WRATH OF THE JÖTUNN



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Funded by our amazing Kickstarter backers!

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Foreword—The Long Road to this Book

The ideas and concepts that would eventually become the vast adventure before you (as well as all of the products associated with *Into the Wintery Gale*) originally began as a task to simply expand upon the Vikmordere barbarians as created by Jonathan G. Nelson (*Owner of AAW Games & Adventureaweek. com*) for the Aventyr campaign setting. My assignment as an author was to create content for a single webpage describing the region and its people.

The initial assignment began as a sequence of scribbled notes and loosely sketched maps scattered across my desk. However, as the information began to pile up, the project evolved into the idea of writing a series of articles for the Adventureaweek.com Blog. These articles would be loosely related to one another, and the series would provide new details on the history, lore, and culture of the Vikmordere people.

After a few months of research and writing, I had authored several unique articles and quickly became very fond of the Vikmordere people and their history. I spent months researching the Norse Viking and Native American cultures that the Vikmordere are based upon, and I soon realized that the plethora of potential content available to develop from was virtually limitless. So, I pitched the idea of dedicating an entire month of the blog to expanding on this wholly unique, yet surprisingly familiar, culture of nature-based barbarians. This new project was approved, and so (once again) I donned my writers cap and went to work.

When the expansion of articles was completed and submitted for review, Jonathan approached me with the suggestion that the content I had created deserved to be polished into a full-sized published adventure module. Even though it caused a bit of a scheduling hurdle with the blog, the decision was made to move forward with converting those 31 days of loosely-related blog content into a standard adventure module.

I was about half way through constructing that adventure, when an after-meeting discussion led to Jonathan again approaching me about the Vikmordere content. His suggestion was that I expand my work even further, and AAW Games would run a Kickstarter campaign to raise funds for all new artwork, expanded content creation, and editing that would be required. After a bit of thought, I agreed.

Thanks to the amazing and generous backers of the *Into the Wintery Gale* campaign, the expanded project was more than fully funded, and what was before a single adventure module was now to be expanded into a series of products including a mega-adventure, a bestiary, a magic compendium, a culture book, three full decks of cards, battle maps, miniatures, icons, constructible terrain, and more!

After many intense months of writing, playtesting, re-writing, and editing, you are now reading the end result of that long process. Writing this book was as much a world-building exercise as it was an undertaking in adventure writing, and I have done my best to integrate the two very different aspects of content into a seamless, fun, and exciting experience for you and your fellow players. The road here presented some delay and many unexpected challenges, and now those have been faced and vanquished, I truly hope that you enjoy experiencing *Wrath of the Jötunn* as much I have enjoyed designing and writing it.





NTRODUCTION

Upon the winter solstice every fifty years, as the stars slowly shift in precession across the heavens, a new host of celestial bodies comes into prominence in the apex of the night sky. Scholars from many cultures have grouped these arrangements into various constellations, but to the Vikmordere they represent aspects of nature and are symbolic of the ideals they value most: the black wolf (cunning), the brown bear (strength), the roe stag (the hunt), the snowy owl (wisdom), the saker falcon (commitment and comradery), the silver herring (fertility), the elder tree (family and ancestors) and the great serpent (death).

It requires four hundred years for all eight patterns to trek across the sky, thus completing a single succession of an infinite cycle that begins with the wolf and ends with the great serpent. The winter's longest night approaches and this year will be the end of one such cycle as the constellation of the serpent transitions into the pinnacle of the cosmos. This is an event of ill omen known to the Vikmordere as the Ohjaslange (rising of the great serpent), for it is only on this night that the Jötunn may rise from their icy graves to once again wreak havoc upon their sworn enemy—the Vikmordere barbarians.

Extended Background

The Jötunn were a coterie of ice giants who made their home high in the peaks of the mountains overlooking Serpent Lake. Each winter, as the frigid gale descended from the peaks upon the lake valley below, the warriors of the Jötunn would arrive, raiding and pillaging every Vikmordere village they happened across. Each winter the tribesmen would engage the invading giants, staving off their assaults until the warmth of the spring sun drove the invaders back to their mountaintop fortress located upon Ighdenholm, the tallest peak surrounding the Vikmordere Valley.



This continued for generations, exacting a great toll upon the resources of the barbarian clans and tribes until one day, a great Jarl named Vornig from the Völsfing Clan united the whole of the Vikmordere people in reprisal of the Jötunn.

Lead by the Jarl himself, the federation of clans neglected their yearly raids into the east, and instead opted to march, midsummer, high into the mountains to defy the terrible ice giants when and where they would least expect it.

Losses were heavy for the brave warriors and shieldmaidens, but the ploy was successful and the Jarl's war party all but eradicated the Jötunn.

Legend has it that Krumma Ymagir, the king of the ice giants fled his fortress in the mountains as it fell to the Vikmordere





raiders, and escaped down the mountain pass with the Jarl and his most able-bodied comrades in quick pursuit.

The barbarians cornered the ice giant lord at the great cliffs near the base of Ighdenholm. There the Jarl—finding the coward of a king unworthy of a glorious death—instead cast him off the cliffs and into the depths of Serpent Lake. This act of utter humiliation would prove to be Jarl Vornig's error.

With his body broken and drowning in the stygian waters of the lake's deep abyss, the dark powers that dwell therein sensed the indignant wrath of the ice giant and struck a deal with the king as he died. The Jötunn who had fallen on that day were granted unlife and the king was commanded by his deliverer to unleash his vengeance upon the Vikmordere people—the caveat being that the reprieve from death would only be granted until the zenith of the Great Serpent's constellation on the winter solstice.

If Jarl Vornig was not slain by Krumma Ymagir before that night's end in six months' time, then the Jötunn would be sent to their graves once more until the Great Serpent's return nearly half a millennia later.

In the preceding warfare with the undead ice giants, the valley grew unnaturally cold and was swept by an unending blizzard. The Vikmordere people were hard-pressed and strapped for resources. Many were killed in battle. Many more froze to death or died from starvation and sickness. As endless winter languished, the carnage caused by the Jötunn was nearly unimaginable.

The coalition of clans that the Jarl amassed for the summer attack on the ice giants' keep had all but severed ties. Many blamed Vornig's raid into the mountains for their hardships and some believed that the great Ancestor Spirit had forsaken them for his actions.

Outnumbered by an undying enemy and plagued by dwindling resources, the Jarl's defeat by the Jötunn seemed imminent. However, in that hour of despair, a miracle occurred. During a particularly devastating battle, as the Jarl and his few remaining men were holed up within the Cliffs of Ighdenholm and cornered by an immense army of ice giants, Jarl Vornig was visited by a mysterious flaming owl—totem of the goddess Ningatha (messenger of the great Ancestor Spirit). The strange creature spoke to the Jarl, and revealed to him the location of powerful magic to aid in his struggle.

Vikmordere legends aren't clear on what transpired after the Jarl's conversation with the magical bird. What is known is that within days Jarl Vornig and fewer than a dozen men from his clan marched triumphantly across the battlefields, rescuing besieged village after village until nearly





all of the Jötunn had been defeated. By the night of the winter solstice naught of the ice giants remained save their king.

Jarl Vornig, wielding a flaming sword and an aegis of mysterious power, stood alone in combat with the Jötunn lord. In the midst of the terrible blizzard that had covered the land, the Jarl struck down his foe and ended the terrible curse that had befallen the Vikmordere people.

The tale of Jarl Vornig of the Völsfing is well known amongst the Vikmordere, and often retold during the harsh midwinter—a reminder that even in the darkest of hours, the Ancestor Spirit answers the call of the Vikmordere people. However, as the Ohjaslange approaches, many are fearful of the return of the Jötunn as foretold in that same tale, and hope that once again brave heroes will rise to defend the clans.

Four hundred years have passed since the fall of the Jötunn, and the Völsfing Clan remains a prominent and well respected clan amongst the Vikmordere. Though the Jarl's magical armaments were never seen again, it is said that their location is a secret that was passed down through the many generations of his descendants. Unfortunately, due to internal power struggles within the clan over the centuries, the people of Vornig's bloodline long ago relinquished their positions of power. Today there is but one living descendant of the great hero: a reclusive (and somewhat insane) witch named Arurún who lives in isolation on the northern shores of Serpent Lake.

With the return of the curse, the Vikmordere Valley is plunged into endless blizzard, and the Jötunn once again rise from their wintery graves. New heroes have arrived, and only the old witch can lead them to the tools they need to vanquish the undying giants.

The Adventure Path Summary

The arrival of the Ohjaslange heralds the return of the dreaded skeletal ice giants known as the Jötunn, and the adventurers have unwittingly stepped into the role of saviors of the Vikmordere people. If they are not up to the challenge set before them, winter may forever reign in the valley.

The story begins as the party is traveling through the region of the Vikmordere Valley surrounding the eastern shores of Serpent Lake. The party is suddenly waylaid by an unnatural blizzard which rushes from the peaks of Ighdenholm with amazing speed and explosive force. Soon the adventurers find themselves trapped in a deadly barrage of ice, snow, and violent gale winds. They are forced to shelter in a small grotto where they encounter a mysterious owl wreathed in flames.

After hearing a disembodied feminine voice tell them to follow the bird, the Ember Owl flies out into the blizzard and leads them through the storm toward the great hall within the village of Völsfiheimr, home of the Völsfing clan of Vikmordere. The party soon discovers they are not alone when they are attacked by a strange pack of evil dire wolves in the midst of the howling wind and pelting ice. Led by an undead alpha, the dire wolves have been stalking the adventurers since they entered the valley.

Once they arrive in the Vikmordere village, their entrance to the great hall is accompanied by the revelation that the owl is a manifestation of the demigoddess Ningatha. The party has been chosen by the deity to journey across the hazardous icy waters of Serpent Lake—through the blizzard's veil of snow—to recover the lost artifacts of the famed Jarl Vornig. These artifacts are said to be the only way to defeat the approaching skeletal ice giant horde.

In Völsfiheimr the adventurers discover that warriors and shieldmaidens from many clans across the region have gathered there





in anticipation of the ill-fated night of the Ohjaslange. They now prepare for their great battle against the undead ice giants marching down from the mountaintop of Ighdenholm.

These warriors serve under a loose federation of clans known as the Northern Fury Council, which in turn is headed by the chieftain of the village

the chieftain of the village in which they take refuge.

From their new allies the adventurers learn that there is but one person who may know the whereabouts of the hidden artifacts. The party is charged with traveling to meet with the witch named Arurún (the last surviving descendant of Jarl Vornig).

The barbarians welcome the adventurers and hold a great feast to prepare them for their difficult quest. Canute, the Völsfing chieftain, provides them with winter equipment and one of the village's keelboats to make the voyage to learn Arurún's secret and recover the lost artifacts needed to save his people. If they

agree to return with the artifacts, he offers them a notably substantial portion of the treasure that his clan had looted during their summer raids as reward.

Rowing the Völsfing keelboat across Serpent Lake, while trying to avoid cursed icebergs, the party seeks the old witch's assistance in recovering the Jarl's legendary magic sword (*Vlfberht*) and his magic aegis (*Skjold Rustning*). The old woman instead gives them the hero's receptacle, an amulet of crystal shards that she insists contains the memories of her famous ancestor. She promises that the trinket can be used to locate both of the artifacts, and in fact it does create a magical map and compass that guides them to a mysterious location centered upon the northern glacier.

Using the receptacle to guide them, the adventurers set off to recover the sword and aegis. As they make their way through endless ice and snow, they begin experiencing a persistent haunt by the apparition of the Jarl—who they soon discover has manifested to aide in them in preparing for the dangers that lay ahead.

Locating the vault of *Vlfberht* inside the chasm of the great glacier, the heroes must delve deep beneath the ice in hopes of recovering the lost sword.

Once the ancient jarl's fiery sword is recovered, the adventurers discover the magical map has changed and now indicates that the magic aegis lies on an island in the deep eastern waters of Serpent Lake. They make haste back to the witch's hovel to secure their ship, but find the place destroyed and the witch murdered.

> While investigating the scene, the party discerns from gigantic tracks through the snow that the hut was demolished by giants. Though unaware, their every move is being watched by Jötunn scouts that linger just out of sight through the blinding snow and ice.

When the heroes depart for the shore to recover their boat, they are ambushed by skeletal ice giants, and must fight their way through to their shored keelboat.

Once upon the waters of the lake again, they must make their way to the second mysterious icon on the magical map, and the ghostly spirit of Jarl Vornig makes yet another appearance to bolster the party's resolve.



Upon arriving at the island vault of *Skjold Rustning*, the adventurers explore the dangerous complex and recover the second of the artifacts. With both the sword and aegis in tow, they make way once more for their boat, but are attacked by a group of darkly robed humans accompanied by a contingent of Jötunn berserkers.

After the battle is fought and won, the adventurers discover that the humans are Vikmordere of the Raven Clan. The adventurers find evidence that their leader, Marrak (a sitting member of the Northern Fury Council) is behind not only this attack, but also the murder of Arurún and the attempt to thwart their progress at the northern shores of Serpent Lake.

With a sense of urgency, the adventurers make their way back to the village of Völsfing to return with the artifacts and bring news of Marrak's betrayal.

Upon returning with the artifacts, they reveal Marrak's betrayal to Canute. However, the head of the Raven Clan is nowhere to be found, having fled for his life when he spotted the adventurers returning. The traitor is apprehended hours later, at which point Canute beheads the man with the searing blade of Vlfberht.

Learning from the adventurers that the Jötunn are amassing on the northern shores of Serpent Lake, the chieftain prepares a large contingent of warriors and shieldmaidens to march north and engage the skeletal ice giants upon their approach."

The adventurers are asked to remain behind in the village with three dozen warriors to shore up defenses should the assault fail.

The battle on the shores of Serpent Lake is an utter failure and Canute is killed. The returning Vikmordere tell the tale that every giant they felled seemed to soon rise again to continue fighting.



The pursuing Jötunn arrive and the village is brutally attacked, but Ningatha rushes ahead of the onslaught to warn the village, her powers drained from her persistence through the unending blizzard. Though the village is defended valiantly, ultimately the heroes cannot destroy the giants, and all survivors are forced to flee south into the forest.

The village is lost. The surviving Vikmordere, led by the Council, sets camp in the woods. When the body of Canute eventually makes its way to the encampment, a funeral is held and the Jarl's artifacts recovered.

While all recover from the devastating blow, Ningatha reveals that that she has felt a draining of her own powers as the endless winter continues, and the source of the dark magic is coming from the Isle of Meyla,



WRATH OF THE JÖTUNN • INTRODUCTION which is inhabited by an ancient race of immortal creatures known as the Maidens of Meyla Isle.

The place is both forbidden and feared by the Vikmordere people. Vikmordere folklore pegs the Isle as the place where damned souls reside. Regardless of the truth of those tales, the Isle is constantly surrounded by powerful winds that prevent any ship from sailing within miles of it.

Ningatha offers hope to the Council, and once again calls upon the adventurers to help save the people of the valley. The demigoddess tells of an ancient vessel hidden deep within a secret place she calls The Tomb of the Ancestors. The ship that resides in this ancient place would enable the adventurers to gain access to the evil island.



After informing the Council that no mortal can open the doors to the tomb, Ningatha herself leads the adventurers to the secret location which is located deep beneath the top of the world—Ighdenholm.

The Council entrusts the ancient artifacts to the adventurers, then provides the party with their grandest long ship and two dozen Vikmordere warriors to row it. However, the ship is capsized by an enormous serpent before it can make shore on the mountain landing.

The adventurers and Ningatha (whose powers are now weakened by the curse of unending winter) are swept further out into the violent waters. After a fierce battle with the snake, they are rescued from the frigid waters by the ghost of Jarl Vornig, who manifests riding on the back of a sleipnir striding across the water's surface.

After making several passes to drag each of the adventurers safely to shore, the ghost of Jarl Vornig dismounts, and approaches Ningatha as she lands and reassumes her maiden form. The Immortal approaches and kisses the specter's forehead, and the Jarl fades away as his spirit departs into a long awaited afterlife.

Though visibly distraught over Jarl Vornig's departure, Ningatha completes her mission of guiding the adventurers to the entrance of the Tomb of the Ancestors. She explains to them that the only way for the entrance to be opened is for her to sacrifice her own essence to break the seal.

After confessing her love for the Jarl and speaking of finding peace with him as part of the Ancestor Spirit, Ningatha apologizes to the adventurers for having to leave them during such a difficult part of their quest. She bestows a gift upon each of them before sacrificing herself in a pyre of flame to unlock the way.

The adventurers enter the tomb. overcome its many challenges, and recover the legendary vessel known as Sorrow's Snekkja. With the magical longship, the



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adventurers make their way through the winds of Serpent Lake and to the Isle of Meyla to thwart whatever dark magic pulses from within.

On the isle, the adventurers find the last of Marrak's co-conspirators of taking refuge on the beach near the entrance to a crystalline cave leading into the island's central mountain. The Cult of the Raven Clan make their stand against the adventurers at the mouth of the mysterious cavern, but are defeated.

Deeper in the frozen crystalline caverns, the adventurers encounter the immortal Maidens of Meyla Isle—vile icy sorceresses who have lent their magic to the Jötunn in exchange for a promised rule over the many isles of the lake—and discover that the magical flames of *Vlfberht* can kill the vixens.

After slaying the maidens and destroying their powerful crystal with the flames of the ancient jarl's sword, the curse of the valley is ended. The wintery gale comes to an end, the blizzard slows to a gentle snowfall, and the Jötunn are robbed of .

When the adventurers return to the village of Völsfing they find one hundred Vikmordere longships outfitted for war. Aboard them are every able-bodied warrior and shieldmaiden. The Vikmordere set sail towards Ighdenholm to wage war against the Jötunn.

Led by the Northern Fury Council and the adventurers, the barbarian war party makes their landing near the Mountain Pass, and begins the long march to the fortress of Krumma, the king of the Jötunn. A great storm still encompasses the top of the tallest peak, though the valley below is now serene. Ighdenholm is wreathed in a wintery storm even more powerful than the blizzard that raged before.

The Vikmordere army is met full on half way up the pass, and the battle begins: hundreds of Vikmordere against hundreds of Jötunn. During the raging battle, there is a break in the Jötunn defensive front, and seizing the narrow opportunity the Council asks the adventurers to continue up the mountain and take the Jötunn Fortress.

Dozens of warriors focus their offense upon the ice giant defenses. Soon a gap large enough for the adventurers to pass through is forced and they continue the long climb up to the peak.

The heroes enter the gigantic keep, and fight through Krumma's personal guard before facing down the king himself in his own throne room. With their might, they destroy the Jötunn king, and in an instant all remaining Jötunn collapse into lifeless piles of bone and ice, forever ending the terrible curse.

The party and the surviving barbarian army return to the village of Völsfiheimr where they are hailed as heroes and saviors of the Vikmordere people and amply rewarded for their efforts.

Adventure Hooks

Adventure Hook #1-The Tome of Tomorrow

The adventurers are approached by a messenger, and offered a monetary reward if they accompany her to speak to a scholar in a nearby metropolis. She offers few details on the situation aside from the fact that she was paid to locate and invite the party to this meeting, and that she has been searching for them for several weeks.

The wealthy scholar owns a vast library in the city and has in his possession a very unusual tome. The book, while appearing very ancient, accounts for a telling of history from the perspective of the future. The scholar's substantial wealth has been amassed due to his foreknowledge of certain events.

Unfortunately, much of the book has been damaged in a long ago fire, and nearly a third of the pages are rendered illegible or have been completely burned away. It has become a





personal obsession of the scholar to complete the missing portions of the book again by rewriting those pages as their stories unfold in the present. This self-assigned task is why he has sought out the adventurers.

The scholar shows them a series of partially burned pages. Within the bits of remaining text on those pages are mentioned several of their names, as well as one partial illumination depicting a stylized figure that looks eerily like one of the party members. Though most of the story has been lost to damage, it seems to tell a tale about the PCs going on a great quest, recovering ancient artifacts, and befriending a goddess.

A few of the words contained in the remaining text seem to possibly indicate a time and location for the foretold events. The word Ohjaslange, a Vikmordere word which refers to a unique astrological event that happens only once every four hundred years (and just happens to be mere days or weeks away from the present date), and the mention of the mountain of Ighdenholm, which is the tallest peak in the Vikmordere Valley (also known as the Eastern Mountain region), about 100 miles east of the Klavek village of Rybalka.



Adventure Hook #2-A **Mutual Threat**

Officials of the Klavek kingdom have heard rumors of a gathering of warriors from many Vikmordere clans in one of the barbarian villages on the eastern shores of Serpent Lake. Concerned by the potential threat the allied barbarians might pose to Klavek interests in the region, they have decided to investigate further.

The PCs are adventurers or mercenaries from the Klavek Kingdom that have been hired find this village and discover if the rumors are true and if it's something the kingdom should investigate further.

While traveling deep into the wilds of the Eastern Mountain region to investigate, the adventurers find themselves lost in the unexpected blizzard. After becoming aware of its source they realize that the Jötunn could pose an immediate threat to Klavek interests in the region (more so than any Vikmordere gathering). If the expanding wintery gale isn't stopped, they could quickly find themselves trapped in an unwinnable battle with a legion of undead ice giants.

If it's possible for the party to thwart the invasion from the Jötunn by aiding the





Vikmordere, then they may not only save their own lives, but just might become heroes in the process. That's not to say that the Vikmordere chieftain's reward doesn't provide some additional incentive as well.

SETTING UP THE ADVENTURE

The wilderness of the Vikmordere Valley is vast, and it will take many days to trek to the interior region where this adventure takes place. The timing of the adventure should be so that it begins early to midmorning of the winter solstice. The skies are pristine and clear, and though it is cold, the warmth of the sun brightens the landscape.

Regardless of what adventure hook is used to bring the party to the Vikmordere Valley, strange things will begin to occur as soon as they arrive.

The first series of unusual events will be several sightings of a fiery object flying in the distant sky. While viewable during the day, it is much easier to see at night. The object will seem to be leading the party to the area just south of the eastern side of Serpent Lake (directly south of the distant towering peak of Ighdenholm).

The second of the reoccurring events is whenever the adventurers sleep in the valley (leading up to the adventure start). Their dreams are haunted by a mysterious maiden (see the description of the demigoddess Ningatha in *Part 3-A: the Adventure Begins*). In their dreams they will always remember her observing them from afar with a smile on her lips. Just before they wake, she begins speaking to them, though the exact words escape them upon waking, leaving behind only a lingering memory of a gentle feminine voice.

PART 1-A. TRAVERSING THE WINTERY GALE

As the title of this series alludes, surviving the Vikmordere Valley while it's shrouded in unnatural winter is one of the primary challenges of this adventure path. The most unavoidable and dangerous foe that the adventurers will have to face is the environment itself, and it has been specifically designed to thwart their progress at every turn. As such, this entire



section of the book is dedicated to providing you with the tools required to maintain an engaging and interesting overland trek as the PCs complete the various objectives of the adventure. They are forced to brave the unending blizzard that has cursed the valley. A frigid and dangerous world awaits as they trek out *Into The Wintery Gale*.

Windswept Ammunition

Due to the violent and constant winds, all physical ranged attacks suffer a -4 penalty to hit when exposed to the gale. This penalty only applies to tangible ranged ammo that can be affected by the force of the winds. Some areas such as the deep glacial chasm, inside dungeons, and beneath the cover of the deep forest, are protected from the violent gale winds and this penalty does not apply in those areas. Use discretion when deciding whether or not to penalize range attacks.

Cursed Teleportation

Any sort of teleportation magic is dampened by the curse that stretches across the Vikmordere Valley. If an adventurer attempts to cast such a spell or activate a magic item that generates a teleportation effect, they will discover that the effect only transports them 1-mile in a random direction. The effect is unavoidable in the valley until the destruction of the magical ice shard guarded by the Maidens of Meyla Isle.

Blinded by the White

Dark roiling clouds cloak the sun, making the difference between day and night difficult to differentiate. The constant barrage of falling snow, sleet, and ice cause very poor visibility. With normal illumination (or lowlight vision alone) vision is reduced to 30 ft. *Daylight* or similar magical effects will expand visibility to 40 ft. If a PC is attempting to fly during the blizzard, then all Fly checks receive a –15 penalty due to limited visibility and violent gale winds.

As the adventurers travel through the blizzard and whitewashed landscape, there is a 10% chance of becoming disoriented

and lost for each mile traveled. They will not be immediately aware if they do become lost. If the PCs become lost, the PC leading the way must make a **DC 20 Survival check** to realize they are diverting from their intended route (this check should be made secretly by the GM).

If lost adventurers come across a notable landmark (such as the lake shore or mountains) and are aware that those landmarks are not supposed to be observed during their intended route, they immediately become aware that they are lost and have traveled off their intended route. The party can become lost whether traveling by land or waterway or while flying.

Once they realize they are lost PCs may take a **DC 30 Survival check** to discern their current location and direction of travel. Magical means of orienting themselves, such a<u>s know direction, w</u>ill also help them to discern their current location lowering difficulty for discerning that location to a **DC 25 Survival check**.

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If the adventurers do become lost, do not realize it, and continue to travel, then roll 1d8 and use the chart below to determine which random heading they are traveling in for the preceding mile of travel.

| Random Direction of Travel | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| 1d8 Result | Direction Traveled | |
| 1 | North | |
| 2 | Northeast | |
| 3 | East | |
| 4 | Southeast | |
| 5 | South | |
| 6 | Southwest | |
| 7 | West | |
| 8 | Northwest | |

Note: If the adventurers are using the illusionary map generated by the hero's receptacle, then they may use that map to automatically discern their location. However, if they are not actively using the device, the party may still become lost and wander off course.

Hazard of the Great Ice Fog

Ice fog, known to the Vikmordere as the "white death," is an unusual weather event caused when moisture in the air is suddenly exposed to supercooled temperatures and results in a vast fog consisting of incredibly fine ice crystals. An ice fog is very rare, but not unheard of during the deep winter of the Vikmordere Valley.

Even a light ice fog can cause a sudden and dramatic drop in temperature in an already subfreezing climate and the fine crystals freeze to virtual everything that comes into contact with the fog. However, the dramatic freezing caused by the wintery gale and unending blizzard have caused an enormous, shifting veil of ice fog in the valley. Nearly six miles wide and about eighty feet high, the Great Ice Fog snakes its way through the valley, guided randomly by the violent winds of the gale. For every mile traveled through the blizzard (both on land and by water) there is a 5% chance the party encounters the Great Ice Fog and are forced to either seek shelter immediately or brave its deadly chill.

When the adventurers encounter the ice fog they remain within quickly shifting fog for the next 1d4 miles they travel. If they instead take shelter, the ice fog will pass in 3d4 hours. For each mile traversed through the ice fog after encountering it, the PCs must make a **DC 25 Fortitude save** or suffer 3d6 points of cold damage (save for half damage).

PART 1-B. OPTIONAL RULES FOR HYPOTHERMIA & FROSTBITE

Hypothermia

When a PC is exposed to the wintery elements for a prolonged period their core body temperature begins to drop. This eventually leads to hypothermia. If a PC with hypothermia is not properly treated, the hypothermia progressively worsens. There are three stages of Hypothermia as it progresses. Mild hypothermia has relatively minor effects upon a PC where as severe hypothermia can quickly lead to death.

Hypothermia (1)—Mild. For each hour a PC has the Hypothermia (1) status, they are dealt 1d4+6 (minus Base Exposure Duration) of non-lethal damage (x 1.5 if drenched). When the PC has been dealt non-lethal damage by hypothermia equal to half of his or her maximum hit points, that PC immediately obtains the Hypothermia (2) status. For each hour spent with the Hypothermia (1) status, a PC has a 10% chance of taking 1d4 points of frostbite damage.

<u>Hypothermia (2)</u>: Moderate. In addition to continuing the non-lethal damage caused by Hypothermia (1), for each hour that a PC has the Hypothermia (2) status, they are dealt 1d4+6 (minus Base Exposure Duration) of temporary Constitution damage (x 1.5 if



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drenched). When the PC has been dealt half of their total Constitution score in temporary constitution damage, that PC immediately obtains the Hypothermia (3) status. For each hour spent with the Hypothermia (2) status, a PC has a 25% chance of taking 1d4 points of frostbite damage.

Hypothermia (3): Severe. In addition to continuing the non-lethal damage caused by Hypothermia (1) and the temporary Constitution damage caused by Hypothermia (2), for each hour that a PC has Hypothermia (3) they must succeed a **DC 15 Fortitude saving throw** or die from heart failure. For each hour spent with the Hypothermia (3) status, a PC has a 75% chance of taking 1d6 points of frostbite damage.

A PC must progress through all three stages of hypothermia beginning with mild, moving on to moderate, and finally severe. The initial onset of Hypothermia (1) begins when a PC is exposed to colder temperatures for an extended period of time that is defined by the Base Exposure Duration.

Base Exposure Duration is the length of time (in hours) it takes for a completely exposed (naked) PC to gain the status of Hypothermia (1). If a character is removed from exposure for one hour or longer, then the Base Exposure Duration is reset for them if they become exposed again. This length of time is multiplied by 1.5 if the PC is wearing light or moderate clothing. It is multiplied by 2 if the PC is wearing heavy winter clothing. It is multiplied by 4 if the PC is wearing specialized winter clothing (such as the Vikmordere winter outfit).

If a PC is drenched (either currently submerged in water or wearing wet clothing) the Base Exposure Duration is cut in half.

The chart on the following page details the general Base Exposure Duration based on the environment.

Treating hypothermia requires a warm shelter that provides protection from the elements. For treatment to work, the PC must remove any wet clothing they may be wearing. The negative effects caused by hypothermia stop progressing as soon as the PC is introduced to such shelter, however the PC must remain warm and sheltered for an extended period before reducing or removing a hypothermia status effect.

Hypothermia (1) requires 2 uninterrupted hours of warm shelter to be treated. Once treated, all non-lethal damage caused by Hypothermia is healed, and the hypothermia status effect is completely removed.

Hypothermia (2) requires 2 uninterrupted hours of warm shelter to be treated and reduced to Hypothermia (1). Once reduced, all temporary Constitution damage caused by hypothermia is recovered.



| Exposure to | Freezing 7 | Temperatures |
|--------------------|------------|---------------------|
|--------------------|------------|---------------------|

| Environment | Base Exposure Duration |
|--|------------------------|
| Cold (above freezing) | 5 hours |
| Cold (above freezing) with heavy winds | 3 hours |
| Freezing | 2 hours |
| Freezing with heavy winds | 1 hour |
| Subfreezing | ½ hour |
| subfreezing with heavy winds | ¼ hour |

Note: For the duration of this adventure, the Vikmordere valley is considered subfreezing with heavy winds.

Hypothermia (3) requires 4 uninterrupted hours of warm shelter be treated and reduced to Hypothermia (2).

A warm fire and a hot drink will reduce treatment time for a single stage of hypothermia by one hour. Thus, sitting by a hot fire and having a cup of hot tea would reduce the time to change Hypothermia 3 to 2 to three hours. Continuing to sit by the fire and having a fresh cup of tea would reduce the time to bring Hypothermia 2 down to 1 to one hour, and so on.

Once a PC recovers from hypothermia, any frostbite damage they may have incurred persists.

Frostbite

As hypothermia affects a PC, drawing the blood from the extremities to warm the core of their body, it leaves them susceptible to frostbite (freezing of the extremities).

Damage caused by frostbite results in horrible discoloration and blackening of extremities (particularly fingers and toes) as tissues die off from freezing and become necrotic. Frostbite damage cannot be healed until the PC has been treated with use of *lesser restoration*. The restoration does not heal the damage, but revives the necrotic tissue to the point that it can be healed either naturally or by other magical means. The PC also gains the regular befits of the *lesser restoration* spell when cast.

If frostbite damage is left untreated for longer than 24 hours the PC risks becoming infected with gangrene. If a PC contracts gangrene due to frostbite then they are immediately dealt 1 point of Constitution damage (**no saving throw**), and are dealt 1d4 points of Constitution damage (**DC 20 Fort saving throw** negates) every 24 hours thereafter until either the gangrene is treated with *remove disease* or the affected appendage is amputated.

The chart below can be used to randomly determine the area affected by frostbite damage and the associated risk of contracting gangrene if left untreated:

| become nectotic. | | |
|------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| | Frostbite | |
| 1d6 Result | Area Affected | Chance of Gangrene |
| 1 – 2 | Left Foot (toes) | 30% |
| 3 - 4 | Right Foot (toes) | 30% |
| 5 | Left Hand (fingers) | 20% |
| 6 | Right Hand (fingers) | 20% |





PART 1-K. VIKMORDERE WINTER **TRAVEL GEAR**

If the adventurers agree to aid the Völsfing Clan in recovering the ancient Jarl's legendary artifacts, their host offers them a selection of winter gear that is unique to the region and the Vikmordere people. This gear has been especially designed to aid survival during the long, brutal winters of the valley, and proves to be invaluable to the adventurers. The Vikmordere winter gear collection is detailed here as it relates to assisting the PC's survival within the unending blizzard.

The Vikmordere Winter Outfit

The first rule of keeping warm during winter in the Vikmordere Valley is to avoid traveling during the colder months. However, when this is not an option, the Vikmordere winter outfit is the tried-andtrue native solution. The outfit consists of a multilayered, hooded, full body covering worn over a thick wool undergarment.

During the winter months it is worn by men and women alike who intend to undertake any prolonged exposure to the cold. The winter outfit is very thick, preventing its wearer from donning any additional armor, but is padded enough that it also functions as medium hide armor.

The first layer consists of softened and smoked leather wraps secured by braided

sinew to the arms and legs accompanied by a waxed cuirbouilli jerkin worn over a fitted wool kyrtill (or tunic) and breeches. The segmented nature of the leather wraps makes for plenty of flexibility while traversing the wilds, yet still provides ample insulation to trap the body heat of its wearer.

The second layer consists of a needlebound wool cloak boasting a cowl lined with thick animal furs. The hood is typically accompanied by a long wool wrap used to loosely bundle around the neck and cover most of the wearer's face (similar to a scarf).

The outermost layer of the winter outfit consists of a wrap crafted of thick bear or mammoth hide secured by rugged leather belts and harnesses from which several satchels, tools, sheaths or scabbards can be securely hung.

The attire also includes a pair of thick leather gloves and rugged leather-andpitch-soled turnshoe boots crafted from oilskin. The boots are secured by dyed wool spjarrar (leg wraps dyed a certain color to denote clan affiliation), and in addition to being worn over wool socks, are sometimes lined with plush down or dry hay to help both absorb and prevent sweating which could otherwise quickly result in frostbite.

The combined elements of the Vikmordere winter outfit makes for surprisingly water-resistant and extremely warm clothing, and provides its wearer with protection from the subfreezing temperatures of winter in the valley. A character wearing a Vikmordere winter outfit can withstand the effects of cold weather, such as hypothermia and frostbite, 4x longer than a character wearing another type of garment.

Winter Rations

Among the wide variety of typical Vikmordere winter foodstuffs are smoked and chopped herring pickled in soured whey, dried freshwater cod strips, salted skyr cheese, pickled turnips, dried bread slices, barley ale, and apple beer. The





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longevity of these foods not only serves the purpose of preserving sustenance through harsh winters, but also provides the convenience of an easily portable ration.

A Vikmordere ration kit consists of a five-days-worth of preserved food, a soapstone drinking bowl, and a simple rigged cutting knife all bound in animal hide. The bundle is accompanied by a stoppered wooden amphorae filled with beer, ale, or mead.

Boneskates & Frossenpinne

During the colder months in the Vikmordere Valley, portions of Serpent Lake freeze over—particularly the shallows near the shoreline. The barbarians of the region have discovered that opting to travel over the ice rather than through the frozen terrain that surrounds it can be a much more efficient means of transportation.

The Vikmordere actually skate over these expanses of ice utilizing boneskates, which are ice skates fashioned from the femur bones of larger animals such as cattle, horses, or mammoths. Unlike modern ice skates which cut across the surface of the ice, boneskates are flat on one side and rounded on the other, allowing the wearer to glide across the surface of the frozen lake after the boneskates have been securely attatched to their boots.

The Frossenpinne is a long wooden pole, five to six feet in length that is used to propel a boneskater along the ice by pushing down upon the surface of the frozen lake. One end of the shaft has an iron spike that is used to grip the surface of the ice, the other has a narrow axe blade, similar to an ice pick or iceaxe, which is occasionally used to test the rigidity of patches of ice that may look thin or unsafe for travel.

Boneskaters can reach speeds between 8 and 10 miles per hour, on par with the canter of a rider on horseback, though they only function when used on stable ice.

Bearpaws

Also known as snow-shoes, bearpaws are wide, oval wooden frames laced with leather cording to form an interior web which is attatched to the bottom of a wearer's boots. The bearpaws provide a wider surface area for the impression left by the wearer's foot, helping to prevent them from sinking in deep snow.

> The toe of the frames are outfitted with a series of iron claws that allow the snow shoe to dig into for traction on icy surfaces. The combination of features makes the bearpaw a desirable accessory for wintertime travel in the Vikmordere Valley.

Bearpaws are not necessary for a character to make the skill check normally required for overcoming nominal obstacles in the difficult terrain of the wintry landscape.

PART 1-D. OVERWORLD ENCOUNTERS AND HAZARDS General Traveling Distances

The chart on the following page indicates the distance in miles between the various points of interest in this adventure. It has been provided for convenience when determining how long travel may require and when checking for environment induced status effects, random encounters, or special encounters that have a chance of occurring for every mile traveled.

Traveling Across the Lake

The waters of Serpent Lake were already frigid before the endless blizzard befell the valley. If it were not for the constant winds of the violent gale, all but the deepest parts of the lake would be frozen solid. Instead, the lake's surface is covered by a thick slush-like layer of ice with a scattering of miniature icebergs that float like icy ships upon the surface.



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| WRA | TH OF T | HE JÖ | TUNN | • TRA | VERSI | ng th | IE WIN | TERY | WHITE |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|------------|--------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 10 G 24 | Ruined Jötunn Fortress | 35 | 25 | 30 | 50 | 33 | 15 | 40 | 1 |
| | Tomb of the Ancestors | 30 | 27 | 33 | 20 | 40 | 7 | I | 40 |
| | Cliffs of Ighdenholm | 20 | 15 | 17 | 13 | 20 | 1 | 7 | 15 |
| t Aventyr | Vault of Vlfberht | 33 | 17 | 28 | 40 | | 13 | 40 | 33 |
| Throughou | Vault of Skjold Rustning | 15 | 13 | 15 | 1 | 40 | 20 | 20 | 50 |
| Travel Times Throughout Aventyr | Arurún's Hut | S | 3 | | 15 | 28 | 17 | 33 | 30 |
| Tr | Isle Meyla | Ŋ | I | ß | 13 | 28 | 15 | 27 | 25 |
| | Village of Völsfiheimr | I | ß | Ŋ | 15 | 33 | 20 | 30 | 35 |
| | | Village of Völsfiheimr | Isle Meyla | Arurún's Hut | Vault of Skjold Rustning | Vault of Vlfberht | Cliffs of Ighdenholm | Tomb of the Ancestors | Ruined Jötunn Fortress |

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Some of these larger shards of ice have been imbued with dark magic by the evil entity that resides in the depths of Serpent Lake. For each mile traversed across the lake's surface, there is a 25% chance that the PCs encounter these magical icebergs and potentially trigger *The Growling Lake* trap. The chance of this trap occurring while traveling across the lake will continue with each mile traveled until the icebergs are destroyed or unless the triggered trap is in its reset phase after previously being triggered.







Type magical, **Perception** DC 25, **Disable Device** DC 40 (or destroy growlers) **Trigger** proximity, **Reset** 1d4 hours (unless destroyed)

In the distance, just beyond the edge of the foggy veil of snow, the jagged crowns of several small icebergs can be vaguely seen. The stark white ice bobs slightly as the wake from the vessel ripples out across the iceladen waters to meet them.

EFFECTS

In the wintry waters of the lake, nearly obscured by the unending blizzard, are six growlers (small shard-like icebergs) with jagged edges. These growlers have been imbued with magic by the dark entity that dwells within the depths of the lake. The growlers automatically detect when a vessel travels within 500 feet. When the keelboat is detected, the frozen aquatic hazards are propelled by magic and begin traveling towards the boat with increasing speed.

The growlers specifically target water faring vehicles and ignore individual creatures. If a growler strikes, the damage it deals is done directly to the hit points of the vessel, potentially sinking it. Once a growler has struck its target it will sink below the surface for 1d4 hours before returning to a random spot in the original trigger area of effect.

If triggered, three of the growlers will be near the vessel and will each require 1d4+1 rounds to reach their target to cause 2d6 damage. The other three growlers are more distant from the vessel, and will each require 1d4+3 rounds to reach their target. Due to their increased speed, the three more distant growlers cause 2d6 damage. The growlers are roughly 10 feet in diameter, and have a hardness of 0 and 360 hp. The growlers have no chance to miss, and will successfully hit their target once triggered if the trap is not disabled.

Disabling

To disable the trap, the vessel must be safely traversed through the approaching ice shards, intentionally drawing the growlers together to collide into one another, thus destroying them. This can be accomplished with a single **DC 40 Disable Device check** by the controller of the vessel, however any nautical-based knowledge or profession skill bonuses can be applied to the skill check. The Disable Device check may be made once each round while the individual growlers are moving towards their target.

Alternatively, fire or heat based magic (such as *fireball*) can be used to melt the growlers either at a distance or as they approach. The growlers are vulnerable to heat and take x3 heat-based damage. Each of the six growlers can withstand 360 points of damage before being destroyed.

If the growlers are reduced to less than 180 hp before striking, then halve the damage they would normally cause. If the growlers are reduced to less than 90 hp before striking, then quarter the damage they would normally cause. Round down if calculating for reduced damage.

Traveling Through the Wilderness

Brought about by dark magic, the blizzard and bitter gale are unending. The heavy snowfall makes travel more difficult with constant poor visibility while traveling through the trackless frozen terrain.

After the first 8 hours of snowfall, the wintery white begins to stack and drift several feet deep causing all land-based travel to be considered through difficult terrain and further hindering movement by non-magical mount or a mount not suited for snow travel nearly impossible (**DC 50 Ride check**). These hindrances also affect any creatures or NPCs that the adventurers encounter in the wilderness.



Random Encounters in the Wilderness

For every 5 miles traveled there is a chance that the PCs will experience a random encounter or random event as they make their way through the snow-covered wilderness of the valley. Use Encounter Table 1A for each five miles of segment traveled (indicated by five consecutive hexes on the overland map of the Vikmordere Valley) to determine if there is a random encounter or special event.

Encounter Table 1A: Wilderness Random Encounters

| 1d100 Roll | Result |
|------------|------------------------|
| 1 - 70 | No Encounter |
| 71 - 80 | Monster (1B) |
| 81 - 90 | Wildlife (1C) |
| 91 - 100 | Special Event (1D) |

Encounter Table 1B: Wilderness Monster Encounters

Detailed information and stats about the monsters included in this table can be found in *Winter's Roar*, the Vikmordere Bestiary supplement book.

If you are not utilizing the Vikmordere Bestiary, but roll this option then instead utilize Table 1C for wildlife, and re-roll any 1d100 result lower than 51,

| Table 1B: Monster Encounters | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| 1d100 Roll | Monster Encounter | |
| 1 – 4 | Ratatosk (CR 7) | |
| 5 - 8 | Frost Wisp (CR 8) | |
| 9 – 12 | Frostbite (CR 8) | |
| 13 – 16 | Brunnmigi (CR 9) | |
| 17 – 20 | Icy Vigil (CR 9) | |
| 21 – 24 | Stag of the Whitewood (CR 9) | |
| 25 – 28 | Aptrgangr (CR 10) | |
| 29 - 32 | Fenrir (CR 10) | |
| 33 - 36 | Huldufólk (CR 10) | |

| Table 1B: Monster Encounters | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| 1d100 Roll | Monster Encounter | |
| 37 - 40 | Vættir (CR 10) | |
| 41 - 44 | Fafnir (CR 11) | |
| 45 - 48 | Margygur (CR 11) | |
| 49 - 52 | Snow Screecher (CR 11) | |
| 53 - 56 | Vereri Stalker (CR 11) | |
| 57 - 60 | White Wailer (CR 11) | |
| 61 - 64 | Glacial Bear (CR 12) | |
| 65 - 68 | Nibelung (CR 12) | |
| 69 – 70 | Sleipnir (CR 12) | |
| 71 – 74 | Vatndökk (CR 12) | |
| 75 – 78 | Elderfey (CR 13) | |
| 79 – 82 | Høyonde "Half- Giant" (CR 13) | |
| 83 - 86 | Overseer (CR 13) | |
| 87 - 90 | Tundra Troll (CR 13) | |
| 91 - 94 | Winter Wyrm (CR 13) | |
| 95 – 98 | Lindworm (CR 14) | |
| 99 – 100 | Wintertide Jabberwock (CR 14) | |

Encounter Table 1C: Wilderness Wildlife Encounters

Due to the unnatural source of the unending blizzard, the local wildlife is uneasy and any encounter with it results in an agitated fight-or-flight response. Upon a random encounter roll 1d4; a result of 1 means the wildlife encountered immediately attempts to flee (except where otherwise noted), but on a result of 2, 3, or 4, the encountered creatures become abnormally aggressive towards the encroaching adventurers.



| Table 1C: Wildlife Encounters | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| Wildlife Encounter | # Appearing | Challenge Rating | | |
| Wolf | 3d4 | 1 | | |
| Wild Boar | 2d4 | 2 | | |
| Moose | Solitary | 3 | | |
| Dire Wolf | 2d4 | 3 | | |
| Dire Wolverine | Pair | 4 | | |
| Megalocerous (Dire Elk) | 2d4 | 4 | | |
| Brown Bear | Solitary | 5 | | |
| Smilodon | Pair | 5 | | |
| Remorhaz* | Solitary | 7 | | |
| Mammoth (Wooly) | Solitary | 10 | | |
| Frost Worm* | Solitary | 12 | | |
| | Wildlife Encounter Wolf Wild Boar Moose Dire Wolf Dire Wolverine Megalocerous (Dire Elk) Brown Bear Smilodon Remorhaz* Mammoth (Wooly) | Wildlife Encounter# AppearingWolf3d4Wild Boar2d4Wild Boar2d4MooseSolitaryDire Wolf2d4Dire WolverinePairMegalocerous (Dire Elk)2d4Brown BearSolitarySmilodonPairRemorhaz*SolitaryMammoth (Wooly)Solitary | | |

* This creature does not automatically attempt to flee on a result of 1 when checking to determine the result of agitated fight-or-flight response. However, it still becomes abnormally aggressive on a result of 2–4 for the same check.

WOLF

XP 400

N Medium animal

Perception +8

DEFENSE

Init +2; Senses low-light vision, scent;

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WILD BOAR



XP 600

N Medium animal

Init +0; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 14 (+4 natural) hp 18 (2d8+9) Fort +6; Ref +3; Will +1 Defensive Abilities ferocity

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft. **Melee** gore +4 (1d8+4)

STATISTICS

Str 17, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 4 Base Atk +1; CMB +4; CMD 14 Feats Toughness Skills Perception +6



natural) hp 13 (2d8+4) Fort +5; Ref +5; Will +1

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft. **Melee** bite +2 (1d6+1 plus trip)

STATISTICS

Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6 Base Atk +1; CMB +2; CMD 14 (+18 vs. trip)

Feats Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Perception +8, Stealth +6, Survival +1 (+5 scent tracking); Racial Modifiers +4 Survival when tracking by scent



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WRATH OF THE JÖTUNN • TRAVERSING THE WINTERY WHITE

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XP 800 N Large animal

Init +1; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 14 (+1 Dex, +5 natural, -1 size)

hp 30 (4d8+12)

Fort +7; **Ref** +5; **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft. **Melee** head butt +6 (1d8+4), 2 hooves +1 (1d6+2)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 6 Base Atk +3; CMB +8; CMD 19 (23 vs. trip) Feats Endurance, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Perception +10, Stealth +2 (+6 in forests), Swim +8; Racial Modifiers +2 Perception, +4 Stealth in forests, +4 Swim

DIRE WOLF



XP 800

N Large animal Init +2; Senses low-light vision, scent; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +3 natural, -1 size) hp 37 (5d8+15) Fort +7; Ref +6; Will +2

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft. Melee bite +7 (1d8+6 plus trip) Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

STATISTICS

Str 19, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10 Base Atk +3; CMB +8; CMD 20 (24 vs. trip) Feats Run, Skill Focus (Perception) Skills Perception +10, Stealth +3, Survival +1 (+5 scent tracking; Racial Modifiers +4 Survival when tracking by scent

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DIRE WOLVERINE

XP 1,200

N Large animal

Init +7; Senses low-light vision, scent; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+3 Dex, +4 natural, -1 size) hp 42 (5d8+20) Fort +7; Ref +7; Will +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 10 ft. **Melee** 2 claws +6 (1d8+4), bite +6 (1d6+4) **Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. **Special Attacks** rage

STATISTICS

Str 19, Dex 17, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10 Base Atk +3; CMB +8; CMD 21 (25 vs. trip) Feats Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness

Skills Climb +12, Perception +12

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Rage (Ex) A dire wolverine that takes damage in combat flies into a rage on its next turn, madly clawing and biting until either it or its opponent is dead. It gains +4 to Strength, +4 to Constitution, and -2 to AC. The creature cannot end its rage voluntarily.











