

# IRON EDDA WAR METAL & BONE

Written by Tracy Barnett



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## Thanks

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## *Prologue*

Long had the Dwarves, | forgers of iron and metal,  
Bent and twisted, rotten fork | of Ymir's life-river,  
Kept to the ground | holding in their homes  
The secrets of the world | long left hidden.  
Their dark hands darker | with the blood of the earth  
They crafted in secret; | would you yet know more?

A liar, monster-father, trickster, | whispered to them of lost days,  
Dripped mind-poison in their ears, | made promises of lost glory regained.  
Incensed, the duergar took the forms | of giants of old,  
Wrought by hammer and steel | not by natural means.  
Metal giants made in mock | of their grave-laid ancestors  
Built for war and destruction; would you yet know more?

Rising from the ground | across the world, in all nations  
The humans and elves alike | were caught unawares.  
Mighty warriors blunted | their spears and axes  
On the surface of the | dwarf-forged giants.  
Where hammers wrought | the deaths of the brave,  
Flowers grew to show | their blood-marked passing.

Hope faded and desperation | etched every face.  
Eyes to the heavens turned | pleading for aid  
From the Aesir, the gods | of the old long held.  
The gods, knowing their fate | held back action, no aid given.  
All save Loki, liar, monster-father, trickster; | would you yet know more?

From the depths of the earth, | old jotunn bones were  
Pulled forth; The trickster god | working his mischief.  
Loki gave the secrets needed | to raise the bones,  
To bind the spirits of true warriors | to the spirits of dead bone.  
Old giants, flesh-lacking, | rising to meet the dwarves.

The Elves, too, with the willows | of Alfheimr, strong  
And true, came to battle; | how else to fight their doom?  
Giants, true children of Ymir |, full of rage, few of number,  
Rose in challenge, daring | Men, Elves, and Dwarves alike.  
The mock made of their forms | and the pillaging of jotunn bones  
Drove them to mind-fury, | raging against all.

Grinding war rends | the earth asunder,  
Rivers of blood crashing | through axe-made canyons.  
The seers proclaim truths | hidden truths, eye-hiding things  
That speak of the end. | The death of all things, world-ender, Ragnarok.  
Some accept, bending to Fate | as in times before.

We do not bend. We fight, | no matter the means.  
This is our world | which we fight to protect  
And for which we will die. | Our home, gift of the  
Gods, we will fight for, always; | would you yet know more?

- Pened by Selvie Half-axe, skald to Jarl Elsebet.



# Hrofnir's Story

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It always comes back to one thing. What is a person willing to do to protect what's theirs? In the old days, men fought men, to keep what they had. They raided, ravaged, and pillaged each other and the surrounding lands. Life, it was good. Then the world shattered. The ground rent asunder by the metal giants of the duergar. None could not stand against them.

So tall. Blocked out the sun. Some say the largest had heads that were lost in the clouds themselves. They moved as mountains, with ponderousness. A grinding that shook you to your very bones. Entire holdfasts shattered, crushed under metal feet, or torn from the ground by grasping hands.

We cried out to the gods, praying for help. We sacrificed and we bled, the warrior clans disintegrating under the onslaught. Even my own clan, the mighty Raven Clan, Odin's own clan, was reduced to a shadow of our former glory. So many deaths. Truly Valhalla was filled to bursting after our fruitless battles.

After months, all seemed lost. The dwarves and their metal creations had laid waste; there was little left to speak of. Then, in the north, a grim hope appeared. We thought at first that it was dwarven trickery. A giant, it seemed, but not of metal. Of bones, it was, with scraps of gravecloth hanging from it. At the center of it, a human form burning in blue light. And as the man moved, so too did the bones.

Ragnar Bonebonded. His original name was burned from him. He spoke of the northern Seers and their powers. How the gods had come to them and delivered to them the answer. How they pulled the bones of long-dead giants from the ground. How they took him and wedded his very spirit to the bones. How he was the start of a new clan: the Clan of Bone.

The clans were troubled by this. Spirit bonded to bones? To the bones of a giant? What would happen when he died? Would he feast with Odin in Valhalla? Would he be condemned? Words were thrown like spears. Clans already ruined by the war broke further.

Two sides took form. There were those who said this was no gift, that they would rather die like warriors than rely on the magic of bones.

Others welcomed this gift from the gods. They clamored to be bonded themselves. Then the attack came and, for the first time, the dwarves were driven back by Ragnar and his bones. The Clan of Bone truly began that day.

And now, it is my turn. I have heard what the old one says will happen, and I have made my choice. I will take this gift from the gods. I will leave the Clan of the Raven and give over my name. Forevermore, I will be known as Hrofnir Boneson. I, and my brothers and sisters, will drive back the dwarves. We will turn the tides or die in defiance.

## The Game

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*War of Metal and Bone* is a game of brave warriors fighting to keep their homes, lives, and freedom. It is a game of magic and intrigue. It is the story of ordinary men and women who fight alongside towering giants. It is the story of a world irrevocably changed. What the future brings will be in your hands. It is your fate to walk into the world of giants.

Midgard is a world like our own. Inspired by Norse myth, it is a world roughly as it was during the Viking Era. A lot of research went into the writing of the setting. Historians will see a lot of variations, but will hopefully appreciate the small details that were purposefully included. Norse myth is a rich source from which to draw, and *War of Metal and Bone* would not be what it is without the use of such sources.

Ultimately, this world is your world. Fate is designed for the players to have an impact on the world around them. *War of Metal and Bone* is no different. Your group will create your own holdfast, describe the world around you, and carve your names into the rolls of history.

Lord, warrior, thrall ... all have the chance to feast in Valhalla.

## DIFFERENCES FROM FATE CORE

*War of Metal and Bone* uses the FATE CORE and Fate Accelerated Edition rules, but there are some significant differences in how things are handled in *War of Metal and Bone*. The following is an overview of the differences.

**Holdfast Creation** - Rather than setting creation, *War of Metal and Bone* uses a collaborative map-building process that uses a large table of



questions about the setting. In addition to creating the setting, this leads naturally into character creation.

**Character Creation** - Character creation immediately follows Holdfast Creation. Rather than telling backstories with one another, players use the plot threads they generated during Holdfast Creation to make shared histories.

Characters have differences from those in FATE CORE as well.

**Aspects** - In addition to HIGH CONCEPT and TROUBLE, the other three aspects are labeled: CLAN ASPECT/NATIONALITY ASPECT/BOND ASPECT, SACRED ITEM, and GROUP ASPECT.

**Refresh** - Default refresh in War of Bones and Metal is **four**.

**Skills/Stunts** - Burglary and Driving are all replaced. There are substitutions for each skill

**Magic** - There are three different levels of magic in *War of Metal and Bone*: NON-MAGICAL, SEERS/WITCHES/WISEPEOPLE, and RUNESCRIBED. Each of the Non-Magical distinctions has different mechanical impacts on how a character interacts with the world.

**Scale** - There are three scales of size in *War of Metal and Bone*: HUMAN SCALE, GIANT SCALE, and EPIC SCALE. The size of a thing or being changes the manner in which you interact with it.

## Holdfast Creation

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The heart of a campaign of *War of Metal and Bone* is found in the creation of a unique holdfast and the lands around it. This method of creation allows each group to have a unique experience in Midgard, shaping the lands around them as they adventure.

Each Holdfast is created using the same process and items. Following is a table of questions. Each player uses a set of Fate Dice to determine what

*Credit for this idea goes to Travis Scott, a man of intellect and grace. Thanks for letting me use it, Trav.*

category their question will be from, and to determine the question itself. As each player answers their question, they add details to the world, and something to the ever-growing Holdfast Map. This process gives both the players and the GM a stake in the world that the game will take place in.

Here's the process you'll need to follow.

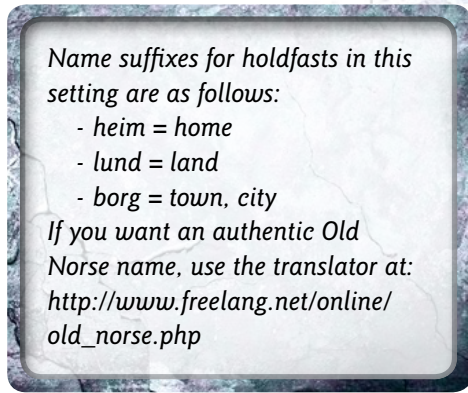
**To create a holdfast, you'll need a few things:**

1. A piece of paper to draw a map on. Graph paper works well. In my experience, an 8½" x 11" piece works best.
2. A set of Fudge/Fate dice.
3. A group ready to begin the campaign.

**To use the holdfast generator use the following steps:**

1. Roll four Fate/Fudge dice. Count the plusses across, and the minuses down until you get to a specific box.
2. Once you have your box, find the corresponding entry on the list on page 7 and roll two additional Fate/Fudge dice.
3. Read the entry aloud, and answer any questions that are posed in the entry.
4. Draw something on the map that corresponds to your entry. It does not have to be to scale. If you can add an aspect to your map entry, so much the better. See the example setting creation on page 16 for more information.
5. The remaining players each take a turn taking steps 1-4. If you have a small number of players, have the GM take a turn as well. When everyone has gone, you should have 4-5 entries on the map.
- 5a. If you roll the same category as another player, feel free to roll again for something different. There are 96 questions on the table. That means lots of possibilities!
6. Discuss among the group where the holdfast itself should be on the map. Name it.
7. While the players are answering these questions, the GM needs to take notes about the answers. What the players are saying are the

seeds of the plot and the beginnings of the story that the GM will guide. Anything that catches your ear should be written down. If something a player says catches your interest, or doesn't make sense, ask a follow-up question to get some more details. See the example below.



- 7a. Players, feel free to ask each other questions as well. Let each player answer their own questions, but if they ask for help, give it to them. This is, above all, a collaborative process.

As mentioned above, as questions get answered, things get defined in the world. It's best to come into this process with an open mind. For example, if a question mentions the Jarl and a player refers to the Jarl as "she," then the Jarl's a woman. The declarations that are made during this process should be noted and used later.

There may be words or terms that you're unfamiliar with when looking at the questions. If you see something you don't recognize, check the setting section of the book to get a description.

### HOLDFAST CREATION TABLE

	■	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕
■	Hanging in the Balance	Sword Talk, Axe Talk	Political Maneuvers	Dictates of Fate	Blessing of the Gods
▬	Time of Sacrifice	Trade and Commerce	Local Resources	Tidings of War	
▬	What We Have Wrought	Clan Matters	Fortune Favors the Bold		
▬	A Glimmer of Hope	Tales for the Ages			
▬	Curse of the Gods				

## HANGING IN THE BALANCE

++	There is a chance to strike at the heart of a dwarven fortification! It would be a telling blow in the war. Where are the dwarves fortified? Why is now the opportune moment?
+■	Information has been gathered on a looming dwarven assault. Many scouts died to bring the information. What was the information? How will this help blunt or thwart the coming attack?
+—	Refugees are streaming into the holdfast. What has caused this influx? How will the Jarl ensure that everyone is fed and cared for?
■■	A lone dwarven automaton arrived outside of the holdfast three days ago. It is not moving. What is the local reaction to its arrival?
—■	A renowned Bonebonded warrior has vanished! Who disappeared? Where did they go? Why?
—■	Rumors of plague are spreading across the holdfast. Everyone who so much as coughs is looked at sideways. How is the Jarl handling the situation? Why?

## SWORD TALK, AXE TALK

++	A great victory has been won over the dwarven forces! Who was responsible for turning the tides? What is needed to ensure future victories will come?
+■	Tempers are high in the holdfast. Duels over honor are at an all-time high. What is causing the tension?
+—	Murder in the holdfast! Who has been killed? Who is the killer? How can they be stopped before it happens again?
■■	An old warrior craves a death that will assure them their place in Valhalla. To what lengths will they go to ensure their proper end? Who are they pulling into their plans?
—■	Two warrior clans are feuding. Which clans are fighting and what is the source of their strife? Can anything end it?
—■	A local coalition hates and fears the Bonebonded. What have they done to sabotage the local contingent? How are the Bonebonded responding?

## POLITICAL MANEUVERS

++	A delegation from Alfheim has arrived in the holdfast. The elves offer their support in the war against the duergar, but for a price. What do they want? Why is the Jarl reluctant to take the deal?
+■	A nearby Jarl is styling themselves as Jarl of Jarls and is demanding fealty of all local lords and ladies. What is the reaction to this in your holdfast? How is this affecting the ongoing war with the dwarves?
+—	A group of merchants is demanding restitution for dwarven raids, claiming the Jarl did not give them promised protection. How is the Jarl responding? What are the merchants withholding until their demands are met?

■ ■	A powerful warrior is stirring up trouble, claiming that the Jarl is weak and foolish. What is the Jarl preparing to do in response? What will it take to silence the dissident warrior?
— ■	The Jarl is gravely ill. Some whisper that their spouse is responsible. What is the true nature of the Jarl's illness? What will happen if they do not recover?
— —	Rebellion! A group of clan warriors has risen up against the Jarl. With whom are the people siding? What will happen when the next dwarven attack comes?

### DICTATES OF FATE

++	A great sacrifice has been made and victory has been promised by the priests of Odin and Thor. What was sacrificed? How will the victory come to pass?
+ ■	A great flock of ravens, Odin's own messengers, has alighted on the Jarl's longhouse. How is this portent being interpreted?
+ —	A skald claims to have visited Mimir's Well, at the root of Yggdrasil itself. The tale is spreading far and wide. What is the skald's agenda? How are the priests reacting?
■ ■	A great number of young warriors are abandoning their chosen clans to become Bonebonded. How are the clans reacting to this?
— ■	A two-headed calf has been born. What does this grim portent mean for the holdfast?
— —	A priest walks through the streets claiming that the gods have abandoned the holdfast. What event does the priest claim as the origin for this loss of divine favor?

### BLESSING OF THE GODS

++	Folk say the forges of the blacksmith ring with the sound of Thor's own hammer. Who is this blacksmith? What did they do to earn such an honor? What does this honor mean for your holdfast?
+ ■	A special member of the Bonebonded is said to have pieces of Ymir, the Father of Giants in his skeleton. What special properties does this give the Bonebonded? How has this made your holdfast famous?
+ —	The waters of your river are said to give strength and agility to those that drink of it. How has the river been protected against the dwarves? What needs to be done to keep the waters safe for all time?
■ ■	Your Jarl has Odin's own wisdom. How has this benefited your holdfast? How have these benefits affected relations with the surrounding lands?
— ■	Frigg has blessed your holdfast! What is the nature of this blessing? How do the women of the holdfast greatly benefit from it?
— —	The blessing of Loki? What double-edged blessing has the trickster bestowed on your holdfast?

## TIME OF SACRIFICE

<b>++</b>	Every hand is needed to fight against the dwarves. How are the warriors supporting the Bonebonded when the dwarven automatons come? Why are these efforts vital to winning the war?
<b>+■</b>	An important resources has been cut off by the dwarves. What is this resource? Why is it vital to the holdfast that it be recovered?
<b>+■</b>	A dwarven assault has the holdfast crippled. A scout claims that a contingent of Bonebonded are on the way. How do the dwarves have the holdfast in such a position? What is needed to hold out until help arrives?
<b>■■</b>	The Jarl's treasury has been depleted by the war. To what lengths will the Jarl go to cover the loss? How will this affect the war?
<b>■■</b>	A living giant arrived outside of the holdfast and is now demanding tribute. What does the giant want for tribute? How is the Jarl responding?
<b>■■</b>	The Jarl has been poisoned! Who is stepping up to fill the void in leadership? Why is their move a contentious one?

## TRADE AND COMMERCE

<b>++</b>	A bountiful harvest means an abundance for the people of your holdfast. Why was the harvest so good this year? What new trade alliances are being formed as a result?
<b>+■</b>	A trader is in dwarven artifacts. Where do the artifacts come from? How are they being obtained?
<b>+■</b>	Caravans from Jgol have begun traveling across the whole of Midgard. What goods do the hooded traders bring? Why are people loathe to trust them?
<b>■■</b>	Jorufaegir, warriors from across the Hnitborg Mountains bring fine furs from strange animals. What is unique about these goods and why are people clamoring for them?
<b>■■</b>	Weapons and armor are in scarce supply. What dwarven threat has caused this shortage? How can the warriors be outfitted in time to stop it?
<b>■■</b>	Traders from the Petruvian Empire are threatening to cut off relations. What has them so willing to destroy years of trade? What can be done about it?

## LOCAL RESOURCES

<b>++</b>	A wealth of gold has been uncovered in a nearby mine. How will this bounty affect your holdfast? What must be done to ensure the mine's profitability?
<b>+■</b>	The land around your holdfast is particularly well-suited for the cultivation of bees and honey. How has the war affected the hives? How can they be protected?
<b>+■</b>	A vital resource for the war is located near your holdfast. What is it? Why is it so difficult to access?

■■	The river is the lifeblood of your holdfast. What threat is being posed to those who ply the river? How can their way of life be maintained?
▬■	A new method of spinning wool has been found. It creates durable cloth more quickly than ever before. Who created this method? How are they profiting from it? How is the holdfast profiting?
▬▬	Scarcity plagues the lands around your holdfast. What is causing the shortages? How will you survive until the next season?

## TIDINGS OF WAR

++	The fighting has avoided your holdfast until recently. Why has the war not come near until now? How is the Jarl responding to the broken peace?
+■	The holdfast's most renowned warrior has died in a recent battle. How is the holdfast honoring them? Where is the honoring ceremony taking place?
+▬	The Jarl's heir has been killed in battle. Where did the battle take place? What has the Jarl sworn to do to gain vengeance?
■■	The fields are running red with blood. Whose blood has been spilled? Why does it spell hard times for the holdfast?
▬■	Crucial supplies need to get to a nearby holdfast. What is preventing the supplies from getting there? How can this obstacle be circumvented?
▬▬	Rumors are swirling that one of the countries surrounding Midgard is about to take advantage of the dwarven war and invade. What country is attacking? What are they looking to gain from the attack?

