Grim
HOLLOW
VALIKAN CLANS
SAGA OF THE
SEASONS
GHOSTFIRE
GAMING
5E
COMPATIBLE

HOLGAR
THE SEA OF TURMOIL
TYBURN
HOLGAR STRAIT
BORGUND
GRENSFAL MOUNTAINS
THE VALIKAN CLANS
HAEYSOR MOUNTAINS
TOCKAN PASS
FOXWOOD RANGE
FROSTMERE STRONGHOLD
THRULL
FROSTMERE
LOST KEPPMIR
GRARJORD
HALSFJORD
THE TEETH
SKARFANES
RAGVALL
ERLEFORT
NORDENLAND
EMPIRE

CINDERGHAST
SNOW QUEEN'S PALACE
CINNABAR
ASTRIK MOUNTAIN
VOLGEN
FORT KENTIGERN
COLD IRON KEEP
NJUKCA MOUNTAINS
LAKE JAKKAN
KANDAR
ORMRALVA RIVER
SOLHEIM
HRIST
ISBRYTERALVA RIVER
SHADOW STORM GULF
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SUMMERHELM
RUNEHEIM
MT. VENGEANCE

THE SEA OF TURMOIL
CINDERGHAST
VOLGEN
FORT KENTIGERN
BORGUND
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CASTALORE
ERLEFORT
NORDENLAND
RAEVO
THE BÜRACH EMPIRE
LANDHAUS
GRAFFENDAM
MALKOVIA
RAVENCOURT SANCTUARY
THE GREY SPINE
FALLOWHEART
WALSTEIN
DUESENBERG
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THE BLACK MIRE
THE OSTOYAN EMPIRE
ULSTENBURG
GREAT EASTERN SEA
CROWSBEND
UNTERLAND
CASTLE
ALTENHEIM
BURROWFELL MINES
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RIVEN
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SOMA
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LIESECH
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NOV OSTOYA
THE EMERALD SEA
THE GROVE MAZE
VOYD
TOL LEYEMIL
CASTLE LAMESDHONNEUR
CAMONT
VOROS
CHARNEAULT KINGDOM
TOL KERDYWEL
BONNESEAUX VILLAGE
THE THOUSAND RIVERS
COROVA
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HOUIVILLE
DARK OAK GROVE
THE TEMPLE OF MIST
MORENCIA
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THE SHADED HAVEN
MONT DE LANCEY
GULF OF LIONS
FARO
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N
W
E
S

Grim Hollow

VALIKAN CLANS

GHOSTFIRE GAMING

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Introduction

Gather 'round, young 'uns. Stay close to the fire on this cold winter's night while I sing you the Saga of the Seasons. Heed well the deeds of heroism and folly, of glory and doom, and of love and despair.

First, I sing of spring, the Season of Rebirth, when all of Valika plants their seed and celebrates young love. The cool breeze of spring turns, in time, to the heat of summer, and the last of winter's ice melts from the sea. Born of this bucolic time is the Season of Warfare, when Valikan raiders take to their longships in hopes of winning glory the likes of which bards like I will sing of for generations.

As the raiders return and the leaves turn from green to gold, so summer fades to autumn, the Season of Fire. You have seen our pyre ships, where the honored dead are given one last farewell before they are burnt to ash. And before long, the ashes in the air mingle with the first white snow of winter. In this Season of Death, we have only our fires and our courage to protect us. Harken, for I will tell you of the brave heroes of Ragvall Village…

—Bragi Bennuson, bard of Ragvall

Dark Fantasy in the Frozen North

Saga of the Seasons is a dark fantasy adventure for fifth edition set in Valika, a frozen land of hardened warriors and apocalyptic magic. This is a Grim Hollow adventure, and Grim Hollow is a setting of darkness, despair, and terrible evil. Heroes are rarely paragons of justice; they are mortals with foibles and flaws. In turn, villains are rarely avatars of pure evil hell-bent on destruction.

Dark fantasy stories rarely culminate in wholly happy endings. Innocent lives are lost just as frequently as evil ones, and people must sacrifice all that they hold dear to achieve their ends. The choices that the characters must make may have no righteous answer—only the lesser of two evils.

You Are a Game Master

As the Game Master (GM), it's your job to establish the tone of each scene in this adventure, to roleplay its nonplayer characters (NPCs), and to play monsters and villains who long to bring a swift end to the heroes' adventures.

Additionally, the player characters (often just called "the characters") are storytellers in their own right. Though they each embody a single character, the players have the power to make decisions that can change the plot and world. The best GMs are eager to improvise, even ignoring the text of an adventure, to ensure the characters' actions have consequences—for good or ill.

Read this First

Saga of the Seasons is a campaign-length adventure for the fifth edition of the world's first roleplaying game. To play, you need either the free fifth edition System Reference Document (SRD) or the books that make up the fifth edition core rules.

This adventure takes place in the lands of Valika, the far northern realm of the world of Etharis. The lands of Etharis are places of darkness and magic described in *Grim Hollow: The Campaign Guide*. The realm of Valika itself, its people, its politics, and its creatures, are all described in the setting guide which accompanies this adventure: *Raider's Guide to Valika*. Before running this adventure, you should familiarize yourself with the setting information presented in this adventure's "Introduction" (which you're currently reading). While you can read *Raider's Guide to Valika* from cover to cover, memorizing the information, it's perfectly fine to scan the book and use it as a reference document during play.

Monsters, Magic, and More

When reading this adventure, you will often see text in bold. That's the adventure's way of telling you a scene or location contains a monster or NPC who is ready to fight. New monsters and NPCs are usually found in appendix A at the back of this adventure. If a monster's name appears in bold but isn't followed by "(see appendix A)" or a similar pointer, then that monster's game statistics are found in the fifth edition core rules.

When you see text in italics, that's the adventure's way of telling you that you're looking at the name of a spell (such as *hideous laughter*) or a magic item (such as *winged boots*). Most spells and magic items are found in the fifth edition core rules. New spells and magic items are likewise found in appendix B at the back of the adventure, as well as indicated by a "(see appendix B)" pointer.

> *When you see boxed text like this, the characters have likely entered a new area or triggered an event, such as an NPC entering the scene. This text is meant for the GM to read or paraphrase aloud to the players to set the scene.*

Calendar of the Seasons

This adventure takes place over the course of one full Valikan calendar year. Each chapter takes place over the course of one season, which is made up of 13 weeks. The consequences of the characters decisions in each week may echo forward into the future. You can use the Calendar of the Seasons, a handout found in appendix C in order to keep track of the characters' deeds and their consequences.

Session Zero

A Session Zero is a meeting between you and your players before the game begins to discuss what themes and content you want to include in your game. Dark fantasy can touch on extremely heavy topics, some of which can remind people of real traumas or phobias they don't wish to be reminded of. On the other hand, some people love tackling real traumas in a fantasy setting with people they trust. You won't know what subject matter the players are comfortable with unless you ask.

Setting Expectations

When setting expectations for this adventure, be prepared to state what kind of content you're excited to include, and what content makes you uncomfortable. Then, ask your players if they have anything to add to the "Yes" list, and anything they want to add to the "No" list.

Encourage your players to put things on the Yes or No lists even if someone else has named it on the opposite list.

If you know your players extremely well, you may not need to ask them about what type of content is exciting or uncomfortable for them. Still, even if it feels overly formal, it's never a bad thing to check in with your players.

Voting Yes

GMs aren't obligated to include every theme, topic, or type of content their players want to see in the game, but it's a great way to build a list of cool things that will raise the stakes, up the intensity, and increase your players' investment in the story.

Hard No, Soft No

When the lists are made, go through the No list and ask the group if it's a Hard No or a Soft No. A Hard No is a topic a player wants to avoid at all costs; these generally fall into the topics of traumas and phobias. A player who experienced a traumatic family death may want to avoid parents dying in-game, or someone with a debilitating case of arachnophobia might not want to explore a dungeon of giant spiders, even though such creatures are a fantasy staple.

If a topic is listed as a Hard No from even a single player, it shouldn't be included in the game. The point of an RPG is to have fun! Including content that violates someone's boundaries is a surefire way to ruin that fun. They don't owe anyone an explanation about why they listed a topic as a Hard No.

A Soft No, however, is a challenging topic a player might want to explore in a limited or specific way. Talk with your player about how this topic, which might border on the traumatic or phobic, could be used to make the game more exciting—and how the player can signal to avoid it.

Veto Power

If a player has reached their limit on a Hard No or Soft No topic (whether they listed it in Session Zero or discovered they're uncomfortable with the topic just that moment), they have the power to veto the topic instantly. RPG designer John Stavropoulos recommends using a card with an X marked on it and placing it on the table to veto a scene. A player can also say something like "I'm not comfortable with this, let's move on."

Some GMs prefer to move on instantly, no questions asked. Others like to take a break, give everyone a chance to have a snack, and then move on to give people a chance to shake the awkwardness that sometimes comes with a friend expressing their discomfort.

The GM's Interests

Don't forget that part of being a GM is making the game fun for your players and for yourself. Having a Session Zero will help you ensure that this adventure is what you and your players want, so you'll all keep coming back week after week.

Dark Fantasy Content

Certain dungeons and quests have explicit content warnings so you aren't surprised when content your players have vetoed suddenly arises. Additionally, there are some broad topics listed below that may arise at any point during this adventure.

By discussing these topics with your players before play begins, you are gaining their consent to go deep and dark with themes they feel comfortable with while also learning what topics to avoid so that you don't compromise real-world friendships. It's generally safest to go with the lowest level of comfort in the group. If there's someone in your group whose tolerance for darkness is so low that other players feel that meeting their needs will make the setting too light, it might be a good idea to play an adventure with a more heroic tone instead.

Death and Misery

One of the most common dark fantasy tropes is anyone can die, for any reason, and at any time. Death is not a meaningful, powerful event. Sometimes it just happens. Your characters aren't safe. Your beloved NPCs aren't safe. Even children aren't safe.

The nuances of this topic are great to discuss during a Session Zero. You might not want depictions of children or certain animals dying. You might not want graphic depictions of agonizing death. You might not want to see the survivors mourning those who are lost—or you may want all of this because it can, when done well, elicit visceral emotional reactions.

Slavery

Nordic cultures in the real-world Viking Age, which the realm of Valika draws heavily upon for inspiration, often took slaves—called thralls—in their raids. The act of thrall-taking in Valika is described more in *Raider's Guide to Valika*, and it is a divisive topic, even among the Valikan cultures of Kandar and Thrull.

Some NPCs in this adventure were once thralls, but they either earned their freedom or escaped. Consider if you want to include this story element for these NPCs, and if you want this to be a potential backstory element for characters. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, if the characters take captives while on a raid, are the players comfortable with the idea of putting these people into bondage as thralls?

This is a topic that provokes strong emotional reactions, so take care that everyone is on the same page before including it in your game.

War and Plunder

Characters in this adventure will be called upon to raid. There is no greater glory and honor in Valikan culture than to claim victory over one's foes and plunder their lands.

Fantasy is rife with stories of war and conquest, but it's important to understand how deep into this topic your players want to go. In the real world, war involves disease, starvation, sexual violence, and other horrific events that leave survivors with lingering trauma. This adventure doesn't linger on those acts or those traumas, but some groups might want to add these details to invoke the idea that the glorious bard-songs Valikans love so much are only pretty lies to inspire the next generation of warriors.

Drugs

Drugs don't feature in this adventure, but narcotics and hallucinogens exist in the Grim Hollow setting.

Even though this adventure doesn't include drugs, the players may want to introduce characters who casually use drugs or suffer from addiction as part of their backstory. See *Grim Hollow: The Campaign Guide* for more about drugs in Etharis.

A Reprieve from Darkness

Oppressive darkness becomes boring without moments of light to contrast it. The greatest tragedies are interspersed with joy and triumph. Nevertheless, it's important to have moments of levity to prevent a thrilling tragedy from devolving into a tedious dirge. Balancing light and darkness in your story is an important skill, and this adventure provides moments of contrasting tone to help you do so.

Starting at 3rd Level

When your players make their characters—which can be a part of a Session Zero—they should start at 3rd level.

A 3rd-level character is an accomplished hero who is already recognized as someone who has completed a great task. When your players are making their backstories, ask them to think of one heroic deed that they accomplished in the past year. This heroic deed should be something that you can see a real-world medieval adventurer accomplishing. In a dark fantasy world, 1st-level characters aren't slaying ferocious drakes—they're saving the village chief from a frothing horse that nearly trampled him or saving the local shipwright from drowning when her boat wrecked on a reef.

Encourage your players to collaborate while creating their past deeds. If two characters collaborated on a mighty feat together, then they might start the adventure as friends or, even more excitingly, as *rivals*!

Past Deeds

The players can use these suggestions to inspire what deeds their characters accomplished in order to reach 3rd level:

Champion. You slew a mighty foe, such as a bear, a dire wolf, or another clan's warrior.

Healer. You used magic or herbalism to save the life of a dying clanmate.

Protector. You saved someone in your village from being killed by a ferocious monster in winter, like a hungerer beast or a sky drake (see appendix A for those creatures' lore).

Relic-Finder. While exploring Valika and the dungeons hidden in its wilderness, you stumbled upon a relic of the past, like an ancient warrior's spear, a rune-etched stone tablet, or the patterned sail of a longship.

This deed might have been done during the journey to found Clan Ragvall, or during the winter following the clan's founding, or it may have even happened before the journey, when Chief Hrafen av Skeir split from Clan Völgr (see "Your Clan: Ragvall," later in this introduction).

Preparing for Session One

To prepare for the first session of this campaign, fully read "Your Clan: Ragvall," below, and the "Adventure Start" section of chapter 1. This is the scripted beginning of the adventure in which the village chief, a strong and trusted man named Hrafen av Skeir, offers the characters three Quests that take place within the village. The characters can freely choose to pursue or ignore the missions.

Those three Quests involve three NPCs:

- Ófeigur Lighraiser (**Quest: The Immortal Hermit**)
- Benna Stonebreaker (**Quest: Thieving Churls**)
- Mildrith Quickshot (**Quest: Night's Fanged Hunter**)

To be fully prepared, read the descriptions in chapter 1 of all three NPCs and their Quests.

However, if you don't have time to prepare multiple Quests, prepare only one and simply have the village chief offer that Quest alone.

Beyond Session One

After the first session, check in with your players to see what quest they're interested in receiving next or if they're interested in finding new quests in the village on their own. This will help you prepare content for the next session.

"Chapter 1: Spring" is an open-ended sandbox environment that allows characters to explore the village and discover Quests. As the GM, you can use the "Locations in Ragvall" section to identify the main hubs and NPCs of the village. From there, you can use the "People of Ragvall" section to learn about those characters and identify what quests they have to offer. The "Springtime Quests" section later in this chapter provides the complete text for the chapter's Quests.

Sandbox Adventuring

Both "Chapter 1: Spring" and "Chapter 3: Autumn" are open-ended sandbox adventures that focus on the people of the village and the challenges they face as they try to win glory in the eyes of other Valikan clans. These three systems—locations, NPCs, and Quests—allow the players to start adventures on their own, rather than following a plot laid out by an NPC.

This campaign has a straightforward beginning to introduce GMs and players to its structure, and then encourages the players to drive the story where they want it to go.

But I Want More Structure!

If you discover either through a Session Zero or through play that your players want a more linear storyline, you can use the quests to create a string of episodic crises in the village that the characters must confront. This removes an element of player choice, but it also reduces time spent wondering "what are we going to do next?"

Additionally, players might find that other parts of this adventure are more suited to their interests. "Chapter 2: Summer" and "Chapter 4: Winter" are more linear in nature. The raids the characters lead in summer necessitate a string of battles that occur in a certain order. In winter, the characters must defend their home against invading monsters.

Gaining Levels

This adventure uses milestone level advancement. This means that the characters level up after they've completed certain story objectives rather than when they've gained enough experience points.

Each chapter of this adventure is designed for a specific level range and includes a number of milestones that count towards the next time the characters gain a level. It's possible that the characters might complete a chapter without having reached enough milestones to reach the minimum level for the next chapter.

This should be rare, however. There are more milestones that grant level progression than needed to reach the maximum level for each chapter. Once characters reach the maximum level for a chapter, they can't gain additional levels until they start the next chapter, even if they continue to complete objectives.

If the characters begin a new chapter despite not being the minimum level for it, you have two choices:

- Continue and let the characters struggle through encounters they might be too weak to handle. This is a dark fantasy adventure, after all.
- Grant the characters a level before they start the new chapter so they aren't woefully unprepared for the challenges to come.

Session Zero and Catch-up Levels

There are pros and cons to both approaches, which means it's a great topic to broach during a Session Zero. Granting a free level may seem like charity, but unless you tell the players exactly what they need to gain a level, they may resent you for, essentially, punishing them for not being able to guess what milestones are needed to level.

Dealing with the Dead

Saga of the Seasons is an adventure that features a recurring cast of NPCs who fulfil a variety of social and narrative roles in the campaign. Throughout the story, each NPC will be a major character in one or more Events, Quests, Core Quests, and Heroic Feats.

However, this is a dark fantasy adventure, and no one is safe from death or tragedy. As the adventure progresses, your version of Ragvall Village will become unique to your campaign, as the consequences of the characters' actions earn them new allies, cause NPCs to die or depart the village, and possibly even dethrone the village chief.

As the GM, how you handle quests and events missing a crucial NPC will be up to you, but here are several suggestions:

- If an NPC crucial to a quest or event dies, that quest is no longer available. This option creates a personalized campaign as certain parties won't experience all possible quests.
- If a crucial NPC dies, a another named NPC fills the role. This option maintains coherency across major story events. For example, the raid veteran Hlökk Warcrier serves as the village's tactician in the winter season (chapter 4) and appears in many scenes. If she is killed or imprisoned, you could replace her with the upstart warrior Ranulf Skullcrusher, who has big ambitions but little actual experience.
- Alternatively, you can create a new NPC (see below).

"We all hope for short winters and long lives but hope isn't enough to ensure survival. Pick up your bow and sling your pack. If you aren't willing to kill, you'll die, and we'll find someone to replace you. You will be forgotten."

- Mildrith Quickshot, Ragvall huntmaster

Creating New NPCs

Ragvall Village has several hundred people in it, and this adventure only gives names, backstories, and personalities to a small handful of them. If a named NPC dies, the GM can create a new one and introduce them seamlessly as someone who was in the village the whole time, but not important to the story yet.

A savvy GM might even recruit one of the players to create an NPC that's linked to their character's backstory. An NPC should have the following elements:

- A name
- A home clan or birthplace beyond Valika, from before they joined Clan Ragvall
- A personality (try using the Ideals, Bonds, and Flaws in the fifth edition core rules)
- A stat block (most villagers use **commoner** statistics, and none are more powerful than a **veteran** of challenge rating 3)
- A role in the village (if this new NPC is replacing a dead one, you can give them the dead NPC's role, and have that new NPC replace the dead one as a questgiver)

Creating a Valikan Character

This section is for both the GM and the players to read. The GM should read this in case the players need advice on creating a character that fits neatly into the setting.

Roleplaying a Valikan

The people of Etharis have a number of preconceived notions and superstitions about the Valikan people.

Valikan raiding parties frequently prey upon the northernmost settlements of their nearest neighbor, the Bürach Empire. Because of this, the Bürach believe the Valikan are murderers and thieves who venerate violent idols which the Valikans call the Seven Heroes rather than the divine Arch Seraphs. The Valikans also have some contact with the Raevo, people who live in the northern reaches of Ostoya. While some coastal Raevan settlements experience raids, the superstitious Valikans tend to steer clear of the powerful mages of Raevo. The Valikan sorcerers of Clan Rune have made diplomatic excursions to trade magical secrets with Raevan mages, and some Valikans have even attempted to break into Raevo's mysterious Ravencourt Sanctuary.

These two conflicting views of the Valikan people—ruthless pillagers and superstitious-but-curious scholars—demonstrate the true diversity of the Valikan clans. Valikan culture values honor, martial prowess, community, and self-sufficiency while mistrusting, even fearing, the supernatural and the inexplicable. Just because these traits are broadly true, however, doesn't mean that your character must fit into the Valikan stereotype. Player characters are exceptional people, and those people rarely fit the mold.

Your Origin

Valikan heroes can come from any place in Etharis. Foreigners frequently come to Valika as traders, mercenaries, diplomats, and thralls. And, as described in "Your Clan: Ragvall" later in this introduction, the clan you belong to has taken in people from across the Valikan world. As a new clan struggling for recognition, the people of Ragvall welcome those who can strengthen the village's place in these harsh lands.

Consider your origin before picking your character's race, class, and background:

Kandar Valikan. You once belonged to a clan in Kandar, the eastern realm of Valika (see "Clans at a Glance," below). Broadly speaking, your clansfolk shun the ancient tradition of thrall-taking and prefer diplomacy and trade with Bürach and Raevo. You are likely aware of the Coldfire Crisis—a mysterious, magical threat from the eastern realm of Volgen that turns all it burns to frost.

Thrull Valikan. You once belonged to a clan in Thrull, the western realm of Valika (see "Clans at a Glance," below). Thrull society is supported by frequent thrall-taking raids upon Bürach and other lands. Thrull is home to the Prismatic Circle, a theocratic order of druids who claim that they must make live human sacrifice in order to keep Gormadraug, the mythic enemy of Valika's ancient heroes, locked in eternal slumber.

Former Thrall. You were captured in a raid and forced into bondage. While you were held in Tyburn by Clan Thrull, you saw their cruelty firsthand. You eventually won your freedom by either escaping or proving yourself.

Your Profession

Valikans don't raid year-round, and even great warriors have important professions in their clans in times of peace. When you choose your character's background, think of what it means for your daily life in the village. Listed beside that profession is an NPC (described in chapter 1) that you're familiar with; you can deepen your connection to the village by including them in your backstory, and if the two of you are friendly, indifferent, or hostile toward one another, with your GM's approval.

The table below uses the Advanced Backgrounds from *Grim Hollow: The Campaign Guide* and lists the most likely professions for a Valikan of such a background. If you aren't using Advanced Backgrounds or the associated mechanics, you can assign these professions to the standard fifth edition backgrounds instead.

Ragvallan Villager Roles

Background	Profession	Bond NPC
Academic	Antiquarian or Archivist	Ófeigur Lightraiser
Aristocrat	Envoy or Noble	Grindal av Halsfjord
Clergy	Priest	Ása Lögmaður
Common Folk	Villager	Benna Stonebreaker
Common Folk	Entertainer	Bragi Bennuson
Common Folk	Merchant	Gunnvarr Grindalsson
Criminal	Cutthroat	Rikarð Jarnskegg
Militarist	Free Sword	Hlökk Warcrier
Militarist	Guard	Rikarð Jarnskegg
Militarist	Soldier (a Valikan Raider)	Ranulf Skullcrusher
Outlander	Beast Hunter	Mildrith Quickshot
Outlander	Pioneer or Explorer	Hrafen av Skeir
Seafarer	Sailor or Sea Gatherer	Mardoll Brightsea

Your Class and Subclass

There are new subclasses in *Raider's Guide to Valika* for all the fifth edition classes. These subclasses grant magical features themed around Valikan legends and culture. While the wizardly magic of the southern realms of Etharis is generally mistrusted by the hardy Valikans, the power of runes is an ancient and respected tradition as well as martial maneuvers styled after the supernatural feats told of in the sagas.

Clans at a Glance

The realm of Valika is shaped politically by its six clans, all of whom are named after a legendary hero who followed Kentigern into battle against Gormadraug, the Prismatic Wyrm, in mythic times. These clans are described briefly here and are described in greater detail in *Raider's Guide to Valika*.

Clan Rune. Rune prizes magic, unlike many of the other clans, for they were founded by the sorceress who lent the clan her name. Magic is at the heart of this clan's life, and the telltale signs of magic can be seen in their architecture, fortifications, and even food. They are a Thrull clan.

Clan Sýr. Named after the infamous weaponsmith Sýr the Seven-Bladed, the people of Sýr follow her virtues of self-determination, combat prowess, and metallurgical mastery. They are a Thrull clan.

Clan Völgr. The people of Völgr embody the stereotypical image of a Valikan raider, fearsome, bloody warriors who go on savage raids. The Völgr enjoy a brutal reputation even among the Valikan clans. They are a Thrull clan, and their city of Tyburn is the seat of power in Thrull.

Clan Mithra. Named in honor of the legendary bard Mithra of the Silver Harp, this clan is not only welcoming toward outsiders but is also the cosmopolitan heart of the Kandar region. The clan embraces merchants, travelers, and diplomats from across Etharis. They are a Kandar clan, and the great city of Hrist is the seat of power for the Kandar province.

Clan Morgöng. Clan Morgöng is best known for its spies, who are rumored to be in every court in Etharis. Morgöng spies take advantage of the brutish, bloodthirsty image southerners hold about the Valikan people; it makes the Morgöng unlikely suspects when rumors of espionage surface. They are a Kandar clan.

Clan Limgri. Named after Limgri Lightbringer, a devotee of the sun god, this clan stands as a dour bastion against the dangerous land of Volgen, which burns with cold fire. This clan has accepted that the world is to end, and that their task is to postpone that apocalypse as long as possible. Others, however, see the end as something as beautiful and natural as the setting sun, and welcome its timely arrival. They are a Kandar clan.

Your Clan: Ragvall

Clan Ragvall is the youngest of the Valikan clans—and it is the clan the player characters belong to in this campaign. The founding of the clan starts with a schism. A charismatic raider named Hrafen av Skeir boldly split from Clan Völgr, taking with him his most trusted warriors, and about one hundred other clanfolk who saw him as a steady leader that outshone the power-hungry Nolgr Magnusson, chief of the Völgr.

Hrafen and his schismatic followers traveled south along the coast of the Grarjord mainland, visiting fishing villages and denouncing Chief Magnusson as a tyrant who made new laws at his whim, and raided not for the glory of his clan or the glory of the gods but to feed his insatiable ego. Few listened, but those who did joined Hrafen in their search for a new homeland.

In time, Hrafen had gathered five hundred Valikans from all walks of life—thralls, farmers, warriors, and even a deposed chieftain—and from all six of the clans. They traveled ever southward until the snows of winter hemmed them in and they were forced to settle upon the shores of Akkeri Bay within a rugged land near the border of the Bürach Empire called the Teeth. As hunger set in and faith in Hrafen's leadership faltered, a warrior discovered a statue buried in the snow. This monument was to the legendary shield maiden Ragvall the Blade-Breaker, who fought alongside the Seven Heroes who tamed Grarjord. The dispossessed saw this as a sign, and Hrafen declared his people to be the clan of Ragvall. All despair was struck from their minds and they worked as if divinely inspired to build their new home on the shores of Akkeri Bay.

Though many died that winter of cold, hunger, and exhaustion, Clan Ragvall survived. The winter snows slowly recede as spring dawns upon the new clan's first year. Now, the Saga of the Seasons begins, and the champions of Ragvall Village will carry the fate of their fledgling clan upon their shoulders. Will they carry it to greatness? Or will they lead it to ruin?

Last Winter

Winter is a dangerous time in Valika, and not only because of the biting winds and bitter cold. Monsters emerge from the darkness to threaten all bastions of Valikan life.

Last winter, Ragvall Village endured an attack by dire wolves: black- and white-furred wolves of enormous size. They were repulsed, but supernatural happenings continued. Spirits of the dead appeared in the waters of the River Heilag and whispered eerie threats upon the howling wind. Despite these frightful events, Chief Hrafen says that they were lucky—the truly fearsome beasts of winter did not yet know they had settled upon these shores.

Laws and Customs of Ragvall

Chief Hrafen av Skeir split from Clan Völgr because he was disgusted by their megalomaniacal leader, Chief Nolgr Magnsuson. To Hrafen's eyes, Clan Völgr no longer honored the Seven Heroes who tamed Grarjord. The Völgr no longer raided to bring glory to their people; they raided to curry favor with their power-hungry chief.

As the GM of this campaign, you must be aware that these values and laws may change over the course of events and encounters. As the characters grow in influence, their own decisions may shape the heart of Ragvall. A character who becomes the chief may institute not only laws but traditions as well, changing the culture of the clan.

Clan Values

The customs of Clan Ragvall are shaped by the values of its founder and leader, Chief av Skeir, and by those who first joined him during the search for a new home. In the spring of this year, the current values of Clan Ragvall are:

Venerate the Ancient Heroes. The gods of Etharis are dead, but the ways of the Seven Heroes who tamed the north endure. The sagas of the heroes are often sung in the village's longhouse, and the fighting styles of the seven, passed down through the ages, are practiced by warriors who honor the old ways.

Clan Over Chief. Hrafen av Skeir enjoys a place of respect among the people of Ragvall because he stood against the theocratic cruelty of Thrull. He strives to never become a despot like the chief of Clan Völgr and urges his people to not curry the favor of their chief but seek the love of their neighbors.

Win Glory. In battle and in peace, honorable folk of Clan Ragvall are to pursue glory for kith and kin. Those who act with honesty and forthrightness, who complete feats of strength and heroism, and who treat friends with kindness and foes with fury will be remembered in song for as long as Clan Ragvall survives.

Protect All Members of Your Clan. Life is harsh in the Valikan clans, and everyone who is able must contribute to the clan's survival. Those who aren't—the elderly, the sick, and the infirm—are cared for by the community.

Clan Laws

Each clan has its own laws and customs, yet all are founded upon the words and deeds of the Seven Heroes who tamed the north.

The following laws are hewn upon the Lögsteinn at the center of Ragvall Village, a sacred standing stone that bears the laws that bind the people of the village. These laws must not be broken, lest a villager incur a fine, punishment, or even exile. Beyond these laws, the village has a number of unwritten social mores that dictate proper behavior at celebrations, in times of mourning, and when interacting with outsiders, which are left to the GM and the players to decide.

Treachery. Those who conspire against clan and chief for personal gain are to be outlawed for life. Honor demands the chief claim satisfaction immediately and challenge the traitor to single combat.

Lesser Violence. Those who commit acts of lesser violence, such as inflicting a wound that will heal, are to be fined weregild equivalent to 50 pieces of silver for each season of labor missed by a thrall, 100 pieces for each season of planting missed by a farmer, and 200 pieces for each season of raiding missed by a warrior.

Malicious Violence. Those who commit murder, sexual assault, or other acts of malicious violence are to be outlawed for at least ten years, if not for an entire lifetime.

Vengeance. If an act of violence is determined to be the result of vengeance, the perpetrator is to be cleared of charges, as the perpetrator sought justice through retribution.

Weregild. To avoid inviting judgment upon an act of vengeance, one may demand weregild ("man's price") as recompense for the wounding or death of oneself or a relative. The price in silver for weregild is to be stated by the aggrieved, and the amount's fairness to be judged by the lawspeaker. If approved, the weregild must be paid by year's end, lest the offender be outlawed for up to five years.

Outlawry. Ragvall has no death penalty. However, the punishment for grave violations is outlawry—which, in many cases, is fatal. An outlaw loses all possessions and is exiled from the community. A minor crime may see one outlawed for only a few years while malign sorcery or unjust murder will result in outlawry and exile for life.

An outlaw is a person outside the law. The outlaw is stripped of protections afforded by Valikan laws and the person is viewed as little more than an animal. Others are free to pursue vengeance against the outlaw, including killing, robbing, or enslaving without fear of repercussion from the law.

Lawkeeping and the Bything

Law is sacred among the Valikan people. An engraved stone pillar called a Lögsteinn stands on Shrine Isle, the stone's surface carefully carved with every major law. And for those who can't read or who are foreign, the village lawspeaker recites to them the laws of the village.

Lawspeaker

In Ragvall Village, the lawspeaker is a woman named Ása Lögmaður (see "People of Ragvall," in chapter 1). The lawspeaker's duty is to know the law, to interpret it in times when the law's application is unclear, and to lead clan assemblies when the community is deciding the fate of an accused person. A lawspeaker must have a strong voice, an unbreakable will, canny insight, and unimpeachable honor.

Village Assembly

Only the clan chief has formal power to call a bything—a village assembly. Nevertheless, many impromptu assemblies form when clanfolk grow unhappy and gather around the Lögsteinn to demand the presence of the chief and lawspeaker. A bything is assembled at sunrise and formally dismissed when a verdict is passed, typically at sundown. Most villagers are permitted to continue about their business between sunup and sundown.

Once gathered, these assemblies serve two purposes:

- For the clanfolk to address grievances that couldn't be resolved through words, barter, or violence.
- For the lawspeaker to publicly recite new laws and carve them into the Lögsteinn.

Addressing Grievances. In Kandar, there is a saying: "Though law be sacred, the most pious men dress themselves in plainest cloth." It means that seeking judgement from the lawspeaker isn't an honorable first recourse for addressing disputes among neighbors. Such disputes are resolved first through words or barter. Violence against a member of your own clan is an act of lesser violence in the eyes of the law, even if it's committed in a duel consented to by both parties. If a duel is clean, witnessed, and without deceit, the loser very rarely demands the lawspeaker pass judgement upon the victory. The loser would be legally in the right to do so, but it would be an act of crass dishonor.

If a dispute is brought before the bything, the lawspeaker meditates on the law, the offense, and the evidence before eventually declaring a verdict. The chief is honor-bound to follow the lawspeaker's verdict, and the clansfolk are likewise bound by duty to their clan to honor punishment meted out by the chief and lawspeaker. This system has served the Valikan people for generations—though not always perfectly. In times of unrest and mistrust, chiefs have exiled lawspeakers for declaring certain verdicts, and clansfolk have overthrown their leaders for executing unpopular sentences.

Most cases are resolved within a day or a week of the assembly, with long cases being tried over the course of a season. On occasion, new evidence can cause the lawspeaker to change a verdict passed on exiles or prisoners. The chief is likewise honor bound to uphold the lawspeaker's revised verdict. However, many chiefs have defied the revised verdict of lawspeakers they suspect of being corrupt by or threatened by an outside party.

Creating New Laws. The creation of new laws is a rare occurrence in Ragvall. Making a new law is a major event in both the clans of Thrull and Kandar, for law sacred to all Valikans, handed down by the Seven Heroes. The creation of new law is generally seen as the act of a tyrant or iconoclast. Indeed, one of the reasons for Hrafen av Skeir's split from Clan Völgr was due to Chief Magnusson of Völgr's love of writing excessive, self-aggrandizing laws.

Nevertheless, Ragvall is a new clan, and its people understand that sometimes new laws are needed for their clan's survival.

> "My hands carved these words into the stone. My fingers bled upon it, for we are no clan until we have our sacred laws. Smile on those who uphold the laws as a friend. Any who break them must face the seasons alone."
>
> *- Ása Lögmaður, lawspeaker*

Pronunciation Guide

Below is a list the names of places, people, and things that appear in this adventure, including their pronunciation.

NPCs of Ragvall Village

Name	Pronunciation	Description
Hrafen av Skeir	RAW-fen AH-v SKEER	Human chief of Ragvall Village
Alvíss av Dvergholt	ALL-vice AH-v DVAIRG-hult	Surly dwarf woodcarver
Ása Lögmaður	AY-suh LOHG-maw-thur	Amnesiac laneshi and lawspeaker
Benna Stonebreaker	BEN-uh	Half-orc village matriarch
Bragi Bennuson	BRAW-gi BEN-uh-sun	Half-orc bard
Grindal av Halsfjord	GRIN-dall AH-v HALLS-fee-ord	Greedy dragonborn patriarch
Gondul Grindalsdóttir	GONE-dull GRIN-dalls-daw-tur	Dragonborn beekeeper with a secret
Gunnvarr Grindalsson	GUNN-vawr	Dragonborn brawler
Hlökk Warcrier	h-LOCK	Elf veteran and weapons master
Mardoll Brightsea	MARR-dawl	Human shipwright in love
Mildrith Quickshot	MILL-drith	Stern gnome huntmaster
Ófeigur Lightraiser	OH-fee-gurr	Reclusive human beacon tender with a secret
Ranulf Skullcrusher	RAN-ulf	Eager gnome recruit
Rikarð Jarnskegg	REE-karth YARN-skeg	Reserved human blacksmith
Thegn Arduinna Shinoff	THANE ar-DWEE-nuh SHEEN-off	Haughty lord of an elven enclave
Yrsa av Dvergholt	EER-suh AH-v DVAIRG-hult	Alvíss's youngest, arrives in autumn
Jorrun av Dvergholt	YOR-roon AH-v DVAIRG-hult	Alvíss's eldest, arrives in autumn

Other Characters and Creatures

Name	Pronunciation	Description
Afjyra	uff-EE-ruh	Former druid turned champion of a dark deity
Aphaelon	uh-FAY-lawn	Arch Seraph of Peace
Claive Sullish	CLIVE SULL-ish	Norden vicar
Gormadraug	GORE-muh-DROGG	Evil Prismatic Wyrm of myth
Gro Stensdóttir	GROW STENZ-daw-tur	Ex-priest of Arch Seraph Solyma
Hersir	HER-sear	Valikan title for a raid commander
Hrein	WRY-n	Deceased Ragvallan bridge-builder
Jarl Mundilfari Grimskjelle	YARL MOON-dill-FAW-ree GRIM-ski-ell-uh	Ambitious frost giant general
Kåre Strongbow	KAH-reh	Ragvallan archer
Keppmir	KEPP-meer	Daemon-spawn fish-person
Laneshi	luh-NESH-ee or lann-ESH-ee	Fish-person from a society of necromancers
Lefsi Mannison	LEFF-see MAN-ih-sun	A great warrior from Hrist
Maelfa Erlekind	MAY-ul-fuh ERROL-kih-nd	Archduchess of Nordenland
Mýrún Stebansdóttir	MAI-roon STAY-bawns-daw-tur	Foreign trader and herbalist
Panjaian	pan-JAI-an	Mortal imbued with elemental power
Ruiadhri	ROO-ee-aw-dree	Elf-traitor bound in the Slumbering Wood
Svend Godrunsson	sv-END GAW-droon-sun	Half-elf assassin
Venin	VEH-nin	Arch Daemon of Deception

Places and Items

Name	Pronunciation	Description
Akkeri Bay	ack-AIR-ee	A central bay in Ragvall Village
Álfavegr Roadway	ALL-fuh-vee-gurr	“Elven road” in Valikan
Bürach Empire	BYOO-rock	A mighty empire south of Valika
Elgrleiths	EL-gurr-leeths	“Elk paths” in Valikan
Erlefort	ERROL-furt	Imperial capital of Nordenland
Etharis	ETH-uh-riss or eh-THAR-iss	The world of Grim Hollow
Faeringfit	FAY-ring-feet	“Fishing boat shore” in Valikan
Grarjord	GRAWR-yord	A vast icefield in central Valika
Halsfjord	HALLS-fee-ord	A trade town north of Ragvall
Hrafensheim	RAWF-ens-HAYM	Ragvallan longhouse; the “house of Hrafen”
Hrist	WRIST	Capital of the Kandar Valikans
Hvitrfjall Peak	VEE-turf-yall	Valikan mountain with mythic past
Kandar	CAN-dawr	Alliance of diplomatic Valikan Clans
Lögsteinn	LOWG-sty-n	“Law stone” in Valikan, displays a clan’s laws
Mannavegr Roadway	MAN-uh-vee-gurr	“Human road” in Valikan
Morfar Ash	MORE-far	An ash tree of druidic power
Ragvall Village	RAG-vall (rhymes with "fall")	The characters’ home in this adventure
River Garthor	GAR-thor	A river in Ragvall Village
River Heilag	HAY-lag	A large river in Ragvall Village
River Ymor	EE-more	A river in Ragvall VIllage
Skarfanes	SCAR-fains	A trade city in southern Valika
Snekkjafit	SNECK-yuh-feet	“Longship Shore” in Valikan
Steðihaugr	STETH-ee-HAW-gurr	The tomb of a mythic smith
Thrull	THRULL	Alliance of warlike Valikans
Thegn	THANE	A noble title used by non-Valikan northerners
Valika	VAL-ih-kuh (VAL as in “Valkyrie”)	The frigid north of Etharis

Chapter 1: Spring

SEASON OF REBIRTH

For characters of 3rd to 5th level

The Saga of the Seasons began in spring, as the long nights of winter slowly melted away. Flowers struggled through the snow, emerging just as determined as before the frost beat them down. Fewer in number, perhaps, but those spring blooms knew that, in time, tales of their valor would spread across all of Valika.

It was a time of peace and rebirth. In spring, we all trusted in the strength of our heroes and our chief.

— Bragi Bennuson, bard of Ragvall

Ragvall Village is home to three hundred brave Valikans who have just weathered their first winter on the shores of the Teeth. It is led by Hrafen av Skeir, the clan's chief and founder, and is largely a society of farmers and hunters with aspirations of launching raids in the coming summer. The other Valikan clans are aware of Ragvall's existence because of Hrafen's bold schism from Clan Völgr and have sent merchants and scouts to see how Ragvall fared during the winter. The Valikan clans, while occupied with their own machinations, watch this new village with interest.

The "Adventure Start" section of this chapter describes how to begin the adventure, and what scenes to run to gently guide the characters as the season continues. The "Ragvall in Spring" section details the village's major locations, main NPCs, and the Events, Quests, Core Quests, and Heroic Feats available to the characters. This is the part of the chapter GMs will need to reference once the characters start adventuring.

Leveling up in Spring

The default method for gaining levels in this campaign is by completing milestones. Characters gain a level when they complete five minor milestones or when they complete one major milestone.

Characters start this adventure at 3rd level and can't advance higher than 5th level in this chapter. Once they reach 5th level, they can't gain levels from reaching milestones until the summer season (chapter 2) begins.

Minor Milestones

The following acts count are minor milestones:

- Completing an Event, Quest, or Core Quest (see "Springtime Quests," later in this chapter)
- Befriending an NPC in Ragvall Village

If the characters go on self-directed adventures and pursue activities not listed here, the GM can grant them a minor milestone—especially if what they do takes up a full session of gameplay.

Major Milestones

The following acts are major milestones:

- Completing a Heroic Feat (see "Springtime Quests," later in this chapter)
- Completing all three Core Quests

Dark Fantasy and Level Pacing

This is a dark fantasy adventure in which characters don't go from dirt farmers to demigods over the course of a few weeks. Characters gain levels at a deliberately slow pace in this campaign—no more than two levels per chapter.

If the players feel like they're gaining levels too slowly, it's worth having an additional Session Zero to discuss the tone and style of game they want to play.

Adventure Start

Before beginning this adventure, GMs should read the "Introduction" and enough of chapter 1 to be ready to run the first session. The "Session One" section of the "Introduction" suggests that GMs should familiarize themselves with several Ragvall Village NPCs and quests well enough to improvise dialogue and descriptions during play.

Once GMs feel ready to run the first session of this adventure, read or paraphrase the following to set the scene:

> *Dawn is bright. Its light reflects across the crisp snow and shines through the shutters of your simple home. It's warm and cozy underneath the animal furs of your straw-mattress bed. But this is no time to sleep in. The words that your village chief spoke at the Feast of Winter's Ending last night ring in your ears: "When next the sun rises, it will be the dawn of spring. The dawn of the Season of Rebirth! All people of Ragvall Village must work to make our young clan strong enough to survive the monsters of next winter's darkness—and to bring glory to our name when raiding ships sail in summer.*
>
> *"At first light tomorrow, I summon these names, our greatest warriors and most cunning minds, to my longhouse. There, we will decide the future of Clan Ragvall."*
>
> *Your name was among those spoken by the chief, and soon, you find yourself at the door to his hall, with several other Valikans.*

Dawn of the First Day

The characters begin play within Hrafensheim, the longhouse of Chief Hrafen av Skeir. The exterior of this longhouse is area R1 of Ragvall Village (described later in this chapter), and a map and description of the longhouse is provided in chapter 5.

The chief has not yet arrived, so the characters have a moment to mingle and introduce themselves to one another. Let the players know that, if they want to, they can also describe what they do before they arrive at the longhouse.

Introductions

The characters begin this adventure at 3rd level. This assumes they've already accomplished outstanding deeds and participated in life-or-death battles. It's likely that they all know each other, or, at least, know of each other. They might even have shared backstories, such as being siblings or having saved one another's life from a monster.

While an introduction may not be strictly necessary for the characters, offering them a chance to briefly talk about their backstory, class, race, and appearance may help the players get into character and offer some early roleplay interactions.

Other Valikans. A dozen other Valikans were summoned to the longhouse. To keep this scene simple, they aren't named or given a chance to interact with the characters. Once the players finish their introductions, move on to the chief's arrival, below.

Chief av Skeir's Entrance

Once the characters have had a chance to get to know one another, the chief of Ragvall Village enters the room. Read or paraphrase the following:

The door of the longhouse opens and a bear of a man, broad as they come, draped in furs and maned by black hair and a braided black beard enters. Three others are with him: another bearded man, the village blacksmith; a small, mousy-haired woman, the village shipwright; and a tall, brawny red-haired elf woman, a great warrior of the village. He says a few quick words to the three before dismissing them and turning his sharp, blue eyes upon you.

"My brave Valikan warriors!" His voice is hoarse and booming. "Today is the first day of spring! And I've gathered you to help transform Ragvall into the strongest and most honored clan in Valika."

Chief Hrafen av Skeir addresses each of the characters by name with fatherly sternness and affection. If the players gave you a backstory with the great deeds they accomplished to get to 3rd level, he mentions these mighty deeds alongside their names (see "Starting at 3rd Level" in the Introduction).

"I have a plan to make this small village known throughout the North. It begins with spring: a season for sowing seeds. In summer, we will water those seeds with the blood of warriors and the songs of bards. In fall, we will harvest the fruits of their heroism. And in winter, we will survive.

"Spring is the Season of Rebirth. Come summer, our clan must be ready to send its strongest warriors in strong ships and with sharp blades raiding along the coast. I am trusting in your strength and cunning to ensure that we are prepared for the raiding season when the last of the sea ice melts away.

The chief wants the characters to prove themselves worthy of being named Hersirs—raid captains. He doesn't say this aloud yet, but he does answer questions about Ragvall and his plans for the future to the best of his ability (using the information described in the Introduction chapter of this adventure).

Once the characters have asked questions, the chief gives the characters their first quest hooks (see "Three Quest Hooks," below).

Who Were the Others? The three NPCs Chief av Skeir was speaking to are important members of the village. They give the three Core Quests the characters can undertake in this chapter. The three NPCs are Rikarð Jarnskegg, the blacksmith; Mardoll Brightsea, the shipwright; and Hlökk Warcrier, the veteran. (See their character descriptions later in this chapter.)

"Do not indulge in the warmth of spring. Pups that have never known winter don't join the hunt if they can't prove their strength."

- Hlökk Warcrier

Three Quest Hooks

"Though you may have roles in this village as farmers, fishers, or crafters, I wish for you to help the other villagers resolve their problems. I've received requests for aid from several Ragvall clanfolk, and I think you are well-suited for the job. You'll be rewarded, of course.

"Benna Stonebreaker, a matriarch of this village and a pillar of our community, has reported that thieves have targeted her family farmstead. She needs help tracking them down and retrieving an heirloom.

"Also, Mildrith Quickshot, our best hunter, has reported that the elk herd her hunters planned to snare have been found dead, mutilated by some beast. Villagers are beginning to whisper that a monster of winter's darkness still lurks in the Sheltering Wood, and she wants reinforcements on her next hunt.

"Finally, I've heard that the lighthouse keeper has not been seen since before winter's end, yet somehow the beacon remains lit. This is a strange request, but one that bears investigation. The villagers are superstitious—rightly so, after last winter—and fear that which cannot be explained."

These three suggestions lead the characters to notable NPCs and their quests:

- Ófeigur's Beacon (area R12) introduces Ófeigur Lightraiser and starts **Quest: The Immortal Hermit**.
- Bennuson Farmstead (area R8) introduces Benna Stonebreaker and starts **Quest: Thieving Churls**.
- The Hunters' Cabins (area R15) introduces Mildrith Quickshot and starts **Quest: Night's Fanged Hunter**.

These three Quests offer the simplest and easiest start to the characters' adventures in Ragvall Village. If the characters want to find adventure elsewhere, they can find other Quests by exploring the village and talking to the villagers. Alternatively, the GM can also drop a quest hook in their lap by having the chief or another villager let them know that someone has been seeking help.

Departing the Longhouse

Once the characters hear the chief's suggestions for Quests, he bids them a good day and begins writing a letter to allies in another clan. The characters are now free to explore Ragvall Village as they see fit (see "Exploring Ragvall," below).

Development

Once the characters have completed three Quests (not including Core Quests or Heroic Feats), the chief summons them once again to discuss this season's Core Quests (see "Raid Supplies," later in this chapter).

Exploring Ragvall

Once the characters depart Hrafensheim, display the map of Ragvall Village for your players. Place a miniature figure or another token on Hrafensheim (area R1) to mark where the characters currently are. Ask them where they want to go or if they want information about a location. Once they decide where to go, move the token to that location and describe how they get there (or ask the players to describe it).

Each village location is described in the "Locations in Ragvall" section, later in this chapter. The GM can use the information in this section to describe a location the first time the characters visit it.

If the characters have forgotten details about the NPCs or the quests mentioned by the chief, it's okay to remind them.

Visiting Locations

Let the players pick where to go. This can simply be handled by letting them point at the map and say, "we want to go here." They're the ones leading the adventure. Once they decide where to go, move the token that represents their location to that new spot. Then, find their destination in the "Locations in Ragvall" section, later in this chapter. There's boxed text that you can read or paraphrase to set the scene as they arrive for the first time.

Once an area is chosen, it's up to the characters to interact with NPCs or investigate the environment.

Sparking Adventure

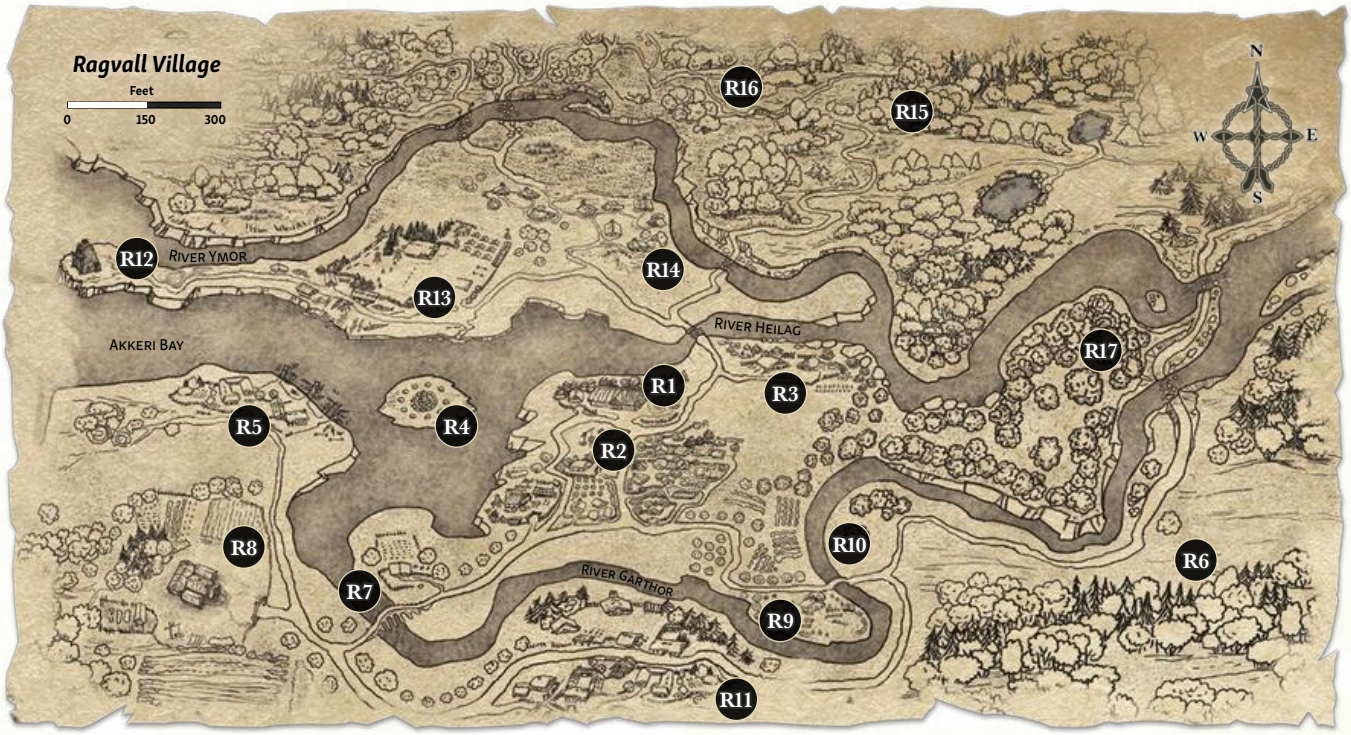
In springtime, Ragvall Village is a sandbox environment the characters can explore freely. The village is new with only a few hundred people living within its loosely defined borders, but adventure lurks in every corner. Nevertheless, if the characters don't seek out adventure, they'll never find it and may need the GM to nudge them forward.

The three quest hooks that the Ragvall chief mentions are a useful, if obvious, prod. A more subtle nudge would have the players meet a village NPC in need of help. There isn't a random encounter table for quests. Instead, GMs should contextualize the villagers as the supporting cast of a book or TV show, and each session functions as a chapter or an episode. With this in mind, decide which NPC the characters to "randomly" bump into, and then share an adventuresome problem that they need help solving.

Undertaking Quests

Each quest in this season is tied to an NPC. When the characters talk with that NPC, it's the GM's job to find a way to reveal that quest. Some GMs like to share plot hooks organically by dropping hints in conversation that for the players to pick up on. Others like to take a video game-like approach and write the names of quests and their quest-givers on index cards to hand to their players to keep until the quest is completed.

No matter the method, this season's Events, Quests, Core Quests, and Heroic Feats are found in the "Springtime Quests" section, at the end of this chapter. Similarly, a short blurb about each quest is included in each NPC's description in the "People of Ragvall" section.



Downtime in Ragvall

After completing a Quest, characters usually need to take one week of downtime, though some Quests don't require downtime between adventures. This downtime represents them recovering from the wounds, fatigue, and stress gained while adventuring. It also represents them going about their daily lives as members of a small, agrarian village. Even adventurers need to pull their weight as farmers, fishers, and artisans when the village is only three hundred souls.

If you use the downtime rules in the fifth edition core rules, the characters can use this time to perform downtime activities. No matter what activities the players pursue, mark off the week on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C) and advance to the next week. Each season on Etharis is composed of thirteen weeks over three months. Once those thirteen weeks pass, the spring chapter ends and the summer chapter begins, regardless of many Core Quests the characters completed or what level the characters reached (see "Gaining Levels" in the "Introduction" chapter).

New Downtime Activities

When the characters have a week or more of downtime, they can spend it doing one of the activities described in the fifth edition core rules. They can also spend this time on one of the following group activities. Unlike other downtime activities, which only a single character can do, these downtime activities must be done as a full party.

Gather Iron

Prerequisite: *Must have discovered Headwater Cave and defeated the monsters inside (see chapter 5)*

At the start of spring, the people of Ragvall lack a reliable source of iron for their tools and weapons. Characters who explore outside the village may discover Headwater Cave—a natural cavern north of Halsfjord containing a rich vein of iron ore guarded by unruly fey spirits. (see chapter 5).

After clearing the cave, the characters can spend one week of downtime to organize a mining expedition but this activity requires the entire group. The party makes several ability checks to determine the successs of the expedition. One character must make a Charisma check to lead the group, one must make a Wisdom (Animal Handling) check to safely manage pack animals, and one must make a Wisdom (Perception) check to watch for danger.

Add the results of these checks together and compare the total result to the table below to determine how much iron ore the expedition brings back to Ragvall.

Ore Gathering Expedition

Combined Check Result	Amount of Iron Acquired
0–20	10 lbs.
21–40	30 lbs.
41–60	60 lbs.
61+	100 lbs.

Gather Timber

While Ragvall Village is surrounded by forests, it is also plagued by superstitions about the woods. Characters can try to organize villagers to fell trees in the woods, but this requires the characters to help the villagers overcome their fear. If the characters are successful, they're able to bring back timber. If they fail, the week is wasted as they fail to assuage the villagers of their fears.

Alvíss's Timberland. Alvíss av Dvergholt (see "People of Ragvall," later in this chapter) watches over a grove important to his druidic faith. However, he lets the Ragvallans sparingly harvest wood from trees felled by the wind, but at a cost. If the characters pay 1 gp per pound of windfall, they're able to harvest up to 200 lbs. of timber per week from the druid's grove.

Sheltering Wood. The woods north of Ragvall Village are rumored to hold elves and ancient spirits, and the superstitious villagers avoid felling its trees. However, the characters can organize a logging party to the forest outskirts. This expedition requires one week of downtime and can be done as a downtime activity. One of the characters in the group must make a Charisma check to lead the group efficiently, one must make Wisdom (Animal Handling) check to supervise the animals dragging logs back to town, and one must make a Wisdom (Perception) check to keep watch for dangerous predators or malicious spirits.

Add the results of these checks together and compare the total result to the table below to determine how much timber the expedition brings back to Ragvall.

Timber Gathering Expedition

Combined Check Result	Amount of Timber Acquired
0–20	50 lbs.
21–40	100 lbs.
41–60	200 lbs.
61+	400 lbs.

The villagers are deeply fearful of the woods, since dangerous monsters emerged from it in winter. These checks are made with disadvantage until the characters have completed **Quest: Beast of Bronze and White Fur.**

Eyes of the Elves

Logging the Sheltering Woods upsets the elves living within its boughs.

Two Expeditions. After the characters have undertaken two logging expeditions into the Sheltering Wood, run **Event: Eyes in the Woods**, if you haven't already.

Four Expeditions. The fourth time they lead a logging expedition into the Sheltering Wood, run **Event: Elven Arrows.** This event doesn't occur if they have already completed **Event: The Elven-Thegn Appears.**

These can be found in the "Events"section, later in this chapter.

Self-Directed Adventures

There's a world outside of Ragvall Village to explore, too! Not all of Valika is available to be explored in this season—the winter ice hasn't fully receded, making travel on foot or by sea all but impossible. Even within the vicinity of Ragvall, the springtime lands of Valika are dangerous, crawling with monstrous whelps left from the receding winter.

See the "Exploring Valika" section later in this chapter for more information about the locations surrounding Ragvall Village.

Raid Supplies

Prerequisite: *Completed three Quests* **or** *begun the fifth week of spring*

The characters are summoned to Hrafensheim once they have completed either of this scene's prerequisites. The village chief is either impressed with the characters' rapid progress (if they completed three Quests), or nervous about the rapid approach of summer (if the fifth week of spring has just begun).

Read or paraphrase the following when the characters come to Hrafensheim:

> *Chief Hrafen av Skeir, dressed in a simple black tunic, spars with a wooden sword and shield against one of the village's warriors. As you enter, the chief notices you, but turns all his focus to the fight. In three strokes of his training blade, he knocks the warrior onto the floor.*
>
> *"Keep training and strengthen your shield arm. You'll do well," the chief says, and claps the warrior on the shoulder as he helps him up. He turns to you. "My best warriors. Summer is coming; let's talk."*
>
> *The chief sits at one of the tables and a serving boy presents clay steins and bottles of mead. "Several weeks ago, I set our village's blacksmith, our shipwright, and our most seasoned veteran to preparing our blades, ships, and warriors for the raids to come in summer. Without all three, there can be no raid—and no glory for Ragvall. All assure me that we're likely to reach the bare minimum of readiness, but all three have also asked me for additional aid.*
>
> *"More blades and tools will better supply our warriors. Sturdier ships will make travel faster and safer—and provide more room for plunder. And better-trained warriors… well, I trust you understand the value of that!"*

The chief unfurls a map of Ragvall Village, and points to Jarnskegg's Smithy (area R2), the Snekkjafit (area R14), and the Proving Field (area R13). He explains what these Quests require:

> *"I'd like to ask you to aid them. Even if you aid only one of them, we'll be better off. Jarnskegg the blacksmith seeks five hundred pounds of raw iron to forge into swords and axes. Brightsea the shipwright seeks two thousand pounds of timber to reinforce and expand our fleet. And Warcrier the veteran seeks more instructors for her warriors.*
>
> *"You'll likely find some of these supplies during your adventures, and they can also be gathered during your downtime. Training warriors will take both downtime and opportunities you could otherwise spend adventuring—but I feel certain that such time and effort will offer the greatest benefit to our warriors."*

To summarize the above boxed text, Chief av Skeir has three Core Quests to offer the characters (on behalf of three NPCs):

- **Core Quest: Raider's Blades** (Rikarð Jarnskegg)
- **Core Quest: Dragon** Ships (Mardoll Brightsea)
- **Core Quest: Greenhorn Warrior Training** (Hlökk Warcrier)

These quests are described in the "Core Quests" section, later in this chapter. The first two are resource-collection tasks the characters can complete during their adventures by finding resources in dungeons or through spending downtime to go chopping wood or mining ore. The third requires the characters to spend time training untested warriors.

Development

Once one of these Core Quests is completed, the chief proudly invites the characters back to his longhouse to discuss embarking upon a Heroic Feat (see "You've Proven Your Worth," below). The characters can still complete other Core Quests after this occurs.

You've Proven Your Worth

Prerequisite: *Completed one Core Quest*

Upon completing the prerequisite, Chief Hrafen summons the characters to the longhouse once more. However, he's joined by the village bard, Bragi Bennuson. Read or paraphrase the following as the characters enter Hrafensheim:

> *Chief Hrafen av Skeir raises a hand in greeting as you enter the longhouse. The village bard plays a low, brooding melody.*
>
> *"Gather, warriors," he says, gesturing you in with an outstretched arm. He smiles wearily. "I've heard word that you've done the village a great service. It was a practical one, yes, and not a particularly song-worthy one… but that is what I intend to correct here today."*
>
> *The chief smiles. "You must undertake a glorious quest. One the bards will sing about. One that will inspire each of our raiders to fight like ten warriors."*

The instrument Bragi the bard is playing is a tagelharpa, a three-stringed, bowed instrument with a beautiful, somber tone. If the characters succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom (Insight or Perception) check, they notice that the even though the chief is projecting power and confidence, he has dark circles under his eyes.

What Makes a Heroic Feat?

The chief explains that a Heroic Feat is an exceptional act that proves the characters are heroes worthy of being memorialized in song, and include the following:

An Act of Martial Might

A Heroic Feat can be a great act of combat, such as slaying a monster or a rival clan's greatest champion.

The bard Bragi chimes in: "Like when the heroic Limgri held off an army of undead warriors who raided even in death, in order to allow her people time to escape!"

An Act of Wily Wit

A Heroic Feat can also be an act of great cunning, such as convincing (or tricking) two bitter rivals to make amends.

Bragi again intrudes, saying: "Like when the heroic Mithra insulted a frost giant jarl so scathingly that the shame made him give up war-making for ten years!"

An Act of Mythic Recovery

A Heroic Feat can also be an act of exceptional exploration and discovery—especially when such an expedition ends in the recovery of a relic of great power or history.

Bragi pipes up once more: "Who can forget when the famed Silver Harp of Mithra, once thought lost for all time, was found by the explorer Jodis and returned to the Skald Library in Hrist!"

Which Quest to Choose?

Once these categories have been presented to the characters, give the players have time to discuss what Heroic Feats they wish to pursue. The greater their agency in deciding how to achieve their own Heroic Feats, the more personal this capstone challenge will feel.

There are three Heroic Feats, each with multiple methods of completing them:

- **Heroic Feat: Monster Slayer**, for characters who want to prove themselves great warriors
- **Heroic Feat: Feud-Ender**, for characters who wish to be viewed as wise and diplomatic
- **Heroic Feat: Relic Keeper**, for characters who value culture, exploration, and tradition

If the characters need guidance, Bragi offers them **Quest: Epic Poetry**, and he tells them that killing a drake and mounting its head upon their ship is worthy of remembrance. The chief can also point them toward Benna Stonebreaker, whose powerful family has long feuded with the house of Grindal av Halsfjord. Speaking with either Benna or Grindal begins **Quest: Burning Feud**.

Development

It's not necessary to complete a Heroic Feat to conclude the spring season, but it does provide benefits to raiding parties in summer (chapter 2), and it affects how the characters are viewed in autumn (chapter 3). These developments are described in the Heroic Feats section (see "Heroic Feats," in the "Springtime Quests" section of this chapter).

Exploring Valika

The characters can explore beyond Ragvall Village by spending one week of downtime. This week represents the round trip of traveling to a location, exploring, and traveling back. At the GM's discretion, traveling to an especially distant locale could take two weeks or more, which could cause the characters to miss out on a chance to undertake Quests in Ragvall Village.

Chapter 5 describes which locations are known to the people of Ragvall Village, and which ones can be visited in a certain season. If a location isn't known, or isn't available in a season (due to inhospitable environmental conditions), the characters can't travel there. If an area is a dungeon, its description is also in chapter 5.

Travel and Downtime

Characters can travel to a location as a part of their downtime in a week. For example, if they complete a Quest and it mandates that the characters take one week of downtime, they can spend that time traveling to a location elsewhere in Valika.

Conclusion

At the end of spring, Chief Hrafen av Skeir names the characters hersirs of their clan—an honored position in Valikan culture that marks them as raid commanders. Spring ends with a raucous party, such as the festivities described in the conclusion of a Heroic Feat, which are described later in this chapter.

If the chief promoted the characters to Hersirs after they completed a Heroic Feat, spring ends with quiet determination rather than a raucous party.

> "Heed me, Ragvall! The ice has melted. The longships prepared. Take heart that in the morning we sail towards glory! We shall fight and bleed and take our bounty in the southern lands. We sail south as clanfolk, but shall return to Valika as kin!"
>
> *- Chief Hrafen Av Skeir*

Ragvall in Spring

Below are the locations, NPCs, and quests vital to running this chapter of the adventure.

Locations in Ragvall

Ragvall is a clan composed of a single village on the shores of Akkeri Bay. Its houses are made of stone or timber, and it lacks any sort of large machinery such as mills or foundries.

Ragvall Village can be divided into four main regions: the North Shore, the South Shore, the Farmsteads, and the Sheltering Wood. Every clanperson in Ragvall is passingly familiar with the locations in each part of town.

The locations described here are marked on the Ragvall Village map. This map is designed to be drawn on by the GM and players as the village develops over the course of the four seasons, and it only shows locations that are present at the beginning of the spring season.

South Shore

The South Shore of Akkeri Bay is the heart of Ragvall Village. Most villagers live in pitched-roof houses near the shore or nestled in the woods on either side of the slow, meandering River Garthor.

R1: Hrafensheim

The House of Hrafen is the largest lodging in Ragvall Village. As the village longhouse, it is residence to Hrafen av Skeir, the village chief, but it is also a place for village feasts and festivities. It also hosts several rooms where weary travelers can rest for the night. Over the course of the deadly winter, many families crowded into the longhouse after sudden fires, foul winds, or dark creatures razed their homes.

Weary travelers can find food and lodging in Hrafensheim. During hard times, the people of Ragvall can find shelter and hot food in the chief's longhouse.

A map and area description of Hrafensheim appears in chapter 5.

Residents. The following NPCs can be found here (see "People of Ragvall," below):

- Chief Hrafen av Skeir
- Bragi Bennuson

R2: Jarnskegg's Smithy

Rikarð Jarnskegg runs the only smithy in Ragvall. He has several young apprentices who make horseshoes and farm tools, but only Jarnskegg himself has the skill to make arms and armor. He works night and day to supply the village's raiders for this coming summer. His apprentices also tan leather to make light armor and straps for shields.

Shopping. The following items can be purchased at Jarnskegg's Smithy for their cost in the fifth edition core rules. Some weapons and armor need to be custom made and take time. For example, a martial weapon that takes one week to make can be picked up at the start of the week after it was ordered.

Rikarð Jarnskegg's Wares

Item	Smithing Time
Metal simple weapon	None
Metal martial weapon	1 week
Light armor	1 week
Medium armor	2 weeks
Heavy armor	3 weeks

Jarnskegg has additional offerings that can only be accessed once certain outcomes have been added to the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Jarnskegg's Friendship. Rikarð Jarnskegg is now friendly towards the characters; he sells nonmagical weapons and armor to them at half price.

Superior Blacksmithing. If Rikarð is given the hammer Wyrmbreath from Steðihaugr, he can use this tool to produce *+1 armor*, *+1 shields*, and *+1 weapons* of any type.

These magical objects must be custom made, which adds two weeks to their creation time and 1,000 gp to their cost because the smith must import special materials from Halsfjord.

Residents. The following NPC can be found here (see "People of Ragvall," below):

- Rikarð Jarnskegg

R3: Alvíss's Woodcrafts

The dwarven hermit Alvíss av Dvergholt spends the daylight hours in his woodworking hut near the chief's longhouse. He whittles esoteric wooden charms and idols of the hero Ragvall that the people of Ragvall Village gladly purchase. He is also an accomplished bowyer and fletcher.

Shopping. Alvíss's charms aren't magical, but they make popular gifts. He sells them for 1 gp each. He also sells bows and arrows (but not crossbows and bolts) at their price listed in the fifth edition core rules. He produces ten shortbows and longbows each week as well as hundreds of arrows.

Residents. The following NPC can be found here (see "People of Ragvall," below):

- Alvíss av Dvergholt (daytime only)

R4: Shrine Isle

In the center of Akkeri Bay is an isle upon which stands a shrine to Ragvall, the ancient hero whose name the village bears. The Lögsteinn stands before the shrine as an oath from Ragvall Village that they will uphold her honor through their deeds in life.

Shrine Isle is 200 feet long and 100 feet wide in the middle. The Lögsteinn is a 10-foot-tall runestone that stands directly in its center. Across from the runestone standsa 3-foot-tall statue of the hero Ragvall.

The island serves as the center for prayer, funerals, and trials. Proceedings are conducted here, and there are dozens of flat stones placed in a rough circle around the Lögsteinn. There are enough stone seats for 250 people, with room for twice that to stand and still see the events.

Residents. The following NPC can be found here (see "People of Ragvall," below):

- Ása Lögmaður

R5: Faeringfit

Ragvall Village is an agrarian settlement that relies upon fishing and hunting. Every day, a dozen boats sail from the Faeringfit—the fishing boatyard—out into the waters of the Teeth. Some spend the day setting lines and nets to catch salmon and eels while others sail upriver to catch carp and pike. Only half of what is caught during spring, summer, and autumn is eaten fresh; the rest is salted or smoked for the darkness of winter.

R6: Mannavegr Roadway

The Mannavegr—the "human road" in Valikan—is a long highway that runs along the sparkling waters of the river Heilag. Eventually, this road leads to the city of Summerhelm.

Farmsteads

South of the village center are Ragvall's outlying farmsteads. Dozens of small farmers tend their fields from spring planting to the autumn harvest. The largest farms are worked by the Bennuson family or villagers in the employ of the Grindalsson family. These fields are separated by stone walls only tall enough to keep wandering livestock out.

Together, the farms in Ragvall Village produce hay, barley, beans, peas, cabbages, and onions.

R7: Benna's Bridge

This sturdy stone bridge spans fifty feet across the river Garthor. Benna's Bridge is an essential link between Ragvall Village's South Shore and the Farmsteads. If broken, the only way to deliver food and goods between these regions is to ford the frigid river or take a long detour to Hrein's Bridge in the east.

Benna's Bridge was one of the first structures built in Ragvall Village. The half-orc matriarch Benna Stonebreaker earned great renown for leading its construction despite her age.

Destroying the Bridge. The bridge is a Gargantuan object with AC 15, 200 hit points, a damage threshold of 15, resistance to piercing and slashing damage, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

R8: Bennuson Farmstead

The Bennuson Farmstead is the largest single-story building in town. This sprawling, stone-brick building is divided into sections for sleeping, eating, milking dairy cows, stabling workhorses, and sheltering animals during the winter. The Bennuson Farmstead is known for its dairy goods, especially butter and sweet skyr.

Residents. The following NPCs can be found here (see "People of Ragvall," below):

- Benna Stonebreaker
- Bragi Stonebreaker

R9: Grindalsdóttir Meadery

Beer and ale are produced from wheat and barley, and drunk in great quantities. However, by far the most popular drink in Ragvall Village is the honey mead produced by Gondul Grindalsdóttir. She is the eldest child of the wealthiest man in Ragvall, and the honey from her apiary is beloved throughout the village. Her aging father, Grindal av Halsfjord, lives in comfort here.

Residents. The following NPCs can be found here (see "People of Ragvall," below):

- Grindal av Halsfjord
- Gondul Grindalsdóttir

R10: Hrein's Bridge

The first bridge in Ragvall Village was built by Hrein Tallback, a fair-haired warrior who was in love with Chief Hrafen av Skeir. He perished in the chief's arms last winter, and the impact of his death is said to be why the chief has not yet sought a wife. The bridge is a monument to his memory.

R11: Grindalsson Farmstead

This farmstead was founded by Grindal av Halsfjord to cultivate wheat—a rare cash crop that can only grow in Valika's temperate south. His youngest son, a quarrelsome man named Gunnvarr, now runs the farm. The land now grows wheat, bowstring flax, and rears horses and oxen to serve as beasts of burden for the village.

Residents. The following NPC can be found here (see "People of Ragvall," below):

- Gunnvarr Grindalsson

North Shore

The northern shores of Akkeri Bay are sparsely populated and mostly home to folk whose professions take them from Ragvall Village each day. Hunters, trappers, fishers, shipwrights, and warriors-in-training make their homes here.

R12: Ófeigur's Beacon

Standing tall and proud on the village's northwesternmost point is Ófeigur's Beacon, a lighthouse designed by a sickly man named Ófeigur Lightraiser. He now lives alone in the lighthouse as its keeper, but he has recently gone missing within its depths. The villagers fear a curse, or a spiteful spirit, has claimed him.

The interior of the lighthouse is a dungeon described in chapter 5 of this adventure.

Residents. The following NPC can be found here (see "People of Ragvall," below):

- Ófeigur Lightraiser

R13: Proving Field

This wide-open training yard is pressed against the edge of the Sheltering Wood and filled with scarecrow dummies for warriors to practice their swordcraft. Hay-bale targets also mark a rustic archery range. The field is often empty during the day, but after the day's work is done, it fills with dozens of untrained warriors competing in chaotic practice duels and target tests in hopes of joining the summer's raids.

Residents. The following NPCs can be found here (see "People of Ragvall," below):

- Ranulf Skullcrusher
- Hlökk Warcrier

R14: Snekkjafit

Warships are built here in preparation for the summer raids while barges are constructed for the season of trade that will come in autumn. Mardoll Brightsea, the village's most practiced shipwright, leads two dozen hardworking shipbuilders.

Residents. The following NPC can be found here (see "People of Ragvall," below):

- Mardoll Brightsea

R15: Hunters' Cabins

Ragvall Village isn't prosperous enough to raise sufficient animals to feed their people. Instead, a dozen hunters and trackers under the tutelage of Master of the Hunt Mildrith Quickshot scour the Elgrleiths—the "elk paths" in Valikan—for game. These hunters are sullen, awkward, and brusque, and they live reclusive lives apart from other villagers.

Residents. The following NPC can be found here (see "People of Ragvall," below):

- Mildrith Quickshot

Sheltering Wood

North of Ragvall Village is an ancient, dark wood that shelters the settlement from the snowstorms that blow across Grarjord. Ragvallan hunters tracked elk in these woods during their first winter, but found that its boughs shelter not just game, but also an insular enclave of elves. And when winter's days turned black as pitch, the hunters found true evil stalking its paths.

R16: Álfavegr Roadway

Legend tells that Álfavegr—the "elven roads" in Valikan—run through the ancient forests of Valika. One road runs through the Sheltering Wood from Ragvall Village to the plains of Grarjord. The village's hunters discovered stone cairns with unlit candles lining parts of this road, and the people have named this mysterious path the Álfavegr.

Residents. The following NPC(s) can be found here (see "People of Ragvall," below):

- Thegn Arduinna Shioff (leader of the Evergreen elven enclave)

R17: Elgrleiths

Twisting Elgrleiths—the "elk-paths" or "game-trails" in Valikan—wind through the Sheltering Wood. Hunters brought back several elk at the beginning of spring, but the Elgrleiths were abandoned after two of their hunters were found mauled to death by an unknown forest creature.

The Elgrleiths are a part of the Sheltering Wood dungeon described in chapter 5 of this adventure.

R18: Alvíss's Timberland

The surly dwarf artisan Alvíss av Dvergholt spends his nights in his forest realm. He permits Ragvallans to log this wood only if they pay for each tree felled (see "Downtime in Ragvall," earlier in this chapter). He also allows them to scavenge windfall for kindling.

Deep in the middle of the timberland is the Morfar Ash, the "grandfather tree," which Alvíss venerates as a protector spirit of his druid enclave—an enclave that he never speaks a word of to the Valikans.

Alviss's Timerland is a dungeon described in chapter 5 of this adventure.

Residents. The following NPC can be found here (see "People of Ragvall," below):

- Alvíss av Dvergholt

People of Ragvall

Able-bodied clanfolk serve as farmers in months of sowing and harvesting and as warriors and hunters when summer's raids and winter's frosts come. Each of these NPCs is associated with one of the locations described in the "Areas of Ragvall" section above.

Likewise, these villagers have Quests they'd like the characters to help with. Sometimes, a villager's Quest isn't available until certain prerequisites are met. These can include completing other quests first or gaining a certain level of renown in the village. The GM can ignore these prerequisites if it makes sense for the -actions or words of the characters to unlock them in other ways.

This section describes questlines, their prerequisites, and their rewards in short blurbs. The full text of each quest is described in "Springtime Quests," later in this chapter.

NPC Dispositions

Throughout this adventure, NPCs are described as having a certain disposition towards the characters, such as Hostile, Indifferent, or Friendly. In general, this offers a streamlined approach to how the NPC treats the characters. Hostile NPCs are surly and possibly outright aggressive whereas friendly NPCs go out of their way to help the characters, possibly even risking their lives if they're a courageous person.

These dispositions also have mechanical effects:

- **Hostile:** The DC of all Charisma checks made to influence this NPC is increased by 5, and failing a Charisma check by 5 or more causes the NPC to attack (at the GM's discretion).
- **Indifferent:** No effects.
- **Friendly:** The DC of all Charisma checks made to influence this NPC is decreased by 5.

Chief Hrafen av Skeir

Chaotic good, male human (see his game statistics in appendix A)

Hrafen av Skeir—the famous Raven of Skeir—was once a veteran of countless Thrull raids across the Grarjord tundra and the other lands of Valika. In his prime, he was a giant among men, nearly seven feet tall with long, raven-black hair and cunning black eyes. Now in his middle age, Hrafen's glory days as a warrior are behind him, but his legendary will is as strong as it ever was.

The story of Chief Hrafen av Skeir is inextricably tied to the founding of Ragvall Village and its clan, described in the Introduction. In short, after years of raiding and witnessing the cruelty of the Thrull clans firsthand, Hrafen gathered allies and splintered from Clan Völgr. As he traveled south, his heroic reputation attracted more and more supporters and followers along the way.

Now, after weathering a deadly winter, Hrafen is dedicated to preserving not just his clan's survival but also its prominence among the other clans. He dreams of making Ragvall the seventh Valikan clan, and he seeks warriors and thinkers to be his hersirs—his "raid commanders" in Valikan—to garner glory for Ragvall during the raiding season.

Roleplaying Hrafen av Skeir

When the characters interact with Hrafen av Skeir, consider these roleplaying traits when deciding how he responds:

Personality Traits: "I have my beliefs, and no one will turn me from them. I can be fair and accepting of my villagers' ideals, but only my judgment will guide me."

Ideal: "Assess all people and situations impartially. Don't let your feelings impair your judgment; even if I hate someone, I'll treat them fairly."

Bond: "Ragvall Village represents a fresh start for Valika. Free from the cruelty of Thrull and the bureaucracy of Kandar. I would give everything for it."

Flaw: "Because I've sacrificed so much and fought so hard, I believe I'm owed respect. I dislike anyone who doesn't show me the reverence I deserve."

Hrafen knows that the characters are among his clan's most talented fighters, and they are first in his mind to be granted the title of hersir. He has a friendly disposition and tolerates petty disrespect for the sake of strengthening Clan Ragvall, but if his leadership is challenged, he dourly draws his blade in and urges the insolent character to meet him upon Shrine Isle for a duel. On the first offense, he merely fights to knock his foe unconscious to teach respect. If the character continues to undermine his rule, he gathers the village on Shrine Isle and has the character tried for treachery (see "Clan Laws," earlier in this chapter) and prepares to duel to the death.

Alvíss av Dvergholt

Neutral, male dwarf **druid**

Gruff, short, bald, and white-bearded, Alvíss av Dvergholt is a quintessential dwarf—in the eyes of the Ragvallan settlers, at any rate. He doesn't dress it, but Alvíss is a druid of the Circle of Stoneraisers (see the new character options in *Raider's Guide to Valika*). He came to the secluded shores of the Akkeri Bay to meditate and learn from the spirit of the ancient Morfar Ash tree that his ancestors planted long ago. It is planted in his timberland (see area R18).

When Valikan settlers discovered an ancient idol of the hero Ragvall here, Alvíss reluctantly accepted that fate had guided them and refused to court ill fortune by demanding they leave. Nevertheless, he has little desire to fraternize with the Valikans. Alvíss holds tragedy in his heart, which he does not share. Valikan raiders murdered his druidic circle two centuries ago when he was a boy, and dwarven grudges die hard.

Though Alvíss mistrusts Valikans as a whole, he has a measure of respect for Hrafen av Skeir, who he sees as an honorable man. At Hrafen's urging, Alvíss opened a woodworking shop in the village and trades his crafts for coin or directly for food and other necessities. While he allows Ragvallans into his timberland, he forbids them from felling trees, and he has mercilessly beaten one Valikan youth who defied his command. He does, however, permit the gathering of windfall—if they pay.

Roleplaying and Befriending Alvíss

When the characters interact with Alvíss av Dvergholt, consider these roleplaying traits when deciding how he responds:

Personality Traits: "I don't need to be polite to these damn Valikans; they settled next to my woodlands. If they don't like me, they can damn well pack up and leave."

Ideal: "I won't kill in the pursuit of hatred, anger, or profit. Only in defense. That's the way of the Stoneraiser druids."

Bond: "My children and the Dvergholt family may be far away, but I treasure them. I honor their memory by tending Morfar Ash, which holds the memories of archdruids past."

Flaw: "I know the Valikan chief is an honorable man, but I can't help but think we'd be better off if he were gone—and the village with him."

Alvíss's disposition is indifferent and gruff to all Valikans, at best. Once per day, when the characters finish an interaction with Alvíss, the character who interacted with him most makes a DC 15 Charisma check. This check is made with advantage if that character was uncommonly kind to him or gave him a gift. The check is made with disadvantage if the character was rude to Alvíss. If the characters make five successes before the end of spring, they befriend Alvíss, and his disposition becomes friendly.

Where is Alvíss?

During the day, Alvíss is usually whittling in his woodworking shop (area R3). At night, he is typically roaming his timberland (area R17), muttering druidic prayers and staying alert for Ragvallan thieves.

Alvíss's Quests

Alvíss prefers not to get emotionally involved with the Ragvallan settlers. He's happy to sell them his woodworks and lumber, but he shows them little hospitality. Characters who become known for being highly spiritual or who befriend the druid are eventually approached one night by Alvíss, who is red-faced and embarrassed.

Quest: Traveler of the Álfavegr

Prerequisite: *Completed a Heroic Feat* **or** *Befriended Alvíss*

Alvíss thinks he saw a friendly dwarf wandering the elven road in the Sheltering Forest. He wants the characters to help protect him from the elves of the wood while he searches for the dwarf. The dwarf is a monster from Alvíss's past, not a friend.

Ása Lögmaður

Lawful neutral, female laneshi **priest**

Ása Lögmaður is the lawspeaker of Ragvall Village, one of the most revered and sacred positions a Valikan can hold. She is also a laneshi, possessing unnervingly smooth, piscine features, short, kelp-like hair, and clawed, webbed fingers. Her voice is wet, yet authoritative. Few in Ragvall trust her, and yet all abide by her interpretation of Valikan law—perhaps only because she has refrained from making a ruling that has displeased the Ragvallan people.

Ása is a member of an amphibious race known as the laneshi. They are described in *Grim Hollow: The Player's Guide*, and also in appendix A of this adventure.

The Tale of Ása and the Idol

Ása was given her name by Mardoll Brightsea. The laneshi was found half-dead upon Shrine Isle, battered by the turbulent waves of the storm that had wracked the bay during the clan's first night there. Mardoll found Ása clinging to a stone idol—the idol of the hero Ragvall. The poor girl, exhausted and starved, could not recall her own name.

Hrafen av Skeir does not like to recount the tale of how Ása came to hate him, for it makes him appear cruel and selfish, and not the bold and magnanimous leader he and many other Ragvallans think him to be. When Mardoll brought word of the dying laneshi to him, he rowed to Shrine Isle and wrenched the idol from Ása's hands and claimed this Valikan artifact for the Valikan people. Ása wailed in grief, and while her past was hazy, the idol brought her comfort. Having it wrenched away was like having her heart torn from her chest.

Mardoll returned to Ása in secret and bound her wounds and brought her food and water. Together, they hatched a plan to retrieve the idol. The next day, Ása appeared before Hrafen at the site of his yet-unbuilt longhouse and said:

"I am Ása Lögmaður, your lawspeaker. I will carve your Lögsteinn. I will make myself Valikan. All I ask is that you leave the idol upon the isle. I will tend to it."

Mardoll then spoke to assure her chief: "I will be her acolyte—and watch her." And so, things have remained since. Ása is both an outcast of the village and its lawful authority.

Roleplaying and Befriending Ása

When the characters interact with Ása Lögmaður, consider these roleplaying traits when deciding how she responds:

Personality Traits: "I am quite literally a fish out of water. My duty is the only thing keeping me together."
Ideal: "Though I feel no fondness for the people of this village, their law is mine to carve. This is a duty I take with the utmost seriousness."
Bond: "I have no desire to grow close to the Ragvallans, yet my heart aches when I look upon the soft skin and ocean eyes of Mardoll Brightsea."
Flaw: "I could gain the trust of the people, but I make no attempts to do so."

Ása is indifferent and terse with all Valikans, except those who befriend Mardoll Brightsea, the woman Ása is in love with.

Ása's Quests

Many dark thoughts trouble Ása's mind. What lurks in her murky past? She has little hope of learning the answers to these questions unless she gains the aid of the Valikans she mistrusts.

Quest: Gills for the Gill-less

Prerequisite: *Befriended Mardoll Brightsea*

Ása plans to make an expedition into the waters of the bay in search of answers about her past, but she knows she'll need help. Unfortunately, Valikans can't breathe water. The characters need to find some remedy to this. Ása has heard the chief telling stories about famous warriors—perhaps such tales tell of one who could breathe water.

Reward. The characters gain a means to breathe water, such as a potion or magical helmet.

More to Come

Ása's quests to discover more about her past continue once the characters return from raiding in the autumn season.

Benna Stonebreaker

Neutral good, female half-orc **berserker**

Short, stooped, silver-haired, and corded with more muscle than even Chief Hrafen av Skeir, Benna Stonebreaker is a former thrall of Clan Rune who, many years ago, bought her freedom with the silver she won as a pit fighter. She proudly carries the epithet she earned in that ring, Stonebreaker, as a symbol of her survival.

Unbreakable Matriarch

Benna is the matriarch of a large family—the largest within Clan Ragvall—which manages vast swathes of farmland and beekeeping yards south of the village. She has a longstanding feud with Grindal av Halsfjord. Benna's family includes the following people, all of which use **commoner** statistics unless otherwise stated:

- Sýrfari the Sailor (husband, male human, age 63)
- Ubbi Songweaver (husband, male half-elf, age 98)
- Ywain Oriksson (husband, nonbinary halfling, age 84)
- Bráma av Solheim (wife, female human, age 38)
- Andsvarr Bennuson (son, male half-orc, age 31)
- Bragi Bennuson (see below)
- Marsibil Ulfrsson (granddaughter, female halfling, age 8)
- Skaga Bennasdóttir (daughter, female half-elf, age 19)

The list of Benna's children goes on, but these names are enough to populate a small family gathering. Of the roughly three hundred people in Ragvall at the start of spring, Benna's children account for at least twenty of them, and her grandchildren account for at least fifty.

Roleplaying Benna

When the characters interact with Benna Stonebreaker, consider these roleplaying traits when deciding how she responds:

Personality Traits: "My heart is as big as my muscles. You piss me off, and you'll have to deal with both."
Ideal: "Love can overcome nearly everything. Extreme violence does the trick for just about everything else."
Bond: "My family is everything to me."
Flaw: "Though my passion is my greatest strength, it is also my greatest weakness."

Benna's Quests

Benna Stonebreaker is the matriarch of a large and influential family, but there are problems that even her army of relations can't solve.

Quest: Thieving Churls

Prerequisite: *None*

Benna Stonebreaker and her family members have noticed that knick-knacks have been going missing from the family farmstead. Recently, more valuable items have started vanishing, and the matriarch has taken this matter to the chief. From there, the chief calls upon the characters to investigate the farmstead, discover who the thieves are, and put a stop to them.

Quest: Burning Feud

Prerequisite: *None*

This quest can begin with either Benna Stonebreaker or her rival, Grindal av Halsfjord. Ultimately, the characters must find a way to assuage the ire between these two influential families. Otherwise, their feud may escalate during the raiding months while the chief isn't around to mollify them.

Completing this Quest qualifies as a Heroic Feat (see "What Makes a Heroic Feat?" earlier in this chapter).

Bragi Bennuson

Chaotic good, half-orc bard (use **scout** *statistics)*

Slender, soft-featured, romantic, musical, and shy, Bragi Bennuson is nothing like his musclebound, polygamous mother. While Benna's other children run the Bennuson Farmstead (see area R8), Bragi is often found at the village longhouse (see area R1) or Shrine Isle (see area R4) reciting poetry or singing.

Roleplaying Bragi

When the characters interact with Bragi Bennuson, consider these roleplaying traits when deciding how he responds:

Personality Traits: "I don't have an agenda, mate. I just like telling tales about my clansfolk. Of course, I'll embellish 'em to make 'em more exciting. I want people to like me, y'know?"

Ideal: "Emotion is everything. Truth is important, but the facts aren't as important as what something *felt* like and what it means poetically. That's the whole point of the sagas!"

Bond: "Hlökk Warcrier, that red-haired angel, is the only woman for me."

Flaw: "Compared to my mother, I'm nothing. People say such nice things about me, but… all I can do is tell tall tales and sing sappy songs."

Bragi's Quests

While Bragi Bennuson is a bard who knows all the great sagas, most of the people in Ragvall have heard them all already, and he's too self-conscious to make new stories. Maybe the characters can create new legends for him to sing?

Quest: Epic Poetry

Prerequisite: *None*

Bragi longs to hear about a heroic deed that he can spin into epic poem. If the characters complete a Heroic Feat and share their story with him, he is thrilled to commemorate the occasion.

"When the sun rose the snow was washed red. Each of his foes at his feet lay dead!… no, too obvious. Each of his foes had fled? … no, the timing is off. He sent them to bed? I give up!"

- Bragi Bennuson, composing a poem

Grindal av Halsfjord

Lawful evil, male bronze dragonborn **noble**

With a gaze that could melt an iceberg, this rail-thin, pale-bronze dragonborn is the patriarch of a family of dragonborn and a cunning master of trade. Chief Hrafen av Skeir knew of his unsavory reputation as a cruel keeper of hundreds of thralls and ill-paid indentures, but Hrafen grudgingly courted the favor of this mogul to help secure trade routes for his new settlement.

Grindal av Halsfjord himself has only just arrived in Ragvall after spending a comfortable winter in his Halsfjord manse. His eldest daughter, Gondul, and youngest son, Gunnvarr, came with Hrafen before the winter. His arrival in Ragvall sent ripples through the community, especially through the large and influential family of Benna Stonebreaker, the family whose matriarch he once held as a thrall.

Roleplaying Grindal

When the characters interact with Grindal av Halsfjord, consider these roleplaying traits when deciding how he responds:

Personality Traits: "I am the most important person in this village. Chief Hrafen av Skeir knows he needs me more than I need him."

Ideal: "Money is power, and I'll do anything to accrue more of it, especially if it means exploiting others."

Bond: "I am only in Ragvall Village to further the renown of my family. I only care about Gondul and Gunnvarr."

Flaw: "Hrafen av Skeir, pah. A charming warrior drunk on his own reputation. I'll never follow such a man unless there's profit in it for me."

Grindal's Quests

Grindal av Halsfjord is accustomed to a life of comfort in the city, but he's willing to part with luxury in exchange for making history in Ragvall Village.

Quest: Burning Feud

Prerequisite: *None*

This quest can begin with either Grindal av Halsfjord or his bitter rival, Benna Stonebreaker. Grindal av Halsfjord hates that his former thrall has become so beloved among the Ragvallan people. He seeks the characters to end this feud by forcing Benna to submit to him. Ultimately, the characters must find a way to assuage the ire between these two influential families. Otherwise, their feud may escalate during the raiding months while the chief isn't around to mollify them.

Completing this Quest qualifies as a Heroic Feat (see "A Heroic Feat," later in this chapter).

Gondul Grindalsdóttir

Chaotic evil, female bronze dragonborn (see appendix A for her game statistics)

Small and demure, Gondul is the perfect eldest daughter of the wealthy Grindal av Halsfjord. Her polished scales shine like burnished bronze, and she dresses in the best finery her father's money can buy. She has caught the eye of nearly every young man in Ragvall Village, and a handful of the young women, too. While she likes the attention, she knows she's better than these backwater villagers. She ought to be in Halsfjord attending opulent dances, or, better yet, in the great island city of Tyburn attending grand fetes for beautiful, well-bred nobles.

Gondul's Dark Secret

As the case stands, none of Gondul's dreams are possible, for she bears a curse: lycanthropy. During the dark heart of winter, she ventured into the Sheltering Wood and was bitten by a dire wolf. She has seen the full moon rise twice since then. Both times, Gondul has blacked out only to awaken covered in blood and achingly full the next morning. She has done her best to hide this curse from the village, but she couldn't hide it from her father. Her prideful younger brother, Gunnvarr, is eager to help Mildrith Quickshot and her hunters kill the beast, which has already claimed two hunters.

Roleplaying Gondul

When the characters interact with Gondul Grindalsdóttir, consider these roleplaying traits when deciding how she responds:

Personality Traits: "I relish the attention these backward serfs lavish upon me. Yet, as much as it pains me, I must stay out of the public eye, lest one of them discover that I bear this beastly curse."

Ideal: "I'm superior to the rabble of Ragvall. The only thing that would change my mind is if one of them found a way to save me from my curse."

Bond: "I am grateful to my father for everything he has done for me. Yet I fear he would cast me aside if my secret were revealed."

Flaw: "Ever since I was bitten, the people around me look more like food than friends."

Gondul's Quests

Gondul doesn't have Quests to offer, but she is significant to **Quest: Beast of Bronze and White Fur**.

> "This secret is only ours, child. When the moon waxes, journey deep into the woods to keep out of sight."
>
> *- Grindal av Halsfjord*

Gunnvarr Grindalsson

Chaotic neutral, male bronze dragonborn **berserker**

Broad and brash, Gunnvarr is the picturesque heir to the stately line of Grindal av Halsfjord. Though he lacks the cunning of his father and sister, he more than makes up for it with gleaming looks and raw charisma. He is a renowned berserker, and he single-handedly killed the White Bear of Merki Peak and made its pelt into a coat that he wears into battle. Gunnvarr bullied Bragi Bennuson, the village's bard, into learning the "Ballad of Gunnvarr and the White Bear," so that the bard can play it whenever Gunnvarr enters the village longhouse.

Roleplaying Gunnvarr

When the characters interact with Gunnvarr Grindalsson, consider these roleplaying traits when deciding how he responds:

Personality Traits: "I'm the best warrior this village has. Everyone else pales in comparison to me, y'hear? I'll damn well flog anyone who says different!"

Ideal: "I want to be the reason why this clan becomes renowned. Imagine all of the songs!"

Bond: "I'm glad my father and sister are here with me so they can witness my great deeds firsthand."

Flaw: "I never back down from a challenge. Never. If my mum rose from her grave and drew a blade, I wouldn't bloody hesitate."

Gunnvarr is jealous the characters have gained the favor of the chief, and he treats them as inferiors no matter how kindly or sycophantically they treat him. Gunnvarr only comes to respect the characters after being publicly humiliated in a duel (see **Event: Besting the Braggart**, below).

Gunnvarr's Quests

Gunnvarr doesn't care for the characters, and he doesn't offer them Quests. However, Gunnvarr gossips that the village's huntmaster, Mildrith Quickshot, has heard rumors of a beast in the woods—a beast that Gunnvarr is eager to triumph over. (See **Quest: Night's Fanged Hunter**, later in this chapter.)

Event: Besting the Braggart

Prerequisite: *Completed a Heroic Feat or completed* **Quest: Night's Fanged Hunter**

Once Gunnvarr's jealousy overcomes his good sense, he drunkenly approaches the characters one night and delivers a blistering barrage of insults. They have the choice to duel him to shut him up or turn the other cheek.

> "The last fool that insulted me was this bear!"
>
> - *Gunnvarr Grindalsson*

Hlökk Warcrier

Neutral evil, female high elf **veteran**

The way of the high elf warrior Hlökk Warcrier is simple: she shows vicious cruelty to her foes but displays staunch loyalty to her friends. Her age is unknown, but she possesses the youthful looks and vigor of a warrior in her prime. Beneath her bright-red hair, she bears the scars of a dozen battles.

Hlökk came to Ragvall in the dark night of its first winter as a lost, half-frozen traveler beset with fear and hunger. No one trusted her, save for Bragi Bennuson, the village bard, who was instantly smitten with her. Even in her frostbitten state, she managed to help defend the village from a pack of wolves that emerged from the Sheltering Wood.

Roleplaying and Befriending Hlökk

When the characters interact with Hlökk Warcrier, consider these roleplaying traits when deciding how she responds:

Personality Traits: "I am the strongest warrior in this village, and I don't need to brag to prove myself."

Ideal: "Strength and the ability to lead are all one needs in the world. I will not prostrate myself before a weak leader—but I will gladly follow a strong one."

Bond: "The people of this village saved my life. I do not have to like them, but I am honor-bound to lay down that life for them in return."

Flaw: "I have my doubts about Chief Hrafen av Skeir. He relies too much on diplomacy and backs down from fights he could easily win. When he is tested, I fear he will fail."

Hlökk is loath to share information about her past; she feels that the village of Ragvall has yet to earn her respect, especially after treating her with mistrust when first she arrived. She is indifferent toward all Ragvallans, but she slowly opens up to skilled warriors.

Once per week, when the characters finish an interaction with Hlökk, the character who interacted with her most makes a DC 15 Charisma check. This check is made with advantage if that character was uncommonly kind to her or gave her a gift. It's made with disadvantage if that character was unkind or rude to Hlökk. If the characters make three successes before the end of spring, they befriend Hlökk, and her disposition becomes friendly.

Hlökk's Quests

Hlökk now trains young warriors, and she is preparing is the Ragvallans for the summer raids. She has realized that too few are combat-ready, and she begs for the characters' aid.

Core Quest: Greenhorn Warrior Training

Prerequisite: *Completed three Quests*

Chief Hrafen av Skeir urges the characters to aid Hlökk Warcrier in training the village's young warriorsin order to get ready for the summer raids. The characters must put the trainees through a series of drills, and then lead them in a fox hunt.

Mardoll Brightsea

Chaotic good, female half-elf **acolyte**

Cheerful and shy toward strangers but innocently flirtatious toward friends, Mardoll Brightsea is Ragvall Village's most talented shipwright. She is beloved by both the village's fisherfolk and would-be raiders. Her pale, freckled skin and short, brown hair give her the look of a demure girl that belies her bold spirit and surprising physical strength.

She is in love with Ragvall's lawspeaker, Ása Lögmaður, and serves as her acolyte on Shrine Isle when not repairing ships or overseeing their construction.

Roleplaying and Befriending Mardoll

When the characters interact with Mardoll Brightsea, consider these roleplaying traits when deciding how she responds:

Personality Traits: "I'm like an oyster: hard to open up, but when ya do, I'm a real pearl."

Ideal: "I'm getting these ships built and out to sea, no matter what!"

Bond: "I know other Ragvallans think Ása is creepy, but I think she's really… sweet."

Flaw: "Why is asking out a girl on a date so hard? I can flirt all day long, but why can't I do this?"

Mardoll starts with an indifferent disposition toward the characters, but she is still superficially cheerful. However, she is shy and doesn't share her secrets—such as the feelings she harbors for Ása—with anyone she isn't friends with.

Once per week, when the characters finish an interaction with Mardoll, the character who interacted with her most makes a DC 15 Charisma check. This check is made with advantage if that character was uncommonly kind to her or gave her a gift. It's made with disadvantage if the character was unkind or rude to Mardoll. If the characters make three successes before the end of spring, they befriend Mardoll, and her disposition becomes friendly.

Mardoll's Quests

Mardoll oversees building the raiding fleet that the Ragvallans will sail upon this summer. Additionally, she knows that Ása Lögmaður needs help (see **Quest: Gills for the Gill-less**, later in this chapter), but she will only recommend the characters help Ása once Mardoll herself has become friends with them.

Core Quest: Dragon Ships

Prerequisite: *Completed three Quests*

Event: Ship Wars

Prerequisite: *None*

The feud between Grindal av Halsfjord and Benna Stonebreaker reaches a breaking point, and Mardoll's shipyard becomes a battleground between the two influential families and their allies.

Mildrith Quickshot

Chaotic neutral, female forest gnome **scout**

Though small in stature, Mildrith Quickshot is a skilled tracker and practiced hunter. Her small arrows felled the elk whose hides and meat sustained the people of Ragvall through their first winter. Her stern countenance is tattooed with blade-like fern leaves, and a deep green ribbon is braided into her blonde hair.

Roleplaying Mildrith

When the characters interact with Mildrith Quickshot, consider these roleplaying traits when deciding how she responds:

Personality Traits: "People ask me why I never smile. I tell them to mind their own business. There's no room for levity in the dark forest."

Ideal: "The only thing you can rely on is how true your aim is. If you have that, you can survive anything."

Bond: "The only family I need are my elk hunters. We've been through thick and thin together."

Flaw: "My elk hunters look up to me. For their sake, I cannot show a hint of weakness."

Mildrith's Quests

Mildrith is loath to cause a panic, but she fears that a monster of winter's darkness has awoken late, and it is likely to cause harm if not hunted and slain. She has informed the chief, and she hopes he will send his best warriors to aid her.

Quest: Night's Fanged Hunter

Prerequisite: *None*

Rumors are circling about a monster in the woods, one which didn't return to slumber after the winter. Hunters have found dead elk with terrible wounds. The matter has been brought to the chief, who urges the characters to investigate and put a stop to the attacks.

Quest: Beast of Bronze and White Fur

Prerequisite: *Completed* **Quest: Night's Fanged Hunter**

The characters found the cause of the attacks, or so they thought. Even after eliminating the creatures, the attacks continue. This time, it's a village hunter, who was found brutally mauled. The true culprit is still out there.

> "The monsters that awake in winter don't always return to slumber. Shake off your fear! It must die before winter returns."
>
> *- Mildrith Quickshot, Ragvall huntmaster*

Ófeigur Lightraiser

Lawful good, male (formerly human) **keppmir** *(see appendix A)*

Once a tall, gaunt, and ethereally beautiful man with spectral-blonde hair, Ófeigur was said to be touched by the gods. He was born sickly and given the name Ófeigur—the word "immortal" in Valikan—as a blessing to stave off death. It seems to have worked, and he went on to join Hrafen av Skeir's journey south. Ófeigur put his mason skills to work by building a lighthouse on the shore of Akkeri Bay. He barred the door and vanished inside the beacon. Somehow, though, the beacon has remained lit all through the winter and into the spring.

The Vanished Lighthouse Keeper

The truth of Ófeigur's disappearance is that he is transforming into a monster: an aquatic horror of the Valikan seas called a keppmir (see appendix A). Three months ago, during winter, Ófeigur barricaded himself inside his small lighthouse as a defense against the monsters of winter's darkness.

With plenty of rations and little else to do, he began digging a cellar for his beacon. To his surprise, he found a small grotto, within which was a shrine. The shrine stood atop a stone seal to some unknown chamber below. It depicted a piscine spirit and bore countless unfamiliar runes. Ófeigur began studying the glyphs, and he soon became obsessed with unraveling their meaning.

