



Niflheim



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**DOG
SOUL**



NIFLHEIM

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Child-Gobblers

"Children played around the colorful gypsy wagon on the village green as the bells chimed for dinner. It was just a single wagon, belonging to two minstrels who entertained all who cared to watch. One danced with elegant clumsiness, hidden behind a costume resembling a caricature of a Jotnar, a sort of giant that lived nearby. Its tongue fell from beneath the comically bulbous nose deep within the shadows of the mangy mane of shabby black hair, quite enough to scare the youngest members of the crowd. The other minstrel, a tall comely man whose too obvious orc blood lent him a sinister aspect, told the tale of Gryppa the Child-Gobbler with much enthusiasm and suspense, keeping the crowd cooing to every move of his hand, every giant step he took, and every battle he pantomimed with his partner.

I approached the little gathering, knowing full well that the minstrels kept secrets beyond the bulky suit of hair and leather - something else was going on, just below the skin. No one else noticed, but I had been watching these strangers for some time. The man's dusky orc skin hid the paleness well, but even the dim light of the torch circle in which they performed could not hide the blue tracery lingering just below the skin. The minstrel's eyes lingered just that instant longer on the halfling kidlets clapping in excitement on the front row, and my heart felt fear. I knew the meaning of that glance. I knew why the wagon was parked beneath the birch tree as it was, even though the barest traces of the last rays of sunlight could still have been enjoyed.

That wagon had a secret, and this village would be the last place it tormented. Staying out of sight from the entertainer, I made my way past the birch, sneaking around back until I stood before the door of the caravan wagon. I had the key, I had laid hands on it months ago but I hadn't been prepared for what was inside. This time would be different. I slipped it into the lock and it clicked open with a metallic thud, but I stepped back, hesitant. With my enchanted sword held at the ready, I checked quickly that I still had both daggers hidden in my boots. A big picture of a befuddled giant adorned the wagon door, threatening to crush visitors with a huge meatless bone. The wagon leered at me, daring me to open the door, and so I did.

The door swung outward revealing a narrow room, long and dusty and pitch black. No light entered through the blackened windows. I waited in the doorway a moment to let my eyes adjust, so that in time the familiar image revealed itself to me once more: thirteen little beds strewn about the floor, hanging from the roof overhead, nested in the cupboards and pitched up against the windows, all arranged around a large double-bunk bed obviously meant for the two performers.

Thirteen little figures shifted uneasily in their sleep. I edged my way inside, shuffling along the right edge of the room, doing what I could to not disturb any of the sleepers. Despite my efforts, I got the distinct impression that they became more uneasy as I advanced. I had come for the bag this time, Gryppa's bag - the tool of the Child-Gobbler. Three steps from her bed I realized that the first of the small folk had begun to awaken. I glanced back to see which of the cretins had stirred lazily in its sleep, but saw only an empty bed that had been occupied just moments earlier. I reached for Gryppa's bed, turning my head to seek out the bag and instead faced the most grizzly little sharp-toothed, blood-stained smile I could fathom. The child-size monster had snuck up on me and we now stood face to face, his rank breath just inches from my flesh. Even in the darkness of the wagon, I could see his elongated fangs and in that instant I realized that I still had my hand extended, reaching for the bed. His grin widened as I yanked my painfully exposed limb away, but it wasn't mercy that made him hesitate to strike. His purrs and chirps had grown into a chorus, echoed by a dozen more. I turned back toward the entrance, every instant seeming an eternity, trying to judge how far I had to move to escape my certain demise. Five unhindered steps would launch me out the door, though something told me the monsters intended to do far more than hinder. My eyes ran across little creatures weighing them as best I could, though each seemed identical to the others. Covered from top to bottom in short, shabby fur, their faces might seem vaguely human were it not for the ghostly whiteness of their features, the redness of their eyes, and their terrifying little teeth. Restless now, they looked at each other as if waiting for one another to make the first move, and I knew I had only this last chance for escape.

I bolted. I took a leap, a hop, another leap, and two ex-



hausting steps, all the while imagining the feel of the chilling claws on my arms and groping hands at my feet. For some unfathomable reason the monsters didn't follow. Three steps from the exit I heard a voice cry in alarm, but before I had the time to look up I had thrown myself crashing into the terrible costumed figure at the door. I knocked us both off our feet, sending us sprawling into the grass outside the trailer. The sweet grass! Freedom! Scrambling for all I was worth, I managed to get out into the red light of the setting sun and knew I had escaped. The crowd had gone, and only the gypsy wagon remained. With the two minstrels about to retire, only a fluke of timing had saved my life. Whines erupted from inside the wagon, but both minstrels let me be and joined their little monsters, and since they probably plotted to come after me once the sun had set properly, it seemed wise to make myself scarce.

Of course, you can't make yourself quite scarce enough when you're in a small village on a lonely, wind-blown plain in the middle of Niflheim. The beasts found me before midnight, bit me within the hour, and I lay bleeding in the alley behind the glazeier's the next morning. I finally found the strength to get back up and seek out those who had afflicted me. I was in for a whole lot more surprises, but that is very much a different story, and one, perhaps, for another time."

"Now, please welcome Leppaludi and the Child-Eaters as they tell the tale of the Jotnar that stole midsummer!"

-Bjarn,
Ringmaster, and former vampire hunter





Iceland

Iceland, with its bumpy green hills and ice-crested waterfalls has inspired folk for centuries. Through its Nordic culture, shared with the rest of Scandinavia, it has influenced the way modern culture looks at fantasy as a genre from the very beginning.

The best preserved written sources of Norse mythology originate from Iceland, one of the few countries that committed its folk tales and stories to paper. All that is known of Nordic mythology comes from Icelandic writing and the study of Germanic folklore, a culture that heavily influenced the Norse. In this sense we are indebted to the Germanic monks that broke the tradition of oral storytelling to record their history in writing.

To draw from this international heritage, we will be taking a closer look at some of the existing myths here. As all Nordic myths are part of the same culture, the same background, they all share common themes--themes the Vikings brought back to the European mainland with them, showing us exactly how they differed from the mythologies of other cultures. It is worth taking a look at these differences.

WHAT MADE THE VIKINGS TICK?

Big things.

Awe-inspiring big folk permeate the Norse culture on all levels. Giants and titans play an important role in the beginning and end of the world. These same entities have become synonymous with ugly trolls and ogres. Fire giants, frost giants, dragons, birds ... Vikings liked them all to be exorbitantly vast.

Hidden things.

In the mundane reality of everyday life, Icelandic folk believed that there was more to the world than what met the eye. They were convinced of the existence of fairy folk, entities that lay just outside of their line of sight. These could be benevolent, though more often than not the culture held them responsible for anything that went wrong. Also, they were viewed collectively with a single reputation, not as the well-defined individual creatures and races that have developed in the fantasy genre; elves, dwarves, gnomes and goblins were all just different names for the same "hidden things."

Ugly things.

Vikings liked to play out a prominent duality between what is good, strong, virtuous, and heroic, and what is conniving, mean, foul, and all-around nasty. They portrayed the "hidden things" as being fat, warty, hairy, or otherwise less than comely, an image extended to the giants turning evil them into ogres and trolls. Evil women also followed this rule, and if a beautiful villainess was encountered she was surely a hideous hag in disguise.

Much current fantasy fiction is based on these ideas. Works of popular fiction have adopted these stories and given them new life, passing them on to a new generation of non-Vikings. The story of the conquering hero, of the dastardly witch, and of the man-eating troll all existed centuries before we saw them reincarnated in our literature.

Overview

WHAT TO EXPECT

Few myths are solely Icelandic, as they shared most of their stories with their Nordic neighbors. Singled out here are a few of the most interesting tales, each filled with a variety of details and extras.

MISTY LOCALES

In this book, the rugged, self-sufficient, almost stubborn heritage of Iceland is merged with Niflheim, the mythological Norse realm of the dead, to create a demiplane of mists, monsters, and mortals. Tiny settlements cluster together in the center of this land, surrounded on all sides by peril. Detailed here are the infamous Hall of the Mountain King, the Helka Volcano as a conduit to the land of the dead, the Gulfoss waterfall with its lonely inhabitant, and the icy river Ledda.

PECULIAR SPECIES

Somewhere along the line modern fantasy and role playing games created a more or less fixed image of the dreaded "troll." Here you will meet the Jotnar - one possible incarnation of the beast, and one that leans more towards the original concept of the heavy-set giant.

Also introduced are the legendary Valkyries. These winged warrior-maidens from the plane of Asgard fly



out in troops of nine to bring balance to the most epic of battles.

MAJOR MONSTROSITIES

From the Child-Gobblers featured in the introduction, to the legendary serpent Nidhogg who guards the Shore of Corpses, to the titanic mountain king from the play "Peer Gynt", a handful of personalities are presented in standard format, each of them suitable for use as a sub-quest, a major encounter, or even as the starting point for an entire campaign.

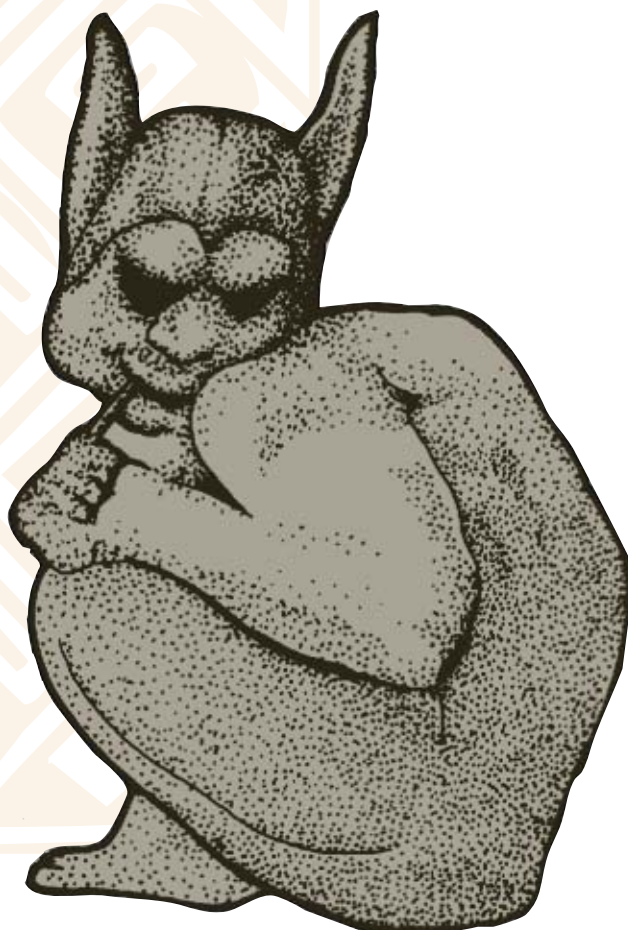
SUPPORTING ENTITIES

Just over a dozen minor NPCs are also included, though only some of these are firmly rooted in traditional folklore. Played carefully they should make a rich addition to whatever setting the GM chooses; they can greatly help or thwart the heroes in every conceivable way.

EPIC WEAPONRY

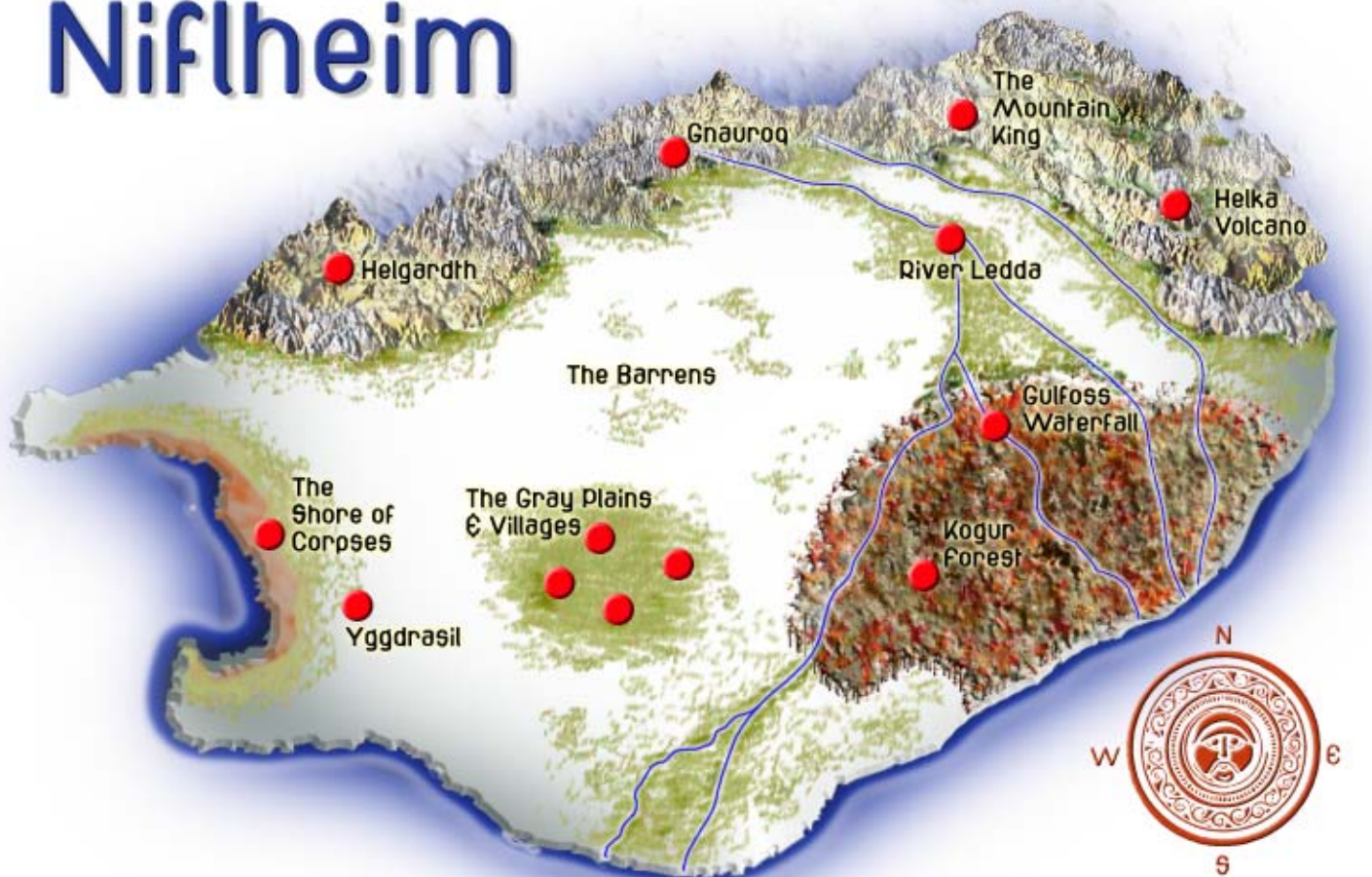
Many of the individuals listed in this book have peculiar items in their possession worthy of separate mention. From Valkyrie feathers to unique artifacts, these items are provided in a section of their own.

Together these sections provide a multitude of resources to spice up a campaign and spark new ideas.





Niflheim





Misty Locales

NIFLHEIM, DEMIPLANE OF THE DEPARTED

Through the craggy, ice-silvered portal lies a vast, mountainous expanse of snow-blanketed rock. A perpetual blizzard shrieks and stings the air with darts of snow, and low, guttural moans can be heard far in the distance. The wind sounds like the hiss of a gigantic serpent, and the ground occasionally shudders beneath what seems to be the heavy footsteps of gods.

Niflheim is a demiplane of mist and undeath, created by the demigoddess Hel as a refuge for tortured souls. A limited expanse of mountainous outcroppings lies blanketed in snow with weather perpetually switching between fog and blizzards. Niflheim is only accessible through four gates, each sealed away carefully by Hel herself so that the living won't be too tempted to seek passage.

Hel created the plane as part of her own passion for the undead and lives in a huge palace wreathed in icy clouds, high up on a mountain named Helgardth. Mortals are not welcomed at the gates of Niflheim, though several small villages of hardy mortals exist within the plane's interior. Hel is aware of their presence and tolerates them, so long as they stay far away from her fortress and her affairs.

THE FOUR PORTALS

Only four options to enter or exit Niflheim present themselves – the four guarded passages, held by an equal number of legendary sentinels.

The first of these passages can be found in the cellar of the mountain king, protected by the giant himself.

The second portal is near the end of the river Ledda,

where the river descends into a portal in the rock. Gnau-roq, the majestic bird of ice, guards this passage from the Material Plane.

The third portal is in Helka Volcano near the shaft of volcanic magma and is guarded by "The Bull," the necromancer Loftur.

The fourth and final portal is a fissure in the blasted rock of Niflheim's outermost plains. It sits at the midpoint between the Shore of Corpses and Yggdrasil, the ancient tree guarded by Nidhogg the serpent.

1. THE HALLS OF THE MOUNTAIN KING

Aside from the obvious amazement the mansion elicits for its gargantuan proportions, the mountain king's home hides a few more surprises that may be of interest to those who plan to stay the night or pass through.

The mansion is a single-story building crafted in a sober, 'earthy' style with gothic touches here and there. The building has a tendency towards oversized decoration, as if the mountain king had no qualms about accentuating his height. There is a massive wooden double-door which is the only proper way in, though locked windows line the whole building.

ENTERING THE MANSION

The front door has an enormous brass knocker for those who are tall enough to reach it and strong enough to knock it, though a smaller bell has been installed alongside the door which can be reached with a long string that is attached to the ringer.

