



# Blackwood

## The King of Knuckle Peak

By Eli Kurtz





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# The King of Knuckle Peak

## A Savage Worlds One Sheet for the Blackwood

**Begins in:** Last Fork, Giant Province  
Winter, 1452

Our story begins with a woman at the edge of her prime. She is in full flight, running through a snowy Blackwood. A deep growl freezes her where she stands. She looks over her shoulder, her eyes widen, and a mighty roar clashes with the sickening impact of wood on bone. The hunter flies into the air, the life already gone from her eyes.

The Village of Last Fork has sought the help of our errant heroes. The last two hunters in the village are three days late from a foraging trek to the nearby hunting lodge. Each holding a strange wooden figure to their hearts, the villagers offered a middling sack of silver for the errants to go to the hunting lodge and see what story they might uncover.

"But beware," the village elder warned, "Rouse ye not the ire of the King of Knuckle Peak."



### Chasing Thoughts

The game begins as the errants leave the scene of the first hunter's corpse. They found her pulverized and wedged into a crevice at the base of a boulder. Howler tracks blanketed the ground around her, but there were no bite wounds on her corpse.

A successful Notice or Tracking roll reveals a huge, barefoot print in the midst of the Howler tracks. On a raise, they notice the figurine carried by all the villagers is missing from the woman's corpse. The Howler tracks leave northeast.

Players should be given sufficient time to discuss these clues before jumping back to the present.

Even without a successful roll, the errants can't help but notice one particular item on the corpse:

**No-Fire Smoke:** Crafty woodland hunters have learned how to capture a campfire's smoke within fist-sized wicker balls. These ashen bombs explode into a dark, heavy cloud when thrown. Treat this effect like the *light/obscure* power with a trapping of thick smoke. This item is consumed when used.

### Primal Peril

Our heroes follow the footprints to a long, narrow glade, tangled with fallen trees. The tracks lead to a small stream in the center, lit by the late afternoon sun. Several piles of dark, matted fur lay around a toppled stone ancestor shrine, a terrible omen. The Wood is far deadlier without its influence, and when night falls it will be all the worse.

As the characters deliberate, a sense of wrongness slowly creeps into the glade. The heavy stench of animal musk drifts in on the wind. Errants should make a Notice check at -2 to spy a hulking, hairy shadow standing just beyond the treeline, watching them. No sooner has it been spotted than it turns and disappears into the wood.

A cacophony of howls breaks the brief fugue. With the sun sinking lower in the sky, a pack of howlers (one per player) burst from the same part of the woods and rush to attack. When killed, the howlers rapidly decompose into the same smoking piles scattered around the broken shrine. They will fight to the last.

The hunter's tracks, now trailing more blood, head east along the stream toward the lodge. He can't be much farther.

### Ruddy Road Hall

A light is shining from within the lodge when the party arrives. Half a dozen elves occupied the lodge as soon as the shrine was broken. The elves have eaten the second hunter, and then disguised themselves as humans to lure more victims to a similar fate. Their illusion is powerful, but also imperfect: the hearth fire doesn't flicker quite right, the food doesn't smell like it should, and the ale is thick as pond scum.



The elves will tell a string of secrets to entice the party closer to the ambush waiting at the hearth fire: the Howler King's rage at any human who enters the Wood, and of the villagers blind worship of him. The elves will even tell secrets about the errants (award a Benny to any player who fabricates an especially good secret). The characters must win a Knowledge (Lore) Dramatic Task at -2 to invent an apology to the elves, excuse themselves, and escape unharmed. The elves will attack if the errants fail.

## Dusk at the Howling Court

Outside the cursed lodge, a keening howl will point the characters toward Knuckle Peak. If nothing else, perhaps the Howler King has a shelter they can take over before nightfall.

It's a two-hour hike to the Howler King's court at the edge of the treeline, still a few hundred feet below the peak. If the errants push themselves hard, they can make it in one hour, but they must make a Vigor roll at -2 or suffer a level of fatigue. The throne is a slab of crude stone at the base of a rocky cliff, surrounded by the ruined columns of an ancient structure. A long pile of gravel stretches out behind the throne at the base of the cliff, and many boulders are precariously perched at the top.

A number of howlers (two per player) attend the Howler King. Enraged at the mere presence of the humans, the King leaps to attack any errant he sees. He and his howlers use the standing stones and the rest of the terrain to their advantage, and will fight to the bitter end. If dislodged, the clifftop boulders could bury the whole court.

## Aftermath

The rubble at the base of the cliff partially obscures a door. Inside, the players find a shelter large enough to house them for the night, along with a hoard of jewelry and valuables worth 500 silver pieces. Upon their return to Last Fork, they are paid 50 silver apiece for their trouble and sent on their way. If they share the news of the Howler King's death, the village will lament this new calamity, and wonder how they will survive the months to come. It will take a long time for the superstition to fall from their eyes, and to see the danger has passed.

### WILD SCEPTER (MAGIC ITEM)

The owner of this magical quarterstaff can change its size at will. It can be as small as a toothpick, as big as a fallen tree, or anywhere in between. The staff has 10 Power Points, which the wielder can use to cast *burst* (Trunk Smash), using Spirit as the arcane skill.



### CHANGELING ELVES

Even disguised as humans, the elves can't totally hide their strangeness. The smiles are just barely too intense, the movements too alien. Their true forms on the other hand, are grotesque mockeries of humanity and truly terrible avatars of nature.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Notice d8, Taunt d8, Throwing d8

**Charisma:** +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

**Edges:** Arcane Background (Elves; Spirit arcane skill)

**Powers:** *Burrow* (Melting Hop), *confusion* (Lullaby Gaze), *disguise* (However Ye Please), 20 PP

**Gear:** Leaf Darts x15 (Range 3/6/12; Str+d4; RoF 3)

### HOWLERS

As large and sturdy as a wolf but with limbs and a visage like unto an ape, howlers are highly territorial beasts. They leap down from the tree branches in packs, and are at their deadliest when ganging up on their targets.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Climbing d10, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 4

#### Special Abilities

- **Acrobat:** +2 to Agility-based maneuvers; +1 Parry
- **Bite:** Str+d4
- **Size -1:** Howlers are about the same size as a wolf
- **Go for the Throat:** Hit least armored location on a raise.
- **Wall Walker:** Can climb at normal Pace.



### HOWLER KING

This hulking monster towers over eight feet tall, its shoulders nearly half as wide. Cruel cunning burns in its too-human eyes as it wields a tree trunk like a staff. A mantle of thick fur protects the Howler King as it fights with ruthless ferocity.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d10, Intimidation d12, Notice d10

**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 9; **Toughness:** 11 (1)

**Edges:** Nerves of Steel, Howler Mantle (1d4 Howlers sprout from hairs for each Wound suffered)

**Gear:** Wild Scepter (Str+d6; +1 Parry; Reach; 2 hands; 10 Power Points that can be used to cast *burst* (Trunk Smash) using Spirit as the arcane skill)

#### Special Abilities

- **Acrobat:** +2 to Agility-based maneuvers; +1 Parry
- **Armor +1:** Thick Hide
- **Fear:** Any who see the king must make a Fear check.
- **Size +2:** The howler king is over eight feet tall
- **Wall Walker:** Can climb at normal Pace.