given a small token with the Clan's rune worked into it as a sign of favor. Navash's gear is later turned over to the PCs (in Act 2) as part of the reward for their efforts.

In either instance, Clan Hammerfall recognizes the good and honorable actions of the PCs, formally requesting the return on the following day so that they can reward them for their efforts.



ACT 2:

INTERVIEWS & REWARDS

In this act, Narfin the Hall Warden interview the PCs. During the interviews, each asks the player characters if they recall anything specific—things that they may have noticed during the preceding day that might help them identify who was behind the attack (if Navash got away) or who helped him (if he didn't).

A MEETING WITH NARFIN (CR ½)

When the PCs return to the Hammerfall Estates the following day, they are immediately escorted inside by a fully armed patrol of nine dwarves in heavy chain shirts, who take the PCs to one of the clan's many reception halls. As the PCs walk, they cannot help but notice that all of the debris has been cleaned up and most of the damage—at least anything that is visible from the outside—has been patched or covered. Although it is cordoned off, the PCs easily notice that Dægr's Hall has been completely covered with a massive piece of canvas.

As they walk, read the following:

Security in the aftermath of yesterday's attack is very tight and you cannot help but notice the fully armed, dwarven patrols that appear to be everywhere. They are especially numerous around Dægr's Hall, which is now completely covered by a massive sheet of brown canvas. And, like spiders climbing an intricate web, those dwarves not actively guarding the building seem to be erecting a perimeter of scaffolding.

A few minutes later, the PCs are brought to Narfin's Hall. After they are brought inside, read the following:

This hall, unlike the one you visited yesterday, is small—cozy even. Two companies of high-backed chairs, all of them polished to a deep red, flank a long table of the same color. Toward the back of the hall, a massive tapestry depicts Yggdrasil - The Great Tree—atop the emblem of Clan Hammerfall. Four small fire pits, each in a corner of the hall, burn low, giving off a warm glow. The smell of wood smoke and coffee fill the air.

Narfin the Barrister (male dwarven expert 4/bard 2) is an affable dwarf with hair the color of new coal and a complexion that suggests a lot of time in the sun. Were it not for his monocle and spotless attire, many might agree, too. Narfin, however, has other talents, one of which is his keen ability to discern fact from fiction. He dutifully serves Clan Hammerfall in this regard.

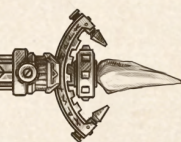
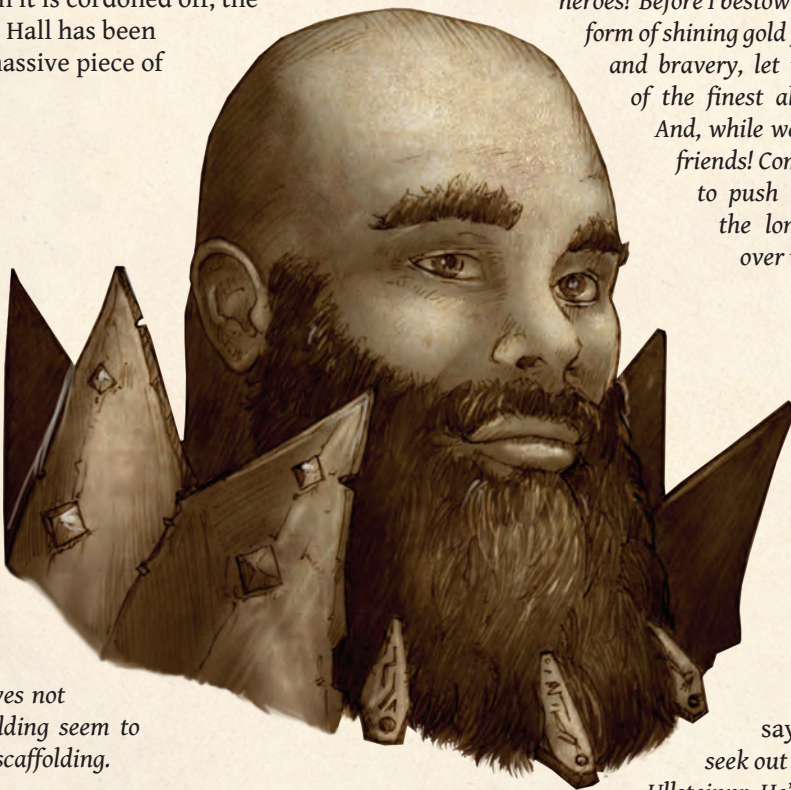
Approximately a minute after the PCs arrive, Narfin walks in behind them. Read the following:

"And now I am in the presence of greatness!" As you swing around, you see a ruddy-skinned dwarf, his black beard and hair spilling over his white tunic. Although older, he's still years before the stone-touch sets in. He smiles widely, opens his arms to welcome you, and speaks. "Hail heroes! Before I bestow our thanks on ya in the form of shining gold for your quick thinking and bravery, let us sit and enjoy some of the finest ale east of Rhunheim! And, while we drink, let us speak as friends! Come, sit!" Then, he starts to push the chairs away from the long table, inviting you over with a wave.

Unless the PCs are obviously rude or intentionally insult Narfin or Clan Hammerfall, he treats the PCs favorably, maintaining a relaxed, friendly demeanor.

Before the PCs depart, Narfin hands them a piece of parchment, sealed with his signet, and says, "When it pleases ya, go seek out Knight-Commander Erik Ullsteinr. He's working with our clan to get to the bottom of this mess. This letter will introduce you!"

At this point, the PCs are free to do as they please. While some may investigate, there is little to learn about the attacks. PCs that openly ask about the Black Hand are quickly shunned or warned not to dive into dangerous affairs. After three days, if the PCs do not go on their own, a group of watchmen approach, asking for them by name



During the interview, have the PCs each make a single Intelligence or Perception skill check to see to recall any of the following from the day before (roll 1d4):

DC 10

1. One of the men involved in the brawl wore a silver ring that he kept touching directly before the fight broke out. This means nothing, the man was just nervous.
2. One of the men involved in the brawl wore a tanner's leathers (suggesting he wasn't actually an anti-tech activist). Narfin nods when this information is shared, writing a small note on parchment.
3. One of the men in the brawl wore steel-tipped boots (again, suggesting he wasn't an anti-tech activist). Narfin nods and makes a note on a piece of parchment.
4. When Navash was running, he favored his left leg. When the PCs share this, Narfin frowns and says; *"Now that makes sense. My team can use this."*

DC 15

1. Although he performed what some might call supernatural feats, he never once stopped to cast a spell or use a magic item. When the PCs share this, Narfin smiles and says; *"More important information."*
2. When the brawl in the garden originally erupted, a blond woman in an expensive, pale blue gown immediately left the garden. She left her without her companion (this fact is relevant is and Narfin nods, noting such).
3. Navash's messenger bag had the image of a black hand sewn into the strap. Any that makes a Knowledge (local) skill check (DC 20) realizes that is the emblem of the Black Hand, a notorious network of terrorists. Narfin realizes this instantly and frowns, but doesn't say anything about it.
4. While Navash was running, it appeared as if he dropped something and was scanning the grounds around the barracks for it. PCs that search the area (and make a DC 16 Perception skill check) find a *potion of spider climb*.

DC 20

1. Although Navash had black hair, he had deep brown roots, suggesting he may have worn a disguise. Narfin writes this fact down, frowning.
2. Navash had a small, black tattoo on his left hand. It was nearly impossible to make out, but it was definitely a tattoo. Narfin frowns, nodding as he writes something down on a piece of parchment.
3. No one was riding in any of the rail cars that passed. A single driver watched the wall. Narfin notes this, saying, *"I'll have my men check the rail stations throughout the city—see who worked yesterday and if any were new."*
4. Although Navash wore a dark grey cloak, the inside was a pale blue in color. PCs that see the cloak may make a Knowledge (religion) skill check to identify colors commonly associated with Mhamnoch, Lord of the Long Winter.

After he interviews them (encouraging each of them to recall the events, as best they can, in turn), Narfin awards the group with a small chest containing 100 Crowns (500 gp). If the PCs defeated Navash, Narfin hands them his gear, as well. Finally, each PC earns a single point of honor.



ACT 3:

NORTHGARD NEEDS HELP

THE KNIGHT-COMMANDER'S REQUEST

Whether the PCs go on their own or are escorted, the PCs eventually find themselves on the northern side of Union City in the sprawling compound known as Festung Nar. Festung Nar is less of a fort and more of a watch-complex, holding offices for the city watch, jails to hold those they snatch from the streets, and all of the legal offices required to serve both. Several orders of knights, including the Dawngard and Dusk Knights, keep offices inside the complex, as well.

Knight-Commander Erik Ullsteinr (male human cavalier 9) is a smart, dangerous man with a deep, heavy laugh. Dedicated to the protection of the city for nearly fifteen years, he's somewhat weary when it comes to adventurers, but he's not above granting them the chance to earn some semblance of honor in the city's employment.

Knight-Commander Erik Ullsteinr's office is busy, its walls covered in maps, watch schedules, notes, and sketches of what can only be the city's most wanted! Anything not adorning the walls has been stacked on a massive, Whisperwood desk, forming what appears to be a defensive screen. As the guard closes the door behind your group, a massive man rises from behind the desk. He pushes back his blond hair and thrusts one of his meaty paws in your direction, smiling. Then, in a rough voice, he says, "Please, sit."

After the PCs sit, he continues:

"Thank you for coming. I've heard tales of your heroic deeds, yet I've not had the distinct honor of meeting you. I aim to change that today." Then he gestures for you to speak and says, "Please, tell me a little about yourselves."

After the PCs finish talking, read the following:

When you're done, Erik unfolds a map on his desk and continues. "This is Northgard. I need you to deliver a message to Commander Drothgar, and should he need it, render any aid he might require. While I would normally send some of my troops to do this, your recent heroics have tempted me to put you in my service instead. As a man who places great trust in the Æssinyr, I'd be unwise not to follow my gut. So, I must ask—would you do me the honor and travel to Northgard on my behalf? I'd be very grateful and, if you do render aid to Commander Drothgar, very generous. What say you?"

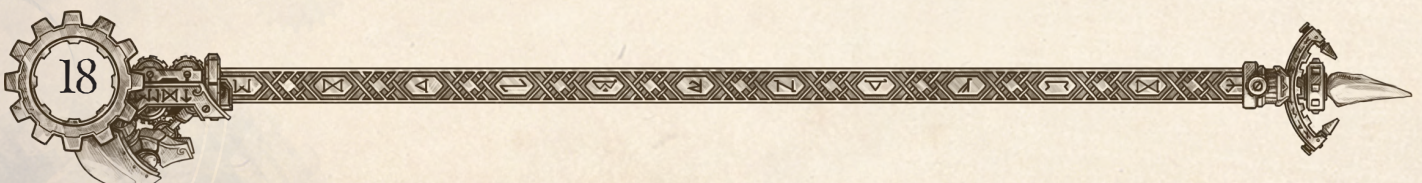
Erik begins this encounter friendly and offers the player characters 75 gp each to deliver the message to Northgard, plus another 75 gp apiece when they return. He also offers

the player characters four pieces of *Blue Heartberry* (see Act 1) in case of emergencies to sweeten the deal. He's open to bartering with the player characters, but quickly reminds them they have yet to really prove themselves. Player characters that succeed on a Diplomacy skill check (DC 19) win Erik over, who offers to consider a small bonus of 50 gp when they return.

Once they agree (and **not** before), the Knight-Commander informs them he'll book passage for them on *The White Jarl*, which leaves at noon on the following day. If they ask, he happily informs them to seek out its captain, Torva Ellegard, who is nearly always with her beloved Dragonship. Then, he quickly pens a letter of introduction and seals it, pressing his signet into the wet wax. He smiles and hands the letter to the PCs. He says, *"This will introduce you to her. This,"* he continues as he hands you a black leather satchel, *"is for Commander Drothgar. Guard it with your lives."*

If the PCs decline Erik's offer, he frowns and sits back, letting out a long sigh. He says, *"And I had such high hopes for you. May the Æssinyr bless your journeys, wherever they take you."* Of course, if the PCs do decline, GMs are faced with the task of getting the PCs to Northgard. The best way to do this without forcing the plot is to tempt them anyway. Any time the PCs attempt to gather information about Grey Navash, the recent attack on the Hammerfall Estates, or information about any of the NPCs involved in the aforementioned, allow them to learn any of the following rumors with a successful Diplomacy skill check (DC 10):

- Along the docks, sailors tell strange stories, swearing they've seen lights around the infamous Pale Tower. In fact, a group of sailors from *The White Jarl*, an infamous Dragonship captained by Torva Ellegard, might have more to add, having just arrived from the North.
- The infamous Blade of the Black Hand, Grey Navash, is rumored to be planning another assassination in Northgard. While no one is sure who the target is or why Navash has left Union City, this can't be good.
- A traveler from Northgard swears that miners have recently uncovered a small vein of Jötunestones in a mine on the northern coast. Prospectors are already lining up to head to Northgard. Ships, like *The White Jarl*, are already taking passengers.
- Torva Ellegard, the captain of *The White Jarl*, is hiring mercenaries to guard some important cargo she's recently been tasked to move to Northgard.





NORTHGARD

Although the PCs are likely to make multiple Diplomacy skill checks each day, they should only learn about *The White Jarl* twice. Any other rumors should lead them to the docks, instead.

FACTIONS ABOUND

If the GM has decided to introduce the various factions that have side missions in this adventure, it should be done before the PCs leave Union City. These interactions need not be extensive, but should be presented as a one on one encounter with the PCs, each according to their chosen faction.

- **Mikalda** (NE female human rogue 3) is an agent of the Black Hand and one of Navash's trusted contacts. When she learns of the PCs actions, she attempts to recruit one of them (the rogue or ranger, if possible). She offers the PC membership in the organization if they are successful. She tells the PC to drink three glasses of Northwater Wine in The Mead Hall (in Northgard) to learn what their mission there is. (See the index for the **What the Black Hand Wants** and

Handout #3).

- **Sir Nanu Arnason, K.Th.** (NG male human cavalier 5) is a proud member of the Order of the Thorn who publically approaches the PCs the day after the Hammerfall events take place. He may approach the PCs before they meet with either Narfin or Erik, but definitely meets with them before they leave Union City. He invites all of the PCs, remarking on their heroics, but pays special attention to fighters, clerics, and paladins. He offers membership in the order as a reward. (See the index for **The Thorn's Agenda** and Handout #4).

- **Sir Hallvarðr Hammerfall, K.W.** (LN male dwarven fighter 4) is a decorated member of the Order of the Wall, the elite group of dwarves famous for defending Redwall.

While he immediately approaches dwarves before speaking with anyone else, he gladly works with humans or clockwork elves, provided they are martial characters. If the PC shows interest, he offers a reward and, if the PC is a dwarf, potential membership in the organization and its associated honors. (See the index for *The Hammer Falls* and Handout #5).

- **Lady Asa Ashengard** (NE female human aristocrat 3/ranger 2) is commanding, no-nonsense woman who has only her family's interests at heart. An established tracker and scout, she immediately appeals to others of her kind, speaking with rangers (or rogues) in the party. Asa privately offers a sizable reward to a single PC, but only shares her mission after the PC has sworn to aid her family. Asa choses only a single PC and refuses to work with more than one individual. If any of the PCs start as a member of the Ashengard Family, she speaks with them discreetly and no one else. (See the index for **The Ashengard's Folly** and Handout #6).

- **Arenthol Galeror** (NG male clockwork elven wizard 6) is a quiet, inquisitive individual whose interests lie almost exclusively with the Clockwork Accord, of whom he is a public member. He makes no secret that he is interested in activity in the north, but requires an individual with magical talents to carry out his mission. Although he prefers to work with other clockwork elves, he openly accepts anyone with arcane talents, provided their interests lie in league with those who favor the way of technology. He offers potential membership in the order, as well as a reward of 100 Crowns (500 gp) to whoever completes his mission. If more than one individual works on the mission, he splits the reward equally among all those who help. (See the index for **Arenthol's Request** and Handout #7).

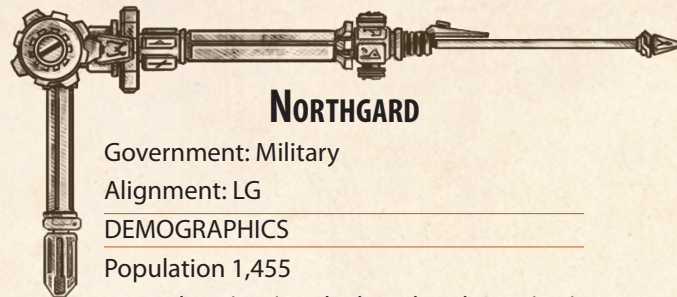
MEETING TORVA ELLEGARD

Regardless of what hook the PCs follow (see **The Knight-Commander's Request** above for suggestions), they eventually find themselves at the city docks in Union City. While several ships are docked, all of them are full. Only *The White Jarl* continues to take on passengers (or hire guards). As soon as the PCs approach, they meet Torva (LG female dwarven expert 5 / fighter 2). PCs should immediately note that Torva's sea-weathered features bear no sign of stone-tough, showing that she gained her ship's captaincy young. She wears a great cloak of oiled leather, proof against rain and sea spray that hides her warm woolen clothes, while golden braids peak from under the peaked hood. Her dark eyes survey everything and everyone she sees for any signs of a threat to her ship or a potential for profit. She wears an amethyst ring on her left hand, a mark of her rank as a Dragonship Captain and Free Trader allied to Union City.

Even short acquaintance reveals that, though young, Torva has clearly earned her rank. Her composed movements and gestures underline her natural competence and capability. She knows *The White Jarl* inside and out; every aspect of its machinery, fittings, and crew. When not otherwise needed Torva tinkers with the engines, displaying endless patience. She rarely shouts, unless in the teeth of a gale, but her calm voice sends cabin boys and experienced hands scampering to follow orders. She runs a tightly disciplined ship, helped by the fact that half the crew is family, and the rest were aboard when Torva's mother captained the ship.

Luckily for the PCs, Torva has enough seats left to put the whole party on, plus a single retainer or hireling. She refuses additional passengers, regardless of how much the PCs offer her. If the PCs do not bear Erik's letter, she charges each player character 3 gp for passage. If PCs haggle too much with her, she shrugs her shoulders, looks north to the sea, and says, "yah welcome ta swim."

Once passage is secured, she smiles and says, "Stay out of my way, and out of the crew's way, and we'll have no trouble. I'll



NORTHGARD

Government: Military

Alignment: LG

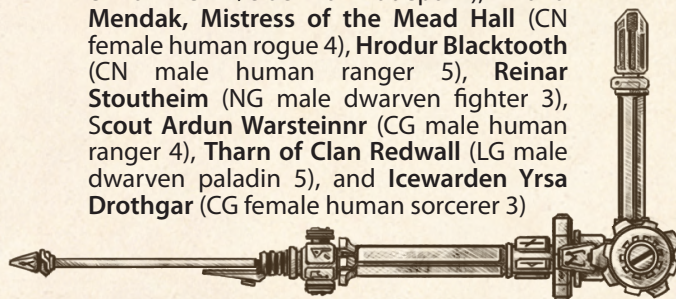
DEMOGRAPHICS

Population 1,455

Aryandai (.5%), clockwork elves (2%), dwarves (35%), humans (62.5%)

AUTHORITY FIGURES

Commander Vagn Drothgar (NG male human fighter 8), **Elevack Norsphel**, **Gear Steward of Northgard** (NG male clockwork elf diviner 7/clockwork adept 2), **Yrona Mendak**, **Mistress of the Mead Hall** (CN female human rogue 4), **Hrodur Blacktooth** (CN male human ranger 5), **Reinar Stoutheim** (NG male dwarven fighter 3), **Scout Ardu Warsteinr** (CG male human ranger 4), **Tharn of Clan Redwall** (LG male dwarven paladin 5), and **Icewarden Yrsa Drothgar** (CG female human sorcerer 3)



get you to Northgard in one piece, never doubt it."

During the short journey, Torva speaks politely with paying passengers, but her first priority is the safety of her ship and her crew. She limits passenger movements to the safest parts of the ship. Under no circumstances does she grant access to the working areas—only her crew may enter the engine rooms, cargo holds, or wheelhouse. The crew is wary of aryandai and subtly watches them whenever they leave their cabin—one of Torva's standing orders. Torva, like most dwarves, deeply fears and distrusts ælves. She only allows an ælven passenger aboard with a written order from Knight-Commander Erik Ullsteinr and a personal bond of good behavior from a reputable dwarf travelling with the dangerous creature. Otherwise she considers the risk of sabotage to her ship too great. She is fascinated by clockwork engineering and seeks out discussion with automata, clockwork elves, and similar experts.

The White Jarl is an independent trading ship, built decades ago in Union City's shipyards and long retired from active service into the merchant fleet. Well-tended and much repaired, her recently repainted wood and brightly polished brass fittings shine with care. The front of the ship houses cramped but warm cabins for the captain and up to six passengers. To the rear, the complex brass clockwork and therma-torque engine hums smoothly, providing enough drive to the propellers to punch through heavy northern seas. Roomy cargo holds below decks provide a second source of profit beyond the passenger trade.



Torva is an expert trader, and will pay well for rarities from the north. In particular she is after wolf pelts, northern amber, and Jötunstones.

OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER: ROUGH WEATHER (CR 1)

About three hours out of Union City, a storm rapidly descends on *The White Jarl*, forcing its crew to secure the deck and fasten down the main tarp. Although the wind and rain aren't dangerous, they do reduce visibility by half and impose a -4 penalty to Perception skill checks.

While the crew is fast at work, a small water elemental (sensing an opportunity to do some mischief) sneaks aboard *The White Jarl* and attempts to pull some of the sailors overboard. Anyone on the starboard side of the ship when this encounter begins notices the water elemental with a successful Perception skill check (DC 12). Otherwise, assume the PCs act only after they hear the sailor screams to sound the general alarm.

Because of the rain, the main deck of the ship (and most of its rigging) is slippery, increasing the DC of all Acrobatic and Climb skill checks by 2.

While each sailor can swim, they begin to drown after 1 minute in the freezing water, requiring PCs to either fish them out or to dive in after them. Pulling out sailors requires a simple ranged touch attack (against AC 12) using one of the ship's many ropes.

Small Water Elemental

CR 1

XP 400
hp 13

TACTICS

During Combat Once the alarm is raised, the elemental focuses on pulling as many of the fleeing sailors overboard as possible. If a formidable opponent (like a PC) attacks it, it ignores the sailors, focusing on them instead.

Morale The water elemental, a dark servant of Mhamnoch, desires to pull as many sailors overboard as possible, but flees if reduced to ½ hit points. Unlike generic elementals, this elemental is a servant of the Thrall Lords and is NE (neutral evil).

While only a short twenty-five mile trip, navigating the northern coast can be

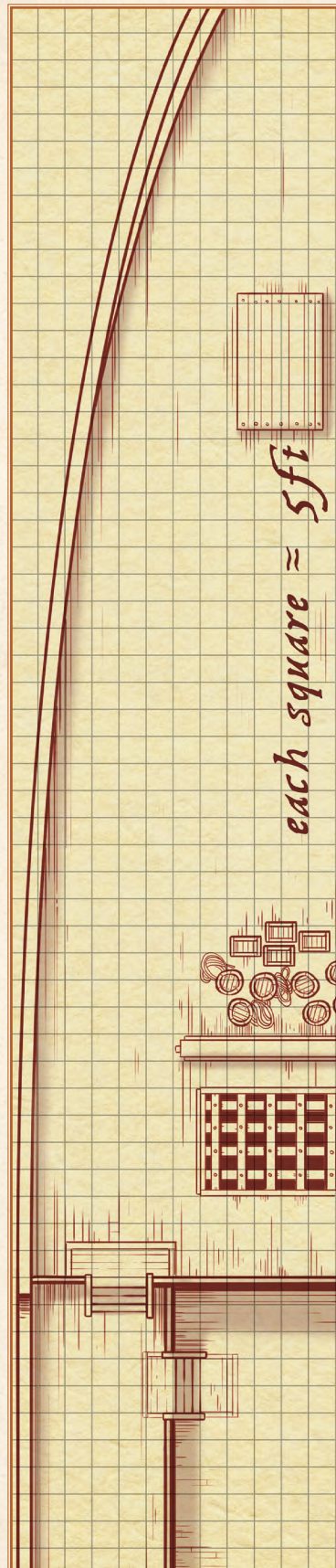
difficult and Torva takes her time. Whether or not the PCs encounter the storm, *The White Jarl* arrives at the northern docks roughly 8 hours later. When the PCs arrive, read the following:

"As you finally pull up to the ice-covered pier, you cannot help but shudder at the sight before you. Far to the north, you can see the Icewall Mountains clawing their way into the dark grey skies like too many broken fingers—a grim reminder that so much of the North is untamed and unfriendly. As you disembark, a single scout—dressed in heavy winter clothing—waves your group over. He says, "Name's Ardun. I'm here to lead you up to Northgard. Make haste, night falls in four hours."

The White Jarl arrives roughly four hours after noon, pushing off immediately after delivering the PCs and their gods. The PCs (and any other passengers or goods accompanying them) have roughly three hours before dusk settles. The scout informs the PCs that Northgard is five miles inland over some fairly rough terrain, (x ¾ normal movement) so the whole group will need to hurry to make it by nightfall. Fortunately for the PCs, the trails around the dock are relatively free of hazards. The scout admits, however, the packs of white wolves occasionally hunt this far south, ambushing travelers before they reach the fort. If the PCs inquire, they learn that *The White Jarl* returns every week, so they won't be able to sail back to Union City for at least a week—they are stuck in Northgard for the time being.

Unless the GM desires to test the PCs, the journey to Northgard is uneventful. As the PCs arrive, read the following:

"As the watchtowers of Northgard come into view shortly before dusk, the scout makes the sign of Oridynn in thanks. When you finally pass the gates and enter the large courtyard, the other travelers in your group give up a small cheer and make for the mead hall without delay. The sounds of laughter and the welcome glow of a large hearth are all the invitation you need."



THE WHITE JARL



ACT 4:

MINES, HUNTERS, AND FROZEN HAUNTS...

