FREYJA'S TEARS

5E

WANDERING THE TRUE NORSE

SVILLAND ADVENTURE (1-20 LEVEL)
FOR 4-6 PLAYERS

FREYJA'S TEARS

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WARNING

This book is for mature readers. If you find the contents of the book disturbing, please do not proceed. Svilland is a dark campaign setting full of hardship and savagery, and this is reflected in the content of this book.

ON THE COVER

In this scene illustrated by Mehmet Özen, we see an epic battle taking place between the forces of Hel and the forces of Svilland. The dvergr runewalker we can see on the right has lifted his axe in the air, preparing for what could be his final attack, while the warrior in the middle is screaming with rage, as an encouragement to herself as well as her allies.

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ABOUT THE ADVENTURE

Freyja's Tears is designed for a warband of four to six 1st-level characters. It is a 5e Adventure that begins in a small town and ends in the darkest pits of Helheim. By the end of the adventure, the characters should be 20th level.

As the adventure takes place in a brutal Norse setting, it contains graphic and gory components which may not be suitable for all players. The game is meant for mature audiences, and includes graphic scenes ranging from human sacrifice to self harm. As such, please look over each chapter and get the consent of your players before starting the game.

Everything you need to run the adventure is given in this book; including the monsters, npcs, magic items, new spells and other things of the same sort. However, if you want further information and player options related to the adventure, it is recommended that you have *Svilland: Campaign Setting* on hand.

The adventure takes place in Svilland. It begins near a lake called Freyja's Tear in Alsvartr, moves on to the northwest of Svilland, Gurbolruhm, and ends in the depths of Helheim. The adventurers wander around the map, discover many areas and face many dangers, including monsters, social conflicts, harsh weather conditions, and wars.

Throughout the adventure, the characters experience things that might challenge them morally as the forces of Hel try to convince them to join their ranks. They lose the sense that their Gods and Goddesses are with them, and pray to them for solace and safety. Darkness and horror are the two most dominant themes of this adventure and follow the characters wherever they go.

We think that the best way to run the adventure is by first reading it through. However, if you are reluctant to do so, the *Adventure Overview* section summarizes the major events that take place in the adventure.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Before the time of Freyja's Tears, Svillanders were busy with the struggles of their ordinary lives, which were already hard enough. Since living in harsh conditions requires a certain dedication and cooperation, Svillanders are closely bound to their deities, and their cults and organisations are especially important to them. This importance is even more evident in times of trouble, such as the ones the characters face throughout this adventure.

In this section, you can find background information on deities, cults and organisations, as well as some settlements. They are all required for you to understand the background of the adventure.

FREYJA

Freyja is a Vanir-born Goddess in Asgard. She taught the Aesir Gods and Goddesses Vanir magic when she sacrificed herself to come to Asgard to marry Odin and ensure peace. Despite the circumstances of her arrival to her new home, Freyja's pure soul kept her from holding grudges. She also preserved all her special qualities that distinguished her from the Aesir such as her elegance and her nourishing personality.

She blesses the soil, just as she blesses all the people of Svilland. Her touch cures sickness and disease. Freyja also protects the dead, particularly women, in her hall of Folkvangr.

Freyja's worshippers are mostly farmers, healers, guardians, and mothers. The Temple of Freyja protects Svilland in her name, using her magical wisdom.

Her commandments are to help those who are in need, to love everyone, and to cherish and respect the earth. However, a follower of Freyja ought to respect warriors as well, for those who fight try to protect their home from destruction.

In summation, Freyja represents "all life in Svilland."

HEL

Hel is the terrifying Goddess of Helheim. Those who die of sickness or of old age, as well as those who die as criminals, are destined for the realm of the dead where they shall suffer for all eternity. Helheim is the exact opposite of Valhalla. Even though she does not have quite as many worshippers as Odin and his pantheon, Hel's powers are greater than all other Gods and Goddesses when in Helheim.

Worshipping Hel is taboo, although some Svillanders do worship her in secret. Followers of Hel aren't afraid of death, since everything must die. They believe there is no honorable way of fighting; that all is fair in war. According to them, one must understand the meaning of death and of the afterlife to truly understand that of life.

In this adventure, the forces of Helheim try to weaken Freyja's influence over Svilland. They believe that if Freyja falls, all life in Svilland will be wounded, and be at the mercy of the foulness of Hel. Therefore, they spread disease through the land and try to corrupt Svilland and everything in it. Freyja weakens as a result of their endeavors and death and decay

are seen in every corner of Svilland, the holy sites of Freyja are corrupted, animals rot, people give birth to draugr babies. The forces of Hel aim to eventually open a gate between Helheim and Svilland, and wage a war on life itself

It is our warband who identifies the threat, stops it, and saves Freyja by recovering her stolen divine essences from Helheim.

HELHEIM

Helheim, the dark, cold realm of death, and the invasion of Svilland by its denizens are the main themes of this adventure. The characters face countless creatures that possess the powers of Helheim.

You can find more details about the nature of this infamous realm in the *Life in Helheim* section on p.210 and throughout the adventure.

THE CULTS AND ORGANISATIONS

As stated above, cults and organisations have an important role in the culture of Svilland. The ones with which this adventure is concerned are given below.

FACELESS

Balder is the God of Light. He brings goodness to the lands of Svilland and to the hearts of Svillanders. He is known for having stopped Odd with his minions and having destroyed countless evil beings to protect the lands of the mortals. However, that is not all Balder is known for.

All of Balder's gothis and alles had been searching for the very meaning of light and good, before Balder fell to Helheim. In the present, Balder is changing despite his efforts to bear the pain and the unimaginable torture he is subjected to in Helheim, slowly succumbing to evil instincts. Balder's feelings directly affect his believers, and his followers are thus changing with him. Some of his more fanatic believers cannot stand even a single moment of Balder's pain, and become corrupted; solely aiming to spread that pain. Others who can stand it try to prove that they are different from the corrupted fanatics, and believe that there is still hope for their beloved God, and therefore, for themselves. The Faceless are those who fight against the agony and the evil it brings with it.

In the adventure, the characters meet a Faceless whose ultimate goal is to go to Helheim and save Balder from his eternal, vicious torment.

FANGS OF FENRIR

The Fangs of Fenrir are born of hate. Their hate comes from the actions of Odin's pantheon. They think that the Gods and Goddesses have falsely accused Loki of being a trickster when they were the real manipulators. They deceived the powerful son of Loki; Fenrir, and they filled the heads of their subjects with lies indicating Fenrir and Loki to be the enemies. Therefore, the right thing to do is to hate the Gods and Goddesses and to fight against them. However, the organization's activities are mostly done in secret; hence their actions are mostly untraceable.

The Fangs of Fenrir believe that they are liberating people's minds from their chains forged by other Gods and Goddesses, and that they do this by killing them. They believe they have the right to act the way they do because they were discriminated against by society, simply because they bear an immense power.

All high-ranking members of this organization are werevargrs. Most of them are not born with that power, they acquire it. All members see lycanthropy as a gift and bestow it upon their most fanatical and promising members.

In this adventure, Fangs of Fenrir cultists are seen cooperating with the forces of Hel because they share a common goal; to massacre those who oppose them.

LIGHT FINGERS

Light Fingers is a widespread organization known throughout the realm, but members are mostly seen in Green Lights of the East. No one really knows who founded this organization or why and when it was founded. It is ruled by local groups. Each of the leaders of these local groups are in contact with one another, and every single one of them are devoted to Loki.

In the adventure, a party of Light Fingers will encounter the characters at night, trying to steal their belongings.

ODIN'S VARGR

Legends say that there are two vargrs (wolves) loyal to Odin; Geri and Freki. They sit beside Odin's throne and sometimes run through Svilland. The members of this cult believe that these wolves are the ones who created werevargrs who roam Svilland today, and who gave some of them a purpose of life. They taught the beasts many things, including how to fight, but above all, they taught werevargrs to fight for Odin. Owing to that, all werevargr carrying the flame of Odin's faith in its heart yearns to destroy Odin's enemies and to tear them limb from limb.

As Svilland is the land of the living, the Vargrs protect it against the army of the dead. They fight with all their might against the offspring of Hel.

TEMPLE OF FREYJA

This cult, bearing the name of their mother Freyja, was formed to fulfill Freyja's will, and has the honor of being the oldest cult in Svilland. Traces of the cult can be seen everywhere in Svilland, and the leaders of all temples are, and are required to be, women.

Although their temples can be found anywhere in Svilland, this cult is not the most crowded one in all the land. Some

temples only have one gothi.

As Hel's influence in Svilland grows stronger each day, Freyja weakens, and this reflects on the followers of Freyja as well. They are in distress as they cannot feel the influence and blessings of Freyja as they did before.

TYR'S JUDGES

Tyr's Judges has been formed by the power granted to them by their God Tyr, and the cult has been able to survive to this day with the help of their motto: "Everyone needs justice." This cult is not involved in politics; Tyr's justice cannot compare by any means to mortal institutions of authority. The traveling judges of the cult can be found anywhere in Svilland. These judges bring people to Tyr's justice, and they do not ask permission as they do so. This power comes not only from their God but also from the trust people put in their judgement. There are, of course, other authorities in Svilland, but these judgements are not carried out in the name of Tyr; and according to the cult, Tyr's verdicts are beyond (and more important than) everything and everyone. The members of the cult are mostly Tyr gothis and Tyr alles.

Tyr's Judges are particularly interested in this time of distress, because they believe it is unjust for Svillanders to die by the hands of the forces of Hel.

TRINITY OF WILDERNESS AND THE WARBAND TRADITION

Years ago, the inhabitants of the Trinity of Wilderness lived on the foothills of the Shadowlow Mountains in small tribes. They were open to attacks by werevargrs and their feral relatives, wolves. One day, three mighty rangers, named Frosted Johan, Grey Eyed Boe, and Asuld Verdnardsonn, convinced their people that they would be better off in villages, since they would be more protected. The citizens of Shadowlow Mountains thus came together to form three villages with close ties to one another, which are called the Trinity of Wilderness altogether.

Holmdar is ruled by Frosted Johann, the most proficient ranger among the three. With his famous warhammer, Ísabrot, he almost looks like a berserkr. Jonnamot is ruled by Grey Eyed Boe, who is the most interested in hunting among the three. Pineheim is ruled by the wisest of the three; Asulf Verdnardsonn. Although the three rangers are the acting rulers of the villages and are called Jarls, the Trinity of Wilderness is actually governed by a council consisting of people known and respected by the folk. This council assembles once a month to discuss external threats and the relations between the villages. Other decisions involving internal affairs are left to the ranger Jarls. Although the rangers' characteristics often cause them to disagree with the council's opinion, they respect the traditions of the three villages and know their place.

The famous warbands of the Trinity were formed by the order of the council when a serious werevargr threat arose in the area threatening all three villages.

"By order of the Trinity of Wilderness, each village shall have a warband, made up of those who can wield weapons or who know the secret of the runes of the Allfather. They can thus protect us from the evil offspring of Fenrir, may his chains be a burden on his neck. Being in a warband shall be the second highest honor one can have,right after becoming a warrior of Odin in Valhalla; for those who protect Svilland have the boon of our Lady Freyja.

Warbands shall get their orders from the Council of Trinity directly. They shall ambush vargr-spawn, battle them, or protect our people in the villages through other means. May the Asgardians be with you."

Since these warbands are the basis for the Trinity of Wilderness's defense and attack force, not everyone can be chosen to be a member. One has to first prove their worth. Traditionally, young Svillanders of the Trinity who have grown enough to fight, and sometimes commoners who wish to join the forces, willingly face a great challenge to prove their strength on the first day of Winter. This day is celebrated as *The Day of the Hunt* and is used to raise morale, and choose the best from the young Svillanders who are up to the challenge to join their forces.

Those who come back from said challenge are deemed worthy and join the ranks as members of the *Great Warband of the Trinity*. Each member of a warband gets a bracelet of their own according to the mission given by the Council. The bracelets of Holmdar are given to those who choose a more direct approach in battle. Bracelets of Jonnamot are given to those who track prey and hunt. Bracelets of Pineheim are given to those who first protect their allies in a battle.

The bracelet of each village has its own magical properties, and all members of warbands wear their own bracelet with pride. If warband members lose their bracelet, they must rise to the challenge once again to prove their worth.

The Warband of Holmdar consists of Svillanders who wish to destroy their enemies. Members of this warband are granted a magic bracelet called the *Bracelet of Holmdar*. The bracelet increases the damage of a damage type chosen by the wearer by 1 for 1 hour. Once the bracelet is used in this way, the wearer must finish a long rest to benefit from this feature again.

The Warband of Jonnamot consists of great trackers who hunt down the evil spawn in their lairs. The members of this warband are granted a magic bracelet called the *Bracelet of Jonnamot.* The bracelet grants advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks for one hour. Once the bracelet is used in this way, the wearer must finish a long rest to benefit from this feature again.

The Warband of Pineheim consists of warriors tasked with the protection of the villages and their people. The members of this warband are granted a magic bracelet called the *Bracelet of Pineheim*.The bracelet increases the wearer's AC by 1 for 1 hour. Once the bracelet is used in this way, the wearer must finish a long rest to benefit from this feature again.

Activating the bracelets requires a member to use a bonus action, and once activated, all members of the warband gain the benefits of the bracelet they have on. A warband member must be within 120 feet of the one who activates the bracelet in order to gain the benefits. Once a member gains the benefits, it cannot gain the same benefit again until it finishes

a long rest by using the bracelet. The bracelets are uncommon magical items that require attunement.

Before starting the adventure, talk to your players and discuss which warband they want to join and which bracelet they want to possess as a party.

ADVENTURING IN SVILLAND

Svilland is dark and cold, which makes life difficult for its inhabitants. Despite the cheerful disposition of most people who feast, sing, and dance together, they still feel in their hearts the threat of Black Winter and Odd approaching from every corner. Moreover, living in Svilland is not easy; the jobs are hard, and there is never a shortage of illness like there is of food. From a very young age, most Svillanders are taught that they must work themselves to the bone to survive the day. The sun can neither warm the soil, nor the freezing hearts of the inhabitants of this land. Therefore, this cold and dark environment surrounds the characters in the adventure as well. Wherever they go, they are met with the dire consequences of unfortunate events. For instance, they may see:

- A child crying for his brother who was chosen to hunt a wild creature.
- A teenager eating with her calloused hands after a hard-day's work.
- An old man crying next to a child's grave.

Other than this feeling of tragedy, the people of Svilland live with their deities, and for their deities. They live by their tenets and look for signs from them in practically everything they do. It is common to see a village burned down by a thunderstorm after somebody was disrespectful to Odin, or a warm wind gracing the lands of a freezing village, warming up the villagers after they make a sacrifice to Freyja.

Svillanders often organize hunts, rituals and sacrifice; therefore, the characters come across temples, gothis, and sacrificial chambers throughout the adventure. Furthermore, Svillanders attribute many natural phenomena to deities, such as the following :

- Strange lights or bizarre colors
- Smell of rotting
- Strange animals (for example, a deer with three eyes)
- Runes on trees, rocks, and animals
- Weird voices, whispers, or humming
- Strange weather conditions (for example, the blood rain, the red snow)

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

Death plays a vital role in Svilland, both in the daily life and in the mind of a Svillander. Even a small child recognizes, accepts, and behaves with the knowledge of death. In this wild land of tough people, death is not always as sad as it might be in other places. Svillanders are not afraid of death in battle, since Valhalla awaits them with all its glory and magnificence. However, not all in Svilland who have no fear of death seek to grace the halls of the great one eyed God; there are also the followers of Hel.

Following the path of Hel is taboo for most Svillanders. Most fear Hel and her cold realm of pain and misery. After Balder fell into Helheim because of Loki and Hel, some people became more fearful about their future; thinking none can escape this fate if the most beautiful God of all himself could not.

In this adventure, heroes will find themselves in the midst of an ongoing conflict between two powerful deities: Hel and Freyja. Hel's followers are gathering their strength to invade the land of Svilland with an army of Helheim's creatures. To do so, they are planning to trap Freyja in Helheim just as Hel has done with Balder.

Freyja is more than just a deity for Svilland, and more than a ruler in her realm of Folkvangr. Freyja is life itself in both; she is the land, the rain, and the sky in Svilland. As Freyja loses her powers, Svilland also loses its liveliness. The land becomes more and more barren, and sickness and death plagues the animals and people.

Chapters	Episodes
Chapter 1: The Beginning of the End (For characters of levels 1-3)	The characters participate in the Day of the Hunt, a competition in which warriors prove their worth. Their celebration is cut short by the unnatural birth of a sick baby. The characters take the baby to Asta, a Freyja gothi living by the lake, to ask her for help. They find she is gone, and go to the closest Freyja Temple.
Chapter 2: In Search for Solidarity (For characters of levels 4-6)	To find Asta and find out what happened, the characters look for clues in the region and visit three different settlements.
Chapter 3: The New Path (For characters of levels 7-11)	With the new information they find in the settlements, the warband moves on to Kolbovaik. From there, they head to the city of North Assembly, which leads them to eastern Svilland, Nionaem. On their way, they find Asta in unexpected circumstances.
Chapter 4: To The Cursed City: Gurbolruhm (For characters of levels 11-14)	After the characters find Asta, they go north to Gurbolruhm to stop the forces of Helheim.
Chapter 5: Into the Darkness (For characters of levels 15-20)	During the battle, the characters sneak into the city to complete their mission. There, they find the darkest path one can walk; the one leading to Helheim.

HEL POINTS

Freyja' s Tears introduces a new mechanic called Hel points.

As Hel's influence on the land increases, the soil, the animals, the plants and even the people of Svilland are affected by her dark powers more and more. Animals have started to be corrupted and touched by Hellic runes, people give birth to undead children, soil starts to rot and a black mist is seen all around Svilland.

There is a chance for characters exposed to Hel's influence to suffer from Hel's corruption, gaining minor or major Hel points. While each minor Hel point has a narrative effect on the game, major Hel points have mechanical effects.

Throughout the adventure, you, the GM, will be informed under which conditions you should give or remove Hel points. You can increase the amount of the encounters that make your players suffer Hel points or you can reward your characters by removing Hel points when they do something heroic or they act `good-aligned`.

Although most major Hel points present minor beneficial features to the characters (such as granting darkvision), they are overall there to make the campaign harder as they bring the character one step closer to death and its Goddess.

Whenever a character has 5 minor Hel points, they add up to one major Hel point. When a character has one major Hel point removed, it has 5 minor Hel points removed as well. Major Hel points can also be gained separately from minor Hel points.

A character can take 25 minor Hel points and 5 major Hel points in total, which leads to death. The implications and definitions of minor and major Hel points are given below.

MINOR HEL POINTS

As mentioned above, a character can gain a total of 25 minor Hel points, each of which has a unique narrative effect. Whenever a character takes a minor Hel point, it has a vision. You can alter these visions to make them fit your game or your characters.

Please be aware that most of these illusions include gruesome details that might not be suitable for every player. Feel free to change and adapt according to their needs.

1. You see yourself drinking a muddy sludge and eating bones that crunch between your teeth like stale bread. After a while, your teeth start to break, your stomach is filled with splintered and fragmented bones, and you can feel the bones ripping you from the inside out.
2. You see yourself falling hundreds of feet into darkness, and find yourself in a pit full of giant worms that try to consume both your body and your soul.
3. You see yourself walking a road that you feel will never end. Even though the vision is quite short you are exhausted when you come out of it. You see your body get extremely skinny, your feet ruptured to the bone, and your body rotting because of your own bodily fluids.
4. You see yourself as a draugr, and you feel nothing but violence and darkness. In the vision, you attack your loved ones and warband members, tearing them limb from limb.
5. You see nothing but complete darkness. After a while, you are consumed by the darkness and become a part of it. The darkness and the sense of nothing fills you with terror and you feel you must have been there for months, or years.
6. You find yourself in a block of ice, and you can feel your skin sticking to the block. You move anyway, and the ice burns away your skin.
7. You are hungrier than you've ever been, and start to gnaw at humanoid flesh/rotten animal parts.
8. You are hungrier than you've ever been. You are sweating and exhausted from hunger and feel like you may pass out at any second. You find yourself sitting in front of a feast, but when you eagerly touch the food, you find that your mouth is sewn shut. Unable to take the hunger any longer, you start to rip the stitches open.
9. You see and feel big worms moving under your skin. The pain is excruciating. You start to make cuts on your skin to let them out, but they move deeper into your flesh with each cut.
10. You see yourself being buried alive by black-hooded figures. Your chest feels heavier and heavier as you feel the earth pile up on your body and you are trapped in darkness.
11. You find yourself in ice-cold water, and your skin burns with the cold. You want to get rid of your skin and start scratching yourself. The water changes color with your blood, and you cannot do anything else even though you feel yourself slowly freezing to death.
12. You see your body has become rotten. The flesh on your limbs and chest are so mushy that it falls apart when you touch it.
13. You hear a maddening scream, a scream so loud that you feel your eardrums rupture. And even though your warm blood starts to fill your ears, the scream doesn't subside.
14. You see the dark silhouette of a woman standing in front of you, whose blood red eyes search and meet your gaze. The moment your eyes meet hers, an excruciating pain shoots out from your eyes to fill the rest of your body. You find yourself in a pool of warm blood as red as the figure's eyes. You start to suffocate and pass out, but wake up a moment later, only to start suffocating again.
15. You see snowy, majestic mountains in the distance. For a moment, you are filled with peace, until you notice the huge figure of a draugr frost jotunn who starts stepping on Svilland. It has an army of jotunns beside him and is ready to terrorize you all.
16. You find yourself in complete darkness. There is a rotting smell that fills your nostrils, but before you can notice anything else, thousands of hands and

claws start tearing you apart.

17. You feel a darkness growing inside you, and you vomit it out. When you look at the waste, you see humanoid parts such as fingers, eyeballs, and toes.
18. You feel extremely full and have terrible pain in your stomach. Then you realize that your stomach is being ripped apart. As it rips from your groins to ribs, you see blood-red creatures clawing their way out of your stomach.
19. You see your hometown be destroyed by the forces of evil, and stand by and watch as your loved ones perish.
20. You feel nothing at first, but then hurt all over. You feel the bones in your body grow. They first disintegrate your internal organs and then start to tear your flesh and skin.
21. You can't move and are covered with rotten food. The rot attracts hundreds or thousands of insects that slowly start gnawing away at the meals and you with them.
22. You are thrown into a cold, deep, and dark well. You are consumed by the feeling that you are constantly being watched.
23. You see all your friends dead at the hands of Hel cultists.
24. You are lost in a dark forest. You desperately run from one place to another with no sense of direction, helplessly trying to get out without any food, water, or rest.
25. You have a vision of a desolate place that you think might be Helheim. Even if it is hard to admit, somewhere inside you, you feel that you belong to these lands.

MAJOR HEL POINTS

As mentioned before, a character can gain a total of 5 major Hel points. Each major Hel point has mechanical effects that would change the gameplay. Whenever characters gain a major Hel point, you must inform your players that their characters are subject to the following benefits/penalties.

1. The color of your eyes, including the whites, turns to pitch black. You have darkvision out to a range of 60 feet. If you already had darkvision, you now have darkvision out to a range of 120 feet. However, you have disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight under daylight.
2. You hear foul whispers in your mind, telling you to commit sins and to turn your back against the good-aligned Gods and Goddesses. You have disadvantage on Wisdom (Insight) checks since the voice in your mind doesn't let you understand the motives of others thoroughly. It makes you think that others are always out to get you, always trying to decieve you. However, you also have advantage on Charisma (Intimidation) checks since the voice in your head always gives you some pointers on how to intimidate others.

   The GM must roleplay this voice and often try to manipulate the characters who hear it to make them followers of Hel.
3. You see your veins darken under your skin, which gets paler and paler. You have disadvantage on death saving throws.
4. Your body starts to rot, and you carry a stench of death. You are poisoned and constantly have one level of exhaustion; you cannot recover from it by finishing a long rest. However, you also have resistance to necrotic damage.
5. You die and your soul is claimed by Hel. If your body is not burnt or buried with a proper ritual, your body turns into a draugr within three days. Then, it will follow and hunt down your warband members during long rests, provided that the draugr can reach them. The draugr has the same statistics as your former character, it cannot speak, and its creature type is undead. The GM must roleplay the draugr.

   When the draugr is slain, it comes back and keeps hunting the warband until it is properly buried or burned.

Chapter I

The Beginning of the End

In the midst of the large steppes of Alsvartr, near the famous lake Freyja's Tear, there are three villages; Holmdar, Jannamot, and Pineheim, which altogether are called the Trinity of Wilderness. Three strong rangers rule the villages, and each of these villages has a population of nearly three hundred. Most people make their living by hunting, gathering, and crafting basic items. Some villagers also raise deer and pigs, which they then use to make dried meat, for the cold winter months. Since the villages are very close to the Mercy of Freyja, which is a fruitful sacred forest, the villagers who reside in them have always found enough food to feed their people.

The villages have been protected by warbands from monsters and other attackers for years. Warbands get their orders directly from the Council of Trinity (see *About The Adventure* on p. 5) since they are the backbone of the Trinity of Wilderness's defense and attack force; however, not everyone who applies to become a member is accepted.

First, one must prove their worth to be a member of this special, intrepid force. Traditionally, young Svillanders of the Trinity who are old enough to fight, and sometimes commoners who wish to join the forces, willingly face a challenge set out by the leader, or Jarl, of each village to prove their strength on the first day of Winter.

This day is also a day of celebration called *The Day of the Hunt* among Svillanders, aimed at increasing the morale of young Svillanders who are up to the challenge.

Each year, a different Jarl hosts the feast. However, things have recently started to change. For the past few years, a sickness has started to spread over the Trinity of Wilderness.

It first began with poor harvests, and then the animals started to get sick, one by one. The soil lost its fertility and the youth started dying from diseases that were previously unheard of.

Nowadays, the villages are attacked by nameless creatures of the night. Some say that these creatures are simply savage beasts, while others insist that they are creatures that have been distorted against the laws of nature. In truth, there is a recent surge in the activity of Hel cultists trying to defile all life on Svilland. Nature, and all wildlife is thus affected by these activities, and the influence of Freyja seems to fade more and more with each passing day. Each village takes precautions by building watchtowers, constructing (higher) walls, and acquiring better equipment.

The villages have started to make sacrifices for Freyja for fertility and life. Gothis have started to arrive from Knafgata, which hosts the biggest Freyja temple of Svilland. Villagers visit the sacred lake, Freyja's Tear. The altar devoted to her is always filled with new sacrifices, each more precious than the other. Nevertheless, life in Svilland is not the same as it was before.

Our characters start their day like any other warband-candidates, and leave the village of Holmdar with the rest of the participants in the Day of the Hunt. Before long, they encounter a Hel-touched beast on their hunt. When they return to the village with the beast on their backs, people look shocked and disturbed. The village ruler and elder, Johan and Rudolf, seize the beast to see what it truly is. Rudolf decides that this is the work of the followers of Hel and asks the warband, now a warband, to take the carcass of the beast and carry it to the sacred lake called Freyja's Tear, where they shall meet a gothi of Freyja to ask her some questions and get some answers.

Together with the Hel-touched beast, Johan wants the characters to carry with them his newborn, who was born a draugr. They are also accompanied by Ygre along the way, who is a fellow warband member and a Freyja gothi. The baby gets farther from life and closer to death with each passing second, and the warband must thus hurry.

When they arrive at the Tear, the characters cannot find the gothi by the lake, and see that the holy lake is already defiled, and that the temple next to it is swarming with draugrs. The warband must then visit Kraekross as soon as possible since the town hosts the biggest Freyja temple in Svilland.

There, they meet Freydis, the high gothi of Freyja, and an old friend of Ygre. Freydis greets the warband and welcomes them, saying that there will be a council regarding the recent issues and that they should also participate. There will also be Jarls and prominent figures of important cults and organizations among the attendees.

After the council, Freydis asks the warband to cleanse the sacred lake Freyja's Tear because only then, will she be able to perform a divination spell to locate Asta, the gothi the warband was looking for. To cleanse the lake, the warband will have to visit a dungeon called the Golden Hall, which is located underneath of the lake itself. When the warband arrives at the location, they see that the place is overrun with the agents of the dead. At the end of the Hall, the characters witness Ygre make a great sacrifice.

RUNNING THIS CHAPTER

You, as the Game Master, can find the key events that take place in this chapter in the table below. The characters will have to face multiple challenges in this chapter.

Episodes

Into the Wilderness (For characters of level 1)
Back to Holmdar (For characters of level 1)
Freyja's Tear (For characters of level 2)
Knafgata (For characters of level 3)
Golden Hall (For characters of level 3)

INTO THE WILDERNESS

Start playing "*Avenge the Fallen*" on "Svilland - Music and Ambiance". Then read or paraphrase the boxed text below to your players at the beginning of the episode:

> The sun is rising above the old forest and nature is waking up, slowly but surely. The wind humming among the wooden houses gently wakes you up.
>
> When you wake up, you hear distant voices coming from the square, as well as other sounds of joyous preparation and of games played by children. You know that people are getting ready for The Day of Hunt. You think to yourself that people are going to keep feasting, drinking, and enjoying themselves all day until the warbands return with their allotted trophies.
>
> The altar will be filled with offerings such as flowers, clothes, eggs, drinks, and meat. Tonight, an uproarious bonfire will be lit and you will be ready to get your own warband bracelet. You've been waiting for this day to come for years. Today, you will prove yourselves, and show everyone once and for all that you are more than capable of defending the village.

This year, *The Day of the Hunt* will be celebrated in Holmdar, which is a village of Trinity of Wilderness. It is located in the middle of a vast valley, and the high snowy slopes of Shadowlow Mountains can be seen in the distance. The houses here have a rough look about them; it is obvious that the buildings are made for their practicality rather than for their looks. Most of them are made of timber, there are few windows and rough-looking doors. Some walls and rooftops have pieces of green and purple mold on them, scattered here and there.

Despite this rough and murky appearance, the place appears to be full of life and people look enthusiastic. Children can always be seen running around and their cheery laughter rings in the ears. There are people all around, enjoying their ales in the glimmer of the light bouncing off the snow. The hearts of the folk here are filled with the feeling of unity and solidarity, and everyone knows that they will always find whatever help they need from their fellow villagers. The main attraction here is the wooden watchtower, which was built recently due to the attacks by the order of Frosted Johan, the leader of the village.

Holmdar has had some troubles for more than a year. The weather has changed; the fields are barren... And what's more interesting is that the forest, Mercy of Freyja, has been getting increasingly dangerous.

Holmdar Thumbnail

Leader/ Important Figures. (Mithal, chaotic good, veteran) is one of the rulers of the Trinity of Wilderness. People like and respect Johan, and feel comfortable under his rule.

Livelihood. Forestry, the smithing of simple weapons and armor.

Militia. 30 **guards** and 60 **warband members**.

Population. 300.

Rumors. Crumbles, a small bakery in Holmdar, is one the fronts for Hanlon's spy agency.

Services. Accommodation, food and beverage, simple repair.

Language. Austris (Common), Mithal

Frosted Johan (Mithal, chaotic good, veteran)

Frosted Johan is a bulky and charismatic figure. His long, coal black hair is braided in the back, and his beard looks quite tidy for the average Svillander. He has a number of scars here and there, taken in the course of some skirmishes and hunts. His ice-blue eyes penetrate the souls of those he speaks to, along with his bass voice.

"Frosted". Johan became "Frosted Johan" when he

1.1 The Holmdar Map

survived one week after getting buried in the snow, and was partially frozen. They say he broke the ice and snow with his warhammer "Ísabrot".

Personality. Contrary to his intimidating appearance, Johan is a gentle person and a fatherly figure. He knows how to be gentle and helpful when others ask for advice or assistance. Yet, he adds an authoritarian weight to his words if he is angry or needs to order people around. No matter his mood, he always looks eager and strong in the face of a challenge.

Motive. Johan is the leader of his village and the folk who live there. He used to be a hunter and a warrior, but he had to leave those things behind with the added responsibilities of being Jarl. Still, he secretly wishes to be among the warband candidates every time the yearly *Day of the Hunt* begins.

LOCATIONS

Holmdar is a small village where all people know one another. Since the characters live here, they know the places and the NPCs within the village quite well. The following locations are identified on map 1.1.

1. THE MARKET

Holmdar is a small settlement, and so is its market. It consists of a small hammersmith, an herbalist, and a couple of stalls for daily needs such as food, clothing, and firewood. Villagers can find all essential items here; no more, no less. But this is perfectly fine as no one wishes for more anyway.

There is also an empty building of a small tavern near the market. It was abandoned two months ago, when its owner left the village unexpectedly.

Elder Fire. It is a small hammersmith owned by Hallkatla Durinsdottir (Mithal, lawful neutral, Commoner). She is a dedicated woman that tries to take care of her sickly parents to the best of her abilities. She has been doing all the metalwork needed in Holmdar for more than five years.

Crumbles. It is a small stall that sells baked goods owned by Hroar. He is a middle-aged man (Mithal, chaotic good, Assassin). His baked goods are so famous in Trinity of Wilderness that people come over from the other villages, just to get their hands on some of these delicious treats. Someone can always be found in front of the stall, salivating over one pastry or another. The most famous dish sold here is berrydough, which is a scrumptious sweet and savory pastry with blueberries and strawberries.

2. FREYJA TEMPLE

The Freyja Temple in Holmdar is an old, small shack that does not have a door. Located to the south of the village square, its small altar is always full of newly placed offerings and sacrifices. People, even the smallest of the children, come here to contribute to what is offered in any way they can; with flowers, meat, shiny stones, and clothing. Candles light the shack and this dim light gleams out through the cracks between the pieces of wood that make up the walls of the shack.

3. ALTARS

Aside from Freyja's little shack, there are small altars for Skadi, Thor, Odin, and Tyr in Holmdar. Villagers have never neglected these altars; no matter how grim other things may get; one can always find lit candles and fresh sacrifices around them.

4. THE HOME OF FROSTED JOHAN

The Home of Frosted Johan is a two-story, stone building, situated near the village square, to the east. Frosted Johan and his family have lived here for years. The villagers meet here when they need to make important decisions.

The building has a small backyard where a few horses are kept and fed.

5. VILLAGE SQUARE

The Village Square is the name given to the big empty space in the middle of all the buildings. All village events (feasts, sacrifices, rituals, weddings, games, and other things of that sort) take place here. From time to time, bards, storytellers, and fortune tellers visit the village and perform in the Square when they do.

The Day of the Hunt also starts here (when Holmdar hosts the event). People enjoy the feast on the great table, as they feast their eyes on the many games and performances that take place.

6. VALLEY REST INN

The characters of the warband are staying at the inn called "Valley Rest", as the guests of Frosted Johan. When they wake up, they can either stay at the inn, walk around the village, or do whatever else they please.

Valley Rest is as old as the village itself, which makes it older than 30 years. It is a wooden, three-story building situated across the village square, to the west. It can accommodate up to 15 people at a time. The villagers like this inn, and they organize many celebrations here; therefore, the feast for *The Day of the Hunt* will be given here.

The ground floor is always crowded and full of the hustle and bustle of the patrons of various professions and their employees. There are chaotic noises and a mixture of delicious smells coming from the kitchen behind the bar.

Sorli, the middle-aged, strong-looking man standing behind the bar, is a stout follower of good commandments. He is the owner of the Valley Rest inn. There is a deep scar that covers the entirety of his left cheek, from his old days as a mighty hunter. He tells everyone who asks a different story about the scar. Everyone in Holmdar knows that he's lying, but they keep asking him anyway, because his stories are so entertaining. If he wants to tell the warband, or the warband asks, about the scars, you can roll on the table below to determine which story the warband is privy to; or you can use the stories below as inspiration and make up a story on your own.

d4	Event
1	He jumped off of a 60-foot-tall tree and a branch skinned the left side of his face.

2	He was attacked by a frost jotunn, and its club slashed his face just as Sorli was hitting its chest.
3	He was assigned to be the guard of an elder, but they were attacked by a group of wolves.
4	His group was attacked by an isa worm (a Gargantuan monstrosity), which swallowed him whole, but he slashed open its stomach, and got out in time.

Despite his menacing appearance, he is fun and optimistic. After taking over the inn from his mother, he stopped hunting. He loves the inn and enjoys working here.

Sorli is expecting the characters, so if they do not show up, he sends a person to go and get them. When all the characters of the warband get to the ground floor of the inn, he starts speaking in his deep voice and shows them a table:

> *"My friends! Come along! The meal is ready! Come, come and sit!"*

If the characters refuse to eat, Sorli finds this to be unacceptable and tries to somehow convince them, as he feels like it is his duty to feed these brave warriors. If the characters insist on going outside without eating, Sorli is offended and refuses to talk to them any further.

Otherwise, Sorli has them sit at a table close to the bar, next to an open window. The table is set, and it looks mouthwatering with an enormous bowl of warm hearty stew, some grilled meat, large chunks of bread placed in a basket, cheese, and a couple of varieties of wild fruit.

When characters look out the window, they can see people in the village square running around, as they prepare for the day ahead. People at the other tables greet one another, as well as the other characters. A red-haired child comes and pours some herbal tea into the cups of the characters with a look of admiration and excitement on her face.

When the characters are done with their meal, Sorli comes and sits with them, inquiring about the meals to see if they tasted alright. When the first conversation ends and the characters are ready to hear more, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> *"Tonight, Holmdar will host a big event; so big that we might even call it legendary; The Day of the Hunt. I know we have hosted many before, but this time, it is different. This time, for the first time in history, we start the struggle afraid of famine, disease, and unearthly creatures..."* Sorli breathes deeply and continues speaking.
> *"We expect great things from you, maybe we expect too much but..."* he pauses again, a bit more grievously this time, before he continues:
> *"If we manage to please almighty Freyja with your hunt, your names will always be remembered in songs and in tales. We will never forget you."*

As soon as Sorli finishes his sentence, a raven feather is seen floating and dancing in the air, and it lands in the middle of the warband's table. As soon as it does, a woman is heard screaming at the top of her lungs, and these screams seem to be coming from the square. Some people including Sorli hastily get up and run out to help.

If the characters choose to get closer to the scene, they see a young man caught under a cart with about ten people around, trying to lift it. It looks like the cart that crashed was full of wood and pelts. In a few minutes, the young man is rescued, and an old woman starts to examine his crushed legs.

If characters choose to assist the old woman with the examination, finding the right treatment requires a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Medicine) check. Then she thanks the character(s) for their help, and the man is moved to his home.

At that point, one by one, people start going back to whatever they were doing before they heard the woman's scream. Next to the characters, there are two brothers trying to spread a cover over the altar while some girls are carrying chairs to the village square, to place around the big table.

Most people are used to such incidents and do not give it much thought; however, if the characters want to listen to their surroundings, they may hear some of the following;

- *"This time, the warbands don't stand a chance... Who will be in the next warband, I wonder?"*
- *"I swear on everything I hold dear; this is an omen."*
- *"These events have become more and more frequent. It is said that black snow fell on the peaks of Shadowlow."*

If the characters return to Valley Rest Inn, they are received with a warm welcome and they have a good time until the feast. If the characters examine the area, a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals a dead raven near the incident. A successful check also reveals that the raven looks abnormal; it has one eye hanging out of its socket, its feathers seem to be stuck to one another, and its flesh looks defiled.

While they are investigating, Ulf, a former warband member, comes over with a grim look on her face. She is a sturdy-looking, middle-aged woman who carries a longsword. She looks worried and explains that these kinds of sightings of **swarms of feral ravens** have increased in these parts. As she puts it, these creatures are known to have multiplied recently.

THE FEAST

A few hours after midday, the village square is filled with a loud crowd. As per tradition, this is when villagers and warband members play various games to get a sense of kinship. The characters ought to visit the village square to join in the fun.

The giant dining table in the village square and the altar are so full of riches that the wood underneath can be barely seen. Frosted Johan, some former warband members (including Ulf), Hungerd (Johan's wife), and Ygre (a young Freyja gothi) are sitting at the table and it looks like they are having fun.

Hungerd (Mithal, neutral good, Noble)
Hungerd is the wife of Frosted Johan, and she is well-liked and held in high regard just as he is. Her long, coal-black hair slightly covers her beautiful face.

Personality. She is known to be a woman as pure as a daisy. She is not only friendly but also a motherly figure for all her folk. Her soft tone of voice makes people feel relaxed and warm whenever she speaks.

Motive. Hungerd wishes and hopes for the good of her folk in the village. And although she doesn't have to, as the leader's wife, she personally takes care of people's needs most of the time. She refers to the whole village as one big family and thinks everyone in it to be her kin.

Ygre (Mithal, neutral good, gothi)
Ygre looks fairly young with her smooth skin and long braided hair, and she is wearing bear fur. Her eyes have a look in them that is mature beyond her years, and her words are often filled with wisdom.

Personality. Although she is sweet in nature, Ygre acts with the distance of a devoted gothi. She is friendly, but in more of a regal manner. Her deep voice also contrasts with her youth.

Motive. Ygre wishes to serve Freyja and prove herself in the eyes of the Goddess. She secretly longs for a dramatic opportunity to do so.

Although Hungerd is usually cheerful and energetic, she looks sad and tired today. She approaches the characters when they are not busy, and politely says, *"Hope you enjoy the feast!"* If one or more character(s) live(s) in Holmdar, or have lived there for a while, Hungerd might ask about the characters' friends, family, health, job, and anything else about everyday life. When the characters are ready to hear more, she talks to them slowly, *"I will wait and pray for your safe return!"* and sentimentally adds as she touches her belly, *"Thanks to you, the brave, I know we will be safe."*

Ygre

Everybody is eating and drinking. Children are playing with wooden axes, swords, and shields, trying to showcase their talents both to their parents and to the village. A small crowd is gathered around the two women fighting; cheering them on, and making bets on which one is going to win.

A young man is entertaining his friends, demonstrating his elaborate skills with the sword. Despite all the noises, joyful music can be heard coming from a corner; and if the characters look over, they see a young lady and her two sons playing, singing, and dancing. Drumbeats accompany the games of these Svillanders:

Tightrope Walking. Participants walk on separate tightropes. Those who fall are eliminated, and whoever reaches the other end of the rope wins. A successful DC 12 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check is needed to walk over the rope successfully. The Dexterity (Acrobatics) check of one participant is contested by the Dexterity (Acrobatics) check of the other. The participant who rolls the highest result wins. Of course, the warband can contest their checks among themselves as well.

Axe Throwing. There are five empty glass bottles within the throwing range of two contestants. Whoever manages to hit three or more bottles wins.

Follow the Coin. Three wooden bowls are placed on the floor in front of the contestants, with a coin hidden under one of three wooden bowls, which are moved around to confuse the player. Whoever locates the coin gets 1 gp. To play this game, one pays 1 sp up front. Locating the coin requires a successful DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check. One contestant can earn up to 5 gp.

Stick. Two contestants are given a warhammer, and they try to hit one stick that has been stuck in the ground within their throwing range. Whoever hits the stick and deals more damage is considered the winner, since that person succeeds in making the stick sink in the ground more than the other.

The people there may bet on who is going to win.

THE HUNT BEGINS

After the characters take part in the feast, the woman they saw at the feast, sitting next to Hungerd, approaches the warband. Her face looks tough, but she speaks softly:

> *"Greetings, warriors. My name is Ygre. As I am told, you are looking for a way to join the Warband of Pineheim/Jonnamot/Holmdar (according to players' or the GM's previous choice (p. 7)). I'm sure you know, but they need me to remind you that you must maim a dire deer (Pineheim)/a vargr (Jonnamot)/a bear (Holmdar) (according to players' or the GM's previous choice (p. 7)) and return to the village with its body. You can kill it in any way you want. However, if you return its pelt intact, I might be able to craft little armor pieces for you. Take it as a gift from your future comrade as I too am in the Warband of Holmdar/Jonnamot/Pineheim (same as the warband's). You may go now; I don't wish to keep you waiting for your fate. May your blades be sharp, and may Freyja be with you."*

If the hunted creature takes less than 10 slashing or piercing damage, or less than 15 fire damage, from a single attack, its pelt stays intact, and can be used to craft armor pieces.

After Ygre is done speaking, and the sun slowly goes down, the drum beats suddenly stop as Frosted Johan rises from his chair, raising his mighty hammer. He and the other ranger rulers of the Trinity who are sitting next to Johan look delighted and gratified by the feast, and all Svillanders to go on the Hunt tonight are getting ready to fight. As the host of this year's *Day of the Hunt* is the village Holmdar, the honor and the responsibility to start "the Hunt" falls on Johan's shoulder, the ruler of the village. His voice echoes in all ears, which sounds like a proud, dedicated, and cheerful roar:

"MY SVILLANDERS! Allfather knows, it is a great honor to host you and to be with you all, drinks at hand, eager to defend your people. The Gods know how I wish I could join you in your hunt. I would be more than happy to let out my final breath, fighting by your side. BUT TODAY IS YOUR DAY. I have no doubt that all of you will be victorious, and catch your game with honor and ease. May Odin watch over you. May Freyja be with you in your time of need. May the thunderous rage of Thor fill your heart. All of you know what you are assigned to do. GO, MY MIGHTY WARRIORS! GO AND BE GLORIOUS! VICTORY OR VALHALLA. SKOLL!"

With his last words, Frosted Johan raises his mighty drinking-horn, and chugs his ale. All the other Svillanders join him in this toast. Then, the beat of the drums changes from that of the festival to that of the hunt; becoming steadier and louder.

As other parties leave the village and disappear into the woods, our party members must also delve into the darkness of the wilderness. As our party is leaving the area where the feast takes place, a thunder strikes somewhere over Shadowlow Mountains, and rain starts to pour down on our characters. Frosted Johan's laughter shakes his village: "*GO, RUN, KILL! THE MIGHT OF THOR BE WITH YOU!*"

THE WILDERNESS

Start playing "*Blood on Wolf's Teeth*" on "Svilland - Music and Ambiance" then read or paraphrase the boxed text below to your players:

As the feast's rejoiced noises slowly fade away in the dark of the night, the rain starts to get heavier. Thunder and lightning fill the air, and the creatures of the wilderness go back into their hideouts. With the hope of finding a track of the hunt you are pursuing; you enter the woods after you walk south for an hour.

Winds are howling, and the sound of the wind whistling through the pine trees makes it harder for you to hear each other. It's time for you to find your prey, and the heavy rain at least makes it easier to locate footprints since the ground is quite muddy.

Due to the heavy rain, the characters have disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing. However, thanks to the soft mud on the ground, the characters have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks made to see the tracks of animals on the ground.

With a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check, characters locate five different footsteps, each belonging to four-legged creatures.

To comprehend which track belongs to the prey they seek, a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Survival) check is required.

If a character rolls 4 or lower on one of these skill checks, the characters follow one of the wrong paths, unless other characters also rolled and got a higher result. Roll a d4 on the table below to determine what the warband will see after they pursue the wrong tracks for at least ten minutes in the woods.

d4	Failure Encounter
1	The warband is met with another party that just killed the same type of prey our party is searching for.
2	The warband is met with one of the other kinds of prey to which they were not assigned to kill, from a distance. They do not need to fight the beast.
3	The warband sees one of the other kinds of prey to which they were not assigned to kill, from a distance. They do not need to fight the beast.
4	A wounded **werevargr** is hiding in a tree, waiting to ambush the warband. The werevargr turns into its human form if it dies; therefore, a party that is assigned to kill a vargr cannot return this werevargr as a trophy.

WEREVARGR (WOUNDED)

Medium humanoid (shapechanger), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 30 (4d8 + 12)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Strength +4, Constitution +5
Skills Athletic +4, Perception +2, Stealth +4

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Austris (Common), Mithal
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Shapechanger. The werevargr can use its action to polymorph into a werevargr, or back into its true form, which is a humanoid.

It retains all its former statistics, save its AC, in each form. The equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

Keen Hearing and Smell. The werevargr has an advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Lycanthropic Regeneration. The werevargr regains 1 hit point at the start of each of its turns if it is not attacked by a spell, or by a weapon that is magic or silvered.

Howl (1/day). As a bonus action or as a reaction, the werevargr howls and provides its allies within 5 feet with a 2 (1d4) bonus on their next saving throw.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The wounded werevargr makes two attacks, one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

If an encounter that is the result of a failure takes place, you, as the GM, make the players roll for the tracks again. Regardless of the outcome, make them find the prey. Bear in mind that if players roll lower than 4 (as stated above), the time spent on finding the hunt increases by one to three hours, at the GM's discretion.

Characters pursue the track by looking at the recent footsteps, and the mud makes it easier to locate them. However, do not forget that the rain has not ceased. It is prone to erase the footsteps if the characters dawdle too much. If so, they can also follow the distinct scent of their prey, although the heavy wind makes it harder to sniff. After about 2 hours out there, a total silence falls except for the rain and thunder.

Finally, the characters reach the end of the tracks. In the middle of the woods, approximately 90 feet ahead of the characters, there stands the prey that our party is seeking. The animal looks extraordinary, even abnormal. The players can realize that the prey's eyes are glistening with cold blue fire by making a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. However, as this is the hunt they are looking for, they should eventually fight the beast.

Characters	Encounter
4	1 Hel-touched deer/vargr/bear (p. 260, 256, 256)
5	1 Hel-touched deer/vargr/bear
6	2 Hel-touched deer/vargr/bear

After the encounter, characters may want to check what the problem with these animals is, since they have an abnormal appearance, and they carry the stench of the Goddess of Death.

A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check allows characters to locate unusual runes carved into the animal's pelt. If they try to read the runes, they do not succeed, unless one of the characters knows the Hellic language (see below). However, a successful DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) or Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that these runes do not resemble those of Odin, the Allfather.

If there is someone who knows Hellic, that person can read the runes, that character will see that the writing reads "Death", "Defile", and "Rise".

If characters look at the flesh of the animal, they see that certain parts of its flesh are rotten. Also, it generates a disturbing aura which the characters have never experienced before. Characters cannot figure out what these runes mean and what they are used for. However, at this point, they

Hel-touched Deer

have killed the beast and completed their challenge one way or another. That was quite something. Now, it is time for our party to take the prey's dead body to the village, and to claim their rightful prize as newly accepted members of the warband.

The animal they carry with them smells like it has been dead for a long time. A Hel-touched bear weighs 600 pounds. A Hel-touched deer weighs 300 pounds. A Hel-touched vargr weighs 200 pounds. The character or characters who carry the beast might be encumbered or heavily encumbered. Since the creatures are too heavy, the travel speed of the warband decreases by 10 feet if the warband has 4 or 5 characters, or decreases by 5 feet if the warband has 6 characters.

BACK TO HOLMDAR

The way back to Holmdar is quiet... too quiet. On the way back, the characters see dead bodies on the ground. These are the bodies of members of other warbands and they appear to have been ripped to pieces by horrors roaming in the night. It seems that these people are shredded into pieces, and hence it should seem obvious to the warband that this is not the doing of regular animals. As Svillanders, the characters should be reminded that if a body is left unattended, it raises as a draugr, a type of undead, and that these bodies must thus be burnt or buried to prevent this. They may also want to collect trinkets or other tokens from the bodies so as to return to their families, friends, or other loved ones that await their return back home. There is inevitably an air of melancholy to this experience, as the people that our party finds lying on the ground are those who were up to the challenge of the hunt, just like our party.

The scene is bloody and brutal. All over, there are bits and pieces of half-eaten flesh. If the characters look at the scene carefully, they recognize some of the corpses, or find a couple of objects that reveal their identity. The characters know that they must either burn or bury the remains, or that otherwise they might come back as draugrs.

If they don't properly take care of the remains, Holmdar is attacked by them within 1d4 days. Therefore, if the characters neglect to burn the corpses, or to give the bodies a burial, Frosted Johan may mention this attack to the characters when they meet again in the future.

As they walk into Holmdar, mourning and sorrow hangs in the air; however, when villagers see our party from a distance, they greet them with songs sung with pleasure and joy. When the characters enter the village, they see that not a lot of the groups who left have returned. They cannot help but realize that though they survived, others have not been so lucky.

It is nearly dawn, and the ruler rangers of the villages can be seen sitting on their chairs with ominous looks on their faces, seemingly in the midst of a heated argument. The sage of Holmdar, Rudolf Karsisson (Dvergr, neutral good), is an old man with braided long hair and beard who is known to wear an iron amulet with Odin's runes on it. He looks worried, sitting next to the rulers with the village's guards who are standing on either side. Then he looks at our party, and scowls. He whispers something to Ygre, and her expression changes from "sad" to "afraid". She quickly gets up and approaches the warband at once, while the other villagers quietly celebrate the arrival of the warband. When the villagers see the beast that the warband hunted, however, they look shocked since this animal does not look like any other. Ygre comes very close to the warband and whispers: *"Come with me at once. Bring that which you've brought with you."*

Afterwards, she loses no time, and starts to hastily march towards Frosted Johan's house.

Frosted Johan's house is a wooden two-story building, the interior of which is decorated with items that any wealthy Svillander could possess. When the characters walk in, they are greeted with a thick, exquisite bear fur lying on the ground. It seems that there is no one here in this decent-looking house that smells like fresh pine trees. Ygre leads the characters into the basement through the main hall of the house. The basement is illuminated with one or two torches, and thus this area is in dim light.

When the characters move into the basement, they see the sage of the village who is waiting for them. The old dvergr Rudolf, wearing a brown robe, is drawing runes with his own blood to the ground while praying to Freyja for mercy. The basement is empty, except for some wooden boxes at the far corner of the room, behind the old dvergr.

When the characters come close enough, Rudolf finishes his casting of the ritual. The runes that he has drawn look like little circles with arrows crossing through each one. All

Rudolf

of these arrows meet in the middle, which forms another big circle. When Rudolf notices the presence of the characters, he starts to speak in his shaken, low voice:

> *"You have brought back a nameless horror. Leave it in the middle of the runes. Now, I shall investigate what this foul creature is. It has some runes on it, as I see. I wonder whose doing that is. Anyway... Children, you have completed the challenge, but have done so by taking with you something I could have only imagined in my darkest nightmares. Know this: If this is what I suspect it to be, some will blame you for bringing a curse upon us all. Still, If I were you, I would not give those people a second thought. You are mighty warriors, that much is certain. Leave this foul beast with me now; get out and have some fun to forget about tonight's grave sadness; that other warband initiates have lost their lives trying to grow in honor. Celebrate. You've deserved it."*

Characters may want to ask Rudolf's opinions about the origin of this creature; however, he will refuse to answer any and all of these questions since he doesn't want to provoke and awaken the darkness. He insists that he will declare his opinion about the subject when the time is right.

Then, the characters may leave the basement with or without Ygre. They can spend some time in the village or return to the inn in which they spent the night before.

If the characters choose to spend some time in the village at night, they eventually see the lights of the houses go out, one by one. The only light that remains is from a small shack that is used as a Freyja temple, which is empty but the candles and torches are still illuminating the small altar inside. If the characters go back to Valley Rest, read or paraphrase the boxed text below to the players:

> The pinewood door opens to the dining room, but this time, the room feels quite different than it did this morning: it is dim and quiet. No one is sitting at the wooden tables, and even the chaos in the kitchen seems to have faded away. Sorli welcomes you behind the bar. *"Welcome my friends,"* says Sorli, in a deep and defeated voice, which he tries to pass off as proud. *"I told you we expect great things from you and you, my friends, have gone above and beyond our expectations. Thank you, you did your part well. Now, it is time to wait and see."*

If the characters want to stay and chat a bit more, Sorli asks if they want anything. He is anxious because of the events of the day and doesn't try to hide it. After half an hour, he says he needs some sleep and leaves the characters. The warband may take a rest here, in their rooms, from dawn until midday. All of the rooms are small but efficiently decorated rooms that contain a few essential items.

When characters wake up and go downstairs, they see that the pessimistic atmosphere of the night before has faded and left its place to a regular day in the inn. There are some patrons who already ate their meals, and are ready to leave. The little girl that the characters saw the day before is still there, serving food to customers. The excitement, which could be sensed from her cheery face, has been replaced by one of diligence and monotony.

Sorli welcomes the characters and shows them to the same table that they previously sat on. The table is still full of food, but not as much as yesterday.

If the characters look around, they notice that some customers are looking at their table. Yesterday's red-haired child comes back and starts pouring herbal tea into the cups of the characters, still looking at them with admiration in her eyes. If the characters attempt to talk to her, she feels happy to be with them and honored to serve them, but she is so shy that she cannot bring herself to speak

The conversation between party members is cut short by the arrival of a young woman, who looks tired and nervous. She looks around, spots the characters, and approaches the table. If the characters wish to examine her further, a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that she has blood on her forearms. She comes over with haste, and silently speaks to the characters: *"I was told you must come to Johan's home; Rudolf is waiting for you there."*

The name of this woman is Grima (Kuning, lawful good, Commoner). She is a follower of Freyja, and she helps the healer of the village with whatever is in her power. She stands short among the others, even though she has an athletic frame. Her tightly tied blonde hair looks a bit messy.

If the characters ask about the blood, she replies, *"I work for a healer and I am used to it"* as if she does not notice nor mind that she is covered in blood. She refuses to answer any other questions, and reminds them that the situation is urgent.

On the road to Johan's house, if asked again, she says that she is coming from Johan's home and that Hungerd is giving birth with an exasperated sigh. According to the healers, the

Sorli

birth is unlike any they have seen and it is extremely difficult to bear, even for a strong woman like Hungerd.

HOME OF FROSTED JOHAN

The two-story, stone building is close to the village square. There are two guards waiting on either side of the large wooden door that opens up into the hall. It looks like torches illuminate the surroundings at night.

The interior is decorated like the outside, most items being there for their functions. A wooden chandelier hangs above a large table, and on the left side of the room, a large fireplace emanates light and heat to the rest of the house. On the left corner of the room, a wooden staircase leads to other floors.

The deep, loud voices of Frosted Johan can be heard, coming from the basement, he is shouting *"How, how could we not have noticed!"*. Then Grima says, *"They must be in the basement... I must go back and help them."* She then leaves the characters and hurries down the stairs.

As soon as the characters start walking down, the awful smell of rot begins to bother them. This smell reminds the characters of the smell they came across in the forest. The basement is a simple big, rectangular room that is illuminated by torches and candles. Within, there are wooden barrels, pelts, and sacks dispersed here and there.

The creature that the characters have killed is in the middle of the room, with some runes drawn around it using coal and blood. A small wooden table is just across the stairs, at which Frosted Johan sits. He is sipping his drink from a wooden cup with a distressed expression on his face. He looks as though his mood was the polar opposite of the night before.

When the characters arrive, Rudolf explains the situation. Read or paraphrase the boxed text below to the players:

> Rudolf gets out from the darkness in the corner of the room, and walks towards you. He looks and sounds both tired and depressed, *"The creature you killed last night cannot even come close to the right sacrifice. For us, it is an abomination and it must be wiped off from the face of this earth."*
>
> As soon as he's done speaking, a loud croak is heard, coming from the outside; at which point Rudolf and Johan exchange looks, each looking more worried than the other. Rudolf comes closer to the characters and starts speaking again,
>
> *"We have some ideas about what this creature might be but we do not want to make a hasty decision. We must..."*

Rudolf tries to keep going, but his words are drowned out by the loud noises coming from upstairs. These noises are a mixture of hurried footsteps and distant raised voices. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that the noises are made up of a raven's crow and the voices of the many women upstairs.

If the characters talk to Frosted Johan in this short pause, he will refuse to answer so as to not disrespect Rudolf or interrupt him. After a few moments, Rudolf continues to speak:

> *"It's been puzzling us for a few months, we've been suspecting that the influence of Hel has increased in our land. But..."* says Rudolf, looking distracted by the carcass. *"But... now, we are almost sure. These are the offspring of Hel... She is here."*

As soon as Rudolf says, **"***She is here***"**, a few loud croaks come from the outside, and one of the voices coming from upstairs, turns into a scream. Johan immediately stands up and runs out, with Rudolf following close behind.

If the characters choose to stay in the basement, they feel like the air is getting colder and thicker with each and every passing second. The runes on the carcass and on the ground start to shine. The screams get louder, and louder, before they come to an abrupt end, and the house is filled with utter silence, which hangs in the air like a heavy smoke.

If the characters choose to go after Frosted Johan and Rudolf, they go up the stairs, into a large bedroom. Hungerd is laying on the bed covered in blood, her hair wet with sweat and tears. Lots of people, Grima among them, are standing around the bed with expressions of shock and horror on their faces.

For a minute, nobody speaks. Hungerd can hardly breathe. Still, she mutters a few words and phrases that can barely be heard, but the gist of it is how sorry she is. An old lady enters the room with the baby wrapped in a large piece of cloth. She approaches Johan and stumbles, *"It is not a baby... It is not a-"*, showing him the "baby" wrapped in the cloth. Rudolf only catches a glimpse of it, before he starts to speak, *"Let's give her time to pull herself together. Those who have no more business here, leave."* then he adds by pointing to the characters, *"Go back to the basement, we may need you yet."* Rudolf and Johan come to the basement after half an hour goes by.

In both cases, a servant goes downstairs ahead of them to get some herbs to brew a calming, soothing tea for his lady after such a horrid delivery. The servant's name is Kollskeg, who is a young, well-built man with long, braided hair. If the characters do not go upstairs, they can ask Kollskeg, and find out what happened. If they choose to do so, they can gather some information. He can divulge the following details:

- Hungerd has been the wife of Frosted Johan for more than 10 years, and together, they have had four children. Even though her previous deliveries were quite easy for her, this one was extremely hard and painful.
- Hungerd felt that something was wrong before the delivery. She did not feel well during her pregnancy, and contrary to what was expected, she kept losing weight throughout.
- If the characters ask him about the ravens that they heard, he mentions that some dead ravens have been seen around the house.

A few minutes after the conversation Rudolf and Johan come down the stairs, with Rudolf clutching a wooden box:

Johan approaches you and stops right in front of you, looking each of you in the eye. He now looks like a different man than the one who gave the speech before the hunt. His blue eyes that blazed with a freezing fire have lost all the brightness in them. He starts speaking in a dull voice; *"We were supposed to celebrate today, as we do on other Days of the Hunt. Meals were to be eaten, hunting was to be done, games had to be played. But... But now we must put the celebration on hold. Hel's influence is stronger than we think, and that requires faster action from us. I will give you your first assignment, the newly selected members of the warband..."* He stops and turns around to Rudolf, but his gaze does not meet his. As soon as he does so, Rudolf opens the wooden box and starts to hand out warband bracelets, and Johan starts to speak once more: *"I want you to carry the cursed carcass to the lake, Freyja's Tear. The gothi there will know what we should do. And... there is one more thing..."* says Johan, turning to what he holds in his hand with his eyes filled with sorrow, *"You will take my child there too; Ygre will carry and take care of it. You can find her at the Freyja temple. You better leave the village before sunset, with her. I recommend that you take supplies to last you at least a week. And... Lastly... Don't you worry. I will personally deal with the rest of these foul creatures."*

At this point, Johan is ready to answer any questions about their mission, in spite of his grief. When he's done talking, Rudolf starts getting the carcass ready for the characters to carry. Frosted Johan goes to the ground floor and sits at the main table with a devastated look in his eyes.

Survival and the idea of the journey is important for Svilland. Therefore, the characters or the GM should keep track of the warband's traveling speed, carrying capacity, whether they have enough food or not, or other elements that you, as the GM, feel would contribute to the realistic experience of a journey in Svilland.

As the preparations are underway, the characters can find Ygre to get a move on, on the road ahead, or they can do whatever they want to pass the time. She is in the small Freyja temple, praying. If they prefer to spend some time around the village, Ygre eventually finds them, with the baby in her arms, before sunset. She tells the characters that Hungerd has utter faith in them and that she prays for them.

The characters hit the road with their lovely companion and the half-living/half-dead baby.

The warband's journey will last four days, and they travel at a slow speed, since they are also carrying the carcass of the **Hel-touched beast** with them.

The sun in the cloudless sky illuminates the entire valley, and as the noises of the village slowly fade away, they are embraced, more and more, by Svilland's primal wilderness. The characters see rabbits, foxes, birds, bugs, and anything else that you, as the GM, feel would be fitting in the Svilland setting, as they travel.

They walk deeper and deeper into the flat valley with its fertile pastures. Everything around them seems to be just as they would expect; except for the baby fussing in Ygre's arms... When Ygre comes over, carrying the baby, the characters see a glowing rune on the baby's forehead. If they ask what this rune is, Ygre will tell them it was drawn by Rudolf as an indicator of the "life" that the baby has inside. Ygre says that the characters must take the baby to the Lake Temple before the rune fades. If it fades before they reach their allotted destination, it means that the baby has too little time to survive.

GM TIP

As the GM, you can use the rune on the baby's forehead to create tension in the adventure.

Aside from the glowing rune on its forehead, the baby looks a little bigger than it ought to be; it is tall enough to be a 6-month-old baby, and it has nearly developed teeth that look sharp. It has no hair, and no eyebrows. Its poor little body looks like all the water has been drained out, and its gray skin is all shriveled up. Its skin is already covered in scars and burns, even though it has been kept quite safe since the birth.

It wheezes nonstop as it struggles to breathe, probably due to a blockage in its nose. Its tiny ribcage looks so misshapen and sharp that it looks like the bones will tear the skin on top. The chest rises abnormally and also, the smell from the baby, the sounds it makes and its eyes cause Ygre to grimace from time to time.

However, she treats the baby with tenderness and affection, as she believes that it will be cured with Freyja's blessings. Except for these little moments that only last a few seconds, where she cuddles the baby, or where she talks to it, Ygre walks with care. Wandering with a draugr baby corrupted by Hel is not an easy task by any means.

There is an invisible aura that the baby radiates around it, which makes it clear the baby is touched by Hel herself. Therefore, it makes sense that Ygre carries the baby, as she is a gothi and is therefore more knowledgeable in the ways of the Gods, and she prays to Freyja for mercy while doing so.

First, they must head south towards the Shadowlow Mountains, from which point they enter Freyja's Mercy forest and continue onwards.

THE MERCY OF FREYJA

Start playing *"Into the Wyld (From Thorath To Nyrstadir)"* on "Svilland - Music and Ambiance".

The austere wilderness around the Trinity of Wilderness is quite difficult to travel through; however, the characters' journey seems to move along without any trouble. Soon, the

warband reaches the forest called the Mercy of Freyja, where they had previously found their corrupted prey. Ygre finishes her prayers, which she had started a while back, and whispers to the rest of the warband:

> *"I spent the first ten years of my gothi training in this forest; maybe even longer. I know these woods well, better than anywhere I've been... There is something strange; I can sense it. The soil that I step on feels strange and new. The green, and brown of the forest no longer fills me with peace. Now... All I feel is angst. Be prepared. We might come across one of those beasts again. Freyja; hear our prayer... Be the wind on our back... Protect us."*

As Ygre reaches the end of her words, she takes the baby, wraps it in a long piece of torn fabric, and ties it up on her back. The baby seems distressed by the situation; thus, it tries to cry. However, all that it can do is growl as if it were a beast. If characters do not think to silence the draugr baby, or try to calm it down, a wolf pack starts charging towards the warband. However, the warband will not be in danger, since even those feral beasts will retreat since they cannot bear the disturbing aura that emanates around the baby. When the wolves completely disappear into the forest, the rune on the baby's forehead fades a little. Then it falls asleep.

The characters move deeper into the forest until sunset.

Clouds conceal the moon. The night is dark, and the trees look like silky silhouettes rather than the large wooden entities that they are. The weather is cold, but the air is still, the harsh winds of Svilland seem to have taken a break.

After they walk into the night, the characters come across shredded pieces of animal flesh, blood-soaked pastures, and rotten smells that accompany the gruesome view. The warband thus understands that there are some other fiendish animals in the woods just like the one they found in the Hunt.

As the characters are passing through the point where they encounter these shredded animal pieces, a spirit flies towards the characters with an agonizing, ear-splitting scream. The spirit does not harm the warband, though, it simply fades away while screaming.

A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that this was a life spirit. These spirits belong to nature. When nature is defiled, they feel uneasy.

Have your players make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw to see if they are being followed. There is no one and nothing following the warband and thus nothing happens as a result of this check; however, they should feel as if they were being followed or watched by an evil eye on a failed save. Therefore, the characters must feel as if they are in danger, which in turn should make them feel uneasy.

Players may roll Wisdom (Insight, Perception) checks every once in a while to see if their characters are being followed or not. As the GM, you are to say that there is nothing to see.

Characters keep going on their route towards the Freyja's Tear, and Ygre leads them, as she has been to the lake many times before. Due to the heavy rain that fell yesterday, the characters find it very hard to move. Their speed is reduced by 5 feet on this difficult terrain.

Meanwhile, keep in mind that the warband's total speed is still decreased due to the **Hel-touched beast** they are carrying. On their way, they do not encounter any beast or animal, but the characters are tired enough due to the harsh terrain conditions and the corrupted baby.

They need to rest in a camp to not suffer an exhaustion level and to keep their strength up, in case of a possible threat on their way to the lake.

A successful DC 17 Wisdom (Survival) check enables characters to find a perfect spot for camping, covered by bushes and rocks around. A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Survival) check allows characters to find a good camping spot under a curved rock, the top of which is covered by trees. A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check allows characters to find a camping spot that is barely covered.

If the result of the check is 10 or lower, the characters will have an encounter during the night; however, characters will still be able to finish a long rest after the encounter takes place.

d4	Encounter
1	A swarm of feral ravens (p. 267) attacks for 1d4 turns and flees.
2	The characters are able to sleep, but their slumber is accompanied by harsh screams. They have nightmares all night. If they investigate why, they find out that the voices are coming from below but they cannot pinpoint its exact source.
3	An old fortune teller traveling to the north, saying that she cannot tell fortunes anymore, visits the campsite and asks for food.

Swarm of Feral Ravens

4	A ritual circle is noticed on the ground, which looks as if it were just drawn. If the characters investigate it, they see that it has been drawn with human blood.

Ygre helps characters to set up camp. Then, she places the draugr baby somewhere in the campsite, where she can keep an eye on it. She opens her bag and offers all characters little sweet rations, called the berrydough, which is the sweet and sour pastry native to Holmdar. She then asks characters whether any of them has a story that will lift their spirits. If the characters do not come up with a story and ask Ygre to tell one, she will ask for a little time to remember a good old tale; and after a few minutes has gone by, she will speak in her soft, soothing voice:

"It is said Freyja has a necklace called Brisingamen, the jewel of which contains; flames that could warm the hearts of all Svillanders, even when Black Winter arrives. Flames that could heal disease if she decides to bless the ill with her mercy. Also, flames that could incinerate those that hurt the innocent in a rage. Knowing that, one day Loki is known to have turned himself into a raven and flown over Freyja, to make her think that one of Odin's ravens was flying over her, counting on the fact that Freyja would feel blessed by such an encounter. Loki waited for hours for the most opportune moment to grab and steal Freyja's necklace. Then, still in raven-form, he attacked Freyja when she was watering her gardens that she creates for her followers to come to when they die. The raven snatched Brisingamen, and the trickster God flew back to his filthy lair. At that moment, Freyja understood that she had been deceived by the Deceiver. Her rage erupted from her eyes. Her fire, once the fire of life and of mercy, burned her gardens to the ground, until all that was left were ashes. She was so filled with rage that she wanted to sprint to Loki's side and put an end to his filthy games. Still, she composed herself, asking how righteous it would be to sully her hands with the blood of a treacherous thief. She intended to keep her promise to keep the peace, however she could. Instead, knowing that she might not be able to if she saw Loki, it might end in blood; she asked her beloved friend Heimdallr to seek her necklace, and bring it back to her. Heimdallr pursued Loki for seven days and seven nights. Finally, he found Loki in the form of a giant seal, wearing the necklace, but the necklace didn't glow with fire as it did before. They fought in the seas for hours, and in the end, Heimdallr managed to retrieve what was stolen. He grabbed the necklace and returned it to Freyja at once. When he did he asked why the necklace did not glow on Loki's neck, as it did around hers. She replied that the necklace did not glow with magic, but rather with the mercy that fills her heart."

After the story, characters may want to keep watch, since there may be threats lurking in the dark.

Towards dawn, all characters who are awake fall into a deep sleep as if a powerful spell is cast on them. These characters must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw, or they cannot fight this strange effect, and fall asleep. The effect ends when the affected characters are forced to wake up. Other party members wake up naturally, after they finish their long rest.

If all the characters fall asleep, the warband will find that the baby has disappeared in the morning. If this occurs, they have to follow the baby's tracks for 1 hour. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation), Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the tracks that will lead the warband to the baby. You, as the GM, can determine whether the warband will follow the baby's physical tracks on the ground, or whether they will go after the baby's distinct rotten smell. After following either track for an hour, the characters find that the tracks end in the entrance of a cave within Freyja's Mercy. Ygre seems to have no memory of this place. However, if the characters take a look around, a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check may reveal that this cave was once the den of a bear.

When characters enter the cave, the first thing they notice is the smell of rotten flesh; to the extent that makes it hard to breathe inside the cave. The cave is dark; characters who do not have darkvision require a light source to see their surroundings. There is moss and ivies decorating the walls of the cave, and a natural path with bushes dispersed to either side lead the characters to the depths of this cave. It looks as though a bear has been using this route to get in and out for some time. With a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check, characters locate the tracks of an adult bear, of two bear cubs, and strangely enough, what appears to be the footsteps of a baby. There is total silence inside the cave except for the sound of water droplets dripping from the top of the cave.

When the warband reaches the cave's deepest point, the narrow path is enlarged and it forms a large, wide den. The baby sleeps peacefully, across from the warband. The adult bear's foot is acting as a pillow under the baby's head. Characters may investigate the den. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation), Wisdom (Perception) check makes them realize that there are two bear cubs behind the adult black bear, who are not moving. A DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation), Wisdom (Perception) check makes them recognize that the bears are dead. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation), Wisdom (Perception) check enables characters to see little, tiny but lethal bites all over the arms and legs of the bear cubs. They seemed to have died pretty recently, since their bodies still seem soft and warm. There are bloodstains all over the draugr baby's face. And the dead black bear seems to have rotten, just like the draugr baby.

When the warband tries to take the sleeping draugr baby and leave the scene, the bear roars with anger and attacks the nearest character.

ROTTEN BLACK BEAR

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)
Hit Points 19 (3d8+6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +3
Damage Resistances poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages -
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Keen Smell. The rotten black bear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The rotten black bear makes two attacks, one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage plus 2 (1d4) necrotic damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

After the encounter, the baby wakes up and does not oppose or fight the warband. When the characters head out to the woods, they notice an unusual weather condition called the Red Snow. It is said that Red Snow only falls where the lives of the innocent have been lost. Those who travel in the Red Snow hear the screams, and thus feel the pain of those innocents. Those who walk in the Red Snow for 1 hour cannot finish a long rest for 1d4 days, because they cannot get those screams out of their minds. It seems that this unusual snow falls everywhere over the woods.

Knowing the implications of walking under the Red Snow, Ygre will offer to wait there in the cave until the snow ends, since there might be more pressing dangers to face in the upcoming days, and the characters cannot afford to get overworked or exhausted.

If the characters accept Ygre's reasoning, they wait for 5 hours for the Red Snow to end. When two hours have passed, if they do not burn or bury the corpses, strange growls are heard, coming from deeper inside the cave. This is the sound of the two black bear cubs, who have risen. If the warband does not attack first, the bear cubs will do so.

ROTTEN BLACK BEAR CUB

Small undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 14 (4d6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	2 (-4)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +1
Damage Resistances poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages -
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Keen Smell. The rotten black bear cub has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +1 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit*: 2 (1d6 - 1) piercing damage plus 5 (2d4) necrotic damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit*: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

After the encounter, nothing unusual happens except that the baby seems to have gotten a lot bigger, in comparison to yesterday. During the 5 hours that the characters spend inside the cave, it crawls inside the cave and sometimes stands up and walks around slowly. Towards the end of the 5 hours, it tries to eat the bear cubs' flesh once again.

Then the warband hits the road again.

If the characters do not accept Ygre's reasoning and set foot outside, they hear unbearable screams and feel all that is felt by those who were ever slaughtered. They each take 1d6 psychic damage and find it harder to move while bearing this pain. Their speed is reduced by 5 feet until they finish a long rest; which they are unable to do for 1d4 days if they spend an hour in it as stated above.

If characters notice that the baby is trying to flee the campsite, they must keep an eye on it from that point forward. However, as the warband gets closer to the Freyja's Tear, the Red Snow starts to fall once more, and the warband needs to find a spot where they can take cover from the snow. They find the cave mentioned above, they may either enter the deepest, widest section of the den and encounter a regular **black bear**; or they can stay at the entrance of the cave, taking just enough cover to stay safe from the harsh weather. If they do so, the black bear will attack when the Red Snow ends. After the encounter, the warband can continue with its journey.

The warband has to travel for two more days to arrive at Freyja's Tear.

Level Up. Before you move on to the episode called "Freyja's Tear" your characters must be 2nd level. Feel free to inform your players to level up during their next long rest.

The characters will be able to see the lake in the distance through the giant trees after sunset.

FREYJA'S TEAR

Freyja's Tear is an old, large lake surrounded by the forest called "Mercy of Freyja".

Extraordinary things have always been known to happen in this area and will continue to happen: the sick heal rapidly here, animals increase in number rapidly, trees grow fast, the winds are softer, and the winters are warmer. All these phenomena have led people to believe that this lake is a sacred gift from the divine since as early as the First Age of Svilland. Many people believe that this lake is filled with Freyja's tears. Many rulers have visited this lake since ancient times, looking to get Freyja's blessings.

Since the First Age, Freyja gothis have been caring for the lake, praying to Freyja and helping those who seek it. It is also their duty to protect the lake because people are not allowed to enter it, drink from it, or take water from it to use for other means. Those caught doing any of these things are punished severely.

Today, the only settlement on the lakeshore is Knafgata, which is home to the largest temple of Freyja in all of Svilland. In addition to Knafgata, a small building on the opposite shore keeps an eye on the opposite side. Although this is a small, wooden building, it is often called the "Lake Temple."

Start playing "*Freyja's Tears*" on the "Svilland - Music and Ambiance," then read or paraphrase the boxed text below to your players:

> You have passed the woods, and left the trees behind. The cold winds are howling from the lake; and you are freezing. Night cloaks the blue of the lake in its darkness, and reflects the night's sky that lies over you. You see the green, blue, and red of the northern lights reflected on the surface of Freyja's Tear, although a light fog covers it entirely. You notice that the trees around the lake seem to be pale and hollow; and the grass around you is covered in flowers that have almost completely faded. There is a little hut near the lake, and a small dock with two Tiny wooden boats nearby. Also, there stands another shack, not far from the little hut. This wooden, one-story shack is a temple devoted to Freyja and it is the home of the Freyja gothi living next to the lake. As soon as Ygre sees the scene, she runs toward the lake, but she collapses on her knees after one to three steps, and whispers in agony and confusion:
> *"Where are you?"*

If characters ask Ygre what she was talking about, she gives the following details in a low, sad voice:

- Normally, a golden light can be seen shining from the bottom of the lake, even at nighttime.
- She is worried that the blessing of Freyja has left this place.

Ygre pulls herself together, as they have a mission to complete, and she goes on to give the following information to the characters:

- The state of the plants in the area also seem unusual; they should have been in better conditions.
- The gothi might be sick or absent from the place. Either way, they must check the shack.

LAKE TEMPLE

Lake Temple is a small building on the northern shore of the lake; next to it, there is a small shed and a tiny dock with two small boats. The building has hosted many powerful gothis since the beginning of its existence, today; it is used for some small rituals and it has also been the home of Asta, a high gothi of Freyja.

You can describe the Lake Temple when the characters first arrive by reading or paraphrasing the boxed text below:

> As you get closer to the temple, you begin to realize the extent of the evil you are up against. The ominous grayish glow of the lake is reflected off the wooden walls. A cold, foul-smelling breeze wraps your bodies like an uncomfortable blanket.

PEOPLE RELATED TO THE LAKE TEMPLE

Only one person, Asta, lives at the Lake Temple full-time; although from time to time, one or two people come and stay here to help her with what she might need.

Asta (Mithal, lawful good, Freyja gothi), is the high gothi of the Lake Temple, and she takes care of the lake, the temple and the forest. Asta is a tall, slim woman who has black hair, going down to her knees, which she accessorizes with some golden beads. She has forest green eyes and she has a large, reddish burn mark on her left cheek, which creates a nice contrast of color on her face. She usually wears basic, long, dark gray robes with boots of the same color.

According to Ygre, she is a very powerful gothi who is well-liked and well-respected by many people in the main temple in Knafgata. Asta came to the Lake Temple after she had had a horrible experience in an abandoned village. Even though Asta did not say much about it, Ygre thinks that she encountered cultists of a dark deity.

Kadlin (Austri, lawful neutral, commoner), is a strong young woman who takes care of the building, the shack, and the port.

Visate the fisher (Vestri, lawful good, commoner), a middle-aged man, carries goods and supplies for the temple.

LOCATIONS

You can see the details on map 1.2 and 1.3 below.

1. THE YARD

Before entering the Yard of the Lake Temple, Ygre wraps the baby up and ties it on her back again. Right before the characters enter this Yard, she stops the warband and offers her blessing. Then, she whispers: *"We must be extra cautious; we do not know what awaits us there. Please be as still as you can be."*

She then performs a chant in the name of Freyja, in her soft voice. Then, she moves her hand as if she were drawing runes in the air, and splashes the characters with sprinkles of water, using her fingers. Each character experiences the effects of the *bless* spell for the spell's duration.

If the characters get closer, they can see some **skeletons** wandering around in the yard, 60 feet away. You, as the GM, can determine how many skeletons the characters will encounter by referring to the table below:

Characters	Encounter
4	6 skeletons
5	8 skeletons
6	10 skeletons

At the start of the third round of the encounter, the creatures in the Altar and Main Hall (3) come out and charge towards the characters, breaking the door of the Lake Temple, with a vicious war cry. If the characters survive this encounter, the rest of the room will be free of combat encounters.

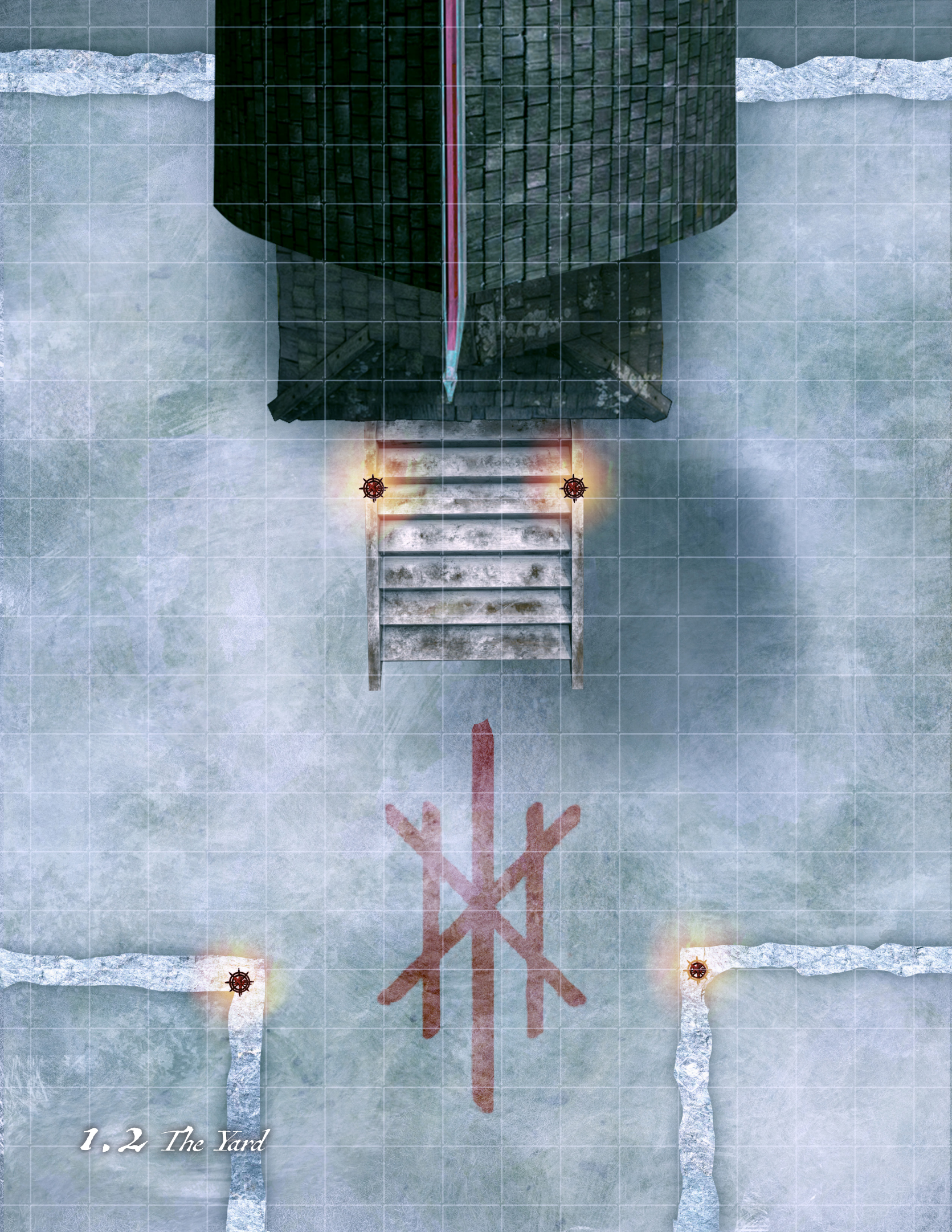
Treasure. *Shortswords* and *shortbows* equal to the number of skeletons and 10 arrows for bow are found.

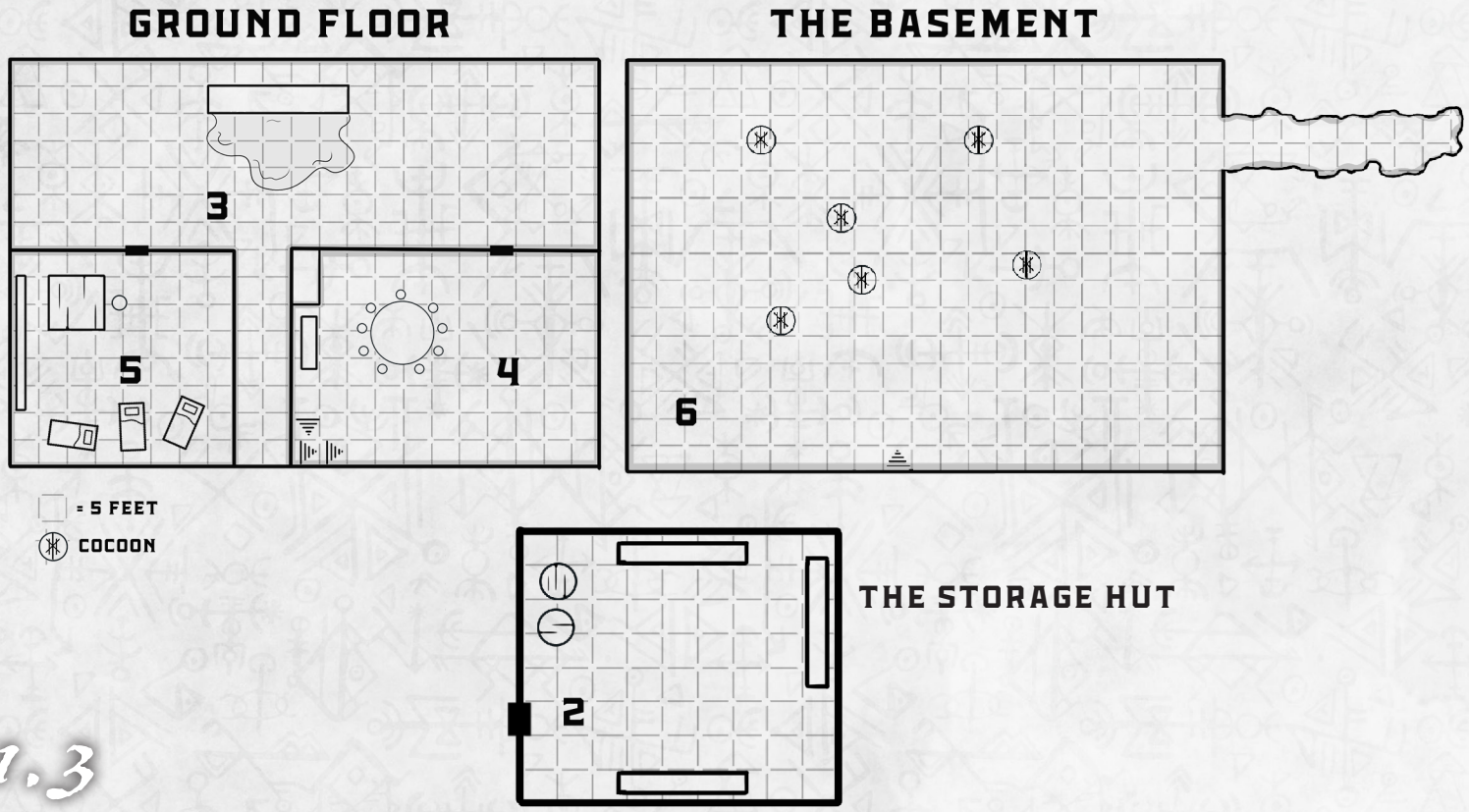
If the characters investigate the yard, they see some footprints in the dirt. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that some areas are covered in little holes as big as two inches. There is nothing inside them but the grass around the holes is rotten. There are also some tracks belonging to humanoids, they look new, and one cannot tell where they lead.

2. THE STORAGE HUT

It is a small wooden club with no lock on the door. The interior is full of various trinkets and tools such as shovels, buckets, and hammers. Some herbs are kept on the dusty shelves on the wooden wall, and a large, haphazard pile of wood can be seen flung in one of the corners, where they await to be burnt, come winter. There are two large barrels on either side of the door. Nothing of value is kept inside the shack.

If the characters open the barrels, they first think that they are empty, but a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) check reveals that they were full of milk and blood up until about a week ago. If the characters try to understand why they are here, a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals


1.2 The Yard



1.3

that the ingredients are common in fertility rituals, while a successful DC 25 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that using both of them together is quite uncommon, and that this could be a sign of dark magic.

3. THE ALTAR AND MAIN HALL

If the creatures inside the door didn't burst out while the characters were in the yard:

The wooden entrance door is secured by means of a rusty lock. If the characters knock on the front door, they will hear growling, coming from inside. Characters can open the door by force. A successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check breaks the lock, or a successful DC 12 Dexterity check with thieves' tools allows characters to pick the lock.

If the characters choose to listen to the door before they enter, a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the sounds of two creatures walking and some angry growls coming from the other end.

A horrible smell greets the characters as soon as they open the door. Looking at the 10-foot-wide, 20-foot-long, 8-foot-high, dim corridor, they see a growling creature move forward towards them. It is a large, corrupted humanoid figure with the head of a large stag instead of a humanoid skull.

Characters	Encounter
4	1 Hel staghead (p. 257)
5	1 Hel staghead, 1 skeleton
6	1 Hel staghead, 1 tormented soul (p. 258)

After the encounter, when the characters have a chance to look around the room, read, or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> After passing through the corridor, you enter a large altar room. Even though the windows are closed shut, you can see the room a little thanks to the moonlight that seeps through the gaps. The image that you see is shocking. As the scent fills your nostrils, you feel the evil aura of the room penetrating the barriers of your corps. The altar is full of flesh, the source of which cannot be understood because of how defiled and rotten it is. The blood flowing from the altar has formed a puddle in the middle of the room. In the corner of the room, things like spider webs hang from the ceiling. There is a large dark stain just below the web-like thing.

If the characters touch the web-like things, they see that the substance is a little sticky, and that it hardens a few seconds after they touch it. A successful DC 18 Intelligence (Nature) check reveals that they are made from a milky paste, and that the large dark stain just below the web-like thing is blood.

There are two other wooden doors on either side of the entrance door.

Reward. If the characters wish to restore the altar, they may do so by means of *holy water* or by working to clear the area for a duration of 1 hour. If they do so, they have 1 minor Hel point (p. 9) removed, if they have any.

4. DINING ROOM/KITCHEN

The wooden door on the left leads to a Dining Room. There is a round dining table in the middle of the room, surrounded by eight chairs. A large wooden cabinet against the right wall is close to a fireplace, which appears to be used for cooking. In the far right corner of the room, an old staircase leads to the basement. The rotten smell seems to be heavier in areas close to the stairs.

Treasure. The wooden cabinet holds 4 small pouches of herbs (15 gp each); 3 empty decorated glass flasks (10 gp each); 2 bottles of wine (10 gp each); 3 vials of *potion of healing*, and a bottle of *black liquid* (p.240). A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that this is a potion unknown to the characters.

Near the staircase, there are three torches on the wall.

5. THE BEDROOM

The door on the right leads to the bedroom, which is smaller than the two other rooms in the shack. There's a simple, single bed in front of the tightly shut window that is located on the opposite side of the door. There is a large piece of felt on the bed, but it looks worn, and it has black stains on it.

Some shelves, a desk and a wooden stool dominate the right side of the room. The shelves are overflowing with ropes and old clothes.

Treasure. There is a coin pouch made of wool on one of the shelves (contains 78 gp and 43 sp), and a bottle of black liquid (p. 240) on the desk.

6. THE BASEMENT

When characters are going downstairs, start playing "*Voices of the Dead*" on "Svilland - Music and Ambiance". When they enter the basement, read or paraphrase the boxed text below to your players:

> The torches on the wall are lit when you enter, but inside the basement is not fully illuminated. Enormous cocoons menacingly hang from the ceiling by webs, and they're dangling right in the middle of the basement. You get the feeling that something is inside them, and that they are watching you. Still, there is not the slightest noise in the basement, although the smell is strong enough to make the weak black out. The air feels heavier and wetter than it should be. Directly below the cocoons, you notice that there are large coal-black stains on the floor.
>
> In the left corner are three large barrels; and next to the barrels, a few sacks catch your eye. You notice that there is a tunnel to the right of the stairs, but it looks very dark inside.
>
> The baby on Ygre's back makes a strange noise like a gnarr and Ygre begins to whisper a prayer. As soon as she starts to pray, one of the cocoons starts to hatch... A growl is heard, coming from inside that cocoon... The baby growls too, and it sounds as though the cocoon and the baby are having a conversation... Then another cocoon starts hatching... The baby takes a deep breath, which makes a strange noise, and the rune on the baby's forehead disappears completely.

The rune's disappearance indicates that the characters have little time left to take the baby where it needs to go. With some of the cocoons hatched, the smell of rotten flesh covers the basement. Grotesque fiends emerge from inside the cocoons to attack the characters, and to fulfill their ends as servants of Hel, the Goddess of Death. You can determine which encounter the characters will face by consulting the table below:

Characters	Encounter
4	2 Hel-touched commoners (p. 259), 1 Hel-touched raven (p. 261)
5	1 Hel-touched hundr (p. 254), 2 Hel-touched commoners, 1 Hel-touched raven
6	1 Hel-touched hundr, 2 Hel-touched commoners, 2 Hel-touched ravens

Hel-touched commoner

After the encounter, if the characters examine the creatures, a successful DC 15 Intelligence check reveals that the Hel-touched ravens are the same kind as the ones that form the **swarm of feral ravens** (p. 267). While the characters examine the area, Ygre looks at the Hel-touched commoners. She realizes that the creatures were Kadlin or/and Visate (p. 27) who worked for the temple. She says this to the characters and suggests giving them a proper burial.

If the characters open the barrels, they see that one of them is half full of milk while the other one is full of blood. If the characters investigate the basement, a successful DC 11 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that there are small holes on the ground. They are the same as the ones seen in the Yard; there are also sacks, dirty pieces of fabric, and some ropes on the ground.

7. THE TUNNEL

It is a 20-foot-long tunnel which is a dead end. A successful DC 12 Intelligence check reveals that the tunnel is newly added to the basement.

After the encounter, the warband may want to take a long or short rest, and the Lake Temple is safe to take a rest from this point onwards. If the characters decide to rest here, Ygre will cut the draugr baby loose for an hour or so, to observe its behavior. If the characters do not oppose the baby being free to move, it toddles around, falling and standing back up from time to time, inside the room in which the warband is resting. It doesn't show any traces of exceptional intelligence, but rather acts just as a regular baby of its age would. However, surprisingly, it strolls and toddles, when it would normally take a much longer time for babies to learn how to do this.

After she observes the baby in this way for some time, and if she has any spell slots available, Ygre offers to heal any wounds if there are wounded people in the warband. If not, she insists on tending and bandaging the wounds by making successful Wisdom (Medicine) checks. (You, as the GM, can assume that these checks are successful, and tell the characters so, as well).

If the characters rest in the temple, Ygre wakes up in the middle of the night, goes near the lake, and starts muttering a beautiful hymn praising Freyja's influence over all of Svilland, as though she were trying to remind both herself and the once prolific nature around her of the might and generosity of her Goddess. The characters may or may not realize Ygre's absence. Ygre returns to the temple and prays a little, then she goes to sleep.

If the warband concludes that they do not need to rest, Ygre, again, offers to heal any wounds if there are wounded people in the warband, provided that she has spell slots available. If not, she insists on tending and bandaging the wounds by making successful Wisdom (Medicine) checks.

In the morning, or after the healing process, Ygre speaks to the warband about their mission.

"We shall go to Knafgata; it is rather close to where we are now. There stands the biggest temple of Freyja. It is also the place where I got blessed by our Goddess. The gothis there can help us. As the Allfather knows, if there is someone who can help us, Knafgata is where they would be. I wouldn't want us to extend this wretched journey, but my gut tells me that we must go there at once. Ordinarily, it is forbidden to enter the lake, but our mission has just become too far from ordinary. The gothi there might be in danger; thus, I am sure Freyja would grant us access to enter her Tear. Knafgata is on the other side of the lake. We could use the boat or travel around, but we mustn't waste any more time. It's your call, I am merely here to be of assistance, after all. What shall we do?"

If the characters walk around the lake, they arrive at Knafgata at the end of 4 days.

If the characters use the boat, they arrive at Knafgata later that day.

According to the warband's choice, you can roll on, or use, the following table to determine possible encounters. The **Hel-touched beast** being carried covers the same space as one character in the boat.

The Lake Encounters

d4	4 Characters	5 Characters	6 Characters
1	2 draugrs of depths (p. 252)	2 draugrs of depths + 3 skeletons	3 draugrs of depths
2	1 sea harpy (p. 264)	2 sea harpies	2 sea harpies
3	1 bottle with a letter inside	1 bottle with a letter inside	1 bottle with a letter inside
4	Nothing happens.	Nothing happens.	Nothing happens.

The letter that the warband finds if a player or the GM rolls a 3 is as follows:

"My sins are too great to bear; I've bitten off more than I could chew. I hope... I hope Freyja accepts me to her embrace. I hope it's not too late. If you find this, please pray for my lost soul while I rot in the depths of this lake. May this lake take my body; may my corpse bring life to its depths, and be of some use at long last... And may others be stronger, and smarter than me, in letting evil into their hearts ..."

- Gertrud

The Wilderness Encounters

d4	4 Characters	5 Characters	6 Characters
1	1 swarm of feral ravens (p. 267)	1 swarm of feral ravens	1 swarm of feral ravens
2	2 tormented souls (p. 258)	2 tormented souls, 3 skeletons	3 tormented souls

3	1 Hel staghead (p. 257)	1 Hel staghead, 1 Hel-touched commoner (p. 259)	2 Hel stagheads
4	Nothing happens.	Nothing happens.	Nothing happens.

If the characters went across the lake using the boat, they make it to the other side of the lake after the encounter. After a while, they see Knafgata's silhouette in the distance; with its walls and the large temple. Then, the warband reaches the docks of this town controlled by Freyja gothis. The gothis greet them with angry expressions on their face, since they know that it is strictly forbidden to use the lake without the permission of the temple. Upon the arrival of the warband, they ask the characters whether they have such permission. If the characters choose to lie, they must make a successful DC 13 Charisma (Deception) check to make the gothis believe them. If they succeed, they can enter the temple freely. If the characters fail the check or choose not to lie, the gothis say that they should follow them to the town hall. Ygre insists on going straight to the temple, and shows them the baby saying *"We do not have enough time. Just look at it, it needs immediate care."* Then the gothis escort them to the House of Fertility.

After the encounter, if the characters went around the lake on foot, they see the walls of Knafgata and the roof of the House of Fertility in the distance after about 4 days have passed. The town is fairly large and it definitely seems cozy and safe, unlike the towns in the Trinity of Wilderness which was always under the threat of wild beasts. The entrance is protected by two guards who have spears and shiny chainmail hauberks. They wear helmets, so their faces are hidden. One of them welcomes the warband and asks what their business is here. Then they are welcomed to the city to visit the temple at once.

Whether they have taken the shortcut across the lake or they have taken the longer way, read or paraphrase the boxed text below to your players when they enter Knafgata:

KNAFGATA

The last lights of the day are seen from the rooftops of the wooden houses as the sun is going down, and the temple seems to embrace all other houses on the shore of the lake. The temple looks big and strong with its stone walls. The forest and the lake surrounding the town looks welcoming and matronly.

The heavy, rotten smell of the lake on the opposite shore has diminished, and even though there was no trace of its usual golden glow, the warm breezes coming from the lake soothe your cold skin. The town looks crowded, there is a warm light seeping through practically every window, and there are people wandering around the streets.

The baby in Ygre's lap has stopped wheezing and begins to gradually turn gray behind its closed lids. Somehow, all of you feel in your heart that it might be too late to save the baby now.

Knafgata Thumbnail

Leader /Important Figures. Bogdunn is the ruler of Knafgata, even though he has many conflicts with Freydis. The townspeople like him but most of them wish for Freydis to be their ruler since they believe it would improve their living conditions.

Livelihood. Herbalism, forestry, trade

Militia. 100 **guards**

Population. 3100

Rumors.

- Bogdunn has sworn allegiance to Hanlon the Real King secretly.
- Freydis is planning to overthrow Bogdunn.

Services. Accommodation, food and beverage, basic repair.

Language. Austris (Common), Mithal

Bogdunn (lawful neutral, half-jotunn, Vartr Blade)
Bogdunn has shoulder- length, dark gray hair that covers his rough, somber face. He generally wears a chainmail, and an Odin symbol around his neck. He also carries a great sword.

Personality. Bogdunn has a cold demeanor towards strangers. In most social situations, he has a formal, almost militaristic facial expression. He is sure to present himself as chief rather than by his name, as he believes his title is more important for the folks.

Motive. He is aware that the majority wants Freydis as the ruler but he has no intention of giving into this whim.

LOCATIONS

Knafgata is a town that hosts the biggest Freyja temple in Svilland. The following locations are keyed to map 1.4.

1. GRAY MANOR

Located in the north of the town, Gray Manor is a big, stone building with a large garden where six guards can be found patrolling the area day and night. It is an old manor in which the rulers of Knafgata have lived for over 30 years.

2. THE MARKET

Since trade is one of the most important sources of income for the townspeople, Knafgata's market is agreeable and well-developed. The market area is clean and guarded by town guards. They carefully patrol the market area to prevent any thievery, hence the business owners are usually cheerful and content.

KNAFGATA

1 - GRAY MANOR

2 - THE MARKET

3 - TOWN SQUARE

4 - HOUSE OF FERTILITY

1.4

People can find many shops and stalls that provide a great variety of items, ranging from herbs to armor. Other than those, one can also find runes, and items that are related to Freyja in the shops of the market.

The Lazy Wolf. This tavern is a large one-story building made of oakwood. Two taxidermy dire wolf heads hang on either side of the two-winged wooden door. As it is the most well-known tavern of Knafgata, it is always crowded inside. Townspeople and merchants entertain themselves with the delicious meals, and good music that is never lacking on the inside. Honne (Mithal, chaotic good, Veteran) is the owner of the tavern. She had opened this tavern after she lost one of her eyes and one ear in an encounter with a *seidr* in a distant forest. She is a strong-looking woman with broad shoulders and a muscular body. She tightly braids her honey-colored, long hair.

The Thirsty Gull. A small armory owned by Hanlon (Vestri, Lawful good, Commoner) and Olvir (Mithal, lawful good, Commoner), who is a middle-aged man with a bald head, and a face covered in scars. He was a sailor once, but he gave up that life after falling in love with Olvir, a young man from Knafgata. Hanlon owns a seagull named Kvit, they have been friends for a while and it never seems to leave its side.

3. THE TOWN SQUARE

The town square is the spacious area in the middle of the town. It is close to the market and The Lazy Wolf. The townspeople use the area as a place of gathering to make sacrifices, have celebrations, and hold other special events.

4. THE HOUSE OF FERTILITY

House of Fertility is the main attraction of Knafgata. Somehow, its high, gray, stone walls suit the golden wisps of the lake, Freyja's Tear. This building, which is called "The House" among the townsfolk, is a large building with many wings.

When the characters reach the House of Fertility, they see a big wooden gate in the middle of strong stone walls. The gate is protected by a couple of guards, and a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that most of them look nervous and worried. They are so anxious, in fact, that they do not notice how the characters look tired and worn-out beyond measure.

If any of the characters have visited the temple before, that character/those characters remember(s) that there were only one or two guards at the gate. The guards only let the characters pass through the gate if they show them the baby, or make a successful DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check.

When you pass through the gate, you enter a large garden full of trees, plants and herbs. A huge, stone altar in the middle of the garden is filled to the rim with plants and foods. You immediately realize that the atmosphere on the inside is the polar opposite of the one on the outside. The people inside seem to be in a state of intense activity and rush; there are people running around, even the oldest of whom seems to be trying to catch up with the others.

As soon as you go through the gate, a couple of women carrying heavy sacks on their backs pass you by, and

the pleasant aromatic scent seeping through the sacks is almost overwhelmingly sweet. Even though she is a Freyja gothi, Ygre looks stunned with the drastic change of the atmosphere. Finally, a young man comes running over to face the characters and asks, *"Have you come as representatives of a village?"* but he continues to speak without waiting for an answer, *"Unfortunately there is not enough space in the temple for representatives, we will host you in an inn in town."*

As soon as the young man stops talking, three women who look like they are Freyja gothis come out of the House of Fertility. The one who is in front is talking loudly, almost yelling, ordering those on her right and left to go here and there or to bring this or that. These two women run out at once, to the garden of the temple; then, the Freyja gothi who was giving orders moves towards the characters. She is tall, wearing high-quality purple clothes with a golden necklace around her neck that has Freyja's runes carved on it. She looks gorgeous with her long braided black hair. She is called Freydis, the high gothi of the House of Fertility, looking tranquil as ever, and she greets the characters with a smile, raising her arms lovingly as she turns to Ygre.