XP 1,200

N Large animal Init +2; Senses low-light vision, scent; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +5 natural, -1 size) hp 34 (4d8+16) Fort +8; Ref +8; Will +3

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft. **Melee** gore +7 (2d6+5), 2 hooves +2 (1d4+2) **Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. **Special Attacks** powerful charge (4d6+7)

STATISTICS

Str 20, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 2, Wis 15, Cha 5 Base Atk +3; CMB +9; CMD 21 (25 vs. trip) Feats Endurance, Lightning Reflexes, Run^B Skills Perception +9

BROWN BEAR XP 1,200



N Large animal

Init +1; Senses low-light vision, scent; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 15 (+1 Dex, +6 natural, -1 size) hp 42 (5d8+20) Fort +8; Ref +5; Will +2

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft. Melee 2 claws +7 (1d6+5 plus grab) Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

STATISTICS

Str 21, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6

Base Atk +3; CMB +9 (+13 grapple); CMD 20 (24 vs. trip)

Feats Endurance, Run, Skill Focus (Survival) Skills Perception +6, Survival +5, Swim +14; Racial Modifiers +4 Swim

SMILDON (SABER-TOOTH) <R 5



XP 1,600 N Medium animal

Init +2; Senses low-light vision; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 51 (6d8+24)

Fort +9; **Ref** +7; **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

- Melee bite +10 (1d8+6 plus grab plus bleed), 2 claws +10 (1d4+6 plus grab)
- **Special Attacks** bleed (1d3), pounce, rake (2 claws +10 1d4+6)

STATISTICS

Str 23, **Dex** 15, **Con** 19, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6 **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +10 (+14 grapple); **CMD** 22 (26 vs. trip)

- Feats Power Attack, Run, Skill Focus (Perception)
- Skills Acrobatics +10, Perception +9, Stealth +11 (+15 in heavy undergrowth or tall grass), Swim +10; Racial Modifiers +4 Acrobatics, +4 Stealth (+8 in heavy undergrowth or tall grass

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REMORHAZ



N Huge magical beast

Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +9





DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 9, flat-footed 19 (+1 Dex, +11 natural, -2 size) hp 94 (9d10+45) Fort +11; Ref +7; Will +4

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., burrow 20 ft.
Melee bite +13 (3d6+9 plus grab)
Special Attacks heat, swallow whole (2d6+9 plus 8d6 fire, AC 15, hp 9)

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 13, **Con** 21, **Int** 5, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10 **Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +17 (+21 grapple); **CMD** 28 (can't be tripped)

Feats Awesome Blow, Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perception) Skills Perception +16

Languages Giant (cannot speak)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Heat (Su) An enraged remorhaz generates heat so intense that anything touching its body takes 8d6 points of fire damage. Creatures striking a remorhaz with natural attacks or unarmed strikes are subject to this damage, but creatures striking with melee weapons are not. The heat can melt or burn weapons; any weapon that strikes a remorhaz is allowed a DC 19 Fortitude save to avoid taking damage. The save DC is Constitution-based.



In a world of ice and snow, the remorhaz is particularly feared for the terrible fires that burn within its body. These internal fires cause the armor plates along its back to glow red-hot when the creature is particularly angry, excited, or in pain. Creatures adapted to arctic regions are often particularly vulnerable to fire, making the remorhaz's primary defense an incredibly potent one and securing its role as a dangerous predator in such frozen reaches.

WOOLY MAMMOTH





N Huge animal **Init** +0; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 8, flat-footed 21 (+13 natural, -2 size) hp 149 (13d8+78 plus 13) Fort +14; Ref +8; Will +7

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee gore +19 (2d6+11), slam +19 (1d8+11), 2 stomps +17 (2d6+5)

Space 15 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Special Attacks trample (1d8+16, DC 27)

STATISTICS

Str 33, Dex 10, Con 23, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 6

Base Atk +9; CMB +22 (+24 bull rush); CMD 32 (34 vs. bull rush, 36 vs. trip)

Feats Improved Bull Rush, Iron Will, Multiattack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (slam), Weapon Focus (stomp), Weapon Focus (gore)

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Skills Perception +17

FROST WORM

XP 19,200

N Huge magical beast (cold) **Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 11, flat-footed 24 (+3 Dex, +16 natural, -2 size) hp 168 (16d10+80) Fort +15; Ref +13; Will +8 Immune cold

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., burrow 10 ft. **Melee** bite +25 (4d10+15 plus 4d6 cold)





Space 15 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Special Attacks breath weapon (60 ft. cone, 15d6 cold damage, Reflec DC 23 half, usable once per hour). death throes, trill

STATISTICS

- Str 31, Dex 16, Con 21, Int 2, Wis 16; Cha 11 Base Atk +16; CMB +28); CMD 41 (can't be tripped)
- Feats Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perception), Stand Still, Weapon Focus (bite)
- **Skills** Perception +17, Stealth +6 (+14 in ice or snow); **Racial Modifiers** +8 Stealth in ice or snow

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Cold (Su)** A frost worm's body generates intense cold, allowing it to deal an additional 4d6 cold damage with its bite attack. Any creature that attacks a frost worm with an unarmed strike or a natural weapon takes 1d6 points of cold damage per successful hit. A creature that grapples or is grappled by a frost worm takes 4d6 points of cold damage per round the grapple is maintained.
- **Death Throes (Su)** When killed, a frost worm explodes in a 100-foot-radius burst that deals 12d6 cold damage and 8d6 piercing damage (DC 23 Reflex half). The save DC is Constitution-based.
- Trill (Su) As a full-round action, a frost worm can emit a strange trilling sound that affects all creatures within a 100-foot radius. Creatures must succeed on a DC 18 Will save or be fascinated for as long as the worm continues to trill (the frost worm can maintain this trill by concentrating). Once a creature has resisted or broken the effect, it cannot be affected again by that same frost worm's trill for 24 hours. This is a sonic mind-affecting effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

PART 1-E. WILDERNESS SPECIAL EVENTS

This list details 30 special events that can occur while the PCs are traveling through the wilderness in this adventure. There are two ways to utilize it:

- Pick from the events to determine which best suites the adventurers' current locale and situation whenever a random event is rolled.
- Opt to use the supplemental *Into the Wintery Gale Random Event Deck* to draw a card upon which is printed one of the special events.

The Abominable Stalker

A DC 20 Perception check reveals to the party that something or someone has been following them through the wintery white. There is a sense of foreboding as they search the area for that which stalks them. An additional DC 30 Perception check reveals the location of the approaching Advanced Yeti (CR 5) as it prepares to attack. Failure of either Perception check results in a surprise attack by the Yeti. The monster is driven by hunger, and fights to the death.

A massive, muscular humanoid figure lunges forward. Covered in thick, white fur, the abomination lashes out with razor sharp claws and presents a maw of pointed and jagged teeth. The beast gnashes its crooked teeth, managing to gash and flay the flesh of its own jaws and lips as it advances. With a deep, and guttural roar, the creature speaks, though in its current state the language spoken cannot be clearly discerned.

Dazzling Rifts

In various locations along the frozen edges of Serpent Lake a phenomenon known to the Vikmordere as "ice rifts" form as the waves generated in the deeper, unfrozen portions of the lake shift and push sheets of ice outward. This motion causes layers of



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ice to pile, churn, and fold inwards, creating unique spire-like forms that jut from the slowly evolving ice flow. The frozen spires, under great pressure from the ever-shifting rifts, are exceptionally translucent, and filled with countless reticulations that cause even the faintest of light to refract and reflect in a dazzling display.

Beautiful though the spires may be, the ice rifts that form them are deadly to those unwitting enough to cross over them. Anyone who attempts to cross a rift must succeed at a **DC 25 Reflex saving throw** or become entangled in the ice flow. This saving throw must be repeated every round the affected creature remains in the vicinity of an ice rift. If failed three times in a row, the creature is sucked into the rift, and begins to drown while trapped in the frigid waters beneath the ice flow. A trapped creature must continue to make a **DC 25 Reflex** **saving throw** every round until they either escape by rolling three successes in a row, or die from drowning.

The Wayward Traveler

While travelling through the blizzard the party encounters a young Vikmordere adventurer (female human sorcerer 4), who was separated from her friends during an ambush by Jötunn berserkers. She is not sure if they survived the encounter or not, but is determined to continue looking for her comrades.

Within a few hours of the initial encounter, the PCs come across a party consisting of two Vikmordere adventurers (male human warrior 5, female human rogue 4), and their



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dwarven guide (male dwarf ranger 3). The party was recently separated from their ally, a female human sorceress, while fleeing from an encounter with skeletal ice giants.

If the party points the group in the direction of the young sorceress, the grateful adventurers thank the PCs and make haste to catch up with her. If the PCs decided to accompany the sorceress and reunite her with her friends, they show thanks by offering 1d4 potions of cure light wounds.

Dragon's Gully

While travelling through the snow, the adventurers come across a steep drop into a chasm known to the Vikmordere as "Dragon's Gully." In the best of conditions, the acute angles that make up the walls of the ravine would be difficult to scale—covered in ice, they are likely impossible to traverse (**DC 35 Climb check** to safely descend down into the gully, **DC 50 Climb check** to climb back out). The gash across the landscape continues for miles in both directions, and bypassing the natural obstacle during the harsh blizzard would require hours.

The adventurers find a mysterious bridge spanning the gap. The bridge seems to be crafted entirely out of ice. If the party has encountered the Jötunn by this point, they recognize its construction is similar to the giants' iceforged weapons.

If they attempt to cross the bridge, they discover that the gully creates a natural funnel for the wintery gale. It is very difficult to maintain proper footing on the slippery surface of the bridge while the wind is charging. A successful **DC 20 Reflex saving throw** is required to make it across. If the saving throw is failed, that PC slides off the edge of the bridge, and plummets 50 ft. down into the gully suffering 4d6 points of fall damage.

Beauties in the Snow

The adventurers come across three beautiful maidens who have stark white flesh, icy blue eyes, and silvery hair. The trio are lightly garbed in sheer white wraps, and seem unaffected by the cold. They cautiously approach the party, one of them hailing they mean no harm as they draw nearer. The three are actually sister Ice Maidens (see "The Maidens of Meyla Isle") who have had their magic stripped from them by the Queen of Maidens. They were banished from the isle when they protested against their queen for aiding the Jötunn king and granting the skeletal ice giants with the gift of iceforging.

Their powers can only be restored by consuming a piece of the queen's magical ice shard which is protected inside the Lair of the Ice Maidens located on Meyla Isle. The maidens are forbidden from returning to the Isle, however they promise to help the party if they agree to meet them at this location with three pieces of the shard.

If the adventurers agree, and later return to give the sisters pieces of the ice shard, the sisters' power returns, and they immediately flee into the blizzard.blizzard. However, they return to assist the adventurers during Part 8-A, "The Great Winter Battle," by providing their magic to aid the adventurers in any way possible.

Firelight Tales

The adventurers are surprised to spot a campfire in the distance. As they travel toward it, the unending blizzard weakens. When they reach the campsite, the winds are calm and no snow is falling—though just beyond winter rages on.

An old man dressed in ragged furs sits next to the fire, tending to a freshly skinned snow hair as he prepares to cook it. Noticing the adventurers, he invites them to join him for a meal.





He waves for them to have a seat at the fireside. Despite there being only one rabbit, the he manages to harvest enough meat from it to amply feed everyone, and produces a decanter of winterberry wine which he shares. By firelight, the old man tells tales of ancient Vikmordere heroes, and afterwards he rises, snugs his furs, and tells the adventurers to make use of the fire for the evening. He then wanders off, vanishing in the snow.

The adventurers are restored to perfect health, and the campfire provides them with warmth and protection from the blizzard as long as they remain camped, disappearing completely moments after they step away.

A DC 30 Knowledge (religion) check reveals that the old man must have been one of the Vikmordere ancestor spirits whom manifested only to provide them comfort during their dangerous quest.

The Well of Rebirth

In the center of this macabre setting is a simple earthen-worked well that has been nearly obscured by deep snow. Gusts of wind force sheets of icy sleet into the blackened depths of the well causing an eerie, skittering sound to echo from within.

This area is actually a site known as "the Well of Rebirth", where a sacred burial rite is performed by the area Vikmordere tribes. When a warrior of the tribe dies, a piece of a limb is removed from the corpse and tossed into the clearing, and a swath of cloth drenched in the warrior's blood is hung from a nearby tree. The Vikmordere believe this ensures the warrior's rebirth in the afterlife as they join the Ancestor Spirit.

Enticed by the rotting flesh, a Brunnmigi (CR 9) has taken up residence within the depths of the well, and attacks the adventurers upon any attempt to investigate the area.

Trudging through the unending blizzard, the adventurers come across a grisly sight. In a clearing surrounded by thick trees, the ground is littered with countless shattered and broken humanoid bones. Tattered and bloodsoaked swaths of fabric hang from the lowest branches of the surrounding trees, and it immediately becomes obvious that this location is sacred (either revered or feared by the local Vikmordere tribes).

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Hobbling Hunter Hans

The blizzard rages on as the adventurers notice a vaguely humanoid silhouette approaching through the snow. Soon, the figure of a one-legged, exceptionally tall and muscular man hobbles through the snowdrifts using a makeshift tree branch crutch. The nub of the man's left leg is wrapped in blood-soaked cloth which he obviously fashioned himself from the torn fabric of his garments.

The immense man introduces himself in a baritone voice as "Hans" and tells the adventurers that an angry glacial bear rent his leg from him in a recent attack. He warns them that the creature may still be in the area, and requests their aid in returning to his nearby village.

If the adventurers help Hans back to his home (about a half hour trek), he invites them to stay for a meal of dried bear meat as his frantic wife and children tend to his injuries, which the Vikmordere hunter seems to simply shrug off with an unusual disinterest.

Regardless of how the adventurers handle Hans' requests, in 1d4 hours after traversing the wintery white again, they are attacked by a Glacial Bear (CR 12) with only half its hp. The beast has several wooden arrows jutting from its body, and its white fur and maw are still damp and dyed a vivid sanguine.

A Chastening Challenge

While traveling through the blizzard, the adventurers come across a small Vikmordere village where they can take refuge from the cold, and replenish their supplies. While there, they are met by two brothers named Hordig and Horgan—both rather large and burly men.

After the village chieftain provides a hearthfire and a decent meal for the adventurers, the brothers challenge them to a contest of prowess. Near the village is a steep hill, where they explain rests an eagles nest. The first to scale the icy hill and retrieve an egg from the eagles nest will be declared the winner. The brothers offer a keg of mead should they be defeated.

Both are known pranksters and trouble makers in their clan, and they have absolutely no intention of scaling the hill. The brothers are aware that the peak is instead the home of two Gargantuan Ravens (CR 5) that attack anyone entering their turf. To climb the hill requires three consecutive successful **DC 25 Climb checks**.

Should the adventurers retaliate against the brothers for their prank, they attempt to flee back to their village. If the village chieftain is informed of their actions, they are chastised and punished accordingly, and the PCs are granted the keg of mead as well as a small supply of winter rations.

Friends in Cold Places

The adventurers come across a battle in progress. A lone Vikmordere warrior stands fast against three Jötunn Berserkers (CR 12). While he is holding his own against the skeletal ice giants, it is obvious that it's just a matter of time before they get the best of him.

If the adventurers intervene and help to defeat the berserkers, the warrior introduces himself as Jurg (Vikmordere warrior 10) and explains that he was dispatched from his clan village far to the north to deliver word to the Jarl in the village of Völsfiheimr about the Jötunn army marching down from the great mountains. If he learns of the adventurers' quest, he requests to join them and offers his blade in service.

Jurg is a warrior of renown among his own people, and he wishes to earn glory for his family and his village by joining the adventurers' epic quest. If accepted into the fold, Jurg eagerly ventures with and faithfully fights at the side of the party until he is unable to do so any longer (either due to death or being dismissed).







Trollveggen

While traversing through the blizzard at the base of the great glacial mountains that crown Serpent Lake, the adventurers come across a snow-encrusted cliffside cave complex. Within the simple cave system resides a subterranean lair belonging to a clan of ice trolls.

If the party investigates the caves, they first encounter three Young Ice Trolls (CR 3) who immediately flee, shouting loudly as they run deeper into the cave. Any PC who can speak the Giant language understands their shouts to mean, "They have returned! The Vikmordere are attacking us again!"

If the adventurers give chase, they encounter a war party of 10 Advanced Ice Trolls (CR 5).



The ice trolls are not innately hostile, but are reacting to recent attacks on their lair from nearby nomadic Vikmordere tribes. With the increased strain on resources caused by the unending blizzard, the Vikmordere and theice trolls have had more than one violent confrontation while hunting. In retaliation for the attacks upon their hunters, the Vikmordere tracked down the lair of the trolls and retaliated. The most recent incident was three days ago.

Isfodt, chieftain of the ice trolls, seeks an amicable solution with the Vikmordere. If the adventurers don't immediately attack the war party, he may be persuaded to seek a peaceful truce with his adversaries.

The Stone of Sacrifice

While traversing through the unending blizzard, the adventurers come across a large altar hewn from a mass of solid granite which juts from the snow-laden ground. The construction is obviously very ancient. Dozens of humanoid bones are strewn around the monolith—some nearly worn into oblivion

from the passage of time.

The unusual runes engraved upon the surface of the altar have fallen from favor in the common Vikmordere lexicon, and suggest a sacred site from eons past, likely dedicated to some long-forgotten deity of their ancestors. An otherworldly sensation hints that the site remains wreathed in ancient divine magic.

No undead, including the skeletal ice giants of the invading Jötunn, may enter within a 100 ft. radius centered on the altar.

The altar is a stone of sacrifice, and was once used by Vikmordere clans to gain the divine blessing of their ancient gods. Any PC who is willing to follow suit of those who constructed the site, may offer their own sacrifice (cutting off a finger upon the altar). Such a sacrifice results in 1d4+1 points of permanent damage, and the sacrificed appendage can never be restored. However, in return that PC gains a permanent +1 to their two lowest ability scores.



Summoner's Ruse

Deep in the snowy forest the adventurers encounter a party of four male human warriors and their hunting fox. At first glance they appear to be Vikmordere, but their noticeably short stature and slightlyoff accents suggest otherwise. Each of them has a small root-entangled inverted triangle tattooed upon their forehead. If questioned about their identity, the men explain that they are of a clan far to the west and the tattoo is a symbol of their people. They tell the adventurers that they were on their way to pay homage at a sacred site east of Serpent Lake when they were caught in the blizzard.

The warriors claim that their campsite was destroyed earlier in the day by a group of Jötunn berserkers, but eagerly offer to share their fresh kill of a sizable boar in return for being allowed to accompany the adventurers to their own warm fire.

In truth, the warriors are the eidelons of a kitsune broodmaster summoner (CR 10) who is currently masquerading as the party's hunting fox. The summoner intends to allow her eidelons to distract the adventurers while she attempts to steal any magic items from them.

If undetected, the kitsune sneaks off with her score, leaving behind her eidelons until they diminish to continue the ruse as she escapes.

Clan Wars

The adventurers encounter a band of Vikmordere raiders racing through the forest. There are seven Vikmordere Warriors (CR 10), all well-armed and wearing expressions of grim determination. As the warriors approach the adventurers they slow, but do not stop. They shout to the party that they are from the village of Ravnrhjem, and go to raid the neighboring village in retaliation for a fallen comrade.

They beckon the PCs to join them in their just cause, and offer wine and a fair share of any loot taken in return for their aid. If the party



refuses, one of the men shouts out, "I am Jarl Ingvar Schildknacker of Draugar Vinlands, and I curse your cowardice!" as they continue on their way to attack the nearby village.

If the adventurers assist the raiders, they are confronted with 4d4+8 Vikmordere Warriors (CR 10) in the village, and have to kill ten opposing warriors or flee. Once ten warriors have fallen, the village surrenders a haul of treasure to the invaders of which the adventurers take their own cut. The treasure consisting of 3d4 potions, 1d4 minor magic items, and 3 large polished opals each worth 45 gp.

Winter Wyrm Pass

As the adventurers continue to make their way through the unending blizzard, they come to a 60 ft. deep ravine with exceptionally steep, ice-laden walls. Luckily the chasm is spanned by a narrow earthen bridge. The walls cannot be scaled without a climber's kit (**DC 40 Climb check**).

The far side of the formation has been donned with a pair of ice carvings in the shape of shieldmaidens bearing large round shields and swords. One can only assume such fine statues were created by a master Vikmordere craftsman to clearly mark the bridge though the blinding snowfall.

The statues are actually Icy Vigils (CR 9) and were created by the Ice Maidens of Meyla Isle to ensnare any Vikmordere who


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pass through the area. The icy vigils become animated and charge to attack once anyone attempting to cross reaches the halfway point.

Unfortunately, a Winter Wyrm (CR 13) has taken up residence in the ravine, and the sounds of combat pique its interest. After three rounds of combat, the winter wyrm hauls its gargantuan body up the ravine and collapses the bridge. Those upon the bridge must make a successful **DC 20 Reflex saving throw** or fall into the ravine. After an additional two rounds, it attacks any living creature which it can sense by their body heat.

Spores of Subjugation

When next the adventurers seek shelter from the blizzard, they locate a cave. In the back of the hollow they find a natural hot spring welling up from the ground surrounded by several large, oddly shaped fungi. The mushrooms occasionally spurt a dark misty haze from their tops, jettisoning spores into the surrounding atmosphere. By the time the adventurers take note of the mushrooms, they have already been exposed to the deadly spores.

DC 20 Fort save to prevent becoming infected. Every additional hour spent in the cave (until the 2d4 mushrooms are destroyed; hp 25; DR 10/fire) requires a DC 20 Fort save that increases by +1 each consecutive hour. An infected creature falls into a comalike state for 1d4 hours while the spores sprout inside them and threads of hyphae extend just beneath the surface of the skin massing in a shiro upon the creature's back where a sporophore bursts through. When the umbrella-like sporophore appears on the creature's back, the mushroom animates the unconscious victim, using its body to attack any living creatures in the vicinity.

The subjugated creature gains +5 natural armor, fast healing 1, darkvision 60 ft., and a once/day Spore breath weapon (30 ft. cone, **DC 20 Fort** or become infected). To save a victim, the sporophore (AC 15) must be destroyed, followed by casting remove disease upon them.

The Wandering Magus

While traversing the wintery white the adventurers come across a tall, brownhaired, black-eyed elf—Aeryn Mountaindew (NG Male Elf Magus 6 with the aracana poolstrike, spell scars, and song of arcane triumph). Through arcane means, the Magus Aeryn has come to believe that an ancient and powerful magic is awakening in the Vikmordere Valley, and he has journeyed here from his distant homeland to research the power's source.

His suspicions were confirmed with the start of the unending blizzard, but the onslaught of snow and ice was a turn of events he had not planned on. The magus has been wandering through the gale in search of shelter. He is nearly out of provisions and beginning to suffer the effects of hypothermia and frostbite.

If assisted by the adventurers, Aeryn tells them more about his research. Buried deep within the texts of ancient arcane tomes, he discovered references to the Vikmordere Valley and a particular alignment of the heavenly bodies that heralds the appearance of an ancient power. While he is convinced that this latent power is real, all he could uncover concerning its source was the name Nordune, though he remains unsure if this is the name given to the arcane source or some ancient deity that dwells within the valley.

A Merchant on the Move

In the distance, through the galeswept snow and ice, the adventurers see a humanoid figure dragging a sizeable sledge. It is apparent that the figure has already taken notice of them, as it alters course and begins to travel in their direction. As the image of the figure coalesces from the veil of the blinding blizzard, an aged—yet massively large—Vimordere man approaches, hauling the sledge laden with a supplies.





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The man is a Vikmordere trader (Vikmordere warrior CR 10) who was once a highly successful raider, but whose war wounds have relegated him to bartering for a living.

Strangely adapted to the winter weather, the horrid blizzard barely seems to faze the rugged man, and he hails the adventurers with a friendly smile and booming voice.

Introducing himself as Rihgar, he tells the adventurers he is a wandering merchant, and that he has been making his way from village to village checking in on his brethren and offering his services where needed. Tired from travel, Rihgar offers to set up camp with the adventurers, and is willing to do business with them. While he has little use for gold or trinkets, he is very willing to trade his wares (5d6 + 100 gp worth of mundane supplies) and to share a warm fire and a meal with his potential new customers.

A Task Unfinished

The adventurers come across a trio of Land Aptrgangrs (CR 10). The undead have stirred from the earth thanks to the same unnatural forces that brought forth the unending blizzard. They approach the party using their natural *veil* ability to appear as living beings and then utilize their *suggestion* ability to try and compel the adventurers to do their bidding.

The GM should roll 1d6 and use the following chart to determine what the Aptrgangrs want:

- 1-2: Ancient warriors from a barrow seek an item that was stolen by Jötunn who robbed their burial mounds.
- 3-4: Warriors on their way to the meeting in Völsfiheimr who were killed by Jötunn. They wish to be guided to their intended meeting place.
- 5-6: The dead from a village slaughtered by the Jötunn marching down from Ighdenholm. They wish the adventurers to travel 1d4 hours to their village and bury their dead friends and family.

If the PCs refuse to assist the Aptrgangrs, they become enraged and attack. However, if the Aptrgangrs wishes are fulfilled, they thank the PCs and their corpses are released from unlife. If the adventurers provide a proper funeral (either burial or pyre), they all receive a blessing from the Ancestor Spirit (+3 bonus to all saving throws for 24 hours).

The Crypt of Stone Tower

When next the adventurers seek shelter from the unending blizzard, they come across the sealed door to a crypt in the side of a snow-covered mound. While not the most ideal location to set camp, it is the only shelter they can find from the violent, icy gale. A **DC 50 combined Strength check** is required to push aside the massive stone door enough to enter into the crypt.

Inside is the tomb and untouched treasure of a giant lord. His huge, bejeweled skeleton, is seated on an enormous throne of petalite and a massive stone sarcophagus-like chest rests at the giant's feet.

The crypt provides shelter from the blizzard. As long as the adventurers do not desecrate the tomb, take any treasure, or open the stone chest, then nothing happens. Otherwise, the giant skeleton (Giant Skeleton CR 7) suddenly rises to its feet, lifting the massive battle-axe that rests upon its lap and attacks the adventurers.

The skeleton is donned with $3d4 \ge 100$ gp worth of jewelry items including a golden crown. Its axe is a large-sized +3 flame burst battle-axe. Within the stone chest are $5d4 \ge 1d20$ gold coins, each minted with the words "stone tower" and the likeness of the crown upon the skeleton's brow.

In the Company of Giants

While traversing the wintery gale, the adventurers encounter a warband of exceptionally tall, muscular, and violent Vikmordere warriors. These warriors speak





only the Giant language and are from the accursed clan known as the Høyonde. In the days of old, their ancestors interbred with the ice giants, producing exceptionally large and powerful soldiers.

In this encounter 3d4 Høyonde (Half-Giant CR 13) have spotted the adventurers, and are intent on killing them to claim any gear or treasure they have for themselves. If any of the PCs can speak Giant, they may be able to negotiate with the Høyonde (3 consecutive DC 30 Diplomacy checks).

The first check is to determine if the halfgiants hold their steel long enough to hear what the adventurers have to say. The second is to successfully negotiate for their lives, and the last is to negotiate keeping their equipment. If any of these diplomacy checks fail, the Høyonde ignore any further attempts to converse and attack the adventurers.

If the adventurers reach a diplomatic solution with the half-giants, they earn the respect of the Høyonde who may return if they are needed to assist the adventurers at a later date—such as during a particularly harsh battle in the wintery white.

A Tumultuous Pass



The adventurers are wandering though the unending blizzard when suddenly the ground begins to shift beneath their feet. With a deafening roar that drowns out even the howling winds of the violent gale, the snow shifts and descends around them, creating a vast chasm. Without noticing, the adventurers have wandered upon a suspended snowpack spanning a wide valley.

Though it looked like solid ground, it was anything but. Their weight and movement have shifted the show and ice enough that the entire snowpack has collapsed save for the very narrow, and slowly crumbling, ice bridge they find themselves standing upon now. The bridge is only wide enough for the adventurers to continue in single file order. The adventurers are located exactly in the middle of the bridge, and both the first and last in line order find themselves 2d4 x 10 feet from solid ground. Each PC on the ice bridge, in order from first to last, must make a **DC 15 Reflex save** to move forward 10 ft. without collapsing the span. If any PC fails, the bridge crumbles into loose snow and ice, sending all the PCs remaining plummeting 60 feet into the valley below (3d6 falling damage; note damage reduced from 5d6 to account for snow-padded landing).

Mage of the Flame

Suddenly, the snow-packed ground in front of the adventurers begins to rumble violently as a large crack splits open. A red glow emerges through the crack, dimly illuminating the snow surrounding it. Vast amounts of snow are quickly turned into steam as 5d4 tiny fire elementals (treat as Steam Mephits CR 3) emerge from the opening and lash out at the adventurers, attacking with bursts of steam.

This continues until half the elementals are destroyed after which a Vikmordere woman approaches the fray and begins to assist the party. Her name is Xela, and she explains that she accidentally released the elementals while experimenting with harnessing the power of fire to combat the unending blizzard.

These tiny fire elementals escaped their confinement during her research, and she has been chasing them down through the blizzard-veiled valley ever since.

After the fire elementals are dealt with, she profusely apologizes to the party and thanks them for helping her get rid of the troublesome elementals. She has yet to discover a way to combat the frigid gale enveloping the valley, but is eager to return to her nearby hut and get back to work. In gratitude for their assistance, she offers the PCs a *wand of fireball* (CR 8) with 2d4 charges.





Five Pillars of Stone

The adventurers come across five tenfoot tall black stone pillars. One pillar is in the center and the others are stationed at each of the cardinal directions and stand 30 ft. from the center post. The outer pillars have been engraved with a rune, while the center monument is marked with a single large rune that can be depressed and a series of four smaller runes identical to the others. A **DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check** on each symbol reveals the runes on the outer poles as elemental symbols, and the center sigil represents planar confluence.

The outer poles are situated in the following order: north/earth, east/air, south/ fire, and west/water. The descending order of their smaller elemental rune counterparts on the center pillar are: water, fire, air, earth.

To solve the puzzle the PCs must turn the center pillar (combined **DC 40 Strength check**) so that the sigil faces each of the outer poles, then press the confluence sigil. This must be done in the order that the smaller runes are displayed on the center pillar. Each time this is done incorrectly, the facing pillar releases a 30 ft. cone of its respective elemental energy (3d6 damage) towards those turning the center pillar. When done properly, the pillars crumble to a pile of rubble which then reforms into a Stone Golem (CR 11) that becomes an ally to the adventurers.

A Morbid Celebration

The adventurers stumble across the frozen corpse of a well-dressed foreign man. Obviously ill-prepared for wintery weather, and caught by the sudden winter's chill, the male human appears to have frozen to death here, with his back propped against a large outcropping of stone. Clearing the snow away from the body, the adventurers find that the man is tightly grasping a bottle of extremely rare fine wine (450 gp value).







In addition to the bottle of fine wine, a search of the body reveals 20 gp, a dagger, a pack containing 10 rations, and a parchment message that reads, "For you to celebrate the wedding of your son-(signed) Voulmer." If the wine is closely inspected, the PC can discover that it is poisoned.

If the adventurers remove the wine bottle from the hands of the frozen corpse, it suddenly opens its icecrusted eyes and begins to stir. The dark magic cursing the Vikmordere Valley has caused the man to be transformed into a Vættir (CR 10) that stops at nothing to recover his wine and destroy those who dared to pry it from his frozen fingers.

The White Wyrm Rider

At the beginning of the next combat engagement the adventurers are approached by a man riding on the back of a massive Winter Wyrm (CR 13). He is garbed in silvery chainmail and heavy white furs, and stands mounted on the back of the massive beast which he steers with reigns made of thick chains.

He introduces himself as Olaf Frode, Priest of Ningatha (Vikmordere Warrior CR 10 / Priest 5), and announces that the Ember Owl has beckoned him to come to their aid. He and his mount, which he calls by the name Purewhite, have come to assist the PCs with their quest.

Afterwards he climbs from his mount, and carefully lays a large burlap sack before the adventurers. As he sets up a campsite, Olaf informs them that these are gifts from the people of his village. He stays long enough to have a meal with the adventurers (which he provides), and then mounts his wyrm, and rides off. He has Jötunn to run down, and no time to waste!

In the sack are a 30 rations, 12 torches, 10 potions of cure moderate wounds, 2 potions of cure serious wounds, 2 potions of neutralize poison, a wand of produce flame (CL 3) with 25 charges, a change of winter clothing for each PC, and a small keg of mead.

A Fool's Treasure

While making their way through the snow and ice, the adventurers stumble across a gaping hole in the ground. It is immediately obvious that the weight of the accumulating snow and ice has caused the roof of an ancient burial site to collapse, exposing the interior to the surface.

There is a total of 2,500 gp worth of art items stowed within the ancient tomb, and a bag of holding type III (which is actually a bag of devouring) alongside two exposed skeletal occupants.



Persistent CN Haunt CR 5; XP 1,600; **CL 5; Notice** Perception DC 20 (to spot some of the treasure shifting about on its own); **hp** 35; **Trigger** disturbing the treasure; **Rest** 1 day; **Effect:** If any of the treasure is disturbed by the adventurers it angers the ghosts of a jarl and his wife who haunt the site. The art items take flight and begin flying wildly around the chamber, forming a vortex of dangerous debris. Any adventurer caught in the treasure vortex suffers 3d4 points of bludgeoning damage from flying debris until they make a **DC 20 Reflex save** to climb back out.

To destroy the haunt, the skeletons contained in the grave must be dowsed in holy water, and a prayer to the Ancestor Spirit committing the spirits to the afterlife must be shouted to the heavens.

Something's Out There

When next the PCs camp, a **DC 15 Perception check** alerts them that there is something moving through the blizzard towards their campsite. If any PC investigates they discover nothing. This should persist for three instances. Upon the third investigation by the adventurers (or if they chose not to investigate at all), they are surprised by an attacking pack of yeti. There are 3d4 + 10 Yeti (CR 4) that rush the campsite with the intent to kill the party. 1/4th of the yeti have the Young template, and another 1/4th have the Advanced template.

Unbeknownst to the adventurers they set their campsite amidst a tribe of particularly aggressive yeti that have become enraged by their presence.

If the adventurers flee the encounter, the yeti give chase for up to 1 mile, after which the PCs have left the tribe's territory and they no longer pursue.

If the adventurers hold their ground, the yeti withdraw and flee once their numbers have been reduced to a third of the entire attacking force.

The Old Veteran

During the next combat engagement the adventurers are involved in, a mysterious aged Vikmordere warrior (Advanced Vikmordere Warrior CR 11) appears from nowhere and rushes into the fray to assist them. He doesn't speak, but instead focuses on slaughtering their foe.

If the grey-bearded warrior survives the battle, as soon as the final foe is felled, he raises his blood-soaked battle axe skyward and releases an ear-splitting battlecry that echoes even over the roar of the unending blizzard. He then clenches his chest over his heart with his free hand, falls to his knees, and drops to the ground dead—axe still gripped firmly in hand.



The old warrior cannot be revived or resurrected as his spirit is content with the glory he found in this death.

On the warrior, the adventurers find his +1 battle axe, +1 scale mail, a masterwork cold iron dagger, and a +1 amulet of natural armor.

The Master of Wolves

While traveling through the valley, the PCs encounter 3d6 + 3 Dire Wolves (CR 3) that begin to stalk them. The wolves keep their distance, but the adventurers are unable to avoid their eventual approach.

The wolves continue to stalk the adventurers until they camp or come across a settlement. If the adventurers take refuge within an established village, the dire wolves halt their pursuit, and disappear back into the wintery white. However, if the party sets camp anywhere else, the wolves attack in 1d4 hours. If the wolves are killed, a huge Fenrir (CR 10) wrathfully charges into the fray intent on killing the PCs.

The dire wolves were the brood of this particular Fenrir, and while the hierarchy of the pack requires the dire wolves give their lives to protect their master, nothing now holds the beast back from attacking the adventurers for himself.



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PART 2-A. WINTERY WAYPOINT DESCRIPTIONS

WRATH OF THE JÖTUNN • WINTERY WAYPOINT DESKRIPTIONS

As the adventurers traverse through the unending blizzard they will need to make frequent stops—whether to rest or to gather their bearings, or due to random encounters.

How many different ways can a desolate winter wasteland be described? This section includes an array of prepared read-aloud descriptions specifically created for each of the areas throughout the Vikmordere Valley. Intended to be read in order as progress is made through various overland areas, the read-aloud texts have a box that can be checked-off as they are used. Use this collection to keep players immersed when pausing to make random encounter and random event checks for overland travel. This way each time there is need for a waypoint description it will be descriptive and unique.



PART 2-B. THE TUNDRA PLAIN

□ Molded by the shifting squalls that rush through the plain, mounds of snow roll like ocean waves across the expanse. Through the wall of white, far in the distance, the silhouettes of the mountains and massive glacier fade into a backdrop of lightning-riddled storm clouds.

A narrow gully has been carved between a

series of high snow drifts and held fast by

two massive boulders. The space between

the two snowy fortifications provides a

bit of shelter from the roaring gusts, but

little protection against the freezing rain

and snow that plummet from above.

□ The sound of crunching snow collapsing

beneath each step is hopelessly drowned

out by the angry screams of the violent

blizzard. Above, clouds churn and twist

with amazing velocity-layers upon

layers of deep grey and faded cobalt.

Nearby, a row of stout needled shrubs

collect snow into massive piles that stack high despite their vigorous swaying.

The second secon

- □ A shallow gulch clutches what was once a shallow creek, but the wintery chill has frozen the water solid and a thick layer of shifting snow shrouds its surface like a brilliant white fleece. The uneven surface is slippery and every step is a challenge against the tossing wind.
- □ A massive dead tree stands as a lone sentinel in the vast open tundra. The tree is so ancient that its branches have grown back into the depth of the earth long before its demise. Each of its branches are as thick as any average tree, and its hollowed trunk large enough to fit a dozen grown men. The space within it appears devoid of snow and ice, and would make a comfortable refuge.
- Deep ruts have been carved across the tundra as massive snowballs churned up by the relentless wind amass and roll across the flat plain. In the distance, the final destination of most of the tumbling snow rests in a wide ice field bearing mounds each the size of a great hall.



- □ Blowing winds gust harder and send an arching spray of frozen precipitation swirling upward from the snow-laden ground. The vortexes of wind whoosh past with an eerie sound reminiscent of a groaning crone.
- □ Piling snow drifts between two knolls that rise from the otherwise flat landscape. Their shape and size unnatural for the tundra plains, it is very likely both are ancient burial mounds, now cloaked in sparkling ice.
- □ A darkness becomes visible in the distance; a shady mass surrounded by a sea of white. Upon approach, the texture of thick black fur becomes apparent as the carcass of a dead reindeer. Stiff as a board, the poor creature froze to death trying to cross the vast tundra.
- □ Ceaseless bursts of frigid wind pummel the plains as the gale unleashes its wintery might. Only windswept tracks in the snow reveal a direction of travel. With no sign of shelter from the tempest, getting lost would be entirely too easy.
- □ The blizzard eases slightly for a few moments, though the shrieking wind barrels on across the tundra. Taking the opportunity to discern its whereabouts reveals the party has drifted wide of the intended path by several miles.
- □ An endless wintery wilderness stretches out from horizon to horizon. Only the faint outlines of the distant mountains can be seen through the intense blizzard. An occasional flash of lighting around the tallest peak serves as a beacon in the otherwise featureless terrain.
- □ The desolate snow-blanketed landscape expands as never-ending winds pelt down from the roiling storm clouds above. Shifting between a deep howl and a high pitched shriek, the deafening gale chisels away at all resolve. A sign of anything anything at all—would be a welcomed sight in this featureless stretch of tundra.

- □ The tundra is featureless in every direction beneath the falling of wintery white. A layer of ice crust encases the deep snow here, and each step requires tiring effort due to constant climbing over countless snowdrifts.
- □ A scattered field of boulders litters the otherwise pristine snow-covered tundra. The tips of the large stones jut up from beneath the icy cover and funnel the windtossed snow into spiraling snow-devils that dance across the surface until the charging winds of the gale eradicates them.
- □ Freezing winds have scoured away much of the snow here, providing passage between two immense drifts. Through the blizzard the ghostly outline of the mountains can be seen to the north. To the northwest lingers a faint trace of the great glacier.
- □ White and barren, the tundra plain spans across the horizon, its snow fields stretching beyond the dense gloom of the monotonous blizzard. The frosty winds continue to yowl ceaselessly as the wintery cold slowly saps any lingering warmth from the area.
- □ Constant renewal of pristine white erases any trace of life here and the stark snowbleached landscape seems to all look the same. Even footprints are almost immediately eradicated by the wintery winds. The sky above is burdened by low-hanging clouds which cast an eerie gloom across the already desolate scene.
- □ The arctic tundra languishes in the freezing grip of the wintery gale. A nearby lone shrub gasps from beneath the snow as it flails in the wind. With its stout green leaves pleading for the warmth of the hidden sun, it is unclear how it managed to survive. This solitary plant provides a sense of hope that life may prevail over this unending freezing hell.







PART 2-4. BASE OF THE MOUNTAINS

- □ Freezing wind whips along the peak of the mountain causing massive bursts of powdery snow to become aloft and cascade across the horizon. Nearby, two stunted evergreens sway in the violent wind as thin tendrils of ice steadfastly cling to verdant needles. The area seems otherwise lifeless and barren.
- □ Beneath the towering peak of the mountain expands a wide ice field large enough to faintly reflect its magnificent silhouette. Whirling snow-devil vortexes kick up and skitter erratically across the glistening surface.
- □ Pale blue-white radiance bursts from the icy, snow-covered ground as lightning flashes wildly overhead and arcs around the cloud-veiled spire of Ighdenholm. The thunder is completely muted by the dense snowfall, but the constant stormy explosions of illumination hint at an unnatural violence being released from the high peak.
- □ Passing near the base of the mountain, a series of snow-laden crags rise from the steep snowdrifts. The constantly shifting top layer of snow makes it difficult to judge the distance to each stony outcropping. To the west, a dark portal can be seen situated beneath two toppled natural monoliths leading into a shallow cave that may provide adequate shelter from the wintery wastes.
- □ The southern face of Ighdenholm is nearly blanketed in icy snow. The entire area appears to be a void; any signs of life encased in a freezing tomb of snow. The dark swirling clouds above only allow dim illumination, and the uniform whiteness of the landscape draws the eye, wreaking havoc on depth perception.

- □ It seems as if the whole world has been frozen. The curves, bulges and hollows of piled snow give way to massive snowdrift embankments sculpted against the mountain base by the constant and powerful winds. Strange shapes endlessly shift beneath the windswept surface as its form is completely altered.
- □ The gale howls relentlessly over the sharp boulders at the base of the mountain. A single large boulder protrudes here, its surface completely swept bare of snow by the wind. With a powerful gust, the blizzard shifts in waves across the sky that obscure line of sight until the bulk of the mountain above is barely discernable. As the frigid wind hisses into all around, shelter becomes a priority.
- □ Shrieking winds tear away at all warmth as the temperature plummets. The blanket of falling snow engulfs the area in a cascading wave of freezing moisture. Every breath seems to partially crystallize as it escapes, bursting into a sparkling wisp of frost as it is eradicated by the breeze.
- □ The path is impeded by a massive snowcovered hill. The base is surrounded by icy boulders and an island of snow-laden pines huddles at its peak. The canopy of dried needles sways violently in the neverending gale, but from beneath appear as if they might provide some shelter from the winds.
- □ Far to the east there is a massive chasm, though it is likely completely impassable as the incline from both sides are covered in thick, glistening ice. The unpredictable winds make even the thought of the attempt seem completely hazardous.
- □ The strobing of violent lightning above causes the shadows cast by nearby conifers to dart and dance about intermittently. Combined with the swaying of snowfall, the shifting shadows cause a moment of vertigo necessitating a pause to gain bearings.

- □ The curvature of the landscape around the mountain's base leads up to a sheer cliff face that reaches hundreds of feet above. A huge break of snow teeters on its edge, threatening to plummet down at any moment. A deep rumble momentarily shudders as the ground quakes. After a moment it passes, but it becomes quickly obvious that this location is not safe.
 - □ For a very brief moment, the winds calm and the whitened world grows deathly silent. The shifting sheets of snow phase into a gentle dusting. The abrupt shift from violent gale is jarring, but a welcome reprieve. Suddenly, a roiling haze of snow barrels down from the mountaintop above as the vicious, freezing winds return.
- □ The gusting gale continues to charge, forcing bursts of snow and ice to crash against the craggy base of the mountain as if they were whitewater rapids. As dark clouds drift high above, the wind direction becomes chaotic, and for a moment it is difficult to stand. The eerie sound of the blizzard becomes like

moaning, and as the winds whip around the jagged outcroppings distance voices can be heard—but only for a moment.

- □ Here at the foot of Ighdenholm sits a log cabin. The snow-covered roof completely camouflages it, but he structure is in ill repair and obviously abandoned long ago. A small group of pines shores up the cabin and provide limited shelter from the abrasive winds of the blizzard.
- □ A desolate sheen of white stretches out endlessly to the south across the arctic tundra. To the north, the emptiness is interrupted by the enormous peak of Ighdenholm. Gusting winds rushing in from the open plain batter against the lower bluffs of the mountain, coating the surface with heavy masses of hoarfrost.
- □ With blinding white in every direction, huge snowdrifts shift and reform across the rise of the mountain's base. Through the flurry of snow riding the gale, mass shadows form and crawl across the menacing sheer cliffs of the peak.





- □Colossal cracked blocks of solid ice are heaped high at the eastern slope of Ighdenholm, a telltale sign of a recent avalanche. The azure boulders collect piles of snow as the winds whip around the cliffs. They have started to accumulate snowdrifts the size of villages.
- □ Whistling winds charge through serrated stone spires that surround the mountain. The funneling wind stirs up ripples in the deep surface snow, revealing a dense snowpack beneath.
- □ Most of the surface snow has been cleared from the enormous boulders here, leaving behind the barren dark stone of the mountain. Deep cracks and fissures in the monolithic surface are filled with ice, creating a mask of crisscrossing pale veins.
- □ A large snow bank has accumulated between two massive rock formations. The icy squalls narrow between the two bodies have bored a wide tunnel, leaving behind a bridge of packed snow that spans across. The surface of the bridge constantly reverberates against the charging winds and casts long tendrils of snow that stretch out overhead.
- □ An eddy of swirling white dances across the dark stone of the mountain, skittering almost as if alive. The looming peaks above are alight with bright blue flashes that brighten the snow below. An unusual dark space between drifts reveals an empty shallow cave that could provide shelter from the blizzard.
- □ Vast snow dunes have formed at the foot of Ighdenholm and skirt the rough landscape up to the lowest of the mountain's bluffs. The torrent of icy sleet rakes across the area with no signs of softening its endless scuffing.
- Ever-changing curves arch across the dark backdrop of the mountain as snowdrifts continuously rise and fall against the harsh winds. In a perpetual

wave, the surface is shaped—and reshaped—as the stoic peak stands fast against the wintery gale.

- □ A brief glimpse of the peak is quickly lost again amidst constantly roiling storm clouds that surround Ighdenholm. A spidering bolt of lightning stretches down from the dark mass and strikes the mountainside, sending a barrage of ice and stone tumbling down in an engulfing explosion of white.
- □ The facade of the mountain is dimly visible through the intense blizzard, its bleak surface only evident through squinted eyes. The roar of the rushing wind dampens the sound of thunder as lighting flashes above to brighten the surrounding cyclone of snow and ice.

PART 2-D. THE GLAKIER KHASM

- □ The gale cuts across the great chasm, howling ferociously as it is forced to an abrupt halt beyond the descending rim. A sheath of thick, unstable ice coats the stone-toothed edge of the deep ravine, making each step more perilous. The gale sweeps sleet down the embankment in a cascading fall of ice droplets that fall into the mysterious darkness below.
- □ A narrow walkway leads further down into the chasm. Touched by the veneer of ice, the jagged stone ledge boasts a frosty gleam. As you take a few steps it feels as though the pathway might shift and tumble into the depths, but the violent shudder of the carapace stills long enough to allow passage.
- □ The chaos of the windswept snow and ice is breathtaking. In an instant, the way is completely concealed behind the itinerant barricade of white. Just as it seems there is no way to continue, it reverts to a wearisome banter and the ledge is once more revealed.







