

TRUVANG

CHRONICLES



RIOTMINDS



STORMLANDS

FOREWORD

Writing about a completely new fantasy country in an imaginary world is a relatively simple task. On the other hand, writing about a people and its traditions, religion, celebrations and important events while keeping it together as a coherent culture is far from easy. "Stormlands" is the first pure background module for Trudvang Chronicles and describes the part of the world which is perhaps most similar to our own history, that is, the Old Norse. It is difficult to maintain the mysticism and the storytelling while, at the same time, telling how people actually live and how they behave. We hope that we have found the balance between facts and imagination, and have deliberately attempted to stay away from going too deeply into how each city looks, exact population numbers, prices in merchandise and so on, because too much detail may remove the aura of mystery and leaves a little open to the imagination. We believe in creating inspirational sources and hooks to keep up your campaigns and adventures, rather than trying to uncover in detail everything there is to know about a country and its people. The Stormlands are wild countries and they require wild imagination to play in them. We hope that the module will give many memorable gaming sessions to come.

Enjoy the Stormlands!
RiotMinds

*"A third I know: if sore
need should come of a spell
to stay my foes;
when I sing that song,
which shall blunt their
swords, nor their weapons
nor staves can wound."
Hávamál*





CREDITS

Concept and Design

Theodore Bergqvist and Magnus Malmberg

Authors

Theodore Bergqvist and Magnus Malmberg

Additional Writers and Helpers

Luca Cherstich, Dan Slottnér and Mattias Berglin

Translation

Andovar and Love Almquist

Editing

John Maron

Art Direction

Theodore Bergqvist and Alvaro Tapia

Layout and Typesetting

Magnus Malmberg

Cover Art

Paul Bonner

Interior Art

Alvaro Tapia, Thomas Wievegg, Justin Gerard,
Per Sjögren, Larry MacDougal and Jim Nelson

Maps and Borders

Niklas Brandt

Additional Kudos

Thanks to all the Kickstarter pledgers and to all
the backers who made this project come to life

Our style is to use “they” as a singular gender-neutral pronoun when possible. This usage continues to gain mainstream acceptance, including among major style guides such as The Associated Press Stylebook and The Chicago Manual of Style. We believe it is appropriate and practical, not just to reflect common usage but to accommodate a more inclusive view of gender identity. The Trudvang Chronicles books also use “he” or “she” when helpful for added clarity.

ISBN: 978-91-984759-6-8



STORMLANDS 7

About the Stormlanders.....	7
Other Influential groups.....	15
Religion, Gerbanis.....	16
Tales and stories.....	21
Sacrifices to the gods.....	24
Superstition and Witchcraft.....	31
Warfare practices.....	31
Feasts and rituals.....	32
Living and housing.....	35
Climate and weather.....	38
Measuring time.....	38
Landscape and Nature.....	38



DAALHEIM 43

Rauk Gloostone' Saga.....	43
Wildale and Fyrdrincsmanns.....	43
The Djutt Mountain Range.....	44
The Duuplya Forest.....	44
Fyrdrincs Ridge.....	45
The Hellack Mountain Range.....	45
Hvergil.....	45
Jornastrandr.....	45
The Vislatt River.....	45



DAIN 47

Family Rods, Mopor and the Religious Practices.....	47
Social Structure and Resources.....	48
A Wild People.....	49
Joaring Warfare.....	49
A Wild Land.....	49
The Blackleaf Mine in Vallerspoin.....	49
The Firstborn Trees of the Plains of Torod.....	50
The Great Shadow Woods.....	50
Hillinge Woods and the Dwarves.....	51
The Hillingen River.....	51
The Julga Trail.....	51
Julgavaad.....	51



DJUNGHART 53

Power in Djunghart.....	53
The Djunghartians.....	54
The Ancient Troll Culture.....	54
Clawcastle.....	54
The Eben's Trail.....	55
The Hart Caves.....	55
The Hartpikes Islands.....	55
The Hrimfors River, the Hrimsbridge and the Ebensbridge.....	56
The Kalderhum.....	56
Kaldershem.....	57
The Klarsvelp Lake.....	57
The Ormika Lands.....	57
Redborg.....	58
The Rydlands Plains.....	58
The Ryd Hill.....	59
The Sisterskimmer forest.....	59
Tuvoldcastle.....	61
Vidarslodge.....	61



THE TROLLRIDGE 97

The Trolls of the Mountains.....	97
Signs of Long-Lost Civilization.....	98
The Ancient Dwarven Kingdom of Graydeep, Grunkovorda.....	99
Dustwall, Ivonda.....	99
Graystone, Yugglovorka.....	100
Grimgnistur, Olgisiljev.....	100
Morkdali, Novgalod.....	100
Wondraskjalf, Rorstrai.....	100
The Dead Trail.....	101
The Klipperlake.....	102
The Mines.....	103
Trollborg.....	103



VORTLAND 105

The power in Vortland.....	107
Bjarpoint.....	107
Brownhill's Moor.....	108
Driik.....	108
The Grenwall Grifts.....	108
The Gruuw Mine.....	108
Hawen.....	108
The Jockla River.....	109
Jornhelm.....	109
Jornwind.....	109
Jotunratir.....	109
King's Call.....	110
Klapperland.....	111
The Mywater lake.....	111
Oakhall.....	111
Sharprund's Eskers.....	111
Stormrock.....	111
The Storm Coast.....	112
The Troll Rocks.....	112
Windiborn.....	112
The Wind's Nest plains.....	112
The Windock Spring.....	112



WILDLAND 115

The Power in Wildland.....	117
The Wildlanders.....	117
Ailburg and Ailgaard.....	117
The Copper Mines.....	117
The Copper Trail.....	117
Hallwind.....	118
Hrefing.....	118
Jordek.....	119
Oungair: the Lair of the Sea Wolves.....	119
Storhavn.....	119
The Wolfwoods.....	121
The Wulfr Villages.....	121
Vretgaard.....	121



THE STORMLANDER 123

Stormlander Archetypes.....	123
Power Archetypes.....	126
Special Stormlander Traits and Abilities.....	130
Stormlander Regional Traits.....	133
Update on old skills.....	139
New Material for Weapons: Bronze.....	139
New items: Wildhorns and Dragonhorns.....	139
New Combat Maneuvers.....	139
Trollridge Mountain Trolls.....	141



EJDLAND	63	FYNNHEIM	71	ICEPEAK MOUNTAINS	79	NOJD	83
Clan Lords, Shieldjarls and the Council of Ejd.....	64	Elven heritage and Brothic colonization.....	71	The Bjarnwoods.....	79	The Legend of Broin.....	83
The Copperwoods.....	64	The Power in Fynnheim.....	72	The Icefjell.....	81	The Nojdans: a Divided People.....	84
Eastmarki.....	65	A Prosperous Land Threatened by Trolls.....	72	Ignadahl.....	81	Chieftains, Councils and Tribes.....	84
The Grimhills.....	65	Arind.....	72	The Illimarik Mountain.....	81	Religion and Markets.....	85
Grim Village.....	66	The Draugmoors.....	72			The Breedripper River.....	86
The Jotunheid Plains.....	66	Elin.....	72			The Darken River.....	86
Iron Moors.....	66	Eiglast.....	73			Fengsale.....	86
Klipp.....	66	Eimar' Sword Hall.....	73			The Frostholt forest.....	87
Kraav.....	66	Gelm.....	74			Gormi' Stones.....	88
The North Plains.....	66	The Gelmrige Mountain.....	74			The Icelake.....	88
Paatr.....	66	The Gulgavade Forest.....	74			The Klappfalls.....	88
Rimcoast.....	68	Hoglamark.....	74			The Ravenswood.....	90
Saaga.....	68	Magnerym.....	76			Regen.....	90
The Silvr River.....	68	Sasrum.....	76			The Ruggi Stones.....	91
Stigor.....	68	The Saukafor River.....	76			The Still River.....	91
The Blacktear River.....	68	Saukamark.....	76			Stillwaterfalls and Stillwater Lake.....	92
The Tinderswamp.....	68	The Styckfors River.....	77			Vaneheim.....	92
The Tinder River.....	69	Styckmark.....	77			Vaskheim.....	92
Tjute.....	69	Trungarm's Ale Hall.....	77			Virtne Spring.....	93
Trollmark Castle.....	69	Vestmamark.....	77			The Wargriver.....	93
The Wildheart Forest.....	69	The Westwater River.....	77			The Wargwoods.....	93
Yksa.....	69					The Wolf tongue.....	94
						The Wolfpeaks.....	94
						Wildis' Face.....	94
						The Vitterstream River.....	95
						Vurdiviik.....	95
						Ylfingstone.....	95





THE STORMLANDS

Daalheim
Dain
Djunghart
Ejdland
Fynnheim
Icepeak Mountains
Nojd
Trollridge Mountains
Vortland
Wildlands



OSTER OCEAN



◆ STORMLANDS ◆

Throughout the Stormlands, from the Great Iron Mountains' to Ejdland's dark forests, the Stormlanders are the people who rule. They are thought to have originated from the Wildfolk of the Northwest. Kremors, Broths, and Wildbrons arrived in the Stormlands thousands of seasons ago. They settled wherever there were good hunting and fishing grounds. After thousands of years, these three races became one: the Stormlanders.

Stormlandic culture dominates vast regions, but one of the old tribal identities is still strong. A few rare, still untouched tribes of Wildbrons are present in the wilderness, although often regarded with suspicion or even scorn by the other tribes. However, many jarls and chieftains gladly employ the combat-efficient Wildbrons in their hordes.

ABOUT THE STORMLANDERS

What gives the Stormlanders strength and unity is not the fact that they are not subordinated to a jarl or a chieftain, nor the prospect of pursuing raids against other countries or collective rampages. Most important is the common ideology and the religion that are shared by most Stormlanders. Stormlanders have long had different ideas about their origins and their history, especially regarding their mysterious ancestors.

It was therefore only after Gerbanis' faith and beliefs were accepted that the Stormlanders became one people, under one faith and religion. While the worshipping of ancestors is still alive in many tribes and regions in the Stormlands, Stormi is the great father and ruler of the Stormlanders' lives.

The Gerbanis' faith is often mixed with the bloodline myths, fertility beliefs, and sacrificial cults, as well as the veneration of an array of natural forces and other deities. The Stormlanders consider these practices to reflect their strong ties to their own clans, and the ultimate expressions of these ties are practices such as the blood revenge and the sacrifices to the ancestors' honor. Many Stormlanders place great emphasis on personal reputation, which is not primarily gained by gaining status through high position, but by the courageous actions and everyday bravery in the face of the grand wilderness and dangerous wastelands that surround the Stormlands.

Even if nature and wilderness seem to rule over most of the Stormlands, this is an ancient land, where civilization flourished long before the coming of the Wildfolk tribes who evolved into the Stormlanders. Elves, Dwarves and Trolls all have lived in these regions in long-gone ages, but most of their history is nowadays gone and forgotten, while their ruins are covered by vegetation or buried under the soil.

Most Stormlanders stem from a mix of primarily two different wild peoples: the Kremors and the Broths. The first were fierce nomads, coming from the west, imposing their primacy over other

Wilfolk with the strength of their mighty horsemen. On the other hand, the Broths were unlike any other people: they came from the Grim Sea, leaving mysterious islands which sunk into the ocean, bringing with them esoteric cults where death and pregnant women were equally revered.

Admittedly, there are also other races or tribes from both the western and southern parts of Trudvang to be found in the ancestry of Stormlanders. In spite of this, few have managed to maintain their own tribal culture, and have quickly mixed with other Stormlanders. However, there is only one ethnicity that has managed to retain its own individuality, culture, and way of living, even in recent times: the Wildbrons. They are great fighters and warmongers, living only for war and battle. Their skills are appreciated throughout the Stormlands, since quite often the Jarls hire whole hords of Wildbrons to be used in the tribal feuds and wars which often plague the Stormlands. They have odd customs (like drowning victims into lakes, instead of using blot poles) and too often nowadays their faith in Gerbanis is mixed with nature cults.

Another important Wildfolk were the Agroths, who arrived later than others in the Stormlands, and their descendants

are mainly the Wildlanders. They were somehow kin to the Wildbrons, loving both wilderness and warfare. Many scholars believe that the tradition of the Bersekers raised from the meeting of Wildbron and Agroth cultures.

The Stormlands consist of the following countries: Ejddland, Fynnheim, Vortland, Djunghart, Dain, Nojd, Daalheim and Wildland. Unlike Westmark, where borders are often more or less defined with markers or watch towers, fences or border rocks, the borders in the Stormlands take on new shapes as often as new jarls or chieftains are born. In short, one can say that the Stormlands consists more of different peoples and groups who share the same regions, rather than well-established countries with clearly-defined boundaries. While rulers certainly care about borders in the Stormlands, there's an unspoken law across the region saying that a ruler's country is never greater than what his clan can defend.

The Stormlander's Appearance

The Stormlanders tend to be stockier and slightly taller than both Mittlanders and Viranns. It is said that Stormlanders are dark in all but skin when they have been freed of dirt, sweat, and blood. "Dark hair, dark eyes, and dark in mind", say the Westmarkian priests. Darker hair than the people of the Stormlands can only be found in the Wildfolk. Among Stormlanders, it is not uncommon to have raven black or troll-brown hair that can be either straight, wavy, or curly. Men have as much hair as their health and age allow them, which can vary from baldness to shoulder-length hair. Women have, in most cases, long hair, at least shoulder length, and some even grow a real "back armor."

According to the venerable tradition of "Skulljood" (see below) warriors cut a portion of their hair once they slay their first enemy. The origin of this warrior tradition is in an ancient battle against the followers of the Tenet of Nid, when the Stormlanders cut off their hair to be able to identify friend from foe. While some Stormlander let their hair grow back after

the Skulljood, others keep their head bald apart from a neck tail, and this hairstyle is called "jod-tail", which is distinctive of Stormlanders. Common male fashions include the "rod braids" (what can best be explained as dreadlocks), "wildbronx" (overgrown hair with bits of bone and large bronze rings attached), "troll-back" (mixed braids and jod-tails), rash, and troll-matted hair. Women can also have neck knots and neck braids.

Stormlanders' eyes tend to be dark, and the most common colors are steel gray, raven black, or earth brown. Unlike other peoples, yellow eyes are relatively common among certain Stormlander clans. Wise men explain this phenomenon claiming that many Stormlanders have troll blood in their veins.

Stormlanders' skin is usually light and pale, but many male Stormlanders are hairy and this paleness is masked under dark body hair. Many others also have a more leathery skin, which is said to withstand the cold climate better, and is also seen as a legacy of the trolls. In winter, it is common to lubricate the skin and hair with fat from narwhale, bear, and snowboar.

Attire and ornaments

Among all peoples and races, the Stormlanders use to ritually scar their bodies the most. It is not so much about the heathens' tattoo traditions, but it is rather about the Stormlanders' relationship to the divine. A scarred Stormlander is a good fighter, and the gods are closer to his heart. Therefore, it is not uncommon for wounds to be widely stitched with heavy thread so that the scars will then become more prominent.

The Stormlanders' garments are not very varied among different tribes but consist almost entirely of wool and fur or hide. The wool comes from goats and sheep, sometimes from long-haired oxen, and in rare cases, the Hrim trolls. The fur or hide usually comes from goat, cow, or rabbit. Women dress in a dress with low-slung belt, or a shirt with an apron, and the men wear a tunic and wool or leather pants. They don't wear anything on their heads, except maybe a helmet.

Being rich and powerful is rarely shown by wearing refined clothing, but rather by wearing beautiful furs from dangerous animals, precious jewelry, such as thick bracelets of twisted silver or gold, and heavy necklaces in precious metals. Trophies from opponents and beasts also inspire respect.

The most common protective garment among the Stormlanders is the fur armor, because it protects against both weapons and cold weather. Many also use metal-reinforced leather, and the richer warriors wear chain mail.

The most common type of weapon among Stormlanders is the bearded axe, and consequently, the god Stormi is often portrayed as a mighty warrior armed with an axe. Other arms are the bear-paw (long dagger with a curved blade) and the "Glaaf", the one-edged short sword which was the ethnic weapon of the Broths, but which is today usually ignored in favor of the broadsword, or of the heavier battle sword. Stormlanders prefer the straight swords since they are easier to manufacture, provide more power, and are easier to handle during battle than blades with odd shapes.

Among Stormlanders it's rare to wear scabbards. Rather, weapons are mounted on the belt by hooks or simply hand-held, which comes down to the importance of being ready for fighting when it counts, and not risking a weapon getting stuck in the scabbard, as often can happen in the cold.

Shaved heads

Stormlanders' shaved heads have not always been a part of the Stormlandic culture and adornment. In the past, it was common for warriors to wear long, bushy hair and beards, but today there are maybe more varieties of the shaved head style, than Stormlander clans to use them. Only exceptional warriors, like the Berserkers and Battleborns, keep their hairs wild and long, while most Stormlanders proudly shave at least part of their heads, often leaving single tails or particular dreadlocks, as distinguishing ethnic signs of their clan, society or tribe.



The myths about why the warriors from the Stormlands shave their heads are numerous and varied, but one story dominates.

Many seasons ago, a great enemy from the West had appeared, and gathered vast numbers of warriors on the highlands in Dranvelt. Some people said that it was the Tenet of Nid's first and only real attempt to convert the ferocious Stormlanders to "the One Faith". The previously divided Stormlanders gathered their warriors under the dimwalker Grejvur Bloodneck's black flags, and in the name of Stormi, they swore to defend their rights and their country.

Dranvelt is no part of the Stormlands, but due to its proximity, the inhabitants of that land had many ties to the Vortlanders. Seeing their enslaved brothers in Dranvelt had become too much for the Stormlanders, who gathered in significant numbers on the border

between Dranvelt and Vortland and began the trek toward Graankul's hills, in a final attempt to break the Nidhist shackles in Dranvelt. They were led by the Grejgvus' bear-like commander, Njord Grimgrift.

The first and last battle of Dranvelt was as bloody as everyone had predicted, and it took place on the highlands of Dranvelt. First, the weak Carlonnians and Bysentians offered little resistance to the ferocious Stormlanders, but it was when the mercenary Arks, with their dreaded thorn beasts, and other savages joined the fray that the hope for a grand victory turned into an escape from death and dismemberment.

But the Stormlanders were not defeated: they were just shattered. Many brothers and sisters lay dead on the battlefield. They temporarily fled into the shadows of the wilderness to lick their wounds and gather strength. They

swore that they would rather fight and die, than be enslaved and live by the One Faith. All night the warriors prayed to Stormi and sacrificed greatly in return for recovering the strength and courage to face their enemy at dawn.

Many felt that they were too few, and that their small strength would not even be distinguished from the heathens once the battle had begun. With a broken knife, Grejvur then cut off his hair, and shared the famous poem:

*Brave men in the name of Stormi,
Axe will bite the weakling's skull.
Rattle our armor in the light of dawn,
Shining heads will separate friend
from foe.*

The fact that Paater Grejvur and the remaining army, all with shaved heads - to distinguish friend from foe - won a bloody victory over the Tenet of Nids' collective strength was naturally interpreted as a great sign that Stormi was stronger than the Tenet of Nid's One God. Since that day the "Skulljood" became a common practice. It is customary for the Stormlander who has killed his first enemy, to have his head shaved as a sign of gratitude toward Stormi for having survived his first battle, and to receive the god's continued protection.

Society: Hirdmen, Jarls, Free Men and Slaves

The Hirdmen is the basic unit of most Stormlander armies. Participation to the "hird" is the most important feature of every farm, alongside the management of slaves. The hird may consist of anywhere from a few men up to twenty or thirty fully-armed warriors, depending on how rich the farm is, and how big a family they have.

Being part of the hird means that one should protect their villages from dangers, and to gather during the family's great hird meeting when feuds flare up. Many men of the hird also serve as farmers and help out with the farm, but they always make sure to keep themselves ready for battle. On larger





TAPIA.

farms, the hirdmen do not participate in the farming, but all their time is spent training, hunting, and protecting the farm from invaders, trolls, or other beasts.

Hirds sometimes do not last, and therefore many lone warriors often look for employment. Most of these mercenaries aim to become permanent hirdmen under the banner of powerful warlords. But there are also those whose battlefields are the fighting pits and rings of mead halls. They are called "Sormmen" and they earn a living fighting and dying for other peoples' enjoyment.

Chieftains, elders, jarls, and Stormkelts base their status on the other residents' needs for security and protection. Across the Stormlands, the strength of a country is reliant on how well the ruling lord maintains his influence through personal friendships and participation to societies. The concept of power is based on lesser men, women, and their families accepting the leadership of those who can offer protection against all the hazards of the wilderness. But the capacity of giving protection may vary through time, or maybe from a generation to the other. This means that the areas of power of such leaders are, therefore, fluid. Countries are constantly shifting in size, and have overlapping, unclear boundaries.

Across the Stormlands, with the exception of Vortland, the power is of a fragile nature, and good connections and a network of oaths and favors are more important than anything else. In the Stormlands material wealth is not valued as highly as in Mittland or Westmark. Friendships and alliances are more important and stand as warranties of prosperity, happiness and, most of all, protection.

How long these bonds and friendships last are often manifested in "things" and "folk moots", or "Stormifeasts", where lords, jarls and other free men govern their affairs. These meetings are a kind of council that is more similar to negotiations than anything else. The things or folk moots are the main channel of dialogue between the ones who govern, and the ones who are governed.

The practice of awarding gifts to worthy subjects is a well-diffused one, and

often the presents are guarantees of fealty from those who receive them. An avid ruler who does not give gifts to his warriors, will sooner or later lose them. "Ringbreaker" is an old title used for generous kings or jarls, recalling the ancient habit of awarding golden and silver rings to worthy subjects. With a treasure chest filled with copper or precious gifts, a jarl can keep his circle of allies around him. The art is to continually renew the stock, in order to maintain his reputation for generosity. An art that has caused Stormlandic rulers to often raid and declare smaller wars against their neighbors.

The generic term "Jarl" or earl is the basic title of power in the Stormlands, but it is mostly used only for those whose authority is limited to a single village, a clan or a small number of farms. "Gårdsjarl" is another word used for a jarl, since it means somebody who rules over a "Gård" or courtyard at the center of a village. Many jarls are independent, while others are "Lydjarls", which mean vassals of a much stronger jarl who bear more elaborate titles like "Swordjarls" or "Shieldjarls" (which are roughly equivalent). There are other titles (like the Fylkjarls of Wildland) but all these relations of power, and the linked titles, are fluid and bound to change, due to the continuous state of conflict and warfare in which the Stormlands linger.

Virtually all the Stormlands are controlled by jarls or chieftains, with varying powers, with topmost rulers bearing special titles and ruling over larger tracts of land. The only exceptions are Vortland, which is controlled by the Paater (Gerbanis' highest religious leader), and Fynnheim, which is controlled by a group of Stormi Kings called the "Storm Jarls". In Ejldland the topmost rulers are known as "Shieldjarls", in Wildland "Fylkjarls" while "Swordjarls" rule smaller estates, in Djunghart "Drotts", and in Nojd "Chieftains". Dain lacks any real form of power structure, but the country consists of farm villages and small towns, each with its own ruler.

Most Stormlandic countries are based on free men and women, most of whom are farm owners, merchants, hunters, craftsmen, or hirdmen. The farm is a

major source of power, and although the custom says that the eldest child inherits the estate, the earth belongs to the whole family rather than to the smaller house of the individual farmer.

"A free man or woman has a free will and a clear voice". This proverb is often said in the Stormlands, and it is also one of the Stormlandic laws. Warriors and hirdmen have a special position in Stormlandic culture, as well as the female warriors known as the "Shieldmaidens". A warrior always gets two votes, one for being free, and one for his weapon. But to argue that you should have two votes also implies a certain responsibility. The warrior who cannot exercise his duty, or who is considered a coward, but still has exercised the right to cast two votes, is often slain or driven out to become an outcast.

A woman has as much power as a man, and the only thing that matters is how well a person can take care of himself or herself and of their underlings.

A slave has no voice and must be helped to understand their wishes. Slaves are owned by both free men and women. They stand outside the clan and are at the mercy of their masters' wishes. Slaves are born into slavery or taken as prisoners during raids. The trade in slaves is great and profitable all over the Stormlands. On some farms, especially in Fynnheim and Vortland, a slave may get paid for their work. The lucky ones who have saved all their money, can, in old age, buy their freedom. However, this is very rare, since the payment they receive is so small that it is barely possible to save.

Shape-Shifters, Berserkers, Storm Maidens, and Battleborns

It is said that some men and women are touched by the god Enken, and that they are what the Stormlanders call "Eigi Einhamr" – roughly translated as "not of one shape". Legend claims that some can transform their physical body into that of a beast, such as a wolf, a raven, or a great black bear. Witnesses mumble in their sickbed that they saw a great black bear charge across the battlefield – cutting through the tide of foes as if were they



melting butter on a hot summer's day. Others say that they have seen ravens come down from the mountains and transform into battle-hardened warriors on their doorstep. No one knows for sure if the legends about shape shifting warriors are true, but there are many across the Stormlands who believe it. Enken is, after all, the god of nature and the protector of animals, who herself takes on the shape of a great bear.

However – as always – for such a great power there is a price to pay. Those who are Eigi Einhamr are cursed by the mark of the beast. They have this extraordinary ability, but inside they are tortured. It is said that those warriors who are touched by Enken and gifted with magical power suffer from an insatiable bloodlust. They are not their own masters, and during the night they crave the smell of rendered flesh and the scent of fear. They prowl the dark

forests as mighty beasts in search of prey. Those who are Eigi Einhamr live solitary lives as they may – unwillingly – harm anyone who lives by their side when the mark of the beast comes upon them. They lead lonely lives, and live by the sword, often serving as dreaded soldiers in armies where they can live out their bestial desires.

But it is written in ancient legends and dusty tomes that the mark of the beast can be removed, and that those who are Eigi Einhamr can become “Einhamr” – of one shape. Through the brewing of potions and the ritual of blood gifting, a shape-shifter who is cursed by the mark of the beast can enter the Great Chaos Storm, and there he must search for the hunting grounds of the great god Enken. As a huge black bear, Enken prowls the plains of eternal twilight deep within the Chaos Storm. Those shape-shifters who meet the god of nature and beasts and defeat him in single

combat, can have their mark removed. On the plains of eternal twilight, no weapons are allowed, and a combatant may only use fist, claw, and paw to do battle.

This is what the legends say, but the mythical shapeshifters are not so frequent today as they once were. Nowadays the majority the warriors who believe to have been touched by Enken are not able to shapeshift, although the frenzy that they display in the battlefiled, makes them more similar to wild predators than to human fighters. They are the “bersekers”, warriors who lack the discipline for fighting in a well-organized shield wall, but whose fury allows them to face and fight even the strongest enemies. Songs, sagas, and poems often tell about Berserkers who courageously take on a large number of foes or dangerous beasts while fighting all alone. In Wildland, they're called “Bearshirts”, although the true



Bearshirts that can shapechange are rare. In Fynnheim, they go under the name of "Ulfheidrs", which in Vrok means "wolves in shaggy fur". In the other Stormlands, they are simply called "Berserkers".

These warriors are often compared to bears and wolves, due to their exceptional courage and strength, which make them to occupy special positions on the battlefield. They often form leagues of warriors that are sought after in times of war, but in times of peace often cause concern.

Some are berserkers by nature; others join secret cults and learn the art under veiled initiation rites. In any case berserkers follow customs which set them apart from most Stormlanders. For example, even if a shaven head defines a skillfull warrior, the Berserkers never shave their heads; instead their hair grows wild and long, as does the beard. Berserkers are in fact sometimes nearer to the animal world than to civilization.

The Berserker's relationship with religion and the gods is complicated. There are a few odd Gerbanian berserkers, but most berserkers believe that their souls have been touched by the wild god Enken, like the shapeshifters of ancient sagas. On the other hand, other bersekers seem to recall prehistoric religious practices of the Agroths and the Wildbrons, when wolves and bears were worshipped as gods, long before the coming of Gerbanis. There are also many berserkers who have taken a more radical approach, completely refusing religion. In fact, in the Stormlands, berserkers are sometimes called "men of their own", as they rely only on their own power, and many of them have chosen not to believe in the words and teachings of Stormi. This has naturally created certain distance between the berserkers and other folk, because most Stormlanders have difficulty conceiving life without Stormi.

The fury or "berserkergang" is what defines the berserkers, and such a maddened mental state takes possession of these fighters during the battlefield. When fight is about to start, berserkers bite their shields or growl in beastly mood, before leaving any caution, throwing themselves against the enemies as furious animals.

On some farms around the Stormlands, they imprison berserkers in anticipation of fighting, because they are considered wicked and too violent to let loose. In other parts, they are treated like kings. Usually beserkers do not change shape like the shape-shifters, but they fight with a ferocity and rage that often puts them out of control. The fury can be so wild that berserkers are reputed to keep on fighting even when they mangled bodies are technically dead. More than one berserker has fallen on the ground only after having killed the enemy who has dealt them a

mortal blow. People say that is the animal spirit of Enken which keep these dead berserkers alive as long as their rage lasts. There are stories about berserkers needing days, or even weeks, to calm down and abandon the beserker gang fury.

Skirmishes and wars are so constant in the Stormlands that most clans cannot rely just on brave men to fight their battles. There are women who fight and die beside the men, and they are labelled with the honorable name of "Shield Maidens".

The fiercest and wildest of these women are the "Storm Maidens" who fight for the Gerbanis faith. They are sworn to protect the Stormikjelts and are known for their bravery in battle.

In the Stormlands, all free men and women have one vote, warriors have two – one for being free, and one for their sword – but Storm Maidens cast three votes. One for being free, one for carrying a sword, and one for serving Stormi. Some Storm Maidens focus on learning the art of combat, and some the art of prayer, but they are all protectors of the Gerbanis faith and of the Stormikjelts. It is common for Gerbanis priests to have a small group of Storm Maidens protecting them when they travel between sacred places.

Some children are born on the battlefield. They are known as the "Battleborn", or the "Stormi-seed", and it is said that they are touched by the greater gods. Most Stormlanders believe that a Battleborn is half man, half god, and as such they have a truly unique position in Stormlandic society. A girl who is born on the battlefield is said to be touched by the god Enken, and as such, she is treated like a demi-god, and is hailed throughout the Stormlands. A Battleborn is destined to never settle down, but to wander from village to village, and to always seek war and to perfect the art of war. As such, a Battleborn is welcome in any Stormlandic home, and is always invited to a free meal and to sleep close to the fire, as the Stormlanders believe that to reject a Battleborn is to reject Stormi himself. Just like most Berserkers and the fierce and wild Wildbrons, a Battleborn never cuts or shaves his/her hair, but lets it grow long.



OTHER INFLUENTIAL GROUPS

Beyond all the jarls, chieftains, Stormi kings, hirdmen, and leaders who control their groups of warriors or traders all over the Stormlands, there are a number of important groups that have a powerful influence over religion, politics, trade, and war in the Stormlands. Two of the most prominent of these are the Hel Riders and the Hel Sisters.

The Storm Hansa

With a red ring as a seal, the Storm Hansa mark all their goods so that everyone will acknowledge that they belong to the influential Storm Hansa. Established more than two centuries ago by the Storm Jarls who held power in Fynnheim, the trading community grew stronger and stronger, making also alliances and

trading agreements with the West. The Hansa managed to control large centers of trade and established a monopoly over several goods and products all over the Stormlands. In this way, the Gerbanian foundation in the north took part of the proceeds. The Storm Hansa spread quickly to other areas of the Stormlands, because they carried out this trade as the very will of Stormi. Few merchants had much strength or influence to compete against the Storm Hansa, who forged lasting ties to the Bryckers and the shrines that existed around the Stormlands. Today, this is a powerful institution that is well associated with both trade and religion. Even the simple fact that they are able to claim the ring as a symbol means a lot for trade, since many Stormlanders unconsciously respect the symbol. If not the men who bear it. The Storm Hansa are especially strong in Fynnheim, Vortland, and Ejdlund. However, it is important

to note that the Hansa are strongest in the larger cities. In rural areas, it is still the local merchants who rule, since it is difficult for the Storm Hansa to control trade in every little village and backwater community. Quite often, such local tradesmen have actually hired unattached hirds to plunder the trade caravans or trading ships of the Storm Hansa in order to diminish their foothold. This has been especially common in Ejldland, where the Hansa often complain about the local merchants' reluctance to enter into the trading community.

Hel Riders and Hel Sisters

There is a crowd of hirdmen of the Dark Race. A group of men and women who have chosen to never assimilate to the Sturmasirs but have given their lives to the Hvergelift. It is said that it was the Broths who first introduced the cult of the dark gods when they came to the Stormlands. Others argue that this group only exist in the Wildbrons' legends. Wildbrons themselves seldom perform blood giftings to the gods in the manner that the Stormlanders currently do on blot poles. Instead, they gladly sacrifice victims in ponds or lakes, like for example slaves drowned in honour of their ancestors, as a gesture of gratitude.

Surrounded by great mystery and violence, the Hel Riders and Hel Sisters live in the shadow of night. They may worship any of the dark Chaos Gods - Helfrigg, Illgri, or Draugrim - and regardless of whether their origin is from Broths or Wildbrons, they're dreaded all across the Stormlands. Only Wildland has been spared from their forces.

The dreaded practices of Darkgifting and Helgifting are common among Hel Riders and Hel Sisters. Deep in the earth's protective womb, they hold their fairs and worship their Chaos Gods. When they sacrifice lives in the name of Chaos, it's in the name of pain and violence. The blood gifting is gruesome and savage, all too often awakening dark dwellers from their deep sleep. Some Hel Sisters are powerful enough to tame these dark dwellers and use them as tools in their pursuit of creating further Chaos.

They believe that all infidels must die before their gods can rise to this world again. They worship chaos and violence, envisioning themselves as a tool in the hands of their gods. Hel Riders are rare but feared. They attack small villages during moonless or cloud-covered nights, and sacrifice everything alive to their gods.

To join this community, a supporter must mutilate himself/herself in some horrific way. Therefore, it is not uncommon for those who belong to the Hel Riders or Hel Sisters to be blind in one eye, missing one or more fingers, possess deep and jagged scars, or display other evidence of great harm. Since Helfrigg is the greatest and strongest goddess among the Hvergelift, it is also common that women have the highest authority in this community. The men, known as Hel Riders, are warriors, and women, known as Hel Sisters, are priestesses.

The community's symbol is a ring with a shaft attached to its base. It is said to symbolize "Wrath", the soup ladle inside Vergelmir, the cauldron of the Hvergelift, but it is also clear that the Hel Riders' symbol seems like a twisted, perverted version of the Gerbanian ring.

RELIGION, GERBANIS

Generally, one can say that most Stormlanders worship the great god Stormi, and the gods who live by his side. Stormi is the great father in a fierce and merciless religion named Gerbanis, after the great seer Gerban Hvingdir who, according to the legend, was the first to pave the way for Stormi's arrival in Trudvang.

Although it can be difficult to understand for some, there are many Stormlanders who fill their faith in Stormi with ancestral worship, wolf cults, moon worship, and other deities of nature. Gerbanis' followers don't necessarily see these local additions to their religion as something negative, but rather as a further pillars to lean on in this brutal and harsh world. Having said that, the Stormi faithful do not constantly try to convert non-believers of Gerbanis into true followers of the, as they call it, the

"Great Faith", unlike the worshippers of the Tenet of Nid, who call their religion the One Faith in the One God.

Before Stormi came with his message of hard work and the rights of the fittest, many cults and creeds, which were closely related to nature and livelihoods such as hunting and fishing, were part of the patchwork of Stormlanders' beliefs. It was considered necessary for the people that interaction with nature was functional. The rites reflected the population's reverence for life around them. The belief in spiritual beings played a significant role in their daily lives. Today, ancient places with beautiful natural features testify to how people showed great consideration and sacrificed to, among others, the bears and wolves, who are still considered sacred by most Stormlanders. But the Stormlands' religious history has a dark and gloomy side, full of victims and bloody rites that continue to this day.

Most Stormlanders and followers of Gerbanis have a worldview that is based on belief that Trudvang is located in the middle of the "Great Chaos Storm", and that the forces of disorder constantly try to force their way into the center, the eye of the storm. Those who die are thrown out into the storm, and they must be strong and brave in order not to be consumed by the dark forces there. The one who possesses the power to get through the Chaos Storm will encounter a peaceful and beautiful country, where the great god Stormi rules, a god who himself constantly heads into the storm to defeat the evil forces of chaos that live there. Sometime in the future, the storm and chaos will be defeated by Stormi's selected army, and they who pass the test will get through the storm. For this reason, it is not necessarily a bad thing to die when you are young and strong, or when courage is the greatest in your heart. It is thought that if you die in this status, you then have the greatest opportunity to get to the other side.

In Gerbanis, there is a large number of gods and monsters, but a handful of them are much more common and more spoken of than others. Gods and mythical creatures are divided into three categories; Stormasirs (Storm Gods), Verglife (Chaos



Gods), and Vanerlift (Death Gods). Although their followers sometimes give consideration to or invoke any of the other gods, it is almost exclusively the Stormasirs that one worships and offers blood gifts to. This is the reason why the Gerbanis' dimwalker tablets are all linked only to such gods. Below are the descriptions of the main deities in the religion.

Sturmasirs, the Storm Gods

Stormi

Stormi is the main god in the Gerbanis pantheon, he is the father of all, and the greatest warrior, the strongest god. He is closely associated with the wind and is called the "God of the Strong Wind", and the "Savior of the Weak". It is said that

Stormi's strength is greater than that of a thousand dragons and a thousand giants. He travels with the wind, and according to myth, he rides on the winds and the rolling thunder while he sends lightnings around him. He dresses in a black chain mail armour that is soothed by the fires of a thousand dragons, and he has a powerful and bushy beard. On one hand he carries

"Gutraring", a magic iron ring that makes all the other weapons that wield to inflict terrible damage. In his other hand he carries either a long hunting spear or a heavy axe. Stormi rules in a mythic hall, called "Stormvakk" or "Jarnglimma", where the heroes, the Havar and the Einharjar, rejoice drinking mead while seating at "Tabarast", Stormi's table, together with the bravest and most valorous warriors which ever existed.

The important traits associated with Stormi are responsibility, courage, and strength.

Windinna

Windinna is the goddess of wisdom. She is the creator of the world, and the mother of Stormi. She is in the sky, in the ocean, and in the land between. Although she lacks eyesight, the other gods come to her for advice and to hear her predictions for the future. She is an old woman living in solitude. Her mouth is toothless and her eyes misty, but still she shines with kindness and inspiration. It is said that her innumerable braids have the power to move like limbs, and that she is in constant company of Djofur, a swine which is said to be able to create anything in one single day. She can also be the "Toxe", a huge brown cow that can climb over a mountain with a single step.

The characteristics most associated with Windinna are patience, creativity, and wisdom.

Jorn

Jorn is the night. He is the son of Stormi and Nightra, the daughter of Bodvildur. He is also the half-brother of Sunvei and Tyrd. Sunvei is also his consort. Jorn is the elusive darkness, the black and the untamed. It is said that he sometimes follows the path of the wild men, and fights against the other gods, but his cunning exceeds all, and the only thing that can catch him is the love of Sunvei that he will do anything to keep alive. He is said to be a figure in the dark of night, a stranger and a raven on the roof ridge. Jorn is a young man with blond, thick hair, and a sharp stare. He wraps himself in the cloak of night, Blackfjor, that allows him

to walk among humans and trolls without being detected. Jorn is an energetic god who often rides legendary spirit steeds, summoned from the Storm. He hates the undead who plague the night and will destroy them using his status, as the nephew of Bodvildur, but also as his future enemy, when during the Heavenfall Jorn will fight her treacherous grandmother, as well as the five guardians of Helgardh.

The characteristics most associated with Jorn are action, impulse, and cunning.

Sunvei

Sunvei is the daughter of Stormi and the wife of Jorn. She is the day, the beautiful daybreak, and the sun's heat. Sunvei is also fertility and love. She heals the wounded with the warmth of her power and she always gets Stormi to listen, as her beauty is also renowned among the gods. During winter, she is seen very seldomly, since Jorn becomes jealous and active during this time. Radiant as a summer's day, withdrawn as a rainy fall day, beautiful as a mild winter day, and blossoming as a spring day: Sunvei is all this. Her hair is flowing and wherever it meets the crowns of the trees, and the soil of the earth, it blossoms. She is dressed in cloud robes, and gives life and joy to everyone and everything with Erkkej, her copper pot. The characteristics most associated with Sunvei are fertility, mercy, and health.

Enken

Enken is the lone heathen who brings freedom with him. He is the son of Windinna and the bear god Birnhogg. Stormi is his half-brother. He's the eyes and ears of Stormi, he sees and hears everything. Enken is the lord of the animals, and the affirmer of the free life. It is he who gathers the troops when time has come for the big battle against the Storm, a battle which will be called "Havenfall". Enken's eyes can see clearly through the darkness of the Storm, and his power will grant courage and protection to those who he calls to fight.

He has taken the shape of a huge bear, but it is said that he can shift to any animal or beast he wishes to. Other

important manifestations of Enken are a wolverine treading the snow, or a drauglynx lurking inside a hollowed tree.

The traits most associated with Enken are freedom, instinct, and attention.

Tyrd

Tyrd is the goddess of wrath and vengeance. She digs into every soul and sows a seed of anger. She is the daughter of Stormi and sister to the beautiful Sunvei. Tyrd is the dagger, the irritation, and the unsatisfied vengeance, the mother of vendetta. She uses thunder and fire to destroy her doomed victims, while her fierce eyes and wild battle cries instill fear into the unworthy, increasing the morale of the desperate warriors who trust in her. Every time someone swears revenge, they promise her fidelity. Tyrd takes the shape of a mad woman, naked but smeared in the dark ashes of her victims' burned bodies. Her dark hair is unkempt and drenched in blood, while her nails are long and twisted. She wears the dagger of vengeance - Harnagga - the blade that kills a giant with one blow. She is accompanied by her two furious warg beasts, Gvann and Kvell. Sometimes Tyrd transforms herself into a black eel and lies waiting on the muddy bottom of a lake.

The traits most associated with Tyrd are anger, hatred, and revenge.

A couple of other gods and spirits worth mentioning are Nightra, Vigdis, and Hagall. Nightra is the goddess of death, war, and violence. She's Stormi's dark daughter, and her mother is Bodvildur, the ruler of Helgardh. Vigdis is the goddess of marriage and family; she who protects the home and loved ones. She is the daughter of Jorn and Sunvei. Hagall is the brother of Vigdis, and is the god of poets and fairy tales, the guardian of sacred poems and songs.

Hvergelift, the Chaos Gods

The powerful and worshipped Storm Gods are not alone in the Gerbanian mythology. Their enemies, and the source of disorder, which risks devouring all worlds, are called the Chaos Gods or Hvergelift (which means "Chaos lives").



These gods live at Vergelmir, the roaring cauldron from which all storm winds swirl up. The more they stir the cauldron, the stronger the storm. In the cauldron, the Chaos Gods boil the heads of all the people who failed to get through the Storm when they die. The fire world called "Surtgap" is located under the cauldron, which boils because of the warmth of this world.

The Hvergelfit have a small following. Only the mythical Hel Riders in the Stormlands and a few devotees in Fjaal are considered to seriously worship the Chaos Gods. The reason for the limited number of worshipers is, of course, that the Chaos Gods are very fickle and

treacherous. They usually punish those who pray to, or worship, any of the Chaos Gods, which of course means that few dare to worship them.

Helfrigg

Helfrigg is a cold and bleak goddess. She is the strongest of the Chaos Gods, and there are many tales of her battles with Stormi. In many ways, one could say that Helfrigg is like Tyr, who is associated with anger, hatred, and revenge. The major difference is that Helfrigg belongs to the Chaos Gods who are both worse and darker than the Storm Gods.

A maggot and a flame created Helfrigg.

She smells of burned flesh, and her eyes light up with a hazy glow. All sacrifices in her honor that are not bloody and violent are an offence to her, and she is widely known to punish rather than set free. The few times Helfrigg manifests in human form, she does so mostly as a thin woman with long, braided, hair and a skull for a face.

It is said that Helfrigg does not really belong to the Chaos Gods, but that she's Bodvildur's twin sister who was rejected by Stormi and chose to join the Chaos gods.

The traits most associated with Helfrigg are unreason, excessive, senseless evil, and a crazy desire for sacrificing.

Draugrim

Draugrim is the guardian of Vergelmir. He never leaves the cauldron, and at his feet sleeps the frost dragon Glimmfrost. Draugrim is lazy and lethargic. When Draugrim stirs the cauldron, the storm winds are weak, and it is easier to get through. Draugrim is depicted as a tall, old, sick man whose lips are blue and whose eyes are misty. When he opens his mouth, it smells of death and decay. His skin is yellow and dry, his hands twisted.

Hlookk

Hlookk is the son of Illgri. He also goes by the name of "Hrannir", an ancient name linked with water and wind motions, because of the waves that Hlook created when he puts heads in the Vergelmir cauldron. It is he who finds the heads for the pot of the Chaos Gods. Hlookk is the Chaos god who eagerly and with the greatest tenacity chases those trying to get through the Storm. He whips up the slave winds with his iron whip Goll. Hlookk has long black hair that reaches down to his ankles and is full of body parts. At Hlookk's side runs Ilgarmarna, his faithful hunting wolves and beasts which sniff out his prey. Hlookk is the archenemy of Enken, and the two fight often.

Illgri

Illgri is the hidden goddess, she who lurks in the dark and who can neither be seen nor heard. The more Illgri stirs Vergelmir, the greater the wrath in trolls, giants, and Lindwurms becomes. It is said that when she will find the lost soup ladle called "Wrath" and stirs it in the cauldron, she will awaken the innate anger of all giants and trolls, and Trudvang will be thrown into Havenfall. It is also said that, when Illgri will manage to persuade Bodvildur that she can defeat Stormi, Helgardh's goddess will take a side in the battle.

Kolldripp

Kolldripp is the unwanted daughter Illgri had with her son Hlookk. Every morning and every evening, she is brought before the other Chaos Gods so that they can let off steam on her. Her body is black

and blue after every hit she endures. The Stormlanders believe that the bullied are manifestations of Kolldripp. Her mouth is filled with the alive maggots that Hlookk has brought in the cauldron. Kolldripp carries a small box called "Hristl", and it is said that it contains her heart, which is as black as soot and as hard as stone.

Vanerlift, the Death Gods

The five watchmen of Helgardh.

Helgardh has five watchmen of divine status. They are all siblings named

Modgun, Mogunda, Moga, Mogrand, and Modgill. Together, they each guard a gate to the realm of death. Mogunda is possibly the most famous, partly because he has a significant role in the myth of destruction, and partly because he wears the mighty sword "Nailbite", a sword said to be made of the nails of dead men.

Bodvildur

Bodvildur is the queen and mistress of Helgardh. She rules a constantly growing realm of death, and is the most feared god in Gerbanis, alongside Stormi



and Helfrigg. Her power is so great that she ties ghosts to her sides, and shackles ancient dragons with her glance.

It is said that she created the five watchmen by luring old creatures out from time's murky womb to give them divine status.

Bodvildur wears the invisible sword "Unskymnir", a sword that can never be broken, and is completely weightless.

Grimm

Grimm, or the Hell Horse, is the dreaded horse of destiny, with eight legs that allows itself to be ridden by ghosts and draugs to reach the human world.

Grimm was created when Enken, in the shape of a bear, mounted Slaipa, the mare Slaipa, who was beautiful on the outside but with a dark mind, then gave birth to Grimm, who she immediately tried to drown in a swamp. Slaipa realized that Grimm, with its eight legs, would only bring evil with it. But before Slaipa managed to complete her work, Grimm was saved by Mogrand, who with its sharp hooks fished the horse out of the deep swamp. Mogrand took the horse to Bodvildur, who decided that it would be given a place at her side.

TALES AND STORIES

There is a plentitude of tales, myths, and legends in the Gerbanis' religion. The tales are often about how the gods take on trolls and giants with cunning and force. Often, such tales are told by the fire on cold winter nights, when no one wants to leave home. The two most common tales, which every Gerbanian faithful should know, are Vonbjor and Havenfall.

Vonbjor, The Creation

In the beginning, there was Humundgal, the vast everything, or the volatile emptiness. It was so vast, so boundless, that it stretched on forever in all directions, so spacious that it could hold endless worlds and still have room left over for more. In the beginning, there was nothing in Humundgal, not a grain of sand, not a whisper or a scent,

not even the smallest drop of water. There was nothing that could be seen, heard, or perceived by any other sense, no light, no darkness, no nothing. Despite this absence, it was not empty, there was a breeze that could not be felt or heard. As time went by, this breeze grew and became Bikafrej, the Chaotic Sea Storm. It grew and grew until Humundgal was filled with Bikafrej. When the wild Sea Storm of Chaos swept back and forth across the infinite universe, Windinna the Ioxe (cow) stepped out of the wild popple. She defied the wild rapids making the chaotic storm winds. Windinna snorted and bellowed to push aside the sea storm, but at every attempt to take strides came the Gofengurs, the slave winds, that prevented her to move forward and tortured her, forcing her to move back into Bikafrej. Together with Bikafrej, she then gave birth to Stormi.

Stormi threw himself into Humundgal in rage and fought back the frantic Gofengurs winds. This way, Windinna gained both time and effort to push back the Sea Storm of Chaos and created the land. The land was the world called "Trudvang", and Stormi was its land wind, while the treacherous sea winds were born of the chaotic sea storm. Stormi constantly went to battle these slave winds so that the land could find peace. The Sea Storm did not give up its fight to keep the world chaotic but sent his Gofengurs to cool the land down and drown it with water. But Windinna stood by the highest mountains, the Great Iron Mountains, and blew the winds back, so that the water froze, and everything beyond the Great Iron Mountains became a land covered in snow and ice called the Great Ice Plains. In the Great Iron Mountains, Windinna met the bear god Birnhogg. They took a liking to each other and gave birth to Enken.

Stormi flew across the land, and found Raptinn, a woman whose body was made of stone and who he lived with, and together they had two children: Sunvei and Tyrd. Tyrd was the black night, and Sunvei the bright day. Sunvei loved life and got the ground to grow, as soon as she created something beautiful, her sister Tyrd got jealous and angry, and eclipsed Sunvei's work.

One day, Sunvei created a huge forest that was infinitely bright and beautiful. She spread the woods all over Trudvang, to create greenery and glory, but as before, Tyrd became jealous, and darkened the woods with her claws and her sour breath. The forest became the Darkwoods. Sunvei also created all life, beautiful humans who lived in the woods and on the plains. Tyrd could not leave this creation unscathed but turned all the people she saw into unnatural and ugly creatures called trolls, or the Spawn of Tyrd.

After Trudvang had been populated with life, space became increasingly limited in the world, and it led to men and trolls falling out and starting to fight with each other. Wars raged for years and years, but no one died because there was no death. All that existed was pain and suffering. Stormi then sought Bodvildur in Helgardh and asked her to share their space. She said that she would accept the dead who did not believe or were not strong enough to get somewhere else, but the requirement was that she would have them forever. That satisfied Stormi, for the infidels and the weak could then access the Helgardh.

With Stormi, Bodvildur gave birth to a daughter called Nightra, and it was not long before Nightra gave birth to a son named Jorn, also with Stormi. Stormi soon saw that the people were frightened and weak and kept to themselves. He asked the man called Gjalf why it was that people no longer dared to fight for what they believed in, and Gjalf replied that if they fought, they would die and go to Helgardh, and if they stayed away they would at least get to live their lives in peace before they ended up in Bodvildur's kingdom. Stormi then created Stormvakk, his mead hall where all strong and brave people could enter after death. Stormi promised to all those who fought by his side whenever he called, that he would choose the one to take his place when the time came. Soon, Jorn married his half-sister Sunvei, and bore Vigdis and Hagall. Vigdis taught humans how to live with each other, and Hagall created the tales that humans could learn from.

Havenfall, the End of the World

There will come a dark time when the Gofengurs, the slave winds, descend upon Trudvang with renewed vigor. This storm will awaken the great frost dragon Glimmfrost which today sleeps at the feet of Draugrum in the cauldron. With renewed anger, the frost dragon will throw itself against the Great Iron Mountains, and in a violent blow, it will slay the bear god Birnhogg who dwells there. Hlookk will gather his warg beasts and ventures into the Darkwoods to whip the evil trolls. They will swarm from their holes, and fear neither sunlight nor meadows.

Enken will then wander over the world to gather an army. Stormi will lift the Gutraring in his hand, ready to go to war. The cunning Bodvildur will betray Stormi and will send the Death Storm – the Army of Undead – of Helgardh, with her guards from the Naarshores. She will ride the eight-legged Grimm horse for the first time.

