

CANYON of the SNOW CAIRNS

by JC Connors

ABOUT THE ADVENTURE

Canyon of the Snow Cairns is a *Savage Worlds* ice age adventure with Lovecraftian horror undertones. It is set 30,000 years ago in the Blue River Valley, somewhere in Europe, long before the dawn of civilization. Weeks before winter sets in, the PCs witness their tribal leader captured by a mysterious, rival tribe. Fearful that their tribe will be doomed without his leadership, they set out to rescue their chief in the Forest of Howling Sorrows.

Canyon of the Snow Cairns can easily be adapted to other systems (a *Call of Cthulhu* and *GURPS* version is also available on www.1shotadventures.com).

Canyon of the Snow Cairns is suitable for four-to-six novice characters. The end of this adventure includes six pregenerated character backgrounds so you can get started faster – plus an extra one should one of the PCs meet a grisly fate before the adventure's conclusion!

Characters introduced for the first time in the adventure are noted in ALL-CAPS. Skill rolls are in SMALL-CAPS. Sections marked with a map icon are side-quests and adventure hooks, and not important to the overall plot of the adventure. Sections marked with a person icon are opportunities for specific PCs, notably the pregenerated characters from the end of this adventure.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

CHIEF KUSIM-AHA has led the Clan of Three Claws for ten years. The young chief was adored, and his bold leadership was marked by warm winds and an endless supply of fat river fish. It was because of the chief's bold leadership that the Lion Tail Tribe was finally destroyed, after a generation of fierce rivalry for food and shelter.

As the Great Autumn Hunt concludes, Chief Kusim-Aha and his brother, war chief TANSUM-AHA are brutally ambushed by savage warriors from an unknown clan. Dressed in black wolf pelts, the attackers speared Kusim-Aha and then escaped with his body across the river and into the primeval Forest of Howling Sorrows.

Dying from his wounds, Tansum-Aha predicts that if his brother is not rescued and returned to the Clan of Three Claws, a terrible tragedy would be unleashed. Without Kusim-Aha, he fears that the tribe will be erased from the earth during the winter.

Tansum-Aha's prediction is not altogether untrue. His brother's captives, vengeful survivors of the Lion Tail Tribe, have turned to worshipping the dark god-spirit known as THE WALKER IN THE WIND. Their zealous and desperate

worship weakened the ancient boundaries between worlds, and they discovered a portal that allowed them to freely travel between the forest and the Walker in the Wind's frozen home world of Borea. However, each trip has eaten away at their very sanity.

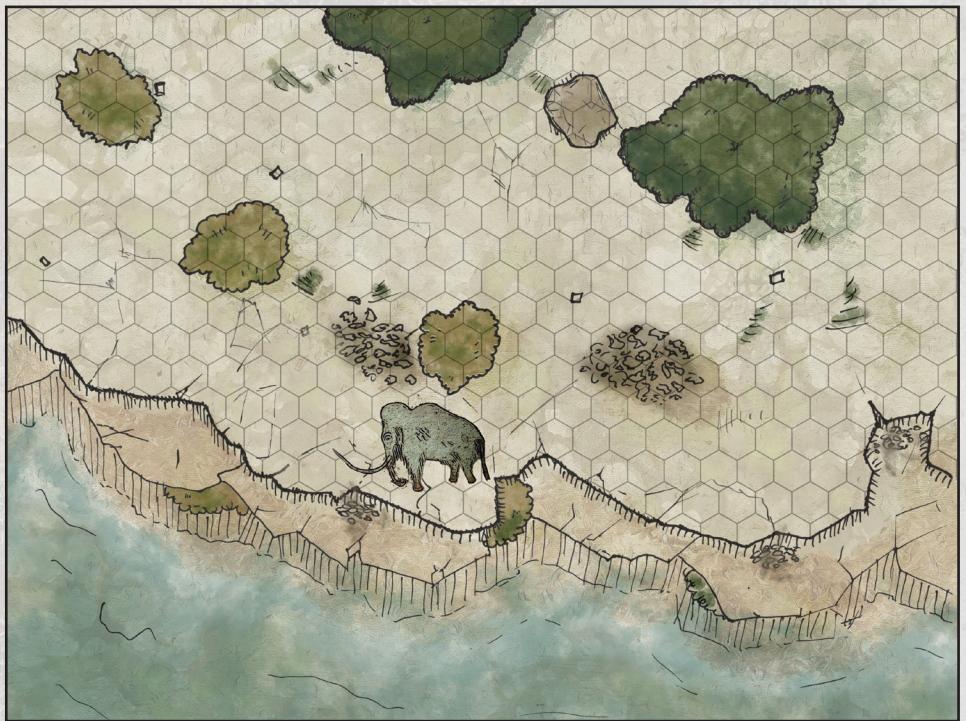
The Lion Tails carried the wounded Chief Kusim-Aha through the portal, so that they can sacrifice him to the Walker in the Wind himself. They hope this act will bring them favor with the Walker in the Wind, while utterly destroying their generational foes.

To save their tribe from doom, the PCs must venture into the Forest of Howling Sorrows, survive its dangers, discover the secrets of the ancient portal, and finally, claw back their leader from the primal ice world of Borea.

THE RECKLESS CLIFF SIDE HUNT

For six days, the Great Autumn Hunt has been underway, a rare time when both the black deer and mastodon herds migrate through the Blue River Valley. Seventeen black deer have fallen to the spears of the Clan of Three Claws, almost half them by the strong hands of young Chief Kusim-Aha and his war chief brother, Tansum-Aha.

Despite the early success, no tribesman has yet to take down



one of the great mastodons. This year, the massive beasts have been especially strong, fast, and aggressive, and two of the finest hunters of the clan were gored and killed by a great mastodon bull dubbed "STONETUSKS". The mastodon is recognizable by its one broken tusk (the other half of which was buried in the gut of one of the ill-fated hunters). Many hunters have sought to take Stonetusks down.

The adventure begins at dusk. The evening is chill and a light northerly breeze is marking the end of the season. Breath frosts in the air as a light drizzle rains down from the darkening sky.

The PCs are hot on the trail of Stonetusks, who has been spotted ambling along the high cliff edge that runs along the southern bank of the Blue River. The mastodon is alone and far away from his herd. The terrain here is rough and rocky and visibility is limited.

A terrible shout comes from the trail up ahead, followed by the fierce trumpet of a furious mastodon. Racing ahead, the PCs see Stonetusks mauling one of their reckless clan mates, stomping him aggressively with one of his huge feet. The dangerous mastodon, backed up against the cliff side, rears up and then glares at the PCs, challenging them.

The PCs recognize the man under the mastodon as MEELO, a young tribesman known for his carelessness during hunts. The man is still alive, though his leg is gruesomely crushed. If the PCs take a moment to assess the surroundings, they see no one else nearby. A NOTICE (-2) roll spots the fallen tribesman's stone-tipped spear under some brush just a few yards away.

STONETUSKS

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d12+6, Vigor d10

Skills: Athletics d6, Fighting d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d6.

Pace: 7"; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 20 (3)

Special Abilities

Armor +3 (woolly hide)

Resilient: Mastodons can take one Wound before they're Incapacitated.

Mastodons typically attack by *slamming* their victim for Str+d8 damage. This then knocks human-sized opponents over then automatically does Str+d8 trampling damage.



The great mastodon is angry and frightened. His first instinct is to scare the PCs away, by bellowing challenges, brandishing his tusks, and stomping his feet.

Saving Meelo

Rescuing Meelo is a dangerous affair while Stonetusks looms over him. If someone approaches Stonetusks, perhaps to pull Meelo away from him, make a Fear check for the mastodon. A clever plan that keeps the animal calm, or a PC with animal empathy that uses an appropriate influence skill, may give a bonus to the roll. If Stonetusks succeeds the roll, he stands his ground and threatens any approaching PC with a tusk attack. If he fails, he bolts along the cliff side – slamming and trampling a PC who approached from that direction.

Challenging Stonetusks

If the PCs wait and do nothing, Stonetusks huffs and bellows. Meelo's moaning and cries for help eventually anger the beast, and he'll find the courage to charge at the PCs, trampling and likely killing poor Meelo in the process.

If the PCs startle, rush, or otherwise attack Stonetusks, make a Fear check for the beast. If he succeeds, he trumpets a challenge and charges the closest PC. If he fails, he bolts alongside the edge of the cliff, trying to get away. This Fear check should be repeated when he is seriously wounded

Anyone, including Stonetusks, who runs closely along the wet cliff side runs a risk of falling and plummeting 20 yards into the river below. A failed ATHLETICS roll indicates a slip and fall into the water below for 5d6+5 damage (or 10d6+10 for poor, massive Stonetusks). A PC who makes a SWIMMING or ATHLETICS roll halves damage, or takes no damage with a raise as he executes a perfect dive! A PC must then make a SWIMMING roll to escape the river, else they begin to drown. Fortunately, allied tribesmen are nearby to fish PCs out.

If the PCs take down Stonetusks, they hear the cheers of their fellow tribesmen who witnessed their victory from below. They have achieved a mighty task and the spirits will heap many rewards upon them this winter. Hauling the six ton carcass of the mastodon back to the tribe's camp is beyond the ability of a small group of men. They'll have to get help to do this, but their allies are quickly rushing up the cliff to help.

If Stonetusks falls into the river and is still conscious, make a ATHLETICS roll for the creature. If he succeeds, he manages to swim down the river and find his way back to his retreating herd. If he fails, he limped from the water too slowly, and was overtaken and killed by other tribesmen, who appreciate the PCs' assistance nonetheless.

