

C13

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OSRIC™

Dungeon Module C13

From His Cold, Dead Hands

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AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTER LEVELS 5-7



From the tundra of the Rianthillon Peninsula, a powerful warlord has risen to bring woe to the folk of Scurki. Said to ride the winds on the wings of a monstrous white wyrm, the Jarlind of All the Xuellii has gathered a band of renowned heroes to lay low the mysterious warrior and his horrific ally before together they bring ruin to the land beneath an avalanche of icy death. Will you return to him in triumph – or see your very blood frozen in your veins?

This module was originally used for tournament play at GameHole Con VII. It contains a challenging scenario and eight pre-rolled, playtested tournament characters. C12 is a complete adventure in and of itself and it may thus be used for competition among players (or groups of players) or as a non-scored adventure included in the context of an ongoing game. Also included are referee's maps, notes, encounter descriptions for players, and a background scenario allowing the module to be easily placed within a pre-existing campaign.



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Introduction

There is a time in the history of the Iksurc of which that folk never speaks.

When their number finally reached the northeastern edge of the continent and looked over land's end into the wild waters of the Ronlos Ocean, all knew that their journey, their pursuit of the renegade Prince Rafillez, had come to an end. Though their brothers and sisters in House Varzii would construct great vessels and continue on across the seas to fulfill their sworn oaths to their Emperor, theirs is a tale for another time. The remnants of the Xuel Noble House, led by the powerful and charismatic warrior Jónar il-Iksurc, followed the river they named Nekajslah back westward until they found a wide swath of good land along the edge of a mountain fjord. On this place in -415CY, overlooking the frigid waves, they built the first of their great cities, Tolg.

This was not something easily done, however. This was a folk to whom a hot and dry clime was natural. The bitter cold of the Nairnolliht Peninsula and the wet, heavy snows it brought with it on the invisible wings of gale winds were constant foes that threatened to freeze the blood in their very veins. Dangerous monsters - most of a like they had never seen before - constantly descended upon them from the mountain peaks above, intent on sating themselves on their flesh and bones. It is a testament indeed to the hardiness and courage of these Xuloise that they were able to survive these early days. In large part, however, this folk could attribute their continued existence to the leadership of il-Iksurc, who was able to hold what remained of his Noble House together on the strength of his great personal might and his ability to amicably mediate disputes. It was il-Iksurc that instituted laws for his folk based on the tenets of family, tradition, and mutual cooperation in the place of ancient Xuel laws that seemed out of place in their new home and an increasingly chaotic culture. So respected was the man that he was named the first King of the Iksurc and the Fasstal of All Xuelii. Though those named Kings of the Iitzurf and Anhics would doubtlessly bristle at such a lofty claim, there can be no doubt that those that would

eventually be known to the other folk of the continent as the Ice Northmen prospered under the leadership of il-Iksurc, carving a way of life for themselves in the frigid, inhospitable clime of their adopted home.

After the death of il-Iksurc in -366CY, the rulership of the Ice Northmen passed down through a series of strong, if unremarkable regents. This changed, however, after the death of King Árni Einarsson in -282CY saw his son, Sveinn, ascend to the *Ísásæti* (AS: "Rime-Covered Throne"). The new ruler quickly proved to be possessed of a rotten, wicked heart. King Eriksson commanded the fighting men of the Iksurc to go forth and raid the Iitzurf and Anhics without remorse or mercy, demanding that they bring back tribute and thralls to strengthen his armies and glorify his name. Indeed, these blue-sailed raiders would even be seen as far south as the lands now known as Kitar, the Pale March, and North Territory, cutting a bloody path along their coasts that stained the very ocean a deep crimson in their wake.

It was not only the folk of these lands that suffered beneath King Eriksson's rule. The black-hearted regent had a bottomless appetite for power, and when his raiders failed to sate that hunger with that which they brought before him in their boats, he began to feed it with the property of his own subjects. Tossing aside the laws of Jónar il-Iksurc in favor of those written by his own hand, the rule of the land soon became that all Ice Northmen existed only to serve their king. All they possessed - indeed, their very lives themselves - were his to do with as he would. The city of Tolg became a dour, grim place and a summons before the *Ísásæti* became synonymous with a death-sentence.

In -163CY, when it seemed that the Iksurc could bear no more, word of the king's sudden demise spread through Tolg like wildfire. A simple thrall girl made an unwilling concubine, Sigrún Bragisdóttir, slew Eriksson in his sleep, cleaving his head so many times with an axe that it was said to resemble the rocky fjords of the Nairnolliht coast, uncountable rivulets of blood running to an ocean of vitae spilling across the white linens of his bed. Bragisdóttir was hailed as a hero of the beleaguered Iksurc and, in gratitude for her bravery, she and her family were said to have never wanted for anything ever afterward.

As for King Eriksson, a single blue-sailed ship carried his body northward to the place they called *Gröf Konunga* (AS: "The Grave of Kings"): A lonely

glacier floating amidst the Frozen Sea. There, the wicked King Eriksson of the Iksurc – a name synonymous among the Ice Northmen with implacable evil and unending woe – was interred and his name stricken from every record of that folk. It was the hope of those rulers that followed him that by doing this, those wounds in their society that he had rent would might heal with time. And the passage of long years proved that there was some wisdom in the notion. With the turn of a few generations, the days of Eriksson were all but forgotten and the Iksurc began to know peace once more. Season after season came and went, and as they did, fewer and fewer knew the significance of the dead ruler's name. Now, over seven centuries after the black-hearted king strode the world, it has lost its meaning entirely.

Yet in Gröf Konunga, the dead and forgotten grow restless. So great was their avarice and their hate, one in particular rises from his icy crypt and walks once more. Hungry for his former titles, he sets an unholy glare upon the lands he once ruled.

King Sveinn Eriksson has returned.

And those that forgot his name will remember what it means once more.

Module History:

From His Cold, Dead Hands was designed as an official convention module for *GameHole Con VII*, held in Madison, Wisconsin in October and November, 2019. The module has been designed in such a way that it can be placed in any published or homebrewed Campaign Setting with little difficulty. It has been written so as to be usable with the **OSRIC™ Role-Playing System**. While the module was developed for the purpose of convention play, it can easily be adapted for use as either a one-shot adventure or worked into an ongoing Campaign with little in the way of alteration on the part of the Game Master.

Adventure Location:

This adventure takes place within Gröf Konunga: A series of catacombs carved into the flesh of an immense glacier that once served as a burial ground for the kings of the Iksurc. Although this location can be placed wherever it fits best within the fabric of a Game Master's Campaign, in the context of

Convention play, the glacier in which Gröf Konunga is located floats in the midst of the Frozen Sea, nearly 250 miles northeast of the Ice Northman city of Talpstoj. Because of the capricious waters in which the glacier lies and the brutal clime that rakes them year-round, only the boldest and most skilled sailors dare a voyage to this grim and bleak place.

Once Player Characters arrive upon the glacier that bears Gröf Konunga, they may delve into the depths of the great necropolis within its frigid expanse. Within that terrible place, they will find that the dead laid there to rest no longer dream away eternity, instead dancing at the strings of an unholy puppetmaster. If they hope to put an end to that which ravages the Iksurc lands from which they hail, they will find a way to destroy that King of the Dead, or at least wrest the magical device that affords him much of his might – from his icy, skeletal grip.

Background:

From His Cold, Dead Hands is composed of two parts: The overland travel to Gröf Konunga and the exploration of that necropolis' catacombs. The first of these two parts takes the form of an outdoor adventure, while the second is a straightforward dungeon crawl. While only the second part of the module is designed for Convention play, both components are specifically designed in such a way as to get right to the heart of the action. This will allow a prospective Game Master to insert either or both of its parts into a pre-existing Campaign experience in a seamless manner. Some recommended ways in which this can be done follow:

- The Player Characters are traveling through Talpstoj on their way to some other location when the city is attacked by The White Rider. After his attack lays waste to a substantial portion of the city, they are asked by its Jarlinde to become champions for Talpstoj and lay low the Rider.
- The Player Characters have learned of the location of the fabled Gröf Konunga through a recovered treasure map or the kennings of a famous skjáld. In search of the great wealth that certainly would be found in such a place, they travel to plunder it.

- The Player Characters have been told by a good-aligned dragon in their acquaintance of the existence of a white wyrm that has flown north to lair within the glacial graveyard of fallen Iksurc kings. The good dragon warns them that they should stop the creature before it has the opportunity to grow strong from the ancient magic certainly contained in such a place. It adds that the dead kings within the glacier would probably smile upon them taking some of their treasures as payment for such a deed.

Notes for the Player Characters:

If *From His Cold, Dead Hands* is being played as a Convention game, the scenario put forth in the **Background** section implies that the Players are using the pre-generated characters included with this module (see **Appendix B** for details). That said, should the Players wish to use their own characters (as one might expect, if this module were used within the context of an ongoing Campaign), the **Background** section can be easily ignored. In such a case, it falls to the Game Master to adjust the text of the module so that it fits seamlessly into the fabric of their individual game.

In the Convention scenario, the Player Characters are taking the roles of some of the most powerful and renowned heroes of the Iksurc. Assembled in the city of Talpstoј by its young Jarlinde, they have been tasked by that worthy to travel to Gröf Konunga to destroy the White Rider and its draconic mount before they render every settlement across the land north of the Kurocs dead and frozen. These heroes have been chosen specifically by the Jarlinde for their courage and valor. They represent the best of the Iksurc. If they fail in their aim, then the gods have spoken: They are surely doomed. Since each one of them hails from the region, those of them that have families, clans, or other loved ones will understand that this is not an option. So it is that the Player Characters have a very vested interest in working with one another so that their mission succeeds.

It is highly likely that experienced Player Characters will attempt to do research before setting off on their journey, trying to learn what they might encounter along the way or maybe even find a map of Gröf Konunga itself. If they choose to do this, the Game Master may offer them some or all of the following bits of information (depending on the type

and depth of research they perform):

- The Iksurc practice of interring individuals upon their death was discontinued several centuries ago, as those buried or entombed often rose once more as the restless dead (the Iksurc now burn their dead whenever possible, usually setting the deceased adrift on some vessel, which is pushed out to sea and lit afire). Therefore, no Iksurc has set foot upon the glacier in which Gröf Konunga lies for over 200 years. It will thus prove impossible to find an existing map to the necropolis, but this information may help the Player Characters determine the nature of what lies within the Grave of Kings.
- Those surviving the attack upon Talpstoј will attest that the dragon upon which the White Rider soars on wings greater than the sails of the largest sea vessels. Its scales gleam like the morning sun as it kisses the snowy tundra and those that fall beneath its breath are frozen to the bone, their flesh rime-covered in death and cracked like a birch in midwinter. Those Player Characters taking note of this description and suspecting that the White Rider is an undead creature will realize that life still courses the terrifying beast's icy veins. This will likely change the manner in which they choose to prepare for combat with it drastically.
- Scouts roaming the tundra loyal to the Jarlinde noticed a great warband of humanoids – dozens in number, accompanied by a pair of giants! – trekking the wasteland northward, toward the Frozen Sea. The Jarlinde suspected that they intended to circle the city and ordered her men to gird themselves for an attack from that direction...but one never came. This information might tip the Player Characters off to the fact that the White Rider has managed to gather a substantial force of allies to himself of which they need to be wary.
- Not long ago, a gigantic sea monster was sighted quite near to the Frozen Sea's shores by fishermen in the region. This is actually a tall tale: Those reporting the sight were quite drunk when relating the story at one of Talpstoј's taverns and were trying to come up with an excuse why they left the north

without fish in their nets. Nevertheless, the tale might give the Player Characters something else to worry about on their trip toward Gröf Konunga.

The Game Master is encouraged to come up with other such tidbits to provide Player Characters that do especially-effective research. However, whatever information they manage to uncover, under **no circumstances** will they be able to learn anything about what lies within Gröf Konunga itself. Whatever will be discovered in that fell place must be found by the Player Characters themselves.

Notes for the Game Master:

This module was designed for convention-style play, and is intended for characters from 5th to 7th level. It is **strongly** advised that a Game Master preparing to run this module closely read **all** parts of the module thoroughly. If the module is being used as part of an ongoing Campaign, the Game Master will want to take notes, making changes in its text to fit its particulars into the Campaign. In this way, they can be prepared to adjudicate the results of any of these powers or abilities as they might relate specifically to the environs in which the Players will be operating.

During the course of the adventure, the Player Characters are welcome to use followers, henchmen, and hirelings to supply needed skills on their behalf. The exception to this is in the context of Convention play, in which no such Non-Player Characters may accompany them on their adventure. Should the GM choose to substitute the pre-generated characters supplied with this module with their own (such as is the likely case if this adventure is used in the context of a Campaign setting, rather than a Convention), they should compare Campaign characters and their magic items with the characters and items included in the module, in order to assemble an appropriate party.

Information presented in the key is divided into two sections. The boxed script is material which should be read to the players unless special circumstances prevent their knowing the information given there, such as no light to see by. The information not boxed is material for the GM only, and provides game details about the encounter. Characters may discover this information as play continues, but they will not know it from the start of the encounter.

Convention Notes:

From His Cold, Dead Hands was designed to be used as a single-event session, featuring 5 players and lasting 3 hours. Timing begins when the character sheets are distributed, and participating Players should be periodically reminded of the time limit. The goal to which the Player Characters must aspire (and which constitutes a successful completion of their mission) is to travel to the glacier that contains Gröf Konunga, enter the ancient burial site, give King Sveinn Eriksson his final rest, destroy his draconic mount Snjórfangar, and return to Talpstoð to tell tale of the adventure.

Since the adventure was designed to be played several times over the course of GameHole Con VII, certain rules were followed in Convention play to insure that many situations were handled in the same way:

1. The Players are presented with pre-generated characters. All their characteristics have been listed, along with equipment, spells, and magic items. Players may not add to or alter this list. This will guarantee that all Players start with the same chances. Players would be allowed the use of the sections of the **OSRIC™ Reference Manual** meant for Player use (those sections reserved for Game Master use are forbidden), although all magic items they possess will be known and understood by the owner completely.
2. Monsters will fight intelligently and to the best of their abilities. They show no mercy or quarter to invaders. Monsters encountered in convention play need never check morale and will fight to the death, unless otherwise noted in the text. Monsters will be fully aware of the powers and limitations of their weapons, magic items, and spells and will use them to their best advantage. In many cases, specific tactics have been listed for monsters to use in melee. If these plans are frustrated by the Players' actions, the Game Master must find an alternative. If the Players are unusually inventive and find something that is not covered in the adventure, a few minutes may be taken to establish some sort of defense for the monsters – possibly having them regroup and counterattack if necessary. In convention play, monsters will not pursue fleeing adventurers out of an encounter area unless

otherwise noted. Players will not know this, however. Monsters will make a lot of noise and will make feint attacks to give the impression of pursuit.

3. Players will never know the function of special treasures they acquire unless they should happen to discover their powers by examination or experimentation.

Campaign Notes:

The Nairnolliht Peninsula

The Iksurc – who are more commonly known to the folk of the continent as the Ice Northmen – inhabit the land's furthest northeast point. Scholars refer to this prominence from its main body as the Nairnolliht Peninsula: A vast frozen tundra pounded by howling arctic winds and thick, wet snows, the spine of which is the eastern spur of the imposing Kurocs Mountains. Roughly 1,500 miles in length and 600 miles in breadth, the Iksurc claim a thin strip of the peninsula, along its extreme north and east coasts. To the north, their land is bounded by the frigid Frozen Sea, while to the east, the waves of the Ronlos Ocean lap upon its shores.

The Nairnolliht is largely characterized by its brutal and unforgiving nature. The dark spires of the Kurocs Mountains dominate the center of the peninsula, separating the three folk that dwell upon it by an all but impassible barrier. As these peaks spread out toward the edges of the Nairnolliht, they recede into hills and finally flat land, though in the holdings of the Iksurc, this habitable land is but a strip no more than 100 miles wide at its broadest. In these places, what little arable land exists is usually found along its coastline. Such places are considered extremely valuable to the Iksurc and no few minor wars have been fought for possession of these places, which grow such hardy crops as cabbage, cauliflower, kale, and potatoes.

Aside of the proud evergreens that form the Ermine Wood – in which the precious trees that lend the forest its name can be found – little else grows upon the Nairnolliht. This is in large part because of its bitter climate. This is a cold place, in which one can only brave the elements bereft of heavy furs for but a handful of days each year. Its proximity to the open waters of the sea and ocean that surround it makes it a wet place, visited by heavy snows that blanket its

landscape almost perennially. Such precipitation is hurled across the barren expanse of the land by westerly winds that shriek like the wail of a banshee and wet exposed skin like the kiss of the lash when at their most powerful. Indeed, all told, this is no place for the meek.

The Iksurc and the Nine Laws

The Iksurc discovered the nature of the land and its many perils for themselves as they began to settle the Nairnolliht Peninsula around -416CY. The Xuel refugees, who hailed from a land where the climate was warm and dry, were ill-suited for the frigid conditions and no few of them died from the grim spectres of exposure, disease, and starvation in the first few years of their habitation of the new land. Some of those that managed to fight off these twin predators instead filled the hungry maws of strange monsters, the likes of which they had never seen before. Despite the harsh nature of this new place, however, the members of the Noble House were driven on by an indomitable will to survive – and not only would this unbreakable spirit see them live, but actually thrive in the face of all odds.

The experience indelibly shaped the Iksurc. In this new place, which they call *Zhiria*, many of the trappings of the civilization they left behind, thousands of miles to the west, have been stripped away and replaced by a simpler culture. To the Iksurc, nine values define the worth of a man or a woman. These characteristics are referred to as *The Nine Laws* and are as follows:

- *Courage.* A Iksurc is expected never to shrink the face of battle. Likewise, they are expected to stand for their beliefs – no matter who might oppose them.
- *Truth.* A Iksurc is expected to be honest about their beliefs and actions, even (especially, perhaps) when doing so is difficult.
- *Honor.* A Iksurc is expected to never betray their personal dignity or their beliefs, no matter the situation.
- *Fidelity.* A Iksurc of any worth will never betray their friends or loved ones. Likewise, they will never betray or attempt to slip the yoke of a sworn oath.

- *Discipline.* A Iksurc is expected to remain in control of their behavior, no matter the price.
- *Hospitality.* The Iksurc believe in meeting a guest that comes to them in peace as they would treat with a brother or sister.
- *Industriousness.* A Iksurc is expected to finish a task, once undertaken, and to accomplish those that are required or expected of them.
- *Self-reliance.* The Iksurc smile upon those that can provide for themselves. They would spit upon those that expect others to assume their burdens.
- *Perseverance.* Failure is an inevitable part of life. Those that would call themselves Iksurc are not, however, defeated in its face. Instead, they continue on, learning from their failures and adapting, until they at last meet with success.

A Matter of Alignment

The Iksurc folk are, with very few exceptions, Chaotic in Alignment. Given the Nine Laws, as listed above, one might expect this to be the opposite case. However, a close inspection of the values reveals that each one promotes personal independence and reinforces the need to govern the self. To the Iksurc, there is nothing more important than personal freedom. This is their Chaotic nature shining through. Yet with this individual liberty is a responsibility to their community that helps them maintain a coherent tribe, rather than a loose collection of individuals. It is this underlying component of the Iksurc values that has allowed them to remain united against their common foes – and the bitter land in which they reside.

The City of Talpstoj

If *From His Cold, Dead Hands* is being used in the context of Campaign play, the adventure can begin in the city of Talpstoj. This is the second largest of the Iksurc's cities, which lies along the walls of a very deep fjord cut into the land by the Kezsrur River. With a population of about 3,500 souls, it is located about 75 miles south of the Frozen Sea.

Talpstoj began as an informal meeting place for the folk dwelling along the coast of the Frozen Sea. Unclaimed by any party, it was a place where they could trade goods and news in peace. A town built up around the location to reinforce it against predations from the humanoids dwelling in the Kurocs to the south soon rose up into a walled city. By 300CY, it was second only to Tolg itself in terms of population and influence in the lands of the Iksurc. In addition to these distinctions, it is known for its young Jarlinde, Sólveig Reynirsdóttir, who is but 11 winters of age yet speaks with the authority and wisdom of a woman thrice her age.

Background for the Game Master

When the Iksurc interred the body of the wicked King Eriksson within Gröf Konunga, they were not so naive to do so without taking considerable precautions that he would not live on as the restless dead. The mightiest of their priests accompanied the vessel that took his body to its vault, then called upon Tavun to see it sealed forever. Confident in the power of the God of the Winter, they then turned their backs upon the dead king, spitting on his corpse before returning to Tolg.

In frozen Gröf Konunga, lonely and undisturbed, it is likely that King Eriksson would have slept until the end of the world. Fate yet had plans for that blackguard, however. In the course of their raiding, a powerful tribe of humanoids learned of the Iksurc burial grounds and the dark vastness of their collective imaginations immediately began to glitter with the glint of the silver and gold that might be found in such a place. So it was that their chieftain assembled a great warband that set forth from the Kurocs Mountains to the Frozen Sea in search of Gröf Konunga. As these were no sailing folk, finding the burial place was not an easy thing, but the humanoids might have impressed the Iksurc with their dogged persistence in the pursuit of the place. In the autumn of 600CY, they were at last able to cross the Frozen Sea and land upon the glacier that held the dead kings of the Ice Northmen.

However, the humanoids were as uncautious in their search of Gröf Konunga as they were persistent. They took few precautions in the exploration of the glacial necropolis, throwing wide vaults never meant to be opened. One of these belonged to the wicked King Eriksson. With the seal that prevented him from walking among the living once more sundered, his

bottomless hate and spite filled his corpse with a dark and sinister mockery of life. He only needed to kill a dozen of the humanoids before the rest of the warband pledged their fealty to him, making of themselves the first subjects of his new kingdom.

But King Eriksson had greater designs in mind than the rulership of two-score humanoids. The empty sockets in his skull burned with the implacable fires of revenge, a terrible desire that would only be sated when those flames consumed the folk that had dared murder him and lock him in the frozen heart of Gröf Konunga. So it was that King Eriksson led the remainder of the exploration and plunder of the glacier, taking for himself its powerful treasures and rousing the bodies of those other kings that slept soundly in the vaults near his own. He was able to do this thanks to a fearsome magical item that he acquired from the depths of the necropolis that the Iksurc called the *Dauður-Stafur* (AS: "Dead-Stick"): So terrible a thing that the Ice Northmen placed it within a hidden and trapped chamber in the burial ground, hoping to be rid of it forever. Perhaps even more importantly, he was able to use the *Dauður-Stafur* to subdue and subjugate the great dragon Snjórfangar, bound to Gröf Konunga to serve as its guardian.

Now King Eriksson is known to the Iksurc as the White Rider, treading the leaden skies above their frozen land upon Snjórfangar. He appears suddenly, like a Nairnollíht snowstorm, plunging toward the Ice Northman settlements and leaving them ruined, rime-covered and dead. Yet mere destruction is not the aim of King Eriksson. He wishes the Iksurc to suffer before he exterminates them from the world. His foray into their lands are for the purpose of reconnaissance. It is his goal to see the great cities of the Ice Northmen for him, judging their defenses and preparedness. Once he is satisfied that he understands these things, he intends on descending across their lands with an army of undead and humanoids, taken from Gröf Konunga and the Kurocs. He imagines surrounding the cities of Talpstoj and Tolg with his forces, vast and fearsome, forcing those within to succumb to slow starvation and death by disease. When this is done and he commands their frozen corpses to rise again, he expects that his undead thralls will treat him with the respect he is due as the King and Fasstal of all Xuelii.

The horror of such a possibility chills the bones as surely as Snjórfangar's terrible rime-breath. With the forces at his command in Gröf Konunga and the

Dauður-Stafur in his possession, it seems a foregone conclusion that King Eriksson will soon reign over a kingdom of the frozen dead.

...unless the Player Characters can stop him, perhaps by wresting the *Dauður-Stafur* from his cold, dead hands.

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Chapter One: The Jarlinde's Oath

Introduction

When played in either the context of a Campaign or Convention, *From His Cold Dead Hands* begins in the city of Talpstoj, in the hall of Jarlinde Sólveig Reynirsdóttir. In the former case, it is suggested that Game Masters in need of ways to get their Players to this place refer to the **Background** section above, where several story hooks that accomplish this are offered. In the latter case, however, Player Characters are assumed to have been summoned before the young Jarlinde from all across Iksurc land to receive a message of most dire import.

