

THIRTEEN EARTHSHATTERING ENCOUNTERS

ENTER The VIKING



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ENCOUNTER ONE: GOBLIN GOODIES GALORE	3
ENCOUNTER TWO: IRON GOBLIN	8
ENCOUNTER THREE: A TEST OF VIKING VIRTUE	15
ENCOUNTER FOUR: GETTING YOUR GOAT	23
ENCOUNTER FIVE: CHALICE IN UNDERLAND	29
ENCOUNTER SIX: FORESTS OF FURY	36
ENCOUNTER SEVEN: AS THE WYRM TURNS	43
ENCOUNTER EIGHT: DRUNKEN CHIEFTAIN	50
ENCOUNTER NINE: THE SEVENTH SEAL	57
ENCOUNTER TEN: THE REMORSE OF HONIR	63
PLOT SEQUENCE: MONASTERY ON FIRE	70
SET-UP ENCOUNTER: BOG OF THE FROG GOD	71
DEVELOPMENT ENCOUNTER: LE LAIR OF LE LOUP-GAROU	75
CLIMAX ENCOUNTER: SCOURGE OF THE SEA	78

ROLL OF HONOR

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ENCOUNTER ONE

GOBLIN GOODIES GALORE

BY MICHELLE A. BROWN NEPHEW

The heroes trudge along through the dark corridors of the Underground. They are young and untried Viking warriors in search of the silver that will make the skalds sing their praises so loudly that even those brave warriors in Valhalla might hear of their valorous deeds. The tales remembered by the village elders tell of strange creatures and glorious treasure in these twisting subterranean tunnels, and so the heroes continue on their way through the gloom ...

Type: Cushion Encounter

Hook: The Underground

Welcome, young one, to the world of **Rune**. In **Rune**, players each construct an encounter using **Rune's** point system of encounter creation. They spend points for features like traps that might injure the heroes, but earn points for beneficial elements such as treasure and healing opportunities. It's a lot like character generation, in that encounter designers get the chance to min/max their creations.

The players then each take a turn as the "runner" who GMs his own encounter; the encounters each lead from one to the next smoothly because they're usually set in a subterranean network of caverns called the Underground, which provides a shortcut between the human realm of Midgard and the mythical lands of the gods and other races. In advanced sessions, one person is designated the "plotter" and is responsible for creating "plot encounters" to give a solid storyline to the more general "cushion encounters" that the other players bring. The last encounter in this book, "Monastery on Fire," is an example of a plot encounter sequence.

The encounter below is designed to be an introduction to **Rune**, with commentary to guide a new horde of Viking warriors through their first trip into the Underground. It may look a bit odd at first; since it's not part a set of plot encounters, it cuts straight to the combat scenes instead of asking the players to flesh out their motivations or otherwise waste valuable game time that could be better spent smiting foes and taking their silver. It also has notations about specific kinds of rolls — like Standard, Weak Link, Freestanding, and Singular — that the designer of the encounter chooses to fit the situation. This all needs to be written down because the heroes gain victory points every time they succeed at a roll that's a part of the encounter notes, but the runner earns victory points every time a hero fails a roll. After the encounter, players are entitled to see the runner's notes to confirm they follow the rules. Once the session is over, everyone adds up their victory points to see who wins, making **Rune** a competitive role-playing game.

EVENT 1: DEATH FROM ABOVE

TRAP — FISSURE



Narration:

The passage the heroes are moving through slowly narrows to about four paces across. As they make their way forward, they come to a fissure cutting across the floor of the corridor. The fissure is five paces wide, and a faint greenish glow seems to be coming from its depths; the only way across is to jump over it.

Standard, conditionally avoidable (don't cross or get pushed into fissure). To cross, roll **Jump vs. Difficulty 9**; heroes who fail the roll or otherwise fall into the fissure suffer **falling damage, Dam rating 20/30 (21 – 25 feet)**, after determining whether they've had a good or bad landing (Jump Difficulty 6, see **Rune** p. 151).

Points Spent: 30 (Difficulty 9); 42 (21 – 25 feet fall)

Points Earned: -10 (conditionally avoidable)

Commentary: This is first roll the heroes need to make in this adventure. It specifies a standard roll, which means that each hero rolls once; successful heroes gain a benefit or avoid a negative consequence, while unsuccessful heroes lose a benefit or suffer a negative consequence. In this case, the "negative consequence" is a 20+ foot drop into the fissure.

So, each player needs to roll 1d10 and add his Jump Ability score to see if he can beat a Difficulty of 9 and avoid the fall. Say Ragnar's player rolls a 6, which he adds to his Jump of 1 to get a total of 7. The runner gets two points right away for the difference between Ragnar's total and the Difficulty of the roll. Ragnar falls into the fissure and has to make another Jump roll of Difficulty 6 to see if he's going to have a good or bad landing. If he makes the roll, he has to deal with a Damage rating of 20, if he fails the Damage rating goes up to 30.

If Ragnar makes this second Jump roll, he then adds the 2 points by which he failed

the original Jump roll to the falling Damage of 20, giving him 22 points of Damage from which he can subtract his Soak of 6. This means he loses 16 of his 77 hit points, which is fortunately under his Wound Threshold of 18. If the Damage had been over 18, he would have had to worry about taking a Wound that would have given him an Impairment of -1 to any other rolls he might need to make in this encounter.

If Ragnar had rolled a 9 on his first Jump, for a total of 10, he would have made it over the fissure safely and earned one victory point for beating the Difficulty of 9, as well.


TERRAIN — LOOSE FISSURE EDGE

The far edge of the fissure is made of crumbling rock. Each time a hero takes 10 or more points of raw damage (before Soak) or moves 2 paces or more, he has to roll to avoid falling down, which would send him over the


unstable edge into the fissure. (Fissure edge acts as slippery ground, see **Rune** p. 126.)

Points Earned: -5 (1/3 area is slippery ground)

TRAP – AMBUSH: GOBLINS

 **Narration:**
When the heroes reach the far side of the fissure, they pause for a second to get their bearings. Was that a noise up ahead?

Weak Link roll vs. Awareness, Difficulty 8. If even one hero fails the roll, all those others suffer a **-6 penalty to ATK, DFN and Engagement rolls** for the first round following the roll. For the second round, they suffer a **-3 penalty to ATK and DFN.** The third has a **-1 decrease.** (See **Rune** p. 147 - 148.) If they all make the roll:

 **Closer Inspection:**
The heroes look up just in time to see the four goblins on the ledge above them, and the look of evil mischief on their faces, before a landslide of rubble comes crashing down.

Points Spent: 50 (ambush); 20 (Difficulty 8)

TERRAIN – ADDITIONAL LEVEL: GOBLIN LEDGE

There is a ledge approximately 15 feet up just past the far edge of the fissure. This is where the goblins have set up their ambush and now lie in wait. From this elevation, the **goblins get a +3 bonus to attack rolls** against those on ground level, and the **heroes get a -3 penalty to attack rolls** against the goblins (see **Rune** p. 122).

Points Earned: -5 (extra level)

COMBAT OPPONENTS – AMBUSH GOBLINS



Name	Type	Mix	Move	Threat Category	Adjust	Predictable/ Self-willed
Flurb	Goblin Warrior	0	15	Inferior	none	Predictable (+0)
Dack	Goblin Warrior	0	15	Inferior	none	Predictable (+0)
Bizzle	Goblin Warrior	0	15	Inferior	none	Predictable (+0)
Gurda	Goblin Warrior	0	15	Inferior	none	Predictable (+0)

Points Spent: 0

Commentary: In **Rune**, just before the game starts the runner tailors each set of combat opponents to the strength of the horde of Viking heroes playing the game. The runner compares the current statistics of all the heroes on the Roll of Valor provided in the photocopy section of the **Rune** rulebook, and figures out the second-worst score for each statistic. For instance, he might come up with:

INIT	ATK	DFN	DAM	Soak	HP	Res
8	10	7	9	10	52	3

The Adjust Table in the **Rune** rulebook on page 99 says that Inferior foes should be adjusted as follows:

INIT	ATK	DFN	DAM	Soak	HP	Res
-2	-2	-2	-1	-1	-10	-1

The encounter designer didn't add any extra adjusts to these goblins, so we just add the two together, getting melee stats that look like this:

INIT	ATK	DFN	DAM	Soak	HP	Res
6	8	5	8	9	42	2

These guys also use bows, so we apply the modifiers from the **Rune** book on p. 100 for missile attacks, ending up with the following missile stats:

INIT	ATK	DFN	DAM
5	4	5	2

The rulebook also specifies that most opponents have Wound Thresholds of 15, and gives the formula for calculating a foe's Might rating, which in this case gives us a result of 20. The hero who kills one of these goblins gets half its Might rating – 10 points – as a victory point bonus. Now the runner fills out a foe sheet from the photocopy section of the **Rune** rulebook for each of these goblins, getting something that looks like this:

Name: Flurb		Soak: 9	COMBAT SCORES			
Type: Goblin Warrior	Threat: Inferior	Hit Points: 42	INIT	ATK	DFN	DAM
		Wound Threshold: 15	Score	Score	Score	Score
			6	8	5	8
			5	4	5	2
			Name: _____			

Now the heroes have a set of foes worthy of the attention of their battleaxes! In **Rune**, foes always fight to the death, so it's time for some blood ... standard attacks follow the following formula, and heroes get a victory point for every point of damage they do to their foes, while the runner gets points for hit points the heroes lose in the bloodshed:

$$\{[(\text{Attacker's Roll} + \text{ATK Score}) - (\text{Defender's Roll} + \text{DFN Score})] + \text{DAM Score}\} - \text{Soak} = \text{Hit Points Lost}$$

EVENT 2: INTO THE WATERY DEPTHS



Narration:

The heroes fall through the fissure and into a large cavern. The walls and vaulted ceiling of the chamber are covered with a glowing lichen that casts an eerie greenish light over the placid waters of the large underground lake that fills most of the space. The heroes land near the edge of the water.

GAIN – HEALING OPPORTUNITY

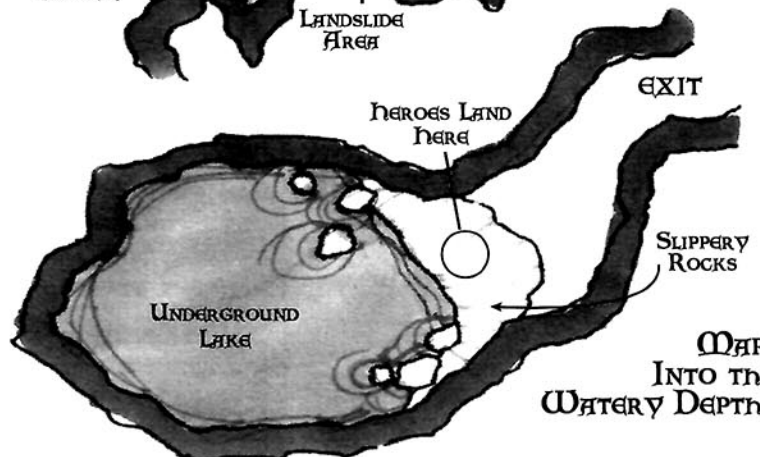
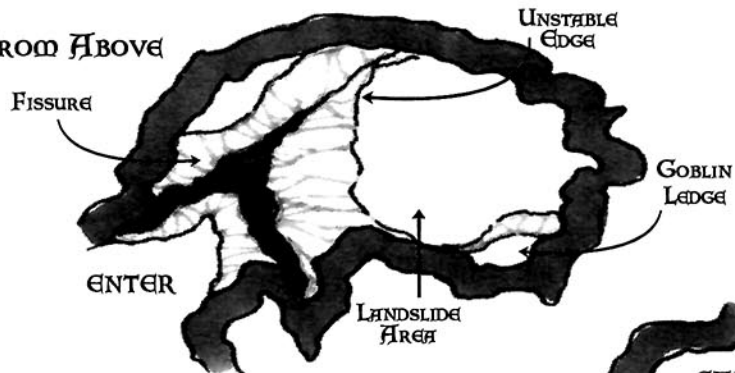


Narration:

This cavern is well protected from the elements and harbors no foes or wild creatures. It is a safe place to rest and recover from that fall through the fissure.

Points Earned: -30 (unlimited time)

MAP: DEATH FROM ABOVE



MAP: INTO THE WATERY DEPTHS

GAIN – FREESTANDING AWARENESS ROLL

Freestanding roll, Singular: No-Fault; roll Awareness vs. Difficulty 6 to notice the following:



Closer Inspection:

From beneath the clear water of the lake the heroes notice the tempting glint of silver! On the lake bottom near the shore rests what looks like a large treasure; the only way to get it is to swim down and scoop it up.

Points Spent: -10 (Freestanding Difficulty 6)

TERRAIN – SLIPPERY SHORE

The shoreline of the lake is littered with lichen-strewn rocks. This makes them extremely dangerous for treasure-hungry Vikings peering into the water.

TRAP – FALLING ROCKS

When the heroes reach the spot just under the goblins' ledge, the creatures let loose a cascade of large, sharp rocks upon their enemies. The goal of this trap is to push the heroes back over the edge of the fissure. If it doesn't work, they will attack the heroes with their crude bows from the relative safety of the ledge.

Standard; Dodge vs. Difficulty 8; failed Dodge suffers Dam rating 15. (Remember that anything over 10 points of raw damage requires a roll to avoid slipping over the side of the loose fissure edge.)

Points Spent: 20 (Difficulty 8); 15 (Dam rating 15)

Standard roll; Balance vs. Difficulty 6; conditionally avoidable (don't go near the edge of the shoreline); a failed roll means the hero slips into the water.

Points Spent: 0 (Difficulty 6)

Points Earned: -5 (1/3 of area is slippery ground); **-10** (conditionally avoidable)

GAINS — CATEGORY F TREASURE

Besides the normal Swim roll required each round spent in the water to keep from drowning (see Difficulty modifiers and drowning rules in **Rune** p. 148 - 149), a hero must make a separate successful Swim roll to scoop up the treasure. If a hero misses the first time, he must make another normal Swim roll before trying to grab the treasure again.

Singular: No-Fault; 2 Extra rolls allowed; rollers must specify they're trying to pick up the treasure while swimming; roll **Swim vs. Difficulty 6**, a success retrieves **1 Category F treasure** from the bottom of the underground lake. The hero who grabs the treasure first gets a bonus of **30 victory points**.

Points Spent: 0 (Difficulty 6)

Points Earned: -10 (2 Extra rolls allowed); **-75** (category F treasure); **-30** (victory point bonus)

ENCOUNTER COST TABLE

Item	Points Spent	Item	Points Earned
Fissure Difficulty 9	30	Fissure conditionally avoidable	-10
Fissure 21 - 25 feet fall	42	Loose fissure edge, 1/3 area is slippery ground	-5
Combat Opponents	0	Goblin ledge as extra level	-5
Ambush	50	Healing opportunity for unlimited time	-30
Ambush Difficulty 8	20	Freestanding Difficulty 6 to see treasure	-10
Falling rocks Difficulty 8	20	Slippery shore, 1/3 of area is slippery ground	-5
Falling rocks Dam rating 15	15	Slippery shore is conditionally avoidable	-10
Slippery shore Difficulty 6	0	2 Extra rolls allowed to grab treasure	-10
Grab treasure Difficulty 6	0	Category F treasure	-75
Invisible barrier Difficulty 8	20	Victory point bonus	-30
Invisible barrier Characteristic only	20	Invisible barrier per barrier	-3
		No limit on attempts to break invisible barrier	-20
		Invisible barrier is conditionally avoidable	-10
Total Spent:	217	Total Earned:	-223
		Balance:	-6

TRAP — INVISIBLE BARRIER

Once a hero has successfully grabbed the treasure, an invisible barrier leaps into existence across the surface of the lake. This keeps the hero with the treasure and any other swimmers from being able to leave the water, and they will inevitably fail a Swim roll and drown if they or their fellows on shore aren't able to break the barrier. The heroes on shore see the following:



Closer Inspection:

The bravest of the Horde grabs the treasure, but as he and the others in the water rise to the surface, those on shore see a look of horror seize their faces. They are trapped under the skin of the lake! They press their hands up against the impassable surface of the water, unable to reach the air.

Heroes in the lake experience the following:



Closer Inspection:

When the bravest of the Horde grabs the treasure, every Viking treading water feels an inexorable pressure pushing him down into the water. Those under the surface of the lake now push up against an impenetrable barrier between themselves and the air, as their fellows on shore look on in horror.

Breaking through the barrier requires a STR roll on the part of either the watchers on shore or the swimmers. Once a section of the barrier has been punctured, others can exit the water through the same break.

Singular, no set limit on extra attempts; STR vs. Difficulty 8. Conditionally avoidable (don't grab the treasure from the bottom of the lake)

Points Spent: 20 (Difficulty 8); **20** (Characteristic only)

Points Earned: -3 (per barrier); **-20** (no set limit on extra attempts); **-10** (conditionally avoidable)



Narration:

After pummeling to itty bits what was most likely one of the evil god Loki's devious tricks, the brave Viking warriors exit the lake cavern, in search of glorious combat and more treasure!

Commentary: At this point, the designer adds up the encounter points he's earned and compares that to the number of points he's spent. He needs to make sure the Points Earned column has a higher number than the total Points Spent, and stays under the maximum points allowed (see **Rune** pages 94 and 177). That's it!

ENCOUNTER TWO

IRON GOBLIN

BY CHRIS AYLOTT

Your horde discovers two vegetarian goblins pursued by a slaving goblin freak. The cowardly goblins beg you for protection, offering the mystical Key of Heimdall as a reward. Before the day is done, you will prove yourself against a pack of goblin slayers mounted upon a dwarvish mechanical centi-mobile spewing hot gatling shards. Only the favor of the gods will preserve you!

Type: Cushion Encounter

Hook: The Underground

EVENT 1: WITH FRIENDS LIKE THESE ...



Narration:

After squeezing through several narrow cracks, you emerge into a wide tunnel with a smooth floor. From the footprints and bits of scattered rubbish, you suspect that it's well traveled.

Your guess is swiftly confirmed. You hear hooting noises and shouts in the distance, along with a dull clanking noise. Then two small goblins dash around a bend in the tunnel. They are obviously running for their lives, and you soon learn why: a large and misshapen goblin with three arms is in hot pursuit.

As soon as they see you, the smaller goblins run to you and hide behind your legs. One of them cries, "Save us! Please, save us from that horrible monster!"

TERRAIN – DECOYS

The two small goblins are terrified **decoys**. If the heroes kill them, either during this fight or later, they are easily removed from the narration. The plot of the encounter remains exactly the same. If only one goblin gets killed, adjust the narration so that the surviving goblin takes over most of the dead goblin's lines.

But there is one possible complication if the heroes kill the goblins early in the adventure. The goblins bear the Key of Heimdall, a magic item that is very useful in the final event of this encounter. If the heroes kill the goblins, they should find the Key while searching the dead bodies. If the heroes don't bother to search the goblins' bodies, then they will just have to suffer for their bad pilaging habits.

These veggie goblins are not foes, and the heroes get no victory points for killing them.

Points Earned: -20 (2 Decoys @ 10 points each)

TERRAIN – COVER

Two large rocks are available to hide behind. The smaller rock provides **half cover** for one combatant. The larger rock provides **half cover** for two combatants.

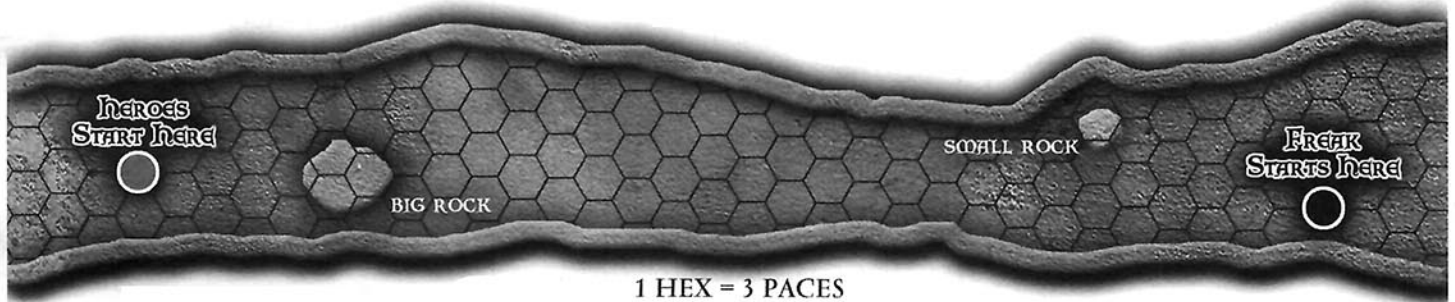
Points Earned: -12 (Half Cover for two combatants); -6 (Half Cover for one combatant)

TERRAIN – SLOPE

The entire tunnel slopes downward. The goblins enter from the higher end of the tunnel.

Points Earned: -15 (Slope, entire area)

MAP: WITH FRIENDS LIKE THESE ...



EVENT ONE COMBAT OPPONENT – FREAK



Combat Tactics: Like most goblins of its kind, Slaving is a howling killing machine. As soon as it sees the heroes, it will forget about its goblins and charge the closest pillager.

Name	Type	Mix	Move	Threat Category	Adjusts	Predictable/ Self-Willed
Ospak	Goblin Freak	2	15	Superior	INIT +6, ATK +1, DFN -3, DAM +3, Soak -1	Predictable (+0)

Points Spent: 0

**Narration:**

After the goblin freak dies, one of the goblins — the smellier one — falls to his knees and kisses your feet. “Thank you, thank you!” he says.

“I am Nroc, and my unfortunate companion over there is Tarroc. We are simple vegetarian goblins who are being persecuted for our peaceful beliefs.”

“Yeah,” says Tarroc. “We want peace and love, but those maniacs want to kill us!” She points up the corridor. The clanking noise and shouts you heard earlier are louder now.

“Alas, my partner speaks true. Perhaps tomorrow our brothers will see that we offer a better way, but today we seem to be running for our lives. We beg of you, O great warriors, will you please protect us and help us get home?”

Tarroc hisses, “Tell them about the bijou, you dummy!”

Nroc looks flustered for a moment, and then his face lights up. “Oh!” he exclaims, “that will do nicely.” He reaches in his pocket and draws out a glittering glass key. “We, uh, liberated this from Lord Slay-Many when we escaped from his cavern. It’s very pretty, and you may have it if you help us get home.”

The key sparkles and shines with a magical light. Inside, it glitters with all the colors of the rainbow.

GAIN — THE KEY OF HEIMDALL

Any hero who examines the key may make a Lore roll to learn more about it.

Singular, Freestanding roll; roll **Lore** vs. **Difficulty 8** to realize:

Points Earned: -8 (Freestanding roll, Difficulty 8)

**Closer Inspection:**

You’ve heard of this treasure in the skaldic sagas — it is the Key of Heimdall, a powerful magical token. Nobody has ever told you what its magic is, but the rainbow sparkle suggests that the Key has something to do with the Bifrost Bridge that connects Asgard and Midgard.

**Background:**

As will be seen later in the encounter, what the Key does is summon a small copy of the Bifrost bridge that can span any gap.

**Narration:**

As you examine the key, the source of the clanking and shouting comes around the bend of the corridor. A pack of goblins sits astride a gigantic mechanical centipede. It looks like a piece of dwarvish equipment, but the legs have been cut in half so that the body rides close to the ground. The legs have also been painted orange, while the body is purple with leering green goblin faces all over it.

**Background:**

The dwarves did make this centi-mobile, but a goblin slayer named Fthagn (Fuh-THON) stole it and customized it to his liking. His lack of taste is only matched by his brutality.

EVENT 2: DEATH BY LOW-RIDER

**Narration:**

A squat goblin in the front of the centi-mobile shouts, “Ah-ha! We have found the mewling vegetarians at last! And they’ve met some delicious humans!”

He sneers at you. “Foolish humans. Soon you will be eaten by Fthagn, the greatest goblin slayer of all! Minions! Fire the gatling shard guns!”

He laughs maniacally. Two holes open in the centi-mobile, and a stream of sharp steel hurtles in your direction!

TRAP — GATLING SHARD GUNS

These terrible weapons spew out fist-sized chunks of hot, sharp metal and never run out of ammunition. They target two random heroes per round.

Singular, limited targeting vs. 2 victims, repeat shots roll; roll **Dodge** vs. **Difficulty 10**, failed roller suffers **Dam rating 15**

Points Spent: 50 (Repeat Shots at 2 heroes); 40 (Difficulty 10); 15 (Dam rating 15)

Points Earned: -10 (Limited Targeting at 2 heroes)



**Closer Inspection:**

After seeing this monstrosity in action, you quickly realize that you have no chance of attacking the vehicle — it's obviously too tough. Fthagn just backs away when you advance towards it and continues to hose you down with fire from the shard guns. There's no dishonor in a tactical retreat — your only hope is to run, and run fast!

To escape Gatling Shard Guns: **Standard** roll; roll **Sprint** vs. **Difficulty 6**, unlimited **extra rolls allowed**

Points Earned: -20 (Extra Rolls Allowed, unlimited extra rolls)

**Narration:**

As you sprint down the tunnel with the vegetarian goblins, it widens and becomes a small cavern. A swift underground river runs across the cave, and a wooden bridge leads over the river.

You run for the bridge, but the centi-mobile heaves itself into the cavern before you can cross. A puff of smoke rises from the top of the machine, and the bridge explodes!

"Ha-ha!" shouts Fthagn. "I have you cornered now!" Nroc and Tarroc squeak in fear as he prepares to hose you down with the shard guns.

What do you do?

**Background:**

Fthagn blew up the bridge with a grenade gun, which is another weapon aboard the centi-mobile. If the characters try to fight him, he'll simply back up and shoot them as before. As for the river, it's too wide to jump and too deep to wade.

**TRAP — USE THE KEY OF HEIMDALL?**

If the characters think of it, they may avoid an unscheduled bath by activating the Key of Heimdall. If they make a Divine Awareness roll, the key will glow brightly, and a shimmering, rainbow-colored bridge will replace the broken one. It will last just long enough for the heroes and the vegetarian goblins to run across it and escape into the next cavern.

All this sounds like a Gain, but it is listed as a trap because failure triggers the Raging River trap that follows, as does not thinking to use the key.

Singular roll, roll **Divine Awareness** vs. **Difficulty 8**, success activates the key, while failure triggers Raging River trap

Points Spent: 20 (Difficulty 8); **10** (Failure Leads to Trap)

TRAP — INTO THE RIVER

If the heroes are unable to summon a bridge with the Key of Heimdall, they must throw themselves into the river and hope they come out in one piece. Since the river has a strong current, that's not likely.

Standard roll; roll **Swim** vs. **Difficulty 7**, failed roller suffers **drowning**

Any hero who succeeds at the Swim roll can climb out of the water and find a path down to the next cavern. Any hero who fails the Swim roll will be carried into the next cavern by the river. Once there, the hero is relatively easy to rescue; the water in the pool there is tranquil with only a slight current.

Points Spent: 60 (Strong Current)

TRAP — MORE GATLING SHARDS

If the heroes stand around dithering or try to fight the centi-mobile, Fthagn will hose the area down with more gatling shards. This time all of the heroes are in danger.

Standard, conditionally avoidable (remains in effect) roll, roll **Dodge** vs. **Difficulty 9**, any hero who fails suffers **Dam rating 15**

Points Spent: 30 (Difficulty 9); **15** (Dam rating 15)

Points Earned: -10 (Conditionally Avoidable: jump in the river or flee over the magic bridge)

EVENT 3: A PAUSE IN THE CHASE



Narration:

Those who took a swim pull yourselves out of the water and stretch out on the rocks. After letting you cough and wheeze for a little while, Tarroc sits up and looks around.

"We should be safe for a few hours," she says. "There's no short way around that river, and Fthagn won't want to risk his precious centi-mobile trying to swim through it."

GAIN — HEALING OPPORTUNITY

Tarroc is right. It'll be at least three hours before anything threatens the characters. In the meantime, they have a **healing opportunity**.

Points Earned: -10 (Healing Opportunity, 3 hours)



Narration:

You get about three hours of rest and some food before you start hearing howls in the distance. After repacking your gear, you look for a side passage that you can sneak out through.

Nroc finds one first. Squeezing through a narrow crevice he shouts, "Here! There's another chamber behind here!"

The crevice looks very tight for the average brawny Viking. For a moment, you consider finding another route, but Tarroc peers down a tunnel and shouts, "Ia! Ia! Fthagn is coming!" It sounds like the centi-mobile is only a few hundred feet away, so you'd better hurry.

TRAP — A VIKING IN A GREAT TIGHTNESS

Each member of the horde must squeeze through the tight crevice. They'll all succeed, of course, but the question is: how quickly? This is a Weak Link roll — the first Viking to fail (and any heroes behind him) will be peppered with shard fire as the centi-mobile bursts into the room.

Weak Link: Line of Doom roll; roll **Quickness** vs. **Difficulty 7**, failed hero and all heroes behind suffer **Dam rating 15**

Points Spent: 20 (Exotic roll, Quickness); 15 (Dam rating 15); 10 (Difficulty 7); 10 (Weak Link: Line of Doom)



Narration:

You flee the cavern in a hail of metal shards. Fthagn and his goblins curse for a moment, and then you hear clanking as the centi-mobile searches for another way around.

"Whew!" Nroc says, "That was close!"

"Too close," says Tarroc as she mournfully picks shards out of her breeches.

You seem to have stumbled into an old crypt. Six stone sarcophagi are scattered about the cavern. Each tomb has the likeness of a dwarven warrior carved into its lid. As Vikings you many times burn your dead, preventing looters from disturbing them — these dwarves are obviously just asking for it. You could try to pry the lids off and search for treasure, but do you have the time?

GAIN — TREASURE FROM THE TOMBS

Of course the heroes have time — they are Vikings, and they do not need to answer to schedules! (More importantly, Fthagn won't catch up with them during this scene.) The Search roll represents their efficiency at prying open the tombs and rooting through the remains.

Singular: No-Fault roll, roll **Search** vs. **Difficulty 6**, if successful the heroes find **5 ounces of silver** and a **Category C Treasure**.

Points Earned: -30 (Category C Treasure); -15 (No-Fault roll); -5 (5 ounces silver)



Narration:

Having spent as much time here as you dare, you leave the crypt behind and begin following the passageways. Sometimes you catch a glimpse of the centi-mobile, or hear the shouts of Fthagn's goblins. It's almost like you're being herded.



EVENT 4: LIKE A BRIDGE OVER TROUBLED LAVA



Narration:

The passage slopes down, and you encounter fewer and fewer branches. You hear a rumbling noise, and smell sulphur. Suddenly, the passage opens out into a large cavern. You're standing on a sheer cliff, looking down at a river of lava. On the far side of the cavern are another cliff and a passage. A stone bridge used to span the chasm, but it has been smashed.

Behind you, Fthagn's centi-mobile pulls into the passage behind you. Steam billows from it as the goblins slayers prepare to charge down the passage.

Nroc throws himself down to the ground in despair. "So close," he wails, "and yet we're doomed! Our village is just past this cavern, but we'll never get across that chasm!"

"Or maybe you could use that magic key thing you've been carrying around," says Tarroc.

Nroc immediately brightens. "Oh right! The Bifrost thing!" He holds out the key to you. "You Vikings are the Aesir's favorites. Make a bridge for us, pretty please?"

GAIN – USE THE KEY OF HEIMDALL!

Each round, any Viking may hold up the Key and make a Divine Awareness roll. If the roll is successful, the Key glows brightly and a rainbow of light plays over the broken stone bridge. The light fills in the gaps in the bridge, making it as good as new. Then the key goes dark, its charges exhausted for this adventure.

Once the roll is made, the bridge shines with a warm, divine light. The heroes will gain an Invigoration bonus for the fight that follows.

If nobody ever succeeds at making the Divine Awareness roll, the heroes will have to fight without the space provided by the bridge. The cliff will be quite cramped, and the slayers will have an easier time cornering the heroes; there isn't much space on the cliff, and the Vikings will have no convenient slope to back up onto.

Singular, extra rolls allowed; roll **Divine Awareness** vs. **Difficulty 7**, if successful the heroes gain **1 Invigoration** until the end of the encounter, if failed the heroes may try again every combat round

Points Spent: 10 (Difficulty 7)

Points Earned: -30 (Invigoration, 1 point for 1 combat); **-20** (Extra Rolls Allowed, unlimited)



Narration:

The centi-mobile rushes down the passage and comes to a halt in front of you. Fthagn and his gang of slayers leap out of the vehicle. "No more slow dwarf-death," Fthagn bellows, his once-careful grammar failing with overexcitement. "Now we kill you old-fashioned goblin way!"