THE SHAMAN'S REWARD

If the PCs killed Stonetusks and rescued Meelo, the shaman KOVA-KEEYA, declares that the broken tusk of the mastodon is theirs to keep. On the other hand, if Stonetusks was killed by the tribe after a fall in the river, the shaman's first inclination is to give the tusk to the other hunters that actually killed the beast. Kova-Keeya can be convinced otherwise with a satisfying story that plays up the PCs' participation (and a very good or better reaction).

Either way, Kova-Keeya spends the night sawing the ivory into several rough-hewn and heavy mastodon talismans, which can be hung from the neck.

The mastodon talismans contain the savage spirit of Stonetusks, and give the wearer a blessing. Treat this as a limited bless spell, but effective only when the PCs are in the cursed land of Borea. The blessing gives +1 to all rolls and ends when the subject is in serious danger and fails some die roll (or a foe makes a good die roll). Then the talisman averts or reduces the danger, and becomes a useless trinket.

Meelo will survive the cliff side encounter as long as he doesn't get trampled or gored by Stonetusks again. (GMs preferring more detail can assume Meelo has Strength d6, Vigor d6, and is incapacitated with one Wound when encountered.)

If Meelo is rescued, he gasps that he will be forever grateful to the PCs. He tells them that he believes Stonetusks possessed the fury of the defeated Lion Tail Tribe. This brave act earns the PCs a token from Meelo's uncle, the tribe's shaman, when they return to their settlement (see text box).

FESTIVAL AT THE CAMP

A full moon shines on the Three Claws' camp of hide-tents and tall, sheltering rocks. Barking dogs welcome the PCs back to the camp, which is lit by three large fires in its middle. A large black deer already roasts above each fire, giving the camp a wonderful smell of oily smoke and crisping flesh. The mood is festive, with men and women dancing and singing around each fire.

Within minutes, the eldest huntsman TUMBA THE HAPPY shouts a merry welcome to the PCs. He witnessed their encounter with Stonetusks from a distance, and tells them to prepare a great story to tell to Chief Kusim-Aha when he

returns – no doubt bringing more deer for the tribe to cure for the winter.

As the PCs are pulled into the festivities, the shaman Kova-Keeya sings a celebratory song to the spirits. Soon, the tribe's women hang garlands of dried flowers about the hunter's necks. This is followed by the sacred tokens of the tribe – necklaces with three claws, that of a wolf, a lion, and a bear. These tokens are only given after a successful hunt or battle. Receiving them is the greatest honor among the clan.

Jealous Ugly Bearface

Tumba informs the PCs that the day's hunt has gone well for all the hunters. If the PCs managed to take down Stone-tusks, Tumba proclaims them *bavaaks*, or “great and towering huntsman,” second only in skill to Chief Kusim-Aha and his brother and war chief, Tansum-Aha. This title earns the PCs many embraces, slaps on the back, and smiles from the amorous clan members who do not have mates already (and some who do). Otherwise, always-happy Tumba will still celebrate the PC's bravery and risk-taking in a public manner.

A hunter called UGLY BEARFACE is not thrilled by the PCs' adventure. Normally one of the clan's greatest hunters, Bearface has had a bad season. He brought down no black deer this year, and worse, scared the mastodon herd away when he had an angry outburst at a younger huntsman who made a joke at his expense. He received no flower garlands or clan tokens this year.

Bearface will hurl insults at the most likeable or capable PC. He claims the PC is taking too much credit, and by doing so, he is dishonoring the great chief. He then pushes and spits at the PC in an attempt to pick a fight. Bearface can be talked down with a PERSUASION roll or other influence skill. If a brawl breaks out, other tribe members will pull Bearface away from his victim once first blood is drawn. Either way, Bearface angrily leave the camp and disappears into the night.

GM Note: Ugly Bearface soon ends up witnessing the kidnapping of Chief Kusim-Aha and shows up later in the adventure. The end of the adventure includes Ugly Bearface as a replacement PC, in the event one of the PCs dies before the adventure is over.

The Search for Chief Kusim-Aha

Hours after nightfall, Tumba quietly expresses his concern to the PCs that Chief Kusim-Aha and his brother Tansum-Aha have not returned to camp yet. It is highly unusual for any hunter to not return before nightfall. Tumba asks that the PCs lead a search party, and reminds the PCs that the brothers were last seen a several miles west of the settlement, along the bend in the Blue River where the black deer herd graze.

UGLY BEARFACE

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

Skills: Athletics d6, Fighting d8,
Intimidation d8, Notice d6,
Stealth d8, Survival d8, Tracking d6

Pace: 6”; Parry: 6; Toughness: 6

Special Abilities

Stone knife: Str + d4 (he won't use this during a brawl)

Personality: Unlucky, jealous Bearface always lashes out after poor hunts. Once he was appreciated for being an effective warrior during the war with the Lion Tails. Now, he is largely disliked by the tribe for being impulsive and bad tempered, which combine into a real liability during group hunts,



A COMMON KNOWLEDGE roll (at -1 due to the dark) recalls a shortcut to the bend in the river. A failure simply means it takes the typical couple of hours or so to reach it.

Blood at the Blue River Bend

As the PCs approach the bend in the Blue River, they hear the distressed screams of the tribe's war-chief, Tansum-Aha. He is shouting his brother's name into the night, his voice filled with anguish and defeat.

As the PCs come closer, they see Tansum-Aha lying on the ground, a broken spear wickedly piercing his side. He is surrounded by a perfect circle of dead black deer, which twitch and spasm in weird unison in their death throes. This unnatural sight calls for a Fear check! As soon as the PCs step over the circle of deer, the deer instantly cease their movement and fall dead. Additionally, the air inside the circle is heavy and freezing cold.

There is no sign of Chief Kusim-Aha. Tansum-Aha is severely wounded, a bone spear shaft buried deep into his side. Wracked with pain, he cries out his story.

“My brother and I were hunting the black deer, here, in this place. When the deer circled around us, dancing and tossing their antlers, we thought the spirits were smiling. But when my brother loosed his arrow we were attacked by savage, wolf-headed men whose eyes held the light of the setting sun. They hurled many spears all at once and all the deer fell, together in this circle. Brother was also pierced by spears and I was afraid for him. I could not move, the fear felt like a winter cold. I tried to crawl to him, but the wolf-men with black nails dragged him away to the river. I was helpless to chase them.”

A HEALING (-3) roll safely removes the spear from Tansum-Aha. Otherwise, he dies from his injury, pleading for the PCs to find his brother immediately. The spirits have told him that his brother still lives but is in mortal danger:

"My nightmares have become living things. I know that our clan will be erased from memory if Kusim-Aha is not returned to us. Without him, we will not survive the winter, I am sure."

If a PC examines the broken spear, they see that it is made from particularly dense bone. It is unknown what animal it is from; a NOTICE roll confirms the bone comes from a creature as big as a mastodon, but also that it is not from any known animal from these parts. An Occult KNOWLEDGE (-1) roll surmises the bone comes from a large spirit-creature. *GM's Note: The spear is made from the bone of the dragon-like shantak, which the Lion Tail survivors killed months ago.*

There is a second, still-intact bone spear lodged into the low-hanging branches of a nearby tree, which only a NOTICE roll will find (plus darkness penalties if at night). Treat this as a bone spear, doing Str+d4 damage, and breaking slightly less often due to its density.

Examining the deer carcasses, the PCs find no wounds or sign of obvious external injury. Unusually, their bodies are stiff and cold already. A SURVIVAL roll identifies marks of frostbite on the creatures. Despite what Tansum said, these deer were not likely killed by spears. *GM Note: They were killed by the freezing powers of the bear-like Gnoph-keh, an otherworldly beast who accompanied the wolf-clad Lion Tails in their ambush.*

A successful TRACKING (plus any darkness penalties) roll finds a trail of bare footprints leading away from the clearing and towards the river. It looks like at least a dozen men made the tracks. If the roll is made with a raise, the PCs also find bear-tracks mixed in with the human tracks. Otherwise, the PCs will have to wait until light to find any tracks.

A Sign of Canoes

The prints lead about a half-mile to the riverbank, where PCs see obvious signs of canoes. Deep slide marks in the mud show where at least three canoes landed and then took off again.

If the PCs made good time and followed the tracks at night, they see faint torches on the other side of the river, soon vanishing into the dense woods of the Forest of Howling Sorrows. If the PCs find the tracks during the day, they see abandoned canoes on the other side of the river.

A COMMON KNOWLEDGE roll knows the name of the forest as well that it is a dangerous wild place avoided for its fierce, stalking predators – wolves and lions. No one has heard of another tribe living in the woods there, though there are rumors that some survivors of the Lion Tail tribe fled into those woods last year.

Distress at the Settlement

If the PCs return to camp, they find their home under great distress and anguish. The loss of their chief has already spread through the camp. The shaman Kova-Keeya declares the tragedy the worst of all omens, and shares his belief that the tribe will lose many children this winter without the chief's wisdom and guidance.

In the unlikely event that Tansum-Aha survived his wound, he is declared the new chief of the Three Claws. However, Tansum-Aha makes it clear he has no desire for such a position, especially since he believes his brother still lives and must be recovered.

After much debate, the clan decides that the chief's attackers must be survivors of the Lion Tail tribe, who were defeated in a bloody war almost a year ago.

"Like the treacherous pouncing lions they pray to," announces Kova-Keeya, "the cowardly Lion Tails hid in the tall grass and the shadows to attack us by surprise!"

Whether it is Kova-Keeya or Tansum-Aha, the tribe begs the PCs to mount a rescue mission for their chief. They are too fearful to send more than a handful of tribesmen on the mission, because they believe that the Lion Tails may be trying to lure away the hunters and warriors of the clan so that they can attack its precious food supplies before winter.