"Ygre! I wasn't expecting you. It's been long, too long! You are truly a sight for sore eyes in these deeply troubled times. It all has truly been awful as of late... Don't mind Ulfr, he is overworked and tense, as have we all. Come, come; introduce me to your friends, I have a minute or two."

Freydis (lawful good, Mithal) Freydis is a high gothi of Freyja. She has a regal visage and the wisdom in the look in her eyes is one that the characters are used to, since they saw it once before in the eyes of Ygre.

Personality. Freydis acts friendly but is also commanding at the same time. She has a high-pitched, lively voice that echoes when she gives others orders. Contrastingly to the way she speaks, Freydis barely uses her body language in social situations, and always stays calm.

Motive. Freydis wishes to take over the rule of Knafgata as she can feel that something is coming, and wants to make sure she can lead her people to survive in the harsh times to come.

Freydis leads the warband into the temple and guides them through a narrow hallway. Then she opens a door towards the middle of the corridor and enters. Inside, there is only an old bed and a dresser, both of which look quite old. The room is too small for eight people; therefore, two to four characters have to stay outside. She then introduces herself to the warband as the high gothi of the biggest temple of Freyja and an old friend of Ygre. She doesn't seem to be surprised by the draugr baby or the **Hel-touched beast** that the warband is carrying. She divulges the following information during their conversation:

- One or two draugr babies are detected in the Austere Woods, which is equidistant from Alsvartr and from the area where Knafgata and the Trinity of Wilderness are located.
- There have been many reports of corrupted feral beasts like the one that the warband brought with them.
- The temple has only last night detected that Freyja's Tear, the lake, has become filthy and unnatural. Moreover, the temple is unable to reach Asta, the Freyja gothi of the Lake Temple.
- The temple sent messengers to the settlements nearby to summon Jarls and Freyja gothis to a council scheduled to convene the next day, to talk about the prosperity of Svilland.

"You, my friends, should also come and share your story with the council. Inform the people of Svilland of this threat. In the meantime, I promise, I will personally investigate how this plague of Hel could be cleansed from Svilland, from this baby and from things such as your sacrifice to be.

Again, pay Ulfr no mind, I will find some rooms for you. You may stay here at the temple, be my guest. The council will convene tomorrow at midday. I want to stress that I want to see you there, you carry important information that everyone should also be privy to. The sun is about the set, so you may want to join in the supper, I trust Ygre recalls where the dining hall is. I'll send some gothis to recover the baby and the beast, you may leave them here for now, but make sure that you lock the door. The key is on the lock. See you tomorrow, and Freyja be with you."

Then Freydis hastily leaves the room with the same soothing look on her face, leaving the warband in the small room. The characters may wander around in the temple if they wish, or they may choose to stay there.

East Wing. This is where the characters currently are. The east wing of House of Fertility is made up of a narrow hallway and extremely small rooms. There are some who reside here in the East Wing. Generally, people who work at the temple and some visitors stay here. You can find the following people in the East Wing:

Ingolf (Dvergr, chaotic good, Commoner) stays in the room at the far end of the East Wing. He is a bald dvergr who has no beard (which is unusual for a dvergr). He works as a servant of the temple, and he runs the errands here. He looks sad since the town has not been in good shape recently and the temple has more visitors than ever. He is getting ready to clean the

altar hall.

Solveig (Vestri, neutral good, Commoner) is one of the servants of the temple. She is a grey-haired tall Vestri, who is sweeping the hallway while the characters are there. She constantly whines about a curse upon the Svillanders. In her opinion, they must have committed a crime so big that not even Freyja could shine the light of her mercy over them. If the characters choose to talk to her in-depth, she says that she does not trust Jarl Bogdunn. She thinks that he must have done something dire and horrible, which brought about this disaster.

Altar of Freyja. This is the first thing that the characters see upon entering the temple. When the characters walk in, they are greeted with a large hall that has an altar dedicated to Freyja in the middle of it. The altar is chock-full of sacrifices such as animals, different kinds of fruit, various seeds, eggs, riches, and anything else one could think of. The altar is surrounded by Freyja followers praying to her name, as well as some other people talking amongst themselves. You can find the following people in the Altar of Freyja:

Ivor (Austri, lawful neutral, Commoner) is an old man who resides somewhere close to Knafgata, who earns a living from animal husbandry. He wears ragged clothes and prays in a whisper, on his knees, close to the altar. A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check enables characters to hear his words: "*Oh Freyja, sweet mother, help my dear daughter Asdis find her way home. She's been gone too long, please shine your mercy on her.*" His daughter is a hunter who lives with him and his wife, and she has been gone for one week now. Ivor is worried sick for his daughter's life.

Brenda (Austri, lawful good, Commoner) is a fair-looking young woman who looks presentable with her well-groomed hair and her nice clothes. However, she looks exhausted and worried. She is praying to Freyja, whispering the words of the prayer with passion, with her hands clasped near her mouth. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check enables the characters to hear her words: "*Forgive me Freyja. I had no other choice. It was not an ordinary child, but it was still ours. He didn't see this. Foolish, cruel man! How could he not see... O Freyja, o merciful matron, have pity... have mercy on me...*" Brenda recently gave birth to a draugr baby. This shook her marriage because her husband Sven killed the baby while Brenda was sleeping, as he thought that the baby was cursed and should be destroyed, knowing full well that his wife would not allow him to do what he thought was necessary. When Brenda found out, she was outraged and she killed her husband in his sleep, just as he had done to their baby. No one knows her story, since she wishes to keep it a secret. However, a successful DC 17 Charisma (Persuasion) check makes Brenda unburden herself, and reveal the truth.

Frida and Hilda (Kunings, neutral good, Priest) are both initiate Freyja gothis currently working on the day-to-day issues of the temple. When the characters get close to the altar, they find the two talking to people who need their guidance. After they finish talking, they start to talk to each other in a corner of the hall. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check enables the characters to hear their words:

Frida: *What do you think Jarl Bogdunn thinks about the council meeting Lady Freydis is holding.*

Hilda: *I don't think he is very happy about it, although he should be. We are only working for the peace of Svilland, Knafgata being the priority.*

Frida: *I know, right? He always seems so tense around gothis like us. I wonder why.*

Hilda: *There is no secret to it, I mean, he likes to be the ruler and he doesn't want to share any of his power, so we're a threat for him. Well, too bad. I feel sorry for him, honestly.*

Then they continue to talk about their daily lives. If the characters intervene and want to talk about the Jarl, Frida and Hilda will say that they do not wish to talk about politics, and will brush them off by saying "*The Jarl does the best he can.*"

West Wing. The west wing is located at the very opposite of the east wing. Generally, this part of the Temple is reserved for the living quarters of the Freyja gothis. Ygre's old room is the second room on the right after one enters the hallway. Freydis' room is the fifth door on the left. Currently, all rooms are taken; however, no one seems to be there.

Dining Hall. The dining hall is the left-hand extension of the west wing. The first thing that catches one's attention here is the intoxicating scent coming from the cooking pots. There is a long wooden rectangular table in this dining hall, around which are just enough empty seats for the characters and Ygre. When Ygre sees the cook as he's picking up the plates of those who are done eating, she runs and gives him a hug. It seems they had a strong friendship that goes way back. You can find the following people in the Dining Hall:

Viggo (Vestri, lawful good, Veteran) is the cook of the temple. He is a middle-aged, handsome man who was a Vikingr once but he was severely injured and had to leave life at sea behind him. He devoted himself to Freyja. He likes spicy food so he makes spicy food; however, Ingolf constantly argues with Viggo about the food being more and more spicy each day.

Viggo welcomes the warband and serves them a delicious bowl of vegetable soup and a decent slab of deer steak, and he checktops supper off with a sweet-sour herbal tea. People in the dining hall do not talk about unpleasant issues while they eat, and Viggo is no different.

While the warband is drinking their tea, a blonde child comes over, and says that her lady, Freydis, has arranged separate rooms for everyone in the warband. The room in which they spoke right after they arrived, and the ones next to them are reserved for the warband.

Courtyard. The Courtyard is on the second floor of the West Wing. The ivies planted in the four corners of the courtyard that cling to the rectangular wooden structure in the middle naturally form a rooftop.

THE PROPHECY

As the warband members rest in their rooms, each player in the warband must make a Charisma check, and two assistants knock on the doors of whoever rolled the highest two. If two characters roll the same number, the door of the one who has the higher Charisma modifier is knocked on.

The assistants have painted their faces gray, and both of their gazes are completely empty as if they were both here and somewhere else. They have the exact same tattoo of a weird, black pattern on their forehead and above their lips.

They will knock on the door until it is opened. If the character does not open the door, the character cannot sleep, and it therefore cannot finish the long rest. When the characters first wake up with the knocks, you can start playing "*Chant of Bones*" on the "Svilland - Music and Ambiance, and then read or paraphrase the boxed text below for the two players:

> You wake up with gentle knocks on the door, they are gentle, but consistent. The light coming from under the door barely illuminates the room. You can still hear the rush; voices can still be heard, both from the garden and from the temple. Although the sounds of the rush have decreased, footsteps and muted voices can still be heard in the distance.
>
> If you open the door, you see two tall figures with gray face paint and strange tattoos. They are wearing long, pitch black robes, as well as some large and unusual necklaces, earrings, and piercings made of actual bones. One of them looks at you and says,
>
> *"The seer wants to see you; she has something of importance that she needs to tell you.*

If the characters accept this invitation, they must follow the characters for about thirty minutes. First, they go out of the room through the temple, to town, and then they enter the forest nearby. After a short walk inside the forest, the characters and the assistants reach an opening where an oddly shaped house greets them in the middle. The house does not resemble any other house the characters saw before. It is hard to tell what shape the house is, or how many floors it has, because it has certain angles and corners that stick out in different directions. Parts of its walls appear to be made of animal skin, and some other parts are held erect by means of large bones.

When characters get inside, they see that they are in a large 8 feet by 8 feet square room yet the room is so full of various objects that it's almost impossible to move freely within. The room has a heavy smell of a variety of candles and incense of pine, oak, and lavender. The air feels so thick with all the smell and dust that it makes people feel comfortably numb. It seems that one could find anything and everything they could think of in this room; candles, expensive metals, glass jars, skulls, rugs, clothes, plants, nameless objects hanging from the ceiling; you name it, this room has it. Some animals being

held in metal cages look at the characters. In the middle of this picturesque room, stands a woman, as unusual as the room itself.

She is a hunched, short, rough-looking woman who appears to be waiting for you. When you come closer to her in the dim lit room, and look at her face, she looks back at you with her big, light blue eyes that almost seem white sparkling underneath her eyelids painted black. She wears an accessory that resembles a crown, made of small bones on her forehead, which is long enough to almost cover her eyes. The woman calmly says, *"I am Jazel, Jazel the Bonereader. I have to read your fortune. I have to look at your bones. Maybe we can learn what awaits you."*

Jazel only tells fortunes by looking at the individual's bone, and to do that she slashes their body open. She must see and touch the bone herself. After a short time passes, she says that she must cut the characters' hand open to see their bones but she assures *"Do not worry, I know both how to harm, and how to heal."*

If the characters agree, Jazel starts to perform a ritual that takes two hours and she takes the following steps in doing so.

- She rings a small bell.
- She invites the characters close to her and shows them a little cushion for them to sit on.
- She lights some more woody incense.
- She draws a circle on the ground with a grey powder (if the characters ask what it is, she whispers shallowly, *"I am the reader of bones, dear."*).
- She sits across from the characters and meditates, making some bizarre sounds as she does so. The character feels a bit dizzy upon hearing these sounds.
- She holds the characters' hand, shuts her eyes, and whispers unintelligible words.
- The assistants start to play the drums on either side of the room with an enchanting rhythm.
- She opens her eyes and slashes open the palms of the characters. The characters take 3 slashing damage but it is far less painful than expected. In fact, a successful DC 6 Constitution saving throw is enough to keep the character calm and quiet. On a fail, the character who fails this check screams in pain.
- She takes a closer look at the bones; she touches them and she smells them.
- Finally, she starts to speak, and she tells the characters' fortunes by looking at their bones and their flesh.

Since there are two different prophecies and two characters, read or paraphrase the first paragraph of the box below to one character, and the second one to the other character.

"What awaits you on your path, is more than that which you carry on your back. When the sky turns black, and black snow covers your shoulders, be not afraid. You will pass through a narrow gate somewhere up high, and will enter a much greater darkness to save the ones you've left behind. When the wind of death knocks on your door, you must open the door and move forward. Move forward, deeper into the long road ahead."

"You will see evil become good, and good become evil, but it is imperative that you do not lose courage. Don't trust the forest or the mountains, they are now home to more than the wildlife we know. Always be alert! Because it is death itself that you are after. It is likely that you and your friends will pass the boundaries of mortal minds."

Level Up. Your characters have reached the 3rd level. Feel free to tell them to level up after they wake up.

Each character wakes up in their bed. The characters visited by Jazel do not remember how they returned to the temple and got in their beds, yet they notice that their hands are covered in bandages. If they unwrap the bandages, they see a large scar covered with a gray paste that smells minty.

When they go into the Dining Hall, they see that it is more crowded than it was the day before. Most of them look serious and worried. Some of them have just arrived with their sacks still hanging from their shoulders. Ygre also looks tired, her hand is tied with the same bandages as two characters who went to see the seer. If asked, Ygre says that she too was visited by a fortune teller. The fortune teller told her that she has likely witnessed her last full moon (and there are eight days until the next full moon). The characters are served a basic breakfast made up of some dried meat, some vegetables, and warm milk. Three hours after breakfast, the bells are rung to remind everyone about the council meeting at midday.

THE COUNCIL

When characters enter the courtyard, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

You enter a clean and sunlit courtyard, going through an embroidered door. The courtyard is large and from it, one can view both the lake and the forest.

Twenty wooden chairs are placed in a circle in the middle of the courtyard. Wooden stools are lined up around these chairs so as to form a circle. Two young members show the arriving crowd to their seats.

High gothis from all over Svilland are sitting in those twenty chairs, while the representatives from the settlements are sitting on the stools. There are also some groups who are standing behind the stools. You are not shown places to sit, and one of the gothis says that you can wait behind the ring of stools, with the rest of the standing group. You can also recognize Frosted Johan in the crowd.

When all the people settle down, Freydis starts her opening remarks:

"Welcome my friends, it is an honor for me to host all of you here, even if the reason for such a meeting is far from pleasant. Some of you have traveled far to get here. Some of you set out with great pain in your hearts... I cannot stress enough; how grateful I am to have all of you here.

For a while now, we have been receiving news that is most disturbing: Of those who rise from their graves, of those who have given birth to draugr babies, not to mention the defiled animals and barren fields... For those of you who are lucky enough not to have seen one, I would like to share with you some 'creatures' brought here by a group among us..." Freydis makes a gesture to one of the gothis and continues to speak, still looking at you.

"Come friends, please, tell us your story."

Four gothis quickly enter the courtyard and lay the creature at the center of the circle. As soon as they enter the courtyard, a foul stench starts to spread. There is the dire deer (Pineheim)/ vargr (Jonnamot)/bear (Holmdar) (according to players' or the GM's previous choice (p. 7)) you hunted at the center. Some people look uncomfortable due to the appearance of the beast, not to mention the smell.

While the characters tell their stories, everyone listens to them intently. When the story is finished, the people in the council want to ask the characters some questions. Those who ask questions first introduce themselves by stating their names and occupation, and then they ask their questions. Each of them speaks to the characters directly and respectfully.

GM TIP

As the Game Master, you can decide the length of this scene, you can make the scene longer by adding more questions, dialogues and other types of role-play, or you can prefer to have a shorter scene.

An angry and tough male dvergr warlord named Droki the Brave from the north asks the following question:

- Where did you kill this creature?

A barbarian half-jotunn woman named Sidgy the Bear killer, who is wearing bear pelts as armor, and who looks as ferocious and as wild as a dire wolf. She is one of Odin's Vargr, a cult dedicated to Odin's teachings. She stands up and asks the following questions:

- Did you see other creatures like this one?
- Did the creature affect the aura of the environment?

A male Austri warrior named Bjarne, who is wearing an armor that carries Tyr's holy rune, stands up and asks the questions below. He is a member of the respected organization called Tyr's Judges. When he gets his answer, he calmly whispers to his servant to take notes.

- What else did you find at the Lake Temple?
- Were there any signs of where Asta (the gothi of the Lake Temple) might be?

An old woman runewalker called Magnhild stands up clutching at her old quarterstaff. She looks really old with her long white hair. She is one of the Rune Keepers, which is an organization that seeks to punish those who use runes for evil matters. After she gets her answer, if there is a runewalker in the warband, she will ask the character to come and visit her after the council. She asks the characters the following question:

- Were there any signs of magic?

After the characters tell their stories, the high gothis coming from Green Lights of the East and Nionaem talk about the creatures they encountered and their differences and similarities. The most notable comparison is the following:

- There are the same creatures with runes carved on their skin, terrorizing the people in both regions. However, in Green Lights of the East, the creatures are skeletal, and in Nionaem when people get close to the creatures, they feel a chill go through them, as if they were in the depths of Hel.

When the council members hear that there are similar problems in distant lands, far from the Trinity of Wilderness, they start murmuring amongst themselves. A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that most attendants are confused and uncomfortable.

After the discussion dies down, Freydis starts to speak once again. Despite all the bad news, she still looks calm and speaks slowly:

"My friends, I understand your fear and concern, believe me, I too feel your pain. I am aware that there are many things we are yet to know and that we have a long way to go.

We used to receive word of such things on rare occasions; but now, not a day goes by without a heralder of bad news. We do not know the exact source of the contamination and these events, but our suspicions center on a secret cult of Hel, whose name eludes us as of now. It is our duty to stop this cult and I think there are three possible ways we can go if we wish to do so.

First, we must inform all the settlements, every ruler must be made aware of the danger. It is everyone's duty to make sure that every Svillander alive knows of this threat, thus, you must warn the people and settlements around you. Second, we must seek ways to heal those that are affected; and to make sure that assistance is provided to even the most remote villages. We already assigned many gothis to this cause as we deem it to be of the utmost importance, and we expect no less from the others. Finally, we must clear Freyja's Tear so that we might trace Asta. I feel that if we can find her, we will learn more about this cult."

At that point, she looks at you and continues, *"If their leader, Frosted Johan will allow it, I wish to nominate this group for the task of clearing the lake; as they've already killed a Hel-touched beast and cleaned the Lake Temple themselves."* Frosted Johan looks tired and devoid of all hope, but he stands up and starts talking nonetheless, *"From this day forth, it is their duty to serve you for this greater cause! And it is their duty to take revenge for my beloved child."*

Freydis smiles at Johan with thankful, and understanding eyes and ends the council by saying *"A different and more challenging time has begun; we will need each other more than ever. Thanks again for coming and listening!"*

Johan looks at the crowd about to leave their seats and he starts to preach:

"You! You are the most courageous Svillanders in this land. See this as a trial from our Gods. We fight to kill. We kill to live. We live to protect. Victory; or Valhalla!!!"

As soon as Johan is done with his words, the crowd goes wild, hitting their swords on their shields and shouting *"Victory or Valhalla!"*

When the council meeting has come to an end, Frosted Johan meets the warband and greets them with fatherly pats on the back. After they talk for a while, he decides to hit the road to go back to his village. He bids farewell to the characters by saying:

"Your service is very meaningful both to Svilland and to me, personally. Hungerd was wondering about the baby... But I will tell her that it is in good hands. I'm sure the temple will find a way to cure our child. Anyhow, the completion of your quest will bring honor both to your warband and to the Trinity of Wilderness. I will be waiting to hear the good news of your heroic deeds. Above all else, watch each other's backs. So long."

After a few minutes, Freydis approaches the warband and outlines some details about the warband's next mission.

"I have no doubt that you will succeed in your sacred journey." Her smile fades, and her eyebrows narrow and her lips come together to form a more serious expression. *"You must clean the lake. No one knows how Asta kept the lake as clean as it was; however, we do have one method under our sleeve, which I'm sure will work. There was a piece of writing we had found years before. It speaks of a 'golden' hallway that stretches out beneath the lake. It is not made of gold, per se. But we choose to call it 'Golden Hall' owing to its glow. I kept this a secret since the lake is sacred so should be the hall beneath. Only a selected few know the way that leads to these halls. We do not usually wander in these halls. However, each time I've been, I was completely filled by the presence of Freyja herself, and I could not help but feel that life in Svilland could have originated from there.*

Within the Hall, you will find a great tree blessed by Freyja. The gate leading to the tree is always wide open to those who have Freyja in their hearts. Thus, you shall have no trouble passing through the door. You must see if the tree has been defiled. If it has, you must purify it, and give it life once more. Finally, it is essential that you bring a vial of the water from the well of the Golden Hall for us to locate Asta. As the water gives life, it helps us locate it, too."

Then, Freydis asks the characters to get ready and meet her within an hour so that she can show them the hidden entrance

of the Golden Hall. She gives a vial of water to Ygre, and leaves, saying that she will be in her room if they need her.

If the characters ask Freydis why they did not enter the Golden Hall before, she gives the following answers:

- Golden Hall is sacred, so normally, no ordinary people should enter the hall.
- Herself and other gothis were, and still are, too busy tending to what ails the people.
- They realized the lake was getting more and more defiled not very long ago, and the first thing they wanted to do was a council meeting to debate what should be done.

THE AFTERMATH OF THE COUNCIL

After the final moments of the council that were filled with excitement, people start to leave the courtyard. Freydis looks hopeful and strong, as her gaze falls on the participants of the council, full of pride. She sees the people off with some other gothis. Everyone looks saddened by the news they've just heard, and yet they look more hopeful and determined than they did when the council had begun.

Sidgy the Bearkiller is the first one who leaves the courtyard, she makes a head gesture to her soldiers and they walk out post haste.

Bjarne can be seen speaking to one of his soldiers with great severity in his voice, and if the characters want to hear what he is saying, a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that he was ordering holy water to purify evil.

Magnhild stands up slowly leaning on her quarterstaff, and she flashes a warm smile at the characters. If there is a runewalker in the warband and the character does not go to talk to Magnhild, she points to the character and says, *"Don't be shy, come along!"* When the characters approach her, she gives them some pages that she tears out of a book she has with her, which contains three 1st level spells and two 2nd level spells of the GM's choice.

If the characters wait for everyone to leave, Freydis approaches the characters with the same smile and pride-filled eyes. She says *"I am grateful for what you've already done for Svilland. I feel that it is just the beginning of all the deeds you are yet to undertake."* she looks at the forest and continues *"You may come find me in the West Wing when you are ready to enter the Golden Hall."*

When the time has come for the warband to enter the hall, Freydis leads the warband to the basement of the House of Fertility. Then she touches a few bricks inside the storage room full of flour sacks. The wall shakes and quakes, and the bricks start to come apart, forming a gap. Freydis enters through the gap with haste, gesturing for the characters to do the same.

The gap leads to an empty room with a gigantic Freyja rune carved on the ground. Freydis asks the characters to shed their own blood on the ground, and says one or two drops should be enough. As soon as the blood drops to the ground, the Freyja rune glows red. Freydis starts to chant in the name of Freyja. As soon as she finishes, a dim path leading under the earth appears to those who shed their blood. The end of the path has a golden glow.

Freydis reassures the characters that the path leads to the Golden Hall, and gives Ygre a little vial of her own blood and a small incense that smells of lavender. She says that when they wash the Great Altar (G23) with her blood and burn the incense, Freydis will know that the hall has been cleansed. Then she will send some gothis to check the hall, and to help the warband get out.

Once the characters set foot on the path, there is no turning back to the basement, as the entrance to the path closes behind them.

If the warband does not hesitate in entering the path, Ygre happens to be the first to enter. If the warband has doubts about moving forward, Ygre asks them to have faith and adds that she needs her friends' help in the next step.

GOLDEN HALL

Golden Hall is a temple hidden below the lake of Freyja's Tear. It is an ancient structure, of which the first Freyja gothis to grace these parts began the construction in the First Age. Both then and now, it has been a sacred place that is kept hidden from most of the followers.

GOLDEN HALL: GENERAL FEATURES

The ancient temple's general features are summarized below:

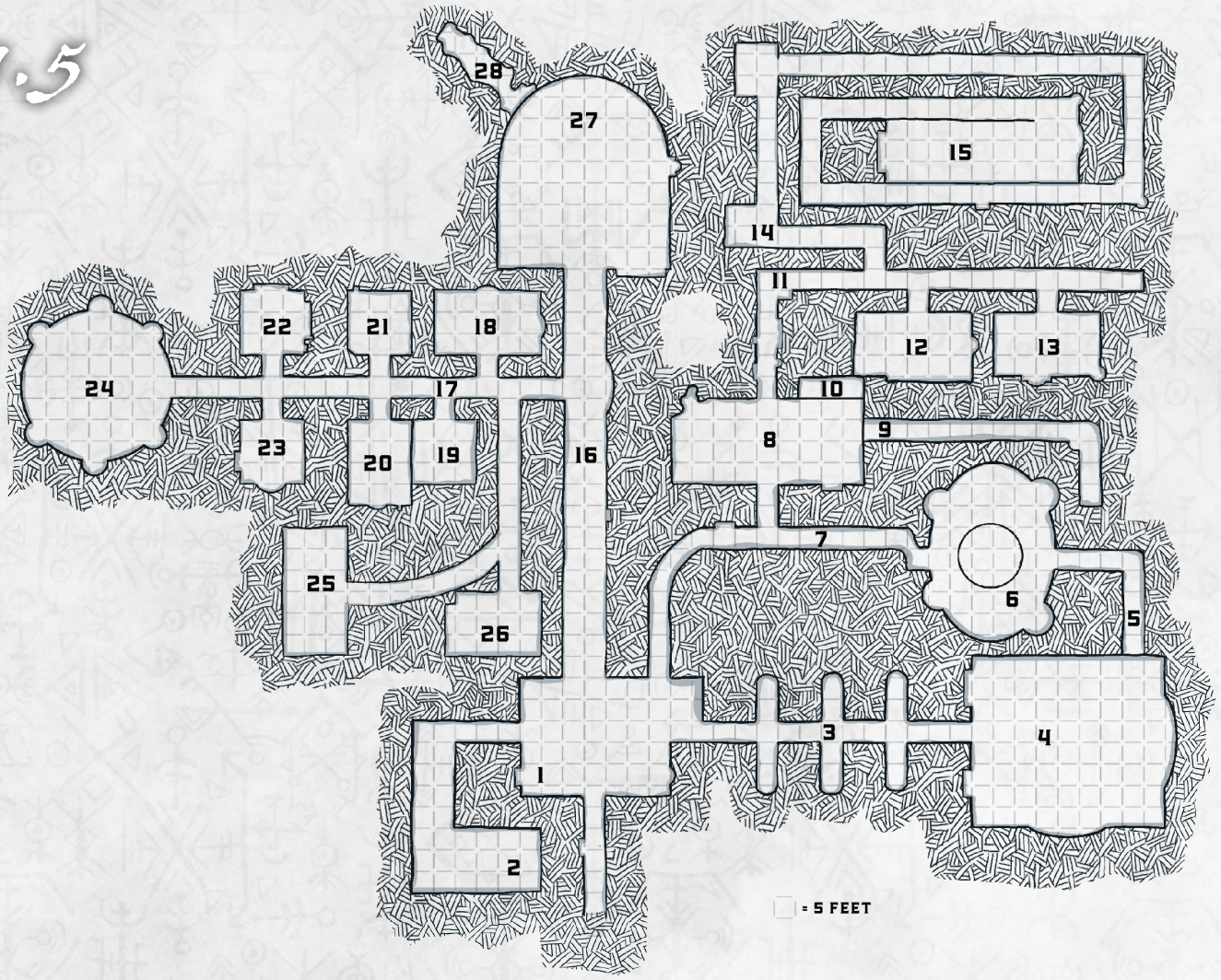
Golden Glow. The stone that is used in the construction of the temple has some sort of golden, magical glow. This glow fills the inside of the temple with a dim, yellow light. The origin of the glow is unknown and it looks limitless. Many believe the temple to be the source of the golden glow that changes the color of the lake. However, now, some areas of the temple are completely dark for the first time in history.

Flooded Areas. Some areas of the temple appear to be flooded with water seeping from the bottom of Freyja's Tear. The depth of the water reaches 2 feet in some areas, which makes these areas difficult terrain. The water is defiled and thus undrinkable.

Foul Smell. The temple has a distinct foul smell of decay, which is similar to the smell of the creature that the characters carried with them. In certain rooms, the smell is so heavy that the characters must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, or take 3 (1d6) poison damage at the end of each turn they spend here.

Pine-wood Doors. The temple has sturdy wooden walls, except for the door to The Great Altar, which is made of stone. Each door is a large object with AC 15, 12 hit points, immunity to poison and psychic damage and vulnerability to fire and bludgeoning damage.

1.5



Perception. If the characters try to listen to their surroundings, they hear nothing unless they are within 15 feet of a room that contains an encounter. In such cases, a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals footsteps coming from behind the door they listen to.

Long Rests. When the characters are taking a long rest here, they suffer from nightmares all night long. However, they can still finish the long rest.

Hel Points. If a character has more than 1 major Hel point (p.9) while in the halls, it may sense the presence of the combat encounters when they are within 15 feet of the relevant door. Also, as they get closer, they see an image of their future opponents.

LOCATIONS

The following area descriptions are keyed to map 1.5.

G1. THE ENTRANCE

Start playing "Tyrfing" on the "Svilland - Music and Ambiance" and read or paraphrase the boxed text below to the players:

> When the door surrounded by ivies closes shut behind you, everyone starts walking in the corridor. Everyone hears Freydis' whisper in their minds, *"My friends, Freyja will protect and bless you!"*
>
> You can see that this temple, which is called sacred, has been defiled completely, starting right at the entrance. There are the mangled remains of animals, and dirt all over the entrance and the ground has been desecrated with unholy blood. You see vile Hellic inscriptions and runes engraved on the beauteous walls of the temple as the smell of death and rot wafts to your face.
>
> Ygre seems overwhelmed by what she sees, she touches the necklace around her neck, mutters a short prayer, and pulls out her axe:
>
> *"Pull out your weapons, my friends, this place must be cleansed at whatever the cost!"*

If the characters choose to examine the remains and dirt, a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) check reveals that they are the remains of more than a dozen creatures including

humanoids, wolves, deer, and possibly a bear. If the characters choose to examine the writings, a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that the writings consist of some repetitive words in Hellic. If a character in the warband knows Hellic, the words are "Hel", "Aesir", "Vanir", "ice", "darkness", "welcome", and "fall"; in no specific order.

As the characters walk through the corridor into the rectangular room, they see four different paths, which lead deep into the temple. One of the roads is on the right, one is on the left and the other two are straight across.

G2. BACKROOM

It seems that this room was used as a warehouse before it was defiled. There are plenty of shelves and barrels lined up against the wall. There are some empty sacs on the floor, and some of the shelves have pieces of paper, clothes, knives, and bottles on them.

Trap. There is a rune written on the ground within 20 feet of the entrance of the room, which the warband can perceive by making a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check.

If any creature steps on the rune before they perceive this trap, the characters see some magic dark purple arrows shooting out from the right and left. In this case, all the creatures in the room must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. A target takes 3 (1d6) piercing damage plus 4 (1d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Treasure. If the characters search the room, they find 8 green, cotton robes in a wooden chest that are worth 50 gp each, if sold. The chest also holds three pots of *Potion of Healing* and a golden necklace with a tree engraved on it worth 250 gp.

G3. THE SCULPTURE CORRIDOR

It is a 55-foot-long, 5-foot-wide corridor with six alcoves that are dispersed on either side, and in the middle of which are 6-foot tall tree statues. These tree sculptures, which look like they are made of stone and iron, are placed on stone bases. All the sculptures are different from one another but their branches meet above the characters. Like everywhere else in the temple, these sculptures have been defiled with blood and rotten flesh. Some remains hang from the branches, and the bases are drenched with blood.

As soon as the characters enter the corridor, they feel a cold breeze go through them, and hear some whispers and whistle-like screams. If any of the characters know Hellic, they can pick up some words such as "help", "no" and "pain".

Tree Sculpture Trap. The characters should keep their distance from the trees, if a character touches one of the sculptures, the sculpture trap is activated, and the character suffers the effects of a *bestow curse* spell.

G4. THE INITIATION ROOM

Describe the room to the players, reading from, or paraphrasing the boxed text below:

> It is a rectangular room, with web-like things hanging from the ceiling. Right across from you, on the other side of the room, you see a stone altar covered with a thick brown liquid, with huge cocoons in the front. While you're looking, the enormous cocoons start to hatch.

Characters	Encounter
4	1 Hel-touched brown bear (p. 259), 2 Hel-touched commoners (p. 259)
5	1 Hel-touched brown bear, 3 Hel-touched commoners
6	1 Hel-touched brown bear, 1 Hel-touched commoner, 1 Hel-touched giant boar (p. 260)

The room is filled with the stench of rotten flesh, and this disables the characters from behaving as they normally would. Therefore, the characters take a -1 penalty to their ability checks, saving throws, and attack rolls while they are in this room.

If the characters wish to examine the brown liquid, a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that it is a mixture of milk and blood.

If the characters investigate the area further, a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a secret door on the north wall. This secret door leads the warband to a corridor (G5), which eventually leads to the Initiation Chamber (G6).

G5.THE INITIATION CHAMBER CORRIDOR RIGHT

The 5-foot-wide corridor is flooded with muddy water. It has a high ceiling, which is roughly 15-feet above the ground. There are some illegible scribbles on the walls, written in coal and blood.

G6.THE INITIATION CHAMBER

Describe the room to the players, reading from, or paraphrasing the boxed text below:

> The room you entered is in the shape of a wide circle, with a mighty round stone table in the middle. There are alcoves carved into the walls around the table with throne-like stone chairs in them. As soon as you enter the room, five skeletons in the chamber turn around.

There are five skeletons that attack the characters upon entry in the initiation chamber. If the characters search the area after the encounter, they can find a note close to one of the chairs by means of a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check. This note is written on a small piece of coarse paper with black ink. The note in Austris (Common) reads:

> *We are almost ready for the ritual. Come as quickly as you can, don't linger around that temple too much.*
>
> *- S.*

After the encounter, if a character has more than 3 major Hel points, it sees a vision of the chamber. In the vision, hooded figures sit on the stone thrones and speak to one another, and it looks like they are discussing something in Hellic. Even though their faces cannot be seen, the voices are clear. Characters who know Hellic understand that they are saying "*We are almost ready for the ritual, after this point, it will become unstoppable.*"

G7.THE INITIATION CHAMBER CORRIDOR LEFT

It is a 5-foot-wide corridor with a 15-foot-high ceiling, which has some web-like things hanging from the ceiling. Also, there are some hatched cocoons on the ground just like the ones the characters saw in the basement of the Lake Temple. Ygre keeps her guard up after seeing the cocoons and whispers *"Be careful!"*

Trap. There is a rune written on the ground 30 feet from the entrance of the room, revealed by a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check.

If any creature steps on the rune, the characters see some magic dark purple arrows shooting out from the right and the left. All the creatures in the room must make a successful DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 3 (1d6) piercing damage plus 4 (1d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

G8. THE RAT'S NEST

It is a rectangular room, the northwest wall of which has almost collapsed. A **Hel-touched swarm of rats** attacks the characters as soon as they enter the room.

Hel-touched swarm of rats

If a character has more than 3 major Hel points, it is stunned until the end of its next turn after seeing the rats. The Hel-touched swarm of rats does not attack the character, and acts as though they do not see it as an enemy.

If the characters search the area, a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that there are two secret doors on the east and north walls. One of them leads a secret tunnel (G9) while the other one opens to a tiny storage area (G10).

Characters	Encounter
4	1 Hel-touched swarm of rats (p. 261), 2 swarms of rats
5	1 Hel-touched swarm of rats, 3 swarms of rats
6	2 Hel-touched swarms of rats, 2 swarms of rats

G9. THE SECRET TUNNEL

This secret tunnel is located behind the secret door, and the whole area is flooded in muddy water. There is a bloated goat carcass in the water. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that the tunnel was built to spy in on the Initiation Chamber (G6). If the characters did not clear the area of the Initiation Chamber (G6) before entering the tunnel, they see five **skeletons**.

The tunnel contains a strong and foul odor; therefore, the characters must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, or take 3 (1d6) poison damage at the end of each turn they spend here.

G10. THE STORAGE ROOM

This tiny storage room contains a large iron-framed wooden chest, some empty sacks, and a wooden chair.

Treasure. The chest is not locked and the interior is divided into two sections. One section is filled to the rim with 6 green, cotton robes worth 50 gp each if sold, while the other contains a silver ring worth 5 sp and a spell scroll of *lesser restoration*.

G11.THE BEDROLL CORRIDOR

It is a 5-foot-wide corridor with a 15-foot-high ceiling. There are 11 basic, rough bedrolls on the ground, next to one another, as well as a waterskin. Ygre looks intrigued by the area, and investigates it carefully, however there is nothing to be found other than the items listed above.

G12. THE BEDROOM

The wooden door of the room is locked. Picking the lock requires thieves' tools and a successful DC 15 Dexterity check. Forcing the door open requires a successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check.

The room is clean and appears to be untouched, it seems that the intruders didn't enter this room and defile it as they did to the rest of the underground temple. This room looks like a

dormitory, with six beds and a large cabinet.

Treasure. Characters who search the cabinet find a large wolfskin pouch, a 6-inch sculpture of Freyja, a nice pair of boots worth 75 sp and two vials of the *potion of healing*. The pouch contains 210 gp and 135 sp, while the sculpture is worth 300 gp if sold.

A successful DC 10 Intelligence (History) check reveals that the pouch contains gold coins that appear to have been there for ages. It probably belonged to a person that lived a couple hundreds of years ago.

A successful DC 12 Intelligence (History) check reveals that the sculpture represents a legendary Freyja gothi named Idunn, who fought with giants and saved Svilland from the deadly cold of Black Winter.

G13. THE KITCHEN

This is a large rectangular room, the west wall of which appears to be a small kitchenette with a built-in cupboard, while there is a wooden table and six chairs on the east side. Some pots and pans hang on the walls. There is also a bucket of water that looks filthy.

If the characters search the room, they find some dried meat, enough to last 6 people two days. The characters can only find basic kitchen utensils, bowls, and platters.

G14. THE RITUAL SITE CORRIDORS

These 10-foot-wide corridors have ceilings that are 15 feet high. The walls of the corridors and the ground have been defiled with blood and the remains of creatures, similar to what the characters found in the entrance of the temple. The further the characters move into those corridors, the darker and colder they get. The smell of rot and death increases with each step they take.

The foul odor the characters could smell throughout the temple is heavy here. The characters must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, or take 3 (1d6) poison damage at the end of each turn they spend here.

G15. THE RITUAL SITE

Describe the room to the players, reading from, or paraphrasing the boxed text below:

> The room is dark and cold... The gentle golden glow inside the temple has completely diminished here. When illuminated, you see that the stone on the walls no longer glow as every inch of the Golden Hall once did. The stone ground has been broken and dug into. A large circle has been drawn using a white rope, which is still in the middle of the room. Hundreds of branches which reach about 15 inches above the ground and some bones have been stuck into the soil; in the middle of which a 10-foot-long, 5-foot-wide rectangular hole has been dug.
>
> You feel a cool breeze coming from inside the rectangular hole, and you hear distant incomprehensible whispers.

As soon as they reach the entrance of the room, each character must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw against the *confusion* spell, since the room was cursed and desecrated, so that each creature is affected in a different way upon entry.

Characters	Encounter
4	1 Hel brute (p. 255), 1 Hel-touched commoner (p. 259)
5	1 Hel brute, 2 Hel-touched commoners
6	2 Hel brutes, 1 Hel-touched commoner

After the encounter, if the characters investigate the area, a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals four facts about the site:

- There are tiny holes inside the chamber that resemble the ones seen in the Lake Temple.
- Two pieces of an engraved ceremonial knife are buried somewhere in the soil. The knife can be repaired by means of a *mending* spell. As soon as it is intact, it can be used as a regular *dagger*.
- A silver ring with a square obsidian worth 15 gp can be found next to the entrance of the chamber.

A *detect magic* spell reveals the traces of a dark, powerful conjuration spell coming from both the ring and the chamber. The one casting the spell feels colder, and hears some distant voices and screams.

G16. THE GREAT ALTAR CORRIDOR

It is a 5-foot wide, long corridor from the entrance to the Chamber (G23) and the Great Altar (G26). As they move deeper into the corridor, the characters may see the Door of the Great Altar Room.

Door of The Great Altar Room. This is a huge stone door containing the secrets of the Great Altar. There are large stone rune carvings on the door. Although it does not look locked, it is impossible to open it by force.

Half of the runes are in Hellic and the other half, in Austris. The Hellic runes seem to be carved recently. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check is required to understand what the runes stand for. The runes written in Austris state that the door has been sealed until the defilers of life are wiped from the halls. This means that if there is any undead creature in the halls, the door shall stay sealed. It is impossible to break the door. The runes in Hellic, on the other hand, probably state that the hall is very much defiled.

If the characters cannot succeed on their Intelligence (Religion) checks, Ygre provides them with the information above.

G17. THE WELL CORRIDOR

The Well Corridor is an 80-foot-long and 10-foot-wide corridor that connects the Great Altar Corridor (G16) to The Well of the Golden Hall (G24). The corridor is a few steps lower than the Great Altar Corridor.

The entire corridor is flooded with water seeping from

Freyja's Tear, and this water is around 1-foot deep. The water is defiled and undrinkable.

The bloated corpse of a humanoid lies face-down in the water. it has decomposed so much that it is impossible to discern its race, gender, or age. Still, if the characters still wish to take a closer look, a successful DC 12 Investigation (Intelligence) check reveals that its mouth is full of a gray substance, which resembles the grey web-like things.

Bone Door. At the end of the corridor, there is a 15-foot tall, 10-foot-wide iron door covered with ice, bones, and flesh. It is impossible to pick the lock, or to force it open. If a character touches the door, it must make a successful DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 3 (1d6) poison and 3 (1d6) necrotic damage. The characters can open the door by two different methods; they can either use Turn Undead on it, or they can cast a *lesser restoration* spell on it. In these cases, the ice; bones, and flesh melts away and creates a beige liquid in front of the door.

If the players cannot figure out how to open the door, they can make a DC 17 Intelligence (Religion) check. On a success, you, as the GM, may reveal how to open the door. If the characters cannot succeed on their check, Ygre will know what to do. Saying that she may have an idea, she uses Turn Undead on the door.

G18. THE EMPTY ROOM

If the characters open the door of the room, a wave of water hits them in the face, pushing them 5 feet away, to the midst of the Well Corridor (G17). In this case, the height of the water in The Well Corridor rises a little.

There is a large crack on the ceiling, and even though the leak is small now, it looks like it is not going to stay that way forever. Other than that, this 150-foot-square room is empty.

G19. THE MEETING ROOM

The room is flooded with water seeping from the ceiling. It is 2 feet deep, defiled and undrinkable.

A round, pine-wood table stands in the middle of the room with six, high-backed chairs around it. The furniture is barely visible, as they are mostly underwater.

When the characters enter the room, Ygre makes a suggestion, *"I think it is a meeting room. Looks like those who can enter Golden Hall gather here before making sacrifices in the sacrificial chamber."*

Treasure. There is a glass vase in the middle of the table with intricate engravings (worth 100 sp, if sold).

G20. THE DRESSING ROOM

This is a plain room with only a big cabinet across from the door, a large carpet in the middle and a simple wooden bench next to the cabinet.

Treasure. If the characters search the cabinet, they find 10 golden robes in a wooden chest worth 150 gp each if sold. If they do not search the cabinet, Ygre searches it. She takes one of the robes and puts it on wistfully saying "*It's been a while since I've worn one of these, this feels right*".

G21. THE ROOM OF SCRIBBLES

The walls of the room are covered in illegible scribbles. Only a couple of words are recognizable, and in Hellic they read, "death, Hel, gone, Freyja". Every inch of the walls is covered in these scratch-like writings that appear to be drawn (or written) in coal and blood. There is a thin mist covering the ground and the room is so cold that each time the characters exhale, a gray vapor can be seen. A small, blood-red candle stands in the middle of the room.

If a character has more than 3 major Hel points and enters the room, it sees a minute-long vision of the whole party hanging from the ceiling by their legs, hanging upside down. The character can interact with the scenery in its mind and while doing so, other party members see the character. This effect cannot be reversed by any physical or magical means.

If a character looks straight at the writings for more than 5 seconds or tries to read it, the character must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw against the *suggestion* spell. On a success, the spell fails and the character feels nothing, and on a fail, the character is compelled to say, *"The fate was told and it was cold."*

The words trigger a trap. As soon as the words leave the character's mouth, the mist thickens at the center of the room and **shadows** spawn from the mist.

Characters	Encounter
4	5 shadows
5	6 shadows
6	7 shadows

G22. SACRIFICIAL CHAMBER 5

This room was used to keep some important items that were used in ceremonies. A large pine cupboard on the opposite side of the door holds all these items.

Treasure. If the characters search the cupboard, they find three round moonstones that are worth 40 gp each if sold.

A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) check reveals that some gothis may have once used these moonstones to predict the future but even if this is true, it is a lost art, nowadays.

G23. THE CHAMBER KITCHENETTE

The kitchenette flooded with water seeping from the ceiling. The flood is 1-foot- deep, and the water is defiled and undrinkable.

In the middle of the room, there is a table with six stools around it. There is a small kitchenette against the west wall. There is also a sink full of water on the west-hand side, and a successful DC 12 Nature (Intelligence) check reveals that the water is potable. There is a small cabinet against the wall that is opposite the kitchenette.

Treasure. Inside the cabinet, the characters can find a spell scroll containing the *aid* spell, five bottles of fine wine that are worth 12 gp each if sold and two days of rations for six Medium humanoids.

G24. THE WELL OF THE GOLDEN HALL

When characters enter the area, start playing *"Voices of the Dead"* on "Svilland - Music and Ambiance" and describe it by reading or paraphrasing the boxed text below:

> This is a huge circular space circled by a cliff, the depth of which is unknown, with a ceiling that almost reaches 100 feet in height. Unlike the other parts of the temple, the area is made out of marble instead of stone. There are 20-foot-tall, marble walls at the sides of this huge space except for the circular platform in the middle, which appears to be made of stone. The only way to get to this platform seems to be through a stone bridge, which connects the cliff to where the characters are standing. A deep cliff surrounds the platform, a faint golden glow is seen coming from below and is reflected off some stones.
>
> When you cross the bridge and reach the platform, you see a large silver bowl in the middle. A grey, diamond-shaped stone is placed above the water with web-like things holding it up. There is water dripping from the ceiling, which travels along the lines of these webs onto this grey stone.

If the characters examine the water, they see that there are some foul essences floating around in the water, which is thus desecrated. It appears that this is caused by the grey stone in the middle.

Grey Stone. The grey stone is a Tiny object with AC 17, 12 (5d4) hit points, immunity to piercing and slashing damage, and vulnerability to bludgeoning damage. After destroying the grey stone, the water in the silver bowl purifies itself within 1d4 hours. If the characters touch the grey stone with their bare hands, they must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw, or take 1 major Hel point (p.9).

When the characters are within 30 feet of the stone, **ísvatns** rise from the water inside the silver bowl and spread around the circular space.

The stone makes ísvatns, which are within 15 feet of the stone, benefit from the *blink* spell unless it is destroyed.

Characters	Encounter
4	5 Ísvatns
5	6 Ísvatns
6	7 Ísvatns

ÍSVATN

Small elemental, neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 7 (2d6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)

Skills Perception +6
Damage Resistances piercing and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic
Condition Immunities grappled, petrified, restrained
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Hellic
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Born from the Helfrost. Whenever the ísvatn is affected by an attack, spell, or another magical ability that deals cold damage, it regains hit points equal to the damage roll instead. For example, an ísvatn would be healed by 2 (1d4) if it is within the radius of another ísvatn's *Hel's Frost*.

Death from Hel. When the ísvatn's hit points drop to zero, the GM must roll a d20. On a result of 11 or higher, the ísvatn's hit points drop to 1 instead. On a result of 10 or lower, the ísvatn dies but it radiates its *Hel's Frost* one more time just before it melts.

Healing Blink. The grey stone in the middle of the chamber magically affects ísvatns and constantly teleports them to Hel and back. Each time an opponent attacks an ísvatn, it has disadvantage on

its attack rolls even if the opponent normally would have advantage on its attack rolls. If the ísvatn is not targeted by a spell but is affected by a spell that deals damage, the GM must roll a d20. On a result of 11 or higher, the ísvatn takes no damage. This feature is active until the grey stone is broken.

Also, at the start of each of its turns, the ísvatn regains 1d4 hit points until the stone is destroyed.

ACTIONS

Ice Spike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) cold damage.

Hel's Frost (Recharge 6). The ísvatn radiates a 10 foot radius of air as cold as Hel. Each creature in the area must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 2 (1d4) cold and 2 (1d4) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

REACTIONS

Freeze (Recharge 5-6). When ísvatn is hit by an attack, it can transform itself into an ice shard from the depths of Hel that is not penetrable. The ísvatn takes no damage from the attack.

Ísvatn

G25. THE SACRIFICIAL STOREROOM

This room appears to be a storeroom in the temple. It is a dusty room with old, rusty, and broken items. This room houses a little bit of everything; chairs, rugs, buckets, broken chains, torches, and other everything objects of that sort. If the characters look around intently, they see that there is an old wooden chest in the corner, which can be located by a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check. The chest contains a spell scroll (*lesser restoration*).

G26. THE CAPTIVE ROOM

If the characters open the door to the Captive Room, they hear a distant wailing coming from within. When they enter this room, describe the room by reading from or paraphrasing the boxed text below:

> As soon as you open the door, you feel a cold breeze with an indescribably awful smell. Despite your distraction due to the smell and the dim light, it is obvious that this room used to be a barn.
>
> There are chains, buckets, and essential animal care items that are haphazardly hung on the wall. The items stand pushed up against the east and west walls. In front of the trough in the west lies two corpses; one of a horse, and one of a humanoid. In front of the east wall lies two more corpses; one (again) of a humanoid, and one of a goat. All the corpses are severely rotten, to the point that it is impossible to discern the age and gender of the humanoids.
>
> Between the goat and the humanoid, someone is chained by its wrists to the troughs; this appears to be the source of the wailing.

After the cold, rotten breeze, the characters must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, or throw up or be nauseated. When all characters pull themselves together, Ygre explains *"This room is used to keep animals that will be sacrificed. Most of them are prepared here for the sacrifices, as they must be fed and groomed well before they are offered to the Gods."*

The rotten smell is quite heavy here. The characters must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, or take 3 (1d6) poison damage at the end of each turn they spend here.

Captive. The wailing humanoid is called Sigewulf (Mithal, lawful good, bard) and he has been chained to the troughs. A character can use thieves' tools to pick the chain's lock with a successful DC 13 Dexterity check, or pull off the chain with a successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check. If the characters use blacksmithing tools to pull off the chain, then the DC of the Strength (Athletics) check equals 15.

Sigewulf is a young storyteller who has been taken captive. However, he is so weak that he is not able to talk and tell the characters what happened to him. A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that his condition is getting worse by the minute, and his condition can be stabilized by means of a *lesser restoration* spell.

If the characters cannot stabilize his condition, he slowly turns into an undead, becoming one right after the warband encounters all the opponents they face within the Golden Hall, except for the Great Altar (G27), the door of which will not open until Sigewulf is defeated if his transformation is complete. If the warband has already encountered every creature in the temple before coming to the Captive Room, they find Sigewulf having completed his transformation into an undead creature, and he breaks free from his chains to attack the characters.

After he completes his transformation, he becomes hostile, and you can use a **mummy**'s stat block to represent Sigewulf.

If characters can stabilize his condition, he gathers enough strength to start talking after one hour has passed and he tells the warband his story. After he takes a long rest, Sigewulf is also able to engage in combat.

If characters talk to Sigewulf, they learn the following details about his life:

- Sigewulf is a storyteller at the age of 21.
- Sigewulf encountered two women in the forest Mercy of Freyja as these women were performing an "evil ritual".
- He would like to stick around, and he wished to write a song about his brave saviors.

Reward. If the characters stabilize Sigewulf, they have 1 minor Hel point removed, if they have any.

G27. THE GREAT ALTAR

The door of the Great Altar has some runes drawn on it with which it is enchanted, and will not be opened until the Golden Hall is cleansed from all fiends and all undead creatures, including Sigewulf if he turns into an undead. Therefore, the characters must encounter all undead and fiend creatures within the halls before trying to enter the Great Altar.

After the characters pass through the giant door, describe the Great Altar by reading or by paraphrasing from the boxed text below:

> There is very little in this world that is both horrific and magnificent. You have probably never seen, and will probably never see a scene like the one you are about to witness. There is a marble hall before you 35-feet wide and 70-feet long. Both sides of the hall are decorated with twelve well-constructed columns that form two straight lines on the left and on the right. Each column is in the form of a distinct statue of Freyja, each of which face the one on its exact opposite, forming the path that you see before you. The columns emanate darkness, which makes you think that they might be defiled and corrupted.
>
> At the end of the path created by the columns, there is a huge stone altar that stands erect before the giant sacred tree. The tree is glorious, with its branches that stretch out into the ceiling to form a roof over the entire room. Still, it looks sickly and dry. You notice pieces of rotten flesh hanging off some of its branches instead of its leaves, which seems to happen more towards the ceiling. Therefore, the smell of rotten flesh dominates The Great Altar.
>
> In the middle of the tree's trunk, there is a burrow, and inside the burrow there is a heart that appears to be palpitating irregularly and glowing with a dark blue gleam. The heart seems as cold as you imagine Hel itself would be; with some icy spikes coming out of this heart's foul, rotten flesh.

As soon as the characters are halfway through the hall, a **swarm of feral ravens** (p. 267) emerge and attack them along with the **tormented souls** (p. 258) if applicable.

Characters	Encounter
4	1 swarm of feral ravens
5	1 swarm of feral ravens, 1 tormented soul
6	1 swarm of feral ravens, 2 tormented souls

After the encounter, the deceased swarm of feral ravens starts to hover above the ground and it starts to rotate, creating a tiny vortex made of ravens. Then ravens start to fade away and a faceless, shadowy woman figure appears in the middle of the sculptures. After it appears and fixes its eyes on the characters, **Hel's chosen** attacks.

HEL'S CHOSEN

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 45 (10d8)
Speed fly 45 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
5 (-3)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)

Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from non-magical attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, poisoned, prone, restrained
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Austris (Common), Hellic
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Ethereal Sight. The Hel's chosen can see 60 feet into the ethereal plane when it is on the material plane, and vice versa.

Incorporeal Movement. The Hel's chosen can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

One with the Darkness. As a part of its movement the Hel's chosen can move into one of the columns and get out from another one. Each time it does so, each creature within 5 feet of the columns takes 5 (2d4) necrotic damage and the Hel's chosen regains 3 (1d6) hit points.

This feature can only be used while the defiled heart of the tree of the Golden Hall still beats. The heart has 25 hit points and 14 AC. Once the heart drops to 0 hit points the Hel's chosen cannot use this feature.

ACTIONS

Withering Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (3d6 + 3) necrotic damage.

Horrifying Visage. Each non-undead creature that can see it within 60 feet of the Hel's chosen must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. If the save fails by 5 or more, the target also ages 1d4 x 10 years. A frightened target can repeat its saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the frightened condition on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends, the target is immune to the Hel's chosen's Horrifying Visage for the next 24 hours. The aging effect can be reversed by means of the greater restoration spell, but this can only happen within 24 hours of it occurring.

Another Action (Recharge 6). The Hel's chosen points at a target. The target must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw, or see visions of Hel. On a failed save, the target also feels as though it were getting tortured by Hel's servants, and therefore takes 22 (4d10) psychic damage and is frightened for 1 minute. On a successful save, the target takes half damage and is not frightened.

REACTIONS

Hel's Chosen (Recharge 6). When a creature hits the Hel's chosen with a melee weapon attack, the Hel's chosen takes no damage. Instead, a shadow from Helheim appears behind the creature and hits it. The shadow mirrors the creature's appearance as well as the amount of damage that the creature would have dealt, but it deals necrotic damage instead.

Read or paraphrase the boxed text to the players after the encounter:

The shadowy woman fades away, leaving nothing but ashes behind. Ygre looks stunned, but She keeps looking at the corrupted heart within the tree intently. She shuts her eyes and frowns as if she were trying to hear something being told (or rather whispered) to her; then, she opens her eyes, and looks at you. Her lips curl in the shape of a smile, and she looks at you with tear-filled, glistening eyes. She says *"You have been great friends and companions to me. I thank you, from the bottom of my heart."* Then she starts walking towards the altar.

Ygre doesn't seem to hear or see anything you do or say. It seems that nothing you could do would stop her. She just keeps walking towards the tree, nodding her head slowly and with purpose. She looks peaceful.

As Ygre is walking towards the altar, if characters try to grapple her, or try another physical means of stopping her, they do not succeed. Even a spell or a class ability is useless at this point of the story since her steps are guided by the will of Freyja herself.

A successful DC 8 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that Ygre is not possessed, or controlled by dark forces in any other way, she simply wishes to sacrifice herself for the greater good.

When she reaches the tree, she looks back at the characters one last time, with her soft gaze full of pride and hope. The characters feel a warm breeze coming from the tree, as if it is calling Ygre. She walks, slowly but surely. Then, she draws a knife and plunges it into her chest in the blink of an eye, she screams when she does so, but she somehow doesn't look like she is in pain. She cuts out her heart and places it on the large stone altar, still beating.

The heart continues to beat as her blood is flowing through the stone ground. Her sacrifice finds its rightful place. The altar, by the power of Freyja, magically and serenely makes her heart hover where it is and replaces the rotten one with Ygre's. The tree slowly comes back to life, the rotten pieces of flesh hanging off the dry branches of the tree magically turn into leaves. The darkness radiating from the columns fades. The columns start to shine bright with a golden gleam, and if the characters examine their surroundings, they see little golden teardrops falling from the Freyja sculptures' eyes. The characters hear Ygre's voice in their minds, as they approach the Great Altar. She says *"One may think I am gone. Yet Freyja embraced me, I am everywhere you set foot. Now I am Svilland, and you, you were once beloved friends of mine and now you've become the friends of Svilland itself. Remember me wherever you go. Feel my presence within the earth, the water, the sky, and the fire. Never forget the war Hel waged on us. It is a war we must win. You, friends of Svilland, you are destined for glory. You are destined to bring back the light and shine it upon us all."* After Ygre's speech, the room is warmer and brighter and all the characters in the room regain 14 (4d6) hit points.

If the characters collected a vial of water from the well in the Chamber (G23) for Freydis, that only leaves them the option of moving forward into the Tunnel (G27). If they have not done so, you as the GM may want to remind them.

The characters may also choose to pour Freydis's blood onto the stone altar and burn the lavender incense she has given them. If so, three young Freyja gothis will approach them in 30 minutes, who thank the characters and assure them that the temple will give Ygre's dead body a proper ceremony when they are finished with cleaning the temple. They also say that Freydis wants the warband to proceed deep into the tunnels (G27).

G28. THE TUNNEL

This is a 950-foot-long completely dark tunnel, with unlit torches on the walls at almost regular intervals. The ceiling is supported by pine-wood beams.

As the characters walk deeper and deeper into the tunnel, roll a d20 once every 150 feet, if the result is between 15 and 20, an encounter occurs. You can determine the encounter by rolling on the table below:

d6	Encounters
1	1 draugr guardian (p. 249)
2	1 tormented soul (p. 258)
3	1 Hel staghead (p. 257)
4	1 swarm of rats
5	1 Hel brute (p. 255)
6	1d4 skeletons

THE LAKE

At the end of the tunnel of the Golden Hall, they see Freydis waiting for them in the basement of the Lake Temple, as she also investigates the basement. As soon as the characters arrive, she greets them and asks if Ygre stayed with other gothis to clean the Golden Hall. She thanks the characters and congratulates them.

Freydis does not want to stay in the Lake Temple, as it still smells foul. Since the characters have been in the halls of the temple for some time now, they lost their sense of time, but when they go out, they see that the sun is about to set.

Having learned that Ygre sacrificed herself for the folk's prosperity and became one with Svilland, she seems both upset and proud, at the same time. Then, she asks for one minute of silence, as she prays for Ygre's soul.

If the characters were able to stabilize Sigewulf, there is a chance he traveled with the warband if the characters let him. If they did so, Freydis asks who he is and why he was there with the characters. Upon hearing his story, she promises to remove any remaining curses if he has any, and asks him to follow her to Knafgata when they are done.

If the characters did not wait for him to have a long rest, did not want him to come with the warband, or did not carry him, he stays in the Golden Hall until the Freyja gothis find him and restore him back to health.

As soon as Freydis takes the vial of water that she has asked for, she gives the following information to the characters:

- She wanted to see the Lake Temple herself, and when she did, she found a secret tunnel, which she assumed leads to the Golden Hall. Therefore, she decided to wait for the characters here.
- She has assigned three gothis to take care of the Golden Hall and to clean it, as necessary.
- She wants the warband to go back to Knafgata with her, using the boat. She says that the warband is welcomed to use the boat from now on since they have served Freyja well.
- The gothis are still working to heal the baby.

Then, Freydis asks the characters to follow her through the lake, Freyja's Tear. Describe the lake by reading from or paraphrasing the boxed text below:

> Just as it did when you visited here, the howling of the wind can be heard on and around the lake. However, you are no longer affected as you were before. Now, the wind caresses your faces like it is welcoming you. The fog that covered Freyja's Tear is no more. You see a golden gleam coming from the bottom of the lake. The pale trees and flowers have greened and blossomed. It seems that nature has started to recover. It is merely a result of your outstanding efforts.

Freydis offers the characters to spend the night at Knafgata. If they agree to do so right away, Freydis orders gothis to bring warm water for the characters to clean themselves in their rooms, and suggests that the warband should celebrate their victory. If the characters are reluctant to stay, Freydis tells them that she is going to perform a ritual to locate Asta and in which she believes the characters' presence is crucial.

Level Up. As of now, your characters have reached the 4th level. Feel free to tell them to level up when they wake up.

In the morning, after the breakfast prepared by Viggo, the cook of the House of Fertility, Freydis sends the same blonde child beforehand, to inform the characters that she is waiting for them near the lake.

When the characters go out, they see Freydis walking towards them and greets them with her soft voice. Then she gives the following details about the baby and the **Hel-touched beast** that the warband carried with them to the temple:

- Gothis of the House of Fertility tried to save Frosted Johan's draugr baby by means of spells, chanters, and rituals that lasted one whole night. However, when the sun came up, the gothis saw that the baby had died peacefully.
- She personally cast the *divination* spell to understand whether the warband's hunt was a proper sacrifice or not. Then, she had a vision in which she heard a cryptic rhyme:

  They must hunt the wretched blight
  to ignite our dying light.
  The offering will be welcome
  if they seek the acolyte.

She thinks that this has something to do with the lost gothi of the Lake Temple, Asta, and that the characters have been chosen by Freyja to seek her out.

Freydis tells people that she used the vial of holy water that the warband handed him in a *scrying* ritual. She prayed to her Goddess to show Asta's whereabouts. However, the scrying ritual was not successful. She thinks that Asta must be in grave danger because the ritual failed even with the holy water from the well of the Golden Hall. However, Freydis is sure that Asta lives:

- She could not confer with the divine to find Asta's exact location; instead, she has seen three distinct places. The failure may occur due to a magical effect that disrupts any spell that tries to scry her. Asta possibly may have been abducted.
- She saw a little hamlet where dead animals and people lay on the ground; the trees were pale and rotten, just as the Lake Temple was before. This place might be Sangarholt.
- She also saw a town that looks like Belmunt. She did not see anything else but felt immense pain, heard a woman's screams, and the wailing of a baby.
- She saw a family gathered around, praising an item within a chest; the item was radiating an evil aura. There was also a dungeon where a woman was being tortured gruesomely by the town guards. This woman may be crucial. From the way these town guards dressed, Freydis thinks that this town must be Kraekross.
- She thinks all of these towns must have clues that lead to Asta. They must locate her at all costs. She says that the warband should travel to each of these locations.

Then, Freydis moves towards a huge sack. She gives the following items as well as 25 gp to each character as a token of her gratitude. As the GM, you may choose which item goes to which character, or you may choose to let your players decide.

Awards

1	A magic longsword that deals an additional 1d6 fire damage.
2	Gafumadr Armor (p.239)
3	Gauntlets of Jotunn Power*
4	Javelin of Lightning
5	Restless Boots of Freyja (p.242)
6	A +1 shield
7	A spellbook that contains three 1st level spells, two 2nd level spells, and two 3rd level spells of the GM's choice.

*There are no ogres in Svilland. Therefore, *gauntlets of ogre power* are called *gauntlets of jotunn power*.

If the characters ask for more information about these settlements, Freydis provides them with the following:

Sangarholt. It was once a prosperous town, of which the population has greatly decreased after an attack of seidrs. The remaining townsfolk are few in number, but they are helpful to each other and usually welcoming to strangers. At least, this

was the case the last time she heard about the town.

Belmunt. Belmunt is a small town that is built around a stone castle of the Old Age. It is famous for its leatherworking and is known to also contain a small iron mine. The last news she heard about this town was unnerving though, as people have said that the Jarl fails to rule over his land properly, ignoring all his responsibilities down to the smallest daily task.

Kraekross. It is a large town; almost the size of a city. It is well-defended with wooden walls and watchtowers. It has a mine and its armorsmiths and weaponsmiths are renowned. Freydis asks the characters to be cautious in their actions when they are in this town, as she has heard that it has been in political turmoil ever since one family took over the rule from the other. This town may be more challenging than the other two.

YGRE'S FUNERAL

After Freydis gives her gifts to the characters she says that at sunset, they will conduct a proper funeral for Ygre. She would like the characters to stay and join the ceremony. If the characters accept to stay for the ceremony, *"Bring flowers."* she says and returns to the temple to get back to work.

At sunset, characters see a boat near the lake. The boat has been decorated with flowers that could be found in the winter in the vicinity of the temple. The characters see Freydis holding a bunch of flowers gathered from the surroundings of the Lake Temple. She puts the flowers inside the boat. If the characters want to do the same, they see that Ygre lies in the boat wearing a green, gold embroidered dress. She looks as beautiful as ever.

A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that Freydis has shed one or two teardrops. She stands next to the boat. Each and every member of the House of Fertility stands behind her, getting ready for the funeral. The characters see Viggo, also putting flowers on the boat.

After everyone puts their offerings in the boat, Freydis wants to say a few words:

> *"Ygre was an excellent warrior, a good friend but most importantly a perfect gothi. She ascended to a place where I could only dream of. I shall never forget you, sweet friend..."*

As she finishes her words, she looks at the characters, asking if they want to add anything. If they do not, then Freydis will order one of the gothis to send Ygre off in her boat to the deep waters of the lake, Freyja's Tear. Gothis of the House of Fertility whisper a chant praising Ygre's sacrifice. Freydis does not move until the boat reaches approximately 500 feet, then she raises her right hand, and a servant brings her longbow. After she places the arrow on her bow, she lights it using the flame of one of the torches lit for the funeral. She gracefully raises her bow and sends a flaming arrow to the boat. Then, they watch the last journey of Ygre until the boat can no longer be seen.

The characters are welcome to stay in the temple until the next morning. Then, they should hit the road to find Asta.

Chapter II
In Search of Solidarity

Following the traces of Asta, the high gothi of Lake Temple, the characters face many challenges, and struggle quite a bit on the way. They must first decide which settlement they will initially go to: Sangarholt, Belmunt, or Kraekross.

In this chapter, the characters will try to solve the problems of Svillanders and find the traces of Asta; while the players will have a chance to experience the culture of Svilland.

RUNNING THIS CHAPTER

You as the Game Master can find the key events of this chapter in the table below. You will notice that there isn't a particular progression or order to these episodes. That is because the characters do not have to visit the settlements in any specific order, but they must visit all of them before moving on to Chapter 3.

Episodes

Sangarholt: At the Edge of Madness (For characters of level 4-6)
Belmunt: The Smell of Blood (For characters of level 4-6)
Kraekross: The Depths of Darkness (For characters of level 4-6)

Freydis provides the characters with information on these three locations in her prophecy (p. 53). If they ask for more, Freydis provides them with the following:

Sangarholt. It was once a prosperous town, of which the population has greatly decreased after an attack of *seidrs*. The remaining townsfolk are few in number, but they are helpful to each other and usually welcoming to strangers. At least, this was the case the last time she heard about the town. Now, it seeks to be reborn, rising from its ashes after being the victim of a horrible massacre. The people here usually make their living from farming and husbandry, but the soil has been infertile and the animals have been sick for a while now.

Belmunt. Belmunt is a small town built around a stone castle of the old Age. It is famous for its leatherworking and is also known to have a small iron mine. However, the last news she heard about this town was unnerving.

The Igrimsonn family has ruled for years, but the leader Kludi is known to have lost all his good qualities.

Kraekross. It is a large town; almost the size of a city. It is well-defended with wooden walls and watchtowers. It has a mine and its armorsmiths and weaponsmiths are renowned. Freydis asks the characters to be cautious in their actions when they are in this town, as she has heard that it has been in political turmoil ever since one family took over the rule from the other. This town may be more challenging than the other two.

Belmunt and Kraekross are much bigger than Sangarholt. Families play an important role in the governance of both of these towns, and family members are constantly trying to either help or overthrow one another. The characters may even have to take sides in these matters while they are there.

In both towns, although people do not suffer from hunger or disease, they hear stories about weird folks and creatures running amuck in the wilderness. They do not know what truth there is to these stories, but they can sense the tension in the air and feel that something dark is on its way.

THE JOURNEY

While traveling between towns, you can use the table below to determine random encounters. It is recommended to use at least one random encounter per day. You should keep in mind that a particular encounter takes place on the road to each town, titled "Road to Belmunt", "Road to Kraekross", or "Road to Sangarholt", and that the characters must have these encounters.

Estimated Duration of Travel. You can see the approximate distance between the towns:

From Knafgata to Sangarholt. 90 miles
From Knafgata to Belmunt. 110 miles
From Knafgata to Kraekross. 100 miles
From Sangarholt to Belmunt. 120 miles
From Sangarholt to Kraekross. 140 miles
From Belmunt to Kraekross. 50 miles

Highlanders. While traveling from Sangarholt to Belmunt, characters may pass through the woods or they may pass near the mountains. If the characters choose to go near the Shadowlow Mountains, they shall see inhabitants of the mountains, called Highlanders.

These are nomadic Svillanders who live near the mountain. In summer, they live near the top of the mountain; whereas in winter, they choose to descend, and live in the forest just under the mountain.

They are an interesting bunch, because they believe in both the Gods and Goddesses, and the spirits. It is possible to see both gothis and seidrs among them.

They make their living from trade, especially during winter, they buy and sell to make a living. As it is winter, the characters can purchase uncommon items from them, or even perhaps a rare item (30% chance).

Highlanders will mention a scary, strange-looking woman in a black cloak riding towards the north.

d10	Encounters
1	A ritual circle on the ground, blood, and humanoid body parts all over it. If the characters want to investigate the area 2d4-1 shadows spawn from the ground and attack them.
2	Weather Encounter: Black Snow.
3	1d4 + 1 Vartr Blades (p. 269) fighting 4d4 Draugr Guardians (p. 249)
4	The characters find an abandoned campsite in the depths of the forest. It still has some dried meat and fruits. A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a Woodcarver's tools hidden under an old quilt.
5	1d4 Hel-touched Brown Bears (p. 259)
6	A wraith flew through you but ran off without a fight.
7	1d4 seidrs (p. 264) resting at a camp, talking about how nature is getting defiled
8	The characters found a wounded seidr leaning on a tree. She asks them to kill her to end her misery.
9	The characters see two groups of soldiers fighting in the wilderness. It seems that one of the groups is loyal to Hanlon the Real King while the other one is to Gudrick the Moonbearer.
10	1 Ambushing Berserkr (p. 243)

Black Snow. Black clouds form in the sky and fill the whole horizon in every direction. For every hour passed traveling in black snow, your Wisdom score decreases by 1. After 2 hours in the snow, you become frightened. The black snow lasts for 4 hours; then, its effects are removed.

SANGARHOLT: AT THE EDGE OF MADNESS

ROAD TO SANGARHOLT

On their journey to Sangarholt, the characters see a light coming from somewhere on the way to their destination, as well as smoke, rising from the same source.

A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that the light is due to a fire. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check allows the characters to understand that a small settlement is on fire.

As the warband gets closer to the settlement, they see a village surrounded by wooden spikes in the distance, at the end of a path. A wooden sign has been nailed to a wooden stick next to the path leading to the village. The plate reads "Gleði" ("Joy") in Austris (Common), which appears to be the name of the village.

When the characters are close to the borders of the village, a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals some figures wielding torches, around the fire, and also that the fire has spread throughout the village and some of the buildings have turned into ash.

A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals sounds of bones scraping together and cracking. A group of undead are trying to break down the doors of a couple of houses around the village square, and a woman is laughing hysterically. The woman is within 100 feet of the characters, and the nearest undead creature is within 150 feet.

When the characters come within 90 feet of this woman, she turns to the characters and starts speaking with a loud but welcoming tone as if she were preaching:

> *"The day of reckoning is finally upon us. We shall no longer dwell in the shadows. Come, witness the beauty of the blazes before us, and then turn back around, and leave the way*

you came, or you too shall burn along with this puny village. Finally, my Goddess shall rule over this land! None shall stand in our way!"

As soon as the characters behave in a hostile manner, the woman orders the undead to attack the warband.

Characters	Encounter
4	1 Hel cultist (p. 257), 1 ghoul, 1 skeleton
5	1 Hel cultist, 2 ghouls, 1 skeleton
6	1 Hel cultist, 2 ghouls, 4 skeletons

* This *medium* encounter is designed for a party made up of 4th level characters. If the characters have reached 5th level, add 2 ghouls to the encounter that matches the number of characters in your party. If they are 6th level, add 3 ghouls.

Hel Cultist

When the encounter ends, the characters hear crying coming from a house that the undead had been trying to break into. Since the house is on fire, the door must be opened for the person inside to reach safety. As it seems that the villagers are more afraid of the dead than of the fire, a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check is required to persuade the person behind the door to open it. The characters may also try to break down the door with AC 10, and 30 hit points.

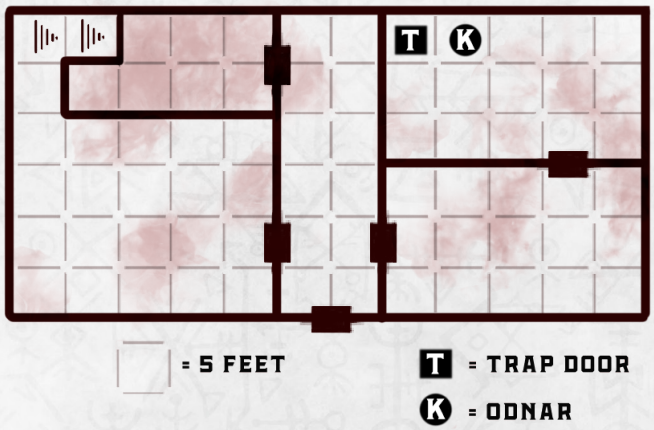
The person trapped inside is a little boy, no older than 7 years of age. He has gorgeous, weepy, green eyes. Unsurprisingly, he looks terrified. If the characters talk to the kid, he provides them with the following information:

- His name is Odnar.
- His parents were outside the house when the village was attacked. From the window, he watched them die at the hands of the woman.
- His dog is missing, and he would very much like the warband to help him find it. Its name is Fluffy. It is an old white dog. He has no idea where it might be.
- He says that Fluffy is the only family he has left.

He wants to go inside the house to give the characters a piece of Fluffy's fur to serve as a clue. He runs to go in. A crack opens in the roof, and falls onto Odnar who is inside the house, restraining him. A successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check is required to clear the rubble, and only one attempt can be made each round. The characters can decide amongst themselves who is to make the check. If the characters cannot save him in 1 minute, he dies.

When characters enter the area, each square marked with a flame sign on the map below deals 5 fire damage when stepped on. Saving Odnar from the wreckage requires a successful DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check.

The house has an underground cellar, which can be reached from the leftmost corner of the house. The fire has not reached the cellar, and the trap door next to where Odnar is trapped opens to the cellar.



If the characters try to find Fluffy while in the cellar, they must make a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) or Intelligence (Investigation) check.

When found, the dog approaches the warband, leaving its hiding place. However, this sweet reunion is cut short. There

are corpses lying around. Right after they meet Fluffy, 2d6 corpses (**zombies**) rise from where they are lying, attacking the characters.

RITUAL OF BONES

The cultist that the characters encountered had performed a ritual of bones before she encountered the warband. This ritual continuously animates corpses and turns them into skeletons or zombies.

When they get out of the house and find themselves in the village again, a character must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to see the Hellic runes written in blood on the wall of a house nearby. Another successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) or DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that these runes are also present on the walls of four different houses.

The characters who can read Hellic understand that these markings translate to Common as "Rise", "Dead", "Warriors", and "Kill." They thus realize that this is a ritual designed to animate the dead.

If they don't know Hellic, a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) check is required to understand that these markings are a part of a ritual.

When the characters are attacked by the zombies, roll a d6 for each turn in which the characters do not erase these runes off the wall. If the result is equal to or lower than the number of runes remaining, 1d4 skeletons will be animated somewhere in the village within 100 feet of the warband.

After the encounter, a heavy rain starts to fall, and the characters may assume that it will most likely put the fire out.

SANGARHOLT

Characters come to Sangarholt to further investigate Freydis' vision, hopefully solve whatever ails this town, and get one step closer to finding Asta. In her vision, Freydis had seen this town wither and die.

Still, the town appears to be functioning normally. Perhaps, what Freydis had seen was what would become of the town if the characters were not able to prevent its fate.

Start playing "*A Welcoming Hearth (Song of Home)*" on "Svilland - Music and Ambiance", and then read or paraphrase the boxed text below to the players when the characters enter the town.

> Sangarholt was built around a giant rock. There is a rune praising *"Freyja, Svilland, and life"* carved on the rock. No one knows why and when this rune was drawn, but it is thought that Sangarholt was purposefully built around it. Sangarholt is a small town that has no taverns for adventurers, although they are usually greeted with a warm welcome and given places to stay for the night.
>
> The town is surrounded by farms, in which you can see a few people working away. The townsfolk raise pigs, goats and cows, so you hear animal noises as you get closer to the area. Other than that, the place looks abandoned from a distance since most of the houses appear to be empty.

If the characters talk to someone in the town, they will advise the characters to speak with Liutrar, the elder of the town.

A DAUNTING VISIT

What the characters do not know is that Asta has been around, 2 days before the characters arrived. Under the influence of Hel, she has committed numerous murders in the villages around the town, causing them to be infested by undead as the one the characters have seen before.

While she was doing so, Eerika (see below) saw Asta, but was driven to madness by a spell Asta had cast on her. As part of this madness, she was terrified of Asta, and started sacrificing random, unwilling people to Odin for protection and redemption. This is also the reason why she is in dispute with the other elders of the town.

THE TOWN

Sangarholt is a town at the edge of the woods called the Mercy of Freyja. A few winters ago, a tragic massacre took place here when a group of seidrs known as the Wanderers came here and slaughtered the townsfolk for no apparent reason.

When the carnage was done, only 50 townsfolk were left out

of 300. Nowadays, 75 people are living in the town, making a living off husbandry and farming.

Those who reside here are generally elder folk. They try to live a normal life and to convince others to settle in the town, so they can make sure it survives. However, people are prejudiced about Sangarholt, claiming that the land is cursed by the spells cast on that foul day.

Although the town's defenses are not that strong, Svillanders tend not to mess with Sangarholt due to this idea of a possible curse.

Sangarholt Thumbnail

Leader/ Important Figures. Sangarholt is under the rule of Liutrar. Liutrar is an old and wise Austri who survived the attack of the Wanderers. He has bushy hair and a bushy beard. He wears simple ragged clothes, and can't stand upright.

After the attack, many of the survivors abandoned Sangarholt to live in big towns. However, Liutrar stayed to rebuild his town from its ashes.

Eerika is another important figure of the town and is one of the elders, all of whom are respected by the folk here.

Livelihood. Farming and herding, not very prosperous.

Militia. none, but the townsfolk try to keep their defenses as best they can.

Population. 75

Rumors. There are the following rumors going around in Sangarholt:

- A woman concealed in shadows is known to have passed through the villages nearby. She did not seem like she was all there, and some thought her to be cursed. Not much more is said about the woman, and mentioning her scares the townsfolk.
- Human sacrifices have been a town tradition ever since the tragedy that struck the folk of this town. Some think that these sacrifices will be their salvation, while others are afraid of them. One or two people are outright angry. Many people prefer to cut this topic short, or try to avoid talking about it.

Services. Accommodation, food, and beverage. Good weapons and armor (surprisingly, given the state of the town).

Random Encounters

d6	Encounters
1	A group of children comes up to the warband, saying that it is tradition for newcomers to play hide and seek with them. You, as the GM, may compare Dexterity (Stealth) checks to Wisdom (Perception) checks to determine the winner.
2	An old half-mountain-jotunn approaches the characters, saying that he lost his dog. Characters may search for the dog who is named Erik. The man does not have much to offer, but he will be eternally grateful. Also, he will give 1 gp to each character who helps him. A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that the dog is in the Town Hall's backyard.
3	A feral raven perches on one of the characters' shoulders. It then pecks at the character before flying away, and disappearing into the woods. A successful DC 8 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that its flesh was rotten and nearly half of its skeleton could be seen from the gaps between its flesh.
4	An old veteran dvergr named Gunne approaches the warband. He mistakes the warband for his own warband when he was younger, and gets mad because the warband is adventuring without him. The characters may choose to take him into the warband. Even if they do so, however, he constantly whines about his backaches, and decides to retire after half an hour.

5	A Mithal kid follows the warband around the town, watching their every move studiously. When asked what her intentions are, she says that she wants to be just like them.
6	An old lady approaches the warband and talks about how Ragnarok is closer than they think.

NERVOUS TOWNSFOLK

Although the town appears to be just like any other, the people of the town seem as though they were filled with sorrow, and some even look nervous and scared. A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals these looks on their faces.

The townsfolk prefer not to talk about Hel, corruption, draugrs, or similar matters. If anyone brings up these issues, they change the subject or cut it short. They get especially skittish when asked about sacrifices.

LOCATIONS

1. TOWN SQUARE

The town is settled around a giant rock with a Freyja rune carved on it. The people of town call the area right around this rock the town "square", although it actually has a round shape. During the day, people gather in the square to trade goods, children run around and play games, and the townsfolk may be seen sitting around and talking to each other when they are not working on the fields. There are small shrines dedicated to non-evil Gods and Goddesses around the giant rock in the middle of the town square.

If the characters arrive at night, they see spurted spots of blood over the giant rock in the middle of the square, and the leftovers of a feast; half-eaten plates of food, a couple of people passed out cold over some of the tables, and multicolored sheets and napkins, some on the tables and some on the ground.

If the characters arrive in the daytime, they hear some young Svillanders talking among themselves:

"That woman has lost her mind, I tell you. I don't want to be next."

"Watch yourself. She is a good woman. Do you have any better ideas?"

"No, but... This... This shouldn't... this cannot be the way."

If the characters want to learn what they are talking about, the townspeople having the conversation look agitated and advise the warband to talk to the elder of the town, Liutrar, with a dry and cold tone of voice. If the characters ask them questions about their quest, they quickly realize that they do not know anything about Asta.

2. TOWN HALL

The town hall is a two-story wooden building where important meetings concerning the governance of the town are held. At the entrance, there is a fireplace and lots of chairs placed around it. Everyone is welcome at the town hall anytime, day or night, to sit and to talk about their daily issues. When one gets into the building, one is immediately greeted with the warmth radiating from the fireplace, and the smell of the old wood.

There is a large hall with a wide, wooden table in the middle on the second floor of the building, as well as another room dedicated to the Jarl of the town to conduct official business. The room is quite small. A bear pelt decorates the wall across from the entrance, and there is a wooden desk surrounded by four chairs in the middle of the room. Four of the chairs are reserved for the townsfolk and one, for Liutrar. Characters may find Liutrar in this room during the day. Liutrar locks the room when he is not here. Picking the lock requires a successful DC 18 Dexterity check.

The characters may hear several elder Svillanders talking amongst themselves, sitting around a large table and eating supper as soon as they walk in:

"It is better to please the Gods and Goddesses in these hard times."

"Indeed. Disasters happen when we turn our backs to them."

"Agreed, old friend... Agreed."

If the characters come across these elder Svillanders, they will invite the characters to eat with them. If the characters want to learn what they were talking about, the Svillanders whine about how the times have changed and say that they don't think youngsters understand the way of the Gods and Goddesses as they themselves did back in their day.

If the characters ask about their quest, they quickly find out that they do not know anything about Asta, but the elders advise the warband to talk to the town elder, Liutrar.

3. LIUTRAR'S HOUSE

Liutrar's House is close to the fields and far from the center of the town. It is a one-story wooden hut with a bedroom, a kitchen, and a small hall. There is a wooden table in the middle of the small hall, on which there is a bottle of mead that he enjoys sharing with his guests.

Liutrar lives by himself. He tries to keep his house tidy; however, he is not able to do much of a good job as a result of his old age. Visitors quickly notice the presence of clumps of dust that sweep across the floor. Characters may find Liutrar in his house at night.

4. KALDR'S SMITHY

Kaldr is a middle-aged Vestri man who doesn't like to talk about his past. He is short and has no facial hair. Some may not consider him to be handsome but his long brown hair is indisputably magnificent.

Rumors say that he was a vicious vikingr once. When his entire crew was slaughtered during a raid, he quit being a raider and started working on the thing he did the best, besides being a raider: smithing.

He came here two years ago, got married, and built himself up from nothing. He doesn't earn much, but he is a good blacksmith. He loves when adventurers visit him and tell him stories of their deeds. He even considers giving discounts to

those who amuse him with a good story.

He works near the town square. He has a special connection with the Isa ("Ice") rune. He sells uncommon items that have to do with ice and frost. There is also a 30% chance that he may have one or two rare items up for sale.

5. OLD BARRACKS

Old Barracks are the houses of the townsfolk who lost their lives in the horrific massacre that took place years ago. These barracks are old, they are cold and almost have a haunted feel to them; however, they are free of charge for travelers who are passing through Sangarholt, provided that they have talked to Liutrar and have gotten his permission to stay.

Old barracks are far from the town square and are close to Liutrar's house.

6. THE FIELDS

The town is surrounded by fields. People who work on husbandry and farming here are the spine of Sangarholt's economy, which is very much closed.

When the characters examine the fields, they do not find what they expect due to Freydis's vision of barren fields and dead crops. Instead, they find the traces of such a scene. A successful Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that there are some holes in the ground. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that some areas in the fields have been burned and singed. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that there was blood spilled in a 20-foot radius somewhere inside the fields, about two days before the arrival of the characters.

The characters must speak to the town's ruler since no one else seems willing to talk to the characters about much, including Asta.

Liutrar will be in his house at night, or in his room in the town hall during the day.

LIUTRAR'S REQUEST

Start playing "*In Sight of Ravens*" on "Svilland - Music and Ambiance" before starting this episode.

Liutrar greets the characters with sincerity, and offers them some mead if they are thirsty. He listens to their questions with patience. Then he starts to speak in his old, tired, stressed voice:

"My dear young ones, I just love it when young travelers, strangers, adventurers visit Sangarholt. But honestly, this is not really the best time for a visit.

People are suspicious of strangers. I can't blame them; we've lost too many to count... Now, I wholeheartedly believe that your intentions are as pure as snow.

But you must give an old man a reason to believe you. Our town's finest ranger, Sang, hasn't returned from her quest given by the Odin gothi of ours. Now, I must ask you to seek her, find her, and bring her back to us; dead or alive. She is a frost half-jotunn with the blackest curly hair you have seen. She also has a scar on her forehead, you can't miss it.

As far as I've heard, she had started from the western fields and gone deeper into the west. I'll lead you to the place where we saw her last.

Then, the rest is up to you. Find her, and I'll tell you everything I know. If you need time to get ready, I'll give you a place to stay too, but you must waste no time."

If the characters accept the quest given, Liutrar will either take them to the old barracks, or to the fields where Sang was last seen, depending on whether they ask for a place to prepare. If he takes the characters to the barracks, he returns to get them in two hours since he wants them to find the ranger as soon as possible.

If the characters do not accept the quest, Liutrar says that they are not welcome in town, and that they must leave post-haste. However, if the characters manage to locate Eerika's house (even if they do so without meaning to) they are able to break into Eerika's house (*see 4. Eerika's House*) by picking the lock. If they do so, they must fight her. When she drops to 0 hit points, she considers herself defeated and talks to the characters.

Liutrar takes the warband to the place where blood was spilled in a 20-foot radius in the fields (*see 7. The Fields*).

In addition to what can be seen in the fields, characters who succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check locate the footprints of the ranger.

Liutrar

PURSUING THE RANGER

After following the footsteps for about an hour, the characters come across a wide river and a stone bridge. The river looks highly dangerous and nearly impossible to pass by swimming.

A successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that someone is hiding behind the bushes on the other side of the bridge. Once the characters set foot on the bridge, a figure jumps out of the bushes wielding two shortswords.

He is a trold, one of the natives of Svilland. Troldfolk are the descendants of the giants. They are known for their ability to commune with nature and the elements.

This particular trold knows how to hide well in spite of his size. He wears ragged leather pants that go down to his knees, and nothing more. He has long, black greasy hair and no beard. He has a long chin and a sinister smile.

He is hardly good looking, and has a big nose that is not in proportion to the rest of his face. He draws his swords but doesn't seem hostile yet, and he starts to speak to the characters in his deep voice:

"Welcome, travelers, to the bridge of Grenus. You've got three ways to cross this bridge here. First, you may kill me, and I might just let you pass. Maybe though... No promises.

Second, answer my riddle, and I'll gladly step aside. Each one of you gets to make one guess, and that's all.

Third, you choose one among yourselves to go up against me in an eating contest. As a great host, I'll provide the food. If you beat me, you shall pass.

It's dealer's choice. In any case, I'll have fun. So... Whaddaya say?"

The Riddle. If the warband chooses to answer his riddle to try and cross, Grenus gets overtly happy and starts his riddle right away:

"I cross rivers in every place.
With no shadow, I leave no trace.
Sometimes soft, and sometimes harsh,
I can go slow, or I can race."

The Answer. Wind.

Eating Contest. If the warband chooses to have an eating contest, Grenus says he will be right back, and goes and gets a huge sack of large maggots. Have your player's character make five separate Constitution checks contested by 5 Constitution checks by Grenus. The one who gets the best of five wins. The other one throws up and loses the contest.

Combat. If the warband chooses combat, Grenus laughs, and charges at them.

GRENUS

Large giant, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 73 (7d10 + 35)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	18 (+4)	20 (+5)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +7, Survival +3
Damage Resistances poison
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Austris (Common), Mithal, Giant
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Eager to Bash. If Grenus makes both of his melee attacks on the same target, he deals an additional 7 (2d6) slashing damage to the creature on his second attack.

Petrified by Light. When Grenus fails his saving throw against a spell that deals radiant damage, or when a spell attack that deals radiant damage scores a critical hit, Grenus is petrified until the end of his next turn. He is also petrified if he is slain by radiant damage.

Regeneration. Grenus regains 5 hit points at the start of his turn. If he takes fire or radiant damage, this trait does not function at the start of his next turn. Grenus dies only if he starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Grenus makes two melee weapon attacks with his poisoned large shortswords.

Poisoned Large Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage plus 2 (1d4) poison damage.

After the encounter, the characters need to relocate the footprints of the ranger, Sang. On the other side of the bridge, it seems that there are three sets of footprints that they must have overlooked. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the footprints of the ranger.

If the result(s) of the Wisdom (Perception) check(s) is less than 10, the warband starts following a false track. In this case, they lose 2 hours following the wrong tracks and returning to the bridge to follow the real one when they realize they have done so. Roll on the table below to determine what happens if the warband is following a false track.

d4	Encounters
1	It is a dead-end! The footprints stop abruptly. Time to go back.
2	The footprints end suddenly, but a bandit (see ambushing berserkr, p. 243) charges at the warband and makes a surprise attack.
3	The warband sees another trold at the end of the footprints. She asks the warband if they have seen anyone named Grenus nearby, saying that he is late for their date.
4	Footprints lead to a cave. Deep inside, the characters encounter three brown bears and see a dead man on the floor, who is not the ranger they are looking for.

If the characters succeed on their Wisdom (Perception) check, or after they go back to the stone bridge, they follow the footsteps for an additional one and a half hours. Later, they see a cave that the ranger must have entered some time ago. The entrance of the cave is ten feet wide and five feet high.

When they move 50 feet into the cave, it starts to widen and the shape of the clearing turns into a circle with a diameter of 60 feet. The cave is dark. Unless the characters have darkvision or a light source, they are not able to see around them.

The smell of rotten flesh is so strong that characters who fail on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw get nauseated and throw up.

There are bones and corpses lying on the ground. At the far end of the cave, there is a wounded woman that matches Liutrar's description of the ranger.

When the characters come closer, the eyes of the corpses open wide and are filled with a blue glow before they rise up.

Characters	Encounter
4	4 frostbitten draugrs (p. 251)
5	5 frostbitten draugrs
6	6 frostbitten draugrs

* This *medium* encounter is designed for a party made up of 4th level characters. If the characters have reached 5th level, add 2 frostbitten draugrs to the encounter that matches the number of characters in your party. If they have reached 6th level, add 1 frostbitten draugr and 1 draugr guardian.

The woman is indeed Sang. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that she is unconscious, although not dead. Even if the characters heal her magically and wake her up, she is not able to speak as she is still in shock. However, if the characters do heal her, she will be able to walk back to Sangarholt with the warband.

HIDEOUT

With the threat eliminated, the characters can take a closer look at the cave, and when they do, they discover that the cave is actually an old bandit hideout. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals the presence of a buried object, which turns out to be a chest.

The chest has AC 10 and 20 hit points. Although it is locked, it can be broken into by dealing damage to it, or by means of a successful DC 15 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check. The chest contains a treasure of items and coins suitable for the CR of the encounter. You, as the GM, can calculate it according to the number of foes and their individual Challenge Ratings.

BACK TO SANGARHOLT

When the warband returns to Sangarholt, they must take Sang to Liutrar.

When Liutrar sees that Sang is alive, he looks at her with eyes opened wide in joyous disbelief, and one or two tears trickle down his wrinkled face. He then turns to the characters, and sincerely thanks them all, shaking their hands one by one.

He then asks the characters to wait in the barracks, promising to come back within an hour after talking and tending to Sang.

He shows up on time as promised, finds the warband, and starts talking in his cracked voice once they are all inside:

"Ah, yes... This town has had some bad times; and personally, I've seen worse than this. However, the things Sang told me and the recent demeanor of Eerika... It worries me, scares me, terrifies me...

Eerika, the gothi of our town, and Sang were out there in the fields, talking to each other, watching other people work. Sang says that the sky suddenly went dark, and as she was looking around to find the source of what was happening, Eerika encountered someone. A woman, hovering above the ground... Eerika says that she saw hands coming out of the earth and dead people rallying around the woman, forming a circle. Meanwhile, the very aura of this woman killed the animals. And then, Sang says, this shady, evil woman raised one of her hands, and people around her started to suffocate. I pray for all their poor souls.

Then, Sang says, it looked as though Eerika went insane. Her eyes opened wide, and she started screaming at the top of her lungs at non-existent figures. She then fixed her eyes on Sang, charged on her and pushed her, saying, "Follow her, follow her for Odin's sake. GO! RUN!"

Sang respects Eerika. In fact, everyone here respects Eerika, myself included. Hence, Sang followed this woman. First going to the west, and then towards the north. Sang thinks that she was going to Kolbovaik. Then, Sang saw the woman go into a cave, and thus followed her in. She was terrified, so she made no hostile move against her. I think if she had done so, she would not be alive right now.

When the woman left the cave, some draugrs came as if out of nowhere, and Sang was stuck in the middle of them. She fought them off killing a bunch of them; and... Well... You know the rest...

There is one other thing. When we learned that there was a massacre, we decided to prepare a feast that would last for three days. That's what we do here when we pray to the Gods and Goddesses for mercy. We eat, drink, try to cheer up those around us, and make sacrifices to the Gods and Goddesses; gladly and willingly. Eerika leads the sacrificial rituals; however, she was acting strangely on the first night of the feast. She left early, which is not like her. She then locked herself in her house. She has not talked to anyone, not even me, ever since... On the second night of the feast, she

brought one of the townsfolk for him to be sacrificed. She claimed that this person was willing, but there are rumors going around that say otherwise. He was a lonesome man, so I am not able to confirm if he was willingly sacrificed or not. I am concerned about the town; yet a fight between the gothi and the town's elders would be devastating for most of them. As I said, I respect her, but I believe Sang. She may have gone mad. If it's not too much to ask, I'd like you to stay for the final night of the ritual. Talk to Eerika, and please prevent her from sacrificing people if they are not willing, or if they are young. If Sangarholt is to survive, we need our young."

The characters learn the following information from this speech:

- A woman killed some people and animals three days ago.
- Sang could not see the woman's face.
- The woman moved towards the north, possibly to the city of Kolbovaik.
- Eerika may know something about this woman that Sang does not.
- There is a chance that Eerika has gone mad. It seems that she may have sacrificed someone who was not willing, which is generally frowned upon by most Svillanders. Liutrar is not sure if the person was willing or not, but he is sure Eerika's intentions are pure. However, he wants the characters to talk to Eerika and "persuade" her not to sacrifice non-willing and young Svillanders.

CONFRONTING EERIKA

The warband has three options to talk to Eerika:

1. ***Breaking in.*** They may break into her house and try to reason with her. If they do so, Eerika will get angry, and it will be difficult to persuade her.
2. ***The Negotiation.*** They may wait for the Feast, which starts at sunset. (If the characters lose time resting in the barracks or while seeking Sang, you, as the GM, may decide that sun is about to set. Otherwise, the characters will have hours until the rituals. If this is the case, they may explore the town (you, as the GM, can also choose one or two encounters from the Sangarholt Encounters table).
3. ***The Sacrifice.*** They may not accept the quest and wait for Eerika to sacrifice a Svillander, and then approach her on their own.

Eerika wears a robe consisting of red, blue, and black rags tied together. She is proficient in the art of oratory and looks impressive with her formidable posture and long white hair.

She is a gothi of Odin and she is one of those who fought when the Wanderers slaughtered the town. She is also a master in sacrificial rituals. She got several lethal scars during the battle, she ended up losing her left eye.

Eerika has recently been driven mad by a spell. A successful DC 18 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that something is not right with her mind.

EERIKA

Medium humanoid (Austri), lawful neutral

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)
Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)

Skills Insight +7, Perception +7, Persuasion +5
Senses passive Perception 17
Languages Austris (Common)
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Beaming Strike. As a bonus action, Eerika can add 3 (1d6) radiant damage to any damage she inflicts once for 4 turns.

Quick Thinking. Eerika has a +1 bonus on her initiative.

Spellcasting. Eerika is a 7th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). Eerika has the following gothi spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light, sacred flame, spare the dying, thaumaturgy*

1st level (4 slots): *cure wounds, guiding bolt, inflict wounds, sanctuary*

2nd level (3 slots): *blindness/deafness, hold person, spiritual weapon*

3rd level (3 slots): *bestow curse, dispel magic, spirit guardians*

4th level (1 slot): *banishment*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Eerika makes three melee weapon attacks with his sacrificial dagger.

+1 Sacrificial Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4 + 3).

In the Name of Odin. Eerika starts to radiate light for 1 minute. Once a turn, Eerika adds 9 (2d8) radiant damage to one of her damage rolls.

Mark of Sacrifice. Eerika says a short prayer and targets a creature within 60 feet of her. The target must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 11 (2d10) radiant damage and it is marked for sacrifice. On a successful save, the creature takes half as much damage and it is not marked.

A target who is marked for sacrifice has disadvantage on any saving throws against Eerika's spells.

ATTACKING EERIKA

If the characters attack the Eerika in a crowded place at night, such as the feast, some of the townsfolk who are deeply loyal to her join the fight to defend her:

Characters	Encounter
4	Eerika
5	Eerika, 1 thug
6	Eerika, 2 thugs

* This *hard* encounter is designed for a party made up of 4th level characters. If the characters have reached 5th level add 2 berserkers to the encounter that matches the number of characters in your party. If the warband has reached 6th level, add 3 berserkers.

Eerika

PERSUADING EERIKA

The characters can try to persuade Eerika in her home or during the feast. To do so, they should make three or more solid arguments to persuade Eerika not to sacrifice non-willing Svillanders or the young. These can be:

- The majority of Sangarholt's population is old; therefore, they need young people to survive.
- Killing non-willing, unarmed people is murder. Odin does not approve of murder.
- She is under the influence of what she had seen before, this is not how the *real* Eerika would behave.

Eerika can be persuaded by means of a successful Charisma (Persuasion) check. The DC of the check is 20, but it decreases by 2 for each valid reason the characters provide (up to 3 valid reasons).

If she is not persuaded, she wants the characters gone. At this point, either the warband kills Eerika, or she sacrifices a non-willing Svillander.

If the characters kill Eerika, Liutrar will be waiting outside of her house and will ask the characters to leave town, saying that they are no longer welcome, and adding that they have killed a gothi of Odin and that the Allfather will never forgive them for this.

If she is persuaded, she will look for a willing sacrifice who is also advanced in age. In this case she promises to talk about the woman she had seen after the sacrificial ritual.

EERIKA'S HOUSE

Eerika's House is close to the town square where she spends her afternoons preaching to the crowd who gathers around her next to the shrines. Her house is a one-story wooden building similar to the Jarl's house; however, hers is always tidy and well-groomed unlike that of the Jarl. She likes to spend the night in the basement of her house, isolated from everyone, and praying to Odin or studying his teachings.

After the incident, she has locked herself in her house and will not come out until nightfall. At night, she wanders in town and observes people, probably thinking of her next sacrifice. When there is a feast, she performs a sacrificial ritual.

Picking the lock of Eerika's House's front door requires thieves' tools and a successful DC 15 Dexterity check.

Picking the lock of Eerika's House's backdoor requires thieves' tools and a successful DC 13 Dexterity check.

BREAKING IN

If the warband chooses to break into Eerika's home:

The characters find Eerika in her basement, getting ready for the sacrifice. She whets her dagger and prays to Odin. She looks shocked and angry upon noticing the characters. She accuses the characters of sneaking around in the shadows like the agents of Loki and that she should kill them for this reason alone.

Angrily, she asks what business the warband has in her house. The characters must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check to calm her down, otherwise she attacks.

If the characters ask why she is sacrificing people, she answers that there are huge troubles ahead, and that if they do not make proper sacrifices, they are certain to get badly hurt.

THE FEAST OF SANGARHOLT

The feast of Sangarholt starts at sunset, and takes place in the town square. Svillanders of Sangarholt place tables and chairs in the town square and cook together to create an enormous, delicious feast. However, there are no games; except for the town youngsters dueling amongst themselves with wooden swords and shields to entertain the commoners.

The winner gets nothing but pride, but the characters may take part in these duels if they want to. Any kind of magic or magical effect is forbidden.

There are six young Svillanders from Sangarholt who want to be a part of these duels. You can use the table below to determine who your character(s) will compete against, if one or more wish to participate.

Wooden weapons are given to the contestants. The damage die used for these weapons are the same as their non-wooden counterparts, but they deal non-lethal damage. This means that if a contestant takes damage equal to its hit point maximum, it is considered knocked out and is therefore eliminated. If a participant is not eliminated and continues to duel, it regains all hit points at the start of the new duel.

You, as the GM, can cast lots to determine which participant will be dueling with which.

d6	Participant
1	Valda (Mithal, lawful good, Guard) - A strong young woman
2	Eamon (Austri, chaotic neutral, Bandit Captain*) - An experienced male combatant
3	Blann (Austri, chaotic good, Thug*) - A young enthusiastic male fighter
4	Gunne (Dvergr, lawful neutral, Veteran) - An old male dvergr who used to be an adventurer
5	Grith (Mithal, chaotic good, Spy) - A handsome, young male
6	Ida (Half-Jotun, chaotic neutral, Berserker) - A tall, very strong, beautiful woman

* Crossbows and scimitars are not common in Svilland, so you would be advised to have the participants of the duel use wooden longbows and shortswords instead.

After the duels, Eerika leaves her house with a young Svillander. This particular Svillander is a Mithal who has long brown hair and a short beard, and is wearing ordinary, everyday clothes. The characters notice that he was also the one who said: *"That woman has lost her mind, I tell you. I don't want to be next."* in the daytime in the town square.

It seems that Eerika has chosen this man as her sacrifice.

If the characters don't interfere immediately, she and the sacrifice slowly walk to the giant rock. Then, the sacrifice commences.

'WILLING' SACRIFICE

If the warband chooses to talk to Eerika outside of her house during the feast;

She asks who the characters are and what they are doing here.

If the characters ask why she is sacrificing people, she answers that there are huge troubles ahead, and that if they do not make proper sacrifices, they are certain to get badly hurt.

If the characters ask whether the man is a willing sacrifice or not, the man says he is willing in a quiet and mournful voice. A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) reveals that the man is not willing at all, but is terrified of Eerika and of what lies beyond death if he disobeys.

At this point, the characters may wish to persuade Eerika (see *Persuading Eerika*). If she is not persuaded, she passes by the characters with the man. At this point, the warband must either kill Eerika, or watch her sacrifice a non-willing Svillander.

If the characters kill Eerika, Liutrar will be waiting outside of her house and will ask the characters to leave their town, saying that they are no longer welcome, and adding that they have killed a gothi of Odin and the Allfather will never forgive them for this.

If she is persuaded, she will look for a willing, old sacrifice to make in the man's stead. She also promises to talk about the women she had seen after the ritual is complete.

THE SACRIFICE

If the warband lets the sacrifice commence:

Eerika and the man stand side by side near the giant rock. If the warband persuades Eerika to sacrifice a willing, old Svillander, she says the same prayers during the ritual. The person who was sacrificed differs. She starts preaching loudly:

> *"Svillanders! Dark clouds are hovering above our heads! We have nothing if not our faith. With this rock that Freyja has gifted us, and with her as my witness, we have no other choice than to spill blood for the rebirth of Sangarholt. And be reborn, we shall! We will cast all the evil rebirth from this land. We should've done that a long time ago. Yet... Fear not! This night will be the last restless one for some time yet! Freyja bless us! Allfather, accept our sacrifice! ODIN!!!"*

Then, Eerika raises her dagger, and cuts the man's throat, hoping that Odin and Freyja will accept their offering.

