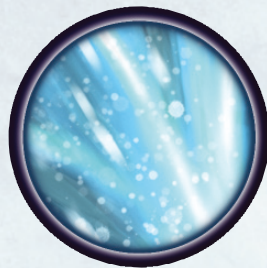


# HELLFROST

## TALES OF DARKNESS





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# THE DARK NIGHT



This adventure is designed for a group of four Heroic characters, but can be run with larger parties. Most encounters are based on a number of antagonists per hero, and thus automatically allow for increased party size.

Scaling for higher Ranks is easily handled. For each additional 20 XPs the party is above Heroic, add two additional Extras of the most common type to each detailed encounter. For instance, if the text says the heroes face one skeleton warrior per hero, a Legendary (80 XP) party of four members would face six skeletons (four because of the party size plus two for being a Rank higher than Veteran).

The adventure can be set in the Hearthlands or Low Winterlands, but must be run while snow lies on the ground. See the *Savage Worlds* rulebook for the effects of cold weather and the *Hellfrost Player's Guide* for information about how the rules work in this setting.

## GM'S BACKGROUND

Long, long ago, shortly before the Liche-Priest was imprisoned and the remnants of his once great army crushed, there lived a powerful priestess of Hela by the name of Helfrith Helasdohtor. Perhaps only second to the Liche-Priest in her devotion to the dark goddess, Helfrith terrorized the Hearthlands while her master held sway in what is now the Low Winterlands.

Helfrith was slain not long after the Liche-Priest fell, but whereas many of her comrades' corpses were burnt by the clergy of Scaetha, Helfrith's corpse was spirited away by her remaining servants and buried in secret. Hela was quick to claim Helfrith's soul when it reached Scaetha's Hall, for such was her right, and not even Scaetha could deny her this privilege.

Most followers of Hela are condemned to eternal existence as a skeleton or zombie, a near-mindless servitor, but Helfrith was one of the chosen elite, one of the few who had earned true immortality. Hela sent her priestess' soul back to the mortal world, into her own lifeless body. Yet Helfrith had no "unlife," for Hela knew the soldiers of her enemies were strong, and that to awaken Helfrith too

soon would be a waste of resources. So Hela bound the cleric to sleep away the centuries until she was needed.

The sigils warding the Liche-Priest's tomb are weakening. When they fail, the great evil will once again be unleashed onto the unsuspecting world. In preparation for this second coming of darkness, Hela has stirred Helfrith from her dreamless sleep.

## ENTER THE HEROES

The characters are staying with a stead owner by the name of Thegn Amundi Vagnsunu. Depending on the needs of the individual campaign, Thegn Amundi may be a hero's liege, an ally, a family friend or kinsman, or simply a stranger who knows of the mighty heroes and has invited them to his stead as honored guests. The party arrived at the nobleman's demesne the night before the adventure begins, and were greeted warmly.

## ● A HUNTING WE WILL GO ●

*The morning is cold and crisp. Fresh snow lies on the ground, but the sky is currently clear and visibility is good. Thegn Amundi has arranged a great feast in honor of his notable guests and to honor Ullr, his patron god. As befits your status as heroes, Amundi has invited you to participate in the hunt.*

Saxa tradition is quite strict when it comes to hunting. Spears must be used against wild boar (though these may be long or short), and bows against rabbits and deer. Only leather armor may be worn—shields are not permitted. Magic may only be used by clerics of Ullr during the slaying of the prey beast, though it may also be employed to help track down suitable prey.

Characters lacking suitable weapons and armor are supplied from the thegn's armory. Adventurers who in-

sist on wearing other types of armor, or carrying other weapons, are ridiculed for their lack of knowledge and scorned for the insult they do their host. If they insist on breaking the rules of etiquette, they lose 3 Glory.

Once the heroes are suitably attired, the hunt begins. The hunters are divided into several small groups. Today, the characters are hunting together. Accompanying them are two local men, Wiglaf and Sigmar. As mere farmers, they are forbidden from actively hunting, so they are present only to supply local area knowledge and carry any animals the heroes take down.

There are eight hours of good light available. Thegn Amundi, ken to ensure no harm befalls his guests, orders that all hunters be back at the stead before Sigel rests for the night. The hunt is to take place in the local forest, Amundi's private hunting reserve. Snowshoes or skis, whichever the heroes prefer, are provided if necessary.

## THE HUNT

A hunt comprises three steps, each of which must be accomplished in order:

The first step requires a Cooperative Survival roll to locate suitable prey. This involves hunting for spoor and animal trails, clear signs that animals are in the vicinity. It also serves to alert the hunters to any predators that may be nearby. With success, the characters may proceed to the next step. On a failure, they waste an hour but may make the Survival roll again.

The second step requires a Cooperative Tracking roll. Because of the recent snowfall, this roll is made at +2. Success means the party has located fresh tracks and may give chase. They come across their quarry in two hours. On a raise, they manage to track down their prey in just one hour. As before, a failed roll wastes an hour but allows a retry.

The GM should now draw a card from the action deck. On a Club, the characters are trailing a hare, rabbit, or similar small game animal. On a Diamond, they are hunting a small deer. A Heart puts them on the track of a large deer, such as a reindeer or moose. On a Spade, they are hunting a wild boar.

Step three brings the hunters into range of their prey. Each hunter who wishes to go for the kill must make a Stealth roll. Wiglaf and Sigmar stay well back, so as not to ruin the hunters' chances. They politely suggest anyone not skilled in moving quietly does the same, for prey animals are notoriously skittish and possess excellent senses. This is opposed by a single Notice roll from the prey. Check the results below.

\* If the prey beats the roll of *any* hunter, it detects the party first and flees. The initial range is 30" and the animal gains Heavy Cover (−4) from the trees. Use the Chase rules as required if the party pursues.

\* If the prey fails to beat any Stealth roll, the hunters creep undetected into killing range. Those who scored at least a 4 and beat the creature's Notice roll close to 20" and gain the Drop, but the creature has Medium Cover (−2). Those who beat the prey's roll with a raise close to 12" and gain the Drop and a clear shot.

Wounded rabbits and deer immediately flee, forcing the hunters to give chase. Use the regular Chase rules. The forest counts as Rough Obstacles. Characters not wearing suitable footwear, or lacking suitable Edges, suffer the effects of difficult ground in the snow.

## THE FEAST

As the sun begins to dip, Wiglaf and Sigmar suggest the party returns home—Amundi's orders were quite specific, and as the heroes are the guests of honor at the feast that evening, it would shame their host if they were to return late. Once the game is delivered, Wiglaf and Sigmar say their farewells. They must return to their steads, but will see the heroes at the feast.

If the party caught plentiful game, Amundi and his court heap praise upon them for providing such a banquet when they are the guests. A handful of small game leads to polite taunting about the prowess of the great hunters, with good-natured comments such as "Rabbits must be tougher than giants in these parts!" and "At least they catered for the women and children!" bandied about at the heroes expense.

Within a few hours, the animals have been prepared and are roasting on spits over the great hearth. As befits their station, the characters are seated at the high table, along with Amundi, his wife (Hilda), and two visiting haulds (Aelfric Cadwallasunu and Olaf Pig-Nose) who owe allegiance to the heroes' host.

Should the characters search out Sigmar and Wiglaf, only Sigmar is present. If questioned about his companion, Sigmar replies that Wiglaf has a newborn child, and may be delayed.

The feast itself is inconsequential to the plot, though that does not mean the GM should ignore the opportunity for roleplaying. The GM should roll once on the Ally Personalities table for each character and run a small roleplaying interlude. Some examples are given below. In most cases the GM can simply choose how the NPC feels about the hero, but sometimes it is fun to use the Reaction table and ad lib as required:

*Creative:* The NPC is a skald and tells a story about the hero. Check on the Reaction table (the skald has +1 Charisma). On a result of Uncooperative or Hostile, his tale is offensive to the character. Perhaps it accuses him of cowardice, compares him to a less than popular folk hero, or otherwise besmirches his good name. The character loses 1 Glory from the ridicule. A Neutral result results in an honest, though hardly glorious song. A Friendly or Helpful result means the tale praises the adventurer, enhancing his reputation through slight exaggerations (but no lies). The characters gain +1 Glory.

*Crude:* An attractive but extremely crude NPC turns their attentions to a hero. It might a powerful berserker out to "woo" a female hero, or a young noblewoman with few social mores. Alternatively, the NPC may hit on another NPC who does not enjoy their advances. They

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may call on the hero to help them. Or perhaps the crude soul simply begins singing embarrassing songs or telling rude jokes, thus ruining the jovial mood of the feast.

**Cowardly:** A boastful but cowardly NPC begins talking big about his exploits. If challenged, he quickly backs down, possibly resenting the hero in the process.

**Experienced:** A huscarl enquirers as to the hero's previous adventures. The NPC has some war stories of his own, though none compare to the character's exploits. Still, it is possible a friendship could develop.

**Fearless:** A huscarl, possibly a berserk, squares up to the character and claims his boasts are the words of a fool. If the hero backs down, the NPC continues to ridicule the character throughout the feast—the NPC is a bully at heart. If the character stands his ground, the NPC may either start a fight (not uncommon at Saxa feasts) or clap the hero on the back and declare him a friend for life.

After running two encounters, a huscarl enters the great hall, his heavy cloak covered in snow. He walks up to Amundi and whispers quietly in his ear. Amundi nods and whispers something back. Only if questioned as to what is occurring does Amundi inform the heroes.

*"It is nothing to trouble you about," Amundi smiles. "The night has turned foul, for a blizzard has started. The huscarl, a captain in my guard, sought permission to light the braziers and increase the watch, for on such nights orcs prowl these lands."*

Continue with the remaining NPC interludes. Shortly after the last one ends, the doors to the great hall crash open. The huscarl captain enters, ushering a woman before him. Amid cries and grumbles, he slams shut the doors on the wintry night and escorts the woman straight to Amundi, brushing aside curious guests who stand in his path.

*"My lord," he says hurriedly. "This is Sexburb, daughter of Ine Cuthbertsunu, who owns the stead a few miles north."*

*Amundi nods sagely. "I know who she is. I knew her father well and knew her as a young girl. Now she has grown to a fine woman, and mother of a newborn named in my honor. What ails thee, Sexburb, that you travel to my hall on a foul night such as this?" Sexburb drops to one knee, but her gaze does not waiver from Amundi's. "My lord," she whispers hoarsely, choking back tears, "my husband, Wiglaf, has failed to return from the hunt you organized earlier. The weather has turned, and I fear for his safety."*

*Amundi rises quickly to his feet. "Who did Wiglaf aid this day?"*

This is the heroes' cue to answer, for there is only one Wiglaf in the community. Last they saw of him, he

was planning to return home after helping bring back the game. That was several hours ago. No one else has seen Wiglaf since.

Amundi immediately summons his huscarls and orders all able-bodied men to gather their cloaks, skis, and spears. As the men rush to comply, the women grab bundles of torches from storage places and light handfuls of them in the hearth.

*"Thrym may well be roaring tonight," Amundi barks, "but Wiglaf is kith and kin to us, and we shall not desert him. Split up into small groups and comb the lands. You," he says pointing to a group of men, "leave from here along the route Wiglaf would have taken home. You," he gestures toward you, "take the north edge of the woods, along the ridge—Wiglaf may have detoured to collect firewood if he saw the storm brewing."*

*Other groups are similarly appointed search areas. Within minutes, everyone begins filing outside, torches flickering wildly in the strong winds.*

The driving snow is blinding and the wind biting. The temperature is one level lower than the standard nighttime temperature for the geographic region. In addition, each character must make a Vigor roll at -2 as they ski up to the ridge.

### THE MOUNDS

An hour into the search, the characters stumble up onto the north ridge. The blizzard has concealed any tracks. All that can be seen are the dark outlines of the trees and a series of high mounds. If the party heads into the trees have them make another Vigor roll at -2 after an hour of searching—they find nothing of significance.

On inspecting the mounds, however, the characters discover one of them is open, revealing a stone-lined passage. It also faces away from the wind, providing limited shelter from the gale. Lying in the snow outside is a stone slab engraved with Auld Saxa runes on what would have been the *inside* face. A Notice roll reveals that it fits the mound's opening and has been removed only recently—there is little accumulation on it, despite snow having fallen for many hours now. Calling into the dark passage elicits no response.

The writing on the slab reads, *"Helfrith Helasdohtor. She rests here in Hela's dark embrace until called upon to serve."* Any hero making a successful Knowledge (History) roll at -2, or Knowledge (Folklore) roll at -4 has heard of Helfrith. She was a powerful priestess of Hela, slain toward the end of the Liche-Priest's reign by paladins of Scaetha.

### INSIDE THE MOUND

The mound is an old burial tomb. Like most barrows,

it is basically a barrel-shaped hill with a stone slab for a doorway. The interior takes the form of three chambers branching off from a small, circular chamber.

**Left Chamber:** This chamber contains a large stone slab bearing a skeleton. The skeleton obviously belonged to a very large person, perhaps nine feet tall in their woolen socks. A successful Common Knowledge roll deduces the bones are very old but do not belong to a human. A raise reveals they are those of an ogre. The skeleton has a ring on the middle finger of its left hand, which is worth 300 gs. Apart from a few very mangy furs, there is little else of interest here.

The ogre was Helfrith's faithful companion. He chose to be buried alongside her so she could animate him on her return.

