

BIRTHRIGHT™

CAMPAIGN EXPANSION

The Rjurik Highlands



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credits

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the northern realms

The northern highlands of Cerilia are harsh and unforgiving, known for their vast stretches of evergreen forests, icy rivers, grim mountains, and rocky coastlines constantly pounded by harsh and unforgiving surf. Great dangers lurk in the highlands—natural dangers in the form of brutal weather, uncharted wilderness, and fierce predators, plus native dangers even more terrifying because of their intelligence and cunning: the cruel Blood Skull orogs, the goblins of Urga-Zai, the ferocious trolls and ogres of the wild places, and the ever-present threat posed by the awnshegh known as the White Witch.

introduction

The spring and summer seasons are short here, while winter is long. Snow and icy rain assault the land mercilessly, driven on biting north winds. The plants and animals of the northern highlands are hardy and resourceful—in demanding conditions such as these, only the strongest survive.

The inhabitants of this rugged land are every bit as tough as the region itself. These people are the Rjurik, the descendants of the followers of the ancient god Reynir, who are now dedicated to the nature deity, Erik.

In the Rjurik realms, fierce independence and a deep sense of honor are the rules. Here, loyalty to one's family and companions is a higher and more important loyalty than that owed a sovereign. To uphold these ideals, the Rjurik are never slow to defend their realms should an external threat arise—their bravery and skill at arms are legendary across Cerilia.

This volume chronicles the history of the Rjurik people and describes all their varied kingdoms and those who live there—the brave, the wicked, the noble, and the fearsome. Here may be found the story of the Rjurik and the lands they call home.

how to use this book

The *Rjurik Highlands* describes the wilds of northwestern Cerilia, where dwell the fearsome but honorable warriors, the Rjurik, and their unique druidic priests. Like the previous campaign-expanding supplements, *Ruins of Empire* and *Cities of the Sun*, this package is designed to give a complete picture of the lands and peoples it addresses and to lay out the realm for use by DMs and players who wish to rule its varied kingdoms.

Part One of this book presents an overview of the Rjurik realms as well as history, social details, and other useful information about the Rjurik people. Part Two describes each Rjurik state in detail. Some nations are ideal for rule by player characters (PCs) and are listed as *recommended*, while others (listed as *not available to PCs*) are home to powerful NPC rulers and can be used by DMs as antagonists for player characters. Still others (usable by the DM) are ruled by humanoids, monsters, or even the twisted awnsheghlien.

Part Three of this book details prominent personalities of the Rjurik realms—those likely to be encountered by player characters. Part Four introduces new rules for Rjurik-based campaigns, such as guidelines for running tribal chieftains, new Rjurik character kits, and new military units.

The final section of this book contains *Njalgrim's Doom*, a Rjurik adventure that sends a blooded character and companions on a quest to redeem a slain ancestor and destroy a powerful magical weapon.

This product also contains a poster map detailing the northwestern realms, six card-sheets portraying various locations and aspects of the Highlands setting, and a set of war cards illustrating the various military forces that might serve player characters—as well as those that might oppose them.



The modern Rjurik are descended from a nation known as the Rjuven, followers of the god Reynir. The current culture reveres Reynir's successor, Erik, and continues the tradition of respect and protection of the woodlands and streams. Every member of Rjurik society from the mightiest jarl to the youngest child recognizes Erik's druids as wielding the true power in these lands.

The Rjuven were a tough, semi-nomadic race who lived in the wild forests and plains of Aduria, honing their skills as herdsman, hunters, and warriors. Though proud of their ancient lands and reluctant to leave them, the threat of the Shadow forced them to migrate north, away from the growing danger.

the coming of the rjuven

Along with the Brechts, the Vos, the Masetians, and other refugee tribes, the Rjuven fled the growing darkness in the south for the wild (and at that time, safe) reaches of Cerilia.

The Rjuven settled along the edges of the northern woods, in the regions now known as Jankaping and the Taelshore kingdoms. Life in these frontier kingdoms was hard—the deep woods were home to the elves, who were highly suspicious and resentful of the humans who suddenly chose to appropriate their ancestral lands. The forests were also riddled with marauding bands of gnolls, orogs, trolls, and other dangerous creatures. Winters were harsh and summers short, but the Rjuven, a people accustomed to hardship and deprivation, survived and even prospered. Their tiny settlements grew into thriving cities. Nomadic Rjuven tribes

the rjurik people

ranged far and wide to penetrate the forbidding dark woods, battling many dangerous denizens and pressing to the very borders of the ancient elven realms.

High in their slender towers, concealed behind walls of illusion, the minds and spirits of the elf-lords were allowed the luxury to wander far from the chaos of temporal existence. The presence of upstart, short-lived humans, however, impinging on the ancient forests and bringing their strange gods and barbaric ways, forced the elven rulers abruptly back to reality. Human settlements now existed deep in the forests, and hunters and foresters roamed through regions once believed by the elves to be theirs alone.

For their part, the Rjuven treated the woodlands with respect and maintained the balance of nature when they hunted, fished, felled trees, and built settlements. Still, they were humans, and were driven by a near-instinctive desire to explore, travel, and settle, and the elven realms were in their path.

war with the elves

No one knows who really started the war, but the undisputable fact is that it did begin. Territorial squabbles escalated into murders, raids, reprisals, and finally full-scale conflict. At first, the elves were pushed back by the upstart humans who, encouraged by early successes, pressed deeper into the woods and threatened the royal domains of the elf-kings themselves.

Perhaps conflict could have been avoided had either side chosen to stop and offer parley. But neither elven arrogance nor human ambition would allow such a course, and soon, as elsewhere in Cerilia, elf and man were locked in a death struggle.

Though defeated in the early stages of the conflict, the elves struck back hard. The Rjuven suffered terribly from the scourge of the Hunt of the Elves—the *gheallie Sidhe*—those stern elf warriors set to the task of exterminating

humans. Rjuven settlements in the woods were sacked and burned, their inhabitants put to the sword. Individual hunters, trappers, and foresters were pursued and slain. Soon, the Rjuven were driven out of the forests and the elves, sensing victory, sent scouts and raiding parties into the heart of the Rjuven realms.

The elven victories were not without cost, however. The Rjuven contested every inch of ground and fought to defend their towns and homesteads. Though clearly outmatched by the elf-lords' warriors clad in shining mail and armed with terrible magic and enchanted weapons, the Rjuven slew many enemies, losses which the elf-kings, already suffering from losses to the orogs, trolls, goblins, and giants, could ill-afford.

In the end, the druids were the deciding force. Although reluctant to intervene in the conflict, the druids aided their people with healing magic and helped refugees escape the forests. Their attempts to negotiate with the elves were rebuffed, but they remained disinclined to use their powers in battle, even as the Rjuven were slaughtered and driven from their homes.

When the old high druid Sigvar died, power passed to his successor, Njarl Sunbow. Younger and less conservative than his predecessor, Njarl prayed to Reynir for guidance and soon announced that the god had shown him the way. The druids' powers were to be turned to the defense of the human realms. Reynir's priests and priestesses, with Njarl at their head, marched into battle alongside the Rjuven armies.

Overextended and faced with the unique powers of human priestly magic, the elves were forced back into their forests. Within a decade, only the elven realm of Lluabright survived; the remaining woodlands lay either in the hands of the Rjuven or with the elves' ancient enemies, the humanoid.



the shadow

For a time, peace settled over the highlands. The new Rjuven realms continued to grow, but the humanoid threat remained, and the elves, still stinging from their defeat, raided into human territory. The coming of Azrai, the ancient enemy from the south, eventually brought the conflict that would change Cerilia and the Rjuven forever. The elves, burning for revenge against the Rjuven, fell easily into Azrai's clutches, as did the goblins, orogs, and other humanoids.

The course of the struggle that followed is well known. On the verge of defeat, the allied human nations, supported by the gods themselves, made their stand at Mount Deismaar. Reynir's chosen champion was the high druid Erik, a direct descendant of Njarl Sunbow. When at last Azrai and the other gods perished in the great conflagration, Reynir's power passed to Erik, who rose up to take his place as a god himself, the protector of the woodlands and eternal defender of the Rjuven (who would henceforth be known as the Rjurik in his honor). Bloodied but victorious, the Rjurik returned to

their homelands and founded their modern nations under the rulership of blooded nobles, those touched by the essence of the gods. So it was in the year called 0 of Haelyn's Count.

The elves, in the pivotal moment of the battle, took the side of their human enemies against the living darkness that was Azrai. When the war was over, they remained in their forest kingdom of Lluabright, but were soon beset by the goblins of Urgan-zai, the humanoids of the Giantdowns and what is now the White Witch's domain, and the most powerful of the awnsheghlien, the creature known as the Gorgon. So isolated, the elves of Lluabright rarely interacted with the new-born Rjurik realms.

the anuirean invasion

The Anuireans, under the leadership of the newly-blooded ruler Roele, took it upon themselves to unite all of Cerilia

how bjarn saved the raven

Once, there was a hunter named Bjarn of the Fyrlaaf tribe. He was a skilled tracker, and in all his tribe, none could best him with a bow. He brought much game home to his tribe, honored his parents and his chieftain, and always expressed proper gratitude to Erik the druid for the bounty which the god provided his people.

One day, deep in the dead of winter, Bjarn wandered far from his tribe's campsite. The snow was thick upon the land and game was scarce, but Bjarn was a good provider, and could not bear the thought of allowing his tribe, his wife, and his three children to go hungry.

Despite this, and despite Bjarn's great skill as a hunter, the entire day passed without Bjarn seeing so much as a single deer, rabbit, or elk. As he prepared to return home empty-handed, Bjarn heard a loud, raucous voice echoing from over a nearby rise.

Approaching stealthily, his bow drawn, Bjarn peeked over the crest of the hill. There he beheld a fearsome ogre seated beside a

small campfire. In a cage nearby was a raven, its feathers bedraggled, its eyes tired.

"Fear not, friend raven," the ogre said in its harsh, croaking tones. "Soon your suffering will be over, for you will be my evening meal. It is good, friend raven, for I have not eaten in many a long day."

Bjarn felt anger in his heart at this, for the raven was sacred to his tribe. He knew, though, that he alone could not best the great ogre, and he thought of a way to trick the ogre and set the raven free.

Digging deep in the snow, Bjarn found several large rocks, which he carried down toward the ogre's camp.

Striding toward the ogre, Bjarn bellowed, "Hail, brother ogre!" in mock fellowship. The ogre looked up with a bemused stare.

Then the creature growled. "You might make a good meal for me," he said. "But you bear sword and bow, and might sting me before you die. I will not eat you then, but will instead eat this raven, which I just caught in my trap."

"It is good, brother," replied Bjarn, "for I am going to sup upon these delicious rocks which I found. They are far more tasty than your scrawny raven. Perhaps you would like



under their own relatively benevolent rule. But the Rjurik had other ideas. New to the blood themselves, the stern northerners devoted their efforts to strengthening existing kingdoms and founding new ones, all the while struggling against the power of the Blood Skull orogs and others. Around 15 HC, when Roele marched his banners northward expecting an easy victory over people he considered unenlightened barbarians, he was greeted with an unpleasant shock. The Rjurik, tempered like a sword of naked steel in the ice-cold forges of the north, proved to be more than the Anuireans' equals. They quickly drove Roele's armies back in defeat.

Believing themselves invincible, the Rjurik kings of Stjordvik and Hjalstone (which would eventually be usurped by the Anuireans and named Dhoesone) formed their own armies and pressed south into the Anuirean provinces, but were themselves defeated by the well-disciplined southerners. Rjurik tales of this period are markedly anti-Anuirean in their tone and speak of the southern invaders with a level of hatred and venom usually reserved for the

awnsheghlien and their most feared minions.

Within a decade, Anuire and Rjurik stood at an uneasy stalemate, neither able to overcome the other through sheer force of arms. Roele's early disasters in the Rjurik lands were a lesson well learned, however, and he approached the northern rulers with offers of peace, alliance, and eventually, union with his empire.

Kind words and diplomacy triumphed where swords and armies could not. By 25 HC, the Rjurik realms of Jankaping, Halskapa, Svinik, and finally even the Anuireans' most dedicated foes, Rjuvik and Hjalstone, agreed to join the empire as equals. The kingdom today known as Hogenmark remained a patchwork of petty jarldoms, nomadic tribes, and monsters, and was considered the empire's wild northern frontier.

The remainder of the region was, for the moment, ceded to the orogs, goblins, gnolls, giants, elves, awnsheghlien, and other nonhuman races. The modern realms of Hjolvar and Kvigmar did not yet exist, though small wandering bands and tribes of Rjurik called the region home, and the dwarves remained holed up in their ancient fortress, Khurin-Azur, beset by the Urga-Zai goblins and the minions of the terrible creature that would eventually become the Gorgon.

to join me?"

The ogre frowned. "You eat rocks?" he asked, puzzled. "I have always been told that rocks are not for eating."

Bjarn laughed. "That is what we tell people, but in fact, rocks are among the tastiest and most satisfying food in the highlands!" He then sat down and began to lay out the rocks in front of him, as if for a fine feast. "Enjoy your scrawny raven, my friend. I will enjoy my rocks."

"Wait," said the ogre. "I am sure that my raven is actually quite delicious. Perhaps I could share it with you if you would share your savory rocks."

Bjarn hesitated and considered this. "I do not think so, friend ogre. These rocks are truly delicious."

"Then I will trade my raven and this sack of gold for some of your rocks," rumbled the ogre, gazing hungrily at the stones.

Bjarn thought long and hard at this. "Well, my friend," he said at last, "if you are truly so hungry that you would give up your raven and your gold to share my rocks, I could not live with myself if I did not behave generously. I will take your gold and raven, and you may have all of my rocks."

With that, Bjarn humbly accepted the

caged bird and the ogre's gold, and quickly departed the camp.

"Enjoy your meal, friend ogre!" he called. "I will speak well of you to my tribe!"

Then, as soon as he was out of the ogre's sight, Bjarn fled the place, covering his tracks behind him, determined to lose himself before the ogre discovered his deception. Before long he was well away, though he heard the ogre bellowing in rage in the distance. Bjarn opened the cage.

"There, brother," he said to the captive bird. "You are free to go."

The raven looked at Bjarn, then spoke.

"My gratitude to you, Bjarn of the Fyrlaaf!" it said. "And the gratitude of my people is with you. From this day forward, we shall be as brothers. Your people shall know the secret language of the birds, and my people shall be your friends, messengers, and guides. Follow me, now, and I will lead you to the greatest stag in the forest."

And so Bjarn followed the raven, and slew the mighty stag. His people ate well for many days after that, and in years to come, the raven's promise proved true. To this day, the Fyrlaaf are known as the friends of the raven, and can speak the secret language of the birds.



Rjurik membership in the empire had its highs and lows. Most of the time, the northerners minded their own affairs, paid taxes, participated in imperial wars, defended the realm, and lived peacefully (but independently-minded) alongside subjects of the Iron Throne.

Slowly but surely, the Rjurik, with some Anuirean assistance, settled the wild north, transforming it into the realm now known as Hogenmark. Elsewhere, the Rjurik realms stood fast against the ravages of the nonhuman tribes of the Blood Skull Barony and the savage inhabitants of the Giantdowns. A few hardy and exceptionally brave Rjurik even colonized the Giantdowns, carving out homesteads, farms, and small communities.

Autocratic rule rarely runs smoothly, however, and a succession of emperors took Rjurik loyalty more and more for granted, awarding jarldoms to political allies, increasing taxes, dragooning unwilling Rjurik warriors into their armies, and generally treating the proud northerners with dwindling respect.

The decades-long struggle for succession to

the Iron Throne finally severed the last tenuous threads of Rjurik loyalty to the Anuireans. In 1030 HC, Stjordvik and Rjuvik were first to declare independence, followed in short order by Svinik, Halskapa, and the other Rjurik realms. Hjalstone, long since taken over by the Anuireans and renamed Dhoesone, remained loyal to the empire, though today it exists as an independent Anuirean nation.

The shattered empire, caught up in a protracted power struggle, could do little to stop its wayward provinces from slowly falling away. Soon, the now-ruined empire was no more, and by 1100 HC, the Rjurik were once again masters of their own lands.

Since that time, the Rjurik have lived peacefully with each other, united by the need to defend themselves against the threat of the awnsheghlien and the humanoids. Although wars did flare up between the Rjurik kingdoms and jarldoms, this was rare; the northerners

the faithful skald

I, Aethelstan, write these words. Hear now the tale of the skald Hruthila, who did once walk these lands, and who was, in her time, the paragon of honor, loyalty, and duty.

It is said that, in the days when the Ylgarri tribe and the Egilsvaar tribe fought the awnsheghlien, the chief of the Ylgarri, one Ingar, sought to bind the two tribes together in a mighty alliance that would defeat the enemy. He chose the skald Hruthila to carry his offer of assistance to the elders of the Egilsvaar tribe.

"Brave Hruthila," he said, "this message is of the greatest importance, for if our tribes do not ally, the tainted ones will surely destroy us. Let nothing and no one stand in your way as you deliver this message—not man, nor elf, nor awnshegh, nor god."

Hruthila bowed her head respectfully. "So it shall be, great chief," she said.

Now it came to pass that the terrible awnshegh lord called the Wraith did hear of Hruthila's mission, and grew determined to stop her, for should she succeed, he and his kind would surely be defeated and slain by the united tribes.

One of the Wraith's foul powers was the ability to take on a pleasing shape, by reaching into his victim's mind and seeing his

innermost desires. Thus, he looked upon Hruthila as she rode determinedly through the forests, and saw there a shape that would bewitch her.

As Hruthila rode, she came upon an old woman. Looking closely, she saw her own beloved mother, whom she thought lived in a far province.

"My dearest daughter!" declared the woman, opening her arms and inviting a warm embrace. "It has been long and longer since I last set eyes upon you! Come and sit with me and tell me of your life and your adventures!"

"Greetings, mother," said Hruthila. Then, though her heart was heavy, she said, "I would stay with you and speak of many things, but the great chief Ingar has set me a task, and as a skald, it is my duty to fulfill it. I must go on my way."

And though her mother stood beside the road and wept bitter tears, Hruthila rode on.

Determined to sway the skald from her mission, the Wraith then took on another shape—that of a small child.

"Please help me, oh beautiful skald," he said, tears streaming down his face. "My mother and father have been taken by the orogs, and I am alone in the world. Please rescue my parents, so that I may once more sit with them and tell them how much I love them!"

But as much as it hurt her, Hruthila hardened her heart and left the little boy. She rode

the rjurik lifestyle

saved most of their energy to fight the far more common humanoid invasions and uprisings.

In 1514 HC, Zhullik, the Scarlet Baron, led his orogs and gnolls in a massive invasion of the Taelshore kingdoms, but was himself slain and his armies scattered in the epic Battle of Innsmark. The torch of leadership was taken up by the current Scarlet Baron, Thrakkazz, and the threat of the humanoids, combined with that of the White Witch and other awnsheghlien, continued unabated.

Isolated throughout most of their history, Rjurik lands have recently begun to open up to the outside world, with Anuirean and Brecht traders and adventurers arriving in the populous Taelshore lands. With foreign influence spreading, the more traditional nomadic and wilderness-dwelling Rjurik feel more and more removed from their urban cousins, and with this feeling of distance, the seeds of conflict have been planted.

The inhabitants of the wild highlands are still a strong, independent race possessed of a fierce warrior spirit and an almost unquenchable survival instinct. These are the Rjurik, followers of the nature god, Erik.

Despite their outward ferocity and insular ways, the Rjurik are a kind and caring people. They are well versed in the ways of nature and are respectful of Erik's wild domains. They are accomplished artisans, poets, singers, and weavers. The skill of the Rjurik as wilderness scouts, trackers, and hunters is legendary across Cerilia. Few outsiders would dare enter Rjurik lands with hostile intent, for centuries of living in this rugged wilderness has strengthened and emboldened its defenders until they fear virtually no foe.

on, trying to shut out his piteous wailing as it faded into the distance.

Growing frustrated, the Wraith took on the guise of the great god Erik, lord of the forests. He grew tall, his skin became gnarled like the bark of a great fir tree, and his hair turned green and shaggy. He stood in Hruthila's path, his branchlike arms extended.

"My daughter!" he cried. His voice was like the rushing of many pine boughs. "You have done well to follow your duty, but I have a greater task for you. I am Erik the druid, father and protector of all the Rjurik. I decree that you must travel far to the south and forget the task set you by Chief Ingar."

Hruthila bowed her head respectfully, but continued to ride.

"Great Lord Erik, I beg you forgive my insolence," she said, "but I gave my word to the great Chief Ingar that neither man, nor awnshegh, nor god would hinder me in my mission, and a skald must always keep her word. I must go on."

"So be it!" bellowed the Wraith, casting aside his disguise and rising up before her in his true form. A tall, hooded shade with burning eyes and a sword of terrible, icy metal loomed in her path. "You would not stop for your family, nor for the innocent, nor for the gods, but now you shall stop for death!"

With that, the Wraith rushed at Hruthila, who drew her own sword and prepared to

defend herself.

Without warning, a great thunderclap smote the forest and a vast and terrible arm reached down from the trees, plucking forth the now-terrified Wraith as a robin plucks a worm from the ground.

"I am Erik!" echoed a fearsome voice. "You have blasphemed against me, taken my form, and tried to deceive one of my chosen people! For that you shall be destroyed!"

With these words, the giant hand closed about the fearsome awnshegh, and the Wraith was no more.

"Go on your way, daughter of Reynir," said Erik, his voice growing soft and comforting. "The Wraith thought he could see your deepest desires and use them against you. But he could not see that which is deepest in you—the honor and love you feel for my people. Go, daughter Hruthila, and know that you are truly blessed."

Hruthila completed her mission, bringing great chief Ingar's offer of alliance to the Egilsvaar. With the alliance sealed, the two tribes joined forces and destroyed the awnsheghlien who had plagued their lands, and were forever free. Hruthila went on to have many more adventures, and was always known for her heroic sense of love, honor, and duty.

I, Aethelstan, wrote these words.



In appearance, the Rjurik are typically tall and heavy-framed, with broad shoulders, strong arms, and powerful legs. It is said that even the most retiring Rjurik maiden is as skilled as a Brecht swordsman and as fierce as a Vos berserker.

Most Rjurik are blond or red haired. Black hair, which is exceedingly rare, is considered a sign of a particularly ill-fated individual, and is thought to reflect a black temperament. As proof of this, many Rjurik inflicted with the curse of battle rage—a combat frenzy similar to that of the Vos berserkers but, in the Rjurik view, invariably tragic and fatal for both the rager and his friends—are black-haired. The Rjurik generally consider this proof positive of the doomed nature of black-haired individuals.

Rjurik men and women wear their hair long, and tend to keep it bound or braided for convenience. In many Rjurik tribes, outcasts are marked by having their hair cut off or their heads shaved, so short hair is generally considered the mark of an undesirable individual. The short hairstyles of the Anuireans and Brechts are often pointed to as inherent proof of their untrustworthiness.

As a result of adaptation to their frigid homeland, the fair-skinned Rjurik dislike warm climates. Rjurik travelers who visit the southern lands, especially the Khinasi kingdoms, tend to complain about the climate and usually drive their companions to distraction by constantly harping on how much they miss the cool northern lands.

Rjurik clothe themselves simply. At home and when at leisure, Rjurik folk prefer long tunics, sometimes with colorful embroidery at the cuffs, collars, and hems. These are often worn with elaborately-tooled belts with fanciful buckles, and low boots or sandals.

While traveling, hunting, or otherwise outside the home, Rjurik men and women alike favor loose shirts, trousers, and high, finely-crafted boots.

Little difference is evident between clothing worn by males and females in Rjurik society, though lighter colors such as white,

tan, and yellow are usually preferred by women, and darker colors such as red, brown, black (and occasionally blue) are favored by men. Clothing in blue or purple is rare and expensive, for the dyes used for such colors must be imported from southern lands.

Rjurik embroidery is exquisite, and is admired throughout Cerilia. Embroidered bands or panels are used in this region to brighten otherwise unremarkable garments. Traditional subjects for embroidery include fanciful knotwork, highly stylized animals and monsters, and images of gods and ancient heroes.

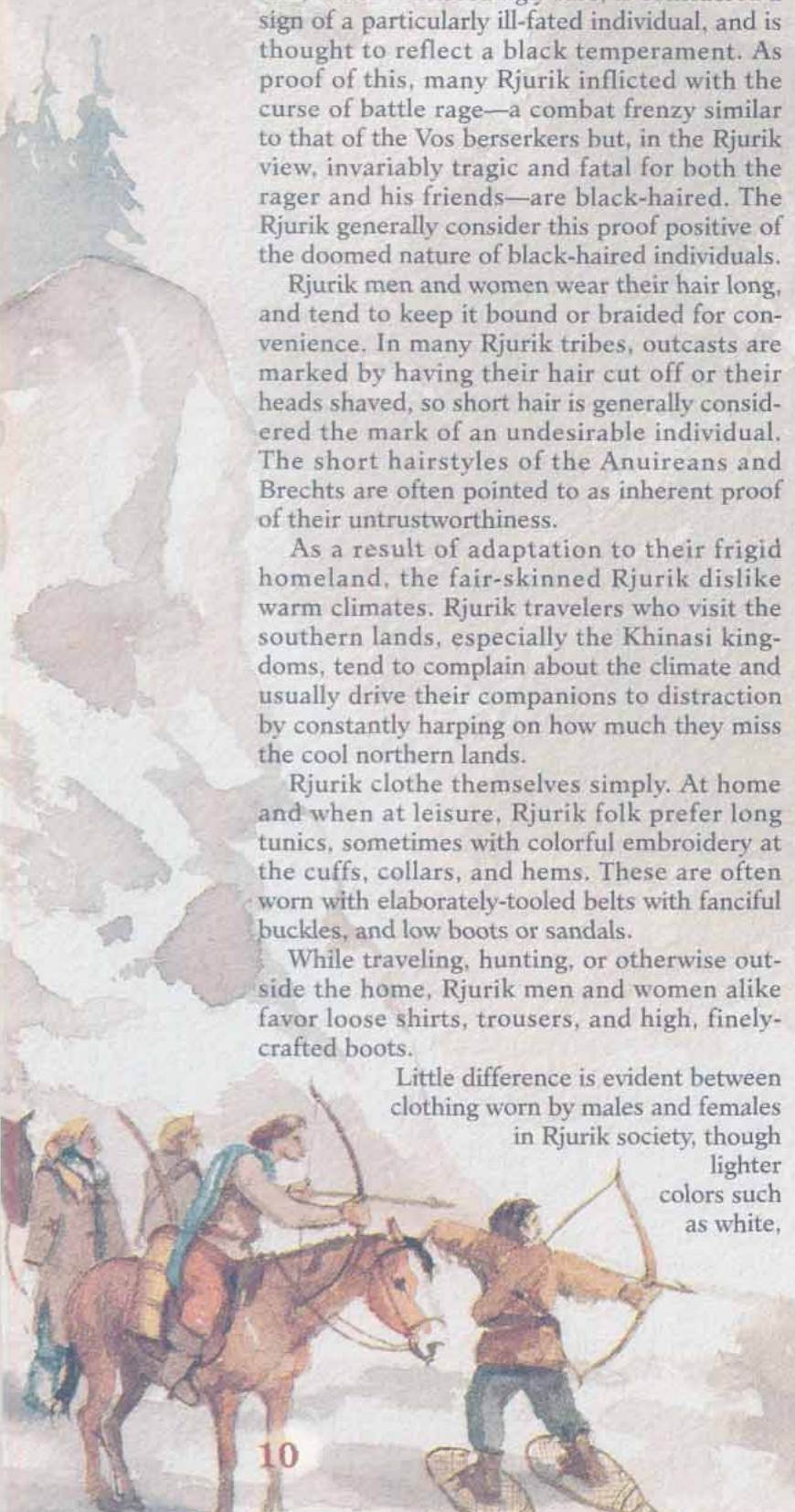
During the winter, Rjurik wear heavy wolf-skin or bearskin cloaks. Felted or boiled wool and other warm, insulating fabrics from the south are favored trade goods, for which the Rjurik pay handsomely.

The strength and skill of Rjurik warriors are famed throughout the continent, as is the quality of their weapons and armor. In battle, Rjurik can be recognized by their steel caps or their unique goggle-helms. Favored weapons include the long bow, spear, broad sword, and the great two-handed claymore, originally developed to defeat the heavy armor of Anuirean knights. The Rjurik favor chain and ring mail, and have developed an improved, double-thickness chain mail which provides protection almost equal to that of Anuirean plate.

Rjurik economy

Traditional Rjurik tribes are semi-nomadic, spending the spring and summer roaming the land to hunt, fish, and gather food. During the fall, as the weather grows colder, the tribes settle down in their ancestral wintering grounds. There, they reclaim existing structures or build new ones as needed, including tribal longhouses, larders, sweatlodges, and communal meeting halls. The tribes spend the harsh winter months here, emerging only occasionally to hunt for survival or simply to break the monotony of daily life.

As a result of the enforced closeness of winter life, the Rjurik are highly social and affectionate among themselves. Winter is the time for singing, feasts, games, crafts, and tribal rituals. Fabric and clothing are loomed and sewn



during the winter, and most of Rjurik's arms and armor are forged during this time. The isolation and peace of winter is considered by many armorers to be essential to the creation of fine weapons. The detail and quality of items created in Rjurik winter camps is unparalleled, and famed throughout Cerilia.

With the spring thaw, the tribes begin to migrate, heading for traditional hunting lands. Those with permanent quarters either conceal them or leave a small crew (including several warriors) behind to guard them. Such duty is considered rather onerous, but is understood by all to be vital to the tribe's continued survival. Warriors chosen to remain behind are selected by lot or by games of chance. Certain tribal elders and individuals too old, sick, or otherwise incapable of travel also remain behind. Messengers return to the site periodically during the hunting season to share their bounty with fellow tribesmen and to make sure their loved ones and their villages are safe.

Some tribes build their communal structures annually, and leave them behind in the spring to be naturally reclaimed by the forest. Solemn ceremonies and prayers to Erik surround a tribe's departure from its winter quarters, including thanks to the powers of nature and blessings for the trees and plants that will grow where the camp once stood. Former campsites are said to be specially favored by Erik and the other gods, and are thought to evolve into places of enormous beauty and peace as the forest returns.

Spring and summer are times of great joy for the Rjurik, for they are spent in the pursuits that they love most. Rjurik roam their ancestral lands hunting, fishing, camping beneath the open sky, and making contact with neighboring tribes for trade, feasting, and socializing. Athletic contests and great meetings between tribes take place during the summer. Several special places throughout the Rjurik lands, blessed and protected by the druids, are reserved for such occasions.

Tribes with semi-permanent villages are able to leave elders and other dependents behind during the hunting season; those tribes that build annually, however, must bring such individuals along on their journeys. This often presents problems, for the exceptionally sick

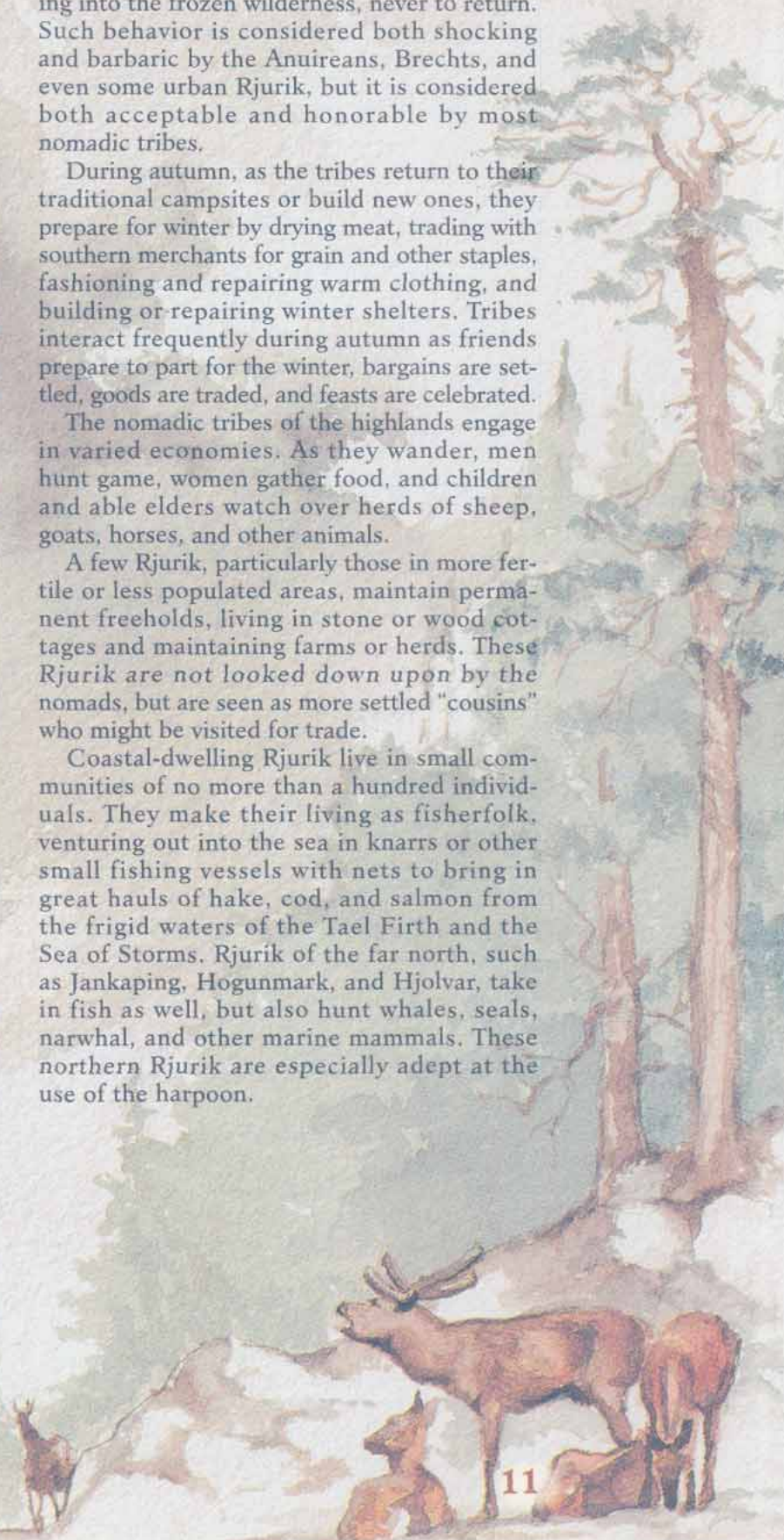
or weak are often unable to travel. In such tribes the elderly and infirm often realize that they will only burden their fellows and voluntarily leave their camps in the winter, wandering into the frozen wilderness, never to return. Such behavior is considered both shocking and barbaric by the Anuireans, Brechts, and even some urban Rjurik, but it is considered both acceptable and honorable by most nomadic tribes.

During autumn, as the tribes return to their traditional campsites or build new ones, they prepare for winter by drying meat, trading with southern merchants for grain and other staples, fashioning and repairing warm clothing, and building or repairing winter shelters. Tribes interact frequently during autumn as friends prepare to part for the winter, bargains are settled, goods are traded, and feasts are celebrated.

The nomadic tribes of the highlands engage in varied economies. As they wander, men hunt game, women gather food, and children and able elders watch over herds of sheep, goats, horses, and other animals.

A few Rjurik, particularly those in more fertile or less populated areas, maintain permanent freeholds, living in stone or wood cottages and maintaining farms or herds. These Rjurik are not looked down upon by the nomads, but are seen as more settled "cousins" who might be visited for trade.

Coastal-dwelling Rjurik live in small communities of no more than a hundred individuals. They make their living as fisherfolk, venturing out into the sea in knarrs or other small fishing vessels with nets to bring in great hauls of hake, cod, and salmon from the frigid waters of the Tael Firth and the Sea of Storms. Rjurik of the far north, such as Jankaping, Hogunmark, and Hjolvar, take in fish as well, but also hunt whales, seals, narwhal, and other marine mammals. These northern Rjurik are especially adept at the use of the harpoon.



Rjurik kingdoms and tribes

Rulership in Rjurik lands is complex, at best. At the largest level, Rjurik kingdoms are ruled by regents—primarily kings and queens—as in other realms. Beneath the stature of the regents are the jarls—Rjurik nobles who rule the provinces of a kingdom. Within a province, dozens of nomadic tribes may exist which might or might not acknowledge the regent as sovereign. Each tribe is led by its own chief or chieftess. Countless druids and bards might also hold influence in a kingdom. These neutral individuals owe allegiance to neither tribe nor kingdom, and exist primarily to serve the Rjurik people, whether individually or as a whole.

While most Rjurik maintain their traditional semi-nomadic lifestyle, other Rjurik, affected by the changes and societal advancements elsewhere in Cerilia, have settled in large numbers, building true cities such as Hollingholmen, Stornomark, Skapa Hjarring, and others.

While the nomadic Rjurik, as noted above, have no prejudice toward those in small villages and in farming or fishing communities, the settlement of actual cities is considered more threatening to the traditional lifestyle. Most nomads, whose loyalty is first to their tribal leaders and not to anything nearly so uncertain as a "jarldom," feel that city-dwellers have turned their backs on Rjurik tradition. City folk outside the Rjurik lands are considered weak and decadent and, though urban Rjurik are not considered quite so far gone, they are held in less respect than nomads.

For their part, city folk have developed a slightly greater level of sophistication and awareness of the world than their "backward" cousins—or so the urban Rjurik believe. They are farmers, sailors, shopkeepers, and tradesmen who daily attend to foreign travelers, handle foreign goods, and discuss the affairs of the world far beyond Rjurik borders. They retain their loyalty and belief in the Rjurik people and stand ready to fight any who challenge them, but at the same time, they hold themselves above the rustic nomads, whom many city-dwellers believe cling to an old and outmoded way of life.

Most of the time, the conflict between nomads and city folk remains quietly in the background. On occasion, however, when urban and rural Rjurik get together at feasts or mead-halls, words are exchanged and fights break out, with each side accusing the other of starting things. What this conflict bodes for the future of the Rjurik is uncertain, but it is unlikely to go away any time soon.

Rjurik society and culture

Rjurik have always worshiped and respected the forces of nature. This worship and respect forms the basis of their society, religion, and daily life. Though the modern world has wrought changes in many Rjurik traditions and sundered the nomadic Rjurik from their city-dwelling cousins, reverence for nature and

the battle for dankmaar

So it was in those days that the greedy kings of far Anuire looked northward and saw the untapped riches of the Rjurik lands. Erik, in his wisdom, had blessed these lands by giving his people guardianship of the realm and by setting his holy druids to watch over the forests. Knowing their lands so well, the Rjurik sensed that the foreigners could bring only destruction and corruption to their beautiful highlands. The forests would be felled, the rivers would be choked with filth from the foreigners' mines, and the beasts of the wild would be hunted to

extinction. Erik spoke to his people, and they willingly followed his instruction to resist.

The struggle was long and brutal, for wicked Roele, supreme ruler of the Anuireans, was a powerful warlord, merciless in conquest. His blood-drenched hand reached across the northern highlands, and his lust for conquest was not stilled by the shrieks of women and the pleas of innocent children. His bloody thirst was unquenched, and only the strength of the Rjurik could stop it.

Though many battles ensued, it was in the province of Dankmaar that the Rjurik first truly proved their mettle. There, the savage killer Anselm, scion of Roele's bloody house, led his master's dogs in what he believed would be a great slaughter of the innocent.

for its defender, Erik, remains strong among both urban and nomadic Rjurik.

In Rjurik lands, little of the religious division which plagues other lands exists, though worship of Erik is divided among two rival temples: the Emerald Spiral, which appeals primarily to traditional, nomadic Rjurik, and the Oaken Grove of Erik (or *Aeric* as the deity is often called in Anuirean realms), a more sophisticated, urban temple with many ties to other lands.

Rjurik are honorable warriors who favor honest conflict between individuals over massive, bloody warfare. They value skill at arms, as well as athletic and artistic excellence. Disputes between individuals are most often settled by games of skill, singing or dancing contests, or feats of strength. Only in the most serious of disagreements is blood shed, for the Rjurik know that they are few, and therefore avoid needless death or injury.

Warfare is considered appropriate only against foreign invaders, humanoids, and the minions of the White Witch. Rjurik jarls who normally cannot stand the sight of each other will readily ally and fight side by side should the Blood Skull orcs or Urgan-Zai goblins cross their frontiers. When fighting for their lands and homes, the Rjurik are among the fiercest and most resourceful warriors in Cerilia.

Though capable of great happiness, love, and joy, Rjurik tend to be a fatalistic lot, prone to the belief that all creatures' fates are preordained and that each individual's doom is his own, inevitable and unalterable. These people do not believe in a paradise or afterlife, but rather think

that the dead return to the natural world that created them, and that their component elements are broken down and redistributed so that each individual's life force is, in a manner of speaking, immortal. Particularly influential, important, or strong individuals are sometimes thought to be reincarnated in order to serve Erik, but this is the exception rather than the rule.

This short-sighted view of the cosmos is the basis of the Rjurik belief that the only chance for immortality is greatness during one's lifetime. Noble deeds and heroic acts contribute to the legacy that each Rjurik leaves behind; songs and stories told about one's life, cherished memories, and the words of praise spoken about the departed are all that truly last. For this reason, Rjurik strive toward qualities of honor, strength, courage, skill at a craft, or talent as a bard. The more accomplishments during a Rjurik's lifetime, the longer his memory will endure.

city dwellers

Although vital elements of Rjurik culture—reverence for nature, excellence in warfare, love for Erik and his creations, fierce defense of the land against its enemies, and respect for beauty and artistic accomplishment—remain strong in the cities, the nomadic Rjurik worry that their urban brethren are turning their backs on the past and on the things that set the Rjurik apart from other races.

City-dwelling Rjurik are considerably less insular than their nomadic cousins. They have fewer qualms about interacting with the outside world—the traders, explorers, and


With great shouts and cries to their brutal lords, the Anuireans advanced, their armored footmen in the center, great masses of knights on either flank, wicked banners flying.

At first, the Rjurik seemed to quail, falling back toward the safety of the forests, and Anselm, cowardly butcher that he was, called for his legions to advance at the double and kill the Rjurik to the last. But the Rjurik were too cunning for the foolish southerners, who advanced eagerly to the slaughter; their lines wavered and broke, each warrior desiring to be the first to take an innocent Rjurik life.

Now came the Rjurik's moments of glory. From the forest, showers of arrows erupted, raining down on the unsuspecting invaders. Horsemen faltered, their mounts falling

beneath them; footmen stopped their advance, confused and unwilling to face the storm of Rjurik rage which confronted them. As the forefront of the Anuirean advance slowed and finally stopped, those behind came up and were similarly beset.

Then, with a great cry, the Rjurik emerged from the forest, fierce and righteous anger burning in their eyes as they bellowed the name "Erik!" and called for vengeance. Many a claymore drank deeply of Anuirean blood that day, and as grim sunset settled on the field, not a single invader remained alive. Among the dead was the terrible Anselm, slain now by those he would have enslaved. A great victory had been won, and the wicked Anuireans knew that the Rjurik were true warriors.



adventurers, as well as those who would fell Rjurik timber, mine Rjurik mountains, and choke Rjurik streams with tailings and poisons. City dwellers have also adopted certain foreign foods, clothing, songs, stories, and customs in a manner that the wilderness-based Rjurik and their chieftains find distasteful.

In these behaviors, the chieftains and druids feel, lie the greatest dangers in the cities: that the Rjurik will lose the vital things that make them the beloved children of Erik. Should the corruption of the cities and continued foreign influence go unchecked, the purists claim, the urban Rjurik will become just like the greedy Brechts, the imperialistic Anuireans, the violent Vos, and the decadent, magic-corrupted Khinasi.

family life

Harsh climatic conditions and the struggle for survival force Rjurik children to grow up quickly and assume a number of responsibilities. But while a Rjurik youngster is dependent on his parents, life is comfortable and parenting is generous. The Rjurik consider children a special blessing of Erik, and treat them with a

level of indulgence that other cultures might go so far as to call spoiling.

A Rjurik couple typically bears four or five children. On average, only two or three of these children will survive to adulthood; cold, predators, war, and the hardships of nomadic life take a heavy toll among the young.

By age eight, children are deemed ready to take their places in the tribe and are trained in minor chores such as cooking, cleaning, tending herds, fishing, and hunting small animals. These duties increase and grow more onerous as a child nears adulthood; by age fourteen, a child is considered an adult, and bears full responsibility to his family.

Rjurik youths typically marry around age eighteen or nineteen. Marriage is expected to be a life-long commitment; concepts such as divorce and separation are unknown. Widows and widowers are expected to mourn for at least two full seasons before remarrying.

In the days when the Rjurik tribes wandered the length and breadth of the highlands, tribe members were allowed to marry only individuals from other allied tribes so that the family tradition within nomadic Rjurik culture would

foolish vjalli

A raucous crowd of children grew quiet as Mother Siftild settled into her customary seat near the firepit, warming her hands over the roaring blaze. Outside, winter raged, fiercely flinging snow and ice driven on merciless winds, swirling and blustering outside the tribal longhouse. More than one child shivered slightly at the thought of the bone-numbing cold outside, and was grateful for the warmth and fellowship of the communal house, and for the tales of Mother Siftild, which helped make the long winter months pass more quickly.

"So you've come to hear another of my tales, have you?" the old woman said at last. "Have you all been good children?" Her words were greeted with a silent chorus of assent, as the children nodded their heads solemnly. "Have you obeyed your parents and respected your elders?" More nods. "Have you all done your chores and told your parents that you would be here? All of you? Good. In that case,

you shall have one of my stories."

Siftild settled in and began to speak, her voice falling into a familiar, deep tone that united with the howl of the wind outside and made her seem bolder, more confident, than the frail woman she was.

"Once, long ago," she said, "there lived a man named Vjalli, of the Ruvaar tribe. He was a strong man, tall and broad, with a great golden beard and piercing blue eyes. All the tribe admired him, for he was a brave warrior, a skilled hunter, and his herds were the largest in all the land. Many women wished to become his wife, that they could share in his bounty, but Vjalli was a prideful and vain man, who felt no woman was good enough for him.

"Though he was blessed by Erik with strength, skill, good looks, and wealth, Vjalli was also cursed. For all he owned, it was never enough. In addition to his vanity, he was greedy, and always wanted more. He looked to the south, where foreigners crowded dirty cities, turned their backs on Erik's wilderness, and grubbed for filthy gold—and he was envious.

be maintained. Today, however, many Rjurik have settled in villages and cities, and the old restrictions on marriage and fraternization with other clans have begun to break down. Some chieftains have allowed individuals to marry outside their tribes and, slowly but surely, the new ways of kings and nobles have begun to replace the old nomadic clan system.

The roles of men and women in Rjurik culture are well defined but not rigidly enforced. Most rulers, sailors, hunters, and warriors are men, while women generally tend to the children, weave and sew cloth, prepare meals, and engage in similar household activities. On occasion, however, women take up swords or venture forth as rangers or hunters. This is considered remarkable by the Rjurik, but is by no means forbidden. The major exceptions to this division of labor lie in the occupations of druids and skalds, who are as likely to be female as male.

Erik and the druids

The god Erik oversees the natural world, maintaining its balance and visiting punishment (in the form of ill fortune and sickness) upon those

who would wantonly damage it. Erik sees humans as part of nature, and has no quarrel with those who take what they need and nothing more. Those who would strip the land for gold or for personal gain, however, attract Erik's wrath. The Rjurik engage in the export of a small amount of timber (which is famed throughout Cerilia for its strength and quality). Such use of resources does not seem to concern Erik unduly; the Rjurik merchants who harvest judiciously remain healthy and prosperous.

Sorcerous magic is rare in Rjurik lands. Druidic and clerical magic are accepted and admired, while the workings of wizards—generally thought to be dark, untrustworthy, and secretive—are shunned and disliked. A few wizards, many in service to respected Rjurik chiefs and jarls, operate in the north, but most magic practiced by Rjurik is priestly in nature. Most of the wizards who do practice are magicians (specialists in the schools of illusion and divination) as described in the *BIRTHRIGHT™ Rulebook*, and are commonly referred to as “seers.” This is generally considered an acceptable term; the words “wizard” and “sorcerer,” however, are rather derogatory and are essentially synonymous with “distrustful schemer.” Practitioners of schools of magic other than divination and illusion are absent except in the most unusual cases (such as in the bandit kingdom of Rjuvik);

“Why do they prosper so?” he demanded. “They have fine houses, and many servants, and dress in silks, and eat of unimaginable delicacies, while we dwell in the forests far from cities and the riches they hold! I would be like those foreigners, and gain gold, so that I, too, can have a fine house and many servants!”

“And so it was, children, that a man came to Vjalli. He was tall, slender, and handsome, with dark eyes and a friendly manner.

“‘I am Tjorim,’ he said. ‘A merchant from the city. I have heard that you wish to be like us, great Vjalli.’

“Blinded by greed and desirous of riches, Vjalli replied, ‘Yes! I would grow wealthy and own many things like you! What must I do, friend Tjorim? Tell me!’

“Tjorim thought a while, stroking his chin, and gazed about the great forest that surrounded them.

“‘The trees, I think,’ the merchant said at last. ‘Yes. We need many trees where I live, for we cut them into pieces and build houses from them. If you cut down all the trees on your tribe’s land and sell them to me, I will give you

more gold than your entire tribe can carry!’

“Still lost in dreams of riches, Vjalli agreed. He was a mighty woodsman, and his enchanted axe was capable of felling even the tallest trees with but a single stroke. Rather than share his bounty with the tribe, he set to work, chopping tree after tree and piling them in a great clearing. At last, but a day later, the land was bare; every tree was gone, and Vjalli sought out Tjorim.

“‘The trees are yours!’ Vjalli cried. ‘Now give me gold!’

“Tjorim the merchant stood silent, gazing with a strange smile at the pile of fallen trees. Soon, Vjalli grew angry.

“‘Here are the trees!’ he bellowed. ‘You promised me more gold than my entire tribe could carry! I have kept my part of the bargain, city-man—now keep yours!’

Tjorim’s smile widened to a grin, and then he laughed, long and hard.

“‘You do not know what you do, foolish man!’ he said, barely able to speak for his gales of laughter. ‘You had beauty, you had peace, you had good fortune, and you threw it



necromancy is universally shunned and hated, considered the work of Azrai and his creatures.

The druids occupy a unique niche in Rjurik society. They are priests, judges, arbitrators, sages, and teachers all in one. They perform ceremonies in honor of Erik in their secret groves, caves, stone circles, and temples. They aid in negotiations and arbitrate disputes between Rjurik folk and with outside domains. They dispense advice and assist those in need, heal the sick, aid the destitute, guide the lost, and defend victims of predators, humanoids, and the awnsheghlien. Should the Rjurik lands be threatened, druids march into battle alongside Rjurik warriors and serve Rjurik kings and jarls.

All Rjurik, even the most lawless and violent, revere the druids, and none would ever knowingly harm one. The druids are Erik's chosen, and serve both him and the Rjurik land itself.

A strong artistic tradition underlies Rjurik culture, and a deep, nearly religious awe is held for talented sculptors, painters, singers, and musicians. Rjurik artists believe that the images they portray—those of sinuous dragons, wolves, hounds, ravens, and various other creatures, or complex abstract knotted patterns—are sent to them by Erik himself, often in the form of dreams.

the bards

The bardic tradition is strong in Rjurik lands. Singing skalds—wandering bards—travel the land, bringing news and entertainment to distant nomadic tribes or isolated villages. Among the Rjurik, bards are untouchable, and to purposely harm a skald is a grave offense against the druids and Erik, as well as the bard himself. Skalds are often hired as heralds and messengers, since they are of neutral political alignment and are sworn to truthfulness in all their dealings. Rjurik bards are all of lawful alignment for this reason.

