

Just Passing Through

Stormholme

A complete medieval village for any fantasy RPG.

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Introduction

As you approach, you see a rustic village nestled in the foothills of towering, snow-capped mountains. A cold river cuts through the settlement, its banks dotted with modest homes and wooden structures. Farmers tend to small fields, and the distant sounds of a blacksmith's hammer punctuate the air. Some people move hastily, casting cautious glances towards the surrounding hills and the path from which you arrived. The atmosphere here is a mix of industriousness and apprehension, as if the community is holding its collective breath.

Nestled in the rugged foothills of the Titans, Stormholme is a hardy village that sits on the banks of the Ecliptic Flow, a river known for its icy currents. The landscape is a picturesque mix of towering mountains, evergreen forests, and rocky terrain, offering a stark but captivating backdrop to daily life. Wooden cabins and stone structures dot the landscape, and despite the harsh conditions, there are signs of life and commerce—a smithy billowing smoke, a local tavern emitting warm light, and fishermen trying their luck in the cold river. The somber beauty of the area is occasionally disrupted by the construction of makeshift barricades and patrols of local militia, telling signs of the village's ongoing struggles.

Stormholme is a community on the edge, both literally and figuratively. Physically isolated from the other settlements in the nation of Veramar, its remoteness adds layers of complications to its existing problems. The Ecliptic Flow has recently begun freezing in an unnatural manner, causing distress among the local fishers and threatening the village's water supply. As if this weren't enough, the village has also been plagued by increasing attacks from bandits. This lawlessness, coupled with the mysterious environmental changes, has created an atmosphere of palpable tension and uncertainty, leaving villagers anxiously wondering what calamity might befall them next.

Basic Information

Those familiar with Stormholme know the following information.

Population

The population of Stormholme is a mix of rugged individualists, hopeful settlers, and families who have called the foothills home for generations. Numbering around 300 souls, the community is largely human, with a scattering of dwarves who find the mountainous terrain familiar and comforting. There are also a few half-elves and a handful of halflings who have integrated well into the tight-knit community. Given its frontier setting, many of the villagers are skilled in survival crafts—hunters, trappers, fishermen, and woodsmen make up a significant portion of the populace.

Leadership

The leadership of Stormholme is vested in Mayor Elysia Thorne, a determined and resourceful woman who was born and raised in the village. She was elected largely due to her practical wisdom and proven ability to handle the various crises that come with frontier living. Mayor Thorne is advised by a council of elders, comprising influential figures within the community, including Gorin Ironfoot, the dwarven blacksmith, and Mariah Greenbriar, the proprietor of the local inn and a direct descendant of one of the village's founding families. The village also has a small militia led by Captain Elara Stormwind, a seasoned warrior who has trained a handful of volunteers to help protect the settlement. The people trust their leaders implicitly, as each has demonstrated unwavering commitment to the safety and prosperity of Stormholme.

Defense

Stormholme's defense is a grassroots effort born of necessity rather than a formal military setup. The village doesn't have a standing army, but it does have a volunteer militia led by Captain Elara Stormwind, a retired soldier who settled in the village years ago. The militia is comprised of farmers, craftsmen, and even some of the older children, all of whom have basic training in handling weapons like crossbows, spears, and simple swords. They hold regular drills on weekends, practicing formations and defense strategies.

The village itself is partially fortified, with a wooden palisade encircling the most crucial parts of the settlement, such as the market and residential areas. There are a few watchtowers at strategic points, usually manned by lookouts armed with horns to sound the alarm in case of an attack. However, these defenses are not entirely foolproof and have been successfully breached by bandits on more than one occasion. The remote location of Stormholme makes it hard to get quick reinforcements from other parts of Veramar, compounding their defense issues. This situation has led the local leadership to consider hiring mercenaries or seeking aid from the kingdom to bolster their defenses.

Commerce

The commerce in Stormholme is modest but essential to the village's survival. Its economy is largely agrarian, with fields of barley, wheat, and a few hardy vegetables that can withstand the cold climate. Livestock farming, particularly sheep and goats, is also common. The village hosts a small weekly market where local farmers and craftsmen trade goods. Gorin Ironfoot's blacksmith shop is a cornerstone of local industry, supplying both the village and passing traders with quality metalwork. There's also Mariah Greenbriar's inn, known as "The Frosted Mug," which provides lodgings and is a social hub for the villagers as well as a resting place for travelers. A couple of general stores offer basic necessities and a handful of luxury items brought from the more populated areas of Veramar. The village's location near the Ecliptic Flow allows for some fishing, though this is more for local sustenance than commercial enterprise. Traders from neighboring settlements and even from across the borders occasionally pass through, offering goods not locally available and taking Stormholme produce to sell in more populous centers. However, the frequent bandit attacks have made trade more perilous and less frequent of late.

Landscape

Stormholme is tucked into the rugged foothills of the Titans, a range of jagged mountains that dominate the landscape. Dense coniferous forests flank the village, the trees often shrouded in mist, giving the whole area an ethereal, almost mystical quality. The Ecliptic Flow, a cold, fast-moving river, cuts through the region, providing both a natural barrier and a resource for the community. Its waters are icy even in the height of summer,

discouraging casual crossing but teeming with fish that form a vital part of the local diet.

About an hour's walk to the northwest of the village, hidden amid a tangle of overgrowth and ensconced in a narrow valley, lies the ruins of an old fortress known locally as "Talon's Grip." Once a proud military stronghold, its crumbling walls and towers have now been taken over by bandits who terrorize the area. The fortress itself is built into the hillside, making it naturally defensible and hard to approach without being seen. Its proximity to Stormholme is a constant worry for the villagers, and multiple expeditions to clear it have ended in failure, further emboldening the bandits who call it home.