TERRAIN – SLOPES

The bridge has two sloping ramps.

Points Earned: -10 (-5 per ramp, 2 ramps)

TERRAIN – DAMAGING PLACE

Any Viking or slayer pushed into the chasm will be exposed to the heat and fumes of the lava below. This makes the chasm a **damaging place** with **Dam rating 25**. Climbing out of the chasm requires a half action.

Points Earned: -30 (Damaging Place, Dam rating 25)

EVENT FOUR COMBAT OPPONENTS – FTHAGN'S GANG



Combat Tactics: Two of the slayers hang back early the fight and pepper the heroes with crossbow fire. Fthagn and the rest of his slayers will rush in to fight hand-to-hand. Whenever possible, the slayers will use Engagement rolls to push the pillagers off the cliff.

Name	Type	Mix	Move	Threat Category	Adjusts	Predictable/ Self-Willed
Fthagn	Goblin Slayer	1.5	15	Equal	None	Predictable (+0)
Ashth	Goblin Slayer	1.5	15	Equal	None	Predictable (+0)
Durrrl	Goblin Slayer	1.5	15	Equal	None	Predictable (+0)
Broch	Goblin Slayer	1.5	15	Equal	None	Predictable (+0)

Points Spent: 0

ENCOUNTER TWO

TRAP — WATCH THAT FIRST STEP

Any Viking pushed off the cliff must make a Quickness roll to grab its edge. If he fails, he takes a dangerous 20-foot fall before landing on a convenient outcropping of rock.

Singular: Rush roll; roll **Quickness** vs. **Difficulty 6**, failed rollers suffer **falling damage, Dam rating 10/20 (16–20 feet)**

Points Spent: 25 (16–20 foot fall); 20 (Exotic roll, Quickness)

TREASURE — FTHAGN'S TREASURE

If the pillagers search the centi-mobile, they find **4 ounces of silver** and a **Category B Treasure**.

Points Earned: -20 (Category B Treasure), -4 (4 ounces of silver)



Narration:

After dealing with Fthagn, the rest of the journey is easy. You soon reach a village full of vegetarian goblins, who are eager to hear what has happened to the two small goblins you have encountered. If you understand the villagers' gabbling, Nroc and Tarroc are the son and daughter of the village chief.

TREASURE — THANKFUL GOBLINS

If the pillagers brought Nroc and Tarroc back to the village safe and sound, the villagers are very thankful, and present the heroes with a **Category F Treasure**. A joyful celebration is held, and the heroes journey onward the next day with well-earned hangovers.

The heroes also receive the Key of Heimdall from the goblins, but since its charge is exhausted it will be of no further use during this adventure. When the pillagers return to their own village, the

Viking elders will accept the Key without comment, and it will not earn victory points. Perhaps the Vikings will discover a way to recharge it in a later quest.

If the horde arrives without Nroc and Tarroc — presumably because they killed the little rats off — the villagers will mourn. They know better than to attack well-armed Vikings, but they might return for revenge in a sequel.

If the Vikings want to slay the helpless villagers, they can do so easily, but they will earn no victory points from doing so.

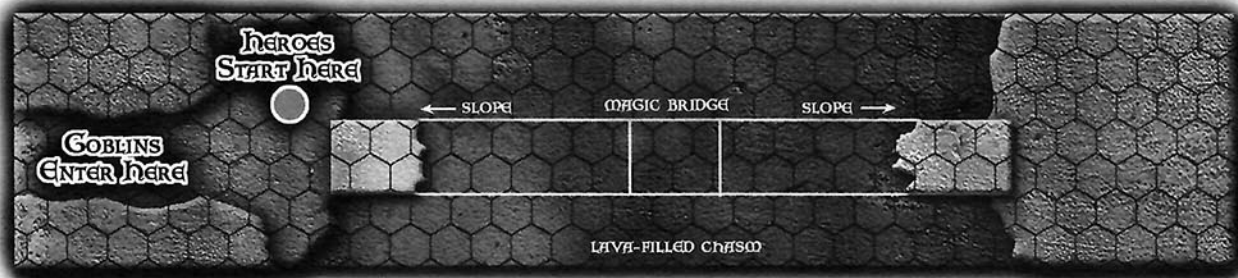
Points Earned: -75 (Category F Treasure)



Narration:

As you continue through the Underground, you mull over your wild chase through the caverns. Perhaps goblins are not all bad — but it is certainly satisfying to smash the skulls of the ones who are.

MAP: LIKE A BRIDGE OVER TROUBLED LAVA



ENCOUNTER COST TABLE

Item	Points Spent	Item	Points Earned
Gatling Shard Guns	105	Terrain — Decoys, Cover, & Slope	-53
To Escape Gatling Shard Guns	0	The Key of Heimdall	-8
Use the Key of Heimdall?	30	Limited Targeting: Gatling Shard Guns	-10
Into the River	60	Extra Rolls to Escape Gatling Shard Guns	-20
More Gatling Shards	45	Avoid More Gatling Shards	-10
A Viking in a Great Tightness	55	Healing Opportunity	-10
Use the Key of Heimdall!	10	Treasure from the Tombs	-50
Watch That First Step	45	Use the Key of Heimdall!	-50
		Terrain — Damaging Place & Slopes	-40
		Treasure — Fthagn's Treasure & Thankful Goblins	-99
Total Spent:	350*	Total Earned:	-350*
		Balance:	0

* Cushion encounters have a starting budget of 350 encounter points, despite the typo in the Rune rulebook on page 177. See www.atlas-games.com for current errata and a conversion of this encounter to a starting budget of 300 encounter points.



ENCOUNTER THREE

A TEST OF VIKING VIRTUE

BY MICHELLE A. BROWN NEPHEW

Your horde finds a holy place deep in the Underground where they must undergo tests of their bravery, combat prowess, and skalding ability. The gods Tyr, Thor, and even Odin himself will be your judges, and a divine treasure awaits those who prove themselves as true Viking warriors. But the gods are fickle, indeed ... will your horde find glory, or only death?

Type: Cushion Encounter

Hook: The Underground

Narration:

As your horde of Viking warriors makes its way down yet another tunnel in the Underground, you all notice the walls have slowly changed from the rough stone of a natural rock passage to a smooth, unblemished stone the color of the finest ivory sword pommel. Soon you see a radiant light coming from up ahead, and at last you enter a chamber made of the same unnaturally pale rock.

The room is perfectly circular, with a 15-pace-high domed ceiling and a diameter of about 15 paces, as well (note that a pace is about 30 inches, or 3/4 meter). In the center of the space stands a pedestal about four paces tall, and hovering another six paces above it is a ball of glowing golden brilliance, which lights the entire room. It's obvious that within the luminous globe is a magnificent treasure of inestimable worth.

One of your number tries to jump up and grab the treasure, but finds that the hovering ball of light is impenetrable ... all he gains for his effort is a residual glow on his hand that slowly fades away after a few minutes.

CARROT – AURA OF THE GODS

Standard roll; roll **Divine Awareness vs. Difficulty 8**, to gain **+2 increase to Runes Ability** roll below, and to learn the following:

Clouser Inspection:

Heroes who make the Divine Awareness roll feel the hairs on their necks rise and a chill in the air. They realize this place is definitely touched by the gods.

Points Spent: 20 (Difficulty 8)

Points Earned: -10 (+2 increase x 5 x 1 round)

GAIN – WRITING ON THE WALL**Clouser Inspection:**

As the heroes look around the room, they see three runic inscriptions carved into different spots, all at eye-level, on the flawlessly smooth walls. They also see identical inscriptions on the pedestal's stone top, each in the curve of a separate fist-sized indentation. A longer inscription also runs around the base of the pedestal.

Freestanding roll, Singular: No Fault; roll Runes vs. Difficulty 8 to learn:

Clouser Inspection:

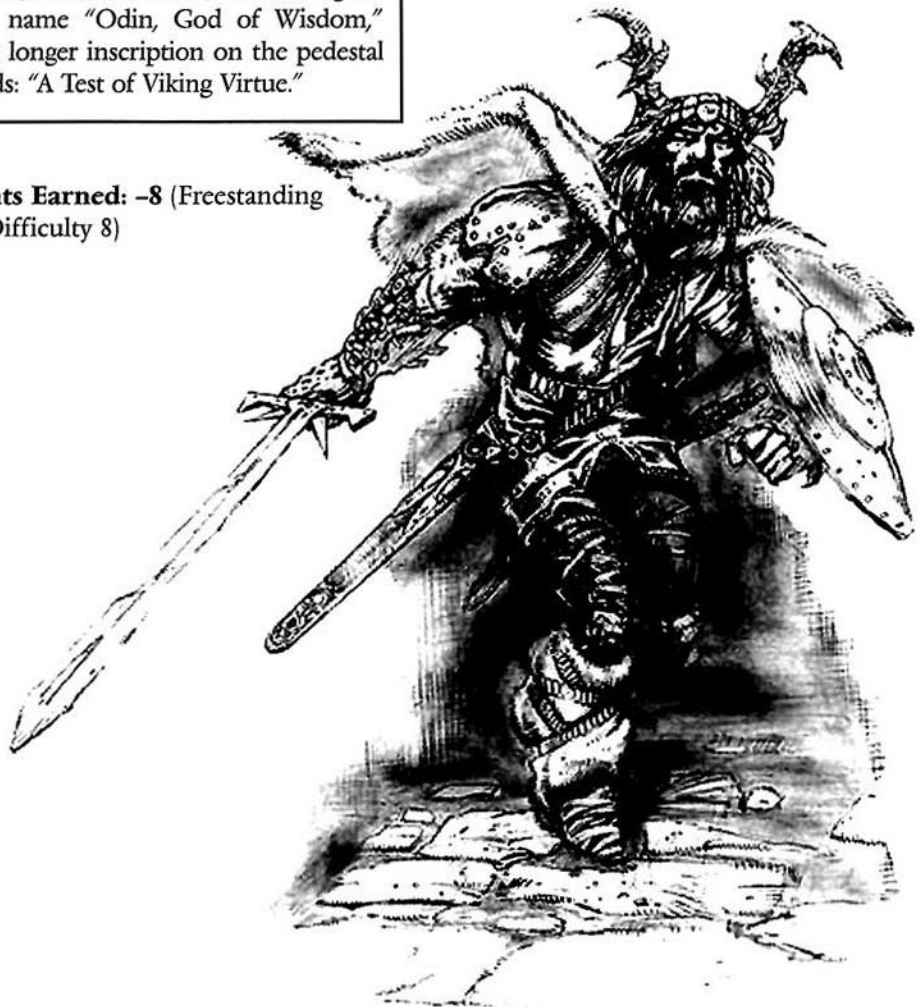
Heroes who succeed at their Runes roll learn that the first of the three inscriptions is the symbol meaning "Tyr, God of Justice," the second is "Thor, God of Combat," the third gives the name "Odin, God of Wisdom," The longer inscription on the pedestal reads: "A Test of Viking Virtue."

Points Earned: -8 (Freestanding Difficulty 8)

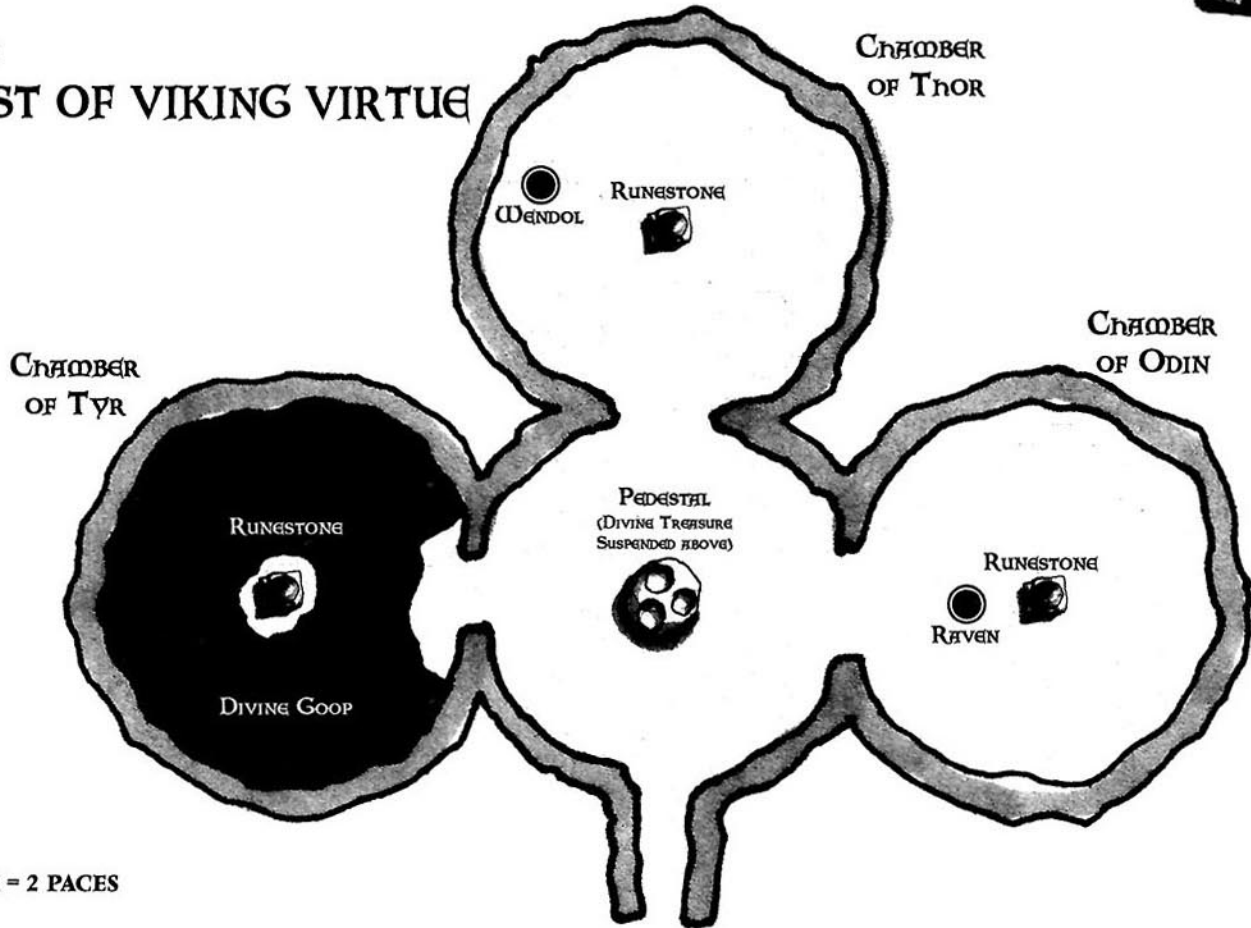
Narration:

The hero nearest the Tyr inscription on the wall now notices that it has begun to glow with the same golden cast as is protecting the treasure. The glow intensifies as he comes nearer. When he reaches up and places his hand on the rune marking, a large section of the curved wall surrounding the rune dissolves to reveal a darkened chamber beyond.

Note: The three events must be encountered in the order given on the pedestal. The doors will only open if the pillagers activate the rune markings on the walls in that order.



MAP:
A TEST OF VIKING VIRTUE



ONE HEX = 2 PACES

EVENT 1: TRIAL BY JUSTICE



Narration:

When the "Tyr, God of Justice" inscription is activated, a large portion of the curved pale wall around it vanishes to show a dark room on the other side. In the center of the chamber is a runestone about the size of a warrior's fist, hovering five paces above the ground and surrounded by the same otherworldly radiant glow. Its warm light is enough to illuminate the area immediately surrounding it, but not much more. This place has the same dimensions as the antechamber.

GAIN – SHRINE TO TYR

Freestanding roll, Singular: No Fault; roll **Divine Awareness vs. Difficulty 6** to notice the following:



Closer Inspection:

Those who succeed at their roll realize that this room is, indeed, a shrine to the god Tyr. Tyr is the god who presides over public assemblies and legal matters. He looks well upon acts of spectacular suffering, as when Vikings honor his deeds by walking into traps.

Points Earned: -0 (shrine to Tyr, over the "two shrines per encounter" limit); -10 (Freestanding Difficulty 6)



Narration:

Your heroes step into the chamber, and the wall reappears behind the last warrior. As you watch, a thick oil-like liquid seeps up from the floor in a ring around the floating runestone. There is now a three-pace by six-pace "safe" spot where you stand against a blank wall, and a three-pace-diameter island in the center of the room that is free of the goop; the rest of the room is filled with the stuff to a depth of about one pace. It begins to seethe and bubble ominously as you realize the only way to reach the runestone and please the god Tyr is to walk through the toxic-looking substance.

HAZARD — DIVINE GOOP

**Narration:**

As a hero tries to walk across the 9-pace-wide writhing mass of goop, it sucks at his feet, making progress slow and painful.

Singular: Endurance Test, Bravery roll (Stamina is the governing Characteristic) Difficulty 8; at least one character must last four rounds (this means he must **roll four successes in a row**) to walk to the clear island in the center of the chamber with no damage from the caustic goop.

On a failure, his feet begin to burn as if immersed in acid and he suffers **recurring, armor-ignoring damage of Dam rating 14 each round** he continues to stand in the stuff. At this point, he can keep trudging forward for the remainder of the four rounds, taking damage every round until he reaches the island, or he can avoid the damage by leaping back to the open space near the wall, humiliated. The goop **does not damage equipment**, only Viking flesh.

Points Spent: 60 (Endurance Test = 20 [Difficulty 8] x 3 extra rolls); **35** (Dam rating 14 x 2.5 for recurring); **10** (armor-ignoring damage).

GAIN — TYR'S RUNESTONE

**Narration:**

Once this test of Viking honor has been overcome by walking through the divine goop, the glow surrounding the levitating runestone fades, and the stone slowly lowers to the floor. On inspection, you find it is actually a fist-sized chunk of silver with the name of Tyr inscribed on it in runes. It weighs approximately 9 oz.

**Background:**

The runestone will only lose its protective globe and allow the heroes to retrieve it if one of the heroes walks across the caustic oily substance of his own volition. Jumping across or otherwise cheating does not sit well with the God of Justice, Tyr.

Points Earned: -9 (Tyr's runestone as petty silver)

GAIN — VICTORY POINTS FOR TYR'S TEST COMPLETION

The heroes who ultimately crossed the divine goop to retrieve the runestone (i.e. either made all of their Endurance Test rolls or took the recurring damage to cross the hazard) also get victory points for completing this test. Split **20 victory points** among them.

Points Earned: -20 (20 point victory point award at 1 point each)

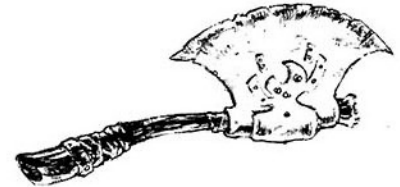
**Narration:**

One of the Vikings in your horde retrieves the silver runestone of Tyr, and the wall behind you dissolves to allow entrance back into the antechamber before closing up again. Another trial awaits you, and you leave this room eager to face it ...

GAIN — HEALING OPPORTUNITY

After passing Tyr's test, the heroes may exit to the antechamber and take time to heal before the next event. There is **no limit** on the time they spend there.

Points Earned: -30 (unlimited healing opportunity)



EVENT 2: TRIAL BY COMBAT

GAIN — SHRINE TO THOR

**Narration:**

When the "Thor, God of Combat" inscription is activated next, a large portion of the flawless alabaster wall around it vanishes to show a dark room on the other side. In the center of the chamber is another runestone about the size of a warrior's fist, hovering five paces above the ground and surrounded by the same otherworldly radiant glow. Its warm light is enough to illuminate the area immediately surrounding it, but not much more. This place has the same dimensions as the antechamber.

Freestanding roll, Singular: No Fault; roll **Divine Awareness vs. Difficulty 6** to notice the following:

**Closer Inspection:**

Those who succeed at their roll realize that this room is, indeed, a shrine to the god Thor. Thor is the god of thunder, a powerful deity who is upright in character but fearsome to his enemies. He looks well upon thick-skulled bravery, as when warriors refuse to retreat in the face of a superior foe.

Points Earned: -25 (shrine to Thor); **-10** (Freestanding Difficulty 6)



Narration:

Your heroes step into the chamber, and the wall reappears behind the last warrior. At this point, a black-furred wendol charges out from the darkness, slamming its massive bulk into the nearest Viking. It tries to knock him down and pin him to the ground, so that it can then tear out his throat.

**CARROT – IT'S UNNATURAL!
(WEIRD MAGIC)**

Before entering combat, all heroes get a **Freestanding roll**, **Singular: No Fault**; roll **Awareness vs. Difficulty 6** to notice the following:



Closer Inspection:

This wendol is not your garden variety wilderness beast. As a divine servant of Thor, and so bound to protect the runestone of that god, it has been granted an aura of holy power.

Points Earned: -10 (Freestanding Difficulty 6)

Points Spent: 30 (Wendol's Weird Magic)

GAIN – THOR'S RUNESTONE



Narration:

Once this test of Viking combat prowess has been overcome and the wendol is really truly dead, the glow surrounding the levitating runestone fades and the stone slowly descends to the floor. On inspection, you find it is actually a fist-sized chunk of silver with the name of Thor inscribed on it in runes. It weighs approximately 9 oz.

Points Earned: -9 (Thor's runestone as petty silver)



Narration:

One of the Vikings in your horde retrieves the silver runestone of Thor, and the wall behind you dissolves to allow entrance back into the antechamber before closing up again. Another trial awaits you, and you leave this room eager to face it ...



EVENT TWO COMBAT OPPONENT – DIVINE WENDOL



Combat Tactics: This wendol has been gifted with eternal youth so that it may hold its guard in this chamber until Vikings of worth prove themselves in mortal combat against it. Note that it is NOT immortal; the wendol does not age, but can be killed by Viking blades like any other animal. Thor has also given the wendol his divine blessing, which grants the beast +3 to its Soak.

Name	Type	Mix	Move	Threat Category	Adjusts	Predictable/ Self-Willed
Snowball	Wendol	0	15	Terrifying	INIT -3, DAM +1	Predictable (+0)

Points Spent: 0

EVENT 3: TRIAL BY WISDOM



Narration:

When a hero places his hand on the inscription for "Odin, God of Wisdom," a large section of the pristine ivory wall surrounding the mark dissolves to reveal a darkened chamber beyond. In the center of the chamber is a runestone about the size of a warrior's fist, hovering five paces above the ground and surrounded by the same otherworldly radiant glow. Its warm light is enough to illuminate the area immediately surrounding it, but not much more. This place has the same dimensions as the antechamber.

GAIN – SHRINE TO ODIN

Freestanding roll, Singular: No Fault; roll Divine Awareness vs. Difficulty 6 to notice the following:



Closer Inspection:

Those who make their roll realize that this room is, indeed, a shrine to the god Odin. Odin is chief of the gods and master of wisdom, magic, and poetry. He looks well upon those who value knowledge and display wisdom in their actions.

Points Earned: -20 (shrine to Odin); **-10** (Freestanding Difficulty 6)



Narration:

Your heroes step into the chamber, and the wall solidifies behind the last warrior. In the center of the room, underneath the floating runestone, is a golden perch upon which sits a large raven. The bird squawks and flaps its wings at the heroes, then goes on to recite the following in a hoarse voice:

"Nolde eorla hleo æmge þinga
þone cpealmcuman epine forlætan,
ne hif lǫpðazaf leoda æmzum/
nyrre tealde."

GAIN – RECOGNIZE THE DIVINE RAVEN

Freestanding roll, Singular: No Fault; roll Divine Awareness vs. Difficulty 6 to recall the following:



Closer Inspection:

Devout Vikings know that on Odin's shoulders perch two ravens, Hugin and Munin (thought and memory), that fly throughout the world and report everything to him each night. This bird is no doubt a divine messenger of Odin, if not actually one of Odin's companions.

Points Earned: -10 (Freestanding Difficulty 6)

GAIN – RECITE THE EPIC POEM

Singular: No-Fault; roll Skald (Intelligence as governing Characteristic) vs. Difficulty 8 to identify the bird's recitation as follows:



Closer Inspection:

Some of those in your horde recognize the raven's soliloquy as being a fragment from the epic poem *Beowulf*.

The poem recounts the plight of King Hrothgar of Denmark, who built an enormous mead hall only to be plagued by a monstrous ogre named Grendel who returned again and again to slaughter the king's jarls and devour their flesh. Finally, the invincible Beowulf was sent by the Geatish king Hygelac to kill Grendel. Beowulf feasted with his hosts in the mead hall, and when Grendel broke into the hall Beowulf caught the ogre's right hand and twisted until its arm snapped off.

With Grendel dead, this trophy was nailed to the rafters of the hall until Grendel's fiendish mother stole it and fled into the nearby tarn. Beowulf swam down through the dark waters of the inlet to the ogress' lair, where he killed her with the fabled sword of the giants that Beowulf found in her treasure hoard. For his bravery, Beowulf eventually became king of the Geats, and died at an old age in the act of killing a great wyrm that was terrorizing his people.

Beowulf is the most ancient and inspiring example of your people's long poetic tradition.

Then also make a **Simultaneous Singular: No-Fault** roll; **Skald (Presence as governing Characteristic) vs. Difficulty 10** to correctly recite the remainder of the passage from *Beowulf* back to the divine raven.

Each Viking is only allowed one chance to pass this test of Viking wisdom and tradition. But, since these rolls are both

THE EPIC OF BEOWULF

"Nolde eorla hleo æmge þinga
þone cpealmcuman epine forlætan,
ne hif lifdazas leoda æmzūm/
mītte tealde. Þær zenehorc bræzð
eorl Beowulfes ealde lafe,
polde ffreadrūhtnes feorh ealzian,
mænes þeodnes, deþ he meahton ffa.
Hie hæc ne rihton, þa he zepm dmuozon,
heapdmezende hildemezazas,
ond on healfa zehpone hearan þohoton,
faple fecan, þone fymfadan
æmz ofer eorþan meama ehte,
zud billa nan, zretan nolde,
ac he fizepæpnum forpþonen hæpde,
eeza zehpyleje. Scolde hif aldorzedal
on ðam dæze þyffer lifef
eamlic purðan, ond fe ellorazafz
on feonda zepæald feor friban.
Ða hæc onfunde fe he feþa eþoz
moder mīhde mamma gūme,
fymene zepfmede he pæf/ fasz pīð zod,
hæc him fe lichoma læftan nolde/
ac hime fe modeza mæz Hyzelacef
hæpde be honda; pæf zehpæþeþ odþum
lifzende lað. Licfap zebad
atol æzlaeca; him on eazle peapð
fymdoli ffeotol, feonore onpþumzozon,
burfton banlocan. Beowulfe peapð
zudhmed zymfeþe; feolde Erendel þonan
feorþþeoc fleon under feomleodu,
fecean fymleaf pic; pifte fe zepmof
hæc hif aldnes pæf ende zezozon,
dozera læzjum. Denim eallum peapð
æpfeþ þam pæþæfe pilla zelumpen.
Hæpde þa zepælfod fe he æþ feorþan com,
fmozon ond fpyðfeþð, fele Hrodzanes,
zeneped pīð mīde; mīþeþeoc zepel,
elleimæþþum/. Hæpde Eafzdenum
Geatmezza leod zilp zelæfced,
fpylee oncyþde ealle zebette,
mīpþozze, fe he æþ dmuozon
ond for hieamþdum folian feoldon,
toþm unlytel. Þæt pæf taceþ ffeotol,
fymþan hildedeor hoid æleze,
eamþ ond eazle hæþ pæf eal zeador
Erendles zþape under zeparne hþof."

"NOT in any wise would the earls-defence
suffer that slaughterous stranger to live,
useless deeming his days and years
to men on earth. Now many an earl
of Beowulf brandished blade ancestral
fain the life of their lord to shield,
their praised prince, if power were theirs:
never they knew, — as they neared the foe,
hardy-hearted heroes of war,
aiming their swords on every side
the accursed to kill. — no keenest blade,
no forest of falchions fashioned on earth,
could harm or hurt that hideous fiend!
He was safe, by his spells, from sword of battle,
from edge of iron. Yet his end and parting
on that same day of this our life
woful should be, and his wandering soul
far off flit to the fiends' domain.
Soon he found, who in former days,
harmful in heart and hated of God,
on many a man such murder wrought,
that the frame of his body failed him now.
For him the keen-souled kinsman of Hygelac
held in hand; hateful alive
was each to other. The outlaw dire
took mortal hurt: a mighty wound
showed on his shoulder, and sinews cracked,
and the bone-frame burst. To Beowulf now
the glory was given, and Grendel thence
death-sick his den in the dark moor sought,
noisome abode: he knew too well
that here was the last of life, an end
of his days on earth. — To all the Danes
by that bloody battle the boon had come.
From ravage had rescued the roving stranger
Hrothgar's hall; the hardy and wise one
had purged it anew. His night-work pleased him,
his deed and its honor. To Eastern Danes
had the valiant Geat his vaunt made good,
all their sorrow and ills assuaged,
their bale of battle borne so long,
and all the dole they erst endured
pain a-plenty. — 'Twas proof of this,
when the hardy-in-fight a hand laid down,
arm and shoulder, — all, indeed,
of Grendel's gripe, — 'neath the gabled roof."

No-Fault, everyone can try and the heroes need only one of their number to succeed at both rolls to pass the test.

Points Spent: 20 (Difficulty 8); 40 (Difficulty 10); 15 (simultaneous roll)

Note: In the tradition of Viking oral poetry, the first pillager to make both rolls should read out loud the full passage given to the right for the amusement of his fellows. (He can choose to read the more modern translation to the right rather than the original Old English if his pronunciation is rusty.)

GAIN — ODIN'S RUNESTONE



Narration:

Once Odin's test has been overcome through the correct (and lengthy) completion of the passage from *Beowulf*, the glow surrounding the levitating runestone fades, and the stone slowly drops to the floor. On inspection, you find it is actually a fist-sized chunk of silver with the name of Odin inscribed on it in runes. It weighs approximately 9 oz.

Points Earned: -9 (Odin's runestone as petty silver)

GAIN — VICTORY POINTS FOR ODIN'S TEST COMPLETION

Those heroes who proved their skalding ability (ie. made both Skald rolls and were brave enough to recite the passage from *Beowulf* out loud) can split 20 victory points for completing the test.

Points Earned: -20 (20 point victory point award at 1 point each)



Narration:

One of the Vikings in your horde retrieves the silver runestone of Odin, and the wall behind you disappears to allow entrance back into the antechamber before closing up again. Your trials may be finished, but you have yet to solve the last puzzle of the gods ...

EVENT 4: MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF THE GODS



Narration:

When you have completed all three tests of Viking virtue, your horde reassembles around the central pedestal in the antechamber, divine silver runestones in hand. Now you must discover the trick to freeing the treasure of the gods from its protective globe.

There is also an "In Defiance of the Gods" aspect to this roll. Every hero must apply his **Divine Connection rating for Loki** to his own Difficulty of this Countdown roll. Loki is, after all, the ultimate opposition to true Viking virtue!

Success: If the pillagers **succeed in getting three successes**, they retrieve the divine treasure as described below:



Closer Inspection:

When the horde places the silver runestones correctly in their respective depressions, they slowly sink into the face of the pedestal until they are flush with its surface. The glow around the treasure fades and it descends to rest on the pedestal. The horde has won the treasure of the gods! Once this divine treasure is in your grubby Viking paws, you all know that honor and glory await your return to the village of your birth. Of course, more loot undoubtedly lies hidden in the uncharted caverns of the Underground. Decisions, decisions ...

Failure: Should the pillagers **fail to get three successes**, they suffer a loss of status equal to 20 victory points and the following happens:



Closer Inspection:

When the attempts of the heroes to properly place the runestones of the gods fail, the three silver stones abruptly vanish from their hands. The runes on the walls of the antechamber no longer activate when the heroes place their hands on them, and they have no recourse but to return to their endless wandering in the Underground, attempting to redeem themselves for their obvious lack of Viking virtue.

GAIN/HAZARD — DIVINE TREASURE VS. LOSS OF STATUS

Lady or Tiger? Countdown roll, Divine Awareness of Difficulty 8, to place the runes properly in their complementary sockets on the pedestal. A total of **three successes** for the horde means the **treasure** is yours, but each hero only **gets three chances!** (This encounter assumes six heroes for designing this roll.) If the horde fails to get the three successes, they suffer a **loss of status of 20 victory points**.

