

Fey Feature

Energy Fey: Hoarfrosters

(Part 2 of 5)

By Gwendolyn F. M. Kestrel and Faith M. Price



From the Journals of Krenn Elias, Court Anthropologist

Day 296

I am filled with hope and dread as I reached the next leg of my journey. While the fire elemental was dangerous, nothing can compare to the possible threat that awaits in the frozen east, where the hoarfroster dwells.

Very little is known of these elementals, as they dwell in areas uninhabitable by most creatures. Bits of lore allude to them as "cursed spawn of Arik," the mad fey necromancer. It is thought that he, in his dangerous quest to overthrow the Unseelie Court, created an unstoppable weapon of destruction. Working to bind the very elements of the planes, his experiments produced nightmarish creatures of evil. In the battle that ensued, his creations managed to destroy half of the queen's armies before they fell. Although the queen announced that all of Arik's creatures were annihilated, rumors of the hoarfrosters' existence continue. Perhaps this is fact, perhaps not. As it has been a dozen millennia since that failed rebellion, the past has swallowed up the truth. At most, I can but hope to be the first to write a personal account of the hoarfrosters.

Day 297

We have stopped for supplies at the last village before the frozen wastelands begin. We managed to secure a guide, although the price was substantial. Only by offering her several powerful magic items and an introduction to the court for her handsome son, were we able to persuade Yolla to lead us into the hoarfroster's territories. Even then, she would not agree until we showed her that we have several spellcasters in our expedition. Indeed, were I not certain that failure on this task would result in a slow and painful death from the queen, I would not be making this journey myself.



Day 298

A storm moved in last night, keeping us here for the next day or two. I have decided to continue my research by interviewing the villagers. Most have never seen a hoarfroster, and never wish to. One fey, older than half the village put together, has memories from her youth of a beautiful blue creature with glowing eyes, clothed only in flowing white hair, floating across the plains. She had been lost in a blizzard,

and was near freezing herself, so even she did not know if the apparition was real or a product of a delusional mind.

Day 301

At last, we are able to continue on our journey. We know from the reports that hoarfrosters are most active at night, so we should be able to travel safely by day. Once we are far into the wastelands, we will set a trap for a hoarfroster. If all goes well, we will all be back to a more temperate climate within two weeks.

Day 304

So far the frozen east has been quiet. Our guide says that we are now in the dangerous territories of the hoarfroster. We have switched to sleeping during the day and traveling by night. As hoarfrosters are rumored to aggressively attack all heat sources, we use only magical lights to guide the way.

Day 306

We came across a horrible spectacle tonight: three fey, with looks of terror on their faces, frozen as statues running from some sort of attack. A thin layer of frost covered their skin. How long ago this occurred is impossible to tell. As I touched the hand of one of the creatures, it fell to the ground with a sickening thud. Then, the entire body collapsed, leaving nothing but a pile of gray dust on the ice.



Looking at the two remaining frozen faces, I wonder if risking the queen's wrath might not be safer than continuing our quest. But we have come this far, and my family will gain much by my success. Tomorrow, we set our trap.

Day 307

We started a fire in the late afternoon, with enough fuel to burn into the night, in hopes of attracting a hoarfroster. Our valley offers little cover, but we were able to dig a cave in the side of the hill. We used snow to block off the entrance; a series of *clairvoyance* globes gives us a view of the valley. I had wanted to see the creature in person, but the guide has persuaded me that it is not safe. We are still taking a chance, hoping that the heat generated by the fire and the snow covering our cave will mask our body heat. Tomorrow, I hope to record my observations of one of the most deadly elementals in the fey realms.

Day 308

I have now seen a hoarfroster with my own eyes, although the cost was great. Our trap was not perfect. While the bonfire did attract one hoarfroster, our body heat attracted a second. As I watched the globes, jotting down impressions, a scream came from behind me. A hoarfroster, with glowing eyes cold and terrible, passed through the ice and into our cave. Before a single spell could be cast, it grabbed my little assistant and breathed its foul breath over her body. She shivered and turned blue around the face. I rushed to help her, but too late. She fell down unconscious and never awoke. Our guide, Yolla, fought bravely beside my companions, but she, too, was touched by the elemental and eventually froze in place.

