

WARLOCK

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DWARVES AT WAR

by Wolfgang Baur

The news from the Ironcrag Cantons is always of interest to lowland humans, given how often the followers of Mavros hire dwarves to serve as mercenaries in the Seven Cities or to help the Magdar Kingdom hold the line against the Mharoti in the east. In recent years though, many small dwarven companies are forming up to go west to the Wastes or north to the Wolfmark and the free city at Johzt. Some of this is driven by piety and some of it by greed; we'll address each in turn here.

The Word of the Forge

Many young dwarven warriors are convinced that the opportunities to find ancient vaults in the Wastes are better now than in prior times, largely because of the Forge Prophecy proclaimed by Toveli Rogest, priest of Volund and master of the Templeforge halls. His oracular pronouncement claims that cantonal dwarves are poised to seize new lands, rather than defending human kingdoms, if only they can accomplish two things: 1) find the *Horn of Verrante* from the treasure vaults of the west and 2) drive back the vampires and ghouls and establish the righteous rule of the living in Morgau, Doresh, and Krakovar. It is, frankly, a call to religious action both by followers of Thor-Perun and by all dwarves of good

heart. As part of this prophecy, a new battle chant has spread among the faithful, giving strength to their arms and axes and victory against dust goblins and ghouls alike. Older, more traditional spells such as *hedgehog dozen*, *march of death*, and *storm of axes* have also found new favor.

News from the Dwarfmoot

The Dwarfmoot has been lively and not just because of Toveli's prophecy and the restlessness of a young generation of reavers. Other interests have been proclaimed loudly, in particular the wish of Jaro Whitebeard, Commander of the Black Fortress and leader of the Grisal Canton, to form a standing body of troops to push hard against Morgau and the ghouls of Krakovar. All dwarves at the moot are in favor of this in principle, though the matter is more fraught when the question of pay arises. Grisal is not a wealthy canton, and the folk of Bundeshausen and Gunnacks are happy to fund some of this Great Cantonal Levy and claim much of the glory. However, they both insist that one of their generals leads it. The discussion continues whether Grisal troops will fight for a "soft canton" leader, and meanwhile, Toveli Rogest strives to gather axe-dwarves and others to the new "Great Canton" banner with promises of plunder from Krakovar.

The dwarves of Grisal did not wait for the decision; some are going to attend Queen Dorytta's Queensmeet to ask for her promise of pay in exchange for this Great Levy and to call a few of the more experienced knights to bring their cavalry north against Morgau. Whether this will come to anything is open to debate; already other cantons accuse Grisal of "speaking for other cantons" and attempting to lead the Ironcrags into a larger engagement than already exists. The dour dwarves of Grisal point to their own losses and the dangers of the undead and insist that other cantons not rely on Grisal as "both sword and shield and strength of arms" against the undead. They feel they have carried too much of the burden for too long.

The Dwarfmoort has thus been a cauldron of varying opinions, many spilling out into sharp insults, muddy fistfights, and even a few instances of beard pulling or beard cutting (both punishable offenses: the first by a fine, the second by expulsion from the Dwarfmoort).

For a general list of events that might enliven a Dwarfmoort, consult the "Events at the Dwarfmoort" table (see next page).

Dwarven Battle Magic

Dwarves spend a large portion of their summer in mercenary work, and reavers plan their spring raids all through the winter, so battle magic is often on their minds. In addition to the standard sorts of arcane improvements to their roster and abilities common to the human legions such as the Wands of Runkelstad and the Bemmean arcanists, the cantonal dwarves have several secrets spells that they seldom share with outsiders. These are described here; human and darakhul foes are familiar with them from the battlefield certainly but generally have no access to the formulas used.

BATTLE CHANT

2nd-level enchantment (ritual)

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: 60 feet

Components: V, S, M (a swinging censel of incense)

Duration: Concentration, up to 5 minutes

You bless up all allied creatures of your choice within range. Whenever a target lands a successful hit before the spell ends, the target can add 1 to the damage roll.



EVENTS AT THE DWARFMOOT

D20 Result

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 1 | A bitter feud has erupted between dwarves of two clan holdings. Several scathing songs have been composed, declaiming the faults of one or another clan, and both sides have seen scuffles and insults hurled during otherwise festive meetings. |
| 2-3 | A case of ownership of a particular gold claim is to be settled at the moot. Roll additional d6: 1 = the judge has gone missing, 2-3 = one side has taken a hostage unless the case is dropped, 4 = the gold claim seems to have been mined in stealth since the first complaint and the gold is gone, 5 = both sides have pledged the funds to the defense of Grisol, 6 = a new and human claimant has muddled the case. |
| 4-5 | A group of female dwarves from Alpentor is at the Dwarfmoor, rousing much curiosity. They all wear bandannas and heavy clothes, and they claim to wish to take up arms in the spring as shieldmaidens, quite against Alpentor custom. They call themselves the "Veiled Sisters" and seem quite competent with weapons and divine magic. |
| 6 | A famous elderly dwarven smith, Jan "Copperbeard" Desmeldin, seeks an apprentice. He is asking candidates to show their best work; competition is quite keen. |
| 7-8 | An ax-throwing contest is announced with the prize of a golden axe head to the winner (400 gp value). |
| 9 | One of the ravenfolk is attending the Dwarfmoor and seems to be consulting various sages, rune shapers, and ring mages about some arcane matter. |
| 10 | Three dwarves have taken seriously ill; poisoning of some food or drink is suspected but cannot be proven. |

When cast by multiple casters chanting in unison, the same increases to 2 points added to the damage roll.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 3rd level or higher, you can extend the range by 10 feet for each slot level above 2nd.

HEDGEHOG DOZEN

3rd-level illusion

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Components: V, S

Duration: 1 minute

Eleven illusory duplicates of the touched creature appear in its space. A creature affected by *hedgehog dozen* seems to have a dozen arms, shields, and weapons—a swarm of partially overlapping, identical creatures. Until the spell ends, these duplicates move

with the target and mimic its actions, shifting position so it's impossible to track which image is real. You can use your action to dismiss the illusory duplicates.

While surrounded by duplicates, a creature gains advantage against any opponent because of the bewildering number of weapons and movements.

Each time a creature targets you with an attack during the spell's duration, roll a d8 to determine whether the attack instead targets one of your duplicates. On a roll of 1, it strikes you. On any other roll it removes one of your duplicates; when you have only five duplicates remaining, the spell ends.

A creature is unaffected by this spell if it can't see, if it relies on senses other than sight, such as blindsight, or if it can perceive illusions as false as with truesight.

-
- 11–12 A crossbow contest is announced with a prize of a mithral crossbow bolt to the winner (400 gp value).
-
- 13 A young dwarf claims to be an orphan and tries to ingratiate himself with a dwarven PC, seeking a mentor. He is far too young to be on his own and may be a runaway apprentice.
-
- 14 A high price is offered for strong, hardworking thralls brought to the Dwarfmoot and sold for work in the mines. Indeed, mines are shorthanded everywhere.
-
- 15 A griffon egg is offered for auction. Bidding begins at just 100 gp, but the priests of Templeforge will pay as much as 500 for it.
-
- 16 A muleskinner and an entire mule train of ale, cider, and provisions from Gunnacks has gone missing on the way to the Dwarfmoot. No one is sure what happened to Eclara “Bootleather” Gunnacks, the tough leader of the mule train, but the gathering is uneasy about this and sends out search parties.
-
- 17 The stones and law tablets of the Dwarfmoot have been defaced with blood during the night. Agents of Morgau are suspected, though some say it is just a foolish prank.
-
- 18 A strange priestess of Ninkash visited the Dwarfmoot this year, offering wine and praising Baccolon and speaking Elvish. Some believe she has been possessed by an elvish ghost or banshee.
-
- 19 Three wild rocs have taken up residence in the foothills near the western wastes, stealing several mounts and mules from dwarves in the western cantons. So far, no one has been able to chase them off.
-
- 20 Rumors swirl that Volund has possessed a famously pious follower who is watching the Dwarfmoot and speaking in an archaic language. Each item she touches is blessed.
-

MARCH OF THE DEAD

3rd-level necromancy

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: 50 feet

Components: V, S, M (a prayer scroll with names of the fallen)

Duration: Instantaneous

This spell animates the recently dead to remove them from a battlefield. Choose one corpse of a Medium or Small humanoid per level of the caster (within range). Your spell imbues the targets with an animating spirit, raising them as construct creatures similar in appearance to flesh golems, though with the strength and abilities of zombies. Dwarves use this to return the bodies of the fallen to clan tombs and to deny the corpses the foul attention of ghouls, necromancers, and similar foes.

