

Ironsworn_Story_007

Intro Notes & Previously...

Last time Valgrym reached the hut of an old fisherman and was almost seduced by the man's young wife, "Aelfgifu". Due to his ability to see magic, Valgrym noticed she was draining his life-force and managed to kill her with his iron spear. In order to do so, he burned all his +10 momentum!

I decided this would return the stolen vitality to Valgrym and to the poor husband - Hwaetmann.

The glamour left the body of the woman, revealing a three-week old corpse.

Hwaetmann has his life back now and must continue to care for his baby son who is about 1 year old. Who knows if the child will have future problems due to being cared for by the Faerie Succubus.

THE STORY

Valgrym helps poor Hwaetmann bury his wife's body and stays with him for a couple of days, looking after the baby while the man grieves.

Hwaetmann asks the lad for a further favour. The child "Little Hwaetmann" is sickly and his eyes flicker disturbingly with green and silver.

"If you intend to step into Faerie-land, please try to find a cure for my boy".

Feeling sorry for the man (and very slightly guilty for his breach of hospitality), Valgrym agrees. Although Aelfgifu had been possessed at the time, travelling to the cave of King Arthur seems like a good first step to getting past the Gate into Faerie. Hwaetmann gives him clear directions to both the Cave and the Yat (the crag that marks the location of the Gate).

His attempts to fish are fruitless and he loses two of Hwaetmann's precious hooks. When he tries to hunt, game is always scared off and the one of the snares he leaves is cut open, but there is sign that he had caught a rabbit.

He catches glimpses of malevolent eyes watching from the bushes. It seems he has angered the local Fae folk (possibly by killing their mistress). He will have to try and appease them before he leaves, or they could do great mischief to the fisherman or his baby.

He decides to try and apologise in rhyme and give them gifts.

THE GAME MECHANICS

They now share an unusual relationship – Valgrym has killed the evil faerie and restored his lost youth, but he also slept with the man's wife (even though she wasn't really his wife!).

MOVE:Forge a Bond

Action Dice 4 +2 Heart = 6

Challenge Dice 1 & 7, so WEAK HIT

They ask something more.

I decided to make this a quest related to the child. Perhaps a cure for some magical infection caused by suckling from the Faerie!

Last time I gave V the benefit of the Bond immediately, I realise now I shouldn't have done that. I'll make this a Dangerous side-quest.

MOVE:Swear an Iron Vow

Action Dice 4 +2 Heart = 6

Challenge Dice 3 & 2, so STRONG HIT

Emboldened and it is clear what you must do. +2 momentum.

V's Momentum is now 4, Health and Spirit are both at 5 but his Supply is only +2, so he will attempt to resupply before pressing on.

MOVE:Resupply

Action Dice 2 +2 Wits = 4

Challenge Dice 6 & 5, so MISS

Find nothing helpful and Pay the Price D100=82 – a surprising development complicates your quest.

THE STORY

With almost the last of his food and wine, Valgrym makes an offering to the Fae Folk.

If they will listen, he will offer them a song to explain what happened and how he was forced to defend himself. They might even tell him how to cure the baby if he can just get through to them.

In the twilight the tiny faerie folk encircle him, watching expectantly. The biggest of them is the size of Peatbog (18 inches tall) but most are no bigger than his hand with a few so small they ride on moths. They are dirty with sly, twisted faces and they whisper and hiss, but as they eventually fall silent and wait expectantly, the boy closes his eyes and relates the sorrowful tale of his quest for Gwenneth, but when he opens them again, not only have the creatures vanished, but his long iron-tipped spear has vanished too.

Despite having no spear and hardly any supplies, Valgrym decides to head to the Cave of King Arthur, perhaps he'll find a sword there as well as a shield.

He can't see any sign of danger, so creeps inside.

Using a feeble torch, he searches the cave, finding it has two huge entrances and a wide tunnel leading back into the hill.

He finds signs that the cave is occupied by a Giant, but clearly the creature is away from home.

THE GAME MECHANICS

I'll give V a chance to Secure an Advantage and then lead into a Face Danger. As before, I'll give up a precious supply to get a +1 bonus (Supply now down to +1).

MOVE:Secure an Advantage
Action Dice 1 +2 Heart + 1 Bribe = 4
Challenge Dice 5 & 10, so MISS

Oops! Fail or assumptions betray you. Pay the Price D100=Something of value is lost or destroyed.

At this point the only thing of value he has is an iron spear (likely) or the baby(unlikely) Ask the Oracle.. 34 so the spear!

From here to the Cave is only a few miles along the valley, so it won't be a Journey. He'll leave his pony tethered near the water's edge and sneak up to the cave entrance to take a look.

MOVE:Secure an Advantage
Action Dice 3 +1 Stealth = 4
Challenge Dice 2 & 4, so WEAK HIT
+1 momentum (now +5)

I've already decided that the cave is home to the Giant who has the key to the Gate. So I'll use Gather Information because Valgrym is searching the cave.

MOVE:Gather Information
Action Dice 6 +2 Wits = 8
Challenge Dice 1 & 6, so STRONG HIT

Discover something helpful and specific. +2 momentum (now +7).