Assuming the PCs have accepted the mission from Knight-Commander Erik Ullsteinnr, they are immediately taken to the Mead Hall, where Commander Drothgar (male human aristocrat 2/fighter 5) is eating his dinner. He graciously accepts the letter from PCs and invites them to have a drink with him. He asks about their heroics in Union City, how the Knight-Commander is doing, and invites them to ask any questions about Northgard they may have. He answers only the most basic questions and never reveals any military information—which he considers essential to operational security. Although he does acknowledge hearing some rumors about the Pale Tower and the Fel Barbarians, he admits that he has only seen them on a few occasions and never as far south as Northgard. He also avoids speculating about rage fever or other ailments, saying, *“I’m no healer and would not want to worry my men with such talk.”* He politely directs persistent PCs to speak with Yrona about local rumors, work, or anything related to Northgard’s more domestic affairs. If the PCs inquire about providing aid, he informs them that while he doesn’t currently require their aid, he knows of several others who might. He then directs them to speak with Yrona, Elevak, or Reiner.

If the PCs have not accepted the Knight-Commander’s mission or are following rumors of Black Hand activity in the area, they quickly learn that the Mead Hall is the heart of the outpost (see **Truth & Lies in Northgard**). If they are looking for rooms, information, or food, passersby direct them there, as well. The PCs, upon entering the Mead Hall, meet Yrona.

Yrona is curious about the PCs and asks about recent events in Union City. If they presented themselves to Commander Drothgar, she automatically assumes they are important and makes several rooms available to them. Otherwise, she has only a single room to rent out and offers the PCs bedrolls around one of the fires. In the morning, if the PCs inquire about work, Yrona mentions that several folks around town—including Reinar Stoutheim—have been concerned about the Fjord’s Wake Mine southwest of the outpost. If one of the PCs orders and drinks three glasses of Northwater Wine (indicating they are on the Black Hand faction mission), Yrona immediately tells them about Hrodur and asks the PC to help her recover him because, *“He was once, and could still be, a valuable ally to us.”*

In either case - Yrona, Elevak, and Reiner each have tasks the PCs can complete. These tasks can be completed in any order, but attempting the **Queen of Vermin** and **Three Gigas** should provide the PCs with enough XP to advance to 2nd level, which is enough to move on to

Act 5 (see **Deployed to Fort Blitzkrieg**). Completing **The Huntsman’s Lodge** awards the PCs with a single firearm, a treasure in and of itself.

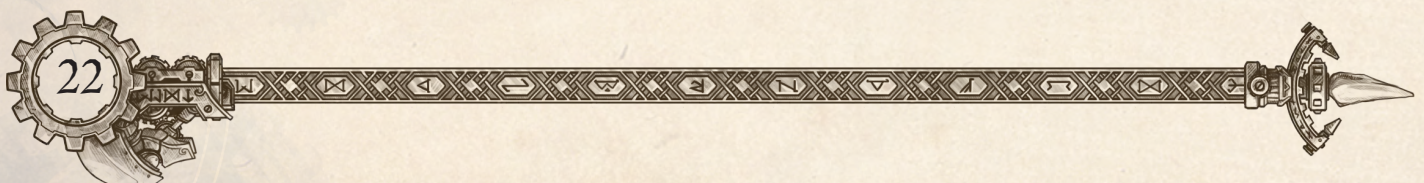
The hooks to these side quests are listed below:

Elevak’s Offer—While the PCs are in the Stopped Clock, (or while finishing dinner in the Mead Hall one night), Elevak approaches them to ask about their encounter with the Scuttlebombs (he doesn’t tell them where he learned about this, but does hint that he has contacts in Union City). Assuming they share their story, he listens intently, clearly fascinated by anything the PCs tell him, and then informs them of his own research into the Three Giga-Model automatons that dwell a few hours to the north. He then tells the PCs he would pay well (200 Crowns, in fact) for just one of their Therma-Torque Engines (although he would buy all three if the PCs secure them), which he suspects was a prototype in its day. **See: The Three Gigas**

Old Nottir—At any point while the PCs are in the Trader’s Hall, Reinar Stoutheim approaches the PCs. He is an old sergeant in Northgard with a great bushy auburn beard and a rusty voice (from years of bellowing orders in the frigid air) who is concerned about an old army companion, Nottiri. He tells the PCs that a few weeks ago Nottiri headed south to the new mines (about a half a day’s walk to the southwest) in search of fortune, promising to return rich. *“He’s a tough bastard, but the northern wastes are always dangerous and mine accidents can kill anyone. I’d expected to hear from Nottiri by now, and it’d be a true favor if you’d look in on the old man for me.”* **See: The Queen of Vermin**

At the Captain’s Suggestion—Shortly before the PCs depart *The White Jarl*, Captain Ellegard pulls one of the PCs aside and asks them to keep an eye out for any Jötunstones. She tells them as had expected to trade for some in Northgard this trip, but had heard that the mine was barely producing any and that the local market has little to offer. She wonders if some danger has beset the mine. Then, she asks the PCs to investigate and mentions that she would pay well for any Jötunstones they acquire. **See: The Queen of Vermin.**

Wolf Spirits—At any point after the PCs earn Yrona’s trust (preferably after they have completed the Queen of Vermin side quest), Yrona approaches the PCs and asks them to consider a “noble task” in service to Northgard. She informs them that Hrodur Blacktooth, a dear friend and old ally, has recently locked himself away in his hunting lodge and refuses to return. He’s run off the last two scouts that went looking for him and she fears something terrible



has befallen him. She asks the PCs to check in on him and see what's wrong. She'll happily reward the PCs with a favor (and free room and board for several weeks) if they can bring him back to her alive and well. See: **The Huntsman's Lodge**.

NORTHGARD

Northgard is a military fort that houses a full battalion of soldiers, most of which are men from Union City or dwarves from the City of Redwall. While the fort is primarily self-sufficient, it still receives regular orders (and supplies) from Union City. While smaller outposts do exist in support of Northgard, both to its south and east, Union City continues to provide the bulk of Northgard's supplies. Likewise, while Union City does occasionally work with the other forts in the area, Northgard is its main garrison in the north, acting as its primary mustering point for all activity in the Fel North.

Although it is mostly a military fort, Northgard isn't completely without its comforts. It has a handful of small shops, most of them trading in furs, weapons, and other basic goods. The following shops are worth noting:

THE STOPPED CLOCK

"The omens are disturbing - see here - where the doom-hand sweeps across the rune Nautiz! Disturbing indeed... But never mind that now, what do you need?"

Elevak runs the Stopped Clock, a gear store that also supplies minor magical items to the soldiers of Northgard. He smiles warmly as he welcomes customers into his shop, and his bright eyes shine in his ash-skinned elfin features. He dresses in a warm grey robe and a battered leatherwork vest with bronze tools and crystalline spare parts glinting from its many pockets. Elevak constantly fidgets with a brass cog, passing it from hand to hand or spinning it like a coin as his fingers move in precise elegant patterns. When concentrating he often spins the brass cog high, where it settles into an orbit around his head, glittering in the stark glare from the lamps.

Inside the Stopped Clock bright arcane lamps hang from iron chains, casting a bluish sheen over everything within. Elevak points out a display of his skills - to the rear of the store several tiny un-awakened automata compete in duels in a miniature arena. A workbench holds partially disassembled clockwork items and scattered chips of runestone, and behind it a corridor recedes into shadowy distances, clearly extending far into the fortress wall. Tall racks line the corridor, holding bins of clockwork parts and arcane ingredients, shelves of munitions and wondrous items. Elevak controls the mechanized racks with a great brass-and-ivory control panel that hunches like a mutated musical instrument behind the store counter. With a swift selection of keys and stops, and a final crank on the control arm, the racks shudder into motion and any requested items clank into easy reach, borne on brass rails.

Elevak's passion is the study of horomancy, the art of scrying through clockwork. He devises delicate arrangements of differential gears, springs, and carefully weighted pendulums, and then peers into rune inscribed clock faces for insight into the web of destiny. He protects and furthers the interests of the Clockwork Accord in Northgard, and is particularly interested to acquire and pacify any examples of Thrall Lord technology. Elevak is particularly useful for Automata characters; his skills as a Clockwork Adept enable him to quickly repair any injuries, and even install modifications. Characters who are friendly with the Clockwork Accord can gain up to a 10% discount on the goods in the Stopped Clock. When not tending his store, Elevak climbs the high walls of Northgard, maintaining the defensive clockwork siege engines that keep unsleeping watch over the icy waste stretching toward the Pale Tower.

RUNIC AMULETS

From the grand runestones of the dwarven kings to the simple inscribed blessings of a peasant's hut, runes lace through the history and culture of Midgard. The breaking of the Grand Galdr and the recovery of the heart rune Kenaz represent epic tales that shape the fate of nations and gods; these tales are at the heart of Rhune. But so too are the lesser uses of runic magic. While weak compared to the carving of a master Vitkarr (runesmiths), on elaborately prepared Jötunstones, commonplace sketched runes of protection have the benefit of being less expensive, easily produced, and bearing some small virtue.

Elevak's gear store sells these lesser runic amulets to soldiers in Northgard.

Amulet of Uruz - neck slot - 50 gp

Carved into a smooth piece of animal bone or whale ivory, the younger rune of Uruz provides a short-lived ward against wild animals. When activated as a standard action the wearer gains a +1 sacred bonus to AC against animals for one minute. After use the bone amulet crumbles to dust, leaving only a non-magical thong.

Amulet of Raidho - neck slot - 50 gp

The journey rune, Raidho, shimmers pale and bleached against the rich dark leather of this amulet. When activated as a standard action the wearer gains a +2 sacred bonus to Acrobatics checks to move on difficult or slippery terrain for one minute. After use the bleached rune fades, leaving an unmarked and non-magical scrap of leather.

Amulet of Kenaz - neck slot - 50 gp

This thin sheet tin or copper with sharp clipped edges bears the stamped impression of Kenaz (the torch rune) and provides strength of mind amid uncertainty and danger. When activated as a standard action the wearer gains a +1 sacred bonus to attack creatures with the [cold] subtype for one minute. After use the metal amulet corrodes and becomes non-magical.

Amulet of Nautiz - neck slot - 50 gp

Etched carefully into a flat round stone, the younger rune of Nautiz aids perseverance and struggle. When activated as a standard action the wearer gains a +1 sacred bonus to Will saves against fear or rage effects for one minute. After use the stone cracks into two pieces, leaving the amulet useless.



THE MEAD HALL

"Oh bless your heart. Sit down in the warm and have a glass of spicewine. We all need a little comfort here in Northgard. Favors beget favors, after all"

Yrona Mendak, the middle-aged mistress of Northgard's mead hall, loves elegant clothes, rich fabrics, and glorious colors. Yrona favors purple and blue clothes, and wears a signature platinum and sapphire jewel in her left ear. She lavishes her love of color and comfort on the mead hall itself; importing rich wall hangings from Union City. A welcoming fire roars at one end and the busy kitchen serves endless rounds of flat breads smeared with spicy vegetable sauce and sliced sausage. Long wooden tables and benches serve common soldiers, while officers and important visitors enjoy the wood paneled booths for private conversations.

Yrona's charm and elegance is matched by her ruthless command of the Nightgulls, Northgard's semi-official thieves' guild. She long ago came to an informal understanding with Commander Drothgar, and in return for making sure she never interferes with military effectiveness, her little gulls are allowed their acts of petty larceny and smuggling. Pickpockets and sneak-burglars, the Nightgulls earn their name by disappearing across icily impassable roofs into the night sky. Through her connections with the Black Hand, Yrona also supplies the extra-legal comforts - imported liquor and smokeweed, gambling and soft company - that make life in the North bearable. Indeed, many soldiers pass much of their pay directly back into Yrona's hands.

THE TRADER'S HALL

"While we may not have all of the comforts of the south, we've our own treasures this far north and most of them can be bought or sold here! Need a new axe? What about a shovel? We've got the warmest winter furs and the darkest ales, all for sale or trade!"

Although Northgard has trading posts that are open most of the week..., the Trader's Hall is only open twice a week—on Thorsnday and Ashday. The hall, which is run by Reinara Stouthheim, contains three-dozen small booths, each of which is rented out. While almost anything can be found here, the goods tend to be comfort items bought in the south and sold here. Likewise, some of the items sold are those that can only be found here in the north, including rare plants, animal pelts, and anything salvaged from the various, snow-covered battlefields.

Unlike the general store, bartering is encouraged in the Trade Hall, with most buyers offering as little as 35% of the base cost for any item to encourage it. Some of the liveliest contests take place at the end of Ashday, right before closing, where contests become public shouting matches. Whether buying or selling in the Trade Hall, people are always guaranteed a show!

Although some of Northgard's citizens joke that Reinara is slow, he is in fact anything but. He is, in fact, an intelligent, serious dwarf that speaks very calmly, but also very precisely. For his part, he runs a pretty tight hall and keeps a handful of off-duty soldiers on the payroll, just in case disputes break out. He's a shrewd businessman, too, who isn't above making side deals with either the PCs or the merchants who rent tables from him if he thinks he can turn a profit.

FORT NORTHGARD

"While Northgard is a small, bustling outpost in its own right, it is built around a single, formidable structure that makes its purpose abundantly clear—this outpost stands the watch. Fort Northgard is a single, massive hall surrounded by high, wooden walls, with watchtowers at each of the cardinal points. Two smaller stone buildings—obviously barracks—and a single stable make up the rest of the fort."

Fort Northgard is, as its name implies, a walled fort that lies at the heart of the outpost that bears the same name. It is a fairly simple affair, with a 15 ft. palisade surrounding it. This wall is supported by 4 stone and wooden towers, each located at the cardinal points and manned throughout the day, regardless of time or weather. The fort itself is a single building—a massive hall containing the armory, officers' quarters, dining hall, and storage. Two smaller buildings, both stone and wooden barracks, flank this main hall. A single stable is located behind the main hall.

Unlike some of the other forts in the area, Fort Northgard does sport two particular items of note—clockwork catapults. Elevak built (and continues to maintain) these two siege engines (treat as heavy catapults, but with a 300 ft. range increments, minimum 100 ft.) to defend the fort from northern invaders. Both are located on small platforms just inside of the northeastern and northwestern corners of the fort. These platforms are wheeled and can be moved as needed, but doing so takes six men to do so (more if there are heavy snows).

The military units that support Fort Northgard make up over half of the residents of Northgard, easily numbering over eight hundred able-bodied men. Most of these men are soldiers, with logistics and other supporting personal equalling less than two-dozen men. In short, the men that stand the northern watch are expected to be able to heft a spear or support the shield wall—the fort as very little use for anyone else within their ranks.

TRUTH & FALSEHOODS IN NORTHGARD

Although Northgard is primarily a military installation, its residents are no less prone to whisper rumors and stories to one another. In fact, because of their closeness to the Pale Tower, they tend to embellish these slightly. Whenever characters use the Diplomacy skill to gather information, they potentially learn several important facts



about Northgard and the surrounding areas. Those who fail, however, learn some of the falsehoods that folk spread.

TRUTHS

- **DC 10**—Witches live in the hills around Northgard, tempting sailors and explorers to their doom. Some of these witches seek to become Winter Hags—horrible fiends loyal to Mhamnoch, Lord of the Long Winter.
- **DC 10**—Yrona, Mistress of the Mead all, once loved a trapper named Hrodur. Hrodur is a quiet man from the Old Holds in the south.
- **DC 10**—Some of the ice, around the Pale Tower, is infused with the cursed blood of the fallen. Beware the blood patches!
- **DC 15**—The men hate Fort Blitzkrieg. Were it not for the safety of Northgard and Yrona's comforting girls, most of them would have quit the front long ago.
- **DC 15**—Not everyone who lives in Northgard is loyal to Union City. Some whisper that agents actively working against the City-States sell information here.
- **DC 15**—Getting orders to Fort Blitzkrieg is often viewed as a punishment, even if it is necessary at times. It isn't, though.
- **DC 20**—Yrona buys and sells information from travelers and soldiers alike, but only once they've earned her trust. Doing favors for Yrona is the quickest way to earn her trust.
- **DC 20**—Elevak still maintains his ties to the city of Damas and favors those aligned to the Clockwork Accord. Some whisper, however, that Elevak has other ties, as well.

FALSEHOODS

- The snow in the north is tainted; anyone drinking the waters here eventually goes mad. If you travel north, bring your own water.
- Commander Drothgar holds grudges and assigns those who cross him to Fort Blitzkrieg. He might seem like a noble man, but he's not.
- A Vitkarr from the Black Ice Flats, far, far to the north, built the Pale Tower.
- Powerful ghosts, some said to be able to possess men while they still breath, make their home in the Pale

Tower.

- The Fel Barbarians are actually undead. Only holy water or the divine light of the Æssinyr can destroy them!
- Elevak and Yrona are lovers. Everyone knows it!

THE QUEEN OF VERMIN

BACKGROUND

Years ago, when Northgard was little more than an expeditionary camp, men from Union City came north in search of wealth. These men, as luck would have it, discovered a small vein of Jötunstones in the cliffs that border the northern coast of Icewall Bay and founded the Fjord's Wake Mining Company—which for years, turned out enough ore to support the whole company. That vein, however, went dry nearly a decade ago and the mine was abandoned.

Several months ago, however, that all changed when a beautiful woman named Adennyaa passed through Northgard with stories of her own find. Within a week or so, men we once again headed south in search of wealth—every prospector dreaming of riches and the luxury they might secure. The Fjord's Wake Mining Company, now under much darker management, reopened its doors.

Unbeknownst to the miners, Adennyaa crept into the mine and planted several small Jötunstones slivers—enough to give validity to her claim—and opened the mine.

Disguised as a beautiful and industrious miner herself, she invited a host of strong, rough men to try their luck. And, when they weren't mining, she teased and tempted them, slowly enlisting them to help her construct a unique sorting table that was actually an altar of pale bleached bone dedicated to Mhamnoch, Lord of the Long Winter. The men toiled in the mines, without much complaint, until it was evident that whatever new vein she had claimed to find simply wasn't there. Facing a lot of angry men, she revealed her true nature and activated the altar, sacrificing her own eye in the process in an attempt to become her heart's desire—a Winter Hag. Then, she unleashed her swarms on the men. Those men she didn't kill outright she bound as thralls to the altar, bring each and every one of them into her service. With the men either thralls or dead, she quickly secured the mine, collapsing its main entrance to make it appear as a cave in. She reasoned



that, if anyone wanted to mount a rescue, they'd have to enter the mines through the old seaside cave entrance, which was dangerous and, if she was prepared, a way to secure more bodies for her grand sacrifice.

Now Adennyaa rules over a squalid empire of endless hunger, forcing her slaves to enact grotesque battles and rituals in petty emulation of the Thrall Lords' dark workings as she completes the final portion of her horrible ritual. Once she has completed it, she plans to kill the rest of the miners, using all of their life force to power her complete and total transformation into an Ice Hag.

TRAVELING TO FJORD'S WAKE MINE

Fjord's Wake Mine is located in a small inlet just above the beach roughly a half a day's march southwest of Northgard, along the northern coast of Icewall Bay. It is a miserable place chocked between the icy cliffs and the cold sea, with only the callous winds to accompany it. A simple, wooden shack and several signs mark the path that descends to the cliffside entrance. When the PCs arrive, they immediately notice the entrance to the mine has caved in. Anyone making a successful Knowledge (dungeoneering) or Knowledge (engineering) skill check (DC 15) instantly notes that this was not a natural cave in, but rather planned. Sadly, it would take a team of men weeks to dig it out.

APPROACHING THE MINE'S MAIN ENTRANCE

After walking for hours, you finally crest a hill to discover a newly painted sign that proudly proclaims, 'The Fjord Wake Mine—Open!' Just beyond it, however, is a dark stain that can only be the former entrance to said mine—now little more than a pile of snow covered rocks and earth. A lonely arctic seabird provides the only sign of life in the bleak terrain.

After the PCs investigate the entrance and determine it would take too long to open, one of the PCs notices that a path leads down around the cliff and out to the ocean. PCs that follow that path discover the following:

After a short descent along the edge of the cliffs that overlook Icewall Bay, you finally notice an icy plateau, upon which stands a simple, wooden shack stained white from the ocean spray. A dark cave lies just beyond, only a few feet above what appears to be a tide marker. The path down does not look inviting.

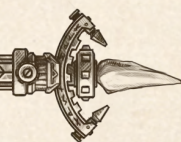
Although it looks dangerous, the path leading to the cave's entrance (and the adjacent shack) is quite safe; PCs should have no problem walking down, provided they are not jumping or being overly careless (and even then, a DC 7 Acrobatics skill check is enough to maintain their footing). The shack is old, but well built and easily blocks out the wind. It contains four 50 ft. coils of good, dry hemp rope, two flasks of lamp oil, and a broken miner's pick. A Survival skill check (DC 15) reveals that no one has been in this shack for nearly a week.

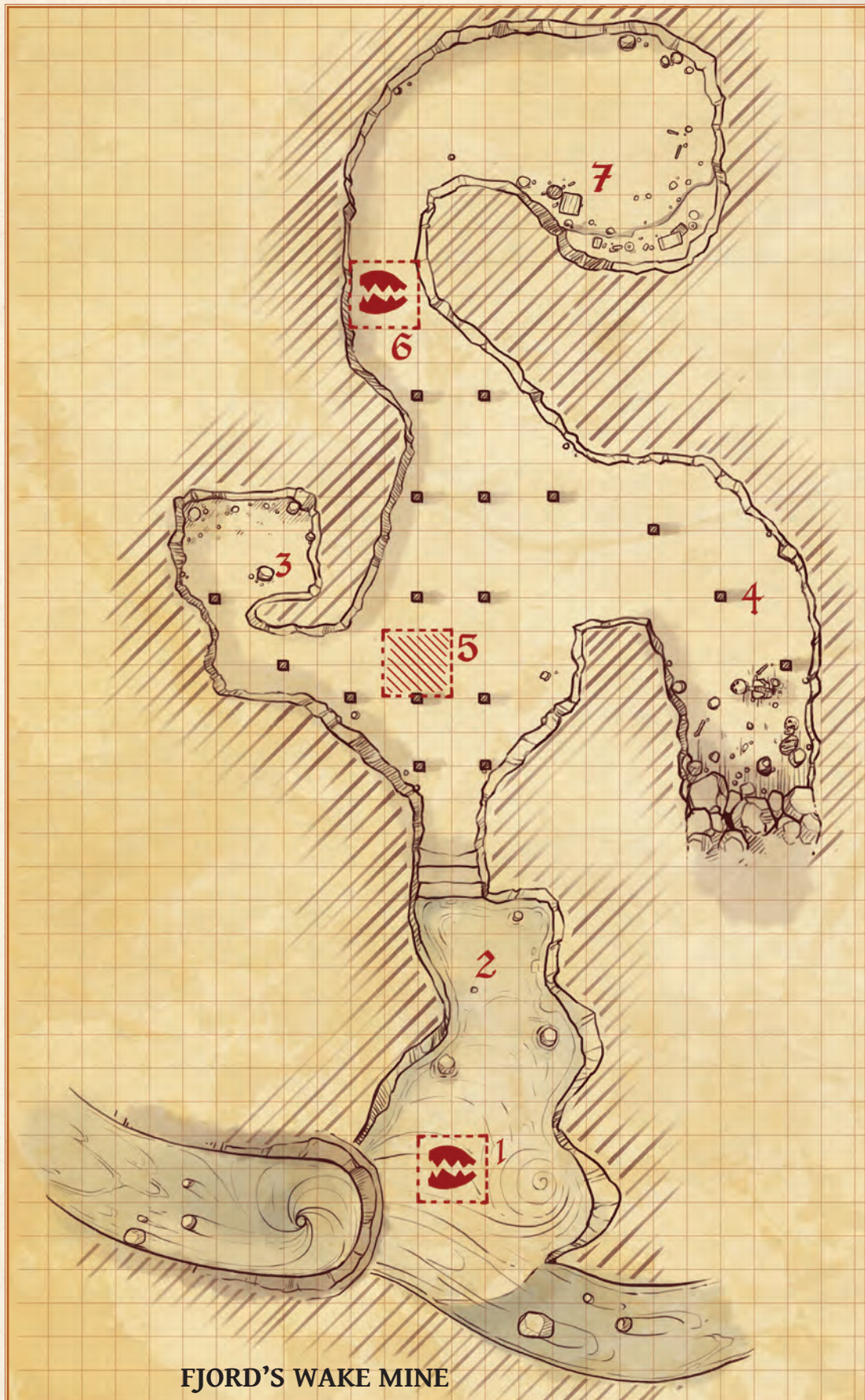
A DANGEROUS DESCENT

As you gaze down into the dark mouth of the cave, a sudden shift in the chill breeze brings tainted odors of rot and decay that threaten to overwhelm the fresh tang of sea air. A series of wooden planks, which appear to steps from your perspective, hold small pools of water. A length of hemp rope runs down the length of the cave's floor, which slopes downward at a forty-five degree angle. Suddenly, a wave crashes behind you, the ocean spray showing overhead. Some of the water runs down the cliff's side and gathers around the opening of the cave—creating what appears to be a sudden whirlpool. The water, however, does not remain, and quickly empties out further in the cave below.

Even though the mine is several feet above sea level, water from Icewall Bay frequently washes into the cave's entrance when the tide is in, turning the slanted downward entrance into a sort of slick, stone funnel that sometimes forms a whirlpool. The miners knew this and, just to be safe, normally ran a knotted piece of hemp rope down the side of the tunnel, allowing them to safely navigate the slick cave floor in case a massive wave hit and filled part of the tunnel with water. Once they were able to tunnel out of the mine from another room, they built a sluice below, which they used to wash and sort their finds. Because the miners knew the risk of getting soaked by a wave from Icewall Bay might mean getting sick (or worse), they rarely (if ever) used this as an exit from the mine. Shortly after Adennyaa took over the mine, however, she collapsed the primary exit, effectively forcing anyone who hoped to escape to use this one—which only two of the miners dared to risk. [These miners are frozen and buried in the snow about an hour north of the mine. Anyone that discovers their bodies easily determines they died of hypothermia with a successful Heal skill check (DC 15)].

Because this entrance to the mine was rarely used, this is the most dangerous way into the mine. Worse, the hemp rope that runs below has not been changed in well over a week and is inundated with icy seawater, which after several freezing nights has made it brittle (a successful Survival skill check, DC 12, reveals this). Anyone who weighs more than 50 lbs. that uses the rope to descend into the cave below breaks it, sliding 10 ft. into the cave below and automatically activating the sluice. Climbing down the cave without the rope requires a successful Climb skill check (DC 12), as the cave floor and walls are very slick. Anyone who uses a knotted rope (like the hemp ropes in the shack next to the cave) gains a +5 competence bonus to this skill check. PCs that use the sluice planks to brace themselves while climbing down gain an additional +2 competence bonus, but automatically set off the trap below.



