

# Jackals

BRONZE AGE FANTASY ROLEPLAYING

## THE CULT OF CEENON

*An adventure for Unknown Jackals. Kroryla – The 3rd Waterday (Udafuth) of Eser, three days before the end of the year.*

### OVERVIEW

People often flee the trauma of their past, to build a better future and life for themselves and their families. But sometimes, trauma follows you. In the case of the Lykosians of Kroryla, the descendants of an ancient foe return to end the line of Lykos. The Jackals get involved during the first overt attack in Kroryla and are set on a path to deal with the Cult of Ceenon. This adventure is focused on the investigation into the Cult of Ceenon and what is targeting the Lykosians.

### BACKGROUND

The Cult of Ceenon has existed since Lykos' time and continually seeks to destroy the small cult dedicated to the local hero. Three years ago, some of them came under the sway of a northern kyklops named Antronach, who seeks to free the Daughters from their stone shape and bring them back to life. To do this, Antronach needs to ensure there are no high ranking Lykosians



left who can perform the annual rituals to keep the Daughters bound, so he has been gathering forces to himself and communing with cthonic powers as he devises a plan.

A year ago, he sent cultists and taken to raid the building camp where Kryrola attempted to start a new colony. He knew the Lykosian ways: that they would seek to emulate their heroic founder, and would have to respond. Antronach personally slew the Lykosians who came to the camp; never all of them, but just enough to keep the threat alive. His followers captured citizens and vagrants who would not be missed, using their blood in rites to desecrate the site where the Daughters were bound in stone.

Meanwhile, his cultists infiltrated the city. Jacinta, one of these cultists, infiltrated the Lykosians' temple. Using her knowledge of the cult's rites and her new position in the Lykosian temple, she began to plant talismans which would kill the priests in new and terrifying ways, hastening their end. She also discovered a secret chamber in the temple, where the Lykosians kept the body of the nyssalis their founder slew and began plans to bring it back to life.

If they are not stopped, the Cult of Ceenon will end the Lykosian presence in the Zaharets, as no priest would remain to initiate their followers into the higher mysteries. Additionally, the new colony will never be built and Kroryla will swell beyond what it is able to sustain. Most troublingly, the Daughters will be reborn from their stony state and begin again their war against the Melkoni. Enter the Jackals.

## TIMELINE

This is the timeline of events which will happen in Kroryla, unless the Jackals stop it.

- **3 Years Ago** – Antronach takes over one grouping of the Cult of Ceenon. They begin to target Lykosians.
- **2 Years Ago** – The cult heads out into the Zaharets to begin hunting Lykosians.
- **1 Year Ago** – Antronach dreams that the time for the final push is at hand. He begins gathering taken, Wolves, and more cult members to himself in the mountains by the camp.
- **6 Months Ago** – Jacinta and six other cultists arrive in Kroryla. Attacks begin on the northern camp. Philon sends Lykosians to defend the camp.
- **3 Months Ago** – Jacinta and other cultists begin to desecrate the glade site with blood, soaking the ground at night. Jacinta discovers the nyssalis' chamber beneath the temple of Lykos through a vision. She begins to attempt to resurrect it, believing it to be the spawn of Ceenon.
- **2 Months Ago** – Kalisto arrives in Kroryla.
- **1 Month Ago** – The Cult of Ceenon sees the first sign that their actions are bearing fruit. There are cracks in the Daughters in the glade and snakes seem to be gathering there. Unable to help herself, Jacinta crafts a small black serpent from marble and places it on Lykos' heel as a sign of their impending victory.
- **10 Days Ago** – Jacinta, sure of their victory, begins sending the talismans to the temple of Lykos to taunt them.
- **Day 1** – Philon is attacked and slain, the Jackals enter the story.
- **Day 2** – Kalisto is slain by the serpents of Ceenon unless the Jackals intervene.
- **Day 4 (Chief Day of Zador's Week)** – If the Jackals do not stop it, the cult awakens the nyssalis' corpse beneath the temple of Lykos. The nyssalis devastates the temple mount and destroys the Lykosian temple.
- **Day 15** – The kyklops Antronach leads his forces from throughout the Valley of Troikos to the northern camp and wipes out the rest of the Lykosians, preventing the building of the new colony and taxing the resources of Kroryla. Additionally, the Lykosians disappear as a cult in the Zaharets, unless a Lykosian Jackal survives and founds a new temple.

