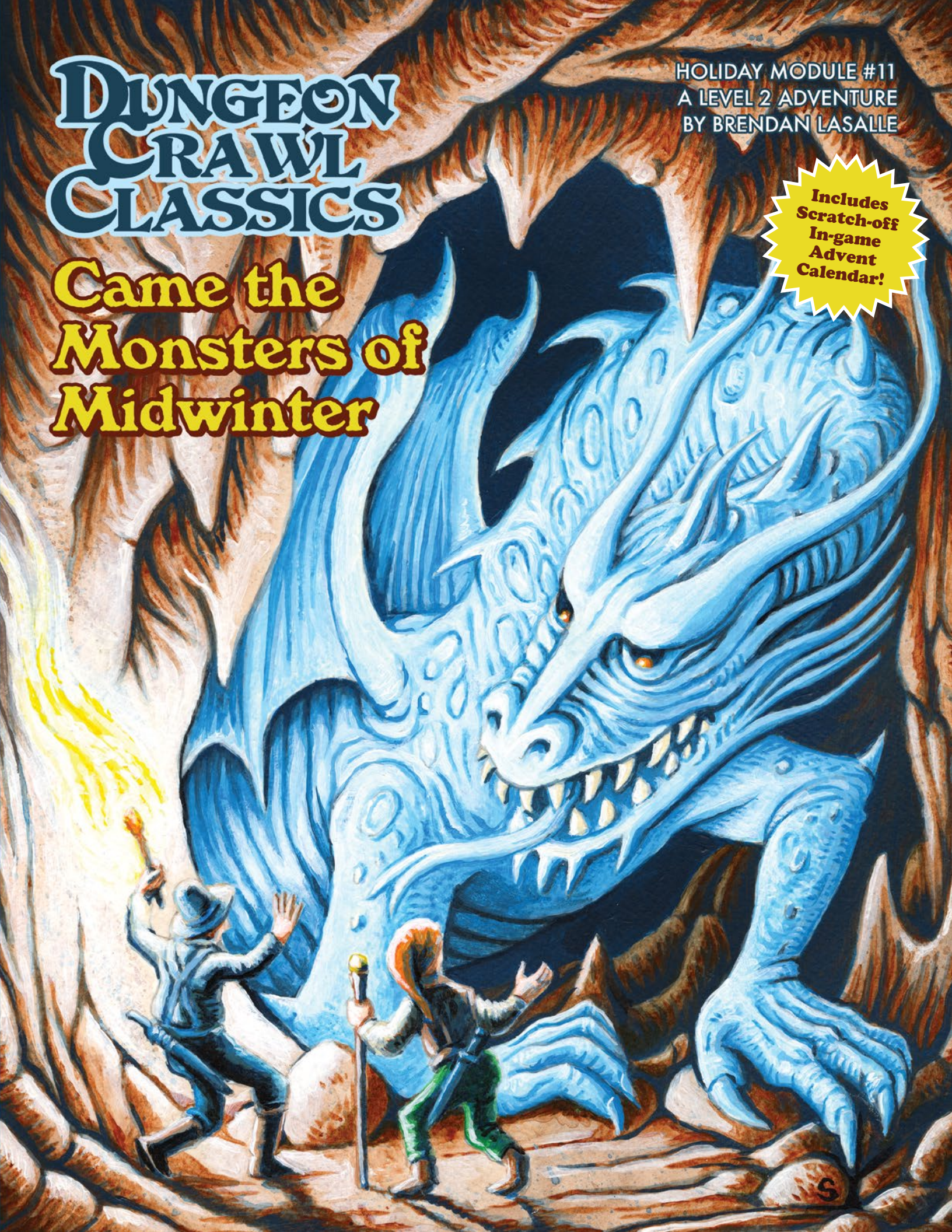


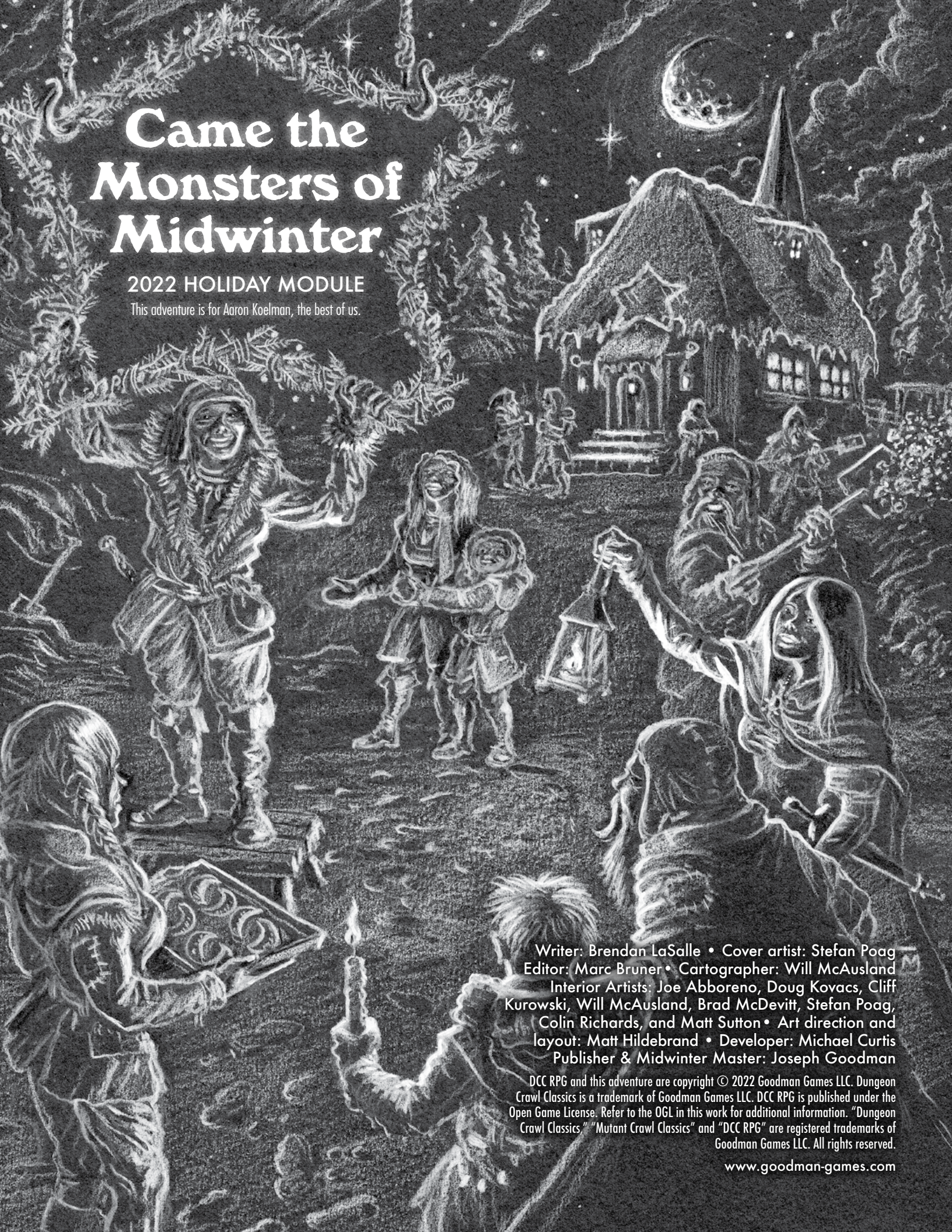
DUNGEON CRAWL CLASSICS

Came the Monsters of Midwinter

HOLIDAY MODULE #11
A LEVEL 2 ADVENTURE
BY BRENDAN LASALLE

Includes
Scratch-off
In-game
Advent
Calendar!





Came the Monsters of Midwinter

2022 HOLIDAY MODULE

This adventure is for Aaron Koelman, the best of us.

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INTRODUCTION



ame the Monsters of Midwinter is an adventure for four to six 2nd level adventurers taking place in the Shudder Mountains during the days leading up to the Sovereignight, a joyous holiday celebrating the season. The scenario has combat and role-playing challenges, and the players should be encouraged to bring a balanced party of Shudfolk, including a cleric and a thief, and their sense of holiday joy. This adventure includes an optional holiday scratch-off component, allowing the PCs who glimpse a bit of the true meaning of the Sovereignight to share in its many blessings. The scratch-off handout is not necessary to play this adventure, and judges without the handout can simulate its use with the table provided in Appendix B. This adventure draws heavily from the lore of the Shudder Mountains, which can be found in *Dungeon Crawl Classics* #83 *The Chained Coffin*.

THE TALE



f you go far enough north and east in the Shudders you eventually come to Star Notch. Prettiest little town you ever saw, especially around the Sovereignight, the longest and holiest night of the year. All Shudfolk hold Sovereignight sacred but it's different up in Star Notch. It seems they spend half the year getting ready, hanging decorations, making gifts, saving money, and singing hymns. On the surface it all seems celebratory, and it is that for sure, but the decorations and hymn-singing ain't the main thing. Notch folk believe that the woods hide an ancient evil, so old it watched the first of us arrive in the hills. Thus, the local custom is to try your hardest to share enough of your own light during Solstice that the Sovereign shall himself bless the proceedings and create such a divine light over the town that it holds back the evil in the woods for one more blessed year. None but Himself can speak to the truth of this, but its sure there's strange goings on in the vicinity. Outsiders coming and going, up to none know what business. Farmers in their fields disappearing, just gone like campfire smoke. Perhaps this year they need that blessing more than ever.

BACKGROUND



ruth shames the rumors. North and east of Star Notch is the Hendershot farm, held for more than fifteen generations of Hendershots. The farm is spread across two shortish flattened peaks connected by a land bridge.