Neighbors

Stormholme's nearest neighbor is the village of Alaric's Reach, situated about five miles downstream along the Ecliptic Flow. Sharing many of the same environmental challenges and resources, the two villages maintain a somewhat symbiotic relationship, often trading goods and information. However, the sense of isolation deepens the farther one ventures from these twin settlements. A 13-mile journey to the southeast will take you to Pinecliff, a more substantial town located where the Seraphine River feeds into the vast body of water known as the Azurean Abyss. Pinecliff serves as a regional hub of sorts, offering goods and services that the smaller villages can't provide.

Beyond these three settlements, the area is sparsely populated, the gaps filled by untamed wilderness and rugged terrain. The few signs of civilization that punctuate this expanse are mostly in the form of inn-fortresses and watchtowers. These fortified outposts provide much-needed shelter and security for travelers, traders, and military patrols navigating the hazardous frontier. Nonetheless, these isolated structures do little to assuage the feeling that Stormholme and its immediate neighbors are frontier settlements, largely left to fend for themselves in a challenging environment.

Stormholme

1 hex = 30 feet



Notable Locations

The following locations are keyed to the map of Stormholme as shown on page 4. In addition to detailing the location itself, the descriptions offer information about the most important NPC there plus quest hooks these NPCs could offer.

1—Mayor Elysia Thorne's Office

Situated near the heart of the village, this is where Mayor Thorne manages village affairs. The modest wooden structure is adorned with hand-carved emblems of the settlement. Townsfolk often gather around here for council meetings or to seek advice from the Mayor.

Mayor Elysia Thorne

Mayor Elysia Thorne is a woman in her early forties, with sharp green eyes that miss nothing and a mane of auburn hair often tied back in a practical bun. She dresses simply but with an air of authority, usually seen in trousers and a tunic tailored to allow her freedom of movement. Known for her level-headedness and deep understanding of human nature, she carries the weight of the village's worries on her capable shoulders. While her exterior is steadfast, few people know that she harbors a deep-rooted fear stemming from an old family secret: her great-grandfather was a notorious bandit who terrorized frontier settlements, and she lives in constant worry that if this secret were to come to light, it could undermine the trust she has worked so hard to build with her constituents.

Some adventure hooks Elysia might offer include:

- **The Bandit's Lair:** Mayor Elysia Thorne is deeply concerned about the bandit activity originating from the old fortress known as "Talon's Grip." She offers the characters a quest to scout out the fortress and, if possible, neutralize the bandit threat. As an incentive, she promises a reward of gold and the village's eternal gratitude.
- **Mysterious Disappearances:** Several villagers have gone missing over the past few weeks, particularly those who wander too close to the forest's edge. Elysia asks the characters to investigate these disappearances. She suspects that something unnatural might be lurking in the dense woods and offers an assortment of survival gear in addition to monetary rewards.

- **Trade Route Troubles:** Due to the bandit attacks, traders are increasingly avoiding Stormholme, putting the village at risk of isolation and economic collapse. Mayor Thorne asks the characters to escort a critical supply convoy from Pinecliff safely to Stormholme, promising them a cut of the goods and some crafted items from the local blacksmith, Gorin Ironfoot.

- **Unearthed Secrets:** While doing some excavation for a new well, villagers stumbled upon an underground chamber filled with ancient artifacts and, unfortunately, traps. Mayor Elysia, knowing the importance of these artifacts to the village's history, requests the characters to safely retrieve them. She offers an artifact of significant historical value as a reward.

- **Council of Elders:** Mayor Thorne's leadership is facing a crucial test, as a faction of the Council of Elders is questioning her capability to protect the village amidst increasing threats. She seeks the characters' help in finding conclusive evidence that will solidify her position. This could range from discrediting a particularly vocal opponent or successfully resolving a major crisis that would otherwise spell doom for Stormholme. As a reward, she offers the characters political favor that could be invaluable in their future endeavors.

- **Rising River Woes:** The Ecliptic Flow has begun to swell unexpectedly, threatening to flood the lower sections of Stormholme. Mayor Elysia suspects that something upstream is causing the disturbance—perhaps a dam built by beavers, or something more sinister. She asks the characters to investigate the cause and rectify it before the village suffers severe damage. As a reward, she offers free lodging at The Frosted Mug for a month and a special permit to fish in the Ecliptic Flow, granting access to some of its more elusive aquatic life.

2—The Frosted Mug Inn

Owned by Mariah Greenbriar, a descendant of one of the village's founding families, this inn is the social hub of Stormholme. Not just a place to rest, it is a meeting spot where gossip flows as freely as ale. The inn is renowned for its honey-spiced mead, a secret family recipe.

Mariah Greenbriar

Mariah Greenbriar is the affable proprietor of the Frosted Mug Inn, a cozy establishment that serves as a second home to many Stormholme residents. A direct descendant of one of the village's founding families, she has a vested interest in seeing her community flourish. Always ready with a warm smile and an ear for local gossip, Mariah has turned the inn into a social hub where folks can relax, share news, and form bonds. What most people don't know is that Mariah has a secret stash of rare, imported wines hidden under a loose floorboard in the cellar. These bottles are not for sale; she saves them for special occasions or for sharing with friends she deeply trusts.