To prevent the Army of the Dead to approach, Windinna will create the magic horn called Fateshout, that she gives to Jorn. When Stormi's son will see the approaching army on the horizon, he will blow the horn, and half the Death Storm will be annihilated. He will blow again, and four of the guardians of Helgardh die. Before Jorn blows a third time, Mogunda will step forward and slay him with Nailbite. From the blood flowing onto Stormland's shorelines, the dead will rise, and Mogunda will call them to strengthen Bodvildur's army. But the fifth guardian will be also defeated, when Stormi's force will shatter the sword called Nailbite.

The Stormlanders will be tired and hungry and unable to resist the threat coming from the Great Ice Plains. Then the "Ioxe", the mythic cow which is also Windinna, will rise, and allows herself to be milked and slaughtered to give strength and courage to Stormi's army. Glimmfrost and its brood, dragons and Hrimtursts, will attack Trudvang. The Icepeak Mountains will split. Stormlanders will blow their Wildhorns and prepare to meet the troll hordes from the north.

Rafner the crow will croak. Stormi will meet the dragon Glimmfrost and the world will shake.

On top of the Icepeak Mountain Bodvildur will meet Skogla, the mighty warrior cursed to fight until the end of times. Skoga will thrust the mighty spear Traulsting – created from the hair of Sunvei – into the chest of the goddess of death. Badly wounded, hanging onto the eight-legged Grimm, she will get back to Helgardh, to be seen no more in the battle. There, she will hide to build a new realm of death for the new time.

In the meanwhile, the sharp bite of the ice dragon will rip out the heart of Stormi, but in a last vigorous attempt, the Storm God will twist Glimmfrost's neck. The blood spurting from the dragon's mouth will pour like a , deep in the woods, petrifying the trees so that they lose all life for three times three thousand years.

Sunvei will ride Enken in his bear form around Trudvang, chasing away the ferocity of the monster Frejkir (or of the undead dragon Nifelfang, according to some other versions). Exhausted, they try to rest at the edge of the Darkwoods, at the lake Darkvittor. There awaits Hlookk, the archenemy of Enken. Sunvei sends her white thunderbolts in every direction, but the warg beasts are too many, and she is torn to pieces. Enken wraps his paws around Hlookk's neck, who himself wraps his whip around the throat of the Storm god. They suffocate each other because no one wants to let go.

With his last strength, Stormi passes the Gutraring to the human warrior who has proved himself the most courageous in the battle. The chosen one will carry the destiny of humans, and they must create a new world.

The Clergy

Gerbanis is found mainly in the Stormlands, but also in parts of the Darkwoods and the Great Iron Mountains, where Stormlanders have settled.

Gerbanis' priesthood is loosely organized, and lacks a coherent,

authoritarian power that spans over several countries like the Ovus of the Tenet of Nid, who keeps Westmark in its grip. Although the Paater is the religious head of all Gerbanian faithful, everywhere in Trudvang, he is the secular ruler of only Vortland, while every part of the Stormlands largely governs itself. Often, the dimwalkers are linked to a jarl or a clan leader, and do not really care about what happens in another stormland far away.

After the Paater of Vortland, the regional Bryckers are the mouthpieces of the Gods, ruling over Duty Kings (responsible for smaller regions) and Blot Lords (responsible for a single stave church). The Bryckers are the highest authorities in the mystical arts of blood gifting. The larger the number of stave churches across a land and the more blood gifting, the greater power the Bryckers have. The dimensions of Bryckers' areas vary. Vortland has 28 Bryckers, practically acting like Jarls under the Paater, while Wildland has only one Brycker in Jordek, acting as the single religious authority over the whole Wildland.

The priests that most Stormlanders deal with are the Stormkelts, who are usually tied to a single village, or wander from house to house to perform their religious acts. In order not to avoid the risk of Gloomgifting, with too much blood gifts improperly resting in the soil, only the officially-recognized Gerbanian priests may perform blood gifting, and therefore a visit from a Stormkelt is something that most people at the farm look forward to. The lowermost rank of the hierarchy includes the Blue Bloters, simple assistants for the Stormkelts.

The warriors who have chosen to serve Stormi and his dimwalkers are called "Stormhirdsmen", or "Knight of the Iron Hand". Such warriors are often tied directly to a Brycker and constitute a kind of religious hird. They often carry weapons of steel and wear blackened chainmail and are feared opponents throughout the Stormlands.



906-15

Symbols and Stave Churches

The most obvious symbol of the the Gerbanian faith is the black ring. It is a manifestation of the eternal, the unifying, and, last but not least, the bracelet of Stormi, the Gutraring which will one day be worn or wielded by a human.

The "Stormilogs" on each side of the door to a house are another important symbol of the Stormlanders belonging to the Gerbanis faith. Stormilogs are often carved and adorned with images of the Storm Gods. They are considered to bar Chaos and the Death Gods from the farm, and the larger and more powerful the Stormilogs, the more powerful is the protection.

If the Stormilogs are the religious center of each house, the "Stave Church" is where the religion of a wider community is focused. There are single farms or minor villages which cannot afford building a stave church, but which have at least one blot pole, for allowing the community' sacrifices.

Most stave churches have external areas with numerous "Stormbarlings" or blot poles of various sizes, for allowing different kinds of sacrifices to be performed in front of the whole community. But poles are not just ritual means. Stave churches, in fact, derive their names from the load-bearing poles called "Stav" or "Staves" on which the whole structures are based. The faithful of Gerbanis have built stone Stave Churches but the wooden ones are much more diffused. The walls of

Stave Churches receive an incredible amount of decoration, mainly in terms of wooden sculpture, runes and carved ornamentation representing symbolic creatures, myths and teachings of the Gerbanian faith.

Stave Churches tend to be the most monumental buildings in the villages where they are built, with heights surpassing their width. However, even though the church buildings could be both highly built and very impressively looking, the actual sanctum inside each Gerbanian church is made in the underground, sometimes hundreds of meters below the church building itself. These underground Ceremony Halls can be huge, with incredibly tall ceilings, since the floor often host tall Stormbarling poles for performing sacrifices. Here the most sacred rites to Stormi are held, usually in front of the black ring symbol and under the vigilant leadership of the Stormkelt or the Brycker in charge of the ceremony.

Sacred texts: Applamaal and Fjettirs

Gerbanis' rules, prayers, and stories are collected in a number of divine poems named the "Applamaal". They are twenty-eight in number, and some are longer than others.

Most of the poems contain simple stories about the gods and their roles, and how people should behave toward them. Others are long and complex, and are often written in Fjettirspá, an advanced poetic language that only the priests master.

Other prayers and the description of Stormkelts' practices are also gathered in three long, very complicated stories or treaties that go under the collective name of "Fjettirs", which priests must learn by heart to connect with the divine. There are Fjettirs written in Vrok, especially in remote places like Wildland or Daalheim, although the more conservative Gerbanian clergy of Vortland or Fynnheim consider as appropriate only the Fjettirs written in Fjettirspá.

SACRIFICES TO THE GODS

To sacrifice in various forms is an important part of the Stormlanders' lives, and a way of life. The people of the Stormlands are superstitious and see the blood gifting and sacrifice as important parts of appeasing the gods in the Gerbanian faith. Stormi is a great god and demands many sacrifices from the Stormlanders so that they may be bestowed with riches and victories in the recurring rampages.

Sacrifices include a complex system of rituals and have many different functions in the Stormlanders' religion and idolatry. There may be gifts that aim to open a channel between Trudvang and the other worlds. The sacrifice can also mean a peace offering or be made to satisfy the gods. Stormlanders normally distinguish between different types of offerings depending on the purpose and circumstances of these rituals. There are various types of religious sacrificial ceremonies in the Stormlands: Blood Gifting, Sendi, Raudgifting, Darkgifting, and Helgifting.

Blood Gifting

Many Stormlanders carry out blood gifting several times a year as their sacrifice to get something in return from the gods. To blood gift often means that what is offered must be of the highest quality and purity. To sacrifice one's firstborn son is considered by all Stormlanders to be the greatest sacrifice of all. Before a hunt, it is not uncommon for people to blood gift or sacrifice one or two slaves for good hunting. Human blood gifting is most common in Wildland, Vortland, and Fynnheim. The other lands of the Stormlands usually only blood gift cattle, or sacrifice parts of the harvest, and rarely blood gift humans.

The victim is usually drained of its blood by a sacrificial blade. The dimwalker leading the ceremony usually drinks the blood and showers it over the the faithful with a "blot broom". In blood gifting, the "Stormbarlings" or "Blot Poles" play a central role. The



Stormbarlings can be seen on most of the farms and cities throughout the Stormlands. Usually, it takes the form of a five- to ten-foot tall pole of wood, with heavy iron rings at the top and in the middle. From the iron rings, which are also Gerbanis' sacred symbol, the offerings are hung and all the faithful can witness that a sacrifice to the gods has been made. How long the bodes are left there depends on the ceremony or from local religious practices.

Stormlanders blood gift many times each year, but four occasions are more important than others. The first is the "Stormgift", conducted shortly after the winter has just started. Stormgift is carried out by the people to have the strength and courage to endure the cold and long winter. Stormgift is an event that takes place over almost the entire Stormlands once a year. The form of the blood gifting varies widely from land to land, but the timing is always the same. In some communities the sacrifices are larger than those described below for the Winter Blood Gifting, while in others it's the opposite.

The second major sacrifice is the "Winter Blood Gifting" that happens when winter is at its coldest, and darkness covers the farms. In the deepest of winter, when people can travel quickly on their sleds over the snow-covered land, Stormi's devotees are gathered to blood gift for the coming year. Usually, an enormous blood pole is erected, full of iron rings and engravings. The pole is similar to that found on many farms around the Stormlands, with the major difference that the Stormgift pole is much higher and thicker. It is not unusual for the pole to rise higher than ten full-grown men into the air.

First, they sacrifice small animals by hanging them from the iron rings at the top of the pole, then larger animals, and eventually powerful animals such as oxen and horses. Sometimes Stormlanders decide to sacrifice humans, to be sure that Stormi will bring them good luck for the coming year.



In Wildland, hrim trolls are sacrificed, or in rare cases, mastomants, because they are considered to bear the strongest and most powerful spirits. The worse the past year has been, the more Stormlanders sacrifice to their strong god Stormi during the Stormgifts. The third major blood gifting feast is the "Wolf Gifting" in the spring, when the landscape begins to thaw, and the beasts of the wilderness awaken from their winter slumber. During the Wolf gifting, the Stormlanders sacrifice wild and dangerous animals that they have

hunted and trapped during a large hunt which goes on for almost a month just before the Wolf Gifting. The sacrifices can be anything from wolves and bears to, uncommonly, hrim trolls and garms.

The last big blood gifting is the "Youth Baptism", carried out in the summer, when the young men are to be united with the land's great warriors to become men. At the Youth Baptism, they get Stormi's blessing and protection in all kinds of battles that fill the Stormlandic year. Usually, young bulls are sacrificed, and other firstborn, for the young warriors' welfare.





Sendi

Sendi is another important part of the Stormlanders' faith. Unlike blood gifting that is often bloody and violent, the Sending is more sedate, but full of ritual and mystery. "To Sendi" is the term that is used to send the victim to the gods as a sign of his humbleness.

Another important difference from Blod Gifting is that Sendi is not performed to gain divine power, but quite often it is performed as an act of gratitude for a good fact which happened.

Typically, one performs Sendi after great battles or wars, when the sacrifice to the gods may be enemy heads hung up on a Blot Pole, or weapons and shields that are lowered into a pond or swamp in order to be able to be consumed by divine forces.

Another type of Sendi is the "Bloodsend", which happens when those in the same bloodline are sacrificed to follow the dead to live in a realm beyond our own. The "Widowsendi" is the most common type of Bloodsending, especially in Wildland, where the woman follows her dead warrior to the realm of death by sacrificing herself, or vice versa. The sacrifices of brothers or warriors with strong ties to each other can sometimes be seen being sent on the beaches of Ejdlund, Wildland, and Fynnheim. The Sending is usually done by killing the victim and putting his corpse on a ship along with the dead, after which the ship is set on fire and pushed into the sea.

Raudgifting

Raudgifting is the third type of sacrifice that Stormlanders practice. To Raudgift means to pay for something that the sacrificed has done. Like the Sendi, the Raudgifting is not done to obtain divine power, it is rather more a final way of getting the victim back

in favor with the gods, or to punish the victims for a crime or misdeed. Raudgifting is the bloodiest of all the Stormlanders' sacrifices and causes the greatest pain and suffering to those who are sacrificed. The greater the pain and suffering of the victim, the greater the likelihood that the gods receive the gift.

The worst form of Raudgifting, the "Hel Rites", are long forgotten and discarded. Only small groups and secret societies such as the Wolf Brothers in Ejdlund still use Hel Rites. This sacrifice lasts for fifteen days and fifteen nights, during which the one to be sacrificed is kept alive and suffers terrible pain and torture. Usually, the ones who are offered are hung on a Stormbarling with a rope that slowly suffocates the victims while their hands are chopped off, and the sacrificed bleeds to death.

Honorable elders sometimes offer themselves for "Age gifting", as described in the section of the burial practices.

Darkgifting

Darkgifting is the kind of gifting where one sacrifices to the glory of the Chaos Gods. It is called Darkgifting, partly because the gifting can only be performed at night, and partly because one sacrifices to the dark gods, such as Helfrigg and Hlookk.

A Darkgifting is always hard and raw in its simplicity. One must quickly make a bloody sacrifice to the Chaos Gods, and little or no regard is given toward the one sacrificed. In addition, only humans, and specifically only believers in Gerbanis, can be sacrificed for the Darkgifting to have any effect. Hel riders and Hel sisters rejoice in this gruesome practice.

One dangerous side effect of a Darkgifting is that it always raises Dark Dwellers, also called "Blood Trolls".

The more powerful and faithful the victim, the greater the Dark Dweller that awakens. The Dark Dweller must be fought for the sacrifice to be effective, and for that reason, the few priests who perform this kind of sacrifice always surround themselves with powerful hirdmen.

Helgifting

Like Darkgifting, Helgifting is dedicated to gods other than the Storm Gods. Those carrying out Helgifting do it in honor of the Death Gods. Of all the giftings, the Hel Gifting is perhaps the most complicated and mysterious. Also, one doesn't sacrifice the living, but the dead. It requires a warrior who died on the battlefield that the priest will call back from their path into the Storm, to cheat Hel. For Stormlanders, this is the worst gifting of all, and it is primarily only Hel Riders and Hel Sisters who perform it.

The powers that priests get in return from Helgardh's goddess are overwhelming and great but can be unpredictable and volatile. Priests caught performing, or having performed, Helgifting, are usually slain without any further questions asked.

Gloomgifting

It is rare, but sometimes it happens, that there is a Gloomgifting.

In areas where many sacrifices take place, the remains stay in the soil, and grow together with branches, leaves, and other things that end up there. When a sacrifice goes wrong, and the power of the gods can resist, or the priest's will is too weak, they awaken what is in the earth. Sometimes, it's a mixture of human parts, sometimes of animals, humans, and plants. Such creatures are called Dark Dwellers or Blood Trolls and are brought to life by Gloomgifting.





SUPERSTITION AND WITCHCRAFT

In the Stormlands, the belief in Stormi is strong. Residents are shaped by nature's harsh reality, and by the common beliefs they have in their powerful gods. Unexplained events are considered alarming omens or are easily blamed on Chaos Gods or Death Gods.

Using an axe and a shield is easy to understand, the force imparted from a deity is not as easy to understand, and to harness the invisible and untouchable and use it as a weapon or tool is completely incomprehensible for most Stormlanders. Whatever cannot be seen or explained is often interpreted as Trollcraft, or punishments from the gods. Wizards and magicians therefore raise fears, but also wonder, in most Stormlanders.

There are few magic users in the Stormlands, perhaps because most of the competent ones don't fully live and practice their skills in these lands. Having said that, those few who practice witchcraft in the Stormlands are often skillful and powerful. Most often, they learn their abilities by themselves, through long and arduous efforts, and at the end they become masterful Vitner weavers. Their incantations have a bluntness and ferocity that is not very common in other parts of Trudvang. The spells they learn are often intertwined with nature and its forces. Most Stormlander weavers of Vitner choose the path of Vaagritalja, seeking knowledge and power in the balance of the natural world. They usually carry knotty staffs, called "Gambatein" and have interest in herbs and plants.

The Vitner weavers are considered to be outside the wordly and the divine paths. Vitner masters are considered completely disconnected from the gods and manipulate energies to gain powerful abilities that really should belong only to the gods. Stormlanders believe that mages carry such strong souls that they have managed to disconnect from the channel and the thread of fate that exists between ordinary people and

the gods. The Stormlanders say also that the sorcerers belong to the natural world but have learned to spin the divine thread and thus control their own destinies, without the interference of gods.

The typical Stormlandic wizard is called a Vedun, if man, or a Vedma, if woman, and they are vitner weavers who develop peculiar links with nature and wilderness.

In the Stormlands there is a kind of love-hate relationship with spell casters, and there are many legends and beliefs about how they got their powers. On the one hand, it is believed that they can help to expel evil spirits and tame the dreaded wilderness. On the other hand, most people are afraid that they are beyond divine fellowship, and that the Vitner weavers control something that only gods should have access to.

WARFARE PRACTICES

Even if the ancient Kremors had cavalry traditions, employing mounted archers and lancers as a heritage of their nomadic days, these are much rarer nowadays, even if there are a few, rare clans who still use hit-and-run tactics with horse and bow. However, breeding a warhorse is a costly business, usually too expensive for the poor soil of most Stormlandish farms. Warhorses are usually owned only by elite warriors and, even if there are legendary horsemen, like the Knights of the Iron Hand, Stormlandish warfare mostly tends to focus on infantry tactics, often derived from the wild practices of the old Wildbrons and Agroths. However, how these infantry units wage war, is a complicated issue with multiple approaches.

Many hunters and trappers, used to face larger trolls in the wild, prefer to use ambushes and guerrilla tactics, especially in the forests and in the mountains. Nevertheless, this approach is disdained by most Stormlanders who prefer to face enemies in the open field. In this sense there are Stormlandish warbands composed by warriors too

proud, independent and wild to fight in regular formations. For those who have too much wild Broth blood in their ancestry it is normal to see battles like a series of one-on-one duels, where each fighter looks for gaining personal glory by the strength of his own two hands.

Nevertheless, any self-respecting Jarl will have disciplined hirdmen who, when need arises, know how to lock shields, protecting each other, becoming a bullwark against wilder opponents. When two of these "Shield Walls" or "Skjaldborgs" meet, a virile confrontation starts, with each wall of shieldmen trying to push the other. Vile hits from below the shields maim and kill the fighters of the first lines, while the second line push and use spears to stab from above. All of this goes on until the fury of the singular warriors prevail over the strength of the enemy, or over the authority of the Jarl to keep the formation tidy. Berserkers usually wait impatiently behind these walls, biting their shields in frustration, until their nerves break, and they blindly throw themselves against the enemies' shields. If they are not killed, it's their fury which breaks the enemies' shield wall.

However, sometimes a single Berserker's madness is not enough to break a shield wall, as the famous Gautlir Harulp noticed. The legends say that he promised himself to Stormi's dark daughter, Nightra, to learn a special "Fylking" or formation that led to victory. The story of the great warrior Gautlir can be told by most warriors in the Stormlands. "Wildfylking" is a war formation that resembles the head of a rushing boar, to be used by Stormlanders when the opposing shield wall is too strong to be pierced. The chieftain or jarl, who always stands in the forefront of the fylking, is called the "Gautlan", that in Vrok means "boar". Many believe that the leader of the fylking can also transform into a boar during the battle, as long the Fylking remains intact. It is particularly common in Ejmland,

Djunghart, and Nojd, that the “boar” also wears a helmet, which in many respects resembles a wild boar’s head, or a face mask with two horns on the sides.

Wildfylkings may consist of up to a hundred warriors who align themselves into a big triangle behind the boar. By grouping themselves in this way, the warriors can protect each other while they can – like a wedge – easily break through a hostile defense. Unlike what happens in the Mittlander fighting traditions, in Stormlands almost all the fights are conducted on foot rather than on horseback, which means that the warriors must rely on their own strength and ability, and the more cohesive the group, the greater the force they can muster. The arrow-shaped formation can cut into an enemy’s shield wall, directly opening the battle up. The Wildfylking is easier to handle for those who are strong and durable, something that most Stormlanders are. However, it also requires discipline, courage and loyalty toward the leader, otherwise the wedge risks to be broken by vicious lateral charges. In this sense the formation is vulnerable against the quick maneuvering of cavalry but, given the scarcity of horsemen in the Stormlands, this often not a concern.

To fight and do battle is quite usual in the Stormlands. The way they fight has its roots in the Broths’ love for death, the Kremors’ combat arts and the Wildbrons’ savage fighting methods.

A good way to instill fear in the enemy, and courage in your own ranks, is blowing on the bronze battle horns called “Wildhorns”. These horns are long and straight, some longer than three feet. Their sides are covered with runes and pictures of battles and struggles.

Ejdland is famous for a few ancient bronze horns, which are remembered in stories and sagas. These are the so-called “Dragon Horns”, used in the great Troll Wars during the Age of the Prophets. Each Dragon Horn is crafted in gilded bronze and has

a large dragon’s head at its mouth. These horns are so long, nearly nine feet, that two people must carry them. Today, there are only four Dragon horns left, and they are all considered to have magical traits.

FEASTS AND RITUALS

There are many rituals which are typical of the Stormlanders, as well as a variety of both minor and major festivals in the Stormlands. Some are local, while others have been adopted by most Stormlanders.

Drinking winter

One of the year’s major festivals that is celebrated all over the Stormlands is the “Drinking Winter”. The feast is celebrated when darkness turns, as they say in the Stormlands. It is a period beginning with the Night of Vikla and finishes three weeks later. At this time, the sun is not seen for almost forty days in the northernmost parts of the Stormlands, and a constant night surrounds them. Because of this, most stay home, cooped up in cottages and cabins. Sometime during this period, a feast is to be held, large or small does not matter. But every slave and free person shall get at least a measure of mead from their lord, or otherwise be paid with property. Typically, it is of course not a small event, but a large and lavish party that residents are treated to. The party is one of the biggest of the year, and is usually held shortly after the Stormgift, and thus combines an ancient tradition with the sacrifice to their greater god.

Wolf Night

Wolf Night, which is more a survival test than a feast, is most common among Wildbrons who live around the Stormlands. Some clans in Wildland, Ejldland, and Djunghart have embraced this test of survival.

At the first full moon after a new child is born, the baby is put in the

woods for a night to see if it can withstand the wilderness’ first test. The children who are eaten by wild animals are considered to have carried a weak spirit, so that they would not have survived the harsh life that awaited them. However, not all children are exposed in the woods. Only those who the family think will be great warriors, berserkers, or shieldmaidens can take the test. To find out whether the coming baby has these attributes, the pregnant mother is to visit a witch or seer who consults the wolf bones. Wolf bones are a set of bones and teeth which the seer, under great mystery and witchcraft, has exorcised for them to work as a window into the spirit world.

Wolf Night has its roots in the old wolf cult that was strong before Gerban came with the new faith. Those children who survive the Wolf Night are considered extra capable, and lots of gifts are lavished for them so that they get the best training in the arts of war. Some are sent as far as the Mittlandic sword halls to learn the ultimate sword arts. Often, they take names that allude to the wolf word. Vulfe, Ulveman, Graymane, and Garmtongue are common names of the selected individuals who survived their trials. Women who survive the Wolf Night are considered unusually strong and capable.

In the morning after a Wolf Night, the head of the family must go to recover the child and, if the baby is alive, a big party is held, where they eat meat from predators and drink a special red mead called “blood mead”. Part of this ceremony involves cutting three deep cuts with a knife on the back of the child. The scars they carry all their lives are proof that they have survived their Wolf Night.

Skulljood

The practice of shaving one’s head after taking down one’s first enemy is a custom that exists over almost the entire Stormlands. Usually, this is also



a time for celebration and amusement and, usually, young warriors who have made their first kill take their place in the seat of honor and are treated as a Shieldjarl for a day. In wealthier clans and families, the person often receives fine gifts and presents. Shields, swords, helmets, and other items change hands at the feast called Skulljood.

In times of peace, Skulljood usually occurs a week after the deed has been performed. When there is war, it is not uncommon for the brave slayer to already accept gifts on the battlefield, while the older warriors shave his skull.

Totring

That a woman gives birth is a major cause of celebration in the Stormlands. Every time a woman gives birth to a child, it is celebrated with a solemn evening called "Totring", to ensure prosperity, strength and health for the baby. Totring is celebrated on the farm, and as many as possible in the family should participate in the feast. Women are entitled to sit in the seat of honor - and like the warrior when it is Skulljood - receive gifts and presents. Most gifts are of symbolic nature, and not particularly expensive or lavish. It is not until the Totring of their firstborn is held, that the man and woman are really considered married and a couple. That is precisely why this celebration is more important than the actual wedding ritual when the two pledge themselves to each other. Parting before a Totring is held is considered bad and characterless, but it is not criminal or illegal, even though it involves paying a penalty. Being separated after Totring though, has cost many men and women both farms and great gifts, and sometimes long-lasting family feuds and blood.

Burial practices

Gerbanis devotees are not buried but their corpses are left exposed in specific locations to be eaten by wild animals

and destroyed by nature. Supporters of Stormi believe that this is the only way for Stormi to discover the dead. In the past, when ancestral worship was more prevalent, large stone graves and impressive earth mounds were erected for the dead, who were interred with great riches. Remnants of these graves can be seen all over the Stormlands.

However, nowadays not all the corpses in the Stormlands are exposed, as remains of burial rituals preceding the coming of Gerbanis still linger in some regions. In some parts of Nojd the dead are sealed into trunks to be thrown into waterfalls. However, the most common kind of "water funeral" is where the dead are put on a ship which is set on fire and pushed into the sea, as it often happens along the coasts of Edjland, Fynneheim and Wildland. In this last, savage region, the Sea Burial is often coupled with the "Widowsendi" ritual, as described in the section about Sendi sacrifices.

Agegifting and Etterstapp

Considering how much the "survival of the fittest" philosophy prevails in the Stormlands, it is odd that the old harbor any greater respect in life.

For this reason, honorable elders are sometimes seen hanging from the Stormbarlings, sacrificed to the honor of Stormi. Such a sacrifice is called "Agegifting" and is considered to bring fertility to the farm.

another common way to solve the aging issue in the Stormlands are the so-called "Etterstapp", where the old ones are put down into a hole in the ice in the winter to die. In areas where there are no lakes or proximity to the ocean, many elders meet their "dry death" instead. The closest relatives then carry the elder into the woods to beleft to perish in a dry pine. In some places in Ejdland, one carries the old from the farm, gives them a shield, and stones them to death. In this way, they show that they have been somehow still able to defend themselves during a fight and can therefore meet Stormi.

The night before the old person is to be carried out into the woods or placed into the ice, a big party is held in their honor. It is a good practice for everyone in the family to have prepared a poem for the elderly, which they present during the tributes to those who will die. It is seen as better to perish and be defeated by the forces of nature than having to die in a "dirty bed".

Firon

In the early spring, when winter finally loosens its grip on the lands, the Stormlanders go out en masse and light large beacons, which are called "Firon", to draw sunlight to the earth. This is an old tradition and has no ties to the Gerbanian faith. Over the course of a few days, they set as many fires as possible to bring out the sun behind the leaden clouds.

Wildspring

Stormlanders have always seen the boar as a ferocious beast: a kind of warrior among the animals. Naturally, it has also become the symbol of struggle and war in many parts of the Stormlands. But to celebrate Wildspring does not mean a feast for the upcoming war, or an attempt to gain good luck before a big battle. Wildspring is celebrated in early spring in most of the Stormlands, except in Dain. To gather their friends and offer roasted boar, plenty of mead and intoxicating mushrooms is considered a good tradition in the Stormlands. Wildspring is enthusiastically celebrated in the hope that the coming year should offer friendship and peace instead of war and death. It is not unusual to also invite their adversaries or even enemies together to celebrate Wildspring as a gesture of reconciliation and hope for new friendships. Despite the fact that large amounts of mead are drunk during this celebration that lasts for three full days, it starts with everyone drinking a great beaker of milk from a cow as a testament to the honesty and modesty of the friends gathered.

LIVING AND HOUSING

Fishing Wulterfish along the shores of the Stormlands, together with the hunting of furred animals, constitute the Stormlanders' oldest sources of sustenance. Fishing Wulterfish has always guaranteed a livelihood safer than hunting, because the giant Wulterfish provides fat, skin, flesh, and hard bones to use for tools. Many times, fishing has come to the rescue when the hunt goes poorly, because fishing Wulterfish can be pursued for almost the entire year, but hunting comes to the fore in the winter times. The fishing of the Yellow Troll Salmon, who plays in the rivers of the Trollridge Mountains, has been very important for those of Nojd's residents who do not live on the coast, as well as the hunting of seals along Dain's, Ejldland's, and Fynnheim's coasts and fjords.

Other ways of feeding one's family among the Stormlanders is farming mountain ox, and handicraft.

Stormlanders are reluctant to trade with other parts of Trudvang. When that happens, it is usually furs and slaves traded or exchanged for iron and other metals. Generally speaking most Stormlanders have the attitude that what does not exist in their own land, is there for the taking from other lands in the South and West.

Many parts of the Stormlands, not occupied by wild forests, have a rock-filled and nutrient-poor soil that is not suitable for anything other than grazing for domestic livestock or very poor, mostly subsistence-level agriculture, focused on small cereal fields and in the very few, lucky places, apples. Instead, most people devote themselves largely to the gathering of wild turnips, mushrooms, and herbs found in nature. In some areas, the soil is so depleted that the ones who live there have few options other than hunting and fishing for their survival.

Both male and female ideals of the Stormlands are athletic and hardy, like the religious beliefs they are blessed with. If nothing else, for practical reasons, because it is Stormlandic law that the eldest child will inherit the farm.



The other sons and daughters are often forced to go into a hird for his brother or sister, breaking new ground, or alternatively earning a living elsewhere. Sometimes, this may consist of going on raids at a young age or participating in well-paid cleansing campaigns against trolls and goblins. Skilful commanders and hirdmen can, after several successful years, return home, buy a farm, and settle down as a Jarl, or even as a Swordjarl.

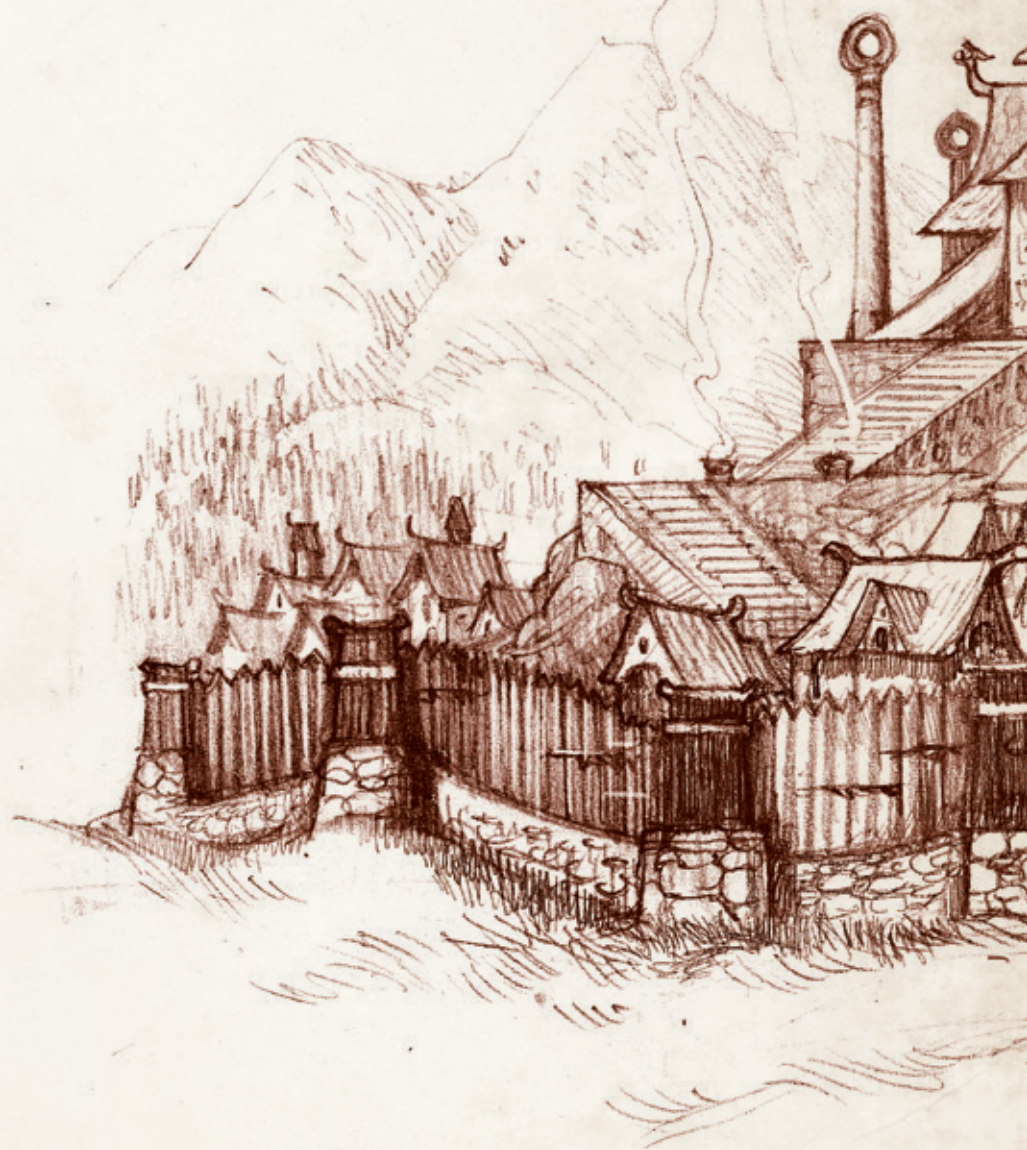
In the Stormlands one can find everything from desolate wooden castles to sparsely populated mountain villages. The most common settlements, however, are the farm villages scattered around the Stormlands. The farm village usually consists of a number of small or medium-sized farms controlled by a clan chief, or at best by a Swordjarl.

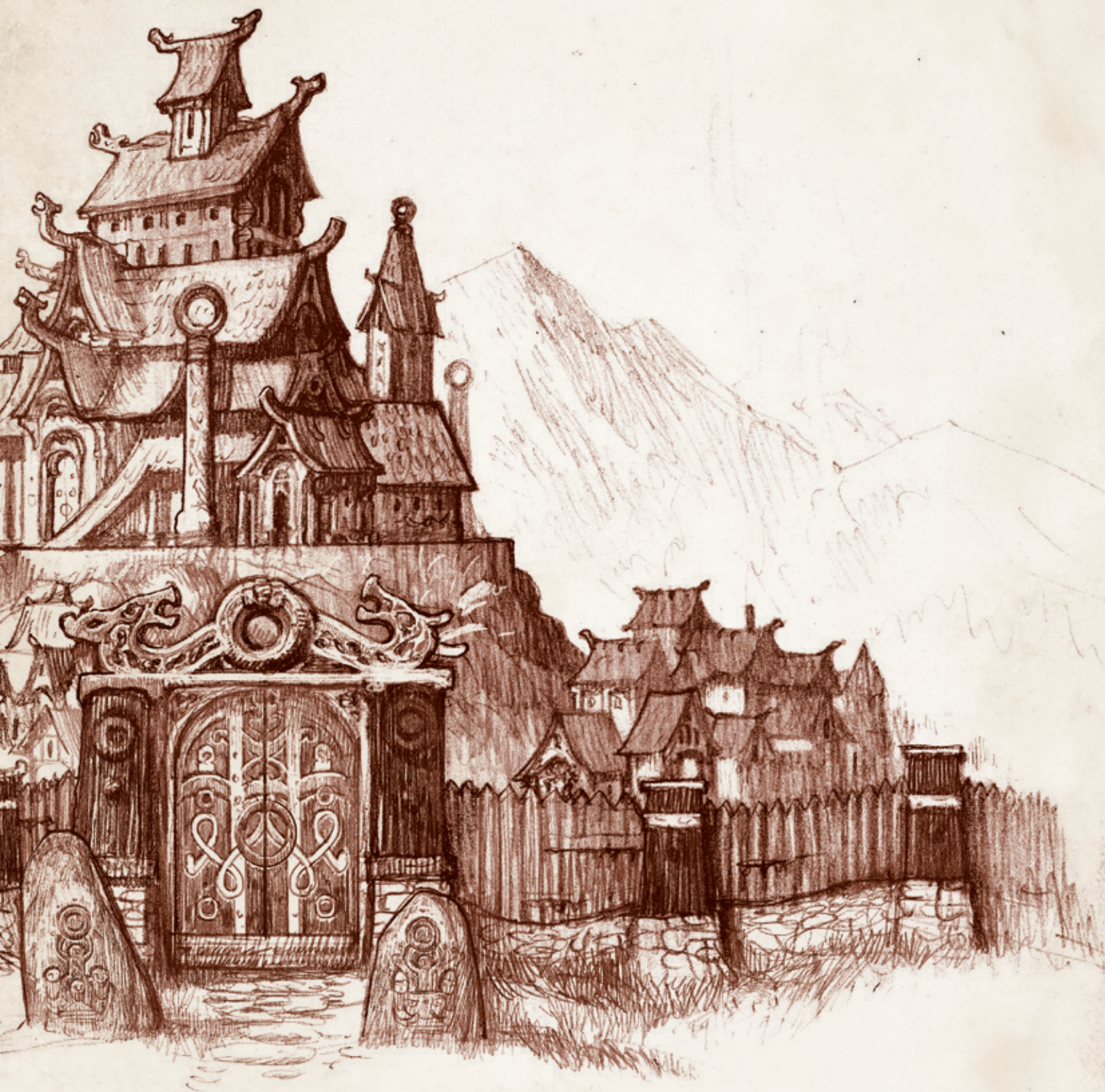
The most common houses in the Stormlands are the longhouses. The houses are usually built on a terrace, on a slope where water can easily drain away. The house consists of a roof supported by heavy posts covered in woodcarvings.

The houses in many farm villages lie close together to protect themselves against outer enemies and wild animals, while the real protection is the bravery of the inhabitants. In places where the wilderness is all too palpable, they raise a single palisade around the farm village to feel safer or have some other rough protecting feature, like a ditch or a thorn hedge.

A larger, fortified settlement is usually called a "Veggrborg", a generic word which include both villages and cities, as far as they are fortified. The richest villages are protected by high walls, which quite often have a circular shape in plan. These "Ring Walls", usually built with wooden logs or more rarely with stones, are set above steep ramparts, sometimes surrounded by moats, with only two or four fortified gates to access the settlement.

There are also "Ring Fortresses", which do not start as villages but are built with obvious military aims, to express the domination over a land. These holdings are expensive to build and are usually held only by the wealthiest Jarls and chieftains.





The most elaborated fortifications can be seen in some large cities protected by monumental walls, in either stone or logs. These fortifications can have many shapes beyond the traditional circular plans, and they often also have towers and complex gate fortifications.

Important cities, with thousands of inhabitants, exist where trade flourishes, like in the harbour cities of Storhavn in Wildland or Redborg in Djunghart. However, most Stormlanders live in small villages spread in the wilderness, and their life is not limited just inside the perimeters of the palisades. Not far from the villages there are often many hunting cabins, cattle farms, and various types of smaller structures linked with crafting activities. The population of these villages varies greatly, from twenty to a few hundred inhabitants.

Stormlanders' lives are surrounded by great superstition. Decorating their houses inside and out with iron rings and various lavish carvings is quite usual and is a great way to keep the Chaos and Death Gods away from the farm. Especially important are the Stormilogs, standing on each side of the doorways. These carved logs say a lot about the people who live in the house. Stormilogs of iron oak suggest that those who live there are rich. Logs of birch or spruce indicates a less fortunate family. Stormilogs are produced by special craftsmen, who charge a lot to make each log as unique as possible. Common patterns in the logs are images of Stormi or Enken.

Wealthy families have so-called "Stormihalls", which stick out from the long side of the house. The Stormihall is a kind of shrine and is also used as this. The Stormihall acts as a powerful barrier against Chaos- and Death gods getting into the house. Normally, the logs are carved like a Stormi with gaping mouth, since people think he can swallow the Dark Gods. Some houses have no Stormilogs, which is a sign that they have committed a crime and have been forced to live unlogged for a period of time, i.e., with chaos and death lurking around as punishment.

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Cold and bitter winters cover the land for most of the year and when summer comes, it is short and intense, with warmer winds from the west. A proverb in the Stormlands says that "anyone who understands the weather is a wise man". Generally, the weather in the Stormlands is very unpredictable. In a short time, a storm can erupt. The changes come as suddenly as the cold winds from the Grim Sea in the east. One minute, the sky is clear blue, and the next, it is replaced by wind and heavy clouds. The wind blows almost continuously along the coasts. It's cold and biting, even in summer, and the rain may persist for several weeks, especially on the Stormlands' east coast.

Because of the cold Grim Sea and the chilly winds that come down from the Great Ice Plains, even through the Great Iron Mountains, the climate in the Stormlands is scowling and biting. Winter is long and relentless, and when summer finally arrives, it is short but warm. In the northern parts, in Wildland, the winter never quite lets go of its grip on the land. In the lands south of the Icepeak Mountains, however, summer can lead to more comfortable temperatures.

Since the dawn of time, the Stormlands have feared the so-called "Fimbulwinter". Nobody knows why it comes, or even when. It is a winter so harsh and ruthless, that it does not let go of the Stormlands. There are stories that tell about Fimbulwinters lasting for ten years.

MEASURING TIME

Stormlanders have a very simple chronology, much simpler than their neighbors to the west, or the Elves. They relate to everything in living memories and divide the living memory in four parts. Saying, "this cold, it has not been in a living memory," means it had not been this cold in almost 50 years. A living memory is considered to be approximately 50 years. A quarter of a living memory is therefore almost 13 years. There are few things Stormlanders keep track of which reach further away than a living memory. In these cases, the event is given a name

to be remembered. The most important thing is not to remember exactly when it happened, but what happened. "When Tordvigg slew the dragon," or "At Frejva's first Totring," are examples of such events. Frejva was perhaps a great-grandmother, and Totring, everyone knows what it is.

LANDSCAPE AND NATURE

At first, it is the Stormlands' immediate beauty that strikes most people who walk its paths and climb its high mountains. One marvels at the variety of towering mountains and vast plateaus, alternating between closed massifs and open moorlands, wild rapids and deep forests. The magnificent mountains resemble castles, and between them are many deep-cut valleys branching out, like moats. But the Stormlands is a demanding environment for vegetation. Most of the year, the vegetation is covered by snow, or exposed to whipping winds or wet summer rain. Cold and barren land has made the plants here persevering and weathered.

Forests, mountains, and a hard, merciless wilderness cover the Stormlands. Those traveling through the countryside soon discover that the larger villages are few, and well protected against external dangers. They are often on the coast, because the inland is barren and untamed.

The Stormlands' wilderness is a hunter's dream, and nightmare. In the forests and the plains, the mountains and the deep valleys, a hunter can find prey of all kinds. Deer, wild boar, reindeer, bear, rabbit, and even large sea monsters like the Wulterfish.

The Stormlands' east coast is also Trudvang's east coast. It stretches all the way from the Ejdlandic city of Saaga in the south, past the country of Fynnheim, and up to Wildland's northern parts. The coast is full of fjords and sheer cliffs stretching their granite spears up from the cold, stormy Grim Sea.

With the exception of the mythical forest of Wildheart, its sister forest Copperwoods in Ejdland, and Sisterskimmer forest in Djunghart, the Stormlands' flora is characterized by



gnarled, windswept, and low plants, trees, and bushes, which tenaciously cling to life despite an inhospitable climate.

The black and poisonous heather plants are lush during the short summers and cover a rocky and rolling countryside. In some areas, the black heather extends its reach so that it encloses an entire landscape in black vegetation. Among the trees, the gnarled dwarf firs and the troll pines are the most common in the northern parts of the Stormlands, while the black bearsoks and spruce, mixed with copper oak are most common in the southern parts of this barren and desolate part of Trudvang. The trees' appearance is an adaptation to the large amount of snow that falls over almost the entire Stormlands.

If the bear is a feared animal, the attitude toward wolves is even more negative; they are hated and feared by the Stormlands'

inhabitants. This attitude stems from the fact that almost all families can tell tales of wolves that have killed members of their own clan.

There are plenty of wolfkin in the Stormlands, and they have therefore been hunted hard and mercilessly. The most common hunting method is a driven hunt on skis during the long winters. Such hunting of wolves can last for several days, even weeks. When the wolf is exhausted, and the hunters have caught up with the beast, they use specialized spears called "wolf poles" to hit them hard across the back, and then poke them in the stomach with a sharp edge made of Wulterfish bones. Wearing a necklace full of warg beasts' teeth is believed to protect one's family from wolf attacks, and many wolf hunters are warmly welcomed at farms across virtually the entire Stormlands. In

many cases, they can reside there without paying for either food or shelter. Rogue wolf hunters who live on farms without accomplishing their task or showing their courage, are hung on stormbarlings with ripped stomachs and severed hands, after which they become dog food.

One will find many other furred animals in the Stormlands, such as the bariatric Iron Marten, the Crystal Wolverine, and the all-white Drauglynx. The Stormlands have a rich collection of beasts and monstrous creatures. Above all, trolls in a never-ending stream can always be seen around the Stormlands. In the southern areas, such as Ejdlund, Dain, and Djunghart, Gray Trolls and mountain dwellers are prevalent. In tWildland, virtually all types of trolls are in great abundance, and in much larger numbers than the people who settled in Wildland.







DAALHEIM
Djutt
Duuplya
Fyrdrincs Ridge
Hellack
Hvergil
Jornastrandr
Vislatt River



◆ DAALHEIM ◆

Daalheim is a fortress that appears to be shot out of the ocean. The large island rises vertically from the waves, and there are only a few natural beaches. The currents around the coast and the big waves that crash into the cliffs have made Daalheim virtually impregnable from the sea. The few harbors that are available are hard to reach.

A green blanket of moss and grass covers the whole of the island, including the two mountain ranges of Djutt and Hellack. It's not uncommon to see Logrjotuns in the sea south of Daalheim. In the fall, a fog covers the whole Daalheim, and the coasts get even more treacherous than usual. To be pulled too close to the vertical cliffs by the strong currents is risky. When the fog is thick and the rocky coast is difficult to detect, many ships are sunk. The fog is called the "Daal Fog", and when the Stormlanders first arrived in Daalheim, they believed that they had come to Dimhall. Because Daalheim is inhabited by the Stormlanders, and not by the Elves who live in the islands.

RAUK GLOOSTONE' SAGA

The tale speaks of Rauk Gollstone, son of Vret Stormbeard, who fell into disgrace with a higher ranking relative for slaying the son of a jarl. There was a price put on Rauk's head, and even though he had a large Hird, had plenty of weapons, and a good relation with the Wildbrons, he became a hunted man. He lived in Ejmland, but also for a while in the Trollridge Mountains. Finally, Rauk grew tired of running from his

tormentors, and decided to load his ships and head out to sea in search of a new place to live. Eventually, he arrived at the large island that he named "Daalheim" after his wife Dala. There, he settled his Stormilog, and built several longhouses on the northeastern shores of Daalheim. The island was virtually untouched by humans and the elves had not set foot there since the Age of Dreams, since they considered the island cursed. About 10 winters passed before the son of Rauk, Storm Gollstone, returned to Ejmland. In his cargo he had amber and gold, because on Daalheim gold could be picked by hand from the streams. It has been said that many Ejdlayers chose to follow Storm back to Daalheim, and several farms were built. The Stormlanders settled in a part of Trudvang that used to be the an elvish domain.

WILDAL AND FYRDRINCSMANN'S

In Daalheim, a better version of the Westmarkian Dragongrape grows. Using this fruit and Wildrye, the strongly intoxicating brew of "Wildale" is brewed. The fact is that the people of Daalheim love this brew, and they enjoy

getting drunk from it. Some claim that the many long voyages to the Stormlands made them addicted to Wildale, because the food on board was sparse and spoiled, but the brew was almost always available. In the houses of poor people, there is sometimes no food, but you can almost always find a barrel of Wildale. Many Daalheimer warriors always carry a jug of Wildale in their pack just to be on the safe side.

People here keep slaves, but unlike other Stormlanders, they do not use them for the household or for hard labor, but for fighting as "Fyrdrincsmann's". It's a tradition in Daalheim that from an early age, children should learn to defend their farm and the best way to do that is to observe fighting at an early age, preferably fights among Fyrdrincsmann's. These slaves are kept in cages and are only let out when they should fight until death against another Fyrdrincsmann. It's not uncommon to intoxicate them with Wildale. These slaves are also taken on the conquests or raids that the people of Daalheim are famous for. The fighters are tethered by a chain to a large rock or, more commonly, to a large pole called "Fyrdrinc", hence the name "Fyrdrincsmann". In order to harden the

slaves before battle, they are chained naked on the mountain slopes while waiting to fight. Betting is an important part of this tradition, and some slave keepers can earn a living from their Fydrincsmann.

Even though there are people living in the western parts of Daalheim, you can say that the huge island is mainly a wilderness, and that only the northeastern part is relatively safe. Here, the farms are built close to each other. The central and western parts of Daalheim are considered to be very dangerous since many Trolls and other dangerous creatures dwell here.

THE DJUTT MOUNTAIN RANGE

Djutt is the inaccessible mountain range in the midst of Daalheim and whose peaks are amongst the highest in all of Trudvang. The six, permanently snow-clad peaks known as the “Godtpeaks” spring up from the mountains like spears, and few if any humans have ever set foot up there. On the western slopes of the Djutt mountain range, there is an ancient elvish shrine known as “Djuttring”. It is a collection of stones in a strange pattern. At the center of the shrine there is a stump of an impossibly-old alfarka tree. By whom and why the tree was cut down is not known, but Daalheimers make pilgrimages to the shrine in order to put flowers on the tree stump. The legend says that performing such a rite will give a long and prosperous life to the pilgrim.

THE DUUPLYA FOREST

The “Duuplya” is the forest that is situated between the mountains of Djutt and Hellak. It’s a dark, impenetrable forest, said to house both Braskelwurms and King Trolls. Few people have ventured into the inner parts of the Duuplyas, but it’s been said that copper oak and alfarka wood grow there, as they do in the Wildheart forest of Ejdland.

During the Age of the Iron Dragon, Glaupkelp, the iron dragon, called “Yttamari” by the elves, crawled up from the underground and instilled fear

amongst the elves at Samia. It has been said that the dragon’s lair was in the Duuplya forest. The elves could not allow such a beast on the island, and decided to send Anillas, the dragon slayer, to kill

Yttamari. For several years, Anillas hid in the forest, waiting for the winter to come and for his chance to face the dragon. He knew that the cold would make the dragon slow and drowsy. Every year



winter eventually came to Daalheim, and Yttamari became drowsy. Anillas tried to kill Yttamari on three different times, but the dragon got away each time. The elf queen of Valkalainen had given the enchanted spear of Pjontikka to Anillas. This was a spear that no armor could protect against, not even the tough scales of the Iron Dragon. The fourth time Anilla tracked the dragon, he managed to kill Yttamari, but was himself killed during the struggle. Legends say that both the dragon's skeleton and Anillas's, still holding the spear, are still somewhere in the forest.

FYDRINCS RIDGE

On the hills east of the lower, green-clad slopes of the Djutt mountain range, there is a place known to the people of Daalheim as "Fydrincs Ridge". It is a gathering point to which many Daalheimers head once a year. During that time there is large contest where many of the Fydrincsmanns from the whole of Daalheim fight for their freedom. Every year, the Fydrincsmann who is considered the best in the competition is given his freedom, and he will walk away from Fydrincs Ridge a free man.

THE HELLACK MOUNTAIN RANGE

Hellack is the darker sister of Djutt. Even though the mountains are clad in green, the higher up you get, the more barren the mountain gets. Then you can see the bluish-black granite's hard surface, and the ridges covered with broken rocks that make walking up here hard and exhausting. The peaks of Hellack are not as high as the peaks of Djutt, but the mountain is still an impressive sight. Particularly its south side, where its vertical walls spring straight from the ocean and reach the sky 3,000 fathoms up. The giant sea-eagles and other birds hide amongst its cliffs. In the mountain ranges, far from any human dwellings, a few gryphons, who have adapted themselves to the environment, live.

HVERGIL

Hvergil is the largest Stormlandic town in Daalheim. It's located in the Hundur bay, where the Stormlanders first landed on Daalheim. Hvergil is run by Jarl Hast the Brave who have family roots in Ejdlund. Similar to most other Stormlandic towns, the houses are traditional Stormlandic longhouses built with Stormilogs. A large blood gifting pole in the middle of town testifies to the many bloodgiftings that have been held in honor of Stormi.