## IMPORTANT NPCS

**Kalisto – High Priestess of Lykos** – Kalisto is a young woman, 20 years of age, who finds herself thrust into the primary position of power in the Lykosian cult. She has long dark hair and high cheekbones. Summoned east by the old priest Philon, she has only recently found her home in Kroryla. At the start of the adventure, she has a vision letting her know that Philon is dead and that she must now guide the Lykosians.

**Diokles – Young initiate of Lykos** – This boy, 9 years of age, has attained the first strip of his Lykosian trials and is present when the high priest Philon dies. He is small for his age, with short honey colored hair that hangs in curls about his face.

**Philon – Former High Priest of Lykos** – Philon has been the high priest of Lykos for the last seven years. He dies at the start of the adventure, when his legs turn to snakes. His hair and beard were thick and white, and his eyes a piercing blue.

**Glykera – Melkoni leader of Kroryla** – Glykera seeks to build a stronger colony around Kroryla. More can be read about her in previous Jackals books.

**Jacinta – Ceenon Cultist** – Sent to infiltrate the Temple of Lykos six months ago by Antronach, she is the head of the local cult and has been weakening the Lykosians by planting ritual talismans. She is a Melkoni woman, average height, and with a series of strange scars on her limbs which look like pairs of tiny punctures. She chafes under the kyklops' leadership, having been a high ranking cultist before he arrived, but knows the kyklops' plan is what brought them this far. She knows she needs something more than the kyklops, so she seeks to resurrect the nyssalis beneath the temple as a way to destroy the temple of Lykos, slay Antronach, and usurp control of the Cult of Ceenon.



## ACT 1 – WITHIN THE WALLS OF KRORYLA

In this act, the Jackals arrive in Kroryla in time to witness a disturbance. The high priest of Lykos dies and dark magics seem to be blamed. Joining – or pressed into – investigations, the Jackals must discover who is targeting the Lykosian cult before it disappears forever.

### SCENE 1 – SNAKES ON THE PLAINS

Read or paraphrase the following:

*You have journeyed west, to the Melkoni colony of Kroryla. The city is booming, with colonists and refugees from the west trickling in every day. The walls of the city are host to tent camps, drawn close to the base of the Lykosian walls. As you approach, you can hear and see a commotion in the midst of one of these encampments. A group of Melkoni soldiers with large bronze shields and spears are trying to push through to the source of the noise, leaving the gate unguarded.*

*You all hear a cry of anguish over the noise of the crowd. “It’s too late! He’s dead!”*

If the Jackals investigate, they hear sounds of shock and outrage. More people start to scream, and they begin to stomp the earth and bat at their legs. Some start to fall and convulse. When the Jackals get to the center of the commotion, they find a body face down in the mud. The body has no legs, but a dozen black vipers spread from the body, striking at the legs of all the people in the crowd.

The snakes can be easily dispatched, as even 1 point of damage slays them. If the Jackals do nothing, the snakes burrow into the ground, disappearing from sight. Next to the legless man, there is a young Lykosian, with a single green slash dyed into the fabric of his left shoulder, convulsing in the grips of the snakes’ venom. A difficult Healing check, or a rite that heals wounds, will save the young man. If this fails, or if the Jackals wait longer than 1 minute before getting involved, the young Lykosian dies.