Crossing the Blue River

Swimming across the 150 yards of cold river water takes a few minutes, requires a successful SWIMMING roll. A failure automatically Fatigues the swimmer and requires another SWIMMING roll to recover. *Savage Worlds Adventure Edition*, p.126, has additional rules on drowning.

The clan also possesses a disused wood and hide canoe. The vessel was built by a deceased tribesman named KOMSA, who liked to spear the fat silver fish from the middle of the river. Unfortunately, he drowned in the spring, and his boat has been unused ever since. It is big enough to hold two people. Navigating the river with Komsa's canoe only requires a BOATING (+1) roll. (A failure indicates overshooting the other bank, costing hours of lost time.)

THE FOREST OF HOWLING SORROWS



 A NOTICE roll identifies that the canoe needs to be patched up before leaving the shore. Otherwise, it will begin to sink halfway across the river! Patching the boat requires replacing a torn hide and a REPAIR roll.

THE FOREST OF HOWLING SORROWS

Three hastily-constructed canoes lie abandoned on the north side of the Blue River. One of them has an ample amount of blood inside it, likely from the wounded chief. A TRACKING roll finds a blood trail that leads into the dense forest (at night, this will be at -2 or worse due to darkness). If the roll is made with a raise, the tracker can identify the prints of eleven men, several of whom were carrying something heavy, as indicated by their deeper footprints in the mud.

There are two paths that visibly lead into the forest. The first path is narrow and shows signs of recent, human usage (this is also the one that the blood trail leads down). This path leads towards the abandoned settlement (#1, detailed below). The second path is wider, and from many obvious hoof marks, looks like a path deer use to get water from the river. This path leads near Neelia's Grotto (#2, detailed below).

Regardless of which path the PCs choose, as soon as they enter the forest, the temperature drops noticeably and unseasonable flurries begin. A COMMON KNOWLEDGE (+2) roll confirms that it is unusually early for snow in this area.

Navigating the Forest

The primeval forest is wet, dense, and features rapid elevation changes and rough ground. An icy wind blows through the old trees, making an unusual whining sound. Punctuat-

ing the wind gusts are warbling howls that are impossible to identify to any known creature. An OCCULT KNOWLEDGE roll recalls that this forest is said to be the home of evil wolf spirits who cannot leave the forest, and are therefore eternally hungry for the flesh of men.


GMs can assume the wary PCs can travel approximately 1.5 miles per hour, or 3 hexes on the map above. Reduce this 1 mile per hour, or 2 hexes, if traveling at night. Traveling at night may attract the attention of the pack of three-eyed Borean black wolves that roam the forest (see the Lair of the Three-Eyed Wolves below for more details).

#1 - The Abandoned Lion Tail Settlement

As the PCs travel on the trail through this area, they may spot an abandoned settlement. A NOTICE roll spots a few makeshift, hide tents in a nearby clearing, just a few minutes off the trail.

This clearing contains twenty or so tents. Several more are overturned. There is no sign of life in the settlement, nor any signs of recent activity. What was once a fire pit in the middle of the settlement is nothing but trodden remnants and ash. It is obvious the pit has not been used in a while (a SURVIVAL roll more specifically reveals that it has not been used in *months*).

A quick search of the abandoned settlement discovers two interesting findings:

- A blue-black wolf pelt, matching the description of Kusim-Aha's attackers, can be found hanging inside one of the tents. A SURVIVAL (-1) or NATURE KNOWLEDGE roll identifies it from a dire wolf, though the blue-black color is extremely unusual.
- The largest tent holds a large, mammoth-sized skull. Sharp incisors in the skull clearly mark it as that of a predator. The species of the skull is unrecognizable, although a SURVIVAL (-1) or NATURE KNOWLEDGE roll identifies it as similar in shape to the skulls of the wild horses that graze the plains to the south. A successful OCCULT KNOWLEDGE roll recalls stories of massive birds with scales like snakes that were once seen generations ago.  A spirit-touched PC with the Tribal Medicine skill may suddenly have a vivid recollection of *shantaks* – terrifying dragon-like creatures who would appear during the fiercest winter storms, tear down shelters, devour men and babes, and fly off with the women of the tribe.
- There is an unusual number of sharp skinning stones, used to scrape flesh from animal pelts scattered everywhere in the camp.

If a NOTICE (-1) roll is successful, the PCs find signs of digging just outside the perimeter of the settlement. If the PCs

SURVIVAL IN THE FOREST

The Forest of Howling Sorrows is an old-growth forest. Large trees and standing dead trees are everywhere. While the high canopy gives the forest a sense of dimness, occasional shafts of cold light cut through to the forest floor. The ground is littered with coarse, woody debris and occasional stones, making it not too difficult to craft primitive wood or stone weapons, if needed.

Because of the presence of the Walker in the Wind and his minion, the Gnoph-keh, the forest is chillier than it would normally be in autumn. Typically, it is around 45° (7° C), but the temperature drops below freezing as the PCs get closer to the Gnoph-keh and the Altar of White Stones.

The PCs should make a SURVIVAL roll for each full day they spend in the woods. On a failure, they suffer 1d4 damage from twisted ankles, cold nights, and other wilderness maladies. Additionally, each day, the PCs can forage as they travel with a successful SURVIVAL roll. Additionally, a character with the SHOOTING skill can make a roll to bag a rabbit.

Sleeping in the forest is difficult, with harsh owl screeches, strange movements, wolf howls, creaking boughs, and the faraway screams of the Gnoph-keh. PCs must make a Spirit (+1) roll or be Fatigued the next day.

dig in that area, they soon uncover a hole with a dozen, rotted lion tails buried there. PCs recognize these as the tails that the Lion Tail Tribe wore in their hair as tokens of victory in hunting or war.

If a NOTICE roll is successful, the PCs can find a handful of useful tools scattered around the camp, including stone knives, a stone axe, and several spear and arrowheads.

GM Note: This settlement was once the home of survivors from the defeated Lion Tail Tribe. However, once they began worshipping Ithaqua, they ceremonially buried their lion tails and left this place to spend most of their time in Borea.

#2 - Neelias' Grotto

The rough ground in this area is marked by a sheer granite cliff that cuts through the forest. Only a five or six yards high, the cliff is easily climbed (a CLIMBING roll can scale it).

About halfway up the cliff side is a grotto. It is impossible to see inside the grotto from the ground, though it looks big enough to shelter a few people.

If the PCs make their way up to the grotto with a CLIMB-

ING roll, they see that the cramped cave has become someone's home. Remains of a small fire are inside; a SURVIVAL roll reveals that the fire was used within the last day or two. Deer hide bedding is neatly laid out in the back of the cave and a nearby carved wooden bowl holds fresh water. Three fire-hardened arrowheads can also be found in the cave, along with a pointed stone knapping tool designed to chip them into sharpness.

Paintings of animals decorate the rear cave wall. One of the paintings depicts a large flying creature (see [Handout A](#)). This is a painting of a shantak, who was killed by the Lion Tails and whose huge skull is found in their settlement. Compared to the other animals depicted here, this creature is *huge*.



The grotto is the home of NEELIA, a capable Lion Tail huntress. She survived the war with the Clan of Three Claws and fled into the forest with the rest of her kin. However, when they began feverishly worshipping the Walker in the Wind, she left the tribe to survive on her own.

As the PCs search Neelia's grotto, she returns from hunting. Recognizing the PCs as members of the Clan of Three Claws, she thinks them to be a war party keen on murdering her. She stealthily approaches, aims with her bow, and then angrily looses an arrow or two at the nearest PC from about a dozen yards away. She then frantically bolts into the woods to avoid capture.

A NOTICE (-2) followed by a COMMON KNOWLEDGE roll recognizes Neelia as a member of the Lion Tails and a skilled huntress. She is known for her feat of killing a sabertooth by shooting it in the eye from fifty yards away.

If the PCs give chase, the GM can just hand wave the outcome, or use the chase rules from *Savage Worlds*. If using the chase rules:

- The chase starts at short range (Range Increment 5 for PCs on the ground near the cliff), or medium range (Range Increment 10) for the PCs up in the grotto.
- Because of the dense foliage, any ranged attacks are at an additional -1 penalty unless the PCs are very close to Neelia.
- If the PCs manage to grapple or tackle Neelia – and she looks outnumbered – she screams and immediately sur-

NEELIA

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

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d8, Knowledge (Mythos) d6, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6;

Special Abilities

Brave +2 to Fear checks

Fleet-Footed Running die increases one step

Short bow Range 10/20/40, 2d6 damage, RoF 1

Personality: Stubborn, cat-like Neelia did more than her fair share to keep the Lion Tails alive during the harsh winter. When her former tribe turned to worshipping the Walker in the Wind, she grew suspicious of the spirits and left to live on her own.



renders, hoping for an opportunity to escape later. She will also surrender if badly wounded.

- Once Neelia is at long range, she will try to hide, using her STEALTH skill. If she succeeds, she escapes and vanishes into the brush.
- Once at short range, the PCs can attempt a COMMON KNOWLEDGE roll to identify her again.

If Neelia escapes, she returns a few hours later (ideally at dusk) to try another shot from the distance, or set a trap for her prey. She enjoys the hunt!

Once subdued or captured, Neelia surrenders and demands to know why the Clan of Three Claws ventured into the forest. *"Was murdering most of our tribe not enough? Do you seek to destroy every last one of who survives?"*

However, if treated reasonably, Neelia explains more of her situation. She tells the PCs that after her tribe was defeated in battle last winter, she and a couple dozen others fled into the forest.

"The Lion Tail tribe had little food that winter, and we were afraid to emerge from the forest to fish along the river, for fear that your tribe would kill us. So we stayed in the trees and survived with what little we could find."

