



STRIGA

For a long time now, you have been hearing unbelievable news about the castle in Vizima. Rumour has it that the place is haunted. Or that the castle has come to life and feasts on the blood of its dwellers. Or even that a monster has taken over the royal court.

You have been summoned before King Foltest. Beneath the façade of composure, the sovereign's face conceals the shadows of a past tragedy.

"My daughter... I'd been mourning her death for seven years before she returned, transformed into a cursed beast. A striga which has been prowling the place for another seven years. She's still blood-starved. It's time you removed the spell. But keep her alive" – Foltest remains composed, but you can read the room and tell that the striga's death would be a severe blow for the ruler.

Once the audience with the king has come to an end, you are accosted by one of the courtiers. He casts his eyes warily around, making sure that no one is listening in on your conversation.

"We are all perfectly aware why Foltest has summoned you. Don't you dare break the curse. It's a crazy risk. We fear that before you manage to do so, there will be more victims. Slaughter the beast, and you shall be rewarded. You won't regret it."

Opinions are divided on what should be done with the striga. Both killing the princess and relieving her of the spell have their advocates.

You begin to understand the gravity of the situation. It's high time you rolled up your sleeves and moved off the dime.

MAKE YOUR CHOICE



Surely, the intimidated castle dwellers along with the local servants wish for their nightmare to end at last. You try to cajole them into telling you what they know.



You are also aware that the castle walls were a silent witness to the tragic events. You explore the halls and chambers in search of clues.

TALK TO PEOPLE



EXPLORE THE CASTLE



TALK TO PEOPLE

First, you decide to talk to the courtiers. The stories they share with you send shivers down your spine. It's becoming more and more difficult for you to see in the striga the traces of the innocent princess she once was and would become again.

The cursory exploration of the castle leads one of you to the basement chamber where the striga laid its mitts on its previous victim. The place hasn't been cleaned up particularly thoroughly and the remnants of the battle give you a broader picture of the situation. Moreover, you find a hidden passage behind the wine rack.



The information you have managed to gain take you to Ostrit, a magnate living in the castle. Emboldened by wine, he confesses that he once was in love with Adda – king Foltest's sister. However, she chose her brother's love and gave him a daughter. Heartbroken, Ostrit cursed his truelove and her offspring. And this is how the striga was born.

"No one will believe you it was me, anyway. You have no ways of proving it" he concludes, contemptuously raising the nearly empty goblet.

MAKE YOUR CHOICE



You well know that removing the curse won't be easy. That's why you devote a lot of time to rummage the books and dig into the magical research, hoping that it will allow you to better understand the curse which was cast on the princess.



You start gathering evidence against Ostrit to force him to help you.

LEARN ABOUT THE CURSE



GET EVIDENCE



EXPLORE THE CASTLE

Clues found in the castle make you believe that one of the local magnates, Ostrit, is responsible for the transformation of the king's daughter into a striga. One of you comes across the letters which give you a better understanding of the nature of the curse.

In them, Ostrit professed his love for princess Adda. However, she chose her brother's, king Foltest's, love. When it turned out that she was pregnant with him, heartbroken Ostrit cursed his truelove and her offspring. And this is how the newborn daughter transformed into a striga. A conversation with the royal cook gives one of you a new perspective on the matter – the chef may not be willing to share his recipes, but that's about everything he holds back from you.

Ostrit confirms your assumptions. Despite all the years that have passed, the wounds on his heart still haven't healed.

MAKE YOUR CHOICE



You try to convince him that the striga which is roaming the castle poses a danger to him too – you want him to help you deal with it.



Being pressed for time, you resort to arguments that go beyond a civilised conversation.

TALK CALMLY



INTIMIDATE



LEARN ABOUT THE CURSE

Having browsed through magical treaties and broadened your knowledge about curses, you are virtually ready to remove one. One of you has spent long hours poring over books and has devised a plan.