On each of your turns, you can use a bonus action to mentally command all the creatures you made with this spell if the creatures are within 60 feet of you. You decide what action the creatures will take and where they will move during the next day; you cannot command them to guard. If you issue no commands, the creatures only defend themselves against hostile creatures. Once given an order and direction of march, the creatures continue to follow it until they arrive at the destination you named or until 24 hours have elapsed when the spell ends and the corpses fall lifeless once more.

To tell creatures to move for another 24 hours, you must cast this spell on the creatures again before the current 24-hour period ends. This use of the spell reasserts your control over up to 50 creatures you

have animated with this spell rather than animating a new one.

At Higher Levels: When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th level or higher, you animate or reassert control over two additional construct creatures for each slot level above 3rd (two creatures/level at 4th, three creatures/level at 5th). Each of the creatures must come from a different corpse.

STORM OF AXES

4th -level conjuration (battle)

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 25 feet

Components: V, S, M (axe handle)

Duration: concentration + 1 round

You conjure up dozens of axes and direct them in a pattern in chopping, whirling mayhem. The blades fill eight 5-foot squares in a line 40 feet long or in a double-strength line 20 feet long and 10 deep. The axes cause 6d8 slashing damage to creatures in the area at the moment the spell is cast or half damage with a successful Dexterity saving throw. By maintaining concentration, you can move the swarm of axes up to 20 feet per round in any direction you wish. If the storm of axes moves into spaces containing creatures, they immediately must make another Dexterity saving throw or suffer damage again.

Dwarven Magical Items of the Cantons

The dwarves make a huge variety of tools and weapons for their expeditions into the lowlands. Other items, particularly their temple horns, are rarely taken out of the cantons themselves. Both types of items are described here.

Note that the temple horns are somewhat religious and require attunement by the faithful. This is as normal attunement; however, it succeeds only if attuned to a follower of the god in question. This need not be a cleric, druid, or other spellcaster; any sincere follower of the god can attune the item. While these are usually dwarven followers of Khors, Ninkash, Volund, or Thor-Perun, cases have been recorded of human and even ravenfolk heroes successfully using temple horns.

GRISAL TRUMPET

Uncommon wondrous item

A brass trumpet coiled into a circle and sometimes decorated with black cords or ribbons, these are sacred to the sun god Khors. Its holder can use an action to blow the trumpet, which imbues all bones



or corpses within 60 feet with a mimicry of life, raising them as undead creatures shining with the radiant light of the sun (as a *light* spell). The targets become skeletons if you choose bones or zombies if you choose corpses.

On each of your turns, you can use a bonus action to mentally command any creature you called up with this item if the creature is within 60 feet of you. (If you control more than one creature, you can command any or all of them at the same time, issuing the same command to each one.) You decide what action the creature will take and where it will move during its next turn, or you can issue a general command, such as to guard a particular chamber or corridor. If you issue no commands, the creature only defends itself against hostile creatures. Once given an order, a creature continues to follow it until its task is complete.

The creatures remain under your control for 24 hours, after which the remains vanish with a gentle pulse of sunlight.

A *Grisal Trumpet* has three charges per day; these are regained each day at dawn.

HORN OF NINKASH

Rare wondrous item, requires attunement by the faithful

Sometimes called a “feasting horn,” a *Horn of Ninkash* is usually shaped like a drinking horn or sometimes a bit like a beer stein with a handle and a mouthpiece for blowing. When the horn is sounded, a raucous noise such as a cheer or toast emits from the horn along with a feeling of fellowship and confidence to all who hear it. They gain a 1d6 bonus to a check or attack made within 12 hours of hearing the horn. A creature benefits from this blessing of Ninkash only once per day.

The bearer of a horn of Ninkash can always give commands to a keg golem and expect them to be obeyed.

HORN OF VERRANTE

Rare wondrous item, requires attunement by the faithful

Made of gold, remorhaz ivory, and chased with designs of interwoven shields and axes in finest mithral, the *Horn of Verrante* is possibly one of the few items left from the height of dwarven power, before the Mage Wars and before the elven legions commanded much of the Crossroads, the West, and the Seven Cities.

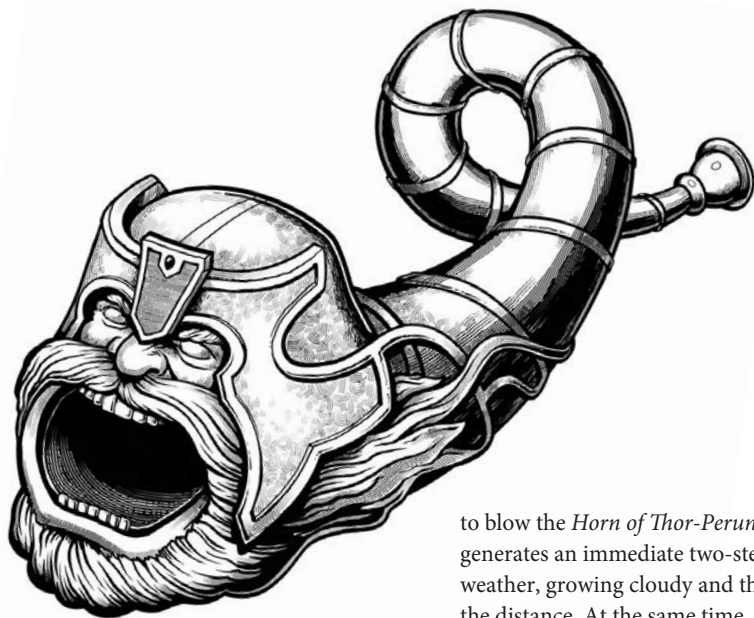
You can take an action to blow the *Horn of Verrante*. Doing so invokes powerful battle magic. (Spells marked with an asterisk [*] are from *Midgard Heroes Handbook* and/or *Deep Magic: Battle Magic*.)

- 1 charge for warning shout* (for all allies that hear the horn)
- 2 charges for wresting wind*
- 3 charges for inspiring speech* (though with effective casting time of 1 action)

If used with ley line attunement, the Horn of Verrante’s powers increase sharply.

- 0 charges are expended for warning shout*
- 1 charge is expended for wresting wind*
- 2 charges are expended for inspiring speech* (though with effective casting time of 1 action)
- 3 charges are expended for instant fortification*
- 4 charges are expended for holy ground*

The Horn of Verrante regains 1d6 charges each day at dawn. If it is ever blown and its last charge expended, the desired effect occurs. In addition, the mouth of the horn is instantly sealed by a small leaden plug that cannot be removed without destroying the horn. To unseal it, the Horn of Verrante must be blown at the site of a great dwarven victory in battle, or it must be the subject of a holy aura spell cast at Templeforge or a similar high holy altar of the dwarven gods.



HORN OF VOLUND

Rare wondrous item, requires attunement by the faithful

The *Horn of Volund* is a marvel of metalworking with gold, mithral, and vermeil mixed together, often making the shape of a dwarf with an open mouth, which forms the sounding bell of the horn. Its tone is loud but not unpleasant and can be heard for distances up to 2 miles without difficulty.

You can take an action to blow the *Horn of Volund*. Doing so invokes divine light to bless the armor and shields of all allied creatures within 60 feet and either wearing Medium or heavier armor or carrying a shield. Those given the blessing of Volund gain advantage on all saving throws for four rounds.

HORN OF THOR-PERUN

Uncommon wondrous item

This silver horn is decorated with thunderbolts of gold and often with a holy symbol of Thor-Perun included in its maker's mark. You can take an action

to blow the *Horn of Thor-Perun*. Doing so generates an immediate two-step shift in the weather, growing cloudy and thundering in the distance. At the same time, all weapons held by your allies are blessed and add 1d6 lightning damage on their next melee or ranged attack.