## WHAT WE HAVE WROUGHT

++	The Golden Halls of your holdfast are the envy of all in Midgard. Why were they built? What is required to keep them up? Why does the Jarl guard them so jealously?
+■	Your holdfast has a cadre of blacksmiths that make the finest weapons in the area. How is the war affecting them? What do the blacksmiths need to keep forging?
+▬	A persuasive speaker has convinced the Jarl to work to divert the river to better water the crops. How did the speaker do their convincing? What does the rest of the holdfast think of this idea?
■■	New knowledge from the Petruvian Empire makes it possible to create stone roads from holdfast to holdfast. How is construction taking place with the war? Why do the dwarves seem so keen to disrupt it?
▬■	A nearby bridge is on the verge of collapse. What resources will be cut off if it is not repaired? What needs to be done to fix it?
▬▬	Desecration! The statues of the gods in the nearby temple have been stolen! Who took them? How can they be retrieved to avoid the wrath of the gods?

## CLAN MATTERS

++	The clans are united and working together in your holdfast! What event brought about this unity? What will it take for the unity to scontinue?
+■	The Clan of the Raven claims they know of a weakness in the dwarven automatons, one that does not require the Bonebonded. How are the Bonebonded reacting to the news? How will the Ravens work prove themselves right?
+■	The Horse Clan has been losing a large number of scouts to the dwarven forces in the area. How is information being taken from holdfast to holdfast? What is needed to make sure the scouts are safe?
■■	A few hot-headed young members of the Wolf Clan started a fight in the mead hall recently. What was the fallout from that event? Why is one of the hot-heads missing?
■■	Members of the Snake Clan are dying. Who is killing them? Why is the Jarl doing nothing about it?
■■	Rumors of the Clan of the Bone are flying through the holdfast. People talk of dark sacrifices and evil rites. How are the Bonebonded reacting to the rumors? How are the people of the holdfast reacting to the Bonebonded?

## FORTUNE FAVORS THE BOLD

++	A mighty warrior is renowned in your holdfast. Who is it? What deeds made them famous?
+■	The Jarl is planning a night assault on a Dwarven position. What preparations are needed to make the maneuver successful?
+■	A local scoundrel claims that Loki has given them knowledge of something the dwarves value greatly. The loss of it would cripple them. What is the item? What must be done to secure it?
■■	The Norns have marked a young child for great deeds. What will the child accomplish? What needs to be done to ensure those deeds come to pass?
■■	Despite the war, couples are making their vows in record numbers. What is needed to make sure that the ceremonies are proper in the eyes of the gods?
■■	The Jarl is hiding behind the walls of the holdfast while their warriors are clamoring for an assault on the dwarves. Why is the Jarl so hesitant? What are the warriors willing to do to for the Jarl's hand?

## A GLIMMER OF HOPE

++	A skald sings songs of the eventual defeat of the dwarves. How do the Bonebonded figure into the tales? What does the skald claim needs to happen to make it so?
+■	The river flooded but a great bounty was left when the waters cleared. What is that bounty? How does it bring hope to the people of the holdfast?



<b>+</b> <b>-</b>	A contingent of Bonebonded are on their way to your holdfast. Why are they coming? How will the holdfast accommodate them?
<b>-</b> <b>-</b>	A missive from the dwarves is calling for peace, but at a price. What are the dwarves demanding? Is it possible for the Jarl to deliver? Why or why not?
<b>-</b> <b>-</b>	A shipment of weapons has come from one of the countries surrounding Midgard. Which country sent the weapons? How will the shipment benefit the holdfast in the war?
<b>-</b> <b>-</b>	A new salve has been discovered. It can knit broken bones and heal grievous wounds, bringing warriors back from the brink of death. Who discovered the salve? What do they want for it?

### TALES FOR THE AGES

<b>+</b> <b>+</b>	A warrior of great renown comes from your holdfast. Why do all of the clans honor them? What do young people do to be like them?
<b>+</b> <b>-</b>	A relic of the gods is revealed to be in a nearby barrow. What protects the relic? How could it help turn the tide of the war?
<b>+</b> <b>-</b>	A weapon of peerless quality has been forged in your holdfast. For whom has it been forged? Why do they not wish to wield it in battle?
<b>-</b> <b>-</b>	The skalds are composing a poem to reflect the glory of your holdfast. What about the holdfast and the surrounding lands do they praise the most? What do they malign?
<b>-</b> <b>-</b>	The twisted wreckage of many dwarven automatons surround your holdfast. Why did the dwarves attack in such numbers? How did the Bonebonded defeat so many of the dwarven war machines?
<b>-</b> <b>-</b>	Local brewers have created a brew to end all brews. Its presence has raised morale in your holdfast. What hard to find ingredient do they need to make it? How will they get it?

### CURSE OF THE GODS

<b>+</b> <b>+</b>	One of the clans in your holdfast has fallen out of favor with the gods. Which clan is it? What did they do to lose the gods' blessing?
<b>+</b> <b>-</b>	The priests say that warriors from your holdfast are not being taken to Valhalla when they die, but instead are being taken to dine with Hel. What happened to cause such a thing? How can those lost warriors be accorded their place at Odin's table?
<b>+</b> <b>-</b>	A renegade Valkyrie is plaguing your holdfast. Who is the target of her wrath? What did they do to earn the ire of such a being?
<b>-</b> <b>-</b>	The weather has been horrendous for weeks. What was done to offend the gods? What will happen if the weather doesn't break?
<b>-</b> <b>-</b>	A seer arrives at the holdfast and pronounces doom for all who live there. What is the doom? What can be done to stop it?
<b>-</b> <b>-</b>	The river has stopped flowing! How is this possible? What does this lack of water flow mean for the holdfast? How can it be made to flow again?

Once the Holdfast Creation is done, you'll have a bunch of notes, the seeds of amazing stories, characters ready to spring from the minds of the players, and a map of the area the game will take place in. Move on to character creation and take the seeds of story and make them into a game session.

After each game session, as the characters accomplish mighty deeds and effect change across the whole of Midgard, your map will need updated. If any session featured epic events, things that changed the landscape of the setting, or altered the world in palpable ways, update your map.

GMs, ask the players questions about what the long-term impact of the events will be. Don't take that burden on yourself. Let the players give you the plot threads going forward. Then use their ideas, twist them, and surprise the players.





## EXAMPLE SETTING CREATION

*Elissa, Ben, Jared, Jessica, and Jason sit down to play Iron Edda. Jessica's running the game, so she has a copy of the setting questions ready and gives everyone a character sheet.*

**Jessica:** Alright, we need to get the holdfast made. This piece of graph paper represents the area in and around the holdfast. Once you answer your question, draw something on the paper to represent it. Don't worry too much about the scale, just keep in mind that the questions might cover stuff that's outside the walls, proper. Oh, and if you've got input when it's not your turn, you can give it. Let the person whose question it is have final say, though. Elissa, why don't you start?

*Elissa grabs her Fate dice and rolls on the table. ■■■+: Sword Talk, Axe Talk. Then she rolls two more dice on that table. +■: Tempers are high in the holdfast. Duels over honor are at an all-time high. What is causing the tension?*

**Elissa:** Duels, huh? Well, I think that the warrior clans are all messing with each other.

**Ben:** Is it all happening inside the walls? That could get ugly.

**Elissa:** Nah, I think each clan has a little place outside the walls.

**Jason:** An enclave?

**Elissa:** Exactly.

**Jessica:** Cool. I've got a follow-up question: which clan is really responsible.

**Elissa:** ... The Clan of Bone.

*Everyone at the table pauses.*

**Jared:** Do they actually exist?

**Jessica:** For our game, they do now.

*Jessica takes notes about the answer to Elissa's question, making special note that the Clan of Bone exists in this holdfast. Elissa grabs the map and draws twelve rough squares around a center point of the map. She labels each with the name of a clan.*

*For more information on the  
Warrior Clans, see Page 23*

**Jessica:** Alright, Ben, how about you?

**Ben:** Sure.

*Ben rolls his four dice. ☰☰☱☱: Fortune Favors the Bold. On his next roll, he gets ☱☱: Despite the war, couples are making their vows in record numbers. What is needed to make sure that the ceremonies are proper in the eyes of the gods?*

**Ben:** Hmmm... what do people need for weddings?

**Jared:** Well, it means that the ceremony is important, right?

**Elissa:** Yeah, so maybe things to make oils, incense, that kind of thing?

**Ben:** I like that. How about a special kind of bog berry that's used to make the oil they anoint the couples' heads with?

**Jessica:** So your holdfast's in a swamp?

**Jason:** That'd be impractical.

**Jared:** Yeah, things in swamps tend to burn down and fall over.

**Ben:** Heh, yeah. No, we're near a swamp. But it's not easy to harvest the bog berries. In fact, only the Snake Clan know the secret.

**Jessica:** Cool. That's got to add to the tension between the clans. Draw something on the map to represent that.

*Ben takes the map and draws a swampy area on the bottom-left corner of the map, near the Snake Clan enclave that Elissa drew.*

**Elissa:** Convenient.

**Jessica:** Yep. Jason, how about you?

*Jason rolls ☱☱☱☱: A Glimmer of Hope. His next two dice give him ☱☱: A new salve has been discovered. It can knit broken bones and heal grievous wounds, bringing warriors back from the brink of death. Who discovered the salve? What do they want for it?*

**Ben:** Bog Berries!

**Jason:** That would make sense. But would that give the Snake clan too much power?

**Jared:** It might, but is that a bad thing? Jessica?

**Jessica:** It's up to you. This is your version of this setting.

**Elissa:** Yeah, just go with it.

**Jason:** Sounds good to me. So yeah, a member of the Snake Clan discovered that the Bog Berries can be boiled and mixed with a root from a nearby forest to make the salve.

**Jessica:** Forests and swamps, huh? Quite a mixed bag of terrain.

**Jason:** Yeah, there's a dense forest to the north of the swamp.

**Jessica:** Draw it in, if that's the important bit to you. While you're doing that, what's the name of the Snake who discovered the salve?

**Jason:** Uhhh... Sven Urisson.

**Jessica:** Cool.

*Jason draws in the forest right above the swamp.*

**Elissa:** That's awful close to the Bear Clan enclave.

**Jason:** Yeah, I figured they're not fans of the Snakes coming into the forest.

*Jessica makes a note of that.*

**Jessica:** Jared, you're up.

*Jared rolls + - - - : Tales for the Ages. His next roll gets him - - : The skalds are composing a poem to reflect the glory of your holdfast. What about the holdfast and the surrounding lands do they praise the most? What do they malign?*

**Jared:** What do they praise and what do they malign? Well, they malign the disunity between the clans, that's for sure.

**Jessica:** So the problems have been going on for a while, then?

**Jared:** Oh, yeah. I'd say our holdfast is practically known for it.

**Jessica:** That's fair. What about the praise?

**Jared:** Well, the lands around the holdfast are diverse and beautiful.

**Elissa:** A swamp.

**Jason:** And a large forest.

**Jared:** Yeah. I think we're near mountains on the other side, and we've probably got one of the Nine Rivers flowing near us, too.

*Jessica looks at the map of Midgard (see Page 50) to see where in the world the holdfast would be situated.*

**Jessica:** Well, if you're near the mountains, that'd put you over in the east, near the Hnitborg Mountains. And if you're near a river, too... Looks like it'll be Gjöll, which makes sense, because there's a forest nearby. And having a swamp near the river makes sense, too. So, the river would be south of the Holdfast.

*Jared takes the map and draws in the northern banks of the River Gjöll.*



**Jared:** I'm putting it near the Horse Enclave. Seems like the clan that has messengers and such would probably want to be near the river for ease of travel.

**Ben:** Makes sense.

**Jessica:** I'm going to roll one also. There's some good stuff here, but it needs some rounding out.

*Jessica rolls    : Political Manuevers*

**Jessica:** Perfect. This should be good.

*Jessica's second roll gives her  : The Jarl is gravely ill. Some whisper that their spouse is responsible. What is the true nature of the Jarl's illness? What will happen if they do not recover?*

**Jessica:** Oh, nice! So, the Jarl is ill and people think her husband did it.

**Ben:** Her?

**Jessica:** Yeah, We haven't established who the Jarl is yet, so I'm making the Jarl a woman.

**Elissa:** How about the Jarl's wife being responsible, then?

**Jessica:** Yeah, totally. So the Jarl is sick and people think her wife is responsible. Why?

**Jared:** Are they from different clans?





**Jason:** Yeah, if they were from different clans, there could be a lot of suspicion.

**Jessica:** Sounds good to me. Let's get some other clans involved. I'll say the Jarl's from the Clan of the Dragon, and her wife's from the Clan of the Raven.

**Elissa:** Oooh, Ravens. Secrets, secrets are no fun.

**Ben:** Not for the Jarl, anyway.

**Jessica:** So let's say that the Jarl's wife is definitely responsible. What will happen if the Jarl doesn't recover?

**Jason:** Well, the holdfast will have to hold a Thing to elect a new Jarl.

**Ben:** And with how contentious the clans are being, that's not likely to go well.

**Jessica:** I like it. So I'm gonna draw in the holdfast itself. It'll be in the middle of the clan enclaves. What are we going to name it?

**Elissa:** Well, the area's really beautiful. How about something like Home of Beauty?

**Jared:** This online translator says that *vænn* means "beautiful." How about Vænnheim?

**Elissa:** That's a nice name.

**Jessica:** Vænnheim it is.

*Jessica draws a box in the middle of the map to represent the holdfast itself. Below it, she writes VÆNNHEIM, HOME OF BEAUTY.*

**Jessica:** There's an aspect for the Holdfast. Anyone have any aspects for their drawings?

**Ben:** The swamp needs one. How about *TREACHEROUS SWAMP OF LEGEND?*

**Jessica:** Swamp of Legend? Well, the berries have to have come from somewhere. Anything else?

**Elissa:** Not for now. I figure the game will use the clan conflict pretty heavily.

**Jason:** Yeah, I'm good.

**Jared:** Me, too.

# Characters

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If the holdfast creation is the heart of a campaign of *War of Metal and Bone*, characters are the heart of the holdfast. From Jarl to thrall, everyone has a chance to hear their name called, to do their duty, and to live out their fate. The Bonebonded who ride in blue fire inside their giants may seem like the primary heroes, but the tales of the warriors and shieldmaidens on the ground, the servants to the lord and Jarls, the farmers and traders, skalds and merchants, those tales are just as powerful.

## REFRESH

The default refresh for *War of Metal and Bone* is four.

## ASPECTS

Every character has the following aspects:

### **HIGH CONCEPT**

This is the same as in **FATE CORE**. It defines who your character is. Remember that aspects make things true. If you take the High Concept *Dishonored Firstborn of the Jarl*, you've defined three things about your character. Three things that the GM can use to feed into the campaign.

### **TROUBLE**

This is also the same as in **FATE CORE**. This is a flaw, a weakness, an enemy, something that keeps getting in the way of the character. Just like the High Concept, feel free to give the GM something to work with. Something like *I Killed Mirrim Ravensdottir* gives you some depth to your history, and gives the GM an entire family to bother you with.

### **WARRIOR CLAN**

Society in Midgard is built on bonds of kinship. Parents to children, siblings to one another, Jarls to thralls. In this world, there is another type of kin, one that transcends family and blood: that of the clan. The clans are bonds of fellowship and common interest. No one is born into a clan. They choose the clan their fate decrees for them.

There are nine clans. Each has an aspect associated with it. Feel free to use that aspect or to change it to better reflect your character.

*Each clan has an Aspect that may be used whenever that clan features prominently in the story.*

**The warrior clans are as follows:**



### **CLAN OF THE RAVEN - We See Beyond This World**

Odin's own clan, or so the Ravens claim. Much like the Allfather, this clan's interests are spread far and wide. Preaching wisdom in all things, a Raven may spend years perfecting their skill with a blade, then move on to the study of a foreign land. It is said that the Ravens produce the mightiest skalds. Some whisper that Odin himself has blessed this clan with special knowledge of the runes.

### **CLAN OF THE WOLF - The Pack is All**

A wolf's loyalty is the one thing that no person can ever question. Wolves work as a pack, fight as a pack, and live as a pack. No matter how distant and scattered, a wolf will always answer the call of their pack, crossing vast distances to support their sisters and brothers. Rumors persist that some of the wolves are *eigi einhamir*, not of one skin, and are able take the form of a wolf during the heat of battle.



### **CLAN OF THE SNAKE -**

#### **Strike Hard, With Deadly Force**

The snakes strike quickly, lashing out with a quickness that surprises even those familiar with them. Favoring short-bladed knives in combat, the lightly armored snakes are often the first into battle. Some snakes choose to coat their weapons in powerful poisons. This earns them mistrust from the other clans. The snakes simply shrug and say that it is their way.



## **CLAN OF THE HAMMER - The World is Meant to be Shaped**

Forge fires and the ring of metal on metal are the songs of the hammers. Hammers focus on crafting and smithing above all else. It would be a fool who assumes they do not know the use of their own creations, though. Hammers tend to be slow to anger, but like the fires they work with, their rage immolates all before them when it is released. All Hammers see potential in the world around them.



## **CLAN OF THE OX - We Stand, We Fight**

The clan of farmers and herders, the Ox are stubborn and steadfast. If an Ox digs in, expect to not move them, even come Ragnarok. And should you raise an Ox to anger, beware all in its path. This clan prides itself on supporting those around it, through food, through labor, and through unmatched hard work.



## **CLAN OF THE SWALLOW - Words Are the True Weapon**

The skalds of the Swallow Clan sing the sweetest and spin tales with the greatest. Said to be blessed by the gods with golden throats, the warrior-poets of the Sparrows are skalds to Jarls. They also travel the length and breadth of Midgard, telling tales and collecting stories. And everywhere, Sparrows have ears.



