

Longwinter





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Luka Rejec

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LAYOUT
Luka Rejec & Anna Urbanek

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“ Autumn, our poor garden is all falling down, the yellowed leaves are flying in the wind.

epigraph by A. N. Tolstoy
Tchaikovsky – October: Autumn Son

Best not fight it

The snow is alive. A soft, cold spirit courses through them. Her lace threads the world; watching, drinking, listening, stroking, soothing, killing. Her touch is soft and icy. She is Winterwhite, the daughter of the Waterdrinker and the Northwind, and she is a terrible god. An avatar of ice and hunger, of visions and death.

Longwinter is the TRPG sandbox of a realm that has broken its vows to Winterwhite and will now pay the cold price.

This one is for the cloaks of elvenkind
one snowy December in Rut.

This one is for the heroes who ran there.

Contents

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Welcome to Longwinter

This is a time-limited point-crawl sandbox adventure for a role-playing game. It is an escape room—the heroes are thrown in and they have to figure out how to escape (or beat the overpowered final boss) before they are trapped forever in the cold sleep of Winterwhite.

The book is divided into two parts for players: *Common Knowledge* and *Common Rules*, and one part for the referee, *Bones for the Referee*.

The setting is profoundly close to that of *Witchburner*.





Common Knowledge

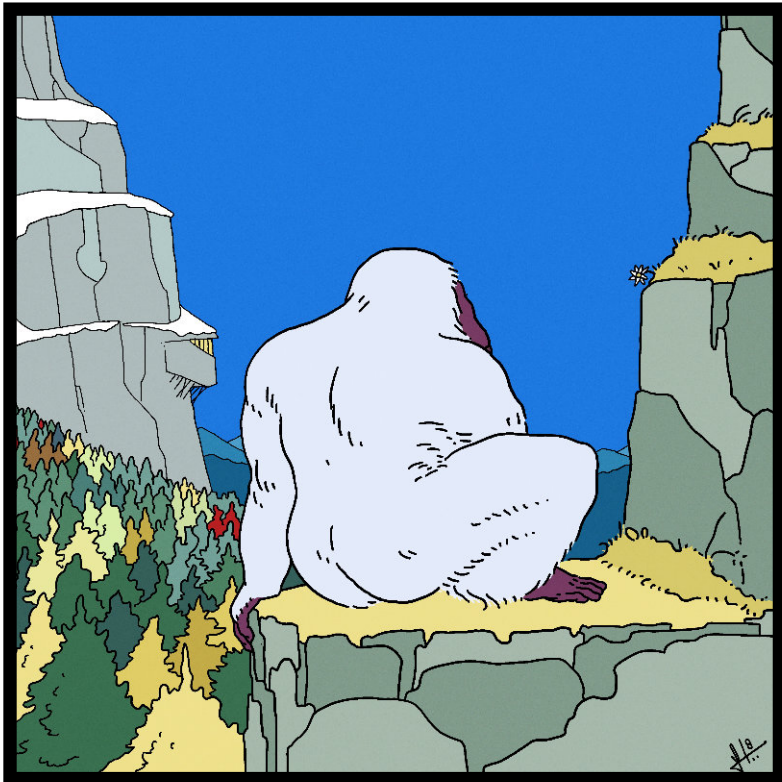
Why Are You Here?

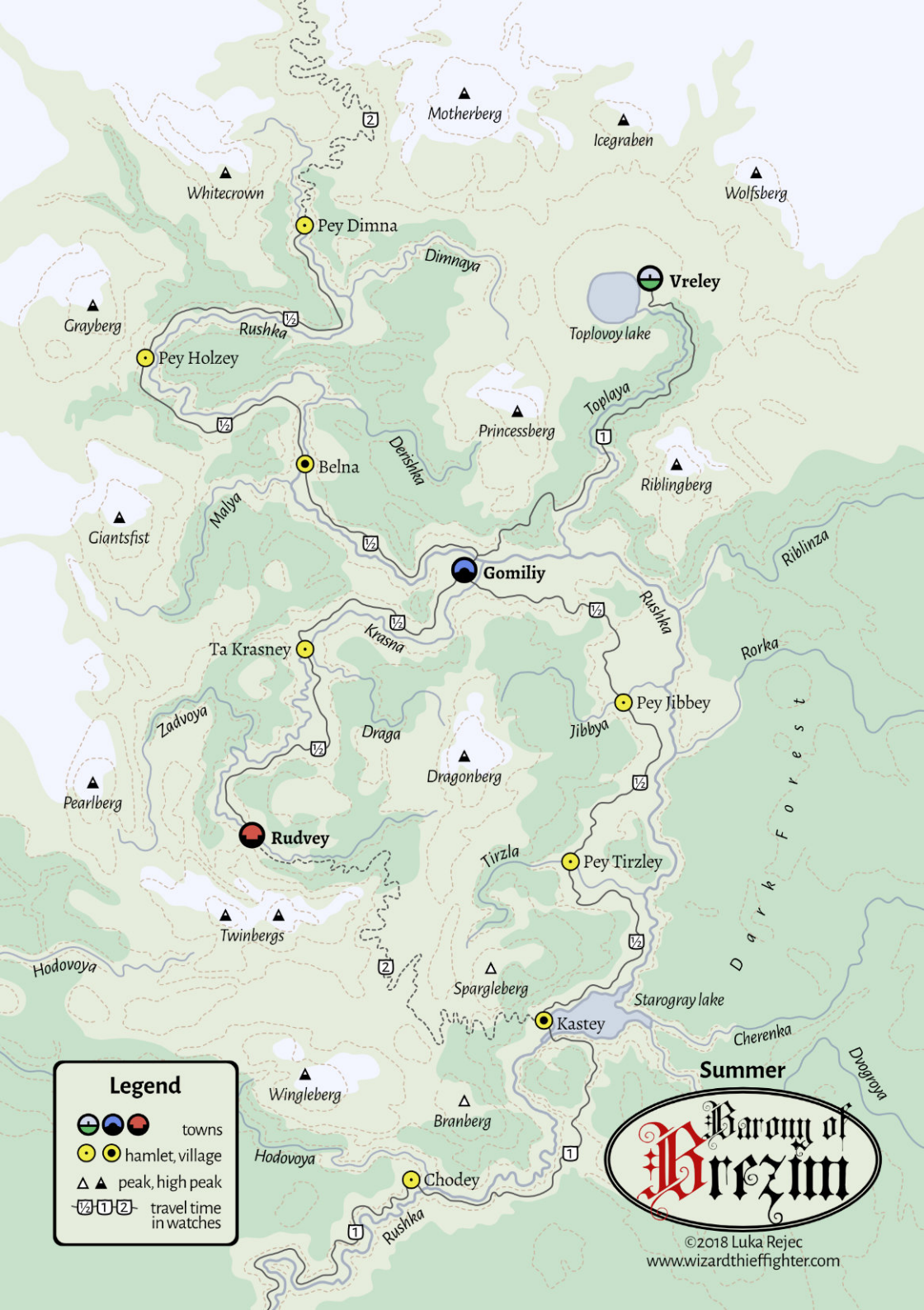
It's cold and dull here, far from the bright city lights, but ...

D10 Reasons To Visit

- 1 Viktor Bluntstone – a cousin – purchased a chalet and found an unusual old laboratory in the basement – a week later a letter arrived stating that he was “missing in unusual circumstances.”
- 2 Ermelina Redwater – an aunt – has decided to purchase a townhouse on the Vreley promenade and needs someone to seal the deal for her.
- 3 Runo Whitetower – a great-uncle – has died and deeded his holdings in Ta Krasney to “the first of my ungrateful brood to bring this letter to the mayoral office in Rudvey.”
- 4 Sigma Delmar – a proletarian researcher of old architect ruins – has secured funding from the Whiteyes Institute to secure an undisturbed bunker on the Dimnaya stream. She needs spelunkers and specialists.
- 5 Obol Fastfoot – a childhood friend, now a City investor – has purchased the deeds to several foreclosed holdings in Pey Holzey, but his agent has not reported back. He needs someone to go and explain to the yokels what that means.
- 6 Zena Blackwolf – a rich merchant – is convinced that her husband’s “botanical research vacation” in Pey Dimna is actually a secret tryst with a famous young actress who is known to spend winter there.
- 7 Andrey Resttree – a nephew – has been diagnosed with a rare respiratory condition and his parents require somebody to accompany him to the Painted Tree in Vreley for treatment.

- 8 Lena Riflesteel – a famous illusionist – is recording a crystal-film about the Snow Apes of Brezim. She needs mountaineers and adventurers.
- 9 The heroes – as a reward – received a month’s stay at the fabled Painted Tree spa in Vreley. This will be an opportunity to rest, recuperate, move the clock forward, and do a bit of safe carousing.
- 10 Igor Ironwood – the son of an Eastern City count – has been “allegedly” involved in a ridiculous scandal and is now going to Gomily where he is to spend a few months discreetly doing nothing. Somebody needs to keep him there.





Legend

-    towns
-  hamlet, village
-   peak, high peak
-    travel time in watches



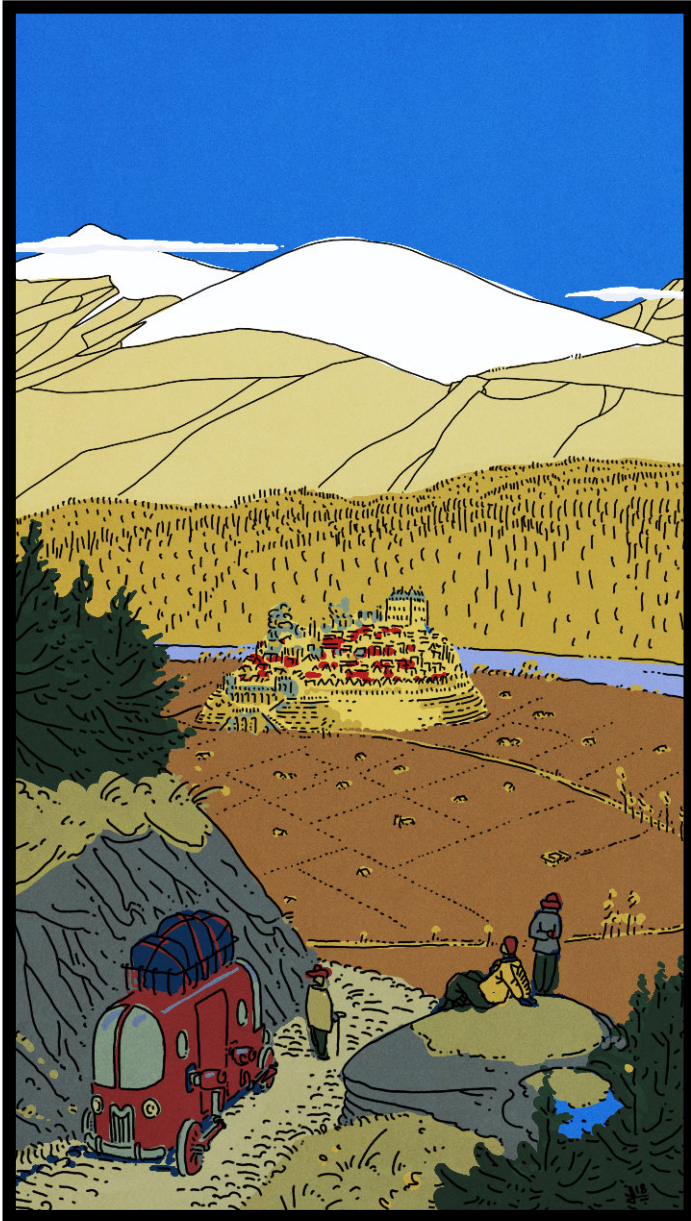
Welcome to the Barony of Brezím

“Brezim. The name conjures visions of birch forests and dappled deer, bucolic baronials and alpine pastures, thick pine and gingko forests, hot springs and glittering icefields. Yet the barony also has much more modern conveniences to offer the gentle visitor.

The barony of Brezím is changing fast under the progressive democratic leadership of the good Baron Soren Greencorner II. The reopening of the fabled Mines of King Rudvik is just the most visible sign of the province's booming economy and plans are afoot to build an ironway to link the valley with the Eastern and Western Cities.

Surely now is the perfect time to visit Brezím, a safe and prosperous valley, yet still offering a wealth of charming vistas and quaint traditions to amuse even the most jaded palate.”

—*Brezim, Barony of Snow, Spas, and Industry. Gentle Visitor's Guides, Second Federated Edition (new year 120)*



The Three Towns

Gomiliy

† baronial capital † tiers on round hill † sparkling roof tiles †
 † great triple-gate † staircases †

Fortress: cubist thing – built and rebuilt – expands down into hill – classical library: librarian Irma Loveless – tours Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Equestrian Statue: Baron and Warlord Ivan Greencorner, founder of Brezim – sensuous lips, proud ears.

Head of State: Baron Soren Greencorner II – courteous, sheltered, and melancholy.

Ruler: Vizier Ibrahim Falconsbrood – cosmopolitan and well-traveled.

Imperial faith: chapel of Saint Nomm: witch-bishop Simon the Wizard – modern crematorium – guided tours of oldsettler crypts and dugouts lacing hill.

Baronial Faith: four stones: shaman-healer Isolda Longrocking – seven-span linden to the trinity – meadow of death.

Guesthouse: Grain King – ale-and-heart pies – houselady: Vizya Aspmilker.

Hotel: Great Farrier – decently overpriced – houselord: Yuva Borderer.

Beer Hall, baronial: Pey Ivan – cheerful – houseleit: Zoog Godgrain.

Beer Hall, rustic: Moldencrust – tar-thick ale – houselady: Ziva Hasbrawn.

Cabaret: Peacock's Tail – and other amusements – houselord: Lomo Dealbaker.

Wednesday Market: Deluvian artefacts and more – everything for sale.

Resource: workshops, weapons, armors.

Curio: Pearly Barrow – flanks of Dragonberg – crystalline trilithons on mound – ancient astronomical observatory(?).

Secret Danger: Elder Things prowl the deep layers of the catacomb-hill – bones of giants lie frozen in stone – deeper: the altar of Winterwhite where Verdek Greencorner sacrificed himself to the White Queen for his brother Ivan’s conquest of the valley.

Rudvey

† industrial town of Brezim † reactivated old architect mine † laborers †
 † new blast furnaces † popular palace crawls up flank of Twinbergs †
 † statue: the Miner and the Virgin by Rivka Woodlip †

Mayor: grand siro Erik Whiteyes – proletarian engineer.

Mine: Barony Mining Corporation – privately owned by baron – representative: Neva Longflanks – museum of mining: “fluted mining boy.”



Inn: Pey Two Devils – bear-porker pie – houselord: Izi Redhairing.

Beerhall: Under the Pick – schnapps-laced beer – houseleit: Lun Breakface.

Theatre: The Pepita – vaudeville act – houselady: Maya Oldwalker.

Resource: iron, coal, fuel.

Curio: Great Pit – ancient open-cast mine – museum – golem-watt pump – deep: ancient mining monsters.

Danger: proletarian bandits – deep things – mountain apes – urban cultists – banker thugs of the Eastern-Western Organization for Cooperation.

Vreley

*† spa town of Brezim † thermal Toplovoy lake: microclimate, never freezes †
 † fruit orchards and greenhouses † poorly defended † Awlschild private palace †
 † lustrous rainbow pines †*

Mayor: fourth sira Ostya Awlschild – old money of the Borderfield-and-Liberia Awlschilds – blinkered.

Spa: Painted Tree – orange cake and recuperation – owner: the mayor – manager: Zon Butterworth.

Inn: The Eagle's Corpse – pine-nut and dormouse confit – housecorps: the Burner Veterans' Society.

Resource: food, heat, medicine.

Curio: Obsidian and basalt cliffs – above: Wolfsberg icefield barrow – friable basalt depths – deeper: skin-changer temple.

Ruin: marble small-person town: later oldsettler remains – deeper: grand mechanical man altar.

Danger: winding road – falling rocks – steam vents – fearless wolves – oldsettler bandits – jagged hiking trails.

The Eight Villages

Belna

† growing market village: wool, wood † filling out prehistoric walls †
 † new government house: crystal clock from Sicher †
 † chapel of Saint Adom Longbeard: Purification Era frescoes †

Inn: Foaming Giant – buffalo cheese and flat mountain bread – house lady: Kunigunda Tavernborn.

Resource: Third Vanya wool cooperative, Belnay lumber field.

Mayor: third siro Bonifas Swiftling – low-born accountant.

Curio: the Murt above the Derishka – Princessberg just below snowline – History: changeling mechanifex – killed by old settler hero Yamash – corrupted by dark miasma – destroyed by baronials.

Danger: torrents – wild bees.

Chodey

† small bucolic village † living wood palisade † hanging bridge: toll †

Inn: Fat Volecatcher – mountain sausage soup – house lord: Viktor Dormouse.

Tomb: Kolgar's Barrow – History: pre-human mound reused by old settlers to bury hero Kolgar Bloodkiss who slew three giant brothers – inside: Kolgar's Axe.

Danger: landslides – playful trees.

Kastey

† fortified hilltop village † war monument: massive, royalist, ill repaired †
 † new suspension bridge: toll †

Inn: Hungry Hans – suckling boar and mushrooms – houselady: Luna Sunstringer.

Resource: first baronial granary.

Mayor: first sira, Joia Tolltaker – bored conservative reactionary.

Mountain Pass: two watches across saddle between Twinbergs and Dragonberg to Rudvey – only in good weather – chalet: the Silverhorn operated by the Fraternal Hunters of Kastey and Rudvey.

Danger: wolffolk and oldsettlers in the woods – falling rocks.

Pey Dimna

† last village on the Rushka † steep rise and waterfalls †
 † gorges and pools of the Rushka † very picturesque †

Inn: Last Hearth – fried potatoes and alpage cheese – houselady: Ilka Ninthling.

Big Citizen: Nora Huntersdaughter – mountain guide, expert tracker, local shaman. Half-oldsettler.

Curio: Iron Palace – rusted twisted ruin spidering along cliff-face of Motherberg – inside: fairy tomb with six sleeping gold-horned virgins of Winterwhite – further: White Shrine.

Danger: snow apes – mountain savages – snowfolk.

Pey Holzey

*† woodcutters' village † sawmill † narrow valley † dark conifer woods †
† sulphurous springs †*

Inn: Darling Jack – closed.

Big Citizen: Umo Droopstone – grim prospector and trapper with secret dreamvine fields in narrow valleys beneath the Grayberg.

Resource: wood.

Danger: Droopstone gang – thieves – wolves – sulphurous salamanders.

Pey Jibbey

*† charming wooden village † sulphurous stream: Jibbya † bridge: flower-covered †
† solstice bonfires †*

Inn: Bonny Fire – odd Jibbey sausages and herbal tea – houseleit: Vinyo Briskwood.

Big Citizen: Zora Bearbreaker, soft-spoken, hard-hearted dairy farmer.

Big Barrow: Veley – in the Dark Forest across the Rushka – inside: dust and crushed oldsettler remains – deeper: petrified changeling garden.

Danger: aggressive wolffolk in the woods – strong winds.

Pey Tirzley

† picturesque village † views of mountains and gingkos † free baronials: armed †

Inn: White Boris – deer goulash – houselady: Ines Cashfolk.

Big Citizen: Roon Southcome, unpredictable but canny geologist and owner of cement manufactory.

Barrow: Samoyba, lonely barrow – oldsettler burial ground – queer aura – inside: cleaned out oldsettler tunnels – deeper: survivor vault with lonely ghosts.

Danger: bears in the woods – deadfall – savages across river.

Ta Krasney

*† rock village † on ruin of oldsettler village † in husk of old architect palace †
† confluence: Nuvo Styl bridges across Draga and Krasna rivers †*

Inn: Buttery Bear – buffalo-butter coffee – houselord: Igor Holdover.

Big Citizen: Almira Dustman, kindly-seeming proprietor of general store and chief gold-dust buyer.

Curio: yellow-flecked blue rock monolith with pictograms.

Danger: avalanches – flash floods – dire beavers.

Mountains and Forests

Branberg

† razor-fractured southern peak † deep gorges †

Curio: immense cave network – deep inside: translucent skinned degenerates worshipping a great green malevolent orb and feeding on slime creatures.

Danger: chasms – predatory ape-cats – poisonous vines.

Dragonberg

† spectacular peak † heart of the barony † forested flanks † small glacier †

Curio: gold dust in Draga river – Dragon's Hole: the home of the barony dragon.

Danger: bears and wolves – the Dragon: a great shimmery beast of slate and ice, bloated with deep-ripping magic.

Dark Forest

*† old growth, eastern highland † wild and rough †
† wolves, wolffolk, and oldsettler hideouts †*

Curio: oldsettler barrows – pre-Purification ruins.

Danger: malevolent tree spirits – wild animals – labyrinthine woods.

Giantsfist

*† second highest peak † fringe of Western Brezim Plateau † massive glacier †
† ridge riven by titanic conflicts of a forgotten time †*

Curio: deep wrym holes on north flank – home to bogeymen.

Danger: snow apes on the alpine tundra – ice-threaded worms – undead giant things in the deep glacier.

Grayberg

† domed nondescript peak † dull grey rock † extensive rubble slopes †

Curio: ancient alien pyramids – actually they are rather boring natural formations. A waste of time.

