



# RHINE

DAWN OF TWILIGHT

## Savage Primer



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### *Forward*

When I first started working on Rhune, nearly a decade ago, I was one of the displaced – one of the many who had moved from New Orleans to Houston in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Like many of those displaced by that terrible storm, I was looking for ways to sort out my frustrations, internalize my strengths, and to banish the fetters that storm had exposed. It wasn't a short process, wasn't without its struggles, and didn't keep me in one place. In fact, it took me around the world and back again.

When I started writing Rhune, I was looking for an outlet, a way to voice the totality of my being; my frustrations, my passions, my understanding, and my interests. I wanted to build a world that was more than just a novel. I wanted to build a living, breathing, and expanding world. So, I reached into that dark well that is the human psyche and (screaming), took up the runes.

When I first started this wyrd endeavor, I never envisioned my setting expanding beyond the 3.x numbered systems. In fact, it was a struggle just to make that happen (and that still took me a solid five years). So, as you might imagine, it's with great joy that I'm writing this forward. It is a testament to the tenacity of the setting, those who have supported it since its inception, and to those who continue to flock to its utter weirdness.

As you're about to see, *Rhune: Dawn of Twilight* is not your standard, kitchen sink fantasy setting.

*Rhune: Dawn of Twilight* is an imagined journey into a realm heavy with Norse influence, but one where social and technological progress has shaped the various races on a grand scale, both for good and ill. This all takes place in a dangerous foreground, one in which the ever present ticking of the Ragnarök Clock reminds everyone, civil and insane, brutal and beautiful, that the end is coming.

It's been a joy to write this book and I'm very thankful that Brad Bell took the time to Savage it. I truly hope each of you enjoy playing in this world as much as I enjoyed creating it.

Go be heroes.  
Jaye Sonia,  
March, 2016





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## *Converting Rhune*

I admit, I had never heard of Rhune until the Kickstarter. A mutual friend called me and the conversation went like this:

“Hey, my buddy Jaye is doing a Kickstarter for his Rhune fantasy setting for Pathfinder.”

“I don’t really like Pathfinder, it uses alignments.”

“He has Chaotic Good Elven Ecoterrorists who are at war with all the other Good races.”

“Send me the link for the Kickstarter.”

After that, the discussion of converting such a unique setting to other game systems arose, and, being a huge fan of Savage Worlds, I volunteered to lead the conversion project. It has been a great joy to bring Fast! Furious! Fun! to such a unique fantasy setting.

It is not “over-the-top kitchen sink” fantasy, it is a hard, gritty world on the brink of doom.

A world that needs Heroes, not tropes.

Brad Bell





# Chapter 1

## Rhune: Dawn of Twilight

“You’d think the ælves would have been friendlier, with titles as exalted as ‘The Ageless’ and ‘The Shining Ones.’ But they weren’t, and that’s the truth. At best, they were civil.”

Everyone knew Lady Mikal of Westholme’s adventures. It was no oddity to see so many of this small outpost packed into its sole inn to hear her story. She was from the lands beyond, well-traveled and seemingly untouched by the normalcy in which each of them lived. When she spoke, she enchanted the great hall. “They were upon us as soon as we entered their lands. Even as foreign diplomats, their disdain for our ways was palatable. They searched our gear thrice, questioned us extensively, and then cast divinations just to be safe. All before we were allowed to enter their hallowed forests! Really, I couldn’t believe it,” Mikal said as she deeply took a deep pull from her tankard. She smiled, pushed aside her red locks, and then continued.

“Their lands were...well, we just weren’t prepared for what we saw. The word majesty comes to mind, and even as fitting as it might sound to my human ears, it doesn’t quite do them justice. If I had...hells, if any of us had lacked an appreciation for their security, it vanished there and then the trees were vast, towering into clear blue skies that seemed to go on forever. Their homes were carefully worked into the giant branches, but in such a way that they seemed part of the canopies themselves. Only the silver inlay – glowing with a gentle green light – gave them away.” Mikal paused, drained the rest of her tankard, and then gazed off momentarily. She brushed her locks aside once again and continued.

“We didn’t waste time there. After we met our ælven contact, we cleaned, dined, and then rested for a night. We traveled the very next day. Our journey into the caverns below their lands was quick. As you might expect, we were bound, blindfolded, and gagged before passing through their secret entrance. We walked a short way before ascending stairs to a platform. They led us to a machine of sorts. I could hear the soft humming of clockworks in the background; it was very subtle. We were led into another smaller room and sat carefully on a soft, velvet-covered couch. I didn’t realize it was a vehicle until it hissed, closed its door, and then began to move.

“The capsule we traveled in was cool to the touch – that much I recall – and it hummed ever so slightly as we traveled. I felt slightly dizzy as it descended. The speed increased to such a degree that I doubt any common streetcar could dare match it. All the while, it grew damp, and then suddenly, bright.

“When our ælven guides lifted our blindfolds and removed our gags, we remained silent. I think Ghe’llnya, our ælven companion, was in shock. The rest of us were in such a state of awe that it took several ‘gentle’ pushes to stir us. We left the capsule to step out into another platform. This one, as I looked down, was made of black steel. “The chamber before us glowed with a golden radiance that pulsed in time with our hearts. All about the periphery runes glowed blue and green, in a grand circle. I thought perhaps they held something at bay, some terrible thing that kept the ælves forever on guard, but I later learned that this magic was solely intended to stabilize the device that dominated the center of the chamber.” Mikal smiled, knowing she held her audience’s attention. She let her pause drag on, knowing the sweetness of anticipation.

The chamber itself must have measured a half of a field in diameter, and measured that much again alone in height, which it no doubt needed to house the device at its heart. The device – which they called the Bilröst Gate – is one of several Clockwork Gates hidden on Midgard. Its activation, I was told, allowed users to freely enter any of the other realms. The realms of Thrall Lords and the realms of the *Æssinyr* would, with the flip of a switch, unfold before us. Of course I





asked what kept travelers from using the gate to travel to Midgard, but the ælves remained silent. I was assured that the ælves guarded all of the gates with ruthless determination. Nothing entered ... or exited, without their consent.

“The device itself? I could only describe it as a series of overlapping metal rings, each attached to a series of rods and pistons that descended into a shining metal sphere that appeared to be have been halved and then carefully parted – like the petals of a flower in bloom – just below the surface of the cavern. At its heart a single, golden orb floated freely, alight with blue and green energy.”

“Of course, with their war against our technology, I almost laughed aloud when it occurred to me that they were sitting on the biggest piece of tech this side of Damas. Of course, before I could ask, Ghe’llnya shot me one of her looks and kept silent.”

Mikal looked at the patrons below her, winked, then stood. She wasn’t very tall, but she commanded their attention with every graceful movement. She was lithe, with a fey like quality, and one could easily see her serving tea at court as readily as she enchanted commoners in taverns. She wore her red hair short in the southern style, cut just above her shoulder, and let part of it fall into her face in a deliberate manner that no doubt attracted women and men alike. Her attire was that of a simple traveler, predominately dark blues, highlighted in yellow and orange. A gusli, alight with small glowing runes, hung at her side.

Immediately, she spread her arms wide, holding them slightly above her head. Her audience’s collective gaze followed the dramatic gesture to the ceiling. “Then the ælves – who remained silent for most of this journey – told me the sad story of the Ragnarök Clock. A story that, should you dine with me tomorrow, you’ll hear. Ladies and gents, I must retire. I do hope to see each of you tomorrow evening.” Mikal, knowing she had the audience for another dramatic night, descended the small stairs and headed for her room.

The next night, Mikal sat, in her customary blues and yellows, on the inn’s small stage. As the audience dined, she softly strummed her gusli, letting it rest on her lap. She hummed to herself as she did, keeping the tune subtle and entertaining. The storyteller watched the audience, knowing she must time her entrance carefully. If she began her story before they had relaxed with enough wine, then they’d fill the hall with too many questions. If she let them drink too much, however, one of them would invariably doze off. A snoring patron would kill her performance. Mikal had learned that lesson the hard way.

She watched the waitresses pour the second round then stood. Her voice washed boldly over the crowd. “Having descended deep under the fabled Court City of Ælveheim, my companions and I found ourselves standing in a great chamber containing one of the Clockwork Gates. The ælves, silent until this point, began their tale.

“They explained how this gate – and all like it – had been a cruel trick of fate, a subtle jest thrust upon them by the Thrall Lords during the Age of Myth.” She paused, making the sign of Velluna-Akka. Several of her audience made the sign as well.

“They told us that, long ago, the Old Gods had walked among their kind. The *Æssinyr* were the Very First, the beloved teachers and guardians of Yggdrasil, the Great Tree and all the realms its branches touched. The ælves knew and loved them greatly. When the *Æssinyr* disappeared and grew silent, the ælves were distressed. Try as they might, they could not commune with them. They called this The Quiescence. It was during this time that the Thrall Lords – who the ælves call the Ash Lords – began to weave a dark enchantment that would ultimately inspire Lady Y’Draah to build the Bilröst Gate.

“I was told that Lady Y’Draah was both a famous astronomer and a priestess, beloved of the people and respected for her wisdom. Her faith, up until The Quiescence, was unquestionable. But that silence changed her. Her faith turned to a passion that the other ælves did not understand. She



The Ragnarök Clock is described on page 8.

The Clockwork Gates are described on page 8.





began to spend great hours meditating in an abandoned stone chamber, contemplating strange angles and planar travel – ultimately seeking new ways to reach the Old Gods. It was here that she conceived the Bilröst Gate.”

Mikal stopped, accepted a tankard from the barmaid, and drank deeply. “Her ideas were radical and met with much questioning. She argued that the celestial realms she studied had undoubtedly changed. This she believed signaled trouble. She feared unholy, unnatural forces were preparing to assault the Great Tree and that the ælves, as a people, would need to come to its defense. The ælves, swept up in her passionate speech, agreed.

