

# Ансажкүт



# introduction

## Chapter One

In the first days, before Moon and Sun, the Land was dark and teeming with power. Words and thoughts could shape creation and no creature was bound to a single form. The uumajurngautaviniit, the first animals, lived as they wished, flying across the sky or running upon the ground or swimming in the deepest waters.

Our ancestors lived side by side with the first animals and learned their wisdom. Some say our ancestors were children of the uumajurngautaviniit. Others say that they were their own and separate things, born of the great and eternal breath from which all creation is drawn. The truth is long forgotten, lost on winter winds that have surrendered to the Sky.

The first days were filled with joy and wonder, but those days were not to last. As the seasons passed, our ancestors forgot the wisdom of the uumajurngautaviniit and knew only one form and one way of living. This sadness is still with us.

There were shadows, as dark as midwinter night, in those days of forgetting. They hunted our ancestors as one hunts the caribou. Where they came from, even our wisest do not know. Some say man created the shadows from his own fearful dreams. They speak of qallupilluk, who lives beneath the water and drags away unwary children. Others believe the shadows were born of broken taboos, such as inukturniq, he who eats the flesh of his fellow man. Some whisper that the shadows are the children of Land and Sky, such as the mighty anurirjuaq and kayarissat, the great giants who bring snowstorms and terrible winds.

Over time, the shadows faded from the Land. Perhaps they went to sleep, tired after many hunts. Perhaps their bellies were full, so we were left to multiply like the vole in a warm spring.

Our grandfathers spoke of a day when the shadows would again fall across the snow.

That day is upon us. Be strong.

### overview

In the Canadian Arctic, near the top of the world, ancient beings are stirring. They are the monsters spoken of in Inuit folktales. The remoteness of the region allows them to hunt and kill with little fear of discovery. They are the shadows that once caused ancestral humans to huddle together in the night. They are the shadows that fall across the snow.

Most are oblivious to this waking darkness, but not all. Ilisaiji is an angakkuq, a great shaman of the Inuit, wise to the old tales and songs. He knows of the creeping darkness that has returned to the Land. Ilisaiji has gathered a handful of men and women to stand against the shadows. He is training them to be angakkuit, shamans, and setting them on the path of power. In them, all hope lies.

*Angakkuit* is a role-playing game about fighting monsters in the frozen north. While the game is set in the modern era, the region is so remote it can feel like the distant past. Players assume the roles of fledging angakkuit who are only beginning

### The Inuit

The Inuit are the indigenous, aboriginal people of the northern Canadian and Alaskan Arctic. For millennia, they have called this region home. Although the Inuit live in a remote part of the world, they reside in permanent communities, many with modern amenities. While the Inuit once held to animistic principles, such beliefs have largely faded from the culture and modern Inuit predominately identify as Christian. However, many of the old customs and traditions are still celebrated, and the old stories live on through oral retellings.

Inuit is the plural form of Inuk.

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to learn about a world largely hidden from modern society. They are new to this life and have much to learn. In time, they will become great *angakkuit*, but that day is still far away. In the meantime, their chief focus is dispelling the shadows that fall across the snow.

Supernatural horrors are not the only threat; the environment presents its own set of challenges. Snowstorms, wild animals, and other obstacles can be as lethal as any monster.

## An Oral Tradition

While the Inuit have an oral language stretching back centuries, their written language is largely a modern development. Like the classic telephone game, details changed and morphed from one telling to the next. Game Masters can use this to their advantage, deviating from folklore whenever it suits their purposes, even inventing their own monsters. The Inuit seldom stayed consistent with their stories so Game Masters are under no obligation to do so either.

## Pronunciation Guide

**Angakkuit** (an-ga-kweet)  
**Angakkuq** (an-ga-cook)  
**Anurirjuaq** (a-new-rear-jo-ark)  
**Illisaiji** (e-lee-say-yee)  
**Inukturniq** (in-ook-tur-nik)  
**Kayarissat** (ka-ya-rees-sat)  
**Qallupilluk** (kud-loo-pid-look)  
**Uumajurngautaviniit** (oo-ma-yung-now-ta-vee-need)

## what is role-playing?

A role-playing game is akin to improvisational theater. Players assume the roles of characters (referred to as player characters or PCs) who are the protagonists of the play. In some regards, a role-playing game is like Radio Theater in that the story is told verbally and not physically acted out.

Players are the actors and actresses of *Angakkuit*. They are the ones who bring the stories to life. Their characters are the principals of the drama. The players decide who their characters are, what they look like, what they do, and how they act; they fuel the dynamic that drives the game via the actions of their characters.

Being a player is, in some ways, more complex than being an actor... because there is no script. In a play, the script tells the performer what to do and what to say. In contrast, a role-playing game is wholly freeform and improvisational. The player must decide on the spot what the character does and says, and what motivations might be propelling those choices.

In a role-playing game, one participant assumes the role of Game Master (GM). He or she acts as the director, establishing the setting, plot, and mood. The Game Master must set the stage for the story being told, creating the framework in which the players act. It is the GM's responsibility to relate the environment to the players; this person is the players' eyes and ears, describing all that they see, hear, or otherwise experience in the fictional world. The Game Master also assumes the roles of all the characters with whom the players interact, outside of the player controlled group of course. These GM controlled characters are known as non-player characters (NPCs). While the GM must create the initial framework of the story, the players will determine the ultimate direction of the plot.

In addition to helping the player characters interact with their environment, the GM also acts as referee. The GM must interpret the rules of the game in a fair and impartial manner to facilitate play. Thus, the Game Master should be familiar with the rules beforehand so that informed and rational rulings can be made.

## rules overview

*Angakkuit* uses a card-based resolution system. Each player and the GM have their own deck of cards. To determine success or failure, players

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draw cards from their deck and certain cards are counted as successes, according to the character's abilities. Often, the players will be the only ones who draw cards. However, for more difficult actions, the GM draws cards to counter the players' successes.

## presentation & breakdown

*Angakkuit* uses specialized terminology in its rules. Any game-specific terms are capitalized and italicized to bring attention to them. **Key rule points are bolded to make them stand out on the page.** Examples are presented in blue text. Sidebars and call out boxes provide information that is useful but not integral to the game.

The next four chapters are intended for Game Masters and players alike. They present a brief overview of the setting, a system for character generation, the basic mechanics of the game, and detailed rules for fighting monsters and other foes. The final three chapters are intended for the Game Master only. They provide information on the monsters of the north, game mastering advice, and a sample adventure to introduce players to the world of *Angakkuit*.

Angakkuit is both the title of the game and the role

the players assume within the game's setting. When the text is referring to the game's title, *Angakkuit* is capitalized and italicized. When the text is referring to the role of angakkuit, it is written in lowercase with no italicization.

## disclaimer

The Inuit are not a homogenized group of people. Different regions have their own stories, customs, traditions, and beliefs. This game simplifies things for the sake of playability, while striving to be respectful of Inuit culture. *Angakkuit* should not be taken as a work of scholarship. It is simply a game. Players wanting to dive into the setting more accurately, with their own research, are encouraged to do so.