

Longwinter

Visitor's Book



Luka Rejec

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The fine typohunters of the
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thousand-fold.

—Luka, *Seoul, November 2018 to
November 2020*

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Luka Rejec



“Autumn, our poor garden is all falling down, the yellowed leaves are flying in the wind.

epigraph by A. N. Tolstoy in
P. I. Tchaikovsky –
October: Autumn Song
(*The Seasons*, Op. 37a)

Winters are long and beautiful in the high valleys of Brezim.

Longwinter is the two-book RPG sandbox of a mountainous winter country on the cusp between the old and the new, the edge of modernity, the stepping stone of a new age. New mines and industries are opened, light breaks the gloom of ancient ruins, change comes to sweep away the cobwebs of history. But cobwebs do not go easily into the dust.

This book contains common knowledge and mechanics for all the players: heroes and referees. The *Referee's Book* contains tools for running *Longwinter* at the table.

The setting is profoundly close to that of *Witchburner*.





This one is for the cloaks of elvenkind
one snowy December in Rut.

This one is for the heroes who ran there.

Contents

Fourth Wall Fracture	7	Chodey	41	Game Rules	67
Why Are You Here?	8	Kastey	42	Back to the Game	68
Welcome to the Barony of Brezim	11	Pey Dimna	43	Setting Recap	69
Land & History	13	Pey Holzey	44	Time	70
Federation	14	Pey Jibbey	45	Time in the game	70
Empire	14	Pey Tirzley	46	Distance is Time	71
Republic	15	Ta Krasney	47	Space	72
Kingdom	15	Mountains and Forests	48	Paths	72
Older Times	16	Branberg	48	Encounters	74
Oldest Times	16	Dragonberg	49	Encounters of Summer and Autumn	75
Government & People	17	Dark Forest	49	Terrain & Weather	76
The Baron	17	Giantsfist	50	Encounter Mishaps	78
The Vizier	18	Grayberg	50	Survival and Inventory	80
The Mayors	18	Icegraben	51	Resources	80
The Federal Faith	19	Motherberg	51	Rest and Recovery	82
The Baronial Faith	19	Pearlberg	52	Short Rest	82
Baronials	20	Princessberg	52	Long Rest	82
Oldsettlers	21	Riblingberg	53	Resting Conditions	83
Wolffolk	22	Spargleberg	53	The Cold	84
Old Architects	23	Twinberg	54	Failing	
Economy & Society	24	Whitecrown	54	the Cold Check	85
Mining	24	Wingleberg	55	Hurt	85
Lumber	24	Wolfsberg	55	An Inventory Sheet	86
Water	25	Rivers and Lakes	56	Barony Buy & Sell	87
Wool	25	Cherenka River	56	Vikuna's Den	88
Manufacture	25	Derishka Stream	56	Grand Open	88
Powerful Few	26	Dimnaya Stream	57	Sporting Supplement	91
Powerless		Draga Stream	57	Hunting in Brezim	91
Multitudes	27	Dvogroya River	58	Guns and Weapons	92
Culture & Faith	28	Grandfather's Icefield	58	You Could Be Here	95
Three Spirits in a Human	28	Hodovoya River	59	The Crossing	96
Polite Address	28	Jibbya Stream	59	Appendix: Music of Longwinter	100
Local Colour	29	Krasna River	60		
The Three Towns	34	Malya Stream	60		
Gomily	34	Riblinza River	61		
Rudvey	36	Rorka River	61		
Vreley	38	Spine Icefield	62		
The Eight Villages	40	Rushka River	62		
Belna	40	Rushka River	62		
		Starogray Lake	63		
		Tirzla Stream	63		
		Toplaya River	64		
		Toplovoy Lake	64		
		Zadvoya Stream	65		

Fourth Wall Fracture

Longwinter is not a setting of canon. It glides uneasily between unreliable, if earnest, narrative, and outright satire. Characters and even tables casually contradict one another. Dissonance is a given. There is no one right way to imagine or play it. You and your friends at the gaming table will take this world, run with it, reinvent it, recreate it, and quite possibly break it. And that is good.

—Luka Rejec, December 2019

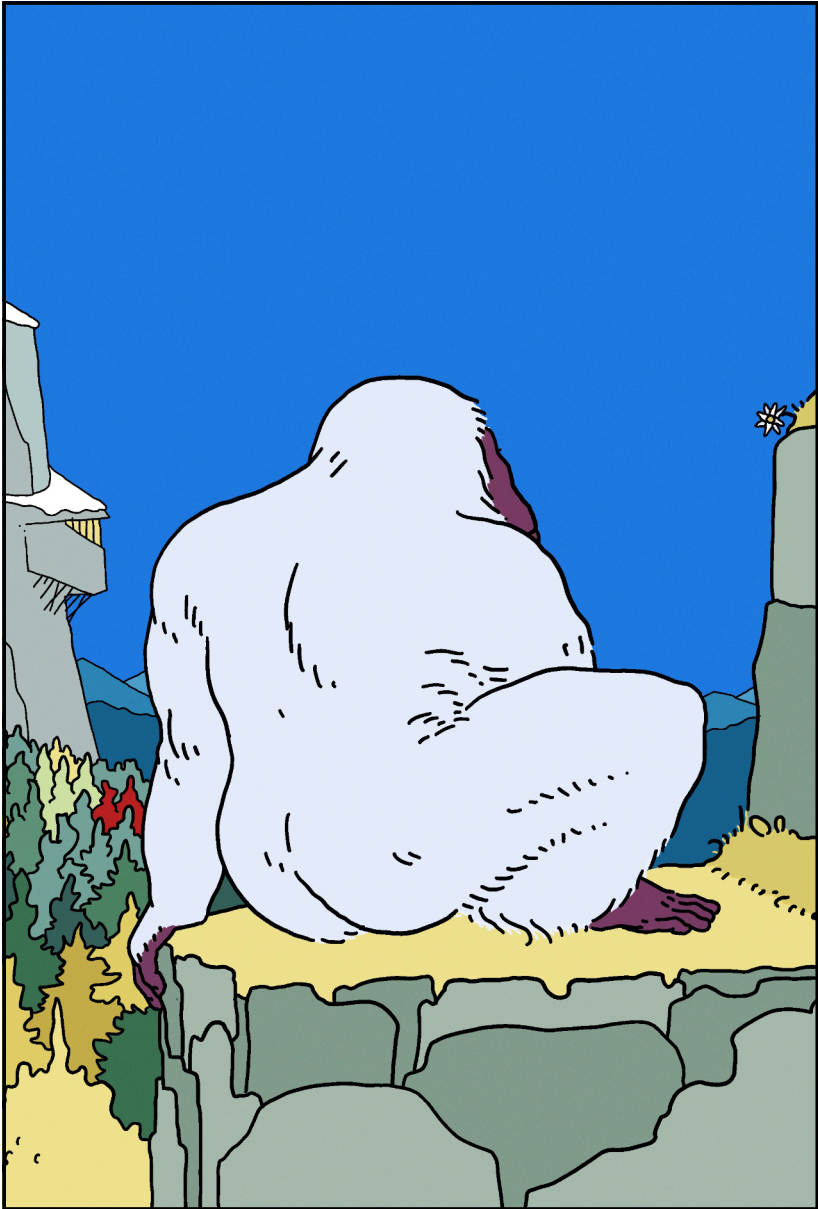


Why Are You Here?

It may be cold here in Brezim. It may seem dull so far from the bright city lights. Yet still, the gentle traveller will find many a reason to visit.

Reasons To Visit (d10)

- 1 Viktor Bluntstone – a cousin – purchased a chalet and found an unusual old laboratory in the basement – a week later, a letter arrived stating that he was “missing in unusual circumstances.”
- 2 Ermelina Redwater – an aunt – has decided to purchase a townhouse on the Vreley promenade and needs someone to seal the deal for her.
- 3 Runo Whitetower – a great-uncle – has died and deeded his holdings in Ta Krasney to “the first of my ungrateful brood to bring this letter to the mayoral office in Rudvey.”
- 4 Sigma Delmar – a proletarian researcher of old architect ruins – has secured funding from the Whiteyes Institute to secure an undisturbed bunker on the Dimnaya stream. She needs spelunkers and specialists.
- 5 Obol Fastfoot – a childhood friend, now a City investor – has purchased the deeds to several foreclosed holdings in Pey Holzey. He needs someone to go and explain to the yokels what that means.
- 6 Zena Blackwolf – a rich merchant – is convinced that her husband’s “botanical research vacation” in Pey Dimna is actually a secret tryst with a famous young actress who is known to spend winter there.
- 7 Andrey Resttree – a nephew – has been diagnosed with a rare respiratory condition and his parents require somebody to accompany him to the Painted Tree in Vreley for treatment.
- 8 Lena Riflesteel – a famous illusionist – is recording a crystal-film about the Snow Apes of Brezim. She needs mountaineers and adventurers.
- 9 The heroes – as a reward – received a month’s stay at the fabled Painted Tree spa in Vreley. This will be an opportunity to rest, recuperate, move the clock forward, and do a bit of safe carousing.
- 10 Igor Ironwood – the son of an Eastern City count – was “allegedly” involved in a ridiculous scandal and sent to Gomiliy for a few months to discreetly stay out of trouble. Somebody needs to keep him there.



A snow ape in its natural habitat.



Gomiliy from Solniy Shoulder

Welcome to the Barony of Brezim

“Brezim. The name conjures visions of birch forests and dappled deer, bucolic baronials and alpine pastures, thick pine and ginkgogin forests, hot springs and glittering icefields. Yet the barony also has much more modern conveniences to offer the gentle visitor.

The barony of Brezim is changing fast under the progressive democratic leadership of the good baron Soren Greencorner II. The reopening of the fabled Mines of King Rudvik is just the most visible sign of the province's booming economy, and plans are afoot to build an ironway to link the valley with the Eastern and Western Cities.

Surely now is the perfect time to visit Brezim, a safe and prosperous valley, yet still offering a wealth of charming vistas and quaint traditions to amuse even the most jaded palate.

—*Brezim, Barony of Snow, Spas, and Industry. Gentle Visitor's Guides*,
Zuleiman Publishing, Second Federated Edition (new year 120)





Legend

- towns
- hamlet, village
- peak, high peak
- travel time in watches



Land & History

† rock and wood and water †

The Barony of Brezim is a mountainous province of a larger world. It is a world that has risen and fallen and risen again, like an ark sailing the seas of time and chaos. History mostly passed the mountains by. There are too few people there. The bones are too strong. The rocks are too high.

More than the acts of kings, it is the will of nature that shapes Brezim. To the north and west of Brezim the vast sweep of the Unwalk Mountains claws at the sky, a wall between South and North. The high and treacherous Rushka pass hardly bridges this divide, before the Motherberg Massif reasserts the dominance of the old nature gods. The east is dominated by the Dark Forest, a highland jungle of lumpen oak and shrouding pine, marbled with birchen bogs and heavy with moss. It is the river Rushka that opens the way for people, if not always civilization, to crawl among these forbidding ramparts of the wild.

But still, history lapped against Brezim, high tides brought invaders and traders, low tides let the old, eternal truths crawl back from beneath rock and tree. Today the federal order has broken the cycles of the past and the current civilization will never decline again.



Federation

† today †

The Common Congress of Cities and Provinces is strong and stable, bound by the cunning of the bourgeoisie, the traditions of the nobles, the dynamism of the industrialists, and the passions of the working classes. This order will last a thousand years.

The banks and the industrialists from the great cities come to invest and exploit the land. Local goodfolk prosper, but discontent stirs among the lowest type of baronial and among the oldfolk. Fortunately, the new money also brings better wages and firearms for the baronial guards companies keeping the peace.

Empire

† more than a generation ago †

A single autocrat ruled the civilization. While the first autocrats restored peace after the excesses of the Republic and its wars, the world was too old and too wise to rest long in an absolute ruler's hands. Repression mounted and eventually exploded in the Trenchant Wars.

War then came also to Brezim. Today's gap-toothed elders are the conscripts and survivors of that time when the great wagons of destruction were dragged up mountains and down rivers, to burn in that devastation of youth.

Republic

† *barely remembered by the eldest* †

The new classes overthrew the monarchs, taking civilization into their own hands. Alas, they were unschooled in administration and restraint, and their fervour led them too far. After initial success, the Republic and the remaining Royals destroyed each other in the bloody Leveller Wars.

Many baronials came to Brezim in those days, refugees from the wars and privation, and many royalists seeking a redoubt with the baron Greencorners.



Kingdom

† *history books and imagination* †

Once upon a time, there had been a single good kingdom, united under a single good ruler. Alas, humans are animals, and animal morality cannot be counted on. The descendants of the good ruler grew fat, lazy, greedy, and vicious. As the fringes strained forward, the centre pulled them back. In the end, the leash snapped and the Newfolk Revolution engulfed civilization.

The first baron Ivan brought a company of good folk to Brezim in the time of the last good king, creating a beacon of order and nobility that survived even the privations of revolution.

Older Times

† centuries past † thick with exaggeration †

There were other civilizations in the past, other people, other ways of life. Though we see the remains, their builders are gone now, and we can only wonder where. All else is amateur archaeology and armchair assumption.

- 1 The Green Flag Rebellion of the centaurs was the last spasm of the steppe peoples against the ordered might of civilization.
- 2 The Success Wars devastated civilization as the three great generals fought each other after defeating the anti-civilization.
- 3 The Night of Tight Nooses saw the new gods die and the old gods reassert the primacy of natural ways.
- 4 In the Hungry Days the monasteries were cracked open and their marrow used to feed the commonfolk.
- 5 Division Bell Prophets split civilization between old gods and new.
- 6 In the time of the Awakening Libraries scholars emerged from beneath the frozen mountains to restore vigour to civilization.

Oldest Times

† the forgotten past † legend and myth †

A hundred stories are told of these times, different in every town and village. Common folk believe them fact, though scholars will always disagree.

- 1 In the Era of Giants, great human-shaped beasts built cities of cloud and iron, while true people hid like mice in the undergrowth.
- 2 In the Silent Era, the gods turned away, and monsters crawled from the corners of the world to drown the wizards and priests in their hubris.
- 3 When the Turning Wizards promised life everlasting, they turned the world into a shadow realm of soulless bodies labouring to keep the wizards' palaces lit and warm.
- 4 In the Forging Era, the dark took away another half of all humans. Alas, the gates of the Former Afterlife were closed and those dead were lost.
- 5 In the Purification Era, the light took half the folk into the Former Afterlife.
- 6 When the Hot Winds blew, crops wilted and whole cities died under the Green Sun.

Government & People

† power † masses † subversion †

Brezim is officially a congressional democratic province of the Federation. In practice it is a hodge-podge of local custom, traditional landed nobility, wealthy bourgeoisie, imperial orthodoxy, rising industrialists, exploited workers, and oppressed peasants. As are most provinces of the Federation.



The Baron

† democratic autocracy †

With the old titles abolished after the Trenchant wars, the baron is *de jure* a private citizen. However, he remains the largest landholder in Brezim, retains control of the Barony Mining Corporation, the largest employer in the valley, and has been elected Governor of Brezim Province by a landslide at every provincial election since the establishment of fraternal suffrage. This may strike the astute observer as somewhat corrupt.

Fortunately, the sixth baron Soren Greencorner II is a courteous and melancholy man, always willing to listen to the council of his vizier and the three mayors.



The Vizier

† *federal representative* †

Viziers are elite civil servants of the Federation, among the best-educated and best-compensated of the betterfolk. Most are the second and third children of wealthy federal families who could afford to reach the lowest rungs of the civil service. This may strike the astute observer as somewhat unfair.

Fortunately, Ibrahima Falconsbrood, the vizier of Brezim, is a cosmopolitan well-travelled woman, whose charm and kindness compensate for her profiteering from local tax collection, civil guard, and judiciary.



The Mayors

† *bourgeois plutocrats* †

It is in the towns and cities of the Federation that the modern meritocracy is most visible. After all, nothing buys votes as effectively as promises, and no promise is better than cold hard cash.

Fortunately, Brezim's mayors exhibit neither excessive cruelty nor incompetence, kept in line as they are by the wealth of the baron and the greed of the vizier.



The Federal Faith

† *organized witchery* †

A country is merely a territory if its citizens do not believe that together they are part of something grand and good. In the Federation, it is the organic and adaptable Imperial Faith that nourishes this narrative of humanity as the fulcrum between the divine and the natural through the cultivation of civilization. It adopts local beliefs and welds them to the root of law and order.

Sadly in Brezim the orthodoxy is weak. The witch-bishop Simon the Wizard is poorly supported by the vizier and mayors.



The Baronial Faith

† *disorganized witchery* †

In remote places, it is only natural for the natives to invent new beliefs and improvise old ones to fit their needs. So it is in Brezim where both baronials and oldsettlers reach for rude and ready answers when faced by the looming might of mountains and woods and waters.

Does this make the baronial faith, the old faith, a powerful force in Brezim? No. It is as fragmented as the terrain, with one witch helping a banker while another helps an oldsettler serf.



Baronials

† *goodfolk* † *citizens* †

The civilized inhabitants of the barony of Brezim, who restored many of the old ruins and brought wealth and culture back to the valleys under the Motherberg.

Or perhaps just the richer and luckier class of provincial citizen.

Stories of the Baronials (d10)

- 1 Their ancestors were the lost legion of Adam Goldenmouth.
- 2 They were stranded in the Sea of Grass after the Centaur Khan destroyed the twin dragons.
- 3 They are common miners, woodsmen, and shepherds with pretensions beyond their class.
- 4 They are proud of their freedoms and willing to defend them to a man.
- 5 They are a fractious lot and the only people they hate more than each other are outsiders.
- 6 They do not bow to their rulers and drown them if they fail to bring the blessings of the gods.
- 7 They have worshipped their old gods since before the Federation, before the Empire, before the Republic, before the Kingdom.
- 8 Lacking gold and industry their lands are poor and for many years they sent their sons away to serve as merchants and mercenaries.
- 9 They know how to whisper to trees and plants, making them grow in strange or useful shapes.
- 10 Their "nobles" are all nouveau riche upstarts.