“It took decades, but the ælves eventually completed the complex series of gates. Y’Draah gathered her workers, the soldiers who would accompany her, and prepared to pass through the gate. She activated it. But as the gate began to move something unexpected happened. The ælves closest to it died immediately, their life force drained from them to power it. Y’Draah rushed to the gate and tried to deactivate it, but ælves continued to fall. Those who could flee did, sealing Y’Draah and her loyal followers in the chamber.

Then, as quickly as it killed her fellows, the clockwork gate stabilized. Left with few options, Lady Y’Draah and the remaining ælves passed through the gate to seek their beloved Old Gods. What they learned in the realms beyond chilled them to the bone, bleaching their skin and, ultimately, stole their immortality. When they finally returned, their kin were at a complete loss. Not only had they changed physically, but they had embraced a whole new philosophy. They spoke of a war in Yggdrasil, of Old Gods who would never again walk with them, and of a need to prepare for the final battle.” Mikal straightened, drank more from her tankard, and continued. “The ælves tell me this is when the current age, as we know it today, sprang into being. The Bilröst Gate was a nefarious trick they eventually renamed the Ragnarök Clock. Try as they might, they were – and still are – unable to stop the device. They watched in horror as it slowly began to count down.

“Of course, Lady Y’Draah and her followers were banished from Ælveheim, forced to wander the face of Midgard an aging and disconnected people. They eventually made peace with their fate, transforming their mortality into a passion to conquer their physical limitations through the same technology that doomed them. After doing so, they brought their message to the dwarves, to the aryandai, and eventually to us.

**Heroes who adventure in Rhune are special** and their actions should always carry weight - even the smallest of gambles might attract the attention of the Old Gods, or worse, the Thrall Lords.

For instance, whenever a hero dies in a Rhune game, it is common for one of the Valkyries to appear, especially when those heroes lived great and honorable lives. When they do appear, they call to the dead in Val (the language of the dead). Should another character speak Val, it is possible to negotiate with the Valkyries, although it is unlikely they will release the heroes they have come to claim – although some have been known to do so.

“Our journey out of Ælveheim was as quick as our journey inward. We were escorted the whole way, stopping infrequently to rest. Finally, we reached the eastern edge of their lands and they returned our gear.”

Mikal stood, descended the stairs, and walked into the center of the hall. “The rest you know.” She curtsied to her audience.





# Rhune: Dawn of Twilight

Rhune: Dawn of Twilight is a setting designed for Savage Worlds that combines elements from traditional steampunk, planar travel and Norse mythology.

At its heart, Rhune: Dawn of Twilight is a world counting down the days until its ruin – a land desperately in need of heroes. Competing factions, each with very distinctive views about Ragnarök, prepare for the inevitable. These factions bypass racial boundaries and national borders alike, creating distinctive groups with highly focused agendas. Some, like the Clockwork Accord, race to stop the Ragnarök Clock, hoping to use technology to bend the lands of Rhune to their will. Others, like the ælves and their druid allies, shun technology and actively work to return all of Midgard to its natural state. Groups like the dwarves of Redwall embrace the inevitable conflict and prepare for the final battle; training day and night for the greatest war they will ever fight.

Players exploring the lands of Rhune will face singular challenges on Midgard, as well as on the other eight realms making up the Great Tree. From the frozen wastelands of the north to the shadowy realms of Nachtland, players will explore lands of dark angles and strange realms overlapping both time and space. Some will do so as champions of ancient, noble gods. Others will serve as cultists of renegade godlings. Some will move forward their own agendas, as well.

Players exploring Rhune: Dawn of Twilight will find ample opportunities to examine traditional character roles while simultaneously approaching social issues all too familiar to the modern world. Players may advocate philosophies and ideologies familiar to them, while still enjoying the Fast! Furious! Fun! action the Savage Worlds rules encourage.

Will you take the side of the dwarves and clockwork elves to champion technology? Will you be one of the self-awakened? Will you take the side of the ælves and their druid allies, working to actively return much of Midgard to its pre-industrial state? Or will you side with the glitterfane, pacifist healers dedicated to spreading Alnara's mercy?

How will you face the Thrall Lords and their barbaric servants? As an ally or enemy?

## What is Stormpunk?

Originally inspired by some of the greatest campaign planar and steampunk settings, Rhune: Dawn of Twilight is truly its own genre, one we affectionately call stormpunk. It is a genre inspired by steampunk, but one that took a radically different turn, both in terms of culture and technology. While it certainly has some similarities to steampunk as a genre, stormpunk trades steampunk's monocle, Victorian sensibilities, and top hat for a drinking horn, a gear-shaped torque, and a gun-sword. It embraces electricity, but throws off the yoke of Earth's normal history and asks the question – what if Tesla had been a magician? What if magic and electricity had developed side by side? What if “steam” had lost the technological race and man learned to call power from the very sky itself? All of these questions, alongside the explorations they give birth to, are what give life to stormpunk.

## What makes Rhune distinct?

A number of thematic factors shape how stories set in Rhune differ from other campaign settings; both GMs and players should be aware of these, long before they roll up their very first characters, since many of these factors will shape how the player characters view the world – as well as the planes beyond. Or, for the sake of brevity, these are Rhune's core assumptions.

### *Access to Electricity*

Most of the settled lands, especially in and around the City-States of Vallinar, enjoy regular access to electricity. Electricity, like clean water or waste disposal, is a utility managed exclusively by the storm shepherds, a group of druids who combine their understanding of the natural world with their evolving technological insights. While few citizens would dare to take their access to electricity for granted, access to it has shaped many peoples' outlooks, both toward the wilderness, as well as those who live there. Moreover, a regular reliance on electricity has also shaped the economics of many of the City-States, for both those who live inside and outside of the various City-States.



### ***The Accidental Airship***

No one, or so its whispered in Damas, ever really thought it would work. Few among the learned people of the city looked to the sky and imagined the battles that might take place there, not when there were trains to build and walls to maintain. But one man did, and in secret, he set out to build what would become his legacy. This airship, known as The Sun's Gem, is the product of years of engineering and arcane mastery, the collective effort of some of the finest minds in the Clockwork Accord and those arcane allies they trusted with its secret. Although its master engineer (and with him, understanding of its construction) is now long dead, The Sun's Gem perseveres.

### ***Alchemical Wonders Abound***

Although the Old Gods bestow divine power upon their favored servants, those able to maintain such celestial might are rarely at the beck and call of every merchant, farmer, or tradesman with a sick sow or odd cough. In fact, there are plenty of folks with ailments and illnesses that rely on the regular work of alchemists to cure them, or at least to alleviate what pains them. As a result, Rhune has an abundance of alchemical wonders – from the healing fruits of Clan Hammerfall to the infused wines of House Scrae – which PCs can purchase.

### ***The Automata***

Known as the Awakened Ones, the automata are a race of sentient constructs that struggle to understand their place in the world. Two centuries of ignorance, prejudice, and existential doubt have left them alone, scared, and desperate – making them dangerous enemies and worthy allies (at least to those who befriend them). Built and programmed to battle the enemies of the Old Gods at the end of days, these constructs were never intended to become sentient, thinking machines they are today.

### ***The Clockwork Gates***

Buried deep in the secluded and forgotten places of Yggdrasil, the clockwork gates lie dormant. Built early in the Age of Myth, these devices were designed to connect the ælves and dwarves to their beloved *Æssinyr*, who for a time, were lost to them. When the final clockwork gate was activated, so was the Ragnarök Clock – a discovery the ancients made far too late. Now, these clockwork gates are all but forgotten, at least to those who never set eye on them. Still, others seek them out, hoping to use them for their own purposes. New Houses, Old Clans – The face of society has changed much over the last few centuries and this is especially true in the City-States of Vallinar. Where old clan loyalties once bound dwarves and men, new houses – whose interests align them far more than blood once did – have arisen. Dragonship captains now pledge themselves to Trade Families and War Guilds, while berserkers train under the banners of the famous Battle Halls. Outside of the settled lands, however, many of the old clans still hold great power and influence.

### ***The Northern Threat***

Far to the North, beyond icy peaks of the Icewall Mountains and the poisonous valleys of Thar, the Fel Horde gathers. Twice this horde has descended on the people of the South and each time, it was repelled. But now, with time running out and their masters – the true progeny of the Thrall Lords – finally beginning to awaken, the Fel Horde is preparing for war once again. In the heart of Icewall, the great chieftains have gathered for the final feast, to cement their alliance and plan the final doom of all those who call the South home. The threat the North poses is addressed throughout the book.

### ***Rage Fever***

Of all the threats coming from the North, one of the biggest is rage fever, an infection that is part curse, part disease, and utterly devastating to nearly everyone who contracts it. Rage fever turns normal men and women into slaving, cannibalistic monsters, robbing them of their sanity in the process.

### ***The Ragnarök Clock***

Of all the strange and wonderful devices that populate Rhune, the Ragnarök Clock is arguably the most infamous of all. Buried deep in the heart of Ælveheim, this device is the byproduct of an ælven and dwarven alliance that, when activated, started the long countdown to Ragnarök, the end of all things. Although some people doubt the existence of this fabled device, the ælves, the clockwork elves, and the dwarves all know that it, alone, is linked to the slow and gradual convergence of the very planes themselves.

### ***The Runes***

While some fantasy settings treat the runes as little more than a magical alphabet, the runes – specifically the Elder Futhark – play a more central role in the campaign setting. In Rhune: Dawn of Twilight®, the runes are both a theme, as well as a mechanic. Moreover, the runes are something that all characters, regardless of their arcane talents, can learn. Whether a character is a druid seeking to become a vitkarr (rune-master) or a fighter set on ruling all of the Old Holds, the runes can (and should) play into their stories.

### ***Technological Tensions***

Midgard, more than any of the other branches of the Great Tree, is a realm divided. Where the North stands in unison, ready to descend in a wave of blood and flames, the peoples of the South stand divided on how best to prepare for Ragnarök. In the City-States of Vallinar, clockwork elves, dwarves, and humans build great machines of war, perfect destructive alchemical agents, and build better, more efficient weapons. In the vast forests of Ælveheim, far to the west of the City-States, the ælves and their allies have sworn off the use of all technology, believing it to be one of the causes of the coming apocalypse. Instead, the ælves prepare to unleash nature's wrath on any who would dare enter their sacred forests. The tension created by technology is addressed throughout this book, especially in Chapters 2 and 9.





