

NLS6



the northlands series:
the long night of winter

NLS6: One Night in Valhalla

by Ed Greenwood



**FROG GOD
GAMES**



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Author: Ed Greenwood
Developer: Greg A. Vaughan
Producer: Bill Webb
Editors: Jeff Harkness and Greg A. Vaughan
Layout and Graphic Design: Charles A. Wright

Swords & Wizardry Conversion: Jeff Harkness
Front Cover Art: Artem Shukaev
Interior Art: Colin Chan, Chris McFann
Cartography: Robert Altbauer



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Creative Director: Pathfinder Roleplaying Game — Greg A. Vaughan
Art Director — Charles A. Wright
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The Long Night of Winter

NLS6: One Night in Valhalla

By Ed Greenwood



One Night in Valhalla is a *Swords & Wizardry* adventure for the Northlands Saga setting and is the sixth and final adventure in *The Long Night of Winter* adventure anthology. Like the other adventures in the anthology, *One Night in Valhalla* can be dropped into a Northlands Saga campaign by the Referee at any time or place that is convenient. It is not tied to a particular location and can be placed anywhere in the Northlands that the Referee needs for his own campaign. *One Night in Valhalla* is designed for a party of characters of levels 8-10.

The Northlands Series: The Long Night of Winter



“Gather round, lads and lasses, and draw close to the hearth fire. Let the glowing coals warm your hands and a horn of mead warm your heart while the old men tell tales and sing songs of days long gone. Each winter the storms howl down from the Far North and bury our fields and halls in a thick blanket of white. They bring nights cold enough to shatter a man’s bones or freeze an aurochs’ blood in its veins, and all men huddle close to their fires in the darkness and wonder if this is finally the Fimbulwinter that will bring about the great battle of Ragnarök. Some say these harsh winters are the work of demons of the Ginnungagap sent to break the will of men in preparation for the coming End Days. Others say they are the gift of the Æsir to mold men and hone their strength as the fire tempers good steel in anticipation of those dark times.

“Me? This old skald thinks it is a time to gather close to comrades and loved ones and tell stories and lies, to swap boasts and jests, and to celebrate that the All-Father has given us one more night for the heartsblood to run hot. The morrow’s dawn is never promised us, and there are things other than the cold that stalk the long night of winter and can kill a strong man just as surely. So tilt the flagon to fill an old man’s drinking horn once again, for talk can be dry work, and lean in close to listen. I have a tale to tell you ...”

The *Northlands Series (NLS)* are standalone adventures set in the Northlands that allow the Referee to drop a one-shot game into that setting or as a short interlude into *The Northlands Saga Adventure Path* with minimal effort. They are not tied to a particular locale within the Northlands, though they may require a certain general type of terrain (e.g. mountains, forest, etc.), and they are not tied to a specific chronology. They can be played in any order, and all or none of them can be used as the Referee sees fit. They are presented from the standpoint of a fireside tale being told by an old skald to pass the long hours of a winter night, allowing the Referee to use them as short breaks from normal campaign play with different characters and without any long-term consequences, or they can be inserted into a normal campaign. The idea is to provide the Referee with the maximum flexibility for their use with a minimum of fuss.

So take them. Use them. Make them your own. The winter night is cold, and there are many hours to pass before the dawn ...

One Night in Valhalla

One Night in Valhalla is a short *Swords & Wizardry* adventure for character levels 8-10. In it, the characters find themselves in an altogether unexpected location as they are called upon by Wotan the All-Father to look into a matter of some concern within his very own mead hall of Valhalla. It is up to them to go where the gods themselves refuse to tread and take on a sinister invasion of the very realm of Asgard. But not all of the gods are equally pleased with interference, and the characters may discover to their discomfort just how very mortal they are in the face of some foes.

Of Valhalla

“Ragnarök will come, when we fight and die again as heroes. Until then, we dwell in Valhalla, in a life beyond death, as heroes rewarded.”

So said the voice of the dead hero Njartaran out of a feasting-fire an age ago; everyone knows the valkyries come for those who die with honor.

The einherjar, or honorable battle-dead, are taken up to Asgard and feasted in Wotan’s hall, Valhalla, where great heroes of ages past hunt wild beasts and spar and train by day, and eat, drink, and cavort with the valkyries by night. The valkyries take those who died with honor but not in battle to their own hall in Asgard, Sessrumnir, where those honorable dead train and feast to await Ragnarök, where they will stand the shieldwall behind the einherjar in the fray.

“So it has been,” say the old wise ones, “and so it shall be, until the coming of the end of time.”

Adventure Background

It seems that although the hunting, sparring, and feasting are going on in Valhalla as they have always done, very recently something has changed ... for the worse. Things are being stolen in Valhalla — mead cups, weapons of various einherjar, even fur cloaks and armor — and it’s causing uproar. Worse, some of the new mortal spirits that have been brought to Valhalla by the valkyries after falling courageously in battle in the mortal world are disappearing. These spirits are still considered mortal until after the first night of feasting, whereupon they wake up at the next dawn as one of the einherjar. But in recent days, 9 such mortal spirits have been discovered to be gone with the coming of the next sunrise, and no trace found of them.

The einherjar constantly accuse and challenge each other — or worse, the valkyries — and fight over the thefts and disappearances, which means there are always many wounded warriors as well as a reduction in the number of new warriors to add to their ranks. The long-term consequence to these otherwise deathless warriors is that the einherjar are not at full strength to face Ragnarök should it come suddenly upon the Nine Worlds.

The chief of the valkyries, Freyja, has had enough. She has convinced Wotan to let her slip a handful of mortal warriors some enchanted mead so these still-living heroes can travel to Valhalla to investigate. They, not belonging there, can “break the code of conduct” of Valhalla in the course of their investigation and find the true perpetrators where the valkyries and einherjar bound by the laws of the hall could not. Wotan, who knows quite well who the thieves are but did not want to intervene and risk harming the morale of the loyal but hot-blooded einherjar, agreed to the Vanir’s proposal.

Now she needs only find the right mortal heroes for the job.

Adventure Summary

The characters are brought to Valhalla by the goddess Freyja in order to discover the identity of a thief who has been stealing personal items belonging to the einherjar and sowing dissension within their ranks, as well as to determine what has happened to new spirits arriving in Valhalla that have disappeared after their first night of feasting. The characters quickly discover that, as outsiders to the inhabitants of Wotan’s hall, they are not welcome among many and suspected of being the very culprit they seek by some. Only by carefully navigating the sometimes-prickly interactions with Valhalla’s einherjar and valkyries do the characters have any chance to succeed. And even then they must still rely on the aid and support of Freyja’s chief valkyrie and Wotan’s most trusted advisor if they hope to have any chance of surviving one night in Valhalla.

Beginning the Adventure

The characters are the worthy mortals chosen by Freyja and are slipped the mead during a night of feasting and drinking. One by one they slip off into a deep and dreamless sleep and awaken in Valhalla. Though their spirits travel to the afterlife, their living bodies remain behind in this magical sleep. They remain behind unmoving and unresponsive, though completely safe and secure; an invisible honor guard of armed-and-ready valkyries stands watch around them, making sure that no harm shall befall them. While they are so indisposed and separated from their bodies, the heroes yet spend what is perhaps the safest night of their lives with the very will of the gods overseeing their well-being.

The disembodied souls of the characters leave their bodies and are whisked by Freyja to Valhalla in wraith-like form, where they arrive in the Forehall (**Area 1**). During the events of *One Night in Valhalla*, the characters have translucent-but-solid bodies, clad in ghostly duplicates of their own clothing and carrying ghostly duplicates of their own weapons and gear. As a result of this odd appearance, everyone they encounter in Valhalla immediately recognizes that they are different, though when you live in the realm of the gods the unusual becomes the usual so that the characters are not treated as intruders or trespassers. In addition, despite their strange almost-spectral forms, the characters can function normally, just as if they were in their own bodies back in Midgard. However, there are some differences due to their temporary form as explained in the **Mortals in Valhalla** sidebar.

