

THE BLACK BLADE OF THE DEMON KING



BY AHIMSA KERP
AND WIND LOTHAMER



THE **BLACK BLADE** OF THE DEMON KING

LAMENTATIONS
of the
FLAME PRINCESS
WEIRD FANTASY ROLE-PLAYING
COMPATIBLE PRODUCT



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This module is intended to serve as either a stand-alone adventure session or as part of a larger campaign in your custom OSR world.

It is intended for a party of 3-8 characters, between levels 1 and 3 and could take anywhere from 3 to 6 game sessions to complete, depending on how you choose to play it.

Statistics are presented for BX style OSR rules—specifically a slightly modified version of Lamentations of the Flame Princess (LotFP), though it should take very little effort to convert the entries to a 1e type of system. When providing entries and stats, we assume the following:

Ascending AC with the LotFP base of 12, which means that AC is also the target to-hit number. Fighters are the only class whose to-hit improves with level advancement (though all characters begin at +1), but Str. confers a bonus to both to-hit and damage rolls.

Saving throws as described in the LotFP rules. If you use something else, adjust accordingly.

We use the gold standard. If you use some other form of money, change our entries.

Classes: Fighter, Magic User, Cleric, Specialist/Thief/Rogue (we give stats for LotFP Specialists, adjust for other systems), Alice (LotFP—if you don't know it, just use Thief/Rogue).

Races: Whatever you want. We assume a world that is mostly populated by humans, though there are gnomes and other sorts of creatures presented within these pages. We do stat some NPCs assuming race as class.

Alignments are either Lawful, Neutral, or Chaotic. Good and Evil are completely irrelevant concepts.

We tend toward being evocative rather than overly descriptive. If any of our entries do not make sense, feel free to make the necessary changes. If the rules are unclear, or you are unsure of how to handle a given situation during the adventure, make something up. You know what you are doing—be strong and have faith in yourself!

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Published by Knight Owl Publishing

www.knightowlpublishing.com

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ISBN #: 978-1-387-60296-4

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EXTRA SPECIAL THANKS

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DUNGEON MAP

Inspired by Dyson Dungeons’ Skull Breach in *Dyson Delves II* and used with permission.

*I have this feeling that my luck is none too good
This sword here at my side don't act the way it should
Keeps calling me its master, but I feel like its slave
Hauling me faster and faster to an early, early grave
And it howls, it howls like hell*

*I'm told it's my duty to fight against the law
That wizardry's my trade and I was born to wade through gore
I just want to be a lover, not a red-eyed screaming ghoul
I wish it'd picked another to be its killing tool*

*Black blade! Black blade!
Forged a billion years ago
Black blade! Black blade!
Killing so its power can grow*

*There's death from the beginning to the end of time
And I'm the cosmic champion and I hold a mystic sign
And the whole world's dying and the burdens mine
And the black sword keeps on killing 'til the end of time*

*Black blade! Black blade!
Bringing chaos to the world we know
Black blade! Black blade!
And its using me to kill my friends
Black blade! Black blade!
Getting stronger so the world will end
Black blade! Black blade!
Forcing my mind to bend and bend*

*The black blade
Forged a million billion years ago
My cosmic sword goes on for eternity
Carving out destiny
Bringing in the lords of chaos
Bringing up the beasts of Hades
Sucking out the souls of heroes
Laying waste to knights and ladies
My master is my slave
Hahahahahahahahahahahahahahaha!
—Blue Öyster Cult*

THE
BLACK BLADE
OF THE DEMON KING

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INTRODUCTION FOR THE GAME MASTER

The Black Blade of the Demon King is a cinematic adventure, designed to cast the PCs as the unwitting protagonists in a fast-paced story about desire, sacrifice, and the unrelenting push and pull between the two. This is not a story about delving for treasure or fighting hordes of monsters, nor is it intended to be a quest for the Black Blade—or at least not really. You see, the Blade is the villain of this story and its powerful ego and dark magic are behind all of the hazards and obstacles that the PCs must overcome in their adventure. It is evil incarnate and will overpower and destroy whomever is unfortunate enough to wield it, just as it has done for time immemorial. Like Stormbringer or the One Ring, the Black Blade may impart incredible power and a feeling of great satisfaction upon those who hold it, but they are its possessions, not it theirs, and it will do with them as it wills.

Ultimately, this is a story about realizing the faults in one's own ambitions and finding the courage to do what must be done, despite the risks and at all costs. The PCs should learn something along the way of what they are truly up against, but should also learn that there are others—perhaps less scrupulous or less aware of their own shortcomings than themselves—who would also find the Blade. The PCs should, hopefully, be able to find the courage to do what must be done—to destroy the Blade, or at least reinter it for another millennia or so, and, in so doing, save both the world and their own humanity.

If this is the sort of story that you and your players would enjoy, then we invite you to continue on. If your players are more concerned with wealth and fame, or would prefer not to have to make the kinds of choices that we asking of them, then perhaps this is not the book for you.

TIME IN THE BLACK BLADE OF THE DEMON KING

Time is a major component of this adventure. The cinematic structure is broken into three acts and each act should build upon the tension of the last. The PCs should have the sense that they are constantly running out of time and that others will reach the Blade before they can. Likewise, the destruction raining down from the skies, the debilitating effects of the dreams sent by the Blade, and the ever-increasing presence of The Cold are all designed to impart a sense of impending doom and should reinforce the fact that this game is a race against the clock.

Of course, you can play this aspect of the game any way that you like. We have included a loose mechanic that allows for the GM to track the passage of time in days and determine whether or not the PCs reach the Blade in time. You may choose to use it and hold the PCs accountable for the outcome if they delay too long, or you may, particularly if they seem to understand the significance of their quest and attempt to resolve it in a timely manner, simply use the timeline as a loose suggestion. On the other hand, if the PCs dally, if they prefer to pursue insignificant side-quests, or if they simply refuse to accept the significance of their quest, time will run out and there will be consequences.

The entries in the book, particularly those in the second act, are written assuming that the PCs follow the most obvious course presented to them. If your game develops in a different

way, or follows a slightly different path, feel free to adjust accordingly. However, events in the third act will transpire almost precisely as written, regardless of the order in which the dungeon is explored.

IMPORTANT NPCs

Failure to reach the Black Blade in time is not necessarily a complete catastrophe. However, someone will find the Blade and now the PCs must likely face that NPC as he or she succumbs to its dark power.

Throughout the adventure, the PCs should be aware that there are dozens of other adventurers who also seek the Blade. However, there are three who stand out against the rabble and who are the most likely to find it. They are the featured NPCs: the Defender, a person of truly good character who will most-likely do what he or she can to destroy the Blade; the Seeker, a villain with more ambition than sense who seeks only to use the Blade to serve his or her own purposes; the Wild Card, a person who, much like the PCs themselves, knew nothing of the Blade before the dreams and is as unwitting and as unknowing as they are mysterious. This book is uniquely structured so that there are eight possible characters for each of these roles, with each one bringing his or her own particular twist to the tale. You should roll before the game to determine who each of these three NPCs will be and record their essential information (or photocopy their entries in the book) for ease of access.

The PCs will first encounter each of these NPCs in the first act, while they orient themselves in Stövring, and may initially choose whether they want to side with one of the NPCs, oppose them all, or ignore them. In Act Two, upon arriving in Sleptown, the PCs will have another opportunity to interact with each of the featured NPCs (or at least the two they have not sided with). Finally, depending

on their actions throughout the game, they will encounter at least one of the NPCs at the end of the third act.

In addition to the featured NPCs, the PCs will encounter the Silver Queen, who is the anthropomorphized manifestation of the land itself, and is essential to this story. Her life is tied to the land and, as she takes damage, so too does the world around her and vice versa. Though it is possible for the Silver Queen to die over the course of the adventure, you should do what you can to keep this from happening, as her death will drastically reduce the PCs options at the end and opportunities for a truly heroic outcome. Read the entry on the Silver Queen in the appendix for more information.

RUMORS AND INFORMATION

Due to the nature of this adventure and the significance of the PCs' decisions, rumors should not be used to deliberately misdirect the PCs or to cause them to fail in their quest. The point of this information is to help guide the PCs towards their goal and to inform them of the ultimate price that the Black Blade will eventually exact. On the other hand, parsing through information and misinformation is part of the PCs job, and as the Blade has only recently awoken there are few with a true understanding of the issue.



RUNNING THE GAME

Before running this adventure, the GM should read through Acts I-III in their entirety. There is a lot going on in a relatively short period of time, and, as this story is time-dependent, you need to have a clear idea of what to expect before you run it. In addition, there are several variable aspects to the adventure which, while allowing for a high level of re-playability, will require some time and planning beforehand.

NEW SKILLS

There are three additional skills in Black Blade of the Demon King (we use “skill” in a general mechanical sense—these are metrics that players will track from 1-6). They are loosely based on the Lamentations of the Flame Princess skill system, where skill checks are rolled on a d6, with anything at or under the overall skill value being a success (so a PC with a skill of 2:6 in Resist Cold will succeed at their check on a roll of 1 or 2).

The first “skill” is **Resist Cold**. All PCs begin play with 0 + their Con bonus in Resist Cold. Certain items, conditions, and magic through the game will change these values. Players will be required to make Resist Cold checks at given intervals, as well as any time they are exposed

to the elements. Failed checks will result in a loss of 1 HP.

The other “skills” are **Chaos** and **Law**. Characters of chaotic or lawful alignment begin with 1 point in the respective skill. During the game, specific events may add or subtract from these “skills” but killing another PC or one of the featured NPCs, intentionally or not, will always add 1 point of Chaos.

Characters who accumulate 6 total points in Chaos will transform into something part beast/part human (see page 66). Characters who get 6 total points in Law become one of The Cold, cultists of the Black Blade. (see page 64) Transformed PCs will have 1d20 hours left of staying with the party before fleeing to join their kind.

FATIGUE

Due to the inhospitable nature of Svårtgard, we suggest that the Game Master introduce the following rules, which would be in addition to any other rules regarding starvation, exhaustion, etc. If the character does not eat at least one meal in a day, or remains in the cold without proper attire for 12 or more hours or chooses not to sleep at night, they suffer the

effects of fatigue (meaning they cannot regain hit points or spells by any means save magical). Every two times they do this, they lose 1 Con point until they can sleep again.

Before beginning play, the GM will want to perform each of the following tasks:

1. Roll and assign dreams and rumors for each of the PCs. Each of the PCs has been drawn to the Blade by a feverish dream that repeats itself with fervent urgency each night. As the dreams have continued and have become increasingly vivid, the PCs have been compelled to seek out the Black Blade. Though early in their quest, each PC has already learned of two rumors that may or may not help them. Hand out **one dream and roll twice on the rumor table for each PC.**

2. Determine who else is seeking the Blade.

There will be dozens of other adventurers who seek out the Black Blade, most of whom will never directly encounter the PCs. If they do, you can quickly determine who they are by using the NPC Quick Drop Table on page 107. There are three NPCs who are integral to the story: the **Defender**, the **Seeker** and the **Wild Card**. You must determine who they are in advance and read up on the entries for each character in the back of this book. Roll three times to see which Defender, Seeker, and Wild Card are used in this adventure. If you want somewhat balanced characters, roll 1d6 or use a 1d8 to add more powerful options. (If you roll an 8 for the Seekers, it adds 4 enemies--maybe not the best option if you're playing with new players or low-level characters.)

3. Roll to see when The Cold will first attack the PCs

1. In the boat, just after the meteorites are seen.
2. The first night in their room.
3. After meeting the Wild Card NPC.
4. During the giant's attack.

4. Roll 1d4 to see when the Silver Queen is encountered

1. Staying in windmill.
2. In Sleeptown.
3. Under attack.
4. With the gnomes

5. On Day 4, the Seeker will attempt to kill the PCs. Roll 1d4 now to see how they will do that.

1. The Seeker sends 1d6 Corrupted Servants. These are gnomes fit with Slave Collars that travel on snowshoes and fight with magically hardened icicles.
2. The Seeker will create an avalanche and send it crashing down onto the PCs.
3. The Seeker will hire 2d4 Uralics (see page 70) to ambush the PCs. The Uralics will aim to capture rather than kill but if they are confronted with great force or if any are killed, they will switch to lethal tactics.
4. The Seeker will send an emissary, representing "an unnamed client" to bribe the PCs to quit their journey. The Seeker offers a chest filled with a staggering 6000 gold pieces but 24 hours later the illusion will fade, revealing it to be chipped ice. If the PCs bargain, the emissary will offer up a magical blade, a magical skeggox axe, and a cloak of warmth. The blade and the cloak are likewise illusory, but the magical axe really is an artifact. It splinters any armor or shield it hits with a critical, making them useless.

REACHING THE BLADE

The PCs have five days, starting upon arrival in Act One, to reach the Black Blade before anyone else.

After this time, if they have not yet reached the Blade, **roll 1d6 (for the Defender), 1d8 (for the Seeker), and 1d10 (for the Wild Card) daily.** If any of the dice roll a 1, that character reached the Blade (multiple 1s indicate that two or more characters reached the Blade at the same time). If one of the NPCs is accompanying the PCs, then skip their roll.

THE NPCs

The Defender

What they know

Where they are

Act 1: Stovring Inn

Act 2: _____

Act 3: _____

The Seeker

What they know

Where they are

Act 1: Golden Leopard Inn

Act 2: _____

Act 3: _____

The Wild Card

What they know

Where they are

Act 1: Stovring Market Square (Day 2)

Act 2: _____

Act 3: _____

ACT I LAND OF ICE AND SNOW

*The cold earth slept below;
Above the cold sky shone;
And all around,
With a chilling sound,
From caves of ice and fields of snow
The breath of night like death did flow
Beneath the sinking moon.
—Percy Shelley*





DAY 1

The PCs begin their journey on a ship headed to the city of Støvring on the frozen peninsula of Svårtgard.

It is reputed to be a bleak, cold land with terrible dangers and little recompense for adventurers. But each of the PCs has recently succumbed to an overwhelming urge to seek out a Black Blade that fills their waking thoughts and dreams alike. Though they do not completely comprehend it, they are unable to ignore its call.

As their ship sails through the ice sea, the PCs observe an endless flotilla of huge icebergs suspended in the freezing water—silent, lethal monoliths that both guard and threaten these dark northern waters. Characters who make a **search check** will notice a silver narwhal darting through the waters, pacing the ship, although all others will swear that there was nothing there. The narwhal bestows a sense of well-being over those that can see it and will temporarily hold the call of the relentless force that has summoned them at bay. **PCs who see the narwhal get +1 to their Law skill.** Though it should not be revealed at this time, and may never be discovered by the PCs, the narwhal is the Silver Queen in one of her three forms. She is both the manifestation of Svårtgard and its guardian and is actively searching for champions to help save her land.

Also on the ship are 1d12 other adventurers, plagued with similar dreams. If the PCs choose

to engage them, roll on the NPC Drop Table to define them. The Captain of the ship is a 4th level Specialist/Thief/Rogue named Roger with a wooden leg and a poisoned dagger. The ship's hold is home to 1d6 robed and hooded religious acolytes that call themselves The Cold. They stick to themselves but they will attack the PCs at one of four pre-determined times, which would possibly mean during this voyage.

THE COLD

Men or women, young or old, their faces look exactly the same and they always smile with creepy intensity. However cold it is, the area around them is always a few degrees colder. They worship the Blade as a God in its own right. Being in the same room or similar vicinity as The Cold for longer than an hour grants a LAW POINT.

The ship turns into a great fjord with sheer icy cliffs rising 30 meters on either side. This is Skåldsfjord—the greatest and most accessible seaport in all of Svårtgard. As they make their way ever north through the narrow channel, the PCs witness great sheets of the glacier wall tumbling into the writhing sea, accompanied by the thunderous roar of calving ice. In the distance, preternaturally bright meteors pound into the glassy black Obsidian Cliffs of Svårtgard.

Light is scarce in Svårtgard—it is the end of the summer and the land is falling into a state of perpetual dusk—with only a paltry 3 hours of wan daylight in these scant remaining days. The sun, always low on the horizon, gives only the briefest pause to the dismal sights and warms the ice but little. Though there is still the faintest of light glowing from the edge of the sea behind them, the main source of light is the not-too-distant fire from the endlessly erupting volcanoes to the north. These are the Obsidian Cliffs—mountains of the purest black obsidian—and they are constantly in a state of creation and destruction.

Option 1: The Cold Attack. At this time, they simply want a sacrifice. They'll try to capture one of the PCs and bring them into their room below decks. Once/if they do, the remaining PCs have half an hour to save the unfortunate soul. See page 64 in the bestiary for The Cold stats.

The ship finally pulls into port: a dark, smoky dock in the seediest portion of Støvring. Unsure of the precise time, but weary from their journey, the PCs make their way onto dry land.

Around 500 people currently live here, though the population dwindles more every day. If not for Blade-sick adventurers arriving daily, the town would be nearly deserted. This temporary economy can only last for so long.

There is no mayor or central government—no militia or police either. It's a stretch to think of it as an anarcho-syndicalist commune, but Støvring is probably closer to that than your traditional feudal trading town. Its people are certainly skeptical of domination, authority, and hierarchy.

From the docks there is a path to the south and east that leads down to the fishmonger ghetto, and another to the west that climbs up a small hill overlooking the city that terminates at an ancient hospital. Beyond the fishmonger ghetto to the north is the wealthiest part of town--the area dominated by the obsidian traders and their workshops. Heading directly east into town from the docks will reveal a large square surrounded by businesses, among which is the only shop in town for characters to gear up.

As small as Støvring is, the PCs should feel they didn't get long enough to explore it. This is a way station, not an oasis. The primary purposes here are to meet the NPCs, learn more about the Blade, and gear up for the expedition to come.

STØVRING KEY

1. The Docks

They still see much use from trade and passengers.

2. Market Square

This is what passes for the center of town—a central square with one of the few trees in all of Svärtgard growing in the center. The tree, a hardy (and surprisingly robust) larch towers over thirty metes and can be seen from anywhere in the small city. If successfully searched, **an old scroll hidden in its branches grants a roll on the Knowledge Table.**

There will typically be citizens congregating in the square, as well as a decent assortment of adventurers (2d4) preparing to seek out the Black Blade. Businesses of note include the **Golden Leopard Inn (A)** and **Brynhild's Shop (B)**, as well as the ubiquitous fishmongers, hawkers and peddlers.

3. Fishing Ghetto

A scattering of ramshackle wooden houses make up the **fishing ghetto**, populated by impoverished and fearful villagers, most of whom are women and children.

4. Bluffs

Long ago, there were both barracks and an infirmary upon these bluffs. Both are deserted now, at least nominally, for some of The Cold dwell here in secret.

5. Fort Trelleborg

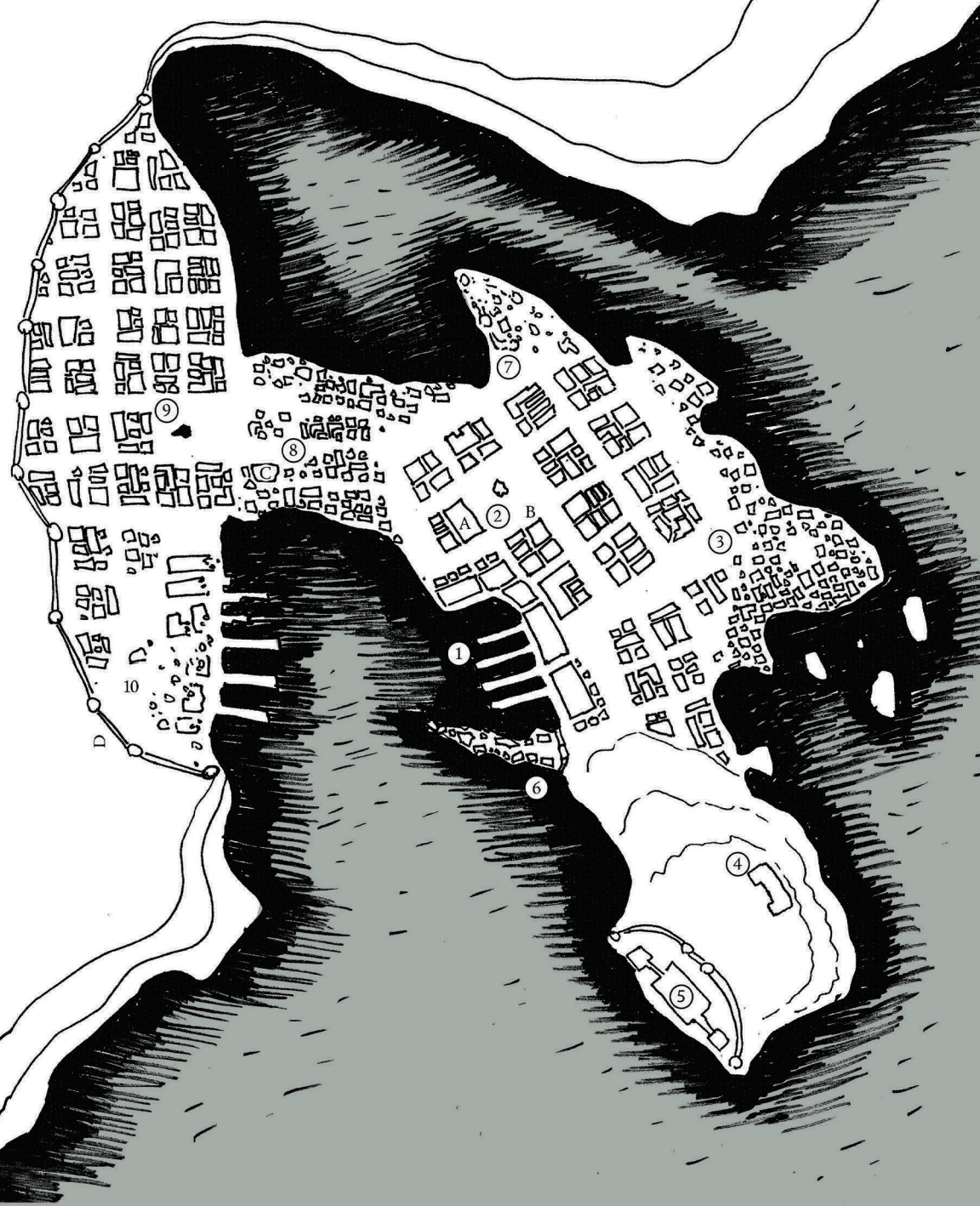
The **ruins of the fort** that long ago looked over the fjord.