"One day, Creel the Stalker, the eldest of our survivors, took us to a round pile of unusual white stones he found in the forest. He told us that his dreams demanded we worship the Walker in the Wind that lived in this forest. If we did, we would be saved, and the Walker would give us our vengeance. Every night we went

to the white stones, and some nights we would hear the distant, indescribable voice of the Walker in the Wind. The winter grew harsher, but still we lived.

“One night, as we returned from the stones, we heard a terrible noise from behind us. A razor-toothed, mammoth-with-wings fell upon our tribe, accompanied by wolves-with-three-eyes! The horrible things killed many of our tribe before we slew them with our spears and arrows.

“Creel the Stalker said our prayers had been heard, and that this was the sign that we had atoned for our defeat at the hands of your tribe, and that the Walker in the Wind had accepted us. The winged creature had culled our tribe of those weak and unworthy. Creel insisted that we furiously strip the things of their hides and return to the ring of stones, where he said we would receive our reward. But my gut felt that this was not right. We were like a herd of young deer to the Walker in the Wind, and I feared any ‘reward’ he would give us.

“Creel called me a great betrayer and tried to crush my skull, so I fled deep into the woods. As I ran through the night, more hungry black wolves chased after me, but I escaped with my life.

“I do not know what became of my tribe after that. A week or two later, I snuck back to the camp to try to convince my sisters to come with me. But the camp was abandoned, and there was no sign of my former tribe. I stand before you as the last of the Lion Tails.”

If asked about Chief Kusim-Aha whereabouts, she does not know much. If given any description of his ambush, she suspects that Creel the Stalker led a war party to capture the chief. She saw signs that her tribe had stripped the skins from the black wolves and the mammoth-with-wings (the shantak) and were wearing them in favor of the old lion hides. She also explains that her tribe buried their once-sacred lion tail tokens once they started worshipping the Walker in the Wind.

On a good reaction or better, Neelia warns that a dangerous “howling white bear” has appeared in the woods, and to be cautious. She says that the air freezes when the howling bear is nearby, and that he often lurks near the circle of white stones. Neelia can also be convinced to give the PCs directions to the areas in the forest she knows well, such as the Lion Tail settlement, the Altar of White Stones, and the area where she glimpsed the howling bear (the Lair of the Gnoph-keh).

On a very good or better reaction, Neelia may offer to accompany the PCs, hoping that their search for Kusim-Aha will also yield the discovery of her beloved lost sisters. Otherwise, assuming the PCs release Neelia, she will vanish back into the forest.

#3 - The Altar of White Stones

In an icy clearing, the PCs see an altar made from piled white stones. The altar is huge, at least seventy feet in diameter, and stacked as tall as a man. A circle of soft, wispy snow surrounds the altar, marked by a perimeter of hard ice. Human footprints have sullied the perfect snow, trampling it down in most of its area.

Anyone making a NOTICE roll spots a three-clawed necklace half-buried in the snow near the altar. While it is impossible to be certain who it belonged to, it is clearly one of the necklaces that marked the bravest members of the Clan of Three Claws, and likely belonging to Chief Kusim-Aha himself. A TRACKING roll reveals that about a dozen different men were moving rapidly in the area, perhaps dancing.

The altar stones themselves are unusual, and look to be more like heavy frosted glass than rock. Each one is pitted with thousands of tiny cracks and imperfections. Anyone touching the stones of the altar receives a painful electric shock and takes 1d4+1 damage. To the primitive ice age characters in this adventure, this shock will also cause a Fear check! Once a stone is removed from the altar, however, the stone ceases to have any unusual electrical properties.

Disassembling the altar would take days of work from many men. Furthermore, if the PCs remove too many stones from the Altar, they will attract the attention of the Gnoph-keh, which will crash through the bushes and attack the PCs for desecrating the Walker in the Wind’s sacred site.

A PC suspecting that the altar is a place of power may make an OCCULT KNOWLEDGE roll to recall that such places are said to be an ancient door between the real world and the spirit world. In the stories, a special totem is usually required to cross between worlds.

If a PC touches the altar while wearing the hide of a Borean creature (i.e., a Borean Wolf Pelt or the hide of the Gnoph-keh), he is instantly hurled to the distant dimension of Borea – a cruel land carved from endless sheets of ice. See Borea (p.13) for details.

The Dead Body

If the PCs search the area, and make a successful NOTICE (-1) roll, they will find blood sprayed and frozen on a nearby tree. Searching in the area finds a chunk of severed, human torso, a razor-sharp tooth embedded in a piece of its rib cage. This was a victim of the Gnoph-keh, who devoured one of the weaker Lion Tail survivors at the height of their last ritual.

4 - The Lair of the Gnoph-keh

A six-limbed, coarse-haired, carnivorous Gnoph-keh lives in this area of the forest. The monstrosity is the size of a polar bear, emanates an unnatural cold from its body, and feeds on the weakest members of the Lion Tribe as well as the any Voormi-Men that wanders into the woods.

As the PCs approach the Gnoph-keh's territory, the temperature drops sharply and snow flurries come down.

The creature is not stealthy, and ambles loudly around the woods, walking in weird patterns that only its primeval race understands. If the PCs are purposely trying to track the Gnoph-keh, the snow and the creature's six legs make it is fairly easy to find – a **TRACKING** roll picks up a trail in its territory.

The Gnoph-keh is intelligent, though alien. Its motivation is to prepare the forest for the arrival of the Walker in the Wind, by physically dropping the temperature in the forest, and kindling the fervor of the Lion Tail worshippers, who worship it as a dangerous deity. Only Creel the Stalker is unafraid of the creature (and delusionally believes he is kin to him).

The Gnoph-keh is extremely aggressive, but also has difficulty telling humans apart. If the PCs enter into its territory, it first assumes that they are members of the Lion Tail Tribe, who often try to lure the creature towards the altar to participate in their frenzied dancing before they enter the portal (a festivity that usually ends with him devouring one of the Lion Tails). The Gnoph-keh will become confused and suspicious if the PCs seem to be surprised to see it, do not subjugate themselves in its worship, or otherwise act differently than the Lion Tails. When the Gnoph-keh realizes the PCs are not Lion Tails it will wildly try to kill them.

Along with its intelligence, the Gnoph-keh has a keen sense of self-preservation. If badly wounded, it will create a blizzard to cover its escape into the woods. Then, it will try to use its ability to create freezing temperatures to try to kill the PCs in their sleep.

5 - The Cairns of Borea

A round glade lies in this part of the woods. Unusually, it is covered with several feet of snow – the same kind of perfect, wispy snow that surrounds the Altar of White Stones. Three mounds are visible in the snow.



THE GNOPH-KEH

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d12+2, Strength d12+4, Vigor d12+2

Skills: Fighting d10

Pace: 6"; Parry: 7; Toughness: 17 (4)

Terror: -2; Mental Anguish: Spirit+d6

Special Abilities

- **Armor** +4 for fur, gristle, and hide
- **Claws**: Str + d6.
- **Horn**: Str + d10.
- **Size** +3 (the size of a massive bear)
- **The Cold of Borea** The area around a Gnoph-keh is always noticeably colder than the ambient temperature. With concentration and a successful Spirit roll, the Gnoph-keh can further reduce the temperature by 20° for an hour. Anyone caught in such sub-freezing temperatures without shelter or arctic-grade clothing is automatically Fatigued. The Gnoph-keh can also create a localized blizzard for an hour. Treat this as the Obscure power with a radius centered on the creature as Spirit x 10 yards.

Investigating the mounds finds the snow and ice there *gauzy* – it can be peeled away like fine silken bandages. Within a minute of peeling the ice away, the PCs realize that there is a near-naked male body buried within each mound.

The skinny bodies are blue-faced and frozen, their faces burned from frostbite. A COMMON KNOWLEDGE roll identifies them as members of the Lion Tail tribe. They bear no signs of injury on their bodies, and they have no valuables or weapons on them.

The survivors are Lion Tail tribe members who entered the portal at the Altar of White Stones, visited the distant dimension of the Walker in the Wind, and then returned to find more servants for him. Unfortunately, their exposure to the Walker in the Wind broke their minds, and they only seek to return to his cold embrace.

However, within minutes of being exhumed, the three frozen bodies miraculously gasp back to life! They tremble, spasm, and emit horrible sounds from their defrosting lungs. This terrible sight triggers a Fear check (-1) for witnesses!

The survivors are desperate and insane, but not violent... unless attacked. They pull at their hair and moan and whimper and immediately try to rebury themselves in the snow. They shout strange things like, “Return us!” and “I am worthy of your blessings!” and “I will bring you stronger women, I swear!”

The entombed survivors ignore any questions or statements from the PCs. The only thing they will react to is if they are asked about the whereabouts of Chief Kusim-Aha. Then, one of the men will cackle and shake and joyously exclaim, “Creel is gifting Kusim-Aha to the Walker in the Wind! And then he will lead your clan into Borea, and your men will be his warriors and your women his wives!”

If left to their own devices, the survivors rebury themselves in the snow, and within an hour, die from exposure. If the PCs physically interfere with them or attack them, the survivors fight back (though they make pitiful foes).

6 - The Three-Eyed Wolf Lair

The weird, warbling howls of the three-eyed Borean wolves are what gives the Forest of Howling Sorrows its name. The huge wolves are more easily able to pass through the veil between Earth and Borea, and at any given point at least two packs of these creatures roam in the forest, especially at night.

The first time a PC sees a three-eyed wolf, he will be unnerved by its milky third eye – and should make a Fear check!

THE ICE ENTOMBED

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

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Knowledge (Mythos) d6, Notice d6

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

Hindrances: Loyal to the Walker in the Wind

Special Abilities

Fearless: The entombed are immune to Fear and Intimidation.