Oldsettlers

† *landfolk* † *residents* †

The pre-civilized inhabitants of Brezim, who dwelled in rude dugouts and subsisted as impoverished gardeners and hunters. They were dying out before the baronials arrived. Still, since then many have adapted to the higher culture of the civilized peoples, adopting modern dress, dialect, and habits.

Or perhaps just the poorer sort of provincial peasant.

Stories of the Oldsettlers (d10)

- 1 The baronials know that the oldsettlers are less intelligent than them and incapable of true civilizations.
- 2 The oldsettlers never tell the truth to the baronials.
- 3 The oldsettlers are nearly extinct. Serfdom has saved those who are civilized enough to contribute to the new federal order.
- 4 Many oldsettlers remain, submerged within the baronial population, emigrated to the cities, and living within the deep woods.
- 5 The oldsettler shamans could walk with the forest spirits and take the shapes of beasts and birds.
- 6 There are still oldsettler shamans and priests and witches, hidden among the free baronials.
- 7 The oldsettlers are the descendants of the Purification Era survivors who hid in the tunnels and time machines.
- 8 The oldsettlers are newcomers to the federal lands who arrived after the Dragonbreath Plagues.
- 9 The oldsettlers and the baronials are the exact same people, the only difference is who they supported during the Revolution.
- 10 All oldsettlers are incorrigibly lazy, that's why they're not fit to own land.



Wolffolk

† skintakers † outlaws †

Monstrous savages, born of oldsettlers gone feral and wild, they are more beast than human. Some still exist in the Dark Forest and the deepest tortured valleys, but bounties have thinned their bestial packs.

Or perhaps they are the sort of thing the deep wild always breeds, taking the lost and the exiled and making them strange and differently human.

Stories of the Wolffolk (d10)

- 1 There is no difference between wolffolk and oldsettlers; every oldsettler reverts if let off their leash.
- 2 They are the product of a curse or blessing of the old gods of rock and wood and water.
- 3 They can speak to wolves and bears and foxes.
- 4 They do not really think the way that humans do: they are beasts of instinct and savagery.
- 5 They can turn into wild, hairy creatures, similar to two-legged canines.
- 6 They eat the flesh of humans, which gives them monstrous strength.
- 7 They flay their victims and wear their skins to pass in normal society.
- 8 They hibernate in deep caves under the hills after eating. That's why they're so hard to root out.
- 9 They have a secret city beyond Wolfsberg.
- 10 They are infectious, spreading their disease through ticks and lice, spreading dreams of moon and tasty mice.



Old Architects

† spiral square culture † ancient visitors †

The wondrously accomplished builders of many livingstone and everglass ruins in Brezim and the wider area. Distinctive spiralling rectangular patterns cover their remains, reflecting a ponderous obsession with the interplay of the organic and the mechanic. They are extinct.

Perhaps they were not even human? Aliens maybe?

Stories of the Old Architects (d10)

- 1 They could whisper stone into motion, making it flow like honey.
- 2 They knew how to build on the ghost of ground now gone.
- 3 Their hands had six fingers.
- 4 Their mouths had no teeth and they only drank juices and soups.
- 5 They had abandoned their humanity to escape the Purification.
- 6 They knew how to knit living creatures into stone and earth.
- 7 They tried to challenge the gods and failed.
- 8 They had built flying chariots and walking skyscrapers.
- 9 They lived on the blood of humans, parasites on the body politic.
- 10 They had sacrificed their health and wealth to build vaults to survive the Purification. All for nought: their hubris undid them still.

Economy & Society

† growth † degradation †

Brezim's curses are rock, wood, and water. Earthquakes and landslides threaten oblivion. Verdant nature chokes civilization and breeds wolffolk. Water floods and freezes.

But these curses are also its strengths.

Mining

† capitalists † miners † factories † toxic tailings †

The upthrust mountains and the deep valleys expose the ores and minerals that fuel the Federation. Coal and iron from Rudvey are the engines of Brezim's development today. Deposits of silver and copper, mercury and marble, asbestos and lead show promise for growth tomorrow.



Lumber

† landlords † lumberjacks † sawmills † deforestation †

Great swathes of old-growth oak and pine, fir and larch, deck the slopes and plateaus of Brezim. A nigh-inexhaustible resource for carpentry, construction, and fuel.

Water

† investors † local peasants † dams † pollution †

Healing thermal springs draw the rich and poorly to Vreley, certainly, but that is not the only advantage. The many rivers and streams, once damned, drive mills and with investment, the great turbine golems that will power entire factories.

Wool

† landlords † farmers † shepherds † erosion †

The heavy rainfall in Brezim ensures fertile soils and perfect conditions for fast-growing grasses. Once the higher slopes are cleared, the large baronial gentry estates make the profitable expansion of the wool and dairy industries a given.

Manufacture

† industrialists † labourers † migration †

Raw materials and water power make Brezim an appealing place for investors keen on new factories. Alas, the local population is too few to staff them all, so the call must go out to landless residents from overcrowded provinces. Opportunity calls! The valleys of Brezim will soon bristle with new villages, where an honest day's labour will buy an honest day's food at the company store.



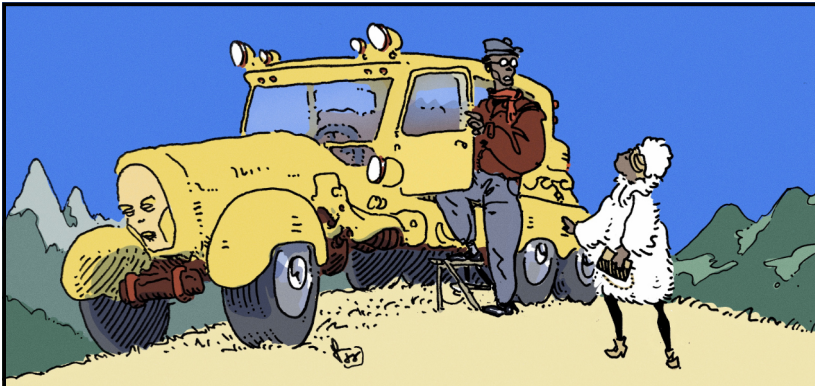
Powerful Few

† nobility † bourgeoisie † industrialists † betterfolk †

They call themselves by different names, they affect different styles and ambitions, but one thing still unites them: they have power and fear to lose it.

Stories of the Powerful (d10)

- 1 This will be a fine new school. It will teach the poor letters and discipline and obedience and how to work in the factories.
- 2 This unpromising ground will be a new village, far from squalor, where employees will focus on their work (and shop at the company store).
- 3 This wasteland of huts and gardens will become a beautiful park. It will inspire poets and gentle visitors.
- 4 This swamp will be drained and filled, the foul vapours stopped. It will become a plantation.
- 5 This wild forest will be tamed and made fruitful. The trees numbered and ordered. The outlaws and wolffolk driven out.
- 6 This slum will be made modern, the streets wide and fair, the houses gentler and finer.
- 7 This old castle will become a barrack for guards who will protect the citizenry from ungrateful, thieving lowfolk.
- 8 This festival will fill the townspeople's bellies with food and their hearts with love. It will be grand.
- 9 This newspaper will educate the masses and make them love us better.
- 10 This road will make export easier. And moving guards faster.



Powerless Multitudes

† labourers † peasants † serfs † outlaws † lowfolk †

They are called many names, and it is easy to dismiss them. Unwashed because hot water is a luxury, unread because books will not feed a child, unwell because cleanliness is next to wealthiness. One thing still unites them: they have lives, but do not fear to lose them.

Stories of the Powerless (d10)

- 1 We shall run away to the woods, become like beasts if need be.
- 2 We will find solace in this cult, for it listens to us.
- 3 This printing press will be ours, and with it we shall set ourselves free.
- 4 We must teach one another, for the masters teach us nothing useful.
- 5 We train in the hidden places in solidarity, to resist the owners.
- 6 Drink and death are the only ways out, what else is there?
- 7 When war looms, they praise us; when peace reigns, they abase us.
- 8 Beneath this neighbourhood we have built a labyrinth for our resistance.
- 9 We abhor crimes against one's fellow human, but the lords are no fellow humans of us. Let us shelter those who fight for us.
- 10 Change is coming. It whispers on the wind and on the wires. Only the rich are so deaf they do not hear.



Culture & Faith

† piety † ambition † desperation †

Three Spirits in a Human

† leits † lords † ladies †

The baronials of Brezim love the number three. Just as it is a land of rock and wood and water, it is also a land beholden to the three avatars. They believe that every human also has three spirits, but disagree quite how this ties together.

The dominant spirit sets a person's dress and tongue and role. Thus they show respect by calling some people leits, others lords, yet others ladies. This confounds some visitors and delights others.

However, they rarely show the same respect to oldsettlers or wolffolk; humans whom they sometimes deem barely people.

Polite Address

† they † you † we †

A baronial's identity comes from their birth and their wealth, whence they come from, and where they are headed on the great wheel of status and position.

A gentle traveller will address those of the highest status in the third person, as they, not speaking directly at them. After a series of platitudes and flatteries, they may address someone of equal status by their title and, eventually, possibly even by their name. Most outsiders will have a guide to address the lower orders for them. When this is not the case, a visitor may refer to inferiors simply with we, assuming them as part of their own body social.

Are the oldsettlers fine with this? The betterfolk would say yes, but one need not believe they know what they say.

Local Colour

† *cosiness* † *charm* † *terror* †

The visitor will discover many charming customs and old beliefs current among the baronials of Brezim. The famed ethnologist Irshiy Wetfoot, PhD, of the Institute of Popular Beliefs at the University of Sunrise, has made it his life's work to record these cultural gems.

Bonfire Beds

The oldfolk build them on exposed ridges at solstices for the **Firebringer**, avatar of sun and sky. They celebrate this dangerous and loving deity by jumping through flames and walking across coals. The ritual brings virility.

Buckwheat Brick

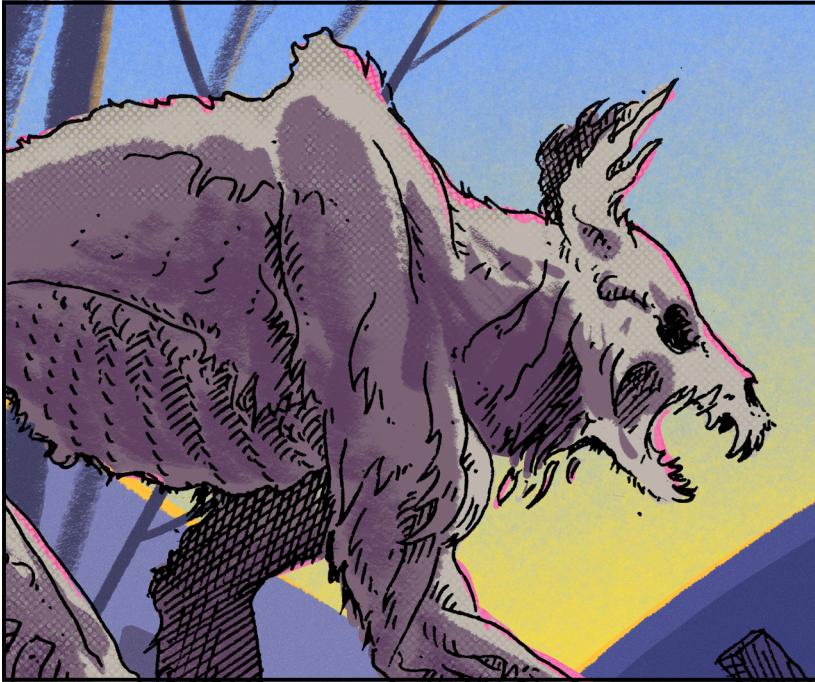
Common folk place a small brick made with buckwheat and stamped with the plum sigil of **Saint Cleareyes** near their granaries to chase away vermin. These days schoolchildren place folded paper prayers under the bricks before exams to partake of the prophet's enlightenment.

Clay Seneschals

These effigies may be as large as a bear or as small as a pig. Farmers and herdsmen fill them with grain and blood and alcohol and set them up on hillsides overlooking their fields to propitiate **Earthbeater**, avatar of crops and earth. On the equinoxes, they light cooking fires and feed the effigies polenta and sausages and beer. Prayers to this nurturing deity ward off its destroying aspect.

Copper Disc

Copper discs hang above every fireplace that can afford one. They please the **Green Sun**, the child of the Firebringer and the Earthbeater. The Green Sun is an ambiguous deity, the creator and destroyer of humanity. Until a copper disc acquires a green patina, prayers are offered every sunset to protect the house from its wrath.



Fat Bear

Chubby wooden bears holding hives dripping with honey, bowls of stew, and stone mugs of beer stand on plinths at crossroads. They are made to appease **Hollowfear**. The Famine Bear is the manifestation of the grey morality of hunger, the god of cannibals. Placing a nut or berry at the plinth ensures good digestion.

Glass Flowers

A popular window decoration with oldfolk and baronials alike, the glittering glass ornaments please **Winterwhite** and show her that she needs not bring too much snow and ice next winter. Lady Deadfingers is the avatar of ice and death, a dangerous god and bringer of hunger. Praying and peeking through a glass flower brings visions.

Golden Mushroom Locketts

Some baronials are partial to **Doctor Love**, the city god of the Eastern and Western Cities, an ambiguous deity of growth, love, and rebirth. To others, the mushroom only confirms Doctor Love as an avatar of temptation and a denier of old provincial truths. The golden mushroom, also known crudely as the shiny treecock, is a mildly toxic stimulant aphrodisiac.

Lace Honey Candies

Lovers give each other honey candies wrapped in white sugar lace on the first day of frost to recall the **Suncatcher**. The winged spider embraces the sun with her webwork every winter as a gift for Winterwhite. The candy is a prayer for love and dreams restored.

Nailed Coins

Everyone, rich leit or poor man, nails a coin to a hardwood post of their house, or to their pillow block if they have no house. This is the coin for the **Devil's Grandfather**, The Dark Beggar. Spurned, the Skingiver steals light and brings confusion. Rewarded, he is the giver of forbidden knowledge, permissive friend of beasts.

Northern Neckerchief

Most baronials wear warm-hued neckerchiefs, belt sashes, or scarves. The warm colours appease hungry **Northwind**. The gusty deity chases away the Eater's rots, but brings pain, ache, and windlung if displeased.

Plaster Henge

Witch priests use small plaster **models of famous temples** to string their prayer threads and chants. Each square peg is painted with a face of the divine, while the order of the thread encodes a request. Rich baronials have decorated stone versions made for their courtyards and gardens. Burning the prayer string at high noon is the best if you want your wish heard.

Sky Babies

Priests and doctors carve cherubic figures high into rocks and remote trees. The carvings distract the **Eater of Virility**, *Amimami*, who is the messenger of age and impotence. A lucky word and a warding gesture helps the traveller hide from the castrated god when they spot one of these curse-prone cherubs.

Spider's Knot

Lowfolk weave the knots from hemp or straw to hang from the eaves of their houses, while the betterfolk have whole curtains of multi-coloured knots of dyed cotton, silk, and wool. The spider's knots are amusements for **Miss Netmaker**, a trickster spirit. Everyone desires her boon, for she is also lady luck.

Talon Wheel

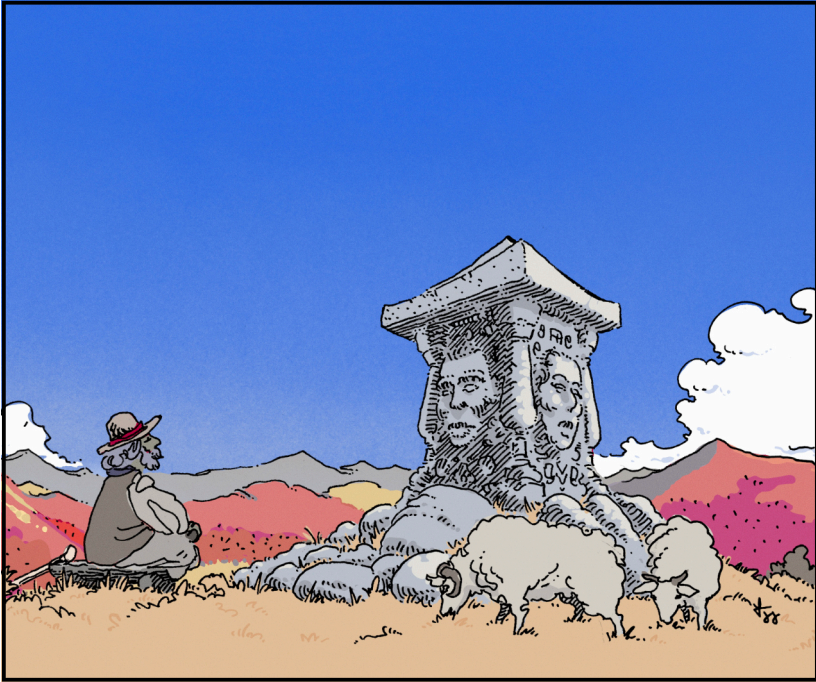
Hunters and guards make wheels from the hooked talons of birds of prey to recall the **Angelhunt**. Nature's Claw is a shifting deity, a furious host which restores the harsh balance of the gods. Placing a feather by the wheel lightens the heart and brings justice.