Points Spent: 20 (Countdown roll; 6 heroes divided by 2 = 20, 20 x no cost multiplier for 3 attempts); **15** (In Defiance of Loki); **20** (Loss of Status)

Points Earned: -75 (Category F Treasure)

ENCOUNTER COST TABLE

Item	Points Spent	Item	Points Earned
Aura of Gods Difficulty	20	Increase to Runes roll	-10
Endurance Test	60	Freestanding Runes roll	-8
Divine goop recurring Dam	35	Shrine to Tyr	-0
Divine goop armor-ignoring	10	Freestanding realize Tyr's shrine	-10
Wendol's Weird Magic	30	Tyr's runestone as petty silver & victory points	-29
Combat Opponent	0	Unlimited Healing Opportunity	-30
ID bird's poem	20	Shrine to Thor	-25
Recite Beowulf correctly	40	Freestanding realize Thor's shrine	-10
ID & recitation simultaneous	15	Freestanding "It's Unnatural!"	-10
Countdown	20	Thor's runestone as petty silver	-9
In Defiance of Loki	15	Shrine to Odin	-20
Loss of status	20	Freestanding realize Odin's shrine	-10
		Recognize raven	-10
		Odin's runestone as petty silver & victory points	-29
		Category F treasure	-75
Total Spent:	285	Total Earned:	-285
		Balance:	0

ENCOUNTER FOUR

GETTING YOUR GOAT

BY CHRIS HYLLOTT

Your horde is tricked by a devious elf, who insults your honor and turns you into goats. Now you must escape a hungry troll and discover the key to breaking the curse, else spend eternity as livestock ... for only as armed and angry Vikings can you wreak vengeance on that sniveling leaf-eater!

Type: Cushion Encounter

Hook: The Underground

EVENT 1: I TAUNT YOU A SECOND TIME



Narration:

After wandering through the tunnels for hours, you come to a large intersection and a worrisome sight. An elf is sitting on a comfortable cushion in the middle of the tunnel. Seeing you, he yawns and stretches his long, spindly arms.

"Oh, look," he says with a smirk. "Vikings wandering the Underground, what a rare and beautiful sight! Of course, you're probably not real Vikings. What kind of worthless, weak-kneed skraelings (SKRAY-lings) are you, anyway?"

He continues to insult you, calling you pathetic cowards and insinuating that you like to bathe. What do you do?

Weak Link, conditionally avoidable (first exposure only) roll; roll Demeanor vs. Difficulty 8, if all heroes succeed they receive a **Category F Treasure**. (Note that the trap below is triggered no matter what the Vikings do, and so is not a case of failure triggers trap.)

Points Spent: 40 (Weak Link roll); **20** (Difficulty 8)

Points Earned: -75 (Category F Treasure); **-10** (Conditionally Avoidable: attack the elf); **-5** (First Exposure Only)



TRAP – I FEEL FUNNY



Narration:

You leap forward with a snarl, ready to tear the elf's head off. He just smiles, and waves his fingers at you. Golden sparks fly into your eyes, and you feel a tingling sensation on your body. Suddenly, you are much shorter, and a little hairier, and your sense of balance feels completely wrong.

You look around at your companions. You've all been turned into goats!

Being turned into a goat is a traumatic experience. Goats move differently than humans, so it's difficult for the heroes to adapt to their new forms. Unless they make a Balance roll, they suffer an Impairment for the rest of the encounter.

Standard roll; roll Balance vs. Difficulty 9, unsuccessful heroes suffer **2 points of Impairment** until end of encounter

Points Spent: 116 (1 combat sequence [30], 3 trap rolls [5 points each], 2 gain rolls [5 points each], and 1 Freestanding roll [3 points] times 2 points of Impairment); **30** (Difficulty 9)



Narration:

"Ho ho!" cries the elf. "It appears that I have had to use a bit of magic, purely in self-defense of course. Bleat all you like, there's no help for you. I curse you to be goats until you learn to crawl before your betters!"

Quick as a hummingbird, he ties a rope around each of your necks. He asks, "Now, whatever am I to do with fine goats such as you?" Judging from his pointed grin, he already has an answer to that question.

Moments later, you hear the heavy tread of big-booted feet. A twelve-foot-tall troll saunters up the tunnel, and the elf greets him.

"Why, it's good old Snarg!" the elf says. "I just happen to have several more fine goats for you today. Would you like to purchase them? They're very tasty!"

Snarg grunts and hands over some silver. Then he takes your leads and drags you back to his cavern.

EVENT 2: HOMEWARD BOUND



Narration:

Ignoring your angry bleats, Snarg hauls you up a long tunnel. Walking is more difficult than usual, especially since you're still getting used to having four legs.

There are slabs of rock to scramble over in this tunnel, and wide fissures that need to be jumped. Snarg may not have any trouble stepping over each crack in the rock, but if you can't bound across you're liable to break your leg.

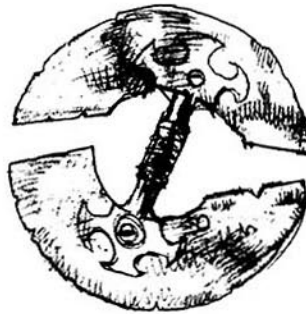
TRAP — HOLES IN THE TUNNEL FLOOR

Each hero must jump over the cracks in the tunnel floor. If he fails, he gets

caught between the rocks and suffers a nasty sprain, twisted ankle, or even a broken leg.

Standard roll; roll **Jump** vs. **Difficulty 6**, failed heroes suffer **Dam rating 14**

Points Spent: 14 (Dam rating 14)



Narration:

Snarg doesn't seem to have any sympathy for your stumbles and falls. He sets a brisk pace and hurries you along. When you fall in a pit, he simply grunts and yanks you out. The only rest breaks you get are when Snarg stops to beat one of your slower or clumsier companions.

After three hours of walking, you arrive at Snarg's home. He shoves you through the main room and into a pen in a smaller cavern. Then he locks up the pen with a gigantic padlock, hangs the key on a nearby hook, and heads back into the main room. Soon, you hear the terrible whistling of a teakettle and the chilling sound of vegetables being chopped.

EVENT 3: WE GOAT TO GET OUT OF THIS PLACE



Narration:

Things are looking bad. You've always taken pride in smelling like a goat, but you certainly don't enjoy being one! Through the open passage to the outer cavern you can see Snarg moving around his kitchen. It looks like he's preparing a fancy dinner — he's got vegetables all cut up, and he's sharpening his knives while waiting for water to boil in a gigantic stewpot.

There are three other goats in the pen besides your horde. You quickly discover that you can communicate through bleats, and learn that these goats are also Vikings who have been transformed by that sniveling elf.



Narration Continued:

The three transformed Vikings are named Elgerac (EL-jer-akk), Holiff (HOE-liff), and Wiggkif (WIG-kiff). They are fellow jarls, from a wealthier and more prestigious family than your own.

But they don't look so prestigious now. They've been goats for days, and they've watched Snarg eat their companions one by one. "We're doomed," Elgerac moans. "The sides of the pen are too high to jump, and Snarg is too quick and strong to outrun. We'll never make it to Valhalla if we're forced to suffer such an embarrassing death!"



Narration Continued:

You're not so sure that you're doomed, especially since your eyes keep returning to the key that hangs so tantalizingly out of reach. But if you can't restore Elgerac and his companions' courage, they'll be no help at all in escaping.

GAIN — MAKE THE THREE BILLY GOATS GRUFF

A single Viking may win honor by raising the jarls' spirits with a stirring speech. If he succeeds, Elgerac and his companions will regain their courage and help the heroes escape. If he fails, they continue to lie around and whimper.

ENCOUNTER FOUR

Singular: Rush roll, roll Leadership vs. Difficulty 6, a successful roll wins 5 victory points and provides a +2 increase to the "Goat Team Goat" Balance roll (below)

Points Earned: -10 (+2 increase to Balance roll); -5 (5 victory points)



Narration:

Your gaze returns to the key. It's not so far from the pen. If you could just get to the top you could probably grab it right off the hook. Getting to the top is the problem, though. As Elgerac said, it's too high to jump and too steep to climb. You need something to stand on, but there's nothing in this pen but transformed Vikings.



Background:

Most groups of players will quickly think of making a pyramid of goats. If they don't, Elgerac or one of his companions can suggest it. If one of the heroes has made a stirring speech, the jarls will be eager to try the idea. If they haven't been rallied, then they will point it out as a terrible idea that couldn't possibly work.

GAIN – CARROT: GOAT TEAM GOAT!

The heroes must try to reach the key by making a pyramid of goats. This stunt is easier if more Vikings attempt it. Each hero receives a +2 increase to his Balance roll for every three heroes to attempt this stunt, up to +4 maximum. As noted above, if Elgerac and his companions have been rallied, they help build the pyramid, providing another +2 increase.

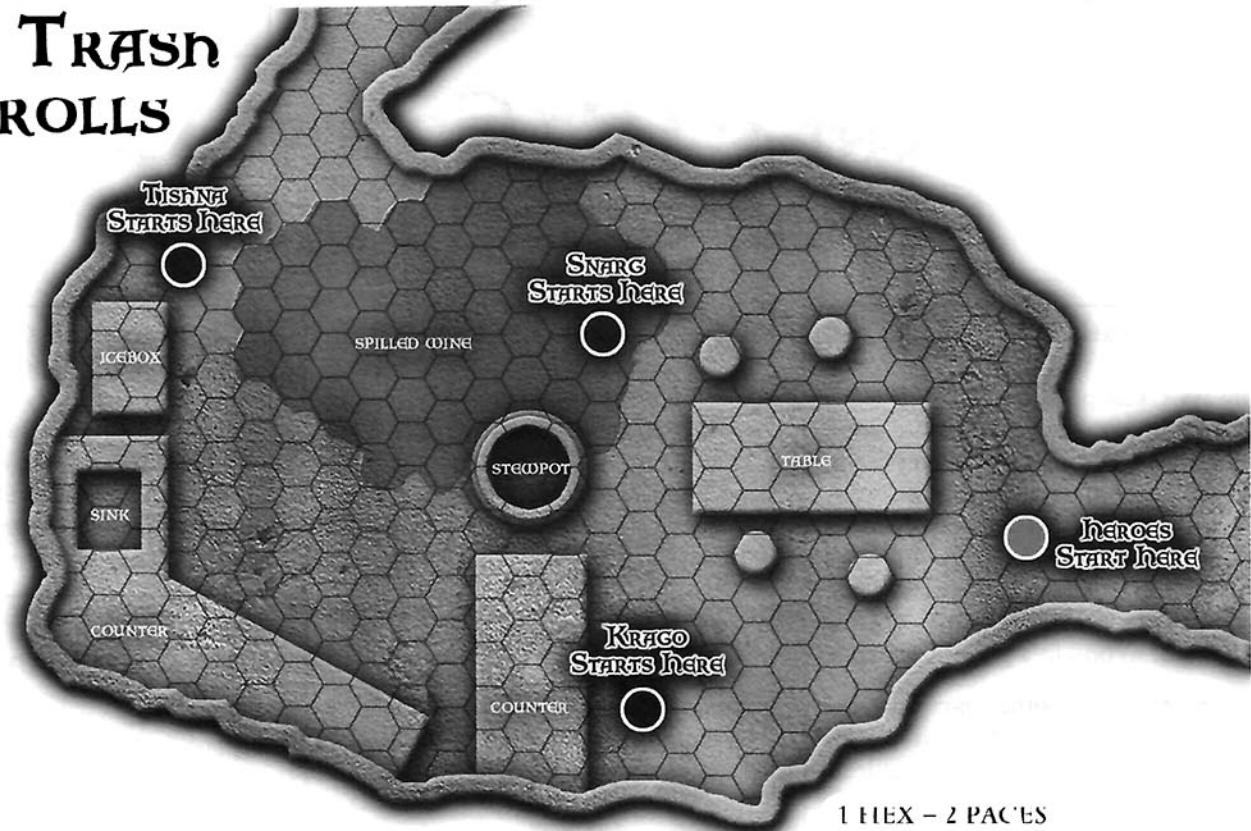
If all the heroes succeed at their Balance rolls, the top goat deftly grabs the key from the hook with his teeth. The Vikings then receive a bonus from using the key in the Pick Lock attempt below. However, if any of the pillagers fail their Balance roll, the pyramid collapses just as the goat on top is trying to grab the key. The Vikings tumble to the floor in an ungainly heap, and the key falls off the hook to land out of reach on the floor.

Singular: Dogpile roll; roll Balance vs. Difficulty 10, if successful the heroes get a +4 increase to the Pick Lock roll that follows; if three to five pillagers attempt this feat, each hero receives a +2 increase to this roll; if six or more pillagers attempt this feat, each hero receives a +4 increase to this roll

Points Spent: 40 (Difficulty 10)

Points Earned: -20 (+4 increase to Pick Lock roll), -20 (up to +4 increase available for this roll)

MAP: TRASH THE TROLLS



**Narration:**

Key or no key, you still have to open the lock on the pen. This would be a lot easier if you weren't a goat.

You can hear Snarg greeting another troll in the other cavern. It looks like he's having guests for dinner. Better hurry, or you'll really be in the soup!

TRAP — STICK: OPENING THE LOCK

If the heroes have the key, then this roll simulates their attempt to put the key in the lock and open the pen door. If they have failed to get the key, they can still try to defeat this trap by eating the lock. (They are goats, after all.) They make the same Pick Lock roll, though they won't have the bonus they would have received by getting the key.

If the heroes fail to open the lock, then the runner should describe how they become frustrated and simply bash the door open with their combined strength. This warns the trolls, however, and gives Snarg a large INIT bonus in the combat that follows.

Singular: Rush roll; roll **Pick Lock** vs. **Difficulty 7**, **equipment not needed**, if failed Snarg receives a **+6 increase** to INIT during the first round of combat.

Points Spent: 20 (Difficulty 8); 10 (+6 INIT)

Points Earned: -5 (Equipment Not Needed)

**Narration:**

That takes care of the lock. It's quiet in the next room; you're not sure whether the trolls heard you. If they didn't, and if you crawl along quietly on the floor, you might be able to sneak out of here without them noticing you!

GAIN — THAT SOUNDS FAMILIAR!

Crawling on the floor should remind the pillagers of the elf's curse. Elgerac and his companions are from "better" families, so if the heroes crawl along the floor in front of the jarls, they'll break the curse without sacrificing their Viking prides.

If the players don't figure this out and the characters don't succeed at their Insight rolls, the jarls will automatically take up position in the back of the line of crawlers, breaking the curse at the proper moment in the plot.

Singular: No-Fault, Freestanding roll; roll **Insight** vs. **Difficulty 6** to realize:

**Closer Inspection:**

Wait a moment. The elf said you had to crawl before your betters to break the curse. Elgerac and his companions' families have more silver and land than you, which places them higher in Viking society. If they're in the back when you try to crawl out of here, it might break the curse!

Points Earned: -10 (Freestanding roll, Difficulty 6)

GAIN — A SNEAKY DEPARTURE

The heroes crawl across the floor. They won't make it to the door before the trolls notice them, but if they succeed at their Stealth roll they'll give the trolls a nasty surprise. On the other hand, if they fail they'll find the trolls standing over them with big grins and bigger kitchen knives.

Either way, crawling in front of the other jarls will break the spell and transform the horde back into their human forms. This means they'll have access to their weapons and will be able to go about committing mayhem in the traditional manner. If they're suffering from Impairment, however, they'll still be a bit disoriented by the sudden shift back to their regular body. (In other words, the Impairment doesn't go away just because they're human!)

Since they are not crawling before their betters, Elgerac and his companions will remain goats. They will not participate in the combat, and will huddle by the side of the cavern.

Weak Link, Lady or Tiger roll; roll **Stealth** vs. **Difficulty 7**, if successful the heroes gain a **+12 increase** to INIT for one round in the combat below, if failed all the trolls gain a **+6 increase** to INIT for one round (this stacks with the previous +6 from "Opening the Lock")

Points Spent: 40 (Weak Link roll); 10 (+6 INIT); 10 (Difficulty 7)

Points Earned: -20 (+12 INIT)

EVENT FOUR COMBAT OPPONENTS — TROLLS

Combat Tactics: Snarg has two guests, his friends Tishna (TISH-nuh) and Krago (KRAY-goe). The trolls are crafty and armed with huge kitchen knives. If they get a chance, they will pick the heroes up (using a normal Engagement roll) and toss them into the stewpot. They do not use missile weapons.

Name	Type	Mix	Move	Threat Category	Adjusts	Predictable/ Self-Willed
Snarg	Troll	2	15	Superior	DFN -1, DAM +3	Predictable (+0)
Tishna	Troll	2	15	Superior	DFN -1, DAM +3	Predictable (+0)
Krago	Troll	2	15	Superior	DFN -1, DAM +3	Predictable (+0)

Points Earned: -10 (No Missile Weapons)

EVENT 4: TRASH THE TROLLS



Narration:

The trolls seem very surprised to see their goat dinners turning into armed and angry Vikings. One troll just stands there with his jaw hanging open, and Snarg is so surprised that he has dropped several bottles of wine.

Too bad for them. In a moment, there's going to be a lot more than wine spilled on the floor.

TERRAIN — DAMAGING PLACE

The big stewpot is a **damaging place** with **Dam rating 25**.

Points Earned: -30 (Damaging Place, Dam rating 25)

TERRAIN — BARRIERS

Snarg's four huge kitchen chairs are **barriers**.

Points Earned: -12 (4 barriers at -3 points each)

TERRAIN — SLIPPERY GROUND

Snarg drops two huge bottles of wine just before the combat begins. Half of the kitchen is **slippery ground** as a result.

Points Earned: -10 (Slippery ground covering half the combat area)

TERRAIN — MULTIPLE LEVELS

The table and counters add a second level to the battlefield.

Points Earned: 0 (The extra level would be worth -5, but we have already taken points from three terrain features)

TREASURE — THE TROLL'S STASH

If the heroes search the cavern, they find **8 ounces of silver** stored in a large cookie jar. A **Category B Treasure**, a **Category C Treasure**, and a **Category E Treasure** are hidden amid the cleaning supplies under the sink.

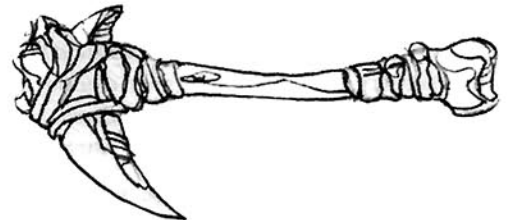
Points Earned: -50 (Category E Treasure); **-30** (Category C Treasure); **-20** (Category B treasure); **-8** (8 ounces of silver)



Narration:

Once the trolls are taken care of, the horde can return the three jars to their home village, or they can let the goats wander home by themselves.

Then there's only one thing left to do — get revenge on that pesky elf! Summoning all your stealth and speed, you sneak back to the intersection where you met him, catch him unawares, and give him the beating of his life. That'll teach him not to mess with Vikings!



ENCOUNTER COST TABLE

Item	Points Spent	Item	Points Earned
He's Getting Your Goat	60	Avoid He's Getting Your Goat	-10
I Feel Funny	146	He's Getting Your Goat: First Exposure Only	-5
Holes in the Tunnel Floor	14	He's Getting Your Goat: Category F Treasure	-75
Goat Team Goat: Difficulty 10	40	Make the Three Billy Goats Gruff	-15
Opening the Lock	30	Goat Team Goat	-40
A Sneaky Departure	60	Opening The Lock: Equipment Not Needed	-5
		Hey, That Sounds Familiar	-10
		A Sneaky Departure	-20
		Foes — No Missile Weapons	-10
		Terrain	-52
		Treasure — The Troll's Stash	-108
Total Spent:	350*	Total Earned:	-350*
		Balance:	0

* Cushion encounters have a starting budget of 350 encounter points, despite the typo in the Rune rulebook on page 177. See www.atlas-games.com for current errata and a conversion of this encounter to a starting budget of 300 encounter points.



ENCOUNTER FIVE

CHALICE IN UNDERLAND

BY TOM JANULEWICZ

A dying Viking warrior sets your horde on a quest for the mythic Flagon of the Aesir. Can you prove yourselves worthy of the fabled chalice of the gods by outwitting crafty dwarvish traps and showing your prowess in battle? If not, your corpses will stand as a warning to the next brash heroes to seek its power!

Type: Cushion Encounter

Hook: The Underground

EVENT 1: A WHOLE LOTTA FIGHTIN'



Narration:

Your horde is traveling through the Underground, in search of the adventure and glory that lurk in its shadowy passages. Suddenly you notice that the cold, moist air of the tunnel is tainted with an acrid smell ... the smell of burning flesh! You enter a large chamber to find a horribly-burned warrior sprawled out on the floor. Upon closer inspection, you recognize him as a warrior from a nearby village — a stalwart Viking you've both fought against and feasted with in the great mead-halls of your people. From the look of things, he will never again have a chance to do either.

"Brothers," he says with his dying breath, "I am the last warrior of a raiding party sent on a doomed quest to recover the Flagon of the Aesir that our legends tell of ... you must find it to redeem our honor! But only the bravest of warriors can bring it back to Scandinavia for the glory of Odin ... I die knowing that I could not ..."

With that, he collapses. A heavy weight falls on your heart to think that such a worthy Viking warrior may never gain entrance to Valhalla.

GAIN — WHAT'S THE FLAGON OF THE AESIR?

Since legendary items are as common as snow in Scandinavia, it is sometimes difficult to keep track of them all. A particularly astute Viking may remember learning about it from a village greybeard.

Freestanding roll, Singular: No-Fault; roll Lore vs. Difficulty 8 to recall the following information:



Closer Inspection:

According to legend, this was the chalice that caught the Allfather's blood when Odin sacrificed his eye for knowledge. As Loki's minions spread their influence across the land, the Flagon of the Aesir stands as a symbol of Viking wisdom and honor for those who still revere Odin. It is said that the village possessing the flagon will gain power and influence over their neighbors, and will serve as a fortress of light in the battle of Ragnarok!

Points Earned: -8 (Freestanding roll, Difficulty 8)



Narration:

After disposing of your fallen comrade's body on a proper death pyre, you continue on through the Underground. Soon, you enter a large circular cavern, about twenty paces in diameter. On the far side of the chamber is another passageway leading into darkness, and a small stone pedestal stands near its entrance. Three scrolls rest on this pedestal. With the sound of grinding gears and screaming stone, a small dais rises up from the cavern floor. The upper body of an ancient, wizened dwarf sits upon the dais; it is obvious that his lower body has been sealed into the stone by some kind of strange wizardry.

This strange dwarf addresses you, saying, "I am the guardian and I know your quest. You seek the Flagon of the Aesir. On that pedestal yonder are three scrolls. One brings a boon, the others, certain doom. Ah, but which is the reward, and which the trap? Convince me you are worthy of my aid, and I'll give you a clue."

GAIN — HALF A DWARF IS BETTER THAN NONE

If the Vikings choose to deal with the dwarf, they will have to convince him of their valor; if any member of the horde succeeds, the strange creature will impart a piece of important information that will help them choose the right scroll. If he finds them unworthy, he will shrug his shoulders indifferently, and leave them to their fate. Either way, the dwarf will trigger a goblin attack when he is finished with the heroes, as a test of their prowess in battle.

Singular: No-Fault; roll Demeanor vs. Difficulty 7 to boast of your prowess, and that of your companions. Pillagers should recount appropriate acts of boldness and daring, as well as rolling. If successful, the pillagers get a **+2 increase** to their "Bringing Down the House" Traps roll, below.

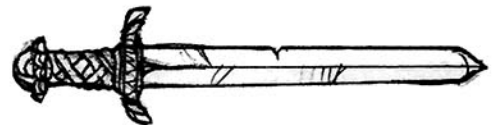


Closer Inspection:

If one of the heroes impresses him, dwarf goes on, saying, "You may choose one, and only one scroll from the pedestal. The last Viking who faced this trap did so with blood on his hands. He chose the wrong scroll, and he paid the price for his error. With that in mind, I'd suggest you avoid the scroll with the bloody fingerprints on it."

Points Spent: 10 (Singular, Difficulty 7); **20** (+2 to "Bringing Down the House" Traps roll)

Points Earned: -15 (No-Fault roll)





EVENT ONE COMBAT OPPONENTS – GOBLIN FREAKS

Combat Tactics: Goblin freaks are vicious, slaving monsters, engines of destruction on two scaly legs, with a taste for flesh. They attack until they are dead or their foes are Viking tartare. In this secondary combat encounter, there is one freak for every two heroes.

Name	Type	Mix	Move	Threat Category	Adjusts	Predictable/ Self-Willed
Pip	Goblin Freak	.7	15	Inferior	INIT +6, ATK +1, DFN -3, DAM +3, Soak -1	Predictable (+0)
Pop	Goblin Freak	.7	15	Inferior	INIT +6, ATK +1, DFN -3, DAM +3, Soak -1	Predictable (+0)
Poop	Goblin Freak	.7	15	Inferior	INIT +6, ATK +1, DFN -3, DAM +3, Soak -1	Predictable (+0)
Sylvia	Goblin Freak	1.5	15	Equal	INIT +6, ATK +1, DFN -3, DAM +3, Soak -1	Predictable (+0)

Points Spent: 0



Narration:

As you conclude your conversation with the dwarf, he tells you, "The path to the Flagon of the Aesir is a difficult one. Nobler souls than you have tried to find the cup, and few have returned to their villages – empty handed – to tell the tale. I doubt you will be even that fortunate, but if you hope to prove yourself worthy enough to win the Flagon for your own, you must first face my pets, for it is only in the heat of battle that a warrior's true mettle is shown!"

The dais descends again into the floor, a slab of stone rolls into place to block the passage you came in, and a secret door in the north wall – hidden from sight behind the rubble – opens ...

TRAP – WHAT'S THAT SOUND?

Between the descending dais before them and the blocking of the passage behind them, the heroes are understandably distracted. The sound of all that grinding stone echoes off the cavern walls, making it difficult to hear the relatively quiet hidden door sliding open. In addition, the pile of rubble near the door masks their foes from sight as they enter the chamber. Will this distraction allow the heroes' opponents to gain the upper hand?

Weak Link roll; roll **Awareness** vs. **Difficulty 8**; if any hero fails the roll, the goblin freaks above gain **+15 INIT** against the horde during the first combat round.

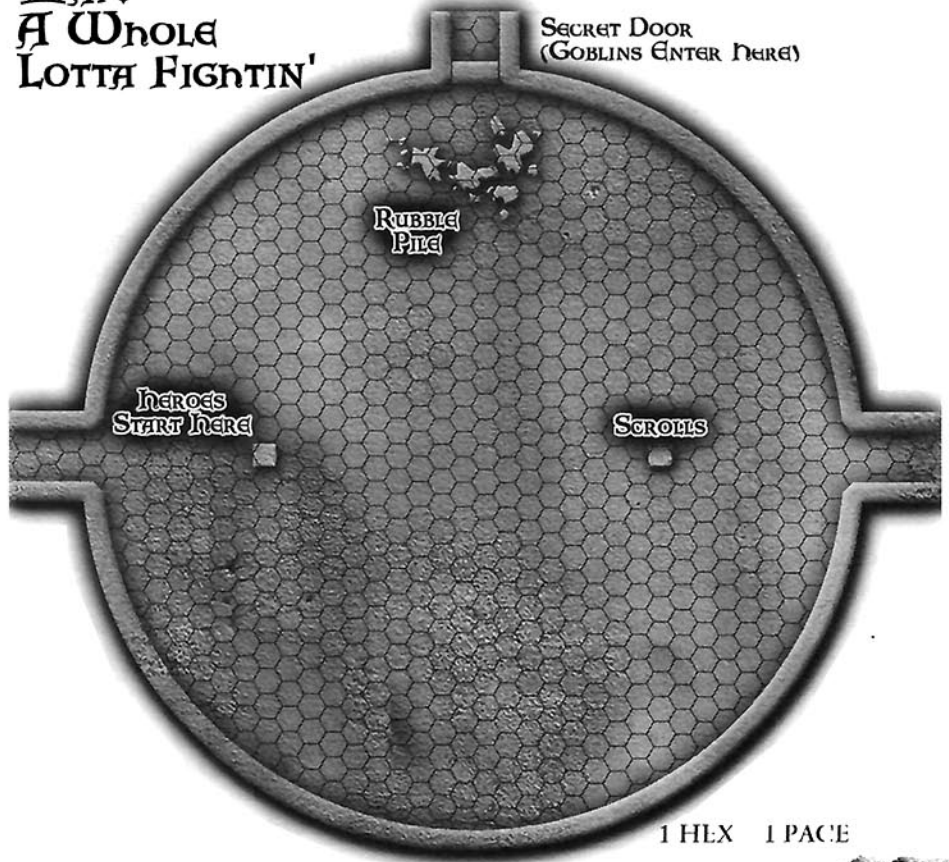
Points Spent: 20 (Difficulty 8); **25** (+15 INIT)



Background:

These sad specimens are more pitiful than normal freaks. The guardian dispatches raiding parties to the goblin nests to abduct newborn freaks. His assistants then take over the training of the freaks, eliminating the goblins' pacification techniques with methods more often seen in bear baiting.

**MAP:
A WHOLE
LOTTA FIGHTIN'**



TERRAIN – COVER

There are two large piles of rubble in the chamber; one in the southeast corner, the other near the center of the north wall. Each provides full cover for two heroes.

Points Earned: -18 (Full Cover for two heroes)

TERRAIN – LIMITED EXIT

There is only one way out of the combat area, but the heroes will have to go through the goblin freaks to get there.

Points Earned: -20 (Limited Exit)

**Narration:**

Having dispatched your foes and proven yourselves in battle, you move on to the far end of the chamber. Three scrolls lie on a stone pedestal near the exit. Might they contain information that will help you on your quest, or are they simply passports to new, and undoubtedly painful, danger?

TRAP/GAIN – BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE

The heroes may choose one of the scrolls from the pedestal. If they select the wrong scroll, or if they choose more than one scroll, they trigger the trap. If any member of the horde made a successful Demeanor roll when speaking with the dwarf, the heroes get +2 to this Traps roll.

Standard: Lady or Tiger roll; roll Traps vs. **Difficulty 9**, failure causes the roof to collapse, inflicting **Damage rating 25** on the heroes. The +2 increase from "Half a Dwarf" may apply. If successful, the heroes get a +3 increase to "The Crucible" Traps roll later; read the following:

**Closer Inspection:**

You choose a scroll, and notice a picture drawn on it. It shows what appears to be a long hallway lined with fiery pillars. A series of footsteps marks the safe path down the corridor.

Points Spent: 30 (Difficulty 9); 20 (Damage rating 25)

Points Earned: -10 (Conditionally Avoidable: don't choose a scroll); -5 (First Exposure); -30 (+3 to Trap roll)

EVENT 2: OPEN UP A CAN OF WHUPAXE

**Narration:**

You enter a short, narrow passage that connects two chambers. Wait ... what was that? Did you hear something?

GAIN – AMBUSH OPPORTUNITY

If the heroes are careful, they can surprise the foes waiting in the next chamber.

**Background:**

The path to the Flagon of the Asir is rarely traveled these days. As a result, the guard post is manned more out of custom than necessity. The dwarven warriors inside are so used to the guardian's pet freaks taking care of intruders that they've become inured to the sounds of battle. Even when a stray warrior makes it past them, he is usually so damaged as to hardly be worth the effort it takes to kill him, so they pass their time napping, eating, and smoking.

Weak Link roll; roll **Stealth** vs. **Difficulty 7**, if any hero fails the roll they will lose the element of surprise.

On a successful roll, the dwarves are at **-6 to their ATK, DEF and Engagement** rolls during the first round of combat, and reducing penalties in subsequent rounds. (See the **Rune** rulebook page 147 for ambush rules.)

Points Spent: 10 (Difficulty 7)

Points Earned: -50 (Ambush Opportunity)

**Narration:**

When you enter the guardroom, you find two dwarves in dented armor smoking cheap, foul-smelling cigars. The guardroom is 12 paces long by 8 paces wide, and there is a large stone door in the opposite corner of the room from where you came in. Across the room there is also a recessed cesspool, and a raised platform that serves as the dwarves' living area. One dwarf is standing by the pit, and the other is standing on the platform.

**Background:**

With the dwarf clans in this region enjoying an unusual – and unusually frustrating – period of peace, even the mightiest dwarves are at their wits' end. With no proper battles to fight, these champions have taken this guard assignment for the occasional amusement it offers.