Wild punches: Str+d4

Tactics: The entombed men only desire to return to the cold and ice of Borea. They will fight as berserkers, attacking with fury against any who prevent them an ice death.



The wolves are less intelligent and behave differently from ordinary wolves. They have not yet developed pack tactics, they fight more easily amongst themselves, and they are highly sensitive to the mood of the nearby Gnoph-keh, who they can communicate with mentally.

GMs can use the wolves as background ambience, random encounters, or as dangerous obstacles that add time pressure to any situation. See p.14 for their statistics.

The Lair

The large-pawed wolves can be tracked to their lair (with a TRACKING roll), a small cave set into a cliff wall on the west side of the forest. The cave was inhabited a thousand years ago by a small cult of the Walker in the Wind. Now, it is filled with old bones of elk, deer, bears, and the primitive Voormi-Men. A successful NOTICE roll can find some useful items, such as arrow and spearheads.

On the cave wall is a cave painting of the Altar of White Stones, as well as a large creature emerging from it (see [Hand-out B](#)). An appropriate KNOWLEDGE roll identifies that the technique of painting is very, very old. An OCCULT KNOWLEDGE roll identifies this illustration as a sacred site that spirits use to cross into the real world, and perhaps implying that either a totem or a wolf pelt is needed to perform the ritual.

STALKERS IN THE DARK

Once the PCs have visited a few of the forest locations, night begins to fall, and darkness rapidly overtakes the forest. The temperature drops below freezing, and the PCs must find or

build shelter to avoid freezing. Without refuge, a VIGOR roll is required every 30 minutes to avoid becoming Fatigued. This will be worse if the PCs are in the vicinity of the Gnoph-keh; if he is aware of the PCs, he will use his powers to drop the temperature further, trying to kill them in the night.

Sometime during the night, the PCs hear rustling sounds not too far from their camp. A NOTICE roll identifies the sounds of ten or more men walking through the woods, just a few dozen yards from the PCs' camp.

If the PCs investigate, they see ten savages – hunched, muscular Neanderthal-like men with sharp teeth and shaggy hair. They wear dirty hides and carry heavy clubs. If the PCs make a NOTICE roll, they will shockingly see that the men have misshapen feet with three over-sized toes (which causes a Fear check). An OCCULT KNOWLEDGE roll identifies these men as VOORMI-MEN, a degenerate race of humanoids that has not been seen in generations, and is said to live deep underground, practice cannibalism, and worship evil spirits.

The Voormi-Men do not seem to talk – they hoot and gesture to each other in a primitive form of communication. If watched from cover, the Voormi-Men stalk through the woods, sniffing the air, and occasionally pointing to tracks on the ground. A SMARTS roll gives the sense that the Voormi-Men are hunting a large creature, as their tactics are similar to what men might do if stalking a dangerous predator like a sabertooth tiger.

Eventually, the Voormi-Men scatter into the woods. If followed (which requires a few STEALTH rolls to go unnoticed), they head towards the Lair of the Gnoph-keh, as that monster is their target. They plan on killing it as a sacrifice to their god, Zhothaquaah, who hates the Walker in the Wind.

The Gnoph-keh is far smarter than the Voormi-Men, and will outwit them for quite some time, perhaps picking them off one at a time so that the PCs hear screams in the dark that night. Generous GMs may allow the Voormi-Men to wound the creature – reducing its Toughness by 1.

If the PCs are seen by the Voormi-Men, they attempt to intimidate the PCs with their dog-like howls. Although savage, they bear no instinctive hatred towards the Cro-Magnons (and actually try to welcome Neanderthals as they would their own). They struggle to communicate, but do their best to gesture that they are hunting a bear-like creature to take its pelt, and that the PCs should stay out of their way or be killed.

If the PCs make a SMARTS roll to communicate, they understand a little more:

VOORMI-MEN

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6,
Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d10,
Stealth d10, Survival d10

Pace: 6"; Parry: 7; Toughness: 7
Fear: -2

Special Abilities

Armor +0.

Knobbed clubs: Str + d4.

Personality: The primitive, three-toed Voormi-Men are bad tempered, mute, and utterly obedient to their sleeping god, Zhothaquaah. They are subterranean and avoid daylight. Their night vision is exemplary, and they hunt in loud, noisome packs to bring down prey. They feel kinship with Neanderthals (who are afraid of them) but think Cro-Magnon man makes for a delicious meal.



- *1 Raise:* The Voormi-Men are more primitive than Cro-Magnons and Neanderthals; they do not seem to use tools or fire. This band is not native to this forest, but live deep underground in the hills located many miles north of the forest. They are specifically hunting a six-legged bear creature to strip it of its pelt.
- *2 Raises:* Their frog-god ordered them to come to this forest to hunt the bear-creature, which they hate with a violent fury. Once they strip it of its pelt, they will seek a glorious death in the "land of ice."
- *3 Raises:* The Voormi-Men are cannibals. They ask the PCs to give them their weakest Cro-Magnon friend for tomorrow's dinner.

Even though the Voormi-Men can communicate to the PCs, they are still dangerous and ill-tempered. Any perceived threat is met with brutal violence. Similarly, if the PCs look weak, the cannibalistic Voormi-Men will clumsily seek to lure them close and then club their skulls in.

The Return of Ugly Bearface

As the PCs watch the Voormi-Men, a NOTICE roll (at -2 for the night darkness) spots a silhouette spying from the branches of a nearby tree. The figure clutches a spear, but looks to make no move towards the PCs or the Voormi-Men. A closer look recognizes that it is Ugly Bearface, the tribesman who angrily stormed off from the settlement of the Clan of Three Claws.

If the PCs fail their NOTICE rolls, Ugly Bearface is the one who spots the PCs. He whistles to them from his perch, using one of the tribe's hunting signals, that anyone of the Clan of Three Claws will recognize with a SMARTS roll. Once they

see him, he gestures into the forest, signalling to meet with him elsewhere.

GM's Note: In the event the PCs get into a fight with the Voormi-Men, brave Ugly Bearface will rush to his clan folk's defense.

Once the PCs rendezvous with Ugly Bearface, he seems to have forgotten his past grudges, and is eager to share his story.

After angrily storming off from the village, he walked along the Blue River, trying to think of some sort of scheme he could deploy on his rivals. But then he heard loud wolf howls and what sounded like a nearby skirmish, so he rushed ahead. In the moonlight he saw three boats crossing the Blue River. Worse, he heard the shouts of Tansum-Aha, and knew that the boats bore his brother, Chief Kusim-Aha. Desperate to rescue his chief, Bearface swam across the river and tracked the kidnappers into the forest. From the familiar voices he heard, he knew that he was following survivors from the hated Lion Tail tribe.

"I tracked the Lion Tail survivors as best I could. Ahead of me, I heard chanting and dancing and feared they were going to sacrifice Kusim-Aha to their ugly lion spirits. But when I reached the site where I thought them to be, all I saw was a circle of white stones. The air was still and smelled of burning – though there was no smoke – and there was no sign of the men I was tracking.

"Soon, the air grew colder and colder and through the trees I glimpsed a fierce and unnatural bear-creature stalking me with hungry black eyes. I fled for my life, escaped, but was lost for the entire day. Then tonight, I heard voices again and thought that I had found the Lion Tails. But instead, I found the primitive three-toed men you just saw. They are savages and only speak in the tongues of dogs. I do not know what they hunt, but they are no friends of the Three Claws."

Ugly Bearface is talkative and pliable – unless he is treated extremely poorly. He is willing to guide the PCs to the Altar of White Stones, but is also willing to return to the clan's settlement to deliver a message or get reinforcements.

OPENING THE PORTAL

Eventually, the PCs will discover that the Altar of White Stones is a portal to Borea, a cruel land carved from endless sheets of ice. While the veil between worlds is fading, the portal can only be entered while someone is wearing the skins or pelts of a Borean creature. There are several ways for the PCs to learn this information:

- Neelia's story tells the PCs that Creel forces the Lion Tail Survivors to "furiously strip the creatures of their hides

and return to the portal." There are also many sharp skinning stones in the Lion Tail settlement.

- The Voormi-Men communicate that they want to strip the Gnoph-keh of its hide and seek a glorious death in a land of ice.
- A PC who studies the altar and makes an OCCULT KNOWLEDGE roll can recall that such places are often doors between worlds, and a special totem is needed to activate the portal.
- The cave painting in the Borean wolf lair shows a man communing with the Walker in the Wind while holding a wolfskin.

While Creel and the Lion Tail survivors perform an elaborate dancing ritual before opening the portal, it is unnecessary. One must only wear a substantial pelt of a Borean creature and then climb atop the altar of stones to cross between worlds.

The PCs need to kill the Gnoph-keh and skin it in order to access the portal. The pelts of the three-eyed Borean wolves can also be used.