Some adventure hooks Mariah might offer include:

- **The Missing Brewer:** Mariah recently noticed that one of her regular suppliers, a local brewer named Torin, has gone missing. She's concerned for his well-being and offers a reward to the adventurers if they can find out what happened to him. Unbeknownst to her, Torin stumbled upon a hidden cave system while foraging for brewing ingredients and has been captured by underground creatures.
- **Secret Ingredients:** The inn's food has been less popular lately due to a shortage of certain herbs and spices that make the local dishes special. Mariah knows of a dangerous, monster-infested grove where these herbs grow naturally. She'd pay well for a fresh supply.
- **The Stolen Keg:** A rare keg of Dwarven Ale that Mariah was saving for the village festival has been stolen. She suspects it might be the work of the bandits from Talon's Grip. Retrieving it would not only earn the characters some coin but also the gratitude of the entire village.
- **Unwanted Guests:** The inn has recently been haunted by unsettling noises and mysterious apparitions. Business is suffering, and Mariah will reward the adventurers handsomely if they can get to the bottom of this eerie occurrence and rid the inn of its unwelcome visitors.

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- **Rumor of Treasure:** Mariah overheard a drunk patron mumbling about a hidden treasure in the woods but didn't take it seriously until other patrons reported seeing mysterious figures digging at night. She's curious and offers the adventurers a cut of whatever they find if they investigate.
- **The Traveler's Tale:** A wandering bard told tales of a mystical artifact said to bring prosperity to lands where it resides. The bard's story hints that this artifact might actually be near Stormholme. Mariah suggests the adventurers seek it out, not just for the sake of the inn but for the prosperity of the entire village.

3—Gorin Ironfoot's Blacksmith Shop

A cornerstone of the local economy, this blacksmith shop is run by Gorin Ironfoot, a dwarf of considerable skill. Here you can find anything from simple nails to masterfully crafted swords.

Gorin Ironfoot

Gorin Ironfoot is a stout, muscular dwarf with a bristling white beard and a bald pate, etched with the lines of age and experience. As the village blacksmith, he's an essential part of Stormholme's economy, crafting everything from simple horseshoes to intricate weaponry. His shop is always bustling, filled with the clang of hammer on metal and the orange glow of the forge. Despite his gruff exterior, Gorin is well-

liked for his dry wit and generous nature; he often provides apprenticeships to youngsters interested in the craft. What most people don't know is that Gorin was once part of an elite dwarven military unit and possesses knowledge of crafting items of great power. He keeps this a secret, as he has long forsaken the life of a warrior, but dire circumstances might force him to reveal his hidden skills.

Some adventure hooks Gorin might offer include:

- **The Forge's Fire:** Gorin's forge has been acting up lately, and he suspects that the source of the issue might be magical. He tasks the adventurers to seek out rare herbs and minerals in the nearby forest that he believes can cleanse his forge of whatever foul magic may be affecting it.
- **Stolen Anvil:** A prized anvil, passed down through generations of Ironfoots, has been stolen from Gorin's shop. He suspects bandits from the nearby old fortress known as Talon's Grip are responsible and asks the adventurers to retrieve it.
- **Haunted Metal:** Gorin recently acquired some iron ore that he believes might be cursed or haunted. Objects forged from it behave strangely and occasionally move on their own. He asks the adventurers to trace back the source of the ore and find out what's wrong with it.
- **The Swords of Legend:** Gorin has been commissioned to forge ceremonial swords for an upcoming festival but lacks a crucial, rare ingredient: Star Iron. Rumor has it that a meteorite composed of this material recently fell in a remote part of the forest. He asks the adventurers to locate it.
- **Sabotaged Supplies:** Someone has been sabotaging Gorin's metal supplies, mixing inferior metals with his high-quality stock. He wants the adventurers to stake out his shop or the supply routes to catch the culprit.
- **Crafting the Ultimate Weapon:** Gorin has always dreamt of crafting a weapon of unparalleled quality. To do this, he needs the scales of a Dragon or similarly rare materials. He offers the adventurers a significant reward if they can procure such an ingredient for him.

4—Stormholme Marketplace

Located adjacent to the palisade, this open-air market is run by various local vendors. Every weekend, Lydia, the market overseer, rings a bell to announce the opening of the market. Produce from nearby farms, freshly caught fish, and crafts made by local artisans can all be found here.

Lydia the Overseer

Lydia is a sharp-witted, middle-aged woman with a robust laugh and a commanding presence. As the market overseer of Stormholme, she manages the weekly bazaars, assigns stalls, and ensures a smooth flow of commerce. Her thick mane of auburn hair is usually tied back in a practical knot as she navigates her way through the market, notebook in hand. Lydia is widely respected for her business acumen and is also known for being a fair but strict mediator in trade disputes. What many don't know is that Lydia was once a traveling merchant herself and was involved in more than a few illicit deals; she has an old contact in the underworld who occasionally provides her with information, a secret she keeps closely guarded to maintain her standing in the community.

Some adventure hooks Lydia might offer include:

- **Missing Merchants:** Lydia is concerned about a couple of regular traders who have gone missing. She suspects bandit activity but needs someone to investigate.
- **Market Monopoly:** A new merchant has set up a stall selling goods at unusually low prices, undercutting other vendors. Lydia suspects foul play and wants someone to dig deeper into this mysterious competitor's business.
- **Stolen Goods:** Items from several stalls have been stolen over the past week. Lydia needs someone to catch the thief red-handed or at least gather evidence to identify the culprit.
- **Smuggled Wares:** Lydia's underworld contact tips her off about a shipment of illegal goods that will pass through the market. She wants someone to discreetly intercept the goods and find out who's behind it.
- **Rare Ingredient Hunt:** A local alchemist needs a rare herb for a medicine that could help many in the village. Lydia asks the

characters to venture into the surrounding wilderness to find it.

