



presents

The Reach of the Underworld

The Pra of Lif – in Norse, the longing for life - is a constant desire for those in the Underworld, particularly for a goddess. Satisfy that desire or **suffer the consequences.**

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5E

A unique module for
Dungeons & Dragons'
5th Edition

SPECIAL NOTE TO READERS – PLEASE READ!

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If that’s not the case, then enjoy this adventure module that provides equal doses of role-play and combat, not to mention some unique gaming moments.

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For monsters, we’ve either created them from common creature templates or make recommendations from one of our favorite publishers, Kobold Press.

All images/visuals were used from creative commons sites; we would like to thank these generous and talented artists for their work!

A final and potentially most important note: A big thank you to the groups and individuals throughout Minnesota and Wisconsin who game with us and encourage us to continue designing these unique D&D adventures. We can’t wait to enjoy this Northlands adventure with you and your group!



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ABOUT THE ADVENTURE

In a world filled with raging seas, frigid storms and the Norse gods' influence dwells two Northland settlements. One of them swells with the riches of countless, successful raids; the other one stewes on its perpetual bad luck and paltry earnings. For the latter group, there is no gold, nor bejeweled treasures secured away in locked chests, just rusty, copper pieces. And few of them! The adventurer and their hardy

band are part of this ill-regarded Northland tribe, the Ligr. But today, the plight of their tribe will change. For it is foretold! Today the Ligr's shaman will provide the band of adventurers visions from the gods themselves. These visions will show the Ligr band how to end their tribe's ill-favored luck by rescuing the son of their newly crowned leader, the Jarl Destin, from a goddess of the Underworld.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

Here are special notes on the module:

- It is intended to take at least 6-8 hours to complete;
- It has been written to accommodate all Player-Character (PC) levels in 5th Edition Dungeons and Dragons. GMs will need to change creatures and conditions based on player levels;
- In some cases have provided monster recommendations, including stats for a

couple of homemade creatures, as well as where to find others in different 5E publications.

- Locations are loosely described in most parts of this module as Heroes B&B gamers play 5th Edition with a multimedia package of high-detailed maps and sound systems.



ADVENTURE BACKGROUND & HISTORY

Ligr is a Northlands settlement located on a chain of small, rocky islands. These islands are covered most of the year by ice and the entire year by an unbreakable spell of bad luck. The spell is hardly magical, just the outcome of living in largely unlivable land that provides little in terms of resources, besides the plentiful cod caught in the sea. There is naught for iron here, nor much wood, even the skinny sheep are sparse. The Ligr trade their catch of cod to a much larger settlement of Northmen called the Bjarni. The Bjarni are located, with an aiding wind, two days away by sea-going boat.

Even though the settlements are close, the two Northland tribes are worlds away in terms of living conditions and prosperity. The Bjarni live on a vast mainland amongst towering trees and have resources aplenty, enough that the smaller, scrawnier men of Ligr say the Bjarni - meaning "bear" in Norse - could hibernate through the fall and winter and still have enough food and ale to survive comfortably the

next spring. Not surprisingly, the Bjarni are a strong, physically imposing people, rich in their history of successful raiding in the South. Both Northland settlements are made up of primarily humans but other races dwell here as well.

Because the Bjarni prefer to raid rather than spending the long summer days of the North catching fish, they do trade with the Ligr. So there is familiarity between the tribes, but certainly not friendship, nor any reason for pleasantries. For one Northlands tribe represents a mighty, full-grown bear and the other a scrawny, sliver of a mouse. The mice, the Ligr, harbor resentment for their life, but most see their plight as a result of their inability to successfully raid other lands.

The Ligr, physically, are mostly a smaller folk. They are tough and resourceful but lack adequate equipment. Their arms and armor are known to break under the slightest stress.

The Ligr live in a series of villages located in the center of their islands, as far away from the sea and its dangers as possible. The largest of the villages houses the Jarl, a blacksmith of sorts, and crudely built, mud-and-rock housing structures.

The Ligr are ruled by two forces: Their living ruler, the newly crowned jarl Destin, and their communicator with the gods, Asmund the Volva.

Destin the Jarl was destined for greatness, a pearl among the scrawny men of Ligr. He recently tried to seize greatness by the hand, attempting to slay a man-eating shark, longer than he was tall, in a one-on-one combat in the seas off Ligr. For this, he was given his tribal name: Destin, meaning “Determined for Greatness” in Norse. But the Ligr’s streak of ill

luck endured and the newly named Destin was unable to overcome his shark-battle injuries.

Asmund the Volva, a shaman, is a lean man, like most Ligr, and old. So old most won’t even guess his age. But his voice carries formidable weight with his people. Through the years, Asmund has shown the ability to foretell the fates of his tribe. His ability to track the location of the precious cod - the popular, savory fish of the islands - has proved to be extremely beneficial to his people. Recently, the Ligr gave their Volva a gift for his remarkable visions - the tribal name of “Asmund,” meaning the “Divine Protector” in Norse. This recent event, one of the few celebrations the Ligr have had in years, will lead to the PCs’ possible downfall, for the celebration caught the attention of Loki the god. But those doings will transpire in the “For the Jarl!” adventure, which follows this module.

THE LIGR PLAYER-CHARACTER RACE OPTION

If PCs prefer, they could play this adventure in a “challenging mode” where their armor and arms follow Ligr custom - ie, are made of poor and brittle resources and are subject to break in combat. (30% chance of arms/armor breaking during combat) To reward their bravery, GMs could allow the PCs to discover more items - magical or well-made items - during this adventure.

A PC variant race for the Ligr would include increased Dexterity (+1) or Wisdom (+1) and +2

Constitution as well as advantage on athletic swim checks and Survival checks related to the seas or the Northland’s rocky shores. We recommend GMs do not limit the Ligr races as it’s possible this tribe of mostly humans could have taken slaves/prisoners of other races from long ago raids or received new villagers from past shipwrecks.

