

Into the Unknown 4 Unlikely Allies

Decision Path: Chase after the Vermling

Goal: Destroy the totem and deliver an amount of meat equal to seven times the number of characters

Introduction:

Not wanting to be ambushed later by a pack of vengeful Vermlings, you pursue the fleeing figure back into the forest. Catching it or getting a clear shot proves more difficult than anticipated, however.

The Vermling continues to gain ground until you are barreling through the trees with only vague idea of the direction you should be headed. Suddenly, you burst out into a clearing full of the small creatures, all of them dressed in the same colorful attire of plants and feathers.

At your arrival, the Vermlings hiss menacingly, but they do not appear to be armed. You are about to brandish your own weapons when one of them yells above the crowd.

"Wait!" It says. "These are ones I saw! These are ones who kill Blackbiters! They are not enemy!" You haven't quite arrived at that conclusion yourself yet, but you stay your hand as the Vermling walks closer to you.

"You kill many Blackbiter and their demons, yes?" He asks. Not sure what to do, you nod. "Good! You help kill more of them, yes?"

You nod again and the crowd of Vermlings visibly relaxes. You talk more with the one who recognized you, named Antgut, and you learn that this Vermling tribe, the Hollowbones, has been warring with the Blackbiters for many years. Only recently, though, did the Blackbiters begin employing the aid of demons.

Antgut is afraid the demons will turn the war in the Blackbiters favor, and the Hollowbones were preparing to attack their enemy's temple when you appeared.

"Before we fight," Antgut explains, "We need power of ancestors. We make ritual feast, and would be honor if you join us." Antgut explains that the most important task in the feast is the cooking of the meat. Drake carcasses, recently harvested from a nearby cave, must be butchered, brought to the cooking cave, and then returned to the banquet table, all the while a totem of the enemy tribe is danced around and attacked.

"It is very important meat cooked well and totem destroyed," Antgut says. "Sacred task, but I see you kill Blackbiter already. Ancestors choose you for task."

Special Rules:

Meat must go through an entire cycle before it is considered delivered. First, while adjacent to table **a**, a character must perform an attack action against the table **a** (ranged attacks do not automatically suffer disadvantage), where the amount of damage done is equal to the number of raw meat tokens picked up (use damage tokens placed on your character mat). Once a character is carrying meat, they cannot pick up more, though a character can lose any number of meat tokens from their mat whenever they want on their turn.

Once carrying raw meat, a character must then end a movement on a hex adjacent to hot coals **c** to place the meat tokens on that hex and begin cooking them. At the end of every round, all meat tokens on hot coals **e** are removed from the board, all meat tokens on **d** are moved to **e**, and all meat tokens on **c** are moved to **d**.

While adjacent to hot coals **e**, a character must perform an attack action against the hot coals **e** (ranged attacks do not automatically suffer disadvantage), where the amount of damage done is equal to the number of cooked meat tokens picked up, up to the number of tokens on the hex (use damage tokens placed on your character mat). Again, once a character is carrying meat, they cannot pick up more.

Maps:

L1b
M1b
B4b



Vermling Scout



Giant Viper



Thorns (x4)



Hot Coals (x3)



Totem (xi)



Table (x2)

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Once carrying cooked meat, a character must then end a movement on a hex adjacent to table ⑥ to deliver it.

If a character occupies a blue cave space on the end of their turn, they suffer 2 damage.

The totem ① has Cx18 hit points. It cannot be focused on by summons.

The Vermling Scouts block normal movement, but are otherwise considered allies to you. An ability card is revealed for them at the beginning of every round, as normal, but instead of performing the actions specified on the card, they instead, on their initiative, move as a group to surround a different thorns hex, keeping the same orientation with respect to each other. If their initiative value is 53 or lower, they move to surround the next clockwise thorns hex. If their initiative value is 54 or higher, they move to surround the next counter-clockwise thorns hex. If a hex a Vermling would move to is occupied, the Vermling instead moves to the empty hex closest to the hex it would have moved to. The next time it moves, it will attempt to return to the original surrounding formation.

When Cx3 pieces of meat have been delivered, read ①.



Drawn by the smell of the meat, you see a group of huge snakes begin to emerge from the forest.

"Keep them away from the ritual!" Antgut yells.

Special Rules:

A Giant Viper spawns on hex ⑨ at the end of every round. These spawns are all normal for two characters. They are normal every odd round and elite every even round for three characters. They are all elite for four characters. The Giant Vipers are enemies to you and the Vermling Scouts.

Conclusion:

With the meat delivered, the dancing and singing of the Hollowbone tribe ends abruptly and dramatically. As you clear out the rest of the vipers, you notice that the meat emits a faint golden glow. Disconcerted, you see the tribe crowd around the table and begin to feast. Antgut approaches you.

"We thank you greatly," he says with a smile. "Without you, ritual surely fail." You begin to hear an odd cacophony of noises around the table as Antgut continues.

"I lie, though," he admits. "Ancestors give us power, but not power to fight. Power to flee."

At this, you recognize the sounds around the table as those of birds cawing. Before your eyes, a number of Vermlings begin to change shape. They writhe on the ground in pain, flapping their arms wildly. Slowly, their limbs become wings, their mouths become beaks, and their feet become talons.

"You can eat meat, too," Antgut says noncommittally. "I not know if it work on non-Vermlings, but it all I can offer for help." He turns and begins to walk toward the table.

Rewards:

1 ✓ each
2 experience each for each Vermling alive
"Necklace of Teeth" (Item 106)

What is your next move?

- ① Take some of the meat and return to Dreyl.
- ② Take Antgut hostage and demand the Hollowbones help you fight the Blackbiters.
- ③ Leave the Hollowbones on amicable terms and continue your search of the inner island.