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On Treacherous Ground

Tribal warfare and intrigue in the brink of history.

This scenario is based on a story told in my novel, *The Fargoer*. For more information, check http://mybook.to/fargoer

It is spring on the lands of Kainu, a hunter-gatherer tribe located in the vast northern forests. Ruled by their women chiefs and shamans they never stay too long in one place, but rather wander their lands in loose groups, hunting, gathering and fishing. Their lands are harsh, hill after hill covered by the primeval forest flanked by dark swamplands and marshes. There are no roads and no buildings, just nature, and hardened people extracting their living from it.

They are unique people, for as long as they can remember the women have ruled over the tribe. Having more than one husband was considered the mark of a true chieftain, and norm in the near past that can still be recalled by the elders. But tribes living around them have started to change their ways. Southern Kainu clans have some men among the chiefs and shamans and some speak of ways of the foreigners with hushed, yet fondly.

For as long as the elders can remember, the southerners, both Finns and Norsemen, have come here each spring when the waterways have cleared from ice. They are after the furs Kainu hunt during the long winter, as those are as valuable as gold and silver to them.

Years passed and the number of springtime travelers increased every year. Then they ceased to just trade, and started to loot and pillage. The southernmost Kainus were the first to suffer at their hands. Kainus are not a war-like people, but there is a limit to what they can take.

Now, in the eve of spring the whole tribe has been called together. Ancient war-songs are sung among the council-fires, spears and arrows are being sharpened. While the southern clans are already painting their faces with spirals of war, their northern sisters hesitate.

The hour is desperate for the Kainu. Over the last winter, wisp fever ravaged them taking a third of their strength to the land of the shadow. Hard choices and harder tasks are ahead if they are to survive.

But first, they have to choose a great chief, someone to lead the tribe to unity during this spring of change.

Grains

- War boils away everything that is unnecessary
- Fear leads to wrath leads to violence
- Human kindness is not easily destroyed

Aure

Aure is a headstrong and fierce woman of the Kainu tribe. She is a chieftain of her own clan, born of a line of chieftains before her, in a tribe where chiefs are not picked by bloodline but by prowess to rule.

She has seen twenty five summers, had three husbands and three daughters. Wisp fever took all of her daughters and two of her three husbands. The grief has broken her from inside and her mourning is horrible thing to watch.

She began to wander alone in the gloomy swamplands, calling out for spirits. This she did, fully knowing that such acts were shunned by the Kainu people. Ill fortune had always followed when consulting the spirits of the swamps. She just didn't care anymore.

In the end she got her reply. At first the spirits only wanted little things: fish, meat, crown made of rare flowers. In return they promised health and vigor against the never-ending sorrow that haunted her heart. But both demands and rewards grew bolder, until the spirits promised Aure to bring back her daughters, one by one if only she would sacrifice enough people for the spirits to consume in their rotten depths.

What better way to accomplish this than war with the troublesome southerners. She has so little to lose!

Spirits of the gloomy swampland
Little people in the deep
Chorus of the helpless children
Victims who the death will keep

Hear me good, my offer take
Down now pull him to you
Eat him with your hungry mouths
All blood, gut, all sinew

Give me luck and grant me hope
Give me back what life did steal
Though I come from world above you
All my wounds and ailments heal

	Traits
3	**Tribal Huntress** Strong, fast and stealthy. Aure is among the best of her tribe, who have mastered living in the harsh conditions.
2	**Chief** She is the chief of her clan, with the authority it gives her.
2	**Tough** Hard land has tempered her.
1	**Aid of Dark Spirits** Blasphemous as they are for the Kainu, she has their aid.

	Burdens
1	**Taint of the Spirits** They are to take her down in the end.

	Burdens
1	**Broken** Life has took too much of her.

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