The Ligr have Darkvision and are adept swimmers, meaning it does not cost them additional movement to swim.

GM NOTE: PLAYER-CHARACTER PREPARATION

In preparation for this adventure, ask each PC to provide a list of at least three significant facial features their character has. This list could include:

- * The color, length and general condition of their hair (ie – stringy, full, thick hair, etc.);

- * The color of their eyes;
- * The condition of their teeth;
- * Their general complexion – ie, if they have pimples or scarring or overall a fair complexion;
- * The shape of their nose and any possible disfigurement.

ADVENTURE OUTLINE

Part One – A vision

Shortly after receiving shocking news, the PCs are asked to appear before their shaman, Asmund. He provides a series of visions from the gods, including those related to the shocking news - the recent kidnapping of the Jarl's baby boy.

The visions include the sight of a ghost ship upon the seas carrying the boy and his apparent kidnapper, Helheim, the ruler of the Norse underworld.

Activity: RP

Part Two – Witches' Isle

The PCs' quest to recover the boy starts on an island of witches. According to the visions, it is here where the PCs will discover when the ghost ship will appear and how they can gain access to it. This part will include interaction and trading with the Twin Seeresses, the two witches of the North.

Activity: RP

Random Encounter 1 – Outside the Witches' Lair

Outside the witches' cave lurks something under the ice. And these creatures have worked diligently to thin the depth of the ice, ensuring anything of any size will fall through the thin sheet of recent snowfall, allowing it to become trapped and thus an easy meal.

Activity: Combat

Part Three – The Eye of Huginn

The witches tell the PCs they must recover an



Asmund, the Ligr's Volva (shaman)

item that possesses the gods' own magic, of which there is just one upon this island. It is the eye of Huginn, a raven who serves the gods. This magical item is said to be possessed by a black dragon. But when the PCs near the dragon's territory, they are surprised by an undead Giant king,

slayer of dragons who actually has the magical eye. The Giant king is willing to allow the PCs usage of this eye for a price.

Activity: RP

Random Encounter 2 – The Roc

The Eye of Huginn's magic can tame a Roc that nests on a peak overlooking the island. But the Roc has its own magical resistance and the Eye's charm will take time to take hold.

Activity: Combat

Part Four – The Ghost Ship

In the storm-surfing seas southeast of the Ligr's islands, a ghost ship has intercepted one of the Bjarny longboats. It is during this chaotic period that the PCs must descend – from the Roc - and land upon the ghost ship. Here they must find the goddess Helheim and deal with her and her allies to regain the Jarl's kidnapped son.

Activity: RP/Combat

Part Five – The Rogue

A deal with the goddess is struck – the Jarl's boy in return for the Eye of Huginn and the death of the rogue that originally stole it - the black dragon Cinnae.

Activity: Combat



PART ONE: A Vision

Clouds of misfortune, black and foreboding, hang suspended over the Ligr islands this morning. Some would label these the fog of winter, as prevalent in the Northlands as ice on the shoreline. But the adventurers, fishermen of these tiny, unnamed rocky islands of the far north, know better.

The clouds of misfortune have clung to the islands for days now, right after one of their clan attempted to claim the title of “Jarl,” leader of the Ligr. That clan member, Destin, is a tall and brawny man, physical attributes rarely seen on the islands. So mighty is Destin that he attempted a feat of such strength and courage that even the gods could not dismiss it, and thus he would be rightfully named Jarl. The mighty Destin tried this feat in the throes of winter, diving into the icy waters off Heit Feigr (In Norse this translates to “Promised Death.”) There, in the frigid seas, he fought a monstrous shark that dwarfed him in both size and weight. And he did so with just a single, simple dagger. Destin came out victorious, and thus he was crowned Jarl of the Ligr.

But in true fashion of the ill-lucked Ligr, Destin’s success was shortlived. A day after the battle, when the clouds of misfortune first appeared, the injuries Destin sustained during the epic shark battle grew more worrisome. And now, a

few days later, the once great warrior can barely stand and his entire left side, including his mighty left arm that once hefted a great axe, is useless, evidently paralyzed.

The gods’ distaste of Destin’s failure to overcome his injuries became evident last night. In the midst of a near full moon, while the Jarl fretfully slept, his wife and babe – a son named Cnute – were kidnapped by unknown raiders. His wife Hilda’s body was found floating in the morning tide, violently ripped apart. The babe Cnute remains lost.

It is these morbid thoughts that haunt the PCs during their morning fishing, even after they receive a rare summons from their Ligr shaman, Asmund.

The summons requires the PCs to join their shaman upon a hallowed island, a small, rocky outcropping that is used solely by the Volva for spiritual matters. The PCs themselves have only been on this isle once before, when they were old enough to participate in their naming ceremony.

Upon this hallowed spot, there is but one item of significance – a tree, its thin trunk bent and disfigured. The tree – looking more a sapling but known to be ages old – signifies the Ligr themselves. It is by all accounts clinging to life,

having but a few leaves, all of which somehow cling to the branches despite being shriveled and more yellow than green.

The shaman, Asmund, will be the last to arrive at this summons. As he walks upon the isle, the ever-present sound of seawater splashing onto the shores will cease. A trailing fog, enwrapped in his thin, short form, will appear and begin snaking around the small isle, creating a barrier to see beyond this small, sea outcropping.

Once on this island, there is no banter by the old shaman. Instead Asmund strides slow and purposefully towards the PCs and his voice beckons them ...

“Be warned Ligr, you venture afar;
Into the realm of the stars;
Where the living are the dead,
and the dead desire the living;
We here seek their guidance,
visions of truth;
But their sharings are lures for
your youth;
Ask for their visions, plead for
their aid;
But linger not, lest your trip become a
permanent stay.”