6. Cold Compound

A small peninsula that has been walled off by members of The Cold. None but they are allowed egress through the barriers.

7. Ruins / Trash Dump

The haunts of **Drakkar the Berserker.**





8. Shanty Town

This part of Støvring is actually below sea level and only the poor and desperate dwell here, for it is prone to flooding. This is where the **Støvring Inn (C)** can be found, and the **Defender** as well.

9. The Obsidian Traders' Quarter

Most buildings are homes and shops, where rare obsidian is cheaply sold. In obsidian town is a workshop where they chip jet black weapons and rings and necklaces.

10. Old town.

The pier has collapsed into the sea and the houses are wrecks.

A. The Golden Leopard Inn.

The newest and most expensive place to stay in town. This is where the **Seeker** stays. It is brightly lit, relatively clean, and full of the nicer (this is a relative concept) people in town. Nightly accommodations run 10 gp, meals are 1 gp, and ale (real ale, not the rotten fish-swill that can be found elsewhere) is 2 sp a pint.

B. Brynhild's Shop.

The town of Støvring has no mass production or merchant class. Most people, if they need something, make it. Failing that, they trade or barter with their homemade goods. But there is a goods shop in Støvring, consisting mostly of goods left by departing miners, adventurers, obsidian traders, and fishermen. It is currently run by Brynhild Cripplehand, a tall, pale unsmiling woman with pale blond hair that reaches down to her pale knees. She hates talking to people and will raise prices the more a prospective buyer tries to impress her. She may, however, offer a slight discount to equally taciturn costumers as an act of unconscious solidarity.

Though it be late, Brynhild's shop remains open. The PCs are free to visit her any time before they leave town.

C. The Støvring Inn.

What this decrepit inn lacks in aesthetics, hospitality and basic sanitation, it makes up for in dirt-cheap prices. The **Defender** can be found

drinking the wretched fermented fish-wine that is served here. Nightly accommodations are a paltry 2 gp, a bowl of fish head stew is 5 sp, and the fish-wine is 1 sp a pint or 3 sp a gallon.

Regardless of who the Defender is, they will recognize the PCs as fellow adventurers/useful tools who were drawn to Svärtgard by the same power that compelled them—and will attempt to convince the PCs to help them in their quest. They see the PCs as useful meatshields and will offer to hire them as retainers, **offering 2d4x10 gold per day to serve them.** This they will pay immediately and ask to meet at the inn tomorrow night at dinner time. In addition, the PCs will be provided with a free bunk room with bunks for each of them.

Option 2: The Cold Attack. If they choose to come now, d3 members of The Cold will slip into their room and attempt to silently murder everyone present. If defeated, one will drop two faceted black opals, as big as eyeballs.

Two, maybe three, things happen this night. First, The Cold may attack. Secondly, while sleeping that night, each of the PCs will have a vision. This night, their first on the island, is the only night they have such specific dreams. Roll on the Black Blade Dream Table in the appendix to determine what the dream is.

Thirdly, tonight begins the ritual of rolling against the influence of the Blade.

Blade Sick Night One - Each player should roll a d4. On the first night, those who roll a 4 are haunted by dreams of the Blade. They feel a physical need to hold it, clutch it in their hands. They do not heal HP or regain spells this night.

Once they have failed this check three times, they will suffer from Ceaseless Bladelust: they must hold a sword in their hand at all times. If they have a blade, they will draw it and carry it at all times, even in sleep. If they don't have a blade, they will rigorously attempt to obtain one—even at the cost of attacking or hurting their friends or innocents.

BRYNHILD'S SHOP.

Entries marked 'NE' are non-encumbering, all others weigh as much as you'd expect.

Bear claw - A glove with claws attached. Called "bear" but can be wolverine, dog, or snow leopard. Does d4+1 damage. 40 gp.

Bearskin - (50% chance head is still attached and can be worn as a hood). +1 to Resist Cold. Treat as Leather Armor. (+1 Cha if bear head is still attached). 60 gp.

Byrnie and Coif - A tunic of sleeveless chainmail and mail helm; it weighs almost 30 lbs and must be protected from damp and patched after battle. Treat as Chain. 100 gp but looks awesome.

Fur Bracers - +1 to Resist Cold. +1 AC. 40 gp

Cinder and Basalt - 6 sp NE

Dried Cloudberries - Food. 5 gp NE

Dried Fish. Food - 5 gp NE

Drinking Horn - 7 gp NE

Elk Staff - A thick branch with antlers tied to one end. It's not magical but looks like it really should be. 20 gp

Firewood - Sold in packs of ten, with kindling. PCs without this may find it difficult to stay warm in the treeless tundra but it requires two encumbrance slots. 5 gp

Fur Armor - +1 to Resist Cold. Treat as Leather Armor otherwise. 50 gp

Fur Coat - +1 to Resist Cold. 20 gp

Hemp Rope - Lots of this strong material mostly used for ships. 5 gp per 10 feet

Narwhal Blubber - Rub it on your skin; feels nice don't it? It also can serve as emergency rations or a fire source in a pinch. +1 to Resist Cold when smeared all over you. 10 gp NE

Pickled Rabbit Balls - Food. 4 gp NE

Raw Wool Cloak - +1 to Resist Cold 16 gp

Reindeer Leather Armor - Treat as Leather Armor and the sigils and runes drawn on the armor are so impressive that it provides +1 Cha while worn. 60 gp

Salt - 1 gp NE

Sealskin Pants - +1 to Resist Cold. 25 gp

Sealskin Tunic - +1 to Resist Cold. 25 gp

Snowshoes - Can move at regular speed on snow and ice. 10 gp

Wool Coat - +1 to Resist Cold. 30 gp



DAY 2



The next morning, one of the volcanoes erupts much more violently than the others. Slight tremors rock the city, though the PCs will be assured that these are normal and no one in the town takes note of it whatsoever. PCs with more than 2 points of Law will feel exited and anxious. (-1 to all rolls for the rest of the day).

If the PCs venture into the town square, they will meet the Wild Card, though he or she will be elusive and secretive—intentionally hiding his/her motives and misinterpreting the PCs intentions. As long as the PCs aren't too belligerent, the Wild Card will chat for a few minutes (as a PC sees potential hirelings and dungeon fodder, so does the Seeker see the PCs).

If the PCs seem competent but aren't willing to serve the Wild Card, s/he will tell them that rumors of the Black Blade are just that: legends for the simple-minded created to distract the foolish from the true threat. The Cold are a cult of the Black Blade (or maybe the Demon King) they might say, and it is their rituals that disturb the sleep and ensnare the passions of the honest people everywhere. What's more, the cult has great treasures—piles of silver and gems and furs and honey. This is all misdirection: the Wild Card is informative but plays it cool, like it's no concern of theirs whether or not the PCs believe the story, and will soon depart.

PCs can roll on the rumor table per every ten silver they spend, up to 30 silver/3 rumors. This represents gossip over lunch, a bit of baksheesh, or other bits of social investigation. This money has to be spent specifically on rumors—it doesn't count if it was money spent on food, equipment, etc.

The PCs may want to question some of the inhabitants of the town. Some citizens of Støvring they may encounter are included

below. Either choose randomly or roll 1d4 two times, the first to see who is encountered and the second to see what they know. For additional information, roll on the rumors table in the appendix.

Encounters

1. Fiskari the fisherman sells fresh fish and warns of the dangers of Sværtgard, which he claims will kill anyone foolish enough to leave the safety of the city.
2. Y the obsidian trader has stopped venturing up into the mountains and no longer can collect obsidian. Since the meteorites came, it has become too dangerous; for instance, she saw from a distance snow apes carrying bows and she barely escaped them. She is sad to have to leave the island soon.
3. Jin and Essa from the fallen city of Mördr Point. Some weeks ago, their town collapsed into the fjord. They are struggling to raise the funds and materials to restart their business as coopers.
4. Rollo the Thin is an adventurer who arrived three days ago. His party was attacked by a party of rival Blade Seekers upon leaving Støvring and only he survived. He is cut up to pieces and is dying in the Støvring Inn.

Knowledge

1. Say they have seen a giant striding through the fjord, but it was from afar and long ago.
2. Warn of hooded humans with tentacle faces.
3. Afraid of the beasts that now inhabit the inner part of the peninsula.
4. Say they've been having dreams of a dark sword. They can feel its pull from the Obsidian Hills.

Option 3 The Cold Attack. If they come now, it's in force, with 1d6 members and the leader capable of casting magic. See page 64 for The Cold stats. If the PCs have separated, they will go for the group of fewest. They attack with obsidian knives. If met with resistance or if the battle takes too long, they will turn and flee back to their peninsular compound.

The Cold Compound

Law rules supreme here--the snow falls in symmetrical patterns and each snowflake is exactly alike. Those arriving from the sea will notice the sheer cliffs rising 30 meters from the icy water to the top of the jagged outcropping. The only way in or out of this compound is through the closely guarded gates at the south end. While The Cold will fight off intruders, their main wish is to convert the non-believers to their own way of thinking .



A. Gates. Guarded at all times by four of The Cold. The wall is ten feet high and topped with shards of obsidian.

B. Barracks. Roll 1d6; 1-2 = empty, 3-6 = has 2-8 of The Cold inside.

C. Guard House. Always has a guard inside, armed with chain mail and a a flail.

D. Acolyte's Quarters. Roll 1d6; 4-6 means that there is currently an Acolyte within! Standard Cold stats, but has one of the Eldritch Blade Powers. There will also be 6d6 gp worth of precious art in the building.

E. Communal Building. The Cold like to have meetings and meals in here. There will always be 3-24 of The Cold within. There is not much of value, however.

F. Prayer Room. The Cold are fond of geometric shapes. This triangular room gives them better communion with the Black Blade. Add 1 point of law if you pray in here.

G. Store House. Full of dried fish, grain, and fermented drink.

H. Indoctrination Quarters. Where the newest members of The Cold come for their education.

I. Outhouse.

J. Temple. The most depraved of The Cold's rituals occur in her. It is lavishly ornamented with 3d100 gp worth of fine metalwork and tapestries. It also has 4-24 of the Cold inside performing some dark ritual.

There is one other noteworthy place in town. It is up the hill toward the east. This is where the vastly unpleasant Drakkar spends his days. Upon seeing the PCs, he will threaten, intimidate, and insult the PCs (or anyone else) until they lose their temper.

DRAKKAR THE BERSERKER

Drakkar is an out-of-work berserker. He goes around insulting people in as hurtful and clever a way as he can. If he senses a weakness or bad temper, he redoubles his efforts and his profanity is truly the stuff of legend. If the characters are angry enough to physically engage Drakkar, he will challenge them to Hólmganga. He is careful not to insult anyone too powerful. If Drakkar is killed before he can issue a challenge, any townspeople who witnessed it will congratulate the PC who did it and possibly buy them a drink.

In the Hólmganga, he is not that keen to fight and will try to be as scary as possible. If his opponent surrenders, they must pay him 30 gold, or give him something of equal value, which is what he was aiming for the entire time. If they try to beat him, he will go into berserker rage.

Drakkar AC: 14 (bear skins), HD: 3, HP: 17, Attack: 1 (battle axe) + 3 to hit 1D8+2 damage. Move 120'

Berserk Drakkar AC 12 (bear skins) HD 6, HP 30 Attack: 2 (battle axe) +4/+5 to hit 1D8+4 damage, Move 100'

A Hólmganga is fought 1d4 hours after challenged. If one party does not show up, they are considered to have lost and any present are legally allowed to rob or kill them. The fight takes place upon a blood stained polar bear pelt that Drakkar carries with him for times such as this. The challenged party chooses the weapon. Either party may yield, paying 30 gold. (When fighting a berserker, yielding before the berserker rage sets is a key bit of strategy).

Drakkar is a trap that most PCs will avoid. There is no treasure for beating him, however **any PC who accepts his challenge and kills him will absorb Drakkar's spirit and gain his berserk rage.** (AC-2) HPx2, 2 attacks a round at +1 and +2, damage bonus +2. This lasts until the current combat is over and can be used once per day per experience level. Drakkar's berserk rage, though violent, does not cause the PC to attack allies but does give them 50 chance to insult anyone they meet.

That afternoon, the town is rocked by a massive tremor, much greater than the others. The townsfolk have hitherto been stoic as statues but this earthquake, along with meteors crashing into the city, is too much. Many of them run for cover, fully panicked. The bay is wrecked, the ships sinking or sunk.

To see where the meteors hit, drop 3d4 on the map of Støvring:

1. Burning meteor.
2. Frozen chunk of ice.
3. Giant block of rock.
4. Evaporates into blinding cloud of star dust.

At this moment, a giant attacks as well. Any PCs close to the fjord will see a massive Jötunn—an ice giant—wading through the harbor. The giant hurls ice floes at random, destroying buildings and crushing panicking townspeople.

The giant is, in fact, wounded by a meteor and seeking shelter, but it is very reasonable to interpret his actions as an attack. .





Option 4: The Cold Attack. At this late stage, it's simply a magic user using the storm to murder as many adventurers as she can. She will use all the eldritch powers available to her. See page 64 for cultist stats.

MONGROVE THE GIANT

This twenty foot creature is a thin albino, currently wounded by a meteor strike to his shoulder. If a successful search roll is made (or if any character has 3 points of Chaos) they will see that he has no shadow.

He has lost his shadow and has been looking for it for some time. This is why he was wandering around when the meteors hit. The language he bellows is not understood by anyone. If a Charisma check is made, he will cautiously treat with the PCs in very broken trade tongue. He is older than he looks and remembers some lore of the Demon King. He will warn that Law is just as bad as Chaos, and that neither the Blade nor the King can be trusted. He ends in a singsong chant:

The only way to destroy the Blade, you know

You must bury it somewhere purer than new snow

If the PCs want to fight him, here are his stats.

Mongrove the Giant AC: 15, HD: 5, HP: 22 (wounded), attack: 1 (hurled ice floe—4d6, stomp or smash—2d6), move: 150'

If the giant is killed or knocked out, he has four things in his possession:

A bag of 2d100 gold. This is cursed and will cause 1 HP damage for every GP spent, though the curse does not have the power to kill. The curse can be lifted through use of a *Remove Curse* spell (or similar magic), being cast into the fjord, or by the Silver Queen.

A poem written in idiosyncratic glyphs and homemade runes that if translated (Read Magic will do the trick, as will a successful Int. or Language check) will be revealed to be a love letter dedicated to a woman known as the Silver Queen.

His mighty beard, which if cut and made into a cloak grants sneak at 5:6 chance when in ice or snow, protects against mundane cold, and gives +1 to AC.

His blood, if consumed, will grant a permanent result on the following table (roll 1d10):

1. Grow a long beard 1d00 cm long.
2. Grow d20+10 cm.
3. Can understand bird song 50 percent of the time.
4. Skin becomes ice blue.
5. Giant's blood borne pathogen—lose 1 point Constitution.
6. Giant's flatulence—fart with resounding force 1/hour.
7. Gain 1 point Con or Str.

8. Immune to electricity.

9. Become 1d00 cms taller.

10. Immune to cold (go to 6 points in Resist Cold).

THE GIANT'S POEM

Remember me as I remembered you

My love

Sharp as an axe, hard as winter

my love for you

The fire seems cold

without you

The mountains are empty

without you

My love

If the PC observe their companion gaining abilities from drinking Giant Blood, they may want to drink the blood of their party member. That's smart! But blood digested this way is only part Giant. It will work, but in a watered down way and the PC only rolls d6.

After they talk, fight or flee from the giant, the PCs will be joined by the featured NPC they met/teamed up with first the previous night. The NPC is anxious to leave Støvring and will insist upon departing immediately. Meteor strikes are hitting the entire city and fires are spreading as the earth trembles. It seems Støvring might be pulverized, burn away, or slide into the icy waters of the fjord.

This module assumes the PCs will go with the NPC of their choice but there are other options.

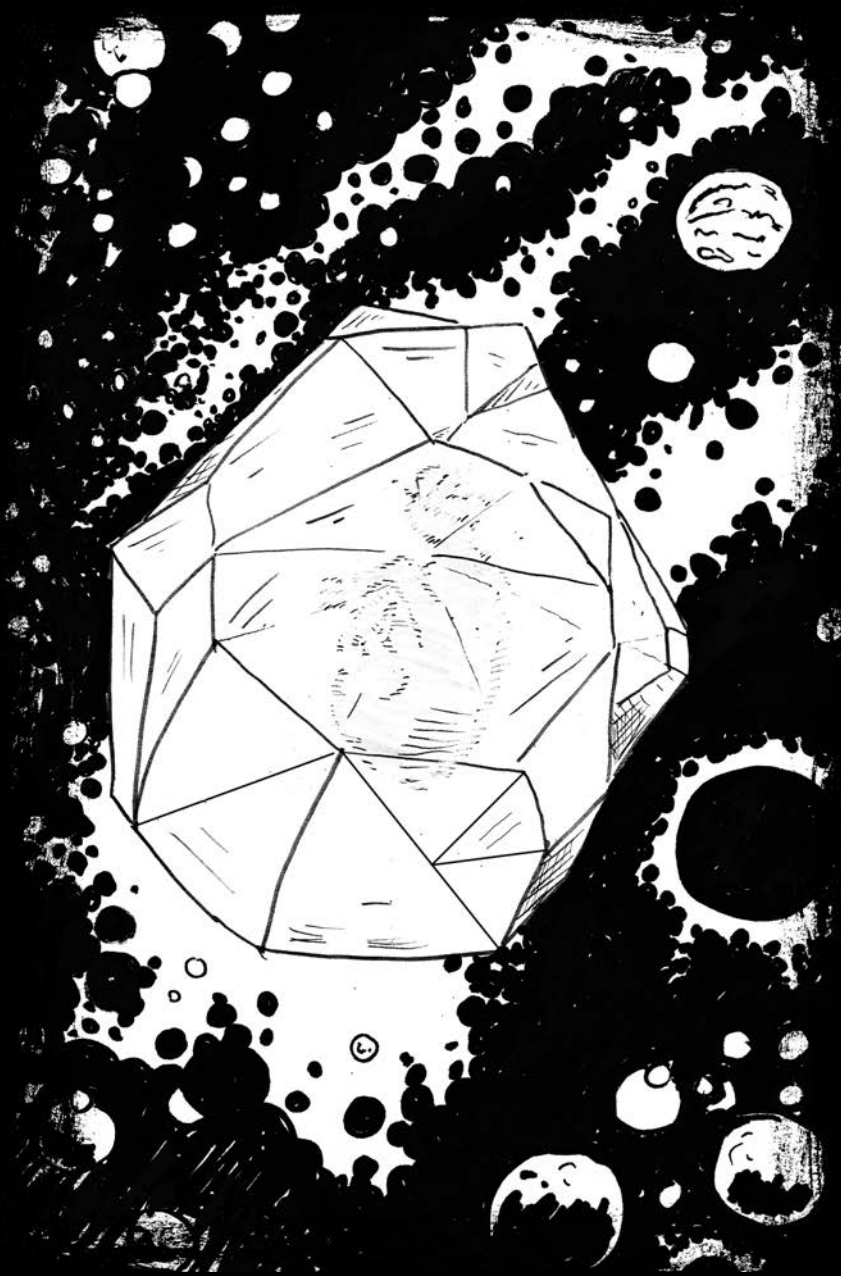
If any PCs have seen enough and want to gee out they can return to the ships. The port has been wrecked but there are still d4 ships departing as soon as possible. In order to physically leave, however, the players must resist the call of the Black Blade by making a Save vs Magic. Each point in Law subtracts one (-1) to the roll while each point in Chaos adds one (+1). Those who fail are too enamored, too addicted by the Black Blade to consider leaving.

This module assumes they will head north along the Fjordtrail, probably with one of the NPCs. If they want to do their own thing, though, we're not going to stop them. The land of Svärtgard has much to see. Ahead of them, dimly gleaming in the distance, are the black cliffs of obsidian. To the west is the jagged Skaldsfjord and on the other side is Rytände

Point, where the rumored headquarters of The Cold dwell. To the east are tumbling, nameless hills buried under decades of snow and ice.