TERRAIN – THE PIT

One third of the guardroom consists of a pit that serves as both latrine and compost pile – the dwarves have been here for a while. The pit is recessed, counting as a second level. The pit acts as slippery ground.

Points Earned: -5 (Second Level); -5 (Slippery Ground)

TERRAIN – PLATFORM

One third of the room consists of a raised platform, which serves as the dwarves’ living quarters.

Points Earned: -5 (Third Level)

GAIN – HEALING OPPORTUNITY

After the battle, the heroes receive an unlimited healing opportunity.

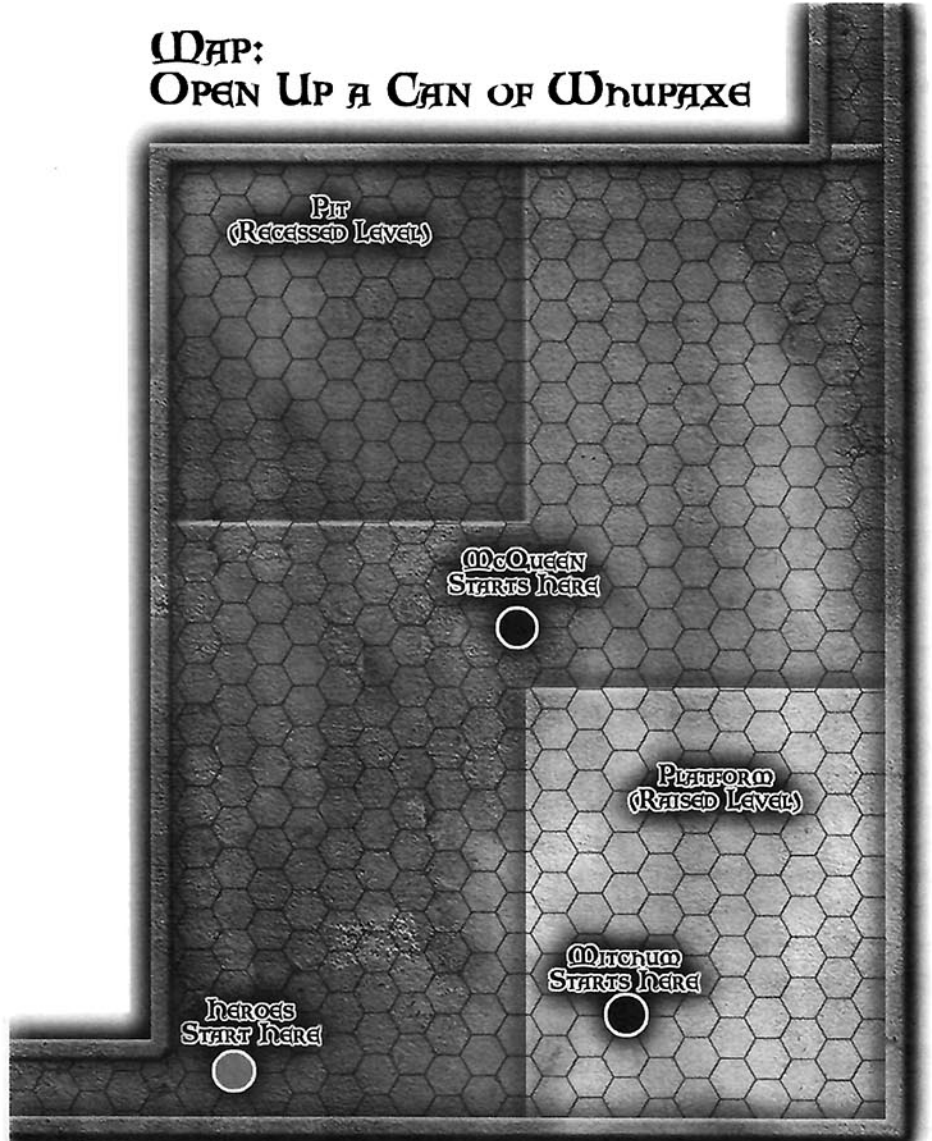
Points Earned: -30 (Unlimited Healing Opportunity)

GAIN – TREASURE

An examination of the guardroom reveals a **Category A Treasure** and a **Category D Treasure**.

Points Earned: -10 (Category A Treasure); -40 (Category D Treasure)

**MAP:
OPEN UP A CAN OF WHUPAXE**



1 HEX = 1 PACE

EVENT TWO COMBAT OPPONENTS – DWARF CENTURIONS



Combat Tactics: McQueen will wade into battle according to the dictates of the Foe Target Choice Flowchart (**Rune** rule-book page 196). Mitchum, on the other hand, will make attacks of opportunity, convenience, and necessity as the runner dictates. This is the primary combat of this encounter; there should be one dwarf for every three heroes.

Name	Type	Mix	Move	Threat Category	Adjusts	Predictable/ Self-Willed
McQueen	Dwarf Clan Champion	3	15	Exceptional	DAM +9	Predictable (+0)
Mitchum	Dwarf Clan Champion	3	15	Exceptional	DAM +9	Self-willed (+10)

Points Spent: 35 (Exceptional, Self-willed foe)

Points Earned: -10 (No Missile Weapons)

EVENT 3: REGULAR OR EXTRA-CRISPY?



Narration:

Once you are ready to move on, you leave the chamber through a heavy stone door in the northeast wall. No sooner do you pass through the door than it slams shut behind you. You have no choice but to press on.

As you look down the narrow, tiled corridor that stretches out ahead of you, you see a lighted alcove up ahead. In the alcove sits a stone slab, and on the slab rests what can only be the Flagon of the Aesir!

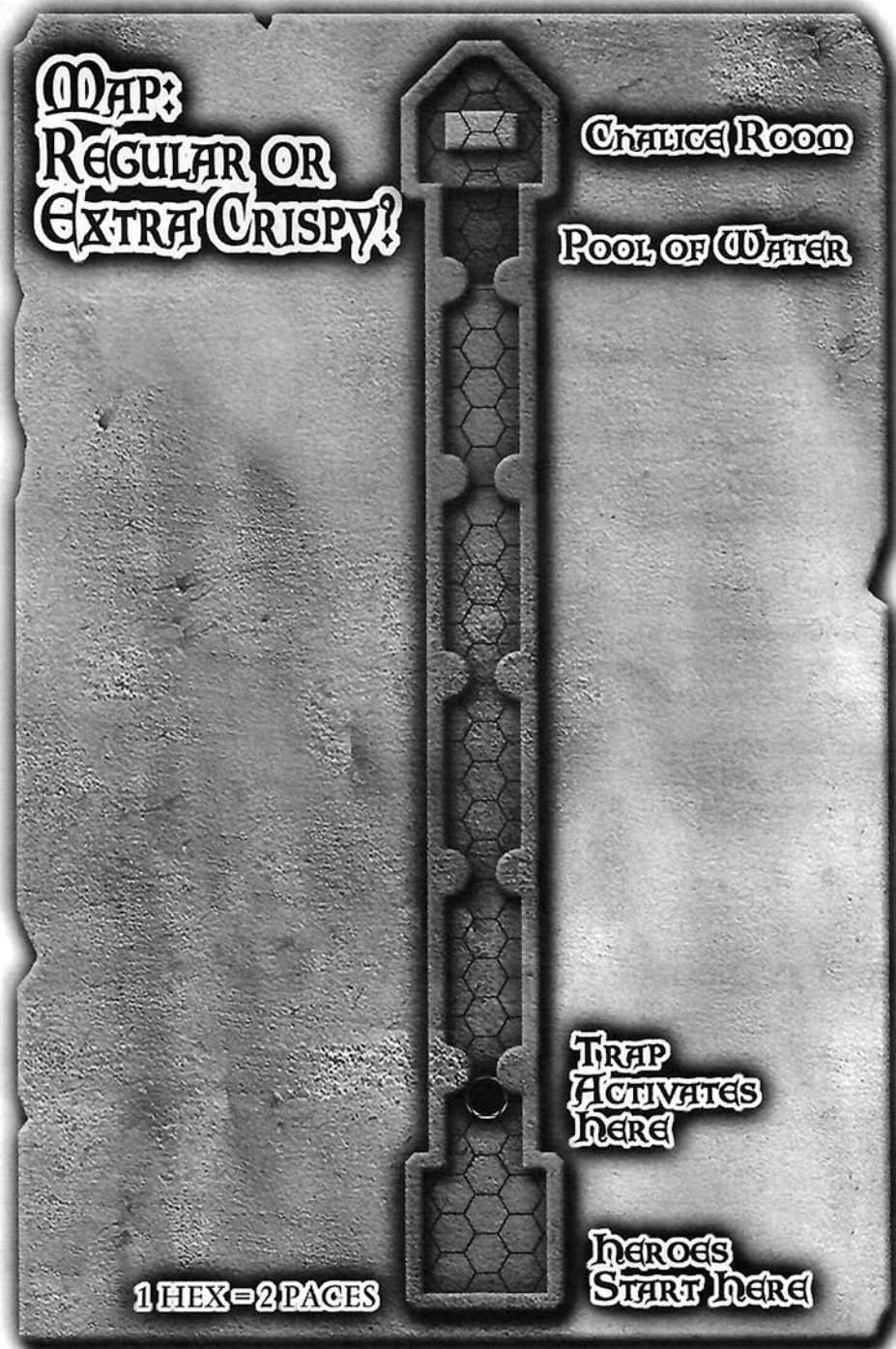
Between you and your prize, lining the passage down which you must travel, stands a row of pillars. Set into each pillar is a hideous stone demonic face, and the demons appear to be smoking cigarillos; each stone face has a long stone tube protruding from between its lips, and a thin line of smoke rises from its end.

TRAP — THE CRUCIBLE

The heroes must walk down the corridor to reach their goal. Unfortunately, the corridor is one big trap, and one wrong step will trigger it. The corridor is lined with stone tiles. If a hero steps on the wrong tile, the cigar-smoking demon heads on the pillars spew raging gouts of flame along the length of the corridor.

The good news is that this is where the scroll from Event 1 comes into play, giving the pillagers a +3 increase to this Traps roll. The corridor is 40 paces long, and on a failed roll the trap triggers on their fifth pace into the room.

Standard Roll; roll **Traps** versus **Difficulty 13**. If the heroes succeeded in securing the correct scroll in "Bringing Down the House," they gain a +3 increase to this roll since they have



some idea of where to safely step. Failure triggers a **raging fire hazard**. Affected players must roll an unmodified die against Difficulty 6 to keep their clothing from catching fire. If a pillager fails this roll, he must roll Dexterity versus Difficulty 6 to smother the flames or suffer **12 points of Escalating Damage**.

Points Spent: 70 (Difficulty 13); **36** (Raging Fire Hazard)

GAIN – COOL, CLEAR WATER

There is a pool of water at the far end of the corridor, 35 paces from the entrance to the room. If a hero catches fire, he may plunge into the pool to douse the flames.

Points Earned: -5 (Water Source within 40 paces)



Narration:

Once through the passage, you stand before the object of your quest – the legendary Flagon of the Acsir!

GAIN – FLAGON, FLAGON, WHO GETS THE FLAGON?



Narration:

Suddenly, you hear a deep, booming voice echoing in your mind. "Only one who is worthy may claim the Flagon of the Acsir. Who among you has the courage to claim this cup that once belonged to Odin himself? Step forward now ... if your spirit is that of a true leader, you shall claim your prize!"

Singular: Rush roll; roll **Leadership** versus **Difficulty 8**. The hero who succeeds claims the Flagon of the Acsir for a brief moment, and gains a singular award of **30 victory points**.



Narration:

As the most deserving warrior of your horde grasps the chalice of the gods, it disappears in a flash of blinding light! But as you regain your vision, you all behold the otherworldly glow that surrounds the one who held the Flagon of the Acsir; it casts a gentle luminescence for a few seconds, only to slowly fade away. You have undoubtedly been blessed by Odin himself!

Points Spent: 20 (Difficulty 8)

Points Earned: -30 (Singular victory point award)



Narration:

The entire slab the Flagon rested on slides back, revealing a hidden stairway. At the same time, the central section of the pillars rotate so all the demon's faces are pointing at the spot where your party stands.

Discretion occasionally being the better part of valor in Viking circles, you race down the stairs just as the demons spew their raging fire. The air in the passage becomes uncomfortably warm as the heat from the flames behind you radiates outward, but the farther you run, the cooler it gets.

You reached for power that rightly belongs to the gods, and you not only escaped with your skins, but you will return to your village with treasure to share, and a story to recount during many a winter's feast!

ENCOUNTER COST TABLE

Item	Points Spent	Item	Points Earned
Half a Dwarf is Better Than None	30	What's the Flagon of the Acsir?	-8
What's That Sound?	45	Half a Dwarf	-15
Bringing Down the House	50	Terrain: Full Cover for 2	-18
Ambush Opportunity	10	Terrain: Limited Exit	-20
Self-Willed Foe	35	Bringing Down the House	-45
The Crucible	106	Ambush Opportunity	-50
Leadership Roll, Difficulty 8	20	No Missile Weapons	-10
		Terrain: The Pit	-10
		Terrain: Platform	-5
		Healing Opportunity	-30
		Category A Treasure	-10
		Category D Treasure	-40
		Cool, Clear Water	-5
		30 Victory Points	-30
Total Spent:	296	Total Earned:	-296
		Balance:	0

ENCOUNTER SIX

FORESTS OF FURY

BY DAVE BLEWER

A chance encounter with the remnants of an elven war party from Alfheim sends your horde on a mission of honor into the lands of the gods. Can you resist the charms of Valhalla and survive the brooding evil of Svartalfheim? Of course those weakling light elves could not, but you are true Viking warriors!

Type: Cushion Encounter

Hook: The Underground
and Svartalfheim

EVENT 1: A GLIMPSE OF THE FUTURE



Narration:

You've been traveling through the Underground for hours now; it's cold, wet, and uncomfortable — yet you do not care, for you know that soon your weapons will taste the blood of Loki's minions. Ahead you can see that the tunnel forks, and there seems to be a smaller passage leading away from the main tunnel; experience tells you that very often treasure can be found down such passages. The fact that something seems to have forcibly widened the passage recently — something very big — supports your suspicions that fortune and glory await you!

You follow the twisting passageway for several hundred feet before you come across a body. It is an elf; she has been set alight and then run over by something very heavy. It's a grisly sight.

GAIN — LOOT THE BODIES

Every self-respecting Viking knows that you should loot the bodies of fallen enemies, even those whom you did not smite yourself.

Singular: No Fault, Freestanding roll; roll **Awareness** vs. **Difficulty 6** to discover the following:



Closer Inspection:

Even though the body is horribly mangled and burned, you discover a worthless charm — a golden apple — pushed into the flesh of the body by an enormous weight. This is the symbol of Freyja, the goddess of love and fertility; these elves are not followers of Loki, so they must be from Alfheim, the home of the few good elves who will fight alongside the Aesir when Ragnarok comes!

Points Earned: -10 (Freestanding roll, Difficulty 6)



Narration:

Finally the passageway opens up into a large chamber, which has obviously been the scene of a very recent battle. A large dwarven craftwerk shaped like an unholy centipede dominates the center of the chamber. Its shell is cracked and torn, and a foul black liquid leaks from it onto the cavern floor; the device is slowly coming to the end of its unnatural life. The various nozzles dotted around its carapace belch flames or clouds of scalding steam. Its telescoping arms — each one ending in a blade, circular saw, or hammer — flail blindly, seeking fresh prey. Scattered around this monster are the burned and broken bodies of the valiant elves who defeated it at the cost of their own lives. It will be an honor to stand beside these brave warriors during the final battle of Ragnarok!

On the far side of the foul dwarven creation is an altar to Freyja, upon which lie votive gifts left for the goddess of love. However, your attention is more urgently drawn to the one elven warrior left alive, as he feebly tries to fend off the craftwerk's blades. He won't last long. Maybe if you distract the dwarven monstrosity, you can keep the elf alive long enough to find out what happened here!



Background:

The craftwerk is running low on juice; if the Vikings can attract its attention it will not have enough power to finish off the elf. The easiest way of distracting it is to approach close enough so that its sensors can detect the Vikings and recognize them as a greater threat than the wounded elf. Once three heroes have attempted to get past the craftwerk — or bashed it with a weapon, attracting its ire — it finally "dies."

TRAP — RUN THE GAUNTLET

The horde must distract the craftwerk long enough for it to run out of energy.

Singular: Rush roll; roll **Dodge** vs. **Difficulty 7**, failed roller takes **3 dice of Damage**. **Limited Targeting Only**; attacks the first three Vikings who attempt to get past, then runs out of juice.

Points Spent: 10 (Difficulty 7); 15 (3 dice of Random damage)

Points Earned: -20 (Conditionally Avoidable: let three of your horde take the risk instead); -0 (Limited Targeting, 3 heroes)



Narration:

The elven warrior is very badly wounded and obviously dying. When you reach him he is struggling towards the altar of Freyja. He turns to you with relief palpable on his face.

"Thank the goddess, you came when you did ... you must help us! Foul denizens of Svartalfheim have kidnapped one of our princes and are even now subjecting him to terrible sorceries that will thrall him to Loki forever!"

The elf retrieves a strange charm from his clothes. "I was to lead a rescue mission, but we happened upon a dwarven war party that destroyed us with their unnatural machines. I beseech you, take this charm and open the secret portal that this altar protects. It leads through the godly realms into the dark forests of Svartalfheim. Rescue the prince ... you are the only hope of the elven people to thwart foul Loki's plan ..."

With that he dies.

GAIN — ALTAR TO FREYJA

**Narration:**

This is an unremarkable altar to the goddess of love and fertility — unremarkable except for the fact it has been found deep in the dank, depressing Underground that is infamous for its lack of love and boasts a sort of fertility that is best not dwelt upon.

A **Category A Treasure** lies on the altar

Points Earned: -10 (Altar to Freyja);
-10 (Category A Treasure)

GAIN — CARROT:
ELVES ARE STRANGE

Freestanding: roll **Lore** vs. **Difficulty 6**, if a roller succeeds at this roll, read him the following:

**Narration:**

You remember a particularly well-traveled Skald visiting the village a few seasons ago who told a funny story about the religious beliefs of the elves of Alfheim. Apparently elves will not ascend to Valhalla unless the holy symbols they carry are placed upon an altar to one of the Aesir — Loki claims these poor lost souls if this ritual is not done promptly, and uses them to create undead warriors.

If all the holy symbols of the elves are collected and placed upon the altar to Freyja, then each member of the Horde gains a +3 to his **Bravery** roll later on, as Freyja shields them from the awful majesty that is Valhalla.

Points Earned: -15 (+3 to Bravery roll);
-10 (Freestanding Difficulty 6)

Once the Vikings have finished collecting the holy symbols, beseeching Freyja for her gifts and purchasing Death Insurance, they should be ready to open the portal to Svartalfheim.

TRAP — SUICIDAL TENDENCIES

**Narration:**

Unsure how the charm that the elf gave you opens the portal, you approach the altar tense; in your experience almost all magic is bad, especially the magic of inhuman effete tree worshippers.

The charm begins to glow, and then in a heartbeat, where once stood the altar now stands a doorway beyond which you can see a sun-dappled forest glade. As you watch, a magnificent stag darts into view, meets your eyes and leaps away. Distantly you can hear the sound of those joyously engaged in combat. The gods have smiled upon you today; you are seeing that which very few mortal eyes have seen: this is Valhalla!

Now that the heroes have had a glimpse of the glory that awaits their immortal souls, it is possible that they will crave it to the extent that they will not defend as well as they should in battle, hoping for a glorious death.

Standard roll; roll **Bravery** vs. **Difficulty 8**. Heroes who fail suffer 1 point of **Impairment** to **DFN** for the rest of the encounter.

Points Spent: 20 (Difficulty 8); 40 (-2 to **DFN** for 2 combat sequences)

**Narration:**

You climb through the portal and set off through the forest, your heart yearning to join the Einherjar — the honored dead who you can hear training for the final battles of Ragnarok. But you resist the urge; you have not earned the right, but if you are lucky maybe you will fall in combat whilst battling the dark elves.

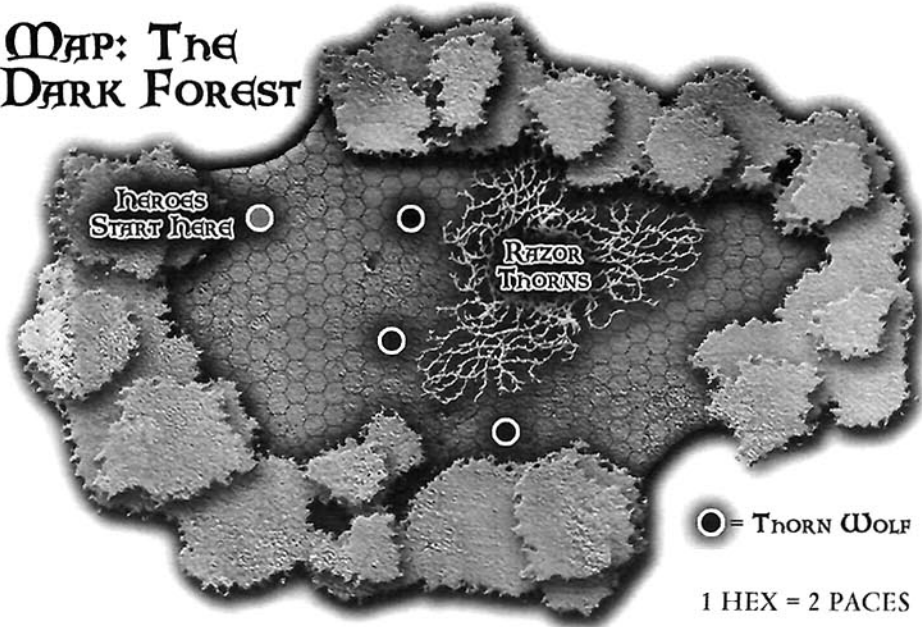
You soon become aware of a dampening of the joyous sounds of battle and a steady darkening of the woods around you. The trees seem to loom over you, and the animals become fewer and fewer. You slowly realize that you are no longer in Valhalla, but have somehow entered Svartalfheim, the land of the dark elves.



EVENT 2: THE DARK FOREST

TERRAIN – RAZOR THORN PATCH

MAP: THE DARK FOREST



Narration:
 You're not certain if it is day or night, such is the gloom in this foul forest. Despite this, you slowly cut your way through a huge briar patch; the wicked thorns threaten to rip through your clothing and draw blood if you don't take care (although such a paltry wound would never cause you to complain – you are not some mewling outlander; pain thresholds are for others!).

This is a large patch of long and sharp thorns; a skeleton in torn leather armor can be seen in the middle of the patch.

Points Earned: -10 (Damaging Place, Dam rating 10)

Narration:
 The woodland you find yourself in is a breeding place of evil. The trees seem to hunch over you like gaunt giants and you're sure you see the moss-covered branches flex like grasping claws.

What's worse, you're sure that you are being stalked – several times you've heard something moving through the undergrowth towards you, but when you've investigated nothing was to be found.

Narration:
 Suddenly the entire briar patch comes alive! As you watch, three of the bushes start to move towards you, taking on the form of wolves made of briars. One of these thorn wolves fires a hail of thorns from itself at your horde.

EVENT TWO COMBAT OPPONENTS – THORN WOLVES



Combat Tactics: These creatures are thorn wolves, created by the application of some foul dark magic. This breathes deadly life into the bloated, diseased briars that carpet the forest floors of the Svartalfheim. The creatures that result resemble a twisted knot of tangled vines and stems, all sporting three-inch-long wicked thorns that drip a poisonous sap. When roused, the thorn wolf assumes a canine-like shape, complete with burning green eyes. Thorn wolves are able to expel a hail of barbed thorns from their bodies as a ranged attack. They can be frighteningly accurate with these attacks – as many a scarred Norseman will testify.

These abominations patrol the forests of Svartalfheim, hunting down trespassers. They are usually stealthy hunters, although it has been noted that they will attack elves from Alfheim with all the subtlety and self-preservation of a maniacally depressed rock goblin. Thorn wolves have a Mix adjust of .4, a Max. Threat of Superior, and a Benchmark of 8.

Name	Type	Mix	Move	Threat Category	Adjusts	Predictable/ Self-Willed
Kudzu	Thorn Wolf	1.1	20	Inferior	DAM +3, DFN +3, Soak -2, HP -10, Res +6	Predictable (+0)
Barkley	Thorn Wolf	1.1	20	Inferior	DAM +3, DFN +3, Soak -2, HP -10, Res +6	Predictable (+0)
Nettle-cater	Thorn Wolf	1.1	20	Inferior	DAM +3, DFN +3, Soak -2, HP -10, Res +6	Predictable (+0)

Points Spent: 0

Event 3: The Behemoth

TERRAIN – TREES

Trees surround the clearing and provide **three additional levels** of elevation at 10, 20, and 30 feet. The trees seem to resist any attempt to climb them; branches suddenly rot through and snap, slippery sap pours down the trunks, etc. However, there are plenty of handholds, so the chance of climbing is not reduced.

Points Earned: -15 (3 Additional Levels)

TERRAIN – COVER IN THE TREES

The trees provide **full cover** for those who hide behind them. Each tree only provides cover for **one Viking**, but there are plenty of trees.

Points Earned: -36 (Full Cover, maximum possible)



Narration:

If the thorn wolves were able to find you, then other, even more vicious denizens of these Loki-plagued woods will also be able to find you; it's time to move on.

Just as you're wondering which is the best direction to go, a blast of arcane energy illuminates the horizon. Someone is using evil sorceries; the stink of Loki is heavy in the air. Grimly you heft your weapons and set off towards the site of this malignant magic.



Narration:

As you move through the forest it becomes, amazingly, even more threatening. The tree limbs, heavy with pulsating veins of sap and blood-red leaves, snatch at your packs and clothing; whorls of bark look like menacing faces glowering down at you. It's as if you can feel the hatred of this forest touched by Loki's vile hand; you start to long for the honest fields and copses of your home village.

The creak of wooden limbs is all the warning you get – the very trees themselves are attacking you! Large gnarled branches swing down to smash your skulls in!

TRAP – THE WOODS ARE ALIVE!

The heroes aren't going to be able to dodge this attack; instead, they must defend themselves with weapon and shield while they break free of the trees.

Standard roll; roll DEN vs. Baseline +1, failed rolls take 10 Damage.

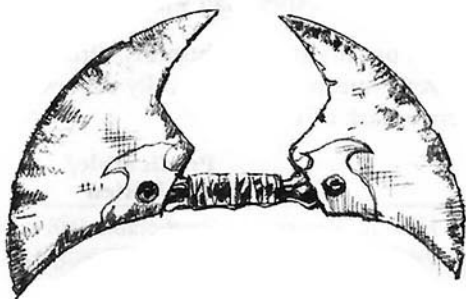
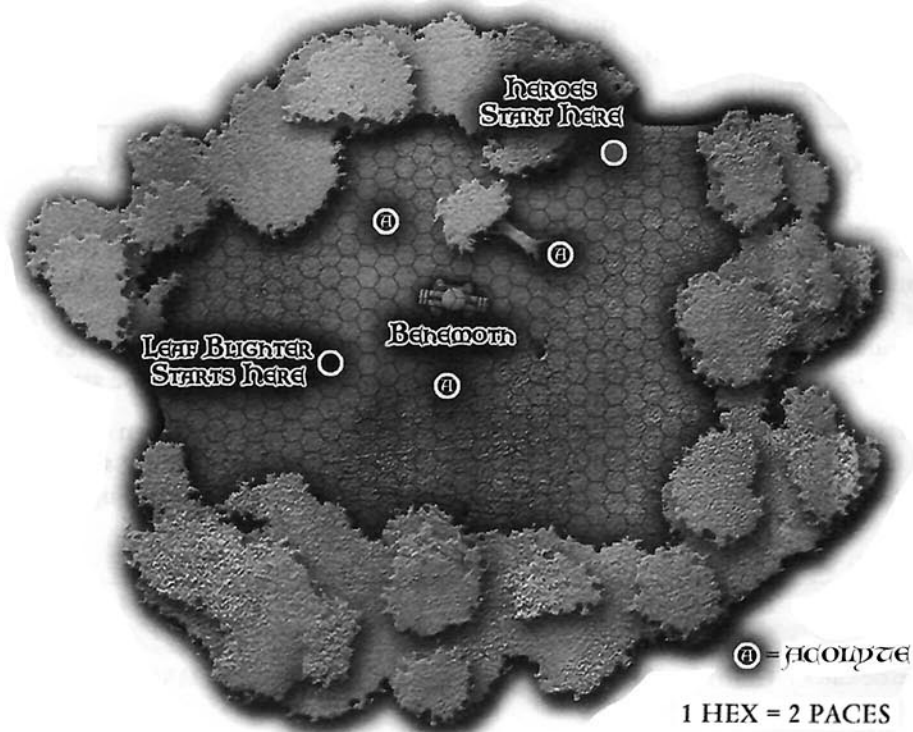
Points Spent: 10 (Baseline +1); **10** (10 Damage); **20** (Exotic roll)



Narration:

Finally, after what seems like hours of dangerous travel across this terrible land, you reach your destination. Ahead is a large clearing, from which you can hear voices chanting a prayer to Loki.

MAP: The Behemoth





Narration Continued:

You see several dark elf acolytes arranged around a huge wooden statue. The arcane energy controlled by these sorcerers is being focused at the top of the statue, where you can see a fine-featured unconscious elf shackled between two rune-inscribed wooden pillars. As you watch, these pillars on the statue's head start to glow with a sickening light and the statue starts to move jerkily. One of the dark elves – obviously the ritual's leader – chuckles evilly.

These elves have obviously been twisted by Loki's evil will. You have a choice – sneak up on the soon-to-be residents of Hel, or charge in, screaming songs of glory to the gods and cause your enemies to cower from your wrath.

GAIN – INTO BATTLE

Weak Link roll; roll **Demeanor** or **Stealth** vs. **Difficulty 7**, if successful the **horde gains +18 Init** during the first round of the battle

Points Spent: 40 (Weak Link roll); **10** (Difficulty 7)

Points Earned: -30 (+18 INIT); **-10** (Alternate Way)

WEIRD MAGIC – WHIRLWINDS

As a first action, the elf wizard uses his Loki-spawned magic to stir miniature whirlwinds of blowing leaves that chase the Vikings as they do battle. This makes visibility poor for the heroes; they suffer a **-1 to their ATK rolls**. The spell is ended when the wizard is dealt with in true Viking style and sent screaming into Hel.

Points Spent: 10 (-1 to ATK rolls for this combat scene)

TERRAIN – TREES

Trees surround the clearing and provide **two additional levels** of elevation at 10 and 20 feet. The trees are long dead, however, and so don't provide any cover to the combatants.

Points Earned: -10 (2 Additional Levels)

TERRAIN – FALLEN TREE TRUNK

A dead tree lies across the clearing; even the wooden behemoth can't step over this giant.

Points Earned: -3 (Barrier)

TERRAIN – HOSTAGE

If the prince is rescued the heroes receive **20 victory points**.

Points Earned: -10 (Hostage)

EVENT THREE COMBAT OPPONENTS – THE DARK ELVES



Combat Tactics: These elves were once like their effete brethren, but sold themselves to Loki for a taste of his diabolical power. They have access to some weird magic, but are otherwise just darker versions of standard elves.

Name	Type	Mix	Move	Threat Category	Adjusts	Predictable/ Self-Willed
Leaf-blight the Wizard	Elf Courtier	3	30	Exceptional	INIT +3, DAM -3	Predictable (+0)
Root Rip	Elf Mischief-maker	.3	30	Pitiful	INIT +3, DAM -3	Predictable (+0)
Choke Vine	Elf Mischief-maker	.3	30	Pitiful	INIT +3, DAM -3	Predictable (+0)
Sap Screamer	Elf Mischief-maker	.3	30	Pitiful	INIT +3, DAM -3	Predictable (+0)

Points Spent: 0

EVENT THREE COMBAT OPPONENT – THE BEHEMOTH



Combat Tactics: The wooden behemoth craftwerk is a magical construction of elven make. A prisoner of noble blood powers the monstrous thing with his own life's essence, and gives the creation a driving force and consciousness of its own. It is obviously a spawn of Loki's dark imagining. A wooden behemoth has a Mix adjust of .1, a Max. Threat of Terrifying, and a Benchmark of 17.