AFTER THIS WARNING, the shaman will sit, his back against the frail and bent tree, all the while the fog continues to swirl around, one by one encircling the PCs until each of them are seemingly alone, no longer able to see or hear their fellow Ligr.

At this point, the PCs will begin hearing whispered voices within the fog and then see outlines of faces of deceased Ligr tribesman. Some faces the PCs know, others are not recognizable, seemingly ancestors they never knew.

Some of these dead Ligr have an unsatiable desire to live again, and it these that reach out through the encircling fog, which acts as a temporary link between the dead and the living. PCs should roll a d20 – those rolling an odd number feel a “spirit touch” of embrace - a breeze of stinging, frigid air that hits and lingers upon their faces.

At this point, the PCs touched by the spirits – those who rolled an odd number - should roll again, this time a Wisdom saving throw. Those

that fail this save (DC depends on the level the adventure is played at) become vulnerable to their ancestors’ desires. They will hear the pleas of former Ligr to return to the islands, to once again feel the winds and hear the crashing swells of their homeland. The pleas will distract the PCs for a time but nothing else with the “spirit touch” happens for now.

This touch is likely to impact the PCs on the ghost ship, later in the adventure.



Inguz, the Norse symbol for fertility.

FOLLOWING THE SPIRIT TOUCH, the PCs will see visions within the fog encircling them ...

* The first is a series of Norse runes – the Othala (Separation), Inguz (Fertility) and Riadhó (Journey) – a trio of runes that symbolizes a woman’s departure from a normal life within her tribe and into the mysterious life of a seeress, the Norse name for a witch. A PC can attempt to piece these runes together with Religion or History checks but the DC will be difficult and their rolls at disadvantage as the Ligr have little knowledge of witches (See below – Asmund can help on this);

* The second vision appearing from out of the fog is a single eye, a piercing yellow in color with a slanted pupil. This is the eye of Huginn, a

raven known in Norse mythology for sharing news of mankind to the gods. A challenging History DC could explain the significance of the eye as belonging to the raven Huginn;

* The third vision is the emergence of a ghost ship, appearing on surging seas, out of a thick mist, and veering quickly toward a longboat, its flag clearly showing it to be from the Bjarni. The PCs have never seen nor heard of such a ghost ship – nor has their shaman.

ONCE THE VISIONS AND FOG DISSIPATE, Asmund the Volva will tell the PCs the visions were their own and were not shared with him. He could only sense the visions were here – like a fisherman can feel sudden and unexpected optimism before a grand catch. If the PCs tell Asmund what they saw, he will connect the first series of visions – the Norse runes – as those associated with the transition of a woman from a member of a tribe to becoming a seeress. Asmund knows of very few witches – in fact only two. The Twin Seeresses of an island further to the north, near the Bjarni mainland.

Asmund certainly knows of Huginn but he can see no connection between the raven and the witches, nor the third vision of a ghost ship. He can, however, help the PCs with one vital task – travel to the witches’ island. The Ligr have only old fishing boats – nothing seaworthy that would carry them to the witches’ island. But Asmund’s own visions have shown him a Bjarni trader appearing on the next tide – a trader that he believes can be talked into delivering the group onto the witches’ island.

BEFORE THE GROUP leaves the Ligr Islands, they could pay a visit to **Hrut, “Old Fish Bones,”** the weathered Ligr blacksmith (a dwarf) who uses sun-hardened mud nails and dried, sun-bleached fish bones to piece together armor and arms ... that rarely stay as one piece for long. Hrut, however, is confident and proud - his blacksmith skills have been handed down over generations and if it’s “goo’ enough for me father’s father, it’s goo’ enough for the likes of ‘ou!”



PART TWO: Witches' Island

The PCs' trip to the witches island, which lies to the northeast of the Ligr lands, takes two days and goes by without incident. As Asmund's vision predicted, the PCs are able to board a trading vessel of the Bjarni. The captain of the boat, Siv, nor his small crew are welcoming or interested in what the Ligr are up to. Like most Bjarni, Siv considers the Ligr little more than penniless peasants, certainly not worth talking to.

Siv and his crew drop off the PCs at the island and then depart. The land appears like an island of the Ligr rather than anything the Bjarni would occupy as it is mostly rocky and at first glance, devoid of life. (Siv and his crew know nothing about the island, having never been on it. They have, however, heard of the Twin Seeresses there.)

Once ashore, the PCs find mostly a flat, snow-covered island. There is one prominent, tall land mass, its cliffs overlooking the sea, at the eastern end of the island – almost opposite of where the PCs landed. Here, on the western end of the island, ice-covered rocks of different sizes line its shores, as do groups of massive, tusk-bearing seals, some weighing a thousand pounds and more. Further ashore, only groupings of massive boulders separate the skyline of the flat landscape. Ask the PCs to roll

a Perception check. A DC10 Perception roll will reveal in a land of mostly white, snow-covered features there is a single black object taking flight from a boulder some 150 feet away. The black object is a raven and it begins flying toward the opposite side of the island. The raven, a creature friendly to the witches, has spotted the PCs, communicated with the seeresses and been commanded to guide the PCs to a cave, on the southern side of the island. The PCs will travel for a couple of hours through the thigh-high snow and often rocky stretches of the island before arriving at the entrance to a cave, the home of the witches.

THE TWIN SEERESSES

The two witches of the islands are called twins for their appearances are similar, although there are differences. One is an inch or two taller and bulkier. But it is the similarities between the two that stand out. Each of the witches are centuries old and their physical appearances do nothing to contradict that. They are short, frail-looking creatures, bent at the waist and do little but hobble about. Their short, exposed feet are misshapen and bent inwards. Even their speech is more of a ragged breath than a compilation of spoken words, as if they fail to produce enough saliva to speak clearly.