DRAUGHT OF THE BLACK OWL

Common Potion

By drinking this potion, you transform yourself into a large black owl. The transformation lasts until dawn or until the drinker drops to 0 hit points or dies. Your game statistics, except for mental ability scores and hp, are replaced by Str 3, Dex 13, Con 8, AC 11, and darkvision 120 ft. You gain keen vision and hearing and thus advantage on all Perception checks. You retain your alignment and personality.

The owl form is limited in the actions it can perform by the nature of its new form, and you can't speak, cast spells, or take any other action that require hands or speech.

Your gear melds into the new form. While in owl form, only druids with Wildshape can activate, use, wield, or otherwise benefit from any equipment, and even this equipment must be worn or grasped (such as a ring or wand).

DWARVEN DEVICES: FIREARMS AND AIRSHIPS

by Ashley Warren

Dwarves are often lauded for their impeccable engineering, but this extends far past intricate stone work and into the realm of science and artifice. They delve into the Ironcrag to glean resources needed to create mechanical inventions unlike anything else seen in Midgard. Don't be fooled by the boisterous dwarf; these are nimble-handed folks who can construct the smallest of innerworkings of clocks and the most powerful of engines.

Not all dwarves are drawn to the depths. It is the cantonal dwarves, residing in the Ironcrag, who are unique among other dwarven communities. The cantons are scarred with various mountain ranges that form a ring around the region. Cantonal dwarves have a saying: "The colder the peak, the stronger the ore." As such, they'll brave the dangers of the kobold-occupied depths to collect whatever they can. Those who are successful often find acclaim and wealth. And all those unique substances found pique further interest with many of these resource-seeking dwarves continuing their studies in laboratories and workspaces.

It's nearly possible to separate the culture of mining from science, artifice, and construction. Many dwarves consider it part of the process—if you want to create something from scratch, you must first source your materials yourself. One can only call themself a maker if they bring something to life with their own hands.

Two notable inventions have arisen from this culture: firearms and airships. Although these developments differ greatly in their purpose, the processes of building them share many similarities. It's inarguable that these have changed Midgard irrevocably—for better or worse.

Cult of the Gear Maiden

For dwarves of Zobeck, passion for devices and constructs is more than just a lucrative endeavor. These dwarves revere the Gear Maiden, Rava, and those who worship Rava see artifice as an extension of the natural world. They do not see nature and science as incompatible but rather as a way to cultivate and process materials sourced from the wild. It is a mutually respectful relationship: Rava provides, and the dwarves reap, process, and build.



Makers Marks

Dwarves who mine, forge, and craft often include a maker's mark on their inventions, whether it's engraved on the back of a pocket watch or on the butt of a firearm. The mark is determined by the dwarf's family and the metals they employ in their creations. Thus a mark is comprised of three components:

- First letter of the dwarf's surname.
- A symbol that represents their house. Dwarves from ancient and noble houses often have a sigil, but dwarves without such lineage typically create their own based on their personality or values.
- A shape or symbol that designates their specialty. These mirror symbols that alchemists use, and there's quite a bit of crossover between alchemists and artificers. For example, a goldsmith's mark displays a circle with a dot in the center.

More experienced dwarves may specialize in more than one material, and this is reflected in the mark. Dwarf PCs who are artificers, crafters, miners, and forgers can create a maker's mark using the same system. However, there is a prerequisite: they must create at least one item in the material they consider their "specialty." Once this item has been crafted, it must be used and stress tested. If it can suitably accomplish the purpose it was intended for, the creator is permitted to design a maker's mark. Some dwarves specialize in this design and offer this service to others.

Firearms

Gunpowder is rare in Midgard, and firearms even rarer. To create both requires a dedication to mining some of the most dangerous substances found in the Ironcrags. Swordsmiths and goldsmiths are highly respected among dwarven society, but gunsmiths supersede even the best of these because of the danger associated with their craft. Meeting a grayed and weathered gunsmith is a special and rare encounter.

The first firearm designed by dwarves was essentially a modified crossbow. Used mostly in open-field combat, the fighter would load the bow with a bolt and pack it with gunpowder, and the arrow would shoot forth toward its target. Dwarf engineers were then eager to streamline and automate this process further, and thus the firearm was made. Gunsmiths continue to develop new firearms and push the boundaries of weapon design.

Even in a world where magic is commonplace, guns still inspire fear. The weapons can be unpredictable, and many gunsmiths suffer lasting injury from the volatile gunpowder. Because so much goes into crafting a firearm, dwarves don't often sell their creations. It's uncommon for these guns to be used in criminal activity because they are easily traced back to their maker. Still, some dwarves use them on the battlefield in place of more traditional weapons like axes or swords.

Dwarven Arquebus

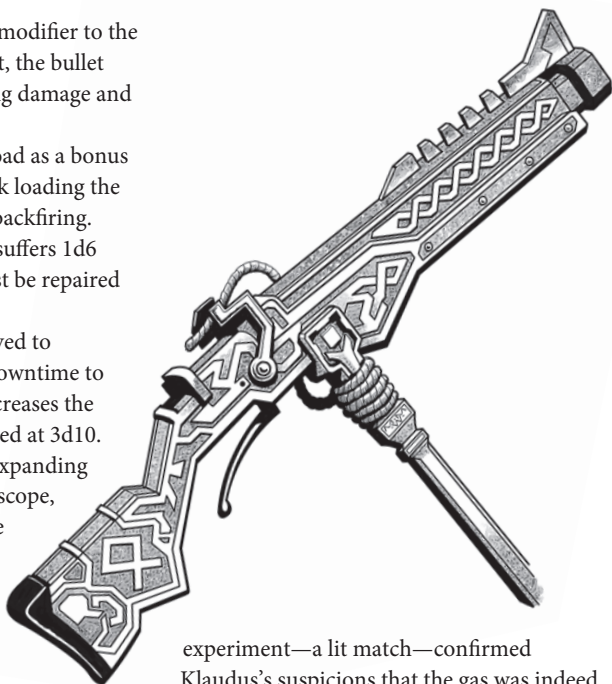
Spot a dwarven arquebus by the intricate geometric metalwork along the barrel; most makers place their mark right on the stock. The arquebus uses bullets, which must be kept wrapped in cloth to prevent them from accidentally detonating.

It takes an action to load an arquebus safely. Spending a full action means that the gun is loaded safely and doesn't backfire.

The user adds their dexterity modifier to the attack roll. On a successful hit, the bullet causes the target 1d10 piercing damage and 1d4 fire damage.

A character can choose to load as a bonus action instead; however, quick loading the firearm has a 20% chance of backfiring. If the gun backfires, the user suffers 1d6 fire damage, and the gun must be repaired before it can be used again.

The arquebus can be improved to increase damage. Spending downtime to refine and rebuild the gun increases the damage by another d10, capped at 3d10. Improvements may include expanding the bullet chamber, adding a scope, shortening or lengthening the barrel, or any other change that would affect the gun's mechanical abilities.



Bomb

Miners often make bombs to help clear out large amounts of stone and ore; however, the bombs can also be used in combat. Crafting a bomb is dangerous as is any activity involving gunpowder. The powder must be wrapped in parchment and then contained in a cylindrical vessel comprised of wood or a thin, pliable metal. Lighting the wick leads to its detonation in a 10-foot space; any creature within that space suffers from 5d6 fire damage. A DC 12 Dexterity save halves the damage.

Airships

The invention of the airship can be traced back to Klaudus Erdogant. Like many scientific developments, the energy source of airships was discovered by accident. Originally an alchemist, Klaudus invented “liftgas” by dissolving a waxy material in boiling water; the paste that resulted emitted a potent gas that lifted the parchment under which it was being stored. An additional

experiment—a lit match—confirmed Klaudus's suspicions that the gas was indeed flammable. Klaudus survived his laboratory explosion but lost a finger, which he considered quite worth the cost of science.