BOREA

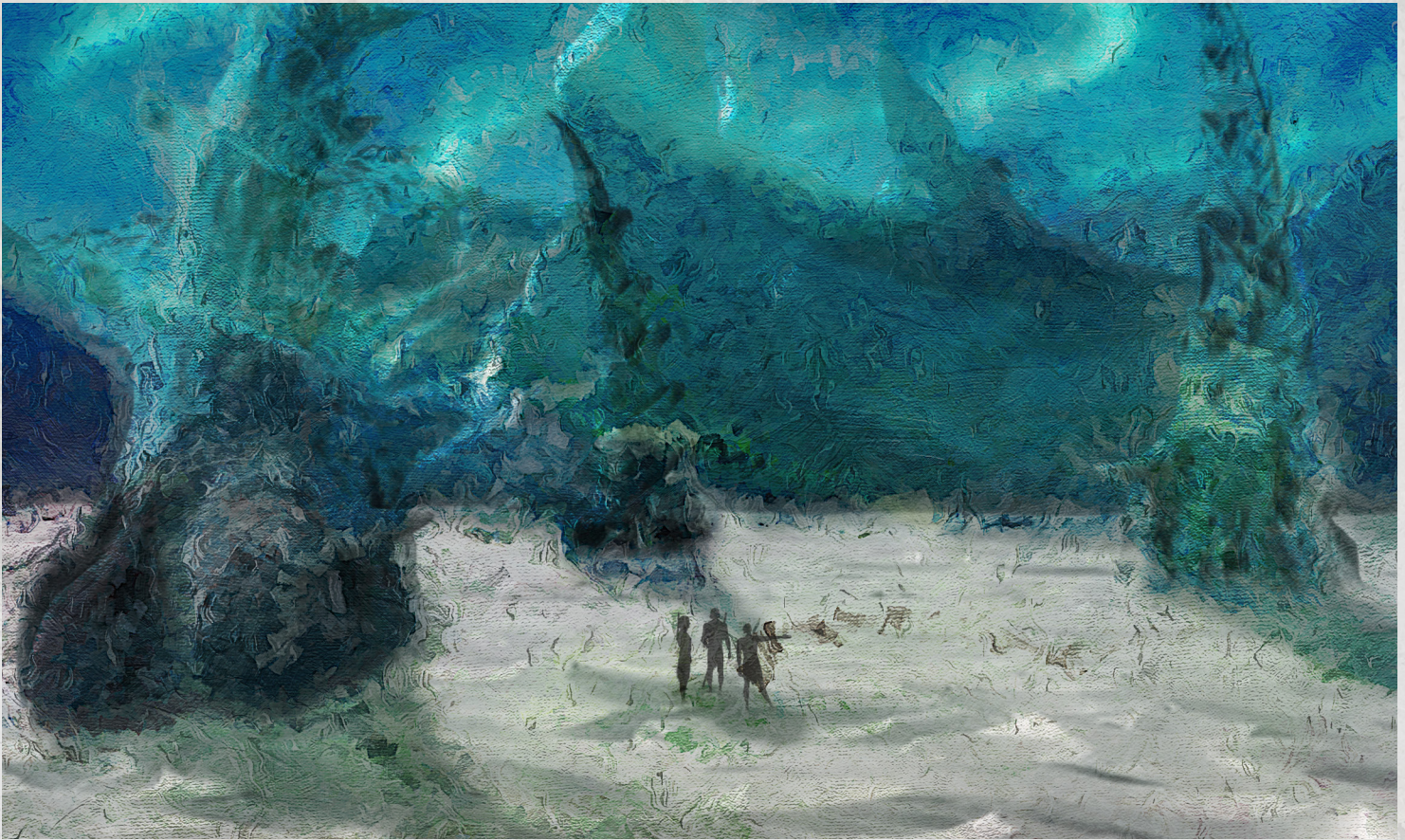
When the PCs enter the portal wearing the skin of a native Borean creature, they feel their blood freeze, their eyes turn to stone, and their limbs stiffen like tree branches. Suddenly, they find themselves near a similar altar of stones in the frozen, icy landscape of Borea. However, instead of being surrounded by a dense forest, they find themselves in a towering canyon, staring up at twisted stone formations and impossibly high peaks. The sky is a shimmering haze of green and pink colors. Faraway, the sharp cracking of heavy ice intertwinces with the echoes of a dissonant song.

The dimensional trip into Borea requires an immediate Fear check (-3)! The PCs know that their ancestors have not walked in this place. They feel disconnected from the familiar. The infinite, bone-chilling sky of Borea overwhelms them. The icy winds seize at their souls, trying to hold them here and claim them for all time.

Borea is utterly freezing at all times (-60° with cold gusts of winds)! PCs should make a VIGOR roll at -2 every 10 minutes. A failure costs Fatigues the subject. Also, the shimmering fog and strange glowing lights in the sky give a -1 to visibility.

A Solo Trip?

In the unusual event that one of the PCs makes the trip to Borea alone (for example, using the extra wolf pelt that is found in the abandoned Lion Tail settlement), they find



themselves surrounded by a dense, freezing fog. In the far off distance, they hear slow chanting. Suddenly, emerging from the fog are several Borean three-eyed wolves who are intent on ripping intruders apart.

If the PC dashes back to the altar stones, he can avoid the wolves' attack and return to the real world. Returning through the portal requires another Fear check (-1).

Creel's Cold Revenge

Through the swirling fog, a hundred yards away, the PCs see a few glimpses of torchlight. A NOTICE roll makes out about a dozen men, fervently dancing and singing on the windswept plain. The black wolves dance among men and sometimes their legs bend grotesquely as they stand upright and lurch with the chanting.

As the PCs approach, they see the Lion Tail survivors, dressed in their wolf pelts, spasm-dancing furiously, waving their bone spears, and chanting and screaming "ITHAQUA!" into the winds. There are only men here, no sign of any women, who were handed over months ago to Ithaqua's dark purposes. All of the men look pale and sickly, little like the athletic warriors they were during the war with the Clan of Three Claws.


In the center of the circle is Chief Kusim-Aha, prone and horrifically impaled to the ground with two bone spears. He is surrounded by a pool of frozen blood, and he writhes and moans, barely conscious.

A COMMON KNOWLEDGE roll identifies Creel the Stalker, the leader of the Lion Tails. If Fels is one of the PCs, or if Neelia is with the PCs, or described him to them, he will be easily spotted. Not only does Creel wear the blue-black wolf pelts, but he also wears a tunic of a strange, scaly material that shimmers blue in the cold light of this strange place.


Although there is slim cover in this world, the Lion Tails are distracted. If the PCs want to sneak up, they should make a STEALTH roll versus the distracted, dancing lions.

The moment the PCs are spotted, Creel silences his men to a low whisper ("Ithaqua... Ithaqua...") and demands to know who the PCs are. Soon enough, through action or recognition, he will figure out that they are his most hated rivals, the Clan of Three Claws. The mad Creel is energetic and eager to mock the doom of his foes:

"You thought us all dead! Little did you know that the Walker in the Wind found us in the forest, taught us his mysteries, and chose us to be his honored warriors. We are destined to walk with Ithaqua into our world, bearing his heir, and trampling the Clan of Three Claws under our feet."

 If Fels is one of the PCs, Creel offers him the chance to return to his tribe. *"Fels! I never believed what they said about you slaying our chief Grumgorr! I knew that was just a lie, and*

that Grumgorr was too weak to survive the battle on his own. You were too clever to join our foes, and I believe you now led them here, to me, for our combined glory. Join the Walker in the Wind, my brother, and all will be well again.”

 If Jowda-Aha is one of the PCs, Creel is *delighted* to see him. With Kusim-Aha dying and about to be sacrificed to Ithaqua, and Tansum-Aha dead (at least to Creel’s knowledge), he commands his men to capture Jowda alive, so that he too can be speared the ground and sacrificed to the Walker in the Wind. “I am thrilled to know that you will die beside your uncle, frozen in your own blood, and that the Clan of Three Claws dies with your last gasps.”

The PCs can engage the Lion Tails in a final battle – destroying Creel and the Lion Tails forever. Although the Lion Tails outnumber the PCs considerably, not all of them will fight at once. If a melee breaks out, Creel orders some of his followers to continue the chanting.

The PCs might also devise some clever plan to distract the Lion Tails so that they can free Kusim-Aha and drag him back to the portal. It’s also possible for the PCs to scare off several worshippers (the more sane ones) through uses of INTIMIDATION, or other influence skills. Reminders that their tribe was already decimated by the Clan of Three Claws are particularly effective.

While the GM can tune the final battle to the group’s abilities, it is suggested to pit no more than two opponents per PC, plus Creel himself.

The Walker in the Wind

At some dramatic moment before Kusim-Aha is freed, a tremendous sound thunders through the wilderness of Borea. A mixture of a thousand howls, a thousand shrieking owls, and an earth-shattering avalanche reverberates in everyone’s skulls. This horrifying sound does 1d6 damage to everyone nearby and requires a Fear check. Though he is not yet visible through the fog... Ithaqua has come.

The GM should give the PCs a few precious moments to try to make their frantic escape before the Walker in the Wind emerges from the fog, melts their minds, and hurls their bodies across the landscape with tremendous windstorms. Just seeing an elder god like Ithaqua in person is sanity-shredding and requires a Fear check (-6)! Once he gets closer, he uses his great powers to pull his worshippers from danger, and then pummels his foes with hurricane-force winds. Once this starts happening, it is unlikely any of the PCs will survive the rest of this adventure.

CREEL THE STALKER

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

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d10, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d10, Stealth d10, Survival d10

Pace: 6”; Parry: 7; Toughness: 12 (1)

Special Abilities

Armor +1 wolf pelts

Bone spear: Str + d4.

Personality: Once a middling hunter, Creel abandoned the war with the Three Claws to flee into the forest. Now, months after discovering the Walker in the Wind, he is delusional, believes himself a native of Borea, and ready to bind his soul with Ithaqua’s.



LION TAIL CULTISTS

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

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Stealth d6, Survival d8

Pace: 6”; Parry: 5; Toughness: 5

Special Abilities

Bone spear: Str + d4.

Personality: Deluded to think they are the chosen ones of the Walker in the Wind, the cultists are only interested in worshipping him and his representative, Creel the Stalker.



THREE-EYED WOLVES

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

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d6, Notice d10, Stealth d8, Tracking d8

Pace: 8”; Parry: 5; Toughness: 6 (1)

Special Abilities

Armor +1 wolf pelt

Bite Str+d4.