Danger: glacial winds – landslides – murderous mountain goats.

Icegraben

† low ridge between Motherberg and Wolfsberg † eerie metal remains †

Curio: blue-metal installation in dry valley – frozen machines and mummified old architects.

Danger: rime-heavy vomes – savage snowfolk – demented machines.

Motherberg

*† tallest peak † southern edge of the Spine Icefield †
† great western and eastern cliffs † curling clouds: “the Mothershroud” †*

White Shrine: crystal-skinned children serve at altar of Winterwhite – beyond the portal: the Frozen Palace of Winterwhite.

Danger: snow worms – great white birds – avalanches.

Pearlberg

† *Westernmost peak* † *spectacular sunrise and sunset hues* † *dolomite cliffs* †
† *pearlescent calving glacier* †

Curio: titanic ruined palace drowned in ice.

Danger: snow apes – undead giant things – snow vultures.

Princessberg

† *breath-taking central peak* † *ridge to Motherberg* † *towers above Gomilyi* †
† *reddish flanks* †

Curio: last highland oldsettler fort – abandoned – within: collapsed chthonic temple trapping hundreds of animated frozen children and old people.

Danger: forest spirits – sudden gusts – bears.



Riblingberg

† crinkled peak † rib-like ridges † eroded valleys † dark forest †

Curio: bone moraines of dead land behemoths.

Danger: wolves – savage oldsettlers – trees falling soundlessly in the woods.

Spargleberg

† lumpen, half-shattered mountain † scrub † ruins of ancient trench works †

Curio: extensive Starogray ruins – blasted and weathered remains of a city(?) carved into the flanks of the mountain by celestial forces – inside: oldsettler holdouts.

Danger: half-animated metal wire traps – old pits and tunnels.



Twinberg

*† glacier-bound twin peaks † roots shot through with mineral veins †
† large white ape population †*

Curio: great sphinx carved on southern outcrop – inside: graffiti and dirty camp – deeper: caves crawling to Rudvey past old architect engine room.

Danger: carnivorous apes – great hawks – timberwolves.

Whitecrown

*† numinous cliff-sided peak † edge of Western Brezim Plateau †
† southern end of Grandfather's Icefield †*

Curio: glistening natural arch – actually a titanic zygomatic arch?

Danger: white apes – dragon-worms – sudden fog.

Wingleberg

† many-folded southern peak † dotted with glaciers and forests † caverns †

Curio: Purification Era city tunnels – collapsed.

Danger: wolves – bears – giant timber bats.

Wolfsberg

*† looming eastern peak † south-eastern edge of Spine Icefield † crumpled slopes †
† thick pines † thermal fissures †*

Curio: lost valley – edaphosaurs and moschops browsers – wolffolk dreamwalkers.

Danger: wolffolk – wolves – crumbling volcanic rocks.

Rivers and Lakes

Cherenka River

† peaty water † heavy smell †

Curio: beaver dams – waterlogged swamps – deep pines.

Danger: dire beaver – leeches – wolffolk.

Derishka Stream

† icy torrent † red pebbles † thick forests † waterfalls †

Curio: breached remains of old architect dams.

Danger: sulphurous salamanders – hot springs – rusting ferro-ceramic cables and spikes.

Dimnaya Stream

† rushing torrent † basalts and reddish schists † great boulders †

Curio: tributary emerges from great cleft – within: deep caverns and a pillaged old architect seed vault.

Danger: snow fish – rolling boulders – slippery molds.

Draga Stream

† *torrential stream* † *gold dust* † *dark water* †

Curio: pools with oldsettler sacrifices – dragon otters.

Danger: flash flood – torrent – falling trees.

Dvogroya River

† *sour water* † *old architect ruins* †

Curio: corroded artefacts – eroded ruined dams – further: warding obelisks: changelings – ruined tunnels: dark, dangerous, old – inside: tribe of cancer trolls – bribe with flesh or gold – want: to recover their ancient memories and become giants once again – own: mottled flesh-mother carrying the memories of Long Ago and plundered gold to bind memories within her cancered flesh – magic: pacts with the Devil's Grandfather.

Danger: troll-otters – toxic mists.

Hodovoya River

† *green water* † *thick with algae and weeds* † *shallows and cascades – gorges* †

Curio: Purification Era glass-bottomed lake.

Danger: giant timber bats – crocodilian salamanders – bears.

Jibbya Stream

† *sulphurous* † *yellow water* † *beautiful pebble banks* †

Curio: dragon's sandbox – piles of magic-rich dragon dung.

Danger: dire dung beetles – quicksand – decayed trees.

Krasna River

† reddish water † oxide-rich † many dams and water wheels †

Curio: industrial architecture – dragon scales.

Danger: toxic minerals – dire leeches.

Malya Stream

† gentle babbling stream † massive torrent after rains † icy cold †

Curio: wyrm scales and claws in stream.

Danger: broken undead carcasses – fishing apes – sharp rocks.

Riblinza River

† milky water † rustling shallows † deep gorges †

Curio: bone pebbles and cobbles.

Danger: dire otters – wolffolk fishers – bone fish.

Rorka River

† thundering cascades † pure water † dense beech and oak forests † deep pools †

Curio: giant vegetarian salamanders – coral lotus.

Danger: giant carnivorous sail-backed salamanders – waterfalls.

Rushka River

† largest river † swift, rough †

Curio: trophy granite trout.

Danger: whirlpools – cascades – current.

Starogray Lake

† artificial lake † oldglass barrier a mile thick † cold water †

Curio: old architect ruins – inside: oldsettler dwellings.

Danger: giant snake fish – gripping mud.

Tirzla Stream

† laughing torrent † deep gorges † picturesque pools †

Curio: great old tree – half dead, indeterminate species – inside: restful hollow.

Danger: bloodthirsty otters – falling boulders.

Toplaya River

† warm, mineral-rich river † azure waters †

Curio: Crystal-shelled armored fish.

Danger: intoxicating fumes – hot vents – rolling mists.

Toplovoy Lake

† volcanic lake † hot springs † warm water †

Curio: mineral-loving crustaceans – pale lake kelp – string lotus – hot-water snails – curative for arthritis and gout.

Danger: predatory lake scorpions – hot steam vents – wolffolk highlanders.

Zadvoya Stream

† mineral-rich stream † pyrite nodules † refreshing waters †

Curio: ape-built shrine in middle of pool – inside: meats and machines from the glacier.

Danger: fishing apes – tangled water plants – calving rocks.

People of Brezím

Baronials, Goodfolk

The civilized inhabitants of the barony of Brezím, who restored many of the old ruins and brought wealth and culture back to the valleys under the Motherberg.

D10 Stories of the Baronials

- 1 Their ancestors were the lost legion of Adam Goldenmouth.
- 2 They were stranded in the Sea of Grass after the Centaur Khan destroyed the twin dragons.
- 3 They are common miners, woodsmen, and shepherds with pretensions beyond their class.
- 4 They are proud of their freedoms and willing to defend them to a man.
- 5 They are a fractious lot and the only people they hate more than each other are outsiders.
- 6 They do not bow to their rulers and drown them if they fail to bring the blessings of the gods.
- 7 They have worshipped their old gods since before the Federation, before the Empire, before the Republic, before the Kingdom.
- 8 Without gold and industry their lands are poor and for many years they sent their sons away to serve as merchants and mercenaries.
- 9 They know how to whisper to trees and plants, making them grow in strange or useful shapes.
- 10 Their "nobles" are all nouveau riche upstarts.

Oldsettlers, Oldfolk

The pre-civilized inhabitants of Brezim, who dwelled in rude dugouts and subsisted as impoverished gardeners and hunters. They were dying out before the baronials arrived, but since then many have adapted to the higher culture of the civilized peoples, adopting modern dress, dialect, and habits.

D8 Stories of the Oldsettlers

- 1 The baronials know that they oldsettlers are less intelligent than them and incapable of true civilizations.
- 2 The oldsettlers never tell the truth to the baronials.
- 3 The oldsettlers are nearly extinct. Serfdom has saved those who are civilized enough to contribute to the new federal order.
- 4 Many oldsettlers remain, submerged within the baronial population, emigrated to the cities, living within the deep woods.
- 5 The oldsettler shamans could walk with the forest spirits and take the shapes of beasts and birds.
- 6 There are still oldsettler shamans and priests and witches, hidden among the free baronials.
- 7 The oldsettlers are the descendants of the Purification Era survivors who hid in the tunnels and time machines.
- 8 The oldsettlers are newcomers to the federal lands who arrived after the Dragonbreath Plagues.

Wolffolk, Skintakers

Monstrous savages, born of oldsettlers gone feral and wild, they are more beast than human. Some still exist in the Dark Forest and the deepest tortured valleys, but bounties have thinned their bestial packs.

D8 Stories of the Wolffolk

- 1 There is no difference between wolffolk and oldsettlers, every oldsettler reverts if let off their leash.
- 2 They can speak to wolves and bears and foxes.
- 3 They do not really think the way real humans do, they are beasts of instinct and savagery.
- 4 They can turn into wild, hairy creatures, similar to two-legged canines.
- 5 They eat the flesh of humans, which gives them monstrous strength.
- 6 They flay their victims and wear their skins to pass in normal society.
- 7 They hibernate in deep caves under the hills after eating. That's why they're so hard to root out.
- 8 They have a secret city beyond Wolfsberg.

Old Architects, Spiral Square Culture

The wondrously accomplished builders of many livingstone and everglass ruins in Brezim and the wider area. Their remains are quite easily distinguished by their use of spiraling rectangular patterns, which reflect a ponderous obsession with the interplay of the organic and the mechanic. They are extinct.

D10 Stories of the Old Architects

- 1 They could whisper stone into motion, making it flow like honey.
- 2 They knew how to build on the ghost of ground now gone.
- 3 Their hands had six fingers.
- 4 Their mouths had no teeth and they only drank juices and soups.
- 5 They had abandoned their humanity to escape the Purification.
- 6 They knew how to knit living creatures into stone and earth.
- 7 They tried to challenge the gods and failed.
- 8 They had built flying chariots and walking skyscrapers.
- 9 They were evil and lived on the blood of humans, parasites on the body politic.
- 10 They had sacrificed their health and wealth to build vaults to survive the Purification.



Histories of Brezim and Civilization

The Barony of Brezim is a mountainous province of a larger world. It is a world that has risen and fallen and risen again, like an ark sailing the seas of time and chaos. History mostly passed the mountains by. There are too few people there. The bones are too strong. The rocks are too high.

But still, history lapped against Brezim, high tides brought invaders and trader, low tides let the old, eternal truths crawl back from beneath rock and tree.

Fortunately the federal order has broken the cycles of the past and the current civilization will never decline again.

Still, it is good to know whence the order came.

Federation

The Common Congress of Cities and Provinces is strong and stable, bound by the cunning of the bourgeoisie, the traditions of the nobles, the dynamism of the industrialists, and the passions of the working classes. This order will last a thousand years.

Empire

A single autocrat ruled the civilization. While the first autocrats restored peace after the excesses of the Republic and its wars, the world was too old and too wise to rest for long in the hands of an absolute ruler. Repression mounted and eventually exploded in the Trenchant Wars. The Common Congress was only possible solution to that terrifying time.

Republic

The new classes overthrew the monarchs, taking civilization into their own hands. Alas, they were unschooled in administration and restraint, and their fervor led them too far. After initial success, the Republic and the remaining Royals destroyed each other in the bloody Leveller Wars.

Kingdom

Once upon a time there had been a single good kingdom, united under a single good ruler. Alas, humans are animals, and animal morality cannot be counted on. The descendants of the good ruler grew fat, lazy, greedy, and vicious. As the fringes strained forward, the center pulled them back. In the end the leash snapped and the Newfolk Revolution engulfed civilization.

D6 Older Times

- 1 The Green Flag Rebellion of the centaurs was the last spasm of the steppe peoples against the ordered might of civilization.
- 2 The Success Wars devastated civilization as the three great generals fought each other after defeating the anti-civilization.
- 3 The Night of Tight Nooses saw the new gods die and the old gods reassert the primacy of natural ways.
- 4 In the Hungry Days the monasteries were cracked open and their marrow used to feed the commonfolk.
- 5 The Division Bell Prophets split civilization between the old gods and the new.
- 6 In the time of the Awakening Libraries scholars emerged from beneath the frozen mountains to restore vigor to civilization.

D6 Oldest Times

- 1 In the Era of Giants great human-shaped beasts built cities of cloud and iron, while true people hid like mice in the undergrowth.
- 2 In the Silent Era the gods turned away and monsters crawled from the corners of the world to drown the wizards and priests in their own hubris.
- 3 When the Turning Wizards promised life everlasting they turned the world into a shadow realm of soulless bodies working to keep the wizards' palaces lit and warm.
- 4 In the Forging Era the dark took away another half of all humans, but the gates of the Former Afterlife were closed and the dead were lost.
- 5 In the Purification Era the light took away half of all humans into the Former Afterlife.
- 6 When the Hot Winds blew, crops wilted and whole cities died under the Green Sun.



Common Rules

The Barony of Brezim is a mountainous place. The terrain is harsh, building and maintaining infrastructure is expensive, travel is slow, going off the beaten path is difficult, bad weather makes everything much worse.

To simulate this environment in a game set in the barony, time is the crucial constraint and measurable distance on a map is almost irrelevant.

Encounters happen regularly to make it clear that time is a serious constraint, relentlessly depleting heroes resources.

Space is relevant as scenery for encounters, providing opportunities and obstacles for the heroes, and to set the mood. The referee can use the terrain tables to make encounters more or less challenging.



Time

Time in the game

A minute or less: usually rounds or turns in combat. Treat them however you like.

An hour: this is the basic unit of time for any activity. Whether the heroes bind wounds after a fight, explore an abandoned house, visit a blacksmith for a chat, or make diagrams of a creepy idol, this is how long it takes. This is an obvious abstraction. Use a d6 to tally hours up to the watch.

A watch: 6 hours long, this is the basic unit of time for travel, short rest, and encounter checks. Heroes should sleep at least one watch per day. Every watch missed applies penalties to activities.

A day: 4 watches long, the day is the basic unit of time for weather, environmental modifiers, and events.

A week: 7 days. The length of a long rest and some solid carousing.

Distance is Time

The map of Brezim shows settlements, mule-roads and travel times between them, the major mountains, rivers and forests. Travel times include basic preparations, packing, sandwich stops, and time to gawk at panoramic scenery.

Points of interest and curios are not marked. Add them to the map if you decide to visit them. Roll d6 twice to determine how far the location is from the nearest settlement and what the best path is like.

D6 Distance and Path Type

1-4 half a watch hunterway

5 one watch beastway

6 two watches mule-road

Mountains are hard to climb. For peaks, double the time required. For high peaks, triple the time required.

Going off trail, say to avoid an obstruction or enemy, is always slower.

D6 This is not a shortcut

1-3 x2 travel time

4-5 x4 travel time

6 x8 travel time

Encounters

In the wilderness an encounter occurs **once per watch, every watch**. A player rolls d100 and the referee consults the appropriate encounter table (p. 74–76). Every encounter table in Longwinter is ‘overloaded,’ like the Summer/Autumn Daytime Encounters table on the next page. This means that something happens every time it is checked. The referee section has nighttime and winter encounters.

Remember that not every encounter with a creature should result in combat. And if the party encounters The Dragon, they should probably just stay still and not move. Apparently dragons have frog DNA and can’t see immobile objects. Ok, that’s not true, probably.

Sometimes it matters *when* an encounter takes place—whether the heroes can run back to their point of origin, or press on to a safe house. In that case **roll 1d6 to determine the hour of the watch when the encounter takes place**—1: first hour, 2: second hour, and so on.

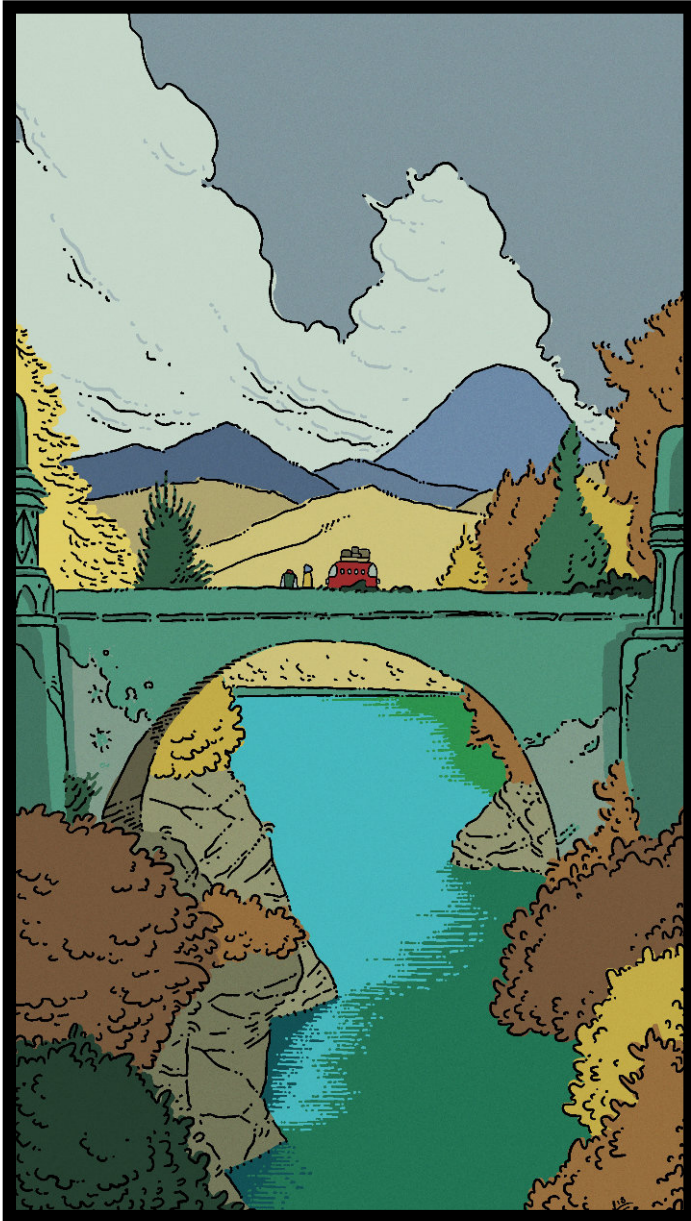
Encounters put pressure on the heroes to get somewhere safe fast.

In an enclosed dungeon or city environment, encounters might occur more often. Individual modules or locations usually have specific encounter rules. Otherwise, roll a 1d6 every hour: on a 1, an encounter occurs. Shockingly, this still results in exactly one encounter per watch.

Encounters of Autumn

D00 Summer/Autumn Daytime Encounters

01	The Dragon, flying surreally (HD 20).
02	Older Thing, flesh machine moaning and hiding (HD 10).
05	Forest Spirit, gracefully patrolling (HD 8).
04	Woodland Wurm, crawling for prey (HD 7).
05	Mountain Apes, playing monkey games (HD 6).
06	Aurochs, browsing coolly (HD 5).
07	Bears, stuffing themselves (HD 5).
08	Dire Lynx, stalking prey (HD 4).
09	Wild Boars, digging nuts and roots (HD 3).
10	Deer, a herd nervously awaiting winter.
11	Gnome Monkeys, squirreling away food (HD 2).
12	Mountain Goats, giving the evil eye (HD 1).
15	Wolffolk, shying from humans (HD 3).
14	Rabbits, multiplying.
15	Oldfolk, serfs slinking (HD 1).
16	Baronial, freesettlers working their holdings (HD 1).
17	Outlander, craftsmen and tourists (HD 1).
18	Baronial, official patroleurs keeping the peace (HD 2).
19	Cityfolk, merchants or specialists (HD 1).
20	Baronial, families, picking mushrooms.
21-50	Interaction: roll 1d20 twice.
51-40	Corpse: roll 1d10+10
41-60	Traces: roll 1d20.
61-70	Hunger: use food or lose 1d4 health.
71-80	Terrain: use survival gear or lose 1 stat.
81-90	Heat: use water or lose 1d4 health.
91-95	Soothing rest: spend 1d6 hours to regain 1d6 of one stat.
96	Wonderful spot: regain 1d6 of one stat.
97	Panorama: advantage to one mental check.
98	Delicious berries: advantage to one physical check.
99	Forgotten goods: roll on "loot the body."
00	I needed this! Pick a common item. You've found it.



Space

Paths

Going anywhere in a mountainous landscape means following paths and trails, because every other option is harder.

Beastway: a narrow trail, ill-maintained and used more by beasts than humans. A single infantry must watch their footing carefully. Most forest or mountain trails are of this sort. – Impassable for vehicles without extreme effort, pack animals double travel time.

Hunterway: a narrow trail kept in good condition by the local hunter society. A single infantry can easily fight on such a trail. — Almost impassable for vehicles, quadruple travel times.

Mule-road: a modern mountain road, specifically made for the narrow front-and-rear steering mechanical mules originally made by the Ovestá company. Two or three infantry can easily fight side-by-side on such a path. – Normal travel times. Mule-roads connect most major settlements in Brezim.