Ófeigur's ceaseless study of the Nameless Shrine awoke magic that has begun to alter his body. His legs have fused into a single fin, and his body has broken out in a rash of crimson scales. Horrified by what he is becoming, Ófeigur remains sequestered in the grotto, submerged entirely in the frigid pools and unsure of what he'll do once his rations run out.

Roleplaying and Befriending Ófeigur

When the characters interact with Ófeigur Lightraiser, consider these roleplaying traits when deciding how he responds:

Personality Traits: "Oh, please don't worry about me. I'm just… I'd just rather not leave. I'm so used to it in the lighthouse, you know. It's all I'm good at. Definitely not so good at… people.

Ideal: "I know what I'm good at. I know what I'm not good at. I just want to be useful."

Bond: "This lighthouse is my pride and joy. I love her. She saves lives. She serves a purpose. She's a work of art."

Flaw: "Oh, heroes alive, where to start? Um, let's just start with 'nearly everything,' and then list the things that aren't flaws from there…"

Ófeigur is initially fearful of the characters, and he has a hostile disposition toward them. He becomes friendly toward the characters if they treat him with kindness in **Quest: The Immortal Hermit.**

Ófeigur's Quests

Ófeigur Lightraiser has vanished into the beacon he built on the shores of Akkeri Bay.

Quest: The Immortal Hermit

Prerequisite: *None*

Ófeigur became obsessed with a daemonic shrine he unearthed in the beacon's basement. Since its discovery during the winter, he has been slowly transforming into an amphibious keppmir. The lighthouse remains lit, but no one has seen Ófeigur in weeks; he must be found before fear and superstition grip the village.

Event: Seal Upon the Depths

Prerequisite: *Befriended Ófeigur*

Ófeigur made a dangerous discovery: beneath his beacon is a shrine to Keppr, daemon of the depths. If the characters treated him with kindness in **Quest: The Immortal Hermit**, he remains lucid enough to fear this discovery, and he sneaks to the characters at night to tell them.

Quest: Eggs Over Easy

Prerequisite: *Completed* **Quest: The Immortal Hermit**

Once the seal beneath Ófeigur's Beacon is opened, the characters find a clutch of keppmir eggs. Ófeigur feels a powerful paternal instinct to protect these eggs. The characters are faced with a choice: let Ófeigur live in peace with the eggs and deal with the danger once they hatch, or they can smash the eggs now and deal with the bloody consequences.

Ranulf Skullcrusher

Neutral good, male rock gnome **tribal warrior**

Ranulf is a young, eager greenhorn warrior. He may not be as tall or as broad as other Ragvallan warriors, but that doesn't stop him from dreaming of being the greatest raider in Ragvall Village. Standing a mighty three feet tall with a fiery shock of red hair and stubble to match, Ranulf has the bravado of a veteran, but none of the fighting skill.

Roleplaying Ranulf

When the characters interact with Ranulf Skullcrusher, consider these roleplaying traits when deciding how he responds:

Personality Traits: "I gave myself the epithet Skullcrusher! Sounds pretty scary, huh?"

Ideal: "Honor is everything! And good Valikans gain honor by being victorious in battle!"

Bond: "She doesn't think much of me yet, but Lady Warcrier is like a big sister to me. I'll make her proud!"

Flaw: "You say that rushing headlong into a fight is a flaw? No way! Shut it, or I'll make ya!"

Ranulf looks up to the characters, seeing them as great heroes worthy of song. He has a friendly disposition toward them. Even harsh insults won't break his spirit, and it would take serious cruelty to turn him indifferent toward them.

Ranulf's Quests

Ranulf doesn't have Quests to offer the characters. He serves as a face for the many eager, untested warriors that the characters train in **Core Quest: Greenhorn Warrior Training.**

Rikarð Jarnskegg

Lawful good, male human **veteran**

Rikarð Jarnskegg is a tall, broad-shouldered, middle-aged human with a thick, iron-gray beard lined with streaks of rusty red.

He was a blacksmith captured from the Bürach town of Erlefort during a raid by Clan Sýr five years ago. He earned his freedom after spending five years as a thrall, but he emerged with no money and no prospects.

When Jarnskegg first heard of Hrafen av Skeir's schism from the clans of Thrull, he sold all he had, including most of his tools, and used his meager savings to travel more than 100 miles to join Hrafen on his journey south. The two men became fast friends.

Jarnskegg is the village's only blacksmith who knows how to craft weapons. He has a variety of tasks that he needs help with so he can meet Hrafen's goal of equipping a raiding force by summer.

Roleplaying and Befriending Rikarð

When the characters interact with Rikarð Jarnskegg, consider these roleplaying traits when deciding how he responds:

Personality Traits: "I look big with these broad shoulders and bushy beard, but I don't want any trouble. Just leave me to my work, please."

Ideal: "Freedom is the greatest gift a person can have. In a world like this, where monsters lurk around every corner, good steel is the only way to protect that freedom."

Bond: "I was a thrall. I've seen people, thralls like me, suffer in the most horrific ways. Anyone who went through that is a brother to me. A brother in suffering."

Flaw: "I was once Richard Ironbeard, a man of Bürach. I can't handle anything that reminds me of home. Not anymore. I'm not that man."

Jarnskegg's disposition is indifferent and terse with all but Hrafen av Skeir, who he admires and speaks to with reverence.

Once per week, when the characters finish an interaction with Rikarð, the character who interacted with him most makes a DC 15 Charisma check. This check is made with advantage if that character was uncommonly kind to him or gave him a gift. It's made with disadvantage if the character was unkind or rude to Rikarð. If the characters make three successes before the end of spring, they befriend Rikarð, and his disposition becomes friendly.

Rikarð's Quests

Rikarð Jarnskegg throws himself into his work to forget the pain of his past. He happily rewards characters who help him do so.

Core Quest: Raiders' Blades

Prerequisite: *Completed three Quests*

This sprawling Quest is a major matter that must be handled over the course of the season, and it is one of Chief Hrafen av Skeir's greatest concerns. The warriors of Ragvall need weapons so they can raid this summer. Somehow, two-hundred and fifty weapons or five hundred pounds of iron need to be acquired during the spring season.

Quest: Tools of the Trade

Prerequisite: *None*

Rikarð sold most of his specialized tools to reach Chief Hrafen av Skeir's procession last year. Now, he seeks new tools to replace those that he sold so he can forge the weapons needed for this summer's raids. The characters can find new tools by exploring Valika

> A sword's only as reliable as the tools that forged it.
>
> *- Rikarð Jarnskegg*

Thegn Arduinna Shinoff

Chaotic neutral, female wood elf **assassin**

Arduinna Shinoff, the thegn of the Evergreen Enclave, has watched the settlers of Ragvall since they first made camp on the shores of Akkeri Bay. A thegn is a noble title used by non-Valikan peoples in the woodland realms of Valika and Nordenland. She dwells in the forest that the Ragvallans call the Sheltering Wood with her fellow wood elves of the Evergreen Enclave. The elves secretly watch the Ragvall settlers to see if they are worthy of meeting and trading with her "enlightened people."

This tall, white-haired, green-eyed elf is possessed of unconventional beauty and preternatural cunning. As a thegn of the Evergreen Enclave, she wishes for her neighbors to live in balance with the elves and dwarves of this region. She only appears to the characters under certain circumstances (see "Arduinna's Quests," below).

Roleplaying Arduinna

When the characters interact with Thegn Arduinna Shinoff, consider these roleplaying traits when deciding how she responds:

Personality Traits: "I am a thegn of the elves, and I will be treated as such. You will address me by my title. Only those who I trust and respect have earned the right to address me by my name."

Ideal: "Elves were not meant to live in cities of stone. Our homes are the meditation-shrines of our ancestors. We are guardians of nature by birth, and my enclave shall not sacrifice that for comfort or convenience."

Bond: "I've seen too many elves and woodlands suffer at the hands of these Valikans to trust them, and yet, something in my heart makes me want to."

Flaw: "I am haunted by the ghosts of my dead companions, human friends I've outlived and allies who've died defending me. I can see them with my waking eyes."

Arduinna is aloof and indifferent to Ragvallans. Even though she is willing to speak with them once they prove themselves to the elves and dwarves who have lived here for centuries, she keeps them at arm's length. Arduinna can't be befriended in springtime.

Arduinna's Quests

Arduinna doesn't have Quests to offer the characters, but there are certain events featuring her that can occur during the spring season.

Event: Eyes in the Woods

Prerequisite: *Led two logging expeditions into the Sheltering Wood*

Arduinna and her Evergreen Enclave scouts keep a close eye on the Valikans who have settled on their shores. If spotted, she flees, and if she is pursued, she fires a warning shot. She vanishes into the woods after that.

Event: Elven Arrows

Prerequisite: *Led four logging expeditions into the Sheltering Wood*

Upset by the Ragvallans logging their ancestral forest, Evergreen Enclave archers launch a volley of arrows to dissuade the Ragvallan loggers.

Event: The Elven-Thegn Appears

Prerequisite: *Completed* **Quest: Beast of Bronze and White Fur** *and at least one Core Quest*

Arduinna appears before the characters and wishes them good luck in their summer raids. She urges them to live so that she may speak with them on behalf of the Evergreen Enclave when the raiders return in the autumn. While she mistrusts the Valikans, she hopes to live in peace with them.

Springtime Quests

Quests in this adventure come in four types:

Event. An Event is a problem that suddenly occurs without warning that the characters must solve. An Event is short and can typically be solved in a single encounter.

Quest. A Quest is a series of encounters. The characters typically start a quest by speaking with an NPC who needs help. While failing to complete a Quest doesn't penalize the characters, certain Quests require other Quests to be completed before they can be accessed by the characters. A Quest can typically be solved in a single session of play, and completing one causes a week of in-game time to progress as characters need to rest and pursue downtime activities to maintain their position in the village.

Core Quest. A Core Quest is a task vital to the success of the village and progression of the story. If left uncompleted by the season's end, there will be consequences in the next season. A Core Quest takes several weeks of in-game time to complete because it has multiple objectives. Core Quests that require collecting resources are designed to be completed while the characters go on other adventures.

Heroic Feat. A Heroic Feat is a legendary deed that awards great renown for accomplishing. These quests typically involve slaying a mighty monster or solving a feud between powerful people. Heroic Feats usually take one to three sessions of play to complete, sometimes with multiple weeks of in-game time passing between steps of the quest.

Each Event, Quest, Core Quest, and Heroic Feat that can be started in the spring season is listed below in alphabetical order. This means that many scenarios are presented out of sequential order. If a scenario has a prerequisite below its title, that means that there are other quests or events that influence it, which means that its story won't make total sense unless you read those prerequisites first. If it has "Prequisite: None" below its title, that means it's the first Quest in its chain, or that it's a completely standalone Quest.

To gain the maximum possible benefit in the summer season, the characters must complete at least three Quests, one Core Quest, and one Heroic Feat. Chief Hrafen av Skeir suggests new Quests as the characters complete others, but they don't have to follow their chief's guidance. Characters that won't be told what to do can freely explore the land and interact with NPCs to find Quests (see "Beyond Session One" in the "Introduction" chapter).

Recording Progress on the Calendar of the Seasons

When the characters complete an Event, Quest, Core Quest, or Heroic Feat, mark it on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C). Do so by writing the name of this Quest on the week in which it was completed. This creates a record of which quests have been completed.

Additionally, some Quests have choices or developments that affect future events. Write a note on the Calendar of the Seasons with the name of this development to keep track of how things played out when it's time for the characters to face the consequences of their actions.

Events

Keep track of Event prerequisites. The GM can choose to have an Event happen at any time once the prerequisite has been met.

Event: Besting the Braggart

Prerequisite: *Completed a Heroic Feat or* **Quest: Night's Fanged Hunter**

Questgiver: Gunnvarr Grindalsson
Location: Hrafensheim (area R1) or Grindalsson Farmstead (area R11)
Downtime: None

The successes of the characters cause Gunnvarr's jealousy to escalate to drunken violence. Read or paraphrase the following to begin this Event:

> *"You there," shouts a voice from the darkness. Gunnvarr stumbles towards you with malice in his eyes and a greataxe in his hand. "The best warrior among you! Draw steel!"*

Soused and unable to contain his resentment, Gunnvarr insults the characters relentlessly. Furthermore, he claims that he could best any one of them in a duel.

Duel Accepted. If the characters accept Gunnvarr's challenge, he insists on dueling one of them right there and then.

In his drunken and envious state, Gunnvarr (a **beserker**) attacks brashly, always using his Reckless trait. Nevertheless, he retains enough sense to stop attacking an unconscious opponent.

If nonlethally defeated, Gunnvarr immediately passes out, slumping to the ground.

Gunnvarr Ignored. If the characters simply disregard Gunnvarr's words and continue with what they were doing, Gunnvarr calls them weak cowards, but he does not follow after them if they walk away.

Calendar of the Seasons

Depending on how the characters resolved this Event, mark one of the following outcomes on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Bragging Justified. If Gunnvarr defeats the character who dueled him, he becomes insufferable and finds every moment he can to rub his victory in the character's face.

The Last Word. If the character dueling Gunnvarr killed him, Chief Hrafen av Skeir calls the character to Hrafensheim (area R1) the next morning. The chief reprimands the character for such actions and he voices his disappointment. He informs the character that there will be a bything at sunrise the next day. This starts **Event: Settling the Law**.

Gunnvarr's Respect. If the character dueling Gunnvarr defeated him nonlethally, the hero is approached by Gunnvarr the following morning. He recalls enough of what happened to gain a newfound respect for the hero and the rest of the characters, and he expresses his admiration. He volunteers to command a group of warriors during the summer raids (see "Battle Preparations" in chapter 2).

The Other Cheek. If the characters refused to fight Gunnvarr or otherwise ignored him, Chief Hrafen av Skeir calls them to Hrafensheim (area R1) the next morning. He praises them for their restraint and strength of will, saying that they set a good example for the rest of Ragvall. However, Gunnvarr's jealousy remains, and he refuses to join the summer raids, preferring to remain behind and guard his father's estate.

Event: Eyes in the Woods

Prerequisite: *Led a second logging expedition into the Sheltering Wood (see "Gathering Timber," earlier in this chapter)*

Questgiver: Thegn Arduinna Shinoff
Location: Sheltering Wood (see chapter 5)
Downtime: None

While the characters are leading their second logging expedition during downtime, Thegn Arduinna Shinoff notices their presence. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *You feel it before you're able to comprehend it. There is a slight lurch in your stomach. The hairs on the back of your neck stand to attention. You're being watched.*

A successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check spots Arduinna. If one of the characters succeeds on the check, read or paraphrase the following:

> *A shadow shifts in the boughs, and suddenly you spot the outline of a figure with pointed ears and piercing green eyes. As soon as you notice the silhouette, the figure darts away through the underbrush.*

If characters choose to peruse Arduinna (use **assassin** statistics), she shoots the nearest character with a single Light Crossbow attack before she vanishes completely. The characters are unable to track her unless one of them succeeds on a DC 25 Wisdom (Survival) check. If successful, run **Event: The Elven-Thegn Appears**.

Arduinna is simply interested in observing the characters and does not reveal herself. Regardless of if they discover Arduinna's presence or not, the characters can continue with their expedition without further complications.

"These trees are more ancient than your sagas. They are not yours to pluck from the grove at your choosing."

- Thegn Arduinna Shinoff

Event: Elven Arrows

Prerequisite: *Led a fourth logging expedition into the Sheltering Wood (see "Gathering Timber," earlier in this chapter)*

Questgiver: None
Location: Sheltering Wood (see chapter 5)
Downtime: None

While the characters are leading their fourth logging expedition during downtime, they find they've angered the elves of the Sheltering Wood. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *There's a subtle rustling in the foliage. You spot eyes in the trees. But something's wrong. Before you're able to act, arrows burst from the tree line, whistling with blood-freezing speed. In an instant, a dozen Ragvallans have fallen dead, and horrible pain lances through your body. The iron smell of blood fills the air, but the trees are silent.*

All villagers in the logging group are slain, and each of the characters takes 21 (6d6) piercing damage. The elves vanish into the woods, but a successful DC 25 Wisdom (Survival) check finds their tracks. In the unlikely event that the characters track them, run **Event: The Elven-Thegn Appears**, even if they haven't completed its prerequisites.

Event: The Elven-Thegn Appears

Prerequisite: *Successfully tracked Arduinna after* **Event: Eyes in the Woods or Event: Elven Arrows or** *completed both* **Quest: Beast of Bronze and White Fur and** *a Core Quest*

Questgiver: Thegn Arduinna Shinoff
Location: Sheltering Wood (see chapter 5)
Downtime: None

Whether by choice or because they managed to find her, Arduinna reveals herself to the characters while they are in the Sheltering Wood.

If this Event happens because of successfully tracking down Arduinna during **Event: Eyes in the Woods or Event: Elven Arrows**, read or paraphrase the following to begin the Event:

> *Just as it seems there are no more tracks to follow, an elven figure emerges from the shadows of the trees. She inclines her head in greeting, causing long, white hair to cascade over her shoulders. "Not many Valikans possess the skill to track elves of the Evergreen Enclave. My name is Arduinna Shinoff, and I am the thegn of these woods."*

If this Event happens because of the characters completing **Quest: Beast of Bronze and White Fur** and a Core Quest, read or paraphrase the following to begin the Event:

> *The dappled light of the forest bends slightly to reveal an elven figure who raises a hand in greeting. "Well met," she says. "I am Arduinna Shinoff, thegn of these woods."*

Explaining the Attack

If the characters completed **Event: Elven Arrows** and ask Arduinna why she and the other elves killed the loggers, read or paraphrase the following:

> *"It was a message," she explains. "The Sheltering Wood is the sacred home of the elves, and you were not only trespassing but actively violating our home. Nevertheless, the fact that we stand face-to-face now is another message: we do not need to be enemies."*

Reparations from Arduinna

If the characters demand recompense for the lives of their kinfolk, Arduinna assents easily. Read or paraphrase:

> *Arduinna nods. "Your tradition of the 'weregild.' I have heard of it. By dawn of your next week's first day, you will find our silver upon the threshold of your longhouse. I ardently hope such payment will purify any bad blood between our peoples."*

Retaliating Against Arduinna

Arduinna is not alone. She is accompanied by three elven **spies**, who are hidden among the trees. A successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the elves.

If the characters attack Arduinna (use **assassin** statistics), the other elves act on initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties).

If reduced below half her maximum hit points, Arduinna and her accompanying elves flee.

If the characters flee or surrender, Arduinna allows them to but does not offer them her truce (see "Calendar of the Seasons," below).

An Audience with the Elven-Thegn

Once the characters have introduced themselves to her, Arduinna elaborates on why she has shown herself. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *"I appear before you because I have seen your exploits in these woods, and I find myself impressed," Arduinna admits. "As such, I am offering a truce between our peoples. We will not harm you in this forest as long as you don't harm us."*

Arduinna's truce is simple but nonnegotiable. She is not interested in making the deal better for the characters, and she doesn't feel remorse or the need to make amends for the Ragvallans she has killed.

If the characters attack or greatly disrespect her, Arduinna rescinds her offer and attacks (see "Retaliating Against Arduinna," above).

If the characters accept her truce, read or paraphrase the following:

> *"Once you return in the autumn, I would like to speak further on the matter. I wish you luck on your raids, so you may live to see the turning of the leaves." Without a goodbye, Arduinna leaps into the branches and vanishes.*

Calendar of the Seasons

If the characters accepted Arduinna's truce, mark the first outcome on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C); if they also convinced her to pay reparations for the lives of their kinfolk, they also earn the second outcome:

Woodland Truce. The characters have secured peace between Ragvall Village and the Evergreen Enclave (see **Heroic Feat: Feud-Ender**, later in this chapter).

Elven Weregild. True to Arduinna's word, an elven scout delivers satchel with 1,000 sp in unfamiliar coins bearing a pinecone on one side and a stylized arrowhead on the other appears by the door of Hrafensheim just before dawn at the start of the next week. The chief distributes it to the families of the slain, unless the characters steal or otherwise intercept it before dawn.

Event: Seal upon the Depths

Prerequisite: *Befriended Ófeigur Lightraiser*

Questgiver: Ófeigur Lightraiser
Location: Home of one of the characters or Ófeigur's Beacon (area R12)
Downtime: None

If Ófeigur lives after completing **Quest: The Immortal Hermit**, he is suddenly driven to unseal the runic stone that blocks the subbasement of his beacon. Underneath it is a clutch of keppmir eggs surrounding a shrine to Keppr, known as the daemon of the depths, who is responsible for the creation of the first keppmir.

If Ófeigur is friendly toward the characters, he remains lucid enough to fear this discovery, and he quietly visits the characters at night to warn them. If he is indifferent toward the characters, he enters the shrine to protect the eggs.

Ófeigur's Arrival

Read or paraphrase the following to begin this Event:

> *Quiet knocks tap at your door in the dead of night.*

The knocker is Ófeigur, who is dressed in a heavy cloak dripping with keppmir mucus. Once the characters open the door or otherwise examine their guest, read or paraphrase:

> *Ófeigur appears even more fishlike than the last time you saw him. He peers at you with watery eyes from beneath his cloak's mucus-wet hood. "Friends…I didn't know where else to turn. The seal beneath the beacon…I opened it. Please… come. Follow."*

Hiding Ófeigur

Ófeigur scuttles from the house's doorway to the streets of Ragvall Village. It's a simple matter to keep him hidden while the characters gather, but getting from their houses back to the beacon requires caution, even at night.

The characters must make a DC 18 group Dexterity (Stealth) or Charisma (Deception) check to make it through the village without arousing suspicion (see "Group Checks" in the fifth edition core rules). If this group check succeeds, they reach the lighthouse (area R12) without issue.

If this group check fails, see "Suspicious Villager," below.

Suspicious Villager

The characters couldn't sneak Ófeigur through the village without attracting the suspicion of Tafi (CN, male human **scout**), a hunter who saw such horrors in winter that he now ends every night completely soused. This social encounter involves Tafi escalating the situation until he attacks unless he's talked down. Read or paraphrase the following to begin this encounter:

> *"Evenin', stalwarts," Tafi says, slurring his words. "Your bud's got a slimy cloak, don't he?" He breaks into a fit of giggles, then tries to get a closer look at Ófeigur.*

If the characters think of a suitable lie and one character makes a successful DC 16 Charisma (Deception) check, Tafi smiles and bids them farewell. If not, he rushes forward and tries to tear Ófeigur's hood away:

> *"Show me who ya got under there, you big mister mystery!"*

A character can intercept and restrain him with a successful DC 13 Dexterity or Strength check. On a success, Tafi sways, vomits his supper into the snow, and passes out. On a failure, he sees that Ófeigur is a keppmir and attacks the "monster." (Ófeigur uses the **amphibious keppmir** statistics in appendix A and Tafi is a **scout**.)

Brawl! Tafi, Ófeigur, and characters wishing to join the fray roll initiative. While Tafi fights to kill, Ófeigur only fights in self-defense, but he doesn't know how to keep his claws from lethally goring Tafi.

If Tafi is nonlethally defeated, he wakes up the next morning with no memory of the event. If he's killed, the chief has no choice but to try the killer (see "Laws and Customs of Ragvall" in the Introduction for how to run a trial).

Concluding the Brawl. After this encounter, the characters make it to the lighthouse without further complications.

"Worse o' winter ain't in the snow. Is the monsters in the village. The one's who turn into some'fin 'orrible and murder their kin."

- Tafi, Ragvall hunter

Event: Settling the Law

Prerequisite: *Completed* **Event: Besting the Braggart with** *the "The Last Word" outcome* **or** *Completed* **Quest: Beast of Bronze and White Fur with** *the "Dragonbornslayer" outcome*

Questgiver: Hrafen av Skeir
Location: Shrine Isle (area R4)
Downtime: None
Content Warning: Accusations of murder

If the characters kill either Gunnvarr Grindalsson or Gondul Grindalsdóttir, Grindal av Halsfjord becomes overwhelmed with grief and rage. By his estimation, all that his family has gained from coming to Ragvall Village is death.

With no hesitation, Grindal pressures Chief Hrafen av Skeir into calling a bything to address the murder of his child. The chief complies, and a bything is announced for the next sunrise.

Beginning the Bything

At sunrise, the village gathers on Shrine Isle. The bything begins with Ása Lögmaður standing before the Lögsteinn, stating that they are there to address the death of either Gunnvarr Grindalsson or Gondul Grindalsdóttir.

Grindal begins his attack immediately, pointing at those involved in the killing.

If the bything is for Gunnvarr's death, read or paraphrase the following:

> *"This is my son's killer!" Grindal declares. "A thug who deemed him fit to die for idle insults!"*

If the bything is instead for Gondul's death, read or paraphrase the following:

> *"My daughter was killed by these murderers!" Grindal snarls. "It was no accident! They hunted her down and slaughtered her like a beast!"*

Mounting a Defense

The characters make their case and justify their actions. Throughout the bything, they must build a case for themselves, and then, at the case's end, one character must make a successful DC 15 Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check to convince the assembled village that the actions taken were just. If the character fails this check, Grindal manages to convince the villagers instead.

The GM determines if the character makes a convincing argument. Each convincing argument adds a +1 bonus to this check. The check can benefit from multiple arguments.

Arguments for Gunnvarr's death include:

- Gunnvarr did not specify that the duel was not to the death.
- Gunnvarr dueled knowing death was a possibility.
- If the duel had gone differently, Gunnvarr would have killed them.

Arguments for Gondul's death include:

- Gondul undermined the clan's chances to gather food, and therefore their chances to survive.
- Gondul murdered a hunter, which means she was a killer who should have been outlawed.
- The characters present physical proof of Gondul's monstrousness.

Leveraging the Feud

If the characters haven't completed **Quest: Burning Feud** yet, they can use Benna Stonebreaker's feud with Grindal to their advantage. A successful DC 12 Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check convinces Benna that Grindal is leveraging his child's death for his own gain. Benna rallies her family to side with the characters, granting the character making the check advantage on the check to convince the village.

Grindal's Stand

Depending on which of his children was killed, Grindal intersperses his own argument with the characters' argument.

Gunnvarr. Grindal points out that Gunnvarr was drunk during the duel, affecting his judgment. He also brings up that by killing Gunnvarr, the village has lost a great warrior.

Gondul. Grindal defends his daughter with appeals to Gondul's personhood. He is appalled by claims that Gondul's curse made her a monster or made her any less of a member of the clan.

Murky Waters

Characters who find the situation to be more nuanced, especially regarding Gondul Grindalsdóttir, can instead negotiate for a new law and a corresponding punishment. This doesn't require a roll, relying on the creativity of the characters instead.

Calendar of the Seasons

Depending on how the characters resolved this event, mark one or more of the following outcomes on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Scot-Free. If the characters can convince the village that their killing of Gondul was justified, Ása Lögmaður clears them of charges. Grindal demands a weregild of 1,000 sp and refuses to deal with the characters ever again. They have until the beginning of the autumn season to deliver the weregild. If they fail, Chief Hrafen av Skeir is forced to exile them for four weeks. They are free to go adventuring but need to find food and shelter.

No Good Deed. If the characters fail to convince their fellow clansfolk that the death was deserved, Ása Lögmaður finds them guilty of Grand Violence, and the punishment is ten years of exile. Much to Grindal's anger, Chief Hrafen av Skeir reduces this punishment to one year, and the characters can return if they accomplish a Heroic Feat (see "A Heroic Feat," later in this chapter).

New Territory. If the characters manage to negotiate for a new law, Ása Lögmaður carves it into the Lögsteinn. The characters receive the punishment this law decrees.

Burning Brighter. Using Benna's hatred of Grindal makes completing **Quest: Burning Feud** more difficult.

Event: Ship Wars

Prerequisite: *Begins the seventh week of spring if* **Quest: Burning Feud hasn't** *been completed*

Questgiver: Mardoll Brightsea
Location: Snekkjafit (area R14)
Downtime: None

If the feud between Benna Stonebreaker and Grindal av Halsfjord is not resolved by the beginning of the seventh week of spring (see **Quest: Burning Feud**), tensions between these two pillars of the Ragvallan community begin to cause rifts between the villagers.

While working under the supervision of Mardoll Brightsea, two shipwrights who have opposing loyalties begin arguing about Benna and Grindal. Soon, the other shipwrights reveal their allegiances and draw weapons.

If the characters have befriended Mardoll Brightsea, she approaches them urgently. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *"No time to explain," Mardoll manages between gasps of breath. "You have to come with me." Before you can respond, she rushes toward the shore.*

Otherwise, the characters either witness the start of the commotion or hear about the situation from other villagers.

Once the characters reach Snekkjafit, read or paraphrase the following:

> *The Snekkjafit is overwhelmed with insults, each louder and more vicious than the last. Shipwrights point their weapons at each other, punctuating their words with threats.*

If she is not already with the characters, Mardoll runs up to them:

> *Mardoll looks at you with panic in her eyes. "Please, do something!" she pleads.*

Setting Everything Wright

The argument involves ten shipwrights (**commoners**); five are loyal to Benna Stonebreaker and five are loyal to Grindal av Halsfjord.

Magical Solutions. The shipwrights can be instantaneously subdued with a spell such as *sleep* or *calm emotions*.

Make Some Noise. The characters can create a distraction to diffuse the situation. The characters must make as successful group DC 15 Charisma (Intimidation) check to scare the shipwrights into putting down their weapons (see "Group Checks" in the fifth edition core rules). On a failure, the shipwrights disregard the characters, and future attempts to convince shipwrights to stop arguing are made with disadvantage.

Finding the Cause. Characters can talk with the shipwrights and gain information by making a successful DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion) check. Alternatively, they can eavesdrop on the shipwrights by making a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check. On a success, they learn:

- The argument is about the feud between the Bennusons and the Grindalssons.
- The argument began when a shipwright said that with Grindal av Halsfjord around, Ragvall might actually become a place of note.
- This enraged a shipwright loyal to Benna Stonebreaker. The matriarch has contributed immensely to Ragvall's development.

Quelling Benna's Supporters. A successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check calms Benna's supporters and resolves the situation. While they swallow their pride and walk away, they continue glaring at their rivals. Characters who appeal to their love for Benna and the community make this check with advantage.

Quelling Grindal's Supporters. A successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check calms Grindal's supporters and resolves the situation. They return to their work on the ships. Characters who appeal to their feelings of superiority and disdain for Benna make this check with advantage.

Fighting Words

If the characters fail three checks to convince the shipwrights to stop arguing, one of the shipwrights loyal to Grindal swings an axe at a Benna supporter, and the situation escalates into a fight. Nothing short of physically getting between the shipwrights de-escalates the situation.

Eventually, the shipwrights tire themselves out, but their scrapes and bruises remain.

Calendar of the Seasons

If the characters successfully stopped the argument, mark the following outcome on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Mardoll's Friendship. If the characters have not befriended Mardoll, she is now friendly towards them. In private, she tells Ása about how the characters diffused the situation, prompting Ása to consider asking them for help (see **Quest: Gills for the Gill-less**).

> "Oh, there was an argument on my behalf? Interesting. By whom? Bah... I truly care not. Folk loyal to me should know a dragon does not concern themself with the yelping of a fox. But I'm glad it's common knowledge where the value in Clan Ragvall truly resides."
>
> *- Grindal av Halsfjord*

Quests

To undertake these Quests, the characters need to explore Ragvall Village and meet with their fellow clanfolk. At the beginning of this adventure, Chief Hrafen av Skeir offers suggestions about problems around the village that the characters can help solve (see "Meeting the Chief," earlier in this chapter). Those problems are drawn from this list of Quests.

Once three of these Quests have been completed, Chief Hrafen av Skeir invites them to his longhouse to discuss completing Core Quests (see "Raid Supplies," earlier in this chapter).

Session Zero: Obvious Quest Hooks

As the GM, make sure you and your players are on the same page regarding how forthcoming the Ragvallan villagers are about giving quests. Some players may think a villager directly saying "I have a quest for you" is too direct. These players may prefer discovering quests through clues. Others like knowing exactly what kind of quests are available; otherwise, the characters may not know if they have missed a narratively interesting opportunity. This is a great topic to discuss during your Session Zero.

Quest: Beast of Bronze and White Fur

Prerequisite: *Completed* **Quest: Night's Fanged Hunter**

Questgiver: Mildrith Quickshot
Location: Hunters' Cabins (area R14) or the Sheltering Wood (see chapter 5)
Downtime: 1 week
Content Warning: Rotting corpses

Following the demise of the dire wolf during **Quest: Night's Fanged Hunter**, the elk hunters resume stalking the Sheltering Wood, unaware that the real killer is still at large.

On the night of the full moon, a hunter is viciously mauled by the true culprit: Gondul Grindalsdóttir in her werewolf form. He lives long enough only to tell Mildrith his last words.

If the characters achieved the "Beast's Keeper" outcome at the end of **Quest: Night's Fanged Hunter**, Mildrith personally seeks out the characters. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *"There you are!" Mildrith says, slightly out of breath. "I've been looking all over for you." She inhales deeply. "Look, I know this is sudden, but if you have a moment, could you swing by my cabin? It's urgent. It's related to the beast you helped me slay. Thank you again for that, by the way."*

Once Mildrith receives a response, she returns to the Hunters' Cabins (area R14).

Otherwise, Mildrith broaches the matter when she comes across the characters. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *"Hey," Mildrith calls over. "You got a moment? There's something I was hoping you could help me with. Something urgent."*

If the characters agree to listen, Mildrith ushers them into her cabin to talk in private.

A Tragic Casualty

Once the characters are in her cabin, Mildrith explains the situation.

If the characters achieved the outcome "Beast's Keeper" at the end of **Quest: Night's Fanged Hunter**, read or paraphrase the following:

> *"Things are as we feared—the true beast is still out there," Mildrith confesses. "And, the other day, it killed one of my hunters." The guilt is evident in her voice. "*

If the party didn't achieve the "Beast's Keeper" outcome in **Quest: Night's Fanged Hunter**, read or paraphrase the following:

> *"One of my hunters was killed the other day. Brutally maimed," Mildrith's usually level tone wavers. "The scene reminded me of the elk. But we killed the beast responsible, right?"*

Either way, Mildrith explains her next step:

> *"I've asked Ása to magically examine the body. But it might be for the best if you take a look first."*

A Closer Look

Mildrith stored and covered the corpse under her bed. If the characters agree to look, she drags it to the middle of her cabin.

Detect Magic. A character casting *detect magic* discovers traces of transmutation magic lingering in the wounds. A successful DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana) check uncovers that a curse began to take hold of the body but didn't finish.

Impromptu Autopsy. Characters can examine the body to gain information by making a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation or Medicine) or Wisdom (Perception) check. As many characters can make this check as they want, and the check can be repeated on a failure. On a success, they learn:

- The wounds appear to be from fangs and claws.
- Tufts of white fur cling to the remains of the hunter's clothes.
- A sturdy bronze scale, like that of a drake, is lodged in the hunter's deepest wound.

Ása's Discovery

After three checks, regardless of success or failure, Ása Lögmaður arrives accompanied by Mardoll Brightsea.

Once the body is handed over to Ása and Mardoll, read or paraphrase the following:

> *Ása begins casting spells, frowning at the results. After whispering something to Mardoll, she procures a silver coin and places it on the body. Performing a ritual together, the coin begins to glow like moonlight. When the light fades, Ása looks at you with a grave expression on her face. "Wounds from a legend," she says. "Your legend of a man who turns into a wolf."*

If asked to elaborate, Ása explains that she discovered the wounds were slightly magical. Suspecting a werewolf, she cast a ritual to test what the wounds would react to. As expected, the wounds recoiled from silver and tugged towards moonlight.

A Silver Edge

Characters who make a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check are aware that werewolves can only be harmed by silvered weapons.

Rikarð Jarnskegg can silver weapons at his smithy. He can silver one weapon or ten pieces of ammunition for 100 gp, but the characters must wait a week for him to send a courier with the money to Runeheim to get the alchemical silver needed.

Whodunnit?

The characters can start deducing who and where the werewolf is. If they need help, the other NPCs can provide their suspicions.

Ása's Suspicions. The lawspeaker has done her duty and has nothing more to contribute.

Mardoll's Suspicions. Mardoll has heard eerie stories of the elves in the Sheltering Wood, and says that they have every reason to try and scare of Ragvallan hunters.

Mildrith's Suspicions. Mildrith reveals that the hunter said his attacker was "a beast of bronze and white fur." She suspects Grindal and his children because they are dragonborn who all have bronze scales.

Wolf, Where?

With the suspects narrowed down, the characters must figure out which dragonborn is the werewolf.

Though they are free to investigate the entirety of Ragvall and interview its inhabitants, only Grindal and Gondul know about the werewolf curse. They have managed to keep it a secret from Gunnvarr.

If the characters completed **Event: Besting the Braggart**, its outcome may this quest.

One Suspect Down. If the characters achieved the outcome "The Last Word," they only need to worry about whether Grindal or Gondul is the werewolf.

An Unlikely Ally. If the characters achieved the outcome "Gunnvarr's Respect," they can talk with him regarding the matter. He can be found at his farmstead (area R11).

Grindalsson Farmstead

Provided they achieved the "Gunnvarr's Respect" outcome from **Event: Besting the Braggart**, Gunnvarr is amendable to discussing matters. A character who makes a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check can confirm his honesty.

Even with this in mind, Gunnvarr is not someone the characters should confide in.

Potential Sisterkiller. If he learns they are after a vicious beast, he insists on joining the characters to fight it and can only be dissuaded with a successful DC 17 Charisma (Persuasion) check or if they reveal the beast is most likely his sister.

Family Before Honor. Gunnvarr does not take kindly to his family being accused of murder. He refuses to help the characters with their investigations and makes his way to his sister's meadery (area R9) to alert his father and sister.

Grindalsdóttir Meadery

It is Grindal who greets the characters at the meadery. Paranoid that they have discovered his daughter's secret, he is hostile to the characters, stating that they have no business at the farm. He threatens them by reminding them of his wealth and influence.

Too Late. If Gondul is alerted to the arrival of the charactersby her brother or another person, she flees toward the Sheltering Wood before they arrive at the meadery.

Stalling For Time. If Gondul is in the meadery when the characters arrive, Grindal prohibits the characters from entering in an effort to give his daughter time to escape. The characters must make three successful DC 15 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) checks to convince him to let them talk with Gondul. If they fail three times, Gondul successfully escapes to the Sheltering Wood.

Gondul Cornered

If the characters manage to talk with Gondul, read or paraphrase the following:

> *"It's true. After the last several full moons, I awoke covered in blood in the woods. I never meant to harm anyone! I know that doesn't change the fact that I've caused so much death but…I wish I could control my powers. Please, you have to help me."*

The characters are free to deal with this however they wish. If they have no ideas, a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Nature) check recalls that some Valikan clan druids have harnessed lycanthropy for good. Alvíss av Dvergholt is no Valikan, but characters who bring Gondul to his woodworking shop (area R3), could convince him to help her.

Alvíss knows stories of the werewolf Lief Sarvif and werewolves who learned to control their transformations and appetites with the aid of druidic training. He has his doubts, but could be convinced to try to help Gondul if one of the characters makes a successful DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) check.

Back to the Woods

If Gondul flees to the Sheltering Wood, she makes her way to the Elgrleiths (area W1 in chapter 5).

Scared and alone, Gondul fully expects to fight the characters. For the first time, she voluntarily transforms into her werewolf form and manages to stay in control.

When the characters arrive, read or paraphrase the following:

> *A large white wolf with patches of gleaming bronze scales stands amidst the bones of a half-dozen elk. Her golden eyes stare at you. She's been waiting.*

Though **Gondul Grindalsdóttir** (see appendix A) is ready to fight the characters, it is not their only option.

Brother Against Sister. If Gunnvarr is present and unaware of the beast's identity, he charges forward, eager to get the first strike. His greataxe is not silvered, however, so he isn't capable of physically wounding the creature. If he attacks, though, the relationship between the siblings is irreversibly damaged.

Fighting Gondul. Though Gondul has blood on her hands, she was not lucid during those times. She is powerful but has no practice in this new form. Gondul fights with desperation, attacking the closest enemy she sees. If one character is dealing more damage to her than the others, she turns her attention to that character. When possible, she uses her Lightning Breath to deal with multiple characters at once. She fights to the death, believing she doesn't have anything to live for.

Because she is a werewolf, characters without silvered weapons or magic are at a significant disadvantage in this fight.

Calming Gondul. The characters can convince Gondul they mean no harm with three successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) checks. These checks are made with disadvantage if Gondul is being attacked. Once calmed, she pleads with the characters to help her (see "Gondul Cornered" earlier in this quest).

Calendar of the Seasons

Regardless of how the characters resolved this quest, the problems of Mildrith and her hunters are over. She thanks the heroes for everything they have done, cracking a rare smile as she does so. Mark one outcome on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Dragonbornslayer. The characters have slain a vicious beast (see **Heroic Feat: Monster Slayer**, later in this chapter). At the same time, they have also slain Gondul Grindalsdóttir. Immediately after finding out about her death, Grindal approaches Chief Hrafen av Skeir, starting **Event: Settling the Law.**

A Wolf Among. If the characters convinced Alvíss to train Gondul, they both vanish from Ragvall Village for one month, then return with Gondul fully in control of her transformation. If they return by spring's end, the characters can bring Gondul on the raids (see chapter 2).

Quest: Burning Feud

Prerequisite: *None*

Questgiver: Benna Stonebreaker or Grindal av Halsfjord
Location: Bennuson Farmstead (area R8) or Grindalsson Farmstead (area R11)
Downtime: 1 week
Content Warning: Slavery and abuse

This quest begins when the characters learn of the feud between Benna Stonebreaker and Grindal av Halsjord, which can be given directly by Chief Hrafen av Skeir (see "You've Proven Your Worth" earlier this chapter) or from witnessing a conflict brought on by the feud (see **Event: Ship Wars**, earlier in this chapter).

The characters can approach Benna Stonebreaker or Grindal av Halsfjord about the feud. Alternatively, they can talk to Chief Hrafen av Skeir for more information on the situation.

Benna's Perspective

If characters ask Benna about the feud, read or paraphrase the following:

> *Benna's usual smile drops into a scowl at the mention of Grindal. "That man kept me as a thrall for several years. Had to fight in an underground ring to buy my freedom. And just when I thought I saw the last of him, he shows his face here." She spits on the ground in disgust. "I understand why the chief has let him stay, but if it was up to me, I'd chase him out of the village."*

Grindal's Perspective

If the characters ask Grindal about the feud, read or paraphrase the following:

> *Grindal's mouth curves down into a frown. "Ah yes, that," he says tersely. "I grace this village with my presence only to be met with such hostility. And from a former thrall, no less. Utterly disrespectful."*

Hrafen's Perspective

Alternatively, the characters can talk to Chief Hrafen av Skeir about the feud. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *The chief lets out a frustrated sigh. "In a way, it's my fault," he admits. "Grindal is both a very powerful trade mogul and a corrupt individual with many thralls in his service. I allowed Grindal to stay here because he accepted my stipulation that he cannot bring his thralls to Ragvall. It wasn't until the start of spring that I learned one of his former thralls was Benna herself."*
>
> *He rubs his temples. "Unfortunately, that man is integral to securing trade routes. I'm afraid that chasing him out of the village would do more harm than good for us. But at the same time, I feel great sympathy for Benna. She has to live in the same village as a man who inflicted so much pain upon her."*

"Swap your tunics between you to dress as your neighbor. Live in the world as they do to know how your feud pains you both. Only the prideful stand before me, refusing to dress in plainer clothes."

- Ása Lögmaður, lawspeaker

Taking a Stance

Once the characters are aware of why there is a feud, they must decide on how it should be resolved. While there are three main ways to end the feud, if the characters think of another solution, the GM may have to improvise another conclusion for this quest.

Recompense. The characters decide Grindal must apologize for his past treatment of Benna and offer her reperations to ensure harmony. This requires convincing Grindal.

Forgiveness. The characters decide Benna must forgive Grindal for his transgressions and offer him another chance. This requires convincing Benna.

Compromise. The characters decide Benna and Grindal should hear each other's perspectives and come to an agreement that, somehow, satisfies them both. This requires convincing both Benna and Grindal.

Convincing Benna

A character must make a successful DC 22 Charisma (Persuasion) check to convince Benna. If the check fails, it can be repeated once a week. Depending on quests and other factors, the DC for this check can be altered.

Kind Offerings. If the characters give Benna a gift or spend one week of downtime assisting her, the DC for this check is reduced by 2.

Natural Twenties. If a character rolls a natural 20 but still fails the check, the DC is reduced by 5 for future attempts.

Friend of Stonebreaker. If the characters achieved the outcome "Friend of Stonebreaker" at the end of **Quest: Thieving Churls**, the DC for this check is reduced by 10.

Burning Brighter. If the characters achieved the outcome "Burning Brighter" at the end of **Event: Settling the Law**, the DC for this check is increased by 5.

Convincing Grindal

A character must make a successful DC 22 Charisma (Persuasion) check to convince Grindal. If the check fails, it can be repeated once a week. Depending on quests and other factors, the DC for this check can be altered.

Kind Offerings. If the characters give Grindal a gift or spend one week of downtime assisting him, the DC for this check is reduced by 2.

Natural Twenties. If a character rolls a natural 20 but still fails the check, the DC is reduced by 5 for future attempts.

Gunnvarr's Respect. If the characters achieved the outcome "Gunnvarr's Respect" at the end of **Event: Besting the Braggart**, the DC for this check is reduced by 5.

A Wolf Among. If the characters achieved the "A Wolf Among" outcome at the end of **Quest: A Beast of Bronze and White Fur**, the DC for this check is reduced by 5.

Burning Brighter. If characters achieved the "Burning Brighter" outcome at the end of **Event: Settling the Law**, the DC for this check is increased by 5.

Scot-Free. If characters achieved the "Scot-Free" outcome at the end of **Event: Settling the Law**, the DC for this check is increased by 5.

Calendar of the Seasons

Depending on how the characters resolved this quest, mark one of the following outcomes on the Calendar of Seasons (see appendix C). It's possible to have elements of both outcomes, which means the GM must improvise a combined outcome.

Not Forgiven nor Forgotten. If the characters convince Benna to forgive Grindal, the Bennuson family and its supporters stop antagonizing him and his family. Benna never again gives the characters a genuine smile, and she begins to pack her belongings to leave Ragvall during the summer. This leads to **Quest: Afterburn** in autumn (chapter 3).

Not Fine nor Fined. If the characters convince Grindal to give Benna reparation, he approaches her in public and throws 10 sp at her feet before walking away in disgust. The Grindalsson family and its supporters keep antagonizing the Bennuson faction, and word that Grindal plans to leave Ragvall during the summer spreads. This leads to **Quest: Afterburn** in autumn (chapter 3).

Feud Quelled. The characters have successfully resolved the feud (see **Heroic Feat: Feud-Ender**, later in this chapter). Benna Stonebreaker and Grindal av Halsfjord grudgingly tolerate each other for the good of Ragvall Village. Neither of them feels the desire to escalate the situation during summer.

Quest: Eggs Over Easy

Prerequisite: Completed **Quest: The Immortal Hermit**

Questgiver: Ófeigur Lightraiser
Location: Ófeigur's Beacon (area R12)
Downtime: 1 week
Content Warning: Body horror, mental degradation

The basement of Ófeigur's Beacon (area B4 in chapter 5) has a stone seal placed upon it that only opens at the touch of a keppmir. If Ófeigur Lightraiser is alive, he opens the seal and enters.

If the characters completed **Event: Seal upon the Depths**, they arrive at the beacon with Ófeigur. Otherwise, this Quest can only be begun if the characters explore the lighthouse basement after completing **Quest: The Immortal Hermit**. In that case, they find the seal opened, and Ófeigur is in the basement, enthralled by the keppmir eggs and his physical form appearing less human.

Towering Idol of Keppr

This boxed text assumes Ófeigur is arriving with the characters. If he isn't, paraphrase to suit the current situation:

> *Beneath the seal is a grotto filled with tide pools. In its center is a ten-foot-tall statue of a muscular, eel-headed spearman. "I've seen this before," Ófeigur says haltingly. "In dreams. A statue to a daemon. And on the ground, a wonderous sight... eggs!"*
>
> *Ófeigur lurches toward the statue, shedding his cloak as he goes, and bending unnaturally into one of the tide pools surrounding the statue. "Eggs… my kin," he murmurs, entranced by the contents of the pool.*

Ófeigur feels a powerful paternal compulsion to protect the eggs of his keppmir kin. Any attempt to touch the eggs causes him to lash out with a Gore attack (see **amphibious keppmir** statistics in appendix A). A character who makes a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check to read his disposition recognizes that he grows increasingly agitated the longer the characters remain near the eggs. Succeeding on the check by 5 or more reveals that his mental state seems to be rapidly degrading while he's near the keppmir eggs.

Calming Ófeigur. If he's friendly toward the characters, a character who says something to remind him of their friendship can make a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check. On a success, he stammers an apology and invites them to look at the eggs. Even while calmed, however, he refuses to willingly leave the shrine. The only way to remove him is to kill him or render him unconscious.

The Decision

The characters must make a decision. Leaving Ófeigur here results in his complete mental collapse, but it also leaves the problem of the keppmir eggs hatching in the future. However, while in this chamber, Ófeigur is so enthralled by the power of Keppr and the eggs that he will fight to the death to protect his kin.

Leaving Ófeigur. If the characters leave Ófeigur here, he never emerges again. He tends to the keppmir eggs until they hatch (see "Calendar of the Seasons," below). His loyalty to Ragvall dissolves until nothing but a fanatical devotion to protecting his keppmir kin remains.

Destroying the Eggs. There is a total of twenty keppmir eggs in the four tide pools, five in each pool. The tide pools are 3 feet deep and completely submerged in water. Each egg has AC 15, 5 hit points, and vulnerability to bludgeoning damage.

Angering Ófeigur. If the characters attack the eggs to protect Ragvall, Ófeigur is enraged and attacks to kill. Additionally, the monument to Keppr awakens to defend its eggs. It is a **shield guardian** with the following changes that reduce its challenge rating to 5 (1,800 XP):

- Its speed is reduced to 20 feet.
- It doesn't have the Bound trait; instead, if the shield guardian is within 60 feet of a keppmir or a keppmir egg, half of any damage the keppmir takes (rounded up) is transferred to the guardian.
- It doesn't have the Regeneration trait.
- Its Spell Storing trait contains the spell *suffocate* (see appendix B), which fills the victim's lungs with water.

If the characters flee this room, the animated statue emerges only to replace the seal before returning to the shrine. Neither it nor Ófeigur pursues the characters.

Saving Ófeigur

If Ófeigur is knocked unconscious or otherwise forcibly removed from the Shrine of Keppr and the eggs, his mental degradation stops. He remains a perfectly lucid person, even if his body is that of a frightful keppmir. If brought before Chief Hrafen av Skeir, he convinces the chief to return him to his post at the lighthouse. While he must resist the supernatural urge to descend into the shrine, he performs his duties admirably.

Calendar of the Seasons

Depending on the characters' choices, mark one or both of the following outcomes on the Calendar of Seasons (see appendix C). It's possible to have elements of both outcomes, which means the GM must improvise a combined outcome.

Death of a Lightkeeper. This outcome means that Ófeigur Lightraiser was killed, and Ófeigur's Beacon is manned by an inexperienced villager, causing **Quest: Shipwreck** in autumn (chapter 3).

Left to Hatch. This outcome means that even a single keppmir egg was left to hatch, either by the characters' choice or because they were forced to flee from combat. This affects the sixth week of winter and **Event: The Darkwater Alliance** (in chapter 4).

"Leave! Leave me be with my kin!"

- Ófeigur Lightraiser

Quest: Epic Poetry

Prerequisite: *None*

Questgiver: Bragi Bennuson
Location: Bennuson Farmstead (area R8) or Hrafensheim (area R1)
Downtime: 1 week
Content Warning: Corpse mutilation

This Quest begins when the characters encounter Bragi Bennuson at either his farmstead or in Hrafensheim. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *"Hello?" Bragi says confidently. "I was wondering if you'd be interested in making history."*

A character that makes a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check can tell that the notoriously self-conscious bard is feigning confidence. Bragi elaborates if the characters ask for more information:

> *His face lights up at your interest. "Well, you see, I want to write a new poem or song. And I, uh, want it to be about you," Bragi blushes at his own words. "Not in, like, a romantic way! I want it to be about your deeds. Like, if you killed a prismatic drake—there are legends, you see—and mounted its head on one of our ships. Yeah, that would be worthy of being commemorated in song!"*

If asked if he knows where a prismatic drake can be found, Bragi mentions that many bards have written poetry about the beautiful rainbow lights that surround Hvitrfjall Peak (see chapter 5). Though he is unsure if prismatic drakes can be found there, he suggests checking it out.

A Prismatic Problem

Unfortunately for the characters, the prismatic drake that once resided on Hvitrfjall Peak left two winters ago. Instead, Nataya, a panjaian ilharan with the ability to transform into a sky drake, has taken over the mountain.

If the characters kill Nataya in her sky drake form, they can decapitate her and disguise her head as a prismatic drake head. A character wishing to disguise her head can do so with a disguise kit, prismatic scales from Herald's Rest (area P2 in chapter 5), and a successful DC 15 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check. A character presenting the disguised drake head to Bragi must make a successful DC 13 Charisma (Deception) check to convince him.

Calendar of the Seasons

Depending on how the characters resolved this quest, mark one of the following outcomes on the Calendar of Seasons (see appendix C). The characters may solve the situation with a different approach, which means the GM must improvise a new or combined outcome.

Honest Poetry. The characters are truthful about their encounter with Nataya. While Bragi is disappointed that there isn't prismatic drake, he is excited to write poetry about a mythic Handmaiden of Ilhara with the power to transform into a drake. If the characters killed the servant, Bragi is uncomfortable with putting Nataya's head on a ship.

Fabricated Poetry. The characters deceive Bragi into believing they killed a prismatic drake, and he begins immortalizing their fight in a song (see **Heroic Feat: Monster Slayer**, later in this chapter). Mardoll mounts the drake head on one of the ships.

Quest: Gills for the Gill-less

Prerequisite: *Befriended Mardoll Brightsea*

Questgiver: Ása Lögmaður
Location: Shrine Isle (area R4)
Downtime: 1 week

This quest begins when the characters visit Shrine Isle after befriending Mardoll. Mardoll told Ása about a time the characters showed her tremendous kindness and courage. Having heard the woman she loves speak so highly of them, Ása Lögmaður decides to ask them for help. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *"You're Mardoll's friends, right?" Ása asks tentatively. "This is sudden, but I was wondering if you could help me with something."*

If the characters ask for more details, Ása elaborates:

> *"Oh!" Ása lets out a gurgling croak of surprise, caught off guard by the interest. "Well, you see. I don't remember anything before I washed up on this shore. I don't belong here. I need answers, answers- I can't find alone." She stares at you with her fishy eyes. "Mardoll tells me I can trust you, so, I will trust. The problem is that I can breathe water, and you cannot." She looks askance and rubs her smooth arms together in thought. "I do not have much to give as reward, so this would be purely an act of kindness. And I still have much planning to do, but… in the meantime, perhaps we could find a way to let you breathe water?"*

Ása admits she has no strong leads, but suggests they visit Chief Hrafen av Skeir in Hrafensheim (area R1) because he knows of many legendary warriors. It is possible one of these legends learned of ways to breathe underwater.

By following this lead, the characters may learn that there are many ways to gain the ability to breathe water, including:

- Making *potions of glacial resistance* (see appendix B) or *potions of water breathing*.
- Waiting until a spellcaster is strong enough to learn and cast *water breathing*.
- Making *scraglung helmets* (see appendix B) out of seaborn trolls found in Oceantide Cave (see chapter 5).

Hrafen's Tale

Chief Hrafen av Skeir is busy but happy to point the characters in the right direction:

- Fearless warriors have made *potions of glacial resistance* (see appendix B), highly sought-after potions made from ground keppmir horns and dried seaweed.
- He recalls the legend of Frihilda the Fearless who swam after a ship full of her captured clansfolk. She wore a magical helmet fashioned from a seaborn troll.

If the characters ask Chief Hrafen av Skeir if he knows where they might find seaborn trolls, he mentions that Hlökk Warcrier told him once that she'd seen some to the south of the village.

Hlökk's Sighting

If asked, Hlökk confirms that she spotted seaborn trolls while traveling across the shores below Ragvall. She recalls that they were quite large and formidable predators, effortlessly killing the sea creatures they hunted. Hlökk cautions the characters against directly engaging in combat with seaborn trolls, and she suggests they take a stealthier approach if they choose to pursue this lead.

Ása's Aid

If the characters relay to Ása information gleaned from Chief Hrafen av Skeir or Hlökk Warcrier, she suddenly recalls a place in the Teeth where other laneshi harvested materials that would allow their prisoners to breathe water. She is unsure of when she acquired this knowledge. She tells the characters where Oceantide Cave is (see chapter 5), and of two ways they can create water-breathing tools from the creatures within it.

Scraglung Helmets. If the characters bring her the corpse of one or more seaborn trolls, Ása crafts four *scraglung helmets* (see appendix B) from each corpse. Each helmet takes two weeks to make, and if spring ends before they're all done, the laneshi presents the rest to the characters once they return in autumn (chapter 3). Ása warns them that these trolls are powerful enough to kill Valikan warriors in a single crushing blow, and some even have magical powers. She recommends avoiding fighting them directly.

Potions of Water Breathing. Ása mentions that she also remembers brewing *potions of water breathing* using seaweed known as trollkelp, which she offers to do if she is brought some. Characters who make a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) check recall firelight stories about aquatic trolls feasting on seagrass of this name.

For every ten strands of trollkelp the characters gather from Oceantide Cave, Ása can make one *potion of water breathing*.

Conclusion

After finding their means of water breathing, Ása expresses her relief. She tells them to hold onto their solution until autumn; she plans on going on an underwater search for a hint of her lost memories once the sea ice has fully melted.

Quest: The Immortal Hermit

Prerequisite: *None*

Questgiver: Hrafen av Skeir
Location: Ófeigur's Beacon (area R12; see chapter 5 for the interior of Ófeigur's Beacon)
Downtime: 1 week

This quest begins when Chief Hrafen av Skeir tells them of Ófeigur's disappearance (see "Meeting the Chief," earlier in this chapter), and he asks them to enter the lighthouse and find out what happened to him.

Read or paraphrase the following when the characters reach the door of Ófeigur's Beacon (area R12):

> *Before you stands a lighthouse of stone bricks with a closed roof. It stands about twenty feet tall. Every night, a bonfire atop the beacon burns, even though the lighthouse keeper hasn't been seen in months.*

The lighthouse door is locked from the inside. A character can pick the lock silently by making a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. Alternatively, a successful DC 15 Strength check smashes the door clean off its hinges, but this alerts Ófeigur to the characters' presence.

Ófeigur is currently in the Nameless Shrine, beneath the lighthouse. The interior of Ófeigur's Beacon and the dungeon beneath it are described in chapter 5.

Meeting Ófeigur

Ófeigur is in the secret basement of the lighthouse (area B4 in chapter 5). Ófeigur Lightraiser was once the human lighthouse keeper, but he is now an **amphibious keppmir** (see appendix A). Reference the "Roleplaying Ófeigur" section earlier in this chapter to determine how he acts around the characters.

Ófeigur Attacks. If Ófeigur is unaware of intruders, he is running his webbed, scaled fingers over the runes of the Daemonic Seal (area B5 in chapter 5), trying to discern their true meaning. If he notices the characters, he immediately attacks. If he knows they are coming, he hides in one of the tide pools, waiting to ambush them.

When he attacks, he shouts in gurgly Valikan: "Look away! I'm vile! And the shrine is mine!" He fights until reduced to 0 hit points or until calmed (see below). He wears nothing, but if his body is searched, the characters find an easily identifiable whalebone amulet shaped like a burning beacon. The amulet was a gift from Mardoll Brightsea as thanks for his lighthouse.

Calming Ófeigur. The panicked lighthouse keeper can be calmed by addressing him by name, by making a successful DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check, or by using a spell such as *calm emotions*. Once calmed, he shakily explains what happened to him (see "Ófeigur Lightraiser," earlier in this chapter).

Ófeigur's Request. If the characters speak with Ófeigur, he twitchily asks them to bring him food so that he can continue studying the rune-etched stone seal undisturbed. A successful DC 8 Wisdom (Insight) check

reveals that he's unhealthily obsessed with it, and a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that it's likely the cause of his physical transformation. If they accede to his request, his disposition turns friendly.

A successful DC 21 Charisma (Persuasion) check convinces Ófeigur to leave his beacon in a concealing cloak and meet with the chief. The DC of this check is reduced by 5 if Ófeigur is friendly. Nevertheless, he sneaks back to the beacon the very next night after sleeping in the longhouse. He explains the situation awkwardly, but otherwise says little. His mind is clearly fixated on the Daemonic Seal in the basement (area B4).

Reporting to Chief Hrafen av Skeir

Chief Hrafen av Skeir takes the news of Ófeigur's transformation with grim impassiveness. If Ófeigur is alive, he sends the lighthouse keeper back to the beacon with a single warrior to watch him. If Ófeigur is dead, he growls that Ófeigur was the only one who knew how to maintain a lighthouse. Until they can find another keeper, they'll just have to pray boats find their way home safely.

Calendar of the Seasons

If the characters befriended Ófeigur Lightraiser, mark the following development on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Befriended Ófeigur. Ófeigur is friendly toward the characters. The GM can choose for **Event: Seal upon the Depths** to occur at any time after one week has passed. It can also occur if Ófeigur seeks the characters for aid or when the characters approach Ófeigur themselves.

Quest: Night's Fanged Hunter

Prerequisite: *None*

Questgiver: Mildrith Quickshot
Location: Hunters' Cabins (area R14) or the Elgrleiths (area R16; the pathways of the Elgrleiths are described in chapter 5)
Downtime: 1 week
Content Warning: Dead animals

This quest begins when Chief Hrafen av Skeir tells them about mutilated elk corpses in the forest (see "Three Quest Hooks," earlier in this chapter) and directs them to Mildrith Quickshot at the Hunters' Cabins.

Mildrith is stringing a bow outside her cabin when the characters arrive. Read or paraphrase the following when the characters approach:

> *Before you can even announce your presence, Mildrith swiftly turns her gaze to you. "About time the chief sent some folks," she says instead of a greeting. She leaps up from the tree stump she was sitting on and heads to the nearest cabin. "Come into my place, so we can discuss matters there."*

Mildrith refuses to talk about her quest outside of her cabin because she fears someoneoverhearing them.

If characters follow Mildrith into her cabin as instructed, she explains the situation:

> *"I'm sure Chief Hrafen av Skeir has filled you in on the basics, so I'll get to the point. There's a monster in the woods. You're gonna help me find and kill it so that it stops tearing apart the elk and scaring my hunters. I trust that you are up to the task?"*

Mildrith is also able to supply the following information:

- The mutilated elk were discovered in the Sheltering Wood during her last hunt.
- They were in the Elgrleiths, near where a group of hunters vanished during the winter.
- Afraid of the implications of the wounds, especially in relation to the location, Mildrith contacted the chief immediately after they returned.
- The hunters have not gone back into the woods. Many of them are terrified of encountering the beast.
- Mildrith speculates that the beast is usually active in the winter, possibly because itwoke up later than it should have.

Provided that the characters agree to her Quest, Mildrith explains her plan:

> *"Splendid," Mildrith's posture relaxes slightly. "Well, when we saw the elk last time, we didn't stick around for long. I think our best lead is to go back to where they were first spotted. See if there's anything left to go off on."*

Mildrith and two of her hunters (use **scout** statistics) are prepared to venture into the woods whenthe characters are ready.

The Elgrleiths are areas W1, W2, and W3 in chapter 5.

Grave of the Elks

Once the characters reach the location of the mutilated elk in the Elgrleiths (area W1 in chapter 5), they are able to inspect the bodies for clues.

The corpses decompose during the first two weeks of spring. If investigated after that point, they have been reduced to skeletons, picked clean of meat.

Searching For Clues. Characters can spend 10 minutes searching the area to learn:

- Some of the leg bones appear to have been snapped by vicious bites.
- A tree behind one of the elk has deep claw marks.
- The direction the elk fell indicates that the creature must have entered the area roughly where the characters did and left towards area W6.

Additional Clues. There's more information to be found in the first two weeks of spring, before the elk corpses rot. The characters can also make a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation or Nature) check. On a success, they also learn:

- The wounds appear to be from fangs and claws.
- Tufts of white fur cling to some of the corpses.
- Tracks from a quadrupedal creature with clawed paws leads away from the area and toward area W6.

Stake Out

If the characters don't follow the tracks to area W6, Mildrith and her hunters begin walking into the forest.

Following Mildrith leads the characters through the Elgrleiths to area W3, where two **elk** graze. Characters can conceal themselves with a successful a DC 12 Dexterity (Stealth) check. On a failure, the elk notice them, but don't startle unless another creature gets within 10 feet of them.

If the characters spend an hour waiting, read or paraphrase the following:

> *Finally, three shadowy beasts emerge from the forest. Massive wolves, all eyeing the elk with hunger, prowl forward.*

Cry Wolf

Depending on the characters' actions, a wolf attack occurs in either area W3 (following the "Stake Out" option), or by antagonizing the wolves in area W6. During this quest, they encounter the four **dire wolves** and their matriarch (a **dire wolf** with 40 hit points, a scarred eye, and arrows riddling her flank).

Upon meeting the wolves, read or paraphrase the following:

> *"There's five of them," Mildrith says in a hushed voice, readying her bow. "One's big. The matriarch of the pack, I think. Time to take them down once and for all."*

Characters who make a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) notice slight hesitation in Mildrith's voice; she isn't confident that the dire wolves are the killers they're after.

Staking Out (Area W3). The dire wolves emerge from the direction of area W6 and attack the elk. If characters succeeded on the earlier Dexterity (Stealth) check, the wolves do not notice them. Otherwise, the wolves spot them and attack.

Wolves' Cave (Area W6). As soon as the dire wolves spot the characters, they attack them.

Attacking the Wolves. The dire wolves spread out and individually attack the characters and the NPCs. The matriarch targets the NPC hunters first, allowing the wolves to use their Pack Tactics trait to quickly defeat them.

If an NPC hunter (including Mildrith) is reduced to 0 hit points, that hunter falls unconscious and starts making death saves. The wolves stop attacking unconscious creatures and shift focus to a more threatening target.

The wolves fight until reduced to 0 hit points.

The Beast Slain

Relieved that the Sheltering Wood is safe once more, the hunters are all notably happier. Mildrith thanks the characters for their assistance, complimenting their skills in battle. She seems troubled, however. A successful DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that she is examining the wolves' jaws and claws with concern.

Treasure. If the characters search the wolf den (area W6), they find the treasure listed there in the dungeon's description (see chapter 5).

Confronting Mildrith

Characters who suspect that the dire wolves aren't the culprits behind the mauled corpses can talk to Mildrith in her cabin about it.

Mortified that the characters realized this too, Mildrith admits that she holds the same suspicions. Unfortunately, they have no other leads and the wolves' deaths have boosted morale considerably. She asks the characters to keep this a secret for now.

Calendar of the Seasons

Upon completing this quest, Ragvall's hunters are emboldened to continue hunting the elk of the Sheltering Wood. Additionally, if the characters confronted Mildrith, mark the following outcome on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Beast's Keeper. If the characters realize that the dire wolves might not have been the real culprits and share their concern with Mildrith Quickshot, she seeks them out when a hunter is later violently killed by a beast, inciting **Quest: Beast of Bronze and White Fur.**

Quest: Thieving Churls

Prerequisite: *None*

Questgiver: Benna Stonebreaker
Location: Bennuson Farmstead (area R8; see chapter 5 for the interior of Bennuson Farmstead)
Downtime: 1 week
Content Warning: Theft, murder

This Quest begins when Chief Hrafen av Skeir tells the characters about tracking down thieves (see "Three Quest Hooks," earlier in this chapter) and points them toward Benna Stonebreaker, who awaits them at Bennuson Farmstead.

Upon their arrival, Benna gives them a big welcome. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *"Chief Hrafen av Skeir's finest warriors! Welcome to our fine estate." Benna proclaims in a booming voice. "Thank you for answering my call. As I'm sure the chief has told you already, this farmstead has been beset by thieves and I need help getting back what they stole."*

Benna is happy to elaborate on what was taken.

- Various pots, pans, and knives from the kitchen.
- Most importantly, Benna's wedding ring—a band she still wears in honor of her first husband, even though he's been dead for two decades. She woke up to find it missing from her hand.

If asked when the theft occurred, she confirms that it happened during the night.

If asked if she suspects anyone, Benna admits that she does not. She is beloved in the village, and she doubts even her rival, Grindal av Halsfjord, would stoop so low.

The interior of Bennuson Farmstead and the cellar beneath it are described in chapter 5. Benna points the characters toward the kitchen (area F1) and her living quarters (area F2).

Putting the Pieces Together

If the characters did not discover that they are dealing with kobolds during their search, a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation or Nature) check deduces this. Every clue they uncovered in the Bennuson Farmstead adds a +1 bonus to this check.

New Perspectives. If the characters have figured out kobolds are responsible, they can search the kitchen and bedroom again for clues they missed. These checks are made with advantage.

Finding the Kobolds. Characters can track down the kobolds with a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Survival) check. This check is made with advantage if the characters have seen kobold tracks before.

Barns and Kobolds

Characters tracking the kobolds are led into one of the barns on the farmstead (area F3). This tunnel leads to a cavern filled with kobolds.

Six **kobolds**, led by an opportunistic and resourceful, white-scaled kobold called Serrev the Skulk (uses modified **spy** statistics, see area F5 in chapter 5), are at the end of the tunnel underneath the barn. Using the supplies they stole, the kobolds are tending to a sick kobold called Neev.

If they notice the characters, the kobolds prepare to fight, and a voice that echoes through the cavern demands to know why they are in their home. The voice comes from the kobolds' leader, Serrev the Skulk, who hides behind a dirt wall. Serrev would prefer to buy his freedom than fight, but will proudly go down swinging if he feels cornered.

New Perspectives. The kobolds will only give back what they've taken if the characters trade items with them worth a total of 20 gp—or make a successful DC 15 Charisma (Intimidation) check.

If the characters demand the kobolds give leave the farm, the kobolds beg to be allowed to stay in this "nice cozy cave." Only a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation) check convinces them to leave. If either of these checks are failed, then the characters must acquiesce, or remove the kobolds by force.

Inevitable Violence. If the characters attack or make the kobolds think they will, the kobolds use tactics described in area F5 in chapter 5.

Plaguebearers

If the kobolds are left alive and Benna is informed of this, she insists that the characters remove them from her farm. She is worried that they are dealing with morbus kobolds, which spread plague in the name of the Filth Grazer. (See "Morbus Kobolds" in *Grim Hollow: The Monster Grimoire*.)

Calendar of the Seasons

Upon dealing with the kobolds and returning the stolen items to her, Benna invites the characters to share a meal with her family. She tells the characters that they are free to keep items they found that don't belong to her family. Mark one or both of the following outcomes on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Friend of Stonebreaker. Benna Stonebreaker considers the characters her good and loyal friends. She's willing to hear them out on any issues, even ones that go against her nature (see **Quest: Burning Feud**).

Kobolds Spared. The characters choose to remove the kobolds from the farm without killing them. **Quest: The Herald's Harbingers** only occurs in autumn (chapter 3) if this outcome is achieved.

"Great Ragvall, kobolds were in my house? Disgusting!"

- Benna Stonebreaker

Quest: Tools of the Trade

Prerequisite: *None*

Questgiver: Rikarð Jarnskegg
Location: Jarnskegg's Smithy (area R2)
Downtime: 1 week

This Quest begins when the characters visit Rikarð Jarnskegg at his smithy. At the end of a transaction, regardless of whether the characters purchased anything, he asks them about finding improved smith's tools. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *The blacksmith speaks up as you open the door to leave his smithy: "By the way, you wouldn't happen to know where I could find a good set of blacksmith's tools?"*

If the characters inquire further, he explains:

> *The smith flushes in embarrassment behind his black beard and says, "Well, y'see, it's like this. I sold all my specialized tools to get the silver I needed for supplies to follow Chief Hrafen av Skeir on his mad quest to make this new clan. And now…well, the tools I have now are only good for making basic weapons. But you're great warriors, and I'd like to make weapons worthy of great deeds. For that, though, I need better tools.*
>
> *"I figure you can buy them in a market out at a bigger settlement, or maybe find them while exploring. Some other folks in town might even know something about it."*

As Jarnskegg suggests, there are several ways to find the superior smith's tools that he seeks:

- Buy them at market in the towns of Skarfanes or Halsfjord (these locations are described in *Raider's Guide to Valika*, but they aren't present in this adventure).
- Find them at the end of **Quest: Thieving Churls** for Benna Stonebreaker.
- Find the ancient tools in Steðihaugr, the tomb of the famed smith Yngvarr Steðisson (described in chapter 5).

Seeking Rumors

The characters can ask locals aboud locating superior smith's tools. While these leads are linked to specific NPCs, the GM can have any lead come from any villager, which can help if the characters are growing frustrated from not finding any leads.

Chief Hrafen av Skeir. The chief is trying to secure trade deals with Halsfjord, and he suggests that the characters travel there and buy them at the market, though he cautions that they won't be cheap.

Grindal av Halsfjord. The trade mogul is also quick to recommend the great markets of his home city of Halsfjord.

Mildrith Quickshot. While Mildrith notes that she doesn't know about smith's tools, she mentions that valuables have gone missing from the village, and gossip is that there are thieves burglarizing nearby settlements. She recommends talking to Benna Stonebreaker, whose home was burgled recently.

Bragi Bennuson. The bard's eyes light up at the mention of high-quality smith's tools, and he suggests the characters seek out Steðihaugr, the tomb of a legendary blacksmith.

Hlökk Warcrier. The elf warrior also knows legend of Steðihaugr, the resting place of Yngvarr Steðisson.

Calendar of the Seasons

Upon completing this quest, Rikarð Jarnskegg lets out a howl of appreciation and claps one of the characters on the shoulder. Mark one or both developments on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Jarnskegg's Friendship. Rikarð Jarnskegg is now friendly toward the characters; he sells nonmagical weapons and armor at half price to the characters.

Superior Blacksmithing. If Rikarð was given the hammer Wyrmbreath from Steðihaugr, he can use this tool to produce *+1 armor*, *+1 shields*, and *+1 weapons* of any type. These magical objects must be custom made, which adds two weeks to their creation time and 1,000 gp to their cost because the smith must import special materials from Halsfjord.

Quest: Traveler of the Álfavegr

Prerequisite: *Completed a Heroic Feat* **or** *befriended Alvíss av Dvergholt*

Questgiver: Alvíss av Dvergholt
Location: Characters' homes
Downtime: 1 week

Once either of the prerequisites for this Quest is met, Alvíss knocks upon the front door of one of the characters' homes. He has a sheepish look on his face and wrings his cap in his hands.

This Quest and the other Quests involving Alvíss are described in chapter 3. However, if the characters are able to complete a Heroic Feat or befriend Alvíss before spring ends, they can begin this storyline early.

Core Quests

At least one of these Core Quests must be completed before Chief Hrafen av Skeir suggests Heroic Feats that they can undertake to inspire their clan's warriors before the raiding season (see "You've Proven your Worth," earlier in this chapter).

Core Quest: Dragon Ships

Prerequisite: *Completed three Quests*

Questgiver: Chief Hrafen av Skeir or Mardoll Brightsea
Location: Hrafensheim (area R1) or Snekkjafit (area R14)
Downtime: None

When the characters speak with Mardoll Brightsea at the Snekkjafit (area R14), read or paraphrase the following:

> *"Storms bless ya, I can't say how happy I am to have your help pulling this together. We have the hands to make all the ships we need, but not nearly enough timber—especially if we want to fill our boats heavy with the loot. No trade caravans come through here yet, so we gotta take down trees ourselves. And I'll bet there's plenty of timber to scavenge from the wilderness."*

Mardoll Brightsea needs an additional 2,000 pounds of timber and 200 pounds of raw iron to craft boats for the raiders. These resources can be found:

- In dungeons described in chapter 5
- By undertaking the "Gather Timber" downtime activity (see "New Downtime Activities," earlier in this chapter)

Conclusion

Once the characters deliver all the needed supplies, the shipwright thanks them profusely. In a charming, delicate voice, she says, "Each of these ships will get a dragon's head on the prow. Then those bastards we're raiding'll know we mean business!"

Reward. Mardoll gives each character 50 sp as thanks.

Calendar of the Seasons

Once this Core Quest is completed, check the box next to "Dragon Ships" on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C).

Core Quest: Greenhorn Warrior Training

Prerequisite: *Completed three Quests*

Questgiver: Chief Hrafen av Skeir or Hlökk Warcrier
Location: Hrafensheim (area R1) or Proving Field (area R13)
Downtime: None

When the characters speak with Hlökk Warcrier at the Proving Field (area R13), read or paraphrase the following:

> *"I'm glad you've decided to help me. We need better-trained warriors than this lot by summer. I'm more than equipped to show these greenhorns the ropes, but there's more than one way to be a warrior and it's hard to demonstrate that if there's only one instructor. I'll also need help supervising them when their combat skills are put to the test against actual targets."*

Hlökk Warcrier asks the characters to lead two training sessions, each of which requires one week of downtime, as well as a final trial for the greenhorn warriors, which also requires one week of downtime.

Hlökk lets the characters choose two of the following training session options:

- Melee Training
- Ranged Training
- Stealth Training

Ranulf the Eager

Ranulf Skullcrusher is one of the many greenhorn warriors the characters will train.

If they have not yet met him, Ranulf introduces himself to the characters once the training starts. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *"You're my instructors, right?" a bright-eyed gnome rushes up to you. "I'm Ranulf the Skullcrusher! I wanna be a Hersir one day and lead this village to victory. You'll help me, right?"*

If the characters are acquainted with Ranulf, he voices his excitement once he realizes who is teaching him. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *"Woah, you're my instructors?" Ranulf says with wide eyes. "I'm going to be a Hersir in no time if you're teaching me!"*

Lesson Plans

Completing this Quest requires the characters to train Ranulf and a group of Ragvallan warriors for one week per training session. (A total of two weeks, which can be done consecutively or split up.)

Because the lessons teach the greenhorns how to attack and defend, both success and failure are rewarded. Ranulf, representing the greenhorn warriors collectively, gains a bonus to be used in "Putting Your Teaching to the Test" later in this Quest.

Melee Training

To complete this session, the characters must demonstrate how to attack with and defend against melee weapons and melee spell attacks. One character is the attacker, and another is the defender. The attacker makes an attack roll against another character's AC. The attacking character makes three attack rolls, which grant Ranulf bonuses used later in Hlökk's test.

On a Hit. Ranulf adds +1 to his attack rolls when using a spear as a melee weapon for the rest of this Quest.

On a Miss. Ranulf gains a +1 bonus to his AC for the rest of this Quest.

Ranged Training

To complete this session, the characters must demonstrate how to attack with and defend against ranged weapons or ranged spell attacks. Just like the melee test, there is an attacker and a defender. The attacking characters makes three attack rolls, which grant Ranulf bonuses that will be used later in Hlökk's test.

On a Hit. Ranulf gains a +1 bonus to his attack roll when using his spear as a ranged weapon for the rest of this Quest.

On a Miss. Ranulf gains a +1 bonus to his AC for the rest of this Quest.

Stealth Training

To complete this session, the characters must demonstrate how to be sneaky or how to detect hidden foes. One character sneaks and the other spots. Sneaking characters must make a Dexterity (Stealth) check contested by the spotter's Wisdom (Perception) check. This is done three times. Each check grants Ranulf a bonus used later in Hlökk's test.

Successful Stealth. Ranulf gains a +2 bonus to Dexterity (Stealth) checks and initiative rolls for the rest of this Quest.

Failed Stealth. Ranulf gains a +2 bonus to his damage rolls for the rest of this Quest.

Putting Your Teaching to the Test

Once the training sessions are done, Hlökk brings the greenhorn warriors to the outskirts of Ragvall where a pack of frostbite foxes roam.

While most of the warriors choose to tackle a single fox, a group of three **frostbite foxes** (see appendix A) catches the attention of Ranulf (use **tribal warrior** statistics) and he prepares to fight them. His approach depends on what lessons the characters taught him.

- If the characters taught "Melee Training" and "Ranged Training," Ranulf throws his spear before rushing in to retrieve it and attack in melee.
- If the characters taught "Melee Training" and "Stealth Training," Ranulf sneaks up to a fox before attacking in melee.
- If the characters taught "Ranged Training" and "Stealth Training," Ranulf hides and stays at a distance, making ranged attacks with the spear.

Ranulf refuses help defeating the foxes, but he eagerly accepts guidance. This Quest is a success even if Ranulf is defeated, for failure is just as good a teacher as victory.

Conclusion

Once the frostbite foxes have been slain or Ranulf is reduced to 0 hit points, Hlökk thanks the characters sincerely. She confidently states: "When summer comes, our enemies shall underestimate our warriors at their own peril—even if some of them still need shaping up."

Reward. Hlökk gives each character 50 sp as thanks.

Calendar of the Seasons

Once this Core Quest is completed, check the box next to "Greenhorn Warrior Training" on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C).

Core Quest: Raiders' Blades

Prerequisite: Completed three Quests

Questgiver: Chief Hrafen av Skeir or Rikarð Jarnskegg
Location: Hrafensheim (area R1) or Jarnskegg's Smithy (area R2)
Downtime: None

When the characters speak with Rikarð Jarnskegg at his smithy (area R2), read or paraphrase the following:

> *"It's kind of you to aid me in a task like this. I have enough supplies to easily outfit our warriors for raiding, but a warrior needs more than one good sword or axe. We'll need more to replace broken blades, and to give our warriors sidearms."*

Rikarð Jarnskegg needs an additional 500 pounds of raw iron—or 250 pre-fashioned weapons to properly outfit the raiders. These resources can be found:

- In dungeons described in chapter 5
- By undertaking the "Gather Iron" downtime activity, once the characters have unlocked it (see "New Downtime Activities," earlier in this chapter)

Conclusion

Once the characters deliver all the needed supplies, the blacksmith thanks them brusquely before pausing and gently saying: "Our warriors will go wherever you lead. These blades may save their lives come summer."

Reward. Jarnskegg gives each character 50 sp as thanks.

Calendar of the Seasons

Once this Core Quest is completed, check the box next to "Raider's Blades" on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C).

Heroic Feats

The final test of the characters in spring is accomplishing a feat that inspires bards to write epics. In addition to granting great rewards themselves, these feats also grant an enviable boost in power while raiding in the summer season (chapter 2 of this adventure).

Multiple Heroic Feats

Even if the characters complete multiple Heroic Feats, they gain no additional mechanical rewards for doing so. Though people still praise them for their heroism, their repeated great deeds don't seem to have the same impact as the first one did.

Heroic Feat: Feud-Ender

Prerequisite: *Completed one Core Quest*

Questgiver: Chief Hrafen av Skeir
Location: Hrafensheim (area R1)
Downtime: 1 week

To complete this Heroic Feat, the characters must resolve a great conflict that will bring safety to their village while they are away raiding. Such an act could be:

- Resolving the feud between the houses of Benna Stonebreaker and Grindal av Halsfjord (see **Quest: Burning Feud**)
- Brokering a truce with the elves within the Sheltering Wood (see **Event: The Elven-Thegn Appears**)

Calendar of the Seasons

If this Heroic Feat is the first one completed by the characters, mark the following development on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Silver-Tongued Reputation. The characters have earned Clan Ragvall a reputation for cunning and persuasion. The characters gain advantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks when speaking to other clans or settlements on behalf of Clan Ragvall, including during raids; however, they have disadvantage on Charisma (Deception) checks under the same circumstances.

Heroic Feat: Relic Keeper

Prerequisite: *Completed one Core Quest*

Questgiver: Chief Hrafen av Skeir
Location: Hrafensheim (area R1)
Downtime: 1 week

To complete this Heroic Feat, the characters must seek out and find a relic connected to Valika's history. First, they must learn of an ancient site's location. Second, they must spend time exploring beyond Ragvall Village to find its resting place. And third, they must pass the challenges guarding it. Such a relic could include:

- The hammer *Wyrmbreath* (see appendix B), found in Steðihaugr (see chapter 5)
- The *viscious war axe* belonging to the Evergreen Traitor found in the Slumbering Wood (see chapter 5)
- A *bowl of commanding water elementals* venerating the primordial Alondo (see appendix B) found in Oceantide Cave (see chapter 5)

Calendar of the Seasons

If this Heroic Feat is the first one completed by the characters, mark the following development on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Traditionalist Reputation. The characters have earned Clan Ragvall a trustworthy reputation for preserving the relics of Valika's storied past. The characters gain advantage on Charisma (Deception) checks when speaking to other clans or settlements on behalf of Clan Ragvall, including during raids; however, they have disadvantage on Charisma (Intimidation) checks under the same circumstances.

Heroic Feat: Monster Slayer

Prerequisite: *Completed one Core Quest*

Questgiver: Chief Hrafen av Skeir
Location: Hrafensheim (area R1)
Downtime: 1 week

To complete this Heroic Feat, the characters must kill a monster worthy of song and bring back a trophy. Such a monster could include:

- A werewolf (see **Quest: Beast of Bronze and White Fur**)
- A drake (see **Quest: Epic Poetry**)

Calendar of the Seasons

If this Heroic Feat is the first one completed by the characters, mark the following development on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Martial Reputation. The characters have earned Clan Ragvall a reputation of strength in arms. The characters gain advantage on Charisma (Intimidation) checks when speaking to other clans or settlements on behalf of Clan Ragvall, including during raids; however, they have disadvantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks under the same circumstances.

Reward and Developments

After completing their Heroic Feat, the characters become renowned throughout the village.

Relic Keepers' Conclusion

If the characters completed **Heroic Feat: Relic-Keeper**, read or paraphrase:

> *A crowd gathers around you, curiously murmuring and sneaking glances at the relic you've returned with. Chief Hrafen av Skeir nudges you and whispers, "Hold it in the air. Bask in its legend. Let them see!"*

Monster Slayers' Conclusion

If the characters completed **Heroic Feat: Monster Slayer**, read or paraphrase:

> *A crowd gathers around you, curiously murmuring and sneaking glances at the trophy 'you've returned with. Chief Hrafen av Skeir nudges you and whispers, "Hold the thing in the air. Let its ichor ooze onto you. Let them see!"*

Feud-Enders' Conclusion

If the characters completed **Heroic Feat: Feud-Ender**, read or paraphrase:

> *A crowd gathers around you, abuzz with gossip about the feud you brought to a close in this village. Chief Hrafen av Skeir nudges you and whispers, "Speak to them! Display the powers of your silvered tongue. Let them hear!"*

A Night of Revelry

Then, read the following regardless of which Heroic Feat the characters completed:

> *The chief's voice booms out, "Behold, Clan Ragvall! Your heroes! And, come the first dawn of summer, your hersirs!"*
>
> *A cheer erupts from the crowd, and one bardic voice carries above the rest: "Drinks! Drinks and song for the hersirs!" Before long, a night of mirth ensues around the fire in the village longhouse.*

Everyone in Ragvall wants to buy them a drink at the end of each day, even after the night of celebration is over. Everyone in Ragvall is inspired to work harder, and an additional 250 pounds of lumber and 250 pounds of iron are stockpiled by the end of spring. Also, twenty-five additional warriors are trained by the end of spring.

The characters also gain the following boon:

Renowned Commander. You are a hero in the eyes of your warriors. In a raid scenario, when you make a Raiding Roll, you can roll 1d4 and add it to the result.

Chapter 2: Summer

SEASON OF WARFARE

For characters of 5th to 7th level

And so spring turns to summer, and the last of the winter ice melts into a sea stained crimson. Honor, glory, and plunder are purchased with heroic blood. Those bodies that rot not on the fields of battle will burn during the glorious pyres of autumn. Yet, those with blades in their hands cannot think long of the future. The promise of eternal life in song drives them onto the battlefield where all that matters is the blade pointed at their hearts.

—Bragi Bennuson, bard of Ragvall

Summer is a season of raiding in Valika. The floating sea ice of winter has melted or cracked apart, leaving the seas open for Valikan longships to spread terror across the waves of Etharis.

Valika's western coast is controlled by the clans of Thrull, who are known for their bloodthirsty thrall-taking raids upon remote settlements of the Bürach Empire and the border region of Nordenland. The Thrull aren't the only raiders, however. The clans of Kandar, for all their talk of trade and peace, are known to send pillagers in all directions, attacking Nordenland to the south, the Raevo in the east, and the Thrull in the west. Though their raiders don't take thralls, their attacks are no less bloody.

Chief Hrafen av Skeir has decided that Ragvall Village's first raid will be a bold stroke, one that will make their name known throughout the land. The target is Erlefurt, the seat of power of Nordenland, renowned for its mages and natural wealth. To loot such a city would instantly raise Clan Ragvall to a position of respect among the other Valikan clans. With this plan in place, the only thing left to do is execute it. That's where the characters—the renowned hersirs of Clan Ragvall—come in.

Leveling up in Summer

The default method for gaining levels in this campaign is by completing milestones. Characters gain a level when they complete five minor milestones or one major milestone.

Characters start this chapter at 5th level, and they can't advance higher than 7th level by its end. Once they reach 7th level, they can't gain levels from reaching milestones until the autumn season begins.

Minor Milestones

The following acts are minor milestones:

- Capturing 5 or more conflict zones in a raid
- Capturing a stronghold during a raid
- Looting a stronghold of least 1,000 gp worth of treasure during a raid (another milestone is awarded for each additional 1,000 gp plundered)

Major Milestones

The following act is a major milestone:

- Completing the final raid of this chapter

Raid Mechanics

This raids in this chapter use the raid mechanics presented in chapter 3 of *Raider's Guide to Valika*. If you don't have that book, or don't wish to use the raiding rules, the GM can instead make combat encounters using the normal fifth edition rules to represent these massive battles.

Quests in Summer

This chapter doesn't offer Quests. If the players grow weary of raiding, GMs can use uncompleted Events and Quests from spring or use locations in chapter 5: Exploring Valika to challenge them. GMs can grant a minor milestone for self-directed adventures and pursuing activities not listed here, especially if they take a full game session.

Defeat and Retreat

The characters can retreat from a raid when they wish. Sometimes, a raid goes poorly but more often it's because Valikans retreat even in victory. The goal of most raids isn't conquest but plunder.

Utter Defeat

A raid may utterly defeat the characters. Overcommitting forces and losing their warriors can bring a sudden and inglorious end to the season. In this unlikely scenario, GMs must determine how to continue. Perhaps they are captured and ransomed back to their village, or even to their enemies. Thrull would gladly pay for the traitorous Raven of Skeir. Its impossible to list all the possiblities and best left to the GM to improvise the best path forward.

Raid Plunder

As hersirs, the characters are expected to track plunder collected in raids. Upon returning to Ragvall at summer's end, hersirs make a grand offering of thier plunder to the chief who divides it among all people—though it's expected the hersirs will keep a few of the best items for themselves.

Season Start

Before the characters depart Ragvall Village to go raiding, there are a few logistics that need to be settled.

These battle preparations serve both a mechanical and narrative purpose, informing the stories told through the raids. For example, if the NPCs brought from Ragvall to serve as raid commanders are defeated, they die, and they won't come back. War is bloody, and each death severs and tangles the threads of fate, weaving a different tapestry in autumn and winter.

This scene is set in Hrafensheim. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *You are all gathered around one of the feasting tables in Hrafensheim. Rather than being covered with freshly cooked meat filling the air with savory smells, the table bears a map of Valika's western coast, and the air is heavy with stale pipe-smoke and ale. The fire has dimmed, and the chess pieces the chief is using to represent your warriors and enemy forces cast long shadows.*
>
> *Chief Hrafen av Skeir takes a swig from his tankard and brings it down hard, rattling the chess pieces. "Ships leave in the morning, no more dawdling," he says. "Let's take stock of everything, one last time."*

During this chapter, the chief briefs the characters on what they need to know about raiding. This begins with elements that must be chosen before the characters sail forth from Ragvall Village.

Battle Preparations

Before the raids begin, the characters need to select NPC allies from Ragvall to bring on the raid. This is also where they see the resources they've gained from completing Core Quests and the bonus they've gained from completing a Heroic Feat come into play.

Raid Commanders

The first decision Chief Hrafen av Skeir asks the characters to make is to select Ragvallan NPCs to serve as unit commanders.

> *The chief says, "We've a number of brave warriors who are eager to carry out your orders. They can lead your raid units. Having these stalwart allies at your side will help you fare better in battle, but you must be prepared to pray for their souls, come autumn."*

The characters can choose two named NPCs from Ragvall to be their deputy commanders. When deploying a unit of warriors to attack a conflict zone during a raid, one of these NPCs can be assigned to the unit. If the unit is defeated, there is a chance the commander is killed.

Gondul Grindalsdóttir. If Gondul was spared during **Quest: Beast of Bronze and White Fur** (the "A Wolf Among" outcome), this werewolf could be made a powerful ally. Her feral offense grants a unit she's assigned to a +1d4 bonus on Raiding Rolls.

Gunnvarr Grindalsson. If the characters impressed Gunnvarr in **Event: Besting the Braggart** (the "Gunnvarr's Respect" outcome) he would gladly lay down his life for his hersirs. His mastery of shield-wall tactics allows his unit to escape certain death. If his unit fails a Raiding Roll, it can escape without casualties once per raid.

Hlökk Warcrier. This veteran's tactical acumen allows her to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat; when a unit she's assigned to fails a Raiding Roll, it can reroll any two dice in a Raiding Roll once per raid.

Ranulf Skullcrusher. This upstart warrior's courage is greater than his sense. A unit he's assigned can choose to gain a +2d4 bonus to a Raiding Roll once per turn. However, if his unit fails a Raiding Roll, all of its warriors are lost, regardless of how much the roll failed by.

Resources and Core Quest Bonuses

The chief explains to the characters that their raiding crew carries a baseline number of resources with them for repairing equipment. Many of the resources the characters gathered in spring were spent constructing the raiding venture: the baseline is what remains.

The characters' actions in spring also grant them certain bonuses to this baseline resource. For the rest of the adventure, the characters (or the GM) need to keep track of the amount of iron, lumber, and warriors because those will be spent and gained during summer, autumn, and winter.

Timber. 500 pounds.

Longships. 4 longships, each of which can carry 50 warriors. One warrior can be replaced with 100 pounds of cargo or plunder.

Iron. 250 pounds.

Warriors. 100 warriors

Bonus: Raiders' Blades. If the characters completed **Core Quest: Raiders' Blades**, all of the warriors are well-armed. They gain a +1d4 bonus on all Raiding Rolls during this chapter, and have a surplus of 500 pounds of iron, which they bring with them.

Bonus: Dragon Ships. If the characters completed **Core Quest: Dragon Ships**, the raiding crew's longships are upgraded to dragon ships, which can carry 75 warriors (see "Longships," above).

Bonus: Warrior Training. If the characters completed **Core Quest: Greenhorn Warrior Training**, more villagers were trained to fight. Add 25 warriors to the raiding crew.

Bonus: Kobolds Spared. If the characters spared the kobolds at the end of **Quest: Thieving Churls**, a group of 5 kobolds requests to join the raiding party at the start of summer, and they promise to be good. If the characters allow them to join, they gain 5 warriors. However, little knick-knacks do go missing from their longship.

Bonus: Elven-Thegn's Favor. If the characters made a good impression with Arduinna in **Event: The Elven-**

Thegn Appears, she sends five elves to aid in the raids and to learn how well the Clan Ragvall functions while under pressure. The raiding crew gains 5 warriors.

Heroic Feat Bonuses

The characters can gain one of the following raid bonuses, which is based on the first Heroic Feat they accomplished in spring (chapter 1). If they didn't complete a Heroic Feat, they don't gain a bonus. These bonuses last throughout the entire summer season.

These bonuses, called "Martial Reputation," "Silver-Tongued Reputation," and "Traditionalist Reputation," are described in the "Heroic Feats" section of chapter 1.

We Sail South!

Once the characters have made their selection of personnel and assessed their resources, the chief points to the map and says:

> *"I've selected a target that will give bards reason to sing of us for years to come. The city of Erlefurt in Nordenland. Long have Valikans feared this city and its mages, but I believe they're ripe for plundering. They're on the outskirts of imperial territory, which means there will be no support for them from the south.*
>
> *"And what's more, we have the element of surprise. No one even recognizes us as a clan. The Norden people have spies in every major clan in Valika… but not ours. Their best warriors will be bracing against incursions from Thrull—not a strike straight at their heart. Is there anything you wish to know about Erlefurt or the warriors of Nordenland?"*

Chief Hrafen av Skeir has battled with the Norden people before when he was a raider for Thrull. He can offer the characters information about their lands.

City of Erlefurt. "Erlefurt is northernmost city of the Bürach Empire. It's a port city with a large harbor and few fortifications. But even though it looks indefensible, it has the unpredictable strength of mages protecting it."

Mages of Erlefurt. "Nordenland is ruled from Erlefort by an Archduchess. She has an alliance with a group of mages called the Thaumaturge. I don't think they see eye-to-eye; the mages are powerful, but fickle. If we can spook them, they may give up their defense of the city to protect their own skins."

Norden Beliefs. "The Norden people were conquered by the Bürach Empire some time ago. They have a kinship with the faerie folk, and their nation is split between imperial law and ancient tradition. Erlefurt clings to the ways of the empire, and their decaying piety for dead gods."

Norden Warriors. "The Nordenfolk are stout warriors, but they rely too much on magic. If we can ambush them and avoid confrontations where they can rain fire upon us from afar, we can expect victory."

Nordenland's Terrain. "Unfortunately, to successfully attack Erlefurt, we must proceed through Nordenland on foot because their harbor is too well defended to attack by sea. The Norden terrain is corrupted by dark magic. I've seen walking trees with agonized human faces and fleshy, grasping limbs. It is a horrible place, but the Norden people are just as vulnerable to its horrors as we are. We must be on our guard and press our advantage."

You Would Prefer Another Target?

This chapter describes a campaign against the Nordenland capital, Erlefurt. However, there are other nearby cities that the raiders of Ragvall can strike—particularly the Kandar settlement of Summerhelm and the Thrull settlement of Skarfanes. Traveling upriver to raid is no great task for Valikan warriors. Chief Hrafen av Skeir is wary of aggravating the Kandar by raiding them.

If your players are interested in attacking their fellow Valikans—which is common enough among the oft-warring clans—you can create a new raiding campaign by using the raiding rules in *Raider's Guide to Valika*. You can use the same maps and scenarios for raiding the village and town presented in the Erlefurt campaign, but you should create a new map for the final attack on the city of Skarfanes or Summerhelm.

Skarfanes. To attack this Thrull city, the raiders sail through the Teeth and land on the shore, away from the well-defended Skarfanes harbor. They first target a village near a copper mine called Eirgrof, and then a town by a waterfall called Blarhoss, before finally reaching the walls of Skarfanes itself.

Summerhelm. To attack this Kandar city, the raiders must travel upriver. They encounter resistance at a swamp village called Geriksmyrr, and later at a town by a crater lake called Lyfskettil, before finally reaching the outskirts of Summerhelm.

"I have no trouble recalling details of Erlefurt or my encounters with the Norden people. The magic and horrors I've seen can't be forgotten. I wake suddenly in the night with the feeling I'm being watched. The corners of my vision swim with shadows of the fae; the only thing to do is pretend you can't see them. I don't look forward to laying eyes on them again."

- Chief Hrafen av Skier

Onward toward Glory!

The logistics of this summer are settled in the dead of night, and the longships are loaded with raiders the next morning. All of Ragvall Village comes to the shore to bid the raiders farewell.

The NPCs listed below are ones whose friendship can affect the outcomes of quests. If there are other NPCs that the players have become friends with, they can be included in the farewell, the GM improvising what they say to personalize the experience.

Alvíss av Dvergholt. The dwarf is conflicted about giving a tearful goodbye to Valikan raiders, given his history, but he's found that he cares for the characters. "Good luck on your killing spree, you brutes. Hope you bring back a boatload of glory, or whatever it is you raiders do." Despite his gruff words, it's clear that he hopes the characters return safely.

Ása Lögmaður. Ása doesn't care much for the Valikan tradition of raiding, but she recognizes its cultural significance to the characters and wants to support them. "There are laws to warfare, I'm sure you know. Conduct yourselves with honor. And… what do they say? Ah yes: health and happiness, hersirs. May you have good waves."

Mardoll Brightsea. The shipwright has said farewell to many raiders in her time, and she is eager to see how her ships perform. In her charming, delicate voice she says, "Get out there and give 'em hell! I wanna see both you and those ships come back scarred but unbroken. Glory to you all!"

Ófeigur Lightraiser. The lighthouse keeper timidly bows to the characters. "You saved me with your kindness. I'll always keep the light on and pray for your safe return. Pray to the Seven Heroes, I mean! Not to that shrine down there."

Rikarð Jarnskegg. As a former thrall taken from Bürach, Rikarð Jarnskegg is concerned about the raids, but tries not to show it. "My weapons will serve you well out there, hersirs. Just, please remember that there will be innocents on that battlefield. The chief has promised me that there will be no thrall-taking. Please, hold him to that promise."

The Sea Journey

The trip from Ragvall Village through the Teeth and to the Norden coast is tense but uneventful. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *The first day of your journey passes quietly. Then the next, and the next, and the next. Each day of the journey drags on, and the warriors' fiery enthusiasm dulls to listlessness by the end of the second day. With nothing but gulls and tiny hunks of sea ice to distract them, one of the warriors eventually reveals that they made a deck of cards, and begins teaching a game to the others.*

If the characters have proficiency in any gaming sets, this is an opportunity for them to gamble and bond with their warriors. If you have the Valikan card game "Slayers of Valika," this is an opportunity to introduce it as a minigame.

First Camp: Aristadt's Edge

This is a good place to start a session of gameplay. After nearly a full week of sailing, the Ragvallan raiding crew spies Erlefurt harbor. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *A city comes into view in the south. Its stone walls are high, but crumbling. A single mighty tower looms over all as if watching everything beneath it.*
>
> *"That's Erlefurt," Chief Hrafen av Skeir says. Then, he stands and bellows to all four boats, "That harbor is death! We avoid it at all costs until we can slip through their walls and draw their attention away from it! Continue south where we make landfall in the forest!"*
>
> *The chief sits and turns to you. "Our first target will be a village of trappers and falconers called Aristadt. I know its layout well. I led a crew to strike it when I was a hersir of Clan Völgr. I have every confidence we can pillage it, perhaps even conquer it, with your leadership. It will be an inspiring first victory for these greenhorns."*

The ships land and the raiders make camp in the woods several miles south of the village. They prepare for battle the next day.

The First Raid

Dawn comes on the day of the raid. The characters have an hour to prepare spells, eat a meal, and complete any business before leading their raiders through the forest to Aristadt.

Speak, Hersirs!

Before moving out, Chief Hrafen av Skeir encourages the characters to inspire their warriors with a rousing speech. If the characters orate and make a successful DC 20 Charisma (Performance) check, they gain advantage on the first Raiding Roll they make.

Guard the Camp?

The chief recommends leaving a percentage of their warriors behind to guard their ships and supplies. Otherwise, woodland creatures could attack or fleeing Aristadt villagers could steal their ships and leave the raiders stranded in this foreign land.

The chief recommends leaving behind 25 percent of their total raiders. These warriors can't participate in the raid. For the consequences of this decision, see "Outcome at the Camp," below.

Arrival at Aristadt

To reach the small village of Aristadt, the characters must lead their force through the dark woods of Nordenland. Nothing comes to attack them this time, but the atmosphere is grim and haunting. Read or paraphrase the following to summarize this eerie journey:

> *Something about the forest of Nordenland feels wrong, like an itch deep in your bones. During the march to Aristadt, your warriors murmur about seeing shadows flitting at the corner of their vision. You begin to see the same. The chief quietly says, "It's lucky we aren't deeper in the forest. We may be jumping at shadows, but in those woods, shadows can kill."*
>
> *By noon, you reach the edge of a clearing and the gloom of the forest suddenly gives way to a sparkling glen. Nestled inside this sunny vale is a small village of cottages protected by a simple palisade wall.*

While the people of Aristadt have been raided before, they haven't faced an attack in several years. They have made some cursory preparations, but nobody expects the Valikan raiders.