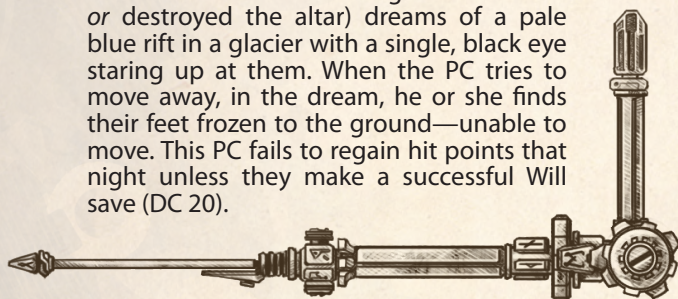


FJORD'S WAKE MINE



MAKING IT MYTHIC!

GMs running this adventure with its mythic options should describe the destruction of the Pale Altar in detail, making note to describe the cave itself shaking (and possibly even suggesting a cave in—with bits of mud and rock raining down in the main chamber)! Although the ceiling (and cave) does not collapse, the Lord of the Long Winter has just been deprived of a promising Winter Hag and is arguably upset with the PCs. The following night, when the PCs sleep, one of them (preferably the one who dealt the most damage to the witch or destroyed the altar) dreams of a pale blue rift in a glacier with a single, black eye staring up at them. When the PC tries to move away, in the dream, he or she finds their feet frozen to the ground—unable to move. This PC fails to regain hit points that night unless they make a successful Will save (DC 20).



ENCOUNTER 1: THE FOULED SLUICE (CR 2)

Immediately after entering the cave, read the following text aloud:

Several narrow passages, each no bigger than a man's hand, litter the walls of the cave's entrance, running its length. Wooden planks, you notice, block some of these off. A wooden barrier blocks the far end, connected by a rope to a pull chain at the bottom.

Immediately after entering the mine, the PCs must navigate past the mining sluice—a cunning contraption the miners used to sort the Jötunstones from worthless rock and gravel. They trapped all of the seawater that washed in from the bay at high tide behind several hidden sluice gates. When they collected enough rock, they opened these gates and let the water flood through a narrow channel lined with low barriers. The heavier Jötunstone remained behind the barriers while the lighter gravel washed into the underground river beyond.

Anyone interacting with the sluice that does not secure (tie off) the activation chain at the bottom of the cave accidentally opens the gate, releasing all of the waters stored along the walls and floor.

Fouled Sluice

CR 2

XP 600

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger touch (falling into or pulling on the activation chain);
Reset automatic (1 hour)

Effect Bull rush (CMB +12) against each creature in the sluice channel. Any creature that is knocked over takes 1d6 non-lethal damage and swallows some of the fetid water (DC 12 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1 hour).

The sluice channel contains several fragments of Jötunstone worth 100 gp

ENCOUNTER 2: THE MINERS (CR 1)

Like the rest of the cave complex, the walls here are rough stone and the ceilings are only ten feet tall at the highest point. All of the side mines are smaller, with ceilings that do not exceed six feet. The walls and floors are rough and hard, but are not difficult terrain.

This room was effectively an underground beach that served many uses. It was, first and foremost, a sluice. However, many of the miners also used it to bathe and many chose to relieve themselves here, as well, using it as a latrine. As a result, the miners found it necessary to build several small fires here, which they tended constantly, in case any of them needed to wash or warm themselves. Pegs for their clothing and several iron rings for torches can also been seen at eye level along the walls of the cave here.

After passing the sluice, you climb a short ramp and enter the main cave. While some torches burn randomly here, the light is dim at best. At the far end of the cave, three unkempt figures—their skin grey and scarred—crouch over the figure of a fourth, prone and unmoving. When they notice you, they slowly rise and slouch towards you in filthy, ragged clothes. Their open mouths exude the stench of rotten meat. Together they hiss, "Join our feast and eat with us!" All three figures lurch forward, their arms outstretched toward you!

Although these miners still live, they no longer bear the spark of self-awareness and compassion that defines most of humanity. Adennyaa has bound each to her altar and now they believe they are ghouls, ghouls who crave warm flesh! The miners attack without pity or conversation.

Runebound Miners (3)

CR 1/3

XP 135

Male Human Expert 1

NE Medium Monstrous Humanoid (augmented human)

Init +0; Senses Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 14 (+3 armor, +1 Natural)

hp 13 (1d8+5); Fast Healing 1

Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +2

Weakness Staggered

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee Heavy pick +2 (1d6+2/x4)

Special Attacks Savagery (Ex)

TACTICS

Before Combat These miners, feeling starved, rush forward into battle.



During Combat Driven by unclean hungers the miners seek the warmth of living flesh. They avoid heavily armored opponents, instead grasping at those in cloth or leathers and chewing at exposed skin.

Morale The miners grunt as weapons strike them, but otherwise entirely ignore even serious wounds until utterly destroyed or rendered unconscious through non-lethal damage.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 11, **Con** 13, **Int** 9, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 12

Feats Martial Weapon Proficiency (Heavy pick), Toughness

Skills Acrobatics -1, Appraise +3, Climb +5, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +3, Knowledge (local) +3, Perception +4, Profession (miner) +4, Ride -1, Stealth -1, Swim +1

Languages Low Common

SQ Runebound

Combat Gear oil (2 flasks)

Other Gear Studded leather armor, heavy pick, bedroll, hooded lantern, poncho, traveler's outfit, and 8 gp.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Savagery (Ex) Once a runebound miner damages an enemy, it gains a heightened focus that removes the staggered condition. Provided the runebound miner continues to attack the same target (the one against which it originally drew blood), it gains a +1 bonus to hit and deal damage against that target.

Runebound Healing (Su) Provided the runebound miner remains within 30 ft. of the item or area it is bound to, the runebound miner gains fast healing 1. Once it moves beyond this place or item (or if it is knocked unconscious), this fast healing stops.

The body of the now dead miner—the fourth upon which the prior three were feeding—has a *masterwork heavy pick* and 13 gold pieces. Otherwise, there is nothing of value here.

ENCOUNTER 3: HUNGRY BONES (CR 2)

Even before you round the corner to this room, the stench of decomposition hits you like a wave of overwhelming decay. When you peer in, you instantly see why. Rotten food spills out of the various broken barrels and boxes that line the walls of this apparent sleeping area. In the center, a large boar, its rotting ribs thrusting from underneath its pallid belly, grunts as it feasts on spoiled hams and festering turnips. Its hunger is doomed to continue, for every mouthful of food immediately falls from gaping wounds in its ribs and guts.

The miners were fattening a wild boar for slaughter when Adennyaa's doom overtook them. Driven by the witch's madness they ripped flesh from the beast with their hands and teeth, eating it alive while Adennyaa cackled in delight. The pain and fear of the pig's demise, combined with the malign aura of the bone altar caused it to reanimate and now it endlessly gorges, always hungry and never satisfied. As soon as it perceives the PCs, it attacks.

Hungry Bones The Undead Boar (1)

CR 2

XP 600

NE Medium undead

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft, scent; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 14 (+4 Natural)

hp 16 (3d8)

Fort +0, **Ref** +2, **Will** +6

DR 5/slashing; **Immune** cold, undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee gore +5 (1d8+3)

TACTICS

Before Combat Hungry Bones immediately attacks any living target.

During Combat Hungry Bones focuses on soft, unarmored targets, especially if it successfully gores one. If it can, it will maneuver to charge opponents.

Morale The undead boar is mindless and driven solely by fear and hunger, fighting until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 10, **Con** —, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 15

Feats Toughness

Skills Perception +6

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization any

Treasure standard

Characters that search the sleeping area discover an unopened crate that contains six flasks of oil, a bundle of twelve torches, a single *potion of cure light wounds*, a healer's kit, and a satchel filled with 150 gp.

ENCOUNTER 4: THE LONE MINER (CR 1/3)

As you round the corner and enter this section of the mine, the floor immediately begins to slope upward toward what is obviously a cave in. Several wooden beams, each relatively new looking, lie broken on the floor next to a pair of heavy mauls. A single man, his head bowed down, stands watch over the cave in. He doesn't appear to notice you.

This section of the mine originally served as the entrance, but Adennyaa quickly had those miners she enslaved collapse it when she took over. While it would take days to dig out, Adennyaa has set a single miner here as guard, just in case someone attempts to do just that. As soon he the PCs approach, this miner attacks.





Runebound Miner (1)

CR 1/3

XP 135

hp 13; Fast Healing 1

See the Runebound Miner stats on page XX.

TACTICS

During Combat This miner mindlessly obeys his last command, attacking anyone but Adennyaa that comes with 15 ft. of the cave in.

Morale This miner fights until death.

ENCOUNTER 5: THE RUBBLE

Although this is not a standard encounter, the area on the map annotated indicates a patch of fine, slippery rocks that have been set here to trip intruders. This patch of scree increases all Acrobatics skill checks by +2 and the whole area is difficult terrain. PCs who fight or run in this area must succeed on an Acrobatics skill check (DC 17) or fall prone.

ENCOUNTER 6: THE WITCH'S PIT (CR 2)

Adennyaa has, since taking over the mine, retreated to the very back cavern of the mine. In order to hinder those who might invade her sacred space, she ordered her thralls to dig a shallow, wide pit and fill it with jagged wooden spikes. She coated these spikes with bloodroot poison, which she knows weakens the bodies and minds of those who succumb to its effects. Although this pit is not deep, setting it off produces enough noise to alert the witch beyond. PCs who discover this trap may either disarm it, jump over it, or may attempt to bridge it (using lumber from area 4). In most cases, unless the PCs are particularly quiet, they alert Adennyaa.

Witch's Pit

CR 2

XP 600

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** repair

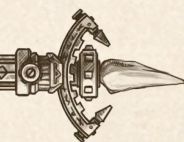
Effect 5-ft.-deep pit; pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d3 damage each plus poison [bloodroot]); DC 20 Reflex avoids; multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-square area)

ENCOUNTER 7:

AT THE ALTAR OF MHAMNOCK (CR VARIES)

Once the PCs pass Adennyaa's final trap, they enter the rear chamber of the mine. This chamber is larger than the rest, with a ceiling that is nearly 12 ft. in height. The walls are rough and covered with black soot in places, as well. Although there are torches attached to the walls for the miners to see by, the whole area is dimly lit. What is far more disturbing, however, is the floor, which is covered by a carpet of dead bugs. A few miners (including Nottri) stand idle along the wall, watching the PCs with vacant eyes. The southern wall of the chamber is shrouded in thick darkness.

After learning of the PCs presence in the mine, Adennyaa retreated here, determined to make her last stand. She realized she needed as many of the miners alive



for her dark ritual as possible, so she has ordered them to remain along the walls, silent. Then, she activated the altar, bathing the area 10 ft. around it in *deeper darkness* and directed the remaining vermin to stand watch. She waits there, patiently, watching to see if her vermin destroy the intruders.

Effectively, this encounter is divided into two waves.

The first wave (7a) is a CR 4 encounter and involves several swarms of spiders and cockroaches. Assuming the PCs have oil and other resources, it shouldn't be too difficult. Unprepared PCs will have a much harder time. Although the swarms are all immune to weapon damage, PCs may use the torches along the walls to deal fire damage to the swarms (1d4 per torch). Once this encounter is complete, allow the PCs roughly a minute before proceeding to the second part.

The second wave (7b) is comprised of Adennyaa and three of her toughest miners (she can't afford to risk more). About a minute after the PCs defeat the swarms or as soon as the PCs start to interact with the miners, Adennyaa banishes the *deeper darkness* and orders her three healthiest miners to attack the PCs. She attacks the PCs with her hexes and spells from a distance.

ENCOUNTER 7A: VERMINOUS LEGIONS (CR 4)

When the PCs walk in, read the following:

Unlike the rest of the mine, this area is a natural cavern, its ceilings slightly higher than everywhere else. As you peer in to the dimly lit room, you immediately notice that the floor appears to be undulating. As you focus on it, you see ranks of cockroaches battling squads of large spiders in some nightmarish parody of warfare. Suddenly, the vermin stop their combat and skitter towards you.

Spider Swarm (2)

CR 1

XP 400
hp 9

TACTICS

Morale The cockroach swarm fights until destroyed.

Cockroach Swarm (1)

CR 2

XP 600
hp 26

TACTICS

Morale The cockroach swarm fights until destroyed.

ENCOUNTER 7B: THE MAD WITCH (CR 4)

Suddenly, a ragged woman steps from the shadows in the south and shrieks out, "You've killed my lovely pets, ain't you. Hah! Well their replacements can feast on yer stinking corpses and eat your eyes and burrow beneath yer reeking skin. Let's be done with this!"

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITION

The altar, lashed together from human bones and tendon, provides a channel for the maddening powers of the Pale Tower. Adennyaa uses its unclean aura to control her verminous minions and improve control over weak-minded enemies. The malign aura of the altar increases the DC of Adennyaa's spells and hexes by +1 against all enemies within a 30-ft. radius (included in her stats below). Additionally, once per minute, Adennyaa can touch and activate the altar to bathe the area around the altar in supernatural darkness (as per the *deeper darkness* spell). As long as the altar stands, everyone bound to it within 30 ft. of it gains Fast Healing 1.

Player characters that succeed on a Knowledge (arcana or religion) skill check (DC 21) immediately connect the altar to the runes on the miners' hands and identify the Fast Healing. The bone altar is fragile and has only 5 hp and hardness 1. If the characters destroy the altar the miners immediately slump to the ground unconscious.

Adennyaa the Fever Witch

CR 2

XP 600
Female human witch 3
CE Medium humanoid (human)
Init +1; **Senses** Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 11, flat-footed 11 (+1 armor, +1 Dex)
hp 25 (3d6+12)
Fort +3, **Ref** +4, **Will** +4

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee Sickle +0 (1d6-1)
Special Attacks hexes [(*cackle*, *evil eye* (DC 15))]
Witch Spells Prepared (CL 3rd; concentration +6)
2nd — *hold person* (DC 17), *vomit swarm*
1st — *cause fear* (DC 16), *ray of sickening* x2 (DC 16)
0 (at will)— *bleed* (DC 15), *detect magic*, *putrefy food and drink*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 15)

TACTICS

Before Combat Adennyaa is concerned solely about the altar, but doesn't plan far beyond that.

During Combat Adennyaa uses *evil eye* and *cackle* to reduce her opponents saving throws. She follows up with *hold person* and *ray of sickening* against obvious warriors. If threatened with close combat she takes a step away and casts *vomit swarm* as a distraction—the look on her opponents' faces as spiders tumble from her mouth makes her howl with laughter.

Morale Adennyaa fights until dead.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 13, **Con** 14, **Int** 17, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10
Base Atk +1; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 11
Feats Spell Focus (Enchantment), Spell Focus (Necromancy), Toughness
Skills Heal +7, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (nature) +9, Profession (soothsayer) +7, Spellcraft +9
Languages Common
SQ arcane familiar (artic fox), patron spells (winter)
Combat Gear sickle
Other Gear bracers of armor +1



Telissia

Arctic fox (Adennyaa's familiar)

N tiny animal

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +8

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 size)

hp 5 (1d8+1)

Fort +3, **Ref** +4, **Will** +4

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee Bite +1 (1d3-1)

Space 2 ½ ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

TACTICS

During Combat Telissia avoids combat unless ordered to participate by Adennyaa.

Morale Adennyaa flees as soon as Adennyaa falls in combat.

STATISTICS

Str 9, **Dex** 15, **Con** 13, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 9 (13 vs. trip)

Feats Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Acrobatics +2 (+10 when jumping), Perception +8, Stealth +10, Survival +1 (+5 scent tracking); Racial Modifiers +4 Acrobatics when jumping, +4 Survival when tracking by scent.

Runebound Thrall Miners (3) CR 1/3

XP 400

hp 13; Fast Healing 1.

See the Runebound Thrall Miner stats on page XX.

TACTICS

During Combat These miners mindlessly obey Adennyaa, attacking the group as instructed.

Morale These miners fight to the death.

Once the PCs destroy Adennyaa, the miners simply stop and remain motionless. PCs that study the miners and make a successful Heal skill check (DC 15) realize they are starved and fatigued, but are otherwise healthy. PCs that succeed on a Knowledge (arcana) skill check (DC 21) realize that the altar is the source of their corruption. As soon as they destroy it (if they have not done so already), the miners animate and return to normal.

Adennyaa kept little in the way of personal treasures, but she does wear a finely crafted set of *bracers of armor* +1. PCs that search this chamber and succeed on a Perception skill check (DC 15) also find 100 gp hidden in an alcove beside the altar.

THE THREE GIGAS

BACKGROUND

The Haunted Hill has long puzzled northern explorers, its three massive ice menhirs standing guard atop a lone hill overlooking a passage to the Icewall Mountains. Believed by most to be a cursed site, the few mercenaries or explorers who have dared the hill have all returned with horrible tales—of ghosts, of the dead, and the very earth itself rising up in defiance of the living. What explorers do not know is that the hill was once the site of an important battle, one that took place under the cover of darkness against nearly insurmountable odds.

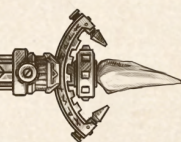
During the final days of the Second Fel Horde, when the cities in the south were turning the Northern invaders back, a force of specially designed automatons—experimental models called *Gigas*—traveled north to fight the invaders. They engaged them at several points along the coast, eventually pushing them into the foothills around the Icewall Mountains. Knowing they would not survive a winter in the mountains, the barbarians regrouped and attacked the southerners, fighting them nearly to the last man. The battle that took place left only three alive. The Gigas Model Automatons, lacking sentience, followed their last order and stood to defend the hill. Over the decades that followed, they shut down and eventually froze to the top of the hill, surrounded by mounds of the frozen dead.

Because of the sheer amount of pain and death, the hill has since become a powerful haunt. Worse, evil elementals, attracted to the pain there, have taken up residence. These two combined

factors have turned what was once a site of noble sacrifice into one of despicable horror.

TRAVELING TO THE HAUNTED HILL

The Haunted Hill lies nearly a full day northwest of Northgard, about 15 miles away through some of the toughest terrain around. PCs traveling there must traverse icy plains before finally entering the low hills that eventually lead into the Icewall Mountains. The Haunted Hill is, as most explorers will tell you, the only one of its kind—a large hill crowned by three massive ice menhirs. Although the journey is a difficult one, the only real



dangers the PCs face are natural ones; timber wolves and the occasional dire wolf roam the low hills, often hunting for any sort of prey, explorers included. The stretch of planes that divides Northgard from the rough hills also feature numerous rivers, some of which lie buried under snow and soft ice.

GMs wishing to showcase some of the many northern hazards that make up this terrain are encouraged to do so here, but need to remember the inherent danger in doing so, as well. Falling into an icy river could spell the end for lower level PCs (especially 1st level PCs), as they have limited resources and probably lack adequate shelter.

ENCOUNTER 1: UP THE MUDDY INCLINE (CR 4)

The hillside that stretches ahead of you is white, pristine under new-fallen snow. At the top in the distance you can make out three large ice columns, or perhaps Elevak's prized automata, glimmering blue and white in the failing light.

They await you, but first you must trudge up the tall hill.

The white snow does not stay pristine for long; it is in fact a thin crust over deep sticky mud. Characters swiftly discover just how hard it is to move as their legs sink into the mud, requiring they fight for each step. The hill takes approximately thirty minutes to climb and counts as difficult terrain. Approximately half way up the hill, each PC must make a Fort save (DC 10) or gain the fatigued condition. GMs should emphasize the seemingly endless nature of the walk, and how struggling to put one foot in front of the other seems to sap the characters strength and willpower.

As the PCs come within the last sixty feet of the march up the hill, they start to enter the main area where the ancient battle took place. Have each PC make multiple Acrobatics skill checks (DC 12) to remain upright—PCs that fail fall prone. Worse, the three mud elementals that hunt this hill rise up and attack the PCs.

As you trudge up the hill, battling snow and mud, you finally come to what feels like the final stretch. You can see the three figures ahead. Then, you step on something. You realize the ground beneath your feet is filled with bits of broken metal and wood! As you do, mounds of snow and mud rise up before you and attack!

Mud Elementals (3)

CR 1

XP 400

hp 13

Sharp bone and metal shrapnel in the mud fists give the elemental's slam attacks bleed 1.

TACTICS

During Combat The mud elementals use their relative mobility in the difficult terrain, and their entrap ability, to separate and frustrate their opponents. They attempt to trap melee warriors and then gang up on fragile characters in an

avalanche of blood streaked filth.

Morale The mud elementals fight until destroyed. Unlike generic elementals, these elementals are servants of the Thrall Lords and are NE (neutral evil).

ENCOUNTER 2: LAST STAND (CR 4)

Atop the hill, three ice coated figures tower against the blue sky. Up close you can clearly see through the layers of snow and ice to the metallic warriors underneath. Retrieving parts for Elevak from beneath the ice may still prove difficult.

The three *Gigas* froze in a rough triangle, one facing north, one north-east and one north-west, each with 20-ft. between them. They are massive (nearly 10 ft. in diameter each) and covered in a layer of thick ice (hardness 3, 9 hit points) which characters must destroy to gain access to the Therma Torque Engine. Removing a Therma Torque Engine requires either a successful Craft (clockworks) or Disable Device skill check (DC 10) and takes approximately one minute.

The hopeless last stand of these giant warriors, combined with the death of the surrounding battle, caused the creation of a haunt which triggers as soon as a humanoid comes within 20-ft. of the three *Gigas*.

Last Stand (1)

CR 4

XP 1,200

NE persistent haunt (20-ft.-radius area around central *gigas* automata)

Caster Level 4th

Notice Perception DC 15 (to notice a chill fog gathering from nowhere, and the sounds of battle raging out of sight)

hp 18; Trigger presence of a living humanoid within 20-ft. of central *gigas* automata; **Reset** 1 day

EFFECT

Thick dank fog gills the area between the giant automata, blocking all view beyond the hill top. Muffled sounds of battle—sword blows, screams, and gunshots—echo from beyond the fog as if the hill were once again the site of a desperate last stand. All creatures in the area must succeed at a DC 10 Will save or become fatigued from the despair and exhaustion of endless war. Creatures that are already fatigued instead become exhausted.

Once per turn the haunt summons a skeleton (Bestiary 1, hp 4) from the fog, wearing the tattered clothes of a northern barbarian. It attacks a single random victim until destroyed. The haunt continues to summon skeletons, once per round on its initiative, until a maximum of three skeletons is present. It summons a new skeleton the turn after one is destroyed if it is not at this maximum. The skeletons do not pursue their target beyond the 20-ft. radius of the haunt, and collapse into dust after 1 hour if their target does not return.

DESTRUCTION

The three *Gigas* must be blessed in a Ceremony of Remembrance by a priest of the Æssinyr (any character able to cast divine spells qualifies). A successful Knowledge (religion) skill check (DC 10) allows the PC to correctly recall the ceremonial prayer and perform the ritual.





MAKING IT MYTHIC!

GMs running this adventure with its mythic options can use the destruction of the Last Stand Haunt as a bit of foreshadowing—as the PCs destroy the haunt, a bolt of lightning lights the northern sky, ripping across the clear skies and striking somewhere in the Icewall Mountains (or the Pale Tower). Religious PCs might interpret this as a sign that the Æssinyr (or the Thrall Lords) have witnessed this event and have taken note!

THE HUNTSMAN'S LODGE

BACKGROUND

The land around Northgard lies bleak and frozen, but game hides in snowdrifts and icy thickets. Fresh meat and warm pelts fetch high prices in Northgard for those hunters canny and driven enough to seek them. The most successful hunters build small shelters and stay out for weeks at a time, returning to Northgard only to trade and resupply before heading back into the white wastes.

Now rumors tell that Hrodur Blacktooth is missing. Tough, experienced, and deadly at any range with his longbow, no one expected him to fall victim to the perils of the North. But his overdue return from his latest hunting trip suggests he may have and the folks that rely on him are worried.

Hrodur is not physically hurt, but three Fel Sprites have taken advantage of his isolation and the maddening taint of the Pale Tower to drive him to paranoia. Tormented by their glamors and illusions, Hrodur has grown increasingly paranoid over recent weeks. He now believes that the spirits of slain wolves stalk him in the forms of men, seeking his blood in recompense for his years of hunting.

He no longer dares return to Northgard. Instead he stockpiles supplies and endures hours crouched over his fire, obsessively forging silver arrowheads and amulets of protection.

TRAVELING TO THE BLACKTOOTH'S CABIN

Hrodur's Cabin is located about seven miles (about a half day's walk with the snow) southwest of Northgard. The terrain isn't too rough, but there are plenty of small copses of trees alongside and abundance of icy thickets that dot the plains. Even with all of this, the PCs shouldn't have too much trouble finding his cabin, which lies at the end of a remote valley.

APPROACHING HRODUR'S CABIN (CR 5)

Sheltered at the end of a natural gully lies Hrodur

Blacktooth's hunting lodge. The ground of the gully is covered in a thin layer of snow, slightly disturbed in places. Low wooden walls and a snow-covered roof imply a cramped interior, but the woodsmoke rising from a tin chimney means fire and warmth. A man stands on top of the lodge roof with a drawn longbow.

Hrodur keeps constant watch from the roof of his lodge. He greets visitors with a warning shot from his bow and shouts his demands that they identify themselves as men, not disguised wolf-spirits. In his madness he requires visitors to strip down to their undergarments and place a silver coin on their tongue, which he inspects. He treats those who refuse this simple and reasonable request as wolf-spirits and shoots to kill.

Persuading Hrodur of their good intentions requires a successful Diplomacy skill check (DC 25) or a Bluff skill check (DC 30). If one of the PCs fulfills his bizarre request to strip down, then grant them +5 circumstance bonus on the check. Anyone who strips down to their underclothes immediately starts to take nonlethal damage from the cold weather unless they succeed on a DC 15 Fort saving throw. PCs that fail this save by 5 or more immediately gain the *fatigued* condition.

If it comes to battle, then Hrodur's position on the roof gives him a small cover bonus (+1) against ranged attacks from anyone below. The roof of the hunting lodge is only 6 ft. above the ground and can be easily climbed with a successful Climb skill check (DC 10). There is also a ladder inside the lodge itself, though players venturing inside must face off against the Fel Sprites first (see encounter 2 below).

Characters that succeed in convincing Hrodur to return to Northgard for help earn the favor of Yrona, and through her the Black Hand. They earn XP as if they defeated Hrodur, plus an additional story award of 1200 XP. Also award this if the party manages to subdue Hrodur with non-lethal tactics and return him to Northgard. If the PCs return Hrodur alive, Yrona offers the PCs both a rifle and sixteen rounds of long rifle ammunition as a reward or 100 Crowns.

