

## The Investigations of Savik Summerstorm

*Regarding the Lakefolk of Atkonarog. While it is important to act, it is folly to act without knowledge! To this end, we encourage the people of Sermersuaq to learn all they can of the nature and purpose of the Lakefolk and despatch Savik Summerstorm to lead this wise work.*

*Assembly of Wisdom, 380YE*

Wisdom is knowing when to ask the right questions.

What is the nature and purpose of the Lakefolk of Atkonarog? It is this question that the Assembly of Wisdom has sent you forth to answer. But is it the right one?

Your investigations at first only tell you what you already know. Using the liao you have brought, local stormcrows following the Path of Wisdom can administer the Clarity of Wisdom to those who have witnessed the attacks by the strangers first-hand. Bringing the mandate of the Synod, those affected listen to the counsel you offer on patient and careful explanation.

At first, their stories are fanciful, full of extraneous details, anecdotes about fishing, expressions of fear and upset, brimming with speculation. With careful guidance, those you meet see the truth with fresh eyes, and give an accurate account of the raids.

You also hear details of the camp the strangers have set up on the lake shore, and have a chance to witness them first-hand. There are many of them, at least a hundred – they have set up huts, tents and shelters on the very shore of the lake itself – indeed, there is no boundary between where their camp ends and the lake begins. Occasionally, you see them swim into the water, drawing their cloaks about them and diving underneath. You do not appear to see anyone surface after such trips, however – or not for some time.

You are welcome to roleplay about the further details of the methods of your investigations in Atkonarog as you like. Whatever your approach, you uncover the following facts.

- These strange people are not entirely unfamiliar to the people who live near Atkonarog – they resemble the descriptions of hylje from local legend.
- The hylje are said to be eerie seal spirits, tied to the stories of Semersuaq herself. They are generally considered, in tales, helpful and positive creatures, inclined to help lost sailors and hunters.
- Some of the old scops do tell stories where the hylje were angered – this was always, in legend, because someone had taken the sealskin cloaks they wear. These cloaks were said to be the source of their shapeshifting power.
- The legends are silent on whether or not hylje are “seals that walk as people, or people who swim as seals” – their nature is unclear.
- The observations made of the strangers and their relationship with the lake does strongly suggest they might be hylje.

- One credible account comes from a Grimnir who hid herself in a chest when the strangers burst in. They spoke in a mixture of Imperial and an odd sequence of wails and calls – but she definitely heard the words “the skin of the Ætheling”. From context, it seemed as if this was specifically what they were searching for.
- From other reports of overheard conversation, the “Ætheling” is their leader. This person lives in one of the most well-guarded huts on the shore. A few comments imply they are personally responsible for the raids –but do not participate themselves.
- The strangers identify themselves as “companions of the Ætheling”, and the word is suggestive – there is no sign of a rigorous command structure. There have been observations of celebrations of comradeship and friendship in battle among them – they perhaps put this in high regard.
- They have not yet found what they are looking for, and they are starting to think about what to do next. You can get no information about how many more might surface from the lake, but there is an implication there might be quite a population to draw on.

On returning from your investigations, you receive word that the Civil Service, following up from last season, have confirmed that there will be a conjunction back to the lake at the Winter Solstice. The Sentinel Gate opens only at critical points in the skein – it seems likely that this conjunction, coupled with the information you have gathered, could prove the key to progressing this matter.

The conjunction has been narrowed down to the first two days of the summit, but not yet any further. The location will be “near the shores of Atkonaroq Lake, Semmersuaq, Wintermark”, and any magician could use this information and the detect magic incantation on the Sentinel Gate in order to discover more information about the exact time and size of the conjunction.