## **CLAN OF THE HORSE - Swift of Foot, Long of Life**

Fleet of foot and swift of thought, the Horses are scouts and messengers. Like the Sparrows, they travel the whole of Midgard. And, like their flighty counterparts, a Horse rarely stays in one place for long. There is always another horizon, always a river to cross or a mountain to climb. This restlessness makes the Horse clan the most widely-traveled outside of the Lands.



## CLAN OF THE DRAGON - Rage is All the Warmth We Need



Implacable warriors, Dragons strike fear into the hearts of their enemies. Said to carry small drops of the blood of Nidhogg in their veins, the Dragons are known for their berserker rages. The fury of the Dragons shocks their enemies, and even allies stand clear when the battle-lust is upon them.

## CLAN OF THE BEAR - The Beast Must be Bested

Powerful and proud, the Bears are the most widespread clan. With warriors in every hold, Bears are reliable and stolid. Natural leaders, Bears protect any in their territory, clanmates or no. Each Bear wears the claws of their namesake, and must have taken those claws in single combat; either from a clanmate, or a beast in the wild.



*There are rumors of a tenth clan, one beyond the sacred nine. This clan, the Clan of Bone, has no public face. If they exist, they exist in the shadows, on the edges of society. The recent rise of the Bonebonded has prompted new speculation among the learned about this "Clan."*

## BEYOND THE CLANS

If you're playing a Bonebonded warrior, you'll replace your **Warrior Clan** with your **Giantsbond**. You have the spirit of a long-dead giant living in your mind. What is that relationship like? How does it affect you? Is there contention? Camaraderie? You might be *Bound as if to a Selfish Child*, or know that *I've Found the Mate to my Own Spirit*.

If you're from one of the countries that surrounds Midgard, you'll replace your **Warrior Clan** with your **Homeland**. Read about the different countries and write an aspect that highlights your heritage or your relationship to

your homeland. A Desert Trader of J'Goll that is *Rejected by the Caliphate*, or a warrior from the Isle of Mists that is *Chosen Scion of the Druids*, or maybe a thrall from the Petruvian Empire that was *Sold Away by My Own People*.

This also covers member of other races like the Alfar. An Alfar treesinger that *Hears the Rustling Song of Willowbough* would be able to contend with the largest dwarven destroyers... or a Bonebonded, for that matter.

If you're playing a Runescribed (page 44) you'll replace your **Warrior Clan** with your Sacred Rune. The Runescribed are part of their clans, but they possess great power via their Rune, and that power supersedes the clan in the lives of most Runescribed.

## SACRED ITEM

The Sacred Item is something precious to your character. It might be *My Father's Axe*, or *The Jarl's Armband*. It can also be something ephemeral like *My Mother's Last Words*. The item should have a history to it, something that speaks to the character's past. It also needs to speak somewhat to a weakness in the character so that it can be compelled like all Aspects.

The Sacred Item functions like a Gear Aspect from the Fate Toolkit (see page 16 of the Toolkit.) If you want to, you can spend one of your refresh to have this aspect as an Extra so you can use it as a weapon or armor. By default, it has a rating of 2, whether it's weapon or armor.

## GROUP ASPECT

The Group Aspect is the last aspect to make in character creation. It is a bond that ties you to another character in the group. Every group aspect will have another character's name in it. **NARFI SAVED MY LIFE**, or **SIGRID OWES ME BIG**. If you can pull from the plot threads you came up with during Holdfast Creation, so much the better.

The Group Aspects are also unidirectional, meaning that no one will have a Group Aspect with the same person. This means that early in the defining, an order will be established.

## EXAMPLE:

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*Our group from before has their characters almost complete. Elissa is playing Felbride the Scarred, Jason is playing Kel Farseer, Jared is playing Narfi Svensson, and Ben is playing Barri.*

**Jessica:** Looks like we've got the characters set, all except for the Group Aspect.

**Ben:** Yeah, I was wondering about those. You said we were going to save them for last.

**Elissa:** Why'd we save them?

**Jessica:** Well, we needed to have a better sense of who your characters are. And now that we've finished all the other aspects, and gotten your skills and stunts done, we have that information. Group Aspects tie your characters together.

**Jason:** So, would something like *I GAVE FELBRIDE HER SCAR* be cool.

**Jessica:** Elissa, are you okay with that?

**Elissa:** Yeah, it sounds good to me.

**Jessica:** Cool. So now you guys have that bit of history between you.

**Ben:** Now what?

**Jessica:** Now Elissa gets to make a connection between Felbride and someone else. Elissa, who does Felbride have a connection to?

**Elissa:** Hmmm... how about Narfi?

**Jared:** Works for me. What are we talking here?

**Elissa:** I think that Narfi and Felbride were out hunting bog berries, you know, the ones needed for the weddings?

**Jared:** Yeah.

**Elissa:** They were hunting them, and were attacked by a giant swamp snake. And Narfi saved Felbride's life.

**Jessica:** So the aspect is going to be *NARFI SAVED MY LIFE?*

**Elissa:** Yeah.

**Jessica:** Works for me. That means it's Narfi's turn, and Narfi will have to be connected to Barri, and then Barri back to Kel.

**Jared:** Why's that?

**Jessica:** Well, each of the aspects only goes one direction and we want everyone to have one. And since there are only four of you, the order got set early.

**Jared:** That's fine by me. I don't know what the details of it are, but I think I want mine to be *BARRI BETRAYED MY CLAN*.

**Elissa:** Whoa.

**Jessica:** Yeah, that's big. But you two aren't from the same clan.

**Ben:** That's fine. There's a lot of infighting between the clans. I'm sure we can have that play out.

**Jessica:** Excellent. So that means we need to connect you and Kel.

**Ben:** Well, Kel's a Seer, right?

**Jason:** Runescribed.

**Ben:** Well, when Barri did the ceremony to get his Bonebond, he had a vision and he believes that *KEL WILL GUIDE ME*.

**Jason:** I like it. I don't know that Kel likes it, but I like it.

**Jessica:** Alright! Looks like we're ready to get the session started!

*See Page 29 for more on the mechanics behind Bonebonded, Page 43 for Seers, and Page 44 for Runescribed.*



## THE BONEBONDED

Secret rituals pull the spirit of a dead giant from the depths of its dark afterlife and binds it to the soul of a warrior brave enough to take the burden. With the spirit come the bones of the giant... and power. But power at a price. The giant lives inside the warrior, always. For the rest of their shared life, they are never alone. A mere human and a powerful, dead giant, bound for ever after.

### *EXTRA: BONEBONDED*

**Permissions:** Replace your Warrior Clan aspect with a Bond aspect. Your spirit is bound to that of a dead giant. Giants are cruel, capricious, and tend towards evil. They bear no love for humans. However, you have chosen this bond to help save your people from the constructions of the dwarves. You will continually battle the nature of the giant as you use the bones. This battle continues even when you are not working with the bones. The bond is a part of you, always. Look to the approaches you chose for the bones to give you an idea of the temperament of your bond. Some giants are brutish and straightforward, others are subtle and cruel. This is the burden you will carry with you; choose well.

**Costs:** Two refresh, one of your starting three stunts must be used on your Giant.

Create your giant. Give your giant a name, and assign approaches.

Choose one approach at Good (+3), two at Fair (+2), two at Average (+1), and one at Mediocre (+0). The default five approaches are listed here:

- ◆ Forceful
- ◆ Clever
- ◆ Quick
- ◆ Careful
- ◆ Flashy

The sixth approach is for you to fill in. Think about what makes your giant different from any other giant in the land. Choose an approach to reflect that. Remember, we're talking about 40 foot-tall skeletal giants. They're usually not too subtle.

Sample approaches for giants are *Explosive*, *Wrathful*, *Icy*, and *Vengeful*.

Choose a stunt from your starting pool for your giant. The form for building stunts for approaches is found in *Fate: Accelerated Edition* on Page 31. If you don't own *Fate Accelerated Edition*, the two templates for Accelerated stunts are as follows:

Because I [DESCRIBE SOME WAY THAT YOU ARE EXCEPTIONAL, HAVE A COOL BIT OF GEAR, OR ARE OTHERWISE AWESOME], I get a +2 when I [PICK ONE: CAREFULLY, CLEVERLY, FLASHILY, FORCEFULLY, QUICKLY, SNEAKILY] [PICK ONE: ATTACK, DEFEND, CREATE ADVANTAGES, OVERCOME] when [DESCRIBE A CIRCUMSTANCE].

and

Because I [DESCRIBE SOME WAY THAT YOU ARE EXCEPTIONAL, HAVE A COOL BIT OF GEAR, OR ARE OTHERWISE AWESOME], once per game session I can [DESCRIBE SOMETHING COOL YOU CAN DO].

Give yourself an amount of stress boxes equal to the value of your highest approach. If your highest approach increases because of a milestone, you add an additional stress box.

These stress boxes represent the power of the giant bones that surround you. The stress boxes may only be used when you have the giant's bones summoned. All attacks on the Bonebonded when the bones are summoned use this set of stress boxes. If an attack exceeds the giant's stress boxes and the character would be Taken Out, the stress instead rolls over to the human's stress boxes. Then the giant's bone can't be summoned for the rest of the scene.

## EXAMPLE:

Barri has a Bonebonded giant named Balgi. Balgi and Barri are fighting Mountaincrusher, and are on their last legs. Mountaincrusher attacks and Barri chooses to defend. Mountaincrusher rolls +8 on his dice, while Balgi only rolls +4. Balgo has no stress boxes left, and Barri doesn't want another consequence. Balgi takes the stress and the bone disappear, dropping Barri to the ground. The extra stress rolls over to Barri's physical stress boxes. Barri checks his fourth physical stress box and prepares to try and continue the fight.

## ADVANCEMENT

When you are able to advance a Skill, you may instead choose to advance one of your Giant's approaches. You may not advance your Giant's approaches higher than the rating of your highest Skill.

If you are able to take a new stunt, you may spend that stunt on your giant, rather than on your character.

## SCALE

When a giant or dwarven automaton is on the battlefield, the scale of the game changes.

There are multiple levels of scale in *War of Metal and Bone*.

- ◆ Human Scale
- ◆ Giant Scale
- ◆ Epic Scale

## HUMAN SCALE

This is the default scale that the game operates on. After all, the PCs are all about that size. Sure, there might be the odd 7-foot tall warrior towering over her companions, but that doesn't put her on the next level of scale.

*What this means in the rules* — Everything on Human Scale operates just like it would in a regular game of FATE CORE. You use your regular skills to Attack, Defend, Overcome, and Create Advantages.

## GIANT SCALE

This is for big things: The bones of a bonded giant that can step over the walls of your holdfast, the Dwarven Destroyer that wields small trees as clubs, or the Alfar Treewalker striding through the forest looking so much like a mobile tree.

Approaches signal Giant Scale. That means when you see anything with an Approach, you're looking at something that operates on Giant Scale. The descriptions become grander. Portions of holdfasts become decimated by one blow. The action of the story becomes, quite literally, bigger in scope.

*What this means in the rules* — If two Giant Scale things are interacting with one another, you use the Approaches of each and resolve stress as normal. Just as if you were playing Fate Accelerated Edition.

If a Human Scale thing is interacting with a Giant Scale thing, the rules change.

*Human Scale to Giant Scale* — To Human Scale things, Giant Scale things function as maps. The Giant Scale thing is divided into zones, and each of those zones is mapped to one of the Giant Scale thing's Approaches.

## EXAMPLE

The Dwarven Destroyer Mountaincrusher has the following approaches:

- ◆ Inferno: +4
- ◆ Forceful +3
- ◆ Clever +2
- ◆ Quick +1
- ◆ Flashy +0
- ◆ Careful -1

Each of those Approaches is mapped to an area of the Destroyer itself.

- ◆ Head — Clever
- ◆ Torso (Front) — Inferno
- ◆ Torso (Back) — Flashy
- ◆ Arm (Right) — Forceful
- ◆ Arm (Left) — Careful
- ◆ Legs — Quick

If a Human Scale warrior wanted to interact with those zones of Mountaincrusher, he would do so just like he would a zone on a map. The Overcome action would be used to move into the zone, and the Create Advantage action would be used to give situation aspects to the zone. To set the difficulties for those two actions, use the numbers associated with the zone.

**EXAMPLE:** Felbride the Scarred and her party are attacking Mountaincrusher. Felbride is Human Scale and has no abilities that let her act on Giant Scale. She wishes to climb onto Mountaincrusher's legs and search for the dwarf that must be piloting the Destroyer.

On her first turn, she rolls *ATHLETICS* to jump onto the legs. Mountaincrusher's legs are Quick +1, so the passive resistance is a 1. Felbride rolls **++--**, with Great Athletics. She makes, it no problem. Mountaincrusher doesn't take notice of her. After all, what can she do to him?

On her next turn, Felbride gets an idea. She tells the GM that she's taking a length of rope and throwing it around Mountaincrusher's legs. She rolls **+---**, with Mediocre Shooting. She gets the Aspect *BOUND IN ROPE* on the leg zone of Mountaincrusher, but because she tied, Mountaincrusher will get the free invoke of that Aspect.

*Giant Scale to Human Scale* — If a Giant Scale thing attacks a Human Scale thing and hits, its attack is treated as having a Weapon rating equal to the rating on the Approach it used.

**EXAMPLE:** Mountaincrusher decides to brush Felbride off his leg Forcefully. He rolls **--+--** with +3 Forceful for a total of 4. Felbride rolls **--+--** with Great Athletics. Not good enough. Mountaincrusher beat the roll by one shift, plus Weapon: 3. 4 shifts for Felbride to deal with. Ouch!

*Human Scale to Giant Scale* — By default, Human Scale things cannot inflict stress on Giant Scale things. There are exceptions to this when magic or stunts come into play.

## EPIC SCALE

There are things in the world bigger than giants or Destroyers. They're spoken of in hushed tones over cook fires burned low; Fenrir, the Wolf, Jormungandr, the World Serpent, and Nidhogg, the Dragon. They tower like mountains, blot out

*If the players decide to generally operate on Human Scale, keep that in mind. Throwing Dwarven Destroyers at a Human Scale party will mean lots of stress boxes and consequences used. Not a bad thing, but don't overdo it.*



sections of the sky, and are terrifying to behold.

When an Epic Scale thing comes into play, the scale shifts further. To Giant Scale things, the Epic Scale thing becomes a map. To Human Scale things, the Epic Scale thing becomes something to explore, a map of maps, if you will.

*What this means in the rules* — Epic Scale things don't use Skills or Approaches. Instead, their Aspects have ratings. Their very natures are the things that they attack and defend with. Those Aspects are also zones, and the passive defense rating of those zones is the same as the zones for Giant Scale things.

Giant Scale things use their Approaches to Overcome and Create Advantages on the zones that make up the Epic Scale thing. Human Scale things explore, hunt, and fight working to find the thing, or things, that will let them disable the Epic Scale thing, if only for a short time.

*Epic Scale to Giant Scale* — This is treated the same as a Giant Scale thing attacking a Human Scale thing. Use the rating of the Aspect as a Weapon rating.

*Epic Scale to Human Scale* — When an Epic Scale thing attacks a Human Scale thing, it means destruction on a vast scale. Rather than inflicting stress, the attacks are not attacks that deal stress, but rather change the landscape.

**EXAMPLE:** If Fenrir attacks a holdfast with his *JAWS THAT CAN SWALLOW THE MOON*, roll as normal. The attack is going to hit; Fenrir is *huge*. The roll is happening to give those in the area an active defense to roll against. Everyone in the area rolls the appropriate skill to duck and cover, get out of the way, and so forth. Calculate their stress as normal, and add a new situation Aspect to the holdfast. *Furrows the Size of Canyons* now cross what once was your holdfast.

*If, after reading this section, you decide that your game needs more levels of scale, add more. To do that, adjust the scale upward as described in the Epic Scale section, on Page 33. Now imagine what could be bigger than the World Serpent.*

## DEALING WITH SIZE IN YOUR GAME

The idea that Epic Scale things can't be killed, only contained, is in keeping with Norse myth. That doesn't mean that you can't have it happen. You just need to find ways for the players to operate on Epic Scale. Weapons as Extras, Stunts, or Godlike magic are all options.

## SKILLS AND STUNTS

### SKILLS IN WAR OF METAL AND BONE

Skill	Overcome	Create Advantage	Attack	Defend
Athletics	x	x		x
Contacts	x	x		x
Crafts	x	x		
Deceive	x	x		x
Empathy	x	x		x
Fight	x	x	x	x
Investigate	x	x		
Lore	x	x	x*	x*
Notice	x	x		x
Physique	x	x		x
Provoke	x	x	x	
Rapport	x	x		x
Resources	x	x		
Ride	x	x		x
Sail	x	x		x
Shoot	x	x	x	
Stealth	x	x		x
Thievery	x	x		
Will	x	x		x

\* Certain characters may be able to attack and defend with Lore; see Magic, on Page 41.

### ATHLETICS

Leaping from the prow of a longship as it surges through the river; Rolling aside to avoid the thundering blow from a destroyer's hammer; Running through the forest in chase of a fleet-footed Alfar.

### CONTACTS

Having an in with the only traveling merchant that comes to your holdfast; Knowing who really runs the Wolf Clan, regardless of what they say; Having a place to stay in a distant holdfast because of the favor you're owed.

### CRAFTS

The forging of a blade worthy of a Jarl; Constructing a new series of walls for the holdfast after a ruinous battle; Devising a new means of irrigating the fields to better harvest crops.



## **DECEIVE**

Talking your way into a clan meeting for a rival clan; Passing yourself off as a seer by telling false fortunes; Avoiding a beating from angry warriors by convincing them that someone else is responsible for stealing their horses.

## **EMPATHY**

Figuring out the true nature of the new seer that arrived in the holdfast; Using verbal cues to determine that the speaker at the clan meeting isn't really a Snake; Discovering that the fast-talker in front of you is a **RENOWNED HORSE THIEF**.

## **FIGHT**

Trading blows in combat; Standing toe-to-toe with an opponent in an honor duel; Parrying a vicious cut from an enemy blade.