Night Vision ignores penalties for Illumination
Speed d10 running die

Traits: As large as dire wolves but crueler and more savage. Their third eye gives them fantastic night vision.



Returning through the Portal

Once the PCs reach the altar again, they are transported away from Borea and back into reality. They do not need Borean hides to return to Earth, but this helps with the reality bending aspect of interdimensional travel.

Returning through the portal requires another Fear check (-1), or (-3) if not wearing a Borean hide. Furthermore, any quirks or delusions gained from a return from Borea will compel characters to love ice and snow, or deeply desire to return to Borea, even at their own mortal peril.

Despite his injuries, Chief Kusim-Aha is remarkably tough and hardy. To see if Kusim-Aha survives his injuries, make a Vigor roll. The GM should also make two Fear checks for him versus his (one at -3 for his original arrival, the second at -1 for his return) to see if he returns with his mind intact. The PCs will have a difficult decision to make if Kusim-Aha is rescued but only craves a return to Borea to worship at the feet of Ithaqua!

If the PCs wish to destroy the portal, an OCCULT KNOWLEDGE roll reveals that it can be destroyed by disassembling it by hand, one stone at a time, and scattering the stones throughout the forest. Given the size of the altar, this work is time-consuming, and takes days of time with the tribe. But it will prevent Ithaqua and other creatures of Borea from emerging, for now.

CONCLUSION

Whether the PCs rescue Kusim-Aha, or flee from Borea with their minds barely intact, the adventure is concluded.

For completing the adventure, surviving PCs should receive the usual awards, especially for roleplaying or excellent performance (i.e., defeating Creel or rescuing Kusim-Aha).

Rescuing Kusim-Aha earns the PCs a patron or great reputation. If befriended, Neelia and Ugly Bearface may become contacts or allies. Finally, anyone who survived the trip to Borea may gain an unusual amount of temperature tolerance, as their bodies and minds are permanently changed by that cold and distant world.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

Special thanks hafizaprilio on Fiverr.com for his drawing of the fierce Gnoph-keh. Special thanks to Barry Swedlow for editing and additional writing. Thanks to zombiebashr on Reddit for the great, simple *Savage Worlds* character sheet, and also Dichelord N for creating the *Savage Worlds* characters.

KUSIM-AHA

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

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d10, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d9, Shooting d10, Stealth d6, Survival d10

Pace: 6"; Parry: 7; Toughness: 6

Special Abilities

After being dragged into the alien world of Borea, Kusim-Aha is not himself, and only rambles incoherently about the black wolves, a devouring wind, and the leering face of Creel. Whenever he recovers from his madness depends on his Fright Checks returning from Borea and the esoteric medicines of his shaman, Kuva-Keeya.



Thispersondoesnotexist.com was used to help create illustrations of the various human characters.

If you enjoyed this adventure, or ran it for a group, all the author asks is that you give a shout out and let me know how it went. You can also check out my [YouTube channel](#) to see overviews of adventures like this. If you enjoyed this adventure, or ran it for a group, all the author asks is that you give a shout out and let him know how it went. Post a note on www.1shotadventures.com or give a shoutout to @1shotjc.bsky.social on Bluesky.

Savage Worlds isn't a system I'm super familiar with (despite a great love for the old *The Great Rail Wars* miniatures game). As a result, the *Savage Worlds* conversion in this adventure is probably off in several places, but there was enough interest for me to give a try. If you're a *Savage Worlds* expert and have some errata or fixes, please let me know!

HANDOUTS



Handout A - Painting in the grotto of the dragon-like shantak



Handout B - Painting in the Borean wolf cave

HANDOUTS - PLAYER SAFE MAP





YNGLIS THE KEEN-EYED

Name

HUNTRESS OF THE LION TAIL TRIBE

Profession

CRO-MAGNON

Race

17

Age

Experience

5'2"

Height

Attributes & Skills

d8 Agility

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| d Boating | d8 Shooting |
| d Fighting | d8 Stealth |
| d Lockpicking | d Throwing |
| d Riding | |

d6 Smarts

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| d Healing | d6 Survival |
| d4 Knowledge | d Taunt |
| d4+2 Notice | d Tracking |
| d Occult | d |
| d Repair | d |

d6 Strength

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| d8 Athletics | d |
|--------------|---|

d6 Spirit

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| d Intimidation | d4 Persuasion |
| d Performance | d |

d6 Vigor

Raise Calculator

- | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | 5 | 9 | 13 | 17 | 21 | 25 | 29 | 33 | 37 |
| 2 | 6 | 10 | 14 | 18 | 22 | 26 | 30 | 34 | 38 |
| 3 | 7 | 11 | 15 | 19 | 23 | 27 | 31 | 35 | 39 |
| 4 | 8 | 12 | 16 | 20 | 24 | 28 | 32 | 36 | 40 |

Weapon

Bow

Range RoF

12/24/48

1

Damage AP Ammo

2d6

10

STONE SPEAR (reach 1)

3/6/12

Str+d6

STONE KNIFE

Str+d4

Charisma

Pace

6 (1) +Gear

Parry
(Fighting/2)+2

5 +Armor

Toughness
(Vigor/2)+2

Injuries

Armor

TN

Head

Torso

HEAVY FURS

+1

Arms

Legs

Equipment

FLINT

FIBER STRING (8')

10 WHITE CEDAR ARROWS

FOOT WRAPPINGS

DRIED FISH

Money

Hindrances

+ARROGANT (BELIEVES SHE'S THE BEST HUNTER)

-DRIVEN (START A NEW TRIBE)

-SMALL

Edges

ALERTNESS

TRADEMARK WEAPON (BOW)

Novice

5

10

15

Seasoned

25

30

35

Veteran

45

50

55

Heroic

65

70

75

Legendary

90

100

110

Notes

Wounds

-1

-2

-3

INC

-2

-1

Fatigue



The only thing you love more than a hunt is the feast afterwards! It feels like glory made crisped flesh and bubbling fat! And the feeling is even better knowing that the strong male hunters of the tribe bring down less game each year than your arrows. This is why you have conviction it is your destiny to select a few, worthy clanmates, and lead them north to start a new tribe - the Clan of the White Arrows, named after the white cedar that makes such fine arrows. This new tribe will grow and be the greatest in the land, with you as their chief.

PP



5 10 15 20 25



JOWDA-AHA

Name

ELDEST SON OF THE WARCHIEF

Profession

CRO-MAGNON

Race

19

Age

Experience

5'6"

Height

Attributes & Skills

d6 Agility

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| d Boating | d6 Shooting |
| d6 Fighting | d4 Stealth |
| d Lockpicking | d Throwing |
| d Riding | |

d6 Smarts

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| d Healing | d6 Survival |
| d6 Knowledge | d Taunt |
| d4 Notice | d Tracking |
| d Occult | d |
| d Repair | d |

d6 Strength

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| d6 Athletics | d |
|--------------|---|

d8 Spirit

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| d6 Intimidation | d4 Persuasion |
| d Performance | d |

d6 Vigor

Raise Calculator

1	5	9	13	17	21	25	29	33	37
2	6	10	14	18	22	26	30	34	38
3	7	11	15	19	23	27	31	35	39
4	8	12	16	20	24	28	32	36	40

Charisma

6 (d6) Run

Pace

5 +Gear

Parry
(Fighting/2)+2

5 +Armor

Toughness
(Vigor/2)+2

Injuries

Armor

TN

Head

Torso

Arms

Legs

Equipment

FLINT

HIDE BAG

10 ARROWS

LEATHER FOOT WRAPPINGS

THREE CLAW NECKLACE

Money

Weapon

Range RoF

Damage AP Ammo

BOW

12/24/48

1

2d6

10

STONE SPEAR (reach 1)

3/6/12

Str+d6

STONE KNIFE

Str+d4

Hindrances

+LOYAL (FAMILY AND CLAN)

-ONE EYE (-2 TO ROLLS THAT VISION PAST 5')

-STUBBORN

Edges

BRAVE

COMMAND

Novice

5

10

15

Seasoned

25

30

35

Veteran

45

50

55

Heroic

65

70

75

Legendary

90

100

110

Notes

Wounds

-1

-2

-3

INC

-2

-1

Fatigue



You are the eldest son of Tansum-Aha, the warchief of the Clan of the Three Claws. When your aunt was abducted and killed by the Lion Tail Tribe, you begged your father and his brother - the great chief Kusim-Aha - to go to war with them. They listened, and you led many glorious skirmishes. The day of the final battle you sought to slay Creel, one of the Lion Tail's greatest hunters, when he loosed an arrow at you. The arrow missed but shattered off a nearby boulder, spraying sharp debris into your eye. Still, the war was won and your father presented you with the honorary Three-Claw Necklace afterwards.