Name	Type	Mix	Move	Threat Category	Adjusts	Predictable/ Self-Willed
Loki's Behemoth	Wooden Behemoth Craftwerk	3.1	15	Superior	INIT -3, DAM +3	Predictable (+0)

Points Spent: 0

GAIN – TAKE TO THE TREES



Narration:

It is pretty evident that the life force of the prince is somehow directing the wooden behemoth. If he could be rescued from the tethers at the top of the behemoth, then maybe it would be impeded or even stopped. Attempting to climb the behemoth itself would be suicide. But maybe a brave Viking could climb a nearby tree, leap across to the top of the wooden giant, and cut the prince free.

Multiple roll: Action Sink; roll Climb vs. **Difficulty 6** to climb high enough up into the tree. Once a single climber has gained **2 successes** he can attempt to jump across to the wooden behemoth (See "Leap of Faith," below). **No limit on extra rolls.**

Points Spent: 20 (Action Sink, 2 successes)

Points Earned: -20 (Extra Rolls)

TRAP – LEAP OF FAITH

The leap across from the tree to the behemoth is one that would make even the most stout-hearted warrior quake.

ENCOUNTER COST TABLE

Item	Points Spent	Item	Points Earned
Run the Gauntlet	25	Loot the Bodies	-10
Suicidal Tendencies	60	Run the Gauntlet	-20
The Woods are Alive	40	Altar to Freyja & Category A Treasure	-20
Into Battle Weak Link	40	Carrot: Elves are Strange	-15
Into Battle Difficulty 7	10	Freestanding Roll Difficulty 6	-10
Weird Magic (-1 to ATK)	10	Terrain: Thorn Patch & Trees	-61
Take to the Trees	20	Into Battle	-40
Leap of Faith	55	Terrain: Trees & Fallen Trunk & Hostage	-23
Free the Prince	40	Take to the Trees: Extra Rolls	-20
		Leap of Faith: Conditionally Avoidable	-20
		Weird Magic: -2 DFN, -1ATK	-30
		Category B Treasure & Silver	-31
Total Spent:	300	Total Earned:	-300
		Balance:	0

Singular Rush roll; **Jump** vs. **Difficulty 9**, if the roller fails he falls 20 feet (Dam rating 10 for a good landing; Dam rating 20 for a bad landing). **Conditionally avoidable.**

Points Spent: 25 (20-foot fall); 30 (Difficulty 9)

Points Earned: -20 (Conditionally Avoidable: don't climb the tree)

GAIN – FREE THE PRINCE

Now all that's left is to cut the prince down from his restraints.

Multiple Singular roll: Action Sink; roll ATK at **Baseline**, once **2 successes** have been achieved, the prince has been cut free and the behemoth suffers a -2 to its DFN and -1 to its ATK for the rest of the combat.



Closer Inspection:

Cutting the prince free doesn't actually stop the behemoth. It has absorbed enough life force to maintain its actions for a while. However, it does have problems defending itself, now that its guiding consciousness is gone.

Points Spent: 20 (Action Sink ATK); 20 (Exotic roll)

Points Earned: -30 (Weird Magic -2 DFN, -1 ATK)

GAIN – TREASURE

If the body of the dark elf wizard is searched, **one Category B Treasure** and **11 oz of silver** will be found.

Points Earned: -20 (Category B treasure); -11 (11 oz of silver)



Narration:

Battered and bruised, you return through the darkened forest, supporting the body of the prince who slowly recovers his wits. The forest around seems to pause as you pass, as though awed by the skill and bravery of the valiant Norsemen. The elven prince – whose name is far too effete and strange for you to ever utter – thanks you profusely and declares that this day you have forged a mighty alliance with the good elves of Alfheim. Should your village ever be threatened, they will rally to its aid. He leaves you at the portal to the Underground to make his way back to his own people.

You feel the strength pouring back into your bodies as you rest in Valhalla, and very soon you feel refreshed enough to return to the Underground and continue your quest. You have dealt Loki a blow – but greater glory awaits!

ENCOUNTER SEVEN

As the WYRM TURNS

BY PHILIP REED, WITH CHRIS AYLOTT

After defeating yet another weakling goblin pack and claiming their pitiful treasure, your horde learns that they must scale the walls of a volcano to return to the Underground. But nesting among the smoldering rocks and open pools of red-hot lava is a great wyrm ... soon you will earn the name "Wyrmslayer!"

Type: Cushion Encounter

Hook: The Underground
and Scandinavia

EVENT 1: ONWARDS AND UPWARDS



Narration:

Ever onward, mighty Vikings! Your horde's search for riches and honor has led you into the depths of the Underground. It's been many miles since the last branch in the passage, and you dread reaching a dead end that will force you to turn back. Suddenly, the tunnel twists and shoots almost straight up. Looking up you see the night sky, calm and beckoning. There are many small rocks jutting out from the sheer walls – these are obviously handholds used by many others who have encountered this obstacle.

As you begin climbing, you hear screams and the clatter of swords. A battle! Somewhere on the surface world a battle is taking place without you! Up the steep slope, mighty warriors. Join the fight!

GAIN – FALLING DUST

From above, several goblins watch the heroes approach. As they shuffle their feet in excitement, they knock some dust and small rocks loose. This gives the Vikings a chance to spot the goblins and prepare for an attack.

Standard roll; roll **Awareness** vs. **Difficulty 9** to spot the goblins above, any hero that succeeds gains a **+2 increase** to the Dodge roll in the next trap, and notices the following:



Closer Inspection:

You notice small amounts of dust raining down from above when it lands on your shoulders. Following the trail of falling dust, your eyes gaze upward where you see a crowd of goblins peering down at your horde.

Points Spent: 30 (Difficulty 9)

Points Earned: -10 (+2 increase to Dodge roll)



Narration:

Suddenly, rocks start flying from the goblins lurking above! Dodge quick, mighty warriors, or find yourselves beaten before you have even joined the battle!



Background:

These goblins have been left behind as a lookout in case someone or something tries to sneak up on them – which would be completely unfair since *they're* in the middle of a sneak attack themselves! This is the closest entrance to the Underground and it's important that this rear guard keep the path to home free and clear of all obstacles.

TRAP – GOBLIN ATTACK!

Standard roll; Dodge vs. **Difficulty 9**, any hero that fails suffers **random damage** of 3 dice from the falling debris.

Points Spent: 30 (Difficulty 9); 15 (Random Damage: 3 dice)

COMBAT – KILL THE GOBLINS!



Narration:

Screaming the name of Odin you rush heroically up the steep rock face, weapons held high and proud as the goblins rise and return your charge, each one moving quickly down the tunnel wall. A glorious battle ensues, granting another opportunity to prove your might as a great Viking warrior!



TERRAIN – STEEP WALL

Other than the narrow ledge the heroes have managed to reach, this tunnel is a steeply **sloped surface**. The goblins are approaching from the highest area.

Points Earned: -20 (two-thirds sloped)

TERRAIN – DUST AND ROCKS

Most of the ledge and rock face are covered in dust and small rocks. The footing is questionable at best, making the surface **slippery**.

Points Earned: -15 (two-thirds of the area is slippery)


TERRAIN – LARGE BOULDERS

Four large boulders provide half cover for four heroes.

Points Earned: -24 (half cover for four heroes)

GAIN – LOOT THE BODIES

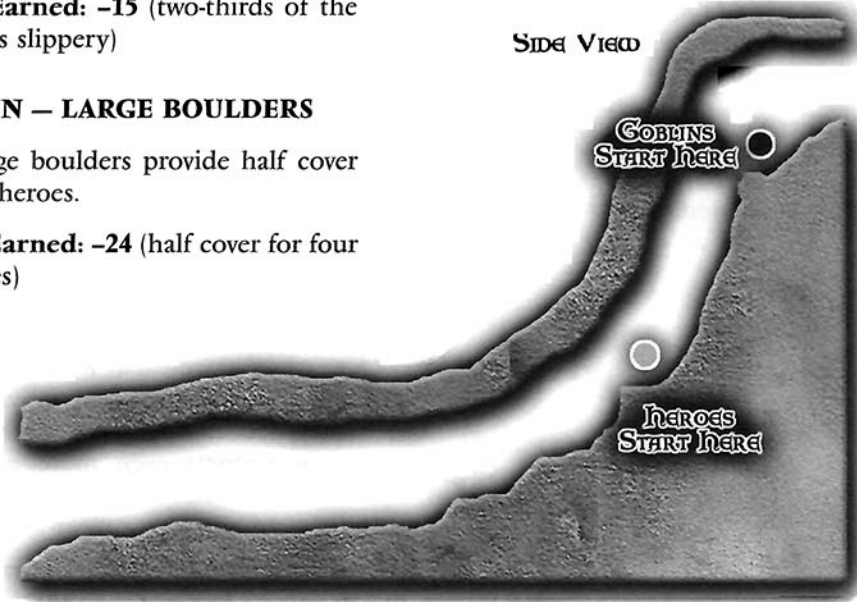
If the heroes loot the bodies of the goblins, they find **7 ounces of silver** and **3 ounces of liar's silver**.



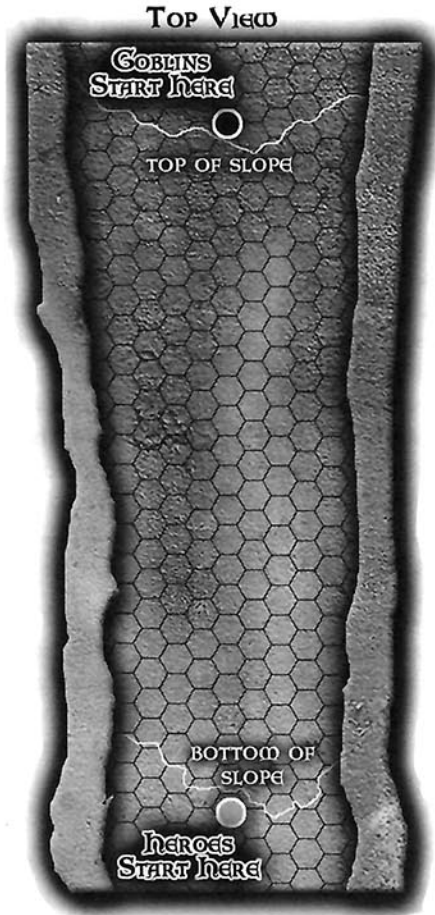
Closer Inspection:
You have defeated the goblins and claimed their pitiful treasure. Your path to the surface is now clear!

Points Spent: 3 (3 ounces liar's silver)

Points Earned: -7 (7 ounces of silver)



MAP: ONWARDS AND UPWARDS



EVENT ONE COMBAT OPPONENTS – ROCK GOBLINS



Combat Tactics: This opponent list assumes six pillagers in the horde. The number of foes should be modified if your horde is larger or smaller than six.

Name	Type	Mix	Move	Threat Category	Adjusts	Predictable/ Self-Willed
Fereq	Rock Goblin	.7	15	Inferior	None	Predictable (+0)
Haggus	Rock Goblin	.7	15	Inferior	None	Predictable (+0)

Points Spent: 0

EVENT ONE COMBAT OPPONENT – GOBLIN SLAYER



Name	Type	Mix	Move	Threat Category	Adjusts	Predictable/ Self-Willed
Karn	Goblin Slayer	1.3	15	Equal	None	Predictable (+0)

Points Spent: 0

EVENT 2: THE TALE OF THE GREAT SVEN-EATING WYRM



Narration:

A battle rages just a few hundred paces from the opening of the tunnel to the Underground. Goblins are overrunning a small farmhouse, killing and burning everything and everyone they see! Scattered farmers are valiantly keeping the place from total destruction, but it is obvious the fiends are going to win. Or, rather, *were* going to win before your horde of mighty Viking warriors arrived!

GAIN — SAVE THE DAY!

The heroes rush into the battle and save the farmers, of course. These goblins are no real match for them, and we've got a doozy of a main combat coming up in Event 3, so instead of the usual combat, we're going to have a little contest: how many goblins can our heroes kill?

The fight will last four rounds, and there are twice as many goblins as heroes. Each hero may attempt to slay one goblin per round with the weapon of his choice. Hitting a goblin requires a single weapon ability roll; if the hero succeeds, he kills the goblin!

If the heroes slay all the goblins in four rounds, they gain fame for their martial prowess. If they don't slay the goblins, the villagers are rallied by the horde's arrival and finish off any goblins the heroes don't kill. The village is safe either way, but the heroes don't look as amazing as they would have if they'd killed the goblins themselves. The hero who slays the most goblins gains extra fame, though.

All this may sound familiar, and for good reason — this is a cunningly disguised Countdown roll!

Countdown roll, requires successes equal to twice the number of heroes; roll **Brawling, Chain Weapon, Great Weapon, Longshaft Weapon, Single Weapon, or Two Weapons** vs. **Difficulty 8**, heroes have **four rounds** to succeed, if heroes succeed they gain a **mutual award of 10 victory points**

Points Spent: 80 (Difficulty cost of 20 times 8, times .5 for four rounds)

Points Earned: -20 (at least 2 Alternate Methods at -10 each); -10 (10 victory points)



GAIN — THE MIGHTIEST VIKING

The Viking who killed the most goblins in the Save the Day gain receives **20 victory points** as a **singular award**.

Points Earned: -20 (20 victory points)

GAIN — HEALING OPPORTUNITY

As soon as the last goblin is killed the farmers (aided by the Vikings, no doubt) extinguish the flames threatening the farmhouse and other buildings. The grateful farmers feed the heroes and put them up for the night, providing a **healing opportunity** that lasts twelve hours.



Background:

Goblins have been raiding this home for months and have managed to kill almost all of the men strong enough to defend it. The farmers are extremely thankful for the heroes' intervention in this latest raid. After all, what goblin would dare raid again after being devastated by a horde of angry Vikings?



Narration:

The farmers beg you to stay the night to recover from your exertions. It is not often that such noble warriors grace them with their presence, and your sudden arrival when they needed you most makes these poor farmers even more generous than normal. "Come in, come in," they cry, slapping you on the back.

Points Earned: -15 (Healing Opportunity: twelve hours)



Narration:

The next morning you rejoin the farmers at their table. After some laughing and food, the farmers ask if there is any way that they can assist you in your journey. You realize that you need to return to the Underground to continue your search for glory and silver, but the tunnel you emerged from goes the wrong direction for many miles. Maybe these good people know of another opening into the Underground so that you may continue your quest!

Whether the heroes take the hint or not, one of the farmers gives them a map pointing out the location of the next entrance, which is inside the mouth of a small volcano.



Narration:

With directions out of the way, the farmer volunteers a frightening story. And since all Vikings love a good story, you decide to listen rather than doing something so dishonorable as getting up and leaving during the tale.

"Just four weeks ago my brother Sven chose to travel to the great port town of Odin's Landing to do some bartering. He took his axe, his heavy furs, and a chest filled with the pelts of many small animals he had trapped in the forest. He was going after a gift for his wife and was counting on the pelts to bring in a fair amount of silver. But, just to be sure, he also carried a small sack of silver along with him.



Narration Continued:

"That night, after Sven left, the men a few farms over reported seeing a great wyrm in the skies. The beast stole some cattle from Olaf's barn and completely destroyed the roof. Night after night this monster attacked the farms in the area, none of us able to do a damn thing about it!

"By now you're thinking, what do a wyrm and my brother Sven have to do with each other? Well, if Sven had been lucky, not a thing. But, after a week with no sign of Sven, some of the younger farmhands went looking for him. They were worried he had broken a leg somewhere on the trail. What they found, instead, was frightening.

"About halfway between here and Odin's Landing is a volcano called Loki's Cauldron. Now, it's just a little 'un that likes to spit some fire and grumble a bit. Back in my father's day the volcano erupted and caused quite a bit of damage. But all it does now is belch now and again.



Narration Continued:

"When the boys reached this volcano they were planning to take the bridge over it. But the hideous shadow of the great wyrm flying overhead forced them off the trail into hiding! They lay in the bushes and waited, watching for the wyrm to leave. But it didn't leave! No, the wyrm landed in the volcano, nestling itself down into the bubbling pit. The beast had made the burning lava its home!

"Well, the boys hurried back as quick as they could to warn us all. A volcano in your backyard is bad enough, but a volcano that's the nest of a wyrm may very well signal Ragnarok itself!

"As the boys shared the grim news with us they also reported that they had found Sven — apparently, the wyrm had found him first, though. The boys saw his belongings in a pile of what they said was 'the greatest collection of treasure ever' in the pit with the monster!"

EVENT 3: THE VOLCANO AND THE WYRM

Armed with the information they need to return to the Underground and a warning about the wyrm, the heroes are ready for what should be a glorious battle in the service of Odin!



Narration:

After hours of marching up a narrow, snow-covered trail, you arrive at the edge of a great pit. Hot ash and smoke rise from within, and a foul, evil smell fills the air. A single, well-worn bridge of rope and wood stretches across the pit. Below you can see smoldering rocks and open pools of red-hot lava. You have reached Loki's Cauldron, and there's the wyrm the farmers spoke of!



Narration Continued:

It's gigantic, the length of a longhouse. Its polished red scales glitter ... its razor-sharp talons gleam. Fortunately, it is sleeping, its tail coiled daintily around its massive body. Past it you see what must be the entrance to the Underground!

If the heroes sneak past quietly on the bridge and don't try to steal the wyrm's treasure, they can completely avoid this fight and escape to safety. They don't even have to make a roll.

No, we don't really think they'll pass up the chance to smite a wyrm, either ... as soon as the Vikings attack it or try to steal the treasure, the great wyrm Maul wakes up instantly and roars into combat!

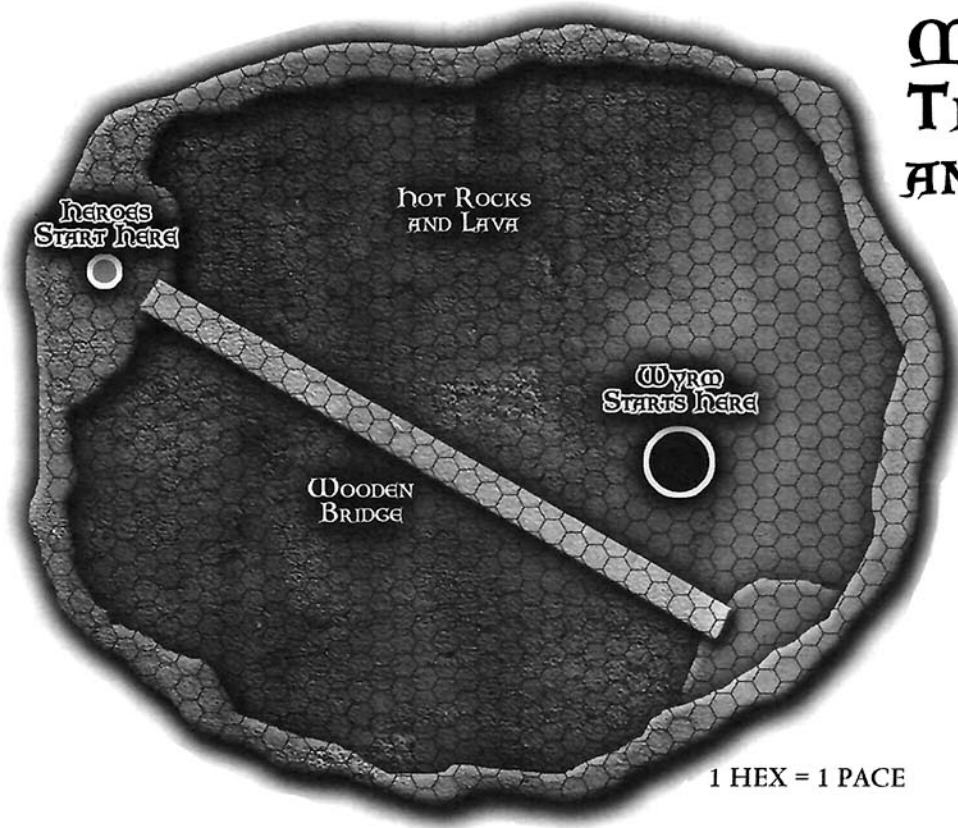
TERRAIN — MULTIPLE LEVELS

There are **two levels** of terrain. The dragon is sleeping on the hot rocks scattered among the lava pools at the bottom of the volcano crater. The heroes are at the edge of the crater, where the bridge leads across and slightly downward to a rough hole in the far wall.

The top level is 24 paces above the bottom level; climbing up or down is handled according to the usual climbing rules. The wyrm is large enough that it can easily reach both the top and the bottom level by stretching out its sinuous body.

Points Earned: -5 (one Extra Level)

MAP: THE VOLCANO AND THE WYRM



EVENT THREE COMBAT OPPONENT – THE GREAT WYRM



Combat Tactics: A beast as big as a house and covered in red, armored scales, the great volcano wurm is just one of such creatures that live in the lands of **Rune**. Armed with enormous claws, dagger-like teeth, and a fearsome breath of fire, this monster is a formidable foe and many who face it find themselves standing at the gates of Valhalla. Fortunately for humanity, great wyrms are extremely rare and are often content to feast upon livestock and large woodland animals. They can easily eat twenty to thirty head of cattle a week and spend a great deal of their time searching the lands around their chosen lair for food. After feasting, a great wurm will often return to its lair and sleep for days, sometimes weeks.

The only thing the great wurm likes better than eating and sleeping is collecting treasure. Though they have no use for it, these gigantic predators hoard human treasures such as silver and fine weapons. They often create great mounds of treasure, which they sleep upon. Many a warrior has been tempted to attack these monsters merely to loot their vast hordes.

In combat the monster can attack with teeth or claws, and, once a day, can belch a terrible burst of flame from its mouth. This is treated as a normal missile attack. Great volcano wyrms have a Mix adjust of +1.6, a Max. Threat of Terrifying, and a Benchmark of 40. This combat assumes six pillagers in the horde.

Name	Type	Mix	Move	Threat Category	Adjusts	Predictable/ Self-Willed
Maul	Great Volcano Wurm	5.6	60	Terrifying	INIT +6, ATK +2, HP +40, Soak +2, DAM +9, Res +9	Self-Willed (+50)

Points Spent: 50

TERRAIN – LIMITED EXITS

The only exits are either across the rope bridge to the other side, or back down the trail.

Points Earned: -10 (two Limited Exits)

TERRAIN – DAMAGING TERRAIN

The hot rocks and lava pools are **Dam rating 35**. The wyrm is normally unharmed by the terrain, though it can be injured if the heroes push it into a lava pool with a successful Engagement roll.

Points Earned: -10 (Dam rating 35)

TRAP – CAREFUL ON THAT BRIDGE!

The bridge is rickety and sways wildly with the slightest movement. If a Viking is hit in combat while standing on the bridge, he must make a Balance roll to avoid being knocked off. If he fails, he falls to the floor of the crater and suffers damage.

Singular roll, conditionally avoidable (don't get hit while standing on the bridge), **remains in effect**; roll **Balance vs. Difficulty 8**, failed heroes fall to the bottom level and suffer **falling damage, Dam rating 35/40 (41 – 60 feet)**



Points Spent: 72 (41 – 60 foot fall); **20** (Difficulty 8)

Points Earned: -20 (conditionally avoidable: don't get hit while standing on the bridge)

GAIN – THE WYRM'S TREASURE

The wyrm's treasure is lying in plain sight at the bottom of the crater. Any pillager who wishes to climb down to it may retrieve a **Category F treasure**, a **Category C treasure**, and **9 ounces of silver**. Getting the treasure is much safer if the wyrm is dead, though, since it will attack anyone attempting to steal its hoard!

Points Earned: -75 (Category F treasure); **-30** (Category C treasure); **-9** (9 ounces of silver)



Narration:

You lower yourselves into the opening to the Underworld and resume your search for still yet even more wealth and glory. This tale shall live on in the songs of skalds for ages to come!

ENCOUNTER COST TABLE

Item	Points Spent	Item	Points Earned
Falling Dust Difficulty 9	30	Falling Dust +2 Increase	-10
Goblin Surprise Attack	45	Terrain: Steep Wall	-20
Gain: Loot the Bodies Liar's Silver	3	Terrain: Dust and Rocks	-15
Gain: Save the Day	80	Terrain: Large Boulders	-24
Great Volcano Wyrms	50	Gain: Loot the Bodies Silver	-7
Trap: Careful on that Bridge	92	Gain: Save the Day	-30
		Gain: The Mightiest Viking	-20
		Gain: Healing Opportunity	-15
		Terrain: Multiple Levels	-5
		Terrain: Limited Exits	-10
		Terrain: Damaging Terrain	-10
		Trap: Careful on that Bridge Avoidable	-20
		The Wyrms' Treasure	-114
Total Spent:	300	Total Earned:	-300
		Balance:	0

ENCOUNTER EIGHT

DRUNKEN CHIEFTAIN

BY ROLFE BERGSTRÖM

An undead menace afloat a burning funeral barge plunders seafront Viking villages renowned for their astounding brews; it's up to your horde of warriors to head it off and send these mead-drunken spawn of Loki back to Hel for all eternity!

Type: Cushion Encounter

Hook: The Underground
and Scandinavia

EVENT 1: THE SMOKING VILLAGE



Narration:

You emerge from the mouth of a cave, pleased to reach the surface again after so long in the Underground; finally, a chance to stretch your sword arms after the confines of tunnels and caverns! Walking about, landmarks quickly tell you where you've ended up.

The twin towns of Filskfurt and Glenskirping sit on opposite shores of a long peninsula, and are known throughout Scandinavia for their astounding mead and grand parties. The liquor is rumored to be enchanted, made by beings of magic that were befriended by the chiefs of the two villages. Magic or not, it's said to be the best buzz in the entire region, and honor demands a short detour to sample the local wares and hospitality.

But when your horde arrives at the coastal village of Filskfurt, you find only a shambles of burning buildings, wrecked fishing vessels, dead bodies, and — the worst disgrace of all — the fabled 500-ton mead kegs shattered on the ground! This is a crime that cannot go unpunished!

GAIN — WHAT HAPPENED HERE?

Singular: No-Fault, Freestanding, Alternate Method roll; any hero may roll Seamanship or Pursuit vs. Difficulty 6 to note the following:



Closer Inspection:

It looks like there was a scramble to get the local fishing vessels out to sea before the village was so terribly devastated. The shore is marked by footprints, sand troughs, and rubble indicating a rush to get the boats sea-borne in a hurry. Obviously this failed, as the burned and broken remains of half a dozen fishing vessels float in the harbor waters.

You puzzle over the scene for several moments. There are no signs of any army entering the village. What could approach from the air or the sea and set fire to this entire town? For a fleeting moment you concentrate on the problem, a fierce sweat breaking out on your warrior's brow. Enough! All this thinking is too much! The only headaches you wanted from this village come with the sweet fire of a tall flagon of mead!

Points Earned: -10 (Freestanding roll, Difficulty 6); -10 (Alternate Method)



Narration:

After several minutes of sifting through the wreckage and trying to lick the last few drips from the remnants of the kegs, you begin to hear a groaning voice.



Narration Continued:

"Warriors ..." cries a feeble, aged voice, "... you come too late to save Filskfurt!" A ancient woman, stooped and grayed, sits in the burned wreckage of the village. "But maybe you've still got time to save Glenskirping," she says with great effort. She seems to be exhausted, her eyes dipping lower with every word she speaks. "It lies overland but a mile or two ... but I'm too weak to move ... and warn them ... I was trading ... for the honey ... when I saw ..."

She's quiet, and unmoving. You begin to wonder if she's died in mid sentence. But then her slow, pained words start again: "... goblins ... told the goblins." She coughs lightly. "Could you carry me to Glenskirping ... where people would see after me?" Her head rolls forward, and the soft snoring tells you that she's simply exhausted.

Goblins, eh? Now there's something you can sink an axe into. Once you've warned the other village of the danger, it'll be an easy afternoon's work for you to split the little monsters' heads and earn the mead and gratitude of Glenskirping.

GAIN — WHAT WAS THAT ABOUT GOBLINS?



Narration:

Goblins? It strikes you that there's something more about goblins that you ought to recall.

Singular: No-Fault, Freestanding, Alternate Methods; any hero may roll Skald, Lore or Carousing vs. Difficulty 8 to pull out the following memory of a tale told one night when you were really hammered:

**Closer Inspection:**

Yes, now you remember! It was on a late eve some time ago ... you were putting away flagons and boasting of the greatest ales that ever the gods did share with mortal men. One of the carousers told of the vegetarian goblins that helped produce the twin villages' finest meads. As you recall, these goblins were such cowards that rather than spend time raiding with their more feral kin, they instead bred magic bees, and after brewing the honey into mead, traded it with the local towns. That's how both could have such fine booze without competition that might cause one village to sack the other. Not that it didn't cause some trouble, for they say the former brewmeister, Osvif the Hot-Headed, was fired by one town's chief and then the other for failing to brew better booze than the goblins did.

**Closer Inspection Continued:**

So ashamed was he that he set fire to himself and his closest drinking buddies upon his own boat. This was all at least a generation ago.

Points Earned: -8 (Freestanding roll, Difficulty 8); -20 (2 Alternate Methods)

**Background:**

Osvif the Hot-Headed lived up to his moniker, and indeed became so angry with the villages that had spurned him that he swore himself to the twin masters of vengeance and necromancy. (That's fancy talk for "He's come back from the grave to kick some butt.") Osvif is now a Sark Amen, and rode his flaming funeral barge into Filskfurt earlier this morning. He's currently sailing around the Peninsula to sack Glenskirping, but the heroes can beat him there by taking the overland shortcut.

**Narration:**

There's a trail heading eastward along a high ridge that will take you to the village of Glenskirping, but you fear it might take too long to reach the place. If you wish to be heroes and earn the favors of lush young barmaids, you'll need to cut across the valley of brambles that the trail overlooks.

The valley would be a lot faster, perhaps meaning all the difference as to whether or not you arrive in time to save the mead kegs of the second village. However, it's also a more difficult course, and you wouldn't be able to haul the old lady cross-country like that.

So what do you say — the lady and the long high road, or leave her here so you can take the shortcut and get to Glenskirping in a hurry?

EVENT 2: DOWN IN THE BRAMBLES AND THROUGH THE BEES, FOR GLENSKIRPING'S MEAD WE GO ...

**Background:**

The second event is distinguished by the fact that every bit of it is conditionally avoidable.

Vikings may not be particularly galling heroes, but it's still pretty cold to leave an unconscious elderly lady all alone in a burning village with monsters lurking about. If they bring her along and take the high road along the ridge, then there's no drawback or danger — in fact, they'll avoid every trap and test in the brambles. But they don't need to know that just yet.

**Background Continued:**

If they're in such a rush that they abandon her, then there'll be Hel to pay later. The brambles are goblin territory — a fact the pillagers won't know until they've sprung the goblin booby traps. Isn't it amazing the way coincidence conspires to smack unscrupulous Vikings upside the head?

If the heroes take the old woman with them and march along the ridge-top, you can tell them they've made the right decision and skip ahead to Event 3. If they abandon her to take the "shortcut" through the brambles, read on:

TRAP — THE LADY OR THE BRAMBLES

Should the pillagers choose to leave the old lady behind, they'll each need to make a roll to get on her good side. When she wakes up and realizes she's been left behind, she'll blame her abandonment on "the shifty-eyed, blood-crazed fool(s)" that failed the test.

Standard roll, conditionally avoidable (first exposure only); Communication + Demeanor roll vs. Difficulty 8, failing heroes suffer -15 victory points as a Loss of Status, and learn the following:



Closer Inspection:

As you leave the unconscious old woman behind to fend for herself in the smoldering village, you never for a minute imagine that she'd blame you personally and label you all cowards. But with the retelling of her story she could mar your good names forever. Oh well, it's not like you were planning on spending a lot of time here sober, anyway.

Points Spent: 15 (Loss of Status); 20 (Standard roll, Difficulty 8)

Points Earned: -10 (Conditionally Avoidable: bring the old lady with); -5 (first exposure only)



Narration:

You're now hip-deep in irritating brambles and thorns, but also just over halfway across the valley, when you notice two things. The first is poking just over the far ridge — it's the tops of the buildings of Glenskirping, with wisps of smoke beginning to form between them! The second is much closer — a large boulder carved with crude runic symbols. The way the rock is positioned means you'll have to take a look at the runes one at a time. Who will be first?

**GAIN — CARROT:
MIDPOINT OF THE MINEFIELD**

Singular: Rush roll; there's only time for one pillager to roll **Runes** against **Difficulty 5**. If he succeeds, that pillager gets a **+2 bonus** on the "Bee Bomb" trap (below), and he learns the following:



Closer Inspection:

It takes you a few moments to puzzle out the runes, scrawled crudely as they are across the uneven face of the boulder. Some of the symbols are improperly made, but at last you do figure them out ...