Valkyries

These warrior women are the guardians and serving-maidens of Valhalla. They are all about 6ft tall and muscular, have long blonde hair bound into braids or ponytails, and wear a breastplate of gleaming blued steel. The only visible difference between a valkyrie on guard duty in Valhalla and one on serving duty is that the guardian wears a helm and has a spear in her hand, while the server lacks both spear and helm. At all times, every valkyrie has a dagger sheathed in each boot, and a longsword and a dagger at her belt). Brunnaharr is the only valkyrie the characters meet who has black hair and black armor (she’s one of Freyja’s personal shield maidens).

Although the valkyries can feel pain and can be wounded and killed, they are utterly fearless. They laugh during battle and delight in it. They are also absolutely loyal to Wotan and Freyja, and can’t be tricked into betrayal, neglect, or abandonment of their duty. In addition, the muster of valkyries in Valhalla while the characters visit is effectively

Mortals in Valhalla

While in their temporary wraith-like forms in Asgard, the characters experience some odd benefits. Though they can take wounds and feel pain, they don't become exhausted, fatigued, nauseated, sickened, or stunned. The one exception to this is if they become drunk by purposely imbibing too much mead or some other potent beverage, then they can experience being nauseated or sickened based on the amount they imbibe and the Referee's discretion.

If a character is reduced to less than two-thirds of his maximum hit points, he is instantly flung back one room in Valhalla, and during that involuntary teleportation (no save), he is healed of half of his current hit point damage (rounded up). If he dies before he can be flung back a room and healed, a character is "killed," but not in the normal sense. His body and gear vanish immediately, and he becomes an invisible spirit that can see, hear, smell, taste, and speak. He can continue on with his companions in this manner, providing insights to assist his fellows, though Valhalla around them slowly becomes darker and dimmer. Finally, after 2 hours the "deceased" character vanishes completely from Valhalla, whereupon he awakens — unharmed, in his own body — back in whatever locale he started when he drank Freyja's mead. He finds that he and his slumbering comrades are ringed by guardian valkyries who regard the character as a hero for his efforts in the realms of the gods. The valkyries will not interfere with the awakened character but will not allow him to disturb the sleepers. They defend themselves against the character if they must, but make only nonlethal attacks. They are otherwise friendly and may even flirt with a character who proves to be so bold as to attempt such a thing. If a character thinks of it and has the courage to dare ask a boon of a valkyrie, they provide that individual with more of Freyja's drink. A character who imbibes of the goddess's ambrosia once again quickly finds himself whisked back to Valhalla to rejoin the adventure.

endless, so they will not see any attrition of numbers at any point no matter what occurs.

The valkyries aren't shy about giving their names if asked, though they'll not volunteer them. The Referee should pick from among these sample names: Geirahöð, Geirskögul, Göll, Göndul, Gunnr, Herfjötur, Hervör alvitr, Hildir, Hlaðguðr svanhvít, Hlökk, Hrist, Mist, Ölrún, Ráðgríð, Randgríð, Reginleif, Sigrún, Skeggjöld, Skögul, Skuld, Sváva, and Þrúðr.

Valkyries: HD 10; AC 1[19]; Atk +2 *spear that returns to hand* (1d6+4), +1 *longsword* (1d8+3), +1 *dagger* (1d4+3); **Move** 12 (fly 18); **Save** 5; **AL** L; **CL/XP** 12/2000; **Special:** heal (1/day, restore full hit points to any creature), plane travel, spell-like abilities, summon (1/day, pegasus).

Spell-like abilities: at will—*cure disease*, *cure serious wounds*, *dispel evil*; 3/day—*call lightning*, *geas*; 1/day—*restoration*, *resurrection*.

Equipment: platemail, helm, +2 *spear that returns to hand*, +1 *longsword*, 3 +1 *daggers*

Einherjar

The honored dead in Valhalla are a jovial, good-natured lot — so long as they believe they're dealing with folk of mind's-worth. They can go from laughing and jesting to snarling war cries and attacking in an instant. Every one of them carries a belt knife (as a dagger) and a battleaxe, but against characters they prefer to use their fists or whatever is handy to throw (plates, skillets, and drinking horns) in nonlethal combat unless the characters draw weapons first. If the characters catch an einherji without his weapons, he readily takes up and uses wooden stools and benches as improvised heavy clubs in a pinch. They wear leathers and furs and boots of fine make, for

the one immediate reward for becoming an einherji is (finally!) to get finely crafted boots custom-made and fitted for them. (Which is why they praise individuals by saying, "Worth his boots!") If a character does something really foolish (set fire to Valhalla, for example), they appear from every direction, up to a thousand strong, and will then *not* be pleased with the characters (to put out Valhalla, they douse the flames with their tankards of ale, and then demand the characters get them refills).

Einherjar have such names as Abiorn, Aðulfr, Afvaldr, Arnhallr, Barkr, Bláinn, Brandr, Buri, Dálkr, Edvard, Egill, Fiðr, Forkundr, Garni, Geirulfr, Grímnir, Hafir, Hamall, Harðr, Hárekr, Hávaldr, Iarli, Inguar, Iolik, Iuar, Jafnhár, Jormunrekr, Julfr, Kalf, Kárn, Kolbrandr, Kolfinnr, Kraki, Kvasir, Lefsi, Leiknarr, Leikr, Lofarr, Markvard, Maurr, Mikkel, Mundi, Naddr, Nár, Niðr, Oddr, Ofbradh, Olafr, Orald, Ormarr, Osmundr, Pall, Patrekr, Ráðugr, Ragnarr, Rámundr, Raumr, Rúni, Rúnolfr, Sighurdr, Sigleifr, Skirvir, Skorri, Sparr, Stafn, Stefnir, Stormr, Styrr, Sunnulf, Tannr, Teitr, Torfi, Trausti, Tryggr, Tyrfingr, Ulfarr, Ullr, Unnarr, Utr, Vakr, Vakri, Valtar, Vargr, Veigr, Víbald, Vilhjalmr, Vragi, Ylfingr, and Yngvi. In addition, the Referee can put formidable NPC warriors — judgmental ancestors of the characters, perhaps? — among their ranks if so desired.

Einherjar: HD 7; AC 2[17]; Atk +2 *battleaxe* (1d8+2), throwing axe (1d6), belt knife (1d4), or fist (1d3); **Move** 12; **Save** 9; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 10/1400; **Special:** immunities (cold, disease, poison), rage (16 rounds/day, +2 to hit and damage), resist (electricity, fire).

Equipment: +2 *ring mail*, +2 *wooden shield*, +2 *battleaxe*, throwing axe, belt knife

Mind's-Worth and Joviality in Valhalla

If at any time in Valhalla any character acts craven or submissive or obsequious in the presence of a valkyrie or an einherji, they will be told something along the lines of: "Pah! Where is your honor, ghostly one? Not solid, not staunch — away, craven spirit!" Future interactions with them will be considered unfriendly until the characters do something to successfully change their attitude.

However, if any character tells a joke, however crude and feeble, this is greeted with loud approval every time: "Hah! To laugh at death and danger is to be one of us! So, have you heard the one about the jarl and the Bearsarker?" If the characters say "no" and ask to hear it, it is told to them:

"There was a jarl who told his warriors, 'I need someone who will watch a foe, and not stop watching him for twelve summers and winters. I will pay the one who does this his weight in hacksilver, but I will be paying for diligence. Who among you will sleep only when the foe sleeps, and hound his very heels, without taking time away for any reason?'"

"Every warrior raised his axe and bellowed, 'I will!'"

"So the jarl thought a bit, and asked, 'Who among you is lazy and would like instead to guard the women of my hall in their bedchambers?'"

"Every warrior roared, 'I will!' and waved his axe — except one, a Bearsarker. The jarl asked him, 'And you?'"

"Too lazy to raise my axe again, lord," the Bearsarker replied, "So, which bedchamber has the comfiest bed?"

This jest will bring giant guffaws from every einherjar, and sly smiles from every valkyrie within hearing every time it is told.

Unfortunately, this seems to be the only joke that any of the einherjar appears to know, though there is a cumulative 10% chance each time that one of them knows the following cutting insult as well:

"That one's so vain he wants to lead all raids, just so all the screaming women in the world will see him first!"