Get the Lay of the Land

To prepare the characters for this raid offense scenario, lay out the exterior map of Aristadt. This map indicates the various conflict zones that need to be conquered. Once the characters can see the whole view of the village, Chief Hrafen av Skeir explains the basics of raiding to the characters:

A Two-Phase Battle. A raid has two phases: in the first phase, the hersirs command their forces to attack and pillage points on the map called conflict zones. Once these defensive points have been conquered, the characters can lead a strike force on a stronghold, which holds the settlement's best loot.

Command from the Back. In the first phase of the raid, the characters are commanding, not fighting. They're preparing for their attack on the stronghold while their soldiers and deputy commanders lead the attacks on conflict zones.

Surround the Stronghold. Once the characters decide to strike at the stronghold, the other raiders divert from pillaging and try to control the stronghold's entrance so that no reinforcements can trap the strike force inside.

Conquer or Pillage. The stronghold is defended by the settlement's leader. Once inside, the characters need to decide if they want to plunder its loot and get out quick or commit to defeating the stronghold's leader and conquer the entire settlement.

Act Fast. The longer a raid takes, the more likely it is that the settlement can rally its defenses. On certain turns of the raid, circumstances will change. For example, villagers might flee with treasure that could have been pillaged or reinforcements might make areas harder to capture.

Launch the Attack

Once the characters know the rules of this raid offense scenario, the attack can begin. Run **Event: The First Raid.**

Outcome at the Camp

After the raid, the characters return to their ships—hopefully with loot in hand and spirits high. When they return, however, what happened at camp while the characters were away needs to be checked.

During the raid, horrific creatures came from the woods: walking trees with fleshy limbs and dozens of mouths that moaned attacked the Valikan warriors left to guard the ships. Roll a d100 and add the number of warriors that the characters left to guard the camp to the result to determine how the camp defended against the attack.

Camp Defense

d100	Event
01–25	No trace remains of the defenders. There are signs of a struggle, and all the longships are damaged and need to be repaired before they can carry troops or cargo. Half of your supplies (before adding what you found in the raid) have been destroyed.
26–50	Half of your defenders are dead, and the survivors tell of horrible creatures that came from the forest. Two of the longships are damaged and must be repaired.
51–75	Ten of your defenders are dead, and the survivors tell of the monstrous trees that attacked. Your warriors fought bravely and defended the ships well.
76–100	When monsters attacked, the defenders were able to swiftly put the longships to sea and killed two of the monsters by shooting flaming arrows from safety. Only charred wood and flesh remains.
100+	Not only did your warriors overwhelm the monsters but they also found a strange charm on one of the trees. An *ring of protection* is given to the characters.

Downtime

Chief Hrafen av Skeir is willing to spend two weeks of downtime here to repair or to gather materials (see "Downtime in Summer," later in this chapter). If repairs take longer than two weeks, a crew will need to be left on this beach, and then rendezvous later.

The chief urges them to spend resources only as needed; they do hope to return to Ragvall Village with some resources in tow to prepare for the winter defenses.

Calendar of the Seasons

If a crew needs to be left behind to conduct repairs, mark the following development on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Serious Repairs. A group of raiders was left behind on a river shore near a haunted forest to repair damaged longships at a rate of one ship per week.

Moving Onward

Even if they didn't conquer the village, the raiders hit it hard and fast. And with this momentum, they can continue through the woods and strike a new target that will put them one step closer to the walls of Erlefurt.

Second Camp: Kirkbridge Outskirts

This is a good place to start a session of gameplay. Traveling through the woods to the next location takes a day, but morale tumbles quickly, even on the heels of victory. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *Strange creaking and chittering echo through the trees as you march, and though Chief Hrafen av Skeir tells the warriors that it's naught but the wind and beasts; few believe him.*
>
> *The raiders begin murmuring about the Beast, an ancient legend of the Bürachi people. They say it is a massive wolf or bear or, they fear, something worse. But whatever it is, the Beast is a horrid thing that tore itself from the womb of the woods and supped first upon the corpses of the gods themselves.*
>
> *Camp is made in the woods, and the scouts can see your next destination, the town of Kirkbridge, in the distance, but morale is falling. The woods themselves seem to be draining the hope from your raiders' hearts.*

The characters can allay these fears by making a successful DC 20 Charisma (Performance) check. On a failure, or if this check isn't made at all, the first Raiding Roll the characters make in the next raid only uses 1d10 instead of 2d10.

The Second Raid

The characters are roused at dawn, if they aren't awake already, by the sound of a scream. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *Those of you sleeping jolt awake as a blood-curdling scream tears through the camp. Outside your tent, one of your guards stands over a humanoid corpse. The guard's chest is spattered with blood, and her spear still protrudes from the corpse's stomach. You quickly realize that the corpse isn't Valikan, but an elf whose face is covered with war paint.*
>
> *"One of their scouts," the guard says, trembling. "He had magic. Everyone else was frozen in place, but I was somehow able to move."*

A scout from Kirkbridge found the Valikan camp while doing his morning rounds. Some scouts and hunters of the Norden people follow ancient druidic ways and use primal magic to navigate their wretched woodlands. Luckily for the raiders, this scout's hubris led him to try and kill the Ragvallan night watch alone. One of the guards resisted his hold person spell and slew him with a lucky blow.

Unless the characters immediately rally their forces, Chief Hrafen av Skeir spurs the raiders into action. Now that a scout has found their camp, it's only a matter of time before the scout fails to return on time, and the raiders lose the element of surprise. The raid must begin now!

Assaulting Kirkbridge

The town of Kirkbridge is unfamiliar to Chief Hrafen av Skeir, but the night before the attack, a group of Ragvallan scouts surveyed the area and identified a number of key areas the raiders can strike. This information includes the most significant structures in town.

Lay of the Land

Since the characters learned how to conduct an offensive raid in the last battle, Chief Hrafen av Skeir takes more time to highlight key locations in this town. Because this town is well-fortified, reaching its stronghold will take more strategy.

Saint Hermia's Cathedral. Kirkbridge is ruled by Vicar Claive Sullish. The primary target of this raid is St. Hermia's Cathedral, the town's mighty church, which is alsoits most fortified location. It was founded by a lesser Norden saint named Hermia, and it is dedicated to the Arch Seraph Aphaelon, an angel of temperance and peace.

Main Gate. The town has a main gate against its southwestern wall. This gate is well-fortified and the path leading to it is pinned between the river and the forest's edge. A frontal assault would be dangerous and costly, but possible.

Forest Incursion. The presence of a church of Aphaelon hasn't prevented the dark forests of Nordenland from laying siege to this town. In two places, the twisted

creatures of the woods have breached Kirkbridge's walls, and the forest has sprung up fast and thick within the town, despite the townsfolk's best efforts. While such a forest is likely dangerous, it could allow the raiders to enter the town without alerting its guards.

Walled Town. Because of the town's walls, the main gate, the western forest, or the eastern forest must be conquered to attack the conflict zones within the town. Attacking from the east makes it easier to assault the church—the main target—but the west is where most of the resource-rich structures are located.

Kirkrun River Crossing. The town is bisected by the Kirkrun River. In its center is a sturdy stone bridge that spans the river. Because of this, the bridge must be conquered for the raiders to gain access to the conflict zones on the side of the city they didn't enter from.

Kirkrun River by Ship. Valikan longships can sail upriver in good circumstances, and the Kirkrun River is a great getaway route. Chief Hrafen av Skeir has prepared for the longships to arrive at the town's edge during the raid to provide reinforcements and the chance to escape, but the town's northern river gate must be held to gain these reinforcements (see "Kirkbridge Features" in **Event: Raid of Kirkbridge**).

A Smorgasbord of Targets. Kirkbridge is a highly centralized town, which means the town is wide open to be plundered once the raiders are inside. The only choke point that needs to be overcome is the central bridge.

Ships from Downriver

It's important to keep track of how many warriors are left at camp to guard the ships because it's possible for the characters to gain these warriors as reinforcements if the raiders conquer the river gate (see "Kirkrun River by Ship," above). Unlike the last raid, good fortune prevails, and nothing emerges from the forest to attack the camp while the main raiding force is away.

Launch the Attack

Once the characters are informed of the major locations, the raid can begin. Run **Event: Raid of Kirkbridge.**

Moving Onward

While conquering Kirkbridge is an excellent prize for the Valikans, merely sacking it is enough to continue pushing toward Erlefurt on land. With Kirkbridge in chaos and vulnerable to incursions from the forest, your warriors can escape by ship and make a new camp on the coast. This also allows the raiders to slink inland and make a camp near Erlefurt's walls.

Third Camp: In the Shadow of Erlefurt

This is a good place to start a session of gameplay. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *Your raiders beat through the forest until they come to an ancient road that runs through the dark forest from Kirkbridge to Erlefurt. Enormous roots burst through the road and the wet smell of decay hangs in the air. Nevertheless, the longer you walk this road, the more the unsettling noises of the forest fade. Civilization grows strong around the capital of Nordenland, and before long, you've made camp in a small valley a mile outside the city walls.*
>
> *Erlefurt's white walls are tall but crumbling and choked with vines. A salty sea breeze rolls through the forest, and the raiders grumble about missing home.*

The characters can allay this homesickness by making a successful DC 20 Charisma (Performance) check. On a failure, or if this check isn't made at all, the warriors have disadvantage on all Raiding Rolls made during the next raid. However, this penalty ends the first time they make a successful Raiding Roll.

The Grand Prize

As dawn breaks before the raid, read or paraphrase the following:

> *As morning comes, you are gathered by the chief to plan the final raid of your campaign. You sit with him away from the rest of the raiders as he draws a crude map of the city in the ashes of last night's fire.*
>
> *"It's important to remember that this city is defended by mages. And not just local forest druids, but academy-trained wizards. If we fight fair, they'll kill us. I'm not worried, though. I do not doubt that you will lead our people to victory, Hersirs. Come, let's talk strategy."*

Assaulting Erlefurt

Erlefurt is the official capital of Nordenland. Though technically Nordenland is a part of the Bürach Empire, all its cities save for Erlefurt have been overtaken by the accursed forest or fallen into ruin as its people returned to the old ways. Erlefurt, often simply called the City, is ruled by Archduchess Maelfa Erlekind, the last living heir of the once-great Bürachi House of Erle. Clinging to the last vestiges of her family's wealth and power, she makes a benevolent show of accepting the sovereignty of her neighbors, despite privately disdaining outsiders as backward and barbaric.

The archduchess is reassured in her belief by the evokers of the Thaumaturge, a secretive cabal of mages who have their own reasons for ensuring the stability of the empire in Nordenland. The mage-defenders of Erlefurt are captained by Lord Duma Felsinger. Duma sees himself as above the petty politics of Erlefurt, and he is quick to retreat before his mages' lives are endangered.

Lay of the Land

Erlefurt is a well-defended city and making a tactical misstep could force the characters into an unwinnable battle. Chief Hrafen av Skeir highlights key locations in the city, particularly ones whose capture will open new avenues of attack or otherwise alter the battlefield.

Nordenmark Palace. This palace of magically raised and polished white stone towers stands over the Bürach Empire's northern marches. Its treasury room is the primary target of this raid. Trying to depose the archduchess and conquer the great city is, by Chief Hrafen av Skeir estimation, folly. The raiders are here for plunder, not conquest.

Marcher Lord's College. Erlefurt is home to eight colleges of magic, three of which are renowned throughout the empire. The greatest of the eight, Marcher Lord's College of Evocations, is a military academy. Though difficult to take, claiming it will doubtless damage morale across the city.

Pinnacle of Theurgy. A group of mages called the Thaumaturge are contracted to protect Erlefurt. However, rumor has it that their local commander, Duma Felsinger, has no particular loyalty to the empire. If his fortress, the Pinnacle of Theurgy, is conquered, he and his Thaumaturge forces will likely flee.

Sea Gate. Erlefurt once forded a river, and though that river has long since been diverted and filled in, its harbor and sea gate remain. This sea gate isn't literally a gate, but rather a line of defensive towers that overlooks the harbor. Without capturing these towers, sailing Ragvall's longships into the harbor is an impossible task.

Neighborhoods. Residential cottages and townhomes make up the bulk of Erlefurt's size. These neighborhoods aren't as rich as the palace, but they're lightly defended and are so vast that they can be plundered again and again.

Commanding from the Front

Additionally, Chief Hrafen av Skeir places his life directly in the characters' hands, and he requests that they send him to be one of their deputy commanders in today's raid.

Hrafen av Skeir. The famed Raven of Skeir was once feared throughout Valika and Bürach as a bloodthirsty commander of Völgr. His unsavory reputation grants a unit he's assigned to a +1d4 bonus on raiding rolls. If a unit he's assigned to fails a Raiding Roll, he is unable to escape and is captured. His bonus can't be used for the remainder of the raid. Run **Event: Godrunsson's Aid** after the raid is completed.

Ships in the Harbor

As with the previous raid, it's important to keep track of how many warriors have been left at camp to guard the ships because it's possible for the characters to gain these warriors as reinforcements if the sea gate is conquered during the raid (see "Sea Gate," above).

Launch the Attack

Once the characters are informed of the major locations in this raid, the attack can begin. Run **Event: Sack of Erlefurt.**

Moving Onward

Conquering Erlefurt is a nigh-impossible task for a small force of Valikan raiders, so this raid will likely end in the characters retreating—hopefully with their longships full of plunder. Once they've retreated, the ships return to Ragvall Village, as described in the Conclusion section below.

Conclusion

How successful the summer raids went will affect the characters' reputation come autumn. Using the scorecard below, determine how many points the characters earned for their deeds in summer. If they scored 5 or more reputation points, they return to Ragvall Village as heroes beloved by their warriors. If they scored 4 or fewer points, their warriors see the raid as a failure, and the chief is disappointed in his decision to appoint them as hersirs.

End-of-Summer Reputation Points

Event	Reputation Points
Each 2,500 gp gained at end of summer	+1
Each Stronghold captured	+1
Ended summer with over 75 warriors	+1
Ended summer with over 100 warriors	+1
Each fancy food or item acquired that will "make the characters very popular"	+1
Ended summer with 50 warriors or fewer	-2
Each named NPC killed in summer	-2
Each player character killed in summer	-2

It's Not so Cut and Dry

Raiding, unlike a military campaign of conquest, is an endeavor where the feeling of victory is just as important as the victory itself. Use the scorecard above as a rule of thumb to determine if the characters return to Ragvall Village as heroes or as disappointments. The scorecard can't account for narrative details such as if the characters were cruel to their warriors or had one enormous, memorable failure even if they managed an overall victory.

Ultimately, the way the people of Ragvall Village feel about their hersirs is up to the GM to judge.

New Downtime Activities

When the characters have a week or more of downtime, they can spend it doing one of the activities described in the fifth edition core rules. They can also spend a week or more of downtime on one of the following group downtime activities. Unlike other downtime activities, which can be done by only a single character, these downtime activities must be done as a full party.

Downtime in Summer

Summer is thirteen weeks long, just like the other seasons of the year. The first week is spent sailing from Ragvall to Nordenland. Each of the three raids takes a total of one week each, which includes the time spent traveling, preparing, and withdrawing from the raid. The final week is spent sailing back to Ragvall Village. This leaves eight weeks of downtime amidst the raids.

The characters can spend these weeks of downtime repairing ships, hunting for game, seeking sources of timber or iron, building tools, or sailing south to hire mercenaries or purchase supplies.

Repairing Ships

Prerequisite: *Have at least one damaged longship*

The Ragvallan raiding party sailed to Nordenland with a fleet of four longships. While they don't have shipwrights as skilled as Mardoll Brightsea in the raiding party, several raiders apprenticed under her and know the basics of the craft. Given one week of downtime and 100 pounds of timber, they can repair one damaged longship. The characters must spend this week of downtime leading and overseeing the effort to repair the ship.

The raiding group can continue moving during repairs, if time is short. A group of 10 warriors per ship being repaired must be left behind with the ships.

Additionally, given four weeks of downtime, 500 pounds of timber, and 50 pounds of iron, they can construct a new longship that can carry 50 raiders or 100 pounds of cargo in place of 1 raider.

Hunting

While the raiding party has sufficient rations in dried meat and salmon jerky, fresh-cooked meat always bolsters a raider's moral. The characters can spend one week of downtime hunting in the Norden woods. To do so, the characters must make several ability checks.

Finding Tracks. One character makes a DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check. On a success, a game trail is found; record the result of the check for later. On a failure, the hunting expedition was fruitless and the downtime is spent in vain.

Pursuing Game. One character makes a DC 10 Dexterity (Stealth) check to stalk the game and clear a path for the other characters. On a success, the character manages to corner the animals; record the result of the check for later. On a failure, the game flees and the downtime is spent in vain.

Ambushing Prey. All characters make a ranged attack roll to fell the animals. Take the average of all the rolls and record it.

Overall Success. Add together the three recorded numbers. The total is the number of warriors the characters can feed with fresh meat. If at least half the warriors are fed, they gain a +1d4 bonus to all raiding rolls for the next four weeks. If at least 25 percent of the warriors are fed, they gain a +1 bonus to Raiding Rolls for the next four weeks.

Gathering Resources

The forests of Nordenland are filled with dark fey and unnatural aberrations, but they are also rich with timber and iron. If the characters are running low on these valuable resources, they can spend one week of downtime to lead an expedition into the woods. The more warriors they take with them, the more likely they are to return with a lot of resources. However, it's harder for a large expedition to retreat from attacking monsters.

Party Size. The characters can bring up to 50 warriors with them; the chief won't permit more to be taken.

Roll for Resources. At the end of the week, roll a d100 and add the number of warriors the characters brought. They return with that number of pounds of timber and half that number of pounds of iron.

Roll for Danger. At the end of the week, roll a d6. On a result of 1 or 2, mutant treants emerge from the woods and attack, killing 1d10 warriors before an effective retreat can be staged. If the characters brought more than 25 warriors, 2d10 warriors are killed instead.

Sailing South to Market

There are several small villages along the western coast of the Bürach Empire that are more than willing to trade with Valikans in exchange for peace. There are even some Bürachi mercenaries who have little loyalty to their crown and will gladly raid alongside the Valikans for a payment of gold up-front.

Resources for Sale. Timber can be purchased in 50-pound bundles for 5 sp per pound. Iron can be purchased in 50-pound bundles for 1 gp per pound.

Mercenaries for Hire. Mercenaries can be hired for 10 gp per week, with the first week paid up-front. No more than 10 mercenaries can be hired per week. Each hired mercenary increases the raiding crew's number of warriors by 1. When warriors die, assume that mercenaries die first.

Crafting Supplies

Raiders have a number of supplies at their disposal beyond mere swords and axes. Casks of alchemical fire to burn forests, tall shields to defend from arrows, rams to breach gates, and more. The characters can spend downtime and resources to craft these supplies, as described in chapter 3 of *Raider's Guide to Valika*.

Raid Events

Though there are no major quests in summer, there are three raids. These raids consist of two parts, as described in chapter 3 of *Raider's Guide to Valika*. The first part is a large-scale invasion in which you command raiding parties to attack and seize various points on a regional-scale map. The second part is an assault on a stronghold in which the characters lead a strike force on a 5-foot-square-scale map using the standard rules for combat in fifth edition.

Since these Raid Events occur in a linear fashion, they are presented in chronological order, rather than alphabetical.

Event: The First Raid

Prerequisite: *Made camp outside Aristadt*

Questgiver: Hrafen av Skeir
Location: Aristadt Village
Downtime: 1 week
Content Warning: War, civilians in peril

When the raid begins, read or paraphrase:

> *Your raiding party has arrived on the outskirts of Aristadt, a small hamlet of trappers and falconers in western Nordenland. Nestled between mountains and lakes, this charming village is lightly defended and is easy prey for most Valikan raiders.*
>
> *What zones of the village will you send your warriors to first?*

Resources and Supplies

If the characters or GM don't wish to track the raiding crew's inventory throughout summer, the party begins this raid with the following spread of resources and supplies instead:

- 100 warriors
- 500 pounds of timber
- 250 pounds of iron
- 1 cask of drake fire
- 10 tall shields
- 1 battering ram

The bonuses granted by these supplies are fully described in chapter 3 of *Raiders' Guide to Valika* and in the abridged Raiding Rules found in Appendix D. If the players have fewer warriors and supplies than this, this raid may be more difficult than expected.

Aristadt Valley Features

Aristadt Valley is a charming dale with no dangerous terrain that affects its conflict zones.

Conflict Zones

The following conflict zones can be targeted in this raid. The GM's map of this region shows which conflict zones must be conquered as a prerequisite to attacking others or for reaching the village longhouse (this site's stronghold).

V1: Forest's Edge Homesteads

Minimum Force: 10 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 7
Supplies Bonus: —
Plunder: 500 sp, 100 pounds of timber, and 10 horses
Captives: 10 captives

> *A simple wooden palisade draped with the gray falcon banner of Aristadt Village stands on the village outskirts. These homesteads have banded together for safety, and though their palisade walls protect them from wolves, they provide little defense against armed raiders.*

V2: Village Mews

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone V1 or V7*

Minimum Force: 10 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 5
Supplies Bonus: —
Plunder: 25 pounds of iron
Special: If not conquered by the start of turn 2, reinforcements arrive in zones V3 through V8 (see "Developments," below).

> *The falconers of Aristadt keep their raptors in large birdhouses called mews. The falcons and their trainers reside in cottages resting between the two lakes. They seem to have few possessions, and while they aren't warriors, they seem prepared to defend their homes.*

V3: Lake Ruhig Docks

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone V1 or V7*

Minimum Force: 5 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 7
Supplies Bonus: Tall shields
Plunder: 100 pounds of timber, and a *+1 longbow*
Captives: 5 captives

> *Rowboats and docks line the shore of the southwestern lake. On the lake sits an island with a shrine visible upon it. The village militia has barricaded the docks, prepared to die to defend the shrine. Several boats on the lake are filled with archers, ready to attack from afar.*

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Aristadt Village
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V4: Village Leatherworks

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone V1 or V7*

Minimum Force: 10 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 8
Supplies Bonus: Drake fire causes instant victory with no casualties but destroys all supplies and kills all potential captives
Plunder: 100 gp, 150 pounds of timber, 50 pounds of iron, and a suit of *+1 leather armor*
Captives: 10 captives

> *These wood-walled houses are dedicated to the tanning of hides and the creation of leather goods. A stone wall with a simple gate surrounds the tannery, and a group of villagers defends it fiercely with crude spears.*

V5: Shrine to Ulmyr

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone V3*

Minimum Force: 10 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 3
Supplies Bonus: —
Plunder: Art worth 500 sp and diamonds and incense worth 100 gp
Captives: 40 captives

> *A shrine to Ulmyr, the dead god of the Norden forests, stands tall and proud on this island. The shrine is undefended; the priests and huddled civilians here put up precious little resistance.*

V6: Trappers' Cottages

Minimum Force: 10 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 5
Supplies Bonus: —
Plunder: 200 sp worth of furs
Special: If not conquered by the start of turn 2, reinforcements arrive in zones V2 through V8 (see "Developments," below).

> *Fur trappers hunt animals for their pelts in the nearby coastal woods. They notice your force as it emerges from the woods, and several prepare to sprint in the direction of the village longhouse, while most ready simple bows and spears.*

"We couldn't abandon Ulmyr! Even when the rest of the village falls to your hand, we can be certain the shrine will always be a pillar for our people."

- Ulmyr Shrine Priest

V7: Bergmann's Bridge

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone V6*

Minimum Force: 5 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 8
Supplies Bonus: Battering ram
Plunder: 100 pounds of timber

> *A wooden bridge spans a wide, lazy river. On the other side of the bridge stands the village longhouse. A gate on the other side of the bridge can be opened and closed, but it is currently open.*

V8: Villagers' Escape Route

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone V3 or V7*

Minimum Force: 20 raiders
Raiding Roll DC: 5
Supplies Bonus: —
Plunder: 100 pounds of foodstuffs, trade goods worth 500 sp, 200 pounds of timber, and 100 pounds of iron
Captives: 50 captives

> *The villagers have hastily arranged four covered wagons and oxen to escape the battle of Aristadt. If you can catch them in time, the wealth they're fleeing with can be yours.*

V9: Thegn Rutger's Longhouse

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone V4 or V7*

Once reached, the characters can choose to end this event and attack the longhouse directly. This begins **Event: The First Conquest.**

Developments

Certain conflict zones change at the start of the following turns of this raid:

Turn 2: If both the Village Mews (zone V2) and the Trappers' Cottages (zone V6) have not been captured by the start of this turn, the occupants warn other areas of the approaching raiders. The Raiding Roll DC of all zones increases by 2, and the Raiding Roll DC of Bergmann's Bridge (zone V7) increases by 5 (to DC 13).

Turn 4: The commonfolk gathered at the escape point flee into the mountains, leaving behind everything they can't carry. The Raiding Roll DC of zone V8 drops to 0. However, the commonfolk have set simple traps, which can still cause casualties. The plunder drops to 25 pounds of foodstuffs, trade goods worth 100 sp, 50 pounds of timber, and 25 pounds of iron. No captives can be taken.

Turn 6: After six hours, the villagers fully fortify the longhouse. All areas within the stronghold gain the benefits of being Prepared. See the "Prepared" section in **Event: The First Conquest.**

Event: The First Conquest

Questgiver: Hrafen av Skeir
Location: Aristadt Longhouse
Downtime: 1 week
Content Warning: War, civilians in peril

The Ragvallan raiding crew has besieged the village longhouse of Aristadt, giving the characters the opportunity to plunder it. Here, the characters have two options: plunder what they can and then get out before reinforcements arrive or slay this fort's commander and conquer it for themselves.

This longhouse is the seat of power for a Norden thegn named Gorman Rutger (LN, male dwarf **noble**). He is a coward who relies on his soldiers to save him.

Aristadt Longhouse Features

The areas of the Aristadt longhouse have the following features unless otherwise stated in that area's description:

Ceilings. The indoor areas of this longhouse have 15-foot-tall ceilings.

Light. The indoor areas of this longhouse have no windows and are dimly lit by fire pits or oil lamps.

Wooden Walls. This longhouse is made of wood and is flammable. If fire damage is dealt to the walls of this longhouse, all adjacent 5-foot spaces catch fire at the start of each subsequent turn until the entire longhouse is aflame. A creature that starts its turn in a burning square or enters it for the first time on a turn takes 2 (1d4) fire damage and can't breathe until the start of its next turn.

Your Mission is Plunder, Not Victory

It's important that the players and their characters know that the goal of this fight is to obtain as much treasure as they can, as fast as they can. The longer they wait, the worse the situation becomes for them and their warriors outside the stronghold.

The main goal is to plunder and run, and the secondary goal is a complete rout.

Areas of the Aristadt Longhouse

The characters begin the longhouse raid in area L1, the fort's entry courtyard. Read or paraphrase the following when the characters begin the attack:

> *The village longhouse is simple but large; it's easily large enough to hold a feast for every man, woman, and child in the Aristadt, and then some. Your warriors have rallied around the outside of the longhouse, clashing with small groups of villagers swooping in on horseback to hurl spears before fleeing.*
>
> *"Get in!" shouts Chief Hrafen av Skeir, who stands with the other warriors. "Move quick, grab the loot and run! Only try and seize the fort if you think you can do it as fast as lightning!"*

L1: Entry Courtyard

Once the characters enter the stronghold, read or paraphrase the following:

> *Standing before the front of the longhouse's oaken double doors is a group of warriors from the thegn's personal guard. Four are dressed in simple, unpolished chainmail. The fifth, their leader, is a scarred man with an eyepatch and wispy white hair. He's clearly seen at least sixty winters, but he holds his sword well.*
>
> *"Valikans," he growls. He speaks the Valikan tongue with a Valikan accent. "Brutish dogs. Depart now, lest I put ye down like the curs ye are."*

Thegn Gorman Rutger's commander of the guard, a former Clan Völgr warrior named Lars One-Eye, is prepared to meet any Valikan invaders in a duel to the death. He tries to stall the characters in a one-on-one duel to buy time for the thegn to rally his reinforcements (see "Developments," below).

Hostile Creatures. The following hostile creatures are in this area:

- Lars One-Eye (CN, male human **veteran**)
- Four **guards**

Prepared. If the stronghold is in a prepared state, the following changes occur:

- A wooden barricade (Large object, AC 14, 30 hit points, vulnerability to fire damage, and immunity to poison and psychic damage) has been erected in front of the main door to area L2.
- The guards in this area are behind the barricade, and they attack using their crossbows.

L2: Thegn's Hall

> *The thegn is nowhere to be seen in his hall. Villagers who fled to this stronghold huddle beneath benches, clutching their valuables and praying that you won't notice them. Valuables are strewn about the room, upon tables and benches. Several doors are open, revealing stables and a dairy to the west. Two doors on the back wall, behind the thegn's throne, are closed.*

The thegn has locked himself in his bedchambers (area L6) and commanded his guards to protect him and the commoners in this hall, but the thegn's safety comes first.

Commoners. A dozen **commoners** hide beneath the tables and benches in this room. As an action, a character can grab one and make a DC 12 Charisma (Intimidation) check to force the commoner to hand over whatever is being held (an heirloom or piece of jewelry worth 2d12 gp) on a success. As an action, a character can also make a DC 18 Charisma (Intimidation) check to force the villagers to throw their valuables onto the floor on a success, worth a total of 65 (2d12 × 5) gp.

Killing a commoner grants advantage on ability checks made to influence the commoners for 1 minute.

Hostile Creatures. The following hostile creatures are in this area:

- Eight **guards**
- Four **scouts**
- Two **blood hawks**, which the scouts can order to attack a creature or use the Help action on an ally (no action required by the scout)

The guards hang back and protect the two northern doors, but they don't attack unless attacked or a hostile creature enters their reach. The scouts shoot invaders and command their hawks to aid them.

Treasure. There are three piles of treasure in this chamber. A character can collect one pile as an action:

- **West Table:** A treasure chest with 400 sp
- **East Table:** A pile of silverware worth 50 gp
- **Thegn's Throne:** A golden holy symbol of the god Ulmyr worth 50 gp

Prepared. If the stronghold is in a prepared state, the following changes occur:

- A wooden barricade (Large object, AC 14, 30 hit points, vulnerability to fire damage, and immunity to poison and psychic damage) has been erected in front of the doors to areas L5 and L6

L3: Dairy

Five dairy cows are in this stable.

Hostile Creatures. The cows (use **ox** statistics) are panicked from the sound of battle, and they attack the nearest creature as soon as it enters this room for the first time, unless the creature makes a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check as a reaction. The cows simply want to escape.

Treasure. This room has no obvious treasure. If the cows are calm, a character can search them as an action. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check finds a perfectly carved ivory idol of a cow god worth 50 gp hidden in the hay.

L4: Stable

Five **riding horses** are in this stable. They're jittery from the sound of nearby battle, but they can be calmed and taken as plunder if a character uses an action to make a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Animal Handling).

Treasure. The room has no obvious treasure, but a character can use an action to search it. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check finds an ornate warhorse saddle worth 50 gp hidden in the hay.

> "I've been waiting for folks like ye for too many years. The hair on me head is stronger than any one of ye. Step forward and face yer cowardice."
>
> *- Lars One-Eye*

L5: Barracks

If the hostile creatures in this area are defeated, the development on Turn 10 of this battle doesn't occur (see "Developments," below).

Hostile Creatures. A group of six **guards** and six **scouts** are donning armor and grabbing weapons. They are preparing to get horses from the stable and ride out to crush the raiders.

Treasure. The thegn's guards keep their valuables beneath their beds in twelve footlockers in this room. A lockbox can be forced open easily as an action, but a stack of four lockboxes can be collected without opening it as an action. When opened, each lockbox contains a total of 35 (10d6) sp and a personal item worth 1 gp.

L6: Thegn's Chambers

Thegn Rutger, leader of this village, cowers pathetically in his chambers. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *A pathetic man with long, greasy brown hair kept out of his face by a tarnished, gem-studded silver circlet huddles by his bed. He feebly clutches his sword and feverishly murmurers a prayer. He gasps when you enter and shouts, "Take it all! I beg you, take it and leave!"*

Hostile Creatures. The following hostile creatures are in this area:

- Thegn Gorman Rutger (use **noble** statistics). He is prone and only fights back if attacked.

Prepared. If the stronghold is in a prepared state, the following changes occur:

- The thegn has found and loaded a light crossbow, and readied an action to shoot it at the first Valikan who enters this area (+3 to hit, *Hit:* 5 [1d8 + 1] piercing damage).

Treasure. The thegn's chambers are filled with treasure, including:

- The silver-and-garnet circlet he wears (worth 50 gp)
- A tapestry of Ulmyr smiting a Bürachi army (worth 25 gp)
- A ceremonial blade made from gilded steel (worthless in combat, but worth 25 gp)

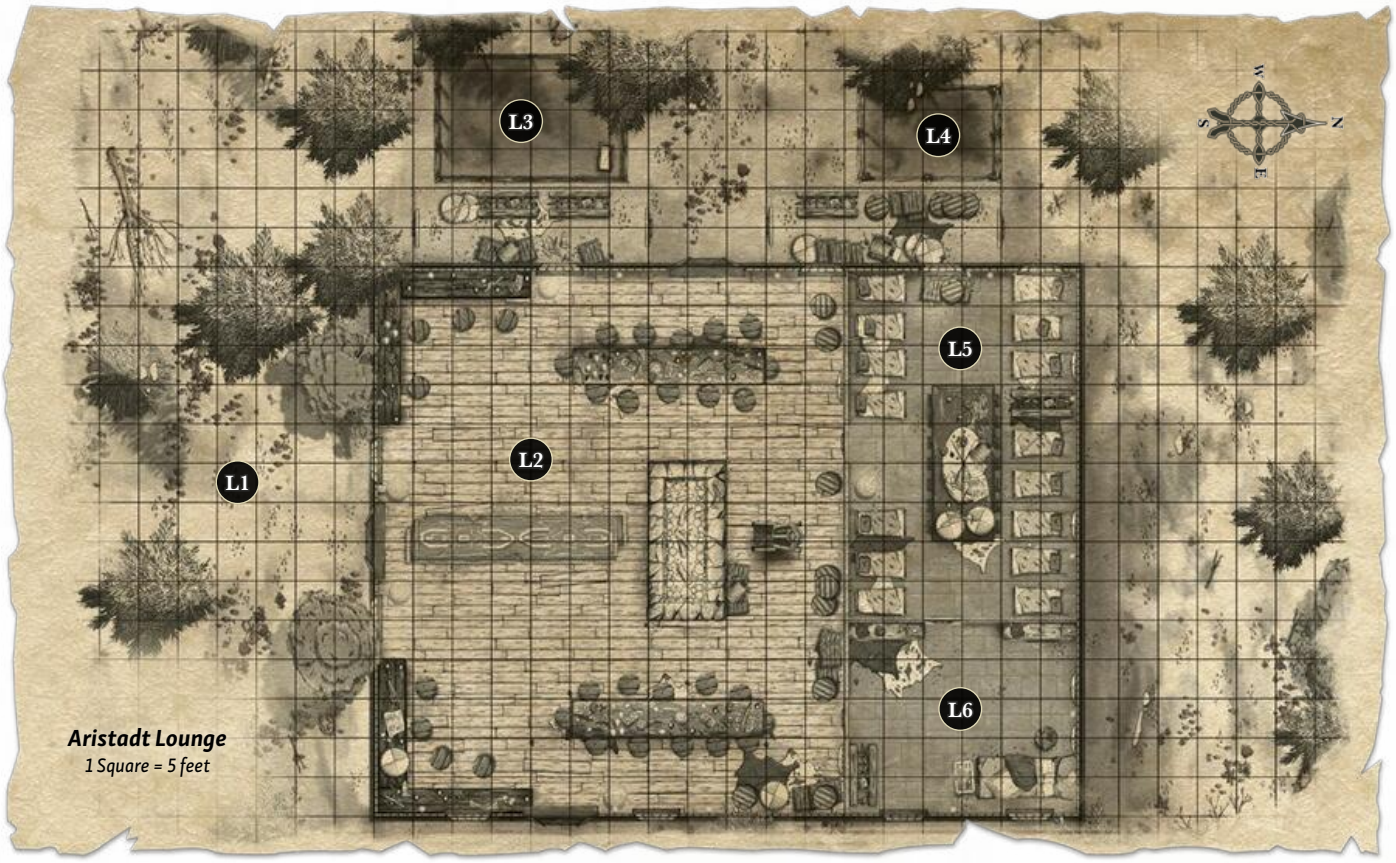
Developments

The following changes occur on these turns of this raid:

Turn 5: The stronghold enters a prepared state, causing certain areas of the stronghold to change as described in the "Prepared" section of those areas.

Turn 10: The stronghold musters horse-riding reinforcements that begin attacking the raiders besieging its walls. At the end of each turn, 1d6 warriors die. Casualties stop mounting once the characters and their raiders retreat.

Commander's Death: If Thegn Rutger is killed or captured, all hostile humanoids in this stronghold offer their surrender. If the characters accept, they can conquer this stronghold and loot it at their leisure, out of initiative order.



Event: Raid of Kirkbridge

Prerequisite: *Made camp outside Kirkbridge*

Questgiver: Hrafen av Skeir
Location: Kirkbridge
Downtime: 1 week
Content Warning: War, civilians in peril

When the raid begins, read or paraphrase:

> *Your raiding party has arrived on the outskirts of Kirkbridge, a walled town constantly fighting against invasions from the corrupted forest beyond. Its sturdy stone walls are crumbling, and the twisted treants from the forest have planted rapidly growing trees within the walls. This town may be difficult to breach, but once inside, its people are easy prey.*
>
> *What zones of the town will you send your warriors to first?*

Resources and Supplies

If the characters or GM don't wish to track the raiding crew's inventory throughout summer, the party begins this raid with the following spread of resources and supplies instead:

- 75 warriors
- 250 pounds of timber
- 150 pounds of iron
- 2 casks of drake fire
- 10 horses
- 20 tall shields
- 1 battering ram

The bonuses granted by these supplies are fully described in chapter 3 of *Raiders' Guide to Valika* and in the abridged Raiding Rules found in Appendix D. If the players have fewer warriors and supplies, this raid may be more difficult than expected.

Kirkbridge Town Features

Kirkbridge is a walled town amid a deep forest.

Rapid Burn. Fresh kindling covers the forest floor, and fires start quickly and burn hot. Casks of drake fire grant a +4 bonus instead of +2.

Kettled In. Once a raiding party has entered Kirkbridge, it's easy to get trapped within its walls when trying to retreat. If a retreat is called without first conquering either the River Gate (zone T7) or the Main Gate (zone T2), half of the warriors in the raiding party are killed while retreating.

Imperial Bridge. Kirkbridge is bisected by the Kirkrun River. Spanning this river is a large and impressive stone bridge (zone T6). Depending on where the raiders enter from (zone T1 or T2 in the west of town or zone T3 in the east), they must conquer the bridge to attack conflict zones on the other side of the river.

Reinforcements by Ship

At the start of any turn after conquering the River Gate (zone T7), the characters can call in reinforcements, adding the warriors they left behind to protect their ships to their warrior count.

Conflict Zones

The following conflict zones can be targeted in this raid. The GM's map of this region shows which conflict zones must be conquered as a prerequisite to attacking others or for reaching St. Hermia's Cathedral (this site's stronghold).

T1: Western Forest Incursion

Minimum Force: 5 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 14
Supplies Bonus: Drake fire causes instant victory with no casualties but destroys all supplies and causes the Turn 4 development to happen early (see "Developments," below)
Plunder: 200 pounds of timber
Captives: —

> *The dark boughs of the Norden woodlands have breached the tall walls of Kirkbridge. It's easy to sneak through undetected by the town guard, but the trees possess a dark semblance of life and tear at your warriors as they pass.*

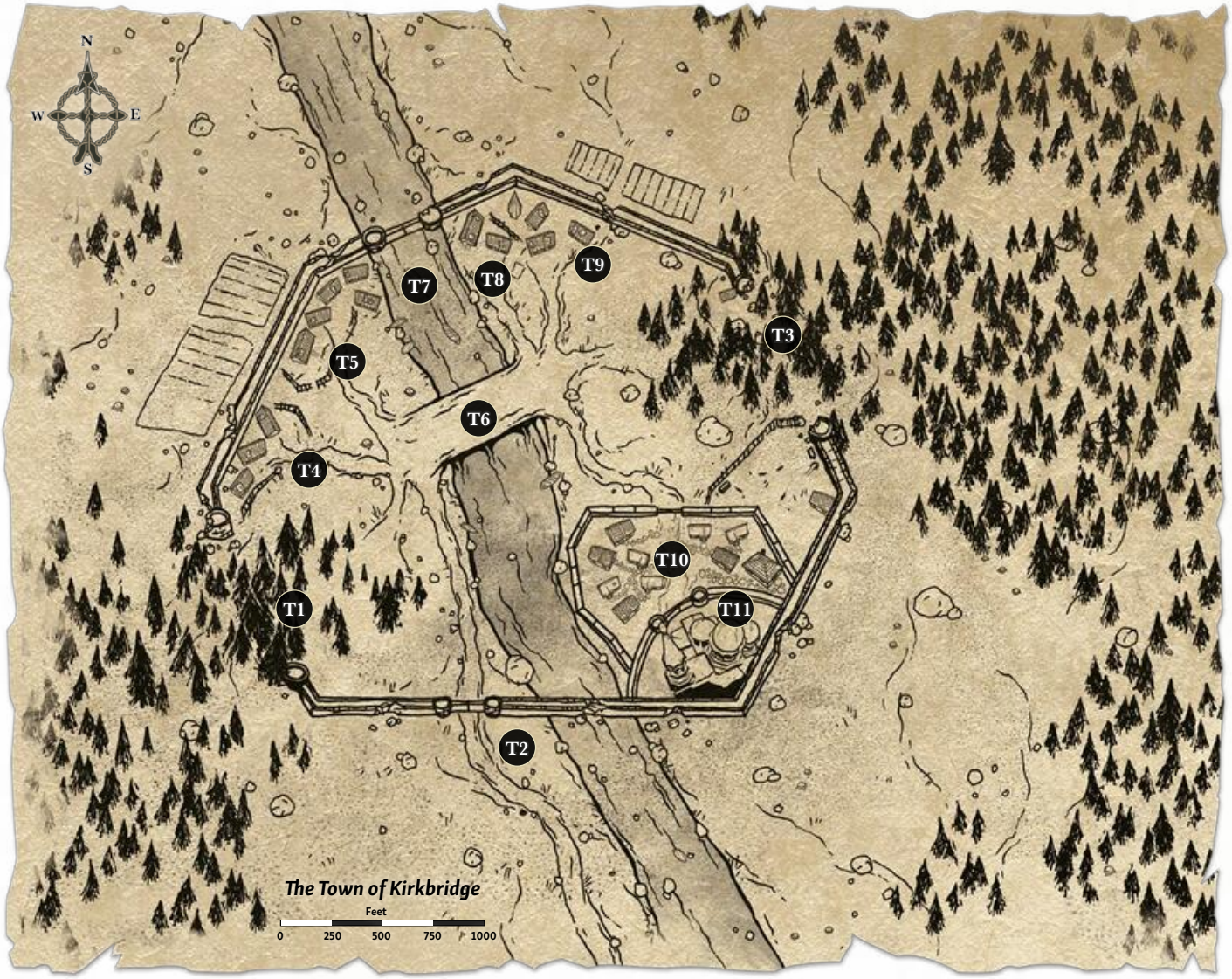
T2: Main Gate

Minimum Force: 5 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 18
Supplies Bonus: Battering ram, tall shields
Plunder: 500 sp in jewelry, 100 pounds of iron, and 10 horses
Special: If the attack fails, the town guard is alerted, causing Turn 4's development to happen early (see "Developments," below).

> *The main gate of Kirkbridge is unusually small, and one of your raiders mutters that the town must have once had larger roads that fell out of use. Two crenelated towers loom over the road, and a heavy wooden gate bars access to the town. The walls bristle with archers who scan the road—do they know you are coming?*

T3: Eastern Forest Incursion

This zone has the same statistics as zone T1.



T4: Finsterlog Neighborhood

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone T1, T2, or T6*

Minimum Force: 10 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 12
Supplies Bonus: Horses; drake fire causes instant victory with no casualties but destroys all supplies and kills all potential captives
Plunder: 500 sp, 150 pounds of timber, and a *+1 hand axe*
Captives: 20 captives

> *This shabby neighborhood is pressed tight against the outer wall, and it bears the scars of constant battle against the Norden woodlands. Bonfires burn constantly in this neighborhood, filling the air with smoke.*

T5: Flussufer Market

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone T1, T2, or T6*

Minimum Force: 20 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 10
Supplies Bonus: Horses, tall shields
Plunder: 750 sp, 200 gp worth of furs, foodstuffs, and trade goods, 50 pounds. of iron, and 10 horses
Captives: 30 captives

> *A marketplace by the riverside blocks access to the gate on the Kirkrun River. A contingent of crossbow-touting armored warriors—the most fearsome-looking foes you've seen so far—have barricaded themselves in this neighborhood.*

T6: Bridge Over the Kirkrun River

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone T1, T2, or T3*

Minimum Force: 20 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 18
Supplies Bonus: Battering ram, horses, tall shields
Plunder: —
Special: If drake fire casks are used, the explosive force collapses the bridge. The attack is a critical defeat regardless of the roll, and this zone can't be conquered.

> *A vast stone bridge spans the Kirkrun River. The town militia has taken up its defense and raised heavy barricades all along it.*

T7: River Gate

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone T5 or T8*

Minimum Force: 5 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 16
Supplies Bonus: Battering ram, tall shields
Plunder: 50 pounds of iron
Special: Conquering this zone opens the river gate (see "Escape by River," above).

> *Two stone towers loom over the Kirkrun River. Between them is a gate made of sharpened tree trunks lashed together. A complex system of pulleys and iron chains allow the gate to be raised and lowered to allow ships in and out of the town. From the towers, armored soldiers in imperial colors train their crossbows on you.*

T8: Zuflucht Neighborhood

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone T3 or T6*

This zone has the same statistics as zone T5.

T9: Zittern Neighborhood

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone T3 or T6*

This zone has the same statistics as zone T4.

T10: Kasematte Walled Neighborhood

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone T3 or T6*

Minimum Force: 20 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 14
Supplies Bonus: Battering ram, tall shields
Plunder: 2,500 sp, 200 gp worth of jewelry and art, and a chest of fine silks and regal clothing that will make the characters very popular in Ragvall Village (see "Conclusion," earlier in this chapter)
Captives: 30 captives

> *A sturdy defensive wall and oaken gates protect this wealthy neighborhood. Only a small detachment of imperial soldiers defends it. Countless civilians, rich and poor alike, huddle within this solid wall.*

T11: Saint Hermia's Cathedral

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone T10*

Once reached, the characters can choose to end this event and attack the church directly. This begins **Event: Attack on St. Hermia's.**

Developments

Certain conflict zones change at the start of the following turns of this raid:

Turn 3: People panic, and riots break out. The Raiding Roll DC of the neighborhoods (zones T4, T5, T8, and T9) increases by 1.

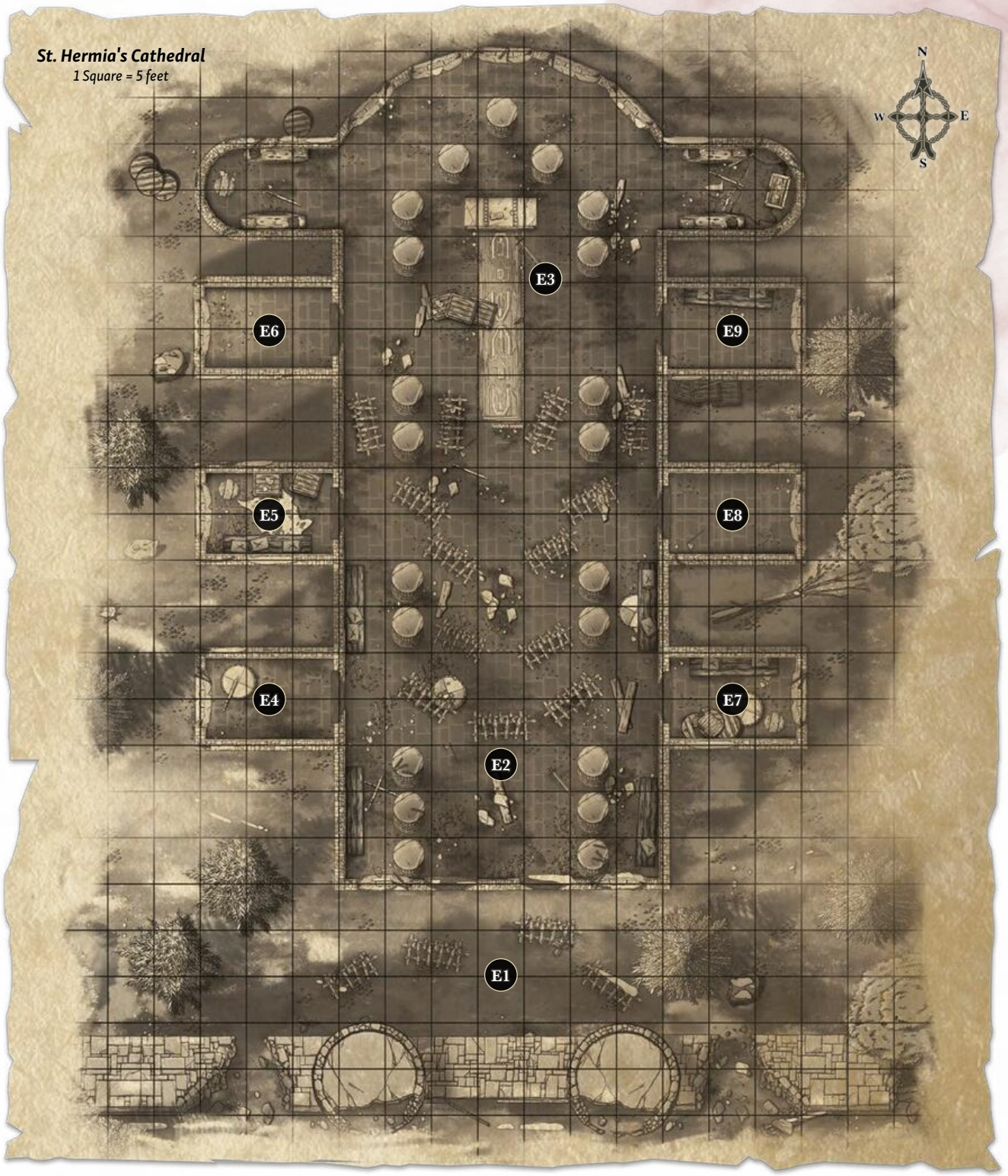
Turn 4: Imperial guards along the walls rally to the militia's aid and reinforce the bridge. The Raiding Roll DC of zone T6 increases by 2 (to DC 20), if it hasn't already been conquered.

Turn 6: After six hours, the church defenders fully fortify their position. All areas within the stronghold gain the benefits of being Prepared. See the "Prepared" section in **Event: The First Conquest.**

Turn 8: After eight hours, reinforcements from a nearby imperial outpost can be called. Horse riders flood in from the west and guard the entrance to the cathedral. The cathedral can no longer be entered unless one of the characters makes a successful DC 18 Dexterity (Stealth) or Charisma (Deception or Performance) check on this turn to elude, dupe, or distract the reinforcements.

Turn 9: The imperial riders sweep through the town, killing half of the warriors brought on this raid. The raiders are outnumbered and outmatched, and defeat is imminent.

Turn 10: The imperial riders complete their counterattack, killing all remaining warriors brought on this raid. The characters can retreat and escape with their lives.



Event: Attack on St. Hermia's

Questgiver: Hrafen av Skeir
Location: St. Hermia's Cathedral, Kirkbridge
Downtime: 1 week
Content Warning: War, civilians in peril

The Ragvallan raiders have stormed the castle-like fortifications of St. Hermia's Cathedral in the walled town of Kirkbridge. The ruler of Kirkbridge is also the head cleric of the cathedral: Vicar Claive Sullish. He is supposedly a descendant of Hermia, the saint who founded Kirkbridge.

The vicar is a good-hearted man. As a devotee of the Arch Seraph Aphaelon, he has worked tirelessly to preserve peace in Kirkbridge and root out corruption within his church. He wields potent magic, but this is not because he inherited the divine power of Saint Hermia's bloodline, as many believe. His secret is that he is simply an evoker trained at the Pinnacle of Theurgy in Erlefurt.

St. Hermia's Cathedral Features

The areas of the cathedral have the following features unless otherwise stated in that area's description:

Barricades. Spiked wooden barricades have been set up throughout the cathedral. They are objects that occupy two adjacent 5-foot spaces. They have AC 14, 30 hit points, vulnerability to fire damage, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. A creature that enters or starts its turn in a barricade's space takes 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

Ceilings. The indoor areas of this cathedral have vaulted, 40-foot-tall ceilings.

Columns. Many columns support the cathedral's vaulted ceiling. A Medium creature can occupy the same space as a column to gain half cover.

Light. The tall, stained-glass windows of this cathedral allow its indoor areas to be brightly lit during the daytime.

Windows. This church is decorated with beautiful stained-glass windows. A window has AC 13 and 2 hit points. A successful DC 12 Strength check made by a creature within reach of a window also shatters it. A creature pushed into the window's space smashes the window and falls through it.

Areas of the Cathedral

The characters begin storming the cathedral in area E1, within the stone walls surrounding it.

E1: Entry Courtyard

Once the characters enter the stronghold, read or paraphrase the following:

> *Your raiders burst the gates of the church courtyard open, and then they immediately wheel about to repel an attack from the Kirkbridge militia. Their foes are fast and fierce, and better trained than the villagers in Aristadt. Time will be short.*
>
> *In the church courtyard before you stand two knights in polished Bürachi armor. The knights wear no helmets, revealing dirtless, clean-shaven faces similar enough that the knights must be brothers. "Hold, heathens!" one bellows, pointing his broadsword at you. "Only over my corpse will you defile this holy place! Turn back or accept your eternal torment!"*

Holding the line in front of the church are two sworn knights of the Bürach Empire and a few fanatical members of the clergy. These knights are brothers named Alger and Ernst (LG, male humans), freshly sent north by imperial decree.

Hostile Creatures. The following hostile creatures are in this area:

- 2 **knights** in front of the barricades
- 2 **druids** behind the barricades
- 8 **cultists** equipped with shortbows (+3 to hit, *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage), to the east and west of the entrance

Prepared. If the stronghold is in a prepared state, the doors to the cathedral are closed and barred. The front doors to this church are made of sturdy oak reinforced with iron bands. Once barred from within (AC 16, 30 hit points, vulnerability to fire damage, and immunity to poison and psychic damage), they can only be opened from the outside by destroying them or forcing them by making a successful DC 18 Strength check as an action. The door can be unbarred from within as an action.

E2: Nave

The interior of the cathedral is split into two sections: the nave (area E2) and the apse (area E3). The nave is typically filled with pews for the congregation, and the apse contains the altar. Currently, all the pews have been overturned and have had spears laid upon them to create spiked barricades.

Doors line the east and west walls, leading to six sealed chambers. These six rooms are commonly used as crypts, prayer rooms, and vaults in churches dedicated to the Arch Seraphs, as they represent the six wings of the seraphs.

Hidden Foes in Area E3. Hiding behind the altar in the cathedral's apse is Vicar Claive Sullish, a skilled **mage**. He also has two **knights** hiding in the alcoves to his left and right. He doesn't come out of hiding to attack until the characters have entered 30 feet into the nave.

Hostile Creatures. The following hostile creatures defend the church's nave as soon as the characters enter:

- 8 **scouts**
- 4 **druids**

These defenders position themselves in the center of the nave, which has been blocked off by barricades. They do not move from this position unless forced to. Instead, they make ranged attacks against invaders. They can drop prone (no action required) to gain three-quarters cover from their barricades.

Treasure. There is no treasure stockpiled in this main room. It has all been moved to the side chambers.

Prepared. If the stronghold is in a prepared state, six additional barricades are placed in front of the six doors to areas E4 through E9.

E3: Apse

> *A white-marble altar stands in the center of this apse, illuminated from above by the prismatic glow of light filtering through the stained-glass windows.*
>
> *As soon as you approach, an old man in the white robes and golden stole of a high priest stands from behind the altar. At the same time, two armored knights emerge from the alcoves. "This far and no further," the priest growls. "I am a man of peace, yet still I am only a man—and a man cannot abide the slaughter of his kin. Perish in flames."*

Hostile Creatures. The following hostile creatures burst from hiding as soon as the characters move halfway down the nave:

- Vicar Claive Sullish hiding behind the altar; use **mage** statistics
- Two **knights** hiding in the east and west alcove

Treasure. Atop the altar is a solid gold icon of the Arch Seraph Aphaelon, worth 300 gp.

E4: West Sealed Crypt

This crypt holds the sealed tomb of Saint Hermia. It can be forced open using an action and making a successful DC 18 Strength check.

Treasure. Inside the tomb are old bones, and:

- A *censer of controlling air elementals*
- Priestly finery worth 100 gp

E5: West Sanctuary

A dozen civilians are huddled in this small prayer room.

Treasure. As an action, a character can grab a commoner and make a DC 12 Charisma (Intimidation) check to force the person to hand over whatever they're holding (an heirloom or piece of jewelry worth 3d12 gp) on a success. As an action, a character can also make a DC 18 Charisma (Intimidation) check to force the villagers to throw their valuables onto the floor on a success, worth a total of 130 (2d12 × 10) gp.

Killing a commoner grants advantage on ability checks made to influence the commoners in this raid site for 1 minute.

E6: West Transept Vault

This vault contains money tithed by the church to fund town wall repairs as well as repairs for the church. Other bits of fine décor are also hastily shoved in this room.

Prepared. If the stronghold is in a prepared state, a trap has been set in this room:

- The other side of the door has a bear trap affixed to it. A creature entering this room without succeeding on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, it takes 2 (1d4) damage and has its speed halved until the trap is removed by using an action to make a successful DC 15 Strength check.

Treasure. The vault is filled with treasure, including:

- A chest containing 750 sp and 2,500 cp
- A dozen golden candelabras, each worth 20 gp
- An assortment of jewelry tithed instead of coinage, worth 100 gp in total

Each piece of treasure can be collected as an action.

E7: East Sealed Crypt

This crypt contains three small sarcophagi, each containing the bones of three halfling sisters who helped Saint Hermia carve Kirkbridge from the Norden woodlands. Each casket can be forced open by using an action to make a successful DC 13 Strength check.

Treasure. Inside the sarcophagi are the sisters' bones, and this treasure:

- A golden necklace bearing immaculately fine engravings of Aphaelonite catechisms, worth 50 gp
- A suit of halfling-sized *adamantine plate armor*
- A golden circlet inlaid with a ruby, worth a total of 100 gp

E8: East Sanctuary

A dozen civilians are huddled in this small prayer room.

Treasure. As an action, a character can grab a commoner and make a DC 12 Charisma (Intimidation) check to force the person to hand over whatever is being held (an heirloom or piece of jewelry worth 3d12 gp) on a success. As an action, a character can also make a DC 18 Charisma (Intimidation) check to force the villagers to throw their valuables onto the floor on a success, worth a total of 130 (2d12 × 10) gp.

Killing a commoner grants advantage on any ability checks made to influence the commoners in this raid site for 1 minute.

E9: East Transept Vault

This vault contains artifacts of value to the church, including weaponry said to have been used by Saint Hermia herself.

Prepared. If the stronghold is in a prepared state, a trap has been set in this room:

- A *glyph of warding* has been inscribed upon the door. A creature that touches the door without uttering a prayer to Aphaelon triggers it. All creatures within 20 feet of the door must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw, taking 22 (5d8) fire damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one.

Treasure. The vault is filled with treasure, including:

- A *mace of disruption*, with a handle bearing the inscription: "May Aphaelon protect in peace, and may your strength protect amidst peril."
- Ten gilded phials of holy water, worth 20 gp each
- A a silver-tipped crozier bearing the holy symbol of Aphaelon (*+1 quarterstaff*), worth 100 gp as a piece of art

Developments

The following changes occur on these turns of this raid:

Turn 4: The stronghold enters a prepared state, causing certain areas of the stronghold to change as described in the "Prepared" section of those areas.

Turn 8: The stronghold musters a brigade of heavily-armored soldiers that counterattack the raiders besieging its walls. At the end of each turn, 1d6 warriors die. Casualties stop mounting once the characters and their raiders retreat.

Commander's Death: If Vicar Claive Sullish is killed, all hostile humanoids in this stronghold offer their surrender. They do not surrender if he is merely captured. If the characters accept, they can conquer this stronghold and loot it at their leisure, out of initiative order.

Event: The Sack of Erlefurt

Prerequisite: Made camp outside Erlefurt

Questgiver: Hrafen av Skeir
Location: Erlefurt
Downtime: —
Content Warning: War, civilians in peril

The chief's plan is to destroy the grate, storm the city, destroy the watch towers protecting the bay (see "Reinforcements by Ship," below), and then make a quick getaway on your longships. When the raid begins, read or paraphrase:

> *Your raiding party has made a hidden camp in the woods just beyond the walls of Erlefurt. There are two main gates into the city but attacking them would be tantamount to suicide. Instead, your scouts have identified a grate in the wall that allows a river to flow through the walls and into the bay.*
>
> *What zones of the town will you send your warriors to first?*

Resources and Supplies

If the characters or GM don't wish to track the raiding crew's inventory throughout summer, the party begins this raid with the following spread of resources and supplies instead:

- 100 warriors
- 0 pounds of timber
- 0 pounds of iron
- 2 casks of drake fire
- 20 horses
- 30 tall shields
- 2 battering rams

The bonuses granted by these supplies are fully described in chapter 3 of *Raiders' Guide to Valika* and in the abridged Raiding Rules found in Appendix D. If the players have fewer warriors and supplies, this raid may be more difficult than expected.

Erlefurt Features

The city of Erlefurt has the following features:

Mage Artillery. When you attack a conflict zone, an additional 25 percent of the warriors assigned to that zone are killed.

Faithless Mages. When a conflict zone with "College" in its name is conquered, roll 1d6 for each Mage College conquered during this raid. If any of the dice roll the same number, the mages retreat from the city. This raid site loses the Mage Artillery feature. Alternatively, conquering the Pinnacle of Theurgy (zone C8) also causes the raid site to lose the "Mage Artillery" feature.

Kettled In. Once a raiding party has entered Erlefurt, it's easy to get trapped within its walls when trying to retreat. If a retreat is called without first conquering either side of the Sea Gate (either zone C12 or C13) or one of the main gates (either zone C2 or C3), half of the warriors in the raiding party are killed while retreating.

Reinforcements by Ship

At the start of any turn after conquering either side of the Sea Gate (zone C12 or C13), the characters can call in reinforcements, adding the warriors they left behind to protect their ships to their warrior count.

Conflict Zones

The following conflict zones can be targeted in this raid. The GM's map of this region shows which conflict zones must be conquered as a prerequisite to attacking others or for reaching Nordenmark Palace (this site's stronghold).

C1: Nordenmark River Sluice

Minimum Force: 50 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 0
Supplies Bonus: —
Plunder: —
Special: Your raiding crew can't suffer casualties capturing this zone.

> *A culvert wide enough for five warriors to walk through shoulder-to-shoulder is the clearest breach in the walls of Erlefurt. It is blocked by a heavy iron grate, but removing it should pose little problem for your warriors.*

C2: The Eastgate

Minimum Force: 20 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 22
Supplies Bonus: Battering ram, tall shields
Plunder: 1,000 sp in jewelry and 200 pounds of iron
Special: If the attack fails, the town guard is alerted, causing the Turn 4 developments to happen early (see "Developments," below).

> *The gates of Erlefurt stand tall and proud, even though its walls are vine-choked and slowly crumbling. Its towers fly proud banners of the Bürach Empire, and rows of well-armed, yet visibly haggard, imperial soldiers patrol the walls.*

C3: The Westgate

This zone has the same statistics as zone C2.

"We are so close to Erlefurt! We have a few ways of getting in and getting the supplies we need to continue. I have faith we can breach into the city. This is my best piece of advice; make sure you don't get trapped within the city's walls, it can quickly become a death trap."

- Chief Hrafen av Skeir

C4: Low Town Neighborhoods

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone C1, C2, C5, or C6*

Minimum Force: 5 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 13
Supplies Bonus: Drake fire causes instant victory with no casualties but destroys all supplies and kills all potential captives
Plunder: 500 sp, 150 pounds of timber, and 20 horses
Captives: 20 captives

The slums of Erlefurt are crammed against its southern wall. Few guards patrol it, but its people courageously defend their meager homes.

C5: Dock Town Markets

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone C4 or C11*

Minimum Force: 5 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 15
Supplies Bonus: Horses
Plunder: 2,000 sp, 500 gp worth of furs, foodstuffs, and trade goods, and 50 pounds of iron
Captives: 30 captives

The dockside markets of Erlefurt are filled with fishmongers, furriers, and kitschy trinkets.

C6: Unten Mage College of Conjuration

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone C4, C5, C7, or C8*

Minimum Force: 5 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 18
Supplies Bonus: Battering ram, tall shields
Plunder: Spell components and arcane texts worth 1,000 gp and an *amulet of health*
Special: If this zone is conquered, uncontrolled animals and elementals spread through the city, lowering the Raiding Roll DC of all zones by 2.

Within the shining stone walls of Unten College are animals and elementals collected for study and replication through the use of summoning magic. Most of its mages are still neophytes, and they are wont to lose control of their creations.

C7: Ataraxia College of Illusion

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone C3, C6, C8, or C9.*

Minimum Force: 5 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 18
Supplies Bonus: Battering ram, tall shields
Plunder: Spell components and arcane texts worth 1,000 gp and a *ring of swimming*
Special: If this zone is conquered, uncontrolled daemons spread through the city, lowering the Raiding Roll DC of all zones by 2.

> *The illusionists of Ataraxia College draw upon shadowy magic said to be connected to an Arch-Daemon known as Venin. Rumors say that within the college's onyx-black, mirror-shine walls are countless daemons being tortured for their arcane secrets.*

C8: Pinnacle of Theurgy

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone C3, C8, C10, or C11*

Minimum Force: 8 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 18
Supplies Bonus: Battering ram, tall shields
Plunder: Spell components and arcane texts worth 2,000 gp and a *ring of spell storing*
Special: If this zone is conquered, its commander, Lord Duma Felsinger, retreats to an extradimensional space and destructs his tower so that its secrets can't be revealed. The tower violently collapses, sending a wave of stone across the city center. Additionally, the raid site loses its Mage Artillery feature (see "Erlefurt Features," above).

> *This tower is a gothic, gargoyle-festooned spire that appears to have grown cancerously out of a beautiful, Bürachi-style cathedral. Only powerful magic could have created this disturbing structure.*

C9: Adiaphoron College of Necromancy

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone C3, C8, or C10*

Minimum Force: 5 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 18
Supplies Bonus: Battering ram, tall shields
Plunder: Spell components and arcane texts worth 1,000 gp and a *ring of swimming*
Special: If warriors die attacking this zone (in victory or defeat), the GM can assign undead warriors equal to the casualties to any conflict zone in the city. Each undead warrior increases that zone's Raiding Roll DC by 1 (maximum 5 undead warriors per zone).

> *This college of necromancy is bleak and stark. It resembles a military fortress more than a school. The houses around the college are all unnervingly plain, a thin ploy to desperately convince the people around them that they're no threat to the city.*

C10: Eudaimonia College of Enchantment

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone C8 or C9*

Minimum Force: 10 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 13
Supplies Bonus: Battering ram, tall shields
Plunder: Spell components and arcane texts worth 1,000 gp and a *ring of animal influence*
Special: The first Raiding Roll against this zone has disadvantage.

> *Flowers bloom in gorgeous flowerboxes outside of every window on this ivory-walled campus, and their scent is thick and sweet. Just being here makes you feel like laying down your arms.*

C11: High Town Square and Docks

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone C5 or C8*

Minimum Force: 5 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 18
Supplies Bonus: Horses, tall shields
Plunder: 4,000 sp, 1,000 gp worth of furs, foodstuffs, and trade goods, and 200 pounds of iron
Captives: 40 captives

> *The dockside markets of this wealthy quarter of Erlefurt are well-defended by imperial soldiers. High-quality foodstuffs, clothing, and jewelry are being hastily packed by merchants desperately trying to escape to their ships.*

C12: Sea Gate West

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone C11*

Minimum Force: 10 warriors
Raiding Roll DC: 16
Supplies Bonus: Horses, tall shields
Plunder: 100 pounds of iron
Captives: —

> *The Sea Gate of Erlefurt is actually a pair of stone towers equipped with ballistae and catapults. Manned by some of the best siege engineers in the empire, these towers are easily able to target ship entering the harbor. However, incapacitating even one tower creates safe waters for your longships to land on the beach.*

C13: Sea Gate East

Prerequisite: *Must have conquered zone C2, C4, or C5*

This zone has the same statistics as zone C12.

C14: Nordenmark Palace

Once reached, the characters can choose to end this event and attack the palace directly. This begins **Event: Storming the Palace.**

Developments

Certain conflict zones change at the start of the following turns of this raid:

Turn 3: People panic, and riots break out. The Raiding Roll DC of the gates, neighborhoods, and markets (zones C2, C3, C4, C5, and C11) increases by 1.

Turn 4: Imperial guards reinforce the city gates. Retreat now incurs 100 percent casualties unless either of the land gates (zone C2 or C3) is conquered (50 percent casualties) or either of the sea gates (zone C12 or C13) is conquered (no casualties).

Turn 6: After six hours, the palace defenders fully fortify their position. All areas within the stronghold gain the benefits of being Prepared. See the "Prepared" section in **Event: Storming the Palace.**

Turn 8: After eight hours, reinforcements from a garrison outside of the city arrive. Horse riders flood in from the west and guard the entrance to the palace. The palace can no longer be entered unless one of the characters makes a successful DC 18 Dexterity (Stealth) or Charisma (Deception or Performance) check on this turn to elude, dupe, or distract the reinforcements.

Turn 9: The imperial riders sweep through the town, killing half of the warriors brought on this raid. The raiders are outnumbered and outmatched, and defeat is imminent.

Turn 10: The imperial riders complete their counterattack, killing all remaining warriors brought on this raid. The characters are captured, and the GM can create a scenario for them to escape execution.

Event: Storming the Palace

Questgiver: Hrafen av Skeir
Location: Nordenmark Palace, Erlefurt
Downtime: 1 week
Content Warning: War, civilians in peril, implied infidelity, implied suicide

The Ragvallan raiders have burst through the gates of Nordenmark Palace, the seat of imperial power in the Nordenland region. As the home to Archduchess Maelfa Erlekind (LE, female **mage**), the last of the founding bloodline of Erlefurt, it is the best-defended stronghold in all of Nordenland.

Maelfa is a prideful woman and refuses to either give quarter or accept it. If the Valikans do not retreat, she gladly gives them a fight to the death. Her personal guards are an order of knights known throughout Nordenland as the Grünenritter, and they share their duchess's stubborn, highborn pride.

Nordenmark Palace Features

The areas of the palace have the following features unless otherwise stated in that area's description:

Ceilings. The indoor areas of this palace have 20-foot-tall lavishly painted ceilings.

Doors. The doors of this palace are made of sturdy wood and are locked. Each door has AC 15, 20 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. A door can be breached by destroying it, using an action to force it open by making a successful DC 15 Strength check, or using an action to pick the lock by making a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools.

Furnishings. The indoor areas of this palace are adorned with opulent art and furnishings.

Walls. The walls of this palace are made of sturdy stone. Each 5-foot section of wall has AC 18, 50 hit points, a damage threshold of 25, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

Areas of the Palace

The characters begin storming the palace in area M1 just outside its doors.

M1: Palace Doors

> *The sturdy doors of the palace stand before you, already broken open by a battering ram wielded by your warriors. Those raiders salute you and wish you luck as they turn to the castle gates and draw their blades, guarding your back as you enter. The fighting is fierce and bloody. The archduchess's knights are struggling to keep up with your warriors' relentless offense, but they are slowly gaining the upper hand through superior training. Time is short.*
>
> *Suddenly, arrows fly from the walls. There are archers firing from arrow slits!*

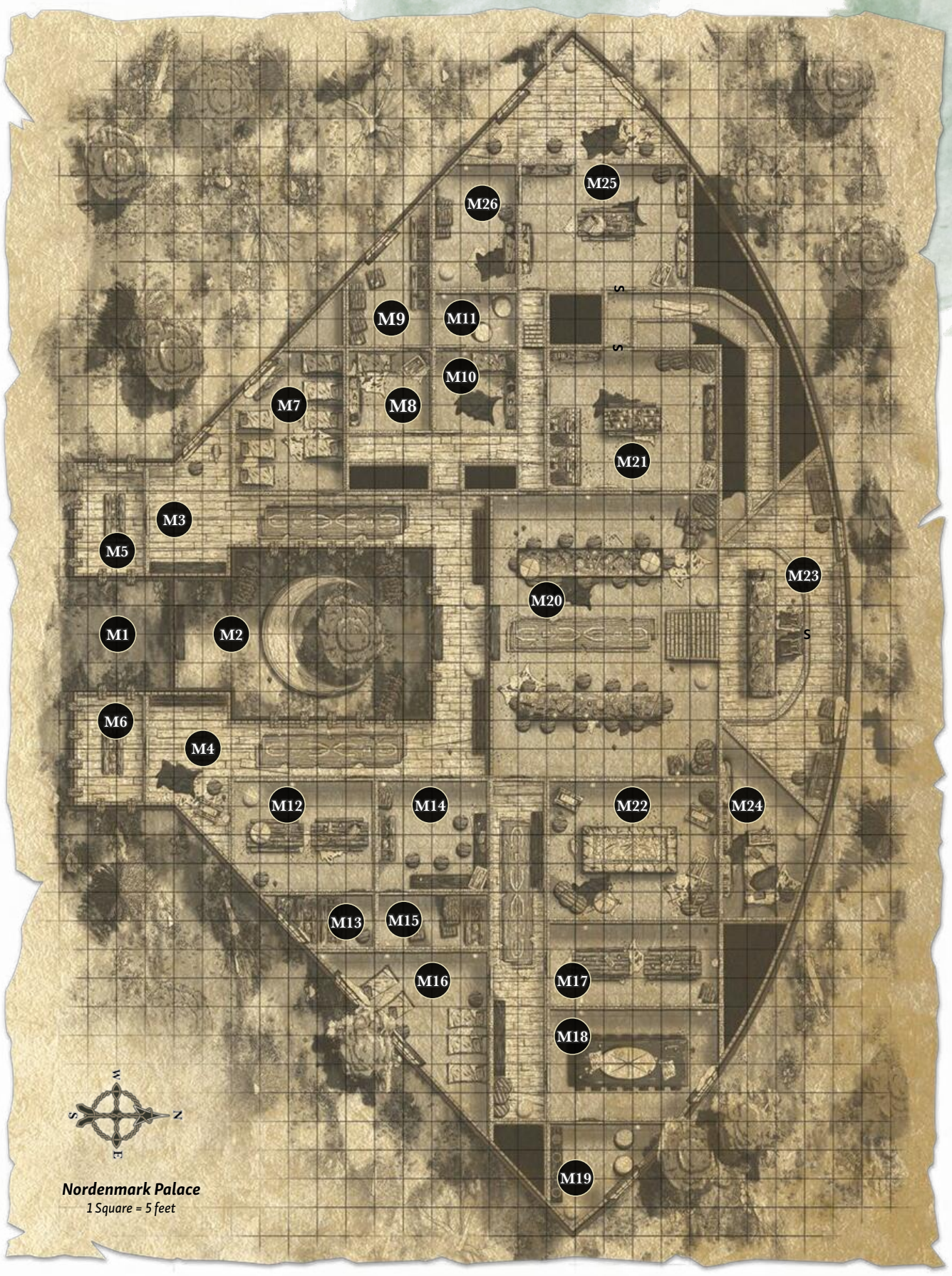
There are arrow slits on the east and west walls of this area, allowing the six **scouts** in areas M5 and M6 to attack intruders. These scouts have advantage on their attack rolls when they surprise the characters. The arrow slits grant the archers three-quarters cover against attacks from the other side of the wall.

In this surprise round, these six scouts can make a total of twelve attacks before initiative is rolled.

Prepared. If the stronghold is in a prepared state, the archers poison their arrows. Each arrow deals an additional 4 (1d8) poison damage on a hit.

M2: Verdant Courtyard

> *Immediately inside the doors of the castle is a splendid courtyard with a healthy yew tree spreading its boughs to the sky above. The immense tree is encircled by a crescent-shaped water feature. To the left and right are doors leading farther inside the palace, and there is another pair of double doors on the other side of the courtyard.*



Nordenmark Palace
1 Square = 5 feet

Arrow slits are built into the walls of the courtyard, giving the ten **scouts** in the halls north of areas M3 and M4 a clear line of attack to the courtyard.

Prepared. If the stronghold is in a prepared state, there are a pair of **veterans** standing in front of the northern double doors. They use the yew tree as cover against ranged attacks while attacking with their heavy crossbows to lure the characters into range of the arrow slits in the courtyard.

Treasure. There are no obvious treasures in this room. However, a character who uses an action to search the courtyard can make a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check. On a success, the character finds a *staff of the woodlands* curled in the branches of the yew tree.

M3: West Hall

This room connects to a hallway that leads to the head servants' quarters and to the archduchess's quarters.

Hostile Creatures. The following hostile creatures are in this area:

- Five **scouts** in the hall to the north

If combat breaks out here, the scouts in area M5 join the fight.

Treasure. This hall contains ten portraits of past archdukes and archduchesses, each worth 100 gp.

M4: East Hall

This room connects to a hallway that leads to the palace's guest quarters.

Hostile Creatures. The following hostile creatures are in this area:

- Five **scouts** in the hall to the north

If combat breaks out here, the scouts in area M6 join the fight.

Treasure. This hall contains ten lavishly decorated vases in an imperial style, each worth 100 gp.

M5: West Gatehouse

This unadorned chamber houses three **scouts**.

M6: East Gatehouse

This unadorned chamber houses three **scouts**.

M7: Ducal Knights' Quarters

The most trusted warriors of the archduchess's ducal knights, the Grünenritter, are lodged here. They are presently mustering in the knights' tower to the northwest of the castle (not depicted on this map).

Treasure. This room contains seven lockboxes holding the ducal knights' jewelry and pay. A lockbox can be forced open easily as an action, but a stack of four lockboxes can be collected without opening it as an action. When opened, each lockbox contains a total of 3d10 × 10 gp and a ring or amulet worth 50 gp.

> "Are these portraits magical? I hate patrolling this way. I feel like I'm being watched. Do you even recognize this one? Was it here last time?"
>
> *- Unnamed scout to the north of West Hall*

M8: Head of Staff's Quarters

The archduchess's head of staff resides here. This room is immaculately clean and filled with ledgers of all servants working in the palace and information on their backgrounds. It's obvious that the archduchess's head of staff is a meticulous man.

Treasure. There are no obvious treasures in this room other than a gold-framed portrait of the archduchess worth 100 gp. However, a character who takes or investigates this painting finds a safe embedded in the wall. As an action, a character can pick the safe's lock by making a successful DC 20 Dexterity check using thieves' tools or force it open by making a successful DC 20 Strength check.

Trap. If the wall safe is forced open, a mechanism within the safe sprays a potent dose of a hallucinogenic toxin called Breath of Beleth into the air. All creatures within 20 feet of the safe must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute.

While poisoned in this way, the creature immediately becomes frightened of all hostile creatures it can see, and it must take the Dash action and move away from them by the safest available route on each of its turns, unless there is nowhere to move. If no hostile creatures are in sight, the poison has no effect until a creature comes into sight.

Wall Safe. Inside the safe is a dossier holding extortive secrets on every Bürachi noble from Erlefurt to Altenheim. To the average person, it's just worthless paper. However, to the right buyer (see "R18: De Morencia Trading Post" in chapter 3), it could sell for up to 5,000 gp.

M9: Head of Staff's Washroom

This washroom is lovely and spotlessly clean, but it contains little of apparent value. However, the lavender-scented soaps and delicate hand mirrors will delight the Valikans back in Ragvall Village and make the raiders very popular (see "Conclusion," earlier in this chapter).

M10: Head Chef's Quarters

The archduchess's head chef lives here. The mess in her room is so severe, it looks as though it's already been raided.

Treasure. So cluttered is this room that a character must use an action to make a successful DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check to find anything valuable. The chef has a notebook filled with recipes that will delight the Valikans back home, but the most valuable thing she possesses is a wedding ring with a sapphire inlaid, worth a total of 500 gp.

M11: Head Chef Washroom

This washroom is also an unsalvageable mess. A character who spends an action to sift through the clutter will be sorely disappointed, as there's nothing of value in this room.

M12: Guest Quarters

Ten minor Bürachi **nobles** from Altenheim are staying here as guests of the archduchess. They mewl and cower before any raiders that enter.

Hostile Creatures. The following hostile creatures are in this area, guarding the cowering nobles:

- Six **guards**
- Two **knights**

Treasure. As an action, a character can grab a noble and make a DC 8 Charisma (Intimidation) check to force the person to hand over whatever is being held (an heirloom or piece of jewelry worth 3d10 × 10 gp) on a success. As an action, a character can also make a DC 15 Charisma (Intimidation) check to force the nobles to throw their valuables onto the floor on a success (worth a total of 3d10 × 100 gp).

Killing a noble grants advantage on ability checks made to influence the nobles in this raid site for 1 minute.

M13: Guest Washroom

The noble guests of the archduchess have left a bevy of fine clothing hanging in this washroom. There are:

- Ten fine dresses and doublets here worth a total of 500 gp

M14: Family Quarters

The archduchess's family, including her duke-consort Adam of Duesenberg, her three children, Elice, Malory, and Salen, and her elderly mother, Cornelia, are huddled here. All are **nobles** save for the children, who are noncombatants.

Hostile Creatures. The following hostile creatures are in this area, guarding the archduchess's family:

- Four **guards**
- Four **knights**

Treasure. As an action, a character can grab a noble and make a DC 8 Charisma (Intimidation) check to force the person to hand over whatever is being held (an heirloom or piece of jewelry worth 3d10 × 10 gp) on a success. As an action, a character can also make a DC 15 Charisma (Intimidation) check to force the nobles to throw their valuables onto the floor on a success (worth a total of 3d10 × 100 gp).

Killing a noble grants advantage on ability checks made to influence the nobles in this raid site for 1 minute.

M15: Family Washroom

This washroom is tidy. The duke-consort's wedding band (worth 500 gp) has been left on a side table, and four vials of ingestible poison (worth 50 gp each) sit next to it.

M16: Ducal Library

The archduchess's library is filled with books in the language of the Bürach Empire. The library is guarded by Remy Clarque, the aging librarian (LN, male half-elf **commoner**). He hides behind a shelf, waiting for the right moment to ambush a raider. He wields a dagger and futilely tries to defend his library—his life's work.

Treasure. It's unlikely the Valikans have a use for these books. However, to the right buyer, the high-quality books can sell for 10 gp per pound (see "R18: De Morencia Trading Post" in chapter 3). As an action, the characters can gather 20 pounds. of books from the shelves, up to a total of 200 pounds

M17: Spare Rooms

These spare rooms aren't occupied and are currently being used as extra storage.

Treasure. This area contains the following treasure:

- Stacks of fine silks, worth a total of 200 gp
- A crate of heirloom tapestries, worth 500 gp
- The archduchess's summer wardrobe, worth a total of 1,000 gp

M18: Imperial Quarters

This room is kept in pristine condition year-round in case of a surprise visit by one of the empire's heads of state. This includes either the true head of state, the young Emperor Aratron II, or the *de facto* head of state, Pope Roland Murrich.

Treasure. This area contains the following treasure:

- An unbearably tacky, solid-gold statuette of the young emperor, worth 500 gp
- A box filled with one hundred individual *spell scrolls* of *prestidigitation*, used for keeping such a grand personage as the emperor impeccably clean

M19: Imperial Washroom

This washroom is filled with the finest soaps, oils, and perfumes found within Nordenland. They're worth 300 gp.

M20: Great Hall

When the characters enter this hall, read or paraphrase the following:

> *Within this grand dining hall is arrayed a line of knights. Each one wears a distinctive green scarf draped over a shoulder. Their tall shields are lowered to create a wall before you, and behind that wall is a group of archers with arrows nocked. Behind them all is a woman dressed in black and purple, a high collar spread like a drake's frill behind her head. She arches a carefully penciled eyebrow and sneers at you.*
>
> *"Pathetic Valikan brutes. Your hubris will be the death of you." She turns to the archers beside her and jerks her thumb across her neck. They fire.*

These scouts all have readied actions to shoot their longbows as soon as they see raiders. Likewise, the knights with their shields have readied an action to Dodge as soon as they see the raiders.

Hostile Creatures. The following hostile creatures are in this area, guarding the cowering nobles:

- Four **knights**
- Eight **scouts**
- Archduchess Maelfa Erlekind (use **mage** statistics with 60 hit points)

The four knights fill the space between the two dining tables. The scouts line up behind them. The Archduchess Maelfa Erlekind stands in front of her throne.

If all four knights are reduced to 0 hit points or Archduchess Maelfa is reduced to half her hit point maximum, the archduchess flees into the secret passage behind her throne and runs to her chambers (see area M25).

Secret Passage. A hidden switch on the back of the archduchess's throne unlocks a sliding door. The door can be opened and closed as part of the same action. The door automatically locks itself when it's closed. As an action, a character can make a successful DC 19 Intelligence (Investigation) check to spot this door and its switch.

M21: Kitchen

The palace's servants—a total of twenty-four **commoners**—are holed up in the kitchen.

Hostile Creatures. One of the chefs is secretly an **assassin** who serves the archduchess, and she tries to sneak up on the characters as they pass through this room or shake down the servants. A character who succeeds on a DC 21 Wisdom (Insight or Perception) check notices the chef eyeing them for weaknesses or concealing a knife in her sleeve.

Treasure. As an action, a character can grab a commoner and make a DC 12 Charisma (Intimidation) check to force the person to hand over whatever is being held (an heirloom or piece of jewelry worth 3d12 gp) on a success. As an action, a character can also make a DC 18 Charisma (Intimidation) check to force the servants to throw their valuables onto the floor on a success (worth a total of 4d12 × 10 gp).

Killing a servant grants advantage on ability checks made to influence the servants in this raid site for 1 minute.

M22: Larder

The larder is fully stocked with fancy foodstuffs for the archduchess's table, from caviar and peacock to honey cakes and marzipan.

Treasure. While the fancy food is perishable, it will survive the journey back to Ragvall Village, where it will make raiders very popular (see "Conclusion," earlier in this chapter).

M23: Secret Shelter

Hidden behind the archduchess's throne in the Great Hall is a secret room that she occasionally uses to escape from her duties. It contains a secret passage that gives access to her chambers and the kitchen. Her daughters often use this secret passage to sneak food from the kitchen, just as she did in her youth.

Hostile Creatures. The following hostile creatures are in this area, and they attack anyone who does not say "Stargazer," the archduchess's password:

- Eight suits of **animated armor**
- Eight **flying swords**

The archduchess commissioned these animated objects herself, and they don't pursue anyone outside of the secret room.

Treasure. This area contains the following treasure:

- Eight suits of beautiful armor (once the animated armors are defeated), worth 1,000 gp each
- Eight longswords with intricate designs on their blades and cross-guards, worth 500 gp each

M24: Secret Library

The archduchess has four shelves full of a variety of romance novels (which she purchased secretly) and magical tomes (which she pilfered from the Thaumaturge mages in her city) here.

Treasure. Valikans mistrust magic, so these books are of little value to them. However, a wizard in the party can study them after the raid. If the party plunders the books from this library, they can spend 8 hours studying the books to discover 2d6 new spells of 4th level or lower (of the GM's choice).

M25: Archduchess's Quarters

Archduchess Maelfa's quarters are draped in gauzy white curtains and adorned with sparkling golden finery. The room itself seems to shine, regardless of the state of the light.

Pursuing the Duchess. Archduchess Maelfa flees here by means of her secret passage (area M23), if the battle in the Great Hall goes poorly. If the characters track her to her room, they find her standing upon the ledge of her window on the west side of this room, prepared to leap from her tower and be dashed on the stones below.

Treasure. This room contains more jewelry and fine furs than the characters have likely ever seen in their lives, including:

- Armfuls of gold, silver, and Norden-style bone necklaces, worth a total of 1,500 gp
- Five gem-studded circlets, worth a total of 1,000 gp
- The archduchess's winter wardrobe, worth a total of 2,000 gp

M26: Archduchess's Washroom

Though magnificent, this washroom contains little of interest.

Developments

The following changes occur on these turns of this raid:

Turn 5: The stronghold enters a prepared state, causing certain areas of the stronghold to change as described in the "Prepared" section of those areas.

Turn 10: The stronghold musters a legion of mounted knights that counterattack the raiders besieging its walls. At the end of each turn, 2d6 warriors die. The Valikans stop incurring casualties once the characters and their raiders retreat.

Commander's Death: In the rare event that Archduchess Maelfa Erlekind is killed, the castle's warriors fall into disarray, but they don't surrender. Her death only galvanizes the desperate Nordenfolk into fighting to the bitter end. The developments above continue to cause casualties, even with the castle under the characters' control. Ultimately, capturing and controlling this city is an impossible task for a small raiding band.

Event: Godrunsson's Aid

Questgiver: Svend Godrunsson
Location: Longships en route to Ragvall Village
Downtime: None
Content Warning: Near-death experience by Hrafen

In this event, the characters find Chief Hrafen av Skeir being tended to by a stranger. This man is Svend Godrunsson, a former merchant bodyguard who was caught in the fighting in Erlefurt. He saved Hrafen's life and has pledged his service to the chief. In truth, Svend is an assassin who will play a larger role in the events to unfold in autumn.

An Unfamiliar Face

When the characters are on the longships returning to Ragvall Village, read or paraphrase the following:

> *The journey back to Ragvall Village is quiet. Despite your ships being loaded with plunder, everyone is quietly processing the chaotic battle in Erlefurt, and the deaths of their allies.*
>
> *Amidst the silent contemplation, you see Chief Hrafen av Skeir speaking with a man you've never seen before. The chief has a bandage around his chest from a near-mortal wound he took during the raid on Erlefurt.*
>
> *The stranger is bald, with tapered ears, and his bicep is wrapped in a bloody bandage. He has the lean, muscular build of a swimmer, and he carries a crossbow slung over his back and two shortswords at his hip.*

If the characters approach this man, continue with this scene. If not, they can meet Svend Godrunsson (LE, half-elf **assassin**) another time during autumn; that meeting can be based on this Event.

Meeting Godrunsson

When the characters approach the chief, read or paraphrase the following:

> *"Ah, hersirs," Chief Hrafen av Skeir says. "Let me introduce the man who saved my life."*
>
> *"Svend Godrunsson." The stranger rises to shake your hand. That alone marks him as a foreigner, despite his northern name. "Former merchant bodyguard, current Valikan-in-training. I saw your chief cornered by knights back in Erlefurt, and I was amazed.s I'd never seen one man fight with such ferocity. When he was struck down… I couldn't help but intervene."*
>
> *"He's expressed interest in joining our clan," Hrafen Av Skeir says. "What do you think, hersirs?"*

A character who succeeds on a DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check sees that Chief Hrafen av Skeir is clearly awed by the idea of a non-Valikan willingly joining his new clan, and not as a thrall but as an equal. It exceeds even his initial dream of drawing Valikans from all six clans together into something new.

If the characters express satisfaction with the idea, the chief smiles and turns to Svend with a nod. If the characters are suspicious, the chief frowns and nods. He says:

> *"Caution is wise, of course." He cracks a smile and says, "Nevertheless, I'm the chief, and I say we trust him. Maybe you can keep an eye on him, eh, hersirs?"*

After this Event, the season of summer draws to a close, and autumn begins when they arrive in Ragvall Village.

Chapter 3: Autumn

SEASON OF FIRE

For characters of 7th to 9th level

Now cometh the season when trees burn bright with tongues of flame and their red and orange embers fall to the ground. As children dance and crush these cinders underfoot, the people raise real flames high upon to welcome the glorious return of their conquering heroes—and to light pyres for the honored dead.

The season of harvest and change brings joy and strife in equal measure, for it is when the people are most drunk on victory and bardsong. The fires of autumn must burn hot and bright, for memories of its joy is all that will sustain us in the coming cold.

—Bragi Bennuson, bard of Ragvall

The raiding season has come to an end and the characters have returned home, one way or another. If they were successful in their raids, they return as glorious heroes. If they failed, they return in disgrace.

No matter how they return, however, they return to a Ragvall that was larger than when they last saw it. People from across Valika have heard tales of the tiny young clan nestled amidst the Teeth and have come to trade, to visit, and to resettle. These visitors come none too soon, for as filled with celebration as autumn is, it is also a season of preparation for winter. Supplies must be stockpiled, defenses erected, and warriors trained for the onset of monsters.

The dizzying heights of fame and the fathomless pits of despair are both apt to lead heroes to ruin—and a shadowy daemon has slunk into Ragvall to goad them into acts of pride, jealousy, and treachery. This season of fire and festivals represents the clan at its highest point. If the characters succumb to greed, it's a long way to fall.

Leveling up in Autumn

The default means of gaining levels in this adventure is by completing milestones. Characters gain a level whenever they complete five minor milestones, or whenever they complete one major milestone.

Characters start this season at 7th level, and can't advance higher than 9th level in this chapter. Once they reach 9th level, they can't gain levels from reaching milestones until the winter season begins.

Minor Milestones

The following acts are minor milestones:

- Completing an Event, Quest, or Core Quest (see "Autumn Quests," later in this chapter)
- Befriending an NPC in Ragvall Village

If the characters go on self-directed adventures and do things not listed here, you can grant them a minor milestone at your discretion—especially if what they do takes up a full session of gameplay.

Major Milestones

The following acts are major milestones:

- Causing or preventing the assassination of Chief Hrafen av Skeir
- Fully upgrading all the fortifications in Ragvall Village (see "New Locations," later in this chapter)

Starting Resources

Acquiring, spending, and managing your resources of timber, iron, and warriors is just as important in this chapter as it was in summer. The village must be fortified before winter comes, and you can only do so if you have resources to spend.

Starting Resources in Autumn

The people of Ragvall Village have not been idle while the characters have been off raiding. They have built fortifications in preparation for winter, and stockpiled any leftover resources. The starting supply of resources is:

Timber. 250 pounds **Iron.** 100 pounds **Warriors.** 50 warriors

Leftover Resources from Summer

Some resources will need to be spent to get the raiders home at the end of summer. Subtract 500 pounds of timber and 200 pounds of iron from your total. If there is anything left, add that number to the starting resources for autumn. Your full number of surviving warriors are added to that resource in autumn (though they won't be needed until winter).

"Hope you brought back something for us too!"

- Ragvall Lumberjack

A Conspiracy Afoot

For all of autumn, several NPCs work in small or large ways to undermine Chief Hrafen av Skeir. Some are encouraged or misled by daemonic power, but all are motivated (at least in part) by their own goals or dislike of the chief.

Though the characters won't learn the truth for some time, these events are the beginning of a storyline that runs through the end of winter. Venin, Arch Daemon of Deception, is eager to cause chaos in Valika. This mighty daemon is sowing discord in Thrull and Kandar alike, but is intrigued by the strong-willed people of Clan Ragvall. She senses the characters' power—and also senses that they might be greedy enough to kill their chief. If they won't turn, the chief has other, less powerful enemies who she can manipulate into setting these events in motion.

Below is a list of all the NPCs involved and a brief summary of their involvement:

Venin the Deceiver. An Arch Daemon is at work in Valika. Venin the Deceiver has noticed the chaos brewing in Valika as a result of Chief Hrafen av Skeir's schism from Thrull, and sees the characters as a wedge to drive further discord. She plots to goad the characters into usurping their chief and sullying his honorable name—and if the characters won't do it, she has other conspirators to manipulate instead.

Gro Stensdóttir. This former priest of the Arch Seraph Solyma is a CE, female human **bloodbonded** (see appendix A) that serves Venin. She arrives at the village with the merchants in the fourth week of autumn (see "Traders from Abroad," later in this chapter). She has received visions from Venin guiding her toward Ragvall Village, and to stoke the fires of ambition in Grindal av Halsfjord's heart. She also meets with Hlökk Warcrier and goads her quiet misgivings in the chief. Gro provides magic to help Grindal's hired assassin Svend. If the party approaches her as fellow conspirators after **Quest: Whispers of Treachery**, she considers them superior potential leaders to Hlökk and helps them until the end of autumn.

Svend Godrunsson. This former merchant bodyguard (LE, male half-elf **assassin**) returns with Chief Hrafen av Skeir from the raids after saving his life in the final battle. Svend was hired by Grindal av Halsfjord, whose ambition has driven him to think that he—or one of his children, if they live—would be an ideal chief for Ragvall.

Grindal av Halsfjord. This wealthy patron of the village is allied with Gro Stensdóttir and hired the assassin Svend Godrunsson to eliminate Chief Hrafen av Skeir. His aim is to put a chief more aligned with his goals in control, such as the characters or Hlökk Warcrier. If he hasn't left the village yet, he does so if he has any sign the characters are on to him. If Grindal has left Ragvall Village, then Gro allies herself with Grindal before she arrives.

Hlökk Warcrier. Hlökk proved herself a staunch defender of the village in the raids, and is trusted by all. However, ever since she returned home to Ragvall, Venin has been preying upon her mind, urging her to give in to her fears that Chief Hrafen av Skeir is a milk-drinking coward. She meets Gro in week four and joins the conspiracy in **Quest: The Missing Shadow**.

Gro Stensdóttir is the only conspirator who knows about all the others. Svend only knows of Grindal, Hlökk only knows of Svend, and Grindal only knows of Gro. Because the characters can stumble upon parts of this conspiracy accidentally and in many different ways, it's a good idea to glance over this list before the party starts any new Event or Quest.

Adventure Start

This season begins as the characters return to Ragvall by boat. Depending on the events of summer, it may be with great barges full of loot in tow, or with heads hung in shame. Read or paraphrase the following boxed text to set the scene for autumn's beginning in the case of a triumphant return. If the characters were defeated in summer, paraphrase and alter the boxed text to suit their disgraced return.

> *Cheers erupt from the shore of the Akkeri Bay as your ships pull into sight. Even from here, in the mist of the early morning, you can see friendly faces waving at you from Shrine Isle and in front of Hrafensheim.*
>
> *As you get closer, you notice that there's something in front of the village longhouse: an enormous warship. It's far too big to actually sail. The chief approaches you and claps one of you on the shoulder. "The Ship of the Dead," he says matter-of-factly. "It will burn tonight, on the night of our return, to honor the gloried dead. There will be bonfires, feasting, songs…it will take your minds off the blood and death of the raids. Be there, hersirs."*

Burning the Ship of the Dead

Since this is the conclusion of the village's first raiding season, Ása Lögmaður calls upon the characters beforehand to make sure they are clear on the expectations of them at the event. They must bring their spoils from the summer raids to be held temporarily at Hrafensheim in honor of the fallen warriors, then the spoils will be formally returned to them after a traditional week-long period of mourning. This is the Valikan way—do not break tradition.

When the characters arrive at the party that night, read or paraphrase the following:

> *Night falls early in autumn. The sky is dark and filled with stars, but the village square in front of the longhouse is bright with the orange glow of torches. The Ship of the Dead stands in the middle of the festival square, festooned with crimson banners and wooden idols of food, armor, weapons, and monsters which brave warriors will eat, wear, and battle in the afterlife for eternity. Dozens of villagers that you haven't seen since the end of spring are here, and they're eager to welcome you home.*

This festival setting gives the characters an opportunity to catch up with some of their favorite NPCs from the spring season and see the consequences of choices they made in spring. These early meetings sow the seeds of quests that the characters can follow up on later in this season.

Familiar Faces

To help your players visualize the NPCs in this scene that they can talk to, you may want to use a map and miniatures, even though this isn't a combat situation. Use the map of Hrafensheim and the village square in chapter 5 of this adventure. Since there are a lot of NPCs in this scene, you may wish to move it along after the characters talk with five of them, rather than letting them talk with everyone. Once the scene is losing steam, you can skip to "The Chief's Eulogy," below.

If the party missed the start of some Quests or Events after they left for the summer, they can learn about those developments now. Many NPCs can have their initial contact incorporated into the conversations below.

Didn't they Die?

It's possible that several of the NPCs at this party are dead or gone from the village. Ignore their entries and review "Dealing with the Dead" in the Introduction.

Hrafen av Skeir. The chief has much to speak with the characters about, and invites them to Hrafensheim after the one-week mourning period to distribute the spoils of war and begin making preparations for winter. See "Awarding the Spoils," later in this chapter. Also, he is speaking with Svend Godrunsson (see below), and has approved him as his bodyguard for the valor he showed during the raids.

Alvíss av Dvergholt. Alvíss has recently returned from the druidic henge near Runeheim with his two daughters in tow. Their names are Yrsa and Jorrun (see "Daughters of Dvergholt," later in this chapter). If the party befriended him in spring, he introduces them. He also confides quietly in them about **Quest: Traveler of the Álfavegr.** If they completed that Quest in spring, he talks of its continuation, **Quest: Figure on the River Heilag.**

Ása Lögmaður. The lawspeaker stands apart from the festivities. She forces a smile at any mention of conquest, but is clearly uncomfortable. She views raiding as barbaric. If the party failed in their raids, she is warm and supportive to them, casting aspersions on anyone who demeans them (which will soon include the chief, if he hasn't yet given his speech).

Benna Stonebreaker. If Benna was driven off in spring as a result of Quest: Burning Feud, she is gone by now, along with most of her family (although Bragi and a few of her other adult children chose to stay). If she remains, she is relieved to see Grindal gone. (See **Quest: Afterburn.**) If the party took captives in summer and she remained, she becomes hostile to them and loudly condemns them during this Event.

Bragi Bennuson. The bard is eager to get details about the events of summer from the party directly in order to compose new songs about what has happened, whether tragic or heroic. He follows the characters around all night like a lost puppy, asking all sorts of questions about their great deeds—and those of Hlökk Warcrier, his crush. (See **Quest: Cyrano av Ragvall.**)

Grindal av Halsfjord. If Grindal was driven off in spring, he has gone by now, along with most of his family and employees. If he remains, the cruel mogul is distant and condescending unless the party brings captives back to prove their strength. He makes a point to brag to the chief (where he can be overheard) that he has secured the interest of new traders who should arrive within the month (see "Traders from Abroad," later in this chapter).

Gondul Grindalsdóttir. If the characters spared Gondul in spring, and didn't bring her along on the raids, word about her curse has spread through the village and made her something of an outcast. If the characters befriended her, she practically leaps to see her again—she is in need of sympathetic friends. If she's not their friend, she is clearly uncomfortable when they arrive. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that she's become something of an outcast over the summer, and is unsure how the characters will treat her.

Gunnvarr Grindalsson. As a beloved raider, Gunnvarr should be drinking and partying with his fellow warriors. However, he is uncharacteristically agitated during the ceremony and avoids prolonged conversation. He uses paper-thin excuses to get away, such as hearing someone calling his name before ducking out of the building. If he must make conversation, he feigns excitement about the merchants his father has attracted to the village (which arrive in three weeks). In truth, his last message from his father has made him worried that Grindal has become troublingly obsessed with correcting some slight by Chief Hrafen av Skeir—but he confides this only to friends.

Hlökk Warcrier. The elf warrior is eager to get the characters by her side to tell the villagers tales of their daring and valorous deeds in summer—which she then attempts to one-up with a boast of her own. If she is friendly, she asks if the characters know about the chief's secret hoard of weapons and armor. She muses that she, at least, would put such weapons to good use. If the characters know nothing, she reacts with surprise and says she thought that everyone knew: there's rumors that the chief is hoarding rare artifacts from the raid—plunder which no one else will see. (This rumor is false.)

Mardoll Brightsea. The shipwright is exhausted from the long hours required to finish the Ship of the Dead in time, so she spends the whole evening sitting near Ása, either mooning over her (if the party hasn't played matchmaker for them) or holding her hand (if they have). She's eager to chat with the characters about how her dragon ships fared in the raids.