### *Yggdrasil, The Great Tree*

Rhune isn't a model of historic earth and does not use a heliocentric model; even though it supports a sun, a moon, and countless stars. Its prime material plane – which the people of Rhune call the Middle Realm or Midgard – is a wrapped around the trunk of Yggdrasil, the Great Tree. In many ways, Midgard could be seen as the outside of a massive cylinder, whose eastern and western oceans meet and whose top and bottom flair out, expanding outward, becoming the roots and branches of the known universe. These roots and branches are composed of countless other, lesser realms, but at their core, each make up one of the main planes those who “walk the tree” can access.

## A Look at Midgard...

Midgard – sometimes called the Middle Court or the Middle Realm – is Rhune's prime material plane. It's a vast realm, beloved by the ælves and the dwarves, as well as countless races and peoples between. For those who study the ancient sagas (and this is especially true of the scholars who study the *Grand Galdr*) Midgard is the central axis of Yggdrasil – its trunk – and the place that Ragnarök, the Final War between the Thrall Lords and the Old Gods, is destined to take place.

Although Midgard has many earth-like qualities, it is important to note that it is not a mirror of the world we know. Its oceans, for instance, wrap completely around the trunk, connecting east to west on the dark side of the tree. While some Dragonship captains claim that other lands lie hidden on there, none who have sailed out beyond have returned to confirm this belief. Though sailors have sailed North of the Wynn Sea, in search of what lies beyond the northern continent, all have met with great, icy seas and massive icebergs, stalling such journeys. The same can be said for those who have dared the northern waters of the Ealden Sea. Only a few brave souls have sailed around the Black Ice Wastes, and only a dozen men claim the honor of sailing south into Lake Thule.

A few dragonships have set out into the Southern Ocean, as well as the southern waters of the Ealden Sea, but both report the same thing the further south they go – a wall of rainbow-like energy that bridges sky to sea, that some sailors claim is the Great Rainbow Bridge itself. This strange phenomenon that merges sea and sky, is infused with bizarre lights and an odd humming that encourages most sailors to make the sign of Nayadia, seeking her shelter, before turning back. A few have sailed closer, daring the wall, but every man that has come within a few boats lengths from the great wall reports the same thing – the wall itself causes storm engines to quit, compasses to spin wildly, and men to start weeping. None who have dared sail onto the Rainbow Bridge have come back.

While Midgard is a single land, it is divided along several lines, the most noticeable being between the north and the south.

The North, from Undheim to Skullenport, is generally known as the Fel Lands and avoided by most from the South. It is a cold, wicked land where barbarian tribes roam, enslaving (and sometimes consuming) all they come across. As one goes north along the western coast of these lands, one begins to encounter the various giant-holds, cities built and dedicated to the Thrall Lords themselves. These cities dominate the western coast, from Thulefall in the North to Undheim in the south. A few other cities – some little more than hordes of gathered barbarians, dot the south. Icewall and Firstholm are the two largest of these southern cities, the latter resting on a massive black plateau that looks on all of the tundra surrounding it. The eastern end of the North is a sparse, poisoned land that most few dare cross into that people in the North call the Black Ice Wastes – a land filled with supernatural horrors, soul-fused ice fields, and deadly, black water that no one, giant nor man, can suffer for long.

The South is, by comparison, the more civilized of the two halves of Midgard. Divided by Blackblood Bay (in the west), Icewall Bay (central to most of the two lands), and Oud Bay (in the east), the South has been settled by most of the Old Gods' various children.

The ælves once dominated nearly the entire southern continent, but retreated as the dwarves traveled east and the humans settled what would later become the Kingdom of Vallinar. Today, the ælves lie sandwiched between two major territories – Rhuneheim, home of the dwarves in the distant west and the City-States of Vallinar in the east. In the face of their retreat, however, many of the other races – especially the dwarves and men – continue to expand, claiming much of the southern continent as theirs exclusively. While this increases tension in some parts of the South, it is a fact nonetheless.











## Story themes and character motivations...

In Rhune, both story tellers and their players have a variety of strong themes with which to work. Among these, the most prominent theme is the countdown to Ragnarök, a celestial event that brings the various branches of Yggdrasil into planar alignment, radically changing the face of Yggdrasil, The Great Tree. This event, alone, could easily drive countless stories, from any number of angles or perspectives. However, stories set in Rhune need not focus on this theme alone. Several other themes, some subtle and others readily apparent, make Rhune a setting ripe with adventure.

Players exploring these other themes will note that most focus on obvious opposites, polarizing player characters and inviting them to pick a side as part of their character creation. For some, this is part of selecting a race, and to some extent, their class, as well. So, prior to generating characters for any campaign, players and their story teller should discuss precisely what themes would be actively explored. Whether or not story teller selects one of these themes is up to her, but when she does, she should openly communicate that to her players. Common themes (and examples of setting tie-ins) in Rhune include:

### Geo-political

This theme is applicable in nearly all fantasy games, but has a special place in Rhune. Story tellers exploring this theme will likely set their story in the City-States of Vallinar and will run campaigns focused on intrigue, self-interest, economics, and inheritance. These stories may involve one or more of the Trade Families, underground groups like the Black Hand, or the regional interests of a given city. Geo-political campaigns revolve around the ties individual heroes have to particular clans, families or political factions; ties that as story teller you might create or else guide your players towards, as you see fit.

### Nature vs. Technology

Story tellers using this theme will focus on the various ideological approaches to Ragnarök, narrowing in on technology, its development (or discovery), and its use to win Ragnarök. This is a theme that will include a lot of racial tension (especially between the ælves and dwarves) and may be run in parallel to a campaign actively featuring racial division. At its heart, however, a story featuring this theme should focused on the “rightness” of technology, its place in the world, and whether or not it ultimately harms or helps those involved in its creation or use. Stories that directly involve the clockwork gates or the automata will likely use this theme.

### North vs. South

In Rhune, this is a theme that pits the evil, dark forces of the North against the civil, good forces of the South. This is a common theme that, at its core, pits the Thrall Lords (the Void-Touched giant offspring of the Old Gods) against their elders, the *Æssinyr*. While this is arguably the most prominent theme in all of Rhune and ultimately leads to Ragnarök, it need not be explored in obvious ways. Countless cults (many dedicated to Thrall Lords) operate in the South, any of which the story teller might send against the heroes (which might appear as agents of other forces). Likewise, some brave souls might march to the wicked North, intent on freeing the damned or slaying those who spread evil.

### Peace vs. War

Of all the themes, this may be the most challenging to explore, especially considering that most fantasy RPGs include combat encounters as a route to gain experience. Moreover, with the threat of war looming and military options readily available for most situations, peaceful solutions to problems are not always sought. Story tellers wishing to focus on diplomacy and non-violent problem solving should consider exploring this theme. Challenges that focus on role-playing, diplomacy, and creative (out-of-the-box) solutions offer a nice contrast to campaigns where the only option is the use of force. Players building glitterfane heroes (or with followers of Alnara) will likely enjoy this theme the most.

### Racial

Story tellers should weigh carefully how they explore this theme. In Rhune, the racial tensions that exist are based on ideological choices more than on an outright racial hatred and this may be hard to convey. Ideally, this is something that story teller should highlight early in a campaign, maintaining a positive and constructive tension rather than simplifying encounters to skin color alone. This is a mature topic that lets players explore how social ideologies merge with racial identity, and how those tensions might eventually erupt into open conflict. This is a strong theme that deals with racism, the problem of racial identity (in place of individual sovereignty), and how conflicts develop between peoples. In Rhune, this is best exemplified by the conflict between the ælves and the dwarves, two races who have such strong beliefs that they have come to



actively dislike (and sometimes hate) one another as a result.



### Raiding vs. Trading

Tradition is a prevalent force in Rhune, especially in rural areas. The traditions of raiding, slaving, and dominating those too weak to overcome outside forces persists despite the influence of the more civilized sectors of society (such as the City-States of Vallinar). So, while society (at least in the South) has advanced to a point that it recognizes the sovereignty of the individual, not everyone embraces it. This theme might also be called titled “tradition vs. progress” and could cover more traditional fantasy themes, including gender roles, family relationships, racism (although that theme is addressed below), and the problems of economic status. Similar to the racial theme above, this theme requires a high degree of maturity. Players and their story teller are encouraged to discuss this theme before starting a story based on it.

## Technology, the dividing line...

All across Midgard, the level of technology varies. In the east, specifically in the City-States of Vallinar (and Damas), technology is roughly equal to 19th-century earth, although not as widespread. Textiles, storm power, machined tools, and alchemical solutions are all prevalent in the major cities – something some citizens take for granted when heading west. In the smaller towns, pre-industrialization still remains the norm, although regular commerce with the larger cities is quickly ending this. Even electricity exists, although the power fields are located within all of the major cities, linked to the Thermo-Torq Engines (or storm engines, as they are more commonly known) that power them.

In addition, travel is fairly safe within the City-States. Railways connect most of the major cities and roads connect nearly all of the smaller towns and villages. Only the most distant towns and hamlets cannot make these boasts.

It is this expansion of technology, however, that divides Ælveheim from its eastern and western neighbors, as both Rhuneheim and the City-States of Vallinar embrace technology. Between Witch Hill and the Forgestone Mountains, technology is far less apparent. Throughout Ælveheim, it is forbidden. All attempts to establish technological bases directly bordering the ælven nation have met with tragedy.

Most of the “civilized” races consider the ælves and their allies to be savages because of this. Of course, the feeling is mutual. The ælves and their allies blame technology (and those that use it) for the wrongs of the world. They consider everything, from the Ragnarök Clock to the blasted fields in northern Midgard, the effects of unnatural advancements. Worse, that same technology is a painful reminder of their own past and the secrets they still hide.