The peaks enjoy rich soil and full sun, and yield far more corn than the largest family could possibly use, and yet the reclusive Hendershots haven't traded corn with even their closest neighbors in a rooster's age.

Fact is the Hendershots are moonshiners, mostly selling to outsiders to hide the source of their fortune.

Some years ago, tenth generation moonshiner Amos Hendershot went digging a new outhouse pit and uncovered a point of egress into a massive cavern network. Exploring it, he found an ancient quarry containing a spoil, a patch of sorcerous black fire left behind from the cataclysm that de-

stroyed the Hsaals that once ruled the mountains. His eyes lit up with greed: it might be a sin, but Amos knew the spoil was the key to making witch liquor, which could make his family not just country rich, but *rich*.

Amos set out to learn the secrets of witch liquor, trading bushels of corn to shady conjure-men all over the mountains in exchange for sinister secrets and advice. The moonshiner's efforts were fruitless until loathsome Anector, the demon prince of degeneracy and debasement and bane to vulnerable Shudfolk for more than six hundred years, arrived at the Hendershot farm disguised as a traveling peddler.

The fiend made an extraordinary offer: he would share his very own *guaranteed* recipe for witch liquor if Amos would only promise to make a big enough batch annually to satisfy the needs of the city merchants he represented. A single sip from the devil's flask was enough to convince Amos of the recipe's potency; the brew the peddler smirkingly called "A Nectar" was wickedly strong, tasty, and the first sip gave you a powerful want for a second.

Amos and the Devil shook hands, damning the moonshiner and his family. Anector's recipe makes a powerful, addictive brew that carries with it a curse of unpredictable manifestation.

Amos died seven years later when he got drunk and fell off the land bridge . . . or did he jump? His son Hank and Hank's wife Lottie took over the farm, and while they knew about the moonshining that went on, they weren't aware of the spoil or the witch liquor. That is, until they found a stoppered pint of A Nectar hid behind the cornmeal in the cabinet and decided to give it a taste.

The unwitting pair drank all night and were overtaken with unholy lust. That next morning, Lottie was clearly pregnant, and three days later she gave birth to 13 identically ugly offspring. The Hendershots were shocked and overwhelmed, but when their "thirteenplets", as they called them, grew to working age in the space of three moons they rationalized their macabre fortune by deciding it was a mysterious blessing from the Sovereign.

The Hendershot thirteenplets are actually a gaggle of evil changelings, vile spawn of infernal Anector. The changelings soon took over the day to day running of the farm, the still, and the brewing of the witch liquor, all the while keeping their parents drunk and ignorant of what goes on. Hank and Lottie are now so out of touch that they have no idea their decaying home is a stone's throw from an ancient Hsaal mine, and that the rising evil within has attracted terrifying horrors, all of whom now reside in the caverns beneath the corncrib.


Now the changelings work their diabolic master's plan to spread his blasphemous influence and taint the Sovereignight, the holiest night of the year, in a bid to destroy the divine protection it grants Star Notch against the horrors of the mountains. The thirteenplets have kidnapped dozens of Shudfolk, forcing them to work at digging buried moon rock to power the unholy A Nectar. The changelings found one Shudfolk with good handwriting, and have forced her to make copies of Anector's witch liquor recipe, planning

on spreading it all across the mountains in an effort to hook more and more Shudfolks on a vice sure to commit their souls to their Dark Progenitor.

A twist of fate could be the changelings undoing: when the city bootleggers came for their annual witch liquor purchase, they decided to sample it for themselves before committing their coin. The evil concoction transformed them all into monsters, and now they charge toward Star Notch, insane with rage and determination to destroy the Sovereignight.


Now the fate of Star Notch hangs in the balance. Can the heroic Shudfolk save the Sovereignight from the degradations of Anector and the monsters of midwinter?

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

he adventure begins three days before Sovereignight. This is a time of prayer, fellowship, and joy celebrated to some degree or other in every town and village in the Shudder Mountains. The adventurers might be Notch locals, they might have business in town, or they could just be visiting to see what all the fuss is about.

Scripture tells that on the first Midwinter's Night the Sovereign lit the stars in the heavens to help travelers find their way. Shudfolk regions, towns, and families often have their own way of marking the occasion, practicing everything from preparing traditional foods, hymn-singing, winter storytelling, fasting, and visiting.

AREA 1: STAR NOTCH

tar Notch is a tiny town, cute as you could want. It is close to the border of the "outside world" and it is easy to spot the influences in the exposed wood beam frameworks, window box flower beds, and double-hung doors. Visitors often call it quaint or picturesque.

Nearly every home in the Notch, as the locals call it, has a comfortable guest room for rent. So many visitors come to the city that putting up strangers is a lucrative side-business with enough trade to make the myriad hassles of keeping borders worthwhile. Locals normally ask 1 sp a day, including breakfast, but some homes have grander accommodations, additional meals, or other comforts and the fanciest lodgings can go as high as 5 sp. Ma Tay Tay's boarding house is the best deal at 1 sp a night, biscuits, squirrel burgo, and the company of her dozen cats included.


WORD ROUND THE COOKFIRE

While staying in the Notch, each PC can make a Luck check to have heard one of the following rumors (roll 1d7):

1. A number of folks from nearby towns such as Green Downs, Shoo, and Fog Hollow have gone missing in the last several weeks. (TRUE)
2. The Sovereign Himself watches over Star Notch during the Sovereignight, and sometimes sneaks into town disguised as a peddler to join the festivities. (FIRST BIT TRUE)

3. In olden times Star Notch had the most plentiful and delicious corn in the mountains. Since the Hendershots got stuck-up and stopped trading with their neighbors this ceased to be the case. (PARTIALLY TRUE)
4. The outsiders who visit Star Notch are mostly Shudfolk who left the mountains and now regret their new lives in the city. (FALSE)
5. This past autumn a dragon was spotted in the sky over Star Notch. (NOT A TRUE DRAGON)
6. The Sovereignight means more than gifts and getting together in Star Notch. Holding it special the way they do grants the town protection from evil creatures and bad influences. (TRUE)
7. A secret cult operates clandestinely in Star Notch, and all the trappings of the holidays are actually secret symbols of evil. (FALSE)


THE REAL MEANING OF SOVEREIGNIGHT

he meaning of Sovereignight is different for everyone. You might find it in the shining eyes of a child unwrapping a present, a sincere holiday greeting from a stranger, or in the sheen of sweat of a Shudfolk warrior whaling the tar out of a servant of Evil.

In *Came the Monsters of Midwinter*, there are several opportunities for PCs through their actions and decisions to get a glimpse at the real meaning of the Sovereignight. If the PCs perform heroic actions or witness holiday miracles that touch their hearts, they may receive a blessing from the Sovereign themselves, by way of the Blessings from the Shudder Mountains scratch-off handout. See Appendix B for full details.

There are suggestions in the text, but the judge should consider allowing their PCs to receive a blessing for acts that demonstrate exceptional holiday spirit.

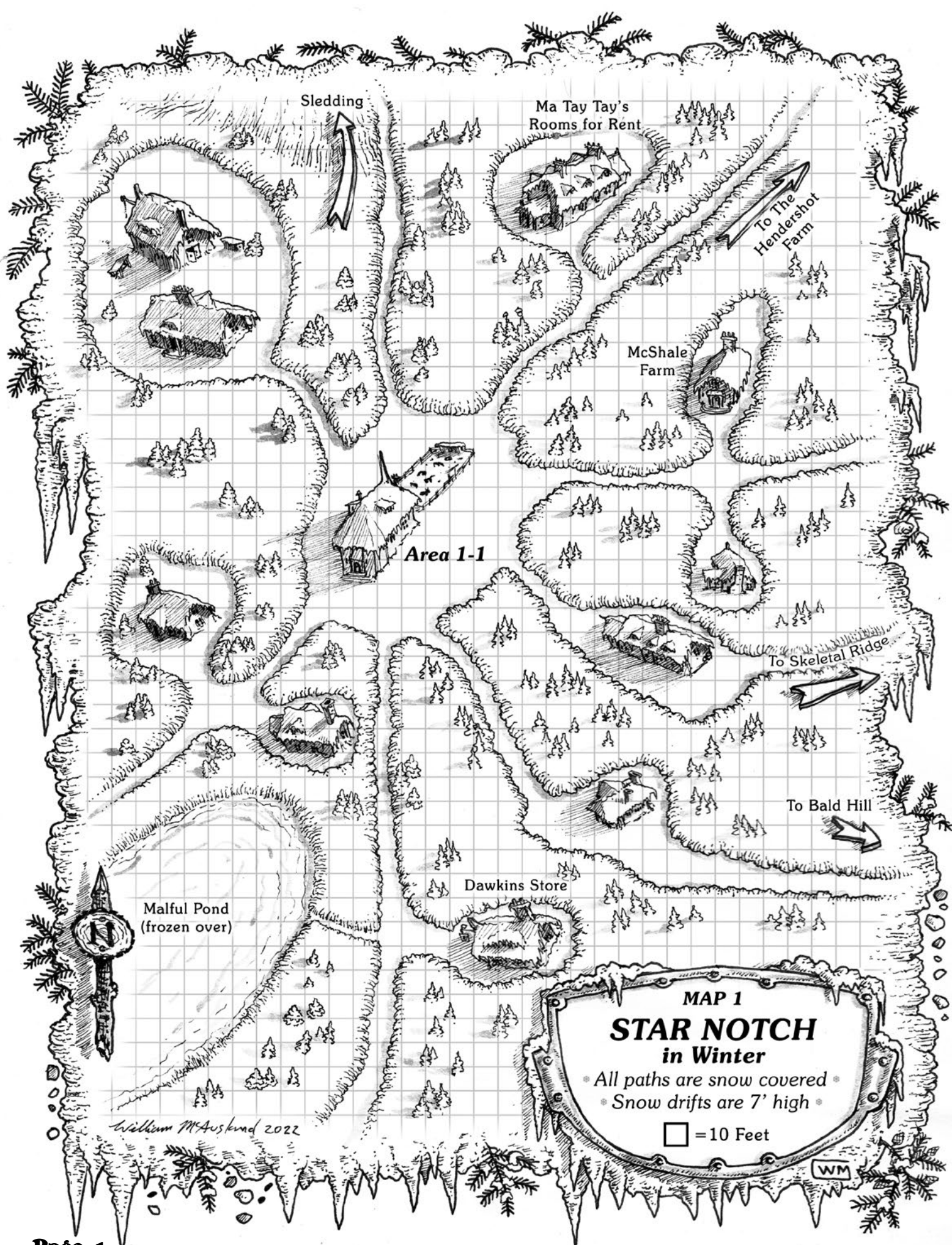
EVENT 1: FIRE AT THE TEMPLE

ometime before midnight the town fire bell starts to ring. Any PCs who go out to investigate will see that the Star Notch Chapel of the Blessed Sovereign, center of the town and its tallest point, is on fire. Within the orange-red blaze are strange black flames, moving almost like living creatures, reaching and dragging themselves along and igniting everything in their wake.