When the Player Characters are gathered in this manner, the Game Master may read the following boxed text:

You stand before a great throne that seems to have been constructed from countless different wooden shields, the differing patterns and colors of each giving it the appearance of a patchwork quilt. Each one of you has heard of the seat before. This is the Throne of a Thousand Shields: The chair upon which the leader of Talpstoj – greatest of the northern Iksurc cities – sits and the place from which she directs the efforts of a hundred clans that make the place their homes. The massive chamber in which the throne rests occupies a great wood and stone longhouse, capped by a sod roof gone white with with a thick blanket of snow. The great hall features an immense rectangular table surrounded by chairs. On one side of it, a large stone fireplace is set into the wall. Its wan, flickering light makes shadows seem to dance upon the the

hall's walls and gives its air the quality of dusk, settled in upon a thunderstorm sky.

At one end of the hall, a low dais allows the throne to gaze down upon those within the hall. It is from that height that an intense sapphire stare falls upon your number. Encompassed by the great chair is a personage, a slight woman whose presence inspires no small amount of awe, despite her obvious youth. This is the flame-haired Jarlinde of Talpsto, Sólveig Reynirsdóttir: A girl of no more than eleven winters, yet clad in the dark leather armor and heavy furs of a warrior, nonetheless. A brief glance at the others assembled before the Jarlinde – each one, you recognize as heroes of the highest caliber the Iksurc can boast – reassures you, for they demonstrate the proper attitudes of humility and respect before such a worthy. A summons such as the one which has brought you before the Throne of a Thousand Shields marks a momentous meeting, and none take it lightly.

The Jarlinde's gaze sweeps across your number, taking the measure of each of you before she speaks at last. “*Ég óska þér góðs heilsu,*” she greets you in the ancient manner of your folk. “In days before our history was committed to the skins of deer or elk, King Sveinn Eriksson was the King of the Iksurc and the Fasstal of All Xuelii. Ours was a young tribe, still in search of our place upon the world, as the gods would wish it be. Weak as newborn babes, we struggled with the character of the land and the monsters that would see us flee its face.

“King Eriksson knew this well,” she continues. As wicked a man as could be, he used this weakness to his advantage. He demanded tribute and thralls from a folk that could not stand against him. He took the food from the farmer with a starving family. He stole

the silver from the merchant until he was but a pauper. And all those that dared defy him heard the ugly music of steel and iron – then heard no more at all.

The Jarlinde pauses. Then: “When King Eriksson died,” she continues, “it was not an army that laid him low. It was no hero's sword that brought peace to our land. It was a young girl, stolen from her father and groom to warm his bed. She was filled with the courage of The Thunderer and rained down a score of axe-blows upon his brow when he slept. It was Sigrún Bragisdóttir that reminded the Iksurc of our Nine Laws and how returned to us our honor and dignity. This is why the image of the Axe-Maiden graces the halls of our King today in Tolg, as a reminder of both of who the Iksurc are – and what would become of one who would follow King Eriksson's tread across the snows of our land.

“Know you all this, though,” the Jarlinde says, “in these days, the Iksurc did not send our dead to Tavun's great halls upon burning boats pushed to sea. Then, the custom was to bury them beneath great stone cairns or in vast vaults upon the land held by their ancestors. Each of you knows of such places,” she looks across your number once more. “And so, you also know why we now do as we do. The dead do not always sleep well in these places. Verily, some come to walk once more, restless, angry at that which has become their fate. You have no doubt struggled with such foul things in days before today, abominations that mock Tavun for their very being.

“You know of the White Rider,” the Jarlinde says, pausing to spit after speaking his name. “He that would ride the skies as do Tavun's handmaidens upon the spine of a terrible white dragon. He descends from the clouds as a storm of ice and snow descends upon

the world. His axe kills the Iksurc like winter kills the world and the breath of his dragon is like the rime from which Tavun saw the world form at the beginning of time. The ghosts of those that once called the villages of Hjalt, Raska, and Shaltak their homes will attest to each of these things, wailing for vengeance in the frozen remains of those places. Should he be permitted, there can be no doubt that he will be the doom of us all. We will share the fates of those places, our icy corpses joining theirs in chorus.

"All this is true," she says, pausing for a moment. "And yet, there is more. Such is the threat posed by the White Rider that I have dared spoken with norns who whisper to the runes." At the admission, you think you hear one of the heroes aside you gasp. "The runes have told these witches that the White Rider is truly the wicked King Eriksson, visiting upon the land he once ruled a most dire revenge for his murder. Rising from his grave, it would seem that if he cannot rule us as he once did – he will see us all die, become the winter snow to be swept from the land come the thaw.

"The burial place of King Eriksson lies many days from Talpstoj," the Jarlinde continues. "The eldest of our norns has told me that there is a place in which the Iksurc used to bury their kings called Gröf Konunga. It is a great crypt, dug into the flesh of a glacier that floats upon the Frozen Sea, far to the north. It is in this grim and forlorn place that King Eriksson must be found. But you should have a care. A score of kings – each one a powerful warrior in their own right – takes their eternal rest in Gröf Konunga. If he has swayed them to his side, then the danger to be found within such a fell place rises a hundredfold. And who knows what other allies he might have rallied, what treasures and weapons he might have claimed for himself since he once again

walked the world Tavun has blessed? Indeed, even heroes such as yourselves will likely never have face a more terrifying foe.

The Jarlinde pauses, breathes deeply. When she at last speaks again, it as if her voice has gained the force of nine thunderstrokes. "You have been brought before me today to swear an oath to the tribe of Iksurc; before the Throne of a Thousand Shields, to those that would share your flesh and blood," she says. "You have been brought before me, Jarlinde Sólveig Reynirsdóttir – daughter of Reynir, son of Einar – to swear an oath to travel to grim Gröf Konunga and bring King Sveinn Eriksson his final rest. Not upon this world...but in the burning pit of Múspell, instead."

She looks across your number a final time.

"Would you accept this oath, heroes?"

If the Player Characters would dare call themselves Iksurc (see **The Iksurc and the Nine Laws** section above), they will not hesitate to accept the Jarlinde's solemn charge – probably offering up a hearty cheer and a few sworn oaths of their own, pledging to Tavun himself to return the head of the White Rider to the Throne of a Thousand Shields or die in the effort.

But What If...?

...they refuse? After all, Player Characters are a notoriously capricious lot and it cannot be expected that they will agree to take up the Jarlinde's mission for certain. Some Players might be playing their characters as oath-breakers or blackguards in their own rights. Some others might just delight in being obstinate. In such a case, the Jarlinde will spit upon the floor at their reticence, but otherwise retain her calm. To such characters, she will remind them that there is certain to be treasure aplenty to be found within Gröf Konunga. Those wealful kings interred in that place would certainly smile upon those that would take up their ancient – and most probably magical – weapons against such a wicked being as

King Eriksson. If such an enticement does not persuade the Player Characters to take up the oath, Jarlinde Reynirsdóttir will be obviously wroth with fury, yet the need of the Iksurc is great. She will then offer such reluctant Player Characters a reward of 5,000sp should they return to her with the head of the White Rider as proof of their victory over their foe.

If the Player Characters refuse this or attempt to persuade the Jarlinde to sweeten the pot, she will cast such an impetuous individual from her hall. Forever will that Player Character be marked as a coward, unworthy of counting themselves among the Iksurc. For a member of the tribe, such a censure is unthinkable. They will be turned away in every Iksurc city in which their name is known (which will be many, as the Jarlinde's judgment will spread very quickly). Indeed, many are those that they might have counted as brothers or sisters that will ignore them at best and attack them at worst. In the land of the Iksurc, they might be better off dead.

Such an eventuality is unlikely, however. It is much more probable that the Player Characters will accept the Jarlinde's mission. In such a case, the adventure will continue as they plan on how they will travel to Gröf Konunga.

Traveling through Zhiria

If *From His Cold Dead Hands* is being played in the context of a Campaign, the Game Master may choose to play out the journey to from Talpstoj to Gröf Konunga. In such a case, rules to aid in running that dangerous voyage have been included below. Remember that if the adventure is being played in a Convention environment, however, it is assumed that the travel to that dire place occurred without major catastrophe. The Game Master may feel free to skip forward to **Chapter Two: Gröf Konunga** (see below for details).

The area around Talpstoj is incredibly dangerous. In addition to the brutal clime – its northerly situation is such that it sees some of the worst weather in all Zhiria – the Kurocs Mountains to its south are known to contain several strong tribes of orcs, ogres, and far worse. The plains to the east and west of the city are the demesne of Remorhazes who can explode from beneath the snow and ice to swallow whole travelers in the brink of an eye. The north is no better, ravaged by still worse cold, snows, and winds, in addition to monstrous creatures best

left undescribed. This makes the lands surrounding Talpstoj some of the most unsettled and unexplored on the entirety of the continent.

There are two ways that the Player Characters can travel to Gröf Konunga: Braving the barren tundra or navigating the Kezsrur River. More exotic means of travel to the shores of the Frozen Sea (such as long-distance *flight* or *teleportation*) will likely be unavailable to them, given their experience level and the paucity of such magic in Ice Northman culture.

Should the Player Characters ask the Jarlinde for her opinion (a wise move), she will recommend traveling the Kezsrur. By doing so, they are much less likely to encounter dangerous monsters or raiders that might delay their travel or diminish their much-needed supplies. Additionally, if they are to reach the glacier in which Gröf Konunga lies, they will have to cross the Frozen Sea at some point. If they choose this route, the Jarlinde is even willing to provide a vessel for the Player Characters (a longboat, complete with ten oarsmen). If they choose to travel overland, however, she defers to the party's experience as adventurers and travelers and will not judge them too harshly.

Braving the Tundra

As one might expect, it is difficult to find a guide willing to conduct the passage of a group through such a fearsome and forlorn landscape as the tundra that comprises the northern portion of Iksurc land. Indeed, even reliable maps of the territory further than 50 miles from Talpstoj is practically impossible. Because of this, Player Characters stand a very good chance of becoming lost as they traverse the land, if they should ever lose sight of the Kezsrur River (which serves as perhaps the only landmark that they might use to navigate their passage to Gröf Konunga).

It is assumed, given their origins, that the Pregenerated Characters offered in **Appendix B** of this module (see that section for details) are quite experienced at trekking the tundra. Consequently, provided that they take care to equip themselves with proper supplies for such a journey (heavy furs, ample food and water, and tools for constructing shelter are a good start), the elements will only slow them to 50% of their normal pace, barring random encounters that will delay them even further. As the Frozen Sea is approximately 75 miles from Talpstoj's walls, a completely unimpeded march across the tundra to its

waters might take almost four days for such experienced explorers. Of course, the same cannot be said for Player Characters that are not of the Iksur and have no experience with Zhiria's brutal clime. For such characters, the Game Master will have to adjudicate their experience on a case-by-case basis – though their results should be uniformly harrowing.

For each day of overland travel in which the Kezsrur River is out of their sight, a party traveling the land north of Talpstoj has a 35% chance of becoming lost (if a Ranger character is leading their way, this chance is reduced to 15%). In such a case, the Game Master should randomly determine the party's new course and adjudicate the scenario as they see fit, given the party's situation.

Random Encounters on the Tundra

Random encounters are checked three times each day and the chance for an encounter is 1 in 12. The normal encounter distance is 6" - 24" (6d4). If a random encounter is determined to have taken place, check the following table to resolve exactly what is encountered.

Random Encounter Table (Talpstoj Environs)		
Die Roll	Encounter	Number Appearing
01-03	Bugbears	4d4
04-06	Giants, Frost	1d4
07-08	Giants, Hill	1d6
09-18	Humanoids	3d8
19-38	Men, Raiders	2d10
39-41	Ogres	4d4
42-48	Remorhazes	1d6
49-50	Trolls, Ice	1d6
51-00	Use Standard Encounter Tables	*

Navigating the Kezsrur

Should the Player Characters choose waterborne travel as their method of reaching Gröf Konunga, they may either use their own vessel or accept the one that the Jarlinde will make available for their use. This is a longboat, manned by ten oarsmen. The wisdom of this choice of travel will swiftly become apparent to the Player Characters. Not only will their passage be much more rapid, the deep fjord that forms the Kezsrur River does much to shelter those traversing

its surface from the teeth of the elements. While it is still brutal in character, those traveling by longboat to the Frozen Sea will emerge into that body in far better stead than those who made the same journey overland.

A journey by longboat from Talpstoj to the Frozen Sea will take almost 10 hours. This form of travel comes with no chance of being lost; following the fjord to its source is a simple enough matter. However, dangerous creatures and raiders are known to travel the waterway and Player Characters doing likewise will have a chance of encountering them.

Random Encounters on the Kezsrur

Random encounters are checked twice each day and the chance for an encounter is 1 in 12. The normal encounter distance is 1 - 6 miles (1d6). If a random encounter is determined to have taken place, check the following table to resolve exactly what is encountered.

Random Encounter Table (Kezsrur River and Frozen Sea)		
Die Roll	Encounter	Number Appearing
01	Dragon Turtle*	1
02-08	Iceberg or Floe*	*
09-23	Men, Raiders	6d6
24-26	Scrag	1d8
27-29	Sealion	1d4
30-32	Seawolf	1d4
33-36	Snake, Sea	2d4
37-45	Storm, Severe	*
46-48	Turtle, Giant Sea	1d4
49-50	Whale*	1d4
51-00	Use Standard Encounter Tables	*

* Only present in the Frozen Sea. If these results are rolled, refer to the **Standard Encounter Tables**, instead.

The Frozen Sea

Regardless of their means of travel, the Players will eventually find the vast and frigid body of the Frozen Sea on their northward voyage. Frozen over at the height of winter, its waters are both powerful and capricious. Immense banks of fog hang over its surface, often hiding great icebergs and floes and disguising great and tumultuous waves that are

capable of swallowing a vessel and drowning it within its body in the blink of an eye. Just as the tundra upon whose shores it tides pummel is not a place for the meek, so too the Frozen Sea is a dangerous place for all but the most expert of sailors and the stoutest of ships.

Fortunately for Player Characters that accepted Jarlinde Reynirsdóttir's offer of a longboat and crew, the oarsmen conducting their vessel are accustomed to the danger of the Frozen Sea. A longboat conducted by these worthies can be expected to arrive at its destination without incident, barring random encounters or inclement weather (worse than usual, at any rate). It falls to the Game Master to determine what should become of vessels bereft of the guidance of such expert sailors as those conducting the Jarlinde's longboat. Whatever outcome is decided will likely be fraught with peril indeed.

The glacier in which Gröf Konunga lies is nearly 150 northeast of the mouth of the Kezsrur River. Given the conditions of the Frozen Sea in which it floats, a trip by the Jarlinde's longboat to its shores will require nearly two days (the sailors conducting its passage will be sure to inform the Player Characters of this fact, so that they might decide if a night's rest in in order before making the arduous journey). As has been said before, Player Characters unused to the Frozen Sea's character or (far worse) those hailing from beyond Zhiria's bounds will have a much tougher time of the voyage than will Iksurc folk conducted by the Jarlinde's men. Only the Game Master and Tavun himself can decide what will become of such brave (or foolish) adventurers trying to make the trip without their guidance.

Chapter Two: Gröf Konunga

Introduction

Should the Player Characters manage to successfully brave the perils of the Frozen Sea in addition to their journey, through the density of a great cloud of fog on the horizon, the silhouette of a massive body becomes visible. As they draw nearer to the looming shadow, its nature becomes apparent: That of a massive glacier, covered in ice and wind-lashed snow. Along the southwest edge of this immense landmass, a particularly sharp-eyed Player Character might notice an ancient landing, cut from the frozen substance of the glacier, upon which longboats must surely have been meant to moor.

This is the glacier that bears within its depths Gröf Konunga: The Iksurc graveyard of kings. The landing potentially spotted by those aboard the Player Characters' vessel was indeed a place in which Ice Northman boats would beach themselves, those within them accessing the necropolis thereafter. However, the landing has been disused for centuries now and the elements have eroded and overtaken its expanse. To use it in the manner it was intended would be to surely hole a vessel's hull on the jagged ice that now coats its once-smooth ascent.

If the Player Characters are guided by the Jarlinde's sailors, they will notice this and be sure to point it out to the party. They will tell them that the only way to certainly keep their longboat seaworthy would be to near the glacier and allow the Player Characters to walk unto its surface. This will be the exact course of action that the sailors will recommend, asking the Player Characters when they should return for them, since bobbing within as treacherous a body of water as the Frozen Sea until they are finished with their mission is hardly an option.

Should hard-headed Player Characters insist on attempting a landing, or if they do not have the Jarlinde's sailors to guide their way, their passage on the landing will be a rough one indeed – punctuated by the awful sound of rending wood. A great hole now exists in the bottom of their vessel and, if they wish to return to the land of the Iksurc, it falls to them as to how they will patch it.

This will be a concern for another time, however. No matter the condition of their longboat or the manner in which they leave those sailors that potentially guided them to the glacier, the Player Characters have arrived at their destination.

Gröf Konunga awaits.

Gröf Konunga Encounter Key

Note: Gröf Konunga is a great necropolis, built within the frozen belly of a glacier. The walls of its chambers and corridors are composed of solid stone covered with ancient rime, taken from the glacier's firmament by its Iksurc builders through the process of hollowing it. Its hallways are uniformly 10' wide and just as tall. There is no form of light within its vast expanse (unless specifically described otherwise), so Player Characters exploring its depths will have to provide their own form of illumination. Doors within

Gröf Konunga are made of ancient, solid stone. These have been designed in such a way that they can be pulled into recesses in the walls to access that which lies behind them. They are so heavy, however, that to do this requires a Strength score (combined or individual) of at least 16.

In addition to the necropolis, King Eriksson's humanoid allies have excavated deeper into the belly of the glacier, creating a series of catacomb-warrens beneath Gröf Konunga. As above, the caverns and corridors within this place are roughly 10' wide and tall (they were entirely cut by hand and so their walls are jagged, inconsistent, and covered in ice). As above their breadth, there is no form of light to be found within these winding catacombs, so Player Characters that find themselves within their lengths will have to provide some form of illumination or else explore blindly through them.

As will become evident, this would mean their certain doom.

1. DESCENT

Leaving behind the gale-hurled snows, a small wound in the face of the glacier becomes apparent. Past its open mouth, the path extends 20' before plunging downward in the form of a steep stairs. Its composition is solid stone, as are the walls that rise up from their foundation. The bitter cold has permeated this place from outside its bounds, coating it in a thick blanket of rime-covered ice and a slight dusting of snow.

Ahead, the light from outside dies about 20' from the mouth of the passage. Further that that, utter blackness holds sway.

This is the ancient entrance to Gröf Kununga, excavated from the belly of the glacier in those first days that the Iksurc called the Nairnolliht Peninsula home. The stairway extends about 30' while descending about 40'. This steep grade and the ice that coats the stairway make coursing its path treacherous, but so long as Player Characters take some care in doing so, they should be able to find its bottom with little difficulty.

Far worse than the footing is the darkness that looms beyond the portion of the stairs that the light from outside touches. From that point onward, there is no form of illumination to be found within Gröf Kununga. Player Characters unable to see unaided in the dark will need to provide some form of light from this point onward.

2. THE WARNING

The stairway ends in a strangely-shaped area: Like a diamond in its center, corridors extend outwards from it to the east and west, directly after the stairs. Past the angles of its middle, two more issue forth to the northeast and northwest. To the north, the area ends in a pair of great stone double doors.

This area served as a foyer for the glacial complex that bears Gröf Kununga. A close inspection of the walls in the diamond-shaped portion of the area reveals writing etched into its walls. Unless Player Characters are specifically searching these walls, the ice covering them will obscure this writing completely; they can be found with the same chance one might find a concealed door. The writing, which is in the tongue of the Ancient Xuloise, reads as follows:

*Nine kings sleep here,
Nine, whose blood lies
along desert and glen
staining the snow until washed clean
by the wind and the waves of the sea.*

*Nine who led us from invisible fire.
Nine who laid that which is law.
They ruled the lives
For the children of the ages,
they set the wyrd.*

*Bow your head before nine.
For in days to come, when ice thaws
and the sea-wind and waves fill red
The House of Iksurc will come to dwell
alongside nine kings.*

In life, not in death.

This is repeated four times, once on every one of the walls in the diamond-shaped area.

This verse refers to the function of the level of Gröf Kununga in which the Player Characters stand. When the Grave of Kings was excavated, those responsible for the deed envisioned the glacier as a place to which the Iksurc might one day retreat in some desperate and dire hour. Consequently, they ensured that it would be large enough to house many folk comfortably and that it would be easy to defend against enemies of the Ice Northmen. Doing this also afforded the structure's builders to place many traps here for those that had the impudence to think to rob the sleeping place of kings.

Of course, this design made it ideal for King Eriksson to use it as a giant barracks for the force he forged after his return from death's icy embrace. So has great Gröf Kununga been used as a weapon against the Iksurc folk. Player Characters reading the verse, which was intended to relate the history and function of the place, may well be able to interpret it as a warning and divine some idea of what to expect from its kennings.

Note that loud noises within this area may well rouse the attention of the sentries in **Areas #3 & #4**, who will immediately come forth to investigate such disturbances, should they hear them.

3. REMEMBRANCE

Beyond the door is a 30' x 30' square chamber. The entirety of its back wall has been carved into a bas-relief. Upon its face, within a frame of complicated knotwork in which the heads of dragons and remorhazes can be seen, eight figures stand, their backs to their viewers. Before them, rising up from behind snow capped mountains is a massive bearded man. It is as if he looks down upon them to pass some sort of judgment. The bottom bit of knotwork has been carved in the stone to look like tongues of flame. Another man swims within these, immolated alive.

At the foot of this relief, a great rug cut from the skin of a bear lies. A pile of blankets rest upon these, along with many bones and food scraps. The center of the room is dominated by a fire pit that has stained the chamber's ceiling black with soot and smoke.

This chamber was created as a place in which the children of Iksurc could remember the deeds of their past kings. The east wall represents eight of them standing before Tavun, waiting to be judged. Attentive Player Characters will notice that only eight figures stand before the Great God of the North in the relief. This is completely intentional. The ninth of the kings is the one swimming in the knotwork-fire. This was meant to represent King Sveinn Eriksson, consigned to Múspell for the wicked deeds he committed against his brothers and sisters when he lived.

The north and south walls are blank. Though they were meant to be carved to reflect the individual deeds of these men, the creators of Gröf Kununga never finished those works.

This chamber is not uninhabited. It is the demesne of guards placed here by King Eriksson to defend Gröf Kununga against possible interlopers: Three **Orcs** and two **Ogres**. They will attack any non-humanoid (or their liege, naturally) who enters the room immediately.

Orcs (3): AC 6, MV 9", HD 1, HP 6, THAC0 19, #AT 1, Damage 2d4 (Broadsword), AL LE, XP: 16.

Ogre (2): AC 5, MV 9", HD 4+1, HP 27, THAC0 15, #AT 1, Damage 1d10 (Fist), AL CE, XP: 225.

These creatures live in mortal terror of King Eriksson and the supernatural power at his command. They would far prefer to fight and die here than live to face his fury at allowing intruders to pass their post. Note that loud sounds of combat in this place are 25% likely to rouse the attention of the sentries in **Area #4**, who will come here to reinforce their allies if they hear such noise.

Among the bedrolls in the back of this chamber, the humanoids keep some modest bit of treasure. Here can be found 212sp, 54gp, and a foul-tasting black grog contained in a tanned elk bladder. Despite its awful flavor that defies description, it actually acts as a minor *potion of healing*, restoring 1d4hp with each drink. The bladder contains enough of the liquor for three such draughts.

4. THE PROPHECY

The four stone walls of this chamber are all carved, shaped by the hand of a master, into elaborate bas-reliefs. Around the edges of each one is elaborate knotwork that forms a frame around a central theme. Upon the north wall, a great warrior drops five broken swords into a flame. At the base of this fire, a rugged blacksmith forges five keys. On the east wall, the image of two men – one a titanic, rime-covered warrior with a mighty axe; the other a gaunt figure with a beard made of icicles – engage in a titanic clash, while beneath them, vast armies engage in an apocalyptic battle. The south wall features the remnants of one army, looking skyward along the curve of a rainbow toward a gleaming city in the clouds.

At the base of the east wall, several bedrolls lie. Mangy, filthy blankets stacked high upon one another, they rest behind a fire pit dug in the chamber's center. The smell of smoke in the air and the soot-covered ceiling imply that it has not been long since its fires were last stoked.

When the ancient Iksurc toiled at the labor of carving Gröf Kununga into its glacial home, the high priest of Tavun, Orn Valisson, had a great premonition of days yet to come. In this vision, he saw five great swords, over which men would struggle. One man, wise and mighty, came to possess these weapons and broke them, giving them to a master blacksmith to fashion into keys. It was these five keys that would unlock the icy prison in which Tavun's rival Ruhclet imprisoned the

Great God of the North. With Tavun freed, the men of Iksurc met the devout of Ruhclet on a great field of battle. Such was the cataclysmic nature of the fray that it nearly destroyed both sides in its course. Yet when all was said and done, those loyal to Tavun gazed skyward and saw a rainbow arching from the heavens to land at their feet. Majestic and wondrous, this was a bridge leading to a hidden world in which all of Tavun's brothers and sisters – unknown yet to the Iksurc – dwelt. With the victory of the Ice Northmen, their time to watch over the affairs of man had come. Each of the bas-reliefs in this chamber represent a part of this prophecy.

