

REIGN OF WINTER



CONTINUING THE CAMPAIGN

THEY WERE A MYSTERY AT THE TIME, THESE THREE RIDERS OUR SCOUTS SPOTTED IN RAEMERRUND. THEY GREW MORE BOLD AS THE WEEKS WENT ON. EACH ASTRIDE A FANCIFUL HORSE, THE RIDERS KEPT THEIR DISTANCE AS IF THEY WERE SCOUTING TOO. THEY RODE CLOSE ENOUGH TO OUR TOWNS AND VILLAGES TO COUNT HEADS, BUT THEY DIDN'T DRAW NEARER. IT WASN'T UNTIL OUR LANDS WERE TAKEN BY THE WITCH'S ARMY OF GIANTS AND FEY THAT WE KNEW THEY WERE SCOUTS FOR HER INVASION. NOW THE RIDERS HERALD THE QUEEN OF WITCHES' RETURN TO OUR LOST LANDS—THE ICEBOUND REALM OF IRRISEN.

—FROM *THE CONQUERING COLD: A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE WINTER WAR*

CONTINUING THE CAMPAIGN

The Reign of Winter Adventure Path concludes with this volume, but there are more adventures to be had following “The Witch Queen’s Revenge.” Although this adventure assumes the events in *Pathfinder Module: The Witchwar Legacy* have already occurred, they could just as easily transpire after the events of this Adventure Path. If the PCs now have possession of Tashanna’s journal, clues within the journal can lead them to the far north of Irrisen to discover Tashanna’s fate, or perhaps Baba Yaga herself sends them on a mission to recover the *Torc of Kostchtchie*. In addition, this article presents other possible scenarios to expand the campaign, and *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Irrisen, Land of Eternal Winter* contains numerous adventure hooks and ideas. First, though, the PCs may claim one boon from Baba Yaga for freeing her; several possibilities for this reward are detailed below.

BABA YAGA’S BOONS

In exchange for freeing Baba Yaga, the PCs may request one boon from the Queen of Witches, so long as it is within her power to grant. The following are just a few possibilities; if your PCs come up with their own ideas for a reward, use these examples as a guide. Note that Baba Yaga will not grant some boons—the Queen of Witches is simply unwilling to part with some of her treasures and abandon some of her plans.

The Dancing Hut: Baba Yaga will not give the PCs her own *Dancing Hut*, but she is willing to give them a lesser version, which takes the form of a permanent version of the witch’s hut grand hex (*Ultimate Magic* 83). Expanding the hut or giving it additional abilities is up to the PCs. *Create demiplane* spells (*Ultimate Magic* 213–214) can be used to permanently expand or personalize their new hut.

End Irrisen’s Winter: “Sorry, dearie, I can’t do that.” The magic behind Irrisen’s supernatural winter is already in place, and Baba Yaga does not budge on this point. Ending Irrisen’s winter is a major quest in its own right, and successfully completing the task will likely gain the PCs mythic tiers. See *Finishing the Job* on page 66 for details on how this might be accomplished. If asked politely, Baba Yaga should be willing to grant another boon to the PCs instead.

Leave Golarion Forever: If the PCs ask Baba Yaga to leave Golarion and never return, she begrudgingly agrees to do so. She has a lot invested in Golarion, but it is far from the only world where she has influence, and with her latest daughter deposed from the throne of Irrisen, she has less tying her to Golarion than before. What this means for Golarion is up to you, but Baba Yaga’s absence will certainly have an effect on places like Irrisen and Artrosa. See *Vengeance of the Linnorm Kings* on page 68 for one possible version of events if Baba Yaga abandons Irrisen.

Magic: The PCs might simply want nothing more than a monetary reward from Baba Yaga. If so, Baba Yaga is willing

to give each PC a single magic item of his choice—either from one of her many treasuries or created specifically for him. She will not give a PC an artifact, but otherwise, this boon is limited only by the GM’s discretion. Alternatively, a spellcaster can ask Baba Yaga to teach him new spells instead. Again, it is up to the GM to decide exactly what magical knowledge the Old Crone is willing to part with, but it should certainly be equal to the great favor they have done Baba Yaga.