JORNASTRANDR

Jornastrandr is the little brother of Hvergil. The town is much smaller, and the houses are scattered over a large area. The town was founded on the northeastern point of Daalheim as a defense against the wild Bults of Mittland, for fear that they would come from the north to raid the

island. Jornastrandr later became a home for fishermen as well as cattle herders. The hird is strong in numbers here, and Hast, the jarl of Hvergil, often brags of his hundred berserkers that dwell in or around Jornastrandr. Exaggerated or not, the huge Stormlandic hird is feared and respected all over Daalheim.

THE VISLATT RIVER

The Vislatt River is the wild foaming stream that finds its way down the mountain range and peaks of the Djutt mountain range. It opens up like a cut, with 10-meter high granite walls on each side. Filled with rocks and mighty waterfalls, this river is difficult to cross for most of his course. However, the Vislatt finds its way to the ocean, where the delta opens up, making possible to finally cross the wild stream, at least at the mouth.





DAIN
Blackcleaf
Hillinge Woods
Hillingen
Great Shadow Woods
Julga Trail
Julgavaad



◆ DAIN ◆

It is considered common knowledge that the Joarings have been present in the Stormlands since before the arrival of the Kremors, Broths, and Wildbrons. The followers of Gerbanis believe that the Joarings somehow antagonized the grim god Stormi, and that he therefore sentenced them to a life in the shadows of the trees, without iron axes and boats.

On their parts the Joarings often choose not to talk about right or wrong. Matters of who has found the right faith and background seems unimportant to these people. During the great migration which formed the Stormlanders as an ethnic unity, the Joarings were pushed out of their native land of Djunghart. They were driven north, into the meager, grim land of Dain, with its scraggy pine forests, marshes, and volcanic plains. Stories tell of how, in the era before the great migrations, the Joarings coexisted more or less peacefully with the many Trollkin of Djunghart. When the new people migrated from the north and started fighting the trolls, the Joarings appear to have simply withdrawn in the land which is nowadays called Dain. There are people who claim that the Joarings were actually enslaved by the trolls. They simply saw the incoming people as liberators but took the opportunity to withdraw before the liberators turned into new oppressors.

FAMILY RODS, MOPOR AND THE RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

The Joarings are a people that completely lack a written language, and therefore, it seems, they have no culture. They

are frowned upon by other peoples who consider them ignorant. This is actually not the case. It's an act of self preservation by the Joarings not to document their tales, simply so that the tales cannot be destroyed. It's their belief that if all Joarings can remember the tales, the tales will live on forever. As a rule, they have little faith in physical things, but they have a great tradition of orally-transmitted knowledge. Instead of writing the tales down, they are passed on from father to son. They are memorized with the help of a complicated system of bone rods that at least one man in every family must be able to handle. The bone rods are believed to have magic features and are carved with mysterious signs from a forgotten alphabet.

The four or five carved sides of the rods can be combined in thousands of different ways. Each combination holds a key to one of the Joarings' many mysteries.

The man in each family who is allowed to carry the families' rods is considered to be an apprentice of the village's Mopor. The "Mopor", who is always a woman, is the village's shaman and sorceress. She is the one who manages the whole history of the village, and who performs all religious rituals. She is constantly educating young

men, and she trains them in the art of interpreting the language of the rods. The Mopor also has a "Manpi" in her house. The Manpi is the disciple and the heir of the Mopor. With the help of complicated rituals, the Mopor puts herself into a trance, during which she gets visions of how to rule the destiny of the village. The spirits, who are her allies, tell her how to choose her Manpi, and the best way to teach her the path of the Mopor. The girl who is chosen to become the Manpi must immediately leave her family, and she immediately becomes a relative to the whole village. During her apprenticeship, she is treated with the utmost respect, and she is considered a welcome family member in all the houses of the village. The old Mopor hands over her magic objects to the Manpi when she passes away, the Manpi then ceases to be a Manpi, and becomes the new Mopor.

The religion of the Joarings is a complicated web of religious ceremonies and ancestor worship. There is an altar in every home where offerings are made to an image of the family's protective deity. The same altar host skulls from dead relatives who have done good deeds for the family. These skulls are honored by both food offerings and



Bloodgifting. The skulls are also used for a ritual which is known only among the Joarings of Dain: the Borngifting. Every newborn received a cut on the chest, not deep enough to endanger the baby's life, but enough to make the wound dropping some blood. This blood is then ritually smeared on the skull of the forefather the family wants to watch over the child.

The villages are often built in a circle of houses. The central space of every village hosts a stone table resting atop the tomb of the first chieftain of the settlement. There are four images of

deities on top of the stone table, facing the four cardinal points. These gods are central to the Joarings' religion. The dark war god Ogon faces east, Sille, the goddess of plenty, faces west, while facing north is Lekaba, the guide and the god of the holy speech, Lekaba, and Sonntag, the god of death, faces south.

During major festivals, the villagers gather around this stone altar, and this is where offerings to the gods are made. It's also in the town square that the villagers gather for weddings, celebrations, or when the chieftain wants to address all of the people.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

Every Joaring village is ruled by a Chieftain who is always a man, like the Mopor is always a woman. The way the Chieftain comes into power is different in every village. It is common practice that the Chieftain hands over power to his son, or that he chooses an able man from a neighboring village to marry his daughter, thus becoming the next Chieftain. According to old customs, the Chieftain is only allowed to have one heir which must be officially chosen as soon as possible, in order to avoid family feuds.

There are also Joaring villages where the leader is chosen, and whose villagers turn to violence and rioting if their Chieftain fails to bring them prosperity. The interaction between the different villages is very tense, and war tends to erupt often over land or mines.

The Joarings do not mine iron ore but their mines are dug to look for copper, tin, gold, and gems. Their blacksmiths forge skillfully-crafted bronze weapons, and the creations in gold by Joaring artisans are works of art, sought after in other countries. Joarings frequently trade with the outside world but tend to avoid any cultural exchange. Strangers are mistrusted, and only a few traders are accepted in the Joaring villages. Iron is treated with the utmost respect and dwarven steel is seen as a divine material considered to be more valuable than gold. Weapons and armor made of iron are something only the richest can afford. A simple iron axe or a dagger can be passed down from father to son for generations. Because of this, the few traders that are accepted by the Joarings are often very wealthy men.

A WILD PEOPLE

The Joarings are the dominant people in Dain, but along the coast there are some small villages inhabited by normal Stormlanders who tend to disdain the Joaring culture.

The Joarings are often tall as the normal Stormlanders, but much more sinewy. They move cautiously, often with their back hunched, and they are therefore criticized for their troll-like posture. Joarings have big blunt faces, with eyes tight together, huge, wide mouths, and thin, fair hair. Stormlanders consider them to be very ugly, and the Joarings' bleating voices are often imitated by Stormlander children when they want to mimic a changeling, since they believe Joarings to have trolls among their ancestors. All-in-all, Joarings are regarded with contempt, disdain, or just with leniency by normal Stormlanders.

The Joarings are mainly hunters and gatherers. The meager soil of Dain is not suitable for any major farming, and the Joarings have therefore not developed any advanced agricultural tradition. Their crops are usually nothing more than some root vegetables and other small, usable plants which are grown in small gardens outside the villages.

A Joaring village is almost always at war with other villages. Secret pacts and alliances are constantly being made between different Chieftains and villages in order to destroy other villages. Everything is built on a complicated history of marriages, pacts, wars and reconciliation gifts, plus deceit, lies, and slander. There are no major towns in Dain, nor are there any stave church or any civilized trading center.

Dain is truly a country where the wilderness dominates everything. Small villages are scattered all over the plain of Torod, but they are not even tied together by a big road. The inhabitants mix as little as possible with each other, and they see no need for major cultural or commercial exchanges with foreigners. Once or twice per year, a few selected warriors head to a nearby village to barter or to buy supplies they reckon they need.

JOARING WARFARE

War is seen by the Joarings through a religious filter. When the Joarings go to war, the whole village is affected. For days before battle, the Mopor oversees ritual dances and offerings to appease the gods. Ogon, the god of war, is promised the facial skin from the slain enemies, and during the day, there are dances to honor Sille, sometimes also called Esilis, the goddess of love. After nightfall, a mixture of tar, bones' splinters, and spices is burned to honor Sonntag, the god of death. During the early morning hours, it's finally time to honor Lekaba, by singing holy songs and by the sickly stench of burned blood from sacrificed goats.

Before battle, the goats' meat is feasted upon, and the bloody skins are

used as clothes. Joarings craft their weapons of bronze and wood. Their principal weapons are a curved saber (similar to the krum sword of the Wildfolk) and a war club, reinforced with bronze. After battle it's common practice for the winning village to collect trophies from the defeated, mainly heads and facial skin. This skin is later offered to the fetish of Ogon. Since the Joarings consider the face as the mirror of the soul, this means giving the souls of the defeated to their dark war god.

A WILD LAND

Dain is a country ravaged by volcanic activity. Its forests only consist of scraggy pine trees and huge clumps of brush, languishing in the barren soil. There are tall, dry grasses growing in the black soil of the windswept plains and in some areas there is nothing growing at all.

In a few selected points of his otherwise barren wasteland, some of the Stormlands' tallest trees grow. They are ancient, and their magnificent branches reach for the sky, blackened by the soot of a thousand volcanic eruptions.

THE BLACKLEAF MINE IN VALLERSPOINT

In Vallerspoint, high up in northern Dain, there is an abandoned mine that today only goes by the name of "Blackleaf". Many stories surround the place, which was once a very rich in gold. The mine was abandoned a long time ago, after an encounter with a fierce Jarnwurm that had been woken up from its long sleep.

Since the huge mine at Vallerspoint was abandoned, it has been the center of some peculiar incidents, according to the tale of the local inhabitants. It seems as though someone or something is still living and still digging down in the tunnels. At night, the echoing of hammer strokes and the trampling of many feet can be heard. Those who have entered the mine in search of the source of the



sounds have not returned. Many claim to have seen horrifying sights around the mine's many entrances. It's been said that bent, growling creatures with picks and shovels, drag sacks with peculiarly glowing contents to black carriages drawn by drooling horses. These tales are told by many supposed eye witnesses in the villages around Vallerspoint, although the stories are many, and there are as many tales as there are people in the area.

THE FIRSTBORN TREES OF THE PLAINS OF TOROD

There are four trees in the vast plains of Torod which the Joarings call the "Firstborn", venerating them as gods. Ever since the tribes of the Joarings first came to this land, they have carried here any deceased chieftain after the first who has founded a village (and who is therefore buried there) to let the gods bleed over the

bodies. The resin from these huge trees has been proven to have an embalming effect, and any body which is coated with the resin from these trees will be preserved for centuries. The mourners carry their deceased chieftain to the trunk of the tree and cut a notch in its rock-hard bark above the head of the deceased. As the resin flows, the deceased is propped up, and is often dressed in ornate clothes and carrying his favorite weapons. The deceased is overflowed by resin, which eventually hardens. While waiting for the resin to harden, the mourners attach beautiful gold ornaments around the deceased. These gold ornaments will soon be covered with resin and stick to the deceased.

For a passerby on the plains of the first-born, it's a strange and macabre sight. By the huge three trunks there are now several hundred chieftains resting with weapons in their hands. Their cheeks may be hollow and their eyes may be black, but other than that, they look alive as they stand amongst their thousands of gold treasures. Even though no one guards them, it's very rare that someone tries to steal from them. There are whisperers of curses and hauntings on the plains. There is talk about how strangers have been found in the dust in the morning, with their spines broken and their guts spilled out onto the black dust. Whether the peace of the dead is truly protected by ghosts and spirits is unclear, but the tales discourage most grave robbers.

THE GREAT SHADOW WOODS

The "Great Shadow Woods" is the name of the great forested area in northern Dain, just south of the Hillingen river, bears the impressive name of "Great Shadow Woods". It is a dark and rough place, but most of all, it is a forbidden forest. The superstitious inhabitants of Dain believe that the souls of the dead live in the forest, and that a horrible battle raged in the forest in ancient times. A

myth that is actually true. In this forest that used to be called “Ullikka” in the Eika language, a bloody battle raged between a small number of Elves and mighty dragons when the times were still young. The threatening mood and the sense of mystery still lingers in the air, and many Joarings have sworn to have seen Draugrs creeping at the edge of the forest during starlit nights.

HILLINGE WOODS AND THE DWARVES

One of the first dwarves who came to the Trollridge Mountains order to mine was called Sergin Greathold. He and his followers have tried for many years to find a fabled vein of mitraka. After having led his men and his family into a large cave-in during his search for the coveted metal, the other dwarves in Trollridge Mountains thought that Sergin had become mad, and that he and his kin were cursed, following the mirage of Mitraka.

Sergin’s dwarves were not accepted back into the mountains’ dwarven communities, and they were blocked into this land. Given their failures with underground tunnelling, they were obliged to settle above ground. Sergin, who had always hated the sunshine, decided to head for the dark shadows of the Hillinge Woods. Here, he had his own little kingdom built above ground, nearby the iron mines located in the midst of the forest, where metal ore is extracted. Now, there is a small colony of dwarves living in the forest.

For the moment the Joarings avoid the dwarves, but it is unknown what will happen if the dwarves decide to sell their metal to them.

THE HILLINGEN RIVER

A rapid, but shallow river finds its way down from the Trollridge Mountains in the north to the cold ocean in the east. “Hillingen” is the name of the river, whose gold is famous for having made many poor people rich, therefore during the brief summer, a large number of panners can be found here, busy in their work, with dreams of wealth. The Hillingen has been called the “Stream of the Many Waterfalls”, and someone has calculated that there are more than 100 waterfalls that throw the river from steep cliffs, on its way down from the north to the south. The shores of the river are the only land in all of Dain that has rich vegetation. Stones covered by moss change places with big mushrooms and lush grass.

THE JULGA TRAIL

The Julga Trail is the closest thing to a road that can be found in Dain. The trail only consists of two wheel ruts, and some occasional heaps of stones that mark the directions. The Julga trail begins in Julgavaad and ends in Blackleaf. Once upon a time, there was enough iron being transported from the Trollridge Mountains along the Julga trail for it to get

a name. Now it’s very little used, and the Joarings instead travel across the country any way that pleases them. For someone unfamiliar with travel in the land, the trail can be a useful navigation aid.

JULGAVAAD

Julgavaad is a small village consisting of about 15 scattered farms, two small stores, and a small inn. The farms are located in a semicircle from the edge of the canyon that was created where the Hrimfors river flows. In the middle of the village, the Ebensbridge rises and stretches over the canyon to the neighboring country of Djunghart. Next to the bridgehead are the three decrepit houses that serve as the village’s stores and inn.

The inn is run by Jidtord Oneeye, who claims to be an urbane adventurer. When you are buying a jug of mead or a meal at his inn, you will get to listen to many stories from this candid and happy innkeeper, whether you want to or not. One of his favorite stories is the one about how he lost his left eye in a land far up north called Wildland. How he found himself there surrounded by two angry Hrim Trolls, who were determined to eat human flesh. If Jidtord is in a really good mood, he sometimes brings out a rusty two-handed sword that he waves while he tells the story with great expression. On rare occasions, he also brings out a box where he keeps two pairs of Hrim Troll tusks. If you are really observant, you can see a kind of map carved into one of the tusks.

“There are whisperers of curses and hauntings on the plains. There is talk about how strangers have been found in the dust in the morning, with their spines broken and their guts spilled out onto the black dust.”



DJUNGHART

Clawcastle	Klarsvelf
Ebens Trail	Ormika Lands
Hart Caves	Redborg
Hartpikes	Ryd Hill
Hrimfors	Rydlands
Kaldershem	Sisterskimmer
Kalderhum	Vidarslodge



◆ DJUNGHART ◆

Since Djunghart lies on the southwestern part of the Stormlands, it was the last part to be reached by the northern exodus. Nothing is recorded from this time, but it is assumed that the northern exodus pushed aside a people of herders and hunters that lived here before.

There is also much that indicates that an important and high-standing culture of Trollkin has lived in these areas, and some want to go as far as to claim that the legendary Fjøl Trolls once lived here.

In the Djunghartian countryside it is still normal to find weird stacks of rocks, cult shrines, and peculiar buildings from the time when the trolls ruled this land. Many of these places are thought to hide dark magic and great treasures. It is said that the trolls that in the prehistoric age ruled Djunghart had a civilization which reached a level so high that it overshadowed anything known today about the trolls.

The land rises out of the Oster Ocean on gargantuan, red cliffs. Cliffs which sometimes can rise as high as two-hundred fathoms above the foaming ocean. Further to the northwest, just before the Nojdian coast starts, the cliffs and highlands become lower. In the northeast towards Dain, the land rises again, however, and the whole of Djunghart could be described as a gigantic valley with Kalderhum as its center.

At a few places along the steep Djunghartian coast, however, the cliffs make way, and the land begins to show beautiful beaches in the valleys between the cliffs. What makes the Djunghartian

beaches to be different from other beaches in Trudvang is the rust brown color of the sand, which through the ages has been broken down from the cliffs along the coast. A few of Djunghart's main settlements, like Clawcastle, are on such beaches. The red cliffs have been shaped by the ocean waves since ancient times, and are full of weatherworn formations and natural caves, which have acted as hiding spots for smugglers and seawolves.

Along the entire coast of Djunghart runs the "Eben's Trail", a rock-paved road that was built a long time ago by the first Redborg Drott, Eben Wildfjord. Because the treacherous coastal landscapes made difficult the traffic between the west and the east, he thought that the road was a necessity for the survival of Djunghart.

POWER IN DJUNGHART: THE DROTTS AND THE GREAT LINEAGE

Each village in Djunghart is ruled by a "Drott", a chieftain, while the capital of all Djunghart is Redborg, where the Redborg Drott rules. All of the drotts belong to the same "Great Lineage" and are, according to old tradition, bound to answer to the Great Redborg Drott.

A Djunghartian takes deep pride in belonging to what is known as the "Great Lineage". It is a complicated family tree which connects almost all families in the entire land. This enormous family tree is recorded on rune rods in Redborg and is carefully maintained. Djunghartians have found a small nugget of belief in the words that the followers of Stormi preach. But they haven't dedicated themselves fully to the Gerbanian beliefs, and therefore mix it with their own rules and creed. Djunghartians rarely wage war on other Djunghartians because of the family bonds of the Great Lineage. However, this doesn't stop a healthy struggle for glory and prestige between the families.

The inevitable disputes and arguments between the chieftains are settled at the yearly thing in Redborg. Once per year, those that are having a quarrel can meet and present their cases in front of the gathered thing. If the Redborg thing can't agree on who is to blame, the two quarrelers are sentenced to duel in the "Salt Circle". This relatively bloodless solution for one of the world's oldest problems has parallels with similar traditions of the Arks, which are far in the north-west. These similitudes are possibly relics of customs brought by the northern

exodus, so long ago. The two quarrelers face each other in an area cleared of grass and weeds. The area is limited by a circle that the Redborg Drott draws with salt on the ground (the salt is used to make sure that no quarreller can use magic against the other). The fighters then attack each other, each with a wooden mallet called the “Club of Rights”. The first one to be knocked unconscious to give up, or to be forced to leave the circle has lost. After the battle, the gathered thing decides what punishment should be administered to the loser. In the worst-case scenario, all of his possessions are given to the winner, whereupon he is most brutally executed by the gathered mob. Ideally, the two can make a deal in the old-fashioned, Stormlandish way, by simply mixing blood to seal their agreement, and then separate as friends.

THE DJUNGHARTIANS

Djunghartians are a wild and aggressive people, and their accomplishments in war are known far and wide. Many think that everybody in Djunghart has some troll blood in their veins, and that their warmongering minds and brutality are simply inhuman. This belief is further supported by the fact that Djunghartians often are yellow of eye and heavily built. There are those who say that this peculiar mix is caused by the war that is thought to have raged in the land during ancient times. The war is supposed to have been fought between the residing trolls and the immigrating people. During these turbulent times a large number of half-trolls was supposedly born, as the result of terrible rapes. The half-trolls were mixed up with the rest of the people, and eventually contributed to one of many special features that are today associated with this peculiar people.

Because all of Djunghart is filled with relics from the old troll culture, which many say still haunts the land with its magic, Djunghartians are very careful when it comes to magic. This carefullness almost borders on terror. Stories are told throughout the land about entire villages that long ago were destroyed by magic

because they were situated right next to the ruins of the old troll culture. People soon left the inland areas because of these stories, but sometimes also because of mysterious deaths. Instead, they settled down by the coasts, and established the foundation of the society which is known today as Djunghart. The inhabitants of the land fear everything and everyone that has anything to do with magic, and because they believe that elves are made out of pure magic, elves should think twice before they visit Djunghart.

The inhabitants of Djunghart are predominantly a coastal people. This is largely because the inner parts of the land are occupied by the renowned Sisterskimmer forest. However, it is not the forest itself that the people of Djunghart fear, but what is hidden in its bosom.

For hundreds of seasons, the wild people of Djunghart have occupied themselves with robbery and plundering, especially as sea raiders. For this reason, the peoples of Mittland hate and fear the Djunghartians and their nimble warships, as do the inhabitants of Nojd.

THE ANCIENT TROLL CULTURE

Wherever you turn in Djunghart, you find traces of the troll culture that had its pinnacle just before men came to these parts of the world. The Ormika Lands and Kalderhum are especially full of these traces, in the form of the ruins of Kalderhum, and the mysterious urns of the Ormika Lands. If you seek anywhere in the Sisterskimmer forest, you can find traces of the troll culture there as well. Just south of Kalderhulm, you find Hrimsbridge, the only building that, through its splendor and completeness, can testify to the pinnacle of the troll culture.

CLAWCASTLE

Clawcastle lies in a valley almost at the tip of the peninsula, which in the south stretches out into the open sea. Clawcastle is a city built entirely in honor of Stormi and constitutes something that is not very usual in the southern Stormlands, where

the Gerbanian belief isn't as established as in the north. The city was built and founded by Brycker Eidar Navhorde, who saw the superstitions of the southern lands of Djunghart as a threat against the Great Belief. With great assiduity, he had a city built, which would triumph over the cities of the untamed, and lure people to the bosom of Gerbanis. Eidar traveled south together with a handful of Knights of the Iron Hand, whose mission was to protect the Brycker in this uncivilized land. He had with him on the trip a large chest of gold that he had gathered as offering from both jarls and single farms during his travel. The gold was to be used to build the city and the stave church in Stormi's honor. At some point, it is said that there were as many as 600 men working at the same time on the shrine.

Eidar never got to see his life's work completed, and neither did his son, who carried on when his very old father no longer had the mind, or the iron will left for completing the task. After about three men-ages, however, Clawcastle was completed. Logge Bearsbane was the name of the Brycker who first sat down in the throne-like chair in the highest room of the castle, to gaze out over the city. For during the duration of the construction, people had gathered, initially in small temporary dwellings next to the building site, because the builders needed somewhere to sleep. And there, where a large collection of people soon existed, you soon needed people who could fill hungry bellies and therefore make a living from the builders' needs. The temporary buildings soon became more and more permanent, and the merchants, who had earlier lived under brushwood and slept on cots, built sheds and timber cottages, and it didn't take long before the foundation of the city of Clawcastle had been lain.

Today, many, many seasons later, Clawcastle is the second largest city in all of Djunghart, only Redborg is larger. The city has nothing at all to do with Djunghart, but just happens to be situated in the land, and should probably be regarded as a small state, Independent from the Djunghartian drotts. Clawcastle is completely permeated by a fanatic version of the Gerbanian faith, and to even be allowed to settle down in the city, you have to be faithful to Stormi.

Today, the city is ruled by Jormern Kolmemur, a man who claims to be a Brycker, but few have seen his powers in a long time.

THE EBEN'S TRAIL

Along the entire coast of Djunghart, but also far inside the neighboring country of Nojd (which once was part of Djunghart for a time period), Eben's Trail weaves. The trail consists of two long rows of carefully placed plates of red clay. Because the trail isn't used much today, grass flourishes between and next to the plates, which mostly give the animals a good grip to pull their carts and wagons. The trail was established a long time ago by the first Redborg Drott, Eben Wildfjord.

THE HART CAVES

A few days march south of Hrimbridge, along the Hrimfors, and not far from the Sisterskimmer forest, lies one of the gates to the Hart Caves. There are very few, if any, who know anything about the existence of the Hart Caves. These natural caves start as a fairly unremarkable opening in the western wall of a ravine. The opening is hidden behind a few boulders, and the first room is only big enough for ten men to have little space to move. The cave sports many tunnels, which all lead deep inside Djunghart. After several hundred steps through any of these snaking tunnels, you will enter the Hart Caves themselves. However, this isn't the only entrance to the caves. On the contrary, there are many more. The problem with most of these is that paths and rocky walls have collapsed, and therefore shut off the real caves.

The Hart Caves stretch in all directions below Djunghart, which makes it possible to get from the Hrimfors river in the east to the west coast of Djunghart, and onwards to the Hartpikes below the surface of the water, or from Kalderhum to the southern coast through this gigantic cave labyrinth. The caves, each bigger than the last, provide spectacular views of stalactites and stalagmites in all sizes, each adorned with beautiful crystals which reflect light sources in a myriad of prisms. Walls, pillars, and

floors have round, swollen shapes, and are dark red in color. On their surfaces the slow, patient dripping of water over thousands of years is reflected. Tunnels criss-cross the stone foundations and connect one cave hall with another. Some tunnels and passages begin in a wall, while others start as a hole in the floor or the ceiling. Where they lead is very hard to tell, as they twist and turn in every direction. Sometimes, they slope down, sometimes up, and sometimes they are level. Sometimes the tunnel abruptly ends in a hole in the ground or ceiling, and just as often it ends up in a wall. However, it is not a given fact that the floor plan of the cave is on the same plane as the one that the path ends in. One tunnel can just as likely end in the cave hall's wall, as it can end just below its ceiling or just above its floor.

In short, it is very hard to tell where one tunnel leads until you have traveled through it and seen its end yourself.

THE HARTPIKES ISLANDS

Just a day's travel by boat out to sea, off the west coast of Djunghart, lies a very treacherous and feared marine landscape. A collection of islands shoots up like small mountains from the sea. Treacherous reefs surround the entire group of islands, and only very experienced sailors can find their way safely through the dangerous reefs. But it is not the reef surrounding the islands that have made the Hartpikes into famous landmarks. Among the islands, Sea Wolves and raiders gather.



The Sea Wolves are a collection of seafarers who all live to plunder and conquer. They live an outlaw life out among the islands, with their own laws and customs, separated and different from the mainland of Djunghart.

Their small villages are set up on the flat tops of the islands. Every small group of islands forms a faction that is led by a clan. Of course, sometimes a strong leader rises who gathers several families and clans to unite under his banner. It is in such times that even the earthbound people on the mainland fear the Sea Wolves of the Hartpikes. For then, it is not only the ocean that constitutes the workplace of the raiders, but also the mainland.

The Sea Wolves exploit the early morning fog to hide their small, quick ships that appear suddenly next to the ship they have decided to plunder.

In the water around the islands, there are pig seals, which are hunted for their meat, skin, and furs. The hunt is mostly carried out by the Sea Wolves, but a few Djunghartians have managed to claim a small beach area from a clan of Sea Wolves and have thus gotten the opportunity to hunt pig seals.

THE HRIMFORS RIVER, THE HRIMSBIDGE AND THE EBENSBRIDGE

All along the eastern border of Djunghart, the mighty river of Hrimfors flows toward the southern coast, through the depths of a wide ravine. From the glaciers of the Trollridge Mountains, icy waters run wild along slippery and wet rocks. Only for a few days' march, near Kalderhum's eastern border, toward its center, does the river flow unaccompanied by rock walls on either side.

Here stands the last monument left from the old troll-culture. An immense stone bridge towers above the raging river, originating several hundred paces up the river-bank. The bridge is over twenty paces wide - ancient tracks in its worn stones are a testimony to its heavy use over many ages. Today, it is known as "Hrimnsbridge", nowhere near as busy as it once was, before men made their entry into these lands.

North of Hrimnsbridge, the landscape slowly rises towards the Trollridge Mountains, as does the ravine near Hrimfors. Just like in the north, the southern landscape also rises steadily all the way to the rocky coast. The two lands of Djunghart and Dain are divided by a steep canyon with the Hrimfors river on its bottom. Other than Hrimnsbridge, only Ebensbridge in the southeast connects the two countries. Ebensbridge was built by men, under orders from Eben Wildfjord, Djunghart's first Redborg Drott, and its quality is nowhere near to the construction which Hrimnsbridge is. Although Ebensbridge is not as impressive as its northern cousin, these days it is far more trafficked, as it leads directly to Julgavaad, a small settlement which acts as the gate of Dain.

Trying to cross the river at any other place than over the two bridges is very reckless. The river is too deep and too wild to ford, and treacherous stones and currents threaten even the sturdiest of the ships.

Here and there along the Hrimfors, steps have been carved out of the rock wall of the side of the ravine, leading to the river banks. Below these, small fishing posts have been set up, taking advantage of the river's abundance of fish. All fish inhabiting the river, regardless of species, are jet-black - a characteristic gained when the Trollridge Mountains' poison seeped into the river. Today, the fish are free of poison, the black color their only inheritance from the contamination of the past.

THE KALDERHUM

Between the Trollridge Mountains in the north and the Sisterskimmer forest in the south stretches a clipped landscape called "Kalderhum". This is a weird mix of cliffs and hills, covered in waist-high grass. Here and there, soft and round peaks rise out of the ground, only to be turned into sheer cliffs and steep walls. Rocky walls rise vertically from the ground beside hills that end just as abruptly as the cliff at its foot rose. That which, one moment, might seem like a flourishing hill, can, without warning, end in a deadly cliff. The hill and cliff walls are placed without any recognizable, natural

order. Sometimes two cliff walls can face each other with only a few steps in-between. In other places, a cliff wall can rise at the foot of a hill, and sometimes two hills can form a grand valley. Between valleys and close to cliff walls, there are in some places small rivulets of the purest water pouring forth in a never-ceasing stream. The water partly comes from the highlands in the south, and partly from the Trollridge Mountains in the north. The rivulets eventually meet in Kalderhum, where they form small and shallow pools. The pools almost never grow to be larger than a few hundred metres in diameter, or deeper than two fathoms. The porous soil which lies like a layer across all of Djunghart is often eroded by these rivulets, which constantly seem to find new paths to stream through. This leads to water-covered areas soon turning into fertile grasslands, and what was previously fertile grasslands instead turning into a lake. The grass is hardy and seems to thrive in these conditions, and therefore doesn't mind to sometimes act as seaweed. In some places it can be hard to see where land meets water, because the grass covers all of Kalderhum, and because the pools usually don't get any deeper than two fathoms.

The hilly Kalderhum is a very dangerous landscape in which to travel. Partly because it is so easy to get lost, and partly because you are constantly at risk of falling down a nasty cliff. Places where two cliff walls stand opposite each other and the gap in-between is hidden by the thriving grass present a particularly big risk for uncautious travelers to fall head over heels.

Despite the fact that it is a treacherous landscape, there is plenty of game in Kalderhum. And where there is plenty of game, there are almost always plenty of beasts of all kinds. Gryphons especially seem to feel at home in these lands, a beast which is otherwise rare in the Stormlands.

Because Kalderhum is situated between the chilly Trollridge Mountains in the north and the significantly warmer Sisterskimmer forest in the south, cold and hot air often meet over Kalderhum. This is when the treacherous Hulm Fog materializes. The fog, which is often very thick, wanders like a phantom along the ground, and follows the landscape up the hills and down the

cliffs. Sometimes, the fog is so high that it covers the entire landscape, valleys as well as heights. Wanderers are then best off stopping for the night without taking another step. The fog can come at any time, and anywhere, and sweeps forth over the landscape almost as if it had a purpose. When the fog has a place in its grip it can sometimes take a whole day before it has swept past, and you can once again see your hand in front of your face.

Just like everywhere else in Djunghart, here you can find remnants of the now-lost prehistoric culture in the form of rock piles, obelisks, and buildings that a long time ago fell into ruin. The ruins of Kalderhulm are situated without noticeable pattern, and you can tell by looking at them that the landscape didn't always look like this. Some of the ruins are nowadays completely under water or at least partially submerged, while others lean against one of the hills. On some heights, you can see half a ruin on the edge of a cliff, and if you look down the mountain wall, you can see the rest of the ruin fallen on the ground below. In places where two mountain faces stand wall-to-wall, you can see half a ruin on each top. Most of the ruins are completely decrepit and have long ago been emptied of treasure. But here and there, there are a few which still have unexplored tunnels and rooms, hidden below layers of stone and soil.

What once happened here is hidden in the mists of the past. But that something with a furious power laid into the landscape is easy to see.

KALDERSHEN

The majority of Djunghartians live on the coast, fearing the threats of the inland wilderness. But the city of Kaldershem is different, and in fact many of his inhabitants descend from non-Djunghartian Stormlanders who came here attracted by the fame of the city.

Kalder Hawkmaan was a ranger of the wild who lived several hundred years ago. Kalder was the master of pathfinders, and he mastered the hunt like no one had done before him, or ever would. It is said that Kalder could think like the animal he was

tracking, and by becoming one with the mind of his prey, he could know where it was heading to. It is also said that he could turn himself into a hawk which on broad wings, high above the ground, could find all tracks he was searching for, and all prey he was hunting.

In his autumn years, when ailments and lack of energy made it impossible for him to do what he had done all through his life, he decided to teach his knowledge to young men of the wilderness. Soon his simple abode had been joined by several dwelling houses, built by men and women, thirsty for knowledge of the wilderness. Kalder's home was soon rebuilt into a small farm, where he could enjoy his last time on the soil of Trudvang. The young apprentices soon increased in number, until the point where a small settlement had been built in only a few years. The town was, of course, named after its founder, Kalder Hawkmaan, even though this was more or less involuntary. As all small villages and cities in the wilds, Kaldershem also attracted beasts. Kaldershem became a ring fortress since a ring wall was built around the rangers' dwellings, and a herd was established to guard the wall.

Today, Kaldershem is no longer a small settlement for the men of the wilds, but a real city like any other, with both craftsmen and ale houses.

Because of the city's location out in the wilderness, it is a very hardy people who live here, constantly under threat from the beasts of the wilds, which never seem to run out.

Queen Iberkald rules the city with an iron fist, which is accepted by the people, who consider it necessary for survival. The city gates are closed at sundown and are not opened until the first rays of the sun again shine upon the city. Everyone on the wrong side of the wall when the gates are closed better prepare for surviving the night outside the city gates, where the laws of the wild rules. The darkness of the night brings out the tireless beasts, which never seem to give up on trying to conquer the city. The city's harassed herdsman often have to watch their animals fall prey to the predators, even during the day.

THE KLARSVELP LAKE

Just outside of the Greenskimmer woods (a part of the Sisterskimmer forest) lies a peculiar lake in a gigantic crater with horizontal walls. The word "Klarsvulp" derives from the word "Klar" or "Clear". The lake has received its name from the crystal-clear waters of the lake, as well as the sound of the waves which constantly hit the cliff walls which circle the entire lake. Despite there is no wind on the lake, it is in constant motion. Wave after wave pulsates against the cliff walls, with a never-ending power.

If you look down into the crystal-clear waters, you will not find a bottom. The fact is that people have tried depth-sounding the lake without finding a bottom. Klarsvulp is therefore, according to many, bottomless, and constitutes yet another bad omen for the superstitious people of Djunghart. The water level is another factor which builds and enhances the mystery surrounding the lake. Sometimes it reaches all the way up to the upper rim of the crater, and sometimes a 50-fathoms long rope hang from the same crater rim isn't enough to reach the water's surface. At moments when the water has sunk especially low, you can see stairways cut out far down there, circling along the mountain wall and disappearing into the depths beneath the surface. Some believe that this is yet another work by the old trolls who used to live here a long time ago, while others believe that it was dwarves who themselves carved out the entire Klarsvulp in their hunt for precious metals, many thousand years ago. Today, no one really knows who built these stairways.

THE ORMIKA LANDS

Between the Sisterskimmer forest and the west coast of Djunghart lies the Ormika Lands. A moor like any other in Trudvang, except with the difference that this one hides great secrets. Scattered over the moor are several urns of varying sizes and shapes. They range in size from the smallest, which don't reach higher than the waist of a fully-grown man, up to urns that are twice

as high as a grown man and need four men with arms outstretched to encircle them. The urns are made of red clay and have therefore withstood the test of time well. Every urn is decorated from top to bottom with patterns and images. What these patterns and images mean is something that no one has yet to discover, but that they hold the key to the mysteries of the troll culture is something that all learned men agree on.

The urns stand in a very familiar pattern, and those that are knowledgeable in astronomy can see that the urns are placed according to the constellations of the stars in the sky. Larger urns correspond to the stars that shine brightly, while those that shine weakly are represented by small urns. There are, however, some small differences in how the urns are placed according to the brightness and how the constellations appear today. This is because the urns were raised by a people who lives such a long time ago, that the positions of the stars in the sky have changed.

During the night, the urns give off a weak light, almost as if they all contain a small star. If the night is cloudless, the light from the urns is significantly brighter than if it is cloudy. The light then rises in a constantly revolving cone of starlight, as high up in the air as the urn is tall. During nights when the full moon rises over the Ormika Lands, and no cloud hides the night sky, you can feel how the entire ground gently vibrates, and hear the air being filled with a low humming.

The legends say that, on nights like these, mysterious beings of the mist can be seen stalking among the urns. The beings are tall and towering, but thin, with frail arms and legs protruding from their bodies. Their heads, however, are large, and look clumsy and out of place on the mist-beings' bodies.

Ever since humans came to these parts of Trudvang, the Ormika Lands have filled men's hearts with fear, awe, and respect. Some even say that it was the troll-culture's great knowledge about magic that made the Djunghartians forever see the place as something dangerous and unnatural. Others say

that the troll-culture wasn't chased off by man, but that it rather chose to leave Trudvang on its own, perhaps to join the stars and their mysterious sun gods.

REDBORG

Redborg is one of the cities in the Stormlands that has the most contacts with Mittland. This harbor city is situated along the rocky coast at Djunghart's westernmost point. The mountain keep sits high on the cliff known as Sunklipp, overlooking the Oster Ocean, hundreds of fathoms below. The harbor itself is at the bottom of a vast natural cave. Visiting ships moor in a complex system of caves and clefts. Visitors must climb down slippery paths along the rock wall to reach the city. Merchants selling goods and provisions at Redborg market, however, can get a considerably more pleasant journey up to the city. From the harbor there is a wide walkway, winding up the mountain like a staircase. The walkway is always busy with beasts of burden pulling goods to and from the city.

Because the city is situated atop a cliff, with only two easily defensible roads leading to it, the city is well-protected from attacks from the sea. Redborg is therefore nearly impregnable, both from land and sea. In a semi-circle around the city, a four-fathoms tall, and three-metres wide wall protects the city's keep and buildings from the attacks. The city walls have four towers, two on the western wall, and two on the east. The entire city - its walls, keep, and houses - are all made of red-baked clay, which lends Redborg its name. For when the sun's last rays shine on Redborg, the city is alight like a red beacon shining into the grey-blue sea below.

Redborg is a merchant city, dominated by a round central market, and welcoming to most visitors, as long as they bring money to spend, or goods to sell. Its walls face inland and allow an unspoiled view of the sea.

Far below the city, in a large cave, another marketplace can be found. Commonly known as the "Offal Pit",

even those refused entry into the city are allowed to trade here. Experienced mongers know that here, in the early dawn hours, is the best place to close the most lucrative deals. Whereas the city market trades in metals, red clay, work, spices, and raw materials, the Offal Pit deals in slaves, cattle, weapons, and all manner of extracts.

Redborg is governed in a very interesting manner - with influences from all over Trudvang. The city is ruled by the Great Redborg Drott. A personal hird protects the Redborg Drott, sworn to protect him and his position. The city's remaining defense is a Hird paid for by the city's many hucksters.

All those suspected of serious crimes are condemned by the city's Hird and must pay for their crimes in the "Blotpit". The pit consists of a small cave-network outside of the city and houses an ancient Lindwurm. The nature of the crime determines how long the condemned is banished to the Blotpit. The more serious the crime, such as the use of vitner, the longer the suspect must stay in the Blotpit. Those who survive their allotted time are presumed to be innocent. What the people of Redborg don't know - and most likely don't want to know - is that the Lindwurm has a way out of its lair, and that it occasionally leaves the Blotpit. Its tunnel leads all the way to the Sisterskimmer forest. However, he rarely makes his way there, since he rarely has to wait long between meals.

THE RYDLANDS PLAINS

At first glance, the Rydlands, with their tall, windswept grass, look like any other plain. Gnarled, lonely junipers grow here and there, and where the trees aren't clustered, the Rydlands are almost indistinguishable from other plains. There is one thing missing from this plain, however - something most other lands have - animals. The complete lack of animals and birds has turned the plain to an evil and mysterious place. No true Djunghartian would voluntarily set foot here, or even think of doing so. The plain is haunted by spirits.

THE RYD HILL

In the center of the Rydlands a peculiar hill can be seen. It is not round, but rather cone-shaped, with a flat peak. Legends say that this is where Rydegarm Blackwindi came with his band of creatures. Nobody quite knows why he collected this large band to follow him. But the stories tell about how he decided to seek out the Trollridge Mountains, where he had heard the Stone of Knowledge was hidden.

A long time passed, and by the time he found the Stone, he was so old that his

wits had long abandoned him. Therefore, when he finally learned the wisdom of the Stone of Knowledge, he didn't notice a very important fact - the stone carried a curse. He who awoke its knowledge would never leave Trudvang - but forever wander its lands as a spirit. The Stone's powers were so great that all living beings who heard the song of its finder would forever be bound to him, and when he would one day die, they would follow him, condemned spirits as well.

In a final beam of light, Rydegarm regained his wits at the end of his life. He realised what he had to do. He could not stop his singing, but he could lock himself away, together with the spirits he would summon by his death. Therefore, he made his way to the Rydlands, and with his final energy created a large pyramid-shaped hill inside which he locked himself and his followers.

As to what was in the cone, the many legends about Rydegarm Blackwindi's destiny still contest. Some tell of tremendous treasure, worthy of dragons, while others whisper of the source of all knowledge - a burden too heavy for Rydegarm to carry. Many have tried to dig their way into the hill, but to this day, none have survived to tell of Ryd Hill's secret.

THE SISTERSKIMMER FOREST

To the southwest lies the Sisterskimmer forest, which in ancient times was part of the same, enormous primeval forest that once covered all of Djunghart. All that remains of this ancient forest today is the Sisterskimmer. The mighty Frostpines, once abundant in the primeval forest, can now only be found here. The only clue suggesting that these trees may once have grown in wider areas is a gigantic tree stump in Vidarslodge, functioning now as an inn that houses tired wanderers traveling on Ebens trail.

Although most of the Sisterskimmer forest no longer houses any Frostpine, the forest is filled with mystery and legends. Its tales of mystery get more interesting, because it is said that a small tribe of Elves live in the forest. Whether

this is true or not, no Djunghart truly knows. Despite many attempts to drive off these mythical elves, nobody has actually encountered one in the forest.

The forest is dense and wild, its undergrowth often thick with plants and bushes. Trees that have seen thousands of seasons come and go stand on gnarly, twisted trunks - their leafy branches so heavy that they almost touch the mossy ground. Traveling through this forest is difficult, but rewarding, since its virgin beauty offers awe-inspiring sights and discoveries. Because it has remained untouched for so long, it is teeming with wildlife that thrives in its green interior. Wildlife is not the only thing attracted to this forest, however. Well-traveled foresters claim that in the deepest shadows of the forest lives a dragon, guarding a large treasure. But few believe these stories - how could a humble forester meet such a legendary creature and live to tell the tale?

Although the trees in the Sisterskimmer seem all to be of the same species, they have distinct looks depending on whether they are found in the two different sections of the forest: the Greenskimmer or the Darkskimmer. Frostpines in the Greenskimmer have light green needles, and the bark on their vast contorted trunks is a light shade of beige, different from other pines. The Frostpine produces enormous pinecones, very highly valued among the men and women of the wild. The pinecones are edible, excellent sources of energy, and very tasty. They are sweet and can be as large as two fists held together.

The Greenskimmer is a very beautiful forest, its ground is covered by a soft and fertile moss. It shimmers with a magical green light. It is the rich, red soil that is the source of the forest's energy and ability to grow. Here and there, the mighty trunks of the Frostpines rise above the canopy, in an almost predetermined pattern. Firs and pine trees are scattered in small clusters around the forest, and almost look as if they were planted there on purpose. Vast ferns grow in the fertile red soil, among bushes and other undergrowth. The hilly landscape means that sometimes you find yourself overlooking the tops of towering firs and pines, and, if you are lucky (or perhaps





50-51

unlucky), you may see one of the Vidrjotuns wandering past. Whichever way you face however, you see the impossibly large Frostpines' trunks, and if you look straight up to the heavens, their vast branches hide the sky above like a ceiling.

Here and there ruins stand out of the green moss, at times as small mounds of rocks or large pillars, other times as gates leading into the depths below, and sometimes entire buildings, still standing defiant, despite their age. Roots and moss cover the buildings and statues, whose faces have long ago been erased by wind and time. The buildings stand like ghost ships in a sea of moss, their architecture long forgotten, as are their builders, lost to the passage of time. Rumors of treasures hidden among the ruins have attracted families of King Trolls to the forest. Whether they have come across anything of value among the ruins remains unknown, but the fact that they have chosen to stay in the forest suggests that they have found something.

The Greenskimmer is abundant with wildlife, and Forest Trolls - who seem to infest all the forests of Trudvang - roam within, making life difficult for all its inhabitants.

While the Greenskimmer is magical and beautiful, the Darkskimmer is a terrible, frightening place. The once-fertile red earth is now and forever poisoned and sick. The forest's soil is barren and dead. Dried trunks and rotten branches lie scattered on the needle-covered ground in eternal gloom. It is rare to find grass-covered slopes and greenery defiantly alive in the forest. The wild animals cling to these areas desperately. The silence is only broken by alarming sounds, suggesting that a battle of life and death is underway nearby. Needless to say, far less wildlife lives in the Darkskimmer compared to the Greenskimmer. Its animals are smaller and appear lean and scraggy.

The Darkskimmer is home to Vidrjotuns and Ogres, but also rarer creatures, such as the Happjas. What were once small streams and lakes have turned into swamps and marshes, where the eyes of Lyktgubbe glimmer in the dim light. Nobody knows what befell these poor souls.

TUVOLDCASTLE

It is easy to say that that Djunghartians are savages, although there is a slight spark of hope that even this people will one day become a civilized country with an enlightened population. This light gleam of hope in an otherwise dark and uninhabited country can be found in Tovuldsborg, where the country's only real library can be found. The city itself is not very big or significant for the common Djunghartians, but for the scholars it is a city of hope and knowledge. Tuvoldcastle has been forgotten by the power struggle of Djunghartian drotts, who cannot understand what might be more important than the arts of war and the power of the strong to assert themselves.

The city houses nearly 1,000 inhabitants. Here you will not find the robust warriors who normally waste time in any inn like in other city. There are no beggars and poor people who stroke along the streets and paths. You do not have to be afraid of being hit by someone who has a reason for why you should deserve a strike, since crime is practically non-existent in Tuvoldcastle.

An old castle stands in the middle of the city, serving today as a library for the many scholars who inhabit Tuvoldcastle. The library is not very large, if you compare it with famous institutions like the library of Kess in Westmark, but big enough to spread enlightenment to the barbaric world of Djunghart. The librarian Sveinold Storklippur is the man who runs the library and rules over the city. He is a man in his sixties whose great calling in life is to spread knowledge. Pedagogy is his great interest and he can teach several subjects to the person who is interested. Sveinold's teaching is very hard. If a student fails at any time during the studies, he must not continue any longer under Sveinold, but be forwarded to teachers whose knowledge cannot be compared with the head of the city. Sveinold is helped by twenty-four learned men and women who, like him, all feel the duty of the spreading the knowledge in this world. These men and women came from all the corners of Djunghart, tired of the barbaric society in which the country lies.

In the city there is also a small hospital led by Koldra Lövsådra, a very old woman who has become blind in the autumn of her life. She used to lead a network of healers who all live to help and care for the injured and the sick. Many of these healers have long since left the city and now live somewhere in the wildest part of the Stormlands to practice their arts. Until just a few years ago, Koldra could have a team of up to five, adepts at his side who were taught in the art of healing. Nowadays, however, she does not have the strength to deal with her adepts. Her main task now is to perpetuate her knowledge of healing and let her draw down the recipes she invented during her long life. Today there are only three healers in Koldra's house, all of which have gone as an adept at Koldra. Together, they now try to preserve the precious knowledge that their teacher and mentor possess.

VIDARSLODGE

Along Eben's trail, lies an inn that offers tired wanderers a hot meal and shelter for the night. Housed inside the stump of an ancient Frostpine, it is known as "Vidarslodge". About a century ago, Vidar Hjord, decided to turn the old stump into an inn. The idea came to him from one of his many travels in his youth. He once came across a strange and fascinating tavern in the far north, in a forest called the Darkwoods. The Wooden Tankard, it was called - chiseled from the the trunk of an age-old tree. The Wooden Tankard refused to leave young Vidar's mind, and he thought of the the old stump near the Sisterskimmer forest, only a day's march or two from his home village. With the Wooden Tankard in mind, he turned back toward home, and soon the construction started - together with his wife, whom he met on his journey back.

Today the inn is run by Vidar and Trinda. This Vidar is the grandson of the Vidar who built the inn, and Trinda is his wife. The pair have a young daughter, who helps her mother take care of the cooking.



EJDLAND

Blacktear River
Copperwoods
Eastmarki
Grim Village
Grimhills
Iron Moors
Jotunheid
Klipp
Kraav
North Plains
Paatr
Rimcoast
Saaga
Silvra River
Stigor
Tinder River
Tinderswamp
Trollmark Castle
Wildheart



◆ EJDLAND ◆

During the first exodus to Ejddland, a people came from the forests of Trudvang's central and northern parts. They came in different waves, more than a thousand generations ago, and settled in the desolate land. The people are called "Wildbrons" or "People of the Wild Boar", after the boar's fur that they usually made their clothes out of.

The Wildbrons were a nomadic and fairly primitive-natured people, who lived on hunting, fishing, and plundering of each other's villages. These ancestors of today's inhabitants quickly spread across the uninhabited land and established small settlements and temporary hunting villages across Ejddland. They were a strong and powerful people, with the wind blowing in their hair and a way of living that brought forth the rights of the strongest. They were always in constant conflict with each other and used to the harsh life of war.

A few generations later, a new people wandered into the region, this time from the other side of the mountains in the west. They called themselves "Kremors" and wanted to find grazing ground for their livestock. Their civilization was superior to that of the Wildbrons in most aspects and had great knowledge about things big or small. Through war and sacking, they tried to conquer the land from the Wildbrons who, however, resisted strongly for a time. Because the Kremors used the horse both as fast mode of transportation and as a way to surprise their enemies, the Wildbrons lost more and more of their hunting grounds, and slowly but surely the Wildbrons got pushed aside. During

a few intense years of war, large parts of the tribes and villages of the Wildbrons were eradicated. Today, their descendants live in a sort of cult society in the northern Copperwoods.

What keeps the Wildbrons together is their warrior ideal, in other words, the belief and culture centered on war as something to live for and endure, thus allowing one to reach the farthest truth. Today, the Wildbron warriors are highly valued and are offered expensive gifts to serve as hirdmen for Clan Lords and Shieldjarls in Ejddland.

The Broths were last to arrive in Ejddland. They came from the ocean in blackships, and according to hearsay, left the sinking islands for a new land to conquer and populate. They were led by pregnant women, and they worshipped Fertility and Death as two gods. The Broths came ashore on the east-coast of Ejddland, and through plundering and war took over a large area that went from Saaga in the south to Eastmarki in the north. They brought with them a belief in the rights of the strong, the life in the womb of the woman, and death as an involuntary release. Right away, they sacrificed people in honor of the pregnant women in the new land. Broths and Kremors, however,

lived side-by-side for several generations. Sometimes they clashed together in violent blood gifting sackings, but more often they exchanged gifts and allowed marriage into each other's clans.

After a time of peace in the area, Ejddland was afflicted by trolls. Hordes of trolls rushed down from the mountains in the northwest. They plundered and killed anything that got in their way. Panic spread quickly among the inhabitants of the loosely connected land, and Clan Lords and Shieldjarls formed an alliance against the trolls of the Trollridge Mountains. The alliance was called the "Eje Alliance", after Eje Rudshort, Shieldjarl and Clan Lord by marriage. A new country was born, and it was named "Ejddland".