Whether or not any of it is true, who can say? All that is assured is that the room has taken on a much different character since King Eriksson rose from his eternal slumber. Now it serves as a dwelling for a few members of his humanoid army – three **Orcs** and two **Ogres** – tasked with seeing to the security of Gröf Kununga's entrance. In pursuit of this duty, they will immediately attack the Player Characters if they dare enter their demesne.

Orcs (3): AC 6, MV 9", HD 1, HP 6, THAC0 19, #AT 1, Damage 2d4 (Broadsword), AL LE, XP: 16.

Ogre (2): AC 5, MV 9", HD 4+1, HP 27, THAC0 15, #AT 1, Damage 1d10 (Fist), AL CE, XP: 225.

Note that the sounds of battle in this room may (25% chance) well alert the sentries in **Area #3** to the presence of intruders. If this occurs, they will certainly come forth from their positions to crush their foes.

If the Player Characters overcome the humanoids in this chamber, they will find a total of 111sp and 32gp strewn about in their reeking bedding. Also, a small piece of alexandrite worth 50gp is hidden in the blankets.

However, to Iksurc Player Characters – particularly clerics of Tavun – the prophecy carved upon the walls of the room is of much greater value than any gold or silver. If Valisson's visions are true, then vital clues necessary to unraveling the ancient riddle

regarding freeing the Great God of the North are laid bare here upon the chamber's stones. What will come of such knowledge in the context of a Campaign set in the Nairnolliht Peninsula falls to the Game Master to determine, for the nonce. The subject, however, will be an important component of a future **casl Entertainment®** product!

5. THE FROZEN HEARTH

The north wall of this 30' x 30' stone chamber is dominated by a large stone fireplace, set into the wall. All around it, a knotwork relief has been carved into the wall in such a way to make it seem as if stone ivy vines rise and weave up the face of the wall.

Iron hooks set into the wall jut forth at the height of a man's shoulder. Their purpose is a mystery. Beneath them along the room's east wall, however, the ancient bones of some unfortunate lie bleached and covered in frost. The ruined fur cloak and boots that cling to the skeleton are all that remains of what was.

This room was designed by the builders of Gröf Kununga to serve as a place where those visiting its staid chambers and corridors could throw off the terrible chill of the weather outside it by warm themselves near a fire. Since the place has been silent and disused for centuries, however, the flue of the hearth has long since frozen solid, making it completely impassible.

The body in the room belonged to Þór Týrsson: An explorer that came upon Gröf Kununga accidentally and sought to plunder the place of its riches. Sadly, much of the heavy furs he wore to fight off the cold that stokes the Frozen Sea's powerful waves was ruined in his expedition and the man froze to death in this room while trying to stoke a fire within its hearth.

Týrsson's spirit lives on as an **Apparition**: A unique type of undead that seeks to wreak revenge on the living for its fate. Though its existence unnerves King Eriksson's humanoid

followers (they refuse to enter the room under any circumstances), he who has met death and mocked it to live again allows it to remain where it is as a potential defense against those who might come to Gröf Kununga to lay him low. As soon as the Player Characters enter the room, the Apparition will make itself visible and try to murder any of them that it can.

Þór Týrsson, Apparition: AC 0, MV 24", HD 8, HP 47, THAC0 12, #AT 1, Damage Special, SA Surprise on 1-5 on d6, SD Can only be hit by silver or magical weapons, AL CE, XP: 1,470.

If Player Characters are able to somehow can possession of it, Týrsson's old fur cloak actually functions as a *cloak of protection +1*, once it has been cleaned (in its current condition, its magic will fail to function for a wearer).

6. THE JARL'S DEN

This circular chamber is 30' in diameter. A fire pit dominates its center and several furnishings surround it, pushed against its stone walls. A large wooden bed, its frame shaped like a sled meant to track the snows of the Nairnolliht, rests against the southmost wall, covered in all manner of furs and blankets. It is flanked by a pair of end tables - one of which bears the weight of an old oil lantern - and set with a thick brass-bound trunk at its foot. A dresser rests against the chamber's east wall, while a desk appoints the wall opposite that. All of these wooden furnishings, covered in dust and rime, seem ancient.

This room was designed to be the home of the Jarl, would that such a worthy ever had occasion to visit Gröf Kununga. As such it was filled with lavish appointments as a due sign of respect to a leader of the Iksurc. The chamber was never used, however, other than by those who built the ancient necropolis who decided that their labors warranted a bit of luxury for themselves.

The desk and dresser are empty. They are also very old and fragile (they save vs. attack forms at -4). Still, both are quite valuable: The former might fetch as much as 350gp, while the latter could be sold for 300gp. The bed is just as fragile as either of them, but even more valuable, worth 500gp if it could somehow be taken from Gröf Kununga.

The trunk at the end of the bed is another story. It is locked, but untrapped. In it is hidden the wealth Þór Týrsson (see **Area #5**, above) was able to gather from the necropolis before his death. This amounts to 243sp, 167gp, and 3 small garnets, each worth 75gp. Among this treasure is a small flute of a thick blood-red liquid (a *potion of heroism*), a *hand axe +1*, and a *cursed* (though some Iksur might take issue with such a distinction) *broadsword +2, berserker*.

7. THE GREAT HALL

Opening these double doors reveals an immense room. 80' long, 40' wide, and made of ancient, frozen stone, its ceiling rises 30' above its floor and reveals dark timbers that reinforce its substance. A second pair of double doors lies at the back of the chamber, allowing egress from its bounds.

Within the chamber, a massive wooden table rests, two dozen chairs appointing it. In the northwest corner of the room, three large kegs can be seen, atop them empty platters dripping with the bloody remnants of food scraps.

The air within the chamber is loud and boisterous. Full of shouts and growling sounds, it seems as if a feast takes place at the table dominating the room. However, seated at the table are nearly a score of humanoids. Still more who cannot fit into the old chairs stand, eating and quaffing.

In the midst of the table, as the subject of the feast: The corpses of three men, rent and torn. It looks as if they were alive when first the monsters began to dine.

King Eriksson has bade the small army of humanoids at his command to dine within this room, as the horrid mockery of a man occasionally enjoys visiting this room and seeing them at feast, in imitation of the Iksur he once led. The humanoids, for their part, would prefer to do this in the belly of their catacombs – but are in no position to argue with their liege.

Within this room, when the Player Characters arrive, will be eighteen **Orcs**, five **Ogres**, and two **Trolls**. A cautious party that listens to the double doors leading to this room will automatically hear the great noise issuing forth from its substance and realize that they are greatly outnumbered. A reckless party who enters the room will soon find themselves embroiled within a mass melee. Such individuals will probably get exactly what they deserve.

Orcs (18): AC 6, MV 9", HD 1, HP 6, THAC0 19, #AT 1, Damage 2d4 (Broadsword), AL LE, XP: 16.

Ogre (5): AC 5, MV 9", HD 4+1, HP 27, THAC0 15, #AT 1, Damage 1d10 (Fist), AL CE, XP: 225.

Trolls (2): AC 4, MV 12", HD 6+6, HP 40, THAC0 13, #AT 3, Damage 1d4+3 (Claw) / 1d4+3 (Claw) / 2d6 (Bite), SD, Regenerate 3hp/round, SV Acid, Fire, AL CE, XP: 845.

Should the Player Characters make their presence known in this room, they are in for a serious fight. The swifter and more savage Trolls will fall upon them first, looking to rip them limb from limb, while the Ogres will try and reach over them to get at their enemies. The Orcs, meanwhile, will want no part of the fight, instead, fleeing through the double doors at the back of the room and spreading out through this level of Gröf Kununga and its catacombs level to warn their allies that they are under attack. Six of these, however, will double back to the room's entrance, seeking to ambush those attempting to flee in that direction. All in all, this is an area that the Player Characters would be best served avoiding entirely – unless they can find a way to draw their foes out of it and fight them in a more manageable manner!

Perhaps even worse for the Player Characters, should they somehow manage to overcome the chamber's occupants, there is virtually nothing at all of value within this room. Its wooden table is old and fragile, while the iron platters upon it are simple metal. The kegs in the corner of the room contain barely-digestible (but incredibly potent) grog. However, a search of the bodies of those humanoids assembled here can reveal a total of 412sp, 320gp, and 5 small assorted gems, values 25gp, 25gp, 100gp, 150gp, and 175gp, respectively.

8. OFFICE OF THE CHIEFTAIN

This is a 30' x 30' square room, composed of stone, covered with a thin coating of ice. Its walls are unbroken but for the door opening into the room and another, opposite its place.

The center of the room is occupied by a knit wool rug, dyed a bright red color. On its north side is a large desk and chair, made of fine, dark wood. Opposite that is a large rack made of a matching wood, from which a suit of padded armor and a suit of leather armor hang, joined by a broadsword, a battle axe, and a hand axe.

This chamber was meant to serve as an office for those forced to dwell within Gröf Kununga, should the lands of the Iksurc ever become overrun and its folk forced to retreat to this place. It now, however, acts as a place where the humanoids under the sway of King Eriksson may treat with their leader: A powerful and clever **Ogre Chieftain** named Barkan.

Ever-obsessed with the notion of reigning over a folk as he once did, King Eriksson insisted that Barkan maintain this office. However, a the likes of a degenerate Ogre touching any of the weapons or armor on the room's racks – things fit for a Iksurc – was an insult in the King's mind, so he forbade him for doing so. This annoys Barkan, but he fears his undead liege's power enough that he says nothing of it.

Barkan whiles away his days in this chamber, doing what he can to ensure that peace is kept among the humanoids in the catacombs beneath Gröf Kununga and at the same time avoiding King Eriksson, whose very presence instills fear within his heart. When the Player Characters enter this room – or he is brought forth from its bounds by some disturbance in **Area #7** (see above for details), he will relish the opportunity to vent his frustration on something (or someone) he can break.

Barkan, Ogre Chieftain: AC 1 (Natural & Chain Jack), MV 9", HD 4+1, HP 37, THAC0 13, #AT 1, Damage 2d10+2 (Two-Handed Sword +2) or 1d6+2 (Spear), AL CE, XP: 992. Magic Items: *Two-Handed Sword +2*.

The rug in the room's center is a magical Trap: A cursed *rug of smothering*, of which Barkan knows well to stay clear (those humanoids he commands that displease him are often invited to stand upon its surface...then disposed of in the waters of the Frozen Sea). If attacked in this chamber, his tactic will be to put the *rug* between himself and his opponents, using his spear to dissuade missile attacks upon his person. If reduced to less than 25hp, he will flee the room by its east exit, hoping that Player Characters pursuing him will be tripped up by the *rug's* foul magic.

If the Player Characters should manage to defeat Barkan, they will find that he keeps his personal treasure – 724sp, 549gp, and a large diamond worth 500gp – in one of the drawers of the room's desk. Much more valuable, however, are the magic sword the Ogre carries and those arms and armor found on the rack in the room – all of ancient Iksurc, made when magic still flowed freely through that folk's culture. This consists of *padded armor +2*, *studded leather armor +1*, a *battle axe +1*, a *broadsword +2* “*dragon slayer*” (evil dragons), and a *hand axe of hurling +1*.

9. CATACOMBS STAIRWAY

The end of this corridor concludes in a steep stairway plunging deeper into the heart of the glacier. A foul odor issues upward from somewhere at its foot, enshrouded in darkness. Unlike the remainder of the ancient burial ground, the stairs break through the stone floor of the complex and are rough-hewn and inexpertly created, as if by the weight of shovel and pick.

This steep stairway, which descends 50' and extends 40' outward from its upper landing, was dug into the belly of the glacier by King Eriksson's humanoid allies, leading to the catacombs he has given them live to excavate and dwell within. Even the wicked king would not see Gröf Kununga disrespected by allowing such foul and degenerate creatures to live within its chambers en masse, hence the need for this place.

The descent is **trapped**. Every third stair has been coated with a *Grease* spell by the Ogre shaman dwelling in the catacombs at its foot. This will cause Player Characters descending it to make three saving throws vs. petrification to avoid tumbling down its frozen and rocky stairs. If the first of these fails, this indicates that the unfortunate character has fallen down the entire staircase, taking 3d6 damage. If the second is failed, then their tumble begins about halfway down the flight, and they suffer only 2d6 damage. If the only final save is failed, the character is assumed to have made it nearly to the bottom of the stairs before falling, taking 1d6 damage. If all three saves are made, such a sure-footed character can be said to have safely traveled the stairway without falling at all. Naturally, the humanoid allies of King Eriksson know well which of the steps is perilous and can skip them easily.

Characters falling down the stairs from any point along its length will make a **lot** of noise (which is truly the point of the trap, rather than the damage). If any character falls down the stairs, they will alert the entire population of the glacier's catacombs as to their presence. Those that dwell in its labyrinthine tunnels will thereafter be impossible to surprise.

10. THE ABBATOIR

It is unclear for what purpose this circular chamber, 30' in diameter, might have been constructed. This is because its stone walls and floor have been smeared with gore, bits of still-bloody bone and flesh scattered all about its expanse. In the center of the room, a shallow pit has been excavated from the stone, in which blackened wood and coals lie. The whole of the room smells like smoke and flame with the unsettling undercurrent of death.

Laying discarded at the edge of the pit are iron prods, the like of which are used to stoke a fire. In its midst is a great, black iron kettle.

It is often said by wise generals that *an army crawls upon its stomach*. King Eriksson's forces are no exception to this rule. At least once a month, the undying regent sets forth above the Frozen Sea upon Snjórfangar, hunting for meat with which he might feed his allies. As the savage humanoids are not especially picky, this can take many forms, from elk to whale, from deer to human. Indeed, an inspection of the remains littering the room will reflect this well.

When he returns from such hunting expeditions, his kill is brought back to this chamber, where it is cut into manageable pieces before being disseminated to his hungry army (usually in **Area #7** or in Gröf Kununga's catacombs). On some occasions, it is even cooked in the fire pit in the room's midst. This is usually done in the kettle that lies in the pit. While empty when the Player Characters visit this location, this container is possessed of an overwhelmingly putrid stench certain to turn the stomach of even the most unflappable of civilized folk.

Aside of the fire pit and the cooking implements in and around it, the grisly room has little to offer Player Characters investigating its bounds. Note that loud noises in the chamber are 50% likely to draw the attention of the Shaman in **Area #11** (see below for details), who will immediately come to investigate such sounds.

11. THE SHAMAN'S CHAMBERS

Beyond the door lies a 30' x 30' room. Its stone walls have all been brightly - if clumsily - painted with all manner of primitive scenes, such as those of the hunt and the kill. A large bear-skin rug rests against the ice-coated north wall. Tattered and filthy, several wool blankets are piled high atop it.

A metal cage, composed of fine iron wires, rests in the center of the room. The box seems packed full of charred meat and bones, burned beyond recognition. Atop the cage rests a large iron pot, the handle of a ladle emerging from its edge. A wisp of smoke rises out of its midst, filling the room with a horrid scent, like burning flesh and hair.

This chamber belongs to the **Ogreish Shaman** among King Eriksson's humanoid forces, a powerful warrior-spellcaster named M'rkaan. Somewhat of a loner by nature, the Ogre far prefers the company of spirits to which he whispers to that of his own folk.

Fortunately for him, within Gröf Kununga, there are ghosts aplenty with which he can commune. In particular, he has struck an understanding with a wicked Iksurc skjöld named Björn Þórsson that lives on long after his death as a **Spectre**. The sinister undead is not especially fond of M'rkaan; it simply enjoys corrupting the shaman by whispering ancient lore forbidden by his folk into his ear by the crackle of his fire (which is why the Ogre has been able to far surpass the level of spellcasting to which he would normally be able to aspire).

M'rkaan, Ogre Shaman: AC 3 (Natural & Leather Armor), MV 9", HD 4, HP 30, THAC0 15, #AT 1, Damage 1d10 (Fist), AL CE, XP: 1,024. Spells Prepared: 1st: *Fear*, *Protection from Good*, *Sanctuary*; 2nd: *Hold Person*, *Resist Fire*; 3rd: *Animate Dead* (possibly already used). Magic Item: *Talisman of Spirit Strengthening*.

Björn Þórsson, Spectre: AC 2, MV 15"/30", HD 7+3, HP 38, THAC0 12, #AT 1, Damage 1d8 (Touch), SA Energy drain, SD +1 or better to hit, Undead immunities, AL CE, XP: 2,030.

If M'rkaan and Björn have advance warning of the Player Characters' approach, the former will cast *Animate Dead* on the bodies within the cage in the center of the room (burning these bodies to heat his cauldron, he has been told by the Spectre, increases the potency of the potions he concocts within it). The result of this spell will be three burning **Zombies** that he will order on either side of the door and instruct to ambush anyone entering.

Burning Zombies (3): AC 8, MV 6", HD 2-1, HP 11, THAC0 16, #AT 1, Damage 1d8+1d4 (Touch, Flame), SA Burning, SD Undead immunities, AL CE, XP: 62.

If struck by a burning Zombie, a Player Character must save vs. dragon breath or be caught aflame, suffering 1d6 damage each round for three rounds or until they are extinguished. These Zombies will only exist for 3 rounds after they are summoned before they are consumed by their own fires.

After M'rkaan has given these undead the gift of dark life, he will cast *Protection from Good* and *Resist Fire* upon himself. As for the Spectre, it will float above the doorway, dropping down upon a vulnerable character (preferably in the party's midst) to use its level-draining touch upon them. Note that, due to the Shaman's magical *Talisman* (which he created with the careful instruction of the Spectre, naturally), all undead within this room receive a +4 bonus to resist *Turn* attempts.

If the Player Characters can defeat M'rkaan and his undead allies, they may recover the treasures he keeps hidden in the pile of blankets under which he sleeps. This amounts to 724sp, 387gp, 5pp, and a small topaz worth 75gp. Additionally, he keeps there the many potions he brews in his cauldron, examples of *clairaudience*, *healing*, *hill giant strength*, and *poison*. These are all in worn and beaten waterskins and contain 2 doses of each named potion.

12. STAIRWAY TO GRÖF KUNUNGA

A stone stairway forms the conclusion of the hallway. Its steep stone steps ascending to unknown heights, ensconced in utter darkness.

On the west side of the corridor, just before the stairs begin, a deep slot has been cut into the stone wall, almost an inch wide and two feet high. This depression is able to disarm the **trap** that occupies the staircase. If the edge of *Höfuðkúpa-Kljúfar* (the enchanted axe found in **Area #27**, see below for details) is placed into the slot, a sound like a distant peal of thunder will roll forth from the stairs. This is the sound indicating that the ancient magic laid upon their stone composition has been dispelled.

Should any creature set foot upon the steps without disarming the trap, nothing will happen until they reach their midpoint. At that time, a *wall of lightning* (exactly as a *wall of fire*, except that this effect deal electrical damage; it deals 2d6+12 damage with no chance to save for half) erupts down the entire length of the stairway. This will occur each time the stairs are tread until the trap is disarmed as described above.

Note that Player Characters may be able to use this trap to their advantage, as while King Eriksson knows about its existence - his humanoid allies do not. Therefore, clever parties may be able to lure the White Rider's lackeys into the deadly trap with some ingenuity and a little luck.

13. THE HEART OF WINTER

This is a 30' x 30' chamber, its stone composition covered with a heavy jacket of ice. Great mounds of snow occupy the corners of its east walls, though how they arrived here is a mystery. The center of the room bears a depression that might have been a fire pit, but it has been filled with water. How it is that it does not freeze over is likewise unexplained.

This room is the home to five **Ice Trolls**: Dangerous humanoid members of King Eriksson's growing army. It was once meant to serve as a dwelling for ordinary Iksurc folk, should they have ever had the occasion to come to this place. The Ice Trolls destroyed all the furnishings that were here though, and their remnants have been taken from this place to serve as firewood in other portions of Gröf Kununga.

The Ice Trolls here were once quite unruly, uncomfortable without easy access to water (they loathed having to trek from their dwelling out to the open waves of the Frozen Sea). To placate them, the restless spirit of Hákon Árnisson (see **Area #31** for more details) showed the Trolls where they might find a *cube of frost resistance* within Gröf Kununga, then directed them to place the enchanted item in the midst of the fire pit and fill it with water from the sea. This delighted the Trolls, who now enjoy a pool in their dwelling that will never freeze over (thanks to the *cube's* magic).

Ice Trolls (5): AC 8, MV 9", HD 2, HP 11, THAC0 16, #AT 2, Damage 1d8 (Claw) / 1d8 (Claw), SD +1 or better to hit, Impervious to cold, Regeneration, SV Fire deals double damage, AL CE. XP: 66.

If the Player Characters enter this chamber, they will be attacked immediately by the Ice Trolls. As is the case with the other humanoids within Gröf Kununga, they would rather fight them to the death than face the wrath of the spectral King Eriksson.

Should they defeat the Ice Trolls, the Player Characters will find 122sp and 234gp buried in the snow in the corners of the room (valuable, but freezing cold!). In addition to this, they may plunder the pool of the magic *cube* at its bottom, which may prove far more valuable than any amount of precious metal, in fell Gröf Kununga.

14. FILTH PIT

Opening this door releases an awful, nearly overwhelming scent. The room is littered with all manner of garbage: Food scraps, discarded or broken furnishings or pieces of metal, bodily waste...even what might be a trio of corpses. Such is the expanse of the detritus that fills the 30' x 30' stone room that it is impossible to tell what purpose it might have had before it was turned into refuse storage.

This chamber was constructed by the builders of Gröf Kununga to house many Iksurc, should some catastrophe ever force them to fall back to the necropolis in order to survive. Since then, however, it has become used as a place in which the allies of King Eriksson can dispose of their refuse. Such is the filth within this room that the scent it emits is far better left imagined than described.

In order to ensure that the disgusting waste never fills its bounds, the White Rider has instructed his humanoid troops to place five **Ghasts** within the room. These horrid creatures (who feast upon the garbage within the room to sate their unholy appetites) were once members of the King's army that displeased him in one way or another. As soon as Player Characters enter this room, they will attack them immediately.

Orc Ghasts (5): AC 4, MV 15", HD 4, HP 23, THAC0 15, #AT 3, Damage 1d4 (Claw) / 1d4 (Claw) / 1d8 (Bite), SA Paralyzation, Stench, SD Undead immunities, AL CE. XP: 282.

Such is the filth within the room that any creature suffering damage while within its bounds has a 85% chance of contracting a severe, chronic blood disease that will reduce their hit point total by 10% for each day it remains untreated unless they successfully save vs. poison.

If the room is searched, nothing of value will be found. Only woe and suffering dwell within its expanse.

15. THE FALLEN CHAPEL OF TAVUN

Within this circular chamber, 30' in diameter and 20' in height, the air somehow even seems more frigid than the remainder of Gröf Kununga's chambers and corridors. Within it, the breath becomes long cones of frost, like those whispered from the snout of some white wyrm.

The chamber's back wall features a short square pedestal, upon which stands a 10' silver statue. This features a powerful broad shouldered man wearing the furs and hat of a Iksurc traveler, a great spear in his hand. Upon the spear, a raven sits, as does another, upon his right shoulder. The statue is set with a sapphire in one eye, though the other appears to be missing. The whole of the statue and the pedestal upon which it stands are completely covered in a thick jacket of solid ice.

A large brazier flanks the frozen statue on its left and right. In the center of the room is occupied by a heavy wolf skin fur rug. Aside of these appointments, it appears to be empty.

This chamber was of great import to the Iksurc that built Gröf Kununga. Though the Ice Northmen are not an especially devout folk as a rule, this was not always the case. Indeed, during those difficult years in which they first inhabited the Nairnolliht Peninsula, faith in the gods they worshiped as a part of the Xuel Imperium was something they clung to in order to maintain their hope. Time has forgotten how it was that Tavun came to be celebrated by these folk (though some suggest he was brought to their attention by travelers from the east, across the sea), but his faithful soon far outnumbered those of any other god among the Iksurc.

In those early days of his worship, Tavun was always depicted as having but one eye. Over the course of history, few remember this, however, imagining the Great God of the North simply as an idealized version of themselves. So it is that many Player Characters will likely not even recognize this

as Tavun. Only clerics devoted to his worship or the especially-devout are likely to do so.

In any case, when King Eriksson rose once more as a mockery of natural life, and found this chamber, he wasted little time in defiling it. The wicked regent ensconced it in ice in reference to the Great God of the North's imprisonment at the hands of Ruhclet. He then ordered one of his most powerful servitors - a sinister Spectral Cleric named Friða Njállsdóttir - to watch over the fallen chapel in which it stands. A priestess of the Oathbreaker in life, Player Characters visiting this chamber will likely soon discover to their collective chagrin that her powers are undiminished in death.