To get to the chapel the PCs will have to make their way down the shoveled snow paths to the clearing dug around the church.

Area 1-1 — The Blessed Temple of the Sovereign at Star Notch: When the PCs arrive at the church, they see the following:

The grounds around the Star Notch Chapel of the Blessed Sovereign are recently shoveled. You can see that the roof of the church





is on fire, but there is something sinister about the flames themselves. Mixed in with the orange, red, and white are flames of black, which twist into strange shapes as you watch. In front of the stairs leading to the door of the temple are three rampaging humanoid figures. From the neck down they appear to be men dressed in city-made clothes, but for their clawed hands and feet. From the neck up the three have the heads of animals – a snake, a weasel, and a lizard. They roar and stomp and gnash their teeth. The lizard-headed one holds a torch of black fire, and its flame seems to have a horrible face within. As you watch, the flame hisses and menaces you with tiny arms of dark fire.

These are bootlegger outsiders from the city, all of whom sampled the Hendershot's witch liquor. The evil brew changed them all to human-animal hybrids, mad with rage and hatred of the Sovereign. They are all dressed in flashy city finery, now tattered by their transformations and roughhousing, exposing claw toes sticking out from once-elegant boots. If the PCs do not intervene, they will burn the church down, then attack the residents of Star Notch.

There are actually four transformed bootleggers. The fourth, who currently has the head of a stoat, is stealthily creeping up on the PCs by walking across the tops of snowbanks. Once the PCs attack, it pounces on the rear-most adventurer on the first round of combat.

Transformed bootleggers (4): Init +2; Atk bite or claw +3 melee (1d6+1) or see below; AC 15; HD 2d8; hp 14 each; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP heightened senses; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +1; AL C; Crit III/d6.

The witch liquor's curse has given these humans the features and savage urges of animals. Their heightened senses give them +1d on all checks to perceive or notice sounds or smells. The individual bootleggers have additional attributes:

Snake: bite +4 melee (1d3 plus poison, DC 12 Fort save or lose 1 point of Stamina). Bite victims must make a new save every round, losing an additional point of Stamina until they succeed.

Weasel: +1 AC, can perform Mighty Deeds with bite (1d4).

Stoat: +3 to AC and Reflex saves, +6 on ability checks for acrobatic maneuvers and stealth checks. The stoat can run on the surface of the snow without breaking through the crust, allowing it to charge along the tops of snowbanks.

Lizard: Climb 30', spoilfire torch +3 melee (1d4+1d6 fire damage, DC 12 Ref save or catch fire, see spoilfire torch below for complete stats).

Spoilfire torch: Init +0; Atk fire claw +1 melee (1d2); AC 13; HD 1d6; hp 5; MV 3'; Act 1d20; SP vulnerable to water, unholy; SV Fort +0, Ref +4, Will +2; AL C; Crit M/d4.

The spoilfire torch is a semi-intelligent evil elemental entity that wants to turn the whole world to ash. It was created by leaving a gloomwood stave in the Hendershot spoilfire for a day. Used as a weapon, it strikes for d4 + 1d6 fire damage, and the target must make a DC 12 Reflex save or catch on fire, taking 1d4 damage every round until they put themselves out. If mashed into snow or immersed in water, the spoilfire torch takes 1d6 damage per round until extinguished. The spoilfire is unholy to the Sovereign and can be turned by his clerics.

Unattended, the spoilfire entity may drag itself along very slowly (movement rate 3', cannot double move). The creature can cause flammable material to ignite as an action (no check).

During the battle, townsfolk attempt to put together a bucket brigade to put the fire on the church out. If the PCs can keep the transformed bootleggers busy, they can put the mundane fire out in two minutes. However, the black fire created by the spoil fire torch cannot be put out by normal means. Treat it as having an AC of 5 and 10 hit points. It is vulnerable to spells such as *magic missile* and can be turned as a 2 HD unholy creature. If the fire is turned, it flees in huge arching leaps, heading straight back to the spoil at Hendershot Farm, leaving foul-smelling scorched tracks. There are many other methods that might be used to put the fire out, and the judge will have to adjudicate which creative plans have a chance of working.

The transformed bootleggers might attempt to run if the battle is clearly unwinnable. In this case, they flee to the only safe place they know, the Hendershot farm, possibly leaving tracks and/or a blood trail on their way.

AFTER THE FIRE



nce the creatures are bested and the fire is out, the folk of Star Notch gather to see what can be done with the church. They are dispirited and frightened, their joy at the upcoming holiday fading like smoke in the air. They look to the PCs for guidance, especially any clerics of the Sovereign in the group. If the PCs address the crowd with a message of hope they may reignite the town's holiday spirits (DC 12 Personality check or automatic success for exceptionally good role-play). In this case, someone declares that there is still time to make this the best Sovereign night ever, and after a joyful hurrah, the entire town clasps hands around the damaged temple and sing the Sovereign night hymn, "A Star O'er the Mountain". Helping save the spirit of the Sovereign night should earn every PC a *Blessing from the Shudder Mountain* (see Appendix B for details).

THE TRAIL TO THE HENDERSHOT FARM

There are many ways the PCs can find their way to the Hendershot farm, the source of the attack. If a bootlegger escapes the melee at the temple, adventurers might track them to the farm. The PCs might make inquiries about local rumors and learn of the reclusive Hendershots, who have been suspiciously absent from church and the marketplace for years.

If the PCs are at a loss, the Sovereign intervenes directly to help save the town that take so much joy on his special night by putting Wilbur the hound dog in their path.

EVENT 2: WILBUR



his event can take place in town or on the road to the Hendershot farm. The PCs hear a kerfuffle heading in their direction. A moment later a hound dog with a bandanna tied around its neck comes bounding down the path, with a half-starved looking mountain lion in hot pursuit.

Mountain Lion (1): Init +2; Atk claw or bite +3 (1d6); AC 13, HD 2d8, hp 11; MV 40'; Act 1d20; SP - heightened senses, knockdown charge :Fort +3, Ref +3, Will+1; AL N; Crit 1d3/ M

The mountain lion has a superior sense of smell and hearing (+1d on relevant checks). On a successful charge attack against a human-sized opponent, the

target must make a DC 13 Fort save or be knocked prone. The lion is hungry but not suicidally so, and attempts to chase if off have a better than average chance of working (-1d on morale checks).

Any PCs who are familiar with Star Notch may make a Luck check, with success meaning they recognize Wilbur, the Rudd family's hound dog. Wilbur is secretly a member of a group of canine adventurers who fight for neglected and abused animals all over the mountains. The dog is seeking his missing boy, Myng, who was captured by the changelings and forced to work in their mines (see Area 3-8). If rescued, Wilbur attempts to get the PCs to follow him to the farm. The dog will faithfully lead them there, but the unnatural stench of the changelings and the spoil frighten and confuse him and he will not willingly cross the land bridge unless he senses either or both of his people, Myng and Mazel. If the PCs reunite Wilbur with his people, they share a group hug, giving all present a glimpse of the True Meaning of the Sovereign night (see Appendix B).

AREA 2: THE HENDERSHOT FARM



he Hendershot farm is spread out over two flattened mountain peaks connected by a land bridge. The peak nearest Star Notch is one massive cornfield, covered in deep snow except for a path that goes straight through to the land bridge. The second peak has the Hendershot farm and the secret entrance to the moonrock quarry, and is mostly shoveled clear. Older Shudfolk might remember the farm as being especially grand, making its current state a shock.