Again, this brings roars of approval from all einherjar and even any valkyries present every time it is spoken. However, if the characters don't likewise react as if either of these jests is the funniest thing they've ever heard, the joke-teller is in turn frosty to them.

On the other hand if any character comes up with a variation on either of these jokes, however lame, and tells it, he is instantly regarded as a trusted friend.

In addition to the above interactions, any einherjar that the characters attempt to question or watch closely has a 50% chance to feel insulted and challenge them to fisticuffs. It is likely, therefore, that the characters face fight after fight unless they can be eloquent without being craven (and if they are craven/obsequious, they will be scorned by all who witness it).

Drinking Songs

The einherjar, when not arguing or fighting, are drinking and singing. The Referee should make up low, meandering, repetitive tunes for these songs. Most of the einherjar lack the skill or vocal quality to can carry an actual melody, their rough, deep voices more suited to rhythm and chanting than hitting specific notes.

Alternate between these two songs, or feel free to add your own:

Drink, Drink

Drink, drink, for the wolves howl tonight
Drink, drink for the wind is so cold
Drink, drink, for the moon is so bright
Drink, drink, for our foes grow so old.

Drink, drink, for now I see clear
Drink, drink, where I've gone wrong
Drink, drink, for I forget fear
Drink, drink, for the rest of this song.

Drink, drink, to the arms that await
Drink, drink, to the blood that dark flies
Drink, drink, to the path never straight
Drink, drink, to the ravens' dark eyes.

Drink to the All-Father
Drink to the World Tree
Drink to our Hamingja
Drink to deep mystery

Oh, drink, drink, for the wolves howl tonight
Drink, drink, for the wind is so cold
Drink, drink, for the moon is so bright
Drink, drink, for our foes grow so old.

Hail

Hail swords,
Hail fields of blood,
Hail shield maidens.
With understanding
Regard us,
And take us up when we fall.

Hail All-Father,
Hail all-seeing ravens
Hail to our mothers who bore us.
Their wise words guide us;
Their hopes for us hearten us
Shield maidens tend us when they cannot.

In Valhalla

Upon drinking the mead of Freyja and dropping off to sleep, the characters awake in their wraith-like-yet-corporeal forms (described in the **Mortals in Valhalla** sidebox) in **Area 1**.

I. Forehall

You suddenly find yourself standing in a dimly lit hall, the ceiling lost in the darkness somewhere high overhead. The floor is a smooth expanse of masterfully fitted flagstones, all as large as the biggest shield you've ever seen — they must weigh more than a brawny warrior apiece — and the walls are the trunks of massive trees stripped of bark and smoothed, each one 12 feet or more in girth, chinked with what look like living vines. There doesn't seem to be any furniture, and all you can really see, far away down the cavernous hall, are two great swords hanging vertically, points downward, glowing with a golden, flickering light, like a hot forge fire.

Strangely, though you can feel the solid stone beneath your feet and the weight of your arms and armor, your bodies and gear are thin and insubstantial looking, almost transparent. It almost seems as if you are not wholly present in this place, though you feel no different.

Something is moving in the distance, between those swords. It's someone walking towards you — a human shape in a jet-black breastplate, helmless, with a longsword scabbarded at her side. Yes, her; a smiling beauty with skin as white as ivory and long unbound hair as dark as the raiment of Wotan's ravens. Her eyes are a starry blue and twinkling with a merry spirit. She greets you in a strong but not unpleasant voice, "Welcome to Valhalla! You have received a rare honor, being allowed here while you yet live — but what is even rarer are those who are worthy of such a boon! Are you among those rarest, I wonder?"

This valkyrie is **Brunnaharr**, personal shield maiden to Freyja herself, who knows the truth of who the characters are and why they have been brought to Valhalla. She approves of the idea, but has been instructed to gently test these ghostly mortals to learn their character, and tell them how to behave. She will cheerfully fight the characters if they treat her wrongly (attacking her, for instance), but fights only to subdue. And aided by the power and direct guidance of Freyja, the characters quickly learn that all of her strikes are successful for maximum (nonlethal damage), and all of her hit points are completely regenerated each round. If the characters are polite to her, however, she is friendly, open, and helpful with them (if they flirt with her, she finds it amusing; if anyone gets too fresh, she casually picks them up and tosses them across the room, then wags a disapproving finger after them).

Once the initial greetings have been made, she explains the following to the characters.

"You have been brought here among the gods to find a thief. The All-Father knows who steals things in his hall, of course, but it is not his way to set one who shelters under his roof against another, for to do so would harm morale, and we must always be ready to face Ragnarök."

Brunnaharr is happy to discuss matters with the characters. She will tell them the routine in Valhalla: that the einherjar here spend their days out in the golden-leaved forest that surrounds Valhalla (and "is not a place for mortals") hunting and sparring and then come back to the hall every evening to feast the night through. They then go and do it all again the

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next day. Some valkyries guard and tend to the hall and set the feasts, and others train and lead the einherjar, rotating these duties.

If the characters ask, she reveals that no one ever goes hungry in Valhalla, and dines from the finest, for “all feast from the enchanted boar, Sæhrimnir, that we cook every day but is whole again, and vigorously alive, every night. The mead in the hall comes from the udders of the goat Heiðrún, who feeds on the leaves of the ‘famous tree’ Læraðr. Wotan only drinks wine, and gives his meat to his dogs; his ravens fly and fend for themselves, out in Asgard.” If pressed for further details, she reveals that the boar is prepared by the cook Andhrimnir in a pot named Eldhrimnir.

After describing the routine of Valhalla, Brunnaharr continues her explanation.

“This routine continues unchanging, as it has for as long as all of the valkyries can remember, but something *has* changed in Valhalla. Very recently, Wotan’s hall has acquired a thief. Such things as mead cups, pieces of armor, weapons, fur cloaks, and even garments (almost all of them belonging to various einherjar who were drunk or asleep or both when the items went missing) are vanishing. These disappearances are causing an ongoing uproar, as angry einherjar accuse and challenge each other. Brawls erupt, and the wounded pile up, leaving the einherjar at less than full strength to face Ragnarök. Wotan fears that such may be the beginnings of a ploy to usher in the arrival of Ragnarök with the forces of Asgard ill prepared to face it.

“Wotan — yes, the All-Father himself — wants *you* to get to the truth of this. If you discover the identity of the thief, denounce the thief to me or any valkyrie. We will handle it from there.”

If a character thinks in regards to denouncing the thief and asks, “Even if it’s a valkyrie?” Brunnaharr answers flatly and grimly, “Even if it’s a valkyrie.”

Brunnaharr (Valkyrie): HD 10; AC 1 [19]; Atk +2 spear that returns to hand (1d6+4), +1 longsword (1d8+3), +1 dagger (1d4+3); Move 12 (fly 18); Save 5; AL L; CL/XP 12/2000;

Special: heal (1/day, restore full hit points to any creature), plane travel, spell-like abilities, summon (1/day, pegasus).

Spell-like abilities: at will—*cure disease, cure serious wounds, dispel evil*; 3/day—*call lightning, geas*; 1/day—*restoration, resurrection*.

Equipment: platemail, helm, +2 spear that returns to hand, +1 longsword, 3 +1 daggers

Development: What Brunnaharr would prefer to do, and does briskly the moment she believes characters are ready to be swayed by her, is to point the way on, between the distant glowing swords. If asked why she won’t accompany them, she tells characters she is on guard duty in the Forehall, and does not disobey the All-Father.

When characters cross the 120ft-long Forehall to the distant swords, they discover these two 8ft-long swords aren’t real but instead are glowing magical images that hover vertically in midair, their tips 3ft above the ground. Between them is a 20ft-wide veil of darkness that cannot be pierced by any light or vision. If the characters dare to walk forward into this pitch darkness, the light of the swords vanishes from their sight when they take their step. They are momentarily surrounded by utter silence, and then their next step brings them forth into sound and light once more in **Area 3**. If the characters return to the Forehall at any point during the adventure before the final encounter, they find Brunnaharr still there dutifully guarding the doors to Wotan’s hall.