Livingstone road: a wide road built long ago, in the time of the Old Empire. Most are long dead, but some are still usable. As many as ten infantry could easily fight together on such a behemoth. – Halve travel times for vehicles. – There are no such roads in Brezim, but everybody knows about them and dreams about the day they might reach Gomiliy or even Rudvey.

Terrain and Weather

Whenever something happens in the mountains, the land is always an antagonist. Players or referees roll on the relevant terrain and weather feature tables to figure out what is going on, and the referee decides what kind of penalties and bonuses this applies.

Terrain Features

D20	Icefield	Mountain	Forest	River
1	Crevasse	Slippery slope	Great linden tree	Beaver dam
2	Slippery	Grassy hummocks	Overgrown pit	Rapids
3	Deep snow	Shattered terrain	Leaf-filled trench	Cascades
4	Pitted	Narrow ridge	Ravine full of broken wood	Waterfall
5	Rotten	Friable rocks	Fallen pines	Confluence
6	Avalanche danger	Falling stones	Overgrown dwarf-pines	Bridge
7	Sharp shards	Unstable boulders	Dense ferns	Massive boulders
8	Rocks in the snow	Cliff	Barrier of raspberry bushes	Sandy beach
9	Ice cliff	Overhang	Dark fir grove	Pool
10	Frozen slope	Cave	Ivy-choked larches	Tangle of lilies and frogs
11	Smoothed boulders	Pinnacle	Rocks broken by oaks	Exposed riverbed
12	Overhanging ice	Massive boulder	Tangled woody vines	Pebble stream
13	Icicles	Crevasse	Barrow with hazel thicket	Slippery clay banks
14	Briny pools	Natural bridge	Clearing with mushrooms	Uprooted tree
15	Pink algal ice	Ravine	Somber beeches	Ruins of dam
16	Powder drifts	Chimney	Flash-flood debris	Gorge
17	Ice cave	Hole	Storm-broken trees	Spring
18	Ice bridge	Small lake	Quiet meadow, flowers	Deep water
19	Broken blocks	Rocky outcrop	Slippery mosses	Rushing shallows
20	Gravel and ice berms	Plateau	White birches, long grass	Gravel banks

Weather Features

D20	Wind	Cloud	Rain	Snow
1	Rustling	Rolling banks of fog	Humid	Sparkling crystals
2	Gentle	Crawling mist	Drizzle	Floating snowflakes
3	Whipping	Dull grey	Pelting droplets	Flurries
4	Howling	Ominous bruised	Gentle	White feathers
5	Murmuring	Heavy	Cool mist	Fine
6	Pelting dust and leaves	Towering	Showers	Light
7	Tossing sticks	Oppressive	Clammy	Like flower petals
8	Shaking treetops	Climbing hillsides	Remorseless	A white veil
9	Rattling shutters	Tumbling down slopes	Morose	Heavy flakes
10	Flying snow	Dropping	Heavy	Sticky wet flakes
11	Stabbing like ice	Gathering	Sour	Dry
12	Squalling	Breaking	Slow	Powdery
13	Screaming	Rising	Ominous	Glutinous
14	Ripping foliage	Scattered	Freezing	Gathering in drifts
15	Scouring soil	Drifting	Sleeting	A duvet of snow
16	Booming	Diaphanous	Thunderous	Silent
17	Hollow	Gauzy	Exhausting	Rushing
18	Ceaseless	Icy	Unremitting	Blizzard
19	Gusting	Cold	Dark	White out
20	Laughing	Thick	Torrential	Howling snowstorm

Encounter Mishaps

Mud, rain, wind and snow make combat difficult. Ridges and slopes make falls dangerous. In the mountains, almost no encounter happens on a simple flat square. Encounter mishaps roughly model the inherent difficulty of getting anything done in such terrain.

Whenever a character rolls a 13 during a physical check, including combat, they suffer a misfortune depending on the environment. Apply effects after resolving the check. The character may lose 1 point of Charisma instead of suffering the misfortune.

D10 Ice Misfortunes

- 1 Weapon dropped and lost.
- 2 Clothes damaged.
- 3 Shoe caught.
- 4 Character injured by ice shard.
- 5 Slips and falls.
- 6 Stumbles.
- 7 Slips and wheels arms comically.
- 8 Breaks through into pit.
- 9 Stumbles off ledge, hanging on.
- 10 Stumbles off ledge and goes flying.

D10 Rocky Slope Misfortunes

- 1 Weapon damaged.
- 2 Clothes damaged.
- 3 Armor damaged.
- 4 Equipment damaged.
- 5 Character injured by sharp rock.
- 6 Falls painfully.
- 7 Knocked out by fall.
- 8 Sprains ankle.
- 9 Slowed.
- 10 Stumbles off ledge, hanging on.

D10 Mud Misfortunes

- 1 Mechanism jams.
- 2 Character slips.
- 3 Slips and falls.
- 4 Stuck in place or loses shoe.
- 5 Splashes into puddle.
- 6 Falls into puddle.
- 7 Slowed by sticky mud.
- 8 Blinded by flying mud.
- 9 Choked by flying mud.
- 10 Injured by hidden rock.

D10 Wind Misfortunes

- 1 Attack blown widely off mark.
- 2 Hit ally or attack blown off.
- 3 Light item blown away.
- 4 Clothes blown away.
- 5 Character blinded by debris.
- 6 Confused, thinks someone is behind them.
- 7 Deafened.
- 8 Injured by debris.
- 9 Thrown off balance.
- 10 Stumbles.

D10 Rain Misfortunes

- 1 Ammo wet.
- 2 Food wet.
- 3 Lamp wet.
- 4 Clothes wet.
- 5 Character blinded.
- 6 Character deafened.
- 7 Splashes into puddle.
- 8 Slips.
- 9 Slips and falls.
- 10 Stumbles on hidden rock.

D10 Snow Misfortunes

- 1 Weapon dropped and lost.
- 2 Ammo wet.
- 3 Food wet.
- 4 Lamp wet.
- 5 Character blinded.
- 6 Deafened.
- 7 Slips and falls.
- 8 Slowed by drift.
- 9 Dazed and confused.
- 10 Injured by hidden rock.

D10+Charisma Flying Off A Cliff

- 1 or less** Lethal. Gruesome. Combat pauses as everybody watches, suddenly aware of their own mortality. Human combatants can call off the fight.
- 2-3** Long, steep, and probably lethal. Fall seems to take forever. 2d10 x 10 damage at the end.
- 4-5** Gruesome, tumbling fall. Takes three rounds, 1d6 x 10 damage per round. After taking damage, character can check to see if they catch themselves on a shrub or rock.
- 6-8** Painful tumbling slide. Takes three rounds, 1d6 x 5 damage per round. After taking damage, character can try to stop themselves.
- 9-10** Slide down gravel slope in tangle of limbs and small landslide of loose rocks. Takes three rounds, 1d6 damage per round. After taking damage, character can try to stop themselves.
- 11 or more** Flies off the edge, takes 1d6 damage and is caught in a convenient tree or eagle nest about 10' below the ledge.

Survival and Inventory

There is no bad weather, there is only bad equipment.

This is usually a fact, but sometimes lightning strikes a hero exposed on a hilltop. Then again, is lightning even weather?

To simulate the hardship of watch-by-watch survival in the winter environment, Longwinter details inventory in greater detail than the UVG.

The basic rule remains: a human can carry one sack unencumbered and two sacks encumbered.

Each sack breaks down into 10 stones.

One stone is about 15lb: one generic significant item, like a sabre or spear or short sword or shovel.

Leave aside one stone for 10 'soaps': generic small items, like a signal whistle or signet ring or spike. Or bar of soap.

Add or subtract stones equal to the character's Strength bonus.

Ranger and barbarian types gain three free "survival inventory slots" which can only be used for warm clothes, food, or survival gear.

Resources

The following are crucial in winter.

Warm Clothes

Coats, caps, mittens, parkas, scarves, leggings, and more. A human who is not the Michelin man cannot wear more than 5 units of warm clothes. Warm clothes work as "heat points," insulating the character against the cold. Cold checks are rolled every watch that the hero spends outside. Mark clothes as chilled when the cold gets through.

Warm clothes may also double as survival supplies for encounters. Slashing weapons, explosions, and fire ruin warm clothes. Water makes them ineffective (they get chilled and wet).

Meals

Bread, water, cheese, schnapps, butter, sausages. Staying warm takes a lot of energy. One day's meal takes one stone, travel rations may be more compact. Some encounters require characters to eat meals or lose health.

A character must eat one meal per day or they lose 1d4 hit points.

Armor

Keeps white apes and ice worms from hitting the hero. Armor is also bulky. Light armor takes one stone. Medium is two, and heavy is three. A shield takes another stone.

Weapons

To kill wolffolk and skintakers. If weapons need ammunition, it runs out when a 13 is rolled on an attack. The hero may choose to miss instead of using their last piece of ammo. Each weapon takes one stone. Each pack of additional ammunition takes another stone.

Survival Gear

Tents, ropes, sleeping bags, pitons, walking sticks, crampons, axes, ladders, picks, carabiners, axes, harnesses and more. At any time, a hero may use up a unit of survival gear to reroll a failed mountaineering or climbing check. One unit of mountain gear is always used up when a 13 is rolled on a check. In this case, the hero may choose to fail the check instead of using up their gear. Some encounters require characters to use survival gear to avoid losing health or stats.

A character can use one unit of survival supplies per short rest (one watch) to recover 1d4 hit points.

Lamps

Fuel, oil, wood, torches, batteries, coal braziers. Something that gives off light and usually also heat. Lamps are often used up by night time encounters. Lamps can be used to attack undead and cold creatures, dealing 2d6 damage when used up.

Rest and Recovery

Longwinter assumes gritty realism rules with slight modifications. Resting rules are a little more forgiving, but the environment is a lot harsher.

Short Rest

Lasts one watch (6 hours). After a hero can:

- † Use Hit Dice to recover hit points.

and one of the following:

- † Recover one point of a lost stat (Str, Dex, etc.).
- † Remove one exhaustion level.
- † Regain one heat point.
- † End one harmful effect.

Heroes should sleep once a day or else:

1 day Disadvantage on social activities.

2 days Disadvantage on all activities.

3 days Disadvantage on all activities and all saving throws, every watch save or fall asleep.

4 days Disadvantage on all activities and all saving throws, halved hit point maximums, every watch save or fall asleep.

Long Rest

Takes five full days, leaving a weekend for carousing. After a long rest a hero:

- † Recovers all their hit points and heat points, and half their Hit Dice.
- † Recovers 1d6 points in every stat (Str, Dex, etc.).
- † Removes all exhaustion levels.
- † Ends all harmful effects, including sleep deprivation.
- † Checks to end all illnesses.

If a hero is being cared for by another character, they recover more quickly.

D10 Resting in Horrible Conditions

Heroes should avoid sleeping in here. Hero:

- 1** Contracts pneumonia (max hit points halved) or flu (disadvantage to all checks). Marks corresponding exhaustion level. Cure requires a long rest and care.
- 2-4** Sleeps poorly, dreaming of white birds and laughing death. Cannot recover any lost points or remove exhaustion levels. Can still use HD.
- 5-9** Sleeps ok.
- 10** Wakes up surprisingly refreshed. One chronic ache is gone or one disease is cured or gains 1 temporary point to a random stat.

D10 Resting in Ordinary Conditions

Most nights should be uneventful. Hero:

- 1 Sleeps poorly, dreaming of an ice princess and bleeding eyes. Cannot recover any lost points or remove exhaustion levels. Can still use HD.
- 2-8 Sleeps ok.
- 9 Wakes up eager to change the world. Gains 1d4 temporary hit points.
- 10 Wakes up refreshed and ready to attack the day. Gains 1d8 temporary hit points or 1 temporary heat point.

D10 Resting in Excellent Conditions

Everybody wants to rest this way. Hero:

- 1 Dreams of bloody slaughter and frozen children clinging to the bosom of a graceful ice goddess. Cannot remove any exhaustion levels. Gains 1 temporary point of Charisma.
- 2-5 Wakes up with +1d4 temporary hit points.
- 6-8 The effects of rest are doubled.
- 9 The effects of rest are doubled and gains 1d6 temporary hit points or 1 temporary heat point.
- 10 Wakes up feeling blessed by wealth and kindness of the Firebringer and the Green Sun. Rest effects are doubled and gains 2 temporary heat points or 1d6+6 temporary hitpoints.

The Cold

As far as the human body is concerned, the weather can be infinitely bad. In game, the referee estimates how cold it is based on the described weather.

Heroes wandering around outside in the cold have to make a check.

If a hero is wearing more units of warm clothes than the cold level, they do not have to roll a cold check. Their body heat is enough to keep them going.

Cold Level and Cold Checks

- | | | |
|---|-------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | Cool | Survival DC 5 |
| 2 | Cold | DC 10 |
| 3 | Bloody Cold | DC 15 |
| 4 | Siberian | DC 20 |
| 5 | Frozen Hell | DC 30 (auto-fail, basically) |

A roll of a 1 is always a failure.

Wind imposes a disadvantage on survival checks against the cold.

Digging into snow or leaves gives advantage to the cold checks.

Rain and damp means the cold effects are doubled.

A character in cold water makes an immediate cold check, and then another cold check every few minutes. The water soaks 1d4 items of warm clothing per round. Wet clothes provide no heat points and impose a disadvantage to cold checks out of water.

Failing the Cold Check

When a character fails the cold check they lose a heat point (two if it is raining). Medium animals like humans and wolves start with one heat point. Big animals like horses and bears start with two.

Warm clothes, fluffy fur, or winter feathers add additional heat points.

When a hero has no heat points left, any additional heat points lost translate directly into fatigue.

Fatigue

As a hero gets colder, sicker, and more tired, they grow more fatigued. Soon enough, they're dead.

- 0 It's fine.
- 1 Disadvantage to all checks.
- 2 Speed halved.
- 3 Current and max hit points halved.
- 4 Comatose, unresponsive, 'sleeping.'
- 5 Dead.

A short rest can remove one level of exhaustion.



Bones
for the
Referee

How to Referee the Icebox

The Barony of Brezim is an rpg sandbox. As the referee, let the players weave their own adventures out of a mix of strange locations, sidequests, and random encounters.

However, Winterwhite's curse provides an overarching narrative: survival in the face of an unending winter. As the barony gets colder and darker, Winterwhite snaps the trap shut. Ice worms crawl down from the peaks and up from the rivers to lock the valley in ice.

Do not make this immediately clear to the players or the inhabitants of the Brezim, announce it with portents and growing danger.

As the trap closes, the environment becomes harsher. Travel becomes more difficult. The weather kills faster. Food becomes scarcer. The baronials grow weaker. The monsters grow stronger.

When the players decide to escape, it will be possible, but hard. They will lose NPCs and friends along the way. Think of the movies "K2" and "Alive".

The 'True' History of Brezim

The snow is alive. A soft, cold spirit courses through them. Her lace threads the world; watching, drinking, listening, stroking, soothing, killing. Her touch is soft and icy. She is Winterwhite, the daughter of the Waterdrinker and the Northwind, and she is a terrible god. An avatar of ice and hunger, of visions and death.

The ice-drowned mountains that spread behind Motherberg are her home. Brezim and other mountain valleys grow and quietly die at her whim.



A hundred years ago Verdek and Ivan Greencorner came up the valley with four hundred civilized soldiers. The oldsettlers met their muskets and maces with bows and traps.

That first summer the Greencorners burned oldsettler villages and fields, tore down the henges and crucified the men, bayoneted the babies and kidnapped brides for themselves.



That first winter the oldsettler shamans called and the wolffolk and the skintakers came. Children and grandmothers crawled out of mass graves to drown the soldiers in their own blood. One after another the wood-whispered invader forts cracked and broke.

At last the oldsettlers pushed the Greencorners to the great barrow hill between the Rushka and the Krasna rivers.

The frozen ancestors claimed the kidnapped brides for themselves. The skintakers took the enslaved and rode them. The oldsettlers howled to the moon, for never could they be unfree.

The Greencorners retreated up that hill, among ruins like fangs and ribs. The horde came for them. Their bullets ran out and they dropped their guns. Skintakers whipped amalgamated horrors of flesh and wood across the old living walls at the hills' crown. Their swords grew as blunt as their maces as they staggered back into mist-laced bowel of the hill. Roaring worms of flesh and bone battered down metal hatches and stone doors as the oldsettlers followed.

The last dozen soldiers fled deeper and deeper, until they reached a white room with black tapestries, and an altar of crystal-clear ice. On the altar stood a white bird with red eyes and a bloody beak.

"You are new," said the bird.

The soldiers ignored it and heaved the mighty white stone door shut.

"That won't stop them," said the bird.

"It talks," said Verdek.

Ivan grunted and squinted with as the doc tightened the tourniquet on his left leg.

“The bird, it talks,” repeated Verdek.

A couple of the warriors inched towards the altar. The bird flapped into the air and perched on a frost-rimed chandelier. Its talons left a bloody stain.

“Stop, guys,” said Mira Falconsbrood, “I’m as hungry as you, but eating the magic white bird won’t do anything. The savages are coming for us with their needle teeth.”

On cue there was a hollow thump as something broke through a barricade, getting closer.

“So it talks,” said Ivan.

Verdek stepped under the chandelier and craned his head, “Bird! Who are you?”

“Oh, questions! I like that game,” said the bird, “I am the soft hand of winter, and who are you?”

Mira squinted thoughtfully.

“We are the brothers Greencloak, rulers of this land,” announced Verdek.

“We are supplicants to the lady,” added Mira.

Verdek frowned, “We’re republican soldiers, we don’t...”

“Shut up,” she hissed.

The bird made a rattling cough. The warriors stopped.

“It’s laughing,” said Ivan.

“Yes! The one-foot is right, I am laughing,” said the bird.

Verdek leapt onto the altar, windmilling his arms to keep his balance on the ice. Mira reached out a hand to steady him.

“Get down here, you feathered mockery,” shouted Verdek. With his numb fingers he fumbled for the throwing knife at his side. It wasn’t there.

His leg buckled under him and he fell hard onto the ice altar.

“Oh, Winterwhite, we beg you! Save us!” cried Mira and plunged Verdek’s throwing knife into his throat, “Accept our sacrifice! Accept our ruler’s youngest kin! Accept our worship!”

The white stone cracked and the survivors crawled out from under the barrow as winter squeezed the valley. For three months the winter did not let up. The oldsettlers starved. The soldiers ate the dead.



That second summer Greencorner and his soldiers went to the cities to tell their stories of oldsettler savagery and cannibalism.



That second winter the Emperor of the Republic bestowed a baronage on Ivan Greencorner and a posthumous order of valor on his brother Verdek, who gave his life to save his companions. At the same time the Generalissimo of the Western City made Mira Falconsbrood the treasurer of the Brezim Burners.



That third summer Ivan and Mira returned to the valleys with the Brezim Burners. White birch gibbets full of oldsettler savages greeted the first snows that year.

Every year after that the gun and the axe pushed the savages further into barren highlands and dark forests.

The whispered wood pallisades and the warding runes went up. The second baron of Brezim sacrificed her youngest nephew to Winterwhite. The mule-roads were built. The third baron of Brezim sacrificed his twin sons to Winterwhite. The great ancient silver mine was reopened. The fourth baron of Brezim quietly sacrificed her younger sister to Winterwhite. Traders and craftsfolk came. The fifth baron quietly sacrificed his baby niece to Winterwhite and said she had died of measles. Guesthouses and spas opened. The sixth baron, Soren Greencorner II, ascended to the silver-bone throne.

Soren did not sacrifice his daughter to Winterwhite. His vizier, old Negra Falconsbrood begged him to reconsider.

Soren refused and Negra died in an unfortunate motoring accident. Her nephew, Ibrahim Falconsbrood, a well-traveled ethnologist from the Eastern City took her position.

Years passed and nothing happened, and Soren realized that the terrible family stories of sacrificing their children to the laughing ice goddess were just superstition and lies covering up the bestial cruelty of his ancestors.

Soren opened orphanages and schools for oldsettler children, to integrate them into society as upstanding citizens, free from the savage superstitions of their ancestors.

He lobbied the Kings' Council to open equal education to all children, regardless of ethnicity. The industrialist conclaves supported him and he achieved a modicum of fame.

Then his daughter turned eighteen and Winterwhite sent her insistent dreams.

Soren ignored the ice queen.

They all ignored her.



Winterwhite Aggrieved

Winterwhite, daughter of the Waterdrinker and the Northwind, is a terrible god, the bringer of ice and hunger and visions and death. She rules her peaceful white domain with a soft, cold touch.

She smiles as she inhales the souls of the dead and covers their cold corpses with a gentle shroud.

She is never angry when somebody breaks their vow.

No, she is glad.

For then neither Firebringer nor Green Sun, neither Devil's Grandfather nor Doctor Love can guard her prey from her.

Her white birds carry her dreams to her subjects, witting and unwitting.

They visited Soren, the baron of Brezim, and whispered, "Soren, your ancestors' vow still binds you, the Lady remembers."

Soren ignored them.

They flew again, "Soren, your great uncle's shadow begs you consider, the Lady remembers."

Soren visited the apothecary and took sleeping draughts.

Winterwhite's birds flew again, "Soren, summer is turning and the Day of All Ghosts will come. Your vow-given ancestors will gather at the altar of ice to see you renew your vow to the Lady."