**Right Chamber:** This chamber contains an old chest and some scroll cases. The old chest can be opened by one good hit with a weapon (Toughness 8) or with a Lockpicking roll at +1 (due to the archaic and simple lock). Inside are several necklaces, some rings, and a coronet. The whole lot is worth 1,750 gold scields but weighs 10 pounds. A Common Knowledge roll at -2 reveals this style of metalworking has not been used since the Blizzard War. The scrolls crumble to dust when opened, no matter how carefully the party is.

**Top Chamber:** The top chamber contains a stone slab with something lying upon it, hidden under a funeral shroud. Resting by it is a large suit of rotting leather armor, a worm-eaten 2-handed boar spear, a rusted broadsword, and a round shield emblazoned with a grinning skull. Unlike the other objects, the shield is in perfect condition. Lying at the base of the bier is Wiglaf. A quick check reveals his neck has been snapped.

The shield is a permanent relic. Anyone inspecting it sees it has Hela's holy symbol engraved on the inside. The relic allows anyone attuned to invoke *fear* with a d8 Faith skill. If the user has Hela as a patron deity, the casting roll is made at +2.

Anyone removing the funeral shroud sees the tomb's occupant—a draugr! Do not forget to ask for Guts checks.

*Beneath the shroud lies the bloated body of what you assume was once a woman. Her skin looks badly bruised and is virtually black in color. Streaks of yellow fat show between some of the muscles. Lank strands of blonde hair cling to the scalp. Her nails are long and dirty and look quite sharp. Suddenly the woman's eyes open and a low moan emits from her shriveled lips. She begins to stir.*

Unless the party has encountered a draugr before, it takes a Knowledge (Folklore or appropriate Monsters) roll to identify the creature. If the heroes decide not to pull the shroud away, Helfrith awakens by herself before they leave her tomb.

Given the standard reaction of most characters to seeing a monster appear before them, a fight will break out

at this point. Unfortunately, Helfrith cannot be harmed at this stage. The heroes' best plan is to run away across country and seek help.

## CHASED BY THE DAMNED

When the group finally flees, run this scene as a Chase. Outside, the blizzard has eased, and it is now late into the night. The full moon and clear sky provides Dim lighting (-1).

Each round, the characters must make Agility rolls. Those without skis or snowshoes suffer a -2 penalty, in addition to any other modifiers, because of the deep, fresh-lying snow. Anyone who goes Out of Control suffers a further -2 penalty to their next Agility roll—do not roll on the Out of Control table.

Each Range Increment equates to 5". The party begins three Range Increments ahead of the draugr (who suffers no penalties from the snow) if they flee the instant she awakens, but just one Range Increment if they withdraw from a fight.

Note that the time interval between rolls is not 6 seconds—the Chase represents an hour of frantic skiing or running, not just a few minutes. Essentially, the rolls are snapshots in time, not a continuous sequence. For ease, the usual rules of actions that can be taken each "round" still apply—there is nothing the heroes can do to harm Helfrith, anyway.

Unlike other chases, this one uses fixed obstacles, representing the route. Lay out 14 markers. Mark the Range Increments of note (see below) with a different color marker to help you remember that something occurs at these points.

On any round Helfrith is within one Range Increment of a hero, she tries a Parallel maneuver at -2 as she tries to close to melee range. With success, she may make a single Fighting attack with a multi-action penalty.

**Encounter 1 (7th marker):** The characters reach a low fence. They have a choice—stop and climb over or try to jump the fence using a snow mound as a ramp.

Stopping is the safe option, but it costs time. The character's movement for the round ends immediately, regardless of how many Range Increments his Agility roll allowed him to move. Next round, he makes an Agility roll as normal. Success or raise, he moves just *one* position. Pushing grants additional distance as normal, but increases the risk of failure.

Jumping is faster but riskier. The hero makes an Agility roll (a free action) at -2 (those without winter footwear suffer that penalty on top). With success, the hero clears the fence. If his initial Agility roll allowed for more movement, then he keeps moving. For instance, a hero scored a raise on his initial Agility roll, allowing him two Range Increments of movement. After moving one Increment, he reaches the fence, which he elects to jump.

With success, he clears the fence and takes his second Range Increment of movement.

A failure means the hero pulled up short. On the next round, he may climb over or try a second jump. A critical failure means the hero slams into the fence and becomes entangled. It takes a Strength roll (as an action) to free himself. Until he does, he cannot progress further.

Helfrith runs through the fence (literally) without being slowed.

**Encounter 2 (9th & 10th marker):** On both these increments, the heroes are moving through a copse. A failed Agility roll means a hero slams into a tree and is automatically Shaken.

**Encounter 4 (12th marker):** The heroes spy a small fire in the near distance. All that separates them from apparent safety is a wide gorge half-filled with snow. Do they take the safe route or take to the air? Heroes without skis *must* take the safe route. Helfrith is similarly impaired, and so must use the slow route.

The safe route requires the hero to stop, clamber down the sides, and carefully ski over the gorge. This takes two rounds, during which they gain no distance. They may roll as normal on the third round after entering the gorge.

If they decide to jump over the gorge whilst skiing they must make a successful Agility roll at -2. If the roll fails, the skier fails to hit the right snowdrift and slams into the chasm's far wall for 2d6 damage. He must spend the next round climbing out. A critical failure causes a more severe impact for 3d6 damage.

## FIRE IN THE NIGHT

With the gorge behind them, the characters can now see that the fire comes from the centre of a stone area some yards ahead. Reaching it requires the heroes to move onto the last marker. Only then can they clearly make out any details.

*At one end of the stones is an altar of some kind made of stacked stones. A large ash tree, grimly decorated with decaying animal heads, stands nearby. By the fire, which burns in the center of the flagstone floor, is the figure of a man. He is moving his hands, but you cannot tell what he is doing. Strangely, there is no snow on the stones or the tree.*

Helfrith stops at the edge of the stones and howls aggressively. She then slinks off into the night. The stones are sacred ground to Scaetha, and the man is a priest of Scaetha. The sanctified precinct is protected by a powerful warding spell, which keeps the draugr at bay. Once the characters are all within the paved area, the chase ends.

The man ignores any calls from the heroes, even if they mention the draugr hot on their tail. For each hero that steps on the stone floor, a misty figure manifests before them. It takes the form of a large man wearing a wolf skin cloak. The figure is semi-translucent, its face

contorted into a terrible grimace. It reaches out to strike them with its large axe. The battle that ensues exists only within the target's mind (even though actual physical combat stats are used). Friends only perceive those being attacked shaking and sweating uncontrollably.

These are guardian spirits that are attempting to possess the party members. Each spirit attacks for four rounds (at which time the figure by the fire calls them off), or until it possesses a character. If the characters reach the temple ahead of the draugr but fail to enter, the draugr will eventually catch up and attack.

Ⓜ **Berserk Spirit (1 per hero):** See page 12.

## THE PRIEST

Once four rounds have passed, the man releases the characters from combat by commanding the spirits to leave, but refuses to exorcise any spirits possessing characters. Indeed, he informs them the spirits now housed in their bodies may be of assistance later. He asks the party who they are and what they are doing on Scaetha's sacred ground. The priest, who identifies himself as Corneus One-Eye, listens to their story. Assuming they tell him of their plight, the priest replies:

*The priest nods into the darkness. "That creature is a draugr, one of Hela's most vile servants, but it is no ordinary member of its fell kind, for in life it was Helfrith Helasdohtor, a powerful priestess, perhaps second only to the Liche-Priest himself. So powerful is she, that Hela has granted her special protection.*

*"Helfrith cannot be slain by standard methods. She must be called using a specific chant. I have consulted with Scaetha, and she has guided us. A half mile from this temple is the remains of a sacred area, once used by Hela's cultists. It was raided by clerics of my order in days past, but among their records may still lie the information you seek."*

Given that the priest honors Scaetha, the heroes may enquire as to why he does not go and find the information himself.

*"Much must be done before this night is over. The Norns have brought you here for a reason, and that reason is to locate the chant to summon the draugr. My role is to prepare the ritual battlefield so she may be defeated. If either of us fails in our appointed tasks, the whole of Rassilon may be endangered. Rest here by the fire if you require, but do not tarry long, for by dawn, the draugr will be beyond the range of the chant and all will be lost.*

*"Whatever you do," the cleric continues, "on no circumstances must you utter the chant until you*

*I tell you. Return with all haste to this temple, whereupon I shall advise you further."*

Once the party prepares to leave, a large black raven lands on the shoulder of one hero who has shown bravery in the past. It need not be the best fighter in the group—often those who lack combat skills display more bravery by leaping into battle. The raven whispers into his ear (pass the information secretly by note): "*You are the chosen one.*" It then flies away.

## THE TEMPLE OF EVIL

Following the priest's directions, the party finds the entrance to a cave after a short hike. The door lintel is decorated with carved stone skulls and a giant serpent. Skull symbols are long associated with temples of both Hela and Scaetha, but the snake symbol is not one the party has seen before.

Entering, the characters find themselves in an old temple to the goddess Hela carved into the side of a hill. Even though the site has been abandoned for centuries, it still reeks of death. The temple is unlit. Unless otherwise stated, ceilings are 12' high.

### 1) GUARDROOM

This room contains some broken stools and other bits of wood that are no longer of use to anyone. Two broken spears can be found if someone searches through the debris.

**Treasure:** Hanging from a hook is an oil lamp that looks remarkably new. It was left here by a hunter who sought shelter in the cave. Scared by strange sounds from deeper in, he fled, leaving his lamp. It has consumed its oil reservoir.

### 2) STOREROOM

This room is an old storehouse containing a stack of broken barrels and crates.

**Monsters:** Living here amid the debris is a very large, very hungry pack of rats. The rats nest here because the chamber provides shelter. Food is scarce, and the swarm is ravenous.

**M Rat Swarm:** See page 12.

**Tactics:** Each round, the rats maneuver to catch as many characters in the template as possible. Fuelled by their hunger, they fight to the death. If a character falls unconscious at any point, the rats mass on the body, ripping and tearing the flesh. This counts as a Finishing Move.

### 3) ROUGH CAVERN

Hundreds of human skulls are stacked in three pyramid-shaped piles around the room. These grisly trophies

## TALKING ANIMALS

While Wood Wardens and a few fey can talk with mundane animals, most mortals have no way to communicate with beasts. Even *beast friend* grants no ability to understand a beast, though it allows the spellcaster to control its actions. Several versions of *voice on the wind* allow animals to act as messengers, though in this instance it does not grant any conversational ability beyond recalling the message.

A rare few animals, however, can converse with the sentient races in their own languages. Typically, these are messengers of the gods or powerful fey nobles, imbued with limited intellect and often for a short duration. A very rare few animals possess the permanent ability to speak and understand human terms. These are always servants of some greater power. Most talking animals, however, are not capable of holding detailed conversations and are generally used to pass on simple missives to specific people.

One must also remember that despite being gifted with the ability to talk, they remain animals in all other ways. A squirrel, for instance, understands about trees, nuts, predators, and many forest animals, but it is very unlikely to use human names and terms. An oak may simply be known as a "harvest source," while a wild cat may be a "clawed terror."

Encountering a talking animal, while extremely rare and likely to rouse much interest from the local populace, is not considered frightening. Many legends tell of heroes guided or aided by talking beasts. That said, few citizens will ever converse with an animal directly in their lifetime or even meet someone who has.

Most talking animals use the stats for Small Animals from the *Hellfrost Bestiary*.

are the remains of ancient sacrifices, left here as a warning to those who seek to intrude on the temple, and to show devotion to Hela. The exact age of the pile is impossible to guess, but judging by the mildew, it has been many decades, if not longer.

### 4) HOLDING CELL

Chained up to the wall is the skeleton of a large man wearing chain mail armor (now rusted through) and wearing a broadsword with a silver edge to it. The skeleton is harmless.

**Treasure:** The sword appears strong, but shatters through old age if the user rolls a 1 on his Fighting die (regardless of Wild Die). If the Wild Die is a success, it shatters after delivering damage.

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## 5) ACOLYTE'S BURIAL CRYPT

A resting place for the honored dead of Scaetha's clergy awaiting resurrection in eternal unlife, the chamber is filled with stone biers, many standing in alcoves. Upon each bier, lies a skeleton clad in rotting black robes adorned in silver thread with Hela's holy symbol.

**Monsters:** Helfrith's awakening has already brought dark spirits into the fleshless corpses. For now, the bones stay at rest, awaiting one of two conditions—Helfrith's orders or the close proximity of living creatures.

☛ **Skeleton Warriors (2 per hero):** See page 12.

**Tactics:** As soon as a hero moves adjacent to a bier, *all* the skeletons attack. Clambering off the biers is an action. Possessed by the spirits of evil warriors, the skeletons retain some tactical sense. As such, they use Gang Up bonuses against those who appear the strongest foes (those in heavy armor are favored targets), and spellcasters (who are their greatest threat).

**Treasure:** One of the skeletons, chosen at random, has a scroll case dangling from its belt. The scroll is a special form of relic, though the wielder need not attune. It details how to understand the speech of the damned, and was once used as a teaching aid for those loyal to the cult.

A hero who studies the scroll for the next month (two months if the reader spends time adventuring) may make a Smarts roll. With success, he learns Black Tongue. Only one hero at a time may study the script. Once used, whether the Smarts roll is a success or failure, the scroll turns to dust.