Despite their lawful alignments, Rjurik bards have no formal organization. Aging master skalds who approach retirement usually take on apprentices and teach them all their secrets. As a result, the skalds' knowledge and skills are passed from generation to generation.

In effect, the skalds are a living repository of Rjurik history and culture. Their stories chronicle the Rjurik people from before the flight from shadow to the present day. The songs of the skalds, in addition to being exciting and entertaining, help preserve the heroic past and prepare the Rjurik for the uncertain future.

all away for the promise of gold! There is no gold, foolish Rjurik! For I am not what I seem! Behold, now—see me as I truly am!

"With that, Tjorim transformed, his body growing taller and broader, his head lengthening into the semblance of a great serpent, his hands transforming into wicked claws. In horror, Vjalli saw that he had been tricked. No man was Tjorim, but a cursed awnshegh, a foul creature of polluted blood who lived for torment and the pain of others.

"See, foolish man?" thundered the terrible creature, reaching out a taloned hand to capture the whimpering and frightened Vjalli. "See how gold can cloud the mind and make one see what is not there?"

"Though Vjalli screamed and begged for mercy, it was no use. The awful monster, now fully transformed, carried him away, its dark laughter echoing across the naked hills and mud-choked streams—to what fate, none can say."

A long silence followed, in which the captivated children darted nervous glances into the wavering shadows, fearful perhaps that the beast who took the cursed Vjalli might be lurking somewhere near.

"And so, my children," Mother Siffild said with a wry smile, "you see how valuable it is to follow the words of Erik the druid, guardian of the forests, lest the dreadful awnsheghlien appear to take advantage of your greed and vanity, and carry you off to a horrible fate. Be good, and obey your parents as you would Erik himself, and protect these forests from those who would destroy them, and the evil of the awnsheghlien need never trouble you. Good night, children. May Erik protect you and grant you pleasant dreams."

"How can we have pleasant dreams after *that* story?" demanded a little girl as the crowd of children dispersed.

"Sh!" hissed her companion.

The Rjurik are the dominant race amid the cold, wind-swept forests of Cerilia's extreme north. The southern regions were the first settled by their Rjuven ancestors, and today support the oldest and most developed Rjurik kingdoms. Farther north, however, populations plummet, towns grow rare and eventually vanish altogether, and human habitation becomes sparse or absent.

The highlands of the north are divided into three major areas, as described below. These regions are important to the Rjurik, and to those interested in the area, for they correspond to the kingdoms' populations and levels of development.

the taelshore

These oldest and most developed Rjurik kingdoms occupy the coast along the crashing surf of the Tael Firth. The modern realm of Dhoesone, now an Anuirean kingdom, was once counted among the Taelshore domains, but is today the wild northern frontier of Anuirean influence.

Though winter visits harsh conditions upon the Taelshore, most Rjurik consider this region to be the highlands' garden spot. The Taelshore lands enjoy a long spring, brief summer and fall, and a winter which, while cold and grim, is less severe than in other Rjurik areas. Travel during warm months is possible by horse, wagon, and occasionally carriage. In winter, sleighs and sledges are the rule, though coastal regions often remain warm enough for horseback riding.

Major kingdoms along the Taelshore include Stjordvik, the southernmost Rjurik realm; Rjувик, the bandit kingdom; and Svinik and Halskapa, the oldest and most powerful Rjurik kingdoms. All of these realms are relatively cosmopolitan and sophisticated, though in their northern reaches, many inhabitants still follow the traditional nomadic ways and turn their noses up at the "corrupt" city dwellers.

The Taelshore also features the Siren's Realm, home of the awnshegh known as the Siren. Neither evil nor hostile, the Siren wishes simply to be

left alone in her wild kingdom, but the Rjurik of Halskapa continue to look upon her with enmity, and would conquer her if they could.

the northlands

The kingdoms of Jankaping and Hogunmark—rugged, cold, and sparsely populated—lie in the place that the Rjurik refer to as the Northlands.

The central Northlands are thick with fir and pine forests, while the far north is wind-swept tundra. Wild and largely trackless, the Northlands are cold and snow-clad most of the year, but shed their icy mantle during a brief spring and summer. In this region, travel is possible only on foot, skis, snowshoes, or dogsleds. Horses are rare; only the most vigorous ponies can survive in this region.

Most Rjurik in these realms are nomads, hunters, or fisherfolk who scrape out precarious livings in the face of the elements and the pressures of the Blood Skull Barony, whose orog leaders continually test their borders. Fond of raiding, burning, looting, and slaying, the Blood Skull humanoids are a constant threat to all neighboring Rjurik kingdoms in both the Northlands and the Taelshore.

The greatest threat to the Rjurik (and to humans in Cerilia) is the awnshegh who calls herself the White Witch. Alternately beautiful and repulsive, arrogant and humble, treacherous and friendly, the Witch oversees a network of agents who spread her influence throughout Rjurik lands and beyond. Her warriors defend one of the largest kingdoms in Cerilia, and her mercantile and economic acumen are legendary.

In the region's south lies the Giantdowns, rugged, unsettled, and home to dangerous humanoids and hardy, self-reliant Rjurik. The eastern Northlands are home to the remnants of the ancient elven kingdom of Lluabright. The elves, proud and arrogant, fight what they secretly know is a futile battle against surrounding enemies, clinging desperately to the remnants of a great kingdom.

the rjurik lands



the wild lands

The Wild Lands are the farthest reaches of Rjurik influence, where kingdoms exist in name only and a mere handful of humans crouch in cities along the coast. The interior remains largely unpopulated. Here, too, lie the wicked goblin kingdom of Urga-Zai (ferocious foes of the Lluabright elves), and the dwarves of Khurin-Azur. Like the elves, the dwarves of this region are the last remnants of a heroic past, and now fight for their very survival against the Urga-Zai and the minions of the Gorgon in the south.

The Wild Lands are more brutal and unforgiving than even the Northlands, and only the most skilled wilderness survival experts can live for long. Inhabitants include humanoids, canny predators, nomadic bands, and a few daring Rjurik settlers.

kingdom descriptions

In the manner of previous BIRTHRIGHT game products, this book details the many kingdoms of a specific Cerilian region. Following the pages describing each subregion, the kingdoms of the Rjurik and other inhabitants are given one- or two-page descriptions, depending upon their suitability as player character realms. Information on other domains follows, including prominent tribes and their summer and winter provinces and chieftains. All kingdoms use some or all of the following statistics:

Alignment: The overall alignment of the region. This does not necessarily reflect the alignment of the inhabitants, but more accurately, the attitude of the rulers and others in authority. Many Rjurik domains are chaotic in alignment, meaning that they favor individualism above all else, and sometimes have a difficult time uniting unless the entire realm is threatened.

Status: Kingdoms are *Recommended* (suitable for control by player characters), *Not available to PCs* (player characters are not allowed to control such kingdoms), *Usable*

(available to PCs with some changes and approval by the DM), or rated *NPC Domain* (ruled by an important NPC and generally not available for PCs, but might be adapted under special circumstances).

Summary: A description of the domain's status along with information on law, guilds, sources, and temples, their regents, and their style of control.

Regency Generated/Accumulated: Number of RPs generated each domain turn, and the number of RPs currently amassed. PCs who assume the leadership of kingdoms begin with *no* accumulated regency.

Treasury: Number of GBs currently in the royal coffers, and the number generated by the realm each turn.

Army: List of military units available, type and number, and guidelines for raising more units in times of crisis.

Regent: Name and description of the realm's regent, using the following format and abbreviations: (Sex and Race; Class and Level; Bloodline, Category, Strength; Alignment)

Sex
F: Female
M: Male
?: Unknown

Class
B: Bard
F: Fighter
M: Magician
P: Paladin
Pr: Priest
T: Thief
R: Ranger
W: Wizard

Bloodline
An: Anduiras
Az: Azrai
Ba: Basaia
Br: Brenna
Ma: Masela
Re: Reynir
Vo: Vorynn

Race
A: Anuirean
Aw: Awnshegh
Br: Brecht
D: Dwarf
E: Elf
1/2E: Half-elf
Hlf: Halfling
Kh: Khinasi
M: Monster
Rj: Rjurik
V: Vos

Lieutenants: The ruler's assistants who administer the domain in his absence or aid the ruler in daily demands of the realm.

the taelshore

The southwestern Rjurik jarldoms of Halskapa, Svinik, Rjuvik, and Stjordvik form the region known as the Taelshore. Though these are the oldest and most "civilized" Rjurik realms, the land is nonetheless wild and rugged, but starkly beautiful. Here, amid pine forests, rolling hills, lowland valleys, and the weathered peaks of the Halskap Range, many Rjurik continue to live in their traditional nomadic manner, settling in winter camps, then migrating to ancestral hunting grounds in spring and summer.

Much of these ancestral lands lie in the adjoining Northlands, across the Hjarring River. As a result, most Rjurik nomads exercise a sort of dual citizenship, living in the Taelshore realms during harsh months, then moving to hunting grounds in Jankaping, Hognunmark, and even the hazardous Blood Skull Barony in summer.

The central Taelshore is wet and marshy, and its jarldoms cling tenuously to survival. Only the hardest (or possibly most foolhardy) Rjurik choose to live in the marshes, and usually share the region with monsters, humanoid tribes, and outlaws.

In the coastal regions, the Rjurik have begun to establish permanent settlements, pursuing lives as farmers or herdsfolk, and even gathering in small villages for protection and economic benefit. The great coastal cities of Skapa Hjarring, Leivika, and Hollingholmen have grown large and powerful over the years, much to the disgust of the nomadic Rjurik, who believe that the city dwellers have grown soft and turned their backs on tradition.

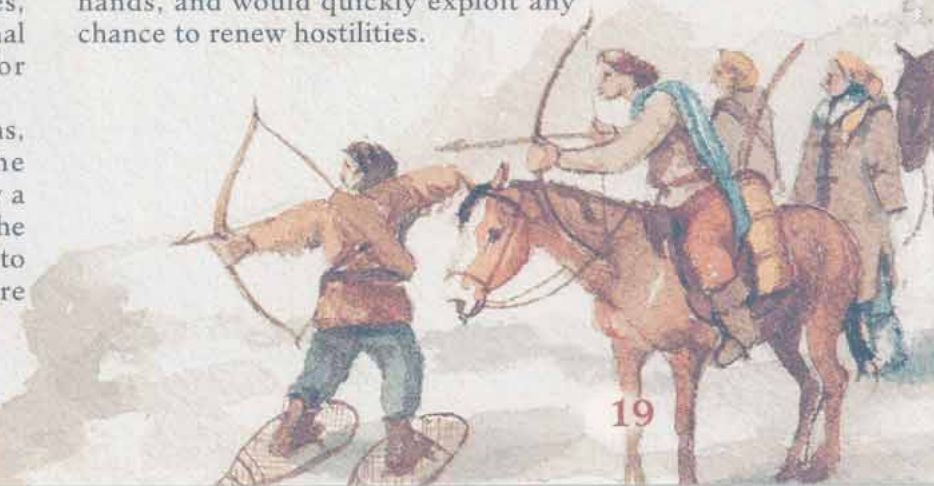
The cold shoals of the Tael Firth yield rich fish harvests during spring upwelling, and the fisherfolk of the coast make their livelihood braving these rough waters. The large cities, though spoken of with disdain by traditional Rjurik, provide a convenient place for Taelshore fisherfolk to sell their catch.

The Taelshore remains, to most Cerilians, the place most often associated with the Rjurik. Though this region represents only a fraction of the totality of Rjurik territory, the Taelshore is the face which the Rjurik show to the world, and the one which outsiders are most likely to view.



the siren

The sad creature known as the Siren is the only awnshegh who directly threatens the Taelshore realms (the White Witch, to the north, is a far greater threat, but she is more interested in the Northlands). A tragic figure cursed with a voice that slays all who hear her, the Siren maintains her realm with relative benevolence, wishing no trouble with her neighbors, and seeking none. The Halskapans, however, among the most aggressive and violent of the Rjurik, see the Siren's realm as a place of potential expansion. Though officially her allies, the Halskapans well remember past defeats at the Siren's hands, and would quickly exploit any chance to renew hostilities.





the siren's realm

Alignment: Neutral.

Status: Not available for PCs.

Summary: The Siren's primary goal is to maintain control of her realm and fend off those who would try to steal her lands or power. She realizes that by controlling holdings in other lands, she can better monitor outside activities and prevent certain individuals from amassing too much strength.

Province	Law	Temples	Guilds	Sources
Callanlars (2/4)	Sr (2)	—	Can (2)	—
Dantier Island (1/6)	—	—	BA (1)	—
Gigha (2/5)	Sr (2)	—	Wis (2)	—
Newtonor (3/3)	Sr (2)	CTN (2)	Can (2)	—
Port Helen (1/4)	Sr (2)	CTN (1)	Wis (1)	—

Abbreviations: Sr=the Siren; Can=Cannock; BA=Bannier Andien (Andien and Sons); CTN=Coastal Temple of Nesirie (Ahrek); Wis=Wisbeck.

Law: The Siren herself controls all law within her realm, comprising her militia and her units known as the Guard.

Temples: Erik and Vorynn are not widely worshiped in the Siren's Realm. The two major temples here are both dedicated to Nesirie, and its high priest Ahrek (*MRj; Pr9, Nesirie; Re, minor, 14; NG*) is an adviser who is close to the realm's ruler.

Guilds: Economic power in the Siren's Realm is controlled by Cannock and Wisbeck, advisers to the Siren and owners of her trade fleet and shipbuilding interests.

Sources: No sources are currently controlled in the Siren's Realm, though the Siren has directed her followers to investigate the practicality of developing them.

Regent: The Siren, ruler of this desolate realm, is an unusual awnshegh in that she is neither evil nor particularly interested in anything save the welfare of her lands and of the people who live there.

Once an ordinary wandering minstrel, the Siren was known as Jerusha Fjoldan. After her latent awnshegh abilities were awakened, Jerusha fled to the realm she now rules, slew the powerful awnshegh known as the Dusk Man, and freed the local people from his tyranny. Today, Jerusha (now called the Siren) continues to rule and causes little or no trouble for her neighbors. More information on the Siren may be found in the *Blood Enemies* accessory.

Lieutenants: The Siren's primary assistants are the seven members of her advisory council: Birkenhead, Cannock, Hanley, Radnor, Thorpe, Wisbeck, and Wolds.

Important NPCs: The Siren is also served by skilled and loyal military leaders—Bardsey, Govan, Hugh, Ryde, and Shanklin. Her elite guard is led by Rolf Junnarson, a veteran Rjurik soldier who is secretly in love with the Siren herself. Rolf serves her faithfully, though he currently plots to murder the Siren's lover, the Rjurik ranger Dhaelrik.

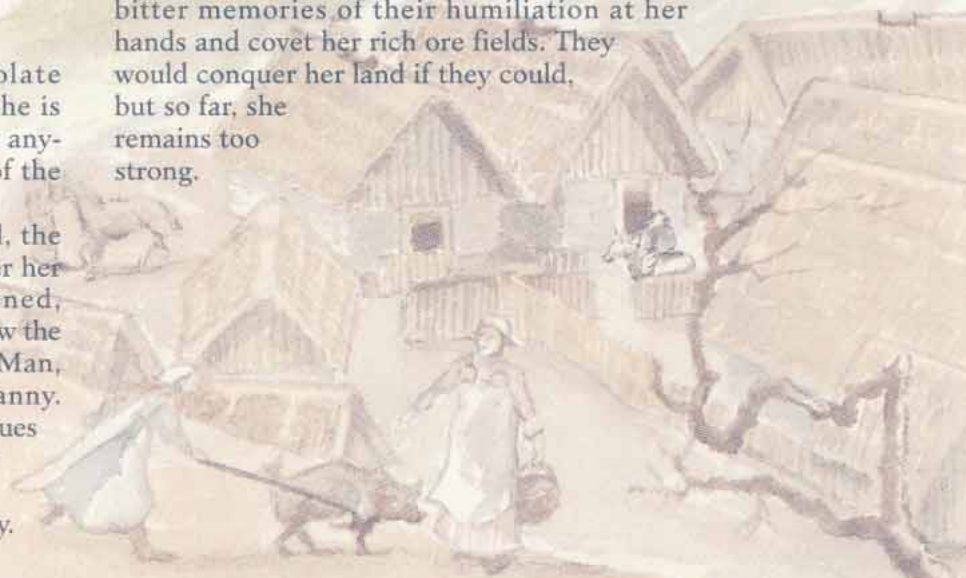
Description: The realm is a rocky, rugged place that was once dominated by the evil awnshegh known as the Dusk Man. The Siren, one of the more benign of her kind, slew the Dusk Man with her deadly cry, and has since ruled both wisely and kindly, with no territorial ambitions. Her only desire is to be left alone.

Capital: Newtonor is a teeming, crowded city, home to extensive smelting facilities and extensive trading operations. The Siren herself occupies a surprisingly modest villa in the center of the city.

Trade Goods: The Siren trades actively from Port Helen to Dantier Island and Talinie. Exports include artworks, weapons, herbs, and fish; imports comprise timber, finished wood products, fabric, and rare seaweed useful in spellcasting.

Allies: The Siren has no official ties to any land save Dantier Island, which acts solely as a trading partner.

Enemies: Though their realm is officially at peace with the Siren, the Halskapans retain bitter memories of their humiliation at her hands and covet her rich ore fields. They would conquer her land if they could, but so far, she remains too strong.



halskapa

Alignment: Lawful neutral.

Status: Recommended.

Summary: Halskapa (literally "Iron Cape") is the most powerful Rjurik domain, formed from a union of influential clan jarls, all of whom swear fealty to the king at Skapa Hjarring.

Province	Law	Temples	Guilds	Sources
Aandvjør (1/4)	Sk (1)	OE (1)	Sk (1)	—
Dalmsrhuud (2/5)	Kh (1)	OE (2)	Kh (2)	—
Dvasviik (4/1)	Rj (2)	OE (2)	Rj (2)	—
	—	PSN (1)	—	—
Helkstraad (2/5)	Kj (2)	OE (2)	Kj (2)	—
Selkhauske (2/5)	DW (1)	OE (2)	DW (2)	—
Skapa Hjarring (4/3)	Be (3)	OE (2)	Be (3)	—
	—	RCS (1)	WW(2)	—
Stjølvar (1/4)	La (1)	OE (1)	La (1)	—
Taelrhud (2/3)	Th (2)	OE (2)	Th (1)	—

Abbreviations: Sk=Sketa; Kh=Kahlor; Rj=Rjanik; Kj=Kjessen; DW=Dherg Wir; Be=Bervinig; La=Laefr; Th=Thaenjra; WW=White Witch; OE=Oaken Grove of Erik (Günther Brandt); PSN=Peaceful Seas of Nesirie (Daffyd Tamaere); RCS=Northern Reformed Church of Sarimie (Nara Nielems).

Law: The rulers of the land's major jarldoms are collectively known as the Great Jarls, and control law within their own provinces. King Bervinig, his health and authority failing, controls only the law in Skapa Hjarring.

Temples: The Oaken Grove of Erik, under high priest Günther Brandt, controls most of the temples in Halskapa. Since many foreign traders and travelers pass through Skapa Hjarring and surrounding lands, several foreign temples also exist, including the Northern Reformed Church of Sarimie and the Peaceful Seas of Nesirie.

Guilds: Several of the seven Great Jarls control much of Halskapa's trade. Unknown to them, the White Witch, through her agents, controls a small amount of trade and much of the criminal activity in Skapa Hjarring.

King Bervinig himself, despite his age and infirmity, maintains control of trade in his capital city of Skapa Hjarring.

Sources: No sources are controlled in

Halskapa, even though some of the less populated provinces have substantial magic potential and could be exploited by an ambitious wizard. The Rjurik distrust of wizards may make such activities difficult, however.

Regency Generated/Accumulated: 21/20 RP.
Treasury: King Bervinig has maintained a healthy treasury of 20 GB, and typically raises 12 GB/turn.

Army: Halskapa's army, drawn from the retinues of the seven jarls, is increasingly fractious and unreliable due to rivalries between Rjurik nobles that occasionally escalate into open conflict. Troops are well trained, however, and are supplemented by large numbers of foreign mercenaries. Its elite infantry is a body of veterans known as the Wolf Guard. The Halskapan army consists of:

- ◆ 3 units of Rjurik archers.
- ◆ 1 unit of Rjurik cavalry.
- ◆ 3 units of Rjurik infantry.
- ◆ 1 unit of Wolf Guards.
- ◆ 1 unit of Rjurik housecarls.
- ◆ 2 units of Rjurik mariners.
- ◆ Navy: 1 Knarr, 1 Longship

Regent: King Bervinig (MRj; F7; Re, major, 28; LN) has ruled Halskapa for nearly 50 years, and is now in his dotage—he is old, weak, and increasingly irrational. In his prime, Bervinig was a wise and intelligent, if somewhat stern, ruler, who brought the seven divergent jarls together, knew when to negotiate and compromise, and when to invoke his authority as king. Under his rulership, the land remained strong and prosperous.

Now, even Bervinig's most fervent apologists admit that he has passed his prime, and that soon the land will be in want of a new regent. This is nowhere near as simple as it sounds, however, since the seven Great Jarls, and many other clan leaders, are incapable of agreement regarding a successor. All seven of the Great Jarls are ready to fight for the throne, and evince little concern over the pain and disruption such a conflict would cause their kingdom.

Lieutenants: King Bervinig's most loyal and capable lieutenant is Sir Brodrick, a commoner who has served his lord for over a decade. He is a rare voice of reason in the increasingly shrill argument over who should succeed the

king, but his words are rarely heard, let alone heeded. Bervinig's other lieutenants are his own cousins and capable assistants drawn from the courts of the seven jarls. These individuals, loyal to their leaders, are likely to fall into chaos should a succession struggle erupt.

Important NPCs: The seven Great Jarls—Dherg Wir of Selkhauske (MRj; F11; An, major, 15; N), Thaenjra of Taelrhud (FRj; F3; Br, major, 16; CN), Rjanik of Dvasviik (MRj; Pr4; Re, minor, 15; NG), Kjessen of Helkstraad (MRj; F5; Re, tainted, 14; LN), Sketa of Aandvjour (FRj; W4; Ma, major, 24; CN), Laefr of Stjolvjar (MRj; T2; Az, major, 33; CN), and Kahlor of Dalmsrhuud (MD; F3; An, minor, 26; N)—are likely to fall to squabbling, each claiming Bervinig's throne when the old monarch finally passes away.

Description: In the chaotic wake of the Battle of Mount Deismaar, when the blooded rulers emerged to claim their kingdoms and the powers of the young awnsheghlien rose to threaten civilization, the clan jarls who ruled the realm now known as Halskapa gathered in solemn council and determined to choose one of their own as king. Within two decades, the new kingdom had emerged as the most powerful and prosperous Rjurik realm. Since then, Halskapa's influence has grown, the great city of Skapa Hjarring has become an important trade center, and the iron legions of the Halskapan monarch have held the realm's various enemies at bay.

Over two decades ago, the Halskapans sent a delegation of 50 warriors and diplomats to the Siren, hoping to force her allegiance or, if necessary, slay her and take her territory. Previously held at bay by the power of the awnshegh known as the Dusk Man (whom the Siren slew to conquer the realm), the Halskapans arrogantly assumed that the realm's new ruler would be easy to intimidate. The Halskapans were proven disastrously wrong, and the Siren slew the entire delegation. Since then, Halskapans have avoided the Siren's Realm, and are even counted as reluctant allies, but would destroy her if they could.

Today, the ancient nation seems on the verge of crumbling, with the seven jarls unable to select a new leader, and each claiming that he alone is the most fit to rule. A long struggle seems in the offing, and the land will suffer as this tension escalates.

Capital: Skapa Hjarring overlooks the cold, grey surf of the Sea of Storms. Well defended and strongly walled, Skapa Hjarring also serves as home to the Halskapan king, and is considered the king's own realm, independent from the seven jarldoms.

The chief trading city of the northern highlands, Skapa Hjarring hosts visitors from many different lands, and a wide variety of foreign goods flow in and out of its docks. The elderly King Bervinig maintains control of most trade in Skapa Hjarring, but the White Witch also maintains secret control of some trade and most criminal activity.

Trade Goods: Of all the Rjurik kingdoms, Halskapa has the most active relations with the outside world, trading timber, fish, weapons, and artwork for textiles, metals, horses, and luxury items. Skapa Hjarring is an active trading port visited by many foreigners. Sea trade routes exist between Skapa Hjarring and Boeruine (Seasedge) and Skapa Hjarring and Avanil (Anuire).

Allies: Halskapa maintains good relations with the nearby Svinik and Jankaping, as well as a close trade relationship with several Anuirean realms including Dhoesone, Boeruine, and Avanil. The kingdom has a formal alliance with Stjordvik, but political turmoil in both realms makes adherence to this treaty problematic.

Enemies: Many claim that Halskapa's greatest enemy is its own jarls, who are willing to ruin their realm in the struggle for power. The orogs of the Blood Skull Barony are relatively distant and rarely trouble the kingdom. The Siren, despite past conflicts, harbors no territorial ambitions beyond maintaining peace within her own realm. Halskapa's greatest enemy is the ancient enemy of all Rjurik—the brilliant and treacherous White Witch of the Northlands.



rjuvik

Alignment: Chaotic evil.

Status: NPC Domain.

Summary: Rjuvik is a violent bandit kingdom ruled with ruthless efficiency by the chieftain Fulgar.

Province	Law	Temples	Guilds	Sources
Dankmaar (0/8)	—	—	—	QD(3) AD(3)
Hjarrsmark (1/5)	Hu(1)	OE(1)	Hu(1)	AD(3)
Hoeskal (1/5)	Ar(0)	—	WW(1)	AD(3)
Nalhorske (2/3)	FB(1)	OE(2)	Rn(2) WW(0)	QD(2)
Sjarkhoelle (1/6)	Na(1)	OE(1)	Na(1)	QD(2)
Svarkannek (2/4)	FB(1)	OE(2)	Dj(1)	AD(2)
Yvarre (4/3)	FB(4)	OE (4)	FB(3) WW(1)	QD (2)

Abbreviations: FB=Fulgar the Bold; WW=White Witch; Ar=Arnor; Na=Najral; Hu=Hulak; Rn=Rannar; Dj=Djarrik; QD=Quirad al-Din; AD=Adriala the Dark; OE=Oaken Grove of Erik (Günther Brandt).

Law: Fulgar and his lieutenants control what law exists in Rjuvik. A certain degree of lawlessness is tolerated, even encouraged, as long as Fulgar's authority is not threatened and he gets part of the proceeds. The White Witch's agents have found Rjuvik to be fertile ground for spreading her influence; they control elements of both law and guilds.

Temples: Though several small temples of other gods, such as Eloele and Sera, exist, the real temple power lies with the Oaken Grove of Erik.

Guilds: Many guilds flourish in Rjuvik—but most are of a criminal nature. The Rjuvik Tradesmen's Consortium, actually an alliance of bandits who occasionally turn to trading, is one of the most prominent. Fulgar and his followers control the Scarlet Glove—the leading thieves' and assassins' guild, which takes contracts all across Rjurik and Anuirean lands. Fulgar also exercises personal control over much of Rjuvik's trade and, as noted,

the White Witch also has her hand in the realm's criminal and mercantile concerns.

Sources: Fulgar is tolerant of foreign wizards as long as they pay him tribute. The renegade Khinasi mage, Quirad al-Dinn, shares control of the realm's sources with Adriala the Dark, an evil wizardess of unknown nationality and background.

Army: Fulgar maintains a rough-and-ready army of cutthroats, professional adventurers, and mercenaries. Though slovenly and ill-disciplined, they are desperate and ruthless, capable of giving even a powerful kingdom a run for its money. Several rogue wizards, including Adriala the Dark, are willing to assist Fulgar in battle, as are his numerous thieves and assassins who may act as highly skilled insurrectionists, scouts, and ambush experts. Rjuvik's army consists of:

- ◆ 2 units of Rjuvik raiders.
- ◆ 1 unit of Rjurik housecarls.
- ◆ 3 units of Rjurik irregulars.
- ◆ 1 unit of Rjurik mariners.
- ◆ Navy: 1 Longship

Regent: Rjuvik is ruled by the bandit chieftain Fulgar the Bold (*MRj; F12/T9; Br, minor, 14; CE*), who has awarded jarldoms to his personal allies and friends. Fulgar is a merciless cutthroat, and tolerates no challenges to his rule.

Lieutenants: Fulgar's ruthless band of cutthroats includes his primary lieutenants—Thurak, an Anuirean fighter of enormous strength but limited intelligence; Dagmar, priestess of Eloele (*FRj; Pr9, Eloele; Br, minor, 13; CE*); and Gunnar the Knife, his chief assassin and enforcer.

Important NPCs: Quirad al-Dinn and Adriala the Dark are both expatriate wizards who seek power in this part of the world. They aid Fulgar only as long as it suits them, and each plans to one day supplant him. Should one of the two wizards rise to power, however, the other will make his or her opposition known.

Elsewhere in the realm, Jarl Najral (*MRj; F6; Re, tainted, 8; NG*) of Sjarkhoelle has grown disaffected with Fulgar and his thieving ways, and might back an attempt to overthrow the realm's corrupt regent.

Description: Once a landless reaver exiled from his clan despite the strength of his blood, Fulgar the Bold roamed the land, preying on merchants and travelers, and wandered the oceans, leading a small fleet of sea reavers in raids on mercantile shipping and coastal villages in Rjurik and Anuirean kingdoms. Two decades ago, however, he wrested control of the coastal jarldom of Yvarre from its former ruler, the weak-willed regent Norvlad, and used it as a base for further expansion. The marshy central regions of Rjurik lands were underpopulated and unwanted by neighboring jarls; these quickly fell under Fulgar's influence, and when the walled city of Viborg fell to Fulgar's treachery over ten years ago, his control of the region was complete.

Today, Rjuvik is a hazardous and lawless place where traditional Rjurik nomadic life has almost completely died out except in the extreme northern regions. In the north, the raiders of the Blood Skull Barony hold even Fulgar's influence at bay.

Elsewhere, Fulgar's jarls exercise absolute authority over their subjects. Most are, however, corrupt and inattentive, allowing their people to engage in all forms of lawless conduct, taking interest only if excessive profits are made (in which case the jarls, through their club-wielding thugs, make it clear that the jarls and Lord Fulgar expect to share in the take).

As noted, the Rjurik in the far north of Rjuvik, particularly the jarldom of Hjarrsmark, still practice their traditional nomadic lifestyle. Jarl Najral of Sjarkhoelle (see above) tolerates (and secretly admires) the nomads and leaves them in peace, occasionally sending troops their way to help repel Blood Skull raiders who threaten them. For their part, the nomads hate Fulgar and his jarls, though a few realize that Najral is actually an honorable man caught in a dishonorable situation.

Fulgar's palace crouches on the seacliffs of Yvarre. From there, he broods on his stone throne. He remains a reaver at heart, and has turned his attention to expanding Rjuvik's trade relations with the outside world. His jarls are strictly forbidden from raiding outside Rjuvik's borders, but are encouraged to develop mercantile contacts with Svinik, Stjordvik, Dhoesone, and southern Anuirean

kingdoms. So far, Fulgar's attempts have met with mixed success, for outsiders are wary of him and his bloody past. These endeavors are slowly paying off, however, beginning with unscrupulous merchants and corrupt nobles. Fulgar has begun to make inroads in trade throughout western Cerilia.

Capital: Rjuvik's official capital is the walled stone city of Viborg, a fortress built to defend against the depredations of the Blood Skull raiders. King Fulgar rarely goes there, preferring the comforts of his great palace on the coast of Yvarre far to the south. Viborg is a strange place where hardened warriors grimly wait for the next orog raid, thieves and outlaws walk the streets vying with pirates-turned-merchants, and more-or-less honest tradesmen compete for economic prosperity. Much work is available for adventurers and mercenaries in Viborg, but the risks are correspondingly high.

Trade Goods: While Fulgar would like the outside world to see Rjuvik as just another Rjurik kingdom, the truth is that his realm is a land of bandits and thieves. Though officially forbidden from raiding neighboring kingdoms, Fulgar's jarls make most of their income from managing criminal activities both within Rjuvik's borders and beyond. Legitimate trade—in the form of livestock, finished textiles, refined metals, spices, and luxuries—has begun to trickle into the kingdom, offered by less scrupulous traders and foreign nobles (in exchange for fish, timber, weapons, and items gained through illegal raids on other kingdoms, or the hijacking of other merchants' wares). A sea trade route currently exists between Yvarre and Dhoesone (Nolien).

Allies: Fulgar counts no one as his friend, and the realm has no allies.

Enemies: Very few foreign rulers trust Fulgar fully, though some are willing to trade with him. On the other hand, Rjuvik has no true traditional enemies, since his jarls are officially forbidden from raiding and invasion. The orogs of the Blood Skull Barony raid regularly, but they are considered everyone's enemies, and the White Witch's agents have found Rjuvik to be fertile ground for spreading their ruler's influence.



stjordvik

Alignment: Chaotic neutral.

Status: Recommended.

Summary: Stjordvik is a chaotic realm where individual jarls exercise authority independent of their weak ruler, nomads wander heedless of central authority, and the vicious warlords of the Blood Skull Barony periodically ravage the land.

Province	Law	Temples	Guilds	Sources
Arvaald (2/3)	Ol (2)	OE (2)	ST (2)	—
Hjorvaal (0/4)	Nj (0)	—	—	Oh(3)
Hollenvik(2/3)	Gu (2)	OE (2)	Gu (2)	—
Lofkirdik (1/4)	Ha (1)	OE (1)	ST (1)	—
Namverg (2/3)	Hu (1)	ES (2)	TT (2)	—
Saerskaap (4/2)	Sk (2)	OE (3)	WW (1)	—
	WW (1)	—	ST (1)	—
Udvika (1/4)	Dj (1)	ES (1)	TT (1)	—
Ustkjuvil (3/2)	Va (3)	OE (3)	Va (2)	—

Abbreviations: Dj=Djursund; Ol=Olfjor; Hu=Huljim; Oh=Ohlaak the Dragon; Nj=Njall; WW=The White Witch; Ha=Hadrim; Gu=Guthrim; Va=Varri; Sk=Skjada; TT=Three Trees Traders (Jan Hrustraad); ST=Stjordvik Traders (Storm Holtson); OE=Oaken Grove of Erik (Günther Brandt); ES=Emerald Spiral (Gretta Seligsdotter).

Law: Law is evenly divided among the jarls, while King Varri holds authority only in his capital city. The jarls control their own realms' law, though banditry is increasing, and the White Witch's agents now promote dissent and dissatisfaction.

Temples: The Oaken Grove of Erik controls most of the temples in Stjordvik. The Emerald Spiral controls the remainder; foreign faiths are not represented here.

Guilds: The Stjordvik Traders, under the leadership of Storm Holtson (MRj; T5; Re, minor, 12, LN), is the leading mercantile interest in the region. The Three Trees Traders have made major advances on Holtson's power in recent years. The White Witch continues to maintain a small but significant interest in the area.

Sources: The northern provinces have much untapped potential, but the Stjordvikers themselves believe that no wizard has ever claimed or developed their sources. Unbeknownst to the self-involved Stjordvikers, however, the renegade Rjurik wizard Ohlaak the Dragon has seized control of most of the magical sources in the near-empty province of Hjorvaal. He recently completed forging ley lines between Hjorvaal and his base of operations in the province of Vejle in the White Witch's realm. He plans to use the magical power gained through the ley line to engage in battle with the White Witch, who is determined to drive him out of her territory.

Regency Generated/Accumulated: 18/8

Treasury: Only 5 GB remain in King Varri's depleted treasury. The impoverished realm produces an average of only 6 GB in taxes per turn.

Army: Stjordvik's army has declined along with the land's fortunes. The northern garrisons remain sufficient to repel invasion from the Blood Skull Barony. Elsewhere, little remains of what was once a potent military force. Today, Varri's army consists of:

- ◆ 1 unit of Rjurik archers.
- ◆ 3 units of Rjurik infantry.
- ◆ 1 unit of Rjurik cavalry.
- ◆ 1 unit of Rjurik housecarls.
- ◆ 1 unit of Rjurik scouts.

Regent: King Varri (MRj; F3; Br, minor, 17; CG) succeeded to the throne three years ago upon the death of his mother, the aged Queen Ljorrah. Young, indecisive, and untrained for the role of regent, Varri has allowed his jarls to do as they please, and the kingdom has suffered as a result.

Lieutenants: Varri's chamberlain, Helder, also served the old queen, and does his best to guide the new monarch with, at best, mixed success.

High marshal of Varri's armies, Lord Bern (MRj; F10; Re, tainted, 9; LG) is intensely loyal despite his liege's shortcomings, and would fight to the death anyone who opposed him.

Important NPCs: Jarls Olfjor of Arvaald (MRj; F9; Ma, major, 23; CN) and Guthrim Haraldson of Hollenvik (MRj; F8; Re, major, 25; CN) are the two most troublesome Stjordvik leaders.

Neither seeks the throne for himself, but they instead prefer a weak king who allows them to go unchecked and rule their jarldoms as they choose. Both oppose all attempts to strengthen the monarch, and are quick to dissuade Varri from taking any actions that would reduce their independence. Intensely selfish and uninterested in the welfare of their kingdom, Olfjor and Guthrim may be instrumental in leading their realm to ruin.

Storm Holtson, a major Rjurik merchant who has completely turned his back on the old nomadic ways, is probably the wealthiest man in Stjordvik apart from the king. He controls several guild holdings within Rjurik lands and elsewhere, particularly in the Anuirean realm of Dhoesone.

Description: Founded in the wake of the Battle of Mount Deismaar and once a mighty realm, Stjordvik has fallen into decline of late. Queen Ljorrah's lackadaisical rulership and the feeble incompetence of her son, Varri, who rarely sees fit to challenge his jarls or to assert his authority as king, have dangerously weakened the domain.

The Stjordvikers are a people both hardy and independent in the greatest Rjurik traditions. They view their weakling king and the various selfish jarls with contempt; many have called for the jarls' replacement, but so far, discontent has not grown to open revolt.

Southern Stjordvikers, particularly those in and around the trading city of Hollingholmen, are truly urban Rjurik, though they retain close ties with their pastoral cousins—who make their living as herders and farmers—in the central jarldoms and northern hills. The growing tension between the nomadic and urban Rjurik, which has marred Rjurik unity elsewhere, is rare or absent in Stjordvik.

It is perhaps the admirable and honorable nature of the Stjordvikers that makes the current leadership situation so vexing. A strong and proud people, many Stjordvikers feel that the willful independence of their jarls and the incompetence of their monarch are robbing the land of its soul. Rjurik kings and jarls rule only with the consent of their people, and for some Stjordvikers, that consent may soon be withdrawn.

Capital: Hollingholmen is one of the oldest

true Rjurik cities. Built at the mouth of the Northbyrn River on a narrow peninsula into the Tael Firth, Hollingholmen boasts a sheltered harbor, extensive shipyards and storage facilities, and a large fishing fleet. Travelers and traders from Dhoesone and points south often visit to deal with the merchants of the Three Trees Traders.

King Varri's palace sits on the heights above the city, and the land's jarls are theoretically expected to meet there each spring equinox and winter solstice to report on the status of their realms and work out mutual problems. In recent years, however, jarls have begun skipping these meetings, preferring to remain near the comforts of their homes and growing disinterested in the affairs of Stjordvik as a nation.

Trade Goods: The Three Trees Traders manage most mercantile affairs in Stjordvik and represent one of the most powerful influences keeping the nation together. Exports include fleece, wolf and bear pelts (and other pelts from animals of the northern hills), fine Rjurik weapons, beer and ale, and fish from the cold waters of the Firth. Foreign merchants bring the usual trade items—refined metals, wines and liquors, finished clothing, processed textiles, horses, and luxury goods. So far, trade with the outside world remains healthy, and the tenuous political situation has yet to put much economic pressure on the traders or on common Stjordvikers. A sea trade route exists between Saerskaap and Boerune (Seasedge).

Allies: Though Stjordvik has a formal treaty of alliance with the Halskapans, both realms are now in the throes of political conflict; the agreement may not be worth the paper it is written on. Trade agreements with Svinik, Dhoesone, and several Anuirean realms keep money flowing into the Three Trees's coffers.

Enemies: The raiders of the Blood Skull Barony are a continual threat to the nomadic northern Stjordvikers and the settled Rjurik of the central jarldoms. The White Witch also has agents here, and rumor has it that the Gorgon himself has considered exploiting the current political uncertainty for his own gain.



Svinik

Alignment: Chaotic good.

Status: Recommended.

Summary: Svinik is, in many ways, a typical Rjurik nation. Its population consists of Rjurik who are evenly divided among urban existence, rural farmholding and herding, and the traditional nomadic lifestyle. Protected from outside threats by surrounding Rjurik realms, Svinik is threatened mostly by internal conflict, in which nomadic Rjurik feel increasingly alienated from their city-dwelling brethren.

Province	Law	Temples	Guilds	Sources
Bergvaas (0/7)	Le (0)	—	Le (0)	—
Bjarnheim (4/3)	Hr (1)	OE (2)	TT (1)	—
	Ra (1)	—	ST (1)	—
Darsruud (1/4)	Su (1)	ES (1)	Su (1)	—
Haekholfn (2/3)	Hr (1)	OE (2)	Vi (1)	—
	Vi (1)	—	—	—
Hvarliik (1/4)	Dj (1)	OE (1)	TT (1)	—
Innsmark (4/1)	Hr (1)	OE (2)	ST (1)	—
	Ul (1)	—	Ul (1)	—
Leivika (4/3)	Hr (4)	OE (3)	TT (2)	—
	—	ES (1)	Hr (2)	—

Abbreviations: Hr=Hruthvar; Ra=Ragnar; Su=Suthrim; Dj=Djarvim; Vi=Viighar; Le=Lenjar; Ul=Ulfgrim; TT=Three Trees Traders (Jan Hrustraad); ST=Stjordvik Traders (Storm Holtson); OE=Oaken Grove of Erik (Günther Brandt); ES=Emerald Spiral (Gretta Seligsdotter).

Law: The law in Svinik is evenly divided among King Hruthvar and the jarls who rule the seven provinces.

Temples: The Oaken Grove controls most temples here, though the more wilderness-based Emerald Spiral, whose power base lies further north, has gouged out a small toehold.

Guilds: The Stjordvik merchant-prince

Storm Holtson and his rivals, the Three Trees Traders, control much of Svinik's trade, though local jarls also control some of the trade within their borders. King Hruthvar also maintains some interests.

Sources: The forests and taiga of northern Svinik are filled with undeveloped sources, but thus far, no wizards have attempted to control them.

Regency Generated/Accumulated: 23/20

Treasury: 15 GB. The kingdom produces approximately 10 GB in income each turn.

Army: Svinik's central location keeps it relatively safe from the Rjurik's traditional enemies—the minions of the Siren and the humanoids of the Blood Skull Barony. Svinik's standing army is quite small, but can be supplemented by irregulars in times of emergency. In quiet times, the army is usually employed in public works projects such as road maintenance, and in patrol efforts to repel occasional bandit raids. These infrequent raids sometimes originate in the Blood Skull Barony and cross through northern Rjuvik; sometimes they originate with the bandit-jarls of Rjuvik themselves who, though officially forbidden from raiding outside Rjuvik, do occasionally bend the law and attack, though their guilt has never been conclusively proven.

Svinik's army currently comprises:

- ◆ 2 units of Rjurik archers.
- ◆ 2 units of Rjurik infantry.
- ◆ 1 unit of Rjurik housecarls.
- ◆ 1 unit of Rjurik cavalry.
- ◆ 1 unit of Rjurik scouts.
- ◆ Navy: 1 Cog, 1 Longship

Regent: King Hruthvar (MRj; F9; Re, major, 24; CG) has ruled the land for most of the past decade, and has proven a competent, if not especially outstanding, ruler. For their part, the jarls and other Svinikers don't mind Hruthvar's lack of distinction as long as he leaves them in peace and does not overtax in order to keep his realm running. Hruthvar is an austere man, with little love of luxury, and enjoys the pleasures of hunting and traveling in the traditional nomadic manner far more than the sybaritic pleasures of so-called "civilization."

Hruthvar tries to maintain close relations with his subjects. The nomadic clans of the north have grown increasingly distant of late, however, seeing Hruthvar as yet another settled Rjurik who has turned his back on tradition and rides out of his citadel only

to convince his subjects otherwise.

Lieutenants: Hruthvar's huntmaster, Rolf, is his chief adviser and lieutenant, and is generally in charge when the king is indisposed or away. Other prominent lieutenants include Hruthvar's chief constable Alvid and the court druidess Ingrida.

Important NPCs: The nomad chieftain Hrathul (MRj; R12; Re, major, 20; LG), leader of the Sjavaar tribe, winters in northern Svinik and is one of Hruthvar's most important friends and allies. Elsewhere, Jarl Ragnar the Beardless (MRj; F6; Vo, minor, 16; LG), ruler of Bjarnheim, is one of the realm's more hot-headed leaders, and has repeatedly called for war against the bandit chiefs of Rjuvik, whom he believes have completely turned their backs on the honorable and respected ways of the Rjurik.

Description: Though not without its problems, Svinik is probably the most stable and untroubled of the Taelshore realms. Like most of the other Taelshore nations, Svinik was founded in the wake of the battle at Mount Deismaar, by the ancestors of King Hruthvar. This bloodline has ruled ever since, and the people have rarely, if ever, found it necessary to oppose the ruling family.

The Vika River forms the kingdom's western border, while the Hjarring River separates Svinik from the northland realm of Jankaping. The southern jarldoms boast fishing villages, farms, and the great city of Leivika, which sprawls on the shores of the Vika and serves as the land's trade link with the outside world. The central jarldoms are marshy lowlands with small farmsteads, villages, and the isolated homes of peatcutters, hunters, and herdsmen. The swamplands are unpopulated and are known to harbor various hostile creatures. King Hruthvar's royal huntsmen and various rootless adventurers periodically visit the swamplands to root out their deadly denizens.

The northern jarldoms are high taiga crowded with thick green firs, and are home to nomadic clans who still brave the elements each year and live in the traditional manner. These nomads have grown increasingly suspicious of the settled southerners, and rarely if ever have any contact with them. Their jarls are selected from among their own number, and chafe somewhat at the control of a distant king who lives in a walled, dirty city alongside untrustworthy foreigners and greedy merchants. So far, the northerners

still consider themselves Svinikers, but they feel less comfortable and more alienated the farther south they go.

Capital: Like Skapa Hjarring and Hollingholmen, the great city of Leivika has grown into an urban trading hub where outsiders venture to purchase Rjurik goods, and the natives offer their own for sale. Squatting above the banks of the Vika River, Leivika has paid a steep price for its notoriety, and is now a sprawling, dirty, ugly place surrounded by extensive settlements of transient foreigners and the poor. Leivika is unwalled; its central citadel represents its only real military strong point. King Hruthvar maintains his court in the citadel, but leaves often to hunt, camp, and roam the land with his lieutenants and other nobles. This conduct is considered somewhat hypocritical by some nomads, who think that Hruthvar is simply one more urban Rjurik.

Trade Goods: Svinik offers familiar Rjurik products for trade—fish, hides, weapons, carvings, and a small amount of timber (though the druids carefully oversee all timber harvests in Svinik). The bardic guilds of Leivika are also well known for their harps, lutes, and bagpipes, which fetch high prices in foreign lands.

Foreign goods such as livestock, fishing nets, artwork, refined metals, tools, and grains are offered in exchange for Rjurik goods. The Three Trees Traders oversee much of the mercantile activity in Svinik, though King Hruthvar and the jarls also control trade.

A sea trade route connects Leivika to Southern Anuire.

Allies: Svinik retains friendly but informal relations with Halskapa, Jankaping, and Hogunmark. Though no official treaties exist, there is an unspoken agreement that Svinik will help defend any of these realms should they ever be attacked.

Enemies: The Svinikers are wary of the bandit-jarls of Rjuvik and suspect them of raiding into Svinik lands, but these claims have never been proven. The White Witch's agents are rare in Svinik, and the Blood Skull raiders come through the forests of northern Rjuvik to attack Svinik only occasionally.

Fewer nonpolitical domains exist in the Rjurik lands than other places in Cerilia; these few are most common in the Taelshore. Prominent domains include trading consortiums and agents of the White Witch.

other taelshore domains

Description: The Stjordvik Traders, an alliance of merchants with Storm Holtson as its unquestioned leader, is an up-and-coming concern in Rjurik lands, as all members have decided to completely forsake traditional Rjurik life and become major players in the economy of Cerilia.

guilds

stjordvik traders

Alignment: Neutral.

Status: NPC domain.

Summary: The leader of the Stjordvik Traders, Storm Holtson, is the major competitor of the Three Trees and shows signs of becoming one of the leading merchants along the Tael Firth and beyond. A grasping, acquisitive man with an innate business sense, Holtson has little use for the old, nomadic ways of his people and works toward both personal prosperity and control of a far-reaching trade empire.

Holding	Level	Province (Rating)	Domain/Ruler
Guild	2	Arvaald (2)	Stjordvik/Varri
Guild	1	Lofkirdik (1)	Stjordvik/Varri
Guild	1	Saerskaap (4)	Stjordvik/Varri
Guild	1	Bjarnheim (4)	Svinik/Hruthvar
Guild	1	Innsmark (4)	Svinik/Hruthvar

Regency Generated/Accumulated: 6/5

Treasury: Holtson's treasury has been depleted of late by his expansion into foreign provinces. He currently has only 2 GB in his treasury, though his Rjurik holdings usually generate 4 GB per turn.

three trees traders

Alignment: Neutral good.

Status: Recommended.

Summary: The Three Trees House is one of a handful of true trading guilds in the wild northern highlands. An alliance of a dozen or so wealthy urban Rjurik, the Three Trees manages much trade along the Taelshore. The House's presence actually helps maintain some semblance of order in the more chaotic Rjurik domains, and many foreign traders have begun to take notice and turn their attention northward.

Holding	Level	Province (Rating)	Domain/Ruler
Guild	1	Udvika (1)	Stjordvik/Varri
Guild	1	Namverg (2)	Stjordvik/Varri
Guild	2	Leivika (4)	Svinik/Hruthvar
Guild	1	Bjarnheim (4)	Svinik/Hruthvar
Guild	1	Hvarliik (1)	Svinik/Hruthvar

Regency Generated/Accumulated: 6/10

Treasury: The Three Trees have accumulated a treasury of 6 GB, and typically generate 6 GB per turn.

Regent: Three Trees members select a leader every five years. The current leader (and leader for the last two decades) is Jan Hrulstraad (MRj; F4; LN), a canny merchant from Skapa Hjarring who has largely turned his back on most "primitive" Rjurik traditions and seeks to bring his people into the modern world through trade and diplomacy.

Description: Compared to other continent-spanning trading organizations, the Three Trees are small and unsophisticated, but in Rjurik lands, they are the largest guild in operations. Through Three Trees oversight and the management skills of Jan Hrulstraad, Rjurik goods are now beginning to appear throughout western Anuirean lands and as far east as Brechtür and Vosgaard.



the white witch

This awnshegh, whose domain lies far to the north, exercises influence over several guild and law domains along the Taelshore and in the Northlands.