Tanglehair Pools

Witches and hunters tend ink kelp in secluded pools. The long hair-like strands recall the strangling locks of **Waterdrinker**, avatar of underworld and river. Supplicants give offerings of clay loaves and bronze fishes to this loving and deadly deity on moonless nights. Bathing in the pool brings fertility.

Triple Triangles

Throughout Brezim geometric patterns of triangles and trefoils recall the **Three Avatars**, the Firebringer, Waterdrinker, and Earthbeater. These patterns keep the divine anger of the natural world quiescent.



Watching Column

At least one stands near every settlement, on a vantage point whence **Fourface** can watch and be seen. The Worldwatcher is the god of the turning seasons, of the directions of the sky, of birthing and dying couples. Offerings are burnt to ashes in twos (a pair of pears works best) to please this remote, cruel, tender god.

Yellow Bar

Most baronials paint at least a single yellow horizontal line above their doors; the richer sort build elaborate yellow lintels. These recollect the **Bridgespirit**, an avatar of perseverance, long life, stability, and troubles traversed. The spirit of the Bridge is a good god to ask for blessings, as she asks little in return.

The Three Towns

† *government* † *industrial* † *leisure* †

Gomiliy

† *picturesque baronial capital* † *tiers on a round hill* † *sparkling roof tiles* †
 † *great triple-gate* † *staircases* † *darling markets* †

Fortress: a grand and cubist thing, it has been built and rebuilt since time immemorial. It predates the current gentle age and its roots worm into the nethers of Gomiliy hill.

Classical library: a tour de force of federal neoclassicism, funded by the Zuleiman Estate. The librarian and scholar Irma Loveless organizes tours of the pre-temporal fortress on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Equestrian Statue: Baron and Warlord Ivan Greencorner, founder of Brezim. Note the sensuous lips, the proud ears.

Head of State: Baron Soren Greencorner II. Courteous, sheltered, and melancholy. Receives dignitaries and gentle betterfolk every Thursday.

Ruler: Vizier Ibrahim Falconsbrood, of the Federalist Falconsbroods, cosmopolitan and well-travelled. Brezim could want no better ruler.

Chapel of Saint Nomm (Imperial Faith): an exuberance in basalt and coloured glass, the witch-bishop Simon the Wizard presiding. A modern crematorium speaks to the progress in these parts. Available: guided tours of oldsettler crypts and dugouts lacing the hill.

Four Stones (Baronial Faith): solid as the titans' bones, they flank the poultry and vegetable markets. Shaman-healer Isolda Longrocking offers help, residing in the cottages by the seven-span linden to the trinity. The meadow of death is available for cinerary rites.

Tiered Town: rings of roads and houses terrace the hemispheric hill above the old revolutionary walls. The fabled bronze portcullis has been removed to the Grand War Museum on Munchhouse Square. Niso Telldigger, the custodian, is available, but grudging.

Grain King Guesthouse: the place for jubilant ale-and-heart pies. Site of the '88 Witch-hewing. Houselady: Vizya Aspmilker. Kindly political.

Great Farrier Hotel: decently overpriced and suitable for gentle travellers. Houselord: Yuva Borderer. Discrete. Beware his parakeet.

Baronial Beer Hall "Pey Ivan": cheerful place with cicada motifs. Great for experiencing the students. Houseleit: Zoog Godgrain. Salty old soldier.

Rustic Beer Hall "Moldencrust": famed for its tar-thick ale. Great for slumming. Houselady: Ziva Hasbrawn. Tart as lemons, quivers like aspic.

Peacock's Tail Cabaret: the place to go for dance and 'other' amusements. Houselord: Lomo Dealbaker. His sister never leaves her white iron suit.

Wares: manufactured goods from many workshops: weapons, armours, tools. Wood and bone dolls are a local peculiarity.

Wednesday Market: Deluvian artefacts and more. Everything for sale. Perfect for the budding antiquarian.

† *crystal megaliths* † *tales of deep things* †

Pearly Barrow, on the flanks of Dragonberg, with its crystalline trilithons on an ancient mound, makes a romantic picnic spot. Was it perhaps an astronomical observatory in some forgotten past?

Orso Vulpina's "**Oldfolk Tales of Elder Things**" calls Gomiliy Hill "Koletumba" and alludes to deep layers beneath, where the bones of frozen giants lie and misty old things creep and lurk. Beneath those bones, she writes of a blood altar of Winterwhite, where Verdek Greencorner sacrificed himself to the White Queen so that his brother Ivan could conquer the valley.

Rudvey

† industrial town of Brezim † reactivated old architect mine †
 † new blast furnaces † labourer apartments excavated in pit's higher tiers †

Popular Palace: owned by the Corporation of Civil Associations, its pomp is an affront to aristocrats throughout Brezim. Gardens and orchards crawl in terraced steps up the flank of the Twinbergs above the town.

Mayor: grand siro Erik Whiteyes rules Rudvey with a benevolent death grip. The proletarian engineer made noble is proof that birth is no disadvantage to station in the Federation.

Miner and the Virgin: the wonderful bronze statue by Rivka Woodlip represents some of the finest artisanry in the lower states.

Ruddy Town: at first glance grim, the ash-grey brickwork of Rudvey hides a profusion of warm nooks and crannies. Still, the visitor in search of the natural wonders of Brezim would do well to pass by swiftly.

Mine: run by the baron's privately owned Barony Mining Corporation, the correctly conservative representative Neva Longflanks takes fine care of the lower class of folk that works in the pits. Visit the museum of mining to marvel at the spectacularly petrified "fluted mining boy."

Pey Two Devils Inn: the best Rudvey has to offer. Serves a mean bear-porker pie. Houselord Izi Redhairing is a hunter and hiker. The strange sport sees Izi climbing high bergs for mere amusement.

Beerhall "Under the Pick": the schnapps-laced beer is particular to this town. Houselord Lun Breakface cracks the snappiest jokes in Brezim.

The Pepita Theatre: famed for its vaudeville act, pay attention to the Iron Clown. Houselady Maya Oldwalker collects stories and gossip.

Wares: steel, coal, and fuel are the big-ticket items in Rudvey, of course, but hard-wearing cloth also makes an entry thanks to the new Van Frankley mills.

Friday Market: wrought iron, pocket knives, and varied tinkeries.



† prehistoric mining † gossip and tensions † wonderful apes †

Great Pit: the ancient open-cast mine is now much expanded and houses three BMC neighbourhoods. The Pit Museum has a fine selection of ancient curios from the mine, including an archaic golem-watt pump.

Miners gossip of ancient mining monsters in the deepest pits. Moonless nights are considered particularly dire.

Be aware: proletarian bandits and banker thugs of the Eastern-Western Organization for Cooperation often duke it out in the streets.

Observe the wonderful mountain apes in their natural Twinberg habitat.

Take precautions against urban cultists. A chthonic panic is afoot.



Vreley

† spa town of Brezim † frost-free microclimate †
 † orchards and greenhouses † Awlschild Palace † lustrous rainbow pines †

Promenade: along the saturated waters of thermal Toplovoy Lake the villas and guest houses of the betterfolk follow one another in serried ranks. Awlschild Palace stands out as the finest example.

Mayor: fourth sira Ostya Awlschild is old money of the Borderfield-and-Liberia Awlschilds. A proper betterfolk, if a tad blinkered.

Painted Tree Spa: famed for its orange cakes and glasshouses. Owned by the mayor but managed by Zon Butterworth. A loyal lieutenant, generous to their betters, but a martinet to the staff.

The Eagle's Corpse Inn: the association inn makes a stunning pine-nut and dormouse confit. It is run as a housecorps for the Burner Veterans' Society. Houselady Martina Seekmiél is a bear of a woman, her chest heaving with medals.

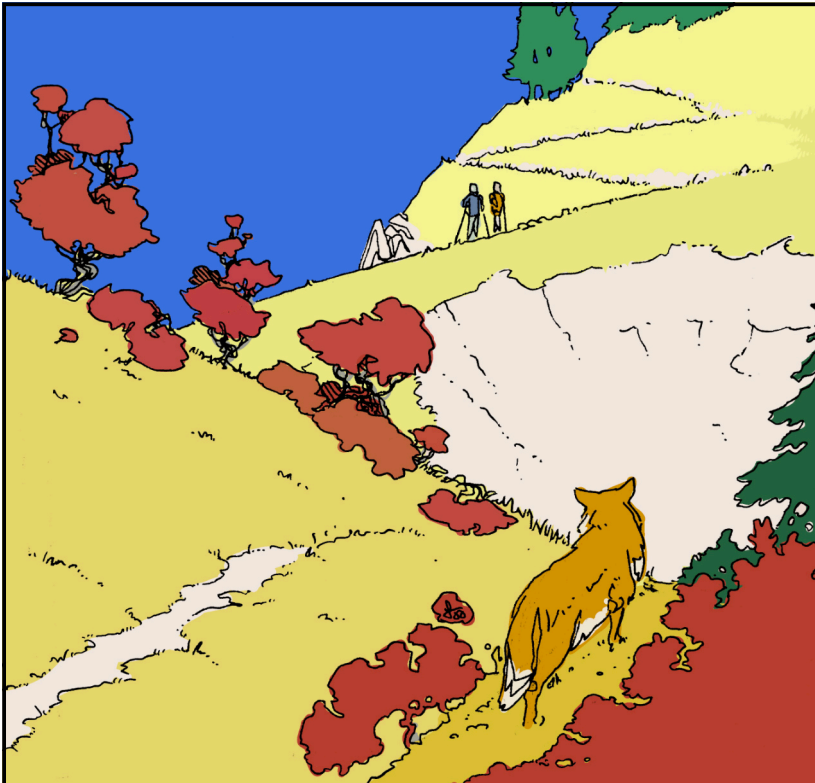
Wares: Vreley is famed for its fruit and vegetables, preserves, and hot mineral waters. Several local apothecaries produce a variety of cures and medicines.

† barrows and cliffs † marble follies † volcanic landscape †

Obsidian and basalt cliffs rise above Vreley to the geologically fascinating Wolfsberg icefield barrows. Oldfolk fairy tales talk of wyrm tunnels in the friable basalt depths and a skinchanger temple in the ever-warm depths.

Marble ruins of a smallfolk town and later oldsettler remains make a haunting destination for romantic hikes from Vreley. Older locals tell tall tales of a mechanical-man altar buried in the ruins.

Dangers abound in the wild mountain lands about Vreley. The winding roads are beset by **rockfalls and steam vents**. On the jagged hiking trails, one can hardly decide which is more of a nuisance: the **fearless wolves** or the smirking **oldsettler bandits**.



The Eight Villages

† rural centres † isolated hamlets † strange folk tales †

Belna

† growing market village † prehistoric walls †

Prehistoric Walls of petrified wood constrict the growing village. The handsome new government house sports a lovely crystal clock from Sicher.

Mayor: third siro Bonifas Swiftling is a low-born accountant with the style and affectations of a better-born marcher duke.

Quaint Chapel: dedicated to Saint Adom Longbeard, its Purification Era frescoes are literally to die for. The paint is highly toxic.

Foaming Giant Inn: famed for buffalo cheese and flat mountain bread. Houselady Kunigunda Tavernborn is wily and somehow lupine.

Wares: visit the Third Vanya wool cooperative and Belnay woodwork fields.

† alpine necropolis † torrents and bees †

The Murt above the Derishka, on the Princessberg just below the snowline, draws macabre souls to its shadowed halls. Baronial records tell how the oldsettler villain Yamash killed a changeling mechanifex in the Murt and donned its dark mantle. They plagued local woodcutters until three hunters put them down.

The beautiful forests and meadow of the Princessberg and Giantsfist conceal great dangers: sudden **torrents** and vicious elf-touched wild **bees**.

Chodey

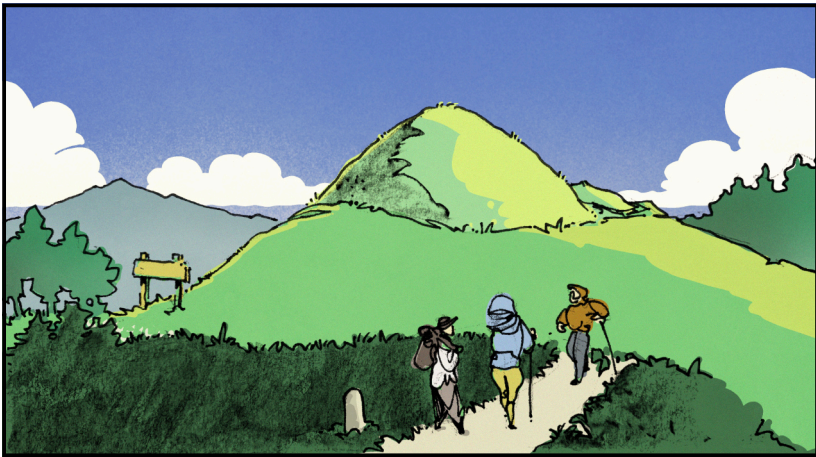
† *petite bucolic village* † *living wood wall* †

The traditional woodsingers of Chodey daily sculpt and tend the **Living Wood Palisade**. Oak, pine, yew, plane, spruce, and bronzedwood twist together to create a verdant, moss-decked defence for the village.

Fat Volecatcher Inn is where you must stay and try the mountain sausage soup. Houselord Viktor Dormouse is a gentle giant, but rumours fly that he used to be a vicious pit fighter nicknamed “Eyscratcher”.

† *toll bridge* † *hero's barrow* † *dangerous woods* †

Pay the toll when you reach the **Hanging Bridge** over the Rushka. It's a fair price and worth it for the views alone, and a detour to the shallows in the gorge below takes half a day. Spit on the iron gnome in the middle of the bridge for luck.



Kolgar's Barrow is a pre-human mound reused by the oldsettlers to bury the hero Kolgar Bloodkiss “Sancbacho” who slew three giant brothers. Folk tales say that inside Kolgar's Axe waits to deliver the oldsettlers in a time of need.

Beware the steep slopes of the Branberg, they are prone to **landslides**. The forests covering the dimpled highlands either side of the Rushka are full of **playful trees**. They'll steal your hat or shoes if you let them. Don't.

Kastey

† centre of southern Brezim † large village † new suspension bridge †

The **fortified hilltop** of Kastey is centred on the massive royalist war monument. It is ill-repaired—little surprise, since it celebrates the Empire.

Hungry Hans Inn: try the finest suckling boar and mushrooms in the bergs. House lady Luna Sunstringer tells charming tales of the old faith.

First Baronial Granary: a powerful statement of the Baron's care for the commonfolk. Kastey biscuits keep famously long.

Mayor: first sira Joia Tolltaker is a bored conservative reactionary. Were it up to her, the Empire would be restored.

Suspension Bridge: made with finest BMC steel, it is a proud sign of the barony's development, crossing the end of Starogray Lake. The toll is steep, but progress demands it.

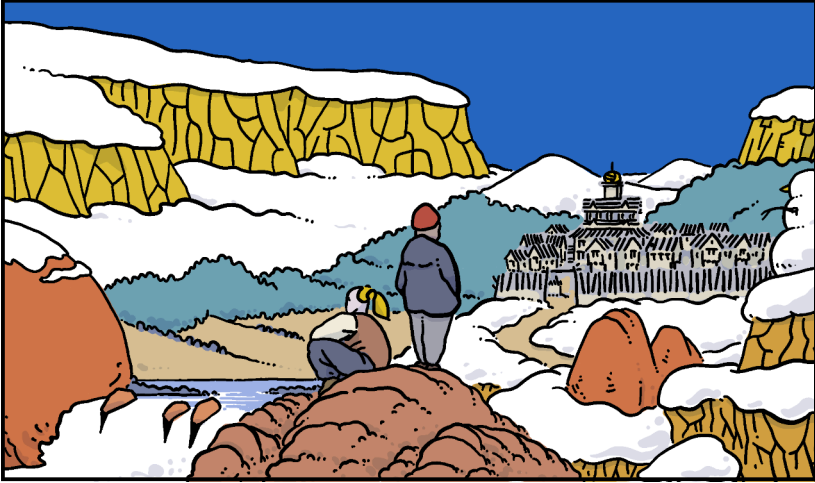
† pass to Rudvey † steep Spargleberg † wolffolk haunters †

Mountain Pass: two watches will see you across the saddle between the Twinbergs and Dragonberg to Rudvey. The pass is only open in good weather. Stop by the **Silverhorn Chalet**, operated by the Fraternal Hunters of Kastey and Rudvey, and sample their mountain goat and juniper goulash.

The Spargleberg is steep, and a hard hat is recommended against **falling rocks**.

Be aware of the edge of the Dark Forest just past the Rushka and Starogray. **Wolffolk and oldsettlers** haunt the woods.





Pey Dimna

† last village on the Rushka † waterfalls and gorges †

Gorgeous Dimna snuggles on a series of wide terraces above the steep crevasses and pools of the upper Rushka. Breathtaking sights await the intrepid visitor.

Last Hearth Inn: fried potatoes and alpage cheese are *de rigeur* here. Houselady Ilka Ninthling used to be a court painter in the Eastern City.

Big Citizen Nora Huntersdaughter is a mountain guide, expert tracker, and local shaman. Half-oldsettler, her position shows the Baron cares about both oldsettlers and baronials, making Brezim a model of integration.

† iron ruins † Winterwhite fairytales † snowfield creatures †

Iron Palace: this rusted, twisted ruin spiders along the cliff-face of Motherberg. It whispers of some ancient industry or war. Local tales say that within is a fairy tomb with six sleeping gold-horned virgins of Winterwhite and further in the half-world, the White Shrine of that goddess itself.

Avoid the ice fields of Motherberg and Whitecrown. **Dangers abound:** snow apes, mountain savages, and snowfolk.