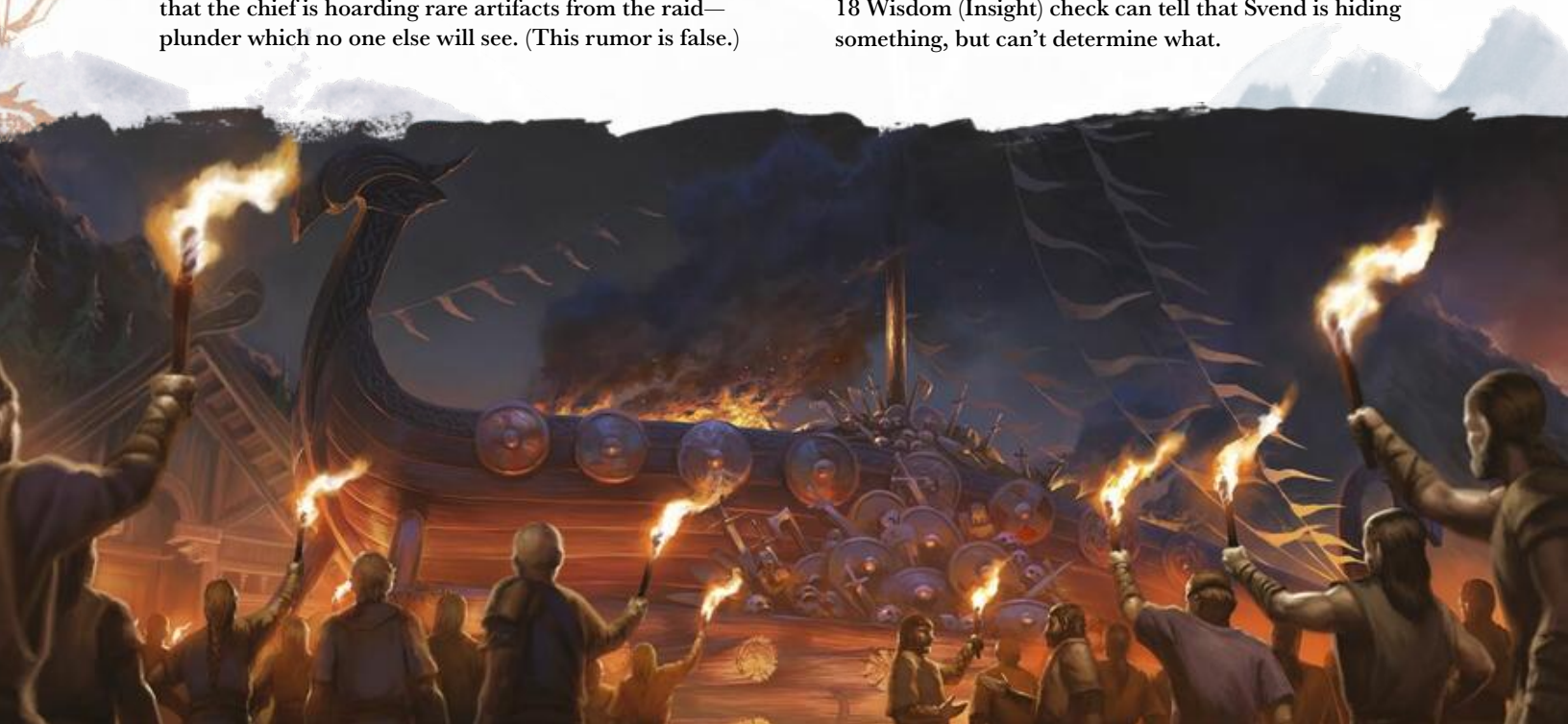
Mildrith Quickshot. The hunter excitedly asks about any novel food the raiders brought home, as it gives her a change from the same local meat. She also gives them a smile and says that she discovered she was pregnant while they were away; it must have happened in early springtime, so she'll be due by the end of autumn (see **Quest: Mildrith's Quickening**, later in this chapter).

Ófeigur Lightraiser. If he lives and retains his mind, the transformed lighthouse keeper watches at a distance from the water's edge. He has taken to fishing for the villagers, though only Benna Stonebreaker's family and Ása Lögmaður trust the food he offers.

Ranulf Skullcrusher. The young warrior hovers around them, eager to seem like a trusted right-hand man to the village's beloved hersirs. If the party succeeded, he shares stories of their greatness, and embellishes his own accomplishments. If the party failed, he awkwardly assures listeners that they tried their hardest against insurmountable odds.

Rikarð Jarnskegg. The smith examines the weapons the party has, seeing how his work has held up or studying new weapons they found. He invites them to come by his forge, which he has expanded.

Svend Godrunsson. This is likely the first chance the characters have to speak with Svend. This callous assassin has a noble brow and a exudes a convincing façade of devotion to the chief. He claims, "The Raven of Skeir was legendary in Thrull! I never thought I'd get the chance to finally meet him—and save his life in battle, no less. I assure you, I'd never want to get on his bad side." He asks the characters to watch out for the chief this season. A character who succeeds on a DC 18 Wisdom (Insight) check can tell that Svend is hiding something, but can't determine what.



The Chief's Eulogy

Read or paraphrase the following boxed text to set the scene as Chief Hrafen av Skeir announces the burning:

> *Chief Hrafen av Skeir holds aloft a burning torch as he calls out, "Heed! Heed my words!" At that, the crowd moves to get a good look at him and the ship. He continues. "It is now time for the ship to burn. This pyre ushers all those who died in glorious battle to the hereafter. Before it will lay the spoils that they helped win." He gestures to a plinth set between the ship and Hrafensheim, and waits for you to place the summer's spoils.*

When the party places the spoils, the crowd responds with approving or disapproving murmurs as suits the size of their haul.

Crowd Reaction

Total Plunder	Crowd Reaction
4,999 gp or less	The crowd murmurs quietly as a disappointingly small treasure trove is placed before the chief.
5,000 to 9,999 gp	The gathered villagers whistle and cheer, though the warriors quietly vow to strike richer targets next year.
10,000 gp or more	All the people of Ragvall Village bellow with pride for their raiders. The warriors stomp their feet and pound their axes against their shields, and the rest bang drums or clap their hands.

If the summer raids were successful (the characters scored 5 or more reputation points, see "Conclusion" in chapter 2), Chief Hrafen av Skeir lauds the specific successes of the raiders, including the characters, among compliments for the efforts of the deceased.

If the summer raids were unsuccessful (the characters scored 4 or fewer reputation points, see "Conclusion" in chapter 2), the chief laments that these promising warriors died so young. He doesn't blame the characters outright—no chief would be so dishonorable as to shift blame to his hersirs—but the crowd is well aware of whose leadership truly led their children to the pyre.

Should the party fail to fulfill their part in the ceremony, Ása Lögmaður firmly reminds them exactly what is expected of them. If they don't relent, the crowd grumbles uncomfortably while Hrafen chastises them for their greed, but he acknowledges he was going to award them most of the spoils anyway as leaders of the raids and hurries to wrap up the event on a better note.

> "I'm glad you've returned alive. I look forward to celebrating whatever success you had. You were successful, yes?"
>
> - *Ása Lögmaður*

Read or paraphrase the following to end the ceremony.

> *The chief continues, "Enjoy this night in their honor—their glory earns them our celebration and our remembrance!" With that, he hefts his torch onto a prominent spot of pitch on the ship, which immediately ignites. The crowd murmurs prayers and a few cry out names of fallen warriors. In short order, the whole ship is aflame.*

After the chief's speech, the characters can choose to continue mingling or turn in for the night. Sleeping in their own beds after so long away grants each of the characters inspiration. The ship burns night and day for a week until nothing remains but ash.

The Rest of the Week

The next day, morning dawns upon the first week of autumn in Ragvall Village. The characters have gathered in the middle of town once more, but unlike their gathering in springtime, they aren't being goaded by the chief into following any quests. Based on the quest hooks they heard in last night's festival, guide them to spend this first week however they want.

We'd Rather Explore!

If the characters aren't feeling motivated to explore the Quests available to them in the village, you could have a villager tell them about the balmy, above-freezing winds of Grarjord in autumn. In other words, they can go exploring far beyond Ragvall Village, if they wish! See chapter 5 for an explanation of where they can travel in the autumn season.

Awarding the Spoils

Prerequisite: *Begun the second week of autumn, party left the spoils at "Burning the Ship of the Dead"*

After the customary mourning period of one week, Chief Hrafen av Skeir formally awards the raiders their spoils from the summer raids. This custom is built on the assumption that as the raid was a communal effort, the chief should collect the plunder and award it to the raiders and the rest of community in keeping with their personal contribution and the village's needs. The crowd who gathers to witness the day includes anyone the party took raiding with them and anyone they have befriended. When the party arrives at Hrafensheim, read or paraphrase the following:

> *A small crowd has gathered at Hrafensheim for today's ceremony. Chief Hrafen av Skeir is seated nearby, mug in hand. He clears his throat and spreads his arms wide in welcome. He gestures toward the treasure plinth and says, "Behold the spoils of the summer raids!"*

The Crowd's Reaction

The crowd's reaction this time is loud, either celebrating a large hoard (of 10,000 gp or more), groaning at a small one (of less than 5,000 gp), or bellowing for an even grander hoard next year (if the total was somewhere in the middle).

Successful Raiders. If the characters earned 5 or more reputation points in summer (see "Conclusion" in chapter 2), the chief formally awards the party all that they claimed and asks them to share what they can for the community's trade and arming the other defenders—the gathered villagers cheer them, The characters receive gold and silver coins, lavish jewelry, and art worth 75 percent of the total plunder to divide among themselves.

Raiders in Retreat. If the characters earned 4 or fewer reputation points in summer (see "Conclusion" in chapter 2), the chief awards them a modest sum, but keeps the rest to recoup and rebuild the losses they sustained. He growls sternly, "We must prepare carefully to do better next year. This is no way to establish the clan's reputation." Meanwhile, the villagers in the hall at the time turn their eyes away to minimize the party's shame. The characters receive silver pieces and somewhat dingy pieces of jewelry and art worth 25 percent of the total plunder to divide among themselves.

No Time to Dwell on the Past

With the plunder divided, the chief is open to discussing anything the party hasn't yet learned about how things fared in Ragvall during summer, his impressions of what went well and what didn't during the raids, and what preparations are needed for winter. He is also eagerly anticipating merchants, whom he expects to arrive within a few weeks.

Recruited by the Deceiver

Prerequisite: *Begun the third week of autumn and the characters failed in their raids*

Sensing instability, the Arch Daemon Venin has come to Ragvall Village. There are those who feel wronged by the chief and long to remove him from power. To Venin, instability is chaos that hasn't yet been given a push in the right direction. And to a daemon, chaos is the sweetest sound in creation.

Do the Hersirs Have What It Takes?

As described in "A Conspiracy Afoot" at the beginning of this chapter, Venin is setting pieces in play to assassinate and usurp Chief Hrafen av Skeir at the end of this season. If she believes that the characters may turn on the chief—because, for example, the chief denied them a worthy cut of the treasure the week before, or the characters believe Hlökk when she shares the (false) rumor that Hrafen is hoarding magical relics, or one of the characters has expressed a desire to become chief themself—Venin appears before them and tries to make them her primary agents in this assassination plot.

Venin's opinion is driven by your opinion as the GM. If you don't think that the characters will go along with a plan to usurp the chief and make one of their own number chief instead, Venin does not approach them.

Inciting Incident

Venin's first move is to possess a Ragvallan villager to use as her mouthpiece, while she stays safe in her domain of the Netherworld. You might use the NPC villager Tafi (CN, male human **scout**); he last appeared in **Event: Seal Upon the Depths**, and participated in the raids. That villager approaches the characters during the third week of autumn late in the night. This begins **Event: Whispers of Treachery**.

After this event, the NPC Venin possessed stands up, leaves the characters, walks back to their own home, and falls asleep with no memory of the event.

Traders from Abroad

Prerequisite: *Begun the fourth week of autumn*

A group of traders arrive in Ragvall Village at the start of the fourth week of autumn.

A Ship from Skarfanes

Read or paraphrase the following boxed text to set the scene as a Valikan ship from Skarfanes pulls into the Akkeri Bay:

> *From the top deck of the ship—a glorious two-master of foreign make—come boisterous shouts and greetings as its Valikan crew heaves down a shore boat brimming with crates. One woman stands at the prow of the small craft as her crew paddles it to shore. Her skin is light brown and her hair is short, black, and curly. She dresses in Valikan furs, but wears a sharp, masculine doublet beneath it all.*

The leader of the merchant ship from Skarfanes is Mýrún Stebansdóttir (CG, female half-elf **sailor**). She is the daughter of a successful Castinellan merchant named Esteban de Morencia who retired in Skarfanes and passed the family business onto his only child—a daughter with a sharp mercantile mind and a belly full of fiery ambition. Her primary goal in Ragvall Village is to make money—lots of it—and then sail south for the warm waters of her father's homeland before winter hits.

Mýrún's Introduction

Mýrún greets whomever is there at the shore boisterously and aggressively. Anyone that makes a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Insight) check identifies that she's a little nervous and inexperienced, and is powering through on determination alone:

> *"Greetings, my fellow Valikans!" the young woman says. "My name's Mýrún, daughter of the best merchant to ever sail the seas. My ship's in from Skarfanes. I'd like to meet your leader, set up shop. I hear you've got a real hero as your chief; where is the one they call the Raven of Skeir?"*

Once she meets with the chief, the two of them start discussing the possibility of Mýrún setting up shop for a few weeks in autumn. If one of the characters pretends to be the chief, none of the other villagers interfere, but the character must succeed on a DC 16 Charisma (Deception) check to convince Mýrún.

The merchant wants a total of 500 gp (she can be haggled down to 250 gp) and a temporary gift of a small plot of land on the sparsely inhabited north shore to set up her shop. Av Skeir eventually agrees, but if the characters take the reins, the choice is in their hands. See "R18: De Morencia Trading Post" under "New Locations," later in this chapter for her weekly stock and special items.

Mýrún's Confessor

In addition to seamen, the ship from Skarfanes also carries a holy passenger: Gro Stensdóttir, supposedly a cleric of the Arch Seraph Solyma, but secretly a fallen devotee of the Arch Daemon Venin. Mýrún and her family are deeply religious and sought out a confessor to travel with her on this journey. Gro, having already heard Venin's call, ensured through deceit and treachery that she would find herself in Ragvall before autumn's end.

During the day, Gro is never far from Mýrún, and is almost always in her shop or running small errands for her. At night, the priest often wanders the streets observing people who might be a threat to Venin's scheme. Notably, however, Gro does not leave with Mýrún at the end of the eleventh week of autumn—a fact no one realizes until it's too late. Gro lurks in the empty trading post for one week until the plot to assassinate the chief comes to fruition in the twelfth week.

Stockpiling for the Winter

Prerequisite: *Begun the fifth week of autumn or delivered new resources to the chief*

Though the people of Ragvall are celebrating the autumn harvest, it won't be long until the season of flame and beauty turns cold. The village's winter stockpiles have been growing since spring, but Chief Hrafen av Skeir knows that more is needed. The village is well-stocked on food, but its defenses need to be strengthened against winter's monsters. Timber, iron, and warriors are needed once more.

The chief only asks for more resources in the fourth week of autumn. However, if the characters acquire resources in their adventures and bring them to the chief's stockpile before then, he tells them about these core quests upon delivery.

What's Needed for Winter

Chief Hrafen av Skeir describes the village's needs:

> *"We're a month into autumn already, somehow," Hrafen says wearily, massaging his tired brow. His hair seems grayer than it did in summer. "There's much left to do. Hersirs, you are my most trusted allies, and I've asked too much of you already. Nevertheless, I must ask you for more."*

The chief has three requests:

- Tour and reinforce the village's fortifications (**Core Quest: Raising Fortifications**)
- Strengthen Hrafensheim's defenses in case those fortifications are breached (**Core Quest: Building Shelters**)
- Conduct advanced training drills for the village's veteran raid warriors (**Core Quest: Veteran Warrior Training**)

Gaining Resources

The chief trusts the characters to spend the village's resources as they see fit (see "Starting Resources" at the beginning of this chapter), and recommends leading the villagers in operations to acquire more resources during their downtime, or in efforts to upgrade the village's functional-but-meager fortifications (see "New Locations," later in this chapter).

If Mýrún Stebansdóttir was permitted to set up shop, Chief Hrafen av Skeir tells the characters that her shop has resources and is willing to sell them, if the characters want to spend their own gold on it.

The Chief's Speech

Prerequisite: *Begun the twelfth week of autumn and Chief Hrafen av Skeir is alive*

In the penultimate week of autumn, Chief Hrafen av Skeir plans to give a speech to the people of Ragvall as they brace for the first frost of winter. Before the crowd gathers for the speech, Svend Godrunssun has already moved to weaken the chief for his defeat. He laced the chief's morning drink with shadowlance: a rare poison that has already begun to slowly weaken him.

Due to the magical poison, Chief Hrafen av Skeir has the poisoned condition. While poisoned in this way, any damage he takes also reduces his hit point maximum by half that amount, leaving wounds that won't heal and unnatural "tears" in his shadow. The poison can't be removed except by *greater restoration*, *heal*, or a similar spell of 6th level or higher.

The party might plan to defend or attack this event, in which case you will need to adjust your description to suit their approach. Otherwise, read or paraphrase the following boxed text to set the scene as they arrive:

> *Chief Hrafen av Skeir stands upon the stoop of the longhouse, and it seems the entire village has come out to hear him speak. The dark circles beneath his eyes have grown even darker than before, and it's clear he is making an effort to stand without shaking.*
>
> *"People of Clan Ragvall! People of the youngest, most determined Valikan clan of them all!" Despite the look of sickness upon his face, the chief's voice is as strong and booming as ever. "It was autumn's end one year ago that we first settled on the shores of the Akkeri Bay. It was one year ago that we received a sign from the Hero Ragvall to make this our home and take her name. It was one year ago that we enshrined her idol upon the isle with our lawspeaker, and carved the Logsteinn.*
>
> *"Winter comes upon us again," he says grimly. "We survived it last year, and we shall survive it again. Now, creatures of darkness know of our presence, and will seek to snuff out our vital flame, yet…"*
>
> *The chief continues to speak, but there is motion in the crowd that no one else seems to notice.*

"I can't be the only one who knows we would all be better off with a different Chief. Everyone's seen how he is. He's not the leader he once was. With winter upon us, we need to start making hard decisions."

- Svend Godrunsson

If the characters have resolved to ally themselves with the usurping daemon, kill or exile Chief Hrafen av Skeir, and take control of Ragvall, run **Event: Revolution in Ragvall.**

Otherwise, run **Event: A Knife at Autumn's End**, as agents of Venin infiltrate the crowd, as well as the chief's personal guard, and attempt to kill him.

Calendar of the Seasons

Once this Event occurs, mark one of the following outcomes on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

With Blade in Hand. Chief Hrafen av Skeir was slain by the characters in an honorable duel. One of them may now claim the title of chief and rule Ragvall as they see fit.

Stabbed in the Back. One of the characters killed Chief Hrafen av Skeir in a surprise attack. They may claim the title of chief, but few in Ragvall respect their dishonorable rule.

Daemonic Assassination. Chief Hrafen av Skeir was slain by a daemonic interloper, and the villagers turn to his closest confidants—the characters—for leadership.

Rescuers. Chief Hrafen av Skeir was gravely wounded in an assassination attempt, but survived with the characters aid. He can't fight or speak publicly, but can aid the characters in winter with his wisdom.

Conclusion

Autumn has come to a dramatic end. The villagers are shaken by the events of this season, but there is no time to mourn or panic—winter is now upon them. With the chief either poisoned or assassinated, the characters must lead their village more directly than ever before.

Ragvall in Autumn

Below are the locations, NPCs, and quests vital to running this chapter of the adventure. Many of the locations and characters in this chapter are identical to their description in Chapter 1: Spring.

Downtime Activities

All of the downtime activities the characters could partake in during the spring are available during autumn. Additionally, they can spend a week of downtime creating a spell stick with the av Dvergholt family at their shop (see "Daughters of Dvergholt," below).

New Developments

Based on the characters' actions in spring and summer, there may be new locations, NPCs, and other surprising developments in the village upon their return from the raids. Keep the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C) on hand to determine if the proper prerequisites have been met for each new development.

Additionally, if any Key NPCs are dead or otherwise not present in Ragvall at the start of autumn, this development does not occur. However, if the GM decides that another NPC could reasonably take their place, the development still occurs (see "Dealing with the Dead" in the "Introduction" chapter).

Mountain Passes Clear

Key NPCs: None
Effect: Ice blocking the mountain passes clears, allowing the characters to explore more of Valika

The brutal snowstorms and ice-choked passes of the nearby mountains made travel to other parts of Valika difficult in the spring. However, now that summer has melted the ice and autumn has tamed the weather, it's possible for adventurous characters to explore locations as far as Runeheim and the Frostmere.

Traveling to such distant locations takes several weeks, and may allow the conspiracy in autumn to progress unseen by the characters until it's too late to do anything about it. These locations aren't described in this adventure, but the GM can use their descriptions in *Raider's Guide to Valika* to create adventures that the characters can undertake in those places.

Daughters of Dvergholt

Prerequisite: *Alvíss av Dvergholt survived spring*

Key NPCs: Alvíss av Dvergholt
Effect: Alvíss brings his two daughters to live in Ragvall, and they expand his shop (area R3)

The Dvergholt druid circle has suffered much over the centuries. Two hundred years ago, it was all but completely destroyed by raiding Valikans—an event which Alvíss can neither forgive nor forget. However, he does have a loving Valikan husband named Arinbjorn and two adopted daughters (technically his great-nieces) named Yrsa and Jorrun in the tiny and secluded settlement of Dvergholt.

Despite Alvíss's grudge against the Valikans, he observed the Ragvallan people's strength and determination in spring, and decided it would be wise to bring his daughters to the village for the winter—and teach them to listen to the spirit of the Morfar Ash (see **Quest: Shadow of the Morfar Ash**).

Yrsa av Dvergholt. This young dwarf, age 3, has just learned to speak Dwarvish, and knows how to say "Hello," and "I'm a friend, don't kill me," in Valikan, which she says often. It delights her and terrifies her father.

Jorrun av Dvergholt. Jorrun, the older sister, is twelve years old and acts the part. She knows Dwarvish and Valikan, and has been learning Druidic from her father. She has a knack for magic that her father is helping her cultivate.

New Stock. With the help of his family, Alvíss has expanded the stock of his woodworking shop to include spell sticks. For the cost of 200 gp per spell level, a spellcaster can inscribe a spell of 1st level or higher with a range of Self onto a spell stick during a week of downtime. When the stick is broken as an action, that spell is cast on whomever broke the stick, requiring no components or spell slots. If the spell has a casting time of 1 action, it is cast instantly. Otherwise, the creature that broke the stick must concentrate on the spell for the duration of its casting time before it is cast.

Headwater Mining Trail Built

Prerequisite: *Cleared the Headwater Cave dungeon (see chapter 5)* **and** *Completed* **Quest: Burning Feud with** *either the "Feud Quelled"* **or** *"Not Forgiven or Forgotten" outcome*

Key NPCs: Rikarð Jarnskegg, Grindal av Halsfjord
Effect: The "Gather Iron" downtime activity produces twice as much iron

A group of villagers led by Rikarð Jarnskegg created new vehicles and better mining equipment to extract ore from the iron vein in Headwater Cave more efficiently. Regular convoys ran to and from the cave in summer.

However, word of the cave's bounty has spread, making Ragvallan ore convoys easy pickings for bandits. Sensing profit and fame, Grindal av Halsfjord used his wealth and influence to create a defensible road between Ragvall Village and the town of Halsfjord, which kept these convoys safe.

Evergreen Logging Camp Built

Prerequisite: *Completed* **Quest: The Elven-Thegn Appears with** *the "Woodland Truce" outcome* **and** *completed* **Quest: Burning Feud with** *either the "Feud Quelled"* **or** *"Not Fine or Fined" outcome*

Key NPCs: Benna Stonebreaker, Thegn Arduinna Shinoff
Effect: The "Gather Timber" downtime activity produces twice as much timber (Sheltering Wood only)

Successful diplomacy between the hersirs of Ragvall Village and Thegn Arduinna of the Evergreen Enclave has led the elven-thegn to consider how to allow the Ragvallan people to harvest the timber of the Sheltering Wood without angering her own people. During the summer, Benna Stonebreaker led a coalition of villagers to discuss options with her.

Ultimately, they decided to create a logging camp so the villagers can harvest wood from trees the elves decided needed to be cleared for the health of the forest, and the elves could replant trees to keep the forest thriving. The Evergreen elves' guidance and protection has made the Ragvallan loggers much more productive.

New Locations

The villagers who remained in Ragvall Village during the raiding season have built dozens of new homes. They've also constructed several basic defensive installations to protect them from monstrous attackers in winter. The characters can increase the protective power of these installations by spending resources (see "Stockpiling for the Winter," earlier in this chapter).

Locations keyed with the letter "R" are locations that can be visited by the characters and may have NPCs in them. Locations keyed with the letters "RF" are points in the village are fortifications that can be upgraded in Core **Quest: Raising Fortifications**. The game statistics of these fortifications are provided in Chapter 4: Winter.

R18. De Morencia Trading Post

Prerequisite: *Gold to open a shop was gifted during "A Ship from Skarfanes" in the fourth week of autumn*

Ambitious merchant Mýrún Stebansdóttir opens her trading post in the sparsely populated north side of town in the fourth week of autumn, then closes it and departs in the eleventh week.

When the characters first approach the trading post, read or paraphrase:

> *One of the hunters' cabins has been empty since he was killed in the woods in spring, but now the trader from Skarfanes has set up shop here. Its exterior is draped with colorful cloth and a banner that reads "De Morencia Trading Post."*
>
> *Inside, the merchant Mýrún has turned her shipping crates into a makeshift counter and shelves, and has arranged a variety of goods in pleasing ways. She greets you with a beaming smile as you enter.*

Mýrún Stebansdóttir's sunny demeanor is authentic for the first few weeks, and then more and more forced as the weather gets colder. She has the following goods constantly for sale:

- Any items from the "Adventuring Gear" section of the fifth edition core rules for their listed price
- Up to 4 *potions of healing* per week, for 50 gp apiece
- Up to 200 pounds of timber per week, for 2 sp per pound
- Up to 50 pounds of iron per week, for 1 gp per pound

Additionally, every week she has a special item on sale, delivered by her supply line from Skarfanes. Roll once on the table below when the characters visit her shop for the first time in a week to see what's new; items marked with "Adv." are special weapons found in the "Advanced Weapons" section of *Grim Hollow: The Campaign Guide.*

Weekly Special Goods

1d8	Item
1	2 potions of greater healing (300 gp each)
2	1 suit of plate armor (1,500 gp, fitting included)
3	1 blackpowder rifle and 40 bullets (Adv.; 600 gp)
4	1 flame bellows and 60 bellows canisters (Adv.; 800 gp)
5	1 repeater crossbow and 20 silvered bolts (Adv.; 1,000 gp)
6	3 sabres of Castinellian make (Adv.; 500 gp each)
7	3 claymores of Bürachi make (Adv.; 500 gp each)
8	3 polearms of Charneaultian make (Adv.; 500 gp each)

Defensive Fortifications

The Ragvallan villagers started creating defensive fortifications by the chief's order in autumn. Just like the conflict zones in an offensive raid, these fortifications are the points that monsters attack and you must defend to keep from reaching your stronghold.

You can upgrade a fortification to a more powerful version by paying its upgrade cost. The p-eople of Ragvall are able to upgrade that fortification with one week of work. You can only upgrade one fortification per week.

These fortifications are described in more detail in chapter 4. This chapter only describes how each fortification can be upgraded. Mark what rank each fortification is on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C).

RF1: Mannavegr Towers

Rank 1 Fortification

This fortification can be upgraded to Rank 2 by spending 250 pounds of timber and one week of downtime.

RF2: Hreinsbridge Barricade

Rank 1 Fortification

This fortification can be upgraded to Rank 2 by spending 100 pounds of timber, 50 pounds of iron, and one week of downtime.

RF3: Southeastern Palisade

Rank 1 Fortification

This fortification can be upgraded to Rank 2 and then Rank 3 by spending either:

- 100 pounds of iron to create rows of shields along the outside of the wall, or
- 100 pounds of timber to create a line of pointed stakes to deter enemy charges

RF4: Farmstead Watchtowers

Rank 1 Fortification

This fortification can be upgraded to Rank 2 by spending 250 pounds of timber and one week of downtime.

RF5: Bennasbridge Barricade

Rank 1 Fortification

This fortification can be upgraded to Rank 2 by spending 100 pounds of timber, 50 pounds of iron, and one week of downtime.

RF6: Southwestern Palisade

Rank 1 Fortification

This fortification can be upgraded to Rank 2 and then Rank 3 by spending one week of downtime and either:

- 100 pounds of iron to create rows of shields along the outside of the wall, or
- 100 pounds of timber to create a line of pointed stakes to deter enemy charges

RF7: Woodland Spiked Pits

Rank 1 Fortification

This fortification can be upgraded to Rank 2 and then Rank 3 by spending one week of downtime and either:

- 50 pounds of iron, or
- 50 pounds of iron and 50 pounds of timber

RF8: Northern Palisade

Rank 1 Fortification

This fortification can be upgraded to Rank 2 and then Rank 3 by spending one week of downtime and either:

- 100 pounds of iron to create rows of shields along the outside of the wall, or
- 100 pounds of timber to create a line of pointed stakes to deter enemy charges

RF9: Woodworker's Barricade

Rank 1 Fortification

This fortification can be upgraded to Rank 2 by spending 100 pounds of timber, 50 pounds of iron, and one week of downtime.

RF10. Shrine Isle Shelter

Rank 1 Fortification

This fortification can be upgraded to Rank 2 and then Rank 3 by spending either:

- 200 pounds of timber, or
- 50 pounds of iron

Customizing Fortifications

One of the fun aspects of having a village to defend is customizing the buildings that you have within it. These fortifications are no different. If your players want to create custom fortifications, allow it! The fortification on Benna's Bridge doesn't have to be a barricade; it could be row of metal rods etched with arcane runes that creates an arcing line of lightning when activated. You could choose to alter the material cost for upgrading this fortification, or simply allow it to be a flavorful change with no mechanical impact.

Upgrading Hrafensheim

The village longhouse (area R1) is the stronghold that all villagers will retreat to in winter if the village's outer defenses are breached. The characters can spend their resources and downtime to help improve its defenses. Each upgrade allows Hrafenheim's defenders more time to attack invaders before they breach its gates and interior combat begins.

The following upgrades can be applied to the longhouse, with the following resource costs:

Reinforced Doors

Hrafenheim's heavy oaken doors are sturdy but reinforcing them with iron bands and a heavy bar would make them even stronger.

- *Cost:* 100 pounds iron
- *Effect:* Preparation time increases by 10 minutes.

Archery Platform

A platform on the roof for archers to attack defenders doesn't look pretty, but it's useful.

- *Cost:* 300 pounds timber
- *Effect:* One hostile creature takes 35 (10d6) piercing damage at the start of combat in Hrafensheim (players' choice).

Burning Pitch and Flameproofed Roof

Flameproofing the longhouse's roof allows defenders to use a classic Bürachi siege defense tactic: dumping burning pitch on invaders.

- *Cost:* 200 pounds timber and 100 pounds iron
- *Effect:* All hostile creatures take 14 (4d6) fire damage at the start of combat in Hrafensheim.

Autumn Quests

There are three types of quests available in autumn: Events, Quests, and Core Quests. These different quest types are described in chapter 1 of this adventure.

Each Event, Quest, and Core Quest that can be started in the autumn season is listed below in alphabetical order. This means that many scenarios are presented out of sequential order. If a scenario has a prerequisite below its title, that means that there are other Quests or Events that influence it, which means that its story won't make total sense unless you read those prerequisites first. If it has "Prequisite: None" below its title, that means it's the first Quest in its chain, or that it's a completely standalone Quest.

Old Quests from Springtime

If there are any Quests that weren't completed in spring, they're still available for the characters to undertake in autumn. Core Quests and Heroic Feats that weren't completed in the spring season don't occur in autumn, and Events that didn't happen in spring only occur at the GM's discretion.

Events

Keep track of these Events' prerequisites. As the GM, you can choose to have an event happen at any time once the prerequisite has been met.

Event: Shadowy Reprisal

Prerequisite: *Completed* **Quest: Whispers of Treachery** **with** *the "Conspiracy Exposed" outcome,* **or** *otherwise become a known threat to the assassination plot*

Questgiver: None
Location: Home of one of the characters
Downtime: None

At this point, the party has become an apparent threat to the conspiracy and Svend Godrunsson decides he needs to dissuade them. To do so, he unleashes a **candlelight daemon** (see appendix A) granted to him by Venin late at night, when he assumes the characters are sleeping. Once the daemon finds the characters vulnerable, it attacks. It has three hours to complete its task before the candle burns out—but that is more than enough time to find them, if they're still in the village. Once the candle dies, Svend disposes of the drippings in a bottle and hides it under his bed.

Event: A Knife at Autumn's End

Prerequisite: *Begun the twelfth week of autumn*

Questgiver: None
Location: Outside Hrafensheim (area R1)
Downtime: None

The event turns from soberly resolved to utter chaos when the chief stands at the plinth. Before he can speak, Hlökk Warcrier confronts Hrafen directly, unless the party already talked her out of it. She accuses the chief of causing deaths in summer by his failure to share his magical protections and demands an immediate trial by combat. The chief is too baffled to respond right away, but Ása Lögmaður immediately supports the challenge and insists the chief defend himself at once.

Even though the chief feels unwell, he is too proud to name a champion to fight in his stead. He involuntarily glances at one of the characters who might stand a better chance against his challenger. If one of the characters makes a declaration to become the chief's champion, he swallows his pride and accepts.

Svend Godrunsson (LE, male half-elf **assassin**) waits at the chief's side for Hlökk to challenge the chief, if she intends to. If she fails, doesn't make the challenge because the party eliminated her or talked her out of it, or is interrupted, Svend turns on the chief immediately. Gro Stensdóttir (use **bloodbonded** statistics; see appendix A) and a **candlelight daemon** (also see appendix A) she conjured wait in the audience, as if they were merely curious travelers observing a local custom. They attack when the guards do. Gro wears a cloak of secret shadows (see appendix B). If Gro was caught earlier, Venin sends the daemon alone.

The party's investigations up to this point and their relationships with certain NPCs influence how those NPCs act now, as noted below. When open battle begins, some NPCs flee or change sides, as noted below.

Hrafen av Skeir. The chief draws his weapon and stands his ground against any attackers. He carries his *Mithra's pinion* (included in his stat block in appendix A).

Ása Lögmaður. The lawspeaker sternly insists that only the chief's chosen champions—the characters—can defend him, and the crowd begrudgingly listens to her. The party can convince her to join in the fight (using **priest** statistics) if they provide evidence that nefarious magic or poison was used to undermine the chief before the trial properly began. Otherwise, she flees combat. Afterward, she insists that the usurpers, if any survived, be banished for treachery, unless one of the characters intervenes on their behalf.

Hlökk Warcrier. The party can convince her to back off if she is friendly. A character must spend an action and succeed at a DC 17 Charisma (Persuasion) check. They can also dissuade her by providing evidence that she has been misled. If she has been talked out of participating, a character she is friendly to can convince her to join their side of the following battle as an action either by pinning the blame for the lies on the opposing side or with a successful DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check. When open combat breaks out, if she hasn't been calmed, she fights against the chief.

Ragvallan Villagers. The crowd harasses the attackers if the characters earned the "Conspiracy Exposed" outcome from **Quest: Whispers of Treachery**. On initiative count 0 of each turn, hostile creatures within 40 feet of the chief must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 4 (1d8) bludgeoning damage. Additionally, if the closest attacker to the chief fails this save, its next attack roll is made with disadvantage.

Event: Revolution in Ragvall

Prerequisite: *Begun the twelfth week of autumn*

Questgiver: None
Location: Outside Hrafensheim (area R1)
Downtime: None

Run this Event if the characters are leading the conspiracy to usurp Chief Hrafen av Skeir.

Masters of Subterfuge

If the party successfully kept their conspiracy to usurp Chief Hrafen av Skeir from public notice, he doesn't expect trouble and they can attack the ceremony with surprise. In this case, they can surprise **Chief Hrafen av Skeir** (see appendix A) and his guards: four loyal **berserkers** and Svend Godrunsson (LE, male half-elf **assassin**). Hlökk Warcrier (NE, high elf **veteran**) joins the fight if she's alive, equally surprised that the characters had machinations of their own if she wasn't included.

The Wild Card Assassin. Svend, of course, is a member of the conspiracy. He may be surprised by the characters' attack if they didn't clue him in, but quickly realizes that they're on his side, and starts fighting to fend off the berserkers. Svend's ultimate goal, however, is to eliminate all contestants for leadership except Hlökk, whom Grindal considers easy to manipulate. Svend fights against the characters to maintain his cover, turning on Chief Hrafen av Skeir only if multiple characters are incapacitated.

Honor Among Usurpers

The characters may attempt to dethrone Chief Hrafen av Skeir honorably, by accusing him of incompetence and slaying him in a trial by combat. The law stipulates that a duel is to be one-on-one; the characters choose a champion to face off against the chief, with no other combatants. If the honorable terms of the duel are betrayed, mass combat breaks out as described in "Masters of Subterfuge," above.

Hrafen's Honor

The chief assents to any duel he is challenged to, despite his ailing health. He draws his weapon and stands his ground against his attackers. He carries his *Mithra's pinion* (included in his stat block in appendix A).

NPC Opinions

The NPCs present behave in the following ways:

Ása Lögmaður. The lawspeaker is supportive of a proper challenge to seize leadership in a trial by combat. Normally, this would call for a prolonged presentation of evidence, but Hlökk Warcrier has already addressed her grievances to the lawspeaker in private. Moreover, Ása's own distaste for the chief has clouded her otherwise impeccable judgment. She approves of starting the trial by combat immediately. If the party follows the proper custom, she demands no other Ragvallan villagers interfere, and the crowd begrudgingly obeys.

Gro Stensdóttir. If mass combat breaks out and the party has allied with Gro (CE, female human **bloodbonded**; see appendix A), she fights alongside them.

Hlökk Warcrier. If allied with the characters, the elf **veteran** helps the party with whatever approach they want to take against the chief.

Ranulf Skullcrusher. If recruited secretly, the youth is able to act as a decoy to ensure the party is able to precociously distract the chief so that the characters can surprise him, even if they were suspected of treachery.

Ragvallan Villagers. If mass combat breaks out, the crowd harasses the characters on initiative count 0 of each turn. They hurl objects and shout insults. On initiative count 0 of each turn, any character within 40 feet of the chief must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 4 (1d8) bludgeoning damage. Additionally, if the closest attacker to the chief fails this save, its next attack roll is made with disadvantage.

Ragvallan Villagers Dispersed. If the characters earned the "Ragvall in Confusion" outcome in **Core Quest: Rally Rebels**, the villagers scatter when combat breaks out.

Quests

The festival at the beginning of this season is an opportunity for the characters to speak with their old friends in Ragvall Village and learn about what's going on in their lives—which is to say, if they have any Quests for the characters to undertake.

Quest: Afterburn

Prerequisite: *Completed* **Quest: Burning Feud with** *the "Not Forgiven or Forgotten" outcome* **or** *the "Not Fine or Fined" outcome*

Questgiver: Hrafen av Skeir
Location: Hrafensheim (area R1)
Downtime: 1 week

Due to the way the characters resolved **Quest: Burning Feud**, either Benna Stonebreaker or Grindal av Halsfjord leaves Ragvall during the summer.

Benna's Departure. If Benna left, her many partners and some of her children went with her, lowering morale in the village, and harming the village's diplomatic efforts with the nearby elves and the other Valikan clans. The village doesn't benefit from increased timber output (see "Evergreen Logging Camp Built" in the "New Developments" section, earlier in this chapter).

Grindal's Departure. If Grindal left, the amount of trade Ragvall gets is reduced and the supplies the village can acquire, especially iron ore, is greatly diminished. The village doesn't benefit from increased iron output (see "Headwater Mining Trail Built" in the "New Developments section," earlier in this chapter).

This Quest begins when Chief Hrafen av Skeir calls the characters to Hrafensheim. If Benna departed, start this Quest with "The Matter of Benna," below. If it was Grindal who left, start with "The Matter of Grindal," instead.

The Matter of Benna

When the characters arrive, they are met with both Chief Hrafen av Skeir and Bragi Bennuson. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *"I've called you all to talk about Benna," the chief reveals. "She left Ragvall because she couldn't stand being in the same village as Grindal any longer. I respect this choice. However—"*
>
> *"Ragvall's not the same without her!" Bragi cuts in. "Everyone's kind of miserable. And while I'm not saying it's your fault—"*
>
> *"Benna's decision happened as a result of your attempts to end the feud," Chief Hrafen av Skeir finishes. "Ending a feud such as that is no easy task. I don't blame you for her departure. Still, responsibility rests on your shoulders."*
>
> *"Before she left, my mother told me that if I ever needed to find her, I should ask Kyli, her sister," Bragi pipes up. "She runs Snow's Respite Hot Springs with her partners. Could you go there and talk with Kyli about this?"*

Snow's Respite Hot Springs are described in Chapter 5: Exploring Valika.

If the characters haven't already explored this dungeon, then Kyli is unconscious in the abandoned nest (area N5 of that dungeon) and wakes up if healed. Once she is out of danger, she is happy to talk with Benna regarding the possibility of returning to Ragvall. She tells them to return to their village and await Benna's response.

At the start of the next week, Kyli has a letter for them from Benna:

> *Hersirs, As much as my heart aches knowing Ragvall is made miserable by my absence, I refuse to return to a place that houses Grindal av Halsfjord. I hope you understand.*
> *- Benna*

If this letter is brought to Chief Hrafen av Skeir, he admits that Grindal has already done everything he can do to assist Ragvall, and they do not need his help anymore. If the characters decide to oust Grindal, Chief Hrafen av Skeir tells them that he'll do it.

The Matter of Grindal

Once the characters have arrived, Chief Hrafen av Skeir informs them he called them there to talk about Grindal. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *"I'm sure you've noticed the departure of Grindal av Halsfjord," the chief says. He sits at one of his long tables, surrounded by drafts of trade agreements with other clans. "Now, it's not your fault he left. He's a prideful and heartless man who would rather leave than admit when he's in the wrong.*
>
> *"Unfortunately, I'm not half the negotiator he is. At least, not where business is concerned. Fortunately, it seems we might be able to salvage the situation." He pushes a letter towards you. "Please, read this."*

The letter reads as follows:

> *Hrafen av Skeir, I hope you and your little village are thriving without me, because life in Halsfjord has never been better. I'm back in my home, waited on by my thralls, and free to return to my business without the annoyance of that bellowing cow Benna Stonebreaker. It's made me realize just how much of a fool I was to move to Ragvall to begin with.*
>
> *Yet, dear chief, let it never be said that I'm not a generous man. Before I departed, I was drawing up plans for a caravan route between the iron mines near Halsfjord and your little village. You'll need that ore in winter, no? I've heard tell of a remarkable stone at the Snow's Respite hot springs in the mountains north of Halsfjord: a petrified dragon's egg. I desire it. Indeed, I desire it enough to give you the plans and resources for this route. Send your hersirs to fetch it for me, and it's yours.*
> *- Grindal av Halsfjord*

Once the characters have read Grindal's letter, Chief Hrafen av Skeir continues.

> *"I hate to play into his hands, but we do need iron," the chief admits. "Of course, we don't necessarily need iron from him specifically. If you can get help from another benefactor instead, I would be grateful."*

Snow's Respite Hot Springs are described in Chapter 5: Exploring Valika. The dragon egg is found in the abandoned nest (area N5 of that dungeon).

If the characters retrieve the dragon egg, characters must travel to Halsfjord to deliver it to Grindal. This doesn't cost any extra time.

Alternatively, characters can travel to either Skarfanes or Summerhelm in search of another influential trader. Doing so spends 1 week of downtime.

Calendar of the Seasons

Depending on who left Ragvall and how characters resolved this quest, mark one of the following outcomes on the Calendar of Seasons (see appendix C):

Benna's Back. A week after Grindal is ousted from Ragvall, Benna returns alongside the family that accompanied her. The village rejoices. Any of Grindal's sympathizers that remain hold their tongue, knowing they are outnumbered. Four weeks after this outcome is earned, the characters can benefit from the "Evergreen Logging Camp Built" development (see "New Developments," earlier in this chapter).

Grindal's Help. In exchange for the dragon egg, Grindal sends the characters back to Ragvall with the plans for the Headwater Mining Trail. Four weeks after this outcome is earned, the characters can benefit from the "Headwater Mining Trail Built" development (see "New Developments," earlier in this chapter). Grindal never does business with Ragvall Village again.

Replaceable Grindal. A new trader is found who helps bring supplies of iron ore to Ragvall. Four weeks after this outcome is earned, the characters can benefit from the "Headwater Mining Trail Built" development (see "New Developments," earlier in this chapter). Grindal never does business with Ragvall Village again.

Quest: The Herald's Harbingers

Prerequisite: *Completed* **Quest: Thieving Churls** *with the "Kobolds Spared" outcome*

Questgiver: Ranulf Skullcrusher
Location: Jarnskegg's Smithy (area R2) and the cave in the Sheltering Wood (area W6 in chapter 5)
Downtime: 1 week
Content Warning: Abduction, cult indoctrination

In this Quest, a group of kobolds the characters spared in **Quest: Thieving Churls** have formed a doomsday cult to Gormadraug, the Prismatic Wyrm, and venerate a being they mysteriously call "The Herald." This Herald will appear in chapter 4.

This Quest begins when Ranulf Skullcrusher approaches the characters with concerns regarding his friends. Read or paraphrase:

> *"Health and happiness, hersirs!" Ranulf Skullcrusher practically shouts in your faces. "I've got something to report! Folk have gone missing from their houses, and I'm on the case." He pauses and lowers his voice. "But I'm kinda stumped and I want your help."*

If asked to elaborate, Ranulf points the characters to Jarnskegg's smithy, anxiously noting that several of his friends have recently vanished, but he's sure it is nothing too serious that heroes can't handle.

Upon arrival at Jarnskegg's Smithy, Rikarð is understaffed and more stressed than characters have ever seen him. He heaves an enormous sigh and says:

> *"Listen. I didn't want to cause a fuss. I thought it was just my apprentices being youngsters—running off into the woods for some fun, having a drink, seeing a lover, journeying to another clan. Ain't none of them have parents—orphans of war and raids—it only makes sense they'd have a taste for adventure. But it's been too long. They've been vanishing one by one for three weeks. This ain't right."*

Apprentice Identities. Rikarð's three apprentices this season are named Terfel (CG, male human, age 17), Kella (LN, female rock gnome, age 16), and Sigyn (NG, female half-orc, age 14).

Clues. Rikarð explains the following details of the disappearances:

- One apprentice has disappeared each week over the past three weeks. Sigyn, the last to vanish, disappeared last night.
- His apprentices all eat together and sleep in living quarters next door to the smithy. Rikarð's own living quarters are nearby.
- The vanishings always happened at night; they'd be in the smithy one night, have supper, then not show up the next morning.
- Each apprentice was in a foul mood the day they vanished. Rikarð isn't the kind to pry, so he has no idea why.

Searching the Smithy. If the characters want to search the smithy for clues or tracks, Rikarð allows it, though he apologizes that he must keep working to get his orders done on time. The interior of the smithy is disorganized, and full of both soot and sooty bootprints (Rikarð's). Characters that spend 10 minutes searching it find nothing out of place.

Searching their Quarters. A character who searches the apprentices' sleeping quarters for 10 minutes learns the following information:

- The apprentices' clothes are all gone, but they left their tools, money, and any other material possessions behind in disarray.
- Tiny, bronze, lizard-like scales are littered all over the floor.

- There are small, clawed footprints in the mud outside of the sleeping quarters. A character who makes a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check identifies these as kobold tracks. Succeeding by 5 or more reveals the kobolds were carrying something very heavy.

Querying the Villagers. Asking around the village or reconnecting with Ranulf reveals several other people have gone quietly missing at night within the last few weeks as well, all of them young adults presumed to have abandoned Ragvall Village to travel to a city like Skarfanes or Summerheim.

Other information the characters gain includes:

- Five other villagers have vanished since the start of autumn.
- The missing people were all annoyed or fearful when last seen.
- Someone missing from the Bennuson Farmstead had snarked about "little thieves getting awfully bold."

If the characters have not yet discovered or guessed kobolds are up to something again, Benna Stonebreaker, if alive, is quick to put the pieces together. She demands the characters do away with the kobold menace for good this time.

Finding the Kobolds. There are kobold tracks all throughout the village, impressed into muddy patches. A character can track the kobolds to their lair in the Sheltering Wood by making a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Survival) check.

If this check fails, the trail goes cold, and the characters will have to wait until another villager is kidnapped next week for fresh tracks to appear. If the characters want to stake out the village to catch the kidnappers, the GM can create a stake-out scenario. The kidnappings happen at midnight, and target people who work with their hands.

Serrev the Magnificent

When the kobolds swore to leave town, they didn't leave very far. Their new base is in the Sheltering Wood (area W6). If the dire wolves that once lived in this area are dead, the kobolds have taken over. Otherwise, the kobolds' leader, Serrev, has used magic to befriend and pacify them. The dire wolves, if alive, are draped in prismatic ribbons, and are friendly toward the kobolds.

When the characters arrive at the cave, they can see inside without being noticed. The kobolds' leader, Serrev the Skulk (see **Quest: Thieving Churls**, in chapter 1) stands

in the middle of a circle of six kobolds and eight humans and humanoids kidnapped from Ragvall Village, all dressed white robes haphazardly dyed into a mess of many colors. All those present are messily eating soup in a circle. Serrev speaks to them in a tinny, rasping, yet powerful voice:

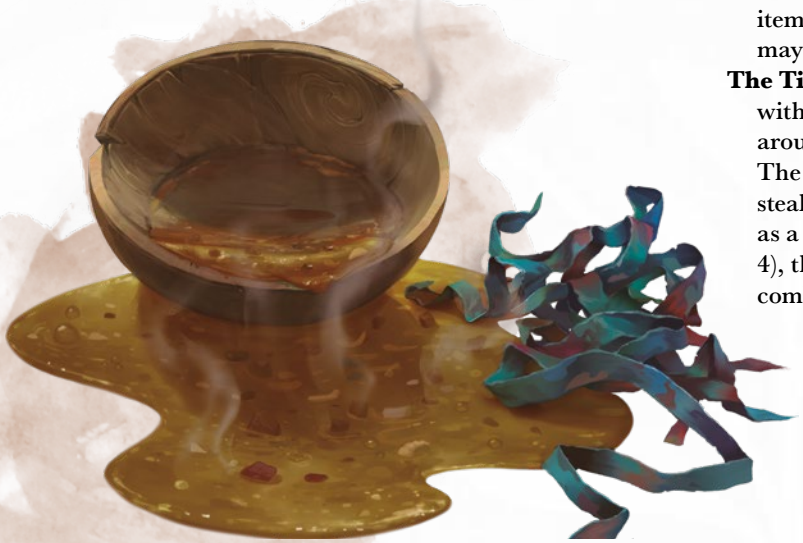
> *"Sup! Sup well! Drink 'til soup runs down your chest, my friends, for it may be the last supper you ever sup!" The kobold takes The end cometh and it cometh with a swiftness! We have heard Herald! We have borne witness to the glory of his scales! Hail Gormadraug! Hail Herald! Let us drink to the end of the world!"*

If any characters are noticed by the kobolds, a kobold rushes over immediately and proceeds to tell them the "good news" about Gormadraug.

Conversing with Converts. The kobolds are eager to share their new faith. They speak incoherently about how the world will soon end in ice and brilliant colors—but they can't specify when asked how soon "soon" is. If asked how they know this information, they say that the Herald granted them visions of the end, and that the Wyrm Who Ends the World—Gormadraug—appears in their dreams every night. Serrev and his kobolds were visited by the Herald during summer, and it was a religious experience.

Deeper Conversation. It's hard to ask the kobolds about their actual feelings, or anything beyond their prepared speeches. Derailing the kobolds from their well-practiced spiel requires a successful DC 16 Intelligence (Religion) or Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check. On a success, the kobolds reveal they have been slowly spreading the word for weeks to great effect.

HowThey Spread the Word. If asked, the kobolds explain that their leader, Serrev, has been slipping into the village under cover of night for weeks, and using the powers granted to him by the Herald to show them dreams of the end times, and speak to them in those dreams. Then, after the villagers begin to fear the end and chafe at their meaningless life in Ragvall Village, the kobolds abduct them in their sleep and bring them home to the cave for soup, kindness, and further brainwashing.



Freeing the Kidnapped Cultists

The characters can talk the kobolds into letting their people go, or they can wipe them out to save the brainwashed Ragvallans.

Talking them Down. Informing the kobolds that allowing the abducted villagers to go home will spread the word further delights them, and they provide prismatic scale necklaces for anyone interested in leaving for this purpose. Confident in their faith, Serrev the Skulk allows any Valikans who want to leave to go home in peace.

Attacking the Kobolds. As soon as the characters show violent intent, the kobolds call upon their **dire wolf** allies, if they are alive.

Four of the abducted Valikans fight alongside them (use **cultist** statistics). Serrev the Skulk now uses **mage** statistics, but knows the spell *dream* instead of *cone of cold*. The other six kobolds now use the **cult fanatic** static with the following additional trait, raising their challenge rating to 3 (700 XP):

Pack Tactics. The kobold has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the kobold's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated. The kobolds gang up on targets to get the most out of their Pack Tactics trait. Upon dying, they gleefully proclaim the end is nigh.

We Happy, Brainwashed Few

While most of the abducted are eager to forget the whole incident, four of them were swayed by the kobolds and actively spread the word that the end times will soon be upon them. Rikarð Jarnskegg's apprentices, Terfel, Kella, and Sigyn, aren't among these four.

Calendar of the Seasons

Upon returning the missing people to the village, Rikarð Jarnskegg gruffly thanks the characters, and invites them to dinner with him and his apprentices. Mark one or both of the following outcomes on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Jarnskegg's Gratitude. If they weren't friends already, Rikarð Jarnskegg becomes friendly toward the characters and offers them a 25 percent discount on all items in his shop, on top of any previous discounts they may have accrued.

The Time is Now. If the characters rescued the abducted without killing the kobolds, they continue to hang around the village, chattering about the end times. The Ragvallans don't like them much, but they aren't stealing or hurting anyone, so people mostly treat them as a nuisance. During **Quest: First Blood** (see chapter 4), the kobolds arrive alongside the Herald as non-combatants, cheering on the carnage.

Quest: Ása's Lost Past

Prerequisite: *Completed* **Quest: Gills for the Gill-less**

Questgiver: Ása Lögmaður
Location: Shrine Isle (area R4)
Downtime: 1 week
Content Warning: Non-consensual memory modification and removal, being addressed by the wrong name, drowning, ghosts

This quest begins when the characters visit Shrine Isle for the first time in autumn. Read or paraphrasing the following:

> *Ása turns as you arrive and smiles widely, revealing rows and rows of long, thin, fishy teeth. "You are here!" she exclaims. "Does that mean you will help me? Like you said in the springtime?"*

If characters answer in the affirmative, Ása continues:

> *"Mardoll told me that a ship crashed in the Teeth. A merchant ship called the Blade-Blessed," she explains. "There are rumors that laneshi…that people like me… are swimming in those waters, wrecking ships. I think we should investigate the Blade-Blessed. If anyone's left alive, they might need help—and they might know something about why the laneshi are here at all."*

The Wreck of the *Blade-Blessed* is described in Chapter 5: Exploring Valika. Ása (use **priest** statistics) accompanies the characters but tries to avoid combat, especially with other laneshi. She can cast *cure wounds* if characters need it.

A Memory of Armor

Upon spotting the laneshi soldier in the Outer Teeth (area G1), Ása is taken aback. She knew there would be people who looked like her here, but actually seeing him is a shock to her system. Furthermore, she remembers the last time she saw the armor the corpse is wearing. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *"When Mardoll found me, I was wearing that armor," Ása says in a hushed tone. "She gave me new clothes, but… was I a soldier too?"*

The One Who Got Away

Upon reaching Pale Coral's Cry (area F5) and encountering the laneshi necromancer, read or paraphrase the following:

> *Ása's fishy eyes bulge out in shock at the sight of the woman before her. Upon noticing her, the laneshi lets go of the blade she was trying to pull out and turns to face her, her expression mirroring Ása's. "Nalem, my sweet. I thought you'd be dead by now," the woman says. "What a pleasant surprise."*

The necromancer is Lamora, the only laneshi that Ása has any recollection of. Due to Ása's presence, Lamora is amenable to answering questions about Ása's past instead of immediately fighting.

Lamora is a **laneshi necromancer** (see appendix A). She believes in the supremacy of the underwater Llana'Shi Empire, and wants to spread their power to Valika. She speaks to the characters with amazement and derision, as if they were dogs somehow capable of speech.

Lamora shares the following information, if asked about herself, or about Ása's past:

- Ása was born into the laneshi warrior caste.
- Lamora was born into the laneshi mystic caste, but became friends with Ása because Ása was fascinated by necromancy and kept spying on Lamora's lessons.
- Over time it became clear Ása was interested in learning magic herself, despite not being of the mystic caste.

- Lamora, who believes in the caste system, discouraged Ása from learning magic, but she did not listen.
- Ása became more and more unhappy and began to talk about leaving their underwater Llana'Shi town.
- Upset at seeing Ása miserable, Lamora decided to use magic similar to *modify memory* to change Ása's memories so that she believed she was happy with being a warrior.
- This backfired. Ása's desires were so central to her sense of self that Lamora's attempt at mercy erased all of Ása's memories instead.
- Unable to reverse what she did, Lamora left Ása's body in the water near Ragvall, hoping she would reach land.

Attacking Lamora. If Ása learns that Lamora attempted to alter her memories without her consent, she is revolted. She has no qualms with the characters killing Lamora. If the characters attack, the encounter happens as described in the description of area G5. Lamora, for all her feelings of superiority, is wise enough to know not to fight one-on-one with a pack of wild dogs. She flees into the water. Unless a character can catch her, she escapes.

Negotiating with Lamora. The characters also have the option of negotiating with Lamora. A successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation) check convinces her and the remnants of her warband to depart and never return to the waters near Ragvall. They have advantage on this check if they use Lamora's fondness for Ása as leverage. The DC for this check is lowered by 5 if they allow her to keep the *pale coral blade* she is after (see area G5).

If this check succeeds by 5 or more, Lamora warns them that, while they won't have to deal with her warband ever again, their new keppmir allies are still a threat. Lamora leaves without elaborating.

Ása's Name

Before Mardoll Brightsea gave Ása her current name, she was a laneshi warrior named Nalem. Ása hates this name—it's a reminder of a life that is no longer hers. If the characters use the name Nalem with her, she kindly asks them to call her Ása. If a character continues to do so, she simply ignores that person and refuses to respond to that name.

Calendar of the Seasons

Upon completing the quest, Ása thanks the characters for everything they've done and tells them she is forever in their debt. Mark one or both of the following outcomes on the Calendar of Seasons (see appendix C):

Ása's Home. Having discovered the truth about her past, Ása begins to realize that, for all the strange looks she gets, Ragvall is where she belongs. Ása starts to trust the people of Ragvall more easily, initiating conversations she otherwise would not have.

Languishing Laneshi. If Lamora is killed or successfully negotiated with, the characters have weakened the laneshi forces that plan to attack Ragvall in winter.

Quest: Cyrano av Ragvall

Prerequisite: *None*

Questgiver: Bragi Bennuson
Location: Hrafensheim (area R1) or Grindalsdóttir Meadery (area R9)
Downtime: 1 week
Content Warnings: Possible unwanted romantic advances

This Quest focuses on the social relationships between the characters and two NPCs in Ragvall Village. The social encounters in this Quest can be resolved in many ways. Some suggestions are provided, but the GM is encouraged to listen to the characters' own ideas and improvise outcomes using the suggestions below as

It begins when the characters visit either Hrafensheim or the Grindalsdóttir Meadery; Bragi has been singing songs of valor and lost love. He finishes a song and approaches the characters with a cask of honey mead under his arm. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *"Ah, when beauty and bravery are wrapped in the same golden package… one who knows her smile has known a perfect thing. Tell me, how well do you know the queen of my heart, Hlökk Warcrier? Has she ever mentioned me?"*

If characters allude to having a remotely positive relationship with Hlökk, Bragi is ecstatic.

> *"The time has come to reveal the true feelings of my heart—though I would never expect her to notice a scrawny bard, barely a skald. Prithee, my friends, assist me in my brilliant plan to win my lady love!"*

Bragi's Master Plan

Bragi is far too timid to approach Hlökk with a direct proposition. In his words, "she is a goddess in the flesh, and I am but a meager man." Instead, he requests the characters woo Hlökk on his behalf, singing her songs or reciting poems that he has written, eventually revealing that he is the true author after seeing how she responds.

Being Light and Vain and Loving You

Characters who know Hlökk Warcrier or have any experience in romance may see a problem with Bragi's approach. Alternative approaches that do not thrill Bragi but he is willing to consider include but are not limited to:

Getting to Know Her. Learning more of Hlökk's interests for him to help convince Bragi to engage her in conversation, despite his timidness.

Training to Best Her. Training Bragi in combat so he can ask Hlökk to spar with him.

Steel Yourself to Woo Her. Encouraging Bragi to write a song and sing it to Hlökk himself.

Make a Gift to Impress Her. Convincing Bragi to buy or craft a gift for Hlökk.

In order to convince Bragi of one of these alternative options (or another alternative that the characters come up with), the character that suggests the option must make a successful DC 15 Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion) check.

Once the characters feel sufficiently prepared to speak to Hlökk—or Bragi grows impatient with their dilly-dallying—they approach Hlökk.

A Woman's Charm

How characters have decided to approach Hlökk or have Bragi approach her greatly changes the outcome of her response.

- Characters enacting Bragi's initial plan must succeed on a DC 20 Charisma (Performance) check followed by an explanation of what on earth is going on.
- Characters who encourage a sparring match with Bragi and Hlökk, encourage Bragi to perform his own love song, or simply have him talk to her can encourage Bragi with a DC 12 check of their choice, or through magical support (*bless* or *guidance* spells, Bardic Inspiration, etc.)
- Having Bragi give Hlökk a gift he has purchased or giving them one themselves confuses her when she learns of Bragi's romantic intent. She stresses she is not a woman who can be bought. Checks in this section are made with disadvantage. Making her a gift, however, she finds sweetly pathetic. The characters can add a d4 to their checks instead.
- Characters who learned about Hlökk through conversation gain advantage and can add a d8 to their checks.
- Breaking into Hlökk's home or otherwise stalking her infuriates her and results in failure no matter how well characters perform.

If this check succeeds, the characters are successful in their wooing by proxy. If the check fails by 5 or more, Hlökk finds this whole charade off-putting, even revolting, and avoids Bragi from that day forward.

However, if the check fails by only 1 to 4 points, Hlökk is amused and delighted by the characters' attempts, and develops a crush on one of them instead.

Calendar of the Seasons

Upon completing the quest, Bragi thanks the characters regardless of the outcome: "Love and loss is part of the bardic life—though loving and winning sounds better." Mark one of the following outcomes on the Calendar of Seasons (see appendix C):

An Odd Couple. If the characters succeeded in wooing Hlökk for Bragi, the two begin an awkward but heartfelt romance that lasts naturally through the end of this adventure. While they have little in common, Hlökk comes to treasure the love in Bragi's eyes and songs.

Bad Blood. Hlökk is disgusted with Bragi and by proxy, the characters. Her disposition changes to Friendly to Indifferent or Indifferent to Hostile, and all future checks to improve it are made with disadvantage. She refuses to speak to Bragi or look him in the eye.

Bragi Betrayed. Characters decided to woo Hlökk for themselves—or stumbled into it by accident and went along with it. Bragi is heartbroken. His disposition to the characters changes to Hostile, and Hlökk is interested in forming a relationship with one (or more?) of the characters.

Quest: Figure on the River Heilag

Prerequisite: *Completed* **Quest: Traveler of the Álfavegr** *and at least two weeks have passed*

Questgiver: Alvíss av Dvergholt
Location: Alvíss's Woodcrafts (area R3) or Alvíss's Timberland (area R18)
Downtime: 1 week
Content Warning: Body horror, intense gore

If characters achieved the "Boulderdashed" outcome at the end of **Quest: Traveler of the Álfavegr**, start this quest with the "Alvíss's Findings" section, below. If they didn't, start with "More Disappearances," also below.

Alvíss's Findings

Bragi's song about the hersirs' fight against the elder hurrock has spread throughout Ragvall Village, causing the existence of the strange stone dwarves to become widely known. Villagers have begun mutter about dwarf statues being spotted at the edge of the Sheltering Wood, facing Alvíss's timberland, just like in the song.

Alvíss, anxious to protect his daughters, has already investigated. His findings are grim, and he finds is notably agitated and tense the next time they encounter him. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *The moment he notices you, Alvíss's shoulders relax slightly. "Just the people I wanted to see," he says, relieved. "Something is watching me across the river Heilag. The bloody things stand stock-still and don't look like nothin' more than shadows, but when I crossed to see them, they were gone. Please, help me once more by crushing these monsters to gravel."*

Alvíss knows exactly where he saw the hurrocks last, and takes them there without delay. Proceed to "Heilag Riverbank" below.

More Disappearances

The people of Ragvall don't know about the hurrock threat, and a group of five Ragvallan timber scavengers have gone missing after exploring Alvíss's timberland. This reduces the number of warriors in the village by 5 (see "Starting Resources in Autumn," at the beginning of this chapter).

Some villagers now suspect the dwarf of killing the missing people, and he comes to the characters for help. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *Alvíss approaches you warily, and your fellow villagers shoot him—and you—dirty looks as he gets near. "They think I'm a bloody murderer," he growls under his breath. "But I ain't done nothin'. I can take their hate, but… my daughters…" he looks down at the ground, and you can see real fear on his bearded face. "Will you help me search the forest for these folk and clear my family?"*

The characters can find the timber scavengers' tracks easily in the mud on the banks of the river Heilag, near the border of Alvíss's timberland. Following the tracks as they meander through the forest takes 4 hours, but this time is reduced to 1 hour if one of the characters succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check. At the end of every 4 hours they spend searching, the characters must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or gain 1 level of exhaustion from the biting autumn wind.

At the end of this search, the characters find corpses at the end of the tracks.

Corpses at the End of the Tracks

Read or paraphrase the following when the characters find the scavengers' corpses:

> *The smell of rot and sound of buzzing flies becomes obvious even before the tracks end. The corpses before you are more like mulched flesh than bodies. Only the blood-drenched clothes in the heap identify this grisly sight as your former clanfolk.*

These bodies were bludgeoned beyond recognition by hurrocks that were wandering through the timberland. One **elder hurrock** (see appendix A), still caked with gore, stands amidst the thick trees in the shadows 30 feet away from the characters. It doesn't attack or even acknowledge the characters unless one of them interacts with it first. Onward. The deep, massive tracks of a whole group of hurrocks continues through the forest toward the bank of the river Heilag. It's trivial to follow these tracks, and the characters reach the riverbank after 1 hour of following them.

Heilag Riverbank

The characters easily locate the statues if they follow the river to the Heilag Shores (area W2) in the Sheltering Wood (see chapter 5). Once they get there, read or paraphrase the following:

> *Three dwarf figures with stony skin and wiry beards stand motionless at the edge of the forest. Their milk-white calcified eyes stare across the river towards the timberland.*

These three "statues" are **hurrocks** (see appendix A). Though the characters can only see three, there are another three **hurrocks** hiding 10 feet underground. The hurrocks do not acknowledge the characters, even if they stand directly in front of them.

Attacking the Hurrocks. The moment a character touches, attacks, or casts a spell on one of them, the hurrocks take notice and retaliate with surprising speed. The three hurrocks that are underground rise out of the ground behind the characters and attack with surprise, prioritizing characters that attack from range or have less armor.

Monster Salvage. Upon death, the hurrocks' bodies crumble away to reveal gemstones each worth 100 gp.

Conclusion

Once the hurrocks are defeated and the characters return to Alvíss, read or paraphrase:

> *"Stone-damned monsters," Alvíss growls. He kicks a chunk of a hurrock away, then sighs and says to you, "Thanks again, Valikans. I want to tell you more—everything, actually. But…" he turns and looks deep into the forest, lost in thought. After a moment, he turns back and says, "I need to take my daughters to safety first. And I need to confer with the spirit of the Ash before I share secrets with outsiders. I'll find you all again a week hence."*

Reward. Alvíss upgrades the budding *heartseed ring* he gave as a reward for **Quest: Traveler of the Álfavegr** into a sprouting *heartseed ring* (see appendix B).

Quest: Mildrith's Quickening

Prerequisite: *Begun the fourth week of autumn and Mýrún Stebansdóttir is in the village*

Questgiver: Mildrith Quickshot
Location: Hunters' Cabins (area R15)
Downtime: 1 week
Content Warnings: Abortion, abortive complications and death

This Quest begins when Mildrith Quickshot approaches the characters after delivering pelts to the village. After greeting them in her usual way, she requests they speak with her somewhere private. Read or paraphrase the following.

> *"Apologies for taking you out of the way. It's a matter of a sensitive nature. I returned from the summer raids and realized I was… well, to put it bluntly, unexpectedly in the family way."*
>
> *There's a short, awkward pause, then she says, "I don't want the baby, hersirs. I'm not the mothering type. I'd like it gone, and I'd like your help. Please."*

Who's the Father?

If asked, Mildrith elaborates she has an idea of who the father might be, but she'd prefer not to reveal his name or inform him as they're not in any real relationship. Characters who succeed on a DC 20 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check get her to reveal the father is most likely Kåre Strongbow, a fellow hunter.

> *"It was just a way to relax before leaving for the raids. My way of saying farewell to the village, in case I didn't return. Then…" Mildrith sighs and paces around in frustration. "Then, Kåre came home from the raids with a bride and this would just complicate things for both of us. I don't have the time to care for a wee one or the inclination to embarrass Kåre. Or his new wife."*

If the characters are willing to help Mildrith end her pregnancy, she thanks them profusely, and says that all she knows is that there are tales of herbs that can bring an end to a pregnancy. She suggests that the new merchant Mýrún Stebansdóttir might know about these herbs.

A character can also make a DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check to recall abortifacients like tansy and pennyroyal grow in the riverlands that border Valika and Nordenland, to the south.

Pennyroyal For Your Thoughts

If approached, Mýrún is eager to acquire the plants in question. While initially nosy regarding the interest in the plants—though she says it is in the interest of finding out more about her future customers—she is easily redirected, especially with the promise of business.

She reveals that herbs called tansy and pennyroyal are common in the very south of Valika, on the Norden border.

Mýrún also stresses that she's no herbalist, and that they'll need to make them into a draught themselves. She is, however, interested in buying a few bunches of the herbs to dry and sell later, and will pay the characters well for the herbs.

Telling Kåre

Characters may choose to tell Kåre about his possible fatherhood despite Mildrith's objections. If they do so, the hunters meet in private, and Kåre sets Mildrith's fears of harming Kåre and his wife at rest. Mildrith still fears motherhood, but nervously agrees to bear the child. Characters can still deliver herbs to Mýrún Stebansdóttir for a reward, but Mildrith no longer has any interest in them.

The trip to the border takes 1 week (which takes up the 1 week of downtime for this quest).

Finding the Herbs

Upon arriving in the southern Valikan riverlands, characters must spend 8 hours searching and succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom (Survival) check to locate the required plants.

Great Success. If this check succeeds by 5 or more, the characters find enough herbs for Mildrith and to sell to Mýrún.

Partial Success. If this check succeeds, but not by 5 or more, the characters find enough herbs for Mildrith or Mýrún, but not both.

Failure. The characters find no herbs.

Extending the Search. If the characters haven't found all the herbs they want, they can keep searching the riverlands for another 8 hours to repeat this check.

Harvesting the Herbs. Harvesting them properly requires a DC 14 Intelligence or Wisdom check using either an herbalism kit or alchemist's supplies. After the characters make this check, regardless of success or failure, fey spirits that watch over these herbs rises from the grasses and roars in fury.

Herbal Guardians. A willow that hangs over a nearby creek is a **puck tree**, and is filled with a group of eight **pucks** (see appendix A for both). These pucks have seen countless women killed by their husbands for seeking these herbs, and screech warnings while fight to drive the characters away.

If the characters can speak Sylvan, they can understand the pucks' warnings and can make a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check to convince them that Mildrith is under their protection. On a success, the pucks back off and let the characters harvest the herbs in peace.

Herbs for Mýrún

Mýrún gladly pays the characters 250 gp for a bunch of the herbs they gathered.

A Draught for Mildrith

After returning to Ragvall Villag, the characters are requested by Mildrith to help her brew them into a tea, then sit with her for the night. The characters must succeed on a DC 18 Intelligence or Wisdom check using either an herbalism kit or poisoner's tools. The characters only make this check after giving Mildrith the tea—not when making it; the quality of their work isn't apparent until it's been consumed.

If the character fails this check, it works as intended, but Mildrith is also poisoned for the next 7 days. If the check fails by 5 or more, Mildrith also takes 2 (1d4) poison damage at the start of every hour while poisoned in this way. If characters roll a 1 and fail this check, Mildrith takes 33 (6d10) poison damage upon drinking it, and 10 (4d4) poison damage at the start of every hour while poisoned in this way. This death is as painful and gruesome as it is tragic.

Calendar of the Seasons

Upon completing the quest, Mildrith is grateful both for their help and for their continued discretion. She offers them some high-quality pelts and fresh meat. Mark one or more of the following outcomes on the Calendar of Seasons (see appendix C):

Blood on the Birthing Bed. Characters attempted to help Mildrith, but she died. Rumors abound if the characters had it out for the hunter or if her former lover eliminated her to ease the way for his new wife. The effect of these rumors, if any, is left to the GM.

Mildrith with Child. Mildrith decided to carry her child to term, despite her fears. She gives birth in the last week of winter, and must be protected in Hrafensheim until then during the raid defense events in chapter 4.

Mýrún's Moontide Elixir. Mýrún sends the herbs to an alchemist she knows in Skarfanes. Within weeks, word spreads of an elixir that can aid women who are unexpectedly and unwantedly with child. Mýrún Stebansdóttir stocks it in her shop for 10 gp a dose, and is thankful to the characters for helping her expand her business.

The Hunter's Mark. Mildrith terminated her pregnancy and survived. She considers the characters her saviors, and she and her hunters stand by them in any endeavor—even if it means going against the chief.

"Those herbs? Seems like a curious combination. Why are you lot interested in anything like this? Well, I suppose it's no matter. You would be willing to help the new merchant out, wouldn't you? I can pay handsomely for some of those to sell later on. I could see a market for something like this. Have to make a living somehow. Good luck helping out your friend. May Ragvall be with her."

- Mýrún Stebansdóttir

Quest: The Missing Shadow

Prerequisite: *Completed* **Quest: Whispers of Treachery,** **and** *begun the fifth week of autumn,* **and** *the party has neither joined the usurpers' conspiracy nor removed Hlökk Warcrier from it*

Questgiver: Mardoll Brightsea
Location: Shrine Isle (area R4) or Snekkjafit (area R14)
Downtime: 1 week
Content Warning: None

On the week of the waning moon, Ása Lögmaður notices during an evening ceremony on Shrine Isle that Mardoll Brightsea is casting no shadow. It will take digging for the party to learn all the details, but the bloodbonded priest Gro Stensdóttir (see "A Conspiracy Afoot," at the beginning of this chapter) has taught the secret of shadow theft to Hlökk Warcrier. She has used it to steal a shadow for a dark ceremony at Venin's urging, which she intends to use to create a daemon that will help her challenge the chief.

If either Mardoll or Ása are friendly toward the characters, this Quest begins when Mardoll seeks them out the next morning.

> *Mardoll Brightsea strides up to you, her face set. "I hate to impose upon you, but something strange has happened, and I could you use your help. I'll be on Shrine Isle when you're ready, okay?"*

If the characters aren't friendly with either, this Quest begins the next time the characters visit either location. They meet Mardoll there, pacing with worry.

Hlökk stole the shadow as she was leaving Shrine Isle, where she had asked the lawspeaker about the laws around how to replace a chief. Ása Lögmaður loves Mardoll and wants to help her—however, she is reluctant to share that Hlökk was on Shrine Isle she thinks it irrelevant to Mardoll's missing shadow, and she doesn't want anyone to learn that Hlökk wants to depose Ása's hated rival, Hrafen av Skeir.

What Mardoll Knows

Mardoll explains everything she knows about her situation to the characters:

Where were you? "I was at Snekkjafit—the shipyard—at dusk, just before I went to the island and realized my shadow was missing. The only person she saw there was the lighthouse keeper. We chatted a bit, but then we split up, and he went back to the lighthouse at dusk." (This could be Ófeigur Lightraiser or his replacement.)

Did you see anyone suspicious? "I was on Shrine Isle earlier in the afternoon. I when she saw Hlökk Warcrier visit Ása. The warrior left just as I came to see Ása. It was a bit strange—I didn't think they were friends, and Ása didn't want to talk about it. She usually shares everything with me."

Have you heard anything else strange? "I shared breakfast with Gunnvarr Grindalsson in Hrafensheim this morning. He asked me the same question, actually. He seemed a little on edge. (If Gunnvarr is gone, she instead had an uneventful meal with Mildrith Quickshot.)

Investigating the Shadow Magic

A character that spends 1 hour studying Mardoll and her missing shadow can make a DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana) check. On a success, that character recognizes the curse affecting her as an unusual form of necromancy. The character learns about the *steal shadow* spell and its effects (see appendix B).

Investigations on Shrine Isle

The characters can learn the following information by searching Shrine Isle and speaking with Ása.

Ása Lögmaður. The lawkeeper saw nothing unusual on the evening when she noticed Mardoll's predicament. If asked why Hlökk Warcrier visited, she insists it is irrelevant and that she gave her word to keep the discussion confidential. She won't break her word unless given evidence Hlökk has committed a crime or is involved in a criminal conspiracy. A character can persuade or trick her into revealing Hlökk's intentions by making a successful DC 17 Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check.

Ása knows Hlökk intends to challenge the chief's fitness to lead. She encouraged the elf to wait until a speech he is planning for the end of autumn, explained the right wording to use for the challenge, and encouraged her to find allies to help fight whichever champions the chief chooses for the trial by combat. Hlökk seemed to have someone in mind already, but Ása doesn't know who. (The lawkeeper dearly hopes this serves as comeuppance to the chief for his cruelty to her when they first met.)

Shrine Isle. Examining Shrine Isle for physical clues for 1 hour allows a character to make a DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) or Intelligence (Investigation) check. On a success, that character finds tracks belonging to the Ása, Mardoll, and Hlökk Warcrier. Oddly, Hlökk's tracks only lead inland. It looks like Mardoll left twice, but Hlökk never left.

Questioning Witnesses

The party is likely to question one or more of the following witnesses.

Gro Stensdóttir. This ill-dressed priest has not been mentioned by any of the witnesses yet, but she is a newcomer to the village and a spellcaster to boot—suspicious characters may well think her involved. And, it just so happens that she's a servant of Venin herself. Gro has kept her contact with Hlökk limited to avoid suspicion, but she did teach Hlökk the spell of shadow theft.

Gro spends her time in solitude on the verge of Alvíss's timberland, ostensibly meditating on Solyma's silence. A character who interacts with her up close can recognize that she is badly injured with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Once they do, they can recognize her as a **bloodbonded** (see appendix B), a servitor of Venin, by making a successful DC 14 Intelligence (Religion) check.

If interrogated, Gro placidly says that she is a humble priest seeking enlightenment in this remote place, and that she knows nothing of the tribal politics of this quaint village. A successful DC 16 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals

that her words have an air of smug superiority to them, and succeeding by 5 or more reveals that she seems proud of herself for tricking the characters. Gro never reveals the truth—she would sooner fight and flee, or die first.

Gunnvarr Grindalsson. If asked about his conversation with Mardoll, Gunnvarr claims he was just looking for opportunities to build his reputation by acts of heroism. This interview is otherwise the same as in **Quest: Whispers of Treachery**.

Hlökk Warcrier. The elf warrior says that she didn't see anything unusual about Mardoll. If asked about her conversation with the lawkeeper, she says it was to clarify a minor legal question. A character who succeeds at a DC 16 Wisdom (Insight) check notices that the warrior has set her jaw, as if preparing for battle.

A character who interacts with her and makes a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check—or anyone who explicitly examines the elf's shadow—can see her shadow doesn't have the same build or match her armor and weapons—instead, it matches Mardoll's slight silhouette. If she is made aware of this tell but the stolen shadow isn't taken from her, she gives it to Gro as soon as she can.

Confronting Hlökk

If confronted outright as the one responsible for Mardoll's missing shadow, Hlökk furiously denies everything the characters don't have evidence to back up. If they point out her false shadow, her flustered denials suddenly cease, and her cold, warrior's demeanor returns. She knows that she's beaten.

Hlökk Bested. If given evidence that she did it on purpose, or if she confesses, she returns the shadow but refuses to explain how she took it or what she wanted with it, saying that she feels she earned the right to take a little after giving so much to defend the village over the last winter. She agrees to pay a fine set by the lawkeeper, which is merely a token amount because it caused no lasting harm, and swears not to do it again.

Hlökk's Confidence. A character can convince Hlökk to confide in them if she is friendly toward them and they have shown antagonism toward the chief (whether privately with her or publicly). If she is friendly with them or they have antagonized the chief, but not both, she can be convinced to share with a successful DC 13 Charisma check.

When she talks openly, Hlökk shares the same rumors that Venin shared with her—that Chief Hrafen is a coward who hoards the best valuables for himself at the expense of his villagers—and angrily insists the chief needs to step aside or be pushed aside. If pressed on who should succeed him, she says, "I would do it if no one else does, but any one of us would be better qualified than that coward."

If the characters earned 5 or more reputation points in the summer raids, she continues, "I think one of you would be well-suited. You're beloved by the people, and strong hersirs." If the characters agree with her, this begins **Quest: Rally Rebels**.

Deprogramming Hlökk. A character can convince Hlökk she is being manipulated with evidence from the chief that he hasn't hoarded anything (and an admission of the item he does have), and by providing evidence that the people encouraging her are Venin's sinister agents. If the party provides only one of the two, they must make a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check to convince her.

Hlökk's Fury. Once convinced, she is incensed at those who dared manipulate her, and she becomes committed to helping defeat them. She admits Gro Stensdóttir encouraged her and offered to use the shadow to help her get an advantage against the chief.

Mildrith Quickshot. The hunter recalls that Mardoll seemed to be her usual self and in good health that morning at Hrafensheim. She can confirm Mardoll's shadow was intact then, because she had a headache that morning and sat in the taller woman's shadow to avoid the sunlight through a window aggravating it.

Ófeigur Lightraiser. The lightkeeper doesn't know anything about it, but if pressed, he recalls that Mardoll seemed faint and he doesn't remember seeing her shadow even in the brilliant sunset. The daemonic shrine in the lighthouse, if examined, seems no different. A character who examines the shrine to see if its magic might be related can conclude confidently that it is not with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) check.

Calendar of the Seasons

Mark all appropriate outcomes in the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Shadows Encroach. The party failed to find the culprit who stole Mardoll's shadow. Mardoll remains weakened until it is restored by the *remove curse* spell. **During Event: A Knife at Autumn's End**, Hlökk wears a *cloak of secret shadows* (see appendix B).

Thief Exposed. Hlökk Warcrier has been exposed as a thief but hasn't turned from her rebellious path. She has no magical or popular support during **Event: A Knife at Autumn's End**.

Warcrier Redeemed. The party convinced Hlökk that the chief is not her enemy. She doesn't challenge av Skeir and sides with the characters in **Event: A Knife at Autumn's End**.

> "It's a real shame what happened to Mardoll. I wish I could help more, but I didn't see anything. I had a chat with her a while back, but dusk was coming on quick, so I came back here. Since then I 've been on the job—like usual. Sunset was brilliant tonight though. Actually… now that I think about it… if Mardoll's shadow wasn't around it would have looked real nice. I definitely would have remembered it."
>
> *- Ófeigur Lightraiser*

Quest: Rally Rebels

Prerequisite: *Begun* **Quest: Whispers of Treachery,** **and** *the questgiver believes the characters would turn against the chief*

Questgiver: Ása Lögmaður or Hlökk Warcrier
Location: Shrine Isle (area R4) or Proving Field (area R13)
Downtime: 1 week
Content Warning: Rumors, conspiracy

Once Ása Lögmaður or Hlökk Warcrier learns that the characters are interested in removing Hrafen av Skeir from power, they tell each other, and Hlökk cautiously approaches to suggest cooperating. If the party hasn't directly confessed their plans to her, she approaches casually in a place where it's hard to be overheard and idly says:

> *"You see Hrafen's on the way out, right? You have thoughts on who should succeed him?"*

She steers the conversation to what she believes are the chief's failings, and welcomes the characters to come talk about this more in a secluded corner of the Proving Field. When they arrive, read or paraphrase the following:

> *Hlökk Warcrier is practicing weapon drills in a lonesome corner of the Proving Field when you arrive. She barely breaks from her movements to speak with you. "You and I both know that Hrafen's a useless coward. Ása already explained this to me—we can spell out his failings and challenge him to a duel for the right to lead the village. He'll get to pick some guards to be on his side, but I think together we'll win.*
>
> *"The trick is, even if Ása calls the challenge fair, the so-called chief is still popular enough the town might just ignore her and us, even if we win. We need to get the town less comfortable with him, if not against him. That's where you come in. I'm a warrior, not a diplomat. And Ása… well." Hlökk laughs. "She's no smooth-talker. You, though. You can stir the pot. Rally the villagers against that carrion crow, the Raven of Skeir."*

If the party wants more clarification, she points them to the lawspeaker, who can explain that transitioning power to a new leader depends on the populace not clinging to the old leader. To make the plan go smoother, characters can undermine the chief and give themselves the best chance of the crowd remaining on their side when they challenge him.

Sowing Discontent

The characters gain a new downtime activity: Sowing Discontent. The characters can spend 1 week of downtime to spread unpleasant rumors about Chief Hrafen av Skeir. Doing so without drawing the chief's attention requires an ability check depending on their approach: a DC 15 Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion) check to chat with people away from prying eyes.

Someone in the group must also succeed at a DC 15 Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion) check to avoid the conversations drawing attention from villagers loyal to the chief.

The party can use the rumor they heard already (that the chief is hoarding magic that could have helped the raids) or they can deduce something else that would undermine his legitimacy with a successful DC 13 Intelligence (History) check.

If the characters don't go about spreading rumors stealthily, or if they fail the check required to keep the conversation secret from the chief's supporters, Chief Hrafen av Skeir calls them to Hrafensheim and asks them what the matter is—and if they have something they'd like to say to his face. Hot-headed characters might escalate this to a duel immediately, possibly causing the confrontation in **Event: Revolution in Ragvall** to occur now, rather than in the twelfth week of autumn.

Calendar of the Seasons

Track each success and failure the party accumulates until they collect either three successes or three failures. Once they do, the populace's opinion is cemented for the autumn and can't be shifted further without dramatic actions or the passage of significant time. Mark one outcome on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Ragvall Resolute. After three failed attempts to stir unrest or three successful attempts to quell dissent, the villagers become protective of their chief. The villagers rally to support av Skeir during **Event: A Knife at Autumn's End**.

Ragvall in Confusion. After three successful attempts to stir unrest or three failed attempts to quell dissent, the villagers become suspicious of their chief's motivations and methods. They second-guess him and look for validation of his words from other authorities, such as Ása Lögmaður (in matters of law), Hlökk Warcrier (in matters of war), or Grindal av Halsfjord (in matters of trade). The villagers scatter in confusion during **Event: Revolution in Ragvall**.

Quest: Shadow of the Morfar Ash

Prerequisite: *Completed* **Quest: Figure on the River Heilag**

Questgiver: Alvíss av Dvergholt
Location: Alvíss's Timberland (area R18)
Downtime: 1 week
Content Warning: Civilian massacre, earthquake, body horror

This Quest begins with a rumble beneath Alvíss's timberland, causing tremors across Ragvall Village that knock small items off tables and shelves.

Soon after, Alvíss rushes to find the characters and says, "I'm afeared we can't wait any longer. Come. Hurry!"

Alvíss Answers

Alvíss's destination is an immense ash tree in the heart of the timberland (area W7 in the Sheltering Wood; see chapter 5). Clearly in a state of panic, he makes sure the tree is unharmed. Once Alvíss notices the characters, read or paraphrase the following:

> *Alvíss pants and leans against the massive tree at the heart of the timberland. His girls, Yrsa and Jorrun, peer at you from behind its roots.*
>
> *"Damn it all," Alvíss grumbles. "Time for answers. Ask me anything. About the stone dwarves, or the tree, or me. You've got a right to know."*

Through conversation, the character can obtain the following pieces of information:

Who are the dwarf statues? "Those damned statues are called hurrocks. They were once dwarves of the Circle of Stoneraisers; my druid circle. Two hundred years ago, some of my fellow druids invoked dark magic that our archdruid had forbidden anyone to ever use."

Why did they invoke forbidden magic? "Two hundred years ago, raiders attacked our circle. Valikans. Bloody Valikans. They all but wiped us out to the last dwarf. You can imagine why I'm so cautious around your kind."

Were the dwarves victorious? "Nay. Even the forbidden magic weren't enough to defeat the Valikans. The raiders had a druid of their own with them, who wore a robe of many colors. They sealed the hurrocks away beneath the earth."

Why are hurrocks emerging now? "I couldn't say for sure. I reckon the druid who placed the seal died ages ago, and their magic has finally weakened enough for the hurrocks to bust through."

What is that giant tree? "It is the Morfar Ash, a sacred ash tree which contains the spirit of Dvalinn, the archdruid that led us during that massacre."

Dvalinn is inside the tree? "Aye. Dvalinn survived the massacre by using magic to transform himself into an ash sapling, which I myself planted here, in this sacred wood."

Why attack the tree, not the Valikans? "I wish I could say. I don't know what bloody vengeance churns in those bloodless minds. It's odd that they're going after the archdruid, though, and not your people, Valikans."

Secret of the Morfar Ash

The reason why the hurrocks are attacking the ash tree is that the archdruid Dvalinn actually commanded them to use the forbidden magic to defend his circle. He didn't reveal to them that their transformation would be permanent. The hurrocks turned on Dvalinn during the Valikan raid when it became clear that they were losing, despite their sacrifice. They nearly cornered Dvalinn, but he used his magic to transfer his consciousness into a sapling and commanded Alvíss to take him far away—to the Akkeri Bay, which he falsely claimed was sacred woodland.

Piecing it Together. The characters can surmise this by making a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check to piece together everything they've learned.

Speaking with Dvalinn. They may also learn this by speaking directly with Dvalinn by casting *speak with plants* while within 30 feet of the Morfar Ash. The archdruid is used to speaking with Alvíss, but is surprised if another druid speaks. He recovers quickly, and speaks entirely in mystical-sounding riddles. Dvalinn is proud and self-assured; he thinks he's won the ultimate victory: he will be venerated as a god-like spirit for hundreds of years by his druid circle. And now, Alvíss has assured him protection from the hurrocks that hound him by making a surprising alliance with the Valikans.

Confronting Dvalinn. The archdruid gladly tells the characters the same sanitized story of the hurrocks' creation that he told Alvíss. A character who listens to him can make a DC 17 Wisdom (Insight) check, identifying that he's hiding his complicity on a success. Dvalinn doesn't reveal his complicity in the hurrocks' transformation unless the characters accuse him of it. Then, he proudly scoffs and praises the characters' insight, and reveals the full story. He then states that none of that matters; he is still a wise archdruid, and the hurrocks are monsters that must be destroyed.

Destroying the Morfar Ash

If the characters uncovered Dvalinn's betrayal, they can convince Alvíss with a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check that the hurrocks are in the right and they should destroy the Morfar Ash instead. A more

pragmatic approach also works; the hurrocks will continue attacking until the tree is destroyed, costing lives and putting Alvíss and his daughters in danger.

Though Alvíss is sickened by the idea, learning the truth about his former mentor is enough to make him believe the tree must be burned and the corrupt archdruid ousted.

Defending the Morfar Ash

Alvíss av Dvergholt (see appendix A) aids the characters in defending the Morfar Ash. The Morfar Ash has AC 16, 100 hp, vulnerability to fire damage, and immunity to psychic damage. If the tree is destroyed, the hurrocks let out an exultant cry

The hurrocks appear at the start of the following rounds, prioritizing attacking the tree. The following events occur on initiative count 20 of the listed rounds.

Round One. Four **hurrocks** (see appendix A) rise out of the ground. Upon death, they crumble into opals worth 100 gp each.

Round Two. The earth trembles as two **elder hurrocks** (see appendix A) surface. Upon death, they leave behind rubies worth 500 gp each.

Round Three. With a tremor that fells nearby trees, an **ancient hurrock** (see appendix A) emerges. Upon death, it crumbles, revealing a star sapphire worth 1,000 gp.

Conclusion

If the characters saved or destroyed the tree themselves, Alvíss lets out a sigh of relief before thanking the characters once more. He also adds, "Maybe this place won't be so bad for my daughters to grow after all."

Tree Savior Reward. If the Morfar Ash is saved, Alvíss upgrades the sprouting *heartseed ring* he gave as a reward for **Quest: Figure on the River Heilag** into a blossoming *heartseed ring* (see appendix B).

Tree Burner Reward. If the characters chose to destroy the Morfar Ash, way, the characters' *heartseed ring* bursts into flame and crumbles into ash, leaving seeds behind (a number of seeds equal to the number of characters).

If planted, these seeds grow into ash saplings in two weeks. After four weeks, they each produce a budding *heartseed ring* (see appendix B) After four more weeks, the budding rings become sprouting rings. After four more weeks, the sprouting rings become blossoming rings.

Calendar of the Seasons

If the hurrocks destroyed the Morfar Ash, mark the following outcome on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

The Fallen Ash. The hurrocks let out a grating cry of exultation, and then freeze in place, never to move again. Alvíss breaks down and weeps, and his daughters emerge from hiding and weep with him. The dwarves remain in town, but Alvíss closes his woodworking shop and sinks into a deep depression.

Quest: Shipwreck

Prerequisite: *Completed* **Quest: Eggs Over Easy with** *the "Death of a Lightkeeper" outcome*

Questgiver: Mardoll Brightsea
Location: Ófeigur's Beacon, Wreck of the Sea Dragon (see chapter 5)
Downtime: 1 week
Content Warnings: Drowning

Mardoll Brightsea approaches the characters in an uncharacteristically sour mood and informs them the replacement lightkeeper for Ófeigur has made a grievous mistake. She says:

> *"It's terrible. I'm not sure if the new lightkeeper fell asleep on the job or if they're just plain incompetent, but no matter. There's been a shipwreck. I doubt at this point there's any survivors, but you never know. Please, do what you can. I can handle finding a new lightkeeper. Oh, by all the heroes, this is a disaster."*

If characters have completed **Quest: Ása's Lost Past**, Ása arrives hand in hand with Mardoll and offers her help to the characters. She offers them a *+1 net*. In addition to a +1 bonus to attack rolls, the Strength check required to escape it is DC 15, and the net's hit points are increased to 10.

Visiting the Wreck of the *Sea Dragon*

The wrecked ship is a longship called the *Sea Dragon*. It was wrecked upon rocks within the Teeth, and is being picked clean by keppmir. The characters can visit it by taking a boat into the Teeth. The wreck is described in chapter 5.

Calendar of the Seasons

The characters are welcome to keep or sell anything they pillaged from the wreck of the *Sea Dragon*. Depending on the character's choices, mark the appropriate outcomes on the Calendar of Seasons (see appendix C).

Recovered Potions. Ása can turn the salvaged crate of potion ingredients into 20 *potions of greater healing*, which will be ready after 5 weeks.

Smooth Sailing. Mardoll Brightsea assigns one of the sailors to lighthouse duty after a month of rigorous training. While they become a bit twitchy due to their isolation, shipwrecks cease.

"It wasn't my fault, I swear! I know exactly what I'm doing. I made one mistake, I mean I didn't, but they think I made one mistake and I'm done for! How?"

- Replacement Lighthouse Keeper

Quest: Traveler of the Álfavegr

Prerequisite: *Completed a Heroic Feat or befriended Alvíss av Dvergholt*

Questgiver: Alvíss av Dvergholt
Location: Characters' homes
Downtime: 1 week
Content Warning: Body horror

Once either of the prerequisites for this quest are met, this Quest begins when Alvíss knocks upon the front door of one of the characters' homes at the start of the next week. He has a sheepish look upon his face and wrings his cap in his hands. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *"I know this is unexpected, but I'm here to ask for your help," Alvíss says, clearly embarrassed. "I've heard rumors that one of the elk hunters saw a strange dwarf statue in the Sheltering Wood. If it's what I think it is, it could spell danger. Could you possibly check it out and report back to me what you see?"*

If asked for more details on what the dwarf statue is and why it's dangerous, Alvíss hems and haws and refuses to elaborate. He unconvincingly mutters that he might simply be paranoid and his fears are probably nothing.

If asked for leads, Alvíss directs them towards the Hunters' Cabins (area R15) where the elk hunter who saw the statue resides.

Sole Witness

The elk hunter, Sakari (NG, male forest gnome **scout**) supplies the following information:

- The statue resembles a dwarf, but its body was twisted and bulbous
- He first saw the statue standing amidst the trees along the Álfavegr—the elven road which runs through the Sheltering Wood.
- It was gone the next time he visited that path.
- A week later, he found it standing beside the Wishing Pond deep in the Sheltering Wood.

The statue is currently in area W5 of the Sheltering Wood (see chapter 5). The information given to them leads them to area W4. If the characters go to W4, proceed to "Tracking the Moving Statue," below. If they go to area W5 first, they get lucky and find the statue without tracking it. Go to "Stone Faced," below.

Into the Woods

Wary of the Evergreen Enclave, **Alvíss av Dvergholt** (see appendix A) only joins the characters on this expedition if they have not completed **Event: The Elven-Thegn Approaches** with the "Woodland Truce" outcome.

Arduinna's Aid

Thegn Arduinna Shinoff appears to the characters when they reach the Wishing Pond (area W4) if they completed **Event: The Elven-Thegn Approaches** with the "Woodland Truce" outcome. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *While traveling through the woods, a deliberate rustling of leaves reveals an elf lurking on the crown of a nearby elm. It's Arduinna, thegn of the elves!*
>
> *She leaps to the forest floor and says, "Valikans. I hear you are seeking a living dwarf statue in these woods. I've seen it. We fired arrows at it and half of them bounced off completely—and only after we attacked it did it react to our assault. Fair warning with that."*

If asked where she saw the dwarf, Arduinna tells them she can do one better and leads them to the Elven Crossing (area W5). Arduinna remains and helps them fight (use **assassin** statistics).

Good Luck on the Raids!

If the characters complete **Quest: Traveler of the Álfavegr** in spring, then a full season passes between this quest chain's beginning and conclusion. Ultimately, Alvíss stayed vigilant—and sent a courier to retrieve his daughters rather than going in person—but no further attacks have happened by the start of autumn. At least, not yet. Once the characters return, all bets are off, and this story can continue.

Tracking the Moving Statue

Characters who travel to the Wishing Pond (area W4 in chapter 5) find heavy tracks leading deeper into the woods. Following the tracks as they meander through the forest takes 4 hours, but this time is reduced to 1 hour if one of the characters succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check. At the end of every 4 hours they spend searching, the characters must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or gain 1 level of exhaustion from the biting winds.

At the end of this search, the characters find the statue standing upon the Elven Bridge (area W5)

Stone Faced

The dwarf statue—an **elder hurrock** (see appendix A) stands astride the Elven Crossing (area W5). When the characters arrive, read or paraphrase the following:

> *A stony dwarven warrior stands in the clearing, one granite hand warped into a blade, the other into a shield. Instead of a well-maintained beard, sharp wiry strands cover the dwarf's face.*

As Alvíss merely wants information, the characters are able to leave without fighting. However, if they choose to approach it, it rumbles to life and turns to attack. Its movements are rigid but unsettlingly fast.

Monster Salvage. Upon death, the hurrock's body crumbles away to reveal gemstones worth 500 gp.

Conclusion

Alvíss's worst fears are confirmed: a horror from his past has returned with an inexplicable thirst for vengeance. He thanks the characters profusely for their help. He gives them a ring, and says:

> *"One of you, take this ring. It's crafted from a seed of the Morfar Ash, my druids' sacred tree. In it is the knowledge of my circle's warriors. Bear it with honor."*

Reward. Alvíss gives the characters a budding *heartseed ring* (see appendix B).

Calendar of the Seasons

If this quest is completed in spring and the characters slew the elder hurrock, mark the following outcome on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Boulderdashed. The characters killed a song-worthy monstrosity (see **Heroic Feat: Monster Slayer,** in chapter 1).

Quest: Whispers of Treachery

Prerequisite: *Begun the third week of autumn, and the characters have grievances with Chief Hrafen av Skeir*

Questgiver: Venin
Location: A secluded location, like one of the characters' homes, or their camp while traveling
Downtime: 1 week

Venin, Arch Daemon of Deceit has a proposition for the power-hungry among the hersirs: assassinate Chief Hrafen av Skeir and take his place as chief.

Approached by an Unassuming Face

One of the many villagers of Ragvall approaches the party at night, and tells them they have something urgent to share with them, alone. This person is being puppeteered by the Arch Daemon Venin; they use **commoner** statistics, but they have a +30 bonus to Charisma (Deception) checks.

The Villager's Tactics. Depending on how you run your campaign, this possessed villager may try to gather all of the characters together in one place to discuss their proposition as a group, or they might single out the one character in particular who seemed most disgruntled with the chief (such as any who spoke against him publicly) or someone who seems greedy or power-hungry (perhaps a warlock, wizard, rogue, or whoever took a clear leadership role in the summer raids).

The Villager's Appearance. This villager can be any NPC you wish. If you want to use a hitherto-nameless commoner from the village, this character is Thyra, a young woman who nearly died fighting alongside Chief Hrafen av Skeir in the summer. He wears a long black cloak with a hood that nearly hides his deep blue, bloodshot eyes and twitchy grimace. "Hersirs, I think we should talk. Something is desperately wrong in Ragvall, and we must solve it. Together."

Venin's Deceptions

Throughout this Quest, the characters can interact with the Arch Daemon Venin while she is puppeteering an unassuming Ragvallan villager.

Before the moment Venin reveals her true nature, her guise is nearly impossible to penetrate due to her incredibly high bonus to Charisma (Deception) checks. Only by casting *detect magic* can a character realize something is amiss, by virtue of the faint trace of enchantment magic clinging to this person.

However, even though the characters can't use their skills to see through Venin's lies, they can still act on their hunches. If a player feels that something is fishy, don't tell them that their character would have no reason to think that. If a character wants to stab Venin's guise and get this charade over with, that's perfectly fine. Just remember that murder is a serious crime in Clan Ragvall, and "that person was acting funny" isn't a very good defense.

"Surely the puppeting of a simple villager will be perfect. I can begin to sow doubt so quickly and easily. Just the illusion of secret-keeping is enough."

- Arch Daemon Venin

Venin's Pitch

If the characters hear the villager out, Venin explains her thinking along the following lines; read or paraphrase:

> *"The problem in this village is Chief Hrafen av Skeir. He's a coward—a milk-drinker more interested in saving his own skin and growing fat off this clan than making his clansfolk rich, like they deserve. He chose to deny you the treasures he knows you were owed. He has a treasure trove in his longhouse, you know. Enchanted weapons and armor he stole from the Thrull, which he could have offered to make your raids easier, or at least now, to repay the losses you suffered for his sake.*
>
> *"He's a thief playing the high-and-mighty do-gooder chieftain. I know it. Plenty of other people in the village know it. You would be a better chief. One of you. Or rule together. Just kill him—or ensure that an assassin can kill him. I have certain abilities that can help you do this, if you do one small thing for me."*

Everything Venin has said about killing the chief and having certain abilities that can help the players is extremely suspicious. The characters will likely have questions; Venin's responses to these questions include:

Why does the chief deserve to be dethroned? The villager's eyes widen in contempt, and Venin reminds them of instances in which the characters have been embarrassed or ill-supported by the chief. "Have you not been listening?" she asks incredulously. "He's a coward without proper respect for your abilities. Haven't you heard how he took that idol from the lawspeaker, then gave it back just because he might face consequences for it? He's a spineless wretch."