Holding	Level	Province (Rating)	Domain/Ruler
Guild	1	Aaldvaar (2)	Jankaping/Alnor
Guild	2	Skapa Hjar (4)	Halskapa/Bervinig
Guild	2	Saerskaap (4)	Stjordvik/Varri
Law	0	Aaldnjor (2)	Jankaping/Alnor
Law	0	Aaldvaar (2)	Jankaping/Alnor
Law	0	Draaska (0)	Jankaping/Alnor
Law	0	Nalhorske (2)	Rjuvik/Fulgar
Law	1	Hoescal (1)	Rjuvik/Fulgar
Law	1	Yvarre (4)	Rjuvik/Fulgar
Law	1	Saerskaap (4)	Stjordvik/Varri

Description: The White Witch is an arrogant, self-centered ruler who believes it her destiny to rule all Rjurik lands, and perhaps beyond. To this end, her agents scour the Highlands, seeking to control mercantile activity or disrupt the authority of legitimate rulers. So far, the Witch's involvement in local affairs is suspected by better-informed Rjurik, but remains unproven.

temples the oaken grove of erik

Alignment: Chaotic good.

Status: Recommended.

Summary: This church, known as the Oaken Grove of Aeric in Anuirean regions, is quite influential in the more urban and settled Taelshore realms.

Regency Generated/Accumulated: 61/42

Treasury: 30 GB

Regent: Günther Brandt (*MBr*; *Pr 10*, *Erik*; *Re*, *major*, 32; *CG*), a Brecht immigrant bearing the blood of Reynir, is living proof that there is no

fanatic like a convert. Upon immigrating to Dhoesone with his parents three decades ago, Günther embraced the faith of Erik and took his vows as a druid. Since then, he has risen in power to become a high priest of one of the most powerful churches in the region.

Holding	Level	Province (Rating)	Domain/Ruler
Temple	1	Aandvior (1)	Halskapa/Bervinig
Temple	2	Dalmsrhuud (2)	Halskapa/Bervinig
Temple	2	Dvasviik (4)	Halskapa/Bervinig
Temple	2	Helkstraad (2)	Halskapa/Bervinig
Temple	2	Selkhauske (2)	Halskapa/Bervinig
Temple	2	Skapa Hjar (4)	Halskapa/Bervinig
Temple	1	Stjolvar (1)	Halskapa/Bervinig
Temple	2	Taelrhud (2)	Halskapa/Bervinig
Temple	1	Hjarrsmark (1)	Rjuvik/Fulgar
Temple	2	Nalhorske (2)	Rjuvik/Fulgar
Temple	1	Sjarkhoelle (1)	Rjuvik/Fulgar
Temple	2	Svarkannek (2)	Rjuvik/Fulgar
Temple	4	Yvarre (4)	Rjuvik/Fulgar
Temple	2	Arvaald (2)	Stjordvik/Varri
Temple	2	Hollenvik (2)	Stjordvik/Varri
Temple	1	Lofkirdik (1)	Stjordvik/Varri
Temple	3	Saerskaap (4)	Stjordvik/Varri
Temple	3	Ustkjuvil (3)	Stjordvik/Varri
Temple	2	Bjarnheim (4)	Svinik/Hruthvar
Temple	2	Haekholfn (2)	Svinik/Hruthvar
Temple	1	Hvarliik (1)	Svinik/Hruthvar
Temple	2	Innsmark (4)	Svinik/Hruthvar
Temple	3	Leivika (4)	Svinik/Hruthvar
Temple	1	Gundviir (4)	Hogunmark/Eriela
Temple	2	Jurva (4)	Jankaping/Alnor
Temple	1	Stangajord (2)	Jankaping/Alnor
Temple	2	Byrnnor (4)	Mhoried/Daeric
Temple	2	Dhalsiel (2)	Mhoried/Daeric
Temple	0	Marloer's Gap (2)	Mhoried/Daeric
Temple	3	Torien's Watch (3)	Mhoried/Daeric
Temple	1	Bjondrig (1)	Dhoesone/Fhiele
Temple	2	Riveside (2)	Dhoesone/Fhiele
Temple	1	Romiene (1)	Dhoesone/Fhiele
Temple	1	Soniele (1)	Dhoesone/Fhiele
Temple	0	Riverford (5)	Cariela/Entier

Description: The Oaken Grove of Erik is a faith that appeals primarily to urban Rjurik and those who live in the Taelshore. Wilderness Rjurik, or those of the Northlands and Wild Lands, consider the Oaken Grove to be somewhat "foreign," but the church continues to gain adherents. In the wilder realms, the Grove has yet to make serious inroads on the power of the other major temple of Erik, the Emerald Spiral.



taelshore tribes

fjrllaaf

Kingdom: Rjuvik
Winter Province: Sjarkhoelle
Summer Province: Hoeskal
Chief: Linna (*FRj; R9; Re, major, 22; LG*)

The Fjrllaaf are a surprisingly nonviolent and tolerant tribe who dwell in the forests of northern Rjuvik. Deep and sincere in their worship of Erik, the Fjrllaaf are proud that they have never started a feud or war, although they have defended themselves fiercely when attacked. The bandit chieftains of Rjuvik have often troubled them, and though they have always preferred peaceful retreat to open conflict, the Fjrllaaf have several times been brought to bay and forced to fight, which they have done with skill and honor, frustrating the brigand forces of Rjuvik. Today, Jarl Najral, a somewhat honorable man, leaves them in peace and does his best to defend them from neighboring warlords who wish to plunder the Fjrllaaf's lands, steal their possessions, and (in the case of some more unscrupulous jarls) sell their people into slavery.

The Fjrllaaf are ruled by Chieftess Linna, a ranger with close ties to the druids. Her friendship with the various mysterious priests and priestesses who inhabit this region has aided her people considerably, helping them to elude pursuit and attack and assisting in the setup of ambushes and counterattacks.

rjkar

Kingdom: Stjordvik/Blood Skull Barony
Winter Province: Lofkirdik
Summer Province: Angarr
Chief: Kjalnaar (*MRj; F11; Br, major, 20; CG*)

The Rjkar summer in the hills of northern Stjordvik and migrate to the hazardous forests of the Blood Skull Barony for the winter. Harsh conditions in the cold season help keep the Rjkar safe from raiders, for the orogs generally hole up during the winter, but

the tribe's winter camp is dangerous nonetheless. Many fearsome creatures, driven from other Rjurik lands, dwell in the Barony's forests—winter wolves, trolls, fhoimoriens, and others—some of which roam abroad, even in snow and ice.

Chief Kjalnaar is a near-legendary hunter and tracker who often enjoys departing his tribe's winter quarters to hunt down marauding monsters. His single-handed defeat of a powerful fhoimorien lives in stories told by the Rjkar as well as many other tribes in the Rjurik region.

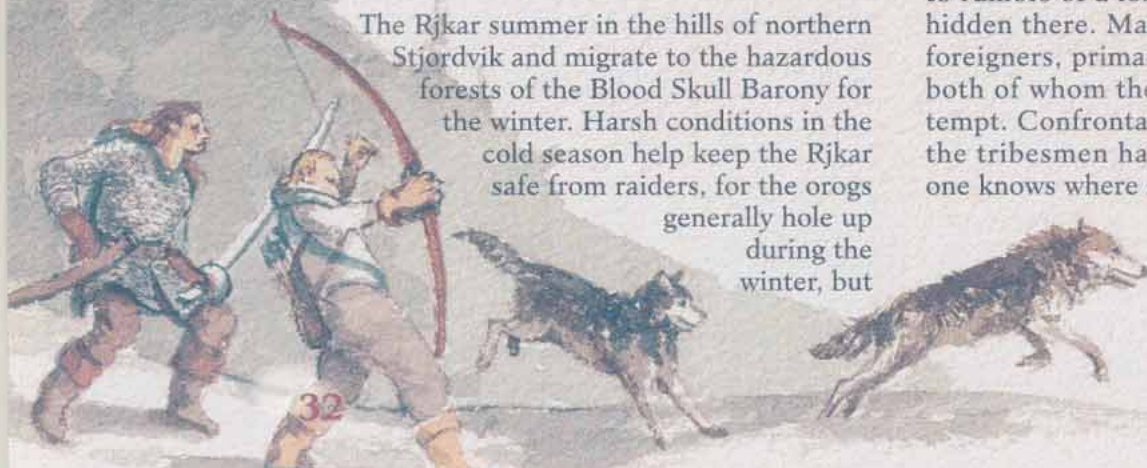
Proud and independent, the Rjkar shun the company of outsiders and totally reject the authority of both the Scarlet Baron and the king of Stjordvik. They (grudgingly) reward those who aid them, but are far too proud to ask for assistance, even in the most dire of need. It is far better, Kjalnaar claims, to die bravely and join Erik than to live as cowards and beggars. Unfortunately for the Rjkar, such attitudes may well lead to their destruction, for the Blood Skull orogs are aware of their presence and are determined to wipe them out.

thajarr

Kingdom: Svinik
Winter Province: Bergvaas
Summer Province: Innsmark
Chief: Lars Bodenson (*MRj; F13; Re, major, 22; CN*)

A peaceful, retiring tribe desiring little contact with the outside world (and until recently having none), the Thajarr are said to be especially wise in the ways of the forests. Their elders are rumored to speak the ancient language of ravens and eagles.

In the past several years, outsiders have been venturing into the deep Bergvaas forests (the winter home of the Thajarr), in response to rumors of a lost dragon's horde said to be hidden there. Many of these adventurers are foreigners, primarily Anuireans and Brechts, both of whom the Thajarr hold in deep contempt. Confrontations between travelers and the tribesmen have been escalating, and no one knows where such matters will lead.



Distant, cold, and wooded, the Northlands are far less populated than the “cosmopolitan” Taelshore, and are among the most dangerous places on the continent due to the constant threat of the White Witch and the Blood Skull orogs.

Roughly defined as those realms lying north of the Hjarring and west of the Sidhebyrne Rivers, the Northlands central region contains dense, ancient forests that are home to humans, humanoids, and monsters, and that harbor many old ruins, stone circles, and places of magical power that remain untapped and unexploited.

The cold north coast of Cerilia is wind-swept tundra, grassy and green in summer, frozen and snow-clad in winter. Here, the Thaelasian sea tosses uneasily, and a few Rjurik make their livings as sealers and whalers, venturing forth in hide-covered boats, armed with only harpoons to wrest a bare living from the gray, unforgiving sea.

The Northlands are largely trackless wilderness, where travel is difficult or impossible without a skilled guide. In summer, travel is on foot or horse, while during winter, Rjurik who must travel are forced to do so by sleigh, dogsled, skis, or snowshoes. Even then, travel in winter is a tricky and potentially deadly proposition.

Most of the Northlands were once under the control of the elves of Lluabright, a proud kingdom of great antiquity. These elves were among the most distant and haughty of their race, rejecting contact with even their elven cousins elsewhere on the continent. At the arrival of the Rjuven, the Lluabright elves reacted harshly, driving the humans from their forests and killing mercilessly. The newcomer humans responded in kind, establishing what eventually became the modern Rjurik states and driving the elves, in turn, deeper and deeper into the wilderness and into their last stronghold. The much-shrunken kingdom is still called Lluabright, but it retains only a fraction of its past beauty, glory, and power.

The Rjurik of the Northlands typify the traditional image of their hardy race. Most are nomads—strong, toughened by their environment, skilled as trackers, hunters, and warriors, and independent and distrustful

of the “civilized” world and its decadent ways.

For years prior to the Battle of Mount Deismaar, the Northlands were wild and unsettled, home to humanoids, animal herds, and small bands of Rjuven nomads. After the catastrophic destruction of the gods and birth of their successors, the land changed irrevocably. The Blood Skull orogs, long disorganized and ignored, became a powerful force of chaos and destruction. The White Witch, already a powerful wizard, discovered her awnshegh powers and drew many Rjurik

the northlands

tribes under her influence to establish one of the largest kingdoms in all of Cerilia.

In response, the modern kingdoms of Jankaping and Hognunmark were created, though many of their jarldoms existed (as they do today) in name only, remaining largely unpopulated and ravaged by the elements. Their chief residents are reindeer herds and solitary rhoimoriens, trolls and other creatures, with only the occasional human visitor.

The White Witch is clearly the most powerful political entity in the region, expertly managing her isolated but expansive realm and spreading her malign influence throughout the northern highlands and beyond.



THAELASIAN PASSAGE



N

Roykenskapa



realm of the white witch

Alignment: Lawful evil.

Status: Not available for PCs.

Summary: One of the largest domains in the Rjurik lands, the White Witch's realm is composed of wind-swept tundra and cold forests but is sparsely populated. The Witch rules her domain with an iron hand and controls a far-reaching network of spies, ambassadors, and merchants.

Province	Law	Temples	Guilds	Sources
Bjornoya (1/6)	WW (1)	—	—	—
Boden (2/3)	WW (2)	Kar (2)	WW (1)	—
Folda Fjord (1/4)	WW (1)	—	WW (1)	—
Halten (0/7)	—	—	—	—
Innherad (0/7)	—	—	—	—
Kandalask (1/4)	WW (1)	—	WW (1)	—
Mandal (4/3)	WW (3)	Kar (4)	WW (4)	—
Nordcapp (0/5)	—	—	—	—
Oulu (3/4)	WW (2)	Kar (3)	WW (3)	—
Pitea (2/3)	WW (1)	—	WW (1)	—
Rovan (1/6)	—	—	—	—
Solung Bank (1/6)	WW (1)	—	WW (1)	—
Soroya (1/4)	—	—	—	—
Torne (0/5)	—	—	—	—
Vejle (1/6)	WW (1)	—	—	Oh (4)

Abbreviations: WW=the White Witch; Kar=Great White Church of Karasha (the White Witch); Oh=Ohlaak the Dragon.

Law: The White Witch maintains absolute control of all law within her domain. Her soldiers and various humanoid or monstrous minions enforce her will throughout the realm.

Temples: The Witch maintains control of the Great White Church of Karesha, which has temples in Boden and Oulu and a single great temple at Mandal.

Guilds: A financial genius, the White Witch controls all trade and mercantile activities within her borders, and also manages an extensive foreign trade network.

Sources: Although the White Witch does not herself cast wizardly magic, she keeps a close watch on the potential magical sources in her realm. Recently, a Rjurik mage named Ohlaak the Dragon has taken control of one of her sources in Vejle, but she plans to destroy him as soon as possible.

Regent: The White Witch is one of the most dangerous individuals in the Highlands. Arro-

gant, ruthless, and cruel, she is a powerful priestess capable of wielding impressive magics. She is further gifted with natural talents as a leader, financial manager, and mistress of intrigue. Despite her infamy, a considerable amount of confusion and uncertainty remain regarding many aspects of the White Witch's nature, not the least of which is her actual appearance. Some claim that she is a beautiful, kind-hearted young woman without a cruel bone in her body, while others say that she is a withered, ugly creature of hatred and malice. In fact, both descriptions of the White Witch are accurate, for she uses magic to change her appearance. See the *Blood Enemies* accessory for more details on this powerful awnshegh.

Lieutenants: The White Witch's only real lieutenant is the powerful warrior and captain of her elite guard, Haghar. Skilled and loyal, Haghar is a surprisingly honorable man considering who he serves, and seems to positively delight in combat with the Blood Skull orogs.

Description: Harsh and unforgiving even for the northern highlands, the White Witch's Realm is a place of permafrost and glaciers in the north, and tundra and forest in the south. Population is light, with small communities dotted here and there and a few tough Rjurik nomads making the treacherous trip from winter camps to summer hunting grounds each year.

Capital: The city of Mandal serves as the White Witch's capital and shelters several thousand of her subjects.

Trade Goods: The realm exports furs, meat, and a small amount of timber; it imports grains and other staples from the south.

Allies: Though she has numerous trade contacts with nearby lands, the White Witch has no allies.

Enemies: The White Witch considers everyone outside her borders to be an enemy. With slow, calculating skill, she has absorbed the various unpopulated and independent domains surrounding her realm, and has added seven new provinces in the last two decades.

blood skull barony

Alignment: Neutral evil.

Status: Not available for PCs.

Summary: Adjacent to many diverse realms, the Blood Skull Barony has been a dagger in the side of the Rjurik people for many years. A rough alliance of orogs and other humanoid tribes, the Blood Skull realm remains under the control of the savage Scarlet Baron, a powerful orog monarch. Though the difficulty of holding together so many diverse groups has prevented the baron from expanding his influence beyond the realm's current borders, he retains strong control within them and still schemes to expand his influence.

Province	Law	Temples	Guilds	Sources
Angarr (1/6)	SB (1)	MK (1)	—	Da (2)
Chur (1/6)	Da (1)	—	—	Da (4)
Hrukk (3/4)	SB (2)	WT (1)	—	—
Shir'kh'an (0/7)	—	YB (0)	—	Da (0)
Sh'kkra (0/7)	Ko (0)	YB (0)	—	Da (1)
Thurzimm (0/7)	—	WT (0)	—	—
Valkith (2/5)	Ko (1)	YB (1)	—	—
Vrallik (1/6)	Gl (1)	WT (1)	—	—
Zakkhur (2/5)	SB (2)	WT (2)	—	—

Da=Darkon; Gl=Gleggh; Ko=Konesh; MK=Minions of Kartathok; SB=Scarlet Baron; WT=Warriors of Torazan; YB=Yeenoghu's Brood

Law: Law enforcement is harsh in the Blood Skull Barony, with the Scarlet Baron's various chieftains exercising rough justice within the various provinces.

Temples: The battle priests of Torazan control the Barony's orog temples with an iron fist. In provinces populated more densely with other types of humanoids, deities such as Yeenoghu are worshiped by the gnolls; worship of Kartathok is practiced by the goblins.

Guilds: The orogs and their allies simply take what they want, and do not engage in trade. No significant guild activity exists in the Barony.

Sources: The sources of the Barony are largely controlled by a mysterious human wizard named Darkon.

Army: The Scarlet Baron typically maintains a sizeable army, though this varies depending upon internal politics, time of year, etc. His personal bodyguard is a unit of elite orogs called the Scarlet Baron's Own.

- ◆ 4 units of Blood Skull orogs.
- ◆ 3 units of Blood Skull goblins.
- ◆ 2 units of Blood Skull gnolls.
- ◆ 1 unit of the Scarlet Baron's Own.

Regent: Thrakkazz the Scarlet Baron (*MM*; *F12*; *An*, major, 38; *LE*) is the realm's current ruler. In the traditional Blood Skull manner, Thrakkazz murdered the previous baron, then survived all subsequent attempts to unseat him, strengthening his position and ridding himself of rivals in the process.

Thrakkazz's career has not been without personal cost, however. He is a twisted, scarred creature, ugly even for an orog, and his right hand, lost in a duel with a rival, has been replaced by an artificial metal claw.

Important NPCs: Thrakkazz's lieutenants and aides are the only individuals he trusts completely. Each of his immediate followers is sworn to give his life for the Scarlet Baron. Prominent aides include the orogs Zhallvur and Mkhur, and the fhoimorien Gwedd. The most intriguing and dangerous inhabitant of the Barony, other than the Baron himself, is the human wizard Darkon.

Darkon arrived in the Barony nearly five years ago and, after besting several of the Scarlet Baron's guardians, offered his service in exchange for control of one of Thrakkazz's provinces. He was eventually awarded the province of Chur, where he took over an ancient orog fortress beneath Skull Butte (see below), kept his borders tightly closed but faithfully paid tribute, and aided the Baron in battle with powerful necromancy.

No one knows Darkon's origin. Little is known other than his name, which itself may be false. Some speculate that he is an exiled blooded noble from a southern land, gathering forces for an eventual return for vengeance, while others say he is simply an evil sorcerer seeking sufficient peace and quiet to conduct his wicked experiments.

Description: The lands now known as the Blood Skull Barony were historically a wilderness, home only to savage bands of orogs, gnolls, goblins, fhoimoriens, and other humanoids. The scattering of godly essence in

the wake of the Mount Deismaar battle brought changes in the region, however—creatures of the Blood emerged with new powers that made them princes and chieftains among their people. Most prominent among these was the orog leader Shazrakk, who welded his Blood Skull tribe into a powerful military machine, bringing most surrounding tribes under his heel.

For centuries, the Blood Skull Barony remained a thorn in the side of surrounding lands—too powerful to invade and conquer, but too disorganized to do more than savagely raid frontier provinces. The Rjurik fortress-city of Viborg sprang up to defend against these incursions, but could do little to halt the raids permanently. The most serious of these invasions occurred in 1514, when Scarlet Baron Zhullik and his orogs swept out of the Barony. They defeated the hastily-assembled Rjurik armies sent against him. In the end, he met his death at Thrakkazz's hands at the battle of Innsmark. The shattered Blood Skull humanoids retreated to the Barony, where Thrakkazz, the current baron, seized power.

Thrakkazz wishes all the disparate races of the Barony to be united under his skull banner. To this end, he has determined to change the Barony's army from an irregular mob dedicated primarily to raiding into a permanent, well-trained force able to conquer territory and hold it. Blood Skull warriors are now being trained and equipped with such a mission in mind, and Thrakkazz has laid the groundwork for a full-scale invasion of the Barrow Woods in the Giantdowns. This region, sparsely populated and claimed by both the mysterious Ghuralli and the White Witch, is unlikely to offer organized resistance, and is seen as a good opportunity for Thrakkazz's legions to hone their skills.

The Blood Skull Barony currently comprises nine provinces. Each has a mixed population of orogs, gnolls, goblins, fhoimoriens, minotaurs, and similar creatures, but each also has a majority population which largely controls the province. The provinces are Zakkhur, the Scarlet Baron's so-called "Throne Province," where Thrakkazz rules from his underground warren of tunnels and halls; Thurzimm, Vrallik, and Hrukke, all primarily ruled by orogs; Valkith, Sh'kkra, and Shir'kb'an, controlled by gnolls; Angarr, the sole goblin province, and Chur, a realm given over to the foreign human wizard Darkon. Not much is known about Chur, for Darkon keeps its borders tightly sealed with orog and minotaur guards. Darkon pays the Baron tribute regularly and aids him in battle upon demand.



hogunmark

Alignment: Chaotic good.

Status: Recommended.

Summary: Hogunmark is a vast realm of wind-swept taiga and thick forests, largely inhabited by nomadic Rjurik. Though it is the largest Rjurik realm, much of its area remains unsettled and completely untamed.

Province	Law	Temples	Guilds	Sources
Aldrud (0/7)	—	—	—	—
Bjarkheim (1/6)	Fr (1)	ES (1)	Ul (1)	—
Djaalfund (4/3)	Yn (1)	ES (1)	Yn (1)	—
Fjoltyr (1/6)	Ja (1)	ES (1)	Ja (1)	—
Gundviir (4/3)	Fr (3)	OE (1)	Fr (3)	—
		ES (2)		
Hjolgrun (2/5)	He (1)	ES (2)	He (2)	—
Horvliik (1/6)	Fr (1)	ES (1)	In (1)	—
Jarnborg (0/7)	—	ES (0)	—	—
Njordard (0/7)	Ot (0)	—	—	—
Oelfrun (0/7)	—	ES (0)	Fr (0)	—
Sehaka (1/6)	Hj (1)	—	—	—
Sjaruud (1/4)	Ro (1)	ES (1)	Ro (1)	—
Valkheim (1/6)	Fr (1)	—	—	—

Abbreviations: Fr=Freila; Yn=Yngvi; Ro=Rolulf; Ul=Ulfdan; He=Heimdjor; Ja=Jarvill; Hj=Hjarni; Ot=Otryff; In=Ingdar; ES=Emerald Spiral (Gretta Seligsdotter); OE=Oaken Grove of Erik (Günther Brandt).

Law: Queen Freila maintains some authority in all her provinces, but wisely leaves primary enforcement to her jarls, who are the supreme authority in their various realms. Many jarldoms exist in theory only, with minimal or no real control by the queen and her representatives.

Temples: The Emerald Spiral holds sway here, favored by the rural Rjurik over the rival Oaken Grove of Erik, though permanent temples are uncommon. Most of the druids maintain wilderness shrines, circles, groves, or sacred caves, where local Rjurik come to worship, seek advice, or ask the druids to settle disputes.

Guilds: The queen and jarls control most trade in Hogunmark; no organized trading guilds or consortiums exist as such.

Sources: The wilds of Hogunmark harbor many potential sources, but no wizard has braved the harsh climate and suspicious natives to develop them.

Regency Generated/Accumulated: 22/22

Treasury: Hogunmark maintains a healthy 15 GB in its treasury, and the kingdom generates approximately 10 GB per turn.

Army: Queen Freila maintains a small standing army to fight off raids from the Blood Skull Barony and the Realm of the White Witch. In the event of invasion, she can call upon her jarls, who can swell her army with numerous units of irregulars. Her personal guard is called the Hogunmark Dragons. Normally, she has the following forces available:

- ◆ 2 units of Rjurik archers.
- ◆ 2 units of Rjurik infantry.
- ◆ 1 unit of Rjurik cavalry.
- ◆ 1 unit of Hogunmark Dragons.
- ◆ 1 unit of Rjurik scouts.
- ◆ Navy: 1 Longship

Regent: Queen Freila (FRj; F10; Vo, Major, 32; CG) is an intelligent, middle-aged woman who rules the land from her palace in Veikanger, deep in the southern forests. She is well liked by her people, who thus far have not experienced serious difficulties arising from the Rjurik urban/nomadic conflict.

Lieutenants: Freila's chief steward, Hruthwulf, is a talented administrator and competent military commander, and is left in charge when Freila is indisposed or traveling.

Important NPCs: The high druid of Hogunmark, Thorjak the Green (MRj; Pr13, Erik; Re, major, 28; CG), lives in a carefully maintained and protected grove in central Hogunmark, deep in the woods. He is a great source of wisdom for those in Hogunmark and elsewhere; pilgrims, druidic acolytes, and others seeking wisdom often journey to his grove to pose questions or request training. Thorjak is an ancient man; not all his visitors come away with the wisdom they sought, but travelers continue coming.

Description: Hogunmark did not exist prior to the battle at Mount Deismaar. After that event, when the Blood was bestowed upon the Rjurik people and compelled their leaders to greatness, the nomadic clans of Hogunmark united to form a nation and selected one of their blooded leaders, the jarl Wjulf, to lead them.

The nation thus created existed largely for

mutual defense and patriotic identity; the Hoguns wished to avoid the fate of the southern regions, which had spent long centuries sparring against Anuirean domination. The clansmen retained a deep, typically Rjurik streak of independence, obeying the king or queen only when their orders made sense, and occasionally even displacing an unpopular monarch and electing a new leader.

Today, the situation continues largely unchanged, though the minions of the White Witch have begun to put increased pressure on the eastern jarldoms. Queen Freila has sometimes been forced to call up some of her irregulars to defend against the Witch's minions.

The wild taigas are home to scattered nomadic clans, roaming herds of reindeer, occasional bands of trolls and ogres, and the rare fhoimorien. These trackless, sparsely populated lands are hazardous for travel, owing to harsh conditions, cold, and wind, as well as hostile clansmen and monsters. The far northern reaches of the realm, particularly the wind-torn Roykenskapa, are but sparsely populated, although a number of storm giants are known to call these lands home.

The interior forests harbor most of the land's nomadic population, who winter here in semi-permanent camps and travel the taiga in summer. The thick woods are also home to fhoimoriens, isolated humanoids, and forest giants.

The city of Aaldvika, nestled in the deep forests of western Hogunmark, is the northernmost port along the Thaelasian passage. As such, it has grown into a bustling seaport. Most of the traffic to the lonely Rjurik outposts in Thaele passes through Aaldvika, further enriching its citizens. Queen Freila and her family maintain almost complete control of trade through Aaldvika, keeping them wealthy and well connected.

This last fact remains largely unknown to the nomadic Rjurik who make up the bulk of Hogunmark's population; the nomads consider Freila to be "one of them," unconnected to the "soft" Rjurik of the south. Should her strong connections with foreign merchant princes ever become common knowledge, Freila may lose considerable support.

Capital: Hogunmark's capital is the forest city of Veikanger, tucked within the wooded

slopes of the Jarlskap Hills. A rude, palisaded city built primarily of wood, Veikanger is also the main bulwark of defense against raiders from the Blood Skull Barony. Several druids maintain important circles nearby and aid in the city's defense if needed.

The Queen spends most of her time in her central palace complex, a series of thatched-roofed longhouses with elaborately carved crossbeams, extensive meeting halls, and luxurious living quarters. The jarls of Hogunmark meet here each year to discuss disputes, ask advice of the druids, and socialize.

Trade Goods: Hogunmark exports small quantities of lumber, furs, artwork, and weapons. Most of the land's mercantile income arises from tariffs on foreign goods bound for the Thaele colonies, headed south to the Taelshore and Anuirean lands, or destined for Brecht lands to the east. The Hogunmarkers also purchase foreign spices, precious metals, dyes, and artwork. A sea trade route links Djaalfund with the Brecht lands.

Allies: Hogunmark retains friendly relations with neighboring Rjurik realms, though its jarls have little use for paper treaties, preferring the strength of honorable oaths to the written word. Should neighboring realms be threatened, Hogunmark will attempt to aid them, and expects similar aid if the White Witch or the Scarlet Baron attempts any major attacks.

Enemies: The Hoguns fight a constant war against the minions of the White Witch, who have moved against the land many times over the past centuries. The Blood Skull raiders are also a threat, but most of their raids are confined to the Taelshore Realms.



jankaping

Alignment: Neutral.

Status: Recommended.

Summary: Jankaping is a land influenced by both the traditional nomads of the north and the more modern nations of the south. More than any other Rjurik kingdom, the conflict between the old and the new seems likely to tear this nation apart in the foreseeable future.

Province	Law	Temples	Guilds	Sources
Aaldnjor (2/4)	Ol (1)	ES (2)	Ol (2)	—
	WW (0)	—	—	—
Aaldvaar (2/5)	Bj (1)	ES (2)	Bj (1)	—
	WW (0)	—	WW (1)	—
Draaska (0/7)	WW (0)	ES (0)	—	—
Froylaad (1/6)	Um (1)	ES (1)	Um (1)	—
Harlskaang (1/4)	Al (1)	ES (1)	La (1)	—
Jokkajoen (1/4)	Ke (1)	ES (1)	—	—
Jurva (4/1)	Al (1)	OE (2)	Al (1)	—
	Da (1)	—	Da (1)	—
Rjutaffel (0/7)	Ju (0)	ES (0)	—	—
Stangajord (2/3)	Al (1)	OE (1)	Al (1)	—
	Bo (1)	ES (1)	Bo (1)	—

Abbreviations: Bj=Bjark; Ol=Olam; WW=White Witch; Al=Alnor; Ju=Jurik; Ke=Keljar; Um=Umvar; Da=Daalhar; Bo=Bori; ES=Emerald Spiral (Gretta Seligsdotter); OE=Oaken Grove of Erik (Günther Brandt).

Law: The king controls the law in most provinces, though he shares substantially with his jarls. In the north, the rebel jarls Bjarik and Olam hold sway and control some law enforcement. The agents of the White Witch are also active here, fostering dissent and opposition to the land's rightful ruler and his representatives.

Temples: The Oaken Grove of Erik holds most temples in the southern regions, though the Emerald Spiral maintains considerable influence in Aaldvaar and Aaldnjor, where the rebellious nomads reject the southerners and their city-bred ways.

Guilds: The king and his jarls control trade in Jankaping; organized mercantile guilds do not

exist. The White Witch has made some surreptitious inroads in this area.

Sources: No sources are currently held by wizards, although as in many other Rjurik lands, numerous regions (deep forests, hills, ancient stone circles, elven ruins) are quite suitable for development as magic sources.

Regency Generated/Accumulated: 16/5

Treasury: 2 GB remain in Jankaping's depleted treasury. The kingdom generates 6 GB per turn.

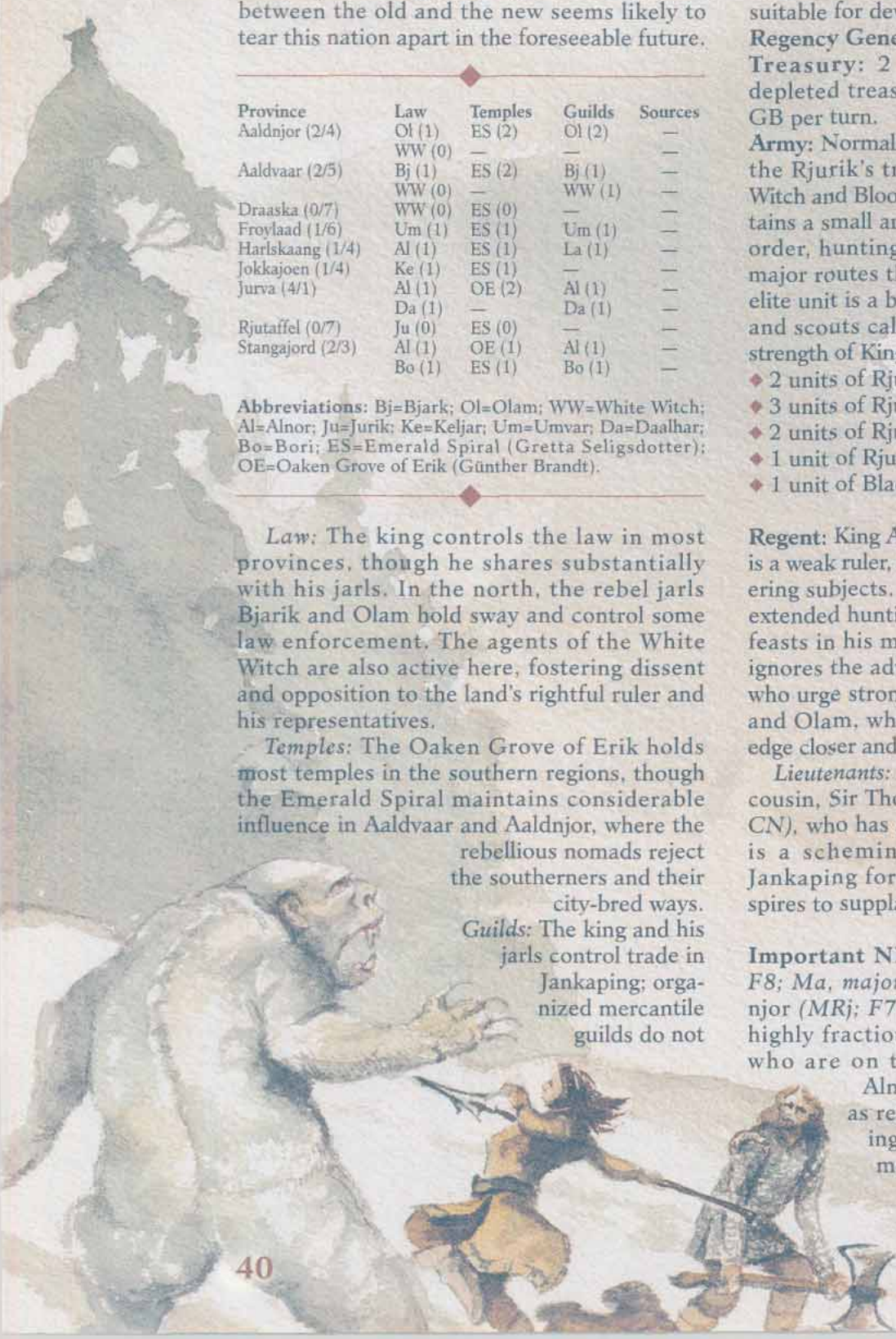
Army: Normally a peaceful realm isolated from the Rjurik's traditional enemies (the White Witch and Blood Skull raiders), Jankaping maintains a small army used mostly for maintaining order, hunting down bandits, and patrolling major routes through the country. The army's elite unit is a band of veteran mounted archers and scouts called the Black Arrows. Current strength of King Alnor's army is:

- ◆ 2 units of Rjurik archers.
- ◆ 3 units of Rjurik infantry.
- ◆ 2 units of Rjurik scouts.
- ◆ 1 unit of Rjurik cavalry.
- ◆ 1 unit of Black Arrows.

Regent: King Alnor (MRj; F6; Ba, major, 22; N) is a weak ruler, incapable of reconciling his bickering subjects. Preferring to waste his time on extended hunting trips and throwing elaborate feasts in his mead-hall in Stornomark, Alnor ignores the advice of his lieutenants and jarls who urge strong action against the jarls Bjarik and Olam, who daily flout his authority and edge closer and closer to open rebellion.

Lieutenants: Alnor's primary lieutenant is his cousin, Sir Thorgrim (MRj; F5; Vo, minor, 14; CN), who has a claim to the throne. Thorgrim is a scheming man who wishes to take Jankaping for himself, and constantly conspires to supplant the rightful regent.

Important NPCs: Bjark of Aaldvaar (MRj; F8; Ma, major, 20; CN) and Olam of Aaldnjor (MRj; F7; An, minor, 12; CN) are both highly fractious, nomad-sympathizing jarls who are on the verge of rejecting King Alnor's authority and breaking off as rebel kingdoms. Both are receiving tacit assistance in the form of money, weapons, and trade from the White Witch, who sees an



opportunity to exploit divisions in Rjurik lands.

Both of these jarls are rough, simple men who want to run their realms as they choose, without interference from a king. Neither is particularly wicked, though they are stubborn and willful. They would readily reject the aid they have been receiving should they ever learn its true source.

Jarl Thornul (*MRj; F10; Re, tainted, 5; LG*), leader of the desolate Halskaang Marsh, is a former mercenary who has fought all across Cerilia and also for many Rjurik leaders. He is a scarred, grim man whose many battles have left him with a deep hatred of the Blood Skull humanoids, the minions of the White Witch, and the goblins of Urga-Zai. Should he ever learn that the two renegade jarls are backed by his hated enemy, the White Witch, Thornul will call for their immediate removal and arrest. He will even offer to lead the armies sent to capture the men. That he would even consider making war upon another Rjurik jarl gauges the depth of Thornul's hatred for the White Witch and her minions.

Description: Jankaping best illustrates the growing rift between urban and nomadic Rjurik. In the southern jarldoms, many Rjurik have chosen to settle down and build permanent cities, thereby moving away from their nomadic lifestyle. In the north, traditional pursuits hold sway, and the tribes make their yearly migration from winter quarters to summer hunting grounds, often across the border with Hognunmark. These individuals, bolstered by jarls Bjark of Aaldvaar and Olam of Aaldnør, plan eventually to rebel against the king at Stornomark and form a new kingdom. These traditionalists feel increasingly alienated from the southern city-dwellers, and go their own way more and more, heedless of the king and his authority.

Unknown to all, including the troublesome jarls, this rebellion is also supported by the White Witch, foe of all Rjurik. Should the jarls' revolt succeed, the White Witch will be in a perfect position to influence the new realms, transforming Bjark and Olam into puppets, with the White Witch herself pulling the strings.

Capital: Stornomark is a grim, gray city of stone rising from the central taiga. It is surrounded by grazing and farm lands, and its walls contain the great granite palace of Jankaping's regent. As dissent and dissatisfaction grow in the land, Stornomark becomes a greater and greater affront to the traditional Rjurik, who see it as a symbol of their loss of freedom and the arrival of strange, foreign ways.

Trade Goods: Jankaping trades only minimally with the outside world. Most mercantile contacts are with neighboring lands such as Hognunmark, Halskapa, Svinik, and Rjuvik. The rebel jarls have no difficulty dealing with the bandit rulers of Rjuvik, while other Jankapings shun them. Timber, livestock, fleece, thread, cloth, foodstuffs, and clothing are primary trade goods.

Allies: Jankaping has no formal alliances, but retains friendly relations with Halskapa, Svinik, and Hognunmark.

Enemies: The realm has no active enemies, although the scheming enemy of all Rjurik, the White Witch, is currently funnelling surreptitious aid in the form of weapons, money, and trade goods to the rebel jarls. To date, the jarls do not know who their benefactors are, and would definitely rethink their actions should they ever learn the truth.

Special Conditions: From his lonely castle in the frozen province of Rjutaffel, Jarl Jurik (*MRj; F7; Re, minor, 10; CG*) controls what little law exists. Here also, the Olthrugaard tribe waylays unlucky travelers, and rumors abound of a new and powerful awnshegh called the Ice Fiend. This creature is said to resemble a frightening statue of pure ice; it roams the land only on the coldest days of winter to tear apart nomads' shelters, freeze them solid, and carry their bodies off to its unknown lair. The Ice Fiend's exact history and nature remain a mystery, for expeditions sent to slay it have returned either empty-handed or not at all.



northland tribes aegilsgaard

Kingdom: Hogunmark
Winter Province: Valkheim
Summer Province: Njorldar
Chief: Gunnar (MRj; F15; Vo, major, 28; LN)

his tough, war-loving tribe inhabits eastern Hogunmark and is often on the front line of conflicts with the White Witch or Blood Skull raiders. Noted for the quality of their weapons and the skill of their warriors, the Aegilsgaard also boast highly skilled bards and artisans, who are among the best in Hogunmark but are barely recognized outside the tribe.

Chief Gunnar is an old and powerful fighter who is revered as the virtual father of his tribe. Even after losing an eye to an orog raider, Gunnar remains a relentless warrior and a wise leader, though he is prone to be impulsive and engage in outbursts of temper.

The Aegilsgaard are less suspicious of outsiders than other tribes, and have few qualms about the rulership of Freila, Queen of Hogunmark, who respects them and asks only token tribute. Her warriors are often sent east to aid the Aegilsgaard in defending themselves against the Witch and the Blood Skulls.

olthrugaard

Kingdom: Jankaping
Winter Province: Rjutaffel
Summer Province: Draaska
Chief: Ulthar (MRj; F10; CN)

The Olthrugaard are recognized as a hazard of travel in Jankaping, for they are notoriously suspicious of strangers. Travelers in

their region are often stopped, taken into custody by tribal warriors, intensely questioned, then relieved of valuables as "tolls" or "taxes" (a trick that Chief Ulthar learned from the regents of Jankaping).

Though many consider them bandits, the Olthrugaard are merely traditional nomads who spend the cold months in the sheltering forests of Rjutaffel and move to Draaska as the weather warms. Their hunters are expert trackers and survivalists and are often hired as scouts by King Alnor. The Olthrugaard's valuable contribution to the Jankaping military has made the feeble Alnor turn a blind eye to their occasional brigandage, but some believe that Ulthar will eventually grow overconfident and actually prey on official representatives of the kingdom. Such a situation may spur Alnor to action, despite his weak-willed nature.

jarnkasspel

Kingdom: Hogunmark
Winter Province: Bjarkheim
Summer Province: Fjoltyr
Chief: Axel Tjarlhan (MRj; F11; Ba, minor, 12; LG)

The Jarnkasspel are highly insular, ascetic, devoted followers of Erik. They inhabit the deep forests of Hogunmark and shun the company of outsiders. Some claim that traces of elven blood flow in their veins, the result of an ancient alliance or association between the tribe and the elves of Lluabright. Given the elves' fanatical hatred of humans, however, many believe that this is unlikely.

The Jarnkasspel are a strange group, seemingly midway between human and elven cultures. They obey Erik's edicts to safeguard nature and never take from it needlessly, even to the point of endangering their own tribe with starvation or exposure.

In the wilderness, the presence of this tribe is barely noticeable, so careful are these folk to conceal themselves from visiting strangers. They do not hate outsiders, but simply prefer to avoid them. The Jarnkasspel will not hesitate to aid travelers in need; the starving, wounded, and dying are brought to their camps and tended or fed. The Jarnkasspel ask only that individuals so

privileged never reveal the locations of their camps. So far, all guests of the Jarnkasspel seem to have respected the tribe's requests.

gautrakka

Kingdom: Hogueunmark
Winter Province: Aldrud
Summer Province: Njorldar
Chief: Najlar (MRj; R12; NG)

The Gautrakka represent one of the most hardy and enduring of Rjurik tribes—these northerners dwell along the broken, icy reaches of the Thaelasian Sea. Inhabiting the wind-ravaged wilderness of Roykenskaapa in extreme northern Hogueunmark, the Gautrakka make their living in the spring and summer by putting to sea in small hide boats and hunting seals, walruses, narwhals, and small whales. They sometimes prey on the large whales that migrate through the region, but the Gautrakka are always careful to use all parts of any animal they take.

Brave, stoic, and quiet, these Rjurik endure the rigors of northern life without complaint. The Gautrakka are known to be insular, though their code of honor demands that they share shelter and food with any who need it. Several unusual taboos govern the Gautrakka's daily life: They may never smile at outsiders; unmarried men and women may speak to each other only during meals; and no food may be consumed between the first light of dawn and the time the sun fully clears the horizon. These rules are sometimes confusing to outsiders, who risk offending the Gautrakka if they do not follow them.

During the coldest part of winter, the Gautrakka retire to the interior highlands where they construct ice shelters and live on food they gathered in summer. Gautrakka bards are busy and appreciated during this time, for songs and stories are the only entertainment available and the winter can last more than half the year.

Druids are always welcome in Gautrakka camps regardless of their origin, for even these wilderness-toughened priests rarely venture so far north. A few traders also deal with the Gautrakka, trading metal implements, harpoons, clothing, and foodstuffs for whale oil, carved walrus tusks, handcrafts, and other products.



trygvaar

Kingdom: Realm of the White Witch
Winter Province: Unknown
Summer Province: Unknown
Chief: Darvjaal (MRj; F13; Vo, tainted, 6; LE)

A truly barbaric tribe with no interest in the outside world, the Trygvaar inhabit the deep forests in the southern reaches of the White Witch's domain in winter, then migrate to the northern tundra in spring and summer. Though tough, resourceful, and independent, they cooperate with the White Witch because it suits them and their chief, the grim Darvjaal Treecutter. All Trygvaar warriors serve one-year terms in the White Witch's personal guard; at the end of their service, they come home loaded with gold, furs, weapons, food, and other necessities, further cementing the bond between the Witch and the tribe.

The Trygvaar admire little other than skill in hunting and battle, and spend much of their time in contests of arms, or on massive hunting expeditions that involve the entire tribe. When called upon by the Witch or by Darvjaal to fight invaders from the Blood Skull Barony or the Giantdowns, the tribe reacts with howling bloodlust. Unfortunately for Hognunmark and the Lluabright elves, the Trygvaar display similar enthusiasm on their raids into these neighboring lands. Such raids are uncommon, orchestrated only when the tribe is in dire need (this need may apply to supplies or simple excitement). The White Witch is known to discourage such conduct since it reflects badly on her and sometimes frustrates her plans to rule and control in secrecy. She usually ends

up disavowing any knowledge of or responsibility for them, despite the fact that the Trygvaar proudly proclaim themselves as her elite.

fryggvaal

Kingdom: Jankaping
Winter Province: Harlskaang
Summer Province: Jurva
Chief: Rjannka (FRj; R9; Ma, minor, 16; NG)

The most populous and important tribe in Jankaping, the Fryggvaal boast nearly 600 members, and occupy extensive semi-permanent winter quarters in the realm's eastern forests. Chieftess Rjannka is an influential friend of the jarls Bjark and Olam, who are leading dissidents wishing to break from the city-based influence of King Alnor.

The Fryggvaal make a great deal of their independence and reliance on traditional ways, but despite this, have come to depend more upon trade with the renegade jarls for their basic sustenance. Though they still trek to traditional hunting and fishing lands in Jurva each spring, fewer and fewer Fryggvaal tribesfolk actually engage in such pursuits, preferring to spend the summer haggling and trading for foodstuffs, clothing, and weapons with both the rebel jarls and the foreign traders who appear in the region with increasing frequency. Unknown to most tribesfolk, Rjannka has come under the influence of the White Witch through her agents. These agents act as traders and subtly urge the chieftess to increase both her distance from the king and the tribe's reliance on outside trade for survival.

halskorrik

Kingdom: Hognunmark/Realm of the White Witch
Winter Province: Bjarkheim
Summer Province: Kandalask
Chief: Sigmund (MRj; F13; Re, minor, 13; N)
Caught in the territory between the White Witch and her traditional enemies, Chief Sigmund and the Halskorrik maintain a delicate balance between the two. They have managed to stay in the good graces of the Hognun

winter, and are careful not to offend or anger the White Witch while hunting reindeer and musk ox in Kandalask in the summer. The Halskorrik's only major enemies are the Trygvaar, who sometimes raid their camps for food and slaves. The Halskorrik are outstanding warriors themselves; the Trygvaar rarely come away from such confrontations unscathed. The Halskorrik's friendship with a clan of forest giants in Hogunmark helps as well, for these fearsome beasts sometimes come to their Rjurik friends' aid. Respect for tradition keeps the Halskorrik coming back to Kandalask year after year.

other northland domains

the emerald spiral

Alignment: Chaotic good.

Status: Recommended.

Summary: The Emerald Spiral appeals primarily to traditional Rjurik and those who dwell in the wilder lands. It is the primary alternative to the more urban Oaken Grove of Erik.

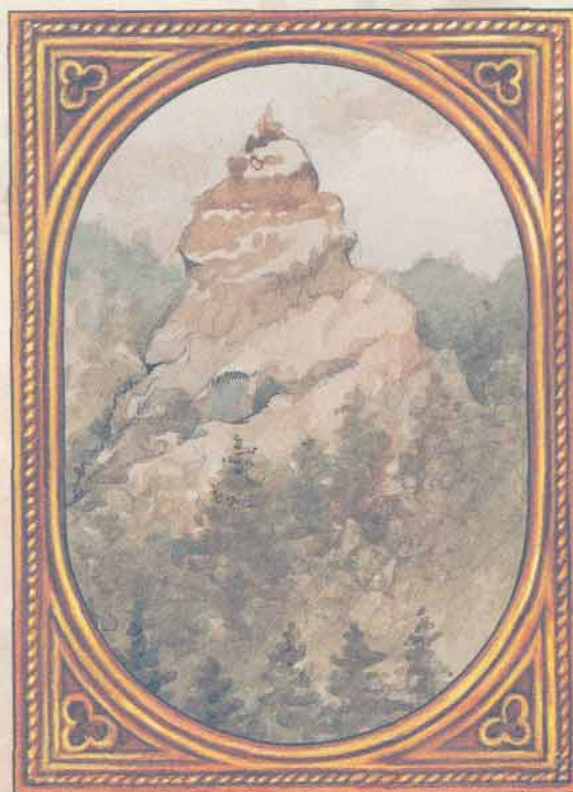
Holding	Level	Province (Rating)	Domain/Ruler
Temple	2	Namverg (2)	Stjordvik/Varri
Temple	1	Udvika (1)	Stjordvik/Varri
Temple	1	Darsruud (1)	Svinik/Hruthvar
Temple	1	Leivika (4)	Svinik/Hruthvar
Temple	1	Bjarkheim (1)	Hogunmark/Freila
Temple	1	Djaalfund (4)	Hogunmark/Freila
Temple	1	Fjolytr (1)	Hogunmark/Freila
Temple	2	Gundviir (4)	Hogunmark/Freila
Temple	2	Hjolgrun (2)	Hogunmark/Freila
Temple	2	Horvliik (1)	Hogunmark/Freila
Temple	0	Jarnborg (0)	Hogunmark/Freila
Temple	0	Oelfrun (0)	Hogunmark/Freila
Temple	1	Sjaruud (1)	Hogunmark/Freila
Temple	2	Aaldnjor (2)	Jankaping/Alnor
Temple	2	Aaldvaar (2)	Jankaping/Alnor
Temple	0	Draaska (0)	Jankaping/Alnor
Temple	1	Froylaad (1)	Jankaping/Alnor
Temple	1	Hardskaang (1)	Jankaping/Alnor
Temple	1	Jokkajoen (1)	Jankaping/Alnor
Temple	0	Rjutaffel (0)	Jankaping/Alnor
Temple	1	Stangajord (2)	Jankaping/Alnor
Temple	1	Midjarna (1)	Giantdowns
Temple	1	Vielthelma (1)	Giantdowns
Temple	0	Belik (0)	Hjolvar/Uldviik
Temple	0	Erefkstaad (0)	Hjolvar/Uldviik
Temple	1	Hruthjik (1)	Hjolvar/Uldviik
Temple	2	Kopingdal (4)	Hjolvar/Uldviik
Temple	0	Vaaltrand (0)	Hjolvar/Uldviik
Temple	1	Dhovjiir (1)	Kvigmar/Ulrich
Temple	1	Kvigmarheim (4)	Kvigmar/Ulrich

Regency Generated/Accumulated: 30/18

Treasury: 11 GB

Regent: Gretta Seligsdotter (*FRj; Pr 12, Erik; Vo, major, 28; CG*) is high priestess of this order, the temple most often patronized by the Rjurik of the wilderness. She is old and wise, and discourages competition between the two temples while secretly looking down upon what she considers the lack of tradition in the Oaken Grove of Erik. She also officially discourages conflict between nomadic and urban Rjurik, but does little to stop it when it does arise.