- **Supplier Shakedown:** Several vendors have complained that their usual suppliers are demanding higher prices for raw materials. Lydia suspects a single source manipulating the market and wants someone to find out who is behind it and why.

5—Training Ground

A clearing near the edge of the village serves as a training ground for the volunteer militia. Led by Captain Elara Stormwind, the volunteers can be seen drilling here on weekends, honing their skills with spears, swords, and crossbows.

Captain Elara Stormwind

Captain Elara Stormwind is a stern but fair leader of the volunteer militia in Stormholme. With striking features and a bearing that speaks of years of military discipline, she is a woman of few words but decisive action. Her icy blue eyes can be as warm as a summer's day when she's among her trusted comrades or as cold as the depths of winter when sizing up a threat. Before settling down in Stormholme, Elara served in the Veramarian army, where she gained a reputation for being both brave and smart. She stepped down from her formal military role after an operation went horribly wrong, a detail she keeps closely guarded. This seasoned veteran took it upon herself to train the local militia, transforming a ragtag group of farmers and craftsmen into a somewhat organized defense force. Her deepest secret is that she's been in covert correspondence with her former military contacts, seeking additional support for Stormholme, a move that could be seen as an act of desperation—or treason—if discovered.

Some adventure hooks Elara might offer include:

- **Bandit Reconnaissance:** Captain Elara suspects that the bandits from Talon's Grip are planning a large-scale attack soon. She needs a group to scout the old fortress and gather intel on their numbers and defenses.
- **Missing Militia:** Two members of the militia didn't return from their regular patrol along the Ecliptic Flow. Worried about their safety, Elara asks the characters to find them and bring them back.

- **Supply Raid:** The militia is running low on crucial supplies like arrows and medical kits. Elara has heard rumors of an old military cache hidden in the nearby hills and needs someone to locate and retrieve it.

- **Training Day:** Captain Elara wants to test new defense strategies but lacks the manpower for a full-scale mock battle. She asks the party to act as an opposing force in a simulated combat scenario against the militia.

- **Unsettling Reports:** Travelers have mentioned seeing unnatural creatures prowling the outskirts of Stormholme. Concerned, Elara asks the adventurers to investigate the matter and deal with any threats.

- **Insider Threat:** Elara has reason to believe there might be a spy among the militia leaking information to the bandits. She needs the party

6—The Watchtowers

Built at strategic intervals along the wooden palisade, these towers are manned by vigilant lookouts. Horns are kept at the ready to alert the town in case of an attack or other emergency.

The Watchtower Trio

Jareth "Longeye" Serris, Milla "Stoneshot" Thorne, and Bertram "Quietfoot" Willow are the vigilant trio that often mans the watchtowers of Stormholme. Jareth, a lanky man in his early thirties, is revered for his sharp eyesight and serves the watchtower with his trained hawk, Ember. He keeps a secret journal filled with encrypted messages about strange happenings he's observed. Milla, a robust woman and cousin to Mayor Elysia Thorne, is famous for her no-nonsense attitude and her deadly aim with a crossbow. When not on duty, she indulges in her secret passion for sketching landscapes and portraits. Bertram, a wiry halfling with a quick smile, is surprisingly stealthy for someone who spends most of his time in a high tower. He's known to be the go-between for Captain Elara Stormwind and the other volunteers, carrying messages and relaying updates. What most don't know is that Bertram is an amateur herbalist, and he's been investigating the properties of some local plants for their potential use in minor healing potions. Together, these three form a vigilant and dedicated team, each bringing their

unique skills and secrets to the defense of their frontier home.

Some adventure hooks the trio might offer include:

- **Suspicious Movement:** Jareth "Longeye" Serris has seen shadowy figures skulking around the edges of the forest near sundown. He'd like the adventurers to investigate, fearing that these could be scouts for an incoming bandit raid or worse.
- **The Lost Heirloom:** Milla "Stoneshot" Thorne accidentally dropped a family heirloom while on watchtower duty, a brooch that slipped through the floorboards and into the wilderness below. She's too embarrassed to ask for official time off to search for it but would be indebted to anyone who could retrieve it.
- **Hawk's Eye View:** Jareth's hawk, Ember, has picked up a shiny object from somewhere in the forest and brought it back. It's part of a larger artifact, and Jareth believes it may be cursed or magical in nature. He suggests a mission to find the other parts.
- **Potion Components:** Bertram "Quietfoot" Willow is interested in completing his minor healing potion experiment. He needs rare herbs that grow in a dangerous part of the forest, guarded by a territorial beast. Bertram can't leave his post but would be grateful if someone could fetch the herbs for him.
- **The Silent Whistle:** A secret code whistle hasn't been heard from one of the other watchtowers in days. Since they can't all abandon their posts, they ask the adventurers to check on the other watchtower and report back.
- **Infiltration at Talon's Grip:** Having kept a keen eye on the activities at the bandit fortress known as Talon's Grip, Milla has noted a decrease in sentry patrols. She sees this as an opportune time to infiltrate the fortress for reconnaissance or even to rescue hostages. She looks to the adventurers for their combat and infiltration skills.

7—Riverbank of Ecliptic Flow

A common spot for fishermen and youngsters who brave the icy water for a refreshing dip. The area is somewhat secluded, providing a peaceful escape for those wishing to get away from the routine hustle and bustle.

Old Man Wren

Old Man Wren, born Thaddeus Wren but rarely called that, is a fixture along the riverbanks of the Ecliptic Flow. With his long, graying beard and weathered face, he resembles the ancient willows that line the river as much as a human. Wren is known for his expertise in fishing, seemingly having an almost mystical connection with the river and its aquatic inhabitants. Villagers often seek him out for advice about the best fishing spots or even matters of the heart, as he has lived long enough to gather wisdom on a variety of topics. What most don't know is that Old Man Wren was once a skilled water mage, a secret he keeps hidden to avoid drawing attention. Nowadays, he's content to live his life in tranquility, though he occasionally shows signs of a more adventurous past.