Today, a single people rule in Ejddland, one people who once was very different. After the Brothian conquest, the Ejddlanders were worshippers of Fertility and Death, a kind of nature cult focused on sacrificing people to their pregnant women. At the time of the Eje Alliance, new beliefs in new gods and divinities started to spread in the Stormlands, especially in lands north and northwest of Ejddland, in Vortland and Fynnheim. This way of thinking became the foundation of a whole new religion, with a re-interpretation of the

basics surrounding existence, and even the Broths could easily accept the teachings of the Great Faith about the rights of the strong.

The cult of Stormi, the great creator god and father of all, and of his messenger Jorn, reached Ejmland and, after the course of a few generations, the old beliefs were gone. The followers of the new belief naturally got to bear the name of their foremost god Stormi, and thus were named Stormlanders, a name which possibly originated here in Edjland, but to be later adopted by all the Stormlands. Today there is nothing left of the Brothian sacrifice culture or of the Fertility and Death worship in Ejmland, other than in fairy tales and stories from the old times.

Characteristic for Ejmlanders, as for all Stormlanders, is their hard every day life, and the strong belief in Stormi. Stormlanders live in class societies where every clan is a group consisting of several families who are connected both by marriage and blood. Most people associate the Stormlands with war and inner conflicts, which often have their roots in clan feuds.

CLAN LORDS, SHIELDJARLS AND THE COUNCIL OF EJD

A clan is ruled by the Clan Lord of the lineage, who is the main male of the family with the most members. The Clan Lord decides what must be done on the farm or farms, and always looks after his own members. The men work, while the women take care of the upbringing of the children, making sure that the men have food on the table after a day's hard work. Both men and women hone their weapons and put on their battle garments when the fight approaches.

The biggest and richest clans have their Clan Lords raised to the status of Shieldjarl. The Shieldjarl has great power, and the Clan Lords in his region obey his every command. The size of a region is usually gauged by how many families the Shieldjarl's clan is comprised of. Normally, a Shieldjarl rules over five to eight clans. The Shieldjarls possess the most power, followed by the Clan Lords. The least power belongs to those that live under their Clan Lords.

Ever since the first people came to Ejmland, conflicts between different families have been a great problem. The most significant Shieldjarls that have risen constantly try to win more land and power.

Alliances between the mighty and rich have grown like weeds on newly-sown land and have been broken as fast as they came to be. Edjland has therefore sometimes been referred to as the "Land of Broken Promises".

Since the Eje Alliance came to be, Ejmland has been divided into several unions between Shieldjarls and important men, who constantly strive to be more powerful than the next. The three, at the moment, mightiest Shieldjarls of Edjland sit together in the so-called "Council of Ejd", which controls and rules the land. Every year, several candidates are called to sit on the land council, who, during the "Ejd Week", investigate and discuss which three Shieldjarls should sit on the Council of Ejd.

Today the power in Ejmland is mainly divided between twomen: Shieldjarl Vulfgart Skjodroot of Saaga, and Shieldjarl Jorn Entloft of Trollmark.

At the moment, the Shieldjarl of Saaga is the man with the greatest power and influence in Ejmland. Vulfgart rules from his city of Saaga in the south to Paatr in the northeast. The Shieldjarl of Trollmark rules from Rimcoast in the southwest to Trollmark in the northwest.

There is also a third Shieldjarl with power, though he is not as influential as the other two. His name is Rodur Fenlyck, and he rules over the the small island of Outwind from the city of Klipp. So far, Rodur has kept himself out of the political power game. The jarl of Outwind calmly sits on his island and watches as the two other shieldjarls fight over glory and power. Perhaps he is hatching schemes to give himself more power and strength without the others knowing.

Together these three jarls sit on the Council of Ejd. But power is often a heavy burden for the greedy. The two great jarls Vulfgart and Jorn are, as it could be expected, plotting and scheming against each other in order to constantly grow in power, despite the fact that the distance

between their seats of power is enormous. For this reason, the three main powers have been continuously antagonizing each other, discussing like priests of the Tenet of Nid arguing about theological niceties, always having a hard time agreeing on laws and rules to be applied for the whole Edjland. What one jarl says, the other contradicts, and this is the way it has been since the land was new. Jarl after jarl, and this is certainly the way it will continue for a long time to come.

THE COPPERWOODS

The wild, Korpikalli elves that live in the Copperwoods wish to deal as little as possible with the humans who live in Ejmland. Only one time throughout history have they united with the untamed Ejmlanders, when they, during the Age of the Prophets in the 562nd season, stood eye-to-eye with the large force of giants that had charged down from the Trollridge Mountains and seized parts of Ejmland. The Copperwoods was then also under threat, so the elves decided to send out a force of its foremost warriors to fight side-by-side with the Wildbrons. The pact was short-lived, and after the victory the elves withdrew back to the shadows of the trees once again.

The Korpikalli elves who live here are diligent in their defense of their part of the forest. They ward off everything and everyone from the part that they have claimed as their own. The area has a reputation for being dangerous and treacherous to those that aren't elves themselves. Around the borders of their land, the elves have planted large, thorny bushes and poisonous thickets as a defense against outsiders. The area which the elves count as their own stretches from the Tinder River in the south to the Grimhills in the north.

The three villages of Bjolk, Imir, and Elk which lie north of the river Rimfors are all villages of the Wildbrons, led by hardened warriors and experienced woodsmen. In appearance and structure, the three villages resemble each other. They all have a simple stockade, which encircles the village, and the houses are constructed of timber, with roofs made out of animal furs and phragmites.

The villages have 500-800 inhabitants each. Bjolk is a bit larger than the other two villages, and sports both an impressive long house with two floors and a badly constructed stone tower with three floors in the center of the village. The inhabitants of the three villages consider themselves to be part of the same tribe, which has a direct blood relationship with the first wave of Wildbrons who came to Ejmland. The village of Bjolk is even considered to lie on the same spot as the first Wildbron village in Ejmland.

Within a radius of a couple of days' walk from every village there is a small number of communities, each counting between 50 and 100 inhabitants. The inhabitants of these villages make a living primarily from hunting wild boar, bear, or the elusive drauglynx, which lives in the Copperwoods. Wildbrons in the three villages live a tough life and are in constant conflict with the Korpikalli elves who live further south in the Copperwoods.

EASTMARKI

Where Trollmark Castle is high and towering, Eastmarki is its opposite. Eastmarki is the second most important stronghold in Ejmland. Its foremost feature are the eight earth mounds or mottes, crowned with high log palisades forming separate "ring fortresses", linked by a longer wall of logs or bailey. Together they protect the great stone house in the center of Eastmarki. The earth mounds are linked together by underground passages. If enemies attack, the defenders of Eastmarki can fire upon them with bows and spears from the fortified mottes. If the opponents breach the wall of a ring fortress, the place is abandoned, and the defenders go through the underground passages to the next ring fortress atop another motte to fire upon the invaders once again. Between each motte is a 50-meter wide grass area. The plain is full of murder-holes and wolf traps with sharpened poles.

The stronghold is long and vast, and anyone who wants to get to its core has to fight for every meter as if it's the last. Up until this day, there has been no hostile force which has been able to get to the core of Eastmarki.

Today, Eastmarki is degraded and deteriorated because it has been a long time since anyone had the courage to attack from the northeast. Many of the underground tunnels have caved in, and the log palisade is in many places rotten. The Shieldjarl who is chosen as the head of Eastmarki is considered to be less valuable, and someone who the other Shieldjarls want to have as little as contact with as possible.

THE GRIMHILLS

Like enormous waves, frozen in stone, the series of hills known as the "Grimhills" roll in wave after wave, from west to east, and the myth about the man who once lived here is still flourishing in all of Ejmland.

The hills get their name from the Clan Lord Grymmin Dofgar, who once held the hills in a reign of terror. It is rolling hills and smaller mountains

with rock-filled soil that stretch from the coast in the west to the coast in the east. Grymmin saw the hills as his land, and therefore named them Grimhills. He was an ignorant and evil Clan Lord, who refused to join the Eje alliance, and held his clan together with an iron fist. According to legend, he was slain by his own son, and it is said that he still haunts the dark hills during fog-shrouded nights.

Among the hills you can find the heritage of the time of the Brothian conquest in many locations. Here and there you can find monuments raised to the deities of the past. The stones are symbols of remembrance of different sizes and shapes. All are worn down by weather, and it is hard to see what they once portrayed, or what the carved runes once told. According to the legend, all are aimed southeast towards the sunken islands, beyond the sea, that the Broths left under mysterious circumstances.



GRIM VILLAGE

Grim Village is the place of trade by the water which binds Ejmland together with the rest of the Stormlands. Wares and people travel here, sometimes including wild beasts in a never-ceasing flow. The docks are as lively as in any of the biggest cities of the Stormlands. It is not especially large harbour but has a long tradition of trade. Here the Storm Hansa have one of their strongest holdings, which has been a great contributor to the liveliness of Grim Village.

The city itself lies a small distance from the harbour, on a hill with a good view over the ocean and the docks with its skewed piers. Beside the docks, Grim Village claims to have some of the finest and most visited taverns in all of Ejmland: Frejvid's Cellar and The Copper Tankard. In these mead houses and guesthouses, many secrets and goods change owners, and the Shieldjarls' pacts are formed under veiled circumstances.

Grim Village is ruled by Ybentord Silvertooth, a Shieldjarl, even if not as powerful as the three who sit in the Council of Ejd and nominally a vassal of the Shieldjarl of Trollmark. Shieldjarl Silvertooth keep order in town by his strong hirdmen, of which a handful are pure-blooded Wildbrons.

THE JOTUNHEID PLAINS

Jotunheid are the plains which stretch from Trollmark Castle in the north to Stigor in the south. These plains are covered in big, round rocks, that have been worn down by weather and wind. To traverse Jotunheid is hard and troublesome. Only those that follow the Ejd Trail can count on safely riding a horse without breaking the animal's legs. Those who choose to take a shortcut and ignore the trail have a journey ahead of them where the only thing visible is a landscape filled with rocks and boulders. Most of the boulders are no higher than a full-grown man, but some reach the height of ten meters.

Most Ejdlayers agree that the great boulders are an inheritance from a mythic war between giants that took place here, long time before the Broths and the Kremors came to Ejmland. Few creatures manage to prosper here, but the dreaded Gray Trolls are among them.

IRON MOORS

South of the Grimhills lies an area which goes by the name of "Iron Moors". Here, bog iron can be collected from the moors, which cover a large area. In connection with the Iron Moors, there are several charcoal kilns. The charcoal that is made here is used in the bloomeries and iron workshops of many villages in Edjland.

KLIPP

Klipp is a small city that clings to the mighty cliffs along the coast of the Outwind island. Here, the people live on fishing and trading. Klipp's center consists of a small fortification in the form of a high tower which is called "Shieldkasen". From this place the third most powerful man in Edjland, Shieldjarl Rodur Fenlyck and his men, rule the cliff-girt and windy island.

KRAAV

Kraav is a small community, which has no laws except those that are created for the moment. It lies near the Copperwoods, built on three of the large and vertical granite cliffs that thrust out of the ground close to the forest. Because most of its inhabitants are woodcutters, they are in constant conflict with the Korpikalli elves living in the forest.

Those that live in Kraav do not consider themselves to be Ejdlayers, and neither do they follow the laws of Ejmland. They have created a system of their own that isn't founded on the laws of either Gerbanis or the Stormlands. Instead, they have adopted an old Wildfolkian law, which shares many similarities with that of the Arks who live far away, in the Great Iron Tooth.

The city itself consists of about 50

more or less crumbling houses, between which a stone-lined path weaves. It may seem strange that the woodcutters here can't manage to build nicer houses, but the fact of the matter is that many of them regard their time in Kraav as temporary and want to save their hard-earned money for the day when they have enough to settle down in Saaga or another city in Ejmland. Neither dimwalkers nor vitner weavers are welcome here. Wizards are decapitated, and priests are impaled on one of the thick, wooden poles that are driven into the ground close to the walking bridge you have to cross to get into the village.

The people in the village are greedy and selfish. If you want to buy something here, you do so from one of those that live here, and if you want to get a room for the night, you sleep in someone's pigsty. There is neither a shop nor a tavern here, and the only pleasure the people have here is the small mead house, which is often filled with drunken woodcutters.

THE NORTH PLAINS

North Plains is an area known for its quarries, but also for the trolls that constantly break loose from the darkness of Wildheart and wreak havoc on the farms. Few people dare to venture into these domains without preparing for combat with the trolls.

Hunters with uncommon courage find the northern wilds rich in boar, bear, and the rare Drauglynx. Up here, the animals are both bigger and more powerful than those that can be found in the rest of Ejmland. Hides and furs from the animals that live here can bring up to double the money when sold.

PAATR

Paatr is a noisy and rumbling wilderness village, where hunters and rangers gather. Paatr acts as a trading place for skins, bondsmen, furs, and other things that can be found in the northern outlands. Hunters, small traders, crafters, and hirdmen come here to sell their wares or charge for their services.



RIMCOAST

At the northern outlet of the Rimfjord lies the city of Rimcoast. It is a city known for its shipwrights, and the many kilns where tar is produced. The city contains nearly 1000 inhabitants, most of whom are dedicated to the art of shipbuilding. The men of the Rimcoast are deft with their bearded axes, and transport timber all the way from the Copperwoods down to the city. The city itself is made up of a number of longhouses that, rather unconventionally, house a large number of families and the teams of shipwrights working on the boats together. A simple stone wall atop a earth rampart circles Rimcoast as a defense against wild animals and other nuisances which would otherwise happily sneak in during the night.

Here you can make a good living working on ship-building, and the docks house two majestic warships in copper oak which belong to the Stave Church of Stormi in Rimcoast.

The city has no official leader, instead the team of shipwrights which is currently working on the biggest boat owns the right to rule over different matters in the city. The others can bring forth their wishes at the yearly "Ship's Thing". Naturally, this has caused some competition about who is building the biggest and mightiest ship. At the moment, the city is flourishing more than usual because the Shieldjarl of Saaga has ordered 46 armoured warships in iron oak. Many argue that the jarl is preparing for war against his neighbors, while others say that he's planning a great conquering campaign against the lands in the west. The jarl himself says nothing.

SAAGA

Saaga is, and has always been, the heart of Ejmland. Besides Grim Village, this is the only real city in the land. Saaga lies south of the Copperwoods and it is the Edjland's center of power. All the Councils of Ejd are held here, and the ferocious Wildbrons guard the local Shieldjarl, day and night. An

embattlement at the top of a granite cliff flaunts itself in the city's center. The embattlement consists of a large longhouse with a foundation of stone, and tall watchtowers of timber in each corner. On the rock-strewn courtyard in front of the longhouse, several small and large buildings compete for space, some of which are linked to the longhouse by wooden bridges and walkways.

In Saaga, you can find a large Stave Church built in Stormi's honor, trading houses, smithies, ale houses, and everything else that can keep the city self-supporting. Around Saaga rises a three-meters tall and two-meters thick defensive rampart, topped with two lines of log palisades. During the day, the four gates are usually open at the same time, but during the night, they are all closed.

THE SILVRA RIVER

The wide and wild Silvra River breaks through like a wedge and splits Ejmland from Fynnheim. Its waters are foamy and cold, and changes from the wild currents of the Westwater to the significantly gentler stream that is the Silvra River. The closer to the Grim Sea that you get, the calmer the river becomes, while at the same time the cliffs on its banks reach ever higher towards the sky.

STIGOR

Stigor has several times experienced the brutal forces of the wilds. The city lies like a last outpost to the northern parts of Ejmland, and only Trollmark Castle is further north. Those who travel south from Trollmark Castle draw sighs of relief, once they have gotten behind Stigor's tall city walls of stone and logs. Those who travel north leave Stigor with a heavy sigh and worried heart. The men and women of Stigor are tall and brave, for few could handle living as close to the wilds and the feared trolls of the Jotunheid plains.

The houses are timbered longhouses with roofs of straw. Some have a foundation of rock, but this is rare.

Stigor lacks a Gerbanian stave church, and the existing blood gifting pole is rarely used. While the belief in Stormi is strong here, sacrifice of both animals and people are considered especially stupid in these parts, where the people believe that everything is needed to make it through each day.

THE BLACKTEAR RIVER

The Blacktear River is the river that, with its shifting tempo, flows forth and separates the feared Wildheart forest in two. Large parts of the river are hidden below black trees that stretch their knotted branches like a roof over the river. Both of its banks are covered in thick roots and branches, and it is hard to find a good place to take a break. However, few are those that choose to travel on the Blacktear River, for the legend of Wildheart has grown strong and discouraging through the years.

The waters of the Blacktear are as dark and foreboding as the forest it flows through. Many suggest that it is poisonous, and that any who drink from it will die a painful death.

THE TINDERSWAMP

The Tinderswamp is a large swamp area, which has enclosed the landscape in hot, steaming fog since ancient times. Not even during the coldest months of winter does the swamp freeze to ice, but instead, simmers like a bubbling cauldron.

Tinderswamp is in some places treacherous, and many of those that have ventured into the swamp to escape justice or to hunt for hidden secrets have been sucked down under the wet ground, forever devoured by the hungry jaws of nature.

In the northern parts of the swamp you can still find remains from an ancient culture that was here long before men came to the Stormlands. The architecture strongly resembles that of the dwarves, and many insist that it is a dwarven kingdom which has been pushed up to the surface, built thousands and thousands of seasons ago.

THE TINDER RIVER

The Tinder River is a raging stream which travels from the west coast of Ejmland to its east coast. The river is treacherous, full of large stone blocks and currents, and rushes through sharp turns and dizzying waterfalls. The Tinder River is commonly known as “the Water Snake”, because of its slithering path and treacherous passages. In the east, the Tinder River flows out into the Tindra Lake, a body of water with plenty of fish and other delicacies.

TJUTE

This settlement was one of the “Torch Towers” founded by Paater Vjal Avlotsbarn in his dream of uniting the Stormlands under the direct rule of the Gerbanian clergy. This fortress was one of the five that he erected as a “beacon in the dark”, as a base of countless religious war and reformation campaigns led by the Order of the Iron Hand.

At the beginning Tjute was no more than a hexagonal tower. It was not until the coming of three Stormkelts, led by Espen Dajlen, that the settlement expanded. Today the fortress of Tjute consists of the old tower building, four smaller stone buildings, a strong ring wall and many smaller houses and workshops.

The Torch Tower is an impressive sight for any traveller and the underground church below the tower, with its huge cave room, makes any explorer to lose its grip. Tjute’s church is the heart of the Gerbanian religion in Ejmland. Outside the ring wall, a small farming community has emerged and supplies the settlement with both cereals and livestock.

The importance of Tjute for the Gerbanian faith lies in his status as the safehouse of the Twelfth Applamaal. This important, sacred book is kept in

the tower to be studied and interpreted by Gerbanian dimwalkers. Tjute is nowadays led by Stormkelt Salborje Dømen whose most sacred duty is to keep the Twelfth Applamaal safe.

TROLLMARK CASTLE

Southwest of Wildheart lies a castle that has protected Ejmland from the Troll Folk since ancient times. It is a mighty stronghold that was built by the dwarves, back when the world was young. No one really knows why or for whom the stronghold was built.

The castle consists of three round stone towers linked together by a tall, circular wall. Two of the towers face the north, and the third is aimed toward the south. In the southern tower, you will find the castle’s gigantic gate, crafted all out of stone. The wall stretches 15 fathoms up to the sky, and the three towers are even higher. Along the crest of the wall there are great stone statues, like guardians scanning the northern landscape for enemies. The entire castle is surrounded by a large moat, just as wide as the wall is tall. In the courtyard, a square tower rises ten stories off the ground.

Shieldjarl Jørn Entloft rules his part of Ejmland from Trollmark Castle with a strong hird that constantly patrols the area to chase away sinister Gray Trolls or other malicious beings from the north.

THE WILDHEART FOREST

The tales and legends about the ancient forest of Wildheart are both grand and dark. In short, you could say that Wildheart consists of two forests.

The southern and south-western part of Wildheart are controlled by an ancient and mysterious spirit, who keeps its part of the forest in an iron grip.

The eastern and northern parts of Wildheart, even if still affected by the darkness, are still not entirely under the spirit’s control. However, this area is nonetheless still untamed and wild. Neither man nor elf dares to venture here since the forest is here inhabited only by trolls and other evil creatures.

The trolls call this part of the forest “Wozugtro”, which in the Bastjurnal language means “the mother of all forests”. Much indicates that it might actually be the mother of all forests. Its trees are older than many others in Trudvang, and its moss grows thick on both tree and rock. In here you can find a variety of plants, many of which do not grow elsewhere. Wildheart inspires myths about Yggdras, Trolls, Braskelwurms and Logiwurms.

YKSA

Yksa can’t beat Tjute in splendor or grandeur, but those who want to deepen their knowledge of the principles of Gerbanis as held in the Fjettirs compositions come to Yksa. For in Yksa reside several old men and women who, in their later years, left their lives as Bryckers and Stormkelts in favor of coming here and sharing their knowledge.

Yksa consists of around 50 houses that are placed in a ring around the “inner part,” which is a circular stone building with two floors. Gigantic, tarred logs fortify and support the thick stone walls around the whole stone building. In the chamber in the center of the stone building, you can hear the old dimwalker speak of the power of Stormi, and the tears of Helfrigg.

As of 12 winters ago, Yksa has been ruled by the Stormkelt Olgir Bearsinn, and no other laws than Stormi’s are considered worthy enough to follow here.



FYNNHEIM

Arind	Saukaford
Eiglast	Saukamark
Gelm	Styckfors
Gelmridge	Styckmark
Gulgavade	Sword Hall of Eimar
Hoglamark	Trungarm's Ale Hall
Magnerym	Westenmark
Sasrum	Westwater



◆ FYNNHEIM ◆

The history of Fynnheim is a story of struggle and adventure. Despite frequently being drawn into the affairs of its neighbour, Vortland, it still stands free on its sturdy legs, reigned over by its own “Stormi Kings”. Since the Broths took possession of the land after a long and relentless battle with Trollfolks who lived in the Bjarnwoods, all has revolved around the strong belief and faith that Stormi is the Great God.

The Stormi Kings based their power on a clan society founded on strong blood ties and kinship whose roots hail back from the time the Broths conquered the land. The different lineages have always been characterized by their own specialization, and each clan has built its power and strength around one specific area among three: trade, war and erudition. Once a clan had consolidated its power within one field, the others gave up their fight in this particular field. These specializations were sanctioned by the Paater of Vortland, strengthening each clan in its own way by religion, which is also the main reason why most clan leaders are often also dimwalkers. Without the official endorsement by holy power of the Paater in the west, each clan would stand outside Fynnheim’s power structure, and soon the clan would turn into just a lineage without any significance.

ELVEN HERITAGE AND BROTHIC COLONIZATION

Long ago, Fynnheim was an Elven kingdom, and the town, then located in what is nowadays known as the Bjarnwoods, was called “Parkashajlo”,

the “Star in the East”, by the Elves. During the Age of Dreams, what happened to many other Elven settlements also happened here. It was swallowed by dragon’s fire, and perished by an ancient evil, so dark and cold, that even the Gods chose to look the other way. At the time the Bjarnwoods was one with the Wildheart forest and the Copperwoods. Nowhere else, throughout Trudvang, lived any Elf that had a better and more prosperous life than here. Clear traces of the Elves are still to be found in the Bjarnwoods, despite thousands upon thousands of seasons having passed since they left this eastern kingdom. The land, which nowadays is known as Fynnheim, was perhaps the hardest hit by the long war in the Age of Dreams, because many great battles took place in what once was the vast forest covering almost the entire Stormlands.

Many thousands of seasons after the Endless Storm rose, an important man and his entourage came into this barren and desolate land. He was a man of Broth’s kin and called himself Vrungir Redbeard. He was a great warrior who managed to conquer the land with iron and harsh words. The trolls of the woods

called Vrungir “the Iron Hand”, and many believe that it was his Hird who formed the Knights of the Iron Hand, who nowadays are often associated with the warriors who have chosen to serve Stormi and the Bryckers.

All along the east coast with its bustling fjords, to the Trollridge Mountains to the southwest, and even beyond the Icepeak Mountains, Vrungir and his warriors fought, forcing many Trollkin back to the dark caverns in the depths of the Bjarnwoods. Vrungir could tame the trolls, and even the local Wildbrons were subjugated under his arms, but the wilderness remained what it had always been, and wherever you were traveling in Fynnheim, the wilderness always remained a ferocious beast that devoured souls every day. To subdue the untamed nature and gain control of the land, Vrungir decided to put power in the hands of the three best warriors of his Hird. The descendants of these men founded the clans, whose union is the society, which today’s Fynnheim rests upon. When Stormi’s cries resounded in Vortland, the three main lineages of Fynnheim had no difficulty adopting and embracing a faith that they themselves for so many

generations had lived by. Slowly but surely, the clan leaders became kings, and holy preachers, who wanted to build their land upon the new faith. The “Stormi Kings” were born.

THE POWER IN FYNNHEIM: THE STORMI KINGS

The three great clans of today’s Fynnheim all claim to descend from the first Broths who conquered the land.

The Forvagra clan has accumulated great power by building up the hard-hitting and hard-lined “Fynn Hird”, a kind of common Hird and army that fights under the flag of the land, when Fynnheim needs it.

The Eskla clan are important members of the Storm Hansa and prosper due to controlling much of the trading within, as well as between, its neighbors.

The Njal clan is rich in knowledge and wisdom. Many Njals hold important positions as Bryckers, not just in Fynnheim.

The land is governed by three Stormi Kings, sometimes called also the Storm Jarls. One from each clan. Bauge Forvagra from the Forvagra clan, Djukle Eskla from the Eskla clan, and Urdi Njal from the Njal clan. Of these three, Djukle Eskla is considered to hold the strongest position, with the family coffers filled with gold and precious gifts. Djukle has also married his oldest daughter to the current Paater’s nephew, which has strengthened his position considerably.

A PROSPEROUS LAND THREATENED BY TROLLS

Fynnheim has a unique flora and fauna, with green hills, lush woods, and rippling creeks, which make their way down from the heights of the Icepeak Mountains. Had it not been for the eternal battles with the trolls that live hidden among the mountains and within the Bjarnwoods shadows, the land would have been a rich and prosperous kingdom in the eastern

parts of Trudvang. However, nearly every day is a struggle against the ferocious and sinister trolls. Large sums are spent by the clans only to equip their Hirds to stand up and defend the land.

One might say, the land consists of four main regions, all framed by three large rivers, and to the north the wild Bjarnwoods. Saukamark is the name of the northernmost and most desolate part of Fynnheim, Styckmark is the most densely populated part, Vestmamark is the most fertile part while Hoglamark is the most barren one.

ARIND

On the east coast of Fynnheim, just beyond the important commercial town of Eiglast, there is a castle seems built directly in the sea, at some distance from the shoreline. The fortress of Arind oppies the whole surface of a small island and it therefore stretches like a spear out of the cold and chilly Grim Sea. Many are those who wonder how it once could have been erected. The castle is not very big, but it is almost entirely impregnable, as it is located in a place that is too shallow for most crafts to sail. Only small boats with shallow drafts are able to get through, all the way to the Arind castle. Yet, the castle is surrounded by the sea, with its treacherous waves that break against the sharp edges of the rocks. As long as anyone can remember, the castle has belonged to the Ceridwanska family, a lineage with its roots in Mittland. There are stories about Chu’Chridwan, a notorious Fhomor or Swordmage, who built the castle on the east coast of Fynnheim.

Nowadays, the island is inhabited by a timid old vitner weaver, the last of his family, it is said, along with a small staff of servants. Once a week, a few servants row to the mainland in a black row boat made of iron oak, and purchase goods from the small village located on the mainland, not far from the island.

THE DRAUGMOORS

The Draugmoors cannot appear more different from the usual sight of the fertile Vestmamark. North of the Silvra river there is an area marked by heath and moors, avoided by most Fynnheimers. The few hikers who come to this desolate landscape are met by a horrible sight. Over a vast area, there are countless, half-buried bones from many different creatures, sticking up from the soil. Few travellers dare to go there, but there are stories about human, troll, jotun and mastomant skeletons all mixed together and spread over the great heath near the Silvra River’s northern beaches. Nobody knows why and how all these bones got here. Some say that this area was once a large cemetery. Others say that this was a mysterious, ceremonial place for sacrifices made on a huge scale by some prehistoric, long-estinguished culture.

The center of the moor is flat and infertile. The soil here is stone-filled and this means that the bones are not half-buried but still remain on the surface, creating a macabre landscape. Most travellers avoid coming here since the legends speaking of evil presences, maybe disers or hungry ghosts, hunting the area. However, there are stories about fearless craftsmen who came into the area to collect ivory tusks from the skeletons of mastomants and of other unknown creatures. Whether these men were able or not to return is unknown.

ELIN

Elin was the site of one of the first stave churches that the Gerbanian set up in the Stormlands. Here there is a tradition of educating Gerbanis’ holy warriors, the Knights of the Iron Hand, also providing them with the equipment they need.

Elin consists of a number of smal buildings that are protected by a large ring wall. Inside the ring wall there are stables, training places, obstacle courses and smaller buildings where the dimwalkers and the holy warriors of Gerbanis house and eat.

In the middle of the whole area the actual stave church is erected with its entrance leading directly into a simple small crypt. The sanctum consists of several floors that goes deep down into the underworld. Here, holy scriptures are studied, and the holy warriors are taught the words of Stormi, which are written in the precious Twenty-Eight Applamaal which is kept here in Elin.

As the prospective warriors make progress in their education, they are given access to visit the deeper parts of the sanctum. Only the Elin stormkelts and the warriors that are fully learned are allowed to visit the lowest floor, where the most holy altar stands. Here they swear their eternal fidelity and receive their first sacred mission. At most one can find up to one hundred holy warriors who are schooled in Elin. A few specially selected people will have the opportunity to train with the legendary Doke Ormvald who, since he retired from active service in the Gerbanis' armed forces, lives inside Elin's ring walls.

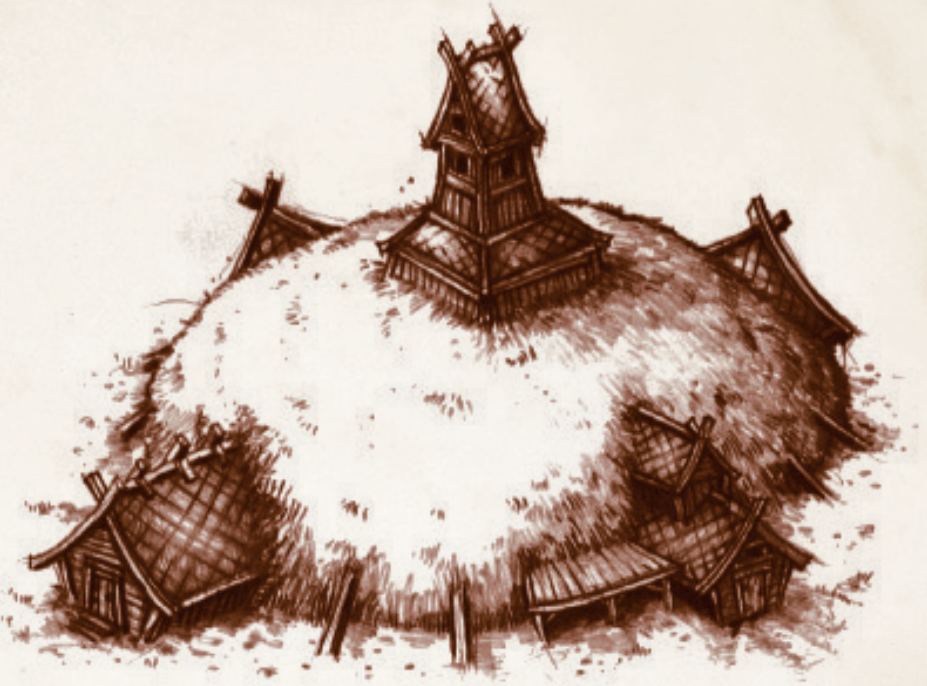
EIGLAST

Eiglast is an important trading center in Fynnheim, which have powerful commercial ties, even if still remaining just a small town. Here, most residents know each other by name and occupation. Down at the port, one can hear many foreign dialects, including those from the west.

In Eiglast, there is a large community of Wildlander bronze smiths who have chosen to settle here. They have brought with them a long tradition of bronze handling, and their craftsmanship is of the highest quality. Many Stormilogs in the houses here have thick bronze fittings, adorned with carved figures and prayers.

EIMAR' SWORD HALL

There is a place along the Heimdale trail which is widely famous. A place that most able-bodied men and women from Fynnheim have either visited



or say to have visited. The fact is that most reasonably well-traveled Stormlanders in one way or another, have been told about someone's visit to this famous Sword Hall. Travelers who pass through Fynnheim often take two or more days off from their journey, just to visit the Guest House, they have all heard so much about.

The Sword Hall is located less than a day's march from the place where the Heimdale trail splits to find its way up towards Skook River, while continuing its journey north to the Draugmoors and the Silvra River. It is situated amidst Vestmamark, well known for its fertility. Though, it is perhaps most renowned for its large population of trolls and giants that haunt its landscape. The people in the area, who mainly subsist on farming, have become, due to constant attacks from trolls and giants, a stiff-necked people, who are constantly prepared for new attacks. Although farmers in Vestmamark are both hardened and trained with weapons, it is not unusual for them to hire both Hirdmen and Sormmen to protect their farms from these attacks, since they usually have

too much to do running their farms. The place where the farmers seek to hire able-bodied men and women has become the Sword Hall of Eimar. Here there seemss to be a never-ending supply of men and women, whose destiny has fallen into the hard steel acquisitions.

There is a man named Eimar, who in his late middle age, nearly 50 seasons ago, landed here on his journey from Mittland to open the Sword Hall. He had just been badly injured in a battle against a giant and had to abandon his career as a warrior and find a new way of making a living. With the money he had saved up after years of hard work, he built a simple tavern or Mead Hall at the place where he was wounded, not far from the place where the Heimdale trail splits.

Seasons came and seasons went, and visitors came and went to Eimar's Hall. However, business was slow, and Eimar soon became penniless. There did not seem to be enough travelers along the trail to make his business flourish.

Despondent and nearly penniless, he one day sat at his hall and sadly looked out on his guests. This was one of the

Guest House's better days, when one looks at the number of guests present. Two passing trade caravans of traders and their Hirdmen had stopped for the night. They almost filled the mead hall, which he had not bothered to baptize. The food he offered was poor, as were the pints he served over the bar. The atmosphere at the Hall was not bad, but also not at its peak, and the tone-deaf bard could hardly be described as capable in his task.

The two caravans of Hirdmen had just completed their watery turnip stew and started to drink with each other. Eimar, who had become used to seeing fights at his hall, as well as during his time as a Hirdman, told a merchant at his side, that there would soon be a fight among some of the guests. The merchant looked out across the Mead Hall but did not see any tendency to brawl and said: "I see no attempt to brawl here, my friend".

But Eimar, who now had become even more sure about his case, threw up his day's cash on the table and answered: "I bet that I can discern between whom the row will arise, and I can even tell you, who or whom out of these, will remain on their feet when the fight is over".

The merchant, who was both rich and slightly drunk, immediately took the bet, as he himself thought, he would never lose. Indeed, a fight soon broke out, exactly between those men who Eimar had identified, and when the fight was over, the man who Eimar had pointed out, was the only one still standing. The merchant had been staring at Eimar in astonishment, and then handed over the money he owed. When Eimar had checked his revenue, the merchant said to him: "You must know what abilities you possess, don't you? To be able to see the winner in advance between two combatants, might generate a substantial income in the right places".

Eimar curiously watched the merchant, when he went off to take care of his Hirdmen. Eimar now had his thoughts on the future. Shortly

thereafter, he hung a sign above the door to the bar, which had been painted by a guest, who had gotten a free meal for doing so, as he passed by. The sign read, "The Sword Hall of Eimar." Eimar, who realized the wisdom of the merchant's words, had, instead of going to one of those places, turned his own Guest House to such a place as the merchant had referred to.

GELM

Gelm is the meeting place for those outback hunters and Wildfolk who live large parts of their lives on Saukamark's barren plains, chasing and seeking prey. The shearing sheds and long houses which have been built here are all the result of someone's temporary housing, created for the time they spent here. Most of the houses are a miscellany of logs, thick branches, peat, straw, and animal hides. The nicest buildings belong to the Storm Hansa. Most impressive though, are Gelm's very many fur traders' small huts. This is one of the few places in the entire Stormlands where one can actually buy both mastomant furs as well as Drauglo (large Lynx) furs. There is a saying in Fynnheim which goes like this: "Buy your fur in Gelm or buy it not at all," and this is in many respects the truth. The prices are always higher than elsewhere, but the quality is usually incomparable. This is where one can find the finest furs which can be bought for money.

Gelm is controlled by the Storm Hansa, and its representative here is a large woman named Ylvir Eskla, the oldest daughter of the Stormi King Djuke Eskla. At her side, there is a very loyal and well-paid entourage of Wildbrons, who keep the town in order, as much as it is possible among all these Wildfolk.

THE GELMRIDGE MOUNTAIN

Amid the wild lands rises a mountain peak high and steep. It is best known for its steaming and bubbling springs with their smell of sulphur. Large parts of the

mountain are shrouded in fog, due to the lingering warm moisture from the very many springs. It is a mystical landscape, unlike the one surrounding the mountain. Few people dare to go there, because of its mystique and enigma.

THE GULGAVADE FOREST

Gulgavade is known as the Bird Wood, due to all the black crows who live there. It is a strange wood. One can clearly see signs that this wood was once connected to the Bjarnwoods. Copper Oak is the dominating species in its tree flora. Above all, the huge boulders scattered throughout the woodland will astonish the wanderer. There are many boulders, most are taller than ten meters, and on their moss-covered tops, trees grow strong and tall. Besides Copper Oak, one can find small areas of the mythical Iron Oak, with its black bark and thick branches. The Iron Oak is very rare. Visitors can hear the crows constantly cawing, and for those who are not paying attention, the surprising attacks from those Happja, who also live here, come unexpected. The Happja build their nests on top of the boulders. These are unusually big to be nests of this species. For some reason, very few trolls live in the woods. Some believe that the woods are cursed, while others think, one should just be happy as long as the trolls do not live there. Everyone who lives near the woods, knows the story of the "Bird Winner", a Vitner Master who once fled into the woods.

HOGLAMARK

This large tract of land which extends from the Trollridge Mountains in the west, along with the woods of Wildheart to the south and all the way to the Silvra River in the north. It is a barren land where the forces of nature reign in their solitary majesty. The flatter part of Hoglemark is called "Hoglefjell", where the winds howl undisturbed, and sweep between the ridges and over the mountains.



Only a few people have chosen to live here, because here it is a risky living, with the wilderness so close to the house. Hoglemark consists mostly of flat rocky lands with hard limestone rocks occasionally thrusting up from the flat surface. Soil is lacking, or very thin. The climate here is very demanding, which in turn makes the vegetation very special. During summer, the limestone soil is often cracked and dry. During autumn, winter, and early spring, large areas are flooded, which in wintertime causes heavy movements in the ground because of the ground frost. The effects of the frost are reinforced by the limestone land, which has no protective snow cover, as the strong wind blows the snow along stone walls and other obstacles.

Hoglemark has a pebble-filled and depleted soil, and very few plants can grow here. The only vegetation to talk about is the black heather that breaks through the red earth and covers large parts of Hoglemark. In some places, one can find small clumps of withered Troll Pines, which are known to hide many beasts. The land is scarce in wolves, bears, and other greater predators, but there are plenty of red voles, black fox, and birds of prey.

MAGNERYM

The town is the religious center of Fynnheim. Here reigns the Stormi King Urdi Njal. As both a Storm Jarl and the Brycker of Fynnheim, he is a man of great influence. Many would say, his influence is perhaps greater outside of Fynnheim, than in the land itself.

In the center of town rises the great stave church, known as the "Glaserkalk", whose huge Stormihall is built entirely of Iron Oak. Its underground church is one of the largest in all the Stormlands.

Straight southward from Magnerym, one can find the woods of Wildheart. At its northern border, there are numerous logging camps, which have during the last decade begun to harvest large tracts of woodland. Timber is brought to Magnerym, and from there, floated down to the coast, where it is to be sold.

The people of Magnerym have always had a great respect for Wildheart, and most of its people know the legend of the mysterious forest. But the payment for shipping the precious trees like the "Copper Oak" and, to some extent, the "Iron Oak", is so great that they will defy the dangers which lurk beyond the boundaries of these woods. A great number of loggers disappear each year, swallowed up by the shadows of Wildheart.

Many of the houses in Magnerym are made of wood, with rich carvings and beautiful ceilings. It is a prosperous town, and it shows in those who live here. The Njal Hird consists of capable men and women. The Guest Houses serve delicious food and drink, and craftsmen are plenty. The Lawspeaker of Magnerym - Urdi's right hand - Brodvan Birke, applies a strict and harsh interpretation of the laws. The general consensus here is that those who are considered to be weak and poor are incompetent and should work as slaves for the better suited.

SASRUM

There is a saying in Fynnheim that goes: "In Sasrum there is a party every night, even on nights that are called days," and for sure, it is true that large parties and banquets are held in this warrior's abode. Sasrum is located in the middle of the large tract of land called the Vestmamark, which is the land that the trolls usually make their way through, when they come to raid and cause nuisance in Fynnheim. For this reason, almost three lifetimes ago, a fortress complex was constructed as a warning finger amid the land. It was named Sasrum, which in Wild Vrok means "the last abode of the party". It was named this, since the warriors who are supposed to serve here, rarely survive for more than four to five years.

Most people of Sasrum are both generous and talkative towards strangers. They do not often get visitors, and all sorts of goods that someone might trade or sell to them, often bring a higher price here than in many other places.

It is in Sasrum where the Stormi King Bauge Forvagra reigns, and it is from here that he controls his affairs. Among those serving here, many are sons or grandsons of other Stormi Kings, along with their closest men. They are kept as a kind of hostage to Bauge Forvagra, in case they should get the idea to strengthen their position of power by building up their own Hird. The downside is that when they finally leave town, they are full-fledged warriors and strategists, who have been trained at the harsh school.

THE SAUKAFORD RIVER

Saukaford is the northernmost river of Fynnheim. It empties into the Grim Sea, just north of the market town of Eiglast, but has its sources up among the Icepeak Mountains' cold glaciers. It is cold and stone-filled and is covered in ice most of the year. This means that the trolls who live in the Bjarnwoods have the habit of making raids into Styckmark mainly during the cold winter period, as it is easy to cross the river then. In some places the river is very deep, as deep as twenty meters, which has allowed the big Sea Gjard fish to thrive in Saukaford.

SAUKAMARK

Saukamark is the rural wasteland of Fynnheim. The bleak, windy plains, with their rock-filled soil leave little space for those who try to create a lasting place to live here. The unwanted and lawless are driven here, to live a life close to the trolls and beasts that flourish in the Bjarnwoods. The Storm Jarls have named the area free to use for whoever so wishes, without any taxes. This has caused the less fortunate and poorer inhabitants of Fynnheim to, despite their fears, travel up here to try to make a living on what the land can provide during the short summer months. Aside from this, it is mostly hunters and men of the wilderness who travel up here. A few go as far up as the Glimmer Coast, where precious amber can be found along the rocky beaches. The area is rich

in prey such as elk, bear, and deer, which has brought with it a large population of wolves.

THE STYCKFORS RIVER

The river Styckfors has an irregular course with sharp turns and smaller rivers. This is because the loose mountain in the area has forced the river to adapt its course depending on where the moraine has been deposited. The Styckfors mostly consists of falls, rapids, and pools from the sources of its confluence with the Saukaforð in the north to the Silvra River in the south. Like the Saukaforð, the Styckfors begins among the high Icepeak Mountains, goes down via the Fynnheim highlands, and flows out into the Grim Sea.

STYCKMARK

Between the two great rivers, the Saukaforð in the north and the Silvra River in the south, lies a tongue of land named “Styckmark”. Its southern parts are as lush as Vestmamark, and there are many farms here. The northern parts are often plagued by trolls, who now and then get over the wild Saukaforð. On the great plains outside of Eiglast, it is not uncommon to see herds of the Northkralik Ox, which means that there is a large number of hunters in these lands.

North of the city of Eiglast lie great quarries where limestone is quarried. Beside the quarries, stands the impressive windmills, which are used for smothering stone slabs for stonework, and also for grinding stones to get refined mortar and plaster. The mills are owned by the families that live their lives here,

but the quarries belong to the mighty Storm Hansa. It is not uncommon that bondsmen who arrive with merchant ships at Eiglast end up as mill slaves under the cracking whips at these quarries.

TRUNGARM’S ALE HALL

Fynnheim’s foremost allies and sworn supporters of the Gerbanian belief are the brothers and sisters of Vortland. Numerous times they have gathered their armies under a unified banner to meet an outside threat or enemy. As a gesture of this good friendship, Jarl Trungarm Blackgrim had a magnificent Ale Hall built right on the border between Fynnheim and Vortland. This Ale Hall is so gorgeous that its walls are covered in gold and its pillars are decorated with amber. Here, all traveling inhabitants of Vortland and Fynnheim could rest on their routes to or from Vortland and Fynnheim. The Ale Hall stood constantly open, and all those who came with a honest approach were welcomed in this mighty hall. Over a number of years, a small village named “Aleton” sprung up around the Ale Hall. A jarl was appointed to manage the golden hall that was constructed by Fynneheim as a proof of friendship and allegiance to Vortland and its divine ruler, the Paater.

Today, the ale hall serves as a receiving and counsel hall for the jarl that has been appointed to maintain order in the quickly expanding village. Another just as impressive - if not gold-covered - Ale Hall lies not far from the original one. This second Ale Hall is called “Skraole”, and is a gathering spot for the farmers living in the area.

VESTMAMARK

Vestmamark is among the most fertile and least rocky lands in Fynnheim. Unfortunately, it is also the most plagued by both trolls and giants, making the local inhabitants tougher and more resilient than others in Fynnheim. Vestmamark has a large number of farms and villages. It is not uncommon to see farm villages with both wooden and stone walls surrounding the otherwise simple farms. In Vestmamark, both boys and girls learn how to use the sword at a very early age. It is considered bad and ignorant to not be able to fully use a sword by the age of ten.

North of the Draugmoors, the farms lie so closely together that it is possible to get a roof over your head every night for those who wander in these parts.

THE WESTWATER RIVER

Westwater is the name of the roaring river that constitutes the border between Fynnheim and Vortland. Probably most known as the border between the two countries, those who happen upon it usually do so in connection with a visit to Trungarm’s Ale Hall which lies not far from its rocky beaches. It flows forth from the glistening heights of the Icepeak Mountains, and only separates once it reaches the Trollridge Mountains in the south.

A couple of hundred years ago, the river was heavily used to transport wood from the wood camps that existed in the north close to the Bjarnwoods. Today, very little wood is transported because the Bjarnwoods are so full of trolls and other nuisances that it is hard to build lasting camps at its borders.



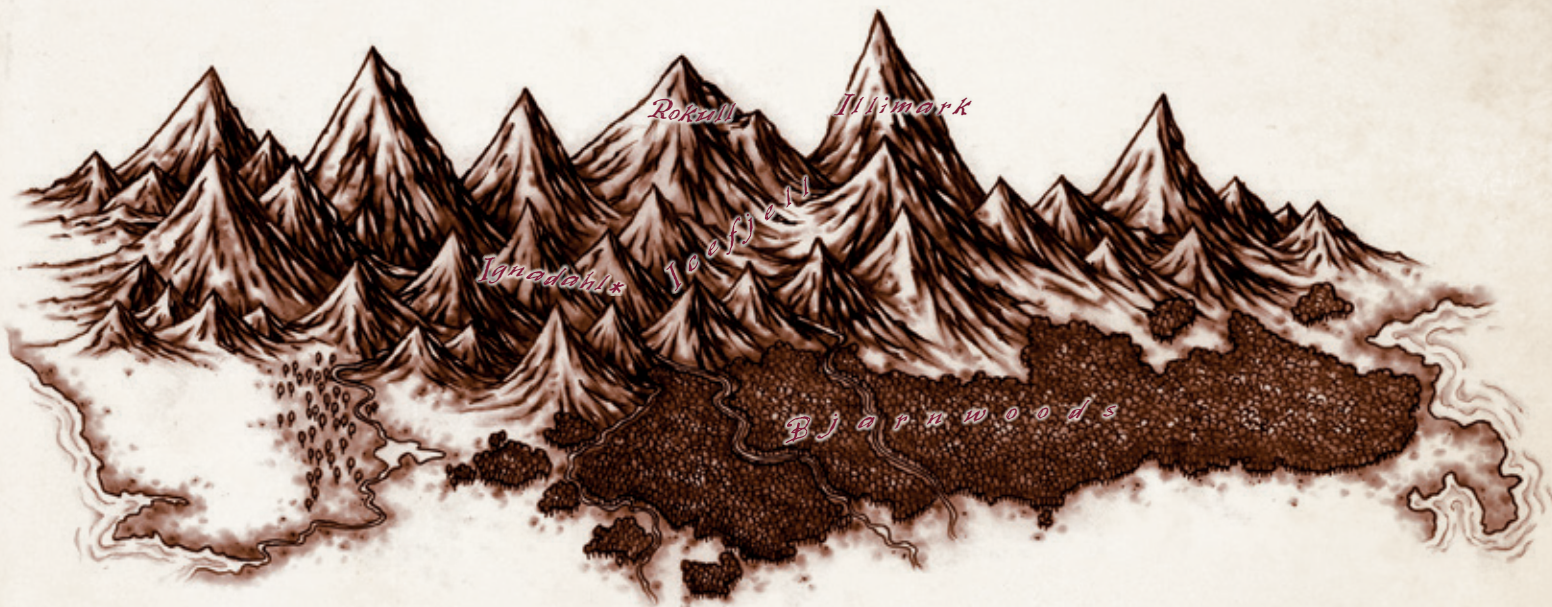
ICEPEAK MOUNTAINS

Bjarnwoods

Icefjell

Ignadahl

Illimarik



◆ ICEPEAK MOUNTAINS ◆

The dreaded range of the Icepeak Mountains rises like an impenetrable barrier of high peaks and vertical rocky walls, dividing Wildland in the north from Fynnheim and Vortland to the south. Perpetual coldness rules the Icepeak Mountains, which are embedded in a thick layer of ancient ice and live up to their name.

Namely, the Icepeak Mountains rise like snowy spears at the Bjarnwoods' northern frontier. Very few living beings live here. Not even the hardened trolls can thrive in the harsh cold and treacherous landscape of these mountains but have instead flocked to the Trollridge Mountains to exploit the caves and mines, excavated by dwarves and adventurers. But no dwarven mine is present in the Icepeak Mountains range. A few times, minor dwarven clans have tried to dig their way down under the earth here, but they have all failed. Black, empty shafts are reminders of such attempts of digging through these mountains, made of implacably hard granite and gneiss. They have remained untouched, ever since it burst forth from the rock-filled soil of the Stormlands.

Since ancient times, the mountain range has stood as a place of sudden death and has gained the reputation of being haunted by the spirits of old, cursed Gods. Not even Hrim Trolls thrive up here, due to the mountains' deceitfulness. Those not familiar with the landscape, rarely survive more than a couple of days up here, due to unexpected avalanches and snow-

covered cracks that extend thousands of fathoms down into the darkness. There are no paths or roads up here, not even down in the valleys. Those few wanderers and pathfinders who hike up here, end up following ancient animal trails, or must create their own paths, which will be quickly swept away by the snow-filled wind.

THE BJARNWOODS

Once there was only forest in Fynnheim. The wood stretched as far down as Ejmland's headland to the south. There was a time when the Copperwoods, Wildheart, and Bjarnwoods all belonged to the same massive forest. Then, the Endless Storm came and the Elven kingdom that once existed in Fynnheim was burned and destroyed. After the destruction, the remaining forests were only these three wild and desolate woods. Since no one looked after them, they grew wild and dark, and few dared to enter under the thick canopies made by their branches. Wildheart became empty and desolate. Here the evil of the ancient ruled. The Bjarnwoods was filled with

life and movement, but it was not the Elves who took this wood into their possession, it was the Trolls. With a hard and firm hand, they made the wood their own. Here, they settled in order to spread their evilness over the Stormlands. All kinds of Trolls dwell in the Bjarnwoods. It has been said that even a small pack of Fjol Trolls has been seen there, but no one knows for sure if this is true. The largest group is the one of the Gray Trolls, who spread great fear when they attempted to conquer Fynnheim.

The woods are dark and gloomy. The moss grows thick on both stones and trees. In remote areas, one can still see signs of the old Elven civilization and the ruins which they left. Although rare, one might even see the Elven settlements high up in the trees, abandoned for thousands of years. Some of these abandoned settlements are guarded by Skjolds, while others have been taken over by giant spiders. The Bjarnwoods is a mythical forest, full of movement and evilness. Those who dare to wander into the woods will face a lot of resistance, but it is also possible to find ancient treasures and mysterious places.