This is how you know that to do it you need to keep the striga out of her sarcophagus until the morning when the cock crows for the third time.

On the other hand, wandering the castle in search of evidence, one of you has been led to the armoury.

When you reach the chamber with the sarcophagus, you discover that something tragic took place here! Ostriv, probably with a view to hush up his involvement in this situation, beat you to the punch, coming here before you. However, the man didn't stand a chance against the beast's sharp claws!



MAKE YOUR CHOICE



You also understand that anyone present in the castle today is in great danger. You are shielding the king and the courtiers on their way to shelter.



The bloodthirsty striga will stop at nothing. You realise that you don't have a shot at removing the curse. You won't be able to complete the mission the way king Foltest would wish. You reach for your weapons in a desperate attempt to fend off the enraged beast.

COVER THE RETREAT



FIGHT STRIGA



GET EVIDENCE

You have gathered enough evidence to prove that Ostrit is guilty. However, you still can't agree on how you should go about the whole striga case. One of you expresses a strong opinion, but you still aren't entirely convinced.

Meanwhile, the magnate fears that when the truth comes out, his position at the court will be threatened.

"Put an end to it" he begs. "I might know how to remove the curse... Horrified by my deed and driven by remorse, I've been seeking a way to reverse it."

Ostrit reveals to you that the striga will be relieved of its spell under the condition that it does not return to its sarcophagus by the third crowing of the cock. One of you who has spent the most time investigating the striga's curse finds Ostrit's further explanations useful enough to put everything together and begins to understand the nature of the curse. They come up with a plan.

Finally, the magnate asks you to keep his involvement in the situation secret.

Fearful, you head for the chamber where lies the sarcophagus of the striga. You reach it a short moment later.



MAKE YOUR CHOICE



There are still many hours left until dawn – it will take a great deal of effort to remove the curse.



The enraged striga does not wait for dawn to break – it attacks fiercely, forcing you to defend yourselves.

UNDO THE CURSE



FACE STRIGA



TALK CALMLY

Ostrit admits that the investigation has led you to correct conclusions. It's him who's responsible for the curse. However, he lacks the courage to accompany you to the striga's den. By paying close attention to the magnate's words, you've learnt what to do before you face the beast.

One of you has no intention of letting Ostrit off the hook. They grab him by the collar and shake him violently. Petrified, he tries to placate you with juicy secrets about the court dwellers' intriguing affairs.

Once the air is cleared, Ostrit breathes heavily.

"Ever since it all began, I've been reading up on it a lot" he admits. "As far as I know, keeping the beast out of its lair all night, until the cock crows for the third time, should remove the spell. I hope it helps."



At this point, you already know how to remove the spell. However, there is still something that separates you from the starting point. Some sort of a metaphorical line carved by the beast's long claws. Fearful, you head to the chamber where lies the striga's sarcophagus. A moment later you stand at the door.

MAKE YOUR CHOICE



With the knowledge you've gained, you do your best to remove the spell.



The rageful striga isn't willing to wait until you succeed and carries out a frenzied attack, forcing you to move into defence.

UNDO THE CURSE



REPEL THE ATTACK



INTIMIDATE

Things are getting out of hand! Pressed against the wall, Ostrit admits that the investigation has led you to correct conclusions. However, the attempted intimidation prompts him to a fight. A fight he cannot win. Breathing his last, he confesses the truth about the court dwellers' intriguing affairs – is he trying to wash away his guilt?

Ostrit also reveals that in order to undo the spell, the striga must be kept outside of the sarcophagus until dawn. Now you stand over his dead body, uncertain of what the consequences of this incident will be.

You're forced to face the consequences sooner than you'd expect. Lured by the smell of blood, they stand on the threshold of the chamber in the form of the striga. Luckily, the full-on confrontation with Ostrit has warmed you up. The sight of Ostrit's corpse reassures the person who has been trying the hardest to establish a thread of understanding with the magnate that enough blood has already been shed in this castle. The curse must be removed.