## 6) PRIESTESS' BURIAL CHAMBER

This room is an old burial crypt for priestesses. Lying on a black marble slab in the centre of the room is the

rotten body of a woman wearing rusted chainmail armor under her robes and carrying a round shield and a hand axe.

## 7) TEMPLE OF HELA

Adorned with skulls and images of death, this chamber was once the main temple to Hela. The door to this temple has a pair of eyes carved into it. Close inspection reveals they were once stained red (by human blood). Apart from a bloodstained altar and gruesome carvings on the floor depicting scenes of sacrifice there is nothing here of any interest.

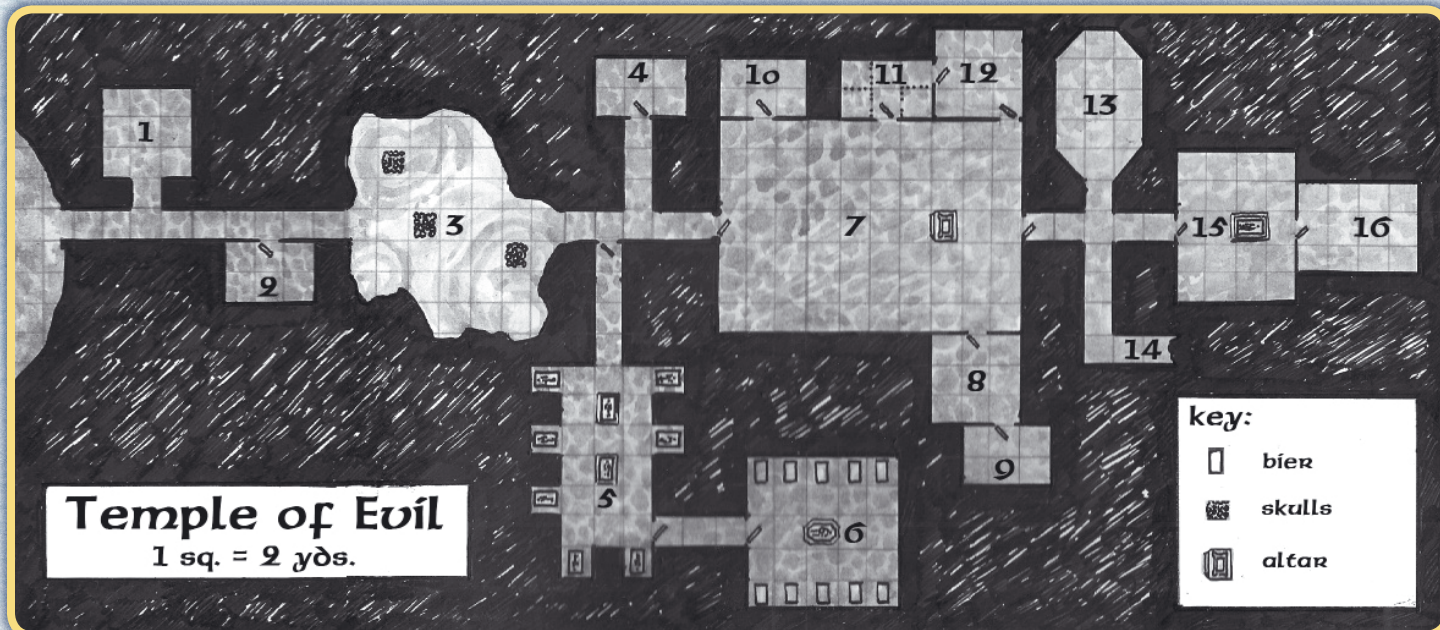
**Monsters:** Powerful spells were used in the consecration of this chamber and hundreds of victims sacrificed. The unfortunate souls selected and slain by the cult of Hela lie buried in great pits beneath the floor around the chamber.

After the party has been in here for one round, the undead guardians erupt through the floor. At the start of each subsequent round, 2d4 skeleton warriors crawl up from the charnel pits below. They appear in the squares adjacent to the altar. If all the spaces are filled, they emerge from the next free square. Leaving the temple prevents any more undead rising, but does not destroy those already summoned. There are a total of 100 skeletons in the pits of death.

☛ **Skeleton Warriors (100):** See page 12.

**Tactics:** On the round a skeleton rises, it takes an action to claw its way from the pit. Once free, the skeletons immediately rush into combat, seeking to surround their foes and prevent their escape, thus allowing more of their kin to awaken. The undead warriors are not bound to the temple—if the party leaves, they follow.

## 8) PRIESTESS' BEDCHAMBER



Inside is a small wooden cot. Dismantling the cot reveals one of the legs is hollow.

**Treasure:** Contained inside the hollow bed leg are a scroll case and a small pendant. The scroll is written in Auld Saxa and details how to use blood in rituals. It acts as a tome of learning, allowing *any* spellcaster to learn the *sacrifice* power. The pendant is an alchemical device, imbued with *strength of the undead*. Invoking the spell grants the user the Undead Special Ability. A cleric of Sigel or Scaetha using this power has committed a minor sin.

## 9) TREASURY

All that remains is a lone chest. The rest of the treasure was either taken over the years or stolen by the occasional traveler who happened upon the temple and was brave enough to enter.

**Treasure:** The chest is unlocked. It contains 800 gold scields in old coins.

## 10) EMPTY CHAMBER

This room contains some old wooden stools placed around what was once a table.

## 11) SACRIFICES' PRISON

This was the old prison for those awaiting sacrifice. Inside are several cells with wooden bars. Within the cells are half a dozen normal skeletons. Nothing in here is dangerous or valuable.

## 12) TORTURE CHAMBER

A large, rusted brazier, two sets of leg irons, and some pokers lie scattered around the room. The ashes in the brazier are cold and there are bones mixed in with them. A successful Survival roll identifies the bone fragments as human.

**Monsters:** The spirits of the victims burnt in the brazier remain trapped here as grief spirits. If the party disturbs the ashes, the spirits rise up. They take the form they held in life, but their faces are wracked with anguish. Spectral tears constantly fall from their eyes. Each moan low the same words—“*Mourn us!*”

Ⓜ **Grief Spirits (1 per hero):** See page 12.

## 13) GRAIN STORE

This room contains 1d4 sealed crates of grain. Despite the age, some of the grain remains usable. A farmer would pay 200 gold scields for all four crates.

## 14) EXCAVATIONS

The former inhabitants began to dig out a new room, but quit before the work was completed. Spades and picks lie scattered around the floor. All of them are rotten and rusted, and quite useless.

## 15) ANCIENT CRYPT

This old crypt was here even before the temple existed. Inside is a marble slab. Lying atop the slab is a body, clad in plate armor of darkest night. A great sword rests along the length of its body.

**Monsters:** The armored corpse is a former paladin of Hela's cult. Helfrith's presence in the vicinity has awakened him as a black knight, one of Hela's most potent servants.

Ⓜ **Black Knight:** See page 11.

**Tactics:** The black knight begins by raising its visor and using Baleful Glare at the nearest character. Over the next few rounds, it tries to Summon Reinforcements. Whether this is successful or not, the undead knight uses its great sword. Against single adjacent foes, it uses Improved Frenzy. If there are two or more characters adjacent, it favors Sweep, even if there are other undead in its sword's arc.

**Continuation:** The far door is engraved with powerful curses. Any character who makes a Knowledge (Arcana) roll knows that it wards against those of non-evil disposition. Any hero who tries to cross the threshold by *any* means must make a Spirit roll. Modifiers are as below.

Mod	Reason
-1	Per 20 points of positive Glory
-2	Cleric of Sigel
-4	Cleric of Scaetha
+2	Cleric of Dargar, Hela, Niht, or Vali

With success, the hero may step into the chamber beyond, but only once—if he leaves and reenters, he must make the Spirit roll again. Failure causes an automatic wound. This can be Soaked. The injury can only heal naturally.

## 16) TEMPLE LIBRARY

Stored in niches lining the walls are hundreds of scrolls. Most are mundane and crumble to dust if touched. Several, however, can be read easily.

**Treasure:** Six of the scrolls are alchemical devices. The GM should determine the spells they contain. As a suggestion, three should contain Novice spells, two Seasoned, and one Veteran. The seventh scroll is the one the heroes seek. It contains the sacred chant to call a powerful draugr. Originally, it was meant to assist clerics of Hela in calling forth allies, but it can be used for any purpose.

## Ⓞ DUEL TO THE DEATH Ⓞ

Once the party is in possession of the knowledge they seek, they can return to the temple of Scaetha. The priest has lit numerous bonfires around the edge of the precinct. After allowing the characters a short rest, the priest of Scaetha informs them of what they must do.

*“By the ancient laws, one of you, your chosen champion, must challenge the draugr to holmganga, rit-*

*ual combat. Once she is summoned with the chant, I shall allow her entrance to the temple precinct, where the fight must take place. The champion may use no magic, for such would invalidate the ritual and leave her immune to harm. She must be slain on ground holy to Scaetha, or Hela will claim her soul and bring it back again.*

*"Unfortunately, the rules prohibit either party from being aided or standing within the battleground. Only the judge may do that, and I shall fulfill that role. The rest of you must remain outside the warding. Helfrith will no doubt have summoned allies by now and they will try to kill you. Whatever occurs inside the precinct, on no account must you enter while the challenger lives. Do not cast any spells at either combatant inside the precinct. I cannot warn you enough—if you break these rules, your champion will forfeit the challenge and all will be lost.*

*"Now, pick your champion and be quick, for dawn approaches. The rest of you, prepare your spells and weapons quickly."*

Once the champion has been decided, the priest of Scaetha prays to his goddess. He daubs the head of the hero with runes of justice and endurance. If the hero to whom the raven talked is chosen as champion, he gains a one die bonus to Strength, Vigor, and Fighting until the contest ends. Recalculate Parry and Toughness accordingly. Note that this is a unique bonus brought about by special circumstances—it is should not be used in every duel against a draugr.

The priest releases any possessed characters of their infesting spirits before the *holmganga* takes place, though he allows the spirit to remain if the victim so wishes.

Once the champion has been chosen, and the chant uttered, the draugr arrives as if summoned, skulking out of the dark. She enters the temple area (Scaetha permits this, as it is the only way to destroy her) and prepares to fight. At the same time as Helfrith steps on to the flagstones, skeletal warriors step out of the darkness. Two fights thus happen simultaneously—the duel against the draugr and the other characters' battle against the skeletons.

By law, whoever initiated the *holmganga* (i.e. the hero) must receive the first blow, although he can parry or dodge. Deal initiative cards as normal. If the champion has a higher card than Helfrith on the first round, he must decide whether to go on Hold, so as to be able to strike back later in the round, or use the Defend or Full Defense maneuver. A character that elects to Hold cannot interrupt his foe. Once the first round is over, combat progresses as normal.

If the character wins the fight, the draugr fades away into nothingness with an anguished cry. If the draugr wins, the character is killed with a Finishing Move. Another may take his place as champion, but this comes at a heavy price. It takes an action for the character to

speak the oath required to grant him this status. Furthermore, the second challenge allows Helfrith to heal **all** her wounds automatically—the new champion does not benefit from injuries his comrade inflicted on the undead.

If Helfrith wins by any means, the heroes have failed, leaving a powerful undead stalking the land.

**Forfeiting:** Should the champion or Helfrith step outside the precinct for any reason, they automatically lose the duel—knocking someone from the sacred area is a legal tactic.

**Special:** So long as the champion is alive, no one else can enter the arena, nor can spells penetrate its borders—spells are absorbed and the heroes bump into an impenetrable barrier. The priest of Scaetha will not fight against the draugr while a hero remains alive. Should the characters lose, the GM has two choices. First, the priest of Scaetha can defeat Helfrith and end the threat. Second, Helfrith kills the priest, leaving her available as a recurring villain to be defeated at a later time.

**Terrain:** The precinct measures 6" to a side and has a paved floor. No snow lies here. Outside the precinct, the ground is covered in fresh snow, and is difficult ground.

**Lighting:** Outside the precinct, the bonfires shed good light to a distance of 3" from the edge of the precinct. At double this distance, the lighting is Dim (–1). Beyond this, the lighting is Dark (–2). Lighting inside the precinct imparts no penalties.

**Monsters:** Initially there are two skeleton warriors for each hero outside the precinct. Each round, regardless of how many skeletons remain active, another one skeleton per hero joins the fray. The warrior skeletons always begin 10" from the characters. There is an unlimited number of undead. The instant the draugr is slain, the skeletons crumble to dust.

Ⓜ **Helfrith Helasdohtor:** See page 11.

Ⓜ **Skeletal Warriors:** See page 12.

## AFTERMATH

Once the fight is over, the characters may return to the stead. There they find that they are being looked for, having not reported back. Wiglaf's body, if left behind by the heroes, was found and recovered. Each survivor earns a 500 gs reward, gifts from Thegn Amundi. The character who challenged the draugr to a *holmganga* automatically gains +5 Glory, in addition to any other Glory reward. This may be awarded posthumously.

A surviving champion also notices a strange rune on his skin that increases his Fighting skill by one die type (no maximum), but only when fighting undead. No magic known to mortals can remove this mark.

## BESTIARY

### VILLAGER

Use these stats for folk around the stead, such as Sig-

mar and Wiglaf. If the GM needs any specific archetypes, such as huscarls or nobles, use appropriate entries in the *Hellfrost Bestiary*.