THE ICEFIJELL

Icefijell is the name of an impressive area below the towering peaks of the Illimarik and the Rokull. Illimarik is an Elven word which means “scene”, while Rokull is a Vrok word, and it means, “to straddle”.

Icefijell is a coarse and majestic land. On its small limited steppes, down in the valleys, and on the pastures, high up among the mountains, roam a group of nomadic tribes. They derive neither from the Broths or the Kremors, nor from the Wildbrons, but from a remnant of a people who once lived in the northeastern parts of the Great Iron Mountains. They are short in stature, have black hair and yellow eyes. They call themselves the “Gruths” and are very few in number. The Gruths worship their Great Winter God, and among the mountains, they shepherd their long-haired mountain oxen, whose horns, in the form of a powder, are sought after as a delicacy, in both Fynnheim and Vortland.

IGNADAHL

The horrible place known as “Ignadahl” took his name from Tork Ignadale, the man who discovered it in the

Icepeak Mountains’ massifs, nearly three hundred years ago. A vertical wall made of Ice was showing the intransparency a scene of pure horror. An enormous, terrifying beast was about to come to life, as the compact snow above the ice wall melted faster and faster. People flocked to the scene to behold the beast that, everyone agreed, would destroy the whole of the Stormlands, if it managed to free itself from the shackles of the ice. At first, one could see its giant demonic hands, then its feet, and within a few months, one could see the whole beast, laying wrapped in ice. Many vitner weavers and dimwalkers were called to the scene, to cast spells and say prayers to stop the thawing, but no one ever succeeded in their efforts. It thawed alarmingly quickly. One day, a cold fog lay over the ice cap, and one could no longer see the beast. Everyone thought this was the end, all hope was gone, and this was the final sign that the beast would free itself. But then nothing more happened, and for more than 200 years, nothing has happened. The beast is still frozen in the crystalline crevice and cannot get loose. As far back as anyone can remember, no one has ever seen any sign that the beast

is still alive, but the Stormlanders fear, of course, the worst. No one would disagree that one day they will have to deal with a primeval demon, a “Ioi”, of the worst kind. The question is, what is it doing here, and how did it get here?

THE ILLIMARIK MOUNTAIN

Illimarik is the pointed peak that rises far above all other, snow-capped peaks in the Icepeak Mountains. It juts out like a spear, with treacherous vertical walls, whose ice-clad sides make even the most experienced climbers realize their limitations.

Once it was said that the Elves had a secret vantage point on the towering peak of Illimarik, and that there was a throne, made of the purest silver, which stood in the middle of a ring of alfarka trees, and that the Elves could come here to look at the stars. What they deciphered from the stars, they sent out through carrier birds to all the Elves around Trudvang. It was said that the one who sat in the chair of the throne could see any other place he wished to see in the whole of Trudvang.

The place has remained nothing more than a legend, because no one has ever found it, despite many attempts.

“An enormous, terrifying beast was about to come to life, as the compact snow above the ice wall melted faster and faster.”

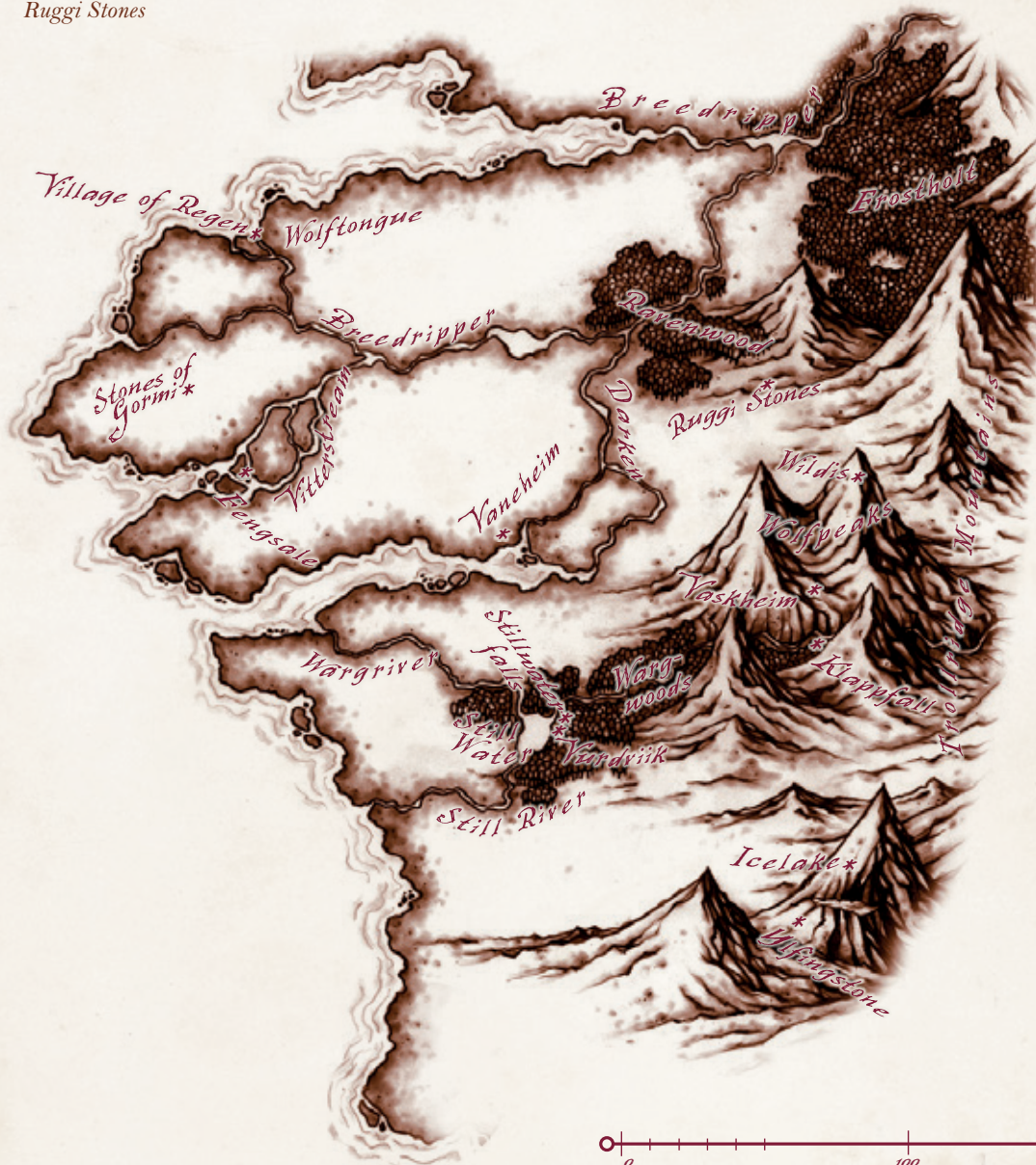


NOJD

Breedripper
Darken
Fengsale
Frostholt
Icelake
Klappfalls
Ravenswood
Ruggi Stones

Still River
Stillwaterfalls
Stones of Gormi
Vaneheim
Vaskheim
Village of Regen
Vitterstream

Vurdviik
Wargriver
Wargwoods
Wildis
Wolfpeaks
Wolfstongue
Ylfingstone



◆ NOJD ◆

Nojd's wild, green fields lie enclosed by the Oster Ocean in the west, the Trollridge Mountains in the east, Vortland in the north and the wild Djunghart in the south. The land of Nojd is beautiful and teeming with life, where an abundance of streams flow, giving Nojd its nickname: "the Land of the Thousand Rivers".

Green, fertile landscapes stretch out between the waterways, where anything will grow. The streams end in beautiful calm fjords with leafy forests on all sides. The largest river in this land is the "Breedripper", named after the legend of Broin, the mythic leader of the great migration who spread his sons among the lands to be conquered, effectively "dripping" his own "breed" throughout Nojd. The Breedripper has hundreds of tributaries, which branch out along its way from the Trollridge Mountains, going into the fjords and bays where the ice-cold water ends up. Three of these tributaries are almost as large as the Breedripper, and just as wild. All these three rivers, the Wolftongue, the Vitterstream, and the Darken, are mentioned in the legend of the great migration, and it is also here where the three largest and most important settlements can be found: Regen, Fengsale, and Vaneheim.

The Wolftongue, the Vitterstream, and the Darken are all very large rivers, and like the Breedripper, they branch out into many tributaries. Most streams in Nojd originate from the Breedripper or one of its three tributaries, but several smaller streams also run down from the Trollridge Mountains. There is one other large river in this land. This river, also originating

from the Trollridge Mountains, is named the "Wargriver", as it runs through the notorious Wargwoods.

Because of its many streams, Nojd's landscape is a green and leafy place. Over nearly every stream there is a bridge or a crossing. Some are abandoned, lying in ruins, while others remain in use.

Along the streams there are ruins and ancient remains from old villages and camps, long abandoned when their inhabitants chose to move on.

In the northeast, near the Vortlander border, lies the forest of Frostholt. This forest is almost sacred to the Nojdans, and they would never fell a tree in that place. There are two other large forests in Nojd – the Ravenswood and the Wargwoods, and it is from these places that the Nojdans produce timber. Small lumber camps have emerged around these forests, from which felling and planting is managed. The settlers live under the constant threat of the beast of the wild and are always vigilant against possible attacks. They ship the timber along a stream towards the more civilized parts of Nojd, where it is processed.

The wild delta of Nojd is as full of myths as the Trollridge Mountains. The people who once came here soon found the land impossible to tame, and many

therefore continued southwards. Here In this wild land, the ancient myths have survived under the cover of night, much more so than in the surrounding lands. Goblins, trolls, and other beasts still thrive in the most inaccessible lands. Together with Nojd's ancient inhabitants, foreign and often frightening customs and traditions live on. The dark forests, mountains, and streams kept their secrets since the beginning of times, and throughout history this wilderness attracted others whose hearts and souls were untamable. This is why they chose to settle in this place.

THE LEGEND OF BROIN

According to legend, it was here that the mythic Broin arrived during the great migration, together with his three sons, Regen, Faneng, and Vanej, and their tribes. The legend says that they camped by a violent, booming river on the first night. Broin slew a bear here and sacrificed its heart to his gods. At the same moment as its heart stopped beating, the river turned red, and Broin saw this as a good sign. In this winding tongue of a river the water turned red, as the "tongue of a wolf", therefore it would now be known as "Wolftongue".

Broin left his son Regen to guard the river Woltongue, together with his hird and their women, saying "This is now a holy place for those of our blood. You are the best hunter of all my sons, therefore I know that your people will never go hungry." In this way, the village of Regen was founded, by the banks of the Woltongue.

The second day, Broin and his two remaining sons camped near some mighty black trees next to another river. When the hammer blows echoed through the camp, and the women were lighting the fires at dusk, a horrific power awoke. An icy scream could be heard in the twilight, and the tree branches came alive. Swarms of aggressive Happjas, women-birds, attacked the camp. All was turned into an inferno of feathers, screams, and blood. The Happjas had been disturbed in their nests, and now attacked furiously. Broin and his two sons stood back-to-back and slashed at the attacking beasts without even a shield for protection. Broin raised his voice and roared at the abominations. He called on the names of his fathers and gods with a powerful voice, swinging his sword in a blind rage. Broin's second oldest son, Faneng, buried his sword into the chest of one of the Happjas, who dropped dead to the ground. The remaining Happjas then flapped their wings as one, leaving them, never to return again. After the battle, Broin decided to name this stream that they had liberated from the Happjas the "Vitterstream". He left his heroic son Faneng to establish a colony, together with his own Hird and his women. Faneng constructed a vast hall out of the giant black trunks, in which he built an altar to his forefathers. Around the hall, he founded the settlement of Fengsale.

On the third day, Broin and his youngest son arrived at a frothing river. They made camp and went down to fish in the water. They were surprised at how turbid the water appeared. It was as if it consisted of a yellow sludge, but the water tasted fine. Soon enough, Broin caught a large salmon on his rod, which fought viciously. He had to step further and further out into the water.

Soon he was up to his waist in the yellow murky water. When the salmon started getting tired, Broin gave off a sudden yell, and disappeared under the water. His son, Vanej, stood in shock on the bank of the river, and watched his father wrestle with a giant river snake in the water. He threw himself into the fray and pushed his sword into the slithering beast. They then both carried the monster up to land and killed it.

The father saw that the son was a strong man and that the land was so full of resource that it could easily support an entire village. Broin decided to call this river "Darken", because of its yellow sludge. He told Vanej to settle here with his Hird and the women. On this location, Vaneheim was founded.

On the fourth day, Broin left and was never seen again amongst men. He went into the wilderness of this land and lived out the rest of his days there. When Broin one day calmly, and with peace in his mind, lay down to die, his spirit took the shape of a large raven. In this form he could forever watch over his son's cities. The three cities by the three rivers remain, and they are the largest of the land of Nojd. The rest of the population lives in smaller villages inland, and they are known as the "Children of Broin", since they chose a life in the wilderness like Broin had done before he died.

THE NOJDANS: A DIVIDED PEOPLE.

The Nojdans are somewhat different from the other peoples in the Stormlands, since they aren't quite part of any country. They are not a uniform people, even though they share a common ancestor.

The people of Nojd can be divided into two main societal groups. Those who come from the larger villages and from the three major cities are not much different from other Stormlanders, since they have a uniform societal structure and a civilization which has developed closer cultural ties with the rest of the Stormlands, especially by sea trade. On the other hand, the "Children of Broin", the wild inlanders from the small, isolated villages, are considerably more savage and barbaric.

The more civilized villages in contact with the rest of the Stormlands are those situated along the coast, or along one of the three rivers, the Woltongue, the Vitterstream, and the Darken. These more civilized villages are all linked with one of the three main settlements of Regen, Fengsale, and Vaneheim. None of these more developed villages lie in the inhospitable inland, where the wild forest and nature rules.

However, most of Nojd's landscape is wild and ruthless, just like its inhabitants. The inlanders here live in small autonomous villages spread in the wilderness, with their own traditions and customs. They mostly follow old, archaic customs, living lives which are mostly isolated from the rest of the world.

Unlike the more civilized the inhabitants of the three cities, the Children of Broin are suspicious by nature and try to avoid strangers and visitors. Many stories tell of how wanderers feel watched and ill at ease in this land. When they finally reach a site which is known to host a village, they are often surprised to find it abandoned. After a closer inspection, they find still glowing embers in the fires, animals tied up, and even cooked food. It appears that the inlanders are so reluctant to encounter strangers that they simply leave their homes rather than be confronted with strangers. In other cases, travelers have been met with aggression and violence, particularly if they have been caught stealing from the "abandoned" villages.

CHIEFTAINS, COUNCILS AND TRIBES.

Almost all Nojdans live in small villages which do not share the same government system but are usually run according to the wishes and specific traditions of their inhabitants. Most settlements are, of course, led by a chieftain or a village elder, but there are stories about isolated villages located in remote areas which are run by strange and mysterious kinds of governance. For example, there are villages completely run by women, where the men take care of the children, and where the women hunt and fight. Tales are also told of villages where all adult males

can decide together, where status and power struggles are unknown concepts. There is little actual proof for the existence of these villages, but there is also nothing disproving them.

Tribal identity is important for all Nojdans, as there are tribes of many sizes, from those occupying a single village, to those encompassing huge tracts of wilderness with multiple settlements. The governance of Nojd as a “nation” is loosely organized and it is based on the whims of the most powerful tribes. The so-called “Council of the Chieftains” consists of the Chieftains from the larger tribes and their advisors. Those tribes with more than 150 members count as “large tribes”.

The Chieftains of the two largest tribes represent the top ranks of the council and have veto power in all questions. The two largest tribes belong to wild inland Nojdans: they are the Gormi and the Ylfing. It is from these tribes’ names that the two holy cairns, the “Stones of Gormi” and “Ylfingstone” got their names. Or perhaps it is the other way around. The two tribes’ villages are spread out around their respective monuments.

Due to the wealth of their domains the Chieftains of the three main cities (Regen, Fengsale, and Vaneheim) are also widely respected. They meet twice every year, in the so-called “Nojd Council”, where the “country’s” problems are discussed. Some also say that each year there is also a third, unofficial, meeting, where the three chieftains speak in dark secret chambers about the country’s complicated relationship with the faith in Stormi.

The members of the Council of Nojd are also members of the Council of Chieftains, even if they quite often pretend to speak for the whole Nojd in their own, private council. In practice each council directly rules over different matters or different tracts of land.

Tribal identity is important not just for the wild children of Broin but also for the citizens of Regen, Fengsale, and Vaneheim.

The three tribes that rule these three civilized cities are not as large in numbers as the Gormi or the Ylfing, but are not less powerful, since they have much more riches, and can afford to hire mercenary

Hirds. These three tribes got their names from the cities’ founders: the Regen of Regen, the Faneng of Fengsale, and the Vanej from Vaneheim. Each new chieftain gets the same last name as the founder of the city upon his ascension to power. Today, none of these tribes’ Chieftains are related to the mythical founders. This is because the chieftain of the city is replaced regularly.

Replacements occur in small coups, with or without violence, where rich families or powerful politicians take over the role of chieftain. Inhabitants living in one of the three cities automatically become members of one of the three tribes.

RELIGION AND MARKETS.

More than anywhere else in the Stormlands, traces of ancient religions from the time before the great migration can be found in the Nojdan inland, where people practice ancient rituals from before the god Stormi and the Gerbanis religion arrived. This is especially true among the “Children of Broin” than among the dwellers of the three cities, even if old practices of the ancient religions can be found even there.

The savage Nojdans often appear to worship the forest, the wild streams, and its animals, and want to raise them to the level of gods. Disturbing images can be observed in the Nojdan villages, depicting river snakes, bears, and wolves. These are highly venerated among the more primitive forest tribes and are worshipped in almost all their villages. The only common religious idea among all the inlanders is the worship of these images, although the object of worship varies between villages. Some worship images of fish, others of wolves, bears, or birds. Often these images are so filthy and disturbing, and tainted with countless blood rites that any civilized man would be sick from being in their presence.

Representatives of the Gerbanis faith tried to separate the Nojdans from the primitive worship of their ancestral forefathers. However, this was a hopeless endeavor. Despite this, the Nojdans were gladly converted since they considered Stormi to be a strong and appropriate deity that fit into their lives.

The priesthood of Gerbanis then decided that the best course of action would be to let the Nojdans keep their old traditions, but only as far as these traditions were integrated into the Gerbanian faith. The Gerbanians noticed that one of the most defining phenomena of the Nojdans were the custom of meeting in seasonal markets, and they exploited the situation. They erected temples at each marketplace in places which were once deemed sacred by the old religions, until it appeared as if the magnificent altars were synonymous with the good and powerful Stormi blessing the markets.

The importance of markets and marketplaces for the Nojdans hail back to the mythic time of a legendary chieftain called Ruggi. His stronghold was at Ruggi Stones, and his rule was considered to be the golden age of Nojd’s history, when the land prospered under his divinely-inspired leadership. He had ruled over all the other chieftains of Nojd and fought against injustice and oppression. He also introduced the custom of seasonal market, in order to give the Nojdans something to share and strengthen their own Nojdan identity. At least that is what the tales say.

Four times per year the Nojdans gather in various markets to trade and sell goods. These events occur at the time when the seasons change, and are known as the “Spring Market” the “Summer Market”, the “Fall Market” and the “Winter Market”. Marketplaces can be found in various places around Nojd and are of different sizes. There are four truly large markets where thousands meet each year to buy or sell. If you can’t find something in these markets, you can’t find it in all of Nojd. The largest Spring Market is held at the Ruggi Stones, and the largest Summer Market is at Virtne Spring. The Fall Market is at Stones of Gormi, and the Winter Market is at Ylfingstone.

The richest merchants gather in the established marketplace and, during the month-long market, they can make enough money to maintain them until next year. Some merchants travel between the four large markets despite the great distances, and in a few years, they can amass a fortune. Fights often occur during these markets,

between the young, drunken members of the various tribes. This is not a very surprising occurrence in a place where so much silver and goods change hands, and where large crowds of wild Nojdans gather. None of this ever happens to those wearing a wolf or bear pelt, which in Nojd are the distinguishing signs of respected warriors. None other than a hero is allowed to wear such pelts in Nojd and cowards wearing them are usually assaulted by Nojdans. On the other hand, the celebrated, pelt-wearing warriors are important guests during the markets, they gather in special mead tents where they are seated in places of honor, bragging about their adventures, while tended to by young women.

At these markets it is customary to resolve any dispute in special enclosures. These enclosures are known as the "Feuding Tents", named after the enclosed tents erected over two tall masts, housing duels within. These feuds are resolved through a duel between the two parties. The two or sometimes more parties gather - voluntarily or involuntarily - within the enclosed tent. There, they must agree on the rules for the duel among themselves: with or without weapons, to the death or until someone surrenders, and who must fight for them. This is why most merchants hire one or more champions for this purpose. The winner is considered to have the right in the disagreement, and the loser must agree to this without any further reprisal. These duels are, of course, wildly popular attractions, where large sums of money are wagered on the different combatants. The bets are managed by the Feuding Tent's owner, who also receives a percentage of all winnings.

THE BREEDRIPPER RIVER

There is an expression in Nojd that says: "You haven't seen a river until you've seen the Breedripper." The river, which in some places can be hundreds of fathoms wide, runs at a frantic pace and with a constant thunder. It is the large altitude difference between the Trollridge Mountains and Nojd's west coast that gives the water its tremendous current. However, the current is not always so, since in some places,

where the land rises, the flood is almost unmoving, and it is around these calm areas that small Nojd settlements have sprung up. If you travel along the river, you quickly see hundreds of smaller tributaries have their source from here. These rivers are all smaller, but not always more tranquil than their mother. The Breedripper's outflows towards the western coast of Nojd, west of the Ruggi Stones, and on its way down from the Trollridge Mountains the mighty river gives birth to thousands of other smaller rivers and streams.

THE DARKEN RIVER

Just south of Ravenswood, the Breedripper splits into two rivers. This is the birth of the Darken river, the largest of the three great tributaries, and it stretches all the way to the Darkenfjord. Just like the Vitterstream, the Darken river is somewhat calmer than its parent river, and later splits into two smaller streams. Both are commonly referred to as the Darken, but locals call them Darkenbrother and Darkensister. The river is lined by a leafy green landscape, with several groves scattered around it. A large percentage of Nojd's population is settled along the Darken, and it is said that as many people live along the Darken and the Vitterstream as there are in all of Nojd's wilderness.

FENGSALE

On the largest island in the Farengfjord sits the city of Fengsale. A group of small islands is scattered around Fengsale Island and limit the approach to the Vitterstream for larger ships, forcing them to the northern side of the archipelago. From Fengsale Island, an impressive bridge towers above the water over to the nearest island to the south. From there another bridge runs to a different island, and then another, which in turn is connected to the mainland in the south. On the northeastern side of Fengsale lies another bridge, which leads to the second largest island in the group. This island is just outside the mouth of the Vitterstream river, and a bridge

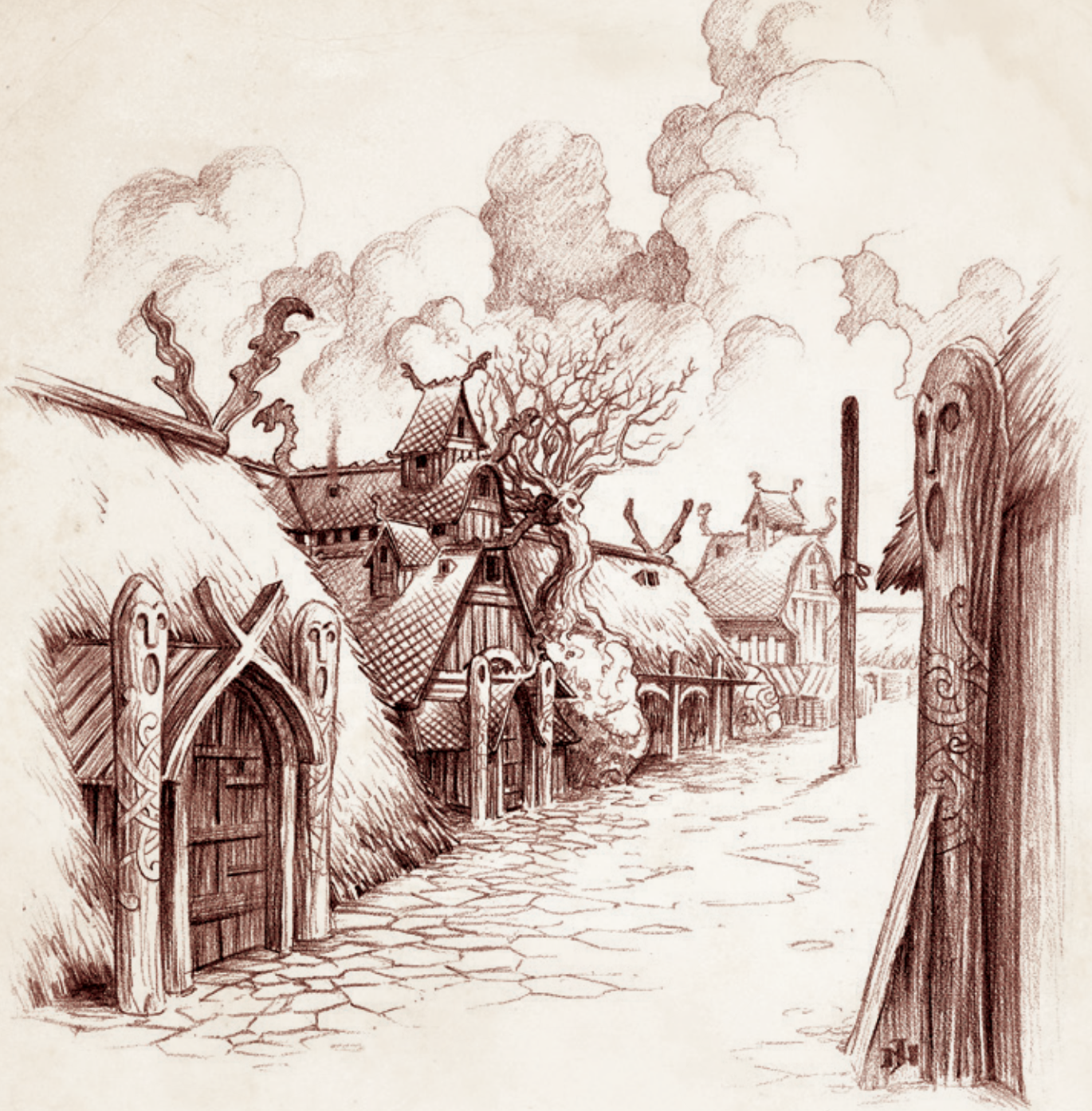
crosses over to the mainland here as well. Under the bridge there is a mighty gate that can only be opened with the help of draft animals on each side of the bridge. The gate is made of thick tree trunks that form a latticework where smaller rowing boats can get through without having to open the gate. It is always guarded from both sides by hirds, who in their fast ships board all boats that go in or out through the gate. Anyone who wishes to pass must pay them a fee. A smaller village has grown up around the hird house on the island where the bridge starts - which is also constantly guarded.

Fengsale is the Nojd city that has the most contact with - and conducts the most trade with - Mittland. It has therefore become both richer and larger than the two other cities which together make up the civilized part of Nojd.

On the northern side of the island there is a jetty system, which is almost yearly visited by large Mittland ships. This is thanks to the fact that the streaming fjord is usually not covered in ice during the winter. Directly connected to the jetties lies the hird house. The west coast of the island is lined with vertical cliffs. It is here that the most important buildings of the city are lined up.

In the middle of the ten houses that line the cliff, and which are also the first thing seen by approaching ships, is a great Gerbanic stave church. On both sides of the church, the most powerful merchants' houses stand, decorated with expensive Stormihalls. Because there are only two ways to attack the city - from the sea or over the bridges - it has no protective city walls. Hirds constantly patrol the bridges, and vast numbers of ships guard the fjord from possible threats.

The city is ruled by Jorek Faneng, a powerful merchant, who recently inherited the chieftain's role after the previous leader died from a fever. Of course, the city streets and taverns are full of rumors about whether Jorek Faneng was involved in the death of Digthorn Faneng. Others talk of Gerbanis' involvement in the last chieftain's death, since Jorek Faneng is considered a very pious man, quite the opposite of the late Digthorn.



THE FROSTHOLT FOREST

In the far north, at the border of the Trollridge Mountains, lies a forest that the Nojdans consider holy. They think that the spirit of Broin's mother lives here. People say that the mother missed her son so much that she took her own life, and traveled to the countryside, only to settle down in Frostholt. When her sad soul entered the forest, the Frostholt got the color that characterizes it to this day. The leaves on the trees have a

silvery hue, making them looking frozen, and the trunks are all white. These trees cannot be found anywhere else in the Stormlands, and unlike other hardwoods, their leaves do not fall off during winter. This peculiar flora has added to the myth that the forest is haunted by an unhappy spirit, whose tears have colored the forest's trees.

However, if you ask any of the Elves inhabiting the depths of the forest, where the Nojdans never travel, you would get

a completely different explanation for the forest's mysterious properties. The forest was planted by the elves' forefathers, who came from the powerful Great Ice Plains with seeds from their frost trees, which normally only grow there. This is one of the very few elven communities remaining in the Stormlands. They are all Korpikalli but, given what their legends tell, it is possible that some legendary Norim Elves are among their ancestors.

GORMI' STONES

This monument and holy place is on the top of a small knoll, at the foot of a long ridge running from north to southwest. The stones are ancient, as also the place itself. Nobody knows why it was originally built but it got its name from the first chieftain of the Gormi tribe to be buried in the knoll, although everybody knows that the monument is much older than this. What the place's original name was, however, is lost in the pages of history, and those who once erected the stones are long dead and gone. Gone also is the knowledge of the stones' original purpose.

The stones are about ten-meters tall and about four-meters wide. There are twenty-three of them, and they stand in a warped circle. In the middle of this circle there are four slabs of stone. Together they form a large square, on which a huge raven has been carved. The raven has faded from the slabs after thousands of seasons' wear, and today only faint contours can be seen of the bird, which always appears to look back at its viewer, its head cocked to one side. It is believed that Gormi was buried under these stones. Others say that the real grave lies in the adjacent ridge and that the monument was built in memory of the venerated chieftain. Many attempts have been made to find the treasure that Gormi is said to have been buried with, such as his golden raven which gave him the power to turn into a bird, allowing him to oversee his lands from the sky. But few have survived these attempts, since the grave and ridge is constantly guarded by the descendants of Gormi - a savage race with features similar to the Wildbrons, and a reputation for being fierce fighters.

A few smaller villages are scattered around the monument and ridge, no longer than fifteen days' march away. The inhabitants of these villages are all descendants of the large tribe once ruled by Gormi. Although the distances in these lands are large, all the "Gormihamlets", as they are

called, have always remained in close contact with each other, feeling all to be part of the same tribal unit. This common identity has been done reinforced through the centuries by both the regular ceremonies held on the Stones of Gormi and the frequent exchanges of manpower. It is customary among Gormi's brood for the men to move between two or more villages. The men live in a village for parts of their lives, then move on to another. Usually they move between two or three hamlets, but there are those who move through more. In this way, information is shared between the Gormihamlets.

Since the men move around the villages, it results in large extended families, where the men simply exchange wives with each other. A large extended family can therefore consist of two or more men, and two or more women - always in even couples. In the large families all are united after a wedding rite at the Stones of Gormi. The large extended families are otherwise very rare both in the Stormlands and in the rest of Nojd.

Not far from the monument, a Gerbanian sanctuary is erected on the slope of the nearby ridge. The sanctuary is mostly used during the Fall Market - at other times of year it is not well attended. Gormi's descendants are unwavering in their worship of the archaic images and totems. Several skirmishes have occurred in the area between the Gerbanian faithfuls and the wild warriors of the Gormihamlets. Neither side seems to have gained the upper hand however, and as time has passed, a sort of mutual agreement seems to have developed - one where both parties ignore each other.

THE ICELAKE

On a plateau on top of an offshoot of the Trollridge Mountains lies a lake known as the "Icelake", which is always covered with ice. The lake is the location where

the Etterstapp (the voluntary death of elders by been buried into the ice) is conducted for the Ylfings' chieftains and their close relatives. They travel here with their elders to give them a final dignified celebration, and to drink to their life.

On the bank, next to an imposing cliff wall, is the "Etterstapp Den", where the party takes place until the early morning, when it is time to say goodbye to the elder. The Etterstapp Den consists of a large house said to be filled with the spirits of the dead Ylfings. Just like the houses of powerful chieftains, the Etterstapp Den is adorned with an impressive Stormihall to keep evil spirits - those unworthy to enter - at a distance. The name or sign of the elder is carved into the cliff wall during the night, forever to be remembered as a powerful member of the Ylfing tribe.

THE KLAPPFALLS

The Klappfalls are the Wargrivers' first waterfalls, located on the west side of the Wolfpeaks. The water plunges down from a plateau 500 fathoms into the valley below. A very large number of troll tribes lives around the waterfall, constantly harassing the inlanders of Nojd. They live in caves hidden behind the wall of water forever flowing down from the plateau, and in the walls on each side of the falls, near the bottom of the cliff. The immense number of trolls makes the Klappfalls one of the most troll-dense areas in the inhabited parts of the Stormlands.

The most disturbing characteristic noticed by inhabitants in Nojd, as well as by travellers from the other Stormlands is these trolls' advanced ability to organize their society. Klappfalls trolls have done something nobody knew their race was capable of - to be organized according to a strict, well-organized hierarchy, where leaders are leading other, lower-ranking leaders, as in a disciplined army with clear rules to be followed by everybody. The trolls have also managed what only very few Wildfolk have been able to do - to tame a huge number of Warg Beasts. Trolls



riding warg beasts are also known elsewhere, but never as the scale which the phenomenon seems to happen in the Klappfalls. There are even reported sightings of trolls riding Skolls and the

rare Garms. Whether this is true or just a rumour remains to be seen, and not many are too keen to find out.

How the trolls have been able to organize themselves, not to mention

learning how to tame wolfskin, remains unknown. Since the trolls seem to have abilities far beyond their normal reach, people suspect powerful, unknown forces at play.



THE RAVENSWOOD

Ravenswood is located in the middle of Nojd and it is one of three major forests of this country. Just like the Frostholt, this forest is sacred to Nojdans since they believe that Broin's spirit lives here. They believe he has remained in the shape of a giant raven, which was possessed by his spirit when he left his worldly life behind. Many visitors of the Ravenswood claim to have seen an enormous raven sitting in one of the trees, watching them intently with a cocked head. Settlers inside and outside the forest also claim to have seen the giant raven in the forest or flying overhead with watchful eyes. Sometimes, the raven is also seen above the three cities founded by Broin's three sons. Nojdans firmly believe in this story and

the accounts seem confirmed by the large number of ravens which live in the area, together with an almost complete absence of trolls, to explained with the enmity of Broin towards Trollkin. Others say that there is a large, mysterious tribe of what the tales call "Blotsystrar" or "Sisters of the Bloodgifting", a local variation of the Hel Sisters' cult, living in the forest and that they keep it clean from trolls, and other vermin like strangers and monsters.

REGEN

On the northern bank of the Woltongue lies Regen. The settlement is both a fishing center and a trading post. Together with Farenscale and Vanesheim, the Regen makes up the civilized part of Nojd.

Merchants gather here from far and wide to trade their goods. The banks of the Regen are lined with a multitude of boats of all sizes, moored on jetties leading up to the boat owners' houses. If you enter the city from the sea, you are sent to the center, where a tree-like system of jetties provides a place to leave your vessel. Most ships come from Vortland and the city of Jornhelm. Some ships also come from Mittland, after traversing the Oster Ocean to reach the city, in order to conduct business at its market. The boatmaster's house is on the bank, where the jetties meet, and to enter the city one must pass through here. This is where the toll is paid for all goods about to enter the city, as well as for those goods exported from within. Those who attempt to avoid the toll are

severely punished, and this has attracted smugglers who attempt to trade their goods into their city by illegal means.

On the land side, the city is protected by a tall stone wall that has withstood many troll attacks over the years. If you visit the city by land you must pass through the city gate placed in the middle of this wall. Here, you pay the toll, just as at the house of the boatmaster on the coast-side. The wall is always patrolled by guards, as the trolls may decide to attack at any time. However, even if there have been numerous troll raids, a full-scale assault never happened. Trolls seem to never manage these attacks wholeheartedly: they are more interested in keeping up their savage reputation than to really conquer the city. They are only interested in never giving the city a sense of calm. Because of the trolls' constant presence, the road to the Regen is never quite safe, so most travellers reach Regen by sea.

Through the oval city runs a long, broad road lined with workshops, stores, smiths, and mead houses. Towards the north, smaller alleys lead up towards dwellings and less reputable workshops and inns. The further from the main road one travels, the smaller and more derelict the houses become. If one was to follow the alleys down to the water, one would find the homes of the ship owners and the fishermen.

In the center of the city lies the main market where most things can be traded. The marketplace itself consists of a large stone-paved circle where merchants set up their wagons and tents. On a ridge to the east of the market one can see city's Chieftain's residence: a large longhouse whose entrance is decorated by an enormous and elaborately decorated Stormihall. West of the market there is another, equally impressive building, a mighty Gerbanian Stave Church. During the years these buildings are constantly being re-built and expanded, since Chieftain Fuld Regen and the local Gerbanian clergy seem to be in a continuous competition over who has the most beautiful and monumental building in the city. On either side of these two constructions, several other large houses stand, all decorated with impressive

Stormihalls. None are as impressive as either of the two major buildings however, which stand on each side of the street leading to the harbor and to the city gates. In some of the less impressive houses live the city's administrative officers and many rich merchants. The fierce competition about who has the most power in the city, between the Gerbanian Clergy and the Chieftain, has created a divide within the city. On one side are those who are piously faithful to the Gerbanian Church. On the other, there are those who stand for the Chieftain, but who also are less convinced about the goodness of Gerbanis. They cannot say this openly however, as they could be called heretics by the priests - a most unpleasant prospect, especially for a city which seem to enjoy well-established trade links with the pious Gerbanians of Vortland.

THE RUGGI STONES

This is the largest sacred place in all of Nojd. The Ruggi Stones are, according to legend, the burial ground of one of the greatest Nojdan chieftains. Because of the tradition of holding the Spring Market at these stones, Gerbanis representatives have erected a shrine to the honor of Windinna here.

There are about 50 stones, each standing between 15 and 20 meters, spread in a very symmetrical circle about 250 fathoms in diameter. The Gerbanian Stave Church has been erected in the middle of this monument, and towers above the stones surrounding it. The monument stands on a tall hill, reaching for the sky like a crown, with a menacing wedge in its center. The main building of the shrine consists mainly of a large underground Ceremony Hall, where the great Stormi is worshipped with blood gifting on tall poles, dance, song, and prayer. Around the shrine lie several smaller buildings, with dwellings and stables. A stone's throw from the hill there is a farm run by the Clergy of Gerbanis. The work is mostly done by the many slaves owned by the farm, who toil the land to the best of their ability and take care of the animals.

Since the Ruggi Stones and its surrounding area is such a beautiful and untouched environment, it is common for Gerbanian faithful to make a pilgrimage here, in order to enjoy the power of Stormi and Windinna for a brief moment.

During the Spring Market, this sense of wilderness and tranquility disappears however, as people from far and wide gather around the monument to trade with each other. Nojdans gather below the hill in several camps. Large groups sometimes travel together since it is safer than travelling alone through the wilderness. This means that the camps around the monument are divided according to home villages, or geographic areas.

The most respected merchants are allowed to trade within the innermost ring of stones, while less reputable ones must keep to the periphery in the camps below the hill. The inner circle and the different camps are always patrolled by local Hirds and Knight of the Iron Hand. Together, they ensure that no quarrels erupt. Many sormmens come here, hoping to be hired for the Spring Market, but most of them do not end up in fighting pits, but are rather hired by Gerbanian dimwalkers to curb those miscreants that inevitably gather where there is money to be traded.

THE STILL RIVER

In the south-western part of Nojd the river known as the "Still River" travels slow and tranquil down to the ocean on the west coast of Nojd. The river is very deep and wide, making its water flow very slowly. The river is more and more becoming trafficked by ships travelling to Vurdviik to trade.

The river houses giant river snakes, always looking for food in the shape of inattentive river sailormen. This is why the local inhabitants, who over time have learned to deal with the river snakes, are often hired to provide safe passage along the river through safe points, in order to avoid unfortunate incidents.

The villagers of the area are called "Snake People" by the ever-growing numbers of travellers along the river. For

the people living along the river, these river snakes are holy, and they regularly perform complicated ceremonies where they make sacrifices to them, according to archaic traditions which recall the worship of Lindwurms as performed in Mittland. If you travel down the river, you will regularly pass wooden or stone statues of giant snakes in various aggressive stances. The villages are filled with these statues which are the subject of continuous veneration by the locals. Some villages even have their own river snake to worship, that they have captured and now keep and feed in a giant tank close to the Still River.

THE STILLWATERFALLS AND THE STILLWATER LAKE

Where the Wargriver flows through the forest from the north, it encounters its last falls in the southern parts of the Wargwood. The landscape takes one final plunge down to sea level here, and the Wargriver flows down it steadily. The fall is nearly 50 fathoms high, and ends in the Stillwater Lake below, which is thus constantly supplied with fresh water. About two thirds down the fall, a lone cliff juts out of the cascade, splitting the water in two. The waterfall is not as impressive as the river's first one, the Klappfalls in the Wolfpeaks, but it is nonetheless a powerful and beautiful sight, lined by the leafy trees on the steep banks around it.

Stillwaterfalls has become somewhat of a symbol for the people who live around the lake, who use the falls for funerals, and as a location for the local version of the Etterstapp, when the elders voluntarily seek death. During the funerals and the Etterstapp, the dead or elderly are placed in a hollow tree trunk that is filled with mud and sealed at both ends with further mud. The trunk is then carried to the top of the cliff, along the "Path of the Dead" on the eastern side of the falls, which is only used for these rites. It is said that those who walk on this road without carrying a dead body or an elder ready to die will themselves meet death very soon. On the top of the cliff, a

bridge has been erected in the torrential water, and this is where the burial trunk is released into the water. The long fall makes the trunk sink far down into the depths of Stillwater Lake, and the current from the waterfall takes it under the water all the way out to a mythic entity known as "Suldur". The legends say that Suldur is an enormous underwater dragon, who lives off the dead bodies which are regularly supplied to him, and whose souls he releases, allowing them to enter the land of the dead. The soul is thus not free to leave this world until the body has been released into the deep water and been devoured by Suldur.

The Stillwaterfalls are also the setting for boys' rite-of-passage ceremonies. At the proper time the boy about to become a man climbs up the slippery wall behind the fall, all the way to the cliff. Here, he must make his way through the cascade without being washed off the cliff. Once out on the tip of the cliff, the boy must jump into Stillwater Lake, and climb out on the east side of the falls. If the boy succeeds with the rite, he becomes a man, and is ready for marriage. In the Stillwater Lake, just below the falls, the boy's relatives await him in boats to save him in case he cannot stay up. It is rare for someone to die during this rite, but it happens sometimes.

VANEHEIM

At a bend of the Darken river, the third largest city of Nojd is located. Vaneheim is a trading town, just like Fengsale and Regen, with frequent contacts with other countries. Vaneheim is not as prosperous as the other two cities, maybe because the local Chieftain and the people close to him are more interested in knowledge than in wealth.

Despite this fact, trade still brings a steady income to the local treasury, because the tax on goods is slightly higher in Vaneheim than in the other two cities due to the smaller market.

The town is surrounded by a high wall, which is only interrupted by the town's gate and by the Darken river. The wall is constantly patrolled,

since troll attacks are very common. The "Borgfaste", the fort hosting the hirdsmen of the Vanej's chieftain, can be seen in the center of Vaneheim. The Vanej chieftain lives together with his hirdsmen in this garrison. The number of hirdsmen has increased recently, leading to necessary extensions of the Borgfaste, which today houses almost 800 hirdsmen. The reason for the recent recruitments is due to an increased number of troll attacks. However, there's also another reason, since Chieftain Rustir Vanej secretly suspects the chieftains of Regen and Fengsfale to plan a joint attack to his town, to conquer it. The discovery of a culprit in Borgfaste, pouring poison in the chieftain's goblet, added fuel to the suspicions. Chieftain Rustir Vanej has, because of this, not been participating in the recent Nojd councils.

Vaneheim has an impressive Gerbanian Stave church, located at the river shore, so as to be the first thing that catches the eye of visitors.

Next to the Borgfaste and the market there is a peculiar building, whose architectural style clearly recalls Mittlander fashions. The purpose of this multi-floored building is to hold Vaneheim's collective knowledge in two large halls filled with rune staffs and clay tablets. Many are the tales in the town of events taking place in this building. Explosions, flashes of bright light, and abyssal screams are not uncommon events when walking past that building.

VASKHEIM

In the midst of the Wolfpeaks there is a village called Vaskheim. The miners and hunters who don't want to leave the Wolfpeaks for winter come here in order to get as early a start in spring as possible. Perhaps they didn't find anything worth bringing back to civilization to sell. Many of the settlers in the mountains have become so used to life here, that nothing outside the mountains feels like home any more.

The village is located at the edge of an elongated cliff. The view of the southern

Wolfpeaks from there is hard to beat. Under the cliff, more than one fathom below, the Wargriver flows, and you can almost see its full stretch from the Trollridge Mountains in the east to the Klappfalls in the west. Because the village is located at the edge of a cliff, there is only one road leading to it. Therefore, there is only one direction from which an attack can be launched. A strong and high wall has been constructed from edge-to-edge on the cliff, to screen off the village from any attacks from the north.

The village consists of about 30 huts and longhouses of various sizes and conditions. In order to survive the long winter, there must be plenty of firewood and supplies in the village, which is what the village's permanent residents work to gather during the other seasons. The firewood and supplies are then sold to the people who seek shelter in the village over the winter, and don't bring their own supplies.

Vaskheim is currently being governed by a man named Eska Bornstride, who originally came from Djunghart. Eska is a smuggler who fled from Redborg under threat of being flung into the Blodpit because of his deeds. The escape brought him to Vaneheim, where a companion persuaded him to come to the Wolfpeaks, where they could find a fortune in gold. The years went by, but the gold stayed absent. Soon, Eska grew tired of coming down from the mountains during the winter, and more frequently chose to stay in the small village of Vaskheim. There, he met Viska, the daughter of the village leader, and soon they got married. When Vimmerud, the father of Viska, chose one night to jump from the cliff, Eska and Viska took over the leadership of the village. Today, they live here together with their three children who have never been outside of the Wolfpeaks' borders, and if Eska has his way, they never ever will. In addition to Eska's family, there are about 50 more or less permanent inhabitants. Amongst others, there is Joar Bearhand, the blacksmith, and Eska's best friend, who is said to be one of the best blacksmiths in the Stormlands.

During the winter season, the population sometimes multiplies, since the people of the wilderness would rather gather amongst themselves than together with people from below the mountains.

VIRTNE SPRING

The vast plain landscape of this place is interrupted by a geological depression from which an almost square enormous pillar rises up from the ground. The sides of the pillar have been carved in unknown time-periods by unknown craftsmen to resemble the head of a dragon. The stone pillar is lined with four ancient and knotty trees whose leaves and trunks have not been seen anywhere other than here in this part of the world. Up from pillar, a never-ending water source flows, sliding down over the four edges which are perfectly aligned towards the four winds. The water does not run more than a hundred steps away from the pillar before it disappears into four smaller openings in the deep depression.

The legend tells about a chieftain whose name was "Virtne" and who in single, incredibly long battle fought an ancient dragon. The two fighters would, according to the myth, have been struggling with each other for a whole season, for so mighty was this chieftain that he alone could fight with a huge dragon. The battle ended abruptly a summer day, when the dragon with a killing bite took Virtne in his mouth and swallowed the dying chieftain while stepping toward the sky in triumph. Virtne, realizing that he could not survive the fight, had with his last force driven the sword through the dragon's unprotected neck, when he was being swallowed. The fatally wounded dragon flowed straight up into the sky and then plunged dead to the ground. The roar from the impact is said to have been heard all over the country and where the dragon fell to the ground, a mighty depression was formed. In the middle of the crater a square rock pillar rose, and a cold and clear water flowed from it.

The water is considered to have strengthening and even magical

properties. Many wizards, wise men, dimwalkers and shamans come here from far away to take a bottle of this splendid water.

During the summer months, the Summer Market around the depression is kept and hundreds and hundreds of visitors are queuing up to fill a plunger with the legendary water or just to drink it.

Unlike other important market sites of Nojd, Virtne Spring lacks a stave church, since it also lacks a permanent settlement. People just gather here for the Summer Market and a temporary sacred place, with tents and movable blot poles, is built by Gerbanians coming from all over Nojd.

THE WARGRIVER

The Wargriver is not as long as the Breedripper, but it remains a long and impressive river, also originating somewhere in the Trollridge Mountains. Whereas the Breedripper is wild and untamed, the Wargriver is its opposite. It flows sleepily along the Wolfpeaks, before continuing through the Wargwoods. The reason for the Wargriver's slow progress is because of its depth.

THE WARGWOODS

Just like the Ravenswood, the Wargwood gets its name from the animals living there. The Wargwoods contain, as the name suggests, a multitude of Warg Beasts. The Wargriver flows through the forest at its meandering pace, and several smaller villages have emerged on its banks, which abound with fish. The villagers here are mostly fishermen, but also make a living selling wolf pelts to merchants and traders in the city of Vurdviik. The trees in the Wargwoods are very thick, with completely straight trunks, meaning that several, very large planks of wood can be extracted from one tree. Small lumber camps have emerged in the northeast part of the forest.

There is also another similarity with the Ravenswood. In fact, there are tales about a tribe of Hel Sisters, or



“Blotsystrar” as they are called in Nojd, conducting their heathen sacrifices in the inner parts of the Wargwoods. However, the villagers in the forest are also said to worship the “Age-Mother” also known as “Wildis”, with mysterious, and maybe also bloody, rituals. Given all these threats, travelers should not only be on the lookout for wolves while wandering through this forest. Many wanderers have disappeared without a trace in the forest, and for this, the wild Blotsystrars or Hel Sisters and their underground creed are blamed.

THE WOLFTONGUE

This is the first large tributary of the Breedripper and flows out into a deep fjord in the northern part of Nojd. The current in the Wolf tongue is often much more violent than in the Breedripper due to the large change in elevation, which occurs like a giant staircase, giving the river several waterfalls on its way to the ocean. This means that it is only possible

to travel by boat for a few days from the fjord towards the inland, until you come across the first waterfall. Like its parent river, the Wolf tongue is lined by small villages at its calmer sections.

THE WOLFPEAKS

The Wolfpeaks give visitors their first glimpse of the eastern mountain range. Through the mountains flow the Wargriver whose origins are the cold waters coming from the Trollridge Mountains. The mountains are nearly impregnable but are said to be filled with metals and gem stones. Warg Beasts can often be seen on the steep mountainsides, hunting for easy prey.

Because of the rumors of an abundance of precious metals, there are some smaller settlements scattered around the mountains - despite the large concentration of trolls and wolfkin in the area. The wild men and women living here are very tough and have learned to live under conditions that most others would consider unbearable. Those who don't dig for precious metals and stones

in caves, or pan for gold in the mountain streams, live off hunting. No matter their profession, all these brave men and women must be on constant watch against both trolls and wolves.

The wolfpeaks are also known for the tales of a mysterious site dedicated to local goddess known as “Wildis”, although its exact position is secret.

WILDIS' FACE

High up in the Wolfpeaks there is a hidden passage that leads wanderers to a large mountain plateau. The plateau is lined with tremendous cliffs, thousands of fathoms in every direction except in the west, where there is a vertical hillside which has been object of worship since time immemorial. Halfway up the vertical hillside, a huge and beautiful woman's face looks out over the land of Nojd. The location is this marvel is known only to a few initiated, even if the cult of the mythic ancestress known as “Wildis” is spread among many Nojdans. Same as with the stones of Gormi, no one can say when or by whom the face was sculpted and not even the followers of the cult know this. The initiated and devout worshipers of the ancestress have always known about the place, since the times when their ancestors came to Nojd, but nobody knows how and by whom the enigmatic face was made. Those who venerate the mysterious Wildis have the tradition of performing at least once in their lifetimes a pilgrimage to this site, and to live under Wildis' watchful eyes and the stars for a whole month. Many people who do this die during their “Wildis' Month”, either from the cold or due to the ferocity of the beasts dwelling in the mountains. This is not considered something serious, as the dead person's soul will be welcomed and taken care of by the ancestress herself. The followers of the cult consider that the time had come for the deceased to revisit their “Moord”, an archaic Nojdan word which can be translated either as “Ancestress-Mother” of “Mother of all Creation”.