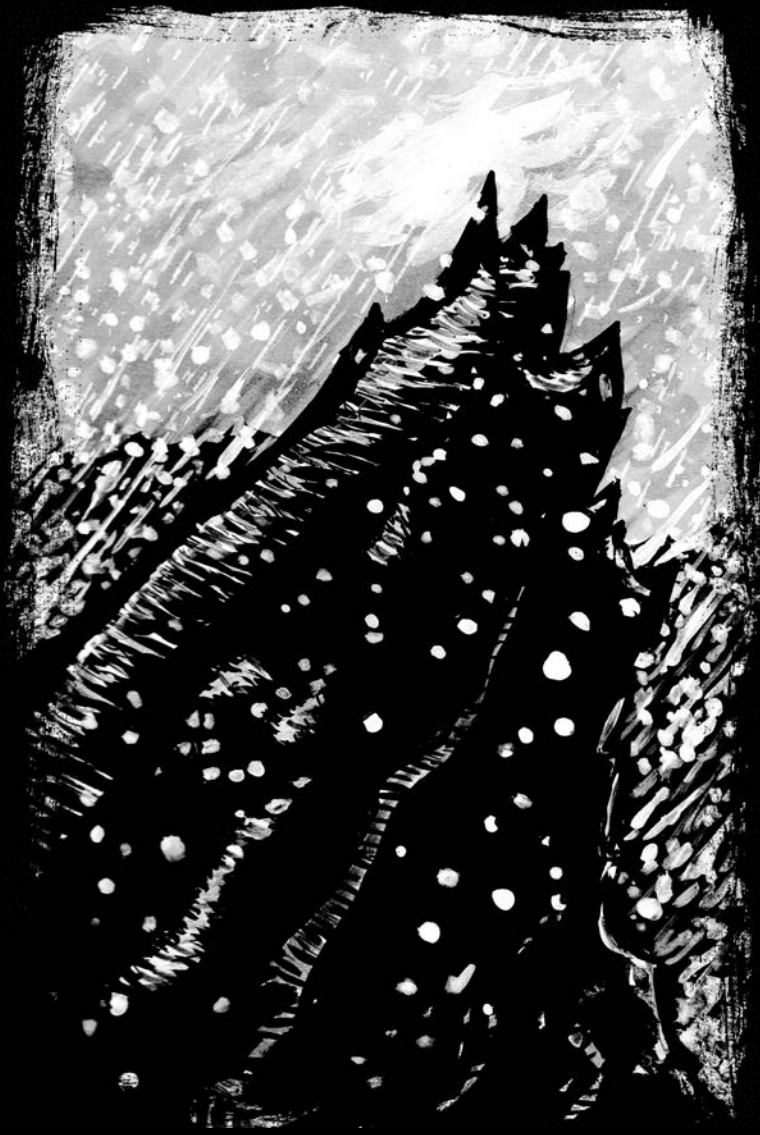
Any of these are valid options, but remember that if the PCs fail to, someone will claim the Black Blade, and if it's the wrong person, it may be the undoing of everyone and everything.

Depending on how deliberate the PCs are while interacting with their environs and how long it took to roll up characters, this might be a good place to wrap the session.

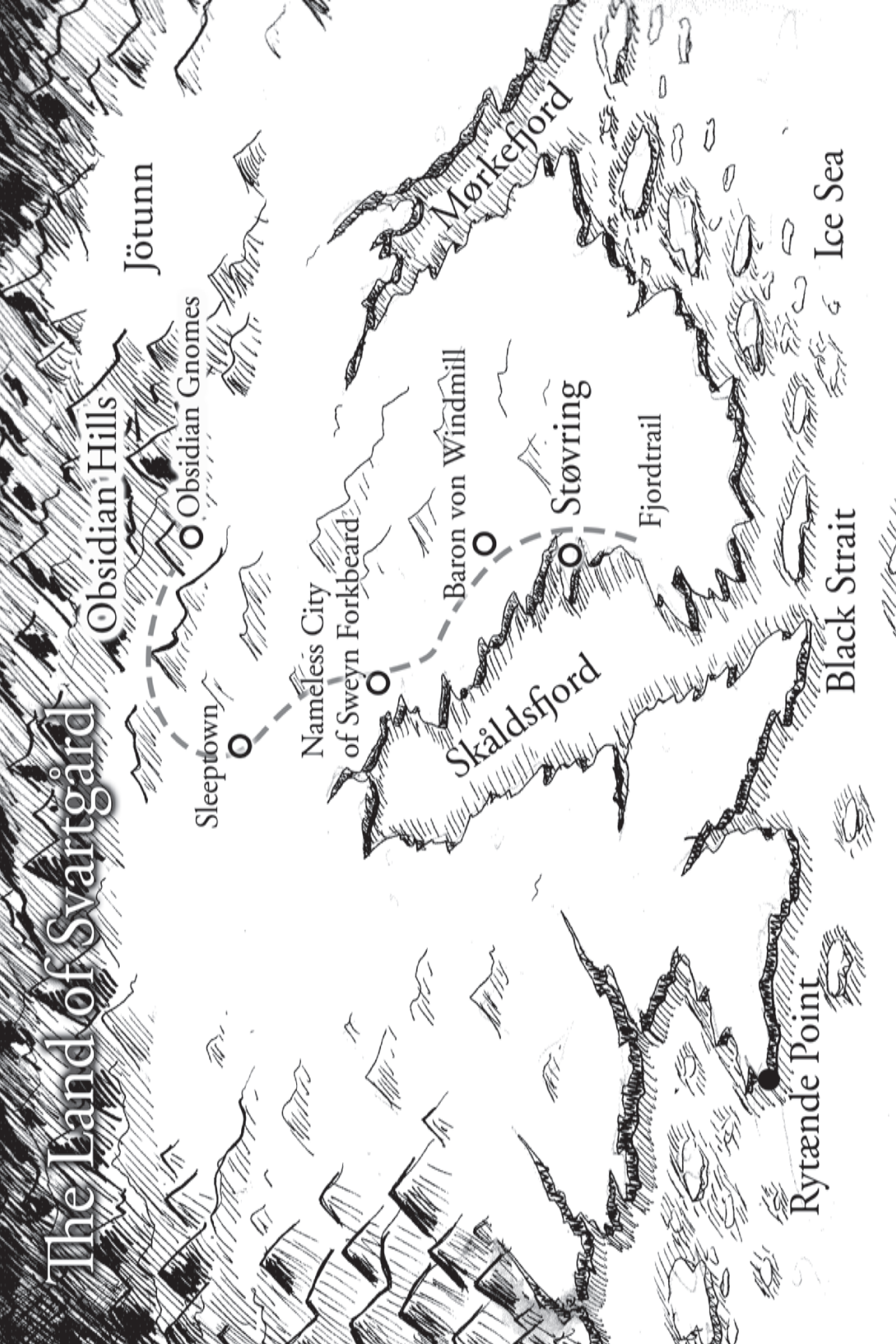


ACT II TO THE OBSIDIAN CLIFFS

*I had a dream, which was not all a dream.
The bright sun was extinguish'd, and the stars
Did wander darkling in the eternal space,
Rayless, and pathless, and the icy earth
Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air;
Morn came and went—and came, and brought no day,
And men forgot their passions in the dread
Of this their desolation; and all hearts
Were chill'd into a selfish prayer for light:
And they did live by watchfires—and the thrones,
The palaces of crowned kings—the huts,
The habitations of all things which dwell,
Were burnt for beacons; cities were consum'd,
And men were gather'd round their blazing homes
To look once more into each other's face;
Happy were those who dwelt within the eye
Of the volcanos, and their mountain-torch:
A fearful hope was all the world contain'd;
—Lord Byron*



The Land of Svartgård



GM DUTIES

NPC PROGRESSION (AFTER FOUR TOTAL DAYS, EACH MORNING)

The PCs have five days, starting upon arrival in Act One, to reach the Black Blade before anyone else.

After this time, if they have not yet reached the Blade, roll **1d6 (for the Defender), 1d8 (for the Seeker), and 1d10 (for the Wild Card)** daily. If any of the dice roll a 1, that character reached the Blade (multiple 1s indicate that two or more characters reached the Blade at the same time). If one of the NPCs is accompanying the PCs, then skip their roll.

If the PCs delay and one of the NPCs claims the Blade, what does it mean? The short answer is: anything you want. Perhaps the PCs go home and a month or six later they are killed and their town wiped out by the raging NPC or Demon King. Perhaps the NPC will hunt down all adventurers on Svärtgard immediately upon claiming the Blade. No matter what, the Blade will eventually call its lord, the Demon King, back from the stars, and He will kill whichever NPC is currently holding the Blade and, reunited once more with his precious weapon, will proceed to destroy all life on earth.

Act II is a physically grueling slog and it's possible some of the PCs will begin to suffer from Fatigue as defined on page 11-12.

If they stay on the quest of the Black Blade and left Støvring with their allied NPC, they will only have a few hours before it gets dark. They travel north and slightly west along the Fjordtrail up the Skåldsfjord. This close to civilization, there aren't many dangers and campsites and even abandoned shacks can be found. But there is somewhere better.

1d4 hours after they depart Støvring, they will see a decrepit windmill 300 meters off the

Fjordtrail. It is a way station, an ad hoc inn of sorts, and it is owned by a lean eccentric called the Baron.

Silver Queen Option One - If found here she left Støvring early that same morning. She does not remember much but is in human form and heading to see the Obsidian Gnomes.

BARON VON WINDMILL

He thinks that all the inanimate objects in the windmill are nobles and he introduces the PCs to his friends the Marquis Pitchfork and Count Bucket etc. He will admire the PC's equipment, and greet Mr. Cloak or Miss Sword.

Some think he is as mad as a hatter, others claim in whispers, late at night, that he once was truly was a nobleman and only great misfortune has brought him to this point. **His sword lends credence to this theory, for it is named Blood Dripper, and it has an iridescent blue gem in the hilt. This means wounds made with the blade cannot be healed unless rubbed by the Healing Stone in the pommel of his blade.**

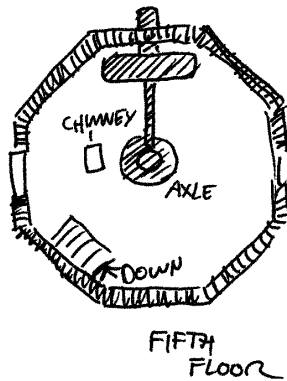
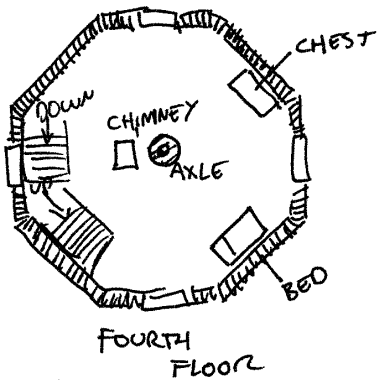
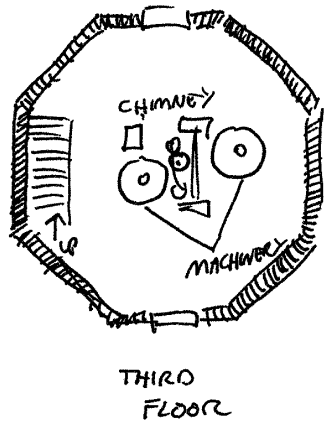
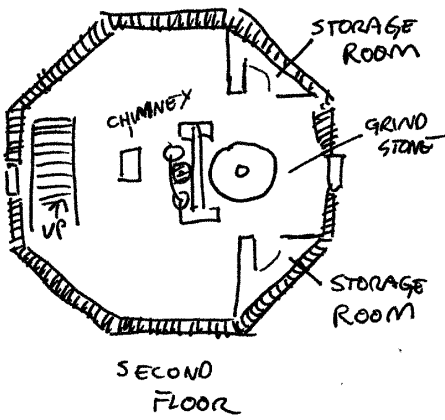
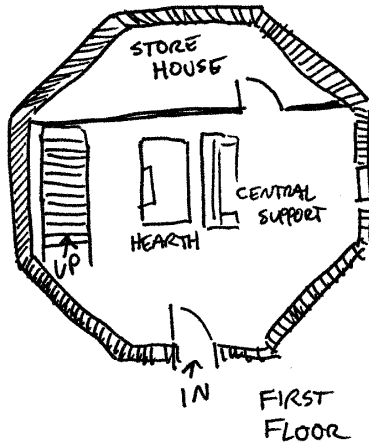
If asked about the Black Blade, the Baron von Windmill will advise speed above all else. If pressed, he may say things like: "Many adventurers have come through already" or "If I wanted Mr. Sword I would be speeding as fast I can."

If the Inn is searched the following things can be found upon successful search rolls.

1. A pile of furs, enough to grant plus one Resist Cold.
2. A pile of straw. Beneath it is a pitchfork with old blood on the tines.
3. A rickety stable with a mad horse. (There's a 50 percent chance it's actually carved of obsidian but he feeds it every day regardless).
4. A small wooden star. If asked, the Baron knows nothing of it and guesses that it was left here by other guests.



THE BARON'S WINDMILL



If the PCs want to buy anything from him, he won't take money but will gladly barter for Mrs. Necklace, Senor holy symbols, Countess shiny thing. He really likes hats.

If he really likes the PCs, Baron von Windmill will warn them: "Mr. Demon is coming for Mr. Sword. If it were up to me, I wouldn't let that happen."

He is a level 6 fighter.

Int. 10, Wis. 10, Str. 13 (+1), Dex. 15 (+1), Con. 8 (-1), Cha. 13 (+1)

HP: 30

Armor: chain (15)

Attack: sword (+7 to hit) 1d8+1 damage (cannot be healed).

Are any of the PCs suffering from fatigue?

Blade Sick Night Two - Each player should roll a 1d4. Those who roll a 3 or 4 are haunted by dreams of the Blade. They feel a physical need to hold it, clutch it in their hands.

Once they have failed this check three times, they will suffer from Ceaseless Bladelust: they must hold a sword in their hand at all times. If they have a blade, they will draw it and carry it at all times, even in sleep. If they don't have a blade, they will rigorously attempt to obtain one—even at the cost of attacking or hurting their friends or innocents.

DAY 3

RANDOM WEATHER TABLE

Roll 1d4 3 times a day

- 1 Snowstorm.
- 2 Freezing rain.
- 3 Thick fog.
- 4 Thin sunshine.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS DAY 3

Roll 1d12 3 times

1. 3d6 refugees making their way to Støvring. If informed of its near destruction, they will smile grimly and continue with their journey.
2. 2d4 obsidian traders heading west to east. They have obsidian daggers, fur coats, polar bear skins, dried cloudberry and one extra set of cross country skis.
3. Dead body mummifying on the ice. It looks like it fell from high above though there are no nearby cliffs. If chipped out and thawed, 1d12 gp and a spellbook with 1d4 random 2nd level spells are found.
4. 1d6 savage babooneten.
5. 1d6 members of The Cold.
6. 1d8 uralics. Roll 1d6 for reaction: 1-2 in the distance 3-4 hostile 5-6 grim but friendly.
7. 1d4 walrusbovy fishing on a frozen lake.
8. Abandoned, half-destroyed village. Nothing worth looting remains.
9. 1d4 obsidian gnomes. They are hastily returning to their cold halls nestled beneath the obsidian cliffs carrying sleds loaded with goods but covered with tarps (they won't share what lies on the sleds but just so you know it's polar bear carcasses). If asked, they tell the PCs they have many great items for sale in their nocturnal kingdom.
10. Meteor strike! 1d6 meteors strike nearby. The most encumbered PC(s) must make a dexterity check or take 1d4

stone and ice shard damage from a very close missile instead. The meteors are too hot to touch for several hours and indeed sink down steaming holes deep into the ice upon landing.

11. A scavenger pulling a sled with gear looted from adventurers. He doesn't want to stop or talk but if the PCs persist violently, the sled will have 4 random items from Brynhild's shop.
12. A lone vulture swoops overhead, following the party for 1d100 minutes. The crafty creature stays out of bowshot.

Regardless of what happens during the day, that night ends at the nameless town of Sweyn Forkbeard.

This is a small hamlet, half-buried in snow. It is abandoned, filled with an eerie cold wind, but proves to be safe. If searched it has been largely picked clean but a large goat skull sitting in a circle of ash is found behind one of the houses.

Are any of the PCs suffering from fatigue?

Blade Sick Night Three - Each player should roll a d4. Those who roll a 2-4 are haunted by dreams of the Blade. They feel a physical need to hold it, clutch it in their hands. They do not heal HP or regain spells this night.

Once they have failed this check three times, they will suffer from Ceaseless Bladelust: they must hold a sword in their hand at all times. If they have a blade, they will draw it and carry it at all times, even in sleep. If they don't have a blade, they will rigorously attempt to obtain one—even at the cost of attacking or hurting their friends or innocents.

DAY 4

This is the day that the Seeker will ambush the PCs. (If the PCs are traveling with the Seeker, the attack is from the Wild Card). If the PCs are traveling with the Silver Queen, there is only a 50 percent chance the ambush happens.

RANDOM WEATHER TABLE

Roll on this 1d4 times a day

1. Snowstorm.
2. Frozen rain.
3. Snow & lightning.
4. Light meteor storm.
5. Heavy black rain, stains the snow black and coats the skin.
6. Frigid, howling winds (no arrows can fly, no torches lit).

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS DAY 4

Roll 1d12 3x per day

1. 1d6 vultures.
2. 1d4 munch ponies.
3. 1d4 octobeasts.
4. 1d8 babooneten.
5. 1d6 mammothjument.
6. Smashed sled and 1d4 dead obsidian gnomes torn apart.
7. 1d8 walrusbovy.
8. Ice construct.
9. 1d6 dead adventurers.
10. Small village (d8 houses). All the people have been stripped and butchered, throats coat and blood frozen in the snow.
11. Sculptures of goats on the ice. Eerie but probably harmless. Probably.
12. 1d6 Munch Ponies.

SLEEPTOWN

Silver Queen Option Two - If met here, she is in human form but bruised all over. She is incredibly serious and aims to leave for the Obsidian Hills the next day. She welcomes companions, but will not be swayed from her course.

A hastily constructed boom town that exists solely to serve adventurers heading north to claim the Blade. In the middle of the town is a deep caldera, currently filled with frozen water. There are several inns and one shop, and they surround the lake in a nearly symmetrical circle. The people here, locals and travelers alike, are tense, frightened. The innkeepers complain of the adventurers: "These adventurers are out of control" and wild-eyed Blade seekers march around muttering things like "You're not getting my sword!"

Working their way ever closer to the Blade, the Cold have sent a group of their most devout into Sleeptown, who are currently staying at Sven's Inn. These cultists will perform a ritual at midnight of the night that the PCs enter the town.

THE COLD'S RITUAL

At exactly midnight, a supernatural fire will burst forth out in the center of the frozen lake. The Cold will be surrounding the ring, lost in a deep chant, and focused on summoning the dark power of the Black Blade.

If left alone, they will complete the ritual in 20 minutes, effectively increasing the powers of all of the Cold (including those encountered later in the adventure) by 1 HD/level and imparting 2 Law points onto anyone who is unfortunate enough to witness the event. If they are stopped before they can complete the ritual, everyone in Sleeptown will lose 1 Law point.

MAGNUS'S SHOP

Items marked 'NE' are non-encumbering, everything else weighs as much as you would expect.

A small shop run by Magnus, a cousin of Brynhild, has the following goods. Magnus is, if anything, more laconic even than her. He has one each of the following items:

Francisca Axe - A small throwing axe. Can be hidden behind shield. (+4 hit surprise attack). 1d6 damage. 20 gp.

Battle Axe - Broad bladed weapon can be used for thrusting, hacking but small enough to be concealed beneath a cloak or behind a shield. (+4 hit surprise attack). 1d6 damage. 20 gp.

Broad Axe - Big and brutal. Requires 2 hands. 1d8 damage. 30 gp.

Kesja - An axe head attached to a long pole. These are two-handed weapons. 1d10 damage. 40 gp.

Crampons - Plus 2 to all Dexterity checks when worn on ice. 10 gp NE

Dried Reindeer Food - 5 gp NE

Greased Leather Cloak - +1 to Resist Cold. 35 gp.

Hauberk and Coif - A longer, heavier byrnie (and mail helm) Armor as chain. 80 gp.

Limewood Shield - The rim is covered with rawhide, giving it greater strength. +2 melee AC / +2 missile AC. 40 gp.