If the characters look behind them instead of proceeding toward the distant swords, they find a pair of huge iron-bound double doors almost invisible in the dimness. They are closed and barred, with two huge cross-timbers lying in iron hook cradles protruding from the doors and the walls on either side. The doors themselves are 60ft wide and 75ft tall. If the characters choose to remove the bar (requiring a combined 25 strength),

Brunnaharr frowns and looks on disapprovingly but says nothing. The doors open inward easily once the timbers have been removed. If the characters ask Brunnaharr, she states that the doors lead out of Valhalla into the forested wilds of Asgard, “where mortals should *not* go.” Heading out through the doors leads to **Area 2**.

2. Outside Valhalla

Before an ice-blue, clear and cloudless sky extends above a vast, wild forest stretching away in all directions across gently rolling hills as far as you can see. Every tree has a gleaming white trunk as straight as a mast and bears leaves of gold. Directly in front of the mighty mead hall, across a hoof- and boot-churned yard, stands the most splendidly beautiful tree you have ever seen in your life, its foliage all of red-gold and glowing like fire as it catches the light of the brilliant sun above.

The great wooden walls of Wotan’s hall stretch for 200ft on either side of the entrance before rounding a corner and being lost from sight. The moment any character steps outside the gates of Valhalla, **60 valkyries**, helmed and armored and with spears and drawn longswords in hand, stride out from around these corners. This living forest of valkyries forms a shieldwall to bar any character from advancing into the forest that surrounds Valhalla, or doing anything to approach the red-gold tree Glasisir.

Valkyries (60): HD 10; AC 1 [19]; Atk +2 spear that returns to hand (1d6+4), +1 longsword (1d8+3), +1 dagger (1d4+3); Move 12 (fly 18); Save 5; AL L; CL/XP 12/2000; **Special:** heal (1/day, restore full hit points to any creature), plane travel, spell-like abilities, summon (1/day, pegasus).

Spell-like abilities: at will—*cure disease, cure serious wounds, dispel evil*; 3/day—*call lightning, geas*; 1/day—*restoration, resurrection*.

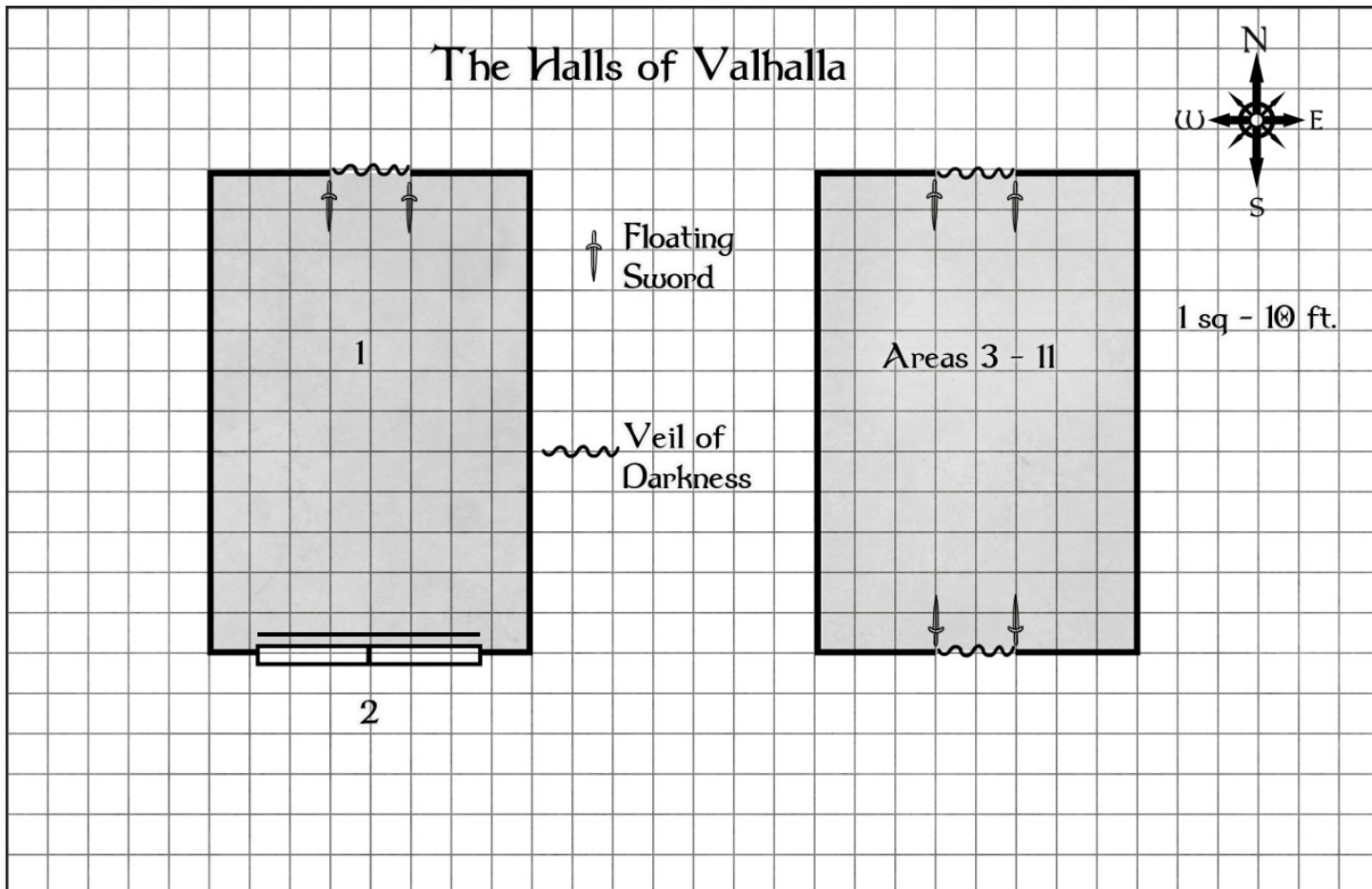
Equipment: platemail, helm, +2 spear that returns to hand, +1 longsword, 3 +1 daggers

Development: The valkyries move to prevent the characters from passing beyond them, even flying upward to block them if necessary. They fight using nonlethal attacks, even if the characters use lethal attacks of their own. If the characters persist, a dozen more arrive every round. As they reinforce their sister shield maidens, one sternly says to the characters, “Mortals must not roam Asgard, lest Ragnarök come too soon!” If even after this warning the characters persist in trying to go out into the forest, valkyrie after valkyrie says, “If you proceed, we shall surely slay you, and if you die without honor; Valhalla shall be denied to you forever! Turn back, and live with honor!” If this warning means nothing to the characters, then they truly are undeserving cravens lacking in mind’s-worth. The valkyries switch to lethal attacks and proceed to prosecute the battle with vicious efficiency. Freyja must find other heroes to assist Wotan in his hall.

If a character manages to sneak out into the forest, he is located by a patrol of 2d10+10 valkyries after 1d6 minutes. Once found, he is picked up by the scruff of the neck and the seat of the pants by a valkyrie, taken inside Valhalla, and tossed headfirst into a slopbucket (see the **Common Room Features** sidebar) in **Area 3** to general roars of jovial mirth from anyone present, though thereafter the character is still free to wander Valhalla unguarded unless he tries to go outside once again (which results in a similar response).

3. First Feasting Hall

You stand in a room dimly lit with a gentle golden light coming from glowing golden shields that cover the ceiling



Common Room Features

Many of the rooms within Valhalla have common features and furnishings that appear frequently. Rather than describe these features in detail each time, they are described here for use in any room where they are present.

Fire Pits

Set into the flagstone floor of Valhalla, these circular pits are 8ft across and 6ft deep, lined with rough masonry. The bottoms of the pits are dirt overlaid with 1–2ft of accumulated ash from past fires (the valkyries remove the ash from the pits once every few weeks). The rest of the space in the pits is occupied by a mixture of charcoal from past fires and fresh split logs serving as the current fuel. The Asgardian hardwood burns long with red flames and very little smoke (more smell than visible clouds) and individual burning brands can easily be retrieved for use as torches (with double the normal duration but only three-quarters the normal illumination). Anyone falling into or thrown into a fire pit takes 4d6 points of fire damage per round of exposure (save for half). Immunity to fire functions normally.