A New Dynasty: With Elvanna’s death, the throne of Irrisen sits empty. Bold PCs might ask Baba Yaga to crown one of their number as Irrisen’s new queen. Surprisingly, Baba Yaga agrees, and enthrones one of the PCs in the Royal Palace in Whitethrone, placing the *Iccrown of Irrisen* upon her head. The other PCs will likely replace Elvanna’s children as dukes and duchesses of Irrisen, but the rest of the country’s Jadwiga aristocracy is another matter—there is no guarantee of a peaceful reign. Likewise, what will happen in 100 years is a mystery—will Baba Yaga return to claim the new queen’s life force, or will she allow the new dynasty to rule Irrisen uncontested? See *The Fate of Irrisen* on page 66 for possible challenges Irrisen’s new queen might have to overcome.

Queen Anastasia: Another possible replacement for Elvanna is Anastasia Romanov, provided the PCs rescued her from Rasputin’s monastery in “*Rasputin Must Die!*” Anastasia is Baba Yaga’s granddaughter, and Baba Yaga agrees to crown her queen of Irrisen if the PCs ask. In this case, the PCs can likely set themselves up the young queen’s advisors, and with their guidance, Queen Anastasia could well become the most popular and well-loved queen of Irrisen. On the other hand, the blood of Baba Yaga flows in Anastasia’s veins, and she could just as easily follow in the footsteps of her predecessors if she succumbs to the corruptive influence of power. *The Fate of Irrisen* on page 66 deals with some of the repercussions of a new queen on the throne.

The Three Riders: With the deaths of Baba Yaga’s Three Riders at the hands of Queen Elvanna’s Winter Guard, Baba Yaga is willing to choose the PCs as her new heralds. The PCs must agree to faithfully serve her for 100 years, but they will become powerful, unique fey creatures with potent abilities. At the end of their term of service, Baba Yaga will offer them an additional boon as a reward. See pages 52–55 of *Irrisen, Land of Eternal Winter* for details on Baba Yaga’s Riders; the GM should use the Riders presented there as an example when creating powers and abilities for PC Riders.

Travel to New Worlds: Baba Yaga is willing to take the PCs anywhere the *Dancing Hut* can go—which is effectively anywhere on the Material Plane or in the Great Beyond. If the PCs want to visit the fabled City of Brass on the Plane of Fire, or explore the jungles of Castrovel, for example, Baba Yaga can take them there, though it is a one-way trip.

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THE FATE OF IRRISEN

Stopping Queen Elvanna from plunging the entire planet into permanent winter is just the beginning. The PCs' actions at the end of the campaign have the chance not only to save Golarion, but also to have a direct effect over the future of Irrisen. Here are a few considerations for PCs who want to take a more personal role in the future development of Irrisen.

A New Queen: If one of the PCs, or perhaps Anastasia, becomes the new queen of Irrisen, the PCs will need to help the new monarch consolidate her power at the beginning. The current aristocracy won't bow down to a foreigner easily, unless Baba Yaga commands it or the PCs show great authority during this transition of power. Elvanna's eldest daughter, Princess Cassisoche, has been seeing to the day-to-day operation of Irrisen for years now. If her mother were eliminated, she would fight hard to claim the throne, but before leaving Golarion, Baba Yaga still takes Elvanna's children with her so as to siphon a small fraction of power as a consolation for missing out on Elvanna's matured essence.

What remains of the Jadwiga Elvanna are split between their support of Baba Yaga and their dedication to their own immediate family ties. Some of these aristocrats could lead a revolt against the new monarch or they could engage in more secretive ploys. One example of this subterfuge could be an assassination attempt carried out by a group of powerful Cold Sisters (see *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Irrisen, Land of Eternal Winter* for more information on the Cold Sisters).

