

SEASON'S BLEEDINGS

Help Egmark deliver the presents to the children of Hakonvik and rekindle the magic candle that protects the town.

5E COMPATIBLE ADVENTURE

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Deep in the chilly heart of the Frost Lands, located between Bregor Forest and Lake Yfónas, lies the town of Hakonvik. Known as laborious and community-oriented, the townsfolk are preparing for Winter's Night, the coldest and darkest night of the year, where adults and children receive presents. Little do they know that this year things will be different.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Season's Bleedings, a 5e compatible one-shot RPG Christmas adventure by Cast n Play.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

Season's Bleedings is a 5e adventure meant for four to five player 5th level characters. The adventure takes place around Hakonvik, a town in the glacial Frost Lands.

- Fun is the ultimate goal. Never forget that.
- As a Game Master, you know your players better than anyone. Make your decisions accordingly.
- You have the last word. This adventure is a guide, but you can improvise as you see fit.

STORY OVERVIEW

Season's Bleedings plot is as follows:

- For hundreds of years, the townsfolk have toiled against severe winter conditions. Solidarity and community drive have helped them thrive in conditions that would deter most.
- Hakonvik lies next to Lake Yfónas and is surrounded by Bregor Forest, a dangerous place covered in snow most of the year.
- Khione and Morana are two powerful winter spirits, guardians of the region and twin sisters, who protected Hakonvik during its early years. For centuries, the townsfolk made offerings to both, but in recent years, only Khione has received, creating a growing resentment in Morana.
- Winter Night is upon the world, the darkest and longest night of the years when the children of Hakonvik receive presents from Khione, and the adults revel in their famed festival.
- This year, Morana has decided to spoil the festivities by targeting what the people of Hakonvik love the most: their children.
- Khione's goblin servants were attacked by Morana's minions (goblin like creatures but fiercer and in red attire and steel boots), the toys intended for the children stolen and the goblins killed except for one, whom the PCs find in the forest while traveling to Hakonvik.
- The surviving goblin, Egmark, will hire the party to help him retrieve the children's presents and reach Hakonvik before the night is over.

ABOUT THE WINTER SISTERS

Khione and Morana are winter spirits that have guarded the land since forgotten times. One represents the day, and the other the night, both vital aspects that require and complete the other. Because of that, even though they dislike each other, they are forbidden to fight with one another.

When Hakonvik was a minute settlement, the spirits guarded them, casting away the harshest blizzards and keeping the most dangerous creatures at bay. They did so by leaving behind a magic candle that has to be rekindled each during the Winter Night. The sisters always acted anonymously, but the townsfolk knew that some benevolent spirits were watching over them.

As the town grew, the inhabitants learned to fend for themselves and the spirits no longer intervened on their behalf as much as during the past. However, they were grateful to the sisters and always left regal offerings to them.

Khione (always the warmest of the sisters) becoming fond of the townsfolk, especially the children whose laughter filled the silent winter landscape, left presents for them each year during the festival of the Winter Night.

Morana didn't share such warm enthusiasm towards the people of Hakonvik, but appreciated the offerings and the presence of such a large settlement. Howbeit, as the centuries passed and her offerings decreased as the ones for her sister grew, resentment built up in her heart, and now that she received none, Morana has decided to do something about it.

ABOUT HAKONVIK

The inhabitants of Hakonvik have long battled and overcome the area's freezing temperatures and baleful winds. The region is merciless, and it is only thanks to community labor and the candle that the town has thrived. Solidarity is considered a virtue, and the townsfolk are empathetic.

Bregor Forest provides the wood and fur that upholds the town, and their woodwork is considered amongst the best in the continent because of its craftsmanship and attention to detail. Another source of income is the oil from Galdur-whales that inhabit the deep waters of Lake Yfónas. This precious liquid, used for magic, is highly sought after by spellcasters from other regions of the continent.

This elevated source of income has allowed the townsfolk not only to maintain a prosperous town protected by wooden walls, but to organize the Winter Night Festival, a celebration where food, drinks, and games are abundant and the adults go merrymaking the entire night whilst their children sleep waiting for their presents the following morning.

MORANA'S LESSON

Khione never delivers the presents herself, preferring to send her goblins during the darkest hours of the Winter Night while the adults are drunk and the children are asleep to deliver them.