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

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d4, Guts d4, Knowledge (one Craft) d6, Notice d6, Stealth d4, Survival d4

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** —

**Edges:** —

**Gear:** Knife (Str+d4)

## HELFRITH HELASDOHTOR (DRAUGR)

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d12+4, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Spellcasting d10, Stealth d8

**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9

**Special Abilities:**

- \* **Claws:** Str+d6.
- \* **Fear (-2):** Anyone seeing the blackened, decaying corpse must make a Guts roll at -2.
- \* **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- \* **Grave Stench:** Helfrith carries with her the unmistakable smell of death—the air around her reeks of rotting corpses. Anyone who begins their turn adjacent, or who moves adjacent, must make a Vigor roll or suffer a level of Fatigue until they breathe clean air for five minutes.
- \* **Improved Snow Walker:** Ignores penalties for movement in snow and ice.
- \* **Invulnerability:** Helfrith can be Shaken by mundane weapons and magic, but can only take wounds from being challenged to a holmganga.
- \* **Undead:** +2 Toughness. +2 to recover from being Shaken. No additional damage from Called Shots. Immune to disease and poison. No wound penalties.
- \* **Weakness (Special):** Helfrith must be summoned to a holmganga using a specific ritual. Until this occurs, she does not have this Weakness, and thus is immune to all damage.

## BLACK KNIGHT

Clad in jet-black plate armor and armed with weapons swathed in necromantic energy, black knights are the elite troops of the undead hordes. They most often serve as unit commanders in undead armies, but can sometimes be found as bodyguards for powerful, evil wizards and priests. Beneath their armor is a mummified corpse with burning green eyes and elongated teeth. Black knights are also known as dark generals, fallen knights, and Hela's knights.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Guts d12, Intimidation d10, Knowl-

edge (Battle) d10, Stealth d6

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 9; **Toughness:** 13 (3)

**Edges:** Combat Reflexes, Command, Fervor, Hold the Line, Improved Block, Improved Frenzy, Improved Sweep, Level Headed.

**Special Abilities:**

- \* **Arcane Resistance:** +2 Armor against damage-causing powers and +2 on Trait rolls to resist opposed powers.
- \* **Armor +3:** Black plate armor and a full helm.
- \* **Baleful Glare:** As an action, a black knight may lift its visor and stare at one foe within 12" and line of sight. The target must make a Guts roll at -2.
- \* **Fear (-1):** Anyone who sees a black knight must make a Guts roll at -1.
- \* **Necromantic Weapons:** Great sword (Str+d10, -1 Parry, 2 hands). For each wound inflicted on a living foe with these weapons, the black knight heals one of its own wounds.
- \* **Size +1:** Black knights stand over 7' tall.
- \* **Summon Minions:** once per day, a black knight can make a Spirit roll to summon forth 1d6 skeleton warriors (p. 12) with a success or 2d6 with a raise. The minions appear within 6" of the knight on the fiend's next initiative card.
- \* **Undead:** +2 Toughness. +2 to recover from being Shaken. No additional damage from Called Shots. No wound penalties.

## PREY ANIMALS

### BOAR

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Guts d8, Notice d6, Stealth d6

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

**Special Abilities:**

- \* **Berserk:** When a boar is Shaken, it automatically goes berserk. It gains +2 to all Fighting, damage, and Strength rolls as well as its Toughness, but Parry is reduced by 2.
- \* **Bite:** Str+d4.
- \* **Gore:** If a male boar can charge at least 6" before attacking, it adds +4 to damage.
- \* **Tusks:** Str+d4.

### DEER

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Guts d4, Notice d8

**Pace:** 12; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7

**Special Abilities:**

- \* **Alertness:** Deer get +2 to all Notice rolls.
- \* **Fleet Footed:** Deer roll a d10 running die.
- \* **Kick/Horns:** Str+d4.
- \* **Size +1:** Deer can weigh over 600 pounds.

# HELLFROST ADVENTURE #19

## DEER, SMALL

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

**Skills:** Fighting d4, Guts d4, Notice d8

**Pace:** 12; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

**Special Abilities:**

- \* **Alertness:** Deer get +2 to all Notice rolls.
- \* **Fleet Footed:** Deer roll a d10 running die.
- \* **Kick/Horns:** Str+d4.

## SMALL ANIMAL

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d4, Guts d4, Notice d6

**Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 3

**Special Abilities:**

- \* **Harmless:** When attacking creatures of Size -1 or greater, damage rolls from these creatures can Shake a foe, but never cause wounds. This includes inflicting successive Shaken results.
- \* **Size -2:** These creatures are small.
- \* **Small:** Attackers are -2 to attack rolls against these creatures because of their size.
- \* **Variant Breeds:** Use these abilities as examples when designing your own mundane creatures.
  - \* **Rabbit:** Bite Str, Alertness Edge.
  - \* **Squirrel:** Bite Str, Climbing d10.

## RAT SWARM

This rat swarm fills a Large Burst Template.

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d12, Strength d8, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Notice d6

**Pace:** 10; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 7

**Special Abilities:**

- \* **Bite:** Swarms inflict hundreds of tiny bites every round to their victims, hitting automatically and causing 2d4 damage to everyone in the template. Damage is applied to the least armored location.
- \* **Infection:** Anyone Shaken or wounded by a rat swarm must make a Vigor roll or suffer a level of Fatigue from infected bites. Cumulative bites can lead to Incapacitation, but never to Death. One Fatigue level is recovered every 24 hours or with a successful Healing roll.
- \* **Swarm:** Parry +2. Because the swarm is composed of scores, hundreds, or thousands of creatures, cutting and piercing weapons do no real damage. Area-effect weapons work normally, and a character can stomp to inflict his damage in Strength each round.

## SKELETON WARRIOR

Skeleton warriors are the reanimated bones of long-dead soldiers. Unlike common skeletons, these undead troops retain more of their combat skills and are equipped with functional, if somewhat old, armaments.

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

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d4, Shooting d6

**Pace:** 7; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9 (2)

**Gear:** Bronze breastplate (+2), bronze short sword (Str+d6), medium shield (+1 Parry).

**Special Abilities:**

- \* **Bony Claws:** Str+d4.
- \* **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- \* **Undead:** +2 Toughness. +2 to recover from being Shaken. No additional damage from Called Shots. Immune to disease and poison.

## SPIRIT

Spirits are otherworldly beings. Some sages argue they are leftover parts of creation, raw magic with a single purpose. Others tend to follow the line of thought of clerics, who say spirits are entities from the divine realms that either have been dispatched by the deity or have somehow found their own way into existence. One other train of thought suggests these spirits are spontaneously created by the collective will of the various races.

Regardless of their type, spirits share a standard basic stat block. Each spirit then has its own individual special ability.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d10, Strength d4, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Notice d8, Stealth d8

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

**Special Abilities:**

- \* **Ethereal:** Immune to nonmagical attacks. Can pass through solid objects.
- \* **Possession:** Spirits attack by making a Touch Attack (+2 to Fighting). With success, the victim must make a Spirit roll opposed to that of the entity, -2 if the spirit's attack is a raise. A failure means the victim is possessed and suffers the penalties for the spirit's particular special ability. Removing the spirit requires a *banish* spell to send it back to its own realm. Using *dispel* allows the spirit to roll its Spirit die to oppose the power. A successful casting forces the spirit from its host, but leaves it free to possess another victim. For each additional attempt at *banish* or *dispel* within the same 32-day period, the spirit gains +1 to resist being expelled.
- \* **Berserk:** Victims gain the Berserk Edge. Anger spirits do not tend to possess victims who already have this Edge. The victim also acquires the Mean Hindrance as a result of his angry outbursts and quick rages.
- \* **Grief:** Victims are struck by deep melancholy and bouts of depression. Whenever they draw a Club for initiative, they suffer a -2 penalty to all Trait rolls until their next card is drawn. They also gain the Mean Hindrance, though this is a result of apathy rather than surliness.

# THE DEMON OF DUNCALLAICH



This adventure is designed for a group of four Heroic characters, but can be run with larger parties. Most encounters are based on a number of antagonists per hero, and thus automatically allow for increased party size.

Scaling for higher Ranks is easily handled. For each additional 20 XPs the party is above heroic, add two additional Extras of the most common type to each detailed encounter. For instance, if the text says the heroes face two bandits per hero, a Legendary (80 XP) party of four members would face ten bandits (eight for the party size plus two for being a Rank higher than Veteran).

The adventure is best set in the western Hearthlands, but Aspiria, Chalcis, Heligioland, the Cairn Lands, and the Barony of Trond (all former Anari conquered lands) are also suitable. A forest is required, but none of the major ones need be used. Given the large scale of the continental map and the small size of the forest, the adventure can be set almost anywhere. The tale is set during no particular season, giving the GM total freedom as to when he uses the adventure. See the *Savage Worlds* rulebook for the effects of cold weather and the *Hellfrost Player's Guide* for information about how the rules work in this setting.

## GM'S BACKGROUND

In the year -407 IR, at the height of the Demongate Wars, the tide of battle began to turn against the dark legions. Clerics of Hela led the armies of light, for these were times before Hela's fall from grace, when she performed the role Scaetha does today. Step by step, blow by blow, the light cast out the shadow.

One of the more powerful demons, a creature by the name of Kithreth, lorded over a major Anari town, Balyeux (bal-yure). Here it ruled over its mortal subjects in mockery of the Anari Emperor. The army of Hela besieged Balyeux for long months. Finally, the walls were shattered and the battle to liberate the broken town began. While mortal soldiers locked sword with demonic legions, their leader, Roderick ap-Jaufre, a cleric of Hela,

sundered the gates of Kethrith's palace and confronted the demon. In an epic struggle, Roderick defeated his mighty foe, though his spell to banish the fiend failed. Instead, the creature of darkness was bound into the soil of Balyeux.

Roderick ordered the town razed to its foundations. All citizens displaying the mark of Kithreth, a black snake tattoo, were executed without absolution, their souls condemned to the Abyss for their sins. The army moved on, and the name of Balyeux vanished from history.

Within a handful of generations, nature, perhaps seeking to hide the stain brought about by Kithreth, concealed the ruins beneath a new forest. When the war ended, several soldiers who had taken part in the battle of Balyeux returned to the region and settled. They knew Kithreth was fettered beneath the ground, and vowed that they and their descendants would stand watch over the site in case the demon ever escaped its bonds. The old Anari road to Balyeux ran straight and true, and still carried trade goods, and Duncallaich grew from a hamlet into a village.

During the Blizzard War, the citizens of Duncallaich fled. Generations passed before they returned home, and by then all knowledge of why the village was founded has been lost. Today it is just another village on an old Anari trade road; but the demon Kithreth still lies trapped, formulating its escape.

## THE ROAD TO DUNCALLAICH

While traveling to their next destination the characters happen upon a small man hurrying down the road as if his life is in mortal peril. If approached in a peaceful manner, he breathlessly explains he is an itinerant herbalist, but is trying to get away from the village of Duncallaich and its evil spirits before nightfall.

If treated well or offered food and water, he says his name is Bertram ap-Duncan. He further explains that the woods near the village are home to evil spirits who entice travellers away from the safety of their campfires by whispering promises of power, wealth, and success. Those who listen to the ephemeral voices are never seen again. Each visitation is preceded by an eerie green light that comes from somewhere deep in the woods. He informs the heroes Duncallaich lies but a few hours travel from their current location.

If treated badly or approached in a hostile manner, the man tries to flee. Should he be captured, he wails about evil spirits, but no sense can be made of his crazed ramblings.

Ⓜ **Bertram ap-Duncan:** Treat as a Villager (see page 10) but with Healing d4 and Knowledge (Alchemy) d8. He has the Hedge Magic Edge.

## BANDITS!

As the characters follow the trail towards Duncallaich, have them each make a Notice roll. Those who succeed spy the bushes up ahead moving slightly a split second before arrows are launched at them. Those who fail are Surprised.

**Monsters:** Lurking in bushes is a gang of bandits. They haunted the roads long before the events of the adventure began, but recently sold their souls to the demon lord in return for vague promises of power and wealth. They now seek not just to rob travelers, but also to take them prisoner so they can be sacrificed to their powerful master.

The bandits begin 20" ahead of the heroes.

Ⓜ **Bandit Leader (1):** See page 19.

Ⓜ **Bandits (2 per hero):** See page 19.

**Tactics:** Each bandit fires one arrow during the first round. On the second round, the bandits drop their bows (a free action), draw their melee weapons (an action), and charge the characters. They are used to working together and favor Gang Up tactics. The survivors try to retreat if more than half their number is slain.

Any that are badly wounded are slain by their comrades using a Finishing Move. Any Incapacitated, but not dead, suddenly begin to haemorrhage from their eyes and ears. They slump down dead before the party can interrogate them. *Gravespeak* fails, as the bandits have sold their souls to a demon lord, and such souls do not go to Scaetha's Hall.

**Treasure:** The bandits carry 1d10 x 50 gs between them in the form of coins and jewelry.

**Continuation:** If the heroes search the bandits, they discover each has a black snake tattooed on their necks.

## ARRIVAL IN DUNCALLAICH

Hopefully curiosity leads the party to Duncallaich.

Night is falling when they arrive and only a handful of people are on the streets, intent on getting to their houses before sunset. No one stops to talk to the heroes if hailed—any cries of welcome are met with fearful glances. If the heroes try to grab a passerby, the villager screams and shouts. After a few minutes, several armed men turn up and try to drive the characters away. The village militia is no match for the party, but a pointless fight at this juncture will not endear the villagers to the party, no matter how virtuous their intentions.