She holds her hand against the man's throat and wets her hand with blood. She then turns around and draws the "life rune" over the rock once again. She then wets her hands with blood once more, and she touches each shrine dedicated to

the non-evil Gods and Goddesses, painting each with the blood on her hand. With every touch, she shouts out the names of these Gods and Goddesses. She says the following while the commoners of Sangarholt repeat after each of Eerika's prayers:

> *"Freyja! Bless us with life.*
> *Odin! Watch over us, and protect us all.*
> *Tyr! Send your divine justice upon us.*
> *Thor! Illuminate our nights with your lightning.*
> *Aegir! Purify us with your blessed waters.*
> *Balder! Show us the good within."*

Then she walks back home, leaving the body by the rock.

The characters can see the relief in the townsfolk's eyes; they appear to be sure that the ritual will be rewarded with peace and prosperity. Everyone sings, drinks, and dances for the rest of the night. Everyone except for the woman who was in love with the sacrifice, at least...

The warband may talk to Eerika after the celebration, and if they do, they are provided with the information granted in the section titled *After the Ritual.*

AFTER THE RITUAL

When the ritual comes to an end, the characters may speak to Eerika in her house if they manage to persuade her to do so, or let the young man get sacrificed. In any case, the characters will find out the following from their conversation.

- The woman that they saw was covered in shadows, Eerika couldn't see her face.
- This woman was all alone but strong enough to kill dozens with a single stare.
- Her spell caused hands to stick out of the earth, and made Eerika see many dead Svillanders who gathered around her in a circle. They were moving towards her, saying her name and some other things in a language she did not speak. However, she was certain that they were calling Eerika to join them. She also distinctly heard the word "Hel." The woman was possibly a servant of the Goddess of death.

If the characters have persuaded Eerika and made her sacrifice a willing person, she adds the following:

- She now realizes that she is suffering from madness, and it seems to have started after the encounter with the woman in shadows.
- She was terrified and wanted to save herself and her people by pleading for Odin's protection, hence she made those sacrifices. She does not feel terrified now.

SANGARHOLT OUTCOMES

After the warband speaks with Eerika, they may stay at the old barracks which was procured to them by Liutrar for as long as they wanted.

1. ***Eerika is persuaded.*** If the characters have persuaded Eerika, Liutrar visits the warband in the barracks and thanks them. He unfortunately has no gold to offer, but says that he gladly and freely gives these barracks to the warband. They are welcome in Sangarholt, anytime.

   In addition, Eerika thanks the characters dearly for helping her find her true path to Odin once more. She gives the warband an heirloom talisman, a beautiful raven made of silver with cut onyx stones as feathers that is worth 1000 gp if sold.
2. ***Eerika is not persuaded.*** If the characters have tried but were not able to persuade Eerika, Liutrar visits the warband and thanks them for trying to do so anyway, and for saving Sang.

   If the characters have not tried to persuade Eerika, Liutrar visits the warband and thanks them for saving Sang.

BELMUNT: THE SMELL OF BLOOD

ROAD TO BELMUNT

On the second day of the warband's journey to Belmunt, they encounter a gap in the woods, which is nearly 100 square feet.

On the snowy horizon, the characters notice swords sticking out of the snow, with one dead, rotten body lying next to each of them. When the characters fix their gaze on this sight, a pitch-black, horrifying spirit calmly and slowly rises out of one of the corpses. As soon as it does, it picks up the sword stuck in the ground next to it. It slowly raises the weapon, and points it at one of the characters, inviting it to a duel.

If the character you choose accepts the duel, the spirit and the character honorably fight one-on-one However, if one of the characters tries to attack the spirit during the duel, the characters count as having defied the terms of the duel. If this is the case, another spirit rises out of one of the other corpses lying on the ground, and it invites the character that disrupted

the duel to a duel of their own. If no one intercepts the duel, after it ends, the spirit thanks the characters for helping it find peace, and vanishes into the wind.

It should also be pointed out that if the characters disrupt the duel, you, as the GM, may want to slightly shift their alignments from lawful to chaotic. For example, if a lawful-good character disrupts the duel, you may say that this was not a lawful act, and that therefore its alignment has just shifted to neutral. Also, please bear in mind that the characters may justify their approach or try to redeem themselves in a way more fitting with their current alignment, at which point, it is again your choice as the GM to shift their alignment or not.

No matter what happens, there should be the same number of spirits on the battlefield as the number of warriors, since each spirit calls one character to a duel. If a character dies during combat, they come back as one of those spirits.

Below are variations of the Cursed Warriors of Svilland. These were great warriors; however, they were so wicked that Odin did not welcome them in his halls. They were rejected from Valhalla. Now, they wander around the lands, seeking challenges.

CURSED SPIRIT

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 22 (3d8 + 9)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Constitution +5, Charisma +5
Skills Intimidate +5
Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained,
Senses darkvision 60 ft.
Languages Austris (Common), Mithal
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Cursed Resurrection. If a creature drops to 0 hit points as the result of an attack from a cursed spirit and then dies, it rises up as a cursed spirit. To resurrect such a creature back to life, it must be defeated as a cursed spirit before casting a spell for resurrection.

Incorporeal Movement. The cursed spirit can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside.

Unflankable. The cursed spirit is a master fighter, it is immune to be flanked.

Innate Spellcasting. The cursed spirit is a 1st-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The cursed spirit has the following spells:

Cantrips (at will): *true strike, resistance*

1st level (2 slots): *shield*

ACTIONS

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage plus 2 (1d4) necrotic damage.

After the encounter, spirits fade away saying *"thank you"* with a satisfied tone. The warband may continue on its journey.

Cursed Spirit

BELMUNT

Belmunt is a small town, yet it is still one of the largest settlements around Freyja's Tear. It is located at the south-western foot of the Shadowlow Mountains. The town has been built around an old castle, which was originally built for military purposes but lost this function as time went by, and is currently being used as home to the Jarl and his family, as well as a longhouse.

Belmunt has been ruled by the Igrimsonn family for more than 30 years and Kludi Igrimsonn has been the ruler for the last five. He was a brave, respected, and strong leader in the beginning of his rule, but these qualities gradually abandoned him as the members of the Igrimsonn family died one by one. Eight months ago, he took an oracle named Ormond the Bloodreader as a consultant, and since then he rarely leaves his castle, and does not pay much attention to matters of economy or of the military. He desperately wants a child; so much so that he requested the company of four other women in addition to his wife, Jofrid, within these eight months.

Aside from Kludi, Thorve Igrimsonn is also a person of notice in Belmunt. She is a strong, middle-aged woman, whose main title is Captain of the Guards, but lately the management of most of the problems in town has also been on her shoulders, since Kludi refuses to get out of his castle. The folk here are also aware of the situation, and most have started seeing her as their true leader. They openly talk about the need for a new leader and how Thorve is the one most suitable for this task. However, she is still loyal to Kludi, who is also her cousin, and believes that he is going to be a good leader once more. Nowadays, her main concern is to provide the guards with better training since she has started to hear stories of weird happenings in the area around Freyja's Tear.

The town market is quite wealthy for a small town. The castle is surrounded by a large circular street, which in turn is surrounded by various shops that make up the town market and that are always prepared to serve customers and merchants. They trade a big variety of animal skin, fur, textile, and hardwood, as well as some other commodities of the same nature. People can find high-quality leather armors and items since the tannery is one of the main attractions in town.

Belmunt Thumbnail

Leader /Important Figures. Belmunt is ruled by Jarl Kludi Igrimsonn of the Igrimsonn family.

Livelihood. Mining, smithing, trade

Militia. 30 **guards**, 20 **guards of the old castle,** 1 **Vartr Blade**

Population. 700

Rumors.

- The Jarl's wife should have given birth but there's no news.
- People are not happy with the Jarl's rule and some support Thorve Igrimsonn, captain of the guard.
- There is a blood reader in the castle who is the consultant

BELMUNT

1 - THE GATE

2 - THE BOILING CHAIR INN

3 - THE GOLDEN PILLOWS INN

4 - MARKET PLACE

5 - SHRINES

6 - THE GUARDHOUSE

of the Jarl.
- The Jarl is trying to make more heirs.

Services. Accommodation, food, and beverage, weapons, and armors.

RANDOM EVENTS

Despite all the big events, upcoming wars, and struggles; life keeps on going. Svillanders have to get on with their daily work, even if there are strange things happening all over the place. Below, a few examples of the daily goings-on in Belmunt are given.

d6	Event
1	A weak stray dog runs towards the characters with a hungry look on its face, barking loudly. It has dirty, dark gray fur and big dark blue eyes. If a character gives it some food, the dog becomes loyal to the warband. It is happy to be around them during the day and at night. It tries to keep watch for its new friends.
2	One of the characters feels that they are being watched by something or someone for 1d4 hours, after which point the feeling fades.
3	A funeral is taking place in one of the streets (GM's choice). The relatives of the deceased are crying as they carry the coffin through the streets. The body belongs to a young man who has died of an unknown disease. If the characters speak with a member of the family, they invite the characters to the remembrance dinner.
4	A man and a woman are fighting in the middle of the street, both of whom accuse the other of having stolen their money. If characters ask others about them, they learn that they are married and that these fights are a part of their daily routine.
5	There is a teenage girl selling firewood near the Marketplace. Even though this wood looks regular, she claims that they provide more heat than any other wood. And if the characters should buy any, they see that they do indeed; they burn twice as long as a regular piece of wood does.
6	A fire breaks out and causes havoc. Some people try to flee the area as quickly as possible while some others try to help put it out. A little boy who seems to be escaping from the scene collides with one of the characters in his hurry. If the character does not succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check, they get pickpocketed by the boy, and lose 10% of the gold pieces they are carrying.

RUMORS

Once characters arrive Belmunt, they hear many rumors around town. These rumors can be heard from the folk around town, from the innkeepers, and from the town guards. Town guards like to have a drink or two in the inns of Belmunt, and discuss these things after a hard-day's night. The rumors that the characters may hear (in accordance with the GM's choice) are given below:

Mysterious Birth. The Jarl's wife, Jofrid Goldensmile, was declared to be with child about a year ago. She should have given birth by now, and as is tradition the Jarl should have then announced his child to the town. Still, neither this announcement, nor any other news in regard to the mother or the child has come up.

Tension in Rule. People are not happy with Jarl Kludi Igrimsonn's rule. He used to be a just and good leader who listened to and cared about the people of his town, but now he never comes out of his castle. Many errands of town are neglected, and crime rates have soared, because nothing seems to befall those who commit them; not even a trial has been set up for a really long time. People openly state that things would be better under the rule of Thorve Igrimsonn (p. 74). She is from the Jarl's family and she is the head of the Belmunt guard.

Blood Reader. Guards who were normally assigned to the castle guard in the past, mention a blood reader. They say the blood reader, Ormond, who is said to be one of the foulest-looking, smelliest, craziest people they have ever seen, and the Jarl is said to hang on to his every word. He lives in the castle with the Jarl and his wife, and many of the guards who used to be assigned to the castle have been replaced by those chosen by this blood reader.

In Quest for Heirs. People say that the Jarl took additional concubines to the castle.

THE GUARDS IN THE INN

The guards from the Guard House regularly visit the inns after their shifts. Specific groups of guards like to go to specific inns, so if one comes across a group of guards in an inn one evening, it would be safe to assume that they could come across the same ones the next night as well.
If the characters chat with the guards, they generally provide the rumors about the town after a couple of minutes. If the characters want to investigate these rumors further;

- A successful DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check or a bribe of 10 gold pieces will make the guards arrange a meeting with Thorve in the Guard House.
- One of the guards within the group says they saw blood leaking through the water drains of the castle.

LOCATIONS

The following locations are marked on the map of Belmunt.

1. THE GATES

The Gates are the one and only entrance to Belmunt, so the characters also pass through them upon their arrival. The gates are open during the day, although four guards stand watch. They do not ask any questions unless the characters appear to be carrying an unusual object or symbol. During the night, the gates are closed. Thus, if the characters arrive when it is nighttime, the guards question them briefly before letting them through the small door situated on the main gate.

After they pass through the gate, read or paraphrase the following boxed text to the players:

> When you pass through the gate of the wooden palisade surrounding the town, Belmunt greets you with its wooden-houses and muddy streets. The town is filled with the noises coming from its well-trained guards, its loud taverns near the marketplace, the running kids, and the friendly street animals; and all this seems to welcome you. You feel that there is nothing to fear, nothing to escape or suspect. The guards are training in front of their barracks, and the townspeople are going about their day. All in all, it is business as usual in this charming town.

If the characters turn around to look at the gates, a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that one of the hinges on the left wing is missing. If the characters tell one of the guards, the guards thank the characters, and assure them that they are going to be fixed as soon as possible.

2. THE BOILING CHAIR INN

The Boiling Chair is one of the inns in town, and it is a large, two-story building made of pinewood. An old wooden sign depicting a chair being boiled in a cauldron (quite literally) hangs next to the door.

It is the second inn ever to open intown. It was called "Red Bear" when it was first opened, however, the cook one day managed to drop a chair in one of the cauldrons and its name has been different ever since. Tosti (Austri, chaotic good, Commoner) is the owner of the inn. He is a middle-aged, red-haired man with dark-blue eyes and a fatherly voice.

When the characters enter the Boiling Chair, they see a large crowd arguing loudly. Although it is not the first time an argument has broken out over almost nothing, Tosti still looks worried. When the characters go in, read from or paraphrase the boxed text below to the players:

> When you open the wooden door, you are greeted by a big, well-lit, warm place harboring a large crowd. Nobody seems to notice you as most of those who fill the inn seem to be engrossed in a steamy argument. A red-headed man is anxiously pacing from one person to another, trying to calm everyone down.
>
> A young woman, whose veins on her forehead are beating with anger, hits the table and shouts at the man on the opposite side *"I know what I brought you, okay? You big, stinking drunkard, you can't even see past your nose, if you can see at all that is!"*
>
> As soon as she finishes her words people start shouting: *"FIGHT! FIGHT! FIGHT!"*
>
> Both the young woman and the middle-aged man she is yelling at walk over the center of the crowd. Tosti, the owner of the inn looks more and more worried, he continuously says *"Please, please stop."* to the people.

If the characters ask what's happening, someone briefly explains: The man, Diarf, claims that Halldora, the young woman, can no longer properly hunt animals anymore and that she ruins all the pelts. This claim makes Halldora mad and a simple argument turns into a fight.

If the characters get involved, they can stop the skirmish with a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check or they can draw attention to themselves with a successful DC 15 Charisma (Intimidation or Performance) check.

If they succeed in stopping the fight, Tosti thanks them and says, "*You can stay here as long as you want, it is on me!*" If they choose not to get involved, Halldora and Diarf will fight it out. During the fight, the characters can bet on one of them to win, and if they are on the winning side, they earn twice what they bet. After the bets are closed, the GM rolls a 1d2 to decide who is going to win.

When the fight is over, people return to their own business and the characters receive a warm welcome from Tosti who says that they are more than welcome to eat, drink, and stay here.

3. THE GOLDEN PILLOWS INN

The Golden Pillows is the oldest inn in Belmunt. The townspeople and merchants come here to entertain themselves. It is a three-story wooden building with large windows. A small wooden sign hangs near the two-winged wooden door.

The inn has been owned by the Ullfar family since the beginning of the town's existence. Today, Gardi (Vestri, lawful neutral, Spy) manages the place. He is a young, handsome man at the age of 19. He is short and he looks quite strong with his muscular body. Even though he is too young to manage such a business, he has been doing great for the past six months, ever since he took over. Nearly all customers leave the inn feeling happy and satisfied.

If the characters visit Kraekross or Sangarholt before Belmunt, Gardi hears about them. If that is the case, he pays more attention to the characters compared to the others in the inn, because he believes them to be mighty warriors fighting for a good cause. He serves them free food and drinks. If the characters want to learn more about the town, he says that he too is feeling quite distressed by Kludi's behavior of late.

The Specials

Aside from the common meals of the region (meat stews, potato soup, roasted and dried meat, and other things of the sort), Golden Pillows offers a special meal called *Shadowlow Tart*.

Shadowlow Tart (3sp/per serving). The tart is filled with a mixture containing pork and lamb meat, as well as some herbs from Shadowlow Mountain, which the owner buys from Highlanders (p. 56), the folk of the mountain. The tart is delicious, earthy, and fulfilling.

You can find the following people in Golden Pillows:

Boe (neutral good, Austri, Scout) is a young hunter who recently went mad and was found around the forest close to town. If you wish to employ this NPC, the characters find him sitting at one of the tables and staring straight ahead with a blank expression. People try to communicate with him but he is not responsive. Some people say, they assume that he encountered a foe, who made him experience unspeakable things in the night. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that he is affected by some sort of magic.

Helping Boe. If the characters decide to help Boe, people can tell them about where the boy usually likes to hunt. If the characters go there at night, they encounter a **green hag** and its 1d6 **wolves**. When the characters slay them, they find 1d4 potions of healing and 2 scrolls of 2nd level spells. When they come back, they see that Boe is healed. He gives the characters a wolf tooth token for his gratitude.

Luta (neutral good, Austri, Veteran) is a drunk middle-aged woman who has shaved off all her hair. She plans to go north to join the army of Hanlon the Real King (p. 106). If asked, she says that she doesn't respect Kludi anymore because of his dishonorable and intolerable behavior.

Violet (chaotic good, Austri, Commoner) is a young woman who is found dancing in the dining area. She has been in Belmunt for two months. Before coming here, she visited many settlements in the area including Kraekross, Vogsal, and Eagleside Castle. If asked, she does not have much to say about these places, except that she doesn't like Kraekross, saying that the atmosphere is way too tense there.

4. MARKETPLACE

The Marketplace where all shops and stalls lean on one another, side by side, is the biggest attraction in town. The shops that make up this marketplace are located on either side of a wide street that stretches from just across the Gates to the Old Castle. People can find different items and materials in these shops. The air here is always filled with the loud merry music, and the delicious smells coming from the two inns in the area. The main attractions of the Marketplace are given below.

The Brown Pond. This is a small armory owned by Gundi (Austri, Chaotic neutral, Commoner). She is a generous woman who likes talking, eating fresh fruit, and drinking good wine. She gives discounts to customers she likes.

The Mystical Stew. It is a two-story wooden building owned by Sten (mountain-half-jotunn, lawful neutral, Commoner). The place is renowned for its large portions that Sten likes to see polished off the plate. Sten is a young, handsome man who likes listening to stories that take place in distant lands. He listens, takes notes and is almost never bored of these tales; the more detail the better.

- If the characters converse with Sten for more than a couple of minutes, he tells them that he is the one supplying the Belmunt Castle with food and other provisions, and that he brings in the orders by means of a large cart at a specific time each day.

Fine Furs Tanyard. This is the famous tanyard of Belmunt, where animal skins and hides are tanned into leather. All the leather goods manufactured here are marked with a small symbol that reads "FFT", to act as proof of their origin.

- Here, quality leather goods, including hide and leather armors, can be found for 20% cheaper than usual.

5. SHRINES

There are no temples in the town of Belmunt, but there are a few shrines. The shrines dedicated to Freyja, Tyr, and Odin are all close to one another, in a small square in town. There is also a shrine dedicated to Ullr, the God of the Hunt, which can be located just outside of town. These shrines are kept clean by a town boy called Birger, but are not regularly tended to by alles or gothis (as they would be in other towns), since there are no alles or gothis living nearby.

Work of Faith. A character who is devoted to one of these deities, and is an alle, is a gothi, or is proficient in the Religion or Medicine skill, can work in the shrine helping the townsfolk, earning 5 (1d10) silver pieces per day.

6. THE GUARDHOUSE

The Guardhouse is a large one-story building looking over the gate. There is a large garden surrounding the building, encircled by roughly constructed wooden fences. Behind the garden and the guardhouse, there are two barracks in which the guards stay. Both of these buildings look clean and well-maintained.

During the day, the guards train and spar in the garden, and there are always small children around, trying to imitate them. Most of them practice and play with their own wooden weapons, trying to imitate the guards the best they can. At night, most guards leave the barracks to entertain themselves at the taverns.

Thorve Igrimsonn lives in the guardhouse, she gives reports to Kludi at the Old Castle nightly, each midnight. Even though these reports are nothing special, Kludi demands them persistently as if his life depends on it.

MEETING THORVE IGRIMSONN

Thorve (lawful neutral, Austri, Vartr Blade) is a young, strong-looking woman. She is brave, brilliant, and unlike Kludi, is respected by the townspeople. She has been worried about Kludi and his way of ruling the town as of late, and she is afraid that his neglect and misconduct may permanently harm Belmunt beyond any hope of recovery.

If the characters choose to visit the Guardhouse, they find Thorve here. She is happy to make small talk with the characters, but is hesitant to talk in detail about the rumors in town, and she outright refuses to speak about the tension around the governance of the town. She agrees to talk further and speak openly about the matter at hand only if;

- The characters make a successful DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check.
- The characters visit Kraekross or Sangarholt before Belmunt, Thorve will have heard of the recent activities of the characters and their reputation, and thus trusts their motives and capabilities.
- The characters arrange a meeting with Thorve through her guards.

If the characters get her to talk about the more important matters, she speaks to them in her room. After she introduces herself, she asks to listen to the characters' story. Either way, when the characters are ready to hear more from her, read or paraphrase the boxed text below to the players:

"Belmunt will suffer so much if Kludi continues to be the Jarl, that much is certain. He is not able to make logical decisions because he's gone mad - I think - at the hands of his blood reader. He is getting worse by the minute, the guards have lost their motivation, the treasure has been spent. What I need from you is quite difficult, but equally necessary... I – we need you to attack him and his blood reader for the sake of Belmunt. Kill the blood reader at all cost, but if you can, spare my cousin... Perhaps we can find a way to make him go back to normal.

You may be wondering why I don't handle this matter by myself. I intend to do so if you don't take my quest. If you've heard the whispers on the street, you will have heard that the folk are with me, but that the loyalty of the guards is divided. If Kludi dies by my hand, everything might get a little more complicated with there being armed masses on both sides. I do not wish this to get bloodier than it has to get."

Thorve

If the characters ask for further information, she can provide the following:

- The baby that the Jarl's wife Jofrid has given birth to was born with a curse. According to some servants, it was born a draugr.
- Kludi is under the influence of Ormond the Bloodreader, and he listens to whatever Ormond says.
- Ormond the Bloodreader lives in the Old Castle with Kludi and Jofrid.

OLD CASTLE

The old stone castle, in which the duties of governance are carried out, is also home to the Igrimsonn family. It has strong, stone walls and three watchtowers in the west, the north and the south. There is a big iron bell on one of the watchtowers, which is used to warn the townspeople and the rest of the guards in cases of emergency and disturbance. Also, two guards stand watch in each tower, looking over both the town and the wilderness.

The castle was built in the Second Age of Svilland by the Kingdom of Easter Horn to protect the borders, but it lost its military importance as the borders changed drastically in the Third Age.

The entrance is a big, two-winged wooden door protected by two guards. They do not let anyone inside unless Ormond the Bloodreader wills it so. If the characters insist on getting into the castle, they unsheathe their weapons and threaten the characters with death. If the characters keep insisting, the guards attack them. In such a case, Ormond becomes aware of the characters and gets ready for a fight.

Old Castle Features. The Old Castle has the following recurring features:

- The windows of the castle have been closed-shut by means of wooden plates. The castle's rooms, corridors, and staircases are hewn from stone and are dark unless the text states otherwise. So, the residents inside the castle rely on darkvision and torches to see in the castle.
- There is a heavy smell of blood and rot on the inside. Upon entering the building, the characters must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 hour.
- The corridors in the castle have 10-foot-high ceilings, and the rooms have 11-foot-high ceilings throughout. Each beam is a Large object with AC 17, 10 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. Destroying all the beams in an area has a 15 percent chance of causing the roof to collapse. Each creature under a collapsing roof must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one. The area under a collapsed roof becomes difficult terrain.
- The doors are made of a hard, reinforced wood. Each door is a Medium object with AC 15, 10 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.
- Certain areas of the castle are flooded with blood (as shown on the castle maps) to a depth of 2 feet that makes

them difficult terrain. The blood belongs to the guards and visitors that were killed when Ormond took control of the castle, and decided to shut it down. This blood smells foul, it has an awful stench. If a dead creature stays in the blood for 1 round, it rises as a **blood draugr** (a type of undead that is covered with blood and resembles the physical appearance of its former self).

- All guards **(guards of the Old Castle)** and servants within the castle carry a bleeding scar on their necks that looks as if it were carved with a blade. Ormond the Bloodreader can control them (as if he has cast a *dominate person* spell on them) and can perceive the surroundings by using their perception. So, if the characters are seen by a guard or servant, the Bloodreader becomes aware of the characters' presence. If the characters destroy the jewel in area 8 that carries the same mark, Ormond's control over the guards and servants ends.
- Nearly 40 people currently live within the castle walls. This includes Kludi Grimsson, his wife Jofrid Goldensmile (the mother of the draugr baby), Jofrid's relatives, Ormond the Bloodreader, guards, and the servants. The guards have been dispersed in specific locations; however, the servants are continuously roaming the corridors, serving as scouts of Ormond. To move without being noticed by these servants, the characters must make a successful DC 18 Dexterity (Stealth) check as they are about to enter a corridor. The servants are all commoners with AC 11 and 15 hit points. If a servant is attacked, Ormond commands them not to resist, letting them be butchered by the characters, aiming to strike sorrow into the hearts of the characters, messing with their consciences.

Treasure. Each guard carries 2 *potions of healing*, 1 *longsword*, 1 *battleaxe*, and a *shield*.

GUARD OF THE OLD CASTLE

Medium humanoid, any evil

Armor Class 14 (hide armor, shield)
Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +4, Perception +5
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages Austris (Common)
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Reckless. At the start of its turn, the guard can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The guard can make two melee weapon attacks.

Battleaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage.

BLOOD DRAUGR

Medium undead, any evil
Armor Class 14 (hide armor)
Hit Points 22 (4d8 + 4)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +5
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages -
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

ACTIONS

Bloody Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage plus 2 (1d4) necrotic damage.

Vomit Blood (Recharge 6). Blood draugr vomits rotten blood. Each creature in a 15-foot cone must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 7 (2d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

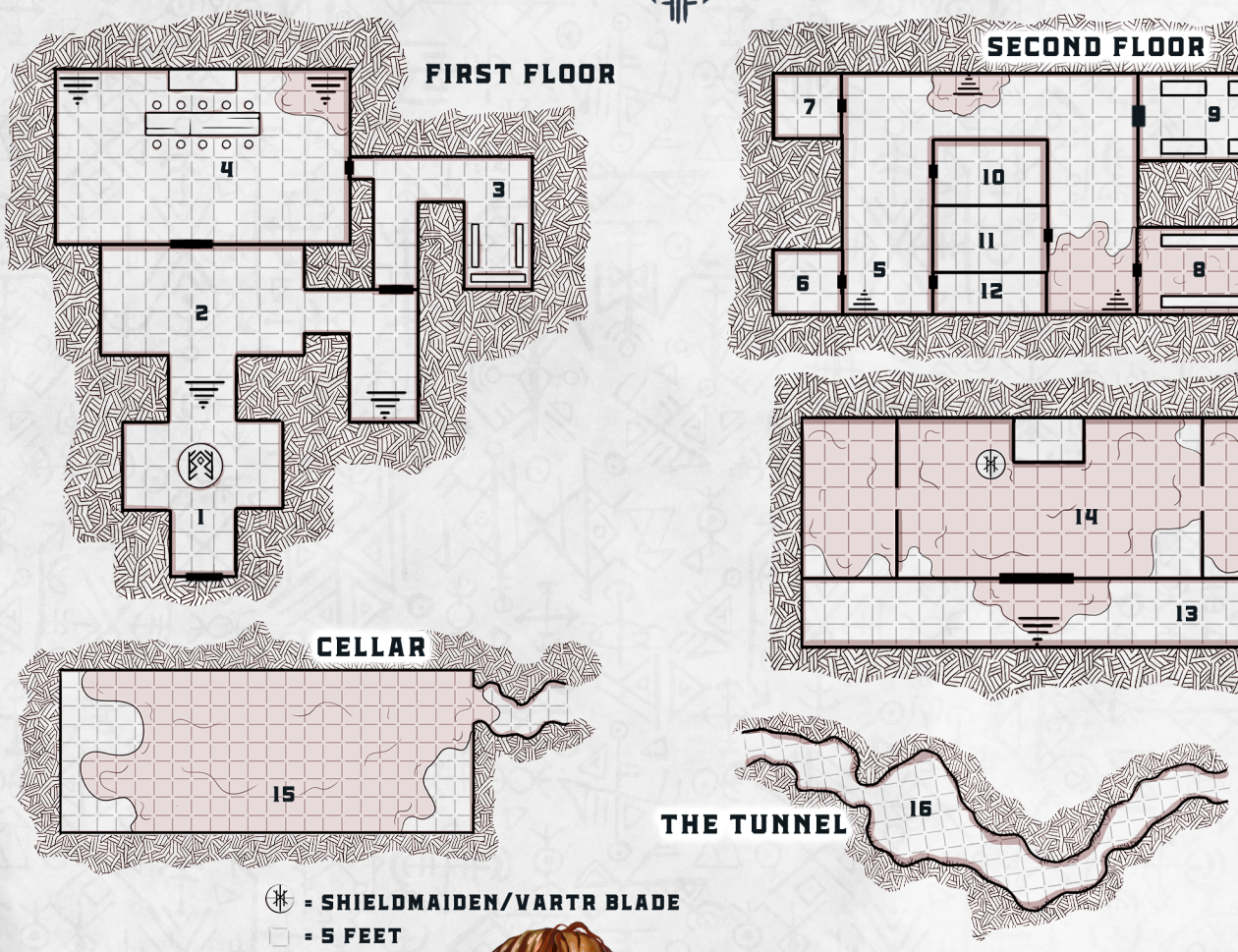
AREA 1. ENTRANCE

After passing through the double-sided wooden door, a 6-foot stone figure of Odin the Allfather greets the characters. Odin is depicted as a tall man, wearing a robe and carrying a spear. His image alone, even depicted in stone in this statue reflects the might of the Allfather's endless wisdom. However, the statue is completely covered in rotten flesh and blood, and is emanating a foul stench.

The entrance has a 12-foot-high ceiling and the stairs lead to the inner entrance.

AREA 2. INNER ENTRANCE

Inside, there are two guards waiting at the door that leads to the throne room (Area 4). If they see the characters, they attack immediately. When the combat starts, the noise prompts the two guards in Area 4 to join in the fight as well. There are also stairs descending to the cellar (Area 15).



AREA 3. KITCHEN

Although this room is normally filled with pleasant aromas, a foul smell is prevalent in this instance. There are pots, pans, and cooking utensils hung over a counter. They are all covered in blood and dirt. The rotten remains of the last meal eaten in the castle can also be seen.

There is a cat prowling the kitchen, killing rats, and eating whatever fresh food left. The cat starts to follow any character who pets or feeds it. It runs away if any of them show hostility towards it, or if there is any sign of combat between other characters, hiding behind any cover it can find, and coming back after the combat ends. Also, it does not want to move into the cellars if the **Hel-touched hundr** (p.254) is alive, nor to move into Area 13, since the cat is frightened by the presence of the Bloodreader and the Hel-touched hundr.

AREA 4. THRONE ROOM

This luxuriously decorated throne room contains a long wooden dinner table for 10 people, and a stone throne for 2 people, covered by wolf furs. There are two tapestries hanging on the north wall; one of them depicts the Igrimsonn family taking over this castle, and the other depicts a fallen warrior whose soul is being collected by a valkyrie. The table is covered by rotten meals, and maggots and worms crawling through them.

The throne is empty, as a sign of the turbulent political state of Belmunt. There are also two stairs on either side of the throne, leading to the 2nd floor of the castle.

There are two guards waiting at the foot of each of the two stairs, which lead to Area 5. If the characters engage these guards and make noise while doing so (that is, unless there is something controlling the volume such as a *silence* spell), the guards in Area 2 and Area 5 join the battle.

Treasure. There are 10 blue crystal goblets (25 gp each) and 4 bottles of wine (10 gp each) on the dinner table. The tapestries in the room can also be collected. Each tapestry weighs 5 pounds and is worth 120 gp if sold.

AREA 5. THE CORRIDOR

The stairs in Area 4 lead to a wide corridor. There are two **guards of the old castle** around and blood spilled on the floor. Slow whispers of which the origins cannot be determined fill the corridor and the air is heavy with a strong stench of death.

If any noise of battle is heard, all the guards in this corridor join the battle.

AREA 6. TOY ROOM

This is the room in which, normally, the children living in the castle play with wooden toys and baby dolls. However, right now, a guard holding a wooden baby doll is treating it as if it were his own child. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check lets the characters hear the guard's voice as he is speaking to the doll when they are within 15 feet of the door. When the characters enter the room, read or paraphrase the boxed text below to the players:

> A guard holding a wooden baby doll plays with toys and is talking with the doll. As you enter the room, the guard turns to you, unaware of your presence until the door you push is open wide, at which point he unsheathes his longsword with one hand and covers the baby with his other arm, seeking to protect it from you. Then, you hear a booming, fiendish voice filling the room, *"Protect us, my love! They are here to take our baby away!"* Completely under the influence of a foul spell, the guard menacingly walks towards you and yells, *"I won't let you harm my family!"*

A successful DC 19 Charisma (Persuasion) check can make the guard figure out that he is entranced by a spell. The guard can then break the spell by means of another consecutive successful DC 19 Charisma (Persuasion) check.

Treasure. There are 2 stone figurines of Thor and Tyr on the ground, (worth 15 gp each) as well as 6 wooden toys (worth 1 sp each).

AREA 7. TAILORING ROOM

In this room, there are clothes, unfinished robes, needles, and threads spread over the table and scattered on the ground. In the middle of all the mess, Jofrid Goldensmile is sitting on a chair, crying, holding her draugr baby and singing lullabies. The characters can hear the sweet lullabies by making a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check before they enter. When the characters enter the room, read or paraphrase the boxed text below to the players:

> A beautiful, middle-aged woman with long blonde-white hair is sitting on a chair. She is wearing highly valuable noble clothes of red color that are decorated with emeralds, indicating her nobility. She looks weak, as if she has not eaten for days.
>
> In her arms, she is holding a draugr baby, much like the one you've carried to Freyja's Tears. When you enter the room, Jofrid gives you a royal greeting, and the baby growls, summoning a Hel-touched hundr behind you

After the combat, Jofrid continues to act as if nothing had happened, with the same air of dissociation. She thanks the characters for getting rid of the danger, and keeps singing lullabies hysterically. If the characters try to convince Jofrid that the baby is not well and that it needs immediate help, she tells them that they should also talk to her husband, Jarl Kludi Igrimsonn.

If the characters examine the baby, a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that the baby is very close to death.

JOFRID GOLDENSMILE

Jofrid Goldensmile (Vestri, lawful good, Noble) is the daughter of a wealthy family of Hvannsavik. She has been married to Kludi for 10 years and her wealth was one of the reasons behind Kludi's rule in Belmunt.

The townspeople loved and respected her in the beginning, accepting her as their generous, beautiful lady who always had a smile on her face. That is how she acquired the nickname "Goldensmile" She listened to and sought to help any who needed it. But things have changed drastically, and today people pity her because of her ill fate. After losing all her children one by one and her husband becoming more and more unstable, she has lost her "golden" smile. Her final pregnancy is known to be the straw that broke the camel's back, and people around town know that she has now gone completely mad. Some say that it's because she lost this baby too, while some others say the reason is that she has given birth to a very sick baby.

If the characters visit Jofrid again after they deal with Kludi Igrimsonn and the Bloodreader, they will find her dead body sitting on the chair, the corpse of the draugr baby in one arm, and a note written in her own blood in the other. *"I can smile no more, I cannot go on..."*

AREA 8. NOBLE JEWELRY ROOM

This is the room in which the magnificent jewelry collected through the years of the Igrimsonn rule are displayed. Inside the cabinets, there are nicely-cut jewels, valuable accessories,

and art pieces decorated with different types of jewels. Close to the east wall of the room, an apple-sized yellow jewel is noticed hovering above a 3-foot-high stone platform. The jewel appears to constantly be bleeding and the ground is mostly covered in the blood dripping out of it.

A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) or DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that the same mark that appeared on the neck of the guards has also been carved on this jewel. A *detect magic* or *detect rune* spell reveals that the jewel constantly casts a spell of the enchantment school. The jewel can be broken. It is a Tiny object with AC 17, 50 hit points, resistance to bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

If the jewel is broken, the spell on the guards is lifted. As a result, the remaining guards regain their sanity and control over their actions. All guards that the characters come across after this point will want to fight against the blood reader for revenge.

Treasure. There are 4 jeweled rings (125 gp each), a damaged royal crown (250 gp), and 4 other art objects (25 gp each). Also, there is a *potion of giant strength (hill giant)* in a golden potion bottle (15 gp).

AREA 9. ROYAL ARMORY

This is the room in which the unique pieces of royal armory are displayed.

Treasure. There is a *gambeson* (p. 239), a *heavy hide* (p. 239), and a *lamellar armor* (p. 239); all decorated with noble carvings. Also, there is a magic battleaxe (also called an *icy axe* (p. 241)).

AREAS 10, 11, AND 12. GUEST ROOMS

These three rooms are the rooms that are reserved for guests. When Ormond took control of the castle and shut it down, the guards were ordered to butcher the guests to prevent them from sending messages to the outside. Therefore now, these rooms are all covered in the blood and the remains of those unlucky guests.

AREA 13. THE TWO GUARDS

When the characters reach the 3rd floor by the stairs, they find themselves at the entrance of a hall before the castle's private chamber. This hall is illuminated by 4 torches placed on the north and south walls.

When the characters reach the doors of the chamber at the end of the hall, they notice blood leaking from below the double-winged door, foreshadowing the foulness that lurks behind them. The chamber door is protected by two guards. The guards share many physical properties (both are Mithal, both have crimson hair, both have green eyes, both are in their late 20s) looking as though they could be siblings. One of them is female (Gunild), and the other is male (Gundar).

When the characters enter this area, they are immediately noticed by Ormond the Bloodreader, who casts a necromancy spell on these guards, which slowly turns them into *ghouls*, transforming them into more powerful foes. The characters find both guards sitting on the ground since they are physically broken because of the spell. The characters can end the effects of the spell and thus save these guards from their fates by means of a *dispel magic* or a *lesser restoration* spell cast within 5 rounds of the moment they see these guards.

If both guards are saved, they quickly regain their health, embrace each other, thank the characters, and join them. If only one of them is saved, the one who is saved swears for revenge in agony, and joins the characters.

AREA 14. THE THRONE OF FLESH

The private chambers of the castle were once a home for Kludi Igrimsonn and Jofrid Goldensmile. However, after the arrival of Ormond the Bloodreader, this lovely place has also gone through drastic changes, like those observed in the rest of the castle.

The ground is covered in blood. There are broken beds, tables, chairs, garderobes, and other kinds of furniture that have been broken and scattered all around. Against the north wall, there is a huge throne made out of flesh, on which Kludi

Kludi

Igrimsonn is sitting. A young female **shieldmaiden** (Vestri, chaotic evil) - or a **vartr blade** if the characters are 5th or 6th level - is standing on his left, ready for combat. When the characters enter the private chambers, read or paraphrase the boxed text below to the players:

> As you enter the room, you see a throne made of flesh. A vartr blade takes one step towards you, drawing her blades to protect the Jarl sitting on the throne. The blood-red image of a robed figure appears above the throne. The figure says, *"I am Ormond the Bloodreader, and I am very pleased to meet you. Unfortunately, I won't be able to host you in person, but worry not. We will meet later in the dark, if you can survive today, that is."* while pouring a cup of blood on the Jarl. Then, the figure transforms into a blood-soaked bat before it disappears. As soon as the Bloodreader disappears, Jarl Kludi stands up and draws his greatsword. He charges towards you, shouting *"I will protect my lands no matter what!"*

Kludi Igrimsonn and the vartr blade are under the strong influence of the Bloodreader, and this influence cannot be reversed. As they are under the spells of the Bloodreader, they are convinced that the characters are here to destroy Belmunt and they are ready to willingly give their lives while protecting the city.

Owing to the spell of the Bloodreader, Kludi is more powerful than he normally is.

Treasure. Apart from the items on the vartr blade and Kludi, there are a total of 150 gp in 3 different coin purses. Also, a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) or DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check allows the characters to find a *diary*, lost in the mess of the private chambers. The *diary* belongs to Kludi and in it, is the following information;

- Last year Kludi met Asta, as he was hoping she could help them have a baby again. Asta obliged, and cast a powerful ritual on the throne room, four weeks after which, Jofrid got pregnant again.
- From time to time, Ormond and Asta would meet either in the Lake Temple or in Belmunt.
- Jofrid has had weird dreams, and hallucinations of cold, dark tunnels and dungeons. He also keeps seeing a dark figure sitting on a stone throne with three shadowy figures surrounding it.

KLUDI IGRIMSONN

Kludi Igrimsonn is the middle child of the Igrimsonn family. He was the smartest and bravest among his seven siblings, and so was chosen by his family to be the next ruler of Belmunt after his father's death. At first, he was a good leader but he lost almost all members of his family one by one, which has made him lose his mind over the course of the grief-filled-years.

Today, Kludi sits on his throne of flesh all day long, except for the time when he is with his child. He is 33 years old but constantly looks weak, tired, and depressed; which gives him the appearance of a much older man. His hair is dirty and messy, and long, sleepless nights have left traces on his light green eyes. He eats and speaks very little, and he moves slowly as if he can barely lift a finger.

KLUDI IGRIMSONN

Medium humanoid (austri), lawful neutral

Armor Class 16 (chain hauberk)
Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	13 (+2)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Strength +6, Dexterity +4, Charisma +5
Skills Athletics +6, Deception +5, Perception +5, Persuasion +7
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages Austris (Common)
Challenge 4 (1,800 XP)

Ormond's Spell. Each time Kludi takes 15 damage and if he is standing on the blood, the blood on the ground becomes rotten and curses his enemies. Enemies within 10 feet of him must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or take 2d6 necrotic damage.

Pack Tactics. Kludi has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of his allies is within 5 ft. of the him and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Kludi makes two melee weapon attacks with his greatsword.

+1 Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage.

REACTIONS

Parry. Kludi adds 4 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, Kludi must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

AREA 15. CELLAR

The stone cellar is much colder than the rest of the castle. It is full of rations, both fresh and rotten. Also, throughout the last 8 months, the corpses within the castle were dumped here. When the characters enter the area, they see a **Hel-touched hundr** standing in the middle of rotten corpses. In such a case, the hundr attacks immediately.

A successful DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that the blood on the ground leaks through the cracks on the east wall. If the wall is broken (it is an object with 13 AC, 40 hit points, immunity to poison and psychic damage), a forgotten tunnel is revealed.

Also, a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a secret door on the north wall. The door leads to a newly constructed secret pathway of which the other end is at the south-east side of Area 8.

AREA 16. THE TUNNEL

This forgotten tunnel leads to the water drains of the castle located beneath it. The tunnel has a 9-foot-high ceiling. It has not been used for years, so a part of it has been invaded by spiders. If the characters have a light source, they can clearly see that an area has been completely covered by spider webs. When the characters reach the area in which the tunnel widens, they are attacked by 2 **swarms of spiders**.

Treasure. There are 2 *potions of healing*, and one *+1 weapon* of which the type is determined by the GM within the spider webs. They are left by the unlucky people who were killed by these spiders.

BELMUNT OUTCOMES

When the characters solve the mystery within the Old Castle and get out, Thorve greets them at the entrance, and listens to what happened inside. After she hears about all the horrors lurking within the castle, she orders some of her guards to prepare a proper funeral for all the residents of the Old Castle. Although some people still feel angry about Kludi and say that he does not deserve such an honor, Thorve calmly convinces them, saying that he was under the influence of powerful magic, and that these final acts should not besmirch a life that was otherwise well-lived. In the funeral, all the dead within the castle are burnt on a great funeral pyre built at the central square of the town.

The folk of Belmunt celebrate this victory, although it is no surprise that they all feel downcast about the tragedies within the castle. They also feel this way due to the unholy nature of things that took place so close to them.

Thorve thanks the characters in the name of all of Belmunt and rewards each of them with 250 gp. Also, their armor and weapons are repaired for free by the blacksmiths, and inns offer free service until the characters continue their stories.

If the characters decide to leave immediately, Thorve and some others send them off near the Gate.

If the characters decide to stay at one of the inns, the folks do their best to entertain the warband with music, dance, fighting competitions, and stories. Kids want the warband to teach them how to fight, and give the warband small gifts like dried flowers, little drawings, or small pieces of wood, carved in different shapes. If the characters visit Thorve once more before they leave, she looks genuinely happy to see them and sends them on their way, saying: "*I want to thank you one more time. You've done great job here, and thanks to you, we shall once again find peace. I wish you the best of luck.*" She adds, "*Remember, if you ever need anything, you have friends in Belmunt.*"

KRAEKROSS: THE DEPTHS OF DARKNESS

ROAD TO KRAEKROSS

On the third day of the warband's journey to Kraekross, they encounter a cave. At first glance from a distance, it looks like an ordinary cave, perhaps not even large enough to harbor a black bear or a pack of wolves.

However, a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that there are footprints on the inside and the outside of the cave. The inside smells like the Hel-touched beast that the warband hunted. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) or DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check also reveals Hellic markings on the walls of the cave, drawn in blood by hand. It appears that this cave is used as a meeting place by Hel cultists.

CULTIST HIDEOUT

After walking down a path that is 15 feet wide and 150 feet long inside the cave, the warband reaches a dead-end, which looks like a 40-foot square hall created by hand. The walls inside the hall look dark and wet. There are bloodstains all over the place, and there are runes painted in red on the walls.

A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Nature) check reveals that these red inscriptions have been made in blood. The writings on the wall read "*Praise the Goddess of Death, the one who is superior to all.*" in Hellic.

A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that there was a ritual cast in the middle of the hall, as there are bloodstains forming a circle.

Around the circle, there are runes drawn in Hellic. A successful DC 18 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that the runes are the opposite of Isa ("*deadly cold*" instead of "*ice*"), and Jera ("*broken cycle of life*" instead of "*harvest*")

In the middle of the circle, there is a shredded piece of pitch-black fabric. A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Survival) check reveals that these blood stains have been here for at least a week.

There is a stone altar and a chest under the altar right across the entrance.

When the characters enter the hall, a **draugr of bones** and **specters** surround the warband.

Characters	Encounter*
4	1 draugr of bones (p. 251)
5	1 draugr of bones, 3 specters
6	1 draugr of bones, 4 specters

*This *hard* encounter is designed for a party made up of 4th level characters. If the characters have reached 5th level, add 2 specters to the encounter that matches the number of characters in your party. If they have reached 6th level, add 1 more specter.

Treasure. In the chest, the characters find 1d4 *potions of healing*, 1d4 flasks of poison, ornamented parchments praising Hel (250 gp in total) and 6d6 gp laying around. They also find 1d4 scrolls of 1st level spells, and 1 scroll of a 3rd level spell of the GM's choice.). Finally, they come across a *sealed letter.*

Letter. "*The sacrifices have been made and our time is nigh. The cave is ready for the lady to make her pawns retrieve the artifact once they take it from the family. These souls belong to Hel now, and they will ward the cave for safekeeping.*"

KRAEKROSS

Kraekross is a small mining town south of Belmunt, located near the end of the forest called the Mercy of Freyja. The Wolfburn Mountains are also in proximity to the town, in fact, the famous iron mines of Kraekross are beneath these mighty slopes. From a distance, it looks hospitable, joyful and safe with the smoke rising from the chimneys and the strong wooden walls surrounding the town. However, the truth is far different than what meets the eye.

Kraekross is wealthier than other towns near it owing to its fruitful mines. It is thus to no one's surprise that the town was raided countless times over the course of history. The Ironheart family, who have been the ruler of Kraekross for more than 40 years, has fought off all these attacks. Today, the ruler of the town is Gorm Ironheart, but everyone knows that he makes most of his decisions with his family.

There is another influential family in town, aside from the Ironheart family: the Stormgazers. They are nearly as wealthy and as powerful as the Ironheart family, so conflict between

them is inevitable. Even though there is no physical evidence, it is known that they sabotage one others' jobs often. Even though the townspeople are aware of the situation, they prefer to keep quiet, as most are afraid of both of these families. Still, most of the population of Kraekross gets by just fine; they have shelter, food and they are safe.

The town market is full of weapons, armors, and many other metal commodities, most of which are sent to the south. People trade a great variety of things with neighboring towns.

Kraekross Thumbnail

Leader /Important Figures. There are two noble families in Kraekross, Ironheart and Stormgazer. The Ironheart family, with the Jarl Gorm Ironheart, has been the ruler of Kraekross for more than 40 years now. However, before that, the town was ruled by Stormgazers.

Livelihood. Mining, hammer smithing, trade

Militia. 300 **guards,** 20 **vartr blades** (p. 269)

Population. 2500

Rumors.

- The Ironheart family pledged its allegiance to Gudrick in the ongoing civil war of Alsvartr.
- The Ironheart family worships an ancient artifact that they found in the mines many years ago.
- Stormgazers have started to put their faith in dark spirits.

Services. Accommodation, food and beverage, complex repair, smithing of custom weapons and armors.

NOBLES OF KRAEKROSS

Stormgazers. Stormgazers is the second most influential family of Kraekross. They were the first ruling family of Kraekross with the title of Jarldom, and they ruled for nearly a century. However, their reputation has changed for the worse over the past years as one of the family members has been known to join a Hel cult.

Ironhearts. The Ironheart family was initially a merchant family. They got their name by finding the iron mine. They were so named as they found and managed the mine at the service of the town and thus of the Stormgazers. In time, they built their wealth and influence, plotted successfully against the Stormgazers, and managed to take over the town by means of a sudden coup assisted by Gudrick.

ENTRANCE OF KRAEKROSS

Strong, pinewood walls welcome the warband at Kraekross' gates, and they see a crowd of people who are waiting to enter. There are guards around, watching and monitoring the surrounding area both during the day and at night from the watchtowers, and patrolling the area. There are many watchtowers, four of them nearly as old as the town itself, and the others built during the war between Hanlon the Real King, and Gudrick the Moonbearer. Read or paraphrase the following text to the players to describe the scene:

> You have arrived at Kraekross's gates. This town, unlike the others you have traveled to before, is protected by a palisade, and there are several wooden five-story high watchtowers to observe the town's surroundings, each of them 120 feet apart from the other. You see one guard looking around on top of each watchtower. In the middle of the wide gate, there is a giant wooden door reinforced with various metal pieces, and it is protected by four guards wearing sturdy chainmail armor. There are two watchtowers behind both sides of the gates. There seems to be a crowd next to the gates. The crowd seems frustrated and tired; while the guards appear to be angry and fed up.

AT THE GATES OF KRAEKROSS

There are five different groups around the gates of Kraekross. Every single group looks different from the other and all of them are loitering around their tents since they were not able to enter the town.

1. MERCHANTS OF MAERIN

One of the groups is made up of Half jotunns, Kunings, and Vestris; merchants from Maerin. You see a woman standing tall among the group. Siv (Vestri, true neutral, Noble) is the leader of this group of merchants. She has a rich look about her with her valuable jewels and her clothes, which are of the utmost quality. The lines on her face reveal that she has seen at least forty long winters. She doesn't look happy, as she is not used to waiting for entry to towns in order to sell her merchandise.

She will be more than happy to meet the characters if they approach her, and to even sell them some of her merchandise. You, as the GM, may treat her tent as a general store and have the characters do so as well. She knows that the guards are suspicious of others in these parts as they think that they might be spies; and that this is why they do not accept those who don't have written permissions to enter from the Jarl. She is currently waiting for her approval to be issued.

2. RAIDERS OF RAN

There is a group of raiders made up of ten mostly Vestri, vikingr followers of Ran who call themselves the Raiders of Ran. They are not very friendly and not very willing to partake in small talk with the warband. They are here to see if the townsfolk are in need of mercenary work of any sort. Eidar (Vestri, chaotic evil, Bandit Captain), a male in his early twenties, is the leader of these people. He looks intimidating due to the scars on his face.

3. HANLON'S SPIES

A group made up of four people is pretending to be merchants from the east, but they are actually spies of Hanlon, who claims that he is the real ruler of the kingdom of Alsvartr.

Hanlon is in an ongoing war with his nephew, Gudrick. Both of the claimants of the crown are vicious and eager to rule Alsvartr.

The leader of this group of spies is a young woman called Liv (Mithal, lawful neutral, Spy) in disguise as a merchant. She wears simple clothing, but still has a striking beauty with her pitch-black hair and deep blue eyes. When asked, she claims that she has no idea why they are kept waiting. She has three people under her command.

After the characters are rejected by the guards, she approaches the characters and wants to talk to them in her tent.

4. MINE WORKERS

Hailing from the kingdom Green Light of the East, there is a group made up of a dozen commoner Svillanders who desire to work in the renowned mines of Kraekross. Their leader is an old man called Orvar (Half-jotunn, neutral good, Commoner), and they are open to conversation. If the characters approach them and ask about their purposes, they wholeheartedly answer that they come here every year to work in the mines for the Ironheart family. They do not earn much, but it is honest work and they need the coin. Their wages seem to decrease bit by bit with each passing year, but because they are in no position to turn down payment of any kind, they have no choice but to accept their lot. They do not know why they are being kept waiting this time.

5. MITHRAL OF THE MOUNTAINS

This warband of five barbarian mountain half-jotunn Svillanders are the only ones who do not have tents and are thus sitting on the ground. They glare at the guards every once in a while, looking up from their conversation. They don't have a leader since they are all friends.

If the warband talks to the Mithral of the Mountains, they may uncover the following information:

- They are impeccable warriors, which is why they have the name "Mithral of the Mountains".
- They are all friends, but they consider themselves a big, strong family.
- They are looking for their friend called Magni; a mighty warrior just like themselves. He is a towering figure, resembling a giant shield, with long blond hair and a beard. Magni told them he was going to visit someone in Kraekross. However, they have not been able to reach him for the past week. He was not the brightest star in the sky; therefore, "Mithrals" suspect that something could have happened to him or to those who crossed his path; which in turn might have meant that he was trapped somewhere, accidentally or on purpose.
- The Mithrals kindly ask the warband to inform Magni to go back to Mugdonvik, a town in Nionaem if the characters find him before they do.

When the warband approaches the gates to enter Kraekross, the guards greet the characters, albeit with a tone that's not in the least bit welcoming. They ask if the warband has a written permit to enter, and that they are not allowed to enter otherwise.

If there is at least one dvergr at the warband, the guards do not even bother to talk to the warband. They simply ask them "to get lost". The dvergrs are not welcome in Kraekross since the Ironheart family has pledged their allegiance to Gudrick.

The dvergrs of the north forge weapons for Hanlon who is at war with Gudrick for the throne of Alsvartr. Therefore, Ironhearts think that the dvergrs have simply betrayed Svilland with their attitude.

LIV'S OFFER

When Liv (see *Hanlon's Spies)* realizes that the warband has been rejected for entry to the town, she slowly approaches the characters and invites them to her tent, and claims that she could help them. Read or paraphrase the boxed text below when the characters enter Liv's tent:

> This wide tent is full of silver ornate chests all over, there lies a bed right across the entrance. It looks so comfortable, inviting and soft that you feel tempted to crawl under the covers and take a nap. There are clothes folded on the bed. There are chairs around a little wooden table near the bed. The tent certainly feels like merchants stay there, with all these riches around. Liv greets you once again and shows you to your seats with a gesture of her hand. You are welcome to sit if you want.

When the characters get inside, she covers the entrance of the tent with a curtain-like-fabric, and starts to speak with a domineering but friendly tone that mirrors Liv's personality:

> *"Allow me to introduce myself, dear members of the Warband of Holmdar/Jonnamot/Pineheim (same as the warband's). I am delighted to meet you. The name is Liv. Do not be alarmed, it's my job to know things that are hidden from most. As I have observed, you have some interests here, you seek entrance. Now, you can wait for days and days and never enter the town. Trust me when I tell you, they will not issue a single permit for any of you to enter this wretched place. Yet... Yet, I can grant you passage. Circumstances; however, force me to ask a favor from you in return."*

If the characters are interested and willing to cooperate, they can receive the following information from Liv.

- She wants to sneak into the mansion of the Ironheart family to obtain some secrets from their library. Liv does not know the exact location of these secrets, although she is certain that the secrets are somewhere in that library. Her agent in the Ironheart manor, who successfully infiltrated the family by being hired as a servant some time ago, told her so.
- This agent's name is Frig, she looks young and frail but she is gifted in changing disguise and in the art of deception. The warband can identify Frig by her pointy chin and a little burnt spot that she has on her forearm. She would collaborate with the warband and lead them to these documents if the warband mentions Liv's name.

- The town is laced with underground passages, the entrance of which Liv will lead the warband to. She will also provide them with a map of these tunnels throughout which the warband may encounter some creatures. However, Liv has no clue about what lurks inside this underground passage and where it (or they) might be.
- While the characters are in Kraekross, they can safely stay in Frig's house, which can only be reached via the tunnels. Once Liv leads the characters to the tunnels, they may use the map to meet her there.
- If there is a dvergr in the warband, she tells the characters that dvergrs are not welcome in town, along with the reason. She also says that she would like to provide said dvergr with a fur cap as a sign of gratitude. She states the cap is actually a *hat of disguise*.

If the characters accept Liv's request, she leads the warband south to an abandoned mine site, walking with them for half an hour. Liv says that not long ago, dvergr miners occupied these mines. The characters shall be safe if they say "steel over the fang" when asked for a password. This password can also be used for her agent, Frig, to recognize them.

REFUSING LIV'S REQUEST

If the characters do not accept Liv's request, there are still several ways that they can enter the town.

Informing the Guards. The characters may inform the guards of their intentions. If they do so, and the warband does not have any dvergrs among them, the guards take them to the barracks to inquire for further details about their quest.

In the barracks, 10 **vartr blades** and 20 **guards** surround them after a brief discussion.

Sneaking In. The characters can try to sneak in with grappling hooks and similar items by making Dexterity (Stealth) checks. The DC of the check is 13 to climb up and down the wall, and DC 15 to stay on the wall.

If they fail their checks and are spotted, 10 guards attack them in the first round of the encounter, 5 guards are added at the start of rounds 3 and 4. Finally, 5 vartr blades are added to the encounter at the start of round 5. If the characters manage to defeat all the foes, they have 10 minutes to leave the location in which they are alone and there is no one else in sight. Afterwards, the remaining vartr blade squadron (15) moves onto the location.

> **ARRESTED!**
>
> If the characters fall unconscious in the encounter or surrender by their own free will, move on to the *Arrested!* section

Tricking the Guards. As the GM, you can decide to let the characters try and trick the guards at the gate to get into the city if they have a solid plan on how to do so. Such plans may include really convincing stories and lies, forging the permit, or other such machinations.

Additionally, they can make use of spells such as *charm person* or *suggestion*.

ABANDONED MINES

Kraekross is renowned for its iron mines. The townsfolk and other Svillanders who come here to work as seasonal miners work here in mines. However, the mine currently looks abandoned.

ABANDONED MINES: GENERAL FEATURES

The mine's general features are summarized below:

Lighting. The mine is completely dark. Unless the characters have darkvision or a light source, they will not be able to see.

Corridors. The mine has narrow, 10-foot-wide corridors; an average half-jotunn would not be able to walk here without bowing their head a little. There are abandoned, rusty mining pickaxes on the floor (which are not valuable to trade). Characters may also see some baskets of iron ore that have also rusted.

The Smell. The mine looks and feels abandoned. The smell of dust and rusty iron ore hangs in the air.

When the characters reach the entrance of the mines, they are met with a reinforced, wooden door. If they knock on the door, a window slit, a little below the middle of the door opens, and a female dvergr voice rises from the slit. She grumpily asks the characters why they are here.

Peaceful Entry. The dvergr does not accept any explanations such as "*we just want to get into the city*", "*we have no quarrel with dvergrs*", or other general answers. However, the characters can try to persuade the dvergr that their mission is of the utmost importance and that they are here on assignment from the Freyja gothis. In that case, a successful DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) check makes the dvergr allow the characters' entry, muttering something with the same annoyed attitude, under her breath.

On the other hand, the characters can state that they know the password, and tell the dvergr "*steel over the fang*". In that case, the dvergr looks and sounds surprised, and welcomes the characters with a half-hearted apology.

The dvergr presents herself as *Groka* (Dvergr, chaotic neutral, Dvergr Troop), and disables the traps to ensure safe passage for the characters to the depths of the mine in order to talk to their leader.

Forceful Entry. If the characters simply wish to force their way in, they can do so by breaking the door with a successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check or by dealing 20 fire, force, bludgeoning, or slashing damage to the door. It does, however, have resistance to piercing damage. In that case some of the dvergrs will act surprised and try to retreat, while the dvergrs hiding will wait for the warband to show up, and try to surprise them.

Traps. There are 3 pressure plates located on the ground of the mine. Locating the traps requires a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) or DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Disabling a trap requires a successful DC 17 Dexterity check and thieves' tools. When stepping on a plate, it is pushed in and a poisonous gas fills the air within a-10-foot-square. Each character within the area must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 5 (1d10) poison damage.

Characters	Encounter
4	Wandr + 2 Dvergr Troops
5	Wandr + 3 Dvergr Troops
6	Wandr + 4 Dvergr Troops

DVERGR TROOP

Medium humanoid (dvergr), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)
Hit Points 26 (4d8 + 8)
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	8 (-1)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)

Skills Perception +3
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Austris (Common), Dvergmer
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Pack Tactics. Dvergr Troops have advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of their allies is within 5 feet of them and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Dvergr Troops make two attacks with their shortsword or with their shortbows.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

WANDR

Medium humanoid (dvergr), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 15 (plated leather)
Hit Points 42 (5d8 + 20)
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)

Skills Perception +3, Persuasion +5
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Austris (Common), Dvergmer
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Pack Tactics. Wandr has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of his allies is within 5 feet of him and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Reckless. At the start of its turn, Wandr can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Wandr makes two melee weapon attacks with his greataxe.

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d12 + 3) slashing damage.

REACTIONS

Parry. Wandr adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, Wandr must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

MEETING WITH WANDR

Wandr, the leader of the dvergrs, an old male dvegr with light brown braided beard, a bald head, and wears a majestic bear fur. He proudly carries a greataxe. He speaks softly and slowly. If the warband has given the correct password, he offers them mead and greets them with a warm welcome. The characters may receive the following information through their conversation with Wandr:

- He knows why the warband is here, and he is willing to cooperate.
- He does not reveal that he works for Hanlon, but he passionately expresses his hatred of Gudrick whenever possible.
- At the end of their conversation, Wandr gives the warband a map of the underground tunnels of Kraekross and orders his people to give the characters access. Then, three dvergrs push a giant rock at the far end of the mine; when the rock is moved five feet to the side, a dark path appears behind it.
- Wandr says he is happy to meet the warband and wishes them good luck. However, he adds that they will not be able to enter the mines again using the tunnel since the warband of dvergrs will leave here soon.
- He advises the warband to first meet with Frig, and then explore the rest of the town.

THE TUNNELS

These tunnels were created decades ago. Few know about the place, and fewer dare set foot in it. Thus, it has been the residence of criminals, thugs and murderers. There are secret passages to some important locations in the city through the tunnel, initially designed as escape routes.

The Ironheart family knows about these passages, but

Wandr

they do not feel the need to guard them because they wish to encourage trespassers to try the tunnels for them to meet their demise at the hands of the horrors festering in the tunnels.

THE TUNNELS: GENERAL FEATURES

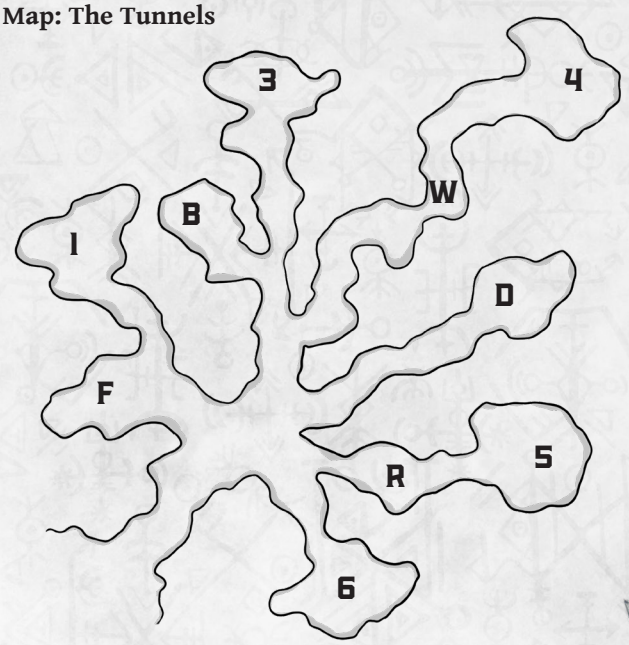
The tunnel's general features are summarized below:

Lighting. The tunnel is completely dark. Unless the characters have darkvision or a light source, they will not be able to see on the inside.

Corridors. The tunnel consists of many corridors that are 15 feet wide and 8 feet high. There are also many small, 25-foot-square, completely empty rooms, in which most of the encounters could take place.

The Smell. The tunnel predominantly smells of dust, rotten corpses, and dirty ponds of waste leaking from the ceiling. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check also reveals the faint smell of processed metal that the mines used to be filled with.

Map: The Tunnels



VOYAGING IN THE TUNNELS

The locations of tunnel entrances are as follows: (1) An old house (Frig's House), (3) Frozen Goats inn, (4) Blue Lavender inn, (5) Iron Mansion, (6) Prison Dungeon. These locations are also marked on the map with which the dvergrs provided the characters. It generally takes a fifteen-minute walk to go from one location to another.

The trap door at the tunnel entrance to the Iron Mansion is not locked but magically sealed by means of an *arcane lock* spell, and there is also a trap placed on it by means of a *glyph of warding* spell (*explosive runes*). The trap is triggered if the *arcane lock* is messed with, or if the door is physically tampered with.

Along the tunnels, there are always corpses scattered here and there. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) or DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals these people were brutally murdered; their bones are crushed and their flesh is flayed or ripped.

The following locations marked on the map Brisingamen are not on the characters' map, and are only visible to the GM. You can allocate treasure according to the Challenge Rating of the encounters below:

(R) Rats. 2d10 **giant rats** try to surprise the characters.

(W) Web. A corridor is shut by spider webs. Characters may burn them and move on. They encounter 1 **giant spiders** and 1d6 **swarms of spiders** if they do so.

(B) Bandits. A group of criminals have set up camp here, and are in hiding. 1d6 **thugs** and 1 **bandit captain** confront the characters.

(F) Fornill Gang. A gang of fornills (1 **fornill gangmaster** and 1d10 **fornills**) come out of hiding and surround the characters. The gang lets the characters go if they provide shiny things of 50 gp value or more.

(D) Dead Room. This is a room full of bloodstains. There are four dead bodies lying on the ground and *a letter* on one of them. The bodies have armor, weapons, and other belongings on them. All of the items on the bodies are worth 300 gp in total.

The Letter. *"I am through, Ori. From now on, I am no longer a part of these nefarious acts of ours. The things we did... They haunt me in my darkest dreams. I cannot continue to live like this. I am going to ask for the mercy of Freyja at the Lake. I hope it works."*

- Gertrud

Fornill

FORNILL GANGMASTER

Small humanoid (fornill), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 14 (leather)
Hit Points 27 (5d6 + 10)
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dexterity +5
Skills Deception +2, Perception +2, Stealth +5
Condition Immunities frightened
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Austris (common), Fornill
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Earthy Visage. The fornill has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks when standing still near a brownish cave or rocky wall.

Pack Tactics. The fornill has advantage on an attack roll and grapple checks against a creature if at least one of the fornill's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit*: 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage and the target creature must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 3 (1d6) poison damage.

Sling. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit*: 5 (1d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Rally (Recharge 5-6). The fornill gangmaster can rally its gang. Each fornill within 60 feet of it gains an additional 10 feet movement for that round and has advantage on its next saving throw.

FORNILL

Small humanoid (fornill), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 13 (hide scraps)
Hit Points 13 (3d6 + 3)
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Condition Immunities frightened
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Austris (common), Fornill
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Earthy Visage. The fornill has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks when standing still near a brownish cave or rocky wall.

Easily Charmed. The fornill make their saving throws against being charmed with disadvantage.

Pack Tactics. The fornill has advantage on an attack roll and grapple checks against a creature if at least one of the fornill's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Crude Knife. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1 + 2) piercing damage and the target creature must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 3 (1d6) poison damage.

Sling. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 +2) bludgeoning damage.

HORROR IN THE TUNNELS

There is a horrific creature that haunts the tunnels. It roams the tunnels, and its crackling voice and loud footsteps can be heard when characters are close to its location.

While the characters are voyaging through the tunnels, roll a d8 to determine where the creature is according to the numbers of the locations shown on the map. If the result is 2, it means that the creature is somewhere inside the tunnels, and that there is a 60% chance that it will encounter the characters.

If the creature encounters the characters, the runes on its body start to glow icy-blue and the corpses nearby are animated:

Characters	Encounter*
4	1 Hræflá (p.262), 1 zombie
5	1 Hræflá, 1 ghoul
6	1 Hræflá, 2 ghouls

*This *hard* encounter is designed for a party made up of 4th level characters. If the characters have reached 5th level, subtract 1 zombie from and add 1 ghoul to the encounter corresponding to the result of your roll. If the characters have reached 6th level, subtract 2 zombies and add 1 ghast.

INSIDE KRAEKROSS

The characters can get into town by using the tunnels. After they are inside, the guards inside no longer bother to ask for a permit or question them in any other way, so they can walk around the town freely, provided that there is no dvergr in the warband.

LOCATIONS

The following locations are marked on *Map: The Tunnels*. The ones marked with (s) have a secret passage leading to the mines underneath.

1. FRIG'S HOUSE (S)

The entrance to Frig's house has a small iron door locked from the other side. If the characters wish to do so, breaking the door requires a successful DC 23 Strength check, and picking the lock requires a successful DC 18 Dexterity check. Also, the door has 19 AC, 18 hit points, immunity to poison and psychic damage.

If the characters do not give the proper password to Frig or try to break the door, she activates a trap. The trap is a poisonous gas released from the ground that affects a 30-foot-radius. The creatures within this area take 1d8 poison damage each time they end their turn within the area.

The underground tunnel to Frig's house opens to a small bedroom in which an old bedroll and a wooden chest are the main attraction. It has no other furniture or decoration. The room smells of burnt cedar, and when the characters look around, they may notice some cedar pieces used as incense. There is one more room as well as a small kitchenette inside the house, and everything looks clean and tidy.

Frig works in the Iron Mansion during the day, and spends most of her night in taverns. She is well-liked in the neighborhood; and as people know her to be someone who likes helping others, no one knows and even suspects her true identity as an agent. She is a young woman with dark brown eyes. Her well-braided blonde hair covers her pointy chin. She is slim and delicate, and wears long dark green robes.

After the characters enter by giving Frig the password ("steel over the fang") and settle in, Frig kindly introduces herself and asks the characters their names and stories. If the characters are hesitant in answering her questions, Frig says that they can have her secrets too if they wish. When the characters are ready to hear more, read or paraphrase the boxed text below to the players:

> *"I am a warrior in my own way, and like the other soldiers, I am ready to die for the Real King. I believe war takes place not only on the battlefield, but also in the chaos of great cities and*

the glory of great halls every single day. I have been here for six months, and I am sure that the Ironheart family is hiding something so dark that it will undoubtedly lead to their demise. I am afraid that the rumors might be true; that they may worship an ancient artifact." She takes a deep breath before she goes on, *"I know we might have different reasons why we are here, but we should act together."*

Frig also goes into detail regarding the Ironheart family if asked. In the time that she has spent with them, she has uncovered the following about the Ironhearts:

Gorm Ironheart. He is the father of Marne and Dálkr and the Jarl of Kraekross. He is known to be a fighter but Frig has also realized that he has been developing a keen interest in religion for a while.

Marne Ironheart. She is the younger child of the family. She is named after her mother Marne, who died as she was giving birth to her. She spends most of her time in the library, and it seems like she is adept at magic.

Dálkr Ironheart. He is the older child of the family and is brother to Marne. He is very loving towards his family in the mansion, but he is known for his vicious fury in the rest of the town. Some of his disputes in the inns, no matter how little, have resulted in deaths; and violent ones at that.

If the characters ask her intention or plans, Frig openly provides the characters with the following information:

Ending the Reign. She wants to dethrone the Ironheart family, who supports Gudrick the Moonbearer. She believes that the Stormgazer family deserves to sit on the throne.

Ironheart's Secret. She believes that the Ironhearts are hiding some things in their library and if the characters would help Frig with the search, she would much appreciate it.

Getting into Iron Mansion. She says the Ironhearts do something strange each night. They dismiss nearly all their guards and servants, and the mansion falls completely silent. Frig thinks that this may be an opportunity for them to get in. There is a service entry to the cellar and she can leave it unlocked for the characters.

Proven Innocent. She wants to clear the Stormgazer family of the rumors that they worship a dark deity, because she believes that the Stormgazers can only take over rulership of the town in this way. In her opinion, the best way to clear their name is to clear Moldof's name first.

Moldof is an old Hel cultist who is in the dungeon. She has openly shown remorse from her choices in the past, and it is known that she now defies Hel. Still, she was arrested mere days ago, accused of still being a cultist. Frig is afraid that Moldof will be murdered in the dungeon before her name can be cleared.

Prison Break. Frig has some connections in the guards that she could use to help Moldof escape, but she is afraid of being seen with the Stormgazers and thus of losing Ironheart's trust. Her most useful connection is a guard named Teit Sigvidsonn, who hangs out in the Blue Lavender most evenings.

If the characters ask about Asta or a Freyja gothi, Frig doesn't recall the name, nor does she remember seeing a Freyja gothi. If they describe her appearance, Frig immediately remembers her and is surprised that she is a Freyja gothi. Frig then goes on to say that she had seen Asta in the Iron Mansion in one of the family meetings, which are completely exclusive. For this reason, Frig got suspicious and tried to follow Asta, but she quickly lost her trail. That is all she knows about Asta.

When it appears that the characters do not have any more statements or questions to add, read or paraphrase the boxed text below, as Frig concludes their conversation with the following words:

"I know our paths are different but they have one thing in common: the dark. From now on, consider yourself at home in my house. Stay here, take rest, eat and drink whatever you'd like. I am glad that I can host such honorable warriors."

Reminder of Asta's Appearance. She is a tall, slim woman who has dark hair flowing down to her knees, accessorized with golden beads. She has forest-green eyes and a large, reddish burn mark on her left cheek, which creates a nice contrast with the beauty of her face. She usually wears basic, long, dark gray robes with boots of the same color.

2. THE GUARDHOUSE

The Guardhouse is a large two-story building on the eastern side of the gates, located under one of the watchtowers. It has a large training garden surrounded by high wooden fences meant to hide the training of the guards. There are two who stand guard at the entrance all day, and they do not allow people to enter if they do not have a permit from the Ironhearts.

During the day, the guardhouse is crowded but at night, the soldiers go to their own barracks, situated on the north side of the Kraekross.

3. INN: FROZEN GOATS (S)

The Frozen Goat is a two-story tavern, close to the old marketplace. It is a shady place according to most townspeople, since the customers are often criminals. The murky, mud-colored building has a small wooden sign hanging over the old, wooden door. Some nights the door is guarded by mercenaries, who are generally the guards of the wealthy customers. They might not allow some to enter (even though the reason as to why is unclear).

The gate of the underground tunnel opens to a dead-end very close to the door of Frozen Goats, the entrance of which is hidden behind the old sacks, rusty metals, buckets, shovels and under a very old, dirty carpet. The area appears to be a cover for those who use the tunnels.

The owner of the tavern is Sibbe Halldottir (Mithal, lawful evil, commoner) who is a middle-aged woman with short, cherry-red hair and green eyes. Even though she is a beautiful woman, it looks like she doesn't care about that or like she doesn't notice it; her sole interest is her business and wealth. She is constantly searching for new ways to build on her fortune and is ready to do anything about it.

The atmosphere of the inn is quite nice; the meals are

delicious, and the music is good. Customers like the place, most of whom choose to come again when they see the place once. Other than the enjoyable atmosphere, they also appreciate the privacy they can get here, groups can cover their booth with thick curtains for one silver piece per hour.

The menu of the Frozen Goat suits every pocket, and customers can find high-quality meals and drinks here as well as very simple ones. Frozen Goat is also renowned for its special; *Iron Stew*.

Iron Stew (1 gp/per serving). Iron Stew is made of *iron fungus*, mushrooms, potatoes, goat meat, and matured. Iron fungus is a special fungus grown in the iron mines of Kraekross, and is generally collected by miners while they work. The stew has a faint smell of rust, but this does not spoil the taste, and the soup is enjoyed by many in this inn.

Special Effect. After consuming iron stew, you gain advantage on sight-related Wisdom (Perception) checks for 1 minute.

If the characters choose to spend time in Frozen Goat, they may encounter the following noteworthy NPCs:

Bolla (Mithal, lawful neutral, Veteran) is a middle-aged veteran soldier of Nionaem. Her long, braided, blonde hair covers her attractive face. She has one arm missing. She tends to be rude to strangers at first, but if the characters speak with her gently and ask her about her own story, she tells them that she lost her left arm three years ago in a battle of the Alsvartr Civil War, while she was fighting for the Real King.

Nowadays she spends all her day drinking, although she would much rather be fighting as she once did, waiting her turn to walk Valhalla.

Snorri Stormgazer (Austri, chaotic neutral, Noble) is a wealthy-looking young man who has many shady friends and connections. As a member of the Stormgazer family, he lives in the Mansion of Stormgazers with the rest of his family. He has a striking face with big, light-blue eyes. His charcoal black hair curls around his long neck, and wears a silver ring with the symbol of Odin.

He feels sad for his sister, Moldof, who has been wrongfully accused of a crime and imprisoned; hence the wine. If the characters ask why he looks so sad, however, he does not give them the information above, but only says *"The time has come for them to suffer too."*

Tyr's Judges. A successful DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) check loosens his tongue a bit more and he says that the Stormgazer family called Tyr's Judges a few days ago to clear their names. He doesn't know when they will arrive.

4. INN: BLUE LAVENDER (S)

The Blue Lavender is a wooden, three-story building near the marketplace. It has large windows and a two-winged, wooden door. There are always some people in front of the building, most of whom are the customers. There are also some guards and beggars in the crowd. When people go inside, the first thing that they notice is the smell of lavender.

The entrance of the old tunnels is in the basement of the Blue Lavender, at the end of a corridor that also leads to the barn. When people use these tunnels, most of those inside think they are coming from the barn. However, the owner - Arfast the Big (Mithal, lawful neutral, commoner) - and some employees are aware of the entrance, and they intentionally turn a blind eye for visitors.

Arfast the Big is extremely heavy, as his name signifies. He stands over 7 feet tall and has an Odin rune tattooed on his chest. He has blonde, wavy hair and a long, braided beard. Most people are afraid of him since he can usually be found yelling at his employees, and he looks angry even when he is not.

If the characters choose to spend time in Blue Lavender, they may encounter the following noteworthy NPCs:

Hallgerd (Mithal, chaotic good, Thug) is a young woman who is in search of her sister, Gertrud. If asked, Hallgerd tells her story: Her sister Gertrud was working in the Iron Mansion as one of the housemaids. She started to behave strangely a few months ago, and she has now been missing for weeks.

At this point of the adventure, the characters may have found two notes from Gertrud, the first one in Freyja's Tear on the boat ride to Knafgata (p. 33), and the second inside the tunnels (p. 89). If they make the connection and tell her about the notes, Hallgerd starts to cry, and vows to take revenge for her fate.

Teit Sigvidsonn (Mithal, chaotic neutral, prison guard) is a young man with short, red, straight hair. He ties his hair back, which emphasizes his sharp jawline and his long neck.

He is a guard, and is currently assigned to prison duty. If the characters tell him that they are friends of Frig and give him the password, Teit considers the characters to be his allies and is ready to cooperate, providing them with the following information:

- In his opinion, Moldof Stormgazer's condition is getting worse with each passing day, and she might not last much longer.
- He knows of an entry through the tunnels to the dungeon, behind one of the walls. The door is locked, and requires a successful DC 25 Strength check to break or a successful DC 20 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check to unlock, but he can also leave it unlocked for the characters.
- There are always guards in the dungeon, and there is a good chance the characters will be spotted. If that happens, Teit has to "attack" them so he does not give himself away.

5. THE IRON MANSION (S)

The Iron Mansion is a big stone mansion located right in the middle of Kraekross. It was built on a hill and can be seen from almost anywhere in town. From the outside, the mansion looks dark and cold with small rectangular windows that are always closed, and grey decorations with carvings and depictions made of stone.

The Ironheart family, which has 5 members, lives in the Iron Mansion and they rarely leave it. Also, the family isn't very hospitable, 15 **guards** and 5 **vartr blades** patrol the area around the mansion during the day.

If the characters scout the area for a couple of hours, they

must make a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) or DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. If successful, they realize that only 10 guards and no vartr blades patrol the gardens at night, and not a peep is heard coming from the mansion.

6. THE MANSION OF STORMGAZERS

The building is a large, three-story, wooden building located close to the old market, in which the family owns some shops. The family lives here together.

The building was constructed by Gamli Stormgazer about fifty years ago. The mansion has been built like a classical longhouse. Walls are supported by wide wooden columns, which makes the house sturdy despite its material.

Before the Ironhearts, the Stormgazers ruled the town for nearly a century, almost as long as the town's entire existence. They were dethroned by the Ironhearts 40 years ago.

Two huskarls guard the entrance of the mansion. If characters want to talk to them without providing them with any information, one of the huskarls informs the family of the request, but they are denied entry. If the characters say they are sent by Liv, or truthfully tell them about their quests as the warband, they are admitted inside.

When the characters get into the mansion, they are greeted by Stykar (see below), and shown to a room to wait in. The entrance door opens into the main hall; there are many long, empty and clean tables inside the hall, ready to be used during a feast. There are a lot of weapons and armor mounted on the walls; probably heirlooms of the family.

The most eye-catching decoration is the large tapestry hung above the large door that leads to the room the characters are shown to. The tapestry is also the banner of the Stormgazer family, and it's adorned with ornaments that demonstrate the true craftsmanship. It seems like it was hung there to defy the fate of Stormgazers' rule, which has ended.

The characters are led into the greeting room by a servant (Stykar), where an old woman (Inga) greets them.

If the characters get in the mansion, they may see or hear about the following NPCs:

Inga Stormgazer (Mithal, lawful good, Noble) is Moldof's aunt, she is a very beautiful old woman with braided, white hair and dark green eyes. She wears a long, black dress and a necklace with a Balder symbol on it.

She looks exhausted and sad when she welcomes the characters, and a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that she has been crying. If asked, she does not hide it.

If the characters start talking about Moldof, she shows them to some seats and closes the door. If the characters offer to help Moldof's escape, she hesitates, and asks the characters' real purpose in Kraekross.

If they tell the truth, she says that she cannot aid Moldof's escape for fear of sullying their family name further, because the Stormgazers have already sent word to Tyr's Judges, and failing to wait for their arrival would be against the law. Yet, Inga is also worried about whether Moldof will be alive when the judge arrives. She thus adds that if the characters themselves are able to rescue Moldof, she will reward them generously; 250 gp per character. If the characters ask for more, a successful DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) check raises the reward to 350 gp each.

Stykar (Austri, lawful neutral, Commoner) is one of the servants of the family, he welcomes the characters in the entrance and shows them to a room to wait in. He treats the characters with respect, and asks them if they need anything before he leaves. He answers all questions the characters ask him unless it would hurt the family. He might provide the characters with the following information:

- Moldof Stormgazer is a very good woman that had made some poor choices in the past. Today, however, she is held captive with no cause.
- The Stormgazer family has nothing to do with evil deities, they are in fact followers of Tyr.

Moldof Stormgazer (In Prison) (Austri, lawful neutral, Cultist) had lived with the cult for about a year before she returned to Kraekross and was redeemed by a gothi devoted to Balder. Afterwards, she was accepted by her family with open arms.

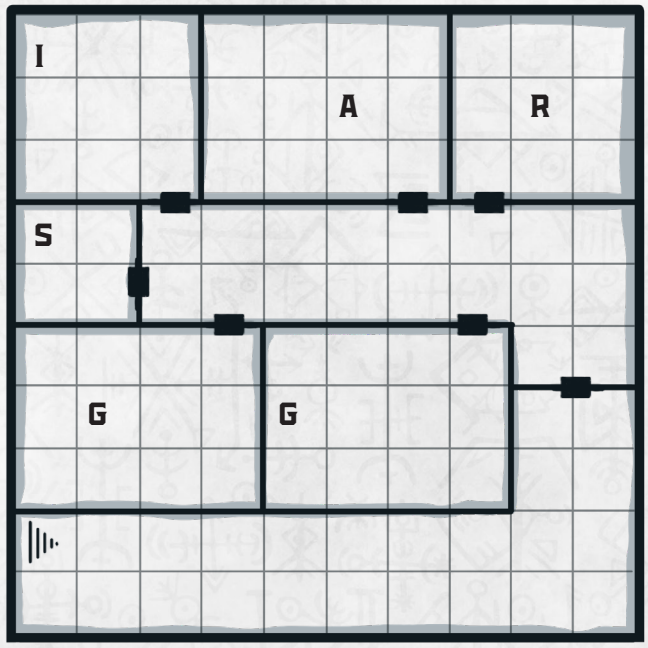
She lived with her family in the mansion before she was taken into the town's dungeon, accused of making Hellic inscriptions in and around Kraekross.

PRISON BREAK (S)

The Dungeon is situated across the Guardhouse, it is a one-story stone building with no windows. Entry is strictly forbidden, which is why four guards stand watch by the entrance day and night, in shifts.

The gate of the prison building is reinforced, breaking it requires a successful DC 30 Strength check. Picking the door's lock requires a successful DC 20 Dexterity check. Also, the door has 15 AC, 40 hit points, immunity to poison and psychic damage.

Map: Kraekross Prison Ground Floor ☐ = 5 FEET



GROUND FLOOR

The following locations are keyed to previous map:

(R) ***Reception.*** The reception room for receiving prisoners contains a table, some chairs, and a cabinet. The dungeon officer (**vartr blade**) sits here during the day.

(A) ***Armory.*** This room contains weapons and simple medium armors enough to arm 20 guards.

(I) ***Interrogation Room.*** The room contains many torture tools and seats, as well as a bunch of stools. There are dried bloodstains on the tools and on the floor.

(S) ***Storage.*** Some mundane items, tools and prisoners' belongings are stored in this room.

(G) ***Guards Bedrooms.*** Each bedroom contains three single beds and three simple chests. At night, three guards sleep in each bedroom. All chests contain 1d4 mundane items, as well as a handful of coins that are worth 1d12 gp in total.

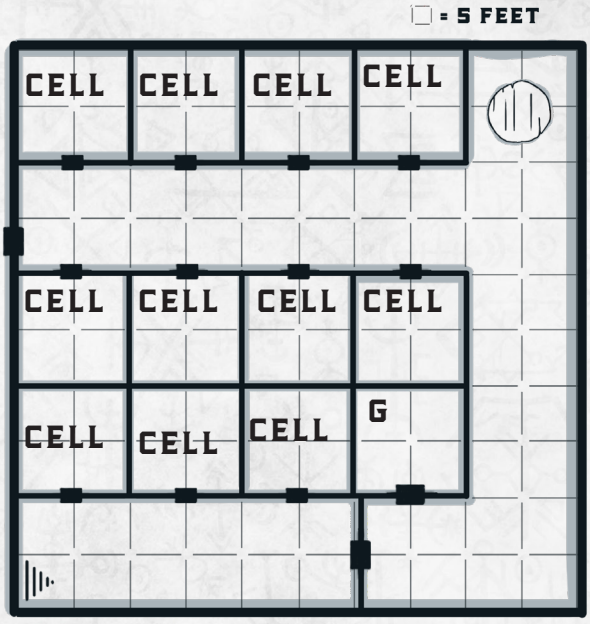
During the day, there are three **vartr blades** along with the dungeon officer and 10 **guards** on the ground floor of the prison. At night, one vartr blade (officer for the night) and five guards are present and awake.

REINFORCED GATES

The prison contains several reinforced gates that look like giant prison cell gates with iron bars. One of them is on the ground floor and leads to the corridor to the dungeon floor. The other is on the dungeon floor before the guard post.

The gates of the prison building are reinforced, breaking it requires a successful DC 30 Strength check. Picking the door's lock requires a successful DC 20 Dexterity check. Also, the door has 15 AC, 40 hit points, immunity to poison and psychic damage.

Map: Kraekross Prison Ground Floor



DUNGEON FLOOR

The dungeon floor consists of two sections. The first section is the entrance, which can also be reached using the stairs on the ground floor. It has three empty prison cells and room for a guard post behind a reinforced gate.

The guard post contains a round table, four chairs and a cabinet. Two guards sit here playing cards, and every 5-10 minutes, one of them gets up to patrol the tunnel entrance.

In the second section, there are eight prison cells filled with prisoners. The characters can clearly see into five cells, occupied by single prisoners. The cells look like they can hold up to two.

This section is dimly lit, apart from the round table and two chairs that are in the corner, which are well-lit. There is also one **guard** sitting there.

This section also contains the tunnel entrance. There is a chair nearby, probably for a guard, but it is mostly empty.

FEAR OF THE TUNNELS

Strange, disturbing voices are heard from the tunnels, and with the rumors of monsters, guards find it hard to patrol there.

As a result, one guard from the guard post comes to check the tunnel entrance every 5-10 minutes, but leaves after a minute, overwhelmed by fear. The guards tend to murmur some songs to overcome their fear while on patrol here.

The characters can try to break the door (DC 20 Strength check) or unlock it (DC 15 Sleight of Hand check). If they try to break it or roll a natural 1 on their Dexterity (Sleight of Hands) check, all the guards on the dungeon floor are alerted. If the entrance is unlocked, the characters can slip in quietly.

In any case, if a guard is close to the entrance (50% chance), they are alerted. Before touching the gate, the characters can make a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to scan for footsteps or murmurs.

SPOTTED!

If a regular guard spots the characters, its momentary panic causes it to attack before calling for reinforcements, shouting to the others as a bonus action on their second turn. If a **vartr blade** (p. 269) spots them, it shouts as a bonus action on their first turn.

If the prison is alerted at night, it takes 1d4 turns for the sleeping guards to get ready. During the day, it takes 1d4 turns for the guards on the streets to be alerted.

The town's squadron of vartr blades that are not on duty in the prison come to aid in five minutes during the day, or half an hour at night.

THE PRISONERS

Some of the prisoners are unconscious due to the unsanitary conditions, insufficient water, food, and perhaps most importantly torture. The following prisoners are the ones with stable conditions. Picking the lock of a cell requires a DC 15 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check.

Moldof Stormgazer (Austri, lawful neutral, Noble) is a young woman who looks exhausted and horrified. She can barely

focus, and cannot answer any questions. The only thing she says is "*I am not the one.*" It looks like she was tortured, her robe has been shred to pieces, and there are many scars on her body, a lot of which appear to be fresh.

Flosi the Red (Vestri, lawful evil, Spy) is a young assassin who claims she will help the warband in their quest if they set her free when the right time comes. She fights with the characters in the dungeon if they free her.

Gardar Vigotsonn (Austri, lawful evil, Thug) is a middle-aged man with an awful smell. It looks like he has been in prison for months. He swears to find and kill the warband if they do not set him free. Gardar tries to flee the scene if the characters release him.

Magni (Half-jotunn, chaotic good, Berserker) is the lost member of the Mithral of the Mountains. He claims to be in the dungeon because he stood up to a guard bullying an innocent half-jotunn. He wants the warband to let the Mithral of the Mountains know he is okay if the warband sees them. Magni fights with the characters in the dungeon if they release him.

Brenda Firecatcher (Mithal, chaotic neutral, Mage) looks calm and quiet. She believes she will find a way to free herself. She is simply waiting for the right moment. She fights with the characters in the dungeon if they release him.

ARRESTED!

If the characters are arrested, they are imprisoned by the vartr blades. All their items are seized, and the guards make sure they don't have any tools on them to break the locks. The cell door is locked, and the characters are locked and chained to the cell floor by their feet. With no means to lockpick them, only a successful DC 25 Strength check can break these locks.

For two days and two nights, the characters are served half-rotten meals and water that tastes sour. The prison cell is cold, and although it has bedrolls, the cold makes the characters constantly have 1 level of exhaustion.

If the characters cannot find the means to escape from prison in this two day period, they hear firm footsteps coming towards them. Two vartr blades and a hooded, bulky figure approach the characters. The hooded man has sharp facial features with brown hair and a bushy beard which can be seen underneath its hood, and he looks at the characters with a savage look in his dark brown eyes.

For the next two days and two nights, the man tortures the characters, seemingly just for the sheer fun of it. Vartr blades are present in these torture sessions, but they are simply there to make sure characters don't die; perhaps making sure they don't die *yet*. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check makes a character realize that the vartr blades are concerned about the situation, but that they are not able to object.

If the characters try to look at the condition of Moldof at this stage, a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that she is no longer breathing.

THE CREATURE

At the end of the last night the characters spend in prison, when the man is about to start a session of torture again, a crashing noise is heard from the depths of the dungeon. Before long, a creature that is half-man, half-wolf charges at the guards, taking them by surprise and killing them in mere seconds. Then, the creature faces the torturer and growls, saying "*Finally, I've found you Kerdack. Enough of your rampage on the innocents and the helpless.*" and gesturing its head towards the characters, he adds, "*I couldn't imagine what kind of a coward you are, not giving them a chance to defend themselves in a proper fight.*"

Kerdack growls and charges at the creature, slowly transforming into a similar form the creature itself holds as it does so; a werevargr. The two tear into each other with utmost savagery. Finally, the creature manages to kill Kerdack, inflicting heavy wounds. However, a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) or DC 13 Intelligence (Medicine) check reveals that the wounds have already started to heal.

The creature tears off the prison door, and the chains that bind the characters to the cell. Then he slowly transforms into a man with blond hair, a short beard, and green eyes examining the characters. He says, "*I have done my deed and will be off now, I suggest you do the same quickly. Lady Liv and her hand Frig managed to create a diversion in the city to cover your escape, you must seize the opportunity to blend in while you can.*" He then starts to trail off. If the characters ask who he is, he replies as "*I am Hemming of Odin's Vargr*." and moves on, not giving the characters time to ask any other questions.

ON THE STREETS

As they make their way out, the characters see that many of the guards in the prison are missing. Some are lying on the ground, unconscious and a few are apparently dead. The characters can take back their items from the storage room and make their escape without any more trouble.

Back on the streets, none of the city guards or soldiers recognize the characters. It seems that the news of their imprisonment did not make it to the city.

If they go to Frig's house, they see soldiers around it, a couple of them dragging the corpse of Frig outside.

At this point, the characters have lost their safehouse as well as the proof of the Stormgazers' corruption, Moldof. Still, they can proceed with their investigations on the Ironheart family.

ASSAULT ON THE IRON MANSION

The characters can choose to enter the Iron Mansion in several ways. They can try to talk their way in, in which case they are denied entry. They can also fight their way in, which is most probably suicide.

They can also try other ways, such as asking for Frig's help or using the tunnel entry to get into the mansion.

MANSION DURING THE DAY

The Iron Mansion is very busy during the day. 20 **guards**

patrol the gardens, and 10 **Ironheart huskarls** patrol the main hall. The family members, Marne, Dálkr, and the Jarl Gorm, are also around, along with 20 servants (commoner).

If the characters try to get into the mansion during the day, the guards on the streets are alerted, and 10 guards from the street join in the fight at the end of the first round. Then, 5 **vartr blades** (p. 269) arrive at the mansion gardens 1d4 rounds later.

DURING THE NIGHT

The Ironheart family performs a ritual involving their artifact each night. They take precautions beforehand in order to keep their secrets safe.

For this, they dismiss most of their guards and servants for the night. Only the guards in the gardens, a handful of their most trusted huskarls, and two of their domestic servants stay behind.

Additionally, as they do not wish their ritual to be eavesdropped on, Marne Ironheart created a magical barrier on the walls of the Throne Room that does not let any sound in or out. To make sure, an additional magical barrier of silence surrounds the ground floor.

MANSION GARDENS

The gardens of the Iron Mansion are surrounded by a small wooden wall that is 10 feet high. There is a 10-foot-wide double gate at the front, and a 5-foot-wide service gate at the back of the gardens. Both gates are closed, but can be broken with a successful DC 20 Strength check or unlocked with a successful DC 15 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check. Breaking any of the doors alerts all the guards in the garden.

There are 10 guards in the garden. 6 guards patrol the front of the garden and 4 patrol the back. As some trees conceal the characters, and the soft ground of grass means that the characters' footsteps are not heard, characters have advantage on their Dexterity (Stealth) checks. If a guard spots the characters, roll for initiative. The guard shouts to the others at the start of its turn and all the guards in the garden are alerted.

AREA 1. CELLAR

It is a large, cool basement with a very low ceiling. There are chandeliers right next to the doors and stairs.

There are two stairs in the cellar, one leading to the kitchen, and the other to the main hall of the mansion. The builders of the mansion wanted to make sure fresh food could be supplied to the kitchen, and mead could be brought straight up to the main hall.

There are barrels and sacks of various kinds of food, but shelves full of mead dominate the room.

Treasure. There are a hundred bottles of mead, ten of which are fine mead (worth 10 gp each).

Service Entry. There is a service entry to the cellar, if Frig is alive, she leaves the service entry to the cellars open for the characters.

SECRET STAIRWAY

There is also a stairway that connects the tunnel entrance, the cellar and the two storage areas on the two floors. The stairs are hidden behind a false wall. A successful DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) or DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the stairs.

GROUND FLOOR

AREA 2. MAIN HALL

The main hall is the largest area of the mansion. It is filled with long tables with four chairs around each of them. One of the tables is in front of the throne room door and has three ornate chairs.

One side of the hall has three doors that lead to 3 guard rooms, and an open archway that leads to the stairs to the cellar. The other side of the hall has four doors, two of them leading to 2 guard rooms, 1 to the servants' room, and 1 to the kitchen. Finally, there is a 10- foot-wide, reinforced main door that leads to the throne room.

There are two **Ironheart huskarls** in the main hall. If they are attacked or spot the characters, they call for help at the start of their turn and a number of Ironheart huskarls come out of their rooms. The following table shows how many guards will be present in total in that case:

Characters	Encounter*
4	2 Ironheart huskarls
5	3 Ironheart huskarls
6	4 Ironheart huskarls

* This encounter is designed for a party made up of 4th level characters. If the characters have reached 5th level, add 1 Ironheart huskarl to the encounter that matches the number of characters in your party. If they have reached level 6, add 2 Ironheart huskarls.

Ironheart Huskarl

IRONHEART HUSKARL

Medium humanoid (Mithal), lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (chain hauberk and shield)
Hit Points 45 (7d8 + 14)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +4, Perception +3
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages Austris (Common), Mithal
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Shield Wall. While two huskarls are within 5 feet of each other and face the same direction, they add 1 to their AC. This feature does not stack.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Ironheart huskarl makes two attacks, one with its longsword and one with its shield.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage.

Shield. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or fall prone.

AREA 3. GUARDS' ROOMS

Huskarls of the mansion stay in these rooms. Each room contains two beds and two footlocker chests.

Treasure. A chest contains a set of *common clothes*, a set of *traveler's clothes*, *mess kits, whetstones*, some other mundane items and coin pouches. The overall value of items and coins in each footlocker is between 10-50 gp.

AREA 4. SERVANT'S ROOM

Even though the Ironhearts have nearly 20 servants, only two of them stay at the mansion, and only they are trusted to stay during the ritual nights. The servant room contains two single beds, small chests near the beds, and a small chandelier.

Currently, one of the servants (**commoner**) is in the room, and she yells for help and tries to fight the characters if the characters go in the room.

Treasure. Each chest contains a set of common clothes, a sturdy cloak for voyage (1 gp), a set of mundane, everyday tools (5 sp), and a small coin pouch with a handful of coins worth1 gp in total.

AREA 5. KITCHEN

The kitchen has a reddish glow because of the dying embers of the fire. The fire is in the large fireplace that dominates the wall across the entrance door. A simple, iron chandelier hangs above the large countertop and there are three large cabinets. One of them is full of cooking utensils while the other ones are reserved for food.

Treasure. A large book titled "*The Fire and The Pan*" full of recipes from Svilland (50 gp), is written in Mithal.

AREA 6. THRONE ROOM

This is the throne room of Kraekross, where messengers from other towns are welcomed and the family makes important decisions.

The hall is a big rectangular room with a high ceiling. Braziers hang from eight stone columns, illuminating the entire hall. A throne sits at the end of the room, right across the big, two-winged door. A dark blue rug runs from the throne, down to the center of the room.

When the characters enter the room, start playing "*Chant of Bones*" on "Svilland - Music and Ambiance". Read or paraphrase the boxed text below to the players:

> A foul smell that reminds you of the Lake Temple bothers you as soon as you enter the area. A green light emanates from a stone in the middle of the room, which colors the entire room with a strange green glow. There is a ritual circle drawn with chalk, and two small circles inside the bigger one. Two people sit with their arms on either side, facing each other, they are inside the little circles. You sense a dark, foul aura spreading from the stone. Gorm Ironheart, Jarl of the town, shouts in Hellic, praising the Goddess of death. Other figures are grumbling and mumbling Hellic words frantically, while two of them are wrapping an unconscious person with a white, web-like thing.
>
> One of them turns her face to you, and you see her pitch-black eyes, she then slowly says to her family *"We have company. Let's entertain them."* You sense that the chamber fills with cold and rotten essences.

Taking the stone in the middle of the room as the center, divide the chamber into two. One half of the room gets cold as Hel, dealing 5 (1d10) cold damage to those who end their turn in this part of the room. The other half of the room gets darker and carries Hel' rotten essence, dealing 5 (1d10) necrotic damage to those who end their turn in this part of the room. Characters who get 10 cold damage due to the effects of the ritual have their speed decreased by 10 feet. Characters who get 10 necrotic damage due to the effects of the ritual suffer one level of exhaustion.

Ritual Attendants. Two people sitting in the small circles are causing these effects. Characters can see mists of black and dark blue spreading from them to the room. They do not attack the characters. If both of them are killed, the effects of the ritual ends. You, as the GM, may use the statistics of a ***cultist*** to represent these people.

The Stone. The stone has immunity to all kinds of damage. When looked at, the characters can see a blue Odin's rune hovering inside the stone. Outside of the stone is defiled with Hellic runes meaning "death", "blind", "raven".

A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Religion) or DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that this item was holy but is defiled by the Goddess of Death. It would be wise to remove its curse, but it is beyond the capabilities of the characters.

When a character touches the item with bare hands, the character must make a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw, taking a minor Hel point on a failed save. Moldof Stormgazer would know more about this artifact.

Characters	Encounter*
4	Gorm, Marne, Dálkr
5	Gorm, Marne, Dálkr, 1 Ironheart huskarl
6	Gorm, Marne, Dálkr, 2 cultists**

* This *hard* encounter is designed for a party made up of 4th level characters. If the characters have reached 5th level, add 1 Ironheart huskarl to the encounter that matches the number of characters in

your party. If they have reached level 6, add 2 Ironheart huskarls.
** Replace scimitars with shortswords.

GORM IRONHEART

Medium humanoid (Mithal), lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (ceremonial robe, shield of faith)
Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)

Skills Arcana +6, Deception +5, Persuasion +5, Religion +6
Saving Throws Wisdom +5, Charisma +5
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages Austris (Common), Mithal, Hellic
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Dark Devotion. Gorm Ironheart has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Spellcasting. Gorm is a 5th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). Gorm has the following gothi (cleric) spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *ray of frost, sacred flame (necrotic)*

1st level (4 slots): *command, inflict wounds, shield of faith*

2nd level (3 slots): *hold person, spiritual weapon (necrotic)*

3rd level (2 slots): *spirit guardians, vampiric touch*

* Gorm starts the encounter with *shield of faith* cast.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Gorm makes two melee weapon attacks with his longsword.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

MARNE IRONHEART

Medium humanoid (Mithal), neutral evil

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 27 (6d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+1)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Skills Arcana +6, Perception +3
Saving Throws Intelligence +6, Wisdom +3
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages Austris (Common), Mithal, Hellic
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Spellcasting. Marne is a 6th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). Marne has the following runewalker spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt*, *shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic*, *mage armor*, *shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *invisibility*, *scorching ray*, *see invisibility*

3rd level (3 slots): *blink*, *counterspell*, *fireball*

ACTIONS

Fire Bolt. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, range 120 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d10) fire damage.

DÁLKR IRONHEART

Medium Humanoid (Mithal), chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (unarmored defense)
Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +2
Saving Throws Strength +3, Constitution +5
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Austris (Common), Mithal, Hellic
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Rage (4/day). As a bonus action, Dálkr goes into a rage and gains the following benefits:

- He has advantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws.
- He has resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks.

Reckless Attack. Dálkr can choose to attack recklessly, having advantage on his attack roll, but other creatures have advantage on their attack rolls against him until the start of his next turn.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Dálkr makes two melee weapon attacks with his greatsword.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit*: 10 (2d6+3) slashing damage, or 12 (2d6+5) slashing damage while raging.

REACTIONS

Pack Fighting. Whenever an ally within 10 feet of Dálkr makes a weapon or spell attack, Dálkr can divert the target as a reaction, and make his ally have an advantage on its attack roll.

Pack Survival. Whenever an ally within 5 feet of Dálkr is targeted by a weapon or spell attack, Dálkr can use his reaction to get in the way of the attack and take the damage himself.

FIRST FLOOR

AREA 7. DINING ROOM

The Ironheart family gathers in this dining room to eat their meals together. The room smells like a forest; an intense smell of pine welcomes the characters. Four large, iron candelabras illuminate this big, rectangular room with a warm light.

The large, pinewood table in the middle dominates the whole room with its heavy, pinewood chairs. A large, pinewood cabinet across from the door looks exquisite with all its detailed carvings. There is no window in this room, yet some clothes hang on the walls like curtains.

Treasure. The pinewood cabinet contains an 84 piece, bell-metal dinner service (worth 420 gp if sold as a full set, worth 3gp each), ten bottles of wine, two of which are fine wine. (worth 15 gp each) and a flask of *black liquid* (p. 240) just like the ones the characters found in the Lake Temple.

AREA 8. BEDROOMS

There are 6 bedrooms in Iron Mansion, other than Gorm's room, and they are all similar. All of them are functional rooms that are decorated and designed tastefully. Even though the colors and texture change from one room to another, they contain a fireplace, a large rug, a bed, a cabinet, and two wooden chests.