Description: As noted, the Emerald Spiral is favored by traditional Rjurik over its rival, the Oaken Grove, which appeals more to southern, urbanized Rjurik. The Spiral's members are mostly wilderness druids who live in the trackless lands of northern and eastern Rjurik realms. Emerald Spiral druids tend to be more martial than those of the Grove, its members actively battling the humanoids and awnsheghlien of the Rjurik wilds. Although this usually involves sabotage and misdirection of the enemy rather than open violence, the Emerald Spiral druids are still much less pacifistic than their city-dwelling counterparts.



These isolated realms located in the far northeastern corner of Rjurik lands are among the most desolate and lonely in all of Cerilia. Here lie the far kingdoms of Hjolvar and Kvigmar, existing mostly in theory, since their provinces have little or no human population.

The Wild Lands are those realms east of the Sidhebyrn River and are composed almost entirely of craggy hills, mountains, and dense forests. Many humanoids found refuge here and took hold of the realm now known as Urga-

the wild lands

Zai, and the wild region called the Giantdowns harbors numerous hostile creatures.

Here, too, lies the last bastion of elven power in the northern highlands—the kingdom of Lluabright. The fortress-city of Khurin-Azur is where the region's surviving dwarves hold out against their humanoid foes and the minions of the Gorgon.

Travel in this region is hazardous and difficult even without the constant threats of humanoid raids, hostile weather, and impassable terrain. Most transportation is accomplished on forest trails or on rivers in rafts and canoes. Both of these methods, however, become extremely limited in winter, when snows choke the land and the rivers freeze or are thick with ice. Travel by sledge with sled dogs on the forest trails or frozen waterways is often the only means of travel in this frozen realm.

For all of these reasons, humans tend to huddle in shelters over the winter, thereby limiting expansion of the lonely kingdoms in this region—the Rjurik realms of Kvigmar and Hjolvar. The Urga-Zai goblins, well adapted to the rugged terrain, move freely in and around their borders in all seasons. The Lluabright elves travel on magically-concealed trails and roads, often enchanted to remain free of snow and ice, but nonetheless invisible to outsiders.

Despite these difficulties, the Wild Lands present a potent lure to the Rjurik, who feel that the region is especially blessed by Erik, as evidenced by its rugged beauty and pristine isolation. The lands also call to less nobly-motivated outsiders such as Brecht traders and Anuirean adventurers who have heard rumors of lost elven kingdoms, rich timber, and vast veins of silver and gold. The Wild Lands remain untouched and unsettled, but someday, perhaps not far in the future, this may change.





the giantdowns

Alignment: Chaotic neutral.

Status: Usable by DM (see below).

Summary: The Downs are a rough, hilly region sparsely settled by the Rjurik and also inhabited by bandits, gnolls, giants, fhoimoriens, and other less-than-desirable creatures.

Province	Law	Temples	Guilds	Sources
Barrow Woods (0/7)	—	—	—	—
Bjorlängen (0/5)	WW(0)	—	—	—
Boganhaar (0/5)	TW(0)	—	—	—
Caer Cwnnar (0/7)	Gh(0)	—	—	—
Haldallen (0/6)	Gh(0)	—	—	—
Lemnjohen (1/4)	TW(1)	—	—	—
Midjarna (1/5)	TW(1)	ES(1)	—	—
Rhuiddar (1/6)	Gh(1)	—	—	—
Skansoeren (0/5)	—	—	—	—
Silverheart (0/7)	Gh(0)	—	—	—
Trondelaag (0/6)	—	—	—	—
Vjelthelma (1/5)	TW(1)	ES(1)	—	—

Abbreviations: TW=The Watch; ES=Emerald Spiral (Gretta Seligsdotter); WW=White Witch; Gh=Ghuralli.

Law: An alliance of rangers and scouts known as the Watch controls some law in the Giantdowns, working to observe humanoid activities and defend the Rjurik inhabitants. The humanoid leader Ghuralli controls law in several provinces as well, but is not politically powerful enough to be considered any kind of threat. Beyond these groups, formal law holdings are nonexistent except for community and clan.

Temples: The Emerald Spiral maintains groves and circles in the Giantdowns for the service of the few Rjurik who scrape out a living here. These temples are generally well hidden and well defended against the predations of the savage humanoids and dangerous monsters that inhabit the area.

Guilds: No large-scale organized trade exists in the Giantdowns, and hence no organized guilds will be found.

Sources: Sources in the Giantdowns are not known to be controlled by any wizards.

Armies: No organized, formal armies exist in the Giantdowns, but the Watch functions as a potent military unit. Ghuralli himself maintains a force of orogs, ogres, gnolls, and goblins. A unit called Ghuralli's Guard is its elite corps.

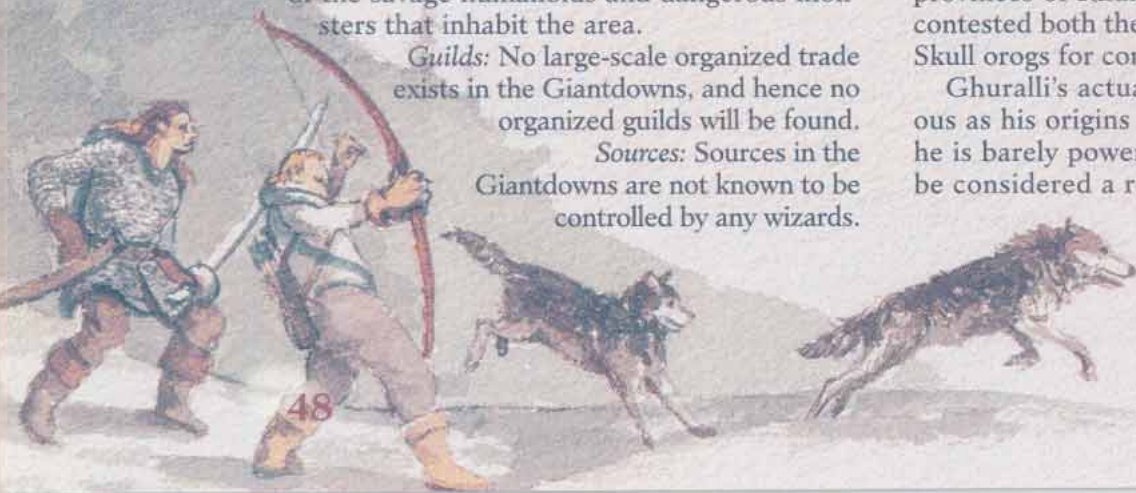
Important NPCs: Major characters in the Downs include druids and local Rjurik leaders as well as the chieftains of the various powerful humanoid tribes that inhabit the region.

The most powerful druid in the Downs is a woman named Kalla (FRj; Pr8, Erik; Br, minor, 18; CG). She commands a number of lesser druids who see to the needs of the Downs' human inhabitants. She is considered very wise, though few can claim to have actually met her.

The informal organization known as the Watch helps protect local Rjurik groups from humanoid attacks, keeps track of enemy activities, warns potential victims, and fights whenever possible. The Watch's leader is a ranger named Hogrun Njalsson, who was originally a soldier in service to the king of Halskapa. Njalsson came to the Downs seeking peace and some measure of independence. The former has escaped him, for he continues to feel a sense of responsibility for his people, but in the Giantdowns, all Rjurik are independent in a sense, and so far, Hogrun is happy with his self-appointed role as the Giantdowns' protector.

The most powerful humanoid in the region is a creature called Ghuralli (MM; Az, minor, 19; LE). Said to resemble a great iron statue that speaks with the voice of an ogre, Ghuralli and his bodyguard of elite hill giants leads a powerful coalition of humanoid tribes that periodically raid down from the Silverhead Mountains to threaten the Giantdowns Rjurik, the Lluabright elves, and even the Blood Skull orogs. Recently, Ghuralli's warriors have driven the Lluabright elves from the provinces of Rhuiddar and Caer Cwnnar and contested both the White Witch and the Blood Skull orogs for control of the Barrow Woods.

Ghuralli's actual intentions are as mysterious as his origins and true nature; at present, he is barely powerful or influential enough to be considered a regent, but he has displayed powers which mark him as one of the blood, leading many to suspect that he is a fledgling awnshegh. Should



this prove true, Ghuralli could represent a serious threat to the peace of the region and to nearby kingdoms; the Watch, under its dedicated leader, will have to redouble its effort to frustrate the humanoid.

Description: The Giantdowns are the wild center of Rjurik lands, where a handful of hardy farmers, herdsman, nomads, and other rugged individualists who shun the rulership of jarls and kings scratch out a precarious living.

These Rjurik must be brave and independent indeed, for many hazards plague the Giantdowns. Many of the Downs themselves are honeycombed with orog and goblin tunnels; the surface is home to gnoll tribes, fhoimorien bands, bandit gangs on the run from justice in Rjurik lands and elsewhere, giants, and other dangerous intelligent creatures. Monsters such as leucrotta, ettercaps, trolls, giant centipedes, and burrowing ankhegs infest the Giantdowns, making the region a very dangerous place.

The land itself is forbidding but beautiful—a place of soaring hills, high woods, grassy valleys, and steep gulleys nearly inaccessible to humans. Rjurik homes and settlements are almost always isolated, located on windswept hilltops, in small woods, or in hidden valleys. The Rjurik here herd flocks of sheep and goats, tend small farmsteads, or wander in the traditional Rjurik nomadic manner. A few Rjurik engage in other pursuits such as hunting or peatcutting (harvesting the rich organic soil of the marshlands then cutting and drying it for use as fuel).

A handful of druids led by the druidess Huralla also serves in the Giantdowns, out of love and respect for their own people and the wild places of the north. These individuals help the Rjurik as best they can with advice, magical healing, and agricultural spells, and have even been known to fight against humanoids who threaten Rjurik families or communities.

The Giantdowns are named, of course, for the many giants that dwell there. Most are reclusive bands of hill giants, generally shy of contact with the outside world, who shun relations with the Rjurik and grow violent if their privacy is breached. Other giants are more hostile—several fhoimorien clans are known to live here, and prey upon isolated human settlements. These monsters are among the Watch's chief foes. The Silverhead Mountains of the northern Giantdowns are home to a number of mountain giants, and the druidess Kalla claims to have spoken with an ancient stone giant who lives near the highest peaks of the Silverheads.

Special Conditions: The Giantdowns are usable as a DM or player character realm, although seizing control and pacifying the region could be quite a task, probably suitable for an entire campaign. Characters might be wise to form a human kingdom out of the realm with the assistance of local Rjurik who wish safety for themselves and their families. Alternately, a PC might be rewarded one or more of the Giantdowns provinces for service to an NPC regent.



Hjolvar

Alignment: Chaotic neutral.

Status: Recommended.

Summary: The settlement of Kopingdal is the only truly populated region of this distant, forested realm. Founded only recently, Hjolvar has yet to grow into a truly modern Rjurik state.

Province	Law	Temples	Guilds	Sources
Belik (0/7)	Ul (0)	ES (0)	—	—
Djarik (1/6)	Ul (1)	—	Ul (1)	—
Freikstaad (0/7)	Ul (0)	ES (0)	—	—
Hruthjik (1/6)	Ul (1)	ES (1)	Gu (1)	—
Junfjor (0/7)	—	—	—	—
Kopingdal (4/3)	Ul (2)	ES (2)	Ul (2)	—
Svinoy Isl. (1/6)	Ul (1)	—	Ul (1)	—
Tarlhaas (0/7)	—	—	Dj (0)	—
Vaaltrand (0/7)	—	ES (0)	—	—

Abbreviations: Ul=Uldviik; Gu=Guthvar; Dj=Djarik; ES=Emerald Spiral (Gretta Seligsdotter); OE=Oaken Grove of Erik (Günther Brandt).

Law: King Uldviik controls all law in the kingdom. Most of the jarldoms have not had regents appointed to them; the few who have received positions have not yet moved into their provinces or tried to pacify their realms.

Temples: A few isolated druids maintain groves and shrines in the trackless wilderness that is Hjolvar. Many of these are ascetics who shun the company of other human beings and probably will not take well to intrusion by the new jarls and their lieutenants. Most of these druids are members of the Emerald Spiral, the temple most popular with nomadic and traditional Rjurik.

Guilds: The king and several of his newly-appointed jarls control the trickle of trade that reaches Hjolvar.

Sources: The wild stretches of Hjolvar are alive with untapped magic, but, as elsewhere in the highlands of the north, no wizards have yet developed or gained control of them.

Regency Generated/Accumulated: 12/10

Treasury: The king currently has only 3 GB in his treasury, but the kingdom is so small that this is not a serious handicap. Hjolvar currently generates 2 GB per turn.

Army: The kingdom's army consists of permanent guards in the city of Kopingdal, a handful of elite scouts, and the various irregulars that can be called up in times of emergency.

- ◆ 1 unit of Rjurik archers.
- ◆ 2 units of Rjurik irregulars.
- ◆ 1 unit of Rjurik scouts.
- ◆ 1 unit of Rjurik mariners.
- ◆ Navy: 1 Longship

Regent: King Uldviik (*MRj; F6; Re, major, 22; LN*) is the son of Lord Varrig, who founded and helped build the city of Kopingdal. Since his father's death, Uldviik has sworn to build Hjolvar into a true kingdom. He intends to clear the southern jarldoms of goblins and other fell creatures and eventually defeat and displace the humanoids of Uрга-Zai.

Uldviik is a tough, resourceful ruler, but he is now over 50 years old and probably will not realize his dreams within his lifetime. His children are ready to assume his duties, and are sufficiently loyal that they will abide by Uldviik's decision regarding a successor.

Lieutenants: Uldviik's primary lieutenant is the ranger Elka Thajuula. This resourceful woman helps oversee the realm in the king's absence and also leads bands of rangers along the Uрга-Zai frontier. King Dargal of Uрга-Zai has placed a bounty of 5,000 gold pieces on Thajuula's head as a result of the many goblin warriors whom she has personally or indirectly slain.

Important NPCs: King Uldviik has three children: two sons and a daughter. His sons, Ruvin (*MRj; R4; Re, minor, 13; NG*) and Tjorkil (*MRj; F5; Re, minor, 13; N*), are both talented warriors, but lack finesse and skill in diplomatic and economic matters; of the two, Tjorkil is the better diplomat. Uldviik has considered leaving the realm to both of them jointly, but the two brothers had a falling out recently, and are not yet on speaking terms.

Uldviik's daughter, Reyna (*FRj; Pr2, Erik; Re, minor, 13; CN*), has taken her vows as a druid and plans to minister to the Rjurik of her realm's interior. Uldviik remains fond of and respectful toward her, and would gladly hand the realm to her were she not so dedicated in her service to Erik. Should the realm ever be seriously threatened, Reyna might accept the



throne, but this will be impossible once she takes her vows and becomes a full druid.

Description: Hjolvar did not exist until 20 years ago, when Uldviik declared himself regent of a newly formed realm. Until that time, the city of Kopingdal had been a prosperous but utterly isolated trading port built along the forested shores of Fingal Inlet. Today, Uldviik has laid the foundation for a real nation. Fortresses and outposts are now scattered throughout the wilderness. Jarls have been appointed, though they are still a long way from taming their remote provinces. The great test of Hjolvar's unity is yet to come; the goblin chiefs of Urga-Zai are aware of Uldviik's intentions and plan to invade and crush the upstart humans.

The Hjolvarans are among the toughest and most resourceful of the Rjurik. Scouts, sailors, fisherfolk, hunters, and explorers have all come here seeking new lives and adventure. None of the current settlers are nomads, however, for such individuals prefer to remain in their ancestral lands. If and when Hjolvar becomes a nation, it will be a place where the old ways are rare or unknown.

Capital: The nation's capital and only real city is the port of Kopingdal. Although permanent harbor facilities and a number of stone structures have existed for many years and the king himself has overseen the construction of a royal citadel, much of Kopingdal has a rough, frontier feel thanks to its wood-and-thatch buildings, wooden palisades, dirt streets that turn into rivers of mud during the rainy season, and so on.

The sheltered reaches of Fingal Inlet make Kopingdal an excellent harbor, and its waters are deep and easily navigable. Sea traffic between Hjolvar, the Thaelasian settlements, northern Vos realms, and even some Brecht kingdoms such as Danigau, Weirech, and Dauren has helped build Kopingdal's prosperity and reputation. Sailors who take advantage of the city as a trading port minimize the risk of travel across the hazardous reaches of the Krakennauricht, as well as the dangers of the Kraken and its minions.

Trade Goods: The Hjolvarans sell timber, fish, and pelts in exchange for cloth, spices, foodstuffs, tools, and clothing. A sea trade route links it with Kvigmar (Kvigmarheim).

Allies: Hjolvar is friendly with most other Rjurik nations, though it is not currently considered to be a "real" nation. The realm is also on good terms with its trading partners: the Vos nation of Rzhlev, and the Brecht realms of Danigau, Wierech, Dauren, Grabentod, and Grevesmühl.

Enemies: The goblins and their allies in Urga-Zai are the most immediate threat to the sovereignty and freedom of Hjolvar. Seeing the growing power of the humans, King Dargal has begun to make plans for an all-out invasion to exterminate the new threat. Farther away, the Gorgon himself, the most powerful of the dreaded awnsheghlien, has taken notice of Hjolvar, though exactly what he will do is not known at this time.

Svinoy Island

This small, forested isle is claimed by Hjolvar. As such, King Uldviik wishes it to function as a Hjolvaran fortress and shipbuilding center. Construction of a small fortress has been completed, but the island has not yet been assigned a jarl. Several druids of the Oaken Grove have been assigned to the island as well, to guarantee that shipbuilding, fishing, and construction do not unduly damage the island.

Though it has the potential to be an important economic asset, all is not well on Svinoy island. Inhabitants report being troubled by nightmares and visions of terrible monsters, though the isle seems uninhabited. Several druids have had disturbing portents of danger on Svinoy, but so far no one has been able to pinpoint the source of the trouble, or even prove that any real danger exists.



khurin-azur

Alignment: Lawful good.

Status: NPC realm.

Summary: This ancient dwarven fortress sprawls across three provinces. It existed long before the Battle of Mount Deismaar, and even before the arrival of humans in Cerilia. Its warriors fought against the dark in the great battle, and today its leaders rule with the aid of blood power. The dwarves are currently hard-pressed by their enemies—the Uрга-Zai goblins to the north and the powerful Gorgon to the south—but continue to hold out valiantly. With each passing year, their numbers dwindle and hope for continued survival fades.

Province	Law	Temples	Guilds	Sources
Azagkhul (1/6)	BR (1)	NG (1)	—	VG (1)
Khurin-Azur (4/3)	TS (4)	NG (4)	TS (3)	VG (2)
Voldar (2/5)	UI (2)	NG (2)	TS (1)	VG (1)

Abbreviations: TS=Tjorgrim Stonesoul; UI=Udri Ironfist; BR=Bori Redhammer; VG=Vaar Gestaad; NG=Northri Guthvarsson.

Law: The Stonelord and his dukes control all law in the realm, and no dwarf would ever wish it otherwise. The stern inhabitants of Khurin-Azur know that it is only through unity that their enemies can be held off, and all obey their rightful rulers. Unknown to all, however, the Gorgon has begun to corrupt some of the realm's inhabitants, though open opposition to the Stonelord is still completely unknown.

Temples: Dwarven priests of Moradin, under the leadership of high priest Northri Guthvarsson, maintain the deep caverns dedicated to his worship. These priests employ elite dwarf warriors and are skilled in combat arts themselves in order to defend their sacred places from the goblins and other denizens of the underworld.

Guilds: Though trade contacts with the outside world are limited, a trickle of goods drifts in and out of the dwarven fortress. The Stonelord controls virtually

all of this, though management of trade is left in the hands of his advisers.

Sources: Dwarves, by nature, are nonmagical, leaving them little use for sources. A loner Rjurik sorcerer named Vaar controls some of the magic in Khurin-Azur (with the dwarves' permission; they are glad to grant control to an approved individual), though the realm's caves and mountain peaks contain enormous magical potential—potential which the Gorgon and other enemies of the dwarves would be happy to control for themselves.

Army: The fortress' army can be expanded to include every able-bodied dwarf in the realm, but the Stonelord's standing force consists of:

- ◆ 3 units of Khurin-Azur infantry.
- ◆ 1 unit of Khurin-Azur guards.
- ◆ 3 units of Khurin-Azur crossbows.
- ◆ 1 unit of Khurin-Azur miners.

Regent: The hereditary monarch of Khurin-Azur is known as the Stonelord. Since the destruction and rebirth of the gods, the descendants of Rudrik Stonesoul have ruled the realm. The current Stonelord is an ancient, scarred dwarf warrior named Tjorgrim (*DM, F15; Re, major, 26; LG*) who has seen his kingdom through numerous battles with goblins, orogs, and the minions of the Gorgon. He is old and weary, however, ready to make his peace with eternity, and prepared to pass rulership to his nephew, Hrothval.

Lieutenants: Tjorgrim's chief lieutenant is the dwarf berserker Rundvi. Ferocious in battle, Rundvi is nonetheless a skilled assistant who is well-versed in the needs of the kingdom. On occasion, Tjorgrim turns important aspects of his realm's maintenance to his nephew, Hrothval, who will one day succeed the king.

Important NPCs: Tjorgrim's nephew, Hrothval, (*DM; F8; Re, minor, 15; LG*) has become a major player in the kingdom. Considered brave, skilled, and honorable, Hrothval is popular, and is expected to make a good king when his uncle eventually passes away.

The high priest Northri Guthvarsson (*DM; Pr15, Moradin; Vo, major, 32; LG*) oversees the various shrines and temples of the realm, moving from site to site, staying where help is most needed, and additionally leading dwarven warriors and priests into battle when enemies are on the march.

Description: Antiquity radiates from the very walls and columns of the vast, carved dwarven halls in Khurin-Azur. One of the oldest realms in Cerilia, the dwarven kingdom continues to hold out against the incessant pressure of its enemies, though each year more ground is lost. Tenuous contacts with the outside world keep a flow of trade coming, but many sages and others who know of such things believe that without outside help, the dwarven fortress-kingdom is doomed.

Capital: Khurin-Azur is one large community, and as such, the realm is its own capital city. A tribute to dwarven engineering, artistry, and endurance, the halls of Khurin-Azur are a wonder to behold, carved inch by inch from the living rock of the region's mountains, covered in elaborate scroll- and knotwork, decorated with runes and images of dwarven gods and heroes, connected by a network of cunningly-designed and craftily-defended tunnels, and containing endless suites of living quarters, temples, storehouses, armories, barracks, and numerous other chambers.

Unfortunately, large stretches of Khurin-Azur lie uninhabited, occupied only by dust and the memories of ancient greatness. Some of the lower levels of the fortress have, in fact, become lairs and bases for goblins and other creatures, which the dwarves lack the strength to drive out.

Trade Goods: A small quantity of goods reaches the dwarves through the Brecht realms of Danigau and Wierech, but these routes are dangerous, crossing treacherous mountain passes and risking the attentions of the Gorgon, the goblins, mountain bandits, and predators. The dwarves require certain basic items such as cloth, wood for weapons, glass, and utensils, as well as certain luxury items. They offer gold, silver, and fine dwarven crafts or weapons in exchange. Hardy traders who survive the trip to and from the region often return home wealthy for their troubles.

Allies: The dwarves, victims of the stubborn pride that is the bane of their race, have no allies in the world. Many lands, such as Danigau, Wierech, and the new Rjurik kingdoms of Hjolvar and Kvigmar, are friendly toward the dwarves but can offer them little save occasional trade and their best wishes.

The dwarves of Khurin-Azur are on neutral terms with the dwarves of Mur-Kilad and Baruk-Azhik. If Khurin-Azur chose to open

diplomatic channels with either group, their efforts would probably be greeted warmly. However, Khurin-Azur must choose an alliance carefully; the dwarves of Baruk-Azhik and Mur-Kilad are sworn enemies. An alliance with one group would automatically mean making an enemy of the other group.

Enemies: Since the Battle of Mount Deismaar, the dwarves have fought the Gorgon and his minions, winning most open battles but at a terrible cost in warriors and material. The Gorgon's attacks on the dwarves have not all been overt, however—recently his agents, always working incognito and never declaring themselves openly, have begun to sow the seeds of dissent against the Stonelord, suggesting that the Stonesouls' rulership is leading the realm to disaster and that negotiation and compromise with the Gorgon might be the best way to survive.

The goblins of Urga-Zai also press hard against the dwarves, swarming their tunnels, building new invasion routes, and returning again and again despite endless defeats. The Stonelords fought against the goblins for centuries before the events at Mount Deismaar, and nothing since has changed the two races' deep hatred of each other.

The elves of Lluabright, proud and arrogant even in their diminished kingdom but hemmed in by enemies on all sides, refuse to deal with the dwarves, and maintain, at best, a state of hostile neutrality. Though the two realms were once enemies, the dwarves have, for several decades now, felt that some form of alliance with the elves would benefit both nations, but thus far, elven intransigence and arrogance have won the day, and the two realms remain at arms' length.



Kvigmar

Alignment: Chaotic good.

Status: Recommended.

Summary: Another new Rjurik realm, Kvigmar lies at the frontier of the Highlands. It is a rough, rugged land of craggy mountains, windswept hills, and dark, crashing surf—a place where only the boldest and hardest survive.

Province	Law	Temples	Guilds	Sources
Dhovjiir (1/6)	—	ES (1)	Ul (1)	—
Jharvild (0/6)	—	—	—	—
Kvigmarheim (4/2)	Ul (2)	ES (1)	Ul (2)	—
Sjalikfjord (0/7)	—	—	—	—
Virskaap (0/7)	—	—	—	—

Abbreviations: Ul=Ulrich; ES=Emerald Spiral (Gretta Seligsdotter).

Law: Jarl Ulrich, from his stone manse in the city of Kvigmar, controls what law exists in the land, but this barely extends beyond the walls of the capital. The remainder of the land is wild and unsettled with few humans—and fewer still who acknowledge Ulrich's authority.

Temples: The Emerald Spiral holds sway within the city of Kvigmar and in the few desolate caves, circles, and groves sprinkled across the realm's isolated reaches. The Oaken Grove has yet to take note of Kvigmar as a source of new worshippers, and maintains no temples here.

Guilds: Trade is sparse here, for the mountain passes to Hjolvar and Danigau are sheer and dangerous. Some sea trade exists, fueled by the increasing prosperity of Kopingdal and the need for a second mercantile port. Ulrich and his allies control trade in Kvigmar.

Sources: No wizards currently control any sources in Kvigmar.

Regency Generated/Accumulated: 7/4

Treasury: Ulrich maintains a treasury of only 2 GB; the kingdom generates 2 GB per turn.

Army: The kingdom army consists only of those units assigned to the defense of the city of Kvigmar, plus a few scouts responsible for keeping watch over the passes and on the activities of the Urga-Zai goblins. Jarl Ulrich's

personal guards are hardened veteran warriors who will give their lives for their regent; they are known as the Kvigmar Guardians.

◆ 2 units of Rjurik infantry.

◆ 2 units of Rjurik scouts.

◆ 1 unit of Kvigmar Guardians.

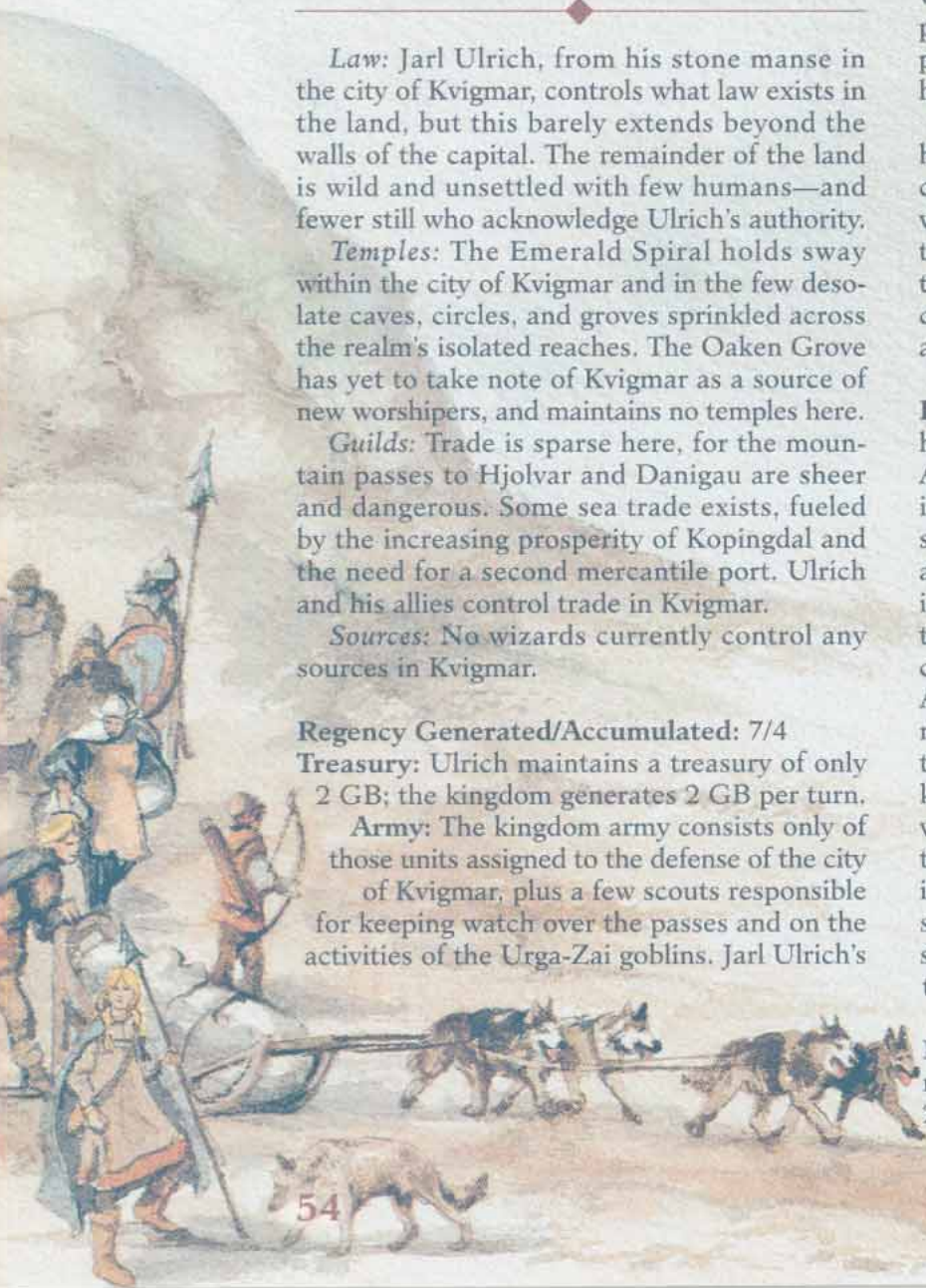
Regent: The ruler of Kvigmar city and, theoretically, the five or so provinces surrounding it, has traditionally been called "jarl." The current ruler, Jarl Ulrich (*MRj; F9; Br, major, 30; CG*), has considered consolidating and expanding his realm's influence, but the nation's rugged nature makes economic and population expansion difficult.

Ulrich is an intelligent, well-mannered ruler who knows that he rules by the will of his own people. For their part, the quiet, good-hearted people of Kvigmar love their jarl and believe him to be a wise and brave protector.

Lieutenants: Ulrich's leading lieutenants are his warden, Sir Borrik, who commands the city's defenses and oversees trade matters within its walls, and his harbor master, Captain Audric, who commands the city's small trade fleet and oversees diplomacy and mercantile agreements with other nations. Both are highly competent and loyal.

Important NPCs: Kvigmar recently became home to a wealthy merchant named Nilsvaar. Arriving on a large dragon ship, Nilsvaar immediately began construction of an extensive manse near one of the major city walls, and contributed considerable sums to help improve Kvigmar's defenses and harbor facilities. He has since become well known in the city and is considered generous and charitable. An unpleasant rumor has tarnished Nilsvaar's reputation of late, however—some now claim that he is actually the infamous Rjurik reaver known as the Black Fiend, who ravaged the west coast of Cerilia and the coastal cities of the Krakennauricht before mysteriously vanishing several years ago. Nilsvaar has not chosen to respond to the rumors, but they are spreading, and he may have to take notice of them soon.

Description: Kvigmar has existed as a northern outpost of Rjurik society for nearly 200 years. Founded by dissident Rjurik who



disliked the influence of the Anuireans on their people, the city has survived despite harsh weather, inhospitable terrain, and occasional trouble from the Urga-Zai goblins. Actual Kvigmar influence is limited to the hunters, scouts, and tough settlers occupying the various provinces which are today considered part of the realm. Many of these settlers and occasional inhabitants are themselves highly independent types, who barely acknowledge the jarl in the city of Kvigmar as the realm's ruler.

In recent years, Brecht traders have begun to influence the realm, bringing their trade goods and customs to this distant land, much to the disdain of many traditional Rjurik.

The nation of Kvigmar is shaped like a rough "V" formed by the Spearmarch Mountains to the north and the Drakonsmaar range to the south. Between them, Kvigmar is a truly breathtaking land of steep valleys, deep rivers, brooding mountains, crystal lakes, and deep green forests that cling precariously to stony slopes.

Human habitations are few and far between, consisting of isolated herders' cottages, hunters' camps, and tiny hamlets with populations of three dozen or less. A number of isolated hunters and trappers call the mountains of Kvigmar home. A few small semi-nomadic tribes, some of which have not had contact with the outside world in decades, inhabit the nation's handful of fertile valleys.

At the base of the "V" are the Gray Hills—rough country bordering the realm of Urga-Zai. Goblin raiders, hunters, and foragers sometimes cross the border and cause problems for human inhabitants of Kvigmar. The jarl's scouts are responsible for keeping watch over the frontier and alerting inhabitants should the goblins attack, but do not have the numbers to oppose them.

Capital: In many ways, Kvigmar is its capital city. This town has stood for nearly two centuries, growing from a rude collection of wooden buildings painstakingly assembled by determined Rjurik settlers into the walled harbor town that exists today. The city survives through a small trade triangle that links the outside world, the brave souls who inhabit the interior, and coastal fishing.

During the fishing season, dozens of clinker-built knarr and other small vessels set sail

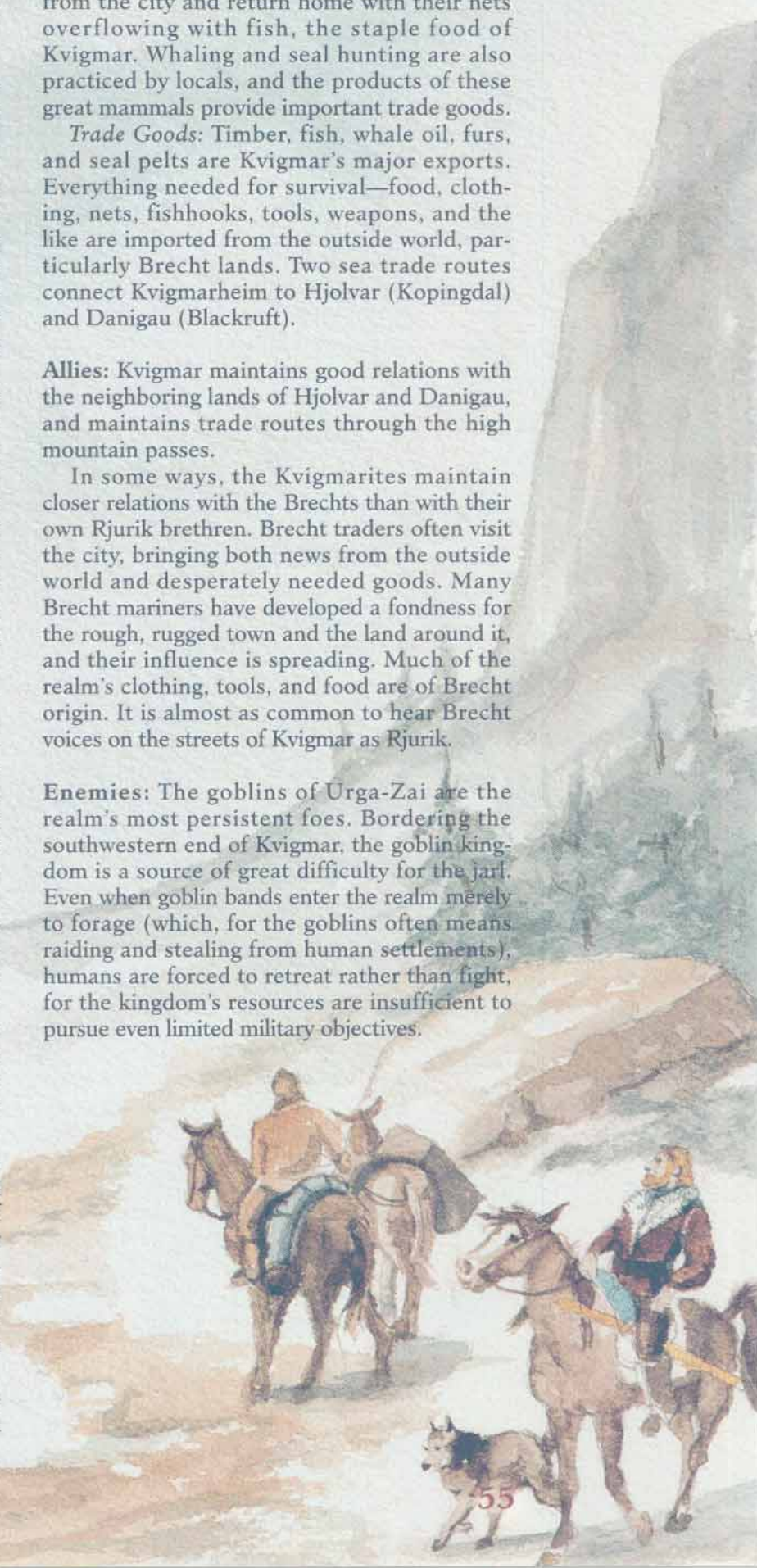
from the city and return home with their nets overflowing with fish, the staple food of Kvigmar. Whaling and seal hunting are also practiced by locals, and the products of these great mammals provide important trade goods.

Trade Goods: Timber, fish, whale oil, furs, and seal pelts are Kvigmar's major exports. Everything needed for survival—food, clothing, nets, fishhooks, tools, weapons, and the like are imported from the outside world, particularly Brecht lands. Two sea trade routes connect Kvigmarheim to Hjolvar (Kopingdal) and Danigau (Blackruft).

Allies: Kvigmar maintains good relations with the neighboring lands of Hjolvar and Danigau, and maintains trade routes through the high mountain passes.

In some ways, the Kvigmarites maintain closer relations with the Brechts than with their own Rjurik brethren. Brecht traders often visit the city, bringing both news from the outside world and desperately needed goods. Many Brecht mariners have developed a fondness for the rough, rugged town and the land around it, and their influence is spreading. Much of the realm's clothing, tools, and food are of Brecht origin. It is almost as common to hear Brecht voices on the streets of Kvigmar as Rjurik.

Enemies: The goblins of Urga-Zai are the realm's most persistent foes. Bordering the southwestern end of Kvigmar, the goblin kingdom is a source of great difficulty for the jarl. Even when goblin bands enter the realm merely to forage (which, for the goblins often means raiding and stealing from human settlements), humans are forced to retreat rather than fight, for the kingdom's resources are insufficient to pursue even limited military objectives.



Lluabright

Alignment: Chaotic neutral.

Status: NPC realm.

Summary: Lluabright is the last remnant of the great and powerful elven kingdoms that once thrived in this region. Beset on all sides by ruthless enemies, the elf-lords of Lluabright continue to fight, arrogant and unwilling to ask for help from the hated humans. The *gheallie Sidhe* still roams the borders of this land in greatly reduced numbers, standing watch over the handful of slender towers and ancient fanes that still exist in this world. No outsiders—whether goblins, orogs, or humans—are welcome here.

Province	Law	Temples	Guilds	Sources
Adothcwr (1/8)	MH (1)	—	—	Ty (6) Ll (3)
Bannoch (1/8)	MH (1)	—	—	Ty (3) Ll (6)
Caer Dwyth (1/8)	MH (1)	—	—	Ll (9)
Challra (2/6)	MH (1)	—	—	Ll (8)
Cwddrrd (2/6)	MH (2)	—	—	Ll (8)
Druinedd (2/7)	MH (1)	—	—	Ty (5) Ll (4)
Gwyddral (2/7)	MH (2)	—	—	Ty (2) Ll (7)
Llwaiss (2/7)	MH (1)	—	—	Ll (9)
Monellrha (3/6)	MH (2)	—	—	Ll (9)
Rhoisneibhal (4/5)	MH (4)	—	—	Ty (3) Ll (6)
Thalbrough (2/7)	MH (2)	—	—	Ty (2) Ll (7)

Ll=Laeddra; MH=Master of the Hunt; Ty=Tyddral

Law: The Master of the Hunt, one of the most powerful elven nobles, controls all law within Lluabright's borders.

Temples: Because the elves do not worship gods, no temples exist in this domain. Leaders of human temples have attempted to open relations with the elves in the past in order to establish temple holdings in Lluabright, but were flatly refused.

Guilds: Lluabright exists in aloof isolation from the rest of the world.

Organized trade is unheard of, though a few human or dwarven traders, who have made individual friendships with elves, sometimes make the perilous journey here to trade for marvelous elven weapons, art, and clothing. Most elves disapprove of this practice, however, and those outsiders who come here for trade often must dodge the *gheallie Sidhe*, which remains powerful despite the kingdom's decline.

Sources: The elven mage Tyddral controls a number of sources outside the city of Rhosneibhal. The single greatest source in the kingdom is controlled by the Grand Mistress herself. Her tower once harbored the Twelve Gems of Arborea (a set of stones mystically linked to a source of awesome magical power), giving her command of one of the single most powerful sources in Cerilia. Unfortunately for the elves, only nine of the twelve gems are in place. The remaining three have been lost or stolen over the years, and the source is less potent as a result.

Army: The kingdom's army is small but highly skilled, having honed its skills over centuries of battle against humans, orogs, goblins, fhoimoriens, and the minions of both the Gorgon and the White Witch.

- ◆ 4 units of Lluabright swords.
- ◆ 1 unit of Lluabright guards.
- ◆ 2 units of Lluabright archers.
- ◆ 2 units of Lluabright *gheallie Sidhe*.

Regent: The realm's traditional ruler is known as the Grand Master or Mistress. The current Grand Mistress, Llaeddra (pronounced HLAY-thra) (*EF; W18; Br, great, 50; CN*) traces her ancestry back nearly 3,000 years through an unbroken line of rulers. Llaeddra herself has ruled for nearly a century and has seen her realm grow steadily more and more hard-pressed by its many foes. She is a stern and powerful woman, however, and refuses ever to give in to despair or defeatism.

Her long life and the many tragedies suffered by her people have made Llaeddra cold and hateful toward outsiders, especially humans, even driving her to occasionally exile subjects who maintain inappropriate friendships with foreigners.

Lieutenants: The Grand Mistress generally controls the realm directly, rarely leaving affairs in the hands of lieutenants. On the few occasions that she does depend on an assistant, the wizardess Tyddral (who controls Lluabright's sources outside the capital city) runs the realm.

Important NPCs: The Grand Mistress's Master of the Hunt, Sir Aelwynn, commands the *gheallie Sidhe* and faithfully patrols the forests, battling interlopers and ejecting or killing outsiders. Whether he slays intruders or simply provides them with an escort to the border, where they are generally left naked and weaponless, depends upon his mood.

Description: Lluabright's origins are lost in the dim past. It is known that the realm has stood for at least 5,000 years and that its current ruling house has controlled the realm for 30 centuries. Grim, isolated, and arrogant, the elves of Lluabright maintain a rigid and archaic social system ruled by a hereditary monarch and various nobles. These nobles participate each decade in elaborate contests and ceremonies intended to choose the various Masters and Mistresses who oversee the actual business of the kingdom.

Once encompassing much of the Northern Highlands of Cerilia, Lluabright has been reduced to its current size through pressure by humans, humanoids, and the destructive power of the awnsheghlien. Most recently, the two southern provinces of Rhuiddar and *Caer Cwnnar* have fallen to the humanoids of the Giantdowns; the Grand Mistress lacks the forces to take them back without weakening her other frontiers.

Most of Lluabright is thick with forests. Its elven settlements are well hidden, both magically and mundanely, from the prying eyes of outsiders. The River Sidhebyrn forms the land's western border, while the foothills of the Giantdowns have traditionally marked its southern frontier. This last has changed recently, with the conquest of Rhuiddar and *Caer Cwnnar* by the Giantdown humanoids.

The elves of Lluabright are a sad, fatalistic race who rarely smile or laugh but are determined to hold on until the bitter end. Only when the last elf dies with sword in hand at the pinnacle of the Grand Mistress's Tower, a curse on his lips, will the elves of Lluabright completely pass from this world.

The Capital: The city of Rhosneibhal grows gracefully like part of the forest, its curved rooftops and slender towers rising toward the sky. This is the last great elven city in the region; only a fraction of its once-mighty populace remains. At the exact center of the city is the gleaming white pinnacle known as the Grand

Master's (or Mistress's as appropriate) Tower, the still-beating heart of this ancient realm.

At the peak of the Tower dwells the Grand Mistress, a powerful wizard who is ruler of the realm and guardian of the Twelve Gems of Arborea—the items considered to contain the very soul of Lluabright and its people. As noted, only nine of these powerful stones currently reside in the tower, greatly handicapping its function as a magical source and preventing the Grand Mistress from fully exercising her powers.

Though the great elven city is so wondrous as to be nearly painful in its grace and beauty, the site has been seen by human eyes but rarely. Even those humans fortunate or foolhardy enough to penetrate this deep into the forests are unable to perceive the city, for it is guarded by potent illusions and appears to be nothing more than another stretch of pine forest.

Trade Goods: Trade is rare here, save for a few individual humans or dwarves who come bringing food, cloth, tools, and animals in exchange for elven art, clothing, weapons, and the like. Such persons, as noted, run the risk of meeting the *gheallie Sidhe*, which still scours the land in search of foreign interlopers. Those traders who come here do so only because of friendship with individual elves within Lluabright's borders.

Allies: Lluabright has no friends, and its people want none. Their fight is a lonely one, against implacable foes who will, in the end, triumph. Though most elves know deep in their souls that their struggle is hopeless, surrender or requests for outside aid are both considered unthinkable.

Enemies: Lluabright is at war with the world. The crimes of the ancient humans have never been forgotten, and most Lluabright elves hate humans for this reason. Even without humans, the elven realm is beset by foes from all sides—the Blood Skull raiders, the humanoids of the Giantdowns, and the White Witch and her minions, all of whom cast envious eyes upon the ancient magics and fertile lands of the elves. The Urga-Zai goblins, whose only goal seems to be conquest and bloodshed, are still another force the elves must confront.



urga-zai

Alignment: Chaotic evil.

Status: Not available for PCs.

Summary: The wilderness of Urga-Zai is home to savage goblin tribes and their humanoid allies, all under the chaotic rulership of the self-styled "King" Dargal.

Province	Law	Temples	Guilds	Sources
Draga-Zai (2/7)	Da (2)	SK (2)	—	—
Hor-than (0/9)	Da (0)	—	—	—
Hovrimm (1/7)	Da (1)	SK (0)	—	—
Idzar (0/9)	Zh (0)	SK (0)	—	—
Kazal-Zai (0/5)	Da (0)	—	—	—
Khul-Na (1/7)	Gl (1)	SK (0)	—	—
Nulthan (2/7)	Mf (1)	SK (1)	—	—
Raka-Zai (0/9)	—	—	—	—
Urik-Na (1/4)	Ny (1)	SK (1)	—	—
Urtha (1/7)	Gl (0)	—	—	—
Vulzin (1/7)	Zh (1)	SK (0)	—	—
Zaruul (1/7)	—	—	—	—
Zeph-Na (2/6)	Da (1)	SK (1)	—	—

Da=Dargal; Gl=Gladdishk; Mf=Mfullik; Ny=Nybwyl; SK=Swords of Kartathok; Zh=Zhourgg

Law: Law is controlled by individual warlords, though for unity's sake (and to avoid his wrath) most lords acknowledge Dargal's primacy.

Temples: The goblin followers of Kartathok (a.k.a. "The Big Boss") control several temples in Urga-Zai. Dargal boasts that his realm contains several "true" goblin shamans who wield what he considers awesome powers; he often insists that they join his forces on raids. Though much of their time is taken up with the intricate and often incomprehensible rituals of Kartathok, the goblin shamans usually cooperate, since "it's what the Big Boss would want."

Guilds: No trade passes in or out of Urga-Zai. The kingdom survives by taking what it wants.

Sources: Many ancient sources, left over from the days when this region was dominated by the Lluabright elves, exist deep in the woods of Urga-Zai, but these have long since lost their connections to their regents and now remain unclaimed.

Army: Dargal's so-called army is both eclectic and chaotic, with most of its warriors acknowledging only their own chieftains, and only minimally aware of the goblin king's authority. Though its size and exact composition vary, the following may be considered typical:

- ◆ 4 units of Urga-Zai warriors.
- ◆ 2 units of Urga-Zai archers.
- ◆ 2 units of Urga-Zai cavalry.
- ◆ 1 unit of Urga-Zai guard.
- ◆ 1 unit of Urga-Zai ogre infantry.
- ◆ 1 unit of Urga-Zai bats.

Regent: Most of the goblins and other humanoids in Urga-Zai agree that the land needs a "king," and the blooded Dargal (*MM; Vo, major, 24; CE*) has both the skills and ability to serve the role. The office of goblin king is a strange one—though acknowledged as the ruler of Urga-Zai, the king exercises little real authority, but on occasion leads the chaotic flood of troops which serves as his "army" into battle beneath his black minotaur-skull banner.

For his part, Dargal doesn't bother his various chieftains and warlords with petty orders or supervision regarding the maintenance and management of their disparate realms, but does dream of a day when his authority spreads all across the Highlands, conquering elves, dwarves, and humans and even challenging the power of the awnsheghlien. In this spirit, he generally refers to himself (and insists that his immediate servants do likewise) as "Dargal the Great," though his other nickname (never spoken in his presence) is "Dargal the Pest."

Currently, Dargal is considering war against the relatively new human nation of Hjolvar as an easy way to improve his people's unity and fighting skills, and as a way to expand their territory.