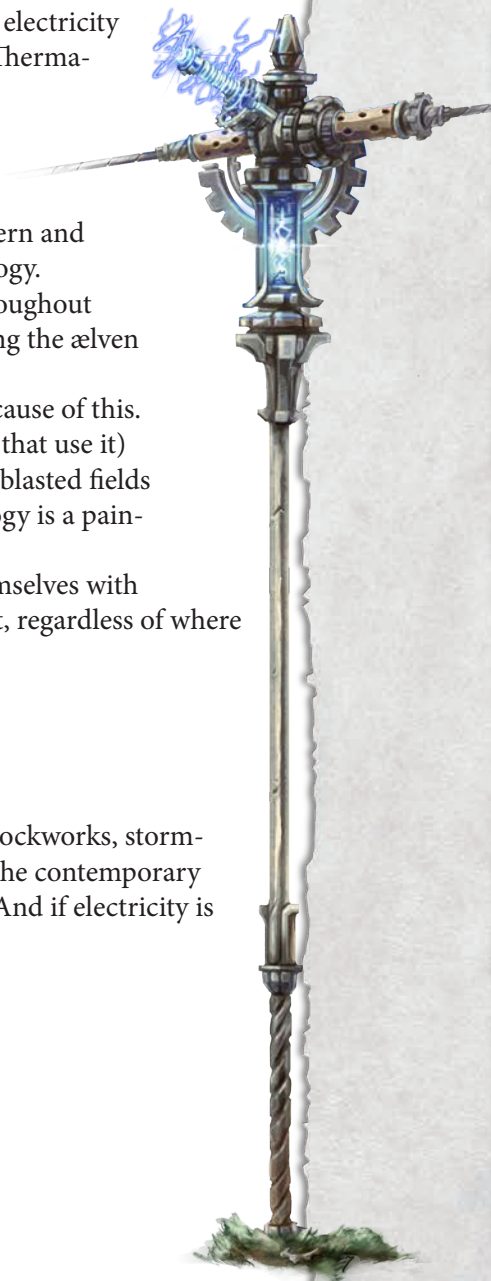
Other races, like the aryandai and the glitterfane, generally do not concern themselves with technology. Most accept the inevitability of Ragnarök and actively work to prepare for it, regardless of where blame should be placed.

## Electricity exists!

Few things represent technology like electricity.

Lightning, electricity’s natural manifestation, serves as the life-blood for the clockworks, storm-tech machines, produced by the breathtaking dragon towers. These wonders embody the contemporary life in Midgard, making life in communities a more comfortable and civilized matter. And if electricity is the lifeblood of technology, then the Dragon Towers are the beating heart, allowing the clockworks and storm-tech to flex their ingenious might.

Unless your gamemaster prohibits or restricts it, electricity is common throughout the City-States of Vallinar, as well as in many of the remote communities beyond - although its presence does decrease the further away one travels from the major technological centers. Electricity is absent in Ælveheim, as are all electronics or other technological wonders.



## Trade & Silver in the Middle Realm...

Like most campaign settings, trade (and greed) drives a great deal of what transpires in the Middle Realm. This is especially true in the City-States of Vallinar, where many of the major human families (and a few dwarven clans) have established themselves as economic powers. Though some of these families are newly tested, most have won their power the old fashioned way – either by offering services others could not provide or by cornering specific markets with ruthless efficiency. Though the individual families are established as individual entities, they are collectively known in the City-States of Vallinar as the Trade Families.

While there is a great deal that can be said about these families, it is sufficient to say they drive nearly all of the trade taking place inside the various cities. This does not stop in the market, either. Some of the families own (or at least sponsor) a number of the guilds throughout the City-States of Vallinar, with most of the families keeping close ties to those guilds whose markets they favor. As would be expected of those facing the inevitability of Ragnarök, most of this trade is focused on wartime readiness, with a number of guilds dedicated solely to the production of arms, armor, and similar items. As a result, most of the families play a complex eco-political game with the various factions that stand guard in the south, ensuring that their products and services are always in demand.

Outside of the City-States of Vallinar, trade is based less on economic manipulation and more on traditional need – with basic supplies and military arms taking priority. The Trade Families still play a big role outside of the cities, but far more power exists for the individual merchant, and in the most remote locations, the local lords who rule their halls. Merchants, in well-guarded caravans, ply their trades in the wilderness places far afield of the cities they know and love, taking their goods to the people beyond the Old Holds and, in some cases, beyond. There, in the lands far west of the City-States, trade takes its most basic form, with raw silver – mined from secret holds – traded for finished goods not available elsewhere.

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Of course, far to the south (and east of the Redwall Mountains), raiders rely on more traditional methods of acquiring their goods, pillaging those too weak to turn them away. The raiders, almost universally aligned with the Sea Wardens, pilot the infamous dragonships of the islands far to the east.

In most cases, however, trade is conducted in peace.

While the Trade Families (and most of the wealthy in the City-States of Vallinar) prefer a gold-based currency, most



business is conducted in silver, whether that silver is minted into coins or crafted into expensive jewelry. This is especially true in the lands outside of the City-States of Vallinar, and more so the further west you travel. Thus, the presence of gold in some locations, especially in remote halls, is considered a sign of power, good luck, clan unity, and great accomplishment. Conversely, some men consider the excessive display of gold (trade gold notwithstanding) a sign of weakness, suggesting inheritance (or excessive taxation) in place of that which has traditionally been won from the dead hands of one's enemies. Many of these men view minted gold as a symbol of greed and will refuse it outright when silver in enough quantity is available.

Of all the prizes dwarves and men seek, however, none is more valuable than the *jötunstones* – which is essential in the creation of Stormtech. Exceedingly rare, these stones can drive a whole community. When discovered, whole towns have been known to spring up around the valuable resource. In these instances, the stones demand the highest prices, bringing well-armed merchants from the City-States, their caravans laden with gold, silver, and other treasures, in hopes of securing the precious gems.

Likewise, Red Mithral is prized for its uses. It fetches a lot of coin as an alchemical ingredient (it is one of the main ingredients in dwarven blasting powder), as well as its use in some items that dispel arcane magic. Exceedingly strong and malleable, it is also found in the finest dwarven arms and armor. Unlike the other precious metals, it is never minted or used as a currency.

### Bartering in Rhune

There is a great deal that can be had in the Middle Realm, especially if an individual learns how to barter for it. While most merchants respect hard-won (or ill-gotten) coin, a great many men prefer to barter, seeing the act as a test of their wit, intelligence, and cunning.

When bartering, the two individuals engage in opposed checks. Either the Streetwise or Persuasion skill can be used by either the buyer or seller. The winner gains a 10% modification in the value of the goods (the seller would increase the price, whereas the buyer would reduce the price). If the winner succeeds with a Raise or more, the modification increases to 25% in their favor. While these challenges can be conducted solely as dice rolls, players should be encouraged to act these challenges out, roleplaying the use of their favored skill.

### Trade silver

Common to most of the people of Midgard, trade silver is the term used for any worked piece of silver that has significant value, a specific weight, and is intended to act as a form of mobile wealth. In most cases, trade silver is cast as jewelry and worn; torques, bracelets, pendants, brooches, and rings are the most common. When intended for regular trade, these items are frequently crafted as brooches and pendants – or similar items not requiring specific sizes. Some pieces incorporate gold filigree, fine gems, or fine etching, fetching more than their common weight in price. Trade silver is exceptionally common in the lands outside of the City-States of Vallinar, where it can quickly be used to determine a man's wealth without the need for writs or city-stamped trade bars.

Because trade silver is incredibly common, most travelers, merchants, and mercenaries (adventurers) take great care to learn the basics of appraising items, both for their value and craftsmanship. While most individuals are far from experts, most tradesmen (and karls) can accurately appraise trade silver to within a few coins. And if they cannot, they have a trusted ally who can.

### Trade gold

Like trade silver, trade gold is a term used for items crafted from gold and intended for trade. These pieces are less common and when discovered, they are generally worked into the finest pieces of jewelry. Fine gems, filigree, and even runic elements are normally worked into these pieces, many of which find their way into noble houses. Some of these pieces, however, never leave a family or clan. It is quite common to discover an ancestral piece, passed across the years, etched with the names of the successive generations – from father to son and onward.

While trade gold is used as a form of currency, it is far less common in most transactions, as it tends to have far more value to individuals. When it is used for trade, it is done so either out of necessity or

to share a great degree of honor, with some pieces unifying clans and families. Unlike trade silver, which can vary from common to elaborate pieces, trade gold is generally elaborate and commands more value.

In mechanical terms, most trade gold has a value of 100 gold pieces or more. It is common to have pieces with a value in the thousands of gold pieces.

### Other currencies

Outside of minted coins, trade silver, trade gold, and *jötunstones*, very few things are used as currency. In the lands west of the Old Holds, where some provisions are harder to come by, some men will use ammunition as a currency, especially when stocks are running low. These men, however, are just as likely to take what they need – raiding nearby settlements and outposts – as they are to trade for it.

House Scraë (one of the former Trade Families) generally conducts most of its business with vintage wines (in place of silver or gold), knowing that their vineyards are the best in all of the southern lands. Although this is done primarily on the black market (and through agents of the Black Hand), the value of such wines is common enough knowledge that some merchants (and housekarls) will gladly accept these wines as payment, as well.

In the darkest parts of the North, even more wicked forms of currency exist. In most of the Fel Lands, the servants of the Thrall Lords freely engage in slavery, trading men and women the same way men from the south trade silver and gold. The value of these slaves varies wildly (and is highly subjective), but most commoners will command between 15 and 30 gold pieces. Men and women with special talents (or who are exceptionally beautiful) will occasionally command up to double the value of commoners. Those intended for dire ends (as foodstuff for the giants) are commonly sold for less, with many going for as little as 5 to 10 gold pieces apiece (alive or dead).

### Using Currency in Rhune

Thematically, trade silver and trade gold adds a great degree of value to Rhune: Dawn of Twilight. In play, however, some GMs (and players) may find tracking their wealth tedious and, to a point, distracting.

GMs that do use the currencies herein should be aware that while silver and gold effectively have the same weight (50 coins = 1 lbs.), silver has less value and thus, carrying coins can potentially increase encumbrance by a factor of 10. In these instances, GMs should encourage players to consider trade silver, allowing them to convert their hard won coin into wearable jewelry at little or no cost.