Pey Holzey

† woodcutters' village † narrow valley † sulphurous springs †

The steep flanks of Greyberg and the dark conifer woods crowd close on the **long village** of Pey Holzey. The smells of the sawmill, the sulphurous springs, and the collieries make this a rather dull spot on the trail.

Darling Jack Inn: unfortunately closed after a queer incident involving the houselord, his dog, and a travelling wizard. It was famed for its rum-and-herb pound cake.

Big Citizen: Umo Droopstone is a grim prospector and trapper. Militiamen mutter about dreamvine fields in the high narrow valleys beneath the Grayberg.

Sawmill: the wood from Pey Holzey is famously sturdy and easy to work.

† thieves † wild beasts †

Beware the **Droopstone gang** of thieves operating in the area. The conifer forest is thick with **wolves**, while the springs attract **sulphurous salamanders**.

Pey Jibbey

† charming village † solstice bonfires †

Jolly wooden houses with heavy stone roofs hug the flower-decked bridge across the sulphurous Jibbya. The blossoms mask the smell quite well, and the farming village really gets swinging for its traditional solstice bonfires.

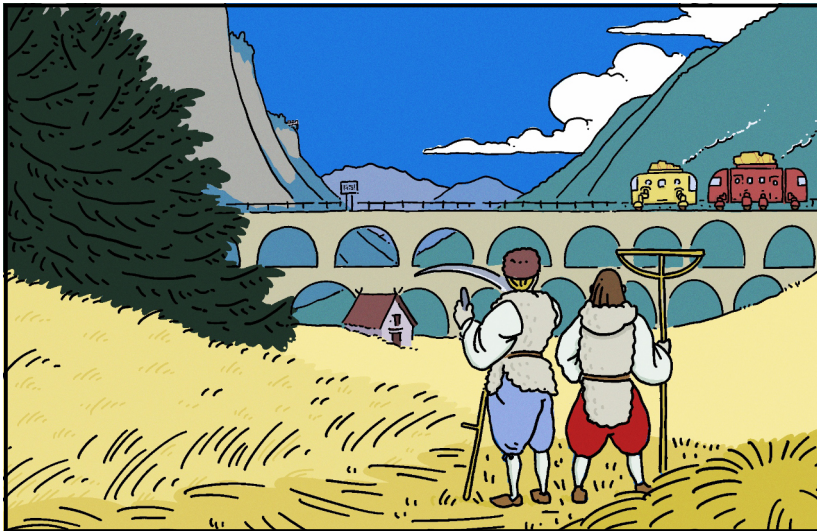
Bonny Fire Inn: try the oddly-shaped Jibbey sausages and herbal tea. Houseleit Vinyo Briskwood has a kindly mien and sharp business sense.

Big Citizen: Zora Bearbreaker, soft-spoken, hard-hearted dairy farmer.

† forest barrows † winds and wolffolk †

Veley Big Barrow, in the Dark Forest across the Rushka, makes for a gothic excursion. Inside, antiquarians have found pre-diluvian dust and crushed oldsettler remains. Locals tell ghost stories of a petrified changeling garden deeper within the barrow.

Be aware that the Dark Forest is still only half-tamed, and **aggressive wolffolk** are known to prey on unarmed travellers. **Gusting north-easterlies** off the plateau can throw one off their feet, so pay attention to the wind signs.



Pey Tirzley

† views of mountains and ginkgos † freefolk †

Picturesque village on the Tirzla, its spectacular vistas recommend it rather better than its cultural offerings. The village is curious in that it has no betterfolk. Instead, the local free baronials, descended from the first baron's personal guard, hold all the lands in freehold and go about their daily labours heavily armed. This lack of a cultured class likely explains why the local cross-valley songs sound rather like foxes in heat. Loud, out of tune foxes.

White Boris Inn: an impressive deer goulash, be careful that you do not mistake buckshot for juniper berries. Houselady Ines Cashfolk is as stunning as she is mercurial. Be aware that her three nephews are quite protective of her, as your correspondent discovered to their misfortune.

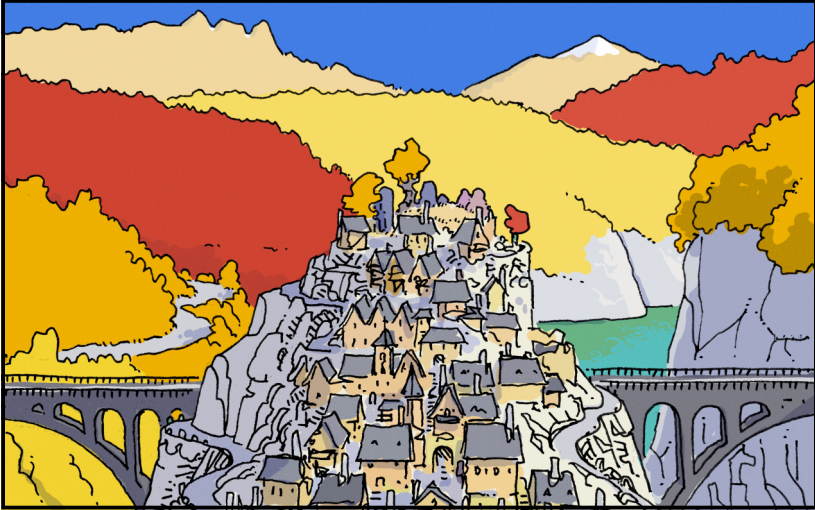
Big Citizen: Roon Southcome, unpredictable but canny geologist and owner of a cement manufactory.

† burial grounds † oldgrowth forests †

Samoyba, the Lonely Barrow, is the heart of a large oldsettler burial ground. The soulful visitor will detect a queer aura about the place, where antiquarians have recovered grave goods from as far back as the tertiary bronze age. From Wednesday to Sunday the cleaned up oldsettler tunnels are open to visitors. Basil Quietdoor has collected unbelievable local folk tales of a survival vault full of lonely ghosts deep beneath the barrow.

Beware the **bears** in the woods of Tirzley. **Deadfalls** seem purposeful in the old-growth, and there are certainly **savages** across the Rushka in the Dark Forest.





Ta Krasney

† rock village † ruins of older times † confluence †

Set in stone on a spar between the Draga and Krasna river, this place has been settled for a long time. Ta Krasney is a wondrous place, built on the megalithic ruins of an oldsettler village that was itself built in the husk of an old architect palace. The fancifully decorated iron Nuvo Styl bridges across the two rivers show that time will not yet pass this place by.

Buttery Bear Inn: try the spectacularly rich buffalo-butter coffee. Houselord Igor Holdover likes to reminisce about the Grand War.

Big Citizen: Almira Dustman, the kindly proprietor of the general store and chief gold-dust buyer, an inveterate scalper.

† monolith † wild waters †

Visit the yellow-flecked **blue rock monolith** with pictograms of an older age. Antiquarians agree that it far predates the oldsettlers.

In the steep hills beware of **avalanches** in winter and **flash floods** after heavy rains. The **dire beavers** can also be a nuisance. Bribe them with corn or beans.

Mountains and Forests

† pinnacles and pines † skin and bones of Brezim †

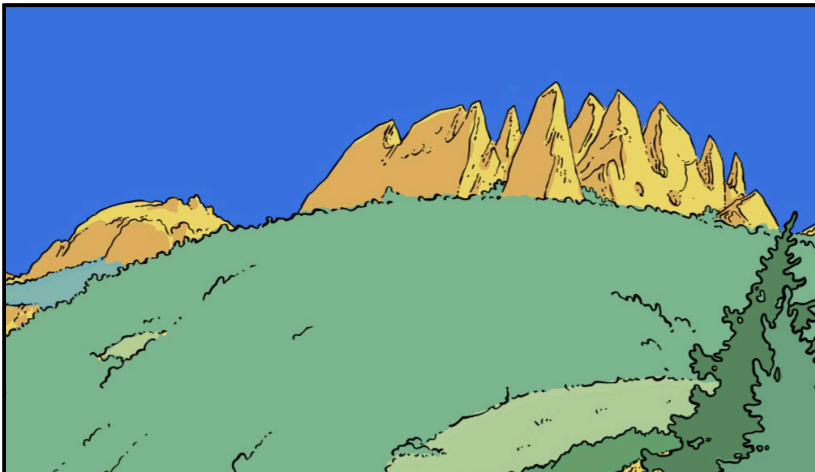
Branberg

† razor-fractured southern peak † deep gorges †

Fortress mountain of the barony, it looms above the way to Kastej. Trenches, platforms, and craters pock and mar the southern peak, traces of the Grand War.

Immense cave network: the limestone is fissured and riven by waters and aquifers for miles. Chthonobiologists confirm the folk tales that translucent-skinned degenerate after-humans live deep within. However, that they worship a great green malevolent orb and feed on slime creatures? Hardly possible, for their brains are no larger than a monkey's.

The hiker should beware the **chasms** and **predatory ape-cats**. A lilac species of local **poisonous vine** is a terrible nuisance.



Dragonberg

† heart of the barony † forested flanks † small glacier †

Prominently featured on the most famous postcards from Brezim, the wonderful Dragonberg rises in cliffs and massifs to a final **spectacular peak** of blinding white ice. Carpets of pine and gorse cover its flanks before the high tundra and rockfields take over.

There is **gold dust** in the Draga river and panhandlers are a common sight. Do not ascend too high to appreciate their quaint folkways, for the Draga flows from **Dragon's Hole**, home of the barony dragon.

Certainly beware of bears and wolves, but also of **the Dragon**. The great shimmery beast of slate and ice, bloated with deep-ripping magic, keeps to the highest parts of the mountain. Dragon-watching with telescopes and binoculars is a popular pastime in the summer months for gentle travellers. However, the oldsettlers swear it brings misfortune.

Dark Forest

† old growth, eastern highland † wolves, wolffolk, and oldsettler hideouts †

Wild and rough, the Dark Forest is claimed by the Baron and the logger clans, but truly it is nobody's land. A wild country of jagged limestone, gnarled oaks, and shady pines. There streams appear and disappear, bogs trap the unwary, and the four shady rivers (the Riblinza, Rorka, Cherenka, and Dvograya) carve dark grim gorges. No gentle fishing excursions there!

The adventurer may be attracted by the untouched **oldsettler barrows** scattered among ancient **pre-Purification ruins**. Antiquarians agree that untouched vaults still remain, hidden in that green labyrinth.

There is danger in the Dark Forest: **malevolent tree spirits** and **wild animals**, and **shifting mazes** of tree and bush and rock.

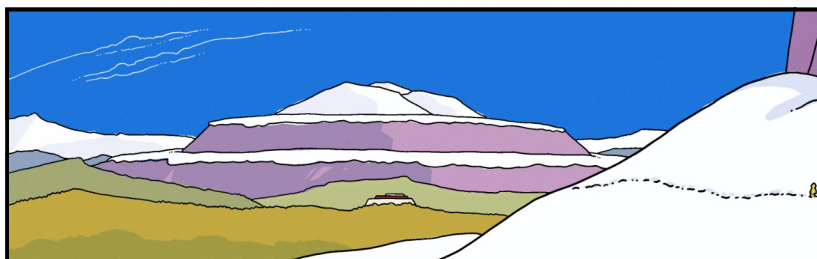
Giantsfist

† plateau fringe † massive glacier † riven ridge †

The **second-highest peak** in Brezim marks the fringe of the Brezim Plateau, Giantsfist dominates the barony's western horizon. Its riven dolomite heights erupt from ruin-spattered glacial barrens, reminders of titanic conflicts from a forgotten time.

Deep wurm holes riddle the Fist's north flank, home to bogeymen and terrors according to the locals.

The grand mountain is cruel to visitors. **Snow apes** abound on the alpine tundra, while **ice-threaded worms** and **giant dead things** lurk and prowl in the deep glacier.



Grayberg

† grey dome † rubble slopes †

The white-capped smooth **granite dome** of Grayberg rises from extensive plains and slopes of rubble. The brooding, humped mountain does not look like it quite belongs in the sharp sky-scrabbling company of its neighbours.

Ancient alien pyramids or boring natural formations? Natural philosophers agree the rubble plains are a waste of time, but many a geoshaman will tell you these five-sided structures do not belong. They are curious and hard to reach. Only accessible in summer.

No matter the season, beware the **glacial winds** and **landslides** that pester Grayberg. And the unusually murderous **mountain goats**.

Icegraben

† ridge between Motherberg and Wolfsberg † metal remains †

Also called the **invisible peak**, this commanding height almost completely disappears from view, dwarfed by the taller Motherberg and nearer Wolfsberg. The Spine Icefield piles up and around it, entombing the eerie metal remains scattered across its ridges and craters.

The largest of the known remains is a **blue-metal installation** in the high dry valley locals call the Vissledole. Credible accounts and lumigraphs depict frozen machines and mummified humans. Perhaps the mythical old architects who oldsettlers claim predated our own times?

The remote heights of Icegraben are a dangerous place, home to both demented, **rime-heavy machines** (vomes) and **savage snowfolk**.

Motherberg

† tallest peak † southern edge of the Spine Icefield †

Baronials and oldsettlers alike call this mountain the **mother of mountains**. Great cliffs mark its eastern and western flanks, and it is usually the first mountain to create clouds on any given stormy day. Locals call those clouds “the Mothershroud” and warn children and tourists to get indoors at such times.

Almost unclimbable, many fairy tales are associated with the Motherberg. A popular one tells of the **white shrine, in the high ice**, where crystal-skinned children serve at the altar of Winterwhite. There, like beneath a fairy mound, is a portal to the Frozen Palace of the cold queen.

The heights of Motherberg are otherworldly, with **snow worms**, great **white birds**, and **avalanches** responsible for numerous deaths. However, the lower reaches are pleasant and offer admirable views.

The **Lay Wachtey** pass winds north under the Motherberg along the dry Wach Valley. It is only open in summer, so plan carefully. Word from the Transport Federation is that an iron road feasibility crew is due to arrive soon, which is exciting many betterfolk.

Pearlberg

† *Westernmost peak* † *spectacular sunrise and sunset hues* †

The **painted mountain's** incredible hues are best admired from Ta Krasney. Artists and luminographers flock to that village to capture the breathtaking contrasts of the dolomite cliffs, pearlescent calving glaciers, and endless skies.

Though its upper structures are ground away to dust, the cellars of a **titanic ruined palace** remain drowned in the glaciers. Skilled guides and explorers navigate the ice caves to reach one of the many entrances to that mysterious place.

As with much of the western mountains, **snow apes** and **giant dead things** from antediluvian times are a threat high up the mountain. Additionally, the **snow vultures** are not above hastening an injured hiker's demise!

Princessberg

† *breathtaking view* † *reddish flanks* †

Opposite Dragonberg, the second **central mountain** of Brezim is the reddish-flanked Princessberg. It towers above Gomiliy, just across the Rushka, its small glacier like a bridal veil. A ridge links this pretty mountain to Motherberg.

You should undertake a tour to **Úbletto, the last highland oldsettler fort**. The baronial antiquarian society museum in the fort offers a fascinating reconstruction of primitive oldsettler folkways before civilization was brought to the valley, including examples of cannibal sacrifice. Indeed, local wise-crackers jest that abandoned within the complex is a collapsed chthonic temple complete with hundreds of animated frozen children and old people. Not for the faint of heart!

The Princessberg's slopes are quite safe, but nevertheless, be aware of the indecencies of playful **forest spirits** and dangerously **sudden gusts** of wind due to the unusual local microclimate. And, of course, the **bears**.

Riblingberg

† crinkled peak † rib-like ridges † eroded valleys † dark forest †

The **rumped massif** of Riblingberg offers many old and unusual volcanic terrains. Hot vents, dunes, columnar cliffs, and magma caves abound, but much has been smoothed and polished by the glaciers of the Purification Era. The thick silence of the dark forest chokes the eastern heights.

Natural philosophers should visit the **bone moraines** of dead land behemoths on the north-eastern plateau.

Besides **wolves** and **savage oldsettlers**, the trees of the dark woods sometimes **fall soundlessly** to trap the unwary traveller.



Spargleberg

† half-shattered † scrub and rock †

The **lumpen mountain** of Spargleberg is riddled with the remnants of an ancient war or mining operation (it's unclear which). Its thin, leached soils can barely support proper trees, and the poor mountain must make do with a coat of hostile, thorny scrub.

The extensive **Starogray ruins**, carved into the south-eastern flanks by celestial forces, may be the blasted and weathered remains of a long-dead city. They housed some of the last oldsettler holdouts.

The ghosts of that long-ago war still haunt Spargleberg. Half-animated **wire traps**, old pits and hungry tunnels mar its slopes.

Twinberg

† glacier-bound twin peaks † large white ape population †

The emblem of Rudvey, the roots of its twin peaks shot through with mineral veins. As technology progresses, Twinberg will continue to feed the wheels of baronial industry. However, this does make it a less attractive mountain for hikers or hunters.

The **great sphinx** carved on its southern outcrop recollects the buried sphinxes of the Auriphages. The insides were repurposed in some later war and are now all barrel vaults, graffiti and dirty camps. Spelunkers speculate that deeper within caves might lead all the way to the pit mine of Rudvey past old architect engines deep within the mountain.

Away from the mines, the traveller must beware not just **abandoned mines**, but also **carnivorous apes**, **great hawks**, and **timberwolves**.

Whitecrown

† numinous cliff-sided peak † remote and cold †

The **lone Peak** marks where the vast Grandfather's Icefield meets the Western Brezim Plateau. Its high dolomite ridge resembles the spine of a great snake crawling out of the deep, old ice.

The glistening **white arch** on the northern icefield is a fascinating sight, rising over twenty paces above the packed ice. Wags suggest it might be a titanic zygomatic arch.

The ice causes sudden fogs and deep clouds, so be prepared. It is easy indeed to get lost in a **whiteout**. The high tundra is home to aggressive **white apes**, while **dragon-worms** tunnel through the glacier.