What the Jackals can glean is based off what skills they choose to use to investigate:

- A successful Lore check will tell a Jackal that Mouathenics can invoke serpents to attack their foes, and that the magic of the east is referred to as the magic of the ‘Serpent’s Standard’.
- A successful Survival check reveals that these snakes are unknown to this region of the world and are far more venomous than any other snake found within the Zaharets.
- A successful Perception check reveals that the black snakes have a strange white mark on their heads, which resembles a humanoid skull.
- A successful Influence check will get the crowd and guards talking.

They can relate:

- Philon and Diokles, the young boy, are members of the Lykosian cult.
- Philon is... was the high priest.
- Philon seemed to recognize someone in the crowd, but then he started screaming.
- No one knows who he recognized.

If they look at the legless man, the Jackals will discover that the man—whom the guards identify as Philon the High Priest of Lykos—has a similar tunic to the young lad, although he has seven colorful slashes on his left shoulder. The skin on his face is slowly turning purple and swelling.

The guards will ask the Jackals if they would help bear the bodies of Philon (the legless man) and Diokles (the young boy) back to the Temple of Lykos, for the temple will want to administer the Hakidian death rites. On the way back, the guards can relate the following information:

- Diokles was raised yesterday to a Lykosian, during the feast day.
- He completed the first of the seven trials of initiation (see *Jackals* p28).
- Philon was the high priest for the last 7 years.
- Kalisto will take over for him.
- It has been a rough time for the Lykosians: every week more news of them dying abroad reaches the city.
- Kroryla is working to build a new colony city for the refugees and the colonists. But something in the woods is attacking the colonists. Scouts find foresters dead, sheep mutilated, and huts collapsed. The colonists were

preparing to flee, until the Lykosians arrived.

- Lykos fought off the beasts which inhabited Kroryla, so the high priest sent the Lykosians into the northern woods to deal with the attacks in the same manner.

Upon entering the city, the Jackal's senses reveal:

*Sights* – people watching speakers debate, the agoras of Kroryla filled, the sight of children racing along the streets, red terracotta roofs, and the broad white steps leading to the temple mount. Peacocks roam the streets, and images of dolphins and swans adorn many of the buildings.

*Smells* – lavender, scented oils, and roasting meats.

*Sounds* – laughter, hawkers, philosophers, and birds.

The guards, assuming the Jackals go with them, will lead them to the Temple of Lykos on the temple mount. When the Jackals enter the Temple of Lykos, proceed to scene 2.

## SCENE 2 – THE TEMPLE

This scene takes place within the Temple of Lykos. Here the Jackals will learn the history of the Lykosian war with the Cult of Ceenon, the secret history of Lykos, and the threat that the cult poses.

### The Temple of Lykos

When the Jackals arrive at the Temple of Lykos, they are greeted by Kalisto who is gathering the Lykosians to go into the city. Read or paraphrase the following:

*As you mount the steps to the Temple of Lykos, you see many who are dressed akin to Philon and Diokles, save that they bear three to five strips on their tunics. The temple is set into the side of the temple mount and extends deep inside the hillside. A young, striking woman in her early 20s stands at the doors of the temple, speaking to them. She wears a bronze helmet and carries a bronze-shod scepter and a trio of javelins.*

If the Jackals bear the bodies of Philon and Diokles, Kalisto calls out:

*“By the gods... what happened?”*

If not, Kalisto calls out:

*“Lo! I have seen it. Philon is dead, and we must go out into the city to save who we can!”*

Kalisto listens to the Jackals, before guiding them into the temple, where she will treat Diokles with Acalana and bloodleaf. If the Jackals follow her, the interior of the temple is brightly painted. The statues and the friezes are colorful and depict the seven great trials of Lykos (see *Jackals* p28). Kalisto will probe the Jackals for information: *What happened to Diokles and Philon? Who are you? Why would you get involved?*

As they walk, Kalisto calls out orders to other Lykosians, to prepare a bed for Diokles and to raise the guard of the temple. She can also relate the following information:

- The trials of Lykos (*Jackals* p28).
- She is new to Kroryla, brought here from the west by Philon's request. She only arrived about two months ago.
- Philon was concerned about the strange disappearances and deaths of high ranking Lykosian cultists over the last three years.
- He sequestered himself in the High Priest's chambers to study the old scrolls.
- The Cult of Lykos has been receiving strange offerings, small black snake heads with white markings on them, for the last 10 days.