Knowing that she couldn't act directly, Morana sent her minions, who intercepted Khione's goblins, killed them, and stole the children's presents.

With this act, she hopes that the people of Hakonvik will turn their backs on her sister, or that they will not forget her own offering in the future.

To seal the lesson, her minions also stole the magical roasted nuts that are used to rekindle the candle that protects the town. If the candle were to go out, the inhabitants would face the harshest winter and year they have ever faced, possibly resulting in icy temperatures and the land being covered with ice so thick that no hunting or fishing could occur. These events could spell the end of Hakonvik.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

For this adventure consider the following character hooks:

Lost. The players have been searching for Hakonvik but have gotten lost in Bregor Forest. The goblin knows the way.

Deliver a Package. PCs were formerly hired to deliver an important item to somebody in Hakonvik.

Reward. The party will be rewarded by Khione if they recover the presents and deliver them.

CHARACTERISTICS OF BREGOR FOREST

Bregor Forest has specific qualities because it is a freezing and desolate place; kept almost intact since its creation. Even after many centuries, the townsfolk explored all its corners and few dare venture far. It is a perilous place.

The forest runs through mountainous regions and flat areas until it ends with Lake Yfónas.

- The trees are colossal, many of them block the skies with their foliage, and their trunks can be thicker than a castle wall.
- The ground is covered with snow and ice, and sometimes blocks natural pits and caves.
- The wind blows unceasingly. Most of the time, it is a light breeze, but ice hurricanes have occurred.
- Bregor Forest is teeming with trees and bushes, all alive but covered with snow.
- Because of Winter Night, the sky is covered with obscurity and hardly any star is discernible.

- Remains of creatures are scattered all over the forest. Many frozen, and others devoured.
- The animals that inhabit the hunting have adapted to the cold and are effective predators although some are friendly and intelligent.

To add suspense and create an ambiance of an oppressive winter environment, use the table below to create some minor effects at any moment outside of combat:

Forest Events

D4 Event

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Ice Flowers. A patch of beautiful ice flowers lies in the snow. There are 1d6 ice flowers and each can be used once, like the <i>ice knife</i> spell. |
| 2 | Frozen Soul. PCs come across a gigantic mass of ice. An adventurer's remains reside inside. If the party melts the ice, they find <i>three healing potions</i> . |
| 3 | Freezing Fog. An unnatural fog entralls the area, reducing everyone's vision. The party wanders about in difficult terrain for an hour. |
| 4 | Avalanche. "A bleak silence is followed by a far-away whump." A strong gale at a high point in the forest has unleashed an avalanche. The party has three turns before it reaches them. A successful DC 12 Dexterity check allows a PC to climb a tree and avoid the avalanche. Any PC that fails takes 6d6 bludgeoning damage and is imprisoned under the snow and grappled (escape DC 15 Strength). |



PROLOGUE

Hours have passed since you saw signs of life, even though you are in a forest known for its vast size and variety of dangerous creatures.

Snow covers the entire ground, making the trip longer than expected. The Twin Suns are setting on the horizon and the temperature drops. Fatigue and hunger are setting in as the thought of “How far to Hakonvik?” crosses your minds.

Suddenly, a low moan interrupts your thoughts. It seems to come from further up ahead, just underneath an immense pine tree...

A COLD SHADOW

The party finds itself in a clearing inside Bregor Forest. A 100 feet away lies a pine tree, underneath which a wounded shape is dragging itself through the snow.

THE SPIRIT’S HELPER

The wounded shape belongs to Egmark (lawful good goblin helper), the sole survivor of a brutal attack and one of Khione’s principal assistants.

Wounded and exhausted, the goblin escaped and dragged himself to safety, but one attacker has tracked him and seeks to finish the job.

Egmark spots the party in the distance and manages to give a cry of help.

Help... please.

Development. Once the party has heard the call for help, a boisterous laughter roars in the surrounding area as another shape appears behind the tree and heartily strolls towards Egmark to slay him.

Creatures. Morana’s **minion** is about to kill the goblin. It will attack the party if interrupted and will fight to the death.

Aftermath. The minion will regret his failure before its body turns to icy dust and disappears into the wind. Furthermore, any PC wounded by the minion’s scimitar becomes cursed.