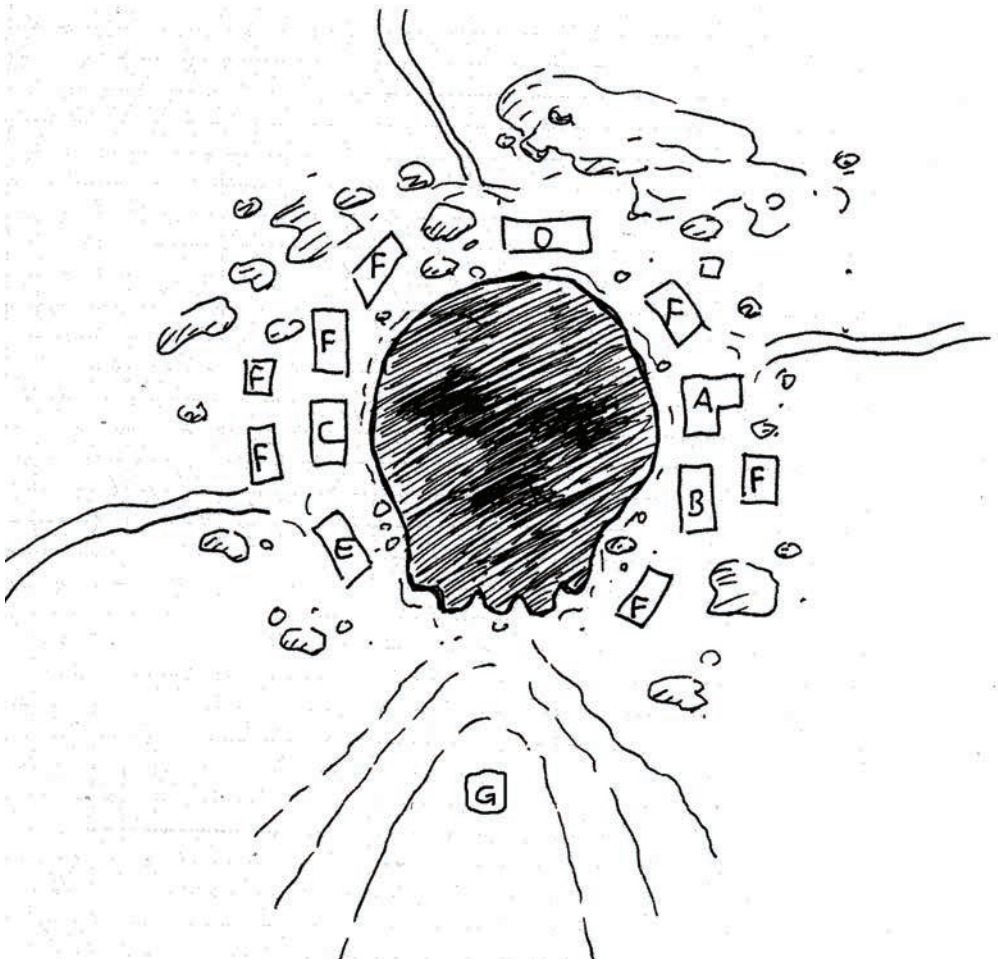
Seax - A long, single bladed knife, 1d4 damage but disembowels mortal enemies on a natural roll of 17+ (this is intended to be revealed only after a player buys and uses it than at the shopping phase). 20 gp.

Spjot - A spear used for throwing (does 1d6 damage). If it hits an opponent with a shield on a natural roll of 17+, it renders it useless until the Spjot is removed. 18 gp.

Wool Trousers - +1 to Resist Cold 20 sp.

SLEEPTOWN MAP

- A. Inn of the Fallen Sky. The Wild Card will stay here.
- B. The Salted Herring Inn. The Seeker will stay here.
- C. Last Chance Inn. The Defender will stay here.
- D. Sven's Inn. 3d4 members of The Cold are staying here.
- E. Magnus's Shop.
- F. Communal housing for the locals.
- G. The Frostover Tattoo Studio is atop this glacier.



FROSTOVER TATTOOS

Ink made from the eldritch glacier water of Jutenheimen. It is stored under the open skies for 3 winter full moons. Ice forms non-Euclidean patterns and then is distilled into a thick luminescent ink.

The tattoo artist is a being so old that gender can't be determined. They go by the name of Groke and will warn the PCs that this is dangerous magic and it may not even work for them.

To gain one of these frigid artworks comes with a cost, and not just the 1d4x100 gp (or a single finger per tattoo) price either. Getting a tattoo permanently lowers the body temperature, and the character will constantly shiver, feel weak, and be susceptible to cold. Their tears and urine are forever chilled (-1 to Resist Cold for receiving the tattoo, even if the magic doesn't work). There is a 6 in 8 chance that the magic will work as intended, but it will be mundane on a 7 or 8 on a roll of 1d8.

However the Frostover tattoos invoke great power. If they're starting characters, possibly none of your PCs can afford these tattoos yet, in which case the promise of wealth enough to get them makes for a useful carrot. The shop is protected by strong magic and will not be damaged from the meteorites.

Are any of the PCs suffering from fatigue?

Blade Sick Night Four - Each player should roll a d4. Those who roll a 2-4 are haunted by dreams of the Blade. They feel a physical need to hold it, clutch it in their hands. They do not heal HP or regain spells this night.

Once they have failed this check three times, they will suffer from Ceaseless Bladelust: they must hold a sword in their hand at all times. If they have a blade, they will draw it and carry it at all times, even in sleep. If they don't have a blade, they will rigorously attempt to obtain one—even at the cost of attacking or hurting their friends or innocents.

DAY 5

RANDOM WEATHER TABLE

Roll on this 1d4 times a day

1. Snowstorm.
2. Frozen rain.
3. Snow & lightning.
4. Heavy meteor storm.
5. Medium meteor storm.
6. Ice shard hail.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS DAY 5

Roll d12 3x per day

1. Yeti Voltron.
2. White-out snowstorm for 1d20 hours.
3. Ice construct.
4. 1d8 mammothjument.
5. 1d10 walrusbovy.
6. 1d10 babooneten.
7. 1d8 vultures.
8. 1d6 octobeasts.
9. The Wild Card (or another NPC as necessary).
10. An ursage.
11. Vampiric diamond leaf willow.
12. Improbably good weather.

Silver Queen Option Three - She is in the form of a Caribou and she is being attacked by three Babooneten. If the PC's intrude in the fight, she will leap away toward the kindest PC and change into a woman before him, shivering and vulnerable.

This night ends in the foothills of the Obsidian Hills; the Land of the Obsidian Gnomes. If in the presence of the Silver Queen or the Defender, they will go straight to the entrance. Otherwise, it will require a successful Search roll or something clever from the PCs to find the entrance to the home of the Obsidian Gnomes.





FROSTOVER TATTOOS

Snowflake - You can cool others with a touch. It doesn't do damage, but if a person is held for a full hour they are frozen solid.

Icicle - Gives perfect balance on ice. No Dexterity checks needed while in frigid climes.

Pine Tree - The calm of a frozen forest on a snowy night. Never fail morale checks, any hirelings/followers get +2 to their checks.

Half-Moon - Hidden like a half moon on a frozen, starless night. +1 point to sneak/+10% to move silently.

Mountain Peak - Strong and sacred as the distant peaks. Gain 1d4 HP at will once per session.

Narwhal - Alignment changes to lawful. For magic users, this entails the loss of their spells. Gain new skill: swimming at 2 points.

Obsidian Shard -Your skin becomes as tough as rocks. +2 AC but critical hits will sheer away limbs. If a natural 20 is rolled against you, lose a random digit or limb.

Spirit Bear - The heartiness and vigor of these majestic ursine creatures makes you immune to mundane cold on land or in water.

Raven - True sight. Grants a bonus of +4 to save vs. illusions and to finding/spotting secret doors.

OBSIDIAN GNOMES

Unique to the volcanic mountains of Støvring, the obsidian gnomes dwell in cold halls of dark glass deep beneath the surface of the obsidian cliffs. Though they have lived here for time immemorial, they have done little to improve their glassy black kingdom—tunnels and halls are hewn roughly from the sharp obsidian and the black caves of the rank-and-file are small and unassuming and unadorned. The stygian darkness of their caverns is nigh eternal, broken only by the occasional lava vent—the gnomes knowing no need or use for light or heat.

These black-skinned, black-maned gnomes spend their days working the obsidian of their dreary mountain home and have crafted some

of the finest weapons and armor that can be found within the whole of Støvring. They will sell their items but do not care for gold or gems, accepting instead the only thing that they truly desire: polar bear pieces, fur or carcasses. Obsidian gnomes crave the flesh and organs of polar bears over all other food and will decorate their dark caves with the naked skulls of these beasts and their cold floors with the pelts.

There are a dozen other adventurers here, browsing the wares, seeking shelter, and preparing for the next day.

Silver Queen Option Four - She is in human form here but has stag horns. Here she is grim and focused. She has more of a memory and knows the Demon King is coming. She thinks the Blade was used to stop him long ago and thinks he needs to be stopped, for he is unnatural, pure Chaos manifested.



The PCs may want to acquire polar bear pelts. This is a bad idea for the clock is racing and each delay will make it more difficult for them to reach the Blade first. On the other hand, it can get them some cool loot. They can make several successive trips but it's a case of diminishing returns as the world grows more dangerous and the Bladehunters get closer to the Blade.

The Obsidian Gnomes will gladly trade with the PCs, provided they can come up with the prized polar bear pelts. You can role play the hunt, or use the following table to see what they come up with when they go hunting out on the ice. If you choose to use the table, imply consult the appropriate row for each sequential time the PCs go out to see what the result of the hunt is, then roll the prescribed action die to see what the Hazard of the Hunt will be.

Attempt	Hours	Reward	Peril	2D6 Action dice	Hazard
1	1d4	1d12 Polar Bear Skins	Each adventurer loses 1 HP and roll 2d6.	1 Mauled!	Randomly determined character loses ½ HP, is scarred.
2	1d4+1	1d10 Polar Bear Skins	Each adventurer loses 2 HP and roll 2d6.	2 Frostbitten	So cold! Character with lowest CON loses 2 HP and 1 point of CON.
3	1d4+2	1d8 Polar Bear Skins	Each adventurer loses 2 HP and roll 2D6.	3 Polar bear attack	Randomly determined character loses arm (-6 HP) in the attack.
4	1d4+3	1d6 Polar Bear Skins	Each adventurer loses 3 HP and roll 2d6.	4 Blinding hail	All PCs lose 1 additional HP.
5	1d4+4	1d4 Polar Bear Skins	Each adventurer loses 3 HP and roll 2d6.	5 Crevasse!	1 randomly determined character falls, and must ditch weapons/armor to escape.
6	2d4	1d4 Polar Bear Skins	Each adventurer loses 3 HP and roll 2d6.	6 Clear Skies	Rejoice for nothing has gone wrong.
7	2d4+1	1d4 Polar Bear Skins	Each adventurer loses 4 HP and roll 2d6-1.	7. Clear Skies	Nothing special.
8	2d4+2	1d4 Polar Bear Skins	Each adventurer loses 4 HP and roll 2d6-1.	8 Clear Skies	Nothing special.
9	2d4+3	1d4 Polar Bear Skins	Each adventurer loses 4 HP and roll 2d6-1.	9. Good Day Hunting	A bonus 1d6 skins are collected.
10+	2d4+4	1d4 Polar Bear Skins	Each adventurer loses 4 HP and roll 2d6-1.	10.Eureka!	A fragment of the giant's beard is found. See page 29.
				11 Cache	Found 1d100 gold pieces.
				12 Spring has sprung	A healing spring is uncovered. No one loses any HP this session

OBSIDIAN GNOME WARES

Item	Cost	Notes
Obsidian Axe	1 polar bear	2d6 damage, considered as a magical blade vs undead but breaks on a natural 1.
Obsidian Dagger	½ polar bear	1d6 damage, considered as a magical blade vs undead but breaks on a natural 1.
Obsidian Sword	1 polar bear	1d8+1 damage, considered as a magical blade vs undead but breaks on a natural 1.
Obsidian Studded Leather	2 polar bears	+3 to AC, but also +2 to saves vs cold.
Obsidian Plate	5 polar bears	+6 to AC, +2 to saves vs. Lightning and fire but shatters against a natural 20.
Obsidian Shield	1 ½ polar bears	+1 to AC, +2 to saves vs. Lightning and fire but shatters against a natural 20.
Obsidian Helm	2 polar bears	+1 to saves vs. Lightning and fire .
Obsidian Arrows	1 polar bear / dozen	1d6+1 damage, considered as a magical blade vs undead but breaks on a natural 1.
Obsidian Gauntlets	3 polar bears	1d4+1 punching damage, +1 to saves vs. Lightning and fire, considered as a magical blade vs undead but breaks on a natural 1.





ACT III

THE CALL OF THE BLACK BLADE

*Sleeping at last, the trouble and tumult over,
Sleeping at last, the struggle and horror past,
Cold and white, out of sight of friend and of lover,
Sleeping at last.*

*No more a tired heart downcast or overcast,
No more pangs that wring or shifting fears that hover,
Sleeping at last in a dreamless sleep locked fast.*

*Fast asleep. Singing birds in their leafy cover
Cannot wake her, nor shake her the gusty blast.
Under the purple thyme and the purple clover
Sleeping at last.*

—Christina Georgina Rossetti

The third act leaves the rustic towns and frozen plains behind and descends deep into the earth. If all went according to plan, the PCs will journey up from the obsidian gnomes and find the obelisks. If they never got to the Obsidian Hills, it's up to the GM to decide what to do. Perhaps the Seeker will claim the Blade. Or maybe the opening to the dungeon was really where the PCs went all along. Or maybe the Silver Queen uses her magic. It's your game—but there's nothing wrong with a cinematic cut to the dungeon even if the PCs wandered a little off course.

Assuming the PCs ended Act 2 with the Obsidian Gnomes, they are escorted through the long tunnels in the back of the Obsidian Gnome kingdom. If they are with the Silver Queen, she will lead them. If they are not with her, the featured NPC they are with will lead them, albeit a little slower (add 2 hours). If they are by themselves, it will take even longer (add 6 hours). However, if they did any favors for the gnomes or made friends with any of them, the gnomes can lead them with the same ability as the featured NPCs.

The tunnels are cramped and wet and cold. It's a fairly miserable, meandering climb. When they at last emerge it's into a high-walled valley filled with swirling mist and cold wind blowing down from the north.

If any of the PCs have some kind of wilderness lore skill (or are Halflings, Elves, Rangers, etc) they will find the Obelisks in short time. Otherwise it takes 1d4 hours of stumbling through the fog before they discover their goal on a small plateau.

The Obelisks are ancient and weathered. In the distant past, they were powerful warriors and wizards known as the Scholars. At that time, Svärtgard was a warm land filled with gentle rains and lush grass. By drawing on the

power of the land itself, the twelve Scholars banished the Demon King to the distant void of space. Not only did this act of tremendous magic reduce the land to a barren husk, it fossilized the Scholars where they stood. Some modern historians place the birth of Silver Queen to this moment; others cite fragmentary records of a Green Maiden from even earlier times.

In the epicenter of the plateau is a sloping tunnel. Any character with a Law skill of three or higher will feel the pull of the Black Blade like a sexual urge—like an addict jonesing for their fix. It is time to enter the dungeon, claim the Blade and do what must be done.

One last thing to keep in mind: The titular Demon King is not the Big Boss. His arrival is an end condition; the destruction of all life on earth, not the beginning of a predictable battle.

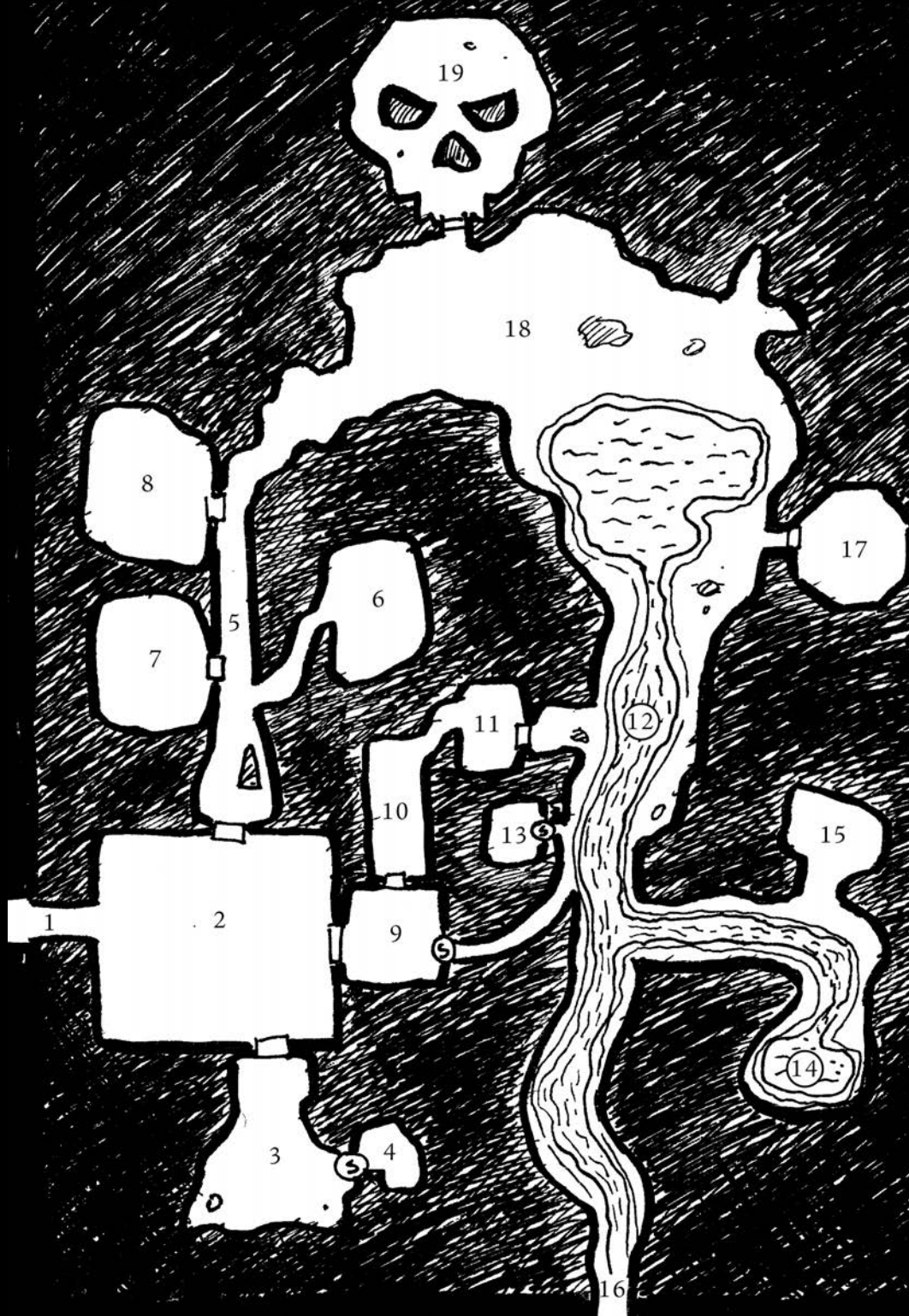
TIME TAKEN TO FIND THE OBELISKS

5 (or fewer) Hours - The PCs are officially too legit to quit and go straight in.

6-9 Hours -The heavy cold sets in. Everyone makes a Resist Cold check. Failure results in loss of 2 HP and 1 point of Dexterity for the next hour.

10-12 Hours -The PCs are soaked through and miserable. Resist Cold or lose 1d4 HP and loss of 1 Dexterity for the next 1d4 hours.

13+ Hours - Well you know this can't be good. Resist Cold or lose 1d6 HP and regardless lose 1 pt of Dexterity and 1 point of Constitution for the next 1d4 hours.



DUNGEON KEY

1. Entrance

An icy, slippery hallway that leads down into the dungeon. An empty, howling wind fills the air. It is ridiculously cold (make a Resist Cold check or suffer 1 HP damage).

2. Cold Orchard

Upon entering this barren, stone chamber the characters will see, in the center of the room, 1d6 trees made of obsidian. Each of them has a single withered fruit made of ice. The fruits are painfully cold but if somehow an entire fruit is ingested (doing 1d2 damage from how cold it is), a large Kermode bear will appear and aid the eater of the fruit for the next 6-8 hours (or however long it takes to poop out the fruit) before wandering off to whence it came.

Kermode Bear

Number Encountered: 1

Alignment: neutral

Movement: 140

Armor: Class: 15

Hit Dice: 3 (21 HP)

Attacks: 2 (claw) (bite)

Damage: claw 2d4, bite 1d8

Size: L

Morale: 9

Disposition: helpful

In the corner is a great wooden statue of the PC with the lowest Charisma score. This 5 meter monolith is freezing to the touch and gives off an aura that will make anyone who stands near it for more than a single round reel with dizziness. A small alter sits at its massive feet. If a PC makes an offering of something of personal significance (magic sword, fancy hat, father's suspenders, etc.) to the statue, **the represented character will immediately gain a level** of experience (this can only happen one time). If the statue is burned or otherwise destroyed, **the character will die**.

3. Storage Room

This room has rotting, broken barrel ribs that have long been deteriorating into the earth. A successful search will reveal a scroll (one random 3rd level magic user spell) and 1d100 gp. A second successful search reveals a hidden recess that opens into room 4.

4. Silent Space

The hidden recess leads to a dark, dripping room. The ceiling has sharp, melting icicles and the floor has many small holes. Voices are utterly silent and even magical light appears as dim as dusk in this barren room. However, any character who attempts to speak within this chamber will lose his or her voice for the next 1d6 hours! On a small dais of ice lies the **Ice Katana**. (Treat as a bastard sword that does 1d10+1 damage but shatters on an attack roll of 1-3).

5. Hallway

This hallway, like the entrance in 1, is slippery and cold, filled with a howling wind. Any character who attempts to run or move quickly on the ice must make a Dexterity check to stay afoot.

A 15 foot tunnel leads down to the Raspberry Room. Halfway down are two dead adventurers, evidently killed while fleeing what lay below. Their bodies are scored with hundreds of small wounds and they lay in a pool of congealed blood. If searched, both were seen in Stovring or Sleepdown. The first has chainmail, a great sword, a short bow, a quiver with twenty arrows, two torches, and 8 gp. The second is equipped with leather armor, a short sword, a light crossbow, 3 daggers, thieves' tools, a now shattered hooded lantern and three pints of oil.