Their facial features, however, are by far the worst. Their eyes are milky and colorless and have limited vision. Their skin is dry, ashen, heavily wrinkled and flake off easily. Their hair – what is left of it – is stringy and occasionally falls out. And their remaining teeth are chipped and bent in different directions.



Inger, a seeress
of the Northlands.

Yet the twin seeresses, Inger and Iona, are determined to regain their beauty of their youth (which was ages ago!). They have each tried crafting potions of all types, using the wildlife and flora found on the island as ingredients. None of it has resulted in a tonic of youth, giving them their beauty back. But a long-ago capture – a mage of the South – did provide them a useful and previously unknown spell. The spell – called “Swapping” - allows the user to swap physical features with a willing creature. An eye for an eye; a set of bottom-jaw teeth for another, etc. The duration of the spell is not quite what Inger and Iona had in mind – only a mere decade – but it is better than more slimy, slippery seal skin, which eases their itchy, flaking facial skin but little else.

The two seeresses will gladly trade information they have to the PCs in exchange for them “willingly” being involved in a Swapping spell. In a competitive manner, the witches will vie for the PCs’ facial beauty – their colorful eyes and thick, glossy hair! – while making promises of such “swapping” only lasting weeks or even days. Because Inger and Iona have been at this for ages, their Deception skill is quite good.

There are five crucial pieces of information the witches will trade the PCs for being “willing”

Swapping spell counterparts. Each piece of information will cost a PC one of their more attractive facial features, plus a lock of their hair. (This will be used to curse the PC if they later dispel the Swapping spell.)

Even though the witches will lie about the “Swapping” spell’s duration, they will – on the PCs’ agreement of being

part of a spell of course - provide what truthful information they have to the PCs, including:

- * They do know of ghost ships. They are rare, occurring once every age, and they usually carry the goddess of the Underworld, Helheim herself. The ghost ships usually seek slaves – dead or alive – for the Goddess.

- * The ghost ships appear only for a part of one night – the night after a full moon in the dead of winter - and then after a few hours, disappear into a mist of fog. The witches can divine where the ship will surface, and when, using old seal bones.

- * The witches know of only one way the PCs can reach the ghost ship – they must take flight upon a winged creature of incredible size and speed, a Roc. There is one on the island – its nest sits on a peak overlooking the ocean.

- * This Roc, however, hates humanoids, except as a meal. What’s worse is the massive creature is a friend of the gods and thus has their protection. Meaning the only way to charm the beast is by using the gods’ own magic.

- * Is there an item possessing the gods’ magic? Yes several, the witches will say, and even one on the island itself. It is the Eye of Huginn. Huginn is a raven known for sharing the news of

mankind to the gods. The Eye of Huginn is a special necklace, a magical item that is in the possession of a dragon, Cinnae the black. Its lair is here on the island.

SEERESS FACIAL FEATURE EFFECTS

Unbeknownst to the mage who shared their "Swapping" spell with the seeresses, the spell has lingering side effects to the PC now sharing a facial feature with a seeress.

Note: The Swapping spell can be dispelled or removed by magic. It is a 5th Level spell.

SEERESS EYE (1 per PC, 2 total)

Appearance: Milky white pupil; the iris has a swirling, cloudy appearance.

The nastiness: The PC loses Proficiency or minus-4 to their Perception checks.

The boon: The PC may cause a bloody tear to form and then fall from their seeress eye as a Reaction. The next enemy that targets the PC or is in the process of targeting the PC must save on a DC 15 Wisdom save or be frightened for 1 minute. This ability is regained after a short rest.

SEERESS SKIN

Appearance: Your face now feels coarse and dry, ashen even. It is heavily wrinkled and itchy. And if you scratch it, you get a momentary, pleasurable soothing before flakes of skin begin falling off and patches of pink, protruding boils form.

The nastiness: The PC loses Proficiency to their Persuasion and Performance checks.

The boon: Once a day, when an enemy first spots you, you can scratch harshly at your face, causing rivulets of puss to form and begin dripping down your cheeks. The enemy must save on a DC 15 Constitution save or be stunned for one round. This is a Reaction for the PC.

SEERESS TEETH

Appearance: The bottom half of the PC's mouth is now filled with jagged and bent teeth. Significant gaps are visible between the teeth as

clearly more than half have fallen out.

The nastiness: Saliva constantly drips from the PC's mouth, causing havoc on their ability to perform and persuade others. The PC loses Proficiency to Performance, Persuasion and Deception checks.

The boon: An insatiable blood lust overcomes the PC and they may make one bite attack (this is done with Proficiency using their Strength or Dexterity) as a Bonus. This acts as an Inflict Wound spell, causing 3d10 necrotic damage. This ability is regained after a short rest.

SEERESS HAIR

Appearance: You are now mostly bald, with the top of your head covered in wrinkly, ashen skin. You do have the occasional oily, rank, long strand of white hair that grows out randomly among your wrinkly folds. These dozen or so strands of hair hang loosely upon your shoulders.

The nastiness: You lose Proficiency on any Charisma-based checks.

The boon: Uncommon fury overcomes your mind momentarily and your oily strands of long hair suddenly grow and thicken, then reach out to an enemy within 5 feet and claw at their eyes. The enemy must make a DC15 Constitution save or be blinded for 1 minute. This is a Bonus. If you are concentrating on a spell, make a DC10 Constitution save to see if you're able to keep concentration. This ability is regained after a short rest. Everytime you use this ability, the hair strands lengthen by 3 inches.

SEERESS CURSES

These are used if a Swapping spell is dispelled on or by the PC. The one affected by the curse is the one who provided the lock of hair (which the seeress uses to perform the curse) and no longer has the seeress facial feature.

The curse only takes affect if the PC fails a DC 18 Constitution save. The saves should be done

at dawn on the day after the Swapping spell is dispelled.