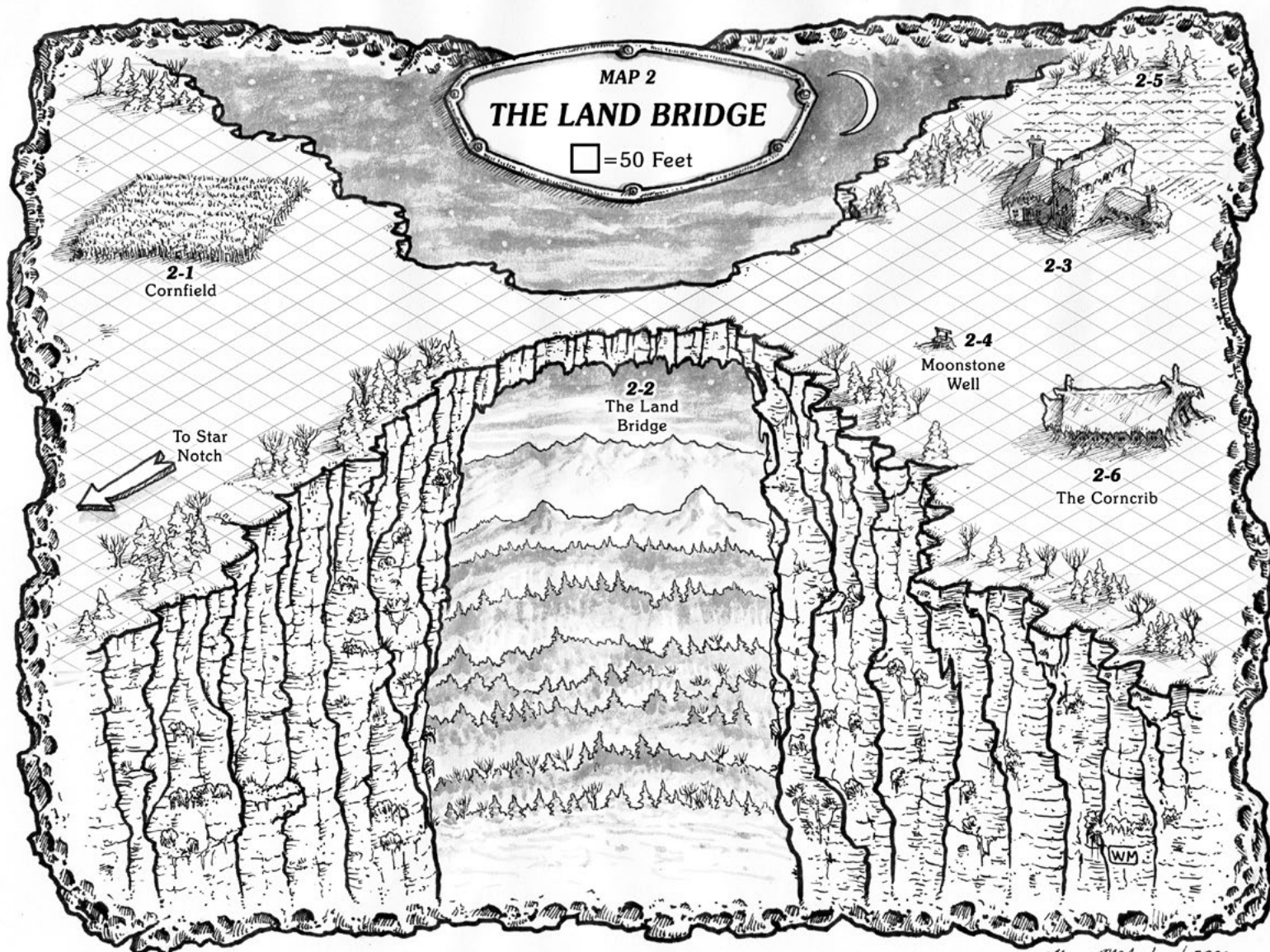
Area 2-1 — The Cornfield: *The cornfield is snowed over, but a jagged path has been cleared right down the center, creating walls of snow taller than a man on both sides. The tops of broken corn stalks stick out from the snow at all angles. In the far distance you see what might be a scarecrow, arms thick with snow, seemingly watching you pass from far off in the snowy field.*

The entire cornfield is 17 acres, most of which (including the scarecrow) are not pictured on the map.

Any farmers in the group will note that the western side of the field seems to be neglected, the eastern side (closest to the land bridge) seems to have been taken care of. The changelings only maintain enough of the field to feed the Hendershots and keep moonshine production going, letting more than 7/8^{ths} of the field lie fallow.

The PCs may slog through the deep snow to investigate the scarecrow, which has been hollowed out for a nest by a gang of devil crows. The crows





were attracted to the farm by the heady chaos of the uncovered spoilfire and are always game for mischief.

If the PCs approach, the devil crow's leader speaks as if he is the scarecrow, demanding to know why the intruders have trod unwelcome upon his field. The crow will keep up this deception as long as it can, asking questions to learn all that they can about the PCs. If the PCs are really falling for it, the crow's leader offers to share a prophecy about their future in exchange for gold or valuables. Any prophecy they give will be false and destructive (e.g., "You will be betrayed by the one you trust the most!").

Observant folk might notice that the voice of the scarecrow sounds as if it is coming from within the scarecrow's chest, and that other small voices occasionally stifle giggles from within. If discovered, the creatures attack, fleeing if more than half of their number are slain. If they manage to glean any good information from the PCs, they fly to the Hendershot farm and share it with the changelings, who might then decide to ambush the PCs before they can make it across the land bridge.

Devil crows (7): Init +3; Atk talon rake +2 melee (1d3); AC 13; HD 1d4; hp 3 each; MV fly 50'; Act 1d20; SP fly-by attack, speech, pick pockets (+7 on checks); SV Fort +0, Ref +4, Will +2; AL C; Crit M/d3.

Devil crows are creatures of Chaos whose sole purpose seems to be to bedevil the days of honest men. They haunt mass graves, battlefields, and other areas rife with death and decay. They speak the local language and up to three others.

Devil crows can perform a fly-by attack – they swoop down, attack mid-move, then continue their move to the maximum of their flight rate, making it difficult to attack them with melee weapons.

Devil crows are clever thieves, who will sometimes steal a precious item from a victim in order to trick them into chasing them down some dangerous path. The creatures can pick pockets with a +7 on checks, and will often attempt to lead their victims on a chase to get their items back in order to lead them to someplace dangerous.

Area 2-2 — The Land Bridge: *The snowy land bridge between the two flattened peaks begins at about 20' wide, but narrows to 8' at its most dangerous looking point. The ravine below is a 200' drop and pure white with snow.*

If the Hendershot changelings are pressed in combat later in the adventure, they will retreat to the land bridge and hide by burrowing themselves into the snow (DC 11 Intelligence check to spot, but only receiving a check if they declare they checking

the bridge). They likewise might set up an ambush here if the devil crows warn of their coming. If they have the surprise, the changelings burst from their hiding places and attempt grapple checks, hoping to push the intruders off the land bridge.

PCs who fall from the land bridge can make a DC 13 Reflex save to catch a handhold. Hanging folks can make a Strength check – a 15 means they can pull themselves up to safety, a 10 means they can hold on for one more round and make another attempt at -1 cumulative, failure means they fall 200 feet into the ravine, taking 10d6 damage.

If the PCs explore the ravine, they may encounter the shamed ghost of Amos Hendershot. The shade of Amos stays hidden unless the PCs visibly wear symbols of the Sovereign, at which point he appears as a translucent spirit and wishes to confess to all of his evil. He tells of his wicked deal with the “peddler,” and opening the ancient mine up to horrific creatures, including the Dragon, and of his eventual suicide. If the ghost is allowed to confess, he disappears, never to return to this plane. For listening to his tale and allowing him to move on, the Sovereign grants all present 2 points of Luck.

Area 2-3 — The Hendershot House: *This was clearly once a grand farmhouse, now desperate for repair and a coat of whitewash. The porch is in need of mending and part of the roof is sagging and near to falling through. The farmyard is strewn with loose tools, including a wheelbarrow, several shovels, and a post-hole digger. You hear the sounds of loud conversation from inside.*

If the PC call out to the house, Hank Hendershot, clearly drunk, comes out to the porch and welcomes them. He is

very happy to have company and invites all inside to meet his wife Lottie and the kids.

The interior of the house is a stinking mess. The Hendershots act sheepish about their housekeeping but invite folks to move piles of dirty clothes and junk off of the couches and sofas and stay a while. Hank and Lottie attempt to introduce the thirteenplets to the newcomers, but the changelings act shy and the introductions turn into a horrifying scene of domestic disfunction as the “kids” are screamed at, shoved, and cuffed to get them to mumble a hello.

The changelings watch the adventurer’s carefully and if they seem about to expose them or hurt their long-term plan they will make a ruckus, signaling the PCs to follow them out to the land bridge. If they can get adventurers to follow them, they will point to something over the edge and then attempt to shove them over into the abyss.

Changelings (13): Init +2; bite +3 melee (1d4) or grapple; AC 13; HD 1d6; hp 3 each; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP gang up, infravision 60'; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +2; AL C; Crit III/d4.

At first the changelings appear to be a group of sullen Shudfolk teens, with nothing outstanding about them but their universally identical foul mood, uncouth manners and similar appearance. All thirteen are of identical size, just a hop over 4 feet tall, and wiry. They remain bundled up, with scarves covering faces and hats pulled down tight, until combat begins. Then they throw off their heavy clothes, their eyes turn around in their heads to show vertical pupils on the far side, and they open their insanely wide mouths to show double-rows of needle teeth.



In combat, all but one of the present changelings will team up to mass grapple as many foes as possible. Roll a grapple attempt for each changeling (grapple +0 against man-sized creatures, +4 on an individual half that size). The highest of their combined checks is the actual grapple check; lower checks that are a 10 or better add +1 to the actual grapple check, so if three changelings score a 13, 11, and 7, the grapple check will be a total of 14 (13 + 1 for the check greater than 10). Changelings are +2 on all attacks to bite grappled opponents and can continue to continue to bite until they themselves are pinned.

If the changelings reveal their true natures, Hank and Lottie are understandably confused and horrified. They remain in shock for some time afterwards, perhaps never recovering.

The house is a reeking jumble parody of a well-to-do Shud-folk farmhouse. The thirteenplets share a gross bedroom, and if the PCs search it, they find a loose floorboard hiding the 200 gp they received from the bootleggers for their latest pick up of 'shine and a small sack of hoarhound candy.