Maintain the Status Quo: It might be that the PCs are unconcerned with what transpires in Irrisen, choosing boons for their own benefit and leaving the situation in Irrisen unchanged. In this case, while Baba Yaga misses out on getting Elvanna in her clutches, she still places a new daughter on the throne and invites the PCs to the coronation. In thanks for her rescue (and in addition to the boon already granted), Baba Yaga gives the PCs a special place in Irriseni life if they desire. For the entire rule of the new queen, the PCs and their families are considered favored allies of the nation of Irrisen, able to come and go as they please. If they ingratiate themselves to Baba Yaga or the new queen they might even be given titles and rule over a portion of the country.

Clean Up Irrisen: Assuming the PCs take a benevolent tack when it comes to ruling Irrisen, the nation is still filled with cruel baronesses, vicious monsters, and brutal winter conditions. Whitethrone itself contains numerous monstrous residents, and the PCs will need to work to eliminate the bestial threats in the city, particularly in the Howlings, the Troll Quarter, and the goblin-infested Ratnest. If any of the PCs made a connection with the winter wolf Greta in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #68, she might be willing to help them, or even offer to assume the

role of leader of the Howlings to keep her fellow winter wolves in order. Greta pleads with the PCs that it would be a shame to waste the great gift that Baba Yaga gave to the winter wolves to allow them to take human form, and she and her kin are willing to fight to keep this gift. If the PCs don't have a relationship with Greta, she forms the winter wolves of Whitethrone into a resistance group fighting to keep the Howlings the way it is forever.

The best aid to making Irrisen a better place would be to help out the resistance that has been slowly picking away at the icebound nation's evil foundation. In earlier adventures, the PCs met members of the Heralds of Summer's Return and worshipers of Milani working a subtle revolution within the borders of the country. If the PCs can recruit these groups to their side, they can help put down any initial rebellions and can even place some of the Heralds' leadership into positions of power in the six provinces of Irrisen.

The PCs could also invite help from good-leaning neighbors. The Lands of the Linnorm Kings once held much of the area that is now within Irrisen's borders, and they have been eager to get rid of the White Witches and reclaim their ancestral land. The PCs could work with the Ulfen, but if they plan to keep Irrisen's current borders, conflict could arise. Another potential ally is the southern nation of Andoran. After hearing the news that the political leadership of Irrisen has been shaken up, Andoran offers their aid in establishing a democratic government in the new Irrisen. Andoran is willing to send advisors for the PCs and their chaotic nation, who recommend that the PCs allow the Linnorm Kingdoms to reclaim their ancestral lands (see *Vengeance of the Linnorm Kings* on page 68). This would greatly reduce the size of Irrisen, but would likely lead to more stability in the long run.

An important thing to keep in mind is that if the PCs don't use their boon from Baba Yaga to convince her to leave Irrisen or Golarion altogether, the Old Crone would still have a strong presence in Irrisen. Any invasion or dramatic change of power would likely draw her interest and retribution. Even with an army of Ulfen soldiers and sympathetic groups within the country, the PCs are no match for the Queen of Witches—unless they possess mythic tiers themselves. See *Finishing the Job* below for how the PCs can attain such power and defeat Baba Yaga.

FINISHING THE JOB

The PCs may have stopped Elvanna and saved Golarion from a new ice age, but they might be less than thrilled to have worked so hard to free an evil old witch. Likewise, Baba Yaga is unwilling to end the supernatural winter cloaking Irrisen that she herself created. Unfortunately for the PCs, Baba Yaga is a mythic creature, far beyond their ability to defeat at this point. However, if the PCs were to end Irrisen's eternal winter, ushering in the first spring

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that land has seen in over 1,400 years, they could gain their own mythic tiers—an important accomplishment if they want to confront Baba Yaga with even a chance of success. If you choose to continue the campaign in this way, defeating Queen Elvanna at the end of “The Witch Queen’s Revenge” should be the PCs’ moment of ascension, and they gain their first mythic tier at the end of the campaign. As they work to shut down Baba Yaga’s winter portals and bring summer back to Irrisen, the PCs should gain more mythic tiers until they’re ready to face Baba Yaga herself. This option draws heavily on the rules presented in *Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures*.