If the save is made by the PC, nothing happens. If the save is failed, the PC regains the original Swapping Spell plus additional ugliness. For example, a PC that has a seeress eye may now have half their face covered in the seeress skin



PART THREE: The Eye of Huginn

The Seeresses have outlined a plan for the PCs to reach the ghost ship and recapture the Jarl Destin's son. The plan, however, relies on the PCs' ability to charm a massive bird, the Roc, and thus convince it to fly the band of Ligr to the ghost ship.

The Roc, being under the gods' protection, will be all but impossible to charm unless the PCs obtain the Eye of Huginn, a magical necklace that possesses the gods' own magic, something that can affect even the Roc.

It is this item of power the PCs seek as they leave the witches' cave and then spend several hours trekking to a mountainous glacier floating off the northern side of the island. As they make their way, snow begins falling, slowly but consistently. (It is not heavy enough to obscure vision but definitely makes tracking creatures challenging.) The raven, which the PCs

(without the beneficial side effect for the new condition).

Also if the save is failed, the spell level for purposes of dispelling it in the future rises by one level, to 6th. This happens with each failed save.

previously saw, will follow the group, doing so at the witches' request and curiosity.

It is on the glacier where – according to the witches – the black dragon Cinnae dwells. The seeresses know little of the dragon, calling “her” secretive, rarely seen and withdrawn.

The glacier, floating alongside the northern part of the island, is easily reachable by walking across swaths of floating ice. The glacier appears much like an island itself, its tallest section rising dozens of feet in the middle of the ice mass. It is on the opposite side of this tall mid-section of the glacier that is believed to house the lair of the dragon, or so the seeresses have been told.

Once the PCs crest the glacier's tall mid-section, they will see a long, flat, relatively featureless shoreline. Light snow continues to fall. The only item of interest within view – on or near the flat

shoreline - is a collection of large bones that lie within the sea on the eastern side of this shoreline.

As the PCs near this area with the bones, giant humanoid figures will begin emerging from the snow-covered ground. In total, five Undead frost giants will emerge, one bearing a crown. It is the latter, bearing shredded, patchwork armor and a massive, rune-covered axe, that will immediately begin speaking. The Undead Frost King Giant will speak out, "I am Vozken, king of all frost giants, living and dead; slayer of Cinnae the black and Arvain the white; and I seek one that wields magic as powerfully as I wield this axe!"

In the following role-play with the PCs, Vozken the Undead Giant King will share the following:

- * He is the most powerful warrior of Giantkind, having been the only Giant to defeat monstrous-sized dragons on two consecutive days, first Arvain the White and then Cinnae the Black. (This is not true as it took the Giant

several years to find the two dragons).

- * Old age – not the dragons – were the reason why Vozken died. (This is also untrue – he died as a result of wounds suffered in the battle against Cinnae). The King also says he rose as an Undead king at the behest of his race, which deserves a powerful and renown warrior to lead them. (This is a lie as well as he rose from the dead to use the magical necklace and rule over all of Giantkind!)

- * Vozken remains here on the glacier to be close to his greatest trophy, the bones of Cinnae, which are barely evident nearby in the shallows of the sea. (For Perception purposes, only the tip of some of the bones are viewable, the rest remain deep underwater and the constant surging seas and waves crashing upon the bones make them hard to see. If seen underwater, the bones are hard to discern as colonies of coral and other sealife have grown on, over and around them.)

- * Vozken seeks a powerful caster to erase a curse that prevents him from using a magical

The Eye of Huginn ... a magical necklace with a curse



Properties: The Eye of Huginn must be held or worn to work upon another creature. Its magical gaze reaches 60 feet.

Helheim, goddess and ruler of the Norse underworld, once granted life to a dying witch in exchange for a secret undertaking. The witch was commanded to craft a necklace bearing an eye of Huginn, the storied raven who brought news of the affairs of men to Odin. It is said this raven's eye – a piercing yellow color with a slanted black pupil – could charm men and creatures alike, who would then speak truthfully and even act out Huginn's wishes for a short time. The Eye of Huginn was crafted with a curse – no Undead besides Helheim could use it to watch the affairs of men nor govern their actions. Only the strongest of magics – and that cast by a god – could dispel this curse.

item that he gained from slaying Cinnae. (This is also untrue as he did not slay the dragon, although it would be questionable if the lie deals with the death of the dragon or which Giant wielded the final, death blow to the creature.) The Undead Giant King will name the magical item as the Eye of Huginn and describe it and the raven it was named for. (See pg. 9 box for information on the Eye.)

* Vozken is willing to lend the item to the PCs if they promise to find a caster powerful enough to dispel the curse. They will have one year to complete this quest and of course, return the item to him. If they do not return the item, Vozken vows he and his warriors will use magic to locate the object and slay whoever holds it.

Vozken is getting desperate to remove the curse as his attempts to do so over the past few decades have failed miserably. His ploys of capturing mages, shaman and other magic users

and bringing them here to rid the magical item of its curse have all failed. (However one mage did place a spell on it that allows the Undead King to understand the necklace's whereabouts at all times.)

Vozken wants to use the Eye of Huginn to rule all Giants – both those live and undead. He heard of the item's magic before he was slain by the dragon Cinnae and compelled himself to return as an Undead king to wield its magic. When he was alive, he had no idea of the item's curse, which does not allow the Undead (besides the Goddess Helheim) to use it.

If the PCs take the Eye of Huginn and do not do as Vozken wishes – remove the curse within a year and return the item to him – then the Undead Frost King will haunt them later in the "For the Jarl!" adventure. The item's curse can only be lifted by a god.