The only other way inside for little folk is up the drainpipe. This drops them on the roof from which they can enter through a crack in the roof tiles and a fissure in the boards that make up the stairs for entering the house. It is possible to get into the main hall from beneath these





stairs, as the crack leads to a small tunnel that ends behind a small potted willow in the entrance hall, a houseplant befitting of such a patron.

In fact, nearly the whole house can be navigated covertly by Medium or Small sized creatures without the king laying eyes on them, provided Hinrik doesn't thwart them. One advantage to having a building this huge is that it has cracks and fissures in the craftsmanship that are large enough for most humanoids to navigate.

HINRIK AND SONS

A few decades ago a small family of ogres found its way into the mansion of the mountain king and has taken up permanent residence there. They seem to have escaped the notice of the mountain king, who either doesn't see them or doesn't care enough to do anything about it, and they have now lived there for so long that they know what makes the big guy tick. Hinrik in particular, the family elder and tribal shaman, has a passion for making life hard on anyone who visits the great halls by creating illusions that tempt guests to cross the thin line of courtesy.

Hinrik tends to leave visiting giants alone, but when smaller folk come knocking he is quick to make sure they'll be dealt with expeditiously. First he sends his sons to either capture or quietly stalk the visitors, testing to see if the newcomers are easy prey. If they choose not to capture them, Hinrik and his ogres will observe the guests and figure out a way to trick them into angering the mountain king. In the end they make it their business and their pleasure to see that no humanoid leaves the mansion alive.

THE WORKSHOP

The mountain king's arcane pastimes have claimed a substantial part of his basement, and he guards these quarters carefully. He permits no guests in this area, save those he believes might teach him something valuable about whichever project he is currently working on. The king is fairly passionate about these pursuits, and he has even succumbed, on occasion, to the temptation of using his visitors as test subjects or even, rarely, as ingredients.

For instance, when working on a potion that ought to cure baldness, the mountain king "accidentally" boiled two halflings that happened to come by, because his ancient formulas hinted that this might increase the concoction's

effectiveness. When looking for a growth tonic to feed his pigs, he tried a little of the brew in the meals of his guests, making them shrink unexpectedly. He lost sight of them then, and they quickly fell prey to Hinrik and his cronies. In these cases the mountain king is more reckless than his usual sense of etiquette permits and he occasionally abuses the faith his guests have placed in him.

The fact that he lets no one enter his workshop is interesting, as the workshop contains a reinforced stone trapdoor that is the only entrance to the caves below where the portal to Niflheim is located. He keeps this door locked and trapped as he is slightly paranoid that things from the other side may find their way into his study.

THE CAVES

The mountain king's purpose in life, though he doesn't feel the consequences too direly, is to guard the portal to and from Niflheim that lies below his study. The caverns were actually once the shafts of a mine that was never completed, though time has eroded the mines, collapsed most of the tunnels, and left only a handful of corridors which are completely devoid of life. The occasional spectre or shambling undead still pass through the portal into the Material Plane, but they are met with ten feet of solid, enchanted stone barring their passage, so the connection to Niflheim remains mostly unused.

2. THE RIVER LEDDA AND THE ISLANDS OF FIRE AND ICE

Originating on the Material Plane, this partially frozen river winds its way down from the mountains and into a cave where it enters Niflheim. On the Material Plane it is protected by the great Gnauroq, though once in Niflheim it meets up with a volcanic stream, causing an extremely volatile area of cool volcanic rock surrounded by explosive bubbles of ice and fire.

A series of small islands in the middle of a dual stream of fire and ice are very dangerous, but also hold the second portal that leads to the basement of the Halls of the mountain king. It is also an excellent location for hiding artifacts that shouldn't fall into the hands of your average commoner. The whole archipelago is overrun by a bizarre assortment of creatures that have either found their way there by accident or have been created by Hel to guard the portal.



Eventually this river finds its way to the shore of corpses and merges with the icy sea beyond.

LEDDA ISLANDS RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE

(roll 1d10 once per hour - a result of 1-7 indicates an encounter)

d%

1-10	1d4+1 Azers EL 6
11-25	2d6 Steam Mephits EL 9
26-35	1d4 Earth Elementals, Huge EL 9
36-45	2d6 Kapoacincts (Aquatic Gargoyles) EL 10
46-55	Fire Elemental, Elder EL 11
56-65	Water Elemental, Elder EL 11
66-80	Twelve-Headed Cryohydra EL 13
81-95	Twelve-Headed Pyrohydra EL 13
96-100	Old White Dragon EL 15

3. HELKA VOLCANO

Helka Volcano is the home of Loftur the Necromancer, one of the guardians of Niflheim. It is the bane of all settlements within hundreds of miles from it, as it is still active (though only irregularly erupts), and more importantly it is one of the four gates to Niflheim.

The area around Helka is scarred by its frequent outbursts, though life has found its way into the plains around it. Ruskan, a relatively large city, has thrived on a coast nearby. It was built on magnificent slabs of volcanic rock formed by previous outbursts and is currently protected by great canals that divert the molten rock from new eruptions into the sea where a splendid harbor is also carved from the layers of stone.

Smaller villages also dot the countryside in the few naturally sheltered locations that aren't overrun by magma every other week, and the people there profit from the rich soil and vast mineral supplies available. The only blemish on the countryside is the home of Loftur.

Loftur's lair is built not too deep below the surface in a disused cavern alongside the main shaft of the volcano. It can be reached by navigating a series of tunnels that originate on the surface in grottos and mine shafts. The whole area near the mountain is infested with Loftur's mindless, undead henchmen, so it can be quite challenging to reach the relatively hospitable part of the volcano. His actual residence comprises of little more than five rooms connected by small passageways. He has a private

room for resting, three rooms devoted to his crafts, and a single reinforced room for holding unwilling 'guests.' The entire complex can be securely locked, each room has a door at every entry point and is well crafted so that the walls and doors can take extensive damage from without. Loftur has installed mechanical traps in most corridors to catch those who try to sneak through his lair.

About a mile below Loftur's caverns is another series of rooms, the sum of which is somewhat larger than the Necromancer's abode. This system was once a great temple devoted to an ancient archfiend where cultists worked tirelessly to bring their dark lord back to the Material Plane. Their movement has long since been abandoned, and the construction was partially engulfed by magma which has now solidified into a soft rock which Loftur is currently excavating to discover what secrets it holds. His skeletal servants labor night and day, slowly clearing out corridor after corridor.

The actual gate to Niflheim is only of mild importance to Loftur, and he has built a sealed chamber around it, accessible only through a secret door in the excavation of the temple. The long funnel that leads down to it is rigged with so many traps it's nigh impossible to reach it without disabling them all first. Loftur himself carries a protective rune that allows him and whoever travels with him to pass safely.

THE LUCKY DEAD

Loftur is kind to those he kills. Their deaths may be gruesome and experimental, but when he restores them to moving, functioning shadows of their former selves he is generous in providing them with something unique to assist them in their function.

To determine in which way any undead created by Loftur is unique, take the undead's stats and adjust them by adding any of the following traits.

Steel Mittens: The creature's hands are replaced, molded or inlaid with gold, adamantine, darkwood, silver, or other precious material and enchanted in a fashion that provides them with a +1 enhancement bonus to any natural weapons or slam attacks.

Golden Crown: A decapitated victim may find his head substituted with some form of idol that protects them



from the simplest of magic attacks. It grants them Spell Resistance of 13.

Full Metal Harness: Finding their staying power to be below par, Loftur occasionally makes some of his creations more sturdy by reinforcing them with harnesses, breast plates, helmets and any other fortifying gear or device. These grant a +4 armor bonus to AC.

Furnacebound: For the more challenging environments below the volcano, Loftur has managed to endow a number of his subjects with *protection from fire*. An amber-like substance covering the entire corpse grants it Resistance to Fire 10, allowing it to ignore the first 10 points of fire damage any time it takes fire damage.

Dragon's Breath: To complement the ability to resist fire, Loftur has created undead that can turn up the heat for adventurers who believe they can escape the perils of the volcano. They are fitted with a device that stretches over their heads and can exhude burning fumes every 1d4 rounds for 3d6 damage. This acts as a breath weapon that works in a 10 ft. cone and does fire damage. Creatures in the cone are permitted a DC 12 Reflex save for half damage.

4. BETWEEN A SNAKE AND A DEAD PLACE

Light appears from the top of the small cave, and as you scramble to climb up to it, the scent of death and decay fills your lungs. Once clear of the fissure you have a perfect view of the dismal vistas surrounding you: to the left, great roiling banks of mists, the sullen splash of waves against a shoreline, and the sounds of tortured moaning. To the right, in the distance, you see a great gnarled tree.

YGGDRASIL, NIDHOGG'S TREE

From more than a mile away this great tree can be seen, its massive gray roots perched upon the rocky waste as if ready to spring. Within the ancient tree's wizened trunk are many dark hollows, and from one of these two eerie red eyes glare out to meet travelers.

Near the shore of Nastrond grows a gigantic, gnarled tree in which an abomination of the worst kind lives - the serpent Nidhogg. The serpent feeds on the corpses that wash up on the shore, and lives inside a hollow of the tree. Most of the time only Nidhogg's head can be seen,

but this is a cruel deception, as his huge body sports twelve mighty tails, each wielding a barbed sword.

NASTROND, THE SHORE OF CORPSES

As far as the eye can see a gruesome beach stretches, its pale, ghostly sand littered with small grey figures twitching and emanating a putrid stench of rot and decay. Low moans echo throughout the mists. The sullen, black waves of Enska Lo - the Sea of Death - lap at the shore.

All creatures die. Some creatures, however, find no peace in death. Necromancy can chain a body to something beyond the usual mortal coil, but when that necromantic link is broken there is often no final rest for the dead. Creatures freed from their unnatural bonds wash up on the shore of Nastrond, and their broken bodies call to any who would hear their plight, and give them release.

This beach is permanently awash with writhing, decaying bodies as they struggle to find the willpower to rise and seek out Hel's halls, a place that promises rest to them.

THE BARRENS

Most of Nifhleim's interior is an expanse of barren, jagged rock, punctuated by the occasional black, gnarled tree or tussock of pale, dry grasses. Pockets of ice are good sources of water, provided the mud beneath them isn't sheltering poisonous winter toads.

THE BARRENS RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE

(roll 1d10 once per hour - a result of 1-7 indicates an encounter)

d%

1-10	Bodak EL 8
11-25	Allip EL 3
26-35	2 - 4 Ghast EL 5 - 7
36-45	6 - 12 Skeletons (human) EL 2 - 4
46-55	2 - 8 Zombies (human) EL 1 - 4
56-65	2 - 5 Dire Badgers EL 4 - 7
66-80	Rat Swarm EL 2
81-95	7 - 16 Wolves EL 6 - 11
96-100	Winter Toad Swarm EL 4

OTHER INHABITANTS

An orc sits slumped in the saddle of a dun-colored, sway-backed horse. He peers at you from beneath the brim of his hat, muttering a half-hearted greeting, his hand on the handle of his axe as he rides past.



There are a few loners who either choose to live in the wilds of the Barrens, or are forced to live there by the close-knit communities of villagers who live in the interior of Niflheim. Orcs, half-orcs, humans, and the occasional half-ogre manage to survive on their own, isolated from the larger settlements and only journeying to them for matters of trade. These loners are not usually hostile, but some are criminal and will try to rob any travelers they come across.

WINTER TOAD SWARM

Size, type	Tiny animal (swarm)
HD	9d8 (40 hp)
Init	+4
Spd	30 ft., swim 30 ft.
AC	18 (+4 size, +4 dex) touch 18, flat-footed 14
Base Attack /Grapple	+6/ -
Atk	Swarm (2d6 + poison)
Full Atk	Swarm (2d6 + poison)
Space/Reach	10 ft./ -
SA	Distraction, poison
SQ	Darkvision 60 ft., immune to weapon damage, swarm traits, scent
SV	Fort +6 Ref +10 Will +6
Abilities	STR 1 DEX 19 CON 11 INT 3 WIS 10 CHA 4
Skills	Hide +3, Jump +20**, Listen +5, Spot +7
Feats	Run, Stealthy, Weapon Finesse
Environment	Niflheim
Organization	Mob (swarm: 2 - 4), Wave (swarm: 7-12)
Challenge	4
Rating	-
Treasure	-
Alignment	Neutral
Advancement	-
Level	-
Adjustment	-

WINTER TOADS

A hopping and croaking mass of evil-looking, bone-colored toads bursts from a nearby snow bank, their eyes glowing red.

Winter toads are normally lone hunters, but once one of the larger females begins her breeding cycle every male toad within a mile gathers around her in a mass of writhing limbs.

The animals then burrow down below a snow drift and lie in wait for some hapless victim to wander by.

When prey presents itself the male toads swarm out and attack. Once the victim is down, the female emerges and burrows into the carcass, laying her eggs in the still-warm flesh. She then departs back into the mud, leaving her gang of eager males to fertilize the eggs. The resultant froth keeps the victim's body from freezing and reduces the internal organs to jelly.

New toads emerge in one week, eating their way out of their grisly incubator.

Winter toads are poisonous. Anyone wounded by them must make a Fort Save (DC 15) to resist the poison. Initial and secondary damage is 1d4 Dex. Saving throw DCs are Constitution-based.

Winter toad swarms receive a +10 racial bonus to Hide checks when concealed in or on snow.

Winter toad swarms receive a +8 racial bonus to Jump and Swim checks. In addition, the height and distance of a jump is not restricted by the animal's height. Winter toads use their Dexterity modifier rather than strength for Jump and Swim checks.

OTHER MAJOR LANDMARKS

HELGARDTH, HEL'S HALLS

Hel is something of a demigoddess, born of a divine father and a mortal mother. Her appearance depends on her current disposition, though she usually takes on the aspect of a beautiful giantess, a massive comely beauty. When angered, her second aspect takes over and she becomes a frightful picture of wrath, a gaunt, sinewy woman with rotten flesh and great predatory claws.

Niflheim is Hel's personal demiplane, crafted by her morbid passion for the restless dead. She is not evil per se, though she deals in things most would find loathsome and inspires fear in those who know what she represents.

Her halls are beautiful, lavish, and exorbitant. A great white palace sits atop the mountain Helgardth, reachable only by those unaffected by cold and fatigue (See "DMG" for guidelines on Cold Dangers). Inside are corridors upon corridors, numerous well stocked banquet halls, and a veritable utopia for the souls who reside there eternally.

Hel does not tolerate the presence of mortals in her halls,



and any who dare defy her are promptly imprisoned, if they're lucky.

GARM'S CAVE

At the base of the Helgardth mountain is a cave that is home to a great hound devoted exclusively to Hel. This is the four-eyed hound named Garm.

Garm is a ferocious beast that roams the plains around Helgardth in search of warm-blooded creatures to devour. While not particularly bright, his infamy is well-deserved. Garm's very presence can send most creatures fleeing for their lives, and those who have the nerve to

stand up to him must avoid his gaze, as his four eyes can paralyze at a glance. Garm never needs to sleep, as his eyes rest alternately.

Garm enjoys sniffing out opponents and sneaking up on them, taking on the most impressive foe first, charging out of the mist in an effort to gain surprise.

Inside Garm's cave hangs a most repulsive scent. A mix of gnawed body parts and canine offal *nauseates* all who enter (DC 25 Fort save to negate), but those who are able to brave the stench and enter the blood-smeared crevice are treated to a great hoard of wealth gathered over centuries, once belonging to Garm's more unfortunate visitors.

GARM

This slaving hound stands twice as tall as a man, with black skin and four yellow eyes that burn with rage.

Size, type	Huge Magical Beast
HD	14d10+98 (170 hp)
Init	+2
Spd	50 ft.
AC	23 (6 +2 Dex, +15 natural)
Base Attack /Grapple	touch 8; flat-footed 21
Atk	+14/+31
Full Atk	Bite +22 melee (2d6+13) or claw +21 melee (1d8+9)
Space/Reach	Bite +22/17/+12 melee (2d6+13) and 2 claws +19 melee (1d8+9)
SA	15 ft./15 ft.
SQ	Pounce, Gaze attack
SV	Damage reduction 10/Piercing and magic, Fast Healing 10, Frightful Presence, Scent
Abilities	Fort +18 Ref +11 Will +4
Skills	STR 28 DEX 14 CON 24
Feats	INT 8 WIS 10 CHA 14
Environment	Hide +6, Listen +17, Move Silently +14, Spot +16
Organization	Alertness, Great Fortitude, Weapon Focus (bite), Multiattack, Run
Challenge	Niflheim
Rating	Solitary
Treasure	12
Alignment	Quadruple Standard
Advancement	Chaotic Evil
Level	-
Adjustment	-

KÓGUR FOREST

Thick, scrubby undergrowth lends a ruddy glow to the ghostly, gray-green stands of pine and gnarled birch. The trees are not very tall - ten feet in height is the norm, with an occasional fifteen foot pine reaching above the dwarfed canopy. Lichen-covered rocks and boulders are scattered throughout the undergrowth and blond, straw-like grasses, making travel difficult. The few paths are slender, winding through the woods, marked by smooth, silvery stones.

The Kógur forest covers the entire southwestern corner of Niflheim. While it is an enormous forest, the trees are relatively short. There is a saying, 'If you get lost in Kógur - stand up!'

There are a few hardy gnomes, elves, and humans who live here - strange loners who don't appreciate company.

THE FOREST RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE

(roll 1d10 once per hour - a result of 1-7 indicates an encounter)

d%	
1-10	Assassin Vine EL 3
11-25	Dire Wolf EL 3
26-35	Dryad EL 3
36-45	Night Hag EL 9
46-55	1 - 6 Giant Owl EL 3 - 8
56-65	3 - 5 Winter Wolves EL 8 - 10
66-80	Wraith EL 5
81-95	Brown Bear EL 4
96-100	2 - 5 Large Monstrous Spiders EL 4 - 6



GULFOSS WATERFALL

In the Kógur forest a tributary of the river Ledda cascades down the front of a huge precipice, and at the very bottom of this rock face is a cave that was once home to a band of Jotnar.