Both the gas and Klaudus's inspiration were ignited, and he turned his attention to harnessing this interesting gas, for it could emulate the (normally magical) processes of flight. After much trial and tribulation, he was able to fill a pigskin balloon with the gas. Lo and behold, the balloon floated around the laboratory—much to Klaudus's delight—until it too exploded in an array of fleshy carnage. Klaudus emerged unscathed and continued to refine his design, using a silk that was less prone to porous gas leaks. Eventually he developed an airship that could carry him alone, and this led to the creation of more substantial airships.

Unfortunately, Klaudus's invention was also what killed him. When demonstrating a prototype of a more substantial airship to a group of potential patrons, the craft crashed and burned with Klaudus inside. This didn't, however, stop the patriarchs from

continuing Klaudus's research and funding additional airship development.

Klaudus was a priest of Volund and resided on the holy ground of Templeforge, and as requested by the Archpatriarch, Klaudus's widow sold his lab notes to Onderval Templeforge. Onderval took up the mantle of airship engineer and built several notable expansions to Klaudus's preliminary designs, including a steam-powered propeller that allowed the ships to travel much farther distances.

Airships were quickly adapted for use in combat. The single-rider ships were used to transport dwarven engineers to the city gate during the Siege of Latorne. This stealth action lowered the engineers onto the city gate, enabling them to declare victory.

Both acolytes of Volund and Reva have a connection to airships and count the sight of one as a positive omen. Templeforge is abundant with the substances needed to produce liftgas. However, this process is strenuous, and a new airship is only created around once every 20 years. It is very expensive to maintain an airship that is safe to fly. Still, those who are part of the industry enjoy their lucrative career.

TYPES OF AIRSHIPS

Dwarven airships come in different designs. Most popular and well-known is the blimp-style airship in which the entire mechanical structure and residential quarters are ensconced within a liftgas-filled balloon. These can vary wildly in size.

Other airships have carriages that suspend from the bottom of the balloon. These are more frequently used in combat.

AIRSHIPS IN COMBAT

Despite the strenuous work it takes to build one, airships are surprisingly delicate constructs and easily felled by enemies. Unfortunately, though, many airships fail rather by mistakes of the crew or passengers.

However, the benefit of using an airship in combat comes down to stealth and the element of surprise. Few warriors expect to see an airship flying overhead, and this provides their combatants ample opportunity to drop bombs upon their surprised enemies.

Some wartime airships are powered entirely by constructs, which prevents loss of life when the fighters eventually turn their attention to the aircraft above. However, some take issue with this, for many makers treat their constructs as familiars and laboratory assistants.

The Liftgas Merchant Marine Air Corps is the only organized airship militia. Joining the LMMAC is prestigious; most involved are dwarves and many dwarven families dream of having a family member become part of the LMMAC.

CREW OF AN AIRSHIP

Manning an airship is not unlike a ship at sea. Captains must closely follow weather patterns to avoid inadvertently leading a crew to danger. The sky's patterns mirror those of the sea, and the climate can change at a moment's notice. A crew must work together to keep the airship afloat.

- **Captain:** The captain is in charge of piloting the ship (and in fact, some airship crews call their captain the "pilot," but this has yet to catch on). Captains must undergo rigorous training to earn their title and the coveted pair of goggles awarded upon their graduation. The tests a captain takes require extensive knowledge of the intricate interworkings of the engine, the ability to repair the ship while it's in flight, and an arsenal of spells or arcane tools to employ in the event of an emergency. Most airship captains tend to be dwarves, for they are among the few who possess such knowledge and expertise.

- **First Officer:** The first officer assists the captain in any way possible, including managing the rest of the crew and ensuring that the airship is in flyable condition.
- **Navigator:** Captains often employ mages or oracles to serve as navigators. This has both an immediate role in keeping an eye on the skies to plan for danger or inclement weather as well as an arcane role in determining the viability of a voyage and divining potential threats.
- **Chief Artificer:** The chief artificer oversees all mechanical components on the ship and manages the mechanics who work under their direction.
- **Mechanic:** In the event of an emergency, mechanics spring into action and make all necessary repairs using the many materials kept on hand. Most mechanics tend to be constructs developed for this specific purpose, but occasionally young dwarves who aspire to be captains join the mech crew for training. Although it may seem like grunt work, engine mechanics are prized and respected by the crew.
- **Cleric:** Most ships employ at least one healer who can ensure that the crew remains healthy and able.
- **Cook:** For long journeys, cooks are brought on board to ensure that crew members and passengers are well fed. They are not, however, permitted to use fire or flammable chemistry while on the ship, lest the liftgas catch fire and consume all within. No pie is worth the risk.
- **Bard:** An airship bard helps improve crew morale. These bards often favor wind instruments.

CAPTAIN'S GOGGLES

Rare wondrous item, requires attunement

Airship captain's goggles are made of copper and glass designed to repel water and to never fog. While wearing these goggles, the wearer cannot suffer from exhaustion. They are fitted specifically for the wearer and are marked with the captain's name. The goggles can only be attuned to one person.

If the goggles break, the wearer must be the one to repair them; otherwise the goggles lose their magical properties.



Character Options

The following character options are available for cantonal dwarf PCs:

STONELESS (BACKGROUND)

Dwarves who spend a lot of time on airships are often referred to as the Stoneless. These are dwarves who have less experience in the mines and do not possess the same abilities to forge and craft items as their cantonal brethren. However, they have a keen understanding for how to build, maintain, and pilot an airship.

d4 Personality Trait

- 1 I prefer the company of engines and technology to people.
- 2 I can discern the needs of an airship the way miners can sleuth out the most potent veins of ore.
- 3 I help build any ship on which I fly and know everything about it. Any ship I build is safe and efficient.
- 4 Like many dwarves, I come across as gruff, but I take a liking to anyone who also enjoys airships.

d4 Ideal

- 1 More people should experience life in the skies. It puts everything else into perspective.
- 2 While in flight, my life belongs to the ship. I owe it respect and care.
- 3 The world would be a better place if more people chose to travel via airship.
- 4 If I never had to return to ground, I would remain in the sky forever. This is my home and where I am most comfortable and productive.

d4 Bond

- 1 I am close with my crew and will do anything to protect them. I consider them my family.
- 2 Whatever the captain says is what I believe. If I am the captain, I expect my crew and I to have consensus over decision making.
- 3 If my ship is used in combat, it's for a righteous cause. I would only put my ship and crew in harm's way in pursuit of something good.
- 4 I never refer to an engine or mechanic as "broken"; I consider it bad luck to refer to technology like that. Instead, I refer to it as "needing" something, like care or maintenance.

d4 Flaw

- 1 I bristle at those who think that life aboard an airship is "easy," and my temper is easily stoked.
- 2 I do not always get along with other dwarves who are more experienced miners and forgers. They don't understand my skillset, and I don't understand theirs.
- 3 I spend so much of my life in the air that I am disconnected from the politics of life down below.
- 4 Navigation on land eludes me.

Airship Acolyte (Background)

Acolytes who serve on airships can be clerics who aid in healing or even combat or any crew member who sees the sailing of airships as a spiritual experience. These are often acolytes of Volund although they may serve any deity that has a connection to mining, science, or artifice related to the development of airships.

d4 Personality Trait

- 1 I am quite introverted and introspective once a ship takes flight. I consider flight to be meditative.
- 2 I intimately know the innerworkings of airships and am attuned to their needs.
- 3 I am always eager to set sail on a new voyage. The farther I can travel via airship, the better.
- 4 I enjoy sharing my values and passion for airships with others who may not know as much about these wondrous inventions.

d4 Ideal

- 1 The sky is the realm of the gods, and we navigate through their home. They'll permit us safe passage if we do not anger them.
- 2 My temple is wherever I go, and my faith is not constrained by arbitrary traditions or practices.
- 3 An airship is like a ship at sea and deserves a name. The crew must treat the ship with respect.
- 4 Scientists and artificers have a responsibility to not put their creations in harm's way. The things we bring to life have value and personality.

d4 Bond

- 1 I regard all light and weather patterns as omens. A crew will never be caught off guard.
- 2 I am not frightened by the expanse of the sky and the creatures that live within it.
- 3 The voice of the engines and mechanics is the voice of the gods, speaking to us through their manifestations.
- 4 I value the ships on which I serve and revere them as a friend.

d4 Flaw

- 1 I don't understand those who are fearful of flying or heights.
- 2 The way I pray and practice my faith is often strange and foreign to others as their ways are to me.
- 3 I don't understand gods or beliefs that see nature and technology as separate.
- 4 I don't think airships should be used in combat; to me, that goes against their purpose and uses their creation for harm instead of good.