Area 2-4 — The Moonstone Well: *This is a short, uncovered well of mortared stone. The individual rocks are unusual - pale and angular - giving the well a knobby appearance. A bucket on a long rope is tethered to a stake at its side.*

This well is made of stones originally from Luhsaal, the Hsaal's long since destroyed moon. The well is about 4' high, 5' wide, 30' deep to its absolute bottom, and the surface of the water is currently 15' below the rim of the well and ice cold.

Hiding in the well is the bootlegger's leader, a wanted outlaw called Pop Branson, who lurks below the surface of the water. When the gang sampled the Hendershot's witch liquor, the transformation robbed Pop of his ability to breathe air normally, and he dove in the well in a desperate bid for life. While his new gills took to the well water just fine, there is no food for him to survive on and Pop has grown unhinged with hunger.

If an adventurer looks over the rim the well without any precautions, Pop makes a mighty leap out of the water, gaining automatic surprise and attempting to grapple (+3 to check). On a successful grapple, the target must make a DC 13 Fort save, with success meaning they manage to keep their footing while Pop hangs on them with his entire weight, attempting every round to drag them down into the water. A failed save means the victim is pulled into the well and dragged down below the surface of the water, where the creature makes a grapple check every round to keep his victim's head below water, meaning to drown them so they can later be devoured.

Players dragged into the frigid water must make a DC 13 Fort save or go into cold shock, losing 1d3 rounds before they can act again.

Pop Branson, transformed bootlegger: Init + 2; Atk bite +3 melee (1d6+1); AC 14; HD 2d8; hp 16; MV swim 30', leap 15'; Act 1d20; SP heightened senses, water creature; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +; AL C; Crit III/d6.

Pop Branson is a former local turned big-city bootlegger, and lately a humanoid with the head of a horrifically en-



larged goldfish. His once fancy city garb now hangs from his body in waterlogged ribbons. He has scaly orange skin, webbed hands and feet, and gills.

Upon his transformation, Pop lost the ability to breathe in the air or walk normally, but breathes normally in water. While submerged, his eyesight is perfect and he can scent in the depths well enough to follow a day-old blood trail. If somehow forced on land, Pop's movement rate is reduced to 5' as he can only flop and try to find his way back to breathable water.

The changelings know the transformed smuggler is in the well and have been avoiding it. Before the coming of the outsiders, they had planned to wait a few days for hunger to weaken it, then kill it with rocks before fishing it out of their precious well, the source of the only water they can use to make A Nectar.

Area 2-5 — The Bootlegger's Sledge: *Behind the house you see that some long, wide thing has been partially covered up with snow. You see a bit of fur through an uncovered gap.*

In a bid to keep their connection to the bootleggers a secret, the changelings have been working to cover their sledge with snow. The sledge is of obvious city-make, 15' long and meant to be dragged by men. Currently the sledge is packed high with wooden crates of local make, covered in tarps and lashed with leather tie-downs. There are 24 cases, each holding six bottles of mountain mashbrew nestled in sawdust. Hidden in the center of the pile of crates where they are not easily spotted are twelve smaller cases, each with six pint-glass stoppered bottles of the dreaded A Nectar witch liquor.

The tarp is covered in ragged animal hides—squirrel, beaver, and possum—none of them well cured.

“I FIGURE ONE TASTE CAN’T HURT NOTHING.”

They figured wrong. A sip of this particular batch of A Nectar produces near immediate debilitating inebriation and a possible curse: the imbiber must make a DC 14 Will save or be transformed to a human-animal hybrid. The judge can choose or randomly determine an animal type, and this type may give some minor benefits. Most animal types will confer a natural attack that does 1d6 damage. While under the influence of this curse, the target is subject to the turn un-holy ability of Lawful or Neutral clerics. A *remove curse* effect, 4 dice of healing, or similar powerful magics will be required to remove the effect of the curse.

Area 2-6 — The Hendershot’s Corncrib: *The doors of this long building pull open easily to reveal two long rows of mostly empty shelving. There are several bushels of winter corn but nowhere near what you might expect from a farm this size. There are a few scattered tools, a wide tarp spread out on the ground, and a few unlit lanterns hanging from pegs along the walls. A contraption made of thick beams holding a rope ending in a hook and pulley attached to a hand crank sits at the edge of the tarp.*

If the PCs move the tarp they see the pithead (Area 3-1), leading down into the ancient quarry below. The rope and pulley are for hauling crates of moonstone up from Area 3-2 to the surface.

AREA 3: THE MOONROCK QUARRY



The Moonrock Quarry is as dark as a dungeon and dry as dust. Beyond Area 3-2 there is no light unless otherwise described in the text. The three main stairways have rough dug-out ramps next to them so the captive miners can wheel carts of moon rock up to the higher levels.

Area 3-1 — The Pithead: *You see a pit some 10’ across. A ladder rests along its edge. Looking down to its depths you see nothing but darkness.*

This is the passage to the moonrock quarry that Amos Hendershot discovered so many years ago. He built out his corncrib to hide it from prying eyes, as it hid the spoilfire that was the key to his family’s fortune.

Once the first adventurer starts making their way down the ladder, the shade of Scharlssa, a wicked Hsaal overseer, phases out of the wall and attacks, hoping to paralyze the target so they fall to the floor of Area 3-2.

Scharlssa, undead Hsaal: Init +1; Atk freezing touch + 4 melee (1d6 plus DC 13 Fort save or paralyzed for 1d6 rounds); AC 13; HD 4d8; hp 27; MV hover 30’; Act 1d20; SP un-dead



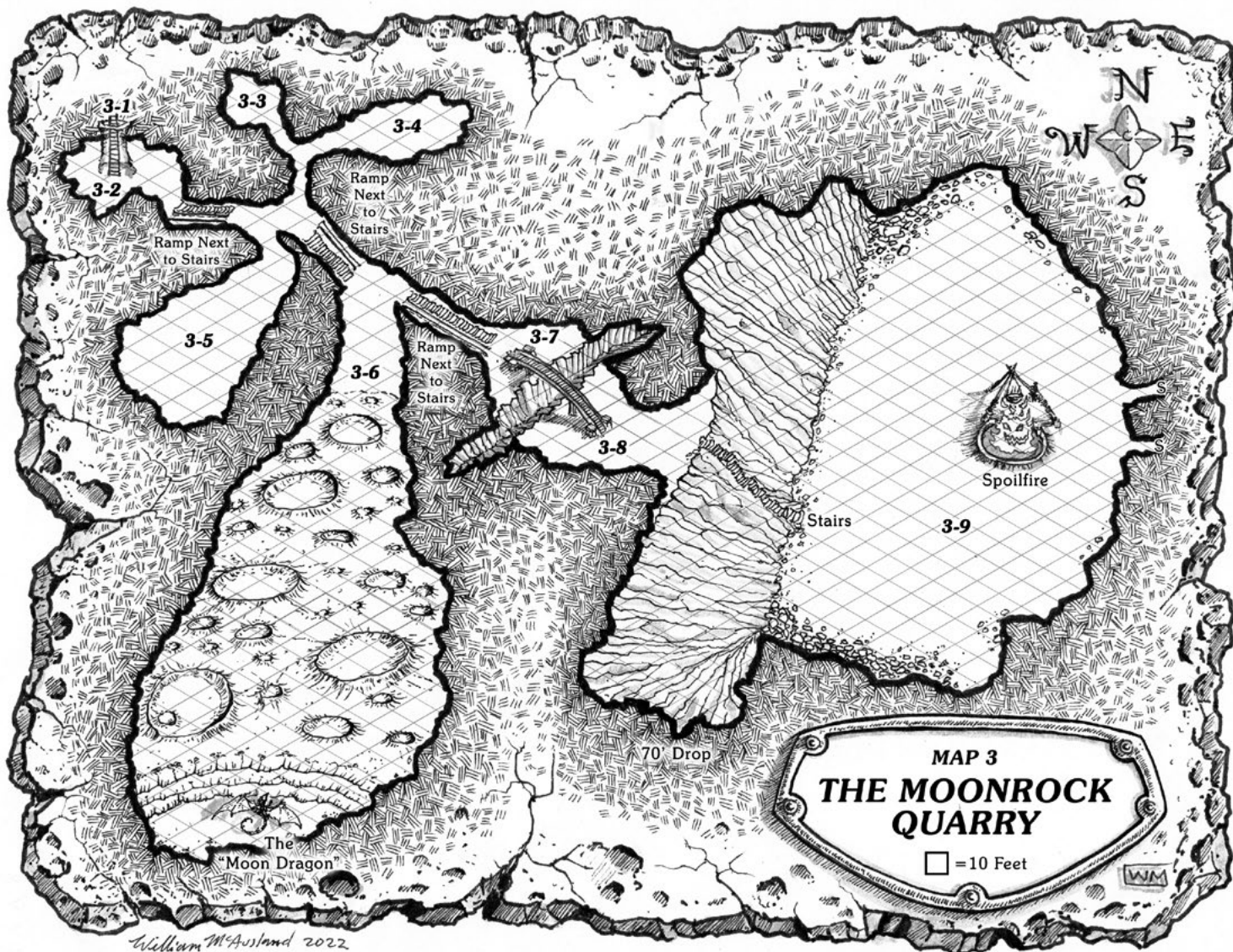
traits, incorporeal, only affected by blessed, magic, or silver weapons, curse of the bloodline geas; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +4; AL L; Crit U/d4.

Scharlssa was a Hsaal overseer who terrorized generations of enslaved Shudfolk in the times before Luhsaal exploded. He died in the cataclysm, but his spirit lived on in a kind of limbo until Amos Hendershot uncovered the spoil. Now he has clawed his way back to our world, and means to dominate and torment the Shudfolk he holds mortal disdain for once again. He appears as a lithesome phantom with a hairless face and crested head.

Scharlssa ignores the changelings and any other creatures of Chaos. He attempts to paralyze as many intruders as possible he can, meaning to force them all into labor in the mines.