Outside the waterfall is a small fireplace, used at night for roasting animals. At night the cave's inhabitant places a cauldron over the fire for his meals, though during the day it is hidden beneath the falls.

The caverns are natural, cause by a fissure in the rock one very cold winter that was eroded further by the waterfall. It comprises of one main space, a mostly oval room that is lined by the waterfall on one side and a moss-covered wall on the other. The ground is soggy and covered in pebbles, leaves and twigs, but obviously served as a common room for the great creatures that lived there. Little drawings, graffiti and other nonsense marked upon the walls provide evidence of the low standard of intelligence possessed by the inhabitants.

Three halls have been carved into the soft rock, tunneling down to form three more chambers. Two of the three serve as living spaces for the Jotnar, stuffed with leaves and ferns for sleeping on, a few victims' bones thrown around the rooms out of laziness that could serve as clubs should the need arise. The third tunnel is blocked by a huge round boulder that can only be moved by those of formidable strength (Str 24 and above). Inside the chamber behind it is the stash of goods that the Jotnar have looted from travelers in the forest.

One Jotnar still lives in this cave. Thokk, now living there alone, has great difficulty opening the rock by himself, but realizes that if he can push it closed at the right time he may trap people who wish him ill inside. He learnt this the hard way when his brethren were "poking fun."

Thokk has secured a couple of useful items here and has hidden them underneath a pile of rotten meat in the first sleeping room, so that should anyone come to loot the cave he might still keep them. If he has a chance, he will actually bury himself in the pile of meat in the hopes of escaping the notice of the intruders.

THE GRAY PLAINS

"What's not to like?" quips a wizened halfling as he leans on his walking stick, observing a storm approaching from the south. "Surrounded by death, darkness, and destruction on all sides - and a hell of a goddess looking down her nose at us from her gilded throne!" The halfling chuckles softly, then spits, looking warily towards the general direction of Helgardth. "Yep, this is the life," he adds, before disappearing into his sod-covered house. "Of a crazy person," you hear him add, just before the winds start to pick up.

There are five small villages clustered together - almost as if for warmth - in the interior of Niflheim. Some of the inhabitants are adventurers who managed to survive one of the four passageways into Niflheim, and found themselves lacking the temerity to brave the portals a second time. Others are descendants of adventurers, struggling to eke a life out of an unforgiving landscape, and and wondering if a better life waits for them beyond Niflheim's guarded boundaries.

Surrounding the villages are the grassy, fertile 'Gray Plains' of Niflheim. While there are a variety of plants thriving here, the verdure of their leaves has a strange, washed-out gray hue to it, hence the name of the region. Copses of stunted, twisted birch trees grow prodigiously throughout the area, as well as a plethora of brightly colored mosses and lichens. Herds of cows wander unambitiously - there are no fences to keep them in, as the cows of Niflheim instinctually know that to roam too far would mean certain death. Each herd usually has a bull watching possessively over them, and strangers may find themselves charged at if they're not careful. The cows of Niflheim are sturdy, tough and larger than their distant, material plane-dwelling cousins.

Many of the villagers have strange aspects, with slightly malformed faces and more than a few with crooked backs or oddly-shaped ears. With limited "stock," there has been an inordinate amount of inbreeding, with the result that everyone is someone's distant (or not so distant) relation.

One unique feature of these villages is the lack of temples, or of any public worship at all. People pray and teach their children about faith at home, but no gods are spoken of in public, and it is considered a taboo to do so. One may encounter a few clerics here and there - but one

**KYHRIN BULL**

Large animal

Hit Dice: 5d8 + 15 (37hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 40 ft.

Armor Class: 13 (-1 size, +4 natural) touch 9, flat-footed 13

Base Attack/Grapple +3/+13

Attack: Gore +8 melee (1d8+9)

Full Attack: Gore +8 melee (1d8+9)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./5ft.

Special Attacks: none

Special Qualities: Low-light vision, scent

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +1

Abilities: STR 22, DEX 10, CON 16, INT 2, WIS 11, CHA 4

Skills: Listen +7, Spot +5

Feats: Alertness, Endurance

Environment: the Gray Plains of Niflheim

Organization: Solitary (as leader of herd of cows)

Challenge Rating: 2

Advancement: 6-7 HD (Large)

Level Adjustment: -

These animals are very aggressive, and will charge most humanoids they don't recognize. Larger threats to the herd will incite both the bull and his herd to flee. A group of humanoids making enough noise and showing enough bravado can often turn aside a bull's charge.

If the bull charges and the PC's attempt to turn aside the charge, the bull must make a Will save with a DC equal to a Bluff or Intimidate check made by the PC's.

A Kyhrin bull stands 6 feet at the shoulder and is 10 to 12 feet long. It weighs 1,800 to 2,200 pounds.

must also prove to be trustworthy before any cleric will assist them.

PORP

This village consists of ten sodhouses, a barn, a common house, and a granary. One of the larger sodhouses, owned by a human named Fridrik, has a room to let for a reason-

able price. Fridrik enjoys hearing tales of the gates, and he'll happily entertain anyone with information about the world beyond Niflheim.

The common house sells ale, dry goods, small household items, and on occasion spell components. It is kept by a dour halfling matron named Eydis.

MIOBORG

This is the largest village, and the oldest. A majority of halflings and gnomes live here, with only the occasional human bumping his head on low ceilings and door frames. The residents are quick to point out that once there were plenty of humans in Mioborg, but many of them were killed years ago in a raid on their village by the necromancer Loftur. The necromancer hasn't bothered the villagers since, but that fact has done little to decrease the little people's rampant paranoia.

Mioborg consists of thirty five sodhouses, four barns, three common houses, a smithy, a tanner, a tinker, a constable, and a wizard's tower.

PETTBYLI

This village has the distinction of having the cemetery located next to it. In the plane of undeath, it is often challenging to keep one's relatives buried properly - but the caretaker, Halldor, manages it somehow. Just don't ask him how.

In Pettbyli there are seventeen sodhouses, one common house, a granary, three barns and a stable, a glazier, a tinker, a wheelwright, a smithy, and an herbalist.

This village is mostly human, with a few elves, half-elves and dwarves adding to the ranks.

STORBAER

This village is comprised of seven dwarven families. They are close-knit, hard-working, and not particularly fond of strangers. Rumor has it that many of the men go on seasonal mining parties to the distant mountains. To see the well-crafted wooden homes, fine clothing of the wives and children, and jeweled rings on the chubby fingers, one might think this rumor is true.

In Storbaer there are fifteen wooden houses, a community longhouse, a tavern, several workshops, five smithies, a community forge, a school, a granary, a smokehouse, a barn, and a stable.



Peculiar Species

VALKYRIES

Nine beautiful women soar from the heavens on brilliant white feathery wings, each of them wielding a terrifying blade, their eyes burning with vengeance and retribution.

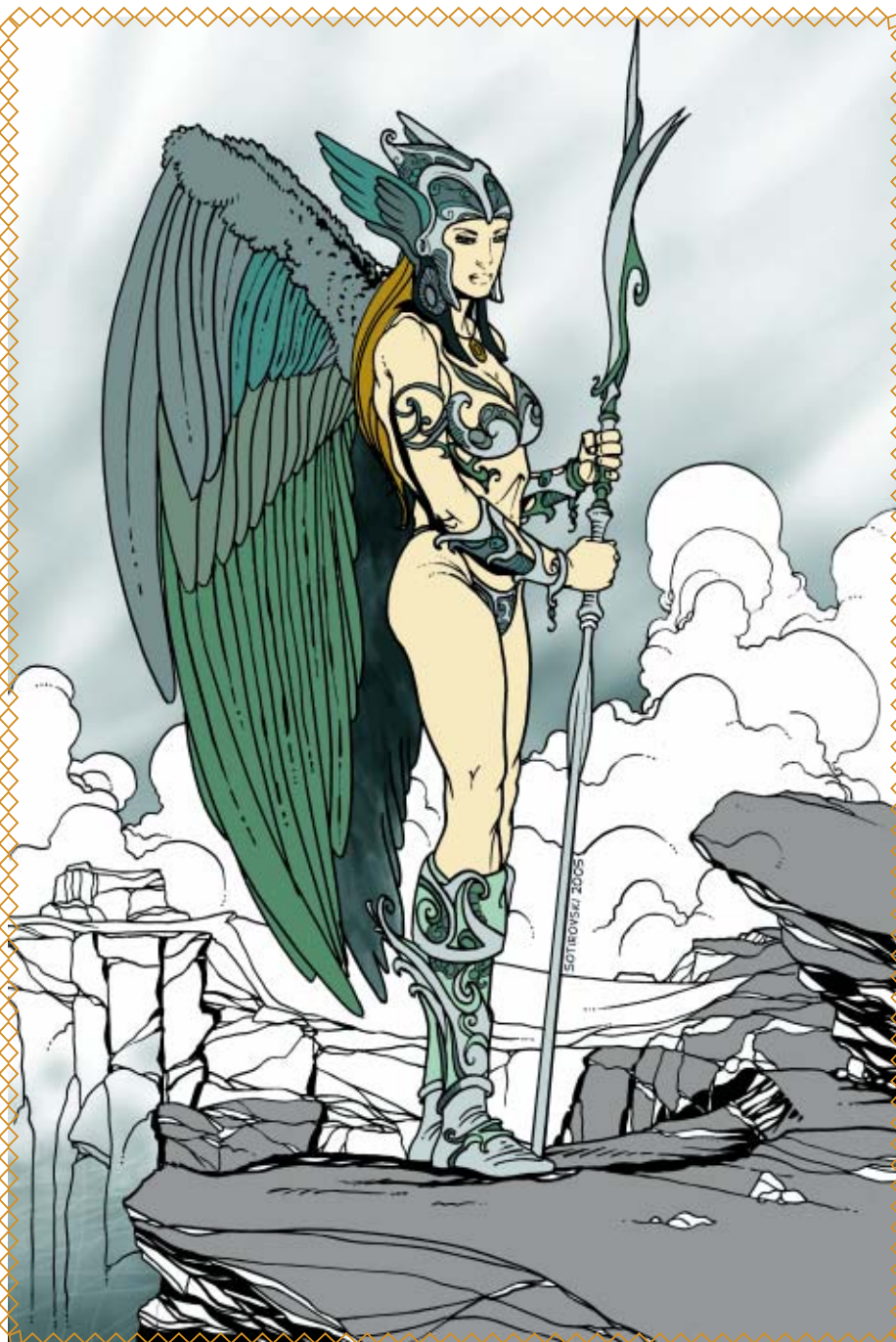
Valkyries are an all-female race of warrior women native to the plane of Asgard. From their backs spring the majestic wings that lead many to believe they are angels, when they actually represent a much more vengeful force. These beautiful maidens have taken it unto themselves to maintain the status quo between good and evil, joining the ranks of whichever side they believe need help the most. This does not mean they always sacrifice themselves to save the day. It means they are dedicated to stopping the slow, gradual alignment change in the multiverse by taking the battle to the planes that are threatening to change fundamentally because of some outside force.

When they venture from their home on Asgard they tend to be loners, staying out of civilized society to seek out the greater battles to participate in. They have the power to take up the guise of a wolf or a raven, using this ability to scout out new territory where their skills might be of benefit.

From time to time nine Valkyries will gather together, creating a troop that sets out from Asgard with a very specific intent: to right a very important wrong or to join a battle that must not be lost. They have fought demons and devils, stood with the forces of chaos - and against them. Dire times have even brought them to the gates of the heavens, putting their foot down

against the zealous celestials. Whoever the aggressor may be, Valkyries have a reputation of showing up unexpectedly during times of great peril.

Brave warriors, holding courage in high esteem, Valkyries almost always specialize in combat. However, each Valkyrie is an individual first, often adapting a very unique





style to set her apart from her fellow maidens. Considering the limitations of physical combat against more powerful opponents they greatly respect anyone who can complement their abilities, backing them up with ranged attacks, arcane barrages, or divine augmentation.

These amazing women have an innate desire to fight, to prove themselves, and to deliver their own brand of justice to those who they believe deserve it. On their own

they take great care to seek out those that truly deserve to be put out of their misery, and this seems to be the only thing that drives them to leave Asgard. They rarely take a companion, finding their passion for battle hard to control, and there are no male Valkyries. From time to time they find partners amongst humans, bearing only female offspring who invariably become Valkyries themselves. Valkyries reach maturity at twenty and can live to be nine hundred, never appearing to age.

VALKYRIE

Nine beautiful women descend from the heavens on brilliant, white wings. Each woman wields a terrifying blade, and has eyes that burn with vengeance and ferocity.

Size, type (subtype)	Medium Outsider
HD	6d8 (27hp)
Init	+2 (+2 Dex)
Spd	30 ft., fly 60 ft. (Average)
AC	20 (+2 Dex, +6 [+1 Breastplate], +2 Shield) touch 12; flat-footed 18
Base Attack /Grapple	+6/+8
Atk	Masterwork longsword +9 melee (1d8+2/17-20)
Full Atk	Masterwork longsword +9 melee (1d8+2/17-20) and 2 wings +3 melee (1d4+1)
Space/Reach	5 ft./5 ft.
SA	-
SQ	Alternate form
SV	Fort +5 Ref +7 Will +5
Abilities	STR 14 DEX 15 CON 10 INT 10 WIS 11 CHA 13
Skills	Disguise +10, Gather Information +10, Handle Animal +10, Heal +9, Hide +11, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (Nature) +2, Move Silently +11, Survival +9
Feats	Hover (bonus), Dodge, Improved Critical (longsword), Track
Environment	Asgard
Organization	Solitary, Troop (9)
Challenge Rating	4
Treasure	Standard, plus +1 breastplate and masterwork longsword
Alignment	Always CN
Advancement	By class level
Level Adjustment	+2

VALKYRIE CHARACTERS

Valkyries favor specializing as fighters of some kind. They have a natural aptitude for combat-orientated classes, and they laud and respect the abilities of those of their race who show the greatest physical prowess. Valkyries aren't strictly bound by their society; however, so the occasional individual will be found training herself in arcane matters or devoted to an appropriate neutral-aligned deity.

Most Valkyries recognize the fact that sheer strength and courage are not always enough to vanquish a foe. Because of this they appreciate reliable backup and may be inclined to help adventuring parties who are fighting for the same cause as they are.

COMBAT

When they have chosen to engage in a fight, lone Valkyries will charge head-on, meeting their foes in hand to hand combat. Failing this they will try to turn their attention to targets they can reach, or seek help from others. Rarely do Valkyries go out of their way to employ stealth. They prefer a fair fight.

Valkyrie troops adhere to a close formation until they reach their foes, and then fan out, taking on any number of foes at the same time. They retain a stubborn individualism, even when part of a team.



ALTERNATE FORM (Su): A Valkyrie can assume the form of a raven or a wolf as a standard action up to two times a day. This ability functions as a polymorph spell cast on herself at a caster level equal to her racial HD, except that the Valkyrie does not regain hit points for changing form and can only assume the form of a raven or a wolf. The Valkyrie can remain in her raven or wolf form until she chooses to assume a new one or return to her natural form.

Valkyries as characters:

- Str +4, Dex +4, Cha +2
 - Medium size.
 - A Valkyrie's base land speed is 30 ft., and has a flight speed of 60 ft.
 - Darkvision 60 ft.
 - Racial Hit Dice: A Valkyrie begins with six levels of outsider, which provide 6d8 Hit Dice, a base attack bonus of +6, and base saving throw bonuses of Fort +5, Ref +5 and Will +5
 - Racial Skills: A Valkyrie's outsider levels give her skill points equal to 9 x (8 + Int modifier). Its class skills are and blah.
 - Racial Feats: A Valkyrie's outsider levels give her three feats. A Valkyrie receives Hover as a bonus feat.
 - Natural Weapons: 2 wings (1d4)
 - Special Abilities (see above): Alternate form
 - Automatic languages: Common.
- Bonus languages: Dwarven, Giant, Elven
- Favored Class: Fighter
 - Level adjustment: +2

VALKYRIE AVENGER

At the head of a troop of Valkyries flies a frightful woman with great golden wings, clutching an equally brilliant sword, her golden hair billowing out behind her.

A Valkyrie avenger has spent her entire life learning the ways of battle in Asgard, fighting amongst the men in the never-ending wars that mar their home plane. She has learned how to coordinate troops and takes great pride in being able to lead an army to victory. Avengers rarely stray from Asgard except to lead a campaign or aid a battle on another plane.

VALKYRIE AVENGER [Valkyrie fighter 8]

Size, type (subtype) Medium Outsider

HD 6d8 + 8d10 + 14 (85 hp.)

Init +4

Spd 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

AC 24 (10 +4 Dex, +7 [+3 chain shirt],

+3 [+1 heavy shield]); touch 14; flat-footed 20 +14/+19

Base Attack /Grapple

Atk +2 keen longsword +22 (1d8+9/17-20)

Full Atk +2 keen longsword +22 (1d8+9/17-20) and 2 wings +17 (1d4+2)

Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.