Closer Inspection Continued:

They say, "Danger! Midpoint of Bee Field! Beware of Traps! Go Away!" Painted next to them is a portrait of a smirking goblin that appears to be sticking its tongue out at you. Traps, eh? You look downward at the thick brambles and multiple layers of underbrush, obscuring everything below your waist. Hmm ... maybe this wasn't the best route after all ...

Points Earned: -10 (+2 Carrot bonus to dodge the Bee Bomb trap); -10 (Difficulty 5)



Narration:

You're not certain who set off the trap — the tripwire or lever must have been obscured beneath the thorny vegetation surrounding you. All you see is the effects. Off to your right, a beehive is catapulted high into the air. With a crunch and an angry buzzing it lands at your feet.

TRAP — THE BEE BOMB

The Bee Bomb is sprung after just enough of a pause to let a successful Rune-reading pillager sensibly duck for cover, gaining a **+2 bonus** to the Dodge roll below.

Standard, conditionally avoidable roll; Dodge vs. Difficulty 8. Each pillager who fails suffers **1 point of Impairment** as the bees sting him painfully and repeatedly. This impairment will remain until the end of the encounter.

Regardless of success or failure, the pillagers now rush to the village of Glenskirping without further trouble.

Points Spent: 20 (Standard roll, Difficulty 8); 35 (-1 Impairment on a Gain roll and a combat sequence)

Points Earned: -10 (Conditionally Avoidable: take the high road); -5 (First Exposure Only)

EVENT 3: THE (OTHER) SMOKING VILLAGE



Narration:

It's hard to tell where the village of Glenskirping begins, because of all the smoke and haze surrounding it. You traveled as fast as you could, and made better time than you expected, but it all seems to have been for nothing. A thick, dull white fog hangs in the air and clings to the buildings. The smoke reeks of some damnably feminine herbal thing, and it makes the insides of your nose itch as if Loki's foul spawn were trying to nest in your nostrils! Through the haze you make out people coughing and being herded about by tiny monsters.



Narration:

Goblins! They're at the bottom of this nonsense! You knew it all along!

Finally, something to swing your blade at! Axes and swords raised, you go screaming into the village. Shriill shrieks soon fill the air, as the goblins careen and scatter like frightened children. You laugh heartily as you mow them down with a ferocious rush of steel. They die by the dozens. It's almost too easy.



Background:

As previously mentioned, these are weak-willed, lily-livered vegetarian goblins. They're deeply terrified of Vikings, but they also need to trade mead with the local villagers to support their lifestyle. So when the old lady from Event 1 told the goblins (back before the heroes showed up) that Osvif the Hot-Headed had come back from the dead to seek vengeance, they figured they needed to intervene.

Being fairly clever, the goblins brought their bee-keeping apparatus with them. Just like insects and other lower beasts governed purely by instinct, Vikings become docile when exposed to the smoke of certain herbs and fungi. Right now, the dazed and drugged villagers are being rounded up so the goblins can cart them off to the safety of a nearby cave, and the pillagers have come to the wrong conclusion yet again.

(You'll note that the pillagers were largely roped into this conclusion, but hey, that's **Rune** — if you want a game with lots of character development and deep contemplation of the inherent morality of various roleplaying options, go pick up **Ars Magica**. In **Rune**, just assume the entire horde slaughters goblins with gleeful abandon for a few minutes.)



GAIN — SHOW 'EM WHO'S BOSS

Standard: No-Fault roll; Bravery or Leadership roll vs. Difficulty 10

If the pillagers fail, the goblins are unimpressed by their dangerous antics. They see the heroes not as brave warrior-poets, but rather as the sort of death-crazed madmen that it's best to get far away from. They take advantage of the fog and vanish. All that's left is a couple of bee-keeping masks and a cage full of sedated villagers. Well, that and the rapidly approaching funeral barge of Osvif the Hot-Headed, servant of Loki ...

If they succeed, then the goblins are astounded by the heroes' fierce temperaments and single-minded devotion to rescue the villagers. In such an event,

the goblins surrender and the pillagers are gently pointed in the direction of the real threat. Read the following to them in your best fast-paced used car salesman voice:



Closer Inspection:

One of the goblins squeals, his empty hands stretched before him in a pleadingly defensive gesture. "Whoa! Whoa, there! Wait just one minute! Just what do you guys think you're doing? Okay, yeah, we get it, you're all big and heroic, and the ladyfolk of Glenskirping are going to sing your praises for the next seven generations. That's fantastic! We're on the same side, for Freya's sake! I get it, and I don't care, you can have the credit. You be the hero! That's great. We don't want the spotlight anyway. Hey, we're vegetarians, we just didn't want anybody gettin' hurt when that crazy undead brewer came to burn the place down like he did in Filsksfurt. We'll be leaving now, you get to be the heroes. It's a very cool gig, as I understand it. Just one thing — you might want to go battle that Loki-worshiper while he's still in the bay and hasn't torched the village yet. He's right over there, just about to the shore. I think I'll be going now ... here, take this for good luck!"

He then hands the group a **Category C treasure** and departs.

EVENT THREE COMBAT OPPONENTS — DRUNKEN UNDEAD



Combat Tactics: A trio of flaming drunken undead Vikings, bounding from ship to ship, belching brimstone and belting out discordant drinking songs.

Name	Type	Mix	Move	Threat Category	Adjusts	Predictable/ Self-Willed
Osvif the Hot-Headed	Sark Amen	2.1	15	Equal	Weird Magic	Self-Willed (+15)
Gauk	Sark Amen	2.1	15	Equal	Weird Magic	Self-Willed (+15)
Hauk	Sark Amen	2.1	15	Equal	Weird Magic	Self-Willed (+15)

Points Spent: 45 (Self-Willed)

Points Spent: 40 (Standard roll, Difficulty 10)

Points Earned: -30 (Category C treasure); -15 (No-Fault); -10 (Alternate Method)



Narration:

The last of the goblins runs in fear, leaving the villagers behind, locked in a cage and lethargic from the bee-keeping fog. Glancing off in the direction of the water, you see a big flaming funeral barge approaching the bay, with sinister dark shapes dancing aboard its deck.

TERRAIN – BOATS

The village's two longboats, and several smaller fishing vessels, are laden with

supplies for a planned voyage, and are unlikely to drift or move much during the battle. Since they float upon the shallow water of the bay, they constitute an **additional level**.

Points Earned: -5 (Additional Level)



TERRAIN – WAIST-DEEP WATER

The shallow water of the bay is unlikely to drown anyone, but it does make it hard to move. It constitutes **uneven ground** in all the shaded areas of the map below.

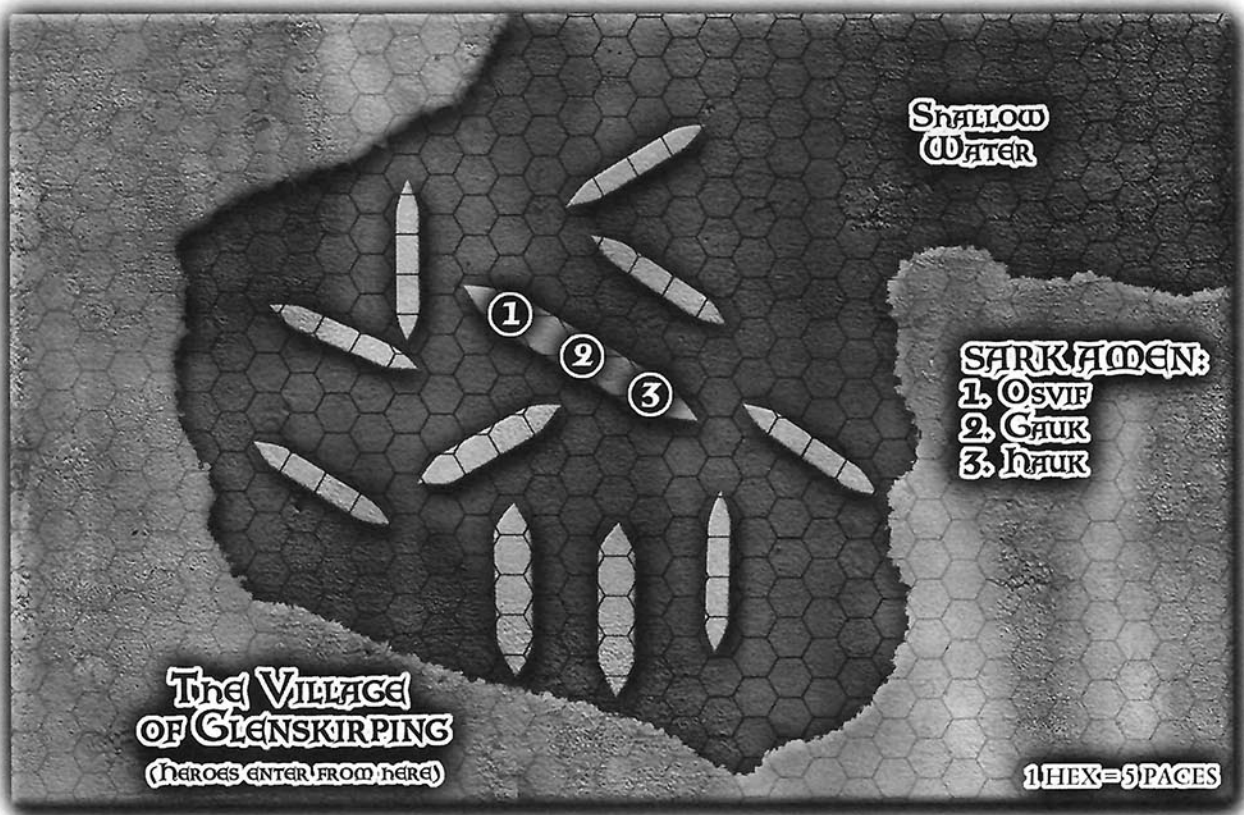
Points Earned: -7 (Uneven Ground, covers 1/2 to 2/3 of the area)

TERRAIN – SMOKE AND FOG

The smoke blowing from the raging fires on board the funeral vessel, coupled with the white haze of the goblins' bee-keeping fogger, makes it difficult to see details at a distance. This imposes a **-2 penalty to missile fire**.

Points Earned: -10 (-2 missile penalty)

MAP: THE (OTHER) SMOKING VILLAGE



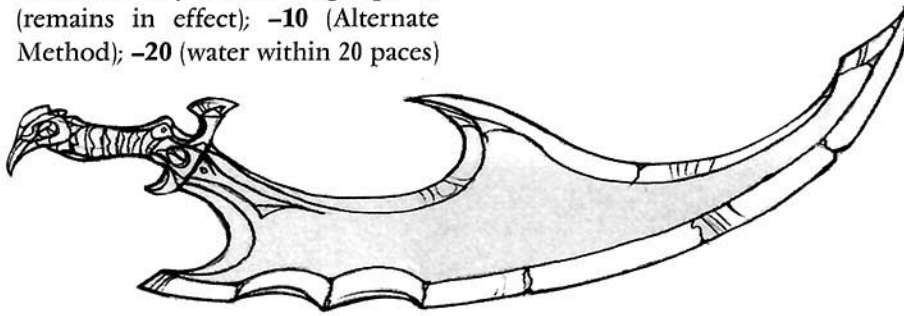
TRAP — THE FLAMING SHIP

The funeral ship is ablaze with ravaging flames, fueled by burning brew and the foul magic of Loki. Pillagers onboard this ship must watch their step, or else be lit ablaze.

Standard roll; pillagers roll **Dexterity + Dodge** or **Dexterity + Seamanship** each turn they are on the longship, vs. **Difficulty 10**. Those who fail are affected by a raging fire that will not go out until they dive into the water.

Points Spent: 40 (Difficulty 10); 36 (Raging fire)

Points Earned: -10 (Conditionally Avoidable: stay off the longship); -0 (remains in effect); -10 (Alternate Method); -20 (water within 20 paces)



TERRAIN — WEIRD MAGIC

Osvif the Hot-Headed and his companions were certainly not the sort of hardy battle-proven Dark Vikings who are typically made into one of the blood-bathed minions of Loki. But they did make a pretty mean brew, which was noteworthy enough for the Dark God to “bless” them with his attention. None of them are particularly good brawlers or archers, but they’ve quaffed draughts that should serve as nourishment to no mortal man. Such exotic liquors have deadened their senses (**Soak +2**) and gifted them with the ability to belch goutts of flame (**ATK +1**).

Points Spent: 30 (Weird Magic bonuses)



Narration:

Osvif the Hot-Headed, and his mead-addled undead cohorts have been laid low by the power of your axes and arms! The finest ambrosia will continue to flow from Glenskirping, fueling the drinking halls and fevered dreams of all of Scandinavia. Speaking of which, now that the danger is over and the villagers are awakening from their drugged slumber, methinks ‘tis time for a few rounds of that fine, fine mead to boil your blood before returning to the dank Underground. I hear the villagers are buying!

GAIN — TREASURE

For saving them from Osvif, the villagers offer mead and treasure. The heroes gain one **Category D treasure**, one **Category B treasure**, and **6 oz. of silver**.

Points Earned: -40 (Category D treasure); -20 (Category B treasure); -6 (6 oz. silver)

ENCOUNTER COST TABLE

Item	Points Spent	Item	Points Earned
Lady or the Brambles Trap	35	What Happened Here? Gain	-20
Bee Bomb Trap	55	What Was That About Goblins? Gain	-28
Show ‘Em Who’s Boss Difficulty	40	Lady or Brambles Avoidable & First Exposure	-15
Flaming Ship Difficulty	40	Midpoint Of Minefield Carrot	-20
Raging Fire	36	Bee Bomb Avoidable & First Exposure	-15
Weird Magic	30	Category C Treasure	-30
Self-Willed Foes	45	Show ‘Em Who’s Boss Roll	-25
		Boats	-5
		Waist-Deep Water	-7
		Smoke & Fog	-10
		Flaming Ship Avoidable & Alternate Method	-20
		Water Within 20 Paces	-20
		Category D Treasure	-40
		Category B Treasure	-20
		6 Ounces of Silver	-6
Total Spent:	281	Total Earned:	-281
		Balance:	0

ENCOUNTER NINE

The Seventh Seal

BY CHRIS AYLOTT

Some of Yggdrasil's many branches kiss the ground of Midgard, creating places where other realms intersect with your own. While trekking along a mountain trail, an avalanche hurls your horde off a cliff and deposits you on a mysterious iceberg in just such a place. After discovering the remains of a stranded Viking sailor, you learn that the only escape is to defeat Death and destroy the seventh seal. Fortunately, you are Vikings, and Vikings laugh in the face of death!

Type: Cushion Encounter

Hook: Scandinavia
and Mythic Realms

EVENT 1: LET IT SNOW, LET IT SNOW



Narration:

The wind howls around you as you stumble down a mountain trail. You can barely see the rocks on your right. To the left is white nothingness – if you fall, you don't know whether you'll fall ten feet or a thousand feet. There's no shelter up here from the sudden storm that has swept down upon you, and your only hope for finding any is to get down the mountain in one piece.

You don't make it. You hear a "CRACK!" above, and the mountain shudders. Then a terrible rumbling begins, and grows louder by the second. An avalanche is rushing toward you!

TRAP – STICK: RUNNING IS FOR OUTLANDERS!

Some of the heroes may try to get out of the avalanche's path. Since the avalanche sends them into the rest of the encounter, there is no chance they will succeed. If they run, they must make Sprint rolls to avoid being battered by the worst of the avalanche when it catches up with them.

Any Viking who doesn't flee the avalanche has time to prepare and avoids this danger. Clever and bold Vikings will use this time to strap on their skis and get ready for an incredible downhill run.

Singular, conditionally avoidable (first exposure only) roll; roll **Sprint** vs. **Difficulty 8**, failed heroes suffer a **-2 penalty** to the Skiing roll that follows.

Points Spent: 20 (Difficulty 8); 10 (-2 penalty to the Skiing roll)

Points Earned: -25 (Conditionally Avoidable: don't run from the avalanche, First Exposure Only)



Narration:

The wave of snow and ice roars over you, sweeping you up into a maelstrom of churning debris. Those of you with skis ride desperately above the wave, dodging broken trees and boulders the size of houses. Those of you without skis curl up into little balls, trying to protect yourselves from the deadly chaos.

TRAP – STICK: RIDING THE AVALANCHE!

The heroes zoom down the hillside, trying to stay on top of the snow and dodge debris. This is a great place to describe a variety of perils – one pillager can ski around a tree trunk in his path, while another ducks as a boulder passes through where his head used to be.

Remember that any hero without skiing equipment, or who fled like a coward instead of strapping them on, rolls at a penalty of -2, and any hero without the Skiing ability rolls at a penalty of -3. The penalties are cumulative.

Standard roll; roll **Skiing** vs. **Difficulty 9**, failed heroes suffer **Dam rating 13** and **-2 penalty** to the Jumping roll that follows.

Points Spent: 30 (Difficulty 9); 27 (50% Combo Trap surcharge); 13 (Dam rating 13); 10 (-2 Balance rollpenalty)



Narration:

The avalanche comes to an abrupt halt at a sheer cliff, but you don't. You hurtle off the cliff, and for one beautiful moment you fly over the water like a gull. You see a mountain of ice far below you. At first it looks more like a snowball than an iceberg, but it grows all too quickly.



Narration Continued:

You can kill your momentum with a twist of your body, and take your chances in the sea. Or you can attempt to win fame by making the ultimate Viking ski jump, and pay the price if you fail. Which will it be?

TRAP – NOTHING BUT AIR

Any hero may attempt to land on the iceberg, even after failing the previous Skiing roll. (Of course, failing the Skiing roll makes the stunt more difficult.) Any hero may also avoid the stunt by diving into the sea. This does the character no harm, though he will be wet and cold when he climbs out of the water onto the iceberg.

Some players may expect this to be a Skiing roll, but it's actually a Jump roll. (The heroes are using their jumping skills to make a safe landing.) Any hero who succeeds lands safely on a convenient snow bank. Heroes who fail the roll hit the ice hard.

The runner is under no obligation to reassure nervous heroes that the water landing is safe, or warn overconfident heroes that they won't be using the ability that they think they're going to use to make the iceberg. Let them make their decision and then play out the consequences.

Singular, Lady or Tiger, conditional (first exposure only) roll; roll **Jumping** vs. **Difficulty 10**; a hero who fails suffers **Dam rating 20**, successful heroes win a **mutual award of 20 victory points**.

Points Spent: 40 (Difficulty 10); 25 (Dam rating 20)

Points Earned: -25 (Conditional: don't try the stunt, First Exposure Only); -20 (20 victory point reward)

EVENT 2: WHERE ARE WE?



Narration:

Whether you heroically made the jump to the iceberg, or your warrior's heart faltered and you swam to its shore like a mongrel dog, you now cling to the surface of the ice. You lie there for several minutes, enjoying being alive, enjoying being on a surface that is at least somewhat like solid ground. Eventually you get up and look around, only to discover that the cliff you fell off of has vanished.

All you can see is the ice you're standing on, the water surrounding it, and a reddish horizon. Even the sun is gone. The horizon itself looks much closer than usual — if you had to guess, you'd say it's no more than a mile away.

GAIN — YOU CAN'T LEAF, LEIF

Any hero may make a Lore roll to remember the following information.



Closer Inspection:

You know that Yggdrasil is the world-tree, whose many branches extend through all the worlds. Some of Yggdrasil's lowest branches kiss the ground of Midgard, creating places where other worlds intersect with your own. It's also been said that there are beings or events that can draw mortals from Midgard into these other worlds.

If this is what has happened to you, then getting home will be difficult. There may not even be any food in this realm, and whatever created it must be powerful and dangerous.

Singular: No-Fault, Freestanding roll; roll **Lore** vs. **Difficulty 6** to realize:

Points Earned: -10 (Freestanding roll, Difficulty 6)



Narration:

Everything seems quiet and deserted. After a few minutes of scouting, though, you discover a small shrine to Thor on the ice. A skeleton lies in front of it, its hand stretched out towards the shrine.



Background:

The skeleton belongs to a sailor named Gunnar who was shipwrecked here long ago. With no food and apparently no way to escape, he starved to death. The sad thing is that he built a shrine to his patron god and received a valuable hint about how to break the magic of the realm. He never figured out the hint, and he mistook Death's invitation to a game as an invitation to die. Gunnar may have been faithful, but he wasn't particularly bright.

SHRINE — SHRINE TO THOR



Narration:

The small alcove of hollowed-out ice isn't much of a shrine. It faces the ocean, and a tarnished silver necklace hung with Thor's hammer symbol has been placed within it. Even so, the simple faith that created it gives it a faint radiance of Thor's power.

Points Earned: -25 (Shrine to Thor)

GAIN — NEWS FROM THE BODY

If the heroes examine the skeleton, they discover **2 Category A Treasures**, and some information:



Closer Inspection:

The broad shoulders and straight limbs make it clear that this skeleton once belonged to a mighty Viking.



Closer Inspection Continued:

Most of his equipment decayed long ago, but you discover a few intact items. You also find a slate with a message scrawled in runes.

Points Earned: -20 (2 Category A)

GAIN — MESSAGE ON THE SLATE

Any hero may make a Runes roll to read the message on the slate.

Singular: No-Fault, Freestanding roll; roll **Runes** vs. **Difficulty 6** to learn:



Closer Inspection:

The slate reads,

*Ship-shorn, sea-wracked
Mortal man in malicious realm,
Death approaches, his aid unasked,
A ghastly giving grievously resisted.
Thor's shrine was no seaman's salvation;
Its message meant nothing to me.
"Break the Seventh Seal," it said,
"By winning might from withered dead."*

You're not sure what it means, but it's terrible poetry.

Points Earned: -10 (Freestanding, Difficulty 6)



Narration:

There is a whisper of wind, and something makes you look up from the body. Standing not ten feet away from you is a seven-foot-tall figure wearing a black hooded cloak. It's carrying a gigantic, razor-sharp scythe.

The being crooks a skeletal finger at you and gestures for you to follow it. It turns and glides away up around a spur of ice. Slowly, you follow, knowing deep in your bones that you have just come face to skull with Death itself!

EVENT 3: A NICE GAME OF CHESS



Narration:

You trail behind the skeletal figure of Death. The landscape has shifted a little, from solid ice to an almost equally forbidding moor. In the distance, you can see what appears to be a shepherd wandering and calling out, "Sven! Sven!" The sky grows gray, and a cold drizzle starts.

After walking for about an hour, you reach a small cottage with a mossy roof. Death stoops and goes in the door. When you follow, you find yourselves in a single room with austere furnishings. There's a bed, a table, four chairs, a stove, a cupboard, and a sink. None of the furniture looks like it has ever been used.

Death goes to the cupboard, gets out a chessboard, and puts it on the table. Leaning its scythe against the table, it sits down in one of the chairs and sets up the pieces, choosing black for its side. It looks expectantly at you, and the phrase "By winning might from withered dead" echoes in your ears.



Background:

There is nothing the heroes can do to harm or even inconvenience Death. It won't even notice. (It's very good at ignoring small annoyances like player characters.) Even its scythe is completely invulnerable to the heroes.

Death is usually an unemotional entity, but it does love a good game of chess. It will be bored and depressed if it is winning too easily, excited by a close game, thrilled if it wins against a good opponent, and a little angry (though sportsmanlike) if it loses.



Background Continued:

Some pillagers (and even runners) may wonder why Death is making such a seemingly random appearance in this encounter. Well, Death is everywhere ... he's just more noticeable in some places than others. That's our story, and we're sticking to it.

GAIN – THE STAKES

Any hero may make a Divine Awareness roll to learn more about the situation.

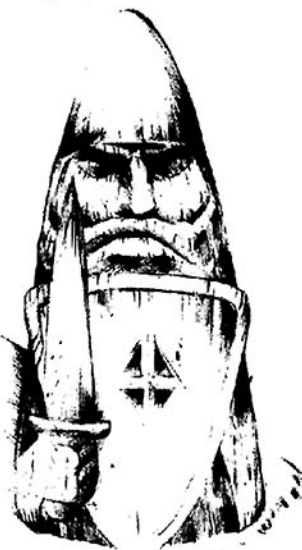
Singular: No-Fault, Freestanding roll; roll **Divine Awareness** vs. **Difficulty 6** to realize:



Closer Inspection:

You're not quite sure what the stakes are here, but defeating Death is almost certainly the key to breaking the Seventh Seal – whatever that is – and getting out of here. One thing you are sure of is that losing to Death is going to be a very painful experience.

Points Earned: -10 (Freestanding roll, Difficulty 6)



GAIN – CARROT: SPOT ME A PAWN?

A skilled bargainer can persuade Death to play with a small handicap.

Singular: Scramble roll; roll **Bargain** vs. **Difficulty 6**, a successful hero gains a **+2 increase** to his first three Gaming rolls against Death.

Points Earned: -30 (+2 increase for one roll and two rerolls, at -5 per roll)



Narration:

And so the game begins. Death is relentless, chipping away at defenses, spoiling strategies, closing off future plays. It is all you can do to stave it off, and its pieces keep moving closer to your king.

TRAP –THE GAME OF KINGS

The scoreboard rolls that make up the game (see below) should create an ebb and flow of play that is easy to describe. Death has an inexplicable fondness for knights, by the way, so they should be featured in the descriptions of its offensives.

If the hero wins, Death will touch the hero on the head with its scythe. A shimmering blue glow representing the character's Invigoration surrounds the character.

Death is eager to play more than one game of chess. (In fact, it can play several games at the same time without giving up any of its skill. It is truly a master of its game, and has several more boards stashed in the cupboard.)

However, it will not play any individual hero more than once.

Opposed, scoreboard, Lady or Tiger, conditional (remains in effect) roll; be the first with three successes rolling **Gamble** vs. **+4 modifier to baseline Res score** (Death's ability; see **Rune** pp. 129 and 139), **equipment not needed**, failure

suffers **Dam rating 25, armor-ignoring** success gains **2 points of Invigoration** until the end of the encounter.



Narration:

Heroes who win their little game with Death feel a new vigor flood their veins, while those who lose stand helpless as a small portion of their life force drains away.

Points Spent: 45 (Dam rating 25, Armor-ignoring); 30 (+4 Modifier); 20 (2 Additional Successes Required)

Points Earned: -60 (1 combat sequence [30] times 2 points of Invigoration); -20 (Conditionally Avoidable: don't play chess); -5 (Equipment Not Needed)



Narration:

After playing, Death puts away its chessboard. It leads you out of the cottage and points a desiccated finger west. You become certain that the Seventh Seal is in that direction, and set out at a brisk walk. Soon you have left the moor and are walking on the ice again.

EVENT 4: SEALING THEIR FATE



Narration:

The ice slopes down steadily towards the sea. You walk carefully, skirting holes in the ice and testing out each step for weak spots. Then you see them ...

Scattered around the very edge of the ice are six — no, seven — fluffy white baby harp seals. For a moment, even the most hardened warriors among you can barely resist the urge to say, "Awww, so cute!"

Then the seals raise their heads, their eyes burning a demonic red. With a terrible snarl, they bare razor-sharp fangs and slide across the ice toward you!



TRAP — THAT WATER'S COLD!

The icy water of the seals' lair chills mortals to the bone — it's unnaturally cold due to the chilling eldrich presence of Sven the seal. Any pillager who falls into or remains in the water must make a Stamina roll to avoid damage. The seals' warm fur coats protect them completely from the cold water.

Singular, conditionally avoidable (remains in effect) roll; roll Stamina vs. Difficulty 8, failed heroes suffer Dam rating 15, armor-ignoring

Points Spent: 25 (Dam rating 15, armor-ignoring), 20 (Exotic roll, Stamina); 20 (Difficulty 8)

Points Earned: -20 (Conditional: don't be in the water, Remains in Effect)



Narration:

As the last seal dies, there is a tremendous cracking sound from the ice. A flurry of snow blinds you for a moment, and when it clears you are standing on the beach of a fjord. You're at the bottom of the mountain you were climbing when the storm hit.

With a shrug, you return to your journey ...

GAIN — CARROT:

CLUB A BABY SEAL FOR THOR!

Any Viking using a mace, a morningstar, or a war maul gains a +2 increase to his attack roll, just because. Go ahead, club those baby seals!

Points Earned: -20 (1 combat sequence times +2 increase to ATK)

TERRAIN — SLOPE

While there are a few flat patches, most of the ice slopes downward to the sea.

Points Earned: -20 (Slope, two-thirds)

TERRAIN — SLIPPERY GROUND

The ice is treated as **slippery ground**. With their Response bonus, the seals won't have much trouble with the ice, but any character who moves more than 2 paces or takes 10 points of Raw Damage must make a **Balance** roll vs. **Difficulty 6** to avoid an embarrassing fall.

Points Earned: -15 (Slippery Ground, two-thirds of battlefield)



EVENT FOUR COMBAT OPPONENTS – DEMONIC SEALS

Combat Tactics: Six of the seals are puny opponents. However, the Seventh Seal – his name is Sven – is quite dangerous. The demonic seals use Engagement rolls to knock their opponents down slopes and into the freezing water. They can also duck into a hole, swim underneath the battlefield, and come up through another hole to attack the heroes from the high ground. The seals are subject to attacks of opportunity while swimming under the ice, but are treated as if they have full cover. If they are in the water with a hero, they will use Engagement to knock the hero under the ice and trap him there. A seal can take a half move, enter or leave the water, and then take another half move. Since it is important to have seven seals, any Mix Value adjustments should adjust their threat levels instead of their number. The Max. Threat of a demonic seal is Exceptional, and the Benchmark is 7.

Name	Type	Mix	Move	Threat Category	Adjusts	Predictable/ Self-Willed
Sven	Demonic Seal	3	10 on land, 30 in water	Exceptional	+3 DAM, -3 Soak, +6 Res	Predictable (+0)
Fluffy	Demonic Seal	.5	10 on land, 30 in water	Weak	+3 DAM, -3 Soak, +6 Res	Predictable (+0)
Happy	Demonic Seal	.5	10 on land, 30 in water	Weak	+3 DAM, -3 Soak, +6 Res	Predictable (+0)
Sneezy	Demonic Seal	.5	10 on land, 30 in water	Weak	+3 DAM, -3 Soak, +6 Res	Predictable (+0)
Dreamy	Demonic Seal	.5	10 on land, 30 in water	Weak	+3 DAM, -3 Soak, +6 Res	Predictable (+0)
Moonglow	Demonic Seal	.5	10 on land, 30 in water	Weak	+3 DAM, -3 Soak, +6 Res	Predictable (+0)
Rosebud	Demonic Seal	.5	10 on land, 30 in water	Weak	+3 DAM, -3 Soak, +6 Res	Predictable (+0)

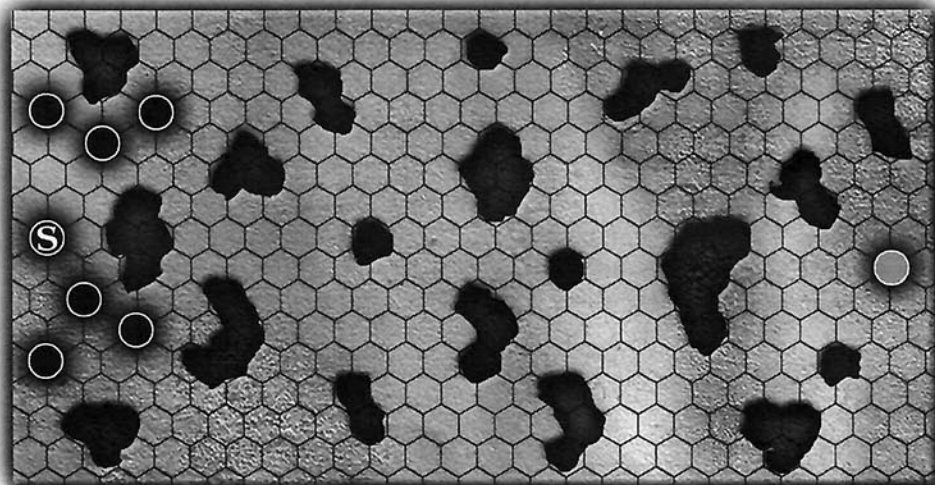
Points Spent: 0

MAP: SEALING THEIR FATE

Key:

- = DEMONIC SEAL
- = SVEN
- = HEROES START HERE

1 HEX = 3 PACES



ENCOUNTER COST TABLE

Item	Points Spent	Item	Points Earned
Running is for Outlanders	30	Avoid: Running Like an Outlander	-25
Riding the Avalanche	80	Nothing But Air Avoid and Victory Point Award	-45
Nothing But Air	65	Freestanding Roll: You Can't Leaf	-10
The Game of Kings	95	Shrine of Thor	-25
That Water's Cold	65	Treasure: 2 Category A	-20
		Freestanding Roll: The Message on the Slate	-10
		Freestanding Roll: The Stakes	-10
		Carrot: Spot Me a Pawn?	-30
		Game of Kings Invigoration, Avoid and No Equipment	-85
		Carrot: Club a Baby Seal for Thor	-20
		Terrain: Slope & Slippery Ground	-35
		Avoid: That Water's Cold	-20
Total Spent:	335*	Total Earned:	-335*
		Balance:	0

* Cushion encounters have a starting budget of 350 encounter points, despite the typo in the Rune rulebook on page 177. See www.atlas-games.com for current errata and a conversion of this encounter to a starting budget of 300 encounter points.