6. Raspberry Room

From outside the dark room, a low chattering is audible. The room is large and crawling with dozens of kitten-sized demonic larva (bodies made entirely of obsidian) crawling over one another. The larva are desperate for human flesh and will immediately attack any who enter

the room. Once cleared the room has many bones and in back, growing incongruously through the stone floor, several raspberry bushes. The berries are mundane but very delicious.

Larva

Number Encountered: 4D6

Alignment: chaotic

Movement: 120

Armor class: 15

Hit dice: 1 (2 HP)

Attacks: 1 (bite)

Damage: 2-5

Size: S

Morale: 4

Disposition: desperate

7. Tree Room

A nondescript room, except for the single beautiful tree that stands against the west wall. The tree is completely recursive, meaning that each fork in the tree is followed by an exact duplicate at half the distance. Though this reduction means that there is apparently an eventual end to the tree's branching, this is not actually the case: the recursion is infinite and continues further and further into the microsphere.

Cutting branches from the recursive tree will lessen its perfection but will not destroy it. Removed branches are themselves powerful and can be used as +2 clubs in combat—imagine the impact of being hit by an infinite tree branch!

Consuming any part of the tree is dangerous—roll a save vs. Death or die as your body attempts to digest an infinite morsel! Success means taking 2d6 damage and throwing up the ingested portion.

8. Ruby Room

The walls, ceiling, floor, and everything else within this room are made of the purest carved

ruby. Characters with skill in mining, gemology, or something of the type should be able to chip away at 1d10x100 gp worth of gems (1 item for encumbrance purposes) per ten minutes spent working. Unskilled characters will need to spend 30 minutes to gather the same amount. The room is such that the wealth of rubies is essentially unlimited and PCs can leave with their wealth in hand **as long as they spend no more than 60 minutes in the room**. If characters remain for more than an hour within the room, they will find that, regardless of which door they exit by, they return to this very same room. Only by dropping all of the rubies that they have mined from the room will they be able to leave!

9. Carcass Room

This room is large and ominous, appearing to be some sort of ancient temple to a long-dead god. Ornate carvings and symbols of multi-headed goats, icicles, and inhuman skeletal remains cover every wall and surface. The light seems to flicker and dissipate within this room and shadows leap from every corner. If the PCs investigate or interact with the shrine in a clever way, they will discover a frieze showing a white caribou impaled by a black sword.

There are 1d6+1 dead bodies in here, relatively fresh. A successful search will reveal that they were, in fact, other Blade Seekers who killed each other and were, presumably, robbed by yet another party who followed them. The bodies are missing all monies, though one still has a really nice hat.

If the back wall is examined or searched, a small tunnel is discovered that leads down to the area of 12.

10. Casting Room

A wounded man-shaped demon with crystal antlers and hands made of a mass of writhing sea anemones stands next to the wall. He is in the midst of casting an elaborate spell by drawing obscure, sea-green symbols on the

cold grey wall. If attacked he will try to touch his opponents, which will, upon a failed save vs. Magic, act as *Polymorph Other*. He is bleeding from a sword wound through his side and only has 2d4 HP. If left alone, the spell will kill all living beings within the room, starting with the demon himself. We don't know who stabbed him, maybe you have some ideas.

11. The Demon King is You

Everything in this room is a dream. But as everyone knows, if you die in a dream, you die in real life too. It's likely that the PC's figure out they are in a dream sooner rather than later. If so, they make a Wisdom check. If they pass, they wake up and the room itself never existed. They were merely sleeping in the hallway. If they fail, they may begin lucid dreaming.

The room is round and mushy and very much resembles the interior of a hollowed out, softly pulsating brain. Grey ichor drips periodically from ceiling and fills the ground with puddles.

A distant, low crooning sound fills the chamber and the entire thing smells strongly of old cheese.

However many PCs have made it here will see themselves gently floating in the air.

The Demon King is hovering just above the ground, but will fly to the top of the chamber (about five meters up) and then the PC notices something interesting. (Each PC will see something different).

Roll 1d8 on the table to find out

1. He's naked.
2. He's an animal.
3. He's a baby.
4. He's dead.
5. His hair and teeth fall off.
6. He's having sex with someone you haven't seen for years.
7. He is actually your father.
8. You run away and he charges after you.

Lucid Dreaming: Whatever a PC wants to happen will happen. They can constantly arrange the fabric of reality, but it also changes not according to their conscious thought.

This is a story-telling mini game at this point and should be brief and fun; a release from the tensions of the dungeon. But if the players do manage to defeat this dream of the Demon King, they get +1d4 to all their saves for the rest of this adventure.

12. Frozen Stream

This once was a flowing underground stream but it has long since frozen into solid ice. It is slippery as can be; each round while on it the PC's must make a Dexterity check to stay afoot. If they are running or fighting or anything apart from concentrating on stepping, they make the check at disadvantage (Roll twice and take the lowest number). A character wearing crampons does not have to roll; one wearing snowshoes, on the other hand, rolls three times for the check.

At the juncture leading down to rooms 15 and 14 are 1d4 members of The Cold. If they've interacted with any before, it's them. Otherwise, it's two women and a man with sharp obsidian swords. Both women have **the Black Blade's Eldritch Power**.

The Cold

Number Encountered: 3

Alignment: chaotic

Movement: 120

Armor: class: 12

Hit dice: 1 (5 HP)

Attacks: 1 (obsidian sword)

Damage: 1d8

Size: M

Morale: 9

Disposition: opportunistic



On the other bank of the frozen stream, a small glacial protrusion obscures a cleverly hidden gap in the wall (make a successful Search check) that leads to room 13.

13. Quicksilver Fountain

A beautiful chamber filled with ornate columns of shaped marble. In the center of the room, an ivory-white marble fountain spills into a dozen small pools around it. Closer inspection will reveal that the fountain pours forth a liquid of the purest silver—which glitters exquisitely in the torchlight. If a character drinks from the fountain, roll the effects on the following table. Each character may gain only one effect from the fountain, they take effect immediately, and they are permanent. The magical properties of the water are lost if it is removed from the fountain for more than one round before imbibing.

Roll 1d10 for results:

1. Subtract 1 point from all ability scores.
2. Lose 1d4 HP.
3. Gain 1d4 HP.
4. Add one point to strength score.
5. Add one point to dexterity score.
6. Add one point to charisma score.
7. Add one point to constitution score.
8. Add one point to intelligence score.
9. Add one point to wisdom score.
10. Add one point to each ability score.

14. Pool Room

This chamber features a large pool, about half the size of the room, surrounded by lovely ceramic tiles in cascading geometric patterns. The water is clear and shallow (about 1.5 meters deep at the center) and several gems, jewels, and coins glitter provocatively at its bottom. There are no traps or hazards in the room, although a *Detect Evil* spell will reveal evil emanating from the pool. Exactly 2 rounds after the PCs enter the room, the Nykkjen will strike at the nearest target.

Nykkjen

Number Encountered: 1

Alignment: chaotic

Movement: 120

Armor: class: 16 (Special—see below)

Hit Dice: 3+3 (17 HP)

Attacks: 1 (special)

Damage: Save vs. paralyzation or dragged into water.

Size: M

Morale: 9

Disposition: fluid

The Nykkjen forms in 2 rounds in water, appearing as a white horse, and lashes out. Save vs. penalization or be dragged into the water. Sharp weapons cause 1 HP damage. Fire-based spells do half or no damage (if it makes a save), but *Purify Water* spell destroys it. If a piece of metal, like a needle or something iron, is thrown into the water the Nykkjen will cease to exist. Inside the pool, buried beneath a trove consisting of 4d6x20 gold, 3d6 precious gems, a pair of beautiful necklaces, and a magic helmet of water breathing, is a large goat skull with obsidian eyes and obsidian horns. It is cold and smells of the void.

15. The Chrysalis

Inside this room (the door is slightly ajar) the Wild Card (or Defender if Wild Card is dead or with PCs) (or random Blade Seeker if both are dead/with the PCs) is fighting a pit of full of ice scorpions. They will gratefully accept the PCs aid and tell them the key to the Blade is either here or in the room across the way.

Ice Scorpions

Number Encountered: 2d8

Alignment: neutral

Movement: 80

AC: 13

Hit Dice: 1 (2 HP)

Attack: Glaciate—1 damage, make Resist Cold check or lose half of current HP.

Size: S

Morale: 4

Disposition: dangerous

16. Exit

Following the frozen river out this direction will lead to an embankment. Digging through the approximately 3 meters of accumulated snow and ice will lead back outside into the Obsidian hills.

17. Floating Library

Hundreds of ancient leather-bound volumes float aimlessly throughout the air of this compact chamber. They are not moving quickly and will not harm PCs if they float into them. The books are all written in the language of the dead and, as such, may only be read by demons, necromancers, or the dead (or undead) themselves. The contents of each book are essentially the same—horrible secrets of illness, suffering and unbearable pain that are intended for the dead alone. Anyone (except demons, necromancers and the dead/undead) who can somehow read these tomes must make a save vs. magic or will lose a level immediately. Any lesser undead (3 HD or fewer) who come in contact with one of these

books will be instantly absorbed by the volume. Assuming one could trust a necromancer, Lich or Vampire enough to do business with one, these books would likely fetch a high price.

18. Goat Skull.

In front of Room 19 is a recessed in the shape of a goat's skull. If stepped on, nothing happens save for a faint, astral bleating. But if stepped on by one carrying the goat skull from the pool room, or if the skull is placed upon it, the door to room 19 opens.

19. The Room of The Black Blade

There are three large pits in the ground, bitterly bleak air rising from them. They are most likely not bottomless, but you might as well assume they are. Behind all of them, hanging in the air, is the Black Blade of the Demon King.

Anyone with 3 or more points of Law will be unable to resist their Bladelust.

Ceaseless Bladelust: they must hold a sword in their hand at all times. If they have a blade, they will draw it and carry it at all times, even in sleep. If they don't have a blade, they will attempt rigorously to obtain one—even at the risk of attacking or hurting their friends or innocents.

If it is reasonably likely that they can, the Seeker will enter ten seconds after the PCs open the door. If the Silver Queen is not with the PCs and is still alive, she will be a captive, tied and gagged, of the Seeker.

Only one hand may claim the Blade—one hand at a time that is!



THE BLACK BLADE

CURSED BASTARD SWORD +5

The Black Blade is an exquisitely crafted bastard sword and can be wielded equally as well one-handed or two-handed. The Blade feels almost weightless when held, but is noticeably heavy (10 pounds to start, but adding 2 pounds per hour until it is drawn) when sheathed. The Blade itself is immaculately carved from the darkest obsidian, while the hilt is of black steel and is inset with a single jewel—a black opal that resembles a cat's eye and emits an eerie black aura whenever it is exposed. When drawn, the Black Blade will lower the temperature around it by ten degrees Fahrenheit (5.5 degrees Celsius).

The Blade is of Lawful alignment and is highly intelligent, with an Int. of 18. It can communicate telepathically over long distances and will laugh or sing out loud when it makes a kill. Once the Blade has been held by a person, even for a moment, it will form a telepathic bond with that person and will be able to communicate with him or her over any distance. It will also impart its strength upon its wielder, granting him or her a +2 on all saving throws and -1 on all damage die sustained as long as the sword is held.

All characters of Lawful (or Evil) alignments can wield the Blade without penalty, but any non-Lawful (or Evil) characters will immediately lose 1d4 points of Con. upon initial contact with the Blade and 1 additional point per hour thereafter. Once his or her Con. has been reduced to 0, the character will die.

The Black Blade is a weapon of incredible Ego and will attempt to control the person who wields it. Every time that it is drawn, the wielder should make a check against the Blade's Ego by rolling 1d20 and adding his or her Int. and Cha. modifiers and Experience Level. Any

roll over a 15 is a success and the character has resisted the Blade. Any roll under 15 is a failure and the character has fallen under the Black Blade's sway. At this point, the character will immediately change his or her alignment to Lawful (Evil), their Law points will automatically go to 6, and they will become preoccupied with feeding the Blade by using it to slay as many people as possible.

When it makes a kill, the Blade will absorb the soul of the victim, ensuring an eternity of suffering and anguish. The soul will be forever a part of the Blade and its strength is directly derived from taking souls. If it does not kill at least once every 72 hours, the Blade will begin to sap the strength of its wielder at a rate of 1 HP per hour. At 0 HP, the wielder will die and his or her soul will be absorbed into the sword.

Victims of the Black Blade cannot be revived by any means, as their souls are lost for all time.

When drawn, there is a 1 in 6 chance that the Blade will automatically lash out at the nearest person, regardless of whether it is friend or foe.

The Black Blade has the following statistics:

+5 to hit, automatic kill on a successful strike, unless the victim makes a successful save vs. Death, in which case damage is 1d8+5 (1-handed) or 2d4+5 (2-handed).

Once the Blade has gained sufficient strength—after it has absorbed a minimum of sixty-four souls—it will serve as a powerful beacon for the Demon King, guiding him back from the depths of space and ushering in a new era of death.

The only way to avoid the Blade killing all life in existence and summoning the Demon King is to sheathe it in the heart of the Silver Queen. Should this be done, the queen will dissipate, like mist. And the Blade will shrink into a dagger, completely mundane in all regards other than its history.

AFTERMATH

No matter whose hand draws it, when the Blade is claimed, the meteors stop, dreams and compulsions end, and the clouds in the sky clear away. The land of Svärtgard will, however briefly, resemble the lush pastoral land it was those many years ago. But that's about the end of the good news. The holder of the Blade will likely go on a killing spree, aiming to murder the requisite number to summon the Demon King. If they maintain control of the Blade, it will take 1d4 days for the dreams to start again as the Blade seeks out a more malleable target.

FOR THIS ADVENTURE

There are a lot of different ways Act III could have gone. In play tests, some groups fought amongst themselves for the Blade while others skipped the dungeon altogether. The main thing is if the Blade was defeated (either by a sacrifice of the Silver Queen or dropped in the sea/taken into space) then the Demon King cannot appear and this crisis is averted.

If someone wields the Blade, on the other hand, even someone with nominal control, then the end of the world is nigh. Do with that what you will.

FOR YOUR CAMPAIGN

There is no horde of undead unleashed upon the world at the end of this adventure, but there are likely a number of factors that will change the world or at least hinder the PCs. The foremost is

if the Black Blade is still around; not only is there a powerful maniac on the loose, but the Demon King will soon be on his way.

If the Silver Queen is dead, the land too will soon die and getting back to a port will be dangerous.

If the Blade still exists, The Cold will hunt for it with fanatical determination. If it has been destroyed, they will seek vengeance against any who thwarted them. The Cold do have a town at Rytände Point with close to a hundred followers. Without the powers of the sword, they are less powerful but the truly fanatical are always dangerous.

If the PCs made enemies with any of the featured NPCs that are still alive, that will be a problem for them.

Why is a Lawful Blade working for a Chaotic Demon? This balance of diametrically opposed forces is what allowed the two such power. As the Demon King grew closer, the sword summoned any in the land who had a chance of drawing it, trusting that it could corrupt them.

If continuing adventures with these characters, assign Law and Cold points to the characters as appropriate. If the Silver Queen has nullified the Blade, it no longer has the power to create The Cold. But the Demon King will certainly change anyone with enough inner Chaos into a Bestial.

BESTIARY

*And others hurried to and fro, and fed
Their funeral piles with fuel, and look'd up
With mad disquietude on the dull sky,
The pall of a past world; and then again
With curses cast them down upon the dust,
And gnash'd their teeth and howl'd: the wild birds shriek'd
And, terrified, did flutter on the ground,
And flap their useless wings; the wildest brutes
Came tame and tremulous; and vipers crawl'd
And twin'd themselves among the multitude,
Hissing, but stingless—they were slain for food.
And War, which for a moment was no more,
Did glut himself again: a meal was bought
With blood, and each sate sullenly apart
Gorging himself in gloom: no love was left;
All earth was but one thought—and that was death
—Lord Byron*

THE COLD

The Cold serve the Black Blade maniacally and have done so since its power has begun to return to the world. The Cold come from many countries and lands and are, for the most part, slow-witted and not strong. But the powers of Chaos give them great—if unpredictable—strength. If confronted by the Black Blade, they will instantly surrender and worship its wielder.

Number Encountered: 1d6

Alignment: chaotic

Movement: 120

Armor class: 12

Hit dice: 1 (5 HP)

Attacks: 1 (punch)

Damage: 1d4/weapon

Size: M

Morale: 9

Disposition: opportunistic

Many of the adventurers who leave Støvring in search of the Blade end up as The Cold, either willingly or unwillingly. Anyone with all 6 points in their Law skill will become one of The Cold. A PC turned to The Cold could stay with the party, as both have similar goals, but probably without much trust on either side.

The Cold who have joined together dress in robes of white with a tinge of blue. They are all entirely hairless beneath the robes and speak mostly in whispers. They are not nearly as important as they think they are but there are strong demonic forces swirling in the cosmos and some of The Cold possess the ability to tap into it: one in four possess an eldritch power. It could be any of them—those with power are constantly changing. For members of The Cold with these powers, roll 1d10 on the following table:

1. Black Blade's Chant: The Cold begins to chant synonyms for cold. Brisk chill cool crisp frigid frosty frozen icy snowy wintry and so on. The effect is that a randomly determined opponent must save vs paralyzation or be victim of the hold person spell for 3 rounds.
2. Black Blade's Divine Blessing: The Cold is immune to magic for the rest of the day, and indeed any spells cast upon them will rebound upon the caster, no save allowed.
3. Black Blade's Grace: The Cold shines with a light blue nimbus and regenerates 1 HP/round for the next 10 rounds. This can bring him/her back to life but only until the 10 rounds end.
4. Black Blade's Invocation: without warning, The Cold explodes like a bomb, doing 1d10 damage in blood and bone and gore to all within melee range.
5. Bite of the Black Blade: The Cold's mouth stretches open impossibly wide. If a natural 18-20 is rolled, The Cold eats their opponent in one bite, even if this is entirely impossible.
6. Black Blade's Malady: save vs magic or suffer from cause disease spell.
7. Claw of the Black Blade: The Cold's hand changes into an impossibly sharp rending talon. It does 1d4 damage but the wound will bleed out, doing 1 damage the next round, 2 damage the next round, 4 damage, 8 damage, and so on. It will continue to bleed until healed with magic or skill.
8. Black Blade's Rumination: The Cold vomits a profusion of ice and snow and hail. So much so that it covers all with frozen detritus. Any character with fewer than 3 points in Resist Cold will be unable to emerge for 10 rounds, each round losing 1 HP to cold damage.
9. Wisdom of the Black Blade: The Cold instantly knows everything a randomly determined PC has done since arriving on the island.
10. Black Blade's Bane: The Cold attempts to hug the PC and will do so on a successful attack. The PC's class abilities (attack bonus for warrior, skills for specialist, spellcasting for magic user and cleric) are negated for the next 1d20 hours.



BEASTIALS

Until recently, they were human traders and explorers, villagers and fishermen, mothers and daughters. Once they were human, yes, but now they are filled with the Demon King's chaotic influence. Their bodies are bursting with eldritch energies and constantly leak chaos dust. If a character dies from a beastial's attacks, the dust will coat their bodies and they will rise in 1d12 hours as a beastial. There is a 50 percent chance they keep their personality, desires, and goals, and a 50 percent chance they become utterly mindless, savage beasts.

This is true for NPCs and PCs alike.

There is no taxonomy yet of the beastials, they are too new a thing, and too widespread across the island of Svårtgard. But presented below are a variety that could be encountered in this adventure.

For wandering monsters, or if a PC is changed into bestial, roll 1d10 on the following table.

1. Babooneten
2. Babooneten
3. Babooneten
4. Mammothjument
5. Mammothjument
6. Walrusbovy
7. Walrusbovy
8. Vulptures
9. Vulptures
10. Octobeast

BABOONETEN

Babooneten, like the squat, savage monkeys they resemble, are deadly, expert marksmen capable of shooting through snow and ice. They get +4 to hit when using bows, plus potentially an initial +4 to their first attack with the advantage of surprise. They travel on skis and fight in skirmish style, coming just into bow range and then skiing out after firing.

Skis move at 200'

Number Encountered: 1d6

Alignment: chaotic

Movement: 200' (50' without skis)

Armor class: 12

Hit dice: 2 (11 HP)

Attacks: 1 (bow)

Damage: 1d6 *

Size: M

Morale: 4

Disposition: sneaky, cheeky

*When they do 3 or more damage, roll an additional 1d6.

- 1: Foot pinned to the ground. Ouch.
- 2: Leg pierced. Movement lessened by 1/3 until fully healed.
- 3: Groin shot. Nothing special mechanically but hope you weren't ever planning on having children.
- 4: Chest shot. If they rolled max damage, a lung is punctured.
- 5: Arm shot. Can only use one hand until fully healed.
- 6: Head shot. Pick up a 1d8 and choose three numbers from 1-8. If you roll any of those numbers, you are alive. Otherwise, game over, man (if wearing a helmet, you may choose 6 safety numbers).