WOTAN'S WARRIORS

by Hannah Rose

*Forth from craggy peaks they strode,
Their blades bright-shined and razor-honed.
Before them lay a dangerous road,
With enemies both far and near.
With sword and shield, with axe and spear,
They fought with valor and gained song-fame.*

*Wisdom they sought, knowledge earned dear,
A raven's whisper in the All Father's ear.
Though no one knows from whence they came,
The tale is told from fane to fane,
Of Warriors who honor Wotan's name."*
—from the *Scrolls of the Raven Father*

Wotan's Warriors are a small band of dwarven reavers who came together to form a highly mobile, elite squad in the name of Wotan, the All Father. Rumors of the squad's purpose are many and varied—some say that Wotan's Warriors were assembled to gather information on the Mother of Madness and her worshippers while others swear that their sole purpose is to quietly dispatch enemies of Wotan with deadly force. Whatever their assignments, they are known throughout the Northlands as skilled fighters, clever strategists, and connoisseurs of fine ale.

Wotan's Warriors report directly to Brökk Kolisen, the high priest of Wotan. However, there are whispers among Wotan's faithful that they may have gone rogue, breaking ties with the official organization of warpriests. Brökk Kolisen is a human, though raised among dwarves and generally considered a dwarf by bond if not blood, so rumormongers speculate that the Warriors

resented being commanded by a non-dwarf and refused to take orders from Brökk.

The Warriors were last seen somewhere near the Gloaming Crag, where they are reportedly hunting a mighty frost giant known as Coldmaw.

Torven the Runekeeper

Unusually for a dwarf, Torven uses no family or clan name, though he is clearly a native of the Northlands. Before the Warriors were assembled, Torven was a priest at Wotan's shrine in Stannasgard, and he is often called the Runekeeper for his mastery of rune magic. Torven is the unofficial leader of Wotan's Warriors, and his grey-streaked hair and watchful eyes give him the appearance of a stern but kindly father.

Torven is slow to anger and slow to forgive. Those who inspire his wrath are sure to feel the full might of Wotan's Warriors, an experience that few have survived. He

values loyalty, fairness, and justice and abhors petty tyranny, cowardice, and greed.

Relationships. Torven and Greta are the most experienced members of the group, and he follows Greta's lead in matters of battle strategy and tactics. He privately thinks of Almaro and Bronwyn as the children he never had. Torven trusts Gunther, but it bothers him that Gunther won't share the details of his past—if Gunther has old enemies, then the group should be prepared for whatever might come their way.



TORVEN THE RUNEKEEPER

*Medium humanoid (dwarf),
lawful neutral*

Armor Class 18 (plate)

Hit Points 117 (18d8 + 36)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	18 (+4)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Wis +7, Cha +3

Skills History +3, Insight +7, Religion +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Dwarvish

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Dwarven Resilience. Torven has advantage on saving throws against poison and resistance to poison damage.

Runecaster's Blessing. Torven knows the runes dagaz, gebu, ingwaz, and mannaz (see *Midgard Heroes Handbook*). The blessing of Wotan allows him to trace the ingwaz rune using one action, rather than the usual 2 rounds.

Spellcasting. Torven is an 8th-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): *bless the dead**, *guidance*, *mending*, *sacred flame*

1st level (4 slots): *cure wounds*, *deep breath**, *guiding bolt*, *longstrider*, *shield of faith*

2nd level (3 slots): *blade of wrath**, *lesser restoration*, *see invisibility*, *spiritual weapon*

3rd level (3 slots): *call lightning*, *fear*, *glyph of warding*, *revivify*

4th level (2 slots): *divination*, *faithful hound*, *inspiring speech**

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Torven makes two attacks with his spear.

Divine Spear. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage and 7 (2d6) radiant damage.

Ingwaz. Torven traces the ingwaz rune upon the face of a willing creature. That creature gains the benefits of a barbarian's Rage feature as though it were an 8th-level barbarian.

Greta Whitecrag

Greta is the master strategist of the group. The others rely on her knowledge of battle tactics, monsters, and ancient Northlands customs. Greta spent years fighting giants, trolls, and wolves, and she has a personal animosity toward trollkin and werewolves.

Greta values honor, knowledge of the old ways, and freedom. She is loyal to a fault and will make it her personal mission to hunt down traitors, spies, and deserters that threaten the safety of her people. Sturdy and stout, she wears unadorned plate armor and coils her long silvery braids beneath her helmet.

Relationships. Greta is a stern and uncompromising warrior, but Almaro and Bronwyn are the most likely to earn her rare smiles, though she and Torven enjoy swapping tales—or boasts—over mugs of ale. Greta is especially stern and dour when it comes to Gunther, but her reticence stems from a reluctance to confront the details of their relationship, which has begun to progress beyond that of fellow warriors.

GRETA WHITECRAG

Medium humanoid (dwarf), neutral good

Armor Class 20 (plate, shield)

Hit Points 117 (18d8 + 36)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Str +7, Con +5

Skills Athletics +7, History +4, Religion +4

Damage Resistances poison

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Dwarvish

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Bulwark. Greta has advantage on saving throws against being knocked prone or moved from her current space.

Dwarven Resilience. Greta has advantage on saving throws against poison and resistance to poison damage.

Wotan's Champion. Greta's weapon attacks score a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20. On a critical hit, she also deals an additional 9 (2d8) radiant damage.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Greta makes two attacks with her battleaxe or javelins.

Battleaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage.

Javelin. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage.

BONUS ACTIONS

Shield Bash. Greta can use a bonus action to slam a creature within 5 feet of her with her shield. The creature must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or fall prone.

Almaro Merecrest

With an impressive, intricately braided beard and piercingly bright eyes, Almaro Merecrest stands at three feet, ten inches—small for a dwarf—but Almaro is in fact no dwarf. Almaro is a halfling who wears a *belt of dwarvenkind*, passing himself off as a dwarf thanks to his fluent Dwarvish, knowledge of dwarven customs, and—of course—his magnificent beard.

Almaro loves a good ale, a game of dice, and a spot of gossip, but he's always quiet when it comes to his own history. Only his companions in Wotan's Warriors know of

his true identity as a halfling from a small farm somewhere near Zobeck, one of six brothers and sisters.

Wotan's creeds demand honor in battle, but despite his talent for subterfuge, Almaro is as true a follower of Wotan as any priest. "I am no coward, nor am I a fool," he says. "I am a warrior wise enough to use the gifts I am given."

Relationships. Almaro's trust is hard-earned, but the Warriors have been through enough together to trust each other with their lives—and at least some of their secrets. He deeply respects Torven but is often tempted to challenge his authority. Although Greta and Almaro have completely different fighting styles, they are frequent sparring partners, taunting and ribbing each other good-naturedly. Bronwyn and Almaro get along well enough as long as Bronwyn refrains from making jokes about his stature. Gunther is a mystery to him, and the question of their origin bothers Almaro so much so that he has begun discreet investigations into the matter of Gunther's family and home.

ALMARO MERECREST

Small humanoid (halfling), neutral

Armor Class 16 (studded leather)

Hit Points 104 (16d8 + 32)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	20 (+5)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +8, Int +3

Skills Deception +8, Perception +3, Persuasion +5, Stealth +11

Damage Resistances poison

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Dwarvish, Halfling, Thieves' cant

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Belt of Dwarvenkind. Almaro has advantage on saving throws against poison and

resistance to poison damage. He also has advantage on Charisma checks made to interact with dwarves.

Brave. Almaro has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

Evasion. If Almaro is subjected to an effect that allows him to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, he instead takes no damage if he succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if he fails.

Sly Escape. Almaro can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of his turns.

Sneak Attack. Once per turn, Almaro deals an extra 14 (4d6) damage when he hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of his that isn't incapacitated and he doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

ACTIONS

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) piercing damage.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d4 + 5) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Theft of Knowledge (2/day). When a creature that Almaro can see casts a spell, he can force it to make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a success, the spell functions as normal. On a failure, the creature's spell fails and has no effect, and it can't cast the same spell again until it completes a short or long rest.