PART FOUR: The Ghost Ship

The trek off the glacier, back onto the main land mass and then eastward toward the island's prominent cliff takes a couple of hours, the last remaining hours of daylight. The location of the Roc's nest was provided by the seeresses so it is not difficult to find. As the PCs arrive at the

base of this cliff, they'll look up and see an empty nest. Luckily, there are numerous small caves the PCs can easily find along the base of the cliff, providing them a site for a somewhat warm and uneventful long rest through the

night. It is not until dawn that the Roc is spotted returning to its nest.

At that point, the PCs can begin an arduous climb up the 120-foot high cliff. The climb is taxing but not something that takes a tremendous amount of skill - at least for the first half of the climb. Then the skies darken overhead and soon rain begins, first in a steady shower and then in a sustained downpour. At this point, the climb becomes both challenging and deadly.

Once the PCs scale the mountain side and charm the Roc, the massive bird will begin its flight toward the site of where the ghost ship is expected to appear. The flight takes nearly six hours to complete, providing the PCs a short rest. The wet and frigid weather continues during this journey as rain mixes with snow before turning again to a constant, steady downpour of rain and accompanying thunder.

Once the Roc arrives at the area the ghost ship is expected to be, the short span of Northern daylight has ended for the day and darkness has settled in. The Roc will circle the area the seeresses divined the ghost ship would appear in for several minutes before the low-hanging black clouds of the nearby storm give away to a mass of low-hanging fog that settles across the top of the ocean for as far as can be seen. At the edge of this sight - some couple hundred feet away - is a longboat shrouded in a light green fog. Unnatural movement can be seen across the deck of the longboat as skeletal figures move across it so quickly they almost appear like shooting stars. The figures moving across the longboat's decks are running and jumping onto a larger ship, one that dwarfs the ghost ship. The two ships seem somehow stuck together, their respective bow and stern nearly touching each other despite the surging seas and 3-foot-high swells all around them.

As the Roc and the PCs come closer to this scene, shouts and screams echo from the larger of the two ships. This larger ship bears the flag of a Bjarni raiding vessel, a flag the Ligr have never seen but certainly heard about and thus recognize. The shouts of panic come likely from the Bjarni raiders, their surprise obvious and loud enough to be heard above the din of the rainfall and raging sea.

The Roc, named "Ras Vaengr" (or Swift Wings in Norse), speaks Common, one of its gifts from the gods. After the long flight, the effect of the Eye of Huginn has waned on the Roc. (Its gift of magical resistance from the gods is starting to counter the influence of the Eye.) Although the Roc won't attack the PCs, it will tell them convincingly that it will fly over the ghost ship once - and only once! - and then immediately fly back to its nest. The Roc then dives toward the Bjarni ship and the ghost ship, but remains safely 30 feet above either vessel. It will remain hovering over these two ships for one round before flying off.

From atop the Roc - 30 feet above the two ships - the PCs can see the following:

* On the Bjarni ship, rain pelts down on the figures there, which includes a dozen Bjarni raiders - mostly fighters but shamans as well - as well as dozens of skeletal figures. A quick glance will show the latter crumbling under the weight of the giant axes the Bjarni raiders wield. But the skeletal figures appear undaunted and more of them continue to appear from the green fog that hovers over and around the ghost ship. The green fog stops at the edges of the ghost ship and does not spread across the Bjarni ship's decks.

(A GM note: Worth mentioning to the PCs is the little interaction that happens between the Bjarni and Ligr, and certainly nothing between the Bjarni raiders and the Ligr, including these PCs. So the PCs would have no idea how they would be treated by the Bjarni raiders if they

suddenly appeared on their ship. Would they be welcomed as warriors, or viewed as the reason for this surprise attack by the ghost ship? The PCs could only guess at that.)

- * The ghost ship's deck is difficult to see in its entirety as the green fog surrounding it obscures vision. There are constant streams of shooting lights darting across its deck, which from higher up the PCs viewed as skeletal figures moving incredibly quickly across the longboat toward the Bjarni ship. Not a single Bjarni raider is seen on the ghost ship's decks.

IF THE PCS BOARD THE BJARNI SHIP:

- * On this massive boat, there are multiple levels to this top deck. Fighting is occurring on both levels. There is a crow's nest atop a 30-foot-high pole on the top level of the deck. It is occupied by two skeletal figures raining arrows down upon the Bjarni as well as a dead Bjarni raider there.

- * If a Bjarni or PC falls unconscious, the nearby skeletal figures will immediately stop battle and act to pick up the downed creature and bring it aboard their ghost ship, where it will slowly begin to turn undead.

IF THE PCS BOARD THE GHOST SHIP:

- * The light green fog is a thick haze of necrotic energy. Every round the PCs are in the haze they take damage. The amount of damage will depend upon level – d4, d6, d8, d10 etc. – and the PCs can attempt a Constitution save to half the damage. Conversely, any skeletal figures in the necrotic haze regain the same amount of damage dealt to the PCs each round, including rising from “the dead”;

- * For PCs who were affected by the spirit touch at the start of the adventure and are in this green fog, they must save against becoming confused (like the spell) as their ancestors – voices from within the green fog - attempt to plead again for their help in returning to the living. PCs who failed their saves against the

spirit touch back upon the Ligr islands make this save at disadvantage;

- * The PCs can only access the top deck upon this ghost ship – there is no apparent way to access a below deck, if there is any;

- * There is also a crow's nest on this ship. It is also 30 feet high and after the first round of combat, will have three skeletal archers on it;

- * Once aboard the ghost ship, a collection of skeletal figures will surround the PCs. The skeletal figures will include one dressed in the robes of a noble and wearing a crown. Once this latter creature is defeated, the crown falls upon the ship's decks and the other skeletons on the ghost ship will immediately cease combat.