## **INVESTIGATE**

Discovering the truth behind the dwarven attacks in a dusty ruin; Gaining knowledge about the Jarl thanks to family records; Uncovering lost forging techniques after an attack uncovers a cache of documents.

## **LORE**

Drawing on your knowledge of herbs and poultices to help bind a companion's wounds; Calling on the gods for inspiration and guidance; Weaving the tenuous forces of magic into spells and creations.

By itself, Lore is the skill that represents knowledge and its applications. However, Lore is also the skill associated with Seer Magic (Page 41). Stunts to enhance Lore as a skill for Seer Magic are found in that section.

*This use of the Lore skill is almost identical to the Lore-as-magic example in FATE CORE. It is re-written in the Seer Magic Section to give the appropriate costs, and to reflect a little flavor of the setting.*

## **NOTICE**

Spotting the dwarven spy moving through the darkness toward the holdfast; Catching sight of the person skulking through the crowd; Hearing the crack of a twig behind you before your attacker lunges.

## **PHYSIQUE**

Working hard at the oar of a longship to help it surge through the river; Catching and holding the thundering blow from a destroyer's hammer; Throwing a tree across the path of a fleet-footed Alfar.

## **PROVOKE**

Using words as a weapon; Laying bare the flaws of someone else for all to see; Inciting ire; Driving someone to distraction.

## **RAPPORT**

Holding strong when someone insults or defames you; Convincing the guards to let you into the Meadhall because you really are the person to help the Jarl; Convincing a crowd to be hopeful and positive in the face of a coming attack.

## **RESOURCES**

What you're worth and what you can buy; Wowing a clan with your generosity as you provide a Sumptuous Feast for their celebration; Outfitting a cadre of warriors for battle at the drop of a hat.

## **RIDE**

Challenging a troll on a combat-trained mount; Avoiding certain danger while your horse leaps across a chasm; Staying atop a wyvern long enough to make it across the mountains.

## **SAIL**

Making it safely through a treacherous set of rapids; Navigating across an expanse of open water with only the stars to guide you; Ramming the spear-like prow of your longship into the side of a kraken.

## **SHOOT**

Splitting your first arrow with your second in an archery contest; Hurling a spear through the thigh of an oncoming ogre; Launching a stone from a Petruvian trebuchet.

## **STEALTH**

Moving unnoticed through a crowd; Sneaking your way into the back of the Meadhall under the cover of night; Finding the perfect position from which to strike in a shadowy room.

## **THIEVERY**

Lifting money pouches; Disabling complex dwarven traps; Setting up a long con or heist; Planting evidence on someone; Forging a document

## **WILL**

Holding on to your concentration in the face of distraction; Solving a puzzle in an old ruin before your companions are crushed; Resisting a magical assault on your mind.



## STUNTS

When creating stunts for *War of Metal and Bone*, think larger-than-life. Imagine clearly the way your hero interacts with the world. How are they unique? How are they capable in ways that no other is capable? How do they strive to accomplish their goals? Do they have special training? Are they the one person to ever take down a dwarven construct without a Bonebonded? Ask yourself these questions. Look to the shared history from character creation. Make a hero.

Stunts in *War of Metal and Bone* fall into two broad categories: Mortal and Supernatural. Mortal stunts are extensions of skills and reflect the work of training, skill, and mortal effort. Supernatural stunts reflect the presence of magic, blessings from the gods, or influence from outside of the normal mortal ken.

## MORTAL STUNTS

*Berzerker* — Once per session, you can make a single attack against all enemies in the same zone as you. Roll once and use that as the attack for all targets.

*The Bigger They Are...* — For the cost of a Fate Point, you can use a skill as if it were an approach, allowing it to affect things on Giant Scale for an exchange.

*Flying* — When you Invoke an opponent's aspect as part of an Attack with Provoke, you gain three shifts success, rather than two.

*I Know Who Can Help* — Once per session you can call on one of your contacts who will appear just at the right time.

*Self-Sacrifice* — Once per session if you have a Mild Consequence available, you may take that consequence and treat it as if you spent a Fate Point. If you don't have a Mild Consequence available, you may take a higher Consequence, but the benefit remains the same.

*Size Doesn't Matter* — +2 to Defend rolls when facing a Giant Scale Opponent.

*You, Beat Me?* — +2 to Create Advantage rolls that involve you outracing or outpacing an opponent with Athletics.

## SUPERNATURAL STUNTS

Some of the Supernatural Stunts are available to any character. Those are directly below. Others can only be used by Seers or Runescribed. Those stunts are found in their respective sections.

*Hammer of the Gods* — Your Sacred Item is blessed by one of the gods.

It attacks at Weapon:3 if it is a weapon, or grants Armor:3 if it is protective. If you use any item of a similar nature (weapon or armor) that is not your Sacred Item, you lose this bonus until you appease the god you have offended.

*Odin's Blind Eye* — Your Notice skill is unimpeded by conditions like total concealment and darkness.

*Odin's Emissary* — A raven follows you, a gift from Odin. You may use the Raven's eyes to roll Notice when the raven is away from you.

*Runetouched* — Pick a Rune from the list

on Page 45. While not Runescribed, you have an affinity for that Rune. You may take that Rune as a Skill, starting at Mediocre. You gain a +2 on Creating Advantages with your Runic Skill due to magical nature of the skill. If your Runic Skill advances to Good (due to normal skill advances), you may take the Runescribed Extra without paying the refresh cost.

*There are a number of stunts in FATE CORE that will work well, as written, in War of Metal and Bone. In fact, any stunt that doesn't imply a higher level of technology than the setting has will work very well. If you're stuck trying to come up with a stunt, start there.*

## MAGIC

There are two types of magic in *War of Metal and Bone*, Seer Magic, and Runescribed Magic. Each type of magic has a different impact on the world and comes with different societal restrictions.

### SEER MAGIC

Seer magic comes from the gods, granting visions, providing knowledge, and crafting spells to delight and horrify. Seer magic operates on Human Scale, working as an extension of the Lore skill.



## **Extra: Seer Magic**

**Permissions:** Indicate your ability to use magic in either your High Concept or Trouble Aspects

**Costs:** Reduce your Refresh by one, and take the Lore skill at Good or higher.

Every time a Seer rolls her Lore skill, she is using magic.

**Overcome:** Cast spells or rituals, commune with the gods

**Create Advantage:** Use magic to change the world people around you, either physically or mentally.

**Attack:** Use Lore to attack with spells, elements, etc. Can affect targets either physically or mentally. Targets can defend with Athletics, Will, or Lore if they are also Seers.

**Defend:** Use Lore to defend against attacks, magical or otherwise. This kind of thing can be difficult to define. Players and GMs should discuss the limits of such defenses. For example, A Seer can't defend against an attack from a Runescribed (see Page 44) without taking the extra shifts of stress from the weapon rating of their attack. But the same Seer could summon a magical defense to defend against the sword of a raging warrior.

## **SEER MAGIC STUNTS**

*My Ancestor's Bones* — Your rune bones are carved from the bones of a notable ancestor of yours. Name the ancestor and give them a High Concept. +2 to Overcome when divining with your special rune bones. Every time they are used, the ghost of your ancestor will demand a boon or favor.

*Tied to (element)* — Choose an element (earth, fire, ice, etc). You get +2 to Attack with Lore when using a natural occurrence of that element.

## **ADVANCEMENT**

Seer Magic advances the same as any skill does, including through the addition of stunts.

*Society* — Seers are on the outside of society. They may advise, guide, or suggest, but they do not lead. Such is the price of their power. They are wise-people, healers, priests, and shamans. They may not have the Authority Extra (see pg 47).

## **RUNESCRIBED MAGIC**

The 18 Runes are powerful forces in the world. Seers use the runes on their bones, casting them to divine the future or seek answers to questions. They never tap the true power of the runes. You gain that power when you inscribe a rune onto or into your flesh.

## **EXTRA: RUNESCRIBED MAGIC**

**Permissions:** Your Sacred Item aspect is your rune; indicate which Rune it is and how it's inscribed (scarred, tattooed, burned, etc)

**EXAMPLE:** Frostburned Rune of Isa (Ice)

**Costs:** Reduce your Refresh by one

You gain a single approach at Good (+3) that reflects your tie to your Rune. That Runic approach operates on Giant Scale.

**Attack:** When attacking a Giant Scale thing with your Runic approach, you may deal stress as normal. When attacking a Human Scale thing, treat your Rune as having a Weapon rating equal to the rating of the Rune.

**Defend:** You can use your Runic approach to defend against Giant Scale attacks as normal. If you use your Runic approach to defend against a Human Scale attack, treat the Rune as having an Armor rating equal to the rating of the Runic approach.

For Overcome and Create Advantage actions, keep the scale in mind. The Runes operate on Giant Scale and should be described as such. There are no mechanical bonuses granted when you use the Runic approaches for those actions, but the descriptions should reflect the scale.

## **RUNIC STUNTS**

Stunts that affect your Runic approach are built the same way Bonebonded stunts are built. See Page 30.



## ADVANCEMENT AND MULTIPLE RUNES

When you are able to advance a Skill, you may instead choose to advance your Runic approach. You may not advance your Runic approach(es) higher than the rating of your highest Skill.

If you are able to take a new stunt, you may spend that stunt on your Rune, rather than your character. The form for building stunts for approaches is the same as it is for Bonebonded. See Page 30.

If you wish to inscribe your character with more than one Rune, you may do so for the equivalent cost of one refresh. The new Runic approach gets a rating of +3 or one step lower on the ladder of your highest Runic approach, whichever is lower.

*Society* — The Runescribed are the magical weapons of those in command.

If an individual takes a Rune, they do so knowing that they will never rule. A ruler with the unchecked power of a Rune would be a terror to behold. Runescribed may not take the Authority Extra (see Page 47).

## THE RUNES

**F** **Fehu** — Luck, Great Fortune. Bearers of Fehu can manipulate their luck or the luck of those around them. Attacks and defenses with Fehu look like random chance or lucky breaks.

**U** **Uruz** — Strength, Aurochs, Ox. Uruz is the true mark of the Ox clan. Those marked by Uruz can accomplish feats of strength that no mere mortal could contemplate.

**T** **Thurisaz** — Destruction, Change. The decay of things, or the transmutation of things is the hallmark of those marked with Thurisaz.

**F** **Ansuz** — Will, Mental Force. Ansuz dominates the thoughts and will of others. Moods change dramatically and minds are damaged by its use.

### MERKSTAVES

*When the Runes appear upside-down or backward in an inscription, the meaning of the Rune is reversed. Such runes are not used in Runescribing due to their deleterious effects on the user.*

- ⚔ **Raidho** — Speed, Travel. The bearers of Raidho move faster than an eyeblink. Some say that they don't traverse the world physically but instead move instantaneously from one place to another.
- ◀ **Kenaz** — Light, Illumination. Kenaz lights all darkness and blinds with its radiance. It reveals the unseen and makes clear the way forward.
- ⚡ **Hagalaz** — Hail, Nature's Wrath. Those marked with Hagalaz are storms contained in mortal form. They can control the weather and unleash its brutality on their enemies.
- ⌄ **Isa** — Ice, Frost, Death. Isa saps, takes, and locks things in place. It is the dead chill of the upper Northlands in the depth of a sunless night.
- ♫ **Eihwaz** — Tree, Life, Growth. Those marked by Eihwaz are life personified. Growth and abundance follow them, to the point of surfeit and beyond.
- ⚔ **Nauthiz** — Need, Desire, Want. Nauthiz creates cravings and hungers that must be sated. Carriers of Nauthiz leave trails of unmet needs and unfulfilled desires in their wake.
- 🔒 **Perthro** — Secrets, Occlusion, Stealth. Masters and Mistresses of the hidden, those marked by Perthro breath secrets and walk in shadows.
- 🛡 **Algiz** — Protection, Shield. Indomitable and unmovable. Algiz breeds a deep and abiding strength used to protect the Runescribed or those they deem worthy.
- ⌊ **Laguz** — Water, River, Lake. Motion, force, and strength. Those marked by Laguz ripple and flow around obstacles. When cornered, they can unleash the fury of the Nine Rivers.
- ◇ **Ingwaz** — Earth, Mountain, Rock. Ingwaz gives its bearers the ability to call on the force of a rockslide, or the solidity of a mountain. Even the smallest pebble can cause damage of great proportions in their hands.

- ⌘ **Othala** — Age, Ancestry, Old Power. Othala marks fearsome warriors that call not on the names of their ancestors, but the spirits of their ancestors to fight at their sides.
- ⌘ **Ehwaz** — Horse, Wildness, Freedom. A person branded by Ehwaz cannot be contained or controlled. They long for freedom and birth the same longing in all things.
- ⌘ **Mannaz** — Intelligence, Insight, Forethought. It is said that Mannaz allows brief glimpses into the future that allow those marked to act before their opponents know a decision has been made.
- ⌘ **Dagaz** — Day, Dawn, Fire. Renewal and rebirth through purifying fire. The flames of the sun burn in those marked by Dagaz and woe betide any who challenge them.

## AUTHORITY

Not everyone in the world is Bonebonded, or uses magic like a Seer or the Runescribed. If your character is none of those things, then you have the option of taking the Authority Extra.

### **Extra: Authority**

**Permissions:** An Aspect that indicates some type of leadership status in the Holdfast, either as granted by society (Haughty Son of the Jarl, Immensely Wealthy Fur Trader, Tenacious Wolf Clan Leader), or by personality (Silver-Tongued and Knows It).

Character cannot have the Bonebonded, Seer Magic, or Runescribed Extras.

**Costs:** Lower your Refresh by one, take either Rapport, Resources, or Contacts at Good or higher.

Those with Authority have the capability to command a group of people, or mobilize a set of resources that operate on Giant Scale. This is called your Asset.

Name your Asset as an aspect.

### **EXAMPLES:**

- ◆ *LOYAL WARBAND*
- ◆ *THE PEOPLE OF CLIFFBORG*
- ◆ *MY NETWORK OF INFORMANTS*
- ◆ *THE GIANT CATAPULT OF RIMEWARD HOLDFAST*

Your Asset has a rating of Good +3. It can act on Giant Scale if the context is appropriate. A *Loyal Warband* might be able to mount an attack on an oncoming Destroyer, but a *Network of Informants* would have great difficulty doing the same thing.

## **ADVANCEMENT AND MULTIPLE ASSETS**

When you are able to advance a Skill, you may instead choose to advance your Asset. You may not advance your Asset(s) higher than the rating of your highest Skill.

If you are able to take a new stunt, you may spend that stunt on your Asset, rather than your character. The form for building stunts for approaches is the same as it is for Bonebonded. See Page 30.

The form for building stunts for approaches is the same as it is for Bonebonded. See Page 31. The new Asset gets a rating of +3 or one step lower on the ladder of your highest Asset, whichever is lower.

## **CONSEQUENCES**

*Extreme Consequences* — In addition to the three standard consequences, there is an additional Extreme consequence that can mitigate eight shifts of success. This is a last-ditch, no-other-options-left choice. To take the Extreme Consequence, the character must re-write their High Concept to reflect the fundamental change that they have undergone in order to avoid the stress they are mitigating.

*Collateral Consequences* — This are a pool of communal consequences that is shared by the party, one of each level including Extreme. If the players decide to, they may use one of these collateral consequences to mitigate shifts of stress.

These consequences represent damage to the people or world around the characters.

### **EXAMPLES:**

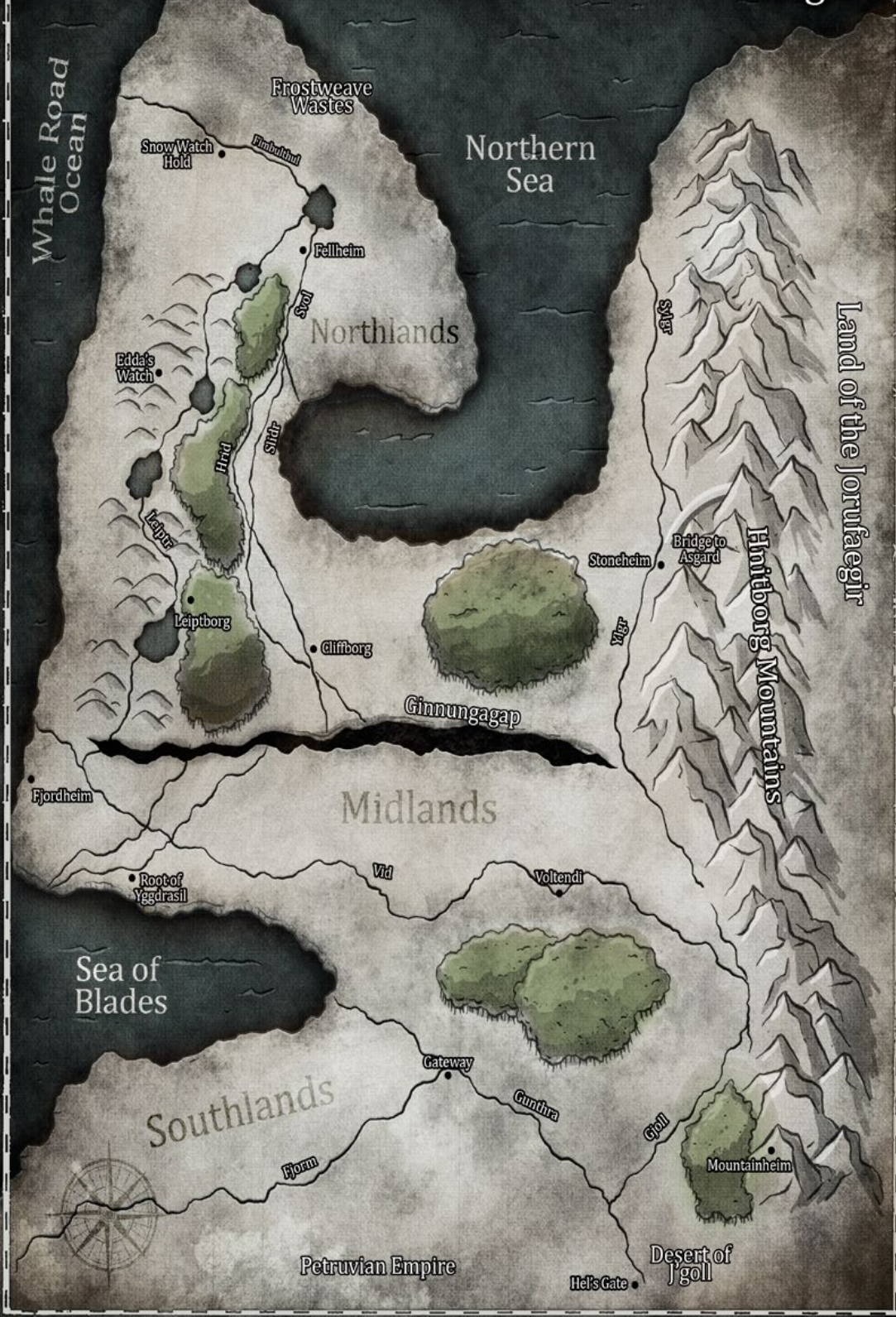
- ◆ Mild — *Damaged Walls*
- ◆ Moderate — *Destroyed Bridge*
- ◆ Severe — *Thousands of Displaced Refugees*
- ◆ Extreme — *The Crater Where Fellheim Used to Be*

## **COLLABORATING IN MIDGARD**

The heart of what makes *War of Metal and Bone* sing is the collaboration that takes place among everyone involved. From the words you are reading here to the decisions the players make during setting creation to the GMs preferences and skillset, all of these things must blend together to create your Midgard. Here are some suggestions on how to accomplish that.

