

L I M I N A L

GHOSTS OF GLENCOE

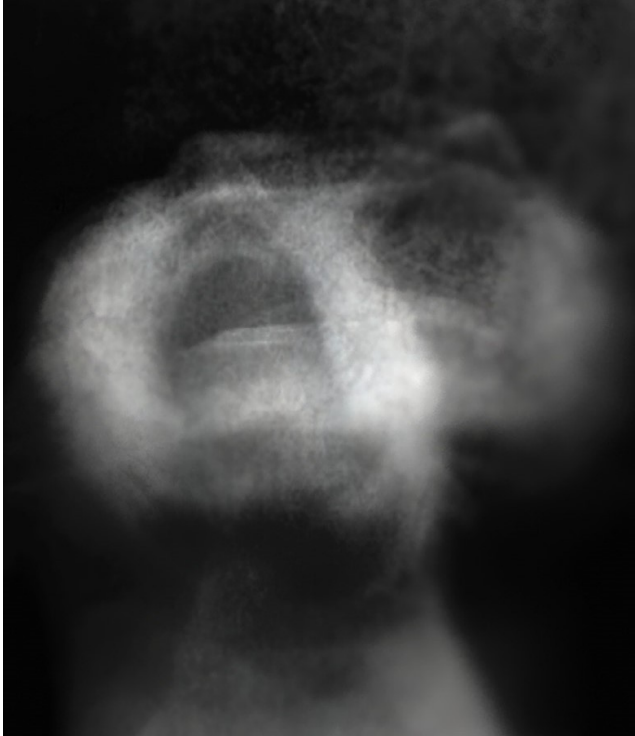
A Case Note for Liminal

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Introduction

A climber has gone missing; it all points to increased ghost activity in the wilds of Glencoe. The PCs investigate, and find out that it is not related to the ghosts at all, but to the Lairds of Rhum, a werewolf pack recently moved to the mainland seeking out new hunting grounds. They must meet and dissuade the Lairds, possibly finding them a new location to hunt in.

Hooks

The PCs are contacted by Tom McAllan, landlord of the Clachaig Inn in Glencoe. He is a clued-in mortal, and reports increased reports of climbers going missing in the valleys and Glens around him. Alternatively, another faction may have need of an investigation into the missing climbers. A member of P Division, a well-known Mercury Collegium member, or any number of wizards or errant wizards, may have disappeared while climbing in the Glen.

Background

There have been more murders on the hills, but it is not at the hands of the ghosts. A werewolf pack, the Lairds of Rhum, have moved in from their remote bases on the Isles and are trying to claim the area as their own. Taking advantage of the remote location and easy pickings, they have drawn attention to themselves, and by hunting in an area near to a Ghost Realm, the dead have begun to take issue with them as well. Most recently, the disappearance on the moors of Paul Stromsoe, a werewolf allied to the Jaeger Pack, has made the ghosts much more aggressive.

Characters

Tom McAllan

Tom McAllan is the landlord of the Clachaig Inn. He is in his mid-50s, and runs the Inn with his wife Pamela and an assortment of seasonal staff, a mixture of summer workers from Europe and locals.

Draug

Draug is the lieutenant, and killer, of the Lairds of Rhum. After their initiation rite was discovered by the walkers, he has been patrolling the area, looking to pick off any curious walkers. He is an old werewolf, and has spent more time with the wolves than humans. In wolf form he is scraggy and mangy, but still moves with a confident grace. As a human, he is a bedraggled, toothless man who stoops low and avoids eye contact – he finds human contact difficult.

Drive: Protect the interests of the Lairds of Rhum
 Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Melee 3, Survival 3
 Mental Skills: Lore 1
 Social Skills: Conviction 1, Taunt 1
 Traits: Brawny, Night Sight, Rage, Rapid Healing (Weakness: Silver), Shapechange (massive wolf form)
 Endurance: 15
 Will: 9
 Damage: d6+3 (natural weapons in wolf form)

The Ghosts

Alasdair Maclain is the leader of the ghosts that haunt Glencoe. He appears as he died – in a rough kilt bearing the MacDonald tartan and a loose, grimy white shirt.

Drive: Keep the memory of the Massacre alive
 Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Awareness 3, Melee 2, Survival 1
 Mental Skills: Lore 3
 Social Skills: Conviction 3, Taunt 1
 Traits: Immaterial (note that Maclain is not Immaterial in the Ghost Realm), Night Sight, Terror, The Sight
 Endurance: 10
 Will: 13
 Damage: d6+2 (big knife)

Clan MacDonald has around 30 ghosts around Glencoe, who flit into and out of the Ghost Realm to take revenge on people (and werewolves) who would violate their sacred grounds. They are belligerent and murderous, often extending hospitality to the guests that they meet before killing them in irony of their situation.