No spell or item can remove the curse, only Egmark knows how to remove it.

Morana’s Curse. All the cursed character’s attacks are done with disadvantage until the curse is removed.

THE OFFER

After the fight, Egmark rises, his wounds healed but his body exhausted. The Goblin will share with the party that he serves a winter spirit called Khione. He will explain that he was part of a group tasked with delivering presents to the children of Hakonvik and to rekindle the magic candle that protects the town, clarifying that if the candle is not rekindled by the end of Winter Night, many ills will fall on Hakonvik. The group was attacked by Morana’s minions and the presents and the candle were stolen. He reveals that only a magic tinderbox (hidden amongst the presents) can rekindle the candle.

Egmark finishes by promising the party a reward of 300 gp, a gift from Khione, and the method for removing the curse if they assist him in retrieving the presents and delivering them to his allies in Hakonvik before the end of Winter Night.

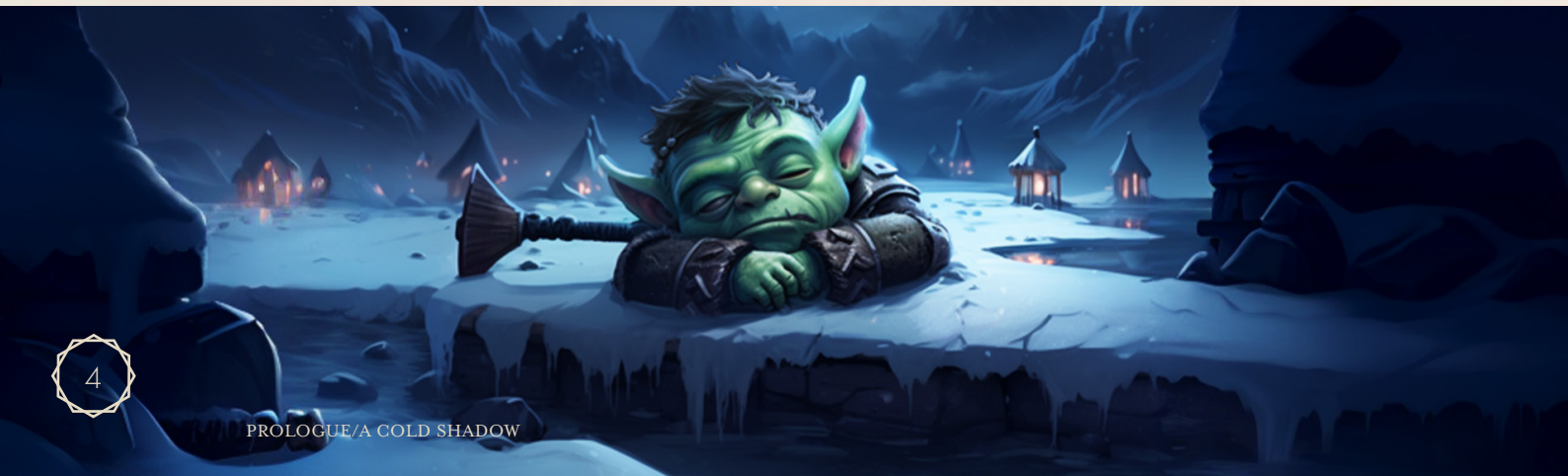
ROLEPLAYING EGMARK

Egmark is an old goblin who has served Khione for a century. He is one of her two chief assistants and the one who best understands the spirit’s whims and behaviour.

A worrywart but a dedicated individual, Egmark is a stupendous source of knowledge, although he lacks power. He takes his job very seriously and will become anxious if the party does not hurry retrieving the presents and delivering them. Pathetic at fighting, he will hide when there’s danger, but assist from the sidelines with advice or encouragement.

What vexes him the most is that this was his final year as an assistant and was planning on retiring, something he cannot do in peace if he should fail his beloved Khione.

Egmark will share everything he knows about Khione’s and Morana’s rivalry and how they cannot fight or act against each other directly, relying on others to do this. He will also state that Morana had never acted like this before, and neither had the minions that attacked him and the other goblins.