MAMMOTHJUMENT

Mammothjument are humanoids that dwell in caves and ruined houses, eking out an existence in small herds. They can reach 2 meters tall and their thick woolly fur insulates against cold and provides a modicum of armor. Some have tusks and/or trunks. They are densely strong and when they punch they knock out opponents with a natural 17 or higher. A knocked out opponent is unconscious for 1d10 +4 combat rounds. Mammothjument aren't aggressive but they are very territorial.

Number Encountered: 1d12

Alignment: neutral

Movement: 120

Armor class: 14

Hit dice: 5 (31 HP)

Attacks: 1 (punch)

Damage: 1d6 + special

Size: M

Morale 4

Disposition: chill

OCTOBEAST

These creatures look like they are from the deep sea but are completely at home on the ice. Octobeasts can shoot darkness from their sphincter and their chests are wrapped in two-meter long prehensile flexible tentacles that can stretch out and clutch opponents.

Number Encountered: 1d3

Alignment: chaotic (evil)

Movement: 120

Armor class: 12

Hit dice: 2 (9 HP)

Attacks: 1 (Darkness) / tentacle / beak

Damage: see below /see below / 1d4

Size: M

Morale: 4

Disposition: aggressive

Cloud of Darkness: a 10 by 10, at least, area of utter darkness as per the official rules, PCs within the darkness suffer a -6 penalty to hit in mêlée and all attacks against them by the unseen party are considered to be "from behind." Missile attacks against unseen targets automatically miss. The darkness is so deep that even those with night vision are blind. It is cold too, about 253 degrees kelvin. After farting out the darkness, the octobeast usually flee back to their glacial caverns.

Tentacles: each octobeast has 8 of these and with a successful attack roll they pull their victim closer. They attack one tentacle at a time. Once 4 tentacles have attached, they can automatically attack with their beak. The beak does 1d4 damage



VULPTURES

The uncanny beasts appear to be fused from arctic foxes and mountain vultures. They have the feral cunning of a fox but the 3 meter wingspan and cruel beaks of a vulture. They have been known to work together and set traps for travelers, or to attack a party just after it survives a mightier foe.

Number Encountered: 1d2
Alignment: chaotic
Movement: 140 (flying)
Armor class: 12
Hit dice: 2 (12 HP)
Attacks: 1 (swoop) / 1 (rake)
Damage: N/A / 2d4
Size: M
Morale: 3
Disposition: opportunistic

If both d4s are max damage, they have plucked out a tasty eyeball.

WALRUSBOVY

Walrusbovy live on some of the coldest and most barren parts of the island. They are greedy bullies who crave fur in all its forms. They get a parry to any attack—if they roll higher on a d20, they are not struck.

Number Encountered: 1d8
Alignment: neutral
Movement: 100
Armor class: 14
Hit dice: 5 (28 HP)
Attacks: 1 (tusk)
Damage: 1d6
Size: M
Morale: 6
Disposition: defensive

MUNCH PONIES

Number Encountered: 1d6
Alignment: chaotic
Movement: 150
Armor class: 16
Hit dice: 3 (12 HP)
Attacks: Bite, trample
Damage: Bite 1d6, trample 1d4+1
Size: M
Morale: 4
Disposition: hungry

These shaggy beasts have developed a taste for flesh and they have a mouthful of shark-like teeth to prove it. They seem to prefer babooneten above all else, but often settle for easier prey. Some small homesteads and settlements have been completely devoured by ravaging munch ponies.



SHARD TOAD

A frog-like humanoid made of ice by a sorcerer who came with an army of such creatures. The army is gone and the sorcerer is dead, but this thing endures; guarding the spot it was ordered to all those years ago. All of its body is covered in sharp icicles, like icy quills.

Number Encountered: 1

Alignment: chaotic

Movement: 0

Armor class: 12 (It is immune to blades).

Hit dice: 10 (64 HP)

Attacks: 1 (quills do area attack to a 10' radius)

Damage: 1 point per person in area of attack.

Size: M

Morale: 12

Disposition: opportunistic

Quills: The quills do 1 HP each to 1d6 targets but if five quills enter one person's body it freezes their blood for 1d4 hours. They will be frozen stiff as a statue for the duration of the effect and when they come to, lose 1d4 points of Constitution (minimum 1) permanently.

URALICS

They live in small families and their economy is based on minniver fur, which is the grey winter coats of frost squirrels. Traders come far to acquire the fur, which is only found in Jutenheimen and three other places in the known world.

They travel across the frozen lands on skis and speak a unique language. They are not friendly, though not hostile either, unless pressed. They live in crumbling stone forts on inaccessible frozen crags; where they keep their stores of fur and where they will retreat to if need be.

On their skis, they are nearly as fast as birds in flight, and they use homemade, powerful recurve bows and arrows with sharpened bone tips. The men are dedicated to martial prowess and stoicism.

Number Encountered: 3d4

Alignment: neutral

Movement: 120' (on skis 180')

Armor class: 12

Hit dice: 1 (5 HP)

Attacks: 1 (bow)

Damage: 1d10

Size: M

Morale: 4

Disposition: stoic

URSAGES

These creatures are solitary sages with the shape of polar bears but the wisdom of the sages. Long ago, they were uncommon but not rare. When encountered, they may be bribed with honey, fish, mead, or courtesy and they will impart their wisdom. They do not fight and even if attacked will sadly accept their fate of being cut into pieces, saying things like "I understand your anger and I hope my death will satiate it," or "though you kill me, it is not me you are angry with. Hopefully you will learn to find the real cause of your unhappiness."

They are unconcerned with the Demon King and Black Blade, and consider it merely the latest in a long-line of meager human concerns. They love talking about nature, the seasons, the stars, and especially patterns of ice crystals.

Number Encountered: 1

Alignment: lawful

Movement: 120

Armor class: 12

Hit dice: 6 (39 HP)

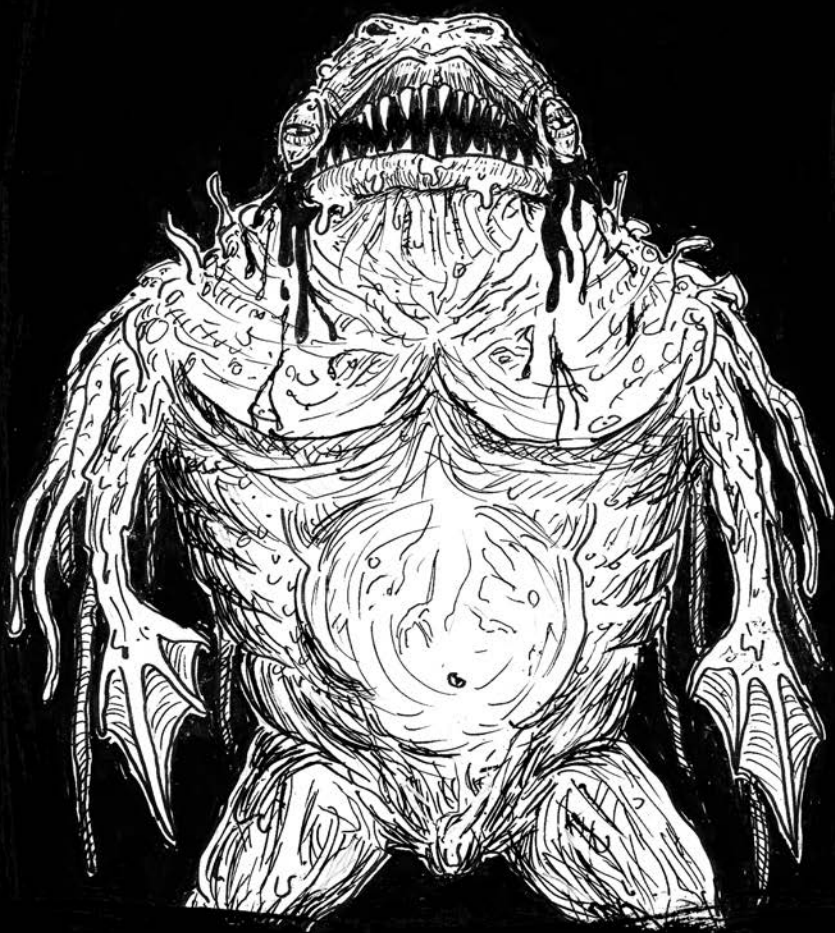
Attacks: N/A

Damage: N/A

Size: L

Morale: N/A

Disposition: contemplative



VAMPIRIC DIAMOND LEAF WILLOW

The Vampiric Diamond Leaf Willow has green leaves and small round twigs that are soft, slender and bend easily. It has a hairy stem and stays close to the ground to keep as warm as possible. Animals and people eat this willow because it has a lot of vitamin C, vitamin A, and calcium. Even buried in ice, it generates heat at will. If touched, the Vampiric Diamond Leaf Willow will attack.

Number Encountered: 1d2

Alignment: chaotic

Movement: 0

Armor: class: 12

Hit dice: 1 (2 HP)

Attacks: 1

Damage: Drain life 1d6 and add to vampiric plant HP (this can exceed rolled HP).

Size: S

Morale: N/A

Disposition: lurking

YETI VOLTRON

There are five yeti and they are old and hungry. They are crafty (they communicate to each other with Wookie-like sounds) and strong enough to forge weapons and armor from obsidian.

Individually they stand at something like four meters tall. If any of the yetis are reduced to single digit hit points, they will combine into one furious, massive 24 foot yeti. How you ask? Inscrutable yeti magic, of course.

If the Voltron Yeti is reduced to single hit points, the magic is broken and the five wounded yetis, individual again, will limp away as best they can. They are wounded badly and exhausted and each will be killed by a successful hit. They have a den nearby with 200 gold pieces and quite a collection of obsidian weaponry and armor. It takes two successful

Search rolls to find it.

Roll 1d4 to see how the Yeti Voltron will fight:

1. Defensively and cannily, slipping into fog or behind mountains and lobbing boulders at his enemies. A thrown boulder can go as far as 100 meters/300 feet and does d10 damage +1 per 10 meters thrown.
2. Savagely; all attacks made with tooth and claw. A lot of body rendering and heads bitten off, bodies flung away or buried deep into the ice (for later consumption).
3. Berserker: the Yeti Voltron foams ice at the mouth and gets +8 to attack but -4 to AC.
4. Tactically: the Yeti Voltron will identify casters or clerics and aim to eliminate them first, possibly with makeshift tree spears (d8) or a giant obsidian blade (D12).

Number Encountered: 5 (individual)/1 (voltron)

Alignment: neutral

Movement: 120 (individual)/180 (voltron)

Armor class: 15 (individual)/20 (voltron)

Hit dice: 3 (15 HP) (individual)/14 (70 HP) (voltron)

Attacks: 1 (individual)/ 5 (voltron)

Damage: 1D8 (or by weapon) (individual)/2d8 (voltron)

Each voltron head gets a chance to bite and tear. They do twice as much damage in voltron form but cannot do critical damage.

Size: L (individual)/XXL (voltron)

Morale: 9

Disposition: grumpy





THE DEFENDER

“[T]o compromise with Tyranny is always to be destroyed by it. The sanest and most logical choice lay always in resistance.”

–Michael Moorcock, *The Revenge of the Rose*

The Defenders aren't necessarily good, but they're probably the closest you can find in this frigid wasteland. In their own hearts, according their own codes, they possess a nobility and this shoes through to all they meet. They know something of the Black Blade and perhaps something of the Demon King as well. They also likely know of the danger posed by the other Blade Seekers, especially the Seeker. Most will serve as guides and even pay good rates (d4x10 gp daily) for PCs to join them.

You can choose an NPC that strikes your fancy or roll for a random result. For (mostly) standard options roll 1d6 or for slightly more gonzo possibilities roll 1d8.

1. Morren Zorander
2. Yew
3. Ophelia Fade
4. Solee the Swordsman
5. Hanne II
6. Mushkah-Kul
7. Malouse
8. The Celestial Count

MORREN ZORANDER



A young warrior with a talent for sorcery and a knack for getting himself into sticky situations. He has a magical sword of his own, the Herbal Sword, and selfishly he doesn't want anyone else to have a better weapon than his own.

Working with Morren will grant 1 point of Chaos.

HE IS A LEVEL 4 FIGHTER & CAN CAST MAGIC AS A LEVEL 5 MAGIC USER.

Int. 15 (+1), Wis. 9, Str. 14 (+1), Dex. 11, Con. 12, Cha. 10

HP: 28

Armor: plate, AC 18.

Attack: herbal sword +2 (+8 to hit). When it strikes, it soothes. Save vs. Spell or fall into deep, dreamless sleep.

He knows: *Plant Growth*, *Strange Waters II*, *Unseen Servant*, and *Wall of Fire*.

Roll 1 time on the knowledge table.

IF HE CLAIMS THE BLADE

If Zorander finds the Black Blade, the herbal blade will crumble into paper thin pieces. Zorander is taken by his new blade--there is a 60% chance the Demon King will notice and change him into a random beast-man hybrid. There is no mechanical difference to the form as possession.

- | | |
|-------------|---------------|
| 1. Reindeer | 6. White hare |
| 2. Seal | 7. Orca |
| 3. Musk ox | 8. Lemming |
| 4. Malamute | 9. Snow goose |
| 5. Narwhal | 10. Wolverine |

YEW

A naturalist and poet, she is not entirely human and bleeds sap when wounded. She possesses knowledge of where the legendary pinecone diamond is hidden and she is searching for trustworthy companions. Truly good in nature, the idea of the Black Blade is abhorrent to young yew. When reduced to 0 hit points, she reverts to a tree form for 1d4 weeks. Working with yew will remove 1 point of Chaos.

SHE IS A LEVEL 4 MAGIC USER.

Int. 16 (+2), Wis. 15 (+1), Str. 8 (-1), Dex. 16 (+2), Con. 6 (-1), Cha. 16 (+2)

HP: 9

Armor: leather, AC: 16

Attack: scepter of branch and root. Hits for 1d4 damage, save vs magic or suffer from power word *Stun* as per the spell.

Roll 1 time on the knowledge table.

IF SHE CLAIMS THE BLADE

Yew will not ever touch the Blade. Instead she will stretch her body and grow around it, her flesh changing to ironwood. She wants to keep anyone from ever reaching the Blade, and there is a 50 percent chance it will work, at least temporarily. There is an equal chance that her sacrifice is for naught, and that the Blade will fill her with crippling pain before shattering her into splinters and allowing a new champion to claim it.



OPHELIA FADE

SHE IS A LEVEL 4 SPECIALIST/
THIEF/ROGUE.

Int. 13 (+1), Wis. 11, Str. 10, Dex. 17 (+2),
Con. 13 (+1), Cha. 16 (+2)

HP: 14

Armor: leather, AC: 16

Attack: blow gun (+3 to hit) darts laced with something like black lotus powder, lotus katana +2 (+3 to hit) 1d8+2 (doesn't hurt lawful characters, acts as *Charm Monster* vs. Monsters)

In LotFP, she has the following skills, otherwise stat her as a level 4 thief/rogue.

Architecture: 4/6

Climbing: 5/6

Stealth: 4/6

Language: 2/6

Roll 2 times on the knowledge table and 2 times on the PC rumor table too.

IF SHE CLAIMS THE BLADE

Ophelia Fade may have the power and probably has the knowledge to claim the Blade, but the Seekers consider her one of the weaker opponents. If still living, they will hunt her down by all means necessary and seek to kill her to claim the Blade for themselves. Assuming that the PCs do not get involved, there is a 10 percent chance each day that she will die.



Self-proclaimed queen of the urban adventurers, she has journeyed the world in search of treasure. There are few cities, ruined or thriving, that Ophelia has not thoroughly explored. Now she has left the urban familiarity of homes behind and seeks the location of the Black Blade...so she can hide it forever.

SOLEE THE SWORDSWOMAN

She carries the twin blades Rahk and Hrung and rides a flying metal construct powered by a bound wind demon. She has already defeated the Timat Jo-Shen, master of necrology, and Ahrken Mul, lord of the faceless ghosts. She wants to kill the Demon King next, knowing that he is the most terrible threat of them all. Working with Solee will add 1 point of Law.

SHE IS A LEVEL 8 FIGHTER.

Int. 10, Wis. 5 (-2), Str. 16 (+2), Dex. 15 (+1), Con. 17 (+2), Cha. 11

HP: 53

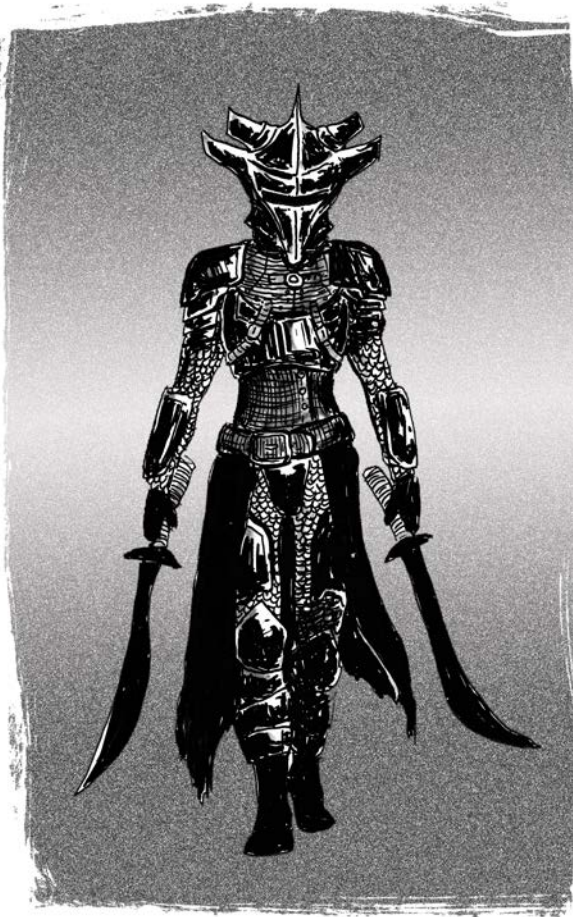
Armor: ring mail and shield, AC: 20.

Attack: 2 per round, bastard swords (+11 to hit) 1d8+2 damage

Roll 2 times on the knowledge table.

IF SHE CLAIMS THE BLADE

Solee the Swordswoman wants nothing to do with the Black Blade. Instead, she wants to sink her swords Rahk and Hrung into the belly of the Demon King—woe to her, should she try! She will attack any wielder of the Black Blade upon sight.



HANNE II



il is leery of using her balloon as she judges the continually falling meteorites to be too risky. Instead she will traverse up the fjord, defending and saving all that she can. She is making it up as she goes along, but will almost certainly reach the obsidian gnomes. Working with Hanne II will remove 1 point of Chaos and 1 point of Law.

SHE IS A LEVEL 10 ALICE (OR SPECIALIST/THIEF/ROGUE).

Int. 12, Wis. 16 (+2), Str. 11, Dex. 12, Con. 12, Cha. 16 (+2)

HP: 30

Armor: leather, AC: 14.

Attack: 2 pistols 1d6 (exploding die)

In LotFP, she has the following skills, otherwise stat her as a level 10 thief/rogue.

Languages: 6/6

Search: 6/6

Tinkering: 6/6

Stealth: 6/6

Sleight of Hand: 3/6

Roll 1 time on the knowledge table.

IF SHE CLAIMS THE BLADE

Should Hanne II claim the Blade, she will climb into her air balloon and disappear. Whither she goes, no one knows.

A tall young woman with a heart shaped face and auburn hair. She has a vast knowledge of the world and is a defender of the weak and voiceless and as such fears the day the Black Blade will fall into the wrong hands. She carries two pistols and owns a hot air balloon. Hanne

MUSHKAH-KUL

Mushkah-Kul travels with 1d4+1 loyal hounds, who will lay down their lives in his defense. The last remaining member of his family, which long ago was rich and powerful, he has dedicated the family fortune and power to combating chaos—with mixed results. If he can keep the Black Blade out of this world, he would consider his existence entirely worthwhile. With his money, he can assemble a force of mercenaries quickly, and he is a true hero to those of a lawful persuasion. Working with Mushkah-Kul will grant one point of Law.

HE IS A LEVEL 5 CLERIC BUT EACH LIVING DOG LETS HIM CAST MAGIC AT 1 HIGHER LEVEL PER BEAST.

Int. 12, Wis. 15 (+1), Str. 11, Dex. 13 (+1), Con. 7 (-1), Cha. 9

HP: 15

Armor: unarmed, AC: 13.

Attack: morningstar (+1 to hit) 1d6 damage.

Knows: *Protection From Evil*, *Enthrall*, *Heroism*, *Remove Curse*, *Cure Serious Wounds*, *True Seeing*, *Heal* and *Control Weather*.

Hounds; AC as leather (14), 1 bite attack of d4 per round. 1hd (4 HP).



Roll 1 time on the knowledge table and once on the PC rumor table too.

IF HE CLAIMS THE BLADE

Mushkah-Kul will take the Blade and hurl it deep into the icy waters of the bay. Will this work? Probably not, or not for long, but it's the best plan he's got.

MALOUSE



A grey cat, fluffy and cuddly. Buried deep in the feline's brain is the consciousness of Soven the Sorcerer. Long ago Soven lost his human body while his consciousness explored other realms. Now he works tooth and claw to keep all away from the Black Blade (the diabolical nature of which he observed while in disembodied form). Working with Malouse will grant 1 point of Chaos.

MALOUSE IS A LEVEL 1 CAT.