THE WINTER COLLECTORS

Irrisen’s endless winter is powered through a system of weather collectors that gather winter energies from dozens of locations and feed them into a receiver located inside the Royal Palace in Whitethrone. Baba Yaga scattered these *winter collectors* across many worlds to make it more difficult for her enemies to disrupt her winter magic, but to fully bring Irrisen out from under the spell of Baba Yaga, the PCs must destroy the *winter collectors* that are fueling the lasting supernatural winter.

WHERE ARE THE COLLECTORS?

Baba Yaga scattered her *winter collectors* in cold locales across the worlds and planes, adding new ones as she discovered new realms of ice and snow. Each of the *winter collectors* is guarded by powerful creatures, devious traps, hazardous conditions, or all three. Examples of *winter collector* locations are presented below, though dozens more may exist.

Antarctica: Baba Yaga placed one of her *winter collectors* on her home world of Earth. She traveled to the coldest place on the planet, a great landmass at the South Pole, and erected an obsidian spike jutting up from the polar ice, its smooth surface covered with an iridescent sheen. Any creatures approaching the spike trigger a powerful magic trap that gates in daemons to fight anyone disturbing the *winter collector*.

Beurdreda: This frozen moon in a far distant solar system revolves around a vibrant, warm planet constantly washed over with colorful auroras. Beurdreda has little atmosphere and is composed completely of an ice colder than any material previously discovered. The strange, three-armed humanoids that live on this moon shape the ice into vast cities and tunnels that stretch between them. Baba Yaga placed her *winter collector* deep underground near the moon’s core, in a vast domed chamber.

Ketkalkitrex, the City of Ice: Located on the Plane of Water near its border with the Plane of Air, this massive city stretches for miles, both horizontally and vertically. Carved from an immense iceberg, Ketkalkitrex

supports millions of the plane’s inhabitants, including ice elementals and ice mephits. Baba Yaga built a *winter collector* inside a massive spire that houses a cabal of cruel and stoic marids.

The Thrice-Tenth Kingdom: Baba Yaga’s activities are not limited to the Material Plane. Upon discovering that she could manipulate the physics of the First World and twist the land to her own whims, Baba Yaga staked a claim on a remote region and warped the countryside to suit her vision. Baba Yaga’s Thrice-Tenth Kingdom resembles a vast boreal forest at the foot of a looming mountain threaded through with glaciers. At the mountain’s summit, Baba Yaga built a *winter collector* guarded by a host of icy fey.

Triaxus: The *winter collector* on Triaxus stands in the far northern reaches of the Drakelands near the planet’s north pole, where it can draw on the severe polar cold even when the planet is in the midst of its long summers. Baba Yaga made a deal with a great wyrm white dragon



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THE WINTER COLLECTORS

Far more powerful than the winter portals established by Elvanna to spread Irrisen's winter over the rest of Golarion, the *winter collectors* are major artifacts created by Baba Yaga. Each *winter collector* varies in appearance, design, and construction, but they function exactly the same.

WINTER COLLECTOR (MAJOR ARTIFACT)

SLOT none	CL 20th	WEIGHT varies
AURA strong conjuration and evocation		

Winter collectors are always located in areas of severe cold, and are typically surrounded by thick snow or ice. A *winter collector* siphons a portion of the ambient cold weather and condenses it into concentrated cold energy, which the collector then beams like a signal across worlds to the *winter receiver* in the Royal Palace in Whitethrone. This energy then radiates out to the borders of Irrisen, keeping the weather in a perpetual wintry state. In addition, a *winter collector* functions as a permanent *gate*, allowing instant travel from the collector's location to the Royal Palace (but not in the other direction), even if the collector is located on the Material Plane.

A *winter collector* radiates an aura of cold out to 50 feet. This aura deals 6d6 points of cold damage each round to creatures in this area. Creatures within 10 feet of the *winter collector* take 12d6 points of cold damage each round. Half of this cold damage is not subject to being reduced by resistance or immunity to cold-based effects.