Hrodur Blacktooth

CR 4

XP 1200

Male human ranger (trapper) 5

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; Senses Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +3 Dex)

hp 52 (5d8+18)

Fort +7, Ref +6, Will -1 (suffers from paranoia)

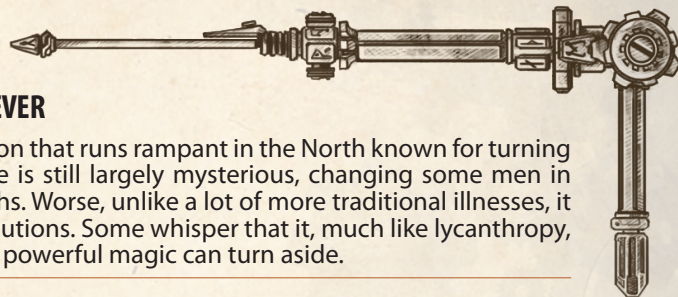
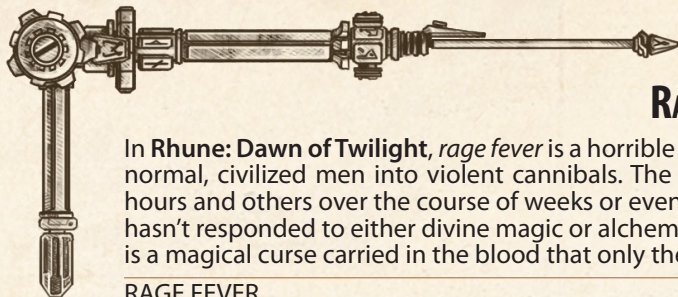
OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee Dagger +6 (1d4+1/19-20) or club +6 (1d6+1/x2)

Ranged +1 composite longbow +8 (1d8+2/x3) or dagger +7 (1d4+1/19-20)





RAGE FEVER

In **Rhune: Dawn of Twilight**, *rage fever* is a horrible affliction that runs rampant in the North known for turning normal, civilized men into violent cannibals. The disease is still largely mysterious, changing some men in hours and others over the course of weeks or even months. Worse, unlike a lot of more traditional illnesses, it hasn't responded to either divine magic or alchemical solutions. Some whisper that it, much like lycanthropy, is a magical curse carried in the blood that only the most powerful magic can turn aside.

RAGE FEVER

Type disease, injury; **Save** Fortitude DC 16; **Onset** 2d4 days; **Frequency** 1/day or during combat

Effect: 1 Int and 1 Con; **Cure** special

Rage fever is both a curse and a disease, one that slowly drives a man mad, turning him into a cannibalistic barbarian. Although it normally takes a week or more to slowly eat away at a man's body and mind, active combat hastens the process of the disease, forcing a save at the beginning of any combat encounter. Each day (or each combat), the affected character must make a DC 16 Fortitude save. If he fails, he loses 1 point of Intelligence and 1 point of Constitution. If he succeeds, he staves off the effects of the disease for one more day. Men that reach 0 in either ability score become catatonic for four to six hours, waking as fel barbarians. These characters gain a single level of barbarian, become chaotic evil, and become NPCs.

Although there are no known cures for this disease, powerful magic spells like *limited wish*, *miracle*, and *wish* can remove it. Player characters who cast *remove curse* or *remove disease* on a PC afflicted by *rage fever* automatically grant them a number of successful Fortitude saving throws equal to their caster level. Because of the nature of rage fever, it can spread very quickly or, with care, can take months to fully destroy an individual.

During this adventure, PCs may potentially be exposed to this disease, especially when battling the crazed Black Hand agent (behind the barracks) or the barbarians in the foul tower. Because this is potentially a death sentence for PCs that fail their Fort save, GMs should avoid having NPC deliberately attack PCs to spread the disease—using weapons instead of bites or unarmed attacks. GMs who do wish to include this disease should understand that it is blood borne and commonly transferred by the affected biting the unaffected. Some barbarians knowingly spread this disease, shaving their teeth and exposing their gums to do so. If you elect to include this disease, add the following section (under special abilities) to the Crazed Black Hand Agent (located on page X) and the Fel Barbarians (located on page X).

Disease (Ex) *Rage Fever*:

Bite or weapon—Injury; save Fort DC 16; onset 2d4 days; **Frequency** 1/day or during combat; **Effect:** 1 Int damage and 1 Con damage; **Cure** special. The save is Constitution-based.

Special Attacks favored enemy (animals +4, humans [wolf-spirits] +2), trap (sleet trap) 6/day (DC 14)

TACTICS

Before Combat If enemies approach, Hrodur fires his composite longbow as they struggle past his many traps. If forced into melee, he uses his *oil of bless weapon* and wades into combat with his dagger.

During Combat Hrodur prefers to pick his enemies off at a distance. His animal companion, Ugly, stays close to protect him in melee. At close range they flank the biggest enemy and attempt to take it down quickly. He avoids attacking obvious priests, fearing the Æssinyr's wrath if he hurts one of their chosen.

Morale Hrodur is suffering from acute paranoia and fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 14, **Con** 17, **Int** 8, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 18

Feats Diehard, Endurance, Extra Ranger Trap, Far Shot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot

Skills Acrobatics -1, Climb +7, Craft (traps) +4, Disable Device +8, Handle Animal +7, Heal +9, Intimidate +4, Perception +9, Sense Motive +2, Spellcraft +2, Stealth +6,

Survival +9 (+2 to track), Swim +3; takes a -4 penalty on all Cha-based skill checks.

Languages Low Common

SQ animal companion link, combat styles (archery), favored terrain (cold), hunter's bonds (Ugly, wolverine), paranoia, track, trap (snare trap, sleet trap), trapfinding +2, wild empathy

Combat Gear alchemical silver arrows (20), arrows, slow burn (20), +1 composite longbow, *oil of bless weapon*, *potion of cure light wounds* (x3), *potion of endure elements* (x2), *potion of hide from animals*, *potion of hide from undead*,

Other Gear +1 chain shirt, furs, cold weather gear, compass, signaling horn, thieves' tools, wire saw, wrist sheath (spring-loaded)

Ugly

Wolverine (Hrodur's animal companion)

N small animal

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 11 (+3 Dex, +1 size, +2 natural, -2 rage)

hp 28 (3d8+15)

Fort +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +4



OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., burrow 10 ft., climb 10 ft.
Melee Bite +6 (1d4+2) and 2 claws +6 (1d3+2)
Special Attacks rage

TACTICS

Before Combat Ugly waits anxiously at Hrodur's side for enemies to approach. As they close to biting distance he flies into a rage (statistics above include rage ability bonuses).
During Combat Ugly protects Hrodur in melee, and acts as a flanking companion whenever possible.
Morale Ugly is devoted to Hrodur and fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 17, **Con** 19, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10
Base Atk +2; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 14 (18 vs. trip)
Feats Toughness, Weapon Finesse
Skills Perception +7

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Rage (6 rounds/day) (Ex) +4 Str, +4 Con, +2 to Will saves, -2 to AC when enraged.

Whether or not the PCs are diplomatic or engage Hrodur in combat, they must still approach the cabin. Doing so would normally be an easy task, but Hrodur, in his increasing paranoia, has buried dozens of traps in the gully leading up to his cabin. These traps are unique variants that use the DC established by his class ability. Disabling these traps does not provide additional XP, figuring into the encounter as normal.

FIRST LINE OF TRAPS

Hrodur set this furthest from his cabin. He loaded these with an alchemical compound that burns and itches, which he believes wards away wolves and their kin. PCs that inspect these traps note a hint of garlic mixed into the alchemical solution.

Itching Trap

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 14; **Disable Device** DC 14

EFFECTS

Trigger location (walking on an indicated square); **Reset** manual
Effect The target is affected with irritation that detracts from its alertness. It takes a -2 penalty on Perception checks, initiative checks, and Reflex saves for 10 minutes.

SECOND LINE OF TRAPS

Hrodur designed his next line of defense against armed intruders who try to rush him. He set a line of tripwires across the gully at ankle height beneath the snow.

Tripwire Trap

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 14; **Disable Device** automatic (cut the wire)

EFFECTS

Trigger location (walking on the indicated square); **Reset** manual
Effect A taut wire stretched between two vertical surfaces knocks the target prone unless it succeeds at a DC 14 Reflex saves. A running or charging creature takes a -6 penalty on its save.

SCATTERED TRAPS NEAR THE HUNTING LODGE

Hrodur set a series of snares around his cabin to catch and capture any intruders that made it too close.

Rawhide Snare

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 14; **Disable Device** DC 14

EFFECTS

Trigger location (walking on an indicated square); **Reset** manual
Effect A rawhide noose constricts around a limb or other part of the triggering creature's body (DC 14 Reflex avoids). The creature cannot move from the location of the trap until it escapes. The trapped creature can escape by making a successful Escape Artist skill check or Strength check (DC 14) as a full-round action. Alternatively, trapped creatures may cut themselves free. The rawhide noose has 2 hit points and no hardness.

The shaded areas immediately to the south and east of the lodge are filled with low brush and scree from the gully walls. They count as difficult terrain, increasing the DC to notice traps in these areas by 2.

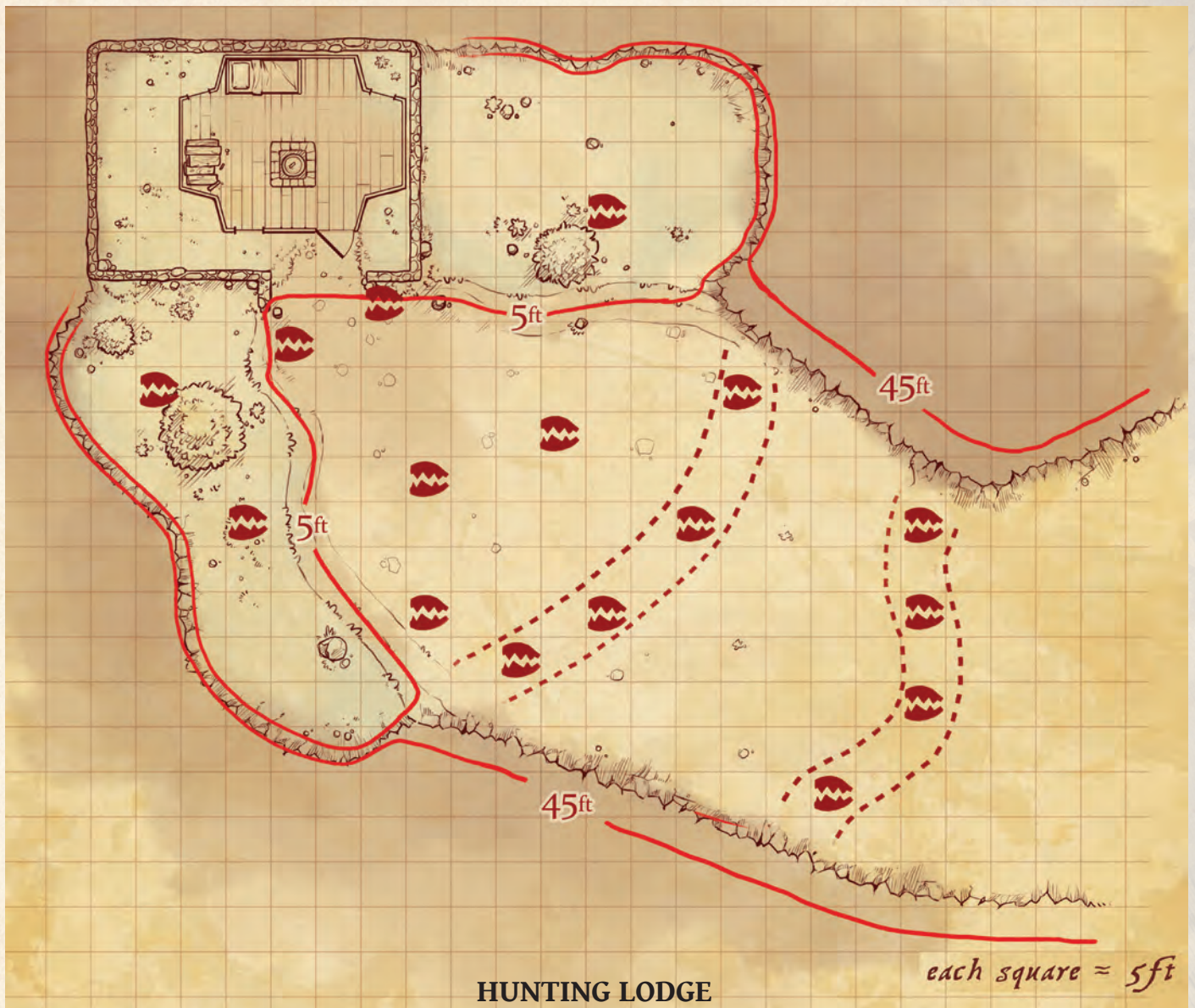
DEPLOYED TO FORT BLITZKRIEG

After completing at least two of the side missions in Northgard (or once reaching 2nd level, if the GM wishes to skip these side missions), Commander Drothgar invites the PCs to share dinner with him at the Mead Hall. He informs them that one of his riders, bearing a report from Fort Blitzkrieg in the north, has failed to arrive. He expected the rider a few nights ago and is starting to worry. His men are, even when they complain, normally very reliable. He tells the PCs that while he would normally send a rider out, he's shorthanded, as a full company of men have just earned leave in Union City. He would hate to ask even a few of them to stay back and, if the PCs would look into this, he'd happily pay them for their time. Moreover, Commander Drothgar has heard some of the rumors the men spread about the Pale Tower and doesn't wish to upset them worse, if something (like the death of a rider) has occurred. He'd much rather rely on professionals to discreetly handle this, men and women who would report to him directly.

If the PCs ask how much he's willing to pay, Commander Drothgar happily offers them 50 gp each to find the rider, a favorable fee for a day or two of work. If the PCs go north to Fort Blitzkrieg and return with that sad information, he triples his fee (after the fact), provided the PCs remain silent about what happened. He will immediately ask them to travel north and investigate the Pale Tower for the good of both Union City and Northgard, citing that he'll need to ready all available troops if things are getting bad up north. He understands the danger, of course, and informs the PCs he'll reward them handsomely once they return, offering each of them 100 Crowns (500 gp) for their effort.

"Thank you for dining with me. So far, you've done quite a bit for Northgard and I cannot help but say you have impressed me. I've met plenty of mercenaries in my day, which is what I originally took you for when we first met,





but I must say I may have misjudged you. You might actually be heroes—a rarity in our time. If this is the case, I have need of you, as a recent development here in Northgard worries me.”

Once the PCs agree to hear Commander Drothgar out, he continues:

“In short, I’m missing a rider—a man I expected a week ago from Fort Blitzkrieg, or Fort Bliss, as the men call it. This man was to meet with the company that arrived with you, but still hasn’t shown. I increased patrols in the area, but none of them have found the man and I am worried—especially with the rumors of the Pale Tower’s activity. If you’re willing, I’d like you to ride north and find him. If you do not locate him, I’d like you to ride further north, to the fort, and investigate. Bring whatever news you find to me, and please, for the sake of all of us, be discreet.”

By now, the PCs should have received their faction missions and should have their own reasons for heading north. If they seem hesitant, Commander Drothgar will double his initial offer, but doesn’t spend too much time talking about money, especially as he considers the group heroes, not mercenaries. Once the group agrees to aid him, he pens a quick note and issues them two horses and a sleigh, telling them that it will be the quickest way to travel, especially if they need to ride north to the fort. He also issues them four days of rations, each, if they require them. Although he doesn’t offer them the money up front (he realizes they could die and he doesn’t want to waste the fort’s resources), he will pay them half up front if they request it. When all of this is settled, he bids them a warm, quiet evening and asks them to leave at first light on the following day.



ACT 5:

INTO THE PALE TOWER

Assuming the PCs set out early in the day, the weather is clear and visibility is at a premium, allowing them to take the put a lot of distance between them and Northgard. The PCs should encounter the wolves around midday and discover the frozen body of the Fort Blitzkrieg soldier in late afternoon.

About four hours into this journey, however, the PCs come to one of the many frozen (and hidden) rivers that crisscross the north. Although it is marked by a single, stone pillar (etched with runes indicating danger), that post is halfway buried under recent snows. PCs who pull up and investigate the marker easily note the warning (which is written in both Runic and Low Common).

As your group pushes northward, you begin to notice the snow deepening on the sides of your path—forming a natural trail where the snow is at its shallowest point. Up ahead, you can make up a large patch of thin snow riddled with animal tracks surrounding a single clearing. A lone stone marker, nearly buried in snow, can be seen at the edge of the clearing.

ENCOUNTER 1: HUNGRY WOLVES, ICY WATERS (CR 5)

Player characters that inspect the tracks and make a successful Knowledge (nature) or Survival skill check (DC 10) correctly identify the tracks as wolves' paw prints. They're only an hour or so old. Inspecting these tracks, however, requires the PCs to walk out onto the ice to do so. If two or more PCs do so, the wolves leap from hiding and attack. These wolves have buried themselves partially in the banks, making them hard to see, but not impossible. Player characters that make a successful Perception skill check (DC 18) notice the wolves, negating the surprise. The starving wolves fight to the death. When the trap is sprung! Read the following.

Suddenly, several creatures—each a blur of white and grey fur—erupt from the snowy banks adjacent to you!

Wolves (5)

XP 400

hp 13 (see *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

CR 1

TACTICS

During Combat The wolves hide in the snow until one or more characters move to the center of the frozen river, attacking in pairs. They attempt to swarm lightly armored targets, but do not leave prone targets once they've successfully tripped them.

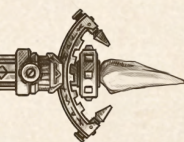
Morale The wolves are hungry, but do not fight to the death. If three or more of the wolves are slain, the rest of the pack flees. If the wolves flee, award the PCs full experience for the encounter.

Although it initially appears safe, the wolves ambush the PCs on a thin part of the frozen river and if they fall, may break the ice. Player characters may notice this hazard before walking out onto the ice, but only by making a successful Survival skill check (DC 15). Player characters that

succeed on this roll by five or more (DC 20+) easily identify the total area of thin ice. The river that snakes through the snowy northern plains is 15 ft. wide, with banks of snow nearly 3 ft. deep (difficult terrain) and 5 ft. wide on each side. The patch up ahead is only lightly covered by the snow and is very slippery, requiring player characters to make a successful Acrobatics skill check (DC 15) to move more than ½ speed (treat the whole area as difficult terrain).

True danger, however, waits for PCs that weigh more than 120 lbs that fall prone while on the

ice. Each time a player character falls in a single square, mark it. Once a square has been marked twice, the ice in that square breaks and the player character occupying it must make a Reflex saving throw (DC 13) or fall into the freezing water below (see "Cold Dangers" in Chapter 13 of the *PATHFINDER® ROLEPLAYING GAME CORE RULEBOOK™*). Player characters that fall into the water immediately begin to take lethal damage from the extreme cold and gain the fatigued condition unless they make a successful Fortitude saving throw (DC 15). Player characters in the water must make a successful Swim skill check (DC 10) to keep their heads above the icy waters.



While the wolves possess no treasure, player characters that search the area notice that a skeleton lies partially buried in one of the snow banks. While most of its gear has long ago worn away, both of its forearms still bear worked, silver bracelets (35 gp each). A frost-forged shortsword (610 gp) lies a few inches away.

ENCOUNTER 2: THE FROZEN BODY (CR 2)

Two hours after battling the wolves, the PCs finally discover what they've been looking for—the body of the rider Commander Drothgar was expecting. The rider, however, is propped up against a large, black tree and is filled with arrows. The victim of the madness that slowly overtook the fort a week or so ago, he was the only healthy (and sane) man left at Fort Blitzkrieg. Unfortunately, he didn't make it far enough south to deliver his warning to Northgard.

This tree, however, is the roost of several flocks of winter ravens. While omnivores like common ravens, winter ravens have a particular fondness of flesh—whether it is fresh or decaying—and will never pass up a feast such as has been laid out for them at the base of the tree. As creatures warped by the strange energies flowing forth from the Pale Tower and by their normal meals of fever-tainted meat, the winter ravens are unnaturally aggressive and will not back down from a fight unless at least a significant portion (at least 6) of their flock is slain.

As you push north toward Fort Blitzkrieg, you cannot help but pull your cloaks tightly against your bodies, doing all you can to push back the cold wind clawing at your face and neck. While you've grown accustomed to the constantly shifting snow drifts, the wind creating a white haze that blocks some of your vision, you are both relieved and unnerved when the wind suddenly dies down revealing the scene before you. You can clearly make out, up ahead, a single black tree, veiled in ice and snow. A host of white birds—each the size of a small raven—rests in the tree. Below it, propped at its base, rests the body of a man whose torso is filled with arrows—collectively grouped together as if he were an archery target.

When the player characters approach the tree or the body, the birds immediately cry out in unison, but otherwise remain in the tree. The birds attack anyone that touches the body.

Player characters that examine the body and make a successful Knowledge (local) skill check or Profession (soldier) skill check (DC 10) quickly note that the man wears a soldier's uniform and armor, both which bear the crest of Union City. Moreover, the man has several arrows protruding from his chest and neck. A player character that makes a successful Knowledge (local) or Profession (soldier) skill check (DC 15), identifies those arrows as the same type that are issued to soldiers in Union City and Northgard. A player character that makes a successful Heal skill check (DC 17) determines that the man had none of the signs

commonly associated with *rage fever*—he bled to death.

The soldier in the snow has very little of use on him. Player characters should note he carries only a dagger, lacks winter boots, and is dressed very lightly for someone traversing the northern lands (he isn't wearing cold weather gear).

Honor Award: Award player characters that bury or burn the body of the fallen soldier 1 point of honor each.

Winter Raven (6)

CR 1/3

XP 135

hp 4 (see appendix)

TACTICS

During Combat The winter ravens spend the first two rounds of combat flying out of reach over the player characters' heads and using their raucous caw to sicken as many player characters as they can within 30-feet of the corpse. Thereafter, they make flyby attacks at anyone remaining in this area, using their jagged beaks to tears bleeding wounds in the player characters in the hopes of increasing the size of their meal.

Morale If the flock loses at least six of their number, the remaining winter ravens will fly off in search of an easier meal.

At this point, GMs should allow PCs to make two relevant skill checks—a Survival skill check (DC 15) and a Knowledge (geography) skill check (DC 20). PCs that make the first realize that night is only a few hours away and, worse, that a lack of cloud cover means a cold night. PCs that make the second check realize that Fort Blitzkrieg should only be an hour or so away. Assuming that PCs make these checks, they will likely opt to head north for shelter. If they do so, they should be allowed to proceed with no real obstructions. PCs that elect to turn back do so with little trouble, either—but the journey is cold (with temperatures dropping below zero degrees Fahrenheit) and takes a full six hours.

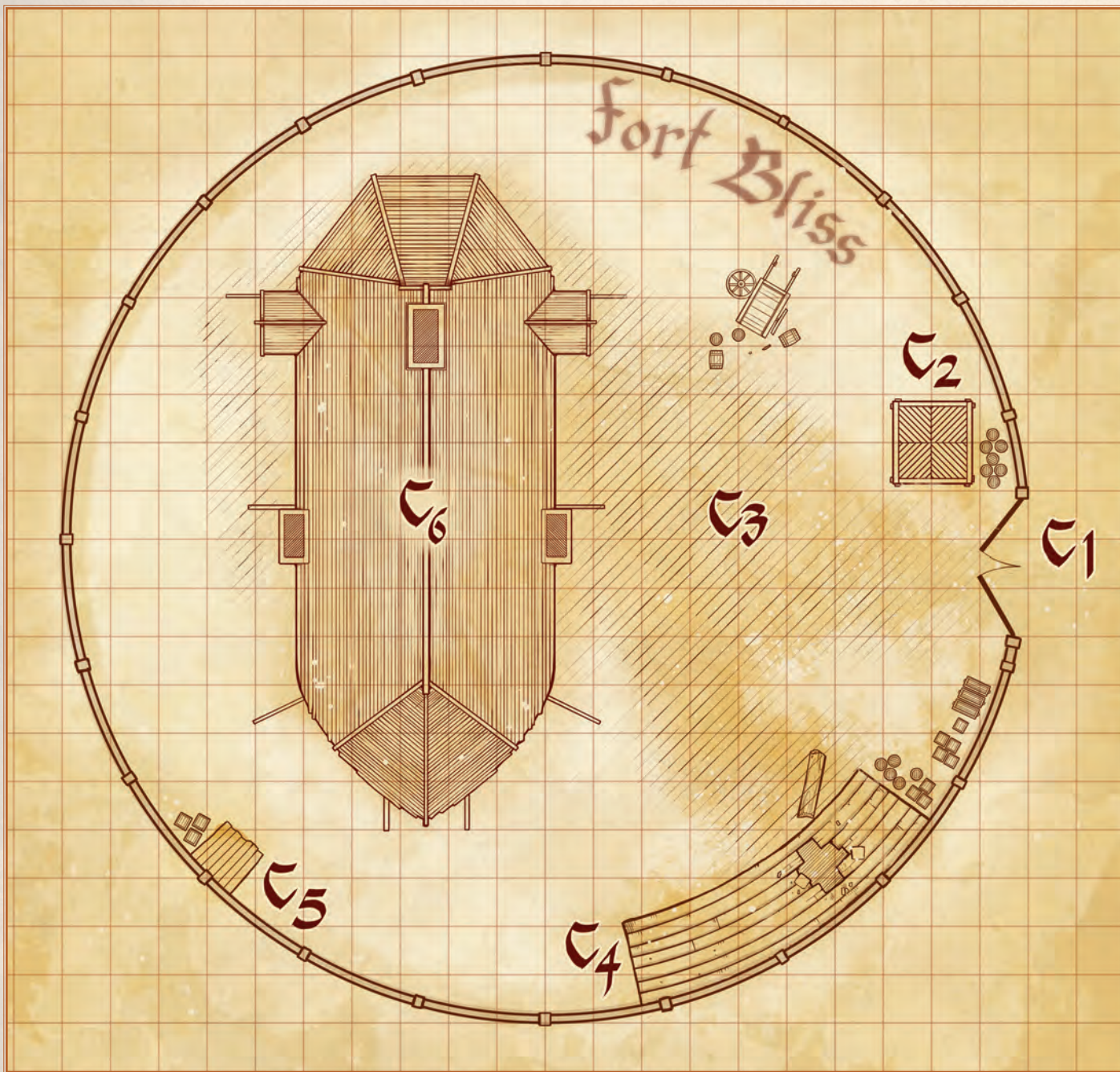
APPROACHING FORT BLISS

Whether the PCs ride out from Northgard and ride to the fort directly or reach it after fighting the ravens, they reach the fort just as the sun is starting to dip into the western skies—leaving the whole area in a perpetual dusk. While there is still enough light to see by, that light won't last more than an hour or so at best.