Treasure. If the characters search the rooms, they find a total of 300 gp in coins, high-quality clothes (50 gp), three golden rings (worth 20 gp each), two golden necklaces (worth 60 gp each) from each bedroom.

Dalkr Ironheart

AREA 9. GORM IRONHEART'S ROOM

Everything in this room looks extravagant and expensive, the room is more like a room of a king and queen rather than a Jarl. Aromatic smells rise from an oak incense. A large iron chandelier hangs above the very large bed with a black velvet bedspread. Likewise, black velvet curtains hang at the windows. There is a cold gray rug on the floor.

There is an empty cage near the windows, a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Nature) check reveals that there has been a crow in the cage recently. Two iron chests stand at the foot of the bed.

Treasure. These chests are unlocked. In total, they contain quality clothes (worth 50 gp), three fine apparels (worth 50 gp), and a coin pouch contains 150 gp.

Secret Altar. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) or DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that there is a faint current of air seeping through one of the walls. If the characters take a look, they realize that a 2 feet by 2 feet section of the wall is a false wall.

Behind the false wall, there is a small altar. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that the altar belongs to Hel.

On top of the altar, there is dried blood, some dried herbs, and a small bloodstone worth 50 gp.

AREA 10. LIBRARY

The library is a dark, rectangular room in the basement. There are shelves full of books and parchments along all the walls. A big, pinewood desk and a heavy chair behind it stand in the middle of the library under a big, iron chandelier. A black rug matches with the black, velvet cover of the chair. The room is colder than any other room, but it has no fireplace.

Treasure. If the characters spend an hour examining the books and parchments, they find some Hellic parchments about Hel and Helheim and three valuable pieces (worth 30 gp each).

KRAEKROSS AFTERMATH

After a day, the characters come out of the Iron Mansion victorious, and they see Tyr's Judges arrive in the city, led by Bjarne (the Tyr's Judge the characters met in the council in Knafgata).

A) MOLDOF IS DEAD

If they did not save Moldof before they went to the Iron Mansion, Tyr's Judges seek her as the proof of corruption, but find out that the woman died in prison.

In both cases in which Moldof is dead, Tyr's Judges declare they sadly don't have proof for the innocence of the Stormgazer family.

With the head of the Ironheart family dead, Stormgazers still try to seize control of the city, but as a large portion of the city folk think they are cultists, this attempt results in civil war in the city.

B) MOLDOF IS ALIVE

If the characters previously managed to save Moldof, Tyr's Judges privately interrogate the woman, and declare the innocence of the Stormgazer family. As the head of the Ironheart family is also dead, Stormgazers seize control of the city relatively easily and with only a few bloody skirmishes.

With the Stormgazers ruling Kraekross, they declare that they pledge their allegiance to the real king, Hanlon. They also declare the characters the saviors of the city and of their family's honor. Thus, the characters can stay anywhere in the city for free, including the mansion, as guests of honor.

Each character is given a tiny, ornate chest containing 1000 gp, and they are presented with some of the heirlooms of the Stormgazer family. As the GM, you can select a rare item for each character.

THE ARTIFACT

If the characters take the evil artifact and try to read the runes on it, they won't be able to do so since it is written in an ancient language they do not know.

If the characters ask Moldof Stormgazer about it, she will say that she does not know what it is. However, she knows that it was taken from a dvergr mining area, therefore an old dvergr runemaster should be able to read it.

There is one located in Kolbovaik, of whom the name is Hegg. He is a gothi of Odin, devoted to his runes (Rûn domain).

Hegg has an eye missing, which he does not cover with an eyepatch. He says he sacrificed it to see the world with Odin's wisdom. He has very long, grey, braided hair but his beard is short. He generally wears a black robe with raven feathers on it.

REALM OF DREAMS

After the characters visit all three locations and complete their quests, they find themselves in a strange dream as they sleep. They know they are in a dream, but all of them are there. They are in a strange woodland area, and their vision is in grayscale. Trees and animals around them appear and disappear into mist.

After a couple of minutes, a strange man appears from the woods nearby. His shape is shifting, but his clothing is made of raw fiber, and he wears necklaces of bones and stag horns. He says "Freydis will come in soon, please wait." and says no more.

Freydis appears and greets the characters. A successful DC 18 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that she too feels like a stranger to this realm.

Freydis asks what the characters found out so far. After she listens to what they say, she says these are not strong leads to what to do next. Yet, she says that she saw a vision of the characters meeting Hanlon the Real King. So, she tells them to go to his capital, Kolbovaik.

SPIRITS' GRATITUDE

After Freydis finishes talking, the man kindly intervenes. He says that the spirits were restless, in agony, in fact. He was used to their peaceful songs of cherishment, but recently, all he heard was moans of agony from them. This was until the characters succeeded on their tasks.

He presents himself, Mielat Vættr Heaibmu (Mielat of Spirits' Tribe) is his name. He is a seidr that follows the spirits' path and helps them maintain the balance.

He is grateful for their deeds. He and the spirits thank them for these deeds.

If the characters ask questions about this dream, he says they are in the Dream Realm and says no more. He also smiles but leaves any further questions regarding him, spirits, or seidrs, unanswered.

Freydis tells the characters that perhaps Freyja has shown them these visions to first cleanse this region for her, before they move on their journey.

Finally, Mielat declares that their given time in this dream ends. Upon hearing this, Freydis tells the characters to go to Kolbovaik to meet Hanlon, and she already sent a letter to him declaring their soon-to-be arrival.

The dream fades, and the characters wake up.

Chapter III
The New Path

After they meet with Freydis in the strange realm of dreams, the characters take on a journey for a new lead. Their destination is Kolbovaik, as it is the place shown in Freydis's vision.

In this chapter, the characters come across various dangers of Svilland while following the traces of Asta. While this chapter includes challenges by cults of evil deities and by frightful foes deep in forgotten crypts, it also includes the chance to make new friends who share in the characters' cause.

RUNNING THIS CHAPTER

You as the GM can find the key events of this chapter in the table below. The events take place one after the other, each of which lead the characters one step closer to Asta.

Episodes

Kolbovaik
(For characters of level 6-7)

On the Wolves' Tracks
(For characters of level 7)

Into the Wolf's Den
(For characters of level 8)

An Early Grave
(For characters of level 9-11)

As the GM, you may find the summaries of the events in these episodes below. Please note that this information contains spoilers for the players.

Kolbovaik. The characters are granted an audience with Hanlon the Real King. They are asked to collect special items to observe what is inside the artifact. Here, the characters can explore the city and help the folk with what they might need. The episode ends with the characters meeting Odin's Vargr.

On the Wolves' Tracks. The characters move on to find the ancient enemies of Odin's Vargr; Fangs of Fenrir. They come across unexpected figures on their journey.

Into the Wolf's Den. The characters find the den of Fangs of Fenrir. Here, they need to plan their assault carefully, as their enemies are too many to count.

An Early Grave. The characters follow Asta's tracks into a graveyard, where they face a maze of ancient, unholy crypts.

THE CITY OF NORTH ASSEMBLY

Kolbovaik is the capital of northern Alsvartr, which has been under the rule of Hanlon the Real King for over eight winters. Hanlon gathered the leaders of four important clans in Alsvartr and created the North Assembly.

Once a small town, Kolbovaik has grown rapidly thanks to the North Assembly and has become the most powerful city in the north over time. It was not easy for a small town to grow that fast, and they accomplished this feat by the shedding of blood. The assembly built on their influence by either occupying or persuading the surrounding towns and villages to join their ranks. While some settlements accepted them, those loyal to Gudrick resisted with all their might.

Hanlon the Real King united four different clans of Alsvartr in the North Assembly: Krangsonn, Asvaldsonn, Thorvedottir, Bergljodottir. He did so because he knew well that he alone did not have the slightest chance against Gudrick the Moonbearer. Three of these clans were highlanders of the Gray Highlands Mountain and Ymir's Lash, and the Asvaldsonn family, who was the ruler of Kolbovaik.

Kolbovaik welcomes everyone who crosses the city gates unless the person openly supports Gudrick the Moonbearer.

Kolbovaik Thumbnail
Leader /Important Figures. Hanlon the Real King, Skuld Krangsonn, Vog Asvaldsonn, Orest Thorvedottir, Bera Bergljodottir
Livelihood. forestry, brewing, farming
Militia. 1200 **guards** 50 vartr blade
Population. 10,200

Level up. Your characters have reached 7th level. Feel free to inform your players to level up during their next long rest.

THE GOOD AND THE BAD

Describe the scene by reading or paraphrasing the boxed text below:

> You can see the wooden walls of the city from a distance. The smoke from the chimneys hanging above the city, creating a mysterious atmosphere. The sun is trying to

break the heavy layers of smoke, but it is powerless to do so.

When you arrive at the city gates and behold the heavy wooden doors supported by metal, you also see four guards. There are tens of others in the two towers situated on either side of the gates as well.

One of them takes a step forward and starts talking, *"Welcome, welcome the soldiers of Holmdar/Jannamot/Pineheim. We've been expecting you!"*

A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that all of the soldiers in front of the gates are looking at the warband with admiration. The name of the soldier talking to the characters is Vikar (Mithal, lawful good, Guard). He is a tall young man with dark blue eyes and shaved hair. He is around 17, and his eyes look dedicated and self-assured. If the characters ask what he meant, or who has been expecting them, Vikar gives the following information to the characters, either in front of the gate or at the North Castle.

- Hanlon the Real King knows that the High Council has met in Knafgata, and he is aware of the activities of the warband.
- There have been reports of some strange incidents in the forests nearby; howls and moans being heard in the night, attacks by animals that seem tainted by death, and plants and vegetation rotting and decaying like never before. The folk of the town have thus been warned about the increasing dangers of the wilderness.

If the characters ask about Hanlon, Vikar says that Hanlon is a good leader for all Kolbovaik and that he will soon become the leader of all of Alsvartr.

NORTH CASTLE

North Castle is a big wooden building with heavy wooden doors. Two guards are standing watch on either side of the door, and when they see Vikar and the characters, they salute them. A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that these guards are looking at the warband with admiration. If the characters ask why this is the case, Vikar replies with a big smile and a respectful expression on his face, and says *"Our chieftain Bera Bergljodottir talks about you a lot. We all think you are brave soldiers with good hearts."*

After getting inside the wooden castle, the characters see a big crowd made up of soldiers, servants, and some merchants... They all look busy and are going about their business as usual, but Vikar greets some of them as if he were trying to show the characters off to some of his friends. When they pass the courtyard and go through a big wooden door, the surroundings quieten.

When they get inside the big yet simple throne room, they see light gliding through the narrow windows and Hanlon the Real King sitting on his simple wooden throne underneath a grand chandelier, quietly speaking to one of his assistants. He looks wise and charismatic with light blue eyes and long, well-groomed beard. As soon as he sees the characters and Vikar, he examines the characters carefully before he starts to speak:

"I see that you've finally arrived in Kolbovaik, my friends! How are you? I believe we have much to talk about." he says in a deep voice. He looks tired with sunken cheeks and dark circles under his eyes. Then he shows the big wooden table near the throne and adds, *"Let's sit there, you have had a long journey."*

If the characters do not want to sit, he insists that they do, and sits in one of the chairs himself. Afterwards, he waits for the characters to talk and to tell him their stories. He orders one of his servants to bring a gallon of mead, and then he might ask the following questions to the characters. He is not judgmental about anything the characters have done.

GM TIP

You can skip the questions below, although it would be beneficial to remind the players of the previous sessions at this point. This way, understanding the storyline and the missions would be easier for the players.

- *"How is Aldis, who is an old friend of mine, I haven't heard from her for a while?"* (Aldis is the wife of Kludi Igrimsonn.)
- *"I heard that the ruler of Belmunt has changed. What happened there, exactly?"*
- *"How was Kraekross? (He actually knows what happened in Kraekross but he is asking regardless, because he wants to hear the characters' spin on the events.)"*
- *I think you have seen some members of my retinue in Kraekross; how are Frig and Liv?*

As he asks the characters the questions above, a couple of servants start bringing in meals and drinks, and serving them to the characters. Before long, the table is filled with a number of spectacular dishes, water, mead, and ale. As the table is set, he can also give the following information to the characters:

- The wilderness has been more dangerous than ever recently. There are more and more reports of people going missing day by day.
- His spies have also been reporting more and more activity by the Fenrir cultists around the region.

Hegg

If the characters mention the artifact they found in Kraekross, he asks to examine the stone. If they mention the stone before the conversations above, he examines it before he invites them to the table. When he examines the stone, he says *"We have to act faster than I thought. I should call my friend Hegg, he'd know what to do."*, sends for a servant to go fetch Hegg, and then finally invites them all to eat something.

Hegg arrives at the throne room after about half an hour and storms in despite his old age. He is an old dvergr with very long, grey, braided hair. He wears a black robe with a reddish-brown fox fur and also wears an Odin symbol around his neck. He looks at the characters and Hanlon with searching eyes and says *"So, your guests've brought something unexpected with them, Hanlon?"* He then looks around annoyed, moves closer to Hanlon the Real King, and grumpily starts to speak:

"I sense great evil here. These kids did well to come. Hanlon, I'm taking your guests to my shack for an hour or two. If you have anything urgent to say, now would be a good time."

Hanlon looks at the dvergr as if he is happy to see him, he listens to the old dvergr with utmost patience and as soon as Hegg finishes his words, he starts speaking:

"Ah, yes. I missed you too, old friend. Yes, I do have some things to speak of." Then turns to fix his tender gaze on you. *"We have heard that followers of the Goddess of Death and the God of Savagery have been seen acting together in these lands.*

You must visit Odin's Vargr to find out more. They are a respected cult, in battle with the forces of Fenrir. I'm certain it will be beneficial for you to pay them a visit after you're done with Hegg. Look for Sidgy the Bearkiller, their pack leader."

Then Hanlon smiles and describes the location of Skari Ból, Odin's Vargr's meeting place in the forest nearby. He then tells a captain of his guard to have a map prepared for the characters by the evening. He then adds, *"You should come back to pick it up to find your way in the forest. That is, of course, if this old pal of mine does not bore you to death with his stories."*

ON THE WAY TO HEGG'S HOUSE

When Hanlon is done speaking, Hegg looks at the characters and says, *"Come on, folks, quickly."* He then takes the characters out of the castle. On the way back to his home, Hegg tries to engage in small talk with the warband, which tends to turn into long, slow, and boring stories about his memories of youth. After half an hour of walking, the characters arrive at the wooden shack in the middle of the city. This building does not look like the others nearby.

HEGG'S HOUSE

It is a one-story stone building, unlike the other houses, which are generally made of wood. The shack also looks ancient and filthy from the outside, with gray and green moss covering half the exterior walls.

Hegg opens the door and invites the characters in. The old shack feels warm, the air inside carries a faint odor of wood and the inside definitely looks better than the outside. Hegg closes the door and says, *"Make yourselves at home."*

When the characters look around, they see sacks everywhere in what appears to be the main hall. These sacks seem to be filled with wood, soil, some fruit, grains, flour, and many more; however, they seem out of place. There are rags and pieces of fur all over the floor. Hegg walks a little and sits on the ground. The characters may sit on the floor with Hegg, or they may sit on chairs that also seem to have been misplaced in the hall.

There are two other rooms in Hegg's house. One is to the left of the hall, and the other is on one end of the hall. In the left room, there is nothing but a bed and a wooden closet. An Odin symbol is drawn on the wall in white. The room to the right has various shelves on the wall, on which there are pots of every size. There is an old stove in this room, as well as a small table and two chairs, and an old cabinet.

As soon as the characters sit in this house, Hegg says, *"Let's not waste any more time."* and asks them some questions about the artifact:

- *What do you think it is?*
- *When did you find it?*
- *Who owned it?*
- *Did anything feel strange while holding or carrying it?*
- *I sensed the presence of this item when I first saw you; are there runes written on it?*
- *Is there anything I should know before I lay my eyes on this thing?*

When the characters answer all of these questions, Hegg gently places a piece of fabric on the floor and kindly asks the characters to put the item on the fabric. When he sees it, he is shocked.

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> Hegg scratches his old beard. *"Balder's beard... My eyes must be deceiving me! Children, this... This is ancient... And defiled. They desecrated what was sacred."* He covers the item with the piece of fabric, looking depressed and desperate. His face twists into a grimace, and he takes a small piece of wood out of one of his pockets. He then closes his eyes, and the tip of the wood catches fire. A second or two later, he shakes the tiny piece of wood to extinguish the little flame. As soon as the fire disappears, a smoke starts to rise, and keeps doing so for several minutes. *"Helps me think,"* Hegg says.
>
> Hegg tries to overcome his trepidation. He winces, and you can see that this man is trying extremely hard to come up with an idea to purify the item. After a while, he speaks again.
>
> *"Are you familiar with the story of the Allfather's ravens?"* and without waiting for an answer, he starts to tell you a poem as if he were trying to remember it himself.
>
> *"Hugin and Munin*
> *Fly, fly today*
> *All over the realms;*
> *I worry for you Hugin*
> *That you might not return,*
> *But I worry more for Munin."*
>
> *Huginn and Muninn, the two ravens of the Allfather, are known to be the eye and ears of the God of Knowledge. However, they meant so much more to him, as folks thought them to be his physical representation. Huginn was also the intellect; Muninn the memory. Without both, you know, a person ceases to be. In ancient dvergrs of Nidavellir (Svartalfheim), our true home, the dvergrs forged these sacred stones to show their gratitude to the Allfather, and called them the eyes of the raven. They have the power to restore memories.*
>
> *Now, I wonder how the servants of Hel got their hands on one of the eyes of the ravens, and how they dared to defile it."*

He stands up and quickly walks towards the room, on the wall of which Odin's symbol is drawn. While he does so, he hastily asks the characters for help. He needs the characters to find:

- The deepest pot on the kitchen's shelves.
- The sack filled with soil in the hall.
- Two rocks that look flat on their surfaces and are no bigger than the fist of a child. Characters can find such stones outside the house.

Gathering each item requires a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check.

As the characters collect these items, Hegg opens his cabinet and takes a little pouch filled with the dust of a precious gem, a leather bag with tiny needles in it, and a rune inscribing kit. Hegg returns to where he was sitting in under a minute. If the characters couldn't find the items he asked for by then, he says *"Quickly, now."*

He first takes the stones he asked for. He takes out a rock chisel from his rune inscribing kit, and scribes a rune by hitting the top of the chisel with the other rock. He then carefully pours the diamond dust inside the rune.

Afterwards, he picks another tool from his kit, this is not a needle with a sharp tip, but a little ball of iron. He hammers at the diamond dust with the little ball to make sure that the dust sticks. He uses every ounce of dust in the pouch.

He then holds the stone in his hand, closes his eyes, and starts praying to Odin. *"Through your blessing, I exist. Let your runes illuminate our path."* He continues to pray to Odin for half an hour. He then casts a spell. It seems that the spell is extremely physically draining for Hegg. However, it is a sacrifice he is willing to make. After a few seconds, Hegg seems exhausted, too weak, and very fragile. However, his savoir vivre and intellect are not affected; in fact, his eyes are filled with hope and he is eager to continue his ritual.

A successful DC 25 (19 if the *detect rune* feature is used) Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that Hegg created a *Gipt* runestone (p.242). When he opens his hands to show the characters runestone, they see that the gem's dust has become

one with the stone, shimmering with great magnificence. The characters feel honored and at peace; the runestone feels like proof that Odin is watching over them and has granted them a bit of his power for help.

Hegg smiles, and he asks a character to pour a thin layer of soil into the pot that he asked for. He then asks the warband to place the artifact in the pot without touching it with their skin. He places the runestone next to the defiled item. He asks the characters to fill the rest of the pot with soil.

Hegg pats the soil with his hands, pushing it to make sure that the soil grips the runestone and the *Eye of the Raven* (p. 241) tightly. When he finishes, he puts both of his hands on the soil, whispers a chant in the name of Odin once more, and casts the *hallow* spell. While casting the spell, he sighs in agony, and his hands seem to decay, ever so slightly. Still, he tries to hide his agony. (This is an outcome of the *wish* spell he cast earlier to create the runestone).

Afterwards, he digs into the soil with his bare hands, having a hard time to do so since the spell has depleted his physical force. After a few seconds, he manages to retrieve the *Eye of the Raven* from inside the pot. The characters realize that the runestone has ceased to exist. Hegg smiles at the characters and says: *"All these efforts, my friends, were just so we could hold it with our bare hands."*

Hegg holds the *Eye of the Raven* in his hands and shows it to the characters. The characters feel that a weight has been lifted. If they can use spells or abilities that reveal desecrated or consecrated areas, they see that the stone is no longer desecrated.

Then, he asks all the characters to place a finger on the stone. When they do so, Hegg quietly says, "*Muninn, show us what you remember."* This causes all characters to have the same vision. If they wish to resist, they must succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw to do so. The visions are seen from the *Eye of the Raven*'s point of view. Read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

Five people have made a circle around the *Eye of the Raven* inside a throne room. Two of them are sitting across from each other, and the eye is placed between them. You hear a voice preaching Hel's commandments. The remaining two are wrapping someone with a white, web-like thing. Then you come and interrupt the ritual. The *Eye of the Raven* having seen this, what you have done is remembered by Muninn.

The vision fades, you feel as if your consciousness fades with it, and a new vision starts to form. The eye is in the middle of a ritual circle in a cave, and so are you. You see the scene in a somewhat distorted way and can't help but feel this is how ravens see the world. There is a lady with black robes whose face you cannot see. She moves slowly within the cave. There are many hostages who are tied and aligned with the ritual circle. The lady raises her hands, and some creatures from Hel appear in phantom form. They massacre the hostages, and the gore-filled scene makes you think this is the most violent thing you've ever witnessed.

Then, the lady douses her hands in the blood of the sacrifices and draws some runes on the walls of the cave. She then moves to the middle of the circle, picks the eye off the ground, and raises it to her eye level, facing it. You can now clearly see her face: This slim woman has gorgeous, long, black hair accessorized with some golden beads. She has forest green eyes, and a reddish scar on her cheek, which creates a nice contrast with the beauty of the rest of her face. She shouts, *"The blood has been spilled. The ritual is complete. Arise from the shadows now, servants of Hel! Set forth, for our time has come. We shall reign in blood and darkness."*

The characters cannot bear to witness this foul memory any longer; therefore, they cannot resist the urge to open their eyes. A few seconds later, Hegg opens his eyes as well. The characters must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or take 14 (4d6) psychic damage. If they have not recalled, a successful DC 12 Intelligence check helps them remember that the description fits the one they got of the missing gothi from Knafgata perfectly. There is now no doubt in their minds that this person is Asta.

Hegg then provides the warband with the following information:

- These were the only visions that the warband could see through the item.
- He hopes that it was useful.
- The second ritual was probably to reach other Hel cultists and tell them it was time to start a possible invasion.
- The runes on the item read the poem he recited earlier.
- He wants to study the item since it belonged to the ancient dvergrs of Nidavellir(Svartalfheim). He promises that if he finds anything of possible use, he will inform the warband quickly, probably by means of a *sending* spell.
- Hegg wants to give the characters something to remember him by. He says, "*If you come here tomorrow, I shall give you a gift that may help you in your quest."*

If the characters choose to visit here tomorrow at dawn, they see Hegg in better shape than today. He gives them a Greater Wunjo (Rune of Bind, rare) runestone (p. 242).

Hegg wants to have a rest; therefore, asks the characters to leave if they have no further questions.

LOCATIONS

Kolbovaik is a new city with four main districts, even though these districts are not much different from one another. As the members of the North Assembly live in different districts, each district is given its own name. The following locations are marked on the map of Kolbovaik.

1. BROKEN THRONE

Broken Throne is a big and new tavern built near the guardhouse, which has just been built by two dvergr escapees from Hvannsavik. If asked, they say that they entered the Forbidden District and stole a piece of the old throne, with

Kolbovaik

1 - Broken Throne

2 - Northern Ale

3 - The Market

4 - Grimkel's Hut

which they built this two-story tavern. The story is so common in the city that the tavern never ceases to be filled with customers enjoying good food, good company, and good music, which is never missing from the stage.

The two-story building is made out of oakwood, and looks clean and well-maintained. A large handwritten sign made of a broken piece of wood hangs over the wooden door. The area in front of the building is full of people day and night; it seems people come here for both breakfast and dinner.

Hemer (Dvergr, chaotic good, commoner) and Tingi (Dvergr, chaotic good, commoner) are the owners of the tavern. The two have been friends for a long time. Both of them look young, full of life and as though they care about their appearance, Tingi in particular. His long, black beard is always carefully groomed, which makes him appear intentionally more presentable than Hemer.

If the characters choose to spend time in Broken Throne, they may come across the following noteworthy NPCs who can be used to spice up the adventure a little.

Vigot (Dvergr, lawful neutral, Veteran) is an old, handsome man with long grey hair and pitch-black eyes. A large scar on his left cheek gives him a tough look. He used to be a soldier of Hanlon before he lost his right arm in battle. He likes to joke about his arm, and says *"I don't mind; I have the strongest left arm there ever was!"* Oftentimes, he challenges people to arm wrestling. Competitors must succeed on a DC 21 Strength (Athletics) saving throw to win.

Nidbiorg (Vestri, chaotic evil, Cultist) is a beautiful, young woman who has been staying in Broken Throne for about a month. She looks fun and happy; singing and dancing in the evenings. She does not carry a holy symbol and does not talk about herself.

This makes sense because she is a runaway Ran cultist. She was sentenced to death by a Tyr Judge after she sacrificed two young men to her Goddess, but she somehow managed to escape. No one in the city knows her true nature.

She does not tell her story unless she is very drunk, meaning that she drank seven pints of mead and failed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw.

If the characters hear her story and repeat it to someone with authority, she will be executed the next day.

Skills. Performance +7

Arnkatla Spjutdottir (Mithal, neutral good, bard) is a bulky, strong woman with a thick accent. She has chestnut-red hair and pale skin with some scars on her shoulders, visible owing to her leather tank-top tunic. She is one of the mountainfolk; nomads who live on the mountains. Yet she came here recently for the *Skáld Kapp (see Skáld Kapp)*.

Skills. Performance +5

Skidi Øpir (Austri, true neutral, bard) is a slim and sleek woman with brown hair, and wrinkles around her eyes that hint at her age in the late thirties. She wears a green dress

fit for nobility, with a symbol patched on its right shoulder. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (History) check reveals the symbol to be the banner of the house of Denil, the house of the queen of Green Lights of the East. Skidi is a royal bard who came to the *Skáld Kapp* with the sponsorship of her queen.

Skills. Performance +8

Aside from regular meals like stews, meats, cheese, and dried fruits; *Stuffed Duck* is a specialty served in Broken Throne.

Stuffed Duck (2sp /per serving). A duck is stuffed with spiced rice, extra sharp goat cheese, wild mushrooms, and tiny bits of dried red apples to add a little sweetness. The duck is roasted with little heat for about four hours. This way, the duck is crispy on the outside and quite juicy with a vast array of tastes and smells on the inside.

Skáld Kapp

There is a notification board inside the tavern, stating that a *Skáld Kapp* (Bard Contest) will be held tomorrow night. The entrance fee for the contest is 25 gp, and the reward is a special tagelharpa, called *Dawn's Hymn*. Below the notification, there is a small parchment for contestants to register for the event. Currently, there appear to be three who are going to compete; Arnkatla Spjutdottir, Nidbiorg, and Skidi Øpir.

The next evening, the characters see that the inn is packed; it's even more crowded than usual. There is a large audience waiting for the bards' performances with eager participation.

The contest requires contestants to enter with songs that tell a unique story. If some characters wish to compete, they should go see the innkeeper, who will have all of the contestants cast lots before declaring the order in which the bards will perform: Arnkatla, Nidbiorg, Skidi, and finally the character(s).

As the GM, you can make the Charisma (Performance) checks of each bard before or after their performances written below, and take note of the result. The bard with the highest check result wins the contest. You can also reward a player who gives an especially memorable performance; for instance, by telling a great story or by actually playing a musical instrument during their roleplay. You can reward them by any means you see fit, but possible suggestions are; giving them a secret +2 bonus on the roll, letting them make the check with advantage, or by declaring them the winner, regardless of the result of their roll.

Arnkatla slowly starts to play her bass tagelharpa. The song she sings is about a girl who fell in love with a woman that turned out to be a bortbyting (changeling) trold. The song becomes more dramatic as the music swells, as the lyrics explain how her love for the trold did not change after she found out the truth, how the girl's clan captured and killed the trold anyway, and how her heart now aches and burns, as if the mighty pine tree of her heart has been chopped down.

Nidbiorg does not use any instrument but her voice for the performance. She sings a beautiful ballad about the waves of the sea. The song tells the story of the sea being impregnated by the Gods and it giving birth to every living thing, including all Svillanders. Her voice is so soothing that the audience is charmed on a failed DC 13 Wisdom saving throw (you can roll any number of saving throws for the audience and divvy the results as you see fit). The characters listening to her must make a saving throw as well. The song continues with a prophecy in which the sea takes back what is rightfully hers, and all the living is lost in a peaceful slumber .

Skidi plays a vibrant song on her lyre. She sings of the green of the grass and the beauty of the seas in her homeland. She sings of mighty cities and buildings that stand tall, just like her queen; her queen Bergljot who stood tall against the curse that infected the throne and her family, as well as her rivals.

Now she sits on her throne, and welcomes everyone with open arms as long as they are faithful to Thor and the Asgardians, and they believe in equality among all, just as she does.

After the character(s) perform, just before the innkeeper asks for a vote from the audience (the result of which is tied to that of the Performance checks), a cloaked figure with a tagelharpa in his hand goes on stage. When he turns to the audience and reveals his face, they see that he is no other than Hanlon the Real King. The crowd cheers and shouts with a great awe and surprise.

Hanlon thanks them all, and thanks the bards for letting him attend. He then starts to play his tagelharpa. A He starts his song with an incredibly musical but equally sad melody. His song first tells the story of a man who cries tears of blood; tears that join with that of the fallen on the battlefields of Alsvartr. Then, it moves on to tell the tale of a man in agony, feeling sorrow and regret for slaying someone he had loved like a son once, and perhaps still does. The song then talks of a man in regret, for he has no choice but to end the bloodshed on the battlefields, by plunging a dagger into his nephew's heart. The man in the song says that his heart is heavy with this thought; the heart that is sure to bleed with that of his nephew.

Hanlon makes the Charisma (Performance) check with a +10 bonus. If he loses, Hanlon presents the reward of the contest to the winner himself. If Hanlon wins, he still presents the reward of the contest to the bard who came in second.

After the contest, Hanlon buys a round of mead for everyone in the inn, drinks a mead or two with the crowd, makes short but decent conversation with the bards, and then leaves for his castle with his retinue.

DAWN'S HYMN

Wondrous item (musical instrument), rare (requires attunement by a bard)

Dawn's Hymn is a tagelharpa with ornaments that symbolize the sun and the dawn. Without expending a spell slot, you can play the instrument for 1 minute to play with a spell of up to 4th level in mind. The tagelharpa takes the essence of the spell and stores it.

Until the next dawn, you can use your action to cast the spell stored within the instrument. No matter the original level of the spell, you must expend a 4th level spell slot to cast it after it has been stored in this way.

2. NORTHERN ALE

The Northern Ale is a tavern popular among the guards of Kolbovaik, and it is always full of them. Most of them come here for recreation to enjoy good meals, cheap drinks, and various performances. The inn also organizes eating or drinking games, fights, and dance nights.

Arn (Mithal, lawful neutral, Commoner) is the owner of the tavern. He is a clever man who knows how to entertain people. Sounds of people laughing can usually be heard coming from the inside; that is, it could until quite recently...

If the characters want to visit the Northern Ale, they see a young man throwing up near the tavern. He has lost the ability to speak, and he looks extremely drunk. A successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check or DC 13 Intelligence (Medicine) check reveals that the man actually has food poisoning.

When the characters open the door of the entrance, they enter a large room with great big windows on all sides. It is well-lit with the large metal chandelier hanging from the ceiling and the candleholder sconces on the walls. There are few customers, and most tables are empty.

As soon as the characters have had a chance to look around, Arn runs towards the characters and says *"Welcome my most majestic travelers! Welcome! Welcome to the best tavern in the region!"* He shows the characters to a table close to the fireplace and asks the characters their orders, making theatrical gestures with his hands. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that Arn is quite anxious. If the characters try to get him to calm down or to relax, he refuses saying *"How can I stay calm in front of such majestic, such nice people?"* He then takes the characters' orders and leaves.

The tavern is quite silent, and a successful DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that the two customers at the table next to the window look sick. These two young guards, who appear to be guards based on their uniforms, have come here to have some fun, but they evidently cannot do that. If the characters ask what happened to them, one of them (Thyri) introduces herself, and explains.

Thyri has short, blonde hair with light brown eyes. She says she suspects that they have all been poisoned by something in the food, because anyone who eats leaves right away, unwell. She adds, *"It was horrible, a true nightmare... First, a middle-aged man puked; then a dvergr woman. We are trying to understand what is going on here but... You see we are not doing so good."*

If the characters ask Arn about the situation, he looks disturbed and anxious but he denies knowing anything about it. Only a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) or Charisma (Intimidation) check can make him speak: He starts by saying he's owned the tavern for many winters and nobody got poisoned, not a soul, and that this must be a mistake. He continues, *"It is all his fault! Grimkel, the evil snake... I bet the Broken Throne guys gave him plenty of coin so they'd do this. I should have known. He brought me some weird looking rabbits and I cooked them anyway."* A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that he has cooked Hel-Touched Rabbits. He is extremely worried about his business, and he gives Grimkel's address to the characters.

If the characters report the incident to anyone and want to visit the tavern afterwards, they see that it is closed. If the characters don't report the incident to the authorities, and come here the day after, they see that the tavern is full of people; eating, drinking, and having a good time. Arn runs towards the characters, shows them to the best table and prepares them a feast fit for royalty, free of charge.

3. THE MARKET

People can find anything in Kolbovaik's market ranging from rare magical items to special herbs and accessories.

The Secret Ingredient

The Secret Ingredient is a clean and well-maintained, two-story oak building with big windows. A large wooden sign hangs above the door that reads "*The Secret Ingredient*" in big, silver letters.

HELPING LULU

Right in front of the Secret Ingredient, there is a child around the age of six. She is sitting on the ground and sobbing uncontrollably. If the characters ask her what's wrong, she says her name is Jodis, and tells them her story right away. She says her dog Lulu has been very sick for the last few days. Her brother told her that she should end Lulu's life to put an end to its misery but she could not do that to Lulu. She decided to come to this shop to try and steal some potions; but the owner, Beiner, caught her and threw her out.

She wants help to heal Lulu. If the characters ask about what potion she needs, she looks embarrassed and replies, *"I don't know, I will take one of the blue ones because Lulu likes her blue toy very much."* If the characters agree to help, she takes them to the small garden of a house nearby. Lulu is lying on the ground, on the bed of flowers that Jodis appears to have made for her. A successful DC 16 Intelligence (Nature) reveals that Lulu has been severely poisoned by a plant and is in need of some herbs to be fully healed A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check and an herbalism kit or a *lesser restoration* spell can heal Lulu. If the characters fail three times, Lulu dies, and Jodis starts crying again. She doesn't talk to the characters again.

A heavy smell of various ingredients welcomes customers, and light reflects off the hundreds of glass jars on the shelves. Beiner (Mithal, lawful neutral, Commoner) is the owner of the shop and she greets customers herself with a warm smile on her face. She is a beautiful middle-aged woman with short, wavy, umber hair and big, almond eyes. She wears long black robes and small golden earrings.

Characters can find a vast variety of components here;

potions, poisons, spell scrolls, and some magic items. If sought, the chances of finding a potion, poison, or spell scroll are 70% for an uncommon, 50% for a rare, and 25% for a very rare item. If a wondrous magic item is sought, the chances of finding it are 50% for an uncommon, 30% for a rare, and 20% for a very rare item.

The Iron and Beyond

The Iron and Beyond is the most famous blacksmith in Kolbovaik. This is where people go for solid metalwork.

The Iron and Beyond looks like a simple one-story building except for the big forge in the front. Hrani (Dvergr, lawful neutral, Veteran) does all metal work in this forge, so that he has an audience of children, guards, mercenaries, and the elderly. He talks to some of them, but he is not generally friendly or talkative. When he does speak, he usually talks about his memories of battles fought long ago.

The characters can find lots of high-quality weapons and armor here. If sought, the chances of finding a magic weapon or armor are 60% for an uncommon, 30% for a rare, and 15% for a very rare item.

Una's Oddities

Una's Oddities is a one-story building located in one of the most crowded areas of the market, thus the shop is always full of townsfolk and adventurers who want to buy or sell products. It is the biggest general store in Kolbovaik, and people can find a large variety of mundane items.

Una (Austri, lawful neutral, Commoner) is a wealthy woman, but no one would know it by looking at her. Her long blonde hair is always dirty and messy, and her clothes are always patched up in various places. People say that she is so stingy that she does not even spend money on proper food. She hates bargaining so much that she sometimes shows customers the door if they try to haggle with her.

Hel-touched giant boar

4. GRIMKEL'S HUT

If the characters visit the address Arn gave them (p. 112), they come to Grimkel's Hut. It is a small wooden house close to the city gates, with a small herb garden in which there are currently two small children playing. Grimkel (Mithal, lawful neutral, scout) is sitting on a chair and drinking.

If the characters ask about the rabbits, he answers the question with a question *"Why? Were they that bad?"*. He looks sad when he learns what has happened but he insists that he had to sell something. He can't hunt animals anymore because lately all he sees are tainted bears, rabbits, and birds he sees in the woods. He says he has to feed his family at the end of the day; looking over at his children.

If the characters ask about the creatures he has seen, the characters immediately understand that they were Hel-Touched.

If the characters want to help Grimkel kill these creatures, he says he knows their places but avoids them, otherwise he would easily be killed. The following encounter occurs during the hunt:

Characters	Encounter
4	4 hel-touched giant boar (p. 260) + 1 swarm of feral ravens (p. 267)
5	5 hel-touched giant boars + 1 swarm of feral ravens
6	6 hel-touched giant boars + 1 swarm of feral ravens

SKARI BÓL

Skari Ból (Pack's Lair) is the headquarters of Odin's Vargr in Alsvartr. It is a cavern complex in the forest near Kolbovaik. If the characters come without the map Hanlon made for them, they must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom (Survival) check to find the location. Even after they locate the general location, the entrance of the cavern complex is well-hidden through the rocks and vegetation, requiring a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to pinpoint.

If the characters wander around trying to find the entrance, or if they get inside the cave, a handsome young man with hazel eyes and scarred face named Kadal (Mithal, chaotic good, p. 272) approaches them. He says *"Why have you come, travelers? Who is it you seek?"* in a soft, calm voice. If the characters say they are looking for Sidgy the Bearkiller, he smiles and replies, *"If you want, I can take you to my pack chieftain"*, and proceeds to lead the way.

The inside of the cavern complex looks like an actual village. Separators and tents of fur, hide, and cloth are arranged to look like buildings. There are also dedicated paths among them to walk on.

Sidgy is in a slightly bigger tent made of bearskin. When the characters get in the tent, they find themselves in a large

room with few pieces of furniture in it. She is sitting on a large wooden chair and whetting her greatsword.

Sidgy (Mithal, neutral, Ambushing Berserker, p. 243) is a barbarian half-jotunn with half shaved, blood red hair and a ferocious gaze resembling that of a dire wolf. She carries a large Odin talisman around her neck, and wears layers of bear pelt as armor.

Characters who make a successful DC 13 Intelligence check remember her from the High Council in Knafgata. She was one of the people at the courtyard. She stands up when she sees the characters and says *"Well, well, well... I thought you were supposed to clean the Lake. What brought you here?"*, with a smile on her face. If the characters tell her how Hanlon suspects a connection between Hel and Fenrir cultists, Sidgy nods her head, goes to close the entrance of the tent, and starts to speak:

"We, Odin's Vargr, were aware of such activities even before the High Council was, and we've had our eye on them for some time. At first, we thought it was one of Gudrick's games, but we now know that it's bigger than that...

Anyway, if you are trying to reach Fenrir cultists, you've come at the right time. I was planning on organizing an attack on their hideout... Yet... I... I cannot trust my own soldiers." she says with a sigh and stops.

She takes a deep breath as she tries to compose herself . She continues a few seconds later, *"I seized a letter off one of the corpses of those abominations. It talks of our important plans, and secrets. This is the apparent and disheartening proof of a spy in my pack."* She takes another long, deep breath *"I have to find the spy. The cleansing of our own blood must come first, or we may cease to be."* She then fixes her gaze upon the characters, and bursts out in anger, *"But these cultists will not wait for us!"*

She shuts her eyes, scratches her forehead, and goes on when she has calmed down a bit, *"So... so would you attack them with a few loyal soldiers of mine? This way you can search for what you want at the hideout."*

If the characters ask for more information about the mission, she can provide the following information;

- The hideout is to the west of Kolbovaik.
- It is on a mountain, so it will be cold.
- Sidgy will misguide her own soldiers both to reveal the spy and to ensure the safety of the characters. She will do so by declaring a fake assault towards the east, where she thinks there is a cultist hideout.
- She advises the characters to prepare some silvered weapons against the werevargrs.

If the characters ask her about Odin's Vargr, she can provide the following information;

- They are fiercely devoted to Odin, and they hunt down the Allfather's enemies.
- They are believed to be descendants of Geri and Freki, Odin's two loyal wolves.
- They act like a wolf pack, usually hunt as duos just like Geri and Freki, and try to live as close to nature as possible.
- They are not secretive about their nature as one would expect them to be; they state that all members of the cult are werevargrs, and so are Sidgy and Kadal.
- They think being a werevargr is a gift, which they receive by the blood of Geri and Freki, the trusted wolf companions of Odin, one way or another. But the Fenrir cultists have sullied it by making heretic werevargrs. They hate these werevargrs the most.

When the conversation is over, and when the characters are ready to hear more, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

"You must be ready by dawn. Then, you will meet my soldiers outside the Gates." It looks like thinking about the attack has calmed her nerves a little. She smiles and adds *"Good luck with those filth. And by the way, now that I remember, I can tell you that we were the wolves watching you while you were carrying the baby in the Mercy of Freyja."*

Kadal

ON THE WOLVES' TRACKS

When the characters arrive at the Skari Ból at dawn, they come across a pack of warriors and Sidgy talking. Read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> *"We shall fight until we have all their heads! Fear not my brothers and sisters, for Odin is with us. Today, we march east, but more importantly, we march to Valhalla! GO!"* Then, she orders her second in command to lead the march. Having realized you are there, she comes at your side and whispers. *"Wait for us to leave Kolbovoik, then go in the tents behind you. There await two of my trusted kin who will help you in your quest. They are of my blood, one of my pack; you can trust them.*
>
> *I have spread the rumor that they are too ill to move, and that is why they stay behind. I've gotta go now, have a band of warriors to mislead hahaha."* You can hear wolves howling in her laughter. She then nods and runs ahead to take the lead.

Hertha

When the characters enter the tents behind them, they see two lying in beds. When they see the characters enter the tents, they hastily throw away their blankets and get up.

One of them is Kadal (p.272). He is the man the warband encountered earlier in this chapter. His hazel eyes look intimidating with his scarred face, and so does his scowl. He wears no armor but a bear pelt. He is quite talkative and sarcastic.

The other one is a Vestri woman named Hertha (p.271). She has ginger short hair and freckled pale skin. She looks tough and angry. Unlike Kadal who looks like a barbarian, she looks like a ranger. She wears studded leather armor and has a quiver of arrows next to her bed.

She is generally silent, and not a fan of small talk. Kadal drives her crazy when he talks to her in a sarcastic manner, but they are still good friends. When the characters talk to these members of Odin's Vargr, they find out that:

- Kadal and Hertha are childhood friends of Sidgy, and they used to be a warband just like the characters' warband. Then they were introduced to Odin's commandments and thus devoted themselves to this path.
- They are going to accompany the warband to the Noble Woods of the kingdom of Nionaem.
- Their scouts have located a Fangs of Fenrir den.
- They have been finding Fangs of Fenrir and Hel cultists in the wilderness, acting together. Therefore, they believe this den to be related to the warband's quest as well. They wish to accompany them to the location.

ON THE ROAD

After the characters talk to Hertha and Kadal, they must hit the road at once. The warband will reach Noble Woods after eight days of walking. As the GM, you should keep in mind that the journey is about 190 miles.

The first 25 and the last 25 miles of this path are difficult terrain due to the denseness of the woods. However, since Hertha is a ranger and as this type of terrain is her favorite, these parts of the journey can also count as normal terrain.

The warband may want to travel by horse. In this case, they will reach the woods within four-days. They must acquire riding horses from Kolbovaik if they don't already have them.

Between the main events, they also have random encounters on the road.

ENCOUNTERS ON THE ROAD

While Hertha and Kadal are with the warband, they assist them in every encounter, both in random encounters and in those that are related to their mission.

Each day, one encounter on the table below can occur:

D10	Encounter
1	A Thormouth starts; a very heavy thunderstorm with harsh winds that lasts 1d4 hours. The warband's speed decreases by 10 feet.
2	1d8 bandits, 1d6 thugs, and 1d4 bandit captains ambush the characters. They demand 20 gp from each to let them cross.
3	A group of two vartr blades are seen walking towards Kolbovaik, they have 1d4 deserters with them as prisoners.
4	The characters encounter 1d8 Hel-touched giant boars (p. 260).
5	Ten dead bodies of Hel-touched creatures have formed a circle, and a brave shieldmaiden lies in the middle. It looks like she died due to her wounds.
6	A giant flock (1d8 swarms of feral ravens, p. 267) of ravens follow the warband from above for 1d4 hours. They do not attack unless the warband attacks first.
7	From a distance, the warband sees two bands of warriors in a skirmish(1d4 veterans, 1d6 berserkers, 1d10 scouts and 1d12 thugs on either side, rolled separately). One party carries the banner of Gudrick, and the other of Hanlon.
8	The characters come across a corpse on the side of the road , and it looks long dead. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that there is a lesser Bjarkan* runestone on the ground nearby.
9	The characters come across a campsite where 1d4 (drunk) bards are singing and dancing around. They welcome the warband to stay for a while to dine and to drink with them. If the characters stay for one hour or more, they gain the benefits of the *heroes' feast* spell.
10	A seidr (p. 264) and 2d4 specters encounter the warband.

* Bjarkan is the rune of life. As an action, one can use the runestones to cast the *revivify* spell. Once used, the runestone is consumed.

GM Tip: As the GM, you can decide to allocate treasure on these encounters based on their Challenge Ratings.

LIGHT FINGERS

On the first night of the journey, while the characters are sleeping in their camps, some shadowy figures watch them from a distance. If there is anyone keeping watch, those that are must succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check to locate these shadowy figures, within 90 feet of the warband. Right when the character(s) locate these figures, they suffer the effects of the *sleep* spell before they have a chance to wake the warband. The warband is also affected by the *sleep* spell.

Then, these shadowy figures come and steal a valuable item from each character, such as their armor, spell scrolls, spellbooks, weapons, or anything else of the sort.

The characters wake up after one minute. A successful DC 11 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that they are missing some of their items. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check lets the characters track the thieves' footprints perfectly. On a fail, the warband will lose 1d4 hours following the tracks.

After following these tracks for one hour, the characters are led to the door of a little, wooden, one story hut in what looks like a small hamlet with five or six houses. There are also footprints behind this hut, going towards another hut. It looks quite old, and some of its parts have been broken and then poorly fixed.

If the characters knock on the door, a little blonde Kuning girl at the age of 13 opens the door.

If the characters choose to break the door and enter, the door is a large object with AC 12, 10 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

Upon entry, they see the little girl hugging an extremely old Kuning man; both in a state of horror. The man looks exhausted, and the girl is about to cry. When the characters go in, read or paraphrase the following boxed text:

> The little girl stutters, *"Wh.. Who are y... you?"*, and the old man raspily calls out, *"Come here Dagny."* He then coughs as if he were about to die. He catches his breath, and continues, *"What brings you here at this time of day? What is the meaning of this?"* And he starts to cough once again. Dagny walks to a room, saying *"Hang on, grandpa. I'll get your herbs."* The old man nods as he continues to cough. After a while, Dagny returns empty-handed. Through tear-filled eyes, she says *"It's gone, pappy. Everything's gone."* She then runs to the old man with a sob and hugs him once more. He says *"We'll find a way, my little valkyrie. We'll find a way."* Then looks at you with eyes filled with tears, trying to understand why you are here.

If the characters go to the room from which Dagny just returned empty-handed, they see a chest right across from the door. This room appears to be a kitchen. The chest is opened, and it seems that there is nothing inside.

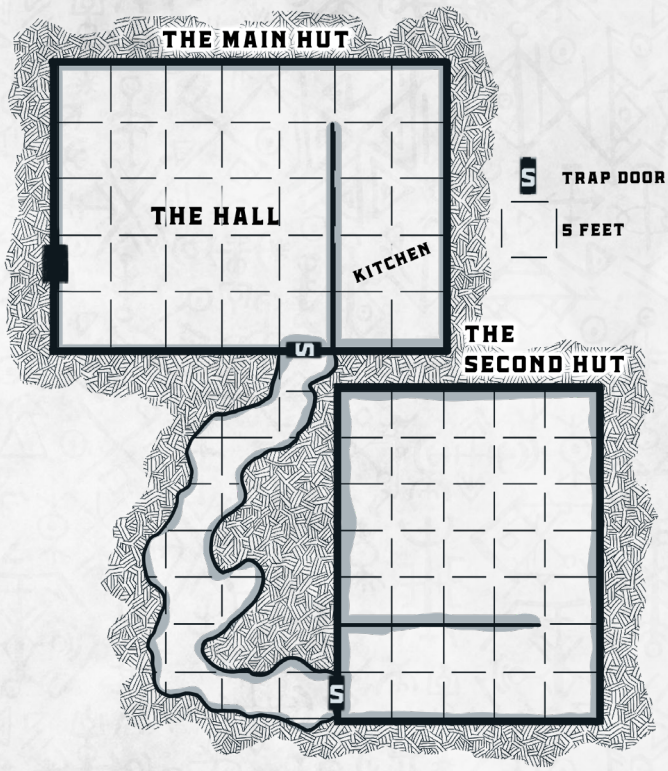
GM TIP

The girl and the old man are actually a couple of Loki followers who are members of the Light Fingers cult. They wander Svilland to trick people and steal their valuables. Some members of the organization are also interested in the

trade of information. However, they are all master manipulators. Therefore, if a character wants to check whether they are lying or not, they must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom (Insight) check. Both Dagni and Halfdan are actually healthy, middle-aged people. They are shapechangers just like Loki, and they are pretending to be helpless to play on the characters' emotions.

If the characters ask the old man and Dagny questions, they may provide the warband with following details, all of which are lies except for their names.

- The old man's name is Halfdan.
- He lost his daughter and her husband in the war between Hanlon and Gudrick. This hut was his daughter's, but now he resides here with his little granddaughter.
- He takes care of Dagny, but it is more like she takes care of him. She gets quite bored since there are no children of her age around.
- In the morning, they work together in the fields.
- They had a pouch of copper coins and some herbs for his cough in the chest in the kitchen, but they are all gone now. He doesn't know what to do. His health isn't what it used to be, after all. He needed those herbs.
- He cannot think of anyone who might rob him.
- There is only one other family living in these huts, but they are two good, elderly people just like him. Their names are Elof and Gull.



THE MAIN HUT

This is where Dagny and Halfdan live. As previously stated, it is a small hut with one story.

1. The Hall

There are two old bedrolls in the far end of the hall, and an old wooden table with two chairs next to it. It seems there is nothing else in the hall.

There is an iron trap door on the ground covered by one of the bedrolls. A successful DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a piece of this iron-plated door on the ground.

If characters ask what this is about, Halfdan says he doesn't know what's inside, and that he doesn't have the key to this door. He says his daughter must have had it, and if that was the case, both she and the key were lost during the pillage. A successful DC 17 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that he might be hiding something.

If the characters attack Halfdan and Dagny, or they open the door before attacking them, the other cultists attack the warband, coming out of the tunnel.

2. Kitchen

There is an old stove and a fireplace in the kitchen, three chairs in front of the fireplace, and an empty chest.

3. Trap Door

The iron-plated door is a Medium object with AC 19, 10 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. Lockpicking the door requires a successful DC 15 Dexterity check with thieves' tools.

This door leads to an underground tunnel which is 55 feet long, 10 feet wide and 8 feet high, with stone walls.

The corridor is not illuminated and the characters need a light source or darkvision to see inside.

There are old sacks in this corridor, and another trap door at the end of the tunnel. It has the same AC, hit points, and DC as the other one. This new door opens to another hut, identical to this one.

THE SECOND HUT

If the characters don't attack Halfdan and Dagny in the main hut before going to and searching the other hut, they realize there are some cultists here. The number of cultists depends on the number of players (see the encounter table below). If the characters engage the cultists in combat, Halfdan and Dagny get involved in the fight, coming out of the tunnel casting the *misty step* spell.

Treasure. The characters' stolen items are stored in three sacks, and there is a separate sack containing 150 gp worth of coins and objects, and one uncommon magic item.

While searching the other hut, a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the location of the iron trap door on the ground, if they haven't located it by coming out of the tunnel already (see above).

Characters	Encounter
4	Halfdan, Dagny, and 2 fingers of Loki
5	Halfdan, Dagny and 3 fingers of Loki
6	Halfdan, Dagny and 5 fingers of Loki

FINGER OF LOKI

Medium humanoid (Kuning), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)
Hit Points 55 (10d8 + 10)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dexterity +4, Charisma +4
Skills Deception +6, Perception +2, Persuasion +4, Sleight of Hand +6, Stealth +6
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Austris (Common), Mithal, Vestri
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Dark Devotion. Finger of Loki has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened..

Spellcasting. Finger of Loki is a 3rd-level spellcaster. Their spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). They has the following spells prepared:
Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, light, ray of frost, shocking grasp*
1st level (4 slots): *expeditious retreat, longstrider, shield*
2nd level (2 slots): *hold person, misty step*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Finger of Loki makes three melee weapon attacks with its poisonous dagger.

Poisonous Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage plus 1 poison damage.

DAGNY

Medium humanoid (Kuning, shapechanger), chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (mage armor)
Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 12)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Dexterity +7, Charisma +8
Skills Deception +11, Perception +6, Persuasion +8, Sleight of Hand +10, Stealth +10
Senses passive Perception 16
Languages Austris (Common), Mithal, Vestri
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Dark Devotion. Dagny has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Natural Deceptionist. Dagny has advantage on her Charisma (Deception) checks.

Shapechanger. Dagny can use her action to polymorph into a Small or Medium humanoid, or back into her true form. Other than her size, her statistics are the same in each form. She reverts to her true form if she dies.

Although she is middle aged, she likes to alter her appearance as a little girl the most.

Spellcasting. Dagny is a 7th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). She has the following spells prepared:
Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, light, mage hand, prestidigitation*
1st level (4 slots): *mage armor**, magic missile, oppression of thurisaz*, shield*
2nd level (3 slots): *hold person, misty step*
3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, smoke of lava*, word of surtr**
4th level (1 slots): *greater invisibility*
** Svilland spells*
*** Dagny casts mage armor while the encounter begins.*

ACTIONS

Dagger of Odds. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage. When rolling the damage roll, roll another d4. On the result of an odd number, subtract it from the damage roll. On a result of an even number, add it to the damage roll.

HALFDAN

Medium humanoid (Kuning, shapechanger), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)
Hit Points 84 (13d8 + 26)
Speed 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dexterity +6, Charisma +6
Skills Deception +9, Perception +3, Persuasion +6, Sleight of Hand +9, Stealth +9
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages Austris (Common), Mithal, Vestri
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Dark Devotion. Halfdan has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Natural Deceptionist. Halfdan has advantage on his Charisma (Deception) checks.

Shapechanger. Halfdan can use his action to polymorph into a Small or Medium humanoid, or back into his true form. Other than his size, his statistics are the same in each form. He reverts to her true form if he dies.

Although he is middle aged, he likes to alter her appearance as an old dying man the most.

Spellcasting. Halfdan is a 3rd-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, light, ray of frost, shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *expeditious retreat, longstrider, shield*

2nd level (2 slots): *hold person, misty step*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Halfdan makes two melee weapon attacks.

Longsword of Filth. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) poison damage. When the target takes poison damage from an attack, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1d4 rounds. The target is immune to being poisoned by Halfdan's attacks if it succeeds once.

THE MAD MAN'S EYES

After the incident with the thief cultists (**fingers of Loki**), the characters encounter an old Vestri man on the way to the hideout of the Fenrir cultists, in the midst of the wilderness, all alone. He waves to the characters in a friendly manner.

He is wearing old, ragged clothes and a bear pelt to keep himself warm and cozy, and a bandage on his wide forehead. He looks dirty with his long, greasy, white hair and ever-tangled beard. His hazel eyes look surprised, shocked, and happy at the same time. He then exclaims, *"HOLD!"* as if he were a mighty commander.

The characters may want to talk to this man (**priest**) who looks quite eager to talk to the warband himself. If so, he introduces himself.

"Welcome, dear children. Welcome, indeed... It's been some time since we've spoken to mighty warriors such as yourselves. Hahaha! you remind me of myself at your age, which happens to be about a month ago; I think... Time is a concept that eludes me at the moment. Let me...

Oh! Forgive us. Let us introduce ourselves.

We are Balder. Bringer of joy, among other things. Anyways, there was an occasion... not one week ago, about which we wanted to tell you.

We saw a woman then. We thought that it was a nice view. Nice... view... The woman carried a bird made of blood on her shoulders.

Yes, on her shoulders, actually the bird was on her right shoulder.

Anyways, then everything changed. As she rode, the earth rotted before her, the clouds darkened, the trees near her faded, died...

I cannot lie, it was scary; very scary indeed... It reminded us of the time we spent, you know, underground... I hid until the woman passed by. But... I'm here!"

Then the man focuses on the sky and looks at the clouds for a moment. He looks inordinately happy to still be alive. The man who introduces himself as Balder gives the following information to the characters if they continue to speak with him. However, bear in mind that he is a mad man.

- The reason why he refers to himself as we, from time to time, is that he has another consciousness within himself that he tries to rein in.
- He really thinks that he is Balder.
- The woman and the blood bat were headed towards the West. She rode like the wind on a skeletal horse.
- When the woman disappeared, he brought nature back to its former condition.

He is willing to talk about great adventures he has experienced back in the day, but if the characters ask too many questions about the woman he saw, he says, *"What are we? A God? We can't know everything, you know."*

After spending nearly ten minutes with the warband, or until the warband has asked all they wanted to ask, he says, *"We have many important things to do."* and leaves, walks into the wilderness until he is out of sight.

THE BORDER

The characters reach the border between Alsvartr and Nionaem in the afternoon. When they are about to enter Nionaem, they encounter 5 **drakkar skipans** (p. 249) and 4 **vartr blades** (p. 269) talking to each other. They are elite warriors from Nionaem and Alsvartr, respectively.

When they see the characters, they stop chit chatting about the unusual stuff they came across on their patrols and focus on the warband. The drakkar skipans ask them for their purpose of crossing over to Nionaem.

If the warband answers honestly, they let the warband into their territory.

If the warband chooses to lie, they must succeed on a DC 17 Charisma (Deception) check. Otherwise, the drakkar skipans get angry.

However, if this is the case, the vartr blades try to reason both with the warband and with the other soldiers, and help the warband enter Nionaem.

THE TRAP

At sunset on the same day, while the crimson red sky hangs over the vast wilderness, the characters enter an ambush site.

There are five traps on the ground, hidden with a wide piece of fabric . The piece of fabric is concealed under snow and thus is not visible at first sight. Under the fabric, there is a 20-foot-deep and 10-foot-long pit .

A successful DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the traps. If the warband cannot locate a trap in time, the characters in the front must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or fall into the pit.

When a character falls in, or when the warband successfully avoids two of the traps, a number of foul creatures made of blood come out of the snowy ground. They surround the warband and attack.

Characters	Encounter
4	3 bloddrapes (p. 244)
5	4 bloddrapes
6	5 bloddrapes

Blooddrape

SMELLS LIKE DEATH

The day after coming across the Trap, the characters see a hillside full of pine trees in the distance. From a distance, The warband locates a huge abandoned tent somewhere close to these trees.

Most of the trees around this tent look burnt and the tent looks wrecked. If the characters get close to the tent, they encounter three dead dvergrs, lying on the ground with a shocked and terrified look on their faces. They do not seem to have wounds.

One of them is holding a leather-covered notebook in his hand. The post-death rigidity has set in on each of those bodies, so much that getting a leather notebook from one of the dead dvergr's hands requires a successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check.

There are many small holes in the ground that look identical to the holes the warband encountered before. This is a sign that they are on the right track.

However, as soon as the characters start to investigate the area, a **death spirit** (p. 248) and **tormented souls** (p. 258) emerge from the woods to confront the warband. The area gets colder and the clouds start to pour rain over the area.

Characters	Encounter
4	1 death spirit , 2 tormented souls
5	1 death spirit , 4 tormented souls
6	1 death spirit , 6 tormented souls

If the characters open the leather-covered notebook, they will find a research log written by the dvergr in the Dvergmer language:

Research Log, Day 1:

Today, I was surrounded by a pack of wolves in the wilderness. Just as I thought I was done for, a trold came out of nowhere and saved me.

Until that very moment, I had only heard horror stories about troldfolk. But when I looked into her eyes I felt that we were one and the same; or at least not so different as one might think.

I hereby pledge my life to learn more about their culture. I shall count the days until I complete my quest.

Research Log, Day 3:

I encountered a Kuning lady today, who told me that troldfolk live in forests and mountains. She also said they can be mischievous when they want to be, and are therefore untrustworthy.

Research Log, Day 17:

Ancient stories state that some trolds are known to commune with nature. They even manipulate elements and bend them to their will.

Some foul-spirited trolds are even able to create hurricanes and cause immense trouble for Svillanders.

However, I don't believe them to be evil. Some of those stories are exaggerated and told to keep people away from the mountains and forests, which are evidently dangerous areas.

Research Log, Day 24:

I must be blessed by the Allfather himself, for today I've met a Mithal warrior, traveling the land. He claims to have seen a trold and to have become friends with him.

The way he tells his story is like no other. The warrior talked of a male trold whose name was Grenus whom he had found protecting his living environment

Trold tradition calls for intruders to win an eating contest, answer a riddle, or fight to the death; or they cannot pass . Respecting their tradition, the warrior correctly assumed that his best chance of winning lay with an eating contest. After besting the trold, he was allowed to enter the trold's territory. Thus I've learnt two things: they like games and contests; but also have rigid rules and traditions they ask all to respect.

Grenus is far far away now; thus, we are unfortunately not able to go and meet him on short notice. I and two good friends of mine are on a journey, however, to the Noble Woods, where we learned that a tribe of troldfolk exists.

Research Log, Day 27:

We are getting really close to the Noble Woods. I am very excited in particula.....

Tormented soul

It is unclear why the notebook abruptly reaches its end.

NOBLE WOODS

After they fight with the spirits, the characters' path leads them to the Noble Woods. There is a never-ending mist, as the forest is quite dense. Also due to this density, sunshine can hardly reach the ground.

This makes the forest dark at all times. Therefore, the characters have a hard time perceiving their surroundings; they have disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

As the characters delve into the forest, they encounter wild animals such as wolves, elks, rabbits; going about their business. Some wolves are seen hunting a deer from a distance, and the characters see a raven fly over them, but none of them approach or engage the warband.

As the Noble Woods is a dense forest, a tribe of troldfolk lives here. After spending two hours in the woods, a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check is required for the characters to see the trolds who live in the forest.

If they can see the tribe, they must respect their tradition to show that they have come in peace.

Either way, a pack of troldfolk comes to the characters to talk.

An old trold woman comes forth to speak as the spokesperson of the pack. She wears ragged, old, leather clothes. Her face is wrinkled due to old age. She has a big nose for the proportions of her face.

In Austris, she says, "*You've come to the misty land of the mighty trold. Retreat, or prove your worth.*"

If the characters ask how they can prove their worth, she provides them with the following options.

Right by Might. One of them must challenge their champion **trold** (p. 268). They shall fight to death.

Right by Mouthful. One of them must best their champion trold in an eating contest. What will be eaten is determined by their traditions. This particular tribe eats giant maggots in these types of contests. If the characters choose this option, both the trold and the character must make DC 15 Constitution saving throws. The first one to fail on three rolls loses by throwing up.

Right by Cunning. They must answer one of the following riddles. You may choose to ask any one of them:

What is greater than Odin,
more mischievous than Loki,
the poor have it,
the rich need it,
And you'll surely die if you eat it?

The answer. "Nothing."

Through towns and villages it goes
Some: around trees and next to the rose.
Though it might quake beneath hooves,
It's forever still, it never moves.

The answer. "A road."

What ails both rich and poor?
What makes us ache, and makes us sore,
What makes us all long for a pillow;
One you can catch, but cannot throw?

The answer. "A cold."

If the characters can prove their worth, they are free to wander the woods as they please, but if not, they must encounter a pack of troldfolk.

If the pack does not survive, the elder of the tribe will not send any more trold to fight with the warband since the elder does not want any more of troldfolk blood to be shed.

Characters	Encounter
4	7 trolds (p. 268)
5	8 trolds
6	9 trolds

Level Up. Before you move on to the next episode your characters must be 8th level. Feel free to inform your players to level up during their next long rest.

Death spirit

INTO THE WOLF'S DEN

After a long and eventful voyage, the warband reaches the region where the cultists' den is located.

The hideout is on an isolated mountain slope on the western border of Noble Woods; a dense forest covered by a heavy mist. A steep, snowy mountain slope lies on the other side.

They see a crude, patchwork wall made of wood, pelts, and big rocks. Behind the wall, they can see the rooftops of wooden houses and the tops of tents.

When the characters are looking at the area from a safe distance, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> The hideout is built around a cave entrance on a steep mountain slope. A rough wall protects and conceals the Hideout, but the mist and the forest provides better cover in itself.
>
> Then, you see skulls and body parts on stakes, a considerable number of them belonging to humanoids.
>
> The dozens of torch lights of the patrolling groups are flickering, and moving in and around the Hideout.
>
> You can see that there are hundreds of people here.

As soon as the characters stop observing the area, Hertha whispers, *"We have to figure out how to get inside; we have to be smart and patient. We may have to find ways to sabotage the Hideout; to weaken their ranks... Otherwise..."* Although she is still determined, there is a hint of worry on her face.

CAPTIVES IN THE WOODS

After Hertha is done speaking, the characters who make a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check hear some distant voices coming from the forest.

If they follow the voice, it leads them to a group of people, who have been tied together with a simple rope on the ground, around a sturdy tree.

The captives have also been gagged with pieces of cloth. If the characters remove them, one of the captives weakly says to the characters, *"Help us..."*.

If the characters come closer, they see that only the captive speaking to them (Anakol - Mithal, Lawful neutral, commoner) is conscious, but he is also about to pass out.

Two of these four captives are young Mithal males. The other two are middle-aged females, one of whom is a Half-mountain-jotunn and the other is a Vestri.

They all look exhausted. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that they have not slept properly for a few days, and that they are thirsty, hungry, and cold.

A successful DC 17 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that one of the women has frostbite on her right leg. Her condition can be reversed by means of the *lesser restoration* spell; otherwise, they will have to chop her right leg off so the rot does not spread.

If the characters untie the captives, give them water, and cover them with a robe or a blanket, they regain consciousness in a couple of hours.

The rest of the captives are Dan (Half-mountain-jotunn, Lawful good, commoner), Visate (Vestri, Lawful good, commoner), and Skamkel (Mithal, Lawful good, commoner).

When asked what happened, Visate says the following in a shallow voice:

> *"A few days ago, a wolf pack attacked our village, Hranstoir. There were too many of them and they slaughtered our families... Then they caught us, and tied us up...*
>
> *They were talking about sacrificing us to Fenrir but... but they left us here. I don't know why they wanted to sacrifice us, or why they didn't in the end; but it's the truth."*

Visate doesn't lie to the characters, and a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that she is telling the truth. The others also confirm the story when they are awakened.

A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check reminds the characters that some Fenrir cultists tie their sacrifices in forests before they sacrifice them in rituals and offer them to the wolves. They believe that wolves represent Fenrir; therefore, if wolves eat the sacrifices, it means that their souls are consumed by Fenrir. If they are not eaten by animals or consumed by the wilderness, it means they can be used in sacrificial rituals as living sacrifices.

Hence, the cultists might have left them here to collect them after a few days if they were not eaten, and by the looks of their condition, they may be along to pick them up some time soon.

Indeed, four hours later, a patrol group arrives. When they do, use the encounter table below. Although the **fangs of Fenrir** are shapechangers, they won't polymorph into werevargrs in this specific encounter.

Characters	Encounter
4	4 fangs of Fenrir (p. 245), 2 claws of Fenrir (p. 245)
5	5 fangs of Fenrir, 2 claws of Fenrir

THREE PATHS

Hertha first looks at the captives, and then looks around. You can see in her face that she is assessing the situation.

After a while, she says, "*I have a couple of ideas about how to get in: We can disguise ourselves as captives or as cultists, or we can fight our way in, but I don't know if that would be wise given our numbers and theirs.*

There may also be weaknesses in the construction of the Hideout; things we could sabotage. We should also keep an eye out for that."

At this point, characters' decisions will take them on completely different paths of the mission: *The Cultists*, *The Captive*, or *The Adventurer*. Each of them has different options, risks, and challenges.

I. The Cultist. If four hours have passed, and the characters have killed the cultists they encountered, they can wear the cultists' clothes. If four hours have not yet passed, the characters may choose to wait for the arrival of the cultists and wear their clothes once they are dead.

II. The Adventurer. If the characters kill the cultists, and choose not to wear any disguises, the remaining cultists in the Hideout notice that the cultist patrols did not come back. As a result, they become more alert. Thus, the characters have disadvantage on their Dexterity (Stealth) and Charisma (Deception) checks.

III. The Captive. The characters take the captives' place (by changing their armor, dropping most weapons, and tying themselves). If 4 hours have not passed, the patrol mentioned in the previous section finds them.

If the characters have killed them already, they must hide the bodies and wait for a second patrol to come along if they wish to take this path.

In addition to these three options, the characters may decide to divide into two groups. In this case, you can follow both of the chosen paths as the GM. You can also decide to merge them at whichever point you choose.

THE HIDEOUT

The characters can easily find their way to the gate of the Hideout by following the footprints and paw prints leading to the entrance. There are two **claws of Fenrir** guarding the gates. The guards' reaction to the warband depends on the path the characters have taken, and is written in the section of the corresponding path.

The hideout is packed with cultists, but not all of them are fighters. Most are claws of Fenrir, who are all low-ranking members, working to earn a higher status (fangs of Fenrir). Others are in charge of logistics for the Hideout, some of whom are children or elderly.

Apart from it being crowded, it is a jungle of tents and buildings. It is also a wide enough area to allow for stealth; there are a couple of empty spaces in the Hideout, and some spaces only have a couple of people in them.

No matter the path the characters take to enter the Hideout, read or paraphrase the boxed text below once they are inside:

> The aura inside hits you hard; the mist hangs in the air. The scene is horrid; heads, and skulls placed on pikes that appear to be in every corner appall you, and break your hearts. Some of them are frozen, while others are rotting, emitting the sour smell of death all around.
>
> There is a great hole, right in the middle of the Hideout, with three cultists standing around it, next to two people crammed into a big metal cage in a prisoner's tent.
>
> It is crowded, chaotic, and cold. The tents and the buildings are around the cave entrance.
>
> All of them are full of Fenrir cultists. They mostly speak Hellic and Mithal, and all of them are wearing black pelts and leather face covers.

POPULATION

There are 30 **claws** and 10 **fangs of Fenrir** in the Hideout. The rest are not warriors.

There are also 30 initiates (**bandits**), but since they have no real bond to Fenrir, having been gathered from the area in a rush, they flee (see *Final Encounter*, p.133) from combat.

There are also dozens of commoners, but they are only here to tend to the cultists' needs. Many are slaves and some the elderly, and they don't possess the ability to defend the cult in battle.

Characters can get a sense of how many people are in the Hideout after 1 hour of surveillance, by succeeding on a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check. The DC increases to 15 if they are outside.

PATROLS

There are cultists patrolling the area at all times. These patrols are made up of various types of warriors and a different number of cultists.

No one is Around (86-100%). The warband can move freely without encountering patrol groups or any other threat.

Wanderers (51-85%). These are single cultists having a normal day. They are running around in the Hideout, going about their day. A wanderer may be a **claw of Fenrir** (100-31%), or a **fang of Fenrir** (30-01%).

As they are not on guard duty, they are not actively making Wisdom (Perception) checks.

Watchers (21-50%). Watchers are the eyes and ears of the Hideout. They patrol in pairs. They consist of two **claws of Fenrir** (60%), a **claw** and a **fang of Fenrir** (20%), or two **fangs of Fenrir** (20%).

Watchers actively look out for signs of trouble. Thus, they regularly make Wisdom (Perception) checks.

As the GM, you can decide to have the watchers make only one check to determine the success of the group, or you can choose to have them make many.

Gang (01-20%). A gang is the first line of defense in the Hideout against intruders. They consist of several warriors, being; 4 **claws** and 1 **fang of Fenrir** (50%), 3 **claws** and 2 **fangs of Fenrir** (30%), or 2 **claws** and 3 **fangs of Fenrir**.

Gangs are also on active lookout for signs of trouble. Thus, they regularly make Wisdom (Perception) checks.

As the GM, you can decide to have them make only one check to determine the success of the group, or you can choose to have them make many.

PATROL PATTERNS

How the cultists patrol the Hideout in general is at your discretion as the GM. You may wish to prepare patrol patterns beforehand and keep track of them as your players progress through the Hideout.

On the other hand, you can also leave it to chance: You can make one of the players roll a d100 during each action taken by the warband or some of the characters such as going from one location in the Hideout to the other.

The probability of the warband coming across a group, as well as what that group may consist of, are given in the *Patrols* section.

The third option is to base the encounters on time-passed: The warband has the chance of encountering a **wanderer** every 15 minutes, a **patrol** every 30 minutes, and a **gang** every hour; these encounters are not stacked.

SUSPICION

If a character fails their check to maintain their disguise, the cultists observing them get suspicious and approach the character (or the warband if they are together).

After a brief interrogation, the cultist(s) will see through their disguise. In that case, roll for initiative.

On their turn(s), the cultist(s) will howl like wolves or yell "*Intruders!*" using their bonus action. The characters can stay in disguise if they kill or knock the cultist(s) unconscious until then.

The characters can also find other methods of evading being found out, such as casting a *silence* spell to drown out the warning of the cultist(s).

BUSTED!

If the suspicious cultist(s) succeed in warning the others, things quickly get out of hand. The following rounds after the warning are crucial: At the end of the first round after the warning, a **watcher** group arrives at the scene and joins in combat. This is followed by another watcher group at the end of the second round, and a **gang** at the end of the third round and at the end of each following round.

The cultists continue to flock to the scene until the warband is surrounded by 30 **claws of Fenrir** and 10 **fangs of Fenrir**.

TAKEN!

If the cultists defeat the warband, they do not kill them; Fenrir cultists respect strength and challenge. Therefore, captives such as the characters are very valuable sacrifices for the cult.

When the characters are taken as captives, move onto *The Captives* path as the GM. In this transaction, the characters regain their consciousness at their hit point maximum. The cultists also heal the characters since they want to use all of their blood in their rituals.

LOCATIONS

There are several locations of importance in the Hideout, also marked on the following map.

1. CULTIST TENTS

There are 30 cultist tents in the Hideout, 25 of which are for 2 people, and 5 of which are large tents for 4 people.

Treasure. The characters find coins worth 3d6 gp in total in one small tent. Roll a d100**.** If you roll between 1-50, there is a *potion of healing*; 51-85, there is a *potion of greater healing;* 86-100, there is an uncommon consumable magic item (a potion or a spell scroll) in a small tent. When looting large tents, the number of potions or items found are doubled.

2. ARMORY

The armory is a 30-foot-square, wooden building. The remains of broken dishware and other mundane items can be seen on the floor, hinting at the carnage that took place in this house during the cult's pillage of the village.

The cultists prefer to carry their armor and weapons with them, but they stash the armors, weapons and equipment looted during their raids.

Armor. There are 1d8 light armors, 1d6 medium armors, and 1d4 heavy armors.

Ammunition. There are 1d100 arrows and 1d10 Svillander javelins.

Weapons. There are 1d10 simple weapons and 1d10 martial weapons.

Equipment. There is mundane equipment; such as backpacks of a specific purpose (filled with relevant mundane items), ropes, candles, torches, and whetstones worth a total of 250 gp.

Magic Items. **Roll a d100.** If you roll between 1-50, there is an uncommon magic item; 51-85, there are 1d4 uncommon magic items; 86-100, there is a rare magic item in the armory. The magic item(s) may be a weapon, an armor, or a wondrous item.

3. FOOD STASH

Another wooden building contains the food of the cultists. The building is 20 feet by 25 feet. There are sacks of grains and cheese, along with fresh or salted meat of various animals hanging off the wall, and off the ceiling here and there. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check reveals that some of the meat does not seem to belong to animals.

4. GENERAL STASH

There is also a wooden hut with a makeshift door, unlike the doors of the other wooden buildings around it, which appear to have been built with more care.

There is a **claw of Fenrir** guarding the hut, but it leaves to take a break of 15 to 30 minutes every two hours.

There is mundane equipment here; various items of general purpose. The items are worth 3d100 gp in total, but they weigh dozens of pounds altogether.

Poison Vials. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals a box, containing 15 poison vials. The cult keeps vials of poison to poison the water of villages before raids.

5. HOUSE OF COMMAND

At the center of the Hideout, there is a two-story building with wooden walls, elevated on a crawl space foundation made of stone. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that this building used to be an inn.

Ivar (the leader of the cultists) and the Bloodreader stay in this house. Ivar is in the building while the Bloodreader is not. 1d6 **claws** guard the entrance, while 1d4 **fangs of Fenrir** patrol the inside.

Ivar usually spends his time on the ground floor, while the Bloodreader tends to stay on the upper floor, except during the rituals performed around the hole.

Ivar's Chest. There is a large chest in Ivar's chambers. It is decorated with shiny ornaments with many different colors, as well as bleached bones.

The chest can be lock picked with a successful DC 20 Dexterity check with thieves' tools. However, the chest is trapped with a 4th level *glyph of warding* spell with explosive runes of fire, with DC 15. When triggered, there is a very loud explosion.

If a character starts to pick the lock, the character can realize there is a trap with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check.

A spell or other effect that can sense the presence of magic, such as a *detect magic* spell, reveals an aura of abjuration magic around the chest.

The trap is activated if a character tries to move the chest, or break it, or casts a *knock* spell on it to open the lock.

The trap is not activated if it is opened with the key for the lock of the chest, which Ivar carries on his person. A successful *dispel magic* (DC 15) spell cast on the chest destroys the trap.

The chest contains art objects, gems and coins that are worth 1000 gp in total. There is also 1 very rare magic item, which may be a weapon, an armor, or a wondrous item of your choice.

Bloodreader's Chest. There is a Medium chest on the second floor, in the Bloodreader's room. The chest is stylish, decorated with some ornaments, but it looks simple and mundane in general.

Although the chest does not have a physical lock on it, it is locked magically.

The chest can be pried open or broken. It has 20 AC, 20 hit points, and is immune to psychic, necrotic, cold, poison, and radiant damage, as well as bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks.

The chest can be opened by a *knock* or *dispel magic* spell, as well as with the *bloodstone* found on the Bloodreader (see *The Final Encounter* p. 133).

Although there is no physical lock on the chest, it is locked

magically with the *arcane lock* spell, and is trapped with a *symbol* spell (symbol of pain, DC 17 Constitution saving throw). The trap is Asta's gift to the Bloodreader.

The DC is 17 to spot the glyph of the *symbol* spell. A spell or other effect that can sense the presence of magic, such as a *detect magic* spell, reveals an aura of abjuration magic around the chest.

The trap is activated if a character tries to move the chest, or break it, or casts a *knock* spell on it to open the magical lock. It is not activated if the *bloodstone* of the Bloodreader is being carried by the character trying to open the chest.

A successful *dispel magic* (DC 17) cast on the chest destroys the trap.

The chest contains a number of valuable gems (all varieties of red in color) that are worth a total of 800 gp, spell components for 1d100 castings of spells (including 200 gp worth of components for random special spells), and it also contains a tome of magic.

Bloodreader's Spell Tome. The Bloodreader's chest also contains a spell tome with a variety of spells with runes written in Hellic: 1d8 1st level spells, 1d8 2nd level spells, 1d6 3rd level spells, 1d4 4th level spells, and 1 5th level spell.

These spells can be copied into the spellbooks of the characters. Also, its pages can be torn carefully with an Intelligence (Arcana) check (DC 13 + the spell's level), and be used separately as a consumable spell scroll.

6. WATER WELL

There is an open water well near the mountain slope. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals some wet footprints as well as someone carrying a bucket away from the hole, indicating that somebody comes to the well and takes some water every half-hour or so.

The characters can realize they can poison the well by making a successful DC 13 Intelligence check (*Sabotage Options*, p. 130).

7. POOL OF BLOOD

If the characters examine the big hole in the middle of the Hideout, a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that it is a pool of blood.

If the characters examine the blood by smelling or and tasting it, a successful Intelligence (Nature) check reveals that the blood is relatively fresh and that it is a mixture of the blood of many animals and humanoids.

A character who tasted the blood must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the character suffers minor Hel corruption, gaining one minor Hel point (p. 9). Characters that fail their saving throw and gain minor corruption, or those who succeed on their saving throws are immune to this effect for 24 hours.

I. THE CULTISTS

After wearing the cultists' clothes, the characters have advantage on Dexterity (Stealth), and Charisma (Deception) checks made against the cultists. This is because the cultists

are less likely to become suspicious of those wearing the cult's clothing and armor.

If the characters have not taken the captives with them, the guards at the entrance notice and take a look at them. In this case, the characters must succeed on a Charisma (Deception) or Charisma (Performance) contested by the guards' Wisdom (Insight) checks.

If the characters succeed, one of the guards opens the gate and says, *"So you've returned empty-handed... That's not gonna sit well with the Bloodreader."* If the characters ask something to the guard, he replies.

If the characters have taken the captives with them, the guards open the gate right away, and do not so much as give them a second look.

In both successful cases, the characters get inside the Hideout and can sabotage the cultists (see *The Inside* under *Sabotage Options*, p. 130).

If the characters look around and walk around once they enter, they may notice the following:

THE CULTISTS ENCOUNTERS

A. DINNER TIME

The characters may come across a small feast. The cultists are going about their day; perhaps enjoying a meal, some music, and various games. When they notice the characters, they invite the characters to join them.

When the warband is seated around the large table full of food and drinks, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> The chaos of the crowd reminds you of the last feast you attended in the Trinity of Wilderness. It is almost as though you are reliving the defiled version of that sweet memory.
>
> People are eating, drinking, and talking. The table is full of dishes, most of which you are familiar with, along with some others that look unappetizing. A ginger, strong-looking cultist is playing the drums loudly near the table, with a slow, looming, ominous beat that fills you with dread.
>
> They do not seem to care about you, and most of them appear to be drunk.

The feast takes three hours after the characters join it, and they must succeed on a Charisma (Deception) check contested by the cultists' Wisdom (Insight) check. Since the cultists willing to talk to the characters are sloshed with mead, they have disadvantage on their checks.

As the GM, you can decide to make only one check to determine the success of the group of cultists.

You can also have some of them ask the characters some questions:

A handsome man (Skard) with a long, lean body and black, messy hair asks, *"Have you come from the West? I don't think I've seen you before*. However, he is so drunk that he believes anything the characters say in response.

A young woman (Rannveig) with short, walnut hair and a large scar on her neck asks *"Will you join the ritual?"*. She is drunk enough that she is ready to tell the characters more about the Hideout. Therefore, if the characters ask about it, she replies truthfully. The characters can learn the following information from Rannveig:

Bloodreader' Ritual. If the characters ask Rannveig about how she is, she talks of the ritual to be performed by the Bloodreader to accept novice initiates into the cult. She adds that she is giddy about the sacrifice, which (she heard) is going to be different than most others.

At the end of the feast, a middle-aged cultist comes over, carrying a large wolfskin, which looks like it is full of some kind of liquid. As soon as the wolfskin is in sight, people start to chant "*Fume! Fume! Fume!*". The wolfskin is full of a special drink called wolf-fume. All people who joined the feast must drink it one by one.

> **WOLF-FUME**
>
> A famous alcoholic beverage among Fenrir followers who generally use the occasion of drinking it as a bonding activity. The beverage is made with tree roots, with an emphasis on pine, fermented in wolfskin.
>
> Before consuming it, all who will drink it must pour some of their blood inside the skin. Then the beverage is poured into a large cup from which everyone drinks, one by one.

B. FOOD DELIVERY

If one of the characters passes by the tent used as the main kitchen of the Hideout, Hogni the Cook calls them over, saying, *"Hey you! Come here! Bring Ivar his food."*

The cook is a tall, middle-aged, handsome man with dark brown, almond-shaped eyes and brown hair. He has a large tattoo of a wolf fang on his neck.

The meal consists of two dishes and a drink; a mushroom stew, a deer rib cage (cooked rare), and a glass of Wolf-fume. After giving the food, he adds, *"And be quiet! Do not wake him up!"*

If the characters ask questions about Ivar or his location, the cook becomes suspicious, so the character speaking to the cook must succeed on a DC 14 Charisma (Deception) saving throw.

If they fail, the cook alerts the other cultists. If they succeed, the cook answers the question and insults the character's intelligence saying they should have learnt that by now.

If the characters want to poison the meal prepared by Hogni, they must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity (Stealth) check to keep from getting caught.

The characters must succeed on a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check and look around the Hideout to realize that Ivar is the leader of the Hideout.

In addition, a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals his tent, which is bigger and fancier than the others, and which looks like it was set up with more care.

When the characters enter Ivar's tent, they find a man sleeping. They can leave the meal on the basic table in the tent.

If they have chosen to poison the food, they should leave the tent quickly. After about thirty minutes, chaos breaks out in the Hideout, and the characters hear the cultists say that Ivar got a whiff of poison in his food.

From then on, the DC of all checks made by the characters to hide their' identity from the cultists increases by 2. In addition, the characters have disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth), Charisma (Deception) and Charisma (Performance) checks.

After the failed assassination, Ivar rushes to the Pool of Blood with his bodyguard. The Bloodreader emerges from the pool and the two engage in a heated discussion about the situation. This creates an opportunity for the characters to *sabotage the Ritual* (p.131) if they so choose.

II. THE ADVENTURER

The characters can observe the Hideout from the outside to determine patterns or weak spots. They must keep watch to figure out the information below. With each passing hour, give the players the following information one-by-one:

Number of Cultists. The characters figure out how many cultists there are in the Hideout, which has been given in the *Population* (p.124) section.

Unstable Snow. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that there is a heavy layer of snow just above the Hideout, which they can use to create an avalanche (p.131).

Patrols. A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals there are three patrols in the wilderness outside the Hideout. A DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals their routes in the area (see *Patrol Patterns*, p.125). The characters can attack these groups to weaken enemy forces.

Side Entrance. A successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the presence of another entrance to the Hideout beside the main gate. There is a small cave entrance within 200 feet of the Hideout, which leads to a tunnel to the Hideout itself. If the characters use this path to sneak in, it is a direct, dark and narrow path that is 400 feet long and 5 feet wide.

Ritual. Towards sundown, a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the presence of preparations for a ritual which will probably be performed in the night.

If the characters enter the Hideout they can use the sabotage methods given under *The Inside* (p.130) until the cultists are alerted.

III. THE CAPTIVE

If the characters disguise themselves as the captives, they are taken to the Hideout and caged in a tent next to a pool of blood. They don't have to make Deception or Performance checks as long as they retain their role as helpless captives.

The cultist patrol (see *Patrol Patterns*, p.125) finds the characters, ties them up, and puts them in a cage with two other captives (see *Other Captives*), carrying them to the Hideout. After the cultists shove the characters in the cage, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> They put you in a cage, like helpless prey; like a deer waiting to be killed, cooked, and eaten.
>
> The cage has a wooden floor and ceiling, but the bars surrounding you are made of wrought iron. They are rusty, and you notice dried bits of blood here and there.
>
> The cage smells of blood, sweat and refuse; probably accumulated from the many captives held here before.
>
> After all the days you spent on the road, you now find yourself surrounded by a sea of others, but you feel lonelier than ever.
>
> Lots of people are wandering around the Hideout, some passing you by without so much as a glance, and some taking the time to insult or curse you, or even spit in your face.

SECURITY

The characters are tied, but the ropes are not that strong. They can be loosened with a successful DC 13 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check, or ripped with a successful DC 13 Strength check.

A **gang** approaches the cages every hour. They check on the cages and the captives, but given that most captives are either exhausted or badly hurt, they seem quite confident that none would try to escape and don't take too close a look.

OTHER CAPTIVES

There are two other people in the same cage as the characters. The characters notice that they are quite pale and that they have probably been used as sources of blood for quite some time with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Medicine) check.

The other captives cannot regain lost Hit Points unless the characters cast a spell with healing properties using a spell slot of 3rd level or higher.

If the captives regain their consciousness, they are able to speak in a weak, shallow voice and introduce themselves. One of them is called Ode (lawful good, Austri, commoner), and the other Vog (chaotic good, Mithal, commoner).

They are from Hranstoir but were captured by the cultists five months ago. Although they have gained enough strength to speak, they can still not move or walk.

PRISON BREAK

The gate of the cage is locked with a rusty iron lock, which can be lock picked, or broken.

The characters must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity check to pick the lock of the cage.

If the characters choose to break the lock, it has AC 12, 14 Hit Points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage, also,

it has vulnerability to bludgeoning damage.

Once the characters are out of the cage, they can use sabotage options given in *The Inside (p.130)* section. After noticing that the characters are absent, the **gang** of cultists alert the others.

From then on, the DC of all checks made by the characters related to hiding their identity from the cultists increases by 2. In addition, the characters have disadvantage on their Dexterity (Stealth), Charisma (Deception) and Charisma (Performance) checks.

SABOTAGE OPTIONS

Since The Hideout is too crowded for the warband to handle, you may want to nudge the characters towards sabotaging the Hideout as Hertha also suggests.

If the characters do not sabotage the Hideout, they will have to fight 30 **claws of Fenrir** and 10 **fangs of Fenrir** in the Hideout, in addition to the Bloodreader, Ivar, and his bodyguard. You would be advised to know that this would be a *deadly* encounter. As the GM, you may want to convince the players to avoid this route.

There are many ways of sabotaging the Hideout, all of which are given under either *The Inside* or *The Outside*.

THE INSIDE

While inside the Hideout, the warband can sabotage the cultists by poisoning the well, lighting a fire, or freeing captives.

POISONING THE WELL

Poisoning the well is not easy, but it is the most effective way of disabling the enemy.

Poisoning the well requires a successful DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) check. If the characters can poison the well successfully, many cultists either die or get very sick.

The characters can poison the wells by several methods:

Casting a Spell. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) or Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that a spell can be used to poison the well.

Characters can poison the well by 10 consecutive *poison spray* cantrips to the well, or one *contagion* spell.

Finding the Poison Stash. The cult poisons the wells of villages nearby before they attack. Therefore, they have a stash of poison vials in one of the huts (see *General Stash* under *Locations*, p.125).

The characters must use 10 of these vials to poison the well successfully.

Brewing Poison. The characters can also use ten vials of poison that they have on hand, or try to make ten vials of poison themselves.

To make ten vials of poison, The characters can return to the forest and search for some specific poisonous plants that require a DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check to harvest. Afterwards, making the poison requires a DC 15 Intelligence check with the poisoner's kit, or a DC 18 Wisdom (Survival) check.

If the characters don't know which plants to harvest or how to craft the poison, Hertha says that she knows about this stuff, guides the characters along, and asks the characters to help collect the plants.

The characters and Hertha collect all the plants in between 1 to 3 hours (depending on the result of their check, at your discretion as the GM), as long as they do not roll a natural 1. If they roll a natural 1, the time it takes to collect the plants is doubled.

Aftermath. All cultists drink from the water in a total of 3 hours. They get sick 2 hours after they drink the water, and the characters start to see the effects within 5 hours. After 5 hours, the Hideout is on high alert for intruders.

Kill Count. The poison kills two dozen commoners, 15 **bandits**, 10 **claws of Fenrir**, and 3 **fangs of Fenrir**. Additionally, the rest of the commoners, bandits, and claws of Fenrir, as well as an additional 3 **fangs of Fenrir** are poisoned.

CAUSING A FIRE

If the characters want to light a fire to sabotage the cult, they notice that it is nearly impossible to burn the tents and the building because of the humidity, cold weather, and most importantly, the layers and layers of snow.

A successful DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) reveals that the characters cannot kill any cultists by causing a fire, but that they may still distract them and get some of them to gather in the same area.

Aftermath. The fire alerts the **watchers** and **gangs**, and they rush to the site of the fire. This means that there are fewer patrols in the Hideout, and the warband therefore does not encounter patrols while executing their next plan or for 1 hour (your choice).

However, once the cultists put the fire out after one hour, all of them are on high alert.

Kill Count. Although there are only a few casualties (commoners and initiates), the fire may enhance the kill count of another sabotage.

For instance, causing the fire in an area where the avalanche seems to hit doubles the deaths of the *avalanche* (p.131) sabotage.

FREEING CAPTIVES

There are a total of four dozen captives kept in four cages. They are unarmed and unarmored, but releasing them may alert the whole hideout, causing them to rush to the cages.

Additionally, not all captives are commoners. Among them, there are some warriors and veterans who can kill a couple of cultists against all odds.

All captives are tied in the same way, and put in cages that have the same build. If the warband decides to release them, they can do so by following the procedures given in the *Prison Break* section under *The Captive* (p.129).

Trying to release the captives is a major action that takes a long time and that might easily draw attention, which is why

it requires checks made against at least two patrols (see *Patrol Patterns*, p.125).

Aftermath. If the characters manage to free the captives, the cultists fight or chase after the escapees for 2 hours. Thus, the warband can roam freely in the Hideout for 2 hours after releasing the captives, or for the duration of the warband's next plan (your choice).

Kill Count. While trying to fight their way out, the captives kill 10 **claws of Fenrir**, and 2 **fangs of Fenrir**.

THE OUTSIDE

While outside the Hideout, the warband can sabotage the cultists by causing an avalanche or attacking the patrols.

AVALANCHE

If the characters examine the Hideout from a distance, they notice that there is a heavy layer of snow on top of a hill located 600 feet directly above the Hideout. The straight-line distance from the characters' location to the hill is 1300 feet. It takes 6 hours for the characters to reach the top of the hill without the cultists noticing them.

To cause an avalanche, the characters must spend half an hour weakening the snow and then triggering the avalanche.

Alternatively, they can cast a spell that deals thunder damage to an area, which causes the avalanche to fall in an instant, but also causes two patrol groups to be alerted and they inspect the hideout for the source of the sound.

Aftermath. The avalanche buries many cultists, some of whom survive by digging themselves out, but most of whom perish in the snow.

Most of the tents in the Hideout are also buried in the snow, and reaching them (to loot them or for other reasons)requires a DC 13 Wisdom (Survival) check.

If the characters did not cast spells to cause the avalanche, the cultists assume it to be a natural phenomenon, and although it disorients and surprises the cultists, it does not put them on alert for intruders.

On the other hand, the cultists are alerted if the characters use a spell that deals thunder damage. If they are spotted by the patrols and watchers are unable to kill the patrol in time before they warn the others, see the "*Busted!*" (p.125) section.

Kill Count. The avalanche kills 15 **bandits**, 8 **claws of Fenrir** and 2 **fangs of Fenrir**.

ATTACKING PATROL GROUPS

If the characters figure out the pattern of the patrolling groups, they see that each patrol takes a different direction and returns to the Hideout after 3 hours.

Therefore, if the characters choose to attack these patrols, they can encounter them on their regular path, in the wilderness, without alerting the others.

These patrols are **gangs**. The warband must kill the patrols within three hours in order not to alert the cultists in the Hideout.

Aftermath. If they manage to kill the groups, the Hideout loses reinforcements, which makes the final encounter easier.

SABOTAGING THE RITUAL

If the characters poison Ivar, cause a fire, or free the captives, Ivar is notified and rushes to the site of the ritual (*Pool of Blood*) with his bodyguard.

When he does so, the Bloodreader emerges from the pool and the two engage in a heated discussion about the situation.

Ivar forces the Bloodreader to stop the ritual and help him against any intruders, thus keeping the ritual from taking place that night.

This creates an opportunity for the characters to take on the enemies on the ritual site (see *The Final Encounter*, p.133).

THE BLOOD RITUAL

No matter which path the characters have chosen, the Hideout goes into action the night after characracters come across the captives on the outside. It can also be on the same night that they enter the Hideout if they have arrived at the site at night.

If the characters have observed the area from outside *(The Adventurer*), they notice the preparations for the ritual with a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check.

The cultists are hanging some creatures directly above the center of the pool by their ankles to bleed them out. A successful DC 18 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that the cultists are getting ready for a very powerful blood ritual.

If the characters have disguised themselves as captives (*The Captive*) until the time of the ritual, they see some cultists mumbling chants in Hellic as they hang the creatures above the blood pool with very close attention. If the characters know Hellic, they can make out some words such as *"cold mother"*, *"the creation"* and *"darkness."*

If the characters have disguised themselves as cultists (*The Cultist*), they see the ritual in full detail. A successful DC 18 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that the ritual is a powerful, new one that aims to either corrupt or create a living being.

If the characters do not enter the Hideout, they see the following details either from a safe distance or from somewhere nearby.

After the characters see the preparations in as much detail as allowed by the path they have chosen, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> As the preparations continue, you feel the sky go dark, the air thicken and everything else fall silent.
>
> It feels like nature has also gone quiet: you cannot hear the animal sounds and the wind humming as it rushes over rocks. Not a single sound is heard, not even from the horses in their stables.
>
> The cultists gather around the blood pool, and the crowd gets bigger and bigger as the moon gets higher in the sky. They are wearing black, ceremonial robes, and are swaying and humming in Hellic together. Then, the blood pool starts seething as if it were boiling.

Blood creatures (**blodpytts**) that look like they are tiny feral animals made of blood start to leak out of the pool. They are not included in the encounter table under *The Final Encounter.*

1d4 blodpytts crawl out of the blood pool at the end of each minute for 1 hour unless the ritual is disrupted.

DISRUPTING THE RITUAL

If the characters kill any cultists that are a part of the ritual, it is disrupted.

If the characters purify the blood pool, it stops bubbling and a man rises out of it. If the characters have not killed all of the cultists, one of them shouts, *"Bloodreader!"*. But he doesn't look much like the one the characters encountered in Belmunt (if they did - p. 80).

While he is dripping in blood all over his body, his vicious, blood red eyes are fixed on to the characters. He looks tired after the ritual, but he attacks the characters nonetheless (see *The Final Encounter*).

Bloodpytt & Bloodreader

BLOODREADER

Medium humanoid (Vestri), neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)

Skills Arcana +6, Perception +5, Religion +6, Intimidation +7
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages Austris (Common), Hellic, Vestri
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Spellcasting. The blood reader is a 7th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The blood reader has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *acid splash, fire bolt, poison spray, shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *false life, mage armor, magic missile, shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *darkness, hold person, ray of enfeeblement*

3rd level (3 slots): *bitter touch of Helheim*, counterspell, vampiric touch*

4th level (1 slot): *ice storm*
** Svilland spells*

ACTIONS

Steal Blood. *Melee Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (4d6 + 4) necrotic damage and the blood reader regains hit points half as much as the necrotic damage dealt. A creature whose hit points drop to zero due to this action automatically fails its first death save.

BLODPYTT

Tiny elemental, lawful evil

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 3 (2d4 - 2)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
4 (-3)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	3 (-4)	8 (-1)	9 (-1)

Damage Resistances piercing and slashing from non-magical attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic
Condition Immunities grappled, petrified, restrained
Senses darkvision 60 ft.
Languages -
Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Together Strong. When blodpytts are 5 feet of each other, they add an additional damage die to their attacks.

ACTIONS

Blood Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) necrotic damage.

IVAR

Medium humanoid (Mithal), chaotic evil

Armor Class 16
Hit Points 93 (11d8 + 44)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Strength +7, Constitution +7
Skills Athletics +6, Perception +5, Intimidation +6
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages Austris (Common), Hellic, Vestri
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Dark Devotion. Ivar has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Keen Hearing and Smell. Ivar has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Lycanthropic Regeneration. Ivar regains 3 hit points at the start of each one of his turns if he is not attacked by a spell, or by a weapon that is magical or silvered.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Ivar makes two attacks with his greatsword.

Greatsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Whirlwind Strikes. Ivar makes a greatsword attack to all hostile creatures within 5 feet of him.

Leaping Strike. Ivar jumps onto a creature within 20 feet of him, without provoking an opportunity attack, and makes a greatsword attack. On a hit, it counts as critical and the creature falls prone on a failed DC 15 Strength saving throw.

COMPLETING THE RITUAL

If the characters do not disrupt the ritual, the blood creatures jump onto the cultists and explode on impact, leaving all the cultists bloodied.

All the bloodied cultists are marked as blodthralls and gain the *Bloodwake* feature:

Bloodwake. If a creature drops to 0 hit points, it does not die, but rather comes back up as a **blodthrall**, regaining 2d10 hit points and gaining the *Puke Blood* action. A character can use this benefit only once.

Puke Blood. *Melee Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (4d8) necrotic damage plus 10 (4d4) acid damage at the start of the target's next turn.

THE FINAL ENCOUNTER

The final encounter can take place at three different times, in different ways:

- When the **Bloodreader** is out of the blood pool (see *Disrupting the Ritual* - p.132, *Sabotaging the Ritual*- p.131, or *Completing the Ritual* - p.133).
- When the warband attacks the Bloodreader and Ivar while they are at the ritual site (*Pool of Blood*).
- And if the characters did not sabotage the Hideout, when the Hideout is alarmed and sends in reinforcements.As the GM, you can follow the directions given under *Busted!* (p.125) for reinforcements. Additionally, the patrols outside the Hideout are also alerted if they were not taken care of before, and they rush into the Hideout 5 minutes after the fight starts.

Characters	Encounter
4	Ivar, Bloodreader, and 2 fangs of Fenrir
5	Ivar, Bloodreader, 3 fangs of Fenrir, 1 claw of Fenrir
6	Ivar, Bloodreader, 4 fangs of Fenrir, 1 claw of Fenrir

THE AFTERMATH

When slain, Ivar reverts to his true form; a vicious abomination of Fenrir that looks like a werevargr with many Hellic runes inscribed on its skin. The runes say "*Change*", "*Form*", "*Bind*".

The **Bloodreader** reverts to the humanoid form, he is not the one they saw in Belmunt (p. 80). In his pockets, the characters find a letter and a bloodstone (see *Bloodreader's Chest*, p.126).

The Bloodreader's body is marked with Hellic symbols that prevent any spell from animating him or speaking to him, such as the *speak with dead* spell.

Letter. *"Ushered Asta, the dark lady. She safely passed the river Van and arrived at the Cemetery."*

With a successful DC 13 Intelligence check, the characters remember that the closest cemetery is the Hillrest Cemetery which is along the end of the river Van. If they fail on their checks, Hertha tells them instead.

Afterwards, Kadal and Hertha (if they are alive), say farewell to the characters and prepare to depart. As they do so, one of them says the following:

> *"We thank you, dearly, for your help in our sacred cause. I have seen in your eyes the fire that burns in the heart of every warrior.*
>
> *I hope you find the answers you seek on your path, and take the heads of those who dare defy Odin and Freyja.*
>
> *As Odin's Vargr, we hope to see you again in the future.*
>
> *May the Gods and Goddesses guide your path."*

Level Up. Before you move on to the next episode your characters must be 9th level. Feel free to inform your players to level up on their next long rest.

AN EARLY GRAVE

The Hillrest Cemetery is nearly 100 miles away from the characters' current location. It is a two-day journey on horseback and a four-day journey on foot. As the characters travel along Frozen Creek, the end of which is by the cemetery, they come across three hamlets, but do not face any challenges.

One of these hamlets is seen in the first half of this journey, and the others are seen in the second half. All of them are ransacked and run-down. However, there seems to be some movement within. If the characters investigate them, a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals slow-moving silhouettes and holes in the ground; just as the characters came across many times before .

Strangely, there are no footsteps leading to or from the hamlets. The creatures within have all been killed and most of their corpses are frozen. The stench of the few that are not is disturbing to say the least. There are undead feeding on the corpses of the dead.

While the characters are examining the hamlets, they may encounter the following creatures:

Characters	Encounters
4	1 hræflá (p.262), 1d4 ghasts, 1d4 ghouls
5	1 hræflá, 1d4 ghasts, 1d6 ghouls
6	2 hræflás, 1d4 ghasts, 1d4 ghouls

HILLREST CEMETERY

This section includes information on Mugdonvik and the cemetery. If the characters wish to visit Mugdonvik first, you may find the necessary information to give them on p.170 (Mugdonvik page).

No matter where the characters choose to go first, Aleson the Arisen, the prophet of Aegir and the king of Nionaem, informs the guards of Mugdonvik about the characters while the warband is in the cemetery. Bear in mind that their duty as the characters is in the cemetery, which then leads the story to the further chapters.

There are special events in Mugdonvik however, they occur only after the characters clear the cemetery.

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below to the players when the characters reach the Hillrest Cemetery:

> Finally, after days of travel, you see the mesmerizing view of the town of Mugdonvik.
>
> It is a settlement built on a hill, and looks like a brown mark in the middle of the snow that stretches for miles. Despite this glorious view from a distance, the town's miserable state becomes more and more evident as you approach .
>
> On the foothills, there is a cemetery in which approximately fifty people are buried. As you get closer to the cemetery, you feel that you are closer to your target.
>
> Yet again, there are no footsteps indicating that Asta was here. Graves are not defiled or desecrated, there is no trace of the undead, the cemetery smells as a cemetery would. Although the place seems neglected, it leaves one with a feeling of solitude.
>
> There is no one else in the cemetery, and from the looks of the place, no one has been here for days. There is a large tombstone in the middle of the cemetery with runic inscriptions carved on it. The monumental

headstone is broken into pieces. In its place, there is a hole that looks like it leads to Helheim itself.

The place feels eerily magical and feels unlike anywhere else you've ever known. You can sense unearthly cold and necrotic energies oozing out of the hole.