- ◆ Keep an open mind. If you come into the session with too many preconceived notions of what will happen, then the setting creation and collaboration that comes with it will fall flat.
- ◆ Work together at all times. Take suggestions from everyone else at the table. Offer suggestions. But remember this: you need to share. If you hog the space, you will win no love from your table.
- ◆ Always enable. This is something that is not always discussed when it comes to gaming. If you take the time (as player or GM) to help the other people at your table have moments in the sun, then your game will sing. If you look only to your own success, then your game will struggle.

# Midgard



Whale Road Ocean

Frostweave Wastes

Northern Sea

Snow Watch Hold

Fimbaltal

Fellheim

Northlands

Edda's Watch

Sval

Hrad

Sidr

Leipbor

Leipborg

Cliffborg

Stoneheim

Bridge to Asgard

Ginnungagap

Migr

Hnitborg Mountains

Land of the Jorufægir

Fjordheim

Midlands

Root of Yggdrasil

Vid

Voltendi

Sea of Blades

Southlands

Gateway

Gundra

Gjoll

Mountainheim

Petruvian Empire

Hel's Gate

Desert of Jgoll



## Setting

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The setting for *War of Metal and Bone* is moldable. It is created and shaped by every group that plays it. There are some things that are always true about the setting, but each group will take Midgard and make it their own. What follows is an accounting of what is true, as seen through the eyes of a resident of the world.

Each section has a description of the area, a section detailing notable holdfasts and settlements, and notable people.

### **Penning by Helga Fenrirsdaughter, historian to Jarl Elsebet**

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All know the story of the world's creation. The ice from Nifelheim combined with the fires of Muspellheim, and in the void of Ginnungagap, Ymir formed. Odin and his brothers killed the Father of Giants and formed the world, formed Midgard, and inside it, Asgard. In the years since the work of the gods, many things have changed.

The children of Rig, the Jarls, the warriors, and the thralls, spread across the land. Divides of geography led to divides of people. Tongues changed, cultures changed, and the world grew. From the Hnitbjorg Mountains to the Jörmungandr-ringed oceans, the people spread across the land. Some forgot the gods, instead worshipping weak spirits and other ideals.

Into this world, the dwarves entered.

In all parts of the world, the people responded. Those who did not follow our gods were left to their own devices. Some managed to survive. Some even found a response for the creations of the dwarves. The years passed in an uneasy stalemate, and the lands suffered.

Who can say what action will be needed to break the will of the duergar? The gods only know.

Let this record serve as a chronicle of the lands as they stand now, at this point in history. This is the record of our lands, and the lands surrounding ours. I have walked them with my own feet, and these things I have seen with my own eyes. Let the gods bear witness to the truth of my words.

## MIDGARD, OUR LANDS

From the northern ice, and the Frostreave Wastes, to the south, along the edge of the River Gjöll; from the Endless Ocean to the west, to the Hnitborg Mountains in the east we hold dominion. People cover the whole of Midgard. They range from the Frostreave Wastes in the far north, all the way to the edge of the River Gjöll in the south. As well, they're found from the shores of the Endless Ocean in the west into the Hnitborg Mountains in the east. No one person rules all of it, though there are Jarls who have tried. Most of the lands are ruled by a Jarl who claims a set area of land. There are also areas of great emptiness, where only beasts and Low Men live. As well, there are areas of great darkness; places where witches, spirits, and beings from the Lower World are said to gather. As promised, I will only speak of what I know to be true, having been witnessed with the eyes granted me by the gods. I will also speak of what is whispered, for even a whisper can carry the breath of truth.

### THE NINE RIVERS

The rivers of Midgard are the lifeblood of our people. Without the Nine Rivers, trade, war, our way of life would not exist. The rivers reach into other realms, and give us passage there. They are sacred and each has shaped the character of the land and the people that live near them.

This is the list of the names of the rivers:

- ◆ **Svol**, icy and hard;
- ◆ **Gunnthrá**, placid and calm;
- ◆ **Fjorm**, warm and tranquil;
- ◆ **Fimbulthul**, cold and riotous, like a blizzard
  - ◆ **Slidr and Hrid**, the first pair, joined and separate across our lands;
  - ◆ **Sylgr and Ylgr**, crossing the deepest place and highest points;





- ◆ **Vid**, so long and large;
- ◆ **Leiptr**, spilling into valleys and forming lakes;
- ◆ **Gjoll**, hard against the Hel-gates, the land of the dead.

No matter what part of Midgard a person hails from, one thing is true: the river is life. We fish them. We hunt the animals that water near them. And, perhaps most important of all, we sail them. The rivers and their tributaries connect the majority of Midgard. The shallow-drafted boats that we pilot are faster than most horses and less expensive for a holdfast to maintain than roads, the boats are a way of life for most residents of Midgard.

Each part of Midgard takes to the rivers in different ways. As well, boat designs vary from holdfast to holdfast, and region to region. More than a few fights have broken out between members of rival holdfasts about this style versus that. Though, frankly, it doesn't take much to prompt a fight between proud warriors.

It is by boat that I have traveled the length and breadth of Midgard, and it is by boat that that I shall be put to rest before the gods when my death comes. Without the boats, our lives would be nothing as they are now. And it is with trepidation that I see the coming of the Bonebonded...

## **THE NORTHLANDS**

Hard lands, with fjords scraped from the earth by the waters there. The folk who live here travel with the seasons, the midnight sun lighting their steps. Long and lean, wearing furs of the beasts they hunt, the Northfolk can endure much. Their Jarls hold court where they rest. The claiming of land is no simple thing in the North. Every year at the Thing, disputes are settled with trials and combats. And every year, the same fights are fought again.

Northlanders are tough, hardy, and brook no nonsense. Though all are

*If the location of your holdfast makes one of the Nine Rivers an important location in your game, use the description of the river as a starting point for a setting aspect for your game. Highlight how the river's nature affects your holdfast.*

loyal to family and clan, Northlanders hold those bonds in high esteem. Too high, some say. These valued attachments make the Bonebonded a problem for most Northlanders. After all, they are choosing to abandon clan and family to be joined with a giant. To many Northlanders, death is a preferable option.

The Northlands stretch from the Frostreave Wastes down to the southern end of the aptly named Northern Sea. There are very few stretches of arable land, though more farms and permanent settlements can be found as you go further south.

Six of the Nine Rivers flow through the Northlands. Some of them spend half the year frozen, and the other half of the year as a riotous crashing set of rapids. Still, they provide food and travel. As well, there is plenty to be found in the salty waters of the Northern Sea and the Whale Road Ocean.

The lack of trees makes sailing difficult. The few stands of forest that can be found in the Northlands provide just enough wood for ships, but hardly enough for any other purpose. That leaves the Northlanders as one of the only areas of Midgard with exclusively stone buildings. In fact, the stonemasons of the Northlands are some of the most sought-after. Their designs and carvings are subtle, functional, but elegant.

## **NOTABLE HOLDFASTS**

### **FELLHEIM**

#### Aspects

- ◆ HOME OF THE SVEIDSDOTTIR
- ◆ WORD TRAVELS FAST AROUND HERE

Located off the River Svol before the mouths of Hrid and Slidr, Fellheim isn't notable so much for anything it produces so much as it's notable for who lives there. I'd heard there are rumors of a remarkable young woman, Sigrid. They call her Sveidsdottir. Daughter of Sveid, a Valkyrie.

The rumor may be true, but in Fellheim there does live a young woman whose prowess in battle is unmatched. She's only 16 winters and she can outmatch any warrior that faces her. The Jarl, Marsa Frostreave, hates the girl. There have been rumors of Dwarven movement in the area, leading

people to believe that young Sigrid might be necessary for her holdfast, Marsa's anger, or no.

To the far north, there are rumors of a seer out in the Frostreave Wastes. The search is tough as guides often grow sick of the snow, ice, and emptiness. What is known is this: the first Bonebonded came from the Northlands. The far Northlands, places that have no name, small settlements that folk barely know exist.

## SNOW WATCH HOLD

### Aspects

- ◆ LIVING ON THE BORDER OF WINTER
- ◆ MARKED BY THE ICE

Snow Watch Hold rests along the Fimbulthul, the river that embodies the very spirit of winter. Aside from its location in alongside the river that borders the Frostreave Wastes, Snow Watch Hold gets its name from the particularly large concentration of Runescribed there. And not just any Runescribed, but those only marked by Isa, ice. Even across clan lines, those Isa-marked refer to themselves as the Snow Watch and have done for as long as any cared to recount.

The seers of Snow Watch survey every youth in the Hold when those children come of age; their Clanday. Those chosen by whatever augury the seers use make a pilgrimage to the Frostreave Wastes, each sent out by themselves, each on different days. Some come back, unmarked, some not at all. And still others come back as members of the Snow Watch, marked by the ice that they grew to know.



## THE MIDLANDS

The Midlands are lush. All of the Nine Rivers save Fimbulthul flow through the Midlands at some point, giving the land the water it needs to support life. Here, the Jarls claim outright the lands that they call their own. Border disputes are more than common, each spring bringing war. This culture of battle permeates everything that the Midlanders do. Like their Northern brethren, the Midlanders settle disputes with trials by combat. Unlike the Northlanders, the Midlanders often claim retribution on the loser's family. This pillaging of a loser's family contrasts to the Northlanders' tight family bonds. No Northlander would consider breaking up another's family. Midlanders think little of it; it is simply their way.

The Midlands hold the largest holdfasts in Midgard. From the rocky outcroppings of Cliffborg, to the floating holdfast of Voltendi, the Midlands boast the most permanent settlements. This means that the Midlands have by far the most political disputes. Anyone who owns a tract of land and has the swords and axes to back their claim can hold the title of Jarl. Petty disputes occur often, with lands changing hands as often as one might change their clothes. These disputes made the Midlands by far the most vulnerable when the dwarves attacked. Many pretty Jarls lost their lands, their lives, and those they loved in the initial onslaught. Rather than breaking under the pressure, this grew a fierce hatred of the dwarves within most Midlanders. The Midlands has the highest number of Bonebonded as a result.

### NOTABLE HOLDFASTS

#### CLIFFBORG

Aspects

- ◆ WE ARE ABOVE YOU ALL
- ◆ PRECARIOUSLY PERCHED

Cliffborg is a major trade settlement that rests hard against the edge of the canyon made by the



River Hrid as it makes its way to the Ginnungagap. The location is perfect for traders, but the height above the river prevented that trade for years. That is, until an enterprising scholar from the Petruvian Empire made her way north.

She saw the potential in Cliffborg and began spending her own funds to make a series of ladders, bridges and pulleys that could raise a boat from the river to the holdfast. That proved to be Cliffborg's greatest boon. Now, years later, an intricate series of mechanisms dots the cliff. Some merchants have even carved caverns out of the Cliffside and sell their goods to the people traveling up and down the pulley system.

## VOLTENDI

### Aspects

- ◆ LOOSELY CONNECTED, BUT WORKING AS ONE
- ◆ EVER-SHIFTING

Voltendi is one of the most memorable and strange holdfasts in Midgard. It's located on the River Vid, literally. What magics or innovations keep it afloat are a mystery, and the residents aren't keen on revealing it. However, there are paved streets, homes and shops, and the Jarl's meadhall, all connected, moving about, and floating on the surface of the river. For a newcomer, it can be quite disarming to find that things aren't in the same place from one day to the next. The residents seem to have a sense of where things will move, though, and have no trouble navigating the holdfast.

Those same residents often prove to be as changeable as the arrangement of the holdfast. It's difficult to get someone from Voltendi to remain firm on anything and alliances or agreements with them are tenuous at best. However, should you be able to gain the actual trust of a resident, you'll find that there are few people more willing to come to your aid.

## THE SOUTHLANDS

The Southlands are as diverse as their people. Southlanders, more than most, are willing to intermarry with people of other lands. As such the only defining characteristic of a Southlander is that they don't resemble their neighbors in manner or dress. This diversity means that the Southlands are

an interesting blend of tradition and new ideas. Here is where new thinking flourishes, including the skaldic colleges. The Southlands also have the greatest number of traders. The Southlanders' openness to new ideas allows them to negotiate with the peoples of different lands more effectively.

The lands themselves are a mix of lush valleys, beautiful fjords, deep forests, and rocky near-mountains. Jarls claim lands as in the Midlands, but the border wars are far less frequent. The natural boundaries created by river and fjord serve as dividing lines for the Jarls of the Southlands. There are disputes over who owns what, but those disputes are more often solved by negotiating over horns of mead rather than by the clash of arms. This has led to the Southlanders having a reputation for either avoiding or fearing combat—depending on the person speaking. Southlanders just smile, knowing that their prowess in combat is not something worth proving at the loss of a life.

## NOTABLE HOLDFASTS

### HEL'S GATE

Aspects

- ◆ LAND OF THE RESTLESS DEAD
- ◆ BORDER BETWEEN WORLDS

Hel's Gate is named for the goddess that keeps watch over the dishonored dead; the ones that did not die in combat, or that offended the gods. It is rumored that the holdfast contains an actual doorway or passage to Hel, the lands named for the goddess. What is true is that the residents of Hel's Gate walk a fine line between traditional worship of the gods and veneration of the goddess from which their holdfast derives its name. Hel is a goddess that most avoid thinking of, but she is given a place of honor in Hel's Gate. It is also rumored that somehow the dead walk in the holdfast. This much is for certain: Hel's Gate is a place unlike any other in the whole of Midgard.

### GATEWAY

Aspects

- ◆ CROSSROADS OF MIDGARD
- ◆ IF YOU CAN'T FIND IT HERE, IT CANNOT BE FOUND

Though there are other holdfasts where merchants bustle about, selling their goods, and where crafters tinker and toil over their creations, no holdfast in the whole of Midgard has the range and depth of goods and services that Gateway has. Situated where the rivers Gunthrá and Gjoll meet, Gateway is next to both the Petruvian Empire and the great Desert of J'goll. Goods moves from both of these lands into and through Gateway. As well, any goods that come from the Midlands or the Northlands end up in Gateway as well. Jarl Heirickson rules Gateway with a strong hand, though rumor has it that his grip can be prised apart if enough coin offered.

## OUTSIDE OF MIDGARD

When people spread to other lands, they forgot the proper worship of the gods. They live in their own countries, strange and sometimes even alien to residents of Midgard. One thing in common is the threat of the dwarves and each land has fought back in its own way. Here is what is known about these lands and their people.

## THE ELVEN FORESTS

It is perhaps disingenuous to refer to the Elven Lands as being outside of Midgard. After all, the forests in which the elves live are the same forests that some see outside their holdfasts every day. However, the elven forests seem quite a different place when you enter them. A hush falls over your ears, the sun dips in the sky, never rising beyond a perpetual twilight, and the smells of loam and leaves grows to a constant perfume in your nose.

The elves keep largely to themselves, not disturbing travelers unless those in the forests mean harm to the elves. They seem to have a sixth sense about such things, though they rarely act directly. And it doesn't take seeing more than one companion being torn apart by woodland animals to convince you that you should tread lightly.



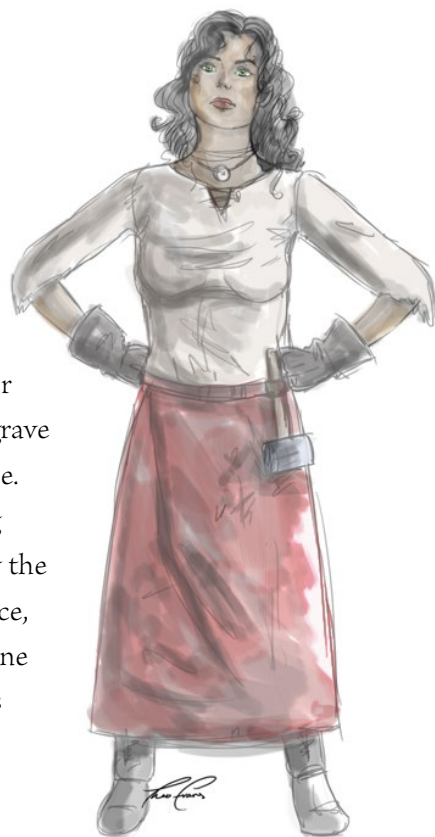
Perhaps of greatest benefit to the residents of Midgard are the elves' Treants. Living trees that move of their own accord, they fight the dwarven Destroyers with a ferocity that even our warriors cannot match. Any holdfast near an elven forest has a near guarantee of protection and aid from the elves in the event of a dwarven attack. For all the enmity that elves and Treants have for the dwarves and their constructs, such help should be sought only in grave situations. Every gift from an elf comes at a price.