□ Constant gale winds pour over the edge of the incline, making the ice-coated stone treacherous to traverse. A narrow outcropping serves as the only footing along the vast empty chasm that drops into utter darkness below. The roar of the gale is constant, and its freezing embrace seems to envelope everything.

- □ The edge of the great glacial chasm still stands in stark contrast against the blinding snow—a void of black set sharply against pale ice. As the wintery winds careen over the edge, dancing wisps of snow are thrown out into the nothingness below. The sheer frozen walls of the chasm plunge towards unknown depths across the precarious foothold.
- □ Sleet and snow blowing from the cliffs that rise above make it nearly impossible to see in the darkened rim of the chasm. The narrow natural outcropping continues to provide an ample path, but charging winds require careful calculation of each

and every step. The constant strain of the descent, coupled with the deadly cold, is nearly unbearable.

- □ Ancient cracks riddle the otherwise pristine surface of the immense glacier. In the darkness below, loud moans and cracks of the ice can be heard as the wintery gale rushes relentless against miles of broad exposed surface. The shallow path here narrows even further, forcing anyone wishing to pass to hug the sleek face of the great chasm.
- □ The walls of the chasm ascend until they pass into an impenetrable veil of white. The darkness below seeks to creep upwards from the mysterious emptiness. The outcropping widens here to create a platform, and a wide crack in the chasm side manifests a shallow ice cave that might provide some welcomed protection from the howling winds.



- □ The sides of the great chasm are infused with hairline cracks and fine crevices. A large jagged boulder juts out overhead forcing the gale to veer sharply downward.
- ☐ Midway through the wide gap a wicked spire of ice towers from the depths of the glacier—a lone cerulean sentinel rising from the darkness of the chasm. Eddies of snow dance fancily around the lonely column. For a moment, it seems impossible to reach all the way to the bottom.
- □ The treacherous path splits here creating a trio of outcroppings that form a cascade of sheer icy cliff faces. The lowest of the paths seems to be the widest. As the chasm wall shudders from the barrage of powerful winds, large chunks of ice tumble from the cliffs above and crash down upon the bottom ledge.
- □ The chasm path abruptly curves toward the frozen shelf and enters into a series of wide cracks which give way to tunnels that bore deep into the glacial ice. While the enclosed passage promises reprieve from the snow and ice, the descent becomes notably more steep, and the slippery surface of the ice tunnels offer little resistance for stance or balance.
- □ The wide tunnel passage leads deeper into the glacier and quickly becomes as dark as the chasm depths outside. The faint, distant whistling of the wind drones on and the entire glacier shudders often.
- □ The steep tunnels slow their descent here, and maintaining footing becomes much easier as the sleek surface of the floor gives way to wide icy platforms that create natural steps. The tunnel opens into a vast ice cavern. The ceiling rises high into a forest of stalactite icicles. The air here has become notably warmer. Dense humidity is accompanied by the sound of water droplets falling from the inverted spires of ice.

- □ As water drips from the countless icicles above, it rains throughout the dark, icy encasement. The water gathers at the lowest point of the cavern and flows down a shallow ravine that leads into a wide tunnel. From within the long passageway can be heard the faint sound of trickling water. The darkness beyond is further obscured by a warm fog that lingers listlessly just within its opening.
- □ The smooth ice walls of the tunnel widen as the steady stream of water from above trickles through the dense haze. The fog breaks and reveals a large cavernous chamber containing a massive warm pool of water fed by the runoff from an underground hot spring. The water is waist deep, and millennia of mineral buildup have constructed a thick stonelike floor nestled here deep inside the glacier. The area is an inviting locale in contrast to the intense cold, and is warm enough that luminescent algae thrives in the pool and casts an eerie green glow.
- □ The sound of flowing water intensifies as a hot spring flows down a continuing tunnel, chiseling its way ever deeper into the glacier. Soon the steady stream turns into a rushing torrent and leaves little more than a narrow ledge to make passage down the tunnel. The water breeches the surface of the chasm wall as it bursts out into the blackness below, creating a thick blanket of fog where the steaming water meets the frigid air outside. A single, sleek walkway provides passage around the edge of the sudden drop and continues to descend the chasm wall.
- □ The charging winds of the gale are less intense at this depth. The climb down the chasm causes them to become little more than a distant roar, replaced by an orchestra of creaking and cracking ice as the glacier shudders and moans. Surrounded by darkness, it is impossible to tell how much further the chasm passage continues.





- □ The narrow outcropping now broadens and funnels out to the base of the chasm. No longer can the winds of the unending blizzard be heard high above, and very little snow manages to fall here. Within the depths of the glacier crack is a strange, dark world, made of smooth translucent blue ice. The wide chasm continues to bear northward into the glacier and passage is relatively easy going compared to the frigid storm that rages on the surface.
- □ Having descended at least a mile into the enormous glacier, the surroundings tell the tale of a world long ago plunged into winter. Despite the lack of sunlight, the chasm base plays host to unusual plantlife: mostly stunted pine shrubs that boast tiny glowing yellow berries. A forest of these short plants creates the illusion of being immersed within a starstrewn night sky.
- □ Just ahead of you looms a massive skeletal arrangement. A boney cage of ribs is clenched by frozen sinew and bits of matted fur. The hollow cavity formed by the bones is the size of a small hut. A frost-seared skull and two massive ivory tusks hint that this was once some enormous mammoth-like creature that plummeted to its death from above. The gigantic stature of the remains are many times larger than any other creature of its type. It likely came to rest here thousands of years past.
- □ Ahead, a light fog lofts across the chasm floor as another hot spring bubbles up and creates several shallow pools of warm water. The icy ground surrounding the pools is exceptionally slippery, and has been smoothed to a clear crystal-like gleam that reveals glacial inclusions and cracks many layers beneath.
- □ The chasm above completely closes in on itself as the glacial crack continues deeper into the ice. The resulting knifeshaped tunnel created by the passage

ends fewer than a dozen feet above, and the narrow pathway continues its gradual descent. It is exceptionally quiet within, and the silence prompts visitors' ears to rush with apparitions of ringing that are interrupted only by the sound of breathing and movement.

□ Having traversed miles down the glacial chasm, the crack comes to an abrupt stop at an icy wall. Beyond the translucent surface, mysterious lines and angles hint to something manmade on the other side. The trek into darkness has been a dangerous one, but this is finally the heart of the glacier.

PART 2-E. THE MOUNTAIN PASS (<LIMB TO THE PEAK OF IGHDENHOLM)

- □ The towering peak of Ighdenholm penetrates into a veil of angrily shifting storm clouds above. Sharp, bright flashes dance throughout, illuminating the snowy landscape below. Several boulder-sized chunks of ice rest at the base of the mountain, deep fissures and cracks hinting at a violent descent down the mountainside.
- □Climbing the slope of the mountain pass is exhausting, and the bitter cold bites at extremities as a harsh reminder of the blizzard that rages everywhere. Nearby, mostly covered in snow, lies a humanoidshaped body. Upon closer examination it appears to be a frozen Vikmordere warrior—leathery skin and rusted, useless armaments suggest that the body isn't a recent addition to the mountain pass. It's impossible to tell how many centuries the corpse has lain here.
- □ Most of Ighdenholm is impassable: sheer cliffs and sharp angles covered in thick ice would make any attempt near suicidal. While the pass is considerably easier to traverse, the howling winds







- □ The beauty of the sparkling shards of ice that have formed along the higher shelf of the pass serve as a distraction from the deadly plunge that lingers mere feet away. The pass grows more narrow and slanted, forcing all who wish to cross the ledge to do so upon hands and knees.
- □ The pass levels slightly as it traces around the face of Ighdenholm. Though it seems impossible impossible, the temperature feels even colder, and the air seems to be thinner.
- □ The unending blizzard diminishes, momentarily providing a clear view of the valley below. From this height, the freezing waters of Serpent Lake appear to be a wide swath of darkness against the surrounding whiteout. The distant snowy forests nearly blend in with the surrounding arctic tundra. Soon the storm intensifies again, and the expanse below fades into an impenetrable curtain of gray and white.
- □ As the storm rages above, the once silent thunder has become a near constant, distant rumble. The howling winds and grumbling clouds produce a foreboding melody that would strike fear into even the bravest warrior.



- □Without warning the gale torrents a constant, violent wind down the face of the mountain. A deep shudder of the rock is followed by an explosion of white from above as huge chunks of ice and snow are lifted and tossed below.
- □ The face of the mountain high above breaks into jagged cliffs to reveal an icy sluice that traces its surface. Somewhere along the footprint of Ighdenholm the incline descends to the ground below, though through the blinding blizzard it is impossible to tell where such a pass might lead.
- ☐ Massive cornices cling to a battered shelf of ice. The long icy fronds fracture with each violent rush of the gale. Glancing around the immediate area reveals dozens of the massive ice spikes shattered atop the packed snow.
- □ Grasping the side of the mountain, a very narrow ice bridge spans a gap in the pass. The sole survivor of a recent avalanche that seems to have badly damaged the pass, the bridge is the only means of passage to continue up the peak. A smattering of dark pebbles and debris litters both sides of the bridge providing contrast in color to the interminable ice.
- □ The mountain trace continues to ascend through the fury of the blizzard. With every step the air seems to become colder. The thinning air causes frequent moments of vertigo. A modicum of frozen rocks overtakes part of the path here, but a momentary stay of the vicious wind allows you to climb over and continue with a bit of effort.
 - □ A steep crevice in the mountainside breaches the pass and a lone narrow channel reaches across. The brittle snow burdened stone bridge is a foreboding challenge as spiraling snow and sleet push back at your progress. Just beyond the mountain pass widens and promises respite under a sheltering ledge.

- □ Towering bluffs to the east of the pass stretch up through the tumbling storm clouds. The sheer, dark surfaces are devoid of snow, but appear sleek with a thick coating of translucent ice. A blinding branch of lightning jolts down from above to sear a ledge below, and its brightness is reflected by the slippery cliff face.
- □ Charging winds batter the great peak of Ighdenholm, sending large plates of snow gliding down the mountainside. Ice haphazardly clings to the mountain pass as a series of naturally carved rivets in the stone provide a foothold to climb higher. The pass becomes notably steeper here—the remaining ascent promises a difficult challenge.
- □ Stinging ice pellets hammer against the mountain pass. The peak summit is now clearly visible with each flash of lightning. The path narrows dramatically and arcs into a succession of natural stone steps nestled between two large vertical rock projections that slink their way towards the top.
- □ Piles of black stone huddled in the mountain inclusion are relatively free of ice. The air remains frigid, however the relentless winds do not reach this section of the pass. Further visibility is hampered by the dense clouds, and the ground far below cannot be seen through the shifting sheet of white that stretches into the distant horizon.
- □ The deep crevasse continues to slice up the side of the mountain. The pass provides relatively easy passage to climb the last segment of the titanic peak, but the increasingly thin air seems to sap motivation after the slightest exertion. Loud thunder frequently interrupts the howling winds as the surrounding dark cloud cover dances with electricity. At this height, the snow has ceased, only to be replaced with an ever present moisture that lingers upon the air, freezing on contact with almost any surface.







□ The enormous stairs that complete the pass to the summit have been chiseled directly into the mountain's rocky surface. They are so large that each step requires a climb to the next to make headway. The sound of the screaming gale has been constant throughout the journey here, but is now replaced by still silence.

PART 2-F. SERPENT LAKE—THE FROZEN LAKE SHORE

□ The shoreline of the enormous frozen lake weaves across the wintery terrain creating a smooth transition from deep snow to the solid ice shelf that reaches nearly one hundred feet into the lake. Beyond the shelf, segments of flat ice float in the slush that laps across the wide expanse.

□ There is no shelter to be found from the bitter cold as the endless blizzard continues to drench everything in a lashing sleet. Powerful gale winds stir the deeper waters of Serpent Lake, creating large waves that ripple across its icy surface. A vague trace across the white horizon hints of the distant shoreline across the waters, but the vista is soon obscured by the falling snow.





- ☐ A stable shelf of ice reaches out from the shore deep into the waters of the lake, providing footing where before there was none. The screeching winds brush areas clean to reveal suspended bubbles that are indicative of a sudden deep freeze.
- □ Beyond the frozen shore, the dark waters of the lake are spotted with bright white growlers that creep along its surface as they are propelled by the constant squalls. The massive chunks of floating ice bob erratically across the wavescattered waters.
- □ A once towering tree has been blown over here. The thick ice of the shoreline has been shattered by the impact of its massive trunk. An undulating seepage of icy slurry breathes through the resulting crack—rising and falling in tandem with the current of the windswept lake.
- □ A hefty snow-covered hill braces the lakeshore and ends at a small grotto. The water within has been frozen solid, but the enclosed space could provide temporary shelter from the cold winds that scream across the surface of Serpent Lake. A faint trail of enormous animal tracks likely from a bear—leads to the now empty hollow, and suggest that others have recently considered it a temporary pardon from the glacial onslaught.
- □ An abandoned wooden dock has been frozen solid in the ice shelf along the shore of the lake. Just beneath the clear icy surface can be seen the outline of a small scuttle that sank long ago. The rushing wind slams against a makeshift wooden shack near the icy wharf. The structure still stands, propped up by a mound of snow that has drifted up over the roof. A constant shudder suggests that the dilapidated building could collapse at any moment.
- □ The lakeshore provides the only visible path. In the blinding whiteness it is difficult to imagine life thriving here.

However, myriad animal tracks along the lake's edge suggests the denizens of the Vikmordere Valley desperately cling to life in defiance of the perpetual blizzard.

- □ The shoreline falls into a steep and slippery bank that dips down to the surrounding ice shelf. The sharp angle provides some cover from the violent winds, and several sturdy shrubs still cling desperately to the soil beneath.
- □ The droning roar of the gale grows louder. Though it seems impossible, the frigid waters of the icy lake seem to make the blasting wind even colder than before.

PART 2-4. THE FROZEN FOREST PATH

- □ A layer of snow lingers upon the high branches of the wind-blown trees, casting down miniature snowstorms from the canopy as the blizzard rages. The gloomy clouds fill the skies above cast the area into perpetual night.
- □ A colossal fir has fallen across the forest trail, its dry-needled branches bunched against the icy ground. The faint sound of several partridges emanates from the broken trunk, followed by a restless rustle. A family of the birds seems to have taken shelter here.
- □ Heavy snowfall from above swirls down between gaps in the dense forest and covers a leafy gallery. A mixture of frigid rain and sleet invokes a thick encasement of glistening ice that coats the thick branches as they groan in galebattered protest.
- □ A snowy owl launches itself from the branches above. The graceful creature glides along a row of pines before punching its claws deep into a drift of packed snow. The ghostly avian effortlessly transitions to flight with a mouse grasped in its talons as it returns to the blackness of the overhead canopy.



- □ A herd of wide-eyed deer hastily leap past after being startled by several loud, explosive cracks. The heavy ice coating the massive trees produces more weight than the slender branches can bear. One by one they begin to snap and tumble to the ground below. A chorus of identical concussive reports echoes through the shadowy forest.
- □ A massive branch stretches across the forest path. The surface of the wooden impasse is heavy with ice and looks to be exceptionally slick. To either side the large snowdrifts have started to pile up. It will only be a matter of time before the path completely vanishes beneath the white powder.
- □ Alternating pines piled heavy with snow droop inward over the path, forming a cylindrical tunnel of needles and undergrowth. The interior of the round portal is devoid of both snow and ice. It continues for two dozen feet before opening again to the sky, becoming once again covered in snow.
- □ A series of paw prints follows this length of the game trail. Fresh in the snow, the tracks suggest a pack of wolves have recently passed through. With much of the valley's wildlife now huddled deep in the dense forests, the trail likely leads to potential pray for the hungry carnivores.
- The darkened forest grows denser and the frequent interval of ancient trunks obstructs every line of sight. The ground here is nearly completely protected from the blizzard by the thick canopy. An overgrown thorny thicket spans either side of the woodland path, forcing travelers to carefully navigate the tangle as the winter winds moan through the branches high above.
- \Box A gap in the thick forest creates a wide clearing that exposes everything to the furious wind and sleet from the storm clouds above. The bulwark of firs lining

this barren white patch are burdened by steep snow drifts, leaving no choice but to trudge through the frigid expanse to continue further into the forest.

The snowy game path arcs to avoid an ancient dead tree. Though lifeless, its colossal trunk is as wide as ten men and the gnarled bark boasts countless burrows. On the opposite side, a single pine sapling is nestled firmly in the elder's roots. The tiny plant is protected from the wintery storm by the wide, heavenward reach of its long deceased predecessor.



- The screeching gale is almost completely muted by the intimacy of intertwined conifer and spruce trees. The path treks across a pine-littered landscape shadowed by countless interlocking branches overhead. Frequent rustling within the tangle hints of small animals sheltering from the wintery weather.
- The brittle chomp of packed snow greets every step as the canopy overhead thins. permitting it to fall to the woodland floor. The snow grows thick as it descends in white static. Curvaceous drifts around the spattering of trees soon take shape and cover entire fragments of the game trail.
- □An individual snow-covered branch overhangs the trail. Barren patches pepper the darkly dense forest. Through the opaque shade, columns of drifting snow enhance the already linear horizon of vertical tree trunks.
- The high-pitch whistling of the gusts swishing through the treetops is constant. A cascade of ice particulates descends from high above and varnishes the earth with a frozen gleam, while the intense scent of pine permeates the area lending to the wintery aura.
- Thick rows of pines surrender to barelimbed oaks that branch skyward to form a complex frozen lattice. While the dense viridian pines sway dramatically in the wind, the stalwart oaks stand firm







and unrelenting against the wintery gale. A ravine slices across the trail, and a tapered creek has been frozen still at the bottom of the gorge.

- □ The icy footpath begins a gradual incline, and the assortment of frozen trees gives way to a colony of lush evergreens. A mixture of icy slush and dried pine needles makes for slippery progress, but the unbearable cold seems to ease ever so slightly among the embrace of the robust pines.
- □ The whine of the winter storm drones on, whipping through the high treetops and casting down a multitude of snowflakes that leisurely float from above. With aimless lethargy, the sparkling particles create an almost magical scene.
- □ A host of chopped stumps clutter the area, suggesting a recent harvest of the surrounding tall trees. Several narrow game trails have slunk through the deep forest to converge here and create a wider, more traversed woodland road. The deep furrow of wagon ruts mars its surface as it leads westward out of the forest cover. To the north, the faint forest pathway continues.
- □ The journey through the dim forest continues and reveals a small pond alongside the trail. While mostly frozen over, the center of the pond bears a host of cracks and fissures. Deep beneath the surface of the ice several large fish swimming in a huddle make way for deeper water. The snow-dusted path skirts around the breadth of the icy pool and continues deeper into the frozen woodlands.
- □ The woodland path follows a small stream covered in a thin veil of ice. Faint whispers of trickling water can be heard from beneath the frozen veneer. Shallow banks on either side of the stream are covered in a combination of snow and ice-laden pine cones that have fallen from the layer of conifer trees high overhead.

- □ Many of the branches here have been snapped. They litter the snowy path. Beneath several towering, leafless oaks, the distinct scent of sap washes over the area. Beyond the shadowed dark of the forest, several loud cracks break the eerie winter silence, accompanied by a moment of cautious rustling as something very large makes its way through the dense cover.
- □ Ahead is a small clearing in the forest. A rusted iron beartrap with its chain secured around a large earthen-ledged boulder sits triggered in the center of the coppice. Surrounding the trap in the stark white snow is a deep crimson stain. Nearby, a fur-covered severed limb juts from the snow telling tale of some unfortunate creature recently forced to gnaw at its own flesh to escape the abandoned trap.
- □ A clump of snow plummets from somewhere high above, exploding into a whirl of white powder. An excited chittering draws attention to a family of gray squirrels that dance and frolic across the steep limbs. The tiny creatures pause momentarily, but just as quickly dart off across the forest canopy.
- □ The dense forest begins to thin and the torrent of wintery chill charges in on the gale winds. The frigid cold is a reminder that the relative warmth of the deep forest was a welcome reprieve from the onslaught of the blizzard. The forest trail seems to taper and disappear here leaving little guidance to navigate the woodlands.
- □ The fierce gale slices down through the trees, stirring up powdery snow to summon billows of whirling white that gust through the area. The wind carries a powerful chill. A mass of frozen brambles snuggled between two massive pines trembles helplessly against the lambasting onslaught.





- □ The jagged trunks of several snapped trees strike a heroic pose from beneath the deep snow, their toppled trunks now completely covered by deep drifts. A wide scar defaces one of the trees—a trailblazing mark carved long ago. While any trace of a path is completely obscured by the snow, the sigil at least provides a hint that this is the correct route.
- □ A large hill rises from the deep snow, its banks host to clinging runs of ice. Crowned with a dense gathering of pines, the hill abruptly ends at a boulderstrewn flat. Among the massive stones is the entrance to a small cavern beneath the mound, a potential site for shelter and rest from the unending blizzard.

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PART 3-A. THE ADVENTURE BEGINS

It is midmorning on a cool and clear winter's day. While traveling on the fringe of a pine forest in the Vikmordere Valley, near the southern shore of the eastern side of Serpent Lake, the adventurers are suddenly caught in a terrible blizzard. The storm invades what were previously calm skies and bellows in from the north as a towering wall of white. The blowing snow quickly obscures the sun and casts an eerie darkness across the surrounding landscape. A **DC 10 Knowledge (nature) check** reveals that the storm is unusual for this region and unnatural in origin.

Caught unprepared, the adventurers must take shelter from the violent winds, pelting ice, and blinding snowfall. Luckily, any search attempt made by the adventurers quickly finds temporary shelter in a shallow cave located down a gorge just beneath an outcropping of the forest.

From within the cave they can barely see more than a few dozen feet through the snow, and the howl of rushing wind outside nearly drowns out all sound, forcing them to shout to communicate with one another as the frigid cold invades the cave.

While camping to await fairer weather, the adventurers notice a majestic ash-grey owl accompanying them inside the shallow cave.



You notice that huddled on a stone perch inside the small cavern is an ash-grey owl. Perhaps the bird has

ash-grey owl. Perhaps the bird has flown into the cave to take shelter from the raging blizzard? It seems unconcerned as it rests near the back of the small enclosure. It frequently shifts its attention between any movement inside the cave and the continuing gale outside.

If the adventurers are aggressive towards the owl, or if they attempt to capture it, it flies out of the cave and into the blizzard, only to return again and light upon its perch soon thereafter. The adventurers should be allowed to set camp for a while to attempt to wait out the blizzard. They soon find it necessary to build a fire to keep warm from the chill manifested by the winter storm. They can find several broken tree branches and clumps of dried grass strewn around the cave floor refuse likely washed in sometime during springtime floods.

While the party is sheltering within the cave, they have the strange sense that they are being watched. As the storm outside rages on, this feeling persists for a while before the grey owl reveals its true identity the demigoddess Ningatha, messenger of the Ancestor Spirit.

NINGATHA (DEMIGODESS)

- **Titles** The Ember Owl, Messenger of the Ancestor Spirit
- **Home** positive energy plane / Vikmordere valley
- Alignment Neutral Good
- **Portfolio** ancestor, purpose, leadership, wisdom
- Worshippers Vikmordere people (in particular Vikmordere clan leaders)

Domains Community, Fire, Good

Subdomains Ancestors, Friendship, Home

- **Symbol** A wreath of flame encircling a single ash-grey feather or a red-painted owl totem
- **Garb** copper-trimmed red robes and a feathered cape

Favored Weapon Longspear Favored Animal Owl

In Vikmordere legend, it is said that Ningatha brings the words of the neestor to the ears of kings, jarls and chieftains. It is also said that she guides the spirits of the Vikmordere warriors who die bravely and honorably to join their ancestors in the afterlife.

Ningatha typically takes the form of a gray owl with faintly glowing embers beneath her feathers that burst into vibrant flames as she takes flight. She has also been known





to assume a less fantastical appearance, sometimes choosing to manifest as a young and beautiful Vikmordere maiden with fiery red hair and green eyes. Her human form always appears dressed in sheer red robes while wielding a copper-headed longspear.

When it comes to the will of the ancestors, it is usually the demigoddess Ningatha who intervenes on the physical plane. She is utterly devout to the great Ancestor Spirit and bears no agenda of her own other than to faithfully serve them. For this reason, despite being the patron spirit of the clan leaders, she has few devout followers of her own (though some fringe Vikmordere shamans do directly commune with her). Most Vikmordere see the Ember Owl as a tangible extension of the Ancestor Spirit, and thus include her by proxy when honoring the whole.

Her origin remains a mystery, but some speculate that Ningatha, like the souls that comprise the Ancestor Spirit, was one of the original settlers of the region. However, unlike her kin, she elected (or was selected) to remain apart and serve as a direct conduit between the prime material and positive energy planes.

GM Note: In the first stages of the adventure, Ningatha may appear to help guide adventurers

appear to help guide adventurers along their path to success. If the adventurers are having a particularly hard time, she can also have the ability to provide moderate healing on occasion.



A BEAKON THROUGH THE BLIZZARD

Without cause, the area grows very quiet. The sudden change in volume is unsettling and leaves an incessant ring reverberating everyone's ears.

Through the opening of the cave it is clear that the storm still rages outside, but the constant, deafening rush from the wind is no more.

Even your own breathing seems muted and hushed. The only discernable noise is the crackling of the nearby campfire. Soon, an indistinguishable sound begins to permeate from the direction of the ash-gray owl perched near the entrance. Beneath the bird's feathers is a faint red glow that begins to shift, dimming and brightening like the embers of a fire.

A pristine feminine voice speaks out with a gentle yet urgent sentiment.

"Prepare, brave ones. Wait no longer. This storm shall not pass, and you are needed elsewhere. The darkness has fallen, and already seeks to destroy you. Find the answers you seek!"

The owl suddenly launches from its stony perch as its ash-colored feathers ignite into bright flame. Ablaze, the creature's wings whoosh like torches waving in the darkness as it swoops out of the cave and into the violent snow storm.

Through the obscurity of the snow, the flame-wreathed owl can be barely seen as it braves the storm—a blazing beacon in the scattered white beneath a darkened sky.

The voice speaks once again, more sternly as she commands, "Follow! And be ready!"

You hear the distant sound of howling wolves. With a whirling gust of freezing wind, the blizzard bursts into the cave and extinguishes the campfire. The silence is shattered by the return of the deafening roar of the wintery gale.







Ningatha, the Ember Owl, circles back repeatedly to keep pace with the party, and continues to guide them several miles northward towards the village of Völsfiheimr.

Nearly half way to the village, the roaring winds are drowned out by something even louder as the droning sounds of baritone warhorns wail from the far north. Once. Twice. Three times the blaring horns cry out over the gale and echo across the hidden landscape.

For an instant the winds themselves feel as if they shift direction in response. A DC 20 Perception check will reveal that the horns must be incredibly loud as they originate from many miles away.

After trekking five miles through the windswept tundra in pursuit of the distant fiery glow of Ningatha, the adventurers realize they are being stalked. Just beyond the veil of white snow lingers half a dozen snowy white dire wolves: five normal sized dire wolves and a sixth which is much larger than the others and bears the telltale signs of unlife.

No sooner than they are noticed, the undead ghoul dire wolf leading the pack charges toward the adventurers. It emerges through the wall of white with its brethren in hurried pursuit behind it. The eyes of the dire wolves are solid black, hinting that they are no ordinary creatures. While originally tasked by the Jötunn with tracking the Ember Owl, they have shifted their priority to the adventurers who she is guiding.

The dire wolves do not treat the wintery landscape as difficult terrain, and they pursue the adventurers until they are all destroyed. When each is slain, a vaporous black wisp rises from the corpse and dissipates into the wind.



DIRE WOLF



XP 800

N Large animal Init +2; Senses low-light vision, scent; Perception +10

KR3

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +3 natural, -1 size) hp 37 (5d8+15) Fort +7; Ref +6; Will +2

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft. Melee bite +7 (1d8+6 plus trip) Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

STATISTICS

Str 19, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10 **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 20 (24 vs. trip) Feats Run, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Perception +10, Stealth +3, Survival +1 (+5 scent tracking; Racial Modifiers +4 Survival when tracking by scent

ECOLOGY

Environment cold or temperate forests **Organization** solitary, pair, or pack (3–8) Treasure none

GHOUL DIRE WOLF KRG

XP 2,400

NE Large undead



Init +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 17 (+2 Dex, +8 natural, -1 size) **hp** 90 (12d8+24 plus 12) Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +10 **Defensive Abilities** channel resistance +4; Immune undead traits





OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee bite +17 (2d6+12 plus paralysis and trip)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

Special Attacks paralysis (1d4+2 rounds, DC 18)

STATISTICS

Str 27, Dex 15, Con —, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 14
Base Atk +9; CMB +18; CMD 30 (34 vs. trip)
Feats Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Run, Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Perception +16, Stealth +9, Survival +10 (+14 tracking by scent); Racial Modifiers +4 Survival when tracking by scent

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary, pair, or mob (2–4 ghoul dire wolves and 4–8 ghoul wolves) **Treasure** none

Ghoul wolves are carnivorous undead wolves that delight in hunting living creatures, catching them, and tearing them to shreds.

PART 3-B. ARRIVAL IN VÖLSFIHEIMR

After the confrontation with the evil dire wolves, the adventurers have no further encounters as they reach the village. Ningatha's distant fiery light guides them through the blizzard towards the settlement's southern gates. A huddled group of Vikmordere warriors take note of the fiery bird while on watch, and all rush towards the great hall in the center of the village without noticing the approaching party.

Located upon a knoll overlooking the south shore of the eastern side of Serpent Lake, the village of Völsfiheimr is home to the Völsfing clan of Vikmordere barbarians. The village is encircled by a dual-gated, 10 foot tall timber fence that encompasses a few dozen buildings.

THE VILLAGE OF VÖLSFIHEIMR HOME OF THE VÖLSFING (LAN

NG village

Corruption -1; Crime -2; Economy +1; Law +4; Lore +4; Society -2

Qualities pious (the Ancestor Spirit), racial enclave (human), rumormongering citizens, sanctuary, superstitious, untamed

Danger +0

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government overlord

Population 120 humans (plus 30 visiting human warriors/shieldmaidens from other clans)

NOTABLE NPCS

Chieftain Canute Völsdahl "Little Bear" (LN male human fighter 10)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 500 gp; **Purchase Limit** 2,500 gp (barter only); **Spellcasting** 1st

Minor Items 3d4; Medium Items 1d4; Major Items —

Approaching from the south, the village has a backdrop of the distant peaks of the Eastern Mountains over the expansive waters of Serpent Lake. Towering higher than any of the buildings within the settlement juts a single totem pole bearing the likeness of a human-faced bear (the totemic crest of the Völsfing clan).

The site consists of several wooden structures, the largest of which is a great hall (170 feet in length and 60 feet wide). The great hall is a communal complex used for clan gatherings as well as the seat of the clan chieftain, his family, and retainers. Two dozen smaller structures surround the hall, each comprising a single large room that houses an entire family.





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Like most of the Vikmordere people, the Völsfing clan make summertime raids, and frequently use their bounty to barter with other area clans. In addition to trade, they also subsist on moderate grain farming, fishing, and hunting or trapping game.

Beneath the freezing torrent of the raging blizzard, the village would seem otherwise abandoned if not for the soft orange glow that creeps from beneath the doors of the many structures. The swelling illumination hints of inhabitants gathered warmly within by firelight.

The flame-wreathed owl glides past several hovels and directly to a massive wooden great hall. A rushing gust of wind flings the shuttered doors wide open as the blazing owl flies inside and begins circling within the structure's high rafters.

The hall is filled with at least two dozen Vikmordere warriors and shieldmaidens, all of whom stare dumbfounded at the dramatic entrance. The owl dives down and into the fire situated in the center of the hall before vanishing into its flames.

A moment later a spiraling column of fire erupts from the same spot. In its wake levitates the translucent crimson likeness of a young maiden garbed in thick robes and holding a spear upright in her hand.

She faces one particular warrior seated upon a wide wooden throne adorned with myriad bleached animal skulls and interlocked deer's antlers.

"Canute Völsdahl, chieftain of the Völsfing, charge of Völsfiheimr, my proud Little Bear... The great Ancestor Spirit has heard your calls. I have answered them."

The woman waves a hand toward the entrance and another gust of wind violently slams the swinging doors shut allowing the warmth of the great hall's fire to heat the room. The maiden glances back to the warrior seated upon the throne and speaks.

"I bring you heroes capable of accomplishing

your appeal. Warm them, feed them, and prepare them for what awaits. Yet know they must choose this destiny freely, and time grows short. The Ohjaslange has passed. The Jötunn have arisen, and their armies march south from Ighdenholm."

The fire splutters erratically, casting dancing shadows around the great hall. The maiden vanishes in a blink, leaving behind the silence of dozens of stunned warriors and shieldmaidens.

Canute rises, introducing himself, and invites the adventurers to warm themselves at his fire. When asked, the chieftain provides an explanation of who the Ember Owl was, what the Jötunn are, and the history surrounding the Ohjaslange. The threat that now faces the Vikmordere people is dire, and visions cast upon him by the Ancestor Spirit foretold that his people could only be saved by the intervention of outsiders.

KANUTE VÖLSDAHL, VÖLSFING KLAN KHIEFTAIN KR 10

XP 9,600

Human warrior 12 N Medium humanoid Init +6; Senses Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +2 Dex) hp 114 (12d10+36) Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +4

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +2 greatsword +17/+12/+7 (2d6+8/17-20) or handaxe +15/+10/+5 (1d6+5/x3)

Ranged longbow +14/+9/+4 (1d8/x3)

STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10 Base Atk +12; CMB +16; CMD 28 Feats Critical Focus, Diehard, Endurance,





Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Initiative, Intimidating Prowess, Toughness Skills Climb +7, Handle Animal +6, Intimidate +19, Perception +2, Ride +4

Languages Common Gear hide armor, +2 greatsword, handaxe, longbow with 20 arrows, 50 gp

Canute is the only son of Hgirmaf Völsdahl, the previous chieftain of the Völsfing Clan. His father, known as the "The Great Bear," was a legendary raider and very well respected by almost all the area's Vikmordere clans. A stylized depiction of Hgirmaf dons the totemic crest of the Völsfing clan, a reminder to all that such a great warrior came from their village.

Though his exploits aren't nearly as numerous as his father's, general respect was extended to Canute when Hgirmaf was killed during a raid. He inherited his position as chieftain at a young age and was bestowed the moniker of "Little Bear."



To most outsiders, the prefix of "little" may seem demeaning or to infer that Canute is less astute than his father was. That is not the case in any way. In Vikmordere tradition, to be bestowed one's father's name is an honor and a sign of great respect by the people, especially when one's father was so prestigious.

Canute maintains a harsh demeanor but is actually reasonable and level-headed—an attribute that serves him well as head of a barbarian clan and appointed leader of the Northern Fury Council. He is eager to prove himself both in battle and with his ability to lead. The approaching army of undead ice giants conveniently provides him with just such an opportunity. His desire to have his bravery and prowess seen on the battlefield by the Vikmordere people accounts for his willingness to allow the adventurers to trek off without him to fulfill their destiny.



The Northern Fury Council

The Northern Fury Council is a loose federation of a dozen Vikmordere leaders. The body makes up the heads of the largest of the valley's clans and tribes. The council usually meets yearly in the weeks prior to launching summertime raids to plan their offensives.

Due to the arrival of the Ohjaslange, they have gathered to await the fulfillment of the prophecy's curse, and to plan their actions. While many on the Council doubted the validity of the old myth, enough of the Vikmordere populace believes in it to warrant a gathering of the Council.

With the arrival of the unnatural blizzard that now engulfs the entire region, and the sounding of the Jötunn warhorns permeating from the great peak of Ighdenholm, there is no doubt that the ancient prophecy has come to pass. And now the Council scrambles to prepare for the coming onslaught of the Jötunn.

Canute is the appointed head of the Northern Fury Council, and as such holds an honorary position as the leader of all Vikmordere. The title, which he will maintain as long as he continues to prove worthy, holds little sway without the approval of the Council, but none-the-less, Canute's word holds more weight than any other individual Vikmordere. And in most instances, the other members of the Council carry out his wishes when they return to lead their own jarldoms.

The other members of the Northern Fury Council can be considered standard Vikmordere Warriors and Shieldmaidens. Alternatively, a detailed background and

| TIETIBERS OF THE TOKTHEKIT FURT COUNCIL | | |
|--|--------|---------------------------------|
| NAME | GENDER | <lan th="" tribe<=""></lan> |
| Anru the Forest Chieftain | Male | Tribe of the Elder Tree |
| Jarl Canute the Little Bear (Canute Völsdahl) | Male | The Bear Clan (Council Head) |
| Jarl Farin the Wise (Farin Meðalskyrta) | Male | The Owl Clan |
| Jarl Kyntha the Cunning (Kyntha Vænnfyrsta) | Female | The Adder Clan |
| Jarl Jon the Black (Jon Miqðvitnir) | Male | The Black Wolf Clan |
| Jarl Jon the Hunter (Jon Snærfreki) | Male | White Wolf Clan |
| Marak the Raven | Male | The Hidden Ones (Raven Clan) |
| Jarl Nestor the Dragon (Nestor Naðrfjall) | Male | Mountain Clan of the Claw |
| Jarl Riso of the Woodlands | Male | The Falcon Clan |
| The Great Sven Silvermane (Sven Mqrkhárr) | Male | Keepers of the Saga |
| Vidar the Nomad Chieftain | Male | Tribe of the Lynx |
| Wilmar the Wild | Male | Berserker Boar Clan |

MEMBERS OF THE NORTHERN FURY (OUN(IL



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full individual character information, background, and resources for every member of the Council is available in *Ancestral Appellations: Vikmordere Culture*, available as part of the Into the Wintery Gale line of products.

VIKMORDERE WARRIOR/ SHIELDMAIDEN <R 7



XP 3,200

Human barbarian 2/fighter 6 N Medium humanoid Init +2; Senses Perception +10

DEFENSE

- AC 20, touch 10, flat-footed 18 (+7 armor, +2 Dex, +3 shield, -2 rage)
- **hp** 64 (8 HD; 2d12+6d10+34)
- **Fort** +14, **Ref** +4, **Will** +7; +2 vs. fear
- **Defensive Abilities** bravery +2, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

- **Melee** +1 battleaxe +16/+11 (1d8+9/19– 20/×3) or shortspear +14/+9 (1d6+6)
- Ranged throwing axe +11 (1d6+7) or shortspear +10 (1d6+6)
- **Special Attacks** rage (14 rounds per day), rage power (quick reflexes), weapon training (axes +1)



When not raging, the Vikmordere warrior has AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 20; hp 64; Fort +12, Will +5; Melee +1 battleaxe +14/+9 (1d8+6/19-20/×3) or shortspear +12/+7 (1d6+4); Ranged throwing axe +11 (1d6+5) or shortspear +10 (1d6+4); Str 18, Con 14; CMB +12 (+16 to overrun); Climb +6, Swim +10

STATISTICS

- Str 22, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 10 Base Atk +8; CMB +14 (+18 to overrun); CMD 24 (26 vs. overrun)
- Feats Athletic, Extra Rage, Great Fortitude, Greater Overrun, Improved Critical (battleaxe), Improved Overrun, Iron



Will, Power Attack, Vital Strike

Skills Acrobatics +6 (+10 jump), Climb +8, Craft (ships) +5, Intimidate +5, Perception +10, Profession (sailor) +5, Survival +5, Swim +12

Languages Common

SQ armor training 1, fast movement

Combat Gear potion of bull's strength, potions of divine favor (3); **Other Gear** +1 chainmail, +1 heavy wooden shield, +1 battleaxe, shortspear, throwing axes (2), boots of the winterlands, feather token (anchor), 5 gp



It is quite common in Vikmordere culture to have both men and woman serve the roles of warrior, raider, and protector. Shieldmaidens are equals to the male counterparts in every way, and every bit as dangerous.

PART 3-4. A GATHERING OF JARLS

As the conversation continues, Canute explains to the PCs about the gathering of the Northern Fury Council, and tells to them the story of Jarl Vornig, the Ohjaslange, and the need to locate the artifacts Vlfberht and Skjold Rustning in order to defeat the Jötunn and stop the unending blizzard.

He is surprised that the Ancestor Spirit has chosen heroes not of Vikmordere descent, but asks them if they will heed the call of the Ember Owl. If the adventurers inquire about a reward, he will offer them their weight in gold (roughly 7,000 to 10,000 gp each) from the bounty his clan gathered during summer raids.

So, how much gold is that exactly?

Since "gp" is considered a unit of measure rather than an actual object of value, there is no specific real-world equivalent for how much gold is actually in a gold piece. However, if we assume that a 'gold piece' is a solid gold coin with a weight roughly equivalent to a US half dollar, then one gold piece weighs about 10 grams (and is about 25 mm in diameter). Therefore, 46 gp worth of gold weighs one pound. If a PC weighed 200 pounds, then that character's 'weight in gold' would be approximately 9,200 gp worth of gold. Alternatively, for the sake of simplicity you may wish to round up and say that 1 pound of gold equals 50 gp worth of gold.

While the chieftain's offered reward may sound excessive, it's important to remember that gold and other such valuables have little to no value to the Vikmordere people. If an item has no practical use, it's considered a waste of resources and such ownership is thought to be a caveat to greed. However, during a raid into foreign territory, the raider's do not halt to be decisive about what bounty is taken. And so, after the summertime raids, the Vikmordere barbarians have an excess of gold, jewels and other such valuables that remains in their possession throughout the winter.

Canute believes the adventurers were guided here by the Ancestor Spirit, and so he rationalizes that it is an acceptable use of the treasure.

What do the Vikmordere do with this excess bounty? On the dawning of the spring season each year, after the first glacial melt, Vikmordere clans from across the valley gather near a spot on Serpent Lake considered to be directly over its deepest trench. Sailing with their longships heavily laden with the unwanted treasure, they dump it overboard into the lake an offering to the spirits of nature and as a show of commitment to the ideals of the great Ancestor Spirit. This sacred act is known to the Vikmordere as the Golldisting, and it is considered to be one of the most important holy observances among the barbarian clans and tribes.

Assuming the adventurers agree to seek out the artifacts for the Vikmordere people, the room bursts into a chorus of cheers and whoops as the barbarians hail their new heroes-to-be. Canute calls for a great feast. All of the village folk are invited into the great hall to celebrate with the visiting barbarians and the new arrivals brought to them by the Ember Owl.

A grand meal already prepared for the meeting of the council serves as a celebratory feast. Two large wild boars are brought and placed upon the fire. They are accompanied by an assortment of salted fish, dried mushrooms, boiled turnips, and more elderberry mash than could ever be consumed within a single evening.

Despite the dire situation, the Vikmordere celebrate with great merriment, lubricated by generous amounts of mead. Food, drink, music, and companionship are abundant for all.





As the feast progresses, the occasional distant Jötunn warhorn drones from north of the Lake. The warriors respond by shouting out warcries in unison until their ruckus within the hall drowns out the sounds of the threatening noise.

As the adventurers feast, drink, and mingle with the warriors and shieldmaidens, any **DC 15 Diplomacy check** for gathering information will result in their company freely sharing additional information about the curse of the ice giants, the legendary Jarl Vorgnig, and the artifacts now sought by the party. (Refer to the *Extended Background* section for details on those topics.)

Should any of the PCs inquire specifically why the Vikmordere are celebrating what would otherwise seem to be a grim and dreadful state of affairs, read the following aloud:

The warrior suddenly becomes somber. He/She explains, "We do not celebrate for ourselves. We celebrate for those who are about to die—so that their last night of life is filled with joy and kinship."

After a brief pause, his/her demeanor shifts back to the previous friendly persona. With a wide grin he/she jests, "Perhaps we celebrate for **you**!" He/she lets forth a tremendous, mead induced belly laugh, before guzzling down yet another horn of the sweet honey wine.



During the feast, Canute motions for the adventurers to join him at his throne. There he explains that the location of the artifacts is a mystery to all of them, but there is one person who knows their whereabouts. A witch named Arurún. She is the last living descendant of Jarl Vornig, and as such, she is the keeper of the great secret.

The chieftain tells the party to seek her hovel on the opposite side of the lake directly north of the village. He explains to them that the old woman sometimes speaks in riddles, and warns to be wary of her trickery. She is a member of the Völsfing Clan, but long ago abandoned living in the village to seek further commune with nature. Canute pulls out a wooden medallion from within a pouch secured to his belt. Giving it to the PCs, he tells them to show the medallion to Arurún and explain that it was sent by him, and to immediately tell her why they have come, lest they risk the witch mistaking them for a foe and working her powerful magic against them.

If asked why the Vikmordere do not accompany the adventurers in this quest, the chieftain will explain that they alone were chosen by the great Ancestor Spirit to take this journey, and that the barbarians must go to battle against the advancing Jötunn. Canute admits they stand little chance of pushing back the ice giants until the artifacts are recovered, but he hopes to slow the enemy's advancement further into Vikmordere territory in the meantime.

The Hábrók Medallion of the Völsfing Clan

This decorative wooden medallion has been carved with the likeness of the Hábrók fetching a herring from the waters of the lake. It hangs from a simple knotted leather cord.

The Hábrók is a mythological being of Vikmordere culture. Its appearance is that of a giant wolf bearing the head and wings of a hawk. According to legend, the Hábrók is known for being able to leap great distances as well as fly, and is said to dwell within the mountains that surround the Vikmordere Valley. It is said that where the Hábrók arrives, soon to follow will be a great hero or mighty king. For this reason, it is





a symbol often associated with jarls, chieftains, and other important figureheads within the barbarian culture.

PART 3-D. THE '&LIMA' OF &OLD Vikmordere Wrestling

Late into the feast, once everyone has had ample food and mead, Canute visually assess the physical strength of the adventurers and challenges whomever he deems the most capable to the Glima, a traditional Vikmordere wrestling match. He offers his golden torque (a *torque of fortification*) as a reward to any person who can best him in a challenge.

Though the chieftain first seeks to challenge those among the adventurers he believes is the most able-bodied, he gladly accepts a challenge from anyone. However, he only grants them one match each to attempt to best him. If the chieftain is defeated in the Glima by one of the adventurers, then the competition is over, that person is gifted the chieftain's torque, and no further matches will be entertained.

In between matches with any adventurer who wish to challenge him, Canute is also tested by a few of the visiting warriors and shieldmaidens that are present—he bests all of them.

Win or lose, to the Vikmordere it is the bravery of delivering or accepting the challenge that is important. Those who compete against Canute gain respect from their new barbarian peers, and those who refuse to take part in the Glima are "playfully" ridiculed until they either accept the challenge or the feast comes to a close.

Running the Glima

When an adventurer accepts or issues a challenge for the Glima, they are presented with a length of braided flaxen rope and shown how to tie a glima harness upon themselves. The harness is wrapped and knotted around the waist and thighs of the competitor so that it forms a snug belt and a smaller strap around the lower thighs of each

TORQUE OF FORTIFICATION

Aura faint transmutation; CL 5th Slot neck; Price 27,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

DESCRIPTION

Crafted of solid gold, this torque is constructed of dozens of braided gold wires into elaborate knot work toggled at the ends by two small polished golden knobs. Its form is relatively flexible, allowing it to be adjusted to comfortably fit its wearer's neck.

A torque of fortification provides its wearer with a +1 endurance bonus to Fortitude saving throws and a +1 endurance bonus to Combat Maneuver Defense. These effects stack with equivalent bonuses of another type. The torque also provides its wearer with 4 temporary hit points automatically granted when the torque is worn. Removing the torque automatically causes 4 points of damage to the wearer.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *bear's endurance, aid*, and 500 gp worth of gold used to craft the item; **Cost** 13,500 gp

leg. During the match both competitors grip their opponent by the waist belt with one hand and a thigh belt with the other. Neither opponent is allowed to release their grip upon an opponent until a point is scored.

During the match the two opponents must remain standing and constantly moving in a clockwise direction so that both are circling one another. As a matter of mutual respect, the two opponents are expected to maintain eye contact during the entire grapple. To score a point, a competitor must trip or throw their opponent causing them to land upon their back, which results in a point being scored to the felled competitor. After a point is scored, both competitors reassume their initial positions and begin the match again. When a competitor has tallied five points they lose the match.



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WRATH OF THE JÖTUNN • THE ADVENTURE BEGINS

Since the Glima is a form of structured combat with defined rules, regular unarmed combat does not apply to a match. Both opponents maintain the grappled condition throughout the match. If either opponent intentionally releases the grapple during the match, they are automatically scored a point.

