

# Ice-Whales of Labrador

[\[The Day After Ragnarok\]](#)

City: Hopedale, Labrador

Population: 290 (includes about 200 slaves)

Controls: nothing

Government: Machine

Problem: Monsters

Heroic Opportunity: Arcana

City Aspect: Doom-ridden

Everybody in Hopedale died in the Serpentfall tsunami. Of course, virtually everybody in the coastal parts of Labrador died in the Serpentfall; and since the interior parts of the province were virtually free of human life already, it's not surprising that what's left of eastern Canada (centered around the town of Rivière-du-Loup, population 1,795) simply assumes that there's nothing at all left up there.

They're almost right. But there's something about the area around Hopedale that attracts those who were either too stubborn or too crazy to die from the tsunami, the freezing cold, the wendigo, or the nigh-omnipresent despair. Perhaps it's the new iridescent labradorite deposits that were thrust up from the ground in the wake of the

Serpentfall. The new residents of Hopedale don't know why labradorite is so valuable to that one submarine which shows up every month or so for a cargo. All they know is that the submarine pays well in supplies and trinkets. Very well, in fact. Easily enough to justify enslaving people to gather and prepare the labradorite.

And then there are the ice-whales. They're called that because one can swim through ice the way that their previous, unmutated selves could swim through the seas; it's only due to an odd combination of strength, flexibility, and acidic slime, but it works. And it's a sight to see an ice-whale breach the pack ice, too. Of course, the slime is alarming (and somewhat dangerous to be around). So are the writhing tentacles, which double as both inexorable borers through the ice and blindly questing appendages, constantly searching for food to throw in the ice-whale's serrated mouth. And, to be clear about it: ice-whales will happily snack on human meat. They're damnably bright creatures, too, with a song that can freeze a man in his tracks until he's bleeding from the nose. And they know how to use that trick to hunt.

The current residents of Hopedale, alas, handle this problem in the old-fashioned way: they propitiate the ice-whales with human sacrifices. Although admittedly not

that often, on the reasonable grounds that there aren't enough humans to do all the jobs that need doing, so any person that they catch who can actually do something useful (even if it's just slave-mining labradorite) will be safe from the ice-whales' tentacles. Anybody who can't work gets chained out on the ice. If the Hopedalers are feeling nice or thrifty, they'll strip the sacrifice first. The ice-whales don't seem to mind if their meat is alive or not, and death by exposure is a cleaner death.

It's all manageable, really. As long as there aren't too many ice-whales coming by for a snack. If *that* happens, the non-slave portion of Hopedale might try to bring in a team of applied violence specialists to solve the problem. Preferably, one that won't be missed afterward, because obviously whoever they bring in will be promptly enslaved afterward and set to processing labradorite. Or at least that will be the plan.

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