Friða Njállsdóttir, High Priestess of Lurys, Spectre: AC 2, MV 15"/30", HD 7+3, HP 35, THAC0 12, #AT 1, Damage 1d8 (Touch), SA Energy drain, SD +1 or better to hit, Undead immunities, AL CE, XP: 2,205. Spells Prepared: 1st: *Cause Light Wounds, Command, Darkness, Detect Good, Fear, Sanctuary*; 2nd: *Augury, Chant, Hold Person, Resist Fire, Spiritual Hammer, Wyvern Watch*; 3rd: *Curse, Dispel Magic, Paralyzation, Positive Plane Protection*; 4th: *Cloak of Fear, Protection from Good 10' Radius, Spell Immunity (Fireball), Spike Stones*; 5th: *Flame Strike, Slay Living*.

Friða is an exceedingly dangerous enemy. If she has advance warning of the Player Characters' approach, she will cast *Cloak of Fear, Resist Fire, Protection from Good 10' Radius*, and *Spell Immunity* on herself. If she has time, she will cast *Spike Stones* on the chamber's floor and *Wyvern Watch* on the statue of Tavun. She will then hover near the chamber's ceiling, waiting for her foes to enter the fallen chapel. When they do, she will cast *Flame Strike* in their midst, following this up with *Slay Living*. The priestess is utterly ruthless and has no intention on leaving a single one of her enemies alive.

If brought beneath 15hp, Friða will slip through the room's ceiling intangibly to warn King Eriksson that Gröf Kununga has been invaded. After she does this, she will return to the first level of the necropolis, following

the Player Characters - and striking again when they least expect it and are most vulnerable.

If the Player Characters are able to overcome the Spectre, they may plunder the fallen chapel as they see fit. The precious metal from which the statue of Tavun is made is worth 1,000gp by itself and the flawless sapphire in its eye 2,500gp. However, to the devout of Tavun that recognize its true significance, it is nearly priceless: An artifact from an age when the Iksurc were young and remembered well the faces of their deities. If returned to Talpstoј or Tolg, the Jarl of King of those places might be willing to pay as much as 100,000gp for such a work of art.

16. ORC DEN

This is a 30' x 30' stone chamber. Opening its doors reveals a group of monstrous humanoids in the midst of a shambles of shattered wooden furniture and broken shards of ice. The room's walls have had primitive drawings scrawled upon their faces in what appears to be blood. The three creatures turn to the sound of the opening door, holding great balls of crimson-stained rags in their clutches.

The five **Orcs** that dwell within this chamber were not the first of their kind to reside within its bounds. The first four had a disagreement over a game of knucklebones a little less than a week ago that led to an all-out brawl. In the end, all of the furnishings that once appointed the room were destroyed and the Orc who was caught cheating was half-devoured, his entrails spread all throughout the chamber.

King Eriksson did not take kindly to this news when he received it (in truth, he was more angry that the Orcs had destroyed the Iksurc-built furniture than killed one of their fellows). He fed the three remaining humanoids to Snjórfangar then summoned another group to dwell in the room, where they could act as sentries. This new lot are busily cleaning the chamber of the blood spilled in the fight so as to please their

master. Of course, as soon as Player Characters enter the room (or they are summoned forth from it by the unusual sounds), they will drop these rags and immediately attack.

Orcs (5): AC 6, MV 9", HD 1, HP 6, THAC0 19, #AT 1 or 2, Damage 2d4 (Broadsword) or 1d6 (Short Bow), SA: Poisoned arrows and blades force save vs. poison or suffer an additional 1d6hp damage, AL LE, XP: 107.

These Orcs are slightly more intelligent than most of their fellows, using coordinated attacks in the defense of their chamber and the hallway beyond. When fighting foes, two of them will rush forward to occupy front-line combatants, while the others will attack with their bows. If the Player Characters slay the bunch of them, each Orc possesses 22sp and 1gp in small leather pouches kept on their belts. Other than this wealth, the room has no valuables to loot.

17. THE ICEBOX

Beyond this door is a 30' x 30' square chamber. Within its stone walls, the ice is far thicker than anywhere else inside the frozen complex. At least a foot thick from ceiling to floor, against the back wall of the place, many barrels and crates are stacked. Hanging from the ceiling, dozens of rime-covered chains dangle from iron swivels.

This chamber was designed by the builders of Gröf Kununga for the storage of perishable drink and edibles, in the event that the necropolis ever needed to see use as a redoubt for the children of Iksurc. To ensure that it was kept cold at all times, the *seiðmann* Hákon Árnisson summoned and bound a powerful **Ice Elemental** to the chamber.

What Árnisson did not expect was that the particular creature he brought forth from the Para-Elemental Plane of Ice was an exceptionally intelligent example of her kind named Kifraya. She rebelled against the *seiðmann*, attempting to escape on many occasions. Yet Árnisson grew fond of the

chess match the two played with one another, finding it stimulating and exciting. So it was that he never destroyed the elemental creature, instead, strengthening her binding and magically compelling her to never harm any with the blood of Iksurc coursing their veins.

When the Player Characters enter the room, they will see Kifraya in its center, appearing as a beautiful Xuel woman (this is the form which Árnisson compelled her to take, as he found it aesthetically pleasing) made completely from glittering ice. While she will initially be hostile towards their lot, she is unable to do them harm.

Kifraya, Ice Para-Elemental: AC 3, MV 6", HD 8, HP 48, THAC0 12, #AT 1, Damage 3d12 (Fist), SA: Cold, SD +1 or better to hit, AL N, XP: 3,570.

If the Player Characters are able to restrain their bloodlust, Kifraya may potentially be made a powerful ally. She is lonely and incredibly bored after spending centuries alone within this room. As she is far more intelligent than others of her frozen kind, as soon as she sees the room's door open, she will realize that the Player Characters are not her captors come to taunt her. Instead she will recognize them as a possible form of escape from the chamber. She will plead with the party to help abet her escape, offering what she knows of King Eriksson and his army in return for their aid.

Unfortunately, Kifraya knows little more than that the one that bound her to the Prime Plane (Árnisson) is a spirit possessed of potent magical power. She knows that he serves another angry ghost that he refers to as his King (this is Eriksson, naturally). She is also aware that the former is possessed of an army and some weapon of frightful power (the white dragon *Snjórfangar*). The one piece of information that the elemental can offer the Player Characters that is of immense value is that much of his might is owed to a magical device called the *Dauður-Stafur* (see **Appendix A** for details).

Although the Player Characters might think otherwise, freeing Kifraya from her durance

is quite simple. A *Dispel Magic* placed upon the room or its door is sufficient to free the elemental. What she does afterward depends upon the way the Player Characters have treated her. If they have attempted to harm her or otherwise given her poor treatment, once her prison is sundered, she will immediately wink out of existence, returning to the Para-Elemental Plane of Ice. However, if they have treated her with respect and in a kindly fashion – and she sees in them might and courage – she will offer to assist them while one this level of Gröf Kununga, fighting at their sides (she fears the power of Árnisson too much to go any further, however). As she is quite powerful, this may well be the advantage the Player Characters need to survive their trials within the fell place!

18. LET YE HAVE WISDOM

Beyond the threshold of this door exists a 30' x 30' room. It differs from those others within the necropolis in that its walls, ceilings and floors are not covered in a blanket of ice. All seems dry here, though the air is just as frigid as anywhere else within the frozen place.

For the exception of the room's entrance and a doorway allowing egress from its bounds along its east wall, each of the walls feature shelves cut into their substance. Upon these, it appears many books once rest. What became of them is a mystery.

In the chamber's center, a stone pedestal stands, rising out of the floor. Upon this rests a thick book. Its covers appear to have been fashioned of the flesh of some unidentifiable beast, then bound in heavy iron. The pages themselves seem ethereal, as sheets of metal foil upon which the lights of the winter aurora dance and play. Their faces bear the weight of complex runes, carefully carved by some master craftsman. A red velvet bookmark rests between its open pages.

Within this chamber, the Iksurc that built the Gröf Kununga placed some of their most sacred holy texts, many of which predated the tragic era in which they forgot most of the Xuloise gods. They did this so that, when the time came to seal away the corpse of a king within its vaults, a holy man accompanying the body might perform the most sacred burial rites known to the Ice Northmen. An enchantment warding away the ice and cold in the remainder of the glacier was placed within the room so that the books within its bounds would remain intact throughout the ages.

When King Eriksson rose from the grave, this chamber was one of the first within the glacial complex to which he walked. Though he was wicked in life, so too was he wise, and he recognized the power that might lie within the texts hidden in this room. He gathered them all from their resting places, then took them to his resting place in **Area #34** (see below for details) to peruse them at his leisure.

One of these books, however, rebuffed his efforts. This is the tome that lies upon the pedestal, which is called *Tavunskredda* (AS: "The Creed of Tavun"): One of the earliest known copies of the most sacred texts to the faithful of Tavun. Something approaching a relic, it emanates a powerful effect similar to the *antipathy* spell that forces all individuals of Evil Alignment to save vs. spells or find themselves unable to come within 10' of the book. Those that can must save once more vs. spells or be disintegrated; success means that the individual suffers 6d6hp damage, but may touch it as they see fit. King Eriksson can sense this warding and – though it vexes him greatly – has not dared to test the divine power in its pages (which is detailed in full in **Appendix A**, see below).

The wicked king would punish all those who would gain from the book's wisdom. He had Hákon Árnisson cast *Explosive Runes* upon a bookmark, which he forced a servant to place between the pages of the tome. Thus, any individual who reads the marker triggers a blast of fire that does 6d4+6 damage in a 10' radius (the reader is allowed no saving throw vs. spells to receive half damage, though all

others within the spell's envelope are permitted such a chance). Note that the *Tavunskredda* itself may be destroyed by the spell's effect (the tome saves as "hard metal vs. fireball" for the purposes of determining its fate in such an event). Note that if the *Explosive Runes* detonate, The Keeper from **Area #19** (see below) will swiftly come to investigate the matter.

The nigh-priceless *Tavunskredda* is the only item of value within the room. All its other treasures have been taken by King Eriksson to Gröf Kununga's upper level.

19. THE KEEPER'S CHAMBERS

This is a 30' x 30' stone chamber. Unlike the passage leading to its door, it is both warm and dry. Composed completely of stone, an empty wooden bookcase stands next to a door along the chamber's west wall. The chamber's north is occupied by a large wooden sleigh-shaped bed that rests atop a red expanse of carpet. The room's east wall bears a large rack of the type one might hang armor and weapons, though it stands devoid of either. Next to that is a large wooden dresser.

Such was the significance of the *Tavunskredda* to the Iksurc that built Gröf Kununga that they chose a volunteer from their tribe - one of the strongest warriors that had proven that the gods smiled upon them - to serve as its protector. This individual was known as The Keeper and he was given a potent magical item called the *Tavunskredda* to ensure that he might fulfill his duties until the Oerth's time was passed.

This chamber was the personal dwelling of The Keeper, who was present within Gröf Kununga when the humanoid from the Kurocs came to plunder its riches. He fought them well, spilling the blood of a score of Ogre and Orcs before he was at last overwhelmed and slain. His chamber was untouched, however, until his murderers woke King Eriksson. After he subjugated those fools that roused him from slumber eternal, he sent forth some of the humanoids

to this place to return to him the potent treasure over which Gröf Kununga's protector watched.

Now this chamber, empty of its valuables, is the demesne of five **Orcs**, each one a powerful example of their kind. Although The Keeper is long since dead, King Eriksson thought it wise to maintain a forceful presence within the room to prevent the *Tavunskredda* from falling into enemy hands.

Orcs (5): AC 6, MV 9", HD 1, HP 6, THAC0 19, #AT 1 or 2, Damage 2d4 (Broadsword) or 1d6 (Short Bow), SA: Poisoned arrows and blades force save vs. poison or suffer an additional 1d6hp damage, AL LE, XP: 107.

Despite the time they have spent in this chamber, these Orcs have never successfully located the *Tavunskredda* (which is hidden beneath a false stone under the room's bed; it was usually kept in the open, but as The Keeper realized that he would soon die, he hid the item as best he could). This is because they have seen that which befalls those humanoids who mishandle the belongings of the Iksurc that once dwelt in Gröf Kununga. This has prompted them to do precious little investigating of the chamber, even going so far as to sleep on the rug in the middle of the room. At any rate, the loose stone beneath the bed is **trapped** with a potent enchantment that will do 8d6+8hp damage to any non-Iksurc character attempting to open it (save for half damage).

In a shallow recess beneath this stone, wrapped in a dark velvet bag is the legendary *Tavunskredda*, which is described in detail in **Appendix A**. No other treasure exists within the chamber (though considering the power within the mythical bottle, Player Characters finding it will likely be hardly disappointed by this!).

20. DANGEROUS AIRS

The corridor leading to this room is quite unusual. A powerful wind blows down its length, forcing anyone attempting to walk its length to put their

head down, shield their eyes, and force their way toward its conclusion. At its end, an iron door stands, which seems to have been run through with dozens of holes. No handle exists in the face of the portal to offer access to that which might lie beyond its face.

This room exists solely to create clean, breathable air within Gröf Kununga, which would be nearly unbearable without its existence. Within the sealed 30' x 30' chamber is a **Small Air Elemental**, bound its center inside a magical diagram etched into the stone floor. Within this simple prison, it whips itself into a constant whirlwind, bringing forth fresh air into the necropolis and stirring it within its corridors. The humanoids loyal to King Eriksson came to this place before waking his corpse, yet feared the force within the hallway leading to the room enough that they left it in peace. Player Characters who push past the hole-shot door (this requires but a successful *Bend Bars/Lift Gates* roll) may wish they had done the same.

Small Air Elemental: AC 2, MV 36", HD 8, HP 44, THAC0 12, #AT 1, Damage 2d10 (Gale), SA Whirlwind, SD +2 or better to hit, AL N, XP: 3,510.

If Player Characters enter this chamber, they will be buffeted by the powerful winds that the Elemental churns within its bounds. That said, unless they pass through or otherwise disturb the magical diagram in which it is held (a pentacle made of silver inlaid into the floor), they are safe from attack by the creature. Attacking the Elemental, naturally, constitute passing through its containing diagram.

Should Player Characters come into conflict with and defeat the Air Elemental, they may pry loose the silver that makes up the pentacle holding it prisoner. This amounts to 500sp in total. Aside of this, there are no valuables to be found within the chamber.

21. OF STONE AND STEEL

Despite this room's 30' x 30' dimensions, it seems far smaller than this. This owes to its cramped confines: Slabs of stone of all manner - irregular-shaped bits stacked atop long slabs, which in turn lay upon great blocks - have been arranged along the chamber's north wall. Opposite these, to the south, lengths of utterly black wood rest. Between them, against the east wall, an immense iron cube stands. Tools scattered across its top, obscuring scores of marks, scars, and scorch marks makes it seem evident that it was used as some kind of workbench. Still larger tools stand in the southeast corner of the room, leaning against the wall.

A thin layer of frost coats everything within the room. Its air is cold enough to turn breath to frost, simply to abide within its bounds.

Note that along the hallway outside the door leading to this chamber, many small scrapes can be found in the stone floor, leading back and forth from **Area #22** (see below).

This room was used by those responsible for the creation of Gröf Kununga to store the raw materials necessary to affect its future repair. The stone in the room is solid granite quarried from the substance of the glacier itself as the necropolis was built. The timber, meanwhile, is precious erminewood, brought forth from the mainland to this place by the Iksurc. It has rest here for centuries now, unused.

Most Iksurc characters will immediately recognize the value of the lengths of aged erminewood within the room. This timber is much prized, as not only is it beautiful, it can be used in the manufacture of weapons and sea vessels. If somehow removed from Gröf Kununga and sold undamaged, the wood can fetch as much as 200gp in a strong market.

The value of the wood may well make Player Characters overlook the tools in the room, particularly those in its corner. This would be to their detriment, as among a great pry bar

and a two-man saw is an ancient *Maul of the Titans*, which predates the Xuloise migration to the Nairnollit Peninsula. Though it is unlikely that any of the Player Characters will be able to use it...if one can, it would make for a powerful weapon against the allies of King Eriksson, indeed!

22. THE ARTISAN'S CHAMBERS

The center of this circular chamber, 30' in diameter, is dominated by a low dais, perhaps 5' in width. Atop it is a large stone block, featureless but for an area one one of its sides, in which the face of a man has been expertly carved. Regal and powerful of features, its unfinished nature makes it unclear who it might have been meant to resemble when finished. Directly between it and the door, the rime-covered corpse of an orc lays on a frozen pool of its blood.

A simple wooden bed, ancient furs and blankets resting atop it, is pushed against the curve of the south wall. At the bed's head, a bookcase stands, though it is empty of tomes. At its foot, a small table rests. Atop it, a hammer and chisel sit next to a wooden bucket and an empty glass container.

Pushed up against the remainder of the wall ringing the room stand twelve finished statues. It is easy to recognize the significance of some of these - one is obviously great Tavun, for example, while another is musclebound Drok - though the identities of just as many are mysteries. From the powerful warriors at the back of the room to the beautiful shield-maidens that flank its entry, however, they are uniformly breathtaking. The one who created them was surely a master of rare ability.

The name of the Iksurc artist that once made this chamber his dwelling has long since been lost to the mists of antiquity. It was he, however, that was responsible for the beautification of Gröf Kununga, carving the many bas-reliefs and statues within the glacial necropolis so that those interred

within it might be glorified.

This artist was a man of letters, to whom mathematics and even the rare patterns of the stars were not mysteries. So it was that he kept a personal library within this chamber, which once filled its bookshelf. When King Eriksson was woken from the dead, he ordered the humanoids he cowed to plunder these tomes from the room so that he might drink deep of the knowledge found in their pages. They did as he bade, but found the task much more difficult than they expected thanks to the pair of **Caryatid Columns** that flank the door (these are the shield-maidens mentioned in the description of the room above). Protecting the room as was their unnamed creator's last command, they managed to slay one of the orcs that dared venture into the room, but the others were able to flee before they shared his fate. When the Player Characters enter the room, they will honor their charge once again, rising from quiescence and attacking them immediately.

Caryatid Columns (2): AC 4, MV 6", HD 5, HP 22, THAC0 12, #AT 1, Damage 2d4 (Spears), SD 25% chance that weapons hitting will break, All saves at +4, Magical weapons do not get their bonus to damage, AL N, XP: 280.

Should the Player Characters defeat the animated constructs, they may loot the room of its valuables. Each one of the statues in the chamber is a masterpiece worth thousands of gold pieces, but as each of them weighs more than a ton, they will prove almost impossible to move. Much more portable, however, is the chisel laying atop the room's table. It's head (and the two spares laying next to it) are made of mithril and are each worth 500gp. The hammer, glass container, and bucket were also tools of the artist that once lived here and while they are well-made, they are otherwise unremarkable.

23. THE ANGRY STAIRS

At the end of this corridor, a staircase descending downwards at a steep angle looms. Its stone stairs plunge deeply into the belly of its glacial surroundings that darkness strangles away light before its end comes into view.

This stairway is actually a **trap**. Its steep grade extends 40' down and 30' outward, until it meets a 10' area of magical *darkness*. When any individual weighing more than 50lbs travels 10' or further down its course, its steps tilt, forming an ultra-slick (*greased*) chute. Just beyond the looming darkness stands a stone wall, covered in wickedly barbed and poisoned spikes (save vs. poison or incur 2d6hp damage). Player Characters on the steps when they tilt must make saving throws vs. petrification or slide down them, taking 2d6hp damage (and potentially more, depending on the result of their save vs. the poison on the spiked wall).

Nothing lays beyond the wall, in any case.

24. THE NORN'S RETREAT

This stone chamber takes the form of a 30' x 30' square. In its northwest corner is a wooden, sleigh-shaped bed, the blanket atop it both clean and comfortable in appearance. In the wall opposite this is a stone fireplace. Within it is wood ancient, charred, and covered in frost. So too a rich red carpet set in the midst of the floor is covered in a thin jacket of ice.

At the foot of the bed, a small iron-bound trunk rests. A few steps from that, a series of shelves stands against the wall, empty but for a glass hemisphere, in which some unnamed artist has somehow placed a diorama of a magnificent city of onion-domed spires, then filled it with water.

This room was once the bedchambers of a wise norn that walked the world among the Iksurc folk. Though her name has been lost over the ages, the evidence of her existence

here yet remains.

The chamber, however, has been claimed by the allies of King Eriksson. When the Player Characters enter its bounds, they will find two **Ogres**, two **Orcs**, and the **Orc Shaman**, G'raaz'k waiting for them. The nominal leader of the humanoid tribe responsible for traveling to Gröf Kununga and rousing the spirit of the wicked Iksurc king, the last of these humanoids is exceedingly dangerous.

Orcs (2): AC 6, MV 9", HD 1, HP 6, THAC0 19, #AT 1, Damage 2d4 (Broadsword), AL LE, XP: 16.

Ogre (2): AC 5, MV 9", HD 4+1, HP 27, THAC0 15, #AT 1, Damage 1d10 (Fist), AL CE, XP: 225.

G'raaz'k, Insane Orc Shaman: AC 6, MV 9", HD 4, HP 28, THAC0 15, #AT 1, Damage 1d6 (Quarterstaff), SQ May cast a 6HD *Lightning Bolt* as a spell-like ability x1/day, AL CE, XP: 366. Spells Prepared: 1st: *Cure Light Wounds*, *Protection from Good*; 2nd: *Hold Person*.

G'raaz'k was once a wise and capable leader. Upon reaching Gröf Kununga and visiting this room and the one beyond it (see **Area #25** for details), he dared reach into the rune bag in that place, ignorant of its implications. Since he was a spellcaster, the bag responded to him, allowing him to produce a stone from its mysterious volume. When he read the rune etched upon its face, he gained much wisdom and the ability to produce lightning from the very air itself once each day. However, the knowledge of the runes snapped his sanity like a twig beneath the heel of a giant. Now G'raaz'k is paranoid, retreating, and fearful that some enemy will come to his abode to try and steal the runes from him. He raves to his fellows in the room each night about this possibility, making terrible veiled threats regarding their fate if they dare even approach the door on the room's north wall. They might have murdered him in his sleep long ago if they did not live in mortal terror of his power...and if he ever actually slept.

If the Player Characters enter this room, the Orcs and Ogres within it will immediately rush to attack them. G'raaz'k, meanwhile, will stand near the back of the room, calling upon the runes to smite them with a *Lightning Bolt* as soon as he is able (he cares little if his allies are in the way of the stroke when he looses it, too).

Atop the bed is an unusual treasure. The blanket resting there (which is made of well-knit wool) has been enchanted with a combination of the *Clean*, *Dry*, and *Warm* cantrips, all somehow made *Permanent*. It is impossible to dirty or make wet, and those wrapped within it will stay warm under most cold conditions of a non-magical nature. This blanket was made by the norn who lived within the room and while it may not have the allure of a potent magical sword or wand to most Player Characters, it has the potential to save their lives all the same.

Within the trunk at the foot of the bed (which is locked, but untrapped) are several sets of women's clothing, along with many heavy furs of fine quality. These are well-preserved and the latter of the garments could fetch as much as 500gp. Meanwhile, within the bauble on the bookshelf (long since denuded and brought to King Eriksson for his perusal) are countless motes of silver. If the object is shaken, it will make the city within it seem as if caught in the midst of a heavy snowfall. The globe actually was made in the Xuel Imperium and brought to the Nairnolliht Peninsula by the first members of House Iksurc to tread the land. As such, it is quite valuable, being worth as much as 1,500gp to a collector or historian.

Player Characters investigating the room's fireplace will find that its chimney has been frozen solid, all along its length. It is completely impassible and useless (especially as some way of entering or exiting the glacier) without first somehow thawing it.

25. WHISPER TO YE THE RUNES

Opening the door reveals a nearly-empty stone chamber, 30' x 30' in area. A single, great block of grey stone rests against its east wall. From all appearances, though it is simple in appearance, it seems like an altar. A small black leather bag lays upon its top.

The air in the room seems even colder than the corridors within the glacier. Its air is possessed of a deadly silence.

The door leading to this chamber is both locked and **Trapped**. Those attempting to open it without first disarming the potent enchantment laid upon it by speaking the words "*Tavun first dared read the runes*" must save vs. spells twice. Failing the first roll sees the character opening the door slowly *disintegrated*, their bodies slowly going winter white before they disincorporate into so many snowflakes blown all about the corridor. *Raise Dead*, *Reincarnate*, and *Resurrection* will all fail to restore such characters to life, though a properly-worded *Wish* will do so. Failing the second saving throw will inflict 5d6hp damage upon the character attempting to open the door. If both saves are successful or the aforementioned phrase is spoken, they may throw it wide without consequence.