Each opponent rolls for initiative, and the winner takes his turn first. When both competitors have had a turn (or after a point is scored), there is another roll for initiative and the process repeats. To trip or throw an opponent in the Glimma, the attacking wrestler makes an attack roll and adds in their CMB in place of their normal attack bonus against a DC of the defenders CMD. If the roll is successful, then the defender may make a Reflex saving throw with a DC equal to the offender's attack roll total. If that saving throw fails, the defender is placed on their back and scored a point. If it succeeds, then the defender manages to stay on their feet and the attacker's turn is over.

If a PC manages to best Canute in the Glimma, in addition to earning the respect of the present Vikmordere (+5 to all Diplomacy checks to gather information at this location) and Canute's magic torque, those who competed against the chieftain should also be awarded 350 experience points each. These points are awarded only if one of the PCs actually defeats Canute.

PART 3-E. SAILING TO THE NORTH SHORE

Afterafewhoursofrestproceedingthefeast, the adventurers are stirred by the chieftain. The great hall is littered with sleeping bodies, and the groans of those awakening interlude like a nauseous choir. The adventurers are presented with Vikmordere winter kits (more details available in the section entitled, *Traversing the Wintery White*). Within each kit is an assortment of wintertime attire and tools to help them make their way through the raging blizzard. Canute and half a dozen warriors and sheildmaidens brave the blizzard to accompany the adventurers to the village dock where they are presented with their ice-laden vessel—a well-crafted keelboat. The barbarians use narrow wooden clubs to knock thick ice from the bow and stern of the ship, then help to load gear and equipment into the shallow hull of the boat. Longer staves with pointed stones are used to reach out and shatter passage for the boat across the frozen shoreline of Serpent Lake.

Once more, the chieftain reiterates the direction to the north shore where the PCs can find the witch named Arurún. He tells them to look for the standing stone (a large 12 foot tall rune-engraved granite stone jutting skyward from the shoreline). The standing stone indicates that they are near the witch's hovel.

As the adventurers set to oar, Canute and his clansmen wish them a safe journey, and he reminds them, with a stern voice, to give the *wooden medallion* to the witch.

VIKMORDERE KEELBOAT

AC 9; hp 80; Base Save +5; Maximum Speed 40 ft. Arms 1; Ram 2d6+6; Squares 2; Crew 4-15

The north shore is located 5 miles north of the Village of Völsfiheimr across Serpent Lake. There is no way to reach the area by land without traveling hundreds of miles around the perimeter of the waterway.

As the adventurers row off into the icy waters, remember to confirm their checks for getting lost in the unending blizzard as well as navigating through the dangerous growlers (refer to <u>Part 1-A: Traversing the Wintery Gale</u>).

When the adventurers have completed their perilous journey across the ice-laden waters from the village of Völsfiheimr, they come across the northern shore of Serpent Lake. Having been informed by Canute,






chieftain of the Völsfing Clan, that the standing stone would point them in the direction of the witch's hovel, they have to search the shoreline to spot the monolith through the raging snow. They may scan the shoreline from the lake while aboard the keelboat, or they may land and shuffle along the frozen shoreline.

The landmark is located on land about 30-feet from the shore and a quarter-mile directly south of Arurún's Hut. A DC 30 **Perception check** locates the standing stone from aboard the keelboat, though the difficulty is reduced to a DC 20 Perception check if the PCs disembark the vessel to scout the frozen shoreline by foot.

When the standing stone is discovered, read the following aloud:

Carefully scanning the shoreline through the shifting wall of snow and fog reveals a protruding landmark: a monolith of solid granite standing nearly fifteen feet tall. Wider at the base and tapered to a point at the crown, the stone structure is roughly shaped like a giant spearhead. The standing stone is roughly hewn and elaborately engraved with Vikmordere runework. This is undoubtedly the marker that the chieftain from Völsfiheimr spoke about.

PART 3-F. THE WITCH'S HUT

With the standing stone now located, the adventurers must then determine where the witch's hovel is located. Having been told "near" the standing stone by the chieftain, they are left with little resort but to meticulously search the area that is currently cloaked in white by the blizzard.

Upon their first attempt to search, the party comes across faint tracks nearly obscured in the snowdrifts. A DC 25 Knowledge (nature) check reveals them to be the tracks of a very, very large bear. After having discovered the bear tracks, a DC 30 Perception check locates Arurún's hut—an earth-bound structure about a quarter mile north of the standing stone. The hovel is nearly completely buried in snow. It would appear abandoned if not for the faint orange glow of firelight creeping out from beneath its thick wooden door.

If the Perception check to discover the hut is failed more than twice, then the adventurers will cross paths with the witch's giant bear guardian. If encountered, the beast immediately and ruthlessly attacks the PCs. The giant bear fights to the death unless the creature is somehow calmed, such as with *calm animals*, or directly communicated to by means such as *speak with animals*. If the party finds a way to convey to the bear their intent to peacefully meet with its mistress, the creature instead guides them directly to Arurún's hut, roaring loudly as it approaches the snow-laden umber structure to alert the witch of her incoming company.







ARURÚN'S GIANT BEAR GUARDIAN (R 9

XP 6,400

N Huge animal

Perception +6

DEFENSE

hp 100 (12d8+20)

OFFENSE

+12(1d10+6)

Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +2

-1 size)

Speed 40 ft.



When Arurún's hut is discovered, read the following aloud:

A small structure can be seen in the distance. Constructed from dried flats of dirt and sod arranged like

bricks upon a short foundation of stacked stones, the surrounding earth has been piled up around its sides creating a mound-like structure with a single entryway consisting of a thick wooden door. Snowdrifts have shifted to nearly obscure the structure, except for the entrance and a patch of exposed earth at its top. From beneath the wooden door the dim glow of firelight can be seen.

The hut is fortified by the *durable dwelling* spell (CL 8) (detailed later in this section), and the structure's single wooden door is secured by *arcane lock*. If the adventurers knock, the old woman hastily answers from behind the closed door. Regardless of what the PCs say to her, she snaps at them, saying "Go away!" Her voice is shrill and raspy with age.

It requires mention of Canute and the hábrók medallion for her to consider allowing the adventurers inside, but with some additional coaxing (**DC 20 Diplomacy check**), Arurún finally opens the door and demands to be shown the medallion.

Space 15 ft.; Reach 10 ft. STATISTICS Str 23, Dex 11, Con 19, Int 6, Wis 12, 0

Melee 2 claws +12 (1d12+6 plus grab), bite

Init +1; Senses low-light vision, scent;

AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15 (+6 natural,

Str 23, **Dex** 11, **Con** 19, **Int** 6, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6 **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +12 (+16 grapple); **CMD** 23 (27 vs. trip)

Feats Endurance, Lunge, Run, Skill Focus (Survival)

Skills Perception +9, Intimidate +9 Survival +8, Swim +17; Racial Modifiers +4 Swim

A white bear of extraordinary size, this beast more than doubles the girth of normal bears and seems unnaturally intelligent as well as particularly aggressive.



If the adventurers kill the bear, Arurún becomes immediately aware of its demise. In this case, she will inquire about the bear as soon as she meets them. If she discovers that they are responsible for its death, her demeanor becomes colder (-5 to all **Diplomacy checks related to acquiring her assistance**). However, if the PCs encounter the bear, but devise a way to end the engagement without killing the beast, the witch's demeanor warms to the party. (+5 to all diplomacy checks related to acquiring her assistance).

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When Arurún is shown the medallion, she reaches out a hand, indicating she wishes for it to be given to her. Once she has it in hand, she yanks it inside and quickly closes the door. Let the PCs' impatience with the old woman simmer for a couple of minutes before having her return to the door to invite them inside.

Now convinced they were sent to her by Canute, the witch's demeanor changes and she acts warm and inviting towards the party, apologizing for her earlier rudeness and explaining that an old woman can't be too careful when it comes to strangers beating down her door.

The single room interior of the hut is warm and inviting. The floor is recessed a few feet into the earth and is backed flot and eavend with dried



is packed flat and covered with dried straw. The rough walls are concealed by a smooth layer of ash-gray clay. A framework of wooden beams supports the weight of the exterior structure. From the beams hangs a selection of common tools and utensils intermingled with several furs, dried herbs and roots, and mysterious trinkets and baubles. A fire pit has been prepared at the center of the room, its flames brightly illuminating the area. Though a compact space, there is ample room for at least a dozen folk to comfortably rest upon a trio of long wooden benches that encircle the warming fire.

ARURÚN VÖLSDAHL, VÖLSFING WITCH (R 9



XP 6,400

Female human wizard 10 NG Medium humanoid Init +1; Senses Perception -1

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +1 deflection, +1 Dex) hp 62 (10d6+20) Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +8

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee sharpened stone dagger +5 (1d4-1/19-20)

Special Attacks hand of the apprentice (7/ day), metamagic mastery (2/day)

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 10th; concentration +14)

- 5th—animal growth, permanency 4th—durable dwelling, remove curse, charm monster, wall of fire (DC 18)
- 3rd—nondetection, fireball (DC 17) (2)
- 2nd—arcane lock, bear's endurance, bull's strength, cat's grace, eagle's splendor, fox's cunning
- 1st—alarm, identify, mage armor (precast), ray of enfeeblement (DC 15), unseen servant
- 0 (at will)—*dancing lights*, detect magic, *open/close*, *read magic*

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 12, **Con** 14, **Int** 18, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 14 **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 17

Feats Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Empower Spell, Extend Spell, Iron Will, Runepainter, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell

Skills Appraise +17, Fly +14, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (geography) +17, Knowledge (history) +17, Knowledge (planes) +17, Ride +11, Spellcraft +17

Languages Common, Draconic, Dwarven,



Elven, Sylvan

SQ arcane bond (*ring of protection* +1)
Combat Gear potion of *cure moderate* wounds (2) wand of cure light wounds (40 charges), staff of journeys; Other Gear ashes of magical creatures; for runepainting (enough to paint 10 runes), hero's receptacle, sharpened stone dagger, ring of protection +1, spell component pouch, spellbook, writing equipment, 10,000 gp worth of various gemstones, 73 gp

The adventurers discover that the temperature is warm and pleasant inside the single room hut. From within they can barely hear the roaring winds outside. There is a cooking fire ablaze which illuminates the room, and ample room for each of them to comfortably sit at the narrow wooden benches, or upon the straw-strewn dirt floor.

Once the adventurers have settled in the hut, the witch lifts the lid from a cauldron and the room is filled with a delicious aroma. Arurún invites the PCs to have a meal with her, and there is just enough food prepared to feed everyone. The food provided is a stew of roots, berries, and boar meat—all of which is prepared per the daily magical meal effect of the *durable dwelling* spell cast upon the hovel. If eaten, the stew provides the adventurers with all of the associated benefits of consuming a meal generated by the spell effect.

While sharing the meal, Arurún speaks freely with the adventurers about her connection to Jarl Vornig (being his eleventh great granddaughter), and how the legend of Vlfberht and Skjold Rustning were passed down through the generations of her family until finally it was bestowed on her. She had hoped that the Ohjaslange would pass without incident and then there would be no need to pass the secret on to future generations. To her disappointment this has now proven to be a false hope. Having no children of her own, the secret of the Jarl's artifacts rightfully fall to Canute, who is actually her second cousin twice removed. It is only due to this relationship with the chieftain who sent them that she is willing to share what she knows with the party.

Very nearly senile, Arurún frequently pauses in the middle of sentences, stares off into space for moments at a time, and then picks back up where she left off, obviously unaware her mind had wandered.

Through their dialog with the witch, the adventurers learn that she is unsure of how to recover the artifacts of her forefather, though she informs the PCs that she can help locate the objects with a magical trinket that she inherited from her mother.

She produces a small amulet made of clusters of sparkling, amber-hued quartz crystal (the *hero's receptacle*) from a tightly-bound burlap sack stashed in one corner of the room.

Arurún informs the adventurers that her family lore says that the amulet contains the spirit of Jarl Vornig himself, and that it is his essence which remains the only source of knowledge about the final resting place of the great sword and aegis.

Arurún shows the PCs how to activate the amulet by using the command word "firfero," an ancient Vikmordere term that loosely translates to the common tongue to mean, "Walking the unknown path." When she does so the first time (in the presence of the adventurers), the secondary illusionary map is triggered instead.

The witch is ecstatically pleased with herself when the strange map manifests and the two glowing icons appear. Explaining that she has never before seen this particular map manifest, Arurún proclaims the adventurers must truly be the rightful heirs of Jarl Vornig's secrets. Now convinced that the adventurers have a destiny to fulfill, she gleefully gives them the *hero's receptacle* to take on their journey.

A DC 15 Knowledge (geography) check reveals that one of the claw-shaped icons on the secondary illusionary map precisely indicates the location of Arurún's hut (or more accurately, the location of the *hero's*





ARURÚN'S DURABLE DWELLING

School universal; Level sorcerer/wizard 4 Casting Time 10 minutes Components V, S, M (a prick of blood from the caster smeared upon the surface of the structure) Range touch Target one single structure up to 250 cubic feet/caster level Duration 24 hours

DESCRIPTION

Durable dwelling can enchant any single structure provided the caster's level permits the spell area of effect to encompass the entire structure. The spell does not create a new structure, but is instead cast upon an existing structure. The structure can be as simple as a tent or as complex as a castle or keep. If the entire structure cannot fit into the area of effect, then the spell fails. All parts of an affected structure must be connected to each other. Secondary structures within or near the affected structure do not benefit from the spell.

A structure affected by *durable dwelling* is granted a constant perfect *mending* effect. Any damage done to the structure (during the spell duration) is immediately repaired to the state that the structure was in before the spell was cast. The *mending* effect prevents the stability of a structure from being gradually degraded to the point of destruction, however if enough damage to the structure is caused by a single attack or effect, then the structure is destroyed and all of the spell's effects immediately end.

The interior of the structure affected by *durable dwelling* provides perfect protection from the elements outside of that structure, creating an environment optimal to the caster's survival (or as deemed desirable by the caster). This includes temperature, humidity, gravity, air, and other natural elements within the structure. The conditions of the structure's interior must be defined at the time of casting and cannot be changed for the duration of the spell.

The spell also creates a cooking fire, hearth, or fire pit in each room of the structure it is affecting. These fires can be either magical (providing only a light source and no heat) or real and may be ignited and extinguished by the caster at will.

Once per day, at will of the spell caster, the magical cooking fire generates sustenance in enough quantity to feed the normal number of occupants for the affected structure type. This sustenance appears in the form of a fully prepared meal consisting of foods and drinks native to the surrounding region. If the surrounding region isn't plentiful, then this effect will generate a tasteless mash and water that provides the same effects.

If the caster is familiar with edible plants and game in the area, they may also define at the time of casting what meal is to be prepared. In addition to providing sufficient sustenance to those who partake of the meal, it also provides the effects of a single *cure moderate wounds* spell to each.

Any creature who rests for at least four hours within a structure under the effects of *durable dwelling* gains benefits of a full night's rest, and eating the magical meal provided by the spell also provides a +1 morale bonus to attack rolls and Will saves for the 24-hours.





HERO'S RECEPTACLE



Aura strong divination; CL 15th Activation instantaneous and at will

DESCRIPTION

A vibrant amber hued cluster of crystals hangs suspended from a braided sinew necklace. Intertwined within the braiding of the cord are a dozen polished bone beads. A single pristine raven's feather dangles from each bead.

Once per day the crystal can be activated at will by the wearer to create an illusionary miniature map perfectly representing the surrounding 500 feet of terrain. This works in natural terrain, caverns, and forests, and man-made structures and dungeons. The map is expertly drawn upon a semi-translucent parchment that appears directly in front of and perpendicular to the wearer when activated. The illusion persists for 1d4+3 minutes or until deactivated at will by the user.

There is a 10% chance upon activation that the location of any magic item with a strong or overwhelming aura in the depicted area is indicated on the map. There is a 10% chance upon activation that any living intelligent creature in the depicted area is indicated on the map.

The user will not be aware whether or not the current illusionary map accurately depicts magic items or creatures. Though the projected map may not depict magic items or creatures when activated, it will never indicate either at incorrect locations. If depicted items or creatures move while the map is being displayed, it is instantaneously updated to depict their new locations.

The *hero's receptacle* is an ancient artifact fostered by the Völsfing hermit witch known as Arurún. The artifact is a family heirloom passed down through the generations of the descendants of Jarl Vornig. The receptacle's precise origin and original purpose have been long forgotten, but its design dates back to the time when the ancient jarls warred with the Jötunn.

The spirit of the legendary hero, Jarl Vornig, is bound to the ancient artifact. In particular instances the *hero's receptacle* triggers a haunting by the Jarl himself. These instances will be indicated specifically at various points in the adventure.

As long as the Jarl's spirit is bound to the artifact (the duration of this adventure), once per day the receptacle can generate a secondary illusionary map in the same manner as the first (if uses for both map types are available, the user defines which map is activated). This secondary map displays a much wider range (an area of 100-miles) and depicts two glowing icons. One icon is in the shape of a bear's claw, the other in the shape of a sword. The claw icon indicates the actual location of the *hero's receptacle* itself, and the other shows the location of the Vault of Vlfberht, where the Jarl's ancient magical sword can be found. The secondary illusionary map can be manifested at will once per hour for five minutes by any of the adventurers.

Only the PCs can cause the secondary map to manifest.

If the Jarl's spirit becomes unbound from the artifact (which happens during the conclusion of this adventure), this secondary illusionary map ceases to function. However, all other abilities and effects of the *hero's receptacle* function as normal.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements cluster of rare crystals worth 2,000 gp, 12 feathers from an *awakened* raven (must be freely given), specific knowledge about ancestral spirits (presently unknown to mortals), Craft Wondrous Item, *detect magic, know direction, locate object, locate creature, magic jar, silent image*; **Cost** 106,250 gp







receptacle). This can also be discovered later by traveling with the receptacle and noticing that its icon moves on the map as it is transported. The second icon indicates a location to the northwest in the middle of the great glacier that overflows the Eastern Mountains.

After the meal is finished, Arurún expresses that she has grown tired due to the excitement of their visit, and informs her guests that they are welcome to stay for a night's rest if they so wish. Though the hut may be crowded, it is still very hospitable when compared to the wintery gale outside. Those resting within gain the benefits of the *durable dwelling* spell.

Additionally, if the adventurers decide to stay the night, Arurún offers her runepainting magic to them to aid them in their journey. After explaining how the magic of her runes works, she offers to paint a single rune upon each of the adventurers before she retires for the evening (see Vikmordere Runemagic at the end of this section for more details. Arurún will be able to offer any of the example runes provided).

Having met with Arurún and obtained the *hero's receptacle*, the adventurers now know the location Jarl Vornig's legendary sword. It will be a long and arduous journey across the eastern tundra plains to venture to the great glacier.

If the adventurers sleep whilst resting in the witches hut, their dreams are filled with visions of brave Vikmordere barbarians locked in battle with droves of massive skeletal ice giants. In battlefields stained with blood the barbarians are losing to their undying enemy. Moments before waking, they once again hear the voice of the maiden whisper for them to hurry as the Jötunn march onward. If the adventurers who experienced the dream vision discuss the matter, they immediately discover that they all had the exact same dream.

PART 3-4. VIKMORDERE RUNEPAINT MAGIK

Itiscommonpractice among the Vikmordere to don elaborate designs upon their faces and bodies when preparing for battle. Each of these runes represents a different aspect of their mythology, culture, clan, or family. The designs used in runepainting are not universal, and are often uniquely designed by the runepainter themselves, or are unique designs passed down from teacher to student. Vikmordere runepaintings serve a much more vital role than their tendency to make the barbarians that wear them appear more frightening to their enemies (which the elaborate designs often successfully accomplish). They are also inherently magical by nature.

An art form usually reserved for shamans and witches, Vikmordere runepainting is a process that requires dedicated practice by skilled magic users. Each rune design is a magic item unto itself. It imbues the wearer it is marked upon with the ability to wield powerful spells that they would not otherwise have access to.

The Use of Runepaintings

Runepainting consists of elaborate rune designs that are essentially spell components that are painted upon the wearer. This means that they contain one charge of a particular spell that is to be cast at a later time. Runepaintings can be worn under clothing and armor, but must always be applied directly to the bare body. A runepainting cannot be applied to an item or upon a non-sentient creature.

The magic of each rune is strictly self-cast upon the wearer and consists of only a single charge. A runepainting can contain any spell that is cast upon a single target or that is selfcast. The target of a runepainting will always be the wearer. A runepainting cannot have an area effect, affect a target other than the wearer, manipulate the surrounding environment, summon another creature, or manifest physical objects.



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Ultimately, whether or not a particular spell can or cannot be made into a rune design to be applied as a runepainting is at the sole discretion of the Game Master.

When the magic of a runepainting is activated by the wearer (at will, as a free action), the rune glows brightly, immediately casts its associated spell targeted at the wearer, and then disappears without a trace. The magic effects of runepaintings are susceptible to affects that would negate or dampen the associated spell if it were cast normally. Attempts to activate the runepainting in these areas does not waste the single charge of a runepainting. Instead, the rune simply does not activate.

If the wearer ever falls unconscious or dies, all runes they bear will automatically activate at once. In a case were the wearer is dealt sufficient lethal damage to die, the effects of the runepaintings they wear are triggered automatically and take effect before they die. This means, for example, that a rune of healing could potentially prevent the death of a character if the resulting effects sufficiently healing offset the lethal damage that would have otherwise killed that character. However, if runepainting is a successfully suppressed by an antimagic effect, and the wearer falls unconscious or dies, then a runepainting does not activate until the magic negating effect is removed.

The wearer may choose to remove a runepainting by wiping it off. Likewise, submersion into water for more than two rounds will result in the removal of a submerged rune. A removed runepainting does not activate during removal, with the exception of baneful runes.

Baneful Runepainting

Applying a runepainting against a wearer's will permits the wearer to make a **DC 15 + Rune Design CL Will save** to repel the magic of the runepainting. Even an unconscious wearer receives this saving throw. If the saving throw is successful, then the baneful runepainting application fails as if the runepainter failed the **Spellcraft check** required for application. Since a runepainting takes an extended period of time to apply, an unwilling wearer will have to be immobilized for the entire duration of application.





Baneful runepaintings function like regular runepaintings, except that rather than being activated at will by the wearer, they are instead activated when the rune is removed (or would otherwise wear off). The effects of the baneful runepainting remain self-cast only. The wearer is allowed any applicable saving throws against the effects of whatever spell is being cast upon them by the activated baneful runepainting.

Applying a Runepainting

Applying a runepainting requires the painter to know the particular rune design they are attempting to paint, the *Runepainter* feat, and a successful **DC 10 + Rune Design CL Spellcraft skill check**. Applying runepainting is considered crafting a minor wondrous item.

Application Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, Runepainter, a quarter-pound of ashes from a cremated magical beast (per rune design slot) to create pigment, ability to cast the associated spell or a wand containing at least one charge of the associated spell; **Cost** 25 gp + 25 gp x associated Spell Level.

Note: Cremating a medium size creature will result in the creation of 4 pounds of ashes. Double this amount for each size category larger, halve for each size category smaller.

RUNEPAINTER (NEW FEAT)

Prerequisites Caster level 3rd, Craft Wondrous Items.

Benefit You can apply runepaint magic to yourself or a desired target. You can also create unique rune designs to be used for runepainting.

To apply a runepainting the painter must know how to cast the associated spell or must use a wand containing at least one charge of the associated spell to draw the rune design. Scrolls or other sources of spell casting are not usable for the purpose of applying a runepainting. Applying a runepainting requires that one cast (or charge) of the associated spell be expended to imbue the spell's magic into the pigment of the painted rune design. The rune design is drawn onto the wearer's skin using either the runepainter's fingertip or with the tip of a wand (if utilizing a wand).

Runepaintings are of various sizes and cover different parts of the body. For this reason, every rune design description has a slot variable that defines where that particular rune is worn. Some runepaintings require multiple slots (for instance, both arms instead of just one). Different runes can never occupy the same slot on a wearer. Likewise, a wearer may only have one rune design of the same type applied to their body at any time. If a rune design that is imbued with the same spell as another rune design already painted upon the wearer, the earlier version vanishes as if it had been intentionally removed by the wearer.

The more powerful a rune design is, the more body slots it will require to be drawn. The nine available rune design slots include: head, neck, left arm, right arm, chest, abdomen, back, left leg, right leg.

To apply a runepainting to a wearer requires 10 minutes for each required slot. A runepainter may apply a runepainting to themselves, however they will not be able to paint any part of a rune design upon their own back.

Once a runepainting is successfully applied, it will persist for 24 + 1d4 hours. If it is not used within that time the magic is lost and the runepainting vanishes.

Detect magic will reveal a runepainting to be magical, glowing with a faint aura related to the associated spell's particular school of magic.





Learning New Rune Designs

Runepainting designs are often passed down through many generations of runepainters. Some rune designs may be common to a region, while others are confined to a single clan or family. For a runepainter to learn a rune design from another runepainter the student must observe the teacher successfully craft the specific rune design they are learning. Once learned, the student must still meet all the requirements, including access to the associated spell, to utilize it for runepainting.

Rune designs cannot be cataloged or learned by any means than this method of direct training. Attempting to copy another ruinepainter's rune design functions exactly the same way as creating a unique rune design.

Creating Unique Rune Designs

To create a new rune design, a runepainter must both know and be able to cast the desired spell. Wands cannot be used for the purposes of creating new rune designs. The caster level of the desired spell becomes a set factor for the new rune design.

The minimum CL of a runepainting is the minimum CL allowed for its related spell. The maximum CL of any runepainting is 5. This limitation prohibits spells requiring higher than CL 5 to cast from being made into a rune design.

Before creating a new rune design, the runepainter must invest study and preparation time into the design process. Preparation for a new rune design requires 24 hours/CL of the desired associated spell. Preparation may be divided up into 4-hour blocks of uninterrupted study.

Once the preparation period has been completed, the runepainter must make a DC 25 + desired associated spell's CL Spellcraft skill check. If the skill check is successful, they may continue to create a unique rune design for the desired associated spell. If the skill check fails, then they must start over from the beginning.

> Rune Design Name The runepainter should come up with a descriptive name for the new rune design. The complexity of this title is entirely up to the creator of the rune.

> > Slots Required The runepainter should decide where the rune design must be painted upon the wearer. The number of slots required for a specific rune design depends on its associated spells spell level. A runepainting requires a number of slots equal to 1 + Spell Level of the associated spell.





Which combination of the nine available rune design slots are used for the new rune design is decided by the runepainter during creation. Once decided, is permanent for the rune design.

Visual Appearance This is where the runepainter can get creative and have some fun. Technically, a rune design for runepainting can be any shape or design as long as it contains markings on all the required slots. This can be as elaborate or as simple as the creator wishes. It also might be fun to draw out the runepainting design as a visual reference.

Some Example Rune designs

Rune of the Running Bear

- Associated Spell bear's endurance Caster Level 5
- Slot(s) Required left arm, right arm, chest, abdomen, left leg, right leg

Application Time 60 minutes

Visual Appearance An intricate knotwork bear paw surrounded by a circle created of interlacing trifolds. The paw is of slightly lighter hue than is the encircling design.

Rune of the Mighty Hero Associated Spell bull's strength Caster Level 5

Slot(s) Required left arm, right arm, chest, back, left leg, right leg

Application Time 60 minutes

Visual Appearance A series of rounded knotwork ovals form the likeness of a fist. The closed hand is depicted holding a hammer formed of opposing chevrons bound to a shaft of triangular runes.

<u>Rune of the Galloping Horse</u> Associated Spell cat's grace

Caster Level 5

Slot(s) Required neck, left arm, right arm, chest, left leg, right leg

Application Time 60 minutes

Visual Appearance A boldly enruned outline of a mare is positioned between two bars of detailed linework that form interlocking knots of five circles.





Horse Rune

Rune of the Noble Maiden

Associated Spell eagle's splendor

Caster Level 5

Slot(s) Required head, neck, left arm, right
 arm, chest, back

Application Time 60 minutes

Visual Appearance A sinuous knotwork designed to depict a stylized feminine figure. A faint tri-circle interlocks behind the sigil. A moon-shape is marked just above the figure's crown.

Rune of Mischief

Associated Spell fox's cunning **Caster Level** 5

Slot(s) Required head, chest, abdomen, back, left leg, right leg

Application Time 60 minutes

Visual Appearance This confusing rune consists of an exceptionally intricate lattice of lines that never quite connect. There is no starting point and no end, and the shape somewhat resembles a jumbled knot.





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<u>The Warrior's Rune</u> Associated Spell mage armor Caster Level 5 Slot(s) Required head, neck, chest, abdomen, back, left arm

Application Time 60 minutes

Visual Appearance A single round rune encircles and more elaborate knotwork circle. The emblem resembles a round wooden shield of Vikmordere design.



Rune of the Blind Man Associated Spell nondetection Caster Level 3

Slot(s) Required head, neck, chest, back **Application Time** 30 minutes

Visual Appearance A complex knotwork design depicts a single eye. Across the pupil of the eye is a bold emblem depicting a sea serpent. Great Ancestor Rune Associated Spell remove curse Caster Level 4 Slot(s) Required head, neck, chest, abdomen, back Application Time 40 minutes

Visual Appearance A series of twelve circles interlock to form a larger circle. The edges weave over and under each other to create an endless path.



Mischief Rune







PART 4-A. THE VAULT OF VLFBERHT

To recover the Jarl's sword, the adventurers must travel from the witch's hut and across the eastern tundra plains to the great glacier lodged between the Eastern Mountains and the peak of Ighdenholm. They then have to descend a massive chasm that slices through miles of the high glacier in order to locate the vault of Vlfberht.

The towering peak of Ighdenholm rises high into a violent stormcloud to the east. Westward to the



horizon the mountain connects to the snowcovered Eastern mountains. The massive glacier spills over between the great stelas, appearing suspended in time as it leaks between the two. A deep, dark chasm scars the surface of the ice monolith. It continues across the glacier for what appears to be many miles.

A set of descriptions of the journey through the glacier chasm is included on page 44 in the section titled Part 2-D: the Glacier Chasm. Once these waypoints (and associated random encounter checks) have been concluded, the adventurers will find themselves at the bottom of the glacial chasm facing an ice wall.

The entrance to the vault is only accessible by hacking away at the ten foot thick wall of ice. The ice has a hardness of 0 and 360 hit points. It takes double damage from fire.

Once the wall takes damage, the resulting vibrations are sent through the ice of the glacier and summon the attention of four medium ice elementals that guard the entrance. If the wall is breached within 10 rounds, then the ice elementals do not arrive in time to attack, but are awaiting the adventurers upon their exit. If after 10 rounds the wall is not destroyed, the elementals arrive and ambush the party by bursting through the frigid walls of the glacier chasm.

MEDIUM IKE ELEMENTAL <R 3

XP 800

- N Medium outsider (air, cold, elemental, extraplanar, water)
- Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft., snow vision; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16 (+6 natural) hp 30 (4d10+8) Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +1





Immune cold, elemental traits **Weaknesses** vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., burrow (ice and snow only) 20 ft., swim 60 ft.

Melee slam +7 (1d6+4 plus 1d4 cold) Special Attacks numbing cold (DC 14)

STATISTICS

Str 16, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 11
Base Atk +4; CMB +7; CMD 17 (can't be tripped)
Feats Cleave, Power Attack
Skills Knowledge (planes) +4, Perception +7, Stealth +7, Swim +11
Language Aquan
SQ ice glide, icewalking

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Ice Glide (Su) A burrowing ice elemental can pass through nonmagical ice and snow as easily as a fish swims through water. Its burrowing leaves behind no tunnel or hole, nor does it create any ripple or other sign of its presence. A *control water* spell cast on an area containing a burrowing ice elemental flings the elemental back 30 feet, stunning the creature for 1 round unless it succeeds on a DC 15 Fortitude save.
- **Icewalking (Ex)** This ability works like the *spider climb* spell, but the surfaces the elemental climbs must be icy. The elemental can move across icy surfaces without penalty and does not need to make Acrobatics checks to run or charge on ice.
- Numbing Cold (su) When an ice elemental deals cold damage to a creature, that creature must succeed on a Fortitude save or be staggered for 1 round. The save DC is listed in the elemental's stat block and is Constitution-based.
- **Snow Vision (Ex)** An ice elemental can see perfectly well in snowy conditions and does not take any penalties on Perception checks while in snow.

ECOLOGY

Environment any land or water (Plane of Water)

Organization solitary, pair, or gang (3–8) **Treasure** none

Ice elementals are creatures made of animated snow and ice. They form in especially cold parts of the Plane of Water and along its border with the Plane of Air, where giant icebergs careen off of world-high waterfalls into the open sky. Ice elementals vary in their exact appearance.

Slippery Stairways of the Vault

The stairs connecting each of the chambers in the vault are coated with thick ice and are exceptionally slippery. To maintain their footing, adventurers must make a DC 20 Reflex saving throw for every 20-foot section of stairs they attempt to traverse. If this saving throw is failed, the adventurer slips and slides down the remaining steps and is dealt 1d4 points of damage for every 20-foot length of stairs they slide down. A character who has succeeded their saving throw and who is also within arm's reach may attempt to catch a sliding character to prevent the incident—this requires a DC 25 **Reflex save** or else both characters slip and begin to slide down the stairs just as if both had failed their initial saving throws.

Room #1: The Entrance Revealed

Beyond the shattered ice wall is a concave cavern that ends at two gigantic stone doors. The doors depict two rampant runework bears. One mighty beast is depicted on each of the towering 20-foot doors as they rear to face one other. The creases around and between the massive portals are nearly seamless. Due to the smooth surface that surrounds them, they do not appear to have been opened for many centuries.



THE VAULT OF VLFBERHT

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1 \$QUARE = 5 FT.

THE VAULT OF VLFBERHT



Three fifteen-foot tall stone statues stand at either side of the doors. The two nearest the entrance gaze down on you. They lean upon matching greatswords with runes engraved on the that read "Vlfberht." The remaining statues stare outward with large, featureless round shields held high against their chests.

The great doors weigh 20,000 pounds and will require teamwork to open. The enormous stone slabs are large enough for any number of characters to push simultaneously and require a combined Strength score of 55 to open enough for the adventurers to pass through.

The doors have been rigged with an *icy burst* trap. The activating rune has been hidden discreetly between the massive doors and designed to trigger when the doors move. A **DC 45 Perception check** allows the trap to be discovered before it is triggered.

KY BURST



Type magic; **Perception** DC 26; **Disable Device** DC 26

EFFECTS

Trigger motion; Reset automatic

Effect Spell effect (*cold ice strike*, shredding flurry of ice slivers which blasts from the crease between the doors in a straight line. The line deals 4d6 points of ice damage; DC 11 Reflex save for half damage); single target.

Beyond the open door is a 10 foot wide set of steps that descend at a gradual angle for 30 feet before opening into a chamber.

Room #2: The Choice is the Key

This elaborate chamber is twenty feet square. The ceiling rises nearly fifteen feet high and is supported

by four thick stone columns in the corners. In addition to the stairs leading up to the entrance, the western wall bears an opening that delves deeper into the earth with a nearly identical set of stairs leading downward. The columns have been meticulously etched with Vikmordere runes. The grey brick walls host stonework molding around the ceiling's edge that portrays a linear scene of a several wolves hunting and then attacking a bear. Due to the progression of the scene as it wraps around the room it appears that the bear manages to escape the packs' onslaught.

In the center of the room is a life-sized statue depicting a Vikmordere shieldmaiden in full battle regalia except for her shield. The statue stands upon a two foot tall stone platform and extends her icy arms outward with palms turned up. In each hand rests a delicate-looking key likewise crafted of ice. The statue faces southward. On the northern wall behind her hangs a featureless disc made of solid ice.

The floor beneath is covered in a thin sheet of ice that cracks with every step, exposing a solidly constructed pattern of grey stone bricks beneath.

The runes upon the columns, if translated, tell stories about the ancient war with the skeletal ice giants, recounting the bravery of many unknown Vikmordere heroes. The central theme of the stories focuses on the exploits of Jarl Vornig, and provide several mentions of his magical flaming sword, Vlfberht.

The statue holds two keys crafted of ice. One key bears a bow crafted into the likeness of a bear's head, while the other appears to be fashioned into the stylized likeness of a rearing wolf. Either key can be removed with minimal effort.

When one key is removed the other instantaneously melts. If an attempt is made to remove both keys simultaneously, then randomly determine which key will melt by rolling 1d100. A roll of 1–50 results in the bear key melting, and a roll of 51–100 results in the wolf key melting.







The disc of ice on the wall behind the statue is featureless except for a single keyhole in its center (**DC 20 Perception check** to notice the small opening). Inspection reveals that there does not appear to be any sort of locking mechanism within the disc. Either of the ice keys found on the statue in this room will fit the keyhole, and both can be turned in either direction.

When a key is inserted and turned, it liquefies and is pulled into the keyhole where it fills the opening, creating a flawless surface. Once the key melts, there is a bright golden flash from beneath the surface of the ice disk, and a design begins being etched into its surface by an invisible force. The design drawn reflects the animal on the key used. If the bear key was used, the disc now portrays a regal bear sporting a three-tined crown. If the wolf key was used, the disc now portrays a rampant wolf reared with its fangs baring.

When the etching upon the disc completes after two rounds, it once again flashes with golden light and is transformed into a polished bronze shield that detatches from its position upon the wall and falls to the floor below. The bronze shield has a mirrored surface and is gilded in gold with the symbol that was drawn upon the ice disc.



30 points of fire damage will destroy the statue. If the ice statue is melted, an etching upon its stone platform is revealed. In Common language the etching reads,

"In winter's freezing wind, cleanse your hands by sacred flame."

Beneath the stanza an etching of the arcane spell *burning hands* appears. If parchment or paper and chalk or charcoal are used to make a rubbing of the spell's etching, it creates a usable scroll of *burning hands*. This process can be repeated once per day. Additional attempts to create a scroll this way on the same day cause the parchment or paper used in the attempt to burst into flames and be consumed.

Room #3: The Gleam of Bronze

The slippery stairs lead westward into a room of identical size. The four columns in the corners of this room have been sheathed in polished bronze and engraved at the crown and base with intricate Vikmordere knotwork.

Another ice statue depicting a shieldmaiden adorns the center of the chamber, but this one is nearly twice the size of the last. Though depicted wearing bits of heavy plate armor, the features of this woman are far more delicate than the last making her appear much younger. The translucent woman faces east. Her hands are outstretched, palms facing forward.

Another wide channel of steps continues north, descending further underground, and the southern wall bears a mounted bronze brazier.

A close inspection of the slightly translucent ice maiden reveals what appears to be a copperforged hammer frozen in its center.

To solve the riddle of this room, the adventurers have to reference the hidden message beneath the statue in **Room #2**. The statue in **Room #3** can be melted, but only by heat radiating from the mounted brazier



upon the southern wall. No flame will take within the oil-filled bowl unless it is cast by the spell *burning hands*. When the proper spell is cast at the oil in the brazier it ignites and roars into flame, filling the room with warmth. The ice statue quickly begins to melt. It is completely destroyed by the fire's warmth in less than a minute.

Any attempt to melt the statue by other means fails. Though crafted of solid ice, some strange magic prevents it from being destroyed by heat or flames. Likewise, any attempt to shatter the statue results in littleto-no damage as the tall, icy figure seems harder than adamantine.

When the statue is destroyed, the copper hammer drops to the stone platform where the statue stood before. When examined, the dual-head of the hammer has been engraved with Vikmordere runes that read,

"Bare is his back who has no brother."

Room #4: Hall of Hands and the Warrior's Twin

The walls of the stairway corridor leading into this room are coated in thick ice that narrow the passage further. The frost-covered ice is filled with incisions and cracks that make it impossible to see the wall behind. Within the ice are hidden 5 giant crawling hands (severed ice giant hands). The hands lie in wait until the adventurers make it half way up the passage, and then they burst out from the ice, three ahead and three behind, to attack.

<RAWLING HAND, GIANT <R 5</pre>



XP 1,600

NE Medium undead Init +2; Senses blindsense 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural)

hp 52 (7d8+21) **Fort** +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +6 **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft. Melee claw +11 (1d6+7 plus grab) Special Attacks mark quarry, pus burst

STATISTICS

Str 21, Dex 15, Con —, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 14 Base Atk +5; CMB +10 (+14 grapple); CMD 23 Feats Dodge, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness, Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills Acrobatics +3, Perception +7, Stealth +12; Racial Modifiers +4 Stealth

Languages Common (can't speak)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Mark Quarry (Su) A crawling hand is assigned a quarry by anointing the hand with a drop of the intended quarry's blood. If the hand has no current quarry, it automatically gains the next creature it damages as its quarry. Once attuned to a target, it becomes aware of the target's location as if under the effect of a continuous locate creature spell. The hand gains a +1 bonus on all attack rolls, damage rolls, and skill checks made to seek out and destroy the marked quarry. The mark quarry ability lasts until the quarry or the hand is slain.
- **Pus Burst (Su)** When damaged by a piercing or slashing melee weapon, a spray of vile pus strikes the attacker unless the attacker makes a DC 15 Reflex save. Weapons that provide reach protect the attacker completely from a pus burst. Creatures struck by pus become nauseated for 1d3 rounds and take 2d6 points of negative energy damage. The save DC is Charisma-based.

ECOLOGY

Environment any land or underground **Organization** solitary or gang (2–5) **Treasure** none







A giant rotting hand rocks unsteadily, propped upon thick, stubby fingers. Its pale, necrotic flesh pulses and crawls with sickly boils.

The walls of the hall can be seen in the holes where the hands burst out of the ice. A **DC 25 Perception check** will reveal faint engraving upon the stone brick surface. The rest of the ice can be removed from the walls with a bit of extended effort, requiring 2d6 minutes to clear both walls entirely. This reveals a vast interlocking knotwork decoration depicting hundreds of Vikmordere warriors marching off to battle.

If the copper hammer found in **Room** #3 was used for this process, then one of the figures begins to glow with a soft red light. The illumined figure wears a three-tined crown and wields a greatsword which he seems to be pushing down into some sort of altar. Note: This is a hint of how the adventurers can reveal the secret door in **Room** #9.

When the characters enter **Room** #4 itself, read the following out loud:

A third chamber of equal shape and size emerges from the long descending hall of stairs. The walls



of this room bear eleven shield-shaped disks. Each of them has been engraved with Vikmordere totems. Featured are the designs of a tree, a bear, two owls, two wolves, an adder, a dragon, a falcon, a lynx, and a boar.

Four columns crafted of solid ice reach to the high ceiling in each corner. Each column base is carved into the likeness of a life-sized bare-chested Vikmordere berserker. Each of these warriors is armed with a large, icy broadaxe.

In the center of the room is a large statue of a Vikmordere warrior in segmented plate armor with a bear's head mantle. The statue seems to have been hammered from copper sheets and fused together with bolts of iron. The statue faces eastward with its arms crossed. A crossed harness mounted to his back bears a single copper hammer. More stairs continue deeper below the glacier as they follow down an eastern corridor. A particularly frigid breeze whispers up from beyond the steps.

The copper shield-shaped discs depict every totem of the twelve tribes and clans that make up the Northern Fury Council, except for the Raven.

The statue is hollow, but contains nothing inside. The copper hammer mounted to its back is identical to the one found in **Room #3.** A **DC 20 Perception check** will reveal that the large statue's crossed harness is intended to sheath a second hammer.

Of the four icy berserkers found at the base of the columns of the room, the one in the northwest corner is actually an icy vigil (CR 11; found in *Winter's Roar: A Vikmordere Bestiary*). Alternatively, all four statues can actually be miming animated statues crafted of ice (treat each as an animated object (large) (CR 5).

The ice berserker(s) will attack the adventurers unless the statue's twin hammer is placed in the harness it wears. If the hammer is so placed, then the discs in the walls release, falling to the floor with a loud clank. In tiny recesses behind each are eleven identical large blue sapphires valued at 500 gp each. The thin discs contain 10 gp worth of copper each, and the statue contains 2,000 gp worth of copper.

ANIMATED OBJECT



XP 1,600

N Large construct

Init –1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception –5

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 8, flat-footed 14 (-1 Dex, +6 natural, -1 size)

hp 52 (4d10+30)

Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +4

Defensive Abilities hardness 5; **Immune** Construct Traits





OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft. **Melee** slam +9 (1d6+9)

STATISTICS

Str 22, Dex 8, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1 Base Atk +4 CMB +11 CMD 20 SQ 3 construction points

Room #5: The Silver Maiden

The wide stairs lead to another twenty scquare foot chamber. The ceiling here rises much higher than in previous rooms, stretching to a

full thirty feet before terminating in a high dome. The dome has been painted night blue and inlaid with hundreds of tiny crystals, creating the illusion of a sky full of stars.

There is a spiraled white stone column in each of the four corners of the room. In the center is a twenty foot tall silver statue depicting a long haired maiden garbed in only a slender shroud. She reaches up with sinuous arms towards the heavens.

The figure stands upon a circular white marble slab with Vikmordere runes that decree,

"Deceit sleeps with greed."

A small divot in the polished stone forms a shallow bowl above the text.

If sapphires from **Room** #4 are placed into the bowl, they will liquefy, becoming a translucent blue serum. When this happens, a series of the stars above begin to pulsate with a deep blue light. A **DC 20 Knowledge (arcana, local, nature, the planes, or religion) check** reveals that the glowing stars form a pattern—the constellation of the brown bear, a Vikmordere symbol of strength.

The liquid created from a single sapphire is not quite enough for anything special; it has no effect. If two sapphires are liquified, they create enough liquid for one dose of a potion. If fewer than 11 sapphires are added before a dose is consumed, the resulting doses deal 6d6 points of cold damage and permanently turn the user's eyes solid white. This has no mechanical effect, but looks eerie.

If all 11 sapphires are placed into the bowl, then the resulting 5 doses of potion each permanently increase the user's Strength score by 1 point. Only the sapphires from **Room #4** can be used for this purpose.

When the adventurers first attempt to leave the room to delve deeper into the vault, several of the stars from the dome burst with light, and blue lights detach from the ceiling. The tiny lights transform into 4d4 frost wisps (CR 8; found in Winter's Roar: A Vikmordere Bestiary). Alternatively, the particles of light become 6d4 icy blue will-o'-wisps (CR 6). The wisps dart to the southern opening and form a barrier preventing passage to any adventurer who hasn't consumed the blue potion created by the sapphires. If a creature who hasn't consumed the blue liquid attempts to pass, they are swarmed by the wisps, which continue to attack them until they flee the vault.

The silver maiden statue is made from 3,000 gp worth of silver. The crystal shards in the ceiling are made of quartz and are too small to be of monetary value.

Room #6: A Familiar Face

This chamber is roughly the same size and shape the same as the last, but the dome above depicts an elaborately painted sunrise in bright hues of yellow, pink, and orange. The four columns supporting the ceiling are crafted of dark stone and emblazoned with golden Vikmordere runes that repeat a prayer across their entire length:

"Ningatha, fiery maiden of spring dawn, grant us wisdom, courage and victory."

The large polished golden statue in the center of the chamber depicts a familiar visage—that of the Ningatha herself.





She stands proudly upon a notched stone base and faces to the west with her right arm outstretched, a stylized golden flame poised in her hand. A golden owl is perched upon her shoulder with its wings spread wide.

Yet another descending stepped corridor continues deeper into the complex from the west wall, but further passage is entirely blocked by solid ice that jams the corridor.

The 70-foot long ice jam blocks the entire passage, and is inhabited by a greater ice elemental (CR 9). Any attempt to make passage through the ice as long as the elemental remains provokes it to attack. If the elemental is killed by the adventurers, then the ice jam melts away to vapor in a matter of minutes.

A DC 28 Perception check will reveal that that base of the golden statue can be rotated in either direction. It requires a combined Strength score of 20 to turn the device. If rotated, the statue can be turned until it faces eastward—the direction of the rising sun—and then clicks firmly into place.

When the statue is locked into place facing east, the golden owl ignites and becomes a large animated flame. If the statue was rotated clockwise, the owl flies down towards the western passage, diving into it and eradicating the ice jam, automatically killing the greater ice elemental. However, if the statue was rotated widdershins, the owl instead dives down towards the adventurers, functioning as a triggered *flame strike* trap (CR 6) that targets every creature in the room before it dissipates into thin air.



Type magic; Perception DC 30; Disable Device DC 30

KR 6

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity (alarm); Reset none Effect spell effect (flame strike, 8d6 fire damage, DC 17 Reflect save for half damage); multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-radius cylinder)

GREATER IKE ELEMENTAL (R 9

XP 6,400

- N Huge outsider (air, cold, elemental, extraplanar, water)
- **Init** +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., snow vision; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 13, flat-footed 18 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +10 natural, -2 size)

hp 123 (13d10+52)

Fort +12, Ref +14, Will +4

DR 10/—; Immune cold, elemental traits Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., burrow (ice and snow only) 20 ft., swim 60 ft.