Gunther Skjaldhammer

Gunther Skjaldhammer's past is a mystery. As far as anyone knows, they simply walked out of the mountains and straight into Wotan's shrine in Stannasgard. There is no Skjaldhammer clan or ancestral hall, so presumably it is a name that Gunther picked for himself. Those who tell tales of Wotan's Warriors describe Gunther as a middle-aged dwarf clad in mismatched hides, bearing a staff with a raven perched on the top.

Gunther's deepest secret is that even they don't remember their past. Sometimes they wonder if they were always a dwarf or if they were a raven that Wotan transformed into a dwarf for the god's own purposes. They find peace and meaning in their relationship with the natural world and fight fiercely to defend the other Warriors, their family in all but name.

Relationships. Gunther hasn't told the others of their missing memories for lack of trust—it's simply that they want to be the first to discover the secrets of their past before sharing it with others. They admire Torven's leadership, Bronwyn's boldness, and Almaro's cleverness. Gunther has developed romantic feelings for Greta but is unsure of Greta's feelings for them.

GUNTHER SKJALDHAMMER

Medium humanoid (dwarf), lawful good

Armor Class 12 (16 with barkskin)

Hit Points 104 (16d8 + 32)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	19 (+4)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +3, Wis +7

Skills Nature +3, Perception +7, Survival +7

Damage Resistances poison

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages Common, Druidic, Dwarvish

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)



Dwarven Resilience. Gunther has advantage on saving throws against poison and resistance to poison damage.

Runic Familiar. Gunther can cast *find familiar* as a ritual to summon a rune raven ally. Unlike other familiars, the rune raven can attack as normal.

Spellcasting. Gunther is an 8th-level spellcaster. Their spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). They have the following druid spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): druidcraft, produce flame, shillelagh

1st level (4 slots): *cure wounds, hearth charm*, thunderwave, wolfsong**

2nd level (3 slots): *barkskin, hold person, pass without trace, snowblind stare**

3rd level (3 slots): *freezing fog*, meld into stone, protection from energy, sleet storm*

4th level (2 slots): *hallucinatory terrain, ice storm, locate creature*

ACTIONS

Runestaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. When a creature that is concentrating on a spell takes damage from this weapon, it has disadvantage on the saving throw it makes to maintain its concentration.

Change Shape (2/day). Gunther magically assumes the shape of a beast with a challenge rating of 2 or less and can remain in this form for up to 4 hours. Gunther chooses whether their equipment falls to the ground, merges into their new form, or is worn by the new form. Gunther reverts to their normal form if they fall unconscious, drop to 0 hit points, or die. Gunther can revert to their normal form using a bonus action on their turn.

While in a new form, Gunther uses the game statistics of the beast (except class features, legendary actions, and lair actions) but retains their Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores as well as their skill and saving throw proficiencies. They can't cast spells, but they can continue concentrating on a spell they have already cast and take actions that are part of a spell they have already cast.

RUNE RAVEN

Tiny celestial, lawful neutral

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 37 (5d10 + 10)

Speed 10ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
5 (–3)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	6 (–2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +5

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages understands Celestial, Common, and Dwarvish but can't speak them

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Flyby. The rune raven doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

Mimicry. The rune raven can mimic any sounds it has heard, including voices. A creature that hears the sounds can tell that they are imitations with a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The rune makes two attacks, one with its beak and one with its talons.

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

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

REACTIONS

Croak of Doom (Recharge 5–6). When a creature within 30 feet of the rune raven that it can see makes a saving throw, the rune raven can use its reaction to impose disadvantage on that saving throw.

Bronwyn Brawnstein

With shining copper hair and ruddy cheeks, Bronwyn Brawnstein is the picture of a fair dwarven maiden, though she knows bawdy songs that would shock even the most grizzled reaver veterans. Despite her mysterious occupation, she maintains a close relationship with her family; Wotan's Warriors are frequent guests at the Brawnstein clan hall.

Bronwyn loves a good joke, but her calling lies in creating epic poems, sagas that carry ancient magic in their words. Many of the rumors about Wotan's Warriors were started by Bronwyn to spread confusion and obfuscate the truth of their missions.

Relationships. Bronwyn finds Almaro's posturing annoying at times but enjoys his wit and ability to spin a tale as fine as any skald. Her irrepressible cheer and determination have seen the entire group through many a battle and many a blizzard.

BRONWYN BRAWNSTEIN

Medium humanoid (dwarf), neutral good

Armor Class 17 (half plate)

Hit Points 117 (18d8 + 36)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Cha +7

Skills Arcana +3, Performance +7, Persuasion +7, Religion +3

Damage Resistances poison

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Dwarvish, Giant
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Dwarven Resilience. Bronwyn has advantage on saving throws against poison and resistance to poison damage.

Spellcasting. Bronwyn is an 8th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). She has the following bard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mending, message, vicious mockery*

1st level (4 slots): *bane, comprehend languages, heroism, thunderwave*

2nd level (3 slots): *heat metal, shatter, unluck on that*, Wotan's rede**

3rd level (3 slots): *dispel magic, fear, hero's steel*, nondetection, tongues*

4th level (2 slots): *confusion, freedom of movement, polymorph*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Bronwyn makes two attacks with her warhammer.

Warhammer. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

BONUS ACTIONS

Scorn of the Skald (4/day). When Bronwyn hits a creature with a weapon attack on her turn, she can deliver a short, mocking verse. If the creature can hear her, it must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw or take 14 (4d6) psychic damage. On a failure, the creature also has disadvantage on all attack rolls and ability checks until the end of its next turn.

* Spells marked with an asterisk are from *Midgard Heroes Handbook*.

FOR CANTON AND GLORY: THE IRONCRAG WAY OF WAR

by Ben McFarland and Robert Fairbanks

The Ironcrag rise out of central Midgard, a stony sword thrust toward the heavens and the homeland of numerous dwarven clans that migrated from the Northlands. They found the mountains rich and verdant and established many scores of canton strongholds throughout the peaks and valleys. While dwarven culture became more urbane and political, the dwarves never lost their taste for combat and martial activities. Mercenary companies created by younger dwarves and aging veterans unwilling to retire quietly march out early each spring to earn fortunes and hard-fought experience on the battlefield. The cantons benefit from those who return, gaining an influx of blooded veterans, strategy, and treasure.

Mustering and Marching

Never ones to shy away from combat, Ironcrag mercenary companies gather in the canton of Tijano, mustering and recording their heraldry with the priests of Volund before marching out to serve under the banners of the Septime Cities throughout that region's Season of War.

While this tradition does provide valuable combat experience, it also provides dwarves the opportunity to take captives, pressing

them into service as thralls for 10 years. The custom discourages others from attacking the Ironcrag, both for fear of becoming a thrall and for concern on the safety of countrymen held as thralls. Thralls are fed and cared for, worked hard but not beaten, generally receiving a tattoo or brand on the shoulder to mark their status, and live a decade of hard labor before being released. Dwarven law dictates all slaves have the right to sustenance, shelter, and life, and they are permitted to complain to a magistrate if denied food or to accuse a dwarf of killing a slave.

As warriors, the Ironcrag Free Companies enjoy excellent reputations for steadfast dedication, the ability to endure harsh conditions without complaint, and being ferocious combatants. Their shorter stature almost never plays a role, and they often match their allies' marching pace while wearing heavier armor. However, dwarven mercenaries are also known for using any advantage they can find on the battlefield. They love using the terrain to their advantage and performing night operations, using their darkvision and discipline to work from the shadows when an enemy might otherwise be blind.

Tools of the Trade

Two new weapons presented here, the chain hook and the Dolen axe, offer maneuvers to make combat more interesting, called Weapon Options. Weapon Options appear in *Midgard Heroes Handbook* and unless specified otherwise can be used by any character as long as they're wielding the appropriate weapon and are proficient with it. If a maneuver requires a creature to make a saving throw, the DC equals 8 + the attacker's proficiency bonus + the attacker's Strength or Dexterity modifier (attacker's choice). Unless specified, these maneuvers have only their listed effect and don't deal weapon damage.