This is when the sound of footsteps is heard in the hall. A group of people is running towards you. These are courtiers! Armed with swords and halberds, intent on killing the beast themselves.

MAKE YOUR CHOICE



You are aware that killing the striga under these circumstances is not an option – Foltest would not forgive you another death. You must remove the spell.



The furious courtiers do not make it any easier for you. You're doing your best to convince them to back off and stay away from the beast.

REMOVE THE CURSE



GET RID OF COURTIERS



COVER THE RETREAT

The striga's claws rasp against your swords. You fight tirelessly, resisting the beast's following attacks. Wounded and bruised, you shield those who try to escape. At last, one of you opens the heavy door to the throne room and gestures for the runners to get inside.

Somebody heroically blocks the entrance with their own body and pushes the striga away. The hasps and staples rattle. You are safe, at least for now

You can still hear the striga's angry noises from behind the locked door. They don't fade away until dawn.

The first thing you notice upon leaving the throne room is a broken window in the hall. Among the shattered stained glass, you can also see the blood. The beast must have left the castle. You don't know whether it has managed to find a new lair before dawn and lived or not. You conclude that the case of the beast plaguing the castle remains unsolved. If the beast had survived, many more of the city's inhabitants may pay for your ineptitude with their lives. You leave the place feeling a little down in the dumps.

The story of your deeds may not go down in the annals, but you well know which one of you gave their all. Maybe if the rest of you did the same, this story would have a different ending.

THE END

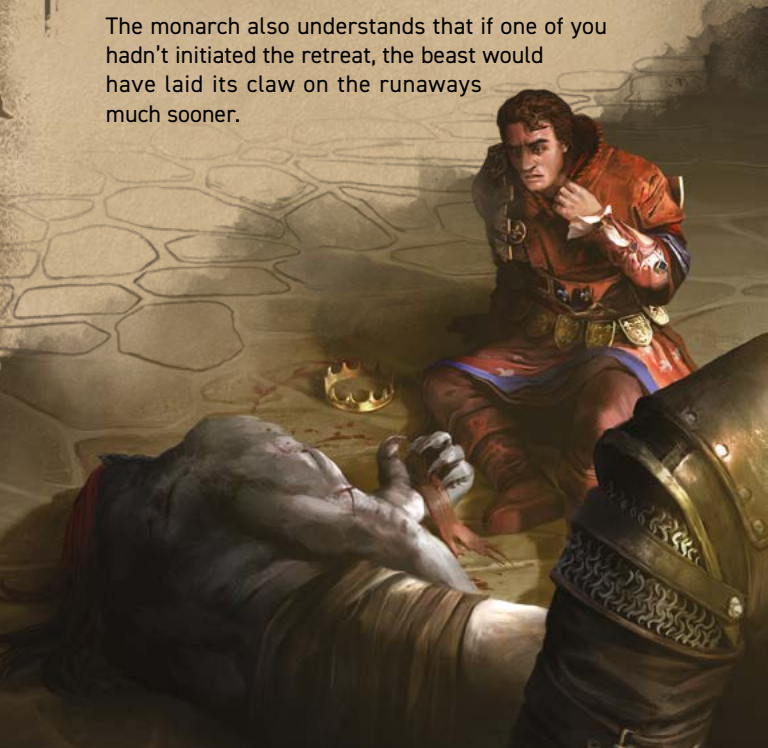


FIGHT STRIGA

The striga falls on the king, ready to sink its teeth into his neck. The guards are too slow! The beast knocks the ruler down and... falls lifeless itself.

Foltest crawls out from underneath the carcass. Appalled, shifts his gaze from the dead beast to you. He catches sight of who holds the blood-stained sword. He expresses his gratitude for saving his life, even though the words stick in his throat.