Melee 2 slams +20 (2d8+9 plus 2d6 cold) **Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Special Attacks numbing cold (DC 20)

STATISTICS

- Str 28, Dex 18, Con 19, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 11 Base Atk +13; CMB +24; CMD 39 (can't be tripped)
- Feats Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Vital Strike

Skills Escape Artist +20, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (planes) +15, Perception +16, Stealth +12, Swim +17

Language Aquan

SQ ice glide, icewalking

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ice Glide (Su) A burrowing ice elemental can pass through nonmagical ice and snow as easily as a fish swims through water. Its burrowing leaves behind no tunnel or hole, nor does it create any ripple or other sign of its presence. A control water spell cast on an area containing a burrowing ice elemental flings the elemental back 30 feet, stunning the creature for 1 round unless it succeeds on a DC 15 Fortitude save.





- **Icewalking (Ex)** This ability works like the spider climb spell, but the surfaces the elemental climbs must be icy. The elemental can move across icy surfaces without penalty and does not need to make Acrobatics checks to run or charge on ice.
- Numbing Cold (Su) When an ice elemental deals cold damage to a creature, that creature must succeed on a Fortitude save or be staggered for 1 round. The save DC is listed in the elemental's stat block and is Constitution-based.

Snow Vision (Ex) An ice elemental can see perfectly well in snowy conditions and does not take any penalties on Perception checks while in snow.

Ice elementals are creatures made of animated snow and ice. They form in especially cold parts of the Plane of Water and along its border with the Plane of Air, where giant icebergs careen off of world-high waterfalls into the open sky. Ice elementals vary in their exact appearance.

Room #7: Maiden of the Inferno

Intense heat radiates from a thirty foot tall iron statue of a Vikmordere shieldmaiden that stands proudly in the center of this room. The figure is

depicted carrying a large round shield with her left arm. She holds her right hand over her head with the palm turned upwards. In her upraised hand is a large bowl filled with a whipping fire.

The walls of the room are made of dark stone, barren of any mark or design. The surface appears to have been singed many times over, and four ruined columns are propped in each corner. Though they may have once help support the ceiling, they are now useless and dilapidated.

To the north, another set of stone stairs descends further into the depths of the ancient vault.

The stairs leading down to this room are trapped with three molten bronze traps (CR 10), the first 10 feet in, the second 20 feet in, and the third 30 feet. The difficulty of detecting each consecutive trap increases by 12 points.

MOLTEN BRONZE TRAP (R 6

XP 9,600

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 25, 37, 49; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity; **Reset** none **Effect** A panel opens in the ceiling and molten bronze pours down from above dealing 8d6 fire damage; DC 20 Reflex save for half damage; multiple targets (all targets in a 10's square)

Any creature vulnerable to fire or heat takes 3d6 points of fire damage while inside this room. There is no saving throw.

A DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check reveals that the flames contained in the brazier held by the iron statue are the result of a 10 foot wide *fireball* made permanent by magical means.

There is a pressure plate (**DC 30 Perception check** to notice) located upon the steps continuing north. It can be avoided if found, but cannot be disarmed. If it isn't noticed, there is a 50% chance that each adventurer passing down the stairs will set it off.

If the plate is unintentionally triggered, the iron statue tilts the bowl towards the north, and the *fireball* tumbles out



and begins an expeditious roll down the northern staircase. Any character on the staircase suffers 3d6 points of fire damage as the *fireball* rolls over them.

However, the plate can be intentionally triggered when nobody is in the corridor, preventing any injury.

Once it passes through the hall, the *fireball* continues into **Room #8**. There, it strikes the ice statue that stands within and begins to melt it.

Room #8: Flames for the Freezing Man

This room boasts stone walls intricately engraved with complex knotwork. Among various decorative designs are wildlife that call the Vikmordere Valley home: deer, moose, wolves, bears, and

serpents, as well as a variety of fish and birds.

Here stands a thirty-foot tall solid ice figure fashioned in the likeness of a huddled naked man, devoid of clothing or equipment. He is hunched in the center of the chamber with his arms wrapped tightly around his torso. The expression chiseled into his face is one of pain and suffering, and his pose suggests the statue is of a man nearly frozen to death.

Four tall stone columns reach up to the grey brick ceiling. Another corridor of steep steps burrows deeper to the east.

A DC 30 Perception check reveals that the ice statue resides on top of a springloaded column that is fully depressed into the ground by the weight of the statue. The only way to release the pillar so it may rise upward is to destroy the ice statue. This can be done by any means of fire or heat. The statue has 400 hp and DR 10/fire.

If the *fireball* from **Room** #7 was released down the stairs, it now leans motionless in the corner of the room pushing waves of heat towards the statue. For every round that the statue is in proximity of the *fireball* it takes 3d6 points of fire damage. When the statue has been half melted, the pillar will begin to rise from the floor, but its top does not reach the ceiling above until the statue is entirely destroyed.

If the risen column is inspected, a large, perfectly round indention is discovered. This slot matches the shield created from the ice disk in **Room #2**. If that shield is inserted into the space, it clicks loudly and fixes into place as the four narrow columns in each corner start to descend beneath the floor until nothing but a three foot tall pedestal remains. Upon each of the lowered columns rests a single potion of *cure serious wounds*.

Room #9: Altar of the Key Sword

The stairs empty out into a room that appears to be fashioned entirely from the blackest onyx or obsidian, but the freezing chill the smooth surface offers suggests that it is of an icy origin. There are no further corridors and it would seem this is finally the bottom of the vault.

Four tall obsidian columns reach up to a flush black ceiling. The entire room is illuminated with fiery light from a hovering flame-wreathed greatsword. The sword rotates in the air above a square altar made of black ice. The north, east, and south walls refract the light and invoke dimmer duplicates of the blazing blade in their dimensionless reflections.

The room is unusually silent except for the crackling of the fire that surrounds the levitating weapon. Embossed in gold upon the blade of the weapon is the word "Vlfberht."

Set into the altar are golden Vikmordere runes that read, "Long live those who are slain by flame alone."

The sword here is not *Vlfberht*, but is an exact replica known as the key sword. The weapon is magical and functions as a +1 *flaming adamantine greatsword*. The flames that wreathe the sword remain constant until it is grasped by a living being, and can't be extinguished by other means.



The creature grasping the sword must suffer 4d6 points of fire damage to take possession of it. As soon as the sword is grasped, the altar erupts into a heatless flame, and the flawless black surface of the walls begin to display orange glowing runes that appear to be a long list of Vikmordere names depicting lineages.

The key sword can easily be plunged into the black ice altar. If thrust into the altar's surface, the sword becomes stuck, and cannot be removed until the secret door puzzle is solved.

As soon as the sword is plunged into the black ice altar, all the glowing runes covering the walls of the room vanish, and a series of nonsensical letters appears in their stead upon southern wall:

WR\$+\$+PA\$ \$D+F+RIE WL+NVR+PR\$ IL+EE+EIH NR+A+NBE+NM \$+\$L+AE

The solution to this puzzle is found by alternating the letters of the first, third, and fifth rows with the letters of the second, fourth, and sixth rows so that the text reads, "WORDS OF PRAISE WILL NEVER PERISH NOR A NOBLE NAME"

This refers to the ancient Jarl's name, Vornig.

When the word "Vornig" is spoken before the puzzle text, the letters appear to melt into golden liquid and run down the wall to trace the frame of the secret passage. The flame engulfing the ice altar vanishes.

The key sword can now easily be removed from the altar and must be used to strike the now visible portal. The black substance of the room vanishes on contact with the blade, revealing the opening in the south wall and uncovering the bright white marble walls that existed beneath.

Room #10: The Inner Vault

The secret passage leads down a short stepped path to an enormous chamber that has been carved straight into the ice of the great glacier. Rows of massive icicles hang from the ceiling, which rises nearly one hundred feet above your heads. The outermost icicles descend to the floor, creating a procession of ice columns that encircle the room and its concave western wall.

Near the front of the chamber rests another black altar identical to the one seen in the previous room. In the center of this massive cavern stands a forty-foot tall ice statue shaped like a powerful grizzly bear poised on its hind legs with its claws stretched outward. From the heart of the bear statue emits an undulating auburn glow that casts a fiery light across the beast's chest.

Though it has the shape of a grizzly bear, the huge ice statue is actually an elder ice elemental charged to guard the true blade of *Vlferht*, which is located in the creature's heart.

The elemental stays motionless and undetectable unless it is attacked or if the ice altar in this room is pierced by the key sword. When it notices the adventurers it immediately bursts into a flurry of motion and attacks them.







The ice elemental gains fast healing 20 as long as the black ice altar in this room is not penetrated by the key sword.

When the ice elemental is defeated, it explodes into a rain of razor-sharp shards that sends frigid shrapnel in every direction for 100 ft. which deal 6d6 points of piercing damage. A **DC 30 Reflex saving throw** completely avoids this damage.

After the elder elemental explodes, the fire-wreathed *Vlfberht* tumbles to the ground and can be claimed by the adventurers. If the key sword was inserted into the black ice altar in this room, then the magic item is destroyed. However, if it was not plunged into the altar then its magic persists, though the name of *Vlfberht* no longer adorns its blade.

ELDER IKE ELEMENTAL <R 11

XP 12,800

- N Huge outsider (air, cold, elemental, extraplanar, water)
- **Init** +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., snow vision; Perception +19

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 14, flat-footed 18 (+5 Dex, +1 dodge, +10 natural, -2 size) hp 152 (16d10+64) Fort +14, Ref +17, Will +5

DR 10/—; Immune cold, elemental traits Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

- **Speed** 20 ft., burrow (ice and snow only) 20 ft., swim 60 ft.
- Melee 2 slams +24 (2d10+10/19-20 plus 2d8 cold)
- Space 15 ft.; Reach 15 ft.
- Special Attacks numbing cold (DC 22)

STATISTICS

- Str 30, Dex 20, Con 19, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 11 Base Atk +16; CMB +28; CMD 44 (can't be tripped)
- Feats Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Critical (slam), Improved

Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Vital Strike

Skills Escape Artist +24, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (planes) +19, Perception +19. Stealth +16, Swim +37

Language Aquan SQ ice glide, icewalking

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ice Glide (Su) A burrowing ice elemental can pass through nonmagical ice and snow as easily as a fish swims through water. Its burrowing leaves behind no tunnel or hole, nor does it create any ripple or other sign of its presence. A control water spell cast on an area containing a burrowing ice elemental flings the elemental back 30 feet, stunning the creature for 1 round unless it succeeds on a DC 15 Fortitude save.



- **Icewalking (Ex)** This ability works like the spider climb spell, but the surfaces the elemental climbs must be icy. The elemental can move across icy surfaces without penalty and does not need to make Acrobatics checks to run or charge on ice.
- Numbing Cold (Su) When an ice elemental deals cold damage to a creature, that creature must succeed on a Fortitude save or be staggered for 1 round. The save DC is listed in the elemental's stat block and is Constitution-based.
- **Snow Vision (Ex)** An ice elemental can see perfectly well in snowy conditions and does not take any penalties on Perception checks while in snow.

Ice elementals are creatures made of animated snow and ice. They form in especially cold parts of the Plane of Water and along its border with the Plane of Air, where giant icebergs careen off of world-high waterfalls into the open sky. Ice elementals vary in their exact appearance.





VLFBERHT (JARL VORNIG'S LEGENDARY SWORD)

Aura evocation [fire]; CL 20th (artifact) Slot none; Price 320,000 gp; Weight 9 lb.

DESCRIPTION

Vlfberht is a +3 holy undead bane flaming burst adamantine greatsword.

The blade of *Vlfberht* is sheathed in flame that deals an extra 1d6 points of fire damage on a successful hit. It also explodes with flame upon striking a successful critical hit to deal an additional 1d10 points of fire damage. The fire does not harm the wielder.

Vlfberht is imbued with holy energy, making the weapon good-aligned and bypassing the corresponding damage reduction. It deals an extra 2d6 points of damage against all creatures of evil alignment. It bestows one permanent negative level to any evil creature attempting to wield it. The negative level remains as long as the weapon is in hand and disappears when the weapon is no longer wielded. This negative level cannot be overcome in any way (including by *restoration* spells) while the weapon is wielded.

Vlfberht gains an additional +2 enchantment bonus and deals an extra 2d6 points of damage when wielded against undead creatures.

When sundering weapons or attacking objects, the sword bypasses hardness less than 20.

Once per day as a full round action, *Vlfberht* can be activated to cast *wall of fire* (CL 20) within 300 ft. of the user, creating an immobile wall of fire as either a 400 ft. sheet or a ring with a radius of 50 ft. The flame wall is 20 ft. high. When this effect is activated the flames that wreath the sword are cast out to create the wall of fire and *Vlfberht* loses its *flaming burst* abilities for the duration of the *wall of fire*. One side of the wall sends forth waves of heat dealing 2d4 points of damage to creatures within 10 ft. and 1d4 points of damage to those past 10 ft. but within 20 ft. The wall deals this damage when it appears, and to all creatures in the area of effect on the turn of the user. In addition, the wall deals 2d6 points of fire damage to undead creatures. The duration of the wall is 20 rounds or until dismissed by the wielder of the sword. If any 5-foot length of the wall takes 20 points of cold damage in 1 round then that length goes away (do not divide cold damage by 2, as normal). The fire of this *wall of fire* does not harm the wielder of *Vlfberht*.

If the user is using *Vlfberht* to attack a Jötunn in the Vikmordere region of Aventyr, then all critical hit rolls are automatically confirmed.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms & Armor; *fireball, flame blade, flame strike, wall of fire,* tears wept by a good aligned goddess or demigoddess to ignite the holy flames that wreath the blade; **Cost** 163,050 gp

DESTRUCTION

In order to destroy *Vlfberht*, the sword's blade must be coated by the blood of a Vikmordere leader who usurped their position from a Vikmordere clan to which they were not born, then cast into Serpent Lake from the cliffs of Ighdenholm.









PART 4-B. EXITING THE <HASM

If the ice elementals in **Room #1** are still awaiting the adventurers when they exit the vault and the true *Vlfberht* has been recovered, then the creatures kneel before them in respect. In their own tongue they simply say the words, "Passage is for the Honored."

The four ice elementals place their arms on either side of the narrow chasm. In an instant, a wide platform of ice forms beneath the feet of the adventurers and slowly begins to rise up, forming a frozen spire beneath.

If the PCs remain on the platform, it continues to rise upward as the ice of the glacier magically separates around them to create a vertical passage just wide enough for the platform to pass through. In three rounds, the platform breaches the top of the glacier, and the party finds themselves standing beside the mouth of the great glacier chasm, having bypassed the dangerous ascent back up from the depths of the shadowy gorge.

When the secondary magical map generated by the hero's receptacle is utilized after the adventurers claim *Vlfberht*, the sword icon is gone, and a new icon—a circle-shaped sigil—now resides over an island located in the waters of the eastern Serpent Lake.

Since the passage over land is impossible due to the ongoing storm (the snow is too deep, and high winds make flying impossible), the adventurers need to retrieve their boat from the shore near the witch's hovel.

PART 4-<. DEATH OF A WITCH AND FIRST OF THE JÖTUNN

With *Vlfberht* recovered, the adventurers make their way back towards Arurún's hut to recover their ship and traverse Serpent Lake towards the island locale indicated on the updated map of the *hero's receptacle*. Soon after leaving the Vault of Vlfberht would be a good time to run the *Into the Wintery Gale* Mini-Dungeon titled, "Den of the Glacial Bear." Insertion of this side quest is completely optional, but the extra experience that can be earned may prove to be useful in advancing the characters.

When the PCs finally dredge their way through the relentless gale, they arrive at the witch's hut. Through the near-blinding blizzard they discover that the structure has been destroyed, its remnants scattered across the area.

If the witch's bear survived the initial encounter with the party, they immediately locate the creature's decapitated corpse buried in shallow snow. The carcass is frozen stiff, indicating that its death occured soon after the adventurers first left the site.

If the debris is searched, Arurún's dead body is found beneath the rubble pile of a collapsed wall. Her frozen corpse shows no signs of struggle, and her wounds indicate she was instantly killed when the building was brought down. The remains of the structure show the telltale signs of demolition by blunt weapons, and it can be immediately discerned that the structure was intentionally destroyed.

If the rubble of the hut is thoroughly searched, the adventurers recover the following items: 4 random medium magic potions, 2 random major magic potions, a wand of *purify food and drink* (CL 5) with 23 charges, a +2 silver dagger, a bag of holding (type I) containing three runestones of warding; moon, sun, and skull (see Raiders Haul: Vikmordere Magic Item Compendium), and a small wooden box containing 15 gp, 30 sp, and 1d4 gems of minor value.

While the adventurers are searching the area, a **DC 35 Perception check** reveals tall humanoid shapes lumbering behind the snowy veil of the blizzard. If the result of the check is **40 or greater**, the adventurers also find tracks from giants.







The hut was destroyed by a party of Jötunn scouts sent ahead of the undead army marching into the valley from the mountains. As ordered, they have been holding the area. If the adventurers do not notice the movements of the skeletal ice giants as they are being surrounded, then the enemy will get a surprise attack on them.

The scouting party consists of two Jotunn for each adventurer, with a minimum of six. When they attack, they do so from all sides at once with a rushing charge towards the adventurers.

JÖTUNN WARRIOR LESSER SKELETAL IKE GIANT (R 12

XP 19,200

CE Large humanoid (cold, giant, undead) Init -1; Senses low-light vision; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 12, flat-footed 24 (+4 armor, -1 Dex, +13 natural, -1 size)

hp 133 (14d8+70)

Fort +14, **Ref** +3, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities rock catching; Channel Resistance +4, **DR** 10/magic; **Immune** cold **Weaknesses** vulnerability to fire **Aura** Desecration

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee icy burst iceforged greataxe +19/+14 (3d6+14) or 2 slams +18 (1d8+9) Ranged ice chunk +9 (1d8+13) Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft. Special Attacks rock throwing (120 ft.)

STATISTICS

Str 29, **Dex** 9, **Con** 21, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 11 **Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +20; **CMD** 29

Feats Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, Martial Weapon Proficiency (greataxe), Power Attack, Skill Focus (Stealth)

Skills Climb +13, Craft (any one) +7,

Intimidate +7, Perception +10, Stealth +2 (+6 in snow); **Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth in snow

Languages Common, Giant

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Aura of Desecration (Su) Skeletal ice giants constantly project an aura in a 20-foot radius that functions as a permanent desecrate spell. The DC to resist negative channeled energy within this area gains a +3 profane bonus. Undead within the area (including the skeletal ice giant) gain a +1 profane bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, and saves. Summoned or created undead that appear in the area gain +1 hit points per HD.

Iceforging (Su) As a free action skeletal ice giants can summon a simple weapon of any type that is crafted entirely of magic ice. The summoned weapon functions as a +1 *icy burst* weapon. Iceforging can also create any type of ammo needed for the summoned weapon as a free action. When wielded the ice weapons have the same hardness as adamantine. If the weapon is dropped, or if the skeletal ice giant is slain, it reverts to useless frost particles. Iceforging can also be used to summon a large boulder that the skeletal ice giant may use for a ranged attack.

Undying (Su) A temporary supernatural ability granted by the curse of endless winter. When a skeletal ice giant is killed, it reanimates itself in 1d6+4 rounds, returning as a fully rejuvenated skeletal ice giant. This can only be negated by submerging the remains of the dead skeletal ice giant in holy water, or by ending the curse of endless winter, at which point all skeletal ice giants lose the undying special ability.

Note: The Undying ability granted to all Jötunn remains inactive until the Battle of Serpent Lake which occurs in section 4-D of this adventure.



Once the adventurers defeat the Jötunn scouting party, they will be able to make way to their ship. There they discover that it has been frozen into the water as the ice rim along the shore of the lake has expanded since their landing.

It requires two hours to free the vessel from the ice. In between violent snow storms as they work, the adventurers will witness the silhouettes of hundreds of Jötunn making their way down to the waters of the lake several miles to the west. The army doesn't progress further, but instead seems to be setting up a camp there.

GM Note: The mention of hundreds of Jötunn should be enough to thwart any desire for the adventurers to advance on the



army of giants. However, if they attempt to do so, have them encounter 2 Jötunn warriors. If they continue to advance, have subsequent encounters repeated (4, 8, 16...). If the adventurers flee from one of these encounters, the Jötunn do not pursue and instead return to their camp.

Once the adventurers have safely sailed out into the waters of the lake, the shoreline becomes hidden by a wall of white as it fades into the curtain of falling snow that obscures the horizon.



NE Haunt (50 ft. radius centered on the bearer of the *hero's receptacle*)

Caster Level 10th

- **Notice** Perception DC 30 (to see the very faint outline of giant humanoid figures moving within the veil fog)
- **hp** 75; **Trigger** proximity (within the veil fog on the lake); Reset 1 hour

DESCRIPTION

This haunt takes place on the waters of Serpent Lake as the adventurers make their way across to the vault of Skjold Rustning.

The party is completely surrounded by icy fog and gale winds with very limited visibility that prevents sighting of any shoreline.

Read to the Players: Through the mist of the veil fog can be seen a humanoid figure striding across the still water of the lake. The form approaches the longboat, and its features begin to coalesce into a more pronounced image: a man in mail mesh armor with a horned helm, carrying both a round shield and a long-bladed sword. Behind him as he approaches the vessel distant, towering figures, each five times as tall as the armored figure, begin to take shape in the veil as they encircle the ship.



As the figure grows closer, all sounds seem to become distant and muffled. The PCs find that even their own voices seem somewhat dampened by the thickening air.

Read to the Players: The figure speaks a warning in common tongue, its gritty voice somehow clearly heard. "Prepare, my brethren. The Jötunn draw near. Be brave and fear not, for this is but a warning."

He then turns away toward the shifting wall of fog, lofts his sword and shield, and readies himself to face the approaching ghostly giants that continue to close in.

The armored figure is the apparition of Jarl Vornig—the first of many appearances this entity makes as his spirit manifests from within the hero's receptacle. A DC 20 Knowledge (history) check reveals the identity of the legendary Jarl's apparition. He does not respond to any questions or actions of the party. Any attempted physical contact reveals him to be an incorporeal apparition.







The Jarl's apparition is not the primary haunt, but a secondary haunt (CR 10 NG Haunt) that is activated immediately upon the triggering of the primary haunt described here. If any character is wearing the *hero's receptacle*, a **DC 10 Perception check** will cause them to notice the crystal dimly glowing with an amber light whenever the Jarl's apparition is present. The only way to destroy the Jarl's secondary haunt is to destroy or permanently discard the *hero's receptacle*.

Read to the Players: The sound of a baritone warhorn blares, its immense volume disturbing the surface of the lake's still waters, followed by a slow and steady distant, hollow drum beat. "Hear that?" The armored figure's voice prompts, "The Jötunn call to us. Let us drown that pitiful noise with the roar of true warriors!" The apparition suddenly raises his sword and shield skyward and bellows out a thunderous battle cry.

If two or more of the adventurers join in on the Jarl's warcry, those who participate are filled with an unnatural sense of courage (and the primary haunt is destroyed). The silhouettes of the distant giants turn and run away as they vanish into thin air, and the Jarl's apparition begins to walk back the same way it first appeared, fading into the fog. If the adventurers noticed the *hero's receptacle* glowing during the haunt, then they also see it dimming as the Jarl fades away.

If two or more of the adventurers did not join in on the Jarl's warcry, then when he finishes his shout, the hauntings vanish into thin air in an instant to be quickly followed by a violent burst of frigid gale from all directions. The gale causes 1d8 points of cold damage (no save), and any character who does not make a **DC 15 Reflex save** will be thrown from the boat. The haunting then resets and triggers again in one hour if the adventurers are still traveling through the veil of fog.

DESTRUCTION

The primary haunt is destroyed when two or more of the adventurers join the apparition of Jarl Vornig in his battle shout at the ghostly silhouettes of the Jötunn. When this happens, the distant figures of the giants turn and flee from "the Jarl's party" and vanish forever into the blizzard. If the haunt is destroyed all adventurers that participated in the battle shout gain a supernatural sense of courage from the experience and should be awarded a +5 morale bonus to Will Saves that persists for 4d6 + 24 hours.

If the primary haunt is not destroyed, then in any new occurrences of the haunt the Jarl's apparition simply appears from thin air sitting in the boat with the party. He then rises to his feet to ready himself for another battle shout as the Jötunn haunting is triggered again.








PART 5-A. THE VAULT OF SKJOLD RUSTNING

The Vault of *Skjold Rustning* is located on a small, mountain-wreathed island on the eastern side of Serpent Lake called Everflame Isle. The island is a bowl created by an ancient volcanic eruption that emptied out the caldera. A forest of rare everflame trees grows there now, and the site is considered sacred to the Vikmordere.



Everflame Trees are known for their bright red, orange, and yellow leaves that are plentiful year round. The wood they produce is highly aromatic and reserved for use in crafting ritual tools by Vikmordere shamans and witches. Strangely though, the forest on Everflame Isle seems to have shed its leaves, which now lay buried under the thick gathering snow of the endless winter.

The *hero's receptacle* indicates the location of *Skjold Rustning* to be very near the center of the small island. In fact, it is located in a vault beneath an earthen mound located in the center of the landmass.

Entrance to the Vault

The vessel lands in the shallows of the southern shore of the isle. A single landmark stands out in the snow-swept waste: a fifteen foot tall mound, obviously man-made, at the center point of the small island. The earthen structure is blanketed by thick snow and crowned by spindly, leafless trees.

Upon closer inspection, a faint veil of steam can been seen rolling up from a deep stone crevice that encircles the mound. The warm waters have melted the snow and ice for a length around the steamy moat, revealing the dark grey stone beneath.

Two rows of tall stone spires line either side of a long stairway that leads up to a ten foot tall door. The door's surface has been engraved with the depiction of a tall shieldmaiden bearing a flame-wreathed round shield.

The entrance to the vault is located less than a quarter of mile inland. The southern shoreline provides the only landing. Though the storm rages fiercely overhead, the surrounding mountains seem to break most of the force of the gale.







THE VAULT OF SKJOLD RUSTNING



The interior of the island is an ancient caldera that hosts a frozen forest that skirts a central tundra plain. Easily spotted in the center of this circular clearing is a tall, snow covered mound. The *hero's receptacle* is leading the adventurers to this location.

A moat of boiling water entirely surrounds the mound, and the only way to get to the stairs leading to the vault door is to cross the fifteen foot wide ditch. It is ten feet deep, and the water within is 150 °F. This causes 2d6 points of fire damage for each round of direct exposure, and 5d6 points of fire damage for each round of complete submersion.

It is also is inhabited by a dozen steam mephitis that attack any living creature they sense approaching the mound. The steam mephitis will work as a team to attempt to force the adventurers to fall in by focusing all of their attacks on a single target while pushing and dragging them towards the water.

STEAM MEPHIT



XP 800

N Small outsider (fire) Init +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6

DEFENSE

- AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural, +1 size)
 hp 19 (3d10+3); fast healing 2 (works only in boiling water or steam)
 Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +3
- DR 5/magic Immune fire Weaknesses vulnerability to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 40 ft. (average)
Melee 2 claws +5 (1d3+1)
Special Attacks breath weapon (15-foot cone, effect based on type, Reflex DC 13 for half)
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th)

1/day—*summon* (level 2, 1 mephit of the same type 25%), *blur* 1/hour

STATISTICS

Str 13, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 14 Base Atk +3; CMB +3; CMD 15

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative

- Skills Bluff +8, Fly +10, Perception +6, Stealth +12
- Languages Common, one appropriate elemental language (Aquan, Auran, Ignan, or Terran)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Breath Weapon (Su) Each type of mephit can unleash a particular breath weapon every 4 rounds as a standard action. The DC is Constitution-based and includes a +1 racial bonus.

The breath weapon of a steam mephit is a cone of steam that deals 1d4 fire damage. The scalding water also causes living creatures to be sickened for 3 rounds. A Reflex save halves the damage and negates the sickened effect.

Boiling Rain (Su) Once per day a steam mephit can create a rainstorm of boiling water in a 20-foot-square area. Living creatures within the area take 2d6 points of fire damage (Fortitude DC 14 half; caster level 6th). This ability is the equivalent of a 2nd-level spell.

Once the moat is crossed, the adventurers must still ascend the mound. The steam has melted the top layer of snow and created a glistening, slippery surface of ice. Two **DC 30 Climb checks** are required to ascend the mound (the DC is dropped to 15 if the adventurers are using specialized gear). If an PC fails either of these checks, they must succeed in a **DC 20 Reflex saving throw**, or they slide down the slick mound and plunge into the boiling water at the bottom.



The Vault Door

The ten foot tall stone door is elaborately engraved with the image of a Vikmordere shieldmaiden bearing a round, flaming shield.



The shield is engraved in both Vikmordere runes and Common with a verse that reads,

"The way is sealed until flames are risen above."

The verse is a riddle that must be solved in order to open the door to the vault. A DC 20 Knowledge (nature) check reveals that at no point during winter would the sun rise high enough to be seen above the mountains that encircle the small island.

The three spindly trees that have taken root on the roof of the mound are unnatural. They weep tar and oil from beneath thick, blackened bark. A DC 25 Perception check allows a character to smell the oil, and a DC 30 Search check reveals its origin.

The puzzle is solved when the trees are set ablaze. Any source of open fire suffices. The trio ignites with a violent "woosh" upon contact with flame. Any creature within 5 feet of the trees when they are lit suffers 1d6 points of fire damage (Reflex DC 10 for half). The flame that engulfs the top of the mound does not consume the trees, but instead continues to burn, fueled by the strange plants' combustible sap.

As the flame roils, the adventurers suddenly notice that the forest of barren, lifeless trees shudder the snow from their branches. In a matter of moments, they begin to bloom with fiery red and golden leaves. The warm colors give the appearance that the entire forest is ablaze.

The mound rumbles as the stone door opens onto a ten foot wide circular chamber that provides access via the floor to a single spiraling stone stairway that descends 100 feet beneath the mound before opening into Room #1.

Room #1 (A): Entrance **Beneath the Mound**

The ten foot wide spiraling stone stairway descends one hundred feet beneath the entrance. The passage opens onto a twenty foot octagonal room with a ceiling supported by columns. A ten foot wide stairway leads upward from the northern face of the chamber. The air grows warmer as you descend, and the heated atmosphere at the bottom is exhausting after only a few moments.

The hot and humid air of the vault is extremely draining for the adventurers. If they do not have access to water, then treat the entire structure as difficult terrain. It takes 6 cups of water per hour to stay hydrated. Each PC takes 1d4 points of non-lethal damage each hour they remain dehydrated. An unconscious character takes 1d4 points of lethal damage for each hour they remain unconscious and dehydrated.

Room #1 (B): The First Ascent

While the stair way continues to ascend, a pair of narrower corridors jut away to the east and west, each leading into darkness. The whole of the structure appears to have been carved directly into the bedrock beneath the mound, the walls rough with preserved ancient markings. The intense humidity weighs even heavier here, and condensation collects on drenched flesh.

A DC 30 Perception check reveals a distant sound vaguely familiar to that of rushing water. The sound originates from further down in the vault in the direction of the descending stairs.

Room #2: Steam Vents

The western corridor continues for fifteen feet before opening up into a fifteen foot wide square chamber. The north and south walls are lined with crudely carved pillars that support the ten foot high ceiling of rough-hewn stone. Another five foot wide corridor continues





west through the adjacent wall. The floor of the chamber bears a web-like tracing of cracks and crevices, none wider than a copper coin.

As the adventurers enter the chamber, there is a deep rumble. The room vibrates for a few seconds before falling still again.

If the adventurers take the time to search the chamber, the room tremors again. A **DC 25 Knowledge (dungeoneering) check** reveals the many crevices to be steam vents that are about to erupt.

As the party is about to leave the room, a high pitched whistling sounds throughout the chamber. If the PCs *immediately* exit to one of the corridors, they completely avoid taking any damage from the erupting steam vents. The cracks erupt as cones of boiling steam burst through the crevices in the floor. The eruption lasts only an instant, but leaves the room filled with a thick vaporous fog that obscures vision for 1d4 rounds. If the characters remain after the whistling sound starts, they are caught in the eruption and suffer 3d6 points of fire damage. A **DC 35 Reflex saving throw** reduces the damage by half.

A DC 35 Knowledge (nature) check reveals that the steam vents erupt on a regular schedule, about once every hour or so.

Room #3: Unstable Ground

The eastern corridor continues fifteen feet from the stairway, then opens into a fifteen foot wide square chamber. The room is barren except for two rows

of three columns: one against the northern wall, the other lining the southern wall. The eastern corridor resumes on the other side of the room.

A DC 30 Perception check reveals that the stone floor is lined with innumerable hairline cracks. The entire floor of this chamber is 5 feet above a ten foot deep pool of steaming water and has become very unstable. The floor can support up to 300 pounds of weight. If more is applied, the floor collapses and sends everyone in the room crashing down into hot water with a huge gush of released steam. Creatures who fall into the pool suffer 4d6 points of fire damage on impact, and an additional 4d6 points of fire damage for each round they remain submerged.

If the floor collapses, a **DC 30 Reflex save** allows a character to catch

hold of the narrow ledge that now skirts the room where the floor once existed. Three consecutive **DC 30 Climb checks** are required to utilize the ledge as footing to cross the chamber after the rest of the floor has fallen.

Room #4: The Chamber of Skulls

The corridor continues west for fifteen feet before opening into another chamber. This fifteen foot square room is lined by six stone

columns. Each of the columns is adorned with a gigantic bleached skull. The skulls are firmly affixed to the columns. They face the center of the room, their toothy mouths agape. To the north is a narrow staircase that ascends into darkness.

A **DC 25 Knowledge (nature) check** reveals the skulls to be those of six ice giants. Judging from their brittle nature they have been here for centuries.

If the skulls are shattered, inside of each can be found a palm-sized multifaceted blue sapphire orb. Each orb is worth 1,000 gp. The sapphires can be used to solve the puzzle in **Room #5**.





Room #5: The Chamber of Fiery ke

The eastern corridor continues for fifteen feet at a slight incline before opening into another chamber. Halfway along the corridor, the

walls are illuminated by a flickering white glow from the room ahead.

The chamber is identical in size to the previous rooms. The walls are lined with six smooth stone columns that support a forty foot high celling. To the north, a narrow stairway steeply ascends into darkness.

In the center of the room a roiling ball of white flame levitates twenty feet above the floor. The heat radiating from the sphere is searing. The light strobes erratically as the fiery sphere spins in place.

The flame surrounding the sphere is white hot. The heat is intense enough to instantly incinerate anything that touches it, including metal objects. It is a magical flame that can only be doused by a CL 20 antimagic field or by solving the room's puzzle. The heat of the white flames bypasses fire resistance and fire immunity. Any creature that approaches closer than 5 feet to the orb suffers 10d6 points of fire damage.

If a sapphire orb from **Room #4** is thrown towards the white flaming sphere, the orb begins to orbit the sphere, glowing with an intense blue light from within. Each orb thrown towards the sphere does the same. If all six are sent into orbit around the white flames, their orbits gradually increase in speed, moving faster and faster until all that can be seen is a shell of blue illumination.

After 1d4 rounds, the six spinning orbs collide with each other and shatter, sending a cloud of sparking sapphire dust cascading down. Before the dust can fall to the ground, it is sucked towards the white flames, and in an instant they are extinguished. The sphere appears to have transformed into solid ice. It plummets to the floor. When it strikes the ground, a one foot wide sphere of pure sapphire is revealed.

The *sapphire sphere* is magical, radiating an overwhelming aura of evocation. It is icy if touched, dealing 1d4 points of cold damage to any creature that does so without protection (such as gloves). All natural flames that come within 30 ft. of the sapphire sphere have an 80% chance of being doused, while those brought in contact with it are automatically extinguished. The magic of the sapphire sphere only persists within the vault. However, it retains its value as an impeccable gemstone, and commands a price of 25,000 gp or more

Rooms #6 & 7: Gifts for the Brave

These two rooms appear nearly identical, but the series of events that unfolds in each is unique. Regardless of the actual number of the rooms, the first room that the PCs enter is the "first room" and the second is the "second room."

First Room:

runes that read,

The stairway ascends for about fifteen feet before opening into an elegantly engraved chamber. The east and west walls boast detailed

pictograms of warriors locked in battle with

ice giants. The north wall is concave. In the

recess kneels a large stone statue of a fully

armored Vikmordere warrior. The statue

holds a massive bronze bowl. The brim of

the vessel is engraved a series of Vikmordere

"The faithful sacrifice what they value most."

the bronze bowl in the first room and left

undisturbed for 1 round, the statue animates and raises the basin over its head. There is

a bright flash of light, and then the warrior lowers the bowl back down, setting it upon

the ground. The statue crumbles to dust,

leaving only the bowl and its contents behind.

within the bowl was 2,500 gp or more, then

every item within it is perfectly duplicated

1d4 times (roll for individual items; money is

If the combined value of the items placed

When a series of objects are placed into

automatically quadrupled). Magic items can be duplicated this way. The duplication effect is negated for artifacts or items found within the vault, but their value still counts towards the duplication trigger requirements. The effects of the offering cannot be discerned beforehand by any means.

Second Room:

The stairway leads up another fififteen feet, then gives way to a large chamber that looks rather familiar. The walls of this fifteen foot wide room are carved with pictograms depicting Vikmordere warriors celebrating a victory in battle over the corpses of dead giants. Within the north wall of the room is a large stone statue of a Vikmordere warrior. The figure is kneeling and presenting yet another bronze bowl. Around the brim of this vessel are engraved a series of runes that read,

"Charity knows no greed."

When a series of objects are placed into the bronze bowl in the second room and left undisturbed for 1 round, the statue animates and raises the basin skyward. If the combined value of the contents of the bowl is less than 5,000 gp, then the same duplication effect occurs, and the statue crumbles to dust. However, if the contents of the bowl have a combined value of 5,000 gp or more, then all of the items are irrevocably destroyed. Only artifacts are immune to this destruction.

If the bowl's contents are destroyed, the large stone statue does not crumble to dust, but instead becomes a stone golem. It relentlessly attacks the adventurers until it is destroyed, trapped, or abandoned on the island.

STONE GOLEM



KR 11

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 8, flat-footed 26 (-1 Dex, +18 natural, -1 size) hp 107 (14d10+30) Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +4 DR 10/adamantine; Immune construct traits, magic

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft. Melee 2 slams +22 (2d10+9) Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft. Special Attacks slow

STATISTICS

Str 28, **Dex** 9, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 1 **Base Atk** +14; **CMB** +24; **CMD** 33

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Immunity to Magic (Ex) A stone golem is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. In addition, certain spells and effects function differently against the creature, as noted below.

A *transmute rock to mud* spell slows a stone golem (as the slow spell) for 2d6 rounds, with no saving throw, while *transmute mud to rock* heals all of its lost hit points.

A *stone to flesh* spell does not actually change the golem's structure but negates its damage reduction and immunity to magic for 1 full round.

Slow (Su) A stone golem can use a *slow* effect, as the spell, as a free action once every 2 rounds. The effect has a range of 10 feet in a burst centered on the golem and a duration of 7 rounds, requiring a DC 17 Will save to negate. The save DC is Constitution-based.

A stone golem has a humanoid body made from stone, frequently stylized to suit its creator. For example, it might look like it is wearing armor, with a particular symbol carved on the breastplate, or have designs worked into the stone of its limbs. Its head is often carved to resemble a helmet or the





head of some beast. While it may be sculpted to carry a stone shield or stone weapon such as a sword, these aesthetic choices do not affect its combat abilities.

Like most golems, a stone golem cannot speak and makes no sound other than the grinding of stone against stone when it moves. A stone golem is 9 feet tall and weighs around 2,000 pounds.

Room #8: The Second Ascent

The temperature becomes nearly unbearable as you ascend. Fifteen feet up the wide stairway is a landing. To the north, the stairs ascend into

a wall of fog and steam, backlit by flickering orange light. To the east and west, two narrow corridors continue into darkness.

If the adventurers continue the ascent toward **Room #11**, each of them must succeed a **DC 35 Fortitude saving throw** at the start of every round or suffer 1 point of fire damage. It is obvious that the source of the vault's intense heat originates from the north.

Room #9: The Shrine of Sigi the Fearless

A narrow stairway at the end of the long corridor descends ten feet before opening into a twenty five foot square room. The eastern wall



of the chamber is lined with five massive columns that rise to support a sixty foot high ceiling. The walls have been hewn to have the appearance of brick skirted above and below by elegantly gilded knotwork molding. Near the center of the northern wall is a stone altar cut from the solid grey rock floor. Upon the altar rests an upright clear crystalline tablet.

Inside the tablet, a series of colored lights form a moving image depicting an armored shieldmaiden engaged in an epic battle with skeletal ice giants. Her greataxe mows through giant after giant in an unending cycle of victories. Etched deeply into the base of the altar is a short series of Vikmordere runes. The runes present the name "Sigi the Fearless." The tablet is securely affixed to the altar. When any living creature touches the tablet, the walls of the room become covered in green glowing arcane runes. In addition, a translucent ethereal greataxe appears levitating in the center of the room. A **DC 30 Knowledge (aracana) check** reveals the runes to be related to spirit binding. The runes and the axe vanish if contact with the tablet is ceased.

The tablet is three feet tall by two feet wide, and one foot thick. It is made of a mysterious material that has a hardness of 15 and 300 hp. If the tablet is shattered, the green light forming the images within bursts outward. Read the following aloud:

The hidden runes on the wall begin to glow, and the ethereal image of the shieldmaiden in the tablet's illusions manifests in the center of



the room holding the translucent greataxe. In an instant, the greataxe takes on physical form, and the specter says in Common with a heavy Vikmordere accent: "You have summoned me, Sigi the Fearless. You have entered the vault of Skjold Rustning. The shield of our Jarl can be possessed only by the worthy. Prove to me your mettle or fall as all others have!"

Sigi then forgoes initiative to allow the adventurers their first action. She must be defeated, as she will accept no other proof of the adventurers' claim to the shield. If prompted to speak, she spits insults at the adventurers, and regales them with tales of her own prowess.

GM Note: Sigi was one of Jarl Vornig's most trusted allies. She fought fearlessly in battle, helping him to defeat the ice giants in ages

past. However, during the final battle she was mortally wounded. Her last request was to continue to serve the king in the afterlife, an honor that she was granted when her soul was bound to this chamber by the Vikmordere witches who served the Jarl.





SIGI THE FEARLESS DREAD WRAITH < R 13



XP 25,600

LE Large undead (incorporeal)

Init +13; Senses darkvision 60 ft., lifesense 60 ft.; Perception +28

Aura unnatural aura (30 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 26, flat-footed 16 (+7 deflection, +9 Dex, +1 dodge, -1 size)
hp 184 each (16d8+112)
Fort +12, Ref +14, Will +15
Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4; incorporeal; Immune undead traits
Weaknesses sunlight powerlessness

OFFENSE

Speed fly 60 ft. (good)
Melee incorporeal touch +20 (3d6 negative energy plus 1d8 Con drain [Fort DC 23]) or Axe of the Fearless +3 (*special, see below*)
Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Special Attacks create spawn

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 28, **Con** —, **Int** 14, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 25 **Base Atk** +12; **CMB** +22; **CMD** 40

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (incorporeal touch), Mobility, Spring Attack

Skills Diplomacy +18, Fly +24, Intimidate +26, Knowledge (planes) +13, Perception +28, Sense Motive +28, Stealth +24 Languages Common, Infernal, Skald

When Sigi is defeated, her incorporeal form dissipates into nothingness, and her magical axe, the *Axe of the Fearless*, tumbles to the ground. The glowing runes permanently vanish and the remnants of the crystal table decay to crystalline dust to be blown away by a swirling gust of wind.

AXE OF THE FEARLESS



Aura overwhelming abjuration; **CL** 20th **Slot** none; **Price** 99,020 gp; **Weight** 12 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

This is a very large axe with a winding linden wood shaft. Its opposing dual crescent heads are forged of adamantine and razor sharp. Each is masterfully engraved with the emblem of a rearing bear grasping a struggling serpent.

The *axe of the fearless* is a +3 *ghost touch adamantine greataxe* that grants its wielder immunity to all fear and confusion effects. When the user lands a successful critical hit on a target, they receive a magical morale boost that grants +3 to further attack rolls against that target. The morale boosts are cumulative with each subsequent successful critical hit and persist until either the target is destroyed or another target is attacked.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Critical Strike; *plane shift, remove fear*; Cost 51,020 gp

Room #10: The Tomb of Brimnar the Hysterical

A narrow stairway at the end of the long corridor leads down another ten feet and opens into a twenty-five foot square room. The walls of the room are hewn from solid stone but are marred with countless scrapes and claw marks. The western wall is partially obscured by a row of massive stone columns that also bear the strange scrapes. An altar of stone rests near the middle of the north wall.

A **DC 30 Perception check** reveals that the stone altar has a hairline crack from the top to the bottom, and appears to be about to break in half. A magical enchantment prevents it from being shattered by anything except for





the *Axe of the Fearless* (obtained from Sigi the Fearless in **Room #9**. This is the only way to end Brimnar's haunt and break open the altar, which contains a valuable treasure.

When the adventurers enter the room, Brimnar's Haunt is triggered. A cacophony of insane laughter begins to echo throughout the chamber.

BRIMNAR'S HAUNT



XP 19,200

CN Persistent haunt (25-ft. radius contained within the room) Caster Level 12th

Notice Perception DC 30 (to hear faint and vague laughter in the distance)

hp 40; Trigger proximity; Reset 1 round

DESCRIPTION

Effect When Brimnar's Haunt is triggered, the entire room erupts with the sound of insane laughter. The ethereal form of a Vikmordere berserker manifests in the room. He appears to be enraged and driven to primal violence. The figure angrily claws and strikes at the walls of the chamber while laughing hysterically.

Any creature who can hear the laughter must succeed at a DC 50 Will save or become frightened for 2d4 rounds (this is a *fear* effect).

A creature who succeeds on the save and remains in the chamber is set upon by the enraged ghost of Brimnar at the start of the next round. He begins to claw at them violently. causing 6d6 points of slashing damage every round the creature remains in the room.

DESTRUCTION

The spirit of Brimnar is released from the chamber and allowed to rest only when the stone altar has been destroyed. The altar can only be destroyed by the *Axe of the Fearless* or by more than 150 points of damage from a magic source dealt in a single attack.

The altar contains a hidden compartment that holds a solid gold coffer. The box itself is valued at 500 gp. Inside the coffer are the following items: a +2 breastplate, +2 chainmail, a berserker's boss (see Raider's Haul: Vikmordere Magic Item Compendium), a wand of cure light wounds (50 charges), 4 random major magic potions, 250 pp, 1,000 gp, and 800 sp.

Room #11 (A): Guardians of the Shield

The wide stairway ascends another twenty feet before opening into a chamber masked by a veil of flame.

The heat here is almost unbearable. The fire rises nearly thirty feet and arches overhead, though it originates in a 10 foot wide pit. Several immense humanoid figures lurk within the flames, their muscular frames completely enveloped and accentuated by tendrils of dark black smoke that curl around their forms. There is no way to pass further into the chamber except through the wall of fire.

The flame pit is inhabited by the Guardians of the Shield, a group of five elder fire elementals. Their sole purpose is to prevent anyone from passing beyond this point. They only converse with the adventurers in Ignan, though they all understand Common. They do not attack unless a PC attempts to pass further into the chamber or if they are attacked. They do not leave the room. The only way for the adventurers to progress past this point is to defeat all five elder fire elementals.

The *Sapphire Sphere*: If the adventurers have obtained the *sapphire sphere* from **Room #5**, it can be cast into the pit to trigger a weakening effect on the guardians. If this is done at the start of the encounter, all the elementals are transformed from elder fire elementals (CR 11) into huge fire elementals (CR 7). If the sphere is thrown in during combat, any of the elder fire elementals whose hit points have been reduced to less than half are automatically destroyed, and all remaining elder fire elementals are immediately transformed into huge fire elementals while retaining their current hit points.





XP 12,800



N Huge outsider (elemental, extraplanar, fire) Init +13; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +19

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 18, flat-footed 16 (+9 Dex, +1 dodge, +8 natural, -2 size)

hp 152 (16d10+64)

Fort +14, Ref +19, Will +7

DR 10/-, Immune elemental traits, fire Weaknesses vulnerability to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft. Melee 2 slams +23 (2d8+8 plus burn) Space 15 ft.; Reach 15 ft. Special Attacks burn (2d10, DC 22)

STATISTICS

Str 26, Dex 29, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 11 Base Atk +16; CMB +26; CMD 46

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative^B, Iron Will, Lightning Stance, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse^B, Wind Stance

Skills Acrobatics +28, Climb +27, Escape Artist +28, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (planes) +19, Perception +19

Languages Common, Ignan

SPECIAL ABILITIES



Burn (Ex) A fire elemental deals fire damage in addition to damage dealt on a successful hit in melee. Those affected by the burn ability must also succeed on a Reflex save or catch fire, taking the listed damage for an additional 1d4 rounds at the start of its turn. A burning creature can attempt a new save as a full-round action. Dropping and rolling on the ground grants a +4 bonus on this save. Creatures that hit a burning creature with natural weapons or unarmed attacks take fire damage as though hit by the burning creature and must make a Reflex save to avoid catching on fire. See Burn for more details.