This hole does not have stairs or anything else that will help the warband descend. However, the characters can safely climb down the whole with a successful DC 14 Strength (Athletics) check. This hole is 5 feet wide and 30 feet deep. As there is no light source within, characters without darkvision must have a light source to see their surroundings.

When the warband sets foot on the ground inside the hole, an ancient complex made of stone welcomes them. This place is extremely cold and silent.

GM TIP

The players now step into a massive dungeon where high-ranking Hel followers have been put to rest. Keep in mind and feel free to remind them that they can go back to Mugdonvik at any time to resupply or to take a rest somewhere safe.

HILLREST CRYPTS

Hillrest Crypts is an ancient and secret burial ground hidden below the Hillrest Cemetery. Why or when this collection of crypts was built is still unknown, as Svillanders have only recently become aware of its existence. However, it is evident that they have some connection to Hel, because there are Hellic runes on the walls.

Three Layers. The floors of the crypt are referred to as layers. The Hillrest Crypts consist of three different layers, each representing a different aspect of Hel: The first layer of the crypts demonstrates the undead's obedience to Hel. The second layer emphasizes the bitter cold of Helheim. The third layer represents torment and pain.

HILLREST CRYPTS: GENERAL FEATURES

The ancient crypt's general features are summarized below:

Doors. The crypt has strong wooden doors except the secret doors. They are made of granite, the same as the walls. Some of the doors are locked, and their locks can be picked by a successful DC 13 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. Each door is a Large object that has 20 AC, 27 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage, as well as slashing and piercing damage from nonmagical attacks.

Locating Secret Doors. Unless stated otherwise, locating a secret door requires a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check or a 5-minute investigation with a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

Perception. Unless stated otherwise, there are no footprints on the ground, and the characters may listen to what is happening behind the doors right next to them with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check.

Sealed Layers. At the end of each layer, there is a spell that seals the layer below to stop intruders from descending to the layer beneath. The barriers are translucent and have different colors. The barrier of the first level is purple, and that of the second layer is blue.

The seals cannot be dispelled by any means. Each time a creature touches a seal, it takes 2d6 force damage and cannot go through. However, the seals are broken if their creator is destroyed. There is a warlord who should be destroyed in order to move on to the next layer on each level.

Stench. The crypt is dusty and dirty. There are spider webs all over the corners, and burials and graves in the rooms, which makes them stink of death. There are tiny ventilation holes carved into the stone next to the corners of the floors, but they are narrow and filled with webs and dust; thus unable to relieve the damp air.

Structure. The crypt is made of granite. The walls or rooms are not made of clear-cut stones. Unless stated otherwise, the corridors are 5 feet wide and 10 feet high, and the place is under total darkness. There are no torches on the walls.

LEVELING UP IN THE CRYPT

When the characters kill the warlord of the first and second layer, they level up. Therefore, inform your players to level up during the next long rest after they kill the two warlords. It is advised for the characters to take a long rest before descending into the second or third layer. Note that the characters will not level up when they cleanse the third layer.

DEFILED GRAVES

In Svilland, disturbing or defiling the graves is considered to be disrespectful to the dead and the Gods. However, the graves in this crypt belong to those who were never buried but were stilted in a state of perpetual loyalty to Hel when they became draugrs.

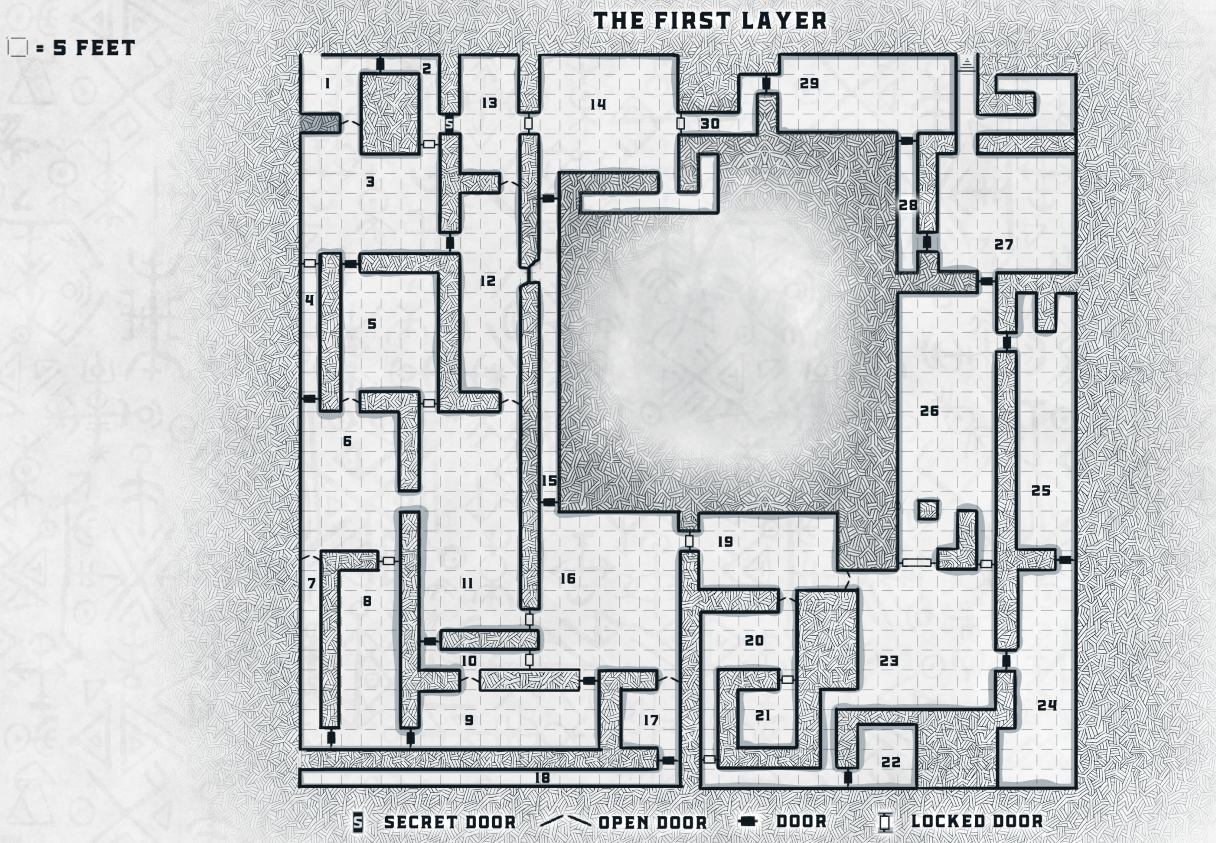
In that sense, these graves count as already defiled, and looting them won't result in disrespect to the dead, or to any God or Goddess other than Hel.

THE FIRST LAYER

The following area descriptions are keyed to the next map.

GRAVES IN THE CRYPTS

There are graves in the crypts, dedicated to the fallen warbands loyal to Hel. Each section (such as *C3 . Altar of Hel*, but not the corridors or entrances) contains 3d4 graves that are 8 feet long and 5 feet wide. Some of these graves



are sarcophaguses made of rough-cut stone without any ornaments, while others are simple burials with merely a stone lid on top. There seems to be no indication of which grave is for someone of more importance and which is for someone less important.

Treasure. The warbands are buried with their belongings and loot. All corpses have their full armor and weapons on them, although they are old and rusty, which means that they lost their combat effectiveness and value. There are also urns for each grave within; each urn contains ancient copper, silver, and gold coins that are worth 3d10 gold pieces in total, 1d4 gemstones (worth 50 gp each), and 1d8 art objects (worth 25 gp each).

C1. THE ENTRANCE

It seems there is nothing in the room except for the spider webs covering the corners of the room and the freezing cold. However, a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that there is a writing carved on the wall, which is not visible due to dust. When the dust is cleared, the writing can be seen clearly. In Hellic, it reads "*You are granted an audience by those who died but never left.*"

There is not a single footprint in the entrance. An open arc leads to a larger room (C3), and a closed door leads to a corridor (C2).

C2. CORRIDOR

When the characters enter the corridor, tiny spiders in the middle scuttle away. There is a secret door that leads to C13 and a statue of a woman that is pointing her finger towards C3. A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that the woman represents Hel since half of her body is painted white and the other half is black as if it were rotten.

C3. ALTAR OF HEL

There is a large stone altar marked with a rune in the middle of the room . The corpse of a male humanoid, who appears to have been sacrificed, is on this cursed stone. The humanoid has been gutted, and its bowels are spilling to the ground, creating a stench that is hard to endure. The characters must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or spend 1d4 turns only retching and reeling. The chest of the sacrifice has been dissected with a dagger and its heart taken out. A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that the dagger used has been placed inside the dissected chest and that the heart, a small part of which has been eaten, is on the ground.

The humanoid's face and other body parts are in pieces; a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that the sacrifice was made some time within the last week.

There are also humanoid bones scattered all over the floor. It looks like they are the remains of former sacrifices.

Trap. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that the rune on the altar contains an *animate dead* spell, which is activated if the altar takes any damage and creates 2 **draugr guardians**. The spell can be removed by means of the *dispel magic* spell or a use of the Runic Purge feature (requires 3rd

level spell slot).

Breaking the Altar. The characters can break the altar with some effort. If they do so, they have 1 minor Hel point removed. The altar has AC 20 and 100 hit points. It is immune to fire, cold, lightning, psychic, and poison damage, as well as piercing and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks. It is vulnerable to thunder damage.

C4. CORRIDOR WITH WRITINGS

This is a straight corridor with a closed door that bypasses C5 and leads to C6. There are writings in Hellic on the walls on either side of the corridor, which read:.

"All hail the great warrior of Hel, Valkyrie slayer, Halle of Sangar."

C5. ANTECHAMBER

There are stone chairs against the walls. Longer walls contain two, and shorter ones contain one of them. In the middle of the room, there is a stone table with some parchments on it. The writings on the parchments have faded, and if a character tries to hold it, it turns into dust.

C6. TOMB OF HALLE

There is a large stone tomb with Hellic runes carved on it in the middle of the room. It reads *"Halle shall lie here until he rises again."*

As soon as the characters set foot in this room, a spirit ascends from the tomb. It says *"Embrace your deaths for I've risen."* in Austris.

HALLE OF SANGAR

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (ringmail of the dead*, shield)
Hit Points 67 (15d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Saving Throws Strength +8, Constitution +3, Intelligence +5
Skills Athletics +8, Perception +4, Religion +5
Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Austris (Common), Hellic
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Creature of Darkness. When Halle takes radiant damage, it is pushed 5 feet away from the creature who dealt the damage.

Ethereal Sight. Halle can see 60 feet into the Ethereal Plane when it is on the Material Plane, and vice versa.

Incorporeal Movement. Halle can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Regenerating Tomb. At the start of each of its turns, if Halle stands in the same square with its tomb, it regains 11 (2d10) hit points.

Turning Defiance. Halle has advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Halle makes two melee weapon attacks.

+1 Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d8 + 6) slashing damage plus 5 (1d10) necrotic damage.

REACTIONS.

Incorporeal Body (Recharge 5-6). An attack that hits Halle passes through its ghostly body without any harm.

**Ringmail of the Dead (p.240)*

Halle of Sangar

C7. CORRIDOR OF THE DEADCALLER

A **draugr deadcaller** (p. 250) is walking back and forth in the corridor. If the warband does not come to this corridor and goes straight to C8, the draugr deadcaller goes to C8 to confront the warband and protect Halle's belongings.

C8. HALLE'S REMAINS

This treasure room contains two large chests in the middle. A character can remember that Hel cultists believe they will all rise from the dead when the time comes with a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check. Therefore, they are buried with their belongings.

Treasure. *Ringmail of the Dead** (p.240), *a +1 Longsword*, coins that are worth 120 gp in total, a piece of paper that contains a poem written to praise Halle's viciousness in a war against the agents of good (see The Handouts).

C9. CAGE OF THE SKELETAL HOUNDS

There is a 15 feet by 30 feet iron cage at the east side of the room as well as deadly and hungry looking skeletal hounds. The number of **skeletal hounds** (p. 265) is two times the number of characters in the warband.

They cannot break through the cage. The characters may kill them or let them be. However, if the characters let them be and they enter C16 going through the locked door in C10, the hounds are released and attack them (in C16), since there is a hidden door on the cage that leads to C16.

C10. SMALL CORRIDOR

This is a small corridor with one door that leads to C11 and one locked door that leads to C16. There is a rune drawn on the ground.

Trap. A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that the rune on the ground contains a *ray of enfeeblement* spell. Its spell attack modifier is +6. A *dispel magic* spell or a use of the Runic Purge feature (requires 2nd level spell slot) removes the spell.

C11. CLUTCH OF HEL

There are four identical statues in the room that form a rectangle around a woman who is lying unconscious in the center of the room, each depicting a hand clutching a red stone. A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that her chest is moving.

The woman is a wraith who has disguised herself using Illusory Appearance. A character can become aware of the illusion upon physical inspection and with a successful DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

If a character touches the woman or tries to investigate her, she screams and turns into a **wraith**. The character who touches the woman must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened of her until the end of its next turn.

As soon as the woman transforms, the statues are connected by a force barrier that stretches from the ground to the ceiling, and a number of **tormented souls** (p. 258) equal to twice the number of characters inside the rectangular barrier is summoned from the stones, attacking the characters inside.

No one, including the wraith or tormented souls, can get in or out of the barrier. Creatures who try to do so take 7 (2d6) necrotic damage and are pushed 5 feet away from the barrier. The barriers cannot be dispelled by any means and are destroyed only if the statues are destroyed.

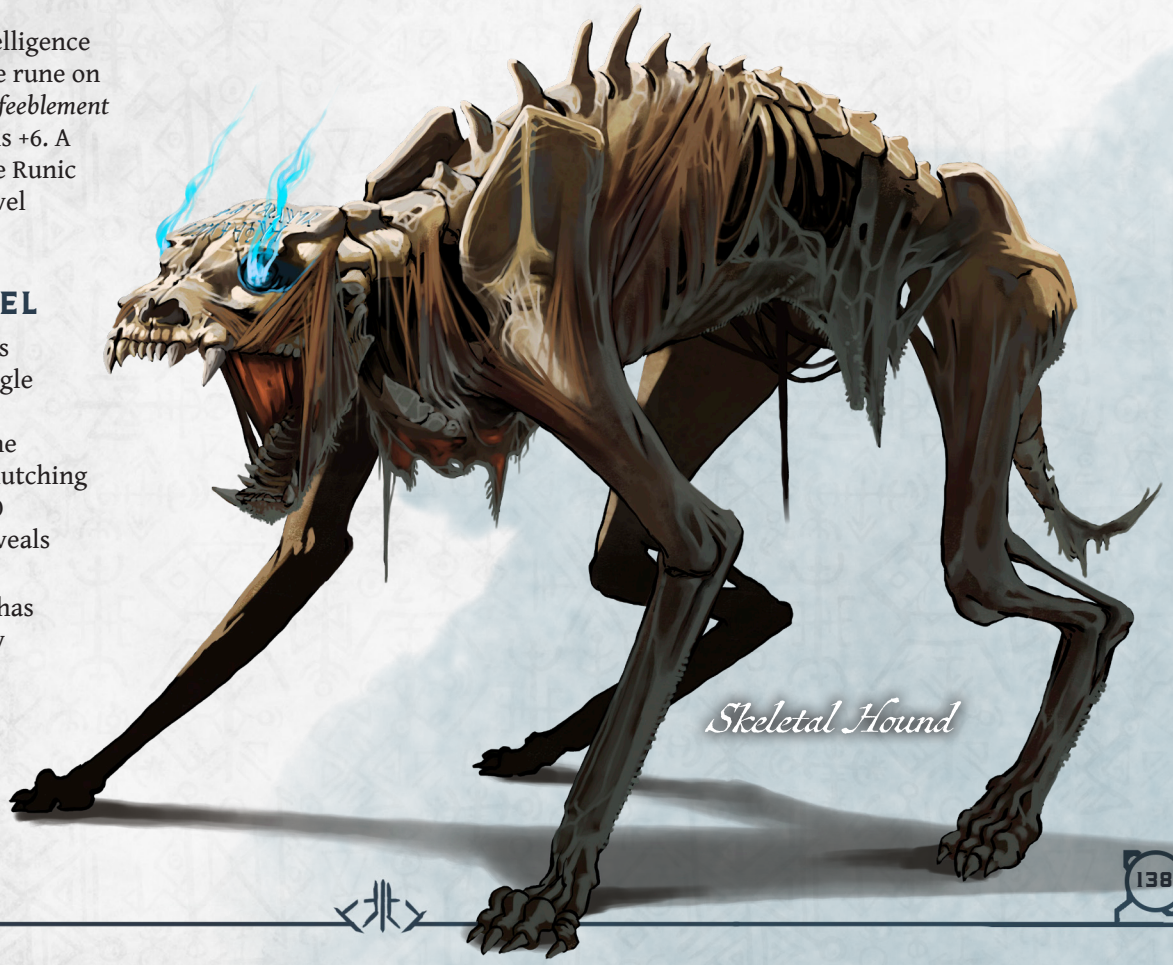
Each statue is a Large object with AC 13, 20 hit points, immunity to poison and psychic damage, as well as slashing and piercing damage from nonmagical attacks. It also has vulnerability to force, bludgeoning, and thunder damage.

C12. CHEST ROOM

A long, narrow room, with 3 torches on either side of the room (each). There are three big chests in line with the torches in the middle of the room.

The identical, wooden chests are covered with different runes. They also have a metal foundation, and big, iron locks. Chest 1 is the one in the north, chest 2 is in the middle, chest 3 is the one in the south.

All the locks can be picked with a successful DC 18 Dexterity check. Each chest has 20 AC, 20 Hit Points, and are immune to all damage types except bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from magical attacks.



There is a trap on each chest, which is activated if the chest is tried to be broken or opened before the trap is disarmed.

Chest 1. A successful DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that the rune on the chest contains a *blight* spell. The spell save DC of the spell is 15, and a successful *dispel magic* (DC 14) or a use of the Runic Purge feature (requires 4th level spell slot) removes the spell.

Treasure. 250 gp in a cotton pouch, ten small gems worth 100 gp each, two ornamented; silver rings worth 15 gp each, and a *ring of vidr* (p. 240).

Chest 2. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that the rune on the chest contains an *animate dead* spell that creates 2 **draugr guardians** (p. 249). A *dispel magic* or a use of the Runic Purge feature (requires 3rd level spell slot) removes the spell.

Treasure. 1200 gp and 2000 sp in a wooden box, six weapons (only one of them is magical; a *+1 battle axe*).

Chest 3. A successful DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that the rune on the chest contains a *circle of death* spell. The spell save DC of the spell is 16, and a successful *dispel magic* (DC 16) or a use of the Runic Purge feature (requires 6th level spell slot) removes the spell.

Treasure. A spellbook containing the *cloudkill, cone of cold, ray of enfeeblement, rune of elemental burst** spells, a jewelry box carved from bone containing *a lesser isa runestone* (p. 242).

*Svilland spell

C13. THE ROTTEN ONE

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below when the characters enter the room:

> As soon as you enter the dark room, an overwhelming smell of rot blocks all your other senses.

When the characters take a look around, they see a corpse in the middle of the rectangular room. It looks like a bloated humanoid corpse, facing down.

Trap. If the characters touch the body, it bursts open and releases poisonous gas. Each creature within 15 feet of the body must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 4d6 poison damage and is poisoned for 10 minutes. On a successful save, the creature takes half damage and is not poisoned.

C14. FACE OF HEL AND THE BALCONY

The north wall of this room has a huge statue of the face of Hel embedded in the wall. The right half of the face is that of a skeleton and the other half; a beautiful woman. Under the statue, there is a tomb. The floor is covered in bones and skulls. There is an **ancient draugr** (p. 243) in the middle of the room on its knees, looking at its Goddess's face and screaming *"Flesh!"* in a deep voice, in Austris. It picks its greatsword off the ground. If the warband consists of 5 characters, the ancient draugr creates a **draugr guardian** by using the bones and skulls on the ground with its first bonus action. If the warband consists of 6 characters, the ancient draugr creates two draugr guardians.

There is a door leading to a balcony on the south wall of the room. The balcony does not have railings at the sides. If the characters look down, they see a translucent force barrier with a purple hue one feet below. The characters are at least 40 feet above the ground. There is another force barrier 10 feet below the first one. However, the characters can't tell what color it is because of the purple layer above. On the ground, there is a huge tomb, probably belonging to an ancient Hel warlord.

Secret Door. On the east wall, there is a very well hidden stone door that leads to C30. Only a successful DC 23 Wisdom (Perception) check can reveal its location. The door has no lock, and the door is thick and tough. It has 21 AC, 90 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

C15. CORRIDOR OF BONES

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below when the characters open the door of the corridor:

> There are holes in both the walls and the uneven ground of this long, dark corridor. It is freezing cold, and quiet... Too quiet.

As soon as the characters enter the corridor, some skeleton pieces (arms, bones, fingers...) spill out of the holes and cover the whole floor, making it difficult terrain.

The characters must succeed on a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check every ten feet of the corridor or be grappled by the bones and fall prone.

Skeletal hands claw at a grappled character, dealing 10 (4d4) piercing and 10 (4d4) slashing damage at the start of each turn the character is grappled.

C16. THE POOL OF DESECRATION

There is a pool full of a black liquid, which makes the whole room desecrated ground. The pool has a radius of 10 feet and is 1 feet deep.

If the characters break into the room and the **skeletal hounds** (p. 265) in C9 are not killed, they break free from their cage and attack the characters. There is also a **draugr of bones** (p. 251) in the pool, getting ready to attack the characters. There is a dark-necromantic tether between the pool and the draugr. When the pool is consecrated with a *hallow* spell, which makes the liquid turn into water, the tether is broken. The draugr has advantage on attack rolls as long as the tether is intact.

When a character enters the pool for the first time or ends its turn within, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or take 11 (2d10) necrotic damage.

C17. THE SKULL BACKROOM

If the characters open one of the doors to this room, hundreds of skulls start rolling towards the characters, cracking loudly as they do so and making 15 feet into the corridor difficult terrain. This small, square room is full of these humanoid skulls, which make the room difficult terrain as well.

The characters who are within 10 feet of the door must succeed on a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity

Corridor of Bones

(Acrobatics) check or be knocked prone.

A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that there are no bones other than skulls in the room. A successful DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that the rest of the bones of the people killed in this dungeon were used to make the bone traps in the corridors.

C18. CORRIDOR OF BONES

This corridor has the same properties as C15.

The only difference is that there is a wooden chest at the end of the corridor. The chest contains no traps, and can be unlocked by a successful DC 15 Dexterity check. It has 10 AC, 20 hit points, and is immune to poison and psychic damage.

Treasure. A *ring of cartilage* (p. 240), 1000 gp in a wool pouch.

C19. THE BLUE HALL

The color of the floor close to C20 is different from the rest of the corridor; it seems a dark blue liquid was spilled here and then dried. Light reflects off the liquid, making the hall appear blue.

Characters who step on the dark blue ground feel as if something were wrong and as though the essence of life were leaving them. They have disadvantage on attack rolls for 1 minute.

There are some draugrs walking around:

Characters	Encounter
4	1 draugr of bones, 1 draugr deadcaller (p. 250), 2 draugr guardian (p. 249)
5	2 draugr of bones, 1 draugr deadcaller
6	4 draugr of bones

C20. THE RITUAL SITE

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below when the characters enter the room:

> You come into a cold room that is as dark as can be. Light barely shines off its dark, dusty surfaces. The mark of a perfect circle can be seen on the floor with half-erased twisted runes around its edge.

If the characters look at the runes, a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that they are necromantic runes which might be used in forbidden rituals for the creation of undead creatures.

If the characters want to erase or cover the runes, they are faced with a powerful magical barrier. A *detect magic* spell reveals that this is also a necromancy spell.

A successful dispel magic (DC 14) or a use of the Runic Purge feature (requires 4th level spell slot) removes the runes. The characters have one minor Hel point removed after they destroy the runes, if they have any.

If a character fails to dispel a rune, each character inside the room must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be overcome with a dark feeling, taking 2d8 psychic damage.

C21. ALTAR OF HEL'S CHAMPION

Near the east wall, there is a black stone statue of a heavily armored woman holding a greatsword. The symbol of Hel is carved on the woman's armor.

On the bottom of the statue, there is a small altar filled with many small bones with bits of dried blood on them. On top of the altar, the words "*We give these gifts of respect to you; flesh and bones of our enemies who are slain in our war against our mother's foes.*" are written in blood, both in Austris and in Hellic.

C22. BONE ROOM

This room is full of humanoid bones. When the door opens, the characters see three piles of bones set up as if they were to be used for something later on. The floor is covered by a thin layer of bones that have spilled over from the piles, making the floor difficult terrain.

A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that there is a **draugr of bones** (p. 251) lying in the right corner of the room. It awakens if the characters enter the room.

Draugr of Bones

C23. PREPARATION ROOM

When the characters enter the room, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> A large dark room with a distinct smell of rot and acid greets you. There is an enormous stone table at the center of the room with a large ritual circle around it. You are filled with an overwhelming sense of desperation.

If the characters search the room, a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals the following objects: A fleshcarver, and two large pots with Hellic runes on them that read *"Flesh is weak"*.

A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that the room might be used to prepare a body for the afterlife. It seems some internal organs were removed and stored in small pots during a ritual. A successful DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) or Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that this ritual is quite long and complex, taking more than a week to cast. Once the ritual is complete, the bodies can wait in their tombs until they are raised from the dead by a worthy caller.

Reversing the Ritual. A character who understands the ritual can expend a 4th level spell slot to perform a reverse ritual that takes 1 hour. Gold worth 1000 gp in total must be used as material, which the ritual consumes. Once the ritual is complete, the spell is broken, and the bodies formerly affected by the ritual start to decay naturally. The undead that were already awakened are not affected.

Trap. If the characters open a large pot, it releases a poisonous gas. Each creature within 15 feet of the pot must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 4d6 poison damage and is poisoned for 10 minutes. On a successful save, the damage is halved and the creature is not poisoned.

C24. STORAGE ROOM

When the characters enter the room, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> You find yourselves in a big, messy room used for storage. It has a distinct smell of acid and dust. There are various items and objects here and there, and the walls are dominated by cupboards and shelves.

If the characters search the room, a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the following objects and tools: Alchemist's supplies, a pouch of valuable gems worth 500 gp in total.

C25. IRON CHEST

The room is very similar to the chest room (C12), the only difference being that it has only one chest in the middle rather than three. You can tell the players that they are reminded of this room.

The room is long and narrow with some Hellic runes carved on the walls that read *"Life is a lie"*. A big iron chest stands in the middle of the room. Other than the chest, the room is empty. The chest has a sturdy lock which can be picked with a successful DC 18 Dexterity check.

A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals footprints on the ground. They look new and as though they belong to a tall humanoid.

C26. WARLORD OF THE FIRST LAYER

When the characters enter the next room, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> When you enter the room, a cold, dead voice whispers, *"Come in, you are expected."* An intimidatingly large draugr, with a Large and rusty greatsword covered with dirt and decayed flesh, greets you. Its eyes look black as the sky on the darkest of nights.
>
> It continues *"The lady wants you dead. If it were up to me, I'd keep you. I would like to cut you every now and then, or to eat your flesh while you scream, right off the bone. Alas! I must send you to Helheim, where the same fate shall befall you at the hands of anyone but me. Come forth!"*

There is a stone table and two chairs near the east wall. On the same wall, there are some runes scribed in an old and forgotten Hellic dialect.

There are two statues of the Goddess facing each other, which act as columns. One of them has the appearance of a wise, skeletal lady and the other one; a young angry woman.

Vragi, Warlord of Undeath and a number of draugrs await characters in the middle:

Characters	Encounter
4	Vragi, 1 draugr of bones (p. 251)
5	Vragi, 1 draugr of bones, 3 draugr guardians (p. 249)
6	Vragi, 2 draugrs of bones, 3 draugr guardians

> You can also use the poem below to add flavor to your game, at any point you like:
>
> Thou, who dare oppose Vragi,
> would be wise to stop and think.
> For a dark phoenix of death is she,
> and will defeat thee, soon as thou blink.
>
> There be a day when all things fade,
> Be-it by age, by sorrow, or blade,
> So come, if thou must, be one with the shade,
> And as part of her army, be not afraid.

C27. TOMB OF VRAGI

The door on the north wall of C26 leads to this room. The walls are covered in artwork carved into stone. They depict Vragi, the woman the characters saw the statue of in C21, and the warband she leads while charging into the fray.

There is an ornate, stone tomb in the middle as well as regular tombs next to the walls of the room. All the tombs have been opened.

The number of tombs against the walls is equal to the number of draugrs that fought alongside the warlord. These tombs have treasure as given in the *Graves in the Crypts* (p. 135) section. Vragi's tomb contains the following treasure:

Vragi's Treasure. A dozen religious artworks and objects that belong to deities other than Hel and that look defiled. They are made of gold and decorated with precious gems, and are worth 2500 gp in total.

VRAGI, WARLORD OF UNDEATH

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (rusty plate armor)
Hit Points 120 (16d8 + 48)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Strength +8, Constitution +7
Skills Athletics +8, Perception +5, Religion +6
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Austris (Common), Hellic
Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Eager for Challenge. If two or more creatures are within 5 feet of the warlord, it has advantage on its weapon attacks.

Intimidating Strikes. If the warlord scores a critical hit with its weapon attack against a creature, creatures within 15 feet of the warlord must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or are frightened of the warlord for 1 minute. The creature hit by the attack has disadvantage on the saving throw. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Magic Resistance. The warlord has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. The warlord's weapon attacks are magical.

Turning Defiance. The warlord has advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The warlord makes two greatsword attacks.

Large Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (4d6 + 4) slashing damage plus 4 (1d8) necrotic damage plus 4 (1d8) poison damage.

Poisonous Breath (Recharge 5-6). The warlord's body got rotten for hundreds of years so it can exhale a poisonous gas on a 15-foot cone. A target must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, it takes 42 (12d6) poison damage and is poisoned for 1 minute. On a successful save, the damage is halved and it is not poisoned.

Whirlwind (Recharge 5-6). The warlord makes a weapon attack against each creature within 5 feet of it. A creature that is hit by the attack must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or is knocked prone.

C28. CORRIDOR OF BONES

This corridor has the same properties as C15.

C29. ROOM OF THE TOMBS

This is a crypt room that contains twice the number of tombs that the characters saw in other rooms (see *Graves in the Crypts*, p. 135).

C30. RUNIC TRAP CORRIDOR

It is a dark, 5-foot-wide corridor with rough stone walls. There is a very thick stone door at the end of the corridor that is hard to break and that can only be opened from this side with the iron lever on its right side. The door leads to C14.

Trap. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that there is a rune hidden beneath blood and dirt on the lever.

A successful DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that the rune on the lever contains a *circle of death* spell. The spell save DC of the spell is 16, and a successful *dispel magic* (DC 16) or a use of the Runic Purge feature (requires 6th level spell slot) removes the spell.

C31. DOWNSTAIRS TO THE SECOND LAYER

When the characters enter this room, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> As soon as you enter the room, you see stones with layers of ice on them. You feel a bitter cold, a cold that feels different from anything you have known. It is a cold that makes you remember the myths about Ragnarok and Black Winter.

The room is rectangular with a dark, narrow corridor leading downstairs. There is nothing in the room except for the stairs.

THE SECOND LAYER

This layer has the following general features. You should always keep the following information in mind while the characters are in this layer.

Flaying Cold. If a character touches any metal object that is not being carried, wielded, or worn, the object has a 50% chance of sticking to the flesh because of the unearthly cold. The character can remove the object as an action, but the object rips the flesh as it is being removed and the hit point maximum of the character is reduced by 3 until they finish a long rest. If the object is removed with a warm liquid, it does not rip the flesh.

Icy Floors. The ground of this layer is covered in ice. If a character moves faster than half of its speed, it must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or fall prone.

Too Cold to Rest. This layer is built on runes of cold and frost, which causes the layer to be extremely cold at all times. Whenever the warband finishes a long rest in this layer, the characters suffer one level of exhaustion unless they have lit a campfire or kept themselves warm in another way.

C1. ROOM OF SIX TOMBS

As soon as the characters arrive in the second layer of the crypt, they set foot in a room full of tombs.

There are six large tombs in this room, all of which are decorated with Hellic runes that mean "cold" and "death." The temperature of the room is so low that the characters can see their breath in the air. This room is *Too Cold to Rest*.

As soon as the characters set foot in this room, the tombs break, and the corpses inside rise as draugrs.

Characters	Encounter
4	2 draugr frostbringers (p. 250), 3 frostbitten draugrs (p. 251)
5	2 draugr frostbringers (p. 250), 5 frostbitten draugrs (p. 251)
6	2 draugr frostbringers (p. 250), 7 frostbitten draugrs (p. 251)

There is a wooden door that leads to area C20. The door is glowing with cold blue flames. There is a big and rusty lock in the middle of the door, which is also sealed magically. A *detect magic* spell reveals that there are two abjuration spells on it. These spells are *arcane lock* and *alarm*.

The door has 19 AC, 15 hit points, immunity to poison and psychic; resistance to piercing and slashing; vulnerability to bludgeoning damage. The lock can be picked with a successful DC 25 Dexterity check. If the *arcane lock* spell on the door is removed, the DC decreases to 15.

If the characters try to break the lock, try to pick it, or try to dispel the *arcane lock* spell before dispelling the *alarm* spell, the *alarm* spell is activated and creatures from C5 and C21 come to life to keep the intruders at bay.

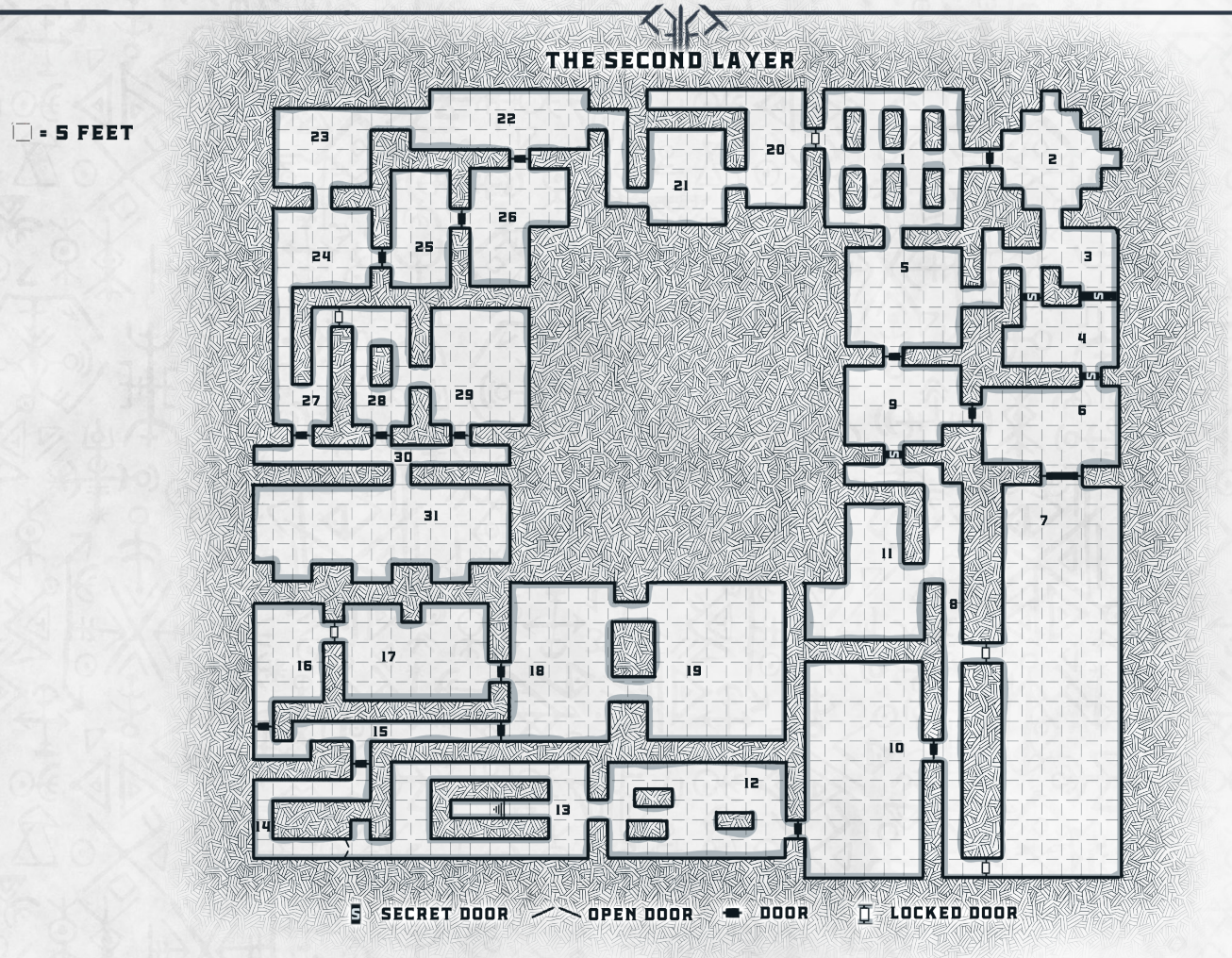
C2. ICE FOUNTAIN

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below when the characters enter the room:

> The room is freezing. You notice an icy fountain at the center of the room, and when you look around a little more, you find that everything in the room seems to be frozen. You can't help but feel like time itself is frozen in the room.

A successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that there is a small ornate chest on the bottom of the bowl of the fountain, where the water has frozen and trapped the chest.

Trap. A successful DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that the runes on the fountain contain an *ice storm* spell. It is activated when a character moves within 5 feet of the fountain. A *dispel magic* (DC 14) or a use of the Runic Purge



feature (requires 4th level spell slot) removes the spell.

Treasure. The ornate chest is a Medium wooden chest. It contains 1000 silver pieces, and a silver necklace with 1d4 dark blue stones in the middle. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that the stones can protect a creature against the effects of cold when filled with magic:

As an action, a character that can cast at least one 1st-level spell can touch a creature with the stone to provide it resistance to cold damage for 10 minutes, doing so breaks one of the stones.

C3. THE ICY CORRIDOR

A successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals two secret doors that both lead to C4.

C4. THE STORAGE ROOM

It is a storage room filled with piles and piles of materials such as metal and wood pieces, ropes, empty vials, cloth pieces, bones and other things of the sort. If the characters search the room, a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals some precious items.

Treasure. A wooden chest full of 20 gems worth 5 gp each, 5 potions of minor healing, 20 gp in an old woolen pouch.

C5. THE FIRST DEFENDER OF THE CRYPT

A Large stone statue of a **alpha skeletal hound hel beast** (p. 266) stands tall in the middle of the room. There are Hellic runes carved on it that read "Helbeast.", and the statue itself looks like it is carrying the cold of death. Whenever a character enters a space within 5 feet of the Helbeast statue, the character must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or take 11 (2d10) cold damage.

If the statue takes any damage, it transforms into its true form and attacks the one who has damaged it. In this case, the **draugr runemaster** in C9 hears the sounds of battle and comes into this room to attack the characters.

If the characters tried to open the sealed door at C1, the statue cannot be found in this room since the Helbeast already confronted the warband.

If the characters destroy the statue, the temperature in the room increases and the room loses its *Too Cold to Rest* property.

C6. THE PREPARATION ROOM

This is a ritual preparation room and full of all sorts of components and materials. The smell and the general aura of the room reminds the characters of the Ritual Site (C20) in the first layer.

There is a large wooden table in the middle and a couple of little tables around it that are full of knives, charcoal, some vials and a fleshcarver. There is a small rune, which resembles isa (ice) on the south wall.

A successful DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that the table was a surgery table used to create draugrs and to preserve the dead.

A successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a note hidden behind a rusty knife.

The note under the knife was written on rough paper in Hellic. If any of the characters know Hellic, the text describes an ancient ritual performed to preserve humanoids in ice blocks. The ritual is quite long, and starts with the rune on the wall being carved into the chest of the target humanoid.

Frost Rune. When the characters enter the room, they must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a character gains vulnerability to cold damage for 1d4+2 turns. On a successful save, the character gains immunity to this effect until it finishes a long rest. If a character fails the saving throw, and leaves and re-enters the room, it must repeat its saving throw against this effect again. A successful *dispel magic* (DC 14) spell or use of the Runic Purge feature (requires 4th level spell slot) dispels or purges the rune.

C7. THE ROOM OF ICE AND SORROW

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below when the characters enter the room:

> The room looks overwhelmingly bigger and colder than any other room in the dungeon. The air feels dry and heavy. Giant ice blocks are lined up next to each other with humanoids frozen inside.

There is a ritual circle in the middle of the room, and 11 ice blocks. Within the blocks, the characters see well-preserved corpses of Svillanders. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that there are runes carved on the corpses. Additionally, a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that these runes activate when an ice block takes any damage, freezing all the bodily fluids of the humanoid within, and animating it as a **Frozen Svillander**.

The blocks are large objects with AC 16, 20 hit points, immunity to cold, poison, psychic; resistance to slashing; vulnerability to fire and bludgeoning damage.

If the characters can read the Hellic note in C6, they realize that the rune on the humanoids is the same as the one in the note. In this case, a successful DC 18 Intelligence (Arana) or DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that the ritual can be dispelled in three ways: Removing the rune on the bodies right after the Svillanders fall to the ground by means of a *dispel magic* (DC 14) spell or a use of the Runic Purge feature (requires 4th level spell slot), casting a *remove curse* spell on the ice blocks containing the humanoids before breaking them, or drawing the same rune upside down on the ice blocks and pouring one vial of fresh blood on them.

When the characters inspect the ice blocks, they can realize that one of the figures is blinking her eyes with a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check and that she is therefore alive. As soon as she is freed, her eyes open wide and she lets out a pain and agony-filled scream. She is extremely tired; her white eyes are darting around the room and her whole body shakes. There are many open wounds on her body, and she looks really thin.

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below, when the characters are ready to hear what she is saying:

> She starts to speak frantically and fast, almost in a whisper, and says, *"Oh darling, darling, where to begin... I was frozen to death, indeed. And I was burned. Yes, YES! I was burning inside this thing, wasn't I?! No flower, no sun, no darkness... n-nothing! I was just bored, at first. Then I was so bored that it hurt! Like the 'nothing' was freezing my soul. Hahaha! Then I got used to this pain, and got bored of that. Yes yes yes, it was boring like Hel, like Hel for sure. I still do not see any flowers. Oh! Do you have one? By the way, who are you? I am, I am... I mean I was..."* Then she stops and starts looking for flowers in the dungeon.

She has gone completely mad. If the characters ask for her company, she agrees to travel with them, although the characters would be advised to keep in mind that she is unpredictable. Just a few hours later, she starts to believe that she *is* a flower herself and refuses to consume anything that is not in liquid form. She also asks the characters to bury her feet when they find the proper sunlight, just like a flower.

1d4 rounds after the characters interact with the mad Svillander, all the other ice blocks shatter and the Frozen Svillanders attack the warband.

Frost Rune. When the characters enter the room, they must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a character gains vulnerability to cold damage for 1d4+2 turns. On a successful save, the character gains immunity to this effect until it finishes a long rest. If a character fails the saving throw, and leaves and re-enters the room, it must repeat its saving throw against this effect again. A successful *dispel magic* (DC 14) spell or a use of the Runic Purge feature (requires 4th level spell slot) dispels or purges the rune.

FROZEN SVILLANDER

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 9
Hit Points 49 (14d8 - 14)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	8 (-1)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning
Damage Immunities cold
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Understands Austris (Common) but cannot speak
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Shriek. As a bonus action, the frozen Svillander shrieks in pain, remembering the imprisonment and tortures of years. A creature that hears the frozen Svillander must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving

throw or be frightened until the end of its next turn.

ACTIONS

Embrace the Cold. When a frozen Svillander grapples a creature (escape DC 14), the creature takes 11 (2d10) cold damage at the start of each of its turn it stays grappled. While grappling, the frozen Svillander cannot take any more actions.

Ice Cold Fists. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) cold damage.

C8. ICE SPIKE CORRIDOR

This cold and dark corridor is narrow but very long. The cold here feels unnatural.

Icy Spikes. A successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that there are icy spikes in the holes of the walls of the corridor. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check reveals that the spikes will melt with fire, but will soon go back to their old shape due to the cold.

The trap is activated when a character enters the corridor. When activated, the trap releases the ice spikes. A character must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw at the end of each of its turns that it ends within the corridor, or it takes 7 (2d6) piercing and 7 (3d4) cold damage on each failed save.

There are many little spikes in each square. The spikes in a 5-foot-square melt if they take 24 damage (or 12 fire damage). Once they melt, the spikes go back to their old shape in 1d4 rounds. Any attack against the spikes counts as a hit since there are too many of them.

C9. THE ROOM OF THE RUNEMASTER

There is a **draugr runemaster** (p.252) in this room, vigorously carving runes on the wall with its shortsword. Although the draugr looks slim, the ice-blue runes on it give it an air of splendor. When it sees the characters, it growls and shouts *"PREPARE TO DIE!"*

If the characters hit the Hel beast statue at C5, the draugr hears the sound of battle and charges to C5 to kill the intruders.

Runes of Regeneration. A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that the runes carved by the runemaster are constantly healing the draugr. Thanks to these runes, the runemaster regenerates even after death. The check also reveals that it can only be killed if it is utterly destroyed (meaning if it fails three death saving throws).

The runemaster regains 1d4+2 hit points at the start of each of its turns.

The runes can be destroyed by a *dispel magic* spell or a use of the Runic Purge feature (requires 2nd level spell slot).

C10. THE STONE OF COLD

This room is mostly empty. There is only a small stone in the middle of the room. It looks like a regular stone with no special features. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that there is a hardly visible, dark grey circle around the stone.

A character within 10 feet of the stone must succeed on a DC 22 Wisdom saving throw, or start seeing disturbing visions for 6 turns and take 2 (1d4) cold damage at the end of each of its turns. An affected character can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effects on itself on a success. The visions end if the character falls unconscious.

The character having the visions sees how people are turned into Frozen Svillanders. However, since the visions are blurry, the character cannot make out the physical characteristics of the figures involved. The details of the visions are as follows:

First Turn. The character is tied up, sitting in the corner of a large, dark room as a man is sacrificing a human on a large stone altar.

Second Turn. The character feels like an hour has passed, and the man is still sacrificing more and more people. The dead bodies of the sacrifices are piled up in the corner. The blood dripping from the altar has made a small puddle in the middle and the trail of blood oozing from it is making its way towards the character.

Third Turn. As soon as the blood finally reaches the character, the man turns to the character with a merciless look in his eyes and walks towards them. He then drags the character to the altar, presses them against it, and carves a rune on their chest.

Draugr Runemaster

Fourth Turn. The character is taken to a big room, in which there are many other captives, desperately awaiting their bitter end. The man draws a large ritual circle in the ground and places a stone in the middle of it. Then a strong and intimidating woman enters the room. She looks at all the captives, the man, and the stone one by one, examining them. She then starts to walk towards the ritual circle.

Fifth Turn. When she reaches the circle, she lets out a terrifying scream. All captives start crying and begging for help and mercy. The character is terrified. She then casts a spell and creates two copies of herself. One duplicate goes to stand on her right side, facing the character, and the other on her left. Once everyone is in place, she starts to perform a ritual

Sixth Turn. The character feels as though days, weeks, or even months have passed; it feels like the ritual may never end. When it finally does, the woman becomes one again and starts touching the captives one by one. The ones she touches slowly turn into blocks of ice . The woman approaches the character last, and touches the rune the man drew on their chest. As soon as she does, a layer of ice emerges from the point she touched and starts covering the character's body, getting thicker with each passing second. When the ice reaches the character's head, they are left with an immense pain, trapped in complete darkness with no end to their suffering in sight.

If a character experiences all 6 visions, they realize that there is a rune identical to the ones in C7 carved on their chest when they open their eyes. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that this is a transmutation rune, and that it binds the character's soul to this layer of the dungeon. The character cannot take a long rest within this layer, and is vulnerable to cold damage.

The rune can be destroyed by a *dispel magic* spell or a use of the Runic Purge feature (requires 3rd level spell slot).

C11. TREASURE ROOM

There is a large wooden chest with a big iron lock in one corner of the north wall. There are also four torches, one on each wall.

The lock can be picked with a successful DC 19 Dexterity check with thieves' tools.

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below once the characters open the chest:

> When you first open the chest, it emanates an aura of bitter cold accompanied by a bright, blinding light. Then you start to hear voices coming from the chest; whining, groaning, cawing, screaming... You feel like you can hear thousands; all in great agony. As if the chest cracks open a gate to Helheim...

If a character has more than one major or more than three minor Hel points, it must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or start to feel the influence of Hel and be *agonized* for 1 minute.

CONDITION : AGONIZED

A creature that is agonized has its speed slowed by 10 feet and takes 2 (1d4) psychic damage at the end of each of its turns it remains so. It is also unable to cast spells that require concentration, and any spell that requires concentration fails when it becomes agonized.

Frost Rune. When the characters enter the room, they must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a character gains vulnerability to cold damage for 1d4+2 turns. On a successful save, the character gains immunity to this effect until it finishes a long rest. If a character fails the saving throw and leaves and re-enter the room, it must make a saving throw against this effect again. A successful *dispel magic* (DC 14) spell or a use of the Runic Purge feature (requires 4th level spell slot) dispels or purges the rune.

Treasure. The chest contains a silvered ceremonial dagger (worth 200 gp), three golden rings (worth 10 gp each), *hjalpa armor* (p.239), *frosted mask* (p. 242), and a spellbook containing 5 spells of 4th level or lower (of the GM's choice).

C12. A DESECRATED FAMILY VAULT

There are three Large tombs in this room, all of which are covered with Hellic runes, which mean "cold" and "death." The tombs also have names written on them in Austris (Common). The first one reads "Oda", the one on the left reads "Randi", and the other; "Brandr".

The tombs are colored crimson red, as Asta recently poured blood all over them. As soon as the characters enter the room, the dead start to rise, breaking out of the tombs and leaving them in pieces.

At first, they don't seem violent and greet the characters peacefully. Oda asks, *"Why did you disturb us in our eternal sleep?"* This draugr looks like she was once a wise, old woman.

If the characters don't attack yet, Brandr, a draugr who seems to have been a warrior in his life, says, *"I'm terribly sorry but we cannot let you pass..."* . Randi, a female spellcaster draugr, continues, *"We advise you to turn your back and leave the crypt. Why resist death? Everything shall die after all. Death is the ultimate reality of life. What's with the resistance?"* Randi and Brenda look exceptionally similar, as they were twins once.

If the characters leave the room, they don't attack the characters. If the characters choose to stay, they engage in combat.

Treasure. There are two chests in the left corners of the room, which contains 300 gp in total.

ODA

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 55 (10d8 + 10)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)

Skills Arcana +7, Perception +8, Religion +7
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 18
Languages Austris (Common), Dvergmer, Hellic, Vestris
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Dark Devotion. Oda has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Foul Regeneration. When targeted by a spell that deals necrotic damage, Oda regains hit points equal to the amount of necrotic damage dealt instead.

Turn Resistance. Oda has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Spellcasting. Oda is a 7th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). Randi has the following gothi spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*

1st level (4 slots): *bolt of watery death**, inflict wounds, sanctuary, shield of faith*

2nd level (3 slots): *blindness/deafness, draining gaze**, icicle of death***

3rd level (3 slots): *bitter touch of Helheim**, insults to spirit**, spirit guardians*

4th level (1 slot): *dagger of agony***

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Oda makes two melee weapon attacks.

Sword of Cold Flames. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) cold damage.

Brandr *Oda* *Randi*

RANDI

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (with mage armor)
Hit Points 36 (8d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)

Skills Arcana +6, Religion +6
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Austris (Common), Hellic
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Dark Devotion. Randi has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Foul Regeneration. When targeted by a spell that deals necrotic damage, Randi regains hit points equal to the amount of necrotic damage dealt instead.

Turn Resistance. Randi has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Spellcasting. Randi is a 6th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). Randi has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch, mage hand, prestidigitation, shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *hideous laughter, mage armor*, magic missile, shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *enlarge/reduce, hold person, ray of enfeeblement*

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, haste, vampiric touch*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Randi makes two melee weapon attacks.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) slashing damage.

BRANDR

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 14 (shield)
Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)
Speed fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)

Skills Athletics +6, Perception +3
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Austric (Common), Hellic
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Brave. Brandr has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

Brute. A melee weapon deals one extra die of its damage when Brandr hits with it (included in the attack).

Foul Regeneration. When targeted by a spell that deals necrotic damage, Brandr regains hit points equal to the amount of necrotic damage dealt instead.

Turn Resistance. Brandr has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Brandr makes two melee attacks or two ranged attacks.

Spear. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) cold damage, or 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) cold damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Spear. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) cold damage.

Shield Bash. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d4 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

C13. THE DOOR TO THE THIRD LAYER

This room consists of three dark and narrow corridors. The door in the middle corridor opens to the stairs to the lower layer. As soon as the characters open this door, they find themselves in the freezing cold, and the disturbing presence of Helheim envelops and overwhelms them.

There are many runes drawn on the ground leading to the staircase, and a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that the runes are the names and commandments of Freyja, Odin, Thor and Tyr. A successful DC 14 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that they were carved on the ground of this dungeon to disrespect them.

Reward. Erasing the runes from the ground takes 1 hour. If the characters choose to do so, they feel relaxed and have 1 minor Hel Point removed.

C14. HEL'S EDDA

This dark corridor is desecrated and the characters feel uneasy as soon as they walk in. There is a statue of the Goddess of Death in an alcove inside the corridor near C13. The statue's hand is pointing at C15. On the walls, there are three writings in both Austris (Common) and Hellic and carved art pieces lined up on opposite sides.

The first carving depicts several people bowing down in front of Hel, represented as a giant lady whose one half is skeletal and the other one is flesh.

Goddess of Death,
Let us rise once again.
Goddess of the Cold,
Let us freeze Svilland.

After reading these words, a character must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or see a vision in which they are worshipping Hel in a cold pit.

In the second carving, the same Hel figure is petting a Huge wolf, both of whom are surrounded by a Gargantuan serpent.

Children of Loki,
The day shall come,
when the mightiest command,
and the thralls comply.

After reading these words, a character must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or see a vision in which it dies in the middle of a vast void of Helheim.

In the third carving, the same Hel figure's face, whose half is that of a skeleton's, is clearly visible. She is about to place a crown of bones on her forehead.

Of the mighty,
you are the mightiest.
Once all worlds come undone,
your dominion will be the one.

After reading these words, a character must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or feel like Hel's rule is inevitable, and like there is nothing anyone can do to stop it. The next attack roll the character makes within 1 minute has disadvantage.

A character who reads all of these writings must succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw, or take 1 minor Hel point.

C15. ICE SPIKE CORRIDOR

This is another dark corridor, way colder than it should be.

Icy Spikes. A successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that there are icy spikes within the holes of the corridor walls. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check reveals that the spikes can easily melt by fire, but they will go back to their old shape in a short time due to the cold air.

The trap is activated when a character enters the corridor. When activated, the trap releases the ice spikes. A character must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw at the end of each turn it ends within the corridor or take 7 (2d6) piercing and 7 (3d4) cold damage on each failed save.

There are many small spikes inside each square. The spikes in a 5-foot-square melt if they take 24 damage (or 12 fire damage). Once they melt, the spikes go back to their old shape in 1d4 rounds. Any attack against the spikes counts as a hit, since there are too many of them.

C16. THE SECRET SHRINE

This dark, cold room contains a shrine to Hel. Above the shrine, there is a writing in Hellic that reads, *"The brightest salvation is found on the darkest of paths. One must burn inside to talk about salvation. We are saved, we are at salvation."* A small, dark, chestnut chest with a lock on it stands in the middle of the room. The lock can be picked with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check with thieves' tools.

Treasure. The chest contains a wool pouch containing 500 gp, and a dozen pearls (worth 700 gp in total).

C17. THE LETTER FROM THE LAST AGE

There is a large, wooden table in the middle with a high-backed wooden chair, and the table is full of piles of papers. In the pile, there are letters, tales, and records of certain historical events; some in Hellic and others in Austris. One of the pieces of paper has a story written on it. If the characters can read Austris, they find that it's a tale about immortality. It tells the tale of a wealthy dvergr king with a burning desire to be immortal. A successful DC 21 Intelligence (History) check reveals that the story may be about the king of Gurbolruhm who was cursed by Hel due to his insatiable desire for immortality.

If the characters search the room, a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a key under one of the papers. The key opens the door to C20.

C18. BLOODY HALL

The frozen blood from C19 (see below) exceeds half the width of C18. The room smells of blood and there are many stone chairs against the walls of the room made for visitors to sit and wait their turn to visit the altar at C19.

C19. ALTAR OF HEL AND THE "DESCENT OF BALDER"

There is an altar dedicated to Hel against the east wall. A humanoid skeleton lying on the altar decorates it, and both the altar and the ground is painted blood red.

The altar stands at the feet of a Huge statue of a half-

skeleton, half-flesh woman holding a chain in her hands as a leash connected to the collar around the neck of a man, looking up at the woman with a look of anguish on his face . The whole thing inspires terror in the observer. There is a frost rune carved on the chest of the statue. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that the woman is Hel and the man in pain is Balder.

There is a **frost spirit** (p. 255) praying to Hel in front of the altar . When the characters enter the room, they hear words in their minds that mean *"let me send you your enemies."* Then, the spirit stands up to attack.

Frost Rune. When the characters enter the room, they must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a character gains vulnerability to cold damage for 1d4+2 turns. On a successful save, the character gains immunity to this effect until it finishes a long rest. If a character fails the saving throw, and leaves and re-enters the room, it must make a saving throw against this effect again. A successful *dispel magic* (DC 14) spell or a use of the Runic Purge feature (requires 4th level spell slot) dispels or purges the rune.

C20. THE POTION ROOM

The room smells of hundreds of rotten potion materials such as plants, meat, blood, bone, and mud, although it is very difficult to identify the objects since they have disintegrated to form a disgusting sludge on the table, rendering all of them unrecognizable and unusable.

If the characters search the room, a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals some potable water which is enough to last three days for five people, as well as ten vials of the *black liquid* (p. 240).

C21. THE SECOND DEFENDER OF THE CRYPT

There is a large stone statue of a **alpha skeletal hound hel beast** (p. 266) in the middle of the room. There are runes carved on it that mean "Helbeast" in Hellic. Whenever a character enters a space right next to the Helbeast statue, the character must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or take 11 (2d10) cold damage.

If the statue takes any damage, it transforms into its true form and attacks the warband.

If the characters tried to open the sealed door at C1, the statue cannot be found in this room since the Helbeast came to life and got ready to attack the characters at C20.

C22 AND C23. THE BEDROOMS

There are six bedrolls and a chest in each of these rooms. It appears that these bedrolls were for those who stayed, prayed, and stood guard here, but they now look incredibly fragile, like they will come undone at the slightest touch. It seems that one of the bedrolls in C23 was used recently. A successful DC 15 Widom (Perception) check reveals the position of a few strands of black hair, possibly belonging to Asta.

The same number of draugrs patrol each of these areas. When the draugrs in the other room hear the sounds of combat, they immediately join the encounter.

Treasure. A golden amulet of Hel worth 15 gp (if characters willingly put it on, they gain a minor Hel point), a silver sacrificial dagger worth 10 gp, 6 empty waterskins, a bag of rotten rations.

Characters	Encounter (for a single room)
4	1 draugr frostbringer (p. 250)
5	1 draugr frostbringer, 1 frostbitten draugr (p. 251)
6	2 draugr frostbringer

C24. EMPTY ROOM

The characters come across some empty rooms in this large dungeon with nothing valuable or interesting in them.

This is one of those empty rooms. It is a cold, dark room with rough stone walls.

C25. STORAGE ROOM

A strong, filthy stench fills the room. It appears to have been a storage room when the crypts were actively used by the cultists. Now that the crypt is long-forgotten, the goods in the room haven't been used for decades and are therefore covered by a thick layer of dust.

C26. THE CHAMBER OF THE FROZEN SOULS

There are **ísandis** (p. 263) in the room which look like spirits made of the cold. They mindlessly wander around the room. On the floor, there is a huge, blue rune written that means "frost" in Hellic.

Frost Rune. When the characters enter the room, they must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a character gains vulnerability to cold damage for 1d4+2 turns. On a successful save, the character gains immunity to this effect until it finishes a long rest. If a character fails the saving throw and leaves and re-enters the room, it must make a saving throw against this effect again. A successful *dispel magic* (DC 14) spell or a use of the Runic Purge feature (requires 4th level spell slot) dispels or purges the rune.

Characters	Encounter
4	3 ísandis
5	4 ísandis
6	5 ísandis

C27. EMPTY CORRIDOR

It is a long empty corridor with tiny holes on the walls. It appears that some ice-spiked traps were going to be set on the walls, but weren't finished.

C28. DISPLAY ROOM

This is the only room in this layer with a light source; a large display within a column at the center of the room. The display is covered in a thin layer of ice, rendering the saex within perfectly visible.

If the characters examine the display, a successful DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals some runes carved within the display. With a successful *detect magic* spell, the characters can see a faint conjuration aura radiating from the display case. The case is a Large object made of ice. It has 20 AC, 50 hit points, immunity to cold, poison, psychic; resistance to slashing; vulnerability to fire and bludgeoning damage.

If the characters reach the sword, they feel a dark aura emanating from it. If they take the sword, which is *The Saex of Helheim* (p. 241), or relocate the sword, the warlord in C31 cannot summon the sword so she cannot use it in the encounter.

C29. HEL'S ALTAR

It is a large room with a large stone altar, behind which is a Hel statue with a pleasant yet demanding expression. The altar is full of all sorts of objects and it looks wickedly picturesque. If the characters examine the area, a successful DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that the objects on the altar were placed here to insult Freyja, Odin, Thor, and Tyr. There are upside-down Odin runes carved on humanoid skin, a broken, defiled replica of Mjolnir placed on a small pile of bones, a scale filled with black stones with Hellic runes on them, and a tiny golden skull. Black feathers and tiny bones sprinkled all over the altar. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Nature) check shows that the bones and feathers belong to at least six ravens.

If the characters decide to clear the altar and break the Hel statue, **tormented souls** and **ghosts** trapped inside the statue are released. Look at the table below for the number of tormented souls existing inside the statue.

Characters	Encounter
4	2 ghosts + 4 tormented souls
5	2 ghosts + 5 tormented souls
6	3 Ghosts + 4 Tormented Souls

Reward. If the characters clear the altar, after the encounter, when the characters finish their first long rest, they have 1 Minor Hel Point removed, if they have any.

Frost Rune. When the characters enter the room, they must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a character gains vulnerability to cold damage for 1d4+2 turns. On a successful save, the character is immune to this effect until it finishes a long rest. If a character fails the saving throw and leaves and re-enters the room, it must make a saving throw against this effect again. A successful *dispel magic* (DC 14) spell or a use of the Runic Purge feature (requires 4th level spell slot) dispels or purges the rune.

C30. ICE SPIKE CORRIDOR

This is yet another cold and dark corridor that feels colder than anything can be.

Icy Spikes. A successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that there are icy spikes within the holes of the corridor walls. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check reveals that the spikes melt by fire, but that they will go back to their old shape in a short time due to the cold air.

The trap is activated when a character enters the corridor. When activated, the trap releases the ice spikes. A character must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw at the end of each turn it ends within the corridor, or it takes 7 (2d6) piercing and 7 (3d4) cold damage on each failed save.

There are many small spikes inside each square, and the spikes in a 5-foot-square melt if they take 24 damage (or 12 fire damage). Once they melt, the spikes go back to their old shape in 1d4 rounds. Any attack against the spikes counts as a hit since there are too many of them.

C31. WARLADY OF THE SECOND LAYER

To the right of the entrance of the room, there are three Svillanders hanging by their feet from the ceiling. They look like they are long dead, but there's still blood dripping from the corpses. The blood leaks through a hole right under the hanged Svillanders. A hovering sword goes around, making cuts on the flesh of the corpses to extract more blood from them.

On the wall opposite the entrance, there are three tombs. The one in the middle looks fancier than the others, as it is decorated with valuable jewels and is placed higher than the others. This one's tombstone is broken.

On the right corner of the room, near the door, there is a draugr with a layer of ice as armor. She wields a crown made of spiky ice shards and is sitting on a chair, watching its illusion cut already lifeless bodies when the characters walk in. When she sees the characters, she greets them with a rattling voice:

> *"Welcome, welcome, welcome. My commander informed me that we would have visitors, but I was expecting you a lifetime ago. What took you so long?"* She then raises her right hand with an open palm facing the entrance, expecting a magic saex to appear in her hands.

If the characters dispelled the runes in C28, the Warlady of the second layer cannot summon her magic saex in her hands. Whether she succeeds or not, she shouts, *"I'll see you in Helheim."* and attacks the characters.

GM TIP

After the encounter, if the characters do not dislodge the hanged humanoids and let their blood pour into the third layer, they will encounter creatures made of blood in room C3 of the third layer.

Shieldmaiden of Helheim

SHIELDMAIDEN OF HELHEIM

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (+1 ringmail, shield)
Hit Points 112 (15d8 + 45)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Strength +9, Constitution +7
Skills Athletics +9, Intimidation +7, Perception +6
Damage Resistances necrotic,
Damage Immunities cold, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Austris (Common), Hellic, Mithal
Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Innate Spellcasting (1/Day).* The shieldmaiden of Helheim can innately cast *greater invisibility* (spell save DC 15), requiring no material components. Its innate spellcasting ability is Charisma.

Innate Spellcasting (3/Day).* The shieldmaiden of Helheim can innately cast *misty step* (spell save DC 15), requiring no material components. Its innate spellcasting ability is Charisma.

Servants of the Dead (3/Day). As a bonus action, the shieldmaiden of Helheim can conjure two images of herself at any two points within 30 feet of herself. These images can flank her opponents, they stay up to 1 minute or until they are hit by an attack. The images cannot attack, or harm others.

Turn Resistance. The shieldmaiden of Helheim has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

*If the warband consists of 6 characters
**If the warband consists of 5 or 6 characters

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The shieldmaiden of Helheim makes three melee weapon attacks, two with her Saex of Helheim, or battle axe and one with its shield.

Battle Axe of Cold. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage plus 9 (2d8) cold damage.

Saex of Helheim (+2 Saex). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d8 + 7) slashing damage plus 5 (1d10) cold damage and 5 (1d10) necrotic damage.

Shield Bash. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d4 + 5) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Medium or a smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Helscream (Recharge 5-6). The shieldmaiden of Helheim bangs her weapon against her shield while shouting a foul battlecry. Each creature within 30 feet of the shieldmaiden of Helheim who hears the Helscream must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened until the end of its next turn.

THE THIRD LAYER

The following area descriptions are keyed to the next map.

Resting. Unholy aura of this layer constantly tries to penetrate the minds of the characters. They have visions of Helheim, and hear the cries and moans of suffering souls at all times. The characters have enough power to resist these effects while they are conscious. However, if they fall unconscious or sleep, they must succeed on a DC 17 Charisma saving throw or take 1 minor Hel point.

The characters see visions that seem much more tangible in some of the rooms compared to the others. These rooms are marked as ***safe zones*** throughout the crypt, in which the previous case is not applicable.

Safe Zone. When the characters first enter a safe zone, they see illusions from Helheim. After the illusions end or after the characters dispel the illusions, these areas become safe zones which are eligible to take short or long rests in. Unless stated otherwise, dispelling the illusion requires a successful *dispel magic* spell (DC 14).

C1. THE ENTRANCE ROOM

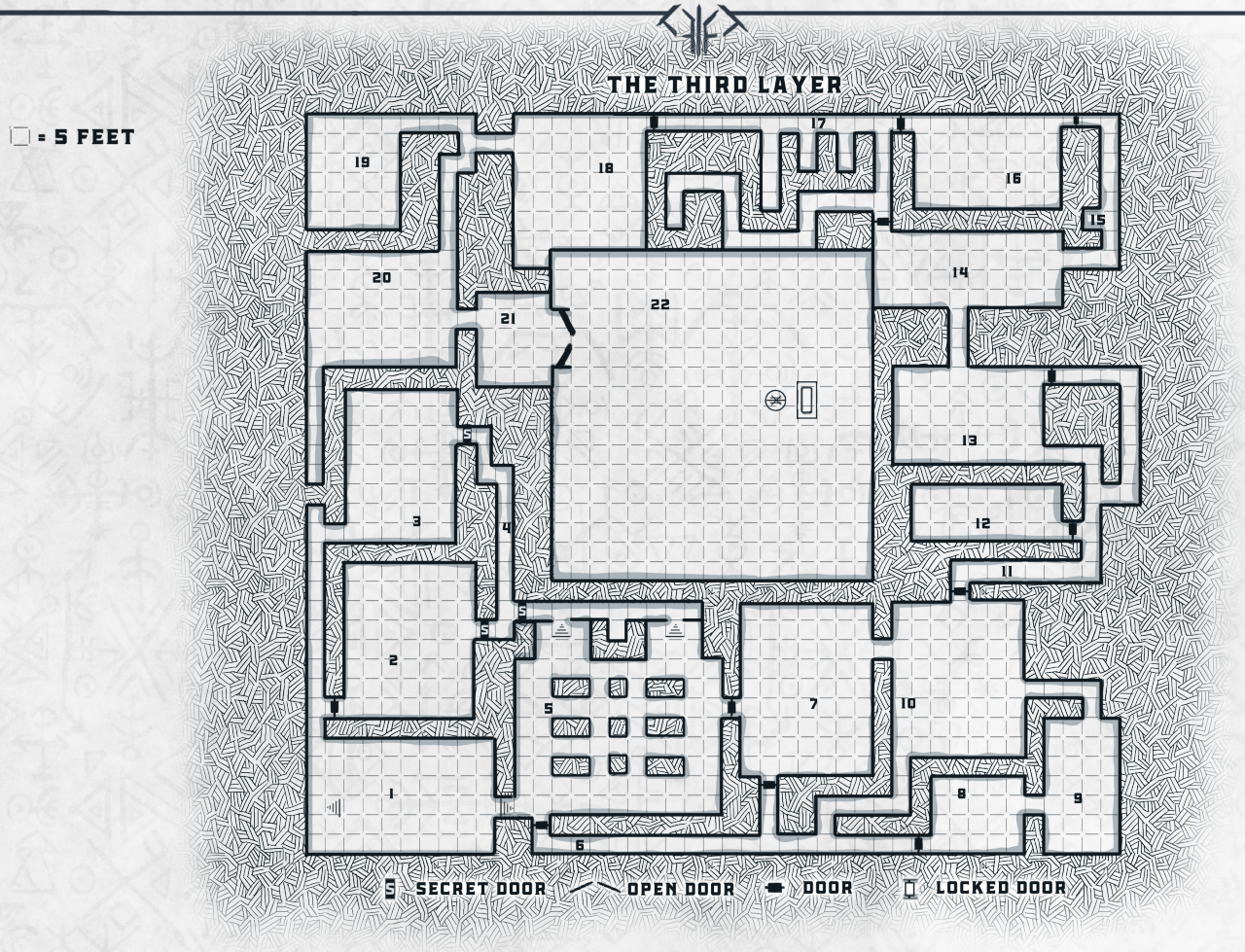
It is the entrance of the third layer. The walls of the room are covered with runes, some of which are carved into the stone. Others are drawn on, with coal and blood.

If the characters investigate these runes, a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that most of the runes create illusions, and a successful DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that there are also some Hellic runes intertwined with them, which is why they create illusions from Helheim.

If a character looks straight at these runes, the character must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or be affected by the *suggestion* spell, which compels them to say *"Hail the Goddess of cold and death!"*.

C2. THE HEL STONE (SAFE ZONE)

As soon as the characters get inside, they find themselves in the illusion of an immense, ice-covered land in the midst of an endless, chilling blizzard. The characters are then all startled



by blood curdling screams of agony, wailing and groaning, coming from a pit nearby. If the characters look into the pit, they see four people whose limbs and bodies have deformed because of the cold. After this scene, the vision ends.

The actual room is a dark room with rough, stone walls. The two broken chairs at the center of the room are the only furniture. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals scratches and blood stains on the chairs. A successful DC 21 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that at least one of the chairs was used in interrogation where the interrogee was tied up on the chair and tortured. It is impossible to determine who was tortured and when according to the clues at hand.

Secret Door. The characters can locate a secret door covered by a wheel on the east wall with a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check. The wheel is stuck and can only be turned with a successful DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check. The door opens to a dark and (evidently) secret corridor (C4).

C3. THE BLOOD BATH

This dark and cold room is filled with a foul smell of blood, coming from the puddle of blood at the center. Across from the door, there is an old wooden chest against the wall.

If the characters do not dislodge the hanged humanoids in the C31 in the Second Layer, their blood continues to pour down to this room, which forms a puddle at the center, and as soon as a character step inside the room, **bloddrapes** (p. 244) spawn from the puddle and attack the characters.

Characters	Encounters
4	2 bloddrapes
5	3 bloddrapes
6	4 bloddrapes

Secret Door. A successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a secret, locked door on the east wall. A character can pick the lock with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check with thieves' tools, and can break the door with a successful DC 22 Strength check. The door opens to a dark and evidently secret corridor (C4).

C4. THE SECRET CORRIDOR

This secret corridor connects the rooms, C2, C3, and C5. With a height of 5.5 feet, this dark corridor has the lowest ceiling in the dungeon. A successful DC 21 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a small rag stuck into the rough stone and some tiny little bloodstains on the floor. If the characters examine the bloodstains, a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that the blood is three days old at most. If the characters take a closer look at the rag, a successful DC 19 Intelligence (Investigation) check reminds them it is similar to those found in the Temple of Fertility in Knafgata.

C5. UNHOLY SANCTUARY

There are 15 stone chairs in the middle of the room, three

of which are filled with dead skeletons. There is an elevated balcony on the north side of the room, which can be reached via two staircases of 10 steps each.

Secret Door. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a secret door on the left of the balcony, buried within the stone wall that leads to C4. It is not locked.

In the middle of the balcony, there stands a **messenger of Hel**. It has a pale slim body over which it is wearing dark-blue robes. When it sees the characters arrive, it starts to preach the teachings of Hel with a sincere smile on its face, owing to the pleasure of finally getting an audience.

As soon as the characters hear its words, they must succeed on a DC 17 Charisma saving throw or be charmed, each finding themself sitting on a random chair to hear the foul words of the messenger:

"Rise, the children of Hel. Greet our newcomers. Welcome to the heart of darkness and cold. Welcome to the arms of the unearthly Goddess! Thou, who hath created the darkness. Thou, who hath created the cold. Thou, who hath given Helheim its name and who dost reign over it with all her glory. I am thy humble messenger, I bow down to thy power, thy darkness, thy justice. And you! You who hears me! Surrender to the darkness; both Hers and your own."

Although the messenger preaches in Hellic, those who are charmed understand their meaning clearly. The sermon lasts 1 minute.

A character can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a successful one. A successful DC 20 Charisma (Intimidate or Persuasion) check can also bring an affected character back into reality. In addition, the effect ends if the messenger of Hel stops preaching. This can be achieved by various means for example by casting a *silence* spell, or by dealing damage to break its concentration.

When the effect ends on an affected character, the character feels dizzy and has disadvantage on the next attack roll made within 1 minute.

If a character listens to the sermon until the end, the character rolls a d100. If the result is greater than 50, the character is stunned until the end of their next turn. Otherwise, they immediately attack the ally closest to them.

MESSENGER OF HEL

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 91 (14d8 + 28)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Intelligence +9, Charisma +9
Skills Arcana +9, Deception +9, History +9, Persuasion +9, Religion +9
Damage Resistances cold, necrotic, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Austris (Common), Hellic
Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Magic Resistance. The messenger of Hel has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Spellcasting. The messenger of Hel is an 14th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). The messenger of Hel has the following spells prepared.

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch, mage hand, prestidigitation, ray of frost, shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *charm person, mage armor*, magic missile, shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *hold person, misty step, suggestion*

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, hypnotic pattern, lightning bolt*

4th level (3 slots): *banishment, greater invisibility, ice storm*

5th level (2 slots): *cone of cold, dominate person, rune of translocation***

6th level (1 slot): *mass suggestion*

7th level (1 slot): *teleport*

**The* messenger of Hel *casts these spells on itself before combat.*
***Svilland spells*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The messenger of Hel makes two melee weapon attacks.

Poisoned Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage plus 5 (1d10) poison damage.

Messenger of Hel

C6. CORRIDORS OF TRICKERY

While in the corridor, the characters hear whispers coming from every direction, inviting them to join the ranks of Hel. The source of the whispers cannot be located. Characters must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw at the end of each turn they spend here, or take 1d10 psychic damage.

C7. THE WARRIOR OF PAST

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below when the characters enter the room:

> You hear a spine-chilling warcry before your eyes meet with the man behind it. The man's entire body is covered in runes, scars, tattoos and carvings. Although obviously a Rune Warrior, he looks unholy and distorted. He looks at you for a moment, with his pitch black eyes and crooked smile, before he attacks.

After the encounter, the body of the rune warrior starts rotting at an abnormal speed, as if it were trying to get to Helheim as fast as it could. The body rots in minutes, releasing an overwhelming smell of rot, decay, and dust. If the characters examine the items on the warrior, a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that he is a long-forgotten warlord that served Hel with its warband.

If the characters take a look around, they see a dungeon room with very few furnishings; two unlit torches on the north wall, a small, wooden cabinet on the west, and a wooden chair. If the characters search the cabinet, they discover that the room is for Hel gothis to get ready before their speeches in C5, the *Unholy Sanctuary*.

HEL'S RUNE WARRIOR

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 19 (chain mail, shield)
Hit Points 157 (21d8 + 63)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	20 (+5)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Strength +9, Intelligence +9
Skills Arcana +9, Athletics +9, Perception +5
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Hellic, Mithal
Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Action Surge (1/Day). On its turn, Hel's Rune Warrior can take one additional action.

Brute. A melee weapon deals one extra die of its damage when Hel's Rune Warrior hits with it (included in the attack).

Dueling. When Hel's Rune Warrior is wielding a melee weapon in one hand and no other weapons, it gains a +2 bonus to damage rolls with that weapon (included in the attacks).

Duel Seeker. When Hel's Rune Warrior is wielding a melee weapon in one hand and no other weapons, it gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls with that weapon (already included in the attacks).

Spellcasting. Hel's Rune Warrior is a 16th-rune caster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). Hel's Rune Warrior has the following rune warrior spells prepared.

1st level (4 slots): *elemental rune***, rune of power***, *rune of slaying***, *rune of speed****

2nd level (3 slots): *rune of dismay* **, *rune of troldkin****

3rd level (3 slots): *rune of death***, *rune of halt****, *rune of the giant****

***Svilland spells*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Hel's Rune Warrior makes three melee weapon attacks.

Dead Man's Blade. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d8 + 7) slashing damage plus 5 (1d10) necrotic damage.

C8. THE ALTAR OF THE WARRIOR

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below when the characters enter the room:

> You are greeted with an unnatural, disturbing silence upon entering. It's as if the walls, the items, and the furniture have all been petrified in silence after the terror they witnessed. A large stone altar dominates the north wall. The altar, the ground, and the walls have all been stained with blood, and there are illegible inscriptions decorating the walls.

If a character touches the walls, the inscriptions, or altar; they must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw or have the vision of a young man (if the characters encountered the warrior in C7, they immediately recognize him) captured by two-hooded figures and forced to slit his own throat to sacrifice his blood. He tries to resist the figures at first, but is obviously weak and exhausted. After some meagre protest, he gives in. After he dies, the hooded figures start to cast a spell that binds his spirit to this dungeon.

Reward. If the characters choose to bury or burn his rotten remains and demolish the altar, they will hear a young man whisper *"Thank you"*. They also have 3 minor Hel points removed, if they have any.

C9. HEART OF COLD

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below when the characters enter the room:

> As soon as you enter the wintry room, your eyes catch the glare of a bright, ice-blue light. You have never seen something so mesmerizing yet so disturbing: There is an ice river flowing from the ground to the ceiling. Pieces of ice hit the ceiling and scatter around the room like it's snowing.
>
> There's a humanoid with a hole in its chest lying in the middle of the room, giving off a frightful stench. This appears to be the source of the ice river. A few seconds after you see this unforgettable scene, the river slows down, and stops at the same time that the figure opens its pure white eyes, which bring a whole new quality to its faded, rotten face.

The **heart of cold** attacks the characters.

HEART OF COLD

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 180 (19d8 + 95)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	18 (+4)	20 (+5)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	18 (+4)

Damage Immunities cold
Condition Immunities charmed, exhausted, frightened
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages -
Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Freezing Aura. A creature that starts its turn within 5 feet of the heart of cold must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or take 11 (2d10) cold damage.

Turn Resistance. The heart of cold has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Weapons Made of Frost. The heart of cold can summon melee weapons in its hands that are made of ice. Such melee weapons deal one extra die of its damage when the heart of cold hits with it (included in the Saex of Ice attack).

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The heart of cold makes three attacks, two with its saex of ice and one with its freezing blow.

Freezing Blow. The heart of cold exhales a deathly cold in a 30-foot cone. Each creature within the cone must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) cold damage and 7 (2d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Saex of Ice. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 9 (2d8) cold damage.

Ice Ray. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +8 to hit, range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (4d10) piercing damage plus 22 (4d10) cold damage. The heart of cold can burst an icy ray from its chest.

When the heart of cold dies, the ice river disappears.

C10. OSBORN'S DESCENT (SAFE ZONE)

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below when the characters enter the room:

There is a man on his knees in the middle of the room. He seems unaware of your presence. He has long blond hair and a clean-shaven face. The air smells fresh, and the walls are not dusty or dirty at all. The man is wearing shiny armor that doesn't look like it's from this time period. There are tables with fresh fruit on them here and there, and wooden wardrobes against the walls that seem recently crafted. There is a stone glowing with a dark blue light on one of the tables

The man looks up, and you hear the sinister voice of a young woman. *"Osborn, you've been chosen. Your wish, whatever it was, has been granted by the Goddess. As your obedience is high, your reward is nigh. Now, close your eyes, so you may open them to new Svilland, dark shall be its skies. Do what must be done."* The man stands up saying *"I shall not fail you my lady."* He then opens the door on the north wall and enters the corridor (C11).

The characters cannot encounter Osborn directly, as he is only an image. However, they may interact with his surroundings. The illusion remains for 4 rounds.

Treasure. The treasure differs according to the time in which the warband searches the room.

If they search the room while the illusion is active, they find 4 Hel cultist robes worth 5 silver pieces each (although it would be hard to find a merchant who is willing to buy such items), 2 *potions of healing*, and a yellow gem worth 200 gp.

If they search the room after the illusion, they find wooden shards with worthless black linen pieces under them all over the place, 2 empty vials, and a yellow gem worth 200 gp among the wooden pieces.

C11. THE CORRIDORS OF TRICKERY

Eerie whispers echo from all directions, telling the characters to join the ranks of Hel. The source of the whispers cannot be found. Characters must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw at the end of each turn they spend here, or take 1d10 psychic damage.

C12. THE SACRIFICE (SAFE ZONE)

The characters find themselves in another room with an illusion inside. As soon as they enter, they find Osborn standing in the middle of the room; thus, it is clear that this is also an illusion.

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below when the characters enter the room:

The cold room is illuminated by the torches on the right and the left. Osborn stands in the middle of the room with a silver goblet in his right hand. He is circled by Hellic runes drawn on the ground with a piece of charcoal. There is a thin, 2-inch-long stone in the middle of the runes, next to Osborn's feet. There is a table behind him, on which there is a book , written in Hellic, titled *"The Commandments of Hel."*

Osborn's voice echoes in the room. *"A life for a life. Seems fair enough..."* He takes a deep breath and continues *"Accept my sacrifice, embrace me, let me serve you for all eternity. I, Osborn, am your faithful servant, in life and in death. I am yours to command as you wish."* When he's done with these words, he takes a sip from the goblet with a determined look on his face. He immediately falls to the ground, unconscious. Then the illusion slowly fades away.

The characters cannot encounter Osborn directly, as he is only an image. However, they may interact with the surroundings. The illusion lasts 1 minute.

Treasure. The treasure differs according to the time the warband searches the room.

If they search the room while illusion is active, they can easily find the book called The Commandments of Hel; however, the writings on the pages have faded.

If they search the room after the illusion disappears, they find the book on the table turned to dust and are thus unable to read it.

C13. THE MEMORY OF AN OLD FRIEND (SAFE ZONE)

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below when the characters enter the room:

As soon as you enter this cold, dim room, you see Ygre standing in the corner of the room, smiling. Wearing a golden robe, she looks more beautiful and stronger than ever. She starts walking to the center of the room, and seems like she doesn't notice you.

She looks at you, although it is more like she is looking through you with her ethereal eyes, void of all mortality. When she reaches the center of the room, she suddenly stabs herself in the chest, slashing it open and sacrificing her heart... This time, however, she doesn't scream or even flinch; she simply continues to look at you with the same look in her ethereal eyes.

At this point the characters must succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check to understand that this is an illusion. Those who prefer to continue seeing the illusion or those who fail the check, continue to see Ygre.

With the heart dripping blood all over her hands, the golden robe Ygre is wearing grows darker with each passing second. She starts murmuring to herself, saying, , *"Now I am strong enough to serve my lady in her war, which we must win in her name. In your name, my lady, we all shall spread the darkness."*

She then looks down at her heart, gets down on her knees and starts to zealously chant unintelligible words before she slowly fades away.

C14. TREASON (SAFE ZONE)

The characters have arrived in another room with an illusion

inside. Again, it is clear that this is an illusion.

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below when the characters enter the room:

> There are wooden tables on the north wall and wooden shelves displaying mugs and bowls on the south wall. There are people sitting and chatting in Hellic. Osborn barges in and flings the door open with an infuriated expression on his face. Those who see Osborn stand up and leave the room without saying anything; fading away at the door.
>
> Osborn paces from one end of the room to another, cursing Freyja's name. He shouts *"Damn you, and all those years I was blinded by you. All these years... They weren't worth a fucking dime. I prayed to you. Night-and-day I praised your name... And you can't even save her from the claws of death for me... CAN YOU??"* He tears a necklace off his neck, throws it on the ground and steps on it with all his might. Before the wooden necklace shatters into a million little pieces, you notice Freyja's rune on it. *"I shall be without her, knowing that she lives on. Whatever the price is..."*

The illusion lasts one minute.

C15. THE CORRIDOR OF SCREAMS

This dark corridor connects C14 and C16. From the depths of this darkness, the characters hear the echoes of loud screams filled with agony. If the characters try to locate the source, a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that it is coming from a door (C16) at the end of the corridor. If the result is 20 or higher, the characters hear the crack of a whip.

If the characters listen to the screams, they understand that they are half in Austris and half in Hellic. All the screams seem to be begging for someone to stop the torture, saying things like, *"Stop, stop it, PLEASE! STOP!"*

C16. THE ROOM OF TORTURED SOULS

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below when the characters enter the room:

> The screams get louder and louder as you get closer to the door. When you finally step inside the room, the environment changes and you find yourself in the cold, the only light source being the pale, blue lights coming from the large ice blocks surrounding you.
>
> A group of humanoids being whipped by a monster comes into view in the middle of this scene. The monster looks like a man that has many scars and carved Hellic runes on his body. It also appears that it has no eyes on its face (where they should be), but many on his body, blinking away.

As soon as all the characters get inside the room, A **Hel tormentor** and **tormented souls** attack the characters.

Characters	Encounters
4	1 Hel tormentor (p. 258) + 5 tormented souls (p. 258)
5	2 Hel tormentor + 3 tormented souls
6	2 Hel tormentor + 5 tormented souls

After the encounter, the illusion slowly disappears and the ice block turns into snowflakes that wash over the characters.

C17. THE CORRIDORS OF TRICKERY

The characters hear whispers coming from every direction while they are in the corridor, inviting them to join the ranks of Hel. The source of the whispers cannot be found. The characters must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw at the end of each turn they spend here, or they take 1d10 psychic damage.

C18. OSBORN'S ROOM

There is a wooden table, two chairs, a small bed, an old chest, and a small cabinet in the room. The bed is against the north wall, the table and the chairs are in the middle and the cabinet is against the west wall. It appears someone is staying in this room. There are two unlit torches on each wall, and a rug which is almost torn to pieces.

After the characters enter and start looking around, an illusion of Osborn materializes next to the bed. A character who does not wish to see the illusion must succeed on a DC 21 Wisdom (Perception) check to refrain from seeing it. If they fail, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> Once again, you see Osborn. He is unaware of your presence and is going about his daily business. He is skinnier and paler than in the other visions. His eyes are bloodshot and his old, glorious armor has left its place to a long, black, embroidered robe.
>
> He drinks some water and starts praying to Hel,whispering and murmuring under his breath as though he were chanting, *"My lady, you are strong, you are powerful, you are fair. You blessed my path with pain, and you've given my worthless life an aim. Say the word, my lady... Command it and I shall die for you!!"* Then you hear that same sinister voice of the young woman one more time, saying *"I want you to protect my warriors. Guard them and care for them until it's time until my gothi wakes them up."* At the end of these words, Osborn throws himself on his knees and whispers, *"O great one! Thou who the lights themselves fear, your wish is my command, and your command is my will! "*

After the illusion slowly dissipates, a successful DC 21 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a distant, shallow voice coming from a room nearby (C19). If the characters do not notice the voice and/or decide to rest here, Osborn (in C19) will attack the characters in three hours.

Treasure. It looks like the table was used as a small altar;

there are two tiny, bronze Hel sculptures (worth 100 gp each) standing on it. Within some containers, there are spell components, 12 onyx pieces (worth 10 gp each), and two vials of *potion of greater healing.*

C19. A SCENE FROM HELHEIM

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below when the characters enter the room:

> There are bones and skeletons in the corners of this dark room. In the far south corner to the left, you see a draugr with his back turned to you , looking inside a bowl, clutching a small Hel sculpture in his hands. The draugr whispers in a deep, growling voice. *"Oh, Reidun..."* Then, he looks at the face of the sculpture and whispers, *"Thank you."* before turning around to face you. The draugr looks exactly like Osborn from the illusions, only a decayed and rotten version, with bits of flesh hanging off his cheek. His shiny armor is now rusty and blackened. *"Greetings mortals. If it were hundreds of years ago, we'd sit and drink mead together. Alas, the circumstances have changed, and so havel. I must ask you to prepare to die."*

When Osborn stops speaking, he draws his flail and applies a poison on it.

OSBORN

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (chain hauberk, shield)
Hit Points 190 (20d8 + 100)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Strength +9, Constitution +10, Charisma +10
Skills Athletics +9, Insight +9, Perception +9, Religion +7
Damage Vulnerabilities psychic
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 19
Languages Austris (Common), Hellic, Mithal, Vestri
Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

Aura of the Dead. Any creature that gets within 10 feet of Osborn must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat its saving throws at the end of its turns to break free from this effect.

Commander of Souls (1/Day)*. As a bonus action, Osborn can summon 1d4 tormented souls. They appear in unoccupied spaces within 15 feet of Osborn.

Divine Smite. When Osborn hits a creature with a melee weapon attack, he can expend one spell slot to deal necrotic damage to the target, in addition to the weapon's damage. The extra damage is 2d8 for a 1st-level spell slot, plus 1d8 for each spell level higher than 1st, to a maximum of 5d8.

Dueling. When Osborn wields a melee weapon in one hand and no other weapons, he gains a +2 bonus to damage rolls with that weapon (included in the attack).

Lay on Hands. Osborn can restore a total number of hit points equal to 35 from its pool.

Turn Resistance. Osborn has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Spellcasting. Osborn is a 14th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). Osborn has the following spells prepared.
1st level (4 slots): *command, inflict wounds, shield of faith*
2nd level (3 slots): *blindness/deafness, cold of Hel**, ray of enfeeblement*
3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead, dispel magic, vampiric touch*
4th level (1 slot): *cage of bones**, hollow eyes***
**If the warband has 6 characters.*
*** Svilland spells*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Osborn makes two melee weapon attacks.

Flail of the Dead. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage plus 4 (1d8) cold, 4 (1d8) necrotic, and 4 (1d8) poison damage. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the end of its next turn. A creature that succeeded on its saving throw is immune to this effect.

Blight Weapon. A melee weapon in Osborn's hand gets filled with Hel's deadly blessing. For 1 minute, the weapon deals an additional 1d4 + 5 necrotic damage.

The bowl that Osborn had in his hands contains a dark liquid. If a character examines the liquid, they see the soul of a beautiful woman wandering in the plains of Helheim. She was once the beloved wife of Osborn, Reidun. The character must also succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or gain 1 minor Hel point.

C20. THE SECOND HEL STONE

Powerful illusion magic has brought forth a terrible scene from Helheim in this room. As soon as the characters enter the room, they find themselves in the same illusion as they did in C2; a broad, dark, and ice-covered land being torn apart by an endless blizzard.

The characters can engage with the environment, they can hear the howls of the northern winds, feel the snowflakes on their skin, and smell the foul scent of death and decay.

The characters start hearing a young woman's voice. If they succeed on a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check, they realize that the voice is the same that spoke to Osborn. The voice comes out of nowhere and says, *"Oh children, haven't you suffered enough? Stop resisting, and rest a while! How tired you must be... Come, re-examine your path."* After listening to the speech, the characters must make a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw against an *infuse thoughts* (p.236) spell. On a success, the characters feel nothing. On a fail, the characters are filled with a dark, overwhelming sense of cataclysms. After that, the illusion dissipates.

The room itself is a dark room with rough, stone walls with bloodstains on them. There is nothing in the room except for the characters.

GM TIP

The *infuse thoughts* spell has no mechanical effects on the characters at this point in the adventure. However, from this point on, the characters who failed their saving throw will have visions that others do not, which could have the potential to affect their alignments. These visions and/or events will be indicated with the phrase "infused thoughts."

C21. ASTA'S BELONGINGS

The room is small and illuminated by a torch that burns with a blue flame. A long, wooden bench dominates the south wall. Resting on it, there is a shoulder-sac, an old robe, and a bedroll. On the bedroll, there is a *diary*.

If the characters look at the diary, they see that it is written by Asta. Her handwriting is beautiful and legible. After some examination, the characters can see she has logged her feelings and ideas in this journal, starting with her days in the Lake Temple. You may find a summary of the diary's contents below. For more information, see *the The* Handouts.

The journal reveals that as time went by, she first started to feel empathy for the Goddess Hel, which slowly transformed into worship. Her mind shifted slowly but surely, and she decided to join Hel's army, which had already started to form in Svilland, particularly in Gurbolruhm. After this decision, she received a message from Hel, and was chosen to be a warlord. Then, she defiled and abandoned the Lake Temple to come here, awaken the old warlords of Hel, and go to Gurbolruhm to build Hel a worthy army and invade the whole of Svilland.

Treasure. The bag contains a wool pouch containing 80 gp, a basic black robe, three days' rations, a tinderbox, and two torches.

C22. ASTA: AN OLD FRIEND, A NEW ENEMY

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below when the characters enter the room:

> A half-naked woman is standing next to a large tomb surrounded by a circle, which looks like a magical barrier. The circle glows blue in the darkness and lights the giant room a little.
>
> Her back is turned to you, which is full of fresh and deep scars. It looks like she isn't aware of your presence and is performing a ritual to awaken what lies in the tomb. However, as soon as you enter this room, a chilling breeze carrying a terrible smell of burnt and rotten flesh wafts up from the circle.
>
> This stench has to be from at least ten burnt bodies lying on the ground.

As the warband starts to move closer, Asta stops performing her ritual and faces them.

The room is more or less empty other than the tomb and

the large iron chest next to it. There are ten, unlit torches hanging on each wall and a couple of stone and wooden chairs dispersed here and there.

The characters can identify this woman to be Asta. Even though her appearance has changed drastically since it was described to them, her hair, scar, face, and height still match the description.

The characters must succeed on a DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana) check to understand that the ritual being performed by Asta is a powerful necromancy ritual meant to raise whoever lies in that room as a powerful draugr.

Asta speaks in an unnervingly calm voice, which somehow makes her seem more intimidating. When it's time for Asta to speak, read or paraphrase the boxed text below.

"Well my friends, we meet at last. I've been told, you were quite desperate to find me. What an honor... I trust you found our little welcoming ceremony to your liking." She laughs sarcastically. *"Now, I must say I don't appreciate being interrupted.* Her expression becomes a bit more serious, with an air of condescension. *"I know why you are here. I know you think you are the forces of good. I see that spark in your eyes. The one you get when you think you are the defender of life, just as I thought I was once."* She stops for a second and sounds genuinely curious as she asks . *"You have met Osborn, haven't you? I believe there's an important lesson to be learnt from his story. You see, he begged Freyja to heal his wife, for weeks and months, he pleaded and bargained with the Goddess; but she didn't. He was devastated and desperate. He* ***had to*** *pray to Hel to spare his wife. So our Goddess healed her, and the woman lived on, at least for a while longer. You see... Her ways are just different from your Gods', which makes her look like a villain. But she is not, really."* Asta takes a deep breath and continues. *"Let me remind you that each of us is dying from the moment we are born. Life is meant to be temporary, and death is the cathartic and inevitable end to all our stories. Sooner or later, everything dies. Death itself is not evil."*

If any of the characters interact with Asta, the magical circle, or try to attack, Asta stays motionless until the magical barrier (see below) is destroyed. When the warband tries to harm Asta or the circle, the circle slowly lifts off the ground and hovers, forming a magical barrier that has AC 16, 60 hit points, vulnerability to radiant damage, and immunity to necrotic, psychic damage. The barrier mirrors half of the damage it takes as necrotic damage, dealing the damage to a random creature outside the barrier.

The warband can talk to Asta until the barrier is destroyed. If they ask Asta why she changed her ways and became a Hel follower, she gives the following information:

"One day, a woman named Gertrud came to the Lake. She was a sinner seeking redemption. She was the most remorseful person I've seen in my life. When I asked her what she had done to suffer such remorse, she said she couldn't bring herself to talk about it, and I respected her silence. She came to the lake every day for a month. A cursed MONTH, asking for redemption. I would stay up with her at night, praying for her soul. She became the only friend I had in my lonely life. One day, she didn't show up. I was surprised and frightened. I realized she had taken her life, for I knew nothing else would keep her from her prayers for redemption. I prayed for her soul and asked Freyja whether she had forgiven her or not. Turns out, she had committed sins far beyond forgiveness according to Freyja. I couldn't believe that Freyja could be so rigid, that she couldn't see the pureness of the remorse in Gertrud's heart. On that day, a seed of mistrust and disbelief against Freyja and her tenets was sown in my heart. The more the sapling from that seed grew, the more I was led to my current path.

The warband may have encountered the letters of Gertrud found in *Freyja's Tear* (p. 33) or in *Kraekross* (p. 89).

As soon as the barrier is destroyed and it falls to the ground as snowflakes, Asta's eyes turn pitch-black and she attacks.

ASTA

Medium humanoid, lawful evil

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 187 (22d8 + 88)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	22 (+6)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Wisdom +9, Charisma +9
Skills Arcana +9, Deception +9, History +9, Persuasion +9, Religion +9
Damage Resistances cold
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Austris (Common), Hellic
Challenge 13 (13,000 XP)

Feed From the Helheim's Cold. Whenever Asta casts a spell of 1st level or higher that deals cold damage, she regains hit points equal to 2 + the spell's level.

Magic Resistance. Asta has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Sacred Cold. Whenever Asta casts a spell that deals damage, she can choose to convert that spell's damage type to cold damage. If she uses this feature on a spell that already deals cold damage, the spell ignores resistance and treats immunity to cold damage as if it is resistance to cold damage.

Vessel for Her Goddess (4/Day). As a bonus action, Asta offers her conscience for the use of the Goddess of Helheim and she becomes a mere vessel. Hel appoints one of her favored spirits to possess Asta, the spirit stays until the end of Asta's next turn. Her eyes turn to ice blue. Any action or effect made while the spirit is inside Asta cannot be suppressed by an *antimagic field* spell.

Also, Asta regains a +2 bonus to her AC, resistance to bludgeoning, piercing and slashing, and immunity to cold damage while she is possessed.

Spellcasting. Asta is an 18th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 19, +11 to hit with spell attacks). Asta has the following spells prepared.

Cantrips (at will): *guidance, resistance, thaumaturgy*

1st level (4 slots): *bolt of watery death*, cage of water*, false life, fog cloud, inflict wounds*

2nd level (3 slots): *draining gaze*, hold person, icicle of death*, spiritual weapon*

3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead, bitter touch of Helheim*, spirit guardians*

4th level (3 slots): *banishment, compulsion, dagger of agony*, ice storm*

5th level (3 slots): *cone of cold, geyser**

6th level (1 slot): *harm*

7th level (1 slot): *hands of the dead**

8th level (1 slot): *antimagic field*

9th level (1 slot): *Hel's blessing**

**Svilland spells*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Asta makes three melee weapon attacks.

Saex of the Hel's Warmonger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) slashing damage plus 7 (2d8) poison damage. When the final hit that kills a creature is dealt with this saex, its soul is claimed by Hel and goes to Helheim. When Asta scores a critical hit against a humanoid target with this weapon, the creature feels the pain and disappointment of those lost souls, taking an extra 18 (4d8) psychic damage.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage.

Drain Life. Each creature within 30 feet of Asta must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or take 27 (6d8) necrotic damage. For each creature that fails its saving throw, Asta regains 10 hit points.

Freezing Cold. Asta summons a freezing cold onto a creature within 30 feet of her. The creature must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, it takes 2d10 cold damage and its speed reduces by 15 feet. It takes half as much damage and its speed is not reduced on a successful save.

If the creature that fails the saving throw by 5, it gets frozen by Hel's ice, becoming restrained for 6 rounds. The creature can repeat its saving throws against this spell attack to break free at the end of each of its turns.

If the characters search the tomb after the encounter, they find the remains of a humanoid buried with some clothes that have decayed over the years, and a *crown of the dead* (p.241), which is an ornate silver crown with black onyx and sapphire on it.

Treasure. A large iron chest containing a small engraved wooden box with 10 gems worth 100 gp each, a *saex of the Hel warmonger* (p.240), *alchemist's supplies*, and a *disguise kit* (the clothing items in this kit look old and outdated, so it is not useful).

The warband now can leave the Hillrest Crypt. As they move up the crypt, they see that the runic traps and illusions have disappeared. The ice in the second layer has melted, and it is no longer as cold as it was. The necrotic aura in the first layer is almost completely gone. The Hillrest Crypt has been cleansed of Hel's corruption. The warband encounters no hardships on their way back to the surface.

Reward. The characters have 1 major Hel point removed, if they have any.

Chapter IV
Cursed City: Gurbolruhm

There is a town over the hills, close to the ancient Hillrest Cemetery. This old, run-down, but cozy town is named Mugdonvik. The warband's activities in Hillrest Cemetery, the most historical destination in proximity of Mugdonvik, have certainly captured the attention of the authorities of the town, as these activities have revealed that the cemetery held unknown secrets.

A number of soldiers have since been sent over to confront any possible danger that may still be polluting the cemetery, and they look relieved when they see the warband. The warband's reputation now precedes them.

The soldiers take the warband to their commander who wishes to talk to them. The commander claims that the prophet of Aegir himself wants to meet with the warband to discuss a matter of grave importance. They must thus stay in Mugdonvik until they speak to the prophet Aleson.

Meanwhile, a shady figure has been pursuing the tracks of the warband since the council gathered in Knafgata, not to fight them but to join them in their righteous struggle against Hel. Mind you, the shady figure is a kind, competent, and reliable person at heart. He is a follower of Balder, one of the Faceless, a cult dedicated to fighting evil. However, his encounters with Hel's offsprings caused his flesh to rot and change to the extent that it makes it harder for him to blend in society.

The warband, assuming that the shady figure is trying to assassinate them, should naturally try to follow him to track him down. However, what the warband will find instead is a hideout of Hel cultists, who were trying to deceive them and lure them into the hideout. Meanwhile, the Faceless also try to help the warband in their fight with Hel cultists.

After the warband defeats the wicked followers of the Goddess of Death, they meet with Aleson. The prophet of Aegir shows great respect to the warband since they have proven themselves worthy. By him, the characters will be given a quest to form a military headquarters somewhere close to the ancient city of Gurbolruhm, where they will meet various organizations, allies, and even bump into some friends they helped along the way.

On the road to Gurbolruhm, the warband also faces a new danger; a disease that they've never seen before, created by assassins in the ranks of the Hel cultists. The makers of this disease were tasked with killing the warband, and magically created a deadly disease to do so. The warband then confronts these assassins, as they get close to the aforementioned military camp.

Gurbolruhm is an ancient dvergr castle that was constructed in the Second Age of Svilland. It was built on the Forbidden Peaks in the North West of Svilland, of which the snowy peaks never melt due to its height. It is hard to navigate and travel on the mountainside, due to both the steep terrain and extreme weather conditions.

The castle and the city beneath were built by dvergr criminals who were cunning enough to escape punishment. They left all that they knew behind, in Svartalfheim, and built another city in Gurbolruhm around 70 years ago. They chose this location since the Vanir haven beneath the earth had given way to an incredible abundance of resources.

With time, its ruler, Don Baltham, got greedy and started to pursue immortality. But no one can escape death. To punish Don Baltham for his impertinence, Hel cursed the city along with everyone inside it. The city has been in ruins ever since. Recently, there have been talks of draugr sightings around the city. The soil around the city is said to have grown dark and rotten, and the undead to have overtaken some surrounding villages. All these problems have been ignited by the draugr king of Gurbolruhm performing a ritual to open a gate between Helheim and Svilland, so that the forces of Hel can cross over to start the invasion.

On the way to Gurbolruhm, the warband faces a draugr army and thus sees that they must act fast to make Gurbolruhm fall to save Svilland. The warband enters the city through the front gates where they face a resistance from the draugr army. Soon, it becomes evident that the army of Svillanders won't be able to march deeper into the city, and that the warband has to sneak inside the ancient dvergr settlement, leaving the battlefield behind. Inside the city, the warband finds itself in the glorious ruins of an ancient city, a masterpiece of dvergr masonry. As they explore the nooks and crannies of this ancient, fabled place, they face illusion spells created by Hel followers and fight some of the most ferocious Hel cultists they've seen yet. The warband must ultimately find its way into the Hall of Gurbolruhm and fight with an ancient draugr king and his daughters before discovering a way to enter Helheim to put a stop to the invasion once and for all.

At the end of this chapter, your characters will be 15th level and will have a chance to finish the adventure early. Instead of entering Helheim, your characters will be able to close the gate to Helheim and stop the invasion without visiting the land of the dead. Or, they will be able to venture through the dark path that leads Helheim and witness the great evil that lies beneath the Yggdrasil.