The **high pass of Lay Wachtey** leads north between Whitecrown and Motherberg along the high and dry Wach valley. It is only open in summer, and even then there is a danger of sudden blizzards.

Wingleberg

† dotted with glaciers and forests † caverns †

This **many-folded southern peak** offers beautiful views south, out of Brezim across the Folder Hills, towards Widefeld and Forum Bay. But looks can be deceiving, and the hills themselves are a pernicious mess of zones and old murder machine fields.

Mostly collapsed **Purification Era city tunnels** are all that remains of a large shelter city from that era. The renowned Ram Moranadzi University plans further excavations next summer.

Besides the **wolves, bears** and **giant timber bats**, make sure to avoid the **exclusion and delusion zones** that crawl along the southern flanks. You can spot them by the grid-like shimmer of their false haze.

Wolfsberg

† looming eastern peak † thick pines † thermal fissures †

The **crumpled slopes** of Wolfsberg nestle uncomfortably against the southern tongues of the Spine Icefield. With geysers and hot springs, this dormant monster of a mountain makes a spectacular backdrop for the beautiful town of Vreley.

Isolated on the high mountain is the **caldera of Gorundol**, a true lost valley, home to Purification Era re-lived creatures, including fascinating edaphosaurs and moschops browsers. However, visitors to the caldera also report wolffolk dreamwalkers, so caution is advised.

As the name suggests, the berg is infested with **wolffolk** and **wolves**. The **crumbling volcanic rocks** are also a hazard not to be underestimated.



Rivers and Lakes

Cherenka River

† peaty water † heavy smell †

Dark and grim, in caverns unseen born, the Cherenka flows from the Dark Forest into Starogray lake. With every flood, it vomits unpleasant, ill-favoured corpses of better-forgotten things into the common waters of the lake.

The wild waters offer exciting finds for natural philosophers, the beaver dams, waterlogged swamps, and deep pines hide many **botanical and zoological treasures**.

But only visit with an escort. Not only home to **dire beavers** and **leeches**, the upper stretches of the Cherenka are also reliably held by the **wolffolk**.

Derishka Stream

† icy torrent † red pebbles † thick forests † waterfalls †

The Derishka **laughs and roars** down the Princessberg, its reddish waters a reminder of the numerous ancient works that once tried to stop its flow.

The breached remains of **old architect dams** are a curious reminder of a bygone age. Ruin-lovers will enjoy the amusing petroglyphs.

Sulphurous salamanders and **hot springs** may surprise a careless visitor. Be careful when swimming, because many pools are still threaded with rustless ferro-ceramic **cables** and **spikes**.

Dimnaya Stream

† rushing torrent † basalts and reddish schists † great boulders †

The **cold grey** Dimnaya rushes from a great cavern in the pierced flank of Princessberg. Even in coldest winter, steam rises of its waters like smoke. Even in hottest summer, its flow does not stop.

The Sixthfinger tributary emerges from a great cleft which conceals excavated passages leading to **deep caverns** and a pillaged old architect **seed vault**. A visitor's centre is planned soon.

Avoid eating the **snow fish** below the tributary. It's not their vicious bites, but the old architect toxins in their flesh. The terrain is also rather treacherous, particularly the **rolling boulders** and **slippery moulds**.

Draga Stream

† torrential stream † gold dust † dark water †

The **dragon's river** is less reliable than most in Brezim, fed largely by storms and (so the local's mutter) the dragon's relievings. At least, that is where they believe the gold dust in its waters come from.

Ethnologically-minded travellers can book a **gold-panning** experience in Ta Krasney.

Others, of a more macabre inclination, will enjoy visiting the many pools with bronze and stone and bone **oldsettler sacrifices**, as well as visiting the **dragon otter** sanctuary.

If hiking alone, beware the **flash floods** and **falling trees** that make the torrent such a killer during storms. And, of course, take care to mind the **dragonsign forecasts**. They are quite reliable and scientific, unlike the astrological nonsense peddled so often in the Westerly Fringes.

Dvogroya River

† *sour water* † *old architect ruins* †

The **wide and slow** Dvogroya's murky water is unusually sour to the taste, and its fish are universally disliked for their poor taste. Its origins in the Dark Forest are unclear.

Tours lead as far as a series of **corroded artefacts** of uncertain origin and several eroded **ruined dams**. Guides mention warding obelisks farther up its course that warn of changelings. It is good to mind those.

Some of its tributaries emerge from dark and dangerous old tunnels where tribes of **cancer trolls** live according to popular folklore. Stories say that they can be bribed with flesh, gold, or promises that they will recover their ancient memories and become giants once again. Oldsettler soothsayers suggest that the mottled flesh-mothers of the trolls carry memories of Long Ago and that they use gold to bind memories within their cancered flesh. Even a pact with the Devil's Grandfather would certainly be better than meeting such monsters!

Whether the cancer trolls are real or not, **troll-otters** and **toxic mists** certainly are. A thick scarf and a sturdy spear are vital equipment here.

Grandfather's Icefield

† *north-western glaciers* † *rotten ice* † *crevasses* †

In the northwest, the Baron claims a fringe of high glacial altiplateau popularly known as the "Emperor's Tailbone". Although nearby as the white crow flies, no passes lead to the county of Zelenim or the slightly more distant Veriy Tural.

The high ice is riddled with the tunnels of **dragon-worms** and **dragon-nymphs**. It is best avoided, unless in a montgolfer.

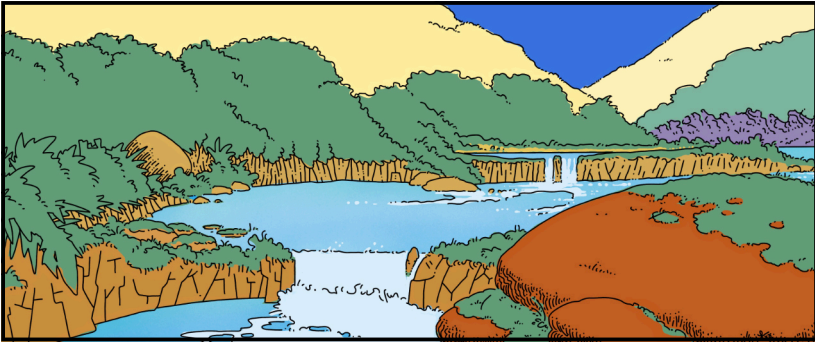
Hodovoya River

† green water † shallows and cascades †

The **emerald waters** of the Hodovoya are thick with algae and kelpy weeds as they wend their way through a series of gorges towards Chodey and the Rushka.

Most visitors will be fascinated by the Purification Era **glass-bottomed lake**. The precise substance is unclear, but it reveals a deeper river, flowing perpendicular to the Hodovoya.

The rugged, wooded terrain hides a profusion of beasts: **giant timber bats**, **crocodilian salamanders**, and **soldier bears**.



Jibbya Stream

† sulphurous † yellow water †

The beautiful **polychrome pebble banks** of the Jibbya have long attracted artists and alchemists to its somewhat smelly waters.

Novelty seekers and the superstitious like to visit a peaty upland of the Jibbya called the "**Dragon's Sandbox**" with its piles of magic-rich fossilized dragon dung.

The lower course is settled and safe aside from the odd treacherously decayed tree. However, the swampy upper reaches present quite a few challenges, including **dire dung beetles** and **carnivorous quicksands**.

Krasna River

† *reddish water* † *industrial architecture* †

The **oxide-rich waters** of the Krasna are said to have healing properties. Doctors disagree, but this does not dissuade the gullible. The many dams and waterwheels of the recent industrial expansion may do more on that account.

Occasionally **dragon scales** are found in the Krasna's settling pools, and a small scale prospecting tourism has grown up around the curious polished objects. Their utility is questionable, but their exotic rarity is not.

Swimming in the Krasna is not recommended due to the somewhat **toxic tailings** of the Rudvey mines and ironworks, while **dire leeches** are a problem in some tributaries and marshes.

Malya Stream

† *gentle babbling stream* † *icy cold* †

The **frigid** Malya depends from Giantsfist, exposing fossil beds of strange ancient behemoths.

Fossil hunters often proclaim they have found **wyrm teeth** and **claws** in the stream. However, the most common finds are calcified swimslug heads and the double-spiraled bookfish shells.

That said, after powerful rains the Malya becomes a **dangerous torrent**, and it often deposits broken **un-living carcasses** on its gravel banks. The **fishing apes** that live in the vicinity are also fond of throwing sharp rocks.

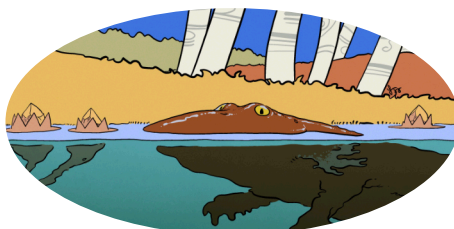
Riblinza River

† milky water † rustling shallows †

The **deep gorges** of the Riblinza usually smoke with the mists coming off its numerous hot springs. Plans to cut back the Dark Forest and build thermal resorts on its lower reaches remain speculative.

The Riblinza flows through strange sedimentary layers, for it commonly deposits polished **bone pebbles** and **cobbles** after heavy rains. This river ivory is quite prized by artisans and betterfolk curio seekers.

Dire otters and **wolffolk fishers** make the Riblinza a hostile waterway. Some swimmers have even developed **wasting diseases** after attacks by what they described as bone fish.



Rorka River

† pure water † dense beech and oak forests †

The **thundering cascades** and deep pools of the Rorka bring a whiff of the untouched deep heart of the Dark Forest to the edges of Brezim.

Natural philosophers will admire the giant **vegetarian salamanders** and **coral lotus** that thrive in the Rorka.

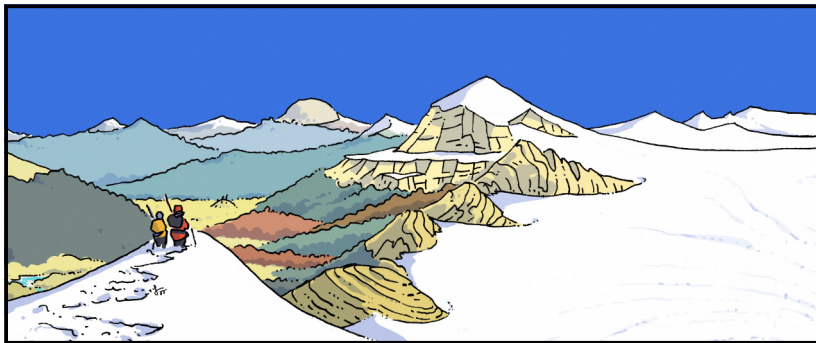
However, they should pay attention that they do not mistake the herb-loving salamander for the **giant carnivorous sail-backed salamanders** also found in the Rorka. Also, at least one cameraman of this reportage carelessly fell off a waterfall while recording a river nymph.

Spine Icefield

† major federal divide † great north-eastern icefield †

The long spine that **divides the Federal heartland** from its southerly regions begins at the Motherberg and continues east for hundreds of miles. The few large passes, such as fabled Bonethrone Pass, have played a large role in the history of the settled lands.

Visitors should be aware that the Spine Icefield is one of the harshest environments known to modern civilization and **nobody has yet traversed it successfully**—unless one counts the revenant of Comte Boris hen Vliegasse as successful. The revenant is still displayed in a large glass jar in the Letobor geographical society.



Rushka River

† largest river † swift, rough †

The Rushka defines Brezim. **Richly flowing**, swift, rough and turbulent. Attempts were made to tame her flow and failed, though plans are afoot to build a new hydro-golemic plant near Chodey, below the oldglass barriers. The dukes of industry remain in fervent discussions.

Sports fishermen prize the **trophy granite trout** of the Rushka. Its armoured head is hard enough to dent the side of a canoe!

However, only the strongest swimmers should try the Rushka. It abounds with **whirlpools** and **cascades**, not to mention the **tremendous current**.

Starogray Lake

† *artificial lake* † *mile-thick oldglass barrier* †

The **cold waters** of Starogray are held back by a massive **oldglass barrier**. Archaengineers have become a regular fixture at the site, testing and prodding. Still, the magical material remains impervious to their methodologies, the waters of the lake spilling over the top and creating curious open-air dripstone lips and stains on the clear matter.

Visitors to Kastey should book a boat to take them to the **drowned old architect ruins** in the middle of the lake. There they can marvel at well-preserved oldsettler dwellings from the early days of Brezim settlement.

Avoid swimming in the Starogray. **Giant snake fish** prowl its depths and the banks are often thick with sneaky **gripping mud**. Many a shoe has been lost to its pungent stickiness!

Tirzla Stream

† *laughing torrent* † *picturesque pools* †

The **gentle** Tirzla runs like a song off the riven flanks of the Spargleberg. Its lower reaches are popular with bathers and sunseekers.

Hikers will enjoy the **greatwood trees** of its middle reach, particularly the two-hundred-foot Grinning Grandad. The trees are of an ill-set species, perhaps local mutants. Still, they are quite safe, and it is a tradition to pose inside the restful hollow of the Grandad.

Avoid the waters of the higher reaches due to the **bloodthirsty otters** and dangerous **falling boulders**.

Toplaya River

† warm † azure waters †

The **hot waters** of the Toplaya run from Vreley to the Rushka. Bathers enjoy comfortable temperatures year-round, and some springs are said to be very good for skin and digestive disorders.

Zoologists will be thrilled by the **crystal-shelled armoured fish** living in its colourful waters.

However, do be aware that some springs have rather **intoxicating fumes** and that some **hot vents** emit jets of boiling water or even steam. In cold weather **rolling mists** can severely reduce visibility.

Toplovoy Lake

† volcanic lake † hot springs †

The **round lake** presents the visitor with a striking panoply of colours. It is little wonder that it is such a popular tourist destination.

The flora and fauna of the region are simply spectacular. Mineral-loving **crustaceans**, pale lake **kelp**, string **lotus**, and hot-water **snails**. All are available in profusion and eaten as a curative for arthritis and gout.

Beware the predatory **lake scorpions** in the deeper reaches of the lake and some hot steam vents. **Wolffolk** highlanders come to swim in the lake when the moon is full.



Zadvoya Stream

† pyrite nodules † refreshing waters †

The **mineral-rich** waters of the Zadvoya promise much further industrial development in the hinterlands of Rudvey. However, several Vreley hoteliers would prefer to develop the region's mineral water offerings instead.

High up the stream, past a series of difficult cascades, is a **crude shrine** in the middle of a small glacial lake. Local guides claim the apes built it and that it hides strange meats and machines from the glacier above. This seems unlikely, as the apes are mere brutes.

Fishing apes armed with nets and harpoons are a menace. The **tangling water plants** and **calving rocks** also act almost like traps, so more care is required than usual.



Hungry bears have been known to disrupt holidaymakers' plans.



Game Rules



Back to the Game



Let us fracture the fourth wall once more and return to Longwinter as a game. The previous section was a lot of world-building, a lot of it presented by the marginally reliable authors of the Zuleiman Publishing *Gentle Visitor's Guides*.

It represents shared but incomplete knowledge about the world. If you are the referee, do not be intimidated. Feel free to improvise, mix and remix, and apportion the blame for any inconsistencies to an out of date and shoddily researched tour book. If you are a player, likewise, do not feel bound to the blinkered world view of the tour book's writers. Make Brezim yours. Take it and rework it into your game.

The following section of rules is written with the same ideal in mind.

All the players, those running characters and the referees, should share the burden of making the world turn; of rolling for random encounters, generating weather, choosing where to travel, and fleshing out terrains. This is why many encounter tables are presented right here, in the Visitors' Book. The idea is that this is commonplace information, familiar to any reasonable native or visitor.

That said, perhaps things are different in the referee book?

Anyhow, enough, enough. Be welcome to the winter wonderland!

Setting Recap

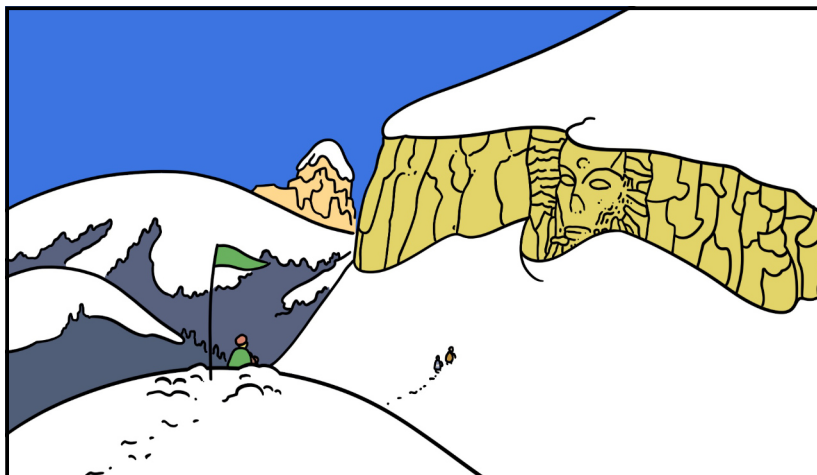
The Barony of Brezim is a mountainous place. The terrain is harsh, building and maintaining infrastructure is expensive, travel is slow, going off the beaten path is difficult, bad weather makes everything much worse. This is clear.

To simulate this environment in a game set in the barony, time is the crucial constraint, and measurable distance on a map is almost irrelevant.

Encounters happen regularly to make it clear that time is a serious constraint, relentlessly depleting the heroes' resources.

Space is relevant as scenery for encounters, providing opportunities and obstacles for the heroes, and to set the mood. The referee can use the terrain tables to make encounters more or less challenging. The players can use them as ideas for set dressing they can spot or use during encounters.