DESTRUCTION

Each *winter collector* has a unique means of destruction, which is left for the GM to develop, though successfully destroying a *winter collector* should be a trial worthy of gaining a mythic tier.

that lives in a series of caves carved into a great glacial cliff, paying the beast to watch over the *winter collector*. The dragon has generations upon generations of its brood acting as additional guardians during the winters, and the cave complex serves as a home for other white dragons during the summer years.

DESTROYING THE COLLECTORS

The PCs can finally end Irrisen's long winter only by destroying Baba Yaga's *winter collectors*. Each collector has its own unique requirements for its destruction, but the adventure to destroy a given *winter collector* should include one or more trials that allow the PCs to attain more mythic tiers upon the successful destruction of the *winter collector*. The order in which the collectors are shut down doesn't matter, but at least six *winter collectors* must

be destroyed to weaken the *winter receiver* in Whitethrone's Royal Palace, which is otherwise impervious to all damage beyond that of the highest mythic tiers. Once the PCs finally destroy the *winter receiver*, they can end winter's supernatural hold on Irrisen. Accomplishing such a legendary task should automatically grant the PCs at least one additional mythic tier beyond those gained by destroying the *winter collectors*.

FIGHTING BABA YAGA

Once the PC have destroyed the *winter receiver* in Whitethrone, ending Irrisen's enduring winter once and for all, they might finally be ready stand toe to toe with Baba Yaga herself. The PCs should likely have attained 10 mythic tiers by the time they go after Baba Yaga, though perhaps—if they've enlisted the aid of deities or other powerful entities—they might be able to face her sooner. In any case, they'll need to find Baba Yaga first, as her *Dancing Hut* can take her virtually anywhere in the Great Beyond. This final confrontation will not be easy, as Baba Yaga is a CR 30 foe with 10 mythic tiers of her own, but if successful the PCs can rid the universe of the Queen of Witches forever. See the Baba Yaga article beginning on page 70 for Baba Yaga's statistics and ideas for further fleshing out an encounter with the Old Crone.

VENGEANCE OF THE LINNORM KINGS

Regardless of whether the PCs want to rule Irrisen or help usher in better times, they are certain to come into contact with Sveinn Blood-Eagle. Ruler of the largest Linnorm Kingdom, the Thanelands, King Sveinn has grown old, and the rumors throughout the Lands of the Linnorm Kings claim that he plans to abdicate any day now—except that Sveinn has yet to choose an heir. Upon hearing of the change in politics in Irrisen, Sveinn hatches a plan for one final raid against the White Witches—or their successors—intent on reclaiming the lands taken from his people so long ago.

If one of the PCs, or one of their allies, such as Anastasia, now rules Irrisen, the PCs have a decision to make—whether to return the Ulfen's ancestral lands to the Linnorm Kings or keep Irrisen's borders where they stand. Sveinn knows this is his last chance to do something grand before he departs for Valenhall and he hopes to bring the stories of this glorious achievement to his ancestors. He is also very aware that this could be his last battle. Sveinn respects the strength of anyone who could take down Queen Elvanna and is wary of the PCs, so he sends out scouts to make their way to Whitethrone and find out as much information about them as possible.

When ready to make his move on reclaiming his nation's old borders, Sveinn sends a messenger to request a meeting with the PCs. If they accept, the Linnorm King

arrives with a small band of soldiers and makes a case to the PCs to manage his people's former lands. Sveinn is proud and boastful, claiming the PCs are so new to governing people that perhaps he should take charge of the western half of Irrisen. If the PCs refuse this offer, he makes it clear that he intends on taking it regardless. He and his guard return to Kalsgard and prepare for war.