PP

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21

22

23

24

25



TEN MEN

Name

GENTLE NEANDERTHAL

Profession

NEANDERTHAL

Race

26

Age

Experience

5'4"

Height

Attributes & Skills

d6 Agility

- | | |
|---------------|------------|
| d4 Boating | d Shooting |
| d6 Fighting | d4 Stealth |
| d Lockpicking | d Throwing |
| d Riding | |

d4 Smarts

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| d4 Healing | d4 Survival |
| d4 Knowledge | d Taunt |
| d4 Notice | d Tracking |
| d4 Occult | d |
| d4 Repair | d |

d8 Strength

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| d8 Athletics | d |
|--------------|---|

d6 Spirit

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| d4 Intimidation | d6 Persuasion |
| d Performance | d |

d8 Vigor

Raise Calculator

- | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | 5 | 9 | 13 | 17 | 21 | 25 | 29 | 33 | 37 |
| 2 | 6 | 10 | 14 | 18 | 22 | 26 | 30 | 34 | 38 |
| 3 | 7 | 11 | 15 | 19 | 23 | 27 | 31 | 35 | 39 |
| 4 | 8 | 12 | 16 | 20 | 24 | 28 | 32 | 36 | 40 |

Weapon

STONE AXE

Range RoF

3/6/12

Damage AP Ammo

Str+d8

STONE SPEAR (reach 1)

Str+db

STONE KNIFE

Str+d4

Charisma

6 (db) Run

Pace

6 +Gear

Parry
(Fighting/2)+2

7 +Armor

Toughness
(Vigor/2)+2

Injuries

Armor

TN

Head

Torso

Arms

Legs

Equipment

FLINT

BONE AWL

FIRE BOW

LEATHER FOOT WRAPPINGS

HIDE BAG

Money

Hindrances

+HEROIC

-LOYAL

-QUIRK (DEEPLY SPIRITUAL)

Edges

BRAWNY

BRUTE

Novice

5

10

15

Seasoned

25

30

35

Veteran

45

50

55

Heroic

65

70

75

Legendary

90

100

110

Notes

Wounds

-1

-2

-3

INC

-2

-1

Fatigue



Ten years ago, you found a boat washed ashore the Great River. The rest of your tribe shunned it and said they would burn it in the next flower festival. But the boat awakened your curiosity. One morning you pushed it into the river. For four days you traveled the river, moving faster than the herds of elk that you saw on the banks. On the fifth day, you spied a young man about to get pounced on by a lion! You swam to shore and strangled the creature to save him. He said his name was Kusim-Aha, and he welcomed you to join his clan.

PP





BEAR-SPOTTER

Name

THE EYES OF THE CLAN

Profession

CRO-MAGNON

Race

24

Age

Experience

5'4"

Height

Attributes & Skills

d6 Agility

- | | | | |
|----|-------------|----|----------|
| d | Boating | d | Shooting |
| d6 | Fighting | d6 | Stealth |
| d | Lockpicking | d | Throwing |
| d | Riding | | |

d8 Smarts

- | | | | |
|----|-----------|---|----------|
| d4 | Healing | d | Survival |
| d4 | Knowledge | d | Taunt |
| d8 | Notice | d | Tracking |
| d8 | Occult | d | |
| d | Repair | d | |

d4 Strength

- | | | | |
|----|-----------|---|--|
| d4 | Athletics | d | |
|----|-----------|---|--|

d8 Spirit

- | | | | |
|----|--------------|----|------------|
| d | Intimidation | d4 | Persuasion |
| d8 | Performance | d | |

d6 Vigor

Raise Calculator

1	5	9	13	17	21	25	29	33	37
2	6	10	14	18	22	26	30	34	38
3	7	11	15	19	23	27	31	35	39
4	8	12	16	20	24	28	32	36	40

Charisma

6 (d6) Run

Pace

6 +Gear

Parry
(Fighting/2)+2

5 +Armor

Toughness
(Vigor/2)+2

Injuries

Armor

TN

Head

Torso

Arms

Legs

Equipment

FLINT

RATTLE

DRIED BERRIES

LEATHER FOOT WRAPPINGS

HIDE BAG

BLUE-ISH CHARCOAL

RAVEN FEATHERS

Money

Weapon

Range RoF

Damage AP Ammo

WOOD STAFF (reach 1, parry +1)

Str+d6

STONE KNIFE

Str+d4

Hindrances

+CURIOUS

-GREEDY (MINOR)

-HABIT (MINOR - TALKS ALOUD TO SPIRITS)

Edges

ANGER SENSE

LUCK

Novice

5

10

15

Seasoned

25

30

35

Veteran

45

50

55

Heroic

65

70

75

Legendary

90

100

110

Notes

Wounds

-1

-2

-3

INC

-2

-1

Fatigue



When you were a girl, you saw the moon turn blue and you felt your spirit pulled into a faraway place - a land filled with dark, icy forests and mounds of thick and perfect snow. When the spirits returned you, you felt blessed by the ghosts of that faraway land. Your blessing brought your tribe great luck on hunts, helping the hunters find great herds of fat elk. When the wars with the Lion Tails started, the spirits told the chief to look for help from an enemy - and it was his trust in a Lion Tail traitor that brought the war to its end. Since the war's end, however, nightmares have crept into your dreams, and you fear the next time the spirits pull you into their land.

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23

24

25



FELS THE STABBING SQUIRREL
Name
DEVIOUS AND AMBITIOUS HUNTER
Profession

CRO-MAGNON
Race
22
Age
Experience
5'5"
Height

Attributes & Skills

d8 Agility

d Boating d Shooting
d6 Fighting d8 Stealth
d Lockpicking d Throwing
d Riding

d6 Smarts

d Healing d4 Survival
d6 Knowledge d6 Taunt
d6 Notice d Tracking
d Occult d
d Repair d

d6 Strength

d8 Athletics d

d6 Spirit

d Intimidation d6 Persuasion
d Performance d

d6 Vigor

Raise Calculator

1 5 9 13 17 21 25 29 33 37
2 6 10 14 18 22 26 30 34 38
3 7 11 15 19 23 27 31 35 39
4 8 12 16 20 24 28 32 36 40

Weapon

SLING (ATHLETICS)

Range RoF

3/6/12

Damage

1

AP Ammo

Str+d4

5

STONE KNIFE

Str+d4

Charisma
6 (d6) Run

Pace

5 +Gear

Parry
(Fighting/2)+2

5 +Armor

Toughness
(Vigor/2)+2

Injuries

Armor

TN

Head

Torso

Arms

Legs

Equipment

FLINT

LEATHER FOOT WRAPPINGS

DRIED SQUIRREL MEAT

BONE FISHHOOK

GRASS-WOVEN STRING

Money

Hindrances

+DRIVEN (MINOR - BECOME CHIEF'S SUCCESSOR)

-ENEMY (MINOR - BETRAYED THE LION TAILS)

-IMPULSIVE

Edges

ASSASSIN

FREE RUNNER

Novice

5

10

15

Seasoned

25

30

35

Veteran

45

50

55

Heroic

65

70

75

Legendary

90

100

110

Notes

Wounds

-1

-2

-3

INC

-2

-1

Fatigue



You knew that the Lion Tail Tribe was doomed. Chief Grumgorr was old and incompetent. His son was a half-wit who believed himself invulnerable to injury. His daughter had rejected you too many times. After the first Battle of the Blue River was lost, you knew your tribe had lost its faith in his leader. You snuck over to the Clan of the Three Claws and made an arrangement with Chief Kusim-Aha. The next week, as Grumgorr and his son charged into battle, your sling-stone found the back of his skull. He fell over dead, and the Lion Tails were routed and forever annihilated. And you were welcomed to the Clan of the Three Claws as a hero and lost son.

PP



5 10 15 20 25



KINA-AHA "DOGRUNNER"

Name

FEARLESS SCOUT

Profession

CRO-MAGNON

Race

16

Age

Experience

5'4"

Height

Attributes & Skills

db Agility

- | | |
|---------------|------------|
| d Boating | d Shooting |
| db Fighting | db Stealth |
| d Lockpicking | d Throwing |
| d Riding | |

db Smarts

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| db Healing | d8 Survival |
| db Knowledge | d Taunt |
| db Notice | d Tracking |
| d Occult | d |
| d4 Repair | d |

db Strength

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| db Athletics | d |
|--------------|---|

d8 Spirit

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| d Intimidation | d4-I Persuasion |
| d Performance | d |

db Vigor

Raise Calculator

1	5	9	13	17	21	25	29	33	37
2	6	10	14	18	22	26	30	34	38
3	7	11	15	19	23	27	31	35	39
4	8	12	16	20	24	28	32	36	40

Charisma

8 (d8) Run

Pace

5 +Gear

Parry
(Fighting/2)+2

5 +Armor

Toughness
(Vigor/2)+2

Injuries

Armor

TN

Head

Torso

Arms

Legs

Equipment

BONE AWL

LEATHER FOOT WRAPPINGS

HIDE BAG

DRIED DEER MEAT

HAMMERSTONE

GRASS-WOVEN STRING

Money

Weapon

Range RoF

Damage AP Ammo

THROWING STICK (ATHLETICS)

3/6/12

1

Str+d4

1

FINE STONE KNIFE

Str+d4+1

Hindrances

+BLOODTHIRSTY

- TONGUE-TIED

Edges

BEAST MASTER

FLEET FOOTED

Novice

5

10

15

Seasoned

25

30

35

Veteran

45

50

55

Heroic

65

70

75

Legendary

90

100

110

Notes

SNIRL THE WOLF-DOG

Agility d8, Smarts db, Spirit

db, Strength db, Vigor db.

Athletics db, Fighting db,

Notice d10+2, Stealth d8,

Survival d8.

Pace 8 (d10); Parry 5; Toughness 4.

Alertness. Bite Str+d4, Size -1

Wounds

-1

-2

-3

INC

-2

-1

Fatigue



You were the only daughter of Keera-Aha, the sister of Chief Kusim-Aha. You witnessed your mother abducted by the Lion Tail Tribe. You would have been taken too, if it weren't for your long legs easily able to outpace the clumsy Creel of the Lion Tails. Unfortunately, when your uncle returned with the warriors, your mother was dead in a field near the Blue River. You swore an oath to the elders that you would avenge her death. That night, you saw a vision of your grandmother take the form of a dog by your side. All the next two seasons you helped hunt the Lion Tails.

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25

Ten-Men

Curious Neanderthal



Ynglis the keen-eYed

Skilled Huntress



Jowda-Aha

Son of the Warchief



Bear-Spotter

The Spirit Touched



Fels

The Stabbing Squirrel



Kina-Aha

The Dogrunner



Ugly Bearface

The Unlucky Hunter