SA -

SQ Alternate form

SV Fort +12 Ref +11 Will +7

Abilities STR 20 DEX 18 CON 12
INT 10 WIS 10 CHA 15

Skills Disguise +11, Gather Information +11, Handle Animal +11, Heal +9, Hide +15, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (Nature) +2, Move Silently +13, Survival +15

Feats Cleave, Dodge, Hover (bonus), Improved Sunder, Leadership, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Self-sufficient, Track, Weapon Focus (Longsword), Weapon Specialization (Longsword)

Environment Asgard

Organization Solitary, Troop (9)
Challenge Rating 14

Treasure Standard, plus +2 keen longsword and +3 chain shirt and +1 heavy shield

Alignment Always CN

Advancement -

Level Adjustment +2



When a troop of Valkyries embarks from Asgard, an avenger often takes her place as their leader. A strong personality backed by an amazing sword can turn the tide in any struggle.

Historically Correct Valkyries

Traditionally, Valkyries are lesser female deities and shield maidens of Odin. They scoured the battlefield looking for fallen warriors worthy of entering Valhalla, bringing them there to enjoy their eternal stay in the halls of heroes. However, when they found soldiers who had fought poorly, they would expel them to Niflheim for them to wash up on the Shore of Corpses.

Odin would call upon the Valkyries to bear messages to his subjects and his enemies. They were beautiful, immortal women, depicted by the Vikings as wolves or ravens, for these scavengers were frequently seen near battlefields picking amongst the slain men, or as tall blonde warrior-women wearing winged helmets. Seeing a Valkyrie before battle was an omen that the battle would take a turn for the worse. The myth of the Valkyries is very similar to that of the swan maiden, and few sources differentiate between the two.

Jotnar

A massive, shaggy creature stands up, looking like a horrible human with a fat nose, stubby tusks, wild, unkempt greasy hair and an odor that will carry for hours after he's gone.

Deep in the forests abominations dwell that rarely leave their abodes. Most say they are huge, hulking folk that are tall as a barn or a house with trees growing all over their tufty skin. They have teeth the size of pitchfork with claws that could brain a man without even trying.

Jotnar are a race of horrible folk. Brutes that live for no particular cause, devoid of much wit or understanding,

Jotnar take out their frustrations on each other and anything smaller than them. They venture out from their caves, deep in the forest, to squash and boil whatever animals they can lay their hands on. They particularly enjoy the rare occasions when humanoids trespass, delighting in robbing and squishing their hapless victims. Every now and then the Jotnar stray into civilized lands and the poor peasants send out their bravest lads out to deal with the threat. Many a self-proclaimed giant killer and poorly led mob has met their demise in this fashion, not quite expecting the raw, stubborn force of the Jotnar.

The only fool-proof way to eliminate Jotnar is to keep them out of their caves until morning; the barest touch of sunlight permanently turns them to stone. The many riches of the Jotnar's victims accumulate in their caves, and many adventurers crave the opportunity to discover an eliminated Jotnar's renowned hoard.

JOTNAR CHARACTERS

Few Jotnar have the mental capacity to learn a trade of any sort, save those that require little mental capacity. Their formidable constitution and size make them ideal barbarians, should they ever find the presence of mind to apply themselves to learning class skills. Their minimal intellect make them ill-suited for most other occupations. Amongst themselves Jotnar distinguish themselves by being tougher, larger, and more stubborn than their contemporaries, though these contemporaries are frequently too dim to acknowledge this fact if it isn't hammered into them regularly with the business end of a small tree. Hence Jotnar don't make many friends amongst their own kind unless they keep their trees handy.

COMBAT

Not being the most subtle of creatures, Jotnar know little more than how to squash, pulverize, crush, and sit on things. Occasionally they have the wits to hide in the forest near trade routes where they can ambush merchants. This amounts to squashing, pulverizing, crushing, and sitting on them... from behind.

Jotnar carry heavy wooden clubs that they'll use for whacking and thumping things when the mood takes them, and, if they find other Jotnar that they are willing to tolerate for long enough, they might form something of an alliance, recognizing even in their dimness that two clubs are better than one.



SUNLIGHT PETRIFICATION:

When exposed to natural sunlight (or magical, such as that caused by the daylight spell), Jotnar are petrified instantly as per a flesh to stone spell. If they are within 10ft of shade (total cover from the source of the light), Jotnar are permitted a DC 15 reflex save to escape the effect of the sunlight. Jotnar become uncomfortably aware of the rising sun ten minutes before the first rays of harmful light hit them.

JOTNAR AS CHARACTERS

Jotnar Characters possess the following racial traits:

- +20 Strength, -2 Dexterity, +18 Constitution, -4 Intelligence, -4 Wisdom, -6 Charisma
- Huge size. -2 penalty to Armor Class, -2 penalty on attack rolls, -8 penalty on hide checks, +8 bonus on grapple checks, lifting and carrying limits quadruple those of Medium characters.
- Space/Reach: 10 feet/10 feet.
- A jotnar's base land speed is 40 ft.
- Darkvision out to 60 ft.
- Racial Hit Dice: A jotnar begins with ten levels of giant, which provides 10d8 Hit Dice, a base attack bonus of +7, and base saving throws of Fort +7, Ref +3, and Will +3.
- Racial Skills: A jotnar's giant levels give it skill points equal to 13 x (2 + Int modifier). Its class skills are Hide, Listen and Spot.
- Racial Feats: A jotnar's giant levels give it four feats.
- +10 natural armor bonus
- Natural Weapons: 2 slams (2d6).
- Special Attacks: Snatch.
- Special Qualities: Sunlight Petrification.
- Automatic Languages: Giant
- Favored Class: Barbarian.
- Level adjustment +4

LIVING MOUNTAIN

Jotnar can live to reach a phenomenal age. The oldest of their kind have somehow managed to escape the attention of the masses, have been particularly lucky about choosing their abode, or hit just that little bit harder than those who challenge them. Whatever the case, ancient

Jotnar	
Size, type (subtype)	Huge Giant
HD	10d8+90 (135 hp)
Init	-1 (-1 Dex)
Spd	40 ft.
AC	20 (-1 Dex, -2 size, +10 natural, +3 hide); touch 7; flat-footed 20
Base Attack /Grapple	+7/+25
Atk	Greatclub +18 melee (3d8+15)
Full Atk	Greatclub +18/+13 melee (3d8+15)
Space/Reach	15 ft./15 ft.
SA	Snatch
SQ	Darkvision 60ft., Sunlight Petrification
SV	Fort +16 Ref +2 Will +1
Abilities	STR 30 DEX 8 CON 28 INT 6 WIS 7 CHA 5
Skills	Hide +0, Listen +0, Spot +0
Feats	Cleave, Power Attack, Snatch, Weapon Focus (Greatclub)
Environment	Temporal Forests
Organization	Solitary or gang (1 plus 1-4 ogres)
Challenge Rating	6
Treasure	Double Standard
Alignment	Always chaotic evil
Advancement	11-20 (Huge); 21-30 (Gargantuan)
Level Adjustment	+4

Jotnar live for over a millennium, always growing during this time. Over the course of years these elder Jotnar become the focus of popular legends and gain a reputation for being living mountains. Their sheer size, combined with the fact that they have dense foliage growing all over them, gives them the appearance of small, mobile forests with two weary eyes and a nose protruding over a willowy moustache.

At this age a Jotnar ceases to hunt quite as actively and its metabolism slows down, reducing the need for con-



stant nourishment and dulling the little voices in its head that would have led it to go find something to beat up in its younger days. They tend to sit in one place, watching everything go by, occasionally picking something up to eat it, but not making a big show about it like they used to. When roused, however, they still pack a lethal punch, positively pulverizing anyone who dares anger them (or refuses to be eaten) with a sturdy oak tree. Many commoners believe some mountains to be deceased or petrified Jotnar.



Jotnar, True Trolls.

Though trolls are known to many thanks to Tolkien's *The Hobbit*, most trolls in popular gaming are derived from the image granted to them by Poul Anderson in "Three Hearts and Three Lions," including the long nose and rubbery skin, ability to regenerate, and weakness to fire. The stereotypical Icelandic troll's image was somewhat lost in this new incarnation, and the Jotnar provide a variant for these abominations closer to the tradition Tolkien followed in his works, bringing them back to their sun-shy roots.

JOTNAR, Living Mountain

Size, type (subtype)	Gargantuan Giant			
HD	30d8+390 (525 hp)			
Init	+0 (+0 Dex)			
Spd	50 ft.			
AC	22 (+0 Dex, -4 size, +16 natural)			
	touch	6; flat-footed	22	
Base Attack /Grapple	+20/+48			
Atk	Greatclub +33 melee (3d8+24/19-20)			
Full Atk	Greatclub +33/+28/+23/+18 melee (4d8+24/19-20)			
Space/Reach	20 ft./20 ft.			
SA	Snatch			
SQ	Darkvision 60ft., Sunlight Petrification			
SV	Fort +30 Ref +11 Will +10			
Abilities	STR	43	DEX	11
	INT	6	WIS	8
			CON	36
			CHA	2
Skills	Hide +21, Listen -1, Spot -1			
Feats	Awesome Blow, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (Greatclub), Improved Natural Armor (2), Improved Overrun, Power Attack, Snatch, Weapon Focus (Greatclub)			
Environment	Temporal Forests			
Organization	Solitary			
Challenge Rating	12			
Treasure	Quadruple Standard			
Alignment	Always chaotic evil			
Advancement	-			
Level Adjustment	-			



Major Monstrosities

GRYPPA AND LEPPALUDI

Gryppa and Leppaludi, two half-orc minstrels that once took to the road to disprove the prejudices against their race, have traveled from town to town for as long as they can remember. Their skill grew greatly whilst they traveled, though their lifestyle became increasingly wild and marginal, until at some point along the way they became involved with a vampire who took control of them. They were completely under his command until the vampire met a grizzly demise at the business end of a vampire hunter's stake and their free will returned to them, but their insatiable hunger remained.

They continued to travel, visiting hamlet upon hamlet, but this time with a more sinister purpose. They entertained the older folks, winning their trust, and then sated their thirst with the blood of the youngest townsfolk, sometimes passing their affliction upon the youths but always leaving the villages they visited in a peculiar chaos. When those adept at destroying the undead started hunting them, they began to increase their numbers. Gryppa, the female part of the duo, won the trust of a traveling circus of halflings, and on a tragic night she and her husband took them all by surprise, drained their mortal blood, and convinced them to join them in their travels of their own free will. Acknowledging that their hunger was best sated by the way Gryppa and Leppaludi could smuggle them into townships, the vampire halflings agreed to this deal, and now have a permanent residence in the wagon of the minstrels.

With their act now expanded, they roam from town to town, rarely leaving a soul alive in their wake. Approximately once every moon their hunger strikes and they seek out a new town to settle down in, preferably some distance from their last snack so as not to rouse suspicion.

COMBAT

When they have decided who or what their prey is going to be, Gryppa usually sends the duo's halfling henchmen to deal with them. All thirteen of these critters are extremely adept at latching on to their opponent, all of

them grappling simultaneously and draining their victim's blood. Gryppa and Leppaludi avoid joining the fray themselves whenever possible.

GRYPPA: Female half-orc rogue 5; CR 7; Medium undead; HD 5d12; hp 32; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 23, touch 14, flat-footed 23; BAB +3; Grp +8; Atk +9 melee (1d6+6, handaxe); Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+6 and 1d6+3, 2 handaxes); SA Blood Drain, Children of the Night, Create Spawn, Dominate, Energy Drain, Sneak Attack +3d6; SQ Alternate Form, Darkvision, Damage Reduction, Evasion, Fast Healing, Gaseous Form, Resistances, Spider Climb, Turn Resistance, Trapfinding, Trap Sense +1, Uncanny Dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +1, Ref +10, Will +1; Str 20, Dex 18, Con -, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +19, Climb +13, Diplomacy +5, Disable Device +11, Disguise +13, Escape Artist +12, Hide +20, Intimidate +13, Jump +13, Listen +10, Move Silently +20, Open Lock +12, Perform +11, Search +11, Sense Motive +8, Spot +10; Alertness^B, Combat Reflexes^B, Dodge^B, Improved Initiative^B, Lightning Reflexes^B, Two-Weapon Fighting, Martial Weapon Proficiency (handaxe).

Gryppa speaks Common, Orc, Abyssal, Halfling, Giant and Goblin.

Possessions: +1 handaxe (2), *Gryppa's Bag of Snaring* (see page 38), masterwork studded leather, 350 gp.

¹ Armor Check penalties not included in stat block

VAMPIRE ABILITIES

Gryppa, Leppaludi and the Jolasveinar all possess the following abilities.

Blood Drain (Ex): A vampire can suck blood from a living victim with its fangs by making a successful grapple check. If it pins the foe, it drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution drain each round the pin is maintained. On each such successful attack, the vampire gains 5 temporary hit points.

Children of the Night (Su): Vampires command the lesser creatures of the world and once per day can call forth 1d6+1 rat swarms, 1d4+1 bat swarms, or a pack of 3d6 wolves as a standard action. (If the base creature is not terrestrial, this power might summon other creatures of



similar power.) These creatures arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve the vampire for up to 1 hour.

Dominate (Su): A vampire can crush an opponent's will just by looking onto his or her eyes. This is similar to a gaze attack, except that the vampire must use a standard action, and those merely looking at it are not affected. Anyone the vampire targets must succeed on a Will save or fall instantly under the vampire's influence as though by a *dominate person* spell (caster level 12th). The ability has a range of 30 feet.

Create Spawn (Su): A humanoid or monstrous humanoid slain by a vampire's energy drain rises as a vampire spawn (see the Vampire Spawn entry) 1d4 days after burial.

If the vampire instead drains the victim's Constitution to 0 or lower, the victim returns as a spawn if it had 4 or less HD and as a vampire if it had 5 or more HD. In either case, the new vampire or spawn is under the command of the vampire that created it and remains enslaved until its master's destruction. At any given time a vampire may have enslaved spawn totaling no more than twice its own Hit Dice; any spawn it creates that would exceed this limit are created as free-willed vampires or vampire spawn. A vampire that is enslaved may create and enslave spawn of its own, so a master vampire can control a number of lesser vampires in this fashion. A vampire may voluntarily free an enslaved spawn in order to enslave a new spawn, but once freed, a vampire or vampire spawn cannot be enslaved again.

Energy Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by a vampire's slam attack (or any other natural weapon the vampire might possess) gain two negative levels. For each negative level bestowed, the vampire gains 5 temporary hit points. A vampire can use its energy drain ability once per round.

Special Qualities: A vampire retains all the special qualities of the base creature and gains those described below.

Alternate Form (Su): A vampire can assume the shape of a bat, dire bat, wolf, or dire wolf as a standard action. This ability is similar to a *polymorph* spell cast by a 12th-level character, except that the vampire does not regain hit points for changing form and must choose from among the forms mentioned here. While in its alternate form, the

vampire loses its natural slam attack and dominate ability, but it gains the natural weapons and extraordinary special attacks of its new form. It can remain in that form until it assumes another or until the next sunrise. (If the base creature is not terrestrial, this power might allow other forms.)

Damage Reduction (Su): A vampire has damage reduction 10/silver and magic. A vampire's natural weapons are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Fast Healing (Ex): A vampire heals 5 points of damage each round so long as it has at least 1 hit point. If reduced to 0 hit points in combat, it automatically assumes gaseous form and attempts to escape. It must reach its coffin home within 2 hours or be utterly destroyed. (It can travel up to nine miles in 2 hours.) Any additional damage dealt to a vampire forced into gaseous form has no effect. Once at rest in its coffin, a vampire is helpless. It regains 1 hit point after 1 hour, then is no longer helpless and resumes healing at the rate of 5 hit points per round.

Gaseous Form (Su): As a standard action, a vampire can assume *gaseous form* at will as the spell (caster level 5th), but it can remain gaseous indefinitely and has a fly speed of 20 feet with perfect maneuverability.

Resistances (Ex): A vampire has resistance to cold 10 and electricity 10.

Spider Climb (Ex): A vampire can climb sheer surfaces as though with a spider climb spell.

Turn Resistance (Ex): A vampire has +4 turn resistance.

LEPPALUDI: Male half-orc bard 5; CR 7; Medium undead; HD 5d12; hp 32; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 23, touch 13, flat-footed 20; BAB +3; Grp +7; Atk +7 melee (1d6+4 plus energy drain, slam); Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+4 plus energy drain, slam); SA Bardic Music, Blood Drain, Children of the Night, Countersong, Create Spawn, Dominate, Energy Drain, Fascinate, Inspire Courage +1, Inspire Competence; SQ Alternate Form, Bardic Knowledge, Damage Reduction, Darkvision, Fast Healing 5, Gaseous Form, Resistances, Spider Climb, Turn Resistance; AL CE; SV Fort +1, Ref +9, Will +6; Str 18, Dex 17, Con -, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 18.



Skills and Feats: Appraise +10, Bluff +20, Diplomacy +16, Disguise +14, Forgery +4, Gather Information +12, Hide +11, Intimidate +8, Listen +12, Move Silently +11, Perform (Act) +12, Search +10, Sense Motive +18, Spot +12; Alertness^B, Combat Reflexes^B, Dodge^B, Improved Initiative^B, Lightning Reflexes^B, Negotiator, Persuasive.

Leppaludi speaks Common, Orc, and Halfling.

Possessions: cloak of charisma +2, masterwork chain mail¹, 250 gp.