CHAIN HOOK

This unusual and multipurpose weapon greatly resembles a robust, utilitarian interpretation of the Cathayan yawanga. Its development and use among canton mercenary companies is uncertain but may have traveled west with merchants or explorers. Consisting of 6–9 feet of hefty chain and terminating in an iron weight set with a bladed hook, this weapon can be used to attack, unhorse, and even occasionally disarm opponents.

You have disadvantage when attacking creatures within 5 feet of you.

Weapon Option: Disarm

When a creature attacks you with a weapon, you may use your reaction to catch their weapon and attempt to disarm them. Make an attack roll with your chain hook. If

the result of this roll equals or exceeds their attack roll, their attack misses, and they must succeed on a Strength saving throw or drop their weapon.

Weapon Option: Trip

As an attack while you are wielding a chain hook, you may entangle your opponent's legs, attempting to trip them. Make an attack roll against a Large or smaller creature. If the attack hits, the creature must succeed on a Strength saving throw or fall prone. If mounted, they have advantage on this saving throw; failure means they are pulled to the ground, prone.

DOLEN AXE

Named after the clan which popularized them, a Dolen axe has a shorter haft than a standard battle axe, a reinforced spike on



SPECIAL MATERIAL: SOULBOUND STEEL

Steel forged with the ashes of the fallen dead, first pickled in ale and cremated through special ritual to Ninkash, creates a special alloy known as soulbound steel, said to contain a sliver of the spirit of the warrior rendered into ashes. The strong, flexible metal has a light grey color and a beautiful, powdery finish, sometimes worked into frost-like patterns. Armor is not usually made of soulbound steel although rarely a buckler or shield is forged. Other items not primarily of metal are not meaningfully affected by

being partially made of soulbound steel: a longsword can be a soulbound weapon while a staff cannot. When wielding a weapon made from soulbound steel, once per long rest, the bearer may use their reaction to roll a saving throw with advantage against a mind-affecting spell, effect, or ability. A character can only benefit from a soulbound steel item once per long rest, regardless of how many they possess. These weapons cost an additional 500 gp to create.

the head, and a heavy, counter-weighted pommel. Balanced to be usable with one hand or two, many northern canton warriors prefer the Dolen axe, and its prominent spike occasionally serves as a makeshift guidon for units in areas with lower ceilings, like warren tunnels.

Weapon Option: Braced Reception

As an action, you can set your axe against a charge. If a creature moves at least 20 feet straight toward you and attacks, you may use your reaction to make an attack with the spike of the Dolen axe. If this attack hits, it does double damage, and both you and the target must make a Strength saving throw. Creatures failing this saving throw fall prone (and fall off their mount if mounted).

Weapon Option: Haft Lock

When a creature attacks you with a weapon, you may use your reaction to attempt locking their blade with the haft of your

axe, parrying the attack. Make an attack roll with your Dolen axe with advantage if you wield it with both hands. If the result of this roll equals or exceeds their attack roll, their attack misses.

Weapon Option: Pommel Smash

As a reaction, you may slam an attacking foe with the weighted pommel, leaving the target gasping for breath. Make an attack roll; if the result exceeds their attack roll, the next attack against the target has advantage. You must have the Dolen axe in hand to take this action.

Alchemical Creations

Many dwarven alchemists begin their careers as guild artisans or merchants only to be bitten by the desire for adventure, whether to fund their research, to acquire rare components, or to seek out rare or lost knowledge necessary to improve their craft.

NAME	COST	DAMAGE	WEIGHT	PROPERTIES
Chain hook	15 gp	1d6 slashing	3 lb.	Special, reach, thrown (range 10/30)
Dolen axe	15 gp	2d4 slashing	6 lb.	Heavy, Versatile (1d10)

Ironcrag alchemists are renowned for their various concoctions, sometimes inspired by or reverse-engineered from foes' weapons.

Ghoul Saliva Paste. Collected from captive ghouls and mixed with compounds that preserve and concentrate its efficacy, ghoulish saliva paste is smeared on weapons as a contact poison. When a creature attacked by a treated weapon suffers damage, they must make a DC 10 Constitution save or be paralyzed for one minute. An application is good for two successful attacks and can be put on one Medium weapon or ten pieces of ammunition. **Cost:** 50 gp per application.

Slughide Dissolvent. This clear, gelatinous liquid is kept in specially prepared porcelain spheres designed to be thrown or in a brass and crystal bombard to be fired in a spray. Targets hit with the liquid must make a DC 13 Constitution save or be paralyzed and suffer 1d6 acid damage. This damage continues until a successful saving throw, five rounds have passed, or the target is doused with a gallon of wine. **Cost:** 75 gp (sphere), 350 gp (bombard: 30-ft line, refillable, 75 gp per refill).

Ironcrag Cultural Options

Several backgrounds remain iconic to the lands of the Ironcrag dwarves, different from the Northlands clans or their Nurian cousins. Ambitious and industrious, travelers familiar with all three cultures often say the Ironcrags feel like a blending of the northern reavers' martial attitudes with the southern artisans' ingenuity. These backgrounds represent options for characters hailing from the cantons.

BACKGROUND VARIANT SOLDIER: IRONCRAG CANTON MERCENARY

Whether you were a member of the Firethroat Regulars, Ironcrag Exiles, Free Peshvai Axes, Rampant Bear Company,

or Trollbane Lances, you mustered in Tijano and crossed the passes to fight in the lowlands against the armies of the Septime Cities and beyond. You know what it means to be in an organized military company for hire and what the duties, responsibilities, and expectations are for a member of a mercenary band.

Languages: Pick two additional languages—from a choice of Darakhul, Draconic, Enochian, Kariv, Minotaur, Northern Tongue, or Nurian. This replaces the Soldier background's tool Proficiencies.

VARIANT FEATURE: FRIENDS IN STRANGE PLACES

Mercenaries from the Ironcrags can be stationed far and wide and have no qualms about serving with auxiliaries of different nationality or heritage as long as the pay is good. When in a larger town or settlement, you can spend a few hours finding either dwarven mercenaries, veterans, active duty troops, or sellswords who have previously served with one of the Free Companies. As brothers in arms, they're willing to provide you and a small group of friends a safe place to stay for the night, an introduction to a local individual who might be able to assist with your current business, or insider information about a particular event, location, or person of interest. They might permit you to borrow a piece of equipment temporarily or use a workshop but will not risk their lives.

BACKGROUND VARIANT URCHIN: FORMER TEN-YEAR THRALL

In what feels like an entirely different lifetime, you were a soldier or simply someone caught up in the wrong place who fought against dwarven mercenaries, either defending another land or as part of a retributive raid, and lost. Dwarven troops captured and pressed you into a decade of hard labor and unwilling service before

releasing you. You know about their rules regarding treatment and hospitality and can easily comment about their life and customs.

Skill Proficiencies: Pick one (Animal Handling, Athletics, Insight, or Nature) and Stealth

Tool Proficiencies: Alchemical, Farming, or Mining tools

Languages: You may add Dwarvish to your list of spoken languages

Equipment: Your equipment may contain a keepsake of little or no value, a reminder of your time in the cantons, if you desire.

VARIANT FEATURE: SHARED EXPERIENCE

You know a web of decent people who were formerly thralls and can rely on them to get messages or even small packages safely across vast distances. You can also occasionally reach out to this network to find an uncommon product, an unusual sage or guide, or a ship captain going to your destination and willing to take on passengers. Should you ever remove your tattoo or branding mark for some reason, you will need to make a successful DC 13 Diplomacy check prior to using this feature. You have advantage on checks to determine something about dwarven culture.

Feat: Trick Fighter You are very adept at special maneuvers with your weapons. When performing a Weapon Option attack, you gain the following benefits:

- +2 to hit on attack rolls for Weapon Options.
- +1 to the DC to resist Weapon Option effects if applicable.
- If your proficiency bonus is +3 or higher, you gain an extra reaction each combat round which may only be used for Weapon Option attacks.