On the vertical hillside, there is a stair that is almost invisible to anyone who

doesn't know exactly where to look. The stair is no wider than the width of one foot and it leads to Wildis' lips and mouth. On the last day of the Wildis Month, a follower of the cult will climb up the dangerous stairs and sacrifice the weapon that they used when they draw the first blood of an enemy, casting it into the mouth of Wildis. After that, he should stay awake all night on Wildis' lip, until the sun rises. If everything goes well, the ancestress will show her face amongst the stars just before sunrise, and hence accept the follower. It's only after the Wildis Month that a follower gets truly initiated into the cult.

THE VITTERSTREAM RIVER

As the river Breedripper turns west, the second largest tributary, the Vitterstream, continues the journey southwards. The Vitterstream splits up into many small tributaries which all bear the same name. The three tributaries that the Vitterstream splits up into are all tied together at Farengfjord where they all discharge into the ocean. Since the landscape the river flows through is flatter than the landscape of its sister, the river Wolf tongue, there are few waterfalls along the Vitterstream. The current is not as strong as in the Breedripper and the Wolf tongue. It flows similarly to the Darken, at a calmer pace. This has made it possible for the more civilized coastal Nojdan culture to reach further inland here than in other places. More villages along the river have contact with the world outside through the town of Fengsale that is located on an island in the fjord where the river discharges.

VURDVIK

Vurdivik is the fourth largest settlement in Nojd, and it is beautifully situated on a cliff, not far from the cascading Stillwaterfalls which have a symbolic value for the local population.

The inhabitants of Vurdivik are a pack of more or less feral Nojdans who are not completely without contact with the outside world, as it is the case with so many other towns and villages in Nojd.

Despite their recently acquired contact with the outer world, they are not always friendly towards visitors, at least not toward first-time visitors.

YLFINGSTONE

Ylfingstone is the third large cult site in Nojd, and it consists of a huge heap of stones, located almost on the border with the Trollridge Mountains. It is unclear if these stones are a remnant of human activity, or if they are a relic of an older, unknown era before men migrated into this area. The heap of stones is at the bottom of a canyon. At first sight, it even looks like the heap was once a building that has collapsed from above. From the bottom of the canyon, a number of huge, sharp stone wedges point up, as if they had been thrown down there by the hand of a giant. The appearance of this heap of stones is very different from the geometrical order, typical of Nojd's other stone circles. A platform has been built from wood and ropes in the middle of the heap of stones, and it serves as a gathering place for religious ceremonies. The bottom of the canyon is filled with rainwater and has become a deep pool. There are stories about beasts living in this stinking still water pool that feed on the remains of people who fall from the platform.

The huge stone wedges are cut from a type of stone that can only be found in the inaccessible and Incredibly far Great Iron Mountains. It's unclear how they ended up in the southern Stormlands. According to a myth, they were carried here in ancient times by the mythic chieftain called "Ylfing", whose aim was to build a majestic mansion. He brought three giants from the north to help him, and he paid them with mead and human flesh from his slain enemies. When he finished building his mansion and founded his own kingdom, he went out hunting. When he returned home, he found his wife and his brother fornicating in his own bedroom. He then promised the three drunken giants they could eat his wife and brother if they threw the whole huge house into the nearby canyon. The giants then feasted on his wife and brother in this heap of stones. When

they had finished their meal, Ylfing went down to the heap of stones and slew all three giants and threw their remains into the abyss. Since then, the tribe of Ylfing had a tradition of making a yearly human sacrifice, usually throwing convicted criminals and prisoners of war to the hungry pool at the bottom of the canyon.

According to folk belief, you can see the dead souls dance on the surface of the water at the full moon, while their bones float up to form a macabre ballroom floor. The people who live in villages around the heap of stones and in this part of Nojd are all assumed to be descendants of the mythical Ylfing. They live here at the edge of the Trollridge Mountains and on the feet of its spur's slopes, in a harsh environment plagued by trolls and goblins.

Next to the heap of stones, as in the case of other Nojdan cult sites, there is a Gerbanian stave church. The shrine here, though, is very decrepit, and it houses no more than three followers, all of whom look more like wild savages than like normal Gerbanian dimwalkers. They all keep their faith in Stormi, but the environment has made them so feral that they could easily be mistaken for Ylfings. The Ylfings have watched the Gerbanians slowly transforming and have on their part have adjusted themselves somewhat to the Gerbanian faith. Together, they have developed their own faith where Stormi is the main deity, whose power can be reached through fetishes and images. If the faithful of Vortland were to hear of this, the Ylfings and the local priests would be accused of heresy, and a large army of Knights of the Iron Hand would have been sent to the area to destroy the corrupted practices.

In the middle of winter, the big Winter Market is held in a plain field about a day walk from the heap of stones. At the same time, the annual ceremony of sacrificing to the hungry beast in the pool in the hope of a prosperous new year takes place. During these ceremonies the three Gerbanian dimwalkers are present, together with the chieftains of the Ylfing tribe. The Winter Market is a big occasion that attracts even people from the northern parts of Djunghart.



TROLLRIDGE MOUNTAINS

Dead Trail	Morkdali
Graystone	Trollborg
Grimgnistur	Dustwall
Grunkovorda	Wondraskjalf



◆ THE TROLLRIDGE ◆

The Trollridge Mountains are a windswept and barren mountain range. They house, as the name suggests, a large number of trolls and goblins. One can also encounter dwarves living in these mountains. The range is a very hostile place, where troll attacks and treacherous weather changes are common. Though they certainly pose a danger to visitors, the mountains are beautiful to behold.

All around the Trollridge Mountains and their offshoots, verdant forests grow, full of game. As one climbs higher into the mountains, the green landscape gradually turns into the hostile place that comes to mind when the words “Trollridge Mountains” are uttered. When one walks past the periphery, and deeper into the mountains, it soon becomes clear that the rumors about the hardships are true. Soon enough, the only place where plants can be seen is in the valleys between the high peaks. The whole range seem to be one single, enormous mountain. With each valley or pass crossed, one finds oneself higher and higher above sea level. Soon, no trees can be found, only a small bush or two, scattered around the landscape, until they too disappear with the rising elevation.

Unlike other mountain ranges, the Trollridge Mountains are not very wide, but they are indeed very tall and sharp. Because of the altitude, winter here lasts much longer than in the surrounding areas. Spring and fall consist of only a few weeks each. The summer is als wedged in between, and it is more short-lived than the summer outside the mountain range. During

the summertime, the Trollridge Mountains bloom and become a scenic experience for those lucky enough to avoid its inhabitants. Verdant grass grows in the valleys, and colorful lichens and moss cover the mountain walls. Trees and flowers bloom, and it is easy then to forget how hostile these mountains can be. Beech trees dominate the tree life here, but other types can also be found - trees that enjoy the windy landscape and can survive the arid winters. The summer is a botanist’s dream, with mountain flowers and bushes of all colors in full bloom. Hiking in the mountains in summer would be a beautiful and serene experience, if it wasn’t for the trolls.

Streams of different sizes lead down to small mountain lakes and rivers. These streams attract gold panners from all the Stormlands, with dreams of riches from the alluring grains. Other adventurers choose to search the abandoned mines, which can be found on almost every hillside. However, those who look for fortune often find only death, since more than one old mine is now the home of a tribe of fierce trolls.

THE TROLLS OF THE MOUNTAINS

When, thousands of years ago, men chased away the trolls from southern Stormlands, many fled into these mountains. The mountains did not have a common name then, not until the trolls arrived and made their mark. Soon they became known as the “Trollridge Mountains”.

The mountains are completely overrun with trolls - most are descendants of Gray Trolls, although interbred with so many other varieties of trolls. Their mighty leaders often carry traits which seem inherited from Jotuns as well as from King Trolls. The trolls in the mountain range today consists of all manner of Trollkin. There are also tribes where half-trolls are so common that these creatures could “almost” be called humans. This mix of races makes the Trollridge Mountain trolls a unique population, where traits from all known troll peoples can be found in each tribe. Many remain small-statured but there are also many odd combinations. For examples there are those that look like Forest Trolls but which as large as Hrim Trolls, and that some scholars define as Ice Trolls, even if they seem to lack any special Hrimfrost power.

The trolls live in warring tribes, constantly fighting with each other. Most have longstanding heraldic traditions, with banners and flags marked by their leaders' crests. There is no visible hierarchy between the trolls. Mostly size and strength give Trollkin the rights to command and lead. In the Trollridge Mountains, however, leadership can sometimes be decided by intelligence. Therefore, it is not uncommon that the smallest - but smartest - troll becomes a tribe's leader. This can sometimes lead to confusion among those encountering a group of trolls. Armed conflicts between tribes of trolls, and between trolls and other races therefore, take different shapes, depending on who leads the troll tribe. The varied leadership system among the trolls makes their hierarchy chaotic. The physically weak but intelligent leader is often pitted against the force of the strongest. Very rarely does a leader command a tribe for more than twenty seasons. On the other hand, the sense of loyalty to the tribe is very strong among its members. Although leaders are regularly overthrown, it is very rare to see a tribe divided, other than at those times when it is defeated to the point of eradication. This sense of loyalty has resulted in the extensive use of banners, flags, and tattoos signalling tribal membership.

The trolls do not live in the mountain range alone. At least not if you enter the inside of the mountains, where dwarves incessantly seek and dig after the riches hidden in the stone. Since the trolls dislike the open, they are always looking for dark dens, crevices, and abandoned caves. This means that they often come across the dwarves, who protect their mines with great zeal. Trolls rule the mountains' surface, but the dwarves rule their interiors, and clashes often occur between the two. The trolls are obsessed with the riches of the dwarves, and in their quest to obtain them, they focus most of their campaigns to besiege dwarven caves and stockpiles. However, the dwarves protect themselves diligently, with cleverly placed traps, pitfalls, guardposts, and devious projectile weapons. It is therefore

tempting to say that a constant war is waged in the Trollridge Mountains. But since the trolls also fight amongst themselves over territories and riches, a true large-scale war between the two main races of the Trollridge Mountains has so far been avoided.

No men are thought to live in the Trollridge Mountains. Perhaps this is because the trolls' favorite diet is human flesh. There are, however, some villages in Dain and Djunghart bordering this perilous mountain range. Men living in these areas are under constant threat of attacks from hostile trolls. Every ten seasons or so, large troll armies are united under a strong warlord. When this happens, the trolls often become arrogant, and decide to reclaim lands from the men below. These campaigns usually start with the razing of nearby villages. They usually don't get much further than this before the troll offensive is repulsed by the armies of men living in the areas around the Trollridge Mountains. Because of the constant threat of trolls, the men living around the Trollridge Mountains and their offshoots are known to be tough and resilient. They are known to be fearless, excellent warriors. The inhabitants of these villages are tall, and often yellow-eyed, resulting from an involuntary mix of troll-blood in their past. Men inhabiting these areas are somewhat cynical, with a dark view of the world. This is both because they live under regular threat from the trolls, who constantly try to kill them and capture their women, but also because they are looked upon with suspicion by other men, who call them half-trolls.

SIGNS OF LONG-LOST CIVILIZATION

Since the Trollridge Mountains have never been appealing to the domains created after the large migration which created the Stormlands, there is no official history written about these mountains. It is, however, known that a people lived here long before the trolls conquered the hills. This "Cave People" lived like the dwarves - searching for valuable metals

and gemstones buried deep inside the mountains. Unlike the dwarves, who like to keep to themselves what they find in the depths, these mining humans would sell their metals and gems to the cities and lands surrounding the Trollridge Mountains. The Cave People were established in the southernmost part of the mountain range. But because the southern parts of the Stormlands were not very densely populated yet, they mostly sold their goods to the people to the north of the Trollridge Mountains. Nobody knows how long these men lived here before they were expelled or killed by the trolls. Ancient monuments of their presence, in the shape of large castle ruins, can still be found in the southern parts of the Trollridge Mountains. Since no village ruins have been found, it is assumed that they lived inside these large castles. To this day, however, no inscriptions have been encountered in these ruins. This suggests that the people lacked a written language and were unable to record their history. The dwarven kingdoms contain a few scrolls telling about skirmishes between dwarves and the humans of the Cave People which happened in ancient times. These clashes occurred when one of the mining races accidentally dug into the other's tunnels or mines.

Men tend to avoid the Trollridge Mountains because of the many stories of the dangers that haunt them. They would rather walk a few days' march longer to avoid their immediate vicinity. Nevertheless, myths and legends abound about treasures beyond one's wildest dreams hidden deep within the inaccessible mountains. Inns and marketplaces are filled with tales of troll gold and dragons' treasures. In dark alleys people whisper of forgotten pieces of time, known among the elves as the "Falekala", when elves hid their treasures from the grasps of dragons, so many centuries ago, when Trudvang was young. Ancient treasure maps are traded across tavern tables, over mugs and tankards, in cities all over Trudvang. Many are the adventurers seeking their fortune in these barren but beautiful mountains, unfortunately never to return.

THE ANCIENT DWARVEN KINGDOM OF GRAYDEEP, GRUNKOVORDA

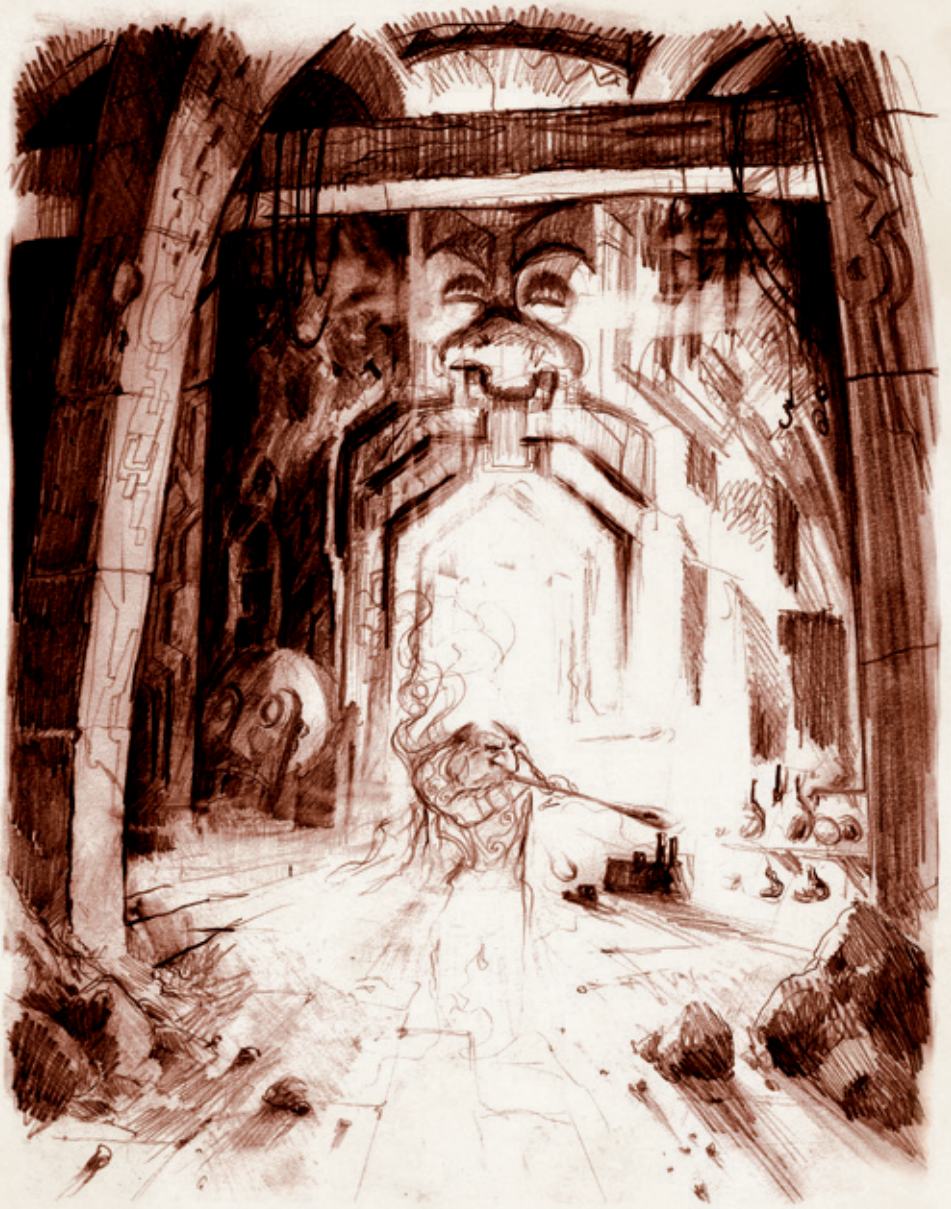
Dwarvish is difficult to understand and to translate, and Grunkovorda, which is the dwarves' name for their land below the enormous Trollridge Mountains, is most easily translated with the Vrok name of "Graydeep". Directly translated, it means "Halls of Graydeep in the Grey Gloom", but the Stormlanders prefer the simpler name of "Graydeep". This mythical fortified realm of the Borjornikka dwarves, once known as Trilheim's biggest rival, is now largely abandoned, and left to the mercy of the Trollkin. Today, the kingdom is divided into several forts, forges, and mines - all fending for themselves. Aside from these small domains, there is a plethora of abandoned tunnels, halls, mines, forges, and other deserted dwarven habitats.

Since the founding of Grunkovorda/Graydeep, the dwarves residing there have made a living by blacksmithing and metallurgy. Among all of Trudvang's blacksmiths, many of the greatest are said to live in the gloomy forges of Graydeep. Despite these blacksmiths' vast knowledge and skills, very few Stormlanders get to use the objects that the dwarves here create. Graydeep's dwarves only sell to a select few buyers, and, more importantly, for a very high price. Dwarven objects from Graydeep are expensive, but their workmanship is excellent and durable. Mostly iron and steel objects are forged in the kingdom, since the Mitraka ran dry in Graydeep long ago.

The ancient realm is divided into the following five locations - or sub-realms: Graystone, Dustwall, Grimgnistur, Wondraskjalf, and Morkdali. In dwarvish, they are known as: Yugglovorka, Ivonda, Olgisiljev, Rorstrai, and Novgalod.

DUSTWALL, IVONDA

In the center of the Trollridge Mountains, like an axle of Graydeep, lies the now abandoned mine called "Dustwall" in vrok or "Ivonda" in the



dwarven language. An excellent kind of Iron is still mined here, but out of the 200 mineshafts once teeming with workers, only 15 remain active today. Adjacent to Dustwall is a small Borjornikka dwarven colony that maintains the mines and makes sure that anyone wishing to mine them pays their fee. The community is led by Thorgagin Dragonslayer, a mythical hero from Trilheim, who, because of a blood feud, was forced to leave his home over 50 years ago.

When he returned to Graydeep, he gave life to the mines again, but

demanded compensation from anyone wanting to mine them. Thorgarin is a good friend of Gargin Redtongue of Grimgnistur, but is feuding with Ivornin Ringalin, the Zvorda leader of Graystone, and has therefore banned him from the mines.

Even if far from Trilheim due to an old feud, Thorgarin is an honorable dwarf who strictly obeys an old edict from his homeland: he blocks the access to Rorstrai and his warriors are commanded to kill on sight anyone who try to pass.

GRAYSTONE, YUGGLOVORKA

Graystone is the northernmost of five communities of Borjornikka dwarves which once were part of the old kingdom of Grunkovorda. Its dwarven name is “Yugglovorka” and it is a small community. On its outskirts, large stones are quarried from the hard black granite, a practically indestructible rock, an excellent component for any fortification. The dwarves of Graymine have learned how to break the black granite with the help of their thuuls, who have been bestowed their tools with a variation of a rare rune (whose name is “Stone to Clay”) that makes it possible for them to quarry even the hardest stones. The Thuul arts seem to transform parts of the granite into clay, which the quarrymen easily separate from their becks. When the granite piece turns back into his original shape, it remains separated, ready to be worked into the desired shape by other, more normal tools.

The black granite is exported to other dwarven communities throughout the Trollridge mountains, as well as to other dwarven lands, but also on a smaller scale to Vortland, who must pay huge sums of money for the rare, hard stone.

Graystone is led by Ivornin Ringalin of the Oktir Brotherhood, who is also one of the few Zvorda to have raised to such a position of leadership. Ivornin controls the Graymines with an iron fist, and his band of heavily armored Zvordorkûm make even the mightiest of the dwarves to shudder.

GRIMGNISTUR, OLGISILJEV

The vrok name “Grimgnistur” refers to the dwarven settlement of “Olgisiljev”, which lies in the east, and is ruled by a council of master blacksmiths. The council is known as the Iron Circle, and those who are elected to it remain members until their death. Today, the Iron Circle consists of a motley group of Borjornikka dwarves, where the oldest member, Fovor Hammershaft,

is said to be as old as 130 years. The youngest, Gargin Redtongue, is considerably younger – at only 90 years. Despite the great difference in age, these two council members are very good friends and comrades in arms. Gargin is said to be one of the Stone Borns, a reincarnation of the original dwarves, made by Borjorn to become master smiths. Gargin’s forging skills are very much appreciated among dwarves all over Trudvang, and he is a living legend who gets great respect even among the Buratja dwarves’ smiths.

Grimgnistur’s economy is based on the forging of high-quality iron and steel, and on rare occasions, mitraka. It consists of 15 smithies, one of which is manned by Buratja dwarves. This smithy is the only one in the Trollridge Mountains which has a logi furnace with a real Logi inhabiting it.

MORKDALI, NOVGALOD

Morkdali is the vrok name of “Novgalod”, the dwarven fort and city connected to the stormgates, the only truly massive gates that lead into the underworld realm of Graydeep. The fort houses more than 10,000 Borjornikka dwarves with some Zvorda, spread over 14 levels, making it the largest dwarven colony in the whole Trollridge Mountains by far. In the vicinity of Morkdali are caves, mushroom farms, and natural caverns where one can hunt Tunnelhogs, and an underground lake. The gates, which are always closed, are very well protected, and are guarded day and night by powerful warriors and Thuuls that have sworn never to allow uninvited visitors to entry. These guardians are called “Thjulks” and are a type of knight’s order which enjoy a special status in the Trollridge Mountains. Their role in the local dwarven society can be roughly equated to what the Knights of the Iron Hand do for the Gerbanis faith.

Morkdali is ruled and led by the Thjulk Orthvinn Irongate.

WONDRASKJALF, RORSTRAI

The settlement of Wondraskjalf, or “Rorstrai” in the dwarven language, is more a fort than a city. Wondraskjalf is in the southernmost part of the Trollridge mountains and can only be reached through a long corridor from Dustwall. Wondraskjalf does not have its own gate, so those dwarves living here must travel all the way to the mines of Dustwall to see daylight. However, the miners of Ivonda do not like the dwarves of Rorstrai, who are usually attacked and killed on sight. The problem is the nature of Rorstrai’s population. Wondraskjalf houses the “Slayers”, a group of dwarves cursed and banished from other dwarven communities, especially from the mighty kingdom of Trilheim which, even if far, can manage to banish these criminals here. They are murderers, sentenced to live with others of their kind for 50 years. When these years have passed, they are considered to have finished their penalty, and have the right to return to their kin. Trudvang has several of these strongholds, and Wondraskjalf is one of the smallest ones. The fortified city houses almost 1000 sentenced dwarves, who are a motley group of murderers, thieves, and honest warriors who made the mistake of committing a crime. When they are sentenced, they are also forced to be the subjects of an ancient and mysterious dwarven ritual: as a result a rune is burned into their foreheads to tell others of their crime. If they are seen outside their allotted area, anyone can kill them without risking punishment. After 50 years the rune mysteriously disappears from their forehead, and they can return to a normal life.

In Wondraskjalf, these dwarves make a living from mushroom farming, mead production (the product of which they sell to other dwarves in Graydeep), and various handicrafts. Every penal colony is led by a chosen Thuul, who has voluntarily chosen to act as a warden. In Wondraskjalf, this prison guard is called Pomvin Illwill.



THE DEAD TRAIL

By the foot of the Gastpeak, the gate to The Dead Trail lies. An underground passage, telling of a people undergoing a golden age, now long gone and forgotten. These people lived here

in the south, at the border of the Trollridge Mountains. They belonged to a now-lost race of humans who, like the dwarves, mined the stones for precious metals and gemstones, which they found in abundance. Sometimes

they are called the "Cave People", but really nobody knows their original name. Riches, precious metals, and gems flowed out of this kingdom to all corners of what are today called Stormlands. But these were tough times,

and these riches were often stolen by thieves along the way, which angered the kingdom's ruler. He ordered a group of cave explorers and several mining teams to find and build an underground passage to the northern kingdoms. The cave explorers went to work immediately, investigating the many existing mines, and soon found what they were looking for. A cave system opened into a multitude of tunnels and rooms, almost all heading north. After many days' march in the cave system they finally found the end in the shape of a solid stone wall. The knowledgeable explorers then spent a long time examining these newly discovered caves for signs of other nearby cave systems. Soon enough, they found a small crack in a rock wall, through which smoke drifted, so they ordered a mining team to start digging. While the miners were digging, a courier was sent to bring the news to the king, who immediately ordered a large workforce to start the construction of a road through the cave system. The road was to be wide enough to fit a large wagon. Seasons came and went, and while the cave explorers charted new cave systems, the mining teams kept digging tunnels, and the workers built the road. One day, almost two hundred seasons after they started, the second generation of cave explorers found themselves overlooking a landscape. They saw it through a small crevice in the mountain, it was the land which much later came to be known as Fynnheim. Soon the crevice became a tunnel, and not long after, bridges and roads wide enough to carry even the largest of wagons had been constructed. The mountain housing this long-awaited exit was named "Daggertop" by the explorers.

What happened next with these Cave People is shrouded in mystery; only guesses remain. The most commonly held belief is that when the big migration toward Djunghart occurred, the trolls were driven into the mountains, causing them to wipe out the cave-dwelling people.

The road between the Gastpeak in the south and Daggertop in the north consists largely of cave floor, which did not require much work to be made, other than leveling it out. Every now and then however, long tunnels needed to be dug, and bridges and ramps connecting the different cave systems had to be constructed. Today, not much remains of the Dead Trail's former glory. However, it is still possible to cross the mountain range through this underground passage. Nevertheless, it would be wise to consider alternative routes before attempting this crossing, since many troll tribes have laid claim to the cave systems along the way. Despite these dangers, many are tempted to enter the Dead Trail. Legends tell about how the ancient Cave People hid their riches in secret places along the trail, before they were erased from the pages of time.

THE KLIPPERLAKE

Shamans, sorcerers, and wizards would do almost anything for the chance to one day stand on the banks of Klipperlake and gaze into this stunning source of purest Vitner. Few - if any - know the way through the Trollridge Mountains to the Klipperlake. It is said that in an old book about vitner, whose name and author are long-forgotten, a map exists which tells of the road leading there. Many believe that the lake is only a legend, told by dreamy-eyed Wizards. But there are those who swear that they have themselves stood on its banks, and seen impossible things occur in front of their eyes. Legends claim that the pool is situated on top of one of the many "hlogres" or great vitner sources or hubs which are spread across the world in a network of gainwires known as the Njord fires. Unlike other vitner hubs however, this hub has burst, causing vitner in its purest form to stream out into the lake. Those knowledgeable in magic currents believe that the world's source of vitner is running dry. They say that the lake is slowly draining the reservoir of magic force flowing

through the njord fires. Others say that without the Klipperlake, the world would explode. They believe that vitner is constantly being generated, and that a valve of sorts is needed to prevent too much energy from being stored.

Looking out over the lake, one can see things that have occurred, or things that will occur, play out in front of one's eyes. One of the lake's most astonishing myths tells of its power to repair that which has been broken. It is said that the lake can cause different things happen, depending on the wish. One must not let his own greed to take over, however. If you believe in the legend of Klipperlake, life can replace death, the broken can become whole, the forgotten can be remembered, and the lost can be found.

One story tells of a man who brought his dead wife to the lake to bring her back to life again. After lowering her into the cold water, she awoke from the sleep of the dead. The man then realised that all the myths about the lake's powers were true, and in a rush of greed wished for a bag of gold. But no bag came. Instead, a dark storm cloud gathered menacingly above him. But the man did not notice this warning sign. Instead he swore, spit into the lake, and tried another wish. This time he wished for eternal life, and immediately fell to the ground, turned into stone.

Another legend tells of three knights who had been instructed to find the lake in order to repair their master's broken sword. When the knights arrived at the lake, one of them placed the broken sword into the water and saw its broken pieces meld together into one. The sword was as good as new. The knights then wondered what else they could get this strange lake to give them. The first of them to enter the lake had a maimed leg from a battle long ago. When he stood in the water he could feel a tingling sensation in his leg, and when he returned to the bank all his pain was gone. The second knight to enter was the oldest among them and wished to become young again. As he returned back from the water, the knight was

twenty years younger than when he had entered, to the great surprise of his friends. The last knight walked into the lake. To his great shagrin, he could not decide what to wish for. Therefore, he chose to wish for nothing, as he did not want to anger his master when he returned. When he came back to the others he started explaining that he couldn't think of anything to wish for. His two friends looked at him puzzled, unable to understand a single word he spoke. The knight had unbeknownst to himself started to speak the melodic elvish tongue, a language he had never before understood or spoken. Soon thereafter, a storm cloud gathered above the lake, and the knights chose to leave this mystical place with the repaired sword safely in their possession. When they returned to their master, they gave him the sword, and told him what they had seen. Their master could immediately tell that his knights were not lying when they told him that they had found this extraordinary place, so he asked them what they saw there. One of the knights stepped forward to tell him, but to his surprise, realised that his memory of the journey had been completely erased from his mind. This fate strikes all who find the lake - none can recall their journey there nor back. Some have tried to bring some of the lake water back with them in a container. But they inevitably find that the water's power has evaporated, losing all its properties, except that to quench mens' thirsts.

THE MINES

Across the mountain range, entrances to both small and large mining systems can be found. Within, sweat and lives

have been shed in the hope of finding the precious metals and gemstones buried deep within the Trollridge Mountains. Some adventurers have succeeded in finding the riches that they sought - and brought them back to their homelands. However, many more who tried never returned to see their friends and families again. The last thing their eyes and ears encountered was the crude jokes of the trolls, and their sharp knives.

Some of these mining systems lead to places filled with riches, untouched by outsiders for aeons. But others lead into the dark depths, with only darkness awaiting where they end. Most abandoned mining systems are now homes to trolls, which must be dealt with before one can start looking for the hidden treasures within.

TROLLBORG

In the heart of the Trollridge Mountains, on a plateau high above the clouds, stands a curious fort. The air here is thin and difficult to breathe for visitors unused to the high altitude. In the middle of the plateau stands the strange construction known as "Trollborg", named after its founder, Rukla Longtongue.

Rukla Longtongue was a King Troll that lived long ago. He was an extremely cunning King Troll and during his long life he got the idea of constructing this stronghold. He united several of the largest tribes in the mountains, and under slave-like conditions, he forced his lowest ranks to commence the construction. Like so many other troll leaders, Rukla was killed by his successor, who took over the construction after his ascension to power. The new troll had his own

ideas of how the fort should be built and continued the construction according to his own tastes. One day, this troll too was killed, and another took over power, and continued the construction according to his own, personal ideas. In this way Trollborg kept growing over thousands of seasons, each leader continuing the construction after his own fashion.

Today the fort looks very peculiar. It looks as if a giant had placed a large variety of forts in a bag and shook it up, after which, he poured the mixed contents onto the plateau. Round towers stand warped and askew next to half-finished square towers. Enormous buildings protrude among the towers, half of them without a roof, or missing a wall. All buildings are connected through thousands and thousands of rooms and corridors. Over the years, the fort has become a giant labyrinth, with no central planning or structure. Each new ruler has hidden his treasures in his own secret compartments of the fort. Often these have been forgotten, or accidentally been built over by the following ruler, making the castle filled with lost treasures. Trollborg is so large and its structure is so complicated that there are trolls inside that have never seen the outside, since they have never found their way out.

The incredible fort with its remarkable structure has turned into a little miniature world of its own, complete with regions that have their own rulers and subjects. Nowadays controlling the whole Trollborg is impossible for a single troll lord. It is impossible to say how many trolls and chieftains live within, but there is a rumour about a powerful troll leading the largest clan in Trollborg and which has started uniting some of the largest tribes.

VORTLAND

Bjarpoint
Brownhill's Moor
Dririk
Frostgrove

Grenwall Gifts
Gruuw
Hawen
Jockla River
Jornhelm
Jornwind
Jotuncratir
King's Call
Klapperland

Mywater
Oakhall
Sharprund's Eskers
Stormrock
The Storm Coast
The Troll Rocks
Windiborn
Wind's Nest
Windock



♦ VORTLAND ♦

In the society that the Kremors once founded in Vortland, there were no kings.

The power lay with a “Hjallir”, a kind of lord, or clan leader. Hjallir had two main functions: First he would act as a secular lord, he would lead the defense against outer enemies, he led a council of tribal chieftains and village elders, but he never, even during war, set foot outside the borders of his territory. His second task was to watch over the community’s tradition and culture.

Thus, Vortland came to lack an authority or a great king who held the land together with imperial dreams towards other lands, and instead, it was led by a lord who controlled a number of farms and warriors only for its defense. Although the times later changed, the ancient tradition of a Hjallir in many respects remains in Vortland and, alongside Gerbanian rules, the lord of a particular area still governs many parts of the land. The power of the lord today is not possible to compare against what he had then: the battle of Brownhills’ Moor changed everything.

The battle is well known all over the Stormlands. It was the first real battle in Stormlandic history. The seer Gerban Hvungdir had gathered his troops with great power to defeat and incorporate the savage tribes on the fields of Vortland, under a common banner, and the discretion of Gerban. Trolls and Wildbrons had gathered at Brownhills’ Moor to meet the faithful devotees of Stormi, or “Gerbans”, which they were called. It was said that a god walked the Stormlands in human guise. His name was Stormi, and his son was named Jörn.

It was autumn, and the rain had poured down from the sky as if it was crying about what was about to unfold. Gerban’s

chief commander, Vidrik Blacktongue, had gathered his forces in three lines around the moor, well aware of the advantage of his enemy being higher up. A burst of troll arrows had poured down over his forces while he put them in motion. Just north of the moor, near Sharprund’s eskers, was Gerban Hvungdir with his fearsome warriors. As soon as Gerban heard that his enemies, trolls and Wildfolk, had pushed their wildest warriors in a ruthless attack against Vidrik and the three ranks, he put his men in motion. But the rain caused greater harm than he bargained for. The horses could no longer be ridden at full gallop, and Gerban feared the worst.

For Vidrik, the troll attack was not unexpected, but was earlier and more forceful than predicted. The day ended when Gerban reached Brownhills’ Moor, and to his great dismay, he saw that the whole of Vidrik Blacktongue’s army had been defeated. The trolls had moved on towards King’s Call, and perhaps they had taken the mighty city, which, according to the legend, had been built by the former Thronlanders, at a time when neither Broths nor Kremors had come to the Stormlands.

Gerban soon found his army’s yellow and black flag, and beside it the wounded Vidrik, still breathing. Before Vidrik died


in Gerban’s arms, he said: “Gerban, friend and preacher, the enemy will take King’s Call. You can still prevent them if you take the route via Ylterstone.” While Vidrik died, the rain stopped, the sun found its way through the clouds, and a strong wind blew in from the east. With the wind at his back, Gerban’s strongest army of heavily armed hirdmen on horses came to strike their enemy from behind. The battle was short and merciless.

Gerban managed to destroy more than half of his enemies before his forces became fatigued. But once this was done, the enemy found themselves surrounded by Gerban’s armies, and defeat was inevitable.

Proud and victorious, Gerban did not know that the forces he fought were only a rearguard for his enemy’s army, and when his scouts later came with this message, he realised their enormous strength. Without rest, he left his wounded behind, and went on to King’s Call, because he got word that the main army was on its way there.

That night, King’s Call fell, and Gerban was too far away to do anything. The town was plundered and burned to the ground, and when Gerban, later the next day, saw a mighty column of smoke on the horizon, he realized that the legendary town was beyond saving. The huge enemy army of





trolls moved further south, to devastate the sister land of Nojd but, before they could return to the Fields of Vortland, Gerban had built a new army, in a land, far to the south, at the wild river of Glimmerford, which separates Nojd from Vortland. He once again met his enemy, and despite Gerban's forces winning an overwhelming victory that day, the great seer, Gerban Hvungdir, could celebrate little. He lay dead on Glimmerford's north shore. His courage had become his death, but the Fields of Vortland now had a unified government, and a new country was formed.

Hjoar Bleakbane was proclaimed ruler of the new kingdom, and decreed that from now onwards, Stormi's law would also be the law of all the land in Vortland. From that day, Stormi's dimwalkers came to mean more to the land than its Hjallir. Hjoar took the title of "Paater", after the old Brothic name "Patur", that meant "father." During the first Paater's lifetime, four new cities were created, which still today are the centre of power in Vortland. The four cities were all named after the new religion; Stormrock, Jornwind, Jornhelm, and Windiborn.

THE POWER IN VORTLAND: THE PAATER AND THE CLANS.

Today, the Paater, as the ruler and preacher, governs the land under the Gerbanian religion. To his aid, he has 28 Bryckers, whose equivalent are the jarls of the other Stormlandic lands. The difference is that they are appointed for religious reasons, and on the same merits. Despite this, there are three very influential clans in the land. The strongest clan is also the one from which the current Paater, Glorimma Stormhandi, comes. The Stormhandi dynasty has always had strong ties to the Stormlandic faith, and according to them, Gerban descended from the Stormhandi dynasty. Stormhandi has great riches in the western parts of Vortland. The other two dynasties, Halfis and Grundolf, don't have the same influence over religion as the Stormhandi, but both are rich in land and capital. Halfis is led by Inguld Halfis, and they have great domains around Jornwind. They also control Gruuw, and to some extent Oakhall. The Grundolfian dynasty is led by Flogrim Grundolf, whose wealth is largely based on trade with Fynnheim. The dynasty is known for its craftsmen, and they provide both Fynnheim and Vortland with considerable amounts of weapons and armors every year.

BJARPOINT

At the tip of Bjarpoint, where the cliffs rise higher than anywhere else along the coast of Klapperland, there is a sacred place for all the faithful of Stormi. On a steep slope above the sea, a variety of large stone altars are erected. It is here, on Bjarpoint, that all Paaters and Bryckers that served the Gerbanian faith are buried. As is customary in the Stormlands, the corpses are not buried in the earth, but they are exposed on a stone altar to perish by the elements of water and wind.

Many believers make pilgrimages to Bjarpoint to see the holy men one last time before Stormi take them with him.

It is a large funerary complex, both in terms of number and size of the altars for body exposures. The earliest altars are said to be dated to the beginning of the Age of

the Stars. Some altars resemble towering crypts, with walls covered with inscriptions and prayers. One of the crypts can be descended into to reach a small shrine. This very crypt is said to have belonged to the “Storm King” himself: a legendary Paater, who was said to have killed a Logiwurm on the slopes of the Trollridge Mountains. His sword, called “Stormi’s Tongue”, is the only thing that still exists of the remains and of his equipment. The sword is guarded day and night by a small band Knights of the Iron Hand from Stormrock.

BROWNHILL’S MOOR

Brownhill hosts a vast moor, in the northernmost parts of the Trollridge Mountains, extending from the mountain towards the fertile plains to the south of Driik. The moor is known for a series of encounters with Trollfolk, and the area is well known to host great packs of trolls and goblins.

From these hills, the rare reddish black Brownstone is mined.

DRIIK

This beautiful town was once the heart of Vortland. The town was meant to be the seat of the great “East Vammel Kingdom”, the dream of Paater Vjal Avlotsbarn to unite the whole Stormlands under his direct rule. This dream failed so long ago, leaving the town between the memories of its glorious past and its unfulfilled hope of greatness.

Driik is built over the wild Iceford river, and once boasted the most beautiful buildings and structures throughout the Stormlands. Out of these constructions, only three bridges are left, which tell about the old days. The three bridges all span over the river Iceford, and are supported by heavy stone columns, constructed by dwarves.

Driik, or Driikheim as it once was called, was the first big town of Vortland, and it existed long before Gerban the Preacher spread his new faith to the east. Driik was strategically placed upon the river in the middle of a newly-won kingdom. The people could, if necessary, easily fall back on one or the other side of the river. Although the town lacks a fortress with high towers

and walls, it has always been considered to be built with care and strategic finesse. The stone-lined streets that wind their way through the narrow alleys, as well as the small defence sentries, are a nightmare for anyone who wishes to raid the town.

The town has two important institutions, which always compete for power: the clergy led by Brycker Oftdale Loth, and the wealthy Stormhansa, which has many representatives in town. Oftdale is one of six Bryckers who were engaged in the “Baptism of Fire”, which led to the current Paater being chosen as the spiritual leader of Gerbanis. Oftdale is considered by many to be better suited as a Paater, due to his steadfastness in his faith. His rituals are more sophisticated than those performed by any other Brycker. Others argue that there are those who know significantly more prayers and rites than this dimwalker does.

The town has been divided between the four major merchant families: the Bjarnirs, Northlings, Jorklirs, and the Wolfheimers, which are in a constant feud with one another. Among these, the Northlings are the strongest, and possess the greatest power due to their control of the town’s arms commerce. Their private Wildfolk hird of pure-blooded Bults from the west is widely feared, even by the Wildbrons who are part of the other families’ hirds.

THE GRENWALL GIFTS

The ancient kings’ great burial mounds were to be found near Windiborn, to the northwest of its northernmost village of Eastwindi. The descendants of the Thronelands, who many thousands of years ago built a fortified town on the eastern coast of Vortland, erected the burial mounds. The Thronelands never claimed the land, and when they settled in what is now Vortland, the Stormlands were even wilder and untamed. Five were the kings of Throneland who died in this wild kingdom before the Thronelands decided to return to the west. Five also are the mounds, which lie in a crescent about 400 meters apart. Nowadays, the rocks are covered with thick and lush moss, and look to the untrained eye more like a row of grassy hills than the graves they really are. Many of the graves have long since been looted, but

the legends of the mythical treasures said to be buried in and around the mounds still attract adventurers and treasure hunters, not to mention the King Trolls, who are often to be seen sneaking among the hills. No one really knows why the Thronelands buried their kings this far inland. Nowadays, the towering hills are a monument to days long gone and times forgotten.

THE GRUUV MINE

The iron mine in Gruuw is known for the excellent quality of the ore. There is really only one problem: there is too little ore in the veins to make it profitable to mine. At the mine, which is located on one of the slopes of the mountain range known as the Icepeak Mountains, a small mining village has emerged, as the mine has stretched its long arm into the mountain. When ordinary people talk about Gruuw, they mean in fact the town, and not the mine, which usually called just “the Mine”.

The ore that is mined is sent, unprocessed and unrefined, to Oakhall, where it is then transported further to the south.

HAWEN

Hawen is a small town in the foothills of the mighty mountain range known as the Icepeak Mountains. To ordinary people, it is an unknown town, like many others in Vortland, but for Vitner Weavers, it has been a site of pilgrimage for many thousands of seasons. Although Stormi’s forces are strong in Vortland, there is so far no Paater who has been able to prohibit the wizards from using Hawen as a meeting place in the land. Here, both magicians and their students gather to decipher the “Bones of the Oracle”, which are to be found In Jotuncratir, about a half day’s march from Hawen. The Frostgrove

The four smaller woods in the west, which broke away from the Bjarnwoods, are collectively known as “Frostgrove”. Despite their vastness, they are all dense and inaccessible. The woods harbor tribes of pure-blooded Wildbrons, who have wandered up from Ejldland. These are direct relatives of the Wildbrons who dwell in the Copperwoods.

THE JOCKLA RIVER

The mighty wild stream known as Jockla River makes its way down from the Icepeak Mountains to the north. It flows through the beautiful lake known as Mywater, down to its broad mouth by the sea. This cold and wild rapid has many times taken lives and drowned sorrows. Its waters are crystal clear, and the foaming eddies in the many waterfalls make even the least experienced realize that the river is a challenge to anyone trying to cross it at the wrong place.

JORNHELM

Jornhelm is found near the Glimmerford's mouth to the sea. Like a lighthouse, it rises from the north shore, on the spot where the great prophet Gerban was once killed. The town does not have a real port, even if low-hulled boats sometimes come by the river mouth, attracted by the trade which flourishes in this town due to its strategic position. The citizens here primarily support themselves through farming on the fertile lands on the wild river's northern shores. However, the southern shores along Glimmerford consist of a belt of stones, which stretches all the way up to the Trollridge Mountains. This effectively prevents any kind of farming on the Nojdian side of the river. Jornhelm's strong position within Vortland's trade and commerce, has led to a strategic build-up of towers and fortifications along the Glimmerford over the years.

JORNWIND

Jornwind was founded by first Paater, Hjoar Bleakbane, but it later became one of the so-called "Torch Towers, the infamous fortresses which were built or re-built by Paater Vjal Avlotsbarn as an attempt to demonstrate his power all across the Stormlands, with his project of a great "East Vammel Kingdom".

Jornwind was built as a fortress rather than a town, but over the centuries a small town has sprung up both outside, as well as inside, its mighty walls. Jornwind is one of the real "Storm Castles" and, if it was not well-known that it was built in great haste and with many casualties,

one would have thought it had been built by dwarves.

Jornwind is a powerful guardian. The castle, in the form of a giant figure, is said to be an image of Jorn, Stormi's son, in his full glory. The castle stands in the middle of the land, as a warning to those trying to get to the Stormrock, or to those who think Gerbanis' kingdom only stretches along the rocky coast. Few people residing in the town have an occupation not related to religion.

For 20 years, the legendary and mythical Knight of the Iron Hand known as Ingrid Klovtooth has ruled Jornwind.

JOTUNCRATIR

About half a day's march to the northwest of Hawen, in the direction of the Icepeak Mountains, lies the mythical and, among exorcists, well-known location of Jotuncratir. This large crater, where the Bones of the Oracle are said to be found, is the Paater's main concern in this area. This is the actual reason for Hawen's status as the administrative center of this part of Vortland. The place is said to be haunted by evil and ancient forces that people would probably do best to avoid. Therefore, it is visited only by a few brave or foolhardy people from Hawen or its vicinities.



The giant Bones of the Oracle derive from a huge skeleton of a long-extinct race. Some claim that they derive from a dead giant, others say from dragons. The Stormlanders themselves insist on one of the evil chaos powers that fell from the sky when Stormi showed his force. The mages make pilgrimage here to behold the runic characters that cover the skeleton. The wizards claim that the Bones of the Oracle hide some of the most powerful hidden magic spells.

KING'S CALL

It is a mystery how and why the proud Thronelanders came to the Stormlands. The story is long since forgotten among most Stormlanders. Still, they came to the Stormlands, and settled upon the Jockla River, where they established a typical grand Thronelandish town. They named it "King's Call".

They built a beautiful town with towers and turrets, large enough to house around 3000-4000 people. Sadly, its beauty and grandeur would not last for many years. When the first Thronlander king in the Stormlands died, in what is now Vortland, the town fell for the first time in history. The town was rebuilt, over and over, but never reached the grandeur and beauty of its past. King's Call was plundered and devastated at the beginning of the Age of the Prophets, and no one has ever thought about rebuilding it.



Those travelling on the path between Stormrock and Driik can see the ruins of the devastated town. Sometimes, wanderers stop to look over the mighty hills along the coast, and marvel at a people they have never seen, and a town that no longer exists. In the midst of King's Call's ruins stands a mighty Iron Oak, spreading its large branches. The holly was planted by the first king of Throneland who came to the Stormlands. Next to the town are a number of catacombs. At this time, many have collapsed or are missing their roofs. Many of those who are still in the dark are afloat.

KLAPPERLAND

The rugged coastline stretching from Jornhelm in the south to Stormrock in the north is known as Klapperland. It is a tall coastline, with rocky shores and vertical rock walls extending up from the sea. All along the coast, one can see the huge sea stacks known as the Sea Kings. In the region it is believed that the coast was once the burial ground for sea giants, and that the large sea stacks are their burial stones. A treasure is said to be found at the foot of each stone. However, few have dared to make their way down the rocky cliffs to see if this is true or not, since the stormy sea and the foaming, wild waves, with their underwater currents, would smash anyone who dares to try against the rocks.

THE MYWATER LAKE

Mywater, in the northeast, is Vortland's only real lake. It is a peculiar lake, with many islands and lava formations, and shores rich in vegetation. The lake was formed during the Age of the Iron Dragon, when lava from a volcanic eruption dammed the creeks. However, nowadays the Jockla runs through the lake.

The lake is rich in fish. It is known that those who are not cautious might find sea serpents on their hooks instead. The sea serpents here are larger than elsewhere. They are said to be black.

OAKHALL

Inguld Halfis' youngest son Rungil Halfis is installed as Swordjarl to guard this northernmost fortress of the Kingdom of Vortland. Oakhall is wedged between two small mountains in the foothills of the mighty Arnehjulda. It is a small, but strong, castle that guards a town with 2000 inhabitants.

The town is a major junction for the crude ore that is shipped from Gruuw through Oakhall, then further south.

The small but well-equipped Stormhird that keeps watch on Oakhall are more loyal to Rungil than to the Paater in the south, thus Rungil has instituted his own laws, with harsh taxation on the people as well. Many say Rungil's days here are numbered. He is wallowing in wealth and gifts, and says, "to guard the most desolate and troubled parts of Vortland it must pay for itself." He keeps his loyal minions at his back, and in many cases, they are allowed to do basically whatever they want without punishment or any measures taken against them. At his side, Rungil has one of the most notorious murderers in Vortland, Gruld Big. He is said to have killed more than 500 men.

The town has well-stocked grocers, two taverns, a variety of mead cottages, and a small Gerbanian stave church, which is cared for by the Stormkelt Torfinn Steepir. Unknown to all, Torfinn Steepir belongs to the Hel Riders, a well-kept secret.

SHARPRUND'S ESKERS

Round, smooth stones, as big as human skulls, sometimes even larger, cover a vast area known as the Sharprund's Eskers. It is an esker with a dark past. The esker was formerly used as a place of execution for those condemned to death. Among the stones, the condemned were beheaded. They got to choose their own stone as a chopping block. Those who live near the esker, only rarely go there. They believe the esker is haunted by the spirits of the executed.

STORMROCK

The most majestic symbol of Gerbanis in Vortland is Stormrock, an impressively-looking settlement at the top of a mountain, which rises along the rocky west coast. Established by the first Paater, Hjoar Bleakbane, it has since then been the center of all trade within the Stormlands, as well as the southwestern Stormlands beyond the seas.

The town, with its log covered streets, literally climbs up along the big rock, and winds its way up to the top, where the impressive Gerbanian sanctuary Stormskalf stands, erect as a monument to past times. Never in its history has the town fallen into the hands of an enemy, despite many attempts to seize it. Stormrock is the very symbol of this Gerbanian Empire within the Stormlands, and houses both the Paater and the local Brycker, and it is full of ancient wisdom and history. The fortress extends deep into the rock. The wooden tower and the wooden houses at the top of the cliff are just the tip of the iceberg. Long winding paths, hidden doors, and secret chambers are hidden in the rock's interior. In its depths are armories, dungeons, and treasure chests filled with great wealth.

The town rises like a granite spear from the fertile green lands surrounding the rock, and it has been said that one who stands among the Icepeak Mountains' mighty peaks can see the town on days when the sun shines brightly, and the sky is clear and bright blue.

Stormrock boasts Vortland's biggest mead hall, though not the best one. Its name is the "Bearclaw and Alehope", but it is better known by most as just the "Bear". One will find it within a large log house, built upon a stone foundation. It is three-stories high and has rooms for more than one hundred guests. In the basement there is singing and brawling every night. Talented poets can earn good money here, during the cold winter nights. Within Stormrock, one can find many cottages where barbecue and mead are served. Those in town, who do not like roast boar, oiled with apple juice and wild honey, really miss out on something. This boar recipe, typical of Stormrock, is widely known throughout Vortland.

Within Stormrock houses are cramped, built close upon one another, and the lanes are narrow. Most houses stand on solid stone foundations and have timber walls with just a few windows. Almost all houses near the Stormskalf sanctuary have large stormihalls, which indicates that the ones who live here are more than wealthy.

Every day at the wide Apple Square a motley crew of merchants, jesters, courtmen, and dimwalkers gather to offer their services. Some services are darker than others. At the port, more slaves are sold than anywhere else in the Stormlands.

THE STORM COAST

The isthmus that extends from the Jokla River in the south to the Wildlandish town of Oungair in the north, is known as the “Storm Coast”. The area is rocky, and supports little vegetation. Not even the black heather manages to get a foothold in this, the most barren part of Vortland. In the old days, limestone was quarried at some places along the coast. Nowadays, the quarries are empty and abandoned. The small amount of softer, superficial limestone that once could be mined is long gone, and only the harder, lower bedrock remains.