Scharlssa is un-dead and cannot be affected by sleep or enchantment magic. He neither eats, sleeps, drinks, or breathes. The vile spirit is immune to critical hits and all weapons that are not blessed, silvered, or magical. He can phase in and out of any non-magical solid object, so he may retreat into the walls or floor in order to preserve his un-life that he may ambush the intruders later when they are weakened or separated.

Scharlssa holds a special place in the oppression of the Shudfolk: he created the bloodline geas that tied the original Shudfolk to the mountains. Any intelligent mortal creature that comes within 30’ of the evil spirit must make a DC 13 Will save. Failure means they are affected by the same geas



that has affected the Shudfolk forever: an intense desire to remain within the mountains, coupled with a lack of interest in what lies outside the Shudders. Natural born Shudfolk who fail this save find the power of their bloodline geas increased dramatically; they must make a DC 13 Will save to even take one step outside of the Shudder Mountains, and those that do leave must make that save again upon waking each day or be forced to start making their way home, regardless of their current obligation or need. This is a powerful curse that will require a quest to dispel, which will otherwise be passed down to the afflicted's natural-born descendants.

Area 3-2 — The Adit: This strange chamber is part rough natural cave, part worked stone. The surviving worked stone is cracked throughout with huge missing sections. The walls have bits of extremely accomplished carvings throughout, although enough are ruined to make it difficult to see what the carvings depict.

When the Hsaal controlled this quarry in ancient times they created it as they did everything, as a monument to their own perceived superiority.

If the PCs spend some time investigating the surviving carvings, they eventually see reoccurring themes of domination, sorcery, and a sky with two moons, one clearly favored, over

tall, pointed mountain peaks. There are several carvings of huge, majestic figures (the Hsaal), ordering about masses of faceless toiling savage laborers.

Area 3-3 — The Office: A hanging oil lantern lights this cavernous room which has been set up as an improvised office. Two barrels with a board across them make a kind of table, while behind it is a crate being used as a seat. A human woman sits at the desk doing some kind of paperwork. The desk is cluttered with blank parchment, an ink well, a jumble of silver ribbon, a fancy pair of scissors, a chipped mug, and a bowl of greyish gruel. A box next to the desk is piled with neat rolls of parchment, each tied with a silver ribbon. The woman scowls as her quill scratches over the parchment.

If the PCs make to enter the area, the ne'erseen throws up its horrific projections and attacks. The creature is a mountain boogiemer drawn to the chaos of the spoilfire like a hummingbird to zinnias. The creature happily agreed to keep an eye on the changeling's most valuable captive, the scribe Mazel Rudd (see below).

Ne'erseen: Init +3; Atk projected claw 1d24+3 melee (1d6); AC 14; HD 3d8; hp 20, MV levitate 30'; Act 1d20; SP permanent invisibility, lethal projection; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +2; AL C; Crit III/d8.

The ne'ersen is an invisible gremlin, a chaotic fey creature that haunts secret places in the Shudder Mountains. Its true form is a 3' tall floating green man usually wearing stolen finery. This one has a shabby top hat, an oversized coat with long tails, and a silver chain with an intricate locket.

The ne'ersen is permanently invisible, even in death, although it can be perceived with a *detect invisible* spell. What can be seen are the projections of itself that the creature radiates. These are distorted, horrific, quasi-real images, that appear much larger and more fearsome than the creature's true form. These projections grow and shrink and whirl about in a chaotic fashion reminiscent of a fever dream. They are always facing the ne'ersen, so they seem to be surrounding the creature and any opponents it faces. The creature's invisibility imposes a -1d penalty on opponents that attempt to strike it, and the distraction of its projections add another -1d, so those attempting to target the creature itself have a cumulative -2d penalty on attacks.

The creature is physically weak but its quasi-real projections swipe its terrible claws at opponents. The ne'ersen can choose not to project images, but is then unable to attack.

The ne'ersen's projections can be attacked, but are unaffected by all but silver or magic weapons, or fire. The projections are AC 14 to hit, and regardless of the type of weapon used, weapon attacks inflict only 1 damage plus the attacker's Strength modifier, which is inflicted directly against the ne'ersen itself. Fire damages the projections, and thus the monster, normally.

This ne'ersen is a mortal coward and if reduced to less than five hit points it flees, never returning to the Hendershot farm if it escapes.

The scribe is Mazel Rudd, sister of the missing Myng. Mazel left the mountains years ago, desirous of higher education and a new life in the city. She rushed home when she heard her brother was missing, but was captured by the changelings and forced to put her scribe training to work in the service of Anector's diabolical Sovereignight surprise.

Mazel has been put to work making copies of the recipe for A Nectar, the witch brew. The box next to the desk has sixty copies of the recipe (see A Nectar Recipe Handout), which the changelings plan on sneaking into every mailbox and Sovereignight stocking between here and Bog Hollow.

Mazel's ankle is chained to a heavy stone fixed with a padlock (DC 11 Pick Lock check to open). Once freed she asks the PCs if they will help her find Myng, who was last seen in the vicinity of the Hendershot's cornfield. She is well-read and clever and willing to help the PCs as long as they keep her out of combat.

If the PCs slay the ne'ersen and find its invisible corpse, they can remove its chain and locket. Inside the locket is a lock of red hair and a picture of a red-haired stranger, the identity of whom might be the basis for a further adventure.

Area 3-4 — Mining Supplies: *This low room is stocked with mining supplies. Pickaxes, leaning wheelbarrows, shovels, and a huge length of rope are haphazardly strewn about in the room. Three stacked crates of thin wood are set by the far wall, each branded with the outline of a half-peeled ear of corn.*

Long-time residents recognize the corn brand on the crate as the Hendershot's maker's mark, rarely seen since back when the family produced more corn than every other farmer in Star Notch put together. The top two cases hold empty mason jars (12 each). The bottom one has a Hsaal artifact nestled in sawdust, an irregular sphere of melded metal and stone, studded with chips of shale, zinc, feldspar, and mica. This is a magical excavation explosive, designed to help open new caverns.

A careful examination reveals that the rock has a hard to notice seam that bisects the sphere. If the hemispheres are twisted a full rotation in different directions, the flakes of metal begin to glow brighter and brighter as the halves of the sphere rotate themselves back to their original position in ten seconds, the sphere explodes, doing 3d6 damage to all targets within 30'. While the concussion is extremely dangerous to living tissue, it sets up much more damaging vibrations in rock, and can cause a cave wall or ceiling to collapse. If the device is activated here and then left on the floor, it causes the entire room to collapse and will certainly attract the attention of the Moon Dragon.

The room holds 4 pickaxes, 1 long shovel, 3 short-handled shovels, 1 wheelbarrow with a shifty wheel, 200' of industrial-strength rope (weighs 6x that of regular rope), and a post hole digger, all of which is destroyed if the device explodes in the chamber.

Area 3-5 — Moonrock Hoard: *Two lit lanterns illuminate this longish cavern with a low ceiling, barely higher than five feet. A chaos of small crates made from scrap lumber and branches are stacked helter-skelter against the east wall.*

There are two dozen makeshift crates each filled with moonrock, ready to transport when the recipe for A Nectar entrances unscrupulous brewers into making the devil's witch liquor. The crates have the misspelled names of Shudfolk towns scrawled on them in smudgy ash: *Prsprerty*, *Tode Fok*, *Dogd Montan*, etc.

If the PCs carefully search the crates, they find one with a note written on a scrap of shirt cloth in blood: *Need freedom! Forced to dig in cave old Hendershot farm NE o Star Notch. Beware horrors! IBSN Myng.*

Locals will recognize "IBSN" as a common Star Notch abbreviation written on correspondence and gift cards meaning *In the Blessed Sovereign's Name*.

Area 3-6 — An Acre of Moon: *A downward sloping passageway leads into this enormous cavern. The space is dimly lit from above by spangles of glowing lichen that reach down from the ceiling in long, branching structures that almost resemble flowering stalactites. The surface abruptly changes from the packed dirt of the rest of the caverns into a white stony floor marked with shallow craters. Even small sounds echo loudly in this strange space, and you hear your own breathing bouncing back from the stony*

surfaces. The room has a strange scent, sweet decay and dust and something unidentifiable. The cavern goes back into the darkness farther than your eyes can track.

When the cataclysm destroyed Luhsaal, the home moon of the Hsaal, some of its rocky crust was blasted through the sorcerous transport gates. This entire mountain top has a huge deposit of Luhsaal moon rock, including the floor of this cavern, which is one enormous, unbroken chunk of the surface of that moon.

As soon as the PCs enter, the Moon Dragon, an abandoned guardian from the time of the Hsaal occupation that claims this acre of Luhsaal ground as his fief, is aware of their presence. It waits on the elevated crater at the south end of the cavern, 60 tiered feet above the surface, until the PCs are midway into the room before gliding down to destroy them. Note that the Moon Dragon automatically notices if the PCs trigger the squeaking board on the bridge (see Area 3-7).

The Moon Dragon (abandoned Hsaal guardian): Init +2; bite +7 melee (3d6) or claw +5 melee (1d8) or tail slash +4 melee (1d10); AC 16; HD 7d8; hp 49; MV 30' or fly 40'; Act 2d20; SP breath weapon, heightened senses, magic flight; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +6; AL N; Crit M/d8.

This fearsome creature is no dragon native to the earth, but rather a specially created abandoned guardian. The Hsaal designed the creature's physical form with elements of both one of the primal terrors of the earth and their beloved Luhsaal.

