

Chapter 3: आरभते-यम (ārabhate-yama) (The Journey Begins)

Continued...

The PCs are part of Miss Dinyá's caravan, heading through the mountains. There are several scenes I'd like to get into...

Attack of the Kotha

The Caravan is held up by their guide, Latdho, who sees a migrating clan of Kotha ahead. They are sitting in the road. The mercenaries remind Miss Dinyá that their contract does not allow for the removal of animals, nor does it require them to be hunters, only to protect the caravan from attacks. "The Kotha are not attacking us, *Miss Dinyá*," hisses "lord" Bhekan, "they are merely an inconvenience, and we are paid to neither remove roadblocks, nor deal with wild animals following their own karma."

None of the porters have skills to deal with Kotha, and Latdho can't do it alone no matter how willing he is. On the advice of Latdho and at the incessant complaining of Úrho, Miss Dinyá politely asks the PCs for help...

If they don't help, the Kotha move on in two days...after seriously messing Latdho up.

The Weird Old Goat and the Hungry Ghosts

An old goat attempts to stop the caravan, but is intercepted by the mercenary outriders. He is brought back to speak with Miss Dinyá. If the PCs helped with the Kotha, they are present for the meeting. He is not very polite, and eats like a pig. His manners are atrocious, but he insists that what he has to say is important, and he will not speak if threatened or attacked.

Four hundred years ago, there was a battle in this pass, and the anniversary is tonight. If the Caravan goes forward, they will encounter a small company of Khaujíva: the remnants of a company who were told to defend the pass at all costs, but who were sold out and sacrificed to allow the enemy to have the pass after infiltrating from behind the company.

There are ten hungry ghosts, appearing as they did when they died. They are all mountain animals, and the commander is a Snow Leopard.

This encounter has to happen, as it is the Halloween Special. Force this one if you have to. Also, play up the creepiness, and make sure the Ghosts are a challenge.