DARK CORE OF THE FOREST

Both Egmark and the minion left tracks on the snow. Following them is easy, and leads to where the attack occurred. The goblins lie dead and there's no sign of the minions. A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a group of footprints heading in the opposite direction from whence the party came. Some prints are deeper than others, as if they were carrying something heavy.

The forest is more impressive here; trees are broader and their canopies denser. The terrain is flat, but descending, and with sudden cliffs in some areas.

I. A ROASTY AMBUSH

Snowflakes flutter down as the temperature starts to drop. It is a gentle and bluish type of snow, as if they were part ice. A strong resinous scent radiates from the pine trees mixed with the crisp air of the cold, and something else...

Development. The unknown smell belongs to roasted nuts. Hidden behind some trees are some minions who have been waiting for their ally who had pursued Egmark. Having spotted the party, they hid and prepared a surprise attack. As soon as combat begins, Egmark will run for cover.

Creatures. Four **minions**, using the trees as cover, launch an attack of explosive roasted nuts against the PCs. This first attack is done with advantage. The minions will attack from a distance and enjoy half cover because of the trees. They will avoid melee combat if possible, and they chuckle continuously throughout the fight as if mad.

Aftermath. The minions will fight until killed, staging a dramatic and exaggerated death in their last moment like a dreadful theater actor. Although snow has fallen, the minions' tracks are visible and simple to follow.

Treasure. Inside one of the minion's pouches are: 2d8 roasted nuts (they work like the fire bolt spell), and 2 Gingerbread cookies (they work like the fire bolt spell).

2. THE CAVE

An hour has passed, and the snow has kept falling. Even with these conditions, the footprints are easy to spot, no doubt thanks to the heavy steel boots the minions wear. Further up ahead there's a bright tiny orange dot, a fire? Still too soon to hell. A sudden movement catches your attention, just a couple of feet in front of you.

An arctic fox caught in a trap caused the movement. Egmark discloses that the minions have a taste for this kind of creature, and that no doubt they left the trap here. A successful DC 13 Dexterity check is required to open the trap and release the fox. If the PCs free the creature, it becomes an ally (see appendix A for its stats) of the party, particularly the PC that freed it.

Development. The orange dot is actually a fire just on the rim of a cave. Sitting around it are some minions, chatting or playing with some wooden toys. Sneaking up on the minions requires a successful DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) check. If the party has the fox, it will try to communicate an idea to them. A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check reveals the fox's plan, which consists of it acting as bait and luring some minions away while the party can get the presents. Whoever of the minions remain, will fight to defend the presents.

Creatures. Six **minions** and one **minion leader** sit around the fire. If the party used the fox's plan, 1d6 of the minions will chase after it. This does not apply to the leader. In combat, the minions will fight until beaten, refusing to surrender the presents.

Aftermath. Egmark rejoices at the presents' recovery and will pick up all the toys scattered by the minions. He will then press for the party to move on fast as the night has progressed and time is running out.

Treasure. A large green sack with presents (works like a bag of holding), and the magical tinderbox in the shape of a dragon.

ICY CHOICES

From the cave, Hakonvik is further north. Going straight is not an option because of a steep cliff that is almost impossible to descend at night, much less with snow falling.

Egmark says that they have two choices: go around via northeast, or northwest. They are the fastest way to Hakonvik.

If the party goes northwest, read on. If they choose northeast, skip to "A White Threat."

3. THE FROZEN RIVER

After descending a path through a dense part of the forest, the trees come to a sudden stop. Beyond it lies a vast blue reflection.

The reflection is a gigantic frozen river. The forest ends but continues on the other side of it. Egmark says that they have to cross it.

Development. The river is 180 ft. wide. A strong gale blows over the area, making floating or flying over it hopeless as anyone attempting it just gets shoved back. It is so slippery that normal movement is also redundant. Egmark sits down, and from his own pouch takes out ice skates for everyone—he was carrying some for the killed goblins. The goblin will give each PC a pair. The skates adapt to each user's size, and a detect magic reveals that they are magical in nature. Egmark hastily explains the basics and then skates to the other side, waiting for the party to make the cross.

Each PC must succeed three successive DC 12 Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks to skate across the river. Any PC that fails trips and falls, breaking the ice and falling into the icy water and is likely to drown (see "Suffocating" in chapter 8 of the Player's Handbook). Other PCs can pull him out. Rescued PCs receive 2d10 cold damage, and are considered having crossed the river.