Within this room, the norn who dwelt in **Area #24** (see above for details) hid a powerful magic item. Won from the lair of a Frost Giant witch, it takes the form of the a simple leather bag that rests upon the large stone block along the east wall. This is the *Bag of Mysteries* (which is described in detail in **Appendix A**, see below): One of the most potent of all Iksurc magic items. A learned norn or skjald will recognize the bag right away, such is its repute. The Dungeon Master is encouraged to carefully read the passage of this adventure regarding the Bag of Mysteries very carefully, as it is extremely potent, historically important, and potentially deadly in quality. In the context of a Campaign, the recovery of this legendary magic item should be a momentous occasion, possibly changing its very fabric forever!

No other items of value exist here.

26. ANTECHAMBER

This area is immense: A 60' x 40' chamber that seems even larger for the vast empty space within its walls. All that exists here is a large red carpet that dominates the center of the room and several armed guards that carefully watch all of the entrances and exits leading to and from it. The guards mill about several bedrolls which are strewn about the room in a haphazard fashion. These are open hallways to the east and west, a single doorway to the north, and a pair of imposing double doors to the south, in which are carved all manner of runes in prominent, dark lines.

This area is a great antechamber: Both a gathering point for those who would visit Gröf Kununga's great hall and an atrium allowing swift access between its eastern and western halves. Since it has been overtaken by King Eriksson and his humanoid allies, however, it now serves as something of an encampment. Ten **Orcs** and five **Ogres** make the chamber their dwelling, watching over the door leading to **Area #27**. As soon as they are aware of the presence of the Player Characters, they will not hesitate to attack them.

Orcs (10): AC 6, MV 9", HD 1, HP 6, THAC0 19, #AT 1 or 2, Damage 2d4 (Broadsword) or 1d6 (Short Bow), AL LE, XP: 16.

Ogre (5): AC 5, MV 9", HD 4+1, HP 27, THAC0 15, #AT 1, Damage 1d10 (Fist), AL CE, XP: 225.

These humanoids have a simple approach to guarding the area. If they are aware of the approach of Player Characters from the east or west, four Orcs will stand at the side of the doorway, greeting them with a fusillade of arrows while their fellows stay out of the way, waiting in reserve in the event that their foes survive this tactic. If they are set upon suddenly or are attacked from the north, the Ogres will rush to melee while the Orcs will

fall back and try and pick off their enemies from their flanks. They will do whatever possible to prevent the Player Characters from opening the doors to **Area #27**. They know that the dragon within that room is supposedly their ally...but they are afraid of what it might do without King Eriksson's presence to pacify the beast. Note that the sounds of combat within the room will not draw forth Snjórfangar (as it is too large to fit through the double doors), though it will **certainly** alert the dragon to be on its guard.

If the Player Characters defeat the humanoids within this area, they will find that each of them carries some bit of personal treasure, usually 2d10sp kept in small leather pouches on their belts. One of the Ogres in the room has a large amethyst hidden in his boot, worth 250gp, while another has a golden armlet that he wears as a ring worth 150gp. Finally, one of the Orcs in this room carries 12 arrows made of white wood with swan-feather fletching. He considers these lucky and saves them for a special foe. He is not wrong; these are actually *Arrows +1*.

27. THE MEAD-HALL OF DEAD KINGS

Beyond the stout, rune-covered double doors lies a long, broad chamber, 40' wide by 80' long. An immense table made of fine erminewood rests in the center of the room, surrounded by at least two-score matching chairs. Around the walls, near the top of a ceiling that reaches a height of 60' above the floor, at least a hundred different shields, bearing just as many varying colors and designs on their wooden faces, ring the chamber. Amidst them, upon the south wall of the room, a steel axe hands. Its edge, set upon a length of white ash wrapped in a leather handle, gleams brightly even for its distance.

Along the east and west walls, behind the chairs that push against the table, two long wooden shelves have been fixed to the walls. Of the sort that usually hold meat and drink for the pleasure of those at feast, they are

empty now, covered with a thin cloak of dust and frost.

Upon the rime-coated floor, a gigantic, sinuous body wraps its way around the table as the World-Serpent circles the planet. As white as the snows that fall upon the Kurocs, its tail - curled upon itself like a whip ready to strike - winds from the back of the room, thickening until it finds a body nearly twice the size of the table. Great leathery wings sprout from its back like the tattered sails of some phantom-ship at sea. The serpentine length of white scales continues down a powerful neck that ends in a fearsome head, like that of a giant snake. It regards the door with slit eyes as blue as the ocean, each one greater than any of the shields on the walls. From the two nostrils at the end of its snout, wisps of frost colder than the glacier itself ride into the air, glittering in their place before falling to ground in the form of snowflakes.

With the opening of the door, the dragon raises its head.

Its slit eyes seem to freeze the very air itself between its place and the doors to its lair.

The last chamber constructed by the builders of Gröf Kununga was this room: A great mead-hall for the pleasure of the kings that slept within the vaults of the necropolis. Those Iksurc imagined the shield-maidens of Tavun descending for their place in the heavens to come of the souls of these worthies and wished them to have a place where together they might celebrate the many battles they fought in the course of their lives before ascending to Tavun's own hall to at last await his release from his icy imprisonment. The shields that ring the room around its ceiling do not only reflect the standards of the Iksurc kings buried here - but all those whom they defeated in battle. That so many are on display speaks to the greatness of these men and also explains why the room was never used by those who built it. They considered themselves unworthy to

do so. The axe hanging amongst these symbols of Iksurc history is none other than the legendary *Höfuðkúpa-Kljúfar* (CT: "Skull-Cleaver", described in detail in **Appendix A**). One of the most potent weapons known to the Ice Northmen, it stands as a symbol of the might of their folk and another testimony to their legacy of strength.

Of course, these Iksurc would not leave such a place unguarded. So it was that they bound a wyrmling **White Dragon** to the place by way of a powerful magical compulsion. They allowed the creature some freedom to fly from Gröf Kununga and soar above the Frozen Sea, hunting walruses and whales for its sup. Likewise, they gave it fabulous wealth to serve as its hoard, so that it might while away the centuries in comfort.

As the centuries dragged onward, however, Snjórfangar grew and grew. Eventually, it became victim to a grave oversight made by its captors: It became too large to easily leave Gröf Kununga. The magical compulsion forced it to return within the Mead-Hall of Dead Kings (as it was dubbed by its creators), and one day, it simply could no longer leave to fly and hunt.

The dragon likely would have starved to death within the chamber had not the humanoids from the Kurocs come to its lair in search of treasure and power. The dragon, nearly mad with hunger and despair, quickly made a meal of a half-dozen of them before they could flee from the room. When they accidentally woke the restless spirit of King Eriksson, they warned him of the creature's existence, but he simply smiled with wicked delight.

Understanding the potential for power just at his fingertips, King Eriksson descended from his crypt and presented himself before dread Snjórfangar. Using the dark power of the *Dauður-Stafur*, he compelled the dragon to serve as his ally. He then utilized the *Beaker of Plentiful Potions* in his resting place to dispense many draughts of *Diminution* - enough to shrink the creature so that it could easily come and go from Gröf Kununga at his behest.

This is how King Eriksson came to be the White Rider, soaring the skies above the Frozen Sea and Iksurc land astride a powerful White Dragon. And unless the Player Characters are able to think quickly, the sight of terrible Snjórfangar may be the last thing they see in their lives.

Snjórfangar, Ancient Huge White Dragon: AC 3, MV 12"/30", HD 9, HP 72, THAC0 13, #AT 3, Damage 1d6 (Claw) / 1d6 (Claw) / 2d10 (Bite), SA Breath weapon, SD Immune to cold, Resistant to earth, SV Vulnerable to fire, AL CE, XP: 16.

Given the levels the Player Characters are likely to possess when they meet Snjórfangar, their chances of defeating the dragon are quite slim (a single strike from its freezing breath is likely to decimate most of them). It is quite fortunate for them, then, that it is not only possible to avoid fighting Snjórfangar – but not out of the realm of possibility to make the dragon an ally. This is because it hates and fears King Eriksson. It is well aware that the wicked undead compels it to service with the *Dauður-Stafur*, reducing a creature as potent and majestic as the dragon into a mere slave. Additionally, once the creature was made the King's subservient thrall, it took from Snjórfangar its entire hoard. Indeed, if it were not for the power at his command, the dragon would have somehow engineered his destruction long ago – or died in the effort.

So it is that the dragon is willing to talk with the Player Characters. If they fought the humanoids in **Area #26**, it will have certainly heard them. Snjórfangar is capable of speaking the Frozen Tongue of the Iksurc (albeit an ancient form of the language) and once they are in the dragon's presence, he will ask them what is so important that they would risk their tiny mortal lives by standing before him. If they admit to being the enemies of King Eriksson right away, he will be willing to listen to them. It will encourage them to tell him tales of the adventures that made them heroes of the Iksurc. All the while, he will take their measure.

If Snjórfangar is unimpressed or they are reticent to admit that they oppose King Eriksson, he will destroy them all. The

dragon is not willing to risk what little freedom it has frivolously. However, if their stories are believable and paint them as heroes of courage and power, the dragon will make them an offer on their honor as men and women of the House of Iksurc. In return for sparing their lives, Snjórfangar will make them swear that they will kill King Eriksson and break his *Dauður-Stafur* in twain. He will also ask that they return to him the magic potion that the King uses to diminish the dragon, allowing him to come and go easily from Gröf Kununga.

The Player Characters may balk at such a bargain. After all, Snjórfangar is a White Dragon and *is* both chaotic and evil. If they voice their concerns in this vein, he will nod sagely, understanding their point of view. He will remind them that they are in no position to question his honor (quite true, given the fact he could easily freeze most of them to death in an instant with his breath). However, to prove himself, he is willing to give them information that will doubtlessly help them when the time comes for them to finally face King Eriksson. Snjórfangar will tell the Player Characters where he can be found (**Area #34**, see below for details), even drawing them a rough map in the ice with a claw, if they request it. He will tell them that he has many undead allies in that part of Gröf Kununga, one of which is a potent spellcaster. He will likewise warn them of the King's strength-draining touch and inform them that if they wish to do him harm, only magical weapons will do the deed. Finally, in his grandest gesture, Snjórfangar will give the Player Characters leave to take *Höfuðkúpa-Kljúfar* from its resting place, so long as they pledge to use it to remove King Eriksson's head from his shoulders.

Can the Player Characters trust Snjórfangar?

In this case, the answer is yes. The dragon hates King Eriksson and fears his ability to make him dance at the ends of invisible strings like a puppet. It longs for its freedom from Gröf Kununga and dreams of riding the skies above the Frozen Sea as it did when just a wyrmling. So it is that the dragon will swallow its pride long enough to aid a bunch of mortal worms such as the Player Characters if they can end its centuries-long

durance. Indeed, if they can find a way to get the dragon up to the vault in which the King abides, it will even help them fight against the undead horror. Such a sight would be the subject of an epic poem, told for generations to come!

Of course, all of this is academic if the Player Characters make war with the dragon. If they do and somehow live to tell the tale (!), they will be disappointed to find that the whole of its hoard lies with King Eriksson. There is nothing of value to be found in the Mead-Hall aside of Snjórfangar's knowledge and the mighty axe *Höfuðkúpa-Kljúfar*.

Though without this, the Player Characters might well be better served if the dragon had killed them all.

Chapter Three: The Graveyard of Kings

By successfully ascending the stairwell in **Area #12**, the Player Characters enter the uppermost portion of Gröf Kununga. This was the glacial complex's necropolis and, in this place, the great vaults lie in which the earliest kings of the Iksurc were interred. Since King Eriksson was roused from death by the humanoids that invaded the burial, this has become a grim and fell place, full of unending hatreds and undying evils. Indeed, the Player Characters will have to be at their best to enter The Graveyard of Kings and emerge once more to tell tale of their adventure.

Graveyard of Kings Encounter Key

As was the case in the level below its expanse, the walls of the chambers and corridors found in the Graveyard of Kings are composed of solid stone covered with ancient rime. Its hallways are uniformly 10' wide and just as tall. There is no form of light within the area whatsoever.

Doors within the Graveyard of Kings are as those in the level below it, made of ancient, solid stone that has been designed in such a way that they can be pulled into recesses in the walls to access that which lies behind them. They are even heavier than those doors on the first level of Gröf Kununga, however, requiring a Strength score (combined or individual) of at least 18 to move them from their places.

28. IN THE CLUTCHES OF DEATH

The steep stairwell ends by emerging into the center of a circular chamber, 50' in diameter. Its walls, floors, and ceiling are made of grey stone, covered in a thin coat of ancient frost. Beneath that icy jacket, the hint of some kind of markings on the walls are evident. Two doorways allow egress from the room, to the north and the south.

Standing with their backs to the walls, twelve figures stand a silent vigil over the stairway. Their faces are sunken and their eyes have a distant quality. Their flesh is nearly white and their beards and hair have long since been frozen. While it is clear that they once drew breath – it also is plain that this was a very long time ago. Wielding axe and sword, clad in leather armor and rime-covered fur, each one wears a great iron bell around their necks, hung from them by a rope like a hangman's noose.

The men in this room were once Iksurc folk, taken from small villages across the northern part of their land as thralls by the humanoid forces under King Eriksson's command. Thinking that they would face a life of servitude beneath such oppressors or end up as their sup – they could not have imagined that their fates would be far worse than this. Each of the men was killed, then animated by Hákon Árnisson as **Zombies** to watch over this area and serve as his King's first line of defense, should Gröf Kununga ever be invaded by his foes.

Zombies (12): AC 6 (Improved by armor), MV 6", HD 2, HP 9, THAC0 13, #AT 1, Damage 1d8 (Battleaxe) or 2d4 (Broadsword), SD Undead immunities, AL CE, XP: 38.

Árnisson knew that such feeble resistance would pose little threat to heroes of such mettle to have made it to the Graveyard of Kings. The Zombies here are not meant to see to their end, however. As the move to attack, Player Characters striking them with weaponry of any kind will cause the bells about their neck to offer a dull ringing noise. This will alert all those in **Areas #29 & #32** to

the presence of approaching foes.

If Player Characters are able to defeat the Zombies in this chamber and chisel through the ancient frost that covers its walls, they will find that carved into its substance are the names of eight of the kings interred within the Graveyard of Kings. Beneath these names is a litany of their deeds, epic in nature. Attentive Player Characters will notice that King Eriksson is not among the listed; even just after his death, the Iksurc already busied themselves with the task of forgetting his reign over their folk.

Aside of the weapons the Zombies bear and the armor they wear, there are no items of value to be found within the chamber.

29. A RULER REBELLIOUS

Beyond the door lies a 30' x 30' stone chamber, its floors and walls twinkling beneath the kiss of light for the thin layer of frost clinging to their surfaces. In the center of the room is a long, rectangular slab that seems to rise from out of the floor, as a part of its whole.

Flanking the slab are two figures, each wearing studded leather armor. Large bells hang from their necks, held in place by lengths of stout rope. From beneath iron helms, they stare out at the world with hateful eyes that burn with a hellish light. Their skin gone grey and beards matted and frozen, it is clear that these are the dead – the souls that once resided within them long since fled.

Within this room, the bones of the first of the Iksurc Kings, Tarvon il-Iksurc are interred. The great slab in its center serves as that worthy's sepulcher. As he is probably the most famous of the various Iksurc rulers, it was he that King Eriksson first contacted upon his waking – by way of a *Speak With Dead* spell – and he who he first tried to rally to his cause as an ally. King il-Iksurc refused to have truck with such a blackguard as Eriksson, however, and never answered the call of the spell. He would prefer the silence of death to dishonor.

This infuriated King Eriksson, though there was little he could do about it. To ensure that he would not come to oppose him in future days, Eriksson saw fit to place two **Ju-Ju Zombies** in the room that contained his remains as guardians. It is these two horrid creatures that the Player Characters will see as soon as they enter the chamber – and they will move to attack intruders the moment they are aware of their presence.

Ju-Ju Zombies (2): AC 4 (Improved by armor), MV 9", HD 3+12, HP 30, THAC0 15, #AT 2, Damage 1d6 (Battleaxe) or 3d4 (Fist), SD +1 or better to hit, Blunt, Fire, or piercing weapons only do half damage, Undead immunities, AL NE, XP: 230.

Unless they are destroyed, these undead will do whatever they can to prevent the Player Characters from approaching the stone slab in the middle of the room. They carry no type of treasure other than their weapons and armor. Note that Player Characters attacking the Ju-Ju Zombies will undoubtedly cause the bells they wear on their necks to ring out in cold, dead sounds, warning the occupants of **Area #30 & 31** (see below for details) of their presence.

Inspecting the stone slab closely will reveal a small seam around its top. If the frost is cleared for it, an inscription in Ancient Xuloise is revealed:

*Within this stone vessel,
Lies the bones of Tarvon il-Iksurc
Scion of House Iksurc,
Entrusted to pursue a wayward Prince
By the word of an Emperor
Though the renegade eluded his grasp
He would tame a land
And gain a crown for his own head.
Hail King il-Iksurc!
Hail King il-Iksurc!
Your vessel of stone holds your bones
Yet your spirit flies to Tavun's Halls
To await the return of the only one
To which your head rightfully bows.*

Lifting the top from the sepulcher will require the frost to be chipped from it and a combined strength score of 20 or more. Within its bounds, the bones of King il-Iksurc

lay, covered by an ancient blanket of red velvet. If this is cast aside, they will see his skeleton, clad in iron chain mail armor. His hands, folded across his chest, grip the handle of a great battle axe, the head of which lies upon a colorful round wooden shield. All are powerful magical items: The weapon is a *+4 Battle Axe, Defender*, the armor protects as a suit of *+3 Chain Mail* that provides a like bonus to its wearer's saving throws, and the shield acts as a *+3 Small Wooden Shield* which can heal its bearer once per day as if a *Cure Light Wounds* spell was cast upon them when they call upon Tavun for strength.

As soon as any individual places their hands upon any of these items, they will be filled with a sensation as if something has walked across their grave. Instantly, they will realize that the spirit of King il-Iksurc has given them his leave to wield the weapons and armor he carried in life - provided they kill King Eriksson, or die in the trying. If they do this, they have proven themselves fit to carry these items; they are theirs to bear for their remaining days. If they fail in their efforts to kill Eriksson, however, each of the items becomes a *Cursed* magic item with a penalty equal to the bonus they normally possess.

The potent magical items are priceless in the eyes of any Iksurc, certainly, so say nothing of the incredible magical power each bears. The Player Characters would be well-served to take them with il-Iksurc's blessing. They will certainly need all the might they can muster to face the horrors to come....

30. WHERE THE LILIES DIE

Beyond this door is a 30' x 30' stone chamber. A door that once hung upon its west wall has been torn from its place and lays shattered where it once stood. The space behind it has been rendered a 10' alcove in which a great stone vessel rests. It evidently once had a lid, but this too has been thrown from its place and lies shattered into thousands of stone pieces that lie upon the floor about it. The remnants of dozens of dead flowers - now twisted and blackened

lengths of spindled stalk - lie amongst the debris, forgotten.

Within the chamber, more dead men stand, their empty gazes staring in the direction of the entry to its expanse. Wearing rotten leathers and furs, they were clearly once Iksurc, but their ancient skin gone grey and brittle with the ravages of the cold have rendered them something else. At the sight of those that would intrude upon their demesne, their eyes seem to braze with unending hatred and hunger.

This once served as the antechamber to the crypt the bore the body of King Sigurðjón Kjárrsson. A military man of great repute and little mercy, he eagerly agreed when King Eriksson offered to return him to the world of the living by using the unholy power of the *Dauður-Stafur* upon his frozen corpse. Swathed in funerary velvet when he was interred within his vault, he rose once more as a creature very much like a **Mummy**, motivated by the dark gift of unlife. While this greatly pleased Kjárrsson, he was a warrior and demanded that if he would serve another man, it would be as the general of an army. Eriksson agreed to this and ceded him the six **Ghouls** within this chamber, promising many, many more would be added to his forces with each successful raid upon the land of the Iksurc. When the Player Characters come upon this room, it is the Ghouls they will first spy, with Kjárrsson himself awaiting them within his burial vault.

King Sigurðjón Kjárrsson, Mummy: AC 1 or -3 (Improved by armor and *Shield +1, +4 vs. Missiles*), MV 9", HD 8+3, HP 51, THAC0 12, #AT 2, Damage 1d12+2 (*Battleaxe +2*) or 1d6 (Shortbow), SA Fear, Mummy rot, SD +1 or better to hit, Weapons only do half damage, Undead immunities, SV Vulnerable to fire, AL CE, XP: 1,908.

Ghouls (6): AC 4 (Improved by armor), MV 9", HD 2, HP 11, THAC0 16, #AT 3, Damage 1d3 (Claw) / 1d3 (Claw) / 1d6 (Bite), SA Paralyzation, SD Immune to *Charm* and *Sleep*, AL CE, XP: 87.

If they have advance warning of the approach of the Player Characters (such as hearing the sound of the bells in **Area #29** ringing out), the Ghouls in this room will gather near the room's entrance, immediately moving to engage their foes the moment the door is opened. Having not dined upon flesh in some time, they are ravenous and will attempt to overwhelm them. Once they have engaged the Player Characters, King Kjarrsson will move from his burial place and attempt to fire arrows into their midst. If his Ghouls are getting the worst of the fight, he will retreat to his vault and force his foes to come to him, relying upon the tight confines in the area to ensure that the number of enemies that can attack him simultaneously is limited. He knows that the sounds of battle will surely draw forth Hákon Árnisson from his place in **Area #31** and is confident that he will be reinforced in short order. Likewise, if combat takes place in that room before this room is opened, Kjarrsson and his Ghouls will come forth to support Árnisson in that place.

If the Player Characters are able to defeat Kjarrsson and his Ghouls, they will find that in addition to his magical items, he possesses no few valuables in the sepulcher located in his vault. He has 5,000sp of ancient make there, each one worth a half-gold, in addition to a beautiful mammoth-tusk drinking horn worth 500gp and cask of fine brandy. This drink has gone putrid with age, but the cask has a false bottom. Found within it is a small philter with three doses of a *Potion of Vitality*.

31. THE POWER BEHIND THE THRONE

The proportions of the chamber beyond this door are impossible to determine. Past its threshold, an unnatural form of darkness looms. All that is visible within its utterly black expanse is something slender and sinuous, swimming through the black as a serpent writhes through the waters of some ebon reservoir.

This room is a 30' x 30' area. Burial vaults that have had their stone doors shattered form alcoves in its east, west, and south walls, sarcophagi occupying the center of each of these recesses.

The darkness within the room is a magical effect. Within its bounds, all non-magical forms of illumination will fail. Spells such as *Light* and *Continual Light* (as well as *Dispel Magic*), however, will lift the veil of darkness and allow normal sight within the chamber – though some Player Characters may well wish they had retained the ignorance provided by blindness rather than see the horrors extant within this fell place.

This is because the area is now the demesne of Hákon Árnisson. In life, the man was a trusted adviser to King Eriksson. He was the first child of Iksurc to possess the *Bag of Mysteries* (see **Area #25** for details) and dared read the runes within its bounds. The experience drove him to madness and the atrocities he committed at the side of his King are far better imagined than described. So it was that when Eriksson was murdered, the Iksurc folk stormed Árnisson's home and bound him in irons for his crimes. They then took the mad seiðmann to Gröf Kununga and interred him alive with his king in an unmarked vault. This would have likely been the last the Ice Northmen had ever heard of him, had the humanoids not woken King Eriksson in their thirst for power. Instead, the newly roused undead's first act was to use the *Dauður-Stafur* to likewise breathe dark life into his adviser's bones. Such was the poor condition of his body but the intense hate and force of will possessed by his ghost that he returned in the form of a **Spectre**. Unfortunately for the Player Characters, this transformation has done nothing to diminish his magical power – which he is certain to ply upon them as soon as they enter this area.

Hákon Árnisson, Spectre: AC 2, MV 15"/30", HD 7+3, HP 45, THAC0 12, #AT 1, Damage 1d8 (Touch), SA Energy drain, SD +1 or better to hit, Undead immunities, SQ Spellcasting, AL CE, XP: 2,400. Spells Memorized: 1st: *Charm Person, Magic Missile (x2), Sleep*; 2nd: *ESP, Mirror Image, Ray of Enfeeblement, Web*; 3rd: *Dispel Magic, Haste, Protection*

from Good 10' Radius, Slow; 4th: Charm Monster, Confusion, Ice Storm, Wall of Fire; 5th: Animate Dead, Contact Other Plane, Feeblemind, Telekinesis; and 6th: Eyebite (Sicken).