Description: Urga-Zai is a crazy quilt of various goblin realms, most containing a substantial number of other humanoids such as ogres, fhoimoriens, gnolls, trolls, etc. These creatures live together in a semblance of unity, periodically going to war against each other, but all acknowledging the unifying value of their king. The king's role appears to be in persuading his bickering subjects to set aside their differences and remain together long enough for yet-one-more raid into Lluabright, reconnaissance-in-force into Danigau, or scouting/foraging into Hjolvar or Kvigmar. Despite their differences, all Urga-Zai acknowledge and even (in their own goblinish way) love their king.

domains

Although they lie on the outer fringe of Rjurik and human realms, the Wild Lands include several other domains that exist independent of borders and human political boundaries. The Thaelasian colonies, communities of especially tough and resourceful Rjurik, are also included here.

the watch

The ranger Hogrun Njalsson leads this informal alliance of rangers, scouts, travelers, trappers, hunters, and wilderness-dwellers. Their job is to protect the Rjurik of the Giantdowns and keep a wary eye upon the activities of the region's humanoids, especially the mysterious creature known as Ghuralli.

The Watch is a constant presence in most parts of the Giantdowns, even in some of those controlled by Ghuralli's humanoids. Here, Watch members act as insurgents by tracking, misleading, sabotaging, and generally making Ghuralli's life miserable. Elsewhere, they act as a combination army/scouting/police force, controlling some law in the various Giantdowns provinces.

Holding	Level	Location
Law	1	Vjelthelma (Giantdowns)
Law	0	Boganhaar (Giantdowns)
Law	1	Midjarna (Giantdowns)
Law	1	Lemnjohen (Giantdowns)

thaelasian colonies

The distant and icy realm of Thaele harbors vast stands of timber, rich mineral deposits, and even occasional fertile valleys sheltered from the wind and fed by volcanic hot springs hidden among its folded, wrinkled hills. A few Rjurik live here—colonists in frontier cities located along the rugged coastline or in sheltered valleys. Although they retain close ties with their homelands in the form of trade and sea links, these colonies essentially function as independent states.

Several of the most prominent colonies are listed below.

hoekstraad

The oldest of the colonies was established by Halskapa over a decade ago. Jarl Haelrya Sivardaan (*FRj; F8; An, minor, 16; CG*) has ruled since Hoekstraad's founding; she hopes to someday expand the realm into a true Rjurik kingdom.

other wild lands

tjarvaald

Established by Stjordvik before the current chaotic conditions began, Tjarvaald has proven to be a relatively successful and prosperous colony, though it is dependent upon trade contacts with the Three Trees Traders for much of its food and building material. Jarl Andros Drakkenviir (*MRj; R12; Ma, minor, 18; NG*) is a veteran warrior with a flair for leadership who gets as much satisfaction out of overseeing the colony's economic well-being as he does out of battling ice troll raiders and the occasional remorhaz.

rjalford

This colony was established by Jankaping three years ago, and has struggled since. Jarl Haldan Njarik (*MRj; Re, minor, 10; LN*) is a competent leader and administrator, but the colony is located in a hopelessly rugged area and is periodically ravaged by ice trolls and fhoimoriens as well as by harsh weather conditions. Its few hundred citizens barely manage to survive from year to year.

Colony	Law	Temples	Guilds	Sources
Hoekstraad (1/6)	HS (1)	ES (1)	TT (1)	—
Tjarvaald (1/6)	AD (1)	—	TT (1)	—
Rjalford (0/7)	HN (0)	—	HN (0)	—

Abbreviations: HS=Haelrya Sivardaan; TT=Three Trees Traders (Jan Hrustraad); ES=Emerald Spiral (Gretta Seligsdotter); AD=Andros Drakkenviir; HN=Haldan Njarik

wild lands tribes

kjarhoelle

Kingdom: The Giantdowns
Winter Province: Trondelaag
Summer Province: Trondelaag
Chief: Tjorvaal (MRj; F16; CE)

The Kjarhoelle are something of a rarity—a thoroughly wicked tribe of bandits and cutthroats with no concern for their land, their fellow tribesmen, or the cautionary teachings of Erik. Safe in their fastness in Trondelaag in the Giantdowns, the Kjarhoelle—under their ancient, scarred leader Tjorvaal (who must be carried into battle in a sedan specially made for him)—sally forth to raid neighboring lands such as the Blood Skull Barony, Dhoesone, and Tuarhivel. Only slightly better than the humanoid raiders who dwell in the downs, the Kjarhoelle are a special enemy of the Watch, which has on several occasions attempted to evict them from the twisting canyons and hilly country where they make both their summer and winter homes. Rumor has it that Tjorvaal has actually considered a formal alliance with the fearsome humanoid leader Ghuralli, who remains the scourge of the northern Downs and is hated and feared by all nearby Rjurik.

helskaar

Kingdom: Hjolvar
Winter Province: Tarlhaas
Summer Province: Hruthjik
Chief: Rankjar (MRj; F9; Re, minor, 13; CG)

This tiny tribe (only 50 members) is one of the few true Rjurik tribes to dwell in the inaccessible wilderness

now known as the kingdom of Hjolvar. Life here is rough, and the Helskaar are only barely aware of the existence of a world beyond their tribal lands.

Each day is a struggle for survival—even in the short, temperate days of summer, when the tribe hunts mountain goats and braves the waters of the Thaelasian Sea in hide kayaks seeking seals and pilot whales for food.

The Helskaar have few enemies save nature itself, but they remain dedicated to the ways of Erik, viewing the harsh northern clime as the deity's way of testing them, and proving their tribe worthy of continued survival. Helskaar scouts sometimes aid King Uldviik, and they maintain good relations with their regent on the rare occasions when they actually come in contact with him. Still, the Helskaar remain good Rjurik, unwilling to accept outside aid or to acknowledge any temporal authority higher than the old and respected chief Rankjar.

ingallan

Kingdom: Kvigmar
Winter Province: Jharvild
Summer Province: Jharvild
Chief: Astridda (FRj; P8, Erik; Re, major, 20; CG)

The Ingallan number perhaps 60 individuals and live in the nearly untouched reaches of Kvigmar. Thus far, neither Jarl Ulrich nor the Ingallan are aware of each other's existence, so isolated is this tribe. In fact, the Ingallans' lonely existence has created a number of unusual beliefs among the tribe's members, including the notions that the entire world is covered in ice, that fewer than a few hundred humans exist anywhere, and that the ocean is virtually endless, terminating only when it reaches Erik's undying realm, an inconceivably far distance to the east.

Some members of the Ingallan, who have ventured far enough to see Kvigmar city or have glimpsed Brecht or Rjurik vessels far off on the wave-tossed sea, now question this view of the universe. Chieftess Astridda gently and chidingly dismisses this confusion. Most of the tribe's older members feel that belief in a world outside the snow and ice of their realm somehow shows a lack of faith in Erik, and some even go so far as to accuse those who question tradition as blasphemers, and call for their expulsion from the tribe.

personalities dherg wir

bervinig

King of Halskapa
9th-level Rjurik fighter

S: 16
D: 13
C: 6
I: 15/7*
W: 16/3*
Ch: 14

AL: LN
AC: -4 (full plate +4; see below)

hp: 30
MV: 12
THAC0: 12
#AT: 3/2
Dmg: 1d10+5 (holy avenger +5; see below)



Bloodline: Reynir, major, 28.

Blood Abilities: Bloodmark, detect illusion, resistance (major)

Equipment: Bervinig's most treasured possession, and the symbol of the Halskapan throne, is the greatsword *Hlarskvung*. This mighty weapon functions as a *two-handed sword* +3. In the hands of a member of Reynir's bloodline, *Hlarskvung* functions as a *sword* +5 *holy avenger* and inflicts the same damage as a two-handed sword.

In battle, Bervinig wears a suit of *full plate* +4, another national treasure crafted by the dwarves of Khurin-Azur for one of Bervinig's ancestors. With both of these items at the ready, King Bervinig was once near-invincible in battle, but he has neither worn the armor nor wielded the great sword in over a decade.

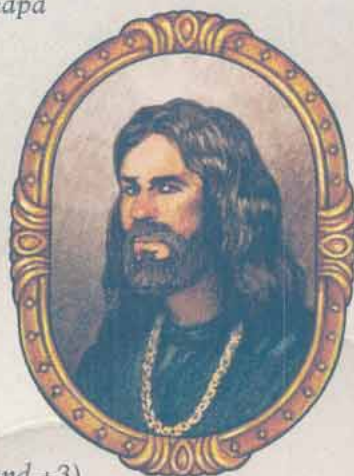
Description/History: King Bervinig has held the throne of Halskapa for over five decades, and has in the past proven a wise and resourceful ruler. In the past few years, however, the king's health and rational faculties have been in decline. Currently, Bervinig is lucid about a third of the time, and uses the first statistic listed above for those attributes marked with asterisks. The remainder of the time, he uses the second set, and is only barely capable of caring for himself.

Not surprisingly, Bervinig rarely leaves Skapa Hjarring these days, preferring to stay close to familiar surroundings, his doting servants, and loyal lieutenant, Sir Jalkvar.

Jarl of Selkhauske in Halskapa
11th-level Rjurik fighter

S: 17
D: 13
C: 16
I: 12
W: 10
Ch: 16

AL: N
AC: 2
hp: 52
MV: 12
THAC0: 10
#AT: 3/2
Dmg: 2d4+3 (frost brand +3)



Bloodline: Anduiras, major, 15

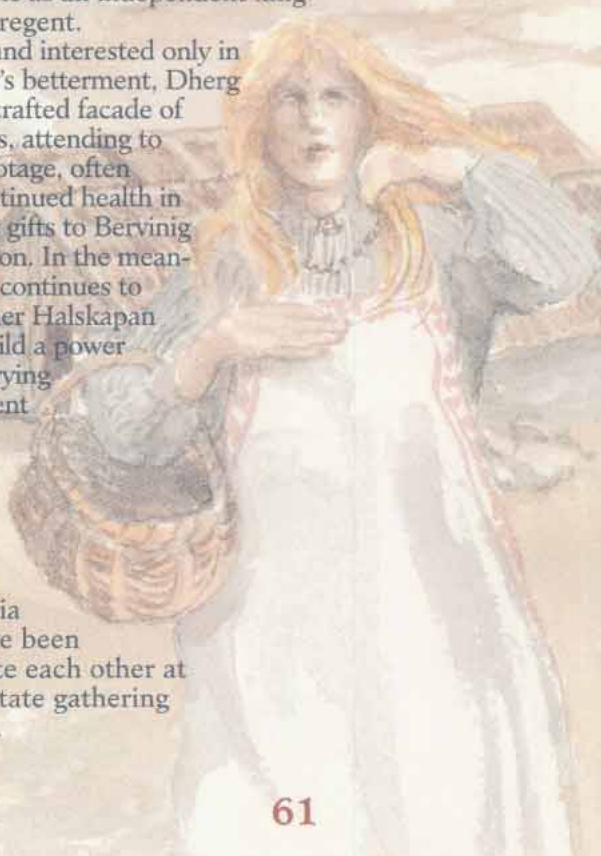
Blood Abilities: Enhanced sense (major)

Equipment: Jarl Dherg owns a fine collection of potions, including an *elixir of health*, several potions of *healing* and *extra-healing*, and (it is rumored) as many as four *potions of giant strength*. He is loath to use these casually, however. His other best-known possession is a *sword* +3, *frost brand*.

Description/History: The handsome, bearded, black-haired Jarl of Selkhauske in Halskapa is a self-interested, scheming man who plots to either replace King Bervinig on the throne when the aged monarch finally passes away, or to proclaim Selkhauske as an independent kingdom, with himself as regent.

Though ambitious and interested only in his own and his family's betterment, Dherg maintains a carefully-crafted facade of loyalty and faithfulness, attending to King Bervinig in his dotage, often toasting the king's continued health in his mead-hall, sending gifts to Bervinig and his family, and so on. In the meantime, however, Dherg continues to make contact with other Halskapan jarls, attempting to build a power base for himself and trying to gain allies in the event that he does make a grab for the throne.

Dherg is aided in his schemes by a number of able scions, including his twin daughters Fjerdia and Dierla. They have been known to impersonate each other at social events to facilitate gathering intelligence on rivals.



fulgar the bold

Bandit King of Rjuvik
12th/9th-level Rjurik fighter/thief

S: 16
D: 17
C: 12
I: 16
W: 12
Ch: 17

AL: NE
AC: 3
(bracers)
hp: 66
MV: 12
THAC0: 16
#AT: 3/2
Dmg: 1d8+1
(cutlass +1)



Bloodline: Brenna, minor, 14

Blood Abilities: None

Equipment: Fulgar maintains an enormous hoard said to be worth over 100,000 gold pieces. Whatever its actual value, he guards it jealously and doles it out grudgingly as bribes and rewards to his followers and jarls.

During his career as a reaver, Fulgar amassed a fine collection of art and enchanted items, the most prominent being a matched set of three magical mirrors which he uses to communicate with his most trusted jarls. He is also rumored to control an extremely powerful golem. In battle, he wields a cutlass that functions as a sword +1, flame tongue. He wears bracers of defense AC3, and has no need of cumbersome armor in combat.

Description/History: The pirate known only as Fulgar the Bold took control of the coastal jarldom of Yvarre over two decades ago, and has since expanded this holding into a major Rjurik kingdom.

Rjuvik is known as the Bandit Realm for good reason, for Fulgar handed out jarldoms as rewards to his various cutthroats and toadies. Fulgar and his jarls today run the kingdom as if it were their private property, having

no qualms about exploiting the people, taking taxes, and fighting among themselves.

Fulgar is a ruggedly handsome man. His once-red hair is now shot with white and his face is decorated by several prominent scars. He has recently begun to desire recognition as a true Rjurik regent, and as a result, has forbidden his jarls from raiding into neighboring lands. He has even gone so far as to attempt trade contacts with the outside world. Unfortunately for Fulgar, most Rjurik still consider him "Fulgar the Blood-Handed," as his enemies once branded him, and they refuse to deal with him or his outlaw kingdom.

Despite resistance and personal justification, the fact is that Fulgar has begun to feel the nagging touch of guilt and culpability for the pain and suffering he caused in his life, and now wishes to legitimize himself in the eyes of his people. That the Rjurik are not so easily convinced burns like fire in Fulgar's heart, and he has grown grim and melancholy, a sad figure alone in his cold stone palace, respected by few and loved by none.

adriala the dark

10th-level human wizard, unknown race

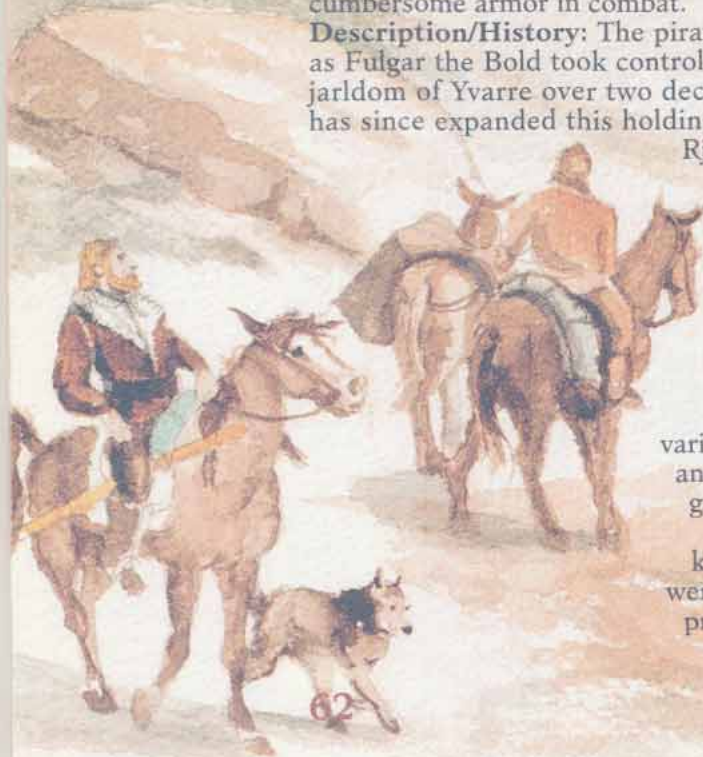
S: 9
D: 11
C: 12
I: 18
W: 14
Ch: 17

AL: CE
AC: 10
hp: 19
MV: 12
THAC0: 17
#AT: 1
Dmg: 1d6
(quarterstaff)



Equipment: Adriala owns a staff of power which she has used on several occasions to dispose of troublesome rivals.

Description/History: A mysterious woman who resides in and controls several sources in Rjuvik (along with the exiled Basarji sorcerer, Quirad al-Dinn (MKb; W11; Ba, major, 38), Adriala keeps to herself, pays tribute to her jarl and to King Fulgar the Bold, and even aids the nation in battle against the Blood Skull Raiders on occasion.



Adriala and al-Dinn's relationship is complex. Sometimes they are rivals, competing directly in quests for magical artifacts, rare spell components, and the like, and at other times they work together, as in a recent battle with Blood Skull orogs. On that occasion, Adriala successfully created the illusion of a major attack by Rjuvik forces; al-Dinn concealed the movement of the real Rjuvik jarls, who fell upon the raiders without warning, routing them and eventually destroying them utterly.

Adriala's actual identity is unknown—some claim that she is an exiled Brecht wizard, expelled from her homeland for experiments in necromancy or evil sorcery; others believe Adriala is from outside Cerilia altogether, in flight from unknown pursuers who may follow her to Rjuvik and wreak terrible vengeance.

olfjor ʏlvarrík

Jarl of Arvaald in Stjordvik
9th-level Rjurik fighter

S: 18/76
D: 10
C: 15
I: 12
W: 13
Ch: 10

AL: CN
AC: 4
hp: 76
MV: 12
THACO: 12
#AT: 3/2
Dmg: 1d8
(battle axe)



Description/History: The jarl of Arvaald is a powerful, loud, arrogant man with a thick red beard and long blond braids. He typifies the more destructive elements of the independent Rjurik spirit, in that he wants to run his own realm as he chooses, without oversight or "interference" from a king or higher official. To this end, he wholeheartedly supports the weak King Varri of Stjordvik, who lacks the spine to stand up to his jarls when they defy him.

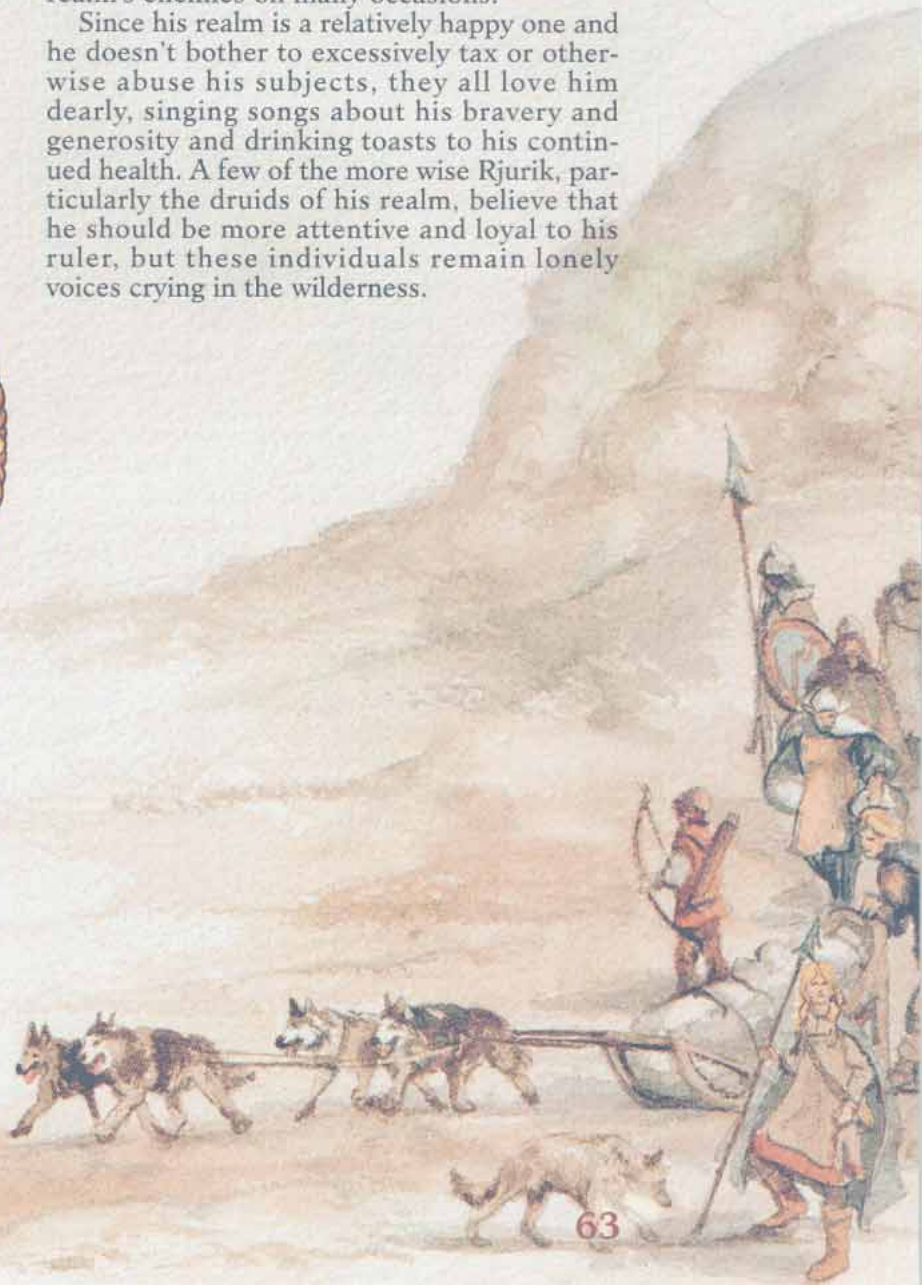
Olfjor loves ale, women, singing, hunting, and fighting, usually in that order, and indulges in all of these with notable lack of restraint. Olfjor's entertainments are famous throughout Stjordvik and neighboring realms, and some of the more memorable indulgences continued for days. The jarl also loves to ride in search of adventure, which more often than not ends up in another drunken revel at one of his many estates. All the same, Olfjor is a skilled fighter, and has fought the realm's enemies on many occasions.

Since his realm is a relatively happy one and he doesn't bother to excessively tax or otherwise abuse his subjects, they all love him dearly, singing songs about his bravery and generosity and drinking toasts to his continued health. A few of the more wise Rjurik, particularly the druids of his realm, believe that he should be more attentive and loyal to his ruler, but these individuals remain lonely voices crying in the wilderness.

Bloodline: Masela, major, 23

Blood Abilities: Divine aura (major)

Equipment: Olfjor owns a pair of gauntlets of ogre power, which he uses to perform amusing tricks at parties, and a bow +1 which he takes on his frequent hunting trips.



thrakkazz, the scarlet baron

Ruler of the Blood Skull Barony
12th-level orog fighter



S: 18
D: 12
C: 18
I: 13
W: 12
Ch: 18 (to goblins and orogs)/3 (to humans, elves, dwarves, etc.)
AL: LE
AC: 3
hp: 88
MV: 12
THACO: 9
#AT: 3/2
Dmg: 2d4 (morning star) or 1d8 (metal claw)

Bloodline: Anduiras, major, 38
Blood Abilities: Detect lie, battlewise, regeneration
Equipment: One of Thrakkazz's most important possessions (and a secret of his continual survival) is his *ring of regeneration* which, combined with the regeneration blood ability, has enabled him to survive the most appalling injuries and return to destroy his rivals and enemies. He is rumored to have several other magical items stolen from his victims, but their exact identities remain a mystery.
Description/History: Rising to prominence in the violent realm known as the Blood Skull Barony, Thrakkazz is everything a good orog warlord should be—strong, merciless, violent, intelligent, skilled, generous to his friends, and ruthless with his enemies.

A mark of Thrakkazz's skill as a survivor is found in his scarred and twisted visage (the result of a dozen attempts on his life) and the iron claw which he uses in place of his right hand, lost in battle against a would-be usurper several years ago. Though ugly and battered, Thrakkazz continues to survive, and plots against surrounding realms.

Today, Thrakkazz hopes to consolidate all his realms and actually take over some

surrounding jarldoms rather than simply raiding, pillaging, and retreating when regular Rjurik troops arrive. He currently plans an invasion of Barrow Woods in the Giant-downs to test his forces.

The White Witch and the humanoid leader Ghuralli have taken an interest in this scheme, for neither wishes Thrakkazz to grow any more powerful than he is, yet neither possesses the strength to stop him. The White Witch has begun to consider sending her humanoid agents to the Barony to sow dissension, but thus far, Thrakkazz remains firmly in control of his realm and will fight tooth and nail against anyone who attempts to unseat him.

jorrik the wanderer

8th-level Rjurik druid



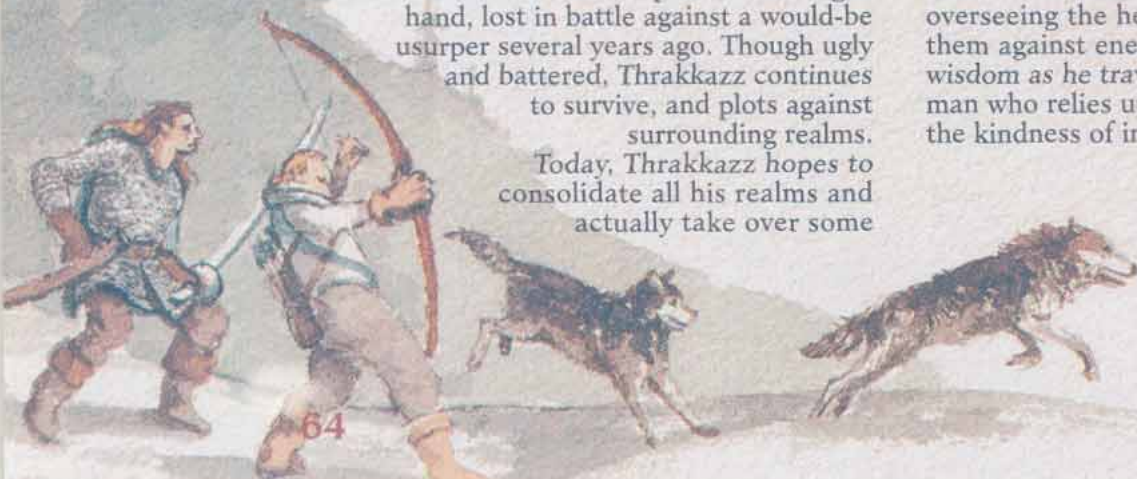
S: 11
D: 12
C: 11
I: 15
W: 17
Ch: 16
AL: NG
AC: 10
hp: 43
MV: 12
THACO: 16
#AT: 1
Dmg: 1d6 (quarterstaff)

Bloodline: Vorynn, tainted, 11

Blood Abilities: None

Equipment: Jorrik carries no possessions save his simple staff, knapsack, shoes, and green or white tunics and cloaks. Jorrik's famous staff is actually a *staff of curing*, and one of the sources of his near-legendary healing powers.

Description/History: Jorrik is a wandering druid with no fixed abode, as reflected in his title. He is usually found in the Northlands, overseeing the health of its people, defending them against enemies, and dispensing aid and wisdom as he travels. He is a tall, spare, tough man who relies upon the bounty of nature and the kindness of individual Rjurik to survive.



Jorrik ignores borders, those of both kingdoms and jarldoms, and calls no man or woman monarch. He himself carries some of the blood of Vorynn, but possesses no blood abilities. He is best known as a healer who never denies aid to those in need, and, though he has never been seen to engage in any act of violence, he is hailed as an implacable foe of the orogs, the White Witch, and other enemies of the Rjurik. Jorrik's opposition to these enemies usually takes the form of misleading invaders, warning potential victims, casting spells to confuse and anger, and so on. Most tales of Jorrik claim that he has sworn never to take a life, save what he needs to survive.

Many stories are told of Jorrik and of other wandering druids like him; these tales often revolve around his unexpected aid to a family in distress, a lost traveler, or innocents beset by humanoids or awnsheghlien. Some of the tales are true, while others have grown considerably in the telling, and some are outright falsehoods, but the fact remains that Jorrik is a true Rjurik hero who places the welfare of his people before his own and would gladly give up his life for the land and its inhabitants.

hogrun njalsson

13th-level Rjurik ranger from the Giantdowns

S:	17
D:	15
C:	15
I:	12
W:	15
Ch:	11
AL:	CG
AC:	8
hp:	70
MV:	12
THAC0:	8
#AT:	2
Dmg:	1d8 (long sword)



Equipment: Hogrun is the owner of a remarkable magical item, the *Bow of Gyddren*. This elven artifact, probably crafted by the bowyers of ancient Lluabright, functions as a *longbow* +3 and has a ROF of 3/1 rather than the normal 2/1. It is a unique item—nothing like it exists in all of Cerilia, and Hogrun guards it with his life.

Description/History: A former Halskapan warrior, Hogrun eventually retired and moved to the Giantdowns where he founded the Watch, an informal alliance of rangers, hunters, scouts, and other wilderness-dwelling Rjurik. The Watch's self-appointed job is to oversee and protect the Rjurik of the Giantdowns from harm, whether from natural disasters or the threat of the various humanoids and monsters in the region. Hogrun counts the strange creature Ghuralli as one of his personal enemies, and will frustrate Ghuralli's schemes at all costs.

Hogrun is a large, bearish man with a thick, graying beard and deep-set, gleaming blue eyes. He normally wears a black cloak with a brooch in the form of a wolf's head, one of the symbols of the Halskapan elite Wolf Guard warriors, of which he was once a member. He is generally suspicious of strangers, but once his trust has been placed in one, he is the best possible friend one can have in the dangerous wilderness of the Giantdowns.

Hogrun's actual history is little known, and he remains close-mouthed about it. His service in the Wolf Guard is common knowledge, but the circumstances of his departure from it are mysterious. Many claim that, when deeply depressed or when he has been drinking, Hogrun speaks of a woman whom he loved, who either rejected him or died (the stories are confused on this point), driving him into the wilderness and his present circumstances.



ghuralli

Awnshegh (former orog warlord in a supernatural metal body), from the Giantdowns

S: See below
D: 12
C: n/a
L: 15
W: 13
Ch: 18 (to orogs, goblins, gnolls, ogres, fhoimoriens)/6 (to humans, elves, dwarves)

AL: LE
AC: 3
hp: 80
MV: 6
THACO: 3
#AT: 1
Dmg: 4-40 (see below)

Bloodline: Azrai, major, 19

Blood Abilities: Fear

Equipment: Ghuralli carries no equipment, nor does he need to.

Special: Once per day, Ghuralli can heat his metal body to white hot intensity, causing a bonus 2d10 points of damage in melee (total 6d10) for 1d4 rounds. He is exhausted after such an attack, and his normal melee damage drops to 2d10 for the next 2d4 hours.

Description/History: Ghuralli is the leader of the northern Giantdowns humanoids and has proven a deadly threat to the Rjurik of the region as well as to his neighbors in Lluabright and the Blood Skull Barony.

A skilled and resourceful leader, Ghuralli's exact race and heritage are not widely known. Those few who have seen him report that Ghuralli resembles a tall, black, gleaming metal statue in the form of a gigantic minotaur or tanar'ri. He is clearly an independently-willed and intelligent creature, and leads the humanoids with a firm, ruthless hand. His leadership in the humanoid conquest of the Lluabright realms of Rhuiddar and Caer



Cwnnar has caused certain observers (particularly Hogrun Njalsson, leader of the Giantdowns Watch) to suspect that Ghuralli plans to establish an actual kingdom in the Giantdowns to rival the elven, orog, and Rjurik domains in the area.

Ghuralli was once an orog chieftain of particular intelligence and cunning, with unawakened blood abilities derived from the evil Azrai. While on a raiding party into Lluabright, he found an elven stone circle where a baatezu lord of considerable power was imprisoned. He set the creature free, after first extracting a promise of aid. The baatezu rewarded the orog chieftain with a great, near-indestructible metal body (for all intents and purposes equal to an iron golem, with additional special abilities as described above), and additionally awoke the orog's inherent blood ability. His mind intact (and even somewhat improved by the grateful fiend) and fully awakened as a powerful fledgling awnshegh, Ghuralli returned to his tribe and set off on the road to conquest. Most of the humanoids under his domination revere Ghuralli as near-divine, and their morale and loyalty to him are virtually unbreakable.



Tjorgrim Stonesoul

Regent of Khurin-Azur
15th-level dwarf fighter

S: 18
D: 10
C: 18
I: 14
W: 13
Ch: 16

AL: LG
AC: 0
hp: 110
MV: 6
THAC0: 6
#AT: 2
Dmg: 1d8+5 (battle
axe +5)



Bloodline: Reynir, major, 26

Blood Abilities: Protection from evil, iron will

Equipment: Dwarven armor and weapons are renowned across Cerilia; human scholars devoted to the study of dwarven craftsmanship have a hard time deciding for themselves which realm produces the finest goods. The fortress-city of Khurin-Azur, of course, is no exception. Lord Tjorgrim owns many antique weapons, shields, helms, and similar items, but his most prized possession—the item that has been borne by the land's ruler since time immemorial—is the giant war axe *Dragonstooth*, which acts as a *battle axe +3* in the hands of an ordinary fighter and as a *battle axe +5* in the hands of the true ruler of Khurin-Azur.

Description/History: The grizzled old dwarf is one of the last surviving defenders of dwarven honor and prestige in the northern highlands. Regent of Khurin-Azur, Tjorgrim has spent his entire life fighting the realm's enemies—the goblins of Urga-Zai, the minions of the Gorgon, the proud elves of Lluabright (on occasion), and nightmare creatures from the Shadow World which sometimes appear in his realm.

Though he remains strong and nearly invincible in battle, the ancient monarch is now centuries old and weary of mortal existence. He intends to live only as long as it takes to train his nephew, Hrothval, to be his successor.

Unlike most other dwarves, Tjorgrim has grown more tolerant of outsiders as he has aged. The decline of his people is unmistakable evidence, as far as the Stonelord is concerned, that the dwarves cannot continue to

exist in isolation, and that human dominion over Cerilia is an unpleasant but unchangeable fact. He also feels that the best defense against the awnsheghlien and the humanoids is common cause with the elves of Lluabright, but High Mistress Llaeddra and her people remain intransigent. On occasion, the dwarves and elves have even fought over minor points of honor, trade, and border disputes, and the Stonelord has almost completely despaired of ever getting through to the proud, stiff-necked inhabitants of Lluabright.

Llaeddra

Grand Mistress of Lluabright
18th-level elf wizard

S: 9
D: 17
C: 12
I: 18
W: 17
Ch: 18

AL: CN
AC: 0 (*Robe of protection*)
hp: 54
MV: 12
THAC0: 15
#AT: 1
Dmg: 1d4 (dagger)



Bloodline: Brenna, great, 50

Blood Abilities: Shadow form, persuasion, character reading, detect lie

Equipment: The Grand Mistress normally wears her *robe of protection*, which provides AC 0. She also possesses an impressive array of magical items, including a *ring of shooting stars*, numerous potions, and several powerful, ancient elven items whose exact functions are not known.

The most impressive of Llaeddra's possessions are the awesome *Gems of Arborea*, enchanted stones that, in combination, create a powerful magical source. Unfortunately for the Grand Mistress, she possesses only nine of the gems; three are missing, and without the full set, her magical abilities remain limited.



Description/History: The most powerful elf sorceress in Rjurik lands is the leader of Lluabright, the last great *sidhe* kingdom remaining in the north. No one really knows how old she is or exactly what powers she commands, but it is known that she remains vital, active, and vociferous in her belief that Lluabright will survive, and that her people will once more rise to greatness. Though she is an implacable defender of her own people, Llaeddra is cold, bitter, and hateful to outsiders, especially goblins and humans, whom she blames for the near-destruction of her kingdom.

Tall, pale, and coldly beautiful, Llaeddra speaks warmly to her close advisers and lieutenants and retains a love for her people that borders on fanaticism. When she deigns to speak to nonelves, however, her manner is as icy and distant as her appearance, and she is rarely merciful. Intruders may be given over to the *gheallie Sidhe* for sport, or, if they are able to convince her of their lack of bad intentions, taken to the frontier and released, stripped of clothing and possessions.

Llaeddra spends most of her time in her high tower, where she oversees her realm, meets with advisers, and manipulates the power of the nine remaining *Gems of Arborea*, which enhance her sources to be among the most potent in Cerilia. Should the three missing gems ever be recovered, Llaeddra may command sufficient magical force to actually bring about her dreams of elven rebirth and return to power.

aelwynn

Master of the Lluabright Hunt
12th-level elf ranger

S: 17
D: 18
C: 13
I: 14
W: 9
Ch: 18

AL: CN
AC: 4
hp: 68
MV: 12
THACO: 9
#AT: 2
Dmg: 1d6+4 (*medium lance +3*)



Equipment: Aelwynn rides the intelligent (Int 15) war horse Grayhoof and sallies into battle wielding the enchanted lance *Oakenshaft*, which functions as a *medium lance +3* and automatically inflicts maximum damage on a natural roll of 20. He normally wears *elven chain mail* in battle.

Description/History: Grand Mistress Llaeddra's Hunt Master shares his race's contempt for outsiders and hatred of intruders. Aelwynn relishes his expeditions, serving at the head of a column of mailed elf lancers, archers, and hunting dogs, scouring the land for unauthorized travelers. He reserves his greatest enthusiasm for goblins and orogs, whom he and his warriors hunt down without compunction. Others—humans, dwarves, halflings, and giants—are sometimes chased out of elven lands, or sometimes captured and brought before the Grand Mistress for judgment.



Sir Aelwynn is handsome, even for an elf, but holds himself apart from others. He is currently driven by his desire for vengeance against the orogs who killed his family two decades ago, and claims that he will not rest until the Blood Skull Barony has been reduced to ruin and the Scarlet Baron's head has been impaled upon Aelwynn's own lance.

Fortunately for other nonelves, Aelwynn's attitude toward humans and other interlopers is closer to contempt than bloodthirst, since he has no personal axe to grind. On the other hand, if he is in a bad mood (which happens with increasing frequency as Aelwynn grows older), the elf knight has been known to hunt down humans, dwarves, and halflings with equal fervor, killing as many as possible while chasing them out of Lluabright's borders.

Like many other elves, Aelwynn has begun to give in to a fatalistic resignation, considering extinction preferable to compromising his people's honor by asking for outside aid. His memory is long, as is that of his people, and he remembers the blood shed during Lluabright's wars with the elves and dwarves, and he is unwilling to forgive so many offenses. If the price for his nation's pride is its destruction, Aelwynn feels, then so be it.

storm holtson

6th-level Rjurik
thief from Svinik

S: 10
D: 15
C: 12
I: 16
W: 14
Ch: 16

AL: CN
AC: 8
hp: 19
MV: 12
THAC0: 18
#AT: 1
Dmg: 1d4 (dagger)



Bloodline: Brenna, major, 28

Blood Abilities: Character reading, detect lie
Equipment: Storm is never without his twin throwing daggers, but generally shuns magical items, rightly believing them to attract too much attention and make their owner the object of larceny.

Description/History: Guildmaster of the Stjordvik traders, Storm is known as one of the most aggressive merchants in Rjurik lands. Having completely embraced the role of "modern" trader, Storm is held in contempt by many traditional Rjurik, who see him as representing everything they despise about their urban brethren.

For his part, Storm has little concern for the feelings of outmoded rustics, and aggressively pursues an expansion policy, struggling with the Three Trees Traders for mercantile concessions along the Taelshore, and fighting for control of timber concessions in Dhoesone.

As his business interests expand, so does Storm's ambition, and he is as often away from Rjurik lands as in them, seeking trade contacts throughout Anuirean realms and even journeying to the far lands of the Brechts and Vos in search of potential profit. So far, these contacts have yielded little, but the canny Brechts, ever alert for new opportunities, have begun to consider joint timber and mining operations with Storm and his traders. Should this ever occur, Storm is likely to grow more estranged from his Rjurik brethren and become more like a profit-hungry southerner.

dargal the great

Goblin king of Urga-Zai
8th-level goblin fighter

S: 14
D: 13
C: 16
I: 15
W: 12
Ch: 12

AL: CE
AC: 5 (chain mail and shield)
hp: 32
MV: 6
THACO: 13
#AT: 1
Dmg: 1d6 +2
(short sword +2)



Bloodline: Vorynn, major, 24
Blood Abilities: Resistance (major; magic), unreadable thoughts, detect lie
Equipment: Dargal possesses a hoard of gold, plunder, and enchanted items which he uses to bribe followers and potential allies in order to retain his power. His personal *short sword +2* is called *Kneesplitter* (Dargal's own name for the weapon).

Description/History: Ruler of a fractious realm, Dargal is a relatively canny leader who does not bother his various subchiefs with unnecessary rules or interference. He maintains a certain annoying trait; his primary activity is considering ever-varying plans to expand his power base and add new territory. He is also an egotist, having chosen the moniker "Dargal the Great" or (when particularly swell-headed) "Dargal the Greatest," though some who serve in his household prefer "Dargal the Pest."

The goblin king's ego has grown of late; Dargal has come to the conclusion that, in addition to being a talented musician and singer (much to his adviser's dismay), he is also a military genius. He is making plans for numerous grandiose assaults on traditional rivals, neighboring kingdoms, and fanciful foes (that exist only in his mind) across the seas.

Despite his delusions, Dargal knows that his conquests must, at first, be limited. He

sees neighboring Hjolvar, only tenuously held by the Rjurik, as fertile ground for invasion, and hopes to unite his nobles in a great crusade to bring all neighboring lands under the dominion of the minotaur skull—Dargal's personal emblem.

arvid keiranger

6th-level Brecht thief residing in Skapa Hjarring

S: 9
D: 18 (19 due to gauntlets)
C: 9
I: 7
W: 12
Ch: 10

AL: CN
AC: 8
hp: 19
MV: 12
THACO: 18
(+1/attack; see below)
#AT: 1
Dmg: 1d6 (short sword)



Equipment: Arvid is never without his trusty short sword—it is not magical, but he is skilled in its use and receives a natural +1 to attack rolls when wielding this sword in combat. His only magical item of note is his pair of *gauntlets of dexterity*, which he has used to become one of the most accomplished thieves in Kiergard and Massenmarch. Recently, he obtained an unusual enchanted gem (see below), which he keeps close at all times.

Description/History: A professional thief (he prefers the term "freelance entrepreneur") on the run from Brecht authorities, Arvid has taken up temporary residence in Skapa Hjarring, where he pursues his accustomed livelihood. So far, Arvid has become something of a one-man crime wave, lifting valuables from the many foreign merchants and travelers who visit Skapa Hjarring. Recently, however, Arvid bought into more than he bargained for when he obtained a large, apparently magical gem.

The gem has some interesting properties—it glows softly at night, and sometimes enables Arvid to hear conversations taking place some distance away. Still unsure what to do with the item, Arvid has also discovered that other people want the gem as well, and has survived two attempts on his life. Currently, he is not sure whether to keep the gem, and still has not determined the gem's identity or full abilities.

Arvid is a handsome man who has seen better days. His fine-boned features are marked with ugly scars. He wears several silver earrings and prefers to dress in dark clothing. He is careful not to be conspicuous with his ill-gotten gains lest he attract the attention of the local authorities, or worse, relatives of his victims.

njallkaar homark

10th-level Rjurik fighter from Jankaping

S: 16
D: 13
C: 16
I: 15
W: 15
Ch: 11

AL: CG
AC: 6
hp: 45
MV: 12
THAC0: 11
#AT: 3/2
Dmg: 2d4
(claymore)



Equipment: Njallkaar owns a *ring of water walking* which he won in a dice game several years ago. This item is of great assistance in his career as a mariner, although it is not his most valued possession—that status is reserved for Njallkaar's longship, the *Dragon's Wing*, one of the most famous vessels to ply the hazardous Thaelasian Passage.

Description/History: An experienced, thoroughly professional captain, Njallkaar sails the *Dragon's Wing* from Halskapa, Jankaping, and Hogunmark to the coastal Rjurik colonies of Thaele. In this endeavor, Njallkaar represents some of the colonies' only links with Rjurik lands and their only source of outside supplies. He certainly looks the part of the adventurous mariner, with a gold front tooth (which he claims he stole from a Khinasi pirate), an embroidered eyepatch (his left eye was taken by a ferocious sea wolf, Njallkaar says), and colorful clothing from a dozen foreign lands.

Njallkaar is a great source of information and tales of the wild northern seas, and claims to have been a tribal whaler who hunted the great beasts with only a hide boat and a harpoon. Many of his tales—of dragons, sea monsters, mermaids, and lost islands—are probably false, the result of excessive embroidery and elaboration by an imaginative mariner intent on impressing his listeners. However, some claim that many of the old captain's stories are true, and that he indeed knows secrets of lost treasures, fantastic creatures, and monsters.

Njallkaar's favorite story involves being led by a beautiful mermaid princess to a strange, lonely island along the uncharted coastline of Thaele. There, Njallkaar claims, he found an elven palace replete with soaring walls and tall, needle-thin towers. In the tallest tower, Njallkaar tells, lay a sleeping elven sorceress who awoke when he entered and offered to truthfully answer any single question. Njallkaar ends the story by telling his listeners how he foolishly replied, "Really?" to which she replied, "Yes," and returned to her enchanted sleep.



Because the Rjurik lands are dangerous, unsettled, and wild, this section details new rules for campaigns and characters based upon this untamed frontier of Cerilia. The rules that follow are optional, to be used at the discretion of the DM, but they add a uniquely Rjurik flavor to campaigns set in the Highlands of the North. Also discussed are guidelines on Rjurik druids and bards, to aid roleplaying such characters in Rjurik-based campaigns.

tribal characters

T rue cities are growing more and more prevalent in Rjurik lands. As a result, the power of blooded rulers (who derive their strength from settled lands) is rapidly increasing. These facts are particularly true in the older nations such as the Taelshore lands; on the other hand, a large number of Rjurik continue to live as nomadic or semi-nomadic tribesmen. Such individuals wander freely across borders and through

new rules

established provinces and kingdoms without regard for rulers or higher political divisions, but they are capable of affecting events in a blooded ruler's kingdom.

Rjurik tribes are small, ranging from a dozen or so members to several hundred. They are ruled by chieftains, who are often blooded—some quite powerfully so—but are not considered regents and do not accumulate Regency Points. They are capable of controlling holdings within a province, but rarely, if ever, do so, preferring to oversee the health and safety of their tribes.

Player characters may be tribal chieftains, but, as noted, cannot be considered regents unless they control a holding. With rare exception, chieftains may be only fighters or rangers (wizards tend to be distrusted by tribal Rjurik, thieves are despised, and priests have their own duties specific

to the tribe, and thus cannot rule). A chief may adventure like a normal character, but the DM should keep in mind the chief's obligation to the tribe. Chiefs may command elders or sub-chiefs, who may function as lieutenants to oversee the tribe in the chief's absence.

Chieftains have elite bodyguards available to them at any time. A chieftain benefits from 1d6+1 bodyguards per 50 members of his tribe; in tribes of fewer than 50, 1d4 bodyguards are possible. The number of bodyguards may never exceed 4d6+4. Bodyguards are automatically equipped with the best weapons and armor the tribe has to offer (the most prestigious bodyguards may qualify as heavy infantry and be outfitted with chain mail, shields, and claymores). In the manner of regent bodyguards, these do not require payment, but serve out of loyalty to their chief.

tribes and regents

A landed domain in the Rjurik region is likely to contain numerous nomadic tribes. These individuals migrate in and out of provinces on a regular basis, moving from summer hunting or fishing grounds to winter quarters in forests or foothills, but their numbers are such as to have no real effect on a province's level or population. Most of the time, these tribes have little effect on a domain due to their small numbers; their devotion to Erik, who teaches respect for nature, results in only minor effects upon a domain's economy.

In some cases, however, tribes can affect a PC regent and his or her domain. During the random events phase of the domain turn, certain events may be changed or influenced by the presence of tribal Rjurik. A feud, for example, could involve two tribes rather than two families, and might require the regent's intervention. A rebellion could be the result of tribes rejecting a regent's attempts to impose taxation or prevent them from migrating over a political boundary. A great captain event might indicate a charismatic tribal chieftain determined to set his people free from "corrupt" city-dwelling nobility. A brigandage event could be the result of a tribe reduced to raiding or pillaging to stay alive—an extremely rare, but certainly not unheard-of event.

To compound these situations, tribal Rjurik have little respect or concern for artificial political borders; many

nomads treat those settled in cities, who have given their loyalty to palace-dwelling regents, with ill-disguised contempt. Tribes sometimes purposely migrate through settled areas in order to bait or provoke responses from settled Rjurik, and often flatly refuse to cooperate with a regent's subordinates sent to levy taxes, gather militia units, or effect a census. Tribes have been known to camp virtually on a regent's doorstep, claiming it as ancestral land and resisting all attempts at eviction. The DM is free to create situations in which a PC regent is confronted with obstreperous tribes and must handle them in as nonconfrontational and nonviolent a manner as possible. Open warfare or violence against nomadic tribes is virtually guaranteed to unite the tribes against the offending ruler, and may even bring about open civil war.

druids

The druids are an integral part of life in the Rjurik Highlands. The druids' influence is at work when every Rjurik is born, as well as when they marry, when they plant, harvest, and hunt, while their children grow, and when at last they die and their spirits return to Erik's loving embrace.

Cerilian PCs are free to become druids, and gain several important benefits for doing so. Druids bear important responsibilities, however, which may limit a character's activities and advancement.

Druid characters are generated as described in the *Player's Handbook* and the *BIRTHRIGHT Rulebook*. In addition, Cerilian druids may use material from *The Complete Druid's Handbook*. Druid kits from this book appropriate to Rjurik druids are the Adviser, Avenger, Beastfriend, Guardian, Pacifist, Savage, Shapeshifter, Village Druid, and Wanderer.

Because of the extreme respect held for druids, no good-aligned Rjurik will attack a druid without good reason or extreme provocation. Druids receive a +5 reaction bonus from good- or neutral-aligned Rjurik NPCs.

A druid PC will invariably be at the center of attention of other Rjurik. They will continually ask the druid for advice, guidance, and wisdom, even if the PC in question has no clue as to the best course to take. Chieftains, jarls, and even kings and queens will heed a

druids' words and follow her advice—a heavy burden for an inexperienced druid.

Druids are loosely organized into groups known as circles, which may include as few as three or as many as a dozen individuals. Circles are generally led by high level blooded druids; if no blooded druids dwell in the area, leadership is usually assumed by the highest level member. The druids' nature is such that leadership of these circles is rarely, if ever, autocratic. The leader's primary function is dispensing advice to lower-ranked members; major conflicts between circle members are scarce.

Circles are allied to their temples; each temple practices its own traditions and ceremonies. The two major temples in Rjurik lands are the Oaken Grove of Erik, most often patronized by city-dwelling Rjurik, and the Emerald Spiral, a much looser group consisting of wilderness and nomadic druids bound together by a desire to preserve the Rjurik way of life. PC druids may choose one of these temples or decide to follow a lesser temple, or may be completely independent of the Rjurik temple organizations.

A PC druid may be able to ask advice of other priests in his or her circle—this may be worked out between the DM and the player. If the PC is blooded or of high level, he may be the leader of his circle or a high-ranking member. Other circle members may appear in a campaign as patrons, NPC allies, or sources of aid and information.

A Rjurik druid's greatest obligation is to his land and his people (even above his obligation to Erik). Any Rjurik in need must be aided, regardless of risk to the druid. Any threat to the wilderness or wild creatures must be averted, even at the cost of the druid's own life. Humanoids, foreigners who exploit the lands, and especially the foul awnsheghlien and their minions must be opposed and vanquished at every opportunity.

