

Skallhaven: The Last Frontier of the South

The village began as a temporary refuge for fur hunters and grew to become the southernmost settlement in Brukon. Small groups of human and half-orc hunters coexist in the region, united by mutual respect, although occasionally tinged with distrust. The half-orcs, who are known for their ability to track prey in the dense forests and survive the harsh winters, are essential to the village's prosperity, but some human residents still view them as "outsiders." Despite this, necessity and trade have forged a functional coexistence.

1. Trade and Sustenance

Life in Skallhaven revolves around furs. The Heskall River connects the village to Brukostad, allowing the transport of its valuable fox, marten, wolf and bear pelts. This trade supports the local economy, but only partially; fishing, a small amount of farming and a sawmill help to supplement supplies for the unforgiving winters. Blue fox pelts are so rare that some are sold as far away as Skolt, while bear pelts are reserved for the strongest and most influential. Hunting these creatures is not only a physical challenge, but also a spiritual one, for the animals are revered by both humans and orcs, who believe their spirits can haunt those they hunt for their own gain.

In exchange for their precious pelts, Skallhaven receives from Brukostad items that are vital to their survival and comfort: metal tools, sharp blades for hunters and lumberjacks, thick fabrics for winter clothing, rare spices to enrich their monotonous meals, grains and seeds that do not grow in the village's soil, and even weapons to protect them from the dangers of the region. In addition, medicines and medicinal herbs are highly prized, especially during the harsh winters, when illness and injury are more common. This trade cycle, although limited, is essential to the existence of Skallhaven, making the Heskall River not only a trade route, but the vital lifeline connecting the village to the rest of the world.

2. Dangers of the region

In addition to the ferocious animals, such as wolves and bears, that patrol the forests, there are even more sinister dangers.

2.1 The Ice Stalkers: During the coldest nights of winter, there are reports of humanoid figures made of ice and snow that prowl the city, seemingly seeking warmth. Some claim that these are the spirits of hunters who froze to death, cursed to wander forever.

2.2 The Renegades: Small groups of bandits and outcasts from society live in the nearby forests. They attack caravans and unsuspecting hunters, not for survival, but out of sheer cruelty, worshiping a "Blood God" who demands sacrifices.

3. Local Characters

Gudrik, the Master Furrier - A burly and experienced human, Gudrik is responsible for evaluating, preparing, and storing the village's most valuable furs. He has an overly large nose, which he swears is useful for "smelling the quality of the furs."

Borna, the Half-Orc Healer - Known for her potions and remedies made from local herbs. With a gruff but efficient manner, she intimidates with her stern gaze, but always helps those in need. It is said that she speaks to forest spirits to gain their knowledge.

Ulfar, the Boat Captain - An old, bearded human, Ulfar owns the largest boat in Skallhaven, which he uses to transport furs to Brukostad. He loves to tell stories of monsters that "nearly" sank his boat - all of which are probably exaggerated.

Tharuk, the Half-Orc Lumberjack - Large and muscular, Tharuk is a tireless worker at the sawmill. Despite his intimidating appearance, he is sweet and has an unexpected talent for carving small wooden animals, which he gives to children as gifts.

Olfrid the Elder - This elderly human is the living memory of Skallhaven. He knows the history of the village and the surrounding lands, but has a nasty habit of falling asleep in the middle of his own stories.

Snorri the Innkeeper - A friendly human, Snorri has a laugh so loud it scares even animals. He is known for serving dubious ale and overcharging for the few spices he sells in his tavern.

Ingrid the Weaver - Ingrid is a human with an unparalleled skill in transforming furs into exquisite clothing. Despite her gentle nature, she is always grumbling about the weather, the people, and the animals.

4. A place of brave men

Despite the dangers, Skallhaven thrives due to the adaptability of its people. The families who live there know that they cannot rely on luck or divine protection alone. Each winter is a struggle against nature, spirits and human enemies. But those who survive carry the pride of belonging to the frontier where civilization meets the wild.