¹ Armor Check penalties not included in stat block

JOLASVEINAR: Male halfling rogue 5; CR 7; Small undead; HD 5d12; hp 32; Init +9; Spd 20 ft.; AC 25, touch 16, flat-footed 25; BAB +3; Grp +6; Atk +7 melee (1d4+3 plus energy drain, slam); Full Atk +7 melee (1d4+3 plus energy drain, slam); SA Sneak Attack +3d6, Blood Drain, Children of the Night, Create Spawn, Dominate, Energy Drain; SQ Alternate Form, Darkvision, Damage Reduction, Evasion, Fast Healing, Gaseous Form, Resistances, Spider Climb, Trapfinding, Trap Sense +1, Turn Resistance, Uncanny Dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +2, Ref +12, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 20, Con -, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Balance +15, Bluff +10, Climb +13, Escape Artist +13, Hide +25, Jump +15, Listen +10, Move Silently +21, Search +9, Sense Motive +8, Sleight of Hand +13, Spot +10, Tumble +15; Alertness^B, Combat Reflexes^B, Dodge^B, Improved Initiative^B, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Lightning Reflexes^B.

The Jolasveinar speak only Common and Halfling. The Jolasveinar also speak a scattering of Abyssal, mostly curses, that they have picked up from Gryppa.

Possessions: masterwork studded leather armor¹.

¹ Armor Check penalties not included in stat block

THE MOUNTAIN KING

Far away, many miles from anywhere, stands a mountain, and it has stood there for as long as anyone can tell. Crowned in clouds and ice, but

touching the grassy plains with its toes, this mountain is home to a giant amongst giants, a man so vast that men are like mice beside him, nay - not even that. His mansion sits atop a precipice, miles above the tumultuous waters of a great cascading river that plummets down to the plains below, and what a mansion! It is said that only the mountain king is quite huge enough to open the door, and that anything that dares to try anyway promptly ends up in the evening's stew. His hogs are so fat that they must surely be fed with the corpses of every giant-slayer he has had the pleasure of crushing, topped off with basket-loads of newborn children which he steals during the night for dessert.





This, at least, is what locals would have you believe. The mountain king has been the focus of great speculation for centuries, as he deviates somewhat from the image most have of hermits. Giants come and go from his home all the time, though smaller folk that presume they may be welcomed to the king's halls never return. No one really knows what to think of him, and so wild tales spread.

In truth, the mountain king isn't such a bad giant. Granted, he is thrice the size of other giants and enjoys his privacy, but he has no inclination to suck the marrow from the bones of villagers or skewer and grill young soldiers, provided they wield the art of common courtesy. He prefers to be left to his own devices, to play his bagpipes and tend to his herd of pigs. Secretly he dabbles in the arcane arts, aspiring to understand the deeper intricacies of magic. Though he has far from mastered the trade, he is adept enough to tinker in the brewing of magic potions, the research of obscure spells, and the creation of magic trinkets and toys. He prefers to keep this secret and gets somewhat agitated when folks unwittingly discover it. When boundaries like these are crossed, the mountain king may decide that guests have overstayed their welcome. Should they refuse to leave immediately, he may become violent. Needless to say, when you are as colossal as the mountain king, violence gets out of hand fairly rapidly, and this may be the reason that small folk rarely leave his abode alive.

It is no coincidence that he lives where he does. Ever since he was born from his frost giant mother, other giants have branded him as divinely blessed – the progeny of a deity – and it is true that he was touched by an unknown deity of magic and knowledge to become what he is today. His purpose on this plane was to be one of four guardians, four sentinels that would protect the gates to the plane of Niflheim, and the mountain king surrendered to this predestined order long ago. His house was built over a cave deep in the mountain below, and he has lived there ever since, watching the ages pass while keeping to his own quiet business.

MOUNTAIN KING

Size, type (subtype)	Colossal Giant					
HD	35d8 plus 5d4+440 (610 hp.)					
Init	+4 (+0 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)					
Spd	60 ft.					
AC	37 (+0 Dex, -8 size, +22 natural, +13 armor) touch 2; flat-footed 37					
Base Attack /Grapple	+28/+59					
Atk	Dekkol'Ator +38 melee (5d8+24/19-20) or Gnawtje +40 melee (4d6+20);					
Full Atk	Dekkol'Ator +38/+33/+28/+23/+18/+13 melee (5d8+24/19-20) or Gnawtje +40/+35/+30/+25/+20/+15 melee (4d6+20)					
Space/Reach	30 ft./30 ft.					
SA	-					
SQ	Darkvision 60ft.					
SV	Fort	33	Ref	12	Will	19
Abilities	STR	40	DEX	10	CON	32
	INT	14	WIS	14	CHA	18
Skills	Bluff +23, Decipher Script +22, Diplomacy +25, Intimidate +25, Knowledge (arcana) +21, Knowledge (history) +21, Perform (oratory) +23, Perform (wind instruments) +23, Use Magic Device +23					
Feats	Awesome Blow, Brew Potion (bonus), Cleave, Great Cleave, Craft Wondrous Item, Great Fortitude, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (halberd), Improved Initiative, Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Power Attack, Scribe Scroll (bonus), Still Spell, Weapon Focus (halberd)					
Environment	-					
Organization	Solitary					
Challenge Rating	18					
Treasure	Quadruple Standard plus a +2 Ghost Touch Vorpal Colossal Halberd (Dekkol'Ator), a +5 Ogrebane Colossal Handaxe (Gnawtje), a +5 Glamered Full Plate of Spell Resistance (17), a Staff of Enchantment and a Cloak of Charisma +6					
Alignment	Neutral					
Advancement	-					
Level Adjustment	-					



When visitors do arrive, he either invites them in or sends them away, deciding which in an instant and doing both equally often. If he favors his visitors, he will treat them to a magnificent meal and entertain them all evening long by the fireside - telling stories or playing the pipes, two things he prides himself in enormously. He will then provide guests with rooms for the night and see them off in the morning, thanking them for their visit. Of course, this is the ideal situation, where the guests are polite, courteous, and grateful.

NIDHOGG

Niflheim is surrounded by the *Enska Lo*, (Sea of Death) and a mile from shore stands a tree that is home to one of the most regrettable abominations in existence, the twelve-tailed snake Nidhogg. He peers out from his abode, staring with sneaky eyes, searching the mists for those who might facilitate his escape from the wretched

plane. His many tails writhe within the tree, keeping his most gruesome aspect concealed - the twelve poison-soaked swords of dwarven craft he wields so masterfully with each tail.

Nidhogg originates from the Outer Planes, and though he is a vastly powerful being, the art of magic has eluded him. He has studied magic all his existence, desperately trying to unlock the power that it might yield to him, but always without success. No one knows how he was trapped in Niflheim, but some suggest he was tricked into it, and now he struggles to escape the place. Whatever the case, he knows things few mortals know and desperately tries to trick those who seek knowledge or passage into setting him free.

Oddly, Nidhogg displays a strange sense of loyalty to his own word; more often than not he keeps his promises. Trust him to twist the wording endlessly and try to set





things up so that the bargain falls into his advantage, but he abides by whatever oaths he swears.

Nidhogg has been identified as the second guardian of Niflheim, for travelers who arrive via the river Ledda are invariably faced with him.

COMBAT

Nidhogg will bargain before he battles, but he does not hesitate to back his negotiations up with force if it seems opportune. Capable of fighting with all twelve appendages, each wielding a sword, he charges into combat with a whirling frenzy led by the lethal bite he delivers from his razor-like fangs. He prefers to keep his swords hidden until he can use them with surprise to overwhelm his adversaries. If he merely wants to incapacitate an opponent he will make a series of disarm attacks and grapple, eventually taking out even the most skilled fighters through a sheer barrage of attacks.

GNAUROQ

In the distant North, where the cold grows so intense that no man in his right mind would ever go there and the waters are so misty no sailor would be so foolhardy as to challenge the icebergs, a river flows through a great gorge of sheer ice that leads to the foggy demiplane that waits upstream. This river is the territory of Gnauroq, the noble bird of frost and the third guardian of Niflheim - monitoring the caves is her charge.

Any travelers mad enough to brave the harsh cold of the North can see Gnauroq's contour silhouetted against the faint sun, and can hear her awesome cry every day. Should these travelers choose to struggle upstream through the caverns of the river Ledda, they will be faced with Gnauroq in her full glory, where they will be judged and dealt with as the guardian sees fit. Due to her noble blood she never knowingly allows evil creatures to enter the plane, as she has been granted the right to allow only those she chooses entry.

Gnauroq sleeps only two hours every day, perching on the highest tip of the highest mountain in her range, well out of reach of adventurers.

NIDHOGG

A mass of writhing tails churns and pulsates below the greedy, cunning eyes of this monstrous twelve-tailed snake

Size, type (subtype)	Gargantuan Magical Beast (Evil, Reptilian)					
HD	22d10+154 (275 hp)					
Init	+2					
Spd	30 ft.					
AC	26 (10, -4 size, +2 Dex, +18 natural) touch 8; flat-footed 24					
Base Attack /Grapple	+18/+40					
Atk	Bite +28 melee (2d6+10 Poison) or Tail +28 melee (2d8+5 Constrict) or Longsword +33 melee (1d8+9 Poison 17-20/x2 Poison)					
Full Atk	Bite +28 melee (2d6+10 Poison) and 12 Tails +26 melee (2d8+5 Constrict) or Bite +28 melee and 12 Longswords +29 melee (1d8+9 17-20/x2 Poison)					
Space/Reach	20 ft./15 ft.					
SA	Constrict, Improved Grab, Poison					
SQ	Damage reduction 15/good					
SV	Fort	+20	Ref	+15	Will	+11
Abilities	STR	30	DEX	14	CON	24
	INT	26	WIS	18	CHA	22
Skills	Appraise +33, Bluff +31, Concentration +32, Diplomacy +33, Intimidate +33, Knowledge (arcana) +33, Knowledge (history) +33, Knowledge (the planes) +33, Sense Motive +29, Use Magic Device +31					
Feats	Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical (Longsword), Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Multiattack, Multiweapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (Longsword)					
Environment	Niflheim					
Organization	Solitary					
Challenge Rating	15					
Treasure	Quadruple Standard					
Alignment	Lawful Evil					
Advancement	-					
Level	-					
Adjustment	-					



GNAUROQ	Gargantuan Magical Beast (cold)					
Size, type (subtype)						
HD	24d10 (132 hp)					
Init	+7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)					
Spd	20 ft., fly 80 ft. (average)					
AC	24 (-4 size, +3 Dex, +15 natural); touch 9; flat-footed 21					
Base Attack /Grapple	+22/+47					
Atk	Talon +31 melee (2d6+13)					
Full Atk	2 Talons +31 melee (2d6+13) and bite +29 melee (2d8+6)					
Space/Reach	20 ft./15 ft.					
SA	Breath Weapon, Detect Alignment, Frightful Presence					
SQ	Damage Reduction 10/fire, Fast Healing 5, Spell Resistance (27), Telepathy 120 ft.					
SV	Fort	+21	Ref	+17	Will	+13
Abilities	STR	36	DEX	16	CON	25
	INT	12	WIS	17	CHA	16
Skills	-					
Feats	Alertness, Endurance, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Multiattack, Power Attack, Snatch, Wingover					
Environment	River Ledda					
Organization	Solitary					
Challenge Rating	17					
Treasure	-					
Alignment	Lawful Good					
Advancement Level	-					
Adjustment	-					

The rest of the day she spends crossing the plains all around the river to spot trespassers from afar. Due to the mists she can rarely be seen unless the sun is behind her, a fact that she uses to her full advantage.

COMBAT

Gnauroq bides her time, spying on travelers from afar and only closing in when she has made up her mind to strike. Should she feel confident that the passers-by are up to no good she will swoop in from behind, surprising them with her breath weapon and her magnificent appearance. In the case of multiple targets she will zero in on the heaviest combatant with her physical attacks and blast any other threats with her breath weapon.

If she is not certain of the intentions of her foes she will block their path, demanding they explain themselves and simultaneously detect their alignments. Should they be found to be evil she attacks, using the same tactics, though she will have lost the element of surprise.



Supporting Entities

LOFTUR THE NECROMANCER

This tall, scarlet-clad man rises tall before the bent silhouettes of his undead consorts, the ring in his nose and his metal hand glowing with mysterious magic.

Loftur is inspired. Many things are said about him, though little is really known. It is generally agreed, however, that he has a plan. A mission. His dealings in Helka volcano have become the focus of folklore across the land, and his henchmen have inspired fear in the townships near Helka, where he is referred to as “the Bull.”

Loftur himself isn't too enigmatic. He is a tall dark man dressed in the most violent shades of red. His seemingly permanent grin is lined with gold teeth, betraying Loftur's most displayed passion, body modification. As evident from his adamantite hand and ruby nose ring (hence his nickname “the Bull”), he has a penchant for replacing natural parts of the body with artificial ones, preferably fashioned from rare materials or magically enchanted. His hand, for example, is effectively a wand of magic missile, and his nose ring is a ring of protection.

But his passion isn't limited to himself. The modifications are also prominent in his other work, namely the tinkering with the life-force of others. Loftur has made a reputation for himself with his manipulation of magic for somewhat sinister purposes, bringing any corpse he can find back to life (or unlife) as best he can. Helka, being an active volcano, occasionally covers the area in ash and lava, leaving the petrified denizens of the region available for Loftur's experiments, though he can just as easily find victims on the plains of Niflheim. His association with the area makes encounters with these undead creatures when nearing Helka quite likely, and the necromancer's influence is undeniably present in the way he adorns his minions. He spares no effort when modifying their corpses, replacing body parts with other items or simply beautifying them with rare materials.

Speculations run wild on the subject of the Bull's lair in Helka. No one actually knows what Loftur has created his army of minions for, so they do the next best thing: they make things up. Holy men maintain that Loftur heads a doomsday cult preparing to engulf the country with his

undead creations, controlling the activity of the volcano with profane power. Traders suggest that his interests might be aimed towards the rich mineral deposits in the area, using undead as laborers because Helka's volcanic activity makes conventional mining too risky. Others suggest he is searching for something, seeking out some ancient artifact buried below the volcano or clearing out the halls of some great subterranean construction that was overrun with magma.

Some of these may have some semblance of truth, but it is all speculation. No living thing knows Loftur personally, and it seems he intends to keep it that way. The only creatures that ever get to meet him are those who are about to undergo some of his altering experiments, and they generally don't leave the volcano alive.

Loftur has a fairly strong character and very keen intellectual interests. His residence in Helka volcano can be ascribed to his dealings with Hel, its vicinity to a plane of undeath, the fact the Helka is built on a desecrated, disused temple, and the rich mineral deposits that yield interesting substances for his experiments. He can go for days without nourishment and has a tendency to explore Helka's caverns on his own for days on end. He wishes the people outside his volcano no particular ill, but enjoys displaying his power by releasing the undead he no longer needs upon the local populace.

LOFTUR: Male human necromancer 10; CR 10; Medium humanoid; HD 10d4; hp 25; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 12; BAB +5; Grp +4; Atk +4 melee (1d6-1, quarterstaff); Full Atk +4 melee (1d6-1, quarterstaff) or +6 ranged (1d8, light crossbow bolt); SA spells; SQ summon familiar (Loftur currently has no familiar); AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +9; Str 8, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +13, Craft (sculpting) +16, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +16, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +16, Knowledge (the planes) +16, Spellcraft +16; Combat Casting, Iron Will^B, Spell Mastery, Improved Counterspell, Craft Wand^B, Craft Wondrous Item, Extend Spell^B, Scribe Scroll^B

Spells: Loftur is a necromancer, the schools of enchantment and illusion are prohibited to him.



Spells prepared: 0th- *detect magic* (2), *light* (3); 1st- *alarm*, *mage armor*, *magic missile* (3), *cause fear*; 2nd- *arcane lock*, *protection from arrows*, *summon swarm* (2), *blindness*, *command undead*; 3rd- *dispel magic*, *explosive runes*, *lightning bolt* (2), *ray of exhaustion*; 4th- *stoneskin*, *black tentacles*, *fire shield*, *contagion*; 5th- *wall of force*, *symbol of pain*, *waves of fatigue*

Spellbook: 0th- all except *enchantment and illusion*; 1st- *alarm*, *cause fear*, *enlarge person*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*; 2nd- *arcane lock*, *protection from arrows*, *summon swarm*, *blindness*, *command undead*; 3rd- *dispel magic*, *explosive runes*, *lightning bolt*, *ray of exhaustion*; 4th- *stoneskin*, *black tentacles*, *fire shield*, *contagion*; 5th- *wall of force*, *symbol of pain*, *waves of fatigue*

Possessions: *wand of magic missile* (Caster lvl 9th), *ring of protection* +2, clear spindle ioun stone, 4625 gp.

THE NORN

High up in the mountains is a mighty tree that twists and turns upward with black barbed branches. Its gnarled roots are splayed across a fissure in a great rock which leads to the cavernous home of three haggard women of exceptional age.

Urd, the oldest of the three, is a decrepit old crone who might, once upon a time, have been called an elf. She studied magic, but despite her racial longevity, as she saw her end drawing close she set about securing her own survival. Delving deep into arcane lore she procured a method to copy herself, to create other individuals that resembled her in almost every way. She applied this to herself twice, and set about extending their lifespan considerably. She searched long, researching every method she could find for delaying death, and finally found one that worked the way she wanted it to. When she subjected her sisters to her newfound ritual, however, they didn't react kindly to it. It warped their unprepared minds fundamentally, and they now cannot live without each other.

Urd herself is somewhat paranoid. She has specialized in looking into the future, clairsentience and clairvoyance, and prides herself on her crystal ball, a prize she holds above all others. She guards this treasure as if it were the only thing standing between her and certain death. She views her younger sisters as being unwise and tries to educate them wherever possible. She demands the re-

spect due to her as eldest of the three. All in all she is now nearly 2000 years of age.

Verdandi, the second sister, is the most introverted of the three. When alive she was known for cutting herself, and the traces of her self-abuse can still be seen now that the marks have settled deep into the grey skin on her sinewy arms. Her face is a mask of scars, with deep bloodshot eyes and gashes all along her torso and arms. When encountering any being other than her sisters, she tries to hide her sad physical state with illusions. She often acts as a surrogate mother for Skuld.