The creature looks like a dragon with craggy skin the color of tarnished silver. Its skin is pockmarked with craters of different sizes, as if struck by small asteroids many times over its long life. Its great scalloped wings are ancient and ragged, and its tail ends in a razor crescent capable of beheading a man. The Moon Dragon has exceptional hearing. It can distinguish targets by their heartbeats alone from 30' away and can make out normal conversation from 100' away. The Moon Dragon understands Common and the Hsaal language, but cannot speak - other than the blast of its breath weapon it is utterly silent. The creature flies and hovers magically, appearing to swim through the air on invisible currents.

The Moon Dragon has a fearsome breath weapon, a line of cosmic void 10' wide and 30' long that makes a huge thunderclap as it displaces the atmosphere. The freezing blast causes 3d6 damage and hurls targets 10-15' away in a random direction. Targets who succeed in a DC 13 Fort save take half damage and resist being hurled. In addition, all creatures within 30' of the blast must make a DC 13 Fort save or be deafened for 1d12 rounds. The creature can use its breath weapon up to once every four rounds.

If the PCs defeat the Moon Dragon and climb to its crater nest, they find it full of all the detritus of the Hsaal period the lonesome beast has gathered over the years. Mostly it consists of old clothes, sandals, and broken bits of pottery, but hidden deep within the pile are two bars of platinum stamped with a Hsaal maker's mark, worth 500 gp each.

Area 3-7 — The Bridge: The passage widens to nearly fifty feet, ending in a wide chasm crossed by a plank bridge. You hear distant sounds from the chamber beyond, folks working stone and speaking with Shudfolk accents.

The planks on the bridge are laid in such a way to leave them noisy. If the PCs cross the bridge normally without taking countermeasures, several of the planks squeak gratingly when stepped on. This alerts the Moon Dragon in Area 3-6 if it has not already been encountered, which instantly leaves its lair to investigate.

The chasm is 150' deep at its lowest point where the steep walls finally meet. Anyone failing a save against the Moon Dragon's breath weapon while on the bridge must make a Reflex save to avoid being blown off the bridge, with the result of the save having a graduated effect, listed below:

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 1 or less | Victim falls to their death down the chasm, no save. |
| 2-7 | Victim must make an additional DC 13 Ref save to avoid falling 10' into the chasm and taking 1d6 damage. |
| 8-13 | Victim must make an additional DC 13 Ref save or be nearly knocked off, hanging on to the side of the bridge with all carried items dropped into the chasm. The victim may make a DC 12 Strength check to pull themselves up onto the bridge. |
| 13-19 | No additional effect. |
| 20+ | The force of the blast propels the target towards the Moon Dragon. The target may take a free melee attack against the Moon Dragon at +1d to hit. |

Searching the bottom of the chasm takes hours. If the PCs make a careful search, they find the following: 117 pieces of rough smoky quartz worth 2 gp each and a stone tipped spear of rough-hewn black locust wood, a powerful magical artifact of the serpent-men that spontaneously self-enchanted after slaying its 111th primordial beast. The spear is +2 to hit and damage, and if the wielder holds it in both hands and concentrates, it points towards the nearest source of clean, fresh water. The spear also carries a curse: its owner gains slitted eyes, a forked tongue, and scaly skin over the course of several months.

Area 3-8 — The Workings: The passageway opens to a huge quarry pit. Looking over the edge, you see humans in ragged clothing toiling, some using pickaxes to chip stone out of the walls, some using carts and wheelbarrows to haul the pieces of white stone from the wall to the center of the pit.

In the center of the lower part of the quarry is a raised mound of gathered white boulders, on top of which is a huge patch of black fire. A kettle on a tripod is set over it, currently being stirred by a grizzled old man.

There are 23 captured Shudfolk here, including Myng Rudd, all working against their will. Only the fellow tending the witch liquor is chained; fear of the dragon is enough to keep the others at their work.



If the captives perceive that this is a rescue attempt, Lorvil Crobb (see Area 3-9) whistles a special whistle and the Shudfolk all grab whatever rocks or other weapons are at hand and prepare to fight for their freedom. They are zero-level Shudfolk but are prepared to throw rocks (+0, 1d3 damage) or swing pickaxes (total of 4 available pickaxes, 1d5 damage) to win their freedom.

If the PCs take the time to examine the quarry walls, they find ancient carvings left behind by the original imported slave laborers, the progenitors of modern Shudfolk. It takes months to study and interpret all of the carvings here, but the patient researcher can find glimpses of thousands of years of pre-Shudfolk history, and may discover one secret of immense import to the culture of the mountains: one series of carvings depicts a group of enslaved miners who, armed with nothing but their wits and determination, trick their Hsaal masters into causing the magical mishap that destroyed Luhsaal.

Along the south wall of the quarry is the shabby dwelling of the Shudfolk where they sleep and eat disgusting corn gruel during the brief periods of rest afforded to them.

Area 3-9 - The Spoilfire: *In the center of the enormous cavern is a low mound set with a pit of soot-blackened stones containing a weird fire, black and mostly smokeless. The fire makes obscene shadows, like a magic lantern show depicting the torments*

of hell. A tripod sits over the entire fire with a huge cast iron kettle hanging by a chain from the apex. A haggard man chained by his ankle to a large stone stands stirring the kettle, loudly cursing the Sovereign in a monotone.

This is the spoilfire Amos Hendershot uncovered many years ago. Modify the above description if the captives have already revolted.

The man stirring the kettle is Lorvil Crobb, a fisherman and odd jobber from Green Downs whom the changelings captured and forced into labor. He is grateful to be rescued and if asked about his cursing the Sovereign, he says he was forced to as a part of the un-holy recipe but tells his rescuers not to worry, he secretly had a toe crossed the entire time. Lorvil's small act of defiance was enough to ruin the charm, making the batch of A Nectar he is currently working on magically inert.

Permanently destroying a spoil is normally impossible, but this close to Star Notch on the cusp of Sovereignight, an adventurer may find a way to destroy the spoil forever. There are many ways this could conceivably be accomplished, with the most direct being a Divine Aid check (DC 25). A successful turn un-holy check (treat as a 10 HD creature with no chance to save) causes the spoil to go dormant for the turn duration. The judge must adjudicate how other methods the PCs may try work against the spoil.

Destroying the spoil sets off the following chain of events:

- There is a clap of thunder and a blast of the sounds of wailing souls, and terrible Anector himself appears over the dying spoil. Anector swears vengeance against the PCs and the Sovereign himself before sinking down to the Underworld, cussing and threatening the whole way. The destruction of his sacred spoil prevents him from wandering the Shudders for a year and a day.
- Any surviving changelings sense the destruction of their power and run to hide themselves on the land bridge, hoping to take their revenge against the PCs when they attempt to leave Hendershot farm.
- If the Hendershots are still alive, they snap out of their moonshine-induced fugue and realize that the changelings were never their natural children. They repent and pledge never to drink another drop of 'shine, and if left to their own devices eventually rebuild and restore Hendershot farm.
- An earthquake hits the quarry, causing all of Area 3 to begin to collapse. The PCs must flee before the cave in destroys them all, but the Sovereign holds back the final destruction until all the Shudfolk are able to escape.

Destroying the spoil earns every member of the party 3 Luck points and the eternal enmity of scheming Anector.

THE AFTERMATH



f the PCs fail and the changeling's plans are allowed to go on unchecked, then Anector's scheme bears its evil fruit. The special charm that has always protected Star Notch begins to fade. The dark creatures of the mountains, attracted by the spoil fire at the Henderson farm, begin a campaign of destruction that eventually leads to the death of the town.

If the PCs rescue Mazel and the other captured Shudfolk then they have saved Star Notch. A huge celebration is held with the adventurers as the guests of honor, although spirits are still a little dampened by the damage done to the Temple of the Blessed Sovereign. If the PCs either fix the building themselves somehow or pledge the treasure they found in the quarry for its eventual repair the judge should consider giving them a final Blessing from the Shudder Mountain (see Appendix B below). In addition, the PCs may learn a local folk magic rite, Gift of the Season, from a grateful citizen of Star Notch (See Appendix A).

If the PCs reunite Wilbur with Myng and Mazel, they earn the dog's eternal gratitude. At some point during the adventurer's travels when the chips are down, Wilbur and his pack of dog adventurers might show up to save the day.

Even if the PCs fail to destroy the spoil fire, terrible Anector plots his revenge against those who ruined his holiday fun. This could lead to more adventure than the heroes of Star Notch should like in the fullness of time.

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APPENDICES

A NECTAR FROM THE MOUNTAIN
SIX BUCKETS WATER FROM THE MOONSTONE WELL
6 HATFULS OF DANKBRIER (UTTINGS,
LEFT TO SEASON A WEEK ON THE TABLE
HEAT OVER DARK FIRE
STIR WHILE PICTURING THE LOOK ON THE FACES OF ENEMIES
WHEN THEY SEE YOU RICH AND RESPECTED
BRING TO BOIL, ADD SALT & COFFIN SPORES
ENOUGH TO KILL A MAN
LOOK OVER SPOILFIRE FOR A FULL NIGHT AND DAY,
STIRRING AROUND LEFT WHILE CUSING THE LIGHT
AND HE WHO BRINGS IT
RAT BLOOD TO TASTE, STIR FINAL TIME,
SPIT THRECE INTO THEREIN AND LET COOL COMPLETELY
BOTTLE IN GREEN CITY GLASS
AGE 1 WHOLE MOON CYCLE

A NECTAR RECIPE HANDOUT

APPENDIX A: NEW FOLK MAGIC RITES

Gift of the Season (DC 12): By spending a few hours making a new circlet holy symbol of the Sovereign, then placing it in a loved one's stocking on Sovereignnight's Eve, you grant the loved one who wears it a +3 on a single saving throw against any machination of the forces of evil that they might make any time in the next full year.