ENCOUNTER TEN

The Remorse of Honir

BY SCOTT REEVES

While traversing the deepest forests of Scandinavia, your horde stumbles upon a weeping, once-proud warrior, who reveals himself as none other than long-legged Honir, the most fair and foolish of the Viking gods! You must defeat a devious troll crone and her nightmarish tree of thorns, then restore the head of a living statue to assuage the tormented god's grief. You will no doubt be rewarded for your bravery, but the gods are unpredictable, and their gifts often carry a price!

Type: Cushion Encounter

Hook: Scandinavia*

INTRODUCTION: THE FAIR FOOL



Background:

The gods of the Vikings divide themselves into two factions: the wise, warlike Aesir and the ancient, unbri-dled Vanir. Although they now live in peace, the Aesir and Vanir once waged a brutal war that shook the very founda-tions of Asgard.

The upstart Aesir are Asgard's princi-pal deities, ruling the Realms of Myth from lofty Valhalla. Their ranks include wise Odin, fierce Thor, stead-fast Tyr, vigilant Heimdal, and treach-erous Loki. They are the patrons of Viking civilization.

The Vanir are the oldest of the gods, ruling over nature, luck, and magic.

Most renowned of the Vanir are Njord and his children Freyja and Freyr. They make their home in Vanaheim, a small corner of Asgard.

To seal their truce, the Aesir proposed an exchange of hostages. They offered Honir, an imposing warrior of low wit and great beauty, claiming he was fit to be a leader of the Vanir. He was accompanied by the wise god Mimir, advisor to Odin and guardian of the Fount of Wisdom.

The Vanir gladly accepted, and elevat-ed Honir to a position of great honor and responsibility. In exchange they sent their most revered members to the Aesir — Njord, Freyja and Freyr.

With Mimir to guide him, Honir was able to hide his foolishness for a time, but the Vanir quickly discovered Odin's treachery. In their rage they cut off Mimir's head and sent Honir back to Valhalla.

Although Odin was unable to revive Mimir, he was able to keep the fallen god's head from dying or decaying. Bound with powerful magics, the head of Mimir resides eternally at the Fount of Wisdom. Fortunately, Odin's deception and the Vanir's rage did not reignite their lust for battle. The Aesir and Vanir hold their truce to this day, their previous differences all but forgotten.

EVENT 1: TEARS OF A GOD



Narration:

As your horde travels through the wilderness, you hear cries of grief and woe echoing off the hard stone cliffs and carrying deep into the for-est. You continue walking for almost a league, and as you draw nearer the wailing continues without a pause.

Now you stand before a once-proud warrior, marveling at his limitless grief. His shoulders shake with great sobs more befitting of a newly weaned babe than a Viking. His clothes are rent and smeared with mud. His cheeks are stained with tears.

"His head!" cries the stranger, "His poor, wise head!"

Let the heroes try to comfort or ques-tion the stranger before continuing.



Narration:

The stranger's grief is so deep that your words cannot reach him. His shrieks continue unabated. He tears mightily at his hair and beard as he shouts toward the heavens.

"Who will restore his poor wise head?"

GAIN — TEARS OF HONIR



Narration:

Tears run in grimy rivulets down the stranger's face and splash in a shallow pool at his feet.

Singular: No-Fault roll; any hero may roll **Awareness vs. Difficulty 4** to notice the following:



Closer Inspection:

As they strike the earth, each tear becomes a small nugget of silver — the bottom of the pool the stranger sits next to is covered with them!

Points Earned: -15 (No-Fault); -20 (Difficulty 4); -9 (9 ounces of silver)

CARROT/STICK COMBO — IN THE PRESENCE OF A GOD

Move quickly onto this roll without giv-ing the pillagers a chance to gather up the loot in the pool.

Lady or Tiger roll; roll **Divine Awareness vs. Difficulty 6**. Failed rolls mean the pillagers plunge their brawny arms into the muddy pool, grabbing for the silver like hogs rooting for grubs;

* This is easily convertible to the Realms of Myth, Foreign Lands, or Inhuman Lands ... any wilderness location will work.

this gives them each a **-2 decrease** to the "Show Some Respect" Demeanor roll below. Successful pillagers gain a **+2 increase** to the roll; they also learn the background information provided in the Introduction, and realize the following:



Closer Inspection:

Beneath the tear-streaked grime and matted beard, this fellow's face is fairer than any on Midgard — or even Valhalla. You stand in the presence of long-legged Honir, fairest of the Aesir!

You realize that you'd only dishonor yourselves and your village with base money-grubbing in the presence of a god ... and the wrath of the gods is not a thing to incur lightly!

Points Spent: 10 (-2 decrease)

Points Earned: -10 (+2 increase)

TRAP — SHOW SOME RESPECT

Although he is foolish and his tears are unseemly, Honir still commands the respect due to any deity. Once his identity is revealed, any hero who doesn't bow his head, drop to his knees, or praise the deity suitably risks shaming himself before the gods and his fellow Vikings. Pillagers who don't think to do this immediately after the "In the Presence of a God" roll must make the following roll to cover their heroes' gaffe:

Singular: Scramble, conditionally avoidable (first exposure); roll **Demeanor** vs. **Difficulty 8**, failed pillagers suffer **-20 victory point** Loss of Status (for shaming themselves before a god).

Points Spent: 20 (Difficulty 8); **20** (Loss of Status)

Points Earned: -20 (Conditionally Avoidable: prostrate yourself immediately after the last roll); **-5** (First Exposure only);



Narration:

At last Honir notices your presence. He raises his eyes to peer at each of you in turn.

"You'll help him, won't you?" he pleads, grasping your hands and pointing toward a thorn-choked path. "You'll help him find his poor wise head?"



Background:

Honir will not stop his pleading until the heroes agree to help him. He is too foolish to give them any information except babble about "poor wise heads" as he directs them down the correct path.



Narration:

Your promises of aid give Honir little comfort. He resumes crying and tearing his hair with renewed vigor. You realize, though, that Honir is now too consumed with grief to pay you any notice; you're sure you can remove the silver from the pool without danger or dishonor.



EVENT 2: THE TREE OF THORNS



Narration:

As you follow the twisting path, Honir's sobs and cries quickly fade into the distance. Soon all is silent, save for the tramp of your boots and the chill, groaning wind in the treetops.

After long hours of walking, a sharp smell taunts your noses. Smoke! Through the tangled thorns you glimpse the flicker of a raging bonfire. Moving forward stealthily, you see a broad clearing ringed with dense thorns; at the clearing's center burns a crackling fire.



Narration Continued:

A bent troll crone stands nearly in the coals to tend a rapidly boiling cauldron. Two crows preen themselves from atop a cluttered workbench. The reek of smoke and foul trolls' brew burns your throat and eyes.

Looming over all this is a towering tree of thorns, which nearly blocks the moon and stars. It has been many years since it bore either leaf or fruit. At its base are the desiccated corpses of a hundred Viking warriors. A thousand severed heads are tangled in its branches.

GAIN — AMBUSH OPPORTUNITY



Narration:

The crone tends her pot carefully, completely absorbed in her work. The bubbling brew and crackling fire should mask the sound of your approach. Now is the perfect time for an ambush!

Weak Link roll; roll **Stealth** vs. **Difficulty 5**, if the pillagers succeed Hungboda suffers a **-6 penalty** to ATK, DEF and Engagement rolls for the first round of combat, a **-3 penalty** in the second round, and a **-1 penalty** in the third round.

Points Earned: -50 (heroes get Ambush Opportunity); **-10** (Difficulty 5)

EVENT TWO COMBAT OPPONENT – HUNGBODA



Combat Tactics: In combat, Hungboda strikes at the heroes by swinging her ladle like a huge, two-handed mace. Anyone she hits is smeared with her foul troll brew. This has no game effect, but the runner should play up the gut-wrenching stench and its thick, greasy texture. Hungboda starts combat within charging distance of the heroes.



Name	Type	Mix	Move	Threat Category	Adjusts	Predictable/ Self-Willed
Hungboda	Troll	4	15	Terrifying	DFN-1, DAM +3	Self-Willed (+50)

Points Spent: 50 (Self-Willed)

EVENT TWO COMBAT OPPONENTS – HUNGBODA'S CROWS



Combat Tactics: Hungboda's crows, Bjarni and Bjarki, are exceptionally large members of their species. They swoop down upon their opponents, attacking with stabbing beaks and fierce rending claws. Their erratic flight makes them difficult to target.

Name	Type	Mix	Move	Threat Category	Adjusts	Predictable/ Self-Willed
Bjarni	Crow	1	30	Weak	DFN +6, DAM -3, ATK +1	Predictable (+9)
Bjarki	Crow	1	30	Weak	DFN +6, DAM -3, ATK +1	Predictable (+9)

Points Spent: 0

COMBO TRAP – HUNGBODA'S JAR OF WIND

This trap takes effect as soon as the heroes attack, before the runner rolls initiative for the first round.



Narration:

At the sound of your war cries, Hungboda leaps to her feet and grabs a small clay jar. With a curse she hurls it to the ground at her feet.

As the jar shatters, a chilling gale roars forth, filling the clearing with swirling icy gusts and frozen debris. It stings your face and threatens to hurl you to the ground. You must struggle to keep your balance.

Points Spent: 30 (Difficulty 9); 10 (Requires Combat Action); 30 (Knockdown Trap); 2 (1 die of Random Damage)



Background:

The jar contains a piece of the bitter north wind, which Hungboda captured to use in a mysterious potion. Once released it dissipates quickly and cannot be recaptured.

Hungboda is considerably heavier than the heroes and suffers no ill effects from her jar of wind. Creatures of the air, Bjarki and Bjarni ride out the gale without difficulty.



Narration:

A faint whisper stirs the tree of thorns, as a thousand dead mouths open and begin a wordless chant. The heads on Hungboda's tree have awoken and now cry out for blood! As the sound rises, your skin prickles and your hair stands on end.



Background:

Hungboda keeps the heads of her slain foes in an eternal state of undeath. They feed on the on the blood of the living and provide unwholesome energy for her magics.

Points Earned: -20 (2 bonus points affecting the heroes and their foes)

TERRAIN – WEIRD MAGIC

As soon as any combatant suffers damage, the entire clearing is suffused with weird magic, granting every combatant a +2 bonus to DAM until the end of combat.

TERRAIN – RAGING FIRE

Hungboda's bonfire is a damaging place with a Dam rating of 25.

Points Earned: -30 (Dam 25)

CARNAGE OFF THE RACK: KNOCKDOWN TRAPS

Knockdown traps are designed to leave pillagers sprawled upon the ground, gasping for air and struggling to ready their weapons. They can be terrifying magical devices, like Hungboda's jar of wind, or simple tricks like cleverly hidden trip-wires, handfuls of round stones spread upon a smooth floor, or rugs yanked quickly from under their victims' feet.

Although knockdown traps are usually employed by foes, designers can gain points by allowing pillagers to set their own traps. This may require a few additional props, like a conveniently placed rug or a good tree trunk to anchor a tripwire.

Victims of a knockdown trap suffer 2 points of Impairment for one round while they flail about trying to regain their bearings. Other characters can attempt to keep them down, and prolong the Impairment for another round, by winning an Engagement roll. These rolls may not be stacked; once the Impairment has been prolonged for another round, additional Engagement rolls will have no effect unless they're made during the next round.

For those traps that throw their victims to the ground with extreme force, designers can add up to 3 die of random damage by paying the appropriate points (see the **Rune** rulebook page 142).

If a knockdown trap affects the pillagers, then it costs the designer 30 points. Knockdown traps that affect only the pillagers' foes earn 30 points for the designer; they can never deal damage. There is no surcharge for creating a combo trap.

TERRAIN – BARRIERS

1. Strange Apparati
2. Hungboda's Workbench
3. Pile of Corpses
4. Cauldron



Background:

The strange apparati are Hungboda's alchemical equipment. She uses the corpses to fuel her bonfire.

Points Earned: -12 (-3 per Barrier; doesn't count against 3-feature limit)



Narration:

As your last foe falls to the earth, the thousand voices of the tree of thorns cease their chant and heave a sigh – the dark power that bound them has been undone. Within moments the heads crumble to ashes. Disappointed, you regard the heap of dust beneath the troll crone's tree. Clearly the "poor wise head" Honir wept for isn't here. It must lie further down the path!

GAIN – HUNGBODA'S BREW



Closer Inspection:

The soot-encrusted cauldron contains a thick, foul-smelling troll's brew. As it cools, a greasy multicolored film covers the surface.

Despite its vile odor and appearance, Hungboda's brew is actually quite beneficial. Any hero who is brave enough to drink at least a flagon full gains **1 point of Invigoration** for the rest of this encounter.

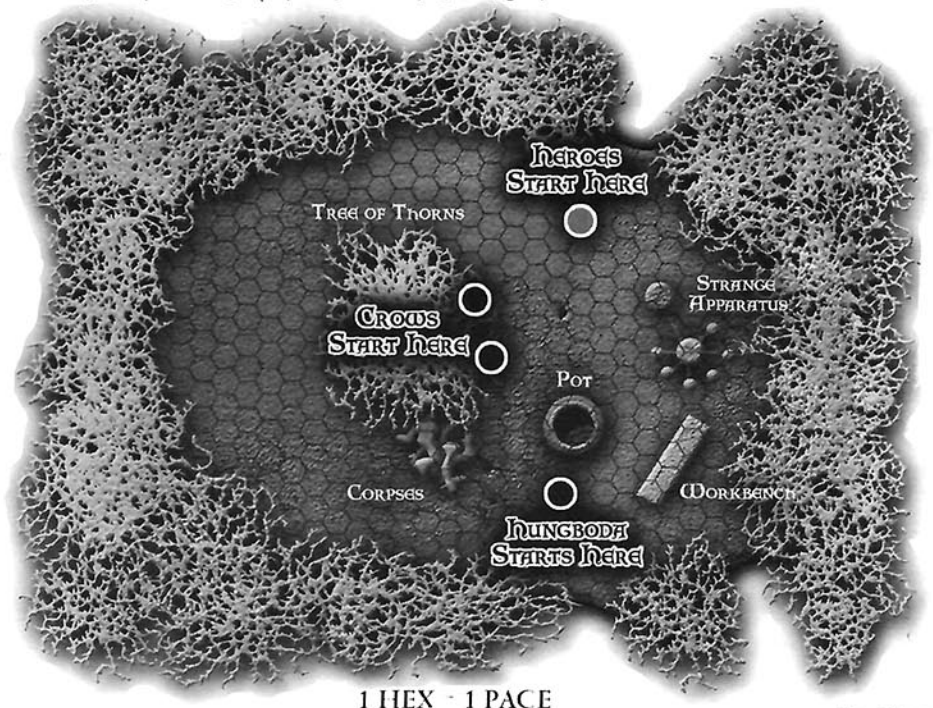
Points Earned: -35 (1 point of Invigoration for 1 combat sequence and one roll); -0 (Conditional gain)

GAIN – TREASURE

Among the scattered debris on Hungboda's workbench, the heroes find one **Category A treasure**.

Points Earned: -10 (Category A treasure)

MAP: The Tree of Thorns



EVENT 3: THE FOUNT OF WISDOM



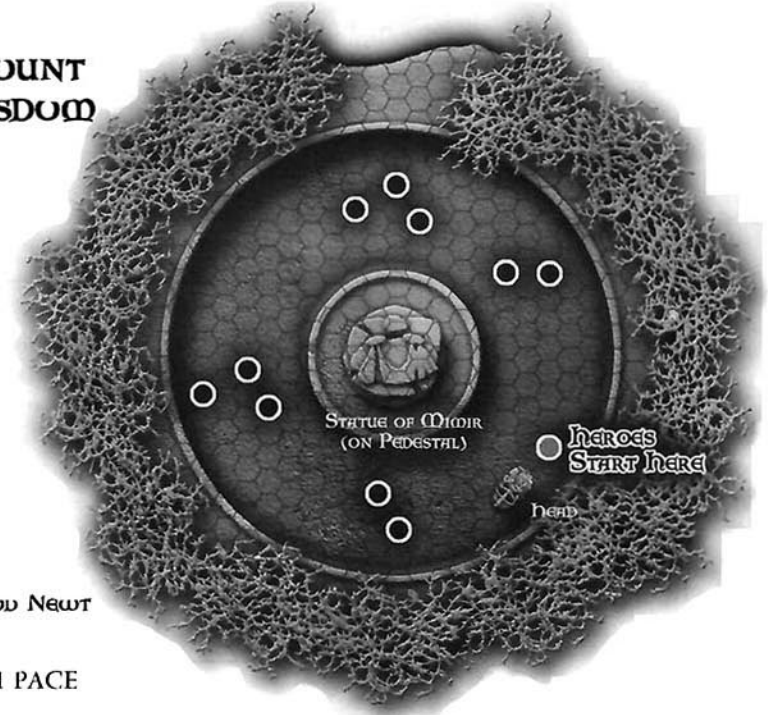
Narration:

After finding disappointment in the troll crone's lair, you take to the forest path again in search of the object of Honir's grief. The path ends at what was once a magnificent fountain. Even in decay, it is a stunning piece of craftsmanship, a tribute to the skills of the Aesir's finest artisans.

Water no longer flows here. A knee-deep pool remains, choked with debris and blood-red algae. The surface of the pool ripples occasionally, as if something swims beneath its surface. The pond smells of rotting vegetation and fish, and thorn trees have almost completely overgrown the area.

On a pedestal in the center of the fountain rests a statue of wise Mimir, companion of Honir and advisor to Odin. The statue's head has been knocked from its shoulders and it lies half-immersed in the foul water.

MAP:
THE FOUNT
OF WISDOM



● = BLOOD NEWT

1 HEX 1 PACE

EVENT THREE COMBAT OPPONENTS — BLOOD NEWTS



Combat Tactics: Blood newts are hound-sized predators and scavengers. These specimens prey on the corpses of creatures foolish or desperate enough to drink from the fountain's tainted water. In addition to their ferocious bite, the newts can use their long serrated tongues as a missile weapon, striking out at targets up to 20 paces distant. The skin of a blood newt ranges from a sickly mottled yellow to blood red. Their eyes are white and cloudy, like the eyes of a corpse. The blood newts attack as soon as any hero makes an attempt to move the head of the statue. There are ten blood newts.

Name	Type	Mix	Move	Threat Category	Adjusts	Predictable/ Self-Willed
Slurp	Blood Newt	.3	15	Pitiful	Soak -6, DAM +6	Predictable (+0)
Slip	Blood Newt	.3	15	Pitiful	Soak -6, DAM +6	Predictable (+0)
Meep	Blood Newt	.3	15	Pitiful	Soak -6, DAM +6	Predictable (+0)
Mip	Blood Newt	.3	15	Pitiful	Soak -6, DAM +6	Predictable (+0)
Chirp	Blood Newt	.3	15	Pitiful	Soak -6, DAM +6	Predictable (+0)
Cheep	Blood Newt	.3	15	Pitiful	Soak -6, DAM +6	Predictable (+0)
Pip	Blood Newt	.3	15	Pitiful	Soak -6, DAM +6	Predictable (+0)
Peep	Blood Newt	.3	15	Pitiful	Soak -6, DAM +6	Predictable (+0)
Sleeth	Blood Newt	.3	15	Pitiful	Soak -6, DAM +6	Predictable (+0)
Tango	Blood Newt	.3	15	Pitiful	Soak -6, DAM +6	Predictable (+0)

Points Spent: 0

TERRAIN – SLIPPERY GROUND

The floor of the fountain is covered with silt and algae. It counts **slippery ground**, covering 2/3 of the combat area.

Points Earned: -15 (2/3 Slippery Ground)

TERRAIN – ADDITIONAL LEVELS

The rim of the fountain and the center pedestal each count as an additional level.

Points Earned: -10 (2 additional levels)

TERRAIN – COVER

In addition to acting as an extra level, the pedestal in the fountain offers **one-third cover** for 3 characters.

Points Earned: -9 (One-third cover for 3 characters)

TRAP – STATUE OF MIMIR

Once any pillager sets foot on or past the rim of the fountain, the statue of Mimir comes to life and begins groping for its lost head. Although it doesn't intend to harm anyone, it may strike or squash heroes accidentally during its blind search.

The statue hits one hero each round. Determine the target randomly, using the Foe Target Choice Flowchart (see the **Rune** rulebook page 196). Squashing and striking have the same effect; they just allow the runner to be creative in his descriptions of the ensuing mayhem.

As it searches for its head the statue moves around the combat area, so the runner needs to keep track of its location.

ENCOUNTER COST TABLE

Item	Points Spent	Item	Points Earned
In the Presence of a God Decrease	10	Tears of Honir	-44
Show Some Respect	40	In the Presence of a God Increase	-10
Hungboda is Self-Willed	50	Show Some Respect	-25
Jar of Wind	72	Ambush	-60
Avoid Statue of Mimir	77	Terrain: Weird Magic, Raging Fire & Barriers	-62
Restore Statue of Mimir	50	Hungboda's Brew	-35
		Category A Treasure	-10
		Terrain: Slippery Ground, Additional Levels & Cover	-34
		Shrine to Odin	-20
Total Spent:	299	Total Earned:	-300
		Balance:	-1

At the beginning of each round place it next to its randomly determined target.

To Avoid Damage: **Singular, repeat shots vs. 1 victim per round; roll Dodge vs. Difficulty 9**, if the hero fails he suffers **4 dice of random damage**.

Points Spent (to avoid damage): 30 (Difficulty 9); 25 (Repeat shots vs. 1 target/round); 22 (4 dice Random Damage)

The statue cannot find the head or repair itself on its own. In order to restore it, a character must climb to the statue's shoulders and replace its head. Once the head is in place the statue returns to its pedestal and ceases to move around. Needless to say, climbing a moving, algae-encrusted object is very difficult.

To Restore the Statue's Head: **Singular, requires combat action; roll Climb vs. Difficulty 10**. Heroes who fail fall a short distance and splash harmlessly into the fountain.



Narration:

With a crack of thunder, the broken stone of the statue's neck merges without a seam. A fierce glow rises in its eyes. It stands still for several moments, blinking and vibrating with a low, sub-sonic hum. Then it turns and strides confidently back to its pedestal.

Points Spent (to restore the statue): 40 (Difficulty 10); 10 (Requires Combat Action)

GAIN – SHRINE TO ODIN

Once combat ends and the statue is restored, the fountain becomes a **shrine** dedicated to **Odin**. The heroes witness the following:



Narration:

The glow from the statue's eyes continues to brighten. Soon it is so intense that your eyes water and you cannot see. For a moment the entire fountain is encased in its warm light.

When the afterimages fade from your vision, you see the fountain restored! Fresh water trickles merrily from the pedestal into a clear pool. Where once it reeked of corruption, now the air is sweet. The cracked masonry is mended and the thorns have receded to reveal an expanse of new grass. From its pedestal, Mimir's stone image regards you with satisfaction.

You have completed your task heroically, and the blessing of Odin has fallen upon this place as reward for your valor! Your horde may enjoy its benefits before moving on to your next challenge, and whatever foul danger awaits the terrible fury of your battleaxes!



Background:

This fountain is an extension of the legendary Fount of Wisdom. The true Fount can be found in the Realms of Myth, at the foot of the World Tree.

Points Earned: -20 (Shrine to Odin)

PLOT SEQUENCE

MONASTERY ON FIRE

BY CHRIS AYLOTT

Fleeing an army of angry Franks – who were considerate enough to place their unprotected monastery near open water – your horde plunges into a bog full of deadly frogs and dangerous *loup-garou*. Before you make your way back to beloved Scandinavia, you must extract vengeance for fallen comrades and face Loki himself on the high seas. Let the smirking one beware the wrath of Viking warriors!

Monastery on Fire is a sequence of three plot encounters – a set-up encounter, a development encounter, and a climax encounter. It is intended to be run by one plotter, with cushion encounters designed the other players inserted in between each plot encounter. However, it can easily be used as three discrete cushion encounters. Either way, be prepared for a longship-load of Viking mayhem!

BOG OF THE FROG GOD

Type: Set-Up Encounter

Hook: Foreign Lands

EVENT 1: RUN AWAY! RUN AWAY!



Narration:

You bound down the hillside, and your spine jolts each time your feet slam into the ground. Your breath runs ragged in your breast, and your voice is hoarse from war cries and howls of laughter. Behind you, the battlefield echoes with the screams of the dying.

Why are you running? Why would any Viking flee battle? Because you have what you came for! You're loaded down with loot from your annual surprise raid on the Monastery of St. Durá (DUR-ray), but the Frankish army wants it back!

You have outdistanced all but their fastest horsemen already. If you can just make it to the dark and misty bog in front of you, you will escape them all and can begin the long journey back to Scandinavia. With another howl of laughter, you reach the last stretch of level ground and run as fast as you can!

TRAP – FASTER THAN A SPEEDING FRANK

The heroes try to outrun the Frankish horsemen to the bog. If they succeed, they reach the bog and find a safe hiding place. If they fail, they must engage in a short and bloody battle with the Franks before they escape (this is handled as a trap, not as a full-fledged combat).

Standard roll; roll **Sprint** vs. **Difficulty 12**, failure triggers "Gratuitous" trap below

Points Spent: 60 (Difficulty 12); 10 (Failure Triggers Trap)

GAIN – VIKINGS ASSEMBLE!

Any Viking who succeeded at outrunning the Franks may leave the safety of the bog and go back to help his companions. Any hero who does receives **15 victory points** and a **+4 increase** to the "Gratuitous Violence" trap roll below. However, the heroes who go back must face the "Gratuitous Violence" trap below, and the horde gains no other benefit.

Points Earned: -20 (+4 to "Gratuitous Violence" roll at -5 each); -15 (15 victory points at -1 each)

TRAP – GRATUITOUS VIOLENCE

Each Viking who faces the Frankish horsemen must do battle with them. The Vikings will win, of course – the Franks are only mewling outlanders. The question is: will the Vikings fight well enough to avoid injury?

Describe each Viking's hacking and slashing with gory enthusiasm if you like, but the whole fight comes down to one die roll – each hero's favorite melee fighting skill versus the Difficulty. Remember this is a weapon skill roll, **not** a conventional attack.

Standard roll; **Brawling**, **Chain Weapon**, **Great Weapon**, **Longshaft Weapon**, **Single Weapon**, or **Two**

Weapons vs. Difficulty 13, failed heroes suffer **Dam** rating 15. The +4 increase from "Vikings Assemble" may apply here.

Points Spent: 70 (Difficulty 13); 15 (Dam rating 15)

Points Earned: -20 (2 alternate methods)



Narration:

Once you're safe in the bog, you pour out your sacks of Frankish valuables. What loot did the monks share with you today?

GAIN – MONKISH TREASURE

The heroes find **9 oz. of silver**, **2 Category B treasures**, and **2 Category C treasures**. This is a good time to define the treasures and refigure Loads.

Points Earned: -60 (2 Category C); -40 (2 Category B); -9 (9 oz. silver)



Narration:

After the wealth has been comfortably packed, you peek out from the reeds. Your horde has been separated from the rest of your raiding party, and there's no chance of rejoining them with the Frankish army out there. With a sigh and a few mucky shoe-slurps, you move deeper into the bog ... maybe you can escape on the far side!

Event 2: Attack of the Killer Frogs

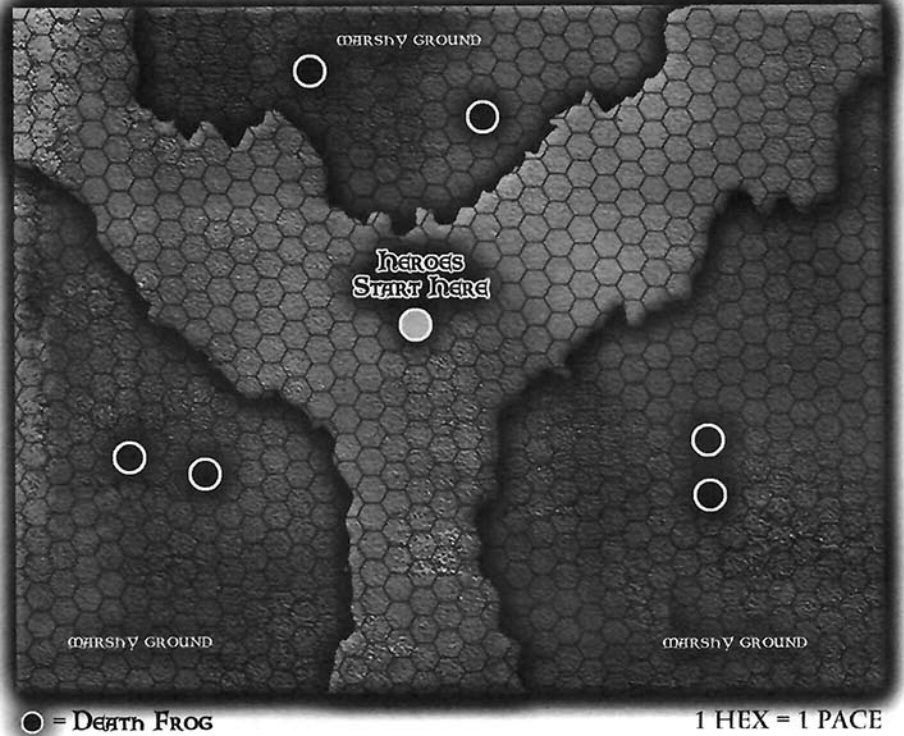


Narration:

It's a hot, sweaty summer evening. Every step seems to get dirtier and wetter, and the buzzing mosquitoes make you grunt in irritation. Then you hear a sound that chills your blood ...

"GREE-DEEP! GREE-DEEP!"

MAP: ATTACK OF THE KILLER FROGS



TRAP – DANGER ALL AROUND

Killer frogs are attacking the Vikings from all sides. Unless every hero can succeed at an Awareness roll, the horde will be surprised and unprepared to defend itself.

Weak Link roll; roll **Awareness** vs. **Difficulty 8**, if any hero failst his roll the death frogs gain an **ambush opportunity** (See **Rune** rulebook page 147).

Points Spent: 50 (Ambush Opportunity, lax sentry), 20 (Difficulty 8)

TERRAIN – UNEVEN GROUND

The muck surrounding the safe paths through the bog is **uneven ground**.

Points Earned: -7 (Uneven Ground, two-thirds of area)

EVENT TWO COMBAT OPPONENTS – DEATH FROGS



Combat Tactics: Death frogs are two-foot-long frogs with mottled green skin and a mouth full of sharp teeth. They prefer swampy areas where they can conceal themselves in mud and pools of water. They hunt in packs and worship Gree-Deep, the frog god. Death frogs can use their long tongues as missile attacks; each death frog can flick its tongue up to ten paces. The attack has a special effect, and does not do normal damage. Instead, it covers the target with sticky goo. Tongue attacks are treated as a bow attack. The tongue goo applies a **-6 decrease to Quickness**. This penalty lasts until the end of the next round, and affects the target's Initiative and DFN scores. The effects of the goo are not cumulative, but each successive goo hit extends the duration of the effect by one round. Whenever possible, a frog stops six paces away from a target and uses its tongue attack to weaken it. After a hapless Viking is covered with frog slobber, the frog leaps forward and attacks with a vicious bite. Death frogs have a Max. Threat of Inferior, and a Benchmark of 4. This is the secondary combat of this encounter; there should be one frog for each hero.