Most of the houses already have their door and windows shut tight. As the party passes, loud prayers to Scaetha can be heard from within. Regardless of promises, threats, or pleas, the villagers refuse to open their doors. Even the local temple to Scaetha is closed for the night, and the village has no regular priest. An itinerant priest comes by every two months to see to the villagers' spiritual needs. He is not due back for five weeks.

Duncallaich has a small inn, the Five Stones. If the party approaches the inn, discernible by the sign hanging outside—an Anari custom—they are admitted only after convincing the innkeeper that they are not evil spirits come to steal him away. This should not be too difficult as the innkeeper is a typical peasant, easily swayed by offers of money. Once inside, the heroes can order rooms. The inn has three rooms, each capable of holding two comfortably and three people in a pinch, and these are available for 10 sc per night, excluding food and drink. There are no other guests.

Ⓜ **Villagers:** See page 10.

Ⓜ **Militia (Watch) (2 per hero):** See page 20.

## WE WANT INFORMATION

The innkeeper, Mortimer ap-Teargal, born to a Tuomi father and Anari mother, has lived in the village all his life and knows the legend of the haunted woods. If the characters buy food and drink he gladly relates it to them. Should the adventurers start eating their own food, or decline to buy any from him, he feigns ignorance about any strange events whilst hinting that he might be able to remember if certain conditions were met. Food will cost 2 ss per person, drink an extra silver scield. Once the formalities are out of the way, he begins his tale:

*"My father told me this story, and his daddy told him, and so on for many a time now. It's said that hundreds of years ago an evil wizard came to these parts looking for people on which to perform his dark arts. Well, he took several young girls and boys afore the villagers rose up against him. Of course, they weren't very well trained and he killed an awful lot of them before they fled his fearsome presence.*

*"The village elders decided to hire some mercenaries to do away with the wizard. Now one of these here mercenaries was a boly man named Rodbry, see. He knew all about slaying fell wizards, so he*

*went into the woods alone to do battle. Oh, it was a fearsome sight they say, with lightning and fire flying all over the place. The battle raged on for ten days afore Rodbry imprisoned that evil wizard in the ground.*

*"You can still see his finger nails if you follow the trail into the woods. Stuck up from the ground they are, as if he's trying to claw 'is way out.*

*"Anyways, every couple of years or fifty, that evil wizard, he escapes for a few days and steals people away, just like he did all them years ago. This time, though, he guides folk to their doom with an evil green light that controls their minds. He's had a few recently, and that's the second time in my life that he's gone escaped.*

*"I reckon that he's gonna' escape for good soon and come get his revenge on us good folk."*

The above tale is almost entirely false, having been retold and corrupted over the centuries. In reality, the evil wizard was Kithreth and Rodbry is Roderick.

Only the latter part bears any semblance of truth. Since his imprisonment, Kithreth has been trying to escape. Every now and then, a mortal is corrupted into weakening his bonds. This is when Kithreth can, for a short while, exert some control over the mortal realm and its inhabitants. Unfortunately, escaping, even for a moment, uses tremendous amounts of his energy, and he cannot try it too often. Regrettably, for the demon, most mortals are too stupid to conceal what they are doing and are soon caught by the authorities and executed. Recently, though, a cult of power-hungry diabolists has taken up the cause—they are on the verge of releasing him from his millennia old prison.

Any inhabitant of the village can recount the tale should the heroes somehow manage to befriend another villager.

## BEWARE SHADOWS BEARING GIFTS

That night, the characters all suffer troubled dreams. The character the GM considers most easily corruptible (previous adventures should have revealed this by now) is visited in his dreams by a shadowy figure who promises great wealth if the character will release him from his prison.

Kithreth (for it is he who disturbs the character's sleep) claims to be a wizard by the name of Morgwyth (morg-oo-ick). Many centuries ago, he says, he was falsely imprisoned here by an Unseelie faerie. The faerie demanded Morgwyth's power but when he refused, his spirit was trapped between this world and the fey realm. Kithreth promises whatever the hero's subconscious reveals to be the best lure—magic, wealth, women, wine, all can be supplied. Promise *anything* you feel will get the hero's attention—Kithreth certainly has no intention of keeping his word once released.

All the sleeper has to do is travel to the stone circle in the woods and shed a little blood on the central slab. If questioned about this, for the dreamer can converse with "Morgwyth," the visitor says the Unseelie fey knew folk of good nature would balk at such a task, hence "Morgwyth" has remained fettered for centuries.

As a sign of his good will, "Morgwyth" promises to use some of what little energy remains to prove his claims. If the hero asks for material wealth, whether relics, alchemical devices, tomes of knowledge, or cash, "Morgwyth" hands the dreamer the object. When the character awakens, he finds what he desires clutched in his hand. The GM should determine the powers of any magic objects, but should not make them too powerful. A player may ask for a +5 *sword of slaying anything it touches*, but a native of Rassilon would ask merely for a magic sword.

This object appears real and registers to *detect* spells as applicable. If the sleeper does not fulfill his part of the bargain within 24 hours, the object vanishes.

Unbeknownst to the character, if he makes the deal he gains a small tattoo on his inner right thigh in the shape of a black snake. Only if the character searches his body will this be noticed. Whether or not he fulfills his end of the bargain, the tattoo remains until Kithreth is slain. This could have severe repercussions for the unfortunate soul.

While the *players* may suspect this is an elaborate trap and try to avoid the deal, the *characters* are driven by their Hindrances, not metagaming knowledge. As such, heroes with the Curious and Greedy Hindrances should be encouraged to roleplay their Hindrances, regardless of the possible outcomes. As suggested in the core rules, characters who roleplay their flaws, especially when the situation puts them in danger, should be rewarded with a benny.

## AN EERIE LIGHT

The adventurers are free to wander around Duncallach (once the sun rises) as they wish. It has a general store stocking standard items for a village, but no crafters of interest (unless the heroes seek a pot or a horseshoe).

If they decide to remain in the village all day, an eerie green light is seen emanating from the woods as the sun begins to set. The locals, fearing for their lives, flee to their houses, shouting that the evil wizard is abroad. If they have not done so already, hopefully the characters are now curious enough to investigate the woods.

See the section entitled **The Stone Circle** for details on how the party travels through the forest. The light is bright enough to guide their way, negating any darkness modifiers.

The light swings back and forth, like a beacon swaying in the wind. When it highlights the characters, they feel their skin crawl. Deep, uncontrollable shudders go up and down their spines. There appears to be no other cause for this other than the light striking them. As the party steps into the clearing in which the stone circle lies, the light vanishes, plunging the heroes in darkness.

## THE STONE CIRCLE

If the heroes venture into the wood, they find that unless they stay on a faint trail trampled through the undergrowth the going is quite tough. The trees are close together and thick brambles snag at their clothing and equipment. If the characters do not take the trail, they must make a Vigor roll or suffer a level of Fatigue from bumps and bruises.

Have the party make a Cooperative Vigor roll. With failure, it is night when they finally enter the stone circle. Success allows them to arrive at dusk and a raise brings them into the circle with two hours to go before sunset.

After many miles of hard marching, the adventurers enter an area of the woods where the trees show signs of blight—new growths are stunted and twisted, while old trees are decaying before their time. After another hundred yards or so, the party emerges into a clearing in which stands a small stone circle.

The circle consists of five standing stones, all of which are roughly three yards in height and a yard wide. In the center of the circle is a stone slab measuring six yards long by two yards wide. The standing stones have very worn engravings on the faces that face the centre slab, though they are illegible through weathering and the ceaseless passage of time. Invoking *detect arcana* reveals the standing stones to be magical.

There are also several small patches of burnt grass around the central slab. Characters making a Survival roll deduce they were probably made by torches being laid on the ground.

### THE CIRCLE AT DUSK

As the sun begins to set, so the forest takes on a different form. This is a result of Kithreth's presence, which grows stronger at night. Regardless of the alertness of any sentries, it suddenly dawns on the party that the landscape has subtly changed—the forest is noticeably warped and twisted, all the trees and bushes showing signs of mutation and premature aging. Perceptive characters may realize that no birds or animals can be heard in this part of the woods. This requires a Notice roll at -2.

Any animals the party has with them shy away, refusing to stay in the clearing unless a successful Intimidation or Persuasion roll is made. If the roll fails, the animals go berserk and try to flee into the forest.

The stones also shift in appearance. The engravings facing the centre slab are not as worn now. A successful Knowledge (Arcana) roll at -2 reveals they are ancient warding runes. Touching the stones reveals faint traces of magic. These are the ancient bindings that hold the demon trapped.

In addition, faint scratches can be seen on the flat slab.

### THE CIRCLE AT NIGHT

As the sun sets, have each hero make a Spirit roll.

Arcane Resistance adds to the roll. Those who succeed hear a faint buzzing sound in their ears, which lasts only a few seconds. Those who fail hear a hissing, whispering voice in their heads saying, "*Help me! Release me from my prison!*" There is no obvious source for the sound to be coming from.

The carvings on the standing stones are now quite visible. The Knowledge (Arcana) roll is made with no modifier. If the party failed the roll earlier, it may be rerolled now the sigils are clearer. Anyone touching the stones must make a Spirit roll. With success, they feel their hair stand on end and a tingling running through their body. On a failure, they receive a powerful shock. This inflicts 2d6 damage and throws them back 1d4". Arcane Resistance protects against this.

The scratches on the flat slab are also more discernible now. A Knowledge (Arcana) roll at -2 reveals they are old symbols, associated with the worship of demons. Hanging from the stone are several strips of strange-looking skin. A Common Knowledge roll at -2 reveals they are snakeskin.

Characters touching the slab must make a Spirit roll. With failure, they see in their mind's eye a fleeting vision of a tall, silver-skinned man chained to a wall with iron shackles. He screams in torment as snakes bite his flesh. This last image is a false one generated by the demon to prompt people to release it.

### A GIFT OF BLOOD

If a character spills any blood on the central slab (a single drop will do), the great stone shatters, rising up from the ground as if punched upward by something beneath the ground. Where it once lay is now a hole, with narrow stone steps leading down into warm, dazzlingly bright, silvery light.

Unless the characters spill blood and enter the light, they cannot hope to progress much further. After a few days of boredom they should, hopefully, decide to explore the only avenue of investigation left open to them.

## LAND OF DARKNESS

The light is an illusion. Once all the heroes have descended the stairs (which seem to spiral down forever), they are plunged into total darkness which no light, magical or mundane, can penetrate. The heroes are unable to communicate with each other by any means.

After a few minutes, unseen things begin to brush against the characters' legs, strange words of hate are whispered into their ears, and the sense that something terrible is watching them is all-pervasive. Each hero must make a Guts check at this point. Those who fail roll on the Fear Table as normal.

After the Guts check is made, each character hears his comrades calling out to him. By following the voices,

the heroes are led to a silver door. Those who refuse to follow the sounds must make a second Guts roll. Again, once the roll is made voices are heard calling out. Until the character relents and approaches, the cycle of Guts checks and voices continues *ad infinitum*.

Opening the door reveals only brilliant light. Once a character steps through, he is held in limbo until all the others pass through the portal. Only when the entire party is through the door (or dead of heart failure) does the adventure continue.

## A FAMILIAR FEELING

Once the entire party steps through the door, they find themselves in a busy tavern. Looking back out the door, they see a large town. The tavern patrons wear vaguely familiar-looking clothes, though the design is unusual. A successful Knowledge (History) roll reveals the garb is that once worn by Anari long before the Blizzard War.

After a short pause, a rotund man, obviously the innkeeper by his apron, asks the characters what they want to drink. He speaks only Classical Anari, as do all the inhabitants of the town. If answered in another language, the innkeeper snarls, "Barbarians, eh?" and points to the barrels of ale and wine lining the wall of the tavern. If questioned in Classical Anari, the innkeeper proudly announces the characters are in Balyeux. A Knowledge (History) roll at -4 allows the characters to know Balyeux was destroyed during the Demongate Wars.

Heroes who cannot speak Classical Anari suffer the Outsider Edge while in the city. Frost dwarves and taiga elves, who were spoken of only in legend before the Blizzard War, attract much attention, and very little of it is welcoming. When rolling on the Reaction table, roll just 1d6, instead of the 2d6 as normal. Every citizen has -2 Charisma, making a Hostile result very likely unless a hero is exceptionally charismatic.

## THE TOWN

If the party leaves the inn, they find themselves in a large city with paved streets and throngs of people, none of whom look much like the locals of the region of Dun-callaich. In the center of the town stands a colossal black-stone temple. Its vast columns are carved to resemble fanged snakes. Violence and crime is rife, part of daily life in Kithreth's alternate reality. The characters witness many beatings, stabbings, and acts of theft taking place. Soldiers patrol the streets, but they are oblivious to the acts of vandalism, death, and theft taking place.

The town is not actually real. Rather, it is a memory of Balyeux, invoked by Kithreth's powerful mind. The characters are, in essence, trapped in Kithreth's dream-like existence. Despite being a non-reality, it functions exactly as the material world.

The town itself works like a Mobius strip. If the heroes leave by the south gate, they immediately reenter through the north gate. The same applies to the east and west gates. Nothing actually exists beyond the city

walls, although the characters can see mile after mile of fields and villas from a high vantage point. They do not really exist, and are mere phantasms. Magic or ranged weapons targeted outside of the walls *appear* to have the desired effect.