Five others of my party died from the injuries they sustained. Only I and my strongest fighter remain. We now face the task of making our way out of this wasteland alone. If another hoarfroster attacks us, we have not the power to fight it off.

Hoarfroster

Medium Fey [Cold, Incorporeal]

Hit Dice: 16d6+32 (88 hp)

Initiative: +7

Speed: Fly 40 ft. (perfect) (8 squares)

Armor Class: 16 (+3 Dex, +3 deflection), touch 16, flat-footed 13

Base Attack/Grapple: +8/ --

Attack: Incorporeal touch +11 melee (2d6 cold plus fatiguing touch)

Full Attack: Incorporeal touch +11 melee (2d6 cold plus fatiguing touch)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Chilling breath, consuming cold, fatiguing touch

Special Qualities: Immunity to cold, incorporeal traits, low-light vision, vulnerability to fire

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +13, Will +10

Abilities: Str --, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 5, Wis 11, Cha 17

Skills: Hide +22, Listen +21, Spot +21

Feats: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spring Attack

Environment: Cold plains

Organization: Solitary or pair

Challenge Rating: 8

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral evil

Advancement: 17-32 HD (Medium)

Level Adjustment: --

A chill aura precedes a ghostly apparition. It resembles a elfin humanoid, but its skin is a transparent, icy blue, and its eyes are cold sapphires.

Hoarfrosters are incorporeal fey, born of hatred and ice. They dwell alone or in pairs in the frozen plains and arctic wastelands of the farthest reaches of the fey lands. They live in small caves or underground burrows, preferring small caverns that have no openings, allowing them to drift through the solid matter to enter, while keeping all light and heat outside. They are nocturnal creatures, choosing to stay inside during the bright hours of day. They are most active and dangerous at dusk, when their vision is sharpest. They feel no hunger or thirst, and will not die from natural causes.

Averaging around 5 feet in height, hoarfrosters appear to be humanoid in form. Created only by another hoarfroster's attack, they resemble their corporeal shapes in life. Hoarfrosters do not speak.

Combat

Hoarfrosters operate on basic instinct, thinking only to protect their territory from anything warm or warm-blooded, including almost all living creatures. They especially target anyone carrying a torch or other open flame.

Chilling Breath (Su): 30-ft. cone, every 2d6 rounds, 6d6 cold, Reflex DC 20 half. The DC is

Constitution-based.

Consuming Cold (Su): Supernatural disease -- touch, Fortitude DC 20, incubation period 1 minute; damage 1d4 Con and 1d4 Str. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Unlike normal diseases, consuming cold continues until the victim reaches Constitution 0 (and dies) or is cured. An afflicted fey that dies of consuming cold becomes a hoarfroster a year and a day after death. Other creatures simply die, and their bodies slowly disintegrate over the next year, along with any clothing or items touching the body.

During the metamorphosis, a fey creature lies dead, but all of the creature's hair or fur gradually fades to white, while its skin changes to an icy blue hue. A hoarfroster retains its basic facial features, but all previous memories, thoughts and skills are completely gone and can never be regained. Any clothing or items touching the creature turn to dust.

Fatiguing Touch (Su): A hoarfroster's touch is tiring. A victim touched by it must make a DC 21 Fortitude save or become fatigued. A creature already fatigued becomes exhausted. The save is Charisma-based.

Incorporeal Traits: A hoarfroster is harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, magic weapons, spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural abilities. It has a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source, except for force effects or attacks made with ghost touch weapons. It can pass through solid objects, but not force effects, at will. Its attacks ignore natural armor, armor, and shields, but deflection bonuses and force effects work normally against them. An incorporeal creature always moves silently and cannot be heard with Listen checks if it doesn't wish to be.

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Gwendolyn F. M. Kestrel is a managing editor for Wizards of the Coast's Roleplaying Games R&D department. Recent work includes editing and additional development for the revised *Dungeon Master's Guide* and the *Monster Manual*. Editing credits include *Fiend Folio*, *Faiths and Pantheons*, *Oriental Adventures*, and *Magic of Faerûn*. Design credits include the *Book of Challenges* and *Dragon Magazine* articles. She's a frequent contributor to the Wizards of the Coast website. Also, check out the website she created for her husband, Andy Collins at www.andycollins.net.



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