In addition to the restrictions detailed above, Rjurik druids are sworn to poverty and can never possess more than they can carry (this limit does not apply to owning a mount). Druids may never possess more than 100 gold pieces; additional funds must be given to poor Rjurik or be used to protect the land.



bards

Bards, or *skalds*, as the Rjurik call them, are an important part of Rjurik culture and society. Bards act as entertainers, messengers, observers, bringers of news and rumor, and chroniclers of the triumphs and tragedies of Rjurik history. In many ways, the bards are the living library of the Rjurik; permanent records are kept only by the city dwellers, and not by the nomads, whose material culture is limited.

Rjurik bard characters are generated as described in the *Player's Handbook*. Material from the *Complete Bard's Handbook* may also be used. Kits appropriate to a Rjurik bard are the True Bard, Herald, Loremaster, and Skald. Note that the skald kit is not to be confused with the bard class itself, even though the Rjurik call their bards *skalds*. A Rjurik bard receives the benefits of the skald kit only if that kit is actually chosen.

Bardic instruments traditional to the Rjurik include bagpipes, drums, flute, and harp. The mandolin, lute, dulcimer, and recorder have also found use; they have been imported from non-Rjurik lands and have attained some degree of popularity among the skalds.

The skalds have no formal organization. Older bards sometimes take apprentices and teach them the ways of song, story, musical instruments, dance, juggling, and the like. When master skalds retire, their instruments, songs, and other secrets are passed on to apprentices, who carry on the traditions.

Bards are considered sacrosanct and untouchable, in much the same manner as druids. Their duty to the Rjurik people—providing news, carrying messages, recording heroic deeds, and so on—are thought to be sacred duties conferred by Erik (the musical talents granted to them is evidence of this); no Rjurik would dare interfere with them. Rjurik bards receive +5 reaction bonuses when dealing with other Rjurik, and no lawful- or good-aligned Rjurik will ever voluntarily attack a bard. It is likewise considered good form for Rjurik to shelter, feed, and aid any

bard in need, but bards return the favor by never taking more than they absolutely require.

Non-Rjurik bards also garner some respect from the highlanders, and receive a +3 reaction bonus. Rjurik have no qualms about attacking non-Rjurik bards, however, and do not feel compelled to aid or shelter them as they do the skalds of their own people.

The high level of respect held for bards is due in part to their unfailing honesty and neutrality. By tradition, a skald entrusted with a message is required to repeat it exactly as said; a bard sent to parley must negotiate in absolutely good faith. Every bard swears a personal oath always to tell the truth, regardless of consequences. For these reasons, not surprisingly, Rjurik bards must be of either lawful good or lawful neutral alignment, and must always act within these guidelines.

As part of a Rjurik bard's oath, he must accept any mission given in good faith by a Rjurik king, jarl, or chieftain. For their part, the kings, jarls, and chieftains call upon skalds only for truly vital missions—the conveyance of an important message or item, help in a search for missing family members, transmission of important news such as wars or disasters, pleas for aid against an enemy, and so on.

As with the druids, Rjurik bards are sworn to eschew wealth, and can never own more possessions than they can carry on their person. Skalds' true wealth is measured, it is said, not in gold, but in their songs and stories, and in the vital services they provide to their people.



special dooms

The Rjurik are a mercurial people, prone to extremes of mirth and depression. When they are at their lowest, the Rjurik are wont to carry on about their "special dooms" and the irresistible fate that binds them and drags them to their inevitable end. To simulate this unique (if somewhat grim) aspect of Rjurik culture and add a truly Rjurik flavor to such characters, the DM may use the following rules to generate special dooms for Rjurik PCs.

DMs who use these rules should keep several issues in mind. First, while called "dooms" in keeping with Rjurik culture and outlook, they are probably more accurately referred to as "curses," since their presence does not necessarily lead to an afflicted character's destruction. In spite of the colorful Rjurik belief in predestination, unavoidable dooms make for less than enjoyable role-playing!

Dooms vary from simple quirks or minor character features to relatively powerful effects. The more potent dooms generally provide both advantages and disadvantages; the DM should consider what impact they will have on the game before assigning them.

To select a special doom, a player rolls 2d10 on the table that follows at the time a Rjurik character is generated. Descriptions of the dooms follow the table. DMs are encouraged to develop dooms unique to their BIRTHRIGHT campaigns.

Alternatively, the DM may wish to determine the character's doom secretly and keep the player guessing at its effects.

2d10 roll	Doom
2	Enemy
3-4	Special Vengeance
5-6	Second Sight
7-12	None
13-14	Extreme Luck
15-16	Animal Guide
17-18	Battle Rage
19	Shapechanger
20	True Fate

Note that some of these dooms are similar to certain blood abilities. Dooms are available to all Rjurik characters, however, rather than only to scions. Should a blooded PC

with a blood ability roll a doom with similar powers, the DM should reroll or select a new doom. Blood abilities always take precedence in such cases.

enemy

The character has an ancient (possibly ancestral) enemy who has sworn vengeance against the character's clan. The enemy may be another clan or tribe whose ancestors fought a blood feud against the character's forebears; in this case, the DM must select or create an appropriate opposing clan or tribe. Representatives of the enemy clan are likely to appear at inopportune moments to demand blood vengeance for ancient wrongs, insist the PC fight a duel, or, in the case of unscrupulous or chaotic Rjurik tribes, perpetrate an ambush.

Alternatively, the character's enemy might be an especially powerful creature such as an influential noble, fiend, or an awnshegh whose hatred of the PC's family or bloodline extends back to the Battle of Mount Deismaar or beyond. Such a foe might be long dead, existing only in family tales of evil creatures and vows of vengeance.

In the case of such a powerful enemy, the creature's presence need not be made manifest immediately, or at all, if the DM so wishes. The distant threat of an awnshegh or fiend, repeated and magnified over generations of storytelling, is likely to be enough to keep a character on his toes and fearful of every mysterious event. An absent enemy is a good tool for DMs who wish to keep their parties rattled.

special vengeance

The PC or his clan has a special enemy upon whom punishment must be inflicted. The target may be an ancestral enemy clan or tribe, a powerful individual, or a supernatural creature such as a tanar'ri or an awnshegh. The character will have been instructed by his clan elders that family honor depends upon taking revenge.

How the PC handles this matter is up to the player, but a Rjurik who refuses to pursue a blood feud is often shunned by other clan members, denied assistance, and generally looked down upon.

Actively pursuing a blood feud against an especially powerful enemy can be hazardous, however—



especially considering that the feud is probably the result of insults and infractions committed generations before the character was born, giving the enemy time to grow in power.

second sight

The character has limited precognitive abilities. He receives visions, prophetic dreams, glimpses of things to come, or hints of future events. He might also recognize omens.

This doom is not magical clairvoyance or divination. Second sight is considered a curse by most Rjurik; those who have it often wish they did not. The visions are usually incomplete, incomprehensible, or confusing, and make sense only after the event in question has taken place. A character may see a vision of riches and ascent to a position of power, for example, but not a vision of his assassination a day later. A character who dreams of a specific enchanted sword will probably not know whether he will wield the sword in glorious victory, or if the sword will end his life.

The DM will need to create visions and prophecies. Dreams may feature shadowy figures imploring the PC to beware of or seek out certain individuals or objects. Visions may appear at any time—as a character gazes into a mirror or a still pond, for example. Glimpses of the future will be brief and mysterious, involving people, places, and things that the character may recognize or which will enter the campaign in a future adventure. (A jarl who asks a regent's aid against goblin raiders might, for example, be the same individual a prophetic PC saw in a dream, killing a party member.) Prophetic dreams and visions are excellent tools to get PCs involved in an adventure. This doom requires more planning by the DM, but in the end, it is often worth it.

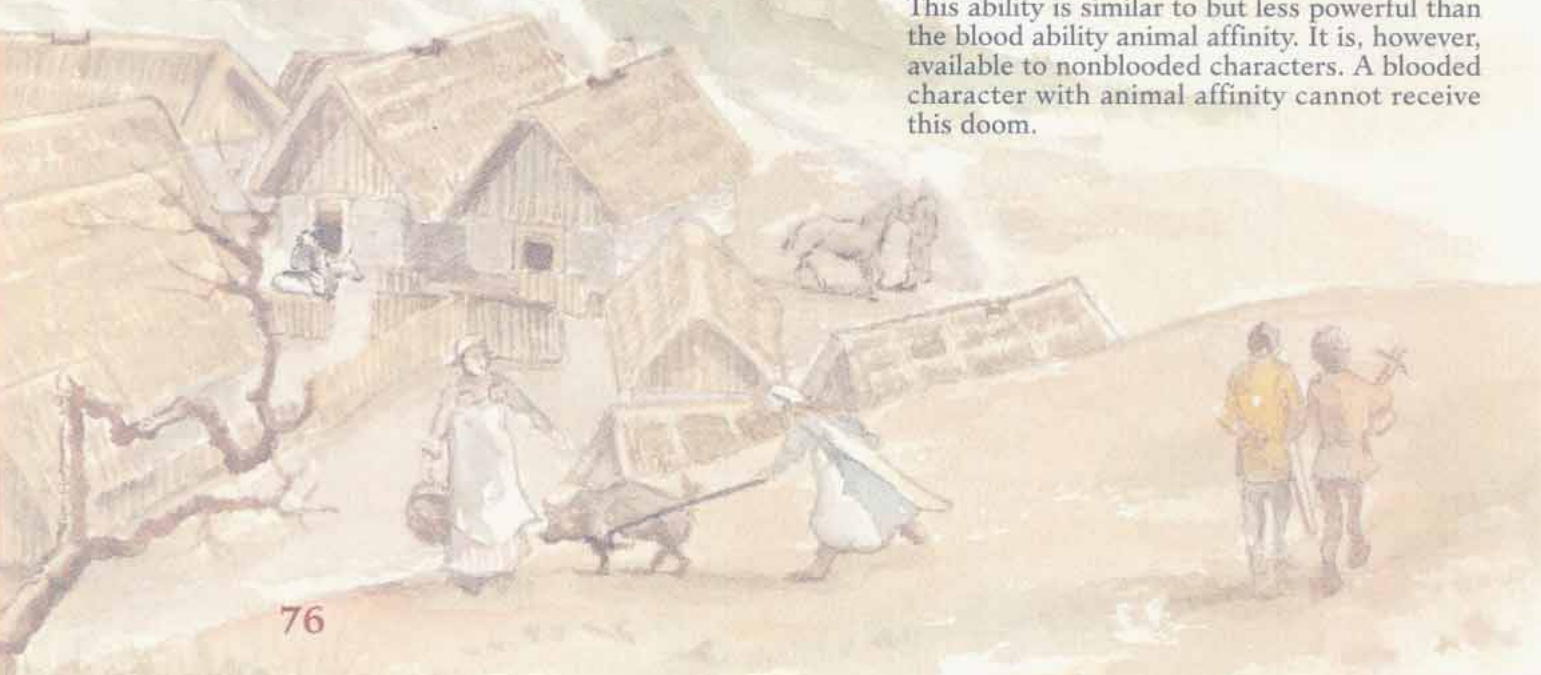
extreme luck

This doom works in two ways: When the PC is lucky, he is *very* lucky, and when unlucky, *extremely* unlucky. The effects of this curse are up to the DM to arbitrate, but results should be rare and spectacular. When an ordinary character might simply miss a bow shot at a passing orog, a character with extreme luck might glance the arrow off a small rock, causing a landslide that reveals the party's hiding place and forces them to flee. When an ordinary character lost in the wilderness might find materials for a rude lean-to for shelter, an affected character will find a hidden castle occupied by a wise and generous wizard who sends the party on its way laden with food and gifts.

Other possibilities include allowing the character maximum or bonus damage on an attack roll of 20 but automatically dropping or breaking a weapon on a roll of 1. A wizard with extreme luck may get bonuses to damage from offensive spells, but have a chance of misfiring and damaging other player characters. An extremely lucky thief will get bigger hauls from his or her roguish activities, but is more likely to attract the attention of the authorities. A ranger will find better game, more productive trails, and sustenance from the wilderness more easily, but will also attract more enemies, raiders, monsters, traps, and so on. The DM must arbitrate the effects of this doom, preferably in a manner that will increase the danger, humor, and enjoyment of the game.

animal guide

This ability is similar to but less powerful than the blood ability animal affinity. It is, however, available to nonblooded characters. A blooded character with animal affinity cannot receive this doom.



One particular animal species holds an affinity for the doomed character. The DM may select a suitable animal or roll 1d10 on the following table.

1d10 Roll	Animal
1	Raven
2	Wolf
3	Bear
4	Fox
5	Stag
6	Lynx
7	Badger
8	Snake
9	Otter
10	Hawk

These animals do not serve as friends or companions to the affected character, and they do not communicate. An animal may simply appear at an opportune moment, accidentally aiding or hindering the character. A leaping stag may lead a character to safety, while a cawing raven may call attention to a hidden warrior's enemies. A great bear may wander onto a battlefield in time to delay pursuing enemies or to help a player character's forces triumph; it might suddenly block the way when victory seems assured.

DM arbitration and guidance are required; an animal guide may often be used as a device to help lead a party in the right direction, discourage them from the wrong path, or introduce an upcoming adventure. The DM's manipulations are appropriate considering the Rjurik's usual gloomy propensity to lament "fate" and "dooms." The use of animal guides can add a uniquely Rjurik flavor to any adventure.

battle rage

While the Berserker fighter kit is available to Vos characters, some Rjurik have similar abilities. In the Rjurik Highlands, however, this is considered a curse. This doom is similar to the divine wrath blood ability; a character with divine wrath cannot have the battle rage doom.

The battle rage curse differs from the Berserker in several important ways. First, any Rjurik character may be afflicted with "the Rage," regardless of class. Second, the Rage is involuntary—unlike berserkers, who can choose to "go berserk" of their own free will.

The Rage comes unbidden upon cursed Rjurik, often at the worst times. Though individuals with battle rage can be powerful fighters, its results (at least in Rjurik legend and story) are invariably tragic.

Battle rage must be triggered by a certain event or condition. This is secretly determined by the DM after the battle rage doom is generated. Suitable events for triggering the Rage include:

- ◆ The death of a fellow party member in combat;
- ◆ The PC being wounded by an enemy;
- ◆ The sight of a certain creature or race (orog, dwarf, troll, ogre, awnshegh, etc.);
- ◆ The presence of a member of a rival clan or tribe (chosen by the DM); or
- ◆ A kinsman, loved one, or friend in danger.

DMs are encouraged to invent unique "triggers" for characters with the battle rage doom.

Once the Rage has been triggered, the PC may rage voluntarily or attempt to resist the Rage. A character who tries to resist must succeed a Wisdom check in order to overcome the Rage. A successful roll holds off the Rage for one full turn (10 rounds). If the condition which triggered the Rage is still in effect at the end of that time, another Wisdom check must be made to resist.

Should battle rage take effect, the raging character receives a +2 bonus to attacks and damage, and +3 hp. Further, a raging character who normally receives 1 attack per round receives 3 attacks per 2 rounds, as described for a warrior of level 7–12. Characters who receive 3/2 attacks receive 2 attacks per round, and characters who receive 2 gain 5 attacks per 2 rounds.

Raging characters are vulnerable to spells and receive none of the other benefits associated with Berserkers. When raging, characters must attack the nearest enemy or, if no real "enemies" are present, the nearest individual, friend or otherwise. Once this individual has been killed or incapacitated, the character must then attack the next nearest individual, friend or foe.

To end the Rage, the afflicted character must succeed a Wisdom check at a -3 penalty. This attempt may be made every round after the first opponent has

been dispatched, but not before. The Rage continues until the character is dead, unconscious, or until the successful roll to end it has been made.

Once the Rage ends, the character must succeed a Constitution check or fall unconscious for 1d10 hours. A penalty equal to the number of rounds the PC remained in the Rage applies to the check.

Rjurik legend is full of sad tales about battle ragers who valiantly defeated enemies only to recover from the Rage and find a close friend or lover slain by the warrior's own hand. The DM might use this situation to advance the campaign or to provide a character with the Rage with motivation.

Note that ragers are traditionally recognized as having black hair (though this is not a requirement). The DM should consider adjusting a character's appearance in order to remain consistent with this Rjurik trait.

shapechanger

The wilderness of the northern highlands harbors a group of legendary Rjurik—the mysterious shapechangers. These individuals wander the land alone and are blessed (or, in the opinion of many, cursed) with the ability to transform into fearsome, wild creatures.

Rjurik shapechangers are not lycanthropes, and use entirely different rules. Their transformation is voluntary, and when in animal form, they are vulnerable to normal attacks. They also run the risk of becoming so lost in their animal form that they cannot change back.

When a shapechanger trait is identified, the DM selects an appropriate animal or rolls 2d10 on the following table.

2d10 Roll	Animal
2	Bear, brown
3-4	Eagle
5-7	Wolverine
8-10	Owl
11-13	Badger
14-15	Raven
16-17	Stag
18-19	Boar
20	Bear, black

Shapechanging carries an inherent danger; a character who remains in animal form for more than one hour runs the risk of being unable to change back. A PC must make an Intelligence check for each full hour (or portion thereof) beyond the first spent in animal form. The check suffers a penalty equal to the number of continuous hours the character has been an animal. If the check fails, the character must remain in changed form for another hour.

If a character remains in animal form for more hours than his Intelligence score, he is allowed no more Intelligence checks and is permanently trapped in animal form. His intelligence immediately drops to animal level. This does not preclude others from locating the changed character and using magic to restore him, but the character may take no further voluntary actions.

Unless permanently changed, a character is considered to retain his normal human reasoning capacity but gains animal strength, speed, size, armor class, hit points, and so on. Magic use is probably impossible (especially spellcasting that involves material or somatic components). If slain in animal form, the character is dead (no hit points are regained through shifting back to human form upon death), and may not be restored without the intervention of magic.

true fate

True fate is the rarest and most unusual of all the Rjurik special dooms. A character blessed—or cursed—with true fate is believed to be marked by higher powers (destiny, the gods, etc.) for a greater purpose. To this end, the character leads a charmed life and invariably manages to avoid death in unusual ways.

A character with true fate always manages to escape death by a hair's breadth, find a way out of trouble, and avoid misfortune. In game terms, such a character might be the DM's



mechanism to extract a party from a desperate situation or to provide clues to an appropriate course of action.

Characters with true fate are often troubled and unhappy, for they may be visited by visions of the future and the past (see second sight, above), may see omens and portents they do not understand, and may dream of the gods but never realize their plans. That some great fate awaits them is certain; it is the precise nature of this fate which causes distress and uncertainty.

The DM need not determine the precise nature of the character's greater purpose—simply note its existence and keep it in mind throughout the character's life.

DMs should be aware that characters with true fate require planning and foresight, and should be awarded to players who can handle them appropriately. True fate should never be considered a license for foolish behavior—should a character grow so unruly and thoughtless as to endanger friends or use the doom as an excuse for bad conduct, the gods may certainly admit that they made a mistake in granting the character's doom and take steps to correct it, revoking the true fate and perhaps leveling a penalty.

recruiting rjurik warriors

(optional rules)

Despite the peaceful nature of the Rjurik and the fact that they have never fought a war of conquest against another people, the northerners are known as fierce warriors whose skill in battle is unparalleled across the Cerilian continent. The DM may use the following optional rules to help simulate the Rjurik excellence in battle.

rjurik musters

The Rjurik recruit troops as described in the *BIRTHRIGHT Rulebook*, as listed under *Armies and Warfare*. The Rjurik typically train all citizens in combat and warfare from an early age, and are considerably more potent than the levies of other lands.

The DM may therefore allow Rjurik rulers, unlike the leaders of other realms, to raise units of irregulars rather than levies as described under *Building an Army*. Raising a unit of irregulars affects a province's population in the same manner as raising a levy.

new war cards

Most of the details about the new war cards included in this product are self-explanatory, but the following cards require description.

rjurik housecarls

These are well-armed nobles or the personal bodyguards of Rjurik regents or jarls. They are the equivalent of the elite infantry or knights of other lands.

rjurik mariners

These tough, resourceful Rjurik serve as crew aboard Rjurik ships during the fishing season. In other times, they often maintain membership in their regents' standing armies.

rjurik druids

The druids are a vital part of Rjurik society, and will come to the defense of regents and jarls should the Rjurik lands or people be threatened.

In a war card battle in which a Rjurik regent defends against non-Rjurik humans, elves, dwarves, humanoids, or forces led by an awnshegh, the Rjurik player may roll 1d6 at the beginning of each Rjurik movement phase. On a roll of 1, a unit of druids may be deployed in any area (except the enemy reserve) which does not contain an enemy unit. Only one unit of druids may arrive in this manner during the course of a war card battle.



Rjurik druids ignore terrain penalties. They receive a +1 bonus to attacks and defense against humanoid units and any units led by an awnshegh (that is, units stacked with the Awnshegh Commander card from the *Blood Enemies* book).

Druids who participate in battle do not engage in actual combat unless absolutely necessary (or in defense of themselves). The effects of their "attacks," although identical to those produced in melee or missile combat, result instead from magical misdirection, druid spells, deceptions, booby traps, and other nonviolent means. Since a druid's magical attacks do not usually assault a target directly, units that are normally immune to magical attack lose this benefit when fighting druids. Thus, a unit that is immune to magical damage would suffer the effects of a *beat metal* spell.

tribal warriors

Normally, levies may not be carried out in provinces rated as zero (0). Numerous provinces are rated (0) in the Rjurik Highlands; this might put a Rjurik ruler at a disadvantage when facing a well-equipped invader.

The DM may allow Rjurik regents to raise tribal warriors from provinces with ratings of zero. This represents recruiting the nomadic tribal warriors who dwell in these regions, and who can be persuaded to fight out of loyalty to the Rjurik people.

When attempting to recruit tribal warriors from zero-level provinces, the player rolls 1d6. On a roll of 1 or 2, one unit of Rjurik tribal warriors is raised in the province. Otherwise, the tribal Rjurik have either refused to cooperate, or not enough could be found to create an army.

Only one such attempt may be made per domain turn, and only one such unit may be raised from a zero-level province. If a unit raised in this manner is destroyed in battle, the regent may attempt to raise another such unit on the following domain turn. In other words, each zero-level province may support only one tribal warrior unit at a time.

rjurik battle ragers

Battle ragers are the Rjurik equivalent of Vos berserkers. Heedless of injuries to themselves and suicidally brave, battle ragers ignore all F combat results.

rjurik shapeshifters

Rjurik with the ability to shapeshift into wild animals (described earlier) can serve a valuable role in battle. These individuals, who are often shy and unwilling to demonstrate their abilities in front of outsiders, may band together into a military unit to aid in the defense of their realm.

In battle, shapeshifters use their animal forms to ignore terrain penalties. They receive a +1 defense bonus vs. all mounted troops.

the watch

In the wilderness of the Giantdowns, some hardy Rjurik have formed a small army known as The Watch. Their primary concern is defending against the humanoids of the region, especially those under the dominion of the mysterious Ghuralli. Well familiar with the Giantdowns, the Watch ignores terrain penalties when fighting within the Giantdowns.

khurin-azur miners

The dwarves of Khurin-Azur are accomplished miners, and sometimes use their skills to their advantage on the battlefield. To simulate this, during the setup phase of a battle, Khurin-Azur Miners can be placed in *any* area that does not contain enemy units except the enemy reserve.



N*jalgrim's Doom*, a BIRTHRIGHT adventure set in Rjurik, features a plot steeped in Rjurik tradition and beliefs about honor. In their quest to redeem a slain ancestor and put his spirit to rest, PCs must face the Scarlet Baron—the orog warlord who rules the Blood Skull Barony—and foil his plan to increase his might by seizing a powerful, destructive weapon as his own.

njalgrim's doom

Ideally, at least one PC will be a regent; at the minimum, at least one character *must* be

blooded. The adventure, which requires a trip to Høgunmark, should start in one of the realms on the west coast (such as Halskapa or Stjordvik). Making the trip from Hjolvar, Kvigmar, or the Giantdowns in the dead of winter would be all but impossible.

Njalgrim's Doom introduces a new undead monster specific to the Birthright setting: the spectral scion. A full description of this creature follows the adventure.

the adventure

In **Part 1: Apparition**, a joyful mid-winter festival is interrupted by the appearance of a spectral scion—the spirit of a bloodtheft victim—in the feast hall. The spirit points to the highest-ranking regent or scion PC and declares that the character's destiny lies far away, in the wild Høgunmark province of Valkheim. Thus motivated, the PC and companions depart for Valkheim.

Part 2: The Scarlet Baron's Fury involves the PCs in a full-scale invasion of Valkheim by the ferocious orog warriors of the Blood Skull Barony. The PCs discover that the orogs have moved into Valkheim at the behest of Thrakkazz, the Scarlet Baron. Thrakkazz seeks a powerful ancient weapon rumored to lie somewhere in Valkheim.

In **Part 3: Sword of Doom**, the PCs (led by the spectral scion) search for the lost weapon. Their investigation takes them to the burial mound of Hrothwulf, an evil warlord known for having wielded the cursed *tigh-maevril* (tih-MEE-vril) sword *Kinbarrower*. It is this sword that Thrakkazz's forces seek. Upon finding the burial mound, the PCs must fight the weapon's skeletal guardians—and the undead Hrothwulf himself.

Part 4: Njalgrim's End pits the party against the Blood Skull orogs once again. In the process, the spectral scion appears once again and reveals his identity: He is the warrior-jarl Njalgrim, the lead PC's ancestor whom Hrothwulf slew with *Kinbarrower* in an act of betrayal. Njalgrim's spirit comes to the PCs' aid, then hides the sword where no one can ever wield it again. Redeemed and freed from his doom, Njalgrim departs, finally at peace in Erik's arms.

The adventure's **Epilogue** sorts out rewards and future events resulting from *Njalgrim's Doom*.



part I: apparition

Njalgrim's Doom begins on Midwinter Night. This annual celebration elicits great rejoicing, feasting, and drinking among the Rjurik, who know that it heralds shorter nights and the onset of spring. The adventure opens as the regent (ideally a PC), his allies, lieutenants, subjects, and other characters greet the shortest day of winter. Read or paraphrase the following:

It is Midwinter Night. In the great feast hall, sounds of revelry and the warmth of crackling fires and boon companionship help drive away the fearsome chill of winter. It has been a long, cold season. Though frigid days are not yet over, you know that the green of spring soon will come, melting the snows and bringing forth new life in the realms of Erik the Druid.

Tonight marks a time for celebration—drinking toasts to each other's health, to the goodwill of the druids, and to the benevolence of Erik. You and your companions enjoy food and drink saved all winter for this event. Much of the feast has been preserved by druidic enchantment, enabling you to savor fresh fruits, breads, wine, ale, roast boar, pheasant, and even vegetables—so long denied in the chilly isolation of winter. As revelers call out hearty toasts and eat their fill, you feel so warm and content that spring almost seems to have arrived early.

Your joy and happiness end abruptly with the crash of wide-flung hall doors, and a rush of snow-laden wind that drives out the warmth and reduces the once-roaring fires to glowing, whirling cinders. A cold blast of fear permeates the room despite the numerous kith and kin who crowd the hall.

The room grows quiet as a fearsome apparition, clearly a creature of the supernatural, enters. The figure stands a full head higher than the tallest Rjurik warrior in the hall and wears battered but impressive mail armor. Great iron gauntlets cover his hands; a massive claymore rides at one hip. He appears ancient and grizzled, bearing a thick beard, wild hair, and eyes mere points of glittering white light. Swathed entirely in glowing green mist, the figure seems to walk a few inches off the ground.

As all in the hall sit transfixed, the figure approaches you [the highest-ranking PC] and points ominously. "You!" bellows its wavering, eerie voice. "Inexorable fate calls to you. Your destiny—for good or ill—lies to the north, in the province called Valkheim. Ignore the call of fate at your own peril, mortal!"

The apparition is the restless spirit of the ancient Rjurik warrior Njalgrim, an ancestor of the PC in question. He will address the highest-ranking PC in the group (ideally the hosting regent). If necessary, adjust the direction in which the PC's fate lies ("north") to reflect Hognunmark's location from the realm in which the adventure begins.

Once the spectral scion has spoken, the horrified transfixion ends and the characters may react. If they attack Njalgrim, the figure vanishes instantly with an unearthly shriek. If they question him, he will not identify himself; he will reply only that he comes bearing "the words of fate," then fade from view. If the PCs treat Njalgrim with respect, he will cry out "Redeem me, [descendant PC's name]" as he vanishes.

moment of decision

If the players are well-versed in Rjurik culture and beliefs, they should recognize the spirit's appearance and call of destiny as a sign of fate that cannot be ignored. Such conduct would result in a doom more horrifying than any can imagine, and also bring about the eventual decline and destruction of the offender's tribe, clan, or even race.

If the PCs consider ignoring Njalgrim's exhortation, older and wiser Rjurik in the hall will "remind" them that one's fate is unavoidable, and that one has an obligation to pursue his destiny regardless of consequences. The honorable man (or woman), they say, meets his fate with bravery, while the coward flees and thus brings shame and catastrophe upon his house.

In all likelihood, the PCs will immediately realize the necessity of a journey to Valkheim. Should any PCs doubt whether they should accompany the "fated" PC on this journey, elder Rjurik will counsel that it is not only acceptable, but admirable, for one's true companions to share one's fate.



preparations

Of course, a journey to Hogenmark in the dead of winter will be fraught with peril. Snow chokes the roads, rivers are frozen into solid sheets of ice, and stormy, freezing weather ravages the land.

Assume that as native Rjurik, the PCs will know what equipment they need to brave the ferocity of winter. As regents, nobles, or scions, they likely either have or will be able to obtain most of their equipment at little cost and trouble, simply drawing it from stores. Appropriate gear includes fur-lined cloaks, woolen tunics, snow goggles (carved bone goggles with narrow eye slits to eliminate snowblindness), skis, snowshoes, hardy Rjurik ponies, dogs and dogsleds, sleighs, provisions (perishable foods are less likely to spoil in the frozen climate), gloves or mittens, saddles and packs, axes, bows, extra arrows, and anything else the players can think of to aid in wilderness survival.

If the players seem lackadaisical about selecting equipment, remind them that this is a journey through trackless, frozen wilderness, where food and water are at a premium and the cold can freeze flesh and bone. This hint should increase their enthusiasm for provisioning.

Should the DM not wish to take the time or trouble to detail supplies, he may simply assume that the PCs, being wilderness-raised and wise in the ways of the Highlands, bring whatever they need. At the very least, players should state how many day's worth of supplies the party brings. Assume that a day's rations for a human or dog weigh one pound, while food for horses weighs four pounds per day. The characters will need enough sleds, pack animals, and backpacks to carry the required food.

Players should consider whether the characters will bring their bodyguards or retainers. These individuals can aid in the fighting, but most require a share of experience and all must be supplied and appropriately provisioned. Note also the limitations on rangers' followers as described in the *BIRTHRIGHT Rulebook*.

Once preparations are complete, it is probably best for the PCs to depart at dawn. Winter days are short and night travel is all but impossible. So with the words of the as-yet unidentified spirit echoing in their ears, the PCs retire and rest up for the great adventure ahead.

part 2: the scarlet baron's fury

Part two involves the journey north. The PCs face various challenges—natural and otherwise—before arriving in Valkheim just in time to be swept up in a battle resulting from an orog invasion.

This adventure assumes the PCs journey north to Valkheim, though they could approach from other directions depending on their starting point. The various encounters and rules described below are appropriate for all travel in Rjurik.

travel times and distances

If the journey to Valkheim originates along the Taelshore, the trip will be 150–250 miles total; those traveling from inland provinces might have a shorter—though still grueling—journey. Although the coastal realms of



Jankaping, Svinik, Rjurik, and Stjordvik experience somewhat milder weather than do the forests and northern tundra, winter still seals the land beneath a blanket of snow. Travel anywhere in Rjurik is slow and hazardous at this time of year. The region enjoys only six hours of full daylight and two hours of twilight each day, yielding eight hours of travel time. Burdened by supplies, warm clothing, weapons, and other equipment, characters and their mounts may be assumed to labor under heavy encumbrance.

Under these circumstances, the DM may simply set a specific time for the journey (probably three to four weeks), or may roll 2d6 each day to determine the number of miles covered. Note the penalties to this distance roll as detailed in Travel Hazards, below.

travel hazards

The PCs' primary enemy on the journey is winter itself. The northern highlands experience some of the most extreme weather on Cerilia, conditions that will prove a major challenge for the party.

The DM should check weather conditions once per day (or more frequently if desired) by rolling 2d6 on the following simplified weather chart:

2d6 Roll	Weather
2-3	Blizzard
4-6	Heavy snow
7	Light snow
8-10	Clear
11-12	Sleet/freezing rain

The above conditions are assumed to include precipitation, temperature, wind, etc., and affect both travel and the following statistics:

Weather	Str	Dex	Con	MV	AT
Blizzard	-2	-3	-1	-25%	-2
Hvy snow	-1	-2	-1	-20%	-1
Lt snow	—	-1	—	—	-1
Sleet	-1	-3	—	-20%	-2
Clear	—	—	—	+10%	—

Str, Dex, Con: Impose these penalties on Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution based on conditions. For example, an individual with Strength 17 fighting in a blizzard would fight with an effective Strength of only 15.

MV: The DM should apply this percentage penalty (rounded up) to the 2d6 roll for distance traveled. For example, if travel took place in blizzard conditions, a roll of 8 would mean only 6 miles covered.

AT: This is the penalty imposed on attack rolls for individuals fighting in given conditions. For example, an attack roll of 15 becomes 16 in heavy snow.

Assume that characters wear appropriate clothing for the weather—heavy, fur-lined garments, hoods, cloaks, gloves, shoes, etc. Such dress provides adequate protection against most conditions, but injury from cold and wind in extreme situations is possible.

If characters are caught in less protective clothing, use the table below to determine damage. The DM should make a Constitution check each hour that a character is exposed to the condition in question. If the roll fails, the character suffers the stated amount of damage. Prolonged exposure yields increased injury: On the first failed roll, the PC takes light damage, on the second and third failed rolls he takes moderate damage, and on the fourth and subsequent failed rolls he takes heavy damage. Note that certain extreme weather conditions reduce a character's Constitution rating (see above).

Weather Condition	Damage (Light)	Damage (Moderate)	Damage (Heavy)
Blizzard	1d2	1d4	1d6
Hvy. snow	1	1d3	1d4
Lt. snow	—	1d2	1d3
Sleet	—	1	1d2
Clear	—	—	1

The DM should exercise discretion when using the above table. Needless to say, rolling once per hour of game time per character over a 20-30 day journey would become tedious. The DM should skip uneventful days and ask

for rolls only when time and game play permit. Further, the effects of exposure can be reduced: For example, characters sleeping in a tent (thus sheltered from a blizzard) do not require rolls, nor would characters riding in a wagon, bundled up on a sled, etc.

foraging and supplies

As noted, the players should state the quantity of rations the party brings. If the DM chooses to roll for distance traveled each day, there is a chance that the PCs will run out of food.

Should this occur, the party can survive without food for 1d6 days with no ill effects. After this point, characters must make Constitution checks each full day they go without food, with a cumulative -1 penalty for each roll after the first. A failed roll results in the following effects: -1 Strength, -1 Constitution, -1d4 hit points; all losses are cumulative. Once the incapacitated PCs have obtained sufficient food, all penalties are recovered after 2d4 days.

A few animals remain in the snow-covered wilderness—wolves, rabbits, small rodents, deer, elk, reindeer—but these are scarce and

some are shy. Starving PCs may be forced to hunt, in which case individuals with the Tracking, Hunting, or Survival proficiencies may make proficiency checks to find game; others must make Intelligence checks at a -4 penalty. Once game has been found, however, the PCs must still catch it.

encounters

The DM may roll for normal combat-oriented encounters—humanoid raiders, ambushes, wild animals, and so on—but the following encounters specific to the Rjurik setting may be played out to advance the story and to provide a Highlands flavor to the journey. They may occur at any point in the trip (except where noted, in which case the encounter's location is important).

starving wolves

Those animals that do not hibernate face bleak prospects in Rjurik's harsh winters. The wolves of the Highlands, deprived of prey, experience great hardships. Many of them die during the season; those that survive are desperate, willing to attack even prey they would normally avoid—such as humans.



This encounter can occur anywhere along the party's route and can take place more than once. The number of wolves that attacks the party should be based upon the number of individuals in the expedition: 1–3 wolves per party member, including bodyguards, retainers, and followers. The wolves may attack the party while it is on the march or after it has camped for the night. They are cunning predators, and use such tactics as feints, flanking attacks, and ambushes. Use the following statistics for the wolves:

Wolves (1d3 per party member): AC 7; MV 18; HD 3; hp 12 each; THACO 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1 (bite); SD +1 vs. *charm*; SZ S (3'–4' tall); ML average (10); Int low (5–7); AL N; XP 120 each.

Although on the surface this could be just another combat encounter, Rjurik characters, raised in the Highlands and educated by the druids in the ways of Erik, might find themselves reluctant to unnecessarily kill the wolves. While Erik condones killing in self-defense or out of necessity, the druids believe that as rational beings humans are obligated to minimize unnecessary killing. The DM should make certain that Rjurik characters are aware of this aspect of their culture, but should allow the party to deal with the wolves as they see fit.

The party receives normal XP for slain wolves, but those characters who go out of their way to avoid killing more wolves than necessary (by using debilitating magic, for example) should receive double XP for their dutiful behavior.

standing stones

When the party travels through a particularly wild and unsettled region, read the following aloud:

You enter a large circular clearing surrounded by tall, snow-covered trees. Strangely, the amount of snow decreases as you move toward the heart of the clearing. In the center, entirely free of snow, a large circle of short stones surrounds a tall, carved column. As you approach the column, you see that intricate carvings cover its surface.

Even more amazing, in the snow-free area within the circle you see green grass and small white flowers blooming in the dead of winter.

The area within the ring of standing stones is completely free of snow, and maintains a temperature of 50–60 degrees Fahrenheit. It is a specially blessed druidic shrine, available for use by travelers. Once within the circle, damage from cold or starvation will heal in 1d4 hours, and neither food nor drink need be consumed while the party remains. The circle is over 100 feet in diameter, probably sufficient for the entire party to take shelter.

The stones are carved with intricate spiral and knotted patterns, while the central monolith is inscribed with prayers to Reynir, the Rjurik's original patron deity. Also carved into the column is a great, serpentine creature; a successful Ancient History proficiency check will reveal it as a dragon.

If the party chooses to spend the night in the circle, all members will have prophetic dreams (see "Special Dooms" in the "New Rules" chapter of this book). Njalgrim's descendent, however, will have a particularly vivid dream. Take the player aside and read or paraphrase the following:

You see the misty form of the spirit from the feast hovering before you, hanging motionless in glowing mist. His eyes are closed and he seems to sleep. Abruptly, his eyes open, glowing red. His head rises and he fixes you with a stare of deadly intensity. As he did at the feast, he stabs a finger at you and cries out in an eerie voice full of pain and desperation.

"Your destiny lies ahead of you! It cannot be changed or escaped! Your destiny is to redeem my memory, and to find that which stole my heritage." His face grows harsh. "Bloodsilver! Cursed bloodsilver!"

You awake with a start, but see that all is as you left it.

"Bloodsilver" refers to tighmaevril (see the *BIRTHRIGHT Rulebook*), a metal capable of severing a regent's ties to his own domain and passing half of the regent's bloodline strength to his killer. As the characters will learn, Njalgrim was slain by a bloodsilver weapon, leaving his spirit unable to find peace.

The party may remain in the circle for 1d4 days, after which its beneficial effects will vanish and snow will once more cover it.

fhoimorien attack

Many species suffer in the winter, including the fearsome *fhoimorien*, the misshapen giants who inhabit the northern woods. Though they are capable of surviving long periods without food, hunger gnaws at fhoimorien in the same manner as it does other beings. The presence of a party of humans and pack animals could present the opportunity for an unexpected feast.

Though not of high intelligence, the fhoimorien are quite skilled at setting ambushes. The snow-covered land provides numerous opportunities for traps and many hiding places, so when a party is sighted, the giants can circle ahead to prepare. The DM should use the Fhoimorien Ambush map when the party nears the fhoimorien position. The exact number of giants should be based upon the size of the party (including fighting retainers, etc.): one giant for every 5–6 character levels.

Fhoimoriens: AC 3; MV 9; HD 13+3; hp 42 each (weakened by hunger); THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4+8 (fists + strength bonus); SA surprise; SD surprised on a 1 only; SZ H (13' tall); ML elite (14); Int average (8); AL NE; XP 6,000 each.

Note: More information about Cerilian fhoimorien can be found on Cardsheet 7 in the *BIRTHRIGHT* boxed set.

A. Forest. The surrounding woods are quite thick. The trail grows narrow and deep in snow at this point.

B. Hidden Fhoimorien. Each of these positions hides one fhoimorien crouching in a shallow, snow-covered depression, waiting for the attack to begin.

C. Chieftain. The chief of the fhoimorien tribe (use the same statistics as the other fhoimoriens) hides here. When the party reaches point D, he rushes forward, screaming loudly to signal the others.

D. Trench. Having guessed the party's route, the fhoimorien spent several minutes frantically excavating a 4-foot-deep trench across the trail, then covered it with snow.

When the lead party member(s) reaches point D, he must make a Dexterity check at a –6 penalty or tumble into the trench (along with any riding animal, sleigh, etc.). The next individuals must make a normal Dexterity roll to avoid falling in; no other party members need check. Individuals who fall into the trench take 2d4 rounds to climb out and may be attacked by fhoimorien as they do so. All attack rolls by individuals in the trench receive a –4 penalty (in addition to any penalties due to the weather). The fhoimorien have an easier time hitting such characters as well, receiving a +2 attack bonus.

Once the first characters encounter the trench, the fhoimorien at point C attack, followed one round later by all the hidden fhoimorien at points B.

Hungry and cold, any fhoimorien who kills its opponent will stay with the body for 1d3 rounds, biting off chunks of flesh and exulting messily. So hungry and cold are the giants, in fact, that a feeding fhoimorien will not even feel or react to attacks while dining.

the wanderer

After the battle with the fhoimorien, or any other especially rough or damaging encounter, the PCs may meet the well-known Rjurik druid known as Jorrik the Wanderer. When appropriate, read or paraphrase the following:



A lone figure appears from the snow-covered trees that surround you. The tall, thin man is dressed in a long green tunic and fur-lined cloak. He carries a staff and a backpack, his bearded face quiet and serene. For a moment, you all stand in silence regarding each other.

At last, the man speaks. "I am called Jorrik," he says. "What quest brings you to these frozen forests when you should be safe inside a warm mead-hall with your family and boon companions?"

Many Rjurik, especially druids and those with the Local History proficiency, will recognize Jorrik as a legendary druidic wanderer, famous for his defense of the innocent and his acts of noble self-sacrifice.

Jorrik will invite the party to share his camp, located nearby. The surprisingly secure and comfortable space under the trees features a small wooden shelter, a smoldering fire for warmth, and covered stone firepit nearby. Jorrik builds such a camp each winter, then restores the area to its original state

come spring. The PCs are fortunate (or, as the Rjurik would say, fated) to meet Jorrik, for he can provide supplies, heal wounds and the effects of hunger, and act as a valuable source of information. (See the "Personalities" section of this book for full statistics and a description of Jorrik.)

The Wanderer will prove both friendly and enlightened, asking no reward for his services save a promise that the Rjurik will continue to live in harmony with Erik and his works. Should any of the party ask Jorrik about the spirit at the feast (the still-unidentified Njalgrim), he will provide information to the best of his ability.

◆ If asked about the original visitation, Jorrik responds, "I have heard of such things. Oftentimes, those who died with business unfinished or as a result of treachery wander the land, desiring vengeance but unable to exact it in their ghostly state. Sometimes such individuals will speak to their descendants and ask for aid. Did this spectral scion appear to



be an ancestor of yours?" (Because Njalgrim lived so long ago, no images of him survived; his descendant cannot know at this point that he was an ancestor.)

- ◆ If asked about events in Valkheim, Jorrik says, "I have heard that the foul orogs of the Blood Skull Barony muster for war. It must be a terrible cause, indeed, for the creatures to consider invasion at this time of year, when winter's blanket lies thick and cold upon the land. Their leader, the orog known as the Scarlet Baron, is known to seek conquest of human lands—perhaps he feels that an attack during winter will catch the Hoguns unawares. I have sent raven messengers to Queen Freila to warn her of the coming struggle; perhaps she has had time to send warriors to repel the orog attack."
- ◆ If asked about bloodsilver, Jorrik says, "Ah, the cursed metal. The elves call it tigh-maevril. Weapons made from bloodsilver sever the ties between regent and land, and steal the strength of his bloodline. If your spirit was slain by bloodsilver, he would have justification indeed for wandering the land in search of vengeance."

Jorrik will answer other questions as completely as possible. After all the PCs are healed, fed, and rested, he will tacitly suggest that they move on. If he knows of their mission, he will suggest that the Hoguns might appreciate their aid should the orogs indeed attack Valkheim.

avalanche

Snows accumulate in great volume, especially in hilly country, valleys, or mountains. As the PCs travel through hills or valleys, the DM may wish to throw in an avalanche—if for no other reason than to prove that monsters and snowstorms are not the only perils in the far north.

The party should first perceive a low rumbling sound and a deep vibration. At this point, the characters should be allowed to react—flee, seek shelter, etc.

Those caught in the open by an avalanche take 2d10 points of damage from the impact. Those behind obstructions can avoid damage altogether, but must make a Strength check in order to avoid being swept away and taking the above damage. Those who try to flee or jump out of the way must make a Dexterity check. Those who succeed take half damage.

Characters caught in the avalanche become

buried under 2d3 feet of snow. Buried characters may attempt to dig themselves free, but must make a Strength check each round. A successful check moves the buried character 1 foot closer to the surface. Buried characters can survive for 1d6+4 rounds before running out of air. After air has run out, the buried PC must make a Constitution check each round. A failed check indicates that the character has suffocated and is either dead or near death (at the DM's discretion).

Characters who are not buried have a 10% cumulative chance per round of finding buried individuals, and can dig 1d3 feet per round to rescue them. Each additional character digging adds +1 foot per round.

arrival

After surviving the many hazards of Rjurik's winter, the PCs arrive at the Hogunmark province of Valkheim. They most likely will not know they have arrived until they encounter the winter camp of the Aegilsgard tribe. Here, since the invasion of which Jorrik spoke is underway, the normally quiet winter life of the tribe is in turmoil. Read or paraphrase the following:

Ahead of you, strangely incongruous in the quiet of the winter woods, you hear the sound of loud voices, the clank of metal, and urgent shouts. Hurrying forward, you spy what appears to be a winter tribal encampment—a circle of low shelters built from fallen wood, a central firepit, and a long structure built from logs, with twin torches burning near its entrance.

The camp is in chaos. Fur-clad men and women run back and forth, some gathering up weapons and strapping on armor, others leading family members and the elderly to shelters. Several armored warriors in tabards bearing the arms of Hogunmark also bustle about the encampment, shouting orders, leading horses, or looking about aimlessly.

One of the tribal warriors, a grizzled man wearing fur set with round metal plates and carrying a notched claymore at his belt, catches sight of you and shouts, "You! Are you with the queen's army? You come at a fine time—the Blood Skulls have slaughtered the queen's soldiers and advance this way!"



The PCs may react to this situation as they choose. The old man is the tribal chief, Gunnar Aegilsgaard. He informs the party that the Blood Skull orogs have invaded, destroyed the Hogenmark troops sent to defend the province, and approach to overrun his tribe's camp. Needless to say, he requests the party's aid in no uncertain terms.

In all likelihood, Rjurik characters' sense of honor and kinship with all other Rjurik will provide them with sufficient motivation to help the Aegilsgaard defend their camp. If the PCs insist on fleeing, not only will they be overtaken by the orogs in the forest and forced to fight anyway, but also word of their cowardice will spread throughout Rjurik lands—they run the risk of severe censure and possible exile from their tribes. Non-Rjurik who flee will simply reinforce the northerners' belief that all foreigners are cowards.

battle!

The players and DM have two options in the coming battle. They may fight the engagement as a skirmish or use the BIRTHRIGHT War Card system—or combine the two methods (see below).

resolving the battle as a skirmish

If the DM chooses to run the battle as a skirmish, the party fights a group consisting of 1d3 orogs per character and ally NPCs, using the Aegilsgaard Camp map. If the party includes a large number of followers, the DM may choose to have only PCs fight the orogs. The orogs also have several allies that the DM may include as desired to provide a greater challenge for the adventurers.

Orogs (1d3 per party member): AC 4 (chain mail and shield); MV 6 (moderately encumbered); HD 3; hp 15 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+2 (broad swords + damage bonus); SW -2 penalty to attack and saving throws in bright sunlight; SZ M (6' tall); ML champion (16); Int high (11); AL LE; XP 100 each.

Orog Chieftain: AC 4 (chain mail and shield); MV 6 (moderately encumbered); HD 6; hp 28; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+4 (broad sword + damage bonus); SW -2 penalty to attack and saving throws in bright sunlight; SZ M (6' tall); ML champion (16); Int high (11); AL LE; XP 175.

Notes: These orogs are fanatical warriors filled with loyalty to the Scarlet Baron, who ordered them to take this province—at the cost of their lives if necessary. Their heightened morale factor reflects the depths of their fanaticism. Additional details about orogs can be found on Cardsheet 8 in the BIRTHRIGHT boxed set.

Goblins (common): AC 7 (leather armor and shield); MV 6 (lightly encumbered); HD 1-1; hp 4 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short sword); SZ S (4' tall); ML average (10); Int low (7); AL LE; XP 35 each.

Notes: The goblins of the Blood Skull Barony have joined this invasion in hope of plunder and food. They are nowhere near as dedicated as the orogs and therefore must check morale as soon as their losses exceed 20 percent of their total force. Additional details about Cerilian goblins can be found on Cardsheet 8 in the BIRTHRIGHT boxed set.

Ogres: AC 5; MV 9; HD 4+1; hp 20 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10+2 (damage bonus); SA +2 to damage; SZ L (9' tall); ML steady (11); Int low (8); AL CE; XP 270 each.

Notes: These ogres are mercenaries well paid by the Scarlet Baron and promised a share of any booty from the invasion.

resolving the battle through war cards

By choosing to resolve the battle with the War Card system, the DM and players will enact one front of the full invasion (with the PCs participating as part of the force at the encampment site). Players, if they wish, may maneuver the defending War Cards themselves, acting as the overall commanders for the battle.

The defending forces consist of local tribesmen and the remnants of the force sent by the queen. The players may place one Woods or Bog card on the battlefield before combat begins. The defense force is as follows:

- ◆ 2 units of Rjurik Irregulars.
- ◆ 1 unit of Rjurik Infantry.
- ◆ 1 unit of Tribal Warriors.
- ◆ 1 Adventurers card (representing the PC party) stacked with one of the above cards.

The attackers are one wing of the Scarlet Baron's elite invasion force:

- ◆ 2 units of Blood Skull Orog.
- ◆ 1 unit of Scarlet Baron's Own.
- ◆ 1 unit of Blood Skull Goblins.

PCs may deploy and command the troops as they see fit. Note any blood abilities (such as battlewise) or proficiencies (such as Strategy) that might aid PCs in the battle.

The DM may, if he desires, combine the War Card and skirmish methods of resolution by suspending the War Card battle when the units with the Adventurers card become engaged. PCs then participate in individual combat against the opponents outlined in "Resolving the Battle as a Skirmish." The results of those encounters determine the outcome of that War Card round; the War Card battle then resumes until finished.

the aftermath

If the combat was run exclusively with War Cards, the DM should adjudicate how much damage each character took based upon the battle's outcome. If victorious, each character should suffer no more than 50% total hit points in damage. If the Rjurik were defeated, some PCs—especially fighters and those likely to be in the forefront of the fight—may have lost 75% or more hit points. The DM should avoid arbitrarily declaring PCs to be dead, though NPCs and members of the adventurers' retinues could easily have perished in the battle.