Sveinn gathers an army of his best Ulfen barbarians and warriors, and easily gains the support of the Blackravens from Hagraech. An event of this magnitude might even be enough to get the kingdoms of Broken Bay, the Ironbound Islands, and Southmoor to align with the Thanelands. The Linnorm Kingdoms' armies invade the Verge first, focusing their strength on the Irriseni military strongholds in that province, followed by Bleakmarch and Wintercrux. Sveinn also sends word to the tribal leaders of the Realm of the Mammoth Lords about his plans to strike, hoping to gain allies and put pressure on Irrisen from two fronts. With an Ulfen army amassing along the western border, and Mammoth Lords to the east, the PCs must raise their own loyal forces to defend Irrisen. Unless they want to enter into a long war with enemies at both sides, the PCs would do well to side with Sveinn and let him reclaim his people's ancient lands.

SVEINN BLOOD-EAGLE CR 17

XP 102,400

Male old human (Ulfen) barbarian 18

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** Perception +22

DEFENSE

AC 31, touch 14, flat-footed 28 (+9 armor, +3 deflection, +3 Dex, +2 natural, -2 rage, +6 shield)

hp 248 (18d12+126)

Fort +21, **Ref** +14 (+6 vs. traps), **Will** +14 (+4 vs. enchantments); +6 vs. magic

Defensive Abilities improved uncanny dodge, indomitable will, trap sense +6; **DR** 4/—

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee +4 *furiosus*^{UE} *thawing*^{UE} *battleaxe* 28/+23/+18/+13 (1d8+13/19-20/x3), +3 *heavy steel shield* +30 (1d4+7 plus bull rush) or *flame tongue* +28/+23/+18/+13 (1d8+10/19-20) or

guarding blade^{UE} +28/+23/+18/+13 (1d6+14/19-20)

Ranged +2 *seeking composite longbow* +26/+21/+16/+11 (1d8+9/x3)

Special Attacks greater rage (41 rounds/day), rage powers (clear mind, knockback, powerful blow +5, roused anger, scent, spell sunder, superstition +6, unexpected strike, witch hunter +6)

TACTICS

Base Statistics When not raging, Sveinn's statistics are **AC** 33, touch 16, flat-footed 30; **hp** 194; **Fort** +18, **Will** +11; +4 *furiosus*^{UE} *thawing*^{UE} *battleaxe* +25/+20/+15/+10 (1d8+10/19-20/x3), +3 *heavy steel shield* +27 (1d4+6 plus bull rush) or *flame tongue* +25/+20/+15/+10 (1d8+7/19-20) or *guarding blade*^{UE} +25/+20/+15/+10 (1d6+10/19-20); **Str** 22, **Con** 17; **CMB** +24, **CMD** 43; **Skills** Climb +6, Swim +9.

STATISTICS

Str 28, **Dex** 19, **Con** 23, **Int** 12, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +18; **CMB** +27 (+29 sunder); **CMD** 44 (46 vs. sunder)

Feats Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical (battleaxe), Improved Shield Bash, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Shield Focus, Shield Master, Shield Slam, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (battleaxe)

Skills Acrobatics +11, Climb +9, Diplomacy +14, Intimidate +23, Knowledge (history, local, nature) +13, Perception +22, Survival +15, Swim +12

Languages Common, Hallit, Skald **SQ** fast movement, king's wealth, tireless rage

Combat Gear *potions of cure serious wounds* (3); **Other Gear** +3 *greater cold resistance steel lamellar*^{UE}, +3 *heavy steel shield*, +4 *furiosus*^{UE} *thawing*^{UE} *battleaxe*, +2 *seeking composite longbow* (+6 Str) with 20 arrows, *flame tongue*, *guarding blade*^{UE}, *amulet of natural armor* +2, *belt of physical might* +4, *boots of speed*, *cloak of resistance* +4, *efficient quiver*, *glove of storing*, *greater bracers of archery*, *handy haversack*, *horn of Vahalla*, *mantle of immortality*^{UE}, *ring of evasion*, *ring of protection* +3, *werewhistle*^{UE}

SPECIAL ABILITIES

King's Wealth (Ex) Sveinn Blood-Eagle is a Linnorm King and as such has the wealth of a PC rather than an NPC.



SVEINN BLOOD-EAGLE