Some adventure hooks Old Man Wren might offer include:

- **Whispers in the Water:** Old Man Wren confides that the fish have been acting strangely, gathering near a mysterious underwater cavern. He suspects dark magic and asks the characters to investigate.
- **The Sunken Relic:** Wren has caught glimpses of a glimmering artifact deep in the river but feels it's too dangerous for him to retrieve it alone. Could the adventurers be interested in a waterlogged treasure hunt?
- **Riverbank Raid:** A group of bandits has been harassing the riverbank, endangering the fish and those who rely on them. Wren asks the adventurers to put an end to it, hinting that the bandits seem to be after something specific in the area.
- **Elemental Disruption:** The river's natural flow seems to be disturbed, with violent whirlpools forming at odd intervals. Old Man Wren believes elemental forces are at play and requests the characters to help him perform a ritual to calm the river.

- **Forgotten Shrine:** Wren shares tales of an ancient shrine dedicated to a water deity that's said to be hidden somewhere along the river. According to legend, it holds a powerful artifact that should not fall into the wrong hands.
- **The Talking Fish:** As absurd as it sounds, Old Man Wren swears that one of the fish spoke to him, warning of an impending disaster. Is it the ramblings of an old man, or could there be a mystical creature in need of help? He urges the adventurers to find out.

8—Stormholme Community Chapel

A small but well-kept chapel serves as a spiritual center for the village. Its stained-glass windows depict scenes from local folklore. The chapel also holds community events and serves as a meeting place during times of crisis.

Sister Eleanor Gracewood

A middle-aged woman with a calming presence and a soft-spoken demeanor, Sister Eleanor is the spiritual guide and caretaker of Stormholme's community chapel. Her past is a carefully guarded secret, with rumors suggesting she was once a healer on the battlefield before taking her vows. She has an uncanny ability to show up when people are in the most need of guidance or healing. Little does the community know, Eleanor is a skilled diviner and often has visions of future events, some of which she has been able to prevent. She keeps her magical talents hidden, fearing the villagers would misunderstand or, worse, exploit her abilities.

Some adventure hooks Sister Eleanor might offer include:

- **A Vision of Doom:** Sister Eleanor has had a disturbing vision of the village burning and its citizens suffering a gruesome fate. She believes that a dark artifact hidden somewhere in the nearby wilderness is the cause and asks the characters to locate and safely dispose of it.
- **Missing Relic:** The chapel's most treasured relic, a chalice said to have healing properties, has been stolen. Sister Eleanor suspects bandits but can't rule out that it might be an inside job. She seeks the characters' help in recovering it.

- **Divine Intervention:** Sister Eleanor reveals to the party that she's been having visions of an injured stranger stranded in the forest, surrounded by wolves. She believes this to be a prophecy rather than a simple dream and asks the characters to intervene before it's too late.
- **Spiritually Haunted:** A series of hauntings have begun to disturb the chapel. Prayers are interrupted by ghostly whispers, and the altar's candles flicker and die without reason. Sister Eleanor believes that these hauntings could be the work of a restless spirit in need of help crossing over.
- **Mysterious Illness:** Several villagers have fallen critically ill with a disease that neither medicine nor basic divine spells can cure. Sister Eleanor suspects this is a curse and seeks ingredients for a ritual to remove it. She has a list of rare herbs and other magical components that she asks the characters to obtain.
- **Secret Sanctuary:** Sister Eleanor has found an old map that points to the location of an ancient, hidden sanctuary said to be a place of immense divine power. She believes this place could serve as a refuge for the villagers in times of crisis and asks the characters to secure the location.

9—Stormholme Schoolhouse

A humble wooden structure where the children of the village receive basic education. Besides reading, writing, and arithmetic, lessons in survival skills are also given, making it an essential institution for the frontier town.

Agatha Featherstone

Miss Agatha Featherstone is the stern yet nurturing headmistress of the Stormholme School House. In her early forties, she has a sharp eye behind her round spectacles and often wears her dark hair up in a tight bun. She believes in the power of education to elevate not just individuals but the entire community, especially in the untamed lands of the frontier. Many parents and students find her strict but fair, with a remarkable ability to get the best out of her pupils. What most people don't know about Miss Featherstone is that she was once a wizard's apprentice and, although she chose the path of education over spellcraft, she still keeps a small collection of

magical texts hidden in a locked cupboard in her office.

Some adventure hooks Agatha might offer include:

- **Hidden Texts:** Miss Featherstone approaches the party discreetly, asking them to retrieve a rare magical text from a nearby abandoned library. She warns that the text might be guarded by arcane traps or magical creatures.
- **Schoolhouse Rescue:** The school has been closed due to a rat infestation, but these aren't ordinary rats—they're the result of a magical experiment gone wrong. Miss Featherstone seeks the party's help in clearing the infestation while investigating the source of these magical pests.
- **Spell Components:** Needing rare spell components for an educational demonstration, Miss Featherstone offers the adventurers a small sum to collect them from the surrounding wilderness. However, these components also attract the attention of other magical beings.
- **Apprentice Trouble:** One of the older students, eager to prove himself, has stumbled upon Miss Featherstone's hidden magical texts and set off to explore an old, dangerous ruin. She asks the party to find and bring him back safely before he gets into something he can't get out of.
- **Ghosts of the Past:** A haunting has begun in the schoolhouse. Students report seeing strange figures and hearing whispers. Miss Featherstone fears that this might be related to her magical texts and asks the adventurers to investigate and deal with the issue.
- **Secret Seminar:** Miss Featherstone is hosting a confidential meeting of local scholars to discuss magical theories and advancements. However, they've received threats from a group that believes magic should not be meddled with. She asks the adventurers to serve as bodyguards for the duration of the seminar.