After hours of pushing through the snow and ice, you finally reach Fort Bliss. Up ahead, you can make out a large wall, easily fifteen feet in height, with a single tower slightly inside the wall. Large banks of snow push against the walls surrounding the fort, except around the front gate, where the snow has been recently cleared away. From your position, you cannot hear or see any activity around the fort.

Fort Bliss (a mocking title the soldiers of Northgard gave to Fort Blitzkrieg) exists solely to watch the Pale Tower. Most soldiers consider a tour at Fort Blitzkrieg



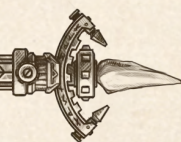


punishment and nearly all who have spent more than a month complain that the tower affects their souls—causing a number of ailments, from headaches to hallucinations. While most soldiers recover within days of returning to Northgard, others are not so lucky. Some whisper that the tower drives men mad, forcing them to wander off, driven like cattle before the prod, right into the gaping maw that is the tower—to serve its inhuman masters. Fort Blitzkrieg is located twenty-five miles northwest of Northgard, about two day's march (weather permitting) from the tower itself. If the PCs traveled by sleigh, it is possible to reach the fort in a single day.

C1: PALISADE GATE

The thick, roughly hewed posts of the fifteen-foot tall palisade converge in an opening large enough to allow passage of a single wagon. A heavy gate of dark wood stands partially ajar, creaking slowly as the icy wind shifts it back and forth by inches. A tall wooden platform with a roof looms unmanned to the right of the gate inside the palisade.

This gate is 15 ft. tall and serves to separate the fort from the outside. The timbers that make up this gate (and the walls around it) have all been alchemically treated and are resistant against both fire and ice (treat as fire and cold resistance 3). Otherwise, the wood is normal in all regards.



(hardness 5, 10 hit points per inch of thickness). Climbing the walls (or gate) is difficult and requires a successful Climb skill check (DC 25).

C2: GATE WATCHTOWER

This wooden platform serves as watchtower for the fort. It stands mere inches from the palisade; a wooden ladder is propped against its side, which leads up to the raised platform twelve feet off the ground. The watchtower provides a clear view of the surrounding area around the fort and particularly of the Pale Tower in the distance. There is enough space above to let two or three guards make use of the platform comfortably. A few arrows and a single warning horn litter the floor of the watchtower.

Climbing the ladder to this tower is simple. Player characters that ascend the 20 ft. ladder discover the body of a single soldier, riddled with arrows. He holds a broken horn in his hand, shorn clear through with a single arrow. Two shortbows, two quivers of arrows, and a single shortsword lie buried in the snow adjacent to his body.

C3: THE YARD AND THE TRAP (CR 2)

The ground inside the palisade walls consists of equal parts snow, dirt and a muddy combination of the two. The fort's barracks dominates the center of the yard; a sturdy, single-story log building with doors in its eastern and western sides and that appears to have weathered many a long, northern winter. The barracks is tightly boarded up with each window's shutters sealed against the pervasive cold. No smoke wafts up from the stone chimney sprouting from the barrack's roof. Two-dozen mounds, each covered in fresh snow, litter the open courtyard.

In the yard's southeast corner, a smaller wooden structure serves as stables and storage space for the outpost. A gaping hole in its roof and a splintered tree trunk resting adjacent on the ground nearby suggest violence. On the other side of the yard, a tiny shed sits nestled between the barracks and the western wall.

The yard of the fort is the scene of much death and player characters willing to pick through the dead will find a host of treasures. Two dozen throwing axes, a dozen shortswords, several daggers, and six chain shirts can be salvaged from the dead soldiers. The three dead barbarians each have a steel greataxe, three daggers, and wear hide armor. Strangely, they do not wear cold weather gear. A total of four hundred Dames (400 gp) can be collected from the dead here.

Honor Awards: Player characters that arrange and burn all of the dead (including the barbarians) in the fort (both here and in the barracks) earn a single point of honor. Doing so takes roughly three hours and alerts anyone observing the fort that it is currently occupied (as the trail of smoke is visible for miles).

Player characters that examine the dead that make a successful Heal skill check (DC 10) note that death was the result of a battle. Particularly observant player characters that succeed on Perception skill checks (DC 16) note that all of the barbarians have shaved their teeth into sharp points, easily exposing anyone they bite to their saliva and blood. PCs that make a successful DC 13 Heal check note that these barbarians have carried *rage fever* for well over a year, gaining an insight into *rage fever*.

Player characters that make a successful Perception skill check (DC 15) note that three sets of indents (which look like footprints covered in new snow) leave the courtyard and head north. Although these eventually disappear in the snow, it is obvious that they are headed northwest—to the Pale Tower—and are no more than a day old.

Trap: Before the murderous barbarians left, they constructed several special traps to welcome future soldiers from Northgard—a silent warning to all those who dared to trespass in their lands. One of these surprises is a shallow pit dug into the ground just outside the eastern door of the barracks. The pit is filled with sharpened wooden spikes and broken weapons, each coated with offal and other foul excretions. A layer of ice and snow form a fragile shell over the top of the pit, disguising it as another patch of snow until the first time that significant weight is placed on the trap. The first player character (of small size or larger) to step into the space outside the barracks eastern door (see the map), springs the trap, causing the snow and ice to crumble and sending them tumbling down into the shallow spikes below.

Dirty Spike Trap

CR 2

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** manual

Effect 5-ft.-deep pit; pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes for 1d4+2 damage each plus disease [filth fever]); DC 15 Fort avoids

C4: STABLES

This stout wooden building is sparse and utilitarian, much like the rest of the fort. A set of large double doors swing outward into the yard with an opening about a foot across between them. A single large area that could be used to store a wagon (or other supplies) takes up a third of the interior space while the rest of the building is partitioned into four empty stalls, each intended for a horse (or similar beast of burden). The smell of damp hay and old manure mixes with another, sharp, metallic odor inside of the stables. There is a gaping hole, about the size of a man, in the roof above the first stall. Cold air and snowflakes drift in past the ruined thatch and the temperature has dropped as a result.



These stables once housed the fort's cart and horses, as well as a number of simple supplies. Stacks of firewood and bales of rotting hay fill part of the ruined building, as do the remains of two half-eaten horses. A large hole in the roof of the building exposes the innards to the weather and snow has piled up beneath it as a result. Thankfully, the cold weather (and accumulated snow) has suppressed the smell of the dead horses, making the stalls bearable to player characters that search the stables.

Those who do discover a single unopened veterinarian's kit (intended for the horses), a pitchfork, several barrels of oil, two stacks of firewood, a simple axe, a dozen horseshoes, an anvil, a hammer, several ruined bags of feed, several riding blankets (treat as winter blankets) and two military saddles (with common barding). There is enough room to board the two horses that pulled the sleigh, should the PCs elect to stay overnight.

A large tree-trunk, obviously wielded as a club at some point, lies partially buried in the snow several feet outside of the stables.

C5: OUTHOUSE (CR 4)

A foul odor assaults your nose as you approach this small wooden shack. The flimsy door of the outhouse remains shut, perhaps for the best, as its exterior is covered in handprints and smears of some dark, sticky substance.

A trail of blood from the barrack's west door leads to the outhouse. Player characters that make a Heal skill check (DC 10) learn that the substance upon the door is dried blood, probably from the same source that made the trail in the snow. Player characters easily identify the horrible scent of death and human waste from up to 10 ft. away with a DC 10 Perception skill check. Although the door to the outhouse is locked from the inside, a successful Disable Device skill check (DC 20) unlocks the simple lock.

A single soldier—wounded but still living—hides in the outhouse. Originally, this Black Hand agent sought to hide in the outhouse, but as the *rage fever* coursed through his body, he started to develop the hunger. When the player characters finally arrived, he abandoned the barracks and hid away here, hoping to catch them unaware. Currently, he plans to wait here until they sleep so he can sneak into the barracks, kill them, and feast on their flesh. If they investigate the outhouse, he waits quietly (and takes a 10 on his Stealth check, requiring a DC 21 Perception skill check by the PCs to hear him breathing). Cornered and with nowhere to hide, the Black Hand agent attacks the first PC that opens the outhouse door.

Once defeated, the PCs may examine the Black Hand agent's body. Player characters that make a successful Heal skill check (DC 10) identify the wounds that riddle his body as human bites. PCs that make a successful Heal skill check (DC 15) gain an insight into *rage fever*.

Player characters that search the body easily discover his combat gear, a tattoo of a nautical star on his neck, and a pouch containing twenty-five gold Dames (25 gp). Moreover, player characters that search the outhouse that make a successful Perception skill check (DC 20) discover a bundle of notes, wrapped around a bloody dagger, hidden in the roof of the outhouse (see: **What the Black Hand Wants**).

The Crazy Black Hand Agent (1)

CR 4

XP 1,200

Male human barbarian 1/rogue 4

CE Medium Humanoid (human)

Init +7; Senses Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 11 (+3 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, -2 rage)

hp 28/41 (wounded) (1d12+4d8+19)

Fort +6, **Ref** +7, **Will** +1

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee mwk kukri +8 (1d4+3/18-20) or mwk dagger +8 (1d4+3/19-20)

Ranged mwk dagger +8 (1d4+3/19-20) or cold iron dagger +7 (1d4+3/19-20)

Special Attacks rage (5 rounds/day), sneak attack +2d6 plus bleed

TACTICS

Base Statistics When not raging, the Crazy Agent's statistics are **AC** 17, touch 14, flat-footed 13; **hp** 31; **Fort** +4, **Will** -1; **Melee** mwk kukri +6 (1d4+1/18-20) or mwk dagger +6 (1d4+1/19-20); **Ranged** mwk dagger +8 (1d4+1/19-20) or cold iron dagger +7 (1d4+1/19-20); **Str** 13, **Con** 12; **CMB** +5; **Climb** +5, **Swim** +5

Before Combat The crazy agent hides in the outhouse, readying a weapon with which to strike the first person that opens the door. He rages and attacks the first person to open the door.

During Combat The crazy agent moves between combatants, trying to damage as many of them as possible.

Morale The crazy agent fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 16, **Con** 16, **Int** 14, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 19

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility

Skills Acrobatics +11, Bluff +4, Climb +7, Craft (traps) +6, Diplomacy +4, Disable Device +9, Disguise +7, Escape Artist +9, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (local) +9, Knowledge (nature) +6, Perception +7, Profession (soldier) +3, Sense Motive +5, Sleight of Hand +9, Stealth +11, Survival +3, Swim +7, Use Magic Device +4

Languages Low Common, High Common

SQ rogue talents (bleeding attack, surprise attack), trapfinding

Combat Gear mwk kukri, mwk dagger, (4) cold iron daggers, *potion of cure light wounds*, *elixir of hiding*, alchemist's fire

Other Gear mwk studded leather, boots of the winterlands, cold weather gear, 25 Dames

C6: BARRACKS—MAIN HALL (CR2)

This room is dark and still somewhat warm. The window shutters have all been boarded up, thick wooden planks



nailed into place to reinforce them. The tables and chairs that once served as gathering the great hall have since been smashed and arranged into makeshift barricades, blocking the two closest doors. There is a large stone fireplace located close to the center of the room with a huge cast-iron pot resting on a bar above the cold grey ashes. As your eyes adjust, you begin to notice the worst part of this scene—bodies are strewn everywhere. Some have died at the hands of Northman, wicked arrows and broken axes still imbedded in them. Others have died in other, even more horrible ways. One corpse sits at the far table, the back of its skull caved in and its face planted in a wooden serving bowl. More bowls lie in a chaotic pattern on the table, some still containing their congealed stew. Most of the bodies closest to the cooking fire are missing limbs or have large chunks of flesh missing.

Player characters that enter this room from the unlocked eastern door must first contend with a wicked trap, left by the marauding barbarians, for future visitors. Once they disarm (or activate) the trap, they may proceed fully into the room.

Trap: The first player character to enter the first square in this room (see the map) sets off this trap, causing a large ceiling beam to swing down from overhead. The beam smashes into anyone in the trigger location and the square immediately behind it (directly in front of the door).

Swinging Beam Trap

CR 2

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** manual

Effect Atk +10 melee (1d10+1 plus bull rush/x2); multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft. line); bull rush all creatures hit by the beam (+10 CMB); if the check succeeds, the target is pushed to the space outside the barrack's east door (and into the Dirty Spike Trap there).

The main hall here once served as the central meeting place for the soldiers, who ate, drank, laughed, and finally died here. A large cooking pot rests above the ashes of a long-dead fire. A dozen bodies, all of them soldiers, lie in various places throughout the room. Most of them are armed, although few of them wear armor of any sort. Most of the bodies have bite marks on them, and more than a few have missing limbs.

Player characters that examine the bodies and make a successful Heal skill check (DC 17) identify that all of the soldiers were suffering from *rage fever*, although many of them were still in the earliest stages of the disease. Some of the bodies lack signs of the disease, but these bodies also appear to be the longest dead—likely killed by their former allies early in the madness that descended on the small fort. Most of these bodies also lack limbs and large portions of their flesh, obviously the victims of cannibalism. PCs that make this Heal skill check gain an insight into *rage fever*.

A single femur lies at the bottom of the cast-iron cooking pot, still coated in the remnants of the now cold stew.

Player characters that inspect the cooking pot discover the nature of the last meal it contained. Those that make a successful Heal skill check (DC 10) discover that the bone once belonged to a human male—obviously one of the now dead soldiers.

C7: BARRACKS—BUNKS

Two-dozen bunk beds, enough to house a company of men, fill this room. Twice as many footlockers rest at the foot of each bed. Like the rest of the barracks, this room has been completely trashed. Beds have been toppled over; mattresses ripped open and their innards strewn throughout the room. Most of the footlockers have been smashed open—their contents cast about—creating a layer of debris that covers the broken floor. A simple iron bathtub lies flipped over in a southern alcove of the room. The fireplace on the western wall is cold and dead.

While most of this room has been torn apart, player characters searching the room will discover three sets of serviceable cold weather gear, two daggers, a shortsword, a healer's kit, four sets of snowshoes, two warm cloaks, and a small leather pouch containing two hundred and fifty Marcs (250 sp). Additionally, one of the soldiers kept a journal, which he hid under his bunk. Player characters that make a successful Perception skill check (DC 15) discover it (see handout #2). It accounts for much of the madness leading up to the slaughter, but also includes details on troop rotations, their strengths, and what the battles with the northern raiders have been like. Player characters that recover and hand over this journal satisfy the requirements for the Order of the Wall's faction mission (see **The Hammer Falls**).

Player characters that search the overturned iron tub discover several bloody handprints along the edge, as well as a stain that rings the bottom of the tub. Player characters that make a successful Heal skill check (DC 10) identify the stains as blood stains and can easily estimate that it would have taken a whole man to bleed out in this tub to create the stain.

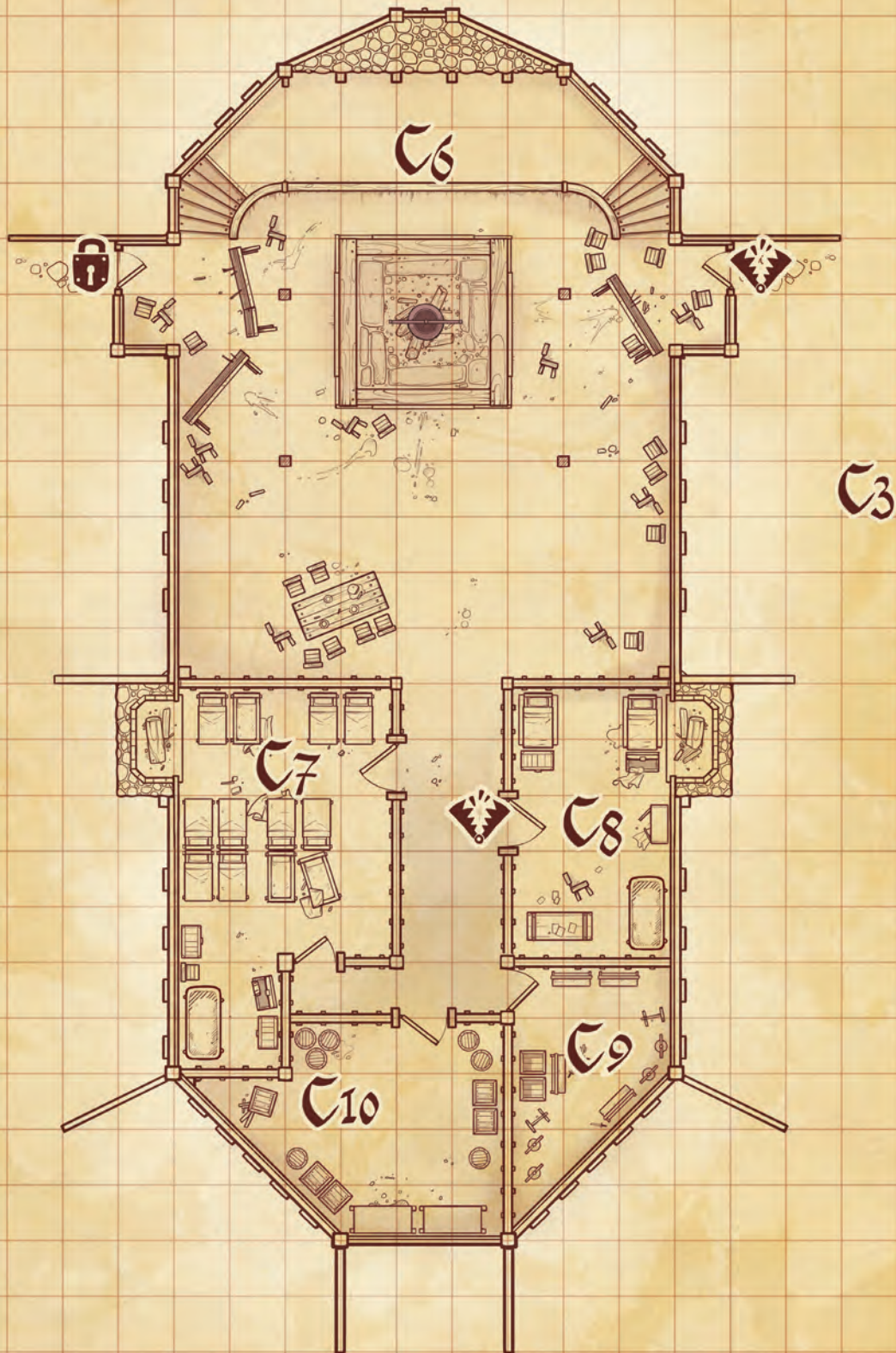
As you examine the iron tub in this dark corner, you cannot help but notice the reddish black stain that rings the old tub. Several handprints, easily the same color, stain the edge of the rim of the tub.

C8: BARRACKS—OFFICERS' QUARTERS (CR 2)

Although this room is as dark as the rest, you immediately notice that one of the officers sits up behind the desk, his head and back tied to a chair. He stares dead ahead, directly at the door, but beckons as you open the door further. This room is smaller than the soldiers' bunkroom and has several nice pieces of furniture in it, including: a desk, a wardrobe, a small copper bathing tub, and several single beds. The floor is littered with scraps of paperwork



BARRACKS



each square = 5ft

and clothing—it appears someone has torn through both the desk and wardrobe.

Although peeking through or cracking open the door does not set off the trap, anyone opening it far enough to pass through it sets off the trap.

Trap: Once a player character opens the door, the dead guard immediately waves that player character over (ropes have been attached to the guard's body so that, as the door opens, he appears to wave at whoever enters). The first player character to step into the officers' quarters (see map) triggers the trap, firing a heavy crossbow that has been set in the corner of the room. Examining the bolt shows some reddish paste smeared onto its metal tip. Player characters that examine the tip and make a successful Heal skill check (DC 12) or successful Knowledge (local) skill check (DC 15) quickly identifies the red paste as bloodroot poison.

Bloodroot Bolt Trap

CR 2

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** manual

Effect Atk +15 melee (1d10+3 plus poison [bloodroot]/19-20/x2)

Player characters searching the desk who makes a Perception skill check (DC 20) will find two *potions of cure light wounds*, each with the symbol of Union City worked into their stoppers, hidden in the top desk drawer.

Otherwise, there is little of use in this room, as the dead officer has been stripped of all weapons and valuables.

Although it is covered in blood, a single logbook lies closed on the officer's desk. It is still legible and lists all of the men currently at the fort and what pay is owed them. Player characters that gather and burn the bodies of the soldiers (or who count the dead) easily determine that three men are missing altogether. This fact, in addition to the tracks leading out of the fort, should suggest three men still live.

Player characters undertaking the faction mission for the Ashengard Family (see **Ashengard's Folly**) looking for proof of faulty weapons being used here at Fort Blitzkrieg need only make a Perception skill check (DC 15) to notice the letter on the desk, wrapped carefully around a dagger. Destroying this letter and the dagger satisfies that mission.

C9: BARRACKS—ARMORY

Although this room was once heavily secured against outsiders, the heavy door that once barred entrance into the armory now stands ajar, revealing the mess within. A good portion of the weapons and armor once stored in this room are either gone or broken. A box of broken swords sits in one corner, next to a pair of chain shirts. Two small metal shields, each with Union City's crest, hang next to the chain shirts. A broken helm, dried blood painted across its chin guard, rests in the center of the room.

This room contains several serviceable items, including: two chain shirts, three steel maces, a war hammer, four throwing axes, sixty crossbow bolts, and sixty arrows. Player characters that make a successful Perception skill check (DC 15) find a masterwork shortsword hidden beneath one of the broken weapon racks. A single barrel with three broken long swords is also located in the corner. PCs undertaking Asa's mission that locate and destroy (or hide) these swords satisfy their faction mission (see **Ashengard's Folly**).

C10: BARRACKS—SUPPLY ROOM

Piles of broken crates and smashed barrels litter this room, creating a cacophony of rotted food, stale beer, old oil, and what can only be more blood. Although the smell is nigh unbearable, you sheer mass of the debris suggest that something may still be of use.

Player characters that make a successful Perception skill check (DC 20) discover a single supply crate, smashed but still sealed, filled with rations. The crate contains enough food and ale for twenty-four meals, a single healer's kit, and four winter blankets. Player characters that make a successful DC 25 Perception skill check discover an even more grisly sight—a set of human teeth, pressed into the corner of one of the lower shelves, in the back of the room. A single +1 *dagger*, its hilt beaten from silver and fashioned to resemble a serpent wrapped around a massive tree, lies covered in blood only a few feet from the teeth.

After gathering the clues at the fort, the PCs should discover that three of the soldiers have likely survived. Although the tracks disappear in the snow beyond the fort, their destination is obvious—they were headed to the Pale Tower.

JOURNEY TO THE PALE TOWER

While it is still the closest settlement to the Pale Tower, Fort Blitzkrieg is roughly twenty miles from the looming structure. As the crow flies, the trek between the two could be made in a day if not for the rolling hills of the coast and thick drifts of snowfall slowing overland travel to a crawl. Use of mounts or other methods to quickly traverse the icy environment can shorten what could be a three to four day journey to less than two days.

At your discretion during this travel time, the player characters could stumble across one or more random encounters from the Pale Tower Encounters table.

PALE TOWER ENCOUNTERS

d%	Encounter	Avg. CR	Source
1-6	1d6 winter ravens	1	See page XX
7-12	1 Fel Horde scout	1	See page XX
13-18	1 draugr	2	<i>Bestiary 2</i>
19-24	1 sasquatch	2	<i>Bestiary 3</i>



d%	Encounter	Avg. CR	Source
25-30	1 wolverine	2	<i>Bestiary 1</i>
31-37	1d4 elk	3	<i>Bestiary 3</i>
38-44	1d4 Small air elementals	3	<i>Bestiary 1</i>
45-51	1d4 wolves	3	<i>Bestiary 1</i>
52-58	Giant wolf spider brood (1d2 giant spiders and 1 spider swarm)	3	<i>Bestiary 1</i>
59-64	1 huldra	4	<i>Land of the Linnorm Kings</i>
65-70	1 ice troll	4	<i>Bestiary 2</i>
71-76	Dame Koldis and entourage (1 ice mephit and 2 Small ice elementals)	4	<i>Bestiary 1</i> <i>Bestiary 2</i>
77-82	1d6 Fel Horde barbarians	4	See page XX
83-88	1 ice golem	5	<i>Bestiary 1</i>
89-94	1 winter wolf	5	<i>Bestiary 1</i>

APPROACHING THE PALE TOWER

After days of drudging through the snow, wind, and ice, your group finally reaches the Pale Tower. The tower easily dwarfs your party, extending hundreds of feet in the air, its shadow a fitting reminder of the darkness rumored to dwell within. A simple archway, at its base, offers entrance. Although some light filters into the hollow of the tower from outside, you do not detect any other light. As you gaze in, you notice that the walls lack sconces and that the tower has no windows—suggesting its inhabitants require no light. Suddenly, the wind picks up, screeching through the ice hills that surround the tower like a wounded banshee.

Hazard: The player characters' journey to the Pale Tower occurs with little incident, the terrible knowledge of the place itself presenting the only real challenge to those determined to visit it. When the player characters catch their first sight of the tower, their senses become assaulted by a palpable aura of madness emanating from its cold surface. A player character that makes a Knowledge (local) skill check (DC 15) remembers that the inhabitants of Northgard call this effect of the tower the 'Pale Miasma'. Furthermore, if a player character casts *detect magic* and studies the tower, they can make a Knowledge (arcana) skill check (DC 20) to discern that the Pale Miasma is a complex weaving of layered enchantment and necromancy auras far beyond the abilities of the average spellcaster.

While it actually extends up to fifty miles from the tower, the Pale Miasma is only faintly felt at such distances. When the player characters enter this area, they are periodically plagued by faint whispers that seem to come from nowhere and the feeling of being watched

constantly. It is only when they travel within a mile of the Pale Tower that the true horror of the Pale Miasma is felt in full. Upon entering this zone and every day spent within it, the player characters must make a Will saving throw (DC 14) or become affected by one of the psychoses of the Pale Miasma. This psychosis is considered both a fear and compulsion effect. Each psychosis lasts for 24 hours. Anyone witnessing this strange behavior can identify it as a type of psychosis by making a successful Heal skill check (DC 15). For those affected by the Pale Miasma, the psychosis is determined at random by rolling on the following psychosis chart.