Slopbuckets

Set along the walls in some of the rooms in Valhalla are 5ft-diameter, 5ft-tall wooden vats (like a tall wooden wash-tub with rope handles). They are filled with “slops”: gnawed bones, the dregs of mead, spilled and trodden food, urine and feces, scooped-up vomit and sauce, and

the like that is thrown into them by valkyrie servers cleaning up after feasts or the occasional unusually conscientious einherji who actually cares where he drops his discarded trash. These contents makes for a *very* slimy interior. If a character is unfortunate enough to end up in a slopbucket, he must roll below his dexterity on 4d6 to clamber out of it without help (5d6 for dwarves and halflings).

Any character ending up in a slopbucket enjoys the full “I’m covered in reeking slime” experience but will not in fact stink or be covered in anything greasy because of their wraith-like forms. However, their forms are sufficiently solid that they can be trapped between two slopbuckets that have been stacked, one inverted atop the other. If this is done and the rope handles of the two buckets tied together, they create a reasonably secure prison cell for anyone trapped within. This is, in fact, a favorite form of einherjar prank, so they won’t hesitate to think of it if they wish to capture a character.

Attempting to capture someone within 2 slopbuckets requires that the target be grappled to be successfully moved into the bucket’s square. It requires an additional round to maintain the pin because the target must be elevated over the lip of the bucket. Once a creature is inside a slopbucket, a second bucket is dumped over the first, and the two rope handles are tied together. Obviously, against a conscious and fighting target, this is much better as a three- or four-man task.

Someone trapped inside the bucket finds that the Asgardian hardwood is very difficult to break or chop through, and even someone with a long blade has a difficult time sliding it between the lip of the stacked buckets to cut one of the tied-down rope handles (10% chance).

like overlapping tiles or shingles 60 feet above. Much the same size as the previous hall you were in, this one likewise has a floor made of huge flagstones and walls of the stripped and smoothed trunks of massive trees. Also, like that hall, two great glowing swords with points downward hang in midair at the far end.

Unlike the previous hall, this one is crossed by three lines of massive trestle tables made from rough-hewn logs of monstrous size, with simple wooden benches drawn up to them. At either end of each line of tables is 20 feet of open floor with a massive wooden tun set with rope handles standing against the wall. The closest line of tables is 20 feet from you, and there is about 20 feet of space between each of these lines. In the open space between each line of tables is a circular fire pit, 8 feet across, out of which rise flames, sparks, and the reek of wood smoke.

The two fire pits cast flickering lights across the ruddy faces of a dozen burly, bearded warriors, clad in sweat-stained, sleeveless, padded leather smocks of the sort worn under mail shirts, as well as breeches, and fine leather boots. They hold drinking-horns in their hands and drunkenly argue in not very good humor. At your appearance, they look up and fall silent. One of the fellows gives you hard glares and roars, “What’s this? Who be *you*, now?”

Standing along the walls at each end of the line of tables is a total of 6 slopbuckets, recently filled by the men sitting at the tables. These **12 einherjar** are angry and more than a little drunk. They ran out of food some time ago and aren’t pleased that the valkyrie servers tartly told them to await the feasting if they wanted more. They are more than a little touchy (one might even say truculent) and are insulted if characters appear to be watching them closely or attempt to question them. They are suspicious of the characters’ wraith-like appearance in the first place (what a perfect guise for thievery!). The einherjar initially view the characters as “evil ghosts” and won’t want to let the characters travel deeper into Valhalla without a fight. They bar approach to the way on (between the two glowing swords) and fight the characters — unless the characters can convince them otherwise, *without* seeming craven.

Einherjar (12): HD 7; HP 52, 50x3, 49, 47x3, 44, 41, 40x2; AC 2[17]; Atk +2 *battleaxe* (1d8+2), throwing axe (1d6), belt knife (1d4), or fist (1d3); Move 12; Save 9; AL N; CL/XP 10/1400; **Special:** immunities (cold, disease, poison), rage (16 rounds/day, +2 to hit and damage), resist (electricity, fire).

Equipment: +2 *ring mail*, +2 *wooden shield*, +2 *battleaxe*, throwing axe, belt knife

Tactics: The einherjar challenge the presence of the characters and have no hesitation in brawling, though they will not use lethal force unless the characters draw weapons first. If possible, the einherjar try to gang up on individual characters and deposit them in slopbuckets along the walls. If the fight turns deadly, they try to force opponents into the nearest fire pit if the opportunity presents itself. See the **Common Room Features** sidebar for more details if such a fight occurs.

4. Second Feasting Hall

You’re standing in a room dimly lit with a gentle golden light that’s coming from glowing golden shields that cover the ceiling like overlapping tiles. The room is the same size as the rooms you’ve already been in, with the same floor of smooth-fitted flagstones, and walls of debarked trunks of massive trees chinked with vines. There are the usual two glowing golden swords, hanging in midair with points

downward, on the far side of the hall from you, with darkness between them.

Like the previous room, this one is crossed by three lines of massive trestle tables made from rough-hewn logs of monstrous size, with simple wooden benches drawn up at them. The lines of tables run across your path toward the glowing swords, but there’s 20 feet of open, unobstructed floor at either end of each table-line with a massive wooden barrel with rope handles standing against the wall at the end of each. The closest line of tables is 20 feet from you, and there’s about 20 feet of space between each line of tables. In the center of each of these runs of open space is a circular fire pit in the floor.

Two large, storm-gray, furry forms lie stretched atop the two nearest runs of tables — muscular living things about the size of a large horse. Each of these things is regarding you steadily out of a single golden eye.

This feasting hall, like all the previous ones, is 120ft long. However, the “slopbuckets” when approached prove to be filled not with slops, but with fresh, clean water. The moment any character advances more than 10ft into the room or otherwise makes any attempt at intrusion, the two sprawled forms get up atop the tables and let drop massive and well-gnawed bones from their jaws to be revealed as snarling dog-like guardians. These are Wotan’s legendary pet dogs **Geri** and **Freki** (identifiable to any Northlander), but they look very much like giant one-eyed, gray timber wolves with their gleaming golden eye, huge jaws and fangs, and long black nails protruding from their paws. This might be because they *are* Asgardian wolves. They are always hungry, and they know nothing about the characters or their mission. They bound from the tables to attack these ghostly intruders as soon as the characters encroach as described above.

Geri and Freki (Abyssal Wolves): HD 7; HP 52, 50; AC 2[17]; Atk bite (1d8+1); Move 18; Save 9; AL C; CL/XP 8/800; **Special:** paralyzing gaze (40ft range, save or paralyzed for 2d4 rounds). (*The Tome of Horrors Complete* 605)

Development: The characters should think of some way of defeating the dogs or at least getting past them without killing them. Otherwise, Wotan will be furious. Aside from using spells in a clever manner, one way the characters can do this is to pin or hamper the wolves with tables or the dog’s water bowls (the slopbuckets). If the characters manage to incapacitate one of the wolves for long enough, it could be trapped inside two of the slopbuckets tied together (see the **Common Room Features** sidebar). In the slopbuckets’ cramped confines, the creature would have insufficient leverage to break out of the wooden prison. After struggling for 2d4 rounds, a trapped dog breaks out into a sorrowful and forlorn howling that brings a valkyrie in another 1d6+2 rounds to release him.

Another way to nullify a dog’s threat is to ram a bench or some other large and heavy item into its open jaws and secure it there. To be successful requires a character with at least a 13 strength to make a to-hit roll with a –2 penalty, though up to 6 characters can help in the attempt (a +1 bonus per additional character). If a bench is successfully wedged into place, the dog takes 1d6+1 rounds to work it free before it can attack again. Geri and Freki won’t leave this room, so characters who get into the next one or retreat into the previous one won’t be followed.