The youngest of the three, Skuld, was barely an adult when Urd pushed her into the rites to preserve her longevity. She was ambitious and a fast learner, but also very intense and passionate. Both of her sisters regard her as being unwise, as she let her emotions drive her. Ever since she was afflicted by her sisters she has only shown rage and frustration towards her lot, expressing her fury with her evocations. She will be the one in the foreground, ready to challenge anyone who wishes any of the three harm, in contrast to the subtler magic of her sisters.

The three Norns, as they are called, live in their cave in the mountains, minding their own business. They know a great deal and are willing to divulge what they know to select individuals chosen by Urd. Her motives have always been suspect, but it can be certain that she has a deep fear of dying, and this has a role in most everything she does.

COMBAT

The Norns pose a very lethal challenge to those who would do them harm, for even though they prefer non-combat spellcasting, they can still complement each other nicely in combat when necessary.

When they have identified someone who could form a threat (which shouldn't be very hard, given Urd's passion for scrying), they will first try to scare off the offender with illusions, ghost sound and fog cloud. If these prove unsuccessful, Verdandi will usually show herself to the creature, disguised as a harmless, innocent woman who is merely seeking directions. She will then try to charm her victim or try to plant a suggestion on him. Failing this she will make her escape to join her sisters again, and they will await the intruder in the center of their lair.



After preparing themselves for the coming battle (for example, with mage armor, mirror image, and fog cloud), Skuld will stand at a choke point, where she can draw the brunt of whatever assault follows. She is backed up by the subtler magic of her sisters, and with the chaos of all three sisters casting spells simultaneously, they are capable of overpowering most targets quickly without taking damage themselves.

Should they feel themselves to be outmatched, the sisters give in to the hierarchy of age, the youngest sacrificing herself so that the elders might escape. Skuld feels compelled to take any attacks by herself, to protect Verdandi and Skuld, and if she should falter, Verdandi will do the same while Urd makes her escape.

TEMPLATE: ANCIENT CREATURE

Ancient creatures have extended their life unnaturally, decaying slowly over an extensive period of time. As opposed to liches, however, they are not undead, nor are they inherently evil.

Most often ancient creatures afflict themselves this way because they find their natural life to be too short for their own designs. Over the course of the centuries afterward their skin becomes grey, and their features start to take on a gaunt, exasperated aspect that gets worse the longer they live.

BECOMING AN ANCIENT CREATURE

Becoming ancient requires an extensive ritual that takes two weeks of uninterrupted casting by an experienced wizard who has at least ten ranks in Knowledge (Arcana), Knowledge (Religion), and five ranks in Heal to afflict any one willing creature. A creature can afflict itself if it meets the prerequisites.

Creating an ancient creature

"Ancient" is an acquired template that can be added to any corporeal animal, aberration, animal, dragon, fey, giant, humanoid, magical beast, monstrous humanoid, plant, or vermin of any alignment (referred to hereafter as the base creature).

An ancient creature uses all the base creature's statistics and abilities except as noted here. Do not recalculate the creature's Hit Dice, base attack bonus, saves, or skill points if its type changes.

Size and Type: Animals or vermin with this template become magical beasts, but otherwise the creature type is unchanged. Size is unchanged.

Special Attacks: An ancient creature retains all the special attacks of the base creature and also gains the following attack.

Frightful Presence (Ex): An ancient creature can be a terrible sight to behold. When it faces hostile opponents and enters combat with them, it forces creatures who can see him within 30 feet to make a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 ancient creature's racial HD + ancient creature's Cha modifier) or become shaken for 5d6 rounds. This ability affects only opponents with fewer Hit Dice or levels than the creature has. An opponent that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to that same creature's frightful presence for 24 hours. Frightful presence is a mind-affecting fear effect.

Special Qualities: An ancient creature retains all the special qualities of the base creature and also gains the following qualities.

- **Darkvision out to 60 feet.**

- **Damage reduction (see the table below).**

Years past natural life span	Damage Reduction
0-200	—
201-600	5/magic
601-1200	10/magic
1201-and beyond	15/magic

If the base creature already has one or more of these special qualities, use the better value. If an ancient creature gains damage reduction, its natural weapons are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Abilities: Same as the base creature, but Intelligence is at least 3. Ancient creatures' intelligence cannot ever exceed the number it was when the template was added. An afflicted creature preserves its own brain magnificently, but the stasis it undergoes also bars it from improving through mental exercise or study. Every two hundred years that the creature lives after it has exceeded its racial maximum, it permanently gains a +1 bonus to Wisdom



and suffers a -1 penalty to its Constitution and Charisma scores. These scores replace the modifiers normally incurred by aging.

Environment: Any.

Challenge Rating: As base creature +1, with an additional +1 per 600 years lived past the base creature's natural life span.

Alignment: Any.

Level Adjustment: Same as the base creature +2.

Urd: ancient female elf diviner 8; CR 11; Medium humanoid [augmented humanoid]; HD 8d4-16; hp 8; Init 0 (+0 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 11; BAB +4; Grp +3; Atk of Full Atk: +3 melee (1d6-1, quarterstaff); or +5 ranged (1d4-1, sling); SA Frightful Presence; SQ Summon Familiar (Urd currently has no familiar), elven racial traits, Darkvision, Damage Reduction 15/magic; AL NE; SV Fort -1, Ref +3, Will +11; Str 8, Dex 12, Con 4, Int 16, Wis 20, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +6, Heal +10, Knowledge (Arcana) +15, Knowledge (Religion) +15, Listen +7, Search +5, Spellcraft +15, Spot +7; Eschew Materials, Spell Focus (Divination), Greater Spell Focus (Divination), Scribe Scroll^B, Widen Spell^B.

Spells: Urd is a diviner. The school of evocation is prohibited to her.

Damage Reduction (Su): An ancient's body is tough and leathery, giving the creature damage reduction 15/magic. Its natural weapons are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Spells prepared: 0th- *detect magic* (2), *dancing lights*, *ghost sound*, *message*; 1st- *alarm*, *obscuring mist*, *comprehend languages*, *identify*, *charm person*, *sleep*; 2nd- *protection from arrows*, *fog cloud*, *detect thoughts* (2), *hypnotic pattern*; 3rd- *clairaudience/clairvoyance* (2), *deep slumber*, *suggestion*, *invisibility sphere*; 4th- *locate creature*, *scrying* (2)

Possessions: quarterstaff, sling, 20 sling bullets, *ring of protection* +1, *dust of disappearance*, *bead of force*, 900 gp.

VERDANDI: ancient female elf necromancer 6; CR 8; Medium humanoid [augmented humanoid]; HD 6d4-6; hp 9; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; BAB +3; Grp +2; Atk or Full Atk: +2 melee (1d4-1, dagger); or +5 ranged (1d4-1, dagger); SA Frightful Presence; SQ Summon Familiar (Verdandi currently has no familiar), elven racial traits, Darkvision, Damage Reduction 10/magic; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 8, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +8, Knowledge (Nobility and Royalty) +11, Knowledge (Religion) +11, Listen +3, Search +4, Spellcraft +11, Spot +3; Spell Focus (Necromancy), Greater Spell Focus (Necromancy), Scribe Scroll^B, Empower Spell^B, Dodge.

Spells: Verdandi is a necromancer. The schools of Evocation and Transmutation are prohibited to her.

Damage Reduction (Su): An ancient's body is tough and leathery, giving the creature damage reduction 10/magic. Its natural weapons are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Spells Prepared: 0th- *ghost sound*, *touch of fatigue*, *prestidigitation* (2); 1st- *mage armor*, *charm person*, *disguise self*, *ray of enfeeblement* (2); 2nd- *glitterdust*, *summon swarm*, *invisibility*, *blindness*, *false life*; 3rd- *stinking cloud*, *suggestion*, *ray of exhaustion*

Possessions: dagger, brooch of shielding, cloak of charisma +2, 100 gp.

SKULD: ancient female elf evoker 4; CR 5; Medium humanoid [augmented humanoid]; HD 5d4+5; hp 15; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10; BAB +2; Grp +3; Atk or Full Atk: +4 melee (1d4+2, +1 dagger); or +6 ranged (1d4+2, +1 dagger); SA Frightful Presence; SQ Summon Familiar (Skuld currently has no familiar), elven racial traits, Darkvision, Damage Reduction 5/magic; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +8, Hide +6, Listen +3, Move Silently +6, Search +4, Spellcraft +9, Spot +2; Dodge, Spell Focus (Evocation), Scribe Scroll^B.

Spells: Skuld is an Evoker. The schools of Enchantment and Necromancy are prohibited to her.



Historically Correct Norns

The Norns are three of the *dísir*. The *dísir* are supernatural women associated with death. These particular *dísir* are Urd (the past), Verdandi (the present), and Skuld (what is to come), and live beneath the roots of the tree of life, weaving the tapestry of fates. In this tapestry, every strand represents one person's life, and its length determines how long that person lives. Even the gods have their own threads in the tapestry of fates, though they are not permitted to see them.

The myth of the Norns appears in different mythologies in a very similar form such as the *Moirae* among the Greeks and the *Parcae* among the Romans. They are probably also the inspiration for the Weird Sisters in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*.

Damage Reduction (Su): An ancient's body is tough and leathery, giving the creature damage reduction 5/magic. Its natural weapons are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Spells Prepared: 0th- *acid splash, flare, ray of frost, ghost sound*; 1st- *mage armor, burning hands, magic missile* (3); 2nd- *summon swarm, scorching ray* (2), *mirror image*

Possessions: *gloves of dexterity* +1, +1 dagger.

SISTER GIANTS

Many giants lead reclusive lives, dealing only with their own kind and their own needs. Suttung the Brewer embodied this philosophy, socializing solely among other giants and gathering notoriety amongst them for his legendary brand of mead. Known for his womanizing, he produced over a dozen offspring by almost as many different giantesses.

Hlökk and Róta share Suttung as a father. Daughters of a fire giantess and a frost giantess respectively and raised by their mothers, these sister giants share an opposing duality which kindled immediate animosity between the two.

HLÖKK

This menacing woman stands a full eleven feet tall, with dark red skin and dazzling red hair flowing out below her black helmet. Equipped for war, she wields a giant axe in one hand and a nasty, pulsating little blade in the other.

Hlökk is a fire giantess with the blood of a storm giant. She took after her father in both ferocity and strength, tooling these passions toward destruction. Her mother was a very tame and meek giantess, traits which Hlökk despises above all others, and she left home very early, determined to make a living as a mercenary.

In the countries of the little folk she has earned herself the handle "Queen of Blades," and is renowned for her unusual grace, belying her toughness. It wasn't long after she started becoming active in this line of work that Róta tracked her down, intent on putting a stop to her less-than-benign ways. Recognizing Róta as a force to be reckoned with, Hlökk has taken to evading her sister whenever possible, determined to continue using her strength and skill with blades to make a living. She both hates and fears her sister, knowing that their animosity may result in a final deadly encounter some day.

Hlökk is a comely giantess by giant standards. Her frame is uncharacteristically lithe and ripples with lean, trained muscles. Her skin is a dark shade of crimson and is licked with pink-lined scars from many struggles. She stands upright, proud, with a smooth deep black breastplate on her torso and two black-dyed leather armguards. She wears an equally black helmet and a full-length cloak that covers her iron-studded boots. By her waist hangs an intimidating waraxe of, ironically, dwarven design. She wields this waraxe with a daunting fervor, subjecting her target to an unceasing, untiring barrage, which she rounds off with a sting of her treasured kukri. This small but deadly weapon is cleverly sheathed behind her against her shoulder blades where she can reach it in a single motion. She batters her opponent with the axe in one hand while looking for a hole in their defenses to exploit with the nasty little blade. On her belt she carries two more axes for tossing at foes she cannot reach. She is prepared for anything.

HLÖKK: Female fire giant fighter 6; CR 16; Large giant (fire); HD 15d8+105 plus 6d10+42; hp 247; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 28, touch 12, flat-footed 25; BAB +17; Grp +33;



Atk +32 melee (2d8+17, +3 dwarven waraxe); Full Atk +30/+25/+20/+15 melee (2d8+17, +3 dwarven waraxe) and +30/+25 melee (1d6+8/15-20, +2 flaming burst kukri), or +29/+24/+19/+14 melee (3d6+18, masterwork greataxe), or +20 ranged (1d8+12, masterwork throwing axe); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Rock throwing; SQ Immunity to fire, low-light vision, rock catching, vulnerability to cold; AL NE; SV Fort +20, Ref +9, Will +8; Str 34, Dex 17, Con 24, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +25; Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (dwarven waraxe), Improved Critical (kukri), Improved Initiative, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Quick Draw, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe), Weapon Focus (kukri), Weapon Specialization (dwarven waraxe).

Possessions: +2 flaming burst kukri, +3 dwarven waraxe, +3 breastplate, 2 masterwork throwing axes, masterwork greataxe, 76 gp.

RÓTA

This huge blue-skinned giantess stands with impressive calm in magnificent white armor with a gold-chained flail by her side. Her gentle, peaceful countenance seems to tell of her reluctance to use force, and her shimmering blue eyes show unusual compassion.

Róta's mother died at childbirth, leaving her to the care of her grandmother. Róta's grandmother raised her well, teaching her both selflessness and self-reliance. When her grandmother fell ill, Róta was forced to take the role of caregiver. This, however, inspired her to open her doors to the needy in her community, and she quickly learned the arts of healing, and the rewards of protecting those less fortunate. Her efforts were backed by the deities of healing and community who granted her power to continue her good works.

When her grandmother died, Róta decided she could be of greater use out in the world, setting wrongs right, so she left home and took to roaming. She soon found one of her sisters making a living as a mercenary, killing for





the highest bidder. She felt betrayed and disappointed at seeing one of her own kin behave in this manner, and vowed to put an end to her sister's wicked ways. Now Róta follows Hlökk wherever the wicked giantess goes, trying to somehow ease the wrongs Hlökk has committed and slowly preparing herself to confront the Queen of Blades.

Róta stands rather tall and has cold blue skin with icy blue eyes that radiate calm and tranquility. Built solidly, but lacking the extraordinary toughness that most of her kind possess, Róta's strength lies in her devotion, her force of will. She radiates a palpable aura of authority and dominance. Usually she wears nothing but a simple gown, and her uncomplicated attire serves to complement her strength of will. Not as graceful as her sister, Róta protects herself heavily when she fears she might get into a fight, donning a heavy plated armor gifted to her by a great smith for healing him. At her side, a massive flail is strapped with a golden chain that ends in a heavy metal cylinder of very modest design but of great magical enchantment. She prefers to also carry scrolls with spells for her protection.

RÓTA: Female frost giant cleric 16; CR 18; Large giant (cold); HD 14d8+70 plus 16d8+80; hp 285; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 36, touch 15, flat-footed 35; BAB +19; Grp +31; Atk +31 melee (2d8+16/17-20, +4 merciful heavy flail); Full Atk +31/+26/+21 melee (2d8+17/17-20, +4 merciful heavy flail); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Rock throwing, turn undead; SQ Low-light vision, rock catching, immunity to cold, vulnerability to fire, resistance to fire 20; AL NG; SV Fort +24, Ref +12, Will +23; Str 27, Dex 12, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 24, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Climb +25, Concentration +21, Diplomacy +18, Heal +26, Intimidate +19, Jump +25; Awesome Blow, Cleave, Dire Charge, Energy Resistance (fire), Energy Resistance (fire), Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (heavy flail), Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Heal), Weapon Focus (heavy flail).

Domains: Róta can cast spells from the Protection and Healing domains.

Spells Prepared: 0- *detect magic* (2), *light* (4); 1st- *detect evil* (3), *divine favor* (2), *sanctuary*^D (3); 2nd- *bear's endure*

ance (2), *delay poison*, *hold person* (2), *resist energy*, *zone of truth*, *shield other*^D; 3rd- *dispel magic* (2), *remove disease*, *searing light* (2), *wind wall*, *water breathing*, *protection from energy*^D; 4th- *air walk*, *death ward*, *dismissal*, *divine power*, *tongues*, *spell immunity*^D; 5th- *flame strike* (2), *raise dead*, *righteous magic*, *symbol of sleep*, *spell resistance*^D; 6th- *blade barrier*, *heal*, *summon monster VI*, *undead to death*, *antimagic field*^D; 7th- *holy word*, *regenerate*, *word of weakness*, *summon monster VII*, *repulsion*^D; 8th- *mass cure critical wounds*, *fire storm*, *mind blank*^D

Possessions: +4 *merciful heavy flail*, +5 full plate, *ring of protection* +5, *scroll of blade barrier*, *scroll of flame strike*, 410 gp.

OSCI THE SWAN MAIDEN

From the mist a delicate white swan emerges, ruffles its feathers and changes suddenly in size, growing, losing feathers, its appendages becoming more pronounced, until a beautiful black-haired woman stands where the swan was before. Her fierce gaze and weathered features mark her as a force to be reckoned with.

Osci is, and always will be, something of an enigma. The people who live nearby know her as the almost legendary swan maiden, a beautiful young woman who lives on a great misty lake, appearing only to a select few. Paranoid townsmen have organized expeditions to drive her out but have all come up empty-handed. Osci has the talent of only showing herself when and how she wishes to be seen.

The locals know little about her. She was first seen ten years ago, when youths claimed to have seen a comely lady bathing in a pond in the moonlight. Each time Osci is spotted the locals also observe strange behavior in swans - the graceful birds are now inextricably linked to the mythos of the swan lady.