If the PCs won the battle, the Aegilsgaard camp is saved. The orog invasion presses forward into Valkheim elsewhere, but here they have been stopped. The following scene takes place in the camp as the Rjurik repair damage, tend to their wounded, and express their gratitude to the adventurers.

If the PCs lost, orogs overrun the camp. They burn buildings and slay numerous tribesmen and -women before moving on, shrieking and exulting. They do not occupy the camp, as their objective takes them elsewhere in the province. The following scene takes place in the camp's smoking ruins, where a battered handful of Rjurik warriors search for survivors and bury the dead with tearful prayers to Erik.

the prisoner

Regardless of the battle's outcome, the PCs will capture a wounded goblin who survived the combat. Read the following out loud:

You hear a low moan from a pile of goblin bodies. Looking closer, you see one of them moving feebly. As you watch, the "corpse's" eyes spring open. Screaming, the goblin leaps to his feet. He turns and tries to run, limping badly.

If the PCs pursue the goblin, they easily catch him. His name is Gribbix, and he jabbbers in heavily-accented Rjurik that he never felt much enthusiasm about the entire invasion to begin with, they made him go, he was only following orders, if the PCs don't let him go the Scarlet Baron will get them, he didn't really mean any harm, he kind of likes humans and would never actually hurt anyone, he's studying to be a priest, he's a vegetarian, and so on.

Gribbix is most interested in self-preservation. Even without intensive interrogation he will offer to tell the PCs anything they want to ask. He knows that the Scarlet Baron ordered the invasion less than a week ago, and that there are "many, many" orogs and goblins invading. He also tells the PCs of fhoimorien and ogres who jumped on the bandwagon and joined the invasion.

The most important bit of news, however, comes if the PCs ask Gribbix why the Scarlet Baron invaded. Even if they don't ask, the goblin eventually volunteers the information.

"I'll tell you why the Scarlet Baron attacked your people, I will," the goblin jabbbers. "I tell you 'cause I'm a good person, and I wouldn't really hurt anyone, and they made me come and I only pretended to fight. I tell you why we attacked, and then you let me go, right?"

Without pausing for a reply, Gribbix continues. "He wants the sword. That's what the orogs say, that's what the chieftain told 'em, and the orog chieftain is the baron's good buddy. Yeah, good buddy. The baron wants a special sword that's in a big mound here in this place . . . a place where a human like you folks is buried. It's a magic sword—yeah, magic. It takes powers from other people. They said it was made by someone special. Someone called 'Timmy Vrill.' Yeah. It's a special

kinda silver, and some elf named Timmy Vrill made it a long time ago. Said it was in a place where a man is buried. That's why we attacked. The baron wants the sword. Says it'll make him powerful."

Characters familiar with bloodsilver will realize that "Timmy Vrill" is actually Gribbix's mispronunciation of tighmaevril. If the PCs aren't swift enough to figure this out themselves, a tribal elder who survived the battle will help them make the connection.

The PCs can deal with Gribbix in any fashion they choose; they should be more concerned about dealing with the information he has provided.

Surviving tribe members will reveal that the province holds only one major burial mound, located less than a day's march north. It belongs to an ancient, evil Rjurik warlord named Hrothwulf who ravaged the region over a century ago. Local Rjurik avoid the place, believing it cursed.

This information alone should be enough to send the PCs to the burial mound. If it isn't, another survivor of the battle remembers that Hrothwulf is said to have wielded a powerful magical sword. If the PCs require further motivation, someone observes idly that if the Scarlet Baron ever got his hands on such a weapon, his realm would become an even greater threat.

By this point the day grows late and the sky threatens snow. If the PCs choose to set out at dawn, they can spend the night with the surviving Aegilsgaard tribesfolk—in the tribal longhouse if the orogs were defeated, or huddling in makeshift shelters if the camp was overrun.

part 3: sword of doom

With much of the province overrun by orogs searching for the lost burial mound, the PCs will have to move quickly. The party travels north through heavy snows, experiencing along the way whatever encounters the DM deems appropriate. These may include attacks by bands of orog invaders or evidence of the orogs' presence (in the form of slain Rjurik or trampled, bloodstained snow). The journey takes 1d4+3 hours.

hrothwulf returns

When the party arrives at the burial site, read the following aloud:

Before you lies a clearing dotted with low mounds arrayed about a central mound that is perhaps twice the height of a man. Atop the central mound sits a carved monolith, but the thick blanket of snow covering everything prevents you from discerning any details. All is still and silent; a light snow falls.

Allow the party to make any preparations they feel necessary to approach the mound.

Brittle cracking and crunching sounds fill the air, as if ice and hard-packed snow were being broken up and pushed aside. All around you, the mounds begin to shake and heave, their snow-topped surfaces splitting into chunks of ice and frozen earth.

Nightmarish figures arise. Once human, they still wear remnants of chain armor and helmets and clutch rusty swords. But now they are skeletal creatures, rising up out of the ground and shambling toward you.

An eerie keening sound emanates from the central mound. This mound, too, has opened up and disgorged its occupant—no ordinary, shambling undead thing. It wears dark armor and moves with dread purpose, its burning eyes fixed upon you. It wields a silver blade which pulses with malignant energy.



The guardians, all normal skeletons, total 25. This number can be increased if followers accompany the PCs.

Skeletons (25): AC 7; MV 12; HD 1; hp 6 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; SD immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, *fear*, half damage from edged or piercing weapons; SZ M (6' tall); Int non (0); AL N; XP 65 each.

The horrifying creature from the center mound is Hrothwulf, now transformed into a warrior skeleton by the various curses he accumulated during his wicked life. Hrothwulf wields the tighmaevril sword *Kinbarrower*, the weapon that slew the unfortunate Njalgrim many years previously. Once blooded, the now-undead Hrothwulf has no blood abilities. His sword, however, will still sever the ties between regent and land if it kills such a character.

Hrothwulf (Skeleton, Warrior): AC 2; MV 6; HD 9+2; hp 48; THAC0 11 (includes +3 due to SA); #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 (two-handed sword); SA +3 to attack roll, creatures of fewer than 5 HD (except blooded PCs) flee; SD only magical weapons (and normal weapons wielded by blooded PCs) can hit, cannot be turned; MR 90%; SZ M (7' tall); ML champion (15); Int exceptional (15); AL NE; XP 4,000.

Notes: Once a powerful, dangerous warlord, Hrothwulf raided and pillaged this region of Hognunmark, wielding the sword *Kinbarrower*, a weapon whose evil nature invariably corrupted its user. Today, his evil nature has kept him bound to the land, surviving as an undead creature.

Though he is a warrior skeleton, Hrothwulf is played a bit differently from the description in the *MONSTROUS MANUAL*. First, he is a self-willed individual, not controlled by a circlet as other warrior skeletons.

Second, all NPCs below 4th level (in all likelihood, most of the party's followers) automatically panic and flee at the horrifying sight of the undead Hrothwulf. Blooded PCs are immune to Hrothwulf's fear effects. Unblooded PCs must save vs. spell or flee for 1d4 rounds.

Third, although warrior skeletons are affected only by magical weapons, the undead Hrothwulf can be hit by normal weapons wielded by blooded characters. This vulnerability is unique to Hrothwulf and does not extend to other undead of the same type.

Should the PCs find themselves on the verge of defeat, the DM may rule that after the party destroys Hrothwulf, the remaining skeletons crumble to dust.

part 4: njalgrim's end

Once Hrothwulf's skeleton has been slain, the characters will probably attempt to take possession of the sword *Kinbarrower*. Before they can do so, however, a chorus of savage yells erupts from the woods at the edge of the barrow-field. Read the following aloud:

A horde of orogs, goblins and ogres races from the surrounding forests, scattering snow, bellowing war cries, and brandishing weapons.

In the midst of the attacking humanoids, you see a particularly fierce-looking orog mounted on a great, muscular wolf. His voice rises above the shrieks and whoops of his warriors.

"I am Lord Zhallvur, Armored Fist of the Scarlet Baron! Surrender the sword and I may let you escape with your lives!"

Of course, Zhallvur, one of Thrakkazz's most trusted lieutenants, has no intention of letting the party escape (and probably couldn't restrain his warriors even if he did). In any event, the PCs never even get a chance to surrender because their attackers fall upon them in no time. Until Njalgrim's appearance, Zhallvur remains safely in the background and does not join the battle.

At the DM's discretion, some or all of the NPCs who fled at Hrothwulf's appearance may return to participate in the battle.

Orogs (200): AC 4 (chain mail and shield); MV 6 (moderately encumbered); HD 3; hp 15 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+2 (broad swords + damage bonus); SW -2 penalty to attack and saving throws in bright sunlight; SZ M (6' tall); ML champion (16); Int high (11); AL LE; XP 100 each.



Orog Leaders (20): AC 2 (plate mail and shield); MV 6 (moderately encumbered); HD 4; hp 21; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+3 (broad swords + damage bonus); SW -2 penalty to attack and saving throws in bright sunlight; SZ M (6' tall); ML champion (16); Int high (11); AL LE; XP 175 each.

Goblins (common): AC 7 (leather armor and shield); MV 6 (lightly encumbered); HD 1-1; hp 4 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short sword); SZ S (4' tall); ML average (10); Int low (7); AL LE; XP 35 each.

Ogres: AC 5; MV 9; HD 4+1; hp 20 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10+2 (damage bonus); SA +2 to damage; SZ L (9' tall); ML steady (11); Int low (8); AL CE; XP 270 each.

njalgrim redeemed

The fight continues for as long as the DM thinks appropriate. Foes continue to attack, rising up to take the place of fallen comrades until all seems completely lost for the party.

Anyone who picks up *Kinbarrower* will find that it functions as a *broad sword +1* and has no other special abilities (assuming it is not being wielded against a blooded opponent).

Just when all seems blackest and the party seems doomed, read the following:

Beset on all sides by furious orogs, goblins, and ogres, you begin to lose hope. The enemy's numbers appear endless and your own reserves are rapidly depleting. Even the menacing sword seized from the undead warrior seems unable to turn the tide against your foes.

Then the air shimmers. Above the barrow appears the glowing form of the spirit who first sent you on this journey. He looks strangely different now—prouder, stronger, his armor new and shining, his face determined. The orogs, goblins, and ogres falter, staring up at the apparition with fearful expressions.

"I am Njalgrim!" he declares, moving toward you. "I was slain by the mortal form of the thing that dwelt in this barrow! My ties to my land were severed by the cursed blade Kinbarrower. With the sword's destruction, my doom shall be lifted. I shall pass on to union with blessed Erik and become once more part of the land I loved so! Give me the sword!"

In all likelihood, the PCs will give Njalgrim the weapon. If they hesitate or refuse, the ties between weapon and victim prove so strong that *Kinbarrower* itself leaps from the hands of the character holding it into the waiting grip of Njalgrim. Read the following out loud:



The spectral scion that was once Njalgrim grows still further in stature as he takes up the ancient weapon.

"I am Njalgrim," he repeats, addressing [the lead PC]. "I am your ancestor; we are bound by the power of the blood! You have freed me. I am forever in your debt!"

Njalgrim's spirit turns his ferocious gaze upon the crowd of fearful humanoids that now surrounds you.

"You have troubled my descendant!" he declares. "You have sought the weapon whose very touch is death! Flee from me while you still can, Spawn of Azrai, servants of evil!"

With that, Njalgrim strides into battle, hewing back and forth with the mighty bloodsilver blade.

No further humanoids join the battle, and those who remain must check morale or flee. The PCs may now counter-attack, standing shoulder-to-shoulder with the vengeful spirit whose weapon cuts a bloody swath through the orogs, goblins, and ogres. Let the melee proceed for a few minutes, ending with the Blood Skull warriors falling back and fleeing in terror (but their leader remains).

Njalgrim approaches Zhallvur, the orog warlord who still sits nearby astride his war-wolf. To his credit, the orog does not quail or flee, but meets the spirit's attack bravely—

And futilely. Kinharrower rises and falls; the fearsome orog lies dead at Njalgrim's feet.

At this point (if they have not already) the remaining humanoids break and run into the forest, flinging weapons aside, all thoughts forgotten save self-preservation.

The forest grows quiet once more, silent as the death that surrounds you.

"You have redeemed me, kinsman," says Njalgrim solemnly. "I now leave, to present this weapon to Erik himself before I return to the land that gave me birth. The Great Druid will destroy it and end its evil forever. Know that this day you have fulfilled a mighty destiny, and that though now is not the time of your death, when it comes it shall be glorious."

With that, the weary spirit fades from view, the sword Kinharrower fading with him.

part 5: epilogue

The characters have completed the adventure and freed the spirit of Njalgrim from his doom. They may seek shelter with the Aegilsgaard tribe, who tend to their wounds and offer supplies for the return journey. Tribal druids may be called in to offer healing. The tribesmen are all grateful to the characters for their aid in repulsing the orogs (even if they lost the first battle), and may be considered allies or friends in future adventures.

Experience must be divided equally among PCs and their followers. Note any penalties incurred by characters (such as rangers) for bringing large numbers of followers (per the *BIRTHRIGHT Rulebook*).

The PCs may receive bonuses as appropriate. These need not be shared with followers, since they are given directly to individuals.

If Njalgrim was successfully freed and the sword disposed of, each PC receives a bonus of 1,000 XP for completing the adventure's objective. If the battle in the Aegilsgaard camp ended in victory, each PC gains an additional 250 XP, plus another 250 XP for particularly brave or resourceful acts. For dishonorable or cowardly acts by Rjurik characters (who value bravery and honor above all else), subtract 100 to 250 XP per act.

The DM can, if he wishes, play out the journey back to the PCs' home with a few minor adventures along the way.



spectral scion

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any
FREQUENCY:	Very rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Night
DIET:	Nil
INTELLIGENCE:	Average to high
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Varies
NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	2
MOVEMENT:	15
HIT DICE:	9
THACO:	12
NO. OF ATTACKS:	2
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1d8/1d8 or by weapon
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Con drain, bloodline drain
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Hit only by +1 or better weapon, immune to tighmaevril weapons
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	See below
SIZE:	M
MORALE:	Champion (15)
XP VALUE:	5,000

A spectral scion is the spirit of a bloodthief victim who was killed with a tighmaevril weapon. Not all people killed in such a manner become spectral scions, but those who do relive daily the horror of losing their bloodlines; they spend eternity attempting to find peace.

Spectral scions are semitransparent, much like spectres or ghosts. They retain the same age, features, size, manner of dress, and demeanor they had in life, including alignment, proficiencies, languages, and memories. They move by walking or floating a few inches above the ground, and can appear or vanish at will.

Combat: Spectral scions of nonevil alignments will attack their direct descendants or former comrades **only** in self-defense (unless those individuals betrayed them in life). A spectral scion, regardless of alignment, will single-mindedly fight the person who stole its bloodline, draining the person's bloodline before delivering the killing blow.

If the spectral scion died holding a weapon, that weapon becomes part of its spectral form; it will use that weapon in combat. Otherwise, it fights with its hands for 1d8 points of damage each.

A spectral scion temporarily drains 1d4 points of Constitution from its victim with each successful hit. A victim whose Constitution drops to 0 falls into a coma for one hour. If the victim is bloodied, the spectral scion takes advantage of the coma to drain 1d6 points of bloodline strength per turn. The spectral scion can drain a victim to no less than 1 point. After draining 4d6 bloodline points, the creature is sated and departs.

While draining, the spectral scion is vulnerable to attack and can be hit by normal weapons for half damage.

The victim of bloodline drain will awaken from the coma with 1



Constitution point; Constitution returns at a rate of 2 points per hour. If the victim lost 90% or more of his bloodline, he loses all blood abilities.

If the drained victim can find the spectral scion within seven days and deliver the killing blow to it, he may regain some of his lost bloodline. If the spirit has drained a subsequent victim in that time, however, the first victim's points are lost forever. Ten percent of the victim's points are permanently lost each day after the bloodline drain; thus, if a victim kills the spectral scion four days after draining, he regains 60% of his bloodline points.

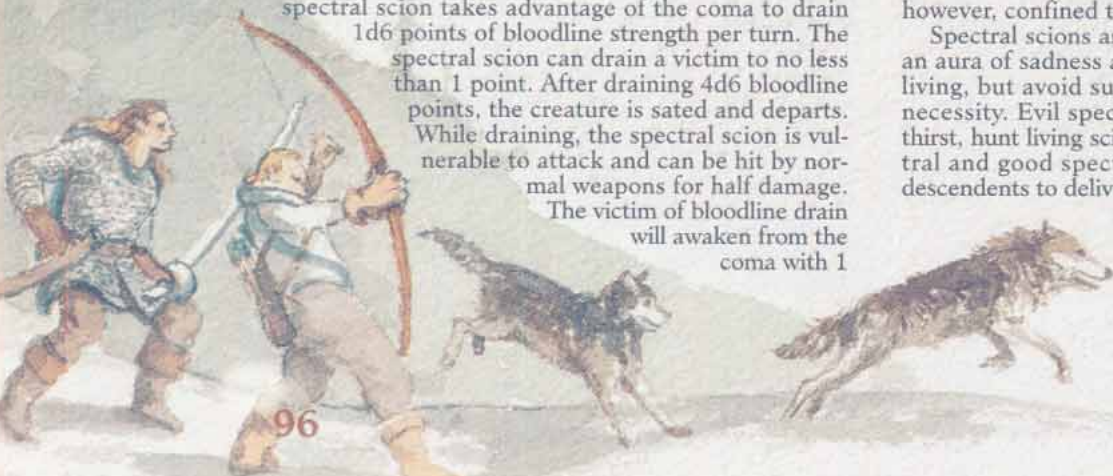
The manner in which the spectral scion lost its life makes it immune to damage from tighmaevril weapons. If such a weapon is used by an opponent, the spirit will attempt to wrest it from the wielder's control and destroy it.

Spectral scions are immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, and cold-based spells, as well as *poison* and *paralyzation* attacks. Holy water splashed on an evil spectral scion inflicts 2d4 points of damage.

Habitat/Society: Because grief over their lost birthright fuels their existence, spectral scions often haunt their former domains. These spirits are not, however, confined to their former domains.

Spectral scions are lonely creatures surrounded by an aura of sadness and loss. They can speak with the living, but avoid such contact unless driven to it by necessity. Evil spectral scions, consumed by bloodthirst, hunt living scions to drain their bloodlines; neutral and good spectral scions sometimes appear to descendants to deliver warnings or ask to be avenged.

Ecology: Spectral scions have no physiological functions, though they sometimes engage in habits they formed in life.



Rjurik Timeline

Date	Event	Date	Event
-3500	Founding of Lluabright.	1031	Svinik declares independence from the Empire.
-400	First Rjuven settlements are established.	1032	Halskapa and the remaining Rjurik realms declare independence from the Empire.
-220	Rjuven wars with the elves begin.	1100	Anuirean influence completely banished from the Rjurik lands.
-190	Death of the Old High Druid Sigvar; Njarl Sunbow succeeds him.	1334	Founding of Kvigmar.
0	Battle of Mount Deismaar.	1436	Llaeddra ascends to the throne of Lluabright.
2	First Rjurik nations are founded.	1498	Halskapan delegation into the Siren's realm is slain.
14	Rjurik defeat Anuireans at the Battle of Dankmaar.	1504	Fulgar wrests control of the province of Yvarre from the jarl Norvlad.
15	Roele wages war on the Rjurik but is repelled.	1504	Hjolvar is founded by King Uldviik.
22	Battles between the Anuireans and Rjurik end in stalemate.	1512	Viborg falls to Fulgar.
24	Halskapa achieves status as the most powerful Rjurik realm.	1514	Zhullik the Scarlet Baron leads invasion of the Taelshore kingdoms. He is killed in the Battle of Innsmark by Thrakkazz. Thrakkazz seizes power as the new Scarlet Baron.
25	Jankaping, Halskapa, Svinik, Rjuvik, and Hjalzone join Roele's empire as equals to the Anuirean nations.	1521	Queen Ljorrah of Stjordvik dies; her son succeeds her.
34	Hogunmark is founded.	1524	Current year.
370	Hjalzone is conquered by the Anuireans and is renamed Dhoesone.		
1030	Stjordvik and Rjuvik declare independence from the Empire.		

Rjurik Nomenclature

This chart provides players and DMs with proper references to the people and features of the Rjurik Highlands. Residents of awnshegh domains typically identify themselves by province, political association, or tribe name, and therefore are not included.

Domain	Resident	Residents plural	Things of this origin
Blood Skull Barony	Blood Skull[humanoid]	Blood Skull[humanoids]	Blood Skull{army}
The Giantdowns	Giantdowns[humanoid]	Giantdowns[humanoids]	Giantdowns{army}
Halskapa	Halskapan	Halskapans	Halskapan
Hjolvar	Hjolvaran	Hjolvarans	Hjolvaran
Hogunmark	Hogun	Hoguns	Hogunmark
Jankaping	Jankaper	Jankapers	Jankapan
Khurin-Azur	dwarf of Khurin-Azur	dwarves of Khurin-Azur	Khurin-Azur
Kvigmar	Kvigmaran	Kvigmarans	Kvigmaran
Lluabright	elf of Lluabright	elves of Lluabright	elven or Lluabrightan
Rjuvik	Rjuviker	Rjuvikers	Rjuvik
Stjordvik	Stjordviker	Stjordvikers	Stjordvikan
Svinik	Sviniker	Svinikers	Svinik
Urga-Zai	Urga-Zai goblin	Urga-Zai goblins	Urga-Zai

Note that creatures rarely refer to themselves as humanoids; rather, the various races refer to themselves as Giantdowns orogs, Bloodskull goblins, and so on. Insert the appropriate humanoid race for the square bracketed references.

Note also that certain entities such as armies may be described by their realm; certain tribes, clans, or products may be described by province. Select the appropriate term for items in curved brackets.



City of Viborg



One inch = 100 feet

Gay M. Behold

the city of viborg

This fortress city was built to stand against the depredations of the Blood Skull marauders. Today, it serves as capital to the nation of Rjuvik, one of the most chaotic and dangerous of Rjuvik realms. Fulgar the Bold, bandit ruler of Rjuvik, maintains a palace here but spends most of his time at his estate on the coast. In the meantime, Viborg is a place ruled by violence, crime, and competing bandit "nobles."

the tan hills (1)

These weathered hills rise to the south and the east of the city to provide refuge for the humanoids and bandits who infest the region.

guardposts (2)

Small forts dot the hills around Viborg. Most have been abandoned, destroyed, or taken over by bandits, but a few contain Rjuvik warriors given the thankless task of safeguarding travelers and caravans in the region.

hill road (3)

The main road into Viborg is relatively safe, kept so by the heavy guards employed by those who travel here.

city walls (4)

Viborg's walls are a combination of wooden palisades and stone watchtowers. They are maintained by the city guards; without the walls, Viborg might be overrun by humanoids. Despite this, some sections are in serious disrepair and may collapse if tested by war machines or magic.

king's avenue (5)

The main street of the city is especially broad to accommodate horse and wagon traffic. The street is usually crowded with Viborgers and foreigners. The pavement is missing stones, however, and the authorities rarely bother to repair potholes.

merchant's road (6)

The city's traders, merchants, and guilds crowd along this street, occupying shops and stalls, or selling right on the street itself. They hawk wares both legitimate and stolen.

barracks (7)

The city guard, along with elements of Rjuvik's ragtag army, is housed here. The buildings are in disrepair, the cavalry stables are foul-smelling and messy, and the armories are known to be understocked in weapons and armor. Nevertheless, Viborg's defenders are resourceful and tenacious, and will give any invaders a stiff fight.

king's palace (8)

Fulgar the Bold, former pirate and ruler of Rjuvik, theoretically occupies this lavish mansion near the center of town. In reality, he rarely comes here, preferring to remain at his estate in Yvarre.

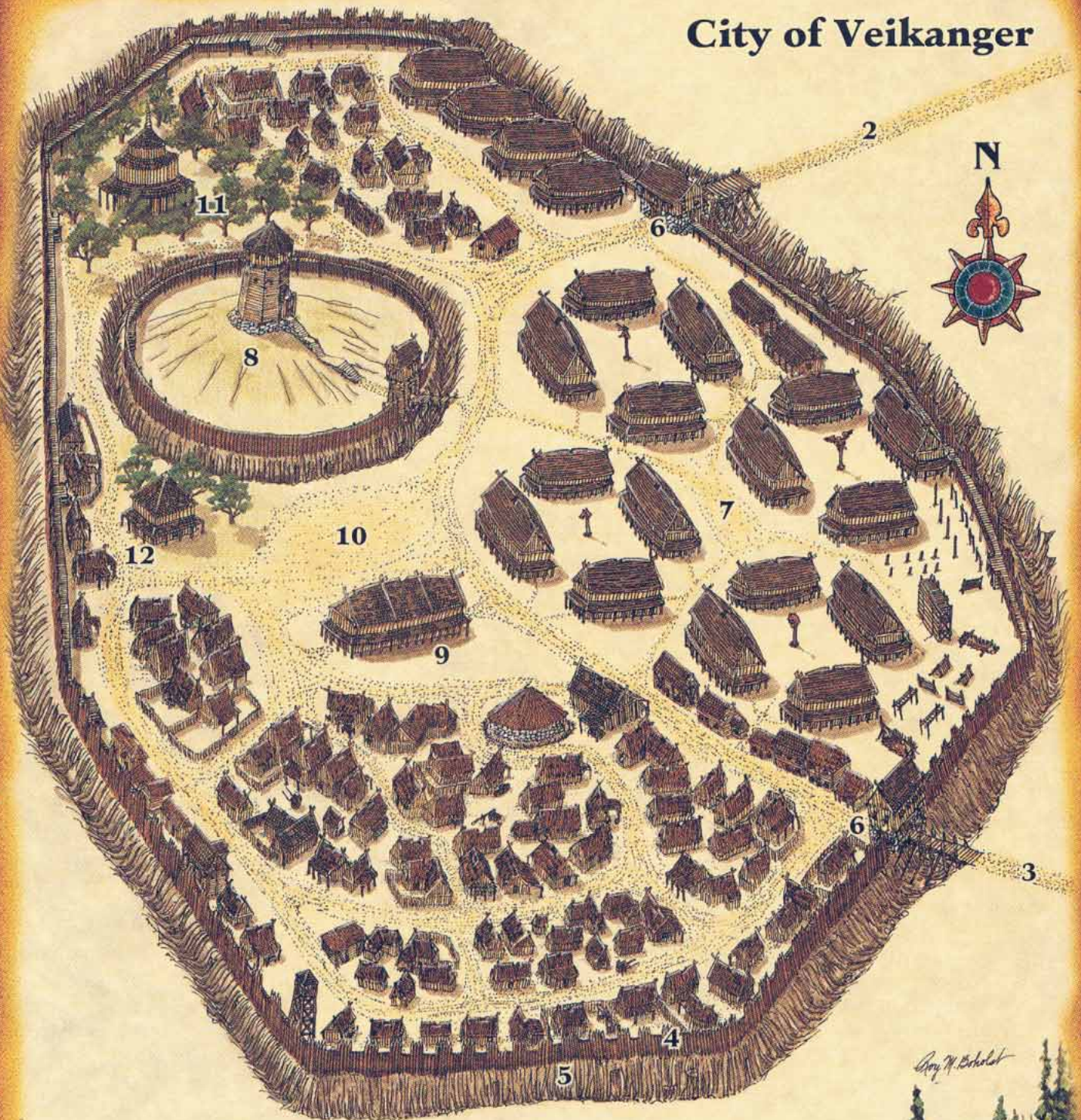
nobles' way (9)

The so-called nobles of Viborg live in splendor along this street, in great houses funded by bloodied gold stolen in pirate raids or through excessive taxation. Former bandits and pirates, the Rjuvik nobles have yet to learn taste, and these palaces are monuments to overwrought, excessive design.

street of the gods (10)

Temples to a half-dozen gods line this street, including Eloele the Sister of Thieves, Sera the Goddess of Wealth, and the ever-present Erik the Druid.

City of Veikanger



Greg M. Borchert

One inch = 100 feet

1

the city of veikanger

Veikanger, capital of Hognunmark, is a wilderness city deep in the forests, surrounded by trackless lands and the ever-present danger of the Blood Skull raiders. Nonetheless, Veikanger is an important outpost of civilization visited by heavily-armed merchant caravans, explorers, and diplomats from *other lands*. Its defenders include the Hognunmark Dragons, elite warriors dedicated to the defense of their realm.

forest (1)

The deep forests of Gundviir surround the city. Although protected by the druids and patrolled by Rjurik rangers and the Dragons, these woods harbor their fair share of goblins, gnolls, fhoimoriens, and other hostile creatures. Travelers are advised by the Rjurik to move only in well-defended groups.

forest road (2)

The most common route to the city, this road is also the best patrolled by the Hognuns. The volume of traffic here is variable; on some days, the road is all but choked with horses and wagons. At other times, weeks may go by with only a trickle of traffic. During the winter, the road is invariably thick with snow, but traffic continues nonetheless via sleighs, skis, and snowshoes.

old road (3)

Until recently, the Old Road was the favored means of travel to and from Veikanger. Since the construction of the Forest Road, however, the Old Road has fallen into disuse, becoming overgrown, dark, and dangerous. Those few who travel along this road risk attack by humanoids or other, darker things.

walls (4)

Veikanger's walls are built of sturdy timbers, and are continually maintained by the Hognuns. The *inner walls support platforms along which defenders are posted*.

moat (5)

The walls are surrounded by a moat. The moat is dry—water would freeze in winter and provide enemies with easy access to the walls. Instead, the bottom of the moat is lined with spikes; in addition, warriors on the walls above can rain stones, hot water, and sand on those below.

gates (6)

The city gates were built in Skapa Hjarring. They are a foot thick, crafted of heavy imported hardwood, and bound in iron. The gates are flanked by wooden gatehouses bristling with arrow loops.

dragons' barracks (7)

The Hognunmark Dragons dwell here, where they receive the best equipment, food, and training of any unit in Hognunmark's military.

regent's citadel (8)

Near the center of the city lies the Citadel, home to Hognunmark's current regent and an important military position. Built of wood, it is nonetheless a fanciful and surprisingly aesthetic structure with domed towers, carved archways, spiked crenels, and other elaborate features.

meeting hall (9)

Near the Citadel is this traditional Rjurik meeting hall—a longhouse with carved lintels of snarling dragons—where Queen Freila periodically meets with her advisers and jarls.

tradesmen's square (10)

This is where outsiders and Rjurik most often meet. Foreign and domestic merchants sell their wares here; travelers may find lodging in the inns that surround the square.

temple of erik— emerald spiral (11)

The druid Vjanik oversees this Emerald Spiral Temple and maintains a surprisingly good relationship with Rudra, leader of the rival Oaken Grove temple nearby.

temple of erik— oaken grove (12)

Rudra, an aged and wise druid, keeps a modest temple here. Her sect is definitely secondary in popularity to the Emerald Spiral in these wild regions, but Rudra is philosophical and remains friends with Vjanik.

rjurik characters



ulvin hjarlsson



helga najlarrik



the ice fiend



sigrun kjornaal

Rjurik characters

Helga najlarrik

(FRj; R10; Vo, minor, 11; NG)

This tough, skilled loner is one of the most experienced members of The Watch, the informal alliance dedicated to safeguarding the human inhabitants of the Giantdowns. She shuns other Rjurik, preferring to associate with the wild things of the hills and forests. She has cultivated a friendship with a small hill giant clan from the Downs, which informs her of the activities of humanoids.

Though gruff with strangers, Helga is a kind individual who cannot stand by and see others harmed. Travelers in the Giantdowns may receive her aid if in danger, but the taciturn ranger rarely reveals herself, instead deriving great amusement from the antics of those she rescues as they attempt to discover who called out a warning, misled attacking gnolls, or showered hostile orogs with arrows.

Helga carries a bone talisman given to her by an ancient druidess many years ago. The talisman ensures that she is never surprised and grants a +20% bonus to all rolls to hear noise and find hidden objects.

Sigrun kjornaal

(MRj; B11; Re, tainted, 3; LG)

One of the best-known bards in the Rjurik highlands, Sigrun's fame has spread beyond his home realm; he has turned down offers to perform in Anuirean and Brecht kingdoms. He is tall and slender for a Rjurik, but his blond hair and beard betray his origins. He is somewhat vain and enjoys wearing garments of blue or green velvet with silver and gold trim.

Sigrun's weapons and instruments are almost as famous as he is. He carries the sword *Rjalskaar*, a lawful good broad sword of Int 15 with the following abilities: *detect evil 10' radius; detect magic 10' radius; heal 1/day*. He carries an enchanted lute; when played in combat, it forces all enemies within 30 feet to make morale checks or flee (3 times/day).

Sigrun is carefree, humorous, and easy-going, yet dedicated and loyal. He is as comfortable singing and juggling for a crowd of children as he is performing a solemn epic for his king or delivering a vital message to a distant region. He is modest, usually preferring to tell accounts of others' bravery rather than his own and unwilling to accept more than minimal rewards. Sigrun is so good-hearted that many Rjurik find him insufferable and feel uncomfortable around him.

Ulvin Hjarlsson

(MRj; Pr6, Erik; LN)

Ulvin is a rare sort—a militant druid. While most druids, especially those of the Emerald Spiral, are not averse to fighting humanoids and others who would threaten the Rjurik, most are nonviolent and shun confrontation. Ulvin is different; he claims the woodlands of the Blood Skull Barony as his chosen realm and actively fights to preserve the land against despoilment by orogs and gnolls.

Years of combat have left Ulvin more than a little demented, but he continues his campaign against the Barony despite having nearly been killed on many occasions. The Blood Skull gnolls and orogs hold him in superstitious dread; many believe him to be an avenging Rjurik spirit capable of appearing and disappearing, and summoning monsters.

In reality, Ulvin was scarred long ago by the ravages of the Scarlet Baron when his village was raided and destroyed. Facing the loss of his home, his family, and his betrothed, Ulvin took vows as a druid and swore to take vengeance on the humanoids. Despite misgivings, the local circle accepted him, though its members did their best to moderate his violent tendencies. They were unsuccessful, and Ulvin left them to take up a solitary life fighting against the Blood Skull Barony.

The Ice Fiend

(MAw; Az, major, 32; CE)

This awnshegh has begun terrorizing the isolated province of Rjutaffel in Jankaping. So far, no one has seen the creature and lived; it largely exists as rumor.

The Ice Fiend was once a Rjurik ranger named Holm Sturmjallik. Holm began to manifest strange abilities in his twentieth year when he froze an attacking orog solid with a single glance. Holm tried to use his powers to aid his tribe, but he gradually felt more isolated from them. He grew in stature and his skin began to turn a shiny blue-white color. Several years after his original manifestation, Holm completely transformed into a 10-foot-tall statue of solid, living ice, and totally accepted life as an evil awnshegh.

The Ice Fiend's powers wax and wane with the seasons. During the spring and summer, it hides, vulnerable to normal weapons. As the weather grows colder in the fall, the Fiend grows in strength. In the depths of winter, it emerges, all but invulnerable to attack.

During the months of Haelynir, Anarire, and Deismir, the following statistics apply:

Ice Fiend, Awnshegh: AC 8; MV 12; HD 5; hp 25; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; SZ L (10' tall); ML elite (13); AL CE

During the months of Erntenir, Sehnir, Emmanir, Sarimiere, Taliener, and Roelir, the Ice Fiend has the following statistics:

Ice Fiend, Awnshegh: AC 4; MV 12; HD 8; hp 40; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 2d8; SA breath weapon; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; SZ L (10' tall); ML elite (13); AL CE

In this condition, the Ice Fiend slashes with its claws for 2d8 points of damage and can deliver an icy breath equivalent to the breath weapon of an age 5 white dragon, 3x/day. The Ice Fiend is immune to normal weapons and can be hit only by magical weapons of +1 or greater enchantment.

The rest of the year, the Ice Fiend uses the following statistics:

Ice Fiend, Awnshegh: AC 0; MV 12; HD 10; hp 50; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 3d8; SA breath weapon; SD +3 or better weapon to hit; SZ L (10' tall); ML elite (13); AL CE

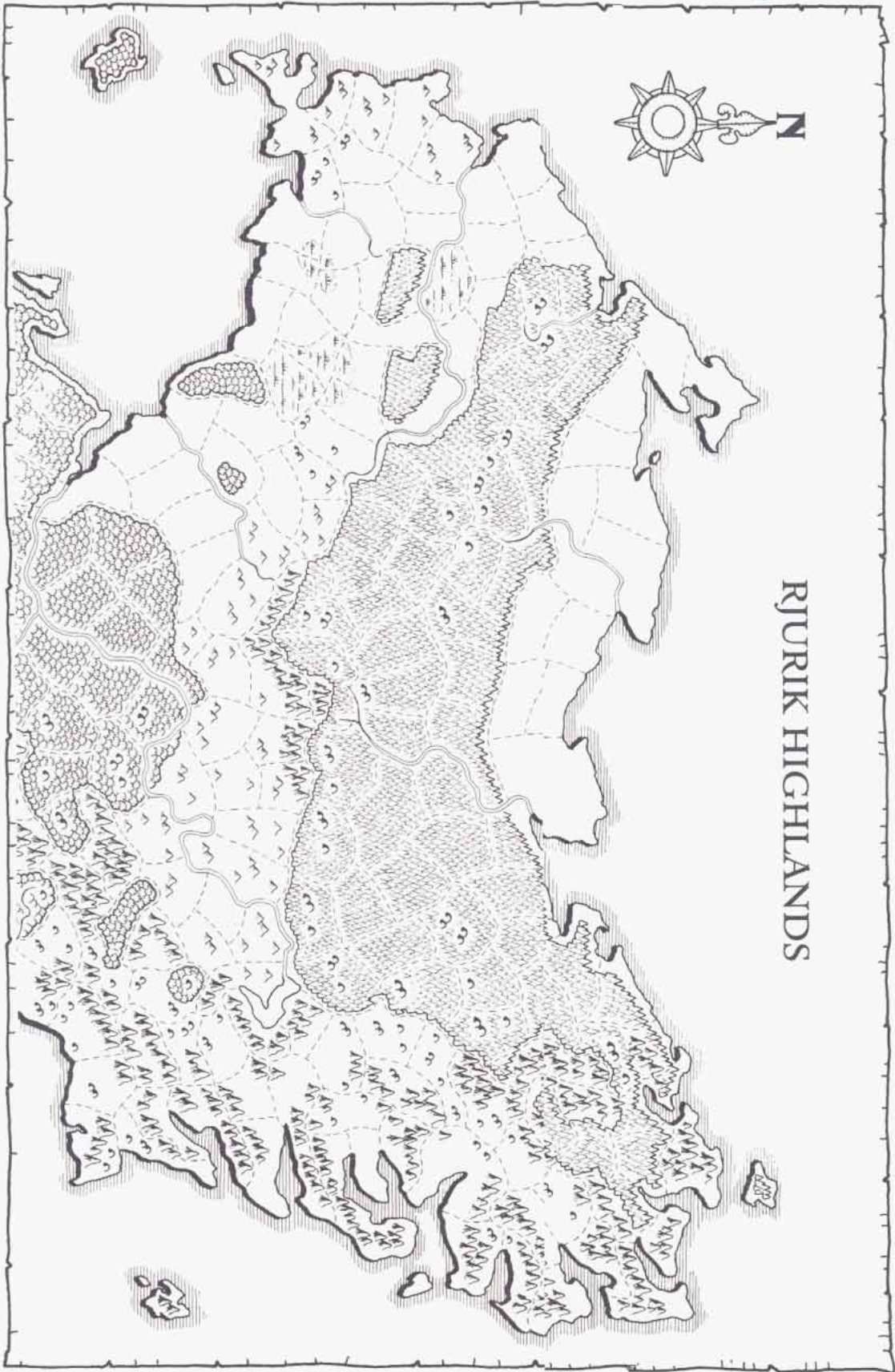
The Ice Fiend's breath weapon functions as that of an age 8 white dragon. The Fiend is immune to normal weapons, and can be hit only by magical weapons of +3 or greater.

the rjurik highlands



player's domain tracking map

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adventures in the rjurik highlands

a bard's mission

Bards travel throughout Rjurik lands, acting as messengers between their engagements as entertainers. When entrusted with a message or other delivery by druids or nobles, a bard must complete the mission at the risk of his own life, or bring dishonor and distrust upon all bards.

In this adventure, the druids of Bjarkheim have discovered a great gathering of orogs and other humanoid primitives deep in the forests, and have determined that it is a major invasion by the Blood Skull Barony. No longer content to merely raid, the Scarlet Baron now wishes to conquer Rjurik lands and enslave or slay their populace. The druids themselves must remain behind to delay and mislead the gathering orogs, and therefore contact a PC bard, asking him to carry word of the invasion to Veikanger, to Queen Freila of Hognunmark.

The orogs get wind of the bard's mission and try to stop the party, sending their own warriors, plus allied rhoimoriens, goblins, gnolls, and other creatures against the adventurers. If the PCs succeed in their mission, they will be well rewarded by Freila—perhaps given a Hognunmark province to rule. This would make a good initial adventure for a Rjurik-based campaign.

ghuralli

In the wilderness known as the Giantdowns, many humanoid tribes owe allegiance to a strange creature known as Ghuralli. Many rumors exist regarding Ghuralli—that he is a fiend, a powerful ogre or orog warlord, or a virtually indestructible statue of solid iron. Now, as Ghuralli seems determined to weld the tribes into a true nation and challenge the Rjurik for control of the region, the human alliance called the Watch comes before the PCs to ask for aid. If the PCs are blooded nobles, the fact that Ghuralli appears to be an *awnshegh* with considerable blood power might serve as a potent motivation for the adventurers to leave their kingdom. In addition, Ghuralli is powerful enough to become a true regent and another major force of evil. Together with the Blood Skull Barony, the Urga-Zai goblins, and the White Witch, this alliance might be more than the Rjurik can handle, and could result in the destruction or devastation of many kingdoms.

Regardless of motivation, the PCs must journey

to the Giantdowns to locate and discover the true nature and history of Ghuralli. As Ghuralli is probably far too dangerous for the PCs (see the *Personalities* section of *The Rjurik Highlands* for more details on Ghuralli), learning the truth about him and his powers should be considered a victory, since the confirmed existence of another high-level *awnshegh* is probably enough to unite many Rjurik kingdoms against him.

the mighty trees

All across Cerilia, the Rjurik are known for their faith in nature and reverence for Erik the Druid and his works. For centuries, the Rjurik have existed in splendid isolation, far from what they consider the destructive influence of outsiders. Today, those influences are closing in as the Anuireans and the Brechts begin to take interest in the northern highlands.

In the PCs' kingdom or province, an unscrupulous Rjurik noble has succumbed to the gold and rich rewards the outsiders offer, and has allowed a band of Anuirean merchants to build a small port operation and logging camp. Although their influence is as yet small and they take relatively few trees, the druids inform the PCs of the situation and demand that they do something. The PCs must investigate the foreigners' operation and find some way to end it. Should they threaten violence, the Anuireans indicate that this will invariably lead to war, for they have the full economic and diplomatic backing of their own government. Are they bluffing? Will they eventually give in to threats, or must the foreigners be persuaded without violence to shut down operations?

The DM may further complicate matters by making deals between the foreigners and local humanoid tribes (or even *awnsheghlien*) to protect their operations. If the foreigners also spread their gold among other Rjurik nobles, they may succeed in buying political support. The PCs will have to decide whether to use force to end the standoff or allow the Anuireans to stay and possibly destabilize the region.

a new jarldom

Hjolvar and Kvigmar are still small, and cling to existence against the pressures of hostile humanoids and

the elements. The rulers of both nations are only too willing to allow blooded jarls, even inexperienced ones, to help settle and civilize their frontier provinces.

In this scenario, the PCs are approached by representatives of the nations in question and are asked to serve as provincial rulers. This will not be easy, they are told, for the land is rugged and unsettled, and marauding humanoids are a constant threat. The first settlement will probably be a small, isolated, and beleaguered fortress somewhere in a trackless wilderness, but in the end, the province may bloom and become a true Rjurik jarldom.

This adventure could be the kickoff to a long campaign based in the wilderness, with the PCs building their fortress, making contact with the small Rjurik tribes of the area, fighting humanoid attackers, weathering the cold and storms, discovering the province's secrets, protecting settlers and trade routes, and so on. In the end, the PCs may be chosen as successors to the throne of their realm or may be able to split off from the kingdom and become regents themselves.

the new leader

In the PCs' realm, as elsewhere in Rjurik lands, conflict exists between the traditional, wilderness-dwelling Rjurik and those who have settled in cities and made contact with the outside world. For the most part, this conflict simmers, rarely boiling over. In the adventurers' kingdom or province, however, the two groups come to open warfare. In the wilderness, a new leader has arisen—a traditional chieftain or radical druid. He claims that the two groups have grown too far apart, and believes it is time for the nomads and wilderness-dwelling Rjurik to rise up, declare their independence, destroy the corrupt cities, and liberate their inhabitants from decadence. Bands of nomads now ambush travelers, cut off communications between cities, and call for a great crusade to sweep foreign influence from the highlands.

The PCs, blooded rulers responsible for the peace and stability of their land, must stop this conflict before it spreads. This is, of course, not as easy as it sounds, for a military campaign against the dissidents could offend other traditional or nomadic groups and bring on full-scale civil war. The new leader is a true fanatic, however, and refuses to negotiate with the corrupt city-folk. In order to talk to the wilderness prophet, the PCs must prove themselves worthy in their respect for traditional Rjurik ways and their rejection of dangerous foreign ideas.

In the end, the DM may determine the precise outcome. The PCs may succeed in talking the leader out of his planned crusade, or may see the problem erupt into open conflict. The prophet's motive may also come into question—is he a true Rjurik patriot, a madman, a tool of the humanoids or awnsheghlien, or (worse still) an awnshegh himself, using mesmeric or magical powers to mislead the Rjurik and plunge them into civil war?

other adventures

Quarreling Nobles or Nomads: The regent must settle a feud or other conflict between influential nobles or nomad tribes before it spirals into open warfare.

Safeguard the Merchants: Humanoids from Urga-Zai or the Blood Skull Barony have been attacking travelers or merchant caravans in the deep forests; the PCs must help stop the raids.

Druids in Danger: A band of druids has been kidnapped by the humanoids or the agents of the White Witch. The adventurers are called upon to rescue them.

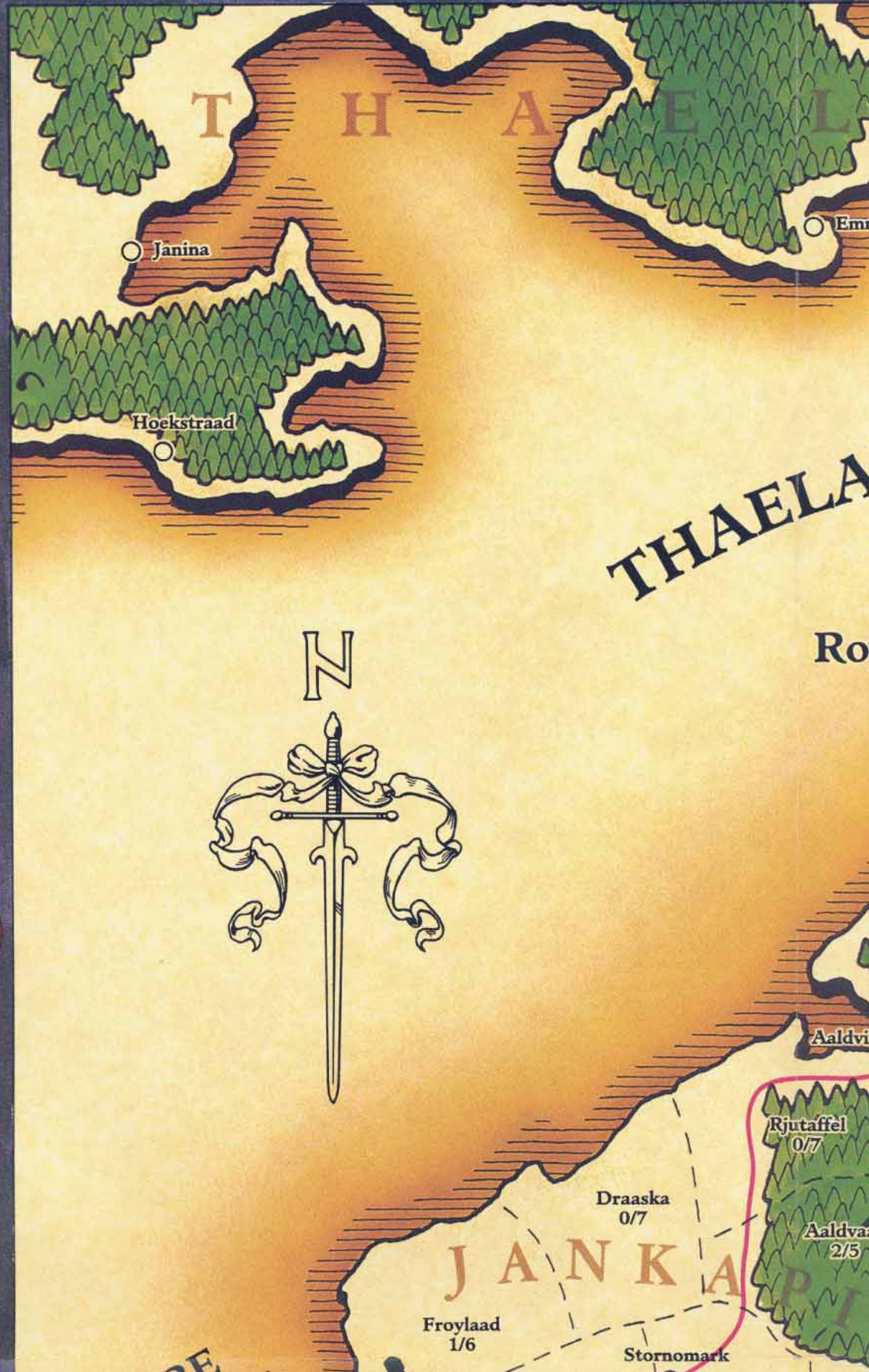
The Gems of Arborea: Rumors abound that one of the lost Gems of Arborea has been located in the wilderness of the PCs' realm. They must venture into the wilds and confirm the truth of the rumors, all the while competing with humanoids, awnsheghlien, and elf warriors from Lluabright, all determined to capture the magical gem.

A New Colony: The PCs must transform wilderness into a civilized realm, but this time, they must establish and develop one of the Thaelasian colonies, safeguarding and guiding its development until it becomes a true nation.

Renegade Jarl: The characters are asked to investigate the jarl who rules a distant province, whom the monarch believes might be plotting against him. The party must learn whether the jarl is innocent, whether he is a renegade, or perhaps under the influence of an awnshegh.

Mission to Lluabright: A diplomatic mission is sent to Lluabright to contact the insular and xenophobic elves. Though the risk is great and the chance of success is tiny, the potential rewards are great; if the Lluabright elves can be persuaded to open up to the outside world, many ancient secrets may be revealed. The elves would also be a powerful ally against the awnsheghlien.

Aiding Khurin-Azur: The adventurers must establish diplomatic contact with the dwarves of Khurin-Azur. During their mission, the Urga-Zai goblins and the minions of the Gorgon ally for a major attack, forcing the PCs to help the dwarves defend themselves.