Game Masters and players should note that, while silver is the common currency used in Rhune, prices are still locked to the gold standard – meaning that most expensive items still have their prices listed as gold pieces. GMs should feel free to change these to silver if they fully adopt the silver standard, or leave them in place, as they like.





City/Area	Currencies	Weights	Equivalency (in gold)	Notes
Damas	towers, marshals, marcs*, pips*	50 coins = 1 lbs	1 tower = 5 gold, 1 marshal = 1 gold, 10 marcs = 1 gold, & 100 pips = 1 gold	These coins are minted with thin, iron cores.
Haven	crowns, dames, marcs*, jarls*a	50 coins = 1 lbs	1 crown = 5 gold, 1 dame = 1 gold, 10 marcs = 1 gold, & 100 jarl = 1gold	These coins are minted with thin, iron cores.
Haverghast	skulls, ravens, swords*	50 coins = 1 lbs	1 skull = 1 gold, 10 ravens = 1 gold, & 100 swords = 1 gold	These edges of these coins are normally dyed red.
Old Holds	Trade bars	2 bars = 1 lbs.	Vary by purity, but most bars equal 20 to 25 crowns (gold)	Gold trade bars normally cost x10 their weight in silver.
Redwall	hammers* and anvils*	50 coins = 1 lbs	1 hammer = 1 gold, 10 anvils = 1 gold	These coins are generally smaller, but solid.
Union City	crowns, dames, marcs*, jarls*	50 coins = 1 lbs	1 crown = 5 gold, 1 dame = 1 gold, 10 marcs = 1 gold, & 100 jarl = 1gold	These coins are minted with thin, iron cores.
Vallingard	crowns, dames, marcs*, jarls*	50 coins = 1 lbs	1 crown = 5 gold, 1 dame = 1 gold, 10 marcs = 1 gold, & 100 jarl = 1gold	These coins are minted with thin, iron cores.

\*These coins are normally pressed with an indent that bisects the coin, allowing them to be split in half. When split, these coins are referred to as half-marcs (for marcs), karls or half-jarls (for jarls), tinnies (for pips), half-hammers (for hammers), sparks (for anvils), and daggers (for swords).







# Chapter 2

## Setting Rules



# Standard Setting Rules



The Rhune campaign setting uses the following **Setting Rules** in *Savage Worlds*.

- Blood and Guts – Bennies can be spent to reroll damage.
- Critical Failures – Bennies cannot be spent to reroll double 1s on a Trait roll.

## Rhune Specific Setting Rules

The following rules are part of what makes Rhune unique, blending together a variety of mechanics to create unique villains and heroes.

- Bodyguards – Some Wild Card non-player characters have the “Bodyguards” special ability. When a Wild Card with the ability is hit by a successful attack, it can be redirected to an allied character within 6”.
- Charges – Many magical items in Rhune have “charges”. An item with charges can be used to cast a power a limited number of times before being recharged. Powers activated only work for the base duration of and cannot benefit from raise effects, unless specifically noted in the item’s description. The following rules apply to items with charges:
  - Any hero with an Arcane Skill can use any item with charges.
  - The item activates as an action and the listed power is created. Activating does not require a Trait check. Note that in some situations achieving the desired effect may require use of a Trait check, such as Shooting to hit the target of a *bolt*, but activating the item does not.
  - The power lasts for its base duration and does not get a raise effect. The range of any power is the base listed.
  - Items with “charges” can be recharged, back to their maximum amount, by anyone who knows the power. To recharge an item requires an Arcane Skill check and expenditure of a number of Power Points equal to the normal casting cost of the power.
  - Example: A wand of *armor* (5 charges) can be activated as an action to cast the *armor* power. This grants the recipient 2 points of Armor for 3 rounds. It can be recharged by any character who knows the *armor* power by making a successful Arcane Skill check and spending 2 Power Points per charge replenished.
  - Example 2: A wand of *armor* (6 charges, 2 for raise) operates in the same way as the previous example, except that, when activated the user can choose to use 2 charges to give the recipient 4 points of Armor.
- Non-Player Characters – the following classifications are present in Rhune:
  - Extra – This is a normal Extra, per the *Savage Worlds* rules.
  - Henchman – This is a slightly tougher Extra. While they still only have 1 wound, they get to roll a Wild Die for all Trait checks.
  - Wild Card – This is a normal Wild Card non-player character, per the *Savage Worlds* rules.
- Potion – A potion is similar to an item with Charges. However, the following rules apply to them:
  - Any hero can use a potion. They do not need an Arcane Skill.
  - The item activates as an action and the listed power is created. Activating does not require a Trait check. Note that in some situations getting a potion to the appropriate location may require use of a Trait check, such as Throwing to hit the target of a potion of *blast*.
  - The power lasts for its base duration and does not get a raise effect. For those powers that have a range, the range is either Touch or 3/6/12 for Throwing.

See the rules for Throwing in *Savage Worlds* for further information.

- A potion is destroyed when used.
- Example: A potion of *healing* removes one wound suffered in the last hour, or it can cure poison or disease within 10 minutes of the event.

## Honor

Honor is a critical component of characters within Rhune. A hero's Honor, or absence thereof, strongly impacts how the world around him reacts. While attractive or charismatic individuals can work their way through the world without caring much about Honor, they will find themselves upstaged by those who are known to be noble or honorable, whether they are beautiful or ugly.

Honor is used by the Game Master to determine how Extras react, what organizations are willing to work with the heroes, and which of the heroes is perceived to be the leader, regardless of reality. Honor is typically gained or lost at the conclusion of an adventure, although certain actions and behaviors may cause an immediate gain or loss. Further information about Honor and its workings will be available in the Rhune Campaign Setting.

## Hero Creation

Hero creation in Rhune follows the normal rules, as outlined in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook.

## Edges

What follows are exclusions and modifications of the basic Edges from the core rulebook.

**Arcane Background** – The Arcane Background Edges are not restricted to character creation and can be taken later, providing the character has a d8+ in the appropriate attribute.

**Arcane Background (Magic):** If this edge is taken after character creation the hero must have a Smarts d8+. Taking the Edge does not confer the Spellcasting skill.

**Arcane Background (Miracles):** A hero who takes this Edge must choose a patron deity and trappings, per the options available in Chapter 6. They are also required take the Vow Hindrance towards that deity if they do not already have it. If this edge is taken after character creation the hero must have a Spirit d8+ and the Vow Hindrance does not confer any extra





benefits. Additionally, if taken after character creation, the hero gains Faith d4.

**Arcane Background (Psionics):** This Edge can only be taken with GM approval in Rhune.

**Arcane Background (Super Powers):** This Edge is not allowed in Rhune.

**Arcane Background (Weird Science):** This Edge focuses on Stormpunk and Clockworks technology. Unless otherwise specified at creation, all Weird Science gizmos use the Electricity trapping. If this edge is taken after character creation the hero must have a Smarts d8+. Taking the Edge does not confer the Weird Science skill. Weird Science gizmos can be repaired and maintained using the Repair (Clockworks) skill.

**Berserk:** This Edge is restricted to the Fel Barbarians of the north, and should not be taken by heroes without generating a very compelling backstory.

**Linguist:** This Edge is replaced with the Linguistics skill, and is not allowed in Rhune.

**McGyver:** This Edge requires the Repair (Clockworks) skill instead of the normal Repair skill.

**Mr. Fix It:** If the hero also has the Repair (Clockworks) skill, this Edge applies to it as well.

**Noble:** A character with this Edge gains an extra 15 points of Honor, but loses the Charisma bonus from the Edge if their Honor ever drops below 25.

**No Mercy:** The Blood and Guts Setting Rule supersedes this Edge.

**Rock and Roll!:** As there are no full automatic weapons in Rhune, this Edge is not allowed.

## Hindrances

What follows are exclusions and modifications of the basic Hindrances from the core rulebook.

**Doubting Thomas** – As Rhune is a magical world and the supernatural can be witnessed on a daily basis, this Hindrance is not applicable to heroes in Rhune.

**Vow** – Most religious organizations and factions require a Vow from adherents, typically to uphold and support the deity or faction agendas. The strictness of the vow and difficulty in supporting it determines whether it is a Minor or a Major hindrance.

## Skills

What follows are exclusions and modifications of the basic Skills from the core rulebook.



**Boating** – This skill is used for the care, maintenance, and operation of a sailing vessel. To figure out how to get from point A to point B requires Knowledge (Navigation), regardless of whether the character is at sea or on land.

**Driving** – This applies to operating wagons, chariots, horseless carriages, and other wheeled or tracked conveyances. Operating a vehicle type the hero is completely unfamiliar with (i.e. their first time driving a steam powered horseless carriage) likely has a penalty, as assigned by the GM.

**Knowledge (Navigation)** – This skill is used to determine where someone is, and how to get where they want to go through the use of stars, constellations, landmarks, technology, and any other applicable means.

**Piloting** – This is used to control flying machines.

## New Edges

### Combat Edges

#### Take that!

Requirements: Heroic, Agility d10+,  
After making a successful Agility Trick, the hero can immediately make a Fighting attack against the same target.

### Leadership Edges

#### Racial Teamwork

Requirements: Veteran, Command Presence, Tactician  
At the beginning of a fight, but before any Action Cards are dealt, the hero makes a Spirit test for each member of a different race present (i.e. A Dwarf, Human, and Glitterfane would be 3 Spirit tests.) For each success, the hero gets a bonus Benny that can be spent on any character during the battle. At the end of the battle, any bonus Benny not spent is lost.



## Power Edges

### Charge Mastery

Requirements: Seasoned, Arcane Background

When this character expends Power Points to recharge an item, it only takes half the normal amount, rounded up.

## Professional Edges

### Potion Maker

Requirements: Smarts d8+, Spirit d6+, Healing d8+, Survival d6+

This character can create certain potions through mundane means, by virtue of understanding the chemical and biological properties of various substances. If the character spends 50 gold on supplies and makes a Survival check at -2, he can create a potion which replicates one of the following powers: *blast*, *boost trait*, *entangle*, *healing*, *smite*, or *succor*. In the event the Survival check fails, the materials are wasted and the hero has to start again.