For the most part, the locals assume the characters are barbarians, and thus smelly, crude, stupid, illiterate, and ungodly. If the characters ask "suspicious" questions (such as Where are we? What is this place? Who's in charge?), the inhabitants instantly alert the town guard, who turn up within 2d4 rounds. The guards are dressed and equipped like images of the Anari of old, except that a blackened snake is emblazoned on their breastplates.

The guards do not tolerate violence or insolence, but will attempt to capture the heroes without killing too many of them. If the heroes resist, then the soldiers use as much force as they deem necessary. Should the heroes be winning, reinforcements turn up (reinforcements who are better skilled and can deal out a lot more damage). Eventually the adventurers will be overwhelmed, will have surrendered, or will be dead.

Should the party avoid contact with the locals and head straight for the temple, they are met by a squad of town guards on the steps outside. The captain salutes the party and invites them in to see "the Emperor." They are allowed to keep their weapons.

Ⓜ **Balyeux Watch Captain (1 per squad):** See page 20.

Ⓜ **Balyeux Watch (2 per hero):** See page 20.

Ⓜ **Balyeux Experienced Watch (2 per hero):** See page 20.

## IMPRISONED

If the party is captured, they are stripped of all their gear, clapped in irons, and lead to a cell deep under the temple. Once safely incarcerated, the heroes are left to their own devices. Being part of Kithreth's dream world, the cell is escape-proof. Any escape plan is doomed to fail.

Of course, the party should not know this and should be allowed to form an escape plan. After several failures, a large squad of guards drags them from the cell to see "the Emperor." Their gear, all of it, is returned to them.

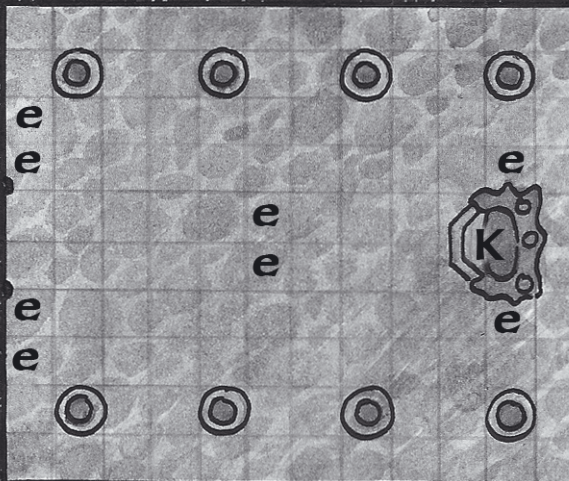
## AN AUDIENCE WITH THE EMPEROR

The heroes are escorted through the temple to "the Emperor's" throne room. Vast braziers provide flickering, orange light. The shadows they cast give the impression that the serpents carved into the walls are writhing. At the far end of the long, pillared hall sits Kithreth, wearing a golden crown comprised on intertwined snakes.

Kithreth is a monstrous, nightmarish creature. His body is comprised of hundreds of long, black snakes. His vast head is that of a colossal, hooded serpent, with fangs as long as a short sword. Each of his long arms ends not in hands, but in five giant serpents, dripping venom from

## Kithreth's Throne Room

1 sq. = 2 yds.



### key:



column



throne

e

experienced  
guard

K

kithreth

their maws. His body slithers and writhes in anticipation as the adventurers approach.

As the party moves deeper into the room, the guards slam shut the great doors, which promptly vanish. A large gold door appears in the wall behind Kithreth. Engraved in its center is a coiled snake.

The demon waits for the heroes to approach his throne before he addresses them:

*"Ab, mossst bonored guestsss, welcome to my bumble home," the serpentine creature hisses. "Thank you for being ssoo graciousss ass to come on sssuch ssshort notice. I pray that you have found my hosspitality welcoming."*

*"I have been trapped here againsst my will for ten of your centuriesss. Ten centuriesss of eternal torment, but the dark timesss are coming again, and when the sstorm cloudsss gather, the world will quake with fear at my name once more. The time drawss near, and I will not tolerate interference from you, or any othersss of your pitifully weak kind."*

*"But, as I am a most merciful ruler and you have sssertain talentsss I could use in my new world, I offer you a choice; eternal ssservice to me, with all the rewardsss that entailsss, or a ssslow, painful death at my handsss. I will give you a ssshort while to decide." The snake-creature reclines back on its huge throne.*

Should the characters try to bluff their way out by feigning loyalty, Kithreth demands they swear a sacred oath. They must renounce all other gods, vowing eternal loyalty to Kithreth alone. A guard carrying a small, black

snake, then approaches the characters. He orders the characters to expose a section of flesh, whereupon the snake's head is pressed against the skin. As its fangs sink in, the snake vanishes, drawn into the hero's body.

Fools that they are, the characters have now sold their souls to Kithreth. Any clerics notice their powers have been stripped from them. In this life and the next, the characters are bound to Kithreth's service. Unless the GM fancies running a campaign where the heroes are all evil, it is suggested the characters now be retired.

The more likely ending is for the characters to attack. Kithreth, vain and arrogant, really was not expecting this. Trapped here for millennia, and imprisoned in an age when mortals readily sold their souls to preserve their pitiful existence, it has failed to understand that times have changed in the world of mortals.

**Terrain:** The ceiling is 5" (30 feet) high.

Tipping one of the large braziers requires a Strength roll at -2 as an action. With success, they spill burning

oil in a Medium Template in any direction the character wishes. Place the template touching the edge of the square containing the brazier. Anything caught in the template takes 2d6 damage and has a chance of catching fire. The fire burns for the duration of the fight. Anyone stepping into the template suffers damage as above.

The columns block line of sight and impede movement. They have Toughness 14 and Heavy Armor. If Kithreth is adjacent to a pillar and rolls a 1 on his Fighting roll, regardless of his Wild Die, while making a slam, he has also struck a column. Roll damage. Should the column suffer a wound, place a Small Burst Template over the column. This area is now filled with rubble and counts as difficult ground.

Treat movement through the squares occupied by the throne as difficult ground.

The gold door is an illusion, a symbolic exit from the dream world, not an actual one. It cannot be opened by any means available to the characters.

Ⓜ **Kithreth:** See page 19.

Ⓜ **Balyeux Experienced Watch (2 per hero):** See page 20.

## AFTERMATH

The instant Kithreth is slain; the false reality shatters in a blinding flash of light! The characters find themselves back in the stone circle. All wounds are translated to Fatigue levels, instead. This means heroes slain in the dream world remain dead in the mortal realm. The five

standing stones are sundered, their magic gone. Kithreth has been banished back to the Abyss, there to suffer the ignominy of not being able to influence the mortal world while his essence reforms. Victorious, the characters can return to Duncallaich and relate their tale.

Any hero who agreed to spill blood on the slab retains his tattoo. Removing this should be the focus of a later adventure of the GM's design.

## BESTIARY

### KITHRETH

Demon Prince of Snakes, the Crawling One, Kithreth has existed since the dawn of time and will quite possibly exist even after the universe ends, for demons are strange creatures, bound by few laws. During the Demongate Wars, Kithreth commanded a powerful army for his headquarters in Balyeux. His name was greatly feared across the land, but those days are gone, and today the name Kithreth exists only in a handful of texts in the forbidden libraries kept by Scaetha's clergy or in the hands of madmen.

Formerly a lesser prince of the Abyss, Kithreth's power has waned considerably since his imprisonment. The foe the heroes must face is a mere shadow of his former might.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d12+2, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Guts d12, Notice d6, Spellcasting d10, Stealth d8

**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 17 (2)/15 (2)

**Special Abilities:**

- \* **Armor +2:** Snake scales.
- \* **Bite:** Str+d8, plus poison.
- \* **Demon:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; immune to poison and disease; +2 Toughness against non-magical attacks, except for star metal.
- \* **Fear (-2):** Anyone seeing the creature must make a Guts check at -2.
- \* **Improved Arcane Resistance:** +4 to Trait rolls to resist magic and +4 Armor against damage-causing arcane effects.
- \* **Large:** Attackers are +2 to attack rolls due to the creature's size.
- \* **Poison (-1):** Anyone Shaken or wounded by Kithreth's bite or snake fingers must make a Vigor roll at -1 or fall paralyzed for 2d6 rounds.
- \* **Powers:** *Armor* (thicker scales), *blast* (swarm of snakes), *bolt* (flying snakes), *deflection* (snakes deflect blows), *entangle* (foes wrapped in coils of giant serpent).
- \* **Quick:** Redraws initiative cards of five or lower.
- \* **Size +6:** Kithreth is 24' tall.
- \* **Slam:** If Kithreth elects to use a slam instead of his snake fingers, Knockback applies. These attacks are

also heavy Weapons.

- \* **Snakes:** Once per round as a free action, Kithreth can cause a snake swarm to erupt from his body. This swarm begins adjacent to the demon. They do not attack Kithreth. He may produce up to five swarms per day.
- \* **Snake Fingers:** Str+d6, Reach 1, plus poison. The long, serpentine fingers on each hand may only strike a single target, but have +2 to Fighting rolls. This counts as a Gang Up bonus.
- \* **Viper Weapon:** Kithreth can cast *viper weapon* as a free action a number of times per day equal to its Spirit die type. This still requires a Spellcasting roll. Only one *viper weapon* may be cast each round.
- \* **Weakness (Star Metal):** Demons have lower Toughness against star metal weapons.

## BANDIT

These bandits fell for the demon's lures, and are now bound to him. On death, their souls will not go to Scaetha's Hall for judgment, but will instead be condemned straight to the Abyss.



### BANDIT LEADER

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

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d10, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Riding d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d8, Throwing d8

**Charisma:** -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

**Hindrances:** Greedy (Major), Mean, Vengeful (Major)

**Edges:** Block, Combat Reflexes, Command, Strong Willed

**Gear:** Chain shirt (+2), battle axe (Str+d8), bow (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6).

## TYPICAL BANDIT

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

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Guts d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6

**Charisma:** -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6 (1)

**Hindrances:** Greedy (Minor), Mean.

**Edges:** —

**Gear:** Leather armor (+1), typically short sword, mace, or axe (Str+d6), bow (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6).

## BALYUEUX GUARDS



### WATCH CAPTAIN

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d10, Guts d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Riding d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d4

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 9; **Toughness:** 9 (3)

**Hindrances:** Loyal

**Edges:** Block, Combat Reflexes, Command, Frenzy  
**Gear:** Plate armor (+3), pot helm (+3), medium shield (+1 Parry), long sword (Str+d8), dagger (Str+d4).

## WATCH

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6  
**Skills:** Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d4  
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (3)  
**Hindrances:** Loyal  
**Edges:** —  
**Gear:** Plate corselet (+3), pot helm (+3), medium shield (+1 Parry), short spear (Str+d6, Reach 1). Half are equipped with crossbows (Range: 15/30/60, Damage: 2d6, AP 2).

## EXPERIENCED WATCH

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8  
**Skills:** Fighting d10, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d4  
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 9 (3)  
**Hindrances:** Loyal  
**Edges:** Combat Reflexes, Frenzy

**Gear:** Plate corselet (+3), pot helm (+3), medium shield (+1 Parry), long sword (Str+d8), dagger (Str+d4). Half are equipped with crossbows (Range: 15/30/60, Damage: 2d6, AP 2).

## SNAKE SWARM

Snake swarms cover an area equal to a Medium Burst Template and attack everyone within every round. When it is Incapacitated, the swarm is effectively dispersed.

