

**Background**

Tsunagral, an old and powerful summoner, called up a water elemental. But the elemental escaped her control and subsumed her, trapping her within its iced body. The elemental keeps the summoner alive but embedded, feeding off her power to work magics of its own. It escaped to a mountaintop where it found a tiny clan of Neanderthals on the brink of perishing. These seven primitives revere the elemental as their god-queen, and in return it has drawn on Tsunagral's magic to give the Neanderthals special powers. The tribe now oppresses the village of Culamonn at the base of the mountain, and it is that community which beseeches you to end to the False Queen's tyranny.

Characters

The seven Neanderthal champions and other important characters.

Mother Bear: She can transform into a large grizzly bear. Changing to and from a bear takes one turn, but has no other cost. Any damage taken as a bear is halved upon returning to Neanderthal form (e.g., 20 ST lost as a bear becomes 10 ST lost as a Neanderthal). Her Neanderthal stats are ST 14, DX 10, IQ 7, MA 10. Her bear stats are ST 28, DX 11, IQ 6, MA 8; 2d+2 dmg, 2 pt fur armor.

Father Frost: He can blast a spray of ice from his hands. This works the same as the *Lightning* spell, at the same cost and inflicting the same damage. ST 15, DX 11, IQ 7, MA 10.

Son of Peace: He can cast *Break Weapon* for 1 ST on any turn. Otherwise uses a bola to incapacitate foes. ST 10, DX 12, IQ 7, MA 10.

Daughter of Torment: She can summon a swarm of 2d nuisance creatures (rats, bats, wasps, etc) at a cost of 1 ST on any turn. These will attack only those she wishes. ST 12, DX 10, IQ 7, MA 10. Wields a knapped flint ax (war ax).

The Three Sisters: Before she attacks she appears to split into three identical women. Two of them are *Illusions*, as per the spell. They cost her nothing to create, but she can only summon them once per day. ST 10, DX 13, IQ 7, MA 10. Wields a bone blade (rapier).

Swift Brother: He moves at double speed. Not only is his MA doubled, but he gets a second action at the end of the turn. ST 11, DX 11, IQ 7, MA 20. Wields a stone-headed wooden cudgel (mace).

Grandfather Says: He has been given Voice Of Command, a weaker form of Word Of Command that has a 4/IQ saving throw. He knows several words, including *Believe*, *Kill*, *Kneel* (fall to one's knees, MA reduced to 2), and *Praise* (one must genuflect, sing songs of adoration, and the like). Each use of the voice costs him 2 ST. ST 9, DX 11, IQ 7, MA 10. Wields a staff.

The False Queen: Water (ice) elemental. ST 30, DX 12, IQ 8, MA 10.

Tsunagral: Elementalist trapped inside the elemental. ST 11, DX 12, IQ 16, MA 10. *Create/Destroy Elemental, 7-Hex Fire, Staff IV*

Choska: Hetman of Culamonn. ST 11, DX 10, IQ 12, MA 10.

The False Queen has granted her champions their powers in a terrible way - she has extracted their hearts and frozen each inside a cocoon of ice, much as she has entrapped the wizard within herself. Then she enchanted these hearts so that they sustain and give powers to her champions. Destroying a heart will take away the champion's powers, but will also kill them. Defeating the False Queen will do the same.

The Scenario

Choska, the hetman of Culamonn village, says that it is time for another "white harvest". This is when the villagers carry offerings up

the mountain to the False Queen and her champions. He says that the players can come along, and provided they don't do anything suspicious until they strike, they should be overlooked. They will have to disguise themselves with peasant cloaks and hoods. Choska will say only that the champions have great and terrible powers, but will not mention their names or detail those powers, as he superstitiously believes that to do so will call them down upon the village. Once he joins the siege of the ice palace with the players, he will then speak the champion's names and say something about their powers, though again in a reverent and superstitious way ("Son of Peace makes warriors set down arms", "Grandfather Says commands with a voice of thunder", etc).

Inside the palace, the players are most likely to encounter Son of Peace and The Three Sisters together. Similarly they will probably run into Daughter of Torment and Swift Brother together. Grandfather Says will be waiting in or near the throne room, along with the False Queen. He will try to incapacitate the party so that the False Queen can dispatch them. The GM can run these encounters as four 2-against-the-party brawls in and around the palace, or the champions can tackle the players in other groupings. If the players are doing too well against a couple champions, have others run to their aid. Conversely, if the players are getting badly beaten by the early encounters, space out the remaining ones.

The Map

The hexes are dungeon scale (one map hex = one combat megahex). Black hexes are ice walls, white hexes are impassible ice and mountain. Light grey hexes are ground hexes open to the sky. Darker grey hexes are under the roof of the ice palace.

The townspeople and party enter the open courtyard (**A**) from the two mountain trails at the bottom. Mother Bear (in Neanderthal form), Father Frost, and Son of Peace are here. This is where the townspeople will hand over their offerings. Today however, the False Queen is also demanding a sacrifice. Mother Bear will seize one of the youths from the townsfolk group and begin taking them inside. The party can attack now, or try to rescue the youth later in the adventure. Once combat begins the townsfolk will flee the way they came, except for hetman Choska, who will stay with the players. He is not a fighter, but will identify the champions for the players and help guide the party.

A crystalline mound of ice (**B**) has numerous skulls from previous sacrifices frozen within. There is a modest cooking fire at (**C**), too weak to melt the surrounding ice. The main living and sleeping area for the Neanderthals (**D**) has piles of furs and simple totems. There is a good chance that the younger champions are in this area, if they haven't already joined the fray. The back area (**E**) is where they keep their weapons when not being carried, plus a chest (**\$**) with trinkets taken from sacrifices. The chest contains significant valuables, some of which the townsfolk would dearly love to have back.

The antechamber (**F**) has a heroic frieze carved in the ice wall, depicting the Neanderthal champions vanquishing many foes. The cleansing room (**G**) has a basin pool of flowing icy-cold water that one is expected to wash in before coming to the False Queen. The forecourt room (**H**) has stone benches and a bearskin rug, and is often where Grandfather Says waits for orders from the False Queen.

The throne room (**K**) is where the False Queen can typically be found sitting upon her throne of ice (**T**). Columns of ice hold up the vaulted ceiling here. If the players didn't rescue the taken youth earlier, the youth is now tied to the column wall (**M**). Behind the throne a hallway leads to the heart room (**N**). Here the hearts (*****) of the seven champions are frozen in ice cocoons along the back wall.