## Weird Edges

### Angry Glitterfane!

Requirements: Glitterfane, Seasoned, Agility d8+

If not Shaken, the character receives one free Fighting attack against an adjacent foe who just made a successful Fighting attack against the Glitterfane or an ally. This attack must be a normal attack and cannot be combined with Frenzy or Sweep. The Glitterfane loses 1 Honor and the Healing skill for an hour every time they use this ability.

## Legendary Edges

### Ragnarök Doesn't Scare Me

Requirements: Legendary, Improved Dodge, Strong Willed, Vigor d12+, Fighting d12+

This character has seen enough madness, death, and combat that no situation is terrifying or hopeless. He gains the Fearless Monstrous Ability, is immune to Taunts, and once per combat can spend a Benny to completely ignore all damage from a single attack. Enemies reduce their number by 2 when calculating Gang-Up against the Hero.

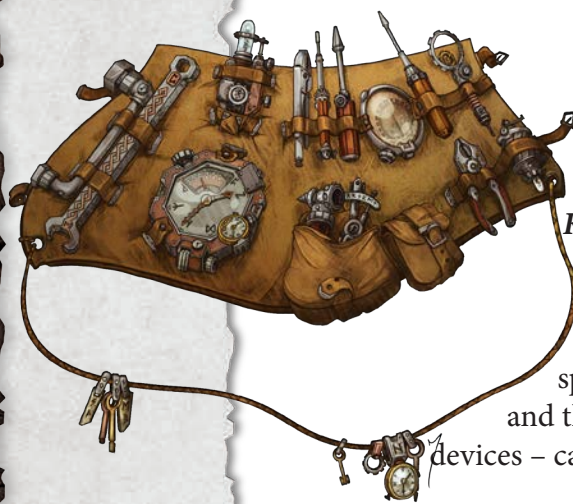
## New Hindrances

### **Braggart (Minor)**

This character believes they are amazing and terrifying to the enemy. As such, this hero's only action in the first round of every combat is to Taunt the foe he perceives to be the greatest threat. To perform any action other than a Taunt on the first round, the hero must spend a Benny.

### **Outcast (Major)**

A more extreme form of Outsider, this hero has been driven out of their homelands and carries a social stigma for all interactions. Perhaps they are refugees from the north fleeing Fel Barbarians, perhaps they are the offspring of an unwelcome union. Whatever the cause, this hero has a -4 Charisma penalty for Persuasion and Streetwise checks, and his Honor is treated as half the normal value in social settings.



#### **New Skills**

#### **Knowledge (Clockworks) (Smarts)**

The character possesses special knowledge about clockworks. In addition to basic knowledge and answering simple and complex questions about clockworks, the character can also identify special traits or abilities they might possess. Weaknesses, strengths, and their uses – whether they are free-willed constructs or highly complex devices – can also be identified with specific checks.

#### **Knowledge (Runic Lore) (Smarts)**

Students of runes and the lore that surrounds them frequently learn this skill. Not only can these heroes identify most runes on sight, they also know the myths and history behind them. Identifying them, their uses, background, and also discovering forgeries and corruptions of runes is all part of this skill.

#### **Linguistics (Smarts)**

Of importance to Skalds and other travelers, the Linguistics skill represents the ability to read and write in other languages. Every die type in Linguistics gives the Hero fluency in another languages of their choice. Additionally, when confronted with an unknown language, the hero can attempt to decipher or understand the language. Success indicates a basic level of understanding for the immediate event, but nuances or complex topics still prove difficult. A raise indicates basic proficiency for the duration of the scene, and the hero retains their understanding for the next scene as well.

#### **Repair (Clockworks)**

While the normal Repair skill is used for most types of mechanical device, the field of clockworks is new and unique enough that only those who have specific education or experience with them can properly repair and maintain these complex devices.

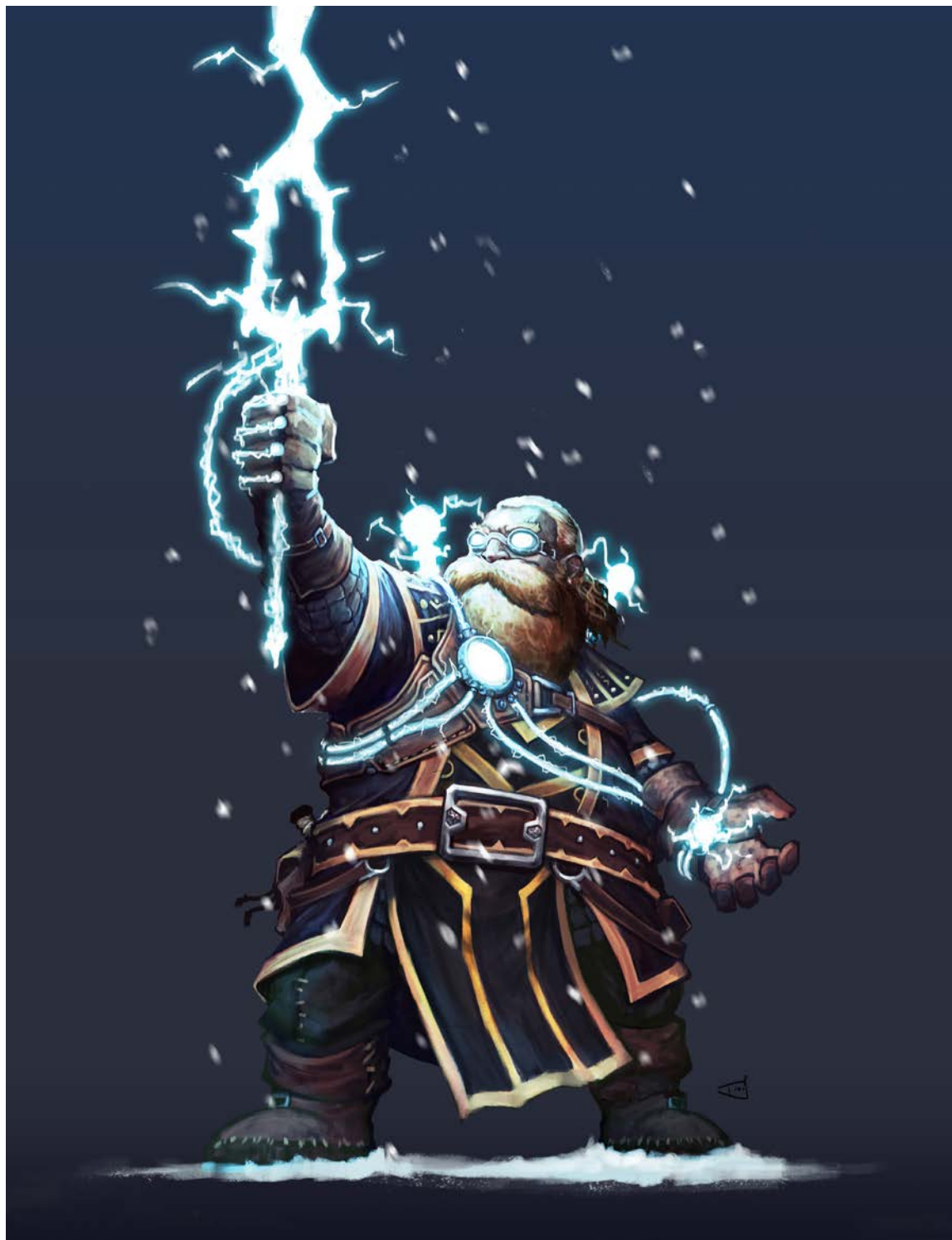
This replaces normal Savage Worlds Linguistics.



The skill encompasses a wide variety of tasks, from creating a variety of clockworks items (everything from simple toys and motors all the way to analytical engines and siege weapons), it also includes repair and maintenance of those devices. It is also possible to customize, program, and modify those devices.

Due to the clockworks devices intrinsic in all firearms, this skill is also used for the creation, repair, and maintenance of all gunpowder-based weapons. Additionally, this skill can be used in the same manner as the Healing skill on automata and other clockworks creations.

Someone with the normal Repair skill can attempt to perform these actions, but they have a -2 penalty to all rolls.



## Dragon Towers!

Erected on high mountain slopes or regions naturally predisposed to storms, Dragon Towers attract lightning, harness the wind, and generate electricity. Fields of these wondrous structures funnel the energy into the power stations of dwarves and humanity through immensely long cables of copper and mithral – the aqueducts of this age. Banks of great batteries charge within the power stations, and those, in turn, feed the Lesser Dragon Towers. These Lesser Towers wirelessly transmit power in fields, which blanket areas as small as a few structures to as large as whole city districts, allowing devices to be operated, recharged, sometimes even function with enhanced abilities.

Smaller communities might only have a half-dozen Dragon Towers, and any civilized village has managed to build at least a lone Dragon Tower, ensuring lights and simple utilities for the residents. More than any flag, a Dragon Tower serves to mark where the frontier ends. A town enjoying the benefits of a Dragon Tower has running water, electric lamps, at least some form of local communication system, and the ability to recharge clockworks and storm-tech. This gives them generally better defenses, more security, and improved production over locations without Dragon Towers.

A Dragon Tower creates an ambient field, allowing electrical items to operate. These fields have a quality and a recharge rate, which defines the speed at which the devices can recharge. The quality of a field is measured in the number of charging stations it can support. Items that require charging take up slots on those stations. Gamemasters are encouraged to say how many slots are available, rather than determine what occupies all the station's slots. Often the recharging rate will be more important for creating urgency in a situation.