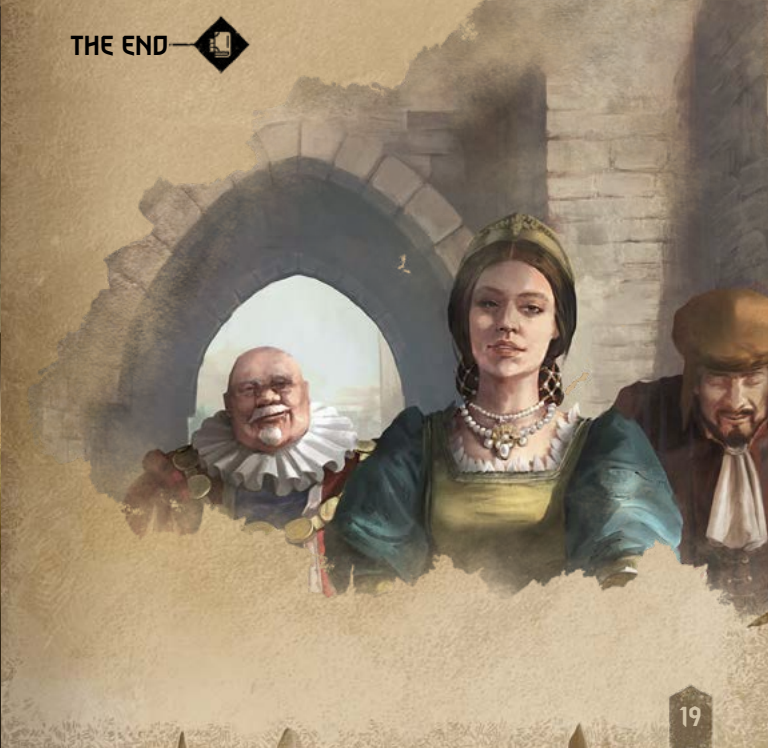
The monarch also understands that if one of you hadn't initiated the retreat, the beast would have laid its claw on the runaways much sooner.



News of the striga having been slayed spread fast also among the courtiers. The nobles can breathe a sigh of relief. When you are leaving Vizima, people are lining up along the road. Although they do not cheer out of respect for the royal mourning, you can see shy smiles on their faces. An odd hand shoots up as a gesture of shout-out.

It all could have ended much worse, you conclude, passing through the Roper's Gate.

THE END



UNDO THE CURSE

The beast fights fiercely. You, on the other hand, unable to take its life without disappointing the king, stick your necks out. And your necks, arms, and chests take the blow of the beast's claws and teeth. The fight goes on while one of you bends over backwards to seal the sarcophagus.

You all fight heroically to fend off the beast. In turmoil, somebody grabs the striga by its head, intent on dragging it away from its lair at all costs.



The dawn finds you on the floor. Blood is oozing from the numerous wounds of yours. Unconscious but alive, lies amongst you the princess in her human form.

When the king appears, he kneels next to his daughter, tears in his eyes. He notices your wounds, a testament to the troubles you have endured. "You will be rewarded" he says. For a moment, he fixes his gaze on one of you. "Your exceptional dedication is plain to see. I shall give you double the reward!"

THE END



FACE STRIGA

Striga fights fiercely. Its claws and teeth tear your flesh. A roar echoes from the walls of the chamber. The striga makes a dash for the sarcophagus, reaches it and tries to jerk the lid off, but it... won't budge! Then, a fatal blow falls on the beast's neck. The agony is accompanied by a moan resembling a child's sob.

Why didn't the lid budge? Who managed to put a magic seal on it? One of you smiles slightly, making it obvious what the answer is.

You leave Vizima feeling weird. The rhythmic clatter of horse hooves breaks the silence, and the castle, fading into the horizon, looms behind your back like a shadow of the recent events.

You can still see in your mind's eye King's Folttest pained face. In your ears, however, still ring the courtiers' words of comfort with which they said farewell to you, their saviours.