At this point, the **goddess Helheim** will appear on the deck of the ghost ship. The goddess is tall, elegantly dressed in long, flowing robes and a cloak that enwraps part of her head, although her long, black hair is visible. Her face is pale, nearly transparent, and different visions of life and death flash across her facial features. Visions such as saplings quickly growing to grand trees before eventually crumbling and crashing to the ground.

Helheim will stride purposefully forward and reach out one hand, whereupon the crown will rise from the ship deck and fly into her outstretched fingers. She will look upon the PCs, scanning their faces before settling on the one that has the Eye of Huginn. She will then say in a courteous tone, “Are you a flaunting thief, or a god's servant?”

Her eyes will flash with anger and her features will transform into skeletal form, with a face devoid of flesh, empty eye sockets, and ragged, jagged teeth.

“Choose wisely,” the goddess will say, her voice deep and her teeth clicking like that of a skeleton.

ALLOW THE PCS TO DISCUSS why they are on the ghost ship and what they seek. After this,

Helheim's face will transform back into that of the elegant lady. She will turn the hand over that is clutching the crown and utter a word. The crown will disappear. The goddess will then utter a second word and the Jarl's babe son, Cnute, will appear in her outstretched hand. He glows a healthy pink and appears not only well but content. His little legs kick out and his eyes peer about curiously. He even smiles.

"Life is glorious," Helheim the goddess will say softly, as she watches the babe in her hand.

"Can you feel it?" the goddess will ask, looking fondly at the boy. "The energy of life sparkles like a candle in the night.

"The boy will accomplish so much. So, so much ... no matter where he lives."

Allow the PCs an opportunity to sway the goddess' thoughts about the future of the Jarl's baby son. But before Helheim agrees, she will demand two items for the boy's return – the Eye of Hugin returned immediately, and the slaying of the one who stole it from her, Cinnae the Black Dragon. The goddess actually does not know who originally stole the magical necklace from her but her ego won't allow one who kept it from her for so long to live on.

Finally, a GM note that the PCs should not become aware of if possible: Helheim did not originally kidnap the boy Cnute from the Ligr. That was Loki's doing. He had the boy taken (as well as the wife killed) and then ensured the child Cnute ended up with Helheim. Why Loki did this will become evident in the next "For the Jarl!" adventure.

THE PCS WILL LIKELY be confused by the goddess' request for they were told by the Undead Frost Giant King that the dragon Cinnae was slain. The goddess will inform the PCs the truth of the matter: The Giant King was lied to. After the Giant king was slain in battle, Cinnae the Black – a cunning dragon if there ever was

one – convinced the remaining Giants to put down their weapons. As they were all terribly wounded and their king slain, they agreed to the dragon's terms. For not only did Cinnae allow them to live but she gave them an item of rare, magical power – the Eye of Huginn. Plus, she told the Giants she would leave her lair on the island so they could tell others that she had been slain by their axes.

They agreed, and never told their king otherwise, even when he rose from the dead.

Why would a cunning dragon like Cinnae give up a powerful magical item from her hoard? The goddess believes the dragon – she calls it "the rogue" - to be a rare breed, one who values deception and deceit even over wealth. After all, the Frost Giant King had spread word about his slaying of a dragon – the white dragon - to all who would listen. And somehow Cinnae devised a plan to not only slay the Giant king but then work to revive him as an Undead who would have access to a powerful magic item that he could ... not use. Not then, not now, not ever, the goddess will say. Think of being so close to such lofty power over your own kind, and never being able to wield such power, Helheim will say. The goddess will shake her head, although in admiration or disgust of Cinnae's scheme is hard to say.

Helheim knows where Cinnae's lair is today and she will teleport the PCs to it, or close enough to find the dragon but potentially have time to rest before facing it. Last, she provides the PCs a scroll and simple obstructions: When Cinnae is slain, cut its head off and draw a circle around it. Then read the scroll. Once the scroll is read, the dragon's head will disappear and in its place will appear the baby boy, Cnute, and a scroll of teleportation to allow the PCs to return home.

Helheim will then turn to the PCs and say matter-of-factly, "If you fail, the boy will become my new eye upon the living. One does

not require a raven for such things ..." She will smile, turn and walk away, vanishing quickly within the light green fog.

MONSTER RECOMMENDATIONS

Monarch Skeleton, Kobold Press' Creature Codex, pg. 342

Deathwisp (higher levels), Kobold Press' Tome of Beasts, pg. 72

BJARNI WARRIOR

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 16 (half plate)

Hit Points 67 (9d8+27)

Speed 30 ft.

Str 16(+3) Dex 12(+1) Con 17(+3) Int 9(-1) Wis 11(0)

Cha 9(-1)

Languages: Common

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Reckless: At the start of its turn, the berserker can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

Actions

Silver Greataxe. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d12 + 3) slashing damage.

BJARNI COMMANDER

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 18 (adamantine plate)

Hit Points 52 (8d8+16)

Speed 30 ft.

Str 16 (+3) Dex 11 (0) Con 14 (+2) Int 11 (0) Wis 11 (0)

Cha 15 (+2)

Saving Throws: Con +4, Wis +2

Languages: Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Brave: The knight has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

Actions

Multiattack: The knight makes two melee attacks.

Adamantine Greatsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

Leadership (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).

For 1 minute, the knight can utter a special command or warning whenever a nonhostile creature that it can see within 30 ft. of it makes an attack roll or a saving throw. The creature can add a d4 to its roll provided it can hear and understand the knight. A creature can benefit from only one Leadership die at a time. This effect ends if the knight is incapacitated.

Reactions

Parry: The knight adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the knight must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

BJARNI PRIEST

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 15 (half plate)

Hit Points 27 (5d8+5)

Speed 25 ft.