### There are five types of fields

**Luxurious** 256 charging station (3072 slots), 4 hours to full charge, ½ hours count.

**Rich** 16 charging station (192 slots), 4 hours to full charge, only whole hours count.

**Moderate** 4 charging station (48 slots), 6 hours to full charge, only whole hours count.

**Sparse** 2 charging station (24 slots), 6 hours to full charge, only whole hours count.

**Weak** 1 charging station (12 slots), 8 hours to full charge, only whole hours count.

In larger communities, an ambient field can be broken down into four sub-fields. For instance, a Luxurious field in a big town could be split into four Rich fields, and one of those Rich fields might be broken into 64 Weak fields to power a poorer neighborhood, where each household is given a single slot on the charging station. Another Rich field might be broken into four Moderate fields, used to power an artisans' quarter, with sub-fields within those Moderate fields possibly based on taxes paid.

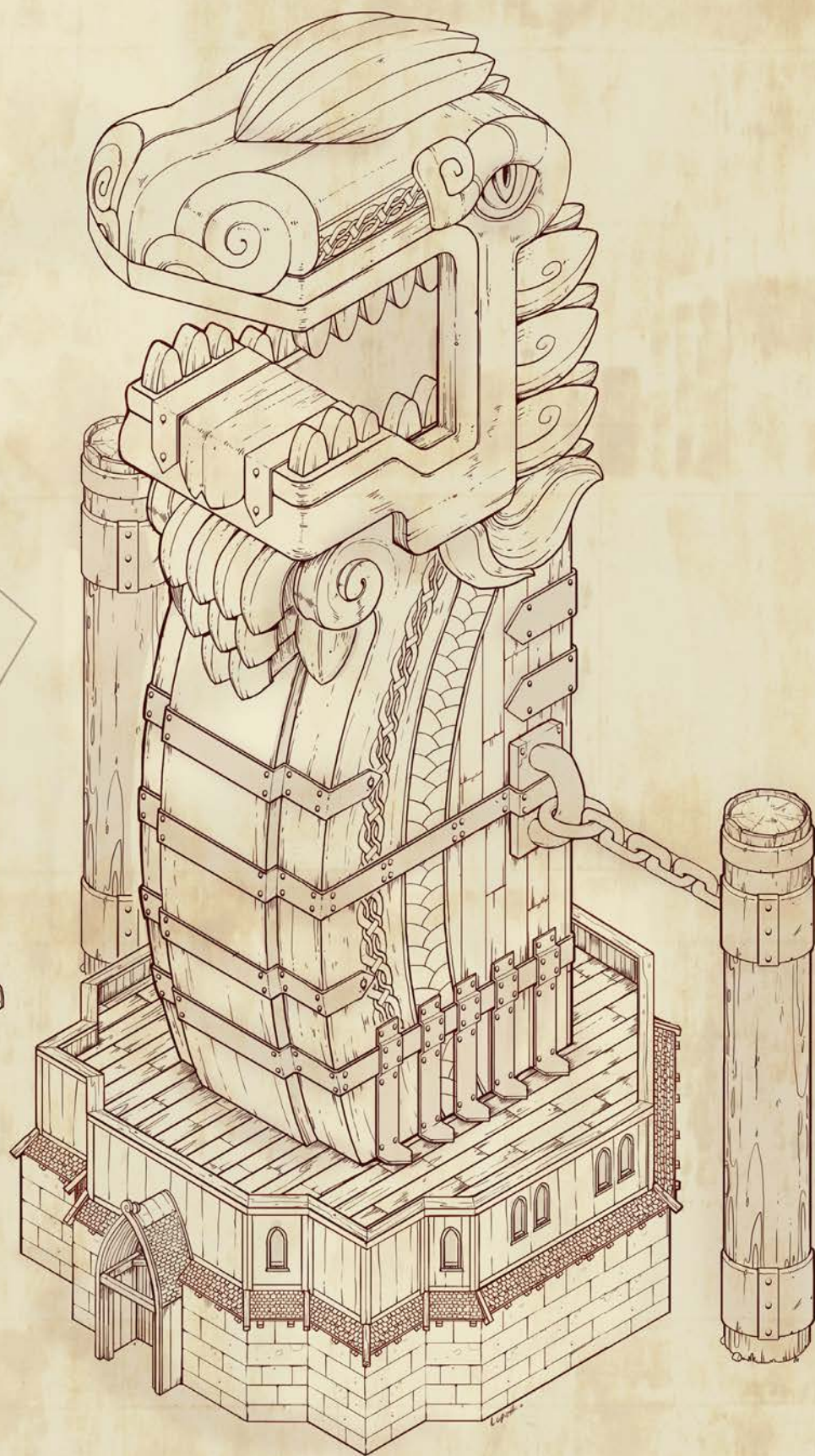
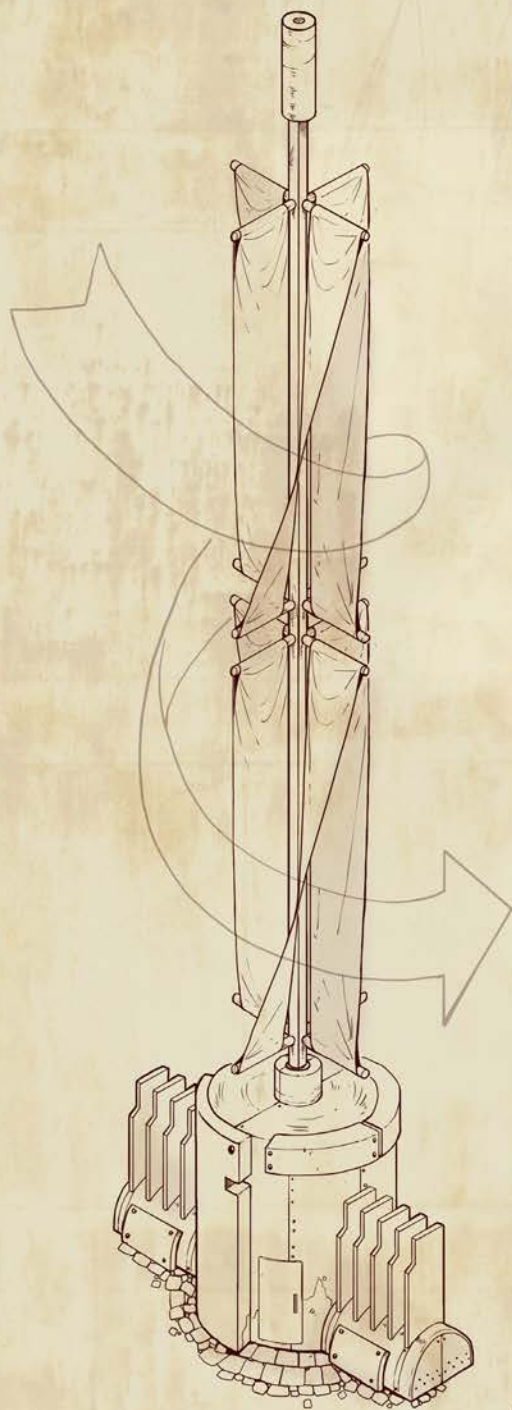
Dragon Towers may transmit their power over longer distances, but require re-transmitters every twenty miles to propagate the electricity. Transmission cables are very thick, often wrapped in hide and sometimes sealed in alchemical resin. They have a Toughness of 15 and can suffer 4 wounds before they are impaired and transmit half the expected power. After 8 wounds a cable is destroyed, and transmits no power. Attacking an active transmission cable with a melee weapon inflicts 4d6 electrical damage on the attacker with each damage-causing attack to the cable.

### Recharging

Once attuned to a station, an electrical item occupies the necessary number of slots and begins to recharge, restoring the indicated number of uses per hour. If insufficient slots are available, an item cannot be attuned. An individual with access to the charging station can disassociate a charging item with the station before it completes recharging with a Repair check at -2.

Spells can be used to quickly recharge an item, providing 1 hour of charging benefit per 1 Power Point spent, but require a successful Repair check at -2 or the effect destroys the battery. On a critical failure, the item is overloaded and explodes. This destroys the item and does 1d6 damage per point of charge to everyone within 10' of the item.









## Firearms in Rhune

Guns are a noticeable part of the world of Rhune, and this especially true in two particular realms – Midgard and Tieferhæm.

On Midgard, firearms have passed the stage of emergence and have entered a truly progressive era. Firearms are constantly being developed and refined, specifically in and around the City-States of Vallinar. Although they have not been deployed in all of the individual cities, they are incredibly prevalent in Damas, Haverghast, Redwall, and Vallingard. In Damas, many designers and gunsmiths incorporate clockwork designs when they build them, and it is quite popular to develop them around stocks that include blades of various sizes. In both Haverghast and Vallingard, guns are prized for their durability and are a practical affair for most people, although Vallingard does have its well-to-do, eccentric collectors. In Redwall, guns are sacrosanct, a symbol of the authority of the Gun Priests of Velash, although that doesn't restrict their use among the military, nobility, or wealthy. While numerous gunsmiths throughout the City-States of Vallinar consider their firearms works of art, none excel like the master gunsmiths in Redwall – who frequently engrave their guns with everything from runes to verses from the *Galdrvalin*.

### Using Firearms

Although firearms are common in Rhune, they are expensive and few people get regular access to them. Accordingly, there is a penalty of -2 to Shooting rolls with them when a Hero is first learning how to operate them. How long this penalty applies is dependent on the Hero's background and the Game Master's discretion.

Some of the more common firearms are listed on the following pages.