5. Third Feasting Hall

You’re standing in a room dimly lit with a gentle golden light that’s coming from glowing golden shields that cover the ceiling like overlapping tiles. The room is the same size as the rooms you’ve already been in with the same dimensions and general features, including the omnipresent glowing

swords and the three lines of massive trestle tables, fire pits, and slobuckets.

This room lacks wolf-dogs and valkyries, but like the first feasting hall, the benches at the tables are occupied by nearly a dozen burly, bearded warriors taking their ease without their chainmail hauberks. They are roaring insults at each other, one of them shaking an empty belt-sheath and bawling that, “But my war-knife is *gone!* And ’twas here, it was! So just show your own, to remove all stain!”

The **8 einherjar** are in the midst of an argument, accusing each other of the thefts that have been occurring. As the characters enter, the other warriors snarl back at the first speaker such things as: “Accuse me, and you besmirch my mind’s-worth!”, “I took no knife, and never would! But I’ll have your blood if *dare* you accuse me!”, “Liar! No axebrother of *mine!*”, and so on. The moment one of them spots any character — and it takes only 1 round unless the characters are actively hiding — the first speaker (rattled by the vehemence of his fellows’ responses) points at them and roars, “There! *There* are the thieves!” whereupon the brawling einherjar turn from each other and attack the characters.

Tactics: These einherjar are confused and angry by the recent goings-on and are looking for a scapegoat. They charge, drawing their axes, and strike to slay. If disarmed, they won’t hesitate to pick up benches and fight, but only use slobuckets in battle if a character makes use of one, and puts the idea into their head. If the characters flee past them or retreat into the previous room, the einherjar roar in victory and settle down to telling tales of past victories, rather than following.

Einherjar (8): HD 7; HP 50, 47, 45x3, 42, 40x2; AC 2[17]; Atk +2 *battleaxe* (1d8+2), throwing axe (1d6), belt knife (1d4), or fist (1d3); **Move** 12; **Save** 9; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 10/1400; **Special:** immunities (cold, disease, poison), rage (16 rounds/day, +2 to hit and damage), resist (electricity, fire).

Equipment: +2 *ring mail*, +2 *wooden shield*, +2 *battleaxe*, throwing axe, belt knife

6. Fourth Feasting Hall

You find yourself in the now-familiar setting of one of the long halls of this place. The glowing swords beckon from the far end, and the lines of tables cross your path with the usual fire pits and slobuckets.

Sprawled on the feasting tables or slumped on the benches are eight bleeding warriors — einherjar of Valhalla. They are clad only the rags of their bloodstained clothing, with discarded belts, axes, boots, and daggers lying about on the floor nearby. They quaff from massive drinking horns and sing songs of courage, victory, or revelry ... badly, their voices choking with pain. The source of this stammering are the ten valkyries busy stitching up wounds on the insufficiently inebriated warriors.

These einherjar severely wounded each other in an earlier brawl over thefts. Half of the slobuckets in this hall hold fresh, clear water while the other half hold blood and discarded blood-soaked bandages and clothing. Neither the **8 einherjar** nor the **10 valkyries** know of the characters or their mission. They can see at a glance that the characters are ghostly, and instantly wonder if they perhaps are the thieves that have been plaguing the halls. Regardless, they *know* that the characters have no rightful place in Valhalla, and order them out, back the way they came. If the characters are quick to obey, they are deemed craven and, therefore, guilty of the crimes for which they are suspected. If they attempt to press on, they are deemed invaders and, therefore, guilty as well. In either case, they are attacked. If the characters spend some time denouncing the crimes for which they are accused and praising the bravery of the einherjar in

attempting to bring an end to the outrage, they can defuse the angry crowd and be allowed to pass. Telling a joke or leading a drinking song also ends the fighting and starts a round of drinking and storytelling (which the characters are expected to take part in, of course).

Einherjar (8): HD 7; HP 36, 33, 32, 29x2, 27, 25, 22; AC 2[17]; Atk +2 *battleaxe* (1d8+2), throwing axe (1d6), belt knife (1d4), or fist (1d3); **Move** 12; **Save** 9; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 10/1400; **Special:** immunities (cold, disease, poison), rage (16 rounds/day, +2 to hit and damage), resist (electricity, fire).

Equipment: +2 *ring mail*, +2 *wooden shield*, +2 *battleaxe*, throwing axe, belt knife

Valkyries (10): HD 10; HP 77, 75x3, 74, 73x2, 71, 70x2; AC 1[19]; Atk +2 *spear that returns to hand* (1d6+4), +1 *longsword* (1d8+3), +1 *dagger* (1d4+3); **Move** 12 (fly 18); **Save** 5; **AL** L; **CL/XP** 12/2000; **Special:** heal (1/day, restore full hit points to any creature), plane travel, spell-like abilities, summon (1/day, pegasus).

Spell-like abilities: at will—*cure disease*, *cure serious wounds*, *dispel evil*; 3/day—*call lightning*, *geas*; 1/day—*restoration*, *resurrection*.

Equipment: platemail, helm, +2 *spear that returns to hand*, +1 *longsword*, 3 +1 *daggers*

Tactics: If battle erupts in here, only two of the Valkyries move to engage the characters. The other eight won’t leave the wounded einherjar they are tending to, and effortlessly and successfully push back down any who struggle to try to get up to fight. If the characters retreat or successfully win past the two fighting valkyries, the rest neither pursue nor raise the alarm (assuming that if victorious, they must not be the criminals, and if retreating, are no longer worth bothering with). If the characters retreat, however, the two fighting valkyries pursue to attempt to capture them (probably in slobuckets). Only if the characters attack the wounded or the tending valkyries do the rest of the room’s occupants raise arms against them, and woe be to a group of just little mind’s-worth when they face the full fury of these warrior-folk.

7. Fifth Feasting Hall

You see nothing but impenetrable darkness, but you sense a vast expanse open before you — probably a hall very much like the other rooms of Valhalla you’ve already traversed. You can see something, though ... shining red dots, moving in the darkness. *Pairs* of gleaming red dots. Eyes! Coming closer, in utter silence.

This dark and haunted feasting hall is empty of furniture but is otherwise of the same dimensions as those encountered previously. The darkness is impenetrable to all magic or sight. The hall’s fire pits are empty and cold, with a 50% chance of a random character falling into one in the dark unless specifically stating that they are avoiding that part of the room. Falling into an unseen fire pit deals 1d6 points of damage unless a saving throw is made and has a 25% chance of severely twisting a knee or ankle. This reduces a character’s Movement by half until the wound is healed. No glowing swords mark the way onward or backward in this hall, but the passage is in the same location as in all of the previous halls. The red eyes belong to **5 fallen Northlanders** brought into Valhalla by the same power as that behind the thieves. They are ghostly images of armed and armored Northlanders (much like the characters) who were once-noble warriors denied the honor of a proper burial or funeral pyre and now find their souls at the mercy of the goddess Hel, their wills twisted to her dark purposes. They arrived here in this unused hall only moments before the characters entered and have not yet emerged to begin spreading their mayhem and murder.

Fallen Northlanders (5): HD 7; HP 53, 50x2, 48, 45; AC 2[17]; Atk *longsword* (1d8 plus 1d6 negative energy) or *dagger*

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(1d4 plus 1d6 negative energy) or longbow x2 (1d6 plus 1d6 negative energy); **Move** 15 (fly); **Save** 9; **AL** C; **CL/XP** 9/1100; **Special:** -1 to hit in sunlight, negative energy (attacks deal additional 1d6 damage).

Equipment: battleaxe, dagger, longbow with 20 arrows (arrows formed of negative energy fade away after striking target)

Tactics: The fallen Northlanders are able to see in the darkness. However, the glowing pinpoints of their eyes are visible in the darkness and allow the characters to know at least where these creatures are located, allowing them to make attacks but with a -4 penalty. These creatures attempt to lure the characters into falling into the fire pits. The fallen will not retreat or attempt to leave the room without first defeating the characters.