10—Path to Talon's Grip

A narrow, overgrown trail leads from the village to the bandit-infested fortress known as Talon's Grip. It's an hour's walk but feels like an eternity

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given the menace that resides there. Locals avoid this path unless absolutely necessary, and a sign at its beginning sternly warns against venturing forth.

Garrick Silversmith

Garrick "Shadowfoot" Silversmith is a rugged, middle-aged scout who knows the path to Talon's Grip like the back of his hand. With a grizzled beard, sharp eyes, and an ever-present smirk, Garrick is both respected and slightly feared by the villagers. He has an uncanny ability to move silently through the forest, which he attributes to years of tracking game and dodging bandits. While generally tight-lipped, Garrick is especially so about his years before coming to Stormholme; what's known is that he was a former member of a rogue's guild in a distant city. Despite his reticence, he's highly trusted when it comes to matters of reconnaissance and pathfinding. Secretly, Garrick has been gathering information on the bandits at Talon's Grip, nursing a personal vendetta against their leader who, unknown to the villagers, is Garrick's estranged brother.

Some adventure hooks Garrick might offer include:

- **The Brother's Secret:** Garrick offers the characters a reward for infiltrating Talon's Grip and bringing back intelligence on the bandits. He's especially interested in any news of their leader.
- **Hidden Cache:** Garrick has hidden valuable supplies near Talon's Grip in preparation for a

personal mission. However, he suspects that the bandits have discovered it. He asks the party to retrieve or verify the cache's status.

- **Bandit Bounty:** Tired of the constant threat posed by the bandits, Garrick sets up a bounty board, promising gold or valuable items for every bandit taken down. He wants the party to be the first to contribute to this grim tally.
- **The Lost Heirloom:** Garrick mentions that he lost a family heirloom at Talon's Grip years ago, and would reward anyone willing to retrieve it for him.
- **Scout the Scouts:** Garrick has heard that the bandits are planning a large-scale attack on the village and wants the party to find and question their scouts for details.
- **Proving Ground:** Garrick is getting older and is looking for someone to train in the ways of scouting and reconnaissance. He sets up a series of challenges for the characters, the completion of which earns his approval and inside knowledge of the area surrounding Talon's Grip.

Other Notable NPCs

In addition to the aforementioned NPCs, the characters might encounter one or more of the following people while in Stormholme.

Lila Broadfoot

The village's healer, Lila is a middle-aged halfling woman who runs a small apothecary stall filled with all sorts of herbs and potions. Her friendly demeanor and vast knowledge of natural remedies have made her indispensable to the community. She's a devout follower of a nature deity and keeps a secret garden of rare, magical plants.

Some adventure hooks Lila might offer include:

- **Healing Herbs:** Lila's herb garden has been raided, and several rare and valuable plants have been stolen. She asks the characters to investigate and retrieve the stolen herbs, as they are essential for her healing remedies.
- **The Midnight Bloom:** Lila has heard rumors of a legendary, magical flower known as the Midnight Bloom, said to grant incredible healing properties. She asks the characters to

embark on a quest to find this rare flower deep within the Whisperwood, which is rumored to be its only known habitat.

- **A Cure for the Cursed:** Lila has received reports of a nearby village suffering from a mysterious curse. She believes she can concoct a remedy using her knowledge and herbs but needs the characters to gather rare ingredients from dangerous locations.
- **The Herb Collector:** A renowned herbalist is visiting Stormholme and is interested in trading rare herbs and knowledge. Lila requests the characters' assistance in finding a unique and valuable herb to impress the herbalist and secure a favorable trade.

Thalia Nightshade

Thalia is a mysterious figure in Stormholme, often seen hanging around the edges of the village or venturing into the forest alone. Rumors say she's a witch, but nobody really knows for sure. She always seems to have peculiar trinkets and odd ingredients for sale, and her reclusive nature makes her a subject of both curiosity and suspicion.

Some adventure hooks Lila might offer include:

- **Herbal Heist:** Thalia's stock of rare healing herbs has been mysteriously depleting faster than it should. She suspects someone in the village is stealing from her garden and wants adventurers to catch the thief in the act.
- **Flower of Light:** Thalia has heard legends of a mystical flower that blooms only under the full moon in a secluded grove deep within the nearby forest. The flower is said to have extraordinary healing properties, and she'd like someone to retrieve it for her.
- **Infestation:** Thalia's garden is suffering from a rare kind of insect infestation that threatens to ruin her plants. She believes the only remedy is a special type of sap from a tree in a dangerous part of the forest and needs someone to retrieve it.
- **Love's Labor:** A young couple in the village wishes to marry but can't afford a proper ceremony. Thalia wants to help by creating a love potion that requires a series of rare ingredients, which she asks adventurers to collect.

Nathaniel "Nate" Swiftwater

A skilled fisherman who knows the Ecliptic Flow like the back of his hand. Nathaniel is an older gentleman, who enjoys recounting tales of his youthful adventures. He's a key source for fish in the village but has recently been concerned about strange occurrences in the river—fish disappearing and odd ripples in the water.

