

# HELLFROST



## AN ENDLESS WINTER IS COMING...

500 years ago: From the frozen far north, beyond the civilized lands with their rolling hills and forests, arose a mighty army of frost giants, ice devils, Hellfrost dragons, and fearsome orcs, servants all of the ice god Thrym. So began the terrible Blizzard War and the downfall of the mighty empires of man

Today: The races of the southern lands may have won

the war, but they suffer its legacy still. For five centuries the winters have grown steadily longer and colder. Huge swathes of the land of Rassilon are permanently covered in ice and snow, and even the temperate lands are not spared the misery of failed harvests, deadly winters, and the dreaded Hellfrost wind.

But winter is not the only danger. A mere 30 years ago, magic, once the civilized races' most potent weapon, suddenly began to fail. The Siphoning, an effect of unknown origin, has made magic an unpredictable ally.

Welcome to the world of Rassilon. Welcome to the Hellfrost!

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## PREVIEW FILM

### FROM





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The Hellfrost Player's Guide contains everything you need to begin adventuring in the frozen wastes:

- \* Six player character races.
- \* Dozens of new Edges, including Disciple Edges for religious heroes.
- \* Rules for hedge magic.
- \* Six alternate magical Arcane Backgrounds, a revised casting system removing the need for Power Points, and the effects of the magic-draining phenomenon known as the Siphoning.
- \* Details on 24 deities and their followers.
- \* Rules for Glory, a new trait that measures the great deeds of your heroes.
- \* Organizations suitable for character membership, including the Convocation of Elementalists, Hearth Knights, Reliquary, and Sisters of Mercy.
- \* Complete setting rules for adventuring in Rassilon.



## HELLFROST IN DETAIL

### THE LAND

The land in which the characters' adventures take place is known as Rassilon. Other lands were once known to exist, but these have been unreachable for centuries.

Rassilon is loosely divided into five main geographic regions. Far to the north is the Hellfrost, a vast expanse of ice and snow, wherein dwell towering frost giants whose skin radiates intense cold, Hellfrost dragons, whose breathe is coldfire, a fire that burns icy cold yet can melt metal, frost vampires, victims of the intense cold who feed on the warmth of the living, and Hellfrost mammoths, whose breath can freeze a man's blood in his veins. The permanent ice and snow radiates, so legends say, from a colossal spike of blue ice at the Hellfrost's center.

Surrounding this is the outer Hellfrost, a realm caught in perpetual winter. Hardy souls struggle to survive against the elements, frost giant raiders, orc tribes, and frostreavers, men driven mad by the Hellfrost wind, which howls across the plains and through the taiga forests.

Surrounding the outer reaches of the Hellfrost is the Icewall, a mile high barrier of solid ice. Many expeditions have been launched over the Icewall, but few have returned. Those who survived reported seeing only endless tracts of snow and ice.

Next are the High Winterlands, a wild and dangerous realm where the temperature rarely rises near freezing point. As one travels south, so the snow and ice grow less, and one enters the Low Winterlands. Here life is hard, but bearable, though the temperature remains bitterly cold all year round.

The southernmost region is called the Hearthlands. The mountains, swamps, forests, and plains have succumbed to the eternal cold, yet there is still hope. These are the most settled lands, though food grows scarcer each year and constant attacks by fell beasts drain valuable resources.

## THE CIVILIZED RACES

Rassilon has several sentient races. Humans are the most common. They live across the Hearthlands and



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outer Hellfrost in cities, towns, villages, and isolated farmsteads. Of the many cultures which once dwelt in Rassilon, now there are just four—the city-dwelling Anari, the rural Saxa, the warlike Tuomi, and the nomadic Finnar.

In the frozen north and on the highest peaks, frost dwarves carve their fortress cities into rock and glaciers, seeking precious metals and black ice with which to craft weapons and armor. Living among the great evergreen forests are the taiga elves, a species of elves at home in the cold. To the south are the hearth elves, cousins to the taiga elves.

Engros (singular engro) are a diminutive race of nomads, traveling across the Hearthlands and outer Hellfrost in brightly-colored caravans. They have a poor reputation, being regarded as thieves and beggars by the other races. They are renowned for their indomitable spirit.

Finally there are the frostborn, a recent race who are more at home in the ice and snow than the warmer climes. The Frostborn have evolved from the other races, but they appear to be a new race unto themselves.

## ● DARK FOES ●

Of course, the civilized races, as they are frequently called, do not dwell in isolation. Frost giants roam the tundra, mountains, forests, and hills. Foul orcs and goblins gather their strength in secluded lands, waiting for the right time to surge forth. Intelligent undead dwell in unhallowed crypts and within the perpetually fog-shrouded land known as the Withered Lands, plotting the destruction of all life. Dragons circle high in the sky, arrogantly defying the lesser races to challenge them. Demons watch from ancient hiding places, corrupting those who would seek to enslave them. The list of horrors seems near endless.