The homes of the elves are unlike anything seen in the whole of the rest of Midgard. Only the forests of the Isles of Mist bear any resemblance, and then only in passing. Elven homes are as one with the land, invisible to the naked eye unless you know exactly what to look for. Hollows in the trunks of massive trees, natural caves adorned with mosses, or even tangles of underbrush; any of these could be the home of an elf or family of elves.

Travelers through the elven lands say that there is nothing that humans would term a city, town, or holdfast. Only individual homes or dwellings that seemed to house multiple elves. But anyone who travels an elven forest reports feeling that the elves hide greater numbers as well as great strength.

## THE PETRUVIAN EMPIRE

To the south is a vast empire, stretching, some say, for distances that would take months upon months to travel. Petruvia. The people of those lands are as diverse of a lot as the peoples of Midgard, but for poorer reasons. The Petruvian Empire is ruled from the city of the same name. The tales told in Midgard are that the Emperor, a kind of overblown Jarl sought to conquer all the lands he could see. His successors did the same, casting their gazes far and wide.





At times, the Emperor or Empress has cast their gaze northward, to Midgard. Great bloody wars were fought, Petruvian phalanxes clashing against our own shieldwalls. Neither side has proven able to get the upper hand, and something approaching peace has settled over the years. Each side patrols their lands, but as long as no hostile actions are taken, blood remains unshed.

When the dwarves came, we called upon the gods to give us the power to bind giants' bone to our will. The Petruvians seem to, well, call upon their gods more directly. Each deity in their pantheon is represented by a gigantic carved statue; a Monolith, they call it. They line the main streets of every one of their large cities, each moving closer to or further from the seat of power as the cult of each gains or loses favor with the Empress.

The Petruvians place great store in honor and glory in combat. It is one of the few things that the people of Midgard have in common with them. They are worthy foes on the battlefield. And though most of the strong-headed Jarls would disagree with me, I think it a good thing that their Empress has her gaze turned to the distant lands on the southern border of the Empire. Were her gaze to turn northward to Midgard, I doubt that we could withstand the full might of her armies.

## **THE ISLES OF MIST**

Far to the west, across the ocean, is a strange land. Our oldest skalds say that we were once of a people with those who dwell on the islands there. That their ancestors sailed across the ocean and found places to settle. Indeed, there is some similarity between our peoples, but the Islanders remain strange to most. The weather patterns of the islands leave them a grey and dim place, with the sun peeking through the clouds only rarely.

The Islanders live in small groups, moving around the thick forests that cover their islands. They have few permanent settlements, and what few they do have are religious in nature. Priestesses and Priests wearing blue face paint and deer-skull masks chant over ritual fires. The smell of burning peat fills their sacred spaces. Peat... and flesh.

The religious fervor of the Islanders is unmatched in my experience. Some of the faithful willingly go to their deaths at the seeming behest of

their gods. And somehow these deaths are used against the dwarves who rose even on these remote islands. Tall man-shapes, made of wicker and vines, filled with writing bodies, all burning. These Wicker Men moved against a dwarven Destroyer with a speed and ferocity I'm not sure even the Bonebonded could match. The scene haunts my dream still.

We see Islanders in Midgard rarely. The journey across the sea is a treacherous one. However, when they do make the journey, they are welcomed in most holdfasts. It is said that to give shelter to an Islander is to gain the favor of the spirits and strange gods they worship. Though I place no stock in any gods save for my own, I see no harm in indulging such superstitions. At the least, the Islanders make excellent drinking companions.

## THE DESERT OF J'GOLL

To the south and west of Midgard is an expanse of sand and broken rock: the J'Goll Desert. This arid and inhospitable land is home to a people almost as enigmatic as the elves: the Desert Traders. For as much contact as our people have, we know precious little about them. They travel in large caravans with wheeled wooden carts pulled by a varied assortment of beasts of burden.

The Traders live up to their name. When their caravan arrive, they carry an amazing assortment of goods, and not just good of their own make. They bring steel from Petruvia, fine woven goods from the Jorufaegir, peat-smoked foods and alcohol from the Isles of Mist, and even soft cloths made of silk that must come from the lands that border the far side of the Desert.

The Traders never uncover their faces. Only their eyes are visible through the layers of cloth in which they are swathed. The cloth varies in color from caravan to caravan. Each color marks some type of clan association, or perhaps familial bonds. Few have been able to find out. It is difficult to gain any information from people that will not talk to you.

All communication with the Desert Traders happens via their slaves. These slaves, not from any recognizable homeland, do all the speaking for

the Traders. And it is unnerving, for the Traders themselves never utter a sound. The slaves seem to know exactly what it is that their owners want to communicate.

It is assumed that the Traders have a way of fighting the Dwarves, as scraps of Destroyers and other dwarven metals have been traded when the caravans stop in the holdfasts of the Southlands. The only guesses as to how they fight come from story books and scraps of half-told tales. The illustrations in the books show men and women in the flowing robes of the traders summoning fire, water, earth, and air. Half-human looking beings seem to be formed of these four things, and are commanded by the men and women in the pictures. It is not known if the books are fact or fiction, but there is little doubt that the Traders possess power of some kind.

## ***BEYOND THE Hnitborg Mountains***

Much like the ocean to the west, passing through the barrier of the Hnitborg Mountains to the east is rarely and perilously done. However, the lands beyond the mountains very nearly rival Midgard in their beauty. The people there, the Jorufaegir, are valiant and brave. They are darker of skin than most who live in Midgard, save for those in the Southlands. One oddity is that the men do not wear beards. It is a shock to most when they first see it, and more shocking still when it is realized that none ever shave.

The Jorufaegir are as varied as we are, though a glance seems to say otherwise. There are many tribes of the Jorufaegir. Some live nomadically, as the Northlanders. Others have more permanent settlements,



much like our holdfasts. They don't appear to build in the same way, though. Very little of what they possess is made of metal, and almost none of their buildings are made of stone.

Many of the Jorufaegir identify with animals in their tribal icons and practices. It seems, on the surface, to be similar to our Warrior Clans. However, a dwarven attack on the village in which I stayed showed me that this was not the case. When the Destroyers rose from the ground, I swear to Odin that three of the warriors of the village changed forms. Where two women and a man had once been, there were now bears, massive in proportion, and more than a match for the Destroyers.

It is not known if other villages or tribes of the Jorufaegir have this same ability, or if they do, if the animals are different. What is known is that the Jorufaegir seem to have fewer problems with the dwarves and their incursions than almost any other part of the world that we know of.





# Running War of Metal and Bone

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Midgard is your world. Every group that runs a campaign will have a different version of it, especially because of the setting generation. This same freedom should be extended to how you interpret threats, enemies, and plotlines. Everything that follows is a well-intentioned suggestion.

## STORY STRESS

Story stress is one of the best ways to keep track of the events in the world that lives around the characters. The world grows and changes and moves with or without the PCs. Create a chain of events that leads to your ultimate story goal. Give that chain a number of stress boxes (eight tends to be a good number). For every two stress boxes, write an aspect that will be present in all future sessions.

Every time the PCs fail to accomplish a goal that would prevent something bad from happening, check one of the stress boxes. Every time the PCs accomplish something that helps them prevent disaster, or that undoes a previous failure, clear a stress box. For every two stress boxes that get cleared, change the aspect associated with that pair of stress boxes. You're putting them into recovery.

## CREATING THREATS AND ENEMIES

There are no statblocks in this setting. Every GM will want to come up with their own enemies and issues based on the setting that their group creates. Fate does an excellent job of laying out how to create enemies. Keep the Fate Fractal firmly in mind. Anything, *anything* can be statted out as a character. Whether you are looking for the opposition to the Jarl or a catastrophic event, skills, stunts and stress are the heart of these threats.

Creating threats and enemies in *War of Metal and Bone* can be as simple or as complicated as you want it to be. If you're already familiar with Fate, then the guidelines that are given in the FATE

CORE book starting on page 213 (Creating the Opposition) will work the same for *War of Metal and Bone* as they do for FATE CORE (rules for scale notwithstanding).

If you want an even faster way to handle threats, remember this guideline:

### **RATING = STRESS BOXES**

Let's say that you're creating an approaching dwarven army to threaten the Holdfast. You want the army to be a threat, but not something that will automatically overwhelm the characters. Based on the setting you've created, you decide that the army needs to have the following:

**Dwarven Spiders**, the teeming masses that are the fodder for any dwarven army

**Automatons**, the shock troops that a human may or may not be able to handle one-on-one

**A Dwarven Destroyer**, the literal head of the army and large enough to smash a Holdfast all by itself if it's not stopped.

You want the Spiders to be disposable, so you grab an index card and write:

**DWARVEN SPIDERS +1**

And because Rating = Stress Boxes, you give the Spiders one stress box. If you want more than one group of spiders, add additional stress boxes, one per group. Everything that the Spiders try to do that relates to their nature as Dwarven Spiders, they do at +1. Everything else, +0, or even -1 if you think they're particularly unsuited to it.

For the Automatons, you decide that you want them to be real threats. On another index card, you write:

**AUTOMATON +3**

And you give them three stress boxes. Same as with the spiders, if they do things that Automatons are good at, they roll at +3. Everything else, +0, or -1.

You'll notice that neither of the above example enemies has Aspects. Their names act as their Aspects if they ever need to be compelled or if you

need to spend Fate Points to invoke anything about them. Keep it simple.

For the Dwarven Destroyer, you have to do a little more work. As with the example of Giant Scale threats on Page 31, you decide which Approaches the Destroyer has, assign those Approaches to sections of its body (to make the zones that Human Scale enemies will interact with), and give it a number of stress boxes equal to its *highest approach*. As well, you will give it a number of Aspects equal to its highest Approach. If this Destroyer is positioned as a long-term threat, give it Stunts and some history as well.

The same principles above can be used for any type of threat you need to make. Environmental threats get ratings that can be used to represent attacks from local wildlife, or natural hazards. The stress boxes you give (equal to the rating) can be used to denote the characters coping with the threats (not dissimilar to Story Stress).

All of this is built on the principals of the Fate Fractal. Everything can be treated as a character. The tricky bit is getting the rating numbers set correctly. Too high and they'll overwhelm your players. Too low and they won't be enough of a challenge. The advice on Page 222 of FATE CORE will guide you here.

## PLOT

The setting generation will provide you many things to work with to create the plot of the game. You also have the minds of the people that sit at the table with you. Collaboration is the name of the game here. You will hopefully have some idea of where the game is going to go after the setting generation. Discuss those ideas with your players and make sure that everyone has bought into what you have in mind.

When it comes to the moment-to-moment running of the game, one of the techniques that can help quite a bit is that of asking questions. Ask questions of your players. Let them give you the information that you need to come up with in-the-moment inspiration. If they ask you a question about the setting, turn the question back around on them and ask them to define that bit of the setting for you. There is power in multiple minds working together. Do not waste that resource.



## INSPIRATIONAL RESOURCES

If you are not familiar with Norse themes, there are some fantastic resources available to give you a taste of what Midgard could be.

**Literature:** Much of what we know about Norse and Viking culture comes from writings of that era. There are a number of wonderful translations available. The primary resources that were used in the writing of this setting were:

*The Prose Edda:* <http://www.sacred-texts.com/neu/pre/index.htm>

*The Poetic Edda:* <http://www.sacred-texts.com/neu/poe/>

*The Norse Myths* - Introduced and Retold by Kevin Crossley-Holland

The Eddas are fantastic resources. The introductory poem was written in the style of the *Poetic Edda*. *The Norse Myths* takes the same information that is found in the Eddas and presents them in a compelling and easy-to-read manner.

**Television:** The writing of *War of Metal and Bone* coincided perfectly with the premiere of *Vikings*, on the History Channel. The series encapsulates the feel of Viking culture fabulously. If you are going to run a campaign of *War of Metal and Bone*, you need to watch *Vikings*.

**Music:** This list would not be complete without *Immigrant Song* by Led Zeppelin. Also of note is anything by Wardruna, and *If I Had a Heart* by Fever Ray.

## LAST WORDS

Beyond anything else that could be used to finish out this book, these words are the most important to include:

### **Know Yourself.**

Every GM plans and runs games differently. *War of Metal and Bone* does not presume to tell you how to create an enemy or what to include. Use what you know and use what you love. If you prefer to use *Fate: Accelerated Edition* approaches (as the Bonebonded do), do so. If you prefer to have every enemy fully blocked out with skills and stunts, do so.

You know your style of game-mastering better than anyone else could. If you see those words and blanch a little, then do some exploration. Find the tools that you need to succeed and create the enemies that you will need to challenge your players.

The world of Midgard is heavily influenced by Norse mythology. Every group will take those themes and bend them in unique ways. Consider the results of the setting generation, consider the group you are playing with, and consider your own strengths (and weaknesses). With those things firmly in mind, design the enemies that are appropriate for all of the items just mentioned.

Stay true to yourself and your game will thrive.





# *A Tale of Blood and Darkness*

by Lillian Cohen-Moore



## Situation

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On the shores of the Vid, the southland community of Selah is holding a festival to celebrate the Spring. Selah's Jarl, Didrick, an elderly warrior that is beyond the fighting days of his youth, is now a shadow of the strong body that fought shoulder to shoulder with brothers and sisters of the Wolf Clan.

Jarl Didrick's family suffered a string of calamities throughout the last winter, but has chosen to press on with a Spring festival in his Holdfast. Didrick's son, Dane, was slain by strange spirits who attacked in the depths of Winter, and the Jarl's daughter Sefa vanished the same night. Only his daughter Þórarna still lives, and the Jarldom pins its hopes for safety and stability on seeing Þórarna safely married, for the Jarl is quite ill. Selah is home to some of the finest orchards in Midgard; the bounty of the land, and the fairness of the Jarl's daughter, who has served for years as her father's beloved counsel and household manager, are each enough to draw visitors to their home. Didrick hopes among the visitors this spring, a suitable and loving match for his surviving child can be made.

Though his illness worsens, the Jarl intends to broker as many alliances and trade agreements as he can, for it may be his last spring to do so. Strange and twisting shadows have been seen on the banks of the Vid, where the community is located. There is a fear that if the spirits said to have slain Dane and many of the Jarl's warriors return, there might not be enough able bodied people to defend Selah a second time.

## Impact

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Without quick-witted visitors who can protect the town, the inevitable return of the shadow-men will do damage, killing even more than they did in winter. These shadow creatures do not simply seek destruction, they seek revenge against Þórarna. In the chaos of their winter attack, Þórarna killed Dane. Sefa, unknowing of why Þórarna killed their brother, discovered the murder only moments after Þórarna dealt the killing blow. Þórarna panicked and killed her sister, to keep the secret of their family's shame from their father and the rest of Midgard. She threw Sefa's body into the

Vid, but left her brother's corpse in the path of a fire raging on the edge of the town, the spot where she caught him with the shadows. Unless the shadows can be dealt with once and for all, they will destroy Selah, and only after that will they kill Þórarna.

The bone flute the skald Anmar carries is in truth made of one of Sefa's bones. If what Þórarna has done is revealed, Selah will be torn apart by horror at her actions, and distrust of the Jarl. It would be easy for someone else to lead a siege against the town after this reveal, as others seek to take Selah from an ailing Jarl who is father to not one, but two murderers.

With some help, Þórarna may find someone that she can show affection to, but a betrothed will leave her if they learn about her actions.

## Hooks

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Each of these hooks can be taken by more than one player. Each hook colors how the characters will approach their time in Selah, and influences their reactions to the Holdfast's many secrets.

**I have journeyed here to escort my Jarl's younger son.** Do you believe it is wise for him to seek marriage to Þórarna? Do you think the attempt at matchmaking will succeed?

**I am escorting a man of wisdom to the festival.** The skald Anmar was attacked on the road, and you rescued him. Do you trust the skald's intentions towards the people of Selah? Is there more to his bone flute than he lets on?

**My Jarl sent me as their emissary.** Has your Jarl sent you to make a trade arrangement? Broker a marriage for a reluctant son? Observe the town? How do you feel about what you've been sent to do?

**I have come to learn more of the shadows.** The reports of the shadowy figures that killed many of the warriors in Selah gravely concern you. What do you hope to learn? What do you fear you will learn?

**A woman's voice in the night bade me to come.** Why did you answer her midnight pleas, and promise to journey to Selah? What exactly did she ask you? Why does she want you to go there?

## Involved NPCs

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### JARL DIDRICK

Didrick is a proud man, who will always hold himself as straight as his sword, no matter how greatly it pains him. He has become ill in his old age, and this Wolf will not admit it. He has already buried a wife and two children. Didrick's heart and soul is his only remaining child, Þórarna. He will do everything he can to see her married to a good man, and his people provided for, before he dies.

**Aspects:** FIGHTER TO THE END, BURDENED BY DUTY,  
HEART OF THE WOLF

**Skills:** Great (+4) Rapport, Contacts, Resources, Provoke  
Good (+3) Empathy, Will,  
Fair (+2) Lore, Notice, Fight, Athletics

**Stunt:** FOR MY PEOPLE. Jarl Didrick has a +2 whenever he acts in defense of one of the residents of Selah.

**Stress:** 2 mental, 2 physical

### MOVES

**Inspire Loyalty.** Though the Jarl is far from the mighty warrior he was as a youth, the history of his deeds and love for his people still count for much. When needed, he will rise to meet danger, and inspire loyalty in those around him.

**A Father Knows Much.** Didrick attempted to give his children as much space as he could as they grew, to foster their independence and discovery of their talents. He seeks to ease his daughter's unspoken pain, and will take time to speak with anyone suffering from heartbreak.