- Snakes such as these have always been connected to the Cthonic Cults.
- She is now the only Lykosian who has undergone all seven trials and they are still a year away from the next rising of initiates.
- She is concerned that she will be next.
- If asked, she will mention that she is not moving into the High Priest's chambers just yet. She will wait until Philon is cremated.

The snake head talismans should ring a bell for the Jackals, as they seem to be similar to the snakes that attacked the crowd. Kalisto will lead the Jackals to a set of ornate doors, which depict Lykos raising the walls of Kroryla in a single night. Standing there, she places her hands on the doors with reverence. These are the doors to the chambers of the High Priest, and now her chambers. Pushing them open, Kalisto will invite the Jackals inside.

Read or paraphrase the following:

*The chambers of the High Priest of Lykos are expansive. The first room you see is a Melkoni sitting room. Several long couches are arranged around a central table. The table is covered, not with the food trays one may expect, but scrolls and tablets. A finely forged, leaf blade sword holds down the edges of several scrolls. Beyond the table and couches, the room opens up to an open air garden; you can just make out the sounds of a fountain beyond. Kalisto walks to a couch, sits down hard, and begins to pore over the scrolls.*

*"I am not sure what Philon was working on, but I suppose I have inherited his investigation. As this last attack came within sight of the city, and as Glykera has her hands full these days, I feel that I could use some outside aid in this. The temple is quite wealthy, and as I am now the High Priestess, I would seek to employ you to help me get to the bottom of these attacks."*

Kalisto will offer the Jackals board in the temple of Lykos for the duration of their investigation and 250 ss upon uncovering and dealing with whoever is behind Philon's murder.

A successful Perception check allows the Jackal to notice a strange lump in the couch at the head of the table. Under a cushion is a talisman made up of three nested snake skulls. The largest, and outermost one, is black scaled with a white skull-like mark on the head, bound with three strands of thread: black, red, and green. There is no indication that Philon had discovered this talisman. If the Jackal picks up the talisman with their bare hands, the largest snake head snaps off the talisman and bites down on the Jackal's hand. The venom of the talisman is an Intensity 6 poison which inflicts 1d10 Vitality damage, with a cycle of Instant. If the target's Vitality drops to 0, the target dies and their limbs dissolve into 3d12 whiteskull vipers.

Should the Jackals ask about the leaf blade sword, Kalisto will share:

*"That is the blade Philon's father presented him with the day he took the seventh trial. He bore it all his time as a Lykosian and as our High Priest. It is a potent blade, crafted with several rites."*

Should a Jackal wish to take the blade, they must make a hard Influence check (or a difficult one if they are Melkoni, or a normal check if they are a Lykosian). If successful, Kalisto will offer to loan the blade for the duration of the investigation. The blade inflicts d8+1 damage and grants the bearer +5% to Melee Combat and Influence.

Should the Jackals wish to look at the scrolls, have them make a Lore check. A successful check reveals the following information:

- Most of these scrolls detail the origins of the Lykosian cult, the seven trials of Lykos, and the kyklops Ceenon and his daughters.
- Some of them are apocryphal tales which link the nyssalis of Lykos' trial to Ceenon. They say that the nyssalis is actually a child of the kyklops, born after the curse of Araton fell upon the rebel kyklops. In this legend, the nyssalis bore the mark of its father as a white skull marking on each of its heads.
- The fact that Philon was researching the stories of Ajax, Lykos, and Ceenon is troubling to Kalisto.
- Ajax's story is recorded in the oldest of the scrolls. He was a child of Araton and went out and pushed back the edges of the ancient world. Ajax came into conflict with Ceenon. The crafty kyklops deceived Ajax into eating a stew of Ajax's own family, causing the hero to slay the kyklops in retaliation. Thus, Ajax committed two sins, consuming human flesh as well as violating the hospitality of Ceenon. Araton cursed Ajax to the

form of a great wolf, and exiled Ceenon's descendants to the east 'where the sun rises'. It is for this reason, the scrolls claim, that Lykos came here to the east, to seek Ceenon's descendants and slay him, thereby avenging his ancestor.

- Kalisto has heard tales that others in the city have found this whiteskull symbol on the Daughters of Ceenon in their glade within the city.
- She is very concerned. Of all the high ranking Lykosians, only she remains. This would not be a concern for a larger cult, but as Lykosians are only here in Kroryla, should they die before initiating others into the higher mysteries, the Cult of Lykos will end.
- She worries this is the work of the Daughters of Ceenon and their followers, bringing about the end of Lykos and his ongoing protection of the city.

If the Jackals think to investigate Kalisto's old room, they will find another one of these snake talismans in her bed. If they do not, she is bitten during the night, and falls into a fever sleep by dawn.

If the Jackals investigate the whole of the temple, they will find a total of 7 more of these talismans found among the rooms of the upper ranking Lykosians. Someone is clearly trying to slay those who have access and knowledge of the higher mysteries.

When the Jackals head out into Kroryla to investigate, proceed to Act 2.

## ACT 2 – CULTIST ASSOCIATIONS

### SCENE 1 – INVESTIGATING KRORYLA

The Jackals have several places they can investigate to find out more information on the Cult of Ceenon and their activities in Kroryla. The main places they can discover clues are the agoras and the Glade of the Daughters. These will lead the Jackals back to the Temple of Lykos.

#### The Agoras

There are many agoras – open air markets – throughout Kroryla. Everything in the Jackals book is available for purchase with a focus on Melkoni versions of the gear. LMs should use the tables on pages 164-166 of *Jackals* to establish what goods are available from what smiths and vendors.

What Jackals' senses reveal:

*Sights* – People hawking wares. Tall stalls and wagons laden with goods.

*Smells* – Fresh baked bread. Salt. Smoke of cooking fires. Charred meat.

*Sounds* – Children calling out rhyming songs. The creaking of wheels. Calls for goods and aid.

Moving about the Agoras, the Jackals may make Influence or Perception checks, to discover the following from the locals:

- The Lykosians are under attack and will be yet another dead cult soon.
- It seems that the gods do not want the colony to be built.
- There have been strange symbols and items found among the Glade of the Daughters. It seems that there have been votives and other signs of worship or veneration of the Daughters of Ceenon.
- Glykera has not taken any action at this point. Her focus is on sending warriors to defend the new colony's foundations.
- It could be a rogue hekas. The Ger alchemists are known for their poisonous tokens.

#### The Glade of the Daughters

What Jackals' senses reveal:

*Sights* – Three dolmens which if you squint at could be mistaken for giant humans... maybe. The statue of a Melkoni warrior. Small bronze dishes set before the warrior statue filled with small pieces of bread, silver tokens, and incense. The whole glade is like a garden surrounded by tall trees.

*Smells* – The smell of fruit blossoms, and something coppery underneath it.

*Sounds* – Children playing, birds hooting in the garden.

This small glade is kept in the northern district of the city. The original walls extend beyond to encompass the quartet of dolmens which mark the resting places of Lykos and the three Daughters of Ceenon. Local legend states that these statues are actually the bodies of Lykos and the Daughters where they were turned to stone. The statue is clearly of Lykos (which any Melkoni or Jackal who visited the Temple of Lykos would recognize). The statue is of carved marble, but the shield, helm, and spear of the statue are of well-crafted bronze. It stands, not on a column or riser, but in the grass. The Daughters opposite are three roughly hewn stone dolmens which tower over the statue.