RUNNING THIS CHAPTER

You, as the GM, can find the key events that take place in this chapter in the table below. The characters face multiple challenges in this chapter.

Episodes

Back to the Sky Above (For characters of level 11)
The Last March (For characters of level 12)
The Mountains (For characters of level 13)
Gurbolruhm (For characters of level 14)

BACK TO THE SKY ABOVE

Start playing "*Into the Wyld (From Thorath To Nyrstadir)*" on "Svilland - Music and Ambiance", then read or paraphrase the boxed text below to your players as they are exiting the dungeon:

> As you come closer to the entrance, a puff of fresh air wafts in your face. The air smells so sweet and so full of life that you feel refreshed to the bone. It has been a long time since you last saw the sky and took in a breath of fresh air. The glare that reflects off the snow is dazzling. Everything; the air, the sky, and the sounds of nature feel incredibly familiar and totally new all at once. Alas, you feel that you've lost something in that bottomless pit; you fear you've seen too much to ever look at such beauty the same ever again.
>
> As you make your way to the entrance, you hear voices coming from a distance, telling you to: *"Keep your guards up! Something is coming!"*

When the characters get closer to the entrance, they see a small military camp in the cemetery. The soldiers are wearing Nionaem armors, and talking amongst themselves. They look quite friendly. When most of the characters are outside, one of the soldiers shouts: *"There they are! It's THEM! The warband!"* Following these remarks, the soldiers salute the characters with great respect and joy. One of them runs over and says, *"Tyr be blessed, It is you. We were afraid of a possible draugr attack. I am Vandil! I've been sent by my commander Manni to collect you and bring you to him. He wishes to speak to you about an important matter, although I am not clear about the details"* Vandil is a young, blonde soldier with a childlike face and light green eyes. The tips of his ears are pink on his white skin due to the cold. When the characters follow him, he leads the characters with a proud and cheerful air about him. He is more than happy to answer any questions the characters may have to the best of his knowledge, but he doesn't know much except for the following. If the characters ask him what he and his troops have been up to, he says they came here after they heard one of the tombs had been broken into. If the characters ask how the soldiers know of them, Vandil says that they are the talk of most soldiers in the north.

If the characters look around, they notice a town of about fifty soldiers staying in basic tents, nestled on a hill nearby. All of them look healthy, happy, and competent. Vandil leads the warband to a tent and says *"In we go, this is the tent."*. The two guards waiting on either side of the entrance look at the characters for a moment before they step aside:

> The tent is spacious; unlike what you encountered in the dungeon for hours on end. Across from the door, there is a tall, young man with dark brown, wavy hair speaking with a wise older woman. They appear to be discussing something rather important, and stop abruptly as soon as you enter. The woman looks at you with her proud, large, sea-blue eyes and a warm smile on her face. She says *"Welcome, welcome!"* Then the man starts to speak in his youthful, clear voice. *"Welcome to Mugdonvik!"* He continues as comes closer, *"Aleson the Arisen, our mighty king of Nionaem, had predicted that you would visit somewhere around here, so we've been expecting you! I must say, it is an honor. I am Manni, a Tyr's Judge."*

If the characters look at him more intently, a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that he is not genuinely happy to see them, nor does he seem like he sees meeting them as an honor. If the characters call him out on this, he says *"There is no question that you are all great warriors. But with you, you bring pain and misery, just as you bring hope. I am just worried about my people and kingdom."*

If the characters ask how Manni and his forces knew about the dungeon, he says some children happened upon the broken tomb, and reported it to their families. The soldiers thus decided to take a look around, expecting to find a horde of draugrs. They decided not to go in, thinking that the dungeon held many convoluted threats, not to mention great terror.

At the end of their conversation, Manni says to the characters *"Aleson will contact you as soon as possible. I suggest you go to the town and rest there for a couple of days. You can stay at Freeman's Place; all your expenses will be covered."* If the characters ask anything else, he says he has no further information as of now.

> **GM TIP**
>
> Once a simple man leading an ordinary life in Nionaem, Aleson the Arisen became the king of Nionaem after he was sacrificed to Aegir and was reborn from the seas. He has been the king of these lands for a while, and the folks respect his unnatural, God-given powers. As these powers have been granted by Aegir, and as Aleson was resurrected by Aegir himself, he is also thought to be Aegir's prophet. However, Aleson's powers came at

a price. He is only able to step on land once every full moon, which is why he changed the capital of Nionaem to somewhere on the shore.

MUGDONVIK

Mugdonvik is one of the biggest settlements in the northern Bjargfold region of Nionaem. Ruled by Skalp Ulfsonn, it is a location of great importance for the region. Start playing "*A Welcoming Hearth (Song of Home)*" on "Svilland - Music and Ambiance", then read or paraphrase the boxed text below to your players:

> While walking on the snowy path leading to the town gates, you hear noises of a crowd going about their daily business in spite of all the terrifying things right under their noses. Even though you feel as though nothing will ever be the same ever again; the people here are laughing, fighting, making up, brawling; and life seems to go on as it always did.
>
> The town gates swing open, and the crowd greets you as though you were war heroes returning from a glorious victory; with cries of joy and roaring approval. Still, you can't seem to feel the joy you expected you would at such a greeting.

There are guards standing watch at the gates. If the characters ask questions about the town, they provide the following information.

Mugdonvik Thumbnail

Leader/ Important Figures. There are three important figures of the town, responsible for making all the decisions; Skalp Ulfsonn who is the town ruler, Audhild the Judge, who is a Tyr's Judge who gives verdicts and contributes to the other decisions made by Skalp, and finally Manni who commands and trains the soldiers.

Interestingly, these three characters are free of greed, which may have led them to fight for rule of the town. However, they've been running it for five years without any conflict. In fact, they are friends with one another.

Skalp Ulfsonn (Vestri, lawful good, Noble)
Skalp has been the ruler of the town for five winters. He is a middle-aged man who is liked and respected by the townspeople.

A brave soldier at heart and a wise man in his soul, he makes excellent decisions both in war and in peace. His short, walnut-colored hair is always clean and well-kempt. His dark-brown eyes calmly watch everything around him.

Personality. Skalp is a respected, wise man who would keep his titles at the cost of his life. He enjoys listening to good stories and reading books. This is why he enjoys spending time with the bards who frequent the town.

Motive. For Skalp, nothing can be more important than the wellness and prosperity of his people.

Audhild the Judge (Vestri, lawful good, Drakkar Skippan)
Audhild is tasked with assisting in the rule of the town by Nyrstadir, and is also a Tyr's Judge who is also the official judge of the town. She is a middle-aged woman with large, sea-blue eyes (she was the one talking to Manni when the characters entered the tent in the Hillrest Cemetery). Every twentieth sunrise, she writes a report about the town and the region, and sends it to Nyrstadir.

Manni (Vestri, lawful good, Veteran)
Manni is the captain of the town, and is a young, handsome man who wants to become as good a judge as Audhild. He is well-mannered and understanding, and he is nice to the soldiers and the townspeople alike. He often wears metal armor with a large Tyr symbol on his chest.

Livelihood. Fishing, fur making, hunting, trade
Militia. 150 **guards**, 3 **drakkar skipan**
Population. 2170
Rumors. There is talk of a foreigner wearing a long, dark robe, who has been lurking in dark corners of the streets at night.

Also, Svillanders who visit Mugdonvik claim that the villages located in the north-west of the town have been demolished by deadly draugrs.
Services. Accommodation, armory, alchemical supplies, simple repairs, weaponry, entertainment, food, beverage, custom fur making.
Language. Austris (Common), Dvergmer, Vestris.

LOCATIONS

Mugdonvik is a cold, northern town with snowy streets, and icicles hanging off the roofs of the houses. Most people know each other. The characters can find various shops and NPCs on the streets of Mugdonvik. The following locations are marked on the map of Mugdonvik.

1. FREEMAN'S PLACE

Freeman's Place is the biggest and oldest inn in Mugdonvik, located very close to the Market, which is why the joyous sounds of the boisterous crowd can be heard even from inside the inn. The inn entertains both merchants and the townspeople. It is a wide-set, three-story building with a two-winged engraved door. If a character takes a closer look, they notice that the engravings depict a glorious battle scene. A large wooden sign hangs over the door. There is a small shack right next to the inn, which is used as a stable for the mounts of the travelers and merchants staying here.

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below to your players when they enter the inn:

When you enter the inn, you find yourself feeling warm and cozy, a feeling you've not had for a long time. The inn is well-lit and decorated with furs and sculptures of animals. The people are enjoying their food, drinks, and the lovely music that fills the room.

While you're looking around, a man starts walking towards you with a bright, cheerful smile on his face. You gather that he's the owner from the way he carries himself. He welcomes you with his deep voice, *"Welcome, welcome my friends! Make yourselves at home! Come, come, have a seat and enjoy!"*

The man's name is Bjorn the Freeman (Vestri, lawful good, Folk Hero), the owner of the inn. As he accompanies the characters to a larger and calmer table, he talks to and lifts the spirits of all they pass by. Looking strong and charismatic even in his basic, daily clothes, he has a long, white beard, a bald head, and blue eyes. He wears a golden chain necklace with a large symbol of Odin. In addition to his strong and charismatic visage, he looks like he is a good man at heart.

When the characters reach the empty table, he says *"If you wish, you may rest, eat, or clean yourselves up. Then, we can meet here."* He points at the empty table and adds *"From now on, this table is permanently reserved for the warband."* Whichever the characters choose to do, Bjorn comes over and sits with them when they sit at their table. Before he does so, he takes their orders, but then passes it on to an employee and joins the warband. Then, they talk about the dungeon, Mugdonvik, and make small talk about the weather, the music, and whatever else they'd like.

After the meal is served and when the characters are ready to hear more, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

Bjorn the Freeman

For the first time since you met him, Bjorn's bright smile has faded and left its place to an expression of worry. He looks each of you in the eye and starts speaking *"My friends"* he says,, *"You great heroes... At times like this, I wish I had better news to tell you... I wish evil would lay off, even if for a day..."* He stops for a second with his eyes fixed on the table, and continues, *"Last week an ominous-looking guy came around once or twice, asking about a warband just like you. I just put him out on his disturbed ass. But now, I think he may want something from you, or he may want to hurt you. I don't know... I just thought I should tell you."* When he is done, he gets up, once again looks at you with his bright smile, and asks you *"How did you like your meals, did you enjoy them?"*

If the characters ask further questions about the ominous guy, Bjorn provides the following information:

- His face was so distorted that Bjorn could see how deformed he was, even concealed in his long, black cloak. He could be cursed or very sick; he smelled awful, like he had not washed himself for years. Bjorn has never seen a face like that, one of his eyes was completely white, and he had a deformed nose, drooping on one side. His whole face was swollen up with pus. His veins looked darker too.
- He came here last week so he probably knew that the warband was around the cemetery.
- Nobody knows where he came from, but Bjorn heard he purchased some dangerous materials from the market, which can be used in poison making or to perform malicious rituals.
- Maybe people in the market know him better.

Read the following locations as well as *Facing the Faceless* (p.172) to see how the characters can locate the character Bjorn is talking about.

Aside from its friendly and cozy atmosphere, Freeman's Place also offers customers the common meals of the region such as wild meat stews, fried vegetables, roasted chicken, dried meat, and boiled eggs. The inn has two specialties; Stone Stew and Bjorn's Berry Pudding.

Bjorn's Berry Pudding (1gp/per serving). Bjorn, who is the inventor of this delicious pudding, has been selling it for over ten years. The pudding is made of blueberries, raspberries, strawberries, roseberries, honey, butter, cow milk, and potatoes. First, all the berries are caramelized in butter for about half an hour, then mashed potatoes and honey are added to the mix. Milk is then added gradually to soften the consistency, and turn it into a pudding. The mixture is served warm in large oak bowls. Most people like the taste, and feel more energized and vivacious after consuming it.

Stone Stew (1sp/per serving). The stew is made with the meat of a white rabbit, potatoes, some herbs, and broth. All the ingredients are boiled in a big cauldron by heating large grayish stones brought here by dvergrs.

2. THE MARKET

Here, you may find the descriptions of the locations in the market and their owners, as well as some information to give characters if they are not searching for the Faceless, ominous man that Bjorn told them about. If the characters are looking for the man, combine these descriptions with the dialog options and details in the section titled *Facing the Faceless.*

Located on a wide street, the Market is a large area in the west that is always crowded. Here, people can find anything ranging from basic household items to the most exclusive of commodities. Some of the many shops and their vendors on this street are given below:

Glaring Vials. A small, desolate shop at one end of the market street, owned by Nassi (Vestri, lawful evil, Warmonger of Helheim). In this awful, smelly shop, the characters can find a range of potions and poisons, which are not combat effective, but which can be used for agricultural purposes. Nassi is a short man with a large belly and plump face. He is a covert Hel follower who secretly aims to stop the warband.

Bare Hand. A large shop in the middle of the market. A small, scrawny child can be seen screaming in the front: *"Get your fur here! ! Say goodbye to the itching and the smell!"* If the characters ask him who he is, he says he is Eirik's (Austri, lawful good, commoner) little brother. Eirik is the owner of the shop, who produces fur clothes, accessories, and all sorts of items.

The Heavy Metal. A big, well-maintained weaponry owned by Edgar (Vestri, chaotic good, Veteran). He is a gorgeous, middle-aged man with well-kempt, short, black hair and large, gray eyes. Despite his age, he has joined many battles and lost half his left foot in one of them. That day, he decided to open a weaponry to make high-quality weapons. He doesn't like to talk about himself but loves a good story.

The Frozen Runestone. A small magic item shop close to The Heavy Metal, owned by Thorvid (Vestri, lawful good, Mage). An old man held in high regard by all in Mugdonvik, he is a close friend of Skalp Ulfsonn, who asks for Thorvid's counsel from time to time.

He sells many magic items in this small shop. Despite his old age, he refuses to leave his shop in the care of anyone else, and he enjoys both his work and speaking to the customers who grace his store.

FACING THE FACELESS

The characters may try to find the ominous figure that was following them. There are various NPCs in the marketplace that may give true or false leads. You can find what the characters may learn about the shady figure below.

Know that the shady figure who wears a long black cloak is a follower of Balder. He is one of the Faceless, a cult established to fight evil and spread the light of Balder. They are mostly known to be the enemies of Loki followers. The man in question conceals his face because his flesh has rotted and started to smell as a result of encounters with Hel-touched creatures. He doesn't wish to disturb people, which is why he

prefers to stay in the shadows while in town.

There is a secret Hel cult seeking to find and destroy the warband. The owner of the Glaring Vials, Nassi, is one of them. The cultists have bribed the beggars of the town to manipulate the warband. However, not all dialogue options will lead the characters to lies. The statements that are false are marked. The characters may locate this Faceless man before they encounter Hel's Cultists. You may find this option in the *Stable of the Faceless* section.

DEADLY LIES

Glaring Vials. When the characters enter his shop, Nassi is going about his daily business, cleaning vials. When he sees the characters, he greets them with a warm welcome. If he hasn't met them already, he introduces himself.

If the characters ask why he sells dangerous materials to the folk, he says: *"I only sell substances used in the art of crafting. The purpose of your craft does not concern me. Besides, I do not sell exclusively deadly components. Say, I sell copper extract. You can use it to make poison, sure, but you can also use it to plate your armor, or to reinforce your copper cooking pot. What you do with these substances is up to you. Besides, no one asks the blacksmith why he sells daggers. Hahaha, anyway, sorry, I've been asked this question one too many times. Sorry if I've bothered you with my complaining."*

If the characters ask if a shady figure had come there to purchase substances, he says: *"Ah! Yes... There was a man. He was here three days ago and he bought a considerable amount of henbane. It is used to treat shaking, but overdo it and it could be poisonous. His skin was seriously messed up, and he reeked of something. So, I just thought he needed a lot of hensbane to cure all his ailments. I still asked him what he was going to do with all of it, he said that he was ill and that hensbane helped him relax. His story seemed to check out, so I sold him the items."*

If the characters ask whether he knows how to find this man, he says: *"That night, after the man left my store, I felt uneasy and thought of how awful I'd feel if he used the hensbane to create poison. So, I asked Hemming to secretly follow him around. He is a beggar in the town square. There is an abandoned house close to the market. It seems the man is squatting there. He comes out of the house at sunrise and goes back at sunset. Nothing out of the ordinary. Anyway, why did you bring him up? Did he do something?"* A successful DC 25 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that this statement was a lie. The shady figure is not squatting in the house at all, but staying in a back alley. The house Nassi was talking about is actually full of cultists who wish to destroy the warband. If the characters don't seem convinced, Nassi suggests that the characters cast the *zone of truth* spell, for them to make absolutely sure that he is not lying. He in fact has an item called *ring of lies* (p. 240), which negates the effects of the *zone of truth* spell. When the characters leave his shop, he leaves his place to his apprentice and goes to the hideout of the Hel cultists.

Bare Hand. When the characters enter his shop, they find Eirik talking to a mountain half-jotunn, trying to sell him a bracelet. The half jotunn is one of the members of the Mithral of the Mountains which the characters met in Kreaekross. His name is Björn. If the characters helped his friend Magni escape from the prison, he greets them with joy and excitement. If the characters did not help Magni escape, he simply greets them with a smile.

If the characters ask whether he knows how to find the shady man, Eirik says: *"Dunno. Nobody like that came to my shop. I've heard Freeman talking about a strange man, though. That's all I know."*

If the characters ask Björn whether he knows how to find this man, he says: *"Yeah, there was a man in a cloak, coming out of the potion shop. Maybe go there? Might help."*

The Heavy Metal. The characters find Edgar shouting at his apprentice for not sharpening the blades well enough. When he sees the characters, he rejoices at the sight of them, and asks if he can interest them in any of his wares.

If the characters ask Edgar whether he knows how to find the shady figure, he says: *"There was this man... I gotta tell ya, he smelled like he hadn't seen soap or water for ages. When he handed me his svardstav, I saw his hand. It was like... Like he was already dead. I've seen scary shit in my life, but this was... different... Regardless, he paid well, and that's all a guy like me can hope for. I have two kids at home, ya know. Oh, and, uh... he was here about three days ago. Almost forgot to say that."* Edgar doesn't know how the characters can find this man.

If the characters ask what Edgar did for this man, he says: *"I repaired his svardstav's balance and sharpened it. It was an unusual weapon, with runes here and there. Don't take my word for it, cuz what do I know about runes, but I think it was magical."*

The Frozen Runestone. As soon as the characters enter the shop, Thorvid welcomes the characters: *"Welcome Svillanders. I hope you don't talk much and buy little like some folk do. Please, come in."*

If the characters ask whether he knows how to find this man, Thorvid says: *"Oh! Hmmm... I might have seen him, but I can't recall.. But... I rarely go out and wander around town. You'd better talk to people who have more free time."*

If the characters leave without buying anything, Thorvid sadly says: *"Not surprised."*

Beggars of Mugdonvik. There are beggars wandering around Mugdonvik. When the characters ask them about a suspicious man, all of them mention a kid named Hemming. He is ten years old, and is one of the beggars. Hemming can be found wandering the streets, his exact location in unimportant. He is a slim kid with short black hair and forest green eyes. He generally has a happy disposition. The other beggars say they saw Hemming following the man. When the characters want to ask for information about the suspicious man, Hemming says: *"Uhhh, you know how it is... Toss me a coin, will ya?"* If the characters give him a coin, he flashes them a sincere smile and answers their questions. If the characters don't give him a coin, he looks disappointed, shrugs, and says: *"Meh, worth a try, wasn't it?"*, and answers their questions anyway.

If the characters ask why he followed this man, Hemming says: *"Nassi gave me not one but 4 silver coins to follow him. So, I did. Simple as that. But Nassi looked worried, so I followed the man from a distance. I know where he's staying, when he's there, and when he isn't."* A successful DC 20 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals he's lying.

If the characters ask whether or not he knows how to find this man, Hemming says: *"Yea, I saw him go into the abandoned wooden house two blocks behind Freeman's. He leaves the house*

early in the morning after he casts a spell on the door. He comes back before sundown. But that's all I know. Unless, you gimme some more... you know..." If the characters give him a coin, he smiles and continues. *"There is a trapdoor behind the house. I think it leads to a basement of some sort but I didn't try to go into the house since I saw him cast a spell on it. I could help you open the door, though, if you can tell me that it's safe. Although, that would cost you a bit more than a coin, heh heh."* A successful DC 18 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that he's lying. If the characters tell Hemming that they've caught him in a lie, his big green eyes widen, and his lip quivers as if he were about to cry. If the characters ask him to tell the truth, he replies in a shaky voice: *"I am sorry, I'm... I'm just... I don't want to lie to such warriors, I've never seen anyone like you... But... but... they gave me a lot of money, and they threatened me. They... They said they would hurt..."* He starts to sob so violently that he cannot speak for a while. Then he says, *"You are strong, you can save us from them. You can, can't you? They are staying in the barracks near Freeman's Place. I can show you where it is."* If the characters get the truth out of Hemming, he looks at the characters at the end of their conversation with tear-filled eyes and says *"You forgive me, right?"*.

STABLE OF THE FACELESS

If the characters don't shut the windows in the market or in the inn, the Faceless man watches the characters from a distance. If the characters try to understand if someone is watching them, they must succeed on a DC 25 Wisdom (Perception) check to identify the ominous figure. If the characters manage to see the Faceless, he retreats to the closest back alley. To locate his tracks, the characters must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. To follow the tracks, the characters must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom (Survival) check.

After following the tracks for ten minutes, the warband finds an abandoned stable next to a one story, run-down, wooden building. As soon as the characters enter the stables, they see a cloaked figure, standing tall and facing them:

As he takes off his hood, he starts speaking in his deep voice. *"Welcome to my humble abode. I am Roar Steinsson. A Faceless. Devoted gothi of Balder. I've been looking for you. I knew you'd find me."* His face looks half pale and half rotten. His eyes are white, and his veins look dark, like something other than blood was pumping through them. He wears a black, studded leather armor and a silver pendant with Balder's runes on it. *"Don't let my appearance deceive you. I am a warrior of light. Recent encounters with Hel's offspring changed me by shape, but my heart still burns with the sacred flame of Balder. We have much to discuss, but there are others who are looking for you. Others with much more sinister intentions. I've located their hideout. The house appears abandoned but I've seen figures go in and out in the dark of night. We must hurry. But first..."*

Roar moves to the sides of the stable and lifts up a shroud on the ground. The man in the shroud moans in pain before Roar takes out the rag in his mouth, and says *"Tell them what you told me, you piece of filth."* The cultist replies, *"We... We were looking for the warband. To... *cough* kill 'em. We had a dream, there was a lady... in... dressed in black... She ordered us to do it."*

Roar looks at the characters and says *"I caught him two hours ago, he came out of their hideout and was passing by. There was no one else around, so I was able to capture him. But... Enough chit chat. We must act now."*

He shows the warband the location of the hideout and wants to assault the hideout together. At this point, see the section titled *The Assault with the Faceless* (p. 175).

ENTERING THE HIDEOUT

There are two ways of entering the hideout mentioned by Hemming or Nassi.

One of them is through the front door, and the other is from the trap door that opens to the basement. Although the entrances are different, the warband encounters the same enemies as described below.

Front Door. The wooden door is protected by means of an *alarm* spell and an *arcane lock* spell. The door is a Large object with AC 15, 12 hit points, immunity to poison and psychic damage; and vulnerability to fire, bludgeoning damage. It can be picked by a successful DC 15 Dexterity check with thieves' tools. However, the *arcane lock* spell increases the DC by 10. The *alarm* spell is activated whenever a creature touches the door, so it alarms the Hel cultists inside. Alarmed cultists hide to further *surprise* the warband in combat. (The characters cannot be surprised if they are aware that the cultists are here.)

Trap Door. If the characters accept Hemming's offer (see *Beggars of Mugdonvik*), they have to pay him 1 gp. Otherwise, they can locate the trap door with a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check and pick the lock of the trapdoor by themselves. Picking the lock of the trap door requires a successful DC 15 Dexterity check with thieves' tools.

1. THE FIRST FLOOR

There are three doors in the main hall. One on the left wall, one on the right wall, and another leading to the basement downstairs, across from the door. If the characters break in, they encounter cultists in the main hall.

If the *alarm* spell is activated by the warband, they encounter the image of a cloaked man sitting on a chair in the middle of the room, with his back to the characters. As soon as the characters approach the image, the cultists charge towards the characters, coming out of the rooms that are the farthest to them. Among them, there is Nassi, the potion maker.

Characters with passive Perception of 15 or lower are surprised. (The characters cannot be surprised if they are aware that the cultists are here.)

2. THE BASEMENT

The basement is full of sacks of potato and flour, which is an indication that the house is being used by someone. The basement is 7 feet high and the walls are made of cobblestones.

Trap. There is a stretched rope on the floor, tied to a vial of poisonous gas, and to a net tied to the ceiling. Locating the trap requires a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check. On a fail, one of the characters steps on the stretched rope, and the vial of poisonous gas and the net drops to the ground. The vial breaks and each creature must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 4d10 poison damage and be poisoned until the end of their next turn. Also, the creatures within 5 feet of the character who stepped on the rope must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be restrained by the net. The characters can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of their turns.

As soon as the characters are trapped, the cultists attack. Among them, there is Nassi, the potion maker who works at *the Glaring Vials*. If the characters are not trapped, they can move to the first floor and encounter the image in the chair.

Hideout Encounters without the Faceless

Characters	Encounter
4	1 Warmonger of Helheim, 4 Gothis of Hel
5	2 Warmongers of Helheim, 3 Gothis of Hel
6	2 Warmongers of Helheim, 5 Gothis of Hel

GM Tip: This encounter is designed to be deadly. Since the Faceless will join the warband later and help the characters on a narrative basis. After he joins the characters and kills the warmonger narratively, the encounter may continue as normal. Please note that no one in the warband should be killed in this encounter although they may fall unconscious.

The Entrance of the Faceless. (If the Faceless is not with the warband yet) Read or paraphrase the boxed text below at a point of the encounter where the characters are in a desperate situation:

> The fight is exhausting. The spells powered by the Goddess of Helheim keep coming at you with all their foul energy. The Warmonger of Hel roars, shouting: *"I'll kill you!"* and grabs (whoever is) in front of him by the neck, choking until they are blue in the face. The other Hel cultists are screaming and screeching at the top of their lungs. You can't see any way out. Right then, someone breaks the front door. A hooded figure charges towards the fight with all his might, swings his svardstav in the air and pierces the skull of the Warmonger. As the cultist falls, the figure's hood falls as well. You see that half of the man's face is blackened with rotten flesh and the rest of his flesh is as pale as death itself. His eyes are pure white and you can see his blackened veins through his almost transparent skin. As you make these observations, he swings his svardstav at the nearest Hel cultist.

After the encounter, he looks at the warband and starts to speak in a deep voice:

> *"I am Roar Stensson. A Faceless. Devoted gothi of Balder. I've been looking for you."* He wears a black, studded leather armor and a silver pendant with Balder's runes on it. *"Don't let my appearance deceive you. I am a warrior of light. Recent encounters with Hel's offspring changed me by shape, but my heart still burns with the sacred flame of Balder. We have a matter to discuss.*

For further dialogue options, see the section titled *Interview with the Faceless.*

The Assault with the Faceless. (If the Faceless is in the warband) The description of the locations do not change, but you should use the following encounter table instead of the first one.

Hideout Encounters with the Faceless

Characters	Encounter
4	1 warmonger of Helheim, 3 gothis of Hel
5	2 warmonger of Helheim, 2 gothis of Hel
6	2 warmonger of Helheim, 4 gothis of Hel

GM TIP

Please note that Roar should be actively engaged in combat. After the encounter, see the section titled *Interview with the Faceless.*

INTERVIEW WITH THE FACELESS

If there are any wounded characters, Roar will offer up to two vials of *potion of superior healing* for them to drink, and starts speaking when everyone is settled.

> *"I devoted my life to abolishing the suffering caused by the worshippers of Hel. I am a Faceless, one of a group of warriors who try to bring light back to Svilland. But my own purpose is even bigger than that... And to achieve it, I must face the foul creatures of Helheim. I've heard that you are more than capable of fighting the offspring of Hel. I'm pleased to say, I find the rumors to be true. I offer you my blade. Let us fight side by side."*

Roar Stensson (Mithal, chaotic neutral)
Roar is a brave member of the Faceless who was recruited as a kid. Since then, he has been wandering Svilland, fighting the creatures of Helheim.

His flesh has been recently desecrated by the curse of Hel (which means he gained Hel points in terms of game mechanics), but he is still as passionate as ever in his heart. His long, dark hair looks clean. His eyes are white, and his body is half pale and half-rotten. He tries to cure himself with the hensbane herb, as it stops the spreading of the rot, although it doesn't heal it. His face, on the other hand, is deformed because he is a Faceless (p. 6).

Personality. Roar is a straightforward, yet hot-headed man who manages to control his temper. He isn't against the use of poison when dealing with foes, but he takes great care while choosing his enemies. He doesn't wish to harm people unjustly.

Motive. Roar is dedicated to ridding Svilland of the foul creatures of Hel. He is willing to do whatever it takes for the greater good. His ulterior motive is to be strong enough to journey to Helheim and save his beloved God Balder from the hands of evil.

Roar Stensson

If the characters ask about his personality and motives, Roar answers their questions in a quick and straightforward manner. If the characters accept Roar to the warband, he swears that he will protect the warband with whatever it takes and that he will be a loyal and true companion, and offers them some mead.

If the characters report the Hel cultists to the authorities, they thank the characters and say that they will immediately investigate the situation. Then, the characters should wait for Aegir's prophet, Aleson, to contact them.

A SACRED CONVERSATION

With the first lights of the day, a knock on the door wakes the characters up if they were sleeping in Freeman's Place. At the door is Gudridr (Vestri, lawful neutral, priest), a middle-aged, elegant woman with long, curly, brown hair and dark blue clothes. Her green eyes look excited with a hint at determination. She is wearing an amulet with Aegir's runes on it and is holding a marble bowl with a radius of 20 inches. The bowl looks fairly heavy, but it seems she has no trouble carrying it. She apologizes for waking the characters this early, but Aleson wishes to speak to them. She is also a strong follower of Aegir, and therefore serves Aleson the Arisen.

When all the characters are all in one place, preferably a secure room in the inn, Gudridr asks the characters to stand in front of her and she places the bowl between the warband and herself. She casts a *create or destroy water* spell and fills the bowl with water, with just a little room left. She then takes a vial of holy water and pours it into the bowl.

She asks the characters whether they are ready to talk to the prophet or not. If the characters say they are ready, Gudridr lays out a few ground rules that the characters ought to follow while talking to the prophet.

- The characters must show Aleson the utmost respect.
- They must only speak when spoken to.
- They must keep their voices down.
- They must introduce themselves properly before speaking.

> Gudridr closes her eyes and puts her hands in the bowl, drawing runes in the water with her finger and saying, *"Hear me, prophet. Hear me through the waters of Aegir."* As she keeps drawing in the water, you start to smell salty sea water, feel a warm breeze blow through your hair, and hear the calming crashing of waves.
>
> Gudridr then takes her hands back out of the bowl, and you see a whirlpool form in the water. The shape of the water slowly changes from that of a whirlpool to that of a person; none other than the prophet of Aegir. Aleson stands tall with all his might and glory, wearing sea-blue robes and holding a Large spear.
>
> *"Greetings,"* he says with his deep, commanding voice. *"I am sure Gudridr, solely out of respect, gave you some guidelines on how to talk to me. Forget all that for a moment,*

you are amongst allies here, not in a diplomatic council." Gudridr stands still without any facial expression. *"Now... I am Aleson the Arisen. And I know who you are and what your duty is. No further introductions are necessary."* He waits for a moment and continues. *"Nionaem is also suffering from the invasion, or shall I say, the plague of Helheim. We have been informed of the burnt villages, and of people turning into mindless draugrs. The plague seems to have hit northern Nionaem the hardest. I hear that draugrs attack villages around Gurbolruhm, killing anyone in their way, regardless of their age or capabilities. The soil itself has begun to rot.*

There is unrest in my kingdom, and I certainly don't want that. More importantly, I'm afraid that there will be no Svilland left if we do not stand up and fight right now; nowhere for us to call home... I must say, in these dark times, the sight of warriors such as yourselves fills me with hope.

You may wonder why I am telling you all this. I am a prophet and I was granted visions by the great God of the Seas. We must attack Gurbolruhm together. There, you will discover things that shall be revealed later on. Fate has given you an important part to play, and from where I stand, it looks like you are succeeding. Consider yourselves at home whenever you travel through my lands. You shall be treated with respect for I am appointing you as my commanders." Before Aleson continues to speak, he scowls and says in a soft, chilling voice that sends shivers down your spines *"Utter the words on your mind right now and I shall rip your tongue out, Gudridr."* Shocked and scared, Gudridr stammers *"Forgive... Forgive me, my prophet."* Aleson then continues to talk to the characters. *"I know that you have encountered many of Hel's offspring. Is there anything that you could share with me? I would advise you not to skip the slightest detail. If we are to fight Hel, we must know what we're up against."*

Aleson waits for the characters to tell him everything about Hel's invasion. Aleson says that he is going to establish a military base near the city of Gurbolruhm and move his army there. He wants the characters to be responsible for the headquarters and to plan an attack on Gurbolruhm. He asks the characters to be there in five days.

He says that he can only set foot on land once every full moon since he lives underwater as Aegir's prophet. As the next full moon is in seventeen nights, Aleson won't be there in the flesh five days later but he'll send his commanders to represent him. He says that he will be sending word of the assaults all over the settlements of Svilland and expects everyone to assist them in their mission to rid this land of these pests.

He specifically asks if there are any people or organizations that the warband would want to be part of the assault. If so, Aleson personally invites them through divination spells. (At this point, the warband may mention each and every organization or NPC that they have encountered on their journey thus far. If the characters want to see, for example, Odin's Vargr or Tyr's Judges on the battlefield of Gurbolruhm, they should say this to Aleson.

After the characters give a list of NPCs or organizations that they want on the battlefield, Aleson says *"Now, go to the foothills of Gurbolruhm, where you'll find a military post at the beginning of the road to the bridge of Don Baltham. There, you will find the soldiers of Nionaem. Wait for me and the others to arrive. Then, we shall strike with a solid plan. Remember, Aegir is with you."*

Then the water starts to calm down and the image of Aleson disappears.

However, if there is an Aegir follower in the warband, before ending the conversation and disappearing, Aleson says that Aegir is most pleased by the actions of the character and that the character is on the right path.

Gudridr looks at the characters, embarrassed, and says that she had thought "How could Aleson appoint outsiders as commanders", but with hostility aimed at the characters. However, now she is upset, ashamed, and afraid. She apologies for her thoughts and wishes to take her leave.

A few minutes after the conversation, the sky goes dark in Mugdonvik. The townspeople look worried and troubled, and the guards don't know what to do about the crowd or the black mist that is approaching.

The mist is an extremely rare weather condition seen in Svilland. If the characters try to understand what it is, a successful DC 18 Intelligence (History) check reminds them of tales of a mist that drove people crazy, although the tales did not mention Hellic whispers, like the ones they hear now. The conditions in Mugdonvik appear to be one of a kind.

Hellic Mist. The air is filled with a thick, cold, black mist. Those who stay in this mist for one hour start hearing Hellic whispers that penetrate their mind and take 1d4 psychic damage at the end of the hour. They must also succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1d4 minutes. If the person knows Hellic, they might recognize the following words or sentences among these whispers:

d6	The Whispers
1	Welcome to my darkness.
2	The day is nigh.
3	You will fail.
4	Kneel before me.
5	I am the cold and the dark. Nothing can stop me.
6	I will destroy your pitiful home.

Some guards start patrolling the streets to warn the townspeople about the mist, telling them not to open their doors and windows.

The characters are expected to arrive at the headquarters near Gurbolruhm within 5 days. Right when the characters are getting ready to leave town, Audhild the Judge personally meets with the warband to inform them that she has received word of the order of Aleson the Arisen. The soldiers of Mugdonvik will be in the headquarters in five days as well. However, the soldiers are not ready for the journey yet, and it will take them hours to prepare. However, she says she can send a number of them (who were prepared for another task) with the warband (8 **guards**). They can accompany the warband throughout the journey and lead them to Gurbolruhm, since the soldiers know the area better than they do. She is also willing to give the warband horses for their journey, if they do not have them already. The characters should hit the road at once. The other soldiers of Mugdonvik, led by Manni and Audhild, will meet them at the headquarters one day after the warband's arrival.

Roar wants to buy heavy armor while in town. He quickly visits the blacksmith and buys a chain hauberk before the warband is on its way.

Level Up. Your characters have reached 12th level. Feel free to inform your players to level up during their next long rest.

THE LAST MARCH

This is where the characters march to Gurbolruhm. The characters face some encounters on the road, as they usually do. You can roll on the following encounter table to determine what they are, or you can create some social encounters that may be related to the guards (Asmund, Bori, Eidunn, Jodis, Halfdan, Olaf, Tola and Ulfhild). Play "Into the Wyld (From Thorath To Nyrstadir)" on "Svilland - Music and Ambiance" while the characters are on the road.

d6	Encounter
1	Asmund finds a lesser Ihwar (rune of death, p. 242) runestone on the road, but doesn't understand what it is and asks the characters. Meanwhile, Eidunn looks jealous of the interaction between the characters and Asmund, and claims that she was the one who actually found it. It even looks like she might pick a fight over such a small thing.
2	Olaf tells the warband that Tola secretly threatens him, telling him to stay away from Jodis.
3	Bori starts singing an epic song about the road to Gurbolruhm. He praises the characters and their epic victories before coming to Mugdonvik.
4	Halfdan tells a story about one of his friends, who encountered a black bear within a cave and then found great treasure in said cave.
5	Eidunn approaches the characters in a friendly manner and asks them questions about their lives.
6	Ulfhild starts to tell them stories of battle and of her fights with bears in the woods between Nionaem and Alsvartr.

The characters start their next journey to Gurbolruhm with a small group of guards who know the area very well. All

these guards are young and strong warriors who are willing to fight alongside the characters to the death. Their names are Asmund, Bori, Eidunn, Jodis, Halfdan, Olaf, Tola, and Ulfhild.

Asmund (Vestri, lawful good, guard)

Asmund is a handsome man with long dark brown, braided hair, and amber-colored eyes. He has a childlike, cheerful personality; he likes horsing around with the other guards, loves to sing, and whistles as he walks. He has a large tattoo on his neck that resembles ornaments that are generally carved on wood or stone.

Personality. Despite his strong appearance, he has the warmest disposition. He hates to hurt any living thing so much that he collects pieces of wood from around trees rather than cut one down himself. He never hunts small animals.

Motive. Asmund admires the characters and wishes to be a great warrior like them, ultimately wanting to go to Valhalla with his fellow warriors.

Bori (Vestri, neutral good, guard)

Bori is a short, handsome man with short, wavy, black hair. He tightly braids his long beard that goes down to his chest. He wears a new, black bear pelt that he bought for this journey. In it, he looks strong and confident.

Personality. Bori doesn't like to talk much; he prefers to listen to conversations. He is an altogether nice person who treats everyone with respect. He enjoys singing and does so whenever the mood strikes him.

Motive. Bori wants to see the other parts of Svilland that he never got a chance to see. He thinks traveling with such warriors is the best chance he is ever going to get.

Eidunn (Mithal, neural good, guard)

Eidunn is a handsome young woman with short, dark brown hair and almond-colored eyes. She wears a deerskin robe and brand new boots, all of which she purchased for the journey. She likes to spar with her new sword during breaks, or to sharpen it.

Personality. Eidunn has an excitable and curious nature and she likes to be surrounded by nature and animals. She is known to have hunted many creatures around Mugdonvik. She enjoys talking to the characters and asking about their journey; how exactly they started this journey, what their life was like before all this, do they miss their hometown, what were the happiest and saddest moments of their lives?

Motive. Eidunn wants to be a part of such a warband and save the lives of Svillanders, just like the characters. She also genuinely wishes to be friends with the characters.

Jodis (Vestri, chaotic good, guard)

Jodis is one of the youngest members of the group. She has a nice, slim, athletic figure and long, black, braided hair. She sleeps in a wolf fur sleeping bag and wears a hat made of rabbit skin; both of which were her pets in life.

Personality. Despite the old and wise look in her eyes, she has a fun and cheerful personality. She likes joking around with Asmund and enjoys talking about her previous pets; which include rats, rabbits, fish, a deer, a wolf, and even a bear cub. She likes the company of animals, and if asked about it, she says that she finds animals more predictable than most people.

Motive. Jodis wants to see Svilland more than anything, she believes that her life will have reached its purpose if she could see every inch of Svilland; even if for a second.

Halfdan (Dvergr, neutral good, guard)

Halfdan is a shorter-than-usual dvergr with pale, bluish skin. and dark brown, braided hair. His hair covers almost half his face. He wears a small necklace with a Tyr symbol, and he prays to Tyr each and every night before he sleeps.

Personality. Halfdan likes to talk. He often tells unimportant stories, but people always want to hear more because of the way he tells them. He may talk about a meal, an innkeeper, or a basic hunt; making the story enjoyable with his attitude, his tone of voice, and his theatrical hand gestures.

Motive. Halfdan wants to see the old dvergr kingdom, Gurbolruhm, which is why he volunteered to be one of the first soldiers to go to this city.

Olaf (Vestri, chaotic good, guard)

Olaf is a blonde man with big, amber eyes. He has a large burn scar on his left cheek, of which he is very proud, because he got it when he rescued two children from a burning house when he was 16.

Personality. He is an honest and brave man, he likes listening to stories and taking care of his weapons. He likes taking care of all sorts of weapons, so he might ask the characters whether they want him to clean their weapons.

Motive. He wants to live a long life yet he knows that if he dies in a battle, he would also be very proud and happy.

Tola (Vestri, chaotic good, guard)

Tola is a young, strong-looking, and beautiful woman with long, black, straight hair and big, expressive eyes. She wears a dark blue robe with rabbit fur on the collar. She wears a small Balder symbol on her chest.

Personality. She is shy and prefers to be silent unless someone asks for her opinion.

Motive. Tola is in love with Jodis, but she hasn't been able to tell her for almost a year. She just wants to be around her, protect her and help her if she needs it.

Ulfhild (Austri, neutral good, guard)

Ulfhild is a red-haired woman with blue eyes. She ties her shoulder-length hair tightly at the nape of her neck. She wears a long, woolen robe, which looks warm and cozy. She has served in many battles, has traveled to some places in Nionaem and Alsvartr, and she hunts.

Personality. She is a brave and strong woman who is not afraid of any challenge.

Motive. She wants to live and die a real warrior, and feast forever with her brothers and sisters who share her fate in Valhalla. She is ready to die on this mission.

THE SICKNESS

The characters meet the group of guards and hit the road. The characters and the guards get to know each other on the way. The guards want to celebrate the first night of the journey with a small feast, since they all believe that the almighty cause of this journey will soon be crowned with a victory in Gurbolruhm.

On the first evening, when the group finds a place to spend the night and settle in, start playing "Into the Wyld (From Thorath To Nyrstadir)" on "Svilland - Music and Ambiance"; then, read or paraphrase the boxed text below to your players:

> The sunset colors the sky a reddish-blue. Unaware of this beautiful scenery, the guards are preparing a meal. Everyone looks happy and busy as they prepare a feast with a deer Bori has just hunted. Halfdan is next to the fire mixing the big pot, constantly checking to see if the fire needs any more kindling, and looking back at the pot.

As the night sky starts to rear its head, the meal is ready and everyone digs in. The guards ask the characters questions about their past experiences and Gurbolruhm. Everybody feels safe here in the open woods, despite the goal of this road trip. When the meal is almost finished, Asmund sings a song and the others accompany him. However, a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that Bori is quiet and eats very little. If asked why, he says he doesn't feel well. A successful DC 22 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that he is affected by a serious disease that could possibly turn the victim into a draugr. He seems restless, and some veins on his chest and belly appear to be going darker. All signs indicate that the sickness is not natural, but magical. If the characters try to determine the source, they cannot do so. If they try to cure the disease, a *heal* spell removes all the effects (darkened veins, the feeling of restlessness, and the loss of appetite).

As the GM, you should know that the source of the disease is a magic ritual performed by Hel cultists, which the warband will encounter later. Their quest is to eliminate the warband, and they are trying everything at their disposal to make this a reality. The disease has no name because it is one of a kind.

If the characters do not realize that Bori is sick or do not restore his health, the characters wake up to rumbles coming from the guards' tent and find that Bori has attacked his friends in their tents. Before the characters make it to the site of the encounter, the other guards, unfortunately, kill Bori. They look devastated. If the characters examine the body, a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that Bori has turned into some kind of draugr. His flesh looks inexplicably rotten despite him dying just moments ago. Worms can be seen moving around under his skin on his arms, chest, and face. The scene is so hard to look at that all the guards need a minute, and go outside.

Whether Bori dies or not, the characters must roll a Constitution check after these events, and the one with the

lowest result gets the same disease. However, the character doesn't see the first effects until the next morning, around dawn. A successful DC 15 Intelligence check reveals that the character is affected by the same disease.

THE SACRIFICE

As the sun rises above the mountains, the characters and the guards start waking up one by one. If Bori died, the guards still look heartbroken by the events that transpired the night before.

The character who rolled the lowest Constitution check, starts to show some symptoms of the sickness determined by the table below. If they try to cure the disease, a *heal* spell will remove all the effects (darkened veins, the feeling of restlessness, and the loss of appetite). Otherwise, the character must roll a die every four hours to determine the symptom that takes effect.

d4	Symptoms
1	The character starts feeling some unnatural tingling inside their body, especially inside their veins. When they make a melee attack, they must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution check or have disadvantage on their attack roll until the end of their next turn.
2	The character loses their appetite and their breath starts to smell of rot. The character vomits a horrible concoction filled with worms and is poisoned for 1d4 hours.
3	The character feels restless and suffers one level of exhaustion, becoming immune to this effect until they finish a long rest.
4	The character finds it hard to speak; unable to form a sentence with more than four words. There is a 50% chance that spells with verbal components cast by the character fails.

The guards suggest that the healers at the military camp near Gurbolruhm might help the character beat this horrible disease.

You can decide whether you wish to use the random encounter table at the beginning of *The Last March* section (p.178) or not. In any case, the characters continue their journey to the north with their sick friend, and come across a ritual circle made up of fifteen women and a wooden altar in the middle. Some women are collecting herbs, and some are walking barefoot despite it being extremely cold. Most of them are middle-aged, with a couple of younger women in the mix. It doesn't look like they are paying attention to the warband, more like they are simply going about their business. A successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that the women are Freyja gothis by the looks of their outfits, and a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that they are about to make a sacrifice. If a character rolls 20 or more on their check, they understand that these women are about to sacrifice an animal in the name of Freyja.

If the characters approach the circle, one of the women steps forward and stops the warband, saying, *"What do you want, strangers?"* Then, in the blink of an eye, her expression changes from one of curiosity and impatience to one that is anxious, worried and doubtful. She asks, *"You are the warband Freydis told us about, aren't you? Are you okay?"* The woman asks for the names of the characters and the guards; she keeps looking over at the sick character. While others are speaking, the sick character hears a voice in their mind that says *"You carry a great evil, a great curse inside you. You have little time. But don't worry, we will take care of you."* After all the characters say their names, the woman steps forward, says that her name is Ingegard (Austri, neutral good, priest) and introduces the others as members of the Temple of Freyja. She looks at the characters one by one and says *"I've seen that one of you is pretty sick. Let us take care of your friend."* If the characters let them, Ingegard calls over some other gothis and starts examining the sick character for about half an hour, asking questions such as what they had to eat, where they have been, did they see others affected by the disease, and so on. One of them gives the character a paste, while another cuts a little hole on their forearm to catch one of the worms. All gothis, including Ingegard, look hopeless and anxious at the results. Ingegard leaves the sick character with one of the gothis, and goes over to the others. From a distance, it looks like they are trying to decide something. Afterwards, Ingegard turns to the characters and says *"It is a disease, a curse that we do not know of. Still, we have a solution that we hope will work. You should wait here while we prepare. Your friend will be sleeping throughout. Hopefully he/she will wake up to a better tomorrow."*

If the characters ask about the solution, Ingegard says, *"We've been aware of these disruptions in nature, and the increasing numbers of Hel's offspring for some time now. We've put it off for quite some time, but today, with this sickness, we see that we must shed human blood to stop this evil. Tonight, one of our friends will sacrifice herself so your friend can recover his/her health."* If the characters disagree or try to convince her otherwise, she smiles and asks*"Since when do you pity those in Folkvangr?"* and adds *"Our mother Freyja does not permit us to force anyone to sacrifice themselves, all who go must be willing."*

During the preparations, the characters speak with other gothis, including the one who will sacrifice herself. Her name is Nanna. She is a young, red-haired woman who looks calm and at peace. If asked, she says she is glad and proud to go in such an honorable way. She says, *"I will abandon my powerless body, and become one with Svilland, one with her."* When the time comes, you can read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> Under the bright and clear night sky, the women with long white robes walk from one spot to another and form a circle around the wooden altar with a woman lying on it. Her hair is combed neatly, and her white robes are adorned with winter flowers. She's holding a golden sacrificial knife. The gothis start singing and whispering as four of the women walk towards the altar.
>
> Two women stand on either side, one at her feet, and one at her head. They start singing louder and

differently from the gothis in the circle. The woman on the altar smiles at the others, hands the knife in her hand to the one on her right, and looks at the sky one last time, before she closes her eyes.

The woman on her right slashes open her chest, wrists, and ankles with one swoop each. The woman on the altar doesn't show any signs of pain or suffering.

The blood starts dripping to the ground from the altar. The woman next to the head of the sacrifice strokes her hair, her shoulders and her arms, reminding her of the motherly love of Freyja. The gothis pray and whisper all night long until the last drop of blood is spent.

The ritual takes about three hours. After the ritual, the sick character in the warband wakes up slowly, the worms on their body having disappeared. The characters who witnessed the ritual realize that they do not feel tired even though they did not rest.

Ingegard approaches the character and says *"This area will be blessed for some time. If someone is sick, they'll heal here. The draugrs will return to their shallow graves and the offspring of Hel will move away."* You are safe here, at least for a while.

If the characters tell Ingegard about the upcoming war with Hel and ask the Temple of Freyja to join them in battle, she says *"You go on, we should bury Nanna properly and take a rest. We'll catch up to you."*

THE CARRIERS OF PESTILENCE

On the third day of the journey, nothing unusual happens. However, a group of Hel's assassins has been following the warband from a distance, and are planning to strike at night. In addition, the events of the previous days have made the guards afraid of the encounters that are to come. They mumble, groan and complain sometimes, saying that they are not as experienced as the warband. Although the members of the Temple of Freyja provided them with some relief, some of them can't shake the feeling that they are cursed.

The characters see the sun set over the mighty Forbidden Peaks, which indicates that tomorrow will be the last day of the journey since Gurbolruhm is built within the mountain range. Their destination is close.

The warband needs to find a campsite to rest for the night. Halfdan, Eidunn, Olaf, and Ulfhild are willing to stand watch.

The assassins are going to attack the warband tonight. If the characters keep watch, they must succeed on a DC 21 Wisdom (Perception) check to see the assassins before they attack. Otherwise, the member of the warband that has the highest passive Perception wakes up, but only after the assassins have already killed 2 of the guards of the GM's choice, and are about to kill another.

The Fight. When the warband joins the fight, the assassins attack the members of the warband first, and try to eliminate the guards with abilities that affect an area. This is because the primary goal of the assassins is to kill all members of the warband. Also, this encounter is designed at easy-medium difficulty. However, since the characters are not wearing their armors it should challenge them in combat.

The assassins wear black and dark red leather armor that covers their entire bodies. It is dark in the night, and their outfits act as camouflage. They attack with saexes, of which the keen edges have been poisoned with a dark green liquid. They smell of rotten flesh and maggots.

Characters	Encounter
4	2 hidden blades of Helheim (p. 262)
5	3 hidden blades of Helheim
6	4 hidden blades of Helheim
7	5 hidden blades of Helheim

After the encounter, if the characters take off the assassins' leather masks and look at their faces, they see that there are dead worms and rotten maggots crawling under their skin. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that this is because of their allegiance to Hel, and a DC 15 Intelligence

(Nature) check reveals that these worms and maggots have been eating their flesh bit by bit, slowly turning them into the undead.

A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check enables the characters to see that when the cultists die, their skin no longer looks like it is affected by the unholy disease of Hel. The warband also sees that cultists have a symbol of Helheim carved on their chests, if the characters examine their bodies. A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that the disease could have been the outcome of a ritual that these cultists were part of. Now that they are dead, the effects of the ritual have ended.

Treasure. There are 200 gp on the bodies, however, they are decorated with Hellic runes, and cannot be used in trading as it would rouse suspicion. Roar investigates the poison on the saexes and finds a total of one vial of poison on one of the bodies, and takes it if the characters do not ask for it. (Once applied on a weapon, the poison remains effective for 1d4 rounds. A creature hit by the poisoned weapon or ammunition takes an extra 4d6 poison damage). There is a page from a spellbook containing two 7th level spells of the GM's choice.

TO THE CAMPS

After the encounter, the characters may choose to bury their dead (if they have any) or take them to the headquarters to get a proper burial with more soldiers. Either way, they should hit the road in the morning.

When they get on the road, the sky is overrun with dark clouds as if the sky itself were mourning the warriors who died the night before. Still, the warband continues its journey to the fabled city. The characters must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom (Survival) check to arrive at the designated location. If not, they get lost and lose three hours on the way until finally, a ranger with long, braided, brown hair finds and leads them to the headquarters. The ranger's name is Magnhild (Kuning, neutral good). She wields a yew bow and looks fairly athletic. She is a warrior of Nionaem.

At last, they see the gates of Gurbolruhm from a distance. The stone castle stands 40 feet tall with a 15-foot-tall castle gate made of darkened metal. The enormous stone walls of the dark city both add grandeur to Gurbolruhm, and a feeling of abandonment. It is evident that this city is from another age, since the characters have never seen such dvergr stonework in the other settlements they have visited.

Close to where the warband is standing, there are ten tents and approximately fifty warriors, all bearing the sign of Nionaem. They all greet the characters with cheers of joy and approval if the dead soldiers of Mugdonvik are not with them. If so, they will tend to the bodies.

Magnhild, the ranger of Nionaem, shows the characters around. There is a large tent reserved for the use of the warband. Inside, there are bedrolls and a small barrel of mead. It's quite cold, but the mead cozies up the tent. The warband should now wait for the others to come tomorrow.

Level Up. Your characters have reached 13th level. Feel free to inform your players to level up during their next long rest.

THE MOUNTAINS

Start playing "*In Sight of Ravens*" on "Svilland - Music and Ambiance", then read or paraphrase the boxed text below when the characters first see the military base from a distance:

> For the past several days, you've been climbing the steep and snowy slopes of the Forbidden Peaks. You see the military base when it's almost sundown, and the heavy fog is about to cover the hundreds of tents before you. The tents look like little spots of dirt against the pure white snow covering the mountains. There's black smoke rising from the campfires, and you can see hundreds of figures, looking small in the distance.

The characters see that the military base hosts nearly 600 people at first glance. As they get closer, they start sensing the thrill and excitement felt all across the military base. The soldiers look ready for a challenge; both mentally and physically. Most soldiers here greet the characters with a salute.

Military Base: General Features

The military base is one big camp that eventually hosts over 600 soldiers, who generally stay in groups of four to eight. The general features of the camp are given below:

Crowd. The military base is like a living organism, all working and functioning as one. People with different backgrounds have gathered here to fight against the forces of Hel. They live, eat, practice, and sleep together. As with any community, there are certain conflicts among individuals, but everyone tolerates one another for the sake of their greater, common cause.

Freezing cold. North Svilland, where Black Winter is closest, is one of the coldest areas in Midgard. There are roaring campfires all over, around which the soldiers drink hot water and beverages. There are also some soldiers trying to heal the frostbite on their ears, fingers, and toes.

Noises. The wide array of noises sounds like one great battle song. The rustling of the snow, the clashing of the swords, the crackling of the fire, the howling of the wind from distant rocks, the rippling of the tents, and the sound of people talking, laughing, and shouting all come together to form one glorious harmony. If a character notices this by themselves, you may give the character inspiration.

LOCATIONS

If the characters look around, they notice the following

9
6
2
1
7
4
5
8
3
= 5 FEET

areas, which look slightly different from others in their surroundings. Some of the locations host some NPCs that the characters have met before. The descriptions of the areas are given below and the locations are keyed to the previous map. Since the characters are known and respected by the entire military camp, they are welcome in any tent and can wander around the military base as they like.

If the characters did not give any names to Aleson when asked, they will only notice the locations marked with "*", otherwise they can spot all the locations given below. As the GM, you can add the tent of any notable, memorable NPCs to these locations.

1. TOTHRUM WARHAMMER'S TENT*

Tothrum Warhammer, the ruler of Bjargfold, is staying in a big, bearskin tent in the middle of the military camp. If the characters go inside the tent, they find him reading some papers. He looks how one would expect a real dvergr king to look; with his royal demeanor, his big golden rings, and the large, white, bear fur he wears on his back. He has a deep voice and deep, pitch-black eyes. When the characters are ready to hear from him, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> A stalwart dvergr with a long, gray beard lifts his head up from the small pile of papers in front of him, and starts speaking in a regal manner *"I see you've finally made it. Come, sit."* and points to wooden chairs near the table and adds "*We have a great deal to discuss.*"

It is known that Tothrum deserves his position in Nionaem and that he struggled to get there. A long, faded scar on his right cheek is a fitting metaphor for his life full of struggles.

After a brief introduction, if the characters do not talk about the battle, he says *"I believe we need to talk about the situation at hand."* and provides the characters with the following information:

- Two nights ago, a big group of **dvergrs of Gurbolruhm**, attacked the military camp, coming in through the main entrance. The soldiers fended off the attack with ease. Tothrum says the first attack was simply a scouting mission to see how many of them there are.
- Nobody knows how many creatures they will encounter inside the city, nor what kind of creatures they will be. Tothrum guesses it won't be less than a few thousand.
- The city had been magically sealed for decades, but the seal appears to have been broken a few months ago. Now, anything can get in or out of the city.

As the warband is talking to Tothrum, a successful DC 19 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that he looks wistful. If the characters ask why, he looks them in the eye and says, *"How could I tell such a story easily, when they are my ancestors?"*

At the end of their conversation, Tothrum says that the soldiers prepared the tent next to his own for the characters. He adds that it would be logical for them to stay together since the characters are also commanders of this army by order of Aleson the Arisen. A successful DC 21 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that even though he likes the characters, he is a bit bothered by the decision. He doesn't enjoy splitting authority.

Tothrum Warhammer

2. ODIN'S VARGR*

The characters can spot some Odin's Vargr if they spend half an hour walking around the military camp. All hide their true nature and most of them stay in tents of two. They have all brought wolves along with them.

It is possible to locate Sidgy, the Odin's Vargr alpha who met the characters previously on more than one occasion. As ever, she looks determined and ready for combat. When she sees the characters, she looks at them with approval. When spoken to, she says *"If I am to die here, it's an honor to die on the same battlefield as you."*

3. TYR'S JUDGES*

The tents of Tyr's Judges are set up the farthest from Tothrum Warhammer and his soldiers' tents. With a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check, the characters count 5 tents marked with Tyr and Tyr's Judges symbols, one of which is bigger than the others. If the characters enter the bigger tent, they find an old woman inside. The smoke rising from her pipe hangs heavy in the air. She looks thoughtful and distant.

She is sitting in a wooden chair with some parchments in front of her. She brushes her silver hair out of her eyes and introduces herself as Ogn the Judge. A successful DC 18 Intelligence (History) check helps the characters remember her name from tales they've heard. As far as they can remember, Ogn is a well-known judge who makes certain critical decisions all around Svilland.

She welcomes the characters and asks how she can be of help. When she figures out who they are, she openly says that she's uneasy about the characters' authority here, as she finds it to be unfair. Still, she adds that she is ready to be proven wrong after seeing the characters' prowess and worth. She also asks them the following questions.

- Do you think the number of soldiers is high enough?
- Do you have a strategy in mind?
- What kind of creatures do we expect to see inside?

Ogn hopes to hear logical answers, and may warm up to the characters if they provide her with logical, consistent, and fair answers. You can decide what Ogn thinks about the characters by considering their answers and role play.

4. HOUSE OF FERTILITY*

The characters can spot a small group of tents marked with Alsvartr and Freyja symbols with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. There are at least twenty people around and inside these tents. If the characters approach the area, they notice a handsome man preparing a big meal. It is Viggo (p.37), the cook of the House of Fertility in Knafgata.

If the characters had a conversation with Viggo in the House of Fertility, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> You notice a familiar, handsome face in the crowd. It's Viggo, standing over a big cauldron. Despite everything that has happened, Viggo hasn't changed one bit, he is exactly how you left him in the House of Fertility, making his spicy food as usual.
>
> Your heart is filled with a warm feeling of home. You find a piece of home in Viggo. He notices and runs over, saying, *"It's you! It's you!"* over and over. He looks genuinely happy to see you, and continues, *"If you only knew! We have been praying for you ever since you left. Freydis never stopped praying, not for a moment."*

Viggo offers the characters a meal and says, *"It's the best you'll find in this camp."* Indeed, he serves a delicious stew of bear meat, wild rabbit meat and dried vegetables, followed by a cup of soothing, hot herbal tea. If the warband asks why he is here, Viggo answers, *"Because I wanted to be a part of the battle, of course!"*

Herbal Tea. The tea smells refreshing. It is a blue-green mixture, since it is made from bilberry and thyme. When consumed, it calms and soothes the drinker.

As the characters are drinking their tea, Viggo says he forgot the most important thing: Freydis's gift. He hurriedly brings over a medium wooden chest.

Gift. A number of *Rings of the Maiden* (p.240) equal to the number of players.

Letter from Freydis. The letter reads:

> *"I hope this note finds you well. Forgive me for I cannot come to Gurbolruhm personally. I have a temple to look after. But when I found out that the situation was much more dire than we had thought, I sent all the help I could, along with this letter.*
>
> *I think of Ygre often. She would be proud of what you've become and would have wanted to be with you to the end.*
>
> *Please accept my small gift. Viggo should hand it to you. And remember to visit Knafgata once you are done with all of this. We'll drink wine along Freyja's Tear, and swap stories.*
>
> *My heart is with you, dear friends. May that of Freyja be with you, also."*

5. HANLON'S SOLDIERS, ULFHILD'S TENT*

In the middle of a large group of tents marked with the Alsvartr flag, there is a bigger tent. This is the tent of Ulfhild, who was assigned here by Hanlon the Real King to help fight against the forces of Hel. She is a middle-aged woman with pitch-black eyes and long, grizzly hair.

Two soldiers stand guard in front of the tent. Since everyone knows the characters to be commanders, the soldiers immediately open the heavy layer of hide being used as a door.

The inside smells clean and fresh, unlike the rest of the military camp. While looking around, the characters can notice a lit incense on a wooden door. Ulfhild comes out from behind a curtain, carrying her heavy hide armor with splendor.

She says *"Welcome, warriors of Svilland!"* in her deep, calming voice and adds, *"How can I help you?"*. She looks welcoming and helpful, but a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that she is in fact feeling uneasy. With a successful DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check, the characters can spot her bloodshot eyes. If the characters ask about her eyes, she looks uncomfortable for a moment. Read or paraphrase the boxed text below when the characters are ready to hear from her:

> She takes a sip from the cup in her hands and says, *"I had an argument with Tothrum... Since you are commanders as well, I think I can divulge the details."* She takes a deep breath and continues, *"We are very few in number, we don't have a commander, we don't know what to expect, and we don't know the city."* She looks at the characters with worry in her big, black eyes, *"We need to fight for Svilland, not for Hanlon, not for Tothrum, not for the Judges, and not for me. Against the forces of Hel, we need a worthy commander or we are doomed. I've just been thinking about my soldiers... All those lives... and I can't sleep."*

She wants the warband to be their only commanders for the upcoming war, and expects them to reach more people. She says she and her army of 150 Alsvartr soldiers would love to fight under their command.

If the characters ask whether she has a plan, she says she doesn't have one; just that the characters should wait for the right time and place to speak up. She promises that when the time comes, she will be the first one to take their side.

6. RUNE KEEPERS' TENTS *

The characters see six runewalkers trying to build a tent. The others are already in theirs. There are approximately 50 spellcasters among them. One of the runewalkers building the tent says *"Why in Helheim are we trying to build a tent?"* The other replies *"To save our magic for later, you bacraut (asshole)."* When they see the characters, they greet them with sincere smiles.

They are wearing grey robes and furs to protect them from the cold, and they don't seem to have armor or shields. *"You must be the warband of the Trinity we keep hearing about. We are the rune keepers. We keep runes, protect them and pass on our knowledge about them, as the Allfather intended. When we heard that there would be a battle in Gurbolruhm, we immediately got a move on. We won't let Hel invade Svilland. In the name of the Allfather, we'll protect it at all cost."* Then, they go back to building their tents.

Rune Keepers brought uncommon and rare magic items, spellbooks and spell scrolls with them. The warband may want to trade with them when they find the time to do so.

7. MITHRAL OF THE MOUNTAIN

If the characters mentioned their name when Aleson asked who should be part of the battle, the characters find their tent close to Tothrum's soldiers. If the characters spot them on the first day, they find the Mithrals in the throes of a heated discussion. Some soldiers close-by start shouting *"Fight, fight, fight!"* If the characters approach the scene they see that two big mountain half-jotunns who look very similar, with blonde long hair and braided long beards, are facing one another, with the rest around them in a circle. The one on the right shouts, *"You said you'd gimme my sword before the next battle. Give it to me. NOW."* The one on the left shouts, *"That was a brawl, not a battle. I will give you the sword before the next battle; not NOW."* The one on the right doesn't seem convinced, but moves on from the argument. When the characters talk to him, he provides them with the following information:

- His name is Njal.
- His brother Skarde borrowed his greatsword and said he would use it in one battle, then give it back. However he also used the sword to kill a person who insulted the Allfather in a bar, and he didn't give the sword back then either. It's like what he did when they were younger. He'd take Njal's clothes and not give them back.
- The Mithrals came to the camp as soons as they heard that there would be a battle where they would get to fight Hel cultists. They came here as fast as they could.
- They are extremely happy to see the warband safe and sound. They offer them mead and want to talk about their journey.

8. THORVE'S TENT

If the characters mentioned Thorve when Aleson asked who should be part of the battle, the characters now find her tent next to the Alsvartr soldiers, close to Ulfhild's tent. If the characters visit her, they can find her in her tent or an open space nearby where she practices with her soldiers. Yet, she looks different than the woman the characters saw in Belmunt as if she has matured with all the events. She has a more serious, and harsh attitude towards those around her. If the characters helped her to solve the problem in Belmunt, she thanks the characters one more time after a short catch up.

9. MOLDOF'S TENT

If the characters mentioned the Stormgazer Family in Kraekross when Aleson asked who should be part of the battle, the characters now find Moldof's tent near Alsvartr soldiers, close to that of Thorve's soldiers. Moldof Stormgazer is leading the soldiers of Kraekross, if she did not die in Kraekross. If she did, then a member of the Stormgazer family (of your choice) comes in her stead. When the characters talk to Moldof, she thanks them once again for what they did back in Kraekross. She wanted to lead the soldiers to battle to finally find redemption for worshipping Hel at one time, not too long ago.

NOTABLE NPCS AROUND THE CAMP

There are many people in the military camp aside from the ones mentioned before, and some of the NPCs below are also worth mentioning.

BEAR RIDER (Vestri, neutral good, berserker)

Bear Rider is a young woman, who has a bear named Slod. Since everyone calls her Bear Rider, nobody knows her real name, which is Ragna. She wears dark brown hide armor that was decorated with soft, brown fur. Her eyelids are painted black with coal and her long, blonde hair is pulled in a braid.

If asked, she might tell the story of how she met Slod:

> *"I found Slod one dark winter night after I gave my baby boy one last kiss on the forehead. He was dead and cold, but I pretended he was still alive and that his face was warm when I kissed it."* Tears fill her eyes. She takes a deep breath before she starts to speak again in a shaky voice that somehow still sounds strong as it hits your ear, *"I went for a walk that night. I was a stranger to the feeling you get when you lose a child; I wished the cold would take me right then and there. I wished I was dead, I still do. But it is not for us to decide our fate. That night, as I walked and cried, with my milk still leaking, I found Slod lying sick on the frozen road; a tiny little cub, cold and scared. I knew it was fate. I took him in, gave him my own milk, took care of him. We've been together ever since."*

Personality. Bear Rider is quite the adventurer. She likes to entertain those around her with stories of her hunts with Slod. She doesn't take life too seriously, and mocks everything from the people around her to the upcoming war. She often goes hunting during the day and shares her finds with the rest of

the camp. She and Slod are always together. Sometimes, she even stays outside with Slod despite the cold.

Motive. Bear Rider believes she will meet her son in Valhalla even though he died as a baby, and this is why she wants to die in battle.

THE MAD KING (Austri, chaotic good, veteran)

The Mad King is an old, mad man who tagged along with one of the soldier groups. He wears a patchy, wooden crown at all times and wields a wooden longsword, which he introduces as symbols of his kingship.

Personality. The Mad King is a good man who tries to help all the soldiers around, he patches up their wounds, and finds them medicine and food.

Motive. He believes he is a king in exile. He doesn't say from where, but the soldiers think that it's somewhere in Alsvartr. He wishes to sit on his throne once more.

"BALDER" (Vestri, true neutral, priest)

This is the old man the characters saw on their way to the Fenrir Hideout deep in the forest. When "Balder" sees the characters, he runs over and starts to talk very fast, saying:

> *"Oh my children, there you are. You followed the blood bat too right, the blood bat flew all this way. It's cold, isn't it? But here you are, where I'll find myself. Yes, myself... I mean the other myself. HAHAHA!"* He all of a sudden gets serious, looks around, slightly leans in, and whispers *"I told you once before, I am Balder."*

Balder stays with four soldiers from Alsvartr. He looks excited to enter Gurbolruhm and to find himself. If Roar is traveling with the warband, he likes "Balder" very much and spends some time with him.

Personality. "Balder" is a mad man who sometimes forgets to eat, sleep, and drink. He often disappears and goes to the mountains. Even though he doesn't have many who stay and listen to him, he is talkative and he can even be seen speaking to objects.

Motive. Balder hopes to find himself inside Gurbolruhm, although no one knows what he means by that. He simply feels an unstoppable urge to get in.

THE WORM & THE GATES

As the soldiers await their orders and prepare for battle, the ground starts to shake and rumble loudly. When the characters look around, they see an **isa worm** within 600 feet of them. It breaks the ground somewhere very close to Tothrum's soldiers, strikes a great big area with its tail, and

Commander of Hel, Frost Jotunn

burrows itself in the ground again. Even if the soldiers try to fight back as hard as they can, everything happens in a matter of seconds. They thus can't stop or harm the beast. With its one attack, the worm causes the army serious losses, wounding 35 soldiers, killing 8 of them, and destroying many tents before it flees to the mountains, underground. Everyone looks shocked, panicked and furious.

When the characters look around at the chaos within the camp, they notice the commanders of each faction trying to gather their soldiers. The Temple of Freyja gothis are tending to the wounded. Play the song "Under the Wings of Valkyries" on "Svilland - Music and Ambiance", and read or paraphrase the boxed text below when the players are ready to hear more:

> Although the isa worm disappeared, it left behind an air of panic and disarray; the Freyja gothis are frantically tending to the wounded, and the dust that wafted off the still-shaking ground has not settled yet. A cold breeze has lifted snowflakes off the ground.
>
> Moments after the disappearance, first, a horrible squeak rings and echoes in the air, accompanied by terrible screams and battlecries. The heavy gates of Gurbolruhm open part-way.
>
> The soldiers start shouting back at the gates, the wounded are moved to tents that are on the other end of the campsite, the battle horns start playing, and the battle drums start beating, creating a cacophony louder than anything you've ever heard.

The army of draugrs approaches the army of Nionaem, looking relentless, vicious, and ready to kill. When they are much closer, the army of the dead blows another warhorn. This army consists of about 150 subjects of Hel; mostly Medium draugrs, as well as some dvergrs of Gurbolruhm, and a small group of frost and mountain jotunns.

The leader of the dead is one of the commanders of Hel; a **frost jotunn** who is wearing a large armor and a big crown made of humanoid bones, and carrying a great club, which he holds with great vigor.

Hundreds of draugrs march behind their leader, ready to kill. When the army of Hel charges towards the characters, the sky around Gurbolruhm goes dark, a strong wind blows through the gates of Gurbolruhm towards the army of the living. The foul, rotten smell of the draugrs fill the nostrils of the living, making them understand once more that this is an army like no other.

The two armies clash, and it's truly a sight like no other. The weapons of the living cut, crush, and pierce the rotten flesh of the dead, while the dead bite and rip through the living with their hands and teeth.

The characters notice that those who die near the Commander of the Hel rise again as draugrs, making the battle that much harder for the living. Tothrum Warhammer also takes notice, fights his way towards the characters and asks if the warband can deal with the commander when he is close enough. At this point, the characters can go towards the Commander of Helheim. If they do not, the commander uses its Icy Rock action against the warband, then fixes his gaze on them, and approaches. When he is close enough, he raises his hand, reaching towards the sky. The earth shakes loudly once more, and an isa worm shoots out of the ground, surrounding the characters and the frost jotunn and thus creating a natural arena on the battleground. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that the isa worm is charmed and controlled by the frost jotunn; if the jotunn is killed, the isa worm is set free.

The commander of Helheim shouts, *"I'LL RAISE YOU AS MY SLAVES AFTER I FUCKING KILL YOU!"* The **isa worm** moves around you, making circles and attacking anyone who tries to enter the area. It follows the designated pattern until it takes 50 damage from the warband. After it takes this damage, it burrows itself in the ground and flees.

Below, some narrative descriptions of the other events that take place when the characters are fighting with the Commander of Helheim are given. You can read or paraphrase these descriptions at any point you see fit.

Round	Description
1	Manni from Mugdonvik is attacked by three draugrs, and he is gutted with the rusty blades of the dead. He falls to the ground, lifeless.
2	In the middle of battle, a character (determined by the GM) is hit by an arrow, dealing 4 piercing damage. There are too many people on the battlefield, and the source of the arrow can't be determined.
3	The characters hear a loud prayer to Freyja. Up to six characters regain 6 hit points each.
4	The Mithral of the Mountains, the warband from Kraekross, roars in the battlefield, viciously butchering any draugr that comes their way.
5	The characters see Manni again, but as a draugr. He mindlessly attacks his former allies. Audhild the Judge unwillingly tries to put him out of his misery, knowing he wouldn't want to be in this miserable state.
6	A black fog is seen on the battlefield. The army of the dead looks more savage, even feral, when they are in the fog.

COMMANDER OF HEL, FROST JOTUNN

Huge giant, neutral evil

Armor Class 18 (magical bone armor)
Hit Points 237 (19d12 + 114)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	10 (+0)	22 (+6)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Strength +11, Constitution +11, Wisdom +7, Charisma +10
Skills Athletics +11, Perception +7
Damage Immunities cold
Senses passive Perception 17
Languages Austris (Common), Giant, Hellic
Challenge 16 (13,000 XP)

***Absorb the Dead (1/Day)**.* As a bonus action, the commander of Hel can cause ten draugrs of his army to demise by absorbing the unholy energy that Hel granted them. By doing so, he regains 25 hit points.
* You, as the GM, may use this feature twice if the warband consists of 6 or 7 characters (including Roar.)

Freezing Hits. If the commander of Hel successfully hits a creature with its great club of frost twice in its turn and if the creature is not immune to cold damage, the target must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw, or be restrained due to the frostbite until the end of its next turn.

Innate Spellcasting. The commander of Hel's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). The frost jotunn can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *darkness, minor illusion, misty step, ray of frost*

3/day each: *charm person, counterspell, detect magic, dispel magic, enthrall, gust of wind, major image*

1/day each: *cone of cold, freezing sphere, ice storm, wall of ice*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The commander of Hel makes two melee weapon attacks.

Great Club of Frost. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (3d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage plus 14 (4d6) cold damage.

Icy Rock. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (4d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage plus 17 (5d6) cold damage.

ISA WORM

Gargantuan monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 186 (12d20 + 60)
Speed 50 ft., burrow 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	7 (-2)	21 (+5)	1 (-5)	8 (-1)	4 (-3)

Saving Throws Strength +11, Constitution +10
Skills Athletics +11, Perception +7
Damage Vulnerabilities fire
Damage Immunities cold
Senses blindsight 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive perception 9
Languages -
Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Snow Camouflage. When it is lying still and is buried halfway in the snow, it is difficult to spot the isa worm. A creature that comes within 150 feet of the isa worm must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check to become aware of its presence.

Tunneler. The isa worm can burrow through solid rock at half its burrow speed, and it leaves a 10-foot diameter tunnel in its wake.

Innate Spellcasting. The commander of Hel's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). The frost jotunn can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *darkness, minor illusion, misty step, ray of frost*

3/day each: *charm person, counterspell, detect magic, dispel magic, enthrall, gust of wind, major image*

1/day each: *cone of cold, freezing sphere, ice storm, wall of ice*

ACTIONS

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 34 (6d8 + 7) piercing and 18 (4d8) cold damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw, or is swallowed by the isa worm. A swallowed creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects coming from outside the isa worm, and it takes 21 (6d6) acid damage at the start of each of the isa worm's turns.

If the isa worm takes 30 damage from a creature inside of it on a single turn, the isa worm must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn, or it regurgitates all swallowed creatures and spits them. These creatures are knocked prone in a space within 10 feet of the isa worm.

If the worm dies, swallowed creatures are no longer restrained by it, and can escape from the corpse by using 20 feet of movement. Creatures are considered prone while escaping from the corpse.

Tail. The isa worm swings its tail through a 30-foot cone. Creatures that are within the area must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or they take 35 (8d6 + 7) bludgeoning damage.

THE PLAN

The morale of the army soars when the characters kill the isa worm, since both the commander and the deadly beast are dead. The draugrs do not last much longer when the two biggest foes are eliminated. Victorious warcries fill the air. The attack of the dead is over.

Everyone, especially Freyja gothis, help heal and cure the wounded. Warriors bid their farewells to their fallen companions with rituals in the name of Odin, hoping that they've taken their rightful place in the halls of Valhalla. The characters may join the rituals if they want.

The sun slowly sets over the mountains, and Tothrum Warhammer sends word with his servants to the notable NPC's in the camp. A young man with leather armor and a gigantic, fresh scar on his face approaches the warband to tell them that they are expected in Tothrum's tent. They are to plan an attack on Gurbolruhm.

When the characters arrive at his tent, they see Tothrum Warhammer, Ogn the Judge who represents Tyr's Judges, Gudridr who represents Aleson the Arisen, Sidgy who represents Odin's Vargr, Magnhild who represents Rune Keepers; and any other notable NPCs who you'd want to add to the mix.

Isa Worm

All of these NPCs are gathered here to make an attack plan. Feel free to engage the characters in roleplay. Listen to their plans, answer their questions. The suggestions of the NPCs are given below:

- Tothrum Warhammer says Gurbolruhm has no other entrance. He knows this because his scouts have been observing the area for a while.
- Magnhild wants everyone in the tent to excuse her as she casts a divination spell to take a look around the Gates of Gurbolruhm. After fifteen minutes, she says that she wasn't able to locate any other entrances. However, she heard voices behind the great door of Gurbolruhm. The door looks like it's sealed with powerful magic. They cannot pass through the city by magical means such as teleportation.
- Gudridr sits and calmly listens to the conversation. She asks what the warband thinks. After the characters speak, she says that the warband was appointed by the prophet Aleson, and that she therefore trusts they know what to do.
- Sidgy simply says there's no time to lose, whatever they do, they must do it fast.
- Ogn the Judge says that it seems there is only one way to enter the ancient city, through which she is willing to lead her fellow Judges into the battle.

There really is no other way to enter the ancient city of Gurbolruhm. The characters and the army must go through the doors.

The NPCs agree with Ogn the Judge one by one. Sidgy stands up and says *"I see before me nothing but great warriors. Brave friends, do not hesitate, do not let doubt into your hearts. We MUST stop Hel's invasion. There is nothing to lose. Valhalla awaits. Let us strike at dawn."* Magnhild hits the table and shouts, *"Victory or Valhalla!"*, Ogn the Judge cries out *"For justice!"*, Gudridr says *"May our blades be sharp as ever."* Tothrum looks at the warband and the rest of the warriors. If nothing else is said, he steps out of the tent. The soldiers who heard the commotion were already watching the tent. Tothrum looks at them and calls out,*"Cheer up lads! Come dawn, we're gonna rip their metal doors down! May Thor be on our side! May Freyja be with you! May Odin watch over us all! VALHALLAAAAA!"* As he is returning to the tent, the whole camp quakes with the prayers and battlecries of the soldiers.

Hellic Mist. As Tothrum enters his tent, the campsite is covered by a cold, black mist. This is similar to the fog that the characters have seen in Mugdonvik.

Those who stay in this mist start to hear Hellic whispers that penetrate their mind, and take 1d4 psychic damage at the end of each hour. They must also succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1d4 minutes. If they speak Hellic, they can discern the whispers saying: *"You'll die, all of you."*

After a couple of hours, the characters hear some soldiers complaining about headaches and creepy whispers.

When Tothrum gets back inside his tent, Ogn the Judge says

that they must talk strategy. They talk for hours and decide that the soldiers with shields would form a shield wall on the front line, with the soldiers with spears right behind them, to ward off anyone who comes close. The runewalkers of the Rune Keepers would cast spells that affect large areas while the rune warriors of the organization would enhance the abilities of the army with their combat-oriented runes. The Temple of Freyja gothis would be responsible for healing hurt Svillanders. Once the doors are open, a group of elite soldiers from Alsvartr and Nionaem would attack with haste and full strength to pierce any kind of defense. Tyr's Judges would consecrate the ground and target the most unholy creatures, and Odin's Vargr would do what it does best; attack with great ferocity. You, as the GM, may also add your own strategies.

The NPCs say that they should be on the battlefield with the warriors, because they have been a great influence and their presence among the troops would greatly boost morale.

- Sidgy says that they should be able to craft three vials of the *potion of giant strength (uncommon)*, or *potion of resistance (poison)* for the warband until morning. The warband must choose one of them.
- Magnhild says that she would be able to make a *ring of protection* or a *ring of evasion* until dawn. The warband must choose one of them. She also shares one of her spellbooks with any caster in the warband. The spellbook contains two 6th, two 7th, two 8th, and two 9th level spells of the GM's choice.
- Ogn the Judge says that three party members may pick out weapons from their arsenal (+2 simple or martial melee weapons of the character's choice).

The characters shall find the things they desire in their tents at dawn. Now, they have enough time to take a long rest and to prepare for the battle of Gurbolruhm.

Level Up. Your characters have reached the 14th level. Feel free to inform your players to level up during their next long rest.

GURBOLRUHM

Waking up to a glorious chaos, the characters witness the whole camp getting ready for the attack. Soldiers are sharpening their weapons, donning their armor, singing songs, and drinking. Despite the Hellic mist and all the loss of the day before, everyone looks ready for the fight.

Air of War. The upcoming scene is a massive battle, and such battles generally have many chaotic moments and elements of surprise. Flying spells, sudden explosions, cracking lightning, raining arrows, screaming warriors, calm mystics, all of these are a part of this battle. Do not hesitate to use such elements to challenge or wound the characters.

War Buffs. There are many different characters with various abilities gathered here. So, if the characters demand specific buffs during the war, they can probably find what they are looking for. However, it might be difficult for you to track the range, duration, and concentration of such buffs. To make things easier, you can make your characters benefit from the following spells and features at the beginning of the upcoming war. You can cancel the benefits at various times and move on to the other; *aid, bless, enhance ability, heroism, see invisibility,* +1 AC. To cancel them, you can use a *dispel magic* spell, or kill (or damage) the character who cast it.

The characters have a few hours to get ready for the attack, and they may spend this time however they want. When the characters are ready, start playing "Under the Wings of Valkyries" on "Svilland - Music and Ambiance", then read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> You have seen much ever since the Day of the Hunt, but this feels different. You feel a sense of bitter glory in your bones that intensifies with each beat of the battle drums, with every battle cry. The soldiers are drunk with joy, excitement, and courage.
>
> Tothrum slowly walks to the front of the big crowd with his big bear armor, facing them. First, he looks at Gurbolruhm for a few seconds; to the city of his ancestors, the city of stones, reminiscent of the great dvergrs. Then, he turns to the soldiers. He says, *"You, great soldiers of Svilland! You are destined to save your own land! You will stop this great evil, and stop it from ruining your home! I am with you!"* He points at you, and at other commanders with his great axe and continues, *"We are with you! No matter what you see inside, know that WE ARE WITH YOU! WE ARE READY AND PROUD TO FIGHT AND DIE AT YOUR SIDE!"* He pounds his chest, the soldiers hit their shields with their weapons, and Tothrum shouts, *"Run, run! Ruuun! Run to the glory! Run to Valhalla!"*

Then the soldiers storm the bridge of Don Baltham with loud and vigorous battlecries. During the charge, an unholy aura lifts off the ground along with a small army of draugrs to brace against the charge. The soldiers raise their shields and run past them by pushing some draugrs off the bridge, and the battle begins.

When the characters reach the large area in front of the city doors, they notice the following three encounters. They may choose to help any of these soldiers, but when the characters finish fighting they will notice that the other two are already dead.

Soldiers	Encounters
Viggo, the cook of House of Fertility	Viggo is surrounded by seven draugrs of Gurbolruhm. He looks like he can take three of them, but nothing more.
Ulfhild	Ulfhild commands her soldiers to attack. Then, she takes an arrow to the knee. She falls on her knees, and an ancient draugr (p.243) moves towards her to kill her.
Bear Rider	The Bear Rider shouts *"VALHALLLA!"* and charges towards the ten draugrs of Gurbolruhm. If the characters choose to help her, she shouts *"NO! HELP THE OTHERS!"* The warband may choose to help Viggo or Ulfhild instead.

When the soldiers fight off the enemy in front of the doors, tens of soldiers start pushing open the gigantic doors. As they slowly open, an unearthly smell of rot and coal covers the area, along with some terrifying screams. The horns and battle drums get louder and louder accompanied by the brave battle cries of *"Valhalla!", "To glory!", "For Svilland!"*

At first glance, the characters see a huge army, carrying the most besetting qualities of cold, death, and rot. The army is just as excited as anything and anyone.

INSIDE THE CITY

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below when the characters are inside the city:

> Earsplitting sounds of battle and the heavy smell of death stupefy you for a split second. All the noises echo off the high ceilings. Your heart grows cold at the gruesome and somber sights you behold. When you come to your senses, you notice that while the Svillanders are doing their best to resist these horrible creatures, draugrs are shooting arrows from the rooftops and the windows. You are disappointed at how strong their defenses are.

The characters see that the undead are succeeding in holding the Svillanders back. They are throwing vials of boiling oil from the higher positions on the gates, then igniting them with flaming arrows. Although the army of the dead suffers great losses, more draugrs run from inside the city to take the

place of those who've fallen.

Tothrum fights his way towards the characters and says, *"You should go, go deep and exterminate them from within. We'll clear this place up."* As soon as he says that, a terrifying roar is heard, coming from a dark corner; the growls of a draugr mountain jotunn. Tothrum looks at the creature with a mix of emotions in his intense eyes and shouts for the characters to *"Go to the east wall! Go!"*

When the characters reach the east wall, they notice a small gap close to the ground. They can't quite make out what's on the other side. When the characters are ready to pass through, they hear the familiar sound of a battle horn coming from the city doors; the horn of the Trinity of Wilderness. If they look at the doors, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> Frosted Johan blows the battle horn; you can recognize his fatherly face and his famous warhammer from a distance. He points inside and some other familiar figures start running; these are the other warbands. You remember your home, Mercy of Freyja, and Ygre... It feels like your heart is expanding and becoming one with all these soldiers. They are your friends, families, sisters, brothers, your first loves, your first fights; you can feel their faith and their courage in their battlecries. One by one, they blend into the crowd.

As the characters crouch down and move further into this small gap on their knees, all the voices dissolve in the distance. Interestingly, for just a few minutes the characters are in complete silence and darkness. The end of the tunnel can not be seen or heard.

In a few more minutes, the characters feel dizzy and restless, they feel their heartbeats are slower than usual because of an instant surge of magic of an unknown source. If the characters focus on their hearts, their feelings, or decide to meditate; they all start to feel the strong presence of Ygre. It feels like she is with the characters once more, ready to fight alongside them one last time. If any of the characters try to communicate with her, they all hear a soft whisper: *"Yes, we are together again; in fact, dear friends, we've never been apart."* (if the characters have someone else with them, it does not feel the presence and hear those whispers).

If the characters continue down the tunnel for about two more minutes, they reach a dark and narrow street. Ygre whispers, *"The lights in your souls will protect you, stick with them, listen to them."* As the characters move on to the street, she continues speaking, *"The city was the home of evil... Call it what you will; lack of blessing, lack of faith... They were so greedy that even Hel cursed them with her chilling breath. The doors were sealed, and the souls that dwelled here were taken to the pits of Helheim to be tortured for all eternity."*

Gurbolruhm: General Features

There is an entire city built below the castle-like structure above the ground. When the characters step into the dark streets of Gurbolruhm, they notice the following features.

Abandoned. The city is completely abandoned, but the characters feel some unearthly thing lurking in the pitch-black, empty streets of Gurbolruhm. There are draugrs in the city. See the encounter table below.

Pitch-Black. The city is the darkest place the warband has ever seen. The darkness is so strong that it seems to drown out all life and all light. This darkness is not magical, but is rather a temporary obstruction of sight, caused because the characters have spent so long in darkness. If the characters don't light a campfire during long rests, their eyes get sore due to this unusual darkness. In this case, the characters' range of sight when they use a light source and their range for darkvision is halved until they finish a short or long rest with a campfire present. When the characters suffer the effects of this feature, a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) check can help them understand that their lack of sight is due to the darkness of the undercity, and that a campfire would help.

Ruined and Sealed. Almost all buildings inside the city are either destroyed or sealed. For this reason, the characters find nothing but ruined houses, large rocks blocking the roads, and dvergr skeletons here and there. The standing structures reveal that this city was a masterpiece of dvergr masonry in its hay-day.

Smell. The smell, which now reminds the characters of Helheim straight away, is very similar to the one at the entrance but it is heavier here inside the city.

Tormented Souls. The painful screams and sorrowful cries of tortured creatures echo inside the city, and the sources for these unnerving noises cannot be detected. Whenever they are heard, Ygre takes a deep breath and expresses her mercy and pity for these pitiful souls.

LOCATIONS

After the long tunnel, the characters reach a dark and narrow street in the Market. As soon as the characters start walking in the depths of the city, Ygre says, *"I can help you find your way, and fortunately I am one with these stones, these mountains, and the ancient air we breathe."* Then she gives the names of the following locations, as well as where she thinks they are.

There were many other places to be found in Gurbolruhm as it is an ancient and a considerably big city; however, as time's arrows have hit Gurbolruhm hard, most of its notable locations are now ruined.

You, as the GM, can roll on the table below to determine the encounters that occur while the warband ventures from one location to another, or you can simply pick one.

D10	Encounters
1	2 warmongers of Helheim (p. 270) ambush the warband while they are passing by a ruined dvergr house (3 Warmongers of Helheim, if the warband consists of 6 or 7 characters).
2	3 gothis of Hel (p. 253) try to reanimate the dvergr of Gurbolruhm. The characters see a ritual ground where the cultists have placed the lifeless bodies symmetrically. When the characters encounter the gothis, a number of dvergrs of Gurbolruhm (p. 253) equal to twice the number of the characters rise and attack the warband.
3	A number of draugr of bones (p. 251) equal to the number of characters patrol the city streets.
4	2 hidden blades of Helheim (p. 262) and 1 warmonger of Helheim (p. 270) are looking for the warband in the city. The characters locate them in a ruined street. (2 warmongers of Helheim, if the warband consists of 6 or 7 characters).
5	A number of wraiths equal to the number of characters wander the city streets. They are probably the souls of the fallen ancient dvergrs.
6	1 mountain jotunn (p.263) comes forth from the ruins of Gurbolruhm that has become one with the mountains. He asks the characters to go back. This place is his home and the warband is most unwelcome. If the warband chooses to find another route, you must roll on the table one more time or choose another encounter from this table.
7	The warband comes across a door. If they open it, they encounter a huge hall occupied by 5 giant spiders and 5 swarms of cannibal spiders (p. 267). The warband can choose not to attack them. If they attack; however, they find 142 gp and 3 potions greater of healing inside, after the encounter.
8	The warband finds three vials of black liquid (p. 240) near a ruined house. It looks like someone was resting here almost a week ago.
9	Ygre's voice echoes in the minds of the characters, asking what they have been going through and how they feel about it.
10	The warband safely manages to travel to the other location.

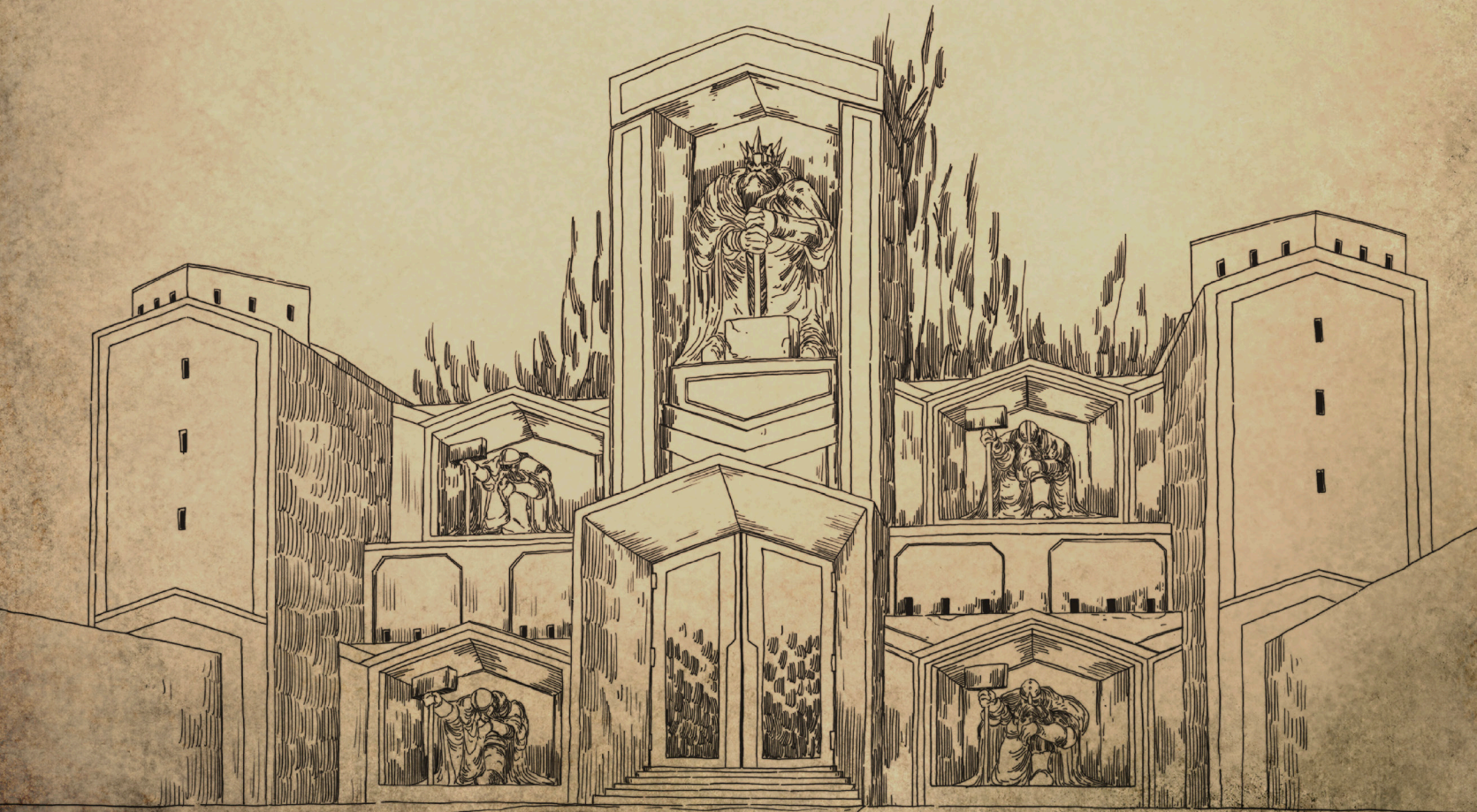
1. MARKET

Located in the southeast quarter of the city, the Market was one of its liveliest places. As the characters walk in its ruined streets, they notice inns, taverns, shops, and some broken stalls. It is not that hard to imagine this place in action.

Ygre is completely silent in the market if she is not spoken to. If asked about the location and the city, she says:

> *"It was a dark place even with people and light in it. The reek of evil is everywhere, gold flowed like wine through the city. With the gold, the darkest objects and desires were crafted and sold."* Ygre sighs and continues *"The rich and powerful came here often, and as long as they were rich, they were free to purchase anything they wanted."*

THE PIT
THE TEMPLE
BARRACKS
THE STATUE
MAIN STREET
COURTYARD
THE HALL
FORGE
SLAVES' QUARTERS
MARKET



For each half hour the characters spend searching around and succeeding on a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check, they find 500 gp (up to 2000 gp). However, these gold pieces were made in Gurbolruhm and are engraved with its symbol, and thus cannot be used when conducting trade with most Svillanders.

2. SLAVES' QUARTERS

Located to the southeast of the main street, the Slaves' Quarters is located between the forge and Market. The streets are so narrow that the characters feel overwhelmed and tired. Many tiny buildings, which appear to have been the homes of the slaves, are completely in ruin. There are two or three skeletons lying in the street in a single pile.

With a successful DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check, the characters can notice a small leather bag next to one of the skeletons. Inside the bag, they find 10 gp, a knife, a metal key with the number "11" on it, and an encrypted letter written on a small square piece of paper. If the characters know Austris, a successful DC 21 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that certain letters have been substituted with others, allowing the characters to read the message. The encripted version of this letter is given in *The Handouts*. You can choose to give this to your players as a puzzle, or have them solve it with the Intelligence check.

The letter says. *"I am ready to finish what I started. But, the 'king' hasn't been seen for some time. People say he locked himself in the throne hall; the door to the throne room is sealed with magic. I think the potions I've taken form the wicked temple would help me pass the gate. I am writing this letter because I might die after drinking these black potions. If that happens to be the case, the ones who come after me: be warned.*

I drank it. Tastes like shit, it hurts, but I believe it's going to work. Time to stop all this madness. I'll get my things and face the king."

3. FORGE

The forge is located to the southwest of the main street. Read or paraphrase the boxed text below when the characters start walking in:

> The ice-cold forges have been waiting for their talented hammersmiths, longing for the roaring fires they were used to. There are many large iron and bronze palettes against the wall.
>
> The streets are covered in broken, crushed tools and shards of metal. There are piles of coal and wood stacked next to the forges. You hear the distant sound of someone working the forge, coming from somewhere in the darkness.
>
> After a few moments, you notice a bluish glow coming closer to you, and you see the silhouette of a strong figure, blowing chilling cold on the metal it was evidently working on. You hear Ygre whisper, *"Watch out!"*

As soon as Ygre says *"Watch out!"*, the figure with viciousness in its eyes starts walking towards the characters with its heavy steps echoing all over the empty street.

THE FORGER OF GURBOLRUHM

Large undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (Svilland chain mail)
Hit Points 142 (15d10 + 60)
Speed 45 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dexterity +7
Skills Acrobatics +11, Perception +6
Damage Resistances acid, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from non-magical attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned, prone, restrained
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Dvergmer, Hellic
Challenge 16 (15,000 XP)

Magic Resistance. The forger has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The forger makes two melee weapon attacks.

Greataxe of the Forger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (1d12 + 6) slashing damage plus 11 (2d10) cold 4 (1d8) necrotic damage and damage.

Cold Breath (Recharge 5-6). The forger exhales cold in a 45-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw, taking 56 (16d6) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The Forger of Gurbolruhm can take 2 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 forger regains spent legendary actions at the start of their turn.

Freeze. A solid layer of ice covers the body of the forger. It adds a +2 bonus to AC until the start of its next turn.

Attack (Costs 2 Actions). The forger makes a melee weapon attack.

After the encounter, Ygre says *"I am sorry, I was not expecting this creature."*

4. BARRACKS

The Barracks is in the west part of the city. Many small houses are scattered here and there along with some big stone buildings, which were presumably used for accommodation. The streets are wide and the characters can spot some ruined taverns and brothels by looking at their signs, even if some of the writing has been scratched off. There are some open areas, which were probably used for training.

As they walk the ruined streets and observe the surroundings, the characters hear a sobbing for a few seconds. It is the voice of a young woman, different from that of Ygre. The characters can't locate the source by any means. In fact, even Ygre, who now knows the details of this ancient, evil city by heart cannot figure out where the sound is coming from. She says, *"I do not know, I do not understand..."*

Infused Thoughts. The characters who did not succeed on their saving throws when they were affected by the *infuse thoughts* spell back in the Third Layer of The Hillrest Crypts (p. 155) have the following vision after hearing the sobbing. Read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> It doesn't look like anything you have seen before, it is as if the ancient ruins were rebuilt. It is as if you have traveled through time to witness the source of this painful, agonizing voice that surrounds you. You are inside the barracks, looking at a lady combing her long brown hair and looking at her baby lying in the crib next to her while doing so. Three women and two men wearing light grey robes, wielding battle axes and saexes break the door to the room that you and the lady are in. The lady looks surprised, she has the most innocent look on her face. Scared for her life, she looks at the intruders, to give meaning to this senseless raid. However, the intruders have a ruthless look in their eyes and are completely bereft of mercy. The lady leaps forward to form a barrier between the intruders and her baby. She whispers *"Please. Spare him. You are gothis of Freyja, are you not? Show mercy. Please..."* Alas, they don't look convinced. You watch them tear the lady's throat out while her baby looks at the ceiling, unaware of the horror. As the intruders take the baby and leave the room, you see the back of their cloaks, on which a large Freyja rune is inscribed.

When the vision ends, the characters who had it find themselves in the same place they were before. This image seemed to be from the Second Age of Svilland. However, the events in it never took place. You may use this vision to confuse your characters morally, suggesting that even Freyja's gothis can sin, and they might not be as good and pure of heart as the characters think. Eventually, they may decide that they do not want to walk this path given by Freyja. When the time comes, there will be a chance for them to shift their alignments during the course of Chapter 5.

Also, after their next long rest, the characters must succeed on a DC 12 Charisma saving throw, or they cannot gain the benefits of a long rest. Moreover, those who sleep see the weirdest and most chilling dreams of dark, tiny places, blinding lights, locked doors, long hallways, and the same, creepy wailing.

5. THE STATUE

In the middle of the main street, there is a huge statue of a dvergr king. Somehow the statue is in better shape compared to all the other buildings in the city. By the looks of it, this dvergr is the king of Gurbolruhm (p.206).

The characters then hear a great noise coming from the Hall. Start playing "Chant of Bones" on "Svilland - Music and Ambiance" then read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

The sound of sliding doors echo in the empty city. A grayish light starts seeping through the crack in the large stone doors, lighting the main street and all the ruined buildings around. Then within a fraction of a second, before the door closes, you start to see things flooding through, some limbs, creatures, body parts, trying to reach the main street.

Then, you see a woman walking towards you, accompanied by a group of creatures. As she walks, you hear a voice inside your head say, *"You are not welcome here in my father's kingdom, you'll die soon just like any other who dares disturb us."* She then spreads her arms, and you witness spirits just like her start to surround you.

A successful DC 25 Charisma (Insight) check reveals that there is a bit of hesitance in the woman's voice. Ygre gives the characters the following information as they hear her voice in their minds:

- The women surrounding you are the Daughters of Gurbolruhm.
- They are the nine daughters of the king of Gurbolruhm, who were cursed just like their father.
- There are a number of daughters of Gurbolruhm equal to the number of characters in the warband here. The others must have gone to the battlefield at the front gates, to command the army of the dead.

DAUGHTER OF GURBOLRUHM

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 105 (14d8 + 42)
Speed fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dexterity +6, Charisma +7
Skills Intimidation +7, Perception +4
Damage Vulnerabilities radiant
Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from non-magical attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, poisoned, prone, restrained
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Dvergmer, Hellic, Vestri
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Ethereal Sight. Daughters of Gurbolruhm can see 60 feet into the ethereal plane when it is on the material plane, and vice versa.

Incorporeal Movement. Daughters of Gurbolruhm can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Turn Resistance. Daughters of Gurbolruhm have advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Spellcasting. Daughters of Gurbolruhm are 9th-level spellcasters. Their spellcasting ability is charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). Daughters of Gurbolruhm have the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *guidance, resistance, thaumaturgy*

1st level (4 slots): *bolt of watery death**, cage of water**, inflict wounds*

2nd level (3 slots): *draining gaze**, hold person, icicle of death***

3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead, bitter touch of Helheim**, spirit guardians*

4th level (3 slots): *dagger of agony**, ice storm*

5th level (1 slots): *cone of cold*

*** Svilland spells*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Daughters of Gurbolruhm make two melee weapon attacks, one with their poisoned blade and one with another.

Poisoned Blade of Gurbolruhm. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) poison damage. The target must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the end of its next turn.

Withering Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (4d8) necrotic damage.

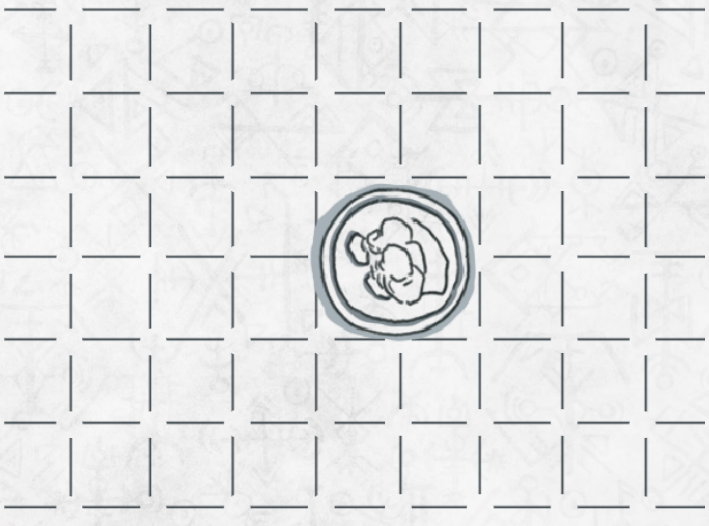
Touch of Helheim. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (4d8) cold damage.