## BRANDT

Brandt was Sefa's betrothed, and is of the Wolf Clan, like her father. He has told no one that he and Sefa had met a few hours before the attack, stealing time away from their families to be together. Though he has kept silent to not betray her memory, he knows she must have come to harm after she left him for the night, and has come to suspect Þórarna may have been involved. Adding to his uncomfortable situation, his parents have begun to urge him to court the Jarl's surviving daughter.

**Aspects:** HEARTSORE, SUSPICIOUS ALL AROUND,  
I MUST FIND THE TRUTH

**Skills:** Great (+4) Stealth  
Good (+3) Fight, Notice  
Fair (+2) Rapport, Empathy, Provoke

**Stunt:** WATCHMAN'S PROWESS. Brandt became a watch captain in Selah after the attack, and has a +2 to noticing possible threats toward the town.

**Stress:** 3 physical, 3 mental

## MOVES

**Silent as the Night.** Brandt is a boon to the watch because of his light steps, but his ability to silently turn up when Þórarna least wishes him present is causing friction between them.

**Air of Authority.** Brandt is intimidating for many to deal with, including, Anmar. The tension between the two men is only heightened by Anmar's air of secrecy.

## ANMAR

The skald Anmar has been making a name for himself across Midgard. His poetry is said to be a gift of the Gods, but his poems have become overshadowed by his flute. Unlike the harps of other skalds, he cannot play his instrument as he recites. But he has taken to closing his performances with the flute's unearthly tones. No one knows it is carved of a bone he found washed up on the shores of the Vid, far from Selah, or that Sefa's spirit has been driving him to write a poem that will break her father's heart.

**Aspects:** PARAGON OF POETRY, CHRONICLER OF MIDGARD,  
DRIVEN BY SEFA

**Skills:** Great (+4) Lore, Rapport, Crafts, Provoke  
Good (+3) Deceive, Empathy, Contacts  
Fair (+2) Will, Notice

**Stunt:** None

**Stress:** 3 physical, 3 mental

## MOVES

**Well-Timed Memory.** Anmar's capabilities as a skald have given the man a memory like a steel trap, one he's more than happy to share the contents of—at the best and worst moments to do so.

**Charming Company.** The skald is an amusing companion, whether on the road or sharing a meal. Though he enjoys insulting people to exercise his skill, he tends to focus his charms on them instead, putting them at ease and listening to their stories, seeking new deeds to compose about.



## ÞÓRARNA

She is the last surviving child of Jarl Didrick. Her years managing her father's household have made her well spoken, using her ready smiles and her intellect to defuse anger and promote bloodless politics. She is ultimately invested in the continued well being of Selah, and will escalate from politic responses to a secret attack if the truth of her siblings' deaths threatens to come to light. The household is largely unaware that the lessons of sword use from her father were continued by Dane. Þórarna is a ruthless, deadly fighter, particularly when armed.

**Aspects:** DRIVEN BY DUTY, WARRIOR OF WORDS,  
SICK WITH GRIEF

**Skills:** Superb (+5) Fight, Provoke  
Great (+4) Rapport, Empathy, Deceive  
Good (+3) Contacts, Will, Deceive, Notice  
Fair (+2) Athletics, Crafts, Lore

**Stunt:** None

**Stress:** 4 physical, 2 mental

## MOVES

**Maiden's Touch.** All it takes to defuse most situations is the intervention—or presence—of a woman. Like her mother, Þórarna willingly intervenes whenever tensions arise where she is present. She'll use kind words to those she likes, but she'll flay with flyting anyone who mistreats someone in her presence.

**Prepared for Battle.** After the events of the past winter, Þórarna will not be taken unawares by danger anywhere inside the boundaries of Selah. If she's far from her knives or her sword, she'll improvise weapons as needed to defend herself or someone else.

# Threats:

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## BONE FLUTE

The bone flute carried by Anmar is haunted by Sefa, and she will seek to control any characters that go against her wish to expose her sister.

**Aspects:** HAUNTING SONG, SUPERNATURALLY PERSUASIVE,  
VENGEFUL

**Skills:** Superb (+5) Rapport, Deceive  
Fair (+2) Empathy

**Stunt:** None

**Stress:** 4 physical, 2 mental

## THE SHADOW MEN

Some of the unholy spirits that Dane forged an alliance with have returned, reinvigorated by their months of waiting, and ready for revenge.

### MOB (2 PER PC)

**Aspects:** STRENGTHENED BY THE NIGHT,  
DARKNESS MADE MANIFEST, DREADED BY THE LIVING

**Skills:** Superb (+5) Fight, Stealth  
Great (+4) Notice  
Stunts: None  
Stress: 2 per Shadow

# Chapter 1: The Road to Selah

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## OPENING

The characters are headed to the spring festival in Selah, but the journey is a strange one. Haunting flute music is just on the edge of their hearing during the days, and at night, their dreams are dark and troubled. These nightmares don't vary across their accounts; all of them share broken memories of dark, frigid, rushing water, and the hungry sound of fire.

## EVENTS

*Encountering the Skald.* On the journey to Selah, the characters meet the skald, Anmar, who invites himself along with them on the remainder of the journey. Depending on what hooks have been chosen, Anmar may be useful and charming, or aloof and sarcastic, if Þórarna is part of their reasons to make the trip.

*Reflections in the Vid.* While fetching water or washing up in the river, one or more of the characters will glimpse a pale, weeping woman with golden hair reflected in the river's surface.

*Dark Tales on the Road.* Either from Anmar, or from other travelers they encounter, a fireside trade of tales will bring up the midnight battle of shadows that descended on Selah.

## CLOSING

This chapter ends when the characters reach Selah, the Holdfast of Jarl Didrick. Depending on the experiences they've had on the way to the city, they may enter with the sense that the worst is yet to come.

# Chapter 2: A Festival of Darkness

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## OPENING

The characters, like the many other travelers that flooded Selah, are entreated to explore the festival. Didrick will take no audiences until the next day, and is in fact not enjoying the festival, but quietly resting out of the view of prying eyes or ears. He sends his daughter out to enjoy the day.

## EVENTS

*Encountering Þórarna.* Where her sister was pale, light and golden, like their father, Þórarna is dark haired and short like her mother. Unless treated poorly, Þórarna will be gracious, charming and eloquent while dealing the characters.

*Flight in a Dark Wood.* A young girl, Katla, cannot be located in the throng of the festival. Her friends say she went into the edge of the wood to retrieve a ball, and has not returned. Any characters who take part in searching for her will become lost for a time in the woods, guided away from Katla by uneven light and strange noises—the Shadow Men confusing and unnerving the searchers.

*Feast of Secrets.* To any of the characters who observe their hosts or those close to them, there's apparent tension between Brandt and Þórarna, and Anmar seems strangely insistent that he will not perform until the following night.

## CLOSING

As the night's feast winds to a close, characters may be able to capture a few private words with Þórarna, Brandt, Anmar, or even the Jarl himself. These conversations will be colored by the secrets and suspicions each of these people harbor.

# Chapter 3: Honor and Blood

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## OPENING

The second feast of the festival has begun, but the night holds countless dangers and revelations. Anmar has promised to perform a story he says none there have ever heard before.

## EVENTS

*Song of Twisted Truth.* The night after the skald's arrival, he performs a poem intercut with flute music, a tale about the riverside murder of a sister at the hands of her jealous sibling, who has no love of her own. Anmar does not outright accuse Þórarna of murder, but Sefa's presence in the flute is a compelling and weighty seed of doubt to everyone present about the fate of Sefa that cold, dark night. Without intervention, violence will happen.

*The Scene of the Crime.* Þórarna will return to where she killed her siblings after the skald's performance, and recover the lost girl Katla in the process, who tells her the shadows have returned. Katla had been hiding, ever since they tried to snatch her up in the forest the previous afternoon. When they stopped searching near her hiding place, she ran. If Þórarna is delayed at the feast, a member of the watch will find Katla near where Þórarna killed Dane and Sefa.

*Shadows Last Stand.* The shadows have returned for vengeance against Þórarna, who will require help swaying those who live in Selah to take up arms with her to fight the Shadows once more.

*Matters of Honor.* Whether or not Þórarna, the Jarl or Brandt survive the fight against the Shadows, those who do survive will have to decide what to do with what they may have learned about what's been going on in Selah. The characters can greatly influence the outcome of this secret meeting, for good or ill.

## **CLOSING**

The town of Selah has suffered in the past, and depending on the outcome of this night, it may have a great deal of suffering to come. At dawn, the survivors closest to the truth will gather to decide how to go forward. For those seeking to learn more of the shadows, there are only more questions to be asked, and few answers to be found.





*The Throne That Would  
Be Bone And Wrath*

by Ryan Macklin

## Situation

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The southlander city of Alsborg must deal with what every village and kingdom silently fears: that a fearsome Bonebonded will come home from the fight against the dwarves and claim rule over the land. For the last few days, the tenor of Alsborg has been beyond tense, and those of sane mind fear that the unease will turn into chaos, chaos into a massacre, and that massacre into a second war across the land.

Last year, the peaceful and stable Alsborg met with grief. Jarl Örvar succumbed to illness and passed away in great agony. His eldest child Brimi, groomed to rule since he was born, took his father's mantle. Soon after, Kolgrímur, his second son (who some say Örvar favored among his children), chose the life of the Bonebonded and sought to keep their city safe by sundering those dwarven Machines that dared tread in the southlands. Finally, his dear daughter Rúna moved away and married the son of a midlander warrior-noble.

Three weeks ago, tragedy struck the latest Jarl of Alsborg. While leading a hunt in the forest, Brimi was savaged by a great beast, his body left mangled and half-devoured. Brimi had no wife or children. With no one to assume rightful rule, four prominent citizens formed a Council: Ísar of the Watch, Hilda of the Ferrymen, Dúi of the Farmers, and Kára of the Treasury. Unfortunately, they are doing far more infighting than administering, and the city languishes in their "care."

Last week, Rúna and her midlander husband, Þór the Redblade, arrived for her brother's funeral. Some believe that she should now rule Alsborg, but others fear that since she was never groomed for leadership, that would mean an outsider—one known for war over peace—would be their new Jarl.

This would be a minor political squabble if not for Kolgrímur's return three days ago, the glowing light in the walking bones of a giant. He announced that he should take his rightful place as Alsborg's new Jarl. So far, he has been patient with his city's delayed acceptance, but the dark whispers of a dead giant inside of his mind grows stronger...



## Impact

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With no one to intercede, Þór the Redblade will convince Rúna to demand the throne. The Council will balk at this, citing that a woman cannot become Jarl—though in truth they only object to Þór and not Rúna. (After all, she could be fashioned into a puppet just as easily without his presence.)

Kolgrímur will finally grow impatient, his inaction allowing the giant's vile urges to caress his mind. He will demand his throne and threaten to end all those who do not bow to him. The Redblade will certainly do no such thing, and the Bonebonded will kill him. Rúna will rush to her husband just before the blow connects, ending her life as well. The grief will trigger rage, and a sizable chunk of the city is destroyed until the citizens are able to calm the giant-rider through complete supplication.

The damage already done to Kolgrímur's mind, he will rule with hate and cruelty, turning his once-beautiful Alsborg into land of despair. This rule will last for nigh a few weeks, though, as Þór's kin arrive to enact justice—and include a Bonebonded and a Runescribed. Kolgrímur will die, Alsborg will be razed, and this story will spread throughout the land.

And people will say, “Why not let the dwarves win, if this is the world we will have afterward?”

## Hooks

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Each character should choose one of the following reasons that they have come to Alsborg, answering any related questions. Each hook can be used by more than one player. All of the hooks involve a question to detail a positive element in the city—something that may be threatened or destroyed if things go poorly.

**I come at Þór's request, to be his council.** Why does Þór invest such trust in you? What is it about Alsborg that makes you wish to remain?

**I have tracked the curious movement of a single Bonebonded heading away from battle.** What is your role or relationship with the Bonebonded? What is the most beautiful thing you have seen in Alsborg?

**Alsborg is my home.** What is it about Alsborg that fills you with the most pride? Who do you believe should rule?

**I represent my Jarl, seeking trade and relations.** What is it that Alsborg boasts that your land desperately wants or needs? Who among the council seems to be the easiest for you to sway? Who is the hardest?

**The Norns spoke to me in a dream, that I should be here to witness and judge an auspicious moment.** This dream involved two visions of Alsborg: one beautiful and one horrific. Describe the beautiful dream. (GM, you can describe the impact from above as in a dream vision.) Why do you accept the Norns' request?



# Invested Characters

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Those in Alsborg who hold a stake or claim to its leadership are detailed here.

## KOLGRÍMUR DUERGARBANE

Bonebonded to the giant Gerðr, Kolgrímur took up fighting Machines as a way to seek his glory on his own path, rather than live in his brother's shadow. That is when he found Gerðr, a noblewoman once accustomed to wealth and power. As they've bonded, she feeds Kolgrímur's mind scenes of delight and power, and that has slowly twisted his heart. The giant's influence has not yet removed Kolgrímur's love for his people and the land, though she does prey on both his grief and his sense of duty.

**Aspects:** GENTLE SON OF SOUTHLAND NOBILITY,  
HARDENED BY BATTLE, GERÐR WHISPERS IN MY MIND

**Skills:** Great (+4) Lore, Physique  
Good (+3) Deceive, Fight, Notice  
Fair (+2) Athletics, Empathy, Rapport, Will

**Stunts:** LASTING BONE. Unlike other Bonebonded, Gerðr does not disappear into the earth when Kolgrímur leaves her. Instead, she sits, unmoving and indestructible, waiting for Kolgrímur to return to animate her. Alternatively, he can will the giant to come to him.

## SOUL LINK

If out of Gerðr, but she's in view, his link to the giant means he defends against any attack, physical or otherwise, as if he were inside the giant. After a scene where he's forced to use this stunt, Gerðr gains a boost relating to being deeper in Kolgrímur's mind or intruding in the mind of an NPC nearby.

**Stress:** 4 physical, 3 mental

**Notes:** Because of his link to Gerðr, Kolgrímur prefers to be outside, in open spaces where the giant can be seen. He sleeps in the open, on roofs, or outside of the city walls where the giant sits silently. He's loathe to enter a building, and when he does, he tries to find a window that looks out toward the giant. (However, he doesn't truly understand *why* he is like this, and believes that it's just natural.)

Those familiar with the Bonebonded know that this persistence is unpredicted. Exceptional Lore actions could shed some further light on the strange Bonebonded nature. Kolgrímur believes that this is his advanced power over the Bonebonded, that his will is able to keep it manifest even when it isn't in it, and is proud of himself.

**Gerðr's Approaches:** Good (+3) Forceful  
Fair (+2) Greedy, Clever  
Average (+1) Careful, Quick  
Mediocre (+0) Flashy

## MOVES

**Make a polite demand.** Whether it's for hospitality for himself or guests, to speak with the Council or others in town, or anything else, Kolgrímur's requests are polite but firm. They always start with "[i]I require...[/i>," and he is knowingly using his nobility and the power of being Bonebonded to get his way without hesitation.

**Seek audience with other Bonebonded.** If any PCs are also Bonebonded, Kolgrímur will seek them out. His rational mind is looking for allies, those who might be able to demonstrate that power need not invoke fear. The whispers in his mind are jealous of them stealing his thunder, so to speak, by not being the only Bonebonded in Alsborg.

**Cause fear, unintentionally.** Kolgrímur's presence is terrifying to behold, and the giant is slowly influencing the weak-willed among the city. Show him doing something that causes panic, exasperated by the giant's dark whispers.

**Show that Kolgrímur isn't fully in control.** Shift his mindset partway through a conversation, change his mood or emotion without warning, and even shift speech patterns. He grows defensive and irrational when he realizes this.



## ÞÓR THE REDBLADE

Like Kolgrímur, Þór is the second son of a Jarl, though unlike the Bonebonded, his father is still alive. He earned “the Redblade” in a vicious battle while barely a teenager. People say that by the end of the battle, you could not see the metal of his sword for all the blood on it, and bestows that epithet. In truth, he does not see that as a proud moment, just a grisly duty to protect those who cannot fight. His temper comes not from hostility, but from constantly feeling the burden of that responsibility.

**Aspects:** THE REDBLADE, WEIGHT OF NOBLE RESPONSIBILITY, DEEPLY LOVES RÚNA

**Skills:** Great (+4) Fight, Will  
Good (+3) Empathy, Notice, Physique  
Fair (+2) Athletics, Flyting, Lore, Resources

**Stunts:** LEGENDARY ARMOR. While wearing the breastplate bearing his family crest, all physical stress boxes absorb 1 more stress than normal—the 1-stress box absorbs 2 stress, the 2-stress box absorbs 3 stress, and so on. (Special: Others succeeding at a Good Lore roll can see that the crest is composed of numerous stylized Algiz and Ingwaz runes forming into a sword and fang.)

**Stress:** 4 physical, 4 mental

## MOVES

**Cause an Incident.** Through either stress or treating the people of Alsborg with midlander manners, Þór causes some crisis that those in positions of authority or power (possibly including some PCs) must handle.

**Through Gritted Teeth.** Þór makes an “observation” or “request” that might be a veiled threat or portent of doom, especially as stress takes its toll.

**Try to do something nice for Rúna.** Þór realizes that this visit is hard for his wife, and is no fool—he knows that his own conduct is part of that strife. He seeks aid to ease her time here or to make her smile.

## RÚNA ÖRVARDOTTIR.

The “daughter of Alsborg” returned to bury a brother after having buried a father not so long ago. She understands that the duty of rule may fall to her, but in truth she does not want that mantle. Rúna left Alsborg because she wanted to see the world outside of its walls, and married a second son whose passion and respect for life inspired her. To Rúna, becoming Jarl would bring her life to a crushing halt, and she sees that with the stress on her husband’s face. Yet, she cannot just walk away from the city and her brother’s return, not while he seems colder than before.