Ask the Oracle – find the giant (1-3) find some supply (4) find the Giant is not at home (5) find a bronze sword (6) D6=4 Giant is not at home.

THE STORY

Should he keep searching and maybe steal the key? Or would that be too ignoble? He decides to keep searching but won't steal anything.

The lad is still searching in rubble

The Cave shakes at the approach of the giant. It enters the tunnel and rolls a stone across to block the exit.

"AM I HAVING SOMEONE FOR DINNER?". There is a rumble like distant thunder, Valgrym realises is laughter. He can't hide for long and won't be able to get out past the great stone, so decides to hold his torch aloft and step forward.

"I've not stolen anything Lord Symon, indeed, I was hoping to meet you as I wish to beg a favour from you".

He starts to tell his tale... Gwenneth, her mother Radka, then the Drake in the woods and how it told him Radka was a Witch and how he promised to kill her and release the Drake. How the Drake had woken some magic in him. Then how he was enslaved and how he met Peatbog and agreed to do a task for the little man.

The Giant is impressed – Valgrym has overcome a Drake, done a deal with it, done one quest for (and apparently befriended the "King of the Peat Bog Faeries"). Finally he has killed Atani, the White Lady.

"YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE MUCH BUT HAVE SOMEHOW MANAGED TO ACHIEVE GREAT THINGS. YOU MUST BE HUNGRY FROM YOUR ADVENTURES. I WILL FEED YOU SUPPER AND MAYBE OPEN THE YAT FOR YOU".

THE GAME MECHANICS

MOVE:Gather Information

Action Dice 5 +2 Wits = 7

Challenge Dice 7 & 7, so MISS 😞 MATCH!!!

A dire threat – obvious option is the Giant returns home. As the challenge dice are 7s, I can't burn my 7 momentum to make them hits.

This seems like Face Danger and Valgrym intends to be honest and appeal to the Giant's mercy by telling his own tale.

In case it comes to combat, the giant is an Extreme foe. I've thought of some peaceful resolutions and some possible motivations for the giant, but intend to "play to find out"

MOVE:Face Danger

Action Dice 6 +2 Heart = 8

Challenge Dice 1 & 4, so STRONG HIT

Successful! +1 momentum (now +8)

Oracle – Elf Names 30.

I'm going to give V another Secure Advantage. Accepting any gift from a Faerie places you under their obligation. If he realises this he can politely refuse, or offer to share his own food.

THE STORY

With a sigh of relief and thinking his words have touched the Giant's heart (and due to having had very little food for a week now) the boy wolfs down the offered fruits and meat.

"IT SEEMS TO ME BOY, THAT YOU HAVE ACCEPTED MY FOOD AND HAVE NOTHING WITH WHICH TO REPAY MY HOSPITALITY. NO COINS OF SILVER, NO GIFTS – THAT IS A POOR THING – PERHAPS THERE IS A SMALL FAVOUR YOU COULD DO FOR ME IN EXCHANGE?"

Sensing he has little choice Valgrym is forced to agree.

"IF YOU CAN ANSWER MY QUESTION WITH THE RIGHT ANSWER, I WILL OPEN THE GATE TONIGHT AND YOU CAN RIDE ACROSS THE MOON'S ROAD ON YOUR LITTLE PONY. NOW TAKE CARE WITH YOUR WORDS BOY, I'D PREFER NOT TO HAVE TO FEAST ON YOUR FLESH TO REPAY YOUR DEBT – **WHAT DO YOU SEEK IN THE FAE REALM?**"

His first thought was to say he sought Gwenneth or the Elf-Earl, but he remembered Peatbog's rhyme said not to say Who you sought. Then just in time, he realised that "Whence comes Why" might refer to the source of the river Wye.

"I seek the source of the river, Lord symon"

The Giant's booming laugh shook the hillside, showering them with stones.

"WELL – GOOD ENOUGH – PERHAPS YOU WILL MAKE IT TO THE ELF-EARL'S CASTLE AFTER ALL. IF SO, YOU MUST SAY THIS TO HIM..."

**For his Freedom, Symon bids me Say
A gracious gift, Faithful and unafraid
Release from Royal ban he begs
Restored the right to fare in Fae**

THE GAME MECHANICS

MOVE:Secure Advantage
Action Dice 2 +2 Wits = 4
Challenge Dice 10 & 9, so MISS

Fail and assumptions betray you. Pay the Price. The likely outcome is fairly obvious...

I'd mentioned previously that Peatbog had given Valgrym a rhyme that would help to answer the Giant's question

**On Simon's Hill where gate stands gaunt
On steep vale side where falcons fly
When gate guard looms, a bellow booms
Not Who or Where, but Whence comes Why**

Obviously, I know the meaning of the riddle so will have to use a Face Danger to see if Valgrym can work it out. He gained +1 towards the solution during the previous session.

MOVE:Face Danger
Action Dice 4 +2 Wits +1 hint = 7
Challenge Dice 5 & 1, so STRONG HIT
Successful, +1 momentum

The giant has been banned from Faerieland for some displeasure of the elf-earl and wants to get back in his good graces. He is sending Valgrym as his "gift" to the earl!

I'll work out next time how far this goes towards his progress – he'll have to swear yet another Vow!