HUGE FIRE ELEMENTAL (R 7 🕼 XP 3,200



N Huge outsider (elemental, extraplanar, fire) Init +11; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 16, flat-footed 13 (+7 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural, -2 size)

hp 85 (10d10+30)

Fort +10, Ref +14, Will +5 DR 5/-, Immune elemental traits, fire Weaknesses vulnerability to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft. Melee 2 slams +15 (2d6+4 plus burn) Space 15 ft.; Reach 15 ft. Special Attacks burn (2d6, DC 18)

STATISTICS

- Str 18, Dex 25, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 11 Base Atk +10; CMB +16; CMD 34
- Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative^B, Iron Will, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse^B
- Skills Acrobatics +16, Climb +13, Escape Artist +16, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (planes) +7, Perception +13

Languages Common, Ignan

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Burn (Ex) A fire elemental deals fire damage in addition to damage dealt on a successful hit in melee. Those affected by the burn ability must also succeed on a Reflex save or catch fire, taking the listed damage for an additional 1d4 rounds at the start of its turn. A burning creature can attempt a new save as a full-round action. Dropping and rolling on the ground grants a +4 bonus on this save. Creatures that hit a burning creature with natural weapons or unarmed attacks take fire damage as though hit by the burning creature and must make a Reflex save to avoid catching on fire. See Burn for more details.





When the fire elementals are destroyed, the flames are extinguished, and the air becomes much cooler. A cold, refreshing breeze seems to emit from further inside the massive, now darkened chamber.

Room #11 (B): Heart of the Vault

Beyond the now dormant fire pit the chamber opens up into a forty foot by thirty foot room. The north wall is concave and covered by an elaborate dome faced with white bricks. Beneath the fifty foot high dome, recessed into the wall, is a magnificent marble fountain of pristine crystal clear water. Standing in the center of the fountain is a twenty foot tall bone-white statue of a familiar figure—the goddess Ningatha. The figure stands tall, with one arm holding a longspear, while the other points towards the waters of the fountain.

Two rows of three life-sized statues stand watch over the way to the fountain. These figures also seem surprisingly familiar. Upon further inspection it seems they are statues of the party. Each is carved of white marble, and bears the age of eons. The statues all hold out their right hands. In each palm rests a small blue glowing crystal shard.

If the any of the adventurers has died along the way, then there is a statue of them which has been shattered to rubble with a non-glowing crystal shard in the debris. If there are fewer than six adventurers, then the statues that do not represent anyone in the party depict unidentifiable individuals and have been reduced to rubble, with dead shards nearby.

Each of the shards is a gift from the Ancestors to the party, who were foreseen in ancient times. This day was destined to happen, though any shattered statues would suggest that such fate is not guaranteed. Perhaps others who were intended to experience the moment did not survive the road before them. The shards function as *magenta prism ioun stones* that are already attuned to each of the adventurers. The stones only ever function for the adventurer intended by the statue holding it. Any dead shards are worthless fractured crystals.

The water within the fountain is *holy water*. It is ten feet deep. Clearly visible at the bottom of the basin rests a round adamantine shield. When the shield is removed from the water, it bursts into heatless flames, revealing it to be *Skjold Rustning*.

SKJOLD RUSTNING



Aura overwhelming abjuration; CL 20th (artifact) Slot none; Price 236,000 gp; Weight 10 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

This shield is made of polished adamantine. On its reverse side, the shield bears a wide leather handgrip decorated with ornate silver knots that stretches the length of the shield. The bright orange-hued face of the shield is rimmed in ruby riveted adamantine and bears a gilded image of the flame wreathed owl of Ningatha.

Skjold Rustning is a +1 wymsbreath (fire) heavy metal shield of fortification (heavy). The shield also provides the wearer with resist energy (cold) 10. The shield is wreathed in a constant heatless flame that can also function as a torch, providing 20 feet of illumination. The shield bearer may turn the flame on and off as a free action. Otherwise, the flame can only be extinguished by submerging the shield in water. If left unattended for more than 24 hours the heatless flames automatically return.

When a critical hit or sneak attack is scored on the wearer, there is a 75% chance that the critical hit or sneak attack is negated and damage is instead rolled normally.

The shield gains 1 charge for every 5 points of fire damage the wearer takes.





On command, the user can expend 1 to 5 charges from the shield to have it create a fire breath weapon in a 15 foot cone dealing 1d4 points of fire damage per charge expended (Reflex DC 11 half). A shield can store up to 5 charges at a time, and stored charges expire harmlessly after 24 hours.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms & Armor, *burning hands*, *limited wish* or *miracle*, *resist energy*; Cost 118,507 gp

DESTRUCTION

In order to destroy *Skjold Rustning* the shield must be burned along with the body of a Vikmordere chieftain of the Northern Fury Council who was slain in battle no more than three days past.

PART 5-B. LEAVING THE ISLE OF ETERNAL FLAME

When the adventurers exit the vault and begin making their way back to their landed boat, they encounter a group of Jötunn Berserkers lead by a trio of darkly robed figures. The group has been dispatched by Krumma Ymagir, the Jötunn king, to specifically locate and prevent the party from recovering the lost artifacts. They all know the PCs' appearances as well as what they seek.

The Jötunn tracking party consists of four Jötunn berserkers and three Vikmordere mercenaries. They have landed their own longship on the isle, and destroyed the adventurers' keelboat.

The tracking party makes no attempt to hide themselves, and approach directly without questions, intent on destroying the adventurers where they stand. The Vikmordere warriors directly command the Jötunn Berserkers to attack the party while they hold back to observe. The Vikmordere robed figures won't directly engage until one of the berserkers has fallen in combat.





XP 38,400

CE Large humanoid (cold, giant, undead) Init –1; Senses low-light vision; Perception +10 Aura Desecration

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 14, flat-footed 24 (+4 armor, +2 Dex, +13 natural, -1 size)

hp 205 (19d8+95)

Fort +14, **Ref** +3, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities rock catching; Channel Resistance +4, **DR** 10/magic; **Immune** cold **Weaknesses** vulnerability to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee icy burst iceforged greataxe +19/+14 (3d6+14) or 2 slams +18 (1d8+9)

Ranged ice chunk +9 (1d8+13)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Special Attacks rock throwing (120 ft.)

STATISTICS

Str 29, **Dex** 12, **Con** 21, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 11 **Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +22; **CMD** 31

- Feats Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, Martial Weapon Proficiency (greataxe), Power Attack, Skill Focus (Stealth)
- Skills Climb +14, Craft (any one) +7, Intimidate +7, Perception +12, Stealth +2 (+6 in snow); Racial Modifiers +4 Stealth in snow

Languages Common, Giant

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Aura of Desecration (Su) Skeletal ice giants constantly project an aura in a 20-foot radius that functions as a permanent desecrate spell. The DC to resist negative channeled energy within this area gains a +3 profane bonus. Undead within the area (including the skeletal ice giant) gain a +1 profane bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, and saves. Summoned or







created undead that appear in the area gain +1 hit points per HD.

- **Iceforging (Su)** As a free action skeletal ice giants can summon a simple weapon of any type that is crafted entirely of magic ice. The summoned weapon functions as a +1 icy burst weapon. Iceforging can also create any type of ammo needed for the summoned weapon as a free action. When wielded the ice weapons have the same hardness as adamantine. If the weapon is dropped, or if the skeletal ice giant is slain, it reverts to useless frost particles. Iceforging can also be used to summon a large boulder that the skeletal ice giant may use for a ranged attack.
- **Undying (Su)** A temporary supernatural ability granted by the curse of endless winter. When a skeletal ice giant is killed, it reanimates itself in 1d6+4 rounds. Returning as a fully rejuvenated skeletal ice giant. This can only be negated by submerging the remains of the dead skeletal ice giant in holy water, or by ending the curse of endless winter, at which point all skeletal ice giants lose the undying special ability.

Note: The Undying ability granted to all Jötunn remains inactive until the Battle of Serpent Lake which occurs in section 4-D of this adventure.



VIKMORDERE MERKENARY (R 4

XP 1,200

Male human fighter 5 LN Medium humanoid (human) Init +5; Senses Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 11, flat-footed 24 (+11 armor, +1 Dex, +3 shield) hp 52 (5d10+20)

Fort +6, Ref +0, Will +2; +1 bonus on Will saves against fear

Defensive Abilities armor training +1, bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft. (20 ft. with armor)

- Melee masterwork bastard sword +12 (1d10+6/19-20)
- Ranged masterwork light crossbow +7 (1d8/19-20)

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 13, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8 **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 20

Feats Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Shield Focus, Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Toughness, Weapon Specialization (bastard sword)

Skills Climb +6, Intimidate +7, Perception +6 **Languages** Common

SQ weapon training (heavy blade) +1

Combat Gear masterwork bastard sword, masterwork light crossbow with 20 bolts, masterwork heavy steel shield, masterwork full plate

If one of the Vikmordere mercenaries is spared from death and captured after the battle, he initially does not speak. However, a **DC 30 Intimidation check** causes the mercenary to succumb to his fear, and in an attempt to preserve his own life, he tells the adventurers everything he knows.

If searched, the bodies of the robed figures each have masterwork full plate, a copper medallion emblazoned with the sigil of a great serpent, and body tattoos identifying them as dedicated members of the Raven Clan. One of them carries a letter with a broken black wax seal. The rolled parchment bears a black raven feather crossed with a serpent's fang, and the following orders penned in crimson ink:

"The Maidens have seen your quarry crossing the great lake towards the Isle of Eternal Fire. High Lord Krumma and the Lady of Frost command you find them and destroy them. Return their possessions to Meyla Isle.—The Raven"





The arrival of the mercenaries of the Raven Clan reveals that there is a plot afoot to thwart the recovery of Jarl Vornig's ancient artifacts. The clan has secretly sworn an oath to King Krumma of the Jötunn, as well as the king's allies, the Maidens of Meyla Isle.

The members of the Raven Clan who are complicit in this conspiracy to overthrow the Northern Fury Council and assure victory for the Jötunn call themselves the Cult of the Black Serpent. The Black Serpent is an ancient evil said to inhabit the depths of Serpent Lake to whom the Jötunn swear fealty. It is by the ancient dark magic of the Black Serpent that the endless winter has been summoned.

In return for assisting the Jötunn, Marrack, the leader of the Raven Clan, has been promised that his clan will not be assaulted in the coming war. Once the Jötunn have overthrown the federation of Vikmordere clans and driven their people into submission, the Cult of the Black Serpent will be granted rule over the Vikmordere during the Reign of Endless Winter.



The adventurers should be able to recall that Marrak is a member of the Northern Fury Council. News of his betrayal, as well as of the legendary artifacts they have recovered, are of paramount importance, especially since the Jötunn army is amassing on the northern shore of Serpent Lake.

Though the party's keelboat has been smashed beyond practical use, the longship left behind by the Jötunn tracking party can be used instead. However, without the strength of four giants to row it, the adventurers must



depend on the sails. This is excessively difficult given the violent wintery gale. For each mile traveled by sail there is a 60% chance of being blown 1d4 miles off course.

To determine the direction in which the longship is blown off course, roll 1d8 for each mile traveled. 1: North, 2: Northeast, 3: East, 4: Southeast, 5: South, 6: Southwest, 7: West, 8: Northwest.

For each mile traversed there is a 30% chance that the adventurers spot a massive serpentine arc in the distance rising out of the waters of the lake. A **DC 35 Knowledge** (nature) check reveals this to be a Serpent of the Depths surfacing (see *Winter's Roar: Vikmordere Bestiary* for details).

Each time the party sights the serpent, there is a 10% chance that the beast strikes the longboat in an attempt to capsize it before diving back into the icy blackness below. While the ship remains afloat, all creatures aboard must succeed at a DC 25 **Reflex saving throw** or be cast out into the frigid waters.

PART 5-<. THE ARTIFA<TS RETURNED

When the PCs finally make their way back to the village of Volsfheimr, Marrak spots them approaching the city. He flees into the snow towards the lake shore. The village has grown in size since the adventurers last saw it. Several hundred makeshift shacks and tents huddle around the outer walls. It appears as if all the clans of the Council have gathered their citizens in Volsfheimr.

When news of Marrak's betrayal is offered, Canute demands his presence in the great hall, but none are able to discern his whereabouts. Canute takes this to mean that Marrak has indeed turned against the Council. He dispatches a search party to locate the betrayer. It takes 1d4 hours for Marrak to be captured. In the meantime, Canute gathers the rest of the Council to celebrate the return of the adventurers, the retrieval of Jarl Vornig's artifacts, and to discuss what news they have to bear.

Once captured, Marrak is bound and brought to the great hall, where he is interrogated by the other Northern Fury Council members and the adventurers. He reveals that the bravest of the Raven Clan have been beckoned by their "true master"— The Black Serpent—to aid the Jötunn. They have also been called to abolish the tyranny of the Council, whose members have always held the Raven clan in low regard.

Realizing that his end draws near, Marrak manages to free himself from his ropes, and swipes a dagger from the feasting table. He backs himself into a corner, brandishing the dagger at all who come near him. Canute approaches Marrak, drawing forth Vlfberht, and in a single, flaming swing, decapitates the traitor where he stands. Marrak's head rolls over into the cooking fire at the center of the hall. Canute decrees all members of the Raven Clan suspected of treason against the Council. He orders that any Raven Clan members be arrested on sight. Any who resist are to be executed.

After the commotion, the chieftain sits back down upon his chair. He continues the conversation with the adventurers as if nothing had happened.

When Canute hears that the Jötunn have begun to amass on the shores of Serpent Lake, he makes the declaration that the Council's army must prepare to row across Serpent Lake to meet the skeletal ice giants head on.

A man of his word, Canute gathers the promised reward. His servants produce several burlap sacks containing the loot. In return for handing over Jarl Vornig's artifacts, he presents the treasure to the adventurers for a job well done.





Upon hearing the tale of the adventure thus far, Canute comes to the conclusion that the adventurers' role in this tale is far from over. They were obviously chosen by the Ancestor Spirit to accomplish this task. He asks again for their assistance.



GM Note: If running the Into the Wintery Gale Mini-Dungeon adventure in conjunction with this adventure, this would be the perfe

this adventure, this would be the perfect opportunity to insert the adventure titled, "The Jötunn Encampment."

If the party does not leave on the mission included in the mini-dungeon, then instead Canute asks of them to stay in the village to help shore up defenses in case their offensive fails.

He not only believes the PCs to have proven their worth, but also considers them a good omen from the Ancestor Spirit, and the champions of the goddess Ningatha. If they adventurers agree to stay the course, Canute offers them the whole of King Krumma's treasure hoard once he and the Jötunn threat have been defeated.

He leaves behind a contingent of 30 Vikmordere warriors with express orders to take commands from the party and assist with guarding the village as a last line of defense for the women and children who have now gathered there.

With *Vlfberht* and *Skjold Rustning* in hands, Canute leads the Council and a small army of nearly 1,200 Vikmordere warriors to board a dozen longships. They all row off into the snow-obscured lake and make their way towards the northern shore, where the Jötunn army encampment awaits.

PART 5-D. THE BATTLE OF SERPENT LAKE

At first, the Battle of Serpent Lake goes well for Canute and the army of the Northern Fury Council. They are initially victorious, felling the foes upon the battle field. Unfortunately, they soon come to the horrible conclusion that the Jötunn are rising from their destruction renewed and pushing back into the fray.

GM Note: It is at this point the Undying special ability for all Jötunn is activated.

The Vikmordere forces are quickly overcome and forced to retreat eastward along the northern shore of Serpent Lake. In the battle, Canute is slain—cleaved in twain by the icy axe of a Jötunn berserker.

Rather than pursuing the defeated barbarians, one hundred Jötunn are dispatched southward across the lake on the Vikmordere's abandoned longships with orders to attack the Village of Volsfheimr.

However, the adventurers and their fellow defenders of the village are not without warning. Ningatha, in her flame-wreathed owl, form rushes through the wintery gale to warn them of the approaching threat, and to tell them the terrible news of the loss and the chieftain's death.



Constant and



Through the dense, shifting blanket of white, a distant orange spark flutters. Slowly it becomes larger as it nears the village. The familiar



flame-wreathed owl approaches Volsfheimr and the doors of the great hall once again burst open violently as it flies inside. The owl hurriedly dives into the fire and is immediately followed by a spiraling vortex of flame from which a graceful feminine figure manifests.

Ningatha steps forward, and the flames seem to coalesce and extinguish into her sheer crimson robes. She glances up with tears in her eyes, hesitating to speak.

"The battle was lost. Little Bear is dead." Closing her eyes tightly in despair, she continues. "The Jötunn are on their way."

Seeming of tangible flesh and blood, the goddess collapses prostrate upon the floor. With tears streaming down her cheeks, she slowly glances around those gathered in the great hall. Turning her eyes emphatically towards you she warns, "The curse grows stronger, and my powers wane. I cannot help you in this fight. Prepare yourselves."



Ningatha then crawls over to the fire and huddles in a fetal position. The pit's flames seem to arch over towards her and gently lick against her skin. If asked what she's doing, the goddess explains that she must rest to renew her strength. She exhausted her powers by flying to the village ahead of the marching skeletal ice giants.

The Vikmordere warriors who were gathered with the adventurers in the hall converse in hushed and worried tones before glancing back at the PCs for orders.

PART 5-E. THE FALL OF VOLSFHEIMR

Despite any preparations the party has made, the battle is intense. If they choose to usher the non-warrior citizens of the village to the cover of the nearby forest, then all civilians survive the battle. However, if left to huddle within the walls, the casualty rate among the non-combatants will be 2d4 * 10%. If the adventurers abandon the village, it is completely destroyed, and the Jötunn continue their search for the people into the forest.

When the 100 Jötunn arrive, they easily burst through the fortifications and instigate close combat inside the walls. The skeletal ice giants are accompanied by an equal number of ice troll lackeys. Their goal is the utter annihilation of Volsfheimr and those who have gathered there.

For purposes of mass combat, each adventurer is simultaneously advanced on by 2d4+2 ice trolls, 1d4+1 Jötunn warriors, and 1 Jötunn berserker (consecutively in this order in groups of three or fewer creatures). It is only when all of the PCs have bested their assigned engagements that the the battle ends.

120

KE TROLL



XP 1,200

CE Large humanoid (cold, giant) Init +4; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+4 Dex, +4 natural, -1 size) hp 45 (6d8+18); regeneration 5 (acid or fire) **Fort** +8, **Ref** +8, **Will** +2 Immune cold Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft. Melee bite +2 (1d6+2), claw +2 (1d4+2) or bite +7 (1d6+4), 2 claws +7

(1d4+4)Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft. **Special Attacks**

rend (2 claws, 1d6+6)

STATISTICS

Str 19, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha₇ Base Atk +4; CMB +9; CMD 23 **Feats** Intimidating Prowess,

Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perception) Skills Intimidate +7, Perception +9, Survival +4 Languages Giant

The trolls assisting these Jötunn are unarmed, and use only their natural claw or bite attacks.



Angry shouts, the drone of Jötunn warhorns, and the clash of metal permeate the constant roar of the rushing gale winds. Through the violently swirling snow, shadowy silhouettes of giants, trolls, and Vikmordere warriors rush all about, creating a chaotic and confusing scene. Several of the makeshift shacks around the village have caught fire—their now towering flames cast a dull orange glow across the hectic battlefront. A trail of blood can be seen creeping across the pristine white snow.

A series of nearby roars is heard as several large, shadowy figures charge forward.







When the battle is over, the adventurers will discover that only five of their fellow defenders remain alive, but the Jötunn have been completely destroyed. Mere moments after the realization of victory sets in, Ningatha rushes out from within the great hall, shouting as loudly as she can for everyone to flee into the forest, for the battle has been lost. Several of the Vikmordere warriors glance perplexedly at one another, but soon the truth of her words becomes apparent.

The remains of the slaughtered Jötunn begin to shift and move across the blood-drenched snow. Piece by piece their sundered bodies regenerate, and they begin to rise to their feet.

Ningatha rushes forward screaming loudly for all to flee, her long auburn hair gusting erratically in the intense wind. She moves her hands in a series of strange gestures as her eyes begin to glow like burning coals.

She shouts, barely audible over the charging gale. "The power of this curse has grown! This is the work of the Maidens. There is no way to stop the Jötunn as long as the Maidens' magic bolsters this dark force!"

A glance around the area reveals every Jötunn has risen from the dead. Witnessing this horror, the last of the panic-stricken Vikmordere villagers flee into the forest.

With a bright crimson flash, a swirling fire appears between the goddess' swaying hands. Sweltering heat radiates from her body.

With a final shout, she says, "We must flee! The village is lost!"

She forcefully thrusts her hands towards the approaching hoard of Jötunn. The fire rolls forward out of her hands, growing until it becomes a churning wall of flame. In a single strike, the fire engulfs and incinerates all of the Jotun and the now-ruined remains of the village.

As the flame vanishes leaving behind only steam and charred ash, Ningatha collapses, unconscious. Ningatha survives, but she has expended all but the last of her essence to destroy the Jötunn. She will awaken in 1d4+2 days, but is now too weakened to utilize any of her powers, including her ability to transform into the flame-wreathed owl. For all intents and purposes, she should be treated as a 1st level commoner that cannot succumb to death from loss of hit points.

The survivors of Volsfheimr have gathered in the forest about a mile south of the former village. The adventurers should have no trouble locating them. In this makeshift camp the party will be able to take refuge, tend to their wounded, and wait for Ningatha to recover.

On the following morning, a group of 120 Vikmordere warriors, accompanied by the surviving members of the Northern Fury Council, arrive at the camp after the long trek from their defeat on the northern shores of Serpent Lake.

With them they bring the body of Canute and the artifacts of Jarl Vornig. The Council brings order, and the returning warriors begin work on preparing simple defenses to protect the camp.

On the night of their return, a funeral pyre is built for Canute. Soon after the former Council head's ceremonial ascent to join the Ancestor Spirit, Jarl Jon the Hunter, head of the White Wolf Clan, is elected as interim leader of the Northern Fury Council. He calls a war council meeting with the adventurers. In this meeting, the PCs will have the opportunity to learn the details about the devastating Battle of Serpent Lake, and to discuss with the Council events that occurred in Volsfheimr in their absence.

When the adventurers tell the Vikmordere about Ningatha's mention of "the Maidens," all those present become even more grim. Jon explains to the PCs who—or rather, *what*—the Maidens of Meyla Isle really are.



The Maidens of Meyla are evil ice fey. Normally forced to retreat to the glacial drifts and mountaintops during warmer months, the reign of the Jötunn and the gale provides them with the ideal habitat. They would be more than happy to coexist with the undying ice giants in a new wintery kingdom. It is in their interests to stop the adventurers from preventing endless winter, and they have joined forces with the Jötunn.

In Vikmordere mythology, the Maidens of Meyla Isle come in wintertime to steal the souls of the dead. If a dead man's life was honorable, then than Ancestor Spirit spares his soul. If a man's life was dishonorable, then the maidens devour his essence. Of course, this is a complete myth, but it does serve as a good morailty tale.

Meyla Isle is feared by the Vikmordere, or at the very least avoided by most. During the winter months, the island is surrounded by violent winds that wreck any nearby ship and whip the surrounding lake into violent, impassable waves littered with ice drifts and growlers. Attempting to make an approach during the winter is completely impossible by any normal means.

However, there are tales of a legendary ship built by the ancestors which would be able to withstand the wintery magic of the Maidens. Called the *Sorrow's Snekkja*, this magical ship appears several times throughout Vikmordere mythology, and is often referred to as "The Northern Fury" (the namesake of the very Council that now seeks the artifact). Unfortunately, its actual whereabouts have been forgotten and are completely unknown to the Vikmordere.

Since the onset of the Ohjaslange and the coming of the endless winter, the Northern Fury Council has been seeking this legendary vessel. Originally the intent was for Canute sail the *Sorrow's Snekkja* to lead their warships against the Jötunn, but perhaps now it can lend its magic to breach the Maiden Winds that surround Meyla Isle. **GM Note:** If incorporating the *Into the Wintery Gale* minidungeons into this adventure, this is the perfect point to insert the adventure titled, "Ways of the Old." If you decide to run this side quest, then Jon reveals that the Northern Fury Council had already sent one of its most learned scholars—a man by the name of Bragi Boddason—to discern where they may uncover the secret of *Sorrow's Snekkja*. If not running the mini-dungeon, then instead when Ningatha awakens she will inform the council of the ship's location: in the Tomb of the Ancestors.

During the wait for Ningatha's recovery, the adventurers are approached by many of the Vikmordere who have taken refuge in the forest with them. Children begin to imitate their likeness, elderly people are friendly, and families invite them to share meals. The adventurers are bestowed with the honorary title of "Heroes of the Ohjaslange" by the people. The moniker seems to take hold as they are addressed by this title the next time they meet with the Northern Fury Council.

PART 5-F. THE VOYAGE TO IGHDENHOLM

The Tomb of the Ancestors is a location known in Vikmordere mythology as "the Tomb of Twenty Kings." Legends of the valley tell that the tomb is located in the heart of Ighdenholm mountain.

The Vikmordere believe that the Tomb of Twenty Kings was created by the ancestors, and houses the remains of their twenty greatest kings. It is said that the tomb is the birthplace of the Ancestor Spirit who rose from the life force of the Ancestors to guide the Vikmordere people away from the ways of the old gods and to teach the peoples of the valley to embrace the sanctity of nature.

The tomb is impenetrable except by way of the massive gates that seal its entrance. The gateway into the tomb cannot be opened









Aura overwhelming transmutation;

WRATH OF THE JÖTUNN • THE VAULT OF SKJOLD RUSTNING

Slot none; Weight 20 tons

DESCRIPTION

CL 25th

A single mast of solid timber rises from the center of this masterfully crafted pinewood longship of Vikmordere design. It bears a dozen shields portraying the

sigils of the twelve clans that make up the Northern Fury Council. A fierce carving of a dragon's head adorns the bow.

Sorrow's Snekkja is a magical longship of Vikmordere legend. It is also known in many tales by its more common name, "the Northern Fury of Ighdenholm." It is said to have been crafted by the Vikmordere ancestors long ago, in the days when gods walked among the mortals. Not seen since the times of ancient battles against the





Jötunn, the vessel is rumored to have been rowed up the peak of Ighdenholm by the spirits of two dozen heroic Vikmordere warriors. These spirits remain, guarding the artifact until the day comes when its powers are once again needed by the people of the valley. It is in fact from the common name of this ship that the Northern Fury Council inherited their moniker. The twelve clans represented in the council are the descendants of the crew that manned the legendary ship.

Colossal water vehicle, Squares 45 (15 ft. by 75 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 2; Hardness 5 hp 675 (337) Base Save +5

OFFENSE

Maximum Speed 120 ft. (current and muscle), 60 ft. (current or muscle); Acceleration 60 ft. (current and muscle), 30 ft. (current or muscle)

CMB +8; **CMD** 18

Ramming Damage 8d8

Sorrow's Snekkja functions as a normal longship. As a full-round action, the vessel can be activated by the captain to transform the boat, cargo, crew, and on-board equipment incorporeal.

While incorporeal, the creatures aboard the ship gain the incorporeal special quality as long as Sorrow's Snekkja remains incorporeal and they remain aboard. When a corporeal creature or object leaves (or is forced off), they instantaneously lose the incorporeal special quality. While this effect is active, the *Sorrow's Snekkja* gains the ability to fly and pass through corporeal obstacles. The ship and the crew aboard can be affected by *ghost touch* and other effects that can affect incorporeal creatures and objects. However, the longship loses its ability to sail when incorporeal and must be rowed by the crew. When traveling in incorporeal form, the ship requires as much effort from the crew to be propelled as rowing in a calm and open sea would require.

If *Sorrow's Snekkja* is short on required crew to man the ship, it manifests a number of ghostly apparitions to work the oars, though a minimum crew of one is required to command the vessel. These apparitions are non-intelligent and considered a part of the vessel.

Sorrow's Snekkja can carry up to 50 tons of cargo or 40 passengers.

Propulsion current (air; 10 squares of sails, hp 50), current (water), or muscle (pushed; 24 Medium rowers)

Driving Check Diplomacy or Intimidate while rowed, or Profession (sailor) or Knowledge (nature) + 10 to the DC when sail is used

Forward Facing the ship's forward Driving Device rudder Driving Space the two middle rear squares of the longship Crew 24 Decks 1 (with small cargo area under the deck) Weapons mounted direct-fire siege engine in the dragon

Weapons mounted direct-fire siege engine in the dragon figure at the bow; this siege engine can be fired only forward (ballista; damage 3d8, Crit 19-20/x2, range 120 ft.; crew 1)





by any mortal creature. Luckily for the adventurers, they have an immortal, though severely weakened, goddess as an ally.

When the goddess finally awakens, a war meeting is summoned at the center of the camp. The Northern Fury Council decides to send out thirty of the warriors to network among the hundreds of smaller Vikmordere tribes throughout the region. Their goal is to amass an army large enough to take on the Jötunn in direct combat. However, until the undying skeletal ice giants can be defeated by physical means, there is little else that can be done to thwart their advance from their home on top of the world.

Ningatha explains that the power of the curse has grown exponentially, and as it does her own powers wane. She admits that she has very little of her own essence left, leaving her trapped within her mortal manifestation. However, she does know of the Tomb of the Ancients, and she believes that enough of her immortal essence remains to break the magical seal of its gate.

Jon asks the adventurers if they would escort Ningatha to the Tomb of Twenty Kings and enter it to retrieve the legendary Sorrow's Snekkja and use it to put an end to the Maidens of Meyla Isle.

If the adventurers inquire about reward, the Jarl reminds them that before his death, Canute promised reward of King Krumma's treasure hoard. Jon assures them that promise stands.

When the PCs agree to the task, Jon bestows upon them Jarl Vornig's ancient artifacts in the hopes that Vlfberht and Skjold Rustning will aid them in their mission. He orders the dispatch of the thirty warrior recruiters. He commands another dozen Vikmordere warriors to man one of their remaining longships, docked at the ruins of the destroyed village, and row the adventurers to the northeastern shores of Serpent Lake near the base of Ighdenholm.

PART 5-4. THE SORROWS OF FAREWELL

When the longship carrying the adventurers and the goddess Ningatha nears the northern shore of Serpent Lake, the vessel is attacked and capsized by a Serpent of the Depths. The ship is destroyed and quickly sinks. All aboard are cast into the freezing, wind-chopped waves of Serpent Lake and the beast attacks them all.

The serpent begins by directing its attacks on the Vikmordere warriors. It turns to the party when those are dispatched or if it is attacked.

SERPENT OF THE DEPTHS <R 15

This huge serpent is covered in vivid blue scales and sharp hooked spikes. Its mouth is surrounded with whipping tentacles and filled with needle-sharp teeth.

XP 51,200

CE Gargantuan aberration (aquatic) Init +5; Senses blindsense 30 ft., darkvision

60 ft.; Perception +30

DEFENSE

- AC 30, touch 11, flat-footed 28 (+5 Dex, +19 natural, -4 size)
- hp 231 (22d8+132); regeneration 5 (good items, effects, and spells)
- Fort +13, Ref +12, Will +19 Immune cold, fire; SR 26

OFFENSE

- Speed 40 ft., swim 60 ft.
- Melee bite +24 (2d8+12/19-20/x3), tentacles +19 (2d6+6 plus grab and paralysis), tail slap + 24 (2d8+12 plus poison)

Space 20 ft.; Reach 15 ft.

Special Attacks constrict (2d6+6 plus flay and paralysis), flay, swallow whole (10d6 acid, AC 19, 23 hp)

STATISTICS

Str 35, Dex 21, Con 22, Int 3, Wis 22, Cha 10 Base Atk +16; CMB +32; CMD 47 (can't be tripped) Feats Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Reflexes,



Critical Focus, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Vital Strike, Lunge, Power Attack, Tiring Critical, Vital Strike

Skills Perception +30, Swim +24

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Currents (Su)** The Serpent of the Depths instinctively controls water currents, allowing it to draw prey in closer or force away threats. The serpent of the depths may make a pull or push combat maneuver as a swift action if both the aberration and its target are in water. There is no range limitation on this ability, however the serpent of the depths takes a -1 penalty for every 10 feet of distance between it and its target. If the aberration succeeds, the target is pulled or pushed 5 feet, plus an additional 5 feet for every 5 the serpent exceeds its opponent's CMD.
- Flay (Ex) A creature caught in the Serpent of the Depth's grasp finds their flesh ripped to shreds by thousands of tiny spikes and barbs. A creature damaged by the Serpent's constrict attack begins taking 1 point of Constitution bleed each round (ended with a DC 15 Heal check or any amount of magical healing). The creature must also succeed on a DC 27 Fortitude save or take a –4 penalty on attack rolls, skill checks, and ability checks until the Constitution damage is healed. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Paralysis (Ex) A Serpent of the Depths' tentacles are covered in tiny spikes that inject a paralytic toxin. A creature must succeed on a DC 27 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1d4 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based. Poison (Ex) Tail slap—injury; save Fort DC 27; frequency 1/round for 6 rounds; effect 1d4 Str; cure 3 consecutive saves.

Once the Serpent has been vanquished, three consecutive **DC 40 Swim checks** are required to swim ashore. 1d4 points of cold damage are dealt for every **failed Swim check**. Ningatha automatically fails, and is swept out deeper into the violent waves of the lake beyond the reach of the adventurers.

After six rounds, the wearer of the *hero's* receptacle notices it vibrating violently. If observed, it glows an intense ruby red. Moments later, the ghostly form of Jarl Vornig appears galloping over the waves while mounted on the back of an eightlegged horse (a sleipnir—more information available in *Winter's Roar: Vikmordere Bestiary*). With a determined gaze, he rides directly towards Ningatha, and heroically swoops her up from the waves and onto the back of his mount.

After returning her safely to shore, he does the same for any adventurers who are struggling to get out of the freezing waters, beginning with any unconscious adventurers. Any of the Vikmordere warriors who managed to survive the battle with the Serpent of the Depths drown before the Jarl can get to them.

Riding upon the magical horse, Jarl Vornig leads the party through the blinding snow and sleet towards the foot of the towering mountain. Viciously flashing lightning illuminates their surroundings from above, but the closer the adventurers get to the mountain, the less violent the gale winds seem to gust, until eventually it dwindles to a gentle, hushed snowfall.

Once Ningatha and the adventurers are safely at the gates to the Tomb of the Ancestors, the Jarl dismounts the sleipnir. With a firm, audible slap to the stallion's hind, the Jarl sends the horse galloping off across the lake. It disappears into the veil of the wintery white. The Jarl then turns to assist an exhausted Ningatha to her feet, taking her hand in his own with a surprisingly firm grasp.







The Jarl leads the party to the foot of the great mountai. Upon its face are a series of deep grooves that trace the outline of a cut stone doorway.



Lush, verdant shrubs root firmly near the closed stone gate despite the frigid chill of winter.

The ghost of Jarl Vornig strides up to the closed door for a moment, gazing in interest at an inset circle of ancient Vikmordere runes that is directly intersected by the line where the two sealed doors meet. "I remember this place..." he says as he turns back to look around the area.

While this isn't the first time Jarl's ghost has appeared, Vornig now seems somehow different—a cogent force. He nods approvingly, speaking with a very heavy Vikmordere accent, "You have done well, brave warriors! The Ancestors could not have chosen any more wisely. I've been dreaming, but I have watched..."

His translucent figure turns and walks towards Ningatha. He grasps her by the hand and pulls her into his arms. They embrace and kiss deeply. It quickly becomes apparent exactly what kind of relationship the two once shared. "My love, it's time—I've brought you home," Ningatha says softly, tears streaming down her cheeks. In a gruff yet gentile tone, the Jarl responds, "It is time. I am ready."

The Jarl bows his head to the goddess and she gently kisses his forehead. The incorporeal form of the Vikmordere hero begins to dissipate, starting at his feet and quickly progressing up his body, until all that remains is a single wisp of essence touching Ningatha's lips.

The vibrating crystal of the *hero's receptacle* suddenly shatters into a cloud of glittering crystalline dust, leaving behind only a simple sinew trinket. It is destroyed. If the artifact is being worn by one of the adventurers when it is destroyed, they feel a surge of energy course through their body. They receive a +2 luck bonus to all saving throws for the next 24 hours.

Moments after the ghost of Jarl Vornig has vanished, the goddess' body is surrounded by gently wavering flames as one final tear evaporates from her cheek. She turns to face you, looking at each of you in turn one last time. A dim red glow builds within her eyes.



WRATH OF THE JÖTUNN > TOMB OF THE ANKESTORS

Constants

"Thank you all. Thank you for following when I called to you. Thank you for fighting at the side of the Vikmordere against this evil," she says softly, slightly bowing her head in respect.

"I am sorry that I cannot continue on at your side. But there is no other way. I beg of you to stay the course—lead my people to freedom from this endless winter. Destroy the vile Jötunn, and their dreaded king."

With a final smile, Ningatha reaches her hand to the runes that adorn the sealed stone gate. Instantly they flash with bright crimson, and begin to pulsate with a dim red glow. Slowly Ningatha's form begins to fade, becoming more and more transparent.

"The curse has grown too strong, and I alone could not open the way. Together, my love and I shall grant you passage where no mortal has walked since before your age. Be wary: the Kings of old will test you..."

As she speaks, Ningatha's voice grows more distant as her figure fades from existence. Soon her body has dissipated into nothingness. You are left standing before the gateway utterly alone, surrounded by the silently falling snow.

With the grinding of stone, the great doors of the gateway open inward. Revealed is a long five-foot-wide stairway that descends into blackness beneath the mountain.

As soon as all the adventurers have entered the gateway, the stone doors close themselves and are permanently sealed shut. They cannot be opened or bypassed by any means. Teleportation magic and planar travel magic is entirely negated within the tomb.

PART G-A. TOMB OF THE ANCESTORS

All of the walls within the structure are crafted of exceptionally large meteoric iron bricks. The walls appear completely featureless, but when a living creature comes within five feet of any wall within the tomb, thousands of inscribed tiny runes appear with a synchronized pulsating red glow. The runes appear to be arcane in nature, but are of an ancient sort of magic which cannot be understood or deciphered by conventional methods. If the walls are struck by a weapon and dealt more than 10 points of damage in a single attack, then they generate a burst of primal magic that envelopes a ten foot diameter circular space centered on the point of impact. A DC 30 Reflex saving throw is required to avoid the burst. Any creature that fails this saving throw and is in the affected space has one of the following effects cast upon them. These effects ignore spell resistance and antimagic fields.

PRIMAL ARCANE BURST The target is dealt 3d4 points of necrotic damage and affected by to *slow* for 1d4 hours.

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The target is dealt 6d4 points of
a necrotic damage and affected by *confusion* for 1d4 hours.

The target is dealt 9d4 points ofnecrotic damage and affected by *sleep* for 1d4 hours.





WRATH OF THE JÖTUNN > TOMB OF THE ANKESTORS

Room #1: The Long Walk

Strange glowing red runes pulsate on the nearby walls. The curving stairway burrows deeper beneath the mountain while the carmine

runes illuminate the way. After a mile of twisting and winding descent, the stairs end abruptly in a large 35 foot wide round chamber with a massive domed ceiling that peaks 25 feet above the floor.

The stairway winds and curves for nearly a mile under the mountain before opening in to **Room #1**. While descending, a **DC 15 Perception check** will reveal to the adventurers a deep humming sound that seems to be resonating from the walls. The hum is constant. Soon their hearing adapts to the incessant sound, making it discernable only when specifically listened for.

Room #2: The Chamber of Judgment

The room bears two massive statues crafted from the same hard black stone that makes up the walls of



this complex. The west statue is fifteen foot tall and represents a Vikmordere warrior wearing a crown. The east statue matches it, depicting a shieldmaiden wearing a different crown. The two statues face one another, standing heavily upon pedestals that intersect a glowing circle of red runes upon the floor. The southern wall has a pair of iron doors that have been sealed with a complex series of wide bars and interlocking gears.

Any attempt to avoid passing through the circle of glowing red runes results a crackle of crimson-hued electricity building up around the statues. This buildup continues until all creatures in the room occupy the interior of the rune circle.

If any creature remains outside the circle at the end of charging period, then once per round an arcing red lightning bolt fires toward one creature not within the circle. The bolt deals 1d6 points of electricity damage and 1d6 points of necrotic damage (**DC 40 Reflex saving throw** negates).

When all creatures within the room are located within the circle, both statues don a soft orange glow that begins in the center of their chests. The glow continues to grow brighter, and in 1d4 rounds, both statues glow brilliantly white. The runes upon the floor begin to move, one by one shifting toward the statues. The runes ascend the monoliths until both glowing white figures are also covered in red runes.

When triggered, the statues automatically detect the alignments of all living creatures within the circle (constructs and the undead are excluded from this effect). If a creature's alignment is undetectable, then it is considered by the statues to have a neutral alignment.

Any creature in the chamber detected as evil aligned is illuminated by beams of white light that are cast from the eyes of both statues. The beams are unavoidable and very bright but have no other effect. If this effect is trigged, both statues emit booming voices that repeat the phrase, "Evil walks among you!" The phrase is cycled through a series of languages beginning with Vikmordere, then Common, and then every other known language, and finally a strange tongue which no one has ever heard before. This effect continues as long as the evil aligned character remains in the chamber.

If the statues do not detect any evil aligned creatures, then the white glowing abruptly stops, and the runes descend back down the statues to once again form the circle upon the floor. Moments later, the iron doors unlock with several loud clunks and the whirring of gears, and are retracted back into the wall providing clear passage southward.

Characters with evil alignments are marked with a glowing red rune upon their foreheads for as long as they remain in the tomb complex. They can still pass through the doors.



TOMB OF THE ANCESTORS "THE TOMB OF TWENTY KINGS"

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WRATH OF THE JÖTUNN • TOMB OF THE ANCESTORS

Room #3: An Inner Reflection

Beyond the gear operated door is a ten foot long corridor that opens into a 25 foot wide corridor that extends 45 feet south. The corners



This room is occupied by three invisible iron golems that attack any creatures that enters the larger chamber. The invisibility effect is constant and cannot be negated, but otherwise functions exactly like *invisibility*. When the golems attack, they remain invisible. However, they are very noisy, and can be easily tracked by sound. A **DC 30 Perception check** reveals that the invisible iron golems can be clearly seen in the reflection on the mirrored ceiling. Characters marked as evil in **Room #2** are given priority by the iron golems and attacked first.

When each golem is destroyed, its metallic remains become visible. If the remains are thoroughly searched, the adventurers will find one hand-sized meteoric iron idol within each. One iron idol depicts a bear, another an owl, and the last a tree. The idols are not magical, but are required to solve the Well of Lost Souls puzzle in **Room #7**.

IRON GOLEM



XP 25,600 N Large construct

Init –1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 8, flat-footed 28 (-1 Dex, +20 natural, -1 size)

hp 129 (18d10+30)

Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +6

DR 15/adamantine; **Immune** construct traits, magic

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee 2 slams +28 (2d10+16/19-20)
Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.
Special Attacks breath weapon, powerful blows

STATISTICS

Str 32, Dex 9, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1 Base Atk +18; CMB +30; CMD 39

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Breath Weapon (Su) As a free action once every 1d4+1 rounds, an iron golem can exhale a 10-foot cube of poisonous gas. This gas cloud persists for 1 round; any creature within the area when the golem creates it (as well as any creature that passes through the cloud during the remainder of that round) is exposed to the cloud's poisonous effects. This poison is magically created each time the golem uses this power. Breath weapon—



WRATH OF THE JÖTUNN > TOMB OF THE ANKESTORS



inhaled; save Fort 19; frequency 1/round for 4 rounds; effect 1d4 Constitution damage; cure 2 saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Immunity to Magic (Ex) An iron golem is immune to spells or spell-like abilities that allow spell resistance. Certain spells and effects function differently against it, as noted below.

A magical attack that deals electricity damage slows an iron golem (as the *slow* spell) for 3 rounds, with no saving throw.

A magical attack that deals fire damage breaks any slow effect on the golem and heals 1 point of damage for each 3 points of damage the attack would otherwise deal. If the amount of healing would cause the golem to exceed its full normal hit points, it gains any excess as temporary hit points. An iron golem gets no saving throw against fire effects.

An iron golem is affected normally by rust attacks, such as those of a rust monster or a *rusting grasp* spell.

Powerful Blows (Ex) An iron golem inflicts one and a half times its Strength modifier and threatens a critical hit on a 19–20 with its slam attacks.

Room #4: The double are sealed and check reveals indentions, bo into the center The lock ca be unlocked by of the golden in Rooms #8 Vikmordere K When both retract into the

Room #4: The Vault of Sorrow

The double doors leading into this room are sealed and locked. A **DC 25 Perception check** reveals that there are two circular indentions, both about ten inches wide, set into the center of the meteoric iron doors.

The lock cannot be picked, and can only be unlocked by inserting the base of each of the golden crowns that can be found in **Rooms #8A** and **#8B** on the undead Vikmordere King and Queen.

When both crowns are inserted, the doors retract into the walls around them, revealing the room beyond. Read the following aloud when this happens: Another large circular chamber. There is no visible ceiling to this room as it ascends into the darkness above. A glistening halfsized longship, about thirty feet in length, levitates about three feet off of the floor. It slowly rotates on its axis in the center of the

thirty-five foot wide room.

This room contains *Sorrow's Snekkja*, also known as the "The Northern Fury of Ighdenholm"). The ship as stowed in this vault appears scaled to half of its size and levitates in its solid form. The ship cannot be used as a magic item until it is removed from the vault.

Removing the longship from the tomb vault requires flooding the complex by triggering the Well of Lost Souls in **Room** #7. The miniaturized ship is large enough to float the adventurers up the shaft, and it takes 3d6 +3 rounds for the shaft to completely fill.

As the shaft fills from the waters of the Well of Lost Souls, the adventurers are constantly attacked by the lost souls that inhabited the well (see **Room #7** for lost soul stats). Each adventurer is individually engaged by three lost souls for the duration of the flooding. When one is destroyed another immediately replaces it at the beginning of the next round.

Once the room is flooded, read the following aloud:

The water continues to rush into the shaft-like room. When the longship nears the top of the shaft, the violent waves below begin to pulsate with the familiar red glow of the wall runes found throughout the complex.

Just as the flooding tide nearly reaches to the ceiling and it appears that the ship has nowhere else to go, the powerful drone of a warhorn sounds.

In moments, another joins its call. Others begin to sound, until the cacophony of bellowing horns drowns out all other noise. The deafening acoustic barrage causes everything to vibrate.





WRATH OF THE JÖTUNN > TOMB OF THE ANKESTORS

In response to the sounding of the warhorns, the ghastly souls that attack from the waters shriek in fear, and slink back down into the depths.

Bits of iron-clumped stone begin to fall way from the ceiling, shaken loose by the trembling mountain. With a violent lurch, the ship is launched forward, nearly causing you to lose your footing as a great gully opens in the side of the mountain.

The warhorns halt, leaving only a highpitched ringing in your ears accompanied by the sound of rushing water. The ship emerges from Ighdenholm and plummets down the mountainside towards the waters of Serpent Lake.

The ship suddenly doubles in size and a crew of ghostly Vikmordere warriors appear seated at the sides. Everyone has become translucent and pale-hued. As the ghosts man the oars and begin to row, the sensation of falling ceases. The ship navigates its way down to the waters of the lake with all the serenity of a gentle breeze.

Though the wind whips snow and sleet about violently, no physical effects of the wintery gale can be felt. The ghostly rowers all turn their heads inquisitively, indicating that they wish to inquire about the party's intended destination.

Once Sorrow's Snekkja is safely upon the waters of Serpent Lake, skip to **Part 6-B**.

Room #5: The Hall of Ancestors

The massive double meteoric iron doors leading into the room are sealed and locked. The locks cannot be picked. The doors bear two rows of five small niches that are recessed to contain a small object.

The only way to open the doors to this room is to place the all ten of the crystal shards that can be found in the sarcophagi in **Rooms #8C-#8L** into the niches. When each crystal shard is placed into one of the cubbies, it begins to glow with a bright blue light. When all ten of the shards are placed, the entire door begins to glow until all that remains is a bright blue glowing portal.

The opened portal into this room cannot be willingly passed through by any creature that is either undead or an outsider. If any undead or outsider creature is forced to pass through the portal in either direction they suffer 1d4+1 negative levels and 2d4 Con damage.