By killing the princess, you have saved numerous lives.

The residents of Vizima have no doubts which one from your group has contributed the most to their case.

THE END



UNDO THE CURSE

You couldn't be better prepared. One of you seals the sarcophagus with a powerful spell, which protects the lid from opening.

The beast breaks its claws and thrashes about furiously, trying to crawl inside before dawn. To no avail. In a heroic fight, you manage to push it away from the lair. In the heat of the moment, someone even grabs the striga by its thin hair.

In the morning you find yourselves in the throne room. The princess is here with you. She rocks back and forth in the chair, looking around the chamber with dazed eyes. Surely, it will take long years before she finally collects her wits. It cannot be entirely ruled out that she will be forever haunted by the echoes of the curse. However, all that matters to Foltest is that his daughter is alive, and that the spell has been removed. The king doesn't hide his gratitude.

"Thank you. Mine are not the only eyes in this castle which see for me. That's why I am well aware which one of you has set out their stall to save my daughter. You shall be rewarded."

A short while later you leave Vizima with pouches bulging at the seams and a sense of a job well done.

THE END



REPEL THE ATTACK

Even the best-laid plan may be torn to shreds by the beast's sharp teeth – and that's exactly what happens this time. The creature's attacks are too fierce, and the night is too long for you to keep it out of the sarcophagus till dawn. You realise that there's no other way than to kill the beast. One of you volunteers to take on the burden of delivering the final blow.

The magic used has weakened the beast which now makes an easier target.



Somber-faced, you leave Vizima early in the morning. You can feel king Foltest's cold gaze on your necks. At the Roper's Gate, on the northern edge of the city, you are stopped by a bunch of courtiers.

"The king may be inconsolable, but we couldn't be more content" says the lady standing at the front. "With the beast's head separated from its neck, it's us who, ironically, feel somehow lighter." They hold out pouches full of coins. "These are for you all. Let us put them into your hands, though, for we have heard that your contribution to the beast's collapse was the greatest."

THE END



REMOVE THE CURSE

Surrounded by chaos and uproar, you head for the chamber. One of you sacrifices themselves and throws their body on top of the sarcophagus to cover the lid so that the rest of the group can seal it with a spell to make it impossible for the striga to crawl inside.

Suddenly, it occurs to you that there are no courtiers around. You have a foggy memory of a scream that tore the air in the hall a few moments ago. It was let out by one of you.

"To the throne room! That's where we'll end its days!"
Incandescent with rage, the crowd must have done as asked, unaware of being tricked.

The striga charges time and again. A short while later, the cock's crow reaches your ears...

When everything is over, the naked, pale body of the king's daughter lies on the floor beside you. It will take a lot of time before the echoes of her beastly self will cease to resonate in her mind, allowing her to put it all behind. However, your task here is done. Vizima has been liberated from the striga and the princess has lived.

"My beloved daughter..." King Foltest enters the chamber accompanied by the captain of the royal guard. "You will be rewarded. You in particular, for I know that you have contributed the most to removing my daughter's curse."

THE END



GET RID OF COURTIERS

At first, the courtiers ignore your requests. Only when a command, so powerful that it makes the panes of the windows shake, bursts out of the throat of one of you, are they forced to retreat.

Then a crackling sound breaks the silence. It's the strigal! Having dodged the blade, she jumps out of the window and falls onto the castle square. It immediately disappears behind the walls in the night's embrace. Just to be on the safe side, one of you seals its sarcophagus with a powerful incantation.

Has the beast managed to find a new lair before the sunrise? Will it survive? You leave the area, knowing that this question will remain unanswered for a long time. For the following months, you will be dreading the news of the beast's attacks on Vizima Castle.

The king's daughter hasn't returned to him. The courtiers have not been given the beast's head. There's nothing else for you to do here today.

You mount your horses and the castle soon disappears behind the horizon.

THE END