Int. 16 (+2), Wis. 11, Str. 4 (-2), Dex. 18 (+3), Con. 6 (-1), Cha. 12

HP: 2

Armor: unarmored, AC: 17.

Attack: claw 1d2

Soven has a fifty percent chance of remembering a random spell up to 4th level.

BEAST MALOUSE

Int. 5(-2), Wis. 8 (-1), Str. 14 (+1), Dex. 16 (+2), Con. 12, Cha. 12

HP: 20

Armor: unarmored, AC: 16.

Attack: (+3 to hit)

1D8 claw, 1D8 claw (if both claws hit, an additional d6 raking damage)

Roll 1 time on the knowledge table.

IF HE CLAIMS THE BLADE

By the time he reaches the Black Blade, Malouse has become a humanoid panther creature. All his human thoughts are gone (so too magic) and only the urge to keep anyone from reaching the Blade remains. He won't claim the Blade but will ambush anyone who appears to be close to drawing it. He cannot be reasoned with and will fight to the death.

THE CELESTIAL COUNT

A spirit from the stars inhabiting a suit of armor. He is utterly incapable of moral compromise and has manifested in this plane with the sole purpose of killing the Demon King, who wounded him long ago. He carries a spear forged from meteorites and dreams. He speaks in rhyming couplets and when cut, he bleeds starlight. Working with the count will grant 1 point of Law.

HE IS A LEVEL 11 FIGHTER.

Int. 14 (+1), Wis. 11, Str. 16 (+2), Dex. 12, Con. 17 (+2), Cha. 9

HP: 70

Armor: plate mail, AC: 18

Attack: Dreamspear: +12 to hit, 2d* +2 damage (whatever single die is closest to you). There is a 20 percent chance that the wound was merely a briefly remembered dream, long ago, however, and does no damage.

Roll 2 times on the knowledge table.



IF HE CLAIMS THE BLADE

The Celestial Count knows what's up. If he can get his metal fingers on the Blade, he will take it into the cosmos with him. This is an easy matter for him. But first he needs hunt down the Demon King and kill him once and for all.

THE SEEKER

“Treasures are not won by care and forethought but by swift slaying and reckless attack.”

–Michael Moorcock, *Elric The Stealer of Souls*

Make no mistake. The Seekers are terrible people and will act as antagonists in this adventure. Each of them want the Blade in a bid to increase their personal power. Some will journey with the PCs to get the sword but they do not pay the high rates of the Defender (10 gp per day) and invariably plan to betray them at first chance. If they do not travel with the PCs, they will set up traps to take them out (see page 32).

You can choose an NPC that strikes your fancy or roll for a random result. For (mostly) standard options roll 1d6 or for slightly more gonzo possibilities roll 1d8. Option 8 is recommended only for seasoned players, large groups, or those who enjoy TPKs.

1. Tikki Tembo the Demon Boy
2. Weller the Gearborg
3. Zul Highmore
4. Feneric
5. Zadroc
6. Marzosh
7. Platul
8. The Disciples of the Holy Words of Chaos

TIKKI TEMBO THE DEMON BOY

The spirit of an eight year old boy who, just last month drowned in a well, despite his mother's and brother's attempts to save him. But while in mid-transmigration, his soul landed in the black carapace of a nethercreature. He is a tall, faceless creature of shadow and smoldering flame, with smoky antlers rising from his head. His powers are infernal and his appearance demonic, but Tikki just wants to be your friend. Working with Tikki grants 1d4 points of Chaos.

HE IS A 10 HD DEMON.

Int. 9, Wis. 5 (-2), Str. 18 (+3), Dex. 17 (+2),
Con. 7 (-1), Cha. 5 (-2)

HP: 27

Armor: as chain (17)

Attack: claws (+13 to hit) 1d6+3 damage

Roll 0 times on the knowledge table.

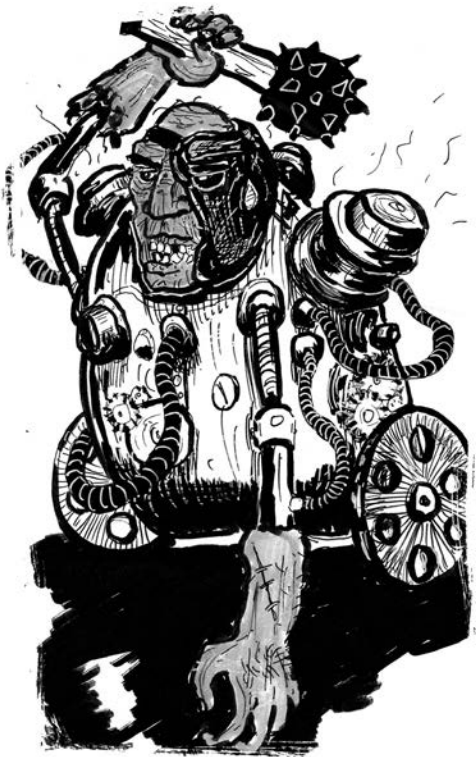
IF HE CLAIMS THE BLADE

Upon grabbing the Blade, Tikki Tembo will create 2d6 obsidian golems to serve him. These fierce creatures are brittle, sharp, and highly intelligent. But how will the sentient Blade communicate with a mind already split in twain? Roll 1d4: the boy wins outright, and he will order the golems to escort him home. 2. The boy attains half of the brain, along with the demon. These leads to a split personality, a



creature that one moment will laugh with you and the next cut your head off. 3. The boy's mind is devoured, leaving the shadowy demon thing in full capacity of its powers. 4. The boy and the demon are gone, and the demonic body becomes a vessel for the Black Blade.

WELLER THE GEARBORG



Once a genial man, he was among the thousands that died from the Veranjun plague. For reasons unknown, he was one of the twelve that were brought back to life by Elkuce the Mad, who replaced much of his flesh with gears and clockwork. Weller has no home and wanders the realms looking for some purpose in life. Sometimes he will help those in need,

but he has a terrible temper and fears not to slay those who incur his wrath.

HE IS A LEVEL 5 FIGHTER.

Int. 10, Wis. 10, Str. 16 (+2), Dex. 5 (-2), Con. 12, Cha. 4 (-2)

HP: 35

Armor: plate (16)

Attack: fist (+8 to hit) 1d6+2 damage, clockwork musket 1d10 (exploding dice)

Roll 0 times on the knowledge table.

IF HE CLAIMS THE BLADE

Weller the Gearborg, if he gets this far, finds that his former humanity is all but a shadow. He will take the Black Blade and go mad with power, killing anyone with disease or poison or any magic users before leaving the frozen north in search of Elkuce the Mad.

ZUL HIGHMORE

An entirely shaved monk who is obsessed with pointless cruelty, Zul Highmore's reputation for brutality is well known in the monastic world, but he is relatively unknown to the general adventuring public. His quest of personal vengeance has left murdered reeves and lamas across the realm. He can summon the demon of flowing colors. Working with Zul grants 2 points of Chaos.

HE IS A LEVEL 6 CLERIC (OR MONK, IF YOU PLAY THAT WAY).

Int. 11, Wis. 17 (+2), Str. 11, Dex. 13 (+1), Con. 10, Cha. 9

HP: 27

Armor: unarmored (13)

Attack: staff 1d6

Knows: enthrall, heat metal, remove curse, remove fear

Flowing colors demon: AC 15, 6 HD (27 HP), #at 1 at 1d6, stone shape (at will). When hit by the demon, the affected body part changes instantly and permanently into another color.

Roll d4 times on the knowledge table.



IF HE CLAIMS THE BLADE

When Zul Highmore closes his pudgy fingers around the hilt of the Black Blade, he will battle the demon of flowing colors for control of the weapon. It's an even battle and whomever wins is likely to be picked off by one of the powerful entities still in play.

FENERIC



HE IS A LEVEL 10 MAGIC USER.

Int. 18 (+3), Wis. 18 (+3), Str. 11, Dex. 9,
Con. 11, Cha. 9

HP: 18

Armor: unarmored (12)

Attack: unarmed (by spell)

Knows any spell you want him to.

Roll 2 times on the knowledge table.

IF HE CLAIMS THE BLADE

Feneric wants the sword to return back in time, which may even be possible, but the power and hunger flowing into him will turn him into a murder addict. He will kill everyone from Støvring to the Jotunheim Mountains. With his knowledge of magic and the power of swirling souls within him, he is a threat to the world, and if he returns back in time, he may change history and create an Eternal Empire.

A taciturn, fastidious body servant; to all appearances, he is humble and subservient but in actuality he is a 3000 year old emperor from a distant land. He has recently been intrigued by the idea of liberating his consciousness and returning to his long away empire. Working with Feneric grants 1 point of Chaos.

ZADROC

One of the three disciples of the Holy Words of Chaos. They seek to debase knowledge itself by destroying books and literature, killing the last speakers of dying languages, sabotaging universities, and removing oral historians. They are soft-spoken and rarely show any emotion whatsoever.

Zadroc can erase the knowledge of language in those who she speaks to for at least five minutes and then touches, skin to skin. She wields the blade Parsa, the phantom blade haunted by the spirits of past wielders. Zadroc is wont to ambiguous statements and if asked to clarify will grow cross. Working with Zadroc grants 2 points of Chaos.

SHE IS A LEVEL 5 SPECIALIST/
THIEF/ROGUE.

Int. 12, Wis. 7 (-1), Str. 15 (+1), Dex. 13 (+1),
Con. 11, Cha. 9

HP: 20

Armor: chain (17)

Attack: Parsa gives her +3 to initiative, +5 to hit, and 1d8+2 to damage. Every time she hits, however, she has a 50 percent chance of being stunned for 1 round as she fights off the memories flooding her mind.

In LotFP, she has the following skills, otherwise stat her as a level 5 thief/rogue.

Sleight of hand 4/6

Sneak attack 6/6

Stealth 5/6



Roll 1 time on the knowledge table.

IF SHE CLAIMS THE BLADE

Zadroc, Marzosh, and Platul, the disciples of the Holy Words of Chaos, will use the Black Blade to create the Cataclysmic Terror. But only one set of hands can wield the Black Blade. How will they reconcile the power?

MARZOSH



One of the three disciples of the Holy Words of Chaos. They seek to debase knowledge itself by destroying books and literature, killing the last speakers of dying languages, sabotaging universities, and removing oral historians. They are soft-spoken and rarely show any emotion whatsoever.

She speaks 4 words of command: *Peace*, *Soothe*, *Soft*, and *Acid*. There is no save vs. these words,

and they work on people and objects in a way pretty similar to how you'd imagine.

SHE IS A LEVEL 5 SPECIALIST/
THIEF/ROGUE.

Int. 14 (+1), Wis. 10, Str. 12, Dex. 16 (+2),
Con. 9, Cha. 13 (+1)

HP: 19

Armor: unarmored (14)

Attack: unarmed (attacks using the Four
Words of Command).

In LotFP, she has the following skills,
otherwise stat her as a level 5 thief/rogue.

Search 6/6

Stealth 6/6

Languages: 2/6

Architecture: 2/6

Roll 1 time on the knowledge table.

IF SHE CLAIMS THE BLADE

Zadroc, Marzosh, and Platul, the disciples of the Holy Words of Chaos, will use the Black Blade to create the Cataclysmic Terror. But only one set of hands can wield the Black Blade. How will they reconcile the power?

PLATUL

One of the three disciples of the Holy Words of Chaos. They seek to debase knowledge itself by destroying books and literature, killing the last speakers of dying languages, sabotaging universities, and removing oral historians. They are soft-spoken and rarely show any emotion whatsoever.

Platul expects her every command to be followed and has little patience for anyone or anything that is not actively praising her. Working with Platul grants 2 points of Chaos.

SHE ACTS AS A LEVEL 10 ELF.

Int. 12, Wis. 14 (+1), Str. 11, Dex. 11, Con. 9, Cha. 18 (+3)

HP: 35

Armor: unarmored (12)

Attack: Staff of Linguistic Disruption, does no HP damage, but each strike removes 1d4 letters from the name of the character she hits. They can never regain missing letters and this is their new name. If all letters are removed, the nameless character is no longer a part of the world and the character sheet is destroyed.

Knows many low level spells and *Stinking Cloud*, *Army Of One*, *Speak With Dead*, *Dimension Door*, *Seven Gates*, *Chaos*, *Contact* and *Outer Sphere*.

Search 5/6

Roll 2 times on the knowledge table.



IF SHE CLAIMS THE BLADE

Zadroc, Marzosh, and Platul, the disciples of the Holy Words of Chaos, will use the Black Blade to create the Cataclysmic Terror. But only one set of hands can wield the Black Blade. How will they reconcile the power?

ALL THREE DISCIPLES

Together Zadroc, Marzosh, and Platul are even more tenebrous and the bane of all who do not serve them. Together they will summon their patron to the material plane.

THE HOLY CHAOS PATRON

LICHEN THING

Looks like scattered lichen across rocks and broken stumps of obsidian. This is the oldest lichen in the world, and quite possibly the oldest living thing in the world. The lichen thing is a creature of chaos and while dormant now, if awakened by the Disciples of the Word, it is a devastating foe.

It will form into a loose quadruped, curved back connecting the four stumpy legs. On a successful attack, it will leap like a great beast onto a victim and then it tightens up, swarming the poor soul like so many ants.

Based on however many PCs and NPCs are present when the lichen thing awakes, have the players choose an equal amount of numbers from 1-20 (e.g. 7 PCs would choose 3 numbers each). Then choose likewise for any NPCs present. If the total number of characters does not divide evenly into 20, then NPCs take fewer numbers, followed by the lowest-level PCs if necessary. When the lichen thing attacks, it rolls d20 and attacks the character with the chosen number.

It consumes 1d4 charisma once per turn. This is a permanent reduction and represents both

horrific scarring and flesh rotting but also the blow to the spirit that the unfortunate soul never recovers from. It can't/won't reduce the victim to less than 1 Cha. At this point, it will leap to the next victim and begin feasting once more. The character reduced to one Cha is not dead but is so hideous, both externally and internally, that all others will flee from their presence, even if hooded.

The Cha pooled by the lichen thing aids the disciples of the word as well; each 3 points it drains grants them full hit point and restores all mana/spells for each of the disciples.

Lichen Thing has no HP. It is older than the world and it cannot be hurt by weapons, magic, psionics, fire, or trickery. It is slow and may be fled from. It also has three major weaknesses:

1. Photosynthesis causes it to grow. If exposed to direct sunlight, or a bright facsimile thereof, it will stop feeding and begin growing for as long as the light shines. This is a good time for the PCs to escape, as it will be bigger and hungrier when finished.
2. A preternaturally strong wind can disperse the individual lichen pieces. Eventually they will gather back together, but it will take 1d10 days
3. Dried. Direct flame doesn't hurt it, but if it is dried it crumbles to pieces and will take 1d100 years to animate again.

THE WILD CARD

“Aye, it is fitting that we should be wanderers, for we have no place in this world.”

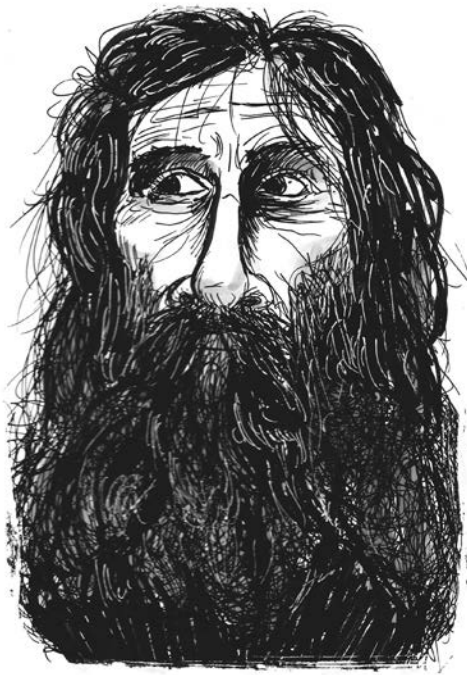
—Michael Moorcock, *Stormbringer*

The Wildcards, like the PCs, are swept up in the race for the Black Blade. From feeble wilderness dwellers to wandering mendicants, they have the least uniformity of the featured NPCs. They might not have advanced knowledge of the Blade, or if they do they see it as a simple artifact that will help them in their personal quests and vendettas. The Blade encourages this thinking, for the best tool is one that does not know its role. They offer a grey alternative to the black and white of the Seekers and the Defenders. In some games, the Wild Card won't have much at all to do.

You can choose an NPC that strikes your fancy or roll for a random result. For (mostly) standard options roll 1d6 or for slightly more gonzo possibilities roll 1d8.

1. Oleg the Mushroom Man
2. Nur
3. Bardash the Swamp Man
4. Ctef the Archer
5. Ahicchattrra Svadu
6. Karoosh
7. Glorisa Tack-Glum, The Golden Courtesan
8. Karsten-Doo

OLEG THE MUSHROOM MAN



HE IS A LEVEL 3 SPECIALIST/THIEF/
ROGUE.

Int. 5 (-2), Wis. 9, Str. 11, Dex. 15 (+1), Con. 9,
Cha. 6 (-1)

HP: 6

Armor: unarmored (13).

Attack: dagger 1d4 or staff 1d4

In LotFP, he has the following skills, otherwise
stat her as a level 3 thief/rogue.

Bushcraft: 5/6

Climb: 3/6

Search: 2/6

Stealth: 2/6

Roll 0 times on the knowledge table.

IF HE CLAIMS THE BLADE

Should Oleg the Mushroom Man claim the Blade, there is a 90 percent chance that the Demon King slays him on the spot and reclaims that which is his. On the off (10 percent) chance that Oleg survives, the power of the sword will fill and corrupt him, and soon the entire world will be covered with strange fungal towers and myconid beings that dwell in them.

A semi-feral man who gathers wild chanterelle, morels, lion's manes, death caps and moominberries, Oleg is both more experienced and more complex than he appears. His diet is mostly fungi and he cannot read or even speak much but his knowledge of the wild is unparalleled. He knows nothing of the Black Blade and cares naught for cosmic concerns but his gathering brings him closer to the Blade every day.

NUR

She was shunned, her tongue cut out and then beaten and left to die by her people and her order, the Silent Sisterhood. She survived and over the last decade has raised a fortune and an army and, if she claims the sword, woe to her people, woe to her order, woe to the world itself. Working for her adds 1 point of Chaos.

SHE IS A LEVEL 6 CLERIC BUT NO LONGER HAS ACCESS TO SPELLS.

Int. 9, Wis. 13 (+1), Str. 13 (+1), Dex. 16 (+2), Con. 7 (-1), Cha. 9

HP: 12

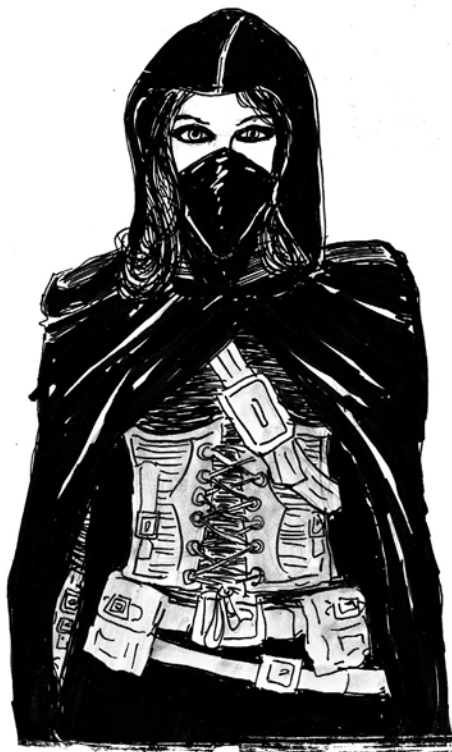
Armor: leather + shield (17)

Attack: silver longsword (+2 to hit) 1d6+1 damage

Roll 1 time on the knowledge table.

IF SHE CLAIMS THE BLADE

Nur with the Black Blade is a frightening prospect. She will use its powers to mutate her already powerful army into were-creatures and ice-creatures and shadow-creatures and all kinds of scary things like that. She herself is insane and will attack any female cleric on sight, thinking they are all part of the silent sisterhood. If left unchecked, her army will sweep down to the south and within 1d4 years Nur will be de facto empress of the world.



The few remaining people will be miserable servants; this is not a happy ending for anyone except for Nur.

BARDASH THE SWAMP MAN



Twenty-five years ago, Bardash was one of the greatest heroes of the realm, leader of the Beetle Brigade and object of everyone's envy. He famously died in battle against the small, terrible forces of the Ekkudians. Or so the world thought. Bardash was gravely wounded and he swore to never fight again. He has kept his vow, but the Black Blade wishes for a man

of his skill to wield it, and he has been slowly making his way to it, though he is not really conscious as to what draws him there.

HE IS A LEVEL 7 FIGHTER.

Int. 10, Wis. 9, Str. 17 (+2), Dex. 14 (+1),
Con. 16 (+2), Cha. 8 (-1)

HP 30

Armor: shield (14)

Attack: short sword (+10 to hit) 1d6+2

Roll 0 times on the knowledge table.

IF HE CLAIMS THE BLADE

Bardash with the Black Blade is one of the most variable scenarios. There is a chance that with the Blade in his hand, he regains his martial glory and survives the Demon King. There is an equal chance that he takes the Blade and his consciousness is erased, becoming a fighting flesh automaton for the Demon King. There is another chance, still equal, that he claims the Blade but is no longer strong enough to wield it, in which case his melted oozing body will be found next to the sword. Finally there is a chance that he sees the sword, realizes what it means, and turns his back on it, fleeing forever back into obscurity.