Once the room is opened, read the following aloud:

Stepping through the blue light of the portal reveals another large circular chamber. The walls of this

thirty-five foot wide room are entirely lined with glowing crystals of various hues. The colors of the shards seem to undulate around the chamber in a vivid, wavelike pattern. The center of the room is dominated by a massive crystal shard column that glows more intensely than the other shards.

If the adventurers are utilizing their uniquely attuned crystal shards that they found in the Vault of Skjold Rustning, then the pieces spiral around their heads at triple the speed. Each one glows brightly.

This room is holy ground and functions with an effect identical to the spell *consecrate* (CL 35). Any undead creature in the chamber suffers 6d8 points of channeled positive energy damage each round it remains within the room.

The crystals in this room are ancient artifacts that have an overwhelming divination aura (CL 40). The shards contain all the conscious memories of the Ancestors, and Vikmordere who have proven themselves worthy of becoming a part of the Ancestor Spirit. The thousands of minds that inhabit the shards function as a single hive entity, choosing a single persona to interact in the physical world. In this instance, they choose the persona of the recently deceased Northern Fury Council leader, Jarl Canute of the Volfsing Clan. However, if need calls




they may also assume the persona of Jarl Vornig, Ningatha, Arurún the witch, or any adventurer in the party who has permanently died during the quest. If the persona of a former player character is manifested, then it should be revealed to the adventurers that they have been promised an honored station among the Ancestor Spirit in recognition for their brave deeds while fighting against the curse of endless winter.

GM Note: The shards do not contain the Ancestor Spirit, but rather contain all of their memories. The shards make up a single artifact that was created eons ago by the Ancestors as a way for them to directly communicate to their descendants in times of great need.

Though long forgotten and lost to the Vikmordere people, this site is among the most powerful and holy locations within the Valley. It provides direct face-to-face interaction with the equivalent of a divine being.

GM Note: If you want to expand on this unique encounter, a variety of additional information about Vikmordere culture, history, and mythology is available in the supplement book titled *Ancestral Appellations*.

The personas that are manifested here have full recollection of their lives and all of their memories. They may provide helpful dialog that can answer various questions about events that may have gone unresolved before their death.

Whichever persona is manifested by the Ancestor Spirit appears as a ghostly, translucent figure. They audibly speak, though their voices sound as if dozens of individual voices of all genders are speaking at once. They always refer to themselves in plural: "we, us, our" rather than "I, me or my."

If the adventurers have not already figured out how to utilize the idols found within the tomb (as described in **Room #7**), then the Ancestor Spirit assists them by telling them about the eight sacred constellations and the story of the Ohjaslange that can be found in the introduction to this book. PCs are told to place the idols in widdershins correct order (from right to left) on the edge of the Well of Lost Souls.

Blessing of the Ancestors

When the conversation has ended, the manifestation of the Ancestor Spirit performs a blessing upon the adventurers. This blessing bestows a permanent +1 to the ability score of the player's choice to an adventurer. All adventurers (and any allies, companions or familiars) are also restored to full hp, cured of any sickness or disease, and any curse bestowed directly upon them is removed. Each adventurer gains 50 temporary hp that remains until utilized and a +3 luck bonus to all saving throws that persists for one week.

When the adventurers all leave the chamber, the portal is sealed by solid meteoric iron once more and the shards that were placed in the many niches become airborne. The crystals spin in an elevated spiral in the center of the hallway before they quickly coalesce in the middle, forming a crystalline staff. The staff remains levitating, but otherwise unmoving, until it is claimed by an adventurer.

STAFF OF THE ANKESTORS

bs.

Aura overwhelming transmutation; CL 25th (Artifact) Slot none; Price 450,000 gp; Weight 8 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

This is a tall staff fashioned of multifaceted rainbow-hued crystal. The crown is an array of jagged crystal shards that pulsate with a gentle blue light.

The *Staff of the Ancestors* allows a priest who is wielding it to cast one prepared spell without expending that spell slot. This ability becomes available again in a



number of days equal to the spell level of the spell cast this way.

When a priest casts a healing spell while using the staff, the spells effects are enhanced to heal an additional 2d4 hp.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *commune*, *wish*; Cost 225,000 gp

Room #6: Altar of the Watchers

This room is oddly shaped: twentyfive feet wide east to west with a concave rounded south wall. The north wall is tapered, ending in

an ascending stairway. In the center of the south wall is a stairway. The east and west walls are centered with opposing descending stairways leading in each direction.

Four eight foot tall stone statues are stationed five feet apart in the center of the chamber. Each figure depicts a humanoid creature facing away from the middle of the room. Each is carved wearing traditional Vikmordere warrior's gear, but their facial features are anthropomorphized. In clockwise order from the statue facing the northwest corner their features are those of a wolf, a stag, a falcon, and a serpent. Each statue has their hands cupped against their abdomen and hold palm-sized spheres of iron.

A DC 25 Perception check reveals a series of tiny runes located in the center of the room. Closer examination is required to discern what is written. The runes are written in Vikmordere and state the following:

The answer to what lies below is found above.

GM Note: The hint provided by the runes behind the statues refers to the Vikmordere constellations that track the Ohjaslange across the heavens. These occur in the following order in the sky: the black wolf, the brown bear, the roe stag, the snowy owl, the saker falcon, the silver herring, the elder tree, and the great serpent.

There is a crushing stone trap in the area behind the statues.

KRUSHING STONE TRAP KR 15

XP 51,200

Type mechanical; Perception DC 30; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset manual Effect +15 melee attack for 16d6 damage; all targets in a 10-ft. square

When the top of any of the statues' iron orbs are grasped by both hands it triggers a magical effect.

If the statues are activated in the proper order, then each orb magically transforms into an animal idol relevant to the anthropomorphized statue. However, if a statue is activated in the incorrect order, then it instead casts *baleful polymorph* (CL 20) targeting the adventurer that activated it. The polymorph turns the target into the relevant creature.

The idols are not magical, but are required to solve the Well of Lost Souls riddle in **Room #7**.

| Baleful Polymorph Results Table | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------|---------|--------------------------|--|
| Statue | Order | Idol | Baleful Polymorph | |
| Wolf Warrior (NW) | 1st | Wolf | Wolf (CR 1) | |
| Stag Warrior (NE) | 2nd | Stag | Herd Animal, Deer (CR ¼) | |
| Falcon Warrior (SE) | 3rd | Falcon | Falcon, Hawk (CR ¼) | |
| Serpent Warrior (SW) | 4th | Serpent | Snake, Viper (CR ½) | |





Room #7: The Well of Lost Souls

The narrow stairway leads down to a single chamber lined with a series of columns along convex eastern and western walls. A massive half-

circle pool is contained within a low, stout stone basin that is pressed against the wall. The water within is cloudy and illuminated by a crimson glow from somewhere deep beneath the surface. The air here smells rancid, like stagnant water and decay.

The depth of the pool cannot be discerned, but a wiggling silvery gleam betrays the location of a single herring swimming near the center of the murky water.

A DC 20 Perception check reveals eight evenly-spaced indentations along the top of the basin wall surrounding the pool. They are identical in appearance.

The water in the pool is magic and innately evil. It is roughly two thousand feet deep. The red glow always appears to be in the distance without a fixed location.

Touching the surface of the water deals 2d4+4 points of necrotic damage. Submerging a limb into the water deals 3d4+6 points of necrotic damage. If a character falls (or is pulled) into the water of the pool then they suffer 4d4+8 points of damage and 1d4 negative levels for each round they remain submerged.

A DC 40 Stealth check is required to capture the swimming herring. If the stealth check fails, a secondary DC 30 Reflex saving throw may be attempted to catch the fish. When the herring is pulled from the water, it permanently transforms into a meteoric iron herring idol—one of the eight idols that can be found within the dungeon that are required to solve the puzzle of the Well of Lost Souls.



The Puzzle of the Well of Lost Souls

The purpose of the Well of Lost Souls is to flood the complex in order to float *Sorrow's Snekkja* up the shaft found in **Room #4** and exit the tomb. There are a total of eight meteoric iron idols that can be found inside the dungeon. Each of them represents one of the Vikmordere constellations. To activate the Well of Lost Souls, all eight idols must be placed into the eight indentions around the pool in the order the constellations appear in the precession of the Ohjaslange (explained in the introduction of this book). This order is as follows, starting at the east and going west: wolf, bear, stag, owl, falcon, herring, tree, and serpent.

- Contraction of
- When the first idol is properly placed, the water begins to stir.
- When the second idol is properly placed, the water begins to bubble.
- When the third idol is properly placed, a spiraling maelstrom begins to whirl in the center of the bubbling pool.
- When the fourth idol is properly placed, bursts of rancid sulfurous gas begin to erupt from the depths of the pool.
- When the fifth idol is properly placed, the sound of thousands of voices moaning and screaming seem to emit from the depths of the whirlpool.
- When the sixth idol is properly placed, the red glow grows more intense, and the visages of countless wraithlike creatures with red glowing eyes swirl erratically beneath the surface of the water.
- When the seventh idol is properly placed, incorporeal clawed arms begin to reach out of the pool, grasping at any adventurer within 5 feet of the pool. They perform 1d4 touch attacks with a +20 to hit targeting each character in range. A successful hit deals 1d4 points of necrotic damage. These attacks repeat every round while the targets remain in range.





• When the final idol is properly placed, the water violently explodes, causing a massive wave that swamps the room in the unholy water, dealing 1d4+1 points of necrotic damage (**DC 25 Reflex** to negate damage).

After the massive wave, water begins to gush out of the pool and fill the room, followed by the eruption of countless spectres from the abyssal depths of the Well.

As the violent wave drenches the chamber, the water of the pool begins to gush over the basin, quickly covering the floor. Twisted

and contorted ghostly glowing-eyed figures emerge from the abyssal depths with the raging flood, shrieking and screaming in a deafening, hellish chorous. First a few. Then dozens. Soon an endless stream of spectres gush forth from the overflowing pool, gnashing their teeth and stretching their arms forward as they move towards you.





the Well of Lost Souls. Their only desire is to destroy the living in retribution for their ill fate.

The flooding waters no longer cause

damage to the adventurers. However the

engagement with the spectres is literally endless. Each adventurer is pursued by 4 of

the evil ghostly figures. If one is dispatched,

it is immediately replaced at the beginning

complex, flooding the lower chamber in

2d4 rounds, and expanding northward

across the breadth of the tomb at a rate of

3d10 feet every round. The spectres persist

in every room of the tomb, including areas

completely submerged in water.

The water quickly begins to fill the

of the next round.

SPE<TRE



XP 3,200

LE Medium undead (incorporeal) Init +7; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +17 Aura unnatural aura (30 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12 (+2 deflection, +3 Dex)

hp 52 (8d8+16)

Fort +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +9

- **Defensive Abilities** incorporeal, channel resistance +2
- Weaknesses resurrection vulnerability, sunlight powerlessness

OFFENSE

Speed fly 80 ft. (perfect)

Melee incorporeal touch +10 (1d8 plus energy drain)

Special Attacks create spawn, energy drain (2 levels, DC 16)

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 16, **Con** —, **Int** 14, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 15 **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 21

Feats Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus

Skills Fly +11, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (religion) +13, Perception +17, Stealth +14, Survival +11 Languages Common

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Create Spawn (Su) Any humanoids slain by a spectre become spectres themselves in 1d4 rounds. Spawn so created are less powerful than typical spectres, and suffer a -2 penalty on all d20 rolls and checks, receive -2 hp per HD, and only drain one level on a touch. Spawn are under the command of the spectre that created them and remain enslaved until its death, at which point they lose their spawn penalties and become full-fledged and free-willed spectres. They do not possess any of the abilities they had in life.



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Resurrection Vulnerability (Su) A *raise dead* or similar spell cast on a spectre destroys it (Will negates). Using the spell in this way does not require a material component.

Sunlight Powerlessness (Ex) Spectres are powerless in natural sunlight (not merely a *daylight* spell) and flee from it. A spectre caught in sunlight cannot attack and is staggered.

Unnatural Aura (Su) Animals, whether wild or domesticated, can sense the unnatural presence of a spectre at a distance of 30 feet. They do not willingly approach nearer than that and panic if forced to do so unless a master succeeds at a DC 25 Handle Animal, Ride, or wild empathy check. A panicked animal remains so as long as it is within 30 feet of the spectre.

Room #8A: The First Queen

The narrow stairway leads down into a wide circular room. In addition to the glowing red runes set into the walls, a series of images are



intricately placed to form a panoramic scene depicting a crowned Vikmordere queen leading several warriors and shieldmaidens into battle against oddly shaped humanoid figures that resemble trolls. In the center of the room is a stone sarcophagus. Its elegantly carved lid is etched with the detailed likeness of a beautiful woman wearing a chain shirt, pauldrons, and an eight-tined crown.

The heavy stone lid of the sarcophagus requires a **DC 60 Strength check** to slide off, casting a cloud of dust into the air. When the dust settles, a lone skeleton is revealed. The bones are wearing the same chain shirt and pauldrons shown in the carving upon the lid. The skeleton's hands are crossed over her chest, resting upon a cobweb-laden golden crown bearing eight points, each inset with a gleaming crystal spiral. The armor is a +1 chain shirt of light fortification, and a **DC 20 Appraise check** values it at about 2,500 gp. The crown is a treasure item, but also functions as one of two keys needed to open the doors leading into **Room #4**.

If the crown is removed, read the following:

As the crown slips from the boney grasp of the skeleton, a violent wind stirs from within the dusty sarcophagus. The wind launches several long stands of cobwebs twirling about in the air. A glowing red light emanates from within the skeleton's skull. Soon its eye sockets shine like burning coals. The rancid stench of death rises from below, and in a startling lurch, the ghostly, decaying visage of a long-haired woman manifests from thin air. With a howling screech she levitates ten feet above near the ceiling and glares down angrily at the disturbed crown.

This is the spirit of the ancient queen, who has been awakened by the disturbance to her tomb. She scowls with a grimace as her raspy, screeching voice commands, "Those who have touched my crown shall here perish! Kneel and accept your fate."

GM Note: The name of the queen was Handra Halvason. She was one of the twenty rulers who controlled the ancient dynasty of warlords that ruled over the Vikmordere valley before the days of the Ancestor Spirit.

The adventurers are automatically granted initiative, but the undead queen, a banshee (CR 13), focuses on annihilating those who dare disturb her tomb. She will prioritize adventurers marked as evil in **Room #2** before moving on to others.





BANSHEE



XP 25,600

CE Medium undead (incorporeal) Init +15; Senses darkvision 60 ft., hear heartbeat; Perception +31

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 26, flat-footed 14 (+4 deflection, +11 Dex, +1 dodge)
hp 161 (19d8+76)
Fort +10, Ref +19, Will +18
Defensive Abilities incorporeal; Immune undead traits

Weaknesses sunlight powerlessness

OFFENSE

Speed fly 60 ft. (perfect)
Melee incorporeal touch +26 (14d6 negative energy plus terror)
Special Attacks wail

STATISTICS

Str —, Dex 32, Con —, Int 5, Wis 20, Cha 19 Base Atk +14; CMB +25; CMD 40

Feats Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Step Up, Weapon Focus (touch), Wind Stance

Skills Fly +19, Perception +31, Sense Motive +7 Languages Common, Elven



SPECIAL ABILITIES

Hear Heartbeat (Ex) A banshee can sense the beating hearts of living creatures within 60 feet, as if it had the blindsight ability.

Wail (Su) Once per minute, a banshee may wail as a full-round action. The wail lasts until the beginning of her next turn. All creatures within 40 feet of the banshee when she begins her wail, as well as all creatures that end their turn within that radius, must make a DC 23 Fortitude save. (This save is only required once per wail.) Creatures under the effects of a fear effect take a -4 penalty on this save. Creatures that make their save are sickened for 1d6 rounds. Those that fail take 140 points of damage (as if affected by a CL 14 wail of the banshee). If a wailing banshee is damaged during a wail, she must make a Will save (DC 15 + damage taken) to maintain the wail; otherwise it ends. This is a sonic death effect. Banshee wails are supernaturally powerful, and penetrate the effect of any spell of 3rd level or lower that creates silence. The save DC is Charisma-based.



Terror (Su) A creature damaged by the banshee's touch attack must make a DC 23 Will save. Failure means that the victim cowers in fear for 1d3 rounds. If a target is protected against fear by a dispellable effect (such as *heroes' feast* or *mind blank*), the banshee's touch attempts to dispel one such effect with greater dispel magic (CL 14th). Negative energy damage caused by a banshee's touch can only harm the living; it cannot heal undead. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.



Room #8B: The First King

The stairs descend down to a small circular room. A heavy stone sarcophagus rests in the center of the chamber beneath a ten foot high



ceiling. Glowing red runes cover these walls, and are accompanied by images of a crowned Vikmordere warrior standing at the bow of a longship. He directs a horde of warriors to row towards another ship that seems to be manned by another group of barbarians.

The lid of the sarcophagus has been severely damaged. At one time, it may have held the carved shape of a humanoid figure. All that now remains is a faint outline.

The lid of the stone sarcophagus can be pushed off with a **DC 60 Strength check**. It contains a skeleton wearing a suit of gleaming full plate armor. Upon its chest is a large, polished, round steel shield bearing the symbol of a flame-wreathed fist. Beneath the shield are two elaborately engraved handaxes.

If the lid is removed or if the sarcophagus is damaged, the spirit of the ancient king, a nemhain (CR 15), will burst out and attack the party. The king's spirit surprises them and automatically gains initiative. He prioritizes characters marked as evil in **Room #2** above all others, moving on to other characters only after these foes have been defeated.

The armor is a +1 rallying full plate, the shield is a +1 defiant (giants) heavy steel shield, and the two handaxes are both +1 keen handaxes. A **DC 20 Appraise check** values the plate and shield at about 2,500 gp each, and the axes at 1,000 gp each. The crown is a treasure item, but also functions as one of two keys needed to open the doors leading into **Room #4.**

If the king is awakened, read the following:

An explosion of red light erupts throughout the room and quickly gathers into an eight foot tall glowing red cloud. From within this cloud emerges the ghostly figure of a warlord outfitted in full plate armor. He has a large shield fixed to his back, and wields two ethereal handaxes. The armored figure wears a crown and is surrounded by an half a dozen ghostly spirits that slink around him. Each of the lesser spirits bears the contorted and elongated visage of Vikmordere berserkers. Without any further warning, the figure lurches forward, swinging its ghostly blades.

GM Note: The name of this ancient king was Umbrut the Rabid. He was one of the twenty rulers that controlled the ancient dynasty of warlords who ruled over the Vikmordere Valley before the days of the Ancestor Spirit. He was considered by the ancient Vikmordere to be a ruthless tyrant, but he was also a successful war leader against the surrounding civilizations that were encroaching upon the Vikmordere Valley in his era.





NEMHAIN



XP 51,200

NE Medium undead (incorporeal) Init +12; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +28

DEFENSE

- AC 26, touch 26, flat-footed 17 (+7 deflection, +8 Dex, +1 dodge)
- **hp** 225 (18d8+144); profane regeneration 5 (electricity or good)
- Fort +13, Ref +16, Will +20
- **Defensive Abilities** channel resistance +4, incorporeal; **Immune** cold, undead traits; **Resist** acid 10, fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Melee incorporeal touch +21 (3d8 plus 1d6 Con drain)

Special Attacks bound spirits

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th; concentration +22) 3/day—harm (DC 23), slay living (DC 22), telekinesis (DC 22) 1/day—antilife shell, wall of force

STATISTICS

Str —, Dex 26, Con —, Int 23, Wis 25, Cha 25 Base Atk +13; CMB +21; CMD 39

- Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Lunge, Mobility, Toughness
- Skills Bluff +25, Diplomacy +25, Fly +37, Intimidate +28, Knowledge (arcana) +27, Knowledge (religion) +27, Perception +28, Sense Motive +28, Spellcraft +27, Stealth +29

Languages Common; telepathy 100 ft. **SQ** rejuvenation

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bound Spirits (Su) A nemhain is surrounded by a whirling cloud of spirits that are bound to him—often the spirits of close relatives or friends he had in life.

As a swift action, he can direct these bound spirits to strike at any creature within 30 feet as a ranged touch attack (with an attack bonus of +21). These spirits may be used to cause damage as if the nemhain had touched the target with his incorporeal touch, or they can be used to deliver a *harm* or *slay living* effect. Using these spirits to deliver one of these spell-like abilities is a swift action; the nemhain does not need to take a standard action to cast the spell-like ability, but it still counts against the number of times per day he can use that spell-like ability.

The nemhain can also send these spirits as a group up to 1 mile away to act as scouts; they have a fly speed of 60 feet (perfect). He can observe and listen through them, but as long as they don't share him space, he can't use them to deliver ranged touch attacks. These spirits are impervious to almost all attacks and magic, save the following: *dispel evil, raise dead*, or *resurrection*. Such spells cause the spirits to vanish and to be useless to the nemhain for 1 hour. *True resurrection* makes the spirits useless for 24 hours.

- **Profane Regeneration (Su)** This ability functions like regeneration except the nemhain possesses it despite the fact that he lacks a Constitution score. A nemhain reduced to 0 hit points is staggered instead of destroyed while his profane regeneration is active. As long as his profane regeneration is active, a nemhain ignores all damage that would reduce him hit points below 0.
- **Rejuvenation (Su)** The nemhains is tied to his sarcaophagus. Until the stone vessel is comletely shattered, the destroyed nemhain automatically rejuvenates back to full hit points 1d4 days after he is destroyed, lurking witin its tomb. If the sarcophagus is resealed with the crown still inside, the nemhain will return inside of the sealed stone container after 1d4 rounds.







Rooms #8C-#8L: The Ten Tombs of Old

Each of these rooms is a nearly identical fifteen foot wide circular tomb containing a single nondescript stone sarcophagus at its center. The contents of these rooms are randomly determined when the adventurers enter them. Use the charts below to establish what each location holds.

Inside all of the sarcophaguses, in addition to any other treasure randomly determined, is a single palm-sized crystal shard. These must be collected and utilized at the entrance to **Room #5** to open the portal into the crystal chamber.

TABLE 8-1: CONTENTS OF THE TOMBS OF OLD

| 1d6 | Contents |
|-----|---|
| 1 | Trap, Encounter, Magic Item, Treasure |
| 2 | Encounter, Treasure |
| 3 | Trap, Magic Item |
| 4 | Encounter, Magic Item |
| 5 | Trap, Encounter |
| 6 | Trap, Encounter, Magic Item, Treasure |

Traj encour kings tombs attacki #2. All shards sarcop of one the ren and Ro ancient to dete the foll

Traps are triggered upon entrance. encounters are the spirits of the entombed kings and queens, awakened when the tombs are disturbed. These spirits prioritize attacking anyone marked as evil in **Room #2**. All magic items, treasures, and crystal shards are located inside the respective sarcophagi along with the skeletal remains of one individual. Rooms #8C-#8G contain the remains of ancient Vikmordere queens, and Rooms #8H-#8L contain the remains of ancient kings. Depending on the roll results to determine the contents of each tomb, use the following tables:

| IABLE 8-2: IRAPS | |
|------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1d6 | Trap |
| 1 – 2 | Maximized Fireball Trap (CR 13) |
| 3 - 4 | Harm Trap (CR 14) |
| 5 – 6 | Flaming Spear Trap (CR 18) |



TABLE 8-3: EN<OUNTER

| 1d6 | Encounter |
|-------|----------------|
| 1 – 4 | Vættir (CR 8) |
| 5 – 6 | Spectre (CR 7) |

TABLE 8-4: MAGIK ITEMS

| 1d6 | Contents |
|-----|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | 1d4 magic potions |
| 2 | 1d4 lesser-minor wondrous items |
| 3 | 1d4 greater-minor wondrous items |
| 4 | 1d4 lesser-medium wondrous items |
| 5 | 1d4 greater-medium wondrous items |
| 6 | 1d4 lesser-major wondrous items |

TABLE 8-5: RANDOM TREASURE

| 1d6 | Contents |
|-------|--|
| 1 – 2 | 1d10 x 100 gp, 1d20 x 200 sp 1d4 gems (50 gp each) |
| 3 - 4 | 1d12 x 100 gp, 2d12 x 100 sp, 2d4 gems (50 gp each) |
| 5 - 6 | 1d20 x 10 pp, 1d20 x 100 gp, 2d4 gems (100 gp each) |



MAXIMIZED FIREBALL TRAP (R 13

Glowing red runes that cover the walls of this chamber momentarily darken, then flash with a blinding crimson glare. A massive sphere of roiling fire manifests in the center of the chamber, just above the sarcophagus.

XP 25,600

Type magic; Perception DC 31; Disable Device DC 31

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity (alarm); **Reset** none **Effect** spell effect (*fireball*, 60 fire damage, DC 14 Reflex save for half damage); multiple targets (all targets in a 20-ft.radius burst)

HARM TRAP



When passing through the narrow entrance to the tomb, an eerie darkness descends. In the distance drums rhythmically beating as a hushed and hoarse voice begins to chant indiscernible words. After several syllables the voice fades, leaving the realization that the thumping drum was nothing more than the sound of your own heartbeat.

XP 38,400

Type magic; Perception DC 31; Disable Device DC 31

EFFECTS

- **Trigger** proximity (alarm); **Reset** automatic;
- Bypass password
- Effect spell effect (*harm*, +6 melee touch, 130 damage, DC 19 Will save for half, cannot be reduced to less than 1 hit point)

FLAMING SPEAR TRAP



From the darkness of the opposite wall of the chamber, a large spear darts through the room. As it crosses over the top of the stone sarcophagus, the head bursts into bright orange flame that illuminates the entire chamber.

XP 153,600

Type mechanical; Perception DC 30; Disable Device DC 30

EFFECTS

Trigger sight (*true seeing*); **Reset** manual **Effect** Atk +20 ranged (1d8+5 plus 6d6 fire damage)





VÆTTIR



The twisted and icy corpse of this creature is covered in black frost-burnt flesh, and moves in stiff lurches.

XP 4,800

NE Medium undead Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0 Aura draining aura (30 ft., DC 16)

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 9, flat-footed 24 (-1 Dex, +15 natural)

hp 54 (12d8); fast healing 10

Fort +4, **Ref** +3, **Will** +8

DR 10/bludgeoning; Immune cold, undead traits

Weaknesses hibernating corpse

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft.

Melee slam +15 (1d4+6 plus energy drain) Special Attacks energy drain (2 levels, DC 16)

STATISTICS

Str 22, Dex 8, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 11 Base Atk +9; CMB +15; CMD 24 SQ haunt

SPECIAL ABILITIES



Draining Aura (Su) Living creatures within 30 feet of a vættir must succeed on a DC 16 Fortitude save each round. On a failed save, the creature suffers one negative level and the vættir gains 5 temporary hit points. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Haunt (Su) A vættir is the physical manifestation of one or more restless spirits of desperation and guilt. This acts as a haunt (see *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Game Mastery Guide* for details), except the haunt can only be permanently destroyed when the vættir is destroyed, and is triggered by the vættir dealing at least one negative level with its draining aura. A vættir's haunt usually employs one of the following spells: *crushing* despair, icy prison^{UM}, overwhelming grief, sleet storm, and terrible remorse^{UM}.

Hibernating Corpse (Su) A vættir that has not gained temporary hit points from its draining aura or energy drain ability in the last 24 hours becomes immobile and helpless. It appears as a normal frozen corpse, unless observers can succeed on a DC 23 Knowledge (religion) or DC 28 Perception skill check. Divination spells and effects work normally on the vættir and may reveal its presence.

Room #9A: Tomb of the Mother Witch

The stairs descend into a burial chamber. The western wall is concave. In it is a statue of a robed woman with her arms outstretched. A small

translucent red flame burns in both of the statue's outstretched hands. The wall behind her is adorned with an elaborate relief carving of a pine forest laden with wildlife native to the Vikmordere Valley. A single stone sarcophagus sits in the curved space just in front of the statue. The vessel's lid is engraved with deeply etched arcane runes. The twenty foot high ceiling in this room is almost obscured by layers of dusty spider webs that shift in a wavelike pattern as your movements disturb the still air. To the north, another stairway descends even further down into the tomb.

The statue depicts Nanat, an ancient Vikmordere witch who rose to power in tandem with her husband, Vodan, a legendary Vikmordere shaman. They were part of a dynasty that once ruled the valley. Together they used their magic to fight against the Høyonde (half-giants) who once threatened to overthrow Vikmordere rule of the valley. During their reign, the half-giants were nearly wiped out, and those who remained went into hiding for generations. The sarcophagus contains only her skeletal remains wrapped in a brittle and decaying veil.





The red flames are heatless and can only be doused by holy water or water sourced from Serpent Lake. If such water is poured over them, each flame magically transforms into a fist-sized faceted ruby of pristine quality.

The rubies are not magical. A DC 20 Appraise check will reveal they are worth about 10,000 gp each. Though the gems offer no magic of their own, they are flawless and completely transparent. If both gems are utilized in tandem as a lens they can reveal six runes upon the sarcophagus that glow brightly when seen through the rubies. These glowing runes cannot be detected by any other means, including true seeing, detect magic, wish, limited wish, or miracle.

If all six runes are touched simultaneously by living creatures, the statue of the witch becomes momentarily animated and kneels before the adventurers. This reveals a small hidden compartment directly behind where it stood moments before.

Inside the two foot by two foot square compartment is a large carving of a woman's head. The features seem to match those of the kneeling statue, except that there are only two empty sockets where the eyes should be.

If the two rubies are placed into these sockets, they lock into place and begin to glow brightly. An ethereal, translucent figure of Nanat coalesces as she sits up from within the sarcophagus, passing through the stone cover if the vessel remains sealed.

The ghostly figure is an illusion. She rises and walks to the center of the chamber, while another form—a white doe—walks from the east stair and approaches the woman. Nanat reaches out and gently pats the doe on the head. There is a blinding white flash and both figures vanish, leaving behind only a single smooth white stone sphere upon the chamber floor.

The smooth stone is not magical, but may be used to unlock the secret compartment behind the shaman's statue in Room #9B.



Room #9B: Tomb of the **Father Shaman**

Descending the stairway reveals a room that is thirty feet wide east to west, and fifteen feet north to south. The eastern wall is concave and bears a statue of a Vikmordere shaman wearing a headdress bearing massive deer antlers. Its arms are outstretched, hands *cupped together as if to hold something—yet* they remain empty. The carefully engraved scene covering the concave wall behind the statue depicts hundreds of dead bodies piled on top of one another, with a small standing figure nearby. The corpses are much larger than the standing figure, suggesting they are some form of giant. In front of the statue is a lone stone sarcophagus devoid of any markings. To the north another stairway descends into darkness.

This is the tomb of the legendary shaman king, Vodan. He ruled in tandem with his wife, Nanat, the Vikmordere witch queen.









Though much of ancient Vikmordere legend has been forgotten, especially from before the days of the Ancestor Spirit, tales of how Vodan waged (and won) an epic war against the half-giants of the Valley persist to this day. There are even a few smaller clans of Vikmordere that claim him as their patron spirit. These people dedicate their efforts to destroying the tribes of Høyonde which inhabit the valley.

Strangely, the tomb contains only the decaying skeleton of a ten-horned buck, and a black metal dagger with a large honey beryl gem set into the pommel.



GM Note: There are a few obscure stories that say that Vodan never died, and instead relinquished his



rule after his wife's death. This legend says that the shaman used his powerful magic to bind his soul to a stag in the Whitewood forests—the traditional home of the Høyonde. He later killed all the Høyonde after driving them into the mountains surrounding the valley. This information is revealed with a **DC 40 Knowledge** (history) check.

The dagger found in the sarcophagus is a +2 keen dagger of wounding.

If the white stone sphere has been recovered from **Room #9B** and is placed into the hands of the shaman statue, it becomes momentarily animated, grasping its hands tightly around the stone orb. The statue then kneels toward the PCs before becoming once again unmoving. In the wall behind where the statue stood is a small compartment containing a faintly glowing white pine amulet.

AMULET OF WHITEWOOD

Aura overwhelming illusion; CL 20th (Artifact) Slot neck; Price 48,000 gp; Weight —

DESCRIPTION

A simple round amulet crafted of white pine wood and seared with a stylized runic stag. This hangs from a simple knotted sinew cord adorned with a few multicolored glass beads.

The Amulet of Whitewood allows its user to wildshape into the form of a doe or stag (depending on preferred gender) three times per day as a standard action.

Once per day, the user of the amulet can summon a heard of ghostly white stags (4d4+4 in number) that run to the nearest source of drinkable water. The stags are only an illusion, but persist until they locate clean water or until the amulet is used again to trigger this effect.

If the amulet is seen by any stag or doe of the Whitewood (see *Winter's Roar: Vikmordere Bestiary* for more info), the creature welcomes them into their forbidden forest. The wearer and their company are treated as trusted allies as long as no intentional harm comes to any beast living in the forest.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *major image, wild shape*; **Cost** 24,000 gp





Room #10A: Tomb of the Ascended

This chamber bears concave north and south walls separated by twenty five feet. It is fifteen feet wide from



east to west. Three sarcophaguses carved from solid stone rest side by side in the center of the chamber. The air here seems oddly refreshing, in contrast to the stale, dank air that permeates most of the tomb. The fifty foot high celling of this chamber is elongated, domed, and bears brilliant gold and silver knotwork across its entire surface. The designs depict stylized longships that appear to sail high above the peak of a symbolic representation of Ighdenholm. The lids of each of the sarcophagi bear an identical symbol: a key enshrined in a circle of arcane runes.

GM Note: These three sarcophagi contain the remains of three Vikmordere generations of queens. The first is Elsa Athadotter, the second is her daughter, Alfsiga Elsadotter, and the last is Alfsiga's daughter, Ingrid Alfsdotter. These three queens ruled over the ancient Vikmordere dynasty during its most peaceful century, and ushered in an era of prosperity and learning. Their reigns brought the Vikmordere people great knowledge and powerful magic. In the centuries after their deaths this dread knowledge would lead to the eventual demise of the old ways.

The three bodies contained in this tomb have been perfectly preserved by magic, and appear as three beautiful middle-aged blonde-haired Vikmordere women. All three are garbed only in simple silken veils. Each grasps a bundle of vibrant reinrose flowers. Each wears a simple silver, featureless ring upon her right ring finger.

If any of the three bundles of flowers are disturbed, read the following:

As the flowers are touched, all of A the reinroses instantly wilt, dry, and shatter into brittle pieces. The three queens groggily open their eyes. After each of them draws a deep breath, their faces begin to contort in agony. They scream in anguish as their bodies suddenly being to age, wrinkle, and decay. Their fingernails and hair quickly grow and curl. Their wrinkled skin tightens around their bones and begins to rot away as their screams fade into wispy breaths. In a matter of moments only their boney skeletons remain, and then even those bones degrade into nothing more than piles of dust; each crowned with the remaining silver ring.

Each of the rings are *minor ring of energy resistance* (cold).

1d4 rounds after the queens' bodies have decayed, the dust of their remains explosively bursts upwards, covering the adventurers head to toe. The incorporeal forms of the three women transform into white wailers (CR 13) and rise from their sarcophagi with the intent of destroying those who disturbed their resting place. They prioritize their attacks on whoever touched the flowers first, then any character emblazoned in Room #2 with the mark that singles them out as having an evil alignment. Only after these characters are dealt with do they move on to the rest of the party.





WHITE WAILER



XP 25,600

CE Medium undead (incorporeal) **Init** +15; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., lifesense 60 ft.; Perception +21 **Aura** burning screams (40 ft., DC 24)

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 27, flat-footed 15 (+5 deflection, +11 Dex, +1 dodge) hp 180 (19d8+95) Fort +11, Ref +17, Will +10

Defensive Abilities incorporeal; Immune cold, undead traits

Weaknesses vulnerability to fire

OFFENSE

Speed fly 60 ft. (perfect)

Melee incorporeal touch +25 (6d6 negative energy plus 6d6 fire and burn)

Special Attacks blight (190 ft., DC 23), burn (1d6 fire and negative energy, DC 24), evil eye (7 rounds, -4 penalty, DC 23), misfortune (3 rounds, DC 23)

STATISTICS

Str —, Dex 32, Con —, Int 18, Wis 8, Cha 21 Base Atk +14; CMB +25; CMD 40

- **Feats** Combat Reflexes, Death from Above^{UC}, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Following Step^{APG}, Lunge, Mobility, Step Up, Step Up and Strike, Wind Stance
- Skills Fly +41, Intimidate +27, Knowledge (arcana) +26, Knowledge (religion) +26, Perception +21, Sense Motive +21, Spellcraft +26, Stealth +33

Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Infernal

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Burn (Su) As the universal monster rule, except half of the white wailer's burn damage is fire and half is negative energy. Additionally, this damage begins at 1d6, but increases by 1d6 for each consecutive round a creature remains on fire. **Burning Screams (Su)** A white wailer can constantly scream as she did when the fire claimed her, and it in fact requires effort for her to stop. Any creature within 40 feet of the white wailer must succeed on a DC 24 Will save each round or catch fire (as the white wailer's burn special ability). A white wailer must use a swift action to suppress this aura for 1 round. This is a mind-affecting sonic effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Room #10B: Tomb of the Founders

To the north and south of this twenty-five foot chamber the walls are concave. Unlike the rest of the



tomb complex, no glowing runes appear on the nearby walls. Instead, a strange fog lingers around the floor of the chamber. The air here is frigidly cold—chilled by an obviously unnatural source. The far western wall is fifteen feet from the entrance, and three stone sarcophagi linger in the center of the room as the fog swirls around their roughly cut edges. A strange hissing sound constantly fills the room, and the three carved vessels at its core appear to be covered in a thin layer of frost.

GM Note: The three sarcophagi located here house the oldest remains to be found in the Tomb of Twenty Kings. Here lie the bodies

of the three brother Jarls who founded the ancient Vikmordere dynasty. Not originally buried here, their names were long forgotten by the time their remains were relocated to the tomb complex. The few obscure historical references to them refer to them as simply, "The Three Jarls."

They were killed in the great battle with the ancient glacial gods who controlled the valley in prehistory. While they were victorious in defeating their enemies, the three brothers paid with their lives. Their bodies were cursed by the ancient gods to forever suffer endless winter. Their bones literally draw the cold from the air





around them. This is why the entire tomb complex maintains a temperate climate, and why the area outside the entrance was vibrant with foliage despite the curse of unending winter.

The mist on the floor obscures a dozen frostbites (CR 8)—the source of the constant hissing sound. They will remain dormant until a creature steps into the lingering mist, and then they will set upon those entering the tomb.

If the sarcophagi are opened, an unbearable cold fills the air. All creatures within a 100 foot radius suffer 3d6 cold damage every round they remain in the area of effect or until the lids are replaced upon the vessels. If an adventurer touches the icy bones of the Jarls, they suffer 4d8 points of cold damage, and become frostbitten. If wearing gloves, this damage is reduced to 4d4.

Hidden beneath the skeleton in the center sarcophagus is a longsword with the word "ISKYSS" engraved upon it; this is the magical weapon's name. *Iskyss* is a +5 *icyburst adamantine longsword*. The wielder of the sword suffers 2 points of cold damage every round it is wielded. It was once the blade of the eldest of the three Jarls, but it was affected by the curse cast by the ancient glacial gods, and hidden here to be forever entombed with The Three Jarls.

KR8

FROSTBITE

A large horned viper with white and azure patterned scales coils ready to strike. Its scales glisten like undisturbed frost, and miniscule ice crystals rim its wide maw.

XP 4,800 N Medium magical beast Init +6; Senses low-light vision, scent; Perception +17 Aura brittle aura (20 ft., DC 19)

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 19 (+2 Dex, +9 natural)

hp 95 (10d10+40) **Fort** +11, **Ref** +9, **Will** +7

Immune cold

Weaknesses vulnerability to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee bite +15 (1d8+7 plus 2d6 cold damage, poison, and grab)

Special Attacks constrict (1d8+7 plus 2d6 cold), hypothermia

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 15, **Con** 18, **Int** 1, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 2 **Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 25 (can't be tripped)

Feats Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Lunge, Power Attack, Vital Strike

Skills Perception +17

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Brittle Aura (Su) Creatures within 20-feet of the frostbite must succeed on a DC 19 Fortitude save each round or take 1d6 cold damage. Objects within the frostbite's aura have their hardness halved. The save DC is Constitution-based.









Frostbite Poison (Su) Bite—injury; save Fort DC 19, frequency 1/round for 2 rounds, effect 1d4 Dexterity and 2d6 cold damage, cure 1 save. A creature suffering from Dexterity damage from frostbite poison is reduced to half speed and takes a -2 circumstance penalty to attack and damage rolls with wielded weapons. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Hypothermia (Su) A creature harmed by cold damage caused by a frostbite must succeed on a DC 19 Fortitude save or become fatigued. The save DC is Constitution-based.

PART 6-B. SORROW BECOMES FURY

Having sailed down the flooding waters of Igdenholm, the longship can row across the violent surface of Serpent Lake. The Maiden Winds that surround Meyla Island will have no effect on *Sorrow's Snekkja* when the ship and its crew are in incorporeal form.

Making landfall upon the isle requires no additional effort. However, as the vessel nears the shore, its magic begins to wanedampened by the dark forces fueling the Curse of Endless Winter. The ship completely loses its ability to maintain incorporeal form and its ghostly crew vanishes once it is beached upon the island. This dampening effect persists until the Ice Queen's magic crystal, the *Wintyrsyrd*, is destroyed in **Part 7**.

PART 7-A. THE MAIDENS OF MEYLA ISLE

GM Note: Triggered magical effects of magic items only have a 30% chance of functioning on Meyla Isle. Spells that are cast on the isle only have 50% chance of functioning. These effects occur because of the magic dampening properties of the *Wintyrsyrd*, and persists until it is destroyed.

Meyla Isle is a rocky island that rises almost a hundred feet to a rocky snowcapped peak. The only available approach is a small two hundred and fifty foot wide beachfront on the eastern side of the island. It leads about a hundred feet inland before reaching the base of the stony spire.



MAIDENS OF MEYLA ISLE THE IKE QUEEN'S LAIR

2A

2B







Area #1: The Snowy Shore of Meyla Island

The last of the longship's magic seems to fade as it lands upon the rocky island's eastern shore—a



snow-covered sandy beach. High above, a jagged spire of stone rises like a beacon, surrounded by a dulled horizon of windswept water and crashing waves. The island's sharp and erratic form is emphasized by several immense shards of ice—some as large as great halls—jutting upwards to form an uneven crown that circles the entire island.

Directly to the north appears the remains of an ancient Vikmordere longship. Its battered and broken wooden frame is bound in an icy coffin, and it appears to have been here for ages.

Gazing around the area, you see eddies that swirl across the powdery snow that covers the wet sand. Directly to the west, a darkened hollow betrays the location of the mouth of a cave that continues into the towering stone monolith at the center of the isle.

If the shipwreck is investigated, in the remains of the ship can be found a wooden shield frozen beneath several inches of ice. The shield bears a symbol of a silver herring. A **DC 40 Knowledge (history) check** reveals that this particular symbol is the totem of the Hakefing clan of Vikmordere, which mysteriously vanished a hundred years ago.

When the adventurers approach the entrance to the ice cave, they encounter five darkly robed figures who rush out towards them. The figures are members of the **Cult of the Black Serpent** (members of the now defunct Raven clan of Vikmordere). See **page 121** for their statistics. Each of them is accompanied by a frost wisp (CR 8) that defends them.

FROST WISP



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A sparkling small matrix of ice crystals darts about erratically through the air, leaving a trail of frost particles in its wake.

XP 4,800

LN Small aberration (air) Init +9; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +18

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 21, flat-footed 16 (+5 deflection, +5 Dex, +1 size) hp 102 (12d8+48) Fort +8, Ref +11, Will +11 Immune cold, magic Weaknesses vulnerability to fire

OFFENSE

Speed fly 60 ft. (perfect) **Melee** +15 touch (6d8 cold plus bloodfreeze)

STATISTICS

Str 1, **Dex** 21, **Con** 18, **Int** 15, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 14 **Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 19

Feats Agile Maneuvers, Dazzling Display, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (touch)





Skills Acrobatics +20, Escape Artist +20, Fly +15, Intimidate +17, Perception +18, Stealth +24

Languages Common (cannot speak) SQ helix

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bloodfreeze (Su) A living creature damaged by a frost wisp's touch has their blood chilled and then frozen. The creature must succeed on a DC 20 Fortitude save. On a failed save the creature gains the fatigued condition. A fatigued creature that is damaged and fails the save gains the exhausted condition. An exhausted creature that is damaged and fails the save gains the staggered condition. A staggered living creature that is damaged and fails the save becomes paralyzed. These conditions can be removed with a DC 20 Heal check or any amount of magical healing. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Helix (Su) Three or more frost wisps can cast any of the following spells as spell-like abilities: *cone of cold*, *control weather*, *sleet storm*. Each of the frost wisps must be within 10 feet of each other and devote a full-round action to use this ability. The caster level of these spell like abilities is 12th and the DC is equal to 12 + the spell's level.

- **Immunity to Magic (Ex)** Frost wisps are immune to all spells and spell-like abilities that allow spell resistance, except spells with the fire descriptor.
- **Partially Incorporeal (Ex)** A frost wisp is immune to all nonmagical attack forms, but takes full damage when hit by spells or magic weapons. A frost wisp can enter or pass through solid objects as an incorporeal creature. It cannot be heard with Perception checks if it doesn't wish to be, and nonvisual senses are not effective.

Area #2A: Ice Cave Entrance

Surprisingly, the fifteen foot wide mouth of the cave is illuminated. A soft blue glow is cast across everything in sight, light traveling and refracting through the many veins and shards of solid ice that run throughout the rocky spire of the island.

The entrance opens into a cavernous chamber that is one hundred and fifty feet at its widest. Directly to the southwest is a large, irregularly shaped pit that drops off into darkness, though a series of shifting blue lights and white flashes illuminate its visible edges. The strong winds outside cause a warbling whistle as they are deflected off the edges of the entrance corridor.

Directly to the southeast is a group of five unmoving humanoid shapes covered in frost. Each seems to be posed as if locked in battle, still wielding icy shields and weapons. Behind the figures is an extremely bright cerulean glow, though a sharp decline in the floor obscures its source.

Far across the pit on the western wall of the cavern is a corridor that leads deeper into the complex.

The pit is the nest of 120 frost wisps. The horde of sparkling icy sprites do not leave the nest unless directly attacked. However, there is a 30% chance per hour that 3d4 frost wisps leave the pit to soar around the cavern on their way outside. If the adventurers are in the massive cavern when this occurs, the approaching group of frost wisps will attack.

The five figures are the corpses of Vikmordere warriors from the Hakefing clan. They all face south with weapons held high and shields raised. A century ago their small clan made the voyage across Serpent Lake, and somehow braved the Maiden Winds to make landfall. They intended to slay the Ice Queen in retaliation for a particularly harsh winter. They were killed, and their frozen corpses have stood motionless in their illfated final charge ever since.





Area #2B: The Vigil Wall

The floor is very slippery here. Intense focus is required to maintain stable footing. Suddenly, four humanoid figures emerge from

the thick ice encasing the cavern walls. The beings have the appearance of Vikmordere warriors, but are translucent and consist of solid ice.

The swath of stone between the north wall of the cavern and the pit is slightly inclined, and encased in slippery ice. If the adventurers brace themselves against the wall as they cross the forty foot patch of ice, they are able to continue. Any adventurer attempting to pass the ice without holding onto the wall must succeed a DC 22 Reflex saving throw or slip into the pit (Area #3).

The four icy vigils, who were perfectly blended into the ice of the cavern walls, approach the adventurers and initiate combat. While they do engage in direct combat, their primary goal will be pushing their adversaries over the edge of the pit and into Area #3.

KY VIGIL



This carved figure is fashioned from pristine ice in the likeness of a Vikmordere warrior. Light passing through the figure casts an eerie illuminated silhouette.