If you are looking for a real-world environment similar to that of the Brezim, think of the Alps or the Pyrenees or the Carpathian mountains in the 1920s and 1930s. Substitute some witchy magic and golems for telegraphs and Daimler-Benz Lastkraftwagens, and you should be all set. When playing characters, be sure to affect an exaggerated faux-Mittelberger accent.



Time

Time in the game

A minute or less: usually rounds or turns in combat. Treat them however you like.

An hour: this is the basic unit of time for any activity. Whether the heroes bind wounds after a fight, explore an abandoned house, visit a blacksmith for a chat, or make diagrams of a creepy idol, this is how long it takes. This is an evident abstraction. Use a d6 to tally hours up to the watch.

A watch: 6 hours long, this is the basic unit of time for travel, short rest, and encounter checks. Heroes should sleep at least one watch per day. Every watch missed applies penalties to activities.

A day: 4 watches long, the day is the basic unit of time for weather, environmental modifiers, and events.

A week: 7 days. The length of a long rest and some solid carousing.



Distance is Time

The map of Brezim shows settlements, mule-roads and travel times between them, the major mountains, rivers and forests. Travel times include basic preparations, packing, sandwich stops, and time to gawk at panoramic scenery.

Points of interest and hiking destinations are not marked. Add them to the map approximately where it makes sense when you visit them. Roll d6 twice to determine **how far the location is from the nearest settlement and what the best path is like**.

d6	Distance	and Path Type
1-4	half a watch	hunterway
5	one watch	beastway
6	two watches	mule-road

Mountains are hard to climb. For peaks, double the time required. For high peaks, triple the time required.

Going off trail, say to avoid an obstruction or enemy, is always slower.

d6	This is not a shortcut
1-3	x2 travel time
4-5	x4 travel time
6	x8 travel time



Space

Paths

Going anywhere in a mountainous landscape means following paths and trails, because every other option is harder.

Beastway: a narrow trail, ill-maintained and used more by beasts than humans. A single infantry must watch their footing carefully. Most forest or mountain trails are of this sort.

Impassable for vehicles without extreme effort, *even pack animals* double travel time.

Hunterway: a narrow trail kept in good condition by the local hunter society. A single infantry can easily fight on such a trail.

Almost impassable for vehicles, quadruple travel times.

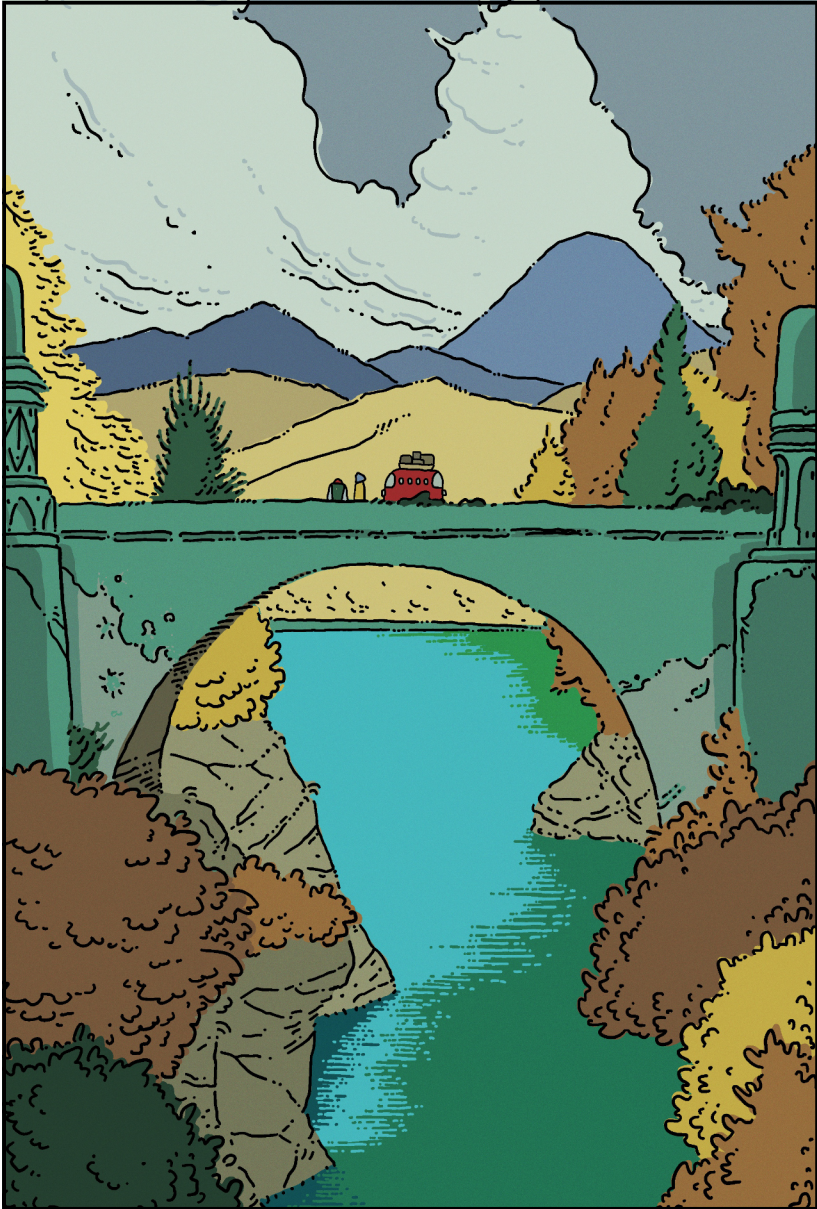
Mule-road: a modern mountain road, specifically made for the narrow front-and-rear steering mechanical mules originally made by the Ovestá company. Two or three infantry can easily fight side-by-side on such a path.

Normal travel times for vehicles. Mule-roads connect most major settlements in Brezim.

Livingstone road: a wide road like those built long ago, in the time of the Old Empire. Most are long dead, but some are still usable. As many as ten infantry could easily fight together on such a behemoth.

Halve travel times for vehicles. There are currently no such roads in Brezim, but everybody knows about them and dreams about the day they might reach Gomiliy or even Rudvey.





Views from Ta Krasney

Encounters

In the wilderness, an encounter occurs **once per watch, every watch**. A player rolls d100, and the referee consults the appropriate encounter table (it might well be one of the *Referee's Book* tables, depending on the time of year). Every encounter table in Longwinter is 'overloaded,' like the table overleaf. This means that something happens every time it is checked. The referee section has nighttime and winter encounters.

Not every creature encountered needs result in a fight. If the party encounters the Dragon, they should probably just stay still and not move. Apparently, dragons have frog DNA and can't see immobile objects. Ok, that's not true, probably. Maybe.

Sometimes it matters *when* an encounter takes place—whether the heroes can run back to their point of origin, or press on to a safe house. In that case **roll 1d6 to determine the hour of the watch when the encounter takes place**—1: first hour, 2: second hour, and so on. Encounters may put pressure on the heroes to get somewhere safe fast.

In an enclosed dungeon or city environment, encounters might occur more often. Individual modules or locations usually have specific encounter rules. Otherwise, a player can roll a 1d6 every hour, and on a 1 an encounter occurs. Shockingly, this still averages out to one encounter per watch.

To simulate mounting tension and rising alarms in an enclosed location, players can roll an additional die for encounters every hour that nothing happens. To add more zest yet, encounters could be more dangerous, the more 1s are rolled. The multiple encounter dice reset after every encounter, as the tension drops.

Encounters of Summer and Autumn

Doo Summer/Autumn Daytime Encounters

01	The Dragon, flying surreally (L20).
02	Older Thing, flesh machine moaning and hiding (L10).
03	Forest Spirit, gracefully patrolling (L8).
04	Woodland Wyrn, crawling for prey (L7).
05	Mountain Apes, playing monkey games (L6).
06	Aurochs, browsing coolly (L5).
07	Bears, stuffing themselves (L5).
08	Dire Lynx, stalking prey (L4).
09	Wild Boars, digging nuts and roots (L3).
10	Deer, a herd nervously awaiting winter.
11	Gnome Monkeys, squirrelling away food (L2).
12	Mountain Goats, giving the evil eye (L1).
13	Wolffolk, shying from humans (L3).
14	Rabbits, multiplying.
15	Oldfolk, serfs slinking (L1).
16	Baronial, freesettlers working their holdings (L1).
17	Outlander, craftsmen and tourists (L1).
18	Baronial, official patroleurs keeping the peace (L2).
19	Cityfolk, merchants or specialists (L1).
20	Baronial, families, picking mushrooms.
21–30	Interaction: roll 1d20 twice.
31–40	Corpse: roll 1d10+10.
41–60	Traces: roll 1d20.
61–70	Hunger: use food or lose 1d4 health.
71–80	Terrain: use survival gear or lose 1 stat.
81–90	Heat: use water or lose 1d4 health.
91–95	Soothing rest: spend 1d6 hours to regain 1d6 of one stat.
96	Wonderful spot: regain 1d6 of one stat.
97	Panorama: advantage to one mental check.
98	Delicious berries: advantage to one physical check.
99	Forgotten goods, barely used. Useful to someone, perhaps.
00	I needed this! Pick a common item. You've found it.

Terrain and Weather

Whenever something happens in the mountains, the land is always an antagonist. Players or referees roll on the relevant terrain and weather feature tables to figure out what is going on, and the referee decides what kind of penalties and bonuses might apply.

Terrain Features

D20	Icefield	Mountain	Forest	River
1	Crevasse	Slippery slope	Great linden tree	Beaver dam
2	Slippery	Grassy hummocks	Overgrown pit	Rapids
3	Deep snow	Shattered terrain	Leaf-filled trench	Cascades
4	Pitted	Narrow ridge	Ravine full of broken wood	Waterfall
5	Rotten	Friable rocks	Fallen pines	Confluence
6	Avalanche danger	Falling stones	Overgrown dwarf-pines	Bridge
7	Sharp shards	Unstable boulders	Dense ferns	Massive boulders
8	Rocks in the snow	Cliff	Barrier of raspberry bushes	Sandy beach
9	Ice cliff	Overhang	Dark fir grove	Pool
10	Frozen slope	Cave	Ivy-choked larches	Tangle of lilies and frogs
11	Smoothed boulders	Pinnacle	Rocks broken by oaks	Exposed riverbed
12	Overhanging ice	Massive boulder	Tangled woody vines	Pebble stream
13	Icicles	Crevasse	Barrow with hazel thicket	Slippery clay banks
14	Briny pools	Natural bridge	Clearing with mushrooms	Uprooted tree
15	Pink algal ice	Ravine	Sombre beeches	Ruins of dam
16	Powder drifts	Chimney	Flash-flood debris	Gorge
17	Ice cave	Hole	Storm-broken trees	Spring
18	Ice bridge	Small lake	Quiet meadow, flowers	Deep water
19	Broken blocks	Rocky outcrop	Slippery mosses	Rushing shallows
20	Gravel and ice berms	Plateau	White birches, long grass	Gravel banks

Weather Features

D20	Wind	Cloud	Rain	Snow
1	Rustling	Rolling banks of fog	Humid	Sparkling crystals
2	Gentle	Crawling mist	Drizzle	Floating snowflakes
3	Whipping	Dull grey	Pelting droplets	Flurries
4	Howling	Ominous bruised	Gentle	White feathers
5	Murmuring	Heavy	Cool mist	Fine
6	Pelting dust and leaves	Towering	Showers	Light
7	Tossing sticks	Oppressive	Clammy	Like flower petals
8	Shaking treetops	Climbing hillsides	Remorseless	A white veil
9	Rattling shutters	Tumbling down slopes	Morose	Heavy flakes
10	Flying snow	Dropping	Heavy	Sticky wet flakes
11	Stabbing like ice	Gathering	Sour	Dry
12	Squalling	Breaking	Slow	Powdery
13	Screaming	Rising	Ominous	Glutinous
14	Ripping foliage	Scattered	Freezing	Gathering in drifts
15	Scouring soil	Drifting	Sleeting	A duvet of snow
16	Booming	Diaphanous	Thunderous	Silent
17	Hollow	Gauzy	Exhausting	Rushing
18	Ceaseless	Icy	Unremitting	Blizzard
19	Gusting	Cold	Dark	Whiteout
20	Laughing	Thick	Torrential	Howling snowstorm

Encounter Mishaps

Mud, rain, wind and snow make combat difficult. Ridges and slopes make falls dangerous. In the mountains, almost no encounter happens on a simple flat square. Encounter mishaps roughly model the inherent difficulty of getting anything done in such terrain.

Whenever a character rolls a 13 during a physical check, including combat, they suffer a misfortune depending on the environment. Apply effects after resolving the check. The character may lose 1 point of Charisma instead of suffering the misfortune.

d10 Ice Misfortunes

- | | |
|----|----------------------------------|
| 1 | Weapon dropped and lost. |
| 2 | Clothes damaged. |
| 3 | Shoe caught. |
| 4 | Character injured by ice shard. |
| 5 | Slips and falls. |
| 6 | Stumbles. |
| 7 | Slips and wheels arms comically. |
| 8 | Breaks through into pit. |
| 9 | Stumbles off ledge, hanging on. |
| 10 | Stumbles off ledge, goes flying. |

d10 Mud Misfortunes

- | | |
|----|-------------------------------|
| 1 | Mechanism jams. |
| 2 | Character slips. |
| 3 | Slips and falls. |
| 4 | Stuck in place or loses shoe. |
| 5 | Splashes into puddle. |
| 6 | Falls into puddle. |
| 7 | Slowed by sticky mud. |
| 8 | Blinded by flying mud. |
| 9 | Choked by flying mud. |
| 10 | Injured by hidden rock. |

d10 Rocky Slope Misfortunes

- | | |
|----|----------------------------------|
| 1 | Weapon damaged. |
| 2 | Clothes damaged. |
| 3 | Armour damaged. |
| 4 | Equipment damaged. |
| 5 | Character injured by sharp rock. |
| 6 | Falls painfully. |
| 7 | Knocked out by fall. |
| 8 | Sprains ankle. |
| 9 | Slowed. |
| 10 | Stumbles off ledge, hanging on. |

d10 Rain Misfortunes

- | | |
|----|--------------------------|
| 1 | Ammo wet. |
| 2 | Food wet. |
| 3 | Lamp wet. |
| 4 | Clothes wet. |
| 5 | Character blinded. |
| 6 | Character deafened. |
| 7 | Splashes into puddle. |
| 8 | Slips. |
| 9 | Slips and falls. |
| 10 | Stumbles on hidden rock. |

d10 Wind Misfortunes

- 1 Attack blown widely off mark.
- 2 Hit ally or attack blown off.
- 3 Light item blown away.
- 4 Clothes blown away.
- 5 Character blinded by debris.
- 6 Confused, thinks someone is behind them.
- 7 Deafened.
- 8 Injured by debris.
- 9 Thrown off balance.
- 10 Stumbles.

d10 Snow Misfortunes

- 1 Weapon dropped and lost.
- 2 Ammo wet.
- 3 Food wet.
- 4 Lamp wet.
- 5 Character blinded.
- 6 Deafened.
- 7 Slips and falls.
- 8 Slowed by drift.
- 9 Dazed and confused.
- 10 Injured by hidden rock.

Flying Lessons

D10+Charisma Flying Off A Cliff

1 or less	Lethal. Gruesome. Combat pauses as everybody watches, suddenly aware of their own mortality. Human combatants can call off the fight.
2-3	Long, steep, and probably lethal. Fall seems to take forever. 2d10 x 10 damage at the end.
4-5	Gruesome, tumbling fall. Takes three rounds, 1d6 x 10 damage per round. After taking damage, the character can check to see if they catch themselves on a shrub or rock.
6-8	Painful tumbling slide. Takes three rounds, 1d6 x 5 damage per round. After taking damage, the character can try to stop themselves.
9-10	Slides down gravel slope in a tangle of limbs and a cascade of loose rocks. Takes three rounds, 1d6 damage per round. After taking damage, the character can try to stop themselves.
11 or more	Flies off the edge, takes 1d6 damage, and is caught in a convenient tree or eagle nest about 10' below the ledge.

Survival and Inventory

There is no bad weather, there is only bad equipment. This is usually a fact, but sometimes lightning strikes a hero exposed on a hilltop. Then again, is lightning even weather?

The basic rule is that a human can carry one sack unencumbered or two sacks encumbered.

Each sack breaks down into 10 stones. One stone is about 15lb: one generic significant item, like a sabre or spear or short sword or shovel. Leave aside one stone for 10 'soaps': generic small items, like a signal whistle or signet ring or spike. Or a bar of soap.

Add or subtract stones equal to the character's Strength bonus (optional).

Ranger and barbarian types gain three free "survival inventory slots" which can only be used for warm clothes, food, or survival gear.

Resources

The following are crucial in winter:

Warm Clothes

Coats, caps, mittens, parkas, scarves, leggings, and more. A human who is not the Michelin man cannot wear more than 5 units of warm clothes. Warm clothes work as "heat points," insulating the character against the cold. Cold checks are rolled every watch that the hero spends outside. Mark clothes as chilled when the cold gets through.

Warm clothes may also double as survival supplies for encounters. Slashing weapons, explosions, and fire ruin warm clothes. Water makes them ineffective (they get chilled and wet).

Meals

Bread, water, cheese, schnapps, butter, sausages. Staying warm takes a lot of energy. One day's meal takes one stone, travel rations may be more compact. Some encounters require characters to eat meals or lose health.

A character must eat one meal per day or they lose 1d4 life.

Armour

Keeps white apes and ice worms from hitting the hero. Armour is also bulky. Light armour takes one stone. Medium is two, and heavy is three. A shield takes another stone.