Tell us more about your offer. Venin is rarely forthcoming with the terms of her pacts, but she is supernaturally obligated to explain them, if asked: "What I need before I grant you power is payment in advance. A shadow. I will give you the power to take a shadow from anyone. Leave it for my shadow-keeper to collect on the new moon at the lighthouse, and by the next new moon you can find a useful gift waiting for you there."

Who are you? The villager gives a wry smile and wags a finger. "No, that wouldn't do. That would be telling. Just know that I'm a friend. Someone who wants you to see the way that things really are—and how much better you deserve."

Who is the shadow-keeper? "An associate of mine. Someone else interested in that coward Hrafen's downfall. The less you know, the safer this plan will be if you're found out."

What do they plan to do to the chief? "The cowardly Raven of Skeir deserves death and no better for what he's done to you. Vengeance is the Valikan way."

Are there others working against the chief? "It depends on whether you're too queasy to kill him yourself. I can find someone to sink the knife in his back if you don't want to. Beyond that… no. No one." Venin won't clarify further, as she doesn't trust that the party will join the conspiracy just yet.

What will we get from the shadow-keeper? The villager shakes their head. "You have no appreciation for surprises, do you?" They sigh. "I am bound to tell you: it is a cloak. One which will make you akin to a shadow, and allow you to conceal even the most brutal weapon within its darkened folds."

We agree. The villager grins. "Delightful! You have three chances to take a shadow. Do not miss the drop time, and do not linger, or your offering will not be claimed. I think it would be wise if you did not speak of this to anyone—it isn't safe for me to say who else is in on this plan, and Hrafen still has many misguided supporters. Have faith; there are indeed others in this village who would see old Hrafen fall." The villager spreads their arms wide and their black, fur-lined cloak flaps in a sudden wind. A darkness creeps along the ground from their shadow to yours. One character gains a magical boon: the ability to cast the spell steal shadow (see appendix B) without spending a spell slot. Once the spell has been cast three times, it can't be cast again in this way.

Refuse, Leave, or Attack. The villager sneers. "I thought you could see the truth better than the rest of these deluded sycophants. So be it. Follow your coward-chief." The villager spins on their heel and walks away. After two steps, they vanish into shadow as if they were never there. If the villager is killed, Venin escapes as a shadow which slides rapidly along the ground and out of sight, unharmed.

A Conspiracy Unfolding

Though the characters won't learn the truth for some time, these events are the beginning of a storyline that runs through the end of winter. Venin, Arch Daemon of Deception, is eager to cause chaos in Valika. This mighty daemon is sowing discord in Thrull and Kandar as well, but is intrigued by the strong-willed people of Clan Ragvall and the reputation of their chief, and now their renowned hersirs. The daemon doesn't need to do much for Ragvall Village to start causing chaos that will ripple outward to all of Valika—she just needs to give a little push.

The party must decide whether they want to expose the conspiracy or join it. No matter what they do, the conspirators will act in "The Chief's Speech," in the twelfth week of autumn, but the characters' actions decide which Event follows.

NPCs' Opinions of Dethroning the Chief

The various NPCs of Ragvall Village all have their personal feelings about Chief Hrafen av Skeir.

- Chief Hrafen av Skeir: Supports*
- Alvíss av Dvergholt: Disapproves
- Ása Lögmaður: Disapproves
- Benna Stonebreaker: Supports
- Bragi Bennuson: Supports*
- Grindal av Halsfjord: Disapproves*
- Gondul Grindalsdóttir: Disapproves
- Gunnvarr Grindalsson: Supports
- Hlökk Warcrier: Disapproves†
- Mardoll Brightsea: Supports
- Mildrith Quickshot: Supports
- Ófeigur Lightraiser: Supports
- Ranulf Skullcrusher: Supports
- Rikarð Jarnskegg: Supports

* Opinion can't be changed
† Opinion can only be changed during **Quest: The Missing Shadow**

Currently, a majority of influential people in Ragvall Village support the chief. The characters can canvas the town to covertly learn about peoples' opinions, and even change an NPC's mind by making a successful DC 15 Charisma check.

The majority opinion has no mechanical effect, but the GM can use how many people supported Chief Hrafen as a guideline to determine NPC reactions to the characters if they usurp the chief, and overall public opinion about them.

Canvassing

At any time, the characters can investigate the village to learn if a character supports or disapproves of the chief. Some ability checks they can make include:

- A DC 15 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check to chat with someone away from prying eyes
- A DC 15 Charisma (Deception) check to avoid drawing attention (such as gossip that could alert enemies)
- A DC 20 Wisdom (Insight) or Intelligence (Investigation) check to deduce someone's attitude without asking
- A DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check or Dexterity (Stealth) check to eavesdrop where people think they won't be overheard

Take a Shadow

If the characters choose to pay Venin her price, they can use the steal shadow spell (see appendix B) to covertly steal a villager's shadow. If caught, the characters are reported to the chief. Ása Lögmaður, after some deliberation, determines that their punishment is to be a fine of 50 gp and the shadow's return.

Being caught also sours the target's disposition toward the caught character. Any friendly NPC who disapproves of the chief can be convinced to donate a shadow if a character tells the NPC that it's for a good cause and makes a successful DC 15 Charisma (Deception) check.

The Drop Point

The party might logically watch the drop point to see if anyone approaches it. Starting in the fourth week of autumn, Ófeigur Lightraiser has seen a boat lurking in the harbor late on some nights. This is Gro Stensdóttir's boat.

The boat sits on the far side of Shrine Isle (area R4) on the night of the new moon. If anyone goes to leave anything at the lighthouse that night, she takes the boat ashore to collect the shadow. Otherwise, the craft can be spotted in the dark distance with a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check. She is accompanied by two Ragvallan villagers she has been preaching to. The villagers are possessed by tortured **ghosts** that are bound to serve her. If caught here, Gro tries to escape in her boat, which has a speed of 40 feet while rowed by her or her possessed villagers.

Calendar of the Seasons

Mark each appropriate outcome in the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Conspiracy Joined. The party delivered a shadow and didn't interfere with its collection. They will receive a *cloak of secret shadows* (see appendix B) at the next full moon (1d4 weeks from now), and Gro and Hlökk view them as committed enemies of the chief that they might conspire with.

Conspiracy Defied. The party opposed Gro, successfully or not. Gro (if she survives) and Hlökk view the party as loyal to the chief, so she doesn't approach them for help. Charisma checks to influence Hlökk have disadvantage for the rest of the autumn season.

Conspiracy Exposed. The characters made their interest in the conspiracy public, drawing potential reprisal on themselves but preparing the community to oppose it during the twelfth week of autumn.

Core Quests

These Core Quests represent the preparations that must be made for winter, and the benefits that the village's defenses gain for completing these preparations.

Core Quest: Building Shelters

Prerequisite: *Spoke with the chief in "Stockpiling for Winter" in the fifth week of autumn*

Questgiver: Chief Hrafen av Skeir
Location: Hrafensheim (area R1)
Downtime: None

The village longhouse, Hrafensheim, serves as a stronghold for the people of Ragvall Village to retreat to if the village's fortifications are breached during the winter. Hopefully such a thing will never happen, but if it does, the longhouse must be prepared to withstand a siege.

Chief Hrafen av Skeir asks the characters to fortify this stronghold in the case of that grim eventuality. The upgrades, their costs, and effects are described in "New Locations," earlier in this chapter.

Calendar of the Seasons

Mark each of these upgrades to Hrafensheim on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C) as they're created. If all three upgrades are made, the chief shakes the characters' hands and invites them to have a private feast with him as thanks. The feast is small—he's rationing for the winter—but Hrafen's thanks are true. The characters all gain inspiration.

Core Quest: Raising Fortifications

Prerequisite: *Spoke with the chief in "Stockpiling for Winter" in the fifth week of autumn*

Questgiver: Chief Hrafen av Skeir
Location: Hrafensheim (area R1)
Downtime: None

During the summer raids, the villagers who remained behind were hard at work building defenses for the winter with whatever resources were left in the village. The chief gives the characters a tour of these fortifications, and requests their aid in gathering resources and leading the villagers in reinforcing them in their downtime.

These fortifications and their upgrade costs are described in "New Locations," earlier in this chapter.

Core Quest: Veteran Warrior Training

Prerequisite: *Spoke with the chief in "Stockpiling for Winter" in the fifth week of autumn*

Questgiver: Chief Hrafen av Skeir or Hlökk Warcrier
Location: Hrafensheim (area R1) or Proving Field (area R13)
Downtime: None

When the characters speak with Hlökk Warcrier at the Proving Field (area R13), read or paraphrase the following:

> *Hlökk hails you with a raised hand and a respectful incline of her head. "Health and happiness, hersirs," she says. "With winter on its way, it's time to ensure that our raid veterans are in peak fighting shape. I thank you for aiding me."*

Hlökk Warcrier asks the characters to lead two training sessions as well as a final trial of the greenhorn warriors' skills, each of which require 1 week of downtime.

Hlökk lets the characters choose two of the following advanced training session options:

- Shield Wall Training
- Arrow Volley Training
- Winter Ambush Training

These new techniques build on the Ragvallan warriors' basics, and will help them better survive monster attacks while defending the village in winter. As in spring's warrior training, Ranulf Skullcrusher serves as a representative for the learning of all of the warriors.

Lesson Plans

Completing this quest requires the characters to train Ranulf and a group of Ragvallan veterans for 1 week per training session (a total of two weeks, which can be done consecutively, or split up).

As the lessons are to teach the veterans how to both attack and defend, both success and failure are rewarded. Ranulf, representing the warriors collectively, gains a bonus to be used in "Putting Your Teaching to the Test" later in this quest.

Shield Wall Training

To complete this session, the characters must show the veterans how to form an impenetrable wall of shields to defend against charging foes. The warriors form a shield wall and defend against the characters' charging attack. Each of the characters makes three melee weapon attacks against the shield wall, which has an AC of 18.

On a Hit. Ranulf gains a +1 bonus to his Strength saving throws for the duration of this quest.

On a Miss. Ranulf gains a +1 bonus to his AC for the rest of this quest.

Arrow Volley Training

To complete this session, the characters must demonstrate how to shoot a barrage of arrows that leaves no room for enemies to dodge. Each of the characters must make three ranged weapon or spell attacks against a field of scarecrows, which has an AC of 18.

On a Hit. Ranulf gains a +1 bonus to his attack roll when using his bow as a ranged weapon for the rest of this quest.

On a Miss. Ranulf gains a +1 bonus to his Strength saving throws for the duration of this quest.

Winter Ambush Training

To complete this session, the characters must demonstrate their ability to sneak through snowy terrain using skis or snowshoes. The characters make three ability checks, which grant Ranulf bonuses that will be used in Hlökk's test, later.

Sneaking characters must make a Dexterity (Stealth) check contested by Ranulf's—the spotter's—Wisdom (Perception) check. Ranulf has a +2 bonus to Wisdom (Perception) checks.

Successful Stealth. Ranulf gains a +2 bonus to Dexterity (Stealth) checks and initiative rolls for the rest of this quest.

Failed Stealth. Ranulf gains a +2 bonus to his damage rolls for the rest of this quest.

Putting Your Teaching to the Test

Once all of the training sessions are done, Hlökk brings the veteran warriors to the Sheltering Wood, where a pack of dire wolves roams.

Ranulf and his squad of three veterans (use **veteran** statistics for all) takes on a group of five **dire wolves** together. Their approach depends on what lessons the characters taught him.

Shield Wall. If the veterans were trained to make a shield wall, they can use their bonus action to raise their shields, gaining a +5 bonus to AC while next to each other until they next make an attack.

Arrow Volley. If the veterans were trained to make an arrow volley, their ranged weapon attacks have advantage if all veterans are adjacent to each other and use their action to make a ranged attack.

- If the characters taught "Shield Wall Training" and "Arrow Volley Training," the veterans shoot a volley with their crossbows to draw their attention before forming a shield wall.
- If the characters taught "Shield Wall Training" and "Winter Ambush Training," the veterans sneak up to the wolves before attacking, then form a shield wall.
- If the characters taught "Arrow Volley Training" and "Winter Ambush Training," the veterans approach stealthily, then hide and stay at a 100-foot distance while shooting the wolves.

Ranulf refuses help defeating the wolves, but eagerly accepts the characters' guidance. This quest is a success even if Ranulf is defeated, for failure is just as good a teacher as victory.

Conclusion

Once the dire wolves have been slain or Ranulf is reduced to 0 hit points, Hlökk thanks them sincerely. She confidently states, "Winter will test us more than you can possibly expect. I'm glad we have these warriors on our side."

Reward. Hlökk Warcrier gives the characters a total of 50 gp as thanks.

Chapter 4: Winter

SEASON OF DEATH

For characters of 9th to 11th level

Behold now the darkening of the year, when night nigh-eternal envelops the brave lands of Valika. It is in the light of our fires and the courage of our champions that we find courage and hope, despite the suffering we know is to come.

We of Clan Ragvall survived our first winter through luck. The worst beasts of winter's darkness did not yet know we were here, huddled on the shores of Akkeri Bay. Now they know. Now they awaken. Now is when our heroes' mettle will truly be put to test. We cling to hope, yet prepare to die, for the season of death is upon us.

—Bragi Bennuson, bard of Ragvall

In order to survive the harsh winter, the characters must use all that they have learned about Ragvall Village's people and its environs over the course of this adventure. If they failed to stockpile resources in autumn, the ravages of winter will surely be their downfall.

This chapter plays out as an inverse of the summer season. Rather than going on the offensive and raiding distant settlements, the characters are put on the defensive. If Ragvall Village's fortifications are breached, the characters must make a stand at Hrafensheim to protect the young and the infirm of their clan.

Amidst the daily fear of invasion, a putrid shadow wriggles through the village: the Arch Daemon that made itself known to the heroes in autumn. As the monster attacks grow fiercer and fiercer, Venin goads the characters into accepting her corrupting power in order to protect all that they hold dear.

Leveling up in Winter

The default means of gaining levels in this adventure is by completing milestones. Characters gain a level whenever they complete five minor milestones, or whenever they complete one major milestone.

Characters start this season at 9th level and can't advance higher than 11th level in this chapter. Once they reach 11th level, they can't gain levels from reaching milestones until the winter season ends.

Minor Milestones

The following act is a minor milestone:

- Completing an Event or Quest

If the characters go on self-directed adventures and do things not listed here, you can grant them a minor milestone at your discretion—especially if what they do takes up a full session of gameplay.

Major Milestones

The following acts are major milestones:

- Defeating the Coldfire Premonition (see "Come Hell or High Rime," later in this chapter)
- Defeating Venin (see "Resisting the Deceiver," later in this chapter)

Raid Mechanics

This raids in this chapter use the raid defense mechanics presented in *Raider's Guide to Valika*. If you don't have that book, or don't wish to use the raiding rules, the GM can instead make combat encounters using the normal fifth edition rules to represent these massive battles.

Starting Resources

Winter will test the fortifications which the characters have spent hundreds of pounds of resources upgrading in autumn. The only problem: if those defenses are damaged, they'll need a stockpile of resources to repair them.

The characters' starting quantities of timber and iron in winter are the same as what they had at the end of autumn.

The village's starting quantity of warriors in winter is 100. If they had more than 100 warriors at the end of autumn, use that higher number instead.

"Outsiders think the cold 'tis the only thing that invades our walls, our homes, and our minds in the lightless winter. They soon learn better."

- Heard around the hearth

Gormadraug's Herald

This season introduces a new villain that calls itself the Herald of Gormadraug. This villain was foreshadowed in **Quest: The Herald's Harbingers** (see chapter 3), but it's not necessary for the characters to have completed that Quest to enjoy this season.

The Herald has relinquished all other names it once bore and fully adopted this grandiloquent title as its identity. It is a prismatic drake that believes itself to be a prophet of Gormadraug, the Prismatic Wyrm whose awakening foretells the end of all things.

The Herald has received a vision of Gormadraug demanding it slay all living creatures in "The Village Which Honors Ragvall" in a mass blood sacrifice. The Herald believes this blood will keep its master slumbering until the Time of Awakening—a point in the future at which Gormadraug will have recovered its full strength. The Herald does not fully understand, but it loyally follows its master's commands. The Herald has also been commanded to find and destroy a "profane idol" of Ragvall, a hero who aided in Gormadraug's defeat, which is safeguarded within the village.

Like most religious fanatics, the Herald is a self-absorbed creature of instinct. Though it believes itself a true prophet of the end times, it's unclear if the Herald truly possesses primordial power beyond any other prismatic drake. The GM should create a sense of mystery regarding the Herald: is it truly a prophet of Gormadraug, or is it just another pawn deceived into causing chaos and bloodshed across Valika by the Arch Daemon Venin?

Despite lacking a true spiritual connection to the Prismatic Wyrm, the Herald's power is still formidable. It can instinctually control coldfire—the hateful icy flame birthed from Gormadraug's power. The coldfire crisis is an existential threat to all of Valika, and Venin delights in seeing such panic spread as a result of her deception.

The Herald's Champion

Like any good fanatic, the Herald has drawn others to its cause. Few humans would dare follow a creature of such apocalyptic ambition (though it's possible some Ragvallan villagers were turned to the Herald's doomsday cult in **Quest: The Herald's Harbingers** in chapter 3). It does have one humanoid ally, however: a defector from the Prismatic Order named Afjyra (see her game statistics in appendix B).

A fanatic herself, Afjyra departed her former order after delving deeper into the history of the Prismatic Wyrm than was permitted by her superiors. She came to believe that the Prismatic Order, which wished to keep Gormadraug slumbering for eternity, was short-sighted. Afjyra learned that past cults believed the serpent must sleep to heal from its wounds, and then be awakened at the proper time to resume its path of annihilation.

Afjyra departed Tyburn under cover of night, and met, as if by fate, with the Herald. She proved her devotion by shedding her own blood in the name of the Slumbering Serpent, and the Herald bestowed upon her their deity's primordial power, transforming her into a panjaian—a mortal suffused with elemental power—with the ability to manipulate coldfire.

She is now the Herald's trusted lieutenant and supports the drake in its quest to sacrifice all life in Ragvall Village in the name of continuing the Prismatic Serpent's healing rest.

The Herald's Death

If the Herald dies before the twelfth week of winter (see "Come Hell or High Rime," later in this chapter), then Afjyra replaces it in any events that the Herald appears in. If both the Herald and Afjyra die before the twelfth week of winter, Venin uses her power to fill them with a daemonic facsimile of life. They use the same statistics, except they are now Undead instead of their usual creature types, and their speeds are halved.

Adventure Start

The winter season begins with a snowball fight. Read or paraphrase the following to set the scene with this brief, idyllic moment:

> *The sound of children's laughter carries over the snow-blanketed center of Ragvall Village. Snowballs whizz through the air as children—and a few adults—build fortresses like little raiders. Others have fashioned skis and skates and are playing on the hills and the frozen banks of Akkeri Bay. Despite weeks of tension, the first snow of winter has brought your people a moment of innocent bliss.*
>
> *Last night, you were approached by Hlökk Warcrier, who is in charge of the moment-to-moment minutiae of the village's defense. She's requested you meet her at the eastern watchtowers, but surely it couldn't hurt to spend a moment with the children.*

Many adult villagers are playing with the village children in this peaceful moment. Ask the characters if they wish to linger with them (see "Winter Playtime," below) or continue onward toward their meeting with Hlökk Warcrier at the fortifications (see "Hlökk's Defensive Plan," below).

Winter Playtime

Like the beginning of autumn, there are a variety of NPCs in the village square. This is what they're doing, and what they say if the characters decide to speak with them.

Hrafen av Skeir. The village chief, if he yet lives, is watching the festivities from outside Hrafensheim. He occasionally shouts an encouraging comment at a child after they've been pelted by a snowball. He urges the characters to take a moment and enjoy the fun, and grimly intones that it might be their last chance for fun for the winter.

Alvíss av Dvergholt. Alvíss and his children, Yrsa and Jorrun, have made a snow fort of their own and have made their own faction against all the Valikan children. Alvíss is surprisingly passionate about the snowball fight. He says that his children aren't going to leave his shop once winter starts, for their own good.

Ása Lögmaður. Ása stands apart from the crowd and plays referee, making sure that no one puts stones in their snowballs. She says that her most important task this winter is ensuring the safety of Shrine Isle. She'll defend the idol of Ragvall enshrined there to her dying breath—she'll even risk her life to bring it to Hrafensheim if Shrine Isle falls.

Bragi Bennuson. The village bard is providing boisterous musical accompaniment to the fight. He says that he's been studying if there are any monsters that can be tamed by music, but the chief has just laughed at him.

Gunnvarr Grindalsson. If Gunnvarr lives and remains in the village, he's laughing maniacally as he stands in the middle of the battlefield, being pelted by snowballs from all sides. He says that he's been setting up barricades within the rivers to make sure no monsters sneak into the village from upriver.

Mardoll Brightsea. Mardoll has an armful of snowballs and is dashing about the battlefield, looking for Ása. She tells the characters that she's been preparing the ships to take warriors to Shrine Isle once monsters attack.

Ranulf Skullcrusher. Even though Ranulf wants to be respected as an adult, he's still teamed up with a group of children. He tells the characters that he's been training hard, and but that the woods have been unusually quiet lately. His gut tells him that the first attack will come from the north.

Enemies from the Treeline!

If the characters spend time playing with the children or speak with five or more of the villagers before going to the towers to speak with Hlökk, monsters appear from the forest while they're still in the village. In this case, read or paraphrase the following:

> *Joyful laughter turns to screaming. Elk and wolves pour from the woods to the north, sending villagers scattering. Something is wrong with them—they're unusually huge, and their eyes glint with malice. A monstrous elk pins down one of the fleeing villagers with its hooves and bares its teeth, revealing rows of fangs that it sinks into the villager's flesh over and over, devouring him alive.*

By a stroke of luck, the characters may have saved many lives by dragging their heels. See "First Blood of Winter," below.

Hlökk's Defensive Plan

Hlökk Warcrier has been handling the minutiae of preparing Ragvall's warriors to defend the village when monsters attack. She's asked the characters to meet her at the Mannavegr Towers (area RF1) to discuss their defensive plans. She waves at the characters from atop one of the watchtowers when they approach. Read or paraphrase the following when the characters climb the tower:

> *"Health and happiness, hersirs," Hlökk says with a respectful raise of her hand. Several other Ragvallan warriors echo her greeting—some veterans who you fought with in the summer raids, but many new trainees, as well. "Come, we've much to discuss. The sagas tell that monsters rise from the darkness with the first snows of winter. There is no time to waste."*

Hlökk explains the following "rules" of winter, based on what she learned from the monster attacks last winter:

- Monsters rarely attack from the same direction twice in a row. For example, if the monsters attack from the forest, it's likely that next week, they'll attack either from the sea or from the plains. Spending time each week scouting around the village can give clues to where monsters will attack from next.
- Whenever one of Ragvall's fortifications is attacked, it'll need to be repaired, otherwise it becomes less effective and will be destroyed the next time it's attacked.
- When a monster attack begins, all noncombatants are ordered to retreat to the longhouse (area R1) to minimize casualties.
- If any the village's innermost fortifications (areas RF3, RF6, and RF9) are breached, the characters must prepare for invaders to attack the longhouse in a bid to steal their resources or slaughter their villagers.
- Each week, the characters can assign a new defensive formation. Otherwise, the warriors will continue to defend the same locations without reinforcements.
- Each week, the characters can also command villagers to improve one fortification in the village over the course of the next week. This costs timber and iron, depending on which structure is being improved. (See "Defensive Fortifications," later in this chapter.)

Making the First Defensive Line

Hlökk walks the characters through their very first time allocating the warriors to their defensive positions.

Warriors. The village starts this season with a minimum of 100 warriors. If they ended autumn with more than that number, use that number instead. Not all warriors have to be allocated. Once an attack begins, the characters can spend a turn to direct unallocated warriors to a new position. These defensive raiding rules are described in more detail in chapter 3 of *Raider's Guide to Valika*.

Minimum Force. Each fortification has a minimum number of warriors required to defend it.

Maximum Capacity. Each fortification has a maximum number of warriors it can hold.

Raiding Roll DC. When monsters attack a fortification, they must make a Raiding Roll. On a success, they overcome the fortification and can attack the next one in its lane. The DC is different for each fortification.

Hlökk's Recommendation. After explaining the above information, Hlökk recommends a balanced defensive spread, since they have no idea where the monsters might be coming from. She notes that the characters can change where their warriors are positioned at any time before the village falls under attack.

Screams from the Village!

Once the characters have concluded their arrangements for winter's first defensive line, read or paraphrase the following:

> *The quiet calm is shattered by screams and a piercing, shrieking howl.*
>
> *Hlökk whirls—her hand is already on her blade's hilt. "Gods' breath, what the hell was that?"*

If the characters fought the prismatic drake in Hvitrfjall Shrine (see chapter 5), then they recognize the shriek as a drake's.

Hlökk commands her warriors in the towers to remain at their posts and on alert, while she hurries down the ladder. Proceed to "First Blood of Winter" when the characters reach the village square.

First Blood of Winter

This morning, Ragvall Village was at peace. It was not to last. Run **Event: First Blood**. This is a raid defense scenario.

Rallying the Village

Once the attacking monsters are repulsed at the end of **Event: First Blood** or killed at the end of **Event: Hungerers Rampant**, the people turn to the characters for guidance. Depending on what the characters say, morale in the village may improve or dissipate. If the characters say something that doesn't fit any of the options listed below, it has no effect.

Honor the Dead. If the characters' first act is to erect a funeral pyre for the dead, the villagers' despair is tempered by a desire to defend those who still live. Until the end of the next raid defense scenario, the Raiding Roll DC for each fortification in the village increases by 1.

Seek Bloody Vengeance. If the characters' first act is to whip the villagers into a frenzy against the monsters, more villagers take up pitchforks and are willing to die in an act of vengeance. The number of warriors in Ragvall increases by 20.

Abandon Hope. If the characters' first act is to panic, the villagers follow suit; until the end of the next raid defense scenario, the Raiding Roll DC for each fortification decreases by 1. If Chief av Skeir is still alive, he urges the villagers not to listen, and to hold on to hope, negating this penalty.

Reassigning Forces

The characters may realize that the creatures which attacked the village were just the vanguard of a larger force waiting in the forest. Now—or at any time before next week's monster attack—the characters can reassign where they posted their warriors to defend against the scouts that snuck into the village.

Taking Stock of the Village

Once this attack has been dealt with, the characters are free to explore the village, speak with NPCs, and learn of any quests they have to offer. Alternatively, they could spend their time doing any of the downtime activities listed in the "Downtime in Winter" section, later in this chapter.

Make sure that the players know all the downtime options they have available to them; as important figures in the village, they would know what they can do to continue securing the village (see "Downtime in Winter," later in this chapter). Additionally, if the characters haven't discussed how to defend the village with Hlökk, she approaches them to do so now (see "Hlökk's Defensive Plan," earlier in this chapter).

As usual, time advances when the characters take downtime—either because a Quest they've completed mandates it, or because they choose to let the week pass without doing any Quests.

They Came from the Sheltering Wood

Prerequisite: *Begun the second week of winter*

The monstrous beasts that the characters fought last week were only the beginning. Twisted by dark magic and driven into a frenzy by the entropic whisperings of the Herald, a herd of hungerer beasts assails Ragvall Village.

Run **Event: Gore-Hungry Beasts**. This is a raid defense scenario.

Recovering from the Raid

There are many roleplaying scenes that can follow an event of this magnitude. This is especially true if the invading monsters breached the characters' defenses and entered Hrafensheim, and even more so if a beloved NPC died. It's up to the players to decide how their characters act in an emotionally heavy situation like this, and to the GM to decide how individual NPCs react.

Like in the "Rallying the Village" section earlier in this chapter, most people in the village find the means to go on after a tragedy by seeking hope in faith or embracing anger and vengeance. Some lose the will to fight and fall into a depression.

Life Must Go On

After the raiding monsters are repelled, the characters can go on Quests and perform downtime this week as usual.

Elven Allies. If the characters made an alliance with the Evergreen Enclave (such as by completing **Event: The Elven-Thegn Appears** with the "Woodland Truce" outcome; see chapter 1), then a messenger of Elven-Thegn Arduinna comes to tell them of the location of a monster nest in the woods and asks them to meet with Arduinna in the woods.

Meeting with Thegn Arduinna begins **Quest: Sheltered Horror**.

"It's funny how your most hated enemy can turn into the heartiest ally when the cold, and the things that come out of the cold, are knocking on your door. Enmity can wait. Old wounds can be healed. Yeah, it's funny. But it's no laughing matter."

- Hlökk Warcrier

A Visit from the Woman of Shadows

Prerequisite: *Begun the third week of winter*

After the carnage at the winter's beginning, this week begins a nearly month-long span without an attack. The characters are approached by Hlökk Warcrier with a scouting report. Later, they are approached by an apparition of the Arch Daemon Venin who tries to goad them into accepting a dark deal.

A Moment to Breathe

As the characters awaken at the start of this week, Hlökk approaches them; read or paraphrase the following:

> *"Health and happiness, hersirs," she says, raising a hand in greeting. "Our scouts have returned from the woods and the surrounding plains. They report that an army from Hrist has reinforced Runeheim, and both Halsfjord and Summerhelm have sent forces out to burn out monster nests.*
>
> *"I suspect we have a moment of peace on our hands. If you have business to attend to outside of the village, I recommend you take this brief reprieve to travel. A trophy from afar might renew our warriors' fighting spirit."*

Hlökk is willing to implement changes to the village's defenses as usual. She's also happy to answer questions, such as:

How do you know there won't be an attack while we're away? "I don't. However, I've survived many winters. If the scouts have found no nests, intuition tells me we have a moment to breathe easy. Probably two weeks—maybe three, if we're lucky."

Can we adjust the village's defenses while traveling? "Only if you leave me plans, or if you can communicate with me from afar."

What happens if there's an attack while we're away? "Then we fight without you. We'll send a scout to find you and try and hold out as long as we can. I admit, I don't like our chances if the perimeter is breached without our hersirs to protect us."

If the characters have no questions for Hlökk, she takes her leave. From here, the characters are free to do as they wish: going on Quests, exploring, or performing downtime activities.

> "Surely survival can't be the only thing you desire. You are the bravest of warriors and the strongest of the strong. What about riches? Power? Glory?"
>
> *- Aspect of Venin*

Venin Comes Calling

At twilight of the third day this week, Venin appears to the characters regardless of whether they are traveling or in the village. Read or paraphrase the following to set the scene:

> *You hear a voice from a dark corner, barely in the corner of your vision. "My most noble and stronghearted warriors." It is a tall, pale-skinned human woman in a black dress that twinkles like the night sky, shrouded in a fur-lined cloak so black that it's unclear where her long, black hair ends and her garb begins. Her eyelids are decorated with gold, and a deep blue iris surrounds a blood-red pupil.*
>
> *A thin smile spreads across her pale face. "It is good to see you again." Her voice now echoes from deep within your head, sourceless and omnipresent.*

This **Aspect of Venin** (see appendix A) is a form that Venin enjoys taking when communicating with mortals: a beautiful woman with an obvious edge of danger to her appearance. She speaks coyly, and as the Arch Daemon of Deception, it's impossible to read whether or not she's lying.

If the characters made a deal with Venin in autumn, she plays upon their existing relationship and tries to get them to accept a second deal: even greater power for a greater cost. If they didn't, she tries to play upon their fear to get them to make a deal now. She describes the power she is willing to offer them in vague but seductive terms, tailored to each character's individual desires and weaknesses. Venin offers the following:

Power. "You Valikans value strength. Of course, I can grant that. Does the power to make a mortal's blood freeze to ice appeal?"

Trickery. "But surely you know that I am a being of deception… it is why you still do not fully trust me." She laughs. "And you are right not to, of course. But think of the illusions I wield. Instead of a village, your attackers would see a mountain of fire, or an army of thousands, or a cavernous abyss."

Loyalty. "It doesn't have to stop there. You are powerful in strength of arms, of course, but you are also leaders. You need your people to love you. Or fear you. You could hold their fears, their joys… their very hearts in the palm of your hands. None would ever turn on you."

Once she offers this power, Venin extends her hand. A simple handshake is all she requires to seal this bargain. She doesn't share the cost of this power unless the characters explicitly ask. Venin is obligated to disclose the terms of her deals with mortal supplicants if they ask, but she phrases the consequences extremely vaguely at first. If she is badgered, she threatens to walk away in an attempt to spook them into accepting the deal without ever seeing its terms.

Contractual Obligation. A character that makes a successful DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) check knows that daemons, even Arch Daemons, are supernaturally bound to reveal all details of a contract, in writing or verbally, if asked; otherwise, the mortal can command them back to the Netherworld for a year and a day.

Venin's Price. In exchange for Venin's power, each of the characters are bound to pay one soul from Ragvall Village to Venin at sunset on the last day of winter, for her to do with as she pleases for eternity. She cares not whose soul it is. If they offer up a no-name villager, she is happy to take it. If they wish to play hero, she is happy to claim their own souls. If the characters balk, she says, "It is a small cost, don't you think? Imagine how many more souls you will save from oblivion by accepting my offer."

Refusing Venin

If the characters refuse her offer, read:

> *Venin pouts, then turns from you to gaze off at the horizon. Quietly, she says, "I hear your village is at peace. That is good for them. Yet surely such tranquility will not last. Even I cannot hold the creatures that lurk in the darkness at bay—not unless you become a conduit for my power."*

She waits, permitting the characters a moment to reconsider after hearing her veiled threat.

If the characters refused her offer by attacking her, she winces at the attack (if she took damage) and steps away from the hostile characters.

Either way, she steps into the shadows and vanishes completely. Her voice echoes on the wind: "Don't say I didn't warn you."

Accepting Venin's Power

Any character that shakes Venin's hand gains a power, at a cost. Read or paraphrase:

> *The woman before you smiles a too-wide smile, and the palm of your hand begins to bleed, suddenly etched with a symbol of a heavily lidded eye shedding two bloody tears.*
>
> *"Fret not about that," she says dismissively. "A symbol of our pact. It will remain there, but it's a simple enough thing to illusion away with your new power."*

All characters who make a pact with Venin can cast *minor illusion* at will. Additionally, they gain one supernatural boon from the list below. Only one character in the party can gain each power. If all three powers are chosen and more characters agreed to a boon, all three become available again. You can present these boons to the players on cards and let them squabble among themselves to choose which one they want most.

Blood-Chilling Grasp. You can cast *hold monster* without expending a spell slot. Its save DC is 17 or your spell save DC, whichever is higher. This spell doesn't require concentration when cast in this way. A creature paralyzed by this spell takes 14 (4d6) cold damage whenever it fails a saving throw against this spell. Once you cast this spell, you must complete a long rest before you can cast it in this way again.

Maven of Heartstrings. You can cast *glibness* without expending a spell slot. You must complete a long rest before you can do so again.

Virtuoso of Illusions. You can cast the following illusion spells without expending a spell slot: *creation*, *hallucinatory terrain*, or *mislead*. Once you cast these spells three times in any combination, you can't do so again until you complete a long rest. The DC for any check made to see through these illusions is 17 or your spell save DC, whichever is higher. Additionally, creatures have disadvantage on saving throws to resist your illusions and Intelligence (Investigation) checks to see through them.

Calendar of the Seasons

If any characters accept a deal with Venin, mark the following outcome on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Infernal Signatory. All characters who accepted Venin's power are bound to pay her by the terms of their contract at sunset on the last day of winter. (See "Come Hell or High Rime," at the end of this chapter.)

Quiet on the Valikan Front

Prerequisite: *Begun the fourth week of winter*

Once again, there is no attack this week. Eager young warriors like Ranulf Skullcrusher are getting jumpy; this tension is starting to grate on their nerves. Seasoned veterans like Hlökk Warcrier and Hrafen av Skeir remain calm.

As with the previous week, the characters are still free to continue adventuring outside of the village.

Stillness Unabated

Prerequisite: *Begun the fifth week of winter*

There are still no attacks, but now the villagers are growing tense. Even the stoic dwarf Alvíss av Dvergholt looks over his shoulder at the slightest sound.

The Unusual Merchant

At any point during this week while the characters are in the village, a strange event occurs: a traveling merchant arrives on foot. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *"Halt! Who goes there?" The voice of Ranulf Skullcrusher, apparently on guard duty, carries over the snow-blanketed village.*
>
> *A response, softer and haggard, is still audible: "I swear, nothing more than a merchant. I've braved the road from Halsfjord and seek shelter. I've wares to sell!"*

This merchant is an old, balding, wispy-haired Bürach man named Fernand Harker (LN, male human **noble**, with a Charisma of 18 and a +8 bonus to Charisma [Deception] checks). He is dressed in fine furs. He's lived in Halsfjord for many years, running the books for a prosperous merchant ship called the *Northern Prospect*, which sells Valikan furs to Bürach nobles and Bürach blades to Valikan raiders. He carries a heavy pack on his shoulder and walks with an ox-cart loaded high with crates behind him.

Mistrust

If the characters try to speak with him with this suspicious merchant, Ranulf pulls them aside and says, "I don't like this, hersirs. I think he's a vampire. He's strange, appearing out of a snowstorm, asking permission to enter… the people won't like this."

Meeting with Fernand

This merchant claims he's half-frozen from the cold; if the characters grant him a room and a place by a warm fire, he'll gladly sell them food and weapons to help them see out the winter.

Can We Trust this Merchant? A character that speaks with Fernand can try to assess his trustworthiness by making a DC 18 Wisdom (Insight) check. On a success, they determine that scared out of his wits of both monsters and a village of strange Valikans but is putting on a brave face and praying for the best. He's probably not a threat but might interpret hostility from you where none is intended.

Fernand's Wares. Fernand's supplies are of little interest to adventurers; he has no magic items or such. He does, however, have about one hundred blades and shields of decent quality, which he'll sell for a total of 500 gp. Doing so frees up raw iron for other uses, granting the village a total of 200 pounds of iron.

Haggling with Fernand. Fernand isn't immune to haggling or intimidation. If the characters demand payment for shelter, he grimaces and says he doesn't have any coin on hand, but offers them a 25 percent discount on his wares as payment. A successful DC 20 Charisma (Intimidation) check increases the discount to 50 percent. If Grindal av Halsfjord is still in Ragvall Village, his connections with Fernand allow you to buy this iron for half price without any haggling.

Why Walk? If the characters ask Fernand about why he walked all the way from Halsfjord to Ragvall Village, he inadvertently gives them a clue about the next week's raid:

> *The merchant grimaces. "Normally I wouldn't. I run the ledger for a ship, merchant ship. The Northern Prospect. Thing is, it was lost at sea last week. Along with plenty of other fine ships. Only one came back, with only a skeleton crew remaining. They gibbered about men crawling up from the sea, killing their crews, and scuttling the ships on the Teeth. It all sounded quite mad, but…well, something about it got to me. I had wares to sell, and decided I'd rather brave the winter road than a haunted sea."*

Developments

Fernand is a minor character that doesn't have any further impact on the adventure. The characters may choose to show him compassion by letting him into the village, but risk misunderstanding and accidental violence between him and the villagers. Alternatively, they could cast him out of the village, likely dooming him to die in the snow. Whatever their choice, this minor moral dilemma doesn't affect future events unless the GM chooses to develop it further.

"When it comes to bad choices, give me the known over the unknown any day. I've seen the Bite take a soul's leg right up to the knee. I've seen the wolves--they can be shooed off with fire. But seeing the looks in those sailors' eyes and hearing the death echoing in their voices, I'm never setting foot on a ship again. The ice might take my body, but something took their souls. And they were the lucky ones."

- Fernand Harker

Tension Breaks

Prerequisite: *Begun the sixth week of winter*

A weeks-long tense peace is suddenly shattered by the warning horns of Ragvallan sentries, and the village bursts into action. An alliance of aquatic humanoid horrors has arrived. Their coming was foreshadowed in **Quest: The Immortal Hermit** (see chapter 1), **Quest: Ása's Lost Past** (see chapter 3), and the rumors shared by Fernand in the previous week. Laneshi raiders, allied with blood-hungry keppmir skirmishers rise from the depths.

Run **Event: The Darkwater Alliance**. This is a raid defense scenario.

Recovering from the Raid

There are many roleplaying scenes that can follow an event of this magnitude. This is especially true if the invading monsters breached the characters' defenses and entered Hrafensheim, and even more so if a beloved NPC died. It's up to the players to decide how their characters act in an emotionally heavy situation like this, and to the GM to decide how individual NPCs react.

Like in the "Rallying the Village" section earlier in this chapter, most people in the village find the means to go on after a tragedy by seeking hope in faith or embracing anger and vengeance. Some lose the will to fight and fall into a depression.

Life Must Go On

After the raiding monsters are repelled, the characters can go on quests and perform downtime this week as usual.

Ása's Fears

This scene only occurs if the characters did not earn the "Ása's Home" outcome in **Quest: Ása's Lost Past** (see chapter 3).

The night after the raid, Ása comes to the characters in tears, sorrowful for the harm the laneshi caused to the people of Ragvall.

> *"I will pass judgement on myself," she croaks miserably. "I am one of the enemy. One of the same blood of the people who killed so many today. I can't be trusted. I will declare myself an outlaw and depart this village. The people have desired it since they first found me on this shore. It's no less than I deserve."*

If the characters accept her judgment, she departs the village silently, without goodbyes, and slips into the sea under cover of night. If they refuse to let her go and tell her that she's wrong, she stubbornly refuses to hear sense.

If the characters continue to try and reason with Ása, ask one of them to make a DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check—with advantage, if they made a persuasive argument. On a success, she relents, smiles, and sobs grateful tears. She agrees to stay in Ragvall Village and help protect them as long as they will have her.

Survivors from the Darkness

Prerequisite: *Begun the seventh week of winter*

There is no attack this week. However, near dawn on the first day of this week, the villagers see a remarkable sight: a talking fox! This *animal messenger* in the form of a white-furred fox appears in the village. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *A crowd of Ragvallan villagers have surrounded a snow-white fox. It's already spoken a few words: "Gather! Gather! I've a message!" After waiting a few patient minutes, the fox speaks. "We are Valikan warriors of Hrist, lost in the Grarjord wastes, waylaid by giants! We beg help. Seek the Rock of the Blade Breaker."*
>
> *The fox then spins in a circle, chirps twice, and scampers off toward the Sheltering Wood.*

This fox's message begins **Quest: Warriors of the Wastes**. Searching for the warriors and returning them to Ragvall Village takes about 1 week of time (represented by this Quest's downtime).

Ignoring the Call

If the characters ignore the fox's request, the warriors from Hrist do eventually arrive in Ragvall at the end of this week, but their numbers are greatly reduced by their hardships. Their arrival only adds 25 warriors to Ragvall's number. The characters can no longer pursue **Quest: Warriors of the Wastes** after this occurs.

March of Jarl Grimskjelle

Prerequisite: *Begun the eighth week of winter*

There is no attack this week, but Hlökk Warcrier approaches with a grim scouting report at the week's start. Read or paraphrase:

> *Hlökk hails you in her usual fashion, then gets straight to business. "Frost giants have been spotted on Grarjord, hersirs, just as the warriors from Hrist described. I can see only two options available to us: launch a preemptive strike or lay low and hope they don't come this way.*
>
> *"We must weigh our options. A preemptive strike could give us an enormous advantage if they try to attack us, but we don't even know if the giants are aware this village exists."*

The characters must make a risky decision with little concrete information. What they don't know is the giants don't know Ragvall Village exists. The giants won't attack in the ninth week of winter unless the characters attack them now. Nevertheless, provoking the giants into attacking and then prevailing over them would grant the characters a great deal of treasure—if they survive.

Hlökk's message begins **Quest: Preemptive Strike**.

Wrath of the Giants

Prerequisite: *Begun the ninth week of winter and completed* **Quest: Preemptive Strike**

If the characters angered the giants commanded by Jarl Grimskjelle, Ragvall Village falls under attack by his enraged warband. If they didn't, see "Giants Move Eastward," below.

Frost Giant Vanguard

Run **Event: Frosty Reception**. This is a raid defense scenario.

Recovering from the Raid

By now, this is the third monster raid that the people of Ragvall Village have weathered this winter. Though death and loss still carry a heavy undercurrent of sorrow, Valikan culture values stoicism and private grief. The villagers have become accustomed enough to tragedy that the only casually visible effect of the raid is a sense of subdued determination as they rebuild their homes and fortifications.

Life Must Go On

After the raiding monsters are repelled, the characters can go on Quests and perform downtime this week as usual.

Lefsi's Pride

After the attack, Lefsi Mannison, leader of the band of warriors from Hrist, approaches one of the characters and clasps their hand in thanks. Read or paraphrase:

> *"I don't know if you know the magnitude of what you just did, but I thank you, nonetheless. Those giants were marching east, towards Hrist, or Summerhelm, or some other city. With just a handful of warriors, you managed to turn them back. I must return to Hrist with a report for my clan's chief, but I'll leave my warriors with you. If there's anything I can do to repay you, anything at all, please tell me. I hope that our people will be fast friends from here on out."*

Calendar of the Seasons. The characters may ask a request of Lefsi, and he will do his best to repay them as a sign of the friendship between Hrist and Ragvall. Mark whatever promise Lefsi makes on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C), such as:

Aid in the Hour of Darkness. If the characters tell him of Venin's prophecy—that grave danger will come to Ragvall Village on the final day of winter—he swears to bring as many warriors as he can from Hrist to aid them by winter's end.

Giants Depart Eastward

Prerequisite: *Begun the ninth week of winter and did not complete* **Quest: Preemptive Strike**

Without being disturbed by Ragvallan warriors, the giants led by Jarl Grimskjelle don't raid Ragvall Village. Instead, they continue on toward the Valikan city of Summerhelm. Unwarned of their arrival, Summerhelm suffers terrible losses as they repel the giants.

Lefsi's Farewell

After feeling confident that the people of Ragvall are safe from the marauding giants, the leader of the Hrist warriors thanks the characters for their hospitality and cordially takes his leave. If asked why he's leaving so soon, he responds:

> *"My chief is awaiting my report. I'm sure the giants have caused chaos throughout Kandar. We will need to prepare to aid our allies. I hope we can count you among those allies come springtime."*

Developments

At the beginning of the next week, the characters hear that Summerhelm's fortifications were breached, hundreds of Valikan warriors were killed, and untold treasures were stolen. Grimskjelle and his giants then disappeared into the snowstorm and are likely halfway back to their stronghold in Frostmere by now.

The effects of the Sack of Summerhelm don't have any impact on Ragvall Village during this adventure. However, it could be important if you create new adventures to continue this story after winter's end. For example, bold Ragvallans could plan a raid on Grimskjelle's redoubt in Frostmere to claim the treasure they looted from Summerhelm.

Vision of Coldfire

Prerequisite: *Begun the tenth week of winter*

There is no attack this week. However, villagers have been suffering from nightmares that share unusual, almost prophetic similarities. If one of the characters is chief of the clan, they are approached by Mildrith Quickshot, who tells them that her hunters—and their families—have been suffering these dreams. If Hrafen av Skeir is still the chief, he is told this, and calls upon the characters to investigate.

Mildrith brings the characters to her hunters' cabins (area R15) and encourages the hunters to describe their experiences. Each of the hunters had a different dream. They share the following information about their dreams:

Blue Fire. "I woke up in my bed and walked into the night. I saw the village all aflame, but somehow, I was still freezing. The fire was blue and deadly cold. Suddenly, the ground shook and fire burst up and devoured me. I can't forget the cold."

A World of Ice. "In my dream, I was an eagle flying above Grarjord. Huge spires of ice burst through the snow, the lakes, even the mountaintops. They were burning with blue fire, and a dazzling light shone in the sky. Like the northern lights, but glowing with every color I could imagine. I saw a shape on the horizon and heard a sound—a roar—that froze my blood, and I woke up."

Light Born from a Frozen Egg. "I was in a cave. Somehow, I knew it was at the edge of the world. I felt the ground shake, and this thing rose out of the ground—a block of ice bigger than any tree. It started cracking, and light poured out. There were so many colors. I stared, and eventually, everything went white, and so cold. I couldn't see anymore, and I woke up.

The Voice of Demise. "I knew that the world was ending. Somehow, I knew. It shames me to say it, but I hid. Under my bed. I hid until I heard a voice. It spoke sounds I couldn't understand, but somehow, I knew their meaning. It was deep, rumbling like an earthquake. It told me to…to kill my family. It said that it wasn't yet time for it to awaken. That it longed for blood. That it *needed* blood to keep sleeping."

If the characters spend at least three hours inquiring about the nightmares, they interview enough people to determine that at least half of the people in Ragvall have had nightmares like this, and that there isn't any common thread connecting the dreamers other than their dreams. The dreams are occurring at random.

The Dream Descends

At some point before this week ends, the characters all experience the dream at once. They find themselves within a shared dream. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *You awaken in a bedroll inside the village longhouse with a start. Something is wrong. The house is empty. The air around you is so cold it burns your lungs, and the dark of night is lit by an eerie blue light.*

If the characters don't exit their homes after 1 minute, their house catches fire. At the start of each minute, they take 7 (2d6) damage from the coldfire; this damage ignores resistance to cold damage and treats cold immunity as cold resistance.

When the characters leave the longhouse, they enter the village square, which is alight with coldfire. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *Blue flame has consumed all the houses of Ragvall Village, but there is no smell of ash. There is no smell at all, and the world is silent except for the crackling of cold flames.*
>
> *In the center of the village square stands a woman, pale as death, with black garb and hair like roiling shadows. She flicks her golden eyes towards you and wryly says, "Something awful is coming, can't you tell? I've heard that the end of the world is quite charming this time of year."*

Venin's attitude is relaxed and superior, but she is here with a purpose: to scare the characters into accepting her power. Her calm demeanor becomes wrathful as they deny her offers.

Another Offer of Power

Venin has more power to offer the characters. However, the terms of her payment are greater than what she asked for earlier in the winter—though, just as before, she doesn't specify what the cost is unless she's asked directly. She only says that she'll collect her payment on the final day of winter.

She offers:

- "A body unable to be harmed by the freezing flames of the Prismatic Wyrm you fear so greatly."
- "Immortality, so long as you die the sort of warrior's death you Valikans idealize."
- "A touch which burns so hot that it can burn flame itself—and quench this cold, blue fire."

Skin of Stone. Your skin turns to grayish stone, which constantly cracks and reforms as you move. You become resistant to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage, and immune to cold damage dealt by coldfire.

Warrior's Immortality. When you are killed by an attack or spell, you are resurrected 24 hours later. Upon rising, you permanently lose 1 Hit Die and bear an eye resembling the symbol of Venin like a tattoo on the place where the killing wound was. You can't be revived if your body was destroyed, such as by being burned, disintegrated, or decapitated.

Touch of Fire. When you touch a creature or object or hit it with an unarmed strike, you deal 4d6 fire damage. Your touch can also extinguish a patch of coldfire no larger than 5 feet on any side, or reduce the size of a larger coldfire conflagration by that amount.

Venin's Cost. Just as before, each of the characters are bound to pay one soul to Venin at sunset on the last day of winter, for her to do with as she pleases for eternity. This time, however, she requests "The soul of one person: the next person who asks you for help."

Once a person asks a character for help, this person's name is seared into the character's palm, and can only be removed when Venin collects their soul.

If any of the characters accept this power, it's the GM's duty to cause a beloved NPC to ask them for help in the coming attacks.

Refusing Venin's Power

If the characters continue to deny Venin, she snarls and spits:

> *"You are weary. Bleeding resources and warriors. You know not what horrors will come to you in the waning days of winter. Though the darkest days are behind you, the bloodiest are yet to come."*

She lingers for a moment, permitting the characters to reconsider their stubbornness, then sneers and vanishes into the nearest shadow.

Attacking Venin

If at any point one of the characters attack Venin, her visage transforms into that of one of their friends. Read or paraphrase:

> *Venin chokes and gasps as you strike her. You look up to her face to see that it has been replaced by the face of one of your friends. The daemon weakly cackles, and haltingly rasps, "Refusing me simply condemns those you love."*
>
> *Suddenly, the dream ends, and you awaken.*

The character whose face Venin borrowed awakens with 1 point of exhaustion.

Bearers of the Frigid Flame

Prerequisite: *Begun the eleventh week of winter*

An undead legion marches upon Ragvall. They come to parley, but the characters can pick a fight here and now, if they choose. Ever since the Herald revealed itself to the Ragvallans in **Event: First Blood**, it has been quietly scheming with its champion Afjyra on how to raise a force to conquer Ragvall.

An opportunity presented itself when a Valikan warband from Hrist was all but annihilated by the frigid cold of Grarjord. Together, they invoked a ritual of gleaming evil that raised this army's dead as starving, frostbitten zombies. These warriors still bear the icons of Hrist that mark them the remains of the brave warriors Lefsi Mannison lost in his campaign earlier this winter.

The Herald's goal is to perform a ritual sacrifice that kills all people in Ragvall Village, and to burn the idol of the hero Ragvall—which, unless it's been moved, is on Shrine Isle.

Parley with the Herald of Doom

The Herald's legion of the dead arrives at the beginning of this week. Read or paraphrase:

> *A horn sounds from the north of your village with a pitch so deep and primordial that the earth itself shakes. Villagers cower, reminded of the dreams they had only a week before, when the quaking of the earth spelled doom. Gathering at the northern road out of Ragvall Village is a small host of Valikan warriors, though they walk with an unnatural, staggering gait. On either side of them are two standard-bearers, though instead of flags they hold poles topped with a brass font of icy blue fire.*
>
> *Behind them all are two figures. The first is familiar—a drake larger than a bull elk with shimmering scales of all colors of the rainbow. The second is a human woman dressed in tattered vestments of the Prismatic Order, and sitting atop a grisly, half-rotten corpse of a steed that somehow still moves and holds her weight.*
>
> *The drake lifts into the air and bellows, "The Herald of Gormadraug has returned! I demand parley with your chief!"*

The drake would prefer to meet the chief out in the open, where no sudden moves can be made. However, a traditional Ragvallan bything (see "Laws of Ragvall" in the "Introduction" of this adventure) gathers the village chief, the lawspeaker, and any villagers that wish to participate upon Shrine Isle. If the characters agree to meet with the Herald, they can demand this be done the Valikan way, and the Herald agrees. In this instance, it flies to Shrine Isle, carrying Afjyra but not her steed. The legion of undead warriors walk into Akkeri Bay and shamble underwater to the shore of Shrine Isle.

If the characters choose to hear the Herald out, see "Herald's Assembly," below. If they attack it instead, see "No Negotiations," below. If Hrafen av Skeir is alive, he is willing to hear the Herald's terms, and requests that the characters be present as they parley.

Herald's Assembly

As stated earlier in this week's events, the Herald has two goals:

- Make a blood sacrifice of all people in Ragvall Village in the name of maintain Gormadraug's slumber until the fated time of awakening
- Find and destroy an idol of the hero Ragvall, which it has heard is somewhere in the village

The Herald claims to be willing to give up the first goal in exchange for the second, but is lying. Even if it gets the idol, it will return next week with its army and attack Ragvall Village.

When it meets with the characters—and the chief, if Hrafen av Skeir is still alive—it states these demands clearly and matter-of-factly, as if Ragvall's fate is an inevitability:

"The Prismatic Wyrm longs for blood as it dreams. Your Valikan Prismatic Order knows this. My master must sleep until the time of awakening. I request your blood. All of your village must lay down their lives and accept being sacrificed.

"Nevertheless, there are other ways to prolong my master's slumber. I receive visions of its nightmares, you see. It is haunted by memories of the heroes who defeated it in mythic times. I have received guidance as its Herald: find the idol of the hero Ragvall in this village and destroy it. I will accept that…and spare your lives."

Insightful Thinking. Mistrustful characters can make a DC 20 Wisdom (Insight) check. On a success, they discover that, throughout the conversation, the Herald has been assessing their village, as if scanning for weaknesses. It seems like, no matter what happens, it will want to make sacrifices of everyone in the village.

The Chief's Decision. If Hrafen av Skeir is alive, he refuses to negotiate for the lives of his people, and refuses to give in to either of the Herald's demands. See "Refusing the Herald," below. If one of the characters is chief, the choice is theirs.

Sacrificing their Lives. If the characters agree to sacrifice the lives of the Ragvallans, the Herald smiles with unexpected delight. Surprised by the characters' willingness to accede to its demands, it magnanimously allows the characters to keep their lives, and depart the village, or live in its hollow remains. It only requests that the characters find some way of subduing or tricking the villagers so that they can be sacrificed without a struggle. This course of action is obviously unpopular among the villagers, and they will fight tooth and nail to survive.

Trading the Idol. The idol of Ragvall is of deep spiritual importance to the people of the village, but they are willing to part with it in exchange for their lives. The decision is not a popular one, but it is accepted as one of the sacrifices that must be made in winter. However, the idol is of great personal significance to Ása Lögmaður, and she refuses to give it up. Even if the characters demand it, she would sooner take it and flee into the sea, or attack the characters and likely die, to keep it. If the characters trade the idol, she departs Ragvall Village forever.

Once the Herald gets the idol, it bows and thanks the characters for their willingness to see reason. It then departs. The characters can repeat the DC 20 Wisdom (Insight) check mentioned in "Insightful Thinking," above.

No Negotiations

If the characters attack the Herald or any of its allies at any point, it snarls and curses the humans:

"Your warm-blooded deception disgusts me. Vanguard! Kill them slowly. Make them suffer until our full might is brought to bear."

The Herald grabs Afjyra and launches itself into the sky, flying away at full speed. If it is prevented from escaping, it fights to the death. Afjyra attempts to escape as well, in order to reunite with the full force of her legion and lead them herself.

Skirmish with the Vanguard. The Herald brought the following forces to Ragvall Village in its vanguard:

- The Herald (a **prismatic drake**; see appendix A)
- Afjyra, a **panjaian gormadraugon** (see appendix A)
- Afjyra's mount (a **withered steed**; see appendix A)
- 24 **rime hungers** (see appendix A)

Reinforcements Come Quickly. Regardless of whether or not the Herald lives or dies, its entire army attacks 12 hours after the characters attacked. Run **Event: Tide of Rime** early, before the beginning of the twelfth week of winter. This is a raid defense scenario.

Come Hell or High Rime

Prerequisite: *Begun the twelfth week of winter* **or** *attacked the Herald in the eleventh week*

The Herald's army attacks. This is winter's final battle for the people of Ragvall Village; even if the Herald and his champion Afjyra have already been killed, a horde of frost-rimed undead clad in Valikan armor is prepared to wash over the village like a fetid wave.

Tide of Rime

Run **Event: Tide of Rime**. This is a raid defense scenario. Also, prepare to run **Event: Coldfire Premonition** at the end of this Event.

Life Must Go On

Once the raid is rebuffed and the Coldfire Premonition conjured by the dying rime hungers is slain, Ragvall Village is in tatters, and burning with unchecked coldfire. There is no time for rest.

The characters and the villagers spend the next week operating in harried shifts hauling their last precious supplies of firewood and oil to the coldfire conflagrations. Since only flames can extinguish coldfire, it takes nearly everything the village has left to put it out. This week must be spent eliminating the fire; there's no time to go adventuring. If one of the characters accepted Venin's "Touch of Fire" gift in the tenth week of winter, they are able to put the coldfire out swiftly, and gain a week to complete Quests or go adventuring.

Afterward, a representative of the people of the village beg the village chief to move as much of the population into the longhouse as possible. After fighting the coldfire, the villagers have so little fuel left that people are beginning to freeze to death in their huts. If Hrafen av Skeir lives, he assents and shares his home with the villagers. If one of the characters is the chief, the choice is up to them.

Pay the Piper

Prerequisite: *Begun the final day of winter* **and** *made a deal with Venin at any point this year*

The Arch Daemon Venin has been an eager spectator of the saga unfolding in Ragvall Village in autumn and winter. As a creature of deception, she is loath to directly involve herself in the misadventures of mortals, preferring to simply give them enough rope with which to hang themselves, then sit back and watch the show. The one exception is when she comes to collect—and for characters who accepted her power, that time is now: the final day of winter.

The Silver-Tongued Devil

Venin appears as she first did in autumn, by possessing one of the Ragvallan villagers. She stands in the middle of the village square outside the longhouse and loudly calls for the village to gather around and hear of how their hersirs bargained with an Arch Daemon and now must pay the price. She possesses great power, even in this form, and has effortlessly batted away several villagers who have tried to restrain and calm the "raving" villager.

The characters may hear Venin's words from within the longhouse, or be called to help by a panicking Ragvallan. Once they arrive, read or paraphrase the following:

> *A villager stands in the middle of the square with a throng gathered around her. She is one whose face you've seen day in and day out all year, someone who has survived every trial this year has seen fit to test you with—and she is denouncing you, loudly, in front of the village.*
>
> *"You hear me right!" she bellows in a familiar, silky voice. "A daemon—an Arch Daemon, no less—came to your trusted hersirs! Those same heroes who led you to victory in the raids, those who protected you in winter. Their power was bought at a price. Yes, a dear price. Your souls."*
>
> *She turns to you and smirks. "Hello, bold hersirs. I was just telling your loyal people the truth. About your dealings with Venin." A murmur passes through the crowd, and all eyes turn to you.*

Battle of Public Opinion

Venin's first battlefield is one of words. She is putting her thumb on the scale gently, without using any supernatural tricks. The best lies, as she sees it, are ones that are true. If she can turn the people of Ragvall Village against their heroes, total chaos is soon to follow.

This battle of words is a tug-of-war, with the hearts and minds of the Ragvallan people hanging in the balance. Currently, the villagers are divided; the characters are trusted leaders, but they have done some unsavory things, and have displayed remarkable, even supernatural, powers over the course of this year.

The characters are supported by 25 percent of the villagers, mistrusted by 25 percent of the villagers, and in the middle are the remaining 50 percent are undecided. Those remaining villagers want to trust the characters, but their faith in them has been shaken. The characters must try to regain the trust of as many villagers as possible over three rounds of verbal combat.

Mounting Mistrust. For every time the characters earned a "Growing Mistrust" outcome during one of the raid Events in this chapter, 10 percent of the undecided villagers are immediately swayed to Venin's side.

Rounds of Verbal Combat. This battle of words consists of three rounds of back-and-forth speaking to capture the minds of the people of Ragvall Village. Venin speaks first, then the characters. When the characters speak, they must make a Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check, gaining more support the higher the check result is (see below).

Swaying Public Opinion. When the characters make a Charisma check, they sway a percentage of the village's undecided population to their side. That percentage is equal to the result of their check. If the check's result is over 20, they also sway 10 percent of the population

that mistrusts them. If there are no undecided people remaining, the characters instead sway people who Venin has convinced to oppose them.

When Venin speaks, her silver-tongued charm automatically convinces 10 percent of the unconvinced population to distrust the characters. If there are no undecided people remaining, Venin's words sway 5 percent of the population who have already chosen to support the characters.

Results of the Battle. The general opinion of Ragvall Village calcifies after three rounds of repartee between Venin and the characters. Sensing this, she finishes toying with these mortals and collects her debt (see below).

Venin Claims Her Due

If Venin drives the majority of people in Ragvall to mistrust the characters, she laughs cruelly and adds insult to injury by turning to the debt she's owed. If the characters rally a majority of the village to their side in the battle of words, she fumes and rapidly changes the subject to collecting her debt.

She abides by the terms of any and all deals that the characters agreed to in autumn and winter, which ranges from the souls of any villager (which she "magnanimously" allows the characters to choose themselves, if they wish), to specific souls. Those chosen die instantly, and Venin carries their souls to the Netherworld herself. She thanks the characters for their business, and with a poison-honey smile wishes them "all the best on their future endeavors." She swears that she'll be watching from afar, in case they have need of her again.

If the characters attack Venin to prevent her from claiming the villagers' souls, she fights back and attempts to kill them. See "Resisting the Deceiver," below.

Resisting the Deceiver

The following sections describe how to run this optional final boss fight. Below them are three potential conclusions, depending on if the characters are triumphant, surrender, or are killed.

Attacking the Deceiver. If the characters attack Venin, she cackles and allows her host body to be killed. She can be expelled from the body harmlessly by casting *dispel evil and good* on her host. Once expelled, the Arch Daemon physically manifests as the **Aspect of Venin** (see appendix A).

Battling the Deceiver. Once manifested as her aspect, Venin gleefully attacks the characters, taunting them for their mortal inferiority and reminding them of the futility of their quest. She is just as happy to claim their souls in the place of other Valikans, and she has been secretly hoping for the chance to unleash her aspect's power against worthy mortal foes.

Mortal Aid. Unless the characters tell them to stand back, any brave Ragvallans who support the characters will try to help them fight Venin. Venin is immune to most of the villagers' attacks since they don't have magic weapons. Instead, the mass of villagers takes the Help action, granting all of the characters advantage on their first attack against Venin on each of their turns. If there are friendly NPCs that the characters have gifted a magic weapon over the course of the adventure, that NPC deals 5 damage to Venin on initiative count 20 of each round.

Lefsi Mannison's Aid. If the characters earned the "Aid in the Hour of Darkness" outcome in the ninth week of winter, Lefsi Mannison brings a group of warriors from Hrist to aid the characters in their battle against Venin. These warriors impose disadvantage on the first attack Venin makes each round, and Lefsi himself deals 5 damage to Venin on initiative count 20 of each round.

Mortal Betrayal. The people of Ragvall would never willingly fight on the sided of an Arch Daemon, even if they believe the characters are in the wrong—but they might consider it, if only for a moment. Venin can use her Invoke Banished Desire action to force a group of villagers to try and restrain the characters. She intentionally chooses not to affect the characters with this effect. These villagers use **commoner** statistics (unless you want to have a named NPC enter the fray for even more drama), and try to either grapple the characters or take the Help action to grant Venin advantage on her attacks.

Conclusion: Besting the Deceiver

If Venin's aspect is reduced to 0 hit points—or if she is banished by a spell such as *banishment* or *dispel evil and good*—she gasps in shock as her form melts away into a torrent of crimson blood that washes across the village, reddening the ice and snow on the ground until it melts in spring. She is banished to the Netherworld for a year and a day, until she can recover enough power to manifest on the mortal world once more.

If Venin is banished, any Ragvallan villagers under her control are immediately freed, and fall unconscious for 1d4 hours.

Conclusion: Surrender and Defeat

At any point, the characters can surrender, and Venin accepts with an air of disappointment; she'd hoped that Valikans courageous enough to fight her would have at least put up more of a fight. If she still has more than half her hit point maximum, she sneers that their defiance has doubled her cost—she will claim twice the number of souls originally bargained for to recover from the wounds they caused her.

If she is at half her hit point maximum or lower, she doesn't want to risk a defeat if they villagers rally against her. She snarls that she'll take what she came for, then vanishes in a sulfurous cloud as several villagers drop dead.

Conclusion: Death at the Eleventh Hour

If the characters die now, it was all for naught. The world goes dark, and the torments of the Netherworld are all that await them for eternity. Such torments are best left to the players' imagination.

The fate of Ragvall Village in this scenario is uncertain—and also best left to the imagination of the players. After all, their characters will never know if their friends and allies pulled together and survived another year, or if chaos consumed them in the dark days to come.

Epilogue: Winter's End

This epilogue has three options for the GM to choose from, based on how the successfully the characters defended their village in winter.

Regardless of what ending the players earned at this tale's close, the GM may wish to share the responsibility of crafting an ending with them. Ask them to think about what their characters do as a new year begins. They can share a short description—in whatever level of detail they desire—of what that character does. Do they remain in the village? What relationships do they have? Do they depart Clan Ragvall? What adventures do they go on?

In between each character's epilogue story, share similar short tales about the fate of their favorite NPCs from this adventure.

Best Ending: First Flowers

Prerequisite: *Survived winter, and earned the support of more than half the people of Ragvall if a deal was made with Venin*

In this ending, the characters and the people of Ragvall Village survived the winter and emerged into a bright new Season of Rebirth. Read or paraphrase:

> *Crimson, blood-soaked snow begins to melt as the first sun of spring dawns in the sky above you. The gray clouds of winter have finally given way, blessing you with a bright blue sky and a shining morning. A villager passes you with tears in her eyes and a weak smile on her face and points out into the grass.*
>
> *Following her gesture, you see them: wildflowers with broad, white petals and a center so yellow it seems like gold. It's finally over—a new year has begun.*

Bad Ending: Exiles of Ragvall

Prerequisite: *Survived winter, but the characters were dishonored*

In this ending, the village was saved, but the characters have earned themselves dishonor and disgrace—such as by failing to win the support of at least half the village after their dealing with Venin was revealed. They face exile for their transgressions. Read or paraphrase:

> *The village lawspeaker stands before you, grim-faced. "Hersirs of Ragvall, I hope you know that we people of this village take no pride in this. There are many of us who owe you our lives. However, the village's sentiment is overwhelming: there can be no trust placed in heroes who consort with daemons. It's with a heavy heart that I exile you from this village until the end of days."*
>
> *One last frigid breeze of winter blows through the village. A new spring is dawning, but you will not remain to see it. The ice is beginning to clear, and the road to the nearest town is long. Maybe you will find shelter there.*

Worst Ending: Ragvall's End

Prerequisite: *Ragvall Village was destroyed*

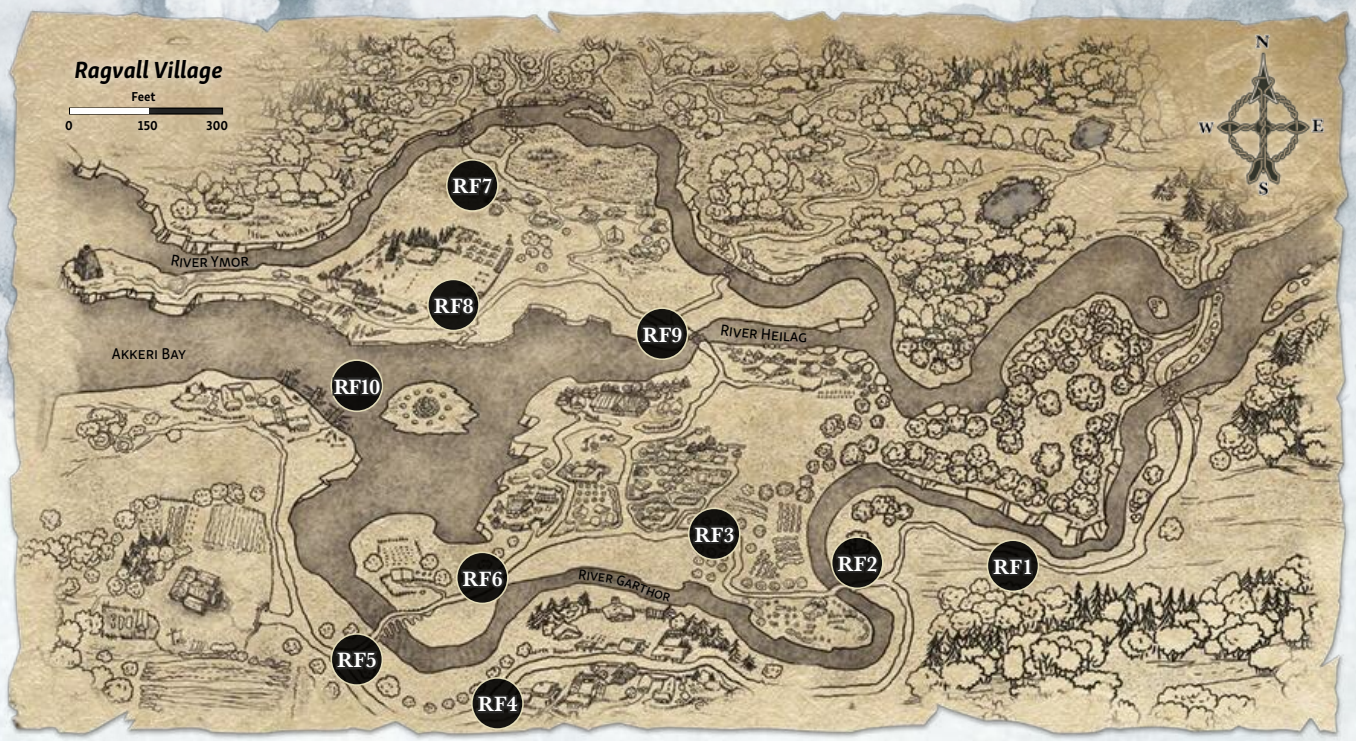
In this ending, Ragvall Village meets a tragic fate. This likely occurred because the characters and their defenders were unable to defeat the Coldfire Premonition in the closing weeks of winter. They fled, or barely survived, and took a few of the survivors with them. Based on the exact details of how this tragic end came to Ragvall Village, read or paraphrase the following:

> *Little remains of Ragvall Village but an icy crater. The ruined houses still burn with frigid blue flames, and the people fear they will never be able to return. The coldfire will spread and consume everything in its path so quickly that no effort to quench it could succeed. This village is lost.*
>
> *Spring is dawning, but the cold, huddled survivors around you seem to take little comfort in it.*

Hope: The Icon of Ragvall

If Ása is still a part of the village, there is a glimmer of hope at the end of this dark story: she kept the idol of Ragvall that made up the heart of the village when Hrafen av Skeir first founded it. Read or paraphrase:

> *"It's not all over," croaks Ása. She creeps toward you and reveals from her heavy cloak. A wooden icon of a heroic woman bearing a shield and defiantly holding a blade in front of her chest. "Ragvall," Ása says simply. "Hope."*
>
> *All eyes turn to you.*



Defending Ragvall Village

Many of the events in this chapter are raid defense scenarios. The rules for defensive raids are outlined in *Raider's Guide to Valika*. In this chapter, a raid scenario is composed of two events. In the first event, you use a map of the entire village. On your turn, the players decide which fortifications to allocate their defenders to. On the enemies' turn, they launch an attack against your fortifications. They start from an unknown position, but their location becomes known once they start attacking. When the monsters attack a fortification, the GM makes a Raiding Roll to try and break through that fortification, possibly killing some of the village's defenders.

The monsters are trying to break through your defensive fortifications in order to strike at your stronghold—Hrafensheim. Fortifications must be attacked in order, unless a special rule allows foes to slip past the characters' defensive line. If Hrafensheim is reached, a new raid event begins, which takes place inside Hrafensheim as the raiding monsters' leader takes to the field to try and capture the village. This event uses a 5-foot-square tactical scale and typical fifth edition-style combat.

Defensive Fortifications

The Ragvallan villagers started creating defensive fortifications by the chief's order in autumn. Just like the conflict zones in an offensive raid, these fortifications are the points that monsters attack and you must defend to keep them from reaching your stronghold.

You can upgrade a fortification to a more powerful version by paying its upgrade cost. The people of Ragvall are able to upgrade a fortification with one week of work. The characters must also spend one week of downtime to lead the rebuilding effort.

Raiding Lanes

These fortifications are divided into three lanes, as described in the raid defense rules presented in *Raider's Guide to Valika*.

Typically, the invaders in this adventure's raids start by attacking only a single zone in a single lane, and then can attack the outermost zone in two lanes at the start of every turn thereafter. This is described specifically in each raid Event's "Invader Tactics" section (later in this chapter). Once the third zone in any lane is conquered, the raid defense event ends and the invaders storm Hrafensheim, the village stronghold. A new Event to defend Hrafensheim begins.

The three lanes are:

Lane A: Zones RF1, 2, and 3
Lane B: Zones RF4, 5, and 6
Lane C: Zones RF7, 8, and 9
Special Lane: Zone RF10. This lane only contains Shrine Isle and the shelter built on it to protect the shrine of Ragvall. Only certain monsters that can swim or fly can attack it, as described in an Event's "Invader Tactics" section.

RF1: Mannavegr Towers

Rank 1 Fortification

Position: Lane A, first position
Minimum Force: 10 defenders
Maximum Force: 20 defenders
Raiding Roll DC: 13

Upgrading

This fortification can be upgraded once by spending 250 pounds of timber and one week of downtime. As a Rank 2 fortification, its base Raiding Roll DC increases to 15 and its Maximum Force increases to 30.

RF2: Hreinsbridge Barricade

Rank 1 Fortification

Position: Lane A, second position (zone RF1 must be conquered)
Minimum Force: 10 defenders
Maximum Force: 20 defenders
Raiding Roll DC: 15

Upgrading

This fortification can be upgraded once by spending 100 pounds of timber, 50 pounds of iron, and one week of downtime. As a Rank 2 fortification, its base Raiding Roll DC increases to 17.

RF3: Southeastern Palisade

Rank 1 Fortification

Position: Lane A, third position (zone RF2 must be conquered; the stronghold is attacked when this zone is conquered)
Minimum Force: 10 defenders
Maximum Force: 50 defenders
Raiding Roll DC: 11

Upgrading

This fortification can be upgraded to Rank 2 and then Rank 3 by spending one week of downtime and either:

- 100 pounds of iron to create rows of shields along the outside of the wall, or
- 100 pounds of timber to create a line of pointed stakes to deter enemy charges

As a Rank 2 fortification, its base Raiding Roll DC increases to 13. As a Rank 3 fortification, the bonus to the Raiding Roll DC for having more than the minimum force is doubled.

RF4: Southern Watchtowers

Rank 1 Fortification

Position: Lane B, first position
Minimum Force: 10 defenders
Maximum Force: 20 defenders
Raiding Roll DC: 13

Upgrading

This fortification can be upgraded once by spending 250 pounds of timber and 1 week of downtime. As a Rank 2 fortification, its base Raiding Roll DC increases to 15 and its Maximum Force increases to 30.

"You've seen the fear in the eyes of the folks we've raided, and you've seen the resolve as well as they stand against us. Now its us. Choose resolve."

- Hlökk Warcrier

RF5: Bennasbridge Barricade

Rank 1 Fortification

Position: Lane B, second position (zone RF4 must be conquered)
Minimum Force: 10 defenders
Maximum Force: 20 defenders
Raiding Roll DC: 15

Upgrading

This fortification can be upgraded once by spending 100 pounds of timber, 50 pounds of iron, and one week of downtime. As a Rank 2 fortification, its base Raiding Roll DC increases to 17.

RF6: Southwestern Palisade

Rank 1 Fortification

Position: Lane B, third position (zone RF5 must be conquered; the stronghold is attacked when this zone is conquered)
Minimum Force: 10 defenders
Maximum Force: 50 defenders
Raiding Roll DC: 11

Upgrading

This fortification can be upgraded to Rank 2 and then Rank 3 by spending one week of downtime and either:

- 100 pounds of iron to create rows of shields along the outside of the wall, or
- 100 pounds of timber to create a line of pointed stakes to deter enemy charges

As a Rank 2 fortification, its base Raiding Roll DC increases to 13. As a Rank 3 fortification, the bonus to the Raiding Roll DC for having more than the minimum force is doubled.

RF7: Woodland Spiked Pits

Rank 1 Fortification

Position: Lane C, first position
Minimum Force: —
Maximum Force: —
Raiding Roll DC: 12

As a Rank 1 fortification, each time the attackers assault this fortification, they suffer a –1 penalty to all future Raiding Rolls against area RF8.

Upgrading

This fortification can be upgraded to Rank 2 and then Rank 3 by spending one week of downtime and either:

- 50 pounds of iron, or
- 50 pounds of iron and 50 pounds of timber

As a Rank 2 fortification, the penalty to Raiding Rolls against area RF6 is increased to 1d4. As a Rank 3 fortification, the penalty is increased to 2d4.

RF8: Northern Palisade

Rank 1 Fortification

Position: Lane C, second position (zone RF7 must be conquered)
Minimum Force: 10 defenders
Maximum Force: 50 defenders
Raiding Roll DC: 13

Upgrading

This fortification can be upgraded to Rank 2 and then Rank 3 by spending one week of downtime and either:

- 100 pounds of iron to create rows of shields along the outside of the wall, or
- 100 pounds of timber to create a line of pointed stakes to deter enemy charges

As a Rank 2 fortification, its base Raiding Roll DC increases to 13. As a Rank 3 fortification, the bonus to the Raiding Roll DC for having more than the minimum force is doubled.

RF9: Woodworker's Barricade

Rank 1 Fortification

Position: Lane C, third position (zone RF8 must be conquered; the stronghold is attacked when this zone is conquered)
Minimum Force: 10 defenders
Maximum Force: 20 defenders
Raiding Roll DC: 15

Upgrading

This fortification can be upgraded once by spending 100 pounds of timber, 50 pounds of iron, and one week of downtime. As a Rank 2 fortification, its base Raiding Roll DC increases to 17.

RF10. Shrine Isle Shelter

Rank 1 Fortification

Position: Special fortification; can only be attacked by flying or swimming creatures (the stronghold is attacked when this zone is conquered)
Minimum Force: 10 defenders
Maximum Force: 10 defenders
Raiding Roll DC: 17

Upgrading

This fortification can be upgraded to Rank 2 and then Rank 3 by spending one week of downtime and either:

- 200 pounds of timber, or
- 50 pounds of iron

As a Rank 2 fortification, its Maximum Force increases to 30. As a Rank 3 fortification, the bonus to the Raiding Roll DC for having more than the minimum force is doubled.

Customizing Fortifications

One of the fun aspects of having a village to defend is customizing the buildings that you have within it. These fortifications are no different. If your players want to create custom fortifications, allow it! The fortification on Benna's Bridge doesn't have to be a barricade; it could be row of metal rods etched with arcane runes that creates an arcing line of lightning when activated. You could choose to alter the material cost for upgrading this fortification, or simply allow it to be a flavorful change with no mechanical impact.

Damaged Fortifications

Whenever raiding monsters break through a fortification, it's damaged. Until it's repaired, Raiding Rolls made against that fortification have advantage.

If monsters break through a fortification that's already damaged—which could happen because it wasn't repaired after the last raid—the fortification is destroyed. Any upgrades that had been made to that fortification are lost.

A destroyed fortification is the same as its Rank 1 form, but Raiding Rolls made against it have advantage.

Repairing Defenses

The people of Ragvall Village can repair a damaged fortification by spending 100 pounds of timber or iron, and one week of downtime.

Downtime in Winter

Winter frost has made the roads out of Ragvall icy and treacherous, and the sea has all but frozen. Downtime can be spent on any of the activities that were available in autumn: Gathering Ore, Gathering Timber, or Training Warriors. It can also be spent upgrading or repairing fortifications (see "Defensive Fortifications," above).

Winter Quests

Winter is a desperate time, with little chance to complete great deeds of heroism. There are only two types of quests in winter: Quests, and Events. Most of the happenings in winter are Events, and most Quests are only available for a short window of time.

Quests from Before Winter

If there are any Quests or Events that weren't completed in springtime or in autumn, they're still available for the characters to undertake in winter. It's the GM's decision whether those Quests can still be started, or if so much time has passed that they're no longer a concern.

Core Quests and Heroic Feats that weren't completed in spring or autumn don't occur in winter.

Events

Keep track of these events' prerequisites. As the GM, you can choose to have an event happen at any time once the prerequisite has been met. The raid defense Events in this chapter use the village fortification map (see "Defending Ragvall Village," earlier in this chapter)

Event: First Blood

Prerequisite: Begun the first week of winter

Questgiver: None
Location: Outside Hrafensheim (area R1; use the map of Hrafensheim in chapter 5)
Downtime: None
Content Warning: Children in peril, evisceration, frenzied animals

The monster attacks have started sooner than expected. A dozen children and their parents are playing in the village square outside of the chief's longhouse (area A1 on the map of Hrafensheim in chapter 5).

Monsters led by a Monster

The attackers are a pack of 10 **hungerer elk** led by a **prismatic drake** called the Herald (see appendix A for both creatures' statistics). These frenzied elk fight to the death. When a creature they can smell is reduced to 0 hit points, the elk surround and attack the dying creature, tearing its innards out until it dies.

The Herald. The prismatic drake can speak Valikan and calls itself the Herald. The Herald communicates telepathically with the elks and commands them to cause carnage.

The elk are in the middle of the town square, while the prismatic drake is perched atop Hrafensheim, beating its shimmering wings of prismatic light in triumph. The Herald flees when it's reduced to half its hit point maximum. However, if it's reduced to 0 hit points, it falls unconscious and the hungerer elk swarm around its body and feed.

Villagers in Peril

There are a dozen children (noncombatants) hiding behind snow forts, and three NPC villagers of the GM's choice are fighting to protect them (see the list of NPCs in the "Winter Playtime" section earlier in this chapter). Once the characters arrive, these NPCs and the children will try to flee inside Hrafensheim (area R3).

All three of these NPCs are at 10 hit points. If they're reduced to 0 hit points, they fall unconscious and are dying; they make death saving throws like player characters. It's possible that one or more of these characters will die as the hungerer elk eviscerate them.

Rolling Initiative

Because there are so many elk in this encounter, the initiative order can be the difference between the characters saving a beloved NPC with a well-timed *healing word* and that NPC's grisly death by a half-dozen elk. Roll initiative for each elk individually in this encounter rather than having them act all as a single group; this potentially lets the characters act in between the various creatures.

Event: Gore-Hungry Beasts

Prerequisite: *Begun the second week of winter*

Questgiver: None
Location: Ragvall Village
Downtime: None
Content Warning: Frenzied animals

This is a raid defense scenario. See "Defending Ragvall Village" for more information.

Ragvall Village Features

During this event, the winter is cold but still mild. Its terrain doesn't affect its fortifications for either attackers or defenders.

Defense Objectives

If any of zones RF3, RF6, or RF9 are conquered by the invaders, the defenders of Ragvall Village are overrun, and they retreat to Hrafensheim. Proceed to the interior phase of this raid, **Event: Hungerers Rampant.**

If none of the fortifications listed above are conquered by the end of turn 5, the defenders successfully repel the invaders and this event ends in triumph.

Invader Tactics

The invading hungerer beasts are trying to reach Hrafensheim, the village's stronghold. In order to do so, they must attack and completely conquer one lane of fortifications (see "Defending Ragvall Village," earlier in this chapter. They attack in five waves. If they haven't reached Hrafensheim by the end of turn 5, they are defeated.

Turn 1. The invaders attack the village's northern palisade (zone RF8). Normally, the spiked pits in the Sheltering Wood (zone RF7) are the first position zone in this lane. However, the monsters have already conquered it through sheer brute force. If the characters investigate the pit traps later, they find them choked with the corpses of the beasts that tumbled into them.

Future Turns. Starting on turn 2 of this Event, the frenzied beasts must target the first unconquered zone in any lane, chosen randomly (roll 1d6; they attack Lane A on a roll of 1 or 2, Lane B on a roll of 3 or 4, or Lane C on a roll of 5 or 6). They can't attack zone RF10, which is shielded by water.

Invader Bonuses

The invading hungerer beasts are frenzied animals whose only advantage are their numbers and their brute strength. All waves of beasts have a +1d4 bonus to their Raiding Rolls.

A Thousand Cuts. These attackers slowly chip away at the village's defenses like waves against a stone. After each attack, a fortification's Raiding Roll DC is decreased by 1d4 until the end of the raid.

Developments

The conditions of the raid change at the start of the following turns of this event:

Turn 3: The taste of Valikan flesh drives the hungerer beasts into an even greater wrath. Whenever they make a Raiding Roll, the GM can reroll one of the d10s, and must use the new result.

Turn 5: The hungerer beasts' fury rises to a fever pitch as their casualties mount. The GM can now reroll one or both d10s when making a Raiding Roll, and must use the new result(s). However, the Ragvallan warriors can see that the frenzied beasts are close to collapse. They only need to hold out a little longer.

Event: Hungerers Rampant

Prerequisite: *Overrun in* **Event: Gore-Hungry Beasts**

Questgiver: None
Location: Hrafensheim
Downtime: None
Content Warning: Frenzied animals

This is a raid defense scenario. It uses the map and area descriptions of Hrafensheim, which is dungeon A in chapter 5 of this adventure.

Hrafensheim Features

The general features of this area are described in chapter 5. This Event doesn't add any additional features.

Defense Objectives

The characters have four goals in this Event:

- Survive
- Protect villagers (10 villagers)
- Protect the village chief
- Protect their resource piles (100 pounds of a resource takes up a 10-foot-by-10-foot space)

This event uses standard fifth edition rules, unlike the special raiding rules used to defend the village. The characters can use any class features and spells they have at their disposal to defend themselves and their stronghold from the invading monsters.

Villagers. Ragvallan villagers have retreated to this stronghold while warriors clash with the horde outside the stronghold's doors. These villagers want to avoid combat (unless otherwise stated), and hide in back rooms while pleading for the characters to protect them. They use **commoner** statistics. During this Event, 5 villagers hide in area A4 and 5 more hide in area A6. The characters can command them to hide elsewhere by making a successful DC 10 Charisma check.

Losing Villagers. If all ten villagers die during this event, mark this outcome on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Growing Mistrust. The Ragvallan people's faith in the characters' ability to protect them is shaken.

Village Chief. If **Hrafen av Skeir** (see appendix A) is alive, he also fights in defense of the longhouse. If one of the characters is the village chief, then that character's life holds special meaning for the Ragvallan people. If the chief dies, fear grips the village. The characters earn the "Growing Mistrust" outcome (see above) even if they protected enough villagers.

Resource Piles. At the start of this Event, the characters must divide their resources of iron and timber into resource piles. These stockpiles are kept within the longhouse for protection from thieves, the elements, and raiders. During a raid, a resource pile can be used as half cover, or three-quarters cover by a creature that is prone. Each stockpile contains 100 pounds of a resource and takes up a 10-foot-by-10-foot space on the map.

- **Iron:** An iron stockpile has AC 17, 25 hp, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.
- **Timber:** A timber stockpile has AC 12, 15 hp, immunity to poison and psychic damage, and vulnerability to fire damage.

If a resource pile is reduced to 0 hit points, it is destroyed and all 100 pounds of that resource are lost.

Invader Tactics

The hungerer beasts invading the longhouse are ravenous for flesh. They rush towards the characters and the Ragvallan villagers, focusing their attacks on the least dangerous creatures they can see. They always move towards their targets in the most direct way, and attack resource piles that are in the way to clear a path. If an attack doesn't destroy a stockpile, the beast moves around the pile until it's as close to the nearest villager as possible.

These creatures fight to the death.

Developments

The invaders enter Hrafensheim in three waves, described below. Any other changes that occur at the start of each round of this event are also described below:

Round 1: A group of 10 **hungerer elks** (see appendix A) break through the front door of area A3.

Round 2: A group of 10 **hungerer wolves** (see appendix A) enter through the open door.

Round 3: A group of 5 **hungerer elks** break through the exterior wood-and-turf wall of area A6, drawn by the smell of cowering villagers within.

This raid defense Event ends once all the hungerer beasts in Hrafensheim have been killed, but only if the round 3 reinforcements have arrived.

The breach in the walls of area A6 is severe, and the characters must spend 100 pounds of timber and 1 week of downtime to fix it, as if repairing a fortification. Otherwise, this breach exists in all future raid defense Events until it's repaired. Whenever invaders enter through area A3 during a raid defense event, they can enter through the breach into area A6 instead.

Event: The Darkwater Alliance

Prerequisite: *Begun the sixth week of winter*

Questgiver: None
Location: Ragvall Village
Downtime: None
Content Warning: Reanimation

This is a raid defense scenario. See "Defending Ragvall Village" for more information.

Ragvall Village Features

During this event, the Ragvallan shipwrights have prepared small boats to cross the bay. These boats can be used to deploy warriors to Shrine Isle (zone RF10).

However, warriors reach this zone at the start of the turn after they were deployed, even they are deployed from the stronghold. See the "Defenders' Turns" section of the raiding rules in chapter 3 of *Raiders' Guide to Valika* for more on how to deploy and redeploy warriors during a defense.

Defense Objectives

If any of zones RF3, RF6, RF9, or RF10 are conquered by the invaders, the defenders of Ragvall Village are overrun and they retreat to Hrafensheim. Proceed to the interior phase of this raid, **Event: Darkwater Rampant**.

If none of the fortifications listed above are conquered by the end of turn 6, the defenders successfully repel the invaders and this Event ends in triumph.

Invader Tactics

The invading laneshi and keppmir are trying to reach Hrafensheim, the village's stronghold. In order to do so, they must attack and completely conquer one lane of fortifications (see "Defending Ragvall Village," earlier in this chapter. They never attack Lane C, except under special circumstances (see below).

Turn 1. This raid begins with an attack on Lanes A and B (at a +1d4 bonus and +0 bonus, respectively). At the end of the defenders' first turn, their scouts announce that they've spotted keppmir encircling Shrine Isle! They inform the characters about the boats that can ferry warriors there (see "Ragvall Village Features," above), if they haven't already used them.

Turn 3. The main body of the Darkwater Alliance's force arrives, allowing them to make three attacks per wave (see "Developments," below). After this turn, they always allocate their highest bonus to the Special Lane as they try to conquer Shrine Isle.

Turn 5. If the characters earned the "Left to Hatch" outcome at the end of **Quest: Eggs over Easy** (see chapter 1), then the Darkwater Alliance gains reinforcements. They bypass zone RF7 and start attacking zone RF8 in Lane C at a +3d4 bonus.

Invader Bonuses

The Darkwater Alliance have an attack bonus of +1d4, and can attack in two waves. Each wave can attack two lanes, using this bonus as they wish (+1d4 against one lane, +0 against another).

Laneshi Necromancers. Whenever this invader conquers a fortification that is defended by at least its Minimum Force, they raise the defenders as undead warriors. Their next attack against a fortification in this lane has a +1d4 bonus.

Rattled Nerves. The villagers have been stewing in stress for the past few weeks. Their nerves are shot, lowering their effectiveness in battle. The invaders roll 3d10 and choose the highest two when making a Raiding Roll for the duration of this raid. On the defenders' turns, one of the characters can make a DC 15 Charisma (Performance) check to bolster morale, ending this bonus on a success. The characters can repeat this check on each of their turns until it succeeds.

Developments

The conditions of the raid change at the start of the following turns of this Event:

Turn 3: Laneshi reinforcements arrive, bolstering the invaders' force. Their maximum bonus increases to +2d4, and they alter their tactics (see above). If the characters dispersed the laneshi Lamora's force by earning the "Languishing Laneshi" outcome in Quest: Ása's Lost Past (see chapter 3), these reinforcements don't occur.

Turn 5: If the characters didn't smash the keppmir eggs in **Quest: Eggs over Easy** (see chapter 1), then a brand-new legion of hungry keppmir burst from Ofeigur's Beacon. The Darkwater Alliance's maximum bonus increases to +3d4, and they alter their tactics (see "Invader Tactics," above).

Event: Darkwater Rampant

Prerequisite: *Overrun in* **Event: The Darkwater Alliance**

Questgiver: None
Location: Hrafensheim
Downtime: None
Content Warning: Enslaved warriors

This is a raid defense scenario. It uses the map and area descriptions of Hrafensheim, which is dungeon A in chapter 5 of this adventure.

Hrafensheim Features

The general features of this area are described in chapter 5. This Event doesn't add any additional features.

Defense Objectives

The characters have four goals in this Event:

- Survive
- Protect villagers (10 villagers)
- Protect the village chief
- Protect their resource piles (100 pounds of a resource takes up a 10-foot-by-10-foot space)

This Event uses standard fifth edition rules, unlike the special raiding rules used to defend the village. The characters can use any class features and spells they have at their disposal to defend themselves and their stronghold from the invading monsters.

Villagers. Ragvallan villagers have retreated to this stronghold while warriors clash with the horde outside the stronghold's doors. These villagers want to avoid combat (unless otherwise stated), and hide in back rooms while pleading for the characters to protect them. They use **commoner** statistics. During this Event, 5 villagers hide in area A4 and 5 more hide in area A6. More villagers rush into the longhouse over the course of this event (see "Developments," below). The characters can command them to hide elsewhere by making a successful DC 10 Charisma check.

Losing Villagers. If 10 or more villagers die during this Event, mark this outcome on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Growing Mistrust II. The Ragvallan people's faith in the characters' ability to protect them is shaken.

Village Chief. If **Hrafen av Skeir** (see appendix A) is alive, he also fights in defense of the longhouse. If one of the characters is the village chief, then that character's life holds special meaning for the Ragvallan people. If the chief dies, fear grips the village. The characters earn the "Growing Mistrust" outcome (see above) even if they protected enough villagers.

Resource Piles. At the start of this Event, the characters must divide their resources of iron and timber into resource piles. For more information on how resource piles are used in defensive raids, see this section in **Event: Hungerers Rampant,** earlier in this chapter.

Invader Tactics

The Darkwater Alliance is made up of a combination of laneshi and keppmir. Both are aquatic humanoids, but the laneshi are clearly the leaders of this attack. They have all but enslaved the keppmir, many of whom are still addled by their transformation into this form by daemonic magic, just as Ófeigur Lightraiser was earlier in this adventure.

These invaders abide by the following tactics:

- Keppmir fight to the death while there are laneshi alive in this raid site.
- If there are no laneshi alive, the keppmir break ranks and flee toward the exit.
- If there are no keppmir alive in the raid site, any laneshi with half their maximum hit points or fewer flee toward the exit, using their actions to cast spells or attack as they flee.

The keppmir rush into combat with the nearest creature they can see. They focus their attacks on humanoids that wear the least amount of armor, like villagers and unarmored spellcasters.

Laneshi soldiers fight more tactically. They attack resources piles to provoke their foes into coming to them. Laneshi necromancers hang back and use spells like *guiding bolt*, *hold person*, and *blight* to attack from afar. They don't care if their area-of-effect spells kill their own keppmir allies, though they try to avoid harming other laneshi.

Developments

The invaders enter Hrafensheim in three waves, described below. Any other changes that occur at the start of each round of this Event are also described below:

Round 1: A group of 10 **amphibious keppmir** and 5 **laneshi soldiers** (see appendix A for both) break through the front door of area A3.

Round 2: A **laneshi necromancer** enters through the door of area A3.

Round 3: A group of 5 screaming Ragvallan **commoners** enter through area A3, pursued by 5 **amphibious keppmir**.

This raid defense Event ends once all the keppmir and laneshi in Hrafensheim have been killed, but only if the round 3 reinforcements have arrived.

Event: Frosty Reception

Prerequisite: *Begun the ninth week of winter and completed* **Quest: Preemptive Strike**

Questgiver: None
Location: Ragvall Village
Downtime: None

This is a raid defense scenario. See "Defending Ragvall Village" for more information.

Ragvall Village Features

This raid occurs in the depths of winter, and conditions are cold and unpleasant.

Frozen Bay. During this Event, the Akkeri Bay has frozen over, allowing the giants to attack the Shrine Isle shelter (zone RF10) and the defenders to deploy warriors to that zone as if it were any other fortification. If the giants attack zone RF10 for any reason, the ice cracks under their weight and that attack instantly fails. The giants can attack that zone on future turns by wading through the bay, but have disadvantage on Raiding Rolls against it.

Taunting the Giants. The giants of Frostmere hate Valikans. The people of Ragvall Village know this and can prey upon that wrath. The characters gain a special trait that they can use on their turn:

Taunt. If a fortification is defended by at least its Minimum Force, the warriors there can make a DC 25 Charisma (Performance) check to taunt the giants. On a success, the giants must attack the lane containing that zone on their next turn. (The GM decides what bonus that wave uses.) The warriors' bonus on this Charisma check is equal to the half the number of warriors defending it (e.g., a fortification defended by 10 warriors has a +5 bonus).

Defense Objectives

If any of zones RF3, RF6, RF9, or RF10 are conquered by the invaders, the defenders of Ragvall Village are overrun and they retreat to Hrafensheim. Proceed to the interior phase of this raid, **Event: Stomp and Burn**.

If none of the fortifications listed above are conquered by the end of turn 7, the defenders successfully repel the invaders and this Event ends in triumph.

Invader Tactics

The invading giants rely on brute force, not clever tactics. They surround Ragvall Village and batter it as hard as possible, right from the outset. As the GM, you choose which lanes they attack each turn, and where they allocate their bonuses.

Invader Bonuses

The frost giants have a +2d4 bonus to their Raiding Rolls.

Giant Stride. Giants can stride over defenses to attack deeper in a lane at a penalty. When a wave attacks a lane with a bonus of +1d4 or higher, it attacks both the outermost fortification in that lane and the zone behind it. The wave must split its bonus between both fortifications.

For example, a wave with +2d4 could attack two fortifications at +1d4 each; a wave with +1d4 could attack two fortifications at +1d4 and at +0).

Developments

The conditions of the raid change at the start of the following turns of this Event:

Turn 3: Boulders suddenly rain from the Sheltering Wood as giant stone-throwers bombard the village. Choose one lane and roll 1d4. All fortifications in that zone have their Raiding Roll DC reduced by that number until the end of that raid.

Turn 5: Jarl Grimskjelle enters the fray himself. For each wave, decide which fortification he's leading the attack upon. When attackers led by Grimskjelle make a Raiding Roll, they can reroll one of the d10s, and must use the new result. If that group fails the Raiding Roll, Grimskjelle escapes, but is wounded. He takes 50 points of slashing damage. He stops aiding his soldiers once he takes 100 points of damage in this way. This damage remains in **Event: Stomp and Burn** if the giants reach Hrafensheim.

Event: Stomp and Burn

Prerequisite: *Overrun in* **Event: Frosty Reception**

Questgiver: None
Location: Hrafensheim
Downtime: None
Content Warning: Crushed bodies, collapsing buildings

This is a raid defense scenario. It uses the map and area descriptions of Hrafensheim, which is dungeon A in chapter 5 of this adventure.

Hrafensheim Features

The general features of this area are described in chapter 5. Once the roof of Hrafensheim collapses, the floor of the entire longhouse becomes difficult terrain.

Defense Objectives

The characters have four goals in this event:

- Survive
- Protect villagers (20 villagers)
- Protect the village chief
- Protect their resource piles (100 pounds of a resource takes up a 10-foot-by-10-foot space)

This event uses standard fifth edition rules, unlike the special raiding rules used to defend the village. The characters can use any class features and spells they have at their disposal to defend themselves and their stronghold from the invading monsters.

Villagers. Ragvallan villagers have retreated to this stronghold while warriors clash with the horde outside the stronghold's doors. These villagers want to avoid combat (unless otherwise stated), and hide in back rooms while pleading for the characters to protect them. They use **commoner** statistics. During this event, 5 villagers hide in the back of area A3, 10 hide in area A4, and 5 more hide in area A6. The characters can command them to hide elsewhere by making a successful DC 10 Charisma check.

Losing Villagers. If 20 or more villagers die during this Event, mark this outcome on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Growing Mistrust III. The Ragvallan people's faith in the characters' ability to protect them is shaken.

Village Chief. If **Hrafen av Skeir** (see appendix A) is alive, he also fights in defense of the longhouse. If one of the characters is the village chief, then that character's life holds special meaning for the Ragvallan people. If the chief dies, fear grips the village. The characters earn the "Growing Mistrust" outcome (see above) even if they protected enough villagers.

Resource Piles. At the start of this Event, the characters must divide their resources of iron and timber into resource piles. For more information on how resource piles are used in defensive raids, see this section in **Event: Hungerers Rampant**, earlier in this chapter.

Invader Tactics

It doesn't take many giants to crush a Valikan longhouse. The giants led by Jarl Grimskjelle start not by bashing in the doors of the longhouse, but by hammering its walls and roof until they collapse. Once the roof collapses, they stomp through the wreckage to annihilate anyone within.

Unlike previous raids, where a chaotic melee between raiders and defenders surrounded the exterior of the longhouse, the characters have the ability to leave the longhouse while it's being battered and attack the giants head-on.

These invaders abide by the following tactics:

- Giants fight to the death as long as Jarl Grimskjelle is alive and fighting.
- If there is only one other giant alive at the raid site, Grimskjelle calls a retreat and flees.
- If Grimskjelle dies, any giants with half their hit points or fewer flee toward the exit, using their actions to attack as they flee.

Unless the characters attack the giants, all the giants in the village square (area A1) attack the longhouse. The longhouse's turf-lined walls have AC 4, 200 hp, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

Once the walls are reduced to half their hit point maximum, the doorway to the longhouse collapses; creatures that are Medium or larger can't leave through the collapsed front door without making a successful DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check.