A successful Perception check on the statue of Lykos reveals the following:

- Someone has carved a small black marble snake, which is now attached to Lykos' heel.
- There are fine cracks in the base of the dolmens, and shadows lie heavily on the ground beneath them.
- There is something painted in red, inside Lykos' shield. It is two curved lines which intersect each other—one concave, one convex—with three dots inside of them. It looks like an eye.
- A successful Lore or Culture (Melkoni) check reveals that this is the Eye of the Daughters, the symbol of the Cult of Ceenon, representing the three singular eyes of the Daughters

If someone grasps at the snake, it becomes alive and attempts to bite the Jackal – the Jackal must make a hard Dodge check. If they fail, they suffer an intensity 7 venom, which deals 1 wound and 1d12 Mettle damage, which will cycle every day at sunset for 1d6 days. The snake will return to Lykos' heel unless crushed.

A successful Perception check on the dolmens reveals the following:

- In the shadows of the dolmens writhe about a dozen, black serpents. They are difficult to notice, blending in and never leaving the shadows. If the Jackals enter the shadow without noticing the snakes, the snakes attack the Jackal. Their bites (which cannot be dodged) are an intensity 4 poison which inflicts wounds.
- Near the shadows, there is a strange bit of colored string. Three strands woven together—black, green and red. It looks as if it was cut but is not fraying as the ends are soaked in blood.
- A small shard of pottery with blood on it. The dried blood is the same hue as the Eye of the Daughters.

At some point, the Jackals may want to go back and discuss their findings with Kalisto. If they have dealt with the snakehead talisman, they find her in the High Priestess' chamber, studying the scrolls.

If they did not, they find Kalisto in the infirmary holding onto life. The priests who attend her have no idea what the affliction is which fills her with fever. They believe she will be dead before the new year, if the spirit of the affliction is not drawn out of her.

Kalisto (or one of the tending priests) can relate the following information:

- The snake – What? Who is this who would deface the statue of Lykos? And the snake is so similar to what happened to Philon. There must be a connection!
- The symbol – What? The statue of Lykos has been marked with the symbol of the Cult of Ceenon? The cult is a group from the west, who worship the chthonic kyklopies, specifically Ceenon, the enemy of Lykos.
- The colored string – I have seen something like this. There is a woman in the temple who wears a bracelet of this sort, Jacinta. She came about six months ago and is a servant here in the temple. She should be here somewhere.

### **In the Temple**

If the Jackals go searching for this servant, they can find her simply. If they do not approach stealthily, Jacinta sees them coming and heads off deeper into the temple. Otherwise, they can watch Jacinta as she moves about the temple. While she does not do anything suspicious, it becomes clear that Jacinta has access to the whole of the temple.

Eventually, or immediately if the Jackals charge her, Jacinta heads deeper into the temple, toward the statue of the Trial of Nyssalis, which is in a dead end of the temple. If the Jackals wait to see her return, they instead hear a faint grinding noise. When they approach the statue, there is no one there.

A successful difficult Perception check—or clever investigation of the statue—reveals that one of the heads of the nyssalis has a small carving of the skull (like the serpents) on it. Pressing this head causes the whole statue to rotate, revealing a dark, dusty stairwell that descends into the earth beneath the temple.



When the Jackals discover the secret passage to the cavern beneath the Temple Mount, proceed to scene 2.