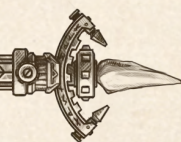
d%	Psychosis
1-25	Disorientation
26-50	Paranoia
51-75	Hallucinations
76-100	The Call

Disorientation: The disoriented character has trouble keeping track of time, places, and people. The character becomes lost easily and is less aware of his surroundings. A character that suffers from this psychosis takes a -5 penalty to any Perception or Survival skill checks and has a 25% chance every combat round to do nothing for that round but try and gain his bearings.

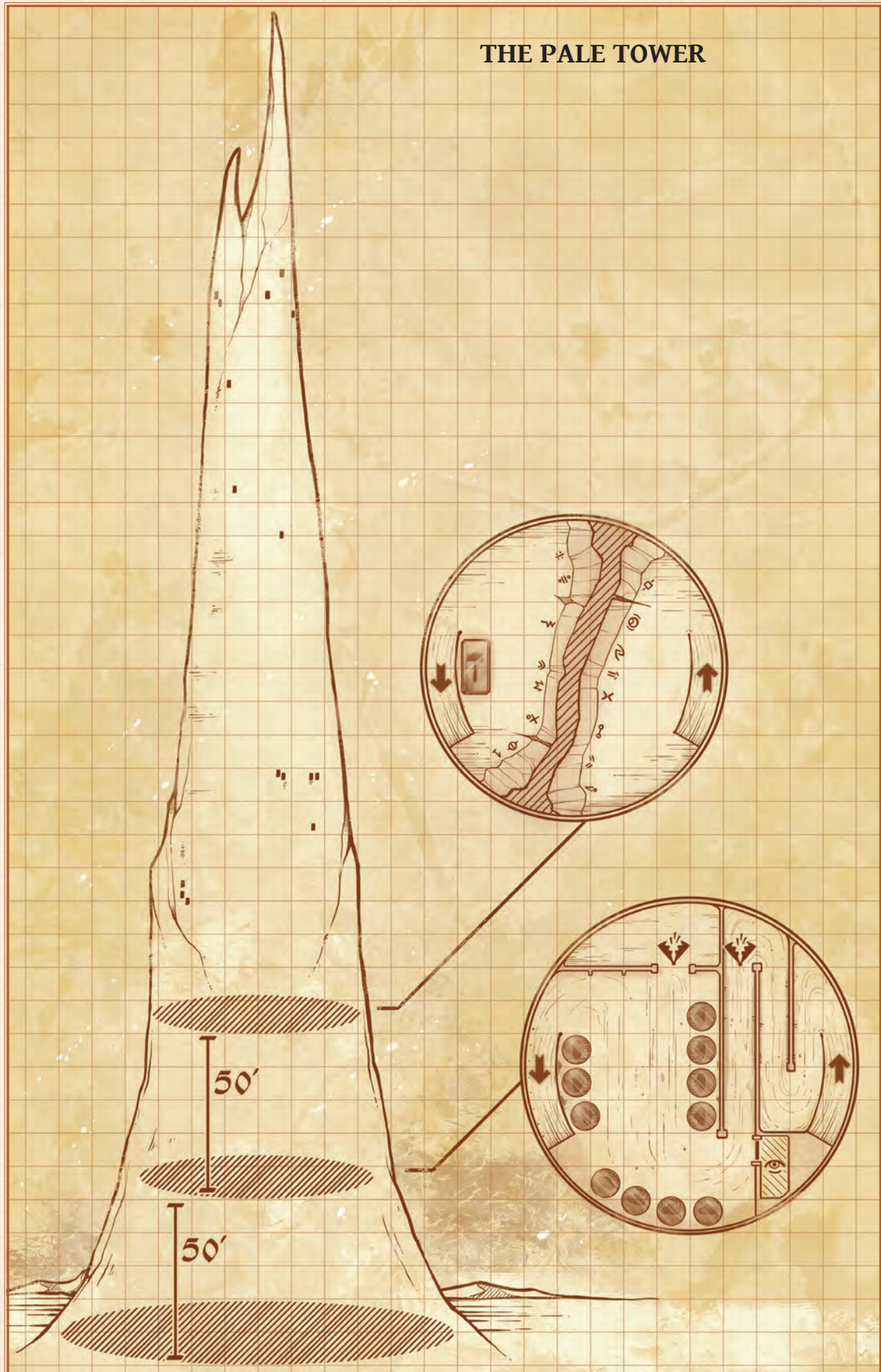
Paranoia: The paranoid character is beset by feelings that everyone is plotting against her, even her friends. The character becomes withdrawn and angry. The character takes a -5 penalty to any Diplomacy or Sense Motive skill checks and has a 25% chance every combat round to attack a friend instead of a foe for that round after misinterpreting a motion, gesture, or word.

Hallucinations: The hallucinating character struggles with visions of things that are not truly there. The character acts erratically to dangers that no one but he can see. The character has a 25% chance per combat round to attack an enemy that does not exist. In addition, there is a 25% chance per combat round that the character will react to a hallucinatory danger (i.e. the ceiling collapsing or the ground falling out from under him). The character must make a Reflex saving throw (DC 10) to avoid the imagined danger or take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage as his mind and body confuse the hallucination for reality.

The Call: A character that is affected by the Call psychosis is gripped by an unshakeable need to enter the Pale Tower and scale its floors all the way to some point near its top. The faint whispers of the Pale Miasma grow in the character's mind until she finds herself moving in the direction of the tower against all sane reasons not to do so. The character has a 25% chance per combat round to use her move action to walk toward the Pale Tower or the next floor if already within it. Outside of combat, the character



THE PALE TOWER



must make a Will saving throw (DC 14) every ten minutes to stop from walking in that direction.

EXAMINING AND ENTERING THE PALE TOWER

Player characters that walk the perimeter of the tower will note that there are no visible windows anywhere along the base of the tower, nor any visible on its higher walls. Massive banks of snow push up against the base of the tower, leaving only a single, visible entrance to the tower. Player characters that elect to dig into these snow banks eventually reach the base of the tower, but discover that no additional entrances are buried underneath.

The tower is made of a white, alien material that is supernaturally hard (hardness 40, 80 hit points per inch of thickness), cold to the touch, resistant to magic (SR 20), and unlike any other material encountered by metallurgist or mason alike. All of the walls and floors inside the tower are made from this material, as well. Unless otherwise noted, the ceilings in the rooms are 10 ft.

Once the PCs enter, they find a single set of stairs that curves along the eastern wall, ascending 50 ft. into darkness above. These stairs lead to a short, smooth ramp that leads up into the Trapped Hallway.

ENCOUNTER 1:

THE TRAPPED HALLWAY (CR 2)

After following the long, narrow ramp that rings the inner perimeter of this strange tower, you emerge in a dark, short hall. A small platform, with a walkway that doubles back from it, lies before you. As you step onto the platform, you immediately notice a darker hall to what you can only assume is the north.

This platform is safe, but the short passage leading north from it hides a vicious trap.

Palefrost Trap

XP 600

Type magical; Perception DC 27; Disable Device DC 27

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset automatic (1 minute)

Effect spell effect (*frigid touch*, Atk +4 ranged touch [4d6 cold damage] and target is staggered for 1 round).

ENCOUNTER 2 (ROOM A):

GALLERY OF THE FROZEN (CR 2)

As you round the corner to enter this chamber, you cannot help but notice an eerie light playing off the pale walls, bathing everything in a blue-green glow that reminds you of the ocean. The light emanates from a series of man-sized glass cylinders, each coated in a fine layer of ice. Copper pipes connect each cylinder to the ceiling. Dark, humanoid shapes float immobile in each.

Eleven glass cylinders, each capped in bronze and covered in ice, fill this room. These cylinders are elegant

in their simplicity, with no working parts and a bundle of brass piping extending from the top and terminating in the ceiling. Most of these cylinders, as players who examine the cylinders closely will discover, contain a sentient being—one that is currently being slowly transformed into a Fel Barbarian. While these beings are mostly human, a single dwarf and a single clockwork elf will be found within. Player characters that make a DC 10 Perception skill check note that the exact number of empty cylinders correlates to the number of player characters that entered the Pale Tower earlier in the day.

Looking at the cylinders has little impact on the room. Player characters that touch a cylinder activates the icy guardian—a bloodclot ice swarm—that feeds on that particular cylinder. This frees the bloodclot thrall within two rounds later. If the PCs destroy the bloodclot ice swarm before the thrall frees itself, it remains in the staggered condition for the whole encounter.

Because this encounter is designed to focus on a single PC, it leaves the rest of the player characters to act with near immunity, as the bloodclot thrall ignores anyone it isn't currently attacking (and does not make attacks of opportunity as a result). If, however, the PCs start to break open or activate (physically inspecting a cylinder as a standard action is enough to activate that cylinder) more cylinders, this encounter can become increasingly more deadly. GMs should make a point to describe how the PCs' actions are affecting the environment—leaving little question that the cylinders should be avoided. Opening additional cylinders and killing the inhabitants does not increase the XP awarded for this encounter. PCs that make a successful Heal skill check (DC 15) while examining the body of the bloodclot thrall gain an insight into *rage fever*.

Bloodclot Ice Swarm (1)

CR 1

XP 400

hp 11 (see appendix)

Bloodclot Thrall

CR 2

XP 400

Male human warrior 4

CE Medium Humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10 (+1 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 26 (4d10+4)

Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +1

Weakness Staggered

OFFENSE

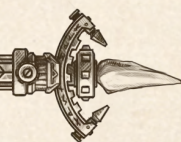
Speed 30 ft.

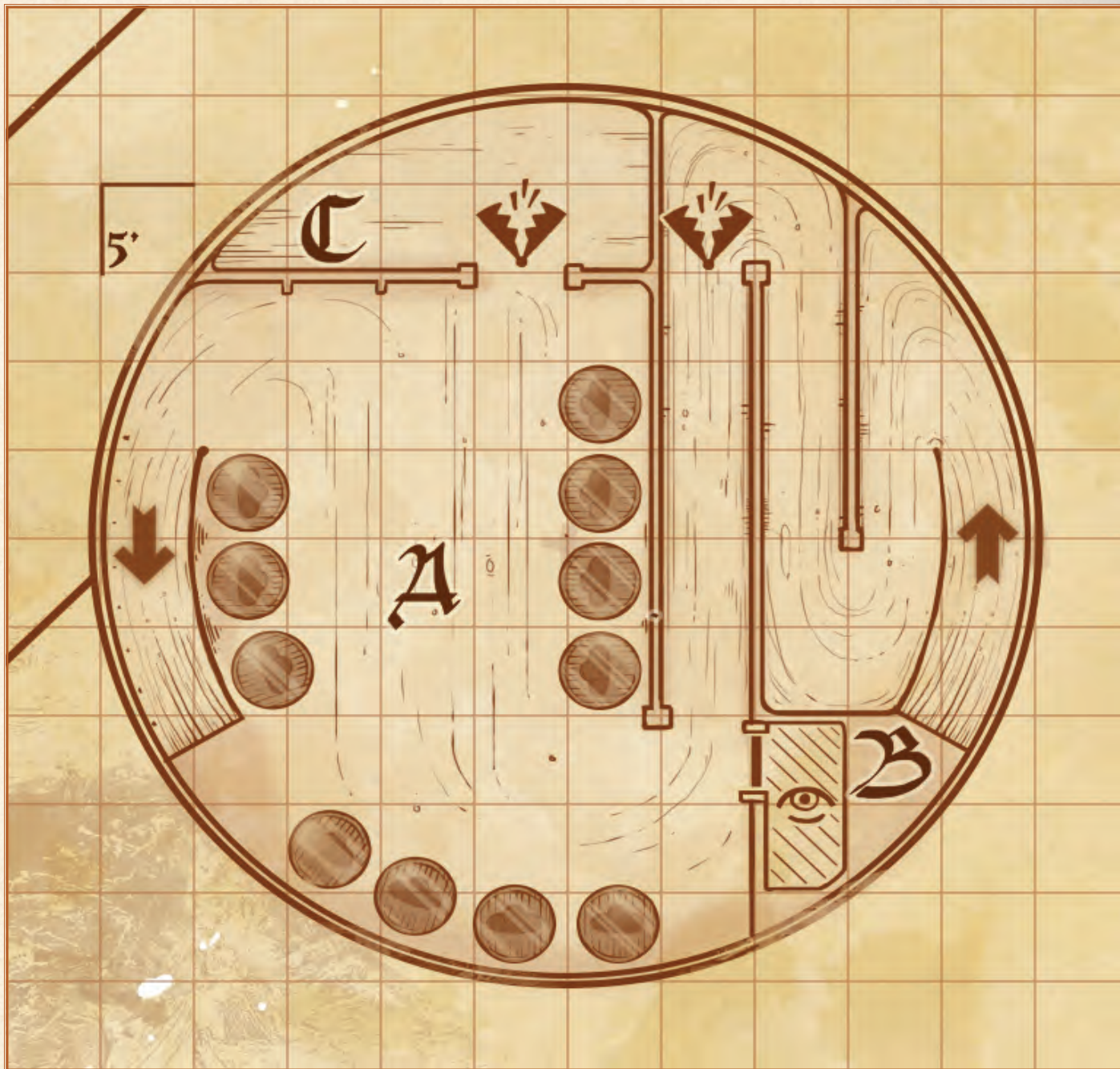
Melee fist +6 (1d6+2/x2) or club +6 (1d6+2/x2)

TACTICS

Before Combat The bloodclot thrall does not have time to prepare for combat.

During Combat As soon as it is awoken, the bloodclot thrall attacks the target the bloodclot ice swarm has chosen. It





only attacks other targets if they impede its attempts to return to the target the bloodclot is focused on.

Morale The bloodclot thrall fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 12, **Con** 11, **Int** 9, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 17

Feats Dodge, Improved Unarmed Strike, Toughness

Skills Climb +6, Handle Animal +4, Perception +4, Profession (scout) +4, Ride +5, Survival +2, Swim +6

Languages Low Common (does not speak)

SQ Bloodbound (see below)

Combat Gear club

Other Gear none

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITION

Bloodbound (Su) The Pale Tower's close connection to Niflæheim has bound the specimens of the Frozen Gallery to the bloodclot ice swarm living herein. Because of this, when freed from their icy chambers, the bloodclot thralls are staggered for the first round of combat. Additionally, a bloodclot thrall will only attack the target of the bloodclot ice swarm and ignores all others (it will not make attacks of opportunity). If at any point they cannot attack its chosen target, the bloodclot thrall immediately regains the staggered condition. This is a supernatural condition tied to the Pale Tower that affects any of the frozen specimens (which immediately become bloodclot thralls) awoken herein. These conditions lower the encounter CR by 1.

When a player character touches one of the cylinders, the ice immediately activates, initiating combat (in the



surprise round). For the next two rounds, that cylinder begins to crack, the ice falling away in visible chunks. At the beginning of the third round, the bloodclot thrall joins the bloodclot ice swarm, attacking in unison against the same target. The bloodclot focuses on the player character that touched it, as does the bloodclot thrall.

ENCOUNTER 3 (ROOM B): THE NORTHERN ROOM (CR 2)

This room contains an array of bronze pipes, valves, gauges, and alien apparatuses. Copper pipes crisscross the northern wall, disappearing into the ceiling and floor. A whole spectrum of strange tools covers the simple wooden table that rests in the western corner of the room. Sheets of paper, nearly all of them blackened, litter the floor.

Like the platform leading into the mail hall, this room contains another trap just inside the doorway.

Palefrost Trap

CR 2

XP 600

Type magical; Perception DC 27; Disable Device DC 27

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset automatic (1 minute)

Effect spell effect (*frigid touch*, Atk +4 ranged touch [4d6 cold damage] and target is staggered for 1 round).

Player characters that make a successful Knowledge (clockworks) or Knowledge (engineering) skill check (DC 15) quickly discern that this room is linked to the main hall, the pipes supporting the frozen cylinders therein. Player characters that make a successful Knowledge (clockworks) or Knowledge (engineering) skill check (DC 25) figure out how to deactivate the cylinders, killing the monsters inside. Anyone that attempts to deactivate a cylinder that fails the check by 5 or more, however, activates that cylinder—freeing the bloodclot thrall therein.

In addition to a jumble of pipes and alien fittings, this room contains several useful items, including a set of surgeon's tools made from strange, green-hued steel. These tools lie on the table in the west, which a player character can easily locate with a DC 10 Perception skill check. While this tool set functions as a set of surgeon's tools, it will easily fetch up to five times its price (100 gp) in the south because of its unique color and composition. Player characters that successfully make a DC 15 Perception skill check or who sift through the burnt sheets of paper on the floor locate a *scroll of false life*. Finally, any player character that searches beneath the table in the western corner, toward the wall or that makes a successful Perception skill check (DC 20) finds two vials of frost ward gel (see the **PATHFINDER® ROLEPLAYING GAME: ULTIMATE EQUIPMENT™**).

ENCOUNTER 4 (ROOM C):

THE HIDDEN ALTAR

Though most of this room is simple and clean, the strange angles and curvature of the southeastern wall immediately draws your attention. As you study the space, you gradually realize that the corner is actually an altar, carved directly into the wall. Strange runes and weird iconography suggest this altar is dedicated to one of the Thrall Lords. The room appears otherwise empty.

This room lies hidden behind a false wall in the southeastern corner of the gallery. Player characters that make a successful Perception skill check (DC 20) locate the door, which can be unlocked with a successful Disable Device skill check (DC 25). Although the room is bathed in darkness, opening the door allows light from the gallery to flood in, illuminating everything in a dim, greenish light and revealing an elaborate altar on the eastern wall. Player characters that make a successful Knowledge (religion) skill check (DC 20) identify the symbols on the altar as those sacred to Mhamnoch, Lord of the Long Winter. Player characters that study the altar may attempt to copy the runes, doing so successfully with a Linguistics, Knowledge (arcana) or Craft (calligraphy) skill check (DC 14).

ENCOUNTER 5:

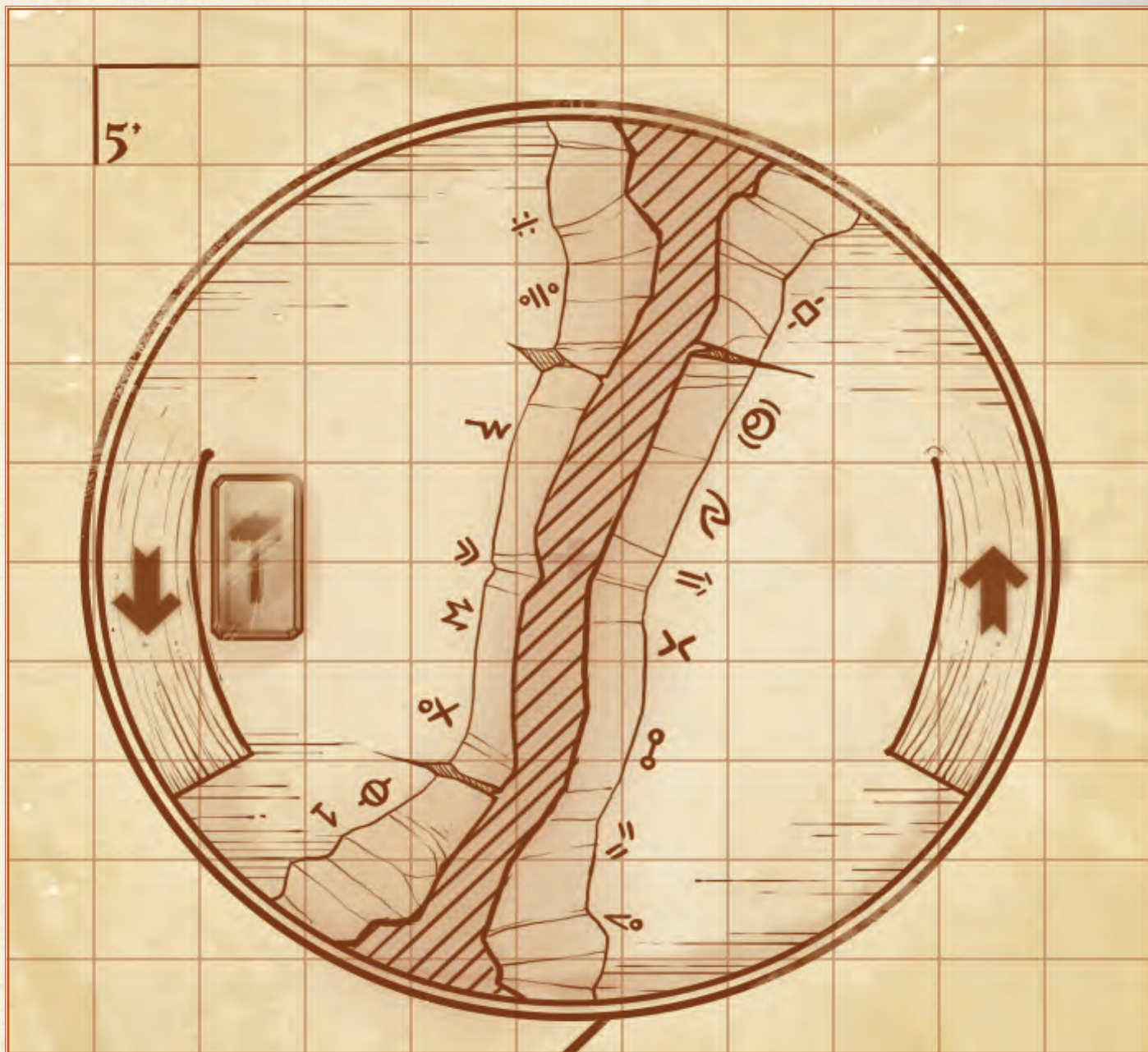
THE RUNIC CREVASSE (CR 4)

With the strange gallery at your back, you assail another winding ramp leading up into the next level of the tower. At the top, the ramp opens into a large room that appears bigger than the outer walls of the tower should allow. The walls of this room are covered in thick layers of ice while huge icicles hang from the ceiling above. The floor is split in half down the middle where a huge crevasse has been torn into the broken, white material of the tower. Large runes have been painted in blood or carved into the ground surrounding the crevasse and on many parts of the tower's icy walls. On the far side of the room, a large white slab stands next to the ramp leading to the next floor. Even from here you can make out the rivulets of dried blood on the sides and the macabre trophies or idols of bone and flesh that decorate the top of the slab. The temperature seems to drop in this room as a frigid blast of wind roars up from deep within the crevasse almost as if some vast creature had exhaled.

Any character that examines the crevasse receives the following description.

As you lean over the edge of the crevasse to see what lies within, an endless trench that drops out of sight thousands of feet below fills your vision. The walls of the crevasse are formed of solid pieces of jagged ice, though ledges jute outward from the sheer walls here and there. Within the walls, you can faintly see the bodies of frozen men and women – frozen in the ice in what appears to be the heat of battle. Huge, sleeping giants are scattered





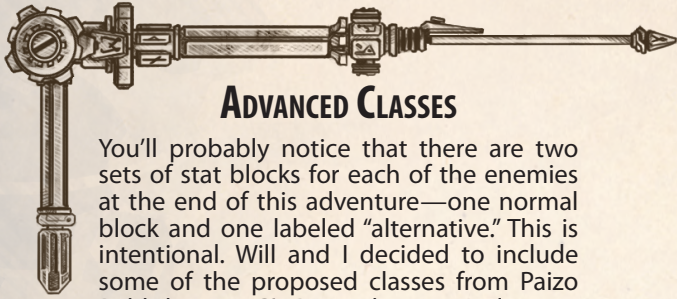
amongst the warriors. The giants' fierce expressions make their peaceful slumber appear to be anything but that. As your gaze focuses on one of these slumbering giants, his eyes suddenly snap open. A blast of icy wind erupts from deep below, hitting you full in the face and rocking you back from the edge.

A player character can make a Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (planes) skill check (DC 20) discovers that this crevasse is not part of the tower but is a rift torn between Midgard and Niflæheim, the Realm of All Winter.

Periodically, icy wind blows upward from the rift. This wind erupts every 1d6 rounds (at the beginning of the round) and player characters adjacent to the rift when it does must make a Reflex saving throw (DC 14) or be

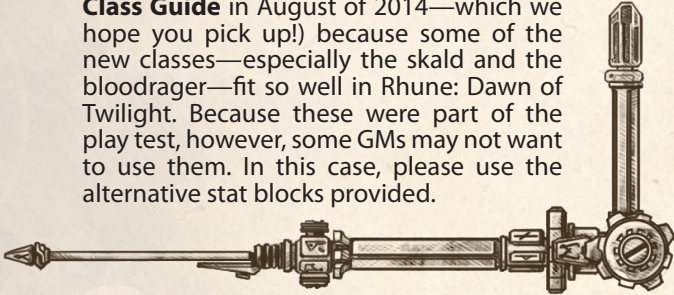
knocked prone. At the end of any round on which the icy winds blow, the winds reverse their direction – possibly pulling anyone near the crevice in! Any player character adjacent to the crevice at this time risks sliding in unless they make a successful Climb skill check (DC 15). Player characters with small, sharp objects in hand (like daggers, pitons, or hand axes) add a +4 competence bonus to this roll.

Any character that falls into this rift lands 20 ft. below on one of the numerous, narrow ice ledges lining the crevasse. The walls near the top of the crevasse can be scaled with a Climb skill check (DC 15). If after ten rounds a character is still in the crevasse then the ice of that realm draws the character into itself, trapping that character



ADVANCED CLASSES

You'll probably notice that there are two sets of stat blocks for each of the enemies at the end of this adventure—one normal block and one labeled "alternative." This is intentional. Will and I decided to include some of the proposed classes from Paizo Publishing, LLC's December 2013 play test (to be released as part of the **Advanced Class Guide** in August of 2014—which we hope you pick up!) because some of the new classes—especially the skald and the bloodrager—fit so well in Rhune: Dawn of Twilight. Because these were part of the play test, however, some GMs may not want to use them. In this case, please use the alternative stat blocks provided.



under a foot of solid ice (36 hp, 5 hardness, break DC 20). A trapped character suffers from extreme cold (see "Cold Dangers" in Chapter 13 of the **Pathfinder® Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook™**) each round until dead or rescued.