APPENDIX B: BLESSINGS FROM THE SHUDDER MOUNTAINS HANDOUT

At several places in the course of the adventure, the PCs may have an opportunity to glimpse a bit of the True Meaning of Sovereignnight (See p. 3 for details and suggestions). If this happens you can allow each player to scratch off one space on the handout. They can choose whatever un-scratched window they wish to when it is time for them to scratch.

The player earns whatever bit of the Sovereign's gratitude is revealed, with the extended definitions below. An especially generous player might find their way to giving their blessing to another member of their group who might could use

it more, which is better than fine. The scratch-off card is randomized, and results should not appear more than once, but just in case know that no character can receive any benefit more than once under any circumstances.

If you are playing *Came the Monsters of Midwinter* without the scratch-off handout you can simply roll on the table, being sure to eliminate specific blessings as they are rolled up so they can't be duplicated in a single game. Each blessing should only be given once per campaign.

Any modifiers and/or benefits are considered permanent unless the description indicates otherwise. Benefits that grant NPC allies (i.e., Loyal Animal or Friendly Stranger) don't disappear with the death of the ally (unless the PCs are the direct cause of their demise). Should an ally granted by this chart pass on to the great beyond, a replacement will eventually arrive, which like all friendships will likely bring with it both good and ill fortune in the fullness of time. Some of the blessings are situation specific (i.e., Devil Forgets Your Name or Friends in Low Places), and the PC may choose to "bank" these for later use.

The judge has final say, as always, about any specific details of blessings received.



Roll d% Result

1-2	Best on the Mountain: You become the best Shudfolk at one skill, gaining a bonus to that skill forever more as follows: a skill you already have (i.e., tracking for a character with the hunter background) = +1d. An unlikely skill (i.e., calligraphy for a character with the farmer background), the skill is considered trained with a +1 to skill checks. An extremely unlikely skill (i.e., suminagashi) is considered trained.
3-4	Bit O' Luck: You gain 3 points of spendable Luck that do not add to your Luck stat.
4-6	Bobcat Sharp: You gain +1 on Reflex saves.
7-8	Bright as Moonlight: You gain +1 Personality.
9-10	Cabin in the Woods: You gain a small cabin somewhere in the Shudder Mountains. This comes to you in legal and permanent fashion, the method of which can be worked out with the judge. This is a small, comfortable place with a well or nearby crick and enough land to put a crop down, should the new resident so choose.
11-12	Cat Feet: You gain +2 on any skill checks to hide or sneak.
13-14	Cougar Quick: You gain +3 on Initiative checks.
15-16	Devil Forgets Your Name: An enemy of your choosing manages to forget you exist. This can be used one time per character level, and can cause pursuers to give up, angry neighbors to call off feuds, or sworn enemies to give up their vengeance. The judge and player can work out the details, with the judge having final say.
17-18	Done Met Everybody: You know the name, family, and brief history of any local you meet.
19-20	Fell as the Mountain: You gain +1d on critical checks.
21-22	Fire on the Mountain: You gain +1 on spell checks or +1 Luck.
23-24	Fist like a Hammer: You gain +1 to hit and damage with unarmed strikes.
25-26	Fox in the Snow: You never leave tracks if you don't choose to. Creatures tracking you by scent have a -4 on any checks.
27-28	Friendly Stranger: You gain an ally from outside the Shudder Mountains. This can be a contact for information, a buyer or seller of strange goods, or even an occasional adventuring ally, details to be worked out between judge and player.

29-30	Friends in Low Places: One enemy you meet is secretly an old crony, and the two of you are inclined to work out any conflicts of interest without violence, with the details to be worked out between judge and player. Natural animals and demons are BANNED!
31-32	Gift of Gab: You gain an automatic new language (turns out you always spoke it but forgot), and an additional new language at every new level gained.
33-34	Hail to the Great King: You gain +1 on rolls for magical healing or +1 Luck.
35-36	Healed Up Nice: Up to one time per character level, you can choose to heal the effects of any otherwise permanent injury, curse, or corruption, by the Grace of the Sovereign.
37-38	Homespun Fortune: You gain 1 point of Luck that is considered to be added to your <i>starting</i> Luck. This can potentially benefit your Birth Augur, Lucky Weapon, and other qualities affected by your starting Luck.
39-40	Hummingbird Quick: You gain +1 Agility.
41-42	Hunter's Eye: You gain double range with any ranged weapon you fire with.
43-44	Know Your Crops: Any crops you plant yield twice as much as normal. Barring any unforeseen problems, your farm always prospers.
45-46	Lessons Lernt: You gain +1 XP on every encounter.
47-48	Little Birds: You automatically know all the local gossip. If there are rumors of monsters or evil-doings, it turns out you heard the story long before anyone else.
49-50	Loyal Animal: You gain the friendship of an animal companion, who you meet and instantly bond with. This can be a mount, guard animal, beast of burden, or other creature as worked out between the judge and player.
51-52	New Friend: You gain a Shudfolk ally. This could be a new information source, helpmate, comrade in arms, or whatever other kind of friend you wish, details to be worked out between the judge and player.
53-54	New Tool: The next creature of evil you face has a beneficial magic artifact, determined by the judge. If you defeat the creature, it's yours.
55-56	Ol' Reliable: You gain a +1 to hit with one specific weapon type of your choosing.
57-58	Old Dog, New Tricks: You gain a second profession, chosen with the judge's approval. You can use knowledge of that profession to gain trained skill checks, as if you had always known the skill.
59-60	Old-Time Tough: You gain +3 hit points.
61-62	Raise your Voice: You learn one of the Old Songs, either chosen by the judge or determined randomly.
63-64	Raised Right: You gain +1d on all Personality skill checks when dealing with Shudfolk.
65-66	Smart as Spring: You gain +1 Intelligence.
67-68	Soul Mate: You gain a new mutual romantic interest or best friend, with the judge and player working out the details. This cannot be with a monster or natural animal.
69-70	Sovereign's Blessing: You gain +1 AC.
71-72	Sovereign's Grace: You gain +1 to Willpower saves.
73-74	Sovereign's Light: You gain a +CL modifier to all attempts to turn un-holy, or +1 Luck.
75-76	Sovereign's Secret: Spellcasters gain a random 1 st level spell, others gain +1 Luck.
77-78	Sovereign's Shield: You gain a +1 on Fortitude saves.
79-80	Sovereignight Miracle: You can spend 1 point of Luck on an ally who failed a roll the body check, who returns to consciousness as if they had made their check with no Stamina penalty.
81-82	Strong as a Bear: You gain +1 Strength.
83-84	Struck it Rich: The next significant creature of evil you defeat has an extra 150+1d100 gp in their treasure hoard, beyond whatever other items they may have.
85-86	Swift as a Deer: You gain +10' movement speed.
87-88	The Touch: With a DC 13 Personality check you can calm even the angriest, most spooked, or hungriest natural animal.
89-90	Tough as Winter: You gain +1 Stamina.
91-92	Walked the Shudders: You can never become lost while in the Shudder Mountains, and you always know which way is north.
93-94	Wildcat Scrapper: You gain +1 base attack or +1d on your Mighty Deed of Arms roll that increases as you level.
95-96	Word of the Crow: You learn a folk magic rite, either determined randomly or chosen by the judge.
97-100	Roll again, choose, invent your own, or get some more pie.



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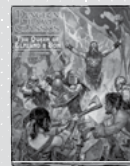
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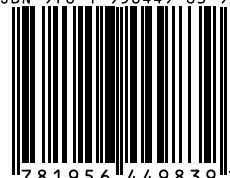
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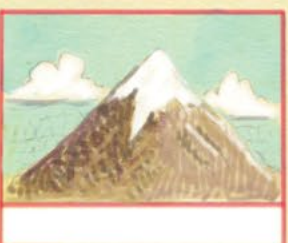
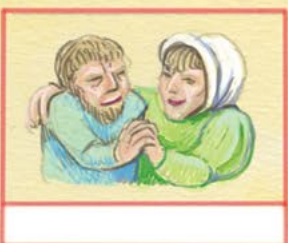
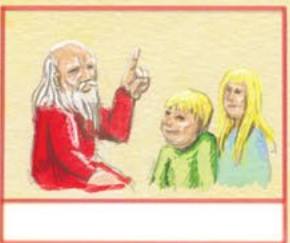
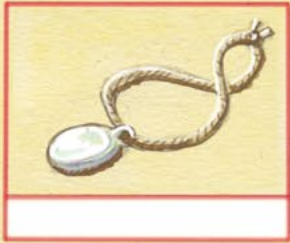
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BLESSINGS FROM THE SHUDDER MOUNTAINS



The Sovereign's Blessings be upon all y'all!

At several places in the course of *Came the Monsters of Midwinter* the PCs may have an opportunity to glimpse a bit of the True Meaning of Sovereignight. If this happens you can allow each player to scratch off one space on the handout.

The player earns whatever bit of the Sovereign's gratitude the scratching reveals. The extended explanations of the blessings are included in the adventure. An especially generous player might decide to gift their pick to another member of their group who could use it more, which is better than fine.

The scratch-off card is randomized, and results should not appear more than once, but just in case know that no character can receive any benefit more than once under any circumstance. You will only need one Blessings from the Shudder Mountain calendar per adventure — the extras are so you can replay the module. If you run out of scratch-off handouts, no worries! You can use the table provided in Appendix 2 of the adventure, randomly rolling the Blessing result and re-rolling so that the party only ever gets any given result once.

Any modifiers and/ or benefits are considered permanent unless the description indicates otherwise. Benefits that grant NPC allies (i.e. Loyal Animal or Friendly Stranger) don't disappear with the death of the ally (unless the PCs are the direct cause of their demise). Should an ally granted by this chart pass on to the great beyond a replacement will eventually arrive, which like all friendships will likely bring with it both good and ill fortune in the fullness of time.

The Judge has final say, as always, about any specific details of Blessings received.