XP 12,800

N Medium construct (cold) **Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 11, flat-footed 24 (+1 Dex, +14 natural, +2 shield) hp 97 (14d10+20) Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +5 Defensive Abilities reform; DR 10/ adamantine; Immune construct traits, cold, magic Weaknesses vulnerability to fire

(1d8+8/19-20/x3 plus 1d6 cold)

Special Attacks create spawn

STATISTICS

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Str 1, Dex 21, Con 18, Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 14 Base Atk +9; CMB +13; CMD 19

Melee +1 frost battleaxe +20/+15/+10

Feats Agile Maneuvers, Dazzling Display, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (touch)

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Skills Acrobatics +20, Escape Artist +20, Fly +15, Intimidate +17, Perception +18, Stealth +24

Languages Common (cannot speak) SQ helix

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Create Spawn (Su) Whenever the icy vigil kills a living humanoid creature, as an immediate action it can attempt to use a small shard of the creature's soul to give a simulacrum it has created with the imbue ice ability true autonomy. The simulacrum must be within line of sight when the icy vigil kills the humanoid creature and the humanoid is permitted a DC 17 Will save to negate this. On a failed save, the creature is treated as if having died from a death effect and the icy vigil can create a new simulacrum without destroying the first. The icy vigil may create any number of simulacrums in this manner.
- Icy Armory (Su) An icy vigil can form any shield or weapon it is proficient in from ice, or alter anything already created in this manner as a standard action. Shields created in this manner have a +1 magical enhancement bonus. Weapons created in this manner have a +1 enhancement bonus and the frost magical enhancement. However, the shields and weapons have half their normal hardness and hit points. Shields and weapons created in this manner melt as soon as they leave the icy vigil's hands or the icy vigil is destroyed.
- **Imbue Ice (Sp)** Once per day as a full-round action, an icy vigil can create a simulacrum as a spelllike ability. The icy vigil may only have one simulacrum created in this manner at a time. Simulacrums created by an icy vigil always appear to be completely composed of ice and cannot be confused for living creatures. If the icy vigil creates a new simulacrum, the previous simulacrum is immediately destroyed.

- **Immunity to Magic (Ex)** As an ice golem (see *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Bestiary for details*).
- **Reform (Su)** Like a ghost, an icy vigil is difficult to permanently destroy. It often requires unique circumstances, a certain weapon, the permission of the vigil's last living relative, or something similar. Otherwise, the "destroyed" icy vigil reforms a new body from nearby ice in 2d4 days. If this body is destroyed prior to it being reformed, the icy vigil simply begins again with some new source of ice.
- Warrior (Ex) An icy vigil counts as a fighter of its Hit Dice for the purposes of feat prerequisites. The icy vigil is proficient in all martial weapons and shields.

Area #2C: Ritual of the Ice Maidens

Upon the frost-dusted stone floor of this great ice cavern, two interlocking circles of arcane runes glow with an intense blue light. In the center of the circles is a gleaming sheet of solid ice. The cavern's nature is announced by the occasional cracking sound of ice being shifted from the heavy winds outside, but is otherwise quiet. A series of hushed feminine laughs emit from the direction of the magic circles.

GM Note: The circles of blue glowing arcane runes mark the location of an altar where the Ice Maidens teleport across the wintery waste. By using their icestriding ability to pass through the circles' center, they enter a vast network of ice that crawls its way across the frozen depths of Serpent Lake and the icy permafrost of the Vikmordere valley.

The adventurers are being watched by three ice maidens safely hidden beneath the icy surface of the portal. As the adventurers draw closer, their three sinuous and icy bodies emerge from the portal and they step forth to confront the intruders.





Con an and

Stepping nearer to the glowing arcane circles reveals three figures emerging from the icy center. Their feminine forms rise as if emerging



feminine forms rise as if emerging from water until the trio stands firmly upon the center of the fifteen foot wide circle of ice. Slender women of obvious fey descent, their eyes are pale blue-grey and their skin is a vibrant blue hue that glistens with frost. Clad in stark white gowns, their faces are crowned by a brow of natural ice shards, as are their fingers, which form long curled icy claws.

One of the women points toward the group, and says with a melodious voice, "You... were not invited. How dare you trespass upon the lair of our Queen!?" Her voice grows more stern and angry and her expression intensifies as she continues, "We have seen you... heroes of the Vikmordere." Glancing at her sisters, the ice maidens speak in unison, alternating between words, as they step forth from the glowing arcane runes, "You shall adorn our halls in repentance for your pride."

The three ice maidens attempt to draw the battle back to the circle, or at the very least keep it nearby. As each is reduced to half hp or less, she will attempt to flee back into the ice portal.

KR 19

KE MAIDEN

XP 204,800

Elf Sorcerer 10/Dragon Disciple 10 N Medium humanoid (elf) Init +7; Senses blindsense 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +20

DEFENSE

- AC 32, touch 18, flat-footed 28 (+4 armor, +3 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 insight, +10 natural) hp 222 10d6+10d12+120)
- Fort +18, Ref +12, Will +17; +2 vs. enchantments
- DR 10/adamantine; Immune cold, paralysis, sleep

OFFENSE

- Speed 30 ft., fly 90 ft. (average)
- **Melee** 2 claws +15 (1d6+1 plus 1d6 cold), bite +15 (1d6+1 plus 1d6 cold)
- Range +1 composite longbow +16/+11/+6 (1d8+2/x3)
- **Special Attacks** breath weapon (30-foot cone, 20d6 cold, DC 27, 4/day, claws (2, 1d6+1 plus 1d6 cold, magic, 10 rounds. day), dragon bite

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 20th;

concentration +27)

2/day: *form of the dragon II* (white dragon only)

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 17th; concentration +24)

8th (4/day): form of the dragon III, polar ray, sunburst (DC 27)

7th (7/day): delayed blast fireball (DC 26), form of the dragon II, mass hold person (DC 24), prismatic spray

6th (7/day): control water, disintegrate (DC 23), form of the dragon I, freezing sphere (DC 25)

5th (7/day): blight (DC 22), cone of cold (DC 24), dream, spell resistance, wall of force

4th (7/day): dimension door, fear (DC 21), ice storm, stoneskin, wall of ice (DC 23)

3rd (8/day): displacement, fly, lightning bolt (DC 22), sleet storm, vampiric touch

2nd (8/day): darkvision, gust of wind (DC 21), invisibility, resist energy, see invisibility, web (DC 19)

1st (8/day): charm person (DC
18), expeditious retreat, mage armor, magic missile, shield, silent image (DC 18)

Oth (at will)—dancing lights, detect magic, disrupt undead, mage hand, mending, ray of frost, read magic, resistance, touch of fatigue (DC 17)

Bloodline draconic (white)







TACTICS

Before Combat The dragon disciple casts *stoneskin*.

During Combat The dragon disciple casts *shield* and spell resistance on herself, then takes flight and rains down destructive spells augmented with Empower Spell.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 16, **Con** 20, **Int** 16, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 25 **Base Atk** +12; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 31

- Feats Combat Casting, Dodge, Empower Spell, Eschew Materials, Great Fortitude. Greater Spell Focus (evocation), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mobility, Nimble Moves, Quicken Spell, Spell Focus (evocation), Spell Penetration, Toughness, Weapon Finesse
- Skills Climb +6, Diplomacy +12, Fly +11, Heal +5, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (geography, local, nature, nobility, planes) +8, Perception +20, Sense Motive +5, Spellcraft +11 (+13 to identify magic item properties), Stealth +13, Survival +5, Use Magic Device +15
- Languages Auran, Common, Draconic, Elven, Goblin
- **SQ** blood of dragons, bloodline arcana (cold spells deal +1 damage per die), elven magic, weapon familiarity, wings
- **Combat Gear** wand of cure serious wounds (10 charges), wand of lightning bolt (10 charges); **Other Gear** +1 composite longbow (+1 Str) with 20 arrows, amulet of natural armor +3, belt of mighty constitution +6, boots of the winterlands, bracers of armor +4, cloak of resistance +3, dusty rose prism ioun stone, headband of alluring charisma +6, ring of force shield, ring of protection +3, 3,099 gp

Area #2D: Dance of the Ice Maidens

The entire floor south of the pit is encased in a thick sheet of ice and steeply inclines toward the massive opening edge. The wall to the south is also encased in thick, slippery ice. A **DC 30 Reflex saving throw** is required to traverse the icy floor. Failure means falling into the pit (**Area #3**).

If the adventurers are driven back to this area while in combat with the ice maidens from **Area #2C**, then they use their icestride special ability on the floor and wall to slink down into the ice and reappear adjacent their targets before again returning to the ice. They will continue this pattern in an attempt to keep the adventurers separated and avoid being attacked by multiple targets.

Area #3: The Frost Wisp Pit

The jagged edges of this deep pit descend fifty feet to its base It is lined with thick ice that glistens in the sparkling white and blue light

of the horde of ice wisps that nest within. More than a hundred of the tiny creatures flutter and spiral within the hole. The base of the pit appears to be filled with dozens of scattered skeletons, broken shields, and weapons that show the telltale signs of frost and frigid cold.

The pit contains a total of 120 frost wisps. Any living creature that falls into the pit is immediately attacked by five wisps, and when one is destroyed another takes its place. The frost wisps do not leave the pit to follow a target they are engaged with.

The walls of the pit are covered in thick ice. A **DC 40 Climb check** is required to climb out of the pit unassisted by a rope or similar means. The skeletons at the bottom are the boney remains of more than a dozen Vikmordere warriors. The armor and weapons are all heavily rusted and covered in frost. The wooden shields, likewise encased, bear the sigil of a silver herring.

A DC 30 Perception check reveals that one solitary weapon is devoid of rust: a plain-looking battleaxe. The weapon is encased in ice that requires a minimum of 25 hp damage [hardness 0] to shatter. The weapon is a +2 battleaxe.







Area #4: A Slippery Slope

This long winding corridor descends to the west and is covered in a sheet of slippery ice. A **DC 30 Reflex saving throw** is required to prevent an adventurer from sliding down the ramp if they approach from the southern corridor in **Area #2C**.

Halfway along the tunnel, located directly at the end of the icy ramp, is a *cone of cold* trap. An adventurer who fails their saving throw and tumbles down the ramp and into the trap is considered prone when the trap is triggered.

CONE OF COLD TRAP



XP 12,800

Type magic; Perception DC 30; Disable Device DC 30

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity (alarm); Reset none Effect spell effect (*cone of cold*, 15d6 cold damage, DC 17 Reflex save for half damage); multiple targets (all targets in a 60-ft. cone)

Area #5: The Lone Hakefing

A series of winding tunnels intersects. Here there stands a lone frozen Vikmordere soldier, his arms raised as if to deflect a blow.



Thick white frost clings to every inch of his icy torso. A gentle glow is cast down on the pristine icy surface, bathing the once brave warrior in a cobalt hues. Two eastern corridors branch off in opposite directions, one northerly and the other southerly. Two additional corridors mimic the trend, leading further to the west.

If the frozen warrior is searched, a **DC 20 Perception check** finds a metal band secured to the ring finger of his left hand. It can only be removed by breaking the finger off. The ring is a *ring of sustenance*. None of the corpse's other gear is magical.

Area #6: An Icy Crossroads

The winding corridor forks into two different fifteen foot wide northward tunnels that continue deeper into the ice cave. Both descend out of sight via a series of ice-covered stone steps. The light emitting from the various clear veins of ice running throughout the cave seems to darken as each of the tunnels deepens.

A successful **DC 30 Perception check** allows an adventurer to hear the sound of rushing wind further down the tunnels. A successful **DC 40 Perception check** reveals that the sound is coming only from the tunnel on the right.

The tunnel on the left requires a DC 30 **Reflex saving throw** in order to descend without an adventurer slipping on the ice. The tunnel on the right is outfitted with a magical trap that generates a constant powerful *gust of wind* that begins halfway down the steps. The purpose of this gust is to force intruders to lose their footing. Descending the right tunnel without falling requires a DC 40 **Reflex save**. If an adventurer falls, they automatically slide down the stairs and land prone on their back in **Area #7**.

Area #7: The Ice Queen's Dragons

The slippery stairs descend to a wide flat cavern. The cavern looks to have been been cut directly into a huge deposit of solid ice beneath the great stone spire.

The dark icy floor is difficult to stand upon. The cavern is twenty feet wide and sharply curves to the east after about forty feet. From beyond the turn, a pulsating blue light illuminates the far northern wall.

A vicious snarling sound draws attention to a large white dragon poised and ready to strike. Its claws are dug deep into the icy floor. It is accompanied by two companions, both of which stare down from the ceiling, forty feet up. Their icy claws grasp the solid ice, betraying their eagerness for the kill.





Treat terrain in this room as hazardous. The five white dragons are the pets and willing servants of the Ice Queen. Three immediately and violently attack any intruders they detect. Two more lurk out of sight, hidden within the deep ice that makes up the walls of this cavern. They lay in wait to assist their Queen should anyone reach her sanctum.

ADULT WHITE DRAGON (R 10

XP 9,600

CE Large dragon (cold)

- **Init** +5; **Senses** dragon senses, snow vision; Perception +22
- Aura cold (5 ft., 1d6 cold damage), frightful presence (180 ft., DC 17)

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 10, flat-footed 26 (+1 Dex, +17 natural, -1 size) hp 149 (13d12+65) Fort +13, Ref +9, Will +10 DR 5/magic; Immune cold, paralysis, sleep; SR 21 Weaknesses vulnerability to fire

OFFENSE

- **Speed** 30 ft., burrow 30 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor), swim 60 ft.
- **Melee** bite +20 (2d6+10/19-20), 2 claws +19 (1d8+7), 2 wings +14 (1d6+3), tail slap +14 (1d8+10)
- Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft. (10 ft. with bite)

Special Attacks breath weapon (40-ft. cone, DC 21, 12d4 cold)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th) At will—fog cloud, gust of wind Spells Known (CL 1st) 1st (4/day)—shield, true strike 0 (at will)—dancing lights, detect magic, ray of frost, mending

STATISTICS

Str 25, Dex 12, Con 21, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 12
Base Atk +13; CMB +21; CMD 32 (36 vs. trip)
Feats Alertness, Flyby Attack, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Power

Attack, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (bite) **Skills** Fly +11, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (arcane) +17, Perception +22, Spellcraft +17, Stealth +13, Swim +31 **Languages** Common, Draconic

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Cold Aura (Su)** An adult white dragon radiates an aura of cold. All creatures within 5 feet of the dragon take 1d6 points of cold damage at the beginning of the dragon's turn. An old dragon's aura extends to 10 feet. An ancient dragon's damage increases to 2d6.
- **Ice Shape (Su)** A young white dragon can shape ice and snow at will. This ability functions as *stone shape*, but only targeting ice and snow, not stone. A white dragon's caster level for this effect is equal to its Hit Dice.
- Icewalking (Ex) This ability works like the *spider climb* spell, but the surfaces the dragon climbs must be icy. The dragon can move across icy surfaces without penalty and does not need to make Acrobatics checks to run or charge on ice.
- **Snow Vision (Ex)** A white dragon learns to see perfectly well in snowy conditions. A white dragon does not suffer any penalties to Perception checks while in snow.









Area #8: The Ice Queen's Shard

The icy chamber shifts dramatically east. Upon the far wall is a massive glowing crystal shard. At the base

of the shard is a pile of humanoid bones, frostbitten and laden with patches of ice. Nearby stands a single Ice Maiden, holding a smaller glowing crystal shard in her hand.

The dark ice of the northern wall boasts a series of three scenes, depicted in realistic, animated detail as if they were reflections cast from mirrors.

The first shows the outskirts of the Vikmordere settlement. Through a veil of snow you can see several hundred warriors gathered around the ruins of the village of Völsfiheimr as a group of men work on rebuilding the demolished great hall. The second depicts a snowy mountain pass, where at least a thousand Jötunn have *gathered in the company of several hundred* Høyonde. The third shows a monstrous, skeletal figure with leathery flesh clinging to his face. The muscular figure wears a heavy metal pauldron and a wicked crown of ice. With sunken black eyes he turns his head and snarls. From the visage of the undead face gazing out from the ice a booming voice barks a command in the giant tongue. The words come with such force that they startle even the Ice Maiden.

"You have caused quite enough trouble, mortals. King Krumma seems to think I should destroy you here and now. I believe that I may agree with him. However, surrender your weapons, and bow before me, and I may just allow you to live for a time."

With surprising grace, she steps foward, a sultry laugh accompanying a wry grin that passes across her lips as she awaits your reply.

The Ice Queen attacks the PCs regardless, though she does take pleasure in toying with them if they allow it. As soon as the party attacks the Ice Queen, the two remaining adult white dragons from **Area #7** burst through the icy ceiling and join the fray. Treat all terrain in this area as hazardous.

Arcea, the Ice Queen, is the no different that her sister Ice Maidens, except that she wields the *Wintyrsyrd*, a magical crystal that doubles the cold damage done by her *ice burst* ability as well as allowing her to create a series of ice clones that can make melee attacks upon different targets.

Even with the Ice Queen defeated, her dark magic lingers until the *Wintyrsyrd* is destroyed. If the *Wintyrsyrd* is damaged when the Ice Queen is alive, it automatically regenerates 2d10 + 20 hp per round. However, once she has been slain, the shard's regenerative effects stop and it can be destroyed.

The Wintyrsyrd

Any creature that physically touches the *Wintyrsyrd* suffers 6d6 points of cold damage. When damage is caused to the *Wintyrsyrd* there is a 50% chance that an *icy burst* will lash out from its faceted form dealing 2d8 points of cold damage; a **DC 25 Reflex saving throw** negates the *icy burst* damage. The shard has a hardness of 10 and 500 hp.

When the Wintyrsyrd is destroyed, it shatters into a cloud of crystalline dust that slowly descends to the ground, and the magic viewing mirrors fade into nothingness. In this moment the Ice Queen's dark curse is lifted. All of the Jötunn lose ability to utilize their undying special ability. The magic-dampening effect that surrounds Meyla Island ceases. The Maiden Winds fall silent, and the massive, crashing waves that surround the isle grow calm. In addition, the dark veil that had been cast across the valley is lifted. This means that teleportation to any location except the top of Ighdenholm's cloud-shrouded peak can now occur. Additionally, the unnatural aggression of the region's wildlife ceases.







WINTYRSYRD



Aura overwhelming evocation; CL 20th (Artifact) Slot none; Price 160,000 gp; Weight 2 lbs. Hardness 10, hp 500

DESCRIPTION

A spiraled, multifaceted crystal small enough to hold in the palm. Its hue is icy blue and it is frigidly cold to the touch.

The *Wintyrsyrd* manifests a 100 ft. omni-directional field of super-cooled atmosphere that causes all cold damage within the area of effect to be doubled. This effect functions for both magical and non-magical cold damage.

Once per day the *Wintyrsyd* can be activated to summon 2d4 ice clones of the wielder. Activation requires a full round action, and the clones persist until they are destroyed or released from existence by the user.

Each clone has 1 hp for every hit dice of the user, and an armor class of zero + the hd of the user to a maximum AC of 14. When they are destroyed they shatter into skittering ice particles. The ice clones can make a simple melee attack (Atk + 10, dealing 1d8 + user hd points of cold damage on successful hit), or move up to 20 ft (80 ft if on icy surface) at the end of the user's turn. Clones may take possession of items, but can do nothing with them other than hold them or transport them to another location to be set down. The ice clones are weak against fire damage.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, a large crystal formed in the heart of a glacier, *wall of ice, clone*; Cost 80,000 gp

PART 7-B. LEAVING MEYLA ISLE

With the Ice Queen defeated and the *Wintyrsyrd* destroyed, the adventurers will have no problem sailing the *Sorrow's Snekkja* towards the southern shores of Serpent Lake to return to the Vikmordere encampment. As they cross the lake, they once again hear the ear-ringing drone of Jötunn warhorns blaring from the mountaintop.

As they are exiting the ice cave, the adventurers meet three more of the robed figures—Vikmordere warriors from the Raven Clan. Instead of engaging the adventurers, the three drop their weapons, and kneel before the adventurers to beg for clemency for their betrayal.

If attacked, the robed figures attempt to flee, running across the beach. If cornered and facing death by the hand of the PCs, the three men will choose instead to attempt to swim out into the freezing waters of the lake, where they eventually drown.

If the cult members are instead arrested and brought back to the Vikmordere encampment, the Northern Fury Council give them a quick trial. They are found guilty, and immediately staked and burned alive afterwards. Their death fires are cheered by the surrounding crowd as the many warriors break into singing Vikmordere war chants.

If the party instead sails the three men back to the shores of Serpent Lake and releases them, one of them gratefully informs the party of the whereabouts of the Raven Clan's deceased leader's treasure hoard. If provided with a means, the ex-cultists even draw a simple map to the location—a series of troll-infested ice caves near the glacier chasm. The map is accurate, and leads the adventurers to a hidden treasure valued at 150,000 gp.





WRATH OF THE JÖTUNN THE KEEP OF KING KRUMMA



GM Note: This can be worked in as a supplemental adventure once this path is completed and the endless winter has been brought to an end.



The glacier ice caves consist of one massive cavern with a dozen smaller chambers branching off in various directions. The cave is inhabited by twenty ice trolls that defend the treasure as their own.

IKE TROLL



XP 1,200

CE Large humanoid (cold, giant) Init +4; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+4 Dex, +4 natural, -1 size) hp 45 (6d8+18); regeneration 5 (acid or fire) Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +2 Immune cold Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee battleaxe +7 (2d6+4), bite +2 (1d6+2), claw +2 (1d4+2) or bite +7 (1d6+4), 2 claws +7 (1d4+4)
Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.
Special Attacks rend (2 claws, 1d6+6)

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 18, **Con** 16, **Int** 9, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 7 **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 23

Feats Intimidating Prowess, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Intimidate +7, Perception +9, Survival +4 **Languages** Giant

PART 8-A. THE GREAT WINTER BATTLE The Return to Völsfiheimr

As the longship nears the southern shore of Serpent Lake, dozens of landed Vikmordere ships can be seen outfitted for battle. In the near distance is the war camp which has overtaken the former location of Little Bear's village. The great hall has been rebuilt, and more than a thousand warriors have gathered there. The army includes members of every clan and tribe affected by the Unending Winter. The encampment includes tents and makeshift lean-tos that stretch all the way back to the edge of the forest. Several much smaller groups of warriors are still approaching the outpost from the east, west, and further south.

Before you can make landfall, the sounds of war horns blare from the encampment, and a large group of barbarians progresses towards the lake shore. As you grow nearer, you can hear them cheering loudly, heralding your return.

Once docked at the encampment, the adventurers are greeted as heroes. They are escorted to the great hall where Jon and the rest of the Northern Fury Council awaits them. There, they find ample mead, warm food, and an even warmer welcome.

Jon boisterously greets the adventurers as they enter the newly-reconstructed great hall. Dozens of servants rush in, carrying platters of roasted mammoth meat, huge bowls of warmed cheese, and amphorae of mead and wine.

They are asked to sit, rest, warm themselves, and replenish their bodies from their voyage. Council members begin to ask them to tell of their recent adventurers, and what news they bring.

When the adventurers reveal that the Ice Maidens have been dealt with, and the Ice Queen's magic eradicated, there is a loud



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celebratory roar that resounds throughout the hall. However, the room falls quiet when news of Ningatha's passing is presented. After the Council is full debriefed, all in attendance seem hopeful, though worried about what lies before them-the Great Winter Battle.

Jon explains that it will be several days before all of the warriors can arrive, but that every clan and tribe has promised to send warriors and shieldmaidens.

The adventurers are presented with their own quarters in a large tent located just outside of the great hall. They can spend a few days resting, and prepare to sail north with the Vikmordere army.



GM Note: If you are running the Into the Wintery Gale Mini-Dungeons with this adventure, this would be the perfect opportunity to insert the "The White Wyrm Awakens." If you run this side quest, then the Hvíturiddare White Riders arrive during this time riding on the backs of winter wyrms to join the Northern Fury Council's army.

Crossing Serpent Lake

After five days, the Vikmordere army has amassed slightly over two thousand warriors. Many clans have also loaned their ships to carry the army across Serpent Lake.

In a final war meeting convened on the fifth evening, it is decided that the army will sail the dark waters of the lake upon the first light of morning,

With the information provided to them by the adventurers, the Council believes they know exactly where the Jötunn army in camped-the lone pass up the great mountain, a narrow and dangerous trek with several wide stone outcrops that serve as perfect locations for an ambush. Jon makes the correct assumption that with the fall of the Ice Queen, Krumma has stayed his forces while he re-assesses his plans.

GM Note: Anyone riding a winter wyrm must travel around the shoreline of Serpent Lake as the creatures cannot swim. This detour is a substantially greater distance, but the winter wyrms can travel much faster than the Vikmordere ships.

If the PCs take this longer path with the White Riders, they are accompanied by five other winter wyrms, each mounted by a dozen Hvíturiddare warriors and shieldmaidens. They are attacked by a Jötunn advance war party consisting of ten Jötunn warriors and five Jötunn berserkers.

The North Shore Landing

All of the Vikmordere arrive on the north shore of Serpent Lake at roughly the same time, landing their ships at the various narrow icy inlets created by the lake's frozen shoreline. A few hours after the landing forces gather at a rallying point, the White Riders arrive with their enormous wyrms.

Through the blinding snow cast down from the churning clouds high above, the Vikmordere army makes its way across the northern valley to the base of Ighdenholm and the mountain pass. The wintery gale makes it impossible to discern any great detail about the heights of the rocky way, but when the droning of Jötunn war horns pierce the howling winds, the Northern Fury Council leader decides that there is no time to waste. He commands the army to march up the pass to engage their undying foes. The time has come for the final battle!

The Council summons the PCs, and a plan is devised for the Vikmordere army to engage the Jötunn. The White Riders are to clear a path across the battlefield so that the adventurers themselves can continue on to the Keep of Krumma the Jötunn King. As the Vikmordere prophecy states, it is by their will that the king must fall to end his curse of endless winter.



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The Snowy Battlefield

In a blinding fury of snow and ice, the sheer mountain flat bursts into an eruption of violence. The snow has already become stained by a growing swath of crimson. The clash of metal and the mingled roars of giants drown out the rush of the wintery gale. The entire scene is chaotic as flaming arrows and explosive fiery potions are hurled into the scattered snowfall. Overhead, massive icy boulders soar across the pass, shaking the ground upon impact and sending dozens of Vikmordere warriors plummeting over the steep edge of the pass to their waiting deaths far below.

As the Vikmordere army is forced into a narrow march up the mountain pass, they encounter the waiting Jötunn army upon the first rocky, snow-packed flat. The enemy's number is merely one thousand, including Jötunn warriors, berserkers, and half-giants. While they are outnumbered, their immense strength and size weighs success in their favor.

The Vikmordere warriors and shieldmaidens march behind the great white wyrms of the Hvíturiddare. With the sounding drone of the Council's warhorn, the massive wyrms burrow directly into front lines of the waiting Jötunn army. Moments later, while veiled by the dense cloud of upturned snow left in the wake of the wyrms, the entire Vikmordere army charges into battle with a chorus of angry shouts. The Northern Fury Council separates into three groups to join their brethren. As they rush forward, Jon turns back to the party. With the glory of battle before him, the brave young Jarl raises his handaxe high and signals the adventurers to make their move to continue further up the pass.

Sure enough, the White Riders' advance has drawn a bulk of the Jötunn away from the pass that continues to ascend higher up the peak of Ighdenholm. The advancing horde of warriors and shieldmaidens engage the others, providing a narrow opportunity for the adventurers to make their way towards the Jötunn keep.

The party must fight their way through two groups of three Jötunn warriors as they make their way through the frozen battleground Afterwards, they find themselves completely alone for the remainder of the ascent up the mountain pass.



THE JÖTUNN KING'S KEEP




PART 9-A. THE KEEP OF KING KRUMMA

See Part 2-E. The Mountain Pass (Climb to the Peak of Ighdenholm) located in the Traversing the Wintery White chapter for descriptions of the mountain pass.

Near the summit of the great peak of Ighdenholm, the enormous keep of the Jötunn slowly comes into view beneath the swirling storm clouds high above.

The stillness of mountaintop is unnerving. The massive stone structure, fashioned by giants, is a partially ruined shell. Though many of its ceilings collapsed long ago, the walls are sturdy and foreboding, as is the massive wooden gate that serves as its entrance.

From this distance a group of half-giants can easily be spotted as they stand guard on either side of the enormous closed gate.

The footprint of this massive structure is 420 ft. by 680 ft., and its walls rise to over one hundred feet in some places. On a clear day in the valley the keep is a clearly visible landmark at the peak of the great mountain. The entrance is guarded by six Høyonde, each outfitted with a warhorn that they sound if they detect intruders. If the horns are sounded, six half giants and two Jötunn berserkers arrive their stations on the opposite side of the keep where they are guarding another entrance from beyond the collapsed wall of **Area #6**. When the warhorns are blown, the calm weather is immediately interrupted by the rush of the wintery gale. Stinging sleet and snow course around the towering ruins of the keep, making the terrain difficult to traverse.

Area #1: The Keep's Entrance

It is hard to imagine that there were ever trees large enough to craft the towering solid wooden gates on the south face of the gigantic structure. Each is nearly 60 feet tall and more than twenty feet wide. Though timeworn and weathered, the durable white pine gates remain sturdy and seemingly impenetrable.

The wood of the gates is one foot thick, and each weighs several tons. The gate consists of double doors secured from within by massive wooden latches. Each door has a hardness of 5 and 120 hp.

The gate is also trapped with a powerful magic *icy burst* trap that is triggered if the gate is breached by force.



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IKY BURST TRAP

XP 25,600

Type magic; Perception DC 30; Disable Device DC 33

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EFFECTS

Trigger proximity (when either door of the gate is breached by force); Reset None
Effect *icy burst* (as a x4 critical) 4d10 points of cold damage, DC 14 Reflex save for half damage); multiple targets (all targets in a 40-ft.-radius burst)

Area #2: The Grand Hall

A massive grand hall consumes most of the interior of the structure. It stretches northward from the



entrance for five-hundred feet to a gate crafted of solid stone. Near the entrance directly to the east and west are twin statues that tower nearly 80 feet tall. Each depicts a giant warrior wielding an ornate spear, their bodies wrapped by a dark stone serpent that winds around their torsos from shoulder to foot, where the snakes' massive maws gape wide. The dark stone of the statues is offset by the large blue topaz eyes of the serpents.

The entire hall is lined with massive pillars rising a hundred feet. Like the ceiling above, many of the pillars have completely collapsed, leaving the majority of the area exposed to centuries of weather. The stonetiled floor is covered in thick, windswept drifts of snow that bear obvious massive footprints leading toward and away from the entrance.

The blue topaz gems can be pried from the statues with some effort. Each is massive and worth 500 gp.

Dimmed by the storm clouds and shadowed by the towering walls, the area is surprisingly dark, though the sky above is completely open. A successful **DC 30 Perception check** will reveal tall shadows lurking behind columns about half way up the length of the grand hall (see **Area #3**).

Area #3: Jötunn-in-Waiting

Three Jötunn berserkers have noticed the party and hidden behind the massive columns. The columns provide each of them with 50% cover. They use their iceforging abilities to create massive boulders to hurl at the adventurers when they move into range. The Jötunn gain the initiative unless they were spotted by the adventurers in **Area #2**.

If Krumma wasn't alerted by the alarms as the adventurers entered the keep, he is immediately made aware of the intrusion by the sounds of battle when the adventurers engage the berserkers.

The instant that all three Jötunn berserkers are killed the following occurs:

The stone gates to the north of the grand hall burst open with a violent charge of wind that threatens to send even more pillars toppling. Behind the door stands a lone lötunn at the for



the door stands a lone Jötunn at the foot of a massive, icy throne, from which he has just risen. This skeletal ice giant appears larger than any others you have seen. A jagged crown rests heavy upon his head.

With an unworldly roar that vibrates the very foundations of the keep, the great giant raises his arms toward the heavens. Tendrils of blue flame spiral from the east and west into his open hands. From within the icy flames, the translucent silhouettes of human-sized feminine bodies swim and intertwine.

Soon, the blue flaming shadows land behind the giant. Their forms coalesce into six ice maidens that stand guard around him.

Glaring angrily southward through the now-open stone gate, the crowned giant begins to stomp his feet: first one, then the other, back and forth, until the whole room shakes. This is followed by an explosive thud on the ground a few dozen feet ahead of him as a mammoth-sized ice chuck plummets down from the sky.







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The megacryometeors are enormous chunks of ice manifested in the storm clouds above and summoned by the dark magic of King Krumma. Immediately after the first lands, one megacryometeor plummets down towards each of the adventurers.

The initial impact deals 6d6 points of bludgeoning damage; a **DC 15 Reflex saving throw** avoids this. The megacryometeor then explodes into a spray of ice shards that burst out in a 30 ft. radius. The exploding shards of ice cause 3d6 points of cold damage and 3d6 points of slashing damage (**DC 30 Reflex** for half damage).

Krumma can summon one of the megacryometeors for each adventurer per round. However he will not summon any if he or his ice maiden guardians are in range of the ice shard burst effect.

Area #4: Vikmordere Prisoners

As this door opens, the overwhelming stench of blood, ichor, and decay wafts into the grand hall of the keep.

Beyond is a massive chamber one hundred and ten feet east to west and one hundred feet north to south. The chamber is occupied by a hundred Vikmordere warriors and shieldmaidens. The vast majority of them are dead. These dead are often missing limbs, or stuck to the floor in frozen pools of their own blood; clearly maimed in acts of extreme sadism. A few have massive ice shards that seem to have burst from their bodies, impaling them. However, a few remain breathing, though they all appear weakened, injured, and out of their wits. Two large stone double doors are closed on the western end of the south wall.

The Vikmordere found in this chamber include survivors from the first failed battle at Serpent Lake. They were brought here, tortured ruthlessly, and interrogated for information. Only three of the surviving Vikmordere have kept their sanity—a warrior named Ordan, and two shieldmaidens named Hargin and Aldra. All three are from Völsfiheimr and know who the PCs are. They are unarmed and weak, but thankful to the adventurers for their rescue. They are willing to assist the party if needed, though they will need healing if they are to be of any use. They warn that their Høyonde torturers are in the room to the south.

There are fourteen other surviving Vikmordere. All have gone completely mad and are unable to speak. They will be unhelpful in battle. If kept safe, they can be led down the mountain to safety.

Area #5: Høyonde Interrogators

Another massive chamber stretches out from beyond the stone double doors. As they are opened, the stench of death within overwhelms the existing odor of gore—prompting an instant gag

reflex. In the center of the room is a pile of human bones stacked high. The upper torso of a dead Vikmordere warrior dangles from manacles attatched to the south wall, which is streaked in glistening blood. A group of five Høyonde have recently removed his lower half and argue amongst themselves as they gorge on the feast of the warrior's remains.

The Høyonde are completely distracted, and unaware of any events that have been taking place in the keep. They are preoccupied with their grisly meal that they haven't even noticed the arrival of the adventurers. The vile creatures do not take notice of the intrusion unless they are attacked or if the adventurers intentionally make themselves known. When the Høyonde turn to engage the adventurers, their bodies are covered in the still-warm blood of the recently killed warrior they are eating.

The bones found in the large pile in the center of the account for at least two dozen Vikmordere warriors and shieldmaidens. The bones are all brutally broken, and bear the gnaw marks of the Høyonde who have been devouring victims after they interrogate them for their lord, King Krumma.



WRATH OF THE JÖTUNN O THE KEEP OF KING KRUMMA

ICY SPIKE TRAP

XP 153,600

Type mechanical; Perception DC 35; Disable Device DC 35

K 18

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity; **Reset** Manual **Effect** Drop 20 feet into a slippery ice encased pit filled with hundreds of ice spikes. DC 40 Reflex to catch edge or plummet and be impaled by 2d4 ice spikes. Falling incurs applicable falling damage. Each ice spike deals 3d6 points of piercing damage and 1d6 points of cold damage.



This massive chamber has been stripped bare except for a single, huge, black stone statue depicting a striking serpent. The statue has been

tilted against a pair of large stone doors in the southern wall, barricading them shut. The roof remains intact over this room, protecting its stone-tiled floors from the snow and ice that is prevalent elsewhere throughout the keep.

The thirty-foot tall solid stone statue weighs roughly 7,000 pounds. The room is otherwise empty. If the adventurers work to move or topple the statue in any way, the moment it falls a group of five Jötunn berserkers rush into the room to investigate. If the adventurers have already had their first encounter with King Krumma in **Area** #3, then no encounter occurs.

Areas #8 and #9: The Treasure Hoard of Krumma

Both of these large rooms contain the treasure hoard of King Krumma. The contents of the treasure are described in **Part 9-B**. Both rooms are haunted by the ghost of a Vikmordere seer from the Raven Clan. This treacherous witch, Kraygurtha, founded the Cult of the Black Serpent centuries past. She remains in service to the Jötunn King even in the afterlife.



Area #6: Collapsed Wall

The outer wall of the fortress has collapsed here, providing a fifty foot wide entrance into the keep. Beyond is a massive chamber laden with snow and completely exposed to the elements. To the north are a pair of forty foot tall double doors carved from stone.

The snow covering the floor hides a massive 40 foot wide, 20 foot deep pit lined with jagged spikes of solid ice. The north doors lead to **Area #7**, but they are barricaded by a massive overturned statue. They are impossible to open unless the statue is somehow moved.

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WRATH OF THE JÖTUNN > THE KEEP OF KING KRUMMA

The Wrathful Witch Haunt can manifest in either of the two treasure rooms, but may only actively affect one room at a time. If the haunt changes its current location, it may not change its location again for 1d4 rounds. Changing from one room to the other requires a full round in which none of the haunt's effects continue.

WRATHFUL WITCH HAUNT



The ghost of Kraygurtha of the Black Serpent Cult haunts this area. When the haunt manifests, it takes on the ethereal form of a stooped, hunchbacked old woman with a hook nose and long boney fingers. She is garbed in only a ball of roiling translucent snakes, and wreathed in a flickering black flame.

XP 307,000

- CE persistent unyielding chained haunt (100-ft. radius)
- **Caster Level** 20th, **Notice** Perception DC 35 (to hear the faint hissing of snakes coming from every direction)

hp 250; Trigger proximity; Reset 1d4 hours

DESCRIPTION

Effect The ghost of the witch immediately summons 1d6 black serpents (treat as giant anaconda; CR 10). Every three subsequent rounds, the haunt summons an additional 1d4 black serpents. This summoning process cannot be negated by any means as long as the haunt remains active, and continues until the haunt is destroyed. The serpents manifest from the glowing black flame that surrounds the ghost's form and aggressively attack the adventurers and any allies until they are killed. The snakes summoned by the ghost are immune to cold and immune to all mind-altering affects.

During the subsequent rounds between summoning snakes, the ghost of the witch shudders violently and leeches warmth from the surrounding environment, lowering the temperature by 5 degrees. The initial temperature of the area is 10 degrees Fahrenheit. Once the air reaches -30 degrees Fahrenheit, creatures in the room suffer 1d10 points of cold damage per round. For each 10 degrees below -30 Fahrenheit the temperature reaches in the haunt's area of effect add an additional 1d10 points of cold damage per round. When the haunt is defeated, the cold environment instantly vanishes, returning to the area's normal temperature.

DESTRUCTION

The Wrathful Witch Haunt can only be destroyed by dealing the haunt a total of 500 points of fire damage within a 24 hour period. If any of the haunt's black serpents persist after it is destroyed they burst into blue flames and burn way to ash instantly.

Areas #10 and #11: Source of the Ice Maidens

The center section of this room contains a thirty foot wide firepit. The pit is perfectly circular and surrounded by heavy, enruned stones.

From within, a towering blue flame rises overhead, roaring loudly like the fire stoked within a kiln. Errant blue sparks lick at the ceiling above and cascade down the surrounding walls. Inside one can see sinuous female forms gracefully swimming through the flames.

The fire pits in these two rooms, as well as the two matching fire pits found in Area #12, must be extinguished to stop the arrival of the six ice maiden guardians who protect Krumma. The flame is burning cold to the touch, causing 6d10 points of cold damage if a creature is exposed to its roaring icy flames. A creature slain by these blue fires becomes a dread wraith (CR 13) in service to Krumma after 1d4 + 3 rounds. This effect can only be negated if the corpse is either consumed in normal flame or completely drenched in holy water. The cold flames can each be destroyed by dealing 10 or more points of magical fire damage to them.



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WRATH OF THE JÖTUNN 👁 THE KEEP OF KING KRUMMA

Area #12: The Throne of King Krumma

The lumbering, crowned figure of Krumma, several steps behind his six icy guardians, raises a large warhorn to his shriveled lips. He



releases a long droning sound that causes the ground to rumble. When the sound dissipates, the ground continues to shake Moments later, a massive winter wyrm bursts through the floor of the southern portion of the grand hall.

When the adventurers advance towards the open stone gates that lead into the throne room, they must first progress across the length of the grand hall in **Area #2** and **Area #3**. When they reach a distance of one hundred feet from the gateway, Krumma lifts his warhorn and sounds a long tone that causes, the ground to tremble. The following round a winter wyrm (CR 13) is summoned. It bursts through the stone tile floors of the grand hall one hundred feet south of the adventurers. It then charges the party.

While the adventurers deal with the threat of the huge creature barreling down upon them, the ice maiden guardians of Krumma begin to cast their ice shards.

When the adventurers manage to get into the throne room read the following:



This room is obviously the Jötunn King's throne room. The room is one hundred and fifty feet wide north to south. There is a five foot high step behind the stone gateway. Half a dozen ice maidens stand at this step facing south between the entrance and Krumma. To either side of the massive ice throne is a wide pit with a roaring blue flame that illuminates the row of columns lining the northern wall. Directly to the east and west of the entrance are two additional arched passages that each lead into smaller chambers. Two more roaring blue fires can be seen through these smaller arches. When any of the ice maidens are killed, they are replaced the following round as long as any of the four blue fires continue to burn. If the adventurers get into melee range of the guardians, then Krumma, who has reach over the heads of the medium sized ice maidens, attacks with his enormous iceforged greataxe.

The two fire pits in the throne room function identically to the fire pits described in **Area #10** and **Area #11**. Once all of his guardians are destroyed, Krumma engages in direct melee combat with the characters. He fights ruthlessly and relentlessly until he is destroyed. When King Krumma is killed, continue to **Part 9-B**.

KING KRUMMA LORD OF THE JÖTUNN <R 24

XP 1,228,800

CE Huge humanoid (cold, giant, undead) Init –1; Senses low-light vision; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 12, flat-footed 26 (+4 armor, +0 Dex, +17 natural, -4 size)

hp 278 (25d8+133)

Fort +16, **Ref** +3, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities rock catching; Channel Resistance +4; DR 15/magic; Immune cold Weaknesses vulnerability to fire;

Aura Desecration

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee icy burst iceforged greataxe +23/+17 (3d6+17) or 2 slams +22 (1d8+13)

Ranged ice chunk +9 (1d8+13)

Space 20 ft.; Reach 20 ft.

Special Attacks rock throwing (120 ft.)

STATISTICS

Str 37, **Dex** 12, **Con** 25, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 20 **Base Atk** +14; **CMB** +26; **CMD** 35

Feats Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, Martial Weapon Proficiency (greataxe), Power





WRATH OF THE JÖTUNN • QUEST'S END

A CONTRACTOR

Attack, Skill Focus (Leadership)

- Skills Climb +14, Leadership +19, Intimidate +7, Perception +12, Stealth -2 (+8 in snow); Racial Modifiers +10 Stealth in snow
- Languages Common, Giant

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Aura of Desecration (Su) King Krumma constantly projects an aura in a 20-foot radius that functions as a permanent *desecrate* spell. The DC to resist negative channeled energy within this area gains a +3 profane bonus. Undead within the area (including the skeletal ice giant) gain a +1 profane bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, and saves. Summoned or created undead that appear in the area gain +1 hit points per HD.
- **Iceforging (Su)** As a free action King Krumma can summon a simple weapon of any type that is crafted entirely of magic ice. The summoned weapon functions as a +1 icy burst weapon. Iceforging can also create any type of ammo needed for the summoned weapon as a free action. When wielded the ice weapons have the same hardness as adamantine. If the weapon is dropped, or if the skeletal ice giant is slain, it reverts to useless frost particles. Iceforging can also be used to summon a large boulder that the skeletal ice giant may use for a ranged attack.

PART 9-B. THE FALL OF KRUMMA AND THE QUEST'S END

With a final blow, the body of King Krumma falls motionless to the ground. A powerful gust of wind bursts through the keep. As it reaches the firepits, the blue flames gutter and go out, then leap up again, now a brilliant orange. The kiss of the wind makes the fire rebound, soaring skyward. The ground rumbles violently, nearly causing you to lose your footing as Krumma's body violently explodes.



The vortex pierces the wintery clouds like a vengeful spear. In an instant, they begin to disperse. Sunlight beams down across the land as the sky becomes clear. In the distance can be heard cries of victory coming from the Vikmordere.

The walls of the keep collapse outward, completely destroying the structure as the last of the spiraling flames shoot up into the sky and disappear. As the rays of the morning sun strike the Jötunn, their bodies seem to implode. Within a few moments, the entire army is reduced to pile of shattered bones and rusted armor.

The battle is over! The Jötunn have been vanquished. The unending winter releases its icy grasp on the Vikmordere Valley. Against all odds, through grit and sacrifice, victory has been won.

The fleeing half-giants are completely eradicated by the emboldened Vikmordere army. Their lifeless corpses are cast over the sheer cliffs of the mountain and plummet into the waters of Serpent Lake.







WRATH OF THE JÖTUNN • QUEST'S END



Soon, Jon makes his way up the pass to meet the adventurers in victory. He is accompanied by the rest of the Northern Fury Council and two dozen warriors and shieldmaidens. Though the keep has been completely destroyed, the group assists in digging through the rubble to recover the Jötunn king's treasure—the promised reward for the adventurers' assistance.

Krumma's treasure (which was located in Area #8 and Area #9) can be sifted out of the rubble of the collapsed structure. Doing so still triggers the haunt occupying both rooms if the haunt was not previously disabled. The treasure consists of the following: 4d10 x 1000 gp, 4d10 gems, 7d6 art items valued at 500 gp each, 1d4 random greater medium wondrous items, and 1d3 random lesser major wondrous items. It requires ten shifts of twelve hours by ten creatures to recover all of the treasure. This number is halved for each additional ten creatures assisting above the first ten to a minimum recovery time of ten three hour shifts (so thirty hours total). The treasure should be divided into relative tenths for each shift worked.

It takes until the next morning before the Vikmordere army can complete the descent back down Ighdenholm. Now that the wintery gale has given way to more temperate weather, the slow descent seems almost pleasant. The adventurers are hailed as heroes of the Vikmordere people. The following week is spent in constant celebration in honor of the prophecy being fulfilled, with raucous feasting and ample drinking.

On the final night of the celebrations, before the Vikmordere army disperses back to the respective villages and homes of the many clans and tribes, the Northern Fury Council holds a special ceremony honoring the adventurers.

They are declared not only friends of the barbarians of the valley, but they are claimed as true Vikmordere. They are also offered honorary positions as members of the Counci. If they wish, they can assist the Vikmordere people rebuild their destroyed villages and reclaim a land decimated by the dark winter.

If the adventurers accept their positions on the Northern Fury Council, 1d12 + 10 Vikmordere families (each consisting of three adults, and 1d4 children) declare their loyalty to them. These Vikmordere found the "Clan of the Firebearers," and assume the symbol of the goddess who sacrificed her life for them—the flaming owl of Ningatha.



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| Rune Design Name | |
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| Associated Spell | |
| Caster Level (CL) | |
| Slot(s) Required | |
| Application Time | |
| Visual Appearance | |
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Made for use with the Vikmordere Runepaint Magic rules found in "Into the Wintery Gale." Written by Justin Andrew Mason. Published by AAW Games. Copyright © 2015. All Rights Reserved. Permission is granted to reproduce and distribute this document for personal use.

WRATH OF THE JÖTUNN

The arrival of the celestial event known as the Ohjaslange heralds the return of the dreaded Jötunn—skeletal ice giants—and with them a curse of endless winter. The adventurers have unwittingly stepped into the role of saviors to the Vikmordere people as the curse descends around Serpent Lake. Summoned by an ancient goddess, the adventurers join forces with the tribes of the Vikmordere to uncover lost artifacts necessary to triumph in this classic battle of good versus evil. A war must be waged against the mighty Jötunn as they march down from their great stronghold on the towering peak of Ighdenholm. If the adventurers are not up to the challenge, then winter may forever reign in the valley.

This adventure is designed to accommodate five to six PCs of levels 9–10 and advance them through 15th level.

This massive mega-adventure book includes:

- 5 full-sized dungeon adventures including top-down and isometric cartography
- A highly-detailed overworld, including over 30 ready-to-run encounters
- Hundreds of prepared read-aloud descriptions
- Optional rules for handling hypothermia and frostbite
- Detailed Vikmordere culture information, including new gear and equipment
- Rules for magical runepainting, including new feats and skills. Comes with a runepainter's record sheet
- A new spell, Arurún's Durable Dwelling
- 10 new magic items including: the *hero's receptacle*, the legendary sword *Vlfberht*, the ancient aegis known as *Skjold Rustning*, and the *Wintyrsyrd*
- New detailed traps and hazards including "The Growling Lake" and deadly "Ice Fog"
- Dozens of complex puzzles to challenge both players and player characters
- Nordic-style hauntings, including "Sounding of the Jötunn," "Brimnar's Haunt," and "The Wrathful Witch"
- A dozen all new monsters, including ice maidens and skeletal ice giant berserkers, as well as villains like the Ice Queen of Meyla Isle and the dreaded Jötunn King, Krumma