Weapons

To kill wolffolk and skintakers. If weapons need ammunition, it runs out when a 13 is rolled on an attack. The hero may choose to miss instead of using their last piece of ammo. Each weapon takes one stone. Each pack of additional ammunition takes another stone.

Survival Gear

Tents, ropes, sleeping bags, pitons, walking sticks, crampons, axes, ladders, picks, carabiners, harnesses and more. At any time a hero may use up a unit of survival gear to reroll a failed mountaineering or climbing check. One unit of mountain gear is always used up when a 13 is rolled on a check. In this case, the hero may choose to fail the check instead of using up their gear. Some encounters require characters to use survival gear to avoid losing health or stats. A character can use one unit of survival supplies per short rest (one watch) to recover 1d4 life.

Lamps

Fuel, oil, wood, torches, batteries, coal braziers. Something that gives off light and heat. Lamps are often used up by night-time encounters. Lamps can be used to attack undead and cold creatures, dealing 2d6 damage when used up.

Rest and Recovery

Longwinter assumes gritty realism rules with slight modifications. Resting rules are a little more forgiving, but the environment is a lot harsher.

Short Rest

Lasts one watch (6 hours). Afterwards, a hero can **use HD to recover life** and one of the following:

- † Recover one point of a lost stat (Str, Cha, etc.).
- † Remove one exhaustion level.
- † Regain one heat point.
- † or End one harmful effect.

Heroes should sleep once a day or else:

Days Without Sleep	Effect
1 day	Disadvantage on social activities.
2 days	Disadvantage on all activities.
3 days	Disadvantage on all activities and all saving throws, every watch save or fall asleep.
4 days	Disadvantage on all activities and all saving throws, halved life maximums, every watch save or fall asleep.

Long Rest

Takes five full days, leaving a weekend for carousing. After a long rest, a hero:

- † Recovers all their life and heat points, and half their HD.
- † Recovers 1d6 points in every stat (Str, Dex, etc.).
- † Removes all exhaustion levels.
- † Ends all harmful effects, including sleep deprivation.
- † Checks to end all illnesses.

If a hero is being cared for by another character, they recover more quickly.

Resting Conditions

It's **horrible**. Heroes should avoid sleeping in here.

d10	Horrible Conditions
1	Contracts pneumonia (max life halved) or flu (disadvantage to all checks). Marks corresponding exhaustion level. Cure requires a long rest and care.
2–4	Sleeps poorly, dreaming of white birds and laughing death. Cannot recover any lost points or remove exhaustion levels. Can still use HD.
5–9	Sleeps ok.
10	Wakes up surprisingly refreshed. One chronic ache is gone, or one disease is cured, or gains 1 temporary point to a random stat.

It's **ordinary**. Most nights should be uneventful.

d10	Ordinary Conditions
1	Sleeps poorly, dreaming of an ice princess and bleeding eyes. Cannot recover any lost points or remove exhaustion levels. Can still use HD.
2–8	Sleeps ok.
9	Wakes up eager to change the world. Gains 1d4 temporary life.
10	Wakes up refreshed and ready to attack the day. Gains 1d8 temporary life or 1 temporary heat point.

It's **splendid**! Everybody wants to rest this way.

d10	Splendid Conditions
1	Dreams of bloody slaughter and frozen children clinging to the bosom of a graceful ice goddess. Cannot remove any exhaustion levels. Gains 1 temporary point of Charisma.
2-5	Wakes up with +1d4 temporary life.
6-8	The effects of rest are doubled.
9	The effects of rest are doubled and gains 1d6 temporary life or 1 temporary heat point.
10	Wakes up feeling blessed by wealth and kindness of the Firebringer and the Green Sun. Rest effects are doubled, and gains 2 temporary heat points or 1d6+6 temporary life.

The Cold

As far as the human body is concerned, the weather can be infinitely bad. In-game, the referee estimates how cold it is based on the described weather.

Heroes wandering around outside in the cold have to make a check.

If a hero is wearing more units of warm clothes than the cold level, they do not have to roll a cold check. Their body heat is enough to keep them going.

Cold Level and Cold Checks

		<i>(Seacat)</i>	<i>(5E)</i>
1	Cool	Easy test	Survival DC 5
2	Cold	Moderate test	DC 10
3	Bloody Cold	Hard test	DC 15
4	Siberian	Very hard test	DC 20
5	Frozen Hell	Impossible (no test)	DC 30 (auto-fail, basically)

A roll of a 1 is always a failure.

Wind imposes a disadvantage on survival checks against the cold.

Digging into snow or leaves gives an advantage to cold checks.

Rain or damp doubles cold effects.

A character in cold water makes an immediate cold check, and then another cold check every few minutes. The water soaks 1d4 items of warm clothing per round. Wet clothes provide no heat points and impose a disadvantage to cold checks out of water. Don't get wet.



Failing the Cold Check

When a character fails the cold check, they lose a heat point (two if it is raining). Medium animals like humans and wolves start with one heat point. Big animals like horses and bears start with two.

Warm clothes, fluffy fur, or winter feathers add additional heat points.

When a hero has no heat points left, any additional heat points lost translate directly into hurt.

Hurt

As a hero gets cold, ill, and tired, they begin to hurt. Soon enough, they're dead. Hurt is similar to "fatigue" in the 5th edition.

- 1 It's fine.
- 2 Disadvantage to all checks.
- 3 Speed halved.
- 4 Current and max life halved.
- 5 Comatose, unresponsive, 'sleeping.'
- 6 Dead.

A short rest can remove one level of hurt.

An Inventory Sheet

Body Heat Pts $\triangle \triangle$

Hurt

Heat Pts $\triangle \triangle \triangle \triangle \triangle$

unhurt

[-]

$\frac{1}{2}$ life

coma

death

First 'Sack'

(10 'stones' per 'sack')

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. ...var. small things →

Small Things

(10 'soaps' per 'stone')

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. ...coins (25/soap) †

Second 'Sack'

(any items here = [-])

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Cash

Equipment

—1 soap—

small handy item—e.g. lighter, pipe, soap, pocket knife, ring, whistle, or dice.

—1 stone—

warm clothes (1 heat point)—fur cap, fur coat or parka, winter boots, lined mittens, fur or wool undergarments.
day's meal—tinned meat, pickled cabbage.

high-calorie travel ration (2 days' meals)—salted butter with berries, peppered lard with raisins.

light armour (+1 to +3 defence)

weapon—pistol, sword, sabre, rifle, spear.

box of ammunition
shield

survival gear—e.g. tent, rope, sleeping bag, pitons, walking sticks, crampons, axe, portable ladder,

pick, carabiners, harness.

lamp or samovar
one day's fuel

—2 stone—

medium armour (+3 to +5 defence)

heavy weapon—bipod gun, great sword

—3 stone—

heavy armour (+5 to +8 defence)

field weapon—mortar, hand cannon

Barony Buy & Sell

† Gomiliy of Brezim † 9-Month • 17-Year Federal †

New This Market Day (d10)

Quality assured by Viney Wreathglory, by ap. baron & electors, cert. 16-YF, rm Yara Lordsword.

- 1. Ammunition—**Redyard Guns co., by baronial dispensation—all calibres served—2-dog, no permit required—3-rooster, 4-boar, 5-bear only with valid permit—special : two-score 2-dogs only 1 cash till solstice.
- 2. Barrel of beer—**Vreley Brewing co.—with seasonal flavours including barley, buckwheat, and chestnut—stay warm with beer!—half-caesar per 10-pint, special offer 3 barrels for 1 cash.
- 3. Fatbear dollies—**Darkwood Toymakers co.—pure whittled darkwood—*amuse your children, keep Hollowfear away—dime a dolly.*

4. Glassbox lamp—Rudvey Irons co.—guaranteed wind-proof—runs on kerosene, giantsfat, oilfish or olive oil—2 cash on hand, 5 wicks included.

5. Hiker's lard—Pepper Oldhouse co.—perfect rations for harsh conditions—excellent seasonings—saxifrage, cumin, red powder, yellow curing, lavender—a dime a day's meal, a quarter buys three.

6. Pickled cabbage—"Lynx" brand original, Viktor Joinpot Authentic Foods co.—keep that scurvy away—1 dime for a jar, 1 cash / dozen.

7. Pocket knife—Anton Goodberry, master knifsmith—antler horn scales, masterwork—1 cash, sharpness guaranteed.

8. Soft warm undergarments—Goodwool Anatol co.—socks, longstockings, tights, vests, one-pieces liners, mittens, scarves, skullcaps, balaclavas—all *knitted in Belna by local knitterfolk—buy local, buy Goodwool Anatol—half-caesar / piece, full-winter set: 2 cash—amulet decorated on request.*

9. Tinned meal—Poli Joinpot's original recipes, Poli co.—beef & trout, carrot & tripe, plum & spam, and the original plum & plum—a quarter, 1 cash / five.

10. Woodsboots—hardy and warm, bison leather top and willow sole, studded for better grip—5 cash—5 year guarantee.

Recovered Artefacts (d10)

Quality assured by Lana Hardnail, by ap. baron & electors, cert. 17-YF, rm Yara Lordsword.

1. **Bear golem, refurbished**—new lemmas, logarithm checked, pliant & helpful, purification quality, great for excavations or forestry work, biomatter converter pebble engine—1,500 cash on hand, 3,000 federals or 3,300 imperials transfer to post bank—Yuri Handhandler, Easter Goth estate, Gomily Near Bank—televocalizer 74.
2. **“Blue God” blaster**—crystals replaced, fully charged, mind-burned for security, bond ports removed—an authentic piece of history!—Yuri Handhandler, Easter Goth estate, Gomily Near Bank—televocalizer 74.
3. **Giantbone shield**—oversized, impenetrable, skull-made, intricately carved, exceptionally rare, wonderful opportunity—300 cash, 300 federals—Runa Riverdaughter, Logbottom, Gomily.

4. **Glow orbs (multiple available)**—pre-Purification manufacture, sunlight harvesters, 50 candle strength, orange hue, easy to bond—4 cash each, 30 cash for 10. Transfers only for boxes of 50 or more—Zola L. Nightshame, Appr. Street (Palace Side), Gomily.

5. **OA hotbox**—converts emotions into heat, great conversation starter, circle-square decorations, elegant, slightly scuffed—35 cash on hand, 50 federal or imperial scrips—Lara “Silverfox” Villagesmith, Old Palace, Gom.—televocalizer 231.

6. **OA lighter**—good as new, strange steel head, crystal charge, works under water—15 cash on hand, 20 federals bank transfer—Mazik Rockshaper, Appraised Street, Gomily.

7. **Prosthetic hand**—flesh-knitting, delicate intaglio, masterful old-gold alchemy, sera-and-plaz core, ready to use—300 cash on hand, 600 federals at 60 per month for 10—Romina Wolfsborn, Tree Square, Gomily.

8. **Sangra yellow bar amulet**—authentic, Rudvey-found, long life and health guaranteed—30 cash on hand, no transfers—Hilda Undermountschild, Logbottom, Gomily.

9. **Shame book**—hand-painted, original emotional imprints, early kingdom period, not a mass-market knock-off!—20 cash on hand, buy quick—Yuri Goosefoot, Mane Bazaar, Clockwork Corner, Gomily.

10. **Wolffolk skull**—mid-shift, malleable bones, still sparkles, half-ghosted—100 cash on hand, 120 federals in scrip—Lara “Silverfox” Villagesmith, Old Palace, Gomily—televocalizer 231.

Vikuna’s Den

* authentic cuisine *
† Gomily Nule street †

Grand Open

10-month, *first Sun.*

† eastland meltcheese †
† venison specials †
† caparisoned scargo †
† saltfish baccala †
† proudstuff buns †
† baron’s bêtes †

Used Goods (d10)

at purchaser's hazard by free diktat, baron & electors n.d., cert. 1-YF, rm Aram Blackbird.

1. Bearhunter outfit—well-armoured, studded, easy to move in—30 cash on delivery—Miro Guarschild, Pey Jibbey—village televoc, leave a message.

2. Fishing gear—ex-husband's—ridiculously overpriced, selling cheap—three rods, boots, chest of flies, lines, and tools—25 cash—"Irma" Penbrook, Inkbrook Manor, Gom.—tvoc 129.

3. Hiking backpack—fully strapped, net bags, sturdy, trophy carrying cradle included—5 cash, 6 cash delivery by post—Lavrentiy Oldschild, Upperfarm, Gomiliy—upperfarm televoc 2.

4. Music box—crank-operated, quite portable, full cylinder collection of Walter Highbrow's Opera of the Six Senses included—60 cash—Aleksy Southson, Reeds Hamlet, Homiliy—televocalizer 230.

5. Parka, mink—hand-made, original valley quality, warm as new—10 cash in pouch—Castra "Turkey" Belgroyé, Pey Jibbey (Gomiliy on market days, ask at Oxcart Square).

6. Redyard bipod machine gun—museum piece, well-preserved, firing mechanism packaged separately, ammunition not available—100 cash on hand—Pavel Oldbrown, Ta Krasney, Brown Estate—televocalizer 44.

7. Rifle, ironbaron—original *graf Mustelik* model—chambered 5-bear with brass *Ajax* 4x90 prismatic scope—cherrywood stock—leather carry case—120 cash or 200 federals—Zena Ironbridge, esq., Medrushka Manor, Pey Jibbey—televoc 112.

8. Sabre, antiq—authentic longwar piece, great for a mantelpiece—gilt basket hilt—15 cash—"Irma", Inkbrook Manor, Gom.—tvoc 129.

9. Skis—good as new, hardly used—steel edges—composite poplar and spruce—4 cash on hand—*hardboots also available*—Yuliya Freebird—Overrushka, Gomiliy—village t-voc.

10. Town wagon/sleigh—two-horse, bells not included—most grooms should handle the switch—lacquered panels by Gleit ot' Torrente—upholstery needs work—200 cash—Vigo Brassbell, esq., Tree Green, Gomiliy—televocalizer 88.

Trade & Buy (d10)

stamp duty may be required per ar-5-YF-2b, b & e, ius, cert. 5-YF, rm Aram Blackbird.

1. **BUY bulk recovered widgets**—pre-purification, old architect, stone strudel, onion & skull, and other lost cultures—*function not required*—1 cash per stone's weight—Alan Dukesget, Duke's Pawns & Antiques, Appr. Street, Gomiliy.
2. **BUY capricorn trophies**—5–10 cash per trophy—taxidermy or bone—*no fresh kills please*—Ludwiga van Knie, Oxcart Square—Karst Coffee, tvoc 342.
3. **BUY oil, lamp oil, fat, cooking fat, other leftovers**—price depends, best quality oils 1 cash per fifth-barrel—Iové “Sashes” Rosho, Ironbaron Square, Gomiliy.
4. **GIFT children's winter clothes**—ages 5–7—clean, deloused—no ghosts, children outgrew them—Vinko Mountainhide, Stair Street, Gomiliy.
5. **LOVE free farmholder seeks companion**—too old for romance—need someone with a down-to-earth understanding of running a manor—code Romao—ask the editors.
6. **TRADE cook, sew, clean house**—for room and board over winter—fallen on hard times—Freit Builderschild, Longrow House, Gomiliy.
7. **TRADE warm meal, shelter**—for prayers at the meeting house of Doctor Love—*love gives to those who believe*—Witch-preacher Ingo Belsteak, Imperial Goodshouse, Gomiliy.
8. **TRADE hens, egg layers**—for rooster and geese—best hens along the Krasna—Hiram Axebreak, Plishya Hamlet, Te Krasney—villagevoc, leave a note.
9. **TRADE oldfaith wards**—for donations, food, and work—building new henge in Belna next spring—services registered at notary Whit Snowdrinker—more information: ghostknower Yari Worldswight, Trinity Linden, Gomiliy.
10. **TRADE room & board**—for entertainers—yodellers, musicians, singers—all welcome—Butler Furst Sungrim, Ulf Oldgraf's Estate, Ta Krasney.

Sporting Supplement

† by special dispensation from the Betterfolk Bettershooter Quarterly †

Hunting in Brezim

“The mountains and forests of Brezim provide much entertainment for the gentlefolk aficionado of the hunt. Both the local betterfolk and visitors appreciate the chase. If you are keen to try your trigger against the local prize game—especially the fabulous snow apes, dire bears, elk, mountain goats, and capricorns—you can easily rent or purchase the requisite equipment in any of the towns and some of the larger villages. However, for our choice, the best place to shop is Rudvey's Gentle Pheasant, where gunleit Ivo Blewmount and his craftsmen create true artworks from regular Zuleimans and Redyards.

As Brezim is a liminal province of the federation, the strict gun controls you may be used to in the better class of city do not apply. Indeed, by decree of the First Baron, all adult baronials are required to keep weapons and attend bi-monthly practice with their free defence clubs. The oldsettlers and wolffolk are, of course, constitutionally unsuited to handling weapons, which are therefore forbidden them. The penalties for possession are quite severe, and should you spot any oldfolk with a firearm, you can be sure that they are enamoured of the bandit lifestyle. Report them to the authorities and, at the very least, you will be treated to a rousing round of songs and beverages at the local club drinks hall or inn. This is indeed a good way to make friends with the local citizens in good standing.

The general selection of sporting goods one finds in Brezim is a little more restricted than famous safari entrépôts like Zamorey or Schitz, but should suffice.

—Nesram Wittbroed 'den Loopwinkle, *Author and Hunter*

Weapon Actuarial Notes

† knife, town sword, pocket pistol	1d4 or 1d6
† axe, sabre, pistol, revolver, SMG, spear	1d8
† rifle, carbine, handcannon, fossil blade	1d12
† pole-shovel, shotgun	1d6 1d12 vs. ghouls

(duel calibrated)

Guns and Weapons

Axes — tool and weapon in one, axes of all sizes are found everywhere in the densely forested highlands and valleys of Brezim. Since even oldsettlers are allowed to carry them, they are also quite popular with bandits.