Name	Type	Mix	Move	Threat Category	Adjusts	Predictable/ Self-Willed
Marsh	Death Frog	.5	15	Weak	-2 DFN, -2 Soak, +3 ATK, +3 DAM	Predictable (+0)
Muck	Death Frog	.5	15	Weak	-2 DFN, -2 Soak, +3 ATK, +3 DAM	Predictable (+0)
Lily-Pad	Death Frog	.5	15	Weak	-2 DFN, -2 Soak, +3 ATK, +3 DAM	Predictable (+0)
Skeeter	Death Frog	.5	15	Weak	-2 DFN, -2 Soak, +3 ATK, +3 DAM	Predictable (+0)
Slimy	Death Frog	.5	15	Weak	-2 DFN, -2 Soak, +3 ATK, +3 DAM	Predictable (+0)
Hoppy	Death Frog	.5	15	Weak	-2 DFN, -2 Soak, +3 ATK, +3 DAM	Predictable (+0)

Points Spent: 0

Event 3: The Inevitable Jumping Puzzle



Narration:

The mists grow thicker. You pick your way from one bit of dry ground to another, cursing occasionally as you stumble into rotting vegetation.

You hear a splash up ahead, and then a rough male voice singing a Frankish children's song. The voice draws closer, and an old man emerges from the mist. He stops, and stares at you with half-lidded eyes. He carries a fishing spear, a lantern, and a string of fat eels.

"Allo," he says.



Background:

The man is named Paul, and he is a servant of the frog god, sent to lure the heroes to their doom. He's posing as a dim-witted eel fisherman, and will pretend to be uninterested in who the Vikings are and what they're doing in the bog.

GAIN – WAS THAT A THIRD EYELID?

Paul is a good actor, but he's still creepy. The heroes may notice this.

Freestanding roll, Singular: No-Fault; roll Insight vs. Difficulty 6 to learn:



Closer Inspection:

Something's not right about this man. He seems a little bit furtive, and every once in a while you think you see a shadow flicker across his eyes.

Points Earned: -10 (Freestanding roll, Difficulty 6)

If the Vikings attack, Paul will feign terror and flee into the bog (see "Just a Poor Fisherman?"). If they behave courteously, he will diffidently suggest his services as a guide. If they agree, he will dicker with the heroes over a price (see "Trusty Native Guidance"). If the heroes refuse his aid, he will shrug, point out the general direction they should

go, and walk off into the mists. He will reappear at the end of the encounter (see "A Hop, a Skip, and a Jump").

GAIN – TRUSTY NATIVE GUIDANCE

If the heroes bargain with Paul, he'll agree to guide them through the bog for a few ounces of silver. They can even pay him after he provides his services. (Remember, he's just trying to win their trust so he can betray them.) If the bargaining roll fails, Paul shrugs and leaves as described above. Either way, go to "A Hop, a Skip, and a Jump"

Singular roll; roll Bargain vs. Difficulty 6, if the hero succeeds then each member of the horde gains a **+2 increase** to the **Jump** roll below.

Points Earned: -10 (+2 increase at -5 each)

GAIN – JUST A POOR FISHERMAN?

If the Vikings chase Paul away, he drops a purse as he flees. Inside is **9 oz. of silver!**

Points Earned: -9 (9 oz. silver at -1 each)

TRAP – A HOP, A SKIP, AND A JUMP



Narration:

You make your way through the bog, following hints of a path. A yellow-green glow lights the mists ahead. A few minutes later, you reach its source.

The swamp is mostly water here, and the water is glowing. Animal bones are scattered around its edge, and your nose burns with the smell of sulfur.

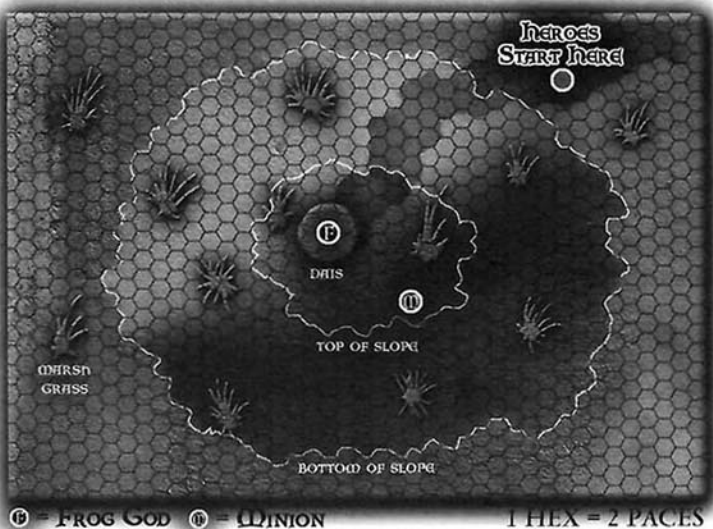
The only way across the water is a series of small islands, conveniently spaced so that you can jump between them.

The heroes must jump from island to island to avoid falling into the deadly acidic water. If Paul helps the heroes, he will point out the best places to jump, giving the heroes the +2 bonus noted above.

Standard roll; roll Jump vs. Difficulty 10, heroes who fail suffer **Dam rating 25, armor ignoring, with equipment damage.**

Points Spent: 40 (Equipment Damage); **40** (Difficulty 10); **35** (Dam rating 25); **10** (Armor-ignoring Damage)

MAP: THE FROG GOD STRIKES!



EVENT 4: THE FROG GOD STRIKES!

If Paul is with the party, he'll rush ahead and disappear up the path as the horde reaches Gree-Deep's island.

TERRAIN — MULTIPLE LEVELS

The bottom of the hill, the top of the hill, and the dais are three levels of terrain.

Points Earned: -10 (2 Additional Levels)

TERRAIN — SLOPED TERRAIN

A large slope connects the bottom of the hill and its top.

Points Earned: -20 (Sloped Surface, two-thirds of combat area)

TERRAIN — COVER

Twelve thickets of marsh grass supply **one-third cover**.

Points Earned: -36 (12 thickets 1/3 Cover)

GAIN — TREASURE

If the Vikings search Gree-Deep's dais, they find a **Category F** treasure.

Points Earned: -75 (Category F Treasure)



Narration:

You reach the last island as dawn breaks. It's much larger than the little hummocks you've jumped around on all night, and the path is clearly marked.

As you follow the path to the top, the mists part in front of you. You see Paul standing next to a large dais; on the dais is a frog twice as big as a man. It stares at you, and smacks its lipless mouth.

It says, "Thank you, mon beloved servant. Zis looks like a wonderful *petit-dejeuner!*" (puh-TEE day-JUNE-ay)



Narration:

With one last sickening splat, the battle is over. You take stock of your situation. It's full morning now, and the way out of the bog is clear. You've escaped the Frankish army, but now your small horde must find its way through a hostile countryside filled with terrible monsters. It should make a great story when you finally get back to Scandinavia!

EVENT FOUR COMBAT OPPONENT — THE FROG GOD



Combat Tactics: If death frogs aren't exactly your worst nightmare, their god might change your mind. This monster can get up to 400 lbs, and has the same abilities and tongue attack of his smaller brethren (see page 73). If he can, he'll snap his tongue at a hero from five or six paces away. Then he'll leap and attack that hero during his next action. The death frogs' god can reach a Max. Threat of Terrifying, and has a Benchmark of 15. Luckily, there's only one god at any one time.

Name	Type	Mix	Move	Threat Category	Adjusts	Predictable/ Self-Willed
Gree-Deep	Death Frog God	4	15	Terrifying	-2 DFN, -2 Soak, +3 ATK, +3 DAM	Predictable (+0)

Points Spent: 0

EVENT FOUR COMBAT OPPONENT — THE FROG GOD'S MINION



Combat Tactics: As far as **Rune** is concerned, Franks are Dark Vikings with outrageous French accents. Paul will throw his fishing spear at the heroes, then charge into melee with a sharp boning knife. The spear attack is equivalent to a bow attack.

Name	Type	Mix	Move	Threat Category	Adjusts	Predictable/ Self-Willed
Paul	Frank (Dark Viking)	2	15	Superior	None	Predictable (+0)

Points Spent: 0

SET-UP ENCOUNTER COST TABLE

Item	Points Spent	Item	Points Earned
Faster Than a Speeding Frank	70	Vikings Assemble!	-35
Gratuitous Violence	85	Gratuitous Violence: Alternate Methods	-20
Danger All Around	70	Treasure: 9 ounces of silver, 2 Category B & 2 Category C	-109
A Hop, a Skip, and a Jump	125	Terrain: Uneven Ground	-7
		Treasure: 9 ounces of silver	-9
		Was That a Third Eyelid?	-10
		Trusty Native Guidance	-10
		Just a Poor Fisherman	-9
		Terrain: Two Levels, Sloped Terrain & 12 x 1/3 cover	-66
		Treasure: Category F	-75
Total Spent:	350	Total Earned:	-350
		Balance:	0

LE LAIR OF LE LOUP-GAROU

Type: Development Encounter

Hook: Foreign Lands

EVENT 1: A FRIENDLY FACE



Narration:

You're weary, footsore, and glad to see the building on the edge of the forest you're approaching. The door stands open, and you can smell meat roasting within. A man emerges from the building holding a tankard in one hand and a dishcloth in the other. "Allo!" he shouts. "Welcome, foreign barbarians!"

He tells you his name is Jacques, and this is his inn and trading post. "I serve ze finest roast sanglier (SAN-glee-ay) in all ze land," he says. "It is a specialty!" His face falls for a moment, and he says, "Unfortunately, ze wild boar is more difficult to get than it used to be, and is expensive. However, I have a special on wolfsbane. Perhaps you would like to purchase some?"

Jacques goes on to explain that all summer, hunters and lumberjacks have seen gigantic wolves — he calls them *loup-garou* — in the forest. Several hunters have been eaten, and most of them won't venture more than a few steps into the forest now. It's been bad for business.



Background:

Jacques is friendly and charming, but he jumps from subject to subject without warning — hence the shift from the topic of food to an offer of an inedible herb.

GAIN — BARGAINING OPPORTUNITY

Jacques is eager to buy and sell, and has a wide variety of common and rare merchandise. The heroes may also buy meals (common) or wolfsbane (rare).

Wolfsbane is a new item that helps protect against *loup-garou*. Any hero wearing a sachet of wolfsbane gains a **+1 increase** to all rolls made against *loup-garou*. The effects of a sachet only last for one encounter with werewolves — after that, the wolfsbane loses its potency.

Opposed roll; roll **Bargain** vs. Jacques' **bonus of 2**.

Points Spent: 0 (Opposed vs. bonus 2)

Points Earned: -15 (Bargaining Opportunity)

GAIN — HAVE FUN

STORMING THE FOREST!

If the heroes have been behaving well, Jacques will give them a little extra advice as they leave.

Freestanding roll, Singular: No-Fault; roll **Demeanor** vs. **Difficulty 6** to learn:



Closer Inspection:

Jacques waves as you leave. "Good luck," he says, "and don't forget to stay on ze path as you journey through ze forest. Oh, those terrible *loup-garou*, they will be sure to eat you if you do not stay on ze path!"

Points Earned: -10 (Freestanding roll, Difficulty 6)

EVENT 2: HUNTED!



Narration:

You walk through the forest for a few hours. It's dark and rainy. Nightfall comes quickly, but you haven't found a good camping spot. You push on, hoping to find a suitable clearing.

Rain trickles down the back of your neck, and a long howl echoes through the night. The wolves are coming, and you are their prey!

TRAP — PANIC ATTACK

The wolves are trying to scare the Vikings into running heedlessly down the path. If the heroes fail their Bravery rolls, they flee in terror.

Standard roll; roll **Bravery** vs. **Difficulty 12**, each hero who fails suffers a **-6 penalty** to the **Awareness** trap below

Points Spent: 60 (Difficulty 12); 30 (-6 penalty at 5 each)

TRAP — WHOOPS!

The *loup-garou* have concealed a spiked pit trap on the path. It's hard enough to see at night, and a panicked Viking is very likely to plunge into it at full speed.

Standard roll; roll **Awareness** vs. **Difficulty 12**, each hero who fails suffers **6 dice random damage**. The -6 penalty from "Panic Attack" may apply to this roll.

Points Spent: 60 (Difficulty 12); 30 (6 dice random damage)

GAIN — HEALING OPPORTUNITY

After terrifying and injuring their prey, the *loup-garou* withdraw. The Vikings are well-armed, and the wolves are not ready to attack. The horde has three hours to heal.

Points Earned: -10 (Healing Opportunity, 3 hours)

EVENT 3: LOST BROTHERS IN THE NIGHT



Narration:

You move on. As you walk down the path, you hear a low hoot on your left side. A snowy white owl peers out at you from the dark leaves of a nearby tree.

It hoots again, but its beak does not move. After a moment, you realize that it is not the only owl in the tree. A second owl — the one that hooted — perches on a branch a little farther up.

Looking deeper into the forest, you see more little white shapes, each one glowing faintly in the darkness. They seem to be calling you.

all the good loot! If the players follow the owls, continue reading the narration below.



Narration:

You push aside branches, slide down a muddy slope, and cross a swelling stream. The owls flicker past you, taking up stations in the trees ahead, leading you forward.

Then you come to the clearing. It is ringed by twelve trees, and on each tree hangs a fellow Viking from your raiding party. Their gear is scattered beneath them. Their bones are snapped, their bellies open. They died in agony.

The owls circle the clearing, and one owl lands in each tree.

Points Earned: -75 (Category F Treasure); -50 (Category E Treasure); -40 (Category D Treasure); -9 (5 oz. silver at -1 each)

GAIN — AN HONORABLE FUNERAL

Viking honor demands a funeral pyre for the dead, but building one in the rain is going to be difficult. Once the bodies are burning, the owls fade away, freed to Valhalla.

Singular: No-Fault roll; roll **Survival** vs. **Difficulty 8**, unlimited extra rolls allowed, if the heroes succeed they win a **mutual award of 10 victory points** and gain a +2 increase in the Sleep roll below.

Points Spent: 40 (Combo Gain, 20 points for Difficulty 8 times 2 gains); 20 (Difficulty 8)

Points Earned: -20 (Unlimited Extra Rolls); -10 (10 victory points at -1 each); -10 (+2 increase at -5 each)

GAIN — THE OWLS ARE NOT WHAT THEY SEEM

These owls are the spirits of another horde of Vikings killed by the *loup-garou*. The heroes have a chance to figure this out for themselves.

Freestanding roll, Singular: No-Fault; **Lore** vs. **Difficulty 6** learns the following:



Closer Inspection:

It's summer, and these owls wear their winter plumage. Their faint glow suggests they are ghosts.

GAIN — THEY WON'T BE NEEDING IT

If the heroes search the scattered gear, they find **9 ounces of silver**, and a **Category D, E, and F treasure**.

EVENT 4: LOUP-GAROU ATTACK!



Narration:

You've finally found a place to camp. It's cold and wet, but it'll have to do.

Points Earned: -10 (Freestanding roll, Difficulty 6)

At the risk of ruining the linear gaming experience, the players have a choice to make here. They've been warned to stay on the path. They can do that and skip down to the next event, because the gains that follow are conditional on following the owls. If they stay on the path, though, they miss

TRAP — A MISERABLE NIGHT

By now, the Vikings are utterly exhausted. Even so, it's difficult to sleep on a wet, miserable night like this. If the horde has followed the owls and lit a pyre, they at least have the fire to help keep them warm. If not, they must make do the best they can.

Standard roll; roll **Sleep** vs. **Difficulty 6**, failed heroes suffer a **1 point Impairment** for the rest of the encounter. The +2 increase in "An Honorable Funeral" may apply here.

Points Spent: 35 (1 point Impairment for one combat and one trap)

GAIN — SENTRY DUTY

One Viking may volunteer for sentry duty. The sentry receives a +4 increase to the **Awareness** roll in the next event.

Points Earned: -20 (+4 increase at -5)



EVENT FOUR COMBAT OPPONENTS – LOUP-GAROU

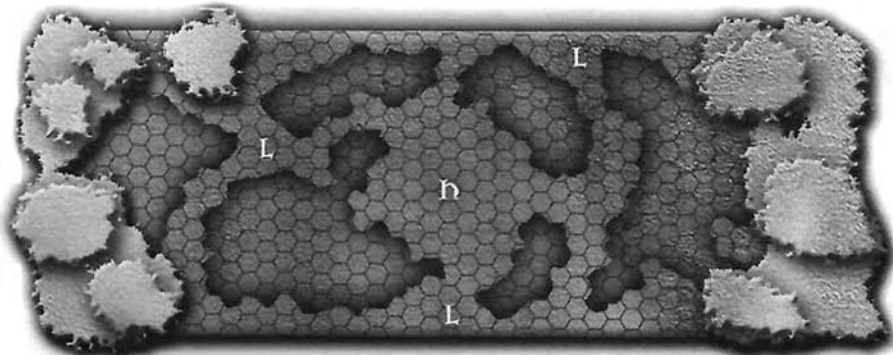
Combat Tactics: *Loup-garou* are terrible combinations of humans and wolves. They have long claws, light fur, and muscular bodies. *Loup-garou* are fast and ferocious. They are very intelligent when stalking or trapping prey, but don't think when they're in a combat frenzy. Heroes carrying wolfsbane get a **+1 increase** to all rolls made against *loup-garou* for one encounter. *Loup-garou* have a Max. Threat of Exceptional, and a Benchmark of 11.

Name	Type	Mix	Move	Threat Category	Adjusts	Predictable/ Self-Willed
Flopsaut (FLOPE-so)	Loup-Garou	2	20	Superior	+9 INIT, -2 DFN, -1 Soak	Predictable (+0)
Mopsaut (MOPE-so)	Loup-Garou	2	20	Superior	+9 INIT, -2 DFN, -1 Soak	Predictable (+0)
Queue-de-Coton (COO-duh-co-tonn)	Loup-Garou	2	20	Superior	+9 INIT, -2 DFN, -1 Soak	Predictable (+0)

Points Spent: 0

MAP: LOUP GAROU ATTACK!

Key:
H. HEROES START HERE
L. LOUP GAROU STARTS HERE
1 HEX 1 PACE



Narration:

It feels like you've barely shut your eyes when there is a shout from the sentry. You roll out of bed blinking, instinctively grabbing your weapon. Pale forms are snarling as they leap out of the woods and into the camp. The *loup-garou* are attacking!

It's about an hour before dawn. If the heroes built a funeral pyre, it's reduced to wet ashes and won't appear on the combat map.

TRAP – WAKE UP! TIME TO DIE!

Unless the Vikings wake up quickly, they'll lose precious time before they can react to the attack.

DEVELOPMENT ENCOUNTER COST TABLE

Item	Points Spent	Item	Points Earned
Panic Attack	90	Bargaining Opportunity	-15
Whoops!	90	Have Fun Storming the Forest	-10
An Honorable Funeral	60	Healing Opportunity	-10
A Miserable Night To Camp	35	The Owls are Not What They Seem	-10
Wake Up! Time to Die!	75	9 oz. Silver	-9
		Treasure: Category D, E, and F	-165
		An Honorable Funeral	-40
		Sentry Duty	-20
		Terrain: Hard Rain, Mud Puddles & Trees	-71
Total Spent:	350	Total Earned:	-350
		Balance:	0

Weak Link roll; roll **Awareness** vs. **Difficulty 8**, if the heroes fail the *loup-garou* get a **+9 increase** to their INIT rolls for the first round. The sentry from "Sentry Duty" receives a **+4 increase** to this roll.

Points Spent: 40 (Weak Link roll); 20 (Difficulty 8); 15 (+9 increase at 5 per +3)

TERRAIN – HARD RAIN

The night's rain continues, causing an **obstruction to missile fire**. All missile fire is at a **-4 penalty**.

Points Earned: -20 (-4 penalty at -5 each)

TERRAIN – MUD PUDDLES

Due to mud and water puddles, about two-thirds of the clearing is **slippery ground**.

Points Earned: -15 (Slippery Ground, two-thirds of area)

TERRAIN – TREES

Trees surround the clearing, providing **full cover**.

Points Earned: -36 (Full Cover, there are many trees but points are capped at -36)



Narration:

After dealing with the lupine pests, you settle down again for a good night's rest. Tomorrow you will face new challenges!

SCOURGE OF THE SEA

Type: Climax Encounter

Hook: Foreign Lands

EVENT 1: BEACH PARTY



Narration:

At last, you draw close to home. Seagulls call, and salt air stings your nose. The sea lies before you, and beyond that, beloved Scandinavia! But what is this?

You look down from the edge of a cliff at the beach your raiding party landed on a few days ago. A Frankish patrol is down there now, and they have captured three Viking warriors. The soldiers are now kicking apart a single longboat that has been left behind by the main raiding party for your horde. You have to get down there and stop them — fast!

siles, the Vikings must climb or jump down slippery rocks to get to the beach. The Franks notice the heroes immediately, and fire bows at them as they descend.

Any Viking making the first roll arrives at the ledge halfway down the cliff. Any Viking failing either roll falls to the beach at the bottom of the cliff.

Multiple rolls: **Endurance Test, conditionally avoidable; Climb or Jump vs. Difficulty 9, two rolls required, combat action required, failure suffers falling damage, Dam rating 10/20 (16–20 feet)**

Points Spent: 30 (Difficulty 9); 25 (Endurance Test, 2 rolls); 25 (Falling Damage, rating 10/20); 20 (Combat Actions Required, 2 rolls at 10 each)

Points Earned: -20 (Conditionally Avoidable, don't go down the cliff); -10 (Alternate Method)

TERRAIN — MULTIPLE LEVELS

There are three additional levels of terrain in the combat area: the top of the cliff, the ledge halfway down the cliff, and a pile of stones on which the Franks are keeping their hostages.

Points Earned: -15 (3 Additional Levels)

TERRAIN — SLOPES

Despite some flat areas, the rocky beach is made up mostly of steep slopes.

Points Earned: -20 (Slopes, two-thirds of combat area)

TRAP — GET DOWN!

Unless they want to sit on top of the cliff ineffectually pelting the Franks with mis-

EVENT ONE COMBAT OPPONENTS — FRANKISH PATROL



Combat Tactics: The Franks will fire bows at the descending heroes. Once the heroes have reached the beach, two-thirds of the soldiers will charge into melee. The remaining soldiers will hang back, firing bows and using the Viking hostages as cover.

Name	Type	Mix	Move	Threat Category	Adjusts	Predictable/ Self-Willed
Clodian (CLOE-dec-an)	Frank (Dark Viking)	.7	15	Inferior	None	Predictable (+0)
Meraveus (Muh-ROE-vee-us)	Frank (Dark Viking)	.7	15	Inferior	None	Predictable (+0)
Childebert (CHILL-du-ber)	Frank (Dark Viking)	.7	15	Inferior	None	Predictable (+0)
Thierry (TEE-air-ree)	Frank (Dark Viking)	.7	15	Inferior	None	Predictable (+0)
Chilperic (CHILL-per-ick)	Frank (Dark Viking)	.7	15	Inferior	None	Predictable (+0)
Sigebert (SI-ge-ber)	Frank (Dark Viking)	.7	15	Inferior	None	Predictable (+0)
Dagobert (DAH-go-ber)	Frank (Dark Viking)	.7	15	Inferior	None	Predictable (+0)
Pepin (PAY-pen)	Frank (Dark Viking)	.7	15	Inferior	None	Predictable (+0)
Louis (Loo-WEE)	Frank (Dark Viking)	.7	15	Inferior	None	Predictable (+0)

Points Spent: 0

TERRAIN – HOSTAGES

The Franks are holding three Viking jarls hostage. They are named Elgerac, Holiff, and Wigkiff. (EL-jer-akk, HOE-liff, WIG-kiff)

Points Earned: -30 (3 hostages at -10 each)

GAIN – THAT’S ANOTHER STORY

Sharp-eared heroes may hear the following exchange as they approach the hostages.

Freestanding, Singular: No-Fault roll; roll **Awareness** vs. **Difficulty 6**, successful heroes hear the following:

Clarer Inspection:
 Holiff tells Elgerac, "This is all your fault!"
 The older Viking shrugs. "It could be worse," he says. "We could have been turned into goats."

Points Earned: -10 (Freestanding roll, Difficulty 6)

GAIN – TREASURE

If the hostages survive, they present their rescuers with **5 ounces of silver**, **1 Category E treasure** and **2 Category F treasures**. If the hostages were killed, the

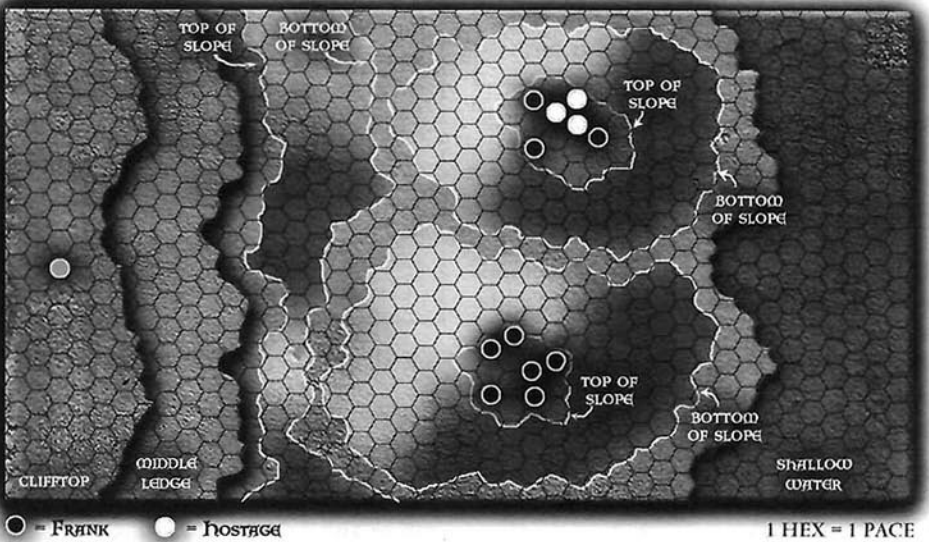
heroes can find the treasures by searching the bodies of the Frankish soldiers.

Points Earned: -150 (2 Category F Treasures at -75 each); -50 (Category E Treasure); -5 (5 oz. silver at -1 each)

GAIN – SHRINE

A small shrine to Njord – the patron of seafarers – has been built among the rocks.

**MAP:
 BEACH PARTY**



Points Earned: -15 (Shrine to Njord)

GAIN – HEALING OPPORTUNITY

After the Frankish patrol has been eliminated, the beach is a safe resting place and an unlimited **healing opportunity**.

Points Earned: -30 (Healing Opportunity, unlimited)

EVENT 2: LOOKS LIKE RAIN

Narration:
 You examine the longboat. The Franks did their worst to it, and the overlapping hull planks are cracked and misaligned. If you don't do some serious repair work, you'll be bailing all the way back to Scandinavia.

TRAP – CALLING MR. FIXIT

The Vikings must repair their longboat. It won't sink if they fail, but it will be much more difficult to sail it home.

Singular: No-Fault roll; roll **Repair** vs. **Difficulty 9**, **four extra rolls allowed**, if the heroes fail they suffer a **-2 penalty** to the Seamanship roll below

Points Spent: 30 (Difficulty 9); 10 (-2 penalty at -5 each)

Points Earned: -20 (4 Extra Rolls); -15 (No-Fault roll)

GAIN – UNWANTED ATTENTION

Unfortunately for the heroes, Loki is about to take an interest in their journey.

Freestanding, Singular: No-Fault roll; roll **Divine Awareness** vs. **Difficulty 6**, successful heroes notice the following:

Clarer Inspection:
 As you work on the longboat, you glance at the sky. A dark thunderhead is building up to the north. For a moment, you think you see a narrow, pointed face leering at you in the clouds!



Points Earned: -10 (Freestanding roll, Difficulty 6)

Event 3: Sails-Man-Ship

GAIN — CALL TO FAITH

If the players do not think of praying for a safe passage at the shrine of Njord, this roll provides an opportunity to remind them.

Freestanding, Singular: No-Fault; Lore vs. Difficulty 6, successful heroes realize:



Closer Inspection:

Those clouds look nasty. Njord is legendary for lending his strength and skill to those who travel on the whale-road; it might be a good idea for your horde to hold a brief prayer at his shrine.

Points Earned: -10 (Freestanding roll, Difficulty 6)

GAIN — THE POWER OF PRAYER

All the Vikings must succeed at demonstrating their faith to get any benefit from praying to Njord. Loki will do his best to disrupt this demonstration, of course. Any hero with a Divine Connection to Loki is distracted and uneasy during the prayer.

Weak Link roll; **Divine Awareness vs. Difficulty 8, In Defiance of the Gods: Loki**, if all heroes succeed they receive a **+4 increase** in the Seamanship roll below.

Points Spent: 40 (Weak Link roll); **20** (Difficulty 8); **15** (In Defiance of Loki)

Points Earned: -20 (+4 increase at -5 each)



Narration:

You push the ship out into the bay, hoist sail, and set off for home. The first two days are quiet, but on the third day — just as the rocky shores of home peek above the horizon — a terrible storm sweeps down the from the north.

Black clouds cover the sky, and you hear a terrible churning noise. The sea spins into a whirlpool in front of you, and a gangly man-shape rises up out of the water and looms over your small boat.

“So,” Loki says, stroking his red beard. “Did you have a fine time plundering, Vikings? Are you laden with silver and jewels? I hope so, because your safe passage depends on it.” His eyes flash. “Give me all your treasure — or die!”

TRAP — SHOCK TREATMENT

If the Vikings throw all their treasure to Loki, he departs without harming them. Once you’ve recovered from your shock and disbelief, you can read the final narration and end the adventure.

If the Vikings refuse to give up their treasure, Loki blasts them with lightning bolts. Then he departs with a shriek of laughter, leaving the horde to battle for survival against his unnatural storm.

Standard, conditionally avoidable roll; roll **Dodge vs. Difficulty 9**, failed rollers suffer **Dam rating 25, armor-ignoring**

Points Spent: 35 (Dam rating 25); **30** (Difficulty 9); **10** (Ignores Armor)

Points Earned: -10 (Conditionally Avoidable: give Loki all the treasure)

TRAP — STORMY WEATHER

The Vikings must keep the longboat afloat. If any of them fail, the boat is destroyed and they must swim to safety. One successful Swim roll is all the heroes need to wash up on shore, though they may make more Swim rolls to rescue drowning companions.

Weak Link, conditionally avoidable roll; **Seamanship vs. Difficulty 12**, if any hero fails the entire horde risks **drowning** in **Raging Waters**. The -2 penalty from “Calling Mr. Fixit,” and the +4 increase from “The Power of Prayer” may apply.

Points Spent: 60 (Difficulty 12); **60** (Drowning, raging waters); **40** (Weak Link)

Points Earned: -10 (Conditionally Avoidable: give Loki all the treasure)



Narration:

You finally reach the shore, where you are met by all your friends and relatives. They lift you up on their shoulders and carry you back to the village for a gigantic feast. It is good to be home!

CLIMAX ENCOUNTER COST TABLE

Item	Points Spent	Item	Points Earned
Get Down!	100	Get Down!: Avoidable& Alternate Method	-30
Calling Mr. Fixit	40	Terrain: Multiple Levels, Slopes & Hostages	-65
The Power of Prayer	75	That's Another Story	-10
Shock Treatment	75	Treasure: 5 oz. silver, Category E, 2 Category F	-205
Stormy Weather	160	Shrine to Njord	-15
		Healing Opportunity	-30
		Calling Mr. Fixit: 4 extra rolls & No-Fault	-35
		Unwanted Attention	-10
		Call to Faith	-10
		Power of Prayer: +4 Increase	-20
		Shock Treatment: Avoidable	-10
		Stormy Weather: Avoidable	-10
Total Spent:	450	Total Earned:	-450
		Balance:	0

RUNE

WENDOLS AND GOBLINS AND FRANKS, ON MY!

In the world of **Rune**, mighty-thewed warriors must prove themselves worthy of the favor of the gods by showing their prowess in battle. If they fail, their corpses will stand as a warning to the next brash heroes to seek their power. Fortunately, you are Vikings, and Vikings laugh in the face of death!

Enter the Viking includes ten cushion encounters and one plot encounter sequence, featuring:

- Settings in the Underground, Scandinavia, Svartalfheim, and the Foreign Land of the Franks, all ready for runners to pick up and play.
- Devious dwarven traps and mechanical monstrosities.
- New foes to challenge your pillagers: vicious giant crows, scavenging blood newts, a bloodthirsty demonic menace, thorn wolves made of poisonous briars, the wooden behemoth craftwerk, vile death frogs, the vicious *loup-garou*, and even the long-awaited great wyrm.
- A longship-load of Viking mayhem!

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Requires the use of the **Rune** RPG core rulebook, published by Atlas Games.



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