Creatures. Halfway across the river, a wolf splashes from inside a hole, trying to get out of the frozen waters. A successful DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check is needed to pull the creature out.

Aftermath. On the other side, Egmark will praise the party and beseech them to continue on. If any of the PCs rescued the wolf, it will howl in gratitude and sprint away.

4. A WHITE TREAT

The trees scatter, revealing an enormous white glade beyond. A slithering gale causes an eerie sensation in the air.

Egmark signals that the glade must be crossed and proceeds on ahead.

Development. The glade is 300 ft. across and is bereft of any trees or bushes. When the PCs reach the midpoint, they are attacked by a swarm of snowballs.

Creatures. A furious **snowman** has been attacking any creature passing through the glade. The creature is 60ft. away, behind a small wall of snow that it summoned. It will attack from behind the wall, casting a swarm of snowballs (see snilloc's snowball swarm) each turn. The snowman will attack until it is destroyed, or, if any of the PCs get close to the snowman, a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that the creature's face is a ball of snow, with vegetables and sweets making up details of its face, and it is missing a nose. If the PCs hand one of the roasted nuts to the snowman, it will place it as its nose and stop its attack.

Aftermath. If the snowman has a new nose, it will explain using gestures that it is sorry about attacking them and thank the party, healing their wounds before strolling away.

5. A LONELY CABIN

Just beyond the tall trees lies a lonely wooden cabin. It doesn't look abandoned, but there's something amiss. As you approach, it becomes evident that some windows are broken, as is the door.

Development. The cabin consists of one enormous room. The inside of the cabin is a mess; tables turned over and chairs scattered on the ground. Hanging on the walls are two pairs of stockings, one red and one green, and at the far end lies a small tree decorated with crystal spheres of different colors next to the fireplace. The cabin belongs to a hermit and his daughter.

Talvi is a 13-year-old human, who is hiding in the cabin's cellar after a party of Morana's minions attacked the place. A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a hidden hatch on the ground. The hatch leads to the cellar where Talvi is hiding. Upon seeing the party, she will ask if the foul creatures are gone. Before the conversation can go any further, an erratic laughter followed by a strange wooden clacking emanate from outside the cabin.

Creatures. A **minion** wearing goggles sits atop a massive **wooden warrior**. He belongs to the group that attacked Tavil's cabin before and has returned to conclude the destruction. The minion controls the warrior and they will fight until they are destroyed. Egmark will grab Tavil and they will remain in the cellar while combat lasts.

I knew I smelled human flesh! Now smash...

Aftermath. Tavil shares with the players that she is the daughter of Danton, a hunter who sells furs, who would be returning any moment now. When the minions attacked, she was asleep. Egmark will take out a doll from the green sack and give it to her, after which he will panic as dawn is arriving, and there is no way they can get to Hakonvik on time. Hearing this, Tavil will give all the party members wooden skis, and inform them that just beyond the cabin is a slope, and if they use the skis, they can make it to town.

6. SEASONS' MIRACLES

As Tavil said, you arrive at the slope. From the top you can see Hakonvik and its vast wooden wall. From the west, a faint orange light manifests behind the clouds. Dawn is approaching.

Development. Egmark is the first to put his skis on and instructs the PCs on how to use them.

The slope is not wholly smooth. Some rocks obstruct parts of the path and some maneuvering is required to dodge them. Moments after the PCs are skiing down the slope, a group of minions appear on the top of the slope riding a sleigh.

The minions will pursue the party, throwing roasted nuts and aiming for Egmark, who is carrying the presents. Fighting is not an option.

To surpass this challenge, the PCs must keep the minions focused on them as they ski down.

Have the PCs make two DC 13 Dexterity (Acrobatics) group checks. If the group checks fail, the minion's sleigh rushes past them and they catch up to Egmark, drag him into the sleigh and make their escape. The presents are lost. However, if the group checks succeed, the PCs have kept the minions focused on them as they ski down. At that moment, help arrives as wolves or snowmen, depending on who the party helped, and they attack the sleigh, pushing it off course and causing it to crash against a large rock. If the PCs helped neither, the sleigh gets stuck, leaving the minions behind cursing the party and their own failure.