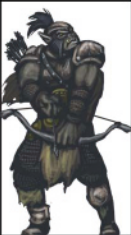


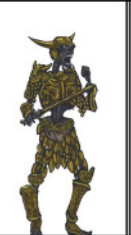






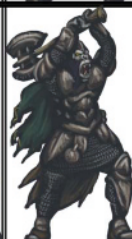

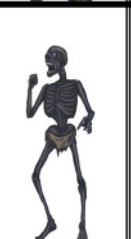


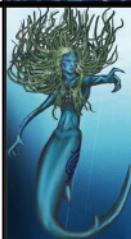



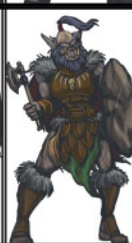

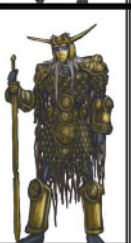






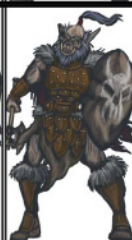








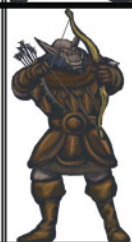








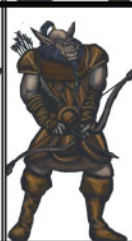

























**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d12, Strength d8, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Notice d6

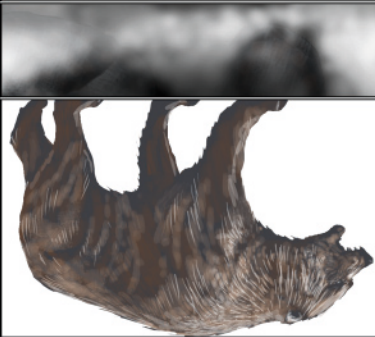

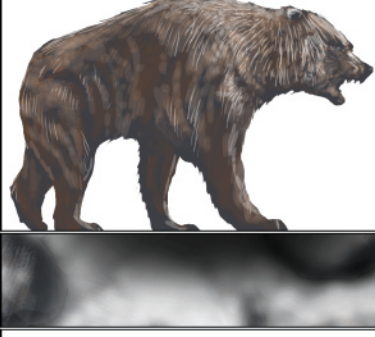


**Pace:** 10; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 7


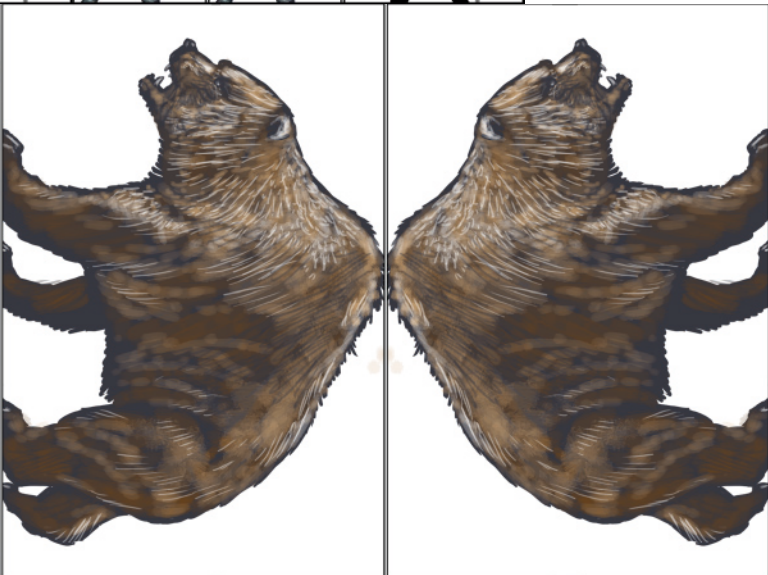
### Special Abilities:

- \* **Bite:** Snake swarms inflict hundreds of bites every round to their victims, hitting automatically and causing 2d4 damage to everyone in the template. Damage is applied to the least armored location.
- \* **Mindless:** Unaffected by Tests of Will, Tricks, or arcane powers like *puppet*.
- \* **Swarm:** Parry +2. Because the swarm is composed of scores, hundreds, or thousands of creatures, cutting and piercing weapons do no real damage. Area-effect weapons work normally, and a character can stomp to inflict his damage in Strength each round.

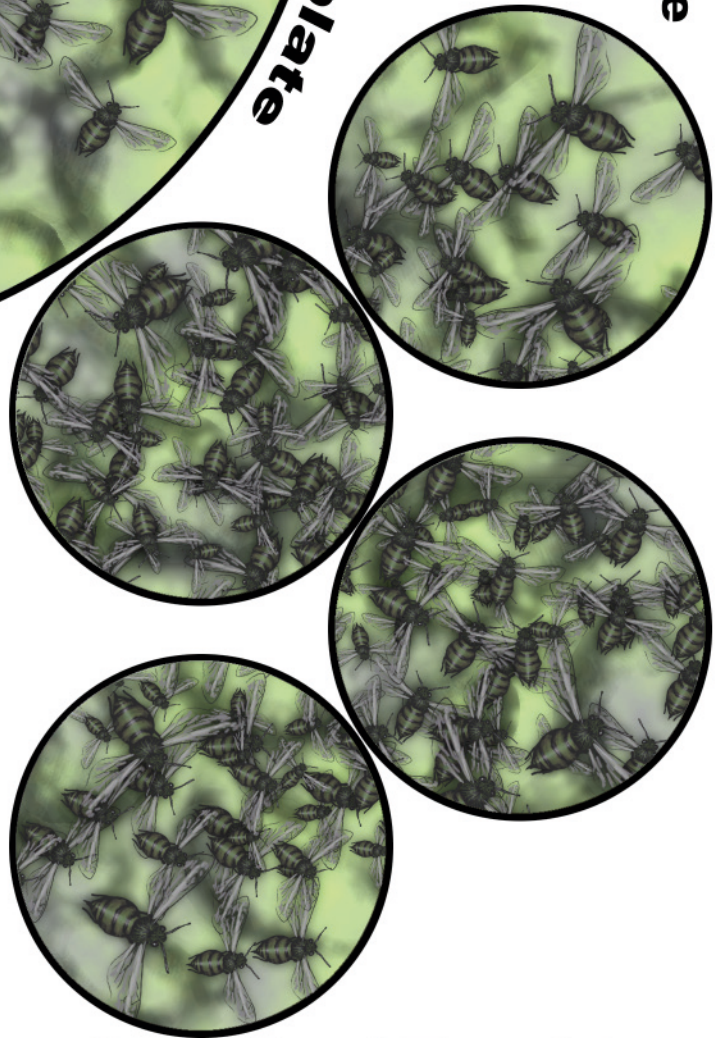
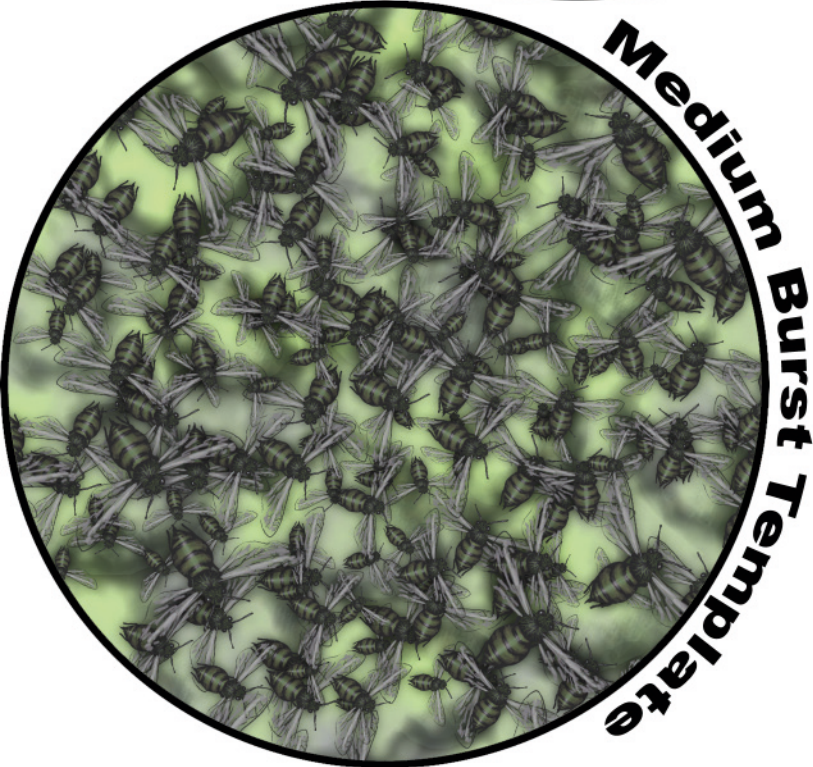
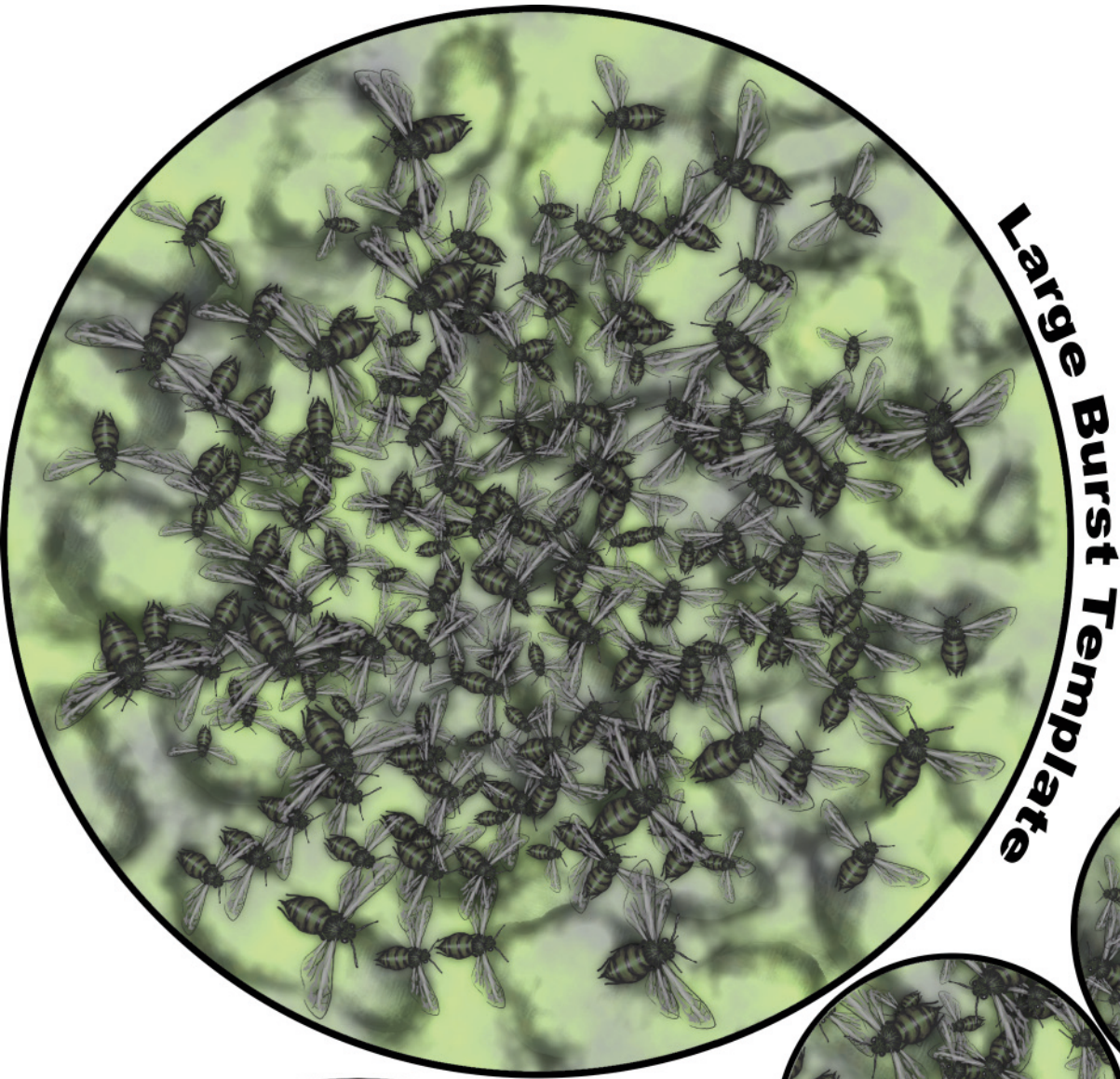
			Orc Subchiefain				Petty Hagbui				Water Elemental
			Orc Subchiefain				Unarmored Petty Hagbui				Yselda, Elder Haymand
			Orc Warrior				Royal Hagbui King				Brude Golden-Lips, Priest of Gultveig
			Orc Warrior				Royal Hagbui Queen				Ansel Fox-Walker, Priest of Vail
			Orc Warrior				Diseased Giant Bee				Village Militia (Spearman)
			Orc Warrior				Giant Bee				Village Militia (Spearman)
			Haymand (Mermaid)				Hydros Water Snake				Village Militia (Axeman)
			Petty Hagbui				Bee Warrior				Village Militia (Axeman)

			Village Militia (Archer)				Freda, Norn Cleric
			Village Militia (Archer)				Serin ap-Burcan, Priest of Vail
			Village Militia (Axe Thrower)				Plague Zombie
			Village Militia (Axe Thrower)				Plague Zombie
			Stone Golem Berserker				Lorekeeper Digger
			Lattia ap-Cuthbert Lorekeeper				Eadhlid the Dour Paladin of Hela