Some adventure hooks Nathaniel might offer include:

- **River's Riddle:** Nathaniel has noticed that fish from a certain part of the Ecliptic Flow have been coming up ill or deformed. He's concerned that something in the water is causing it and wants adventurers to investigate the source.
- **Lost Keepsake:** Nathaniel dropped a sentimental locket while fishing in a deep part of the river and is unable to retrieve it himself. He offers a reward to anyone willing to brave the icy waters to find it.
- **Drifter's Danger:** A mysterious rowboat has been seen floating down the Ecliptic Flow late at night, and Nathaniel suspects it might be connected to smuggling or worse. He's looking for adventurers to stake it out and find out who's behind it.
- **Rapids Rescue:** Every year, young daredevils try to navigate the dangerous rapids upstream for fun, and accidents are common. Nathaniel has heard that a group has gone missing and would like adventurers to go upstream to find and rescue them.

Mira Stargazer

The village's unofficial historian and astrologer, Mira is a half-elf who lives in a home filled with ancient tomes and star charts. She is an older woman with an ageless quality, deeply respected for her wisdom and often consulted for her astrological readings, which many in the village consider to be incredibly accurate.

Some adventure hooks Mira might offer include:

- **Star-Crossed Lovers:** Mira has seen troubling signs in the stars, predicting a disastrous future for two young lovers in the village. She would like adventurers to investigate the situation and perhaps find a way to divert fate.

- **Missing Manuscript:** One of Mira's most treasured astrological texts has gone missing. She suspects it may have been stolen and wants it returned before its knowledge falls into the wrong hands.

- **Comet Sighting:** A rare celestial event is about to occur, and Mira needs specific ingredients to perform an important ritual. The catch? These ingredients can only be found in a dangerous cave filled with hostile creatures.

- **Time Capsule:** Mira is concerned that the history of Stormholme and its surrounding area is being forgotten. She wants to create a "time capsule" filled with important artifacts and documents but needs adventurers to gather these items from various dangerous locations.

Edwin Gruff

Edwin Gruff is the gruff but kind-hearted barkeep at the Frosted Mug Inn. His rough exterior hides a compassionate heart, and he seems to know everyone's secrets but keeps them all close to his chest. With a large scar across his face as a memento of his past life as an adventurer, Edwin is a fixture at the inn, where he serves drinks and listens to the villagers' tales and troubles.

Some adventure hooks Edwin might offer include:

- **Cursed Keepsake:** Edwin has a cursed item from his adventuring days that he's kept locked away. Recently, strange occurrences have been happening around the inn, and he suspects the item is the cause. He needs someone to safely dispose of it.

- **Old Rivals:** Some of Edwin's former adventuring comrades have turned to banditry and are causing trouble in the area. He'd like the characters to find a way to stop them without killing them, if possible.

- **Liquid Assets:** Edwin has heard rumors of a rare and valuable type of liquor that can only be found in a dangerous part of the forest. He'd pay well for a bottle.

- **Edwin's Lost Friend:** A close friend of Edwin's from his adventuring days has gone

missing, and the last time he was seen was near the perilous Talon's Grip. Edwin is too old to go himself and asks the adventurers to find out what happened.

Clara Wainwright

A young, enthusiastic human woman who is the self-appointed community organizer. Clara helps coordinate festivals, public works, and other community events. Though she often clashes with the older, more traditional members of the community, her energy and idealism make her a central figure in any village activity.

Some adventure hooks Clara might offer include:

- **Festival Fiasco:** Clara is organizing the annual Harvest Festival but has run into numerous problems, from missing supplies to mysterious sabotage. She asks the adventurers to investigate and resolve the issues before the festival is ruined.
- **Community Garden:** Clara wants to establish a community garden but has been told that the plot of land she has her eye on is haunted. She asks the characters to investigate and, if there are any supernatural entities, to remove them.
- **Missing Musicians:** A group of musicians that Clara hired for the upcoming festival have gone missing while traveling to Stormholme. She fears they may have run afoul of bandits or wild animals and needs someone to find them.
- **The Old Ways:** Clara wants to integrate some of the more ancient and traditional local customs into the next festival to win the favor of the older generation. She asks the adventurers to retrieve some specific, hard-to-find items that are significant in these old customs.

Jasper Thorne

Younger brother of Mayor Elysia Thorne, Jasper is a budding inventor with a talent for mechanical gadgets. Despite his familial connections, he's somewhat of a black sheep, more interested in his eccentric projects than in community leadership. Jasper has a workshop filled with odd contraptions, some of which are surprisingly useful.

Art Coming Soon

Some adventure hooks Jasper might offer include:

- **Machine Malfunction:** One of Jasper's inventions has gone haywire and is causing havoc in the village. He needs the characters to help him track it down and shut it down before it causes any more damage.
- **Missing Blueprint:** Jasper has lost the blueprint for his latest invention, which he believes was stolen. He asks the adventurers to investigate and recover the missing blueprint, fearing it could be used for nefarious purposes.
- **Prototype Test:** Jasper has a new invention he wants to test but doesn't want to risk his own safety. He asks the characters to be the test subjects for his contraption, promising a reward if they survive the trial.
- **Mechanized Menace:** A malfunctioning golem-like construct created by Jasper is rampaging through the forest, threatening both the village and the local wildlife. Jasper needs the characters to find a way to stop it and bring it back under control.

Rosalind Willow

Rosalind runs the local bakery and is famous for her delicious, fresh-baked bread and pastries. A warm and maternal figure, she's been a widow for many years and treats the whole village like her extended family. She's known for sliding secret notes or small tokens into the bread baskets of

those she believes need an extra bit of love or luck.