## ● MAGIC ●

Rassilon is a world of magic. Tendrils of magical energy emanating from the moon touch every creature, granting them the potential to weave, focus, and manipulate magic.

Elementalists control the four elements, learning

each craft in turn until they have complete mastery. Hrimwisards draw their power from the ice and snow, gaining great power in colder realms and losing it as the temperature rises. Heahwisards rule over a vast realm from their lofty towers, their staves a symbol of their power and the tool by which they work their art. Dwarven mages carve runes of power on stone tablets as their ancestors did countless centuries before. Druids, common among the elves and engros, tug at the threads of natural magic, manipulating plants and animals to their will. Skalds, also called song mages, channel the threads into patterns through their voices.

But magic is weakening, rarely used except in dire circumstances. Sorcerers of all kinds are subject to the Siphoning, a strange malady which drains them of their ability to work magic. The effects of the Siphoning vary immensely—some mages are permanently drained, whereas others suffer only momentary weakness.





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## THE POWER OF FAITH

Many gods watch over Rassilon, though an ancient pact prohibits them from direct interference beyond granting their followers miraculous powers. Clerics and paladins serve these deities, fighting their wars for them on the mortal realm and promoting their causes.

From the motherly white-robed clerics of Eira, goddess of healing, to the cadaverous dark-robed necromancer-priests of Hela, goddess of undeath; from the armor-clad warrior-priests of Scaetha, slayer of darkness, to the studious scholar-priests of Hoenir, god of knowledge, the servants of the gods cover the length and breadth of the land.

## THE BLIZZARD WAR

A little over five hundred years ago, a vast army swept down from the frozen reaches, which were then much further north. Distant empires, their names now forgotten, were obliterated by large numbers of frost giants, Hellfrost dragons, and other frigid abominations.

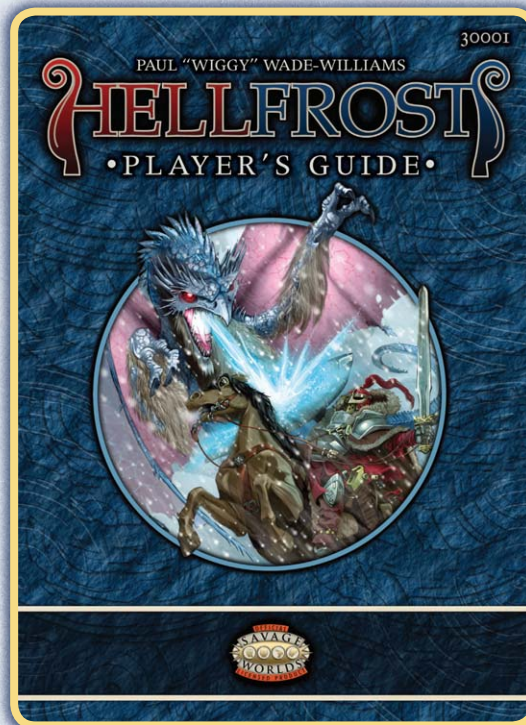
The northern central and eastern regions of Rassilon were cleansed of civilization, only the dwarves, taiga elves, and Finnar humans surviving in any numbers—the dwarves by sealing themselves away in their mountains, the elves through ancient magic, and the latter lacking any cities to attract the invaders.

In the east, the armies of Aspiria and Chalcis rallied to hold the flanks, while below the Icebarrier the Anari and Saxa were pushed back almost to the coast before rallying and driving back the invaders. Long winters and constant attacks devastated the land, but after several years, the attackers were forced back. As they retreated north, a gigantic wall of ice rose, and the Hellfrost formed.

Since that day, known as Ice Rise, Rassilon has been gripped in a wintry fist. Each year the snows begin earlier and last longer, each year the ground takes longer to thaw. Rassilon is slowly succumbing to a permanent winter. Many folk suspect the end of days has finally come.

## CULTS, CABALS, AND SOCIETIES

The Convocation of Elementalists watches over students of the elemental arts, guiding, teaching, and manipulating. Hearth Knights, sworn to defend the Hearthlands from Hellfrost beasts, prowl the snow and ice. Wood Wardens guard the ancient forests from the ravages of man and beasts. Bludgeoners watch over the engros, safeguarding them against the terrors that would otherwise haunt their waking dreams. Knights Hrafn lead armies of men against the forces of darkness, using their superior tactical and strategic knowledge to win the day. But these heroic organizations are not the only ones in existence. Evil lurks in the shadows, ready to strike at the first sign of weakness.



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