Once the walls of the longhouse are reduced to 0 hit points, they buckle and the ceiling collapses. All creatures within the longhouse take 44 (8d10) bludgeoning damage, and the entire floor of the longhouse becomes difficult terrain.

Developments

The invaders enter Hrafensheim in only a single wave, described below. Any other changes that occur at the start of each round of this event are also described below:

Round 1: **Jarl Grimskjelle** (see appendix A) and four **frost giants** enter area A1 and begin attacking the walls of the longhouse (see "Invader Tactics", above).

Round 3: A group of 10 screaming Ragvallan **commoners** flood into area A1 and beg to be let into the longhouse (if it's still standing).

If the longhouse was collapsed during this raid, villagers spend the next week moving wreckage and burning corpses. Much of the house can be salvaged from the wreckage; only 500 pounds of timber and 100 pounds of iron are needed to repair the longhouse.

If the longhouse isn't repaired, then the the next defensive raid (**Event: Drowning in Undead**) happens in the village square (area A1) and the longhouse ruins, rather than within the longhouse itself.

Event: Tide of Rime

Prerequisite: *Begun the twelfth week of winter* **or** *attacked the Herald in the eleventh week*

Questgiver: None
Location: Ragvall Village
Downtime: None

A horde of rime hungers (see their lore in appendix A) descends upon Ragvall Village, led by the Herald and its champion, Afjyra. This is a raid defense scenario. See "Defending Ragvall Village" for more information.

Ragvall Village Features

This raid occurs as winter slowly begins to give way to spring. Nevertheless, conditions are frigid and harsh.

Thawed Bay. During this event, the Akkeri Bay is thawed, and is filled with floating hunks of ice. The hordes of undead assaulting Ragvall Village can slowly walk on the floor of the bay to attack the Shrine Isle shelter (zone RF10) but can't do so until the start of turn 4.

Defense Objectives

If any of zones RF3, RF6, RF9, or RF10 are conquered by the invaders, the defenders of Ragvall Village are overrun and they retreat to Hrafensheim. Proceed to the interior phase of this raid, **Event: Drowning in Undead**.

If none of the fortifications listed above are conquered by the end of turn 7, the defenders successfully repel the invading undead. See "Developments," below.

Invader Tactics

The undead rime hungers attacking the village are mindless, and solely follow the directives of their master, the Herald of Gormadraug. The Herald commands its forces tactically, focusing on battering the village's weakest fortifications until it breaks through.

The Herald issues commands, but can also lead an attack force directly. For each wave, decide which fortification it's leading the attack upon. When attackers led by the Herald make a Raiding Roll, they can reroll one of the d10s, and must use the new result.

If that group fails the Raiding Roll, the Herald escapes, but is wounded. It takes 25 points of slashing damage. This damage remains in **Event: Drowning in Undead** and **Event: Coldfire Premonition**.

Invader Bonuses

If the Herald of Gormadraug is alive, it uses its cunning to guide the undead. Each wave can only attack two lanes, but can attack both lanes with a +3d4 bonus.

If the Herald is dead, the undead attack with reckless abandon. Each wave attacks all three lanes (plus the Special Lane, starting on turn 4). They have a +3d4 bonus, but that bonus decreases for each lane they attack, as usual.

Voice of Doom. If the Herald is alive, it bellows a tactical command to its forces at the start of each turn, granting the undead attacking Lane A, B, or C (GM's choice) an additional +2d4 bonus to their Raiding Roll that turn.

Flight. If the Herald is alive and leading a group of invaders (see above), that group can ignore any effect that would prevent a zone from being attacked.

Developments

The conditions of the raid change at the start of the following turns of this Event:

Turn 4: Undead marching along the bottom of Akkeri Bay reach Shrine Isle. Starting on this turn, they can attack zone RF10 without the aid of the Herald's ability to fly.

If the undead reach Hrafensheim, run **Event: Drowning in Undead**. If they are successfully repelled, read or paraphrase the following as the undead are cut down, then run **Event: Coldfire Premonition**:

> *Freezing blue flames erupt from the bodies of the frostbitten undead. An ethereal shrieking fills the air as their shriveled corpses blacken and curl into ice-rimed husks. The flames lift from their bodies and rise into the air as floating motes of icy flame, then hurtle towards the town square.*

Event: Drowning in Undead

Prerequisite: *Overrun in* **Event: Tide of Rime**

Questgiver: None
Location: Hrafensheim
Downtime: None

This is a raid defense scenario. It uses the map and area descriptions of Hrafensheim, which is dungeon A in chapter 5 of this adventure.

Hrafensheim Features

The general features of this area are described in chapter 5. If Hrafensheim was collapsed in **Event: Stomp and Burn** but not rebuilt, then the floor of the entire longhouse is difficult terrain.

Defense Objectives

The characters have four goals in this Event:

- Survive
- Protect villagers (20 villagers)
- Protect the village chief
- Protect their resource piles (100 pounds of a resource takes up a 10-foot-by-10-foot space)

This Event uses standard fifth edition rules, unlike the special raiding rules used to defend the village. The characters can use any class features and spells they have at their disposal to defend themselves and their stronghold from the invading monsters.

Villagers. Ragvallan villagers have retreated to this stronghold while warriors clash with the horde outside the stronghold's doors. These villagers want to avoid combat (unless otherwise stated), and hide in back rooms while pleading for the characters to protect them. They use **commoner** statistics. During this event, 5 villagers hide in the back of area A3, 10 hide in area A4, and 5 more hide in area A6. The characters can command them to hide elsewhere by making a successful DC 10 Charisma check.

Losing Villagers. If 15 or more villagers die during this event, mark this outcome on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Growing Mistrust IV. The Ragvallan people's faith in the characters' ability to protect them is shaken.

Village Chief. If **Hrafen av Skeir** (see appendix A) is alive, he also fights in defense of the longhouse. If one of the characters is the village chief, then that character's life holds special meaning for the Ragvallan people. If the chief dies, fear grips the village. The characters earn the "Growing Mistrust" outcome (see above) even if they protected enough villagers.

Resource Piles. At the start of this event, the characters must divide their resources of iron and timber into resource piles. For more information on how resource piles are used in defensive raids, see this section in **Event: Hungerers Rampant**, earlier in this chapter.

Invader Tactics

The undead are not cunning or clever. The rime hungers in this Event always move towards the closest hostile creature by the most direct possible route and attack it, if possible. If a creature is completely surrounded, a rime hunger moves towards the next-closest hostile creature instead.

If the Herald or Afjyra is alive, they can verbally command the rime hungers to focus their attacks on a creature or creatures (no action required).

These invaders abide by the following tactics:

- The Herald zealously fights to the death.
- The rime hungers fight to the death.
- Afjyra fights to the death, but only so long as the Herald is alive. If the Herald dies, Afjyra flees towards the exit when reduced to half her hit point maximum.

Developments

The invaders enter Hrafensheim in three waves, described below. Any other changes that occur at the start of each round of this Event are also described below:

Round 1: 5 **rime hungers**, led by Afjyra, a **panjaian gormadraugon** seated upon a **withered steed** (see appendix A for all creatures' statistics), break down the door to area A3.

Round 2: 10 **rime hungers** enter area A3, pursuing 10 screaming Ragvallan **commoners**.

Round 3: 5 rime hungers, led by the Herald, a **prismatic drake** (see appendix A), enter area A3.

This raid Event ends when any one of the following criteria are fulfilled:

- The Herald is killed during this Event
- Afjyra is killed during this Event, and the Herald was dead before this event
- All rime hungers in this raid site are killed, and both the Herald and Afjyra were dead before this Event

The Final Enemy

Once this Event ends, the bodies of the rime hungers, both animate and deceased, simultaneously erupt in coldfire. Read or paraphrase the following, then begin **Event: Coldfire Premonition**:

> *Freezing blue flames erupt from the bodies of the frostbitten undead. An ethereal shrieking fills the air as their shriveled corpses blacken and curl into ice-rimed husks. The flames lift from their bodies and rise into the air as floating motes of icy flame, then hurtle towards the town square.*

Event: Coldfire Premonition

Prerequisite: Successfully defended Ragvall Village in either **Event: Tide of Rime** *or* **Event: Drowning in Undead**

Questgiver: None
Location: Ragvall Village
Downtime: None

This is a combat encounter which uses the map and area descriptions of the Ragvall Village square and longhouse, which is dungeon A in chapter 5 of this adventure.

Hrafensheim Features

The general features of this area are described in chapter 5. If Hrafensheim was collapsed in **Event: Stomp and Burn** but not rebuilt, then the floor of the entire longhouse is difficult terrain.

Battle Conditions

There is only one objective: defeat the apparition that heralds doom for Ragvall Village. All defenseless villagers have fled the scene of the battle, and all remaining Ragvallan warriors have steeled themselves to battle it.

Warriors Dealing Damage. Before this battle begins, count the number of warriors the village has left at the end of **Event: Tide of Rime**. At the start of each round of combat, the Coldfire Premonition takes an amount of piercing damage equal to the number of warriors still alive without cluttering the map with dozens of NPC warriors.

Warrior Casualties. At the end of each round, 2d6 warriors die. This represents collateral damage during the battle and reduces the busywork of rolling attacks against NPC warriors.

Village Chief. If **Hrafen av Skeir** (see appendix A) is alive, he also fights in defense of Ragvall Village. If one of the characters is the village chief, then that character's life holds special meaning for the Ragvallan people. If the chief dies, the people despair, but do not blame anyone for their leader's death—falling in battle against a foe as mythic as this coldfire beast is a glorious thing for any Valikan.

Successful Defense

Ragvall Village ends this battle in tatters regardless of how the battle ends. The only condition to successfully defending the village is defeating the Coldfire Premonition.

The Battle Begins

If the Herald is alive when the Coldfire Premonition appears, read or paraphrase the following:

> *"Rise! Rise, premonition of the end!" crows the Herald. A long, writhing tendril of blue flame uncoils from the crackling mass of icy flame and wraps around the Herald's body. The drake turns to you with manic triumph in its eyes, and says, "In this moment we are all blessed! I am chosen to become one with the premonition of Gormadraug's return—and you are blessed to be the first to see the master's wrath in an eon!"*
>
> *The Herald's voice is abruptly choked as it is engulfed in coldfire and vanishes from sight.*

If the Herald is dead (either before this battle, or if it was killed in the previous boxed text), read or paraphrase the following:

> *The mass of flame writhes and expands, solidifying into an immense, scaled wyrm made of shifting ice, with countless clawed legs. A head emerges from the mass, like that of a monstrous wolf with wild eyes and a ravenous, toothy maw. Prismatic coldfire surrounds its long body like an aurora. It raises its head and howls with a sound that foretells the end of the world.*
>
> *Then it focuses its deadly gaze on you. There's nothing left to do but fight.*

This creature is a **Coldfire Premonition** (see appendix A). It is vision of what could come to pass if Gormadraug is awakened, as imagined into reality by the Herald. It is a mindless avatar of destruction whose only goal is to enact the Herald's dream of sacrificing Ragvall Village to keep Gormadraug in slumber until the proper moment of awakening.

Invader Tactics

The Coldfire Premonition starts this battle by using its Rain of Coldfire action. Then it uses one of its attacks each turn to crush a building in Ragvall Village. Once it's reduced to half its hit point maximum, it stops rampaging and focuses all of its attacks on killing the characters.

Afjyra. If Afjyra is alive, she fights to the death beside the premonition in hopes of gaining favor with her primordial master. Her goal is to be the first line of defense for the Coldfire Premonition.

End of the Apocalypse

When the Coldfire Premonition is defeated, read or paraphrase the following:

> *The beast shrieks and writhes. The sound of shattering ice is magnified a hundredfold as the wolf-headed apparition rears up on its hind legs and stretches into the sky, howling all the while. Then, with a final, sickening roar, its body explodes, sending shards of burning ice showering over Ragvall Village.*
>
> *Your people scatter, and some brave warriors rush to find oil and wood, and make bonfires to quench the coldfire. Amidst the chaos, a gentle snow begins to fall. Winter is almost at an end.*

"I seen this beast once before, as a wee lass. Our village witch tried to burn it with her magic. It worked well, all right. Hurt the beast. But froze the witch forever."

- A village elder

Quests

These Quests are give the characters opportunities to leave Ragvall and proactively protect their home.

Quest: Sheltered Horror

Prerequisite: *Completed* **Event: Gore-Hungry Beasts, and** *have allied with the elves,* **and** *did* **not** *destroy the Morfar Ash in* **Quest: Shadow of the Morfar Ash**

Questgiver: Ælswith, elven scout
Location: Sheltering Wood (area W1)
Downtime: 1 week

The hungerer beasts which attacked Ragvall Village in the first week of winter have been afflicted by starvation, which made them susceptible to daemonic power. Starvation set in because all their grazing and hunting grounds within the forest were stripped clean by aberrant creatures that slumber within trees and hollows undetected, emerging in winter.

These aberrations are called yuluurin (roughly, "horror flits" in Elven) by the elves of the Evergreen Enclave. The elves have tried to eradicate their nests for years, and thought they had this fall, but missed one clutch that spread throughout the wood in an instant. Now, Elven-Thegn Arduinna seeks to eradicate them and desires the characters' aid. Venin's shadowy presence has caused some of these horror flits to mutate into even more vile, shadowy beasts.

Elven Envoy's Approach

An elf from the Evergreen Enclave approaches Ragvall Village frantically. This text assumes the characters have interacted positively with these elves in the past. Read or paraphrase the following:

> *An elf, panicked and breathless, bursts from the wood. "Monsters in the wood!" she shouts. Her golden hair is matted with blood. "Our thegn requests aid! Hersirs of Ragvall—please!"*

If the characters say that this isn't a good time, this elf (named Ælswith, a CN, female elf **scout**) shakes her head and pleads that there is no time. Their people are fighting for their lives to eradicate the source of the monsters that attacked Ragvall Village. If they refuse to help, the elves suffer horrible losses, and refuse to come to Ragvall Village's aid, if requested.

Into the Darkened Wood

The Sheltering Wood is a battlefield. Aberrations have emerged and are running rampant, while elven forces have been broken and scattered throughout the wood. Ælswith says that shadow creatures have hatched from the trees and driven the animals mad with starvation. The elves are fighting them, but they've lost track of their leader, Elven-Thegn Arduinna, and are trying to find her. She begs their aid in finding her, then splits off from the group to search the woods herself.

The characters enter the woods in area W1. Elven-Thegn Arduinna is unconscious in area W8 of the Sheltered Wood.

Exploring the Darkened Wood

Use the map and areas of the Sheltering Wood described in chapter 5, with the following changes; see appendix A for the game statistics of all creatures in this section:

Area W1: No changes.

Areas W2 and W3: A group of four **hungerer elk** are battling desperately with a pack of eight **hungerer wolves**. They are spread throughout this area. If they see the characters, they stop fighting and turn unsettlingly to stare at them. After 1 round, they attack the characters and fight to the death. A path has been cut through the trees, and a character that makes a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check can travel straight to area W6 from here.

Area W4: A dozen gored elven corpses are strewn around this pool. A **hungerer elk** grazes on their flesh. A single **horror flit breeder** lurks underneath the corpses, and two **horror flit hunters** lurk in the pool, guarding that which spawned them.

Area W5: Two **horror flit swarms** hide in the trees and attack any living creature that approaches. Also, a **shadow mauler** lurks on the underside of the bridge, ambushing anyone who gets within 5 feet of it.

Area W6: A pair of **shadow maulers** lurk in what was once a dire wolf den. Bloody elven footprints lead away from this cave, and a character that makes a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check can travel straight to area W8 from here and lead any creatures traveling with them.

Area W7: Four **horror flit breeders** have attached themselves to the Morfar Ash, and four **horror flit swarms** leap like fleas around its crown (each swarm is 3d6 × 10 feet above the ground at any time). Four **horror flit hunters** guard their breeders from the boughs. The swarms descend when the breeders are attacked. This is the source of the horror flit infestation—the inside of the trunk is thick with their larvae. Nearly two dozen elven corpses surround the trunk of the tree.

Area W8: Arduinna is bloody and unconscious but stable at the base of the iron chair. She barely escaped here after nearly being killed in area W6, then passed out.

Arduinna's Plan

Once revived, Arduinna thanks the characters for their aid—effusively, if they are her friend, curtly if they haven't seen eye-to-eye. Regardless, she shares her findings with them:

> *"We thought we had eradicated every last one of these nightmares, but…there was one place we could not search: Veillslaer, the Great Ash. For two hundred years we have watched the dwarf Alvíss tend it from afar—and worshipped the Great Ash from afar—but he would not let us close. We thought it safe in his care." Arduinna sighs and stares angrily into the distance. "Not so. Veillslaer's heart is thick with infestation, and hundreds of these creature spawn from within it. It must be burned. There's no other way."*

The Morfar Ash has AC 16, 100 hp, immunity to psychic damage, and vulnerability to fire damage. If it takes at least 50 points of fire damage, it catches fire and burns to cinders, taking all of the horror flits with it.

The characters may balk at this idea and decide that fighting the horror flits is worth preserving this tree. If so, read:

> *Arduinna scowls at them, and says, "You are too soft-hearted. Death is a natural part of life. We elves have let go of the tree. So must you."*

Calendar of the Seasons

When this quest is completed, mark one of the following developments on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Left to Die. If the characters refused to aid the elves, the Evergreen Enclave is scattered throughout the wood. They cannot, and will not, respond to requests to aid the Valikans.

Savior of the Elves. As thanks for doing the hard task of burning Slumbermourn and eradicating the horror flits from the wood, Arduinna lends the characters the aid of her people in defending the village. At the start of each week of winter, add 5 warriors to the characters' total. However, Alvíss is furious, and becomes hostile toward the characters.

"If you're mortal, you have nothing to lose.
We're all mortal."

- Elven-Thegn Arduinna

Quest: Warriors of the Waste

Prerequisite: *Begun the seventh week of winter*

Questgiver: The Snow-White Fox
Location: Outside Hrafensheim (area R1)
Downtime: 1 week

An *animal messenger* sent by a druidic warrior alerted the characters to a group of Valikans lost and dying in Grarjord. If the characters follow it, they meet up with Lefsi Mannison and what remains of his crew, the Snow Hawks.

Following the White Fox

The white fox is bound to return to the druid who sent it. This druid is a member of the warriors called the Snow Hawks, who are currently stranded on the wastes of Grarjord.

The white fox does its best to lead the characters, but it is small, hard to track, and blends in easily with the snow. At the end of every two hours spent following the fox (first along the Álfavegr Roadway through the Sheltering Wood, then across the Grarjord snowfields), one of the characters must make a DC 18 Wisdom (Survival) check.

On a success, the characters follow the fox masterfully, staying at its side the entire time. On a failure, they lose track of the fox and spend an hour searching for it. This also reduces the number of warriors they can gain at the end of this quest (see "Conclusion," below).

After making three Wisdom (Survival) checks (regardless of success or failure), they reach a frozen field surrounding a snowdrift. Atop the snowdrift is a tattered battle standard of Hrist, depicting the heraldry of Hrist.

Battle on the Ice

The ice field is vast, surrounding the snowdrift for about 1,000 feet on all sides. Once the characters have traversed 500 feet into it, they hear a sickening cracking sound beneath their feet—then four burly, ice-blue trolls burst through the surface of the ice, surrounding the characters. One pair of trolls starts 40 feet away from the characters, while another pair starts 60 feet away from them.

This hunting party of four icefisher trolls was hiding beneath the surface of the frozen lake, thinking over how best to ambush the warriors on the snowdrift island in its center. However, they're impulsive enough to abandon the element of surprise once they notice the characters walking directly over their heads. They use **seaborn troll** statistics (see appendix A) with the following changes:

- They are immune to cold damage
- They have a burrow speed of 20 feet (ice only)

Meeting the Snow Hawks

The Snow Hawks heard the sounds of battle from their encampment in a snowdrift. Their hersir, Lefsi Mannison, left the heat of their fire and crested the hill to see what was happening. He appraises the characters with suspicion until he is certain they are Valikan (seeing the white fox is enough to convince him), then welcomes them with open arms.

The Snow Hawks have many wounded and dying, and need help making it back to the village. Over the next 24 hours, the characters can spend time gathering wood and making stretchers to carry the wounded with them. No ability checks are needed to do so, because the construction of these tools is simple—merely effortful and time-consuming. The journey back to Ragvall Village is mercifully uneventful.

Lefsi's Dire Warning

Hersir Lefsi has dire news for the characters: frost giants are on the march across Grarjord in search of new land.

> *"A fearsome jarl of Frostmere who goes by the name of Grimskjelle. The Grim Hunter." Lefsi's face looks suitably grim, too. "They say he commands a warband of ten giants; more than enough to reduce a city to rubble in a matter of hours. We managed to slay one straggler, but we had to flee to survive. We got lost in a snowstorm during our flight and many of our number froze to death on the wastes. We are the only survivors.*
>
> *"You must be cautious, hersirs. I fear your village is at risk."*

The journey to Ragvall Village concludes without event.

Conclusion

If the entire party of Snow Hawks are brought back safely, their crew stays in the village, bolstering the number of warriors defending Ragvall by 75.

- Reduce this number by 5 for each failed Wisdom (Survival) check the characters made while following the white fox.
- If the characters chose to leave some of the Snow Hawks behind, their actions also reduce this number by 10.

Quest: Preemptive Strike

Prerequisite: *Begun the eighth week of winter*

Questgiver: Hlökk Warcrier
Location: Outside Hrafensheim (area R1)
Downtime: 1 week

The characters are faced with a choice: preemptively attack the giant warband led by Jarl Grimskjelle, or hunker down and wait to see if the giants will pass them by.

Wait and See

If the characters choose not to attack, the giants don't even realize that Ragvall Village exists.

Take the Initiative

If the characters decide to launch a preemptive strike on Grimskjelle's camp, Lefsi Mannison shows them on a map where they've been spotted traveling across Grarjord. It looks like they're headed toward Summerhelm. The characters can determine several possible locations for the giants' camp by making a DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check. On a success, one of the potential camp locations is correct.

Raiding Grimskjelle's Camp

This scenario is designed to be undertaken by characters acting on their own. If they wish to bring their full army, you may have to create a raid scenario using the rules in chapter 3 of *Raider's Guide to Valika*.

Alternatively, you could create a reason why Ragvall's warriors can't leave the village—for instance, Hlökk has received scouting reports about monsters prowling the eastern roads and needs to keep defenders close at hand in case an attack occurs while the characters are away.

Journey Onto the Wastes

Reaching Grimskjelle's camp takes a journey of about 2 days through the bitter cold of winter. At the start of each day, living creatures must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, gaining 1 level of exhaustion on a failure. Creatures that have resistance to cold damage have advantage on this save, and immunity allows them to automatically succeed.

The Jarl's Warcamp

Once the characters arrive at the camp, they look down upon it from atop a wooded cliff. See area J1 of Jarl Grimskjelle's Camp in chapter 5. This camp, its structures, and its inhabitants are described in that chapter.

The Sneaky Approach. The camp is filled with powerful frost giants, and canny characters will choose to sneak in and cause trouble—or assassinate some giants—rather than fight them all up front. If the characters are trapped and defeated, consider how to raise the stakes rather than anticlimactically ending the campaign. They might be captured and ransomed back to the village (perhaps for some gold and some warriors, who will surely be eaten by the giants).

Calendar of the Seasons

When this Quest is completed, mark one of the following developments on the Calendar of the Seasons (see appendix C):

Let them Pass. If the characters didn't attack Grimskjelle's camp, advance to "Giants Depart Eastward" in the ninth week of winter.

Grimskjelle's Wrath. If the characters attacked Grimskjelle's camp, advance to "Wrath of the Giants" in the ninth week of winter.

Chapter 5:

EXPLORING VALIKA

The vast lands of Valika are flush with locations brimming with ancient secrets and hidden treasure. These monster lairs, shipwrecks, and longhouses are related to the many quests that the heroes of this adventure can learn about in the seasons of spring, autumn, and winter—in summer, they'll be raiding beyond the borders of Valika itself.

These locations are intended to be explored fully in a single session of gameplay. That also makes them useful for GMs to plunder and use piecemeal in their own homemade Grim Hollow campaigns.

Discovering a Dungeon

Typically, the characters won't know about a dungeon on this map of Valika until they learn of it from another character. However, if the characters (or their players) are eager to go exploring, have one of them make a DC 10 Intelligence (History) check. On a success, you can reveal one dungeon with a recommended level equal to that character's level. (See Valikan Dungeons Table)

As warriors of Clan Ragvall, the characters already know of Bennuson Farmstead, the Sheltering Wood, and Hrafensheim, because those are all in or around the village. The mining camp at Headwater Cave, close to the nearby town of Halsfjord, may also be known to them.

Quests and Dungeons

Most dungeons in this adventure are related to one or more quests. Some, like the Sheltering Wood, contain potential for many different Quests. Others, like Hvitrfjall Peak, are designed to interact with only one Quest. If your characters don't do a Quest that's only related to one dungeon, it becomes easy to set new Quests of your own creation there to expand your story.

If the characters must explore a dungeon in order to complete a Quest, they automatically learn its location on the map when they accept the Quest.

Reaching a Dungeon

Valika is a harsh land, even in balmy spring and summer. Snow blankets the land year-round, and the wind drives temperatures so low that one's own breath can freeze upon the air.

The deadly nature of travel isn't a core component of this adventure; it's assumed that the characters are skilled survivalists and know how to endure the Valikan cold through proper gear and training. If you want to include elements of winter survivalist gameplay, the GM will need to provide their own rules for surviving the harsh Valikan land.

Traveling to a Dungeon

The journey to and from a dungeon is assumed to fit within one week. If the dungeon is outside of Ragvall Village, characters who journey there aren't able to gain any benefit from the week of downtime they must take after completing a Quest there.

If the characters travel to one of the following dungeons, they can still engage in downtime that week due to how short the journey is:

- Bennuson Farmstead
- Hrafensheim
- Ófeigur's Beacon
- Sheltering Wood

All other dungeons consume their ability to perform a downtime activity that week.

Valikan Dungeons

Location Name	Description	Recommended Level
Bennuson Farmstead	A prosperous farm house in Ragvall Village. Kobolds lair beneath it.	3rd-level
Headwater Cave	An ore-rich cavern near Halsfjord. A druidic curse has halted mining.	3rd-level
Hrafensheim	Ragvall Village's longhouse and stronghold.	—
Hvitrfjall Peak	A wind-scoured peak hiding a shrine to the Prismatic Wyrm.	5th-level
Jarl Grimskjelle's Camp	A camp of frost giant raiders seeking to plunder Valikan cities.	10th-level (Not discoverable until winter)
Oceantide Cave	A troll-infested cavern in the Teeth.	8th-level (or lower, if stealth is used)
Ófeigur's Beacon	A lighthouse in Ragvall Village with a daemonic artifact buried beneath it.	3rd-level
Sheltering Wood	Elf-inhabited woods protecting Ragvall Village from the elements.	3rd-level and higher
Snow's Respite	A hot spring in a distant mountain. In ancient times, a red dragon laired there.	9th-level
Steðihaugr	The "Anvil-Barrow," resting place of a mythic Valikan smith.	3rd-level
Wreck of the *Blade-Blessed*	A wrecked ship containing a blade sought by laneshi necromancers.	8th-level
Wreck of the *Sea Dragon*	A wrecked ship picked clean by wretched keppmir.	8th-level

Bennuson Farmstead

For 3rd-level characters

Since the very birth of Ragvall, the farmstead of the half-orc matriarch Benna Stonebreaker and her numerous partners and descendants has stood proudly in the southern part of the village, where the family commands acres of farmland and beekeeping yards.

Recently, the farmstead has been the target of thefts, including the ring that gave Benna her moniker Stonebreaker (see **Quest: Thieving Churls** in chapter 1).

Bennuson Farmstead Features

This location has the following features unless otherwise noted:

Light. This farmstead is brightly lit by roaring hearths as well as by sunlight during the day.

Ceilings. The rooms of this farmstead are 30 feet high; its doors are 10 feet high; and its hallways are also 10 feet high.

Quests

The characters are guided to this location in **Quest: Thieving Churls** (see chapter 1).

Searching for Clues

During **Quest: Thieving Churls**, the characters are tasked with finding clues. Places where clues can be found are described in areas F1 and F2 of this location. Each place—such as a hearth, or sacks of grain, or a dirty sink—has a clue and a DC associated with it.

Searching Directly

If a character declares that they search one of these places, they discover its clue instantly. They don't have to make an ability check to search it.

Sweeping the Room

If the characters are unsure of where to look and simply want to sweep the entire room, the characters must spend 10 minutes scouring the room, and then can make Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) checks. If a character's check matches or equals the DC listed on a place with a clue, they find the clue listed there. Each character can only find one clue per sweep of the room, so the GM chooses which clues are found by which characters.

"I'd tell ya' to kiss my arse, but even that might kill ya."

- Benna Stonebreaker

Areas within Bennuson Farmstead

The following areas are keyed to the map of this location.

F1: Kitchen

> *Stacked firewood rests beside the open hearth at the center of this large kitchen. Nearby, ash has spilled onto the floor. Sacks of grains and fruits and barrels of cheese lean against the walls. A few overly large knives and pots remain.*

The characters can inspect the kitchen for clues.

Hearth (DC 17). Small, clawed footprints mark the ash. The tracks are hard to identify in the soot; a successful DC 20 Intelligence (Nature) check identifies them as kobold tracks.

Grain and Fruit Sacks (DC 15). A half-eaten apple sits near the fruit sacks. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check identifies that the small and sharp tooth marks were made by a small humanoid.

Cheese Barrels (DC 12). A barrel with a hole in its back is missing little chunks of cheese.

Knives and Pots (DC 15). As Benna said, many knives, pots, and pans are missing. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check deduces that only small items were taken; what remains are larger and more unwieldy ones.

F2: Benna's Living Quarters

> *A bed large enough to fit five adults dominates this room. Various storage chests cover the walls. A large window overlooks the farm.*

The characters can inspect various parts of the bedroom for clues.

Bed (DC 15). The blankets are covered with soot from the hearth.

Storage Chests (DC 15). The latches of these storage chests have been scratched by small claws and implements like lockpicks.

Window Frame (DC 10). The window frame is covered in scratches left by small claws.

Looking Outside (DC 13). The dirt outside the window is covered in small, clawed footprints. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check identifies these as kobold tracks.

F3: Barn

> *Though currently empty, this barn reeks of cows. Several hay bales stand in a corner and a layer of straw covers its dirt floors.*

Upon entering, the character with the highest passive Perception score notices a kitchen knife in the straw.

Near the knife, and underneath some hay bales, is a pit, 5 feet wide and 15 feet deep, that descends into the warren tunnels (area F4).

F4: Warren Tunnels

> *The pit extends into an underground tunnel leading away from the barn.*

The tunnel is 5 feet high and in complete darkness. The kobolds that live here have installed traps every 15 feet.

Crossbow. A concealed crossbow mechanism in the floor fires if its trip wire is activated (hidden 15 feet into the tunnel). A character within 10 feet of the trap who succeeds on a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the tripwire. The wire can be disarmed with a successful DC 12 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. A creature activating the trap must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 7 (1d10) piercing damage.

Oil Trap. A clay pot filled with oil embedded in the ceiling falls if its associated tripwire is activated (hidden 30 feet into the tunnel). A character within 10 feet of the trap who succeeds on a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the trap. The wire can be disarmed with a successful DC 14 Dexterity check using thieves' tools.

If triggered, creatures within 10 feet must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or be covered in oil until they complete a short rest or until they take fire damage. While covered in oil, creatures are vulnerable to fire damage.

The oil patch makes the ground slippery, as if affected by the *grease* spell (DC 13). A creature that slips here also becomes covered in oil.

Fire. A mechanism in the wall hurls a clay pot full of alchemist's fire if its trip wire is activated (hidden 45 feet into the tunnel). A character within 10 feet of the trap who succeeds on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the tripwire. The wire can be disarmed with a successful DC 16 Dexterity check using thieves' tools.

When triggered, all creatures within 10 feet of the tripwire must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or take 5 (2d4) fire damage. Creatures who fail this save also take 5 (2d4) fire damage at the start of each of its turns. A creature can end this damage by using its action to make a DC 10 Dexterity check to extinguish the flames.

F5: Kobolds' Cavern

> *The tunnel widens into a circular room. In its center, several kobolds surround another who rests on a sack while being fed from an iron pot by kneeling kobold.*

This cavern is 10 feet high and in complete darkness.

Six **kobolds** are here plus their leader, a white-scaled kobold named Serrev the Skulk, and a sick kobold named Neev. They tend to Neev with supplies stolen from the farmstead. Serrev uses **spy** statistics with the Pack Tactics trait, which raises his Challenge Rating to 2 (450 XP):

Pack Tactics. The kobold has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the kobold's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

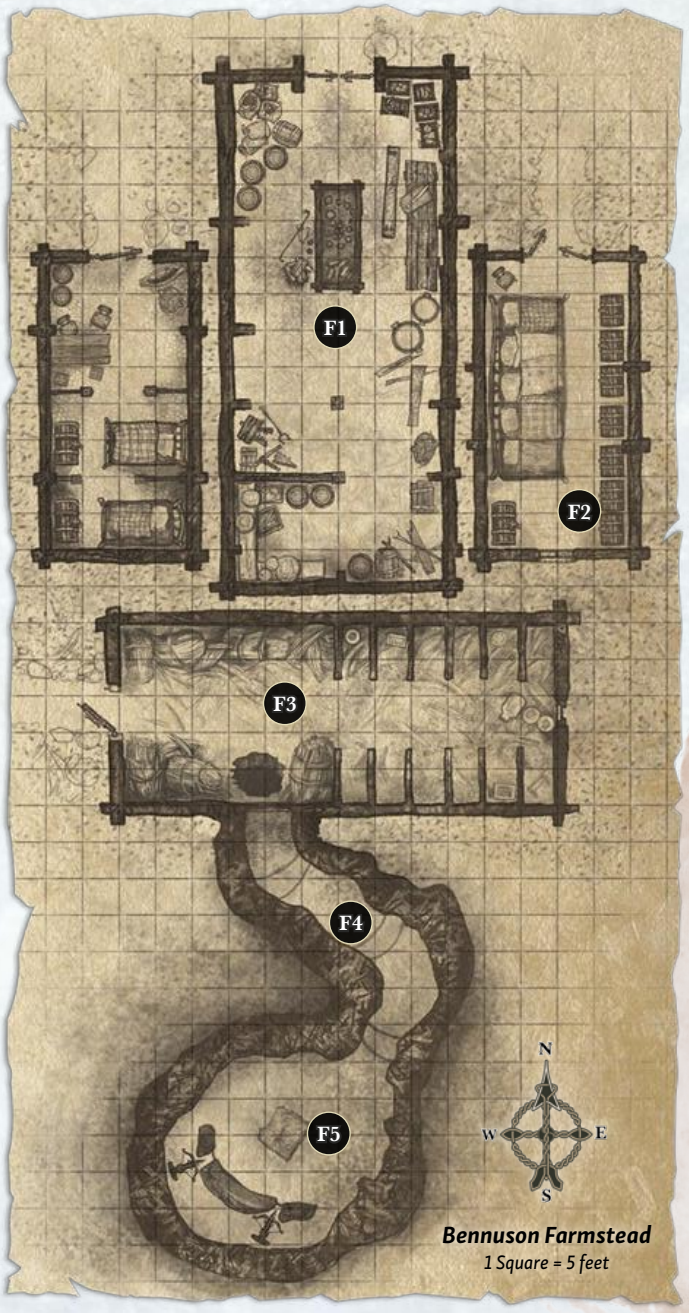
Crossbow Turrets. At the back of the chamber, behind a 2-foot-thick wall with two arrow slits, are two crossbows mounted on stands. Kobolds gain the following Crossbow attack when using a turret.

Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8+2) piercing damage.

Attacking the Kobolds. If the characters show violent intent, four kobolds grab knives and two run to the turrets behind a 3-foot-high dirt wall. The kobolds use their Pack Tactics trait whenever possible. They attack in self-defense and beg for mercy if Serrev is killed.

Kobold Hoard

In addition to Benna's ring and the various knives and pans from the kitchen, the kobolds also stole a set of high-quality smith's tools, which is of great interest to Rikarð Jarnskegg (see **Quest: Tools of the Trade**). A strange object called *fey-eye* (see appendix B) is also lumped in with the hoard.



Headwater Cave

For 3rd-level characters

In the mountain foothills north of Halsfjord is a cave tucked away from prying eyes. While this cavern has been beloved for the river that springs from it, it has also become known as a lucrative mining site, with rich deposits of iron ore waiting to be freed.

But the river is running red. Miners go to Headwater and do not return; if they do, it is not with ore, but wounds and wild-eyed stories of monsters. With its resources threatened, Halsfjord needs help reclaiming their mine.

The truth of Headwater Cave is that prospectors from Halsfjord forced out a group of pixies who were living in a shrine within the cave. A few weeks ago, one of the miners tampered with the shrine and was cursed with a monstrous shape. The pixies, warped into cruel pucks by their grief, returned to their cave to make a grim garden of their enemies' bones.

Background

A character who makes an Intelligence (History) check and meets or exceeds the following DCs recalls information about the site. These are cumulative:

DC 5: Miners from Halsfjord once mined iron from a rich vein in the back of this cave.

DC 10: Rumors of a monster inhabiting the depths of the cave began over a month ago.

DC 15: The last miner to leave the cave said he was chased by something hulking and made of earth, a creature demonstrating no known language beyond roaring.

DC 20: Headwater Cavern was once an ancient site of druidic worship for early Valikans. They made offerings to fey spirits for safety.

Quests

There are no Quests tied to this dungeon, but clearing it of danger allows the characters to take on a new downtime activity to gather iron ore from the mine (see "New Downtime Activities" in chapter 1).

Headwater Cave Features

This dungeon has the following features unless otherwise noted:

Light. Dark. No natural light touches the cave interior.

Ceilings. The rooms of this dungeon are 40 feet high; its doors and hallways are 10 feet high.

Downtime

The characters can find this dungeon by exploring beyond their village during downtime. Once they clear it, they gain access to the Gather Iron downtime activity (see "Downtime in Ragvall" in chapter 1).

Areas of Headwater Cave

The following areas are keyed to the map of this dungeon.

H1: The Cavern Mouth

> *The sound of rushing water greets you as you come over the slope. Before you, the cavern mouth waits, a massive maw from which a white-foam river flows. The stones are slick, the moss speckled with dew. Bodies hide amongst the cavern mouth and river. The air feels too still despite the roar of water from deeper in the cave.*

As characters approach the cavern mouth, they notice corpses scattered around the clearing. A successful DC 11 Wisdom (Medicine) check indicates these people were killed from blunt-force trauma. A character that succeeds on this check by 5 or more notices that their flesh has begun to rot.

Characters that have a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 14 or higher notice simple runes carved in the stone at the cavern's mouth. Characters who understand Druidic can read the runes. They read: "beware," "holy," "wild," and "protector."

H2: Waterfall Climb

> *Inside the cavern, a waterfall gushes over a lip of stone, roaring in the enclosed space. Abandoned pitons and broken rope ladders litter the sides of the waterfall, where the stone is wet and dangerous. A low moan comes from the ledge above.*

The 60-foot-tall cave wall is rough and slick but climbable. If a creature without a climbing speed tries to scale the stone walls to either side of the waterfall, it must make a successful Strength (Athletics) check at the end of each of its turns spent climbing. The DC of this check increases the higher the creature is from the ground:

- 15 feet or lower: DC 10
- 30 feet or lower: DC 12
- 45 feet or lower: DC 14
- 60 feet or lower: DC 16

If a creature succeeds on the DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check, it's able to clamber over the lip of the cliff. If a creature fails any of these checks, it falls. While falling, it can make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw to catch itself after falling at least 10 feet (and taking 1d6 bludgeoning damage from the fall). If a creature fails this saving throw, it falls to the bottom of the waterfall cliff.

If a character climbs 30 feet up and makes a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check, the character finds more runes. Characters proficient in History or who understand Druidic know these runes to mean "turn back," "stone," "demand," and "soul".

H3: Mining Hall

Hidden above the waterfall is a massive hall filled with abandoned mining equipment and destroyed tents. Several offshoot chambers are dug out following veins of ore. Strange, gnarled shrubs grow in the pitch-darkness of the cave. Following the flowing water to the east side of this chamber reveals a passage into another cavern.

Three **pucks** and three **puck shrubs** (see appendix A for both creatures' statistics) are hiding amongst the detritus of the mining camp. These pucks have grown unsettling grasses from the blood and bones of the miners, and five **svangras** (see appendix A) grow in the wrecked camp. Their locations are marked on the map of this dungeon; they attack only if a creature comes within 5 feet of it.

The pucks attack when creatures investigate the wreckage, step on a svangra, or come within 5 feet of the entrance to the Wild Shrine (area H4). The pucks shout in Sylvan as they attack: "Death to tall folk! Flee or die!" They can be convinced to leave the cave and seek another home in peace if a character makes a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check, but only if that character can speak Sylvan.

Treasure. Searching the camp reveals information and treasure. A character who spends 1 minute searching and makes a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check finds 250 pounds of iron spread throughout the room. Succeeding on this check by 5 or more also reveals a journal from the camp doctor. It reads, "Markus went into the forbidden room last week, and isn't acting like himself. He speaks an old tongue. We found moss growing on his arm after a hard rain."

A successful DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals the above as well as a diamond worth 300 gp.

H4: Wild Shrine

A twenty-foot tall being wrought of dark stone, rotting bits of earth, and patches of green-glowing lichen and moss stands at a simple stone altar. Dried blood covers its hands.

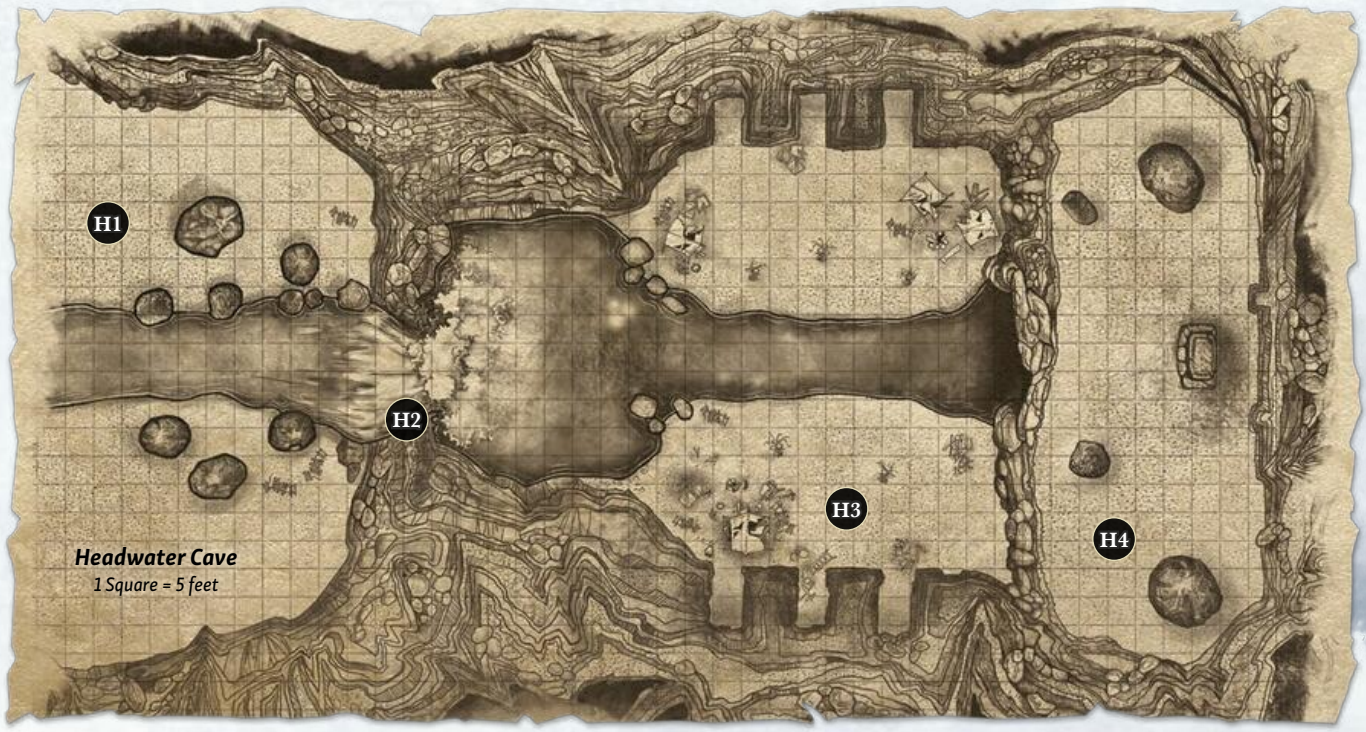
This massive being, its features twisted in horror, towers over the crude altar. If it sees the characters, it gestures towards its mouth. If the characters address it, the being calls itself Markos. "This shrine changed me," he says. "My mind is leaving me. All I can do is kill. Please…help me!" Despite his words, he attacks. His will is not his own.

A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Religion or Nature) check finds the altar marked with runes to summon an elemental guardian, but the magic went wrong and transformed a would-be thief into an elemental abomination. This semi-lucid deathmoss (see appendix A) has the following changes, which reduce its challenge rating to 4 (1,100 XP):

- Its AC is 10
- Its hit points are 76 (8d10 + 32)
- The Constitution saves to resist its Blight trait, its Calming Spores action, and its Slam attack are DC 11
- Its Slam attack deals 4 (1d8) bludgeoning plus 3 (1d6) necrotic damage

If the deathmoss is defeated in combat, there is a brief glimpse of a young halfling man with olive skin, rough leathers, and sad features emerging from the blighted earth before crumbling into soil himself.

Developments. Once this deathmoss has been defeated, surviving pucks flee from area the mining hall (area H3). The mine becomes safe to use once again, and the characters can use downtime to organize a mining party (see "Downtime in Ragvall" in chapter 1 and "Downtime Activities" in chapter 3).



Hrafensheim

For characters of any level

Hrafensheim—the "House of Hrafen" in Valiki) is the longhouse of Ragvall Village and home to the village chief. It is a gathering place for village events, a hospitable shelter for weary travelers that come to the village, and a stronghold for when the village comes under attack.

This location is not a dungeon; it's a location in Ragvall Village that the characters will visit time and time again. It can be used as a map for scenes and combat encounters that occur throughout this adventure, such as **Event: Besting the Braggart** in chapter 1, the "Burning the Ship of the Dead" section in chapter 3, and raid defense events in chapter 4.

Background

A character who makes an Intelligence (History) check and meets or exceeds the following DCs recalls the following information. These are cumulative:

DC 5: Hrafensheim is the longhouse of Ragvall Village. It looks like a hill from outside because its exterior walls are made of compacted earth and grow green with grass.

DC 10: The longhouse holds some of the village's cattle, and also holds reserves of dairy and preserved food.

DC 15: In times of crisis, the longhouse can hold nearly half the village.

DC 20: There are rumors that Chief Hrafen av Skeir has a secret room in the longhouse, which he keeps magical relics he stole from Clan Völgr when he left them.

Quests

This location and its map are used in the following Quests and Events:

- **Event: A Knife at Autumn's End** (chapter 3)
- **Event: Revolution in Ragvall** (chapter 3)
- **Quest: First Blood** (chapter 4)
- **Event: Hungerers Rampant** (chapter 4)
- **Event: Darkwater Rampant** (chapter 4)
- **Event: Stomp and Burn** (chapter 4)
- **Event: Drowning in Undead** (chapter 4)
- **Event: Coldfire Premonition** (chapter 4)

Hrafensheim Features

The longhouse has the following features unless otherwise noted:

Objects. This longhouse is filled with objects and furniture. Any creature can share a space with an object to gain half cover. Most sizeable objects can be flipped over as an action and used as three-quarters or total cover. Additionally, if a Large or larger creature attacks a creature sharing a space with an object, that object is knocked over and can be used as cover, at the GM's discretion.

Ceilings. The ceilings of this house are 30 feet high, and its doors are 7 feet high.

Doors. The longhouse's wooden interior doors can be barred from inside. Breaking down a barred door requires a creature to use its action to make a successful DC 15 Strength check. A door has AC 13, 10 hp, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

Light. This longhouse is lit by two large fire pits in its main hall. People carry candles while moving about the hall at night.

Walls. The interior walls and ceiling of this longhouse are made of sturdy timber. Its exterior is made of compacted, grass-covered earth that insulates the interior from rain and cold. Two smoke-holes exist in the ceiling above the fire pits, which can be covered and concealed during an attack.

Windows. Other than the smoke-holes in the ceiling and the main hall's door, there are no holes in the house's turf-covered exterior.

Areas within Hrafensheim

The following areas are keyed to the map of this location.

A1: Village Square

The Village Square is a crossroads and grassy knoll on the banks of the river Heilag and the shore of the Akkeri Bay. The heavy, oaken doors and decorative façade of Hrafensheim stand tall and noble over the square.

In spring and summer, market stalls are set up on the green once a week. In autumn, the Ship of the Dead is ritualistically lit aflame here to honor those who died while raiding. In winter, children have snowball fights here while adults set up barricades and defenses.

A2: Alvíss's Woodcrafts

This is the home and workshop of the reclusive dwarf Alvíss av Dvergholt. It is described in more detail in chapter 1 of this adventure (see area R3).

A3: Feast Hall

The main hall of Hrafensheim is a single long room dominated by two oaken feast tables with a fire pit between them. Benches line the walls, offering comfortable seating for over a hundred people. During feasts and festivals, hundreds of villagers pack into the hall and special guests sit at the table, leaving the benches for the old and infirm; everyone else stands or sits on the floor while the village bard sings and dances from atop the tables.

In winter, this area is often filled with huddled, shivering people and harried healers doing their best to triage the ill and wounded. In times of attack, the doors to this hall can be barred while rows of stout warriors prepare to repel invaders. See "Defending Ragvall Village" in chapter 4 for more information about defensive raids.

Tapestries and carved wooden art decorate the walls. A tapestry of the hero Kentigern battling the Prismatic Wyrm Gormadraug is in the southeast corner of the hall. It covers a sliding wall panel—a secret door to the chief's safe room (area A8).

A4: Bunks

This room is filled with bedrolls made of pelts and straw. These simple beds are for weary travelers to rest in while they stay in Ragvall Village upon the chief's hospitality. They are also for villagers to use in times of misfortune, especially during the winter when the weather is at its deadliest.

This room contains several small footlockers for personal belongings.

A5: Indoor Dairy

It's common in Valikan clans for the chief to have their own cows, and even small, nascent Clan Ragvall is no exception. On sunny days, these cows are often seen grazing in the village square and are herded to and from the indoor dairy by young adults hired by the chief.

These cows are quite gentle and won't harm anyone unless spooked. If set free in a chaotic situation, they attack nearby creatures indiscriminately while trying to escape to the main entrance. They use **ox** statistics.

A6: Larder

The chief maintains a stockpile of food within the longhouse for feasts, and in case of lean harvests or other disasters. Much of this stockpile is food paid as tax to the chief by clansfolk. A kind chief like Hrafen av Skeir is inclined to share with their clansfolk, while selfish ones hoard the cream of the crop for themselves.

This larder contains dried meat and fish, flour and other cereal grains, and huge tubs of dairy to be turned into cheese, butter, and skyr.

A7: Chief's Bedchambers

This room is just as rustic as the rest of the longhouse, but is decorated with tapestries, hanging shields and swords, and charcoal sketches of ships that the chief dreams up. It contains a fine oaken-frame bed with warm sheets.

On the south wall of the room is a tapestry of the hero Ragvall defending Kentigern from Gormadraug's icy breath. It covers a sliding wall panel—a secret door to the chief's safe room (area A8).

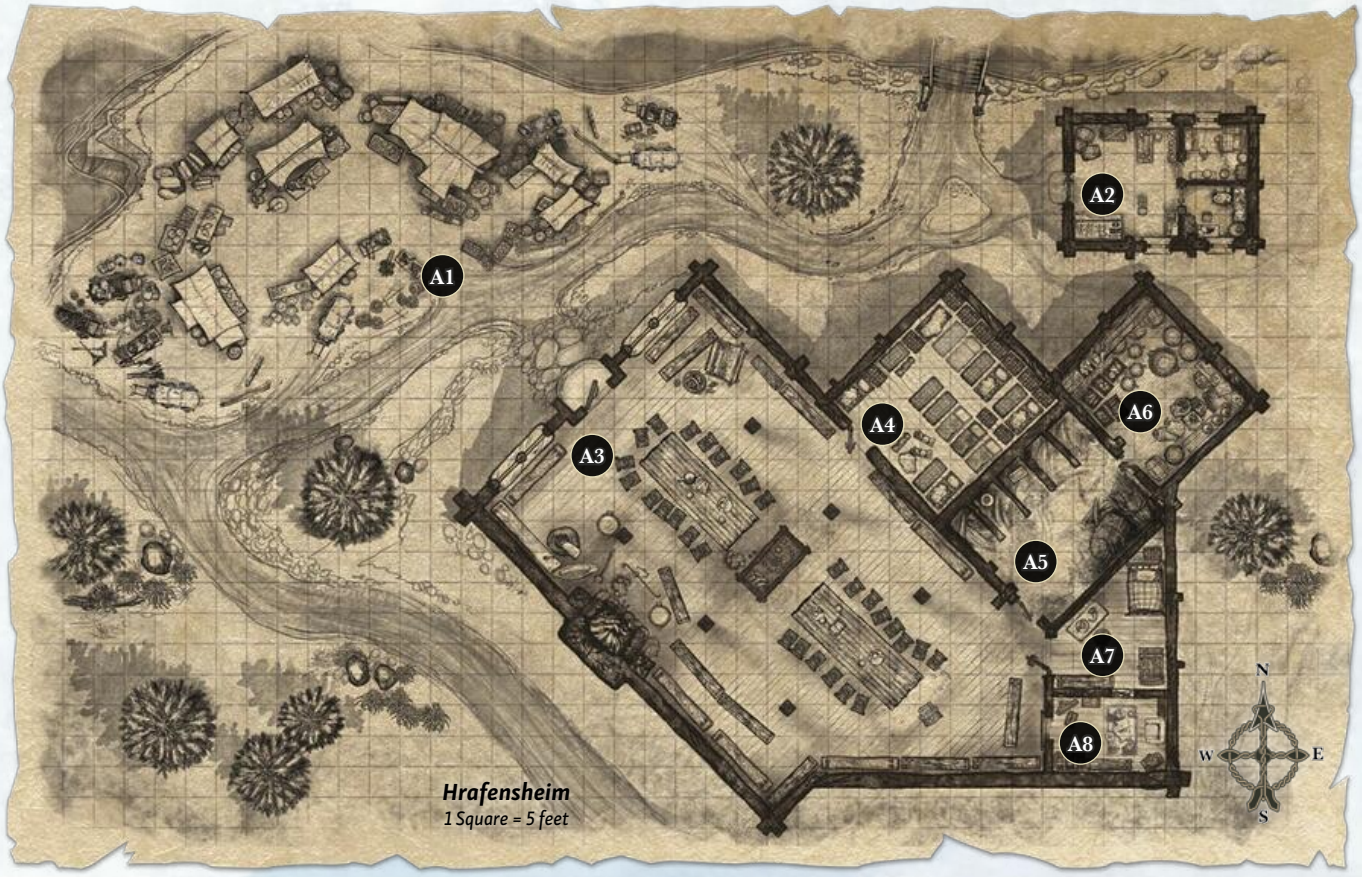
A8: Chief's Safe Room

This small safe room is Hrafen av Skeir's secret. He would never show cowardice in front of his people, but he keeps this room as a stronghold to hide in, just in case the village is ever overrun. After the attack, he can emerge and rally the survivors to rebuild Ragvall.

Running from a fight isn't honorable, but Hrafen cares about his personal virtues more than he cares about the vague cultural idiom of "Valikan honor."

Treasure. This room contains the following items:

- A warm bedroll
- A suit of *+1 plate* that bears the sigil of the occult Prismatic Order, which Hrafen stole while fleeing the Völgr city of Tyburn
- A *frost brand* that once belonged to Chief Nolgr Magnusson of Clan Völgr, which Hrafen stole



Hvitrfjall Peak

For 5th-level characters

Hvitrfjall Peak—the "Shining Mountain" in Valiki—is so named for the curtains of rainbow light which dance around it at night.

These auroras appear due to the lingering influence of Gormadraug, the Prismatic Wyrm, upon the mountain. Up until two winters ago, a fanatical prismatic drake that calls itself the Herald of Gormadraug, made this place its home and constructed a shrine on its peak. The Herald involves itself in the tale of Ragvall Village in chapter 4 of this adventure. Though it has since moved on from Hvitrfjall Peak, its power still lingers there.

The Herald's abiding elemental influence has drawn worshipers of the Primordial Ilhara to search the mountain for magical secrets. These mystics hail from the Bürach imperial territory of Nordenland to the south. They fear and despise Valikans, due to generations of warfare waged upon them by Thrull raiders.

Background

A character who makes an Intelligence (History) check and meets or exceeds the following DCs recalls information about the site. These are cumulative:

DC 5: The mountain is wreathed in curtains of rainbow lights at night.

DC 10: Valikans use it as a landmark to aid navigation.

DC 15: There have been reports of a drake that shines like the rainbow circling the peak.

DC 20: Some say the rainbow lights are a sign of Gormadraug's presence.

Quests

The characters are guided to this dungeon in **Quest: Epic Poetry** (see chapter 1).

Hvitrfjall Peak Features

This dungeon has the following features unless otherwise noted:

Light. During the day, this dungeon is bathed in natural light. At night, the auroras illuminate the night with dim light.

Areas within Hvitrfjall Peak

The following areas are keyed to the map of this dungeon.

P1: Mountain Base

> *The mountain known as Hvitrfjall Peak reaches into the sky above you, clouds swirling around its jagged, snow-capped summit.*

Hvitrfjall Peak has natural footholds and scalable slopes, making it straightforward trek. However, the winding track from the base to the peak covers nearly 10,000 feet of elevation over 12 miles, making it long and exhausting.

Ascending. Characters climbing the mountain must make a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) group check. A character with a climbers' kit makes this check at advantage as do any creatures with a climbing or a flying speed. On a success, a character reaches the cavern near the peak of the mountain (area P2) after 6 hours of climbing. On a failure, a character still reaches area P2 in 6 hours, but also gains 1 level of exhaustion and takes 21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage from falls and scrapes.

Enduring. At the end of the climb, each of the characters that ascended the mountain must make a successful DC 15 Constitution saving throw or gain 1 level of exhaustion. This saving throw is made with disadvantage if characters are not dressed appropriately for the cold weather.

P2: Herald's Rest

> *Previously obscured by rocks and the angle of ascent, the yawning mouth of a cavern reveals itself to you.*

The cavern ceiling is 50 feet high. During the day, the cavern is dimly lit, while at night it is in darkness. A closed stone trapdoor atop the cavern leads to the summit (area P3).

Nataya (NE, female half-elf **panjaian ilharan**; see appendix A), a servant of Ilhara, the Queen of Air and Darkness, examines runes carved into the wall. Two bodyguards, Ditmar and Gelfrid (NE, male human **bandit captains**) keep an eye on the cavern entrance.

As soon as the bodyguards notice the characters, they alert Nataya. Upon seeing them, she snarls: "So the Valikan swine have found us at last. Ditmar, Gelfrid, purge this sanctuary of their filth." All three attack.

Fighting the Ilharans. Nataya immediately flies 30 feet into the air, keeping her distance from the characters. Her bodyguards rush forward with their scimitars. They fight to the death.

Upon reaching 0 hit points, Nataya transforms into a **sky drake** (see appendix A), sloughing off her wounded human flesh like a lizard shedding its skin. This is a gift from Ilhara for her devotion. She flies up to the shrine (area P3) and hides, preparing to attack the characters if they reach it.

No Truce with Nataya. Nataya's traumatic experiences cause her to believe all Valikans to be bloodthirsty slavers, and she grants no opportunities for Valikans to prove otherwise. The characters can't convince Nataya of a nonviolent resolution.

Herald's Legacy. The cave itself is full of shed skin from a prismatic drake. The skin is worth 300 gp. Characters who understand Draconic know that the runes on the wall read "Gormadraug," "return," and "winter."

The Herald left behind two vials of *flammable tincture* (see appendix B), which can be found with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check.

P3: Shrine to Gormadraug

> *Tall stones engraved with Primordial glyphs stand at the summit of Hvitrfjall Peak, forming a simple shrine. Frigid alpine winds howl relentlessly.*

Sixty feet above the entrance to Herald's Rest (area P2), the untended shrine to Gormadraug was built by the Herald. Engraved on the stones in Draconic is the message: "Gormadraug, greatest of the Primordials and bringer of coldfire, slumbers beneath the earth. You can try and delay the Prismatic Wyrm's return, but it is as inevitable as the changing of seasons."

A closed stone trapdoor in the middle of the area leads down to Herald's Rest (area P2).

Phase Two. If the characters defeated Nataya's panjaian form in area P2, she flies here in her **sky drake** form (see appendix A) and summons three sylphs, which use **harpy** statistics with the following changes that raise their Challenge Ratings to 2:

- Their creature type is Elemental and they can speak Auran.
- They have resistance to lightning and thunder damage, and bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks.
- They are immune to poison damage.
- They are immune to exhaustion and the grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, and unconscious conditions.
- They have the following Air Form trait:

Air Form. The slyph can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. It can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

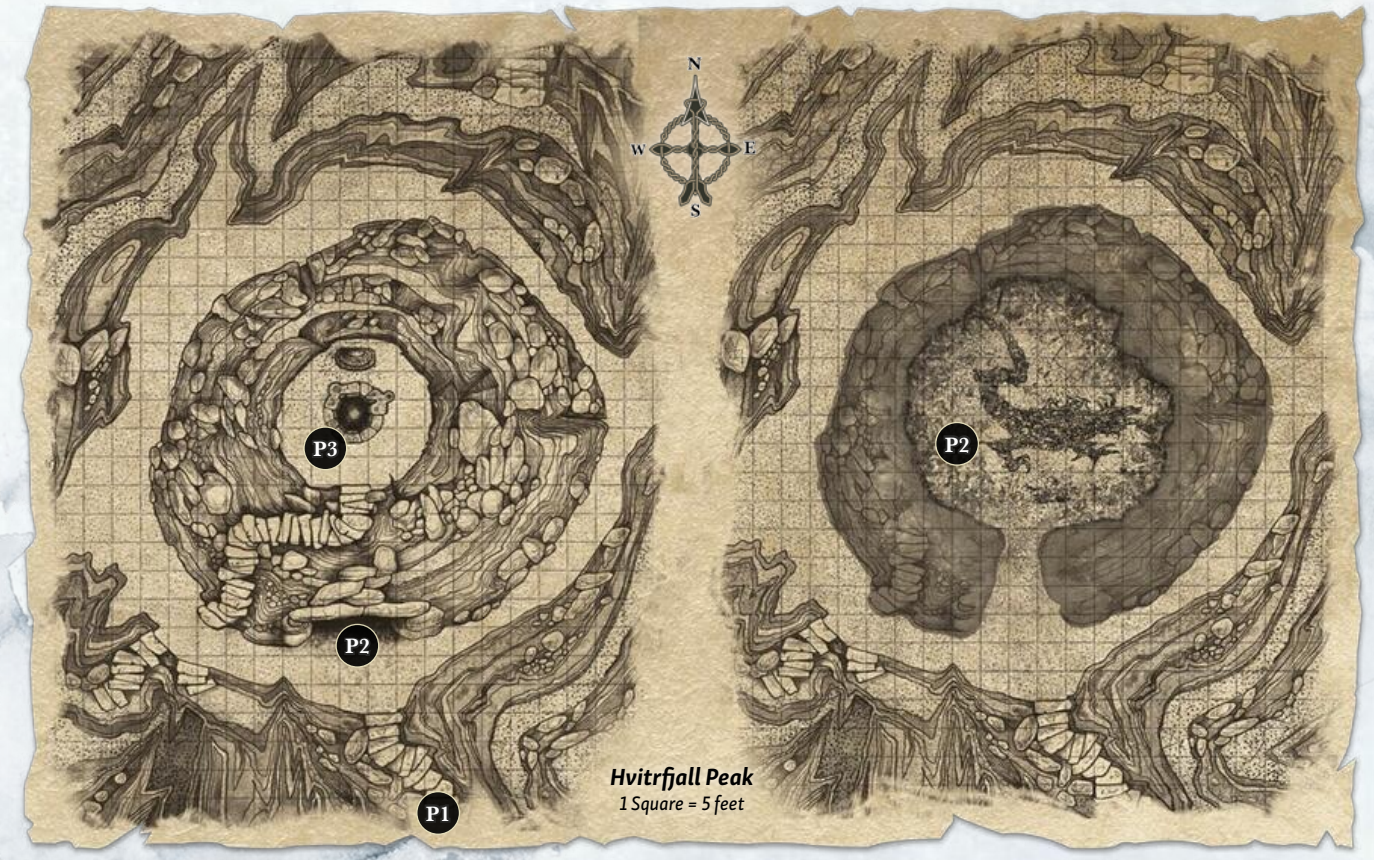
- Their Luring Song action is replaced with the following Gale action:

Gale (Recharge 4–6). The sylph sends out a gust of wind in a 20-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 11 Strength saving throw. On a failure, a target takes 8 (2d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage and is flung up to 20 feet away from the sylph in a direction following the line and knocked prone. If a thrown target strikes an object, such as a wall or floor, the target takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage for every 10 feet it was thrown. If the target is thrown at another creature, that creature must succeed on a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw or take the same damage. If the saving throw is successful, the target takes half the bludgeoning damage and isn't flung away or knocked prone.

Monster Tactics. Nataya uses her Flyby trait to swoop down and attack before retreating. The sylphs use their Gale attack when possible to divide and damage the characters.

Monster Salvage. Nataya remains in her sky drake form when killed. Her corpse is worth 400 gp. If beheaded (see **Quest: Epic Poetry** in chapter 1), the rest of her corpse is worth 300 gp.

Treasure. The Ilharans in this shrine were performing repairs. Thus, their shrine is stocked with 250 pounds of timber.



Jarl Grimskjelle's Camp

For 10th-level characters

This location only exists in winter, when Jarl Grimskjelle, a frost giant of Frostmere, leads his warband to crush and pillage Valikan settlements. His band is comprised of ten frost giant warriors, plus himself. They're currently camped on Grarjord, en route to the Valikan city of Summerhelm, which he plans to annihilate in the name of Frostmere.

This dungeon is the target of a stealth or hit-and-run mission in chapter 4 of this adventure. Because of the number of powerful giants in this camp, it's unlikely that 9th-level characters will be able to take them all on in a fair fight.

Background

A character that makes an Intelligence (History) check and meets or exceeds the following DCs recalls the following information:

DC 5: Frost giants are common in Valika's remote mountains. Though not all hate humans, most avoid the "warm folk."

DC 10: The giants of Frostmere are known as the Melwarg, and they despise humanity. They believe giantkind should rule Valika.

DC 15: Jarl Grimskjelle is a feared commander of Melwarg warriors. He is a zealot of the cause, and longs to enslave the "warm folk."

DC 20: Jarl Mundilfari Grimskjelle can magically conjure shields and restraints out of ice.

Quests

The characters are guided to this dungeon in **Quest: Preemptive Strike** (see chapter 4).

Grimskjelle's Camp Features

This dungeon has the following features unless otherwise noted:

Light. This dungeon is outdoors. During the daytime, it is brightly lit by the sun reflecting off the snow. At night, it is pitch dark. The interior of the camp's tents are dimly lit by glowing orbs of magical ice.

Ceilings. The interior of the camp's tents are 50 feet high.

Sound. Sound travels well in this camp. If a combat encounter begins, 1d4 giants from elsewhere in the camp (GM's choice) come to investigate. They arrive on initiative count 20 of the third round.

Areas of Grimskjelle's Camp

The following areas are keyed to the map of this dungeon.

J1: Forested Overlook

Read or paraphrase the following when the characters arrive at the camp to set the scene:

> *A thick pillar of smoke, smelling of fresh-cut pine, billows high into the sky. Parting thick pine boughs of the copse you find yourself atop a steep cliff, looking down at a camp of three enormous tents made of white canvas, blending into the the snow. The tents are at least fifty feet tall.*
>
> *A towering bonfire at the far end of the camp belches smoke into the sky where three icy blue giants roast an elk.*

This cliff is a dizzying 100 feet tall, though it turns into a sloping hill at its northern end. All sound is muffled by the snow here, and the characters can hold a spoken conversation without being noticed by the giants below.

Scaling the Cliff. The cliffs pose a problem to characters trying to make a quick getaway. The cliff is covered in craggy, icy rocks. At the end of each turn spent climbing it, a creature takes 2 (1d4) cold damage and must succeed on a DC 10 Strength saving throw or slip and fall 10 feet before finding its footing. A creature that fails this save by 5 or more falls to the bottom and lands prone.

J1a: Cliffside Slides

Two slopes on the north and south sides of the cliff are less steep, and covered with snow. They are easy to slide down quietly, but hard to climb back up. Each is 120 feet long. A creature endig its turn standing on a slope must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to keep its balance. On a failure, it slips, sliding back to the base of the slide.

J2: Clear-Cut Campsite

This campsite is littered with the stumps of felled trees used to make the giants' tent posts, firewood, and roasting skewers. The characters must move stealthily through the snow to avoid alerting the giants.

Alerting the Camp. If a creature fails a DC 8 Dexterity (Stealth) check while within 50 feet of the giants at the bonfire (area J3) or the entrance to any of the tents (areas J4, J5, and J6), the giants in that area notice, and send one giant from that area to investigate. If the giant succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check, it spots the creatures' footprints. The giant ignores Beast prints, otherwise it follows them. If it can't find the characters after searching for 1 minute, it returns to its area and warns its fellows to be on the alert, as "warm folk" might be creeping around the camp.

After an area has been alerted, the DC of the Dexterity (Stealth) check to avoid detection rises to 13.

J3: Giant's Bonfire

Frost giants have no need for warmth, but the Melwarg giants enjoy the strange, prickly sensation that being close to a bonfire gives them. They also very much like the taste of scorched-black meat and the light that the fire gives off. The fire spews a thick cloud of smoke due to the still-green firewood used to build it.

A trio of **frost giant** warriors are sitting around the campfire, telling gruesome, bawdy stories and plunging whole elks skewered on pointed tree trunks into the flames. They should be keeping watch, but are confident that the warm folk won't be patrolling the ice fields in the middle of winter.

J4: Warrior's Tent

A group of four **frost giant** warriors snore loudly in this tent. It's lightly furnished and meant to be rapidly packed up and moved. None of these warriors are clad in armor, reducing their AC to 9.

Treasure. Searching the room takes 1 minute and requires a character to make a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check. On a success, they find the following treasure:

- 5,000 gp worth of jewelry and gemstones in a casket marked with a Thrull crest
- Frost giant jewelry made of Valikan weaponry, which can be reclaimed as 50 pounds of iron
- Medical supplies that can be used by Ragvallan warriors, granting the village 10 extra warriors

After making this check, the character who searched must make a DC 8 Dexterity (Stealth) check to avoid detection (see "Alerting the Camp" in area J2).

J5: Ice-Speakers' Tent

A pair of frost giant mages sleep peacefully in this small, but cushion-strewn and comfortable tent. They use **mage** statistics with the following changes, which increase their Challenge Rating to 9 (5,000 XP):

- Their size is Huge
- They have a Constitution score of 20 (+5) and 92 hit points (8d12 + 40)
- Their walking speed is 40 feet
- They are immune to cold damage

Treasure. Searching the room takes 1 minute and requires a character to make a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check. On a success, they find the following treasure:

- 3,500 gp worth of rubies, sapphires, and other spell components in a casket marked with an icon of Clan Rune
- Wooden spell-sticks that these mages use instead of spellbooks, which can be reclaimed as 100 pounds of timber
- Medical supplies that can be used by Ragvallan warriors, granting the village 10 extra warriors

After making this check, the character who searched must make a DC 8 Dexterity (Stealth) check to avoid detection (see "Alerting the Camp" in area J2).

J6: Jarl's Tent

Jarl Grimskjelle (see appendix A) sleeps in an austere, unadorned tent. However, even while sleeping, he wears jewelry made from human, dwarven, and elven skulls.

Treasure. Searching the room takes 1 minute and requires a character to make a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check. However, it also sets off an *alarm* spell that awakens and alerts one of the mages in area J5. On a success, the investigating character finds:

- A *flametongue greatsword* inscribed with Valikan runes, which read "Honor beyond death"
- A vial of *lindwyrm venom* (see appendix B)
- A sack of five *magebane bombs* (see appendix B)

After making this check, the character who searched must make a DC 8 Dexterity (Stealth) check to avoid detection (see "Alerting the Camp" in area J2).

Oceantide Cave

For 8th-level characters

The shores of the Teeth southwest of Ragvall Village are treacherous and foggy. The fog which never lifts stems from a group of seaborn trolls who call the coast their home. When they don't patrol the waters for their next meal, they retreat to Oceantide Cave to recuperate.

Oceantide Cave appears like any number of natural sea caves to Valikan sailors of the Teeth. To the seaborn trolls, however, Oceantide Cave doubles as a place of worship to the Primordial Lord Alondo, also known as the Lord of Depths. Recently, the trolls have become more agitated due to signs of Gormadraug returning, and they hunt for offerings to Alondo in the hopes he will answer their call.

Background

A character that makes an Intelligence (History) check and meets or exceeds the following DCs recalls the following information:

DC 5: Valikans that travel down the coasts to the south of the village rarely return alive.

DC 10: On occasion, seaborn trolls have been sighted below the village.

DC 15: Trollkelp, an ingredient for *potions of water breathing*, grows in water where the blood of seaborn trolls is spilled.

DC 20: Oceantide Cave is of significance to those who worship Alondo, Lord of Depths.

Oceantide Cave Features

This dungeon has the following features unless otherwise noted:

Light. This dungeon has no natural light.

Ceilings. The rooms of this dungeon are 30 feet high and its hallways are 20 feet high.

Fog. The dungeon is filled with patchy fog, making the area lightly obscured.

Trollkelp. Some areas within the dungeon contain trollkelp, which can be harvested to make *potions of water breathing*. Ása Lögmaður (see chapter 1) knows how to brew these potions and is able to make one with ten trollkelp strands.

Quests

The characters are guided to this dungeon in **Quest: Gills for the Gill-Less** (see chapter 1).

Areas within Oceantide Cave

The following areas are keyed to the map of this dungeon.

O1: Cave Entrance

> *The beach ends, the ground descending down into water. Up ahead, part of the cliff face has given way, forming an arch.*

The water is 5 feet deep in the entrance to the cave. The ground smoothly slopes upwards into a beach. Characters with a passive Perception score of 15 or higher notice some bones among the sand and rocks here.

Trollkelp. Characters that succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check find ten strands of trollkelp growing in the shallows of the water.

O2: Stagnant Pool

> *In the middle of this chamber, the rocky floor sharply plummets down into a pool of water.*

The pool of water is 20 foot deep.

As the characters approach the room, the water in the pool begins to splash frantically, and a shape can be seen within it. Due to the fog, however, no further details can be discerned without getting closer. This is an illusion created by a **whelmer** (see appendix A), and it attempts to drown anyone that approaches the pool. The whelmer is assisted by three **tangle weeds** (see appendix A), which are at the bottom of the pool.

Monster Salvage. If *gentle repose* is cast on the remains of the whelmer within 1 minute of defeating it, a character proficient with alchemist's supplies can use it to brew a *potion of water breathing*. The process takes 1 hour, and requires 25 gp and a successful DC 13 Intelligence or Wisdom check.

Using strands of tangle weed, a character proficient with alchemist's supplies can use them to brew a *potion of growth*. The process takes 4 hours, and requires 25 gp and a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check.

O3: Octopus Garden

> *This circular chamber consists of four deep pools separated by stone walkways that jut out of the water. Various forms of underwater flora thrive within the pools.*

Each of the four pools of water, which are 30 feet deep, houses a **giant octopus** camouflaged in the plants and algae. Characters that succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check notice them.

Slippery Stones. The walkways are slick with water. A character attempting to walk on one must make a successful DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or fall into the nearest pool of water, catching the attention of the octopus within and causing it to attack. This check is made at advantage if the character moves at half speed.

Trollkelp. Ten strands of trollkelp are growing within the pools.

O4: Troll Hall

This long rectangular room is supported by four pillars. Most of the room is flooded, the exception being a platform in the center of the room. On the platform is a stone table with benches, on which three hulking figures with water for hair and mouthfuls of sharp teeth sit.

Except for the raised platform in the middle, 5 feet of water fills this room. Three **seaborn trolls** (see appendix A) sit at the table, talking about the creatures they killed on their last hunt.

Monster Salvage. Once the trolls are defeated, a character proficient with leatherworker's tools can use their skin to make a *scraglung helmet (see appendix B)*. The process takes 24 hours, and requires 100 gp and a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check.

Trollkelp. Twenty strands of trollkelp can be gathered from the water of this room.

Bad News for Low-Level Heroes

If the characters attempt to attack the trolls in the spring season, when they're 5th level at most, they're in for a deadly fight. If they fight tactically, using tricks, spells, and the environment to separate the trolls, they might be able to divide and conquer and emerge victorious. If the characters get in over their heads and one of their allies is killed, the troll that killed them drags their carcass off to their cooking pot—potentially allowing the remaining characters to escape.

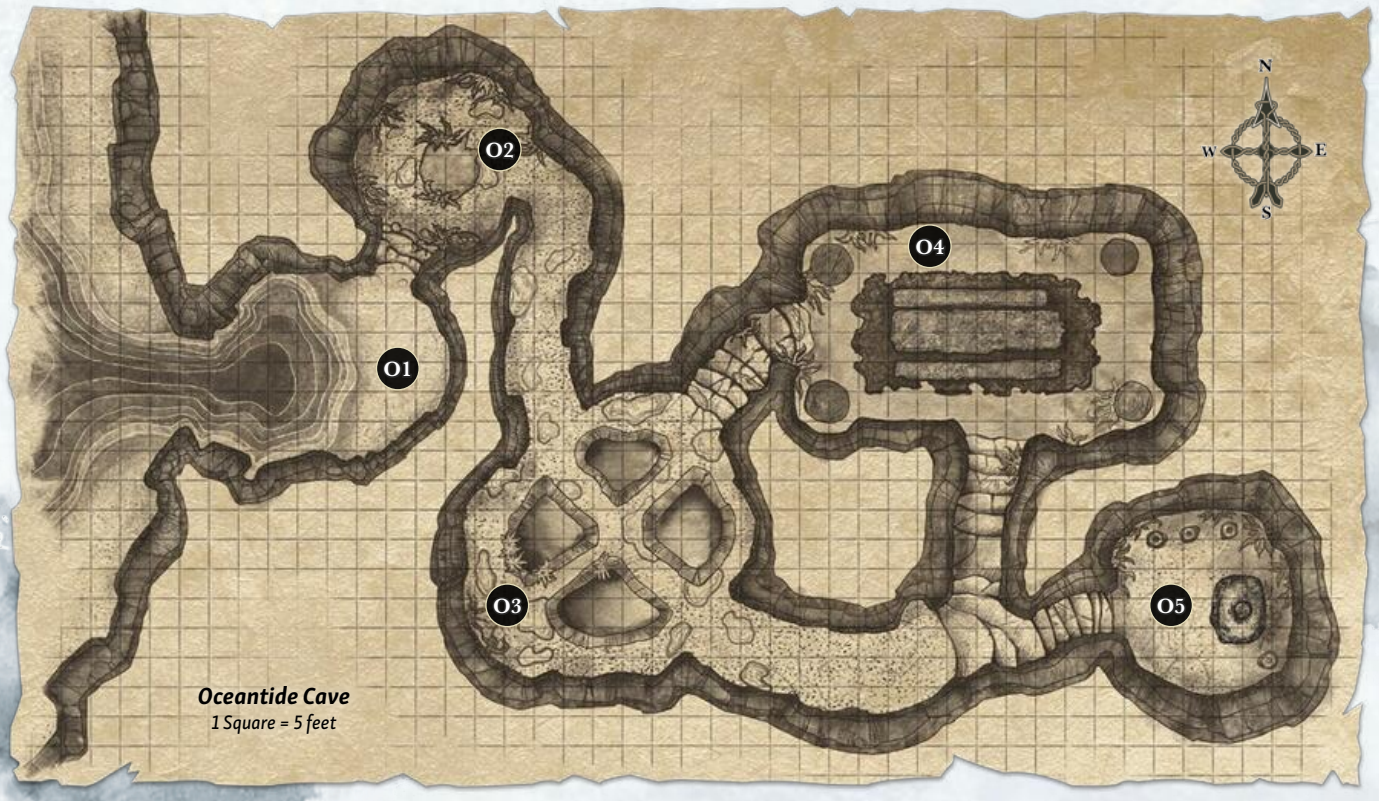
O5: Altar to Alondo

An ugly, warped, and musclebound giant stands before a stone altar. Its body is decorated in shells and draped with seaweed that trembles as he stumblingly bellows an incantation over the corpse of a large, sea-green reptile upon the altar. Another giant, this one more plainly garbed, stands nearby, echoing the chant.

A **seaborn troll fogcaller** and a **seaborn troll** (see appendix A) are sacrificing the sea drake to Alondo in the hopes that he responds and gives them advice. Characters that understand Giant hear them say, "Lord Alondo, hear our prayer. We are certain Gormadraug is returning. Please give us guidance on how we can help stop the Prismatic Wyrm. Please send your loyal subjects a panjaian in this hour of need."

Monster Salvage. Once the trolls are defeated, a character proficient with leatherworker's tools can use their skin to make up to four *scraglung helmets* (see appendix B) from a seaborn troll corpse. Ása Lögmaður can create it (see **Quest: Gills for the Gill-less** in chapter 1), but any character that succeeds on a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check can also determine how to make one. The process requires the trollhide to be stewed in 100 gp of magical reagents for 24 hours, then made into a helmet.

Treasure. The sea drake's blood can be sold to an alchemist or a trader for 200 gp—or, it can be used as a magical reagent to create the *scraglung helmet* (see above). An empty *bowl of commanding water elementals* decorates the altar, and can be removed with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. The bowl itself contains a *ring of swimming*.



Ófeigur's Beacon

For 3rd-level characters

The lighthouse known as Ófeigur's Beacon guides ships through the Teeth, the treacherous fjords that surround Akkeri Bay.

Strangely, Ófeigur, the beacon's keeper, architect, and namesake, vanished near the end of winter. Stranger still, the lighthouse continues to be lit each night without fail.

Ófeigur's Beacon Features

This dungeon has the following features unless otherwise noted:

Light. During the day, the top of the lighthouse (area B3) is illuminated by natural light. At night, it is brightly lit by the beacon at its center. The rest of the dungeon has no natural light.

Ceilings. The rooms of this dungeon are 30 feet high and its hallways are 10 feet high.

Quests

This dungeon is used as a part of the following Quests:

- **Quest: The Immortal Hermit** (see chapter 1)
- **Quest: Eggs Over Easy** (see chapter 1)

Areas within Ófeigur's Beacon

The following areas are keyed to the map of this dungeon.

B1: Ground Floor

> *The interior of the lighthouse is in utter disarray. There are planks scattered across the wooden floor. A hand mirror rests haphazardly on a desk. Beside it, a portrait has been tossed to the ground. The only unscathed objects are some bookshelves and an empty chamberpot. A set of stairs ascends upwards out of the wreckage.*

The stairs lead up to the first floor (area B2).

Hidden by the scattered planks is a hole in the corner of the room. A ladder leads in the hole down to the secret basement (area B4).

A character taking a closer look at the portrait isees that it is of a human man whose features seem to be melting, revealing something crimson beneath. The characters recognize this figure as Ófeigur.

> "Just as my light keeps the ships off the reefs, let my light be a warning to you. While it shines, steer clear of my tower, if you value your life."
>
> *- Ófeigur Lightraiser, his final words before disappearing*

B2: First Floor

> *The first floor is small and cramped. Stores of firewood occupy the majority of this room. A single bed is jammed in what space remains. There is a door in one of the walls, leading out.*

The stairs lead down to the ground floor (area B1).

The door connects to a balcony that has a ladder that leads to the top floor (area B3).

Characters who make a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check find a journal among the firewood. Sequentially, the entries read:

- "Ever since I built this lighthouse, I've been having the same dream. I'm always underwater, and these red arms keep trying to grab me."
- "Last night, I let the arms grab me. They pulled me down and down until I woke up."
- "I saw my reflection today."
- "Th———e ba——se——m—ent——" By this entry, Ófeigur's handwriting has deteriorated into a long, trailing scrawl.

B3: Top Floor

> *At the top of the ladder is the beacon itself. A neat stack of firewood takes up most of this outdoor platform.*

A ladder leads down to the first floor (area B2).

During the night, the stack of firewood is set ablaze. Every morning, Ófeigur emerges from the basement just long enough to stack fresh wood atop the beacon.

B4: Secret Basement

> *The ladder descends into a circular natural cavern. Stalagmites jut out of the ground, and a strange stone seal occupies the center of the floor.*

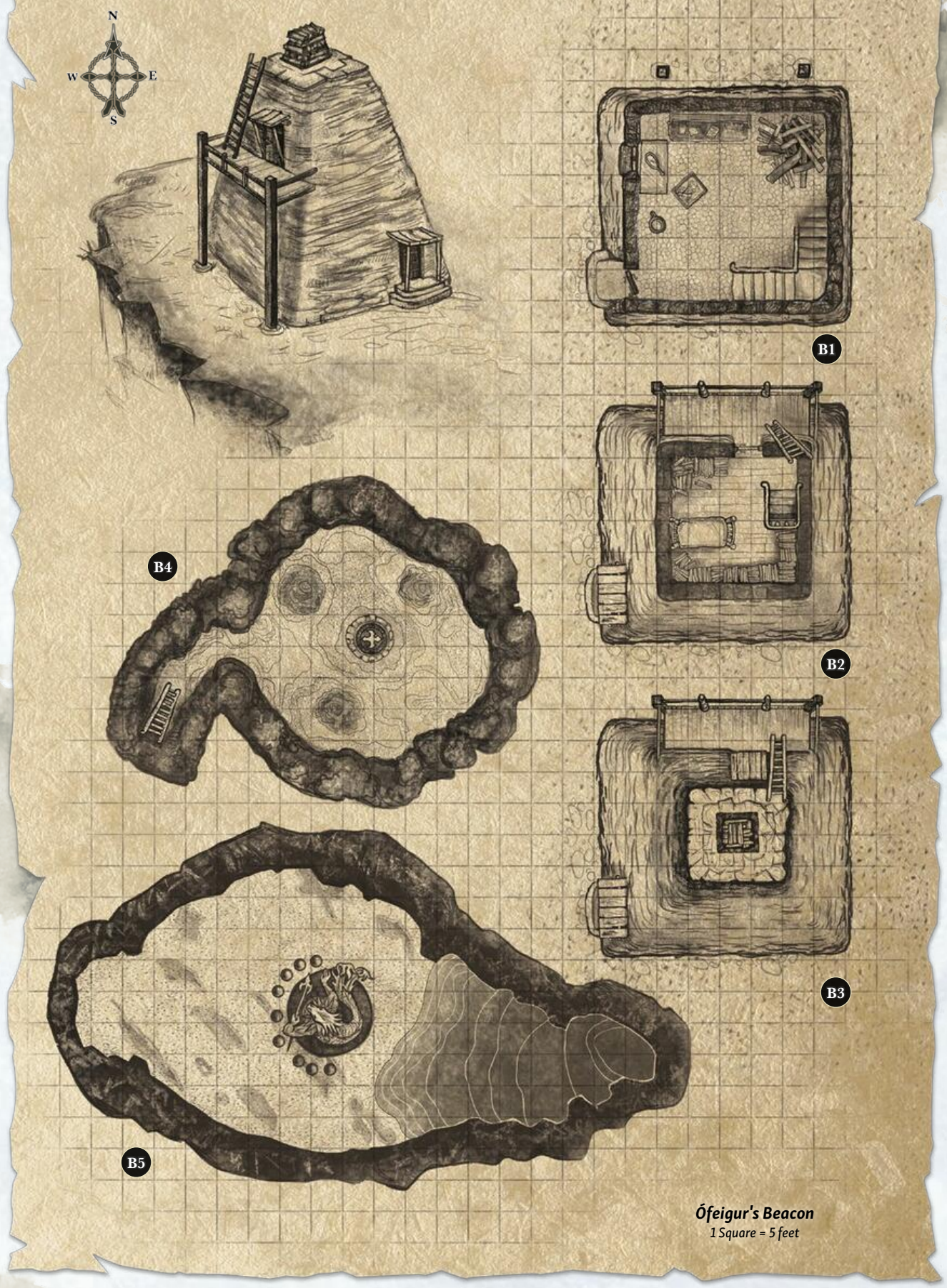
A ladder leads up to the ground floor (area B1). This area is described in **Quest: The Immortal Hermit** (see chapter 1).

The seal blocks the way to the sealed grotto (area B5) and can only be opened by the touch of a keppmir, or Ófeigur himself. The seal is immune to damage.

B5: Sealed Grotto

> *A large statue of an aquatic spearman is the centerpiece of this partially flooded grotto. Tide pools surround the base of the statue.*

This area is detailed in **Quest: Eggs Over Easy** (see chapter 1).



Ófeigur's Beacon
1 Square = 5 feet

Sheltering Wood

For 3rd-level characters

Content Warning: *Starvation, possession*

Bordering Ragvall Village is a dense and beautiful forest. While the presence of Sheltering Wood has done much for local villagers, it is a dangerous place. A former fey haven, the Sheltering Wood only maintains remnants of their shadows and moonlight.

The Sheltering Wood has many secrets and adventures waiting within its groves and fields and fjords. But there is fey magic that ensares and confuses mortals. If adventurers are not wary, they will never leave the Sheltering Wood alive.

Background

A character who makes an Intelligence (History) check and meets or exceeds the following DCs recalls information about this site. These are cumulative:

DC 5: Ragvall uses the Sheltering Wood for its many needs and resources.

DC 10: The Sheltering Wood earned its name for the fey who once made a home of it.

DC 15: Though the fey fled, they left a magic stone behind, making navigation difficult.

DC 20: Many fey were hunted to extinction by the Evergreen Enclave or captured for arcane experiments.

Sheltering Wood Features

This dungeon has the following features unless otherwise noted:

Light. This dungeon has various shades of natural light. In the mornings and afternoons, light filters through the thick pines, creating dim light. At night, even the moon barely pierces the canopy, resulting in darkness below the canopy.

Ceilings. The heights of the canopy vary per area. Each room is 30 feet tall unless stated otherwise.

Quests

The characters are guided to this dungeon in the following Events and Quests:

- **Event: Eyes in the Woods** (chapter 1)
- **Event: Elven Arrows** (chapter 1)
- **Event: The Elven-Thegn Appears** (chapter 1)
- **Quest: Night's Fanged Hunter** (chapter 1)
- **Quest: Beast of Bronze and White Fur** (chapter 1)
- **Quest: The Herald's Harbingers** (chapter 3)
- **Quest: Figure on the River Heilag** (chapter 3)
- **Quest: Traveler of the Álfavegr** (chapter 3)
- **Quest: Shadow of the Morfar Ash** (chapter 3)
- **Quest: Sheltered Horror** (chapter 4)

Exploring Off-Path

There are eight areas within the Sheltering Wood: W1 through W8 (see "Areas within the Wood," below). It's easy to travel along the old elk-paths and elven roads (areas W1 through W3).

However, the rest of the forest is a tangled mess of trails, cliffs, and gullies. Characters who wish to go beyond run the risk of getting lost and finding themselves in another area entirely.

Wandering. If the characters are exploring without a destination in mind, roll 1d8 whenever they wander into the woods. The result of this roll is the area (W1 through W8) that they reach. Finding their way to this location takes 1d4 hours.

Traveling to an Undiscovered Location. If the characters know of a place within the woods, but have never been there before, one of the one of the characters must make a DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check. On a success, they are able to follow known landmarks to get there. Finding their way to this location takes 1d4 hours. On a failure, they get lost; roll 1d8, the result of the roll is the area that they reach.

Traveling to a Discovered Location. If the characters are trying to get somewhere they've been before, one of the characters must make a DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check. On a success, they make it there without incident. On a failure, they get lost; roll 1d8, the result of the roll is the area that they reach.

Areas within the Wood

The following areas are keyed to the map of this location.

W1: Elgrleith Paths

> *While the paths from Ragvall Village are numerous, most are little more than trampled earth cutting between the thick pines. From here, many hunters search for elk to bring home. Crumbling stone arches adorned with elvish script lead into the darkness of the woods beyond.*

The encounters in this area differ depending on what season it is.

Spring. In springtime, there are no encounters here.

Autumn. In autumn, three Ragvallan hunters are combating an enraged **giant gasdra** (see appendix A) the first time the characters enter this area.

"Welcome! You have nothing to fear in our woods.
Drink of our water. Eat of our fruits and nuts.
Even hunt our animals if you dare."

- A wooden sign reportedly seen in the Sheltering Wood

W2: Heilag Shores

> *The river is cold and clear, the water swift and treacherous. It is here many hunters spear fish while being wary of hungry bears. The ruins of a small campsite are visible near the river. A rustling sound comes from overgrown camp.*

The encounters in this area differ depending on what season it is.

Spring. In springtime, this area holds the ruins of an old camp reclaimed by nature. A **meyana** and a **young meyana** (see appendix A for both) pick through the detritus. They are attracted by the unfamiliar scent of two *potions of healing* buried in the rubble, and attack anyone that disturbs them.

Autumn. In autumn, the camp is abandoned.

W3: Edge of the Álfavegr

> *Rough stone paths wind through thick underbrush, skirting the edge of a foreboding pine forest that is rumored to house xenophobic elves. Stone monoliths carved with elven glyphs loom amidst the boughs.*

These monuments are covered with elven mantras beseeching the gods for protection. They include:

- "Look down upon the children of the forest with grace, for the forest is no longer kind to its kin."
- "Grant my lost soul wisdom, for the boughs of the forest in this age are dark and unfamiliar, and its beasts wield steel claws."
- "The snow has grown harsher, and game dwindles. Gods, reveal unto us a place where we can be safe."

The encounters in this area differ depending on what season it is.

Spring. In springtime, there are no encounters here.

Autumn. A herd of twelve **poffers** (see appendix A) has made this area their home. After entering this area, any character that does not make a successful DC 13 Dexterity (Stealth) check awakens the poffers at the end of their turn. The poffers defend their territory, and flee when reduced to half their maximum hit points. One of the poffers wears a *circlet of blasting*, and accidentally uses it in battle (+5 to hit, targets three characters; *Hit:* 3d6 fire damage).

W4: The Wishing Pond

> *A pond waits in a quiet clearing. Faint motes of light drift across its surface, golden and calm. Despite the weather, it is unseasonably pleasant.*

As the former grove of a potent druid, the Wishing Pond is a restful place. Characters who take a short rest here roll the maximum amount on their hit dice. Characters who take a long rest here gain inspiration.

The GM may roll a d20 every time the characters stop here. On a natural 20, an intelligent salmon, beloved by the deceased druid, appear. Scarred and haunted, they are wary. A character who makes a successful DC 17 Charisma check (Persuasion) convinces the salmon to help mortals one last time. They answer three questions using the augury spell.

Once the salmon have been summoned, they will not reappear for 2d10 days.

Treasure. Powerful winds have knocked down enormous trees here. A salvage party from the village can be ordered to harvest 250 pounds of timber by the start of next week. This can only be done once.

W5: Elven Crossing

> *A stream cuts through the trees. A small wooden bridge spans it, no more than five feet wide and ten feet in length. Standing by the bridge is a creature, holding out a hand.*

A scrappy **puck** awaits payment to let characters cross the bride. Citing a dwindling presence of foot traffic, the pixie says it costs each person 100 gp to cross the bridge. There's fey magic barring the characters from walking around the bridge. Attempting to harm or walk past the pixie causes its **puck tree** and **puck shrub** bodyguards to appear and intimidate the party. (The game statistics for all creatures in this area appear in appendix A.)

Characters can attempt to bargain with the pixie; the DC for this Charisma (Persuasion or Deception) check starts at 12, but goes up by 1 every minute until the puck is satisfied.

W6: The Dire Den

> *A cliffside of dark stone opens to show the gaping mouth of a cave; inside, little light is seen. The air becomes alive with the grunts and howls of wolfen predators.*

Dire wolves live within this cave. Their massive size has made them a blight on nearby Ragvall. If the characters approach the mouth of the cave, four **dire wolves** emerge followed by their leader, a matriarch (a **dire wolf** with 40 hit points) with a scarred eye and arrows riddling her flank. A successful DC 16 Wisdom (Insight or Animal Handling) check reveals that these beasts are barely surviving; feeding them or removing the arrows from the matriarch's flank will endear them to the party.

If the party chooses to help them, when combat is initiated within the Sheltering Wood for the first time, a single dire wolf ally appears to aid them.

Treasure. Powerful winds have knocked down enormous trees here. If the wolves are eliminated from this area or befriended, a salvage party from the village can harvest 500 pounds of timber by the start of next week. This can only be done once.

W7: The Morfar Ash

A long, low stretch of lichen and moss are splayed across the roots of a massive, sprawling ash tree. The wind seems to carry whispered conversation, and across the ground are what look like grave markers.

Ancient bones are unnaturally well-preserved amidst the roots of these tree—each of which are as thick as a lesser tree's trunk. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check suggests that this was once the site of a great battle between elves, dwarves, and Valikan humans. None in Ragvall Village know anything about this battle, and a successful DC 20 Intelligence (History) check indicates that no clan has any record of this forgotten event.

Resting Near the Ash. The spirit of a dead dwarven archdruid resides in this tree (see **Quest: Shadow of the Morfar Ash** in chapter 3). A creature that finishes a long rest in this area has dreams where they wander through dark forests, assailed by visions of dying dwarves and creatures made of stone. A character can also speak directly with the ash's spirit by casting *speak with plants* while within 30 feet of it. The tree's spirit can answer any question about the goings-on within the Sheltering Wood, and can guide the characters to any location within the wood without a chance to get lost (see "Exploring Off-Path," above). However, it speaks in mystical-sounding riddles which the characters must make a successful DC 10 Intelligence or Wisdom check to unravel.

W8: Throne of the Blood Traitor

Here rises a misty circle of dark stones where the sun fears to tread. The stones beneath your feet glow with silvery fey runes, and shadows from unseen figures flit about the corner of your vision. A throne made of gleaming silver stands atop a dais; beneath the throne is a bed of gold and silver coins, and a wicked battleaxe. Upon the throne sits a wraithlike figure dressed in armor decorated with ivy vines.

The figure upon the silver throne is an elf named Ruiadhri Shinoff (LE, male, elf **ghost** with AC 18). He is restrained while he sits upon the throne and can't be moved by any means. Any creature that touches him or hits him with a melee attack takes 11 (2d10) psychic damage and must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be stunned for 1 minute. A creature can repeat this save at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

The Wraith on the Throne. Ruiadhri is known to the elves of this forest as the Blood Traitor, for long ago he betrayed his people in a battle against Valikan warriors. He has been imprisoned for so long, all he remembers is his own name and his hatred for his sister, Thegn Arduinna Shinoff, leader of the Evergreen Elves (see her character description in chapter 1).

Ruiadhri requests his freedom, claiming that the leader of the Evergreen Enclave betrayed him in days long past, and promises "a boon for those who mar the mark," and he points to one rune-carved stone that shines brighter than the others (see "Freeing the Traitor," below).

The Traitor's Tale. Ruiadhri remembers little of why he hates his sister and her people, but he is cunning enough to fabricate a sympathetic story about trying to broker a peace between Valikans and elves and dwarves. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that the story is a glib falsehood.

His Sister's Take. If Arduinna is asked about Ruiadhri, she snarls and says that she never wishes to hear of her traitorous brother again—and that such matters are an elven thing, not for Valikans to interfere with. She assures the characters they will suffer her wrath if they free him from his well-deserved imprisonment.

Freeing the Traitor. A successful DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana) check deduces that the rune-marked stone Ruiadri gestured to is the keystone holding this magic circle together. The magic circle that keeps Ruiadhri restrained to the silver throne is dispelled if a character casts *dispel magic* upon the stone or studies it for 1 minute and then makes a successful DC 19 Intelligence (Arcana) check.

Whosoever dispels the circle has an elven mark burned onto the back of the hand. This mark grants its bearer advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened and grants the ability to read and speak Elven and Sylvan. If an elf of the Evergreen Enclave sees this sigil, the elf instantly becomes hostile toward the characters.

Keeping the Traitor Sealed. If characters choose not to mar the mark, or attack Ruiadhri, he attempts to possess one

of them and escape in that way. He can use his Possession action to possess a Humanoid corpse within 30 feet of him, or a living Humanoid within 5 feet of him. Four **shadows** appear from the mist (if it's autumn, twelve **shadows** appear instead). These shadows are the ghostly remains of Ruiadhri's traitorous co-conspirators. They attempt to grapple a character and drag them to kneel before Ruiadhri so that he can possess them. Their touch drains a character's Strength, and a character whose Strength is reduced to 0 dies, likewise making them eligible for possession by Ruiadhri.

Defeat and Treasure. Ruiadhri and all his shadows vanish if Ruiadhri is reduced to 0 hit points. Also, the circle's glow fades, allowing the characters to claim the treasure beneath his throne:

- 300 gp, 200 sp
- A *viscious war axe* inscribed with an Elven sigil of binding (a war axe that deals an additional 2d6 slashing damage to its target when the wielder rolls a 20 on its attack roll)

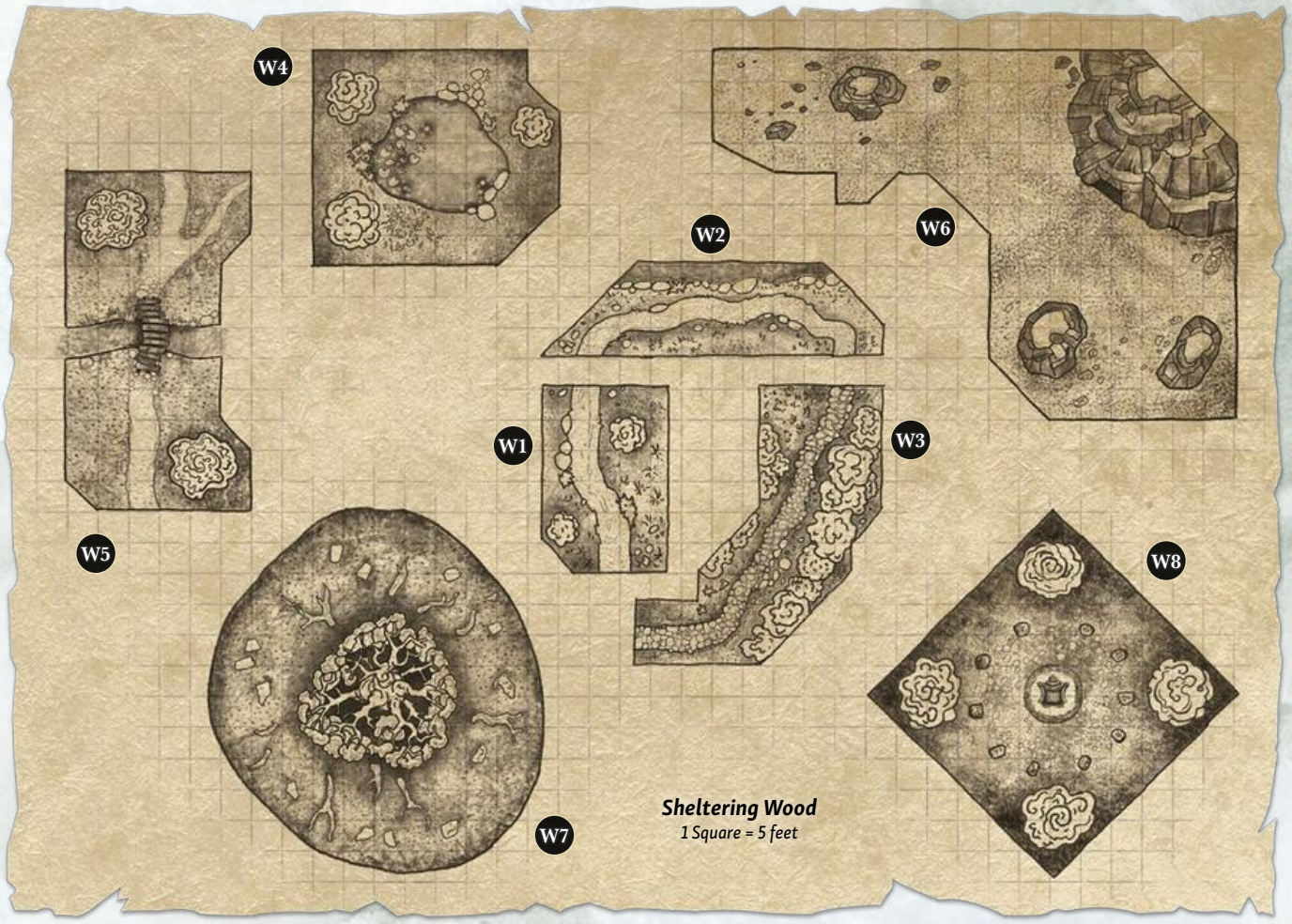
Calendar of the Seasons

Depending on how the characters resolved the Blood Traitor in area W8, mark one of the following outcomes on the Calendar of Seasons (see appendix C):

Blood Traitor Unleashed. The characters freed Ruiadhri. The vengeful spirit vanished into the dark woods, never to be seen by the characters again. However, Thegn Arduinna is killed in the first week of summer (if Ruiadhri was released in spring) or the first week of winter (if he was released in autumn). The Emerald Enclave becomes grim and insular, and can no longer provide any aid to the characters or to Clan Ragvall.