8. Sixth Feasting Hall

Raucous drinking songs ring your ears. The dimly lit room resembles those you have seen before in form and function. The expected tables, fire pits, and wall buckets populate the foreground while paired glowing swords hang in the distance. Sitting at the table are 6 men and women with the look of the warriors to be found here, still in their mail coats. Many also wear bandages or show the angry red edges of stitched-up wounds that have been sealed with pitch or black mud. They wave drinking horns as they sing, and are loud and jovial, but even as you behold them, one of them topples over to the floor, bench and all, with a startled curse, and you see a blur of movement bending over him and then looking, momentarily, like a seventh bearded warrior before it bobs and ducks under a second warrior, spins that one around with the force of a tug that removes a gleaming dagger from his belt, and then ...

The einherjar are all in an uproar, shouting and pointing and surging up from their benches. Another one crashes to the floor, his feet swept from under him by the moving blur, and then einherjar after einherjar is seeing you and roaring challenges as axes and knives come to hand.

Before any character can react to the blurred, shapeshifting thief or do anything to stop him — or it as the case may be — it is gone across the room and between the two glowing swords. This leaves **6 einherjar** charging the characters while shouting battle challenges and insults at them. These einherjar want blood and are ready to spill that of the characters, yelling that they've "Caught the thieves at last!" They pursue any characters who retreat back the way they came but will not follow characters who flee on to the next hall. If the characters head in that direction, they see the einherjar showing fear and drawing back, muttering, "No, no!" and shaking their heads at each other as they allow the characters to depart.

Einherjar (6): **HD** 7; **HP** 51, 48, 44, 43, 40x2; **AC** 2[17]; **Atk** +2 *battleaxe* (1d8+2), *throwing axe* (1d6), *belt knife* (1d4), or *fist* (1d3); **Move** 12; **Save** 9; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 10/1400; **Special:** immunities (cold, disease, poison), *rage* (16 rounds/day, +2 to hit and damage), *resist* (electricity, fire).

Equipment: +2 *ring mail*, +2 *wooden shield*, +2 *battleaxe*, *throwing axe*, *belt knife*

9. Seventh Feasting Hall

This room conforms to those previous in shape and size but differs in its furnishings. Burning brands mounted in brackets along the walls provide the room's dim illumination,

and the only item of furniture in the room is a great chair made of a single great teardrop-shaped lump of fused iron. Its back is like the pointed tongue of a frozen flame. No one occupies this great seat, and its size is appropriate for a giant. As if in acknowledgement of this scale, a giant-sized, disembodied and embalmed head floats in the air above the throne-like chair back. It hovers in place and, as you enter, its eyelids open to reveal deep pools of darkness that regard you calmly.

The head, which looks generally human if oversized, is the confidant and advisor of Wotan, **Mimir**. As the characters enter, Mimir's gaze falls upon them and he says, "Mortals, you stand before Hliðskjalf, the throne of Wotan. I am Mimir. I know your mission, but I do not know you. So if you would pass through this hall — or survive at all — show me your wisdom, and answer riddles three. Refuse, and perish."

Mimir (Demi-lich): **HD** 11; **HP** 83; **AC** 0[19]; **Atk** steal soul; **Move** 12 (fly); **Save** 4; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 13/2300; **Special:** immune to most spells (*power word kill* and *dispel evil* spells deal 50hp damage, no save), immunities (acid, electricity, fire, polymorph), +3 or better magic weapons to hit, reforms in 1d10 days, spells, steal soul (8/day, 30ft radius, save resists). (**The Tome of Horrors Complete** 129)

Spells: at will—*death spell*

Tactics: Mimir won't actually attack the characters unless attacked first, but instead issues his riddles as described under "Development" below. However, if the characters attempt to attack, move past to the distant glowing swords or miss more than one of the riddles, Mimir attacks for 2 rounds. At the end of that time, he stops and offers to allow the characters the chance to prove themselves again with the riddles. If they refuse or continue to attack, he fights for another 2 rounds before giving them another chance, and so on.

Development: Mimir's riddles are actually quite simple for the most part and are more of a test of the characters' respect for the House of Wotan and its rules than a test of their wits. Choose three from among the following riddles or create your own.

• "Wet and silent hamperer of deeds, hinderer of words, loosener of tongues, creator of headaches and clumsiness. What am I?"

Acceptable answers: Drink, beer, ale, mead, wine, alcohol.

• "Harshly he clangs, on hard paths treading, where he has fared before. He is swung, and mightily kisses, kisses metals that all may fight and work. What is he?"

Acceptable answers: A smith's hammer (on an anvil), or a smith working at the forge.

• "What falls cold and hard to bound on flagstones and earth, but dark and wet to sink into sand or soak all else?"

Acceptable answers: Water, falling as hail (cold and hard) or rain (dark and wet, sinking and soaking). Accept all: Hail, rain, snow, and sleet.

• "What hisses through the air, upward flies to catch the eagle, and deals death when it hits, hard grip its claws the helmet?"

Acceptable answers: An arrow, or a hurled spear, or a bolt of lightning.

• "What daily marvel lights the way but swallows up lights?"

Acceptable answers: The sun.

If the characters successfully answer the riddles and their behavior impresses Mimir, he allows them to move on with his blessing: "May you succeed in this, heroes." If they do poorly, requiring several attempts to get three riddles right, or behaved poorly before gaining passage, Mimir instead says, "Could Freyja not find better? Go to your dooms, dolts." In either case, once they have answered the requisite riddles, Mimir moves aside and allows the characters to pass into **Area 10** beyond.

10. Eighth Feasting Hall

Glowing swords, trestle tables, and fire pits. This hall holds all the usual accoutrements you've grown accustomed to seeing. Six valkyries wearing hide aprons over their shining armor are hard at work within preparing the coming night's feast: slicing freshly baked hard-bread, chopping greens for a thick stew boiling in a cauldron over one fire pit next to a second cauldron of simmering gravy, and slicing a side of freshly cooked boar just taken from the spit onto large wooden platters. The succulent smells of this chamber are enough to set your mouths watering.

As the valkyries work away, you notice sitting at one of the tables in their midst are two humans with stone-gray skin — a man and a woman. They eye you with unpleasant grins on their faces. Heaped on the floor and benches around them are all manner of daggers, cloaks, pieces of armor, drinking horns, golden bowls, arm-rings, brooches, and platters of beaten silver. This collected hoard — obviously the many items stolen throughout Valhalla — are all knotted together with long, continuous cords of braided golden hair. Despite these strange-looking intruders and their obviously ill-gotten gains, the working valkyries seem to pay them no mind.

These two gray figures **Ganglati** ("Lazy Walker," the man) and **Ganglöt** ("Tardy," the woman) are both servants of the death-goddess Hel. They are unique servitors of the dark goddess who are said to be half giant and half Ginnvaettir, though this could simply be rumors they themselves have spread to increase their own reputations. The truth of the matter is that not much is known about these strange beings. The **6 valkyries** at work here are completely oblivious to their presence, thinking that they and their loot

are nothing more than already sliced cuts of boar lying heaped on platters and ready for the feasting.

Valkyries (6): HD 10; HP 72, 69, 65, 63x2, 60; AC 1[19]; Atk +2 *spear that returns to hand* (1d6+4), +1 *longsword* (1d8+3), +1 *dagger* (1d4+3); Move 12 (fly 18); Save 5; AL L; CL/XP 12/2000; **Special:** heal (1/day, restore full hit points to any creature), plane travel, spell-like abilities, summon (1/day, pegasus).

Spell-like abilities: at will—*cure disease*, *cure serious wounds*, *dispel evil*; 3/day—*call lightning*, *geas*; 1/day—*restoration*, *resurrection*.

Equipment: platemail, helm, +2 *spear that returns to hand*, +1 *longsword*, 3 +1 *daggers*

Tactics: When the characters first enter, the valkyries cannot see the gray couple or their stolen goods. Instead, they notice the characters and, like so many others, assume them to be intruders and thieves. They howl out such accusations as they move to attack. Fortunately, the valkyries make only nonlethal attacks (unless the characters make lethal attacks, in which case they respond in kind) and attempt to grapple them and trap them in slopbuckets (that hold trimmings of the feast they are currently preparing). They then tip the slopbuckets over and roll them toward the opposite doorway between the glowing swords while one shouts, "Brunnaharr! Trouble for you to deal with!" Ganglati and Ganglöt in the meantime remain careful to keep themselves and their stolen treasures out of the way of the characters. And regardless of what the characters do, the valkyries do not acknowledge their presence.