Roughly three rounds after the PCs enter the room, the ceiling above the ramp on the other side of the room opens and the three missing soldiers—now Fel Bloodragers and bound servants of the Tower—exit. Behind the Bloodragers strides the tall figure of Malgrith the Lost, a heavily armored warpriest of Mhamnoch, Lord of Long Winter. Malgrith quickly casts *communal protection from good* on his minions, and then sends them down the ramp, directly for the PCs! The grinding sound of the opening door alerts the PCs and neither side is surprised.

Malgrith, his armor daubed with runes of ice and death, welcomes the PCs with a chilly smile. He explains that their sacrifice will open a permanent gateway to Niflaheim, plunging all of Midgard into endless winter and burying the City-States of Vallinor under ice and snow.

After Malgrith and the Fel Bloodragers exit and step out onto the ramp, the ceiling immediately closes again, sealing that side of the room. There is no possibly way for the PCs to open this entrance at this time, but the PCs may still leave the tower from the ramp they entered.

Fel Bloodrager (3)

CR 1

XP 400
Male human bloodrager 1/warrior 2
CE Medium Humanoid (human)
Init +1; **Senses** Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 9, flat-footed 12 (+4 armor, +1 Dex, -2 rage)
hp 33 (2d10+1d12+12)
Fort +9, **Ref** +1, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.
Melee halberd +6 (1d10+3/x3) or dagger +6 (1d4+3/19-20)
Ranged +4 with thrown icicles (1d6+3/x2) or +4 dagger (1d4+3/19-20)
Special Attacks bloodrage (6 rounds/day), elemental strikes (1d6 cold, 3/day)

TACTICS

Base Statistics When not raging, the Fel Barbarian's statistics are **AC** 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; **hp** 27; **Fort** +7, **Will** +0; **Melee** halberd +4 or dagger +4; **Ranged** +4 icicles; **Str** 13, **Con** 15; **CMB** +4; **Climb** +2, **Swim** +2
Before Combat The Fel Bloodragers enter their rage the moment they see enemies, pulling icicles from the wall to throw at the PCs as ranged attacks. Immediately afterwards, they leap across the crevice to engage the PCs in melee combat.
During Combat The Fel Bloodragers power attack PCs and cleave any that stand close together. They use their elemental strike ability to coat their weapons in unnatural frost that deals additional cold damage to their foes, but will attempt to push exceptionally dangerous opponents into the crevice if they don't appear to be hitting them with their attacks.

Morale The Fel Bloodragers fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 12, **Con** 19, **Int** 8, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 17
Feats Cleave, Power Attack, Raging Vitality
Skills Acrobatics +3, Climb +4, Craft (traps) +1, Perception +1, Profession (soldier) +1, Survival +1, Swim +4
Languages Low Common
SQ bloodline (elemental [water]), fast movement
Combat Gear (2) daggers, halberd
Other Gear hide armor, grappling hook with 50 ft. of hemp rope, (2) torches, and a tattered Northgard soldier's cloak.

Fel Barbarian – alternative (3)

CR 1

XP 400
Male human barbarian 1/warrior 2
CE Medium Humanoid (human)
Init +1; **Senses** Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 9, flat-footed 12 (+4 armor, +1 Dex, -2 rage)
hp 33 (2d10+1d12+12)
Fort +9, **Ref** +1, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.
Melee halberd +6 (1d10+3/x3) or dagger +6 (1d4+3/19-20)
Ranged +4 with thrown icicles (1d6+3/x2) or +4 dagger (1d4+3/19-20)
Special Attacks rage (6 rounds/day)

TACTICS

Base Statistics When not raging, the Fel Barbarian's statistics are **AC** 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; **hp** 27; **Fort** +7, **Will** +0; **Melee** halberd +4 or dagger +4; **Ranged** +4 icicles; **Str** 13, **Con** 15; **CMB** +4; **Climb** +2, **Swim** +2
Before Combat The Fel Barbarians enter their rage the moment they see enemies, pulling icicles from the wall to throw at the PCs as ranged attacks. Immediately afterwards, they leap across the crevice to engage the PCs in melee combat.



During Combat The Fel Barbarians power attack PCs and cleave any that stand close together. They attempt to push exceptionally dangerous opponents into the crevice if they don't appear to be hitting them with their attacks.

Morale The Fel Barbarians fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 12, **Con** 19, **Int** 8, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 17
Feats Cleave, Power Attack, Raging Vitality
Skills Acrobatics +3, Climb +4, Craft (traps) +1, Perception +1, Profession (soldier) +1, Survival +1, Swim +4
Languages Low Common
SQ fast movement
Combat Gear (2) daggers, halberd
Other Gear hide armor, grappling hook with 50 ft. of hemp rope, (2) torches, and a tattered Northgard soldier's cloak.

Malgrith the Lost

CR 4

XP 1200
Male human warpriest 5
CE Medium Humanoid (human)
Init +3; **Senses** Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 21 (+8 armor, +3 deflection, +1 Shield, -1 Dex)
hp 29 (5d8+5)
Fort +5, **Ref** +2, **Will** +8

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.
Melee mwk cold iron longspear +8 (1d8+3/x3) or morningstar +6 (1d8+3)
Ranged +2 with thrown icicles (1d6+3/x2)
Special Attacks Channel Energy 2d6 or (Fervor 2d6) 4/day
Warpriest Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +7):
2nd (3/day) – *aid*, *bear's endurance*, *communal protection from good*
1st (5/day) – *bless*, *detect good*, *divine favor*, *entropic shield*, *sanctuary* (DC 13)
0 (at will) – *bleed* (DC 12), *guidance*, *light*, *resistance*

TACTICS

Before Combat Malgrith *blesses* his Fel Bloodragers and sends them leaping across the chasm. He then drinks his potion of *shield of faith* +3.

During Combat Early in combat Malgrith concentrates on casting spells to aid his troops while using his fervor ability to cast *bear's endurance* and *divine favor* on himself as swift actions. When he feels ready he advances. Malgrith fights cautiously but without pity, using his reach to great advantage.

Morale If Malgrith is reduced to less than 10 hit points he hurls himself into the rift to Niflaheim, perishing instantly with a prayer to Mhamnoch on his lips.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 8, **Con** 13, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 14
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +7 (+7 grapple); **CMD** 15
Feats Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longspear)
Skills Climb +0, Heal +6, Knowledge (planes) +3, Knowledge (religion) +5, Perception +2, Spellcraft +6, Survival +6
Languages Low Common
SQ aura, blessings (destructive attacks +2, ice strike 1d4),

sacred weapon +1

Combat Gear mwk cold iron longspear, morningstar

Other Gear half-plate armor, mithral buckler, *armbands of the brawler*, (2) *potions of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of shield of faith* +3

Malgrith the Lost - alternative

CR 4

XP 1200
Male human cleric 5
CE Medium Humanoid (human)
Init +3; **Senses** Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 21 (+8 armor, +3 deflection, +1 Shield, -1 Dex)
hp 29 (5d8+5)
Fort +5, **Ref** +2, **Will** +8

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.
Melee mwk cold iron longspear +8 (1d8+3/x3) or morningstar +6 (1d8+3)
Ranged +2 with thrown icicles (1d6+3/x2)
Special Attacks channel negative energy 5/day (DC 14, 3d6)
Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +7)
5/day – *Icicle* (1d6+2)
5/day – *Touch of Evil* (2 rounds)
Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +7)
3rd – *dispel magic*, *water breathing*
2nd – *aid*, *bear's endurance*, *communal protection from good*, *sound burst* (DC 14)



1st – *bleed*, *detect good*, *divine favor*, *entropic shield*, *obscuring mist*

0 (at will) – *bleed* (DC 12), *guidance*, *light*, *resistance*

D Domain spell; **Domains** Evil, Water

TACTICS

Before Combat Malgrith casts his *communal protection from good* on the assembled Fel Bloodragers and sends them leaping across the chasm.

During Combat Early in combat Malgrith concentrates on casting spells (like *bleed* and *dispel magic*) to aid his troops. Before moving into combat, he drinks his potion of *shield of faith* +3. Before advancing into combat, he channels negative energy to harm his enemies (regardless of the damage it does to his allies). Margrith uses his reach to great advantage.

Morale If Malgrith is reduced to less than 10 hit points he hurls himself into the rift to Niflaheim, perishing instantly with a prayer to Mhamnoch on his lips.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 8, **Con** 13, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +7 (+7 grapple); **CMD** 15

Feats Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longspear)

Skills Climb +0, Heal +6, Knowledge (planes) +3, Knowledge (religion) +5, Perception +2, Spellcraft +6, Survival +6

Languages Low Common

SQ aura, blessings (destructive attacks +2, ice strike 1d4), sacred weapon +1

Combat Gear mwk cold iron longspear, morningstar

Other Gear half-plate armor, mithral buckler, *armbands of the brawler*, (2) *potions of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of shield of faith* +3

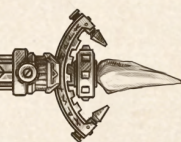
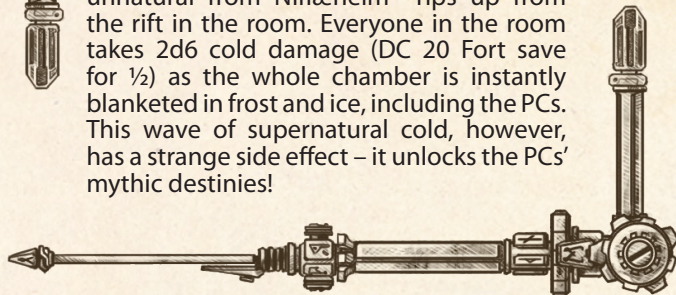
After defeating Malgrith and his Fel Bloodragers, the PCs discover that the strange looking altar – made entirely of ice – on the far side of the room. It is identical to the Pale Altar (found in Fjord's Wake Mine). Unlike that altar, this one contains a single handaxe, which the PCs can recover by either melting the ice (25 points of fire damage is enough) or by chipping away at it (hardness 5, 36 hit points). The handaxe is called *Kuura* (a +1 cold iron frost handaxe) and, from the runes of etched into its side, it was created well over a century ago in the realm of Niflæheim. PCs that recover this axe and show it to Arenthol satisfy their faction mission. Likewise, PCs who examine the bodies of the Fel Bloodragers and make a successful Heal skill check (DC 15) gain an insight into *rage fever*.

PCs that wish to explore this room will discover no additional exits.



MAKING IT MYTHIC!

As the PCs defeat Malgrith the Lost, a blast of cold, pale energy—clearly something unnatural from Niflæheim—rips up from the rift in the room. Everyone in the room takes 2d6 cold damage (DC 20 Fort save for ½) as the whole chamber is instantly blanketed in frost and ice, including the PCs. This wave of supernatural cold, however, has a strange side effect – it unlocks the PCs' mythic destinies!



CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Despite the PCs victory in the Pale Tower, they have not completely thwarted Malgrith's plans. A large force of barbarians have gathered after taking Fort Bliss and set their eyes on Northgard. As described in the summary of this adventure, these barbarians descend on the fortress while the PCs are away and besiege its strong walls, killing many soldiers and even infecting Commander Drothgar with *rage fever*.

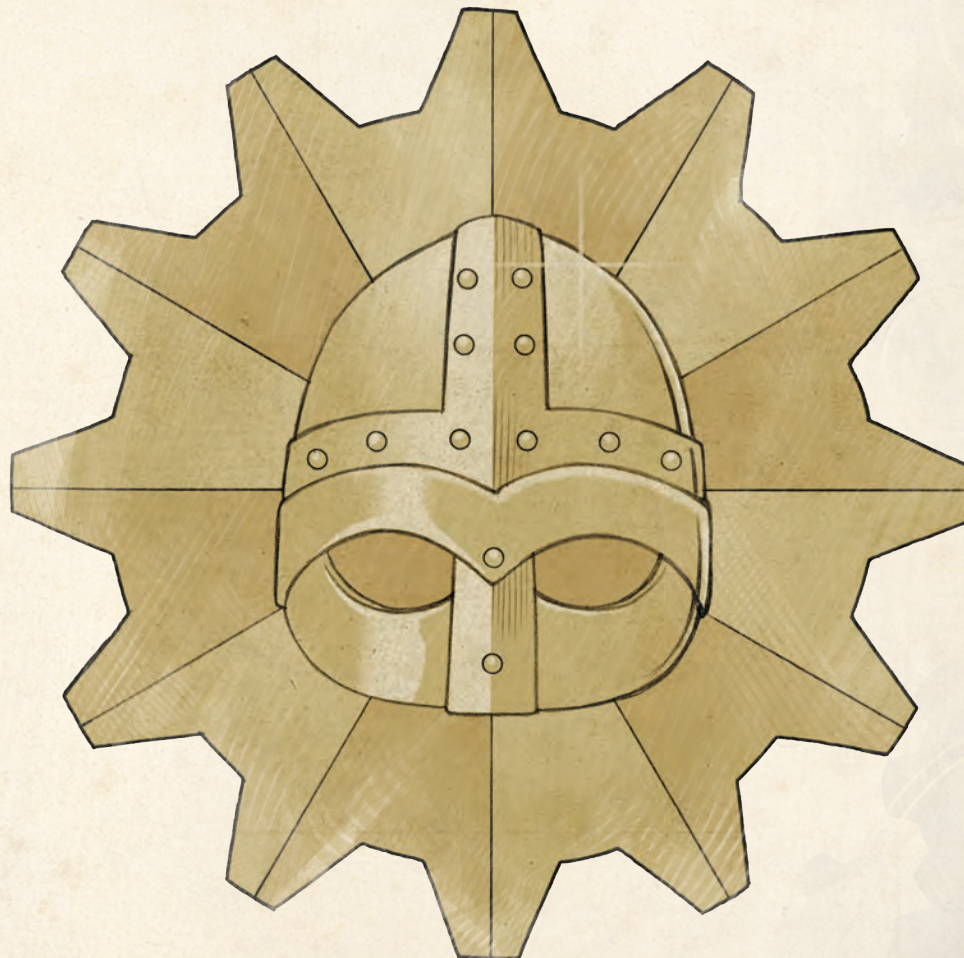
The GM should describe the return to Northgard as anything but comforting. As the PCs crest the final northern hill and look south, plumes of smoke rise from a multitude of barbarian campfires ringing the walls. There are far too many for the PCs to fight, but the enemy concentrates all its attention on the fortress walls, and cautious PCs evade them easily. South of Northgard they discover a troupe of refugees headed for *The White Jarl*, which departs immediately for Union City. Among the refugees the players find Elevak and Yrona, who inform them of the dire situation.

The fortress is well defended and provisioned for months; but its strong appearance hides the rot at its core.

Commander Drothgar and many of his officers are infected with dreaded *rage fever* and dare not take the field lest they succumb to mindless violence. While his daughter, Issadora, strives to hold together the defending troops, without a cure Northgard must surely crumble from the inside. If Northgard falls, thousands more barbarians will flock to the attack, heralding a third Fel Horde and imperiling all the City-States of Vallinar.

Perhaps the Hanging Gardens of Clan Hammerfall in Union City will hold the answer – or at least a place to start. The clock is ticking, how long can the beleaguered Issadora hold on against the ever increasing fury of the North?

After an uneventful journey on *The White Jarl*, the PCs have a chance to sell their treasure, repair their gear, heal up, and rest for a few days in Union City. PCs that took on faction missions have a chance to meet with their various faction contacts. Likewise they will likely want to report back to the Knight-Commander who debriefs them and bestows their promised reward. Though as the old dwarven saying goes, “The reward for a job well done is another, harder, job.”



BESTIARY

SCUTTLEBOMB

This tiny brass and iron construct inches forward on many legs as an ominous ticking echoes from its circular abdomen.

Scuttlebomb

CR 1

XP 400
N Tiny
Init +3; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12 (+3 Dex, +2 size)
hp 11 (2d10)
Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +0
Defensive Abilities construct traits
Weakness vulnerable to sonic

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft.; climb (10 ft)
Melee claw +7 (1d2-4/x2) and claw +2 (1d2-4/x2)
Space 2.5 ft.; Reach 0 ft.
Special Attacks detonate (DC 14)

STATISTICS

Str 2, Dex 16, Con —, Int 4, Wis 10, Cha 2
Base Atk +2; CMB +3; CMD 9 (can't be tripped)
Skills Acrobatics +3, Climb +6, Stealth +11
SQ detonate (DC 14), inexorable

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Detonate (DC 14) (Ex) Upon reaching its preset destination a scuttlebomb detonates, dealing 3d6 points of damage in a 5 ft. radius and damaging crystalline materials as the shatter spell. This destroys the scuttlebomb, reducing it to scattered shrapnel. Attacks that deal sonic damage cause the explosive to detonate immediately, perhaps in a safer area than the scuttlebomb's target.

Inexorable (Ex) Scuttlebombs move slowly but are very hard to stop. They ignore difficult terrain and gain a +2 morale bonus to saving throws against any effects that reduce or constrain their movement.

Scuttlebots were devised by the twisted clockwork elf inventor Gæric Deadgear to serve as the vehicle for revenge on Union City. His designs have since been shared through an informal network of morally dubious craftsmen and engineers. The original version bears a single use rune of *shatter*, though doubtless other villains are hard at work developing other payloads for their own purpose.

WINTER RAVEN

This white feathered avian resembles, in nearly all respects save its color, its mundane cousin the common raven. Its jagged beak is stained the same blood-red color as the pitiless eyes above it.

Winter Raven

CR 1/3

XP 135 each
N Tiny magical beast
Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12 (+3 Dex, +2 size)
hp 4 (1d10-1)
Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +2
Resist cold 5

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., fly 40 ft. (average)
Melee bite +6 (1d3-4 plus bleed)
Space 2-1/2 ft.; Reach 0 ft.
Special Attacks bleed (1d2), raucous caw

STATISTICS

Str 2, Dex 16, Con 8, Int 2, Wis 15, Cha 7
Base Atk +1; CMB +1; CMD 8
Feats Flyby Attack, Weapon Finesse
Skills Fly +6, Perception +3

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Raucous Caw (Su) Whenever three or more winter ravens converge together, as a standard action, they can combine their noisy caws into a wave of sound that may temporarily damage the inner ears in a single living creature within 60 ft. A targeted creature must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw (DC 11) or become sickened and deafened for 1d4 rounds. For each additional three winter ravens that join the raucous caw, the DC for the Fortitude saving throw increases by 1.

ECOLOGY

Environment any cold
Organization solitary, pair, flock (3-12), or hunger (13-100)
Treasure none

Roughly the size of a common raven, the winter raven is a creature that has been altered by nesting too close by sites tainted with dark magic. The foul energies have bleached their feathers white and imparted a lingering hunger for meat over all other food sources. A winter raven's blood-stained beak is cracked and jagged along the edge which allows it to rip bleeding chunks of flesh from any living prey that attracts its attention. The caw of a single winter raven is annoying and unsettling by itself but when found in large groups the noise is powerful enough that it can cause temporary damage to the inner workings of the ears of other creatures.



BLOODCLOT ICE

This clotted pool of dirty red-black ice shapes itself into deformed clawing limbs and screaming mouths as it oozes over the floor towards you.

Bloodclot Ice

CR 1

XP 400

NE Fine Ooze (swarm)

Init -5; Senses lifesense 15 ft.; Perception -5

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (-5 Dex, +8 size)

hp 11 (2d8+2); absorb blood

Fort +1, Ref -5, Will -5

Defensive Abilities ooze and swarm traits; **Immune** weapon damage

Weakness swarm traits

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., climbing (10 feet)

Melee swarm (1d6 plus distraction)

Space 0.5 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attacks distraction (DC 12), remembered rage (DC 12)

STATISTICS

Str 1, Dex 1, Con 12, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1

Base Atk +1; CMB —; CMD —

Skills Acrobatics -5, Climb +3, Stealth +11

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Absorb Blood (Ex) Whenever a bloodclot ice swarm deals damage to a creature, it gains fast healing 1 for that round. Dying creatures cannot be stabilized by non-magical means while touched by the bloodclot ice.

Remembered Rage (DC 12) (Su) Whenever a bloodclot ice swarm damages an enemy, it inflicts a portion of its endless pain on that target, compelling them to rage against the uninfected. Targets that fail their save are compelled to attack the nearest living, unaffected creature, moving or charging their nearest ally if necessary to make this attack. If it is unable to reach the closest living creature on its next turn, the target uses its turn to get as close as possible to the living creature. The target gains a DC 12 Will save to resist the effect. The DC is Constitution based. This is a supernatural, mind-affecting effect.

ECOLOGY

Environment Any arctic

Organization Solitary, pool (3-6), or lake (hundreds).

Treasure None

Bloodclot ice swarms form when blood from a creature infected with *rage fever* freezes in an arctic area suffused in necromantic energy. The tainted blood crystallizes into tiny pustules that flow together within the ice, clumping together in cold and hatred. The Thrall Lord's unnatural disease then animates the clots into gelid pools of endless hunger.

Dormant bloodclot ice looks like a simple frozen puddle of dirty brown water. Only when it senses nearby life does the blood stained ice animate, crawling mindlessly towards the nearest living creature. To attack, the frozen swarm shapes itself into deformed hands and paws, muzzles and

faces, in a ghastly mimicry of life. Scholars speculate that bloodclot ice retains some impression of the creatures from whose blood it formed, and recreates these wretched shapes in a vain attempt to reclaim its original life. But the disembodied hands can only claw across the floor, and the writhing faces can only silently scream and bite. Victims of the bloodclot ice's touch often succumb to echoes of its feverish rage, turning on their companions as the ooze renews itself with their fresh drawn blood.

In the depths of the Fel North, whole valleys are drowned under bloodclot ice. Even the mightiest living servants of the Thrall Lords avoid these sites of ancient battles and vast sacrificial rituals. Nothing mortal watches the lakes of frozen, animate, blood endlessly reshape themselves under the arctic sky, playing out twisted memories of life in the deathly cold.



NPC CODEx

Gæric "Dreadgear" Gorrem

CR 4

XP 1200
Male clockwork elven wizard 5
NE Medium humanoid (ash elf)
Init +5; **Senses** Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 14, flat-footed 19 (+4 armor, +1 deflection, +3 Dex, +4 shield)
hp 20 (5d6-2)
Fort +0, **Ref** +4, **Will** +5
Weakness light sensitivity

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee Mwk rapier +6 (1d6+1/18-20) or dagger +5 (1d4+1/19-20)
Ranged dagger +5 (1d4+1/19-20)
Special Attacks ancient enemies (+1 to hit and damage ælves)
Arcane School Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +8); 6/day—*create gear*
Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +8)
3rd — *disruptive glitterdust* (DC 15), *spiked pit* (DC 16), *summon monster II*
2nd — *anti-summoning shield*, *familiar figment*, *glitterdust* (DC 15), *levitate*
1st — *burning disarm* (DC 14), *color spray* (DC 14), *mage armor*, *shield*, *sleep* (DC 14)
0 (at will)—*daze* (DC 13), *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 13), *open/close* (DC 13)
Opposition schools evocation, necromancy

TACTICS

Before Combat Dreadgear casts *mage armor* and *shield* (from his wand) before entering melee combat. If possible, he casts *anti-summoning shield* on enemy casters beforehand.
During Combat Dreadgear delights in disarming foes in combat, casting *burning disarm* to accomplish his goal. He also uses *color spray* and *sleep* to target weak-minded enemies, especially those heavily armored. He targets casters with his disruptive *glitterdust* early in combat if possible.
Morale Dreadgear flees if reduced to 5 hit points or less.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 16, **Con** 8, **Int** 16, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10
Base Atk +2; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 17
Feats Disruptive Spell, Craft Magic Arms & Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Martial Weapon Proficiency, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Finesse
Skills Acrobatics +3, Appraise +7, Bluff +3, Climb +1, Craft (clockworks) +13, Escape Artist +3, Fly +8, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (clockworks, planes) +9, Knowledge (local) +7, Linguistics +7, Perception +7, Ride +3, Sense Motive +3, Spellcraft +11, Stealth +3, Survival +1, Swim +1
Languages Dwarven, Giant, High Common, High Dwarven, Low Common, Low Elven
SQ arcane bond (iron cobra), keen senses, nature's curse, shadowed blood (10 hit points), summoner's charm
Combat Gear flask of alchemist fire (x2), dagger, mwk rapier
Other Gear *boots of the cat*, *ring of protection* +1, *wand of haunting mists* (9 charges), *wand of shield* (11 charges), *scroll of darkness*, *scroll of true strike*, *scroll of summon monster II*, spellbook, spell component pouch, traveler's outfit, 84 gp.

Torva Ellegard of the White Jarl

CR 2

XP 800
Female dwarven expert 2/fighter 2
LG Medium Humanoid (redwall dwarf)
Init -1; **Senses** Perception +7; Darkvision

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 9, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +3 Dex)
hp 41 (2d10 + 2d8 +16)
Fort +7, **Ref** -1, **Will** +5; Bravery +1; +2 vs poison, spells, and spell-like effects

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.
Melee mwk bill +6 (1d8+3/x3) or dagger +5 (1d4+2/19-20)
Ranged dagger +2 (1d4+2/19-20)

TACTICS

Before Combat If Torva feels combat is about to break out, she orders her sailors to defend her and the *White Jarl*, making a point to control the Storm-Engine and wheel house. She enters combat if either is threatened.
During Combat Torva focuses on disarm heavily armed fighters before moving on to dangerous casters.
Morale Torva surrenders her ship if more than half of her crew falls. Otherwise, she fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 8, **Con** 18, **Int** 13, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 14 (+4 vs. bull rush or trip attempts)
Feats Power Attack, Prodigy, Step Up, Storm-Lashed
Skills Appraise +7, Bluff +0 (+2 to barter with non-dwarves), Climb +7, Diplomacy +4 (+6 to barter with non-dwarves), Handle Animal +3, Heal +2, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (clockworks) +6, Knowledge (geography) +5, Knowledge (local) +6, Perception +7, Profession (merchant) +9, Profession (sailor) +9, Sense Motive +3, Survival +6, Swim +9
Languages Low Common, Low Dwarven, Jarlund
SQ slow and steady, skilled
Combat Gear mwk bill, daggers (2)
Other Gear cold weather gear, furs, merchant's scales, *potion of endure elements*, *potion of touch of the sea* (x2), poncho, and +1 *studded leather armor*.

Lyda Hammerfall

CR 2

XP 600
Female dwarven alchemist 3
CG Medium humanoid (hammerfall dwarf)
Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +2 Dex)
hp 28 (3d8+8)
Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +3; +2 vs. poison, spells, and spell-like abilities
Defensive Abilities defensive training, stability

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.
Melee mwk shortspear +2 (1d6-1/x2)
Ranged bombs +4 (2d6+2 fire/x2) or mwk shortspear +5 (1d6-1/x2)
Special Attacks bomb 5/day (2d6+2 fire, DC 13)



Alchemist Extracts Known (CL 3rd)

1st—*bomber's eye*, *cure light wounds*, *disguise self*, *shield*

TACTICS

Before Combat If fleeing is not an option, Lyda drinks her shield infusion and starts to toss bombs at her closest enemies.