Parallel to the coast, one can see some higher dikes and as one moves inland these gradually turn into rich grasslands with transversal eskers. Pure rocky lands are missing, and the area consists of alternating dry and wet meadows. Upon the herb-rich dikes grow loans, wild roses, and junipers. Upon the beach dikes near the coast one can find several Thronelandian remains.

THE TROLL ROCKS

On the plain north of Windock, there are four huge boulders resting on top of each other, as if they were placed there with great care. Three of the round boulders form the base, while the fourth is resting on top. They are commonly known as the “Troll Rocks”, due to the belief that they were placed there by Trolls, a long time ago. The granite boulders are covered with a thick layer of moss. One can see yellow fungi breaking their way through the

mould. For those who bother going inland, the boulders act as a good resting place for those who wander on the grand trail towards Jornhelm, or north towards Driik.

WINDIBORN

Windiborn, with its seven surrounding villages, is a fortified town whose original purpose was to defend the Gerbanian faith near the border with Fynnheim, in the east of Vortland. However, Windiborn is not a real town. The wooden fortress with the seven merged villages represents the local, Stormlandish interpretation of the idea of a very large town. The fortress lies like a boiling cauldron among the villages. The vibrant trade among and between the villages of Eastwindi, Stoneguard, Bjarnhem, Eastlind, Angir’s House, Stormborn village, and Vjalecroft will, in time, merge them together with Windiborn to become a single town. The affinity and community between the villages have made even strangers find themselves at ease in this maze of life.

In the vicinity of Windiborn, there are plenty of opportunities for both farming and forestry, as well as hunting. Craftsmen of various kinds are to be found if one asks around among the villages. Windiborn is also famous for the large community of the “Skrajtagers”: Gerbanian scholars who are keeper of religious wisdom and lore. Their presense strengthen the religious impression of the city and, together with the solidarity between the people in the region, it has given Windiborn a very good reputation. Here, people live in unity under Stormi’s good will, as worshippers of the Great Belief. The fortress, along with the villages, has become Gerbanis’ largest recruitment center, and followers from faraway lands have found their way here. The Skrajtagers have created vast libraries, including rare books like the original version of the Tenth Applamaal, a sacred and well-revered book on which every new Skrajtager must make a vow of allegiance to the order. The libraries also include a copy of the famous “Jorgi’s Bestiary” written by a Westmarkian monk of the Tenet of Nid.

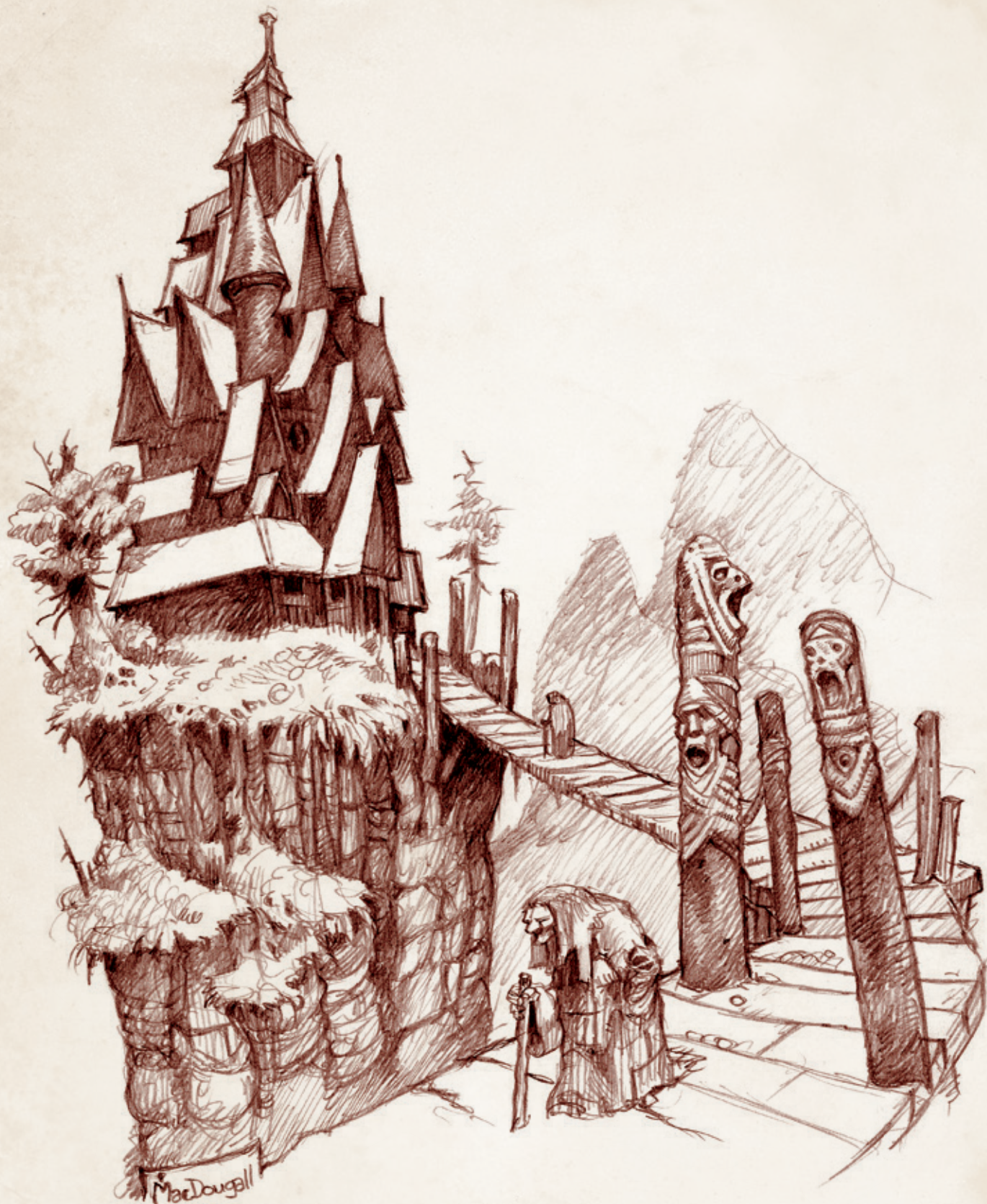
THE WIND’S NEST PLAINS

In the summertime, this vast plain is covered by a thick layer of black heather. In the wintertime, the winds roar like beasts, and hail storms scourge both body and soul. On these stone-covered plains live only the most hardy and enduring wild animals and beasts. For the one who dares to go up into its domains, he will be greeted with good hunting grounds of varying prey. Up here, one might find the Nordkraliska Ox, along with black bears and wolverines. Along the long trail, which looks more like a trodden path than anything else, one finds both hunting lodges and farming villages. However, most of these are abandoned for much of the year, when winter so mercilessly fights those who choose to live here.

In the eastern parts of Wind’s Nest Plains, one finds the Apple Wood. It is a large area with many kinds of trees. Most of them are large birch trees or troll pines. Here, one might find the rare winter apple tree, a kind of apple tree that bears fruit only once every ten years. The apples of the winter apple tree are pure white and taste very good. Though, the trees only bear fruit in the winter, there are very few who are willing to journey up into the forest to pick these apples.

THE WINDOCK SPRING

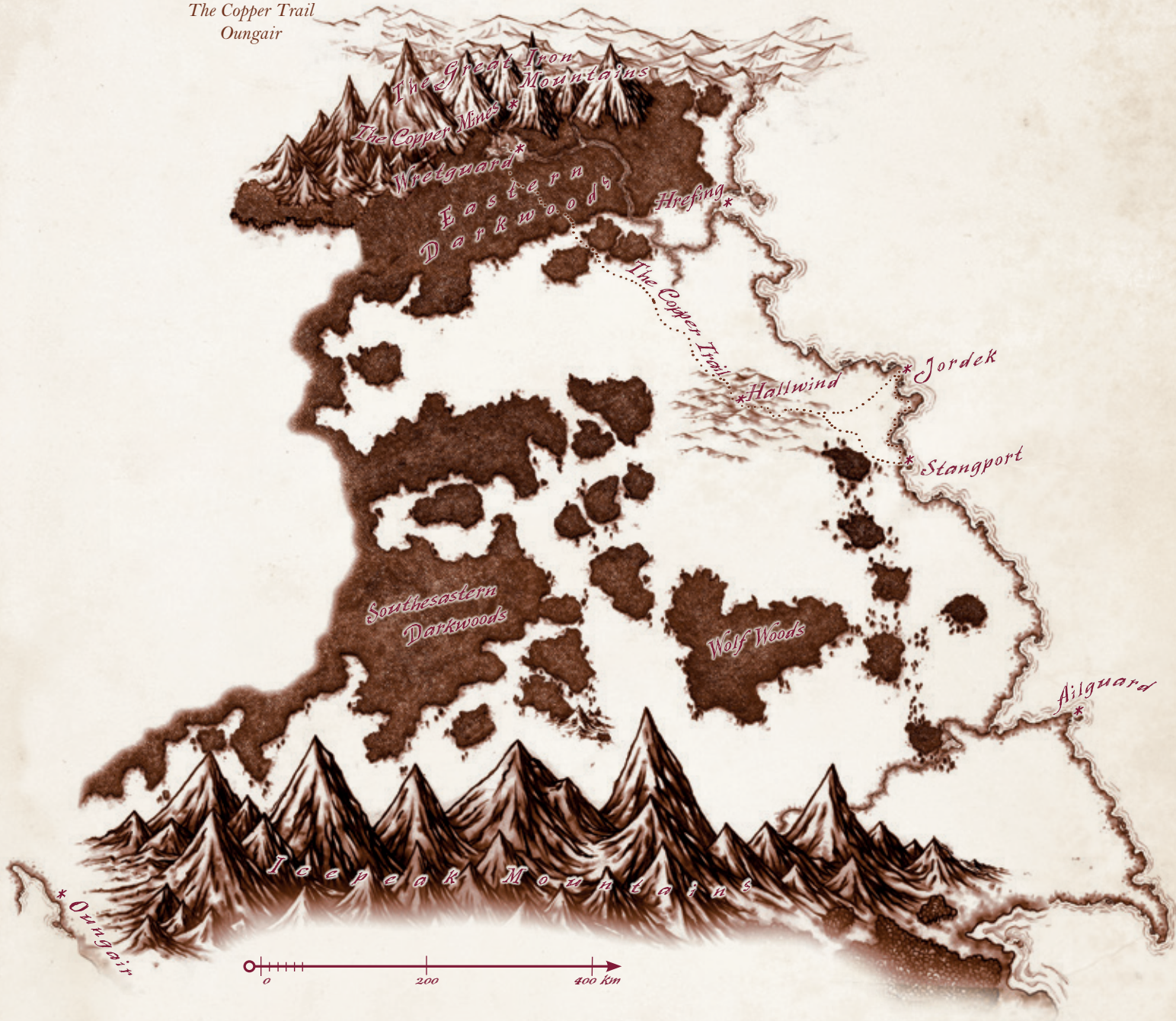
At the foot of the Trollridge Mountains’ steep slopes lies a fabled spring, which Stormi himself is said to have been drunk from. It is a spring with fresh and clear water, but so cold it is barely drinkable. The spring is no larger than three fathoms in diameter, but it is so deep that no one has ever reached its bottom. Anyone who wants to drink from its water, which is said to have healing properties, has to pay a coin to the priests who live here. The spring is located in the middle of the great temple, and to get there you have to walk along a steep and difficult path, and over treacherous, narrow wooden bridges. The place is called “Windock” and the temple has been given the honorable name of “Stormespring”.





WILDLAND

<i>Ailguard</i>	<i>Stangport</i>
<i>Hallwind</i>	<i>Darkwoods</i>
<i>Hrefing</i>	<i>Wolf Woods</i>
<i>Jordek</i>	<i>Wretguard</i>
<i>The Copper Mines</i>	
<i>The Copper Trail</i>	
<i>Oungair</i>	



♦ WILDLAND ♦

Over time, countless people have emerged into the light of history. Some have established themselves well and have founded new lands and communities which have endured through thousands upon thousands of years. Others have vanished, perhaps even without any trace, while still others have left memories behind, and erected monuments.

Some people's fate becomes legends and myths, and their irretrievable past is full of riddles that captivate. At the end of the Age of the Iron Dragon, the Elvish songs tell about many different human tribes and folks who wandered through the wilderness of Trudvang, without ever settling.

The Arks' sister folk - the Agroths - were such a people. They lived in the sheltered darkness of the woods in the foothills of the Great Iron Mountains, from the west to the east. They were a stubborn and untamed folk, who wandered into the Stormlands and mixed with Broths, Kremors and Wildbrons. Like the Wildbrons, they lived for war, with a strong belief in spirits. Also, as in the Wildbrons' culture, all men underwent a test of manhood as a rite of passage, through which they got their high status as warriors and protectors of the tribe. The struggle of war was the most important thing in life for the Agroths. The men's war capability was of utmost importance. From early on, they were raised to shed blood, and great effort was put into creating weaponry. The most common armaments were a shield with iron fittings, a sword of iron or bronze, and a short spear.

Time was hard on this people, though. The Agroths were spat upon by both Broths and Kremors who did not want to have anything to do with this people. Nowhere in the Stormlands did they find a place to settle down and nowhere were they welcomed, despite large tracts of land being available.

The Broths and Kremors did not want war. They wished to live well, sustaining themselves by hunting and fishing. They wanted to lay down roots and build garrisons and fortifications against the great dangers of the wilderness. The Broths were fierce, death-venerating enemies while the Kremors used their upper hand in battle on horseback boldly and without fear of the great loss of life, just as they had done with the Wildbrons, forcing the Agroths further and further north-east to this most savage region of Trudvang. In a final attempt to assert their right to the land, the great leader and autocratic chief of the Agroths gathered his people for a final showdown.

Grimur Moonfriend had chosen the place with great care and thought, because he knew his people's war tactics using the Wildfylkings formation would be difficult against the Kremors' and Broths' mounted archers and lancers. Nowadays,

very few remember the great battle, and it was never depicted in the tales of the Elves. The day is commonly known as the "Bloedis'Dunn" - the Day of the Red Snow. Many people still talk about this day as one of the bloodiest in the history of the Stormlands. The battle took place on the outskirts of the Bjarnwood, where thick vegetation hindered the cavalry charges. Despite the death of thousands and thousands of Broths and Kremors, only a few Agroths understood what their leader, Grimur Moonfriend - did, that the time had finally come for them to leave this land. With thousands of warriors along with their families and all their belongings, this remnant of a people undertook a hard and bitter journey to what is nowadays called Wildland.

It was difficult for the Agroths to start from scratch again. Wildland was not the best place to settle in. The Agroths would probably still be living their usual life, were it not for a man known as Haakon Hagthorn.

Haakon Hagthorn, one of Grimur Moonfriend's many descendants, was a man of great determination. He sought new solutions, and wanted for his people, sometimes in the future, to be one with the Stormlands, but he could not recur



to his people's historical enemies, the Broths and the Kremors, but to the Wildbrons which he invited in his land. It is because of Haakon if the Agroths, intermixing with the Wilbrons, became a new people: the Wildlanders. The Wildbrons brought horses, mighty bulls and many new tools from the Stormlands, while the Agroths shared their secrets regarding Berserkers' warfare practices and surviving the hardships of life in the cold Wildland. On his deathbed, he had become the King of Wildland. Looking back on his life's work brought

him happiness. After Haakon's death, the world would change. Everything would have been fine, were it not for the arrival of the dark ages to Wildland.

The Fylkjarls of Wildland were unable to agree about a new King. The discovery of new copper deposits brought wealth, attracting many new immigrants from the Stormlands, but also envy and greed to what came to be called the "Copper Kingdom". The ensuing struggle for power made desperate men seek to awaken the forces of darkness. The evil that was awakened

was greater than anyone could have ever imagined, and many people still nowadays murmur of the horrors practiced by the Ice Cult.

This dark era would be known as the "Time of the Untamed" and has forever left its mark on those who live here. This is a time that everyone wants to forget, due to the dire war against the Ice Cult. The Hagtorn family produced heroes in that dark time, able to bring new glory to the royal title but, at the end, they lost their kingdom to repay a debt to the Hrim Trolls.

THE POWER IN WILDLAND: THE FYLKJARLS

Since the fall of the Hagton kings the land has since been ruled by the council of the seven Fylkjarls, also known as the “Fylk-Thing”. At the beginning, the Fylkjarls were impoverished Shieldjarls or rich men with problematic backgrounds who, for various reasons, had to flee the Stormlands. These in time intermarried with the strongest lineages of local Wildlanders of Agroth and Wildbron ancestry. The leaders of this growing class were later to be known as the Fylkjarls. They, who now owned both land and capital, quickly rose to power in Wildland, and thus the Fylk-Thing was established. The villages in Wildland are led by Jarls, while the city of Storhavn has a Swordjarl, but none of them has the power of the seven Fylkjarls. With time even the copper mines dried out and wealth disappeared abruptly, as it appeared. The legend of the Copper Kingdom ended, but the seven Fylkjarl families remained, stubbornly attached to their holdings.

The Fylkjarls in the Fylk-Thing have always been seven, with each vote weighted equally. The wealthier and more powerful Fylkjarls have been able to play the less pliable Jarls out, with manslaughter, gifts, and treachery. In this way, only the most ruthless and most prescient Jarl has been the true rulers of the kingdom. Nowadays the seven families who traditionally bear the title of Fylkjarls are: Saatigia, Staark, Uvail, Blueax, Wulfr, Bhalgor, and Hagthorn. The one with the most power in Wildland is the Jarl of Saatigia, who is supported by Staark, Blueax, and Hagthorn. The Jarls of Uvail and Wulfr are both equal to Saatigia in wealth and men, but their long-running disputes have given Saatigia the upper hand. Furthermore, Saatigia is supported by the Swordjarl of Storhavn, Oktar Grimme, the wealthiest man north of the Bjarnwoods. The Jarl of Bhalgor is lord of Jordek but also the Brycker: he is Gerbanis’ watchful guard in Wildland. The least powerful clan is the Hagthorn, a family founded on the proudest ancestry, but which nowadays barely has any land left.

Gerbanis in Wildland is represented primarily by the sanctuary of Jordek under the protection of the Bhalgor clan. It is also the stronghold the black-clad Storm Hird, who helped drive away the darkness during the difficult times, 300 years ago. The Bhalgor Brycker is given great respect, and nine out of 10 Wildlanders are believers in the Gerbanis faith.

THE WILDLANDERS

The people of Wildland are big and strong in their stature. Most men wear beards, sometimes braided, like the dwarves. Bright and ginger hair, with blue or green eyes in all variations would characterize many Wildlanders, except for those who are direct descendants from the Agroths, who have dark eyes and dark hair. Many Wildlanders shave their heads just like other Stormlanders, though it is not unusual that they only shave the front of the skull or save a tassel at the neck. The Berserker or bear shirts’ most common armament is the bearded axe. Many also wear open helmets adorned with tusks of mastomants or bull horns. They also carry round shields. The heaviest armor worn by the Wildlanders is of leather and thick hides. At feasts, shiny copper armor is usually used instead, but mainly for show.

Wildland is a land of contrasts. The descendants of the Stormlanders’ immigrants during the Copper Kingdoms built farms and villages, while the descendants of the Agroths and the Wildbrons often still lived in hide tents and caves. Still, even today, this is how Wildland looks in some places. The villages are often hastily constructed, with an inexpensive kind of wood from the south, and with a simple turf roof on top. Streets and squares have, to some extent, been covered with logs or wood docks, and the plan is simple. On the other hand, the fortresses are big and stout stone buildings, built to last for ages.

Out in the countryside and in the villages, one can see hefty log houses with proper roofs, with several layers

of animal hides upon it. Here, the clans have lived for generations, and the manors have often been expanded to accommodate new clan members.

AILBURG AND AILGAARD

The Uvail Fylkjarl rules over Ailburg, a small fort on the cliffs at the very end of a cape in southern Wildland. The fort was built near the ruins of a lost civilization, dating to tens thousand years ago, before the Agroths arrived in Wildland. The fort looms over the sea like a terrifying, black basalt creation with high walls and pointed towers. The crest of the Uvail clan, a black full moon on a blood red background, flutters on a flag from the tallest tower. The fort is the heart of Uvail, and houses a strong hird of heavily armored, cavalrymen who are in charge of guarding Uvail’s domains and fertile fields.

Beneath the fortress there is a fishing village by the water. It is called “Ailgaard” and here people live on seal and wultherfish hunting. In Ailgaard, one seldom sees strangers. Everyone knows each other. All Ailgaard’s young men, between the 15 to 25 years of age, all serve in the hird of the Uvail Fylkjarl.

THE COPPER MINES

The Copper mines now exist as a silent and deserted stone landscape. The mine has torn up a magnificent landscape. Left behind is a huge hole in the ground. The large open pit rests dark and threatening, inhabited by unspeakable horrors, the likes of which have only been seen by the dwarves.

THE COPPER TRAIL

The 600-kilometers long Copper Trail is the most lavish road in Wildland. The road stretches from Storhavn in the south to the Copper Mines in the north. Once the traffic between the Copper mines and Storhavn used to run day and night, year after year, until the snow fell too deep. Today there is less traffic, but this is still the most used route in



Wildland. The entire road is reinforced to facilitate transport with carts. Most larger villages have grown up along the Copper Trail. This shows how major and significant the route once was.

HALLWIND

It took 100 years to build the fortress called “Hallwind”, and it was completed only 150 years ago, as an eternal monument. The rich Saatigia clan faced no difficulties in paying for the construction of a such a jewel for generations, and Hallwind made the Saatigia Fylkjarl the most powerful ruler in Wildland.

The Hallwing fortress measures at its base hundred meters across on

either side and rises as a twenty-two-story tower. Hallwind is erected in the North-Western corner of the city, which is designed as a square. A twelve-meter stone wall surrounds the city, and the streets are all constructed in a way to allow the defense to continuously fall back without risking an ambush.

Hallwind is located on the highest peak of Ulve’s Hill and, standing on the top floor, the Saatigia Fylkjarl is able to gaze out upon his domains, which span for miles. Hallwind’s central location in Wildland made it a natural stop for travellers, resulting in the building of an inn, stables, and a smithy. The prices are amongst the highest ever recorded in the Stormlands, but sometimes beggars can’t be choosers.

The greater part of Wildland is controlled by the Saatigia family, whose Fylkjarl Is the most powerful of the seven. Some of Wildland’s major towns and villages are also to be found outside the plains surrounding Hallwind. Saatigia has more connections among the Wildlanders than anyone else.

HREFING

The Blueax clan has his manor in the northern harbor town of Hrefing. Hrefing is located on a small islet off the North Frost Coast, the coldest part of Wildland. The people of Hrefning thrive on fishing. The town completely lacks defenses. Despite the

absence of defensive structures, the town is notoriously difficult to invade, as all points of access from the sea, except for one, are blocked by cliffs. The Blueax Fylkjarl's manor is in the middle of the town. It serves as the town center and also as a trading post. Hrefing is the sea port to the northern Darkwoods and the copper mines, though it has only served to enrich the Blueax family. Blueax's land stretches from Hrefing in the east to the lands of the Hrim trolls in the west, bordering the much smaller and diminished holdings of the once-powerful Hagtorn family.

JORDEK

The stave church at Jordek is located along the east coast. It has its own port and is controlled by the Bhalgor clan. The Bhalgor leader is both a Fylkjarl and the Brycker (the regional authority of the Gerbanis faith) of all Wildland. He is personally appointed by the Paater of Vortland to watch over Wildland, so that people do not seek the dark Ice Cult once more. The Bhalgor Brycker is always surrounded by a handful of the Storm Hird, though he is said to be a very competent warrior himself. At Jordek, there are always up to 100 young men and women trained in both combat and religion, although in times of crises the Bhalgor Brycker can summon even up to three thousand warriors.

OUNGAI: THE LAIR OF THE SEA WOLVES

In Oungair, not far from the northern border of Vortland, the Wulfr clan has hosted a small lair of about five hundred, thick-skinned Sea Wolves.

A small wooden fort has been built just by the coast, hosting Oungair's most hardened reavers and berserkers. Five long ships, all without any identifying marks or crests, can carry more than three hundred pirates for raids on the coasts of Vortand, Nojd, and Djunghart



STORHAVN

The rulers of Wildland are to be found in Storhavn, which is located at the mouth of Storm Bay, to the east of Ulves and the Strafes hills. The town came into being with the arrival of the Stormlanders, after the Age of the Untamed, when one did not want to cross the Icepeak Mountains and the Bjarnwoods to get to Wildland.

Storhavn survived the collapse of the copper kingdom since it remained the main trading centre of Wildland. All the other Stormlands have a diplomatic outpost here, in order to manage the trade of precious Wildlander products like furs, timber, copper, mastomant's and wulterfish' ivory.

The "Fylk-Thing", the main assembly of Wildland's Fylkjarls, has his seat in a large long-house upon a stone foundation in the town center, although none of the Fylkjarls have their houses here. Once a year, the Fylkjarls gather here on the Fylk-Thing to sort out issues and to settle disputes. Each of the Fylkjarls might also, in times of crisis, call for a new meeting at the Fylk-Thing, which all Fylkjarls are required to attend. Anyone who does not attend at Fylk-Thing, without reasonable cause, will lose their position. The remaining Fylkjarls then choose a new Fylkjarl.

Even if Storhavn hosts the assembly of the greatest lords in Wildland, the city is not directly ruled by them, but



the Swordjarl of the Grimme family is the highest authority in town. Due to his links with foreign trade he is also the richest man in Wildland, although he has no seat in the Fylk-Thing.

THE WOLFWOODS

This dark forest is the boundary between the Uvails and Wulfr clans. Neither of the clans use the path through the forest, which is said to be haunted by werewargs.

Rumors speak of an exceptionally powerful díser dwelling in the forest, constantly tormenting any who dare enter her dark domain. Throughout the years, many foresters and lumberjacks have disappeared without a trace.

THE WULFR VILLAGES

In the southern regions of the Darkwoods live all the various

branches of the Wulfr clan. They live primarily by hunting and forestry, in small, primitive villages. The wolf is an important symbol for these wildlanders, and a wolf's head is their clan's crest. Wolves are captured while they are young, to be tamed, and then used for hunting and war. In wintertime, the wolves are even used to pull small sledges, making it possible to travel long distances across the snow-covered outfields.

There are about a hundred different Wulfr villages, each hosting about 30 and 40 individuals, often belonging to the same family. All the villagers hail from the Wulfr lineage, and all feel a certain affinity with their Fylkjarl, even if their relationship is sometimes far-fetched.

VRETGAARD

Vretgaard is situated like a final outpost towards Wildland's northernmost and

most sparsely populated regions. The city is located along the once notorious copper-route. The closest city is North Hall.

Vretgaard was established as a last frontier trading spot between the copper mines and the farms to the south. When the mines began to fail, Vretgaard was greatly affected, and those who had not learnt how to till the land were forced to abandon their homes to avoid starvation. Today, only a few families live in the area, and their lives are hard, completely isolated from the rest of the world and dependant on one another.

Vretgaard is the home of the Hagtorn clan, and the local decadence reflects the misfortunes of the lords. The Hagtorn Fylkjarls were once the absolute kings of the whole Wildland, and even heroes in the past wars against the darkness. Their modern descendants' power is practically nonexistent, as the head of the clan passes most of his time working as the head smith in the forge.

*"The wolf is an important symbol
for these wildlanders, and a
wolf's head is their clan's crest."*



◆ THE STORMLANDER ◆

This chapter describes mechanics which are more specific to the Stormlands and their culture. Game Masters are encouraged to take them as an inspiration for their own creations

With the Game Master's approval, a player that is creating a Stormlander character can choose from one of the following archetypes, in addition to those in the Player's Handbook.

STORMLANDER ARCHETYPES

Unlike a normal archetype, the 50 bonus creation points for a Stormlander archetype must be divided as follows

- ◆ **Core skills:** 30 bonus creation points.
- ◆ **Stormlander Skills:** 20 bonus creation points.

Some Stormlander core skills also specify which disciplines and specialties that these bonus points can be spent on. When there is no such a specification the points can be spent freely on all disciplines and specialties within the skill.

Mopor

- ◆ **Core skills:** Knowledge, Faith.
- ◆ **Stormlander skill:** Care (Healing & Drugs discipline and its specialties), Knowledge (Read & write Specialty: Mopor Rods).

The Mopor is the woman who hold the secrets of ancient knowledge in the Joaring villages of Dain. She is the one who performs religious rituals, calls the power of the gods and educate the Joarings by using the Mopor Rods with their mysteriously carved signs. She is occasionally taken by visions and trances through which the Gods speak to her (according to GM judgement). These visions can be facilitated by complicated rituals, but they can also happen spontaneously, especially when the Mopor must choose her Manpi or apprentice.

Treat the Mopor as a normal dimwalkers with the following differences:

- ◆ They need the a specific "Mopor" specialty of the Invoke discipline.
- ◆ To become a Mopor the woman must have appeared in a vision to an older Mopor.
- ◆ The Mopor can raise the number of her divinity points performing a 2-hours long ritual at the stone altar of a Joaring Village. This basic form involves food gifting and gives only 1 DP. Bloodgifting can also be performed on the altar, following the same mechanics for Bloodgifting in Gerbanis, including the risk of Gloomgifting. Unused DP disappear as a rate of 1 per day.

The following Holy Tablets are available to Mopors by changing the name of the involved god. Other tablets are originally Vitner Tablets: just consider costs in DP and not in VP, ignoring also vitner types and negations.

- ◆ **Fury of Ogon:** He is the dark war god of the East. Use "Tribute of Morgu" of the Eald Tradition (Player's Handbook p. 187-190).
- ◆ **Power of Sille:** She is the goddess of love and plenty, known as Esilis of the West. Use the "Warmth of Sunvei" holy tablet of Gerbanis (Player's Handbook p. 166-168).
- ◆ **Sight of Lekaba:** He is the guide and god of the holy speech, always facing North. Use the "Power of Vision" vitner tablet (Player's Handbook p. 120-123).
- ◆ **Curses of Sonntag:** He is the god of death, facing South. Use the "Witchcraft" vitner tablet (Player's Handbook p. 143-147).

Pit Fighter

- ♦ **Core skills:** Knowledge, Fighting.
- ♦ **Stormlander skill:** Agility (Body Control and Battle Maneuver disciplines and their specialties).

There are warriors who fight for other people's enjoyment. In most of the Stormlands they are called "Sormmen": professional fighters, often more skilful than most hirdmen, who risk their lives for money in mead halls' fighting pits or during the large feasts paid by wealthy jarls. Stormlanders bet heavily in these occasions and it is not unheard of Sormmens who become wealthy, betting on themselves, although there are also many others who end up both badly wounded and impoverished.

Daalheim know another kind of Pit Fighter, the Fyrdrincsmanns: mighty slave warriors who fight chained to a pole, under the watchful eyes of his Daalheimer masters. Fyrdrincsmanns are also employed on the battlefield, and they have therefore experiences completely different from other pit fighters. Their hope is to win at the yearly competition in Fyrdrincs Ridge, and this is why the Fyndricsmanns hone their skills, dreaming of freedom.

Sea Wolf

- ♦ **Core skills:** Knowledge, Fighting.
- ♦ **Stormlander skill:** Wilderness (Seafarer discipline and its specialties).

"Sea Wolf" is the Stormlander name for those warriors who live by raiding others with rapid attacks from the sea. There are various lairs of these pirates, like Oungair in Wildland, but their main settlements are in the Hartpikes Islands, beyond the rocky coasts of Djunghart, from where they can often be seen stalking along the shores of both Nojd and Vortland in their longships. These are hardened warriors who live of whatever they can pillage and plunder at land or sea. Their fast ships allow them to raid the unfortunate farms and villages along the coast before help can arrive, or to

quickly catch trade vessels and empty them of their valuable cargo. Sea Wolves live off whatever loot they can get their hands on and can be likened with the thieves and bandits that ply their trade ashore.

Skrajtager

- ♦ **Core skills:** Knowledge, Faith.
- ♦ **Stormlander skill:** Knowledge (Culture Knowledge discipline and its specialties, Language discipline, Reading and Writing: Vrok and Foreign Language: Fjettirspá specialties).

Windborn hosts the main centre of these religious scholars. Even if they are dimwalkers, able to call the powers

of the gods, knowledge remain their main interest. Their duty is to seek and preserve old books of lore, especially those related to the faith of Gerbanis. Nevertheless, they are also interested in any kind of lore and their vast libraries include even books written in the West by scholars of the Tenet of Nid. The Skrajtagers' main interest in adventuring is the recovery of old scrolls and books, and to start such a quest is something not unheard of.

Storm Hansa

- ♦ **Core skills:** Knowledge, Care.
- ♦ **Stormlander skill:** Wilderness (Geography and Seafarer disciplines and their specialties).



The red ring of the Storm Hansa has come to dominate the international trade coming through the ports of Fynnheim, Vortland and Edjland. These traders help each other, sharing knowledge and agreements between the different members of this community. The Storm Hansa are among the wealthiest Stormlanders, but also those who often travel the most, since knowledge of foreign lands and markets is essential for their business. Adventuring abroad and sailing are integral parts of a Storm Hansa's life as they dominate all the main sea routes to the West. However, odd as it may seem, the inland markets of Stormlands are usually closed to them, since there they meet the opposition of local merchants. Many young and ambitious Hansa often try to open these routes, risking their money and life for a dream of success.

Trapper

- ♦ **Core skills:** Knowledge, Wilderness.
- ♦ **Stormlander skill:** Care (Handicraft and Tradesman disciplines and their specialties).

There is no shortage of trappers in the Stormlands. These are men and women living close to nature that harbour skills of both the hunter and the craftsman. They hunt big game as well as small, what matters most is that the hunted animal has a fine or coveted fur that the trapper later can sell for a profit. Being a trapper is also to be a craftsman since how a skin is treated and how well the fur is handled determine how well the trapper will be paid for their trade. The way a beast is trapped or killed, on the other hand, determines how much of the skin or fur that can be sold. Usually a trapper hunts small predators, such as the drauglynx or the wolverine, but also some kinds of rodents and, to some degree, even the enormous mastomants, whose precious furs are invaluable against the northern cold. In order to spare the furs from damage the trapper primarily

tries to use a wide array of traps to catch their prey but also various kinds of rods and clubs. Sometimes however, especially when hunting mastomants, the trapper needs to use spears to bring down their prey.

Vedun/Vedma (male/female)

- ♦ **Core skills:** Knowledge, Vitner Craft.
- ♦ **Stormlander skill:** Care (Healing and Drugs discipline and its specialties), Wilderness.

Vedun/Vedma is the name of a certain kind of vitner weaver that exist in the Stormlands. While there are regular weavers of vitner who have learned the art from the wizards of Mittland, the Vedun/Vedma is a special kind of weaver that, in principle, only can be found in the Stormlands. You could call these people a mixture of vitner weavers and rangers, since they respect the power of vitner as much as the power of nature. A Vedun/Vedma lives close to nature and tries to live with it, rather than of it, with the power of vitner.



Warg Hunters

- ♦ **Core skills:** Knowledge, Wilderness.
- ♦ **Stormlander skill:** Fighting.

Warg Beasts of various kinds plague the Stormlands, killing both men and herds with no regards to the humans' vain attempts at spreading civilization into the wilderness. A specialized kind of hunter appeared in Stormland to solve the farmers' problem. Warg Hunters never settle but wander from farm to farm, and village to village, selling their ability to kill wolves in exchange for food, free shelter or coin. They are not skilful in treating furs like the trappers, but often, as parts of the agreements, they keep the wolf furs to be sold to traders. A rare Garm fur, for example can be sold for decent amount of money in a city, if the hunter also knows how to properly treat it or has a trapper companion to help him.

Another reason why warg hunters never settle is that if they fail, or are lazy or coward, the farmers are not tender. More than one Warg Hunter has been hung to die on a Stormbarling.

Wolf Hunter can work in teams when facing larger packs of warg beasts. They are known to use a vast array of tactics, from traps to spears and bows. There are also specialized tools, like the "Wolf Poles" whose blades are made of Wulterfish. Use the weapon statistics for Hunting Spears and Long Spears to mimic different kinds of wolf poles.

POWER ARCHETYPES

Power Archetypes are archetypes are directly tied to the Stormlander culture but choosing them costs an additional amount of creation points to be paid.

If the player rolling on the "Special Stormlander Traits and Abilities" table (see below) receives a power archetype as a result, then the power archetype costs no additional creation points other than the 10 points spent to roll on the table.

Just like the Stormlander archetypes above, Power Archetypes can have general Core skills and Stormlander skills.

POWER ARCHETYPES

Power archetype	Creation Points
Berserker	30
Storm Maiden	50
Battleborn	50
Stormhirdsman	20
Thjulk of Novgalod	20
Hel Rider	20
Hel Sister	20

Battleborn

- ♦ **Cost:** 50 creation points
- ♦ **Core skills:** Fighting, Knowledge
- ♦ **Stormlander skill:** Care (the Handler discipline and Commander specialty).

War often rage between Jarls or clans. Sometimes it happens that a child is born in the middle of a battle, since in the Stormlands is not unheard that even pregnant women actively fight. Such a child is considered to be particularly strong, strengthened and marked by the battle. Especially in Wildland and among the Wildbrons these Battleborn children are worshipped as chosen by the gods, and their training in warfare starts at an early age.

A Battleborn is the Stormlandish equivalent of a Mittlander weapon master, although the Battleborns are much more brutal and powerful in their fighting technique. To fight next to someone born in the battlefield, hearing the clash of steel already as an infant, is considered to be very honourable among the Stormlanders. Having a Battleborn in your hird also rallies the other warriors and brings terror to the hearts of their enemies.

By right of their title a Battleborn also has a place among the high seats in the court of every Jarl. Battleborns may also choose their share first when plunder is divided among warriors and they may build their house wall to wall with their Jarl. As Battleborn also has the right to raise double Stormilogs outside their house, for a total of four logs: a right not even shared by the priests of Gerbanis.

Abilities

A Battleborn receives the following abilities

- ♦ A Battleborn always succeed in situation roll that could get them Fear Points.
- ♦ A Battleborn has a natural protection of 7 against Fear Points, and thus remain unaffected by Fear Factors generating 7 or less Fear Points. Consequently, only situations that generate at least 8 Fear Points give the Battleborn at least 1 Fear point.
- ♦ A Battleborn starts off with +2 in their Charisma trait (the player character still can't go beyond the +4 limit however)
- ♦ Anyone who fights besides a Battleborn as an ally receives a modifier +5 on situation rolls which may inflict Fear Points on them.
- ♦ Anyone that fights besides a Battleborn as an ally receives +3 Free Combat Points each round.

Berserker

- ♦ **Cost:** 30 creation points
- ♦ **Core skills:** Fighting, Knowledge.
- ♦ **Stormlander Skill:** Wilderness (the Survival discipline and its specialties).

For as long as anyone can remember the Stormlanders have spoken of berserkers as mighty warriors who do not know what fear is like. In times of peace people prefer to ignore these troublesome men, but in times of war Jarls and Warlords are happy summon their berserkers to spread terror in the hearts of their enemies.

The legends surrounding these fearsome warriors claim that a few of them, known as "shapeshifters", can turn into Battlebears or Garms. In the old days, it is said, that you could meet shapeshifters that could turn into falcons or ravens, but this kind of shapeshifter is has not been seen in ages and is presumed to be extinct.

Berserkers are feared and respected all over the Stormlands, and each country seem to have its own variety like the

Bearshirts of Wildland or the Ulfheids of Fynnheim. However, all berserkers are also considered to be strange and unnatural, since nobody knows how much the nature god Enken has touched their souls, making them more animals than men. There are widespread superstitions surrounding the berserkers and it is believed that their tradition belongs to a bygone age, long before the coming of Gerbanis, when the worship of bears and wolves was at its peak. It is believed, for example, that it is dangerous to brandish a polished weapon in front of a berserker and that their power is strongest during the full moon. The superstitions are so widespread in some areas of the Stormlands, that the berserkers are banished from their homes and villages, and thus forced to make a living in wilds, like the animals they are linked to.

Berserker rules

When in battle, the berserker can plunge into the battle frenzy known as "berserkerfury". To make it happen, the following rules must be applied.

- ♦ It takes three rounds to awaken the frenzy. During these rounds the berserker's soul is slowly lowering into a wilder state. Some berserkers bite their shields, other growls like beasts, while others remain in silence, focusing inward. It does not matter what they seem doing, but the berserker cannot move or do anything else in these three rounds. During the 3rd round the berserker must succeed against a Situation Value of 12. If this is failed, the berserker has wasted time and another 3 rounds are needed.
- ♦ A success means that the berserker enters the "berserkerfury" (see below for the effects). All the nearby enemies witnessing it suffer 1d10 (OR 10) fear points. The berserker can act from the following round (usually the 4th round) onwards.
- ♦ If the berserker is attacked the 3 preparation rounds an immediate roll against a Situation Value of 6 must be made. Treat winning and failure as described above.
- ♦ Not all berserkers are equal some may have inherited the blood of the ancient shapeshifters. Everytime a PC or an important NPC (not anonymous berserkers) enters Berserkerfury roll 1d20.
- ♦ On a roll of 1-2 the character will enter a trance and they cannot do anything else for another three rounds. If they are attacked before these further rounds expire the berserker activates the normal fury and attacks the attacker.
- ♦ If these other three rounds pass with no problem, the berserker (and all the items that they are carrying) is mystically transformed into a beast form: a Garm or a Battlebear (See below for the effects). All nearby enemies suffer an additional 1d10 (OR 7-10) Fear Points for witnessing this transformation. In the following round (usually the 7th round) the transformed berserker can act.
- ♦ When the berserkerfury ends the animal form will last for another two hours, before the berserker is transformed back into their human form.
- ♦ During the fury the Berserker must attack all nearby enemies with melee attacks. Thrown weapons are the only allowed kinds of ranged attacks. When all the enemies in range are dead or running away, the Berserker must follow fugitives or look for other enemies. If none of these options are available, the berserker must succeed against a Situation Value of 14 (modified by Psyche) to avoid attacking the nearest friend.
- ♦ When there are no more enemies nearby or when the berserker is attacking friends roll 1d6. This is the number of rounds that must pass before the Berserkerfury ends. Many berserkers do things which they later regret in these situations.



The effects of the Berserkergang Fury

During the fury the Berserker will receive the following.

- ♦ +3 SV on each attack
- ♦ -1 SV on each parry. Evade cannot be attempted.
- ♦ Higher chance for open rolls when dealing damage. The chance for an open roll increases by one step. For example, OR 10 becomes OR 9-10, which becomes OR 8-10, etc.
- ♦ Negative modifiers from injuries are ignored, although the lost body points are recorded.
- ♦ The Berserkergang deletes all the Fear Points which the berserkers had before, and no Fear Point can be taken during the fury.
- ♦ When all body points are exhausted and the berserker is technically dead, he will keep on fighting for another 3 rounds, sustained by the wild spirit of Enken which is in the berserker's soul. During the 4th round his spirit will realize the death and the berserker will fall dead on the ground.

Beast Forms

Each berserker feels a special link with either wolves or bears. They must choose the preferred animal during character creation or the first time they transform. The choice is definitive for the whole life of the berserker.

When the berserker enters into the Beast Form he loses all his previous stats for the animal stats, including the current Body Points. No matter which wound they were suffering as humans, they start with the full Body Points of their Beast Form. If they are killed in Beast Form, they revert to human form and are dead for real. If they go back to human form before getting killed in animal form, they will also get back to their previous amounts of body points.

Remember also to apply the Berserkergang effects also to the Beast Form.

For the Garm form use the stats in Jorgi's Bestiary page 33, with average body points (72) but no wargsickness to spread.

For the Battlebear use the Bear stats on the GM Guide page 99 but with the following changes.

- ♦ Their Fear Factor is now 1d10 (OR 9-10)
- ♦ Their combat points are: Free 12; Natural Weapons (Bite 12; Claws 14).
- ♦ The Battlebear has Nightsight: can see with a weak light source (stars, moonlight) as if it were day.
- ♦ The Battlebear has the "Hug Attack" special ability. If the Battlebear hits the same victim with both claws, it can immediately bite the same target with a free attack at SV 12, without spending any CP. The victim cannot parry this attack, unless he is larger than 3t, since the Battlebear's claws are blocking his arms.

Stormhirdsman

- ♦ **Cost:** 20 creation points
- ♦ **Core skills:** Fighting, Knowledge.
- ♦ **Stormlander Skills:** Faith, Agility (Horsemanship and related specialties).

The Knights of the Iron Hand have served the Bryckers of Gerbanis as faithful holy warriors since time when Vrungir Redbeard defeated the troll armies in Fynnheim. They are a common sight in the fortresses dominated by the Gerbanian church, which spends huge sums of money to train these warriors and to equip them with the best available weapons. The Knights of the Iron Hand are usually expert horsemen, which gives them a huge advantage over common Stormlander infantrymen. The Stormhirdsmen are always watchful against trolls and giants and their fortresses are centres of civilization in otherwise wild lands.

Abilities

The Stormhirdsmen can add half their level (rounded up) in the Faith skill (not the discipline or specialties) to all damage rolls made by melee attacks.

Storm Maiden

- ♦ **Cost:** 50 creation points
- ♦ **Core skills:** Fighting, Knowledge
- ♦ **Stormlander Skills:** Agility (Battle maneuver discipline and its specialties)

There is a special kind of shield maiden that already at birth was promised for a life in service to the god Stormi. Such female warriors are known as "Storm Maidens" and great blood gifts are given when they are born to make sure that the girl receives a close contact with Stormi. The girl, in return for the sacrifices, receives divine powers already at a young age, powers that are otherwise only gifted to Gerbanian dimwalkers. Along with their divine abilities, the girls are sent to be trained in the noble arts of war and the Gerbanian clergy invest many resources to give them the best available education. When the girls are fourteen-years old they are initiated as "Storm Maidens" and, from this day onwards until they have life, they will serve under Gerbanian priests, as their protectors and armed guards. Only the richest Gerbanian priests can afford to bring a Storm Maiden into their service, since the church must pay dearly to the girl's family for her to enter their service. On the other hand, the priest considerably increases their power and prestige by having even a single Storm Maiden by their side.

Abilities

A Storm Maiden gains the following abilities.

- ♦ Every action round the Storm Maiden receives +5 extra combat points locked to a single weapon skill to be chosen at character creation.
- ♦ A Storm Maiden gains 5 "Storm Maiden Points" or "SMP" that they can use to purchase divine powers. This can only be done once, during character creation, and cannot be changed later. A Storm Maiden can freely choose powers from all of the Gerbanis' Holy Tablets without the skill levels, disciplines or specialties

that are usually required. Remember that a “Power” is just a single divine feat, not the whole level of a Holy Tablet. A Storm Maiden can, for example, choose one level 5 power, or one level 3 power and one level 2 power, or three level 1 powers and one level 2 power, etc.

- ♦ Later on, during gameplay, the same SMP will be used to activate these powers. A divine power is activated with as many SMP as the level that it belongs to (simply ignore costs in DP). Levels of power can be activated also with the same SMP and but their cost in SMP is equal to half the indicated cost in DP (rounded down, to a minimum of 1 SMP).
- ♦ To activate a power a Storm Maiden must succeed on a situation roll against 12, negatively modified by the level of the power. If the situation roll is successful, the Storm maiden activates the divine power and spends the SMP. If the situation roll is unsuccessful then no points are used.
- ♦ Used SMP are regenerated after 8 hours of sleep.

Thjulks of Novgalod

- ♦ **Cost:** 20 creation points
- ♦ **Core skills:** Fighting, Knowledge.
- ♦ **Dwarf of the Stormlands’ Skill:** Faith.

The dwarven settlement of Morkdali in the Trollridge mountain is the centre of a tradition which started in the golden days of the now-lost dwarven kingdom of Grunkovorda. The Thjulks are revered dwarven warriors who have dedicated their life to both the veneration of Borjorn and the defence of their dwarven brothers from external attacks. Their enemies are not just the humans and trolls who try to plunder the ancient dwarven treasures, but also the unknown mysterious monsters hiding in the depth of the earth. The Thjulks are famous for their faith in Borjorn who chose them for such a sacred duty, and directly obey the Thuuls who lead them in battle.

Abilities

The Thjulks can add half their level (rounded up) in the Faith skill (not the discipline or specialties) to all damage rolls made by melee attacks.

Hel Rider

- ♦ **Cost:** 20 creation points
- ♦ **Core skills:** Fighting, Knowledge.
- ♦ **Stormlander Skill:** Shadow Arts.

The secret cult of the Hvergelift or Chaos Gods plague all the Stormlands but Wildland. The males of such cults are the warriors who haunt the night for victims to be brought back to their underground lairs and be sacrificed to the Dark Gods. Hel Raiders often have terrible scars over them, or miss an eye or a finger, since they donate their sufferings to the Hvergelift when they were initiated into this damned cult.

Abilities

- ♦ Hel Riders are fearless warriors. They have a protection of 4 against Fear Points, which means they are not affected by situations dealing 4 or less Fear Points.
- ♦ The cult initiation rituals make them connected to the destruction and death. Everytime they slay somebody in melee their dark gods bless them giving them lost strength, making them to recover 1d10 body points.

Hel Sisters

- ♦ **Cost:** 20 creation points
- ♦ **Core skills:** Faith, Knowledge.
- ♦ **Stormlander Skill:** Shadow Arts.

The Hel Sisters are the priestesses and dimwalkers of the Hvergelift cult. Almost all of them are women, although some rare male “Hel Brother” has appeared in the past. They are the most important members of their dreaded communities, since they have the duty of performing both the Darkgifting, usually drowning their victims into lakes, wells or ponds with the help of the Hel Riders.

Abilities

- ♦ Hel Sisters are fearless dimwalkers. They have a protection of 4 against Fear Points, which means they do not suffer situations dealing 4 or less Fear Points.
- ♦ Hel Sisters can try to dominate Dark Dwellers. They must spend 1 DP per 20 BP of the dark dweller or fraction of it (e.g. a Dark Dweller with 85 BP costs 5 DP to be dominated) and make a Faith skill roll (with the Invoke discipline and the Hel Sister specialty). Sum up the total of required DP of all the Dark Dwellers which are present and make a single expense and a single roll, although with a -1 modifier for every dark dweller after the first one.
- ♦ A single Hel Sister can mentally command a maximum number of Dark Dwellers equal to their Hel Sister specialty level. The Hel Sister communicates with the Dark Dwellers by thoughts and until they are at a maximum of 10 kms from the Hel Sister. The Dark Dwellers will obey the Hel Sister for a number of days equal to the Hel Sister’s Faith skill, after this deadline a new control attempt must be made.

Regarding Holy Powers treat the Hel Sisters as a normal dimwalkers with the following differences:

- ♦ They need the new “Hel Sister” specialty of the Invoke discipline.
- ♦ To become a Hel Sister they must have made a sacrifice (terrible scars, an eye, a finger, etc..) like for the Gerbanian Stormkjelts.
- ♦ Darkgifting. The Hel Sisters make sacrifices to Chaos Gods which give the same amount of DP which normal Bloodgifting give. A darker side is that often such evil dimwalkers sacrifice human beings, getting a number of DP equal to half (rounded down) of the victim’s highest stat among Body Points or Divinity Capacity or ¼ of the Vitner Capacity. Furthermore Darkgiftings always evoke Dark Dwellers. Make a roll on the Gloomgifting table on the Player’s Handbook but the 1-4 results will be substituted by the evocation of one single Dark Dweller.

- ♦ **Helgifting.** Powerful Hel Sisters know how to make sacrifices to the Death Gods. These rituals require a victim to gloriously die on the battlefield but, instead of going to Stormi, as he deserves, his soul is evoked to blasphemous undeath either using the “Animate Undead” or “Summon Wight” by a Vitner Weaver (Dimvitner tablet) or by a Hel Sister using the similar holy tablet known as “Helgardh’s Calling” (see below). The victim may even be another undead who has come into this status due to other means. The undead must be ritually sacrificed (a “Control Undead” power may be useful) giving 1 DP per 10 body points or fraction (e.g. an Undead who has 15 BP gives 2 DP). Sacrificing more powerful undead like a Barrow Wight or a Draugr add +10 DP.

The following Holy Tablets are available to Hel Sisters, by changing the name of the involved god. Other tablets are originally Vitner Tablets: just consider costs in DP and not in VP, ignoring also vitner types and negations.

- ♦ **Helfrigg’s Fury.** This bleak goddess is the strongest of the Hvergelift, violence and hatreds are her domains. Use the “Wrath of Tyr” holy tablet of Gerbanis (Player’s Handbook p. 171-172).
- ♦ **Draugrim’s Breath.** This god breathes death and decay and by his pot stirring he persuades the winds be weakened. Use the “Power of Trolls” holy tablet of Haminges (Player’s Handbook p. 223-224).
- ♦ **Hlook’s whip.** This furious god use his mighty whip on the slave winds and they obey his commands. Use the “Wind Craft” vitner tablet (Player’s Handbook p. 139-143).
- ♦ **Ilgri’s whispers.** She is the goddess who knows how to awaken the fury of giants and trolls. Use the the “Power of Thurses” holy Tablet of Haminges (Player’s Handbook p. 221-223).
- ♦ **Helgardh’s Calling.** This tablet includes the veneration of Bodvildur and all the Vanerlift of Helgardh. They are not Chaos Gods, but the Hel Sisters are among the few who know worship them. Use the “Dimvitner” vitner tablet (Player’s Handbook p. 105-109).