As soon as the valkyries successfully hurl a trapped character through the far exit, or if after 2 rounds the fight has begun to turn deadly (the characters and valkyries are using lethal attacks on each other), Brunnaharr strides in through the far exit. If a character in a slopbucket was hurled into the exit, then the slopbucket bounces off the formidable valkyrie without fazing her and then breaks open against the flagstones, freeing the trapped character. Brunnaharr takes only a moment to take in the situation



before her eyes fall on Ganglati and Ganglöt and widen with surprise. She then bellows, “Shield maidens of Wotan, hamper these strangers not for they serve the will of your lord and master! Mortals, now fight these false servants of Hel!” Now it is the gray couple whose eyes widen in surprise at being spotted by the newly arrived valkyrie.

Development: Ganglati and Ganglöt have been empowered by Hel and sent to sow dissension and strife within Wotan’s own hall in an attempt to bring about a premature Ragnarök against an unprepared and undermanned Æsir. She has hidden them from the eyes of the valkyries and einherjar, but they must gather sufficient mortal blood in order to use their bloodgate ability to escape back to Hel’s domain. As such, they must catch a mortal when he or she first arrives in Valhalla, brought by the valkyries from death in Midgard, and slay them for their blood before they can complete the transformation into one of the einherjar after the first night of feasting.

Ganglati and Ganglöt, Minions of Hel (2): HD 10; HP 71, 67; AC 3[16]; Atk +1/+2 *short sword* (1d6+1 [1d6+2 in darkness]) or +1 *dart* x3 (1d3+1); Move 15 (climb 9); Save 5; AL C; CL/XP 15/2900; **Special:** bloodgate (create gate to Niflheim by spilling blood of 12 mortals), hide in shadows (85%), immunities (cold, poison), regenerate (1hp/round), resists (electricity, fire), spell-like abilities, veil of Hel (can appear as any inanimate or animate object for up to 24 hours to natives of plane they are on, 1% chance to detect).

Spell-like abilities: at will—*darkness* 15ft radius; 3/day—*phantasmal force*, *mirror image*; 1/day—*haste*

Equipment: +2 *leather armor*, +1 *short sword* (+2 in darkness), 10 +1 *darts*, assorted stolen treasures (worth 6d6x500hs)

Concluding the Adventure

If the characters have successfully completed their mission for Freyja and comported themselves in a manner worthy of a Northlander, they receive the Favor of the Valkyrie.

Favor of the Valkyries

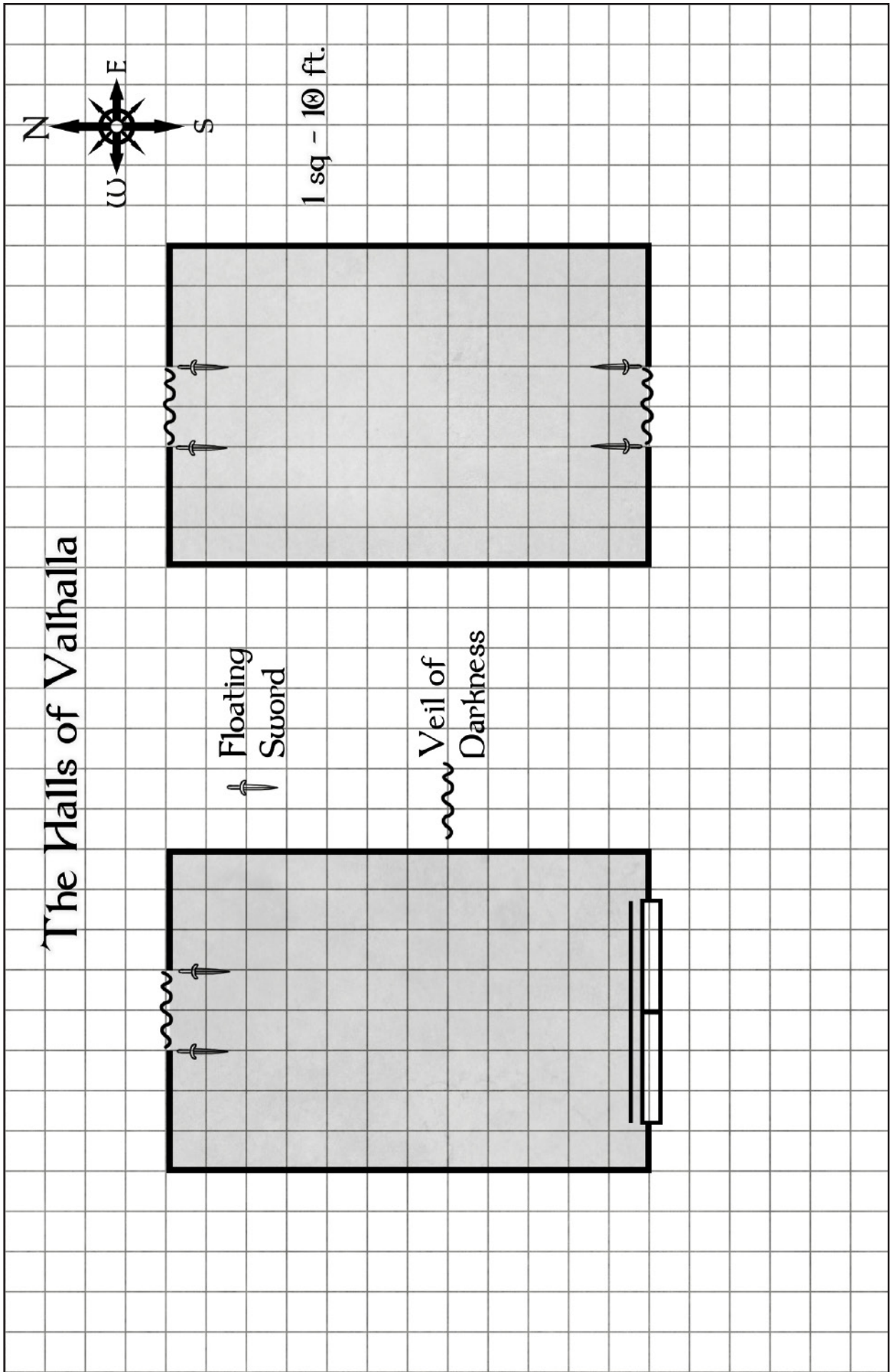
This boon, granted by Wotan to those mortals who have especially pleased him provides one of two effects chosen by the recipient at the time of its use. These options are:

- When dead or about to die, they can call on Valhalla (by will if they cannot speak or are unconscious), and receive the benefits of a *resurrection* (if dead) or be completely healed of all hit point and ability damage, and receive the removal of any harmful conditions, being left whole, unharmed, and fully restored.
- On one occasion, they can call on a valkyrie to guide their attacks for the next 3 rounds. During this time, they gain a +10 bonus to hit and damage for these attacks and can cause their weapon (or even unarmed strikes) to take on any one weapon special quality and any one special material.

II. Ninth Feasting Hall

This room is similar to all of the ones you have seen before. However, there are no visible doors or exits, and no furniture — just Brunnaharr, the dark-haired Valkyrie from when you first arrived in Valhalla. She stands, regarding you. Two black ravens appear out of thin air, to perch on her shoulders.

Brunnaharr either smiles or looks sad, depending on how the characters have done, but speaks politely with them regardless. If they have behaved badly or achieved little, they are sent home by the saddened valkyrie, her touch putting them to sleep only to awaken once again in their own bodies with a vivid shared dream of adventure they’ll be slow to forget. If, however, the characters managed to expose, confront, and bravely battle the two thieves, they are thanked by Wotan (speaking through his ravens), and sent back home, to awaken with a boon called the Favor of the Valkyries (see **Concluding the Adventure**).



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