Disrupt Life Recharge 5-6). Each non-undead creature within 20 feet of the Daughters of Gurbolruhm must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw against this magic, taking 45 (10d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Daughter of Gurbolruhm

After the encounter, if the characters search the remains, they notice a big Hel symbol carved on the chest of their foes. A successful DC 25 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that the symbol is carved on a tattoo resembling the symbol of Freyja.

Treasure. 16 vials of the *black liquid* (p. 240).



▢ = 5 FEET

6. THE PIT

In the northeast quarter of the city, the Pit is located to the north of the Market. It is a large area with stone seating areas (now left in ruin), and a pit at the center with a diameter of 100 feet, and a depth of 65 feet. There are caves with metal handles at the bottom of the pit.

If the characters look around, a successful DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a square, metal door on the ground where they are, which probably leads to the bottom of the pit. If the characters enter, they find themselves on a small, sunken street with tiny, barrack-like buildings, many caves, and cages on it. In the cages, there are the skeletons of humanoids and all sorts of animals. With a successful DC 14 Intelligence (Nature) check, the characters notice that there are skeletons of wolves, horses, bears, goats, and even a frost jotunn aside from that of the humanoids.

As the characters walk towards the pit, Ygre starts speaking with sorrow in her voice:

> *"I wish you had not come here, the pit of suffering, tyranny, and pain. The blood of all sorts of creatures was spilled on this pit...I... I fear they could not find peace in death..."*

Reward. If the characters spend one hour to bury the remains, they have 1 major Hel point removed, if they had any. Otherwise, as the characters are leaving the pit, they notice that the spirits of those that were trapped here appear in the cages and attack them.

Treasure. 2 vials of *potion of greater healing*

Characters	Encounter
4	2 cursed warriors (p. 246), 1 ghost
5	3 cursed warriors
6	4 cursed warriors
7	5 cursed warriors

7. THE TEMPLE

In the northeast quarter of the city, the Temple is close to the courtyard. Once a magnificent building with engraved stones with gold, sophisticated mouldings, it now lies in ruin, same as everything else. There is a gigantic, stone Hel statue in the middle of the temple. The statue looks relatively new when compared to the temple walls. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that there are some inscribed runes left on the north wall of the temple that say "Balder, help us!"

There are three shelves on the east wall, and there are ten vials of *black liquid* on each of these shelves. There are three empty vials on the ground. When the characters pick them up, they see that the vials are covered in dust; nobody had touched them in a long time.

Under the shelves, there are five wooden chests.

Treasure. 8 black Hel cultist robes, 8 silver pendants with Hel's rune carved on them.

As it is written in the next section titled the *Courtyard* (p. 201), the characters can deceive the spell that holds the gate by having two major Hel points or by disguising themselves as Hel cultists. The characters can gain Hel points by drinking these potions, or they can disguise themselves by wearing these clothings and amulets. However, when the characters disguise themselves as Hel cultists, they must make a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw, as these amulets are specifically made for Hel's followers. Upon wielding them, the amulets try to imbue the characters' minds with Hel's commandments. On a fail, they take 1 major Hel point.

Infused Thoughts. The characters who did not succeed on their saving throws when they were affected by the *infuse thoughts* spell back in the Third Layer of The Hillrest Crypts (p. 155) have the following vision as they leave the temple. Read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> You see dvergrs; men, women, children, elderly running around, trying to leave the temple. When you look back, you feel the heat of a roaring fire on your face. The temple is about to burn down. The screams of those who are trapped inside fill your ears and sends a chill down your spine. You then hear a sudden burst of sinister laughter. Inside the fire and flames, there are five gothis of Freyja, wearing light grey robes, killing everyone, burning the Balder temple to the ground.

When the vision ends, these characters find themselves in the last place they were before the vision began. This image seemed to be from the Second Age of Svilland. Although this did not really happen, you may use this vision to confuse your characters morally, suggesting that even Freyja's gothis are not free of sin. Eventually, things like this may cause them to decide that they do not want to walk this path given to them by Freyja. When the time comes, there will be a chance for them to shift their alignments during the course of Chapter 5.

8. COURTYARD

In front of the Hall, there is a big open space with tall columns that stretch all the way up to the ceiling of the giant cave that is this city. The characters find that the columns aren't in ruins, in fact, they still look sturdy and well-maintained.

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below, when the characters start observing their surroundings:

> After all the dark, narrow streets, ruined buildings, and tiny spaces you've seen in the city, this space feels huge. As you look around, Ygre whispers, *"The mother..."* and you notice a very old lady, with the palest skin, messy, gray hair, and an odd, wooden tiara. She drops a small stone on the ground and looks at you with her white eyes and asks *"Why?"*
>
> You feel the insanity that lurks within from this statement alone. She asks again, *"Why?"*

The woman looks completely mad, but she doesn't attack or try to harm the characters unless the characters attack her. She looks like she is dazed and confused. The characters can heal her with a *greater restoration* spell. If they do, she comes to her senses and provides the characters with the following information:

- Her name is Pemm. She is the mother of the nine daughters of Don Baltham.
- She was somehow differently affected by the curse of Hel.
- She has very little knowledge about what's in the Hall, since she was exiled months before the daughters and the king shut themselves in.
- She knows Don Baltham wanted to be immortal and was seeking ways to cheat death.
- She was surprised when her daughters chose the same path as their father.
- The daughters were very good to her, and they thought of leaving the city before the incident.
- She and the daughters were secretly worshipping Freyja. The Freyja carving on the statue at the chamber was her and the daughter's doing.
- She heard rumors that Don Baltham was torturing the daughters.

Pemm

- The door to the Hall was sealed with magic that is impossible to dispel when the city was cursed. However, she knows that forces and creatures of Helheim can go in and out of the Hall gates. Perhaps the spell can be deceived with some items related to Helheim that the characters can find in the city temple.

If the characters choose to communicate with her without removing the curse, she provides them with the following information:

- She has never seen a tree, she'd like to see one.
- She'd kill to eat strawberries right now.
- She was so beautiful when she was not a draugr.

PEMM

Medium undead, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)
Hit Points 180 (24d8 + 72)
Speed fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)	8 (-1)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Dexterity +10, Charisma +10
Skills Intimidation +10
Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from non-magical attacks
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, poisoned, prone, restrained
Senses darkvision 60 ft.
Languages Dvergmer, Hellic, Vestri
Challenge 14 (11,500 XP)

Aura of the Dead. Pemm has a deathly aura, a creature that ends its turn within 5 feet of Pemm must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

Ethereal Sight. Pemm can see 60 feet into the ethereal plane when it is on the material plane, and vice versa.

Incorporeal Movement. Pemm can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Turn Resistance. Pemm has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Pemm makes two melee weapon attacks.

Rusty Gurbolruhm Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d4 + 5) cold damage plus 13 (3d8) poison damage and 13 (3d8) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the end of itse next turn.

Scream of the Outcast (Recharge 5-6). Pemm screams with pain and anger. A deep, painful suffering is heard through her voice. Each non-undead creature within 30 feet of Pemm must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw against this magic, taking 36 (8d8) psychic and 36 (8d8) thunder damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The creatures who failed their saving throw must make the same saving throw once more. On a failed save, the creatures are frightened for 1d4 turns.

After the encounter, the characters can take a look around.

Gates of the Hall. The gates of the Hall are nearly 10 feet tall, and are made of blackened stones. They are sealed with ancient Hellic magic which makes it glow with a green light and makes it impossible to open or break down the door. The spell cannot be dispelled by any means since it was a direct effect of Hel's curse. There are two ways of entering the Hall:

1. As Pemm mentioned, the characters can find something inside the temple to deceive the spell and enter. The characters can wear Hellic robes and Hel cultists' amulets to look like them. Keep in mind that this would give them 1 major Hel point if they cannot succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw.
2. As the letter found in the Slaves' Quarters suggested, the characters can drink the black liquids so that they look like Hellic creatures. This means that the characters must drink enough of the liquid until they have at least 2 major Hel points. If a character currently has two or more major Hel Points, they can pass through the gates. However, there is no way that they can help their friends pass.

If the characters continue walking north of the courtyard, they reach the gates of the Hall. The great, two-winged stone gate is overladen with damaged and old dvergmer writings. If any of the characters know dvergmer, they can make out the writings which read, "The Hall of the King", "The King of the Mountain", "Home", and "The Home of the King".

The gates are not barricaded or locked, so the characters can push through the gates a few minutes after they use one of the methods above to enter. However, when one of the characters touches the gate, all the characters have a vision. Read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> It gets colder in an instant and Ygre whispers *"An unfathomable dark and cold is here. She is closer than ever."* As a dark grey mist starts to wrap around your legs, Ygre grimly says, *"She is here."* The gates disappear, and you see stone stairs leading down; down to unknown depths. You find yourself shrouded in the mist along with the echoes of distant, loud screams. You start to

have trouble drawing in breath, and it gets colder and colder with each passing second. The calm and cold voice of a man says, *"Welcome, welcome my little trouble makers, welcome to your final destination."* As soon as he is done with his words, the mist dissolves and the gates reappear, but this time everything looks and feels different; with a chilling aura that hangs heavy in the air. You recognized the voice; it's Ormond the Bloodreader.

The characters must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw or take 1 minor Hel point. After that, they can push the gates open and are faced with the Hall.

THE PLAN

When the characters enter through the gates, they hear the loud noise of things scraping together inside the walls. Once they are inside, the door locks itself behind them. The door has 21 AC, 300 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. The lock cannot be picked.

When the characters are looking around, start playing "Chant of Bones" on "Svilland - Music and Ambiance" and read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

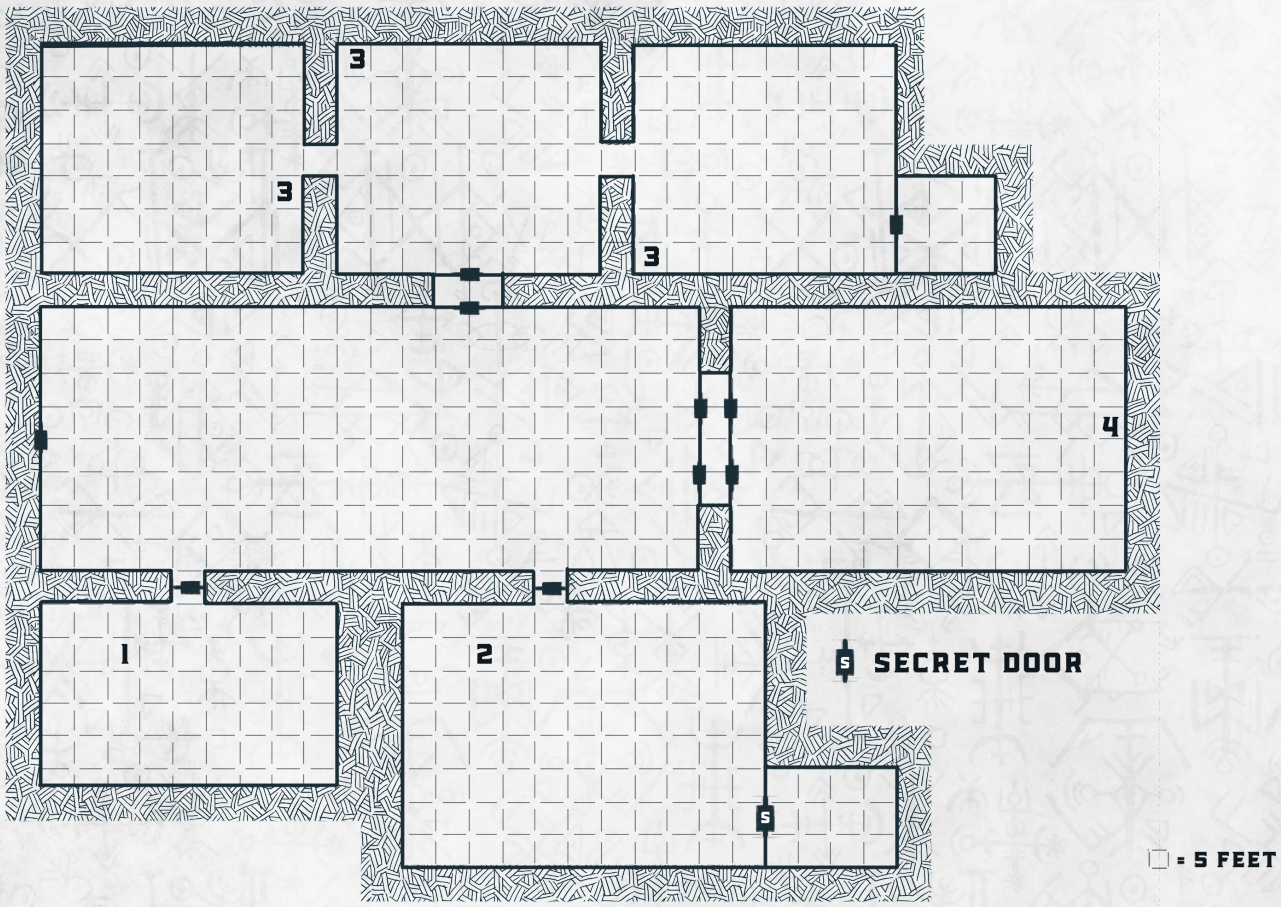
You are in a long corridor with high ceilings that have bodies hanging from them along with big chandeliers that illuminate the whole corridor with dim light. The rotten smell of the bodies is so strong that you feel like you're about to suffocate.

If the characters examine the bodies, a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) reveals that some were humanoids and some were animals. Other than that, the characters notice some of the bodies are fresh enough that they are dripping blood, while some others have been hanging here long enough to turn into skeletons. The bodies are unrecognizable. If any of the characters have more than 3 Hel points, however, they see their loved ones hanging from the ceiling. In this case, they must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw or cannot see the truth and take a -2 penalty to their next ability check, attack roll, or saving throw within 1 hour.

The characters spot four large doors in this corridor, one door on the left, two doors on the right, and one bigger door right across from the gate.

LOCATIONS

The interior of the Hall has remained intact unlike the other



places inside Gurbolruhm. It feels like the Hall is still used with the lit chandeliers and torches, the blood dripping bodies, and the well-maintained walls and doors.

1. THE LIBRARY

The Library is the first room on the south wall. If the characters enter the room, they find that all four walls are covered with bookshelves, even though all the books look illegible, as they are either burned or mouldy.

If the characters look for a book that they can read, they must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check to find a leather-covered notebook with many protective runes carved on the cover. The notebook is written in Dvergmer and takes 2 hours to read completely. It appears to be a journal that belongs to Don Baltham, the king of Gurbolruhm, who chose to seek the ways of immortality. In the notebook, he mentions the presence of secret gardens under the city, and that some unknown powers were constantly trying to hinder his accomplishments.

Spy Hole. A successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that there is a spy-hole in one of the bookshelves on the north wall. If the characters look through the hole, they see an empty room with nine beds. If the characters find the hole, Ygre whispers with agony *"It was their father... Their own father who did this to them.... Evil does not only lurk in the darkness in some remote corner. My beloved friends, evil is among us, with us, and inside of us all. And we must fight it, forever."*

Treasure. A spellbook with three 6th level, two 7th level, and two 8th level spells of the GM's choice.

2. BEDROOM

The Bedroom is the second room on the south wall. If the characters enter this big room, they see nine beds placed next to the walls side-by-side. The beds look dusty and rotten just like all other objects in this room.

A large closet stands on the south wall. If the characters search the closet, they find nothing but rotten, mouldy clothes that appear to have been expensive at one time. There is a table near the closet, full of books, perfumery, carved animal figures, jewelry, and a metal plate; all of which are in shambles. If the characters look closely at this table, they find valuable gems and a ring.

Treasure. Twelve greenish gems worth 100 gp each, a golden ring with a diamond worth 200 gp.

Secret Door. A successful DC 22 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a secret door behind the beds, leading to a secret room. There are runes carved on the threshold. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that these runes are here to protect the room from "evil". A successful *dispel magic* (DC 16) spell or a use of the Runic Purge feature (requires 6th level spell slot) dispels or purges the runes.

As they pass through the threshold, characters with more than or equal to 3 Hel points take 2d10 radiant damage and must succeed on a DC 18 Charisma saving throw or see nothing but a basic storage room with old clothes, brooms, and broken chairs. The others see a small study room with a ritual circle drawn on the ground and a small altar. A successful DC 16 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that the altar and the ritual circle is dedicated to Freyja. Ygre stays silent for a while, then softly says *"I think one of the girls once had followed the path of Freyja, before she lost her way like Asta."*

Reward. If the characters sacrifice some of their food, water, blood (one day's ration for each character, or 1d4 slashing damage for each character), a weapon or a piece of armor, or pray to Freyja, they have 1 major Hel point removed, if they have any.

3. KING'S ROOM

The King's Room is the only room on the northern wall of the hall. It is a big room with a lot of furniture. So when the characters enter the room, they notice that the room is divided into three sections with heavy draperies: the desk, the bed, and the library. Right across the door, a large desk and a fireplace behind it dominates the wall. The walls on the right and on the left can barely be seen through the drapery. On the right side, there is a big, old bed in the middle. On the left side, there is a library with rocks, leather pieces, and old and dusty papers on its shelves.

The desk across the door looks old but well-maintained. The papers and writing utensils look so clean that the characters may think they've been used recently, but they must succeed on a DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check to make sure. If the characters investigate the desk, they see that all documents are either in Hellic or Dvergmer. Those who can read in these languages can understand the following:

- All Hel commanders in Svilland were assigned to recruit an army.
- Those close to Gurbolruhm were instructed to come here and lead the army.
- Hel plans on debilitating Freyja's will, using her forces.

The library covers the wall entirely. All the shelves are full of papers, leather pieces, and extremely old books. If the characters look at the library carefully, they find that most books were destroyed; their pages completely blackened or ripped out. With a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check, they find a small silver key on one of the shelves in a small pile of dusty papers.

On the right side, they find a pit next to the bed. This pit is a 10-foot square with a heavy, iron grate on top with a heavy silver lock (of which the key is on the library on the left side of the room) on it. If the characters look at this pit standing on this bar, they see that it is a 10-foot-high room full of draugrs. If they open the cage, they attack the characters. None of these draugrs have the ability to speak.

Characters	Encounter
4	2 ancient draugrs (p. 243)
5	1 ancient draugr, 2 draugr of bones (p. 251)
6	3 ancient draugrs
7	4 ancient draugrs

After the encounter, if the characters get inside the pit and look around, they notice that it was also used as a torture

chamber. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a small, hidden safe built in the wall. Inside it, there are documents in Dvergmer, concerning the condition of the captive. A successful DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that the pit was also used to test some magical items.

4. THRONE ROOM

This is the room with the biggest door, which is located right across where the characters entered. Start playing "*Voices of the Dead*" on "Svilland - Music and Ambiance", and read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> When you open the heavy doors, you are greeted by evil eyes. A pair of large, pitch-black eyes frantically darting around... They are the eyes of an old man, standing in the middle of the room; a gray-haired, scar-faced dvergr standing still at the very front of a blood curdling scene that stagnates the mind.
>
> You understand that he is Don Baltham right away, the cursed king of Gurbolruhm. The scene behind him is just as terrifying as his eyes: nine seemingly ecstatic women, the daughters of the king, stand on the edges of a ritual circle. The circle is in front of a dark slit that opens to a horrible, dark landscape of frozen barren lands covered with a black mist. The slit is a pathway nobody would want to use; a pathway to Helheim.
>
> The mist slowly starts covering the throne room inch by inch, and distant screams coming from the slit echo in the dark, cold room.

As soon as all the characters enter the Throne Room, the doors shut and Don Baltham shouts, *"Kneel before me or die! Obey the orders of my Goddess!"* When he says Hel, loud screams come from the black slit behind the girls, and he attacks.

> **GM TIP**
>
> Narrative descriptions of events that take place while the characters are fighting with Don Baltham, which may help you describe the atmosphere better, are given below. Please note that as the king takes damage, the girls also lose their life force. The characters notice the changes in the daughters during the second round, when the girl on the left falls unconscious.

Round	Description
1	One of the women on the left raises her hands and tries to break free from the ritual circle. She whispers a chant. As a bonus action, characters can try to understand what she is doing, and a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that she is praying to Freyja.
2	One of the women on the left falls unconscious.
3	Don Baltham turns to his daughters and shouts, *"Call the commanders!"* If any of the characters spend their turns to see how they react, a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that they don't move.
4	A loud scream comes from the dark slit, and the characters hear the voice of Ormond again. This time,he is speaking to the women, saying, *"You've failed. Close the gates, now!"* The women don't make a move.
5	Don Baltham shouts, "I will not DIE! I AM IMMORTAL!" Blood starts to rain on the city. Each character takes 1d8 necrotic damage at the end of each of their turns, and Don Baltham regains 2d8 hit points at the end of each of its turns.
6	The souls of the long-deceased folk of Gurbolruhm start to appear in the battlefield, forming a circle. They curse Don Baltham, accusing him of condemning the whole city to eternal damnation and not being a real king. Don Baltham screams in anger.

King of Gurbolruhm

KING OF GURBOLRUHM

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 20 (black ice chestplate)
Hit Points 195 (23d8 + 92)
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)	22 (+6)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Constitution +10, Intelligence +12, Wisdom +10
Skills Arcana +18, History +12, Perception +10, Religion +18
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing form non-magical attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 20
Languages Austris (Common), Dvergmer, Hellic, Vestri
Challenge 17 (18,000 XP)

Black Ice Chestplate. Whenever a creature touches the armor; for example, when grappling, it takes 1d4 cold damage at the end of each of its turns for 1 minute.

King and Its Subjects (If 5, 6, or 7 Characters). The King of Gurbolruhm summons its subjects to aid him in battle. These summoned draugrs are the reanimated bodies of the king's daughters. They are mindless and obey their father's commands.

For 5 characters: *One dvergr of Gurbolruhm (p. 253)*
For 6 characters: *Three dvergr of Gurbolruhm*
For 7 characters: *Five dvergr of Gurbolruhm*

Rune Hammer. As a bonus action, the king of Gurbolruhm presents his holy symbol and creates a spiritual warhammer in his hands. The warhammer glows with bluish icy runes. The king of Gurbolruhm adds his Intelligence modifier to his attack and damage rolls while using his Rune Hammer.

Turn Resistance. The King of Gurbolruhm has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Spellcasting. King of Gurbolruhm is a 20th level rune caster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 20, +12 to hit with spell attacks). The king has the following rune warrior spells prepared.

1st level (4 slots): *elemental rune**, rune of power**, rune of slaying**, rune of speed***
2nd level (3 slots): *rune of dismay **, rune of troldkin***
3rd level (3 slots): *rune of death**, rune of halt**, rune of the giant***
4th level (1 slot): *rune of harm**, rune of sloth***

***Svilland spells*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The king of Gurbolruhm makes two melee weapon attacks.

Rune Hammer. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage plus 4 (1d8) cold damage and 4 (1d8) necrotic damage. The king of Gurbolruhm's weapon attacks scores a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20. Whenever the king scores a critical hit, the target must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, or suffers one level of exhaustion.

Bitter Touch of Helheim (1/Day). The king touches a creature and delivers the unholy cold of Helheim. The target makes a DC 18 Constitution saving throw; on a failure, the king's attacks and spells deal an extra 12 (3d8) cold damage.

Cone of Cold (Recharge 5-6). A blast of cold air erupts from the king's hands. Each creature in a 60-foot cone must make a Constitution saving throw. A creature takes 45 (10d8) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A creature killed by this spell becomes a frozen statue until it thaws.

Ice Storm. A hail of rock-hard ice pounds to the ground in a 20-foot-radius, 40-foot-high cylinder centered on a point within range. Each creature in the cylinder must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 22 (5d8) bludgeoning damage and 14 (4d6) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

REACTIONS

Black Ice Chestplate. Black Ice Chestplate has 6 charges. When the king is targeted by a spell, he can expand "spell level +1" charges as a reaction to redirect any spell targeting him. DC for redirected spells that need a saving throw is 18.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The king of Gurbolruhm 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 lich regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Attack. The king of Gurbolruhm makes another attack.

Ice Storm (Costs 2 Actions). The king of Gurbolruhm uses its Ice Storm.

Bitter Touch of Helheim (Costs 2 Actions). The king of Gurbolruhm uses its Bitter Touch of Helheim.

Spellcasting (Costs 3 Actions). The king of Gurbolruhm casts one spell from his rune warrior spells prepared.

After the encounter, start playing "Freyja's Tears" on "Svilland - Music and Ambiance" and read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> As the corpse of Don Baltham turns to ash, the girls drop to their knees and fall unconscious. You see Ygre's apparition, glowing gold and white, and she walks towards the girls, her golden robe touching the ground when she leans towards the girl in the middle and whispers.
>
> The girl opens her eyes wide, Ygre disappears, but you can still feel her presence stronger than ever. She speaks with a voice full of sorrow, saying, *"They were innocent, they were followers of Freyja and the Allfather."*

The woman opens her eyes, looks at the characters and her sisters' dead bodies, before she smiles and says *"Finally... We were waiting for this day to come for so long... Thank you..."* She starts crying, golden tears fall from her pale eyes and the dark slit on the wall starts to close slowly.

> **GM TIP**
>
> At this point of the adventure, you can choose to end the story without going further into the pits of Helheim where the characters can try to save an aspect of Freyja.
>
> If you want to conclude the adventure here, see *The Salvation*. If you want for your characters to delve into the darkest pits of Helheim to save Svilland once more, see *The Path to Helheim*.

THE SALVATION

She points to the slit with her weak fingers and says *"It's closing. You... You saved us."* Then she cannot bear the pain any longer and passes out.

If Roar is still with the warband, he charges towards the slit as it is closing, and enters the unknown. When the slit closes completely, it leaves a dark mark on the old stone walls.

The characters can return safely to the city of Gurbolruhm, where they find the army of Svilland who has defeated the forces of Helheim. As the King of Gurbolruhm died, the ancient curse on Gurbolruhm was dispelled, and all subjects of the King of Gurbolruhm were demised, leaving only ashes behind. The forces of Svilland have overcome what's left of the army of the dead and have prevailed.

"When the forces of Svilland gather in a camp to bid farewell to their losses to Valhalla, the characters learn that the army suffered heavy losses in the battle of Gurbolruhm, that many Svillanders have died, and that most of the others are injured; including some people the characters met:

- Sidgy from Odin's Vargr, Ogn the Judge, Viggo the cook from the House of Fertility, Ulfhild from Hanlon's soldiers, Bear Rider, and the Mithral of the Mountain are dead.
- Tothrum Warhammer and Thorve from Belmunt are heavily injured.
- Frosted Johan lost his right arm in the last charge.
- Moldof Stormgazer has a large burn on his face and upper body.
- "Balder" lost both of his eyes.

Your players have reached the end of the road. Both the characters they created and Svilland itself have gone through an immense ordeal, where the very things they held most sacred were threatened and tarnished. With that said, having gone through these challenges has made everyone involved that much stronger; new bonds and traditions are formed, and Svilland has found that it is still strong in the face of evil.

Now that the slit between Helheim and Svilland is closed shut, the forces of Hel retreat, and her influence over the land slowly subsides. The damage done is not easy to forget to be sure, but with time, the pain of loss is also sure to recede.

With Hel's influence ebbing away, Freyja's presence in Svilland is stronger than ever. Once again, flowers are in full bloom, healthy crops have replaced the rotten, and mothers everywhere give birth to happy, healthy babies.

The deeds of the Warband of the Trinity of Wilderness have spread far and wide. With this tale growing in popularity, so will the tradition of the Day of the Hunt. Before long, villages from all over will send their champions to prove their worth in this (now) legendary tradition, seeking to see their names among that of our heroes.

The relentless efforts of the characters does not go unnoticed by Freyja. From the moment that the slit is shut, they feel Freyja's presence wherever they go. What's more, they seem to bring with them bounty and prosperity; the sick get better while in their presence, those that are old and wise are filled with exuberance, and no crop yields a poor harvest when they are near. This adds to their legend, and they are known by all in Svilland as "Lifdaggar Kappi", or "The Champions of Life".

In contrast to their reputation, they will forever carry with them the things they have seen, the scars they have taken, and the evil they have fought. Even though they will (hopefully) live on and experience many things that will bring them joy and comfort, they will still wake up screaming some nights, feeling the cold breath of Hel in the nape of their necks.

THE PATH OF HELHEIM

If the characters want to continue on this journey, she (the daughter) points at the slit with her weak fingers and says *"She is imprisoned."* Then her voice changes a little and says *"You will pass through a narrow gate somewhere up high, and will enter a much greater darkness to save the ones you've left behind. When the wind of death knocks on your door, you must answer. Move forward, deeper into the long road ahead. It is likely that you and your friends will pass the boundaries of mortal minds."* With a successful DC 12 Intelligence check, the characters remember the words of the old seer near the House of Fertility, Knafgata (p. 35).

Ygre's voices echo in their minds, *"I'm afraid the girl speaks the truth. Something that belongs to my Goddess is trapped inside. I don't know where, I don't know what...*

I cannot ask you to go further. You have already suffered enough. But if I were with you, I would go in and make this sacrifice for Svilland, for our home. Oh... One last thing... You won't be hearing me inside for that slit will take me to another realm. However, keep me in your hearts, friends. I... No, we are forever in your debt." Then her voice slowly fades away.

If Roar is still with the warband, he takes a look at the characters, says *"I know what I must do. Thanks for putting your trust in me. I cannot expect you to follow me to Helheim. If this is where we part ways, I'll see you in Valhalla."* and walks into the dark slit.

Chapter V
Into the Darkness

As the characters pass through the dark slit, which is a gate to Helheim itself, the warband sets out on the darkest path of their lives. Amid the smell of death and rotten soil, they walk for endless hours until the darkness takes over their consciousness. They then regain consciousness on the boat of a former foe: Kludi Igrimsonn, the Jarl of Belmunt. He doesn't pose a threat, as he has gone mad, trying to find his wife in a river of dead people.

Kludi takes the warband to the shores of Duftreptof; a town in Helheim, secretly ruled by Ormond. The townsfolk are under a spell, where their experiences run in "loops"; leaving them no choice but to live through the same things over and over again. The characters must break these loops somehow, and free themselves of the town. They cannot find Ormond, but meet Freyja's pet boar; Hildisvini.

Hildisvini tells the characters that there are essences of Freyja trapped in Helheim and that they must recover them. The warband thus ventures into the depths of the Helheim to find *Freyja's golden hair* inside an unholy forest, and *Freyja's Tears* near the rotten mirror of the lake Freyja's Tear. After they recover the *hair* and the *tear*, the warband has a vision of Ormond, commanding them to leave their quest. However, Hildisvini senses the presence of one final essence of Freyja, with Ormond.

When the warband confronts Ormond in his home, they are sadly defeated. When they die, the characters have a vision where they find themselves in a feast surrounded by people they love, only to discover that this is a false vision created by Ormond. In truth, they are to rot in Helheim. The souls of the characters resist and come back to life, as they have unfinished business with Ormond. In spectral form, the warband wages a final epic battle in the twisted version of Freyja's Tears. They must kill Ormond and free Freyja's essences from the clutches of Helheim once and for all.

RUNNING THIS CHAPTER

You, as the GM, can find the key events of this chapter in the table below. The events take place one after the other, each of which lead the characters one step closer to saving Freyja.

Episodes

Duftreptof (For characters of level 15)
The Pursuit of Life (For characters of level 16-17)
Ormond's Wrath (For characters of level 18-19)
The Final Verdict (For characters of level 20)

'LIFE' IN HELHEIM

The fifth and final chapter of the adventure takes place in Helheim and this section might be useful for you to capture the sharp flavor of a different realm. Before moving on to the section titled *The Path*, it is essential for you to know the following information regarding Helheim.

Despite Helheim being one of the nine realms, it is the darkest and perhaps the most feared one among Svillanders. Nobody, unless they are Hel followers, wants to go to Helheim while Valhalla and Folkvangr await with all the joy and glory that anyone could wish for.

In Helheim, the characters will challenge not only powerful fiends and the undead, but will also face their greatest fears and fight against nature itself, while feeling incredibly isolated and helpless.

THE SKY AND NATURE

There is no light source in Helheim, and the sky is always covered with dark gray clouds. It feels like it is always dusk here, and the creatures wait for a morning that will never come. The folk of Helheim cannot tell the time and the direction.

The desolate lands of Hel have a wicked nature in a way that is entirely their own. Everything looks and feels different than it does in Svilland. Some dried trees hang upside down from tiny pieces of rock. Wicked, sharp stones and ice cover large areas, making them impossible to walk on.

Blood Hail. Bloody ice shards fall from the sky for about one minute. The characters must take cover or they take 1d8 bludgeoning damage for every round they spend in the blood hail. Proper cover could be a house, a rock, a hollow or an alcove, or a shield.

Freezing Air. The air gets colder and colder for 1d4 hours. The characters must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or take 1d12 cold damage at the end of every hour, unless they can start a fire by magic and be close to it.

Helsprung. The ground shakes with an earthquake for one minute, the land cracks and a horrible smell covers the area. Then, **Hel beasts** such as wolves, birds, boars and any other animal you may think of start coming out of the cracks.

Under the Ground. The dark gray clouds in the sky get darker and darker, and lower and lower. The air feels heavier and all creatures struggle to breathe and move. They have disadvantage on their Dexterity saving throws.

At one point, it gets pitch black and the loud, terrifying scream of a woman echoes in the dark. Creatures must succeed on a DC 21 Wisdom check or be frightened for one minute. Those who have darkvision see that they are under the ground, that the sky is made of soil, and that it is closer to the ground. After the scream, the sky starts to turn back to its regular dark gray color, and the creatures start to breathe normally.

Unpredictable Gravity. In some parts of Helheim, there are small islands floating in the sky. Yet, the gravity around them is unpredictable and they often fall. If the characters walk under one of these floating islands, they may encounter falling rocks or ice. In this case, the characters must succeed on a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw or take 1d20 bludgeoning damage (if the ice shards have sharp edges, they take 1d20 piercing damage).

Wind of Pain. A wind starts to howl and in it, voices can be heard being carried all over Helheim. The voices range from screams and moans to random words. The characters may also hear the voice of their loved ones suffering in Helheim. The condition takes 1d20 minutes.

If the characters are exposed to this wind for more than one minute, they take 1d8 psychic damage for each minute unless they cover their ears.

ENCOUNTERS OF HELHEIM

Helheim is the realm of death, darkness, and the cold. The creatures here encounter many difficulties. Although the dead usually don't fight with each other, they despise living beings and would want to destroy any they were to see.

The following table is here to represent the dangers of the realm, although you can adjust the encounters as much as you like according to the levels, and number of players.

d6	Encounters
1	While the warband is passing through a woodland area or a mountain pass, 4d6 skeletal hounds (p. 265) surround them.
2	The warband encounters a blood trail on their way. If they follow the path, 5 bloddrapes (p. 244), which are the sources of the blood trail, attack the warband.
3	The warband sees a small frozen lake on their path. When they come closer 7 ísandis (p. 263) confront them.
4	3 draugr of bones and 1 ancient draugr (p. 243) come across the warband and attack if they realise the characters are living beings.
5	The ground trembles and 4 death worms (p. 246) emerge out of nowhere.
6	The warband sees 8 denizens of Helheim (p. 247) casting a ritual in the wilderness of Helheim. They won't attack the warband unless the warband attacks them first.

ONE OF THE RESIDENTS

Helheim is a dangerous place, similar to a swamp of darkness and death. The more the characters spend time here, the harder it is for them to stay "alive." Since they wander the horrible pits of Helheim, the characters start losing their humane features as time goes by.

The following tables demonstrate the effects of staying in Helheim. As the characters spend time here, they can experience the following effects. To determine the effects that take place after spending the equivalent of five days (in Svilland time) in Helheim, the characters can roll a d4, or you can pick the effects as the GM. The effects that take place after 10 or 20 days are the follow-up of the first four effects.

After Five Days

1. The character is sickened by anything they consume. They feel like they have rocks and thorns in their stomach and feel immense pain. They take 1d12 necrotic damage right after they eat and drink.
2. The character loses their ability to feel one emotion. (Love, hope, joy, happiness, gratitude, etc.)
3. The character starts to see illusions of their loved ones suffering in Helheim (You, as the GM, decide when the character sees these illusions).
4. The character's body starts to rot with frostbite. Their limbs change color, and from time to time, they have trouble moving.

After Ten Days

1. The character starts to forget about their previous life. The memories of their loved ones begin to fade. They find it hard to resist the influence of Helheim. As a result, they cannot have advantage on Charisma checks.
2. The character loses their ability to feel one emotion. (Love, hope, joy, happiness, gratitude, etc.)
3. The character starts seeing illusions of themselves worshipping Hel in Helheim (You, as the GM, decide when the character sees these illusions).
4. Due to frostbite, the character has disadvantage on their first attack roll after finishing a long rest.

After Twenty Days

1. The character cannot take a long rest unless they already have one level of exhaustion.
2. The character loses their ability to feel one additional emotion (a total of 3) (Love, hope, joy, happiness, gratitude, etc)
3. The character starts seeing illusions of themselves sacrificing their loved ones in the name of Hel (You, as the GM, decide when the character sees these illusions).
4. The character's speed is halved since the frostbite gets worse. A *greater restoration* spell ends the effect;

however, the character is affected again when it finishes a long rest.

MAGIC IN HELHEIM

Helheim is located at the roots of the sacred Yggdrasil, which contains various realms and planes such as Asgard, Svartalheim, Helheim and more. As all these realms are different planes of existence, magic works differently in each realm. Helheim is the land of the dead; therefore, it abhors everything that light and life stands for. The way magic works in Helheim also mirrors the same ideology.

In Helheim:

- Spells and other magical effects that return a target to life such as *resurrection* do not take effect since only those who are authorized by the Goddess of Helheim can restore the life of the dead in Helheim.
- Spells and other magical effects that transport creatures to a different plane of existence such as *plane shift* or *banishment* do not take effect since getting in and out of Helheim can only be done only through sacred rituals and special gates.

  Also, creatures cannot contact other planes of existences through spells such as *contact other planes* or *scrying.*
- Creatures that are not native to Helheim cannot be conjured by spells and other magical effects such as *conjure celestial.* You decide whether a creature is native to Helheim.
- Necromancy spells such as animate dead do not require material components. Since this is the land of Hel, abilities such as Divine Intervention and spells such as resurrection don't work here, unless Hel wills it so. However, alles and gothis can use their spells and other features normally.
- All numeric effects of a potion or an item that make creatures regain hit points are halved. Spells that cause its target to regain hit points must be cast using a spell slot of one higher than the spell's usual spell level. For example, the *heal* spell must be cast using a spell slot of 7th level instead of 6th.

A successful DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) check reminds the characters that they are in a different plane of existence; therefore, magic works in a different way. Then you, as the GM, may give the previous information to your characters in a suitable way.

THE PATH

When the characters enter the dark slit, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> Apart from the great darkness and evil, you can smell the fresh smell of wet soil for the first time in a long time. As you walk deep into the dark slit, a cool breeze caresses you and wraps you in this smell. You see a huge old root in the ground, which should not be there under normal circumstances; in the deepest cave on such a tall mountain.
>
> With every step you take, it becomes darker, and darker, and darker... At one point, the darkness is so intense that you feel it consume your body, your soul, your mind; your entire being. It's like you're floating in a river made of darkness, and nothing else. You float like that for minutes, hours, maybe days; without the need or the ability to do anything else... You lose all sense of time or direction. You feel yourself give in, without much control on your part, to the darkness.
>
> When you come to your senses, and can feel your body and mind get under your control once more, you realize that your freezing, numb body is hopelessly thrashing about in cold, dark water. When you are about to pass out, you feel a searing pain on your side, caused by the hook of a rod that's trying to pull you out of the water.
>
> As you are pulled out, you feel that something inside you is soaked in the darkness you have just experienced.

Level Up. Your characters have reached the 15th level. Feel free to inform your players to level up during their next long rest.

When the characters come to, they realize that the fresh smell of soil has changed into an unbearable smell of rot and burnt coal and that they are in a large boat with all the other members of the warband under a dark gray sky. The boat is filled with corpses, and the characters are lying on top of the stacks.

If he is in the warband, Roar smiles when he sees the characters and realizes that they were also willing to take this perilous path with him.

When the characters decide to take a look around, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> Everywhere you look, you see the dark shadows caused by the gray sky; corrupt and menacing. The only thing that breaks the freezing, desolate darkness is the small streaks of light here and there. You feel in your bones that you are walking the lands of Hel. Your eyes are among the very few pairs to witness the unspeakable terrors that await, while still alive. You walk on, hoping to hold onto your wits, as you know that even mere illusions of this place can drive people mad.

If the characters examine the boat, they find someone that they do not expect to see; Kludi Igrimsonn, the Jarl of Belmunt who was driven to madness. However, he does not look powerful and strong as he once did; he looks much older and much weaker. Sobbing frantically, he is pulling corpses

out of the water and stacking them on the boat. Every once in a while, he yells or whispers *"Jofrid" to* the dark, still water and begs, *"My goldensmile, where are you? Where are you?!"* With a successful DC 12 Intelligence check, the characters remember that "Jofrid" was the name of his wife. If the characters do not make any move or speak, Kludi doesn't realise they are still "alive." If the characters attack him, he doesn't respond and continues to pull bodies out of the water, looking like he wishes for death himself. If the characters speak to him, he looks at the characters as if he is trying to remember people he knew hundreds of years ago. When he finally remembers, he says, *"I'm sorry... I am so sorry for everything."*

If the characters do not say anything further or ask him anything, he points somewhere and says he has to lead the characters there. It is a malignant-looking settlement called Duftreptof.

If the characters ask what Kludi is doing, he says he is looking for his wife. He says he can feel that she needs help, but he cannot find her.

DUFTREPTOF

Duftreptof looks like a small settlement unlike any other the characters have seen in Svilland, ruled by a fiend (Ormond) who relishes in people's worst fears and sorrows. When the characters come closer to the small dock, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> Duftreptof one of the small towns in the middle of the terrible bleakness of Hel. The sight of Duftreptof makes one's blood run cold. You can see rotten, mossy, black, wooden walls and a big gate in the midst of all the smoke and the fog.
>
> When you enter through the unguarded black gates, you see a town center, albeit shrouded in mist. You see the gory sight of people kneeling in front of a big, wooden Hel symbol and eating a giant animal from a crimson red, stone altar with their bare hands. They are tearing the flesh of the animal that's already sliced open, and almost competing with one another to be able to eat more.
>
> All of them are praying; some are staring at the symbol, some lying down. Some of them notice you, and look relieved when their eyes meet your own; as if they were expecting far worse.
>
> The small mossy buildings look more like rotten, square boxes rather than "homes".

When the characters enter the settlement, they are immediately filled with an intense and endless sense of fear and sorrow. They spot some locations which may be related to some of the Loops (see the *Loops* section below). As soon as any of the characters interact with a specific location or a person, they find themselves in a loop.

Kludi, again, points somewhere; a two-story wooden house right across the Sacrificial Square. He says *"You must go there, I know it. But who knows what you'll find."* Right when Kludi points at the house, the characters notice some people leaving it. If the characters enter the house, they find themselves in a loop. (see *The Birth* section below)

The Language of the Village. The residents of the village know Austris and Hellic, although you can also choose some others for them to know based on the needs of your game. When the warband wants to talk to them in Austris, they answer in the same language, however they use Hellic in all other situations.

LOCATIONS

Duftreptof is a town with many buildings, streets, and openings. The characters can therefore find the locations provided below and more, although many of these locations

are locked, barricaded, or abandoned.

1. THE GOAT HOUSE

A sticky-looking building close to the black gates of the town, the Goat House tavern stands out in the shadows with its oily, broken windows and moldy wood. When the characters come closer, the stink of rot, sweat, and human waste hits their face. The weird crowd of drunks in the front reminds one of black flies around garbage, attracted to the horrid smell. When characters get closer they start hearing loud laughs that send shivers down their spine.

The inside is not different from the outside, but there are people drinking and eating, looking like the smell doesn't bother them. They are playing games that are deemed abominable by most Svillanders. People are eating rotten flesh, killing and torturing people in the middle of the tavern, insulting the Gods and Goddesses by mocking them. Although people are participating in these activities, none of them seem to be enjoying themselves. Even the wood of the walls and of the furniture creak and groan as if the tavern itself is sick of the happenings inside.

Gavt is the ruler of the tavern, he supplies all the meals and drinks from other settlements. He makes good money, and leaves most of it on the gaming tables of the tavern. To those who ask him anything, he says he doesn't care about anything anymore and that he is planning on taking his life.

2. THE DOCK

The Dock is where the characters first anchor after Kludi finds them. It smells as if the whole lake is full of corpses. When the characters look around, they see nothing but the empty and desolate lands of Helheim.

3. THE SACRIFICIAL SQUARE

When the characters enter the town, they notice a big open area in the middle of the town. In it, there are two poles in the middle with chains, nails, and bloodstains on them. Around the poles, If the characters want to learn what the area is for, a successful DC 22 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that the square has been prepared for a ritual that grants protection. If they choose to wait for the performers of the ritual to arrive, they can hide and wait for the **denizens of Hel** who show up in a short time. If characters (who can understand Hellic) wander around, and try to learn more about the square by listening to the prayers of the denizens, a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that sacrifices are about to be made to protect the town from **death worms**; ancient inhabitants of Helheim, made of Helheim's soil. The denizens of Helheim don't attack the warband unless a condition specified in the adventure occurs that entails for them to do so.

If the characters decide to take a closer look, they can see that it is an unholy sacrificial square, which appears to be used often from the looks of the fresh stains and footprints on and around the poles. If the characters examine the footprints, a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check reveals large boar prints. When the characters finish looking around, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> A cold breeze blows between the poles and carries a distant scream full of agony. An overwhelming smell of rot and blood dominates the area. The bloodstains look more vivid and fresh. You hear the ominous sound of a drum beating.

When the drums start beating, the characters find themselves in a loop (see *The Sacrifice* section below).

4. THE WALLS

The characters see people patrolling the walls of Duftreptof. If the characters look closely at the patrols, with a successful DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check, they notice that the patrols are in twos or threes and that they are guarding the walls themselves as opposed to the settlement. They pay great attention to the walls, to all sounds around them, and to any movement they might notice. Everyone around the walls looks deeply disturbed and quite anxious.

If the characters engage in conversation with the patrolling groups, they find themselves in a loop, (see *The Threat* section below).

LOOPS

The leader of Duftreptof, Ormond the Bloodreader, takes pleasure in eternally torturing and agonizing residents by constantly subjecting them to their deepest pains and fears. To that end, Ormond makes them live through scenarios that run in loops. For the characters to comprehend the severity of these loops' effects, it is advised that you have the warband experience the same scenes again and again. If the characters do not understand that they're in a loop as quickly as needed for the game to move at an acceptable speed, a successful DC 22 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals the truth.

After they learn about the loops, they must break them. As the GM, you can come up with paths for the characters to break the loops other than the ones given below.

When the characters break a loop, they feel a warm breeze that whistles in their ears. If the characters can break three loops, the powerful illusion over Duftreptof dissolves, leaving the town and its dwellers to return to their daily lives. If the characters can break all three loops, they have 1 major Hel point removed, if they have any.

If the characters try to leave the town before they break at least three loops, their vision starts to fade and they find themselves in Duftreptof once again.

Leveling up in Duftreptof. If the characters can break three loops, they reach the 16th level. As such, feel free to inform your players to level up.

1. THE BIRTH

Right across from the gates of Duftreptof, there is a two-story, wooden building. The characters see some people going in and out in a state of panic. With a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check, they can notice that most of these people have blood on their clothes and hands.

If the characters come closer, they get a sense of dejavu, because they can hear the distant sound of a woman screaming and footprints that seem to go on and on. A successful DC 16 Intelligence (History) check has the characters realize that the

feeling of hopelessness is familiar to what they felt during the delivery of Hungerd (Johan's wife, p. 22); where it all began.

The door of the house opens to a large dining area with a big wooden table full of unappetizing, almost rotten, or frozen dishes. If the characters examine the food, a *detect poison and disease* spell reveals a powerful necrotic aura surrounding all of it. Therefore, those who consume anything on the table take 2d10 (11) necrotic damage, and the sound of the woman screaming starts to feel so close that they are unable to cast spells that require concentration. No matter how much time the characters spend in the dining area, they can always hear the screams of the woman.

If the characters go upstairs, the stairs get darker with each step. When they reach the second floor, they see that it is covered with blood seeping through a doorway. If they try to hear what's on the other side, they hear chanting in Hellic which means "*Bless her and all her children*". A successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that there are four more people inside the room besides the screaming woman who appears to be in serious pain; probably giving birth.

When the characters go upstairs, they see that the lower floor has turned into a pool of blood. If the characters enter the blood pool, they take 5 necrotic damage at the end of each turn they end in it. It takes 5 turns to reach the door of the house through the blood pool. When they get out, they find themselves at the top of the stairs once again.

If the characters enter the room, they see a young woman giving birth on a bed surrounded by **denizens of Helheim**. They do not move upon seeing the characters. When the characters enter the room, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> As you walk into the room, the woman turns to look at you with her bloodshot eyes and the terrifying expression on her face. Drenched in sweat and blood, she looks confused for a moment upon seeing you. Then, suddenly, she starts moaning miserably, desperately clutching at her belly. The denizens are still; focused on something. Before she passes out, unable to bear the pain, she whispers: *"Help me... For the love of... Fre..."*.

Characters	Encounter
4	1 blodpolli (p.244), 2 denizens of Helheim (p. 247)
5	1 blodpolli, 3 denizens of Helheim
6	2 blodpollis, 3 denizens of Helheim
7	3 blodpollis, 2 denizens of Helheim

Breaking the Loop. The characters must help the woman stop giving birth to **blodpollis**. To do so, they must kill the woman and put an end to her seemingly endless misery. If they don't kill the woman, she starts to give birth each time the characters restart the loop, or every 10 minutes. If the warband attacks her, the woman doesn't fight the characters, in fact, she completely leaves herself in their hands, grateful that her misery is coming to an end.

2. THE SACRIFICE

In the middle of Duftreptof, there is a stone altar of sacrifice, which appears to have been gray before it was painted crimson with all the blood spilt on it. It seems there are constant sacrifices made on the altar since the blood is still fresh and the altar is still wet.

A woman with faded and rotten skin is walking towards the altar from a wooden, worn-down storehouse. The characters can tell that the woman is old by the wrinkles on her face. She walks slowly and has a hunchback. She is wearing a black cloak made of raven feathers, carrying a svardstav (swordstaff) on her back, and she has a frightening crown of bones on her head. She is **the caretaker**. It is hard to tell if she walks slowly due to her age, or due to the Large boar that she is bringing over. The boar's fur looks incredibly soft, clean, and full of life; as if it doesn't belong to Helheim. The boar is alive, but unconscious. It is in fact the pet of Freyja. It has yellow runes written on it that mean "battle", and its name is Hildisvini.

The caretaker places the boar on the altar and shouts:

> *"Gather round all, gather round and witness the might of Hel."* slowly unsheathing the sacrificial dagger from its sheath, she continues *"Goddess of Death, I beseech thee that you protect us and our town from your horrors, may they be far, far away from us. Let us stay dead for all eternity under your command. Let us live through death. Accept our offering, oh Great Goddess. I pray it is worthy of thee!"* The caretaker then slits the boar's throat, and the stone altar is (once again) washed in its blood.

The **denizens of Helheim**, who are watching the ritual, pile on the stone altar, and start tearing into and eating the boar's raw flesh. After a few minutes, the caretaker takes the half-eaten carcass and returns it to the storehouse she came from. She places the boar's dead body in an iron cage inside the storehouse and leaves it there. And there, the boar's body slowly regenerates. After an hour, the caretaker takes the boar to the altar once again, sacrifices it, lets the people eat its flesh, and returns it to the storehouse once more, restarting the loop.

A successful DC 20 Intelligence (Religion) check reminds the characters that Freyja had a pet boar named Hildisvini and saving this animal may be one of their purposes Helheim.

Breaking the Loop. The characters must save Hildisvini from the hands of the caretaker, breaking the loop of sacrifice. There are two ways of doing this:

The first one is to interrupt the sacrificial ritual and to kill the caretaker. The other is to wait for the boar to be healed fully and to set it free from its iron cage in the storage. The iron cage is locked. The characters can pick the lock with a successful DC 17 Dexterity check with thieves' tools; or, they can break the lock. The lock is a Tiny metal object with AC 20, 30 hit points. It has immunity to poison and psychic damage,

as well as slashing and piercing damage from nonmagical attacks, and vulnerability to acid damage.

Either way, the caretaker, along with the **denizens of Helheim** eating the boar, locate and attack the warband since they have distorted the loop.

Characters	Encounter
4	The caretaker, 2 denizens of Helheim
5	The caretaker, 4 denizens of Helheim
6	The caretaker, 6 denizens of Helheim
7	The caretaker, 8 denizens of Helheim

After the encounters, the characters feel a deep, calming voice within their minds; a pained voice that belongs to neither a man nor a woman somehow brings them peace of mind. The voice belongs to Hildisvini:

"You are different. Alive, somehow... You've helped me. Saved me..." It looks at all of you thoroughly, and then smiles. It is strange how the creature smiles in its current condition but it does, as if it recognizes you. *"I am Hildisvini, Freyja's humble companion. I've heard about you. Ygre told me before I found myself in this wretched town. You were on a sacred but very difficult journey... which is not over yet. You... we must still save Svilland.*

I'm afraid there are essences of Freyja in Helheim, abducted, just as I was. The strangest thing happened when you broke the vicious cycle. I felt warmth. I wager if you continue to break Ormond's illusions, I can feel the whereabouts of Freyja's essences in Helheim. I beg you. Help me. Freyja doesn't deserve all this suffering."

If the characters ask how and why Hildisvini and the other essences they must find have come to be in Helheim, the boar looks uncomfortable for a moment, as it is thinking about the unfortunate events that led it there:

THE CARETAKER

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 143 (22d8 + 44)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	6 (-2)	18 (+4)	7 (-2)

Saving Throws Strength +7, Wisdom +8
Skills Athletics +7, Perception +8
Damage Resistances acid, lightning, poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 18
Languages Austris (Common), Hellic
Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Caretaker. The caretaker is a master sacrificer, she knows the weak points of a humanoid target and strikes to kill. The caretaker has advantage on her first attack roll each of her turns.

Necrotic Regeneration. Whenever the caretaker is targeted by a spell or attack that deals necrotic damage, she regains hit points equal to the number of damages that she would normally take.

Sacred Cold. Whenever the caretaker casts a damage-dealing spell, she can change the spell's damage type to necrotic. If she casts a spell that deals necrotic damage normally, the spell ignores resistance against necrotic damage, and immunity to necrotic damage can only halve the damage.

Turning Defiance. The caretaker has advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead.

Spellcasting. The caretaker is a 15th level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). She has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch, resistance, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*
1st level (4 slots): *bane, bolt of watery death**, inflict wounds, sanctuary*
2nd level (3 slots): *draining gaze**, hold person, icicle of death***
3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead, bestow curse, bitter touch of helheim***
4th level (3 slots): *banishment, overwhelming smite***
5th level (2 slots): *contagion, devitalizing smite**, raise dead*
6th level (1 slot): *harm*
7th level (1 slot): *etherealness*
8th level (1 slot): *antimagic field*
*** Svilland spells*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The caretaker makes two attacks with her svardstav or four attacks with her sacrificial dagger.

Caretaker's Svardstav (+2 Svardstav). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d4 + 5) slashing damage plus 5 (1d10) necrotic damage and 5 (1d10) poison damage.

Sacrificial Dagger (+2 Dagger). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d4 + 5) piercing damage.

The Caretaker

"It was just another day in Folkvangr... Oh... How I miss the place. I was running around, enjoying the flowers blooming anew. First, I saw a raven up in the sky, darker than the blackest black. 'No,' I thought. 'No. It is not one of the Allfather's ravens. They don't wander in Folkvangr.' I knew something wasn't right. So I ran... Ran to Freyja's side to warn her. The raven spread its wings wide open. Its foul wings blackened the skies and caused a cold wind, the wind that carried the stench of death to the land of life. As the skies went dark, so did my vision. The last thing I saw was the fading of the freshly bloomed flowers. The last thing I heard was the sinister laughter of a trickster. I opened my eyes to this... this... LUNACY."

If he is in the warband, Roar approaches Hildisvini with suspicion, suggesting that it might be an illusion since they cannot trust anything they see in Helheim. However, as time passes, the two get along well.

3. THE THREAT

If the warband has broken the second loop and saved Freyja's Boar, Hildisvini, they hear a distant sound coming from outside the town one hour later. A high-pitched, otherworldly scream that sends shivers down the spine. When the characters hear this sound, they must succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. If the characters know about the Sacrificial Square, they can deduce that the unnatural screams may be coming from the creatures the townspeople are afraid of, and for whom the sacrifices are.

When they hear the sound, some denizens of Helheim run to their houses in panic, and then the characters notice two guards and a Hel beast dog pacing towards them with wide, terrified eyes. One of them calls out to the warband and says *"Have you heard it?"*. If the characters do not engage in any conversation, they continue patrolling anxiously. If the characters engage in conversation, they can learn the following information:

- The sound belongs to something called a **death worm**.
- The sacrifices in the town help these death worms stay out of the town.
- Death worms are inhabitants of Helheim, and are made of Helheim's soil.
- The guards have never seen someone who killed them before.
- Those who are killed by death worms are revived where they fall, forced to start over as if they have never fought it before, making the fights last for eternity.

When the characters look around, they notice almost all the houses have boarded their windows shut with wood and stone. The death worms enter the town from underneath and surface within 1d4 rounds after the characters hear the sounds. They are Huge monstrosities that resemble Huge worms. Their body is made of stone, soil, bones, and the dead of Helheim, which is why they carry the stench wherever they go. They have no eyes and no face, instead, they have one big mouth and a series of spiraling teeth that look like stones.

Hel Points. Bear in mind that the characters who fail on their death save thrice do not die in this encounter. Instead, they regain all their hit points, and one major Hel point.

Characters	Encounter*
4	6 death worms (p. 246)
5	7 death worms
6	8 death worms
7	9 death worms

* This encounter is designed to be a *deadly* one as the characters who fail on their death saving throws won't die.

THE LOOPS ARE BROKEN!

After the characters break three loops, Hildisvini begins to sense the locations of two of the essences of Freyja, informing the warband of this as well. It doesn't exactly know the place in question nor what the essence is; but it feels in which direction they are located. Hildisvini travels with the warband on their journey to save Svilland.

A lock of Freyja's *golden hair* is located at the top of a mountain towards the north, hanging on a faded, ill-looking, dead tree.

A drop of Freyja's tears is located in the southeast, near a lake; pitch black with its tar-like aqua, with a rotten smell oozing from it as if thousands of the dead were left there to decay.

If he is in the warband, Roar seems extremely eager to save Freyja, hoping he will find some clues to save Balder.

THE PURSUIT OF LIFE

On their perilous journey to recover the essences of Freyja in Helheim, the characters are challenged mentally and physically. They must decide which essence they will save first: the *hair* or the *tear*.

They then hit the road to go to the locations Hildisvini has sensed the essences were in. You may find information on both of the locations below.

The encounter tables at the beginning of this chapter (p.211) might be fun to use at this point of the adventure as well. As the GM, you can decide when, where, and how often you wish to use these tables to challenge your players as you see fit.

Level Up. Your characters level up after finding each essence. Feel free to inform your players to level up after they finish the quests titled *Golden Hair* and *Freyja's Tear*.

GOLDEN HAIR

On the road to find the *golden hair*, the characters lose their sense of time and direction. They can be tricky concepts in Helheim, and Hildisvini warns them about it, firmly stating that none must waver from the way it shows.

The environment is almost completely the opposite of the characters' beloved Svilland, and they cannot tell the time as they do there. However, you should know that the *golden hair* is a 5-days-walk away from Duftreptof. You can assume that a day has passed after each long rest. Remember, as the GM, you can also add additional encounters along the way by using the encounter tables (p.211) if you think it fits.

THE FOREST

After four long rests, the characters spot a forest in the distance with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. The characters can tell that trees look dead and rotten even from a distance. When they get closer, they are greeted with the gruesome sight of dozens of dead bodies hanging from the rotten branches of the tall trees.

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below when the characters are closer to the forest:

> First, the smell of death and rot stupefy you; then, as you walk, you start to hear strange sounds... The bodies... They are howling, growling, moaning... You can discern the voices of some, begging, in this horrific symphony: *"Kill me", "Help me...", "Let me go..."*.
>
> There is a giant hill in the depths of the forest; and upon that hill, a dead tree resides. A golden light gleams from one of its faded branches.

At this point, the characters must go further into the forest. If he is in the warband, Roar suggests that they should get a move on without wasting their time trying to find the source of the sounds. Normally, the characters should be able to reach the *golden hair* in 1 hour. However, to understand the exact route they must take in the treacherous forest filled with ivies, vines, and hidden bridges over clearings; they must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check at the end of each 10 minutes to figure out their next route. On a failure, the characters lose ten minutes as they choose a wrong path and get stuck.

For each hour they spend in the forest, they must succeed on DC 22 Wisdom saving throw or become *desperate* (see below).

CONDITION: DESPERATE/ HOPELESS

A desperate creature suffers from the complete loss or absence of hope. Helheim's atmosphere slowly fills creatures with desperation. This state of despair lasts until the creature finishes a long rest.

The creature has disadvantage on Wisdom and Charisma ability checks, as well as on attack rolls.

The creature must roll 1d4 when it casts a spell that requires concentration. If the result is 1 or 2, the creature cannot concentrate and fails to cast the spell.

The characters cannot help the begging corpses in the trees to die in the lands of Hel. If they remove the bodies, within 1 minute, mists appear and carry them back to the trees. The corpses cannot consume anything. If the characters offer them food or water, what they consume spills out of their throats which are pierced magically as soon as they attempt to swallow.

TORMENTORS

With a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check, the characters notice a group of **Hel tormentors** (p. 258) carrying bodies out of a pit full of ice spikes and unconscious humanoid bodies. Also, there are seriously wounded bodies wandering around, to which the Hel tormentors don't pay much attention.

If the characters have 15 hit points or less and do not choose to attack them, Hel tormentors do not notice that the characters are alive, and thus leave them be. Otherwise, each character must succeed on a DC 22 Dexterity (Stealth) check to keep from being detected. On a failure, one of the tormentors shouts, "*There! They're alive!*" in Hellic, and attacks with the rest of them who are happy to hear the news.

Characters	Encounter
4	4 Hel tormentors
5	5 Hel tormentors
6	6 Hel tormentors
7	7 Hel tormentors

THE SACRED MEAL

When the characters are walking in the forest, they suddenly smell the perfect combination of fresh bread, roasted meat, and mead. Amid all the death and rot, this smell reminds them of Svilland. They then spot the source; a green tree, with food, wine, and mead on the branches.

In truth, the branches have conscious bodies on them. A character must succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw to see through the illusion. On a failure, the characters are charmed and can't resist the urge to eat and drink off the trees. They spend their turn eating and drinking, and take 14 (4d6) necrotic damage at the end of it. A character can repeat the saving throw with disadvantage at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a successful one. If a conscious warband member tries to help the charmed ones in any way, grant them advantage on the saving throw.

A character that fails the saving throw keeps eating the meal as long as they keep failing the saving throw, up to a maximum of 3 rounds. On each fail, the character takes one less d6 necrotic damage. At the end of the third round, the hanged body that the character is consuming screams in agony, and the effect on the character ends, leaving the character with body parts in their hands instead of food, and with blood painting their mouth instead of wine. Realizing what they have done, the character takes 14 (4d6) psychic damage.

AN OASIS IN THE COLD

The characters come across a cave on their way to the *golden hair*. The cave has a dense forest on one side, and a cliff with sharp edges on the other. To reach the hill, the warband must pass through the cave.

The cave is 10 feet wide and 5 feet high; the characters need to crouch, if not crawl, to venture forward. The cave spirals upwards like a staircase, and it is dark as if it were enchanted by a permanent *darkness* spell. It is muddy, and when the characters touch the ground, their hands get drenched in mud, and humanoid bones stick to them. The cave is also filled with semi-poisonous gas, possibly originating from the deceased bodies that the warband comes across once in a while. The gas does not harm the characters physically, but it is definitely disturbing. The cave is utterly silent, to the degree that the characters can hear the blood pumping through their veins.

The characters draw circles crawling to the top. The characters must make a DC 27 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the characters feel disturbed, as if they have lost the sense of what gives meaning to their lives. They feel nothing, and with each step they force themselves to take, they feel themselves dig deeper into nothing. The silence of the cave screams into their souls, which evidently do not belong here. It tells them they will never leave Helheim; and even if they

did, they would always carry the morbid essence of the land within. With all the horrors they witnessed, death will follow them until their last breath. There is nothing to be done, just as there was not to save Frosted Johan's baby. Can they walk into Valhalla with the mark of Hel upon them? The only way to find out is to die, but what happens if they die in the land of the Goddess of Death? Only the Gods would know.

The characters who fail the saving throw are *desperate* (p. 220) until they finish a long rest.

The grim thoughts of the characters are interrupted as they are about to reach the top, which stretches out towards the grey sky. Even the sky cannot be of solace to the characters in this macabre plane.

When they look around, they see a tassel of Freyja's hair on a branch of a lonely, dead oak tree. The once-golden-gleaming hair of Freyja seems to shine no longer, not as it once did. Hildisvini sheds a tear and confirms that it is Freyja's *golden hair*. The fact that it's losing its shine could mean she is getting weaker. Hence, they must hurry.

As soon as one of the characters touch the *hair* to retrieve it, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> The silkiness of the golden hair surprises you. Even the softest cotton you touched can't compare to the caress of this golden tassel. A warm wind blows through you, and you feel like Freyja is trying to show her gratitude. The hair doesn't gleam as it once did, but you can feel it trying to sustain some of its old sparkle; like a wounded warrior tirelessly fighting to cling to life in spite of being surrounded by enemies. You are filled with a bittersweet hope that Freyja is still out there, and that there is hope yet for you to prevail.

When the warband is in possession of the *golden hair* of Freyja, any effect that makes the characters regain hit points heals them for an additional 2d4 hit points.

FREYJA'S TEAR

The *tear* is a 6-day-walk from Duftreptof and a 5-day-walk from the location of the *golden hair*. As the GM you can add additional encounters on the characters' journey, using the encounter tables (p.211) as you see fit.

There is nothing on the horizon, the characters are in the middle of nowhere. Only flat, cold lands lie in front of them. They find it harder to sleep and concentrate on their daily tasks and almost completely lose their sense of time and distance.

CHILDREN OF PAIN

After the characters finish four long rests in these lands, they find that they are closer to a forest. As they get closer, they see a group of people around a blue fire. From a distance, it is hard to understand what they are doing, but they look harmless. When the characters are close to the group, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> As you get closer to the group, you notice someone sitting in the blue fire, completely still as the fire slowly consumes her body. The others are screaming and cheering her on in a state of ecstasy, reaching into the fire and joyously scorching themselves.

If the characters choose to communicate with them, they are so entranced that they don't respond. If the characters attack them, they do not respond and fall unconscious while in the same frenzied state. The characters can notice a seared scar on their necks with a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check. It looks like a collar. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that they are the Children of Pain, a group of lost souls in Helheim who are doomed to feel pain for all eternity.

THE LAKE

As the characters pass the Children of Pain, they enter a dried-up, rotten forest that looks extremely similar to the one on the road to the *golden hair*. After they finish two long rests in the depths of this wicked forest, the characters can figure out the similarity with a successful DC 15 Intelligence check. If a character rolls 20 or higher, they realize that all the trees, the rocks, and the structure of the land are similar to the Mercy of Freyja in Svilland. The area looks like a wicked replica of the region.

When the characters finally reach their destination, they are met with a pitch-black, rotten version of Freyja's Tear. The characters feel like they can see the wooden walls of Knafgata in the distance. They see a black figure sitting on a large piece of rock across the lake.

If the characters examine the lake, they notice that the "water" is pure black, slimy, and smells of death. A successful DC 18 Intelligence check reveals that the slimy liquid is the one the characters encountered in the Lake Temple. If any of the characters touch the liquid for more than one minute, they must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 1d10 necrotic damage.

It takes two long rests to reach the woman on the rock. During this time and the encounters, the figure does not react and stays completely still. As the characters get closer, they notice that the woman is Asta, the Hel cultist that the characters killed in the crypts. When the characters are close enough to speak to Asta, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> Yes, it is in fact Asta, you can tell by her black hair and the red scar on the face. But, she no longer seems like herself. Her forest green eyes aren't burning with intention, but are filled with a stream of endless tears. She cries and cries, not looking at you and not

responding. The tears flow down her cheeks and drop in the lake one by one, as if desperately trying to purify it.

Until the characters say something to Asta about the lake, the *tear* they are looking for, Freyja, or her deviation from her path, she doesn't reply. When they do, she slowly turns her head and looks at the characters. After a moment of pause, she remembers the characters and says the following in a deep, tired voice filled with remorse:

"You, the warband who started out to clear the lake and came all this way to the depths of Helheim; I wish I could have been as brave and faithful. Now, I can do nothing but weep for all the horrors I've caused, all the lives I've ruined, and my Goddess..."

If he is with the warband, Roar says: *"Do we know this woman?"*

If the characters ask about what she remembers, she gives them the following information with tears in her eyes.

- She lost her faith in Freyja when Gertrud died. Then she decided to contact followers of death and to join the cult.
- Once she entered the cult, she was given the task of bringing the oldest followers of Hel back to life. With them, the army of Hel would be unstoppable.
- The moment she was killed by the characters, she felt relieved and grateful. She knew her mistake, but it was too late.
- When she got to Helheim, she walked for years and years (as time works differently in Helheim) to find this lake. When she found it, she noticed a shallow light inside the lake. When she took a handful of water from the light, she first thought she was being fooled by the forces of Helheim as she had been time and time again. Yet, she stored this water in a small waterskin, just in case. The more the flask stayed with her, the more she realized it was a piece of Freyja.

If the characters ask about the essence, *Freyja's tear*, she says *"It is the last piece of Freyja that's still with me... but this is a war we have to win. You, the warband of Svilland, you are destined with glory. You are destined to bring back the light and shine it upon us all!"* As soon as she is done with her words, she stops crying and takes a wooden flask out of her chest. At that moment, a loud roar is heard from the forest.

ORMOND'S WRATH

As soon as the characters recover both of the essences of Freyja, a vision starts to form in the unholy, grey skies of Helheim. Read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

A strong, freezing wind howls and crawls down your spines. Hildisvini looks terribly uneasy. The wind spirals and forms a miniature tornado before you, as the sky begins to darken. Soon, the silhouette of a face begins to take shape. It looks gigantic, and it towers over you, looking down on you. This blood-soaked, sinister face looks familiar. It is none other than Ormond the Bloodreader from Belmunt, wearing the same crimson red robe that you saw in an image, looking just as disturbing as you remember, only angrier. In a frenzy, even... The land trembles before you as he starts to speak: *"You mortals, have once again interfered in my affairs. I am giving you one last chance to save your precious little lives. Turn right around and get used to living in Helheim. You fucking dare get in my way... I'll make you beg. You'll beg for death before I kill you."* Then, the vision fades. The wind stops, and you are once again alone in the dull silence of Helheim.

If he is in the warband, Roar says *"I don't know what affairs you have interfered in, but I'm with you 'till the end. Let's find this guy and kill him."*

Hildisvini seems slightly content. Its happiness completely contradicts the situation at hand. It then telepathically communicates with the rest of the warband, and its soothing "voice" rings in the characters' heads, relaxing them after the confrontation. It explains itself, saying, *"The necklace. I sensed Brisingamen, Freyja's necklace! We have found the last essence of my lady. Yes, we have! This fiend possesses it. The last thing we must do is to go and get it. We must unite the essences. Then, she will be saved; all will be saved."* There is a bond between the necklace and Hildisvini, but since Ormond was in hiding, it could not sense its location. Now that he has revealed himself, it's time for the warband to follow Hildisvini one last time, to find and take Brisingamen from Ormond.

A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check reminds a character that Brisingamen is the golden necklace of Freyja, ornamented with red jewelry. A successful DC 12 Intelligence check reminds the characters of Ygre's story about the same necklace (p. 25).

When the warband is ready, the boar leads them back to the town of Duftreptof, because it can feel the presence of the necklace close to the town.

A DEPRAVED JOURNEY

It is a 4-day-walk from both of the locations to the location of the last essence of Freyja. The warband begins their journey, and they arrive at the top of a hill near Duftreptof at the end of it. They have some encounters on the way, but you can also add additional encounters by using the encounter tables (p.211) where you see fit.

BEWITCHED DESERTERS

After the characters finish two long rests, or after two days of walking, they get closer to their destination. They see a group of people walking in the distance, walking towards them. They are not coming for the characters, they only happen to be on their way. When the characters get closer, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> As you get closer to the group, you see them to be ordinary denizens of Helheim, just like the ones you've encountered before. They are covered in dirt and snow, probably because they've been walking since who knows when. There is a draugr woman up in the front, walking towards you. She does not seem hostile. You see a trace of surprise on her dead face. Others follow her as she gets closer to you. She shouts, "*Greetings*" in her raspy voice.

These draugrs call themselves "The bewitched deserters." Their only goal is to find a way to leave Helheim and go back to Svilland. The woman leading them decides to come closer to the warband since she sees their breath in the air due to excessive cold. No one breathes in the land of the dead. If the characters continue to breathe when the draugr lady comes next to them, she smiles and continues to speak: "*We are wanderers, trying to find a way to leave this land. You see, we have not lost our persistence as the others did. A legend of Helheim goes: Whoever consumes the flesh of the living, shall steal its soul. And we must. For, ones with souls have no place amongst the dead.*" Then, she orders the **bewitched deserters** to attack the warband.

If the warband somehow interrupts her and convinces her that they are not alive, she passes them by without any harm.

As the draugrs attack, they shout, "*You are bewitched!*"

Characters	Encounter
4	5 bewitched deserters
5	6 bewitched deserters
6	7 bewitched deserters
7	8 bewitched deserters

BEWITCHED DESERTERS

Medium undead, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (heavy hide)
Hit Points 82 (11d8 + 33)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Strength +8, Wisdom +7
Skills Athletics +8, Perception +8, Religion +5
Damage Resistances poison; bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 18
Languages Austris (Common), Hellic
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Death's Grip. Bewitched deserters have advantage on their grapple checks.

Hunger. Bewitched deserters attack to satisfy their endless hunger. Their bite attacks deal one extra die of its damage when it hits a target (included in the attack).

Spellcasting. The bewitched deserter is a 9th level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The bewitched deserter has following spells prepared.

Cantrips (at will): *guidance, resistance, thaumaturgy*
1st level (4 slots): *bane, bolt of watery death*, inflict wounds, shield of faith*
2nd Level (3 slots): *aid, blindness/deafness, hold person, spiritual weapon*
3rd Level (3 slots): *animate dead, bestow curse, bitter touch of Helheim*, spirit guardians*
4th Level (3 slots): *death ward, freedom of movement, guardian's slap**
5th Level (1 slots): *devitalizing smite**
*Svilland spells

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The bewitched deserter makes two melee weapon attacks with its sword of bewitched, or it makes two bite attacks and a grapple check.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (2d6 + 5) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) necrotic damage..

Sword of the Bewitched. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage. On a hit, the target must make a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw. Feeling immense pain, hearing the last screams of the creatures have died by this sword and taking 11 (2d10) psychic damage on a failure; or, half as much on a successful one.

A FINAL WARNING

After the characters finish three long rests, or after three days of walking, the ground starts to quake and shake. A successful DC 12 Intelligence check reminds the characters of the **death worms** they encountered back in Duftreptof. They then hear the voice of Ormond echoing in their minds, saying *"I told you to give up. Now, I'll release you in my own way."* As soon as it is done speaking, death worms emerge out of the ground.

Characters	Encounter
4	5 death worms
5	6 death worms
6	7 death worms
7	8 death worms

Level Up. Your characters have reached the 19th level. Feel free to inform them to level up.

CLOSER TO THE SHACK

After 4 days of walking, Hildisvini says it can feel that the necklace is very close. After passing through a small clearing covered with dead trees and smothered in fog, the characters see a shack on a tiny hill. The hill is located at the far northern end of Duftreptof, and the shack views the whole settlement from above, from a great distance. Inside the shack the warband encounters illusions, which can be dispelled by a successful *dispel magic* (DC 19) spell, unless stated otherwise. If the characters can dispel the illusions in one encounter, make them move on to the next one. Each encounter is represented under a different title.

ENTERING THE SHACK

When the warband enters the shack read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> When you enter the shack, although it looks old, small and in ruins from the outside, you find yourselves in a dark, narrow but long corridor made of stone. The corridor doesn't seem to belong in the old wooden shack. As you move along the corridor, you come across gruesome paintings on the wall, depicting the Goddess of Death, sitting on a throne of humanoid skulls. Her one half is pitch-black and the other, as pale as snow. As you move on, you come across more paintings of her, and you can't help but feel like she is watching you. At the end of the long corridor, there is a stone door. A dim, ice-blue light shines from under the door and as you get closer, you feel the cold in your bones and a shiver goes through you. You have been in Helheim for what feels like an eternity, but this place seems colder than anywhere you've ever been.

When the characters pass the 100-foot-long corridor, they must pass through the door to reach the first room of the shack. Hildisvini is with the characters, and it looks hopeful since it feels closer to Freyja's last essence.

Upon entering through the door, they see a huge shard of ice hovering in the middle of a 100 square-foot room made of cobblestones. The shard emits a cold and deadly, blue aura, and it rotates, centered on itself. The walls of the room are covered with ice, and it looks like this is caused by this ominous emanation.

There is a lady on her knees, naked, her hands together in front of her chest. She looks very old and skinny; as if she spent hundreds of years here. She is not dead, but no one would know it by looking at her. She no longer looks like she possesses any will to live and her only quest is to sit next to the giant shard and pray to the Goddess of Death. She does nothing but whisper the name Hel, over and over again. She doesn't respond to the characters by any means, in fact, she doesn't even realize that the warband enters the room.

There is a magically concealed and magically locked door on the wall behind the shard. Locating it requires a successful DC 19 Wisdom (Perception) check, and the lock can be destroyed in two ways: Breaking the shard or casting a successful *dispel*

magic (DC 19) spell. However, leaving the lady in this condition is not a good act. If the characters leave the lady to her fate, they must succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw or take a minor Hel point.

The shard. The shard is a Huge item with AC 15 and 250 hit points. It has resistance to piercing and slashing; immunity to cold, necrotic, and psychic; and vulnerability to fire and bludgeoning damage. Each time the shard takes 50 damage, 1 **frost spirit** (p. 255) is summoned out of it. The shard emits a deadly, cold aura. Each time a character ends its turn within 10 feet of the shard, it must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw; taking 66 (12d10) cold damage on a failure, or half as much on a successful one.

The frost spirits do not harm the old lady. If there are frost spirits in the room when the shard is broken, they disappear. Also, when the shard is broken, the lady whispers *"Thank you."* and dies, indicating that her torment is at an end. Then, the magic on the secret door fades away. There is only one way to proceed.

THE UNDYING

The characters once again enter the dark and narrow corridor. The door has been sealed upon entry, and therefore the warband cannot go back. Those that do not have darkvision are not able to see if the characters are not carrying a light source. This time, Hellic runes and writings accompany the portraits of Hel on the walls. They read, *"Goddess, keep us awake with the cold"*, *"All shall bow before Hel"*, *"Death is the ultimate truth"*, and so on. The corridor is not as cold as the previous one, but it smells of death, making it uncomfortable to be in. At the end of the corridor, there is a Medium door made of bones. As the characters get closer, the stench gets worse and worse.

When the warband goes through the door of bones, they encounter a square hall made of stone, 40 feet wide and 10 feet high. The room is dimly lit and is filled with a pungent, foul stench that reminds one of rotten flesh, coming from the hound-like beast standing in front of the wooden door inside the stone hall.

The beast is a Huge wolf whose skin is diseased, rotten, and inscribed with Hellic runes that mean "protect" and "undying." The creature has two large horns and a wolf's skull where its head should be. When it sees the characters, it growls at them. When the characters move towards the door it is protecting, it starts growling more aggressively. If the characters move closer than within 20 feet of the door, the **keeper** attacks them. If not, it does not take action.The Keeper is assigned with the protection of the door, and it does just that.

The characters can try to kill the keeper. However, the keeper is protected by strong Hellic runes. When it drops to 0 hit points, it regains a number of hit points (details are given in the stat block.) Therefore, killing it is not an option. Instead, the characters can break the door and disengage. The keeper is not small enough to go through the door, and it is only assigned with protecting the door. It does not deal with those who pass through. The characters can also try to paralyze it with a *hold monster* spell. Your players may find other ways to pass the keeper as well.

Hel Points. Bear in mind that the characters who fail on their death save thrice do not die in this room. Instead, they regain all their hit points, and take one major Hel point. The characters who have four major Hel points pose no threat to the keeper; they have safe passage.

Characters	Encounter
4	The keeper
5	The keeper, 1 alpha skeletal hound Hel beast (p.266)
6	The keeper, 2 alpha skeletal hound Hel beast (p.266)
7	The keeper, 3 alpha skeletal hound Hel Beast (p.266)

THE KEEPER

Large fiend, lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 200 (16d10 + 112)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	18 (+4)	24 (+7)	4 (-3)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Strength +13, Wisdom +10, Charisma +9
Skills Athletics +13, Intimidation +9, Perception +10
Damage Resistances poison, bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 20
Languages Knows Hellic but cannot speak
Challenge 20 (25,000 XP)

Never Ending. Whenever the keeper drops to 0 hit points, you as the GM roll a d100. Instead of dropping to 0 hit points, the keeper regains a number of hit points equal to your result + 50. Each time the keeper regains hit points using this trait, it takes a -2 penalty on its saving throws.

Pounce. If the keeper moves at least 15 ft. straight toward a creature and then hits it with a horn attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 20 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the keeper can make one bite attack against it as a bonus action.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The keeper makes three attacks: one with its bite, one with its claw, one with its horn; or two

with its claw, and one with its bite.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (4d6 + 7) piercing damage. The target must succeed on a DC 23 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned. While poisoned in this way, the target can't regain hit points, and it takes 21 (6d6) poison damage at the start of each of its turns. The poisoned target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d8 + 7) slashing damage plus 4 (1d8) necrotic damage.

Horn. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d8 + 7) piercing damage plus 4 (1d8) necrotic damage.

When the characters pass the keeper, and enter the corridor through the wooden door, the keeper whines with embarrassment, having failed its task. The characters can then move on to the corridor.

IN THE NAME OF HEL

The characters find themselves in the same dark, narrow corridor once more. However, when they look up, they see that the ceiling is composed of humanoid skulls instead of stone. The characters hear nonsensical whispers and screams of those tormented in Helheim, once again feeling the cold chill of death in their bones. As they walk towards the stone door, the characters feel as if the skulls above are watching them. Other than that, the corridor is the same.

When they open the door, the characters see a dimly lit room large enough to host a feast inside, and with a number of people inside. They look like ordinary Svillanders upon first sight, some of them wearing pelts and ragged clothes, some of them wearing cloaks and ornate, fine clothing. They are actually draugrs, and a successful *dispel magic* spell (DC 19) breaks the illusion. The number of draugrs disguised as Svillanders in the room is one more than that of the characters, and you can use the stat block of **ancient draugr** (p.243) without immunity to poison damage and to being poisoned.

There are tables around, with silver goblets on them, together with various food, fruit and vegetables. If the characters try to eat them, they find that everything on the table is tasteless. There are also wooden barrels with taps on them that are full of a poisonous, red liquid. If the characters try to drink it, they must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw, taking 55 (10d10) poison damage on a failure or half as much on a successful one.

The people in the room are casting a ritual. They stand around a table. They all look bereft of willpower, just as the lady in the first room was. A frost half-jotunn woman with red, vertical lines tattooed on her face is leading the ritual. She stands tall across the room, away from the others.

She shouts: *"Why are you here?"*
They all whisper: *"We betrayed the Goddess."*
She shouts viciously: *"What happens to the betrayers?"*
They all whisper: *"We die."*
She asks loudly: *"What is death?"*
They all whisper: *"Her blessing."*

They then drink a red liquid from the silver goblets in their hands. When they do, they fall and die. The ritual leader then collects their goblets, fills them with poison from the barrels once again, and places the goblets on a table. The Helheimers who had died stand up once again, slowly take their goblets in their hands and wait. The frost half-jotunn woman shouts, *"Why are you here?" again,* and the loop continues.

There is a door concealed by magic across the room. Locating it requires a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. It can be opened by a successful *dispel magic* (DC 19) spell, or by making the Helheimers drink another liquid but poison. Both of these actions cause the Helheimers and the frost half-jotunn to attack the warband. You can use the stat block of **draugr runemaster** (p.252) for frost-half-jotunn. After the encounter, the magic fades and the secret door can be seen.

A TEMPTING VISION

Upon exiting the room, the characters once again find themselves in the same corridor. However, this time, it is twisted and upside down. The characters see another door at the end of the corridor. As they make their way towards it they must make a series of Wisdom saving throws every 5 feet, the DC of which increases on each one (see below) . On a failure, the deep, calm voice of Ormond the Bloodreader hisses in the characters' minds, asking them questions to make the characters waver from their faith.

DC	Outcome on a failure
10	"What do you hope to find here? Did you really have any say in coming here? Has Freyja even talked to you, or are you just pawns in her game?"
15	"You think Freyja is liberating. Nonetheless, she is the one who draws a line between what is alive and what is dead. OUR GODDESS, on the other hand, is all-embracing. Death belongs in the nature of everything. Nothing is everlasting, only death."
20	"Think, how many souls have you sent to Helheim throughout your journey? Why? Why did you do this if Helheim is the epitome of all things evil?"
25	"After all you've been through, has anyone asked you about your hopes and your dreams? They have not, have they? Our Goddess does... I'm sure you met Osborn in the crypts. He asked his beloved wife to be saved from a fatal disease. Hel granted his wish, and she was granted a long life in prosperity before she met her inevitable end. I, myself, asked her to teach me the secrets of blood. And that, she did. What do you want? What have you ever wanted? Believe me, she can make it happen."

30 The darkness in the corridor expands as if it consumes everything and everyone, including the characters themselves. When they open their eyes up, they find themselves in Helheim but somehow in a peaceful place. As the GM, you ask your players what their deepest worldly desires are. Then, each character has a vision of themselves having turned their deepest desires into reality. Make sure that your characters are really enjoying the illusion, making it as long and as detailed as possible.

GM TIP

The character's desire must be worldly and within reason. A wish such as "I wish Hel to die" cannot be granted. The wishes must be about themselves.

This illusion seeks to seduce the characters into joining the ranks of Hel during the next encounter. In the next encounter, Ormond will offer the characters a chance to have their darkest desires come true if they bow before Hel, and live out their days in Helheim. If you'd like your characters to face a moral dilemma and eventually have the choice to join the ranks of evil, you can make additions to the adventure accordingly. If not, you can alter the illusions by reminding the characters that this is a false illusion created to lure them to the other side.

ORMOND'S SHACK

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

Your eyes are just getting used to the darkness when a bright light hits your face, and your eyes have a hard time adjusting. It hurts, but knowing that the darkness has passed is soothing. When your eyes adjust, you find yourself sitting around a clean table. The room is tidy and neat, and it smells of fresh pine trees, reminding you of the houses in Svilland, in your home. When you look around, it seems you are at the top of a mountain, you can see Duftreptof below. It reminds you of the Trinity of Wilderness from above. You can't help but think, how many days have passed since you slept in your own bed. How long have you been in Helheim? You notice a man sitting at the table with you. Ormond the Bloodreader of Belmunt, is looking at you, only less hostile; even delighted, and wearing simple clothing with no accessories in particular.

The characters find themselves in the house of Ormond, a fiend of Hel, without Hildisvini. The characters are under a spell which makes them see themselves in a regular shack. The characters cannot stand up or move their hands unless they succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. When a single character does so, the illusion breaks. See *House of Ormond* to find what the characters see when the spell ends.

House of Ormond. This is a dark, old, fairly large wooden hut. It is dusty, which definitely makes it harder to breathe inside. There are bloodstains all over the place. Several limbs taken from the poor, wretched folk of Helheim are hanging off the ceiling, along with Hildisvini, Freyja's boar. Ormond has kidnapped the boar while the characters were in the illusion. The boar is still alive, but seems unconscious. There is a stone pool filled with blood, moving and making waves.

Ormond and the characters are sitting around a stone table. On it, there is a green liquid that looks disgusting and that smells of acid, which burns the characters' lungs when inhaled. On wooden plates, there is a meat-dish that looks rotten and slimy, and that has a foul smell. The characters may or may not eat them; it is up to you.

Ormond does not look like a Svillander, not even human. His body is composed of bloody muscular tissue with no skin to cover it up. He has no face; instead, he has skinned a human's face and pinned it over his skull, creating the face the characters have met as Ormond. The back of his head is pointy, and there are tumors on his chest and belly that resemble little bubbles of blood. You notice that he is also wearing Brisingamen, the sacred amulet of Freyja.

"Welcome! The day has finally come that we have met face to face. It's been a pleasure to have you as my guest in my little town. I hope you had time to enjoy all the landmarks. Of course, it did upset some folk that you broke the circle of sacrifice and let the death worms loose on them. But overall, it's been great having you, I would say! Enough pleasantries. I know why you are here: to play the part of the hero, to act as the hand of fate. I've gotta admit, you've done alright so far. But friends, no one has asked you what you wanted; you just found yourself in the fast current of a wild stream that swept you here. Now... It is time to take a step back, and think. Remember your visions, think of all the happiness within your reach. Pledge your allegiance to Hel, do us a little favor, and your wish shall be granted. Or, you may choose to fight me. But I highly advise against it because I doubt very much that you can kill me; this is my turf. And even if you do, I will be reborn somewhere in Helheim, and will hunt you down if it's the last thing I do (and it won't be). Do you really think you'll win a fight against me in Helheim? Be wise. And don't be afraid; if you wish to fight, I will free you of your chains. If we must resort to violence, I'll be glad to see what you're capable of first-hand. What say you? Freedom from all of this and all you've ever wanted, or a fight you cannot possibly win? Choose wisely!"

At this point, the warband is given a choice to join the ranks of Hel. If the characters are interested, Ormond gives them a quest (see the *Ormond's Quest* section, p. 229), and if the

characters succeed, they will be granted what they wished for. If the characters keep fighting for Freyja, Ormond can break the illusion, or the characters could get out of the illusion with a successful DC 15 Wisdom saving throw, and fights with the warband. Please note that the following encounter is designed to be deadly, each warband member must die here for the sake of the story. Therefore, as the GM, you may alter the encounter as necessary for it to end as such. See *Death!* after the encounter.

ROAR'S STANCE

If he is still in the warband at this point, Roar doesn't accept Ormond's quest by any means. However, Roar attacks the warband under no circumstances. If the warband accepts Ormond's offer, Roar states his disappointment and takes his leave. Ormond leaves him be, knowing that Roar will try to save Balder, and since Ormond would greatly benefit if the fiends guarding Balder fail in their duty, getting to imprison Balder once again to appease Hel.

Characters	Encounter
4	Ormond, 3 bloddrapes
5	Ormond, 4 bloddrapes
6	Ormond, 5 bloddrapes
7	Ormond, 6 bloddrapes

Add the following reaction to the statblock of bloddrapes for this encounter:

Bound to His Will. When Ormond is targeted by an attack, bloddrapes try to cover him. The bloddrapes dissolves in the thin layer of blood on the ground and reappear in a space between Ormond and the attacker, receiving the attack instead of him.

ORMOND

Medium fiend, lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (mage armor)
Hit Points 165 (22d8 + 66)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	24 (+7)

Saving Throws Dexterity +10, Constitution +8, Intelligence +9, Wisdom +9, Charisma +12
Skills Arcana +9, Deception +12, History +9, Perception +9, Persuasion +12, Religion +9
Damage Resistances lightning, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 19
Languages Austris (Common), Hellic
Challenge 15 (13,000 XP)

Bloody Regeneration. Whenever 20 hit points worth of blood spilled within 30 feet of Ormond, he regains 1d10 hit points at the start of his next turn.

Bloody Servants. As a bonus action, Ormond summons 1d4+2 **bloddrapes** from his blood pool (only when in his lair).

Explosive Possession (1/Month). When Ormond dies, his soul possesses an enemy creature. Each enemy must roll a d100, the creature with the lowest result gets possessed. Its body starts to rot from inside. At the end of its next turn, its body bursts outside and shreds into many bloody, rotten pieces. After the explosion, Ormond returns to life with his hit point maximum restored.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If Ormond fails a saving throw, he can choose to succeed instead.

Undying Fiend (3/Day). When Ormond drops to 0 hit points, he can choose to drop to 1 instead by consuming a spell slot of the lowest possible spell level.

Spellcasting. Ormond is a 18th level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 20, +12 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch, minor illusion, poison spray, ray of frost, shocking grasp*
1st level (4 slots): *charm person, false life, mage armor*, shield*
2nd level (3 slots): *blur, darkness, hold person, misty step*
3rd level (3 slots): *blink, fear, lightning bolt*
4th level (3 slots): *dimension door, ice storm, polymorph*
5th level (3 slots): *cloud kill, cone of cold, dominate person*
6th level (1 slot): *circle of death, disintegrate*
7th level (1 slot): *finger of death*
8th level (1 slot): *power word stun*
9th level (1 slot): *power word kill*
* *mage armor is already cast on Ormond*

ACTIONS

Blood Boil. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +12 to hit, range 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) poison plus 14 (4d6) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 20 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute and incapacitated for 1d4 turns. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the incapacitated effect on itself on a success.

REACTIONS

Glimpse of Death. Whenever a creature makes a melee spell attack or weapon attack against Ormond, he can make a

spell attack against the creature. On a successful hit, the target sees an illusion of itself dying and fails its attack. The creature must also succeed on a DC 21 Wisdom saving throw or the sight terrifies the creature and causes it to be frightened for 1 minute.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Ormond 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. Ormond regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Cantrip. Ormond casts a cantrip.

Blood Boil (Costs 2 Actions). Ormond uses his Blood Boil action.

Image of the Dead (Costs 3 Actions). Ormond creates an illusion where the characters see themselves in the pits of Helheim, wandering mindlessly, getting tortured, witnessing their loved ones dying again and again. Creatures within 30 feet of Ormond must make a DC 23 Charisma saving throw, taking 36 (8d8) psychic damage on a failure of half as much on a successful one.

LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Ormond takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects; Ormond can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

Blood Pool. Ormond's blood pool creates a flood of blood in the room, each creature in the room gets caught in 2 feet of blood. The blood gets drawn back when Ormond takes a new lair action.

Creatures must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw, taking 35 (10d6) necrotic damage on a failure, or half as much on a success. Ormond regains 50 hit points for standing on the blood.

Cold of Helheim. Ormond's shack's windows are opened wide and a deadly cold wind fills in. All creatures inside the room must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw, taking 45 (10d8) cold damage on a failure, or half as much on a success. Creatures who failed the saving throw are paralyzed until the end of their next turn due to cold.

Vest of Blood. Ormond covers himself with a layer of blood, which absorbs 20 points of damage per attack. The effect ends when the blood absorbs a total of 150 damage.

ORMOND'S QUEST

If the warband accepts to join the ranks of Hel, Ormond wants a drop of each of their blood. He gives them a sacrificial dagger and vials. This is necessary for him to trust the warband, to know whether they are truthful in their wish to join Hel. He then orders the warband to sacrifice Hildisvini in the same place they found the *golden hair*, in the wicked reflection of Freyja's Tear. The sacrifice must be done while chanting Hel's name while in a circle next to the lake.

The warband doesn't encounter any hardships on their way. Hildisvini is unconscious the entire time, the warband hears it sleep-talking telepathically, saying things like, *"Freyja save me," "Help me," "I have failed you,"* and so on.

When they arrive at the lake, they see Asta has been nailed to wooden spikes; a particularly sharp one has pierced the back of her skull and is coming out of her mouth. She is not dead, but left here to suffer.

If the warband sacrifices Hildisvini, each character feels all goodness, the concept of mercy, the reflection of their past, and the essences of Freyja they carried within disappear; leaving their place to a cold sense of darkness.

They are now the agents of Hel, bound to live in Helheim under the roof of the Goddess of the dead, in exchange for their deepest, darkest desires.

The adventure for the characters who have chosen the path of evil ends now, leaving Freyja vulnerable and defeated; with greed prevailing over mercy.

DEATH!

Ormond's plan is to sacrifice the characters in a ritual to destroy the essences of Freyja. He is planning to perform the ritual next to the twisted reflection of Freyja's Tear.

If the characters choose to fight Ormond, they eventually fall unconscious and are chained in metal cages. In this case, Ormond has all the sacrifices and essences needed to perform the ritual.

While the unconscious characters are taken to the ritual site by a large group of fiends and the undead, they enter a deep state of relaxation and relief. They think it must be what death feels like. Yet, you, as the GM, must know that even though the characters are physically considered dead at this point, they still have one more chance to finish their mission. Although the characters are dead, their souls shall refuse to leave as they still have some unfinished business. Right before they regain consciousness, they have a vision created by Ormond that they should assume is reality; read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> All your muscles are relaxed, you feel no pain, no remorse, no desperation. Free from all the dark and the cold, you are in an empty room where a feast is being brought in. As the sunlight warms your body and soul, you see your loved ones who passed away, your friends, your family. Frosted Johan is sitting in one of the chairs; drinking and talking to Freydis, whose laughter rings in your ears.
>
> The only thing you can think of is Folkvangr, the home of Freyja. You are blessed and free from all the pain and misery. You are free.
>
> Then you notice the food on the table, after all the time you have spent in Helheim; it is the most appetizing sight you ever beheld. Everyone seems to be enjoying the juicy, delicious treats. You take a bite, and then another, and are left in a state of gustatory ecstasy, with each bite feeling even tastier than the last.

The characters can interact with each other and the NPCs around, and they can eat and drink as much as they want. The NPCs may welcome them to Folkvangr or tell them how much they have missed them. At this point, as the GM, you can decide how much time the characters should spend in the illusion, or what the NPCs talk about in the vision, in order to emphasize the following treachery better. At the right time, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> A distant howling echoes in your mind, and you hear a cold whisper *"You are so pathetic... you disgust me..."* It is Ormond, with his presence becoming more and more evident with each passing second. Then, everything starts to fall apart. While all your loved ones turn to rotten corpses before your eyes, the meals you were eating turn into maggoty, rotten flesh, and dirt in your mouths.

Ormond laughs hysterically and whispers *"Fools, did you really think you could leave Helheim because you were dead. Let me remind you where you are, you are at the very HEART of death. You didn't listen, and you lost like I said you would. Now, you are doomed, you'll continue losing for all eternity. Have fun."*

When the voice disappears, as the GM, please ask the characters how they feel and note their emotions after hearing them. Roar's significant emotion is "revenge", and he will be restless to kill Ormond. Soon, these emotions will help them acquire new features (see below) when they get the Spectral Warrior template. When they do, modify the character sheets according to the template. Right now, they should be left alone with the rotten feast and their emotions, consumed by the feeling that they are trapped.

After the characters spend some time in misery, they feel a powerful presence. It is different from before, it feels like the presence is within their own bodies. When the characters start feeling the presence, start playing "*Freyja's Tears*" on "Svilland - Music and Ambiance", then read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

You feel the misery in your hearts grow, and grow. You start feeling your body in a very different way, it feels as if you can feel your own souls like limbs. Your body and all the surroundings feel different.

After the characters experience this strange feeling, a successful DC 18 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that the characters have died in such a way that they can return to their mission in spectral form.

At this point, the characters have two options; returning to their mission in spectral form or being consumed by the endless torture of Helheim.

For those who choose to continue their journey, the rotten feast slowly disappears into thin air, and the characters hear a horrible scream; so loud and miserable that they will never be able to forget it. They recognize the voice, it belongs to Asta.

THE FINAL VERDICT

As Asta cries out with her dying breath, trying to prevent the undead from annihilating the characters' bodies for the sake of the ritual, the characters feel the pain, suffering and misery in her shriek, deep inside their souls. As if Asta's dying scream was a call of revenge, the characters open their eyes in the same space as their lifeless bodies. They can move, they can talk, and feel that they are somehow alive; but are no longer restricted by the boundaries of a mortal body. They are spectral and filled with a thirst for vengeance. They have become **spectral warriors**.

Level Up. Your characters have reached the 20th level as they regain their consciousness. Feel free to inform them to level up.

Characters with the spectral warrior template gleam with a bright light resembling the sun. They are spectral, and therefore have no physical body. They retain their armor, weapons, and any other item that they had with them, but they are in spectral form. The characters keep their statistics as they were; for instance, they still benefit from the bonuses to AC they get from wearing armor. However, they also gain the following template.

Give your characters the spectral warrior template with one of the following features, each of which are related to an emotion. You can either grant each of them the benefit coinciding with the emotion they felt when they learnt of Ormond's treachery, or you can increase their most-used ability score by 2 if you want to reward your players for getting this far in the game.

- **Anger:** Charisma score increases by 2
- **Disgust:** Constitution score increases by 2
- **Fear:** Dexterity score increases by 2
- **Sadness:** +2 bonus to AC
- **Hopelessness:** Intelligence or Wisdom score increases by 2
- **The Need for Revenge:** Strength score increases by 2
- **Defeat:** +2 bonus to damage rolls

SPECTRAL WARRIOR TEMPLATE

Medium undead, same as before

Armor Class +2 (natural armor)
Hit Points +2 HD +2 x Con modifier
Speed same as before, fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+2 (+1)	+2 (+1)	+4 (+2)	+2 (+1)	+2 (+1)	+2 (+1)

Damage Resistances poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion,

frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained
Senses darkvision 60 ft.
Languages same as before

Arch-nemesis. The spectral warrior has advantage on its attacks made against Ormond.

Incorporeal Movement. The spectral warrior can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Magic Weapons. The spectral warrior's weapon attacks are magical.

Master of the Arcane. The spectral warrior casts its spells requiring no material components.

Radiant Attacks. Each turn, the spectral warrior can deal an extra 3d6 radiant damage with its attacks. It can choose to deal this damage with a single attack; or, for instance, it can divide the extra damage in three and deal 1d6 radiant damage with each of its attacks if it can make three attacks.

As soon as the characters open their eyes as spectral warriors, they see Asta's lifeless body torn in half, floating in the black liquid of the Freyja's Tear reflection in Helheim. An ancient undead is standing on the shore, next to the torn body of Asta, in the throes of a wicked, bursting laughter. It has a flesh carver in one of its hands, and it seems it was coming towards the characters' bodies to commence the ritual before Asta interrupted it.

The bodies of the characters are tied up to Huge wooden poles next to one another. Hildisvini is also tied up to a pole, and sadly, it is not breathing. The abominable water of the lake is 2 feet deep at the point where the ritual is taking place. There are fiends and the undead, watching the ritual with Ormond, chanting a hymn to Hel. However, after the characters' return, looking bright as day-light in their spectral warrior forms, the fiends and undead look surprised and even agitated. Ormond shouts in a state of fury, the head of the fiends can't keep its dreadful gaze off the characters and orders his subordinates to maim them. There are dozens of residents of Helheim there watching the rituals; however, the intimidating aura of the characters keeps them from joining in the fight.

Characters	Encounter
4	Ormond, draugr runemaster, 2 bloddrapes, 2 denizens of Helheim
5	Ormond, draugr runemaster, 2 bloddrapes, 2 ancient draugrs
6	Ormond, draugr runemaster, 3 bloddrapes, 3 ancient draugrs
7	Ormond, 2 draugr runemasters, 2 bloddrapes, 4 ancient draugrs

During the final combat, there are some specific encounters taking place on each round, which you can use to spice up the encounter even more.

Round	Description
1	At the start of its turn, Ormond enters a frenzy, shouting unintelligibly. Attacks against him have advantage and he has advantage on his attacks until the start of its next turn.
2	Residents of Helheim who do not engage in combat start shouting a hymn. The characters must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or have disadvantage on their first attacks made within 1 minute.
3	Ormond, as a bonus action, prays to Hel and begs for her help. The black water of the lake starts to splash on the heretics and hurts them. Each character must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw, taking 10 (4d4) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.
4	Ormond shouts at his warriors, telling them to show no mercy. Two of Ormond's troops have advantage on their attacks, but attacks against them also have advantage until the start of their next turn.
5	Ormond prays to Hel and begs for her help with a bonus action. Black tentacles emerge from the lake as if the *black tentacles* spell is cast.
6	A ray of daylight from the sky illuminates the lake. The characters regain 10 hit points each as a result of this unexpected weather condition.

After the combat, as the characters look around, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

> As the blood of your enemies and your mortal bodies mix with one another and float towards the dark waters of the lake, a huge feeling of relief fills your soul. Underneath the twisted bodies and all the blood, the soil starts growing green. The color green looks incredibly charming after all the dark and the cold you encountered.
>
> Then, a golden glow starts shining off the lake; and it's as though the dried, rotten trees are washed with a blessing. You too feel a warm breeze coming from the lake, and are relieved by the smell of soil and forest; smells you had almost forgotten. For the first time in days, you feel emotions you thought you had lost. You are filled with the pure joy of seeing something green and alive. Within seconds, the lake turns crystal clear

and you hear the voice of Freyja herself whispering to you from the depths of the lake, *"My children, come to me, this is not what you deserve."*

When the characters look around, they hear distant screams and see dark shadows begin to take shape on some distant lands. It looks like these are the angry undeads and fiends of Helheim who can sense the strong presence of Freyja.

The warm breeze of Freyja could carry life even to the deepest corners of Helheim, but you are aware that she cannot be here long. If the characters spend too much time looking around, looting, and trying to decide what to do next, the warm breeze gets colder, and they are trapped in Helheim.

The characters must walk into the lake to get out of Helheim. If they do not get the idea, a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that this is what they must do.

When the characters starts walk into the lake, read or paraphrase the boxed text below:

You walk into the crystal clear lake and with each step, you feel life within you despite your spectral body.

When the water level reaches your head, you gravitate to the depths, and all the grief that seeped into your soul is washed away with the gentle waves; you are embraced by life itself. Now, away from all the misery of Helheim, you are as safe and protected as you would be in your mother's womb.

Within the clear water, you hear the gentle voice of a woman, saying *"Children... I am sorry for all the blood shed you had to witness... I am sorry for everything lost in the darkness, all the lives, the fields, animals, forests, and most of all, you; the brave warriors of Svilland."*

A bittersweet sadness grows in your heart, and you can see all the lives lost on this long journey. Then, you see a light within the lake. The light gets bigger and washes over you. The silhouette of a woman takes shape in front of your eyes, and you are sure that she is Freyja. The sight of her fills you with a sense of awe that you didn't think you were still capable of. The lady in the light, the mother of Svilland, the bearer of life, of the sun, of soil, and of the rain...