Str 10 (0) Dex 10 (0) Con 12 (+1) Int 13 (+1) Wis 16

(+3) Cha 13 (+1)

Skills: Medicine +7, Persuasion +3, Religion +4

Languages common, primordial

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Divine Eminence: As a bonus action, the priest can expend a spell slot to cause its melee weapon attacks to magically deal an extra 10 (3d6) radiant damage to a target on a hit. This benefit lasts until the end of the turn. If the priest expends a spell slot of 2nd level or higher, the extra damage increases by 1d6 for each level above 1st.

Spellcasting: The priest is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The priest has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy
1st level (4 slots): cure wounds, guiding bolt, sanctuary

2nd level (3 slots): lesser restoration, spiritual weapon

3rd level (2 slots): dispel magic, spirit guardians

Actions

Mace. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage.



PART FIVE: The Rogue

The ice cavern the Rogue – Cinnae the Black Dragon – occupies is hardly her first choice as a lair. Even used to the cold, Cinnae can't help but feel the frigid air sweep through these caverns in biting, cold drafts. But the cavern does provide solace, something the Black found little of in recent decades due to the escalating number of humanoids in the Northlands.

Plus, the caverns provide safety in a way that Cinnae can appreciate, namely with deception and deadly traps. The ice caverns include:

- * A myriad of smooth, ice-covered walls that mirror illusionary reflections perfectly;
- * Tremendous ice formations on the ceilings that Cinnae has "sculpted" with her claws to allow them to easily fall and grievously wound intruders with a swish of her tail;
- * Caverns that are filled with deadly Frostveil, a rare plant that can be found in deep, ice-covered areas;

* Walkways that Cinnae has hollowed and now act as traps that are dozens of feet deep.

Cinnae constructed all of these elements believing her old arch-enemy, Vozken the Frost Giant king, will reappear. Any Persuasion or Deception the PCs attempt – if it somehow includes the Frost Giant King - will be done at advantage for Cinnae has a burning hatred of that Giant. It, after all, caused her to flee her former lair - one much warmer than this one!

The PCs will be teleported near Cinnae's ice caverns, which can be reached through an opening in a mountain-side. The PCs have never seen this mountain so they're uncertain just where they are. (GM note: They're in a remote northeastern part of the Bjarni mainland.)

MONSTER RECOMMENDATIONS

Frostveil, Kobold Press' Tome of Beasts, pg. 207



RANDOM ENCOUNTER 1: Outside the Witches' Cave

The Twin Seeresses live in a cave that is set into an ice-covered hillside that borders the sea. The mouth of the cave is actually one of the few spots in the immediate area that is not ice-covered as waves from the ocean lap onto its slick surface.

The PCs will be directed to this area by the witches' raven, which circles overhead in this area before flying into the cave.

Outside of the cave, a path has been carved into the rock-hard snow that is at least 20 feet tall. The path is about 10 feet wide and shaped like an "L", with one part descending to the close-by sea and the other part veering inland to a largely featureless, snow-covered area.

From the start of this path, the snow is tall enough that the PCs can't see the cave opening. They can, however, hear the grunts of Yetis as they consume a recently killed mammoth, and possibly smell the result of the fresh kill.

The real danger, however, lies concealed.

Under the snow path, about 10 feet from where the PCs begin on this map, the layer immediately underneath the pathway has been scraped away by frost salamanders, hoping for a creature (like a mammoth) to step onto the ice-covered path and fall through. It will likely take the weight of two PCs to step onto the approximately 20-foot long stretch of eroded pathway for the ice to cave in underneath them. (It could require more PCs developing on their height and weight.)

Once the cave-in occurs, the affected PCs will fall 15 feet onto the remains of a skeletal mammoth (which fell through several weeks ago) and then be immediately surrounded by frost salamanders. The creatures will try to drag the PCs further into their underground lair before attacking. The creatures' lair is not visible from the caved-in pathway.

RANDOM ENCOUNTER 2: The Roc's Nest

Ras Vaengr, or Swift Wings in the Norse language, is a Roc with uncommon luck and the smarts to take advantage of that luck.

At an early age, the Roc was lucky enough to be selected by the gods to ferry them in humanoid form across the Northlands. In return, Ras was granted god-like gifts, including resistance from the magic of humanoids. Plus the Roc was given uncommon Intelligence and Wisdom for his kind.

It is these gifts that led the Roc to eventually change his hunting style, from targeting single, large individuals – whales and sharks mostly – to massive wooden structures. The latter included longboats and even larger ships mainly, but the occasional Viking hall as well.

Ras discovered such structures could be torn from their foundation or simply snatched off an ocean swell. Then he would fly the structures to his nest, some 120 feet above frigid seas on a singular island cliff, and humanoid after humanoid would slowly be consumed as they tried escaping from the wooden structures, which unbeknownst to them were set down in the middle of a nest on the high cliff.

It was the perfect hunting system as it kept Ras happily fed and it allowed him to grow his nest to an uncommon size with limited effort.

A win-win for the Roc, which is why he left his nest two days ago to find another ship at sea.

He did just that a night ago and is returning to his nest from a successful hunt as the PCs near the nest on their climb up the cliff.

What Ras doesn't realize – or the PCs - about the longboat he snatched from the sea and carried back to the nest was what was transpiring on it before he arrived – a fierce battle. Two humanoid factions – of which there were at least a dozen of each – were battling each other before the ship suddenly rocked with commotion. Warriors and casters on both sides of the battle were suddenly thrown across the boat and then shaken about for several hours before crashing down on an unknown surface (the Roc's nest).

It is this myriad of foes that the PCs will need to contest with as they try to charm Ras to do their bidding.

Which humanoids are involved in the battle will depend on the PCs' levels, but an example would be Merrows fighting Sea Elves.

For Ras' part, he will focus on consuming whichever humanoid shows itself first until the PCs draw near and try to charm him with the Eye of Huginn. Ras has magical resistance, including two legendary resistances.

MONSTER RECOMMENDATIONS

Roc, D&D Monster Manual, pg. 260



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