The three burial vaults in this chamber were once occupied by Kings Ólav Halldórsson, Stefán Gíslisson, and Jóhann Ásgeirsson. When King Eriksson came to them to offer each his gift of dark unlife, all refused to have truck with such a foul individual that would make war with the sons and daughters of their tribe. Eriksson was wroth with fury at being rebuffed so and, since he did not afford them the same respect he extended to King Ilksurc, he raised them as **Ju-Ju Zombies**. He has ordered them to protect Hákon Árnisson and defend Gröf Kununga against any that would intrude into its upper level. As such, they will likewise attack the Player Characters as soon as they enter this chamber.

Ju-Ju Zombies (3): AC 4 (Improved by armor), MV 9", HD 3+12, HP 30, THAC0 15, #AT 2, Damage 1d6 (Battleaxe) or 3d4 (Fist), SD +1 or better to hit, Blunt, Fire, or piercing weapons only do half damage, Undead immunities, AL NE, XP: 230.

This battle will be an extremely difficult one for the Player Characters if Árnisson has warning of their approach (probably given him by the sounding of the bells in **Areas #29** or **#30**). If this occurs, he will prepare for their arrival by casting *ESP*, *Mirror Image*, *Protection from Good 10' Radius*, and *Eyebite* upon himself and *Haste* upon his Ju-Ju Zombie allies. He will then retreat to the rear of the chamber, floating near its ceiling, and order the dead kings to wait on either side of the door. From his position, he will cast *Slow* upon his enemies, then *Confusion* on their lot. After that, the Ju-Ju Zombies will begin their attack, and he will employ his offensive spells, such as *Ice Storm*, *Magic Missile*, and *Wall of Fire*. If the Player Characters manage to illuminate the room, they will immediately be greeted by the sight of his *Eyebite*. Note that Árnisson has hung a *Talisman of Spirit Strengthening* about one of the Ju-Ju Zombies' necks, providing each of them a +4 bonus to resist Turn attempts.

If the battle should begin to turn against Árnisson and his allies or the spectral seiðmann is reduced to half his hit points or less, he will flee the chamber, using his superior speed to rush to King Eriksson in **Area #34** (see below for details) and warn him to prepare himself for war.

Those Player Characters that are able to survive Árnisson's unholy power may loot this chamber of the considerable treasures contained in its three burial vaults. Each of these bore the name of its inhabitant and some carven verse regarding their deeds, but these were written upon the doors leading to those places, which have long since been shattered. Inside their sarcophagi (whose lids have likewise been destroyed), are the following valuables:

- *Sarcophagus of King Halldórsson*: 2,000sp, a silver and ruby necklace worth 2,000gp, and a silver hair clasp worth 1,000gp.
- *Sarcophagus of King Gíslisson*: 1,500sp, a silver ring set with a flawless star sapphire worth 2,500gp, and a slender platinum rod worth 1,000gp.
- *Sarcophagus of King Ásgeirsson*: 1,700sp, a ceremonial silver hand axe with a large moonstone set in its pommel worth 1,000gp and a mithril armband bearing five large emeralds worth 3,500gp.

The impressive magical treasures once found here now reside in **Area #34** in the possession of King Eriksson.

32. NOTHING BUT FLOWERS

Beyond this stone door is a 30' x 30' chamber composed of the same material. Silent and staid, the intense cold within the room makes of the breath thin cones of frost and covers the entirety of the room in an icy glittering. A door, presumably frozen as well, stands in the center of the east

wall, representing the only exit from the chamber's volume.

In the center of the room, a great stone sarcophagus rises from the floor. Its top is half-shattered. Some portion of it remains at a slanted angle atop the container, but the majority lies all around it in the form of scattered debris. Among this rubble are the withered and blackened stems of hundreds upon hundreds of dead flowers, their petals long since killed and withered by the cold - enough to cover nearly the entirety of the chamber's floor in a macabre carpet.

Standing among this wreckage of what once was, two figures stand. One is clad in leather armor and bears both a spear and shield. The other wears a long, velvet gown, its rich verdance rotted and ruined with antiquity. The flesh no longer clings to the bones of either and they stare at the world by way of burning points of malice in their bleached and frozen skulls.

So much did Queen Rúna Hildarsdóttir love her husband, King Leif Svansson, that in her grief following her death, the grief-stricken ruler demanded that she be interred in his crypt along with him, that they might sleep in each other's arms until they met once more in Tavun's hall. Likewise, it was at her behest that their last bedchambers be filled with pink tulips, as this was the flower he gave to her the day he asked for her hand in marriage.

When the two were approached by King Eriksson with the offer to join him in ruling the Iksurc from beyond the grave, they rebuffed him, preferring to remain in each other's arms until the end of time. Of course, he was loathe to take this as an answer; he used the *Dauður-Stafur* to animate their bodies as a rare form of undead called a **Coffer Corpse**.

King Leif Svansson and Queen Rúna Hildarsdóttir, Coffer Corpses: AC 0 and 2 (Improved by armor), MV 6", HD 6, HP 40 and 28, THAC0 10 and 13, #AT 1, Damage 1d6+3 (*Spear +3*) or 1d6 (Claw), SD +1 or

better to hit, Fear, Undead immunities, AL CE, XP: 348 and 164. Magic Items (Svansson): *Chain Mail +2, Shield +2, and Spear +3*. (Hildarsdóttir): *Bracers of Defense AC5, Ring of Protection +3*.

Both will attack immediately as soon as the Player Characters enter the chamber.

Given their power and authority when they lived, the former king and queen are far stronger than typical Coffer Corpses. To make matters worse for the Player Characters, both undead possess potent magical items that make them formidable adversaries. Yet both struggle defiantly against the power of the *Dauður-Stafur*, their love for one another strong enough that they have not been completely cowed by its magical compulsion. Any Player Character that tries to reason with the undead mentioning in any way this bond will allow them to momentarily break free from the *Dauður-Stafur's* control. In that moment, King Svansson will break off his attack. With his bride placing a skeletal hand upon his shoulder from behind, he will drop to one knee before the Player Characters, taking his coronet from his head and placing it before them. He will look up and offer his magical spear to them - before both he and his queen tumble to the icy stones beneath them in a pile of bones, forever gone. Their gratitude, embodied by the symbols of authority and might, is all that remains.

The coronet upon the king's skull is made of silver and set with a large sapphire, and is worth 3,500gp. The queen has one to match, worth 2,500gp. Aside of these and the magical items described above, there is a total of 2,000sp within their sarcophagus, along with a single *Philter of Love*.

33. TRUTH WAS HIS SWORD

This chamber is 30' x 30' in dimension, its walls, ceiling, and floor composed of dull, rime-covered stone. A lone doorway leads to the east, though the portal that once barred entry beyond its face lies shattered upon the ground within its threshold.

In the center of the room, a stone sarcophagus rises from the floor. Its lid lies upon the ground next to it, as if someone picked it from its place and carefully laid it where it now rests. Standing on the other side of the burial container is a proud warrior wearing rotted leather armor. In his hands are a broadsword and shield. The flesh that once clung to his bones has long since gone rotten and putrified, so it seems a horrific mystery as to how it yet clings to his skeleton.

This room was once the burial chamber of King Snorri Jenssen. Known as *Snorri the Honest* when he still drew breath, he gained repute throughout the whole of Iksurc land for his willingness to speak plainly and honestly, regardless of the cost. Of course few knew that this had less to do with his strength of character than the *Ring of Truth* that he placed upon his finger when he was still an adventurer.

Because of the magical loop that yet rests upon his bony hand, when King Eriksson roused him from his eternal sleep, he could not deny his desire to walk once more among the living. So it was that he called upon the dark power of the *Dauður-Stafur* and granted him the unholy gift of unlife. A moment later, he sat upright from his burial place as a unique kind of **Wight**, far more powerful than most examples of that horrid form of undead. King Eriksson is not exactly sure why it is that this happened, but given the powerful protector that he gained in the process, he would hardly complain.

As soon as the Player Characters enter this chamber, King Jenssen will attack them.

King Snorri Jenssen, Wight: AC 0 (Improved by armor), MV 6", HD 6+6, HP 42, THAC0 11, #AT 1, Damage 2d4+2 (*Broadsword +2*) or 1d4 (Claw), SA Energy drain, SD Silver or magic weapons to hit, Turned as Mummy, Undead immunities, AL LE, XP: 1,290. Magic Items: *Leather +2, Shield +2, Broadsword +2, Ring of Truth.*

The main advantage that what remains of King Jenssen possesses over common Wights is that he is able to employ his terrible level draining ability while striking an opponent with a weapon, rather than needing to touch them. Therefore, he will always seek to attack with his magical broadsword. When he lived, King Jenssen was able to give himself over to a ferocious berserker frenzy in combat. In death, he still relies on these tactics, rushing into the heart of battle and striking with a merciless aggression.

If the Player Characters are able to grant King Jenssen his final rest, they will find the sarcophagus in the center of the room empty; the ancient ruler was actually interred in the vault accessed through the chamber's east wall. Within this place, they will find his treasure: 1,500sp and a small ceramic bowl that holds 100 small gemstones of assorted type, each worth 10gp.

34. KING OF THE DEAD

Approaching the door at the end of the corridor, the temperature begins to drop precipitously. It seems to strangle the light for the air, shed by torchlight and enchanted object, rendering everything in a twilight gloom. Even within this frozen and fell necropolis, this place seems especially bleak.

The room beyond the threshold is a 30' x 30' square. Its ceiling looms nearly 40' above the floor, the center of which is occupied by a great stone sepulcher. Doorways lead forth from its walls to the north, east, and west. What lies past each one – clearly visible, as their stone portals lie razed upon the floor – are still more grey stone slabs, beneath which the dead were once meant to rest.

At the rear of the room, a massive throne has been built from the rubble of the shattered doors. Where a lack of stone was available, bone seems to have been used: Skulls and ribs, hands and appendages. Clumsily cobbled and held together by ice, rather than mortar, it is

nonetheless impressive for its grisly quality and sheer size. The throne sits before the room's central sepulcher as a chair before a dining table.

Seated upon this grim throne is a tall, powerfully-built man. He wears rime-covered chain mail and a massive battle axe rests at the side of his seat. He wears tattered, moth-eaten furs that were once opulent, but now ruined and rotten. Upon his brow rests a great crown that shines brilliantly when touched by light.

His skin is the grey color of a man frozen to death. His long hair and beard are likewise frost-white and matted by the weight of long years. He stares through eyes in which a darksome malice lingers.

He seems as if the king of the dead for his fearsome majesty.

This chamber was once the burial place of King Sveinn Eriksson, along with three other Iksurc rulers: King Einar Drekiþson, King Guðmòn Þórsson, and King Sigurður Rasmusson. The latter of these were considered three of the greatest of the Ice Northman rulers, while the first was buried in the unmarked sarcophagus in the room. It was the thought of the builders of Gröf Kununga that the three mighty kings would watch over Eriksson in death, acting as guardians to see that he never walked the world again.

As it should happen, the exact opposite came to pass. When the humanoid raiders that came to the necropolis entered this chamber, they disturbed first the stone slab in the center of the chamber. Within it, King Eriksson's restless spirit - now a **Swordwraith**, wroth with fury and thirsty for revenge against the ancestors of his former subjects - did not sleep easily, as as they sundered the runes that bound him in his place, they freed the wicked king. After slaughtering many of them, Eriksson walked Gröf Kununga until he discovered the hiding place of the *Dauður-Stafur*, which is largely

responsible for waking the rest of the dead within the necropolis, and cowing all those within it to the king's banner.

When the Player Characters enter this chamber, given that which they must have contended with to reach this point, it is most likely that King Eriksson will be well aware of their presence and prepared to greet them. When he does so, it will be with the three dead kings with which he once shared the room, as well as three more allies of terrifying power.

King Sveinn Eriksson, Swordwraith: AC 0 (Improved by magic ring), MV 9", HD 7, HP 56, THAC0 7 or 10, #AT 3/2 or 2, Damage 1d10+3 (*Battleaxe of Wounding +3*) or 1d10 (Shortbow), SA Strength drain, SD +2 or weapons to hit, Turned as Vampire, Undead immunities, AL CE, XP: 1,630. Magic Items: *Battleaxe of Wounding +3, Ring of Protection +3, the Dauður-Stafur*.

King Einar Drekiþson, King Guðmòn Þórsson, and King Sigurður Rasmusson, Wights: AC 3 (Improved by armor), MV 12", HD 4+3, HP 28, THAC0 15, #AT 1, Damage 1d4 (Claw), SA Energy drain, SD Silver or magic weapons to hit, Undead immunities, AL CE, XP: 680.

Slow Shadows (3): AC 8, MV 12", HD 4, HP 24, THAC0 15, #AT 1, Damage 1d4 (Chilling Touch), SA Slow, Surprise, SD +2 or better weapons to hit, Turned as Wraith, Undead immunities, AL LE, XP: 1,290. Magic Items: *Leather +2, Shield +2, Broadsword +2, Ring of Truth*.

If prepared for the arrival of the Player Characters, the three Wights will stand in the room's forefront, ready to engage them. The Slow Shadows will hover above the doorway and drop down upon the front line ranks. Meanwhile, King Eriksson will stand behind the core of the room's west vault, using it as cover while he uses the power of the *Dauður-Stafur* to force them into fealty. If they seem to resist the power of the artifact, he will remain in place and try to sap the strength of Fighter characters with volleys from his short bow. Only if his foes seem immune to the effects of this tactic or he becomes concerned that he might be flanked or outmaneuvered

(perhaps by way of an area-attack spell) will he engage in melee. Under no circumstances will he surrender. King Eriksson no longer fears death and he bears no respect for his enemies. He would prefer to challenge Tavun in the afterlife than concede defeat to their likes.

King Eriksson has robbed many of the burial crypts of their treasures since he woke from the dead. These valuables are by and large kept within the sepulcher in the center of the chamber, though they are protected by a **Trap**. Laying atop the pile of largesse is a small slip of ancient parchment. This reads: *Heyri síðasta hlátur minn* (CT: "Hear my last laugh"). The words are *Explosive Runes* that not only deal 6d6+4hp of negative energy damage to all those within a 10' radius of the parchment when it is read (only those not actually reading it may save for half damage), but they also lose a level, as if touched by a Wight (all within the area of effect are entitled to a save vs. Spells to avoid this fate).

Within the sepulcher are 72,654sp, 1986gp, and 1,211pp. The 50 assorted gemstones within the container possess the following values: 50 (x19), 75 (x6), 100 (x11), 500 (x7), 1,000 (x4), and 5,000 (x3). These riches are accompanied by a silver and emerald necklace worth 2,500gp, a pair of mithril bracers worth 500gp, a small silver and sapphire crown worth 1,500gp, and King Eriksson's own platinum and ruby crown, which is worth 15,000gp. Mixed in with this treasure is a *Potion of Fire Resistance*, a *Potion of Healing*, a *Potion of Speed*, a *Ring of Jumping*, a *Wand of Frost* (34 charges), a *Beaker of Plentiful Potions* which can dispense a *Potion of Diminution* 1 time a day, 3 times a week (this the object that allows Snjórfangar to easily come and go from Gröf Kununga), a pair of *Bracers of Archery*, a *Cloak of Protection +2*, a suit of *Elfin Chain Mail +1* (sized for an elf), a small wooden *Shield +1, +4 vs. Missiles*, an *Axe of Hurling +2*, a *Broadsword +2*, and a *Heavy Crossbow of Speed +2*.

Chapter Four: The Glacial Catacombs

Introduction

This area of Gröf Kununga can be accessed by way of the stairwell in **Area #9**. Only a recent creation, it was excavated from the flesh of the glacier that surrounds it by humanoids that accidentally managed to release King Eriksson from his crypt. Since he was unwilling to sully the Graveyard of Kings with their presence, he ordered them to dig this dwelling for themselves. While it may seem an afterthought to the burial vaults of kings found in the upper level of Gröf Kununga, it is the place in which a small army of humanoids can be found – and thus, is a very dangerous place.

Glacial Catacombs Encounter Key

The Glacial Catacombs is comprised of several large caverns, connected by a series of corridors tunneled through the glacier that ensconces it. The humanoids that dug it were not skilled engineers. Consequently, its expanse is rough-hewn and inconsistent. Its connecting hallways are generally about 5' in width and meander through the ice in the fashion of a rabbit warren. In this place, there are no doors and no type of illumination by which to see.

Footings within the Glacial Catacombs is treacherous. The ice is slippery, giving characters unused to or ill-equipped for such conditions to suffer a -2 penalty on their To-Hit rolls and their Armor Class. The humanoids themselves wear primitive cleats made of elk and reindeer horn strapped to their feet with leather thongs to overcome this penalty (though their movement rate is reduced by 3" because of the footwear). Player Characters would be well-advised to commandeer a pair of these cleats from the corpse of a dead humanoid if they wish to survive for any length of time within this dangerous place.

35. THE GREAT CAVERN

At the foot of the stairway abides a great open area. Perhaps 80' at its widest and 70' at its longest, it appears to be a vaguely circular cavern, cut from the very heart of the glacier. The ceiling is a dizzying 50' above its floor and every surface seems to glisten and twinkle when kissed by any form of light. Corridors issue forth from the place to

the northeast and northwest, the southeast and southwest, and directly south, disappearing into darkness.

Within the ice-cave are dozens of bedrolls. Dirty and mangy bits of cloth that seem scavenged from all manner of places, these are piled high on the frozen ground near the area's walls so as to keep their occupants from succumbing to the cold.

Milling about within the cavern are just over a score of humanoids – massive ogres, fearsome orcs, and even a trio of hideous trolls.

Much of what will occur within this room will depend upon whether or not the humanoids within this cave have been alerted to the presence of the Player Characters, generally because of events that take place in **Areas #7, #8, and #9** (see above for details). The boxed text above describes the cavern if the party manages to enter its bounds *without* warning the humanoids within. In such a case, they will have the element of surprise and may attack them with a significant advantage.

If the Player Characters are unable to do so, however, they will have a serious fight on their hands.

Orcs (22): AC 6, MV 6", HD 1, HP 6, THAC0 19, #AT 1 or 2, Damage 2d4 (Broadsword) or 1d6 (Short Bow), AL LE, XP: 16.

Ogre (6): AC 5, MV 6", HD 4+1, HP 27, THAC0 15, #AT 1, Damage 1d10 (Fist), AL CE, XP: 225.

Trolls (3): AC 4, MV 9", HD 6+6, HP 40, THAC0 13, #AT 3, Damage 1d4+3 (Claw) / 1d4+3 (Claw) / 2d6 (Bite), SD, Regenerate 3hp/round, SV Acid, Fire, AL CE, XP: 845.

If warned of their approach, the Trolls and Ogres will surround the stairway, acting as front line soldiery (this might have catastrophic results for any Player Character that tumbles down the stairs thanks to the *Grease* effect on its steps (see **Area #9** for

details)). Meanwhile, the Orcs will bravely remain out of melee range, attacking with bowshots, instead. Note that loud sounds of combat here will almost certainly bring forth the humanoids dwelling in **Area #36** (see below) to reinforce those found here.

While King Eriksson does not permit the common rabble of his troops – such as those that inhabit this room – to possess personal treasure, some of the humanoids defy his wrath and stash some meager wealth in their bedrolls. A search of these will yield a total of 174sp, a large piece of beryl worth 75gp, and a silver dagger with a moonstone-encrusted scabbard worth 250gp.

36. THE ARMY BELEAGUERED

This ice cavern is a long and narrow place. Almost 70' in length and but 30' wide, it is more like a crevasse in the frozen firmament of the glacier than a true cave. A slender passage winds away from its south wall into darkness.

Near the rear of the place, several bedrolls lay upon the frozen ground. Furs and mismatched blankets pile upon these sleeping places, mangy and dirty.

Among the cavern, several humanoids roam, bearing weapons and wearing armor. Though they appear cold and hungry, their ferociousness appears undimmed in the slightest.

This cave has been claimed by some of King Eriksson's most experienced and skilled humanoid warriors. The backbone of his army, these twelve **Orcs** and four **Ogres** are every bit as cold and hungry as they look. Indeed, they probably would have tried to desert his service by now, were it not for the compulsion of the *Dauður-Stafur* that drives them onward.

Orcs (22): AC 6, MV 6", HD 1, HP 6, THAC0 19, #AT 1 or 2, Damage 2d4 (Broadsword) or 1d6 (Short Bow), AL LE, XP: 16.

Ogre (6): AC 5, MV 6", HD 4+1, HP 27, THAC0 15, #AT 1, Damage 1d10 (Fist), AL CE, XP: 225.

In the same way as their fellows in **Area #35**, if attacked, the Ogres found here will rush to melee their foes, while the Orcs will attack with bows. In particular, the Ogres will try and cut off escape from this cave, forcing the Player Characters to retreat down the southern passage leading away from its main body. Their doom may be sealed if they are allowed to do so, as that tunnel is a dead-end, its rear being used by the humanoids as a place to dispose of waste and offal (the smell here is truly unspeakable).

Aside of their weapons and armor, the humanoids here bear precious little treasure. A total of 448sp and 52gp can be found in their bedrolls. One of the Ogres, however, has a large sapphire he uses as a false tooth, which is worth 500gp if it can be recovered.

37. WE ARE THE DEAD

This 30' diameter frozen cave is roughly circular. Exits yawn in its southeast and southwest reaches. In its center, five Orcs and three Ogres stand shrouded in heavy plate armor. What shows through of their skin is icy and blue, like that of a man's frozen to death.

When some member of his forces displeases him, King Eriksson slays them and returns them as a **Zombie**, using the power of the *Dauður-Stafur*. He finds that this keeps those that live on in line quite nicely. This room is where he keeps these undead, at the ready when he orders his army to march forth.

Under no circumstances will those living humanoids that dwell in the Glacial Catacombs venture into this cave, as they find it terrifying in the extreme. When Player Characters do, however, they will instantly be set upon by the **Zombie Orcs** and **Zombie Ogres** within its bounds, who will fight to the death to ensure their destruction.

Orc Zombies (5): AC 3 (Improved by armor), MV 3", HD 2, HP 11, THAC0 16, #AT 1, Damage 2d4 (Broadsword), SD Undead Immunities, AL LE, XP: 32.

Ogre Zombies (3): AC 3 (Improved by armor), MV 3", HD 5+1, HP 30, THAC0 15, #AT 1, Damage 1d10+1 (Fist), SD Undead immunities, AL CE, XP: 400.

Unlike a man or humanoid in these frigid conditions, King Eriksson has been delighted to learn that these **Zombies** can wear plate armor without complaint (normally, it would be too cold for even the toughest of warriors). This makes these undead truly dangerous. However, despite the difficulty that the Player Characters may have in killing them, they will find that there are no forms of valuables in this room. Even their armor is useless to the living, here.

38. THE EXILE

This irregularly-shaped cavern takes the vague dimensions of a circle, 30' in diameter. Within it, a single, large bedroll lays upon the icy ground. The furs and blankets that lie upon it seem especially rotten and ruined. The smell that issues forth from the bundle is nauseating in quality.

Within this cavern lives a strange and horrific creature: A **Mutant Ogre** born to the humanoids that dwell within the Glacial Catacombs. Nearly as tall as a giant and with festering sores and features as twisted as any Fomorian, though the creature repulses them it is too powerful for them to kill (and in any case, King Eriksson sees great potential in the thing, so he would forbid such an act). Therefore, the thing has been ceded this chamber as its own. Completely insane, as soon as it sees outsiders within its demesne, it will utter a terrifying shriek and move to kill them with a rime-covered club nearly as big as a tree.

Mutant Ogre: AC 3, MV 6", HD 10+3, HP 58, THAC0 10, #AT 1, Damage 4d6 (Club), AL CE, XP: 2,062.

This horrid thing is like unto a living siege engine, existing but to destroy. It has no type of treasure within its cave.

39. WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

Activity abounds within this icy cave, roughly 40' x 40' at its longest points. Dozens of conversations ripple the air, amongst the sounds of children wailing, fights breaking out, and those squabbles being shut down just as quickly. Bedrolls litter the floor here, making something of an ad-hoc carpet atop the cave's frozen floor. Upon these ratty and moldering furs, dozens of female humanoids - Ogres, Orcs, and even a few Trolls - tend to their children, feeding them, and watching them at play.

To the rear of the cave, the grade of its floor rises to an area uninhabited but by a single Orc. Powerfully built, wearing leather armor and wielding a battleaxe, he glowers out upon the scene, taking in the spectacle impassively.

When he took over the tribe of humanoids that came to Gröf Kununga with the power of the *Dauður-Stafur*, King Eriksson bade his newfound troops multiply as quickly as possible, that his army might soon swell mighty and numerous. Of course, they did as they were told and it is in this chamber that the group's females rear their young, watched over by the tribe's chief, Traa'kan.