T H A E L A

Janina

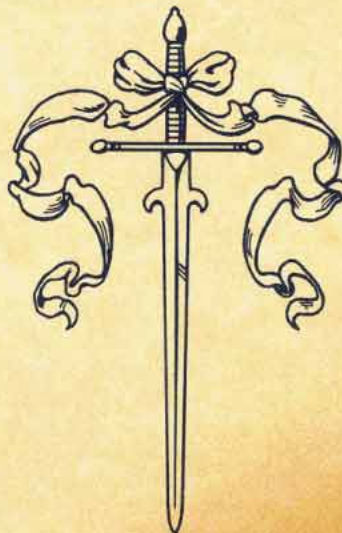
Em

Hoekstraad

THAELA

Ro

N



Aaldvi

Rjutaffel
0/7

Aaldva
2/5

Draaska
0/7

JANKA

Froylaad
1/6

Stornomark

MIERE
RHUANN

brechtür



khinasi

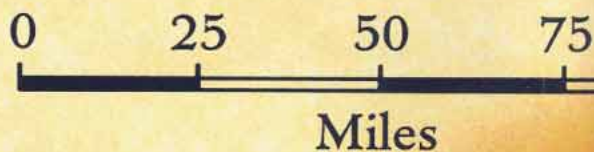


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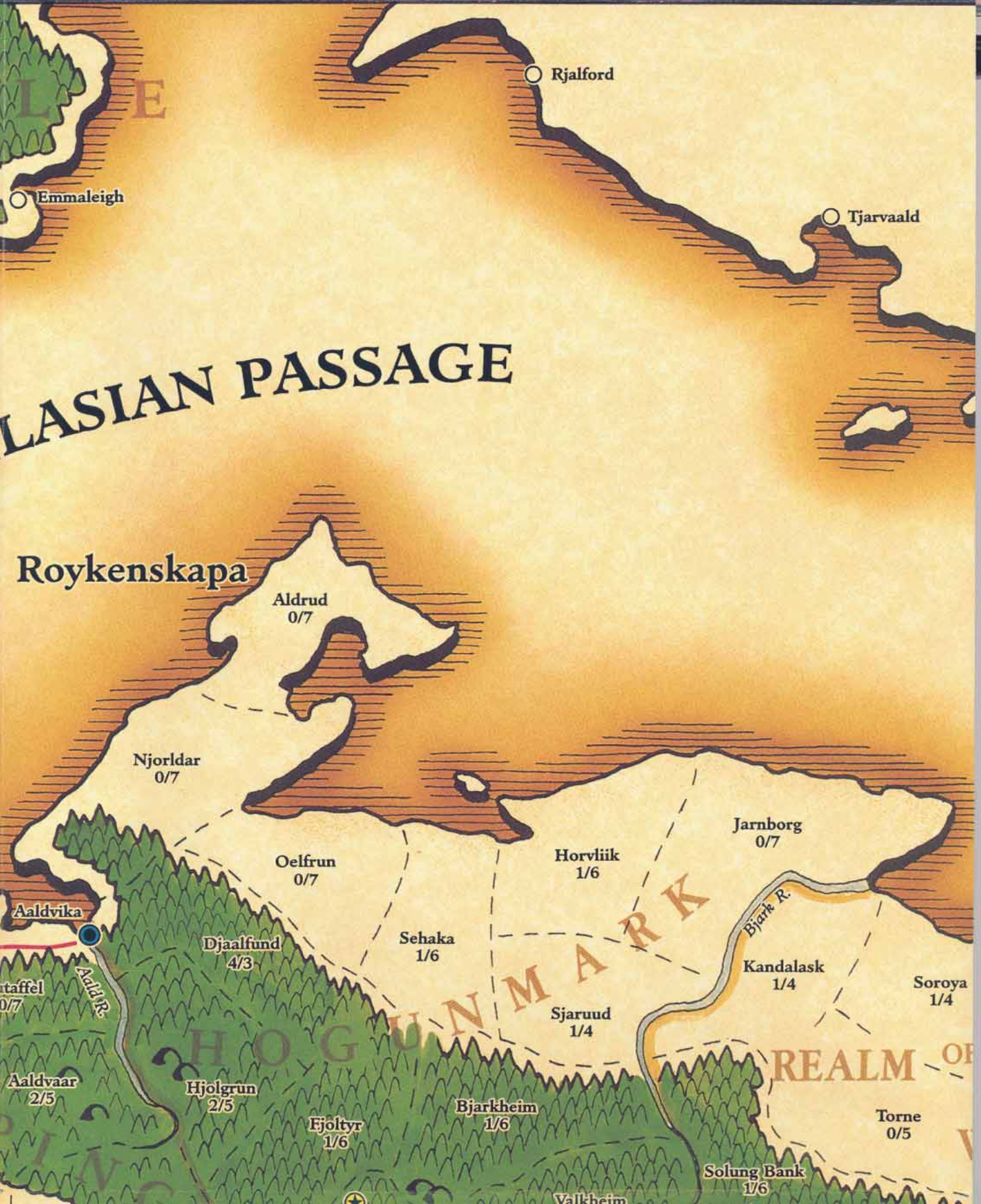


Dantier Island 1/6

TAEEL FIRTI



DIESEL '96



LASIAN PASSAGE

Roykenskapa

- Emmaleigh
- Rjalford
- Tjarvaald
- Aldrud 0/7
- Njorldar 0/7
- Oelfrun 0/7
- Horvliik 1/6
- Jarnborg 0/7
- Aaldvika
- Djaalfund 4/3
- Sehaka 1/6
- Sjaruud 1/4
- Kandalask 1/4
- Soroya 1/4
- Aaldvaar 2/5
- Hjolgrun 2/5
- Ejolyr 1/6
- Bjarkheim 1/6
- Torne 0/5
- Solung Bank 1/6
- Valkheim



Veikanger

Valkheim 1/6

Rovan 1/6

Oulu 3/4

Gundviir 4/3

Zakkhur 2/5

Thurzimm 0/7

Jurva 4/1

Hrukk 3/4

Valkith 2/5

Shikkra 0/7

Innher 0/7

Innsmark 4/1

Sjarkhoelle 1/6

Vrallik 1/6

Shir'kh'an 0/7

Chur 1/6

Haekholfn 2/3

Hoeskal 1/5

Hjarrsmark 1/5

Nalhorske 2/3

Shir'kh'an 0/7

Angarr 1/6

Svarkannek 2/4

Viborg

Hjorvaal 0/4

Lofkirdik 1/4

arnheim 4/3

Dankmaar 0/8

Namverg 2/3

Arvaald 2/3

Udvika 1/4

Yvarre 4/3

Höllenvik 2/3

Saerskaap 4/2

Ustkjuvil 3/2

Höllingholmen

DHONESONE

Nolien

75 100

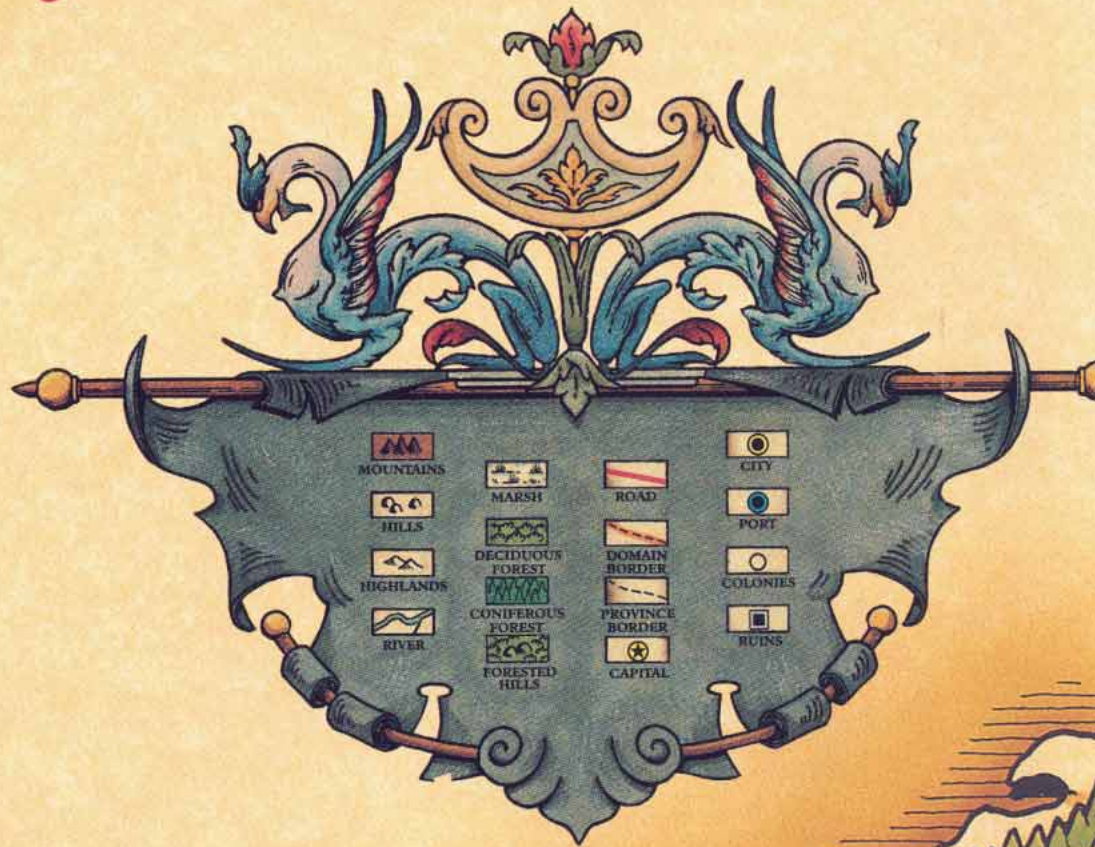
RTH





RJURIK HIGHLAND

ilk Bay ○



THE
WHITE
WITCH

Nordcapp
0/5

Folda Fjord
1/4

Pitea
2/3

Boden
2/3

Challra
2/6

Cwnddrrd
2/6

Idzar
0/9

Khul-Na
1/7

Urtha
1/7

Hor-than
0/9

Zeph-Na
2/6

Nul
2/2

MURGAZAI



WITCH

Mandal
4/3

Veile
1/6

Druinedd
2/7

Monellrha
3/6

Draga-Zai
2/7

Hovrim
1/7

Llwaiss
2/7

Halten
0/7

Bjornoya
1/6

Rhoisneibhal
4/5

Vulzin
1/7

Syldebyrn R.

Thalbrough
2/7

Bannoch
1/8

Caer Cwnnar
0/7

Adothcwr
1/8

Caer Dwyth
1/8

Rhuiddar
1/6

Gwyddral
2/7

Barrow Woods
0/7

Silverhead Mtns.

Haldallen
0/6

Trondelaag
0/6

Boganhaar
0/5

Rui de R.

Fballagblach

Voldar
2/5

THE GIANTDOWNS

Silverheart
0/7

Skansoeren
0/5

Vjelthelma
1/5

Azagkl
1/6

Lemnjohen
1/4

Bjorlangen
0/5

Midjarna
1/5

the GORGON'S CROWN

Adlersburg

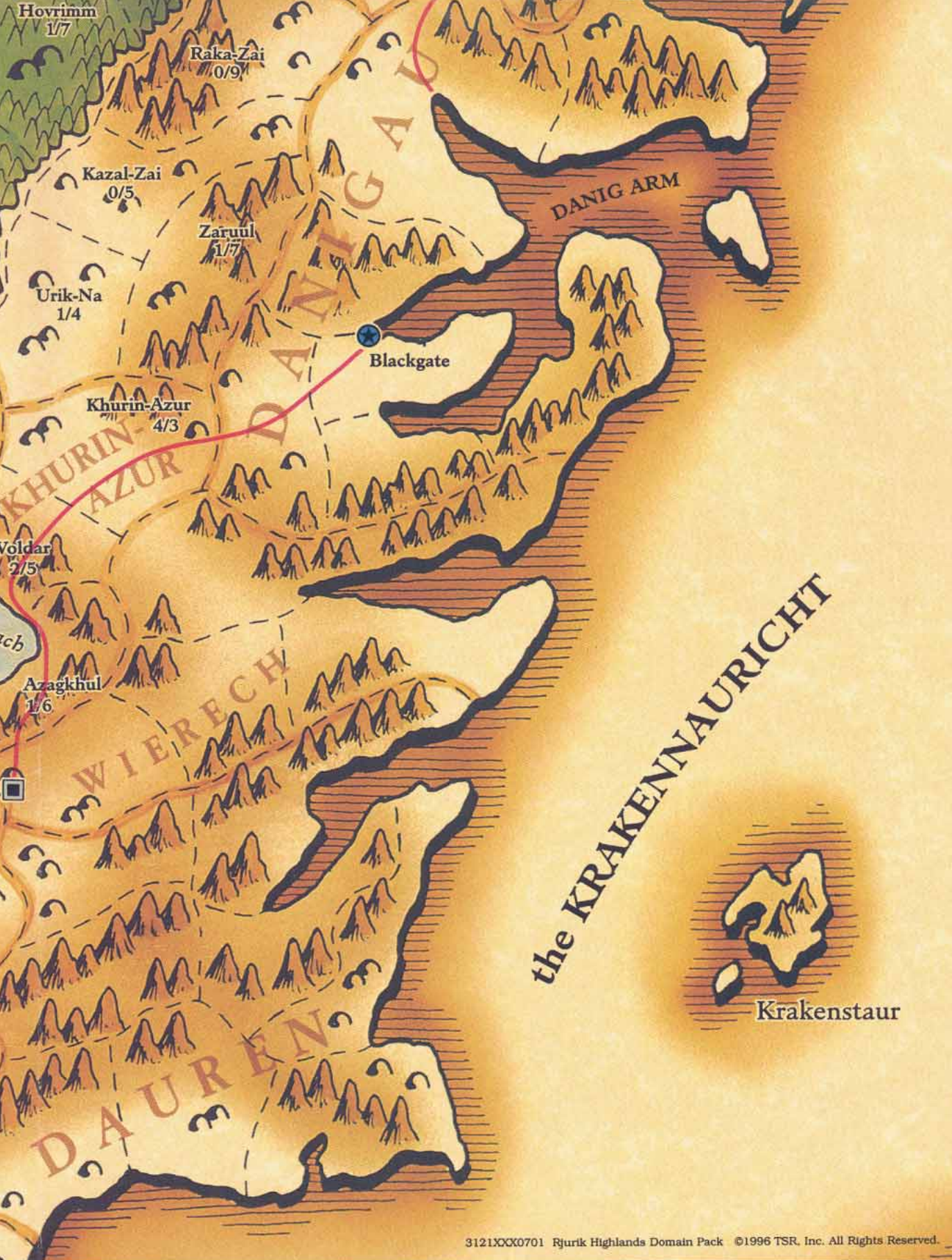
TUARHIEVEL



LANDS

THAELASIAN SEA





the KRAKENNAURICHT

Krakenstaur



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Kvigmar Guardians

#RH106

Move: 1

Melee: 3

Defense: 3

Morale: X



Melee: 2

1 Hit



Jankaping Black Arrows

#RH108

Move: 3

Melee: 3

Defense: 2

Charge: 5

Morale: X

Missile: 2

2 Hits
Melee: 1
Charge: 2
Missile: 0Melee: 2
Charge: 3
Missile: 1

1 Hit



Blood Skull Bats

#RH110

Move: 3

Melee: 2

Defense: 2

Charge: 3

Morale: X

Ignore terrain penalties.2 Hits
Melee: 0
Charge: 1Melee: 1
Charge: 2

1 Hit



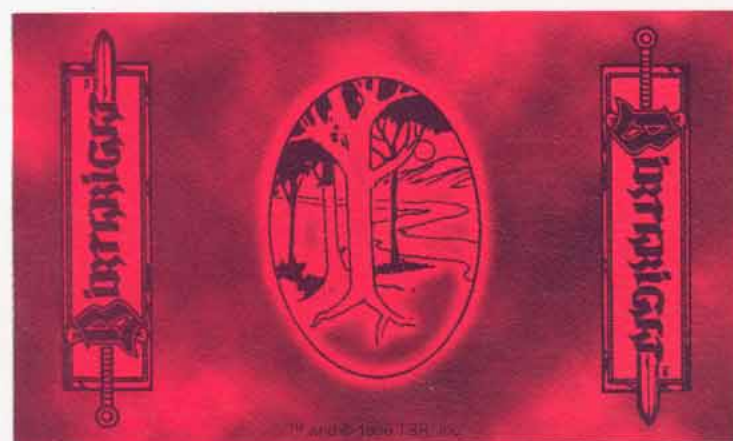
TERRAIN CARD

Icefield

Movement: Mounted units may not enter the area containing this card. Unmounted units must stop when they enter the area containing this card. (They may leave the area without penalty.)


Combat: Units in this area cannot be charged. Units that begin the turn in this area cannot charge.

#RH112




Rjurik Scouts #RH105

Move: 3
 Defense: 2
 Morale: X ▼



Melee: 1
 Missile: 4
Ignore terrain penalties for movement.

1 Hit
 Melee: 0
 Missile: 3



Hogunmark Dragons #RH107


Move: 1
 Defense: 3
 Morale: ▼



Melee: 3
+1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.

1 Hit
 Melee: 2

2 Hits
 Melee: 1



Rjurik Mariners #RH109

Move: 2
 Defense: 3
 Morale: X ▼



Melee: 3
 Missile: 1

1 Hit
 Melee: 2
 Missile: 0

2 Hits
 Melee: 1
 Missile: -2



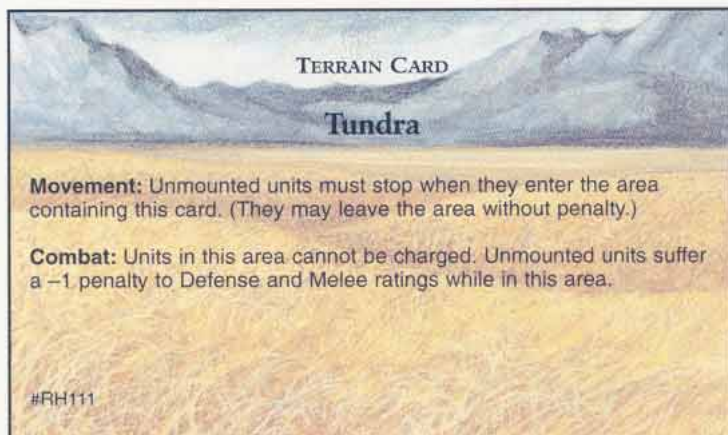
TERRAIN CARD

Tundra

Movement: Unmounted units must stop when they enter the area containing this card. (They may leave the area without penalty.)

Combat: Units in this area cannot be charged. Unmounted units suffer a -1 penalty to Defense and Melee ratings while in this area.

#RH111






The Watch #RH97

Move: 3
 Defense: 2
 Morale: X

Melee: 3
 Missile: 3
Ignore terrain penalties in the Giantdowns.




2 Hits
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 1

1 Hit
 Melee: 2
 Missile: 2

The Watch #RH98

Move: 3
 Defense: 2
 Morale: X

Melee: 3
 Missile: 3
Ignore terrain penalties in the Giantdowns.




2 Hits
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 1

1 Hit
 Melee: 2
 Missile: 2

Ghuralli's Guard #RH99

Move: 1
 Defense: 2
 Morale: X

Melee: 3
 Missile: 2
+1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.



2 Hits
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 0

1 Hit
 Melee: 2
 Missile: 1

Rjuvik Raiders #RH100

Move: 2
 Defense: 2
 Morale: X

Melee: 3
 Missile: 2




2 Hits
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 0

1 Hit
 Melee: 2
 Missile: 1

Rjuvik Raiders #RH101

Move: 2
 Defense: 2
 Morale: X

Melee: 3
 Missile: 2




2 Hits
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 0

1 Hit
 Melee: 2
 Missile: 1

Rjurik Scouts #RH102

Move: 3
 Defense: 2
 Morale: X

Melee: 1
 Missile: 4
Ignore terrain penalties for movement.




2 Hits
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 0

1 Hit
 Melee: 0
 Missile: 3

Rjurik Scouts #RH103

Move: 3
 Defense: 2
 Morale: X

Melee: 1
 Missile: 4
Ignore terrain penalties for movement.




2 Hits
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 0

1 Hit
 Melee: 0
 Missile: 3

Rjurik Scouts #RH104

Move: 3
 Defense: 2
 Morale: X

Melee: 1
 Missile: 4
Ignore terrain penalties for movement.



2 Hits
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 0

1 Hit
 Melee: 0
 Missile: 3



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Rjurik Tribesmen ▲ #RH89

Move: 1
 Defense: 3
 Morale: X ▼

Melee: 4
 Missile: 2

2 Hits
 Melee: 2
 Missile: 0

1 Hit
 Melee: 3
 Missile: 1

Rjurik Battle Ragers ▲ #RH90

Move: 1
 Defense: 2
 Morale: X ▼

Melee: 5
Ignore F combat results.

2 Hits
 Melee: 2

1 Hit
 Melee: 3

Rjurik Battle Ragers ▲ #RH91

Move: 1
 Defense: 2
 Morale: X ▼

Melee: 5
Ignore F combat results.

2 Hits
 Melee: 2

1 Hit
 Melee: 3

Rjurik Battle Ragers ▲ #RH92

Move: 1
 Defense: 2
 Morale: X ▼

Melee: 5
Ignore F combat results.

2 Hits
 Melee: 2

1 Hit
 Melee: 3

Rjurik Shapeshifters ▲ #RH93

Move: 2
 Defense: 3
 Morale: X ▼

Melee: 5
Ignore terrain penalties; +1 defense bonus vs. mounted units.

2 Hits
 Melee: 3

1 Hit
 Melee: 4

3 Hits
 Melee: 2

Rjurik Shapeshifters ▲ #RH94

Move: 2
 Defense: 3
 Morale: X ▼

Melee: 5
Ignore terrain penalties; +1 defense bonus vs. mounted units.

2 Hits
 Melee: 3

1 Hit
 Melee: 4

3 Hits
 Melee: 2

Rjurik Druids ▲ #RH95

Move: 3
 Defense: 3
 Morale: X ▼

Melee: 2
 Missile: 2
Ignore terrain penalties; +1 bonus vs. humanoids and units led by awnsheghlien.

2 Hits
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 1

1 Hit
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 1

Scarlet Baron's Own ▲ #RH96

Move: 1
 Defense: 3
 Morale: ▼

Melee: 3
+1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.

2 Hits
 Melee: 1

1 Hit
 Melee: 2



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Blood Skull Goblins #RH81
 Melee: 2
 Missile: 1
 Move: 1
 Defense: 2
 Morale: ▼

2 Hits
 Melee: 0
 Missile: -2


1 Hit
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 0



Blood Skull Goblins #RH82
 Melee: 2
 Missile: 1
 Move: 1
 Defense: 2
 Morale: ▼

2 Hits
 Melee: 0
 Missile: -2


1 Hit
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 0



Blood Skull Goblins #RH83
 Melee: 2
 Missile: 1
 Move: 1
 Defense: 2
 Morale: ✕

2 Hits
 Melee: 0
 Missile: -2


1 Hit
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 0



Blood Skull Goblins #RH84
 Melee: 2
 Missile: 1
 Move: 1
 Defense: 2
 Morale: ▼

2 Hits
 Melee: 0
 Missile: -2


1 Hit
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 0



Rjurik Tribesmen #RH85
 Melee: 4
 Missile: 2
 Move: 1
 Defense: 3
 Morale: ✕

2 Hits
 Melee: 2
 Missile: 0


1 Hit
 Melee: 3
 Missile: 1



Rjurik Tribesmen #RH86
 Melee: 4
 Missile: 2
 Move: 1
 Defense: 3
 Morale: ✕

2 Hits
 Melee: 2
 Missile: 0

1 Hit
 Melee: 3
 Missile: 1



Rjurik Tribesmen #RH87
 Melee: 4
 Missile: 2
 Move: 1
 Defense: 3
 Morale: ▼

2 Hits
 Melee: 2
 Missile: 0


1 Hit
 Melee: 3
 Missile: 1



Rjurik Tribesmen #RH88
 Melee: 4
 Missile: 2
 Move: 1
 Defense: 3
 Morale: ✕


2 Hits
 Melee: 2
 Missile: 0

1 Hit
 Melee: 3
 Missile: 1





Urga-Zai Ogres #RH73
 Move: 2 Melee: 6
 Defense: 4
 Morale: ✕



3 Hits
Melee: 2

2 Hits
Melee: 3

1 Hit
Melee: 4

1 Hit
Melee: 2

Blood Skull Orog #RH74
 Move: 1 Melee: 3
 Defense: 3
 Morale: ✕ ▼

+1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.




2 Hits
Melee: 1

1 Hit
Melee: 2

Blood Skull Orog #RH75
 Move: 1 Melee: 3
 Defense: 3
 Morale: ✕ ▼

+1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.




2 Hits
Melee: 1

1 Hit
Melee: 2

Blood Skull Orog #RH76
 Move: 1 Melee: 3
 Defense: 3
 Morale: ✕ ▼

+1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.



2 Hits
Melee: 1

1 Hit
Melee: 2

Blood Skull Orog #RH77
 Move: 1 Melee: 3
 Defense: 3
 Morale: ✕ ▼

+1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.




2 Hits
Melee: 1

1 Hit
Melee: 2

Blood Skull Orog #RH78
 Move: 1 Melee: 3
 Defense: 3
 Morale: ✕ ▼


+1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.



2 Hits
Melee: 1

1 Hit
Melee: 2


Blood Skull Gnolls #RH79
 Move: 2 Melee: 4
 Defense: 4
 Morale: ▼



2 Hits
Melee: 2

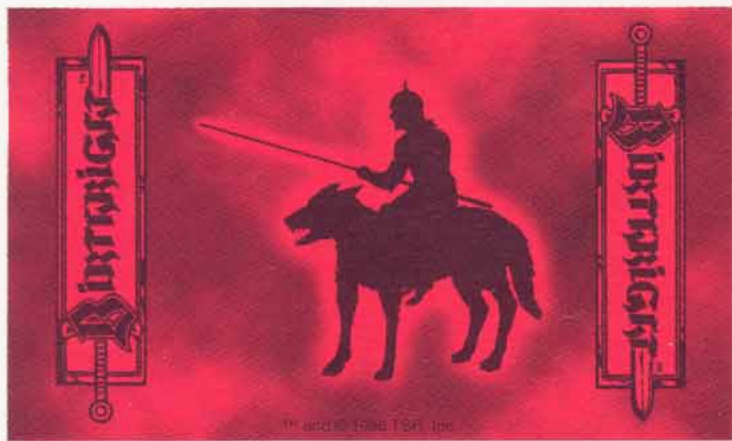
1 Hit
Melee: 3

Blood Skull Gnolls #RH80
 Move: 2 Melee: 4
 Defense: 4
 Morale: ✕



2 Hits
Melee: 2

1 Hit
Melee: 3



Urga-Zai Infantry #RH65

Move: 1
 Defense: 2
 Morale: ♣

Melee: 2
 Missile: 1
 +1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.

1 Hit
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 0

Urga-Zai Archers #RH66

Move: 1
 Defense: 2
 Morale: ✕

Melee: 1
 Missile: 3
 +1 to missile attacks vs. mounted units

1 Hit
 Melee: 0
 Missile: 2

Urga-Zai Archers #RH67

Move: 1
 Defense: 2
 Morale: ♣

Melee: 1
 Missile: 3
 +1 to missile attacks vs. mounted units

1 Hit
 Melee: 0
 Missile: 2

Urga-Zai Archers #RH68

Move: 1
 Defense: 2
 Morale: ♣

Melee: 1
 Missile: 3
 +1 to missile attacks vs. mounted units

1 Hit
 Melee: 0
 Missile: 2

Urga-Zai Archers #RH69

Move: 1
 Defense: 2
 Morale: ✕

Melee: 1
 Missile: 3
 +1 to missile attacks vs. mounted units

1 Hit
 Melee: 0
 Missile: 2

Urga-Zai Cavalry #RH70

Move: 3
 Defense: 3
 Morale: ♣

Melee: 3
 Charge: 4
 Missile: 1

1 Hit
 Melee: 2
 Charge: 3
 Missile: 0

2 Hits
 Melee: 1
 Charge: 2
 Missile: -2

Urga-Zai Cavalry #RH71

Move: 3
 Defense: 3
 Morale: ✕

Melee: 3
 Charge: 4
 Missile: 1

1 Hit
 Melee: 2
 Charge: 3
 Missile: 0

2 Hits
 Melee: 1
 Charge: 2
 Missile: -2

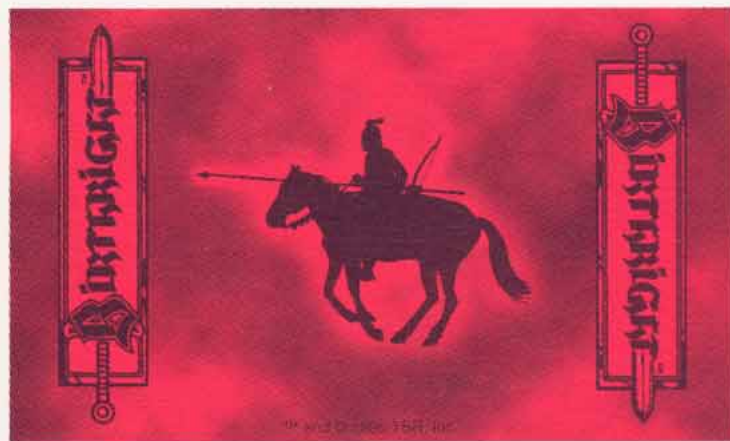
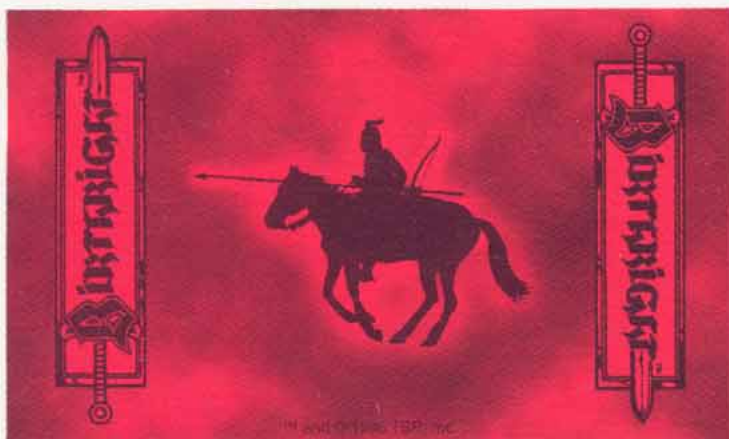
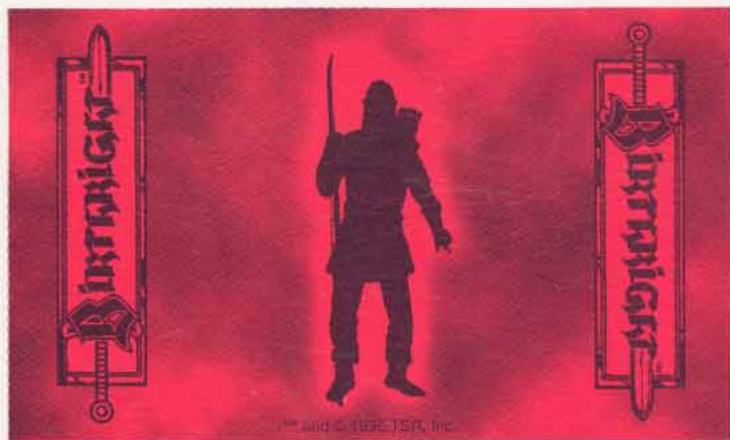
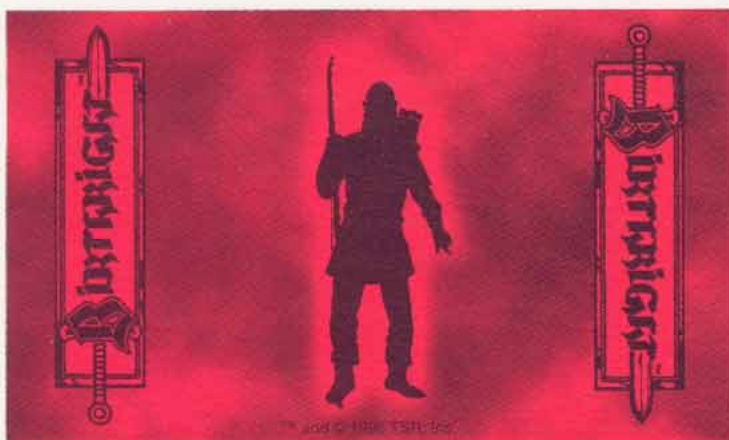
Urga-Zai Elites #RH72

Move: 1
 Defense: 3
 Morale: ✕

Melee: 4
 Missile: 2

1 Hit
 Melee: 3
 Missile: 1

3 Hits
 Melee: 1
 Missile: -2



Lluabright Archers #RH57

Melee: 2
Missile: 5
Elves move freely in all terrain.

Move: 2
Defense: 2
Morale: ✕

1 Hit
Melee: 1
Missile: 3

Lluabright Archers #RH58

Melee: 2
Missile: 5
Elves move freely in all terrain.

Move: 2
Defense: 2
Morale: ✕

1 Hit
Melee: 1
Missile: 3

Lluabright Guards #RH59

Melee: 5
Missile: 3
Elves move freely in all terrain.

Move: 2
Defense: 3
Morale: ✕

1 Hit
Melee: 4
Missile: 2

2 Hits
Melee: 2
Missile: 1

Lluabright Gheallie Sidhe #RH60

Melee: 3
Charge: 5
Missile: 4
Elves move freely in all terrain.

Move: 4
Defense: 4
Morale: ✕

1 Hit
Melee: 2
Charge: 4
Missile: 2

2 Hits
Melee: 1
Charge: 2
Missile: 1

Lluabright Gheallie Sidhe #RH61

Melee: 3
Charge: 5
Missile: 4
Elves move freely in all terrain.

Move: 4
Defense: 4
Morale: ✕

1 Hit
Melee: 2
Charge: 4
Missile: 2

2 Hits
Melee: 1
Charge: 2
Missile: 1

Urga-Zai Infantry #RH62

Melee: 2
Missile: 1
+1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.

Move: 1
Defense: 2
Morale: ♣

1 Hit
Melee: 1
Missile: 0

Urga-Zai Infantry #RH63

Melee: 2
Missile: 1
+1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.

Move: 1
Defense: 2
Morale: ✕

1 Hit
Melee: 1
Missile: 0

Urga-Zai Infantry #RH64

Melee: 2
Missile: 1
+1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.

Move: 1
Defense: 2
Morale: ♣

1 Hit
Melee: 1
Missile: 0



Khurin-Azur Guards

#RH49

Move: 1
Defense: 5
Morale: X ▼

Melee: 4
*Dwarves ignore R
and F results
caused by magic.*



2 Hits
Melee: 2

1 Hit
Melee: 3

Lluabright Swords

#RH51

Move: 2
Defense: 3
Morale: X ▼

Melee: 3
Missile: 1
*Elves move freely
in all terrain.*



1 Hit
Melee: 2
Missile: 0

Lluabright Swords

#RH53

Move: 2
Defense: 3
Morale: X ▼

Melee: 3
Missile: 1
*Elves move freely
in all terrain.*



1 Hit
Melee: 2
Missile: 0

Lluabright Archers

#RH55

Move: 2
Defense: 2
Morale: X ▼

Melee: 2
Missile: 5
*Elves move freely
in all terrain.*



1 Hit
Melee: 1
Missile: 3



Rjurik Infantry #RH17

Move: 1
 Defense: 3
 Morale: ✕

Melee: 3
 +1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.

2 Hits
 Melee: 1

1 Hit
 Melee: 2

Rjurik Infantry #RH18

Move: 1
 Defense: 3
 Morale: ✕

Melee: 3
 +1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.

2 Hits
 Melee: 1

1 Hit
 Melee: 2

Rjurik Housecarls #RH19

Move: 1
 Defense: 4
 Morale: ✕

Melee: 4
 +1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.

2 Hits
 Melee: 2

1 Hit
 Melee: 3

Rjurik Housecarls #RH20

Move: 1
 Defense: 4
 Morale: ✕

Melee: 4
 +1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.

2 Hits
 Melee: 2

1 Hit
 Melee: 3

Rjurik Housecarls #RH21

Move: 1
 Defense: 4
 Morale: ✕

Melee: 4
 +1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.

2 Hits
 Melee: 2

1 Hit
 Melee: 3

Rjurik Housecarls #RH22

Move: 1
 Defense: 4
 Morale: ✕

Melee: 4
 +1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.

2 Hits
 Melee: 2

1 Hit
 Melee: 3

Rjurik Archers #RH23

Move: 2
 Defense: 2
 Morale: ✕

Melee: 2
 Missile: 4

2 Hits
 Melee: 2

1 Hit
 Missile: 3

Rjurik Archers #RH24

Move: 2
 Defense: 2
 Morale: ✕

Melee: 2
 Missile: 4

2 Hits
 Melee: 2

1 Hit
 Missile: 3



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Rjurik Irregulars #RH9

Move: 2
 Defense: 2
 Morale: ✕ ▼

Melee: 2
 Missile: 2






1 Hit
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 1

Rjurik Irregulars #RH10

Move: 2
 Defense: 2
 Morale: ▼ ✕

Melee: 2
 Missile: 2






1 Hit
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 1

Rjurik Infantry #RH11

Move: 1
 Defense: 3
 Morale: ✕ ▼

Melee: 3
 +1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.


2 Hits
 Melee: 1

1 Hit
 Melee: 2

Rjurik Infantry #RH12

Move: 1
 Defense: 3
 Morale: ✕ ▼

Melee: 3
 +1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.



2 Hits
 Melee: 1

1 Hit
 Melee: 2

Rjurik Infantry #RH13

Move: 1
 Defense: 3
 Morale: ▼ ✕

Melee: 3
 +1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.



2 Hits
 Melee: 1

1 Hit
 Melee: 2

Rjurik Infantry #RH14

Move: 1
 Defense: 3
 Morale: ✕ ▼

Melee: 3
 +1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.



2 Hits
 Melee: 1

1 Hit
 Melee: 2

Rjurik Infantry #RH15

Move: 1
 Defense: 3
 Morale: ✕ ▼

Melee: 3
 +1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.



2 Hits
 Melee: 1

1 Hit
 Melee: 2

Rjurik Infantry #RH16

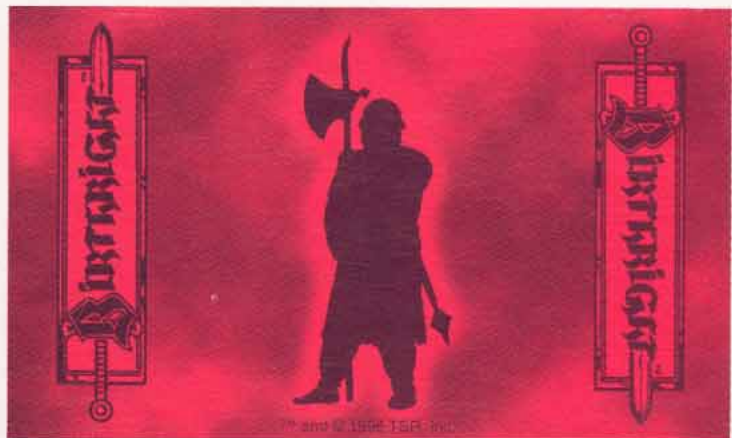
Move: 1
 Defense: 3
 Morale: ▼ ✕

Melee: 3
 +1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.

2 Hits
 Melee: 1

1 Hit
 Melee: 2



Rjurik Irregulars #RH1
Move: 2
Defense: 2
Morale: ▼
Melee: 2
Missile: 2



1 Hit
Melee: 1
Missile: 1

Rjurik Irregulars #RH2
Move: 2
Defense: 2
Morale: ✕
Melee: 2
Missile: 2



1 Hit
Melee: 1
Missile: 1

Rjurik Irregulars #RH3
Move: 2
Defense: 2
Morale: ✕
Melee: 2
Missile: 2



1 Hit
Melee: 1
Missile: 1

Rjurik Irregulars #RH4
Move: 2
Defense: 2
Morale: ▼
Melee: 2
Missile: 2



1 Hit
Melee: 1
Missile: 1

Rjurik Irregulars #RH5
Move: 2
Defense: 2
Morale: ✕
Melee: 2
Missile: 2



1 Hit
Melee: 1
Missile: 1

Rjurik Irregulars #RH6
Move: 2
Defense: 2
Morale: ✕
Melee: 2
Missile: 2



1 Hit
Melee: 1
Missile: 1

Rjurik Irregulars #RH7
Move: 2
Defense: 2
Morale: ▼
Melee: 2
Missile: 2

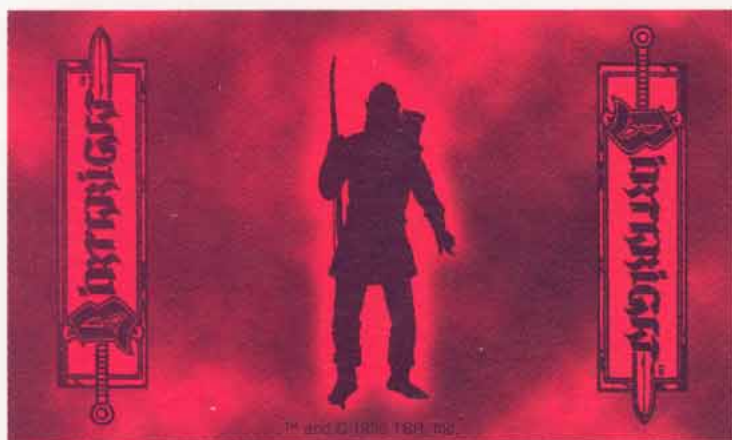
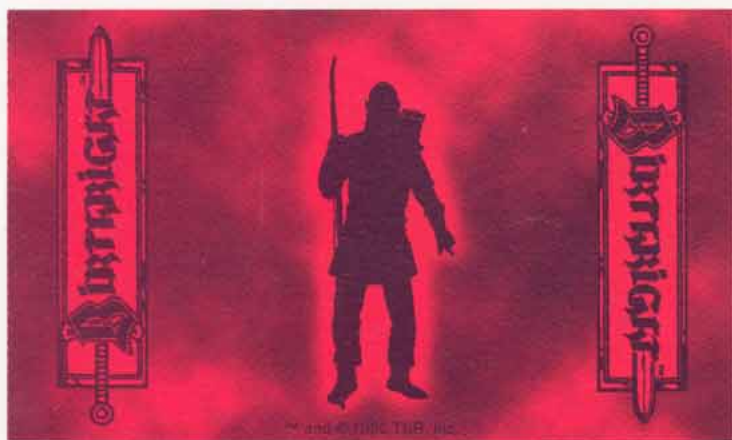
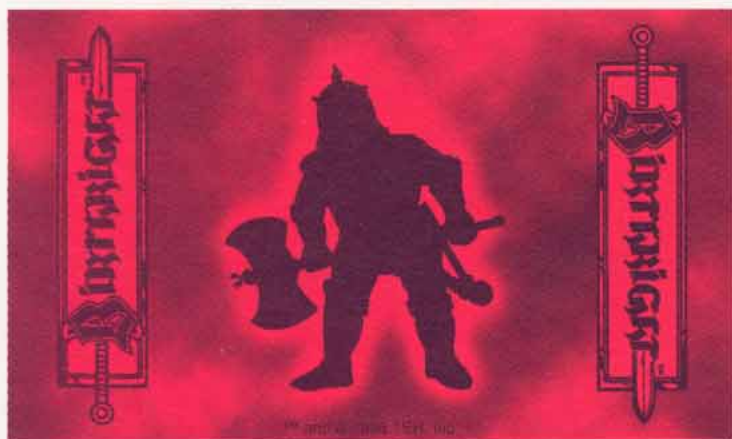


1 Hit
Melee: 1
Missile: 1

Rjurik Irregulars #RH8
Move: 2
Defense: 2
Morale: ✕
Melee: 2
Missile: 2



1 Hit
Melee: 1
Missile: 1



Khurin-Azur Miners

#RH50

Move: 1
Defense: 4
Morale: X ▼

Melee: 3

Ignore R and F results caused by magic; may deploy in any square on field.



1 Hit
Melee: 2



Lluabright Swords

#RH52

Move: 2
Defense: 3
Morale: X ▼

Melee: 3
Missile: 1

Elves move freely in all terrain.



1 Hit
Melee: 2
Missile: 0



Lluabright Swords

#RH54

Move: 2
Defense: 3
Morale: X ▼

Melee: 3
Missile: 1

Elves move freely in all terrain.



1 Hit
Melee: 2
Missile: 0



Lluabright Archers

#RH56

Move: 2
Defense: 2
Morale: X ▼

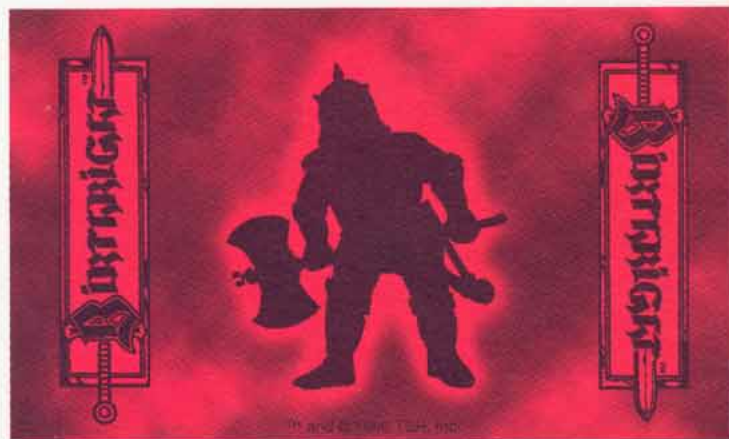
Melee: 2
Missile: 5

Elves move freely in all terrain.



1 Hit
Melee: 1
Missile: 3





Halskapan Wolf Guard

#RH41

Melee: 4

+1 bonus vs. pikes and irregulars.

Move: 1

Defense: 4

Morale: X



2 Hits
Melee: 2

1 Hit
Melee: 3

Khurin-Azur Infantry

#RH43

Melee: 3

Dwarves ignore R and F results caused by magic.

Move: 1

Defense: 4

Morale: X



1 Hit
Melee: 2

Khurin-Azur Infantry

#RH45

Melee: 3

Dwarves ignore R and F results caused by magic.

Move: 1

Defense: 4

Morale: X



1 Hit
Melee: 2

Khurin-Azur Crossbows

#RH47

Melee: 2

Missile: 4

Dwarves ignore R and F results caused by magic.

Move: 1

Defense: 4

Morale: X



1 Hit
Melee: 1
Missile: 3

Khurin-Azur Infantry

#RH42

Melee: 3

Dwarves ignore R and F results caused by magic.

Move: 1

Defense: 4

Morale: X



1 Hit
Melee: 2

Khurin-Azur Infantry

#RH44

Melee: 3

Dwarves ignore R and F results caused by magic.

Move: 1

Defense: 4

Morale: X



1 Hit
Melee: 2

Khurin-Azur Crossbows

#RH46

Melee: 2

Missile: 4

Dwarves ignore R and F results caused by magic.

Move: 1

Defense: 4

Morale: X



1 Hit
Melee: 1
Missile: 3

Khurin-Azur Crossbows

#RH48

Melee: 2

Missile: 4

Dwarves ignore R and F results caused by magic.

Move: 1

Defense: 4

Morale: X



1 Hit
Melee: 1
Missile: 3



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Rjurik Cavalry #RH33

Move: 3 Melee: 3
 Defense: 3 Charge: 5
 Morale: ▼

1 Hit
 Melee: 2
 Charge: 3

Rjurik Cavalry #RH34

Move: 3 Melee: 3
 Defense: 3 Charge: 5
 Morale: ✕

1 Hit
 Melee: 2
 Charge: 3

Rjurik Cavalry #RH35

Move: 3 Melee: 3
 Defense: 3 Charge: 5
 Morale: ▼

1 Hit
 Melee: 2
 Charge: 3

Rjurik Cavalry #RH36

Move: 3 Melee: 3
 Defense: 3 Charge: 5
 Morale: ✕

1 Hit
 Melee: 2
 Charge: 3

Rjurik Cavalry #RH37

Move: 3 Melee: 3
 Defense: 3 Charge: 5
 Morale: ✕ ▼

1 Hit
 Melee: 2
 Charge: 3

Rjurik Cavalry #RH38

Move: 3 Melee: 3
 Defense: 3 Charge: 5
 Morale: ▼

1 Hit
 Melee: 2
 Charge: 3

Rjurik Cavalry #RH39

Move: 3 Melee: 3
 Defense: 3 Charge: 5
 Morale: ✕

1 Hit
 Melee: 2
 Charge: 3

Rjurik Cavalry #RH40

Move: 3 Melee: 3
 Defense: 3 Charge: 5
 Morale: ✕ ▼

1 Hit
 Melee: 2
 Charge: 3



Rjurik Archers #RH25

Move: 2 Melee: 2
 Defense: 2 Missile: 4
 Morale: ♣ ♠



1 Hit
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 3




Rjurik Archers #RH26

Move: 2 Melee: 2
 Defense: 2 Missile: 4
 Morale: ✕ ♠



1 Hit
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 3

Rjurik Archers #RH27

Move: 2 Melee: 2
 Defense: 2 Missile: 4
 Morale: ✕ ♠



1 Hit
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 3

Rjurik Archers #RH28

Move: 2 Melee: 2
 Defense: 2 Missile: 4
 Morale: ♣ ♠

1 Hit
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 3

Rjurik Archers #RH29

Move: 2 Melee: 2
 Defense: 2 Missile: 4
 Morale: ✕ ♠



1 Hit
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 3




Rjurik Archers #RH30

Move: 2 Melee: 2
 Defense: 2 Missile: 4
 Morale: ♣ ♠



1 Hit
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 3

Rjurik Archers #RH31

Move: 2 Melee: 2
 Defense: 2 Missile: 4
 Morale: ✕ ♠



1 Hit
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 3

Rjurik Archers #RH32

Move: 2 Melee: 2
 Defense: 2 Missile: 4
 Morale: ✕ ♠

1 Hit
 Melee: 1
 Missile: 3



The Rjurik Highlands

by Anthony Pryor

The winter wind screamed mercilessly outside the tribal longhouse. Inside, the clan huddled comfortably around a blazing fire and heard the heroic legends of the skalds. "On a night worse than this," began the woman's tale, "our ancestors defeated the ice giant Gruumvok. The creature had already devoured their herds, smashed their village, and crippled some of their best warriors. But through their Rjurik cunning, the villagers tricked Gruumvok and sent him to his death. Gather close and learn from the wisdom of our ancestors. . . ."

Sprawling endlessly beyond the northern borders of Anuire, the Rjurik Highlands harbor undiscovered wonders, secrets, and dangers. Tracts of untouched mountains and forests offer breathtaking vistas; riches in the form of trade goods and untapped magical sources lie quietly for those brave enough to seize control of them; extreme weather and hostile humanoids await their chance to test any who might venture into these pristine lands. The frozen north offers challenges and prizes beyond compare—but only the most ambitious and stalwart will persevere!

This expansion to the BIRTHRIGHT™ campaign setting contains:

- ❖ *The Rjurik Highlands*—A 96-page book covering the history, geography, political alliances, major characters, and tribes of the northern reaches.
- ❖ A full-color poster map of the Rjurik Highlands.
- ❖ 110 War Cards of new Rjurik and humanoid armies.
- ❖ Six cardsheets of major Rjurik cities and player aids.

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