EPILOGUE

Darkness still covers the sky, pushing the light and the dawn back. It's still Winter Night, and the PCs arrived just on time. A group of goblins waits outside the walls of Hakonvik. When they see Egmark, they barely take notice of him, taking the green bag and disappearing behind the walls to deliver the city. Only Egmark stays back to thank the PCs.

"Thanks, friends. Thanks to your efforts, Hakonvik is saved and the children will receive their presents. I cannot thank you enough. If there's anyone who deserves a reward, it is you. But before we settle accounts, allow me to buy you a drink."

The goblin snaps his fingers. A misty blue cloud surrounds Egmark, releasing a lavender smell as tiny white sparks spin inside it. After some seconds, the cloud dissipates, revealing a stout halfling. He smiles and strides into town, signaling them to follow, and mentions that servants of Khione aren't allowed to be seen in Hakonvik.

Rewards. 300 gold pieces, and Khione's gift: a frost brand for each of the surviving PCs.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the entire team of Cast n Play!



APPENDIX A

MORANA MINION

Small Fey, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 15 (Morana's Red Uniform)
Hit Points 19 (6d6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Stealth +6
Senses Darkvision 60ft., Passive Perception 10
Languages Common, Goblin
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Iron Boots. While moving, the minion has disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

Nimble Escape. The minion can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

Outsize Strength. While grappling, the minion is considered to be Medium. Also, wielding a heavy weapon doesn't impose disadvantage on its attack rolls.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The minion makes two sickle attacks or two roasted nuts attacks. The second attack as disadvantage.

Sickle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Roasted Nuts. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 120 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d10) fire damage.

REACTIONS

Redirect Attack. When a creature the minion can see targets it with an attack, the minion chooses another minion within 5 feet of it. The two minions swap places, and the chosen minion becomes the target instead.

MINION LEADER

Small Fey, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 15 (Morana's Red Uniform)
Hit Points 40 (6d6+21)
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

Skills Athletics +6, Perception +3
Senses Darkvision 60ft., Passive Perception 13
Languages Common, Goblin
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Iron Boots. While moving, the minion has disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

Nimble Escape. The minion can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

Outsize Strength. While grappling, the minion is considered to be Medium. Also, wielding a heavy weapon doesn't impose disadvantage on its attack rolls.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The minion makes two sickle attacks or two roasted nuts attacks. The second attack as disadvantage.

Wicked Sickle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (2d4 + 4) slashing damage.

Ironbound Pursuit. The minion moves up to its speed to a creature it can see and kicks with its iron boots. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take 20 (3d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone.

WOODEN WARRIOR

Large Construct, Neutral

Armor Class 9 (Natural Armor)
Hit Points 81 (11d8+41)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Damage Immunities Poison
Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhaustion, Frightened, Paralyzed, Petrified,
Senses Darkvision 60ft., Passive Perception 10
Languages Understand goblin but can't speak it
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Berserk. Whenever the warrior starts its turn with 40 hit points or fewer, roll a d6. On a 6, the warrior goes berserk. On each of its turns while berserk, the warrior attacks the nearest creature it can see. If no creature is close enough to move and attack, the warrior attacks an object, with preference for an object smaller than itself. Once the warrior goes berserk, it continues to do so until its destroyed or regains all its hit points.

Aversion of Fire. If the warrior takes fire damage, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of its next turn.

Immutable Form. The warrior is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Magic Resistance. The warrior has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. The warrior's weapons attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The warrior makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

ARTOX (Arctic Fox)

Tiny beast, Unaligned

Armor Class 15
Hit Points 5 (1d6+3)
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Cha +5
Skills Deception +4, Perception +3, Stealth +5
Senses Darkvision 30ft., Passive Perception 13
Languages (700 XP)
Challenge 1/4 (700 XP)

Rarity Very Rare
Environment Arctic, Forest, Mountains
Diet Berries, Meat, Nuts
Bond 2
Suggested Personality Cunning, Playful

Natural Scrounger. The fox has advantage on Wisdom checks in the wild.

Sprint. At the start of combat, the fox has an extra movement in the first turn.

Thick Coat. The artox can create a thick coat of fur that raises its AC by 2.

Tunneler. The artox can burrow through solid ground at half its burrow speed.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 1 piercing damage.





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