Within the chamber are 15 **female Orcs**, 3 **female Ogres**, and 3 **female Trolls** see to the needs of 22 **juvenile Orcs**, 4 **juvenile Ogres**, and 3 **juvenile Trolls**. None of these are considered combatants and will merely do their best to protect their young if face with foes in the form of the Player Characters, throwing themselves in harm's way. This may well give the Orc Chief time to do significant damage to their enemies, however.

Traa'kan, Orc Chieftain: AC 5, MV 6", HD 5+3, HP 26, THACO 11 or 13, #AT 1, Damage 1d6+2 (*Spear +2*) or 1d6+20 (*Javelin of Lightning*), AL LE, XP: 382. Magic Items: *Spear +2*, *Javelins of Lightning* (5).

If the Player Characters have reached this chamber, Traa'kan will realize that the very life of his entire tribe rests upon the outcome of this battle. He will thusly fight to his dying breath, allowing the young and females within the chamber to swarm over his foes while he hurls his magical *Javelins* at them (if they die, he is unconcerned; more can always be made thralls, then reared). His goal is to make as much noise as is possible in the course of the combat, that he might be reinforced from still-living humanoids within the caverns. The fight is almost certain to be gruesome, the young and females being slaughtered wholesale if the Player Characters hope to reach Traa'kan (something that Good-Aligned characters may have to wrestle with for some time to come).

If the room is pacified, the Player Characters will discover that Traa'kan was the only one of the Orcs permitted by his King to possess personal treasure. In addition to his magical arms, this takes the form of 703sp, a dwarven-made gold ring bearing a fine ruby, worth 1,000gp, and a pair of broad, golden armlets, each worth 250gp.

Epilogue

If the Player Characters fail to destroy King Eriksson, the time of Iksurc habitation of the Nairnoliht Peninsula begins to slip through history's hourglass. The undead horror's forces only grow more numerous and more fearsome with each encroaching day. Soon enough, the villages and towns that dot the landscape north of the Kurocs Mountains begin to wink out of existence like candles blown by a frigid gale. The souls that one inhabited them freeze to death before rising as the wicked king's undead thralls. It is not long after this that proud Talpstoj falls. In the weeks that follow, the capital city of Tolg suffers the same end. King Eriksson holds sway over a great kingdom of the frozen dead, built upon the bones of the children of Iksurc. It is likely that soon the houses of Anhics and Iitzurf will share their fate.

Should the Player Characters manage to defeat the undying king, however, they will be met with great fanfare upon their return to Talpstoј. If they were able to free Snjórfangar from his prison in Gröf Kununga, the dragon will even allow his liberators to return to the city upon his back – an unforgettable experience and a sight sure to awe the common folk of the settlement! – before flying into the heights of the Kurocs. The dragon is not without honor; he will pledge never to attack Talpstoј as a gesture of gratitude for their actions. He will never be seen again, afterwards.

Jarlinde Reynirsdóttir is likewise grateful for the Player Characters' heroism. She will call them before the Throne of a Thousand Shields and summon the most talented of her skjálds to her side before bidding them to tell tale of their adventures within fell Gröf Kununga. When they have finished their story, the Jarlinde will command the skjáld to compose a piece of epic poetry to commemorate the episode. She wishes generations to come to know the names of those responsible for no less than saving the very souls of the children of Iksurc, and the deeds they wrought that made it so.

The Jarlinde will then bid the skjáld bring her the rewards due for the heroes of Iksurc. In a few moments, he will return with three strong men – all of whom carry great wooden chests. For their deeds, she has deigned give each Player Character 5,000sp, a useful magical *Potion* befitting their individual personalities and classes (or a *Scroll*, at the Dungeon Master's discretion), and a magical item of the same kind, worth no more than 10,000gp.

Finally, Jarlinde Reynirsdóttir will tell the assembled Player Characters that they have proven themselves as heroes of the Iksurc – the finest examples that their folk could hope to offer. As such, she explains to them that still more might be requested of them in days to come. When the need of the Ice Northmen is greatest, it is their names that will be called upon to rise up in the defense of their folk. So it is that they might be called upon to destroy a rampaging dragon or protect the innocents of the tribe against a band of marauding giants – the type of adventures worthy of heroes of their ilk.

Her sapphire eyes will seem to flash with fire.

Perhaps, even the liberation of Tavun himself....

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Appendix A: NEW MAGIC ITEMS

Bag of Mysteries

(Major Artifact)

The *Bag of Mysteries* appears as a simple black leather bag, though it is far more than that. Indeed, within the magical container – ancient long before the world's current cycle – is said to be knowledge and wisdom beyond reckoning. Those who are able to divine the secrets held within the *Bag* are given the ability to create that which they can conceive. Iksurc lore states that it was Tavun who first read those mysteries held within the *Bag*, after offering a great sacrifice of himself, and because of this, gained great magical power.

To any non-spellcaster reaching inside it, the container will act as a *Bag of Devouring*. If a character capable of casting spells (a Cleric, Druid, Magic-User, or Illusionist is considered such an individual, a Paladin or Ranger character of sufficient level to cast spells is *not*, however) places their hand in the bag, they will feel several small stones. No matter what method they use, they will only be able to produce one of these (nothing at all will fall from it if they turn the bag upside-down).

Carved on the stone is a single rune. When this is read by the spellcasting character, they must roll percentage dice as if they were affected by a *Psionic Blast*. While they must accept the consequences of whatever result is indicated by the dice, a roll of 76-00 means that the spellcaster **permanently** gains a spell-like ability that can be used once every day. The ability is taken from their spell list and randomly rolled, though the spell must be one that they were capable of casting (for example, an Illusionist capable of casting a 4th level spell at maximum could only gain a spell like ability of 4th level or lower, taken from the list of Illusionist spells). The spell gained in this manner can be of no higher than 7th level, regardless of the casting ability of the individual reading the rune.

This bag will only function once every nine years and only function once for any given individual, in any case. Attempts at using it more frequently will result in the greedy individual being *Feebleminded* (as the spell, no saving throw permitted). This state cannot be reversed by any means short of a *Wish* or the direct intervention by the gods.

XP Value: * GP Value: 60,000

The Dauður-Stafur

(Minor Artifact)

The *Dauður-Stafur* (AS: “Dead-Stick”) is an ancient magical item, said to have once been a dead branch broken from the World-Tree by death itself, who allowed the staff to abide upon the planet to sow woe and discord. It appears as a gnarled length of ash, gone grey with age and demonstrating blots of blight, as if its heartwood were rotten.

The *Dauður-Stafur* is meant to signify death's dominion over the flesh and souls of the living, both. As such, it has two primary functions:

- *Dominion over flesh:* The individual who possesses the *Dauður-Stafur* may use it to exercise rulership (command the obedience and fealty) of creatures within 12" when he or she activates it. From 200 to 500 hit dice (or levels of experience) can be ruled, but creatures with 15 or greater intelligence and 12 or more Hit Dice/Levels are entitled to a saving throw versus magic, albeit at a penalty of -6. Ruled creatures will obey the wielder of the *Dauður-Stafur* as if he or she were their absolute suzerain..
- *Dominion over souls:* The individual who possesses the *Dauður-Stafur* may use it to compel the dead to rise again in the form of an undead creature. A corpse can be made any type of undead creature that has equal to or less the amount of Hit Dice/Levels they possessed when alive. For example, a creature with 4HD could be made a Wight or any lesser type of undead, while a 6th level Fighter could be made a Mummy or any lesser sort of undead creature. The undead created by the *Dauður-Stafur* conform exactly to the listed statistics for such monsters. They are under the complete control of the wielder of the *Dauður-Stafur*.

The *Dauður-Stafur* is an inherently evil item and using it for any purposes constitutes an evil act. It is said that the staff can easily be broken by any individual whose faith in the gods is strong and unwavering. In their hands, the *Dauður-Stafur* breaks as easily as a kindling twig.

XP Value: * GP Value: 70,000

Höfuðkúpa-Kljúfar

The *Höfuðkúpa-Kljúfar* (CT: "Skull-Cleaver") is one of the most storied magical weapons in the history of the Iksurc folk. From its broad, double bladed head, the haft of the majestic battle axe runs no less than four feet before ending in a handle wrapped in the tanned leather hide of a remorhaz. It is said that the great hero Hrímnir Axelsson slew the frost giant king Leifur Glacierthews with the weapon before turning it over to his daughter Anja Hrímnirsdóttir. That heroine subsequently used the mighty axe to behead the first born of the king, the wicked norn Ljótunn Liefursdóttir, at Talpstojs very gates when she came to the Iksurc lands thirsty for revenge.

Höfuðkúpa-Kljúfar is a +3 *Battleaxe of Sharpness*. It possesses the ability to grant its wielder *Strength* (as the spell) once per day. Likewise, once per day, its wielder may ignore the effects of any single attack (the possessor of the axe **must** make clear their intent to call upon this power before any "To-Hit" or Damage rolls are made by the Dungeon Master). All creatures slain with the axe are forever dead and may not rise again by any means short of a *Wish*.

XP Value: 10,000 GP Value: 50,000

The Tavunskredda

(Major Artifact)

The *Tavunskredda* (AS: "The Word of Tavun") is a collection of ancient anonymous Zhirian poems that describe the life and deeds of Tavun. The words within its covers were allegedly handed down from the Great God of the North himself through the ages to his high priests and priestesses. As the text ends only shortly before his imprisonment by Ruhclet, it is arguably the most important extant source regarding Tavun, the beliefs of those who worshiped him, and the history of those who inhabited the Nairnolliht Peninsula prior to the arrival of the Zhirian folk in -417CY.

The *Tavunskredda* takes the form of a great volume, 55 vellum pages long and bound by heavy stone sheets stitched together with the ligament of some unidentifiable type of creature (perhaps one that is now extinct upon the world). The book is covered in frost and rime and radiates an intense cold at all times, regardless of the temperature around it.

Handling it without gloves is perilous, as the covers and pages of the *Tavunskredda* are so frigid that they can easily strip flesh from the fingers. Likewise, the book is so heavy that it cannot be lifted by characters of less than a 15 Strength.

A priest or priestess of Tavun that is capable of hefting its weight and reading the Ancient Xuel tongue may benefit from the power of the *Tavunskredda*. For those that can do neither, even handling the tome is dangerous in the extreme. Those who do not worship Tavun that so much as touch the book suffer 5d6hp of cold damage (no save). Those who worship Ruhclet that come into contact with the *Tavunskredda* are frozen alive and slain instantly (a successful saving throw vs. spells indicates that the individual suffers 10d6hp damage and the loss of 30,000-120,000xp, instead).

A priest or priestess of Tavun that reads the *Tavunskredda* gains 1 level and 1 point of Wisdom as long as the book is in their possession. The mysteries revealed to such an individual further allows the book to act as a *Ring of Wizardry*, doubling the amount of first and second level spells they are able to cast each day. They are immune to the effects of ice and cold at all times and any weapon in their possession gains the properties of a *Frost Brand* sword (making it a +3 weapon, +6 vs. fire-using/dwelling creatures, and giving its wielder many special properties against heat and flame of all kinds).

It is said that the Great God of the North's power is able to course through the pages and cover of the *Tavunskredda* because of a flaw in the prison that has kept the deity in Ruhclet's durance. As such, those faithful to the power often claim that Tavun himself whispers to the bearer of his great holy text, driving them on ever closer to his eventual release....

XP Value: * GP Value: 120,000

Appendix B: PRE-GENERATED CHARACTERS

Guðrún Fjalarsdóttir

Race / Gender: Human Female
 Level / Class: 5th level Cleric (Tavun)
 Alignment: Chaotic Neutral



Strength: 15 TH Bonus: ±0 Dam. Bonus: ±0 Op. Doors: On 1-2 B. Bars: 4%
Intelligence: 9 1 Additional Language Known
Wisdom: 17 Magical Attack Adjustment: +3
Dexterity: 13 Reaction / Attack Adjust.: ±0 Defensive Adjust.: ±0
Constitution: 15 Hit Point Adjustment: +1 System Shock: 91%
Charisma: 14 Reaction Adjustment: +10%

Armor Class: 5 (Studded Leather & Small Wooden Shield +1)
Hit Points: 34
Movement Base: 9"
Weapon in Hand: *Warhammer +2*
Adjusted To-Hit Armor Class 0: [Warhammer] 16
Adjusted Weapon Damage: [Warhammer] 1d4+3 (S/M), 1d4+2 (L)
Attacks Per Round: 1
Weapon Proficiencies: Warhammer, Mace, Quarterstaff
Non-Proficiency Penalty: -3
Languages Known: Frozen Tongue, Ancient Xuloise

Adjusted Saving Throws	
Paralyzation:	9
Petrification:	12
Rods/Staves/Wands:	13
Breath Weapon:	15
Spells:	14

* Save vs. Mind-Affecting Spells: 11

Magic Weapon Descriptions	Special Racial Abilities
<i>Warhammer +2: No special abilities.</i>	None.
Other Magic Items	Spells & Special Class Abilities
<i>Small Wooden Shield +1, Potion of Hill Giant Strength.</i>	Cleric Abilities: Turn Undead (<i>Skeleton: C, Zombie: C, Ghoul: T, Shadow: 4, Wight: 7, Ghast: 10, Wraith: 13, Mummy: 16, Spectre: 20</i>) Cleric Spells Prepared (5/5/2): 1 st : <i>Command, Cure Light Wounds (x3), Protection from Evil</i> , 2 nd : <i>Augury, Chant, Silence 15' Radius, Speak with Animals, Spiritual Hammer</i> ; 3 rd : <i>Cure Disease, Speak with Dead</i> .

Distribution of All Items Carried					
Left Side		Center, Back, or Feet		Right Side	
Item	Location	Item	Location	Item	Location
Small Wooden Shield	Carried	Studded Leather Armor	Worn	Warhammer	Carried
Drinking Horn	On belt	Holy Symbol	Worn	Leather rigging	On belt
Wineskin	On belt	Cloak	Worn	Holy water vials (2)	In rigging
50' Rope	On belt	High hard boots	Worn	Oil flask (1)	In rigging
Small leather bag	On belt	Backpack	Worn	Potion	In rigging
2 weeks Iron rations	In bag	Tinder Box, Flint, & Steel	In backpack		
		Torches (3)	In backpack		
		2 Large leather bags	In backpack		

Gold & Wealth: 24sp, 3gp A silver ring worth 75gp A silver-encrusted drinking horn worth 85gp.	Experience Gained: 20,022xp.
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Special Notes: Guðrún was the priestess of Tavun in the village of Hartshorn, second only to the settlement's drott in authority and esteem. This was before the Dreki-Jarl came from over the mountains on his terrible white würm and laid waste to the only home she had ever known. Indeed, she was one of a handful of survivors that managed to make their way - bloodied and half-frozen alive - to the city of Talpsto, where they found shelter and hospitality from that place's young Jarlinde. Now, that worthy has called to herself a group of the land's most renowned warriors to put an end to the threat of the Dreki-Jarl - among them, Guðrún. Her heart thirsty for a bloody revenge, she will not sleep until the murderer of Hartshorn received his just desserts!



Haukur Ólafsson

Race / Gender: Xuloise Human Male

Level / Class: 5th level Fighter

Alignment: Chaotic Neutral



Strength: 18 82% TH Bonus: +2 Dam. Bonus: +4 Op. Doors: On 1-4 B. Bars: 30%
Intelligence: 7 0 Additional Languages Known
Wisdom: 7 Magical Attack Adjustment: -1
Dexterity: 15 Reaction / Attack Adjust.: ±0 Defensive Adjust.: ±0
Constitution: 16 Hit Point Adjustment: +2 System Shock: 95%
Charisma: 9 Reaction Adjustment: ±0%

Armor Class: 5 (Leather Armor, *Tattoo of Protection* +2, & Small Wooden Shield)

Hit Points: 45

Movement Base: 12"

Weapon in Hand: *Battleaxe* +2

Adjusted To-Hit Armor Class 0: [Battleaxe] 14
 [Short Bow] 16
 [Hand Axe] 16

Adjusted Weapon Damage: [Battleaxe] 1d8+6 (S/M), 1d8+6 (L)
 [Short Bow] 1d6 (S/M), 1d6 (L)
 [Hand Axe] 1d6+4 (S/M), 1d4+4 (L)

Attacks Per Round: [Battleaxe, Hand Axe] 1
 [Short Bow] 2

Weapon Proficiencies: Battleaxe, Broadsword, Short Bow, Hand Axe, Dagger

Non-Proficiency Penalty: -2

Languages Known: Frozen Tongue

Adjusted Saving Throws	
Paralyzation:	9
Petrification:	10
Rods/Staves/Wands:	11
Breath Weapon:	11
Spells:	12

* Save vs. Mind-Affecting Spells: 13

Magic Weapon Descriptions	Special Racial Abilities
<i>Battleaxe</i> +2: No special abilities.	None.
Other Magic Items	Spells & Special Class Abilities
<i>Tattoo of Protection</i> +2 (as the <i>Ring</i>).	<i>Berserker:</i> Haukur can enter a berserk state for 1d10 rounds, 3/day. During this state, if he uses a melee weapon, he may either strike twice per round or strike once with a +2 bonus to hit and damage.

Distribution of All Items Carried					
Left Side		Center, Back, or Feet		Right Side	
Item	Location	Item	Location	Item	Location
Small Wooden Shield	Carried	Leather Armor	Worn	Battleaxe	Carried
Hand Axe (3)	Sheathed on belt	Fur Cloak	Worn	Wineskin	On belt
Quiver	On belt	Furred boots	Worn	Tinderbox, flint & steel	On belt
Arrows (20)	In quiver	Backpack	Worn	Leather rigging	On belt
		Short Bow	Across back	Oil flasks (2)	In rigging
		50' Rope	In backpack		
		Large leather sacks (2)	In backpack		
		2 weeks Iron Rations	In backpack		
		Torches (3)	In backpack		

Gold & Wealth: 38sp, 11gp. 7 Islandic silver rods, each worth 5gp, Silver pendant set with a large sapphire worth 500gp.	Experience Gained: 20,014xp.
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Special Notes: Haukur hails from the small village of Bear Hearth, along the Frozen Sea. He made a name for himself for spearheading a warband of Ice Northmen that met a small orcish army descending from the heights of the Kurocs Mountains to prey on the tiny settlements on the tundra. His staunch bravery and terrifying ferocity upon that gruesome made his name known across the whole of the Iksurc land. Indeed, it is said that the mere mention of it is enough to stiffen the spines of the Kurocs humanoids with respect...and more than a little fear.

So it is that few were surprised when the Jarlinde of Talpstoj called Haukur to her throne to serve as a champion for the Ice Northmen. He knows well the stories of the White Rider and his horrific mount, but fear is a stranger to a man such as he. He is prepared to wrestle his dragon to the world and snap its neck with his bare hands, if he must. All for the glory of the Iksurc!



Jórunn Sindrisson

Race / Gender: Human Female
 Level / Class: 5th level Ranger
 Alignment: Chaotic Good



Strength: 14 TH Bonus: ±0 Dam. Bonus: ±0 Op. Doors: On 1-2 B. Bars: 7%
Intelligence: 13 3 Additional Languages Known
Wisdom: 14 Magical Attack Adjustment: ±0
Dexterity: 16 Reaction / Attack Adjust.: +1 Defensive Adjust.: -2
Constitution: 16 Hit Point Adjustment: +2 System Shock: 95%
Charisma: 7 Reaction Adjustment: -5%

Adjusted Saving Throws	
Paralyzation:	11
Petrification:	12
Rods/Staves/Wands:	13
Breath Weapon:	13
Spells:	14

Armor Class: 6 (Leather Armor & Dexterity Bonus)

Hit Points: 33

Movement Base: 12"

Weapon in Hand: Short Bow

Adjusted To-Hit Armor Class 0: [Short Bow] 11
 [Hand Axe] 16

Adjusted Weapon Damage: [Short Bow] 1d6+3 (S/M), 1d6+3 (L)
 [Hand Axe] 1d6 (S/M), 1d4 (L)

Attacks Per Round: [Short Bow] 2
 [Hand Axe] 1

Weapon Proficiencies: Short Bow, Hand Axe, Battle Axe, Broad Sword, Dagger

Non-Proficiency Penalty: -2

Languages Known: Common, Frozen Tongue, Gnoll, Orcish

Magic Weapon Descriptions	Special Racial Abilities
None.	None.
Other Magic Items	Spells & Special Class Abilities
<i>Arrows +2 (24), Bracers of Archery, Potion of Healing.</i>	Ranger Abilities: +5 <i>Damage bonus</i> against "giant-class" creatures; <i>Surprise</i> opponents 50% of the time; <i>Tracking</i> ability; <i>Identification</i> of tracks.
Animal Companions, Familiars, & Mounts	
<p>Svartur: Is a jet black Zhirian wolf (a breed native to the Nairnollit Peninsula, notable for their aggressiveness and ferocity) that acts as Jórunn's animal companion. She is quite affectionate towards the Ranger, who she sees as an Alpha and mother figure - though she will cheerfully rip the throat out of just about anything else. Absolutely fearless, she would attack a flight of dragons, if her mistress commanded it. AC 7, MV 18", HD 2+2, HP 16, THAC0 16, #AT 1, Damage 1d4+1 (Bite), AL N.</p>	

Distribution of All Items Carried					
Left Side		Center, Back, or Feet		Right Side	
Item	Location	Item	Location	Item	Location
Bracer	Worn	Leather Armor	Worn	Short Bow	Carried
Hand Axe	On belt	Furred Cloak	Worn	Bracer	Worn
Quiver	On belt	Furred boots	Worn	Wineskin	On belt
Arrows (24)	In quiver	Backpack	Worn	Drinking horn	On belt
Small bag	On belt	50' Rope	In backpack	Tinderbox, flint & steel	On belt
Wolf treats	In bag	Large leather sacks (2)	In backpack	Leather rigging	On belt
		2 weeks Iron Rations	In backpack	Oil flasks (2)	In rigging
		Torches (3)	In backpack	Potion	In rigging

Gold & Wealth: 37gp, 4gp. Remorhaz-tooth drinking horn worth 250gp, Ivory and emerald medallion worth 500gp.	Experience Gained: 31,647xp
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Special Notes: Jórunn is known to the Iksurc folk as the *Úlfurstúlkur* (CT: “Wolf-Maiden”): A near-mythic individual who roams the face of the tundra accompanied only by a pack of loyal Zhirian wolves. The woman is said to be a grim and silent figure that hunts the most dangerous monsters that stalk the barren snows: The remorhazes beneath its surface and the humanoid that descend from the mountains above it. It is she that shelters many of the small villages at the foothills of the Kurocs from the monsters that plague them.

Because of this reputation, she was one of the Iksurc heroes called to the city of Talpstoj by its respected young Jarlinde, Solveig. Since she is a hunter of monsters, that worthy believes that her presence is vital if the land is ever to be rid of the White Rider and its terrible dragon mount. For her part, Jórunn is prepared to face the challenge without a hint of fear in her heart. Indeed, such things are strangers to the legendary *Úlfurstúlkur*!



Flóki Björnsson

Race / Gender: Xuloise Human Male

Level / Class: 5th level Magic-User

Alignment: Chaotic Good



Strength: 9 TH Bonus: ±0 Dam. Bonus: ±0 Op. Doors: On 1-2 B. Bars: 1%
Intelligence: 17 6 Additional Languages Known
Wisdom: 13 Magical Attack Adjustment: ±0
Dexterity: 10 Reaction / Attack Adjust.: ±0 Defensive Adjust.: ±0
Constitution: 12 Hit Point Adjustment: ±0 System Shock: 80%
Charisma: 12 Reaction Adjustment: ±0%

Armor Class: 6 (*Staff of Power, Ring of Protection* +2)

Hit Points: 15

Movement Base: 12"

Weapon in Hand: *Staff of Power*

Adjusted To-Hit Armor Class 0: [Quarterstaff] 18

Adjusted Weapon Damage: [Quarterstaff] 1d6+2 (S/M), 1d6+2 (L)

Attacks Per Round: 1

Weapon Proficiencies: Quarterstaff

Non-Proficiency Penalty: -5

Languages Known: Common, Ancient Xuloise, Frozen Tongue, Goblin, Gnoll, Ogreish, Orcish

Adjusted Saving Throws	
Paralyzation:	10
Petrification:	9
Rods/Staves/Wands:	7
Breath Weapon:	11
Spells:	8

Magic Weapon Descriptions	Special Racial Abilities
<i>Staff of Power</i> (0 charges): This potent weapon has been damaged so gravely that it can no longer be recharged. It still possesses the inherent abilities of a magic item of its type, however (acts as a +2 <i>Quarterstaff</i> , add a +2 bonus to AC and all Saves).	None.
Other Magic Items	Spells & Special Class Abilities
<i>Ring of Protection</i> +2, <i>Potion of Fiery Breath</i> .	Spells Memorized (4/2/1): 1 st : <i>Charm Person, Magic Missile, Sleep, Spider Climb</i> ; 2 nd : <i>Invisibility, Web</i> ; 3 rd : <i>Fireball</i> .