**Aspects:** DAUGHTER OF ALSBORG,  
MORE CUNNING THAN GIVEN CREDIT FOR,  
FILLED WITH SORROW

**Skills:** Great (+4) Rapport  
Good (+3) Contacts, Empathy, Will  
Fair (+2) Athletics, Crafts, Deceive, Lore, Notice

**Stunts:** KOLGRÍMUR’S HEART. Even if Kolgrímur is in the giant, she may affect him with actions that inflict mental stress.

NOBLE OF ALSBORG. Rúna has +2 to all social actions that deal with her people.

**Stress:** 2 physical, 2 mental

### MOVES

**Look for leaders.** Rúna needs competent people to lead the city during this trying time, those who would be better councilors. She is constantly testing others to see who is able and willing, including “poorly” solving incidents and looking somewhat incompetent to force others into action.

**Learn more about Bonebonded.** Rúna can tell that the thing he rides affects her brother. Anyone who might know more about his affliction can expect a secret visit from her, if she feels she can trust them.

## ÍSAR, COUNCILOR OF THE WATCH

Ísar is the oldest of the four councilors, and Watch Commander personally appointed by Örvar years before the Jarl's passing. He is worried that the creatures in the forest are growing in number and hunger, and that the beast that slaughtered Jarl Brimi is the first of what's to come.

**Aspects:** WATCH COMMANDER, AFRAID FOR ALSBORG

**Skills:** Good (+2) Fight  
Fair (+1) Empathy, Physique  
Average (+0) Shoot, Rapport, Notice

**Stress:** 3 physical, 2 mental

### MOVES

**Organize a Hunt.** Ísar gathers those able-bodied and brave enough to join him for a hunt in the forest. He seeks to kill that which killed Brimi, and barring that, assess any danger within.

**Challenge Hostile People.** Ísar respects those who don't flaunt their power. He's grossly disappointed in Kolgrímur's development and loathes Þór's midlander ways. Any PCs who displays obvious supernatural or temporal power are likewise distrusted.

**Prepare for the Inevitable.** The Watch Commander is looking for any allies in the possible bloodshed to come, and is willing to make deals that he could only deliver if he was Alsborg's ruler.



## HILDA, COUNCILOR OF THE FERRYMEN

There was a time when the various ferrymen of Alsborg were disorganized and in constant conflict. Hilda saw an opportunity, and over three years formed a union of ferry pilots. Alsborg became an even more vibrant trade hub then, and Jarl Örvar awarded her with a land along with an official writ of unionization. But what she worked hard to forge could all be quickly undone.

**Aspects:** ECONOMIC POWERHOUSE, FRIENDS EVERYWHERE,  
SCARED FOR THE FUTURE

**Skills:** Good (+2) Rapport  
Fair (+1) Contacts, Deceive  
Average (+0) Empathy, Flying, Notice

**Stress:** 2 physical, 2 mental

### MOVES

**Appease the Frightful Bone-Rider.** Hilda is trying to find a way to get Kolgrímur to move his giant away from the city, as it's frightening off traders and her people are hurting for it.

**Recruit to Her Side.** Hilda is no fool, and sees that if the situation does not resolve, she will need protection. She cannot count on Ísar to not grab power once everything is settled—if it indeed gets settled—so she is looking to make powerful friends.

## DÚI, COUNCILOR OF THE FARMERS

The “Councilor of the Farmers” is a misnomer: Dúi is a crime lord, who began operating shortly after Brimi’s passing. However, this isn’t well known outside of his inner circle, as Dúi is no mere crime lord—Dúi is Runescribed, with fehu (the rune of luck and great fortune) carved on his stomach and inlaid with gold. The rune has given him the power to bend favor and chance to his will, which he has used to obtain a council seat.

He is naturally a bit distrustful of Ísar, and the Watch Commander has a sense of suspiciousness toward him. However, both recognize that they are ants in the shadow of a literal giant, and their antagonism could well upset this delicate moment.

**Aspects:** CRIME LORD OF ALSBORG, BEARER OF THE FEHU RUNE

**Skills:** Good (+2) Deceive  
Fair (+1) Contacts, Rapport  
Average (+0) Flyting, Notice, Empathy

**Stress:** 2 physical, 2 mental

**Rune:** Good (+3) Fehu (Luck and Great Fortune)

### MOVES

**Make Generous Offers.** Dúi would love nothing more than to make friendly offers to powerful individuals (such as the PCs) in exchange for their future favor.

**Secretly Manipulate Chance.** Dúi knows that his rune may not stand up to the full assault of a Bonebonded (let alone whatever the PCs bring to bear), so he is careful about using his Runescribed magic. But when he can get away with it, he will.

## KÁRA, COUNCILOR OF THE TREASURY

Kára is the one appointment Brimi made as Jarl before his demise. She was skilled in mathematics and had a good sense of foresight. She also spent many nights in Brimi's company, which led many to believe her a consort—in truth, he sought her aid as he alone knew about her gift and curse of prophecy. Sadly, she was not able to warn him about the forest before he left, and she holds guilt over that.

**Aspects:** SECRETLY A PROPHET, GUILTY

**Skills:** Good (+2) Lore  
Fair (+1) Empathy, Resources  
Average (+0) Deceive, Rapport, Will

**Stunt:** DEALMAKER. Kára has a +2 to social rolls that involve bargaining and making deals, due to both her time in the role of the treasury and her prophetic nature.

**Stress:** 2 physical, 3 mental

### MOVES

**Speak of Doom and Hope Others Believe.** If Kára believes that she might be taken seriously, she will speak of her visions and beseech the characters to action—action that will be difficult to discern, as visions are rarely specific.

**Reluctantly Make Generous Offers.** She will make any offer that she believes herself able to fulfill if it means recruiting bold people to preserve (or restore) the city. She loves the people, and feels a debt loyalty to Brimi, so she will consider whatever bargains she must—though she is not to be underestimated.

# Chapter 1: Auspicious Arrivals

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## OPENING

The characters arrive to a busy city filled with rumors and fear. Citizens are on edge, and not just because of the giant inanimate skeleton sitting outside the city walls. Everyone takes notice of strangers entering the city, especially those who don't seem like typical folk just passing through for trade.

## EVENTS

In addition to whoever the characters look to rendezvous with upon arriving, the major power players will want to meet with the PCs—either to recruit or just assess them. Here are some possible moments.

*The Watch's Eye.* Ísar takes keeping the peace in Alsborg quite seriously, and anyone who looks like a disruption will be “invited” to meet with him.

Those who seem like stable, lawful types will get a much more courteous invitation, hoping that they can do covertly what he cannot to save the city.

*A Daughter's Request.* Anyone who seems wise and knowing will get a summons from Rúna Örvardottir. Before she asks for aid in understanding her brother's condition, she'll need to see if they'll keep her confidence.

*Bonebonded's Beckoning.* Kolgrímur is welcoming and civil, inviting interesting strangers to dine with him in one of the city's plazas—one nearest to his giant. He's upfront about their timing being curious, and without showing hostility warns them against interfering in business that isn't theirs. But for those who are respectful, he swaps stories.

*A Curious Meeting.* Dúi's sense for fortune will lead him to one of the PCs, and he will work to get in that character's good graces. He's no fool, though; he knows to gradually build a relationship and learn how a mark thinks before pressing.

*This is Foreseen.* Kára has a sense that the characters will upset the delicate balance that exists in Alsborg, and she seeks them out to discover their motives and implore them to aid the city. (As the treasurer, she is able to promise monetary recompense, if needed. But asking for that will disappoint her.)

Give time for characters to meet with the movers above, while also playing out scenes that involve reasons they would care about this city's fate. If it helps, explicitly ask the players what would get their characters to care.

## CLOSING

Once the characters have been firmly entangled in the dangerous political web of Alsborg, it's time to move onto the next chapter.



# Chapter 2: City of Dangerous Machinations

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## OPENING

With the characters involved in the city, the web of deals and treachery grows more complex.

## EVENTS

The various moves listed on each interested party could happen here. Along with that, here are some strange portents.

*Citizens Possessed by Vile Spirits of Hate and Greed.* Crime in the city rapidly grows worse—a combination of Gerðr's mental influence and Dúi looking to gather what he can before the city finally boils over.

*Omen of Lightning.* Lightning during the cloudless day either shows the gods' displeasure or sorcerous maleficence. Fear heightens and fires (literal and metaphorical) spark.

*Beasts from the Forest.* The foul creatures who slaughtered Brimi have ventured into town under cover of night.

*Angry and Fearful Mob.* A prelude to city-wide violence, one faction lets anger get the better of them and riots.

*Dwarven Machine.* A stray dwarven creation has followed Kolgrímur's trail home. The battle scars the land and further polarizes the city.

## CLOSING

Two elements will close out this chapter: the tipping point that erupts into violence, and somehow managing a peaceful situation among all involved. If the latter happens, the adventure is over, though certainly such peace will be uneasy to maintain (which means it should be unlikely, but not wholly impossible, to achieve that solution for a short time).

Without significant action either way, the tipping moment happens a few days after the characters arrive.

# Chapter 3: River of Blood and Sorrow

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## OPENING

One outrage too many is suffered, and violence breaks out. Many people in the city take sides—some possessed by Gerðr’s whispers, and others rallying behind their patron. Many more flee into their homes or away from the city. A civil war begins, and blood flows.

## EVENTS

The events drastically depend on who ends up triggering the battle and who the PCs side with (and whether they all side with the same person). Two events in particular are likely to happen, as in any case Kolgrímur will be lost to his giant’s will.

*Assaulting a Giant.* Lost in a rage, Kolgrímur-Gerðr crushes those who they believe to have slighted them. While they won’t destroy the whole town, they seek to make a very public display, and innocents will die unless they’re stopped.

*Safety for Rúna and Þór.* While stubborn, Þór is no fool. The moment it’s clear that violence is erupting, he’ll leave with Rúna. (And if Rúna is elsewhere, he will not leave without her.) Naturally Rúna doesn’t want to leave while her brother is in the throes of the giant. Amid all the chaos of battle. If either of them die, Alsborg is ultimately doomed since Þór’s family will take that as a great grievance.

## CLOSING

There is a city to build. There is perhaps an impending war to avert. The consequences of the Bonebonded that would be Jarl will reverberate for years to come.



# *Remains*

by Quinn Murphy





## Situation

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The quiet, peaceful fishing town of Feskrheim lies in ruins. Several hundred people have been dead for a week. Machines ravaged the town, leaving none alive inside.

The characters enter Feskrheim and discover a garden and come into contact with the restless ghosts, newly created and blindly lashing out for vengeance against the living. Once their ghostly rage subsides, the ghosts more soberly seek vengeance,

## Impact

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Characters can learn news of the dwarven war strategy and next actions. They may also be able to bring supplies (magical and otherwise) back with them from Feskrheim

## Hooks

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Each character should choose one of the following reasons that they have come to Feskrheim, answering any related questions. Each hook can be used by more than one player.

**I heard there was trouble...** You heard that the dwarves attacked Feskrheim. Who asked you to investigate? What is their relationship to Feskrheim?

**Looking to trade.** You arrived at Feskrheim to trade. What were you looking to give? What were you looking to get?

**Visitation.** You came to Feskrheim to visit someone that you know. Who was it, and what was their relation to you?

# Antagonists

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## THE GHOSTS OF FESKRHEIM

The ghosts of Feskrheim still reel from their human memories of the brutal attack of the dwarves. They are at first only able to lash out, but as time goes by, they will regain their senses and become more typical haunts. They may request vengeance to help them gain peace. The stats and the moves of the ghosts vary according to chapter.

## GHOSTS OF VENGEANCE (DURING CHAPTER 1)

**Aspects:** DESTROY THE LIVING, WE DEMAND VENGEANCE,  
TRAPPED BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

**Skills:** Great (+4) Provoke, Stealth, Will  
Good (+3) Notice, Deceive

**Stunts:** DEATHLESS. The ghosts cannot truly die until they are put to rest. They are immune to physical stress  
HAUNTING. +2 to Provoke when creating advantages that involve terrifying the opponent.

**Stress:** Ghosts cannot take physical stress.

## MOVES

**Portents.** We haunt strangers exploring our town to test their mettle. We create obstacles to frighten them.

**The Wrath of Feskrheim.** We possess suits of armors and attack the visitors with several Haunted Armors.

# GHOSTS OF SORROW

## (DURING CHAPTER 2)

**Aspects:** WE SEEK REST, SING THE SONG OF THE DAMNED,  
TRAPPED BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

**Skill:** Great (+4) Provoke, Stealth, Will  
Good (+3) Notice, Fight, Empathy  
Fair (+2) Lore, Resources

**Stunts:** AID THE INSTRUMENTS OF OUR VENGEANCE. +2 to Lore  
when creating an advantage to benefit someone assisting  
the ghosts.

DEATHLESS. The ghosts cannot truly die until they are put to  
rest. They are immune to physical stress.

STRESS: Ghosts cannot take physical stress

## MOVES

**Share Sorrow.** We create an otherworldly display to show these strangers  
what happened to our home.

**Demand Vengeance.** We send a ghostly representative to the strangers  
who demands vengeance for Feskrheim.

**Secret Treasures of Feskrheim.** If the strangers leave without pledging to  
help, we bribe them by promising to share a secret treasure.

**Destroy them.** There will be others. If the strangers refuse to help, we will  
attack them

# Threats

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## HAUNTED ARMOR

The ghosts can possess the armor and weapons in the village and use them to cause physical harm to the characters.

**Aspects:** Animated Armor, Relentless, Terrifying Appearance

**Skills:** Superb (+5) Physique, Will  
Great (+4) Fight, Provoke  
Fair (+2) Notice

**Stunts:** None

**Stress:**

## BLOOD WOLVES

Blood wolves are wolves fed too often on human flesh. They have lost all fear of humans and instead see them as prey. The blood wolves in Feskrheim have feasted plenty, but a blood wolf's thirst is never sated.

**MOB (2 BLOOD WOLVES FOR EACH PC)**

**Aspects:** WE FEAR NO HUMAN, PACK MENTALITY

**Skills:** Good (+4) Fight, Notice

**Stunts:** None.

**Stress:**  for each blood wolf.

## DUERGAR SCAVENGERS

The Duergar aren't quite done with Feskrheim; some stragglers have remained rummaging for further plunder. Without their war machines or battle captains, these dwarves have little heart for a fight. They are merely opportunists looking for easy spoils during a nighttime raid.

**MOB (1-3 DUERGAR SCAVENGERS FOR EACH PC)**

**Aspects:** EASY PICKINGS, SNEAKY

**Skills:** Fair (+2) Fight, Notice

**Stress:** None

## Chapter 1: From Nothing

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### OPENING

The characters arrive and bear witness to the slaughter that took place. As they explore, blood wolves surround them and attack! The ghosts will not make themselves known yet.

### EVENTS

**We're not finished yet.** Duergar scavengers visit the village to loot what remains. A mob (1 for each character) appears. If the characters avoid them, Feskrheim gains the aspect Picked Dry.

**Discovered Atrocity.** The characters come upon an unusually grisly or tragic scene. Create a scene that touches the character's buttons (borrow from aspects if possible). For example, a character might find the charred remains of a father wrapped around a child in his unsuccessful attempt to shield him from the Duergar's weapons. Characters must make a Great (+4) Will overcome action or gain the aspect Shaken by Tragedy.

**Sword Without Master.** While the characters explore, they stumble onto a blade with a sinister energy. The blade's name is Dreyrgur ("Blood-stained"). Choosing to wield the blade grants the trouble aspect A Violent Fate, and grants the character the stunt Blood for Blood.

**BLOOD FOR BLOOD.** *Take 1 physical stress to gain two shifts on a successful Fight roll.*

## CLOSING

Once the characters have encountered at least 2 events or moves, the chapter can end. Adjust for the time you have. Run more events and let the characters explore more if events resolve quickly or you have more time to play.

## Chapter 2: A Good Sleep

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### OPENING

The rage of the ghosts settles and turns to sorrow. The ghosts of Feskrheim attempt to get the characters to take an action that will provide them with rest. The former elder of the village, Jorund Windcaller, will speak to the characters at first, then he will let others from the village speak. The ghosts in their appeal will tell the tales of the lives cut short by the dwarven attack, repeating their requests for the characters. If the characters refuse, the ghosts may turn on them in their sorrow.

### EVENTS

**Vengeance.** If the characters seek vengeance, they must find the duergar destroyer responsible and kill them. Finding the destroyer is a challenge that requires the characters to pick up the trail, track the destroyer, and launch an attack. The opposition is Good (+3) for each part of the challenge.

## MANREAPER

Dwarven Destroyer (Giant Scale)

A hunched destroyer covered in blades, Manreaper is not meant to fight giants or destroyers. It is meant to harass and terrorize.

Head — Careful -2

Torso (Front) — Forceful +0

Torso (Back) — Flashy +2

Arm (Right) — Cutting +3

Arm (Left) — Clever +2

Legs — Quick +1

**Last Rites.** The characters are asked to bury the entire village and perform burial rites for them all. This challenge requires accounting for all the villagers, finding all the remains, and performing all the rituals correctly. The opposition is Great (+4) for each part of the challenge.

**Refusal.** If the characters refuse for some reason, the ghosts will attack them, turning their sorrow to fury.

## CLOSING

Once one of the Events has taken place, the characters have either put the ghosts to rest or not. If the characters put the ghosts to rest, they will find great peace settling upon them and their holdfast. If the characters fail to put the ghost to rest, unease and a subtle curse settles upon them and their holdfast.

**ID**

Name

Description

Refresh

**IRON EDDA  
WAR  
OF  
METAL & BONE****ASPECTS**

High Concept

Trouble

Clan / Bonebonded

Sacred Item

Group

**SKILLS**

Superb (+5)

Great (+4)

Good (+3)

Fair (+2)

Average (+1)

**EXTRAS****STUNTS****PHYSICAL STRESS (Physique)**1  2   **MENTAL STRESS (Will)**1  2   **GIANT STRESS (Bonebonded)**1  2  3  4 **APPROACHES (Bonebonded)****APPROACHES (Runescribed)****CONSEQUENCES**2  Mild4  Moderate6  Severe

Mild

POWERED BY

**FATE**