Some adventure hooks Rosalind might offer include:

- **Mysterious Ingredients:** Rosalind's bakery has been targeted by a series of petty thefts, with some of her secret recipes and unique ingredients disappearing. She asks the characters to investigate and find out who's been stealing from her.
- **The Love Loaf:** Rosalind has baked a special "Love Loaf" bread with a hidden token inside, and it's rumored to bring good fortune in matters of the heart to whoever finds it. She asks the characters to discreetly deliver the Love Loaf to a specific villager whom she believes needs some romantic encouragement.
- **Flour Shortage:** Rosalind is facing a flour shortage, and without it, she won't be able to bake enough bread for the village. She asks the characters to embark on a quest to find a new source of flour, whether it's from a nearby mill or a distant wheat farm.
- **Baking Contest:** Rosalind hears of a regional baking contest and wants to represent Stormholme. She needs the characters to help gather rare and exotic ingredients for her competition entry, as well as provide moral support during the event.

Flint Ironheart

A dwarven miner who has taken to exploring the foothills of the Titans for valuable minerals. He's a recent arrival in Stormholme, bullish and businesslike, but has quickly become a key figure due to the wealth of resources he's begun to unearth. Flint is also a seasoned fighter, having served in dwarven militias in his younger years.

Some adventure hooks Flint might offer include:

- **Mining Dangers:** Flint has uncovered a perilous underground chamber while mining, but he's reluctant to face the dangers alone. He hires the characters as a protective escort while he investigates the chamber's secrets, which may include valuable minerals or ancient artifacts.
- **Rival Prospectors:** A group of rival prospectors, envious of Flint's successful

finds, are causing trouble in the area. Flint asks the characters to help deal with these competitors and ensure the safety of his mining operations.

- **Lost Expedition:** Flint has learned of an old dwarven expedition that disappeared in the mountains years ago, rumored to have been searching for a legendary gem. He wants the characters to help him locate any clues or remnants of the lost expedition and, if possible, retrieve the gem.
- **Trade Negotiations:** Flint has struck a deal with a neighboring village to trade his valuable minerals for supplies the community desperately needs. However, tensions are rising between the two villages.

Lena Quickfoot

Lena is a young halfling woman who serves as the village messenger and news-bearer. Quick and nimble, she knows all the shortcuts and hidden paths around Stormholme and beyond. Lena is eager to prove herself and harbors dreams of becoming an adventurer. She owns a pet raccoon named Rascal, who often accompanies her on her rounds and has become a village favorite.

- **Lost Letter:** Lena was supposed to deliver an important message to a nearby village, but she lost it during her last trip. She enlists the characters to help her retrace her steps and find the missing letter before it causes a diplomatic incident.
- **Raccoon Rescue:** Rascal, Lena's beloved raccoon, has gone missing in the nearby woods. Lena is frantic and asks the characters to assist in the search for her treasured pet, fearing that he may be in danger.
- **Lena's Ascent:** Lena dreams of becoming an adventurer, and she asks the characters to take her under their wing and show her the ropes. She's eager to learn and prove herself, and her knowledge of local shortcuts could come in handy during their adventures.
- **Mysterious Tracks:** While exploring the hidden paths she knows so well, Lena stumbles upon a set of strange tracks that she can't identify. She recruits the characters to help investigate and determine whether there's a potential threat lurking nearby.

Random Events

Once per week (or day, if you like) that the characters are in Stormholme, one of the following events might occur. These events are meant to add intrigue and drama to this seemingly quiet little village.

d20	Event	d20	Event
1	Mayor Elysia confronts Gorin Ironfoot over his increasing influence in village affairs, straining their long-standing friendship.	11	Jasper's eccentric inventions draw the ire of the town council, who demand greater oversight of his activities.
2	Edwin Gruff overhears a secret conversation between Jasper and a mysterious visitor, raising suspicions and sparking a tense confrontation.	12	Lila's attempts to heal a sick child cause friction with the local apothecary, who distrusts her unconventional remedies.
3	Clara challenges Mariah Greenbriar's authority over community events, causing a rift in their once-close relationship.	13	Mira's predictions for an upcoming celestial event provoke disagreement among the villagers about its significance.
4	Lena's pet raccoon, Rascal, accidentally damages a valuable invention of Jasper's, leading to an argument between them.	14	Flint's mining operations inadvertently damage the water supply, causing an argument with Lena's family, who rely on the river for their livelihood.
5	Lila's experiments with rare plants anger the local herbalist, who accuses her of endangering the village with reckless actions.	15	Edwin Gruff and Jasper clash over their differing opinions on how to handle bandit threats, creating division among the villagers.
6	Mira's astrological readings predict a dire future for Stormholme, causing friction with the more skeptical elders.	16	Clara's efforts to organize a grand festival put a strain on the town's finances, leading to disputes with the council.
7	Flint's unearthing of valuable minerals leads to a dispute with Gorin Ironfoot, as both vie for control over the lucrative resources.	17	Mariah Greenbriar's decision to increase drink prices at the inn frustrates customers and results in complaints.
8	Edwin Gruff gets into a heated debate with Captain Elara about the readiness of the village's defenses, causing tensions within the militia.	18	Lena's escapades while delivering messages cause tension with the local militia, who view her activities as disruptive.
9	Clara and Lena's conflicting visions for the upcoming festival result in a clash over event planning.	19	Lila's insistence on using rare plants in her remedies infuriates Mira, who believes she's recklessly endangering the village.
10	Mariah Greenbriar's growing popularity at the inn triggers jealousy in Rosalind, leading to a public spat between them.	20	Gorin Ironfoot and Flint's rivalry escalates when both lay claim to a rich mining deposit, leading to an escalating feud.