Drive: Protect the memory of Clan MacDonald
 Physical Skills: Athletics 1, Awareness 1, Melee 2, Survival 1
 Mental Skills: Lore 1
 Social Skills: Conviction 1, Taunt 1
 Traits: Immaterial (note that they are not Immaterial in the Ghost Realm), Night Sight, Terror, The Sight
 Endurance: 9
 Will: 9
 Damage: d6+1 (knife)

Paul Stromsoe

Paul Stromsoe is an up-and-coming werewolf who serves the Jaeger pack as a scout and diplomat. He has been scouting out potential packs to ally with, and had heard about the Lairds as an option. He decided to come to find them. He is usually a tall, middle-aged man with a trimmed beard, but his time captive in the Ghost Realm of Glencoe has left him dishevelled

Use the statistics for a Werewolf Soldier on p245 of the Liminal core book, but remove Limitation: Uncontrolled Anger

Initial Situation

Tom meets the Crew at the Clachaig Inn and offers them directions to the site of the most recent disappearance – a group of climbers disappeared while climbing Beinn Trilleachan (ben trill-e-ackan), a steady-gradient peak at the end of the Glen opposite the Clachaid, a feeder river to Glencoe. They disappeared in decent walking conditions – “just a wee bit of rain” – and seemed to be experienced climbers. They had stayed in the Clachaig the night before.

The climbers were:

- Raymond Ferrier, an accountant from London;
- Eric Peterson, an English teacher, again from London;
- Paul Stromsoe, a builder and surveyor from Sheffield.

Tom describes all men as being in their mid-forties and fit and able – they had the kit and equipment to cope with much more challenging hills than Beinn Trilleachan. They ate a full meal – Stromsoe in particular, Tom recalls, ate enough to feed a horse – and had a few beers before retiring early to bed. In the morning, Raymond settled up the bill and checked out, while Eric and Paul has already departed.



First Location

The climbers began their ascent at the sea loch at the foot of Beinn Trilleachan, and it is logical for the Crew to begin their search there. The mountain rises sharply from the Loch, and although steep in parts does not require any special climbing knowledge. Beinn Trilleachan is notable for the Etive Slabs, a series of 40-degree granite slabs that slope up the hill and shine in the morning sunlight as the rain is reflected from them.

Searching an area as large as this requires a group skill test. Skills the Crew can use, include:

- Athletics to comb the mountain, looking for signs of clues;
- Survival to look for anything unusual in the natural world;
- Lore to look for signs of Hidden World activity on the mountain;
- Science to use GPS to look for variations in activity.

A failed roll on any of these checks could result in, for example:

- A member of the Crew falling a short distance down the scree near the summit for 1d6 damage;
- The Crew making more noise than they hoped – attracting the attention of some passing hikers who are keen to know their business on the mountain – and why they are so far off the path. A convincing use of Social skills will be needed to avoid them reporting the Crew to mountain rescue, who could cause trouble later.

As they search they will be tracked by Draug. If the group test fails, Draug gets the chance to make an ambush. He attempts to pick off one of the Crew. If the group test succeeds, they find the initiation grounds, which are around a pool just below the summit, hidden from climbers. They also realise they are being tracked by Draug, and can confront him.

Leads

Any violence or spilling of blood on the Etive Slabs gives the Crew access to the Ghost Realm of Glencoe.

In the Ghost Realm, the Crew are met by the grey-skinned ghosts of Clan MacDonald who insist on taking them to their leader. Their attitude is suspicious and angry, but not openly hostile.

Draug can be captured, where he admits that they tried to capture the climbers and offer them as a sacrifice to the ghosts. He tells them of his Pack, and asks the Crew to help him recover his fellow pack members from the Realm. He knows how to access the Realm, and if needed is prepared to lie that many more climbers may be found there.

Complications

Upon arrival in the Ghost Realm the Crew faces a frosty reception. Silent ghosts bring them to Ellis Macdonald, their erstwhile leader, who offers them hospitality. He initially orders Draug to be put to death immediately – and needs convincing with a Social skill, or a deal to be struck – perhaps to help moving the Lairds of Rhum on from the area – to rescind this.

The Ghost Realm of Glencoe is unusual in that, although a relatively small area within itself, it covers a large area in the mortal world. Most of the hills around Glencoe and its nearby Glens can offer some access to it. Hidden World scholars speculate that this is due to the long memories of the massacre in these lands.

Final Location

In the Ghost Realm, the Crew are shown to their quarters – a simple room of straw bedding. Nearby, they can find the other inhabitants of the Realm. Stromsoe is in the cell next to them, starving and barely conscious. He will explain that they were walking – he had heard of a new werewolf pack operating in the area so had convinced his friends to try and summit Beinn Trilleachan, where he had heard there was activity.

Neither of his fellow climbers were werewolves, although they were aware of the Hidden World, and had done work with the Jaegers before. Both are quite dead now, and he is convinced that the ghosts have only halted their slaughter because they have realised that Stromsoe is a werewolf and have assumed that he is linked to the new werewolf activity. There are several other Lairds of Rhum in the cells around, all in a similar state to Stromsoe.

To escape from the Ghost Realm requires an Awareness check of Difficulty 10 – to observe that each time blood falls on the bed of a guest a portal is opened back into the real world. Unfortunately, such a trigger alerts all the ghosts in the realm, who will then try to stop them. The ghosts of Glencoe are powerful and numerous, and not an active threat, but they will be difficult to banish.

The Lairds are in dire need of a hunting ground, although Stromsoe can be persuaded to make their case to join the Jaegers, as giving such a powerful pack a foothold in Scotland may not be in the Crew's best interests. There are many nearby wilderness areas of Scotland around Glencoe, including around Fort William, the city to the North, which the ghosts do not inhabit.