Bloody Hands. A character was possessed by Ruiadhri and escaped. Thegn Arduinna is killed, just as in "Blood Traitor Unleashed." The GM may decide that the character who was possessed is lost forever (or possibly becomes an enemy later in this story), and their player must make a new character. Alternatively, that character awakens a few weeks, covered in blood, standing over the corpse of Thegn Arduinna with no memory of the weeks during which they were possessed.

The Traitor Defeated. If Ruiadhri is reduced to 0 hit points, he reforms upon his throne after being tormented by daemons of the Underworld for a year and a day.



Snow's Respite Hot Springs

For 9th-level characters

Harsh Valika can have its pockets of respite. Several decades ago, three half-orcs found an abandoned red dragon's lair—a network of underground caverns and pools, still hot after the dragon's departure. These battle-scarred brawlers, done fighting, found comfort in Snow's Respite and fell in love. They've worked for a decade to make these springs a haven for the travelers of this land.

Yet in Etharis, no good deed goes unpunished. Three weeks ago, Snow's Respite became unstable: Monsters spawned of flame and soot known as mjorks awoke in response to a cosmic event that tore open a portal to Flamebourne, a realm of pure fire.

Background

A character that makes an Intelligence (History) check and meets or exceeds the following DCs recalls the following information:

DC 5: Snow's Respite is run by three half-orcs, who are romantic partners.

DC 10: Each of them is from a different Valikan clan.

DC 15: Ancient Valikan myth says that Snow's Respite is so warm because it was built atop the lair of a fiery dragon slain by the Seven Heroes in ancient times.

DC 20: The mythic dragon was known as Mjorkmaður, the Ashen Blizzard. Legends say she betrayed Lady Morakesh, Primordial of Fire, to serve Gormadraug. Those same legends say that one of her eggs never hatched and was left behind.

Quests

The characters are guided to this dungeon in **Quest: Afterburn** (see chapter 3).

Snow's Respite Features

This dungeon has the following features unless otherwise noted:

Light. This dungeon is lit by veins of magma along the walls and floor, which glow red. The dungeon is dimly lit.

Ceilings. The rooms of this dungeon are 120 feet high, its doors are 30 feet high, and its hallways are 30 feet high. Pools of water range from 5 feet deep to 60 feet deep.

Temperature. The rooms of this dungeon grow increasingly warm. In the Soothing Pools (area R2) and beyond, creatures that enter the room must succeed on a DC 8 Constitution saving throw or gain a level of exhaustion and take 5 (1d10) fire damage. The DC goes up by 3 for every room after. The fire damage increases by 1d10 for every room; you can't take this damage from entering a specific room more than once per hour.

> "Yeah, it may look dangerous but it ain't. I've snuck off here plenty to take a soak in the wonderful warm pools. Perfectly safe."
>
> *- The last person to use Snow's Respite*

Areas within Snow's Respite

The following areas are keyed to the map of this dungeon.

N1: Snow's Respite Welcome Hall

> *Two male half-orcs argue by the long, low cavern entrance. Behind them should be a soothing sight—but the many pools of the hot springs are empty.*

Shreve and Tulaan (both CN male half-orc **scouts**) introduce themselves to the characters, arguing about what to do; their partner, Kyli (NG female half-orc scout) went into the old lair earlier in the day and hasn't come back. Shreve wants to go in after her; Tulaan says they should wait. They offer the characters the following information:

- The pools are boiling at all hours.
- The old lair entrance was blocked off, but something has broken through.
- Tulaan saw a sinuous, snakelike shadow the other day and ran.

N2: Soothing Pools

> *A few dozen small pools sit before you in this massive cavern, each looking as though they could fit two to three people. They froth and bubble with heat.*

These dozens of small pools have become dangerous. A creature that falls in one takes 10 (4d4) fire damage. A character who makes a successful DC 18 Intelligence (Nature) check discerns that the lair must be active again, which would only happen if a dragon or its kin returned. A character who makes a successful DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check finds scorch marks on the ground, like that of a burning body or flaming tail moving across the stone.

N3: Salt Currents

> *Moving to the next chamber, the pools give way to a handful of long, deep pools of frothing water, better for laps than soaking. The back of the chamber glows brighter.*

While navigating these deeper pools, characters who make a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check will spot a dropped spear. A successful DC 18 Intelligence (Nature) check will determine some of the bubbles in the pools are actually air bubbles.

If a character jumps into the pool to investigate the spear, three **mjork sootling swarms** (see appendix A) burst out of the ground and attack the character while trying to stay out of the water. Characters who study the spear for at least 1 minute realize it belongs to Kyli.

At the end of the chamber, a creature can spend 1 minute pushing the rocks and make a DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check. On a success, the boulders are moved aside, revealing the entrance to the old lair.

N4: Outer Lair

> *Traveling down a long, dark tunnel, the tell-tale glow of magma can be seen. But this light is far brighter—far hotter. As you make your way deeper into the lava tubes, a rhythmic sound like crashing thunder reverberates from the depths.*

Two **mjork chargers** (see appendix A) are loudly butting heads to alleviate boredom while they guard their allies in the ancient dragon's lair, behind them. If the characters are spotted trying to enter, they cease their clashing and bellow, alerting the mjorks working their magic in the Abandoned Lair (area N5). They attack and fight to the death.

N5: Abandoned Nest

> *Veins of eerie magma light the vast cavern's interior. The light gleams upon hundreds of red scales littering the ground. In the center of the chamber is an egg as large as a hound, guarded by hulking beasts made of swirling flame and soot. Behind them, a crimson sliver, like a scar upon the very air, hisses with steam and smoke. Off to the side, an unconscious half-orc woman lies on the stone.*

One **mjork burner**, one **mjork asher**, and two **mjorks** (see appendix A for all) stand over a red dragon egg, crude runes alight beneath them. The mjork burner has an Intelligence score of 15 (+2) and can speak Valikan. It calls itself Surrof, and it intends to resurrect the unborn child of Mjorkmaður, the Ashen Blizzard. They tell the characters they were awakened by fate, and will transform the dragon's fossilized egg to make a dragon of their own—one of ash and flame.

A character that makes a successful DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check discerns that, while dragons have not been seen on Etharis since time immemorial, the elementals' ritual could well bring a dragon back into the world. If the characters attempt to take the egg and flee, the mjorks will pursue.

Child of Ash and Flame. During combat, the creature within the egg acts on initiative round 20. Once the creature makes a successful DC 20 Strength check, it breaks free, joining the characters in combat. This is a **red dragon wyrmling** with the following changes:

- Its creature type is Elemental, and it knows Ignan.
- Its AC is decreased to 15.
- It has a fire elemental's Fire Form, Illumination, and Water Susceptibility traits.

If characters heal Kyli, she rolls initiative and joins combat (she uses **veteran** statistics, but has no weapons), helping the characters repel the invaders.

Directly after the wyrmling's turn, a lair action occurs in the reawakened lair. The same lair action may not be used twice in a row:

- A burst of sulfuric gas erupts randomly from the ground within 60 feet of the wyrmling. Each creature within 20 feet of the eruption must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or take 21 (6d6) poison damage.
- A jet of steam bursts randomly from the walls or ground within 60 feet of the wyrmling in a line that is 30 feet long and 15 feet wide. Until the next lair action, a non-Elemental within the steam is blinded until moves out of the steam.

Fate of the Wyrmling. If the characters leave the wyrmling alive, it will exit through the rift. If the characters attempt to capture the wyrmling, it will retaliate and attempt to flee. The wyrmling can't be tamed, and burns through the bars of any cage made to hold it. If the characters somehow manage to contain it, it falls into a deep depression and its flame dwindles over 1d10 days until it finally dies.

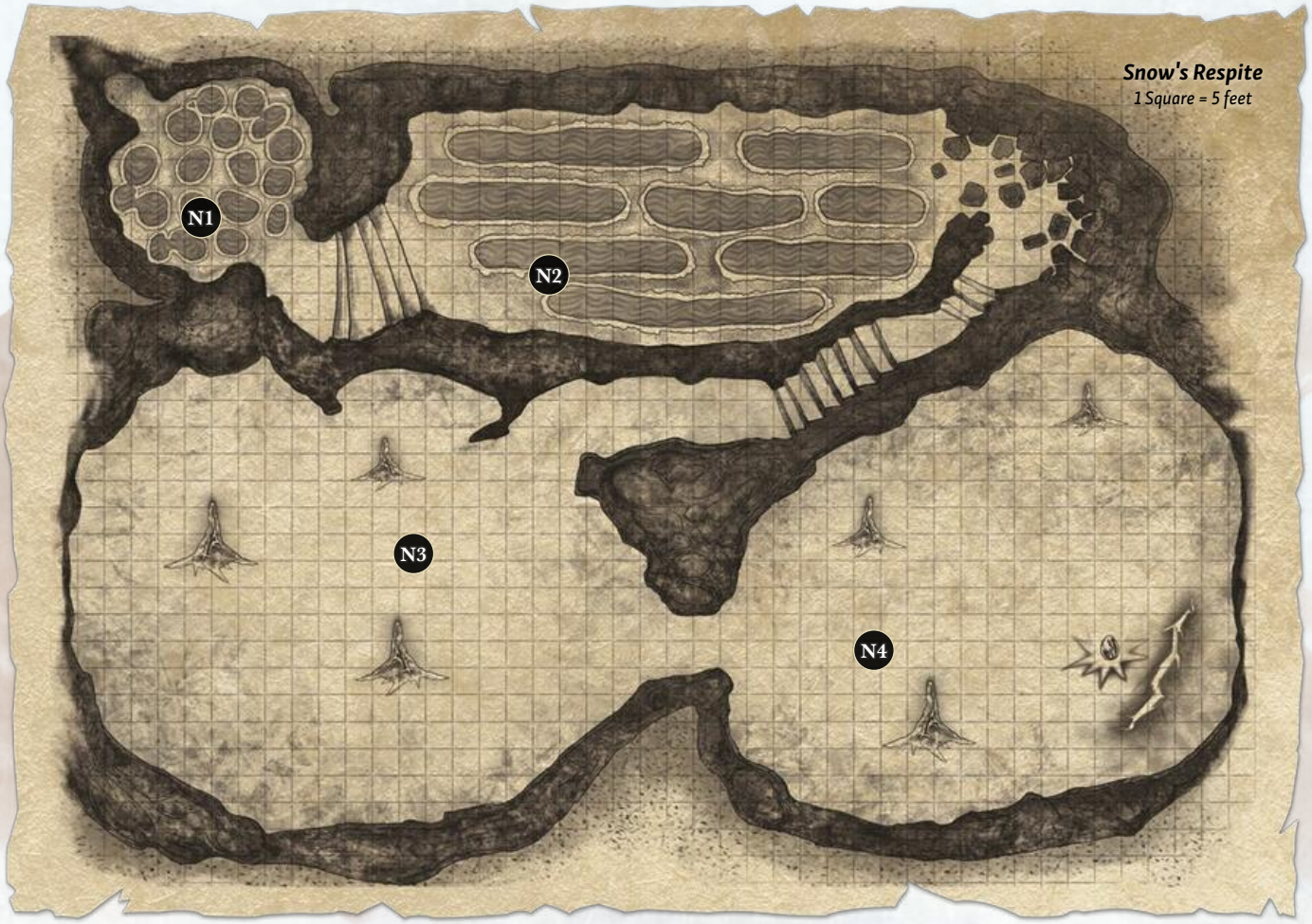
Closing the Rift. Once the wyrmling is either killed or returns through the rift, the unstable rift shudders and closes in a flash of flame. If the characters pass through the rift, they enter Flamebourne, an inhospitable realm of fire that will swiftly burn them to cinders and ash that will choke them until dead.

Until the rift is closed, 1d6 mjorks appear in area N5 at dawn of each day. Once the gate is closed, Snow's Respite returns to normal after 1d4 days. After this, the characters gain a new downtime option: resting at the springs. When the characters spend a week of downtime resting here, they all gain inspiration and 22 (4d10) temporary hit points. These temporary hit points don't vanish after 24 hours.

Treasure

The following treasure can be found on a successful DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check:

- 220 pp, 650 gp, and 150 sp
- A potion case containing 3 *flammable tinctures* and 3 *elixirs of elemental spittle* (see appendix B for both)



Steðihaugr, the Anvil-Barrow

For 5th-level characters

"Blades blunt. Steel cools. Flames gutter. Souls slumber." These words, rusted, rest on the iron door of Steðihaugr, the grave known as the Anvil-Barrow. The tomb is a place of honor among the Sýr of Valika, and it is where the legendary forgemaster Yngvarr Steðisson is buried amongst his trophies and his enchanted hammer, *Wyrmbreath*, which shaped many magical arms and tools for the chieftains of his clan.

The iron door is set into the weathered rock of an icy cliff, and the heavy metal has been sundered with claw marks, deep and smoking. Faint shrieking can be heard from within, like the winter wind screaming. Wraiths of Yngvarr Steðisson's foes have plunged into the tomb to claim his storied hammer, and they brook no competition in their tomb-robbing.

Background

A character who makes an Intelligence (History) check and meets or exceeds the following DCs recalls information about the site. These are cumulative:

DC 5: Yngvarr Steðisson was a Valikan blacksmith of great renown.

DC 10: He wielded an enchanted warhammer that could shrink into a smith's hammer.

DC 15: He encountered the fell dragon Gegazol in battle, claimed a scale from her rotten hide, and lived to tell the tale.

DC 20: He once used coldfire to light his forge, but realizing his mistake, sealed it away.

Quests

Claiming the treasure within this dungeon is one possible conclusion to **Quest: Tools of the Trade** (see chapter 1).

Steðihaugr Features

This dungeon has the following features unless otherwise noted:

Light. This dungeon has no natural light. Each room is lit by coldfire (see "Coldfire" in *Raider's Guide to Valika*) that burns in alcoves within the stone walls. The dungeon is dimly lit.

Ceilings. The rooms of this dungeon are 30 feet high; its doors are 10 feet high; and its hallways are also 10 feet high.

"Maybe coldfire can help me create tools to fight it."

- Yngvarr Steðisson

Areas within Steðihaugr

The following areas are keyed to the map of this dungeon.

S1: Hall of Cold Hearths

> *A long, dark chamber with ten unlit hearths on either side of the room descends before you. Each hearth contains nine skulls, each with a Valikan rune on its forehead meaning "vanquished."*

A character who searches the room for 1 minute and makes a successful DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check finds Valikan runes built into the floor. They read, "By the sight of Yngvarr's vanquished foes, tread with respect. To rob the Anvil-Barrow is to invite the hammer's blow."

Coldfire Elemental. Once a living creature has spent at least 1 minute in this room, all of the hearths burst into flickering, icy-blue flames—coldfire. A **fire elemental** of bright blue fire emerges from a hearth and attacks the intruders. It fights to the death or until all living creatures leave the barrow. Its attacks and traits deal cold damage instead of fire damage; this damage is coldfire and bypasses resistance to cold damage.

Five **torcheaters** (see appendix A) have made a home in the rafters. They emerge and use the Help action to grant the elemental advantage on attacks in hopes of drawing the elemental closer to them so they can consume it. When the elemental attacks a creature when helped in this way, it takes 5 (2d4) necrotic damage.

S2: Lycan's Row

> *This circular chamber holds lit torches at each cardinal direction, and. dominating this space are dozens of furs, skins, rugs, and pelts—all of them taken from various lycanthropes of Valika. The largest of these is a massive bearskin cloak, skull streaked with blood. A rune underneath reads, "Remains of Gnoroth the Timberking."*

Dozens of mannequins hold various types of lycanthrope remains. The largest is Gnoroth's, a werebear pelt that has been enchanted to become a cloak of protection.

Claiming the Cloak. The cloak is guarded by a poison-laced crossbow trap rigged to fire when the cloak is removed from its mannequin. A bolt fires from the mannequin's open mouth in a 30-foot line directly away from the statue. A creature in that area must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, it takes 3 (1d6) piercing damage and 10 (3d6) poison damage.

Disabling the Trap. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check spots the trap, and a successful DC 18 Dexterity check using thieves' tools disables it.

S3: Coldfire Containment

> *Ethereal light illuminates this chamber in a deep and chilling blue. Suspended in the middle of the room by dozens of heavy chains is a thick, glass box etched with runes; the glass looks like it is about to shatter. Within, pressed against all sides, is an undulating being of blue flame.*

A **coldfire ooze** (see appendix A) trapped in this runic containment box bristles as the party enters. A character who makes a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check discovers that the box is covered with fractures.

Once at least two characters enter this room, the agitated ooze smashes through the containment box, which has grown weak over the centuries. It moves toward a crack in the eastern wall; if it encounters a creature in its way, it makes a desperate attack as it seeks to escape.

Monster Salvage. If killed, this ooze can be salvaged and turned into a magical tincture. See the "Salvage" description in appendix A.

S4: Scourge's Scale

> *In the center of this room is a dragon's scale the size of a tower shield. It hovers, suspended and rotating slowly, in a column of silvery-blue light. Valikan runes read, "Gegazol, Scourge of the North, regrets little. She regrets meeting Yngvarr."*

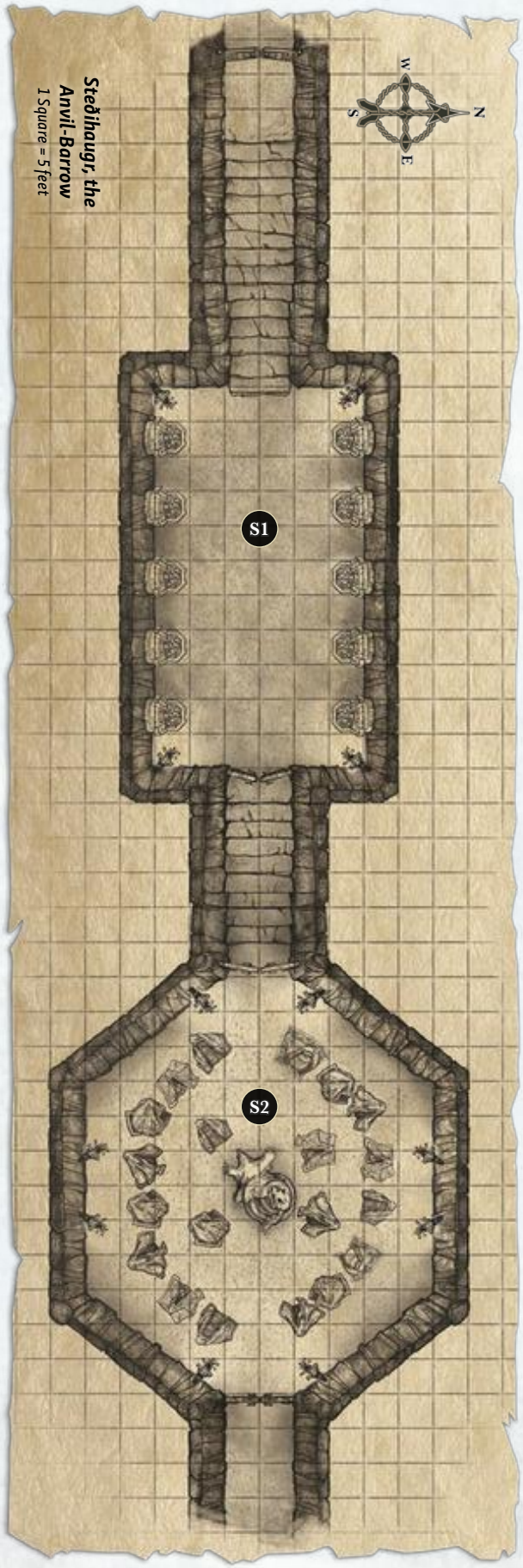
The room is frigid, colder than the others. In the presence of living intruders, four **animated flame tongues** (see appendix A) leap off the walls and attack living creatures in the room.

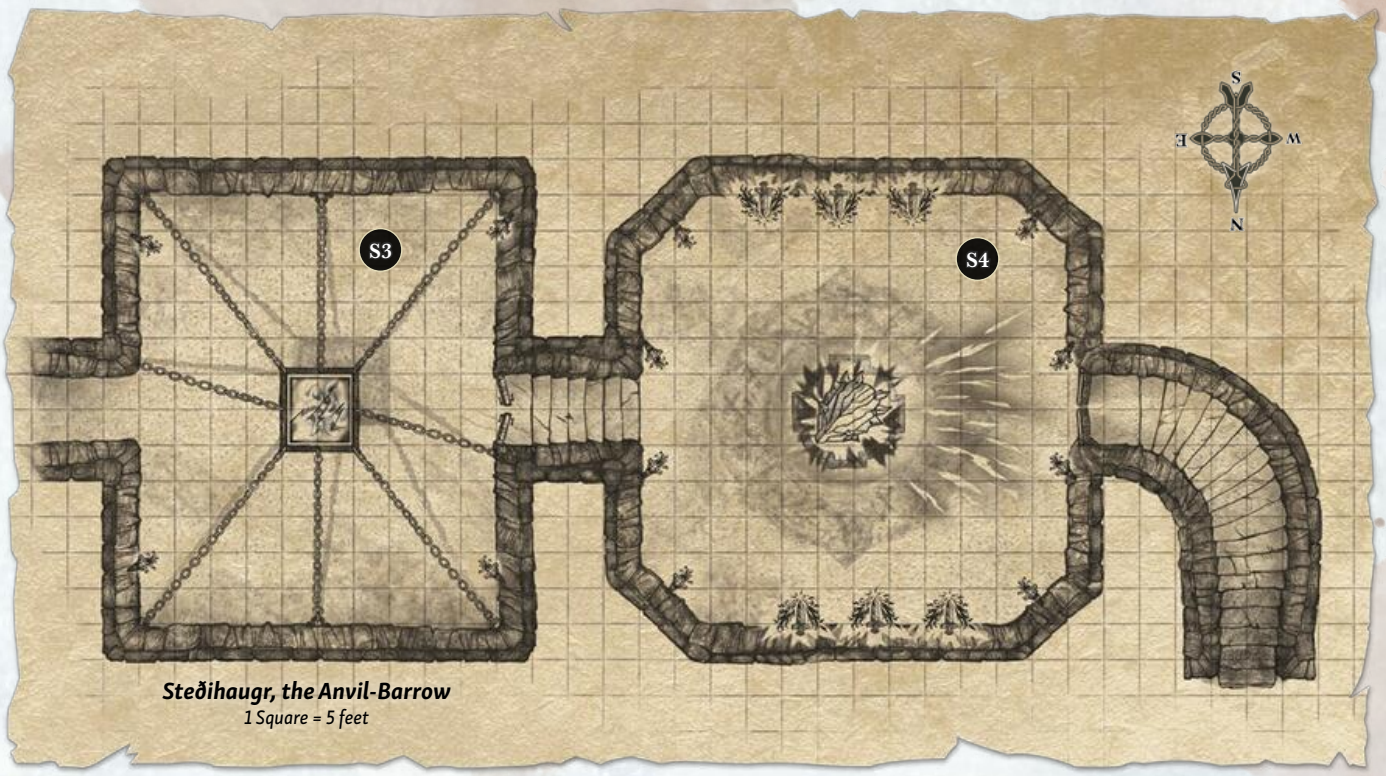
Monster Salvage. If killed, these swords can be salvaged and forged into magic weapons. See its "Salvage" description in appendix A.

Scale of Gegazol. In the center of the room is a *scale of Gegazol* (see appendix B). On the floor around it is a ring of eight magic runes. If the southern sigil and the northwestern sigil are marred simultaneously, the barrier vanishes. Otherwise, the runes instantly reform. A character who spends 1 minute examining the barrier and makes a successful DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check learns how to disable it.

"My craft is my life, but even I have to admit that nature makes some things far more powerful than even my skills can muster. Monsters are treasure troves."

- Yngvarr Steðisson





S5: Yngvarr's Rest

Standing at the center of this massive, circular stone room is the bronze likeness of a broad and sturdy dwarf, resplendent in thick armor and a horned helm. In its enclosed hands rests a beautiful warhammer, almost prismatic in the light. There are chests of gold and treasure scattered at the edges of the room. Two ghastly shadows float by this metallic coffin, wreathed in absorbed coldfire; the air around them burns with fire and death as they turn to see you enter.

Two spirits that burn with blue flame are attempting to wrest the magical warhammer from the grasp of Yngvarr's likeness. In sinister whispers, they say their bodies were destroyed by Yngvarr's creations and have come to take what is theirs. If the party attempts to stop them or ask for peace, the wraiths attack.

These two spirits are **wraiths** that burn with coldfire. They have the following changes:

- Their AC is 15.
- They are vulnerable to fire damage.
- Their Life Drain attack deals cold damage instead of necrotic damage.
- When a creature ends its turn within 10 feet of a wraith, it takes 5 (1d10) cold damage.
- Damage dealt by its attacks and traits ignore resistance to cold damage.

When the wraiths are put to rest, the hands of Yngvarr's likeness open; *Wyrmbreath* (see appendix B) is now free to take.

Treasure. This room has the following treasure hidden beneath the statue of Yngvarr; a creature must make a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check to move the statue:

- 20 platinum, 650 gold, 200 silver

The Wreck of the Blade-Blessed

For 8th-level characters

Content Warnings: Drowning

"A laneshi looks at a corpse and sees profit where others see grief." The necromancers of the depths are fearsome warriors on land or in sea. When a laneshi warband has set their sights on a prize, little will deter them. Such was the fate of the *Blade-Blessed*, a trading galley so named for the laneshi blade driven into its prow on its first voyage. Its blessing was not to last, however. The ship was ambushed by vengeful laneshi, and guided into the reefs.

What remains of the *Blade-Blessed* is dashed across the Teeth and crawling with laneshi led by a fearsome necromancer. These scavengers are dragging its cargo and crew beneath the waves and reclaiming the namesake blade. If the characters hope to avenge the *Blade-Blessed* and keep the Llana-Shi Empire from expanding its power, now is the time to strike.

Background

A character that makes an Intelligence (History) check and meets or exceeds the following DCs recalls the following information:

DC 5: The laneshi are a fearsome amphibious people that live in the deep sea.

DC 10: It is not uncommon for the laneshi to harry ships by the Teeth and assault them on raids.

DC 15: Laneshi necromancers are the true power of their empire. Their necromancers are all twins; one twin is ritually slaughtered and their soul grafted to the soul of the survivor to grant them power over undeath.

DC 20: Rumor has it that the *Blade-Blessed* earned its name from a laneshi blade driven into its hull. They say the blade houses the spirit of a murdered laneshi necromancer.

Quests

The characters are guided to this dungeon in **Quest: Ása's Lost Past** (see chapter 3).

Features of Blade-Blessed

This dungeon has the following features unless otherwise noted:

Light. This dungeon is in broad daylight for most of the adventure, with only G3 and G4 being in dim light. Otherwise, the dungeon is well-lit.

Ceilings. The rooms of this dungeon are 25 feet high, its doors are 10 feet high, and its hallways are 10 feet high.

Water. The water is 10 feet deep in F1, deepens to 30 feet deep in F2 and F3, and deepens further to 60 feet in F4 and F5.

Noise. Due to the high winds and the crash of waves, noise does not travel well. Voices cannot be heard more than 20 feet away.

Areas of the Blade-Blessed

The following areas are keyed to the map of this dungeon.

G1: Shoreline of the Teeth

> *Mighty pillars of jagged stone jut at odd angles. Debris and detritus lay across them, creating makeshift terrain as you move out further from shore. You hear rhythmic humming and burbling speech amidst the moans of the undead: sentries.*

This is difficult terrain as characters make their way from the shore across the wreckage here at the shore. A single **laneshi soldier** (see appendix A) sits in the water, with two **mud zombies** (see appendix A) standing on the last bits of shore. A successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check sees that the rest of the area is clear of enemies.

G2: Shattered Helm

> *The front of the massive trading galley has become wedged between two massive stones. A collection of laneshi warriors and two elemental humanoids are guarding a gaping hole in the belly of the ship.*

Two **panjaian alondons** (see appendix A) and two **laneshi soldiers** guard the gaping hole into the *Blade-Blessed.* They will attack any character on sight and have a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 14. If combat is initiated, one of the alondons will dive into the water and go to call for aid. Because of the weather, they must travel 90 feet away from the area, where they can flag the attention of the **laneshi soldiers** and **panjaian ilharan** (see appendix A) from G3.

Treasure. If characters make a successful DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation) check, they find several pouches of money totaling 340 gp, 109 sp, and 212 cp.

G3: Maze of Masts

> *The three mighty masts of the Blade-Blessed have fallen inward and collapsed, crushing the belly of the ship into a tangled maze of broken wood and unstable terrain. Above the mess, laneshi pick through the salvage and corpses.*

The entire web of detritus and shattered masts is difficult terrain. If the two **laneshi soldiers** and **panjaian ilharan** (see appendix A) were not called to aid in combat at G2, they walk what remains of the deck above the maze. They have a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 14.

Traversing the Wreckage. Characters must make three DC 16 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks to make their way through the wreck of masts. On a failure, a character takes 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage and must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity (Stealth) check or be spotted by the creatures above, who fire on them.

G4: The Cargo Cage

In the rear belly of the ship, the cargo room has become a network of broken wooden spurs and half-flooded chambers where bodies float and treasure are borne out to sea. There are several holes in the hull, and the floor is broken and unstable.

The former cargo hold of the ship has become a dangerous series of islands and rushing water. It takes a DC 17 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to make it from one patch of floor to the next. On a failure, a character must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or fall into the water (see below).

Falling Into the Water. A creature that falls into the water is immediately carried 15 feet to one of the holes in the hull. There is a rope ladder leading up to the rear of the deck. On a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check, the first character to fall into the water hears someone say, "She's in there! I can feel her in there. And I'll be the one to wrench her free!"

Treasure. The characters can make a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check while in F4. On a success, they find the following treasure:

- Two *potions of healing*
- A *hat of disguise*
- A *+1 shield*
- 800 gp and 300 sp

G5: Pale Coral's Cry

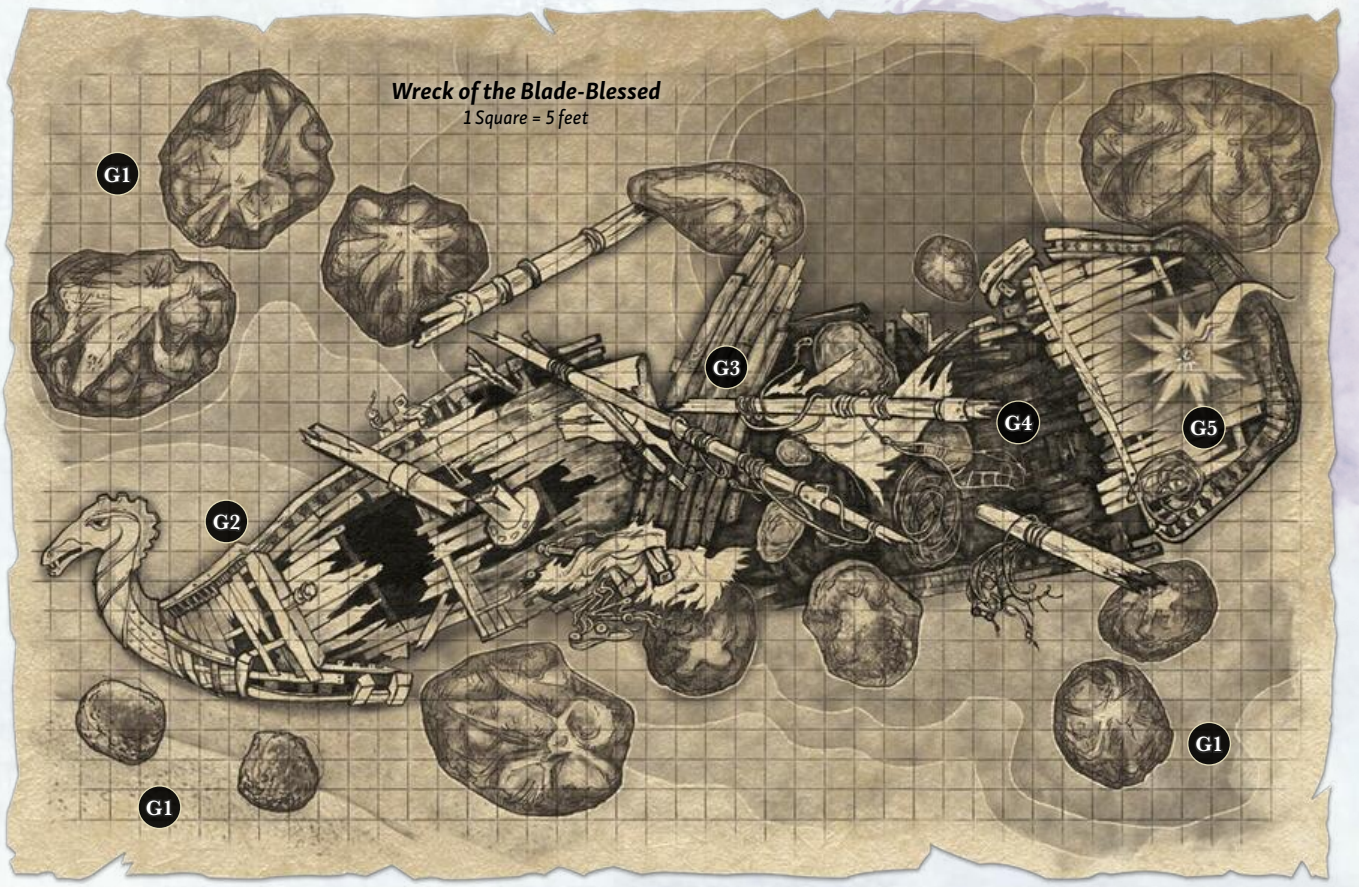
Emerging at the very rear of the wreckage, the laneshi blade that gave this destroyed ship its namesake glows with a pale and ethereal light, which drifts off of it like mist. A fearsome laneshi necromancer stands behind it, a ghostly echo hanging over her like a second shadow. Necromantic energy floods her eyes like ink, and with a cry, she begins to wrench the blade free.

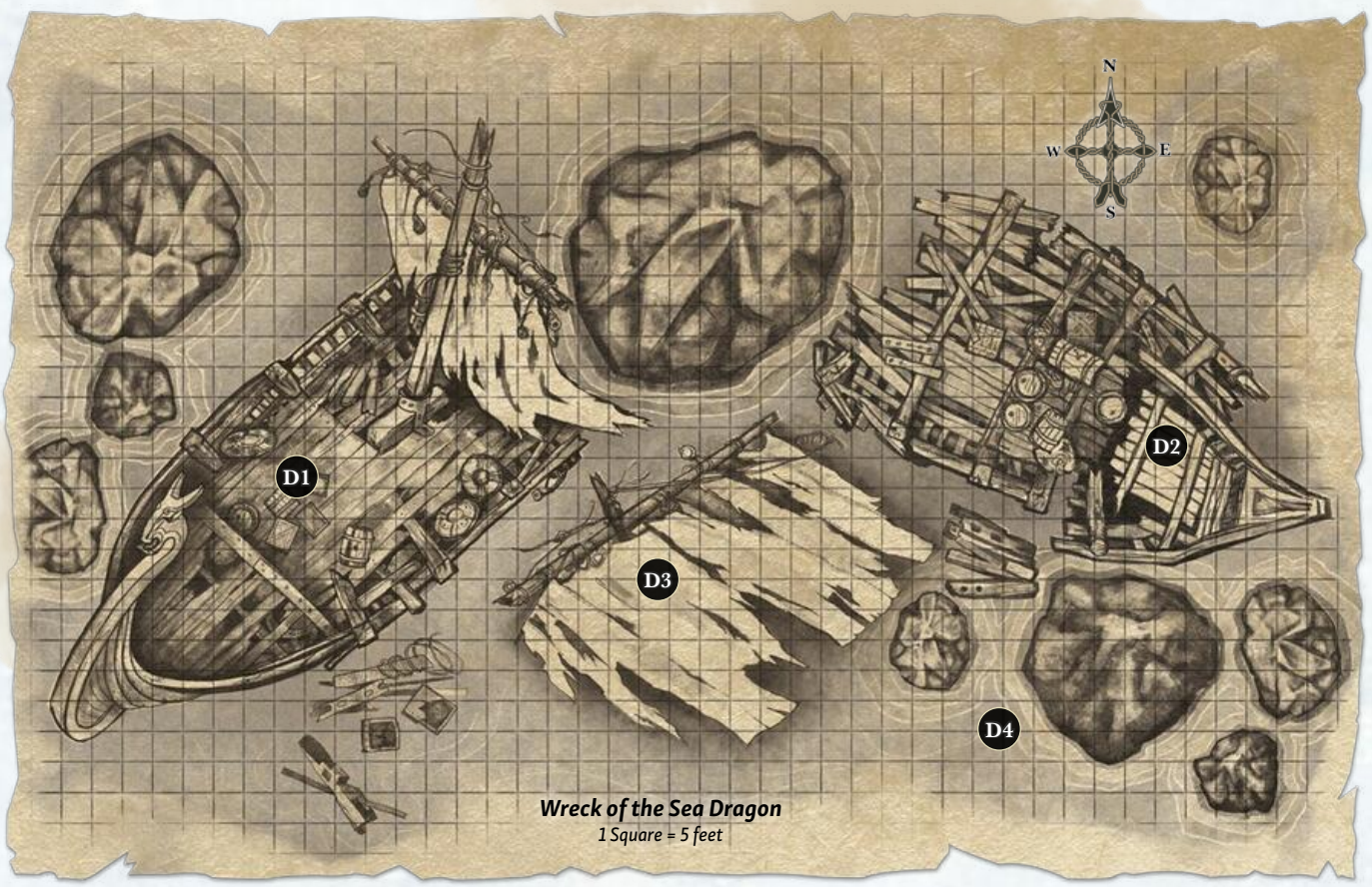
The **laneshi necromancer** (see appendix A) in charge of this salvage crew is attempting to wrest the ancient blade of her people free and consume the spirit within, adding to her power. Surrounded by **four laneshi soldiers** and **three shatter corpses** (see appendix A), the necromancer uses her bonus action every turn to make a DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana) check. After three successes, the blade slides free.

If Pale Coral Is Freed. If the necromancer wrests the blade free, the following changes occur to her statistics:

- Her AC increases by 2
- She gains resistance to necrotic and radiant damage
- She regains spell slots whose total level equal to her Intelligence (Arcana) bonus

Following combat, the spirit is gone from the blade, but *Pale Coral* (see appendix B) can be taken as treasure. Characters can also search F4 once more if they didn't do so the first time.





Wreck of the Sea Dragon
1 Square = 5 feet

Wreck of the Sea Dragon

For 8th-level characters; only appears if the Ragvall Village lighthouse keeper was killed

A mighty Thrull warship called the *Sea Dragon*, laden with treasure and warriors was hiding in the Teeth to avoid a pursuing vessel, which was trying to poach their treasures. However, as they were trying to depart from their hiding place, they ran aground on the rocks and the ship was split in twain. Now, opportunistic keppmir are picking the wreck of the ship clean.

Background

A character that makes an Intelligence (History) check and meets or exceeds the following DCs recalls the following information:

DC 5: This ship was split in two when it smashed at full speed into the sharp rocks of the Teeth.

DC 10: This ship is a massive Thrull warship that could hold hundreds of warriors.

DC 15: Fisherfolk from the Teeth have often reported attacks from fish-like humanoids called keppmir.

DC 20: Legends tell of a mighty creature named Bigirsten, which prowled the Teeth and sunk dozens of ships in ancient times.

Sea Dragon Features

This dungeon has the following features unless otherwise noted:

Light. The ship is outdoors, and is lit naturally depending on the time of day.

Ceilings. The interior areas of the ship have cramped ceilings that are six feet high.

Sound. Sound echoes on the water; if combat breaks out above water, all keppmir above water hear it. Likewise, an underwater battle is heard by all underwater keppmir.

Invaders. The wreck of the *Sea Dragon* is currently being looted by ten **keppmir stalkers** (see appendix A) with the following additional spells that raise their challenge rating to 3 (700 XP):

Innate Spellcasting. The keppmir stalker's innate spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 11). The keppmir stalker can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *entangle, hellish rebuke*
1/day (each): *gaseous form, suffocate*

Ticking Clock. An armored sea drake named Bigirsten (see area D4) was slumbering here when the Sea Dragon wrecked on the rocks. It is awake and trying to ignore the annoying keppmir. However, the arrival of the characters only annoys it further. Once 10 minutes pass after the characters enter area D1, Bigirsten rises from the depths and attacks everything it can see.

Quests

The characters are guided to this dungeon in **Quest: Shipwreck** (see chapter 3).

Areas of the Sea Dragon

The following areas are keyed to the map of this dungeon.

D1: Prow End

The characters arrive at the sunken longship floating in the waves near Ófeigur's Beacon.

> *Crashing waves wash against the rocks, shifting the wreckage back and forth with the tides. Among the smell of salt and fish, an odor of rotten meat and the sound of guttural Valikan is carried on the wind. The salty air is unseasonably warmer than expected.*

The broken bow of the longship hides two **keppmir stalkers** under its canopy. The characters can detect them with a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check. In addition to the keppmir, two corpses, a male human and half-elf, are found tightly embracing. They are wearing ornately engraved matching silver rings worth 5 gp.

Examining the corpses and succeeding on a DC 14 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals they died by drowning and not from the keppmir.

D2: Stern End

Four **keppmir stalkers** are looting this area, carrying off a carved cedar hope chest filled with fine linen undergarments, ten yards of embroidered silk, two silver candlesticks, and a satin tablecloth embroidered with gold thread. These trade supplies are worth a total of 500 gp. They are passing the chest to two additional **keppmir stalkers** beneath the waves.

There is also a small box full of dried herbs and tiny bones. A successful DC 12 (Arcana or Nature) check identifies them as ingredients for healing potions and spell components.

D3: Fallen Mast

The mast is charred and the flag is partially burned, revealing it was struck by lightning. Beneath the mast, two **keppmir stalkers** are dragging down an empty crib. Inside the crib is a silver rattle (worth 10 gp) and a tiny water-logged silken pillow.

D4: Deadly Rocks

The rocks surrounding the wreck are as they appear. The central rock, however, is the top of an ornery, recently awakened sea drake named Bigirsten. Bigirsten is furious if bothered and hostile to all. Bigirsten awakens if anyone stands on them or hits them with a weapon. This enormous, serpentine sea drake has thick armored scales; it uses the statistics of a **dragon turtle** with the following additional trait:

Magic Resistance. The armored sea drake has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Once awakened, Bigirsten attacks all creatures around it, keppmir or otherwise, until all are dead or it is reduced to half its hit point maximum. At that point, it dives beneath the water and swims away.

Appendix A:

NEW CREATURES AND NPCS

This section contains the lore and game statistics for the monsters and NPCs found in this adventure that aren't from the fifth edition core rules. They are new to this adventure (*), or from *Grim Hollow: The Monster Grimoire* (†).

- CR 0 Frostbite Fox †
- CR 0 Svangras †
- CR 0 Torcheater †
- CR 1/8 Poffer †
- CR 1/4 Keppmir †
- CR 1/4 Mjork Sootling †
- CR 1/2 Hungerer Wolf †
- CR 1/2 Puck Shrub †
- CR 1/2 Young Meyana †
- CR 1 Gasdra†
- CR 1 Hungerer Elk †
- CR 1 Keppmir Stalker †
- CR 1 Rime Hunger †
- CR 1 Shatter Corpse †
- CR 1 Tangle Weed †
- CR 1 Whelmer †
- CR 2 Puck †
- CR 2 Animated Flame Tongue †
- CR 2 Laneshi Soldier †
- CR 2 Meyana †
- CR 2 Mjork Sootling Swarm †
- CR 2 Mud Zombie †
- CR 3 Mjork †
- CR 3 Panjaian Alondon †
- CR 3 Panjaian Ilharan †
- CR 4 Bloodbonded †
- CR 4 Sky Drake †
- CR 5 Coldfire Ooze †
- CR 5 Gondul Grindalsdóttir *
- CR 5 Hrafen av Skeir *
- CR 5 Puck Tree †
- CR 6 Alvíss av Dvergholt *
- CR 6 Laneshi Necromancer †
- CR 6 Mjork Asher †
- CR 6 Mjork Burner †
- CR 6 Panjaian Gormadraugon †
- CR 6 Seaborn Troll †
- CR 7 Mjork Charger †
- CR 8 Prismatic Drake †
- CR 8 Deathmoss †
- CR 8 Seaborn Troll Fogcaller †
- CR 11 Candlelight Daemon †
- CR 11 Jarl Grimskjelle *
- CR 13 Coldfire Premonition *
- CR 14 Aspect of Venin *

Alvíss av Dvergholt

Medium Humanoid (Dwarf), Neutral

Armor Class 11 (16 with *barkskin*)
Hit Points 97 (15d8 + 30)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	11 (+0)

Skills Medicine +7, Nature +4, Perception +7
Damage Resistances poison
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Druidic, Dwarvish, Valiki
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Dwarven Resilience. Alvíss has advantage on saving throws against being poisoned.

Actions

Shillelagh Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. This damage is magical.

Stonespur (3/Day). Alvíss causes a blunt spike of stone, roughly 1 foot wide and 15 feet long, to erupt from the ground at a point he chooses within 60 feet. Each creature hit by the spur must make a DC 15 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage and is pushed 20 feet away from the spur in a direction of Alvíss's choice. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't pushed. The spur then cracks and falls apart.

Spellcasting. Alvíss casts one of the following spells; Wisdom is his spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks):

At will: *druidcraft, produce flame*
2/day each: *cure wounds* (at 3rd level), *stone shape*, *thunderwave* (at 3rd level)
1/day each: *barkskin*, *heat metal* (at 4th level)

Reactions

Diamondskin (1/Day). As a reaction to taking damage of any type except psychic, Alvíss gains resistance to it until the end of his next turn.

If the damage he took was bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage, he instead gains immunity to it until the end of his next turn.

Alvíss av Dvergholt

This surly dwarf has lived in the woods at the edge of the Akkeri Bay for decades. He was not pleased to see a group of Valikans settle on his shore, led by the infamous raid leader Hrafen av Skeir.

Alvíss is a druid of an order that practiced the ancient ways of the Stoneraisers (see chapter 3 of *Raider's Guide to Valika*). However, his fellow druids and much of his family were slaughtered by Valikan raiders two centuries ago. Alvíss has since traveled to the Akkeri Bay to nurture and protect a tree called the Morfar Ash, which contains the spirit of his archdruid.

More of Alvíss's background is discussed in his profile in chapter 1 of this adventure.

Animated Flame Tongue

"A sword that flies around by itself is already quite frightening. Adding fire to the mix sure doesn't make it better."

Flourishing Blades. Infused with arcane life, animated flame tongues dance through the air leaving trails of embers behind them as they seek foes to slay. Animated flame tongues fight with the skill of a seasoned duelist.

Honorbound. Animated flame tongues can be created in many ways, but the most common way is when a magical sword's attuned wielder is killed with magical fire. The sword becomes mobile and semi-sentient, seeking to defeat those who killed its master, and anyone who uses magic to destroy life. This makes animated flame tongues a particular risk to those who wield magic.

Constructed Nature. An animated flame tongue doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep. The magic that animates an animated flame tongue is dispelled when the construct drops to 0 hit points. An animated flame tongue reduced to 0 hit points becomes inanimate and is too damaged to be of much use or value to anyone.

Salvage

The animated flame tongue is made from an enchanted metal. Someone who collects four animated flame tongues can craft a *+1 longsword* This requires a proficient weaponsmith to succeed on a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check after working for 24 hours and using 250 gp of components. It's rumored that the longswords can be turned into flame tongues again with the proper ritual, but no one has confirmed those rumors yet.

Animated Flame Tongue

Small Construct, Unaligned

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 31 (9d6)
Speed 0 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	5 (-3)	1 (-5)

Saving Throws Dex +5
Damage Resistances fire
Damage Immunities poison, psychic
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned
Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 7
Languages —
Challenge 2 (450 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Antimagic Susceptibility. The flame tongue is incapacitated while in the area of an *antimagic field*. If targeted by *dispel magic*, the flame tongue must succeed on a Constitution saving throw against the caster's spell save DC or fall unconscious for 1 minute.

False Appearance. While the flame tongue remains motionless and isn't flying, it is indistinguishable from a normal sword.

Magic Weapons. The flame tongue's weapon attacks are magical.

Actions

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack*: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit*: 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage and 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Frenzy (1/Day). The animated flame tongue strikes out in a series of wild attacks against a single creature. The animated flame tongue makes three longsword attacks against a single target.

Reactions

Parry and Riposte. The animated flame tongue adds 3 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. If the attack misses, the animated flame tongue can make one melee attack against the attacker if it is within reach.

Lore

DC 10 Intelligence (Nature): The animated flame tongue is resistant to fire damage.
DC 15 Intelligence (History): An animated flame tongue's attacks are magical.
DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana): An animated flame tongue can be rendered incapacitated by the *dispel magic* spell.

Aspect of Venin

The Arch Daemon Venin is a being of supernatural deceit. She seeks to undermine mortals by tricking them into false ideologies and illusory goals. She relishes the lies people tell themselves to justify depravity and cruelty. Venin's followers gain great skill in illusions and convincing others of their versions of the truth, but eventually they lose all sense of what is real and what is not.

Hand-Crafted Aspects. Venin rarely appears upon the face of Etharis herself. She prefers to lurk in her domain of shadows within the Netherworld. When she desires to take an active role on Etharis, typically to create a theater of chaos among the mortal peoples for her own amusement, she manifests an aspect. This aspect is a shapeshifting puppet of her will crafted out of daemonic magic, which she can cast into Etharis and control as if it were her own body. An aspect can't return to the Netherworld; it can only be destroyed—either by truly powerful mortals, or at Venin's own whim.

Cost of an Extraplanar Journey. Creating an aspect and sending it to Etharis costs Venin a great deal of energy, and she can only conjure the power to do so—without harm to her true self—once every year and a day.

Appearance. Venin's aspect is a shapeshifter. However, the Arch Daemon is vain enough to typically give her aspect a pleasing appearance. Her favored appearance this year is that of a tall, pale-skinned human woman in a black dress that twinkles like the night sky. Her eyelids are decorated with gold, with a deep blue iris surrounding a blood-red pupil. She shrouds herself in a fur-lined cloak so black that it's unclear where her long, black hair ends and her garb begins.

Aspect of Venin

Medium Fiend (Daemon), Chaotic Evil

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)
Hit Points 130 (20d8 + 40)
Speed 40 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	25 (+7)	15 (+2)	19 (+4)	23 (+6)	30 (+10)

Skills Arcana +9, Deception +20, Sleight of Hand +12, Stealth +17
Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages All, Telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 14 (11,500 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +5

Creature of Shadow. Venin can sense all areas of dim light or darkness within 1 mile of her aspect. Additionally, she becomes invisible when she enters an area of darkness. Any creature that can see the area of darkness she's hiding in can make a DC 25 Wisdom (Perception) check as a reaction. On a success, that creature gains the ability to see her until Venin's aspect moves to a new area of darkness. A creature can also make this check as an action on each of its turns. Her invisibility ends when she hits a creature with a weapon attack or leaves the area of darkness she is hiding in.

Daemonic Glibness. When Venin makes a Charisma (Deception) check, the result can't be lower than 35. Additionally, even if she is lying, magic that determines if Venin is telling the truth always indicates that she is being truthful.

Discorporation. When reduced to 0 hit points, Venin's aspect dissolves into a hissing pool of inky, sulfur-smelling ichor. Venin can also discorporate her aspect as an action. After discorporating, Venin can't send another aspect to Etharis for a year and a day.

Shadow Blade (1/Turn). When Venin hits a creature that can't see her with a melee weapon attack, she can cause the creature to take an additional 28 (8d6) necrotic damage.

GM Advice: Description is everything when transforming a monster from a collection of game stats to a formidable foe. Does the Aspect of Venin's evil manifest so strongly that her mere presence causes the air to become frigid and plants to wither and die? Does her honeyed voice supernaturally echo as if a greater being speaks through her? Do her attacks cause veins to turn black as icy darkness spreads beneath the skin? These small details will help the Aspect of Venin stand out from other monster encounters and seem truly daemonic.

Actions

Multiattack. Venin makes three Morphic Blade attacks.

Morphic Blade. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft. or range 30/90 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (3d8 + 7) piercing damage. If this was a melee attack, it can deal extra damage (see her Shadow Blade trait).

Change Shape. Venin can transform her aspect into a Small, Medium, or Large Humanoid of any description. Her statistics, other than her size, are the same in each form. She can also conjure or dismiss any nonmagical clothing or equipment as part of this transformation. Any items created in this way dissolve into black, sulfur-smelling ichor when removed from her person.

Invoke Banished Desire. Venin enhances the allure of evil thoughts which the mortals around her have chosen not to act upon. Up to 20 Humanoids that aren't hostile toward Venin within 120 feet of her must make a DC 21 Charisma saving throw. On a failure, a creature is charmed by her for 1 minute, and follows her commands to the best of its ability.

Shadow Pool. Venin creates a 20-foot-radius dome of magical darkness centered on herself. Each other creature in the area when the dome appears must succeed on a DC 23 Constitution saving throw or take 22 (4d10) necrotic damage. This area of darkness remains for 1 minute. Venin can't have more than three areas of darkness active at once; if she uses this action again, one area of her choice vanishes.

Bonus Actions

Umbral Stride. While in an area of dim light or darkness, Venin's aspect can teleport to another area of dim light or darkness she can sense.

Legendary Actions

Venin can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Venin regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

Hide. Venin makes a Dexterity (Stealth) check. If she's in an area of dim light or darkness, she becomes invisible (see her Creature of Shadow trait).
Shadow Pool (Costs 2 Actions). Venin uses her Shadow Pool action.
Mirror Form (Costs 3 Actions). If Venin is not invisible, she creates three illusory copies of her body. These copies occupy three spaces of her choice that she can see within 30 feet of her. She can choose to swap places with any of these copies when they appear, as part of this legendary action. The copies have the same AC as her, and 1 hit point. A copy vanishes if reduced to 0 hit points, or if Venin turns invisible.

Bloodbonded

"Those who've turned their back on both the Seraphs and the Daemons? That way lies madness."

Disheveled Priests. A bloodbonded, at first glance, appears as an acolyte of an Arch Seraph whose vestments and robes are in disrepair. A closer look reveals a maimed body covered in pulsing red markings, generally missing an arm or even a leg. Angelic markings on the skin are replaced with nonsensical runes and patterns, meticulously scrawled in overlapping ways.

Justice Misled. Bloodbonded are the unique consequence of one of the Arch Daemon Venin's more elegant deceptions. Sometimes, when a particularly prayerful penitent beseeches Arch Seraph Solyma for guidance, Venin answers. The penitent, believing they hear the call of their angelic lady, drinks deeply of the cup of pride that they alone can hear the words of Solyma.

Irredeemable Apostates. Inevitably, Venin's twisted words demand horrible deeds: dark murder under the guise of justice, humanoid sacrifice under the veil of restoring balance, or self-mutilation as a penance for sins. Venin then reveals his lies to seal the fate of the deceived. Sometimes, these cheated creatures become devotees of Venin, seeing in his tricks the power they sought in justice. Others are torn by their misplaced devotion, renouncing the dark acts and terrible deeds too late. They lose their humanity and the divine powers they were once the sacred (or profane) keepers of.

Manipulative Leaders. The bloodbonded are mad, twisted, and hungry for the power and direction. To regain that power, they promise other desperate souls happiness, power, or vengeance. They gather a cult of the gullible, desperate, or weak, dominating the common folk and making ever-greater demands on their lives and sanities.

Running on Empty. The power of the bloodbonded comes from their own lifeblood and the residue of power left there by the enchantments they willingly bore and so suddenly renounced.

Salvage

Bloodbonded still possess the damaged and scarred remnants of their past devotions. When a bloodbonded dies, its blood still pulses and gives off light as it did when it was alive. One vial of this blood can be harvested from a single bloodbonded with a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Medicine) check. Drinking it within one day causes the user to be under the effect of a *bless* spell. When the spell ends, the user suffers one level of exhaustion.

Lore

DC 10 Intelligence (History): Bloodbonded are victims of their own foolish choices, worshipping false gods and then being driven mad by the ruse.

DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana): Bloodbonded use their followers as weapons, even causing them to explode in a wave of fiery blood, which damages nearby creatures.

Bloodbonded

Medium Monstrosity, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class 16 (studded leather, shield)
Hit Points 66 (12d8+12) (or +24 if missing a leg)
Speed 30 ft. (or 10 ft. if missing a leg)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	7 (-2)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Con +3, Wis +0
Skills Deception +6, Persuasion, +6, Insight +0
Damage Resistances necrotic, radiant
Damage Vulnerability psychic
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses passive Perception 8
Languages Celestial, Infernal, one national language
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Bloody Inspiration. As a bonus action, the bloodbonded can inspire an ally within 30 feet to an enraged state of bloodlust for one minute. These followers gain 5 temporary hp, resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage, and vulnerability to psychic damage. All attacks made by the bloodbonded followers are reckless, gaining advantage to hit enemies but granting enemies advantage to hit them in turn.

Resolute Followers. Allies of the bloodbonded within 60 feet of it have advantage on Charisma and Wisdom saving throws.

Actions

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

Rage Bomb (2/Day). As a bonus action, the bloodbonded can infuse one of its bloodbonded followers who is under the effects of Bloody Inspiration with a fatal fury. This magic causes the follower to foam bloodily at the mouth. If the follower is not slain before the start of the bloodbonded's next turn, the follower dies and explodes in a shower of superheated blood. Creatures within 10 feet must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 12 (2d8+3) fire damage on a failure and taking half damage on a success.

Blood Boil. The bloodbonded targets a creature it can see within 60 feet and utters words of madness. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or take 9 (2d8) fire damage as its blood superheats. The bloodbonded must be able to speak to use this ability.

Reactions

Loyal Followers. When a bloodbonded would take damage from a melee or ranged attack it can see that targets only the bloodbonded, it can use its reaction to call on one of its followers within 5 feet to take the damage instead.

Candlelight Daemon

"A candlelight daemon remains for the duration of a cursed candle's flame. That's long enough for a host of sinister deeds."

Candle Bound. The candlelight daemon can be summoned only by the lighting of a specially prepared candle, and then only at night. Once the candle is snuffed or burns out, the daemon must return to the Netherworld. But such daemons can do their job in a short time.

Despicable Cost. To create a candle to summon a candlelight daemon, a spellcaster must make a candle during the new moon using the rendered fat of one murderer, the ashes of three humanoids who burned alive, and the blood of thirteen cats. The caster must also expend a 6th-level spell slot.

Salvage

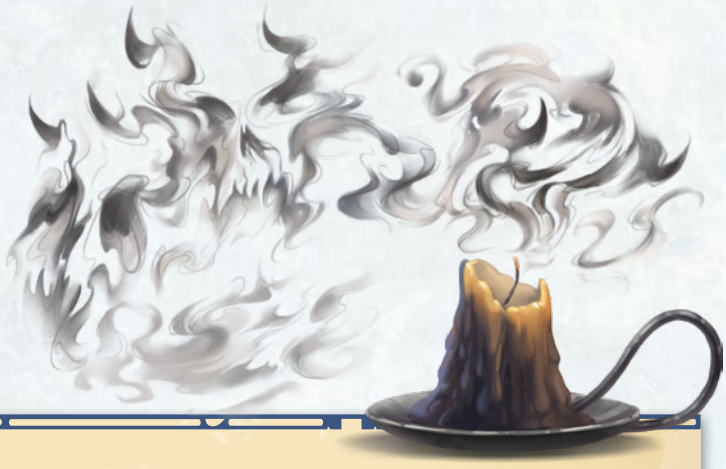
The melted leavings of a candlelight daemon's candle act as *oil of sharpness* against aberrations, celestials, fey, and fiends, as well as against the creature that created the candle.

Lore

DC 10 Intelligence (Religion): Candlelight daemons return to the Netherworld if their candle goes out.

DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana): Candlelight daemons have immunities and resistances typical of fiends, including immunity to poison and resistance to cold, fire, lightning, and nonmagical weapon attacks. The daemon is also resistant to magic and capable of countering spells.

DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana): A candlelight daemon is most effective in shadows or darkness, which allow the fiend to hide easily and bring its murderous talents to bear.



Candlelight Daemon

Medium Fiend, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 170 (20d8 + 80)
Speed 50 ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	17 (+3)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)

Skills Deception +7, Insight +6, Investigation +5, Perception +6, Stealth +7
Damage Immunities poison
Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Infernal
Challenge 11 (7,200 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +4

Candle Dependence. The daemon remains on the Material Plane only while the candle that summoned it burns.

Innate Spellcasting. The daemon's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The daemon can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *detect magic*, *hunter sense*, *knock*
1/day each: *counterspell*, *darkness*, *dispel magic*, *shield*, *suffocate*

Magic Resistance. The daemon has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Nether Step. As its movement for its turn, the candlelight daemon can teleport to an unoccupied space within 30 feet of it, provided the space it's teleporting to and from are both in dim light or darkness. The daemon doesn't need to see the destination.

Shadow Stealth. While in dim light or darkness, the daemon can take the Hide action as a bonus action.

Slayer's Advantage. The candlelight daemon has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't had a turn in combat.

Slayer's Attack (1/Turn). The candlelight daemon deals an extra 35 (10d6) damage when it hits a target with an attack and has advantage on the attack roll. With the *suffocate* spell, the daemon deals this damage as extra bludgeoning damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The daemon makes two claw attacks and one gore attack. It can use hurl fire in place of any of these attacks.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage and 4 (1d8) fire damage.

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) piercing damage and 4 (1d8) fire damage.

Hurl Fire. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (3d8) fire damage.

Coldfire Ooze

"Coldfire's a menace, sure, but at least it doesn't move around on its own. Why are you staring at me like that?"

Spreading Corruption. Coldfire oozes spread coldfire throughout the north. Corrupted slurries of ice and snow, coldfire oozes have become a menace to frontier towns among the Valikan Clans.

Burning Slime. Those who first faced coldfire oozes didn't realize how the slimes could split. This mistake in the first skirmishes allowed the oozes to further multiply. Now, they can be found all over the northern wilds.

Ooze Nature. A coldfire ooze doesn't require sleep.

Salvage

Someone who has proficiency with alchemist's supplies can use the remains of one coldfire ooze to make one *flammable tincture* (see chapter 4). Making the tincture takes 1 day of work, materials worth 50 gp, and a successful DC 13 Intelligence or Wisdom check.

Lore

DC 10 Intelligence (Nature): Coldfire oozes are rare creatures that spread coldfire.

DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana): As with coldfire, fire is the best way to deal with a coldfire ooze. Fire is the only way to put the coldfire out.

Coldfire Ooze

Large Ooze, Unaligned

Armor Class 8
Hit Points 110 (13d10 + 39)
Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	6 (–2)	17 (+3)	1 (–5)	12 (+1)	1 (–5)

Damage Vulnerabilities fire
Damage Immunities cold
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone
Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 11
Languages —
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Amorphous. The coldfire ooze can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Coldfire. The cold damage a coldfire ooze deals ignores cold resistance. Creatures immune to cold treat their cold immunity as resistance to cold damage instead.

Ignite. If a creature or a flammable object takes cold damage from the coldfire ooze, the target ignites. Until the target is dealt fire damage, it takes 3 (1d6) cold damage at the start of each of its turns.

Illumination. The coldfire ooze sheds bright light in a 20-foot radius and dim light for an additional 20 feet.

Spider Climb. The coldfire ooze can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Actions

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage and 14 (4d6) cold damage.

Coldfire Flare (Recharge 6). The coldfire ooze expels coldfire in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If a significant amount of flammable material ignites due to this flare, the area deals damage as the Ignite trait to objects and to creatures who enter the area for the first time on a turn or who end their turn there. This damage from coldfire also subjects targets to Ignite.

Reactions

Split. When a coldfire ooze that is Medium or larger is subjected to cold or slashing damage, it splits into two new oozes if it has at least 10 hit points. Each new ooze has hit points equal to half the original ooze's, rounded down. New oozes are one size smaller than the original ooze.

Coldfire Premonition

The scout claimed the creature she saw was Gormadraug returned, but I knew she was wrong because she had lived to tell me about it.

Elemental Scourge. Coldfire has reawakened in the distant reaches of Volgen. Many horrific tales travel south from that icy hell, yet none are more unsettling than encounters with immense wyrms of living ice and coldfire. These monsters spread their elemental scourge wherever they go. Witnesses to their destruction warn that these creatures are premonitions of a world in which Gormadraug, greatest of the primordials, has returned.

Vision of an Icy Future. Gormadraug is the progenitor of coldfire, a scourge which burns across eastern Valika leaving icy devastation in its wake. The druids of the Prismatic Circle are skeptical that tales of the so-called coldfire premonitions are true. But if they are, perhaps they're conjured from the very dreams of Gormadraug itself— dreams in which the Prismatic Wyrm rises again to end all mortal life on Etharis once and for all.

Image of the Wyrm. A coldfire premonition takes the shape of a wolf-headed, many-legged serpentine wyrm. It is wrought of solid ice and wreathed in frigid, blue flames. The mythical depictions of Gormadraug mirror this terrible image. The coldfire premonition is therefore a spectre of every Valikans greatest dread.

Salvage

The coldfire premonition explodes into a hail of ice when it dies, showering the area in coldfire. Characters savvy enough to quench its remains with hot, red flame can salvage frigid shards of its body. These shards have turned black and shiny, like obsidian, but remain burning cold to the touch. The shards can be used to craft 20 arrows or crossbow bolts. These missiles count as +3 ammunition that does an additional 7 (2d6) cold damage on a successful attack. A proficient weaponsmith must spend 8 hours and succeed on a DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check to create the missiles.

Lore

DC 15 Wisdom (Survival): The coldfire premonition wreathes itself in a blizzard of showering coldfire. Blue flames explode in the area near the premonition, dealing cold damage to everyone they touch.

DC 20 Wisdom (Survival): As a creature made entirely of coldfire, it seems likely that hot, red flame will annihilate it with ease. However, stories warn that the premonitions own flames react explosively to the sudden introduction of burning flame.

Coldfire Premonition

Gargantuan Elemental, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 297 (18d20 + 108)
Speed 40 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	12 (+1)	22 (+6)	1 (-5)	19 (+4)	1 (-5)

Saving Throws Str +12, Dex +6, Con +11, Cha +0
Skills Perception +9
Damage Vulnerabilities fire
Damage Immunities cold, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned, unconscious
Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 19
Languages —
Challenge 13 (10,000 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +5

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the coldfire premonition fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Magic Resistance. The coldfire premonition has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Coldfire. The cold damage the coldfire premonition deals ignores cold resistance. Creatures immune to cold damage treat their immunity as resistance to cold damage instead.

Coldfire Form. The coldfire premonition can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing. A creature that touches the premonition or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 11 (2d10) cold damage. In addition, the premonition can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. The first time it enters a creature's space on a turn, that creature takes 11 (2d10) cold damage.

Frigid Demise. When the coldfire premonition dies, its body is enveloped in a coldfire explosion that sends frigid shards in every direction. All creatures within 30 feet of it must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Ignite. If a creature or a flammable object takes cold damage from the coldfire premonition, the target ignites. Hot fire smothers coldfire; until the target is dealt fire damage, it takes 5 (1d10) cold damage at the start of each of its turns.

Actions

Multiattack. The coldfire premonition makes two attacks: one with its Bite and one with its Tail.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 23 (3d10 + 7) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) cold damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (3d8 + 7) bludgeoning damage and the target is knocked prone.

Rain of Coldfire (Recharges 5-6). The coldfire premonition roars as icy shards burst from its body and rain coldfire down around it. 1d4 coldfire hailstones strike the ground at points of the premonition's choice within 120 feet of it. Each hailstone creates a 10-foot radius patch of coldfire. Each creature that starts its turn in this area or enters it for the first time on a turn must succeed on a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw or take 16 (3d10) cold damage.

Reactions

Explosive Combustion. When the coldfire premonition takes fire damage, a burst of coldfire of equal intensity explodes from its body. All creatures within 30 feet of it must succeed on a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw or take cold damage equal to the fire damage that triggered this reaction.

Legendary Actions

The coldfire premonition can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The premonition regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Tail. The premonition makes a tail attack.
Icy Shield (Costs 3 Actions). The premonition casts *wall of ice (spell save DC 18)*.
Coldfire Wall (Costs 3 Actions). The premonition casts *wall of fire (spell save DC 18)*; the spell deals cold damage when cast in this way.

Drakes

"Descendants of the great dragons of the mythic past still roam Etharis. They have little of the majesty of their ancestors, but they're still frightening."

Lesser Dragonkind. The dragons most common on Etharis are bestial creatures the size of wolves or horses.

Sky Drake. Agile fliers, the sky drakes of Etharis live in the mountains and other desolate areas. A sky drake defends its lair ferociously, but it's willing to negotiate with those who have proven themselves stronger. Sky drakes even serve as mounts in return for promises to leave their homes alone.

Prismatic Drake. Said to be children of Gormadraug, the Prismatic Dragon, prismatic drakes frequent the North. Legends say they want to bring about the return of their ancestor. Sorcerers who foolishly try to tap into Gormadraug's power can be transformed into prismatic drakes. Visions force them to perform tasks that might lead to waking the sleeping dragon.

Salvage

Dragons are rare on Etharis, so materials from their corpses fetch a good price. A dragon's corpse can be sold for at least 100 gp times the Challenge of the monster.

Someone who has proficiency with alchemist's supplies can reduce the brain of a prismatic drake into an oil that can be used to fashion one *arrow of dragon slaying*. Brewing the oil takes 5 days of work, reagents worth 2,000 gp, and a successful DC 17 Intelligence or Wisdom check. Making the arrow is a trivial task, but treating it properly with the oil takes 5 more days of work.

Lore

DC 15 Intelligence (Nature): Sea drakes are cunning grapplers resistant to cold, sky drakes are adept fliers and have a bite charged with lightning, and blight drakes collect diseases that don't kill them but make for a toxic bite.

DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana): Prismatic drakes are the rarest drakes, rumored to be sorcerers transformed into dragons after they foolishly connected their minds to Gormadraug, the slumbering Prismatic Dragon. These drakes can cast spells.

GM Advice: Drakes hold a significant place in Valikan lore. While some clans consider them little more than vicious pests, others fear them as scions of Gormadraug. Drakes feature in many sagas of great heroes who slew or tamed a drake as part of their adventures. Drakes are sometimes painted on shields, raised on longship sails, or their scales are worn as raiments of war. If your party manage to slay a drake during their adventures, they may earn themselves an epithet like "drake slayer", "scale breaker", or "dragon bane."

Sky Drake

Large Dragon, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 85 (10d10 + 30)
Speed 20 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	8 (–1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)

Skills Athletics +6, Perception +4, Survival +4
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Draconic and one other language
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Flyby. The sky drake doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

Keen Sight. The sky drake has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Actions

Multiattack. The sky drake makes one bite attack and one attack with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage and 5 (2d4) lightning damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Prismatic Drake

Large Dragon, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 136 (16d10 + 48)
Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

Skills Arcana +4, Deception +5, Intimidation +5, Perception +5
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Draconic and one other language
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Magic Resistance. The prismatic drake has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Quicken Spell (4/Day). The prismatic drake can cast a spell that has a casting time of 1 action as a bonus action.

Spellcasting. The prismatic drake is an 8th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The prismatic drake knows the following sorcerer spells:
Cantrips (at will): *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*
1st level (4 slots): *chromatic orb*, *color spray*, *shield*
2nd level (3 slots): *blur*, *detect thoughts*, *gust of wind*
3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell*, *hypnotic pattern*
4th level (2 slots): *confusion*

Actions

Multiattack. The prismatic drake makes one bite attack and one attack with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) slashing damage.

Deathmoss

"In places where the land is twisted from its natural state, elementals can be affected. Their poison spreads quickly, creating more of their kind, until the blight covers everything."

Blight Elemental. Deathmoss is but one of several known versions of these corrupted elementals.

Affront to Nature. Whether through a brush with powerful malevolence or unwise experiments, elementals can be corrupted, turning them into blighted forms. Fey and others with a connection to nature have an instinctive aversion to these creatures.

Toxic Magic. Blighted elementals are sources of poison, carrying their corruption with them and spreading it to new places. They multiply rapidly and carry death to the unwary. For those with sinister intentions though, they can be an excellent source of dangerous, potent ingredients for potions or poison.

Salvage

The remains of a blight elemental can be used to produce one of two concoctions. Each elemental leaves enough residue for three doses, which can be divided among the brews created. Someone who has proficiency with alchemist's supplies or a poisoner's kit can use one portion of the residue and other materials worth 50 gp to produce one pale tincture. Producing the tincture requires 1 day of work and a successful DC 13 Intelligence or Wisdom check. Someone who has proficiency with alchemist's supplies or an herbalism kit can instead use one portion of the residue and other reagents worth 50 gp to make one *potion of resistance* (poison) that also confers the benefits of antitoxin. Making the potion requires the same amount of work and a similar successful check.

Lore

DC 10 Intelligence (Nature): Blight elementals arise when nature or the substance of an elemental plane is corrupted. These elementals can resemble non-elemental creatures, but they're still elementals. Blight elementals have elemental resistances, including to nonmagical attacks.

DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana): A blight elemental is always poisonous, in addition to its other powers. Some, such as deathmoss and forgeblights, have supernatural abilities to spread rot to creatures or objects.

DC 20 Intelligence (History): Some legends say a lich created the first blight elementals to gain the favor of the Arch Daemon Malikir. If such stories are true, finding the lich's notes might allow someone to return blight elementals to their original forms.

Deathmoss

Large Elemental, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 133 (14d10 + 56)
Speed 20 ft., burrow 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	5 (–3)	18 (+4)	5 (–3)	10 (+0)	5 (–3)

Damage Vulnerabilities cold
Damage Immunities poison
Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Terran
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Blight. Any creature that touches the deathmoss or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned until the end of that creature's next turn.

Earth Glide. The deathmoss can burrow through nonmagical, unworked earth and stone. While doing so, it doesn't disturb the material it moves through.

False Appearance. While the deathmoss remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a moss-covered mound.

Siege Monster. The deathmoss deals double damage to objects and structures.

Actions

Multiattack. The deathmoss makes two slam attacks. It can use calming spores in place of one attack.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage, 7 (2d6) necrotic damage, and Blight. The target must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

Calming Spores (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). The deathmoss emits a cloud of spores in a 20-foot-radius sphere that goes around corners. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become indifferent toward the deathmoss for 1 minute, becoming unable to take hostile action toward the elemental. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, when the deathmoss or its allies harm the creature, or the creature witnesses any ally being similarly harmed, ending the effect on itself on a success. If the initial saving throw is successful or the effect ends for a creature, the creature is then subjected to Blight.

Gasdra

"Nothing scares me more in the deep wood than the honking of the witch's goose."

Guard Geese. Gasdra look like a three-headed goose with snow white feathers. They are often created to serve as guards for the homes of hags or similar fey.

Born of Foul Ritual. To create a gasdra, a goose egg must be placed in a golden bowl worth 200 gp and bathed in the blood of a newborn infant. The egg is then left in the dark of a new moon for four hours, after which a fully formed gasdra hatches.

Vicious Temperament. Gasdra are extremely protective of their home and attack anyone who trespasses. Conveniently, they are carnivores who can strip a human of flesh in a day, so there's not much mess.

Giant Gasdra. Giant gasdra are grown when a coven uses their powers to grow a regular gasdra to an enormous size. These seven-headed monstrosities can decimate a small village if provoked.

Gasdra

Small Monstrosity, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 22 (4d6 + 8)
Speed 30 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	6 (–2)	10 (+0)	7 (–2)

Skills Perception +2
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages understands Sylvan but can't speak
Challenge 1 (200 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Three Heads. The gasdra has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, or knocked unconscious. That gasdra has one reaction for each head. The extra reactions can be used only for opportunity attacks.

Wakeful. While the gasdra sleeps, at least one of its heads is awake.

Actions

Multiattack. The gasdra makes three beak attacks.

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Salvage

Once every two months gasdra lay 2d4 eggs. These eggs never hatch and are inedible by humanoids, though hags find them delicious. However, the yolks of gasdra eggs are the deepest black and can be used to make fine pigments. Each intact egg sells for 20 gp. Those proficient with alchemist's supplies or painter's supplies and succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence check turn an egg into 50 gp worth of pigment with one day of work.

Lore

DC 10 Intelligence (Nature): Gasdra are vicious watch animals kept by hags that look like geese with three heads. Their three brains make them hard to affect with abilities that blind, charm, deafen, frighten, stun, or knock them unconscious.

DC 15 Intelligence (Nature): The eggs of gasdra are a valuable ingredient in black pigments.

DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana): A gasdra can be turned into a giant gasdra by a foul ritual that involves feeding the monstrosity seven newborn infants under a new moon and painting the creature's feathers with seventy of its own eggs. When the new moon sinks below the horizon, the gasdra grows four more heads and becomes massive, its feathers forever stained dark as night. Giant gasdra are suitable as mounts for hags and other evil creatures.

Gondul Grindalsdóttir

Gondul is the only daughter of Grindal av Halsfjord. She and her father harbor a deadly secret: Gondul has been transformed into a werewolf. This alien-looking beast of bronze scales and white fur is unleashed on full moons. Gondul tries to stick to hunting in the Sheltering Wood near Ragvall Village to keep from drawing attention to herself, but she secretly longs to bite into the soft flesh of a human—and is losing her ability to control that urge.

More of Gondul's background is discussed in her profile in chapter 1 of this adventure.

Gondul Grindalsdóttir

Medium Humanoid (Dragonborn, Shapechanger), Chaotic Evil

Armor Class 11 in humanoid form, 13 (natural armor) in wolf or hybrid form
Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)
Speed 30 ft. (40 ft. in wolf form)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)

Skills Perception +6, Stealth +4, Performance +6, Persuasion +6
Damage Resistances lightning
Damage Immunities bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons
Senses passive Perception 16
Languages Castinellan, Valiki (can't speak in wolf form)
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Shapechanger. Gondul can use her action to polymorph into a wolf-humanoid hybrid or into a wolf, or back into her true form, which is humanoid. Her statistics are the same in each form, unless otherwise stated. Any equipment she is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. She reverts to her true form if she dies.

Keen Hearing and Smell. Gondul has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Actions

Multiattack (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only). Gondul makes two attacks: one with her Bite and one with her Claws or Spear.

Bite (Wolf or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with werewolf lycanthropy.

Claws (Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) slashing damage.

Spear (Humanoid Form Only). *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage, or 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage if wielded with two hands to make a melee attack.

Lightning Breath (Recharge 5-6). Gondul exhales lightning in a 30-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Legendary Actions

Gondul can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Gondul regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

Move. Gondul moves up to her speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Lash Out. Gondul makes one attack with her Claws or Spear.

Recharge (Costs 2 Actions). Gondul recharges her Lightning Breath.

Hrafen av Skeir

Chief of Clan Ragvall, the famed "Raven of Skeir" is an idealist who split from the clans of Thrull. Though a renowned veteran who fought alongside clans Sýr and Völgr throughout his life, he had an epiphany during one particularly bloody thrall-taking raid and refused to fight. More of Hrafen's background is discussed in the "Introduction" of this adventure, and his profile in chapter 1.

Though he is nearing the twilight of his life, his beard and hair are still mostly black, and he is still filled with warrior vigor. He is a man with a mission—to make young Clan Ragvall into a clan all Valikans respect—and would sacrifice his own life to see it accomplished. Thus, he fiercely defends his village from attackers and his position as chief from usurpers.

Hrafen av Skeir

Medium Humanoid (Human), Chaotic Good

Armor Class 17 (chain shirt, shield)
Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)

Skills Athletics +6, Intimidation +6, Perception +3, Persuasion +6
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages Dwarvish, Higher Bürach, Valiki
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Arcing Iron. Hrafen's strikes are wide, striking multiple targets. When he makes a melee weapon attack against one creature, he can also target up to 2 other creatures within his reach, using the same attack roll for each target.

Bad Leg. Hrafen's old raiding wound doesn't hinder him much in daily life, but it does make quick movement difficult. He has disadvantage on Dexterity saving throws, and his walking speed is reduced by 5 feet (included above).

Raid Commander. Hrafen and friendly creatures within 30 feet of him have advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

Actions

Multiattack. Hrafen makes two *+1 Warhammer* attacks.

+1 Warhammer. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., up to three targets. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Armor-Crushing Blow. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and the target must make a DC 17 Dexterity or Constitution saving throw (target's choice). On a failed save, the target's armor is damaged and its AC is reduced by 2. If the target's armor is damaged in this way again, the armor is destroyed and grants no bonus to AC. This attack can't damage magical or natural armor.

Reactions

Shield Parry. While holding a shield, Hrafen adds 4 to his AC against one attack that would hit him. If the attacker is within 5 feet of him, it must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Valkyrie's Pinion. When a creature Hrafen can see within 30 feet of him makes a saving throw, he can choose to give it either advantage or disadvantage on the roll. That creature can't be affected by this reaction again until the next dawn.

Legendary Actions

Hrafen can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Hrafen regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.

Reposition. Hrafen moves up to his speed without provoking opportunity attacks.
Armor-Crushing Blow. Hrafen makes an Armor-Crushing Blow attack.
Furious Recovery (Costs 2 Actions). Hrafen gains 17 (1d10 + 12) temporary hit points. If he has half of his hit points or fewer, he gains 5 (1d10) additional temporary hit points.

Hungerer Beasts

"Those infected with Tears of the Hungerer feel as if they're starving. The disease drives them to look for other beings to bite. Some beasts seem to reach an agreement with the disease, exchanging survival for a mutated carrier form."

Magical Hunger. The disease Tears of the Hungerer can turn a once prosperous area into a wasteland. The affliction mostly affects humanoids, but animals might be infected, too. If so, they grow bolder in their efforts to survive. Herbivore's hunt fleshy prey, and predators raid graveyards to dig up corpses to eat.

Mutated Form. Hungerer beasts don't become how they are by succumbing to the disease. That would be a natural end to these creatures, but little natural remains in them. The body changes to fit the affliction, turning a creature once skittish and peaceful into a ravenous predator.

Some hungerer beasts resemble starving animals, with an unhealthy coat and a spark of desperation in their eyes. Others change in monstrous ways, becoming new beasts with strange and frightening new traits. An attack from such a beast might transmit Tears of the Hungerer.

These changes are so drastic that feeding a beast isn't enough to return it to the animal it once was. Only powerful magic can restore a transformed beast. Some hungerer beasts breed their affliction into their offspring. Even greater magic is required to alter that change.

Abnormal Behavior. Hungerer beasts can be different in form, but they are united in their monstrousness and behavior. They are extremely aggressive. Pain doesn't faze them. They face fire and threats with fierceness. It quickly becomes clear to anyone dealing with such a beast that it wasn't created by nature.

Salvage

Someone who has proficiency with alchemist's supplies or a poisoner's kit can use venom harvested from the hungerer snake to create one *potion of poison* that also exposes the drinker to Tears of the Hungerer. Producing the poison takes 2 hours, reagents worth 50 gp, and a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana) check.

Lore

DC 10 Intelligence (Nature): Hungerer beasts change under the influence of the Tears of the Hungerer disease. The infection might not kill, but it makes the animal an extremely aggressive carrier of the illness. Under this influence, even creatures that were once docile become dangerous.

DC 15 Intelligence (Nature): Hungerer beasts leap into battle and can rush prey with incredible speed. The smell of blood can drive some berserk.

Unusual features distinguish a hungerer creature. The bright blue body, crimson head, and daggerlike tail make a hungerer snake easy to identify, for instance.

DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana): Healing magic such as *greater restoration* or mightier healing can restore a hungerer creature to its normal state unless it was bred with the affliction. Only a *wish* can undo that change.

Hungerer Elk

Large Monstrosity, Unaligned

Armor Class 11
Hit Points 19 (3d10 + 3)
Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Senses passive Perception 11
Languages —
Challenge 1 (200 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the hungerer elk can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature it can see.

Tears of the Hungerer. A beast or humanoid that takes damage from the hungerer elk must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or contract Tears of the Hungerer, a magical disease. If a creature succeeds on the saving throw, it's immune to the disease for 24 hours. A creature infected with the disease decreases its hit point maximum by 2 (1d4) every 24 hours. If this disease reduces the target's hit point maximum to 0, the target dies and becomes a zombie that also has this trait. This magical disease can be cured only with magic.

Trampling Charge. If the hungerer elk moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a ram attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or fall prone. If the target is prone, the elk can make another attack with its hooves against the target as a bonus action

Actions

Ram. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) piercing damage and Tears of the Hungerer.

Hooves. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage and Tears of the Hungerer.

Hungerer Wolf

Medium Monstrosity, Unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 16 (3d8 + 3)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages —
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the hungerer wolf can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature it can see.

Keen Hearing and Smell. The hungerer wolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Pack Tactics. The hungerer wolf has advantage on attack rolls against a creature if at least one of the wolf's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Tears of the Hungerer. A beast or humanoid that takes damage from the hungerer wolf must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or contract Tears of the Hungerer, a magical disease. If a creature succeeds on the saving throw, it's immune to the disease for 24 hours. A creature infected with the disease decreases its hit point maximum by 2 (1d4) every 24 hours. If this disease reduces the target's hit point maximum to 0, the target dies and becomes a zombie that also has this trait. This magical disease can be cured only with magic.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage and Tears of the Hungerer. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 11 Strength saving throw or fall prone.

Jarl Grimskjelle

Mundilfari Grimskjelle is a feared commander of the Melwarg giants of Frostmere. During winter in this adventure, he and his titanic soldiers march across Grarjord in search of Valikans to crush in the name of glorious giantkind.

Mystery and Malice. The Valikans know little of Jarl Grimskjelle's past, save for his zealous hatred of the "warm folk," and his vicious desire to enslave and dominate them all in the Melwarg giants' conquest of Valika. Unbeknownst to them, Grimskjelle was once a Valikan himself. Nearly fifty years ago, a cunning trickster of Clan Morgöng named Lyfr Bearcloak tried to match wits with Venin, Arch Daemon of Deception. Lyfr longed to put an end to the threat of the Frostmere giants; he made a deal with the Deceiver for the power to transform into a giant at will, so that he could undermine them from within.

However, he made another deal with Malikir, Arch Daemon of Conquest and Pride—one which proved to be his undoing. He needed a false past to make his scheme more believable—one as a ferocious warlord of the northern mountains, a person that Melwarg giants would accept into their midst without question. However, Arch Daemons can be jealous. When Venin learned of his double dealing, she determined that the new identity Malikir had granted him was his only identity, and thus voided the deal between her and Lyfr—leaving Lyfr trapped in his transformed shape for all time.

After decades of wearing the shape of the famed conqueror Grimskjelle, Lyfr's memories of his past life have all but vanished into the recesses of his mind. In the unlikely event that a Valikan were to speak with him about Venin or his true identity, a character could make a DC 21 Charisma (Persuasion) check to revive the dying embers of his memory and maybe even sway him to the side of the Valikans once more.

Jarl Grimskjelle

Huge Giant, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 18 (plate)
Hit Points 207 (18d12 + 90)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	9 (-1)	21 (+5)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Con +9, Wis +6, Cha +7
Skills Athletics +10, Perception +6
Damage Immunities cold
Senses passive Perception 16
Languages Giant, Valiki
Challenge 11 (7,200 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +4

Actions

Multiattack. Jarl Grimskjelle makes two Frost Warhammer attacks.

Frost Warhammer. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (3d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage plus 13 (2d12) cold damage.

Conjured Ice Shard. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +9 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (4d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage. *Hit or Miss:* The ice shard explodes, and the target and creatures within 15 feet of it must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or take 11 (2d10) cold damage.

Frigid Restraints (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). Jarl Grimskjelle calls jagged shards of ice from the ground in a 10-foot radius centered on a point he can see within 120 feet. Each creature in the area must succeed on a DC 17 Strength or Dexterity saving throw (the creature's choice) or be restrained for 1 minute. A restrained creature can repeat its save as an action, ending the effect on itself on a success. A 5-foot patch of ice shards has an AC of 20, 25 hit points, vulnerability to fire damage, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. A creature is no longer restrained once all spaces restraining it are cleared of ice shards.

Reactions

Frost Shield (Recharge 6). When Jarl Grimskjelle is hit by an attack or fails a Dexterity saving throw against a spell or effect that targets him or an area that includes him, he can increase his AC or the result of his saving throw by 5 against the triggering effect. If the attack or effect still deals damage, he has resistance to the damage it deals.

Keppmir

"Sailors are warned to be wary when they sail near Thrull in the cold north of Grarjord. It's not the people above the water that they worry about, but what hides under unusually warm waters."

Harsh Origins. Hundreds of years ago, the Clan Keppmir tried to make a living off the unyielding land. The settlers found meager fishing and game, few crops could grow, and little wood made the cold a daily challenge. After ten seasons, the king of the clan turned to praying to Gormadraug. He encouraged his people to do so, thinking that the Great Prismatic Wyrm would be impressed with their dedication and fervor.

The prayers were heard, but the people were deceived. A powerful daemon appeared and claimed to be the avatar of Gormadraug. The king pleaded with the avatar, asking to keep his people warm and fed. The price was high—the avatar demanded all the children of the settlement. The people thought that they could renegotiate for the children once they were comfortable, and an agreement was reached.

Horrid Transformation. Each member of the clan clasped arms with the avatar. At the last, as the king gripped the avatar, hope quickly changed to pain. The people fell to the ground, clutching their legs as they transformed into long, fishlike tails. Chains sprang from the ground and wrapped tightly around each lower torso, embedding into the red scales. Four horns sprouted from every head, and their teeth grew into fangs.

As they felt suffocation creeping in, the avatar directed them to the water. It calmly explained they would always be warm in the water. They could eat anything, including each other, to make sure that they were never lacking in food. The avatar granted them long lives to remember the price they paid.

Infernal Predators. Memory of the Keppmir clan faded, leaving only monsters behind. The king and his people actively hunt in the northern waters, devouring anything that crosses their path, including unfortunate sailors.

Most keppmirs wait for their elite hunters to attack. These stalkers are skilled warriors and wear armor from whale bones. They have mastered hiding in dark waters, and they coordinate attacks on large ships, closing in silently and communicating with hand gestures. When the stalkers attack, other keppmirs dive after meat falling to the ocean floor.

Keppmirs are capable of speech and might negotiate. But the influence of their infernal contract has twisted them into beings loath to enter bargains.

Keppmir King. The Keppmir King lives on. His tribe has ebbed and flowed over the years, but he hasn't aged. He vacillates between pride in keeping his tribe alive and the guilt of the price they paid. But if any of his people are harmed, he reacts brutally.

Keppmir

Medium Humanoid (Keppmir), Lawful Evil

Armor Class 11 (leather armor)
Hit Points 27 (5d8 + 5)
Speed 20 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +3, Perception +2, Stealth +2
Damage Resistances cold
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Valiki
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Heated Body. A creature other than a keppmir that ends its turn grappling or grappled by the keppmir takes 1 fire damage.

Water Breathing. The keppmir can breathe only underwater. In air, it can hold its breath for 10 minutes.

Actions

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage.

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage, or 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Salvage

Brave sailors hunt keppmirs for their horns. Someone who has proficiency with alchemist's supplies can use one horn combined with other reagents, including dried seaweed from the Sea of Turmoil, to create a *potion of glacial resistance*. Creating the potion requires 4 hours of work and a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana) check.

The ancient *Crown of the Keppmir King* has never been removed from his massive horns. Anyone who could defeat the leader could claim this prize.

Lore

DC 10 Intelligence (History): The story of the Keppmir clan is known to many.

DC 15 Intelligence (Nature): A keppmir has a heated body, which provides them with some resistance to the cold. Although they attack ships and coastal settlements, they can't breathe air.

Variant: Amphibious Keppmir

A rare few keppmir are born with split, leg-like fins, and slick, scaleless skin that allows them to breathe both air and water. Their water-dwelling kin think them disgusting mutants but grudgingly acknowledge their usefulness when raiding coastal Valikan settlements.

Use **keppmir** statistics with the following changes:

- They have a walking speed of 30 feet.
- Replace their Waterbreathing trait with:

Amphibious. The amphibious keppmir can breathe air and water.

Keppmir Stalker

Medium Humanoid (Keppmir), Lawful Evil

Armor Class 15 (bone breastplate)
Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)
Speed 20 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +4, Perception +3, Stealth +3
Damage Resistances cold
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Valiki
Challenge 1 (200 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Ambusher. The keppmir stalker has advantage on attack rolls against any creature it has surprised.

Battle Rush. If the keppmir stalker takes the Dash or Disengage action, it can use a bonus action to make a gore attack.

Heated Body. A creature other than a keppmir that ends its turn grappling or grappled by the keppmir stalker takes 1 fire damage.

Water Breathing. The keppmir stalker can breathe only underwater. In air, it can hold its breath for 15 minutes.

Actions

Multiattack. The keppmir stalker makes two attacks.

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage, or 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Laneshi

"An empire beneath the waves. A reflection of the lands above. The laneshi see that contrast, among others, and they value it. Maybe too much."

Imperial People. The laneshi call their domain the Llana'Shi Empire. For most of its history, the leaders of the empire showed no interest in the activities of surface-dwelling peoples or the events of the surface world. Recently, this reluctance to engage with the world above the waves has changed, and agents of the empire go to air-covered lands with increasing regularity. The true purpose of these expeditions is unknown even to most laneshi.

Caste Bound. Pale humanoids from under the sea, laneshi are a rare sight on land. On the ocean's floor, the laneshi built an empire that runs on a philosophy of absolutes and necromantic magic. This empire divides its citizens into a warrior caste and mystic caste. Warriors have dominion over all that lives while mystics have responsibilities related to the dead and objects that never lived.

Caste membership is determined at birth and dictates much about the life of a laneshi. Despite the caste names, their functions are much more expansive. Warriors form the bulk of the Llana'Shi Empire's army, but they also serve as the empire's diplomats. They are responsible for raising children, animal husbandry, and negotiating trade with others. Mystics serve society as loremasters, undertakers, and artisans.

Necromancer Twins. Each laneshi necromancer is a twin. The older of the two is allowed to live while the younger twin is sacrificed and has its spirit bound to the living one. This connection with the dead grants these mystics an intuitive grasp of necromantic magic. Laneshi culture has no taboos against such magic. Undead frequently accompany laneshi mystics.

Laneshi Soldier

Medium Humanoid (Laneshi), Any Alignment

Armor Class 15 (breastplate)
Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)
Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Animal Handling +3, Athletics +4, Perception +3
Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Laneshi and one other language
Challenge 2 (450 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Amphibious. The laneshi soldier can breathe air and water.

Beast Whispers. The laneshi soldier can innately cast *speak with animals*. Its spellcasting ability for this spell is Wisdom.

Skirmisher. The laneshi soldier can take a bonus action to take the Disengage action.

Actions

Multiattack. The soldier makes two melee attacks.

Pike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage.

Net. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 5/15 ft., one Large or smaller creature. *Hit:* The target is restrained. A creature can use its action to make a DC 10 Strength check to free itself or another creature in a net, ending the effect on a success. Dealing 5 slashing damage to the net (AC 10) frees the target without harming it and destroys the net.

Laneshi Necromancer

Medium Humanoid (Laneshi), Any Alignment

Armor Class 16 (breastplate, shield)
Hit Points 71 (11d8 + 22)
Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	15 (+2)

Skills Arcana +4, Medicine +6, Religion +4
Damage Resistances psychic
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Laneshi and one other language
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Amphibious. The laneshi necromancer can breathe air and water.

Beast Whispers. The laneshi necromancer can innately cast *speak with animals*. Its spellcasting ability for this spell is Wisdom.

Death Strike (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). When the laneshi necromancer hits with a melee attack, in addition to that attack's effects, the target takes 27 (5d10) necrotic damage. A humanoid slain by this damage rises at the start of the necromancer's next turn as a zombie under the necromancer's command.

Duality of Spirit. The laneshi necromancer has advantage on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws against magic.

Necrotic Mastery. Resistance to necrotic damage is ineffective against necrotic damage the laneshi necromancer deals.

Spellcasting. The laneshi necromancer is an 11th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The necromancer has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch*, *light*, *mending*, *spare the dying*, *thaumaturgy*
1st level (4 slots): *bane*, *bless*, *guiding bolt*, *healing word*
2nd level (3 slots): *enhance ability*, *hold person*, *lesser restoration*, *silence*
3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead*, *mass healing word*, *revivify*, *spirit guardians*
4th level (3 slots): *blight*, *control water*, *death ward*, *divination*
5th level (2 slots): *greater restoration*, *scrying*
6th level (1 slot): *harm*

Actions

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage or 4 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack, and 9 (2d8) necrotic damage.

Salvage

Laneshi prepared for combat often carry spears or other weapons that function underwater. Some jewelry and other accessories considered pedestrian in the Llana'Shi Empire are significantly more valuable to surface dwellers, such as pearls, shells of deep-sea creatures, and aquatic predator teeth.

Lore

DC 13 Intelligence (History): Laneshi are an ancient aquatic species divided into two castes: warriors and mystics.

DC 13 Intelligence (Religion): Laneshi practice necromancy and employ mindless undead as laborers and soldiers.

Meyana

"Some people eat only plants. A few plants are happy to return the favor."

Hunting Plants. Meyanas are bipedal plant creatures that walk on leglike roots, and they can use tools they hold in appendages resembling arms. These appendages end in pincers that can hold and utilize tools.

A meyana can be up to 7 feet tall. Its torso is most of that, with a long, grasping frond that resembles a clam shell. This torso frond is big enough to "swallow" an adult human. Inside these fronds, meyanas digest flesh into a nutrient goo the creature can absorb. A meyana uses leftover bones as tools, weapons, or decorations.

Several stalks grow out of a meyana's body, and the meyana uses these to sense the environment. (A meyana has no head.) Holes in these stalks allow the meyana to communicate with vocalizations. Most meyanas speak Sylvan.

Meyanas reproduce by shedding one mature "hand." This pod then grows into a new meyana. An infant starts at about a foot long, but after feasting on meat, the baby can grow to full size in 6 months.

Humid Habitat. Meyanas live in forests or other tropical, subtropical, or temperate climates. They camouflage themselves in thick vegetation, making their hunting easier. Meyanas live in sheltered thickets or wet underground areas. They prefer enclosed spaces to open ones.

Despite their preferences, meyanas can survive in any area that supports plant growth. They can be a threat to any area in which they can gain a foothold. Only inadequate prey can slow their proliferation.

Meyanas congregate in small tribes. Those tribes work together in a larger system that cooperates, shares food, and defends each other.

Salvage

Someone who has proficiency with alchemist's supplies can use the leaves of one adult meyana to brew a *potion of greater healing*. Doing so takes 4 hours of work and a successful DC 13 Intelligence or Wisdom check.

Lore

DC 10 Intelligence (Nature): The woody, plantlike structure of a meyana makes the creature resistant to piercing damage. Anyone trapped in the plant's central body risks being quickly digested.

DC 15 Intelligence (Nature): Meyanas can sense the footfalls of those moving on the ground.

Meyana

Medium Plant, Neutral

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)
Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	9 (–1)	13 (+1)	9 (–1)

Skills Athletics +4, Perception +3, Stealth +2, Survival +3
Damage Resistances piercing
Senses tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Sylvan
Challenge 2 (450 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Plant Camouflage. The meyana has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks it makes while obscured by vegetation.

Actions

Multiattack. The meyana makes one bite attack and one greatclub attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage and 5 (2d4) acid damage, or 10 (4d4) acid damage if the target started the turn grappled by the meyana. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 12). Until this grapple ends, the meyana can't bite another target.

Greatclub. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Young Meyana

Small Plant, Neutral

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 18 (4d6 + 4)
Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	8 (–1)	11 (+0)	8 (–1)

Skills Athletics +3, Stealth +3, Survival +2
Damage Resistances piercing
Senses tremorsense 30 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Sylvan
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Plant Camouflage. The young meyana has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks it makes while obscured by vegetation.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage and 3 (1d6) acid damage, or 5 (2d4) acid damage if the target started the turn grappled by the young meyana. If the target is a Small or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 11). Until this grapple ends, the meyana can't bite another target.

Mjorks

"Is it just me, or does the darkness seem thicker?
And did it just get really warm in here?"

Sootling Spawned. Where the powers of fire and earth meet, sparks of elemental energy can ignite a faint light of sentience between the two elements. These sootlings are amorphous creatures, folding and stretching into various beastlike shapes. If allowed to thrive between the elements of fire and earth, the sootling eventually grows into a mjork unless magic keeps its development halted.

Volcanic Elementals. A mjork is a creature as filled with chaos as the fires that fueled it, and as solid as the rock that gave it shape. The elemental looks like a humanoid of volcanic rock, moving with a jagged, stilted gait. Small cracks accent its surface, revealing a pulsating flame within. Heat emanates from the mjork's body, burning those who come too close and leaving singed, sooty tracks where it moves.

As they grow larger, mjorks specialize. Some focus on their solid, rocky shape and charging through foes. Others emphasize fire, allowing their internal flames to sheathe the body. Still others embrace smoke and ash. Some of these ashers grow from sootlings who barely survived their emergence and became attached to their sooty origins.

A World of Ash. Mjorks have a narrow worldview, having been raised in the grind and heat of volcanic stone. To them, the environment they spawned from is the only place of safety they have known, and they wish to spread it across the world. To bring about this ideal, mjorks wander sparsely inhabited areas where they spread fires and watch the world around them burn. These expeditions of destruction last until the mjork returns to the volcanic area that gave it life.

Elemental Nature. A mjork doesn't require food, drink, or sleep.

Salvage

Within every mjork is a heart of ash hardened into smoky crystal. This crystal might already be broken in the remains of a slain mjork, making it useless. An intact crystal can be broken or hurled at a point up to 60 feet away as an action. When it breaks, which it does upon landing if hurled, the crystal releases a 20-foot-radius sphere of sooty smoke, centered on a point in the breaker's space or on the point where the crystal landed. The smoke spreads around corners, and its area is heavily obscured. It lasts for 1 minute, but a moderate wind (at least 10 miles per hour) disperses it in 4 rounds. A strong wind (20 or more miles per hour) disperses the smoke in 1 round. These crystals sell for 15 gp or more each.

Mjork

Medium Elemental, Chaotic Neutral

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	6 (–2)	10 (+0)	6 (–2)

Damage Vulnerabilities thunder
Damage Immunities fire, poison
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Ignan, Terran
Challenge 3 (700 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Fiery Body. A creature that touches the mjork or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 3 (1d6) fire damage.

Illumination. The mjork sheds dim light in a 10-foot radius.

Smoke Sense. A mjork in contact with smoke has blindsight in that smoke's area in a radius of up to 120 feet.

Water Susceptibility. For every 5 feet the mjork moves in water, or for every gallon of water splashed on it, it takes 1 cold damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The mjork makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage and 3 (1d6) fire damage.