SPECIAL STORMLANDER TRAITS AND ABILITIES

Players choosing to play as a Stormlander character can choose to purchase a roll on the tables for “Special Stormlander Traits and Abilities”. The roll can result in both positive and negative traits and abilities, however the results do not matter, since your character will certainly feel more like a Stormlander if this table is used.

You can only buy one roll on these tables per player character, although some negative traits and abilities can result in a new roll on the tables. If a roll would result in that a character becomes a power archetype, this will not cost anything beyond the creation points already spent to receive the roll in the first place.

If these tables are used, the roll must be made before any creation point is spent on traits or skills. Consequently, every bonus or penalty, or skill level given for free, must be taken into consideration during the following steps of character creation.

- ♦ A roll on these tables costs 10 creation points.

TABLE 1: SPECIAL STORMLANDER TRAITS AND ABILITIES

1d20	Result
1-10	Roll on Table 1a
11-20	Roll on Table 1b

TABLE 1A

1d20	Special Ability
1	Power archetype. The player character is born as a Storm Maiden or a Battleborn (the player chooses which)
2	Power archetype. The player character is a born Berserker
3	Child of the Hunt. The player character has grown up with parents who were rangers or trappers, and he has therefore learned the art of hunting. The player character starts with the Wilderness skill level 5 and Hunting Experience discipline level 1 for free.
4	Raised in the Wilds. The player character was raised in the wilderness. They have never lived in the shelter of a house and has roamed around in the wilds with their family that has lived of what nature can provide, rather than of a urban profession or trade. The player character starts the Wilderness skill level 5 and the Survival discipline level 1 for free.
5	Hardened to weather and wind. The player character is hardened to weather and wind. All negative modifiers from weather and wind (including temperature, precipitation and wind modifiers in GM’s Guide p.30) are halved (rounding down) for the character with this ability.
6	Heirloom. The player character has inherited an item, an estate, a ship or something else of great value that has been passed along in the family for many generations. The item is strongly connected to the Stormlander culture. The player may suggest what the heirloom could be but is ultimately up to the GM to decide.
7	Target of a sworn avenger. The player character or someone in their family has killed someone, the relatives of this person have since sworn to take vengeance upon the player character. The player character now has a very dangerous enemy somewhere in the Stormlands that is constantly hunting them. Make another roll on table 1.
8	Physical Upbringing. Long days of hard labour has given the player character a strong physique. They gain 30 extra Creation Points to spend on the Character Traits Constitution or Strength (the player still can’t go beyond the +4 limit).
9	Fearless. The player character has lived so close to nature, beasts and strange things that dwell there that they their minds have become hardened and resistant to all the threats. The player character has a natural protection of 3 against Fear Points. Everytime the Fear Points are inflicted, the character can ignore the first 3 points.

10	Deep Yellow eyes. The player character has deep yellow eyes which means that troll blood flows strongly in their veins. This may lead to trouble or straight up fights in many parts of the Stormlands (especially in the countryside, where troll attacks are more frequent and farmers hate trolls more deeply). In other parts (for example some cities) the player character invokes fear and people won't dare even to speak to him. The player character will often be denied lodging at taverns and mead halls. The player character can't have more than -1 in the Charisma character trait. Make another roll on table 1.
11	Manblotir. Due to fanatic religious teachings that he has been exposed to while young, the player character has become a "manblotir" and must constantly bloodgift human beings in order to appease the wrath of the gods. Or at least this is what the player character thinks. One human blood gift per quarter of year is the minimum amount that the player character must bloodgift, or else risk the wrath of the Storm Gods. If the sacrifice is not performed the mental stress will inflict the character a -4 SV on every skill roll until the sacrifice is performed. It isn't enough to simply kill someone in battle or something akin to this. The bloodgift must be properly performed in accordance to the traditions of Gerbanis. The player character starts with Faith skill level 5 and the Invoke discipline level 1 for free.
12	Fear of Vitner. Since adolescence the Player character has been told that vitner weavers are dangerous and terrible men and women who can turn even the mightiest warrior into a small harmless child. The player character has a natural fear of anything connected to vitner, and this also applies to magic items. Every time the player character sees a vitner weaver they must make a situation roll with the Situation Value of 8 (modified by the Psyche trait) in order to not receive 1d10 (OR 10) fear points. The player character would never consider using a magic item themselves and furthermore will strongly object if anyone close to them considers is using one. Make another roll on table 1.
13	Troll hater. The player character has grown up with trolls living nearby and has seen many of their friends fall prey to their cruelty. The player character is a dedicated troll hater and finds it difficult to take on other tasks if there are trolls to be slayed nearby. Wherever the player character finds themselves, they will go out of their way to find the trolls and slay them. If one wants to resist such an urge the player must roll against a Situation Value of 10, modified by the Psyche trait. While attacking trolls the character is possessed by such a frenzy that each one of his attacks receive a +3 SV bonus against trolls.
14	Dimwit. No one in the player character's family has ever been able to read or write. The family is absolutely unskilled in this field and the player character can basically never learn to read or write, therefore no Reading & Writing specialty can be bought. Furthermore, the player character can't have more than -1 in the character's Intelligence trait. The reason for these limitations is the troll blood which runs in the family. The character may not have any clear, troll-like physical feature, but the mind is nonetheless tainted by such a heritage. Make another roll on table 1.
15	Wolf Child. The player character has survived their wolf night. What this survival has meant for the player characters life is up to the Game Master to decide. Perhaps the player character has been given expensive training in a warrior lodge, or perhaps they've been married into a rich family and so on. A suggestion is that the player character receives an additional 21 Creation Points to spend on certain skills that the Game Master deems fitting.
16	Mead drinker. The player character loves mead and can drink huge amounts of it and continuing much longer than most people. The problem is that they have become somewhat of an alcoholic and needs to drink at least one flagon (preferably more however) each day. For every day that the player character goes without mead results in them receiving -1 per day on anything they try to do. The negative modifiers won't go away until the player character has gotten themselves heavily intoxicated. Make another roll on table 1.
17	Dirtbag. The player character seldom washes themselves and thus (like many others in the Stormlands) smells worse than a pig. Sometimes they will be denied entry to some taverns and mead halls unless they wash themselves first, something that the player character would rather not do since they believe that it is dangerous to clean yourself. As long as the character remains unwashed the environment will behave as if the character had Charisma -1. If the Charisma is already -1 or less, they will suffer a -1 penalty to be summed up to the normal Charisma penalty. Make another roll on table 1.
18	Scavenger. The player character has lived a life of poverty and hunger and, therefore, as a consequence their body has learned to eat rotting food, like carcasses and old vegetables. The player character can eat food that many others would consider disgusting or foul without any physical consequence. Consequently, if such rotten food is available, the character will resist more days than others in difficult conditions.
19	Famous Ancestor. One of the player character's ancestors was one of the great and ancient heroes whose names are told in sagas all over the Stormlands. This means that the player character often is received with great hospitality and good will anywhere in the Stormlands, if they mention their name. This means that in specific situations they will be treated as having a Charisma trait one step higher than what it is. If the Charisma is already +4, a +1 special modifier will be nonetheless applied. In any case, to have such a blood can be a disadvantage in some situations, if the player character meets people that have differing opinions about their ancestor. Remember that legends can be turned and modified in oral traditions: one clan's hero may be another clan's main villain.
20	Retiring. The player character has lived for so long in the countryside or in the wilderness that they finds it difficult to reside in cities or with large amounts of people. The player character has never sat their foot in a larger town and would never consider doing it either. Forcing oneself into a crowded city means that the player character receives -5 on anything they try to do while in the city. Make another roll on table 1.

TABLE 1B

1d20	Special Ability
1	Contact in the Storm Hansa. Someone in the character's family has strong ties with the Storm Hansa. The character can buy goods at a 20% discount when the relative's name is mentioned.
2	Cave Experience. The character is raised not far from an entrance to a mine or a cave complex. Since he was a child the character has spent a lot of time in the caves and therefore learned to navigate underground. The Character therefore gets +3 in SV for skill checks or situation rolls that have something with navigating underground.
3	God-Touched. The character has been touched by a god (choose any god of the Stormlanders). The god has taken the character under his/her protection and given it a godly power. The character may choose 1 single power from the first level of a holy tablet attached to the god in question. The ability can be activated 1d3 times a week (roll the first time the power is used in a week) and activated by a successful situation roll with situation value 8 (modified by the Charisma trait).
4	Bastjurnal Speaker. The character has lived near the trolls and therefore learned to understand and speak the troll's guttural language. Due to this, the character starts with Knowledge 7, Language discipline 2, Foreign Tongue: Bastjurnal 1. Note: the Language 2 discipline substitutes the Language 1 given for free at character creation.
5	Mountain Foot. The character is raised at the foot of one of the steep mountains of the Stormlands. Growing up has given the character the ability to move in mountainous areas like a mountain goat. The character has +3 on all skill- and situation rolls that have something to do with moving on foot in the mountains (also applies to climbing in mountains).
6	Dwarven Friend. A dwarf that has chosen to live in your village or city and you learned his language from him. You start the game with Knowledge 5 and Foreign Language: Futhark 1. Note the required Language 1 discipline is already given for free during character creation.
7	Troll Drum. The character has inherited a portable troll drum and, since he has learned to play it, he starts the game with Entertainment 4 (Music and Dancing 1). The drum also gives +5 modifier to Entertainment rolls and, when played, it makes the trolls listening to it weary and become confused. To play you must make an Entertainment roll and you cannot do anything else except playing it and, at most, moving. As long as the drum is played all the trolls who hear the sound get a -2 modifier to every skill- and situation roll they do.
8	Well-Read. The character has grown up in one of the few places where there are books. Due to this, you can start the game with Knowledge 5 and the Read & Write: Vrok specialty 1. Note the required Language 1 discipline is already given for free during character creation.
9	Seaman. The character has grown up at the coast in a small fishing village and he is used to go out sailing. Due to this, the character starts with Wilderness 4, Seafarer discipline 1 and Seaman specialty 1.
10	Shadow World. The character has since childhood belonged to a party of rogues. Due to this, the character starts with Shadow Arts 4, the Thievery discipline 1 and the Shadow World specialty 1.
11	Troll Eyes. The character has troll blood running through his veins. This has made his eyes turned strongly yellow but he has also got Night' Sight of Trolls. The character can see with a weak light source (stars, moonlight, torchlight, and so on) as if it were day.
12	Swim Like a Seal. The character has grown up on the coast where he has enjoyed swimming since he was a child. Due to this, the character starts with Agility 4, the Body Control discipline 1 and the Swimming specialty 1.
13	Religious. The character has been raised in a religious home and, when he was younger, he has been a Blue Bloter, the assistant of the Stormkelt during blood gifting. He has received the basics of a Gerbanian Dimwalker education, and now it is up to him whether to continue on this path or not. The character starts the game with Faith 4, the Invoke discipline 1 and the Stormkelt specialty 1.
14	Fighter. The character has helped keeping watch over a village or taking turns as a sentry atop the ring wall protecting a city. The character has learned how to fight and has experience in keeping a settlement safe from rampaging trolls. The character starts the game with Fighting 4, the Armed Fighting discipline 1 and one weapon specialty at level 1.
15	Pit Brawler. The character has made a name of name for himself/herself as a pit brawler. The character is maybe a Sormmen or a Fydrincsmann or just an occasional pit fighter who enjoyed the local brawling pit during the youth. The character starts the game with Fighting 4, the Unarmed Fighting discipline 1 and the Brawling specialty 1.
16	Dog Handler. The character has raised one large dog and cannot be separated from each other. Due to this the character starts the game with Wilderness 4, the Nature Knowledge discipline 1 and the Animal Friend specialty 1. He also gets a large Wolfhound (use "Small Wolfkin" stats, e GM Guide p.111) with two levels of training in a single area or one level of training in two areas (GM Guide p.86).
17	Man of the Wilderness. The character has been raised somewhere in wilderness, long way from nearest village or the influence of civilization. Due to this the character starts the game with Wilderness 1 and the Survival discipline 1. Furthermore, the number of days of persistence in the wild that must pass before making a situation roll is always augmented by +2.
18	Cold Resistant. The character has spent long time high up in the mountains, getting used to its cold. All negative modifiers from low temperature (GM's Guide p.30) are halved (rounding down) for the character with this ability. Furthermore, the character gets +4 to all skill and situation rolls that have something to do with resisting natural cold, and +2 to resisting hrim- or unnatural cold.
19	Traveller. The character has been raised in a traveling family, usually helping merchants crossing the wilderness. Due to this the character starts the game with Wilderness 4, the Survival discipline 1 and the Camper specialty 1.
20	Power Archetype. The player character has been trained as a Stormhirdsman. He is now one of the Knights of the Iron Hand.

STORMLANDER REGIONAL TRAITS

Regional Traits are special mechanics linked to specific places or cultures in the Stormlands. They are not requirements for belonging to such places or cultures, and in fact not all natives to those places have these traits. Nevertheless, buying such a trait during character creation means that characters have a special link to their homeland's culture.

One cannot have more than one Regional Trait. The player can roll on the following tables or freely choose one single entry from them. The lists are not comprehensive, and the GM is encouraged to create more of them, if he wants to better characterize specific places or cultures.

One Stormlander Regional Trait costs 20 creation points. A Regional Trait must be bought before any creation point is spent on traits or skills. Consequently, every bonus or skill level given for free, must be taken into consideration during the following steps of character creation.

One can have both a Regional Trait and also roll on the "Special Stormlander Traits and Abilities" table. One thing

does not exclude the other, as far as one pays the costs of both. It may happen that some regional traits give free levels to the same skills which are given free levels also by the Special Stormlander Traits tables. In these cases, reroll or choose another trait

Bonus skills are indicated as follows: skill name (discipline name - specialty name).

Regional Traits are divided in three groups according to the player race: for human Stormlanders (including half-elves and half-trolls raised by humans), for dwarves (including the Zvorda) and for the few elves (including half-elves raised by elves) living in the Stormlands.

- ♦ A Regional Trait costs roll on the table costs 20 creation points.

Regional traits for human Stormlanders

These tables are for humans, but they can be used also half-trolls raised in Stormlanders' communities. Remember that half-trolls are more

common in isolated, rural communities where occasional episodes of troll violence are more frequent.

The GM can allow also to use these tables for the incredibly rare half-elves raised in Stormlander communities. All of them are of the Barkbrule variety and they are found not far from the very few elven communities: e.g. the Wildbrons in the Copperwoods of Edjland.

Choose or Roll 1d10 on the following table, then choose or roll 1d10 in the suggested sub-tables.

HOMELAND

1d20	Homeland
1	Daalheim
2	Dain
3	Djunghart
4	Edjland
5	Fynnheim
6	Nojd
7	Vortland
8	Wildland
9-10	Half-troll: roll on Mountains traits. Human or Half-Elf: re-roll on this table.

DAALHEIM REGIONAL TRAITS

1d10	Trait
1-2	Daalheimer Sailor. Your ancestors came to this island only due to their sailing skills and you embrace this tradition. You start with Wilderness 6 (Seafarer 1 – Navigation 1).
3-4	Fyndrincsmann. You are one of the best warriors of your village, but you are also a slave, hoping one day to win your freedom with your deeds. You start with Fighting 6 (Battle Experience 1 – Fighter 1).
5-6	Hvergil Native. You have grown up in the same place where Rauk Gollstone firstly set his foot in Daalheim, listening to the stories that the bards have told about your people. You start with Knowledge 6 and Lore & Legends: Stormlanders specialty 1. NOTE: the required "Culture Knowledge 1 Discipline" is already given for free to all characters.
7-8	Jornastrandr Native. Your town is the place where more Daalheimers warriors are clustered, therefore you grew up with a certain experience about warfare. You start with Fighting 6 (Armed Fighting 1 – One weapon specialty 1).
9-10	Curious About the Elves. You knew the elves lived in this island long time before your ancestors came here. You have an interest in discovering their mysteries and quite often you have spoken with elves from Soj, in order to get some insight. You start with Knowledge 6 (Culture Knowledge: Elves 1 and Foreign Tongue: Eika specialty 1). NOTE: the required "Language" Discipline is already given for free to all characters.

DAIN REGIONAL TRAITS

1d10	Trait
1-2	Joaring Craftsman. You come from a Joaring family with a tradition of refined craftsmanship using tin, bronze, gold and gems, making objects appreciated by foreigners. You start with Care 6 (Handicraft 1 – Hard Materials 1).
3-4	Joaring Hunter. Your tribe has trained you in the ancient methods for surviving in the ravaged volcanic landscapes of Dain. You start with Wilderness 6 (Hunting Experience 1 – Tracker 1).
5-6	Joaring Intrigue Master. You are accustomed to the continuous states of conflict, betrayal and intrigue which characterizes the relationships between Joaring villages. You gain 45 extra Creation Points to spend on the Perception and Intelligence traits (they cannot go beyond the +4 limit).
7-8	Julgavaad Native. You have grown up in this small village whose importance lies in the Ebensbridge, which is the only way to cross the Hrimfors' canyon for Djunghart. Even if the rough wilderness of Dain still surrounds Julgavaad, you have more contact with strangers than most inhabitants of Dain. You start with Wilderness 3, Knowledge 6 and the Silver Tongue specialty 1. NOTE: the required "Languages 1 Discipline" is already given for free to all characters.
9-10	Stormlander Coastal Inhabitant. You are one of the few Stormlanders inhabiting the wild coast of Dain, maybe in a small village or in an isolated, fortified farm. You hate the Joarings but you must have constant dealings with them in order to survive. You start with Knowledge 6 (Culture Knowledge: Joaring and the Foreign Tongue: Joaring 1 specialty). NOTE: the required "Languages 1 Discipline" is already given for free to all characters.

NOTE: Joarings have a different culture from Stormlanders and regarding the bonus skills gained during character creation (Player's Guide page 17) they have not Stormlander skills but Culture Knowledge: Joaring and Mother Tongue: Joaring.

DJUNGHART REGIONAL TRAITS

1d10	Trait
1	Djunghartian Brute. Like many of your people you are heavily built and prone to violence. You may or may not have yellow eyes, but strangers suspect you have trolls among your ancestors. You gain 45 extra Creation Points to spend on the Strength and Constitution traits (they cannot go beyond the +4 limit).
2	Member of the Great Lineage. Your name is recorded somewhere in the rod records of Redborg. You have the blood of the Drotts and been raised to lead. You start the game with Care 6 (Handler 1). Furthermore, you receive a bonus of +2 SV on any skill roll on social situations with fellow Djughartians who about know your lineage.
3	Djughartian Vitner Hater. The Djunghartian disdain for magic and elves is well-known but, in your case, your hate is enormous. When attacking vitner weavers or elves you get +5 SV on your attacks. However, you will refuse any use of magic over you, even if beneficial. To overcome such a limitation, you should succeed against a Situation value of 8 modified by your psyche.
4	Djughartian Sea Plunderer. You have been raised as one of those sea raiders whose nimble warships are feared in Mittland and Nojd. You start with Fighting 4 (Armed Fighting 1), Wilderness 4 (Seafarer 1).
5	Sea Wolf of the Hartpikes Islands. You are not a Djunghartian but a fierce pirate of the islands, living of the sea and the profits of your raids. You start with Fighting 4, Wilderness 4 (Seafarer 1 – Seaman 1).
6	Kaldershem Native. Maybe your city is no more the small village of rangers that it once was but this is still the best place in Djunghart where you can find expert hunters. You start the game with 34 creation points which can be spent only in the Wilderness skill, including its disciplines and specialties.
7	Clawcastle Native. Your town is the only major settlement in Djunghart where Gerbanis is enthusiastically embraced. You start the game with Knowledge 7 and the Religion: Gerbanis specialty 1. NOTE: the required "Culture Knowledge 1 Discipline" is already given for free to all characters.
8	Redborg Native. You grew up in the largest city of Djughart, where merchants rule both the central market and the "Offal Pit" where illegal goods are traded. This is also the only place in Djunghart where you can feel influences from all over Trudvang. You have 34 bonus creation points which can be spent in the Care and Knowledge skills and their disciplines and specialties.
9	Tuvoldcastle Native. The presence of so many scholars in your homeland has brought a certain education to you. You start the game with Knowledge 6, Culture Knowledge: Stormlander discipline 1 and the Read & Write (Vrok) specialty 1. NOTE: the required "Languages 1 Discipline" is already given for free to all characters.
10	Scholar of the Ancient Troll Culture. You are a rarity, an educated person from the few civilized Djughartian cities, like Redborg or Tuvoldcastle, but you are obsessed with something most Djughartians avoid: the ruins of the ancient troll civilization and the comparison with modern, primitive trolls. You start with Knowledge 6 (Race Knowledge 1 – Monster Knowledge 1).

EDJLAND REGIONAL TRAITS

1d10	Trait
1	Wildbron blood. You have the blood of the Wildbrons, known for their ferocity in battle. You start the game with Fighting 5. All the damage you deal with melee attacks is raised by +2.
2	Kremor Blood. Unlike most modern Stormlanders, the ancient Kremors were skilful horse riders and you bear their blood in you veins. Even if you are not a trained horseman, the horses feel the ancient pacts which your ancestors made with their race. You benefit from a +4 SV to all Agility and Wilderness skills related to horses. Furthermore, when you are mounted, your horse is considered to be trained at one level higher in the following areas: combat, jump, sprint (GM Guide page 86).
3	Broth Blood. Your ancestors, the Broths of old times, came by sea from unknown lands, bearing a veneration of both death and fertility. You know nothing of such a cult, but the blood in your veins make you feel its call sometimes. Whenever you kill an enemy in melee you lose 1d10 (OP 10) Fear points.
4	Grim Village Native. The docks of your town are the busiest in Edjland and sea and trade are both parts of your culture. You start the game with Wilderness 4 (Seafarer 1) and Care 4 (Tradesman 1).
5	Klipp Native. Your town is the main settlement of the Outwind island, where fishing in the Grim Sea flourishes. You start the game with Wilderness 6 (Seafarer 1, Survival 1).
6	Kraav Native. You have grown up in Kraav, where only the strong survive, and both religion and magic are disdained. You do not trust neither vitner weavers, nor the dimwalkers, and any of your attacks against them benefit from a +4 SV. On the other hand, you will always refuse even to receive beneficial spells or power, unless you pass a Situation Roll of 8, modified by your Psyche.
7	Rimcoast Native. Shipwrithing is an honoured tradition in your town and you learned this art when you were young. You start the game with Care 6 (Handicraft 1 – Hard Materials 1).
8	Saaga Native. You are a proud son of the largest city in Edjland. During your youth you had opportunities of learning unknown to those born in the countryside. You receive 34 creation points to spend as you wish.
9	Stigor Native. You have grown up in Stigor, which continuously faced the threats of the Jotunheid plains. Your hate for trolls gives strength and accuracy to your blows: you get +3 to the the damage of all your melee and ranged attacks against them.
10	Trollmark Castle Native. You were born as a subject of the Entloft jarl, who often leads his men to raids against trolls and other beasts. You start with Fighting 6 (Armed Fighting 1 – One weapon specialty 1).

FYNNHEIM REGIONAL TRAITS

1d10	Trait
1	Broth Blood. Your ancestors, the Broths of old times, came by sea from unknown lands, bearing a veneration of both death and fertility. You know nothing of such a cult, but the blood in your veins make you feel its call sometimes. Whenever you kill an enemy in melee you lose 1d10 (OR 10) Fear points.
2	Forvagra Clansman. Yours is the clan who organized the Fynn Hird and who holds the fortress of Sasrum. You have been trained to warfare since you were a child. You start with Fighting 6 (Armed Fighting 1 – One weapon specialty 1).
3	Eskla Clansman. Your clan has important links with the Storm Hansa, and all important trade is controlled by your lords. You start with Care 6 (Tradesman 1 – Trader 1).
4	Njal Clansman. With their power over Magnerym, your clan has more knowledge about religion than any other in the whole Fynnheim. You start the game with Knowledge 7 and the Religion: Gerbanis specialty 1. NOTE: the required “Culture Knowledge 1 Discipline” is already given for free to all characters.
5	Eiglast Native. You have grown up in a maritime small town whose harbour is frequented by many strangers, including traders from the West. You start the game with Knowledge 6 and Foreign Tongue (Rona) 2. NOTE: the required “Languages 1 Discipline” is already given for free to all characters.
6	Saukamark Native. You have grown up in the northernmost, more desolated part of Fynnheim, rich in elks and deer, but also plagued by trolls and the outlaws. To survive in this hard land you have developed keen eyes and a strong will. You gain 45 extra Creation Points to spend on the Perception and Psyche traits (they cannot go beyond the +4 limit).
7	Styckmark Native. You have grown up in the most densely inhabited part of Fynnheim and finding a job as an apprentice, when you were young, was easy. You start with Care 6 (one discipline at level 1 – one specialty at level 1).
8	Vestmamark Native. The fertile lands of your homelands are plagued by both trolls and giants; therefore, you have been wielding a sword since the age of ten. You start the game with Fighting 3. Furthermore, every time you fight a troll or a giant your attacks get a +3 SV bonus.
9	Hoglamark Native. Your homeland is the most barren part of Fynnheim where only the best rangers can survive. You start the game with Wilderness 6 (Hunting Experience 1, Survival 1).
10	Fynnheim Boatman. Your country’s morphology is shaped by the large rivers flowing to the Grim Sea. You start the game with Wilderness 6 (Seafarer 1, Survival 1).

NOJD REGIONAL TRAITS

1d10	Trait
1	Children of Broin. You belong to the wilder type of Nojdans, used to live in the wilderness, isolated from Stormlander civilization. You have a talent for disappearing, as well as for living of what nature offers. You start with Wilderness 4, Shadow Arts 4 (Shadowing 1 – Walking in Shadows 1).
2	Regen Native. Caught between the continuous Troll attacks and the rivalry between the Chieftain and the Gerbanian Church, those born in the civilized Regen tribe have developed a talent for spotting both physical and social threats. You start with Perception Trait +1, Shadow Arts 6 (Shadowing 1).
3	Fengsale Native. Like many other people of the civilized Faneng tribe you met many Mittlanders, visiting the harbour of your city and you also have some experience with the Oster Ocean. You start with Knowledge 6 (Culture Knowledge: Mittlander 1) and Wilderness 3.
4	Vaneheim Native. The civilized members of the Vanej tribe have developed an experience in fighting trolls to defend their city. You receive a bonus of +3 SV to each (melee or ranged) attack and to each parry made while fighting trolls.
5	Gormi Tribesman. You are part of a tribe known for both its odd familiar structure and the fury that the warriors display on the battlefield. You start the game with Fighting 5 (Armed Fighting 1) and all the damage you deal with melee attacks is raised by +1.
6	Ylfing Tribesman. Members of the Ylfing tribe are known to be wilderness, as well as the importance of the Winter Market which is held not far from Ylfingstone. You start with Wilderness 4 (Hunting Experience 1) and Care 4 (Tradesman 1).
7	Ruggi Stones Native. You are born in the large community of Gerbanians whose settlement has overcome the old, pre-Gerbanian character of the Ruggi Stones. You start the game with Knowledge 7 and the Religion: Gerbanis specialty 1. NOTE: the required “Culture Knowledge 1 Discipline” is already given for free to all characters.
8	Snake People. Your tribe lives along the Still River and it has a strong relationship with snakes, which your ancestors venerated since the times when the world was young. Unless you attack them, all the snakes (of any size or type) will avoid attacking you, if they have other preys. Furthermore, you get a +5 SV bonus to Wilderness skill rolls related to (finding, knowing, taming, training etc.) all kinds of snakes.
9	Vurdviik Tribesman. Your tribe has a special relationship with the Stillwaterfalls and the Wargriver where many tribal rituals are performed. You start with Agility 6 (Body Control 1 – Swimming 1).
10	Vaskheim. The inhabitants of Vaskheim are masters of the Wolfpeaks, knowing how to make a living from such a rough environment. You start with Wilderness 6 (Survival 1 –Terrain Experience: Mountain).

VORTLAND REGIONAL TRAITS

1d10	Trait
1	Vortlander Gerbanian. Raised in the lands ruled by the Paater, your education was very focused on religion. You start the game with Knowledge 7 and the Religion: Gerbanis specialty 1. NOTE: the required “Culture Knowledge 1 Discipline” is already given for free to all characters.
2	Vortlander Holy Warrior. You have been raised with the conscience that Gerbanis must be defended by the sword. Every time you fight for defending a Gerbanian dimwalker, holy site or stave church, and every time you fight self-declared enemies of your faith (e.g. fanatics of the Tenet of Nid, Hel Raiders, etc.) you get a +4 to every damage roll you make (either from melee, ranged weapons, holy powers or spells).
3	Kremor Blood. Unlike most modern Stormlanders, the ancient Kremors were skilful horse riders and you bear their blood in you veins. Even if you are not a trained horseman, the horses feel the ancient pacts which your ancestors made with their race. You benefit from a +4 SV to all Agility and Wilderness skills related to horses. Furthermore, when you are mounted, your horse is considered to be trained at one level higher in the following areas: combat, jump, sprint (GM Guide page 86).
4	Driik Native. Your city thrives between the glorious memories of the past and the fervent activities of the merchant families. You start the game with Knowledge 4 and Care 4 (Tradesman 1 – Trader 1).
5	Oakhall Native. War and hardness are parts of the soul of those born here. You start with Fighting 6 (Armed Fighting 1 – One weapon specialty 1).
6	Hawen Native. Since you were raised so close to the Jotuncratir and with so many vitner weavers studying the runes on the bones, you were exposed to some of this knowledge. You start with Vitner Craft 6 (Vitner Shaping 1 – Vitner Runes 1).
7	Jornhelm Native. You have born in the main trading town of South-Western Vortland. You start the game with Care 6 (Tradesman 1 – Trader 1).
8	Jornwind Native. Your education has been marked by a focus on religion and fighting. You start the game with Fighting 4, Knowledge 5 (Religion: Gerbanis specialty 1). NOTE: the required “Culture Knowledge 1 Discipline” is already given for free to all characters.
9	Stormrock Native. You were born in the heart of Gerbanis in Vortland, as well as an important commercial centre. You start the game with Care 4 (Tradesman 1) and Knowledge 4 (Religion 1 specialty). NOTE: the required “Culture Knowledge: Stormlands 1 Discipline” is already given for free to all characters.
10	Windiborn Native. You were raised in a town characterized by the strong presence of the Skrajtagers and their knowledge. You start with Knowledge 6 and Read and Write: Vrok 2. NOTE: the required “Languages 1 Discipline” is already given for free to all characters.

WILDLAND REGIONAL TRAITS

1d10	Trait
1	Agroth Blood. Your family is of pure Agroth ancestry and fear no man or beast. When you are inflicted Fear Points you can subtract 4 from the total.
2	Wildbron Blood. You have the blood of the Wildbrons, known for their ferocity in battle. You start the game with Fighting 5. All the damage you deal with melee attacks is raised by +2.
3	Uvail Subject. Your upbringing included both fierce fighting techniques of Agrothian tradition and a habit of hunting seal and wulterfish. You start the game with Fighting 3, Wilderness 4 (Hunting Experience 1 – Hunting & Fishing 1).
4	Saatigia Subject. Your lords rule over the largest army in Wilderland and all their subjects are expected to defend themselves. You start with Fighting 6 (Armed Fighting 1 – One weapon specialty 1).
5	Blueax Subject. Those living in the northernmost port of Hrefing have been raised among the best fishermen in Wildland. You start with Wilderness 6 (Seafarer 1, Hunting Experience 1).
6	Bhalgor Subject. You have been raised under the protection of the mighty Brycker of Wildland, properly educated in the Gerbanis faith. You start the game with Knowledge 7 and the Religion: Gerbanis specialty 1. NOTE: the required “Culture Knowledge 1 Discipline” is already given for free to all characters.
7	Oungair Sea Wolf. You are a sea raider and, as far as the Wulfr lords get their share, you are used to plunder as you like, roaming the sea in search of prey. You start with Fighting 4, Wilderness 4 (Seafarer 1 – Seaman 1).
8	Storhavn Native. Your homeland is the harbour of Stormlanders most visited by foreigners. Trade and barganining are a second nature for you. You get a +5 SV on Care and Knowledge rolls related to trading and bribery. You also start the game with Care 3.
9	Wulfr Subject. Your life is incredibly wild, compared to that of most Wildlanders. Your ancestors made pacts with the Warg Beasts and you have a peculiar affinity with them. Unless you attack them, all the Warg Beasts will avoid attacking you, if they have other preys. Furthermore, you get a +5 SV bonus to Wilderness skill rolls related to (finding, knowing, taming, training etc.) Warg Beasts.
10	Hagtorn Subject. The lords of Vretgaard had lost power and wealth, but the copper-smithing and the herding of the mighty Hagtorn Bulls still make the Hagtorn lords surviving somehow. You start the game with Wilderness 4, Care 4 (Handicraft 1 – Hard Materials 1).

Mountain Traits

The following traits are usually reserved only to half-trolls raised among trolls, unless the GM decides otherwise. Humans tend to avoid the two mountain ranges and half-trolls are usually the offspring of human

prisoners. Remember that the bonus skills of these half-trolls (Player's guide page 17) are Culture Knowledge: Troll and Mother Tongue: Bastjurnal (taken for free without the usual Languages 2 prerequisite).

Only the Gruths' entry is usually for humans, but also for half-trolls raised by the Gruths (which have Culture Knowledge: Gruths and Mother Tongue: Gruth as bonus skills).

MOUNTAIN TRAITS

1d10	Trait
1-2	Icepeak Mountains – Bjarnwood inhabitant. You belong to a troll tribe living in the darkness of this forest infested by Skjulds and Spiders. You start the game with Wildeneress 6 (Survival 1 – Terrain Experience: forest 1).
3-4	Icepeak Mountains – Gruth of the Icefjell. You belong to one of the few nomadic tribes which roam the Icefjell herding mountain oxen. You start the game with Wildeneress 6 (Nature Knowledge 1 – Animal Friend 1).
5-6	Trollridge Mountains – Trollborg. You are a despised half-troll who managed to grow up in this den of conflict and continuous intrigue among different troll factions. You have definitively developed an ability to foresee trouble and resist hardships. You gain 45 extra Creation Points to spend on the Perception and Psyche traits (they cannot go beyond the +4 limit).
7-8	Trollridge Mountains – Mine Explorer. Even if you are a half-troll your troll tribe consider you useful due to your ability of exploring abandoned mines, discovering troubles and possibilities. You start the game with Shadow Arts 6 (Shadowing 1 – Finding & Spotting 1).
9-10	Trollridge Mountains – Ensorcelled by the Klipperlake. Your tribe wanted to kill you, not just because you are a lowly half-human, but also because you are spending too much time contemplating the cursed Klipperlake. However, the Shaman stopped them since he got visions about the future power that you can potentially develop. It look like the Lake was silently transferring knowledge to you... You start the game with Vitner Craft 6 (Call of Vitner 1 – one of the three related specialties 1).

Regional traits for dwarves in the Stormlands

All the dwarves in the Stormlands are Borjornikka, with a few Zvorda, especially among the communities of the Trollridge Mountains, once parts of the Grunkovorda Kingdom.

REGIONAL TRAITS FOR DWARVES IN THE STORMLANDS

1d10	Homeland
1-2	Trollridge – Graystone inhabitant. You are one of the dwarves of Yugglovorka, whose knowledge of stone is legendary. You start with Care 4 (Handicraft 1). Furthermore, you have a +5 SV to all skill rolls related to the knowledge of stone (like for example to spot stone which is about to fall or to find a way through underground tunnels dug in the rock).
3-4	Trollridge – Morkdali inhabitant. The dwarves of Novgalod benefit from the presence of the mighty Thjulks since, even if you are not a warrior, you are constantly exposed to knowledge of warfare. You start with Fighting 6 (Armed Fighting 1 – One weapon specialty 1).
5-6	Trollridge – Grimgnistur inhabitant. The Ironsmiths of Olgisiljev produce metal whose quality is praised all around Trudvang. You start with Care 6 (Handicraft 1 – Hard Materials 1).
7-8	Trollridge – Dustwall inhabitant. The legendary Thorgagin Dragonslayer rules over the dwarves of Ivonda, forcing them to be always watchful for possible fugitives from Wondraskjalf and for those who try to sneak into the famous mines without permission. You start the game with Shadow Arts 6 (Shadowing 1 – Finding & Spotting 1).
9	Trollridge – Wondraskjalf inhabitant. It does not matter whether you were innocent or not, but you have been accused of murder and banished to Rorstrai. You are now a “slayer”, bearing a mystic mark on your forehead, giving permission to any dwarf to kill you on sight. On the other hand, the hard life in this settlement of outcasts taught you some proficiencies necessary to survive in Rorstrai. You start the game with Fighting 4, Shadow Arts 4 (Shadowing 1, Thieving 1).
10	Dain – Hillinge Woods inhabitant. You are among the outcast dwarves who live under Sergin Greathold. Your life in the woods made you developing skills that not many other dwarves have. You start the game with Wilderness 6 (Survival 1 – Terrain Experience: forest 1).

Regional traits for elves in the Stormlands

During the Age of Dreams there were numerous elvish settlements in the region today known as “Stormlands”. However nowadays the elves have almost disappeared. No Ilmalaini elf or Dyfir half-elf exists in the Stormlands. The few elves are all Korpikalli who chose to abandon the old civilization to live a wild life in the woods.

Use the following table also for the Barkbrule half-elves raised by the elves but remember that they are also incredibly rare, since the Korpikalli try to avoid or even fight the Stormlanders.

REGIONAL TRAITS FOR ELVES IN THE STORMLANDS

1d10	Homeland
1-7	Edjland – Copperwood elf. You belong to the largest elvish community remaining in the Stormlands. The Korpikalli of the Copperwoods are masters of the wilderness and fight for keeping humans and trolls out of their domain. You start the game with Wilderness 6 (Hunting Experience 1, Survival 1).
8-9	Nojd – Elf of the Frostholt forest. The elves of this forest are Korpikalli whose ancestors came from the Great Ice Plain, possibly belonging to the noble Norim lineage. You can spend 45 bonus creation points on traits.
10	Djunghart – Elf of the Sisterskimmer Forest. The elves of this community are so isolationistic that nobody has seen one of them in centuries, although the Djughartians fearfully tell stories about them. You start the game with Shadow Arts 6 (Shadowing 1 – Camouflage & Hiding 1).

UPDATE ON OLD SKILLS

The following mechanics update some skills linked to new cultures. They mainly refer to relics of old cultures which pre-date the coming of the Stormlanders' ancestors.

- ♦ Update on the languages table (Player's Handbook p 63)

LANGUAGES

Language	Spoken by
Fjettirspá	Advanced, poetic language known by the high priests of Gerbanis. It is the complicated language in which the Applamaals and the Fjettir are written. Its written form uses Vrok runes, therefore one must know Reading and Writing: Vrok specialty at level 1, although the Foreign Language: Fjettirspá skill must be rolled for proper comprehension.
Joaring	Joarings of Dain
Gruth	Gruths of the Icefjell

- ♦ Update on Culture Knowledge and related specialties (Player's Handbook p 62)

This discipline and these specialties now have varieties for: the Joarings, the Gruths and the Trolls. This latest entry is equal to a deeper knowledge compared to what is offered by the Monster Lore specialty. The trolls in the Stormlands are so numerous, especially in the Trollridge mountains, that they have elaborated complex cultures, not unlike those of humans.

- ♦ Update on Reading and Writing specialty (Player's Handbook p 62-63)

READING AND WRITING

System	Note
Mopor Rods	This includes the complicated system of bones rods carved with mysterious signs, as used by the Joarings of Dain to help memorizing the oral knowledge.

- ♦ Update on the Invoke discipline (Player's Handbook page 56)

INVOKE DISCIPLINE

Specialty	Religion	Power	Bonuses to
Mopor	Joaring Faith	Invoking the Joaring Gods	Bloodgifting
Hel Sister	Hell Cult	Invoking the Hvergelift	Bloodgifting

NEW MATERIAL FOR WEAPONS: BRONZE

The following rules are made to represent bronze weapons, as used for example by the Joarings of Dain, but also sometimes by other people. Bronze is an alloy of copper and tin, it shines like dark gold and it's malleable to craft. It tends to be heavier and harder than iron, although not at the levels of steel. Furthermore many bronze blades tend to lose their edges if not properly treated. Bludgeoning weapons in bronze have the same stats of steel ones, however the stats may change for bladed weapons. In this case, even if there are many varieties of bronze, for the sake of simplicity, only two kinds of bronze are here treated, with modifiers to be applied before the Quality modifiers.

- ♦ Superior Bronze: identical to steel/iron weapons but value x 2.
- ♦ Normal bronze: IM -1 (to be added to the basic IM).

NEW ITEMS: WILDHORNS AND DRAGONHORNS

The bronze Wildhorns are played by Stormlanders during the battles. Normal wildhorns are reputed to instill fear into the enemy and courage to the allies, but these bonuses are not magical and totally up to the GM.

There are also the "Dragon Horns", enormous magical versions of the Wildhorns which need two people to be brought. Nowadays there are only 4 examples of them. Legends say that they are magical and the GM is encouraged to create specific effects for them. However all of them should instill fear in the enemy. If the player succeeds in the proper Entertainment skill roll and sacrifice 10 BP (or DP or VP) all his enemies will

suffer 2d10 (OR 6-10) Fear Points, as if they are really facing a mighty dragon.

NEW COMBAT MANEUVERS

The following mechanics mimic military strategies known by most Stormlanders.

Skjoldborg

♦ Requirements

There are a few requirements to perform a Shield Wall or "Skjoldborg" in Vrok.

- ♦ Each participant must spend 10 CP per round.
- ♦ There must be a minimum of three combatants, each one must use medium or large shields and use only one-handed weapons.
- ♦ Each participant must have at least the Shield Bearer specialty at level 1, otherwise they do not count in the minimum of three shields. Those who do not have the Shield Bearer specialty can still be part of the Shield Wall and get its benefits, as far as they have shields and there is at least one warrior with Shield Bearer per person who has not this specialty.
- ♦ There must be a leader who, during his round, makes a Care skill roll with the Handler discipline and the Commander specialty. If he fails, the Shield Wall is broken.

The maximum number of warriors in a shield wall is up to the GM, although common sense must be applied.

♦ Effects of the Shield Wall

- ♦ Each member of the shield wall

suffers a -5 SV on each attack, due to the fact of being constricted into the formation.

- ♦ Each participant to the shield wall will get 20 CP per round to be used only for parries against both melee and ranged attacks.
- ♦ Usually attacks from the rear cannot be parried with these points but the GM can make ad-hoc judgements for side attacks, according to the situation. E.g. a non-moving shield wall with a slightly curved shape may use the 20 CP even against side attacks.

Actions and Movement

Warriors in the shield wall do their own actions, although they break the shield wall if they move out of the shield line in their round.

The Shield Wall can move only during the Leader's turn, with all members moving up to 5 m. No further CP must be spent by the shield wall members (the movement is supposed to be included in the 10 CP paid each round).

Breaking the Shield Wall

When one member of the shield wall is killed the wall is broken, and the enemy can overcome the wall, going through the place of the fallen shield man, in order to attack the others in the rear ranks. The other shield men who are not in a line of at least 5 shields stop to get their benefit. If the position is not recovered in the next round the shield wall is permanently broken, unless the GM rules otherwise.

Recovering the Shield Wall

To close the break in the wall somebody from a rear line must step in the fallen man or the companions must step and get a tighter wall. In both cases at least one man must spend 5 CP and succeed in a Fighting skill roll with Armed Fighting discipline with the Shield Bearer specialty.

Fallen leaders

If the leader die there should be a secondary leader, making a successful Care skill roll with the Handler discipline and the Commander specialty. If no

leader recovers the position by the round following the Leader's fall the Shield Wall is broken.

Shield Confrontation

When two shield walls face each other, a shield confrontation is inevitable. Each Shield Wall will try to push the enemy's wall to his maximum movement of 5 m.

If so, consider the following to happen:

- ♦ The men of the first line can use only light one-handed weapons since the space is too tight. However, men from the second line may use longer piercing weapons like spears.
- ♦ At the beginning of the round compare the two shield walls. If the larger shield wall has more than three times the number of men, the smaller shield wall is automatically broken. If the superiority is less significant the loser will be pushed backwards and their leader will suffer a penalty of -5 to their next Care skill roll to keep the Shield Wall working.
- ♦ If the two shield walls have roughly the same number of men, consider the average Strength Traits of the men of both walls. To this number add also the minimum Shield Bearer and Battle Experience levels of the average person in this shield wall. If the difference between the two is of 1-5 m, that's is the number of metres the losing Shield Wall retreats, and also the -1 to -5 penalty for the leader's roll. If the difference is greater, the losing shield wall is automatically broken.

Wildfylking

♦ Requirements

There are a few requirements to perform the Wildfylking.

- ♦ Each participant must spend 10 CP per round.
- ♦ There must be a minimum of five combatants in a wedge-like formation with the leader at the tip of the wedge.
- ♦ Each participant must have at least the Fighter specialty at level 1, otherwise

they do not count in the minimum of 5 combatants. Those who do not have the Fighter specialty can still be part of the Wildfylking and get its benefits, as far as there is at least one warrior with Fighter specialty per person who has not this specialty.

- ♦ There must be a leader who, during his round make a Care skill roll with the Handler discipline and the Commander specialty. If he fails, the Wildfylking is broken.

The maximum number of warriors in a Wildfylking is up to the GM, although common sense must be applied.

♦ Effects of the Wildfylking

- ♦ Only those in the tip of the Wildfylking are considered to fight, while the other just push the formation. Also those at the edges of the wedge are considered to fight, but it's up to the GM to establish how many persons are really fighting in a certain situation. For example in a small Wildfylking of 5 persons only 3 persons fight (leader + 2 edges), while in a large Wildfylking of 50 persons only the tip (about 5-6 persons) may fight in the first round or up to 30 persons when the wedge is finally penetrated into the enemy's formation.
- ♦ All those who fight (except the Leader) get 20 CP to be used only for melee attacks, while the also get a -5 SV on all their parries. Their companions are pushing them, so it's easier for them to charge than to defend themselves.
- ♦ The Leader which is at the tip of the wedge will get 30 CP to be used only for melee attacks but also -10 SV to all his parries.
- ♦ Attacks from the rear can be dangerous for the Wildfylking since its members are all tight and cannot move. Unless the GM decides otherwise, such attacks get a +5 SV bonus on their attacks.

Actions and Movement

Warriors in the Wildfylking do their own actions, although they break the Wildfylking if they move out of their positions.

The Wildfylking can move only during the Leader's turn, with all members moving up to 5 m. No further CP must be spent by the Wildfylking's members (the movement is supposed to be included in the 10 CP paid each round).

Breaking the Wildfylking

When one member of the Wildfylking is slain the enemy can overcome the position and attack those who are behind. If he is not slain or the position is recovered in the following round, the Wildfylking is broken, unless the GM rules otherwise.

Recovering the Wildfylking

To close the break somebody from a rear line must step in the fallen man or the companions must step and get tighter. In both cases at least one man must spend 5 CP and succeed in a Fighting skill roll with the Battle Experience discipline with the Fighter specialty.

Fallen leaders

If the leader die there should be a secondary leader, stepping into the leader's fallen position. This will cost enough CP to reach the position and a successful Care skill roll with the Handler discipline and the Commander specialty. Remember that fighters in the Fylking are very tight, therefore the best thing is to have prospective secondary leaders to be just at the back of the main leader.

If no leader recovers the position by the round following the Leader's fall the Wildfylking is broken.

Wildfylking against shieldwalls

The Wildfylking seems perfect to break shield walls but this is also a risky maneuver. Warriors from the sides of the shield wall can leave the wall to make a pincer maneuver and attack the Wildfylking's vulnerable rear or sides. This maneuver is a bet against odds: it either work or it can be total failure.

TROLLRIDGE MOUNTAIN TROLLS

It is well-known that there are so many varieties of trolls that not even the famous Westmarkian scholar Jorgi was able to do more than a very generic classification. The reason for this is that Trolls of different sizes and types tend to breed with each other, as long as it is physically possible. This is especially true in places like the Trollridge Mountains, where the number and variety of trolls is impressive and new species seem to always appear.

The troll types in the GM Guide and in the Jorgi's Bestiary can be used for most of the trolls, since maybe many trolls are just varieties of those types, which have clear physical differences but with no consequence in terms of mechanics.

However sometimes one may feel the urge of replicating the unpredictability of troll breeding. The quicker and easier way may be to take a basic type and to remove, add or change a feat or special ability. In alternative the following system may be used.

Step 1: Troll Size

Choose or roll on the following table. Use the comparisons for stats in the published books but ignoring feats and special abilities. When the size is changed from the basic comparisons, remember to check GM Guide page 95-98 for changes in speed, damage, armor and number of rounds to spread combat points.

TROLL SIZE

1d20	Size	Stats
1-5	Small (1/2t)	Use Small Troll (GM Guide p.108)
6-8	Medium (1t)	Use Small Troll (GM Guide p.108) but Body Points: 20-30 Fear Factor: 1d6
9-14	Large (1,5t)	Use Large Troll (GM Guide p.108).
15-16	Very Large (2t)	Use Ogre (Jorgi's Bestiary p.167).
17	Huge (3t)	Roll 1d6: 1-3 Use Young Hrim Troll (Jorgi's Bestiary p.161). 4-6 Use King Troll (Jorgi's Bestiary p.165).
18	Enormous (4t)	Use Young Hrim Troll (Jorgi's Bestiary p.161) but Body Points: 90-105 Dexterity -2.
19	Mastodontic (5t)	Use Old Hrim Troll (Jorgi's Bestiary p.161) but Body Points: 100-110 Dexterity -4.
20	Almost Giant (6t)	Use Old Hrim Troll (Jorgi's Bestiary p.161).

Step 2: Troll Feats

All trolls start with the Night's Sight feat (GM Guide page 107) for free.

Choose a number or Roll 1d10 to get the number of Feats that a single Troll owns, beyond Night's Sight.

NUMBER OF FEATS

1d10	Number of Feats
1-4	1
5-7	2
8-9	3
10	4

For Each Feat roll 1d20 on the Feats table, re-roll if you get something you already have.

TROLL FEATS

1d20	Feat	Reference in Jorgi's Bestiary
1-5	Fearless	149
6-9	Camouflage or Mud Camouflage	149, 152
10	Spiderlegs (reroll if the size is larger than 1,5 t)	152
11-15	Plaguebearer	154-156
16	Fear of Magic	159
17	Frenzy	159
18	Mock Guidance	165
19	Mood	167
20	Roll on the following table for exceptional feats	-

EXCEPTIONAL TROLL FEATS

1d20	Exceptional Feat	Description and/or Reference in Jorgi's Bestiary
1-3	Large Claws	This troll does not use weapons since his claws are so big to be considered 1-handed light weapons.
4-6	Large Fangs	This troll's mouth is over-sized since it bears fangs so big that they are considered 1-handed heavy weapons. This troll probably walk on four, like an animal, bearing its weight on the knuckles.
7-9	Thick-skinned	The troll has double the amount of natural Armor.
10-11	Horns	This troll possibly have demon ancestors since he bears bull horns. He gets the Charge feat (p.28) but the damage done is equal to the "bite" column related to the troll's size (p.9).
12	Tusk throw (reroll if the size is smaller 3t)	The troll has some Hrim Troll ancestor, therefore he got impressive tusks on his jaw.(p.159).
13	Hrim Body	The troll has some Hrim Troll ancestor from whom he inherited this unnatural ability (p.159).
14	Two Heads	This incredibly rare mutation means that the troll has a Perception of +4, but its intelligence is -2, since he cannot coordinate the two heads.
15	Resilient	Maybe it's magic or some unknown connection to Dimhall but the troll ignores the penalties inflicted by damage levels.
16	Deathly Howl	This troll has an odd connection with dimhall. He can spend a whole action round howling like a Warg Beast, provoking 1d10 (OR 10) Fear Points in addition to the Fear he should normally inflict.
17	Illusion Trick	King Trolls' blood is in the Troll's veins (p.165).
18	Persuade	King Trolls' blood is in the Troll's veins (p.165).
19	Regeneration	This troll has some demonic blood in his vein. Each round the troll regenerates 1d6 body points. No CP are spent for this ability.
20	Change Shape	The troll has some very rare Fjol blood and he is possibly even more good-mooded than most trolls are (p.148).