#### **Blacksteel Holdout Pistol**

*Harriden Blacksteel, a dwarven rogue from a remote outpost in the Redwall Mountains, designed this pistol for close-quarter fighting. Crafted from dwarven cold steel, this breach-loaded pistol stays cool to the touch, even after shooting a number of rounds through it. This pistol only holds a single pistol round.*

**Damage** 2d6 **RoF** 1 **Range** 5/10/20 **Shots** 1 **Min Str** d4 **Wgt** 5 lbs **Cost** 350 gp **Notes** none



#### **Damassian Elite Guard Pistol**

*Carried almost exclusively by Damassian Air Marshals, this firearm is the pinnacle of clockwork technology. Able to store the kinetic energy generated from its own recoil, this weapon can, when activated, transfer that energy to the large curved blade fitted below the barrel. Although this quality frustrates some, many clockwork elves – especially those who embrace the Path of the Spellshot – seek it out. This breach-loaded pistol holds three pistol rounds.*

**Damage** 2d6 **RoF** 1 **Range** 5/10/20 **Shots** 1 **Min Str** d6 **Wgt** 8 lbs **Cost** 500 gp  
**Notes** Treat as a Dagger in Melee, blade does +1d4 electrical damage for 2 rounds after being fired



#### **Damassian Gun-Glaive**

*Similar to the Sigrún War Cannon, the Damassian Gun-Glaive was created for the biggest automata to carry into battle against heavy troops. Essentially a heavy pole arm with a large, curved blade, the gun-glaive sports a small cannon just below the base of the blade. Designed for use against some of the biggest trolls and their kin, it serves equally well against heavily armored cavalry troops. The gun-glaive holds a single, specialized rifle round that is unique to the weapon.*

**Damage** 2d8-1 **RoF** 1 **Range** 12/24/48 **Shots** 1 **Min Str** d10 **Wgt** 24 lbs **Cost** 1540 gp **Notes** AP4, Snapfire, Treat as a Halberd in Melee

#### **Damassian Shield Breaker**

*Used primarily by the Damassian Air Marshals, the shield breaker is a powerful short-range rifle attached to a long sword that is fired by squeezing the handle attached to the hilt of the sword. Similar in concept to the Damassian Gun-Glaive, it is designed for use against lightly armored targets. This breach-loaded weapon holds a single rifle round.*

**Damage** 2d8+1 **RoF** 1 **Range** 12/24/48 **Shots** 1 **Min Str** d8 **Wgt** 12 lbs **Cost** 1000 gp **Notes** AP2, Snapfire, Treat as a Long Sword in Melee





### Dwarven Great Pistol

Known as simply *The Defender* to most, this revolver is a favorite of bodyguards, cavaliers, and military officers throughout the City-States of Vallinar. Large and powerful, this weapon holds six pistol rounds, each which must be individually loaded once the cylinder is unlocked and slid open. The distinctive flared barrel, weight, and size of this weapon make it very difficult to conceal. There is a -2 penalty to Stealth when attempting to conceal this weapon

**Damage** 2d8 **RoF** 1 **Range** 12/24/48 **Shots** 6 **Min Str** d6 **Wgt** 8 lbs **Cost** 750 gp **Notes** AP2, Snapfire, 3 actions to reload



### Dwarven Hammerlock

Designed by Garn "Trollbane" Stonefuhr to stop the trolls and ogres of the Icewall Mountains at a distance, this rifle has a range that few rifles can match. Arguably one of the biggest and heaviest of dwarven designs, this rifle packs a serious punch that most adversaries find hard to ignore. The spring-fed rifle holds two rounds, although some models to sport modifications that double the weapon's capacity.

**Damage** 2d8+1 **RoF** 1 **Range** 24/48/96 **Shots** 2 **Min Str** d10 **Wgt** 18 lbs **Cost** 1200 gp **Notes** AP3, Snapfire



### Hammerfall Striker

A favorite of dwarven hunters, this medium-range rifle is light, reliable, and popular in the lands in and around Redwall. Although far from official, this weapon is often found in the hands of dwarven long-gunners, most who claim its weight makes it an ideal secondary for short-range targets. The Hammerfall Striker is a breach-loaded rifle that holds two rifle rounds.

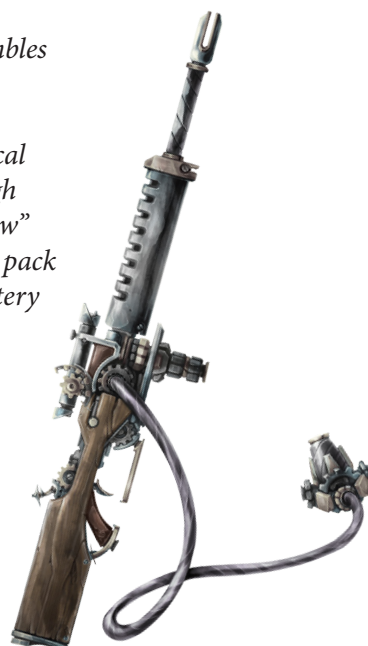
**Damage** 2d8-1 **RoF** 1 **Range** 20/40/80 **Shots** 2 **Min Str** d6 **Wgt** 8 lbs  
**Cost** 840 gp **Notes** Snapfire



### Lightning Coil

About as big as a Warbine, this extremely uncommon weapon resembles a rifle but has no place for cartridges, and possesses a brass stock with a port to connect a thick copper cable. It connects to a battery belt or pack, and allows the gunner to fire a powerful 30-foot electrical spark blast. The Lightning Coil fires using the cone template on a high or low power setting. The "high" setting uses 2 charges, while the "low" setting uses 1 charge. Damage varies based on setting. A Bandolier pack comes with 15 charges, a Canister comes with 20 charges, and a battery backpack comes with 30 charges.

**Damage** 2d6 (Low)/2d10 (High) **RoF** 1 **Range** Cone  
Template **Shots** 1 **Min Str** d8 **Wgt** 8 lbs **Cost** 1700 gp  
**Notes** Ignores cover, +2 damage vs. targets in metal armor



### Redwall Cutter

This heavy rifle has more in common with a small cannon than it does most traditional firearms. Short, with a wide, heavy barrel, this rifle fires a specially prepared chain that, upon leaving the barrel, uncoils and tears through everything in its path. It is commonly used to clear trenches, rip through heavy cavalry, or against the heaviest of automatons. This heavy rifle holds a single, specialized round.

**Damage** 2d8+2 **RoF** 1 **Range** 15/30/60 **Shots** 1 **Min Str** d12 **Wgt** 24 lbs **Cost** 1540 gp **Notes** AP6, Snapfire



### Redwall Warbine

Designed to take down heavily armored enemy troops, the Redwall Warbine is one of the few dwarven rifles designed around the shattersteel round. Far more advanced than most of the rifles found outside of Redwall, it is used exclusively by the dwarven military and is rarely found outside of it. This revolver-style rifle holds six rifle rounds and enjoys a longer range than most firearms.

**Damage** 2d8+1 **RoF** 1 **Range** 20/40/80 **Shots** 6 **Min Str** d8 **Wgt** 12 lbs **Cost** 1480 gp

**Notes** AP4, Snapfire, 2 actions to reload

### Scattergun

Although this gun has many names, it is most commonly known as Hothur's Wrath. While it easily fires normal rifle rounds, its heavy, flared barrel is designed for high-impact shrapnel. Although it is used almost exclusively by the dwarves of the Redwall Mountains to clear out the tunnels below their beloved city, it is sometimes found in other subterranean realms with extensive tunnel systems, as well. The scattergun holds a single, specialized round in its chamber.

**Damage** 1-3d6 **RoF** 1 **Range** 10/20/40 **Shots** 1 **Min Str** d6 **Wgt** 8 lbs **Cost** 650 gp **Notes** 2 actions to reload

### Scattergun, Double-Barreled

Nearly identical to its predecessor, the double-barreled scattergun is a heavier version of the former that is breach-loaded. Its barrels rest side by side, but can only be fired once at a time. A small selector switch allows the shooter to choose which barrel is fired. This rifle obviously holds two specialized rounds, although it can shoot normal rifle rounds.

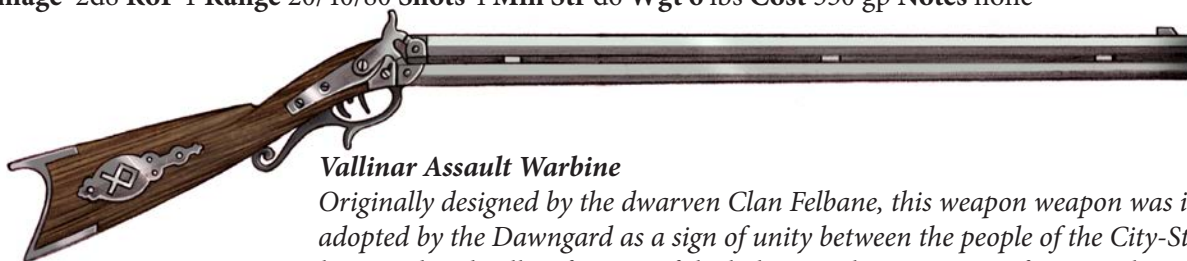
**Damage** 1-3d6 **RoF** 1 **Range** 10/20/40 **Shots** 2 **Min Str** d6 **Wgt** 10 lbs **Cost** 800 gp **Notes** 2 actions to reload



### Scout's Half Rifle

Easily the most common rifle in and around the City-States of Vallinar, this rifle owes its legacy to the Raskhaus Family. Created independently by Deric Raskhaus of Haven City, this tube-fed rifle is the only of its kind. Incredibly popular because of its ease of use and unique design, the family's gunsmiths are constantly fulfilling orders. The Scout's Half Rifle holds four rifle rounds.

**Damage** 2d8 **RoF** 1 **Range** 20/40/80 **Shots** 4 **Min Str** d6 **Wgt** 6 lbs **Cost** 550 gp **Notes** none



### Vallinar Assault Warbine

Originally designed by the dwarven Clan Felbane, this weapon was immediately adopted by the Dawngard as a sign of unity between the people of the City-States of Vallinar and Redwall. A favorite of the holy guns that sometimes frequent the Order, this rifle looks very similar to the Redwall Warbine. This rifle is incredibly reliable, accurate, and holds six rifle rounds in its rotating cylinder.

**Damage** 2d8 **RoF** 1 **Range** 20/40/80 **Shots** 6 **Min Str** d8 **Wgt** 12 lbs **Cost** 800 gp

**Notes** 2 actions to reload



Equipment	Damage	RoF	Range	Shots	Min Str	Wgt	Cost	Notes
Blacksteel Holdout Pistol	2d6	1	5/10/20	1	d4	5 lbs	350 gp	
Damassian Elite Guard Pistol	2d6	1	5/10/20	1	d6	8 lbs	500 gp	Treat as a Dagger in Melee, blade does +1d4 electrical damage for 2 rounds after being