During Combat Lyda tries to remain mobile throughout combat and always seeks the high ground.

Morale Lyda surrenders if reduced to 10 hit points or less.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 14, **Con** 15, **Int** 15, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 13 (17 vs. bull rush or trip)

Feats Brew Potion, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Throw Anything

Skills Appraise +8, Craft (alchemy) +10, Craft (gemcutting) +4, Disable Device +5, Heal +6, Knowledge (arcana, nature) +6, Perception +6, Sense Motive +2, Sleight of Hand +3, Survival +6, Use Magic Device +3

Languages High Common, High Dwarven, Low Common, Low Dwarven

SQ alchemy (alchemy crafting +3, identify potions), discoveries (explosive bomb, infusion), hardy, inventive alchemy, keen trader, stability

Combat Gear mwk shortspear, *potion of jump*

Other Gear Alchemist's kit, +1 *studded leather armor*, mwk tools (gem cutting), thieves' tools, traveling formula book

Hrodur Blacktooth

CR 4

XP 1200

Male human ranger (trapper) 5

CN medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +3 Dex)

hp 52 (5d8+18)

Fort +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** -1 (suffers from paranoia)

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee Dagger +6 (1d4+1/19-20) or club +6 (1d6+1/x2)

Ranged +1 *composite longbow* +8 (1d8+2/x3) or dagger +7 (1d4+1/19-20)

Special Attacks favored enemy (fel barbarians +4, animals +2), trap (sleet trap) 6/day (DC 14)

TACTICS

Before Combat If his enemies make it past his traps, Hrodur fires his composite longbow at range. If forced into melee, he uses his *oil of bless weapon* and wades into combat with his club.

During Combat Hrodur prefers to pick his enemies off at a distance, but fights with his animal companion Ugly, flanking the biggest enemy and attempting to take it down quickly. He avoids attacking obvious priests, fearing the Æssinyr's wrath if he hurts one of their chosen.

Morale Hrodur is suffering from paranoia and fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 14, **Con** 17, **Int** 8, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 18

Feats Diehard, Endurance, Extra Ranger Trap, Far Shot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot

Skills Acrobatics -1, Climb +7, Disable Device +8, Handle Animal +7, Heal +9, Intimidate +4, Perception +9, Sense Motive +2, Spellcraft +3, Stealth +6, Survival +9 (+2 to track), Swim +3; takes a -4 penalty on all Cha-based skill checks.

Languages Low Common

SQ animal companion link, combat styles (archery), favored terrain (cold), hunter's bonds (Ugly, wolverine), paranoia, track, trap (sleet trap), trapfinding +2, wild empathy

Combat Gear arrows (20), arrows, slow burn (20), +1 *composite longbow*, *oil of bless weapon*, *potion of cure light wounds* (x3), *potion of endure elements* (x2), *potion of hide from animals*, *potion of hide from undead*

Other Gear +1 *chain shirt*, furs, cold weather gear, compass, signaling horn, thieves' tools, wire saw, wrist sheath (spring-loaded)

Yrona Mendak

CR 5

XP 1600

Female human expert 2/rogue 5

CN medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +1 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 43 (7d8+2)

Fort +1, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 rapier +8 (1d6+2/18-20) or dagger +7 (1d4+1/19-20)

Ranged dagger +7 (1d4+1/19-20)

Special Attacks sneak attack 3d6

TACTICS

Before Combat Yrona is a polished contact for the Black Hand and never enters combat unless she has a clear advantage. In most situations, she applies her *oil of invisibility* and sneaks away.

During Combat If forced to fight, Yrona stays mobile and prefers to harass spellcasters, using step up to combat reflexes to keep them pinned down. If possible, she uses Bluff to feint in combat, targeting well-armored foes. If she thinks it'll give her the advantage, Yrona is not above snuffing light sources and fighting in the dark.

Morale Yrona is comfortable with her life in Northgard, but isn't willing to die to defend it. If reduced to 15 hit points or less, she attempts to flee. Otherwise, she begs for her life, using her honeyed words ability to feign harmlessness.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 16, **Con** 10, **Int** 16, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 20

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Stealthy, Step Up
Skills Acrobatics +11, Appraise +11, Bluff +10, Climb +9, Craft (clockworks) +9, Craft (traps) +9, Diplomacy +12, Disable Device +15, Escape Artist +12, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +7, Knowledge (local) +9, Linguistics +8, Perception +7 (+9 to locate traps), Ride +3, Sense Motive +7, Sleight of Hand +11, Spellcraft +8, Stealth +13, Survival -1, Swim +1, Use Magic Device +9

Languages Dwarven, High Common, Jarlund, Low Common, Runic, Shadowtongue

SQ rogue talents [finesse rogue, honeyed words (2/day)], trapfinding +2

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*, +1 *rapier*

Other Gear cold weather outfit, mwk tools (clockworkers), mwk tools (trap-makers), mwk thieves' tools, *oil of invisibility*, *potion of endure elements*, *ring of protection* +1, +1 *studded leather armor*, 14 gp



Elevak Norsphel, Gear Steward of Northgard

CR 9

XP 4800

Male clockwork elven diviner 7/clockwork adept 2

NG medium humanoid (clockwork elf)

Init +7; **Senses** Perception +10; low-light vision

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 13, flat-footed 19 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +1 natural, +4 shield); +2 to AC vs. rays; +1 to AC vs. constructs

hp 51 (9d6+13)

Fort +4, **Ref** +8, **Will** +8; +2 vs. enchantments

Defensive abilities *blur*, *shocking image*, *stoneskin* **Immune** sleep; **Resist** cold 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 **quarterstaff** +4 (1d6/x2)

Special Attacks command clockworks 3/day (DC 16; 4 HD)

Arcane School Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th;

concentration +14); 8/day—*diviner's fortune* (+4)

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

5th — *cloudkill* (DC 20), *feeblemind* (DC 20), *prying eyes*

4th — *detect scrying*, *shadow conjuration* (DC 19), *shocking image*, *stoneskin*

3rd — *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *fly*, *focused glitterdust* (DC 17/19), *haste*, *ice spears* (DC 18)

2nd — *blur*, *daze monster* (DC 17), *detect thoughts* (DC 17), *glitterdust* (DC 17), *invisibility*, *symbol of mirroring* (DC 17)

1st — *charm person* (DC 16), *endure elements*, *ill omen*, *mage armor*, *sleep* (DC 16), *stone shield*, *true strike*

0 (at will) — *daze* (DC 15), *detect magic*, *mending*, *message*

Opposition schools evocation, necromancy

TACTICS

Before Combat If faced with no other option but combat, Elevak drinks his *potion of mage armor*, then uses his *wand of shield*. He follows this up with *stoneskin* quickly followed by *blur*. If pressed, he casts *shocking images*.

During Combat If facing constructs, Elevak attempts to command them to defend him. Otherwise, he focuses on restricting his enemies' movement with spells like *ice spears* and *glitterdust*. If he needs to take the offensive, he uses *shadow conjuration* to center a *fireball* on his strongest enemy.

Morale If reduced to 20 hit points, Elevak casts *invisibility* followed by *fly* to make his escape.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 16, **Con** 11, **Int** 21, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 16

Feats Craft Construct, Craft Magic Arms & Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Focused Spell, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Craft [clockworks]), Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +3, Appraise +13, Craft (clockwork) +21, Disable Device +11, Escape Artist +3, Fly +10, Knowledge (arcana, clockworks) +15, Knowledge (engineering) +12, Knowledge (history, local, planes, religion) +11, Linguistics +9, Perception +9, Ride +3, Sense Motive +1, Spellcraft +17, Stealth +3, Survival +1

Languages Dwarven, High Common, High Dwarven, Low Common, Low Elven, Runic

SQ arcane bond (ring), artificer (lesser) 1/day, keen senses, nature's curse, reflective brilliance

Combat Gear *potion of blur*, *potion of invisibility*, *potion of jump*, *potion of mage armor*, +1 *quarterstaff*

Other Gear *amulet of natural armor* +1, *cloak of quick reflexes*, *headband of vast intelligence* (Spellcraft), mwk tools (clockerworkers) *pearl of power*, *potion of cat's grace*, *ring of cold resistance* (lesser), *traveling spellbook*, *wand of shield* (15 charges), *wand of theft ward* (15 charges)

Typical Northgard Officer

CR 2

XP 600

Human aristocrat 4

N Medium humanoid

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +1 Dex, +2 shield)

hp 20 (4d8+2)

Fort +1, **Ref** +2, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk longsword +5 (1d8+1/19–20) or mwk lance +5 (1d8+1/×3) or dagger +4 (1d4+1/19–20)

Ranged shortbow +4 (1d6/×3) or dagger +4 (1d4+1/19–20)

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 12, **Con** 11, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 13

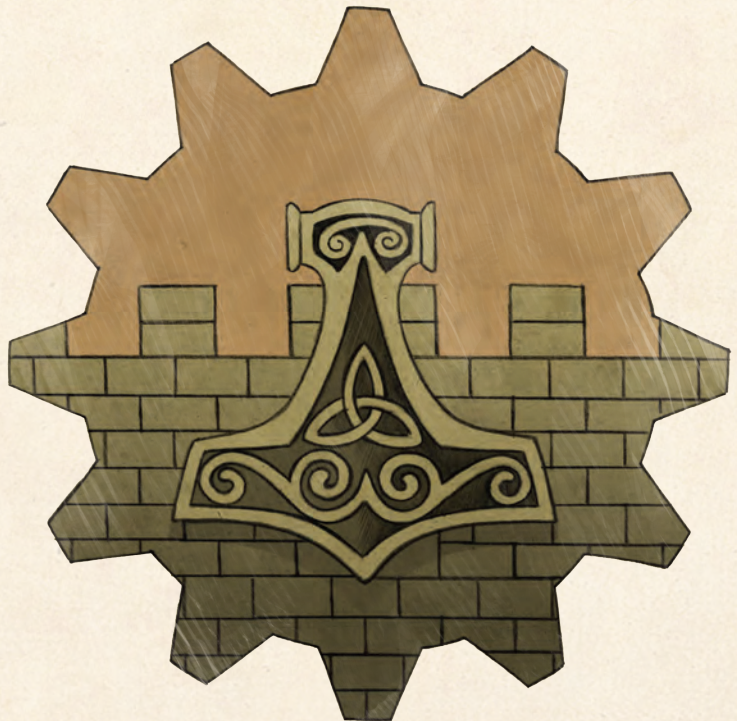
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 14

Feats Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, Trample

Skills Bluff +5, Diplomacy +8, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (history, local) +4, Knowledge (nobility) +5, Linguistics +5, Perception +3, Perform (dance) +5, Ride +6, Sense Motive +3

Languages Low Common, High Common

Other Gear mwk chain shirt, mwk heavy steel shield, mwk lance, mwk longsword, dagger, shortbow with 20 arrows, officer's outfit, light horse (combat trained) with military saddle and studded leather barding, 32 gp



Dane "Blackstyx" Korvald

XP 600

Male dwarven bard 3

CN Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +1 Dex)

hp 25 (3d8+7)

Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +2; +2 vs. poison, spells, and spell-like abilities

Defensive Abilities stability

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee Mwk spiked gauntlet +2 (1d4-1/x2) or mwk dagger +2 (1d4-1/19-20)

Ranged mwk dagger +4 (1d4-1/19-20)

Special Attacks bardic performance 16 rounds/day (countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire competence +2, inspire courage +1)

Bard Spells Known (CL 3rd; concentration +5)

1st (4/day) — *haze of dreams* (DC 13), *saving finale* (DC 13), *sleep* (DC 13), *sotto voice* (DC 13)

0 (at will) — *dancing lights*, *daze* (DC 12), *lullaby* (DC 12), *read magic*, *scrivener's chant*, *summon instrument*

TACTICS

Before Combat Dane isn't one for combat, preferring to either scare off his enemies or put them to sleep.

During Combat If forced into combat, Dane casts *sleep* multiple times, followed by *sotto voice*. If that doesn't work, he throws himself into the inevitability of war, singing loudly as he attempts to pummel his foes with his black, spiked glove.

Morale Dane retreats if an opening presents itself. If reduced to 8 hit points or less, he surrenders.

CR 2

STATISTICS

Str 8, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 8, Cha 15

Base Atk +2; CMB +1; CMD 12 (16 vs. bull rush, 16 vs. trip)

Feats Extra Performance, Harmonic Spell

Skills Acrobatics +5, Appraise +8, Bluff +8, Climb +3, Diplomacy +10, Disguise +6, Escape Artist +5, Handle Animal +10, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (arcana, clockworks, geography, history, local, nature, nobility, religion) +8, Perception +3, Perform (dance) +3, Perform (percussion) +10, Profession (brewer) +3, Sense Motive -1, Spellcraft +8, Stealth +5, Use Magic Device +8

Languages Dwarven, Futhark, High Common, Low Common

SQ bardic knowledge, hardy, inventive alchemy, keen trader

Combat Gear *potion of resist fire* (10), *wand of cause fear* (15 charges), mwk dagger, mwk spiked gauntlet, *scroll of shatter*.

Other Gear entertainer's outfit, eye patch, mwk musical instrument (battle drum), mwk lamellar cuirass, *potion of cure light wounds* (x3)



HANDOUTS

HANDOUT #1

My Dearest Navash,

Soon, those who claim Yggdrasil as their birthright shall empower us. I have cast the runes and see the old gods, impotent in their rage, moving to foil what is written in the roots of the world's end. They conspire with your enemies, who bear the name of the fallen hammer, and seek to fortify themselves against the coming winter. They are fools, the lot of them.

A cold wind blows in the North. It carries the smell of old copper and the faint screams of the frozen. It descends on the City by the Sea and we, in the wake of such glory, shall open her gates. I have set things in motion. Soon, this city will burn. Oh, and they will cry out, seeking water. But we shall give them only blood with which to quench the fires of revelation. Only blood.

Bring our first gift to the dwarves and, if the opportunity presents itself, kill that old Vitkarr, too. Then, flee north and await the next sign. You'll know it from the plumes of smoke filling the sky night and day.

By the Might of Mhamnoch,

Adennyya

What the Black Hand Wants—PCs that accept this faction mission from Mikalda are required to perform three duties. The first, and simplest, is a test of their discretion and requires them to simply order a specific drink at the Mead Hall in Northgard. Once the PC does this, it attracts the attention of Yrona, the agent in Northgard. She subsequently approaches the PC and tells them she needs Hrodur Blacktooth recovered, alive if at all possible, as he has information valuable to her. Once the PC does this, she gives them a faction critical mission—the recovery of the bundle of notes (which PCs will discover is located in the outhouse of Fort Bliss). PCs that accept this mission are given the Black Hand handout below:

HANDOUT #2

Agent,

Go north to Fort Bliss, find Agent Gnarlfr—who bears a tattoo of a nautical star on his neck—and secure the notes he prepared for me. I need them discreetly delivered. If Gnarlfr is dead, please burn his body. Extra corpses do none of us any good.

~Lady Y.

The Thorn's Agenda—PCs that accept the mission from Sir Nanu Arnason learn that the Order of the Thorn is interested in how rage fever affects people, how it is spread, and how dangerous it could be. They realize exposure is a death sentence for most folks, so they tend to work with those—like the automata—who are not likely to contract the disease when exposed. PCs that accept this mission are, essentially, on a fact finding mission and must discover three of the five insights scattered throughout the adventure. PCs that accept this mission are given the Order of the Thorn handout below:

HANDOUT #3

Sir,

Your interest in our order brings us great joy, although we still require you to prove your capabilities. While you are in and Northgard, learn everything you can about the affliction known as rage fever—examine the dead, look for clues to how it might be spread, identify the changes it causes in healthy men, and report back to us here in Union City. Your cooperation and success will bring great honor!

~Sir Nanu Arnason, K.Th.

The Hammer Falls—PCs that agree to work with or for the Order of the Wall have a simple mission; they are to collect strategic data for the Order so that it can plan its defensive strategies in case Northgard ever falls. While Sir Hallvarðr doesn't share this information with PCs, he does request they gather very specific information. PCs that accept this mission are given the Order of the Wall handout below:



HANDOUT #4

Friend of Redwall,

While you are in the North, gather what information you can on the strengths of the troops stationed there. We're interested in how they are supplied, how well they are supported, and how well they are capable of defending themselves. While we doubt the officers in Northgard will be forthcoming with this intelligence, we trust you'll find other channels by which to procure it.

Find Honor,

Sir Hallvarðr Hammerfall, K.W.

Ashengard's Folly—PCs that accept the mission from Lady Asa are expected to discreetly locate the information she requested, as well as any physical proof that her family sold inferior arms and armor to the people of Northgard, and destroy it. PCs that accept this mission are given the Order of the Wall handout below:

HANDOUT #5

Beloved Friend of the Trade Families,

It has come to our attention that the Black Hand, a notorious group of thieves and thugs, has attempted to besmirch the name of our good family by providing weapons and armor to the soldiers of Northgard—all bearing our noble seal and mark—under the guise that they were actually manufactured by us. We cannot let this plot run its course. While you are in the North, look for any of these inferior weapons and destroy them. If you discover information that forwards their plot, destroy it as well. We cannot have our good name drug through the mud!

Sincerely,

Lady Asa Ashengard

Arenthol's Request—PCs that accept Arenthol's mission are required to perform one simple, but potentially deadly, task—they need to enter the Pale Tower and determine if there is a portal there. The Clockwork Accord has long speculated that the Pale Tower is less of a place and more of a thing, acting as an antenna tied to Niflæheim much in the same way that the Ghoul Stone acts as an antenna to Neinferth. PCs that successfully perform this task gain entrance into the Clockwork Accord and 100 Crowns (500 gp).

HANDOUT #6

My Inquisitive Friend,

The Clockwork Accord has long studied technology in all its forms, even when that technology hasn't appeared as such. Some of my peers believe that this is the case with the Pale Tower and that it shares more in common with the Ghoul Stone than we'd like to admit. Travel north, enter the tower, and locate any ties it might have to other branches of the Great Tree. Bring me proof and your future in the Accord is guaranteed.

Onward Toward Understanding,

Arenthol Galeror

HANDOUT #7

The last few pages of Sir Vorgal's journal...

11th of Ashmu

The storm has released another foot of snow to join the other five we have been buried under in the last two weeks. It is an endless struggle to keep the men focused on clearing snow from the yard and around both sides of the palisade. I'd give my left arm for an automata right about now. At least with a tinhead on the job I wouldn't be required to inspect the men's work in the freezing cold every ten minutes.

The last section of the palisade has been repaired and now the fort is finally in serviceable condition. Fat lot of good that has been so far as all we've seen are the strange lights in the sky, a few starving deer, and day after day of snow. I am still waiting on a reply to my inquiry to Northgard in regards to abandoning this location and returning there.

12th of Ashmu

Einrik has reported finding tracks within a mile of the fort. He says they appear to be those of men or man-sized creatures and that there are no more than three of them travelling together. An extra watch will be posted for the next few days in case it is more than simple savages on the prowl for game.

Again this afternoon Balmund and Hulfrin approached me to complain of inadequate provisions and faulty equipment. Tempers flared and I have them mucking out the stables to cool off for a while. As I continue to tell the men, I am aware of the problems but there isn't anything I can do about it right at this moment. I have a letter and proof ready to go out in a few days with the next rider. They'll just have to make do until then.



13th of Ashmu

The men have reported seeing things moving amongst the trees and rocks around the fort. I would dismiss it as more of their superstition about the tower but damned if I'm not seeing it now too. The men have always complained of whispers from empty air and the feeling of being watched since we got to Fort Bliss. There is plenty to be uneasy about in the North but unseen spirits are amongst the least of our concerns.

As the sun nears the horizon, strange calls have started to carry forth from the lengthening shadows outside. Some kind of animal I have never heard before. The mood is tense as the men jump at every bump in the dark.

15th of Ashmu

He was wrong. There weren't only three of them. They brought their whole damned war party with them. Einrik is dead... I think, along with Renhurn. They were at the walls before the alarm was raised. Dozens and dozens of the slathering savages.

With our reinforced fortifications, we could have held them at the wall. We could have...had they not been led by a giant! The lumbering beast plucked Einrik off the watchtower before smashing the gate open for the savages to pour into the yard. They were on us before we could organize a proper shield wall; their faces screwed up in rage, ropes of saliva dribbling from their mouths, and their eyes windows into the very pits of Hel. The men fought a brave retreat back toward the barracks which we sealed against the savages.

Our only blessing was that the giant must have heard our horses from the stables and was too occupied with them to smash through the barracks' wall like so much kindling. All of yesterday and the wee-hours of this morning, they smashed against our doors, shutters, and walls to little avail. We think they are gone now. We have not heard the sound of flesh or iron against wood for hours.

Surprisingly, we only lost two of our number to the initial assault though many bear wounds from the last day of fighting. Once the wounded are tended, we will take inventory of what remains and once we are sure the savages are not lurking close by to pounce upon us, we will attempt re-securing the fort. Then I will send a few of the healthy men south as fast as they can run to bring up reinforcements.

17th of Ashmu

There has been no sign of the savages but tension amongst the men has increased tenfold. I had to break up a dispute that turned bloody between several of the men this morning. I was not surprised to find Balmund at the center of it all. Some of them seem to think the

savages are waiting in the nearby hills for us to get far enough away from our secure barracks before rushing in to finish us off. I've restricted ale rations for now in hopes of keeping the men focused on what needs to be done to ensure our survival.

18th of Ashmu

By the gods, it has all gone to Hel. One or more of the men must have been tainted by the savages before retreating to the barracks. Signs of the fever are spreading amongst the men. I fear that I might even be infected. I thought I detected the metallic taste of blood in my porridge this morning. Several of the men, Balmund with them, have taken to gathering by the armory. The looks they are giving the wounded make my skin crawl.

I fear all is lost.

Out of all of us, the only one that shows no signs of the madness is Sörer. I pulled him aside to the officers' quarters to tell him my fears. I gave him a small bag of supplies and commanded him to get back to Northgard one way or the other and let them know what had happened here. We must not die in vain. Please gods, let us not die in vain.

19th of Ashmu

Words are growing harder and harder to come by. I have locked myself in my room. I hear struggles outside. They have moved on the wounded now. I can hear screams from the men. I think one of them is lighting a fire. Other men have called for ale.

The smell... it is making me so hungry...

Must end it before all is lost...

(The rest of the entry trails off into unintelligible scrawl.)



APPENDIX

GAINING, LOSING & SPENDING HONOR

Honor is a fluctuating currency that player characters can gain, lose, and spend in game. The ways to use honor are legion; it can be won in duels, gained by performing honorable actions (such as burning the dead in this adventure), spent to win favors, or lost when a player character commits an act that brings shame upon him or his clan. And honor, much like physical currencies, constantly accrues interest with those invested in it. Those who do not carefully consider their actions or who elect to ignore honor altogether are bound to discover it impacts their lives—whether they like it or not.

For the most part, gaining and losing honor is fairly straightforward in **Rhune: Dawn of Twilight**. Gaining, losing, and spending honor is almost always the direct consequences of a player character's actions. Ideally, player characters will be invested in gaining honor and will tailor their actions accordingly, naturally playing into the campaign setting. GMs may also encourage the importance of honor, especially at morally charged moments, further adding to the theme of the setting.

Mechanically speaking, spending honor is no different than losing honor, as doing so slowly lowers a player character's overall honor score unless they actively pursue ways to increase it. Cautious player characters will be mindful of this, monitoring their honor score accordingly. When a player character reaches an honor score of 0, they suffer a -2 penalty to all Charisma based skill checks, as well as a -2 penalty to their Will saves. Likewise, most NPCs are likely to treat them unkindly, their starting attitudes unfriendly until improved through diplomacy.

Although a GM may allow a layer character to spend honor any number of ways, most will do so to win favors, to borrow valuable items, or to secure resources normally out of their reach. When a player character spends honor to win a favor, he must do so as part of a social encounter

(he has to ask a friendly NPC to do the favor) and spend a number of honor points equal to the difficulty of that favor, relative to the NPC:

- Player characters must spend 1d4 honor for an easy task (one that takes only a few hours of the NPC's time and requires a single skill check of DC 10 or lower).
- Player characters must spend 2d4 honor for a moderate task (one that takes less than a day and requires a single skill check of DC 20 or lower).
- Player characters must spend 3d4 honor for a difficult task (one that takes several days of the NPC's time, represents significant risk, or requires a single skill check of DC 30 or lower).
- Player characters must spend 4d4 honor for a hard task (one that takes a few weeks of the NPC's time, represents great risk on their part, or requires a single skill check of DC 40 or lower).

Player characters may also spend honor to borrow valuable items, such as armor, weapons, magical items, or money. Generally speaking, borrowing such items costs significantly more honor, especially if there is a risk that the item may be damaged (on an adventure) or gone for a significant amount of time. In these cases, borrowing an item costs 1d6 honor points for every 2,000 gp in its cost. While borrowing items with honor, player characters spending additional honor (on anything) *must pay double their normal costs until the initial item is returned*. GMs, of course, are free to limit the amount of honor spent in a single session.

Player characters can also spend honor to increase their social standing, gaining a +2 competence bonus to all Charisma-based skill checks for a single session. Spending honor in this manner costs the player character 1d4 honor points.



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VERSION 1.0A

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THE FROZEN NORTH CALLS

When an attack on the Hanging Gardens of Hammerfall put the heroes into the very heart of chaos – they quickly discover just how dangerous the foes of the City-States of Vallinar can be! After meeting with some of Union City’s more notable personalities, the heroes travel north to the frozen lands that surround Northgard, the last major military settlement to stand watch against the hordes of thrall-bound barbarians that hunt the North. As the heroes explore the North and aid the people there, however, they soon discover a darker force is at work – and the only the bravest dare enter the infamous Pale Tower.

This adventure:

- Takes heroes from 1st to 4th level. When the heroes complete **INTO THE PALE TOWER**, they’ll have a clear idea of just how dangerous the North is!
- Offers GMs “mythic” options for **RHUNE: DAWN OF TWILIGHT**, adding even more challenge to those using those optional rules.
- Introduces several new monsters suitable for play in any **PATHFINDER ROLEPLAYING GAME**.
- Is the first chapter of the **BEYOND THE GLITTERING FANE** adventure arc.