Cavalry sabre — a leftover from older wars, many baronials who served in the brigades proudly display their company sabres with their enamelled pommels. Militia officers carry shortened versions called “reminderlies”.

Federal pistol “Polizey” — the standardized police pistol of the federation, with semi-automatic action and nine rounds. Not as strong as a revolver, but simpler to hide. You’ll find some on the market, but not many. Federal officials are issued with them when they are posted to remote provinces like Brezim.

Fifthface revolver “Laughing Tom” — the five-chambered high-calibre revolver is powerful enough to stop a bull. A sure sign of an insecure person, no proper betterfolk would use one. Still, if you are going into the Dark Forest, you might pack one for self-defence.

Giantsbone swords — a curiosity in the southern mountain provinces, these blades are made from the fossil steel of creatures from before the Purification Era. The locals will try to sell you replicas, so be careful of what you buy. That said, one of these blades above your townhouse mantelpiece will draw delighted sounds of approval from guests and relatives.

Ironbaron “Aristocrat” rifle — a powerful, heavy rifle, used for the biggest game. A version of the Ironbaron was used in the Hedgerow Conflict to stop scout golems, so you know this gun punches through armour. Made in nearby Eastern City, the Ironbaron is a prestige marque, popular with betterfolk social climbers.

Ironbaron shotgun “Broomer” — a pump-action shotgun, its use to slamfire clear trenches in the Grand War earned it its nickname. This isn’t really a hunter’s weapon, and unless you are cleared with the baronial militia, you may have to store it at a safe house. Anyone you see with this weapon is likely affiliated with one of the free defence clubs. Or a bandit.

Kaiserlich carbine “Smitten Ling” — a cheap double-barreled bolt-action affair, the Kaiserlich was issued to irregular troops during the Grand War, and later during the Afterwar Affair. As such, many baronials and even oldsettler bandits, have these notoriously inaccurate rifle substitutes hidden in their houses. Still, it is light and easy to handle.



Kaiserlich shotgun “Harvester” — this classic shotgun is perfect for bird hunting. The double-barrel version is also popular with housemasters for keeping the peace in inns.

Kaiserlich Pistol “Ten-fingers” — the old imperial gun foundry has truly come down in the world since the rise of the federation, but the ten-fingers is indeed quite a marvel. Small, reliable, easy to conceal, and with a 10-bullet magazine. Not something to stop an armoured soldier, but certainly enough to scare off a wolf, or an axe-wielding bandit.

Pole-shovel — a nasty polearm, somewhere between a poleaxe and sharpened shovel. Oldsettlers often improvise them for their uprisings. That said, if you ever had to fight off a shambling ghoul (ha ha), this clumsy neck-breaker would be ideal! The visitor should beware cheap souvenir knock-offs sold as the real thing.

Redyard “Leadspitter” sub-machine gun — a staple of trendy gangland flicker pictures, this trusty local replica of the Skolnikow-28 is quite common in Brezim among the militia, both serving and retired. This semi-automatic drum-fed gun is very nearly the equivalent of an official badge. Redyard Guns is a subsidiary of the Baronial Mining Company and manufactures rugged weapons in its small factory in Rudvey.

Redyard revolver “Pinky” — a six-chambered revolver of somewhat uninspiring make. Wildly popular among baronials since it is subsidized for militia members. Locals often fondly call it the “shouting teacher” for the way it tends to disperse oldsettler riots.

Walking spear — capped for safety, the walking spear comes with a sturdy heel spike to help with navigating rough terrain. Not really a proper infantry weapon, but solid for chasing off a drunken lout or spearing an overly aggressive wolf.

Zuleiman carbine “starsky” — the overpriced original on which the Kaiserlich was based. Rare now, but still available. It compensates for the Kaiserlich’s defects in all aspects except two: its price and the unreliability of its finicky build. That said, this shooter is nearly the equal of a hunting rifle and can easily take a buck at a hundred paces.

Zuleiman handcannon “Nightbringer” — this bolt-action single-shot carbine can just about be used one-handed. Adapted from a cavalry weapon in the last war, it is strong enough to bring down a bear. Its large calibre also makes it easy to make custom munitions for it, for example, if you are going hunting the skinchanged. The strangely deformed skulls of wolffolk skinchangers are quite popular in extreme sporting circles these days, but you should still take extreme care. The wolffolk exhibit near-human cunning coupled with a savagery and resilience unmatched even by the peninsular buffalo!

Zuleiman “sunshiner” rifle — a popular hunting rifle, available with many options and in multiple calibres. Nearly every store will hold at least one, and most baronial chalets will have one. So long as you’re not going up against a bear, this bolt-action rifle is a rugged and accurate choice.



*All guns chambered above 2-dog require valid hunting permit.
Betterfolk in good standing permit exempt.*

You Could Be Here

† Interested in gentle travel? † Keen to reach new audiences? †

“ Contact the editors of the Gentle Visitor's Guides at Zuleiman Publishing House, Vituperi Gasa 14, Omboló. Ask for Smelovek Goodsoldier.



The Crossing

† *This is a story. It captures the mood this survival icebox aims for.* †

Crack!

Kuya dropped softly to all fours and breathed out slowly.

Creak.

She gingerly spread her arms and legs. Her fur-lined mittens and boots pushed the dusty snow along the ice with a whispering sigh. Like the frozen lake wanted to tell her something.

Creak.

It was uncanny. It sounded just like the tea cabinet hinge in her grandmother's apartment.

She breathed in shallowly, not moving. No creak. That tea cabinet always creaked. She'd been fascinated by it as a child. The mother of pearl inlays in the green and blue lacquer hinting at strange warm lands. Aramie lacquer, from the warm shores past the Grand Betons, where the hills are round like green sheep.

She breathed out. Focus. The ice should hold. Winterwhite's flowers had visited the window panes five days ago and never left. The ice should hold.

Creak.

But maybe there was a hot spring beneath that blue-black cliff on her side. Maybe that's why it wasn't hung in icicles like a come-of-age-cake. Maybe warm water welled up. Maybe it was warm enough to ruin the green tea Granna called her gentle delight. The expensive one she never let anyone else brew. The one she quietly cursed at whenever she steeped it too long. Count the heartbeats, she said, count a hundred as you breathe, and it's steeped.

Kuya counted her heartbeats as she breathed. Slowly. No creaking. She spread herself wide as a spider, hugging the ice of the lake, then started inching just her left hand in, towards her chest. She must look a fool. Or a tasty snack. Maybe some wolf was watching her right now. One of the big, strange ones that ran with the Architects' redesign, the ones that patrolled the preserves and kept people out. No, that was nonsense. She was nowhere near the nearest preserve. She'd struck out south-west from the bivouac, across the high field towards the Riblinza valley. She'd kept the crinkled white peak of the Riblingberg at her right.

Still. Her heartbeat picked up again. No, no. She turned her head, the ice chilling her left cheek. A bit further back. Yes, there it was, just peeking above the grey tablecloth of cloud, like wadded up pages torn from a snow-white notebook. She breathed slowly again. Ok, she wasn't near a preserve.

She started inching her hand inwards again. Lapel. Cap string. Iceberry pin. Backpack strap. There!

Creak.

Her breath stalled. If she fell through the ice here she'd drown. Her body would scream as the cold bit, the water in her mouth and nose, throat and lungs and gut, like a flood of liquid fire, making her thrash and flail for air, for oxygen, for life. The lack of air would shut her awareness down. Eventually. With this cold, it might take five minutes. Ten? An eternity of fire and then an eternity of silence. The oldfolk said a winter's death wasn't so bad. The pain of the cold lifted, a deep weariness came, and then sleep. There was gentle sleep at the end. But a water death, that was bad. The Waterdrinker was not gentle with mortals' souls.

Kuya realized she wasn't breathing and gulped frigid air again.

Creak.

There wasn't time for this, she had to scuttle across this damned lake. Backpack strap. Clasp. Ice axe. Strap. Buckle clasp. Tug. No, the mittens. She needed fingers for this. She shifted more weight onto her hand, pinning hand and mitten. Slowly she withdrew her hand from the warm fur. Immediately the bitter cold went to work. Soon her fingertips would be on fire, but she had enough time.

Buckle clasp. Metal. Fingers sticking. One release. The second. Press. Stuck. Clear the strap out of the way. Ah, that cold steel burned. Press both releases.

Click.

Now the belt clasp. Down. Scraping knuckles on ice, not feeling the cuts, just the ice water. Or ice blood. Too cold. Button. Backpack belt. The big clasp.

Click.

Quick, back in the mitten. Kuya breathed quietly for a while then shuffled to her left. A handspan. Two. Pressing down her right arm on the right shoulder strap, she inched out from under her backpack, crawling out like a hermit crab abandoning its house.

With a clatter of poles and axes and carabiners, her backpack rolled off onto its side. Ten kilos more spread out.

Kuya looked up. She was nearly across the kidney-shaped lake. To her left, the blue-black cliff, to her right the gentle, welcoming slope. The lying slope. The one that promised avalanches. A hundred metres to the nearest shore, but that was close to the cliffs.

First, she'd crawl back five, ten metres, then strike out for the middle of the little beach. There, under the two boulders, the skinny and the fat one.

She pushed the backpack. A foot. Inching like a worm, or maybe a crippled crocodile, she crawled up behind it. Pushed again.

Creak.

Nothing to do now. Count your breaths. Wait for the tea to steep. Wait for the ice to thicken. Push, crawl, push, crawl. Ten pushes, three metres. Thirty, ten.

The ice had been solid here. Kuya carefully raised herself on hands and knees, the ice stopped bleeding heat from her belly. No creaking.

Now she could push the backpack half a metre and crawl faster. A hundred and fifty metres to go. Three hundred more pushes, three hundred more crawls. Too much for tea, unless Granna had trapped her for the full 'ceremony'. No creaking from the Aramie lacquer ice tea box lake. Six hundred. Enough to steep the fine green tea six times.

"Do you taste the difference? The melody of the tea, from the first pour to the last? Ah, it's the little things," her Granna nodded. She'd nodded along and only tasted water from the third cup onwards.

Fourth cup. Seventy metres to go. She could almost taste the solid ground. The sweet density of rock.

Fifth cup. Forty to go. She wept. The ice whispered underfoot. The air hinted at more snow. The boulders beckoned.

Sixth cup. Ten metres to go. Yes. There was a taste. There was a melody. Ice and lake now had a different timbre. The crunch as she pushed the backpack was deeper. The vibrations under her mittens and knees weaker.

Five metres to go. Nearly there. Ice all crumpled at the shore. Floes pushed up. There had been an avalanche. That lying hillside, she'd known it.

Two metres to go. She was going to make it!

One metre to go.

Snap.

The backpack broke through a thin, upraised sheet and thumped down a handspan to the rime-coated pebbles beneath.

Kuya sobbed and giggled as she stood on shaky legs again.

Crack. Crunch.

She dragged the backpack away from the ice and bit her mitten to stifle a whoop.



Appendix: Music of Longwinter

*A curated selection of songs to capture the slide from light into darkness,
from harvest to hunger.*

Agalloch. *Falling Snow; Ashes Against the Grain* (2006). Fade away.

Ángel Ontalva & Vespero. *Her eyes sparkled in a strange way; SADA* (2020). Opening.

Antonio Vivaldi. *Winter; The Four Seasons* (1725).
A classic, in all senses of the word.

Bijelo Dugme. *Hajdemo u planine; Pljuni i zapjevaj moja Jugoslavijo* (1986).
Going to the mountains because there is no winter there. Sure.

Billy Idol. *White Wedding, self-titled album* (1982). It's a nice day to start again.

Black Sabbath. *Fairies Wear Boots; Paranoid* (1970).
Fairies? Yes, fairies. Scary fairies.

Cage the Elephant. *Cold Cold Cold; Tell Me I'm Pretty* (2017).

Carbon Based Lifeforms. *Mechanism, Alt:01* (2016). Minimalism hides messages in the falling frost.

Devin Townsend. *Juular; Deconstruction* (2011).
It's cold inside the worm.

Ennio Morricone. *Complete Album; The Thing OST* (1982).
Something about the ice and snow.

Ghost. *Rats; Prequelle* (2018).
In times of turmoil.

Grand Magus. *Hammer of the North; Hammer of the North* (2010).
This list would be dull without a bit of epic viking doom.

If These Trees Could Talk. *Iron Glacier; The Bones of a Dying World* (2016).
Ominous post-rock for ominous times.

Jim Reeves. *The Blizzard; Tall Tales and Short Tempers* (1961).
Encapsulates Longwinter.

Joe Satriani. *Ice 9; Surfing With the Alien* (1987).
Intense riffage and the name. Blunt.

Kate Bush. *Under Ice; Hounds of Love* (1985). Something moving under the ice.

Led Zeppelin. *Immigrant Song; Led Zeppelin III* (1970).
Of course a song that starts with "We come from the land of ice and snow" has to go on this list.

The Mamas & the Papas. *California Dreamin', A Gathering of Flowers* (1970). All the leaves are brown.

Mephistopheles. *Devotional Doom; album* (2017).

Simon & Garfunkel. *A Hazy Shade of Winter; Bookends* (1968).
Because it weeps.

Stoned Jesus. *I Am The Mountain; Seven Thunders Roar* (2012).
Because it is excellent.

Stribog. *Morana; U Okovima Vječnosti* (2010).
In the realms of ice she disappears.

The Sword. *Age of Winters; album* (2006).
Slower and noisier than you would expect of The Sword.

Tchaikovsky. *November; The Seasons* (1875).

Autumn, our poor garden is all falling down, the yellowed leaves are flying in the wind.

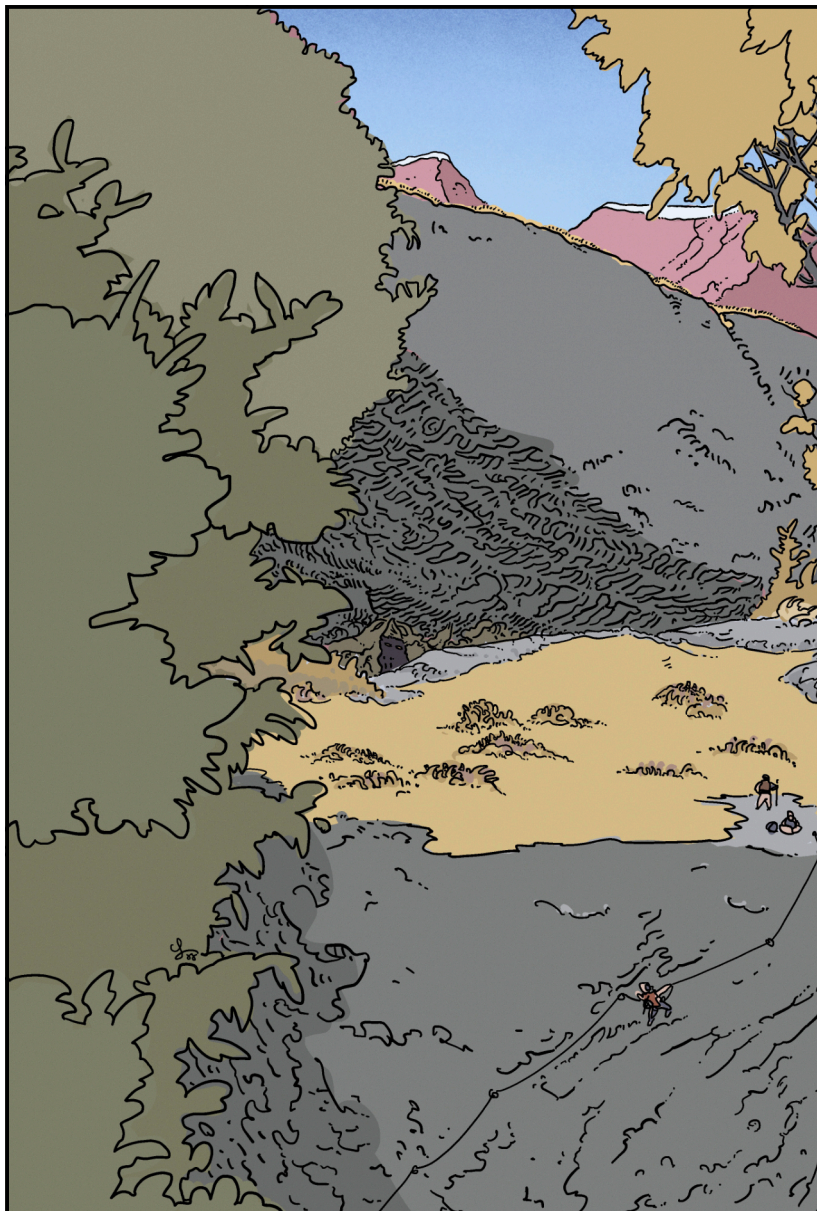
The Unseen Guest. *Let Me In; Out There* (2004)
A terrifying song.

Van der Graaf Generator. *White Hammer; The Least We Can Do Is Wave To Each Other* (1970).
Well, this could have gone for Witchburner, too.

Vangelis. *Other Side of Antarctica; Antarctica* (1983).
Instrumental.

Witchcraft. *Firewood; album* (2005).
Have to include Witchcraft, because of *Witchburner*.

Woods of Ypres. *Lightning & Snow; Woods V: Grey Skies & Electric Light* (2012). In memory of one of the finer metal bands that have gone.



Verdek and Ivan Greencorner discover the Childrens' Cave.

"I did not mean this to happen," wept the Baron.

"Ah, but we've made it through. And at least, now we're free."

"I don't know if I can live like this."

"Take all the time you need, I will keep your lands safe for you in the meantime."

"Thank you, Mira, you are the kindest vizier a baron could hope for."



Fin.

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