## SCENE 2 – BENEATH THE TEMPLE

The statue of Lykos fighting the nyssalis leads to a stairwell which descends deep into the earth. It is pitch black and will require torches for the Jackals to see their path. When they descend, read or paraphrase the following:

*As you follow the stairs down, the stench of something rotting floats up toward you. The stairs descend beneath the temple mount. You can detect the faint smell of oil under the dry rot scent. Eventually, the stairwell opens up into a large chamber, lit by the light of a small fire. Around the fire sit a half dozen tents. Looming over the tents are the skeletal remains of a massive creature with multiple heads. It can only be the nyssalis of Lykosian legend, the one spawned by the kyklops and slain by Lykos. The skeleton seems almost entirely painted with dried blood. You can make out other chambers and stairwells which lead up back to the other temples and outside the temple mount. At the base of each stair, including this one, there is a broken altar of veneration. It looks as if the altars were smashed by something rather large.*

Should the Jackals have snuck their way into this chamber:

*You can see the woman Jacinta kneeling by the fire, speaking to small Takan. They seem deep in conversation in the foul tongue of the beasts.*

Should the Jackals move closer, Jacinta catches sight of them and screams ‘Mekalank! Seklah!’ spurring the Norakan to attack the Jackals.

If Jacinta is aware of the Jackals:

*As you descend the stairs, you hear something scrape behind you. Before you can identify it, you hear a call from the tent camp, “Sloppy. But no matter, more blood for the rebirth! A pity you will not see the spawn of Ceenon rise to consume all above it and that thrice-damned kyklops! Or perhaps you will, with your souls bound into its hide!” Jacinta emerges from one of the tents with a pair of massive black serpents. Behind you, you hear the growls and yips of Norakan.*

This battle consists of Jacinta, her snakes (two are summoned at the start of the battle – see Serpent Spirits, *Jackals* p102), and 2 Norakan per Jackal (*Jackals* p224).

After the fight, the Jackals can investigate the camp, and they will discover:

- A hide map, marking out Kroryla, the northern camp, and another mark near the camp, but in the mountains of the Vori Vana to the north.
- A scroll with a cthonic ritual of rebirth. It calls for many exotic ingredients, as well



as painting the body of the deceased with the blood of many victims. The ritual builds to a crescendo, before its completion during Zaddon's Week.

- Several bundles of dried herbs and a mortar and pestle ~ 100 ss
- 480 ss worth of jewelry in the tent
  - A necklace set with rubies cut in the shape of eyes ~ 300 ss
  - Four rings with onyx and lapis lazuli ~ 25 ss each
  - A torc marked with sphinxes ~ 80 ss
- A pair of boar toothed helms – +2 mettle to the wearer
- 4 more of the strange multi-colored corded bracelets. These, and the one that Jacinta wears, all bear three small beads on them, one red, one black, and one green. Each bead is painted with the likeness of an eye.

Once the Jackals head north to confront the kyklops, proceed to Act 3.

## ACT 3 – AGAINST THE GIANT

The journey north, even with a map, is arduous. It will take the Jackals 10 days to reach the place the map indicates. This requires 5 travel checks. The first three are in the Forests, and the last two are in the Mountains (*Jackals* p74).

After four checks, the Jackals can see the presence of the building camp for the new colony off to the west, before their map takes them east, into the shadows of the mountains. As they approach the location on the map, read or paraphrase the following:

*As you approach the foothills of the Vori Vana, the forest is strangely quiet. The hills rise as you journey toward the Vana, with the squat mountains looming above them. As Kauma bathes everything in sanguine light, you catch a glimpse of firelight in the night. When you approach, you can see there are several, large hide tents in a massive clearing among the foothills. In front of the tents is a huge bonfire. Placed around the circle circumscribed by the firelight, there are stakes driven upright into the ground. There are nine Melkoni, in Lykosian robes, bound to the stakes. As you watch, a tenth Melkoni, recently freed, is forced by four men into the bonfire, where his screams rise to a febrile pitch and are then cut short. The earth around the clearing rumbles as if something deep in the earth answers the gruesome sacrifice. The men pull the rapidly consumed body from the flames, where they strike off the dead man's head and toss it through the entrance of the tent. The men move to the next Melkoni.*



If the Jackals do not intervene, the Wolves move from one Melkoni to the next, reenacting the grisly murders over and over again, one per round. Additionally, a successful Perception check reveals that the cliff face opposite the hide tent is painted with blood, the shapes roughly feminine and giant sized. There seem to be similar cracks in the cliff as to those discovered in the dolmens in the glade.