The truth of the matter is Osci chose her reclusive existence herself. A student of the druidic path, she has never been comfortable around her own kind, preferring to live in wilder places. She left her mentors when she was barely twelve, teaching herself what she needed to know, seeking a home for herself, a place where she felt she belonged. This search led her to Wayland, her swan companion. She developed a genuine love for this animal, bonding with it for life and preferring the guise of



a swan above her human form. She took to living with Wayland, protecting the pond in which he lived, devoting herself entirely to him, and shying away from all but the most necessary contact with humans.

Given the choice she would probably never leave the pond. She is perfectly happy there with her mate, but people are unpredictable, and sometimes unfortunate travelers require her skills. Osci does what she can to avoid conflict of any kind, while still doing what is necessary to help those in need. When people wish her ill she will always flee, preferring to stay unnoticed than to openly confront any living creature. When driven into a corner she can fight ferociously with her spears, but she only fights out of necessity.

OSCI: Female human druid 6; CR 6; Medium humanoid (human); HD 6d8-6; hp 21; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20, touch 13, flat-footed 18; BAB +4; Grp +4; Atk or Full Atk +4 melee (1d6, shortspear) or +6 ranged (1d6, shortspear); SA Spells; SQ Animal companion, nature sense, wild empathy, woodland stride, trackless step, resist nature's lure, spontaneous casting, wild shape (2/day); AL TN; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 8, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +8, Diplomacy +6, Handle Animal +6, Heal +7, Knowledge (nature) +3, Listen +8, Spot +7, Survival +12, Swim +9; Augment Summoning, Dodge^B, Mobility, Natural Spell.

Spells Prepared: 0- *light* (3), *purify food and drink* (2); 1st- *charm animal*, *faerie fire* (2), *magic fang*; 2nd- *barkskin*, *flaming sphere*, *fog cloud*, *tree shape*; 3rd- *call lightning*, *cure moderate wounds*, *water breathing*

Possessions: Hide armor +1, heavy wooden shield +1, *ring of protection* +1, short spear (2), sling, bullets (20), *elixir of fire breath*, 175 gp.

Wayland: Male swan; CR 2; Small animal; HD 5d8+10; hp 32; Init +7; Spd 20 ft., fly 50ft. (clumsy); AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 16; BAB +3; Grp -1; Atk +9 melee (1d2, wing); Full Atk +9 melee (1d2, 2 wings) and bite +4 melee (1d3); SA -; SQ Devotion, evasion, link, low-light vision, share spells; AL TN; SV Fort +6, Ref +9, Will +2; Str 10, Dex 20, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 8.



Historically Correct Swan Maidens

In many accounts swan maidens are synonymous to Valkyries who have taken on the form of a swan. It is then said that should one be able to catch one of these swans, they might be released in exchange for a wish.

In other stories young men see elegant white swans swoop down from the sky to bathe in a pond, removing their feathery hides and turning into beautiful women before their very eyes. There are a number of variations on this story, but they usually include the young man taking one of the feathery hides to wear as a cloak so that he may marry one of the maidens.



Skills and Feats: Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +4*; Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse.

*A swan has a +4 racial bonus on Swim checks.

SHAMANKA

This small lady peers around with wrinkled little eyes and an honest smile, moving slowly and shuffling as if even a slight breeze might knock her off her feet.

Shamanka is an elderly halfling lady who has led quite a life. She has made countless sacrifices and lost many loved ones in her time. She has, however, accepted her lot and come to terms with her losses. She now wanders the land, seeking to help others do the same, and helping to ease the pain of life's hardships wherever she goes.

An inconspicuous old woman, Shamanka gives no one any reason to believe she is anything more than a lovable and harmless old grandmother, and she is intent on keeping that appearance. Her smoky white hair is tied up behind her head in a bun, and she has frail little metal spectacles on her nose which almost disappear in the wrinkles on her wizened face.

Shamanka's mother was a devout follower of the god of knowledge, a deity Shamanka relied on greatly to deal with the tragedies in her life. At age eight she lost her father to an illness, and her mother took her own life three years later. The little halfling girl resolutely maintained the family homestead and cared for herself, learning enough about the gods and the afterlife to finally learn to speak with the departed.

The night Osci was able to speak to her dead parents, it seemed a great weight was lifted from her heart.

Nearing the age of thirty, however, she lost that heart to a soldier, who was a fine but reckless man. He died at war, leaving Osci alone with the three children they had borne, two of which died as toddlers from the same hereditary illness that had taken Osci's father.

The following years of her life were a darkness from which she very slowly struggled to emerge. Her surviving daughter had taken a husband and moved out of the house. Osci - now a worn and weathered lady - took to traveling, having learned to appreciate what she had in the present without clinging on to what had passed.

SHAMANKA: Female halfling cleric 12; CR 12; Small humanoid (halfling); HD 12d8-12; hp 42; Init -2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10; BAB +9; Grp +2; Atk +7 melee (1d4-3, sickle); Full Atk +6/+1 melee (1d4-3, sickle) or +9 ranged (1d3-3, sling); SA spells; SQ --; AL TN; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +16; Str 5, Dex 7, Con 9, Int 15, Wis 20, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +5, Climb -1, Concentration +0, Diplomacy +20, Heal +22, Hide +2, Intimidate +5, Jump -1, Knowledge (history) +11, Knowledge (nature) +8, Listen +7, Move Silently +0, Sense Motive +7, Survival +14; Iron Will, Negotiator, Persuasive, Self-Sufficient, Brew Potion.

Saves: Halflings get a +1 racial bonus on all saving throws, and also gain a +2 morale bonus on all saves against fear.

Domains: Shamanka can cast spells from the Magic and Trickery domains.

Spells Prepared: 0- *guidance* (2), *purify food and drink* (4); 1st- *deathwatch*, *detect evil* (2), *disguise self*^P, *remove fear*, *sanctuary* (3); 2nd- *gentle repose* (2), *invisibility*^P, *lesser restoration* (2), *remove paralysis*; 3rd- *dispel magic*^D (2), *remove curse*, *remove disease*, *speak with dead*; 4th- *confusion*^D, *divination*, *restoration*, *summon monster IV*, *tongues*; 5th- *break enchantment*, *commune*, *plane shift*, *raise dead*, *spell resistance*^D; 6th- *antimagic field*^D, *greater dispel magic*, *heal*, *word of recall*

Possessions: *bead of force* (2), *potion of barkskin* +4, *potion of protection from arrows* 15/magic, *ring of protection* +1, *staff of charming*, 100 gp.

SÝR, BOVINE ENFORCER

This small gnomish lady is particularly brash. A billowing green cloak envelops her small frame and she seems to be itching to use the unusually large sword strapped to her back. Her bright eyes exude an air of natural calm and self-confidence.

The story of Sýr begins with her mother. Sýr's mother, a confident master tinker, could and would mess with the mechanics of pretty much anything, creating ingenious machines of all descriptions usually with the intent of tricking others. That wouldn't be too remarkable if she wasn't also radically opposed to organized religion of all sorts, making it her business to plague all the temples



she could find with annoying traps and nuisances. A cleric caught Sýr's mother in the act of 'trapping' his temple, and using his divine power cast a wealth of curses upon her. Sýr's mother was left with clumsy, inept hands and a cursed child, as she was pregnant for the first time when the cleric caught her.

This particular cleric worshiped a strange god with who delighted in whimsical curses, and Sýr's affliction was a fine example of this. The young gnome was stricken by a strange form of lycanthropy previously unknown on the Material Plane: as Sýr grew older she found the urge to shift into the form of a bovine irresistible. Sýr had become the first werecow.

Sýr hardly suffered under this curse, because as she grew older she found that she was able to control her lycanthropy. For example, when she was young she had to take care of her mother when her father was out selling gear in the streets. Sýr found that when she was badgered by bullies (as often is the plight of gnomish children), she could stand her ground if she focused on her animalistic instincts. As Sýr grew older, these instincts became more pronounced until she could selectively take on aspects of the cow, adding their strengths to her own.

When Sýr took up the greatsword, she first trained by using the machines her mother had crafted. Later she took to honing her skills upon the unlucky heads of common street thugs and criminals. Sýr found that the sheer size of the sword intimidated aggressors more than her own small form ever could.

Her mother never fully agreed with Sýr's passion for fighting, so she made Sýr learn other arts. Storytelling, tinkering and music were added to the young gnomess's education. Only the latter stuck, however. Sýr was well aware that she could get at least as much done with her eloquence as she could with her sword, if not more, and made it a priority to learn how to use social skills to her advantage. This availed her greatly when she went a step further and actively began to seek out criminals - not just muggers, but smugglers, slavers, and any selfish varmint that made life harder on others, finding them and either turning them in or cutting them down to a size the gnomish vigilante deemed suitable.

Sýr has firmly established herself as a force to be reck-

oned with. She makes public appearances only when fully clad in her chain shirt and green cloak with her greatsword close at hand. This way she radiates confidence and makes for quite an impressive sight, especially when she puts down the sword and takes up her lute, a skill which could financially support her, were she not so inclined to right all the wrongs she can.

Sýr's mother's influence has made her self-sufficient in matters of faith, not seeking shelter in any religious code or dogma. Sýr has great confidence in herself and knows where her strengths lie; she makes it her business to appear capable on every level to the outside world, and still has a couple of things with which to surprise those who think they have her figured out.

Sýr's lycanthropy remains her big secret. The only persons beside her parents who have witnessed her affliction are the barkeep of her favorite tavern and a lover whom she hasn't seen for years. The barkeep, a good-natured soul who would never betray Sýr, passes on information to the gnomish vigilante concerning any shady dealings he gets wind of. The lover is a young gnome adventurer who has traveled all his life in search of dark elf slavers. He stayed with Sýr for only a few months, then continued his journey swearing to find her again some day.

Sýr stays in civilized areas and continues her own crusade, seeking out criminals where she can. When possible she prefers to stay in her gnome form, suppressing her lycanthropy, though when she needs to be stealthy she will leave most of her gear behind and take on aspects of the cow, a form in which she is still far from helpless. Only when in the most desperate of situations, like when she needs to disappear from view, will she take on the complete form of the cow.

When in public she will always be confident and straightforward in her dealings with people, trying to win the respect and trust of those who are willing to give it by making merry and challenging those of lesser moral standards to make a move against her. She considers respect for others the highest virtue and doesn't let the law stop her if she feels justified in her actions.

SÝR (Humanoid form): Female werecow gnome bard 4; CR 6; Small humanoid (shapechanger); HD 4d6 plus 2d8+6; hp 29; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 13, flat-foot-



ed 17; BAB +4; Grp +0; Atk or Full Atk +6 melee (1d10+1, +1 greatsword) or +8 ranged (1d6, light crossbow); SA *countersong*, *fascinate*, *inspire courage* +1, *inspire competence*, spell-like abilities; SQ Alternate form, bardic knowledge, bardic music, low-light vision, lycanthropic empathy, scent; AL CG; SV Fort +6, Ref +11, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +10, Craft (alchemy) +2, Diplomacy +12, Disguise +12, Gather Information +10, Hide +9, Intimidate +5, Listen +6, Perform +10, Sleight of Hand +4, Spot +4; Endurance, Quick Draw, Martial Weapon Proficiency (greatsword).

SÝR (Animal form): Female werecow gnome bard 4; CR 6; Medium humanoid (shapechanger); HD 4d6 plus 2d8+6; hp 29; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14; BAB +4; Grp +5; Atk or Full Atk -1 melee (1d3+1, 2 hooves); SA spell-like abilities, curse of lycanthropy; SQ Alternate form, bardic knowledge, damage reduction 10/silver, low-light vision, lycanthropic empathy, scent; AL CG; SV Fort +5, Ref +10, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +10, Craft (alchemy) +2, Diplomacy +12, Disguise +12, Gather Information +10, Hide +10, Intimidate +5, Listen +6, Perform +10, Sleight of Hand +5, Spot +4; Endurance, Quick Draw, Weapon Proficiency (greatsword).

SÝR (Hybrid form): Female werecow gnome bard 4; CR 6; Medium humanoid (shapechanger); HD 4d6 plus 2d8+6; hp 29; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14; BAB +4; Grp +5; Atk +2 melee (1d10+2, +1 greatsword) or +5 melee (1d4+1, hoof); Full Atk +6 melee (1d10+2, +1 greatsword) or +5 melee (1d4+1, 2 hooves) and +0 melee (1d6, bite) or +4 ranged (1d6, light crossbow); SA *countersong*, *fascinate*, *inspire courage* +1, *inspire competence*, spell-like abilities, curse of lycanthropy; SQ Alternate form, bardic knowledge, bardic music, damage reduction 10/silver, low-light vision, lycanthropic empathy, scent; AL CG; SV Fort +5, Ref +10, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +10, Craft (alchemy) +2, Diplomacy +12, Disguise +12, Gather Information +10, Hide +10, Intimidate +5, Listen +6, Perform +10, Sleight of Hand +5, Spot +4; Endurance, Quick Draw, Weapon Proficiency (greatsword).

Alternate Form (Su): Sýr can shift into animal form as though using the polymorph spell on herself, though her gear is not affected, she does not regain hit points for changing form, and only the shape of a cow can be assumed. Sýr also can assume a bipedal hybrid form with prehensile hands and animalistic features.

Changing to or from animal or hybrid form is a standard action. A slain lycanthrope reverts to its humanoid form, although it remains dead. Separated body parts retain their animal form, however. Sýr has full control over this power.

Curse of Lycanthropy (Su): Any humanoid or giant hit by Sýr's bite attack in animal or hybrid form must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or contract lycanthropy. If the victim's size is not within one size category of the lycanthrope the victim cannot contract lycanthropy from that lycanthrope. Afflicted lycanthropes cannot pass on the curse of lycanthropy.

Lycanthropic Empathy (Ex): In any form, Sýr can communicate and empathize with normal or dire cows. This gives her a +4 racial bonus on checks when influencing the animal's attitude and allows the communication of simple concepts and (if the animal is friendly) commands, such as "friend," "foe," "flee," and "attack."

Spells Known (Caster Level 4; 3/3/1): 0- *dancing Lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *lullaby*, *prestidigitation*, *summon instrument*; 1st- *charm person*, *cure light wounds*, *hypnotism*; 2nd- *mirror image*, *hold person*

Possessions: +1 greatsword, masterwork light crossbow (20 bolts), masterwork lute, *cloak of resistance* +2, chain shirt, 313 gp.

THOKK THE LONELY TROLL

This Jotnar lived what trolls consider a good life, plundering, pillaging, cooking, chewing, squishing, hunting, sitting upon, gnawing, fighting, and not washing. However, one tragic day, a giant slayer surprised him and his comrades, threatening them all with *Shimmerclaw*. They fled back to their cave, but Thokk was the only one to get there in time. The others were caught by sunlight just before they reached their hole and are now statues beneath the Gulfoss waterfall. Thokk lives there alone, in their lair beneath the falls, taking care of his petrified brethren



who stand so tragically beneath the gushing water.

Thokk is not very tall, being only two decades of age. He is a bit timid and was always the one of the gang that got picked on, which has left him very confused now that he's "in charge," so to speak. He goes foraging every evening now just after sundown, hunting small animals for his own consumption and trying not to get in the way of adventurers, a breed of creatures he now has an enormous phobia of.

The cave he lives in is still fit for a small troop of Jotnar, so he has plenty of room and tons of booty he has no use for. Thokk is terrified that some day soon adventurers will come by, discover the loot stashed away in the cave, and kill him, perceiving him as a threat.

When cornered Thokk will toss *beads of force* at his enemies, then retreat until they are within striking distance. Thokk will then charge, his scimitar and his sickle raised, and fight until his enemies retreat, are destroyed, or defeat him.

THOKK: Male Jotnar ranger 2; CR 8; Huge giant; HD 12d8+120; hp 174; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 23, touch 10, flat-footed 21; BAB +9; Grp +29; Atk +21 melee (2d6+14/15-20, +2 scimitar); Full Atk +19/+14 melee (2d6+14/15-20, +2 scimitar) and +17 melee (2d6+6, sickle), or +10 ranged (3d8, mw heavy crossbow); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA Snatch; SQ Favored enemy (animal), wild empathy; AL N; SV Fort +23, Ref +11, Will +6; Str 35, Dex 14, Con 30, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Heal +2, Hide +7, Listen +3, Spot +5, Survival +10; Power Attack, Improved Critical (Scimitar), Improved Overrun, Self-Sufficient, Track^B, Two-Weapon Fighting^B, Two-Weapon Defense.

Sunlight Petrification: When exposed to natural sunlight (or magical, such as that caused by the daylight spell), Jotnar are petrified instantly as per a flesh to stone spell. If they are within 10ft of shade (total cover

from the source of the light), Jotnar are permitted a DC 15 reflex save to escape the effect of the sunlight. Jotnar become uncomfortably aware of the rising sun ten minutes before the first rays of harmful light hit them.

Possessions: +2 scimitar, sickle, masterwork heavy crossbow, *bead of force* (3), *cloak of resistance* +3, 329gp.





Epic Weaponry

SCREAMING SPEAR

A *screaming spear* makes a deafening roar when it is thrown, and can be treated as a thundering shortspear. A preferred weapon of the Valkyries, it has practically become their trademark to open a confrontation with a screaming spear, marking their arrival to the conflict.

VALKYRIE FEATHER

These feathers, gathered from Valkyries when they are in the form of ravens (and this is no small feat – they are extremely protective of their plumage), have some interesting capabilities. Alone, they can grant a corpse the effects of a *gentle repose* spell. If coated in the blood of the same Valkyrie, they have the power to trigger a *resurrection*. To trigger this *resurrection*, all that is needed is a DC 15 Heal check. Upon making the check, regardless of the success or failure, both the blood and the feather are rendered useless.