Riding into War

With their broad experience in the conflicts of Central Midgard, the seasoned dwarfs realized the benefit of mounted troops in lowland war but wanted an option also providing an edge against underground foes. Units of badger riders developed as a result.

FIGHTER: IRONCRAG BADGER RIDER MARTIAL ARCHETYPE VARIANT

Certain of the Free Companies among the cantons are renowned, fortunate, or wealthy enough to employ a unique type of cavalry: badger riders. These elite, mobile infantry units consist of an Ironcrag war-badger with one or sometimes two riders. Serving not just as mounted shock troops, badger riders specialize in long-range reconnaissance and as sappers. They are especially famed and feared for their burrowing ambush and all-terrain, night fighter tactics. They rightfully remain among the most dreaded soldiery found among the cantons.

Serving in one or more of these prestigious mercenary companies, you've established the loyalties and relationships, martial prominence and coin enough, to earn the right to claim as your own one of these rare and "respected" war steeds. This archetype modifies the griffon knight archetype (see *Midgard Heroes Handbook*).

War-Badger Mount

When you choose this archetype at 3rd level, you gain a trained Ironcrag war-badger as your mount. Loyal to you but savage and unpredictable toward others, your war-badger is bonded to you and fights to protect you in battle. Use the war-badger statistics, but each time your proficiency bonus increases (at 5th level, 9th level, and so on), add +1 to your badger's AC, saving throws, and attack bonus and increase its hit point maximum by 10. Your mount obeys your commands to the best of its ability,

taking its turns on your initiative. It moves and acts as you direct it with just 3 action options (Dash, Disengage, and Dodge). If you want the badger to attack, you must use your action to command the badger to do so; this allows it to use the Attack action as a reaction on your turn. Once you gain the Extra Attack feature, you can make a weapon attack yourself in addition to ordering your badger to attack.

This replaces Griffon Mount.

Sandhog Claws

At 3rd level, you gain the ability to soften earth and stone, turning a 10-foot cubic area of solid rock

into earth and clay, which your war-badger can dig through normally. You can do this a number of times per day equal to your proficiency bonus. If used on an earth-based elemental creature, it requires a DC 8 (+ proficiency bonus) Wisdom save or the creature gains vulnerability to melee attacks for three rounds.

This replaces High in the Saddle.



Subterranean Combat Mastery

The abilities in the griffon knight's Aerial Combat Mastery trait should be read as applying to the war-badger's movement, which might involve digging or burrowing through the earth. They are otherwise unchanged.

This adjusts Aerial Combat Mastery.

Improved Subterranean Combat Mastery

The ability in the griffon knight's Improved Aerial Combat Mastery trait called Sir Ector's Deadly Swoop should be replaced with the ability detailed below. The trait is otherwise unchanged.

Sir Sigfried's Deadly Breach

While mounted on your badger, you can make a vicious attack. You may move up to double the war-badger's movement, but the last 15 feet of movement is underground, and you and your mount burst up through the ground in a square adjacent to the enemy. You and your mount make your attack rolls with advantage, and you add 1d10 to the damage for each attack that hits. The target makes a DC 12 Strength saving throw; failure indicates they are knocked prone.

This adjusts Improved Aerial Combat Mastery.

IRONCRAG WAR-BADGER

Created in recent years from the largest stock of badgers available and augmented with ritual magics from priests of Volund, the Ironcrag war-badger now breeds true, and is found across the region.

The weathered and battle-scarred mercenary glowered from the saddle, slowly drawing forth a length of thick, iron chain from a saddle-pouch. His snarling, snapping mount, a monstrous and equally scarred war-badger, is draped in battleworn scale-mail and harnessed for combat. The dwarf struggled to contain his steed as it growled and drew furrows in the earth, rabidly eager for the signal to charge.

IRONCRAG WAR-BADGER

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 48 (5d10 +20)

Speed 40 ft., burrow 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Str +5, Dex +5, Con +6

Skills Perception +3, Survival (tracking) +3

Condition Immunities frightened

Senses darkvision 30 ft., passive Perception 12

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Feral Frenzy. While reduced to less than 50% of its hit point maximum, the war-badger's attacks do an additional 5 (1d4+3) damage.

Hard Charger. If the war-badger moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with an attack on the same turn, that target must successfully roll a DC 12 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Keen Smell. The war-badger has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell and is able to detect creatures within 10 feet of it, even while burrowing.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (3d6 +3) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 feet, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 +3) slashing damage.

Multiattack. The war-badger makes 2 Claw attacks.

Opportunist. If a prone target is within 5 feet of the war-badger, on its turn, the war-badger can use a bonus action to make one Bite attack against it.

OTHER MOUNTED OPTIONS

This archetype could also work with similar CR 2 or CR 3 creatures such as crypt spiders, dogmoles, eel hounds, ghost boars, ghoul steeds, giant ants, lou carcohl, shadhavar, or terror birds (see *Tome of Beasts and Creature Codex*).

WARLOCK

LAIRS

LAIR	LEVEL	REGION	TERRAIN
<i>Bagiennik Game</i>	3	Dornig	Forest
<i>Bastion of Rime and Salt</i>	2	Northlands	Urban
<i>Beacon at the Top of the World</i>	12	Northlands	Mountains/Underground
<i>Birds of a Feather</i>	3	Magocracies	Urban
<i>Black Sarcophagus</i>	6	Southlands	Underground
<i>Clattering Keep</i>	5	Wasted West	Urban
<i>Empty Village</i>	2	Northlands	Arctic
<i>Firefalls of Ghoss</i>	9	Mharoti Empire	Mountains/Underground
<i>Fowl Play</i>	1	Magocracies	Farmland
<i>Ill-Met By Moonlight</i>	7	Dornig	Farmland/Forest
<i>Infernal Salt Pits</i>	7	Southlands	Desert
<i>Lamassu's Secrets</i>	7	Southlands	Desert
<i>Leeward Shore</i>	3	Seven Cities	Island/Ocean
<i>Lost Temple of Anax Apogeion</i>	3	Wasted West	Mountains/Underground
<i>Mad Maze of the Moon Kingdom</i>	5	Seven Cities	Underground
<i>Monkey Business</i>	1	City of Brass	Urban
<i>Night at the Seven Steeds</i>	7	Zobeck/ Crossroads	Urban
<i>Pride of Illyria</i>	4	Mharoti Empire	Urban
<i>Pride of the Mushroom Queen</i>	6	Arbonesse	Forest
<i>Red Lenny's Famous Meat Pies</i>	8	Zobeck/ Crossroads	Urban
<i>Returner's Tower</i>	5	Seven Cities	Farmland/Hills
<i>Rumble in the Henhouse</i>	2	Magocracies	Farmland
<i>Run Like Hell</i>	6	Rothenian Plain	Plains
<i>Rune Crypt of Sianis</i>	8	Rothenian Plain	Mountains/Underground
<i>Scorpion's Shadow</i>	1	Southlands	Desert

<i>Seal of Rhydaas</i>	16	Mharoti Empire	Mountains/Underground
<i>Skeletons of the Illyrian Fleet</i>	5	Seven Cities	Coast/Ocean
<i>Smugglers Run</i>	5	Seven Cities	Swamp
<i>Spelldrinkers Cavern</i>	3	Dark Kingdoms	Underground
<i>Storming the Queen's Desire</i>	4	Seven Cities	Urban/Ocean
<i>Sunken Library of Qezzit Qire</i>	5	Seven Cities	Swamp
<i>The Shadow's Envy</i>	10	Summer Lands	Shadow
<i>Three Little Pigs - Part 1</i>	3	Southlands	Urban
<i>Three Little Pigs - Part 2</i>	3	Southlands	Urban
<i>Three Little Pigs - Part 3</i>	3	Southlands	Urban
<i>Wilding Call</i>	7	Northlands	Arctic
<i>Wrath of the Bramble King</i>	2	Margreve	Forest

WARLOCK

NUMBER	THEME
#1	Mythos
#2	Dread Magic
#3	Undercity
#4	Dragon Empire
#5	Rogue's Gallery
#6	City of Brass
#7	Fey Courts
#8	Undead
#9	World Tree
#10	Magocracies
#11	Treasure Vaults

Warlock Guides

#1	The Shadow Realm
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