Once the battle is joined, the kyklops will emerge from the tent on its initiative. When it does, read or paraphrase the following:

*A bellow emits from within the tent, and a massive hand emerges to slowly draw back the tent flap. A giant stands before you! The creature looks roughly human yet stands 10 cubits tall. Wrapped in a bronze hauberk, in one hand it holds a bundle of javelins. Most disturbing, however, is the giant's heavy brow. Where two eyes should be, there is only one. This is a kyklops of old! The giant bellows in rage and charges at you, crying out to Ceenon to guide its hand.*

The battle consists of a kyklops (*Jackals: Travellers on the War Road* p138) and 2 Wolves per Jackal (*Jackals* p209).

Exploring the camp after the battle, the Jackals can find:

- 160 ss worth of jewelry
- 700 ss worth of stolen building materials from the colony camp
- A Melkoni Shield which weighs only 1 ENC and provides +1 PRO
- A small silver horn. The bell is covered with images of swans in flight. The horn, when blown, forces all who hear it (save the blower) to make a difficult Willpower check or lose 1d4 CP for the round. This affects all who hear the horn, including the blower's allies. The horn can safely be blown 1 time a day. Each subsequent time, the blower takes 1d4 Mettle damage.
- A ritualist area, with components for the strange snakehead talismans as well as several bundles of herbs, some which seem to be partially burned. A Lore or Healing check can identify the herbs as a potent mixture of Acalana leaves, Amagis berries, and Tharros needles, all of which have healing properties. These were prepared to treat the ritualists who prepared the talismans if they were bitten. Burning a bundle and waving the smoke around Kalisto will heal the High Priestess of her fever.

Once the Jackals face the kyklops, the adventure is concluded. See the Aftermath for possible endings.

## AFTERMATH

### BRIGHT OUTCOME

Should the Jackals slay Antronach and heal Kalisto, they preserve the Cult of Lykos and defeat the Cult of Ceenon. Kroryla is safe for now. The Lykosians will continue to train and raise new initiates to the higher mysteries and defend Kroryla for decades to come.

### DARK OUTCOME

Should the Jackals fail to stop the Cult of Ceenon, the temple of Lykos is devastated by the nyssalis attack or the cult, and Kalisto is killed by the end of the week. Antronach's forces destroy the colony and raid the lands around Kroryla. The city is unable to deal with the influx of refugees and plague breaks out by Erbe the next year. The loss of Kalisto means the higher mysteries of the cult are lost, possibly forever. Additionally, the Cult of Ceenon is poised to resurrect the Daughter during the next Zaddon's Week. Should that happen... all of the Zaharets will bear witness to the fall of Kroryla in a terrifying storm of chthonic vengeance.

### ADVANCEMENTS

- 1 for surviving.
- 1 for stopping the nyssalis from being resurrected.
- 1 for slaying Antronach the kyklops.
- 1 for saving Kalisto's life.

### HOOKS

The new colony of Kroryla needs aid defending itself while it raises its walls. There is good silver for those who would stand watch and clear the forests of the creatures which threaten it.

This cult's plans have been thwarted, but Kalisto still wants the Jackals to aid her. The cult still may have members in the city, and the new batch of Lykosians need protecting until they can undertake the seventh trial. A year in the service of the temple could have its perks...

There are rumors of a wild beast of some sort, a massive wolf with terrifying cunning, which haunts the Valley of Troikas to the west. Kalisto wants the Jackals to head to see if the rumors are true and what bond it may have with the Lykosians and the great hero Ajax.

The Cult of Ceenon believes they can resurrect the Daughters of Ceenon. The Jackals are hired to look into and stop this foul plot.