GRYPPA'S BAGS OF SNARING

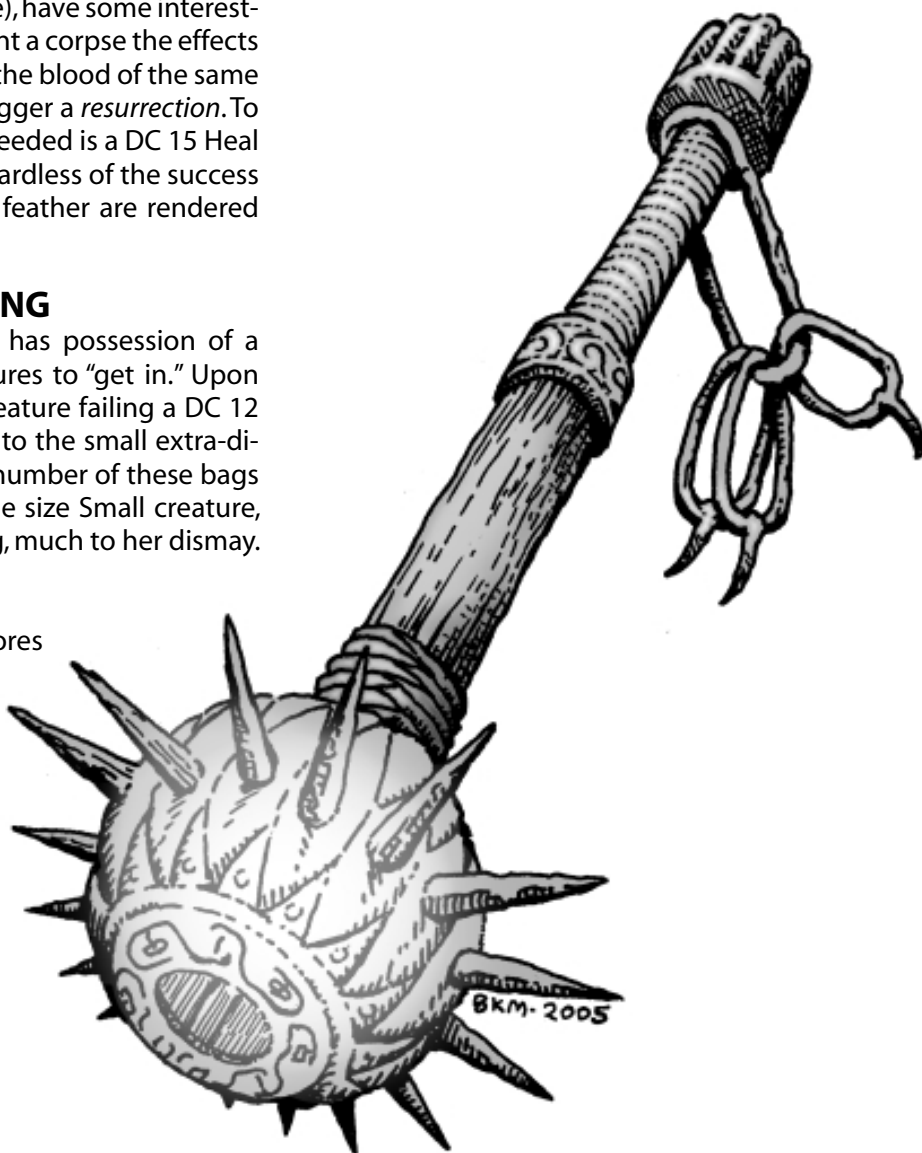
Gryppa, the child-eating monster, has possession of a bag that she can command creatures to “get in.” Upon speaking the command word, a creature failing a DC 12 Will save are compelled to crawl into the small extra-dimensional space inside. She has a number of these bags as every bag has only room for one size Small creature, and the bags frequently go missing, much to her dismay.

GIANTFELL (unique)

Giantfell, a mighty warhammer, stores a potent magic that reduces the size of Large or Huge creatures as per the spell *reduce person* (as cast by a 12th-level wizard) upon a successful critical hit.

SHIMMERCLAW (unique)

This +3 *heavy mace* was crafted to scare the wits out of Jotnar, and it has accumulated a healthy reputation for doing just that. Infused with sunlight, with each blow landed radiates with the light of the sun. Creatures with the Sunlight Petrification attribute take an additional 1d10 positive energy damage from *Shimmerclaw*, in addition to being forced to make a DC 20 Fortitude save or be petrified. The mace acts as a normal +3 *heavy mace* to creatures without the Sunlight Petrification attribute.





ARTIFACT: SWORD OF NIDHOGG

Legend has it that Nidhogg has 12 tails, each wielding a barbed sword covered in venom. They are +4 long-swords sized for a Large creature and coated in lethal poison. They have spent eternity with Nidhogg, and his evil has rubbed off on them – for every week a character carries a Sword of Nidhogg, he must make a DC 15 Will save to refrain from shifting one alignment step toward evil (good creatures become neutral, neutral creatures become evil).

The poison they are coated in is the same as delivered from Nidhogg's bite (Injury DC 20, primary damage 1d6 Con, secondary 2d6 Con). The swords are always imbued with the poison, and it does not need to be reapplied.

ARTIFACT: FANG OF GARM

Garm, Hel's terrible four-eyed guard dog is so frenzied that having one of his canines allows the bearer to *rage* once per day (as the barbarian class feature of the same name). Two *Fangs of Garm* allow the bearer to use *greater rage* once per day instead.

A *Fang of Garm* must be worn around the neck as a magical necklace, though both fangs can be worn together (this is an exception to the magical item body slot arrangement, and does not apply to any other item taking up this slot). After raging, the bearer is struck by fatigue as normal.





Icelandic Naming Conventions

Iceland shares a common cultural heritage with the Scandinavian states of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. Unlike those other nations, Icelanders have continued to use the old-style Scandinavian names, formerly used in Scandinavia but replaced by surnames in recent centuries. In the Icelandic system, there are no actual family names or surnames. A person's last name indicates the first name of the subject's father (or mother in some cases), that is, it is a patronymic (or matronymic). Family names exist in Iceland, and some while ago they existed as traditional surnames which are inherited through generations, but in today's Iceland they are technically middle names, followed by the parent's first name.

For example, a man named Jón Stefánsson has a son named Fjalar. Fjalar's last name will not be Stefánsson like his father's; it will become Fjalar Jónsson, mentioning literally that Fjalar is the son of Jón.

The same goes for females. Jón Stefánsson's daughter Kata would not have the last name Stefánsson; she would have the name Jónsdóttir. Again, the last name literally means "Jón's daughter".

In some cases an individual's last name is derived from his/her parent's middle name instead of first name. For example, if Jón is the son of Hjálmar Örn Vilhjálmsson he may either be named Jón Hjálmarsson (Jón son of Hjálmar) or Jón Arnarson (Jón son of Örn). The reason for this may be that the parent prefers to be called by his/her middle name instead of first, which is not uncommon, or that the middle name seems to fit the child's first name better.

The vast majority of Iceland carries the name of the father, but in some cases the mother's name is used, for various reasons. Sometimes either the child or legal parent wishes to end social ties with the father, some feminists use it as a statement, and yet others simply find it a matter of style and nothing more. In that case, the convention is entirely the same. Fjalar, the son of Bryndís, will have the full name of Fjalar Bryndísarson (literally meaning "the son of Bryndís").

Foreigners often find it strange that Icelanders formally address others by their first name. For example, current prime minister Halldór Ásgrímsson would not be addressed as Ásgrímsson by another Icelandic; he would either be addressed only by his first name (or first and second if he had one), or his full name. The cultural meaning of an Icelandic's last name is not that it's a part of one's name, but a short description of who one is. Halldór is Ásgrímsson - a son of Ásgrímur. Legally it is a part of his name. Culturally it is a definition of from whom he was begotten, even if that definition is seemingly vague. One logical consequence of this is that in Iceland, directories of people's names, such as the phone directory, are alphabetized by given name, not by surname.

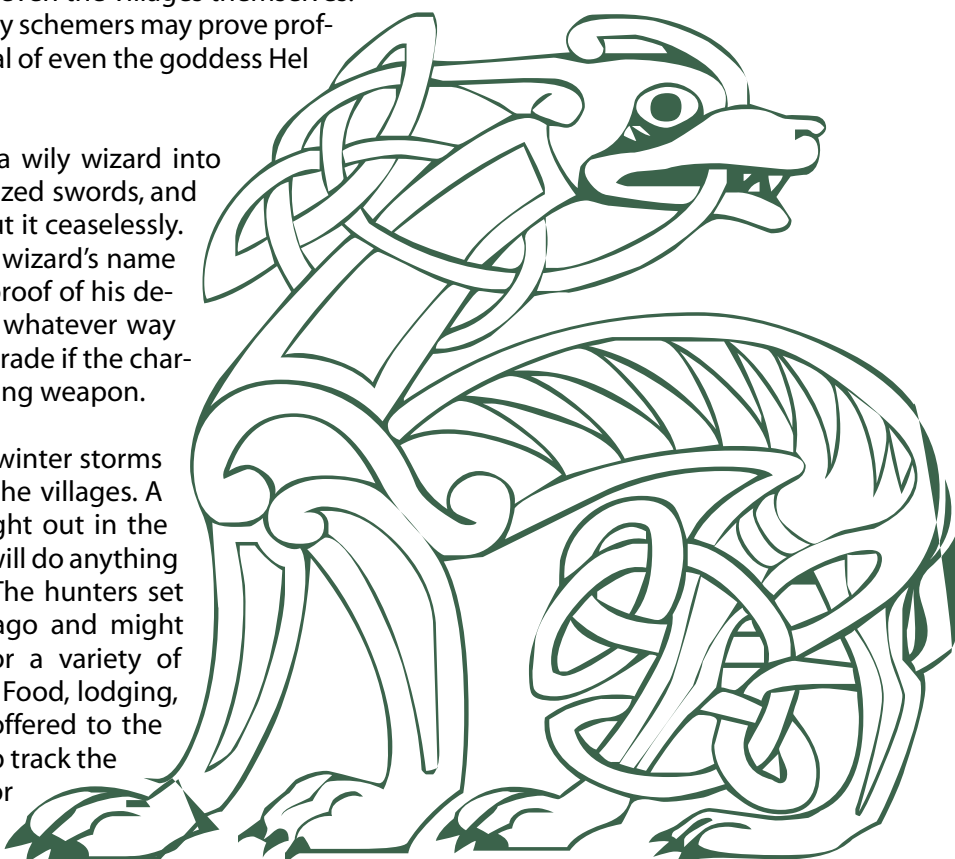
Another good example of the formal mode of address is the Icelandic singer and actress Björk. Björk is commonly mistaken for an artist's name or an artist's expression, such as "Sting". However, Björk is simply Björk Guðmundsdóttir's first name, as any Icelandic would address her, whether formally or casually.

As a result, in a four-person family there might be four different last names: the married couple Jón (Stefánsson) and Bryndís (Atladóttir), and their children Fjalar (Jónsson) and Kata (Jónsdóttir). This also means that names of children do not necessarily reflect the marital status of their parents. Icelandic families have supposedly had difficulties with the customs services of foreign countries mistakenly believing their children may be being kidnapped because of the differing names. In more traditional countries or establishments it can also be fairly embarrassing for a person to check into a hotel with his or her spouse only to have to prove his or her marital status, though this has obviously become a less common requirement in recent decades.



Plot Hooks

- The mountain king is trying to create an enchanted bagpipe and has need of humanoid hide of any kind. He will be particularly welcoming to any hairy people that come knocking, but will kidnap them, bringing them to his workshop overnight and will later "suggest" to any other visitors that the hairy character left during the night.
- Tales tell of a bird of immense evil guarding a cave that contains artifacts of great power. Perhaps the heroes are tricked into trying to bypass Gnauroq and awaken her ire.
- Nidhogg is desperate to escape the confines of Niflheim. Most would agree the horrible creature deserves to remain in the demiplane of undeath, but there are some who believe they can befriend the creature and assist it in traveling to the material plane, where it will wreak havoc on the mortal races. Such dark thinkers may dwell in the Barrens, the forest or even the villages themselves. Finding these power-hungry schemers may prove profitable - and win the approval of even the goddess Hel herself.
- Nidhogg was tricked by a wily wizard into handing over one of his prized swords, and has since been raging about it ceaselessly. He has discovered that the wizard's name is Loftur, and in return for proof of his demise he will aid anyone in whatever way he can. He will be eager to trade if the characters can recover the missing weapon.
- One of Niflheim's terrible winter storms has taken a heavy toll on the villages. A group of hunters was caught out in the blizzard, and their families will do anything to see them home safely. The hunters set out for the forest weeks ago and might have become the prey for a variety of monsters, thieves, or trolls. Food, lodging, gifts and information are offered to the adventurers if they can help track the hunters and bring them - or their bodies - back to town.
- An aging wizard found his way into Niflheim, apparently to die. Upon his deathbed he told a halfling child where he buried his spell book - and then handed five pages of the book to the child to hide in the surrounding fields and wilderness. Should anyone find the pages and read the words inscribed upon them (in proper order), the pages will fuse together to form a map, and reveal where the spellbook is buried. The book itself is a collection of the wizard's life's work and contains a wealth of knowledge and spells.
- Loftur has a need for more recruits! His stable of victims is seriously depleted, and he's been sending raiding parties across Niflheim to steal more flesh for his experiments. A variety of possibilities exists for the PC's: one or more of their party might be captured and in need of rescue; the villagers may be willing to hand over whatever treasure they own to ensure Loftur is put to final justice; or the party may choose to infiltrate Loftur's home in the hope of finding one of the gates out of Niflheim.





Icelandic Pronunciation Guide

UPPER CASE	LOWER CASE	NAME	SOUND
A	a	a	short 'a' as in 'car'
Á	á	á	'ow' as in 'cow'
B	b	bé	same as english 'b'
D	d	dé	same as english 'd'
Ð	ð	eð	similar to 'th' in 'rather'
E	e	e	short e as in 'get'
É	é	é	long 'e' as in 'been'
F	f	eff	similar to english 'f' but 'v' when between vowels or end of word
G	g	ge	as 'g' in 'good' or 'ch' in scottish 'loch' when between vowels
H	h	há	same as english 'h' in 'hat', but when a letter 'v' appears after it, it is sounded like 'k'
I	i	i	short 'i' as in 'it'
Í	í	í	long 'i' as in german 'kino'
J	j	joð	pronounced like an english 'y' or german 'j' as in 'ja'
K	k	ká	as 'k' in english 'kitchen'
L	l	ell	single 'l' pronounced as in english 'lean', if double, 'll', it takes on a 'd' sound with almost an unaspirated scottish 'ch' as in 'loch' or 'dl' sound with the 'l' stopped short.
M	m	emm	as 'm' in english 'man'
N	n	enn	as 'n' in english new', but when it appears double, it sounds like 'dn' with 'n' sound cut short. Exception to this is when 'nn' appears in the article 'hinn' and its declensions.
O	o	o	as 'o' in english 'got'
Ó	ó	ó	long 'o' as in english 'so'
P	p	pé	as 'p' in english 'pan'
R	r	err	icelandic 'r' is always trilled like the french 'rue'
S	s	ess	always as 's' in english 'sand'
T	t	té	as 't' in english 'team'
U	u	u	like 'u' in the french 'leur'
Ú	ú	ú	as 'oo' in english 'cool'
V	v	vaff	as 'v' in english 'van'
X	x	ex	as 'x' in english 'axe'
Y	y	upsílon	same sound value as 'i'
Ý	ý	ý	same sound value as 'i'
Z	z	seta	equivalent to 's' and used inside words only, historically representing letter in the word. There is a trend away from using it nowadays.
Þ	þ	þorn	as 'th' in english 'thank'
Æ	æ	æ	sounds like 'eye' in english
Ö	ö	ö	as 'u' in english 'burn' or german 'hören'



Icelandic Sayings & Superstitions

Here are some common parables of both old and modern Iceland:

- Everyone wants to live long but no one wants to be called old.
- Mediocrity is climbing molehills without sweating.
- If your head itches, you can expect wet weather.
- If something is spilled, a drunken man will soon visit.
- If you itch in the mouth, you will receive a mouthful of knuckles.
- Eyes can not hide a woman's love for a man.
- Nothing grants such an advantage as being dead.
- Nobody is victorious in his death throes.
- How destitute is a heart that misses nothing.
- One's back is vulnerable, unless one has a brother.
- A tale is but half told, when only one person tells it.
- If you see nine cows in a shed with a gray bull next to the door, and all of them lie on the same side, you are in luck, because you will be granted one wish.
- In Iceland, according to legend, there was once a dreadful epidemic in which many people died. In a certain household, a brother and sister observed that everyone around them who succumbed to the disease was first seized by a sneezing attack. Therefore, when they themselves sneezed they cried, "God help me!" Because of this prayer they were allowed to live, and they spread the story of the healing benediction to all the inhabitants of the district. The Icelanders have continued the custom of saying, "God help me!" when they themselves sneeze and "God help you!" when others sneeze.

Further Research

1. **Virtually Virtual Iceland** - a great website with tons of down to earth Icelandic flavor.

<http://www.simnet.is/gardarj/folk/tilv.htm>

2. <http://www.sacred-texts.com/neu>

3. <http://www.legends.dm.net/sagas/northern.html>

4. <http://www.royalty.nu/Europe/Scandinavia/Iceland.html>

5. http://about.pricegrabber.com/search_getprod.php?isbn=0520069048&

6. <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/iceland/myth.html>





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