As she gets closer to you, you can feel her sadness deep in your heart. She says, *"You very well knew that we could not let the darkness take over, so you took it upon yourselves to save us all"* proudly and gratefully and continues, *"You have defeated the darkness and restored my faith in Svillanders once more. Thank you, I cannot thank you enough for everything you've done for me, and for Svilland. Thank you for not abandoning me in Helheim."* Even though you can not see the expression on her face, you hear her smile as she says *"Now, it is my turn to help you, and give you the life you deserve. You are welcome to Folkvangr to live without misery for all eternity or... or you can go back to Svilland, your beloved home."*

The characters can thus choose to go to Svilland, or to Folkvangr. As the GM, you can finish the adventure at this point in the arms of Freyja. You can give the characters the information given in the next section depending on their choices.

EPILOGUE

Depending on the characters' choices, the adventure can end in three different locations: Helheim, Folkvangr, or Svilland. Here, you can find information on what awaits the characters after each choice.

SVILLAND

As the true warriors of Svilland, when they choose to return, the light in the lake expands. They start sliding within the light and the water, which reminds them of how they entered Helheim. When everything stops, the characters find themselves in Freyja's Tear in Svilland. The pleasant forest, the walls of Knafgata, and the silhouette of the old Lake Temple greet the characters.

When they reach the Trinity of Wilderness, their arrival is celebrated by all the villagers with excellent feasts. They learn that they spent six months in Helheim by Svilland-time, and all that time, they were believed to be dead. Once people know of their return, the characters start to receive gifts and letters from all around Svilland; most of them from Svillanders who want to help out, as well as three from Bergljot the Queen, Aleson the Arisen, and Hanlon the Real King. They thank the Svillanders and tell them they are welcome in each of their courts any time.

With Hel's influence ebbing away, Freyja's presence in Svilland is stronger than ever. Once again, flowers are in full bloom, healthy crops have replaced the rotten, and mothers everywhere give birth to happy, healthy babies.

The relentless efforts of the characters does not go unnoticed by Freyja. From the moment that the slit is shut, they feel Freyja's presence wherever they go. What's more, they seem to bring with them bounty and prosperity; the sick get better while in their presence, those that are old and wise are filled with exuberance, and no crop yields a poor harvest when they are near. This adds to their legend, and they are known by all in Svilland as "Lifdaggar Kappi", or "The Champions of Life".

In contrast to their prosperous reputation, they will forever carry with them the things they have seen, the scars they have taken, and the evil they have fought. Even though they will (hopefully) live on and experience many things that will bring them joy and comfort, they will still wake up screaming some nights, feeling the cold breath of Hel in the nape of their necks.

FOLKVANGR

If the characters choose the eternal afterlife in Folkvangr with Freyja, Ygre welcomes them in green silk clothes and a big smile on her face. She hugs them one by one, greets them with sincere joy and asks to listen to all details of their story. Not because she doesn't already know what happened, but because she wants to listen to her friends talk about their experience. She shows the characters around, and tells them about the endless gardens, which the characters are free to roam at their pleasure.

The characters are to live here until Ragnarok, which shall be the end to all things. They dine with Freyja, and pass the time with Hildisvini who can be found wandering around the gardens most of the time. They spar with the honorable warriors who also reside in Folkvangr. They know that being in Folkvangr is one of the greatest honors a Svillander could receive, right alongside going to Valhalla; and they live in bliss for the rest of time.

HELHEIM

If the characters accept Ormond's offer and become agents of Hel by sacrificing Hildisvini, they become natives of Helheim. There is a huge ritual in which the undead and the fiends of Helheim celebrate the weakening of Freyja and Svilland. In this ritual, the characters are required to shed their own blood in the name of Hel. This ritual changes their creature type to undead, as they are now natives of the land of the dead. Meanwhile, the army of Helheim plans another assault on Svilland, now that there is not a warband to prevent it.

The characters may either participate in the second assault on Svilland as commanders, or they can "live" a relatively simple "life" in Helheim. They can be warlords of a settlement as Ormond is. They can own undead and fiend thralls to serve them. In any case, they are now evil and serve death itself.

THE END OF THE SAGA

SPELLS

As Svilland is a dark and brutal place, spells cast in Svilland are also dark and brutal. Throughout the adventure, you will encounter deadly draugr, vicious Hel cultists, and many other foes using the spells from Svilland Campaign Setting as well as new spells created just for Freyja's Tears.

* Spells marked with an asterisk are new spells created for Freyja's Tears.

AVALANCHE

8th-level evocation
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 100 feet
Components: V, S
Duration: Instantaneous
You choose a point within range, and cause an avalanche to fall, covering a 50-foot radius. Creatures in the area must make a Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 6d8 bludgeoning damage and 6d8 cold damage. Large or smaller creatures must succeed on another Strength saving throw or be buried under the snow. If so, it takes a creature 10 Actions to reach the surface. On a successful save, a creature is not buried in the snow and takes half damage.

The avalanche deals maximum damage to constructs, structures, and terrain features (trees, vegetation, etc.). The avalanche remains until it melts naturally. If the avalanche melts instantly, this causes a flood that acts as a river with a width of 20 feet. A creature in contact with the ground within the area must succeed on a Strength saving throw to keep from falling into the flood, or on a Dexterity saving throw to avoid it, or be carried 30 feet away and take 1d6 bludgeoning damage.

BITTER TOUCH OF HELHEIM

3rd-level necromancy
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
You touch your target, and have it experience the unholy cold of Helheim. The target must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or become as pale as death and take an extra 1d8 cold damage from your attacks for the duration of the spell.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 5th level or higher, the cold damage increases by 1d8 for every two slot levels above 3rd.

BOLT OF WATERY DEATH

1st-level evocation
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 120 feet
Components: V, S
Duration: Instantaneous
Make a ranged spell attack. On a hit, a bolt of water streaks towards a creature of your choice within range, dealing 3d8 cold damage to the target. The target must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or is charmed until the end of its next turn.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 2nd level or higher, the damage increases by 1d8 for each slot level above 1st.

CAGE OF BONES

4th-level necromancy
Casting Time: 1 hour
Range: 60 feet
Components: V, S, M (a piece of bone)
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
You choose a creature within range. It must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or is caged inside shifting spiked bones that pierce its body. While caged, the target is restrained and takes 2d4 piercing damage at the end of each of its turns.

The cage can be destroyed. It has AC 15, 40 Hit Points, immunity to poison and psychic damage, and vulnerability to bludgeoning damage.

CAGE OF WATER

1st-level conjuration
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 120 feet
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
A ball of water bursts toward a target of your choice within range and explodes, expanding to form a spherical ball of water. The target must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or become caged inside. The target repeats its saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effects of the spell on a successful save.

A caged creature is restrained for the duration of the spell. In addition, as a bonus action, you can telepathically move the cage 30 feet.

COLD OF HEL

2nd-level evocation
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
You infuse a 30-foot radius centered on a point you touch with the unholy powers of Helheim. The area becomes desecrated and undead creatures have advantage on Wisdom saving throws within the area.

DAGGER OF AGONY

4th-level necromancy
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Components: V, S, M (a dagger that is consumed while casting the spell)
Duration: Instantaneous
You plunge a dagger into the chest of an unconscious creature while you are crying in agony. The target must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or its eyes melt, blood gushes out from its ears, its tongue twists, and it dies making indiscernible sounds as it drowns in its own blood. A creature who is within 30 feet of the target and who can see or hear it must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or become frightened of you until the end of its next turn.

DEVITALIZING SMITE

5th-level evocation
Casting Time: 1 bonus action
Range: Self
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
The next time you hit a creature with a melee weapon attack before the spell ends, you deal an extra 4d8 damage of the weapon's damage type. If your weapon has more than one damage type, you choose the damage type of the extra damage. The target must also succeed on a Constitution saving throw or gain vulnerability against the damage type of the extra damage dealt with this spell until the end of its next turn.

DRAINING GAZE

2nd-level necromancy
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 30 feet
Components: V, S
Duration: Instantaneous
You choose a creature that you can see within range and fix your dreadful gaze on it. It must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or take 4d6 psychic damage.

ELEMENTAL RUNE

1st-level evocation
Casting Time: 1 bonus action
Range: Self
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
Choose one of the following damage types: cold, fire, lightning, or thunder. For the duration, a rune appears on your forehead and your weapon attacks deal an extra 1d6 damage of the chosen type on a hit.

GEYSER

5th-level evocation
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 60 feet
Components: V, S
Duration: Instantaneous
You choose a point within range. A geyser explodes and deals 4d6 poison damage a 30-foot radius centered on that point, releasing poisonous gas and water out of the soil. Creatures in the area must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute.

GUARDIAN'S SLAP

4th-level evocation
Casting Time: Reaction
Range: Touch
Components: V, S
Duration: Instantaneous
You make a melee spell attack against a target, dealing 4d6 psychic damage on a hit. The target must also succeed on a Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, it cannot take any reactions until the end of its next turn.

HANDS OF THE DEAD*

7th Level Necromancy
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 30 feet
Components: V, S, M (skull of a humanoid creature)
Duration: Instantaneous
A wave of necrotic energy washes out from a point of your choice within range. The ground shakes, rotten and bloody hands emerge from the ground, and fill an area of 30-foot radius centered on that point. Creatures whose HD is 1 or lower, and all the plants immediately die. Also, each creature within the area must make a Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 8d8 psychic damage and is afflicted with a long-term madness. On a successful save, the damage is halved and it is not afflicted with madness.

HEL'S BLESSING*

9th Level Necromancy
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 30 feet
Components: V, S, M (heart of a humanoid creature, which the spell consumes)
Duration: Instantaneous
You target a creature within range and bestow Hel's blessing upon it. The ground around the target blackens, skeletal hands emerge from the ground and grab it. The target must make a Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, its hit points drop to 0 and it automatically fails its first death saving throw. On a successful save, it takes 20d6 necrotic damage.

HOLLOW EYES

4th-level necromancy
Casting Time: 1 minute
Range: Touch
Components: V, M (an intact humanoid skull)
Duration: Until Dispelled
You touch an unbroken skull and cast the spell on it. Then, you can choose to see from the eyes of the skull as a bonus action and by expending a 4th level spell slot. When you do so, you lose your own sight, but your other senses work normally. You must use another bonus action to Change your sight back to normal. You can have a number of skulls equal to your Charisma modifier prepared in this way, and when this limit is surpassed, the spell on the first skull loses its effects.

ICICLE OF DEATH

2nd-level evocation
Casting Time: 1 bonus action
Range: 30 feet
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
You choose a target within range and create an icicle hovering around it that remains for the duration or until you cast the spell again. After you cast the spell, you can make a ranged spell attack against the creature. On a hit, the target takes 2d6 cold damage. As long as the icicle is intact, you can use a bonus action on your next turns to repeat the attack to the same target. The icicle has 12 AC, 10 hit points, vulnerability to bludgeoning and fire damage, and immunity to psychic and poison damage.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 3rd level or higher, the cold damage increases by 1d6 for each slot level above 2nd.

INFUSE THOUGHTS*

5th Level Illusion
Casting Time: 1 hour
Range: Touch
Components: V, S, M (herbs, oils, and incense worth at least 1,000 gp, which the spell consumes)
Duration: Until dispelled
This spell is one of the most secret and complex spells used in Svilland. Only high-ranking Loki followers and sinister spellcasters have knowledge of this spell.

While casting the spell, you think about up to 5 places you have seen before, and up to 5 illusionary scenes to fill the places with. The illusionary scenes last up to 1 minute. When you finish casting the spell, you touch a point. When a creature enters an area of 60-foot radius centered on that point, it must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw, or it is affected by a curse.

When a cursed target visits one of the places that are filled with illusions by this spell, it sees the illusionary scene.

INSULTS TO SPIRIT

3rd-level enchantment
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 60 feet
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
You choose a target within range and show it the injustices faced by Balder. The target must succeed on a Charisma saving throw or becomes stunned for the duration. It can repeat its saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effects on a successful one.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 5th level or higher, you can target one additional creature

within range for each 2 slot levels above 3rd.

OPPRESSION OF THURISAZ

1st-level evocation
Casting Time: Reaction
Range: 30 feet
Components: V
Duration: Instantaneous
A Thurisaz rune appears at a point you choose within range. Each creature within 30 feet of the rune must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or feel oppressed under Thurisaz's might, becoming blinded and deafened until the end of its next turn.

OVERWHELMING SMITE

4th-level evocation
Casting Time: 1 bonus action
Range: Self
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
You cast a spell, cursing the next recipient of your wrath. The next time you hit with a melee weapon attack within this spell's duration, your attack deals an extra 3d8 radiant damage. Additionally, the target must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or is knocked prone until the end of its next turn.

RUNEMIGHT

4th-level transmutation
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Self
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
As you empower yourself with the might of the runes, you grow larger and your melee weapon attacks are guided by the runes.

Your size category increases by one, along with your items, and you gain advantage on Strength and Constitution checks. Also, you add half of your proficiency bonus to the attack roll when you make a melee weapon attack.

RUNE OF DEATH

3rd-level enchantment
Casting Time: 1 bonus action
Range: Self
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
The next time you hit with a weapon attack during the spell's duration, your attack deals an extra 6d6 necrotic damage. Also, the target must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by the necrotic damage dealt. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th level or higher, the necrotic damage dealt increases by 1d6 for each slot level above 3rd.

RUNE OF DISMAY

2nd-level necromancy
Casting Time: 1 bonus action
Range: Self
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
The next time you hit with a weapon attack during the spell's duration, the target must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute by the power of the runes. The target can repeat its saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the spell on a successful one.

RUNE OF ELEMENTAL BURST

2nd-level evocation
Casting Time: 1 bonus action
Range: Self
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
You choose one of the elements; cold, fire or lightning. An elemental weapon made of the chosen element bursts into existence in your hand. It can be a one-handed or a two-handed weapon. You count as proficient with the weapon, and you can make melee spell attacks with it. On a hit, a one-handed weapon conjured in this way deals damage of the chosen type equal to 1d6 + your spellcasting ability modifier, while a two-handed one deals 1d10 + your spellcasting ability modifier.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 6th level or higher, the damage of the weapon increases to 3d6 + your spellcasting ability modifier for one-handed weapons, or to 3d10 + your spellcasting ability modifier for two-handed weapons.

RUNE OF ELEMENTAL CHANNELING

4th-level evocation
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Self
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
You choose one of the elements; cold, fire or lightning. An elemental rune appears and starts to glow over your head. It gets brighter and brighter with each passing turn, as it stores more and more energy.

The rune stores 1d6 damage of the chosen damage type at the end of each of your turns. You can add this stored damage to that of any spell that deals damage of the chosen damage type. The stored energy can both be used in parts and as a whole. When the entire stored damage is used up, the spell ends. If you do not use this extra damage within 1 minute, the rune is broken, and you take 10d6 damage of the chosen type.

This damage ignores resistance and immunity.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 7th level or higher, the stored damage increases to 2d6 per turn, and the damage you take when the rune is broken increases to 20d6.

RUNE OF HALT

3rd-level enchantment
Casting Time: 1 bonus action
Range: Self
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
The next time you hit with a weapon attack during the spell's duration, the target must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or be crushed beneath the power of the runes, feel helpless, and become paralyzed for 1 minute. It can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the spell on a successful one.

RUNE OF HARM

4th-level transmutation
Casting Time: 1 bonus action
Range: Self
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
The next time you hit with a weapon attack during the spell's duration, your attack bypasses the damage resistances or damage immunities of your target.

RUNE OF POWER

1st-level evocation
Casting Time: 1 bonus action
Range: Self
Components: V, S
Duration: Instantaneous
The next time you hit a creature within the spell's duration, it must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or take an extra 2d8 force damage.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 2nd level or higher, the damage increases by 2d8 for each slot level above 1st.

RUNE OF SLAYING

1st-level evocation
Casting Time: 1 bonus action
Range: Self
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
The next time you hit a creature with a weapon attack during the spell's duration, the target takes an additional 1d8 damage of the attack's damage type. If the attack deals damage of more than one damage type, you choose the type of the additional damage.

RUNE OF SLOTH

4th-level transmutation
Casting Time: 1 bonus action
Range: Self
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
The next time you hit a creature with a weapon attack during the spell's duration, its speed is reduced by half for 1 minute. It must also succeed on a Constitution saving throw, or it cannot take any reactions until the end of its next turn.

RUNE OF SPEED

1st-level transmutation
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Self
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
Your speed increases by 5 feet for the spell's duration.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 2nd level or higher, your speed increases by 5 more feet for each slot level above 1st.

RUNE OF THE GIANT

3rd-level transmutation
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Self
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
As you draw power from the runes, you grow in size and strength. For the duration, you gain advantage on Strength checks, Strength saving throws, and your size increases by 1 category - from Medium to Large, for example - along with your equipment. Your weapon attacks that use Strength deals 1d6 more damage of the weapon's damage type.

RUNE OF TRANSLOCATION

5th-level transmutation
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Components: V, S
Duration: Instantaneous
You touch a creature of the same size as you. It must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or change places with you.

RUNE OF TROLDKIN

2nd-level transmutation
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Self
Components: V, S

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
You gain a part of the legendary regenerative powers of the troldfolk. For the duration, you regain 3 hit points at the start of each of your turns.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 3rd level or higher, the hit points regained increases by 1 for each slot level above 2nd.

SMOKE OF LAVA

3rd-level evocation
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Self
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
You start to radiate immense heat and breathe poisonous smoke. Any creature who comes within 5 feet of you for the first time on a turn or ends its turn there must make a Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, it takes 3d8 fire damage and becomes poisoned. On a successful save, the damage is halved and the target is not poisoned.

WORD OF SURTR

3rd-level conjuration
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 60 feet
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute
You invoke the fire of legends, and it rains down on the land in the form of the legendary fire-jotunn Surtr's sword. You summon four fiery swords, designating a target for each of them. A target can succeed on a Dexterity saving throw, or take 1d12 fire damage.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 6th level or higher, the damage of the swords increases by 1d12.

ITEMS AND EQUIPMENT

Svilland is the home for many authentic arms and armor as well as different magic items such as runestones. Throughout the adventure, you will encounter and have a chance to use many of the items from Svilland Campaign Setting as well as new items created just for Freyja's Tears.

NONMAGIC ITEMS

Gambeson. This is the most common light armor in Svilland. It is simply heavy clothing. It has layers of hardened wool that reduce penetration greatly.
Heavy Hide. This medium armor is made from thick hides, such as grizzly or black bear hide. It provides great protection but is quite clumsy compared to its counterparts. Some rural Jarls and warlords perceive this armor as a symbol of status, as they usually make it from the hides of the bears they hunt down themselves.
Lamellar. This medium armor is made of pieces of thin, square, or rectangular pieces of metal connected to each other with leather laces that are also sewn onto a leather base. They are tightly fit, which doesn't leave any gaps or openings.

Armor	Cost	AC	Stealth	Weight
Gambeson	5 gp	11 + Dex modifier	Disadvantage	8 lb.
Heavy Hide	60 gp	14 + Dex modifier (max 2)	Disadvantage	17 lb.
Lamellar	750 gp	15 + Dex modifier (max 2)	Disadvantage	20 lb.

ARMOR

GAFUMADR ARMOR

Armor (ring mail), uncommon (requires attunement)
As legends say, luck is something you are born with. However, as long as you wear this luck-blessed armor, it will always be on your side.

This armor has 7 charges. By expending one charge as a reaction when you make an ability check, you can reroll the dice. You can attempt to do so after you roll the dice, but not after the GM tells the result.

The armor regains 1 expended charge at each dawn.

HJALPA ARMOR

Armor (any armor), uncommon
Hjalpa Armor looks like a nonmagical armor that has a rough surface. It becomes tougher when hit. As a reaction when you

take damage, you can choose to half the damage if the damage type is bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing.

RINGMAIL OF THE DEAD

Armor (ring mail), rare (see description for attunement)

The ringmail of the dead is an armor worth of the commanders of the dead. It is said that people who worship the Goddess of Death forged these items for the commanders who devote themselves to the way of Hel. The dead shall wear it when the time comes and they walk among Svillanders again.

Hellic runes are inscribed on this armor and the armor is strengthened with the bones of fallen Svillanders. While wearing it, you gain a +2 bonus to your AC.

Attunement. Only a faithful servant of the Goddess Hel or the ones who can understand its ways can attune to this armor. You either should be lawful evil or have Hel as your deity to wear the item.

Curse. When you wear this armor for the first time, you must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or gain one major Hel point (p. 9).

POTIONS

THE BLACK LIQUID

Potion, uncommon

The Black Liquid is an unnamed, pitch-black potion that is used by the followers of Hel.

You regain 2d4+2 hit points when you drink this potion. However, you must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or gain 1 major Hel point (p.9).

RINGS

RING OF CARTILAGE

Ring, uncommon (requires attunement)

The Ring of Cartilage is a ring made from the bones of a humanoid, whose inner side is covered with magical runes. It looks smooth and sanded yet unadorned.

While wearing the ring, you can choose to have advantage on an attack roll you make against an undead. Once you use this feature, you need to take a long rest before using it again.

Curse. Upon wearing, the ring of cartilage sticks to your flesh never to be taken out by normal means. To discard the ring, you must kill ten humanoid creatures from dusk till the next dawn.

RING OF LIES

Ring, rare (requires attunement)

This is a bronze ring that has a shiny silver stone placed on it. While wearing the ring, you aren't affected by the *zone of truth* spell.

RING OF THE MAIDEN

Ring, rare (requires attunement)

This golden ring shines with the runes praising Freyja carved on it. The ring has three charges and it regains 1 expended charge when you finish a long rest.

By expending a charge as a reaction while wearing the ring, you can cast the *shield* spell.

RING OF VIDR

Ring, uncommon

If you take 25 or more damage in a round while wearing this wooden ring, you have advantage on your next attack roll.

WEAPONS

BLADE OF HEL WARMONGER

Weapon (any sword), very rare (requires attunement)

Only the most vicious followers can become a Hel Warmonger when they die and devote their lives to bringing death and havoc to Svilland. These weapons are forged specifically for these wicked warriors from the bones of the deceased Svillanders.

You gain a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made

with this magic weapon. Also, each hit deals an additional 2d8 poison damage. When you kill a humanoid creature using these foul blades, its soul is trapped in Helheim to be corrupted by Hel. Whenever you score a critical hit against a humanoid creature with this weapon, the target feels the pain and disappointment of those lost souls, taking an additional 4d8 psychic damage.

Attunement. Only a follower of Hel can attune to these swords.

SAEX OF HELHEIM

Weapon (saex), very rare (requires attunement)

The saex of Helheim is a weapon worthy of the rulers of cold and darkness. It is said that these saexes were forged in Helheim by sinful dvergrs. One half of a saex of Helheim looks ice blue and the other half of it looks pitch black.

You gain a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. Also, each time you hit a creature, the saex of Helheim deals an additional 1d10 cold and 1d10 necrotic damage.

Curse. Upon first wielding this item and each time you finish a long rest while attuned to the saex of Helheim, you must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw, or gain a minor Hel point (p. 9).

SWORD OF COLD FLAMES

Weapon (saex), rare (requires attunement)

The sword of cold flames is made from a dark metal whose keen edge is as sharp as a sword can be. Its hilt is made of bones and inscribed with Hellic words meaning “cold” and “flame.”

As a bonus action, you can activate the runes on its hilt, making the dark steel of the sword ignite with ice-blue flames. The sword deals an extra 2d6 cold damage to any target it hits. The ice-blue flames last until you use a bonus action to deactivate the runes or until you drop or sheathe the sword.

ICY AXE

Weapon (Svillander Axe or Battle Axe), uncommon (requires attunement)

Icy Axe is an axe with a wooden handle, icy carvings. This axe is covered with ice and is generally made by dvergrs.

While wielding this magic weapon, you can strike the ground as an action and release a wave of cold in a 20-foot radius. The creatures within the area 2d4 cold damage. Once you use this feature, you need to take a short or long rest to use it again.

When you score a critical hit with this weapon, the target takes an extra 1d4 cold damage.

WONDROUS ITEMS

CROWN OF THE DEAD

Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement)

Slender longish finger bones belonging to a humanoid creature vertically standing tall on a circular bone... Crown of the dead is the one true crown wielded by the leaders of the undead.

While wearing the crown, you can cast the *dominate monster* spell against undead creatures whose CR is less than 1 at will.

Also, all undead creatures within sight, whose CR is less than or equal to 2 perceive you and up to six of your allies of your choice as friendly creatures unless you or your allies attack any of these undead creatures.

Curse. Upon first wearing the item and each time you finish a long rest while attuned to it, you must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw, or gain a minor Hel point (p. 9).

EYES OF THE RAVEN

Wondrous item, legendary (requires attunement)

Ancient dvergrs of Nidavellir, the true realm of the dvergrs, once created two black stones of 2-inches radius to honor the Allfather. They represent the eyes of Huginn and Muninn, the intellect and the memory, the legendary ravens of the Allfather. These items bless the wielder with the memory and intellect of a divine being.

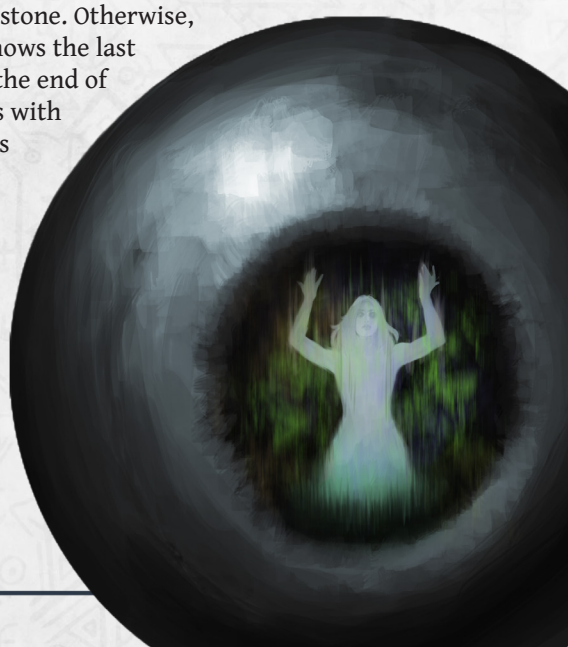
Collect the Memory. If placed on a ritual site, the eye of the raven can collect the scene of a ritual performed on this site.

Also, as an action, the wielder of the eye of the raven can command the item to record the scenes that the wielder is experiencing from the wielder’s point of view.

Each time this feature is used, the eye of the raven can collect memories for up to 10 minutes.

Show the Memory. As an action, the wielder can see a vision in which the recorded memories are shown. The wielder may choose to see specific visions if they are aware of them being collected by the stone. Otherwise, the eye of the raven shows the last collected memory. At the end of the vision, it continues with the collected memories retrospectively.

By focusing on the eye of the raven, creatures within 5 feet of the item can see the vision of the wielder’s choice. When the eye of the raven shares another memory with others, at the start of



the memory, creatures who see the vision must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 10d8 psychic damage and stops seeing the shared vision. On a successful save, it sees the vision normally until the vision ends. The DC increases by 3 each time a new memory is shared.

Improved Scrying. When used as a focus of the *scrying* spell, the target of the spell has a -5 penalty to its Wisdom saving throw, and also has disadvantage on the same saving throw.

Communicate (1/Day). The wielder of the stone can communicate with any person who is recorded within the visions. If the person is dead, its soul can try to communicate if possible. In each case, the person must be willing to communicate. The communication lasts for up to one hour, and it requires concentration (such as concentrating on a spell).

FROSTED MASK

Wondrous item, uncommon

This is an iron mask covered with white stones that looks like ice.

When worn, the mask constantly radiates cold air and extinguishes nonmagical fires within 10 feet of you.

As long as you are wearing it, you are proficient in Perception skill.

RESTLESS BOOTS OF FREYJA

Wondrous item, uncommon

These boots are knitted in Freyja temples by priestesses. They are made from wool, leather and ivy.

While wearing this item you ignore the effects of a difficult terrain. The crafter chooses the type of the terrain while crafting. The boots also keep you warm and you ignore the effects of cold weather.

RUNESTONES

GIPT (RUNE OF GIFT)

Runestone, legendary

Gipt is the rune of gift. Mortals can create miracles with it. You can cast a *wish* spell by using the runestone, consuming the runestone in the process.

GREATER WUNJO (RUNE OF BIND)

Runestone, rare (requires attunement)

Wunjo is the rune of binds and Wunjo runestone lets you cast binding spells as well as spells that aid your allies. This item has three charges and lets you cast *aid* and *sending* spells.

Recharging. In order to recharge this runestone, you must put it in the middle of your dining table where you share your food with trusted friends, and then finish a long rest with the runestone on your body and your friends around.

LESSER BJARKAN (RUNE OF LIFE)

Runestone, uncommo

Bjarkan is the rune of life. It is one of the greatest gifts of the Gods and the Goddesses to the mortals. A Bjarkan runestone miraculously brings the dead back to life but is consumed when it is used. This item lets you cast the *revivify* spell.

LESSER IHWAR (RUNE OF DEATH)

Runestone, uncommon (requires attunement)

Ihwar is the rune of death and Ihwar runestone has mostly necromancy spells stored in it. This item has one charge and lets you cast *spare the dying* and *false life* spells.

Recharging. In order to recharge this runestone, you must bury it within a freshly slain corpse for 8 hours.

LESSER ISA (RUNE OF ICE)

Runestone, uncommon (requires attunement)

Isa is the rune of cold and ice and Isa runestone lets you wield the power of cold. This item has one charge and lets you cast *ray of frost* spell.

Recharging. In order to recharge this runestone, you must bury it beneath a pile of snow that is connected to the earth (not separated by a cup or container from the land) for 8 hours.

Also, if you are attuned to an Isa runestone of any rarity, you can choose to have advantage on a Constitution saving throw against an effect that deals cold damage or against cold weather by expending one charge as a reaction. Once you use this feature, you need to take a short or long rest to use it again.

HOW TO USE RUNESTONES

Runestones are used to cast the spells within by expending a number of charges or by doing what is stated in their description. There are four types of runestones, depending on their rarities: lesser, greater, grand, and sacred; each requiring the caster to expend 1, 3, 5, and 7 charges respectively. The DC equals 12 + the minimum proficiency bonus of the spellcaster that is able to cast the spell.

MONSTERS

You'll find many new monsters in addition to monsters from Svilland Campaign Setting in this adventure. All of them are designed specifically to reflect the grim atmosphere of this brutal land.

AMBUSHING BERSERKR

Medium humanoid (any), any alignment

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Strength +6, Constitution +6
Skills Athletics +6, Perception +5, Stealth +5, Survival +5
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages Can speak its mother tongue, and one more
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Ambusher. In the beginning of an encounter, the ambushing berserkr can attack up to 3 surprised creatures that are within 15 feet of each other and the ambushing berserkr. It deals additional 4 (1d8) piercing damage to each creature it hits.

False Appearance. The ambushing berserkr buries itself into the snow. While it is motionless within the snow, it has advantage on its Dexterity (Stealth) check.

Rage. The ambushing berserkr has a +2 bonus to its damage rolls, and other benefits of the Rage feature (included in the attack).

Stunning Critical. If the ambushing berserkr scores a critical hit against a creature, the creature must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become stunned until the end of its next turn.

Svil Fortitude. The ambushing berserkr can hold its breath for twice as long and it is unaffected by cold weather, as well as the Black Winter's Cold.

Wearing the Bear's Skin. The ambushing berserkr gains +5 AC because of its Path of Berserkr (included in its AC).

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The ambushing berserkr makes three melee attacks.

Battleaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage on hit.

ANCIENT DRAUGR

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 91 (14d8 + 28)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)

Saving Throws Strength +8
Skills Athletics +8, Perception +3
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Austris (Common), Hellic
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Blood Lust. If the ancient draugr makes two successful melee weapon attacks in its turn, it deals an additional 4 (1d8) slashing plus 5 (1d10) necrotic damage with its second attack.

Magic Resistance. The ancient draugr has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Turning Defiance. The ancient draugr has advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The ancient draugr makes two melee weapon attacks.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage plus 5 (1d10) necrotic damage.

Poisonous Breath (Recharge 5-6). The ancient draugr got rotten for hundreds of years so it can exhale a poisonous gas on a creature within its melee range. The target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 42 (12d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

BLODDRAPE

Medium fiend, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 88 (16d8 + 16)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)

Skills Perception +6
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from non-magical attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic
Condition Immunities grappled, petrified, restrained
Senses blindsense 30 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Hellic
Challenge 5 (1,100 XP)

False Appearance. When the bloddrape stays motionless, lying on the ground, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary puddle of blood.

Whispers from Helheim. With a bonus action, the bloddrape targets a creature. The creature must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw, or it hears the whispers of the tortured souls from Helheim. The pain is so intense that the failed creature becomes frightened until the end of its next turn.

ACTIONS

Blood Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) necrotic damage plus 10 (2d6 + 3) cold damage.

Invading (Recharge 5-6). The bloddrape occupies a creature's space, entering its body from its eyes, flesh wounds or from any other empty space. The creature must succeed a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw to avoid the bloddrape; otherwise the bloddrape invades the body of the affected creature, dealing 18 (4d8) necrotic damage at the start of each turn it stays inside its opponent. While invading, the bloddrape cannot take any other actions. It can stop invading a creature with a bonus action at the start of one of its turns.

The affected creature must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw at the end of its turns to get the bloddrape out of its body.

REACTIONS

Abort (Recharge 5-6). When the bloddrape is targeted by an attack, it commands the creature to stop. The creature hears a strong, commanding voice of a woman in its mind and eventually misses its attack. Also, it must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw, or take 5 (1d10) psychic damage.

BLODPOLLI

Small fiend, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 121 (22d6 + 44)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	20 (+5)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from non-magical attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic
Condition Immunities grappled, petrified, restrained
Senses blindsense 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Hellic
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Bloodborne. If the blodpolli is targeted by a spell that deals necrotic damage, it regains hit points equal to the amount of necrotic damage the blodpolli would otherwise take.

Whispers from Helheim. With a bonus action, the blodpolli targets a creature. The creature must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw, or it hears the whispers of the tortured souls from Helheim. The pain is so intense that the failed creature becomes frightened until the end of its next turn.

ACTIONS

Blood Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (3d6 + 5) necrotic damage plus 15 (3d6 + 5) cold damage.

Invading (Recharge 5-6). The blodpolli occupies a creature's space, entering its body from its eyes, flesh wounds or from any other empty space. The creature must succeed a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw to avoid the blodpolli; otherwise, the blodpolli invades the body of the affected creature, dealing 36 (8d8) necrotic damage at the start of each turn it stays inside its opponent. While invading, the blodpolli cannot take any other actions. It can stop invading a creature with a bonus action at the start of one of its turns.

The affected creature must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw at the end of its turns to get the blodpolli out of its body.

REACTIONS

Splash (Recharge 5-6). When the blodpolli is hit by a melee attack, the blood that forms its body splashes to its opponent. The creature must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw, or take 7 (2d6) necrotic damage plus 7 (2d6) cold damage.

If the opponent scores a critical hit, the amount of necrotic damage dealt by this reaction doubles.

CLAW OF FENRIR

Medium humanoid, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)
Hit Points 15 (2d8 + 6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +4, Religion +2
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Austris (Common), Mithal
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Dark Devotion. The claw of Fenrir has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

ACTIONS

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) slashing damage.

FANG OF FENRIR

Medium humanoid (shapechanger), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (15 in werevargr form)
Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Constitution +5, Wisdom +2
Skills Athletics +4, Religion +2
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Austris (Common), Mithal
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Dark Devotion. The fang of Fenrir has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Howl (2/day). As a bonus action or a reaction, the fang of Fenrir howls and provides its allies within 5 feet of it a 2 (1d4) bonus on their next saving throw.

Keen Hearing and Smell. The fang of Fenrir has an advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Lycanthropic Regeneration. The fang of Fenrir regains 1 hit points at the start of each one of its turns if it is not attacked by a spell, or by a weapon that is magical or silvered.

Shapechanger. The fang of Fenrir can use its action to polymorph into a werevargr (which is currently its form), or back into its true form, which is humanoid.

Its statistics, other than its AC, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The fang of Fenrir makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws. In its true form, it makes two attacks with its greatsword.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

CURSED WARRIOR

Medium undead, any evil alignment

Armor Class 14 (masterful duelist)
Hit Points 68 (8d8 + 32)
Speed 0 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Constitution +7, Charisma +6
Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages The languages it knew in life
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Ethereal Sight. The cursed warrior can see 60 feet into the Ethereal Plane when it is on the Material Plane, and vice versa.

Incorporeal Movement. The cursed warrior can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Masterful Duelist. Thanks to its exceptional dueling skills, the cursed warrior takes +4 bonus on its AC (included in the AC).

Thirsty for Challenge. The cursed warrior persists for a challenging combat, adding 1d6 piercing or slashing damage on its melee attacks for each creature that is fighting it in melee range.

Unflankable. The cursed warrior is a master fighter, it is immune to being flanked.

Spellcasting. The cursed warrior is a 1st-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The cursed warrior has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *true strike, resistance, vicious mockery*
1st level (2 slots): *shield*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The cursed warrior makes two melee weapon attacks. It wields either a greataxe or a greatsword.

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit*: 9 (1d12 + 3) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit*: 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

DEATH WORM

Huge monstrosity, neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 57 (6d12 + 18)
Speed 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)	4 (-3)	16 (+3)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Strength +9
Skills Athletics +12
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned
Senses blindsight 30 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.
Languages --
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Made of Helheim. The death worm's body is made of the soil of Helheim. A creature must succeed on a DC 16 (Wisdom) Perception check to locate the death worm in Helheim, provided the death worm is in line of sight.

Tunneler. The death worm can burrow through solid rock at half its burrow speed and leaves a 10-foot-diameter tunnel in its wake.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The death worm makes two attacks, one with its bite and one with its tails.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d6 + 6) piercing damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or be swallowed by the death worm. A swallowed creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the death worm, and it takes 14 (4d6) necrotic damage at the start of each of the worm's turns.

If the death worm takes 25 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside it, the worm must succeed on a DC 19 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate all swallowed creatures, which fall prone in a space within 10 feet of the death worm. If the death worm dies, a swallowed creature

is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse by using 20 feet of movement, exiting prone.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 13 (3d4 + 6) piercing damage and the target must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) cold damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

Death's Grip. When the death worm grapples a creature whose size is Medium or smaller, it constricts the target's body with its tail, covering the target's whole body. The creature takes 9 (2d8) necrotic damage at the end of each of its turns it stays grappled (escape DC 20). When the death worm grapples a creature using this action, it can't use its tail attack unless it releases the grappled creature.

If the target can't escape from the grapple until the end of its third turn, it must make an additional DC 15 Constitution saving throw at the end of its following turns (if the target still is grappled); on a failure, the target loses its breath and faints for 1d4 rounds, and regarded as unconscious. The death worm releases the fainted creatures from its grip.

DENIZENS OF HELHEIM

Medium undead, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)
Hit Points 28 (8d8 - 8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	16 (+3)	8 (-1)	7 (-2)	8 (-1)	6 (-2)

Saving Throws Strength +7
Skills Athletics +7
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 9
Languages Hellic
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Death's Grip. Denizens of Helheim have advantage on their grapple checks.

Hunger. Denizens of Helheim attack to satisfy their endless hunger. Their bite attacks deal one extra die of its damage when it hits a target (included in the attack).

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Denizen of Helheim makes four melee weapon attacks with its seax, or it makes two bite attacks and a grapple check.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (2d6 + 5) piercing damage.

Seax. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage.

DEATH SPIRIT

Large undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 110 (13d10 + 39)
Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)

Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages understands any language, but can't speak
Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Blightful Passage. Whether in ethereal form or not, the death spirit leaves a trace of blight and death on the ground and vegetation it passes over. It can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain, dealing 11 (2d10) necrotic damage to a creature or object, but taking 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Ethereal Sight. The death spirit can see 60 feet into the Ethereal Plane when it is on the Material Plane, and vice versa.

Innate Spellcasting. The death spirit's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The death spirit can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *chill touch, false life*
3/day each: *contagion, eyebite*

Leech Death. Whenever the death spirit deals necrotic damage to a non-undead creature, the spirit is healed by a quarter of the amount of necrotic damage dealt, unless the spirit has taken radiant damage during the previous round.

Life Aversion. Healing spells deal damage to the death spirit, and spells that deal necrotic damage heals it by the amount of the necrotic damage dealt.

ACTIONS

Etherealness. The death spirit enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane, or vice versa. It is visible on the Material Plane while it is in the Border Ethereal, and vice versa, yet it can't affect or be affected by anything on the other plane.

Withering Disease (Recharge 6). The death spirit targets a creature that is within 30 feet of it. The creature must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or catches Withering Disease, and makes its death saving throws, Constitution saving throws and ability checks with disadvantage. Withering disease does not affect other creatures.

Withering Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 38 (10d6 + 3) necrotic damage and the target must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become agonized until the end of its next turn.

REACTIONS

Fearful Visage. The death spirit looms over a creature within 10 feet of it in order to frighten it. The creature must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened.

DRAKKAR SKIPAN

Medium humanoid (Vestri), any alignment

Armor Class 15 (leather)
Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Strength +7, Dexterity +7
Skills Athletics +7, Deception +4, Intimidation +4, Perception +4, Stealth +7
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages Vestri
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Brute. A weapon deals one extra die of its damage when the drakkar skipan hits with it (included in the attack).

Cunning Action. The drakkar skipan can take a bonus action on each one of its turns in combat, which it can use to Dash, Disengage, or Hide.

Expert Boarding. The drakkar skipan has advantage on its first attack while boarding ships.

Skirmish Expertise. The drakkar skipan cannot be targeted by opportunity attacks if an ally is adjacent to the opponent.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The drakkar skipan makes two weapon attacks.

Northfolk Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage, or 15 (2d10 + 4) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

REACTIONS

Manstopper. If a creature within 20 feet of the drakkar skipan is taking the Dash action, the drakkar skipan can use its reaction to make a ranged javelin attack against the creature. On a critical hit, the creature must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone in the middle of its movement.

DRAUGR GUARDIAN

Medium undead, any evil alignment

Armor Class 15 (armor scraps, shield)
Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	6 (-2)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhausted, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9
Languages understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Shield Wall. If two or more draugr guardians are within 5 feet of each other, they form a shield wall, and creatures have disadvantage on their attack rolls against them.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The draugr guardian makes two attacks; one with its battleaxe, and one with its shield.

Battleaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

Shield Bash. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Taunt. The draugr guardian bashes its weapon on its shield and points its weapon towards a hostile creature that is within 30 feet of it. Target must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw, or be affected by the taunt. The creature has disadvantage on its attack rolls against creatures other than the draugr, until the end of its next turn.

DRAUGR DEADCALLER

Medium undead, any evil alignment

Armor Class 15 (armor scraps)
Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	16 (-3)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Intelligence +2, Wisdom +5
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhausted, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Affinity of the Dead. The draugr deadcaller can cast the *animate dead* spell, with a casting time of 1 action.

Spellcasting. Draugr deadcaller is a 6th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). It requires no somatic or material components to cast its spells. The draugr deadcaller has the following spells prepared:

Cantrip (at will): *chill touch, resistance*

1st level (4 slots): *bane, false life, inflict wounds,*

2nd level (3 slots): *blindness/deafness, hold person, ray of enfeeblement*

3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead*

ACTIONS

Mark Mortal's Doom (2/Day). The draugr deadcaller marks one of the death saving throws of a character that is within 30 feet of it as a failure. When the character drops to 0 hit points, it starts with a failed death saving throw. A character can only have 2 marks on it.

The *remove curse* spell or finishing a short or long rest ends the effects of a mark.

Withering Strike. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (5d6) necrotic damage and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or it has disadvantage on its Strength checks or attacks that use Strength until the end of its next turn.

DRAUGR FROSTBRINGER

Medium undead, any evil alignment

Armor Class 15 (armor scraps)
Hit Points 102 (12d8 + 48)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Constitution +7, Charisma +4
Damage Vulnerabilities fire; bludgeoning
Damage Resistances necrotic
Damage Immunities cold, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Aura of Winter. The draugr frostbringer carries the frost of the Black Winter's Cold in a 30-foot radius centered on itself. Additionally, the draugr frostbringer deals 5 (1d10) cold damage to the creatures that are within 30 feet of it at the start of each of its turns. The creatures also have their speed reduced by 10 feet while within the aura.

Ice Burst. When the draugr frostbringers hit points drop to 0, it explodes into many shards of ice. Any creature that is caught within 10 feet of it must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 (4d4) piercing plus 10 (4d4) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

Ice Walker. The draugr can walk on ice without any penalties.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The draugr frostbringer makes two melee weapon attacks with its frostbitten greataxe.

Frostbitten Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack*: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit*: 9 (1d12 + 3) slashing damage plus 5 (2d4) cold damage.

Ice Shards (1d4 shards). *Ranged Weapon Attack*: +5 to hit, range 30/60 ft., multiple targets. *Hit*: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage plus 5 (2d4) cold damage, and the targets' speeds are reduced by 10 feet until the start of their next turn.

Mark of Frost (Recharge 5-6). The draugr frostbringer targets an undead within 30 feet of it. The creature gains the Ice Burst feature if it does not have the feature already. The creature also gains an additional 2 (1d4) cold damage bonus on its attacks for one minute.

FROSTBITTEN DRAUGR

Medium undead, any evil alignment

Armor Class 13 (armor scraps)
Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	6 (-2)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

Damage Vulnerabilities fire
Damage Immunities cold, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhausted, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9
Languages understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Ice Burst. When the frostbitten draugr hit points drop to 0, it explodes into many shards of ice. Any creature that is caught within 10 feet of it must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 5 (2d4) cold plus 5 (2d4) piercing damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Ice Walker. The draugr can walk on ice without any penalties.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Frostbitten draugr makes one seax attack.

Seax. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing plus 3 (1d6) cold damage.

Ice Shards (1d4 shards). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/60 ft., multiple targets. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage plus 2 (1d4) cold damage, and the targets' speeds are reduced by 0 feet until the start of their next turn.

DRAUGR OF BONES

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 58 (13d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	9 (-1)	7 (-2)

Saving Throws Dexterity +6
Skills Acrobatics +6, Perception +2
Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning
Damage Resistances piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Austris (Common), Hellic
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Burst into Bones. When the draugr of bones' hit points drop to zero, its skeletal body loses its integrity; however, it bursts into pieces, and its body parts get spread in a 10 feet radius. Each creature within range must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) piercing damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Magic Resistance. The draugr of bones has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Turning Defiance. The draugr of bones has advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The draugr of bones makes two melee weapon attacks.

Bone Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage plus 4 (1d8) necrotic damage and 5 (1d10) poison damage.

DRAUGR OF DEPTHS

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 22 (5d8)
Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhausted, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Chant of Vikingr. While idle, the draugr of depths chants songs of vikingr that are audible within the sea (Perception check DC 10) in an area of 200 feet and sounds like a grumbling (Perception check DC 13) on the surface in an area of 100 feet. Any creature that hears the chant must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or start moving towards the source of the chant.

Mossy Bones. The draugr of depths has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made while underwater, and any creature that tries to grapple it has disadvantage on its grapple checks.

Undead Fortitude. If damage drops the draugr 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 draugr drops to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The draugr of depths makes two attacks, one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (2d4 + 1) slashing damage

Shriek of the Depths (Recharge 5-6). The draugr of depths puts out an unbearable shriek of pain and denial left from its memories of being drowned in the vast blackness. It chooses a creature within 10 feet of it as an action. Target creature must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, it becomes stunned until the end of its next turn by the dread of the depths and drowning, taking 11 (2d10) psychic damage. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and is not stunned.

DRAUGR RUNEMASTER

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (with mage armor)
Hit Points 135 (18d8 + 54)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)

Skills Arcana +7, Perception +6, Religion +7
Damage Vulnerabilities psychic
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Austris (Common), Hellic
Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Connected to Hel. Draugr Runemaster's essence is connected to Helheim, at the end of each turn, Draugr Runemaster regains 5 (1d10) hit points if it did not take radiant damage that round.

If it takes more than 50 radiant damage in a single round it cannot use its spellcasting ability in its next turn.

Magic Resistance. The draugr runemaster has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Spellcasting. The draugr runemaster is a 15th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). The draugr runemaster has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch, mage hand, prestidigitation, ray of frost, shocking grasp*
1st level (4 slots): *detect magic, mage armor*, magic missile, shield*
2nd level (3 slots): *mirror image, misty step, rune of elemental burst***
3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, lightning bolt, sleet storm*
4th level (3 slots): *ice storm, runemight**, rune of elemental channeling***
5th level (2 slots): *cone of cold, rune of translocation**, wall of force*
6th level (1 slot): *circle of death*
7th level (1 slot): *teleport*
8h level (1 slot)***: *dominate monster*
** The runemaster casts these spells on itself before combat.*
***Svilland spells*
**** If the warband consist of 5 or 6 characters*

ACTIONS

Dagger of Helheim. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) slashing damage plus 11 (2d10) cold damage and 5 (1d10) necrotic damage.

DVERGR OF GURBOLRUHM

Medium undead (Dvergr), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (armor scraps)
Hit Points 37 (5d8 + 15)
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)

Damage Vulnerabilities psychic, radiant
Damage Resistances cold
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities paralyzed, poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Dvergmer
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Carnage. If the dvergr of Gurbolruhm scores a critical hit on its attack roll against a creature, it can make an additional weapon attack against the same creature. It can use this feature once per turn.

Keen Hearing and Smell. The dvergr of Gurbolruhm has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

ACTIONS

Battleaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

REACTIONS

Madness of the Curse (Recharge 6). When the dvergr of Gurbolruhm is targeted by a mind affecting ability or spell, it reflects the ability or spell back to its caster if it succeeds on the saving throw by 5 or more.

GOTHI OF HEL

Medium humanoid (austri), lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (breastplate)
Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	15 (+3)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Constitution +5, Wisdom +6
Skills Athletics +4, Religion +3
Damage Resistances cold
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages Austris (Common), Hellic
Challenge 4 (1,800 XP)

Feed From the Black Winter. Whenever the Gothi of Hel casts a spell of 1st level or higher, it regains 2 + spell's level number of hit points.

Sacred Cold. Whenever the Gothi of Hel casts a damage dealing spell, it can change the spell's damage type to cold. If it casts a spell that deals cold damage normally, the spell ignores resistance against cold damage, and immunity to cold damage can only halve the damage.

Spellcasting. The Gothi of Hel's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following spells:

Cantrip: *chill touch, sacred flame*

1st level (3 slots): *cure wounds, guiding bolt, inflict wounds*

2nd level (2 slots): *hold person, scorching ray*

ACTIONS

+1 Warhammer. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage or 8 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands.

FROST JOTUNN

Huge giant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (magical heavy hide)
Hit Points 187 (15d12 + 90)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	10 (+20	22 (+6)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Strength +11, Constitution +11, Wisdom +7, Charisma +10
Skills Athletics +11, Perception +7
Damage Immunities cold
Senses passive Perception 17
Languages Austris (Common), Giant
Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The frost jotunn's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). The frost jotunn can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *darkness, minor illusion, misty step, ray of frost*

3/day each: *charm person, counterspell, detect magic, dispel magic, enthrall, gust of wind, major image*

1/day each: *cone of cold, freezing sphere, ice storm, wall of ice*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The frost jotunn makes two melee weapon attacks.

Great Club of Frost. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (3d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage plus 14 (4d6) cold damage.

Icy Rock. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (4d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage plus 17 (5d6) cold damage.

HEL TOUCHED HUNDR

Large fiend, lawful evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 45 (6d10+12)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	3 (-4)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)

Skills Intimidate +3, Perception +4, Survival +4
Damage Resistances necrotic, cold
Condition Immunities frightened
Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Understands Hellic, but cannot speak
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Hel Touched. Hel touched creatures are created especially to bring havoc to Svilland, and to corrupt everything stands on it. Therefore, they are created as a tool to spread Hel's supremacy. They carry an abominable aura with them. Any creature that enters within 30 feet of a Hel touched, or any creature that starts its turn within 30 feet of it must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. Otherwise, they suffer from minor Hel corruption gaining one minor Hel point (p. 9). Creatures failed their saving throws once are immune to this feature until they finish a long rest.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Hel touched hundr makes two melee weapon attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage plus 2 (1d4) necrotic damage.

FROST SPIRIT

Large undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 110 (13d10 + 39)
Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)

Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages understands any language, but can't speak
Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Ethereal Sight. The frost spirit can see 60 feet into the Ethereal Plane when it is on the Material Plane, and vice versa.

Freezing Passage. Whether in ethereal form or not, the frost spirit leaves a trace of ice on the ground as it passes over it. It can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain, dealing 11 (2d10) cold damage to a creature or object, but taking 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Innate Spellcasting. The frost spirit's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The frost spirit can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *ray of frost (3d8)*

3/day each: *cone of cold, ice storm*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The frost spirit makes two attacks with its cold touch.

Cold Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (4d6 + 3) cold damage.

Etherealness. The frost spirit enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane, or vice versa. It is visible on the Material Plane while it is in the Border Ethereal, and vice versa, yet it can't affect or be affected by anything on the other plane.

Freeze (Recharge 5-6). The frost spirit releases a freezing ray to a target creature that is within 30 feet of it. The creature must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or become frozen. A frozen creature is restrained, and it takes 21 (6d6) cold damage on each round it remains frozen. The creature remains frozen for 1d4 rounds, but it must make a DC 15 Strength saving throw at the start of each of its turns to break free. It also breaks free if it takes 12 fire damage, which does not decrease the creature's hit points while frozen.

HEL BRUTE

Large fiend, lawful evil

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)
Hit Points 84 (8d10 + 40)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	8 (-1)	20 (+5)	6 (-2)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities exhausted, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8
Languages understands Austris and Hellic, but can't speak
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Hel brute makes two attacks, one with its giant seax and one with its meat hook.

Giant Seax. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (3d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Meat Hook. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., two targets. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage. On a successful hit, the target creature must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check, or be knocked prone.

Hook and Pull. The Hel brute swings its hook on a target that is within 10 feet of it by making an attack roll with its meat hook. On a successful attack, the target creature takes 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage. Also, the target is grappled if its size is Medium or smaller (escape DC 13), and it is pulled 5 feet towards the Hel brute. The Hel brute can pull the creature adjacent to itself. If it does so, it can make the Gutting action against the grappled creature on its next turn if the creature stays grappled.

Gutting. The Hel brute begins gutting the flesh of a creature that is adjacent to itself and that is grappled. The creature takes 24 (8d4 + 4) piercing damage. As long as the creature is grappled, the Hel brute can keep on performing this action. While Gutting, Hel brute neither can make its movement or it can attack another creature.

HEL-TOUCHED VARGR

Medium fiend, neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 15 (2d8+6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	4 (-4)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Skills Intimidate +2
Damage Resistances cold, necrotic
Condition Immunities frightened
Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft.
Languages Understands Hellic, but cannot speak
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Hel-Touched. Hel-touched creatures are created to bring havoc to Svilland, and to corrupt anything and everything that populates its earth. Therefore, they are tools designed to spread Hel's supremacy. They carry with them and emanate an abominable aura of abominable energy. Any creature that is within 30 feet of it must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw, or suffer one minor Hel corruption, gaining one minor Hel point (p. 9). Creatures that fail their saving throws once are immune to this feature until they finish a long rest.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Hel touched vargr makes two melee weapon attacks; one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage plus 2 (1d4) necrotic damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

HEL-TOUCHED BEAR

Medium fiend, neutral evil

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)
Hit Points 38 (4d10+16)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	2 (-4)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Intimidate +2
Damage Resistances cold, necrotic
Condition Immunities frightened
Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft.
Languages Understands Hellic, but cannot speak
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Hel-Touched. Hel-touched creatures are created to bring havoc to Svilland, and to corrupt anything and everything that populates its earth. Therefore, they are tools designed to spread Hel's supremacy. They carry with them and emanate an abominable aura of abominable energy. Any creature that is within 30 feet of it must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw, or suffer one minor Hel corruption, gaining one minor Hel point (p. 9). Creatures that fail their saving throws once are immune to this feature until they finish a long rest.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 2 (1d4) necrotic damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage.

HEL CULTIST

Medium humanoid (Mithal), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (shield of faith)
Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Wisdom +5, Charisma +3
Skills Deception +3, Persuasion +3, Religion +2
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages Austris (common), Mithal
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Spellcasting. The Hel cultist is a 5th level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The cultist has the following gothi (cleric) spells prepared:
Cantrips (at will): *resistance*, *sacred flame (necrotic)*
1st level (4 slots): *bane*, *charm person*, *inflict wounds*, *shield of faith*
2nd level (3 slots): *blindness/deafness*, *hold person*, *ray of enfeeblement*
3rd level (2 slots): *bestow curse*, *fear*, *vampiric touch*

Unholy Healing. If an undead is targeted by the Hel cultist's *inflict wounds* spell, it does not take damage but regains hit points in the same amount instead.

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Treachery (1/day). The Hel cultist presents a necklace with Hel's symbol on it. Creatures within 30 feet of the cultist must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or make one attack to their nearest ally, they are forced to make their movement.

HEL STAGHEAD

Large fiend, lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 42 (5d10 + 15)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	8 (-1)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

Skills Athletics +6
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhausted, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9
Languages understands Austris and Hellic, but can't speak
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

ACTIONS

Carnage. The Hel staghead attempts to grapple a Medium or smaller creature that is within 5 feet of it. The creature must succeed on a DC 14 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check, whichever is higher, or be grappled (escape DC 14). The Hel staghead holds the grappled creature with one hand and starts to open slashes on its flesh with the crossguard of its longsword. It makes 2 (1d4) melee weapon attacks, dealing 6 (1d4 + 4) slashing damage on each hit.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage.

HEL TORMENTOR

Large fiend, lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 95 (10d10 + 40)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Strength +7, Constitution +7, Charisma +5
Skills Intimidation +5, Perception +6
Damage Vulnerabilities radiant
Damage Resistances psychic
Condition Immunities charmed, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Austris (Common), Hellic
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Light Sensitivity. While in bright light, the Hel tormentor has disadvantage on attack rolls and Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Summon Tormented Soul (Recharge 5-6). As a bonus action, the Hel tormentor summons a tormented soul from Helheim in a space within 30 feet of itself under its control. Any summoned tormented souls vanish and fade away when the Hel tormentor is slain or banished.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Hel Tormentor makes two whip attacks.

Whip. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d4 + 4) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage. Target must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be grappled (escape DC 15). Starting from the Hel Tormentor's next turn, as long as the target is still grappled, it takes an additional 10 (4d4) necrotic damage and the Hel tormentor can pull the target 5 feet towards itself. The Hel tormentor cannot make a whip attack while a creature is grappled by it.

Agonizing Shout (Recharge 5-6). The Hel Tormentor projects a terrifying shout that reminds others of its unquestionable domination. Creatures within 10 feet of the Hel tormentor must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed saving throw, a creature takes 45 (7d12) psychic damage and it is agonized for 1 minute, it takes half the damage on a successful one. A creature that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to being agonized for the next 24 hours.

CONDITION: AGONIZED

The speed of an agonized creature is reduced by 10 feet and it takes 2 (1d4) psychic damage at the end of each of its turns it remains so. Additionally, it is unable to cast spells that require concentration, and any such spell fails when the creature is agonized.

TORMENTED SOUL

Medium undead, unaligned

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 22 (5d8)
Speed 0 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
5 (-3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	6 (-2)	14 (+2)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8
Languages Hellic and any languages it knew in life
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Ethereal Sight. The tormented soul can see 60 feet into the Ethereal Plane when it is on the Material Plane, and vice versa.

Grumbling of Agony. The tormented soul constantly whines and grumbles about its pain of eternal torture. Any creature that comes within 10 feet of the tormented soul must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or become agonized. A creature that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to this effect for the next 2 hours.

Incorporeal Movement. The tormented soul can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

ACTIONS

Scream of Agony. *Ranged Spell Attack*: +4 to hit, range 20 ft., one target. *Hit*: 11 (2d10) psychic damage. The creature must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or become agonized until the end of its next turn.

HEL TOUCHED BROWN BEAR

Large fiend, lawful evil

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)
Hit Points 38 (4d10 + 16)
Speed 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	2 (-4)	13 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Intimidate +0, Perception +3
Damage Resistances necrotic, cold
Condition Immunities frightened
Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Understands Hellic, but cannot speak
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Hel Touched. Hel touched creatures are created especially to bring havoc to Svilland, and to corrupt everything stands on it. Therefore, they are created as a tool to spread Hel's supremacy. They carry an abominable aura with them. Any creature that enters within 30 feet of a Hel touched, or any creature that starts its turn within 30 feet of it must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. Otherwise, they suffer from minor Hel corruption gaining one minor Hel point (p. 9). Creatures failed their saving throws once are immune to this feature until they finish a long rest.

Keen Smell. The Hel touched brown bear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Hel touched brown bear makes two melee weapon attacks; one with its bite and one with its claws.

Agony from Hel. The Hel touched brown bear roars with anger. Those who hear the bears roar also hear the souls suffering in Hel. Each hostile creature within 15 feet of the bear must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, targets take 9 (2d8) psychic damage and they are agonized for one turn. On a successful save, the targets only take half damage.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage plus 2 (1d4) necrotic damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) slashing damage plus 2 (1d4) necrotic damage.

HEL TOUCHED COMMONER

Medium fiend, lawful evil

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)
Hit Points 22 (4d8 + 4)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Intimidate +2
Damage Resistances necrotic, cold
Condition Immunities frightened
Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft.
Languages Understands Hellic, but cannot speak
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Hel Touched. Hel touched creatures are created especially to bring havoc to Svilland, and to corrupt everything stands on it. Therefore, they are created as a tool to spread Hel's supremacy. They carry an abominable aura with them. Any creature that enters within 30 feet of a Hel touched, or any creature that starts its turn within 30 feet of it must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. Otherwise, they suffer from minor Hel corruption gaining one minor Hel point (p. 9). Creatures failed their saving throws once are immune to this feature until they finish a long rest.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Hel touched commoner makes two melee weapon attacks.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) slashing damage plus 2 (1d4) necrotic damage.

HEL-TOUCHED DEER

Medium fiend, neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 19 (3d8 + 6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	6 (-3)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)

Skills Intimidate +2
Damage Resistances cold, necrotic
Condition Immunities frightened
Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft.
Languages Understands Hellic, but cannot speak
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Hel-Touched. Hel-touched creatures are created to bring havoc to Svilland, and to corrupt anything and everything that populates its earth. Therefore, they are tools designed to spread Hel's supremacy. They carry with them and emanate an abominable aura of abominable energy. Any creature that is within 30 feet of it must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw, or suffer one minor Hel corruption, gaining one minor Hel point (p. 9). Creatures that fail their saving throws once are immune to this feature until they finish a long rest.

Rotten. Hel spawn Deer deals an additional 1d4 necrotic damage with each successful melee weapon attack.

ACTIONS

Antler. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) piercing damage.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage plus 2 (1d4) necrotic damage.

HEL TOUCHED GIANT BOAR

Large fiend, lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 57 (6d10 + 24)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	2 (-4)	7 (-2)	5 (-3)

Skills Intimidate -1
Damage Resistances necrotic, cold
Condition Immunities frightened
Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8
Languages Understands Hellic, but cannot speak
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Charge. If the Hel touched giant boar moves at least 20 ft. straight toward a target and then hits it with a tusk attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Hel Touched. Hel touched creatures are created especially to bring havoc to Svilland, and to corrupt everything stands on it. Therefore, they are created as a tool to spread Hel's supremacy. They carry an abominable aura with them. Any creature that enters within 30 feet of a Hel touched, or any creature that starts its turn within 30 feet of it must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw. Otherwise, they suffer from minor Hel corruption gaining one minor Hel point (p. 9). Creatures failed their saving throws once are immune to this feature until they finish a long rest.

Relentless (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). If the Hel touched giant boar takes 10 damage or less that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

Agony from Hel. The Hel touched giant boar roars with anger. Those who hear the bears roar also hear the souls suffering in Hel. Each hostile creature within 15 feet of the bear must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, targets take 13 (3d8) psychic damage and they are agonized for one turn. On a successful save, the targets only take half damage.

Tusk. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 2 (1d4) necrotic damage.

HEL TOUCHED RAVEN

Tiny fiend, lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 7 (3d4)
Speed 10 ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
4 (-3)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Intimidate +0, Perception + 3
Damage Resistances necrotic, cold
Condition Immunities frightened
Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft.
Languages Understands Hellic, but cannot speak
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Hel Touched. Hel touched creatures are created especially to bring havoc to Svilland, and to corrupt everything stands on it. Therefore, they are created as a tool to spread Hel's supremacy. They carry an abominable aura with them. Any creature that enters within 30 feet of a Hel touched, or any creature that starts its turn within 30 feet of it must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw. Otherwise, they suffer from minor Hel corruption gaining one minor Hel point (p. 9). Creatures failed their saving throws once are immune to this feature until they finish a long rest.

Mimicry. The Hel touched raven can mimic simple sounds it has heard, such as a person whispering, a baby crying, or an animal chittering. A creature that hears the sounds can tell they are imitations with a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check.

ACTIONS

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 piercing damage plus 2 (1d4) necrotic damage.

HEL TOUCHED SWARM OF RATS

Medium swarm of Tiny fiends, lawful evil

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)
Hit Points 40 (9d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	2 (-4)	10 (-0)	3 (-4)

Damage Resistances necrotic, cold; bludgeoning, piercing, slashing
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned
Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8
Languages Understands Hellic, but cannot speak
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Hel Touched. Hel touched creatures are created especially to bring havoc to Svilland, and to corrupt everything stands on it. Therefore, they are created as a tool to spread Hel's supremacy. They carry an abominable aura with them. Any creature that enters within 30 feet of a Hel touched, or any creature that starts its turn within 30 feet of it must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw. Otherwise, they suffer from minor Hel corruption gaining one minor Hel point (p. 9). Creatures failed their saving throws once are immune to this feature until they finish a long rest.

Keen Smell. The Hel touched swarm of rats has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Swarm. The Hel touched swarm of rats can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny rat. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

ACTIONS

Bites. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d6 + 1) piercing damage plus 7 (3d4) necrotic damage, or 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage plus 5 (2d4) necrotic damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

HIDDEN BLADE OF HELHEIM

Medium humanoid (any), lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (leather)
Hit Points 75 (10d8+30)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)

Saving Throws Dexterity +7, Constitution +6
Skills Acrobatics +7, Perception +6, Stealth +10
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses passive Perception 16
Languages Austris (Common), Hellic
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Assassinate. During its first turn, the hidden blade of Helheim has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn. Any hit the hidden blade of Helheim scores against a surprised creature is a critical hit.

Awful Smell. Any creature that gets adjacent to the hidden blade of Helheim must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw since it carries dead maggots on its body which smells terrible. On a failure, the creature has disadvantage on its attack rolls until the end of its turn. After this turn, or if the creature succeeds on its saving throw, the creature is immune to this effect until it finishes a short or long rest.

Evasion. If the hidden blade of Helheim is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, the hidden blade of Helheim instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). The hidden blade of Helheim deals an extra 10 (3d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 ft. of an ally of the hidden blade that isn't incapacitated and the hidden blade of Helheim doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The hidden blade of Helheim makes two melee weapon attacks.

Seax. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage plus 14 (4d6) poison damage. The target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking the poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Spread the Disease (Recharge 5–6). The hidden blade of Helheim swings an oil lamp made of bones within its melee range. The lamp spreads a poisonous gas that makes the interior organs get rotten within 15 feet of the hidden blade of Helheim. Each creature within the area must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 27 (6d8) poison damage and 18 (4d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

HRÆFLÁ (CORPSE-FLAYER)

Large fiend, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 66 (7d10+28)
Speed 40 ft., burrow 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	7 (-2)	12 (+2)	5 (-3)

Damage Resistances fire, bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered
Damage Immunities cold, poison
Condition Immunities frightened, poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages understands Hellic but cannot speak
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Lunge. If the hræflá makes all of its attacks on the same target, the target must succeed on a DC 14 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or it loses balance due to the hræflá's overwhelming strikes and falls prone.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The hræflá makes two attacks, one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 4 (1d8) poison damage and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or is poisoned.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

ÍSANDI

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 45 (13d6)
Speed fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)

Skills Perception +4
Damage Resistances acid, lighting, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from non-magical attacks
Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, restrained, poisoned, prone, restrained
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages understands Hellic but can't speak
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Ethereal Sight. The ísandi can see 60 feet into the Ethereal Plane when it is on the Material Plane, and vice versa.

Freezing Aura. Each creature that starts its turn within 5 feet of the ísandi must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, or take 5 (1d10) cold damage.

Incorporeal Movement. The ísandi can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object. When it moves throught a creature, the creature takes 5 (2d4) cold damage.

Death from Hel. When the ísandi's hit points drop to zero, the GM must roll a d20. On a result of 11 or higher, the ísandi's hit points drop to 1 instead. On a result of 10 or lower, the ísandi dies but it radiates its *Hel's Frost* one more time just before it melts.

ACTIONS

Cold's Clutch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) cold damage.

Hel's Frost (Recharge 6). The ísandi radiates a 10 foot radius of air as cold as Hel. Each creature in the area must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 (4d4) cold and 5 (2d4) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

MOUNTAIN JOTUNN

Huge giant, any alignment

Armor Class 15 (heavy hide)
Hit Points 175 (14d12 + 84)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	12 (+1)	22 (+6)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)

Saving Throws Strength +10, Constitution +10
Skills Athletics +10, Perception +5
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages Austris (Common), Giant
Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The mountain jotunn makes two weapon attacks, either with its unroot tree or its giant sling.

Giant Sling. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 80/300 ft., one target. *Hit:* 25 (3d12 + 6) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Unroot Tree. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 27 (6d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Crushing Jump. As an action, the mountain jotunn can jump long distances as if it is under the effect of the *jump* spell. Any creature that is adjacent to where the jotunn lands must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw, taking 44 (8d10) bludgeoning damage on a failed save and be knocked prone, taking half as much damage on a successful save.

SEA HARPY

Medium monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 31 (7d8)
Speed 20 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)

Skills Stealth +8 (underwater)
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Austris (Common)
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Into the Depths. The sea harpy can use its movement to dive into the sea. While underwater, it gains a +4 bonus to stealth checks.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The sea harpy makes two attacks: one with its claws and one with its bite.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) slashing damage.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage plus 4 (1d8) acid damage.

Luring Song. The sea harpy sings a magical melody. Every humanoid and giant within 300 feet of the harpy that can hear the song must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed until the song ends. The harpy must take a bonus action on its subsequent turns to continue singing. It can stop singing at any time. The song ends if the harpy is incapacitated.

While charmed by the harpy, a target is incapacitated and ignores the songs of other harpies. If the charmed target is more than 5 feet away from the harpy, the target must move on its turn toward the harpy by the most direct route, trying to get within 5 feet. It doesn't avoid opportunity attacks, but before moving into damaging terrain, such as lava or a pit, and whenever it takes damage from a source other than the harpy, the target can repeat the saving throw. A charmed target can also repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns. If the saving throw is successful, the effect ends on it.

A target that successfully saves is immune to this harpy's song for the next 24 hours.

SEIDR

Medium humanoid (Kuning), any alignment

Armor Class 13 (16 with barkskin)
Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Constitution +5, Wisdom +7
Skills Animal Handling +4, Nature +4, Perception +7, Survival +7
Senses passive Perception 17
Languages Kun
Challenge 6 (2,900 XP)

Spellcasting. The seidr is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The seidr has the following seidr spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *animal friendship, druidcraft, guidance, poison spray*

1st level (4 slots): *charm person, cure wounds, entangle, faerie fire*

2nd level (3 slots): *heat metal, moonbeam*

3rd level (3 slots): *conjure animals, protection from energy, wind wall*

4th level (3 slots): *conjure woodland beings, polymorph, stoneskin*

5th level (1 slot): *contagion*

*The seidr casts this spell on itself before combat.

ACTIONS

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.

SKELETAL HOUND

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 39 (6d8 + 12)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	4 (-3)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)

Skills Perception +3
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages understands Hellic but can't speak
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Charge. If the skeletal hound moves at least 15 ft. straight toward a target and then hits it with a bite attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Pack Tactics. The skeletal hound has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the hound's allies is within 5 ft. of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage plus 2 (1d4) poison damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned until the end of its next turn.

ALPHA SKELETAL HOUND

Large undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 59 (7d10 + 21)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	4 (-3)	15 (+2)	8 (-1)

Skills Athletics +7, Perception +5
Damage Resistances piercing and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages understands Hellic but can't speak
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Charge. If the alpha skeletal hound moves at least 15 ft. straight toward a target and then hits it with a bite attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Pack Tactics. The alpha skeletal hound has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the hound's allies is within 5 ft. of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Turning Defiance. The alpha skeletal hound has advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The alpha skeletal hound makes two melee weapon attacks, one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage plus 5 (2d4) poison damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned until the end of its next turn.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage plus 5 (2d4) necrotic damage.

ALPHA SKELETAL HOUND HEL BEAST

Large fiend, lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 84 (8d10 + 40)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	18 (+4)	21 (+5)	4 (-3)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)

Saving Throw Charisma +3
Skills Athletics +9, Perception +5, Intimidate +3
Damage Resistances cold, piercing and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, poisoned
Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages understands Hellic but can't speak
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Charge. If the alpha skeletal hound moves at least 15 ft. straight toward a target and then hits it with a bite attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Pack Tactics. The alpha skeletal hound has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the hound's allies is within 5 ft. of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Paralyzing Gaze. During its first turn, the Hel beast throws a Paralyzing Gaze to a creature within 30 feet of it, as a bonus action.

Swallow the Soul. If the Hel beast slays a creature, the creature must succeed on a DC 10 Charisma saving throw, or its soul is consumed by the beast. Any creature that has its soul consumed cannot be resurrected by any means, other than *divine intervention* feature or *wish* spell, unless the Hel beast is killed. When the beast is slain, the souls that it consumed are released and there is a 10% chance that a ghost is summoned as a result. The ghost may choose to fight against the Hel's spring (1-24%), fade away (25-75%), or try to possess a creature (76-100%).

Turning Defiance. The alpha skeletal hound has advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The alpha skeletal hound makes two melee weapon attacks, one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) slashing damage plus 5 (2d4) poison damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned until the end of its next turn.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d8 + 6) slashing damage plus 5 (2d4) necrotic damage.

REACTIONS

Paralyzing Gaze (Recharge 6). The Hel beast looks at a creature within 30 feet of it, right in its eyes. The creature must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw, or its paralyzed for 1 minute. A creature that succeeds its saving throw is immune to this effect for 24 hours.

SWARM OF CANNIBAL SPIDERS

Medium swarm of Tiny beasts, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)
Speed 30 ft., 30 ft. (climb)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)	4 (-3)	10 (+0)	4 (-3)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing and slashing
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, stunned
Senses blindsight 10 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages -
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny insect. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

Spider Climb. The swarm can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Web Sense. While in contact with a web, the swarm knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

Web Walker. The swarm ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

ACTIONS

Bites. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 10 (4d4) piercing damage plus 14 (4d6) poison damage, or half as much if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

Web. The swarm occupies another creature's space then wraps the creature with its webs. The creature must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw to avoid the web or be restrained and incapacitated until it succeeds on the same saving throw st the end of its next turn.

SWARM OF FERAL RAVENS

Medium swarm of Tiny monstrosities, neutral evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 45 (6d8+18)
Speed 20 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
5 (-3)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	4 (-3)	11 (+0)	8 (-1)

Damage Immunities necrotic
Damage Resistances cold
Condition Immunities grappled, proned
Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception
Languages -
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Mimicry.The raven can mimic simple sounds it has heard, such as a person whispering, a baby crying, or an animal chittering. A creature that hears the sounds can tell they are imitations with a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Swarm of Feral Ravens make two melee attacks with its beak.

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) poison damage, or 2 piercing damage plus 2 (1d4) poison damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

Eye Gouge. The swarm enters the same square with its target and tries to gouge its target's eyes. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, otherwise it is blinded for 1d4 rounds and take 5 (2d4) piercing damage.

SHIELDMAIDEN

Medium humanoid (any), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (ringmail, shield)
Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Strength +4, Constitution +4
Skills Athletics +4, Intimidation +2
Senses Passive Perception 10
Languages Austris, and its mother tongue
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Brave. The shieldmaiden has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The shieldmaiden makes two attacks; one with its battle axe and one with its shield.

Battle Axe. *Melee Weapon Attack*: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit*: 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage.

Shield Bash. *Melee Weapon Attack*: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit*: 7 (2d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

REACTIONS

Battlecry (Recharge 5-6). The shieldmaiden bangs its weapon against its shield while shouting a battlecry at a hostile creature. The creature must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened until the end of its next turn.

Shield Ally. The shieldmaiden pulls up its shield in front of an ally that is near it, and who is being attacked by a hostile creature. The ally gains the shieldmaidens' shield bonus as AC (+2 AC) while the shieldmaiden loses its shield bonus of +2 AC for that round.

Shield Wall. If two or more shieldmaidens are within 5 feet of each other, they form a shield wall, and creatures that attack them have disadvantage.

TROLD

Large giant, any chaotic alignment

Armor Class 12 (light hide)
Hit Points 73 (7d10 + 35)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	10 (+0)	121 (+5)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +2, Survival +2
Damage Vulnerabilities fire
Damage Resistances poison
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Austris (Common), Giant
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Petrified by Light. When the trold fails a saving throw against a spell or an innate spell that deals radiant damage, or when a spell attack that deals radiant damage makes a critical hit, the trold becomes petrified until the end of its next turn. It also becomes petrified if it is slain by radiant damage.

Regeneration. The trold regains 5 hit points at the start of its turn. If the trold takes radiant damage, this trait doesn't work at the start of the trold's next turn. The trold dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

ACTIONS

Tree Root Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

WYSE TROLD

Large giant, any chaotic alignment

Armor Class 15 (heavy hide)
Hit Points 115 (10d10 + 60)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	12 (+1)	22 (+6)	9 (-1)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)

Saving Throws Constitution +9, Wisdom +6
Skills Insight +6, Nature +2, Perception +6, Persuasion +1, Survival +6
Damage Vulnerabilities fire
Damage Resistances poison
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Austris (Common), Giant
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The wyse trold's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The wyse trold can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *animal friendship, command, fog cloud, speak with animals, thaumaturgy*

3/day each: *enhance ability, gust of wind, spike growth, misty step*

2/day each: *greater invisibility, lightning bolt, plant growth, speak with plants, wind wall*

1/day each: *avalanche*, fire storm, wall of thorns*

**Svilland spells*

Magic Weapons. The wyse trold's weapon attacks are magical.

Petrified by Light. When the wyse trold fails a saving throw against a spell or an innate spell that deals radiant damage, or when it takes a critical hit of radiant damage, the wyse trold becomes petrified for one round. It also becomes petrified if it is slain by radiant damage.

Regeneration. The wyse trold regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn. if the wyse trold takes radiant damage, this trait doesn't work at the start of the wyse trold's next turn. The wyse trold dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points, and doesn't regenerate.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The wyse trold makes two tree root staff attacks.

Tree Root Staff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Whirlwind (Recharge 5-6). Each creature within the reach of the wyse trold must make a DC 15 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, creatures take 22 (4d10) bludgeoning damage. Also, they are pushed 15 feet away from the trold and are knocked prone.

VARTR BLADE

Medium humanoid (Mithal), any alignment

Armor Class 15 (leather)
Hit Points 84 (13d8 + 26)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Dexterity +7, Constitution +5
Skills Athletics +5, Intimidation +6, Perception +4
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages Mithal
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Superior Critical. The vartr blade's weapon attacks score a critical hit on a roll of 18-20.

Unflankable. The vartr blade is a master fighter, it is immune to being flanked.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The vartr blade makes two vartr sword attacks. As a bonus action, it can also make an additional vartr sword attack with its off-hand without adding its Strength modifier.

Vartr Sword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage

Whirling Blades (Recharge 5-6). The vartr blade makes a melee attack against any number of creatures within 5 feet of it, with separate attack rolls for each target.

REACTIONS

Blade Dance. If another vartr blade within 5 feet of it makes at least two melee attacks against a creature, the vartr blade can use its reaction to make a melee weapon attack against the same creature.

WARMONGER OF HELHEIM

Medium humanoid (any), lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (chain mail)
Hit Points 120 (16d8 + 48)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	14 (+2)	15 (+3)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Strength +8, Charisma +7
Skills Athletics +8, Religion +3, Persuasion +7
Damage Resistances cold
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Austris (Common), Hellic
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Poisonous Smell. As a bonus action, the warmonger of Helheim spreads a vial of poison to its surroundings. Any creature within 10 feet of the warmonger of Helheim must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned until the end of their next turn.

Divine Smite. When the warmonger of Helheim hits a creature with a melee weapon attack, it can expend one spell slot to deal necrotic damage to the target, in addition to the weapon's damage. The extra damage is 2d8 for a 1st-level spell slot, plus 1d8 for each spell level higher than 1st, to a maximum of 5d8.

Spellcasting. The warmonger of Helheim is a 12th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The warmonger of Helheim has the following spells prepared.

1st level (4 slots): *command, inflict wounds*
2nd level (3 slots): *blindness/deafness, cold of Hel**, ray of enfeeblement*
3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead, dispel magic, vampiric touch*
*** Svilland spells*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The warmonger of Helheim makes two melee weapon attacks.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage.

Poisoned Blight. A melee weapon in the warmonger of Helheim's hand gets filled with Hel's deadly blessing. For 1 minute, the weapon deals an additional 1d4 + 4 poison damage.

ALLIES

As Freyja's Tears is a long journey, the warband meets various interesting people along the way. Some of these Svillanders will be or can be a part of the warband, either for the short or the long term. These NPCs are presented in the following pages.

HERTHA

Medium humanoid (Vestri), chaotic good

Armor Class 16 (studded leather), 14 in lycanthropic or hybrid form
Hit Points 49 (9d8 + 9)
Speed 30 ft. (50 ft. in Lycanthropic form)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Strength +4, Dexterity +7
Skills Perception +5, Stealth +7, Survival +5
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages Austris (Common), Mithal, Vestris
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Colossus Slayer. When Hertha hits a creature with a weapon attack, the creature takes an extra 1d8 damage if it's below its hit point maximum. Hertha can deal this extra damage only once per turn.

Multiattack Defense. When a creature hits Hertha with an attack, she gains a +4 bonus to AC against all subsequent attacks made by that creature for the rest of the turn.

Regeneration. Hertha regains 1 hit point at the start of each one of her turns if she is not attacked by magic, or by a weapon that is magical or silvered.

Shapechanger. Hertha can use her action to polymorph into a wolf-humanoid hybrid or into a wolf, or back into its true form, which is humanoid. Her statistics, other than her AC, are the same in each form. Any equipment she is wearing is transformed with her. She reverts to her true form if she falls unconscious or dies.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Hertha makes two melee weapon attacks or two ranged weapon attacks. In her hybrid form she makes two attacks, one with her bite and one with her claws.

Longbow (Humanoid form only). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Shortsword (Humanoid form only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Bite (Lycanthropic or Hybrid form). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d6 + 1) piercing damage.

Claws (Hybrid form only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage.

KADAL

Medium humanoid (Mithal), chaotic good

Armor Class 15 (unarmored defense), 12 in lycanthropic or hybrid form
Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)
Speed 30 ft. (50 ft. in Lycanthropic form)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Strength +7, Constitution +5
Skills Athletics +7, Nature +2
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages Austris (Common), Mithal
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Rage (4/Day). Kadal can enter rage as a bonus action. While raging, he has advantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws, has +2 bonus damage on his melee attacks, and resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage for 1 minute.

Reckless. At the start of his turn, Kadal can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against him have advantage until the start of his next turn.

Regeneration. Kadarl regains 1 hit point at the start of each one of his turns if he is not attacked by magic, or by a weapon that is magical or silvered.

Shapechanger. Kadal can use his action to polymorph into a wolf-humanoid hybrid or into a wolf, or back into its true form, which is humanoid. His statistics, other than his AC, are the same in each form. Any equipment he is wearing is transformed with him. He reverts to his true form if he falls unconscious or dies.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Kadal makes two melee weapon attacks. In his hybrid form, he makes two attacks, one with his bite and one with his claws.

Greataxe (Humanoid form only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 10 (1d12 + 4) slashing damage.

Handaxe (Humanoid form only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Bite (Lycanthropic or Hybrid form). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Claws (Hybrid form only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage.

ROAR STENSSON

Medium humanoid (Mithal), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 13 (studded leather), 16 (chain hauberk)
Hit Points 64 (10d8 + 9 + 10)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	8 (-1)

Saving Throws Wisdom +7, Charisma +3
Skills Insight +7, Medicine +4, Nature +4, Religion +8
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages Austris (Common), Mithal
Level 11

Bane of Wrongdoer. Roar's weapon attacks deal an extra 3 radiant damage to evil-aligned creatures (not included in the attack).

Vanquish Evil. Roar can use his Channel Divinity to wreak havoc upon creatures with wicked hearts. As an action, he presents his holy symbol, and up to three hostile creatures of his choice within 30 feet of him must succeed on a Charisma saving throw or take 3d8 radiant damage and be frightened until the end of their next turn.

If an affected creature's alignment is evil, it has disadvantage on the saving throw. If it fails the saving throw, it takes an extra 1d4 radiant damage and is stunned until the end of its next turn instead of being frightened.

The amount of radiant damage increases to 4d8 at 15th level.

Virtuous Strikes. Once per turn, when Roar hits a creature with a weapon attack, he can cause the attack to deal an extra 1d8 radiant damage. If the creature's alignment is evil, the radiant damage increases to 1d10 (not included in the attack).

At 14th level, the extra damage increases to 2d8 against nonevil creatures and 2d10 against evil creatures.

Spellcasting. Roar is an 11th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *guidance, light, resistance, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*

1st level (4 slots): *bless, cure wounds, guiding bolt, sanctuary*

2nd level (3 slots): *aid, lesser restoration, spiritual weapon*

3rd level (3 slots): *bestow curse, remove curse, revivify*

4th level (3 slots): *banishment, death ward, guardian of faith*

5th level (2 slots): *flame strike, greater restoration*

6th level (1 slot): *heal*

ACTIONS

Radiance of Good (1/day). As an action, Roar chants a prayer of goodness. All allies within 30 feet of him gain a +1d4 bonus and all enemies within 30 feet of you take a -1d4 penalty on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws for 1 minute.

Svardstav. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 10 (2d4 + 3) slashing damage.

Roar is a gothi of Balder at 11th level, please make sure that he also levels up along with your characters if he is one of the warband members. You can make him continue on his path of being a gothi of Balder if you own the Svilland campaign setting. Otherwise, it is advised for you to level him up as a cleric or a fighter.

YGRE

Medium humanoid (Vestri), neutral good
Level 2 Gothi (life domain)

Armor Class 16 (Chain Hauberk)
Hit Points 22 (3d8 + 9)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Wisdom +6, Charisma +4
Skills Insight +6, Perception +6, Persuasion +4, Religion +5
Senses passive Perception X
Languages Austris (Common), Mithal, Vestri
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Channel Divinity: Preserve Life. Ygre can use her Channel Divinity to heal the badly injured.

As an action, she presents her holy symbol and evokes healing energy that can restore a number of hit points equal to five times her gothi level. Ygre Chooses any creatures within 30 feet of her, and divide those hit points among them. This feature can restore a creature to no more than half of its hit point maximum. She can't use this feature on an undead or a construct.

Chosen of Freyja. Once per long rest, when Ygre cast the *aid* or *bless* spell, she can target up to six people.

Disciple of Life. Ygre's healing spells are more effective. Whenever she uses a spell of 1st level or higher to restore hit points to a creature, the creature regains additional hit points equal to 2 + the spell's level.

Spellcasting. Ygre is a 3h-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *guidance, resistance, spare the dying*
1st level (4 slots): *bless, bolt of watery death*, cure wounds, virtue's grasp**
2nd level (2 slots): *aid, prayer of healing*

ACTIONS

Handaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

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Emily Lutringer
Emma & Simon Gelgoot
Emma N. Brown
Emmanuel Bichet
engessa
Enkelas
Enkelli Arn Robertson
Entifidich
Eoin O’Connell
Eric “Doranur” Graves
Eric “Odin” Vancza
Eric Anders Harrison
eric Clark
Eric De La Rosa
Eric Farnstrom
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Eric Keogh
Eric Kinzel
Eric Kling
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Eric Maldonado
Eric Minor
Eric Mutchie
Eric Pickney
Eric R. Dittert
Eric Ramsay
Eric Roberts
Eric Stitzman
Eric Toczek
Erik Ayres
Erik Clark
Erik Cohoon
Erik Jeppsson
Erik Sanford Dahl
Erik Stam
Erik Stewart
Erik T Damgaard
Erik Tedesco
Erik Tegen
Erik Tiveskog
Erin B. Dougherty
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Erna Mjöll
Ernestas Bogdanov
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Esenno
Esmeralda Adams
Espen Borgen
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Eugenio Curia
Evan Fraser
Evan Riley
Evelyn Bussey
Even Ytterli Tokle
everweird
Ewan Walker
Ewout Eetesonne
Exomalis
Ezequiel Fiumara
F. Robert Mosdal
F.C. Pereira
Fabian Bräu
Fabian Kappe
FatLorenzo
Fawaz Alhindi
Faye Liyah
Faytality
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Fenric Cayne
Ferdinand Martinsson
Ferret
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FireTheStars
Fjorin Runskirsson
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Florian ‘Barathuur’ Kastell
Florian Fischer
Florian Lang
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Fluffy jr
Flynn A. Roberts
flypirat
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Frank Winters
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Franzi
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Fraser Hardy
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Frazier Turner
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Frédéric Girard
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Frederick P. Feuerborn
Frederik Lind
Fredrik Karlsson
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Freyja Catton
Freyja K. Bellows
Frick
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Fritz “iSwordzman” Heinzen III
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Gabriel Boswell
Gabriel Casillas
Gabriel de Burgh
Gabriel Drax
Gabriel Rivers
Gabriel_Frey
Gabriella Creighton
Gabriella Lake
Gabrielle Chatham
Gage Patterson
Galastro
Galeiboef
Galilleos
Gamerz Nexus
Ganglari
Gareth Danziger
Gareth Date
Gareth John Peake
Gareth Morgan
Gargoyle
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Garrett and Elizabeth Tucker
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Gerald Mistal
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Gonzo Montes
Göran Eriksson
Gordon Duffy
Gordon Pfeil
Gordon Vail
GothyStitch
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Graves
Grayraven
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Greg Jones
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Greg Schroeder
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Gregory Lynn
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Gregory Smith
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Hailfire
Hal J Neat
Hamish Clark
Hammundr
Hanna Sodergren
Hannah Rose Lee
HanniePannie
Hans Höglund
Hans Sagan
Hans van den Heuvel
Hanx0r
Hanyetuwi
Happy Dwarf
Haralambos Kardaris
Harold Dean Hunter Jr.
Harrison bradley
Harrison Jones
Harrison Young
Harry
Harry Coad
Hart Wood
Harzyar
Hauke Stammer
Havok Monkey
Hayden Pech
Hayden Robertson
Hayley McLeod
Headless Hydra Press
Heath Hoxsie
Heath Phillips
Heather Ferguson
Heather Harlan
Heckmac
Hector Lee Heaviside
Helades the Wandering Wayfarer
Hendrik "Diabhail" Ahrberg
Hendrikus Pretorius
Henning O. Geisler
Henri Hemery
Henry Mantel
Hexturn
Hillary Fotino
Hizaku Nailo
HoratioAtTheBridge
Horib
House Barendt
House of Schirtz
Howard Bishop
Howard James Earl
Howard Stickley
Howie
Howie Gumbel
Hrothgar Ironaxe
Hugh McLeod
Hugues Pauget
Hunter Jones
Hunter Parry
Hunter Roberts
Huw Lunger Ashman
Iain Harrison
Iain Sims
Ian "Join a Union" Anderson
Ian Drake
Ian Edberg
Ian Goulet
Ian M Kirby
Ian Phillipchuk
Ian Smith
Ian Stuart Sharpe
Ian T
Ian Woodley
Ian Yeara
Ice Demon Meru
Iceassassin77
Ido Schwartz
Ignis Everbright
Iker Marín
illenvillen
imxRaven
Inge Faro
Inge Rasch
Ingvald Arne Meland
Inola Wolfe
Iramis Valentin
Irene Wijman
Irina & Randall Dorn
Irina Itsy
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Isaac Graham
Isaac Griffiths
Isaac Leavitt
Isaac Wurmbrand
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Isaiah Del Fierro
Isaiah Halverson
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J. Niles
J. Sharp
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J.P. 'Shield-Dropper' Robert
J2Xcentric
Jaakko Saari
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Jack Armstrong
Jack Brown
Jack Church
Jack Doherty
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Jack R Crudele
Jack Ranyard
Jack Roland
Jack Toups
Jack William Shaw
Jackaria Nevrose
Jackie DiBoni
Jackson Chandler
Jackson Huckell
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Jacob "Havarðr Urðr" Miller
Jacob and Jacqui
Jacob C Kelly
Jacob Caffrey
Jacob Cassens
Jacob Cotton
Jacob D. Sharp
Jacob Dalke
Jacob Dornan
Jacob Durbin
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Jacob Glass
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Jacqui Phillips
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Jason Nance
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Jasper Wierda
Jathaan
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Jay Forster
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Jay Kilgore
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Jay Ottawa
Jay 'Raith' Lawrence
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Jayare
Jayden Morrissey
JAYInk
Jayna-Fey Clapp
Jazsmin kroll
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Jendrik Witt
Jeniffer Lopez
Jenna Parkyn
Jenna Sparks
Jennifer Lam
Jennifer P. Wick
Jennine Cerra
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Jens Cramer
Jens Dam
Jens Eberle
Jeramie Vens
Jerel Shepard
Jeremiah Maynard
Jeremy "JamanjiMan" Pratt
Jeremy A. Miller
Jeremy Apps
Jeremy B Wieland
Jeremy Bailey
Jeremy Bridges
Jeremy Buisson
Jérémy Chevrier
Jeremy Cowan
Jeremy Deal
Jeremy Geesey
Jeremy Janey
Jeremy Lang
Jeremy Pinske
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Jessica Flett
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Jessie James
JessileadoesDnD
Jeymi Dunn
JF Paradis
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Jim Bellmore
Jim Glass
Jim Lawhon
Jim O'Sullivan
Jimmy "D3nikke" Gyselinck
Jimmy Paton
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Jochen 'Tailball' Panjaer
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Joe Coleman
Joe Field
Joe Hunt
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Joe Mullahey
Joe Theis
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Joel Beckum
Joel Castro Viedma
Joel Hernandez
Joel Hockney
Joerg Diener
Joerg Igler
Joethelawyer
JoeyQuest
Joh Sedtal
Johan Kjellsson
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John "StrongGlad" Wohlers
John & Meghann Lammers
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John Behnan
John Bejarana
John Bellanso
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John G. Snyder
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John Hickman
John Hyatt
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John 'johnkzin' Rudd
John Jordan Schreck
John Larson
John Lawrence Yabes
John M Maness
John Mettraux
John P. Rogers
John Pechin
John R. Thomas
John Rachwal
John Shirley
John Simpson
John Skinner
John Steaart
John VanBenschoten
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John Wollenzien
John 'Yeoman' Garlick
Johndre De Kock
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Jon Finke
Jon Gray
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Jon McNulty
Jon Milkins
Jon Pynn
Jon Terry
Jon Wandrey
Jon Webb
Jonah Gollihugh
Jonas Lejon
Jonas Orchard
Jonas Vilnius
Jonathan "Buddha" Davis
Jonathan & Carline Davis
Jonathan Bartle
Jonathan Bean
Jonathan Cloutier
Jonathan Conch

Jonathan Cotton
Jonathan Harmon
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Jonathan Siegel
Jonathan Stockwell
Jonathan Ziemann
Jonathon Hubbard
Joonas Kriisk
Joran Schenk
Jordan aka Snow
Jordan Gallagher
Jordan Hush
Jordan Ilareguy
Jordan Johnson
Jordan Murphy
Jordan Peacock
Jordan Pohl
Jorge A. Perez
Jorge Bassi Alonso
Jorge Carrero Roig
Jorge Felício
Jorge Luz
Jorge M
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Jose Lozada
Josef Balderson
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Joseph Arnold
Joseph Blackmon-Dishaw
Joseph Coupal
Joseph Crase
Joseph Evenson
Joseph Guzman
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Joseph Lohr
Joseph McCormick
Joseph R. Quesnel
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Josh A Garvais
Josh Bondhus
Josh Carden
Josh Duckett
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Josh Hernandez
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Josh Lynas
Josh Maca
Josh Murray
Josh Smith
Josh Vella
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Joshua Danny
Joshua Dario
Joshua Donovan
Joshua Ethrufge
Joshua Heider
Joshua J Allison
Joshua Kerns
Joshua Kinnear
Joshua L.
Joshua M. Bryant
Joshua Nach
Joshua Schultz
Joshua Stomel
Joshua Weintrob
Joshua Wood
Joshuah Eae
Josue Pena
JP Stubbings
JPLIV
JT, Kiara, and Scarlet Fischer
Juan “Elfonochasis”
Juan Martin Maanon
Julia Kowal
Julian Barocas
Julian Behrens
Julian David
Julian Thornt
Julian Weitz-Elder
Julien Drouant
Juliette Capel
JUNKDOG
Just glad you succeeded again
Justice Germay
Justin “Magnus Vanskelig” Mitchell
Justin Bergman
Justin Bizet
Justin Camden
Justin Grant
Justin Hadden
Justin Lawless
Justin McCown
Justin Pelkey
Justin Thomas
Justin.D
JW-P
K Horigan
K McDonnell
K. Dudzinski
K. Robert Barlowe
K. Ryzowski
K.D. Graves
Kaare Kulland
Kaelin & Menitza
Kaelob Berger
Kai
Kai Gröner
Kai Salminen
Kai Xuan Leong
Kaia
Kaiden Kangail
Kaila Hanlin
Kailey Smith
Kal Drago
Kalcheus
Kalon G
Kalon Ohmstede
Kalysta Young
Karen Hammervik
Karen kehoe
Karissa K.
Karl Boyce
Karl Cronberger
Karl Schmidt
Karlee Finch
Kasey Wince
Kaspar Gunde Wessberg Larsen
Kasper “The Ghost” Domanski
Kasper Onza
Kasper Riches
Kassie M.
Kat Adams
Kat Chesney
Kate Mascal
Kate Nussrainer
Katherine Panowicz
Kathryn Churchill
Kathryn Heil
Katie Hartigan
Katie Jensen
Katie Shuter Rompala
Katon M Gerky
Kaylee Scruggs
Kayleigh Michelle
Kazay KVM
KazzBeast
KC Luchsinger
Keelan allen
Keifer rutkauskas
Keith Rupp
Kelley Strang
Kelly Cook
Kelly Smith
Kelsey Lau
Keltic Kraken
Kelvin Spencer Chu
Ken B
Ken Bernard
Ken Grose
Ken ‘Kilroy’ Reinertson
Ken mclelland
Ken Wyrick
Kendal Larson
Kenneth Smith
Kenneth Young
Kennie N. Nørgaard
Kenny Beecher
Kenny Modowski
kenny wong
Kent
Kent B.
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Kerry E Hikton
Keszanne
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Kevin Borrup
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Kevin Deliën
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Kevin Freeman
Kevin Holmes
Kevin Killen
Kevin Morris
Kevin Rheault
Kevin Saxton
Kevin Schilling
Kevin Schreur
Kevin Shaw
Kevin Sieswerda
Kevin Tait
Kevin White
Keye Oliver
KG Konstantin Goetz
Khidr Milliman-Jarvis
Kiel Nelson
Kieran
Kieran Patterson
Kiiyashi
Kilah Harrell
Kilian Braun
Kim Lyngby Jørgensen
Kim Synnerborn
Kimba Rose Williams
KindaBees
Kira Camilla
Kira L. Cope
Kirby Rodman
Kirwyn
Kit Dixon
Kiwi Chris
Kjetil Hope
Klog: FwB
Kobi
Kody Ogaard
Kody Verrett
Kookullin
Kora Bray
Korav
Korbin Voss
Kosmas “Samsok” Molntovan
Kosta
Kostadis Roussos
KR Vedolich
Kraig Gander
Kraig Przybylski
Kraul Stone
Kris “Lownwulf187” Kent
Kristen Andersen
Kristen Brewer
Krister Persson
Krister Sundelin
Kristian Klefstad
Kristian Zirnsak
Kristin LeBlanc
Kristina Cantrell
Kristina Zimmermann
Kristiyan Damyanov
Kristof “KiKiN” Lambrechts
Kristofer Wells
Kristyn L Rowe
Krys Otsuka
Krysnay Desgene
Kuduros
Kuroe
Kurtis Short
KW
Kyle “DinoPartyHat” Newell
Kyle Amen
Kyle Anderson
Kyle Civalier
Kyle Erickson
Kyle H
Kyle Knott
Kyle Knudsen
Kyle Langs
Kyle Pritchard
Kyle S.
Kyle sinnett
Kyle Spiegel
Kyle Stewart
Kyle Tice
Kyle Urda
Kyton786
L
Lacey
Lachlan Dry
Lachlan Van Eck
Lady Olive Spoon
Lady Raesa
Lain Artifex
Laine McCurrin
Lance Hurst
LandisTheThief
Landon King
Lane Neufeld
Lara Sidra
Lars Garmon
Lars H. Böttger
Lars Hjortshøj Andersen
Lars Juergen Koenig
Lars Rooijers
Lars Silberg Hansen
Lars-Inge Lindbom
Lasse Dalsgaard Andersen
Laura
Laura McBride
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Lauren Klaumenzer
Lauren Ridgwell
Laurence Tiblis
Laurence Walls
Laurent Duhamel
Laurie O’Dhuine
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Le_Owneron
LeAnn ‘Ellyham’ LaFollette
Leanna Brisky
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Lee A.
Lee Edwards
Lee Hawkes
Lee Perry
Leif
Leif Nepstad
Lemonhands
Lena Erickson
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Lenn Fabian Sanchez
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Lēoht Steren
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Liam “Wolf” Sullivan
Liam Bell
Liam Berge
Liam Chapman
Liam Dunsdon-Bolton
Liam Epp
Liam Sullivan
Liam ‘The Worm’ Butler
Liam Tierney
Liam Tieszen
Lianna
Lilliana Lamoureux
Lilltiger
Lindsey Goodwin
Linn Løkketangen
Linnea Taipalensuu
Linus Niemann
Lionhead Gaming
Lirizar
Littlebit(Ashley J)
Liz Juarez
Liz Siewerth
Liz Zehender
Lizard
Loasdryn
Lóczki Balázs
Logan
Logan Boston
Logan Maynard
Logan S.
Logan W. Cooke
Lohengrin
Lois M Zaleski
Loki
Lokijan
Lon Franson
Lonewolfajk
Lord Creedrain
Lord Dr. Rev. Michael T. Wallace
Lord Victor Rutgar Nightingale
LordBaane
Loren Small
Lorie Jean Guerrero
Lorkun
Lotty Ash
Louis Orr
Lubu
Luca
Luca
Luca Malato
Lucas
Lucas A. Metzen
Lucas Grant Skjaret
Lucas J. Cifranic
Lucas Keeley
Lucas Stephens
Lucas Troyano
Lucio Hinojosa III
Ludocatface
Ludus Rex
Luis
Luis Hinojosa
Lukas “ToastiChron” Scheerer
Lukas Herzog
Luke Fabis
Luke Gates
Luke Rammy
Luke Trevino
Luke Turner
Luke&Marty Babbi
Luthor Astarael
Lykaios
Lysa Racicot
M Jones
M Pierce
M Reeves
M. Donnell
M. P. Redford
Mac Shihab
Maciej Szuba
Mackenzie Cory
Mackenzie-John Morton
MadFergy
Madison W.
Mads Bjarkow
Maficitto
Magfurul Abeer
Magnanyx
Magnus
Magnus “KJR” Rock
Magnús Emilsson
Magnús Þór Einarsson
Magnus TK
Maja Boye Flindt
Makayla Combs
Malcolm Harrison
Malekai Grymme
Mallory Ann
Malmuki
Manfat
Manon & Jordy
Manuel A. Moya - the wolfpriest
Marc Crozier
Marc Le Guen
Marc Mullinex
Marc Stearman
Marc Vaughan
Marcel Bovenschen
Marcin Grabowski
Marco Generoso
Marco Torralba
Marcus Faison
Marcus Funke & Alice Wiesner
Marcus Hedberg
Marcus O’houdrain
Maredudd ap Cynan
Marguerite DeLong
Maria Storm Smith
Mariah
Marie
Marie Gallardo
Mario A. Vélez
Mario M.
Marius van Herpen
Mariusz Kowalczyk
Mariusz Kutek
Mark “Sawboss” Peacock

Mark “the Bard” Gunter
Mark Berard
Mark Blanton
Mark Borja
Mark Carline
Mark Carter
Mark Crawford
Mark Erickson
Mark Francis
Mark Hall
Mark Kearns
Mark Leymaster of Grammarye
Mark M
Mark ‘Madmax13’ Smith
Mark Melenberg
Mark Mills
Mark Odom
Mark of Awe
Mark Rehill
Mark Spaeth
Mark Spanjer
Mark Sprenger
Mark Stokes
Mark Tresidder
Markus ‘Sensei Sc0oby’ Schubert
Maron Wong
Marr Danskerson
Marsayus
Martijn Heitling
Martin Beecr
Martin Bo Ammentorp (NexusNemesis)
Martin Brandt
Martin Duschlbauer
Martin Greening
Martin Hamilton
Martin Heim
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Martin Jorgensen
Martin K
Martin Kreutz
Martin Legg
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Marvin Woodward
Maryah L Rutherford
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Mason G.
Mason Hammerlund
Mason Spaun
Mason T. Gastenveld
Mason Weiss
Mason-Mahoe Pellazar
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Matau
Mathew Jones
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Mathias Eek
Mathias Rotestam
Mathieu Kautz
Mathieu Lapierre
Mathieu Moquin
Mathijs & Naomi Bouma
Mathilde DAVID
Mats Naughty Peltola
Matt
Matt and Morgan Upchurch
Matt Bancroft
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Matthew Sampson
Matthew Smitheram
Matthew speight
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Freyja's Tears Svilland Adventure (1-20 Level) for 4-6 Players © 2021 Dream Realm Storytellers LTD. All rights reserved.