CTEF THE ARCHER

He uses the half-moon arrows that behead his opponents. Ctef is not inherently evil but he does perform evil in the service of his master Elkuce the mad. He seeks the fabled City of Jale and Opal, where the knowledge he craves exists in the famed fountains of cosmic erudition.

HE IS A LEVEL 4 FIGHTER.

Int. 10, Wis. 9, Str. 8 (-1), Dex. 16 (+2), Con. 9, Cha. 9

HP: 14

Armor: chain (18)

Attack: bow (+7 to hit) 1d6 +2 (instant beheading on natural 19 o 20)

Roll 1 time on the knowledge table.

IF HE CLAIMS THE BLADE

If Ctef gets close to putting his actual hands on the Blade, he will split apart and his master Elkuce the Mad will emerge from the skin. Elkuce will challenge the Demon King and is assured to lose. Should Elkuce the Mad survive the Demon King, he will use his power to create the pettiest bureaucracy known in history.



AHICCHATTRA SVADU



He travels with his steadfast companion Zarkara Sita. Most recently they raided the Blesh temples of the lush northern jungles and they are equipped with the items and treasure you'd expect. They unabashedly serve the highest bidder. They have been hired to locate the Black Blade by an unnamed patron. Working with them grants 1 point of Law.

AHICCHATTRA SVADU IS A LEVEL 6 FIGHTER

Int. 9, Wis. 9, Str. 14 (+1), Dex. 11, Con. 16 (+2), Cha. 9

HP: 50

Armor: chain (17)

Attack: glaive (+8 to hit) 1d10+1

ZARKARA SITA IS A LEVEL 4 SPECIALIST/THIEF/ROGUE

Int. 10, Wis. 11, Str. 11, Dex. 17 (+2), Con. 9, Cha. 7 (-1)

HP 20

Armor: chain (19)

Attack: 2 hits/round. Twin blades 1d6 + 1d6

In LotFP, he has the following skills, otherwise stat him as a level 4 thief/rogue.

Climbing: 6/6

Sneak attack: 3 /6

Stealth: 3/6

Tinker: 2/6

Roll 1 time on the knowledge table.

IF THEY CLAIM THE BLADE

Should Ahicchattra Svadu or his buddy Zarkara Sita claim the Blade, neither will be so foolish enough to draw it. Instead they will immediately take it to their patron, (roll 1d8 on the Seekers table), and the patron will indeed grant them great riches and vast swathes of land for the Black Blade. But Ahicchattra and Zarkara are always willing to listen to a higher bidder, though they are expecting at least a medium sized country of their own, each. If attacked, they have powerful magical items and can fend off a small army.

KAROOSH

A tall, solemn young man of 20 years or so, he is secretly the son of the ruler of the Horsetribes. He has been sent to other realms to learn governance and modernity. He is open to new experiences but secretly resents his father for sending him so far from the court and his friends. He has heard of the Blade, and though he is lawful, acquisition of the Blade could change him into a frightening tyrant.

HE IS A LEVEL 3 FIGHTER.

Int. 14 (+1), Wis. 11, Str. 12, Dex. 15 (+1), Con. 9, Cha. 6 (-1)

HP: 17

Armor: chain+ shield (20)

Attack: 2 handaxes (+4 to hit/+5 when thrown) 1d6

Roll 1 time on the knowledge table.

IF HE CLAIMS THE BLADE

If Karoosh claims the Black Blade, he is one of the easiest opponents to deal with. That is, until he turns to the Horsetribes, where he will quickly become ruler of a massive empire (think Genghis Khan armed with the powers of Saruman).



GLORISSA TACK- GLUM, THE GOLDEN COURTESAN



The last member of a dying race in a distant realm that spans across the stars, Glorissa is mostly interested in etymology and knows all seven words that are spoken in every realm in the multiverse. She has read every book known in her world and indeed many from this one (She has even read the very book you hold in your hands right now). She rides across the dark skies on a giant blue cicada, a creature whose song is said to contain sounds unheard in any living world. She believes the Black Blade may be the only thing with the power to return her to

her cracked and dying world. Working for her removes 1 point of Chaos.

SHE IS A LEVEL 8 ALICE (OR THIEF/
ROGUE).

Int. 17 (+2), Wis. 18 (+3), Str. 11, Dex. 11,
Con. 9, Cha. 16 (+2)

HP: 30

Armor: as leather (14)

Attack: longsword 1d6

In LotFP, she has the following skills, otherwise
stat her as a level 8 thief/rogue.

Architecture 4/6

Languages 6/6

Roll 2 times on the knowledge table.

BLUE CICADA

HP: 50

Armor: as plate and shield (19)

Attack: crush (+5 to hit), 1d6

Song of otherworld: save vs. Spells or
consciousness is sent wandering the multiverse
for 1d6 days

IF SHE CLAIMS THE BLADE

If Glorissa Tack-glum claims the Black Blade, she will return to her own far-off world. There she will discover that everyone and everything she ever loved is long dead, leaving her ever incapable of feeling joy again. But at least the Black Blade is no longer a threat, and without it the Demon King is vulnerable.

KARSTEN-DOO

Ruler of the city of stones and song. He is a large creature often mistaken for a golem, but Karsten-Doo is no mindless construct. He is a brilliant tactician and master strategist. He remains the only living man who defeated the Eukkudian army in open battle. His popularity amongst his subjects has achieved almost deity-like proportions. He knows of the Demon King and the Black Blade, and he has recently decided to claim the Blade to keep it from falling into the wrong hands. He carries the Hammer of Stones and Song. Working for him adds 1 point of +1 to Resist Cold.

HE IS THE EQUIVALENT OF A LEVEL 10 FIGHTER.

Int. 15 (+1), Wis. 12, Str. 18 (+4), Dex. 11, Con. 17 (+2), Cha. 16 (+2)

HP: 60

Armor: as chain + shield (17)

Attack: Warhammer (+14 to hit) 1d10+4 damage. On a successful hit, the target must save vs. Paralysis or be turned into statue.

Roll 2 times on the knowledge table.

IF HE CLAIMS THE BLADE

If Karsten Doo acquires the Black Blade, assassins, monsters and dark magics will plague Karsten Doo's journey. Any PCs in Karsten Doo's vicinity will be attacked by ever more terrible opponents.



KNOWLEDGE TABLE

Print or Copy and Cut

This represents a true (or mostly so) collection of knowledge possessed by the NPCs. This is a cut above the average tavern rumor. (Roll 1d20)

1. Has traveled to the north before, in search of rare obsidian. Has stayed with the mad baron and believes him to be harmless.
2. Believes the Blade to lie in the obsidian cliffs. He knows something of the dangers of the peninsula and will travel the wilderness with great caution.
3. Doesn't know where the Blade is, but aims to head north as soon as possible and question everyone along the way. If the PCs discover solid information, they will believe them and head that direction.
4. Family lore tells them that the Blade lies buried in the obsidian cliffs. Does not believe in giants.
5. Has traded with the obsidian gnomes before and aims to visit them in their fortress in the obsidian cliffs to gain more knowledge. Believes that giants are real.
6. Believes that following the meteorites will lead to the Blade. Knows of The Cold but believes their base to the west is merely a red herring.
7. Hunting the Seeker and will inform the PCs to be very careful around whoever it is. Doesn't know much about the Black Blade but wants very much to slay the Demon King.
8. Says the frozen ink tattoos of Støvring are worth the trip alone. Has d3 randomly determined ones already. (beneath his gloves)
9. Has heard of ancient ruins hidden in the obsidian cliffs.
10. Sent a friend to the north last week and is now worried for their safety.
11. Knows that the Silver Queen guards the land and that she is a powerful being of pure good.
12. Has heard of a wandering spirit that can change its form at will.
13. Carries a bag stuffed with polar bear furs, ready to trade with the obsidian gnomes.
14. Believes without reservation that the meteors are the harbinger of the Demon King and that he will soon return, freed from his celestial prison.
15. Has decided that, as a manifestation of pure law, the Black Blade's power can be held at bay by enclosing it in non-geometric shapes.
16. Knows that the Black Blade will attempt to control whomever wields it. It is not sure how he/she intends to use this knowledge.
17. Knows that the Black Blade can be destroyed once and for all by forcing it to drink the soul of the one living being of pure good.
18. Very concerned that whoever clutches the Blade will be corrupted.
19. Has run afoul of The Cold—three of their comrades died in battle from their powers.
20. Knows the Demon King will return in less than a week. Chafes at every delay.



RUMOR TABLE

Print or Copy and Cut

This is the stuff that has a grain of truth but is just as likely to be urban legend, hearsay or rumor. These are the things the PCs can learn by carousing, interviewing townsfolk, researching, etc. (Roll 1d30)

1. Believes the Blade to be hidden in the land of Jotunn. Knows little of the land or its inhabitants but suspects the people are probably just taller there.
2. Believes that killing the Demon King with the Black Blade will destroy each of them.
3. Believes The Cold is an arm of the Demon King and thinks meeting their leader is the best solution to Black Blade problem.
4. Has a map showing the location of the glass obelisks at Rytände Point.
5. Has been told that the secret to finding the Black Blade is hidden in a circle of black columns somewhere on the coast.
6. Holds strong conviction that the way to defeat the Demon King is through dreams.
7. Thinks the Blade is a rumor, a smokescreen and that the ancient mantle of Demon King is just a bluff. Probably by some immoral obsidian trader or jumped up obsidian gnome.
8. There once was a library in the old fort of Støvring. There may still be some books up there?
9. Obsidian used to be so cheap but now few shipments are getting into town. Not sure what happened but probably those dastardly obsidian gnomes are behind it.
10. Since the meteorites began raining down, and the earth shaking, some villages have slid into the icy fjords. Sometimes there are survivors, other times we just never hear from them again.
11. You remember your friend Grettir's grandma always told you: "Deary, if you drink the blood of a giant, you can power over ice and frost."
12. The nameless city of Vadira the Cross fell into the fjord last week. The survivors have built a new town. It's known as Sleepatown, because it is mostly inns and a base for travelers heading to the north.
13. Obsidian gnomes possess great treasures, but they have no love for human coins or currencies.
14. Some claim the Black Blade is the weapon of the Demon King, but it is a lie spread by gullible fools. The truth is that it's the only thing that can kill him.
15. A wandering merchant mentions to you that the Black Blade is also known as the bringer of storms. With its power, a person might become a king, and a king might become a god.
16. You have discovered an ancient tome. Much of it is indecipherable and all of it is frightening, but you learn of an ancient weapon buried beneath the Obsidian Cliffs.

17. An old family legend tells of a time when your kin ruled the known world, aided by a powerful weapon known as the dark bastard.
18. You scoff at rumors of legendary items, but not at the triple rates that warriors are being paid in the town of Støvring
19. Your childhood friend is a royal spy. Over drinks one night, she spills the most important bit of gossip--that the king is sending his son to claim the Black Blade.
20. It's said that if the giant's true name is spoken by a mage of great power, the giant will become the mage's servant.
21. There is a legend of a black goat that lures children onto the ice, where they die. This is true and the goat is a manifestation of the Demon King. It can be killed but in the way you think. Its horns are made of black obsidian.
22. There are mighty creatures out in the wilderness that have control of the very weather.
23. The sorcerer kings who long ago banished the Demon King are still standing, though they no longer live.
24. If you're buying a sword, line your scabbard with sheepskin to keep the blade clean and rust free.
25. Strange monsters have recently been found on the icy steppe to the east. Some of the monsters seem confused, lost.
26. The nameless cities to the east are empty. Where the people went, no one knows.
27. The giants called it the ice fang, the dwarves called it Tyrfin, and men called it the Black Death; but it calls you master.
28. There is a legend of a haunted promontory high above the sea to the west where great glass monoliths keep an eternal vigil over the roaring sea below.
29. The world before this one was ruled by the Demon King, and it was a nightmarish hell for all living things.
30. The cult of law is known as The Cold, because they congregate in the north and have a chill about their bodies



DREAMS

Print or Copy and Cut

You awaken in a cold sweat—there is something of great power hidden in the Obsidian Mountains of the North. You have no idea what it is, but you know that you fear it.

You hear a baby crying but when you rush to find it, the baby is covered in blood. Only it's not a baby, it's a sword but it needs your help and feel an instinct to aid kick as strong as anything you've ever felt.

A lone figure stands atop a hill of corpses. It turns slowly towards you and you can see that its face is your own!

Deep in the ice, you sleep—cold and alone—until something finally wakes you. You rise and step out into the light of day for the first time in what seems like forever. Finally!

Something is calling to you from the North—something of incredible power and loneliness. It wants...no it *needs* you!

The Blade sleeps alone beneath the ice, lost for eternity. And now, long after it had been forgotten by Man, it awakens. It awakens and it sees you—you who can finally free it from its cold tomb.

You step forward and grasp the Black Blade in your hands, power coursing through your body like never before. You turn and see your enemies fleeing before you. Down in the valley below, the peasants shout your name in ecstatic revelry.

Your dreams are dark and terrible beyond description. When you awake, you know two things: 1) The world will soon end, and every living thing in it and 2). the only solution is in the far north, encased in ice, waiting for this moment.

Dream of hundreds of people, slowly bowing before a giant sword hanging in the sky.

You dream of a massive pile of bodies, thousands and thousands of people. Their blood is slowly being sucked out, a crimson mist filling the starry sky. The blood forms the shape of a sword, which hovers proudly over the wasteland of death.

Your dream is difficult to remember, but you remember speaking to a God that was a sword and also totally a dick.

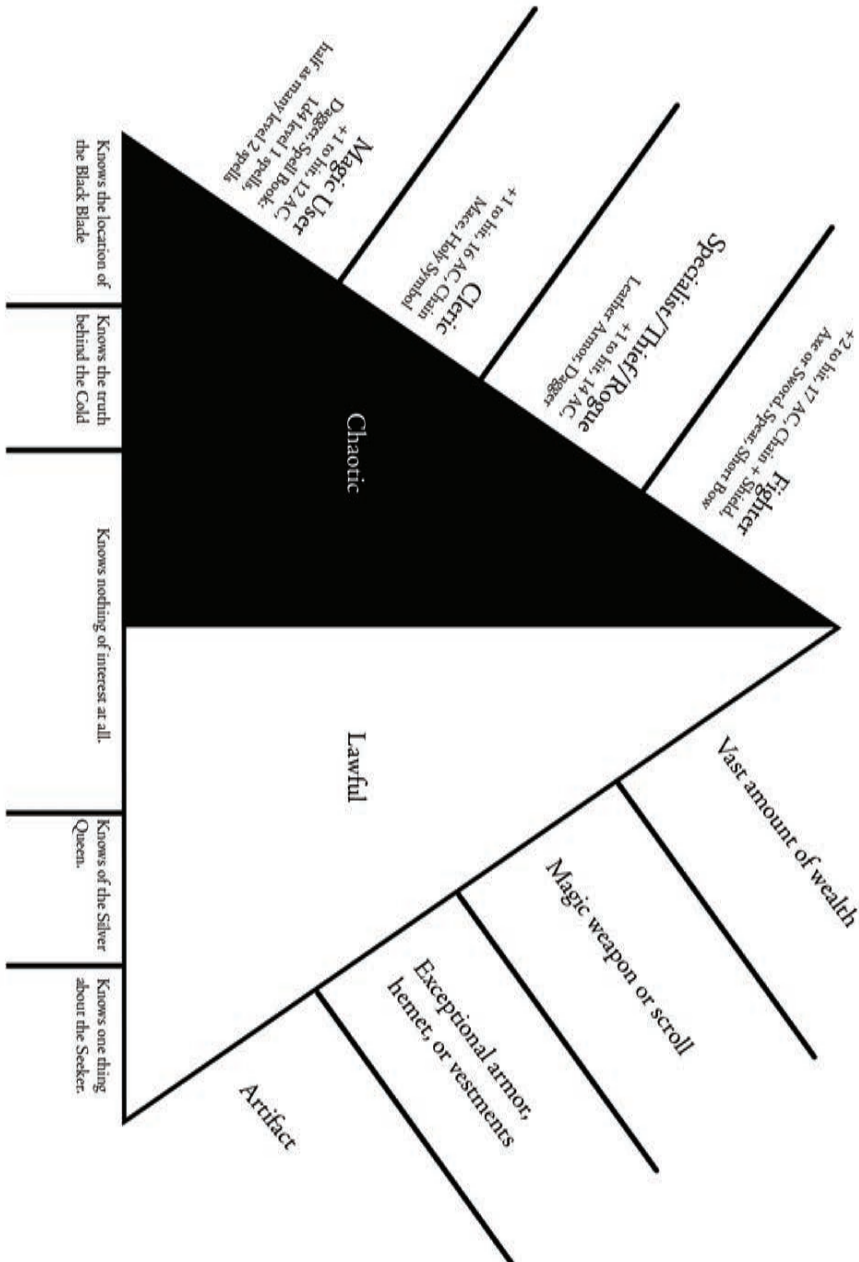
You see a horrific figure grasp a sword and murder all before him. He turns, sees you dreaming, and plunges the sword into your chest.

In your dream a pair of beautiful arms are reaching for a sword hilt. They get closer and closer, ever drawing near. After seemingly hours, they clasp the hilt and you feel the greatest sense of loss you've ever experienced.

You awake weeping.

NPC DROP TABLE

It is very likely that the PCs will meet other adventurers who have also heard the call of the Black Blade. To roll up quick NPCs that the players may meet in towns, along the trail, or anywhere else, simply drop a d4 on the following table for each NPC. The number showing on the die will indicate the NPC's level, its placement within the triangle will indicate alignment (with neutral being in both sides at once), and each of the three corners of the die will point toward the remaining pertinent information (class, knowledge, and treasure).



THE SILVER QUEEN

The Silver Queen is a manifestation of Svärtgard. The land is the Queen and the Queen is the land. She has three forms—a woman, a caribou, and a narwhal. If one of those forms is killed, she will suffer greatly but unless all three forms are killed, she cannot die.

Unless she is slain by the Black Blade, then she is truly dead and the land of Svärtgard will lose all life and sink into the sea.

THE CREATURE TRIUMVIRATE

In any of her forms, the Silver Queen is unwilling to commit violence and she has the same stats in any form.

Narwhal – In this form she splashes through the cold sea, laughing as she does. Her mere presence keeps creatures of the deep away. Though The Cold, should they learn of her, would seek her out with harpoons and magic in a heartbeat.

Caribou - This is her preferred form. Perhaps, in a time before history, she was a simple beast imbued with the power of the land as a by-product of the Demon King's astral ejection. Regardless her greatest joy is galloping across the tundra and munching on lichen.

Human – This is the Silver Queen at her most vulnerable but also at her most eloquent. As a human she is furthest from her natural form and is guided by a deep instinct rather than conscious knowledge. What she knows is that the Blade is in the Obsidian Hills but her foresight ends there, in the cold depths below the earth.

SHE IS THE EQUIVALENT OF A LEVEL 10 CLERIC.

Int. 18 (+3), Wis. 18(+3), Str. 10, Dex. 10, Con. 12, Cha. 16 (+2)

HP: 40

Armor: unarmored (12)

Attack: N/A

Roll 1d4 times on the knowledge table.

IF SHE CLAIMS THE BLADE

She will not claim the Blade, unless it is to plunge it into her own heart as a last desperate measure.



THE DEMON KING

Long ago, during the apex of the First Age of Man, when great sorcerer kings ruled the land and humanity aspired to build the greatest civilizations the world has ever known, there arose a being of the purest chaos. Whether fueled by the hubris of these magnificent empires, or the universe's eternal trend toward balance in all things, he was a creature of unmatched power and his influence spread across the land.

Together with its mighty weapon—the Black Blade—this creature of Chaos swept down upon the great empires of this golden age, destroying everything in its wake. The Demon King, as the beast became known, was relentless in its assault upon humanity, slaughtering entire races, burning kingdoms to the ground, and destroying all of the art and knowledge that mankind has amassed over vast millennia.

It was only when the Demon King was at his very strongest—when the utter destruction of mankind was imminent—that the last 13 remaining sorcerer kings found a way to separate him from the Blade and stop their horrible advance. Weakened, the Demon King was encased in ice and banished to the far-reaches of the cosmos, where he drifts, asleep, and awaits the time that he may return.

If the Black Blade is able to regain enough power, it will send out a strong beacon to the Demon King, drawing him back to the world from which he was banished those 10,000 years ago. Once the Demon King and the Black Blade are reunited, woe be to the hapless souls who stand in their way!

THE DEMON KING (20 HD DEMON)

Int. 18 (+3), Wis. 17 (+2), Str. 18 (+3), Dex. 14 (+1), Con. 18 (+3), Cha. 16 (+2)

HP: 160

AC: 24 (Can only be hit by +2 or better magic weapons and has 50% magic resistance)

Attacks: 3 with the Black Blade or 1 by spell

Black Blade: +13 to hit, automatic kill on a successful strike, unless the victim makes a successful save vs. Death, in which case damage is 1d8+10 (1-handed) or 2d4+10 (2-handed).

Can cast all magic user spells of levels 1-5 at will.

Any creature that comes within 30' of the Demon King must save vs. Spells or be affected by his fear aura, fleeing until exhaustion sets in.



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