The smaller crystals from sootlings or broken mjork crystals are like smoky quartz. These gems can be worth from 1 sp to 1 gp each, or more to collectors who believe they are mjork crystals. Someone who polishes them using jeweler's tools can increase their value as semiprecious stones.

Lore

DC 10 Intelligence (Nature): Mjorks are made from earth and fire clashing together. These elementals often dwell near volcanoes.

DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana): Mjorks are vulnerable to thunder damage, which cracks their rocky skin. They can also sense through smoke as if the haze provided them blindsight.

Mjork Charger

Large Elemental, Chaotic Neutral

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 104 (11d10 + 44)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	11 (+0)	18 (+4)	6 (–2)	10 (+0)	6 (–2)

Damage Vulnerabilities thunder
Damage Immunities fire, poison
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Ignan, Terran
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Charge. If the mjork charger moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a slam attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 4 (1d8) bludgeoning damage and 3 (1d6) fire damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or fall prone.

Fiery Body. A creature that touches the mjork charger or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Illumination. The mjork charger sheds dim light in a 10-foot radius.

Momentum. If the mjork charger moves on its turn before attacking, creatures have disadvantage on attack rolls for opportunity attacks against it.

Smoke Sense. A mjork charger in contact with smoke has blindsight in that smoke's area in a radius of up to 120 feet.

Water Susceptibility. For every 5 feet the mjork charger moves in water, or for every gallon of water splashed on it, it takes 1 cold damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The mjork makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage and 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Mjork Burner

Large Elemental, Chaotic Neutral

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 95 (10d10 + 40)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	7 (–2)	12 (+1)	7 (–2)

Damage Vulnerabilities thunder
Damage Immunities fire, poison
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Ignan, Terran
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Fiery Body. A creature that touches the mjork burner or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Fire Path. The mjork burner leaves fire behind in any space it moves through. Until the start of the mjork's next turn, any creature that enters this area for the first time on a turn or ends its turn there takes 5 (2d4) fire damage. The fire can ignite flammable objects (not creatures), causing the mjork's Fire Path to last longer.

Ignite. A creature or flammable object ignites if it takes fire damage from the mjork burner's attacks. Until a creature takes an action to douse this fire, the target takes 5 (2d4) fire damage at the start of each of its turns.

Illumination. The mjork burner sheds bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for another 10 feet.

Smoke Sense. A mjork burner in contact with smoke has blindsight in that smoke's area in a radius of up to 120 feet.

Water Susceptibility. For every 5 feet the mjork burner moves in water, or for every gallon of water splashed on it, it takes 1 cold damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The mjork burner makes two attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage, 7 (2d6) fire damage and Ignite.

Hurl Fire. *Ranged Spell Attack*: +5 to hit, ranged 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit*: 13 (3d6 + 3) fire damage and Ignite.

Mjork Asher

Large Elemental, Chaotic Neutral

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 85 (10d10 + 30)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	7 (–2)	13 (+1)	7 (–2)

Damage Vulnerabilities thunder
Damage Immunities fire, poison
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Ignan, Terran
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Blinding Soot. A creature that takes fire damage from a mjork asher's attacks must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be blinded until the end of the mjork's next turn.

Fiery Body. A creature that touches the mjork asher or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Smoke Sense. A mjork asher in contact with smoke has blindsight in that smoke's area in a radius of up to 120 feet.

Smoke Shroud. While the mjork asher has 41 or more hit points, smoke renders a sphere within 20 feet of it heavily obscured. This smoke goes around corners. Even while the mjork has 40 or fewer hit points, tendrils of this smoke extend to 60 feet from the mjork, providing smoke for the Smoke Sense of all mjorks. However, the whole shroud dissipates during any round the mjork is exposed to moderate (at least 10 miles per hour) or stronger wind.

Water Susceptibility. For every 5 feet the mjork asher moves in water, or for every gallon of water splashed on it, it takes 1 cold damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The mjork asher makes two attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage and 7 (2d6) fire damage and Blinding Soot.

Hurl Soot. *Ranged Spell Attack*: +5 to hit, ranged 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit*: 12 (3d6 + 2) fire damage and Blinding Soot.

Create Sootlings (1/Day). The mjork asher chooses a point within 60 feet of it that it can sense. Smoke fills a 20-foot radius sphere centered on that point. The sphere spreads around corners, and its area is heavily obscured. This smoke lasts until the start of the mjork's next turn or until a wind of moderate or greater speed (at least 10 miles per hour) disperses it. Unless dispersed before the start of the mjork's next turn, a sootling swarm forms in a space in the area, favoring a space a creature hostile to the mjork occupies. The swarm takes its turn just after the mjork and obeys the mjork's verbal commands (no action for the mjork). If issued no commands, the swarm acts independently, often attacking a creature that isn't its ally. The swarm can survive indefinitely after being created.

Mjork Sootling Swarm

Medium Swarm of Tiny Elementals, Chaotic Neutral

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (–1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	4 (–3)	10 (+0)	3 (–4)

Damage Vulnerabilities thunder
Damage Immunities fire, poison
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages understands Ignan and Terran but can't speak
Challenge 2 (450 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Hot Soot. A creature that ends its turn in the sootling swarm's space takes 5 (2d4) fire damage, or 2 (1d4) fire damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer. The creature must also succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be blinded and unable to breathe until the end of its next turn.

Smoke Sense. A sootling swarm in contact with smoke has blindsight in that smoke's area in a radius of up to 120 feet.

Swarm. The sootling swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny creature. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points

Water Susceptibility. For every 5 feet the sootling swarm moves in water, or for every gallon of water splashed on it, it takes 2 cold damage.

Actions

Burns. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 10 (4d4) fire damage, or 5 (2d4) fire damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

Variant: Sootling Familiar

Sootlings that have become familiars have the following trait.

Familiar. A sootling can partner with another creature as a familiar, forming a telepathic bond with this willing partner. While the two are bonded, the partner can sense what the sootling senses while they are within 1 mile of each other. If the partner harms the sootling, the sootling ends the telepathic bond and ceases being a familiar.

Mjork Sootling

Tiny Elemental, Chaotic Neutral

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 10 (3d4 + 3)
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
4 (–3)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	4 (–3)	10 (+0)	3 (–4)

Damage Vulnerabilities thunder
Damage Immunities fire, poison
Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages understands Ignan and Terran but can't speak
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Heated Body. A creature that ends its turn grappling the sootling takes 1 fire damage.

Smoke Sense. A sootling in contact with smoke has blindsight in that smoke's area in a radius of up to 120 feet.

Water Susceptibility. For every 5 feet the sootling moves in water, or for every gallon of water splashed on it, it takes 1 cold damage.

Actions

Burn. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) fire damage.

Mud Zombie

"Never go into a fight with a mud zombie alone. It's full of surprises you won't enjoy."

Fused Gore. Any muddy or swampy area could hide a grotesque surprise. Mud zombies form from piles of gore. At rest, they look like mounds of remains, but when roused, each becomes a writhing mass of muck-covered limbs. These limbs can split from the mass and continue fighting.

Undead Nature. A mud zombie doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

Salvage

Mud zombies often contain or still wear equipment and jewelry left on the zombie's constituent parts.

Lore

DC 10 Intelligence (Nature): Mud zombies look like large piles of gore.

DC 13 Intelligence (Religion): Stories tell of these writhing masses breaking into smaller monsters when attacked.

GM Advice: For some added fun and challenge, add a ranged attack for the mud zombie, where it throws grasping hands at enemies. These hands attack at +5, doing 6 (1d6 + 3) damage on a successful attack. A hand continues to claw at the targeted creature for that damage each round until the target escapes the claw (escape DC 13).

Mud Zombie

Large Undead, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)
Hit Points 75 (10d10 + 20)
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	8 (–1)	14 (+2)	3 (–4)	8 (–1)	3 (–4)

Saving Throws Wis +1
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9
Languages —
Challenge 2 (450 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

False Appearance. While the mud zombie remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an oozing pile of corpse parts.

Formless. Without squeezing, the mud zombie can move through an opening a creature up to two sizes smaller can move through.

Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 13). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained. A mud zombie can grapple up to two creatures at a time.

Reactions

Split. When a mud zombie that is Medium or larger takes 10 damage or more, it splits into two new zombies if it has at least 10 hit points. Each new zombie has hit points equal to half the original zombie's, rounded down. New zombies are one size smaller than the original zombie.

Panjaian

"Instilled with the power of the Primordials, panjaians are literal forces of nature."

Elemental Gifts. When the Primordials need champions and emissaries, they empower mortals with their elemental blessings, exalting them into panjaians. These panjaians bridge the gap between elemental and humanoid. Most panjaians look vaguely human with hair, eyes, and skin tones that reflect their elemental affinity.

When fighting on behalf of their Primordial patron, a panjaian could never be mistaken for a normal mortal. They weaponize the elements. Towers of flame, rising walls of earth, grasping tendrils of water, and lightning arcing from outstretched fingertips are the chosen weapons of an enraged panjaian.

Once a humanoid becomes a panjaian, their patron can't undo the process. Most panjaian's loyally serve their masters, allying with those who share the same creator. But if a threat is dire, or a quest critical, panjaians empowered by different Primordials work together to ensure success.

Primordial Servants. Each panjaian is tied to a specific Primordial. Alondons serve the Lord of the Depths, Alondo. Morakeshi are the chosen of Lady Morakesh, ruler of Flamebourne and of fire. Empowered by the Living Mountain, Citrolach, citrolachi have mastery over earth and stone. Servants of the Queen of Air and Shadow, Ilhara, ilharans wield the power of wind and storm.

Although they vary as humanoids do, panjaians have tendencies related to their element. Alondons prefer to remain neutral unless the outcomes are serious or impact them directly. Morakeshi are as charismatic as they are quick tempered. Citrolachi are the most stoic of the panjaians and the least likely to act out of impulse or passion. Ilharans are far more likely to act as spies and saboteurs than soldiers.

Return of the King. Within the last decade, panjaians with the ability to manipulate coldfire—a swiftly spreading, freezing, blue flame that plagues Grarjord—have reappeared in the world. These servants of Gormadraug frighten other Primordials. Many speculate the reemergence of these panjaians is a sign of Gormadraug's return.

But the origins of the panjaian gormadraugons are unknown to those outside their ranks. Their presumed patron, Gormadraug, has been dormant for some time, and the gormadraugons aren't sharing their origins. Pariahs among other panjaians, gormadraugons' motives are as enigmatic as their existence.

Salvage

Someone who has proficiency in Medicine can attempt a DC 13 Wisdom (Medicine) check to remove a panjaian's heart intact. Somebody who has proficiency with alchemist's supplies can treat the heart with reagents worth 100 gp in a process that takes 3 days and a successful DC 13 Intelligence or Wisdom check. This process, if successful, hardens the heart into an *elemental gem*: blue sapphire for ilharan, yellow diamond for citrolachi, red corundum for morakeshi, and emerald for alondon. What this process creates when used on the heart of a panjaian gormadraugon is unknown. History records no such act. (A *gem of brightness* is a good possibility, however.)

Lore

DC 13 Intelligence (Religion): Panjaians first appeared near the end of the Primordial's war with the gods. Some scholars believe if panjaians had been created earlier, it might have changed the conflict's outcome.

DC 13 Intelligence (Nature): Every panjaian has an affinity for the element of their Primordial patron. This affinity manifests in resistances, control over the element, and the ability to wield that element as a weapon.

Panjaian Alondon

Medium Humanoid (Any Race, Elemental), Any Alignment

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 55 (10d8 + 10)
Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)

Skills Athletics +4, Perception +4
Damage Resistances cold
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Primordial and two other languages
Challenge 3 (700 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Amphibious. The panjaian alondon can breathe air and water.

Innate Spellcasting. The panjaian alondon's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:
At will: *create or destroy water*
1/day: *control water*

Mobile. The panjaian alondon can take a bonus action to take the Dash or Disengage action.

Actions

Multiattack. The panjaian alondon makes two tidal slam attacks.

Tidal Slam. *Melee Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or the panjaian alondon can move the target up to 10 feet to an unoccupied space in range.

Reactions

Uncanny Dodge. The panjaian alondon halves the damage it takes from an attack that hits it. It must be able to see the attacker.

Panjaian Gormadraugon

Medium Humanoid (Any Race, Elemental), Any Alignment

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)
Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Wis +4
Skills Acrobatics +6, Intimidation +5, Perception +4, Persuasion +5
Damage Immunities cold
Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Primordial and two other languages
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Coldfire Crisis. As a bonus action, the panjaian gormadraugon causes the area within a 30-foot sphere centered on it to become icy difficult terrain. Nonmagical flames in that area go out. Creatures of the gormadraugon's choice that start their turn in that area lose their resistance to cold damage or treat their cold immunity as resistance to cold damage. This loss of resistance or immunity lasts until the start of the creature's next turn. The aura lasts until the gormadraugon becomes incapacitated, dies, or uses an action or bonus action to end it.

Ignite. If a creature or a flammable object takes cold damage from the panjaian gormadraugon, the target ignites. Until the target is dealt fire damage, it takes 3 (1d6) cold damage at the start of each of its turns.

Innate Spellcasting. The panjaian gormadraugon's innate spellcasting ability is Constitution (spell save DC 13). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:
At will: *faerie fire*
1/day: *wall of ice*

Regeneration. The panjaian gormadraugon regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn. If the gormadraugon takes fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the gormadraugon's next turn. The gormadraugon dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Actions

Multiattack. The panjaian gormadraugon makes two attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage, 10 (2d6 + 3) cold damage, and Ignite.

Hurl Coldfire. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (3d6 + 3) cold damage and Ignite.

Reactions

Prismatic Flash. When the panjaian gormadraugon fails a saving throw, its skin flashes with prismatic scales, it rerolls the saving throw, and it uses the higher roll. If the reroll causes the save to succeed, creatures within 30 feet of the gormadraugon must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be blinded until the end of their next turn.

Panjaian Ilharan

Medium Humanoid (Any Race, Elemental), Any Alignment

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 55 (10d8 + 10)
Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +5
Skills Acrobatics +5, Deception +3, Perception +4, Sleight of Hand +5, Stealth +5
Damage Resistances lightning, thunder
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Primordial and two other languages
Challenge 3 (700 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Innate Spellcasting. The panjaian ilharan's innate spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:
At will: *mage hand* (the hand is invisible)
3/day each: *gust of wind*, *invisibility* (self only)

Returning Wind. The panjaian ilharan can take a bonus action to choose up to four objects it can see within 60 feet of it. These objects can't be carried or worn by another creature, and they can weigh up to 5 pounds combined. Those objects fly up to 60 feet toward the ilharan, delivered into its hands or open containers, such as sheathes, once within 5 feet.

Actions

Multiattack. The panjaian ilharan makes four dagger attacks. It can draw the daggers as part of this action.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Storm Wave (Recharge 5–6). The panjaian ilharan unleashes lightning, thunder, and strong wind in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, taking 6 (2d4 + 1) lightning damage and 6 (2d4 + 1) thunder damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Those who fail the saving throw are also pushed up to 15 feet to the edge of the area.

Gift of Flight (1/Day). The panjaian ilharan touches up to four willing creatures. Each target gains a flying speed of 30 feet for 1 hour. When the effect ends, the target descends at 60 feet per round for 1 minute, taking no falling damage and landing on its feet if on the ground after that minute.

Poffer

"You see these fellas in the wild and think, 'aw, look at them sheep with cute bushy wool!' But step closer and they'll fall upon you like a storm, and where there's storms, there's lightning."

Rambunctious Ruminants. Poffers are sheeplike creatures named after the typical poffer's bushy woolen coat. Alone, a poffer is docile and can make a nice, low-maintenance pet. But flocks of poffers are aggressive, charging other creatures that come too close.

Worthwhile Wool. Ranching poffers is worth the risk. Although a flock of poffers can be dangerous, their wool is insulating in multiple ways. It can make warm, comfortable clothing that also protects the wearer from shocks.

Salvage

People prize poffer wool for its insulating properties. Someone who has proficiency with weaver's tools can use the wool of five poffers to make one *suit of the lamb*. Creating the suit takes 3 days.

Lore

DC 10 Intelligence (Nature): Multiple poffers in proximity to another creature can cause an incapacitating shock. The creatures are aggressive in flocks, and they trample fallen foes.

Poffer

Small Monstrosity, Unaligned

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 7 (2d6)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	2 (–4)	10 (+0)	5 (–3)

Senses passive Perception 10
Languages —
Challenge 1/8 (25 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Flock Static. A creature other than a poffer that ends its turn within 5 feet of two or more poffers takes 2 lightning damage plus 1 lightning damage for each additional poffer within 5 feet of the creature. A creature that takes 4 or more lightning damage from poffers in one turn must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or fall prone and become incapacitated until the end of its next turn.

Actions

Hooves. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5ft., one prone creature. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

Puck

"I've heard pixie dust is beautiful, magical stuff. The dust I saw was definitely magical, but it wasn't beautiful."

Crushed Spirit. A puck is a pixie whose hopes and dreams, loves and playfulness, have been erased by mistreatment, betrayal, or loss. Once a beautiful and merry being, a puck is now a sad, twisted monster. Once the transformation happens, the pixie's dust dissipates. Without pixie dust, a pixie can't fly, can't use its magic, and can't turn invisible. They lose their ability to commune with nature.

Puck Dust. Taking the place of pixie dust, puck dust allows the puck to retain magical powers that resemble those of a pixie. The substance corrupts soil, vegetation, and beast, and it enthralls plants and trees to do the puck's bidding. Plants under the dust's influence become telepathically and emotionally bonded to the puck. Despair drives these plants. Each feels the harm done to one.

Corpse Gardener. Pucks farm their glittering soil, using animals and other living creatures to produce fertilizer. The puck force feeds the grove's dead material and soil to animals and humanoids. After a ripening time, the puck opens these unfortunates up to take refined soil from their innards. The puck keeps the creatures alive until this grisly harvest, earning the terrible epithet "corpse gardener."

Salvage

A slain puck produces up to six pinches of puck dust, which are magical but less effective in the hands of a nonpuck. Each dose can be used in one of two ways. Puck dust dispersed on a plant creature within reach of the disperser forces the plant to succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw as if *charm monster* were cast upon it by the disperser. If the dust is dispersed on an inanimate shrub, it becomes an evil awakened shrub with an Intelligence and Charisma score of 3. Three doses scattered on a tree make it an evil awakened tree with an Intelligence and Charisma score of 3. Either use of puck dust animates the plant for only 1 hour.

Lore

DC 10 Intelligence (Nature): The veil between the world and the fey world is thin here. A dark fey spirit has corrupted this place.

DC 15 Intelligence (Nature): The trees themselves are hindering your steps. They are in cahoots with a fey spirit. Anything you say or do is probably sensed by the spirit. Your senses might become targeted by the spirit. Do not trust anything you see.

DC 20 Intelligence (Nature): You are within the domain of a puck, pitiful creatures who scorn humanity and dominate nature. It uses plants as its weapons and concealment as its defense. Finding it may prove difficult, as the forest will protect it, but once found, it is frail.

A Puck's Lair

Soil within a puck's lair occasionally twinkles as if filled with sparkling fertilizer. Many of the trees and plants are likely to be the puck's thralls, and allied plant creatures might also dwell there. Within the lair, only creatures of the puck's choice leave tracks. Tracking such creatures is possible only with magic.

A puck makes their hidden home in small crevices beneath the interlaced roots of plant thralls. These roots act as labyrinthine hallways connecting all parts of the grove, which the puck uses to sneak around. While hidden in this maze, the puck whispers to the trees and telepathically commands them. Hiding and commanding the plants to protect the puck is crucial, for it knows that despite its great power, it is physically frail.

Lair Actions

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), while the puck is inside its grove, it can take a lair action to cause one of the following effects. A puck can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

- Six images of the puck appear in multiple locations in the lair, each moving and speaking independently during the puck's turn. At the start and end of the puck's turn, and one time during the puck's movement, it can teleport to the location of one of these images. The images remain until initiative count 20 on the next round.

- Grasping vines and roots manifest in the lair. Each creature hostile to the puck in the lair must succeed on a DC 14 Strength or Dexterity saving throw (target's choice) or be moved up to 20 feet to another unoccupied space in the lair and knocked prone.
- Inanimate plants in the lair twist and sprout thorns. The area becomes difficult terrain to creatures hostile to the puck until initiative count 20 on the next round. When such a creature moves more than half its speed (as dictated by the difficult terrain) in the area, it takes 5 (2d4) piercing damage and must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. A poisoned creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Regional Effects

A natural environment containing a puck's lair is warped by the puck's presence, which creates one or more of the following effects:

- Plants within 1 mile of the lair darken in hue and look underwatered. Sap from these plants has a bloodlike tinge. This sap seeps from oddly shaped holes that resemble parts of despairing faces or wounds. Fruits are deformed and oddly colored but are otherwise normal in taste and nutrition. Traversing this area is hard and time consuming—roots trip, vines block the way, underbrush is dense and thorny.
- Animals and other wild creatures within 1 mile of the lair are unnaturally aggressive, especially toward creatures hostile to the puck. However, animals are absent within 600 feet of the lair. The puck uses them to fertilize the grove
- Creatures that spend 10 minutes or more within this area feel their negative emotions heightened. Effects that cause debilitating negative emotions double in duration. Effects that provide bravery, joy, hope, and similar emotions, such as the spells *aid* or *heroism*, halve in duration. A *calm emotions* spell ends either effect for that spell's normal duration.

Puck

Tiny Fey, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 15
Hit Points 14 (4d4 + 4)
Speed 10 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (–4)	20 (+5)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	17 (+3)

Skills Deception +5, Perception+3, Stealth +7
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Sylvan, telepathy 120 ft. (plants only)
Challenge 1 (200 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Fey Evasion. If the puck is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a saving throw to take only half damage, the puck instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

Magic Resistance. The puck has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Innate Spellcasting. The puck's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring only puck's dust as a component:
At will: *dancing lights*, *druidcraft*, *entangle*
3/day: *phantasmal force*
1/day each: *bestow curse*, *charm monster* (plant creatures only), *detect evil and good*, *detect thoughts*, *dispel magic*, *polymorph*

Plant Bond. Given 8 hours to be within 20 feet of a Huge or smaller plant, the puck can use puck's dust to form a bond with that plant. The target must have no Intelligence score and gains an Intelligence of 3. The target also gains the ability to understand Sylvan and to move its limbs, roots, vines, creepers, and so forth. It gains blindsight in a 60-foot radius but is blind beyond that range. The plant becomes a puck version of an animated plant, such as a puck tree or puck shrub.

A puck can have only one plant charmed in this way at a time. The condition ends if the puck harms the plant, and the plant can make a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw to end the condition if a request from the puck guarantee's the plant's destruction. Plants freed from the charm leave the puck's grove, becoming inanimate again once 300 or more feet away for 24 hours. Otherwise, the plant is charmed by the puck for 30 days, after which time the plant becomes the puck's willing servant (it's no longer charmed) even when threatened with death.

The puck is emotionally bonded with each plant it has animated, charmed, and enthralled. Provided such a plant is within 1 mile, the puck is aware when the plant takes damage and knows its location. If such a plant is destroyed, the puck is incapacitated until the end of its next turn as it grieves.

Plant Manifestation. As a bonus action, the puck can cause a plantlike manifestation of itself to emerge from the plant material of one plant charmed or enthralled by the puck within 120 feet of it. The puck can act through this duplicate until the end of its turn, then the duplicate disappears.

Actions

Superior Invisibility. The puck magically turns invisible until its concentration ends (as if concentrating on a spell). Any equipment the puck wears or carries is invisible with it.

Reactions

Uncanny Dodge. The puck halves the damage it takes from an attack that hits it. It must be able to see the attacker.

Puck Shrub

Medium Plant, Lawful Evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	3 (–4)	10 (+0)	3 (–4)

Damage Vulnerabilities fire
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing
Condition Immunities blinded, deafened
Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 10
Languages understands Sylvan but can't speak
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

False Appearance. While the puck shrub remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a thorny shrub.

Actions

Thorns. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (2d4 + 1) slashing damage. The puck shrub can deal half damage instead and grapple a Medium or smaller creature (escape DC 11). Until this grapple ends, the shrub can use its thorns only on the grappled creature.

Hurl Thorns. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, Range 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (2d4 + 1) piercing damage.

Puck Tree

Huge Plant, Lawful Evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 114 (12d12 + 36)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	6 (–2)	17 (+3)	3 (–4)	15 (+2)	3 (–4)

Damage Vulnerabilities fire
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing
Condition Immunities blinded, deafened
Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 12
Languages understands Sylvan but can't speak
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

False Appearance. While the puck tree remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a tree.

Siege Monster. The tree deals double damage to objects and structures.

Actions

Multiattack. The puck tree makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (4d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage. The puck tree can deal half damage instead and grapple a Medium or smaller creature (escape DC 15). The tree can grapple up to two creatures at a time.

Rock. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 32 (5d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and a creature must succeed on a DC 15 Strength or Dexterity saving throw (target's choice) or fall prone.

Fling. The puck tree throws a Medium or smaller creature grappled by it up to 30 feet horizontally. That creature takes 1d10 damage per 10 feet thrown and lands prone. If the target is thrown at another creature, that creature must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take the same damage and fall prone.

Reactions

Deadfall. When the puck tree drops to 0 hit points, it falls in a direction of its choice in a 15-foot line that's 5 feet wide. Each creature in that area must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 17 (5d6) bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Rime Hungers

"You almost feel sorry for them. Freezing to death is a bad way to go, but they did something to cause their state. And they hunger for warm flesh. I think you get my point."

Rime-Covered Corpses. Rarely straying far from where they died and never willingly wandering into areas of warmth and sunlight, rime hungers are frost-covered, sickly blue corpses that haunt frozen regions in continuous search for victims.

Hungry Dead. Rime hungers devour all forms of living flesh but crave that of sapient creatures. It's believed their undead state is a curse brought on by cannibalism they engaged in to stave off their original demise.

Persistent Shamblers. While they are slow and will not follow their prey into warm lands, rime hungers track prey with the persistence of the dead while in colder lands.

Undead Nature. A rime hunger doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

Salvage

Rime hungers sometimes carry the treasures they had in life. Some sages claim a rime hunger tongue dissolves in a *potion of cold resistance*, doubling the potion's duration. However, many alchemists consider this claim to be bunk.

Lore

DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana): A rime hunger is immune to cold and vulnerable to fire damage. It can't be poisoned.

DC 15 Intelligence (Religion): One should avoid the grasp of rime hungers. They can feed on the life and warmth of creatures they hold, which strengthens the rime hunger.

Rime Hunger

Medium Undead, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)
Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Wis +0
Damage Vulnerabilities fire
Damage Immunities cold, poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8
Languages understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak
Challenge 1 (200 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Fed Fortitude. For 1 minute after a rime hunger regains hit points, when damage reduces the rime hunger to 0 hit points, it can make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is fire, radiant, or from a critical hit. On a success, the rime hunger drops to 1 hit point instead.

Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage, and if the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 12). A rime hunger can have only one creature grappled at a time.

Sapping Grasp. A creature grappled by the rime hunger must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, taking 9 (2d8) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the target fails, the rime hunger also regains hit points equal to half the damage the target took.

Seaborn Troll

"What's worse than a troll?
A smart troll with elemental powers!"

Primoridal Trolls. Trolls infused with elemental forces serve the primordials. These primordial trolls are more cunning than their mundane cousins, and their elemental nature affects their regeneration. Each type of primordial troll has abilities based on the primordial they serve or have connections to.

Seaborn troll. As with their Primordial Lord Alondo, seaborn trolls prefer to be left alone. Their small familial communes are hidden along remote storm-wracked coasts, where the trolls hunt the waters.

Seaborn troll skin ranges from slate blue to mossy green. They are built to easily navigate surging coastal tides. Among the waves, they hunt using wicked claws and an acidic bite.

The most powerful seaborn trolls wield powers of acid and mist. They can conjure thick and sometimes caustic fog. These seaborn trolls spit acid at foes before disappearing into the mists.

Salvage

Nodules inside primordial trolls empower them with elemental traits. Someone who has proficiency in the Arcana or Medicine skill can extract these "organs" with a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana) or Wisdom (Medicine) check. Somebody who has proficiency with alchemist's supplies can take the nodules from one troll, along with other reagents worth 100 gp, to refine an *elixir of elemental spittle* (see chapter 4). Making one elixir takes 1 day of work.

Lore

DC 10 Intelligence (Nature): Most primordial trolls have natural weapons empowered with elemental damage. Stoneborn trolls don't, but their strength and resilience make up for this lack.

DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana): Powerful primordial trolls have magical abilities tied to their ancestry and traditions.

DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana or Nature): Only the windborn troll's regeneration is sensitive to acid and fire like normal trolls. Cold and acid damage affect fireborn trolls, while seaborn trolls are susceptible to fire and magical cold. And acid and thunder temporarily shut down a stoneborn troll's regeneration.

Seaborn Troll

Large Giant, Neutral

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 105 (10d10 + 50)
Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	9 (–1)	11 (+0)	8 (–1)

Skills Perception +3
Damage Immunities acid
Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Giant
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Amphibious. The troll can breathe air and water.

Aquatic Camouflage. The troll has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide underwater.

Flexible. The troll can enter a space large enough for a Medium creature without squeezing.

Keen Smell. The troll has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Regeneration. The troll regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn. If the troll takes cold or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the troll's next turn. The troll dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Actions

Multiattack. The troll makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage and 5 (2d4) acid damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Seaborn Troll Fogcaller

Large Giant, Neutral

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 136 (13d10 + 65)
Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	16 (+3)	20 (+5)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	9 (–1)

Skills Perception +5
Damage Immunities acid
Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Giant
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Amphibious. The troll can breathe air and water.

Aquatic Camouflage. The troll has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide underwater.

Flexible. The troll can enter a space large enough for a Medium creature without squeezing.

Keen Smell. The troll has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Magic Weapons. The troll's weapon attacks are magical.

Regeneration. The troll regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn. If the troll takes cold or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the troll's next turn. The troll dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Actions

Multiattack. The troll makes three attacks, only one of which can be a bite. It can use call fog in place of two attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage and 7 (2d6) acid damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Spit Acid. *Ranged Spell Attack*: +5 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit*: 14 (4d6) acid damage.

Call Fog. The troll creates a 30-foot-radius sphere of fog centered on itself. The sphere spreads around corners, and its area is heavily obscured. It lasts for 1 minute or until a wind of moderate or greater speed (at least 10 miles per hour) disperses it.

The troll can choose to make this fog caustic. If it does so, a creature that enters the fog for the first time on a turn or starts its turn there takes 10 (4d4) acid damage. Once the troll makes caustic fog, it can do so again only after it finishes a short or long rest.

Shatter Corpse

"The sound of breaking glass startles most, but think twice before going to see what caused it if it is followed by the sound of moaning."

Covered in Glass. When someone dies with glass embedded in their skin—such as being stabbed by a shard of glass or killed by a falling window—they may rise as a shatter corpse. Shards of glass continually grow through the skin of a shatter corpse, covering them in razor-sharp weapons.

Ponderous and Noisy. Shatter corpses are no more mobile than an average zombie, and the constantly breaking glass makes them even easier to hear coming.

Dangerous Volley. Shatter corpses can flick hails of glass shards at nearby creatures. The shards grow back within a few seconds.

Salvage

The glass from ten shatter corpses can be used to create a suit of *glass-studded armor* with a successful DC 10 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check by someone proficient with jeweler's tools. Crafting this item takes 10 days and costs 1000 gp.

Shatter Corpse

Medium Undead, Chaotic Neutral

Armor Class 10 (natural armor)
Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	3 (–4)	6 (-2)	5 (–3)

Saving Throws Wis +0
Damage Immunities poison, piercing
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8
Languages understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak
Challenge 1 (200 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Glass Spikes. Each time a creature makes a melee attack against a shatter corpse, it takes 3 piercing damage. A creature can choose to make an attack with disadvantage to avoid this damage.

Loud. Creatures have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks made to hear the approach of a shatter corpse.

Turn Resistance. The shatter corpse has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the shatter corpse to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the shatter corpse drops to 1 hit point instead.

Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack*: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit*: 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage and 2 (1d4) piercing damage.

Volley of Glass (Recharge 6). The shatter corpse flicks a volley of glass shards in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) slashing damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Lore

DC 10 Intelligence (Religion): Shatter corpses are a stronger kind of zombie that arises when someone dies from being impaled on broken glass.
DC 15 Intelligence (History): Those that attempt to use a melee attack against a shatter corpse are likely to cut themselves unless they attack with carefully.
DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana): Shatter corpses can launch volleys of broken glass.

Svangras

"In a world fraught with danger, sometimes even the underfoot flora is deadly."

Cursed Grass. Stories claim that imps plant svangras, but it really grows in places where travelers died, particularly from exhaustion. Svangras is a bulb plant that looks like a large onion that can move on small tendrils. When svangras forms, grass in its area falls under its control. Anyone walking on svangras is said to be doomed to unending exhaustion.

Salvage

Where svangras grows, treasure and remains might be found. Finding valuables could require searching the area, and a search could turn up almost anything. The value tends to be 50 gp or fewer.

Lore

DC 10 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Survival): Svangras can easily be mistaken for an ordinary onion.

DC 15 Intelligence (Nature): Svangras is immune to being blinded, deafened, and frightened.

DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana): Being close to svangras allows the plant to sap your life force.

Svangras

Tiny Plant, Unaligned

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 5 (2d4)
Speed 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (–5)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	1 (–5)	6 (–2)	1 (–5)

Condition Immunities blinded, deafened, frightened
Senses blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8
Languages —
Challenge 0 (10 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

False Appearance. While the svangras remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary wild onion.

Actions

Tendril. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) necrotic damage.

Sapping Grass (1/Day). Each nonplant creature on the ground within 20 feet of the svangras must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or take 5 (2d4) necrotic damage. Those who fail by 5 or more also gain one level of exhaustion. If the svangras uses this action while motionless, it doesn't give up its false appearance.

Tangle Weed

"Tangle weed, tangle weed, grows in the lake.
Tangle weed, tangle weed, your neck will break.
Tangle weed, tangle weed, pulls you down.
Tangle weed, tangle weed, you will drown."
-children's nursery rhyme

Hiding in Plain Sight. Tangle weeds grow in stagnant lakes and slow-moving rivers amidst other plants and algae. The long, feathery strands are difficult to differentiate from less dangerous lake plants.

Drowning Danger. While tangle weed constricts its prey, the real danger is the environment. Tangle weed drags its prey underwater where drowning is possible.

Whipping Strands. Pulling a victim free of the tangle weed is harder than it looks. The plant makes attacks against any creature pushed, pulled, or shoved out of its grasp, often grabbing the victim again before allies move them clear.

Salvage

The strands of a tangle weed can be gathered and combined with 25 gp of components to create a *potion of growth*. This requires a proficient arcanist to succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check after 4 hours of work.

Lore

DC 10 Intelligence (History): Tangle weed looks like normal lake-grown seaweed, but it feeds on the rotting corpses of those it drags into stagnant lakes.

DC 15 Intelligence (Nature): Tangle weed constricts its victims, dragging them underwater.

DC 20 Intelligence (Nature): When a creature is broken out the tangle weed's grapple, it makes another attack against them as a reaction to potentially grapple them again.

Tangle Weed

Large Plant, Unaligned

Armor Class 9
Hit Points 51 (6d10 + 18)
Speed 15 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	9 (-1)	16 (+3)	1 (–5)	10 (+0)	1 (–5)

Condition Immunities blinded, deafened, exhaustion, prone
Senses blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages –
Challenge 1 (200 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

False Appearance. While the tangle weed remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal plant.

Actions

Constrict. *Melee Weapon Attack*: +6 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit*: The target takes 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and it is grappled (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and at the end of the tangle weed's turn it pulls each creature grappled by it 5 feet toward its roots.

Reactions

Whipping Strand. When a creature being grappled by the tangle weed is subject to an effect that moves it, the tangle weed can use its reaction to make another constrict attack against the creature.

Unusual Beasts

Etharis is teeming with strange and mutated beasts. The ones listed here are just a few of the monstrous creatures that characters might encounter on their travels.

Frostbite Fox

Rare Hunter. Wild frostbite foxes live in packs in Grarjord. They change with the seasons, fur turning white in the winter and brown in the spring. What doesn't change is the fox's weird ability to deliver a jolt of cold with its bite.

Clan Culture. These foxes are an important part of the Valikan clan culture. Their furs help the people of the North survive harsh winters, and the clans are careful not to overhunt the species.

Torcheater

Torcheaters are small batlike creatures that feed on fire, swooping down to douse torches and campfires.

Salvage

Someone who has proficiency with leatherworker's tools can create cold-weather clothing from the pelts of five frostbite foxes. Doing so takes 8 hours of work.

Lore

DC 10 Wisdom (Nature): The chilled fangs of a frostbite fox can overwhelm the senses.

DC 10 Wisdom (Nature): These bat-like creatures terrorize travellers in dark places by consuming fires, plunging the area into darkness.

Frostbite Fox

Tiny Beast, Unaligned

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 3 (1d4 + 1)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (–4)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	3 (–4)	12 (+1)	8 (–1)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +5
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages —
Challenge 0 (10 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Keen Smell. The frostbite fox has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage and 1 cold damage. If the target is a creature and takes the cold damage, the creature can't take reactions until the start of its next turn.

Torcheater

Tiny Monstrosity, Unaligned

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 3 (1d4 + 1)
Speed 5 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
2 (–4)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	2 (–4)	11 (+0)	6 (–2)

Damage Immunities fire
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages —
Challenge 0 (10 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Eat Fire. If the torcheater flies through fire, it reduces the fire's area by a 1-foot cube. A fire goes out if its area is reduced to nothing.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 fire damage.

Whelmer

"Helping people is all well and good on dry land, but you won't see me diving to the rescue of anyone in the water. Not after last time."

Illusory Lure. A corrupted water elemental, a whelmer likes to lurk in or near a body of water close to areas inhabited by humanoids. When people pass, a whelmer creates the illusion of a drowning person. Rather than wait in the water, the whelmer might rest motionless on a path to a beach or lake, waiting to ensnare would-be rescuers.

Fey Ties. The whelmers' powers of illusion stem from fey ties. Some water elementals wanted to meddle in the realms of mortals. Curious about these strange creatures, fey saw a chance for mischief and taught these rogue elementals how to lure people with illusions.

Elemental Nature. A whelmer doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

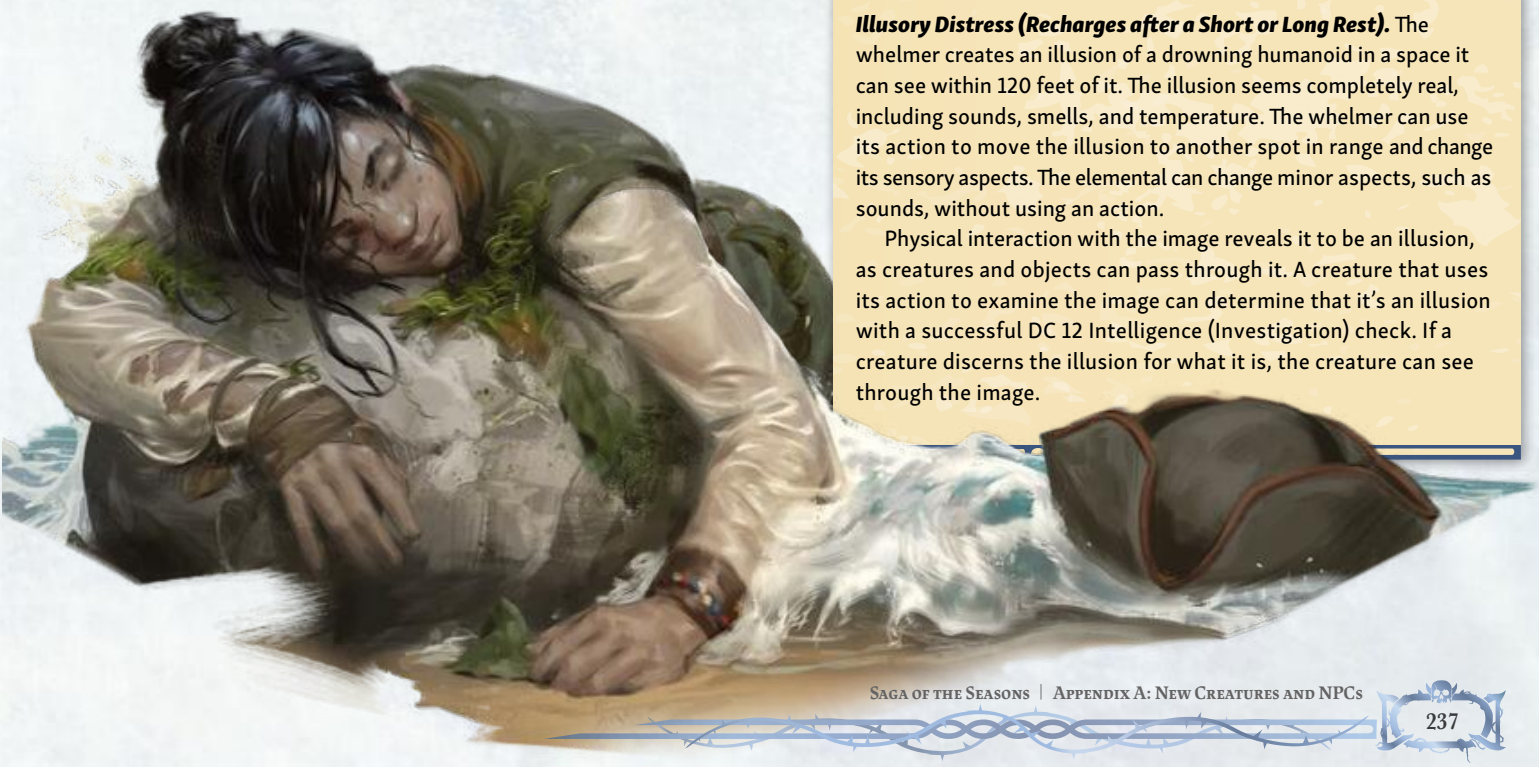
Salvage

If somebody casts *gentle repose* on the remains of a whelmer within 1 minute, someone who has proficiency with alchemist's supplies can boil the water down over 1 hour and add other materials worth 25 gp. If the alchemist succeeds on a DC 13 Intelligence or Wisdom check, the result is one *potion of water breathing*.

Lore

DC 10 Intelligence (History): Whelmers are evil elementals that drag their victims into water to drown them. These elementals are stealthy and lie in wait as still pools of water.

DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana): Whelmers lure their prey with illusions of drowning humanoids.



Whelmer

Medium Elemental, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 68 (8d10 + 24)
Speed 30 ft., swim 90 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	8 (–1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)

Skills Stealth +5
Damage Immunities poison
Damage Resistances acid; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Aquan
Challenge 1 (200 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

False Appearance. While the whelmer remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a pool of water.

Freeze. If the whelmer takes cold damage, it partially freezes, reducing its speed by 20 feet until the end of its next turn.

Undertow. The whelmer's speed is normal when it moves a grappled target.

Water Form. The whelmer can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. It can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack*: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 13). Until this grapple ends, the target can't breathe and the whelmer can't slam another target.

Illusory Distress (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). The whelmer creates an illusion of a drowning humanoid in a space it can see within 120 feet of it. The illusion seems completely real, including sounds, smells, and temperature. The whelmer can use its action to move the illusion to another spot in range and change its sensory aspects. The elemental can change minor aspects, such as sounds, without using an action.

Physical interaction with the image reveals it to be an illusion, as creatures and objects can pass through it. A creature that uses its action to examine the image can determine that it's an illusion with a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check. If a creature discerns the illusion for what it is, the creature can see through the image.

Appendix B:

NEW MAGIC ITEMS AND SPELLS

This section contains magic items and spells found in this adventure that aren't from in the fifth edition core rules.

Magic Items

The following magic items are new to this adventure or originally found in *Grim Hollow: The Monster Grimoire*.

Cloak of Secret Shadows

Wondrous Item, Rare (Requires Attunement)

This jet-black cloak is reversible, with night-black fur on one side and shiny silver silk on the other. You have advantage on Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) checks while you wear the cloak. Additionally, while wearing this cloak, you are unaffected when another creature uses its reaction to impose disadvantage on your attack rolls or determine their results.

The cloak's other powers depend on which side of the reversible cloak faces outward while you wear it. You can switch which side of the cloak is showing as an action.

Black Fur. You are silent and invisible to magical sensors created by divination spells, and your presence doesn't trigger the *alarm* spell or other magical alarms.

As an action, you can pull the hood up to become a flat, intangible shadow. While you are a shadow, you have resistance to cold and necrotic damage and to nonmagical bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage. You also can't move, take actions, or touch or interact with objects except those already on your person when you became a shadow. You can pull down the hood as an action, ending the effect.

Silver Silk. You are shielded from the effects of divination spells. You can't be detected by spells like *locate creature*, and divination spells that reveal information, such as detect thoughts or augury, make their predictions as if you don't exist.

As an action, you can pull the hood up to cast *disguise self* from the cloak (DC 17 to discern that you're disguised). This disguise creates an exact copy of a creature you can see that is within 300 feet of you as you cast the spell.

Elixir of Elemental Spittle

Potion, Rare

This foul-smelling liquid is made from the saliva of an elemental troll. When consumed, you can use a bonus action to spit energy at a creature within 5 feet for 1 minute. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 7 (2d6) damage of a type corresponding to the troll whose spittle was used to craft the potion. No damage is inflicted on a successful save.

If the target of the spell rolls a natural 20 on their saving throw, the potion explodes inside you, doing 6d6 damage of the potion's energy type to you. The potion becomes ineffective after the explosion.

Flammable Tincture

Potion, Uncommon

This swirling mixture of red and white liquid is formed from the remains of a coldfire ooze. As an action, the vial of flammable tincture can be hurled up to 30 feet at a target, which must succeed one a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or be covered with the liquid. For 1 minute, the creature is vulnerable to fire damage. This overrides any previous immunity or resistance.

Fey-Eye

Wondrous Item, Uncommon (Requires Attunement)

This smooth orb of lapis lazuli glows bears a glowing dwarven rune, an ever-watchful naiad spirit trapped within. As an action, you can speak a command word to activate the stone. For the next hour, the orb spins and twitches, as if watching for danger from all directions; you have advantage on initiative rolls and a +5 bonus to your passive Perception.

Once you use this property of the stone, you can't do so again until the next dawn.

Heartseed Ring

Ring, Uncommon, Rare, or Very Rare (Requires Attunement)

This band of living ash wood contains knowledge of the Circle of Stoneraisers. This ring grants its wearer the ability to use maneuvers described in chapter 3 of *Raider's Guide to Valika*.

This ring's magic power is represented as maneuver points, which you can spend to use maneuvers. When a maneuver calls for a saving throw, use the save DC listed below or your maneuver save DC if your subclass grants you one, whichever is higher.

The maneuvers and number of charges available depend on the ring's rarity.

Budding (Uncommon). In this stage, a single green bud adorns the ring. The ring stores 3 maneuver points, and it regains 1d3 expended points daily at dawn. You can use the following maneuvers (save DC 13):

- Tremorcraft
- Uplift Ridge

Sprouting (Rare). In this stage, the bud has grown and been encircled by small leaves. The ring has 4 charges and regains 1d4 points at dawn. You can use the following maneuvers (save DC 14):

- Tremorcraft
- Uplift Ridge
- Alter the Board

Blossoming (Very Rare). In this stage, the bud opens into a fluffy white flower. The ring stores 6 points and recovers 1d6 points at dawn. You can use the following maneuvers (save DC 15):

- Tremorcraft
- Alter the Board
- Stonespur
- Uplift Ridge
- Hold Ground

Tremorcraft (1 point)

With a subtle movement, you shift the ground beneath your opponents. As a bonus action, you can spend 1 maneuver point to target one Large or smaller creature or object touching the ground within 30 feet of you, which must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or be moved 5 feet horizontally in any direction.

You can move one additional target per extra maneuver point you spend.

Uplift Ridge (2 points)

As an action, when standing on stone or natural earth, you can spend 2 maneuver points to slam your foot against the ground to create a ridge of stone that emerges from the ground and lasts for 10 minutes. The ridge is 6 inches thick, 10 feet long, and 3 feet high.

The ridge grants cover to creatures behind it. A Medium creature has half-cover, while a Medium creature that is prone, or a Small or smaller creature, has total cover.

Alter the Board (3 points)

Your control of the earth allows you to alter the positions of other creatures by shifting the very ground they stand on. As a bonus action, you can spend 3 maneuver points to target a number of Large or smaller creatures that are touching the ground equal to your proficiency bonus within 60 feet. Unwilling creatures must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw to avoid being pushed up to 15 feet along the ground in any direction.

Hold Ground (3 points)

When standing on stone or natural earth, you can use a bonus action to spend 3 maneuver points to stomp your feet into the ground, locking yourself in place and giving yourself superior footing. Your speed becomes 0 and you have advantage on saving throws against being moved, and immunity to the prone condition for 1 minute.

Additionally, you have advantage on melee attacks while you are in this state.

You can end this maneuver as a bonus action.

Stonespur (3 points)

As an action, you can spend 3 maneuver points to cause a blunt spike of stone, roughly 1 foot wide and 15 feet long, to erupt from the ground at a point you choose within 60 feet.

If a creature is hit by the spur, it must make a Strength saving throw. On a failure, it takes 6d6 bludgeoning damage and is thrown 20 feet away from the spur. It takes half as much damage on a success and isn't pushed. The ram cracks and falls apart when it hits a creature.

Lindwyrm Venom

Potion (Poison), Very Rare

This terrible venom is extracted and distilled from the deadly lindwyrm. It can be delivered via ingestion or a wound. A creature exposed to the venom must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or take 36 (8d8) poison damage and be poisoned for 1 minute. While poisoned, the creature has disadvantage on Strength and Dexterity ability checks and saving throws.

Magebane Bomb

Wondrous Item, Rare

This bubbling liquid is distilled from the remains of a magebane ooze. You can throw the container at an enemy's weapon or armor, or at a spellcaster.

Make a simple ranged weapon attack. On a hit, the target takes 3 (1d6) acid damage, and their weapon takes a -1 penalty to attacks and damage or their armor takes a -1 penalty to the AC it offers until they complete a long rest. If the target is a spellcaster and you hit them with the bomb, for 1 minute they take a -1 penalty to hit with spell attacks, and their spells' saving throw DCs decrease by 1.

Pale Coral

Weapon (Rapier), Very Rare (Requires Attunement)

This blade has a bone white metallic basket hilt, and wails as it swings through the air. You have a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this rapier.

While attuned to this weapon, you are resistant to necrotic and radiant damage, and can speak and understand Laneshi. You also gain a swimming speed of 30 feet and can breathe underwater.

Scale of Gegazol
Shield, Rare

The largest scales shed from the undead dragon Gegazol can be used as a shield, though few Valikans are foolhardy enough to try and steal one from her lair.

This magic shield grants its bearer resistance to cold damage, even cold damage dealt by coldfire.

Scraglung Helmet
Wondrous Item, Uncommon

This gruesome helmet is fashioned out of the flesh and innards of a seaborn troll. You can breathe underwater while wearing it.

Acidic Biology. You take 5 (2d4) acid damage when you don this helmet, and again at the start of each hour you spend wearing it.

Mithra's Pinion
Wondrous Item, Rare (Requires Attunement)

This golden feather is said to have lined the interior of the hero Mithra's cloak. While you carry this feather, you use your reaction to wave the feather and give a creature you can see within 30 feet advantage or disadvantage on a saving throw, including death saving throws, before it attempts the roll. Once a creature has been the target of this item, it can't be affected by this item again until the next dawn.

Location. This magic item is kept on the person of Hrafen av Skeir, or in his chambers in his longhouse, Hrafensheim (see chapter 5).

Wyrmbreath
Weapon (Warhammer), Rare (Requires Attunement)

This beautiful smithing hammer shimmers with a faint prismatic light. You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. While you are attuned to this item, you gain expertise in checks you make with smith's tools.

This weapon has 2 charges and regains both charges at dawn each day. When you hit a creature with a melee attack, you can expend a charge to unleash a burst of elemental fury. The attack deals an additional 2d6 cold, fire, or lightning damage (your choice). Until the end of your next turn, you have resistance to the chosen damage type.

Spells

The following spells are new to this adventure or from *Grim Hollow: The Players Guide*.

Suffocate
3rd-level conjuration

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 60 ft.
Components: V, S, M (a leather glove)
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

You create a pair of grasping hands made from invisible forces. Make a spell attack against one creature that you can see within range. On a hit, the creature is restrained as the hands crush their throat or bodily equivalent.

If the creature requires air to breathe, it begins to suffocate. A suffocating creature can survive for a number of rounds equal to 1 + its Constitution modifier (minimum of 1 round). At the start of its next turn after those rounds are over, it becomes unconscious, and it can't regain hit points until it can breathe again.

A conscious creature restrained by the hands can use its action to make a Strength or Dexterity check (its choice) against your spell save DC. On a success, the spell ends on the target.

Steal Shadow
4th-level necromancy

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Components: S
Duration: 1 week

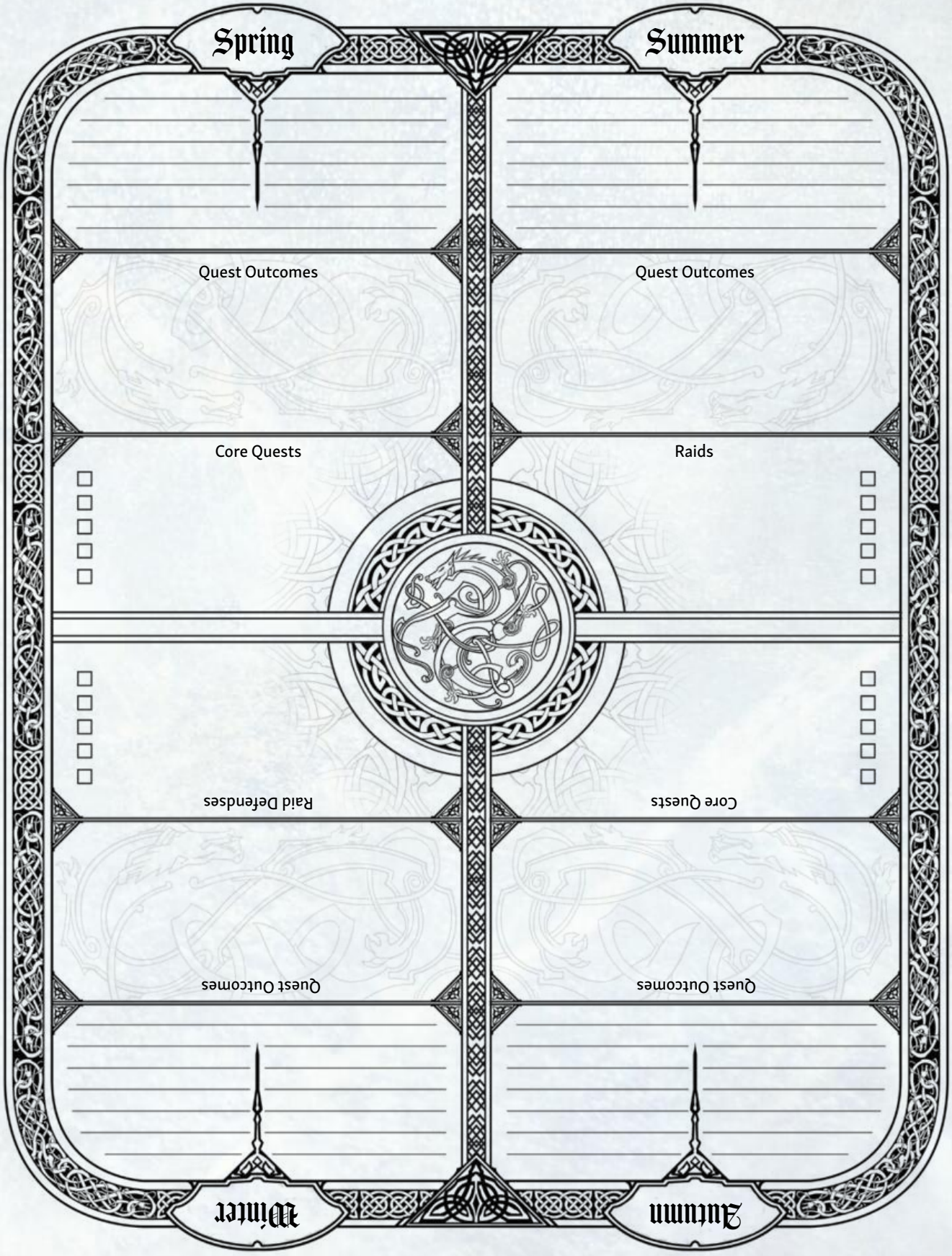
You attempt to curse a creature by stealing its shadow. Make a melee spell attack to grab the creature's shadow. If you hit and the creature is not an Undead or a Construct, you steal its shadow. Until the curse ends, the creature casts no shadow, and it has disadvantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws.

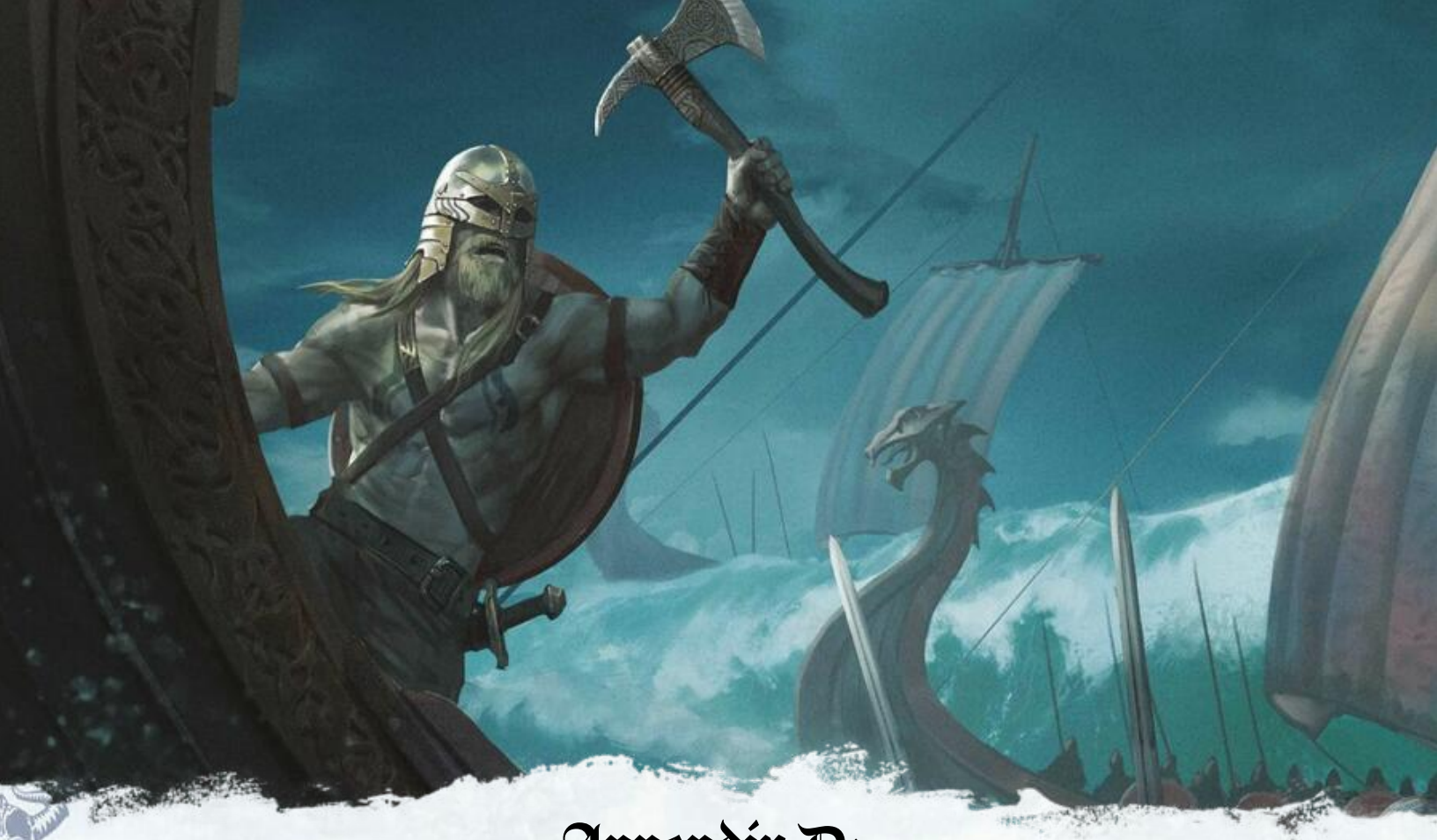
As a part of that spell attack, you can make a Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check contested by the target's passive Wisdom (Perception) score. On a success, the target doesn't notice you've taken its shadow. If the target notices, it can make a melee attack against you as a reaction. If this attack hits, you fail to take the creature's shadow, but your spell slot is still expended.

You can handle the shadow like a wispy gray handkerchief. As long as you carry it, you leave tracks identical to the target's and you cast a shadow that resembles theirs rather than yours. If the shadow cloth is touched to the victim or unattended for 24 hours, the spell ends.

This dispel magic spell ends this spell early if cast on the shadow cloth. The remove curse spell ends this spell early if cast on the creature whose shadow was stolen. If the creature dies while its shadow is stolen, the shadow cloth becomes a shadow that is hostile to all creatures.

Appendix C: CALENDAR OF THE SEASONS





Appendix D:

ABRIDGED RAID RULES

An abridged version of the raiding rules described in Raider's Guide to Valika is presented herein. Refer to that text for a full description of raiding rules, particularly if you plan to create new raid sites for your own campaign.

Raiding

Raiding, as carried out in Valika, is different from warfare. It is governed by centuries-old traditions akin to a legal system of unwritten rules not understood by Valika's southern neighbors.

Approaches to Playing Raids

The *Raider's Guide to Valika* describes two approaches for running raids:

Assault-Style. It focuses on the characters and their conflicts during a raid and is most similar to "normal" Fifth Edition-style combat. The characters overcome challenges before storming a stronghold in a final battle and retreating with their ill-gotten games.

Commander-Style. This includes the aspects of assault-style raids but expands gameplay to include the command of raiding parties in a resource-management minigame, targeting locations at the raiding site to prepare for a final assault of the main stronghold.

How to Raid

A raid is split into five parts, regardless of whether you are using an assault- or commander-style raid:

- Phase 1: Preparation
- Phase 2: Commanding Raiders
- Phase 3: Storming the Stronghold
- Phase 4: Return to the Longships
- Phase 5: Downtime Activities

For either type of raid, it's assumed that the player characters are the leaders of their raiding party and participate in the raid.

Phase 1: Preparation

The preparation phase of a raid is about gathering and utilizing intelligence about the raid site. The raid leaders then choose how many raiders and which resources to employ during the raid.

This phase works similarly regardless of which raid playstyle you're using. Using intelligence and employing

resources wisely is key to a successful raid. Likewise, having incomplete intelligence about enemy defenses and numbers could prove catastrophic, ensuring a negative outcome before the raid even starts.

Longships

A Valikan raiding party typically departs with one longship for every 25 warriors on the raid. Each longship can carry 50 warriors, or replace 1 warrior with 100 lbs. of resources or plunder.

Resources

All raiders rely on three core resources: timber, stone, and raiders, which are taken from stockpiles the clan has gathered before the raiding season.

- ***Timber.*** Used to build ships and shields.
- ***Stone, iron, and other metals.*** Used to create weapons and other supplies.
- ***Raiders.*** The people needed to fight the battles when raiding a settlement.

Timber

The raiders may acquire timber to create new gear or reinforce their vessels and craft supplies. A group of raiders set out from their village with a certain amount of timber (measured in pounds). In Saga of the Seasons, this amount is determined by the characters' actions in previous chapters of the adventure.

Using Timber. A raider with proficiency in woodworker's tools can fashion whatever tools are needed and to implement simple but effective repairs. Repairing ships or creating new supplies is a downtime activity that the characters can lead during a raid. See "Downtime Activities," later in this section.

Gathering Timber. As a downtime activity, the characters can lead an expedition to gather timber and iron. See "Downtime Activities," later in this section.

Stone, Iron, and Other Metals

Basic materials or metals such as stone, iron, and copper can be acquired during a journey through environments that have them naturally occurring, such as mountains, arid hills, and badlands. These mineral resources are collectively called "iron" for simplicity.

Using Stone, Iron, and Other Metals. A raider with proficiency in smith's tools can create supplies that can aid in battle. Creating new supplies is a downtime activity that the characters can lead during a raid. See "Downtime Activities," later in this section.

Gathering Iron. As a downtime activity, the characters can lead an expedition to gather iron and timber. See "Downtime Activities," later in this section.

Raiders

Raiders are warriors with a specialized skill set. Although they are living beings, they can still be created from the raw materials of members of a clan. The specifics of finding suitable raiders and turning them into a well-trained raiding force is covered in "Downtime Activities," later in this section.

Optional Rules

The *Raider's Guide to Valika* provides additional optional rules to use during the preparation phase, including Quartermastering, Hunting and Foraging, and Scouting. These optional rules provided further tools for the player characters to prepare their raiding parties for assault on a target site.

Phase 2: Commanding Raiders

This phase of the raid comprises a series of skirmishes in which the characters serve as commanders and tacticians for the raiding party. The size of their raiding party and the special resources they have at their disposal is determined by the preparations the characters made in Phase 1: Preparation.

Assault Style Raids

In this type of play, the characters work with the knowledge they gain during the preparation phase to plan their raiding. They then undertake the first conflicts leading toward the stronghold area of the raid site. After clearing the path to the targeted stronghold, they take on the forces there.

These skirmishes can be run as combat encounters using normal Fifth-Edition rules. They should be on the easier side in terms of challenge, with the understanding that the next phase ("Storming the Stronghold") will contain more challenging encounters, and the characters will have time to take short rests during the raid, but not long rests.

Everything Else Happening. With the assault-style play, the GM adjudicates the conflicts taking place "off-stage." Decisions about the success of these other conflicts can be made unilaterally based on the success of the reconnaissance, can be determined through rolls as described in the commander-style raiding rules, or simply determined in a way to make the narrative more dramatic and interesting.

Commander Style Raids

This type of play follows a standard set of turns and events to reflect the raiders progress. The conflicts in Phase 2 are resolved by using Raiding Rolls described later in this section to determine outcomes and consequences. It is important to understand that Raiding Rolls and these rules in general involve an abstraction of the results and narratives.

Turns

This phase of a raid is measured in turns, with each turn typically taking 1 hour of in-game time.

Targeting Conflict Zones. The characters can order a simultaneous attack on as many conflict zones as they have raiders to spare in a single turn. Completing the raid in fewer turns reduces the chance enemy reinforcements appear, but spreading the forces too thin lowers the odds of successfully capturing a conflict zone.

Turn Count. A turn ends once the Raiding Roll has been made for all conflict zones attacked during the turn. Typically, the next turn begins immediately, and the characters must assess the state of their raiding party and choose to retreat, which ends the raid, or take another turn by launching attacks on new conflict zones.

In this phase, events can occur on certain turns that cause certain conflict zones to disappear (as civilians flee), become harder to conquer (as they're reinforced with troops), or new conflict zones to appear (which are typically mandatory obstacles that must be conquered to reach Phase 3 of the raid). For more information, see "Reinforcements," below.

Reaching the Stronghold. Certain conflict zones must be conquered before attacking the raid site's stronghold. If all zones blocking access to the stronghold have been conquered, the characters can choose to start Phase 3: Storming the Stronghold at the end of a turn.

Summary View

In short, a single turn during Phase 2 of a raid looks like this:

- First turn begins.
- Players assess their warriors and supplies, choosing which conflict zones to attack on this turn.
- Players assign a number of warriors and resources to each selected conflict zone, which can't exceed their current count of warriors or supplies.
- Make a Raiding Roll (see "Raiding Rolls," below) for each targeted conflict zone, determining the outcome of that attack.
- Assess warriors and resources lost or gained in the attack and adjust resource totals.
- If there are no other conflict zones blocking the raid site's stronghold, the players can choose to move immediately to Phase 3. Otherwise, a new turn of Phase 2 begins, or the players decide to retreat.
- A new turn begins. The GM describes the effects of any events that occur at the start of this turn.

Retreat

Retreat is expected when raiding. Unlike a war of conquest, raiders attack fast, plunder as much as possible, and then leave just as fast as they arrived. During Phase 2 of a raid, the characters can order a retreat at the end of any turn. Once the characters call a retreat, advance to Phase 4: Return to the Longships.

Reinforcements

Each raid site has a "timer" in this phase. At the start of certain turns listed in the raid site's description, the Raiding Roll DC of certain conflict zones can increase, the plunder gained for capturing certain zones can decrease, and more.

Reinforcements don't typically arrive on consecutive turns. In most raids, changes only occur starting on turn four, usually on even-numbered turns, and usually with the change being forecasted by read-aloud text the turn before it happens. You can make your raid more frantic by decreasing the amount of time before reinforcements start occurring, or increasing the frequency with which they occur.

Raid Sites, Maps, and Conflict Zones

Phase 2 of the raid takes place in conflict zones on an overland scale, generally featuring multiple locations, structures, and terrain elements.

Conflict Zones. The conflict zones on the map represent the defensive positions the defenders have established: important bottlenecks in the terrain, stores of valuable resources that are the target of the raid, or other areas of importance. Some areas may be optional but are not required to claim total victory in a raid.

Assessing Conflict Zones. The GM knows the stats of a conflict zone, such as the Raiding Roll DC required to conquer it, and what rewards it grants when conquered. These details are private and shouldn't be shared. However, each conflict zone has some flavor text that should give the players a hint of what special supplies can be used to gain a bonus when attacking it, if any.

Allocating Raiders. To conquer a conflict zone, the characters must first command their raiders to attack it. Each conflict zone has a minimum number of raiders needed to attack it. The optional scouting rules in The Raider's Guide to Valika can provide the characters with guidance on these numbers. Otherwise, use the Raider Numbers Guess table to give the characters an estimate of those numbers.

Raider Numbers Guess Chart

d4	Minimum Zone Raid Force Guess Number
1	Actual number minus 2
2	Actual number minus 1
3	Actual number plus 1
4	Actual number plus 2

Assigning more raiders beyond that minimum grants bonuses to the Raiding Roll that increases the odds of success.

The characters have a finite number of warriors at their command once the raid starts. In long raiding campaigns, warriors are persistent between raids. If they run out of raiders, they're beaten. There's no getting more warriors unless they spend gold and downtime to hire mercenaries (see "Downtime Activities," later in this section) or until they return home to train new raiders.

Spending Supplies. The characters have special supplies at their disposal that can improve their odds of success at conquering a conflict zone without spending additional raiders. For specific examples, see "Supplies," later in this section.

Raiding Roll Chart

Conquering a conflict zone requires the players to make a successful Raiding Roll. The Raiding Roll is 2d10 added together and potentially modified if the characters sent more than the minimum number of raiders to a conflict zone, used special resources, or tapped other bonuses or penalties.

Doubles! If both numbers rolled on the d10s match, the result of the attack is a Critical Victory or a Critical Defeat, regardless of how many points the Raiding Roll DC passed or failed by. See the "Casualties in Victory" and "Casualties in Defeat" tables below.

Conflict Zone Types

Conflict Zone	Minimum Raid Force	Raiding Roll DC	Plunder (Resources)	Plunder (Wealth)
Shrine	3	8	2d4 captives	Religious iconography and art. Their value in gp is a number of d6 equal to the Raiding Roll DC (e.g., 7d6 gp).
Rural Settlement or Homestead	3	9	1d6 × 10 lbs. lumber, 1d4 captives, 1d4 horses (see "Supplies," below)	Livestock, weapons, toolkits, game kits, and jewelry. Their value in gp is a number of d4 equal to the Raiding Roll DC (e.g., 8d4 gp).
Fortified Village	4	10	2d6 × 10 lbs. lumber, 2d8 captives, 2d10 horses (see "Supplies," below).	Livestock, weapons, toolkits, game kits, and jewelry. Their value in gp is a number of d4 equal to the Raiding Roll DC (e.g., 10d4).
Fortified granary or other rural storage	6	13	Food, which adds 1d4 to the first Raiding Roll made next turn	Livestock, weapons, toolkits, game kits, and jewelry. Their value in gp is a number of d4 equal to the Raiding Roll DC (e.g., 13d4).
Monastery	10	14	1d6 × 10 lbs. iron, 2d6 captives	One uncommon magic item, one *potion of healing*. Religious iconography and art; their value in gp is a number of d6 equal to the Raiding Roll DC (e.g., 7d6 gp).
Military Encampment (watch tower, camp, roadblock, etc.)	12	14	2d6 × 10 lbs. iron, 2d8 captives	One uncommon magic weapon or armor, one common potion. One piece of jewelry worth up to 100 gp.
Military Fort (hill fort, bivouac, gate, etc.)	15	15	2d10 × 10 lbs. iron, 3d8 captives	Two uncommon magic weapons or armor. Three pieces of jewelry worth up to 100 gp each.
Redoubt (castle, university, cathedral)	20	18	6d10 × 10 lbs. timber, 4d10 × 10 lbs. iron, 4d8 captives	One rare magic item and one uncommon consumable item, and up to 100 gp of other items. One piece of jewelry worth up to 500 gp.

Conquering a Conflict Zone

Each conflict zone has several traits:

Type. The settlement's description and purpose.

Minimum Raid Force. The minimum number of raiders needed to attempt a Raiding Roll at a conflict zone.

Raiding Roll DC. The number that the Raiding Roll needs to meet or exceed to conquer this zone. This is a suggested DC, and it might be higher or lower depending on the specifics of a zone.

Plunder (Resources). This conflict zone has resources or supplies that can be plundered, in addition to gold. When you conquer a conflict zone, you gain these resources.

Plunder (Wealth). This conflict zone has items or money that can be plundered. When you conquer a zone, you gain these items.

Assigning More Raiders. Assigning more than the minimum number of raiders to a conflict zone grants you a bonus to the Raiding Roll. Every time you assign an extra number of raiders equal to the minimum number of raiders to a conflict zone, you gain a +2 bonus to that Raiding Roll. However, the maximum bonus you can receive for assigning more raiders is limited to +4.

Making the Raiding Roll. Once you've determined all the modifiers from the size of your raiding force and any special resources you're using (see "Supplies" below), roll 2d10, add them together, and add all bonuses and penalties you have on the roll. If the result of this roll meets or exceeds the DC of the Raiding Roll, your raiders successfully conquered the conflict zone.

The type of victory is up to the player to decide—they might choose to have won through stealth, or brute force. They might decide to slaughter everyone in the zone, or they may let them flee. The GM can decide if the narrative method of conquering the zone has any mechanical implications for future attacks in this raid.

Note the result of this roll and compare it to the "Casualties in Victory" or "Casualties in Defeat" tables below to determine how many raiders were lost in the attack. In all cases where a percentage is referred to, round down. However, there is a minimum of 1 in all cases.

Victory: Plunder and Casualties

When you successfully conquer a conflict zone, you gain resources and any benefits inherent in the zone, but possibly lose raiders.

Casualties in Victory

Raiding Roll Result	Casualties
Same as DC	**Pyrrhic Victory.** One Special Raider is killed, if any are present. Half of all plunder at this location are lost. 50 percent of assigned warriors are killed.
Succeeded by 1–5	**Hard-won Victory.** Half of the plunder at this location are lost. 25 percent of assigned raiders are killed.
Succeeded by 6–10	**Excellent Victory.** Victory with minimal losses. 10 percent of assigned raiders lost.
Succeeded by 11–15	**Remarkable Victory.** Victory with no losses.
Critical Victory! Succeeded by 16 or more	**Epic Result!** Victory with surprising good fortune. One warrior becomes a Special Raider, and twice the listed plunder is found.

The resources plundered from a conflict zone are listed in the zone's description, and these resources are added to your stock of resources after the raid is fully concluded. Resources found that can be used as part of a raid can be employed in future conflicts in the current raid.

Retreat: Plunder and Casualties

When you fail to conquer a conflict zone, your raiders must flee or get captured.

Casualties in Defeat

Raiding Roll Result	Casualties
Failed by 1	**Effective Retreat.** One Special Raider is killed, if any are present. 50 percent of assigned warriors are killed. Half all assigned supplies are lost.
Failed by 2–5	**Costly Retreat.** All assigned Special Raiders are lost. 75 percent of assigned warriors are killed. All assigned supplies are lost.
Failed by 6–10	**Horrific Retreat.** All warriors, including special raiders are lost, except for one survivor. All assigned supplies are lost.
Critical Defeat! Failure by 11 or more	**Disaster!** All warriors, including Special Raiders, are lost. All assigned supplies are lost. The enemy rallies, and the turn counter increases by one (see "Reinforcements," earlier in this section).

Preventing Casualties

Losing raiders is costly. Replacing raiders when far from home is an expensive and morally complex question, as mercenaries can be hired with hard-earned gold, and captives can be armed and pressed into service. Whenever casualties occur, the characters can spend a *potion of healing* or a casting of *cure wounds* (or other magic that restores hit points) to prevent that casualty. If a spell is used, one raider may be saved per level of the spell slot used (for example, if cure wounds is cast at 3rd level, 3 raiders can be saved).

Supplies

Supplies can be crafted out of resources during downtime or plundered from conflict zones. You can assign supplies to a conflict zone you're attacking once you've assigned warriors, but before you've made the Raiding Roll. Each supply adds a bonus to the Raiding Roll.

Additionally, some conflict zones have special traits that cause supplies to have additional effects, either positive or negative.

Due to the wear and tear of battle, half of the supplies you send to a battle are destroyed at the end of the battle. Some supplies, like drake fire casks, are consumed completely on use.

Common Supplies

A sample of supplies is shown in the Common Supplies table.

Common Supplies

Resource Name	Raiding Roll Bonus	Special
Horses	If opponents aren't mounted or indoors, gain +1 if at least half of attacking warriors are mounted. Gain +2 when all warriors are riding.	Allows mounted raiders to attack two adjacent conflict zones in one turn but can't add new warriors before attacking.
Drake fire casks	Gain +2 when you use a cask; casks can be used after making the Raiding Roll and can turn a failure into a success. Casks are consumed when used.	Lights houses and forests on fire, destroying all plunder in that conflict zone. Consumed on use.
Tall shields	Gain +1 if at least half of attacking warriors are holding a shield. Gain +2 when all warriors have a shield.	Casualties are halved against conflict zones defended by archers.
Battering ram	Gain +4 when attacking a conflict zone with fortifications like walls or gates.	Consumed on use.

Horses. Valikans don't load horses onto their ships when going raiding, and rarely bring them home but will ride them into battle if they've plundered during a raid. Riding horses is effective when fighting opponents on flat ground, granting a +2 bonus to the Raiding Roll.
To gain the +2 bonus from horses, you must assign a number of horses to a conflict zone equal to the number of warriors attacking that zone. If you assign horses to only half your warriors, the bonus is +1.

Drake Fire Casks. Drake fire is an alchemical compound that bursts into flames when exposed to water. A small cask of drake fire is rigged with a small water pouch. When the cask is broken by hurling it against a hard surface, the concoction explodes.
A group of raiders equipped with a cask of drake fire, can use it to gain a +2 bonus on the Raiding Roll. This bonus can be gained after the roll has been made, potentially turning failure into success.

Drake fire casks used against flammable material like forests or straw-roofed huts, destroys any plunder that could have been gained from that zone.
If used during combat, it is an action to throw a cask up to 30 feet. It is otherwise identical to a *fireball* spell cast at 3rd level (spell save DC 13).

Tall Shields. Most Valikan warriors carry small round wooden shields for hand-to-hand combat. When faced with a barrage of arrows, Valikans use tall shields, positioned overhead, to advance in a single unit. Using these tall shields grants a +2 bonus to the Raiding Roll. Additionally, casualties are halved when using shields in a conflict zone defended by archers.

To gain the +2 bonus from tall shields, you need to assign a number of shields to a conflict zone equal to the number of warriors attacking that zone. If you assign shields to only half your warriors, the bonus is halved to +1.

Battering Ram. This simple siege weapon can be carried by a group of warriors. It has a single purpose: to bash down weak points in fortifications, like gates or

cracked walls. If a battering ram is assigned to a conflict zone, the warriors attacking that zone gain a +4 bonus to the Raiding Roll if it's defended by fortifications. You only gain this bonus if the conflict zone has stationary defenses; a battering ram is too cumbersome to be effective when battling a highly mobile foe.

Phase 3: Storming the Stronghold

Each raid site has a central stronghold containing this area's most valuable treasures and resources, but also its most powerful defenders. Once any conflict zones preventing the characters' raiding force from storming the fort have been conquered, Phase 3 can begin.

Once this phase begins, the characters (and perhaps one or two NPCs) become the main strike force. All remaining raiders move in to attack the fort as well, keeping the stronghold's forces from boxing the characters' strike force in during their own attack. The players can't assign any more raiders to conflict zones once the storming of the stronghold begins.

There is no difference between Assault-Style and Command-Style during this phase of a raid.

Areas of the Stronghold

A stronghold is broken down into areas (typically rooms). An area of the stronghold is labeled on its map and described in the text. Some areas have treasure, some have enemies, some have traps or hazards, and most have a mixture of two or more of these elements.

Hit 'Em Quick, Get Out Fast

Raiders rely on their team's ability to fight, plunder, and retreat before their target can fully muster their defenses or call reinforcements from outside the raid site.

The GM must track how many turns have elapsed since the start of the raid. In this part, turns are six seconds long, just like a regular combat round. After a certain number of turns pass, the challenges grow more deadly, as described in the "Prepared" section that appears in some raid sites. If the characters don't defeat the stronghold's commander before the number of turns set forth in the raid site description passes, reinforcements arrive and start causing casualties among the raiders besieging the stronghold. Unless the characters want to incur further casualties and get captured (or worse), they must break off the raid and retreat immediately.

Treasure on a Time Limit

Strongholds are brimming with valuable treasure and resources that lure characters to spend their turns picking locks or smashing chests. If raiders think they can defeat the stronghold's commander before their raiders start taking losses outside, they're welcome to let the treasure wait. However, if they think they'll need to make a hasty retreat, it might make more sense to plunder the stronghold first, and then cut and run if the situation takes a turn for the worse.

Retreating

Unlike in Phase 2, the characters can order a retreat at any time. The only catch is, they need to conduct the retreat in tactical movement on the 5-foot-square grid the stronghold is drawn on. Typically, to retreat, the characters must make it back to the place on the map they entered from. However, you can decide that reaching the edge of the map in another way allows them to retreat.

Fighting the Commander

Each destination has a commander, and potentially subcommanders in a larger raid site. Without those commanders, the stronghold's defenses fall into chaos. The commander is invariably an extremely challenging fight.

Defeating the Commander

If the characters manage to defeat the raid site's commander, they gain temporary control of that destination, resulting in the following:

- Remaining creatures in the stronghold surrender or flee.
- Reinforcements do not arrive and the raiders can enter the destination's gates and fortify it against attack themselves.
- The characters can claim any treasure within the stronghold.
- Sometimes, a subcommander becomes the new commander and must be defeated to conquer the stronghold.

The characters are free to rule a conquered site but establishing and defending a fortress in hostile territory is beyond the scope of these raiding rules.

Phase 4: Return to the Longships

Eventually, the characters and their raiders must return to the longships and set sail with their plunder and their dead. Typically, Valikan ships are never far from a raid site, even if the site was approached overland. Longships can sail in open waters and upriver, so anywhere there is water, a raid can be exited via longship.

Typically, it's simple to retreat to the longships, and no checks need to be made and no casualties are incurred in the process. In certain desperate situations, such as if there are fortifications overlooking a city's harbor or a river-gate blocking easy access, the characters must fight their way through to escape any pursuers who might arrive after the raid has concluded.

In instances where the raid is taking place on land rather than via water, the phase remains the same. It is assumed that once the raid takes place, the raiding party uses land mounts and vehicles to remove themselves and their plunder from the area, retreating to a safe place free of pursuers. Only if the raid goes poorly and the raiding party must fight their way out should you play this phase out as combat

Phase 5: Downtime Activities

A raid is a lengthy endeavor. In Valika, most raiding clans battle all throughout the season of summer. Between raids are often weeks of downtime spent repairing vessels, foraging for resources, crafting supplies, training raiders, and more.

The downtime activities presented here take place as part of the total raid activity, and if you use more downtime days than one-half of what the raid would normally offer, the entire raid duration is extended by that many days. All raiders participating in the core activity must expend the full number of downtime days from the basic activity.

Repairing Ships

Prerequisite: Have at least one damaged longship

When raiders depart from their settlement, they leave with a certain number of longships. Given 1 week of downtime and 100 lbs. of timber, they can repair one damaged longship. The characters must spend this week of downtime leading and overseeing the effort to repair the ship.

Additionally, given 4 weeks of downtime, 500 lbs. of timber, and 50 lbs. of iron, they can construct a new longship which can carry 50 raiders, or 100 lbs. of cargo in place of 1 raider.

Hunting

It's assumed that your raiding party has sufficient rations in dried meat and salmon jerky to survive. Nevertheless, fresh-cooked meat always bolsters a raider's spirits. The characters can spend 1 week of downtime hunting. To do so, the characters must make several ability checks.

Finding Tracks. One character makes a DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check. On a success, they find a game trail; record the result of the check for later. On a failure, the hunting expedition was fruitless, and the downtime is spent in vain.

Pursuing Game. One character makes a DC 10 Dexterity (Stealth) check to stalk the game and clear a path for the other characters. On a success, the character manages to corner the animals; record the result of the check for later. On a failure, the game is scared away and the downtime is spent in vain.

Ambushing Prey. All characters make a ranged attack roll to fell their game. Take the average of all the rolls and record it.

Overall Success. Add together the three numbers you recorded. The total is the number of warriors you're able to feed with fresh meat. If at least half your warriors are fed by your hunt, you gain a 1d4 bonus to all raiding rolls for the next 4 weeks. If at least 25 percent of your warriors are fed, you gain a +1 bonus to raiding rolls for the next 4 weeks.

Gathering Resources

If the characters are running low on resources, they can spend 1 week of downtime to lead an expedition into the wilderness.

Party Size. The characters can bring up to 50 warriors with them.

Roll for Resources. At the end of the week, roll 1d100 and add the number of warriors the characters brought with them. They return with that number of pounds of timber, and half that number of pounds of iron.

Roll for Danger. At the end of the week, roll 1d6. On a result of 1 or 2, hostile creatures attack, killing 1d10 warriors before an effective retreat can be staged. If the characters brought more than 25 warriors with them, 2d10 warriors are killed instead.

Sailing South to Market

Communities exist that are willing to trade with Valikans in exchange for peace.

Resources for Sale. Timber can be purchased in 50 lb. bundles for 5 sp per pound. Iron can be purchased in 50 lb. bundles for 1 gp per pound. The rare materials for creating drake fire (see "Crafting Supplies" below) can also be purchased at market for 100 gp per cask.

Mercenaries for Hire. Mercenaries can be hired for 10 gp per week, with the first week upfront. No more than 10 mercenaries can be hired per week. Each hired mercenary increases your raiding crew's number of warriors by 1. Whenever warriors die, assume that mercenaries die first.

Crafting Supplies

The characters can spend downtime and resources to craft these supplies.

Horses. Can only be acquired during raids. They cannot be crafted as part of this activity.

Drake Fire Casks. The characters can spend 1 week of downtime, 50 lbs. of iron, and 300 gp of rare reagents purchased at market (see "Sailing South to Market," above) to create 3 casks of drake fire.

Tall Shields. The characters can spend 1 week of downtime, 200 lbs. of timber, and 50 lbs. of iron to create 20 tall shields.

Battering Ram. The characters can spend 1 week of downtime, 100 lbs. of timber, and 25 lbs. of iron to create 1 ram.

Raid Defense

Nowhere in Valika is safe from the raids—even the settlements of raiders themselves! There's always a chance that a location known or loyal to the characters will be raided. If the characters are fortunate, the raid will occur while they are present and can marshal their forces, but this isn't always the case. When those instances arise, the location must rally to its own defense.

Some raids are led by Valikan warriors, and others are led by monsters—as in chapter 4 of Saga of the Seasons. When your home settlement or an allied settlement is raided, the characters and their warriors can spring to its defense.

Approaches to Raid Defense

As with raiding, the *Raider's Guide to Valika* describes two approaches for running raid defense:

Assault-Style. This style runs games as a series of combat encounters leading directly into one another. This style suits gaming groups that like the small-scale tactics of individual combat encounters but aren't as concerned with battlefield strategy.

Commander-Style. This style uses an overland-scale map of the raid site the characters are defending and a map of their raid site's stronghold. This is the style of raid that is described in the rest of this section.

Setting up a Raid

Below are the guidelines for creating a basic raid defense scenario. Other raids, such as the one in chapter 4 of Saga of the Seasons, are more elaborate.

Establish Resources

A clan that is expecting to be raided can assume three or four raids to occur throughout a season, with two or three weeks of downtime to recover in between attacks.

Some basic guidelines for their starting resources at the start of a season are:

- **Small Settlement (Village):** 500 lbs. timber, 250 lbs. iron, 100 warriors
- **Medium Settlement (Town):** 1,000 lbs. timber, 500 lbs. iron, 200 warriors
- **Large Settlement (City):** 2,000 lbs. timber, 1,000 lbs. iron, 400 warriors

Attackers' Objective

The attackers in a raid defense are trying to reach the players' stronghold. To get to the stronghold and break-in, the raiders must first conquer several fortifications blocking their access. The site of the raid defense uses a connected series of fortified locations identifying the paths the raiders can take to reach the players' stronghold.

The Raiders Guide to Valika includes guidance for creating sites for raid defense scenarios.

Upgrading Fortifications

The main way the characters can customize their defenses is by upgrading them. Fortifications are assigned a Rank. Typically, fortifications start at Rank 1 but can be upgraded to Rank 2. Most inner fortifications can be upgraded further to Rank 3.

Upgrading a fortification requires the characters to expend quantities of timber, iron, and downtime, with each location identifying these costs.

Repairing Fortifications

When a fortification is conquered, it is also damaged. Until it's repaired, Raiding Rolls made against that fortification have advantage on all future raids. It can be repaired by spending the fortification's rank 2 upgrade cost and 1 week of downtime.

Assigning Defenders

At the beginning of a raid, the players can assign their warriors to their fortifications. If a fortification has fewer warriors than its Minimum Force assigned to it, then Raiding Rolls against have advantage. Every time you assign an extra number of raiders equal to the minimum number of raiders to a conflict zone, you gain a +1 bonus to its Raiding Roll DC. You can't assign more raiders to a fortification than its Maximum Force.

If the players have any warriors left over after assigning their defenders, they are held in reserve. If warriors die during the raid, these reserve forces can be allocated during the raid at the start of the defenders' turn.

Creating Waves of Invaders

The Raiders Guide to Valika includes guidance for designing the attackers in a Raid Defense scenario.

Waves of Attack

Raiding parties have only so many warriors before they run out of steam or decide it's not worth fighting on. The GM doesn't need to worry about micromanaging how many warriors the attacking force has; they only have to worry about how many waves of attack there are.

Lanes of Attack

Each raid site has at least three different lanes of attack. When a wave launches an attack against a lane, they attack the outermost unconquered fortification.

A wave can choose which lane to attack at the start of each turn.

Raiding Roll Bonuses

Whenever a wave makes a Raiding Roll, it rolls 2d10 and adds a specific bonus to it. The higher an attacker's bonus they have for their raiding rolls, the better odds of success they have. This represents the physical strength and cunning of the attackers.

Typically, an Easy raid has a +1d4 bonus to Raiding Rolls, a Normal raid has a +2d4 bonus, and a Hard raid has a +4d4. However, if you decide that a wave can attack multiple lanes, each additional lane past the first suffers a −1d4 penalty. A wave can never have a negative bonus.

Special Effects

Some waves can afflict fortifications with negative effects, particularly those with warriors with special items or monsters with supernatural powers, even if their attacks fail to conquer a fortification.

Prepare the Stronghold

The stronghold of a raid site must have a 5-foot-square grid tactical map. If the stronghold is breached, the players' goal is to kill the attackers before their treasure and resources are stolen.

The Raiders Guide to Valika includes guidance for designing the entrances and rooms within a stronghold and the raider's goal for attacking the site.

Resource Piles

When the stronghold is breached, count the number of timber and iron resources the characters have. Every 100 lbs. of resources becomes a resource pile that takes up a 10-foot by 10-foot space. The characters can decide where these resource piles are stored within their stronghold.

A raider can pick up and steal a pile as an action on its turn. If that raider leaves the map, it escapes with those resources. If a raider is killed, any resources it has taken fall into the nearest unoccupied spaces to where it was standing.

Running a Defensive Raid

The raid begins as soon as raiders reach the outer fortifications. Just like commander-style offensive raids, Phase 1 of a defensive raid is an overland battle using an abstract flowchart of locations. Phase 2 is a combat encounter using typical Fifth-Edition rules inside a stronghold.

Phase 1: Defending Fortifications

This phase takes place in turns, which are approximately 1 hour each. This phase lasts until one of two things happens:

- The raiders run out of waves of warriors to attack with, as determined by the GM. The raiders are defeated and must retreat or be captured.
- The raiders reach the defenders' stronghold, and Phase 2 begins.

First, the raiders take a turn to attack. Then, the defenders can take a turn reallocating their warriors to fortifications.

Raiders' Turns

On raiders' turns, they send forth a wave of attackers. If this wave can attack more than one lane, choose the order in which they attack these lanes, and then make raiding rolls for all lanes in order, using the correct bonuses (see "Raiding Roll Bonuses" above).

Conquering a Fortification. If a Raiding Roll is successful, that fortification is damaged, and half of the warriors defending it are killed or captured (GM's choice). The remaining defenders can flee. If the Raiding Roll succeeded by 5 or more, all the warriors defending it are killed or captured.

Repelled from a Fortification. If a Raiding Roll fails, the raiders do not conquer that fortification, and that wave is defeated, but the defenders still take casualties. Roll 1d10, and that number of warriors are slain in the attack. The defenders take no casualties if the Raiding Roll failed by 5 or more.

Defeat Condition. If the raiders' turn ends without reaching the stronghold and it has no more waves remaining, they are defeated, and the raid ends.

Reallocate Warriors. The defenders can reassign which fortifications their warriors are protecting. Warriors currently deployed at a fortification can swap to any fortification in a different lane by spending 1 turn moving. During this time, they can't defend either the fortification they've just left or the fortification they're heading to until they arrive at the start of the defenders' next turn. Undefended warriors can be deployed from their stronghold immediately at no cost. Warriors currently deployed at a fortification can also fall back to a different fortification immediately.

If deploying warriors to a fortification would exceed that fortification's Maximum Force, any excess warriors are undeployed and return to the stronghold. (A defender may wish to reallocate more warriors than necessary to a fortification in case that fortification suffers casualties before reinforcements arrive.)

Warriors can also be undeployed to send them back to the stronghold at any time. They arrive in the stronghold at the start of the defenders' next turn and can then redeploy anywhere at no cost, as stated above.

Defenders' Turns

The most important thing defenders can do is observe where their enemies are attacking from and allocate their warriors where they'll be most useful. This is especially true when the defenders are low on resources and don't have enough warriors to fully stock their fortifications.

Special Traits. Sometimes, the defenders have special options available to them for story reasons. They can use these supplies or traits on their turn. If any resources, like spell slots, are expended during this phase, they won't be available in the next phase.

Defensive Spells. Spells that protect an area of effect, such as *globe of invulnerability*, can be used to protect one fortification. Spells of 3rd-level or higher increase the Raiding Roll DC by 2; spells of 5th-level or higher grant a further +2 to the DC; and spells of 7th-level or higher grant an additional +4. This bonus lasts until the end of the turn.

Explosives. Explosive items or area-of-effect offensive spells (like *fireball* or *glyph of warding*) can trap or counter-assault a fortification that was conquered on the previous raiders' turn. By spending an item of this sort or using a spell slot of 3rd-level or higher, the lane that this fortification was in can't be attacked during the next raiders' turn. Spell slots of 7th-level or higher prevent a lane from being attacked for 2 turns.

Healing. During the defenders' turn, the characters can expend one or more *potions of healing* to reverse an equal number of casualties that occurred in the previous raiders' turn. Healing spells can also be used, saving one warrior per level of the spell slot used.

Reaching the Stronghold

Once any inner fortification is conquered, this phase ends, and the raiders storm the raid site's stronghold. The remaining defending warriors swarm to protect the stronghold while the raiders send a strike team to plunder it while the player characters strive to defend it. Should the characters abandon the stronghold and choose not to defend it, the raiders are automatically successful and plunder all of their resources.

Phase 2: Attack on the Stronghold

Once the stronghold has been breached, typical Fifth-Edition gridded combat engages.

The Raiders Guide to Valika includes guidance with the encounter design for attacking a stronghold.

Spread Out and Have Multiple Targets

Most attacks on the stronghold are built from multiple crews of attackers, arriving in multiple waves. Each crew can target different areas of the stronghold simultaneously to pillage and escape most efficiently. Some crews can even have a vendetta against the characters, harrying them with attacks while the characters struggle to devote their attention to stopping the thieves.

Loot and Scoot

Once all of the enemies in the stronghold are dead or have fled, this phase ends. Once a foe departs the map of the defenders' stronghold, they're considered protected by their raiding party and are beyond the reach of the defenders.

Ending the Raid

Once Phase 2 ends (or Phase 1 ends in defeat for the raiders), this raid is concluded. The characters now get to assess the damage, how many resources they have left, and prepare for future raids.

If the enemy was defeated in Phase 1, any defenders they took captive (as opposed to killing, at the GM's discretion) are saved and returned to the defenders' stock of warriors.

> I don't care what you think! Light the drake fire casks and fall back! NOW! Bringing down the tower atop the accursed beasts will give us a precious few moments that we so desperately lack.
>
> *- Hlökk Warcrier*

THANK
YOU

THE SEA OF TURMOIL
CINDERGRAD
VOLGEN
FORT KENTIGERN
BORGUND
COLD IRON KEEP
TYBURN
THE VALIKAN CLANS
KANDAR
THRULL
HRIST
SOLHEIM
FROSTMERE
SHADOW STORM GULF
GRARJORD
HALSEFORD
SUMMERHELM
RUNEHEIM
THE UFETH
SKARFANES
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CASTALORE
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NORDENLAND
RAEVO
LANDHAUS
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THE BÜRACH EMPIRE
MALKOVIA
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THE GREY SPINE
FALLOWHEART
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GRAFENSTEIN
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THE OSTOYAN EMPIRE
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CROWSBEND
UNTERLAND
AMBER SEA
BURROWFELL MINES
ALTENHEIM
RIVEN
RAULAND
VOLLENDORF
SOMA
CASTLE MARTORIUS
ROCK-TEETH MOUNTAINS
STEHLENWALD
STILLBORN FOREST
LUNSK
LIESECH
BESION
NOV OSTOYA
THE EMERALD SEA
THE GROVE MAZE
VOYD
CASTLE LAMESDHONNEUR
TOL LEYEMIL
CAMONT
VOROS
CHARNEAULT KINGDOM
TOL KERDYWEL
BONNESEAUX VILLAGE
THE THOUSAND RIVERS
COROVA
CASTINELLAN PROVINCE
HOUIVILLE
DARKOAK GROVE
MORENCIA
TOLETUM
THE TEMPLE OF MIST
THE SHADED HAVEN
MONT DE LANCEY
GULF OF LIONS
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EMBER CAIRN
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HOLGAR
THE SEA OF TURMOIL
TYBURN
HOLGAR STRAIT
BORGUND
GRENSFAL MOUNTAINS
THE VALIKAN CLANS
HAEYSOR MOUNTAINS
TOCKAN PASS
FOXWOOD RANGE
FROSTMERE STRONGHOLD
THRULL
FROSTMERE
LOST KEPPMIR
GRARJORD
HALSFJORD
THE TEETH
SKARFANES
RAGVALL
ERLEFORT
NORDENLAND
EMPIRE

CINDERGHAST
SNOW QUEEN'S PALACE
CINNABAR
ASTRIK MOUNTAIN
VOLGEN
FORT KENTIGERN
COLD IRON KEEP
NJUKCA MOUNTAINS
LAKE JAKKAN
KANDAR
ORMRALVA RIVER
SOLHEIM
HRIST
ISBRYTERALVA RIVER
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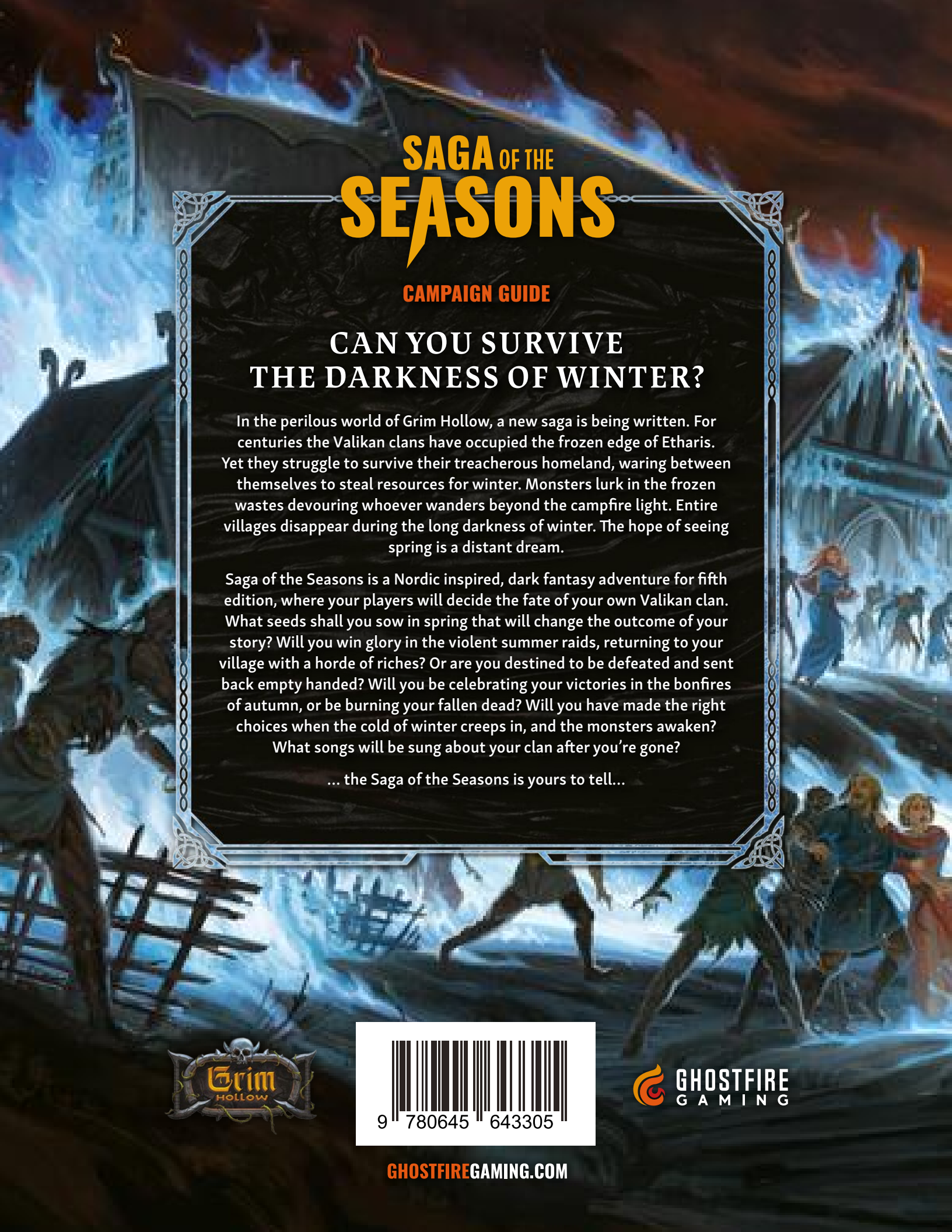
SUMMERHELM
RUNEHEIM
MT. VENGEANCE



SAGA OF THE SEASONS

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