	Giant Crab
	
	
Baby Cave Bear	

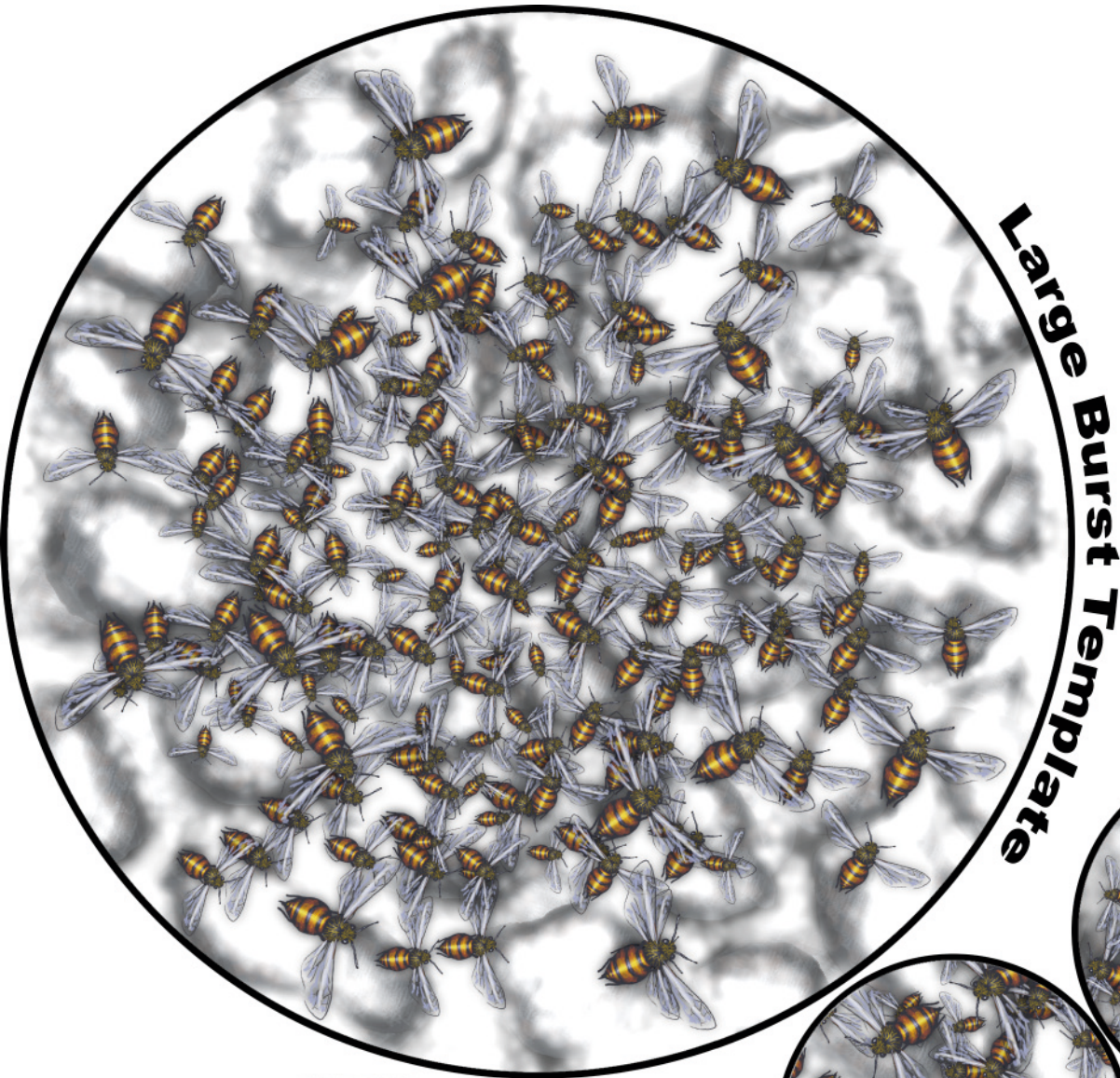
		Adult Cave Bear
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# Diseased Bee Swarm Template

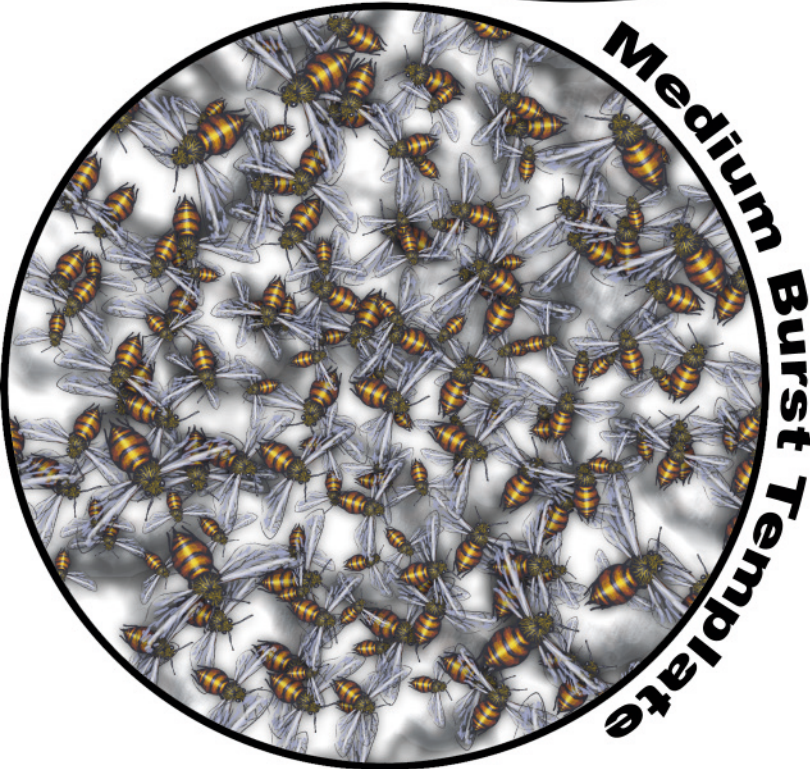


## Small Burst Templates

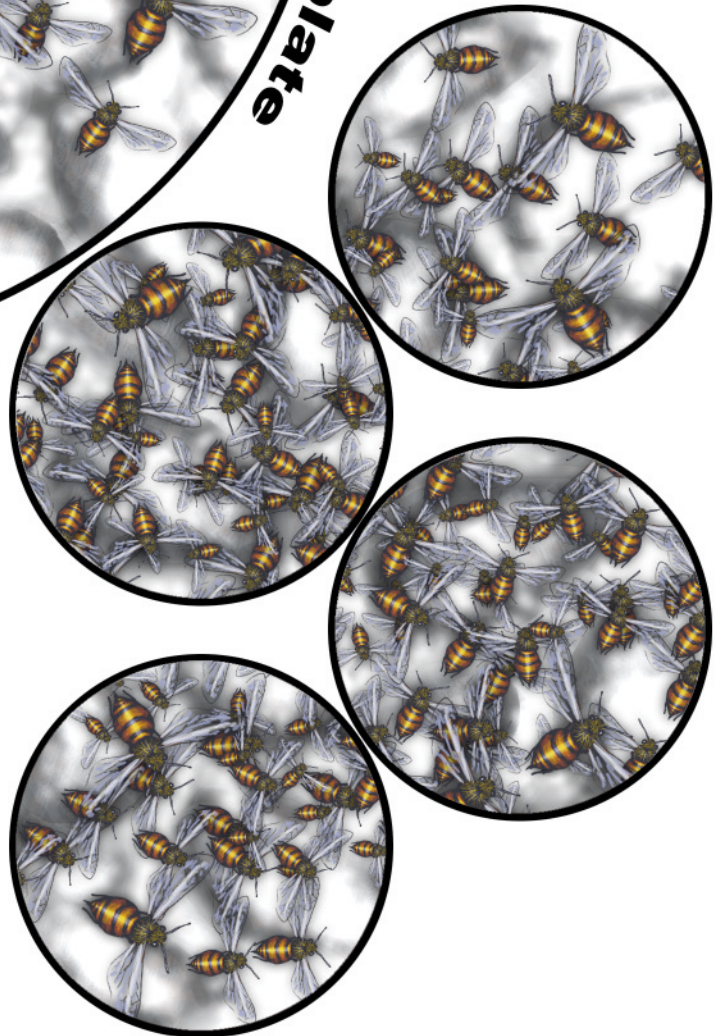
# Bee Swarm Template



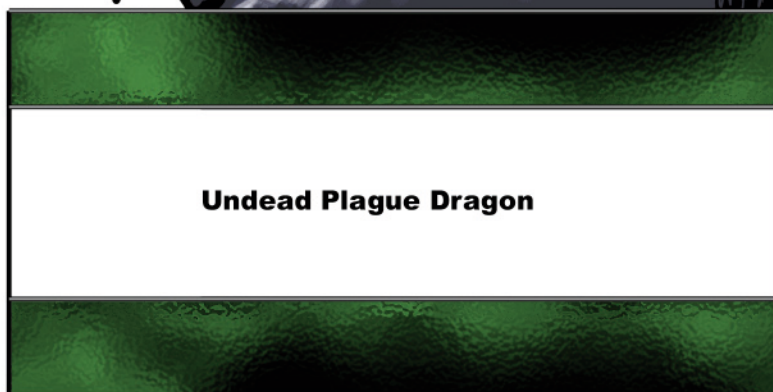
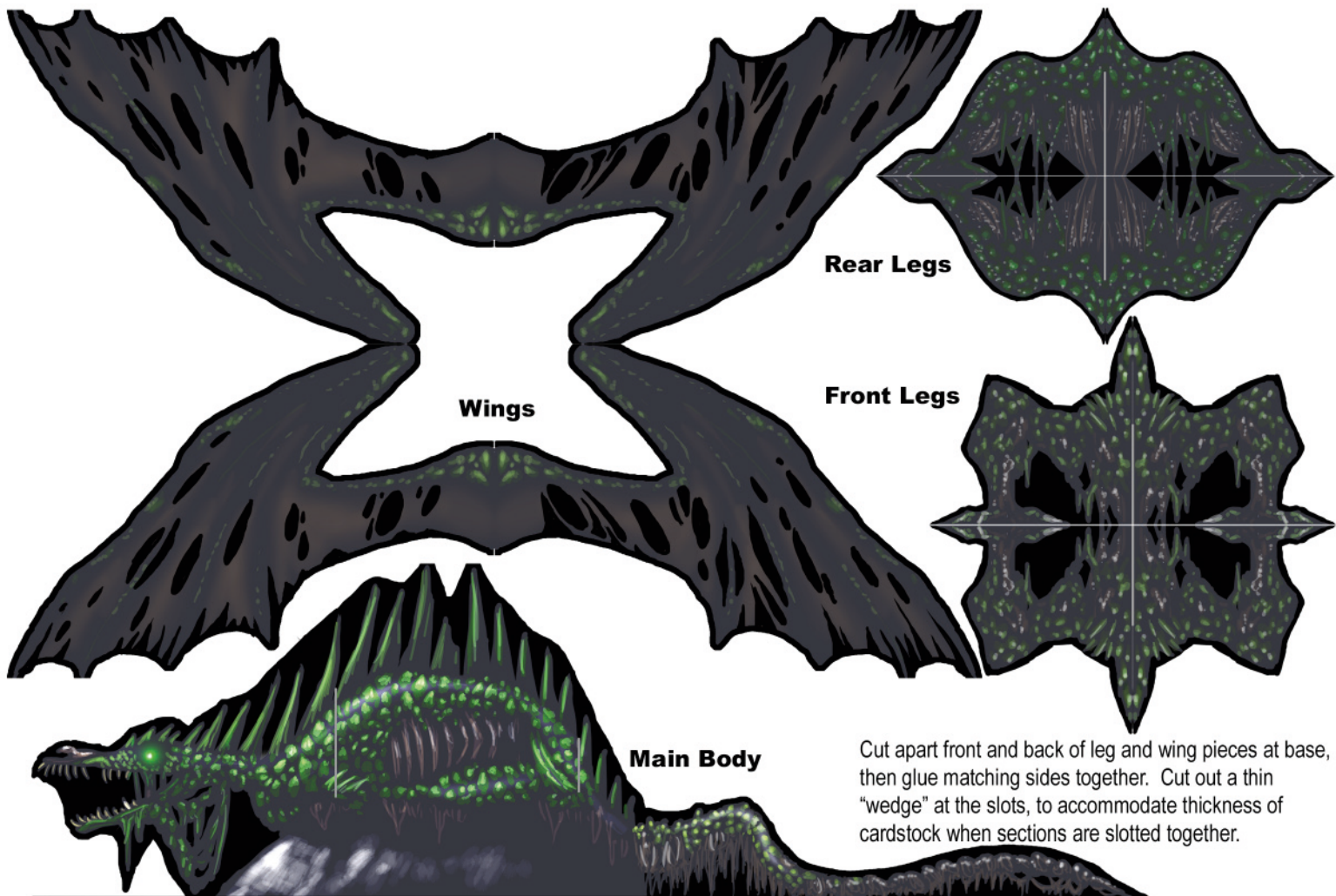
**Large Burst Template**



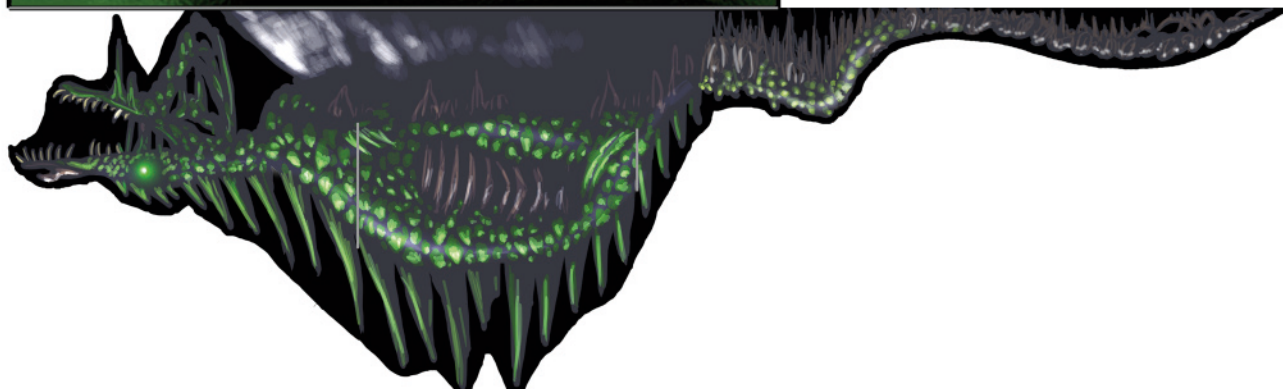
**Medium Burst Template**



**Small Burst Templates**



**Sample Assembly**





# DARE YOU VENTURE INTO DARKNESS?

*The Dark Night* - Buried in secret, Helfreth Helasdohtor a powerful priestess has been slowly breaking the sigils of her ancient tomb. When the sigils fail, the great evil will once again be unleashed onto the unsuspecting world. In preparation for this second coming of darkness, Hela has stirred Helfreth from her dreamless sleep. Can our heroes stop this evil?

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