Distribution of All Items Carried					
Left Side		Center, Back, or Feet		Right Side	
Item	Location	Item	Location	Item	Location
Staff	Carried	Robes	Worn	Ring	Worn
Bullseye lantern	Hanging from staff	Fur Cloak	Worn	Wineskin	On belt
Large Pouch	On belt	Furred boots	Worn	Drinking Horn	On belt
Tinderbox, Flint & Steel	In Pouch	Backpack	Worn	Leather rigging	On belt
Torches (3)	In belt	50' Rope	In backpack	Oil Flask (1)	In rigging
		2 weeks Iron rations	In backpack	Potion	In rigging

Gold & Wealth: 37sp, 11gp A silver and moonstone pendant worth 150gp. A rare silver-bound book entitled "Prayers For Lost Tavun", worth 500gp.	Experience Gained: 37,650xp.
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Special Notes: Flóki was once something of a legend amongst the Iksurc: A spirit-whisperer that walked the snows of the land at the behest of the world's invisible forces, of which he was an agent. The Ice Northmen learned the truth about him just this year, when one night the small fishing village of Báutr was beset by terrible polar worms and it seemed that all the souls dwelling within its low walls would be lost. It was then that Flóki arrived with his mysterious stave and bade the spirits under his command to scatter the hungry monsters like snowflakes in a gale. When the sun rose in the sky the next day, Báutr yet lived, its folk grateful beyond measure to the strange wanderer.

Now a hero of the Iksurc, it was of small surprise when the Jarlinde of Talpstoj called Flóki to join a warband tasked with ridding the land of the horrific villain known as the White Rider. With the very fate of his folk in the balance, it was a charge he could scarcely refuse. He is prepared to test his mastery of the Invisible Art against the warrior and his dragon. It is a trial that he does not expect to fail!



Sigrún Simonsdóttir

Race / Gender: Xuloise Human Female

Level / Class: 5th level Thief

Alignment: Chaotic Neutral



Strength: 15 TH Bonus: ±0 Dam. Bonus: ±0 Op. Doors: On 1-2 B. Bars: 4%
Intelligence: 10 2 Additional Languages Known
Wisdom: 7 Magical Attack Adjustment: -1
Dexterity: 16 Reaction / Attack Adjust.: +1 Defensive Adjust.: -2
Constitution: 14 Hit Point Adjustment: ±0 System Shock: 88%
Charisma: 15 Reaction Adjustment: +15%

Armor Class: 4 (Padded Armor, Small Wooden Shield +1, & Dexterity Bonus)

Hit Points: 22

Movement Base: 12"

Weapon in Hand: Short Sword

Adjusted To-Hit Armor Class 0: [Short Sword] 19
 [Short Bow] 16
 [Short Bow, Arrows +1] 15
 [Garrote] 19

Adjusted Weapon Damage: [Short Sword] 1d6 (S/M), 1d8 (L)
 [Short Bow] 1d6+1 (S/M), 1d6+1 (L)
 [Short Bow, Arrows +1] 1d6+2 (S/M), 1d6+2 (L)
 [Garrote] 1d4 (S/M), 1d6 (L)

Attacks Per Round: [Short Sword, Garrote] 1
 [Short Bow] 2

Weapon Proficiencies: Short Sword, Short Bow, Garrote

Non-Proficiency Penalty: -3

Languages Known: Common, Frozen Tongue, Orcish

Adjusted Saving Throws	
Paralyzation:	12
Petrification:	11
Rods/Staves/Wands:	12
Breath Weapon:	15
Spells:	13

* Save vs. Mind-Affecting Spells: 14

Magic Weapon Descriptions	Special Racial Abilities
Short Bow +1: No special abilities.	None.
Other Magic Items	
Small Wooden Shield +1, Arrows +1 (12), Potion of Invisibility (1 dose remaining).	Spells & Special Class Abilities
	Thieving Abilities: Pick Pockets: 50%; Open Locks: 47%; Find/Remove Traps: 40%; Move Silently: 40%; Hide in Shadows: 31%; Hear Noise: 20%; Climb Walls: 90%; Read Languages: 25%. May backstab opponents for x3 damage.

Distribution of All Items Carried					
Left Side		Center, Back, or Feet		Right Side	
Item	Location	Item	Location	Item	Location
Small wooden shield	Worn	Padded Armor	Worn	Short Sword	Carried
Quiver	On Belt	Furred cloak	Worn	Wineskin	On belt
Arrows (24)	In quiver	Furred boots	Worn	Drinking horn	On belt
Garrote	On belt	Short bow	Across back	Small pouch	On belt
Small sack	On belt	Backpack	Worn	Thief's tools	In pouch
Music box	In sack	50' Rope	In backpack	Tinderbox, Flint & Steel	In small pouch
		2 weeks Iron rations	In backpack	Leather rigging	On belt
				Oil Flask (2)	In rigging
				Potion	In rigging

Gold & Wealth: 42sp, 17gp. Silver medallion with jade inlay, worth 250gp. Silver music box, worth 500gp.	Experience Gained: 15,649xp.
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Special Notes: Sigrún is known as “The Dark Skjald” to the folk of Zhiria. This, because of her calling card: The twinkling sound of a music box, playing a gentle tune wherever she is present. Such is her skill at concealing herself that, despite this noise, few can say where she might be – until the leather thong of her garrote bites their throat, and they breathe their last.

Sigrún was born in the city of Talpstoj in the Iksurc lands. An orphan upon its streets, the girl was taken in by the city's baker, she never forgot the hard lessons she learned when she had noplacement to go and little to eat. Bereft of skills by which to pay the debt of honor she owed her adoptive parents, she put that which she knew – an astounding ability to remain unnoticed – to work, breaking into homes or shops and stealing what she could. Few suspected the pretty young girl of such depths; it served her needs all the better.

Recently, she was approached by agents of the Jarlinde of Talpstoj who brought her before that worthy's high seat. The ruler asked her to join a fellowship set on destroying the plague of the north: The mysterious White Rider and his horrid draconic mount. How it was that the Jarlinde knew of her skills and why she did not see her killed as a thief deserves are mysteries to her. In any case, Sigrún is ready to become the Dark Skjald once again...this time, in the defense of her folk!



Snorri Leifsson

Race / Gender: Xuloise Human Male
Level / Class: 4th level Fighter / 4th level Thief
Alignment: Chaotic Neutral



Strength: 16 TH Bonus: ±0 Dam. Bonus: +1 Op. Doors: On 1-3 B. Bars: 10%
Intelligence: 7 0 Additional Languages Known
Wisdom: 7 Magical Attack Adjustment: -1
Dexterity: 15 Reaction / Attack Adjust.: ±0 Defensive Adjust.: -1
Constitution: 16 Hit Point Adjustment: +2 System Shock: 95%
Charisma: 9 Reaction Adjustment: ±0%

Armor Class: 4 (Padded Armor +1, Small Wooden Shield, & Dexterity Bonus)

Hit Points: 28

Movement Base: 12"

Weapon in Hand: *Broad Sword* +2

Adjusted To-Hit Armor Class 0: [Broad Sword] 16
 [Hand Axe] 18

Adjusted Weapon Damage: [Broad Sword] 2d4+3 (S/M), 1d6+4 (L)
 [Hand Axe] 1d6+1 (S/M), 1d4+1 (L)

Attacks Per Round: 1

Weapon Proficiencies: Broad Sword, Hand Axe, Short Bow, Dagger

Non-Proficiency Penalty: -2

Languages Known: Frozen Tongue

Adjusted Saving Throws	
Paralyzation:	13
Petrification:	14
Rods/Staves/Wands:	15
Breath Weapon:	16
Spells:	16

* Save vs. Mind-Affecting Spells: 17

Magic Weapon Descriptions	Special Racial Abilities
<i>Broad Sword</i> +2: No special abilities.	None.
Other Magic Items	Spells & Special Class Abilities
<i>Padded Armor</i> +1, <i>Potion of Healing</i> (2 doses remaining).	Thieving Abilities: <i>Pick Pockets:</i> 45%; <i>Open Locks:</i> 37%; <i>Find/Remove Traps:</i> 35%; <i>Move Silently:</i> 33%; <i>Hide in Shadows:</i> 25%; <i>Hear Noise:</i> 15%; <i>Climb Walls:</i> 88%; <i>Read Languages:</i> 20%. May backstab opponents for x2 damage.

Distribution of All Items Carried					
Left Side		Center, Back, or Feet		Right Side	
Item	Location	Item	Location	Item	Location
Small wooden shield	Worn	Helm	Worn	Broad Sword	Carried
Hand Axe (3)	On Belt	Padded Armor	Worn	Wineskin	On belt
Small pouch	On belt	Furred cloak	Worn	Drinking horn	On belt
Thief's tools	In pouch	Furred boots	Worn	Leather rigging	On belt
		Backpack	Worn	Oil Flask (2)	In rigging
		Tinderbox, Flint & Steel	In backpack	Potion	In rigging
		50' Rope	In backpack		
		2 weeks Iron rations	In backpack		

Gold & Wealth: 36sp, 7gp.
 3 small, flawless pearls, each worth 75gp
 Orc-skull helm inlaid with silver and iron, worth 100gp.

Experience Gained: 15,442xp.

Special Notes: Snorri was a young man when the Iksurc village in which he lived was overrun by orcs dwelling in the Kurocs Mountains. For most of the humans in doomed Hlíðina, death greeted them right away, brought by the swords and axes of the humanoids. Those unlucky enough to survive this initial attack, like Snorri, were taken into captivity and made thralls of the orcs. Their fates at the hands of the barbaric creatures are better left imagined than described.

Yet Snorri survived. And in his time in chains, he learned much of the way of locks...and how to open them without keys. In time, when his captors were distracted, he crushed one's skull with a stone and fled. Guilt filled his heart at the thought of those he left behind, yet he knew if he was ever to revenge his kin and neighbors, it could never be as a slave. So it is that he has grown strong and powerful, attacking the orcish tribes in the mountains whenever he uncovers them...constantly searching for the one that holds the folk of Hlíðina.

Recently, the Jarlinde of the city of Talpstoj called him to her city to join a fellowship assembled to destroy the terrible White Rider that plagues the folk of the Iksurc. In return for his cooperation, she has promised the aid of her scouts and norns to find his family and friends –and to allow him to lead them into battle when the time comes to crush them. For such a pledge, he would lift the very Kurocs themselves from their roots! He is ready to stare down the threat of the White Rider – or die in the effort!



Markús Dagursson

Race / Gender: Human Male

Level / Class: 4th level Cleric (Þórrik) / 4th level Thief

Alignment: Chaotic Good



Strength: 18.08% TH Bonus: +1 Dam. Bonus: +3 Op. Doors: On 1-3 B. Bars: 20%
Intelligence: 7 No Additional Languages Known
Wisdom: 16 Magical Attack Adjustment: +2
Dexterity: 10 Reaction / Attack Adjust.: ±0 Defensive Adjust.: ±0
Constitution: 15 Hit Point Adjustment: +1 System Shock: 91%
Charisma: 9 Reaction Adjustment: ±0%

Armor Class: 2 (Chain Mail, Small Wooden Shield, & Dexterity Bonus)

Hit Points: 26

Movement Base: 9"

Weapon in Hand: War Hammer

Adjusted To-Hit Armor Class 0: [War Hammer] 16
 [Short Bow] 18

Adjusted Weapon Damage: [War Hmmer] 1d4+5 (S/M), 1d4+4 (L)
 [Short Bow] 1d6 (S/M), 1d6 (L)

Attacks Per Round: [War Hammer] 1
 [Short Bow] 2

Weapon Proficiencies: War Hammer, Short Bow, Broad Sword, Short Sword, Dagger

Non-Proficiency Penalty: -2

Languages Known: Frozen Tongue

Adjusted Saving Throws	
Paralyzation:	9
Petrification:	12
Rods/Staves/Wands:	13
Breath Weapon:	15
Spells:	14

* Save vs. Mind-Affecting Spells: 12

Magic Weapon Descriptions	Special Racial Abilities
War Hammer +1, "Þórrik's Kiss": No special abilities.	None.
Other Magic Items	Spells & Special Class Abilities
Mead of Minor Healing (contains 3 draughts that each restore 2hp damage).	Cleric Abilities: Turn Undead (<i>Skeleton: T, Zombie: T, Ghoul: 4, Shadow: 7, Wight: 10, Ghast: 13, Wraith: 16, Mummy: 20</i>) Cleric Spells Prepared (5/4): 1 st : Bless, Command, Cure Light Wounds (x2), Protection from Evil, 2 nd : Aid, Chant, Resist Fire, Spiritual Hammer.

Distribution of All Items Carried					
Left Side		Center, Back, or Feet		Right Side	
Item	Location	Item	Location	Item	Location
Small Wooden Shield	Carried	Chain Mail Armor	Worn	War Hammer	Carried
Drinking horn	On belt	Holy Symbol	Worn	Leather rigging	On belt
Mead	In drinking horn	Cloak	Worn	Holy water vials (2)	In rigging
Quiver	On belt	High hard boots	Worn	Oil flask (1)	In rigging
Arrows (20)	In quiver	Backpack	Worn		
		Tinder Box, Flint, & Steel	In backpack		
		Torches (3)	In backpack		
		2 Large leather bags	In backpack		
		2 weeks Iron rations	In backpack		
		50' Rope	In backpack		

Gold & Wealth: 103gp. 6 silver rods, each worth 50gp. The platinum-dipped skull of a goblin shaman worth 450gp.	Experience Gained: 7,230xp (as Cleric) 8,136xp (as Fighter).
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Special Notes: A warrior-priest of Þórrík, Markús is proud and noble. He acts as a defender of the weak and merciless punisher of the monsters that would dare prey upon the children of the gods, the Iksurc. He is a hero of his folk who view him with respect and, in some circles, a bit of idolatry. However Markús has a younger brother named Rúnar of whom he speaks little. His brother, too, is a servant of the gods: A reverent of Jónuð, the trickster-god who is a foil and sometime-nemesis of Þórrík. It was no surprise to Markús when Rúnar found himself in the dungeons of the small town of Korvuu after playing a childish prank on that settlement's sten lord and being so foolish as to get himself caught afterwards.

Yet for all his faults, Rúnar is still Markús' only brother. So it was that when the Jarlinde of Talpstoþ called upon him to join a group of the land's greatest heroes to bring down the terrifying White Rider that plagues the land, threatening to turn it into a barren plain of solid ice, Markús spoke up in Rúnar's behalf. He was able to engineer his brother's release on the grounds that he used his considerable skills to help her heroes in their great quest. The Jarlinde has also charged him with ensuring that Rúnar worked no kind of treachery while accompanying the group on their journey. Now Markús has two great responsibilities: Destroying the terrible White Rider in the name of his folk and god, as well as ensuring that his brother properly redeems himself in the eyes of the only authority capable of seeing that he does not spend the rest of his life rotting in Korvuu's dungeons. Each are equally important in the eyes of the hero-priest!



Rúnar Dagursson

Race / Gender: Human Male

Level / Class: 4th level Cleric (Jónuð) / 4th level Thief

Alignment: Chaotic Neutral



Strength: 9 TH Bonus: ±0 Dam. Bonus: ±0 Op. Doors: On 1-2 B. Bars: 1%
Intelligence: 16 5 Additional Languages Known
Wisdom: 17 Magical Attack Adjustment: +3
Dexterity: 17 Reaction / Attack Adjust.: +2 Defensive Adjust.: -3
Constitution: 9 Hit Point Adjustment: ±0 System Shock: 65%
Charisma: 15 Reaction Adjustment: +15%

Adjusted Saving Throws	
Paralyzation:	9
Petrification:	12
Rods/Staves/Wands:	13
Breath Weapon:	15
Spells:	14

* Save vs. Mind-Affecting Spells: 11

Armor Class: 2 (*Studded Leather* +1 & Dexterity Bonus)

Hit Points: 18

Movement Base: 12"

Weapon in Hand: Short sword & dagger

Adjusted To-Hit Armor Class 0: [Short sword] 18
 [Dagger, Wielded] 20
 [Dagger, Hurlled] 16

Adjusted Weapon Damage: [Short sword] 1d6 (S/M), 1d8 (L)
 [Dagger] 1d4 (S/M), 1d3 (L)

Attacks Per Round: 1

Weapon Proficiencies: Short Sword, Dagger, Spear

Non-Proficiency Penalty: -3

Languages Known: Frozen Tongue, Ancient Xuloise, Goblin, Frost Giant, Orcish, White Dragon

Magic Weapon Descriptions	Special Racial Abilities
None.	None.
Other Magic Items	Spells & Special Class Abilities
<i>Studded Leather</i> +1, <i>Potion of Invisibility</i> .	<p>Cleric Abilities: Turn Undead (<i>Skeleton</i>: T, <i>Zombie</i>: T, <i>Ghoul</i>: 4, <i>Shadow</i>: 7, <i>Wight</i>: 10, <i>Ghast</i>: 13, <i>Wraith</i>: 16, <i>Mummy</i>: 20)</p> <p>Cleric Spells Prepared (5/4): 1st: <i>Bless</i>, <i>Command</i>, <i>Cure Light Wounds</i> (x2), <i>Sanctuary</i>, 2nd: <i>Augury</i>, <i>Hold Person</i>, <i>Silence 15' Radius</i>, <i>Speak with Animals</i>.</p> <p>Thieving Abilities: <i>Pick Pockets</i>: 50%; <i>Open Locks</i>: 47%; <i>Find/Remove Traps</i>: 35%; <i>Move Silently</i>: 38%; <i>Hide in Shadows</i>: 30%; <i>Hear Noise</i>: 15%; <i>Climb Walls</i>: 88%; <i>Read Languages</i>: 20%.</p> <p><i>May backstab opponents for x2 damage.</i></p>

Distribution of All Items Carried					
Left Side		Center, Back, or Feet		Right Side	
Item	Location	Item	Location	Item	Location
Short sword	Carried	Studded Leather Armor	Worn	Dagger	Carried
Daggers (7)	On belt	Holy Symbol	Worn	Drinking horn	On belt
50' Rope	On belt	Cloak	Worn	Fine wine	In drinking horn
		High hard boots	Worn	Leather rigging	On belt
		Backpack	Worn	Holy water vials (2)	In rigging
		Tinder Box, Flint, & Steel	In backpack	Oil flask (1)	In rigging
		Torches (3)	In backpack	Potion	In rigging
		2 Large leather bags	In backpack		
		2 weeks Iron rations	In backpack		

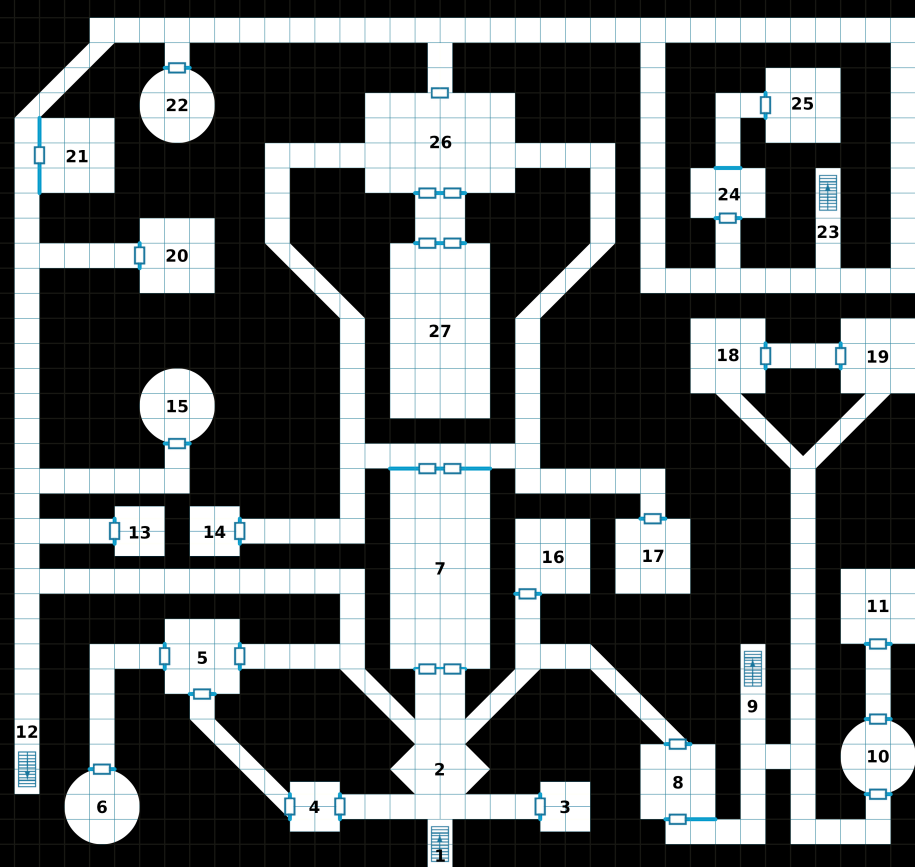
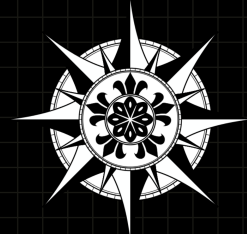
Gold & Wealth: 268gp, 3 small gems worth 25gp. A silver armband worth 50gp. Fine Iksurc wine worth 500gp.	Experience Gained: 6,944xp (as Cleric) 6,944xp (as Thief).
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Special Notes: A priest of the god Jónuð, Rúnar celebrates his patron deity in his trickster aspect and is a man of good cheer and mirth. Sadly, not all among the Iksurc are amused by his antics and, in the wake of a prank in which the lord of Korvuu took a drink from his cup and the whole of his court watched his face turn a brilliant green color, the cleric was thrown in that worthy's dungeons to rot.

He might have stayed there for years were it not for his brother Markús – a priest of Þórrik himself. He informed the Jarlinde of Talpstoj that he had the unique kind of skills needed to assist the group she was assembling to take down the dread White Rider. Rúnar realizes that the mission may represent his only chance to not only escape from his durance, but gain respect for his patron in the process. So it is that he will bring steel and spellcraft to bear against the enemy of all Iksurc. He does not plan to return to the cold and foreboding dungeons – or allow the White Rider to draw breath for yet another day!



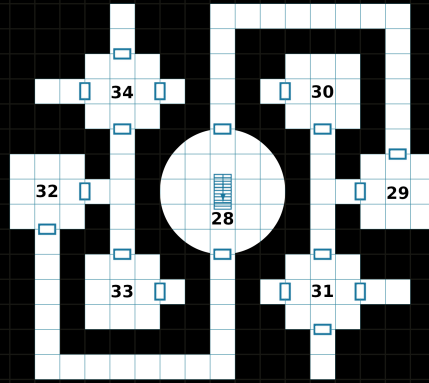
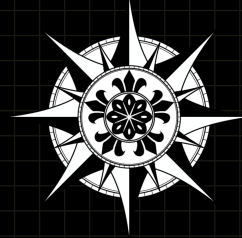
North



Gröf Konunga
Ground Level

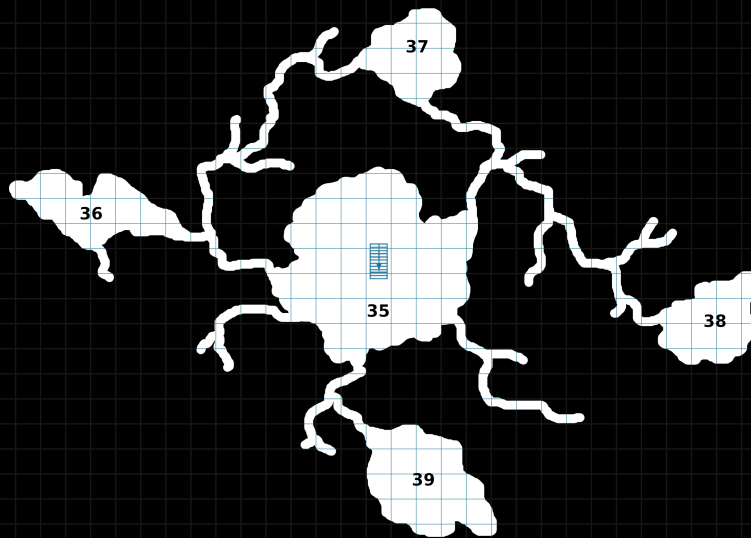
Map scale: 1 square = 10'

North



Gröf Konunga

Upper Level



Gröf Konunga

Lower Level

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Dungeon Module C8 (Zavod)
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