Soren drank the best vintages brought by long-haired traders from the sun-kissed hills.

The birds left hoarfrost where they stepped, "Soren, tomorrow is the last day. Pay your blood debt, or the Lady's interest will be steep."

Soren awoke on the Day of All Ghosts with a pounding headache and went hunting. He bagged a five-tine stag on the ridge behind Gomiliy, while his friend Lazar Woolmaker bagged an incredible eight-tine hart. It was a good day.

When the sun set, Winterwhite sent her white birds to Northwind and Waterdrinker. The birds announced that the winter of her content had come.

Winterwhite's Curse

"The gods stitch our human world together, but they are not human." —Vedom the Iskari Wolf Prophet.

The vow of Mira Falconbrood was simple: save us, and we will give your our youngest and bravest. The vow amused Winterwhite, but she took it seriously nonetheless.

The vow has been broken, and now she will destroy everyone in the land she gave to the Greencorners. It's nothing personal, it's just a vow.

This year the winter will not end. The north wind will blow. The snow will fall.

The rivers will freeze. The ice worms will crawl. Frost will choke the sky.

Darkness will come and everybody in the valley will come to sleep with Winterwhite.

Best not fight it.

After a year and one winter, the spring will come again. Winterwhite is not all powerful, after all, and the Firebringer would have words with her if she overstepped her prerogative.

Portents of Winterwhite

Portents will come. The foolish modern rulers will ignore them until it is too late, of course, but these things must be done properly.

In the end, the sun will close its eye over Brezim and darkness and cold and soft silence will reign until the next solstice.

D30 Portents

- 1 White faces float beyond windows at night.
- 2 Pale icy ghosts crawl from frozen puddles to accuse the living.
- 3 White foxes dig holes in the cemeteries.
- 4 White crows land on the temples.
- 5 Frozen birds on the trees in the morning.
- 6 Fish frozen in streams.
- 7 Frogs turned to ice together with their ponds.
- 8 Tree trunks snapped open by the sudden cold.
- 9 Barrows ploughed open by upthrusting ice.

- 10 Tinkling laughter on the icy wind.
- 11 Crawling shadows leaving rime behind them.
- 12 White wolves whose shaggy manes drip hoarfrost.
- 13 Shattered corpses of birds frozen mid-flight.
- 14 Glaciers slithering down mountainsides like icy worms.
- 15 Powdery snow that refuses to melt.
- 16 Whistling wind that steals voices.
- 17 Dead leaves that crumble to snow.
- 18 Ornaments on the yule trees turn to ice.
- 19 Dead trees that sweat ice.
- 20 Flowers of snow and vines of ice grow in gardens.
- 21 Hoarfrost spreading in starbursts from the graves of the recently deceased.
- 22 Fog and mist dropping suddenly to the ground as a thick layer of hoar frost.
- 23 Frosted handprints and footprints on doors and windows.
- 24 Clouds that freeze in place.
- 25 The sun crawling, purplish as though bruised.
- 26 The moon eclipsed by blackish ice.
- 27 The moon disappears.
- 28 The sky turns white, as though it is a dome and frost is crawling up its sides.
- 29 The days grow shorter after the winter solstice.
- 30 The sun weeps ice.

Days of White Snow and Red Ice

Longwinter covers 100 days—3 months and change—that take the Barony of Brezim from late autumn to the dark year of Winterwhite’s curse, when the sun is obscured until the solstice returns again. You can use the three months as an actual calendar, or as a random table to generate weather and events.

Where events are large-scale, encounters affect only the heroes. Like the weather, the encounters are also split by month and time of day, to model how Winterwhite’s curse changes the land.

Roll encounters every watch. Until half way through the second month there are two daytime watches and two nighttime watches, after that, as the darkness gathers, there is only one daytime watch per four watches.

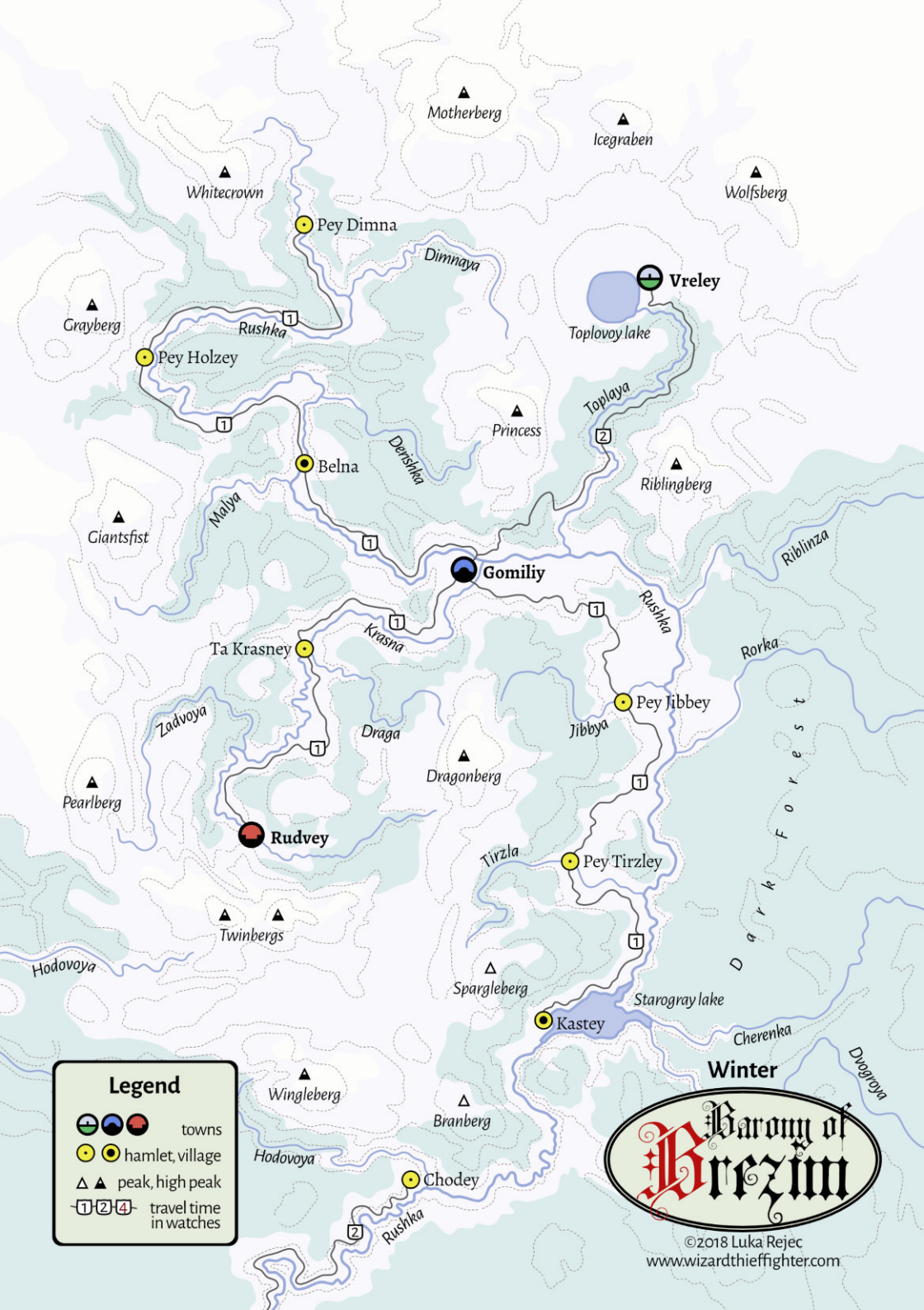
Some encounters cause stat loss. A stat is any number on a character sheet, health refers to any health stat. In a D&D-type game, the stats are Str, Dex, etc., while health is usually hp. One point of damage should suffice in most games that do not have ready access to infinite healing. If you are using 5E, Longwinter assumes gritty healing rules.

Days of Autumn

Before Winterwhite tightened her grip, autumn seemed normal. It was cold. It rained. Sleet and leaves fell. Start your icebox here if you want a slow lead up to winter. Use the standard map.

November – Leafall – Autumn

D30	Weekday	Day Weather (Cold Level)	Night Weather (Cold Level)	Events
1	Thursday	Fine and sunny (0)	Cold and clear (2)	Day of All Ghosts
2	Friday	Bracing and cool (1)	Windy, cold (2)	Rudvey market
3	Saturday	Stiff breeze (1)	Still, very cold (2)	
4	Sunday	Cloudy and ominous (0)	Foggy (1)	
5	Monday	Lashing rain showers (1)	Bone-chilling rain (2)	Belna farm market
6	Tuesday	Persistent heavy rain (2)	Breaking clouds (1)	Pey Dimna pass cut
7	Wednesday	Dull fog (1)	Pea-thick fog (1)	Gomiliy market
8	Thursday	Oppressive fog (1)	Frost (2)	Last Quarter
9	Friday	Clear day (0)	Wood smoke and frost (2)	Rudvey market
10	Saturday	Smell of snow on breeze (1)	Skins of ice on troughs (2)	
11	Sunday	Pillows of building clouds (1)	Surprisingly warm night (1)	
12	Monday	Light snow and steady wind (2)	Clammy, cold night (2)	Kastey farm market
13	Tuesday	Clinging fog (2)	Rime crawls up windows (2)	
14	Wednesday	Cool, humid day (1)	Woodsmoke crawls low (1)	Gomiliy market
15	Thursday	Heavy rain (1)	Sleet falls (3)	
16	Friday	Freezing rain (2)	Ice storm (3)	Rudvey market. New Moon
17	Saturday	Gelid showers (2)	Long icicles grow. Freezing (3)	Earthquake. Branberg landslide cuts off southern mule-road
18	Sunday	Grim mists (1)	Tinkle of breaking ice (2)	Landslide investigation
19	Monday	Strong winds (2)	Gale-force gusts (2)	Belna farm market
20	Tuesday	Calm, cold day (2)	Cold night (2)	
21	Wednesday	Bright and icy day (2)	Mild night (1)	Gomiliy market
22	Thursday	Towering clouds in the west (1)	Heavy fog wreathes the valleys (1)	
23	Friday	Flurries of snow (2)	Eerily calm night (2)	Rudvey market
24	Saturday	Blizzard (3)	Whiteout (3)	Trolls attack landslide area. First Quarter
25	Sunday	Lonely snow flakes falling (2)	Clear night, diamond stars (2)	Spargleberg pass cut
26	Monday	Blindingly bright day (1)	Cloudy night (1)	Kastey farm market
27	Tuesday	Hot wind and grey clouds (0)	Misty night (1)	
28	Wednesday	Slow, heavy drops of rain (1)	Freezing rain showers (2)	Gomiliy market, a damp affair
29	Thursday	Reletless rain (1)	Driving sleet (3)	
30	Friday	Heavy wet snow (2)	Gelid cold snap (3)	Rudvey market cancelled



Legend

-    towns
-  hamlet, village
-   peak, high peak
-    travel time in watches

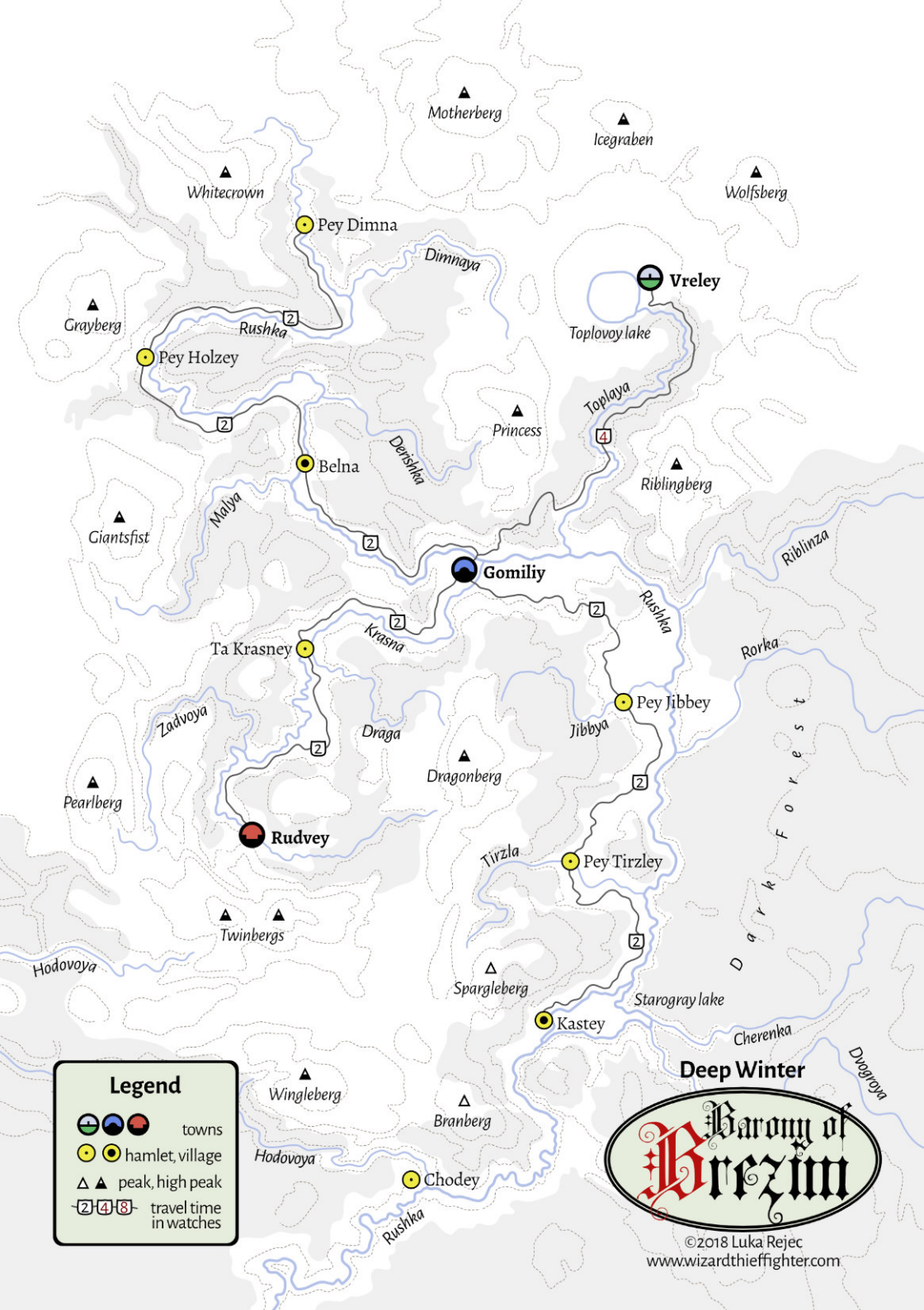


Days of Winter

As the winter descends on Brezim, the mule-roads begin to fight the traveller and the passes out are cut. Start the icebox here if you want to go straight for the survival horror as the sun fails to be reborn at the winter solstice.

December – Rawsoil – Winter

D30	Weekday	Day Weather (Cold Level)	Night Weather (Cold Level)	Events
1	Saturday	Icy crust on heavy snow (2)	Freezing winds (4)	Full Moon
2	Sunday	Howling winds, clear skies (3)	Silent and freezing (3)	
3	Monday	Clear and silent day (2)	Silent night (3)	Belna farm market
4	Tuesday	Ice melts in weak sun (1)	Icy night (3)	
5	Wednesday	Gusting north winds (2)	Icy winds (4)	Gomily market, flapping awnings
6	Thursday	Gentle flurries (2)	Silence and clear skies (3)	
7	Friday	Heavy snowfall (2)	Heavy snowfall, whiteout (3)	Rudvey market cancelled
8	Saturday	Whiteout (3)	Light snow (2)	Last Quarter
9	Sunday	Gray skies, whistling wind (2)	Temperatures plummet (4)	
10	Monday	Cold snap, streams freeze (4)	Cold takes breath away (4)	Kastey farm market
11	Tuesday	Sun, hazy veils (2)	Stars like cold hatred (3)	Days shorten and have one daylight watch
12	Wednesday	Cool steady chill breeze (3)	Painfully cold (3)	Gomily market
13	Thursday	Powder falls steadily (3)	Powder and darkness (3)	
14	Friday	Powder fall, clouds darken (3)	Dark, cold, winter night (3)	Rudvey market
15	Saturday	Thundersnow and powder darken the day (3)	Lightning crackles in the clouds (3)	
16	Sunday	Storm dies down, powder continues to fall (3)	Wind picks up, tossing snow (4)	New Moon
17	Monday	Gelid north wind howls, piling up snow drifts (4)	Temperatures grow cruel, winds die down, (4)	Belna farm market cancelled
18	Tuesday	Silent gray day (3)	Silent black night (4)	
19	Wednesday	Silent slate gray day (3)	Silent purple night (4)	Gomily market
20	Thursday	Quiet, freezing day (3)	Spittle freezes in the air (4)	
21	Friday	Ice cracks like bells (4)	Gelid night (5)	Rudvey market
22	Saturday	Sun blazes, wind whips snow (3)	Gentle snow, cool night (3)	Solstice
23	Sunday	Blizzard (3)	Mocking blizzard (3)	First Quarter
24	Monday	Howling blizzard (4)	Quiet blizzard (3)	Kastey farm market cancelled
25	Tuesday	Laughing blizzard (3)	Sudden silence, freezing (4)	Avalanche cuts road south of Chodey
26	Wednesday	Cold snap, small rivers freeze (4)	Evil stars and rising wind (5)	The day has not started getting longer! Gomily market
27	Thursday	Wind howls in the pines (4)	Booming wind, vicious cold (5)	
28	Friday	Gusts of wind continue (4)	Biting icy wind (5)	Rudvey market
29	Saturday	Steady north wind. (4)	Still night, groaning ice (4)	
30	Sunday	Fluffy clouds, frozen landscape. (3)	Cruel, icy night. (4)	Full Moon.



Legend

-    towns
-  hamlet, village
-  peak, high peak
-  travel time in watches



Days of Deep Winter

They rail against the fading light, but it is too late. Start here if you want forty days of bleak despair and a game focused on scrounging the resources required for escape.

January – Iceling – Deep Winter

D30	Weekday	Day Weather (Cold Level)	Night Weather (Cold Level)	Events
1	Monday	Wet snow falls patchily (2)	Ice coats the forests (3)	Belna farm market
2	Tuesday	Snow blankets the land (2)	White night (3)	
3	Wednesday	Temperatures plummet, icy wind roars down mountains (4)	Wind-blown snow obscures the night (4)	Frost crawling up the sides of the sky. Gomily market cancelled
4	Thursday	Clear skies, whistling wind (3)	Lakes freeze (4)	
5	Friday	Clear skies and silence (3)	Icy quiet (4)	Rudvey market
6	Saturday	Gauzy clouds and silence (3)	Frost-growing night (4)	It's like a snow globe freezing over!
7	Sunday	Hazy skies and silence (2)	Rime spreads (4)	Third Quarter
8	Monday	White skies and silence (2)	Snow and cold, silence (3)	Kastey farm market
9	Tuesday	White skies, light snow (2)	Silent, white night (3)	
10	Wednesday	White skies, heavy snow (2)	Whiteout (3)	Gomily market
11	Thursday	Whiteout (3)	Whiteout (3)	
12	Friday	Whiteout (3)	Cruel mocking snowflakes (4)	Rudvey market cancelled
13	Saturday	Silvery sky, gusting winds (4)	Gusts shiver the stars (5)	
14	Sunday	Gusting icy winds (4)	Still horribly cold (5)	
15	Monday	Thundering gelid winds (5)	Dark and windy night (5)	Belna farm market cancelled. New Moon
16	Tuesday	Sustained icy winds (4)	Wind. Cold. Cruel (5)	
17	Wednesday	Laughing icy winds (4)	Gleeful stars like cold hell eyes (5)	Gomily market
18	Thursday	Barreling icy winds (5)	Trees break under ice and wind (5)	
19	Friday	Icy gale (5)	Wind stops. Waters freeze (5)	Rudvey market cancelled
20	Saturday	Silence. Rivers freeze over (5)	Freezing continues (5)	
21	Sunday	Silence and ice (5)	Ice worms crawl out (5)	
22	Monday	Ice and silence (5)	Ice worms crawl down hills (5)	Kastey farm market. Panic
23	Tuesday	Sparkling snowflakes (4)	Ice worms crawling (5)	First Quarter
24	Wednesday	Mocking snowflakes (4)	Iceworms reach Rushka (5)	Gomily market
25	Thursday	Ice and sun (3)	Hoar frost grows long (4)	
26	Friday	Wan sun and building clouds (3)	Icicles grow like fangs (4)	Rudvey market
27	Saturday	Rag clouds, slight warming (3)	Snow falls from branches (3)	
28	Sunday	Reddish sun, slight warming, icicles drip (2)	Puddles and ice freeze again (4)	Avalanche cuts several roads
29	Monday	Clear sky and crackling ice (3)	Clear, cruel night (4)	Belna farm market
30	Tuesday	Clear sky and silence (3)	Shredded clouds chase moon (4)	Full Moon. Lunar eclipse

Encounters of Autumn

D00	Day	Night
01	The Dragon, flying surreally (HD 20).	The Dark Father, spirit of the First Baron (HD 15).
02	Older Thing, flesh machine moaning and hiding (HD 10).	Undead Troll, drawn from its unquiet rocky rest (HD 13).
03	Forest Spirit, gracefully patrolling (HD 8).	Wild Spirit, looking for mad fools to possess (HD 11).
04	Woodland Wyrms, crawling for prey (HD 7).	Skeleton Thing, eyes afire with calcified passion (HD 9).
05	Mountain Apes, playing monkey games (HD 6).	Night Wisps, flickering with the red of fast decay (HD 7).
06	Aurochs, browsing coolly (HD 5).	Werewolves, prowling and hungry (HD 6).
07	Bears, stuffing themselves (HD 5).	Heart Owl, looking for souls and loves to steal (HD 5).
08	Dire Lynx, stalking prey (HD 4).	Dire Wolf, howling for hell (HD 4).
09	Wild Boars, digging nuts and roots (HD 3).	Wolves, hunting fools (HD 3).
10	Deer, a herd nervously awaiting winter.	Lonely Dead, begging to be near light, food, life (HD 2).
11	Gnome Monkeys, squirreling away food (HD 2).	Gnome Monkeys engaged in bloody sacrifice (HD 2).
12	Mountain Goats, giving the evil eye (HD 1).	Fairies, promising lies with mirror eyes (HD 1).
13	Wolffolk, shying from humans (HD 3).	Foxes, laughing and bewitching.
14	Rabbits, multiplying.	Scurrying Rodents, fearful and hungry.
15	Oldfolk, serfs slinking (HD 1).	Changelings, singing like dogs in the night (HD 2).
16	Baronial, freesettlers working their holdings (HD 1).	Oldfolk separatists pretending to be cultists (HD 1).
17	Outlander, craftsmen and tourists (HD 1).	Wolffolk skin-takers, looking for skins (HD 3).
18	Baronial, official patroleurs keeping the peace (HD 2).	Baronial cultists, appeasing old gods (HD 1).
19	Cityfolk, merchants or specialists (HD 1).	Baronial smugglers (HD 2).
20	Baronial, families, picking mushrooms.	Baronial Dark Rangers (HD 3).
21-50	Interaction: roll 1d20 twice.	Interaction: roll 1d20 twice.
31-40	Corpse: roll 1d10+10	Corpse: roll 1d10+10
41-60	Traces: roll 1d20.	Traces: roll 1d20.
61-70	Hunger: use food or lose 1d4 health.	Dark: use lamp or lose 1 stat.
71-80	Terrain: use survival gear or lose 1 stat.	Dark: use lamp or survival gear or lose 1 stat.
81-90	Heat: use water or lose 1d4 health.	Cold: eat meal or lose 1d4 health.
91-95	Soothing rest: spend 1d6 hours to regain 1d6 of one stat.	Soothing rest: spend 1d6 hours to regain 1d6 of one stat.
96	Wonderful spot: regain 1d6 of one stat.	Wonderful spot: regain 1d6 of one stat.
97	Panorama: advantage to one mental check.	Friendly spirits: temporary +1d4 to one mental stat.
98	Delicious berries: advantage to one physical check.	Friendly bear: temporary +1d6 health.
99	Forgotten goods: roll on "loot the body."	Forgotten cache: roll on "loot the body" twice.
00	I needed this! Pick a common item. You've found it.	I really needed this! Pick a common or rare item.

Encounters of Winter

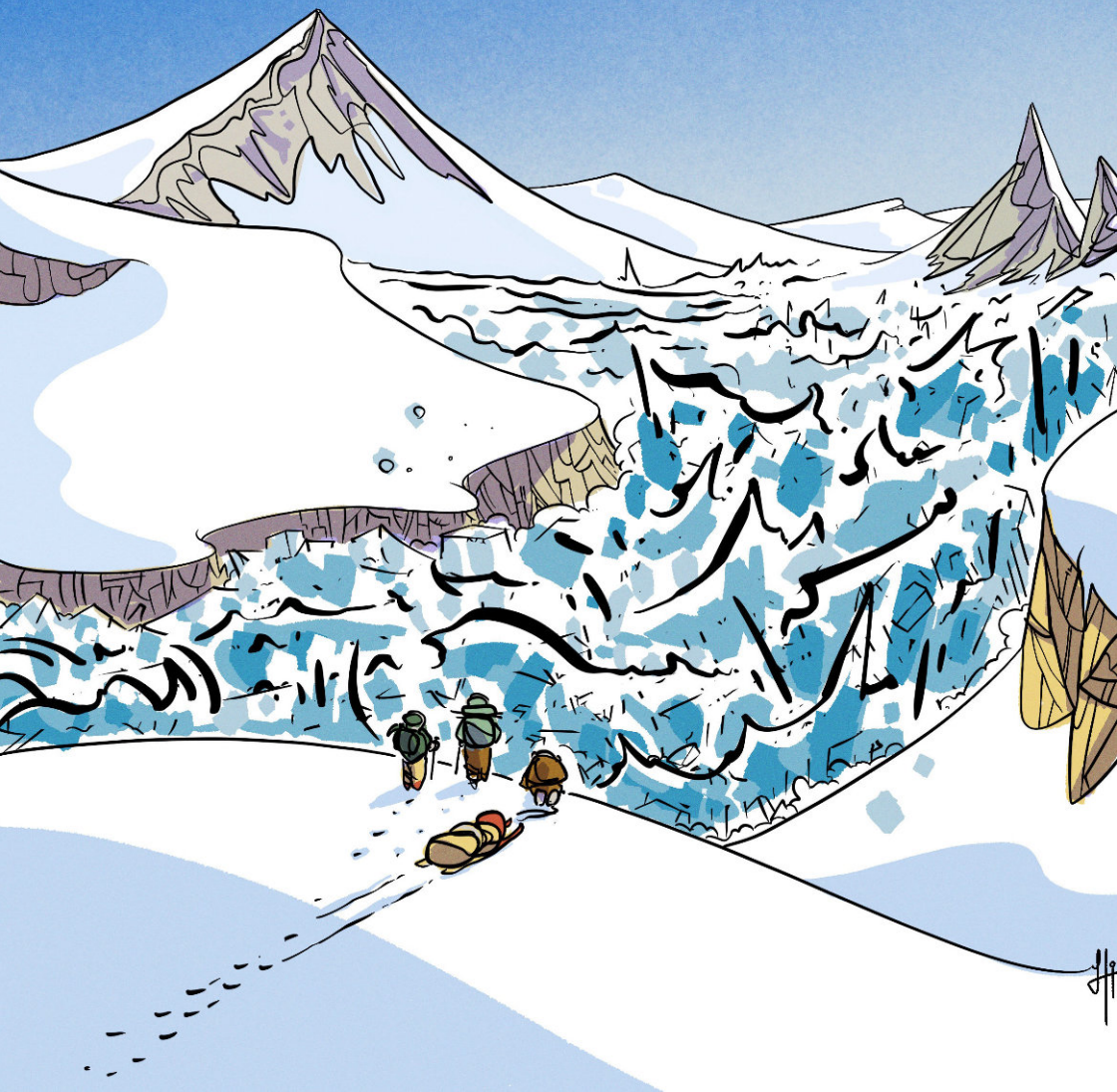
D00	Day	Night
01	The Dragon, flying nervously (HD 19).	White Giant, beard of rime, eyes of silver fire (HD 20).
02	A Giant, skin dead ice (HD 16).	Frozen undead horde (HD 18).
05	Shaggy Bone Spirit, confused (HD 13).	Crawling Glacier Wyrms (HD 16).
04	Ice Wyrms, stalking (HD 10).	Winter Spirit, possessive (HD 14).
05	Great White Birds, cruel (HD 7).	Skeleton Troll, dripping ice and acid (HD 12).
06	Desperate Snow Apes (HD 6).	White Shadows, stealing breath (HD 10).
07	Hoary wired ghouls (HD 5).	Skintaker Shamans, riding great beasts (HD 8).
08	Snow Vultures (HD 5).	Werewolves, stealing the young (HD 6).
09	Ice-threaded Worms (HD 4).	Dire Wolves, eyes aglow (HD 5).
10	Savage Boars, bloodthirsty (HD 4).	Frigid oldsettler ghoul children (HD 3).
11	Dire Lynx, leaving (HD 4).	Ice-stiff Salamanders (HD 2).
12	Savage Wolves (HD 3).	Great White Bats (HD 1).
15	Ape-cat Hunters (HD 3).	Two-legged Foxes, performing magic (HD 2).
14	Elk, rutting (HD 3).	Sad Dead, splintering and decaying (HD 2).
15	Oldfolk, hunting (HD 2).	Oldfolk, saboteurs (HD 3).
16	Oldfolk, rebels (HD 2).	Oldfolk, runaways (HD 1).
17	Baronial, trappers (HD 2).	Wolffolk, assassins (HD 4).
18	Wolffolk, spies (HD 4).	Baronial, possessed cultists (HD 2).
19	Baronial, patroleurs (HD 2).	Baronial smugglers (HD 2).
20	Baronial, vigilantes (HD 3).	Baronial Dark Rangers (HD 4).
21-30	Interaction: roll 1d20 twice.	Interaction: roll 1d20 twice.
31-40	Corpse: roll 1d10+10	Corpse: roll 1d10+10
41-60	Traces: roll 1d20.	Traces: roll 1d20.
61-70	Hunger: use food or lose 1d4 health.	Dark: use lamp or lose 1 stat.
71-80	Terrain: use survival gear or lose 1 stat.	Dark: use lamp or survival gear or lose 1 stat.
81-90	Cold: eat meal or lose 1d4 health.	Cold: eat meal or lose 1d4 health.
91-95	Soothing rest: spend 1d6 hours to regain 1d8 of one stat.	Soothing rest: spend 1d6 hours to regain 1d8 of one stat.
96	Healing shrub: regain 1d6 of one stat.	Healing shrub: regain 1d6 of one stat.
97	Awesome vista: advantage to two mental checks.	Frightened spirits whisper warnings: temporary +1d6 to one mental stat.
98	Frozen 'meat': advantage to two physical checks.	Frozen potion of the bear: restores 1d6 health.
99	Beast-torn corpse: roll on "loot the body."	Frozen well-armed corpse. Roll on "loot the body" twice.
00	I needed this! Pick a common item. You've found it.	I really needed this! Pick a common or rare item.

Encounters of Deep Winter

D00	Day	Night
01	The Winterbird, croaking doom (HD 20).	Winterwhite's Angelhunt, freezing blood and smashing bone (HD 20).
02	A Flayed Ice Giant, awake again (HD 17).	Snow-driven undead horde (HD 18).
05	Avalanche Horses, galloping (HD 15).	Loping Glacier Wurm (HD 16).
04	Ice Worms, soothing the land (HD 13).	Winterwhite's Ice Skeletons (HD 14).
05	White Knights with glass swords (HD 11).	Shadow Troll, dripping hoar and hate (HD 12).
06	White Apes with mechanical implants (HD 8).	Death Fairies, in for the fun (HD 10).
07	Great White Oxen (HD 7).	Ice Troll, eyes drooling (HD 9).
08	Worm-riddled Ghouls (HD 6).	Werewolf Skintakers (HD 8).
09	Undead oldfolk warriors (HD 5).	Skintaker Necrodancer (HD 7).
10	Snow Vultures (HD 5).	Undead wolffolk (HD 6).
11	Wolffolk riding dire wolves (HD 5).	Slippery snow whisps, eyes red and dead (HD 5).
12	Great White Hart (HD 5).	Undead baronial ghouls (HD 4).
13	Shaggy Ice Apes (HD 4).	White Foxes sacrificing changelings (HD 3).
14	Dire White Boars (HD 4).	Hungry Shadow Bats (HD 2).
15	Pack of fresh-frozen undead (HD 3).	Troop of icy undead villagers (HD 3).
16	Oldfolk, soldiers (HD 3).	Oldfolk winter soldiers on sled (HD 4).
17	Baronial, traitors (HD 2).	Wolffolk, burners (HD 4).
18	Baronial and oldfolk rabble, starving (HD 1).	Baronials mad with hunger (HD 1).
19	Baronial, cultists (HD 2).	Baronial, defenders (HD 2).
20	Baronial White Rangers (HD 4).	Adventurers, looters (HD 3).
21-30	Interaction: roll 1d20 twice, once for Day, once for Night.	Interaction: roll 1d20 twice.
31-40	Corpse: roll 1d10+10	Corpse: roll 1d10+10
41-60	Traces: roll 1d20.	Traces: roll 1d20.
61-70	Gnawing hunger: use food and lose 1d4 health, or lose 1d4+4 health.	Grim Dark: use lamp and lose 1d4 health, or lose 1d6+4 health and 1 stat.
71-80	Brutal terrain: use survival gear and lose 1d4 health, or lose 1d4+4 health and 1 stat.	Grim Night: use two lamps or survival gear, or lose 1d10 health and 1 stat.
81-90	Very cold: eat two meals or lose 1d10 health and 1 stat.	Very cold: eat two meals and lose 1d4 health, or lose 1d10+4 health and 1 stat.
91-95	Warm and dry: spend 1d6 hours to regain 1d6 of two stats.	Warm and dry: spend 1d6 hours to regain 1d6 of two stats.
96	Frozen dragon's tear: regain 1d8 of one stat.	Frozen dragon's tear: regain 1d8 of one stat.
97	Dead troll: melt its blood to create 1d6 healing potions (heal 1d6 health each).	Echo of hibernating spirits. Regain 1d4 of one mental stat.
98	Dead unicorn: eat its heart to gain advantage to three checks.	Frozen-dragon blood: restores 1d8 health.
99	Cannibal-eaten corpse: roll on "loot the body."	Flash-frozen hero. Roll on "loot the body" twice.
00	I really needed this! Pick a common or rare item.	Treasure in the snow. Roll on "magic items" table.



LONGWINTER





Escape & Survive

The
cold
draws
in —

“Remember, when the gods fight, its
us mortals that do the dying.”

Lenora “Mother Mercy” Fuméry.

This Is Not Normal

The cold has finally become too much. Where before the old hunters returning wild-eyed from their hides in the krumholz, on the edges of the alpage, could be dismissed, now their stories of crawling tongues, rivers, and snakes of ice locking the valley in a vise ring too true. The words are on every worker's chapped lips. In every pair of ice-tinged eyes, whether leit's or lady's or lord's.

"This is not normal," say those looks, say those faces.

Siras and siros attend the baron Soren Greencorner in the Rudvey fortress. Attend, or hole up there? They have brought wagons and servants and militias. They have requisitioned wood and oil, furs and silver. For security, for redistribution.

Workers and peasants gather beer halls and village manors, faces grave as they count their supplies and their duties, faces grim as they read the nobles' 'requests'.

Oldfolk swaddle themselves in furs and disappear into the deep woods, to die or to plot. Some smile at the baronials' discomfort, others look uneasy, a few talk of the old demon, the death that comes with the cold sleep, the harsh measure of Winterwhite.

"This is not normal," everyone knows and does not have to say.



Players:

You are correct. This is not normal. Now that you think about it, the signs were there for a while. Who is responsible? Why is this happening? Does it even matter? Is survival not the priority now? How bad will it get?

Referee:

Congratulations. You've reached the point of the icebox where the players realize that the whole campaign was just a cover, a red herring, for the real adventure: survival. Optionally, if you want to just run an ice survival adventure, this is where that begins.

A survival adventure pits heroes against an overwhelming antagonist who is not actively malevolent but is fundamentally hostile. In *Longwinter* it is the cold personified in the form of the deity Winterwhite, who has descended on the Barony of Brezim to extract her debt in full and without mercy. She does not come for any particular victim, she does not care if one or another escapes, she comes for all the barons Greencorner hold dear: the barony.

This kind of adventure has some specific constraints.

Because the antagonist is impersonal, there isn't a big boss to beat, there is no expectation of a climactic confrontation, there is no emotion contained in the antagonist, and there is nobody actively trying to thwart the heroes. The antagonist simply is.

This means that as a referee you can't simply keep raising the stakes, introducing new enemies, and developing a plot, because that makes the antagonist personal. You also don't have a villain to play, you cannot embody the winter to deliver a scathing speech, to tug on heartstrings with a nuanced childhood story, or even to deliver a lazy, "you haven't seen the last of meeeee!"

The winter doesn't care.

In *Longwinter* I suggest two methods of delivering a gripping survival adventure.

First, the challenges of survival. Use playing cards to procedurally generate a sequence of situations for the players trying to escape the icebox. This takes the antagonism out of your hands and makes you the arbiter of the will of the uncaring cards. You can cheer for the players to succeed as much as you like, but have the players draw and play the cards publicly, so it's clear that it's the deck, the environment, building this challenge for them.

Second, the emotion of the story. A survival story is about fear and hope, terror and relief. Life and death are possible outcomes, but it is the emotions we play with. Do not ask for their characters' emotions directly. Narratively, as referee, focus on the characters' sensations. Sight, sound, smell, temperature, pressure,

wind, movement, acceleration. Focus in on the physical, embodied sensations, on what the characters' bodies experience and how they. Give them clear, physical options, "You are clinging to the slick, cold rock, but see no way further up. Do you drop back down into the deep, pillowy snow, or try to jump across to the opposite face of the crack? If you fail the jump, you will hit the hard, sharp rock and tumble down, banging knees and elbows." Ask them if their character's heart is racing, if their palms are sweaty, if there is a knot in their belly, if their muscles are burning, if their knees hurt. Ask them how their character reacts to a blow, to a fall.

As supplies run low, as the cold draws in, as injuries accumulate, the emotion will follow.

The Problem of Tools

Some games offer heroes many tools that render environments irrelevant. Whether spells, artifacts, or technologies, I often find these deployed too casually. As soon as heroes can ignore terrain through flight or teleportation, weather through resistance and immunity, the roleplaying campaign has moved to an entirely different stage, one that makes this kind of adventure essentially unplayable—and, I would argue, generally boring without a significantly different setup than offered by "like our world in the past, but with magic."

My recommendation is either removing these kind of character tools outright, or providing severe material and mechanical limitations on those you permit. Flight may be provided by fragile magical wings, which have to be stowed and carried. Resistance to cold could be provided by a magical cloak, which must be cleaned and repaired and maintained. They might certainly be created by spells, but they are imagined within the fantasy as physical objects, which can be stolen, broken, and lost.

This is, of course, something to discuss with players. If they insist on keeping their supernatural super powers, ask them to narrate a fictional reason why they are suspending them for this adventure, or suggest they create a different character to use for this adventure instead.

Honestly, an entire party of characters who can fly or teleport or ignore extreme cold, will make this survival adventure pretty useless.

From here on out I will assume that the heroes your players are using may well somewhat surpass a pinnacle of human physical aptitude, yet are not the equal of a superhero.



The Crossing

This is a story. But it captures the mood this rpg adventure aims for.

Crack!

Kuya dropped softly to all fours and breathed out slowly.

Creak.

She gingerly spread her arms and legs. Her fur-lined mittens and boots pushed the dusty snow along the ice with a whispering sigh. Like the frozen lake wanted to tell her something.

Creak.

It was uncanny. It sounded just like the tea cabinet hinge in her grandmother's apartment.

She breathed in shallowly, not moving. No creak. That tea cabinet always creaked. She'd been fascinated by it as a child. The mother of pearl inlays in the green and blue lacquer hinting at strange warm lands. Aramie lacquer, from the warm shores past the Grand Betons, where the hills are round like green sheep.

She breathed out. Focus. The ice should hold. Winterwhite's flowers had visited the window panes five days ago and never left. The ice should hold.

Creak.

But maybe there was a hot spring beneath that blue-black cliff on her side. Maybe that's why it wasn't hung in icicles like a come-of-age-cake. Maybe warm water welled up. Maybe it was warm enough to ruin the green tea Granna called her gentle delight. The expensive one she never let anyone else brew. The one she quietly cursed at whenever she steeped it too long. Count the heartbeats, she said, count a hundred as you breathe, and it's steeped.

Kuya counted her heartbeats as she breathed. Slowly. No creaking. She spread herself wide as a spider, hugging the ice of the lake, then started inching just her left hand in, towards her chest. She must look a fool. Or a tasty snack. Maybe

there was some wolf watching her right now. One of the big, strange ones that ran with the Architects' redesign, the ones that patrolled the preserves and kept people out. No, that was nonsense. She was nowhere near the nearest preserve. She'd struck out south-west from the bivouac, across the high field towards the Riblinza valley. She'd kept the crinkled white peak of the Riblingberg at her right.

Still. Her heartbeat picked up again. No, no. She turned her head, the ice chilling her left cheek. A bit further back. Yes, there it was, just peeking above the grey tablecloth of cloud, like wadded up pages torn from a snow-white notebook. She breathed slowly again. Ok, she wasn't near a preserve.

She started inching her hand inwards again. Lapel. Cap string. Iceberry pin. Backpack strap. There!

Creak.

Her breath stalled. If she fell through the ice here she'd drown. Her body would scream as the cold bit, but it would be the water, in her mouth and nose, throat and lungs and gut, like a flood of liquid fire, making her body thrash and flail, desperate for air, for oxygen, for life. The the lack of air would shut her awareness down. Eventually. With this cold, it might take five minutes. Ten? An eternity of fire and then an eternity of silence. The oldfolk said a winter's death wasn't so bad. The pain of the cold lifted, a deep weariness came, and then sleep. There was gentle sleep at the end. But a water death, that was bad. The Waterdrinker was not gentle with mortals' souls.

Kuya realized she wasn't breathed and gulped frigid air again.

Creak.

There wasn't time for this, she had to scuttle across this damned lake. Backpack strap. Clasp. Ice axe. Strap. Buckle clasp. Tug. No, the mittens. She needed fingers for this. She shifted more weight onto her hand, pinning hand and mitten. Slowly she withdrew her hand from the warm fur. Immediately the bitter cold went to work. Soon her fingertips would be on fire, but she had enough time.

Buckle clasp. Metal. Fingers sticking. One release. The second. Press. Stuck. Clear the strap out of the way. Ah, that cold steel burned. Press both releases.

Click.

Now the belt clasp. Down. Scraping knuckles on cold ice, not feeling the cuts, just the ice water. Or ice blood. Too cold. Button. Backpack belt. The big clasp.

Click.

Quick, back in the mitten. Kuya breathed quietly for a while then shuffled to her left. A handspan. Two. Pressing down her right arm on the right shoulder strap she inched out from under her backpack, crawling out like a hermit crab abandoning its house.

With a clatter of poles and axes and carabiners her backpack rolled off onto its side. Ten kilos more spread out.

Kuya looked up. She was nearly across the kidney-shaped lake. To her left, the blue-black cliff, to her right the gentle, welcoming slope. The lying slope. The one that promised avalanches. A hundred metres to the nearest shore, but that was close to the cliffs.

First she'd crawl back five, ten metres, then strike out for middle of the little beach. There, under the two boulders, the skinny and the fat one.

She pushed the backpack. A foot. Inching like a worm, or maybe a crippled crocodile, she crawled up behind it. Pushed again.

Creak.

Nothing to do now. Count your breaths. Wait for the tea to steep. Wait for the ice to thicken. Push, crawl, push, crawl. Ten pushes, three metres. Thirty, ten.

The ice had been solid here. Kuya carefully raised herself up on hands and knees, the ice stopped bleeding heat from her belly. No creaking.

Now she could push the backpack half a metre and crawl faster. A hundred and fifty metres to go. Three hundred more pushes, three hundred more crawls. Too much for tea, unless Granna had trapped her for the full 'ceremony'. No creaking from the Aramie lacquer ice tea box lake. Six hundred. Enough to steep the fine green tea six times.

"Do you taste the difference? The melody of the tea, from the first pour to the last? Ah, it's the little things," her Granna nodded. She'd nodded along and only tasted water from the third cup onwards.

Fourth cup. Seventy metres to go. She could almost taste the solid ground. The sweet density of rock.

Fifth cup. Forty to go. She wept. The ice whispered underfoot. The air hinted at more snow. The boulders beckoned.

Sixth cup. Ten metres to go. Yes. There was a taste. There was a melody. Ice and lake now had a different timbre. The crunch as she pushed the backpack was deeper. The vibrations under her mittens and knees weaker.

Five metres to go. Nearly there. Ice all crumpled at the shore. Floes pushed up. There had been an avalanche. That lying hillside, she'd known it.

Two metres to go. She was going to make it!

One metre to go.

Snap.

The backpack broke through a thin, upraised sheet and thumped down a handspan to the rime-coated pebbles beneath.

Kuya sobbed and giggled as she stood on shaky legs again.

Crack. Crunch.

She dragged the backpack away from the ice and bit her mitten to stifle a whoop.



Survival Card Mechanic

This is version 2.0 of the card generator.

Get a deck of ordinary playing cards, the ones with hearts and diamonds, clubs and spades. These will generate the narrative framework of the survival adventure. Show them to the players and explain this to them, so they understand this adventure and how it works.

Different suits represent different terrains, complications, and characters. Diamonds represent icefield locations, supernatural challenges, and magical characters; spades represent mountains, physical challenges, and violent characters; clubs represent forests, resource challenges, and natural characters; and hearts represent rivers, social challenges, and helpful characters.

In every case, lower numbers are less challenging, higher numbers are more challenging. Aces are mixed, offering great opportunities and great risks. Jokers are random.

To activate the escape event and “win” the players have to collect a set of cards: three of a kind (e.g. three kings) or four in a row (e.g. 2,3,4, and 5 of diamonds); or deplete all the location cards. The higher value their set, the better their escape result (three queens give a better result than three sixes). Not all the player characters have to survive for this to happen!

Generate and play the adventure using watches (6 hour periods, 4 to each day) and actions. Each watch a different player chooses the group’s action. Some actions may spend additional watches. Track cold, weather, events, and encounters using the Longwinter calendar as normal.

Play starts with all the cards in the deck. During play, cards will be placed into three additional areas: the discard pile, the misfortune pile, and the players’ card collection. If at any time there are not enough cards in the deck to draw from, shuffle the discard pile and add it to the bottom of the deck.

The Card Actions

Travel: this is the basic action required to win the game. The player deals three cards from the deck onto the table. River and Forest cards (hearts and clubs) cost one additional watch. Mountain and icefield cards (spades and diamonds) cost two additional watches. The player chooses where the group will travel and marks that card. The referee then generates the challenge using the remaining card on the left, and the non-player character using the remaining card on the right. Both of these cards are then added to the discard pile.

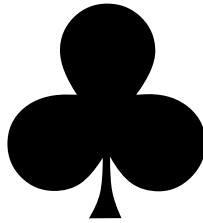
The referee then resolves challenges, weather, events, and encounters for that leg of the journey. When at least one member of the group overcomes the challenges and reaches the location, that card is added to the players' card collection.

Rest: this is how the player characters recover health and heat. It requires shelter from the weather. The player then draws a card from the deck and places it on the misfortune pile (if there isn't a misfortune pile yet, this creates one). If the card is lower in value than the last card on the misfortune pile, the referee immediately generates a challenge and character from that card. Kings are the only cards lower in value than aces. Jokers are higher in value than every other card, except sevens. The whole misfortune pile is then shuffled and added to the bottom of the deck.

Build Shelter: if no shelter is available, it takes one watch to scout out a suitable location and reinforce it with snow and branches to provide a place to rest. The player then draws a card from the deck and places it on the misfortune pile, as with the rest action.

Explore: challenges and characters may leave behind clues, locations, or resources. It takes a watch to explore them and recover anything of value. The player then draws a card from the deck and places it on the misfortune pile, as with the rest action.





Forests

† mountains † slopes † physical challenges † dangerous characters †

**This is the same description as 'spades' which are about
mountains. Could use a double-check?**

♣ 1 Abandoned Lookout

The mule-road snakes along the rugged mountain flank. Dark fir forests rise above, cliffs and tumbled rocks collapse into a torrent below. A blackened bunker complex dusted in snow keeps dead-eyed watch atop an outcrop. The road continues through a tunnel carved beneath.

Ambushers and defenders are advantaged.

It is easy to avoid the worst of the weather here.



Challenge: Spilled Grain

The sack did its best to hold the grain in, but step after weary step, another few grains tumbled down. Now, after a watch's walking, the sack is empty.

Easy test to sweep fresh snow over the tracks. Alternatively, easy test and one watch to pick up most of the spilled food.



Character: Cautious Patrol

Two baronial soldiers in padded greatcoats, armed with walking spears and Redyard leadspitters. Both are also decked with holy stones of the Three Avatars. Brade Icewinkler. Dale Everloyal.

♣ 2 Old Hamlet

Feral orchards choke the old hamlet. Collapsed Oldsettler homes now resemble burial mounds under the snow. A few Baronial-style log cabins have been built among the gap-toothed megaliths of an old sacred circle. Nobody is home.

Defenders and ambushers are advantaged.

The log cabins provide respite from the weather.



Challenge: Mold and Damp

The meat has sprung fine fur, and blue patches coat the bread.

Moderate cooking test to make edible, if unpalatable, meals from the spoiled food. Difficult medicine test to make antibiotic paste from one of the molds.



Character: Inquisitor

A silent masked figure in red and white furs. Their skis are nearly as sharp as the knife at their belt. Their long rifle is an ancient, intricately scoped Zuleiman. Looped around one wrist they wear an inquisition rosary. Doctor Yana Fardaughter.

♣ 3 Isolated Facility

Black pines choke the dale and creep up the hillsides, reclaiming oldsettler pastures and rude shielings on the lower fells. Rusted barbed wire tangled with blackberry brambles creates a wall around a series of log cabins built over the ruins of an Architect facility.

Defenders are strongly advantaged.

The facility provides respite from the weather.



Challenge: Frozen Water

With a loud pop, like a gun misfiring, a water bottle's side bursts open. All the water has turned to ice.

It will take fire or a watch carrying it close to the body to melt it again.



Character: Licensed Explorers

Four figures draped in ropes and exploration gear. They have a Whiteeyes Institute license for a bunker on the Dimnaya. Carefully concealed, they carry baronial Redyard revolvers. Zoran Oldstone. Hektor Smithson. Viktoriya Sunrise. Doctor Sigma Delmar.

♣ 4 Alpine Rainforest

Buttresses of limestone rise along the steep slope of the mountain, funneling humid air into the constricted valley. Great firs and spruces challenge the hills for height. Vines and beard lichens deck the trees. Mists roll among the dark trunks.

Ambushers are advantaged in the thick wood.

The conifers block all wind.



Challenge: Sole-Less

Glue and gum have become brittle in the cold and after a particularly rough descent the soles of several shoes start flapping.

Easy agility tests to avoid losing the soles. Moderate cobbler tests to fix the soles, but this requires tools. Improvised solutions will work for 1d4 watches, but after that the cracked, seeping shoes impose disadvantage on tests against cold and wet. Improvised shoes impose disadvantage to agility and endurance tests on the trail.



Character: City Slicker

A stumbling man in heavy parka and bespoke city shoes is making for the valley. His marten fur cap smells strongly of pomade. Despite the stubble on his cheeks, his curled moustaches still follow the last Eastern City fashions. He keeps mumbling about a hotel in Pey Holzey. His watch is a jeweled TPK Scheephouse with seven complications. Obol Fastfoot.

♣5 Twisted Krumholz

The violent winds along the long slope gnarl the red pines into crawling dwarfs. Layer upon layer of ancient wood creates a tangled maze of trees barely as tall as a shepherd. As the snow grows thicker, it covers the krumholz in a treacherous blanket.

Everybody is disadvantaged in the grasping krumholz

There is no protection from the elements.



Challenge: Tinderless

Only damp coal and a foul odour remains of the kindling. The box of matches is nearly empty. The lighter is nearly dry.

Strong disadvantage to starting fires until new equipment is found.



Character: Wolffolk Scout

A slender oldsettler man in light white furs and white cloak, carrying a recurved bow of bone, sinew, and old architect spring steel. He does not feel the cold and his pupils are feral. When he runs, his feet do not sink into the snow. Wolves and dogs love him. Raham "Red" Cruseao.

♣ 6 Black Forest

Dense woods of witch spruce cover the slopes and highlands like an impenetrable blanket. They block sun and moon, wind and snow. A carpet of dry, sour needles muffles all sound below.

Ambushers are advantaged in the black forest.

It is warmer and windless beneath the spruces.



Challenge: Frayed Rope

The wet, the ice, the rock, all have taken their toll. The fibres of the ropes are frayed and worn.

Disadvantage to all climbing tests until ropes are repaired.



Character: Dead Skinwalker

A bulky oldsettler swathed in tattered furs. Their face is covered in a skin mask. One cold white eye looks out. A chill walks with them. They are polite to outlanders, but coldly mock baronials. "Ah, your greed, you crossed the blue-mouthed lady. You will see her revenge. She will eat you cold." Orso "Deadeyes" Tornato.

♣ 7 Mass Gravesite

Lumpen bearded oaks and silver-needed spruces are reclaiming this plateau. Dense brambles and stands of staff-grass choke sinkholes filled with shattered limestone. Oldsettler wicker wheels and tin triangles mark small dolmens built discreetly by the corpse-filled sinkholes.

The thick growth advantages anybody wanting to stay hidden.

The wind is weaker among the trees.



Challenge: Wet Powder

Snow falling from the trees gets into the ammunition. Arrows warp, bullets freeze together, and the powder is damp.

A watch of careful rest and drying at room temperature will help. Otherwise, disadvantage to ranged attacks.



Character: Infected With The Ice

An older man and a middle-aged woman in rich parkas. The man is missing one hand and the cold awakening of Winterwhite will consume him soon. They have left their fortified townhouse in Pey Dimna after the town was again attacked by the risen oldsettler ghouls. Tomo Blackwolf. Ksenia Redgift.

♣ 8 Sacred Grove

A marshland of juniper and grassy hummocks covers the gentle hill-top depression. Mossy mounds mark ancient earthworks. Sixty blood cedars arranged in five circles form the sacred grove. The bark is marked with angular Oldsettler runes.

The marsh disadvantages all movement.

The wind is weaker among the trees, but there is water and ice everywhere.



Challenge: Torn It Seems

Stumbling through brambles, down gravel slopes, and past broken shreds of barbed wire, tears gape in parkas and pants.

Disadvantage to tests against cold and wet. Moderate sewing tests and one watch to fix the clothes, if needles and thread are available.



Character: Wolfmother

A slender red wolf with hazel eyes. She walks at a distance and watches, carefully. Her wolffolk family is curious how the baronial newsettlers will deal with this calamity. Within her belly she carries an old architect dagger that can sing at strange frequencies and cut the hardest rock. When she needs it, her paw becomes a ghostly human hand that can reach right into her own body and withdraw the blade. Ulna “Trained” Aureina.

♣ Willow Swamp

A forest of bent and broken willows lies beneath the snow. Ice and dessicated cane reeds crunch underfoot. Mulchy ridges and ditches alternate. Deep pools hide beneath surprisingly thin skins of ice.

Tracking is easy in the snow-draped swamp. Travel is difficult.

The wind is weaker among the trees.



Challenge: Blunted

Crampons, ice axes, and picks are blunted and pitted from traversing ice and rock. Disadvantage to climbing checks and damage with these tools and weapons.

Easy blacksmithing test and one watch to fix everything, but requires a smithy.



Character: Good Boy

A wheezing boy in fine greatcoat out looking for help for his nanny who has come down sick. He has a respiratory condition. His cheeks are rosy and he is well-fed. In his chalet, the nanny is in the last stages of starvation. The larder is well stocked with meat and frozen stew. The corpses of the butler and the footman have been neatly butchered, wrapped in canvas bags, and stored in the ice cellar. Andrey Resttree. Hema "Nanny" Farlog.

♣ 10 Shattered Woodland

Stumps and scattered branches mark a savage clear-cutting. Snow covers the raw earth, gouged by heavy golems. Isolated clumps of bushes and twisted trees sway feebly in the wind. Broken wood waits to trap the unwary foot.

Tracking is easy in the open terrain. Travel is difficult.

The clearcutting is exposed to the elements.



Challenge: Spilled Fuel

Perhaps it was the last tumble down the gully, among the ice boulders and broken trunks. The oil cans have punctured and soaked through the packs. The coal bin has spilled. The bundle of wood has come loose.

Moderate test to salvage half of the fuel.



Character: Political Prisoner

Two figures. A bulky city officer packing a Fifthface revolver and a weedy aristocrat in fur-lined parka. The officer agrees: the witness needs to stay alive. Zora Darknoon. Igor Ironwood.

♣ J Stormstruck Linden

Boulders piled with turf and loam glisten through the snow. They shoulder aside smaller trees and create a clearing around a mighty linden. Six woodsfolk could not encompass it with outstretched arms. Its trunk is marred by a great lightning scar. Its long branches have been broken by ice. A wooden womb opens within.

Attackers are advantaged in the clearing.

The wind is merciless.



Challenge: Crunch

Everything was packed so carefully, but packs shift during travel. Falling back onto the pack, a sickening crunch resounds. Something fragile, complicated, and irreplaceable has broken.



Character: The Filmmaker

A bedraggled figure with cases of crystal-film. It records snow apes using tools to excavate an old architect vault. Lena Riflesteel, famous illusionist.

♣ Q Wolffolk Forest

Spruce and pine and oak crowd close. Their branches obscure the sky, their roots obscure the ground. Bronze spikes remain where the Wolffolk sacrificed to the Devil's Grandfather and the Earthbeater.

Defenders are strongly advantaged among the trees. Travel is slowed.

The wind is much weakened.



Challenge: Bad Medicine

You open the first aid pack. It's full of rags, but no medicines. Somebody ripped you off.

The referee saves this challenge and plays it the next time medicines are used.



Character: Orderlies

Three brothers in matching winter uniforms, patched and mended. Wide-eyed, teeth chattering. They talk of ice ghouls and worms awakening the dead. Their axes are notched. Their rifles are short on ammunition. They were orderlies at the Painted Tree spa. Hektor Bearson. Igor Bearson. Andrey Bearson.

♣ **K Needletooth Trees**

Worms of ice crawl up from the ground. They embrace the trees. Leaves become diaphanous frosted wisps. Needles become sharp and hard as crystal teeth. With every breath of wind the forest rattles and wheezes with the laughter of dead shamans.

Ambushes are advantaged, travel is disadvantaged.

The wind and the cold seem sharper here.



Challenge: Machine Dies

Engines seize, ice fractures clockwork, rust destroys firing pins. A machine breaks down.

Moderate test to repair if a replacement part is found.



Character: Secret Cultist

Baronial official, growing gaunt under voluminous winter coat. Dragging books, compass, telescope, and chalk. Befuddled and confused. Hears a deep, promising voice, “she has kept her bargain.” Maya Ogrerider.



Rivers

† valley bottoms † water † social challenges † sometimes, helpful characters †

♥1 Frozen Waterfall

The valley closes in from all sides. Towering buttresses and walls of slick blue-black flysch heavy with dead weeds and ominous icicles frame the pale sky. At the very end, mounds of ice pile up at the bottom of what was a waterfall but is now a crazily shattered ice cliff.

The location is safe on three sides and advantages defenders, but leaves no easy retreats.

It is sheltered from wind.



Challenge: Hubris

This will be easy. Easier than you know. Hardly an inconvenience.

Draw an extra card. Hard test, it is a second location reached this watch. Failed test, it is an additional challenge.



Character: Proof of Horror

A skeletal man comes stumbling out of the woods in a bear-fur cloak much too big for him. Ice dusts his unkempt beard. There is fear in his eyes. He carries sheafs of lumographs depicting oldsettler corpses, their bones knitted together with sinews of ice and muscle of cold clay, crawling out of a lichpit. Academic Asbert Marmotson.

♥ 2 Hoar-Decked Gorge

Past the mountain's shoulder the slope becomes steep and nigh impassable. The path stumbles steeply down, carving through steps made for giants of earlier times, into the gorge. There the path worms forward, inching through tunnels and carven galleries. Water rushes below, the sky is lost beyond the overhanging rocks and hoar frost.

The location is slippery and narrow, making all maneuver difficult, but advantaging defenders.

It is sheltered from the wind.



Challenge: Desperation

A terrified old man, Yivo Fivecorner, is walking in circles. Tracks lead to a small holdfast hidden in a gorge. "They've thrown me out!" he weeps, "they say they don't have enough, but I know they do! I helped lay those stores, I know they have enough!"

Eleven baronials, five adults and six children, are hidden in the holdfast of Drisley. There used to be twenty, but together they decided there were only enough supplies for half of them. The other old and sick people chose the deep sleep. Yivo changed his mind and fled back, begging to be let back in. They did not let him in, and he has become convinced in his fear of death, that it was all a plot.

There are fifty sacks of food at the holdfast. Enough for the remainder to barely survive the longest winter in living memory, no matter how harsh. Too bad the winter will last a whole year instead of just one season.



Character: Hungry Hunter

A muscular woman swaddled in a downy parka squats in a dugout snow shelter. She is trying to grill a rabbit on a weak fire. She is oblivious with hunger. Zuzana Brokenspear.

♥ 3 Hot Spring

An intrusive igneous rock rises from the slope like the prow of a landship. The path makes a looping detour past this mass, obscuring the way beyond. A steaming hot rivulet forces its way out, burbling from beneath the rock, carving through sand and snow to join the ice-covered river downslope. A small bridge crosses the rivulet.

The location is open and exposed, the rock and trees advantaging ambushers.

The hot water creates an island of warmth.



Challenge: Mother's Mercy

A weeping figure struggles along the gritty snow. They drag a flimsy sled, laden with bundles. She is Iva Redend and the bundles are her two frozen children. They died in a cold snap one night. One of the children is missing a leg. Her husband was killed by the wolffolk that raided her hamlet. She has no food left, but she still has five flasks of lamp oil and three survival supplies.



Character: Shepherd's Hut and Stores

Two dirty children, a boy and a girl, dressed in oversize coats lined with old newspapers, huddle in a shepherd's hut. The last headline reads, "Pey Tirezley graveyard condemned. Inquisitors destroy fifteen risen demons." The hut is well-stocked with coal. Viktor Frankstone. Liona Thirdwinter.

♥ 4 Choked Sandbar

The river braids itself into steaming streams around an ice-rimmed sandbar. The sandbar is thick with reeds and shrubs matted beneath snow and ice. Up-stream and down the river collects itself, a swift and deep barrier to crossing once again. Icy fog curls among the bearded thickets crowding the pebbled banks of the river.

The location is very open, advantaging attackers. It is an easy place to ford the river. Unwary fordors can easily slip on the slick rocks and fall into the water.



Challenge: Trapped Travelers

Two terrified travelers approach, gesturing that they are peaceful. Harson Longflanks and Brita Builderschild praise Greencorner and beg your help. While gathering supplies, their sled fell into a crevasse, trapping their friend Orso Flamemane within. Without help, Orso will die.

It will take a watch to help them and this watch's journey is lost. They have 3 sacks of supplies and give 1 for assistance.



Character: Doctor Sawbones

A bedraggled doctor and a dead man with an amputated leg. The doctor is tired and very hungry. She has a hidden revolver. Tisa Streamling. Lament Od'heckboosh.

♥ 5 Ice-Ringed Pool

A natural rock dam compounded by the efforts of generations of beavers creates a large pool. The path around is treacherous, climbing among boulders and stunted pines. The ice covering the pool is thin and fragile in the center. Trout and carp have congregated here, safe beneath the ice.

The ground is treacherous and the vegetation is thick, advantaging defenders and ambushers.

Trees protect from the wind.



Challenge: Hungry Gnome Monkeys

They came silently, without words. Their fur lush and thick, framing wizened faces atop child-like bodies. They tried to pilfer food and survival supplies, but the party was too canny. 1d4 of them are caught, helpless. Perhaps the animalistic things have a lair? Perhaps they taste alright?



Character: House-Clan in Hiding

A one-eyed leit dragging a sled piled with supplies. She has a Kaiserlich shotgun with a pearl stock. Her house-clan is excavating an old architect bunker. Duwin Redwater.

♥ 6 Spiritual Confluence

The path descends into a frozen marsh. Ahead rise the eroded remains of a moraine carved in half by the outflow of the waters. A deathly cold smaller stream joins the main river at a confluence marked by sand and gravel beds. Grotesque geometric wooden totems rise from the beds and the waters, watching over this place.

The location is concealed from outside observers. The spiritual residue of the totems advantages defensive magics and the whims of the Waterdrinker.

Nothing stops the wind.



Challenge: Sick Oldsettlers

Wicker and snow huts huddle beneath an overhang. Large icicles form a feeble barricade. They are fleeing Winterwhite, too, but they are sick with dysnery and infectious. Without care, there is a 50% chance any one of them might die. With care, they will all survive and recover within 1d6+4 days. They have two full sacks of food.

Voz Lindling is old and suspicious, they remember the stories of the first baronials. Kol Oakling is pregnant and determined, her will is indomitable. Arz Buckling is young and reckless, without guidance he will do something foolish.



Character: Amateur Researcher

A young man on skis and wearing a very warm winter suit. The goggles on his winter-mask keep fogging because of a defective air filter. He carries a couple of volumes of research notes on winter corpses. He has the keys to a small chalet around his neck. His hand cannon is the latest Zuleiman model. Viktor Bluntstone.

♥7 Abandoned Mill

A low dam of ice-slick boulders and gravel traverses the river, creating a shallow lake. The empty-eyed bulk of a fortified mill stands at the water's edge. The disconnected mill wheel spins lazily. Poles stick out of the rude dam to help travelers.

The exposed location advantages attackers.

Wind howls loudly over the open water.



Challenge: Whispers and Mistrust

It is obvious. The party is lost. The leader does not know where to go. This will all end in tears.

Hard Charisma test for the leader, or a new leader is chosen and this watch's journey is lost. The old leader now makes Charisma tests with disadvantage.



Character: Vengeful Descendant

An oldsettler woman dressed in an inquisition great coat. Her iron hair is bound with snow ape bone buckles. She carries a long Ironbaron rifle and a notched pole-shovel. Her eyes are haunted, her mouth is set hard. Runa Vicaria.

♥ 8 Snowy Floodplain

The valley broadens and fills out. Alluvial terraces bracket a field of mud, water, and ice covered by a thick blanket of snow. The plain is studded with clumps of dead canary grass and snow-bound swamp willows. The tracks of wild animals and other things traverse the expanse.

The exposed location advantages attackers and trackers. Wind and cold are severe in the open plain.



Challenge: Fear of the Dark

The dark is always near, always long this winter. Perhaps this is not just Winterwhite's doing. Perhaps it is as the stories of the Final Gift foretold, when Suncatcher steals Green Sun forever and the people will wail to the Three Avatars and suffer the four-hundred plagues before the Blue Sun will come.

Easy test or refuse to travel when the cloak of Moon's Inkbrother is upon the land. If cajoled into traveling at night, a fearful character is disadvantaged.



Character: Opportunistic Rebels

Three oldsettler youths in fur caps and heavy coats dragging a dead buck on a sled. One of them was wounded by a baronial police pistol. Their accents are heavy. None of them is wearing a citizenship tablet around their neck. Ayo Bergha. Runa Valés. Ono Devente.

♥ 9 Icy Cascades

The valley rises steeply across a series of stone ribs. The waters have carved a series of bowls and channels. Floods have left massive boulders piled with broken trees. Slippery round shells of ice now cover everything.

The terrain is treacherous, disadvantaging everyone. The lees of boulders provide respite from wind, but the damp and ice strengthen the cold.



Challenge: Weakness and Frustration

The weak only slow down the strong. Perhaps some will have to sacrifice themselves so the group survives.

The strongest and the weakest in the group make moderate tests. If the weakest fails, they want to be left behind. If the strongest fails, they want to leave the laggards behind.



Character: A Rightmaker

A rider on a shaggy mountain pony, dressed in thick white snow ape furs. Their necklace of snow ape tusks has a three-stone pendant of the Avatars. A cavalry sabre hangs by their side and they casually hold a Kaiserlich carbine. They have two boxes of holy Earthbeater shot. Their baronial has a heavy Bridge accent. Zalo Cityson.

♥ 10 Bridges Old & New

The valley narrows as the river carves a calm path across an exposed bed of marlstone. A wide, solid bridge of well-dressed stone crosses the waters. Upstream; the stumps of an older wooden bridge. Downstream; the corroded shards of a yet older metal bridge.

The terrain is open and exposed. The wind is harsher here.



Challenge: Cabin Fever

There is nobody else. The world stretches. Vast. Empty. Everybody else must already be dead. Locked in ice. Are these sorry fools truly the last this world can offer?

Moderate test of anger and frustrations grow, disadvantaging cooperation.



Character: Bunker Seeker

A striding, long-limbed figure, swaddled in linens and leathers under a wolf-fur cloak. Their walking staff is tipped with battered steel. They keep consulting an old architect compass. It leads to a deep bunker. Under their furs, they have an old Zuleiman carbine. Roy Sevenmonth.

♥ I Breached Dam

The sweeping curves of an ancient dam embrace the valley like the wings of a great white eagle. The heart of that curve is breached by an ancient gash. The oldstone of the dam is worn smooth by erosion. Ice coats the boulders of the alluvial fan. River willows and the woody skeletons of sunroots cluster about the dam.

The enclosed location and vegetation advantage those who want to hide. The dam blocks wind, providing relief.



Challenge: Greed and Hunger

The ice has embraced the world. Hollowfear, the famine bear, has entered the hearts and bellies of men. The grey morality of starvation is coming, and only hard choices remain.

Moderate test or begin hoarding and stealing food from the group. If there is no food, perhaps it is time to sacrifice the weakest?



Character: Oldfolk Guides

Two young women hunters in sturdy parkas with long rifles and knives. They are tracking a snow lion that has been plaguing their hamlet. Their faces are marked with baronial tattoos marking criminal oldsettlers. Their bodies are covered in Green Sun tattoos. Their teeth are unusually sharp. Irse “Duna” Deogotta. Wayana “Ana” Valés.

♥ Q Lake and Island

Sheer mountains drop away revealing wide terraced fields embracing a half-frozen lake. A small island emerges from the middle of the lake. Ice-crushed willows surround a small temple. On the near shore an ice-locked paddle boat leans at an angle besides a pier groaning under heavy snow.

The ice over the deep lake is dangerously thin in places.

The open lake is exposed to wind.



Challenge: Dark Despair

The sun is waning. The Suncatcher is wrapping it. Winterwhite has enlisted the Amimami, the Eater of Virility. She has bribed the Green Sun to stay away. This ice will never end. Best to end it all, to embrace the long sleep now, before the Eaters come.

Easy test or lose all Aura and Charisma points, and decide to give up. When a character is healed, they recover the will to continue their journey. A character without Aura or Charisma has to be led by rope or hand, and has no volition.



Character: Finer People

An old woman and two bulky young men. Two ponies pull a sleigh with supplies among which the old woman is nestled. The men wear baronial military parkas, the woman wears sable fur. They are leaving their chalet for the hot springs of Vreley. Ermelina Redwater. Isen Headwater. Zoran Sunrise.

♥ K Subterranean Spring

The valley ends in a dizzying cliff. Mosses grow thick on the undersides of sharp boulders. Cold mist fills the air. Paths reduce to chiselled toe-holds. The river emerges from a square-sided crevasse at the foot of the cliff.

The looming cliffs provide relief and advantage defenders.

The confined space blocks wind. After heavy rains the river gushes and seethes violently.



Challenge: Panic at the Angelhunt

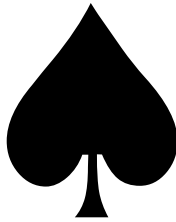
The world howls for justice. The air warps at the passage of the Winterwhite's Angelhunt. Blood chills, fires flicker, and hope dies. The Angelhunt smells hope and communities and the blood debt of Winterwhite. Who is marked for the Angelhunt?

Moderate test or flee the group to avoid the Angelhunt's bone-smashing kiss.



Character: Final Services

A sinewy oldsettler man on skis pulling a corpse on a sled. The corpse was Runo Whitetower, his coat is stuffed with legal documents, bonds, and deeds to his holdings in Ta Krasney. The oldsettler is taking his dead master to the family crypt in Rudvey. Anastasio "Ani" Bergha.



Mountains

† mountains † slopes † physical challenges † dangerous characters †

♠ 1 Precarious Ridge

The shoulder of the mountain rises and narrows, until it suddenly falls away. On one side, a cliff plummets to the valley below. On the other a smooth expanse of frozen snow plummets like a flight of doves into a dark, ice-bearded forest. Ahead the ridge is sharp as a knife, the blown snow and ice overhanging the cliff.

The location is exposed on all sides with nowhere to hide.

Wind and weather are more punishing here.



Challenge: Exposed Traverse

A knife-edge ridge connects two mountains. Gusts blow shards of ice across the lip. It is a dangerous crossing, a fall would be deadly.

Difficult agility test to cross and set a guide rope. Secure the first climber, please. Alternatively, lose a watch going around.



Character: Disciples of the Old Architects

Two figures, faces masked, wearing heavy parkas. They try to avoid contact. Beneath their coats they are swaddled in old architect amulets. One has a mechanical heart that whispers cultic directions. Irma Spoolwinder. Zeko Rabbitfarmer.

♠2 Sky-piercing Pinnacle

The roof of the sky stretches limitless above. The mountains and valleys open around. Snowfields, cliffs, and ridges surround the pinnacle, their patterns laid bare.

The location is hard to reach, advantaging defenders.

It is exposed to all elements.



Challenge: Ice Wall

Climbing across the slick, slippery surface is slow and dangerous going. A fall would be very bad.

Difficult strength test with ice axes. Or a difficult endurance test with rope, hammer, and pitons. Going around takes one watch.



Character: Bringing Peace to the Dead

Four baronial rangers in white parkas on skis, hefting Zuleiman rifles. Their hunting knives are notched and they're carrying irregular battle shovels and incendiary grenades. "The corpses of those stinking beasts are crawling out of the icy ground. Nothing a little fire can't fix." Ariya "Cap" Soldiersdaughter. Viktor Warschild. Ludvik Bearson. Vid od' Return.

♠ 3 Shattered Crater

The top of the mountain is a bowl of fractured rock splinters. Many of the splinters are black and glassy, testament to a recent explosion. The bottom of the bowl is flooded with snow and ice. A frozen pool lies beneath.

The exposed center of the crater advantages attackers.

The bowl is protected from the harshest wind.



Challenge: Wet, Heavy Snow

It feels like with every step, Winterwhite's children grasp your legs with clammy fingers, trying to drag you down.

Difficult endurance test or take one point of fatigue. Skis make the endurance test easy.



Character: Two Skintakers

Two peasants with luminous complexions, wearing light parkas. Their snow shoes are light but strong. They carry heavy bundles of kindling, pitch, torches, fuel, and rags. Their eyes glow with warmth. One has a bundled fox pelt, the other an eagle skin. Roy "Fox" Agnidey. Zoya "Birdie" Alilonghi.

♠ 4 Narrow Chimney

A narrow crack zig-zags up the mountain, splitting one flank from the other. It is dark and irregular, protected from wind and snow by overhanging rocks and lodged boulders.

The tight space disadvantages everyone, but makes a rapid ascent possible.

The chimney is protected from wind and precipitation.



Challenge: Grueling Avalanche

Trees and rocks and ice fill the valley like a plug. Each slow step drags. Going around takes an extra watch.

Difficult endurance or moderate agility test to cross.



Character: Baron's Cousin

Woman in winter armor on skis, with two sabres and a filigreed Ironbaron hunting rifle. Blood marks on her cheeks call Fourface to watch her way and guard her on her diplomatic mission. Ivana Tealcorner.

♠5 Overhanging Cliff

The hulking cliff cuts the world in half. It is pitted with rusted bolts. Within its hard granite the ancients have excavated small cells.

Climbers and anyone at the bottom of the cliff is severely disadvantaged.

The cliff is extremely exposed to wind.



Challenge: Broken Rope Bridge

The way ahead, across the narrow gorge, is broken. The weight of ice has ripped the rope bridge in half. An expert climber or a brace of ladders are needed to fix the problem.

Extreme climbing test to get across with a guide rope. Moderate climbing test and one watch to do it more carefully. Moderate engineering test with ladders, poles, and other supplies to jury rig a temporary bridge.

Alternatively, spend two watches going around.



Character: Militia Massacre

Three baronials in heavy furs, flying a village militia flag. They are dragging a sled loaded with lamp oil and supplies. One is injured—an ice ghoull bite. They are suspicious of outsiders. Tomo Smallengine. Viktor Templechild. Luna Suncatcher.

♠ 6 Deep Couloir

A clean-scraped gully ascends steeply up the flank of the mountain. Snow and boulders accumulate at the bottom. Avalanches are common after snowfalls.

Defenders are advantaged in the couloir.

The gully is protected from harsh wind.



Challenge: Frozen Lake Crossing

Sheer ice and rock bracket the lake. The ice looks solid enough, but is it?

Moderate thought test to cross safely. Alternatively, spend a watch skirting the edge.



Character: Freedom Fighters

Four oldfolk in looted armor, flying a freedom flag. They are dragging a sled loaded with lard, butter, and ammunition. One is injured—a sabre cut. They carry dented Zuleimans. Lomo Valés. Ulya de'Piz. Oryen de'Selá. Viktor “Baronial” Súma.

♠7 Sweeping Plateau

A broad flat plain of hard limestone dotted with lonely granite megaliths forms the top of the mountain. Harsh winds clear snow and dirt away. Spectacular iceforms grow in the leas of the megaliths.

Defenders are advantaged on the plateau.

The plateau is extremely exposed to wind and weather.



Challenge: Long Icy Slope

The slope glitters, smooth as the white-silk bridal gown of a desert princess. Only much more slippery, with few ways to stop on the way down.

Moderate strength test to traverse carefully. Easy skiing test to cross swiftly (heroes can ignore one future challenge of their choice).

Alternatively, spend a watch to detour.



Character: Possessed and Corrupted

A skinny figure in flapping furs, antlers strapped to its back. Its hard to tell if it was once a man or a woman, now only madness flares in its rolling eyes. The cold does not affect it. It has no teeth. Beneath its mittens, it has vestigial sixth fingers. Dey Mugay.

♠ 8 Cave-Riddled Shoulder

A ring chiselled clean through the curtain of the mountain's shoulder greets visitors. Further down-slope the cracked rock of the formation is eaten away by spiral caves and splintered chambers.

Defenders are extremely advantaged.

The caves are protected from the weather.



Challenge: Spraying Waterfall

This mass of water is too large to freeze. It sends spray and mist across the path. Crossing, you will get wet.

Moderate agility test to traverse with oiled cloths and umbrellas without getting soaked. Alternatively, a watch to detour lower down the valley.



Character: Returned from Grandmother's Cave

A tall woman, face like stone, eyes like steel. Her raven hair is bundled beneath a horned fur cap. A great sword of polished giantsbone rests light upon her wide back. She speaks in a strange old tongue. Memories of the Winterbird haunt her. Runa Wreya.

♠ 9 Scree Slope

The long open slope mixes fallen rocks, chunks of ice, and snow. Rock slides and avalanches regularly scour the slope. Careful travelers can traverse surprisingly quickly.

Tracking and pursuit is easy.

The slope is exposed to wind and weather.



Challenge: Terrifying Gales

Tearing the trees, scouring snowy slopes, Northwind's spawn bear the curse of Winterwhite.

Moderate agility test to not fall in the gale, easy strength test to hold onto carried objects. Alternatively, wait a watch under cover and the wind abates.



Character: Proof of Possession

A short man, broad, carrying a clockwork automaton of ancient make strapped to his back. He fingers his Kaiserlich carbine nervously. "At the Institute. We had papers. I have to get it back." The automaton repeats phrases and sometimes makes rude gestures with its six-fingered appendages. Rudo "Rusty" Stoneshaper. Van Mal.

♠ 10 Titanic Terraces

The entire flank of the mountain has subsided in a series of tectonic steps. Flat fields alternate with rough cliffs and scree. Snow and ice collect in every crevice.

Defenders are advantaged by the boulders and cliffs.

The terraces are exposed to the wind.



Challenge: Blinding Fog

Suncatcher's offering to Winterwhite creeps from the crevasses, billows off the rivers, rises from the wet snow, shrouding the world in white. Visibility becomes non-existent, the world fades to white.

Difficult thought test to avoid getting lost (draw a new challenge and lose one random card from the players' card collection). Alternatively, wait 1d4 watches for the fog to lift.



Character: Two Strangers

Two figures, one tall, one wide. The taller wears a turban under its parka. Tattoos of Fourface and the Three Avatars adorn their skins. The taller has a bone needle, the shorter has an Ironbaron shotgun and brace of axes. "We're safe so long as we carry word to Waterdrinker," they hope. Olga Skywatcher. Nedyia Holybolt.

♠ Unstable Boulder

A spectacular boulder forgotten by its glacier rests at the lip of a cliff. Paths wind around and under it. Hundreds of simple pebble stupas disappear beneath the gathering snow.

Attackers are advantaged on the open terrain.

The boulder area is lashed by unpredictable winds.



Challenge: Freezing Rain

Rain falls like the cruel tears of the Devil's Grandfather, freezing as soon as it hits ground or branch or hand. Soon tree branches are snapping and falling with the weight of the ice.

Difficult endurance test to continue traveling without taking one point of fatigue. Moderate thought test to find safe cover for one watch. Moderate endurance test to cower in place for one watch in paltry cover without taking one point of fatigue.



Character: Monkey Gnome

A tiny figure, swaddled in furs, with the face of a shrivelled old person. Its smile reveals large canines and a nest of tentacles instead of a tongue. "I've seen the Devil's Beggars, I have," chuckles the Monkey Gnome. Djuzmarsyan Nal Nal.

♠ Q Howling Saddle

Two fang-peaked mountains meet in a pass worn smooth by the natural wind funnel. The uplift has left striated bands of rock twisted like salted worms. Chiselled steps and rusted pitons mark the way.

All ranged attacks are disadvantaged by the winds.

The wind and cold are both magnified in this pass.



Challenge: Hell's Own Blizzard

Winterwhite's cold blanket falls upon the land, trapping howling star demons upon the world's surface. Temperatures fall, winds whip, and snow fades the world to white.

Moderate endurance test or take a point of fatigue. Moderate thought test or lost. Alternatively, cower for 1d4 watches in a makeshift shelter.



Character: Smuggling Supplies

Three bulky figures, packing heavy Kaiserlich pistols, and whipping a tired horse dragging a sleigh. The sleigh is full of salt and oil. Smugglers. "We've no business with you, you've no business with us. Leave and everyone gets along. Fini Sweetapples. Henrik Foundling. Berengar Knockwood.

♠ R Chiselled Stairs

A staircase switchblades up cliff and couloir to cross the mountain range. Ancient galleries and tunnels with mysterious eroded bas reliefs make passage easier. Panoramic platforms thick with drifted snow surprise travelers.

Defenders are strongly advantaged in the the old stairwells.

The wind and weather are very erratic.



Challenge: Winterwhite's Breath

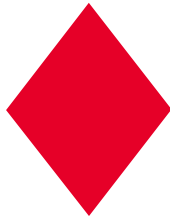
The silence rings like a clear bell. Nothing moves. Like gunshots sap-filled trees explode. Birds on the wing fall to the ground. The chill comes, hard and more brutal than anything yet experienced.

Extreme endurance test or take a point of fatigue. Alternatively, moderate thought test to find shelter and cower for 1d4 watches. In that case, easy endurance test or take a point of fatigue.



Character: There Was a Witch

A lady in white, draped against the cold with white furs and bone medallions. Her staff gleams with dismal runes, and her smile seems to wrap round and round her neck twice or thrice. A witch. "Be along, Doctor Love don't need to know you've seen me by, neither do the Three-and-Four. I'm just bearing witness." Stella Slingstringer.



Icefields

† *locations on the high ice* † *supernatural challenges* † *terrifying characters* †

◆ 1 Powder Dunes

The relentless wind has scoured the high meadow of snow, piling the powder up in drifts taller than a house. Frozen snow and ice gravel hide the rocks and grass. Light scatters in floating chips of ice. Dry escarpments pen the snow dunes.

Anyone moving across the dunes is immediately visible, travel over the powder drifts is difficult.

The wind is exceptionally harsh on the snow.



Challenge: Dark Ranger Lure

Warm light. Laughter. Song. A warm place beckons. It is an illusion, concealing a sharp-walled crevasse. Within, a writhing mass of broken, trapped ice zombies.

Moderate thought test to see through the lure. Easy thought test to spot the baronial warning signs painted on nearby trees.



Character: Firestarters

Five baronials in fur and armor. Greased. Silent. Hooded. They carry rope and pitch and Kaiserlich carbines and fire starters. "Have you seen any of those savages? They brought this upon us, with their wicked demons. We're bringing them some justice in return." Rudy Longstocking. Sandi Blacktemple. Dani Princebrewer. Vidya Ironbeater. Sasha Southson.

◆ 2 Deep Snowfield

Trees, boulders, and houses, everything is swallowed in a silent blanket of heavy snow. The landscape is alien, silent, and white. Digging down, more snow. As sunlight strikes the snow it becomes soft and clinging, when night returns it freezes to a crust.

All action in the clinging snow is disadvantaged, at night travel is easy.

Building a shelter from the wind is very easy here.



Challenge: Old Architect's Face

A large snow ape with machinery in its belly. Within the machinery, a crystal box suffused with harsh phosphorescent light. Shadows flicker within the light, displaying a wizened face. The face speaks with a clicking voice, thick with static. It offers help in exchange for a living body to carry old Nur Enmaw the Reawakened on a fact-finding mission into the outer world.

Difficult fight to defeat the snow ape. Moderate charisma test to politely refuse the old architect. Easy thought test to let the old architect in (this kills the old personality of the character, overwriting it with Nur Enmaw's). Alternatively, easy endurance test to run away from the heavy snow ape.



Character: Ice Troll

A giant figure, three metres tall, swathed in fur and painted robes. A troll of Winterwhite, its blood is leeching acid, its breath is soul-stealing frost. Upon its back, a sacrifice to Winterwhite squirms weakly. "The hamlet has paid, this child will spare them for this month."

◆ 3 Mirror of Ice

The heavy layer of snow has melted and frozen so many times that the surface is now a slippery mirror of ice. Piles of frozen snow and lonely broken trees break the surface. Breaking the icy surface or building

Travel is disadvantaged because of the slippery surface.

Building a shelter from the wind is very hard here.



Challenge: White Fox Sacrifice

Bound upon an altar, a youth with unblemished skin. Around, seven seven-tailed foxes. The youth must freeze to propitiate Winterwhite and avert her gaze. A successful sacrifice gives advantage on the next four encounters.

Moderate battle to save the youth, a wolffolk skintaker. Moderate charisma test to be allowed to participate in the sacrifice. Alternatively, quietly walking away works fine.



Character: Mother Ghoul

A ragged figure, swathed in torn canvas, missing an arm. Its flesh is blue. Ice worms squirm within its wounds, animating it. It is searching for its children, "They ran away, with the sleigh, with the light, without me. They can't leave me like this!" Many Oldschild.

◆ 4 Sculptures of Rime

The forest flash-froze in a blizzard. Beards and streaks of ice deck every leaf and branch. Flowers of ice grow upon the corpses of small creatures caught outside. Every step sets off a tinkling, jangling orchestra as delicate ice crystals explode.

Hiding and stealth is disadvantaged here.

The wind is weakened by the sculptures.



Challenge: Snow Wisp Funeral

Red-eyed white ghosts follow a procession bearing the corpse of a suicide. Hunger in their eyes, soon they will ride this dead baronial. Soon. But before, perhaps, a few more suicides?

Easy aura test to avoid the snow wisps' lures. Difficult thought test to dispel them with sulphur, egg, and blue paint.



Character: Oldfolk Soldiers

Three winter soldiers on a sled, armed to the teeth. Their furs are leached white, their faces tattooed with the old animals, from before the Purification. "Have you seen where those invaders are hiding? We'll smoke them out, the thieves of our land, the killers of our forebears." Troy "Pickles" Belgroyé. Ina "Juniper" Fiayés. Carso "Bones" de'Montéy.

◆ 5 Frozen Slope

The north-facing slope deceives the eye. A smooth, sharp expanse of frozen snow draped over the mountain like a table cloth. Making an impression in the snow is difficult. A single misstep and a walker will accelerate into the cliff-ringed valley below.

All movement is disadvantaged here. Care is a must.

The sun does not shine here and it is unusually cold.



Challenge: Death Fairy Lights

Red lights in the sky, shimmering golden haze, phantasmal flowers blooming in the night. A trilling sound takes residence behind ear and dream. Glistening, curious faces appear in the air. The death fairies are here to observe and amuse themselves. They will draw attention to whomever they follow, disadvantaging stealth and encounter tests. The fairies will get bored after three watches with no battles or deaths.

Moderate agility test to avoid their attentions. Difficult thought test to amuse them with riddles and make them go away. Alternatively, wait in hiding for a watch, and the fairies will leave.



Character: One of the Responsible

Two figures, one limping. Dressed in fine furs, equipped for the snow, dragging a full sled. Their Zuleiman handcannons have pearl grips. "We can make it out, we know the way. Just past that ridge is Soren's hunting lodge, we can gather our breath there, then make a straight dash under the ridges past Hodovoya and into Now Garday." Lazar Woolmaker. Ulna Guardschild.

◆ 6 Rotten Snow

The south-facing valley is swaddled in pock-marked snow. Melt water glistens and scars open up in the rotten snow. Every step the snow threatens to give way, swallowing the walker to their waist. Loud noises or explosions could easily trigger an avalanche.

Travel is horribly exhausting here.

It is unusually warm in the protected valley.



Challenge: Riddle of Worms

A wood henge hung in hoar and ice tops an eroded kurgan. Glistening icy cocoons hang heavy on the henge, pregnant with ice ghoulish worms. When the worms emerge they will dig deep into the kurgan, awakening the bones of the century-dead oldfolk, and perhaps even some of the far older bonethrone centaurs from the time of the hungry khan. The ice ghouls melt into clumps of bone and rotted flesh when the temperature is above freezing.

Moderate agility test to carefully gather up the cocoons and make a bonfire of their deathbringing flesh. Extreme thought test to figure out how to use the ice ghoulish worms to reanimate the dead on command.



Character: Sacrificial Party

Seven bent figures, their furs spattered with blood. All are weeping. They do not feel very cold. "We paid our price twice over. Perhaps Winterwhite will spare us now." Origen Falconbrood and the elders of the Falconsong clan.

◆ 7 Ice Bridge

Two slopes nearly touch above a deep blue gorge. Several chunks of ice cemented with snow form a natural bridge across the gap. The snow on either side is well-trodden and icy. Four megaliths stand askew, streaked with ice and snow. The capstone lies nearby, cracked in the fall.

Ambushers are advantaged, travel is disadvantaged.

The bridge is exposed to sudden gusts of wind.



Challenge: Greetings of the Skintaker

A skinned buck, its seven-point antlers bound to a tree. A skinned snow lion, its head on a pole. A skinned man, his inquisition great coat scare-crowed on a snowman. There is a skin-taker nearby (the next NPC encountered is actually a powerful wolffolk skintaker shaman).

Difficult aura test to discern the karmic residue of the skintaker. Moderate thought test to find their tracks in the driven snow.

Alternatively, spend a watch to put some distance between the travelers and the shapeshifter.



Character: Fear the White Knight

A tall figure, with flying translucent hair, its eyes like mirrors. A sword of glass upon its back. Glistening armor upon its chest. White and red fur stiff on its cloak. A white knight of Winterwhite. A seeker of tribute. Speaker-to-Northwind, It-that-hides-pain.

◆ 8 Avalanche

The valley is filled with a plug of ice gravel, churned snow, boulders, shattered trees, and probably bodies. The slopes above are swept clean by the avalanche's passage. Icy scarps, bare rock, and tree stumps remain exposed.

Travel across the avalanche is disadvantaged, the slopes are slippery.

The valley is exposed to the elements.



Challenge: Necrodancer's Ritual

Upon a barrow three wizened and tattooed oldfolk, stripped naked and glowing red in the snow, dance the massacred women and children of the May Tornay tribe awake from their graves. Iceworms elongate and thread the bones, becoming cold nerves for the dead, while frozen clay flows to become cold sinewy flesh. The risen dead caw like the Winterbird and thirst for outlander flesh, keen to avenge their deaths.

Difficult fight against the oldfolk necrodancers. Alternatively, spend a watch avoiding them, and consign the nearest baronial hamlet to death later that day.



Character: Rag Children

Four ragged children, flesh turned blue, wounds stitched with icy silk, eyes empty and white. Ice ghouls, animated by Hollowfear. "Mother gave us to Winterwhite, what will you give to Winterwhite?" Penelopa, Tuna, and Viktor Takewood. Lano "Curly" Valéy.

◆ 9 Ice Cave

The face of the mammoth glacier looms above, a wall of slowly advancing ice. Rills carve through the snow before it, where the water from a warm subterranean spring forces its way from beneath the ice. Ice caves riddle the underbelly of the glacier, offering passage to clearer terrain beyond.

Travel in the caves is difficult. Also, it's dark.

There is no wind in the caves, and it is always freezing.



Challenge: Snow Circle of Hoar and Hate

Nauseating runes chase each other upon the snow, constricting upon a hamlet or a lonely house, a curse of hoar and hate for those within. Icy undeath will follow soon.

As the circle draws tighter, those within find it harder and harder to avoid the red mist (the aura tests grow harder and harder every hour). Anything that dies within the circle rises again as a hoar ghoul (one level stronger than it was in life).

Easy test to avoid stumbling into the circle. Difficult thought test to figure out how to dispel the circle with incantations of the Green Sun and offerings of liver, blood, and mead to the Winterbird.

Alternatively, just give it a wide berth, spending one watch.



Character: Dead Hero

A hero in fine Western City armor. Skin cold and blue. "Come now, give a body, awaken the sleepers." Odilo Kolgarschild.

◆ 10 Cruel Crevasse

From peak to cliff-edge, the glacier is shorn apart by a fresh crevasse at least a ten-length wide. The bottom is deep and jagged. The lip of the crevasse is pinkish and slick, stained by algae within the ice. Only experienced climbers would dare to attempt a crossing.

Following the edge of the crevasse leads to more icefields. On the next travel action, the players must pick an icefield, or they have not yet reached the edge of the crevasse. If that is the case, the referee only plays one new challenge and one new non-player character, then puts

Everybody is disadvantaged in the crevasse.

Wind is weak in the crevasse, but it is always freezing.



Challenge: Circus of Ice Skeletons

The ice bends and shifts and breaks before you. Contorted, grinning figures rise from ground. Winterwhite's ice skeletons rise to dance and fiddle and play the greetings of their queen.

Moderate agility test to pass them by stealthily. Alternatively, wait a watch for them to leave.



Character: Possessed Prophet

A man, stumbling, half-crippled with pain, burning with fever. One eye glows bright, the other tears with panic. "I have come! I am the prophet of fire! I have returned from the vault of purification!" He is quite mad. May Qizey.

◆ *I Staircase of Ice*

A cascade of ice blocks the size of houses tumble from the overflowing corrie. The blocks form a titanic staircase damming the valley and ascending the mountain flanks. A lake thick with floating ice is forming behind this fresh plug in the valley.

Travel is disadvantaged, defenders are advantaged on the ice blocks.

Nooks and crannies out of the wind are easy to find, but the ice is freezing.



Challenge: Glacier Worm's Passage

A trail of supernatural cold and glistening ice marks the passage of a glacier worm. The cruel cold chills blood and freezes eyes in their sockets.

Moderate endurance test to cross the magical cold trail without suffering a point of fatigue. Alternatively, spend a watch waiting for it to dissipate or finding a path around it.



Character: Traveler In Time

A scrawny young thing in heavy robes with a bloody sword of ancient make. Its blade glistens like opal, and when it shimmers, it hews through stone. Upon his shoulder rests a white bird with blood red eyes. "This was never about you. Go along now." Carl Foundling.

◆ Q Grand Glacier

As far as the eye can see, all is white and blue. Black knives of sharpened rock peek above the ice at the edges of the glacier. The ice is covered in layers of snow that hide crevasses and pits. Downslope the ice stretches and breaks apart as begins to slide into the settled valley below.

The surfaces is treacherous to all walkers.

The cold and wind are intense upon the ice.



Challenge: Hollowfear Awakens the Ghoulfire

The roar of the famine bear shakes snow from trees. That night the ghouls hunger is kindled in the bellies of the weak. The unconsecrated dead shake and shiver awake, driven to feed and feel warmth again.

Easy aura test to avoid the call of Hollowfear. Moderate test to spot the first stirrings of any dead being carried by the group.



Character: Dark Beggar's Champion

A monster in scaly, oily armor. A great axe like fowl smoke rests lightly in its hand. It has two mouths, one white, one red. On a chain it leads three child ice ghouls. "Oh, but the Dark Beggar will be paid well tonight." Elvir Dustheart.

◆ R The Iceworm Comes

The air is filled with the screams of a thousand grinding teeth. The ground rumbles with the pounding of ten thousand fists. Sharp shards of stone and ice fall like rain. A living glacier infused with the the curse of Winterwhite flows across the land. Crevasses open and close in the iceworm like smacking mouths. Before your eyes trees, huts, roads, and boulders are scoured.

Walking on the iceworm is difficult. Everybody is disadvantaged on the iceworm.

The cold upon the iceworm is infernal.



Challenge: Angelhunt Will Eat

The stars melt through the clouds, leaving rainbow streaks upon the brain as they tunnel to the ground. Then comes the shrieking. It is the angelhunt. Shut your mind. Hide your soul. The angelhunt will take their due.

Difficult aura test to silence the quaking fear and awareness that draws the angelhunt. Alternatively, alcohol and stupefaction also work, but at a cost of 1d4-1 watches.



Character: The Old Architect

A feral figure in glistening parka, with glass helmet. Its step is tremulous and confused. Its hand clutches a gleaming silver tool. Perhaps a pistol? "What is this snow? This trickery? Have the vaults betrayed us?" Nix Zeykey.

The Final Two

Joker 1: Mother Mercy

A werewolf, shaggy and tall, loping quietly through the mist. It is decked with bandoliers and holds a Zuleiman shotgun with a firm, professional grip. Its eyes hold no malice, “Remember, when the gods fight, its us mortals that do the dying.” Lenora “Mother Mercy” Fum y.

Joker 2: Bearer of a Demiurge’s Soul

A snow ape, its head gripped in a vise of machinery and crystal. Its face contorts in a rictus as it tries to roar, but the machinery keeps it controlled. In its great arms it carries a crystal machine. It keeps repeating to itself, “Render the vermin, mold the chosen. From the many the few, anew. Anew.” Duy Slawdey.

We could use a bigger ‘joker’ graphic for this.

Escape: Last Location

The players collect their last card, completing three of a kind or four in a row. The last location is the escape from Brezim.

Referee: Presenting the Escape

Add something like this to the last location:

“A mild breeze announces the end of Winterwhite’s reach. The snow does not end yet, but in the still winterland the sound of dripping, melting ice can be heard. A bird trills. The smell of woodsmoke. A crofter? A federal outpost? Help is at hand.”

Then make a final encounter check and describe the last challenge. If the last NPC is helpful, you can ignore it. Remind the players that only one of them has to get out for them to “win”.

Scoring the Escape

To determine the escape event from Longwinter add up the value of the players’ collected set of cards. The lowest possible result is three twos (2, 2, 2) worth 6 points, the highest value is four in a row of jack, queen, king, and ace worth 50. The value of an ace varies, it can be 1 or 14 depending on its position. To determine the value of a set of three aces roll 3d12+6.

Ask the players questions to flesh out the aftermath.

6-10: A grueling escape leaves the heroes scarred and hurt. What nightmares of Winterwhite plague your dreams? Why do you feel like something darker stirred beneath the ice? How do you cope with your trauma? Were there many you betrayed on the way? Why will nobody believe you, when you talk of ice ghouls?

11-20: A painful journey, full of grim memories. What happened to those you left behind? Was there more you could have done? What will search parties find

when the ice lets up? Will anyone believe the icy plague ever happened? Do you have any proof?

30-40: A hard journey has made you stronger. What have you learned of this valley? What truths were hidden deep in the history, beneath the oldfolk? What will happen now to the struggle of the oldfolk? How will you prove the depths of darkness and terror that have gripped the valley? Did you help anyone survive on your way? Is there someone else who might come after you?

41-50: A heroic escape. Who did you find when you made your way out? Is there somebody they could help you save? What proof of strange ancient pacts and cultists do you have? Can you save anyone else? Will there be a mission to save more innocents? How is your journey immortalized? What is the radio-play recounting your deeds titled? How accurate is it?

Then thank them for playing, and have a warm drink against Winterwhite's chill.



Appendix: Music of Longwinter

*A curated selection of songs to capture the slide from light into darkness,
from harvest to hunger.*

Antonio Vivaldi. *Winter; The Four Seasons* (1725).
<https://youtu.be/TZCfydWF48c>
A classic, in all senses of the word.

Bijelo Dugme. *Hajdemo u planine; Pljuni i zapjevaj moja Jugoslavijo* (1986).
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_AFE6UZ8DHk
Going to the mountains because there is no winter there. Sure.

Black Sabbath. *Fairies Wear Boots; Paranoid* (1970).
<https://youtu.be/ab-ZNU76UDE>
Fairies? Yes, fairies. Scary fairies.

Devin Townsend. *Juular; Deconstruction* (2011).
<https://youtu.be/n-DKs0qfdEk>
It's cold inside the worm.

Ennio Morricone. *Complete Album; The Thing OST* (1982).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zgiSXR0G2tQ&t=1336s>
Something about the ice and snow.

Ghost. *Rats; Prequelle* (2018).
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_ijk7A5oAc
In times of turmoil.

Grand Magus. *Hammer of the North; Hammer of the North* (2010).
<https://youtu.be/gGBpOZpmq1U>
This list would be dull without a bit of epic viking doom.

Iced Earth. *I Died For You; The Dark Saga* (1996).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mUGuF8hpMQs>
Something about sacrifice and death and mistakes? Well, why not? Was the pain just too much?

If These Trees Could Talk. *Iron Glacier; The Bones of a Dying World* (2016).
<https://youtu.be/IdqRK7D3Qvc?t=1668>
Ominous post-rock for ominous times.

Jim Reeves. *The Blizzard; Tall Tales and Short Tempers* (1961).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H2fyFumisiU>

Encapsulates Longwinter.

Joe Satriani. *Ice 9; Surfing With the Alien* (1987).

<https://youtu.be/eyVWOH7jIg8>

Intense riffage and the name. Blunt.

Led Zeppelin. *Immigrant Song; Led Zeppelin III* (1970).

<https://youtu.be/RINhD0oS5pk>

Of course a song that starts with “We come from the land of ice and snow” has to go on this list.

Mephistopheles. *Devotional Doom; album* (2017).

https://youtu.be/Rf4f_wBXalk

Simon & Garfunkel. *A Hazy Shade of Winter; Bookends* (1968).

<https://youtu.be/bnZdlhUDEJo>

Because it weeps.

Stoned Jesus. *I Am The Mountain; Seven Thunders Roar* (2012).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iW1jxI6ISks>

Because it is excellent.

Stribog. *Morana; U Okovima Vječnosti* (2010).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iuSWgAUb9cU>

In the realms of ice she disappears.

The Sword. *Age of Winters; album* (2006).

<https://youtu.be/eEsmxjvgcjU>

Slower and noisier than you would expect of The Sword.

Tchaikovsky. *November; The Seasons* (1875).

<https://youtu.be/h5fMMaF8pPo>

Autumn, our poor garden is all falling down, the yellowed leaves are flying in the wind.

The Unseen Guest. *Let Me In; Out There* (2004)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FBGO0IVrA_g

A terrifying song.

Van der Graaf Generator. *White Hammer; The Least We Can Do Is Wave To Each Other* (1970).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t-6QXVFcczw>

Well, this could have gone for Witchburner, too.

Vangelis. *Other Side of Antarctica; Antarctica* (1983).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mkq_Ep5daTM

Instrumental.

Witchcraft. *Firewood; album* (2005).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5P80DrCZcQ4>

Have to include Witchcraft, because of Witchburner.



Credits

This whole adventure, this whole creative endeavor, has been made possible by 261 supporters at the WizardThiefFighter patreon (<https://www.patreon.com/wizardthieffighter>). The heroes and metaheroes will be listed in the complete work.

- Luka Rejec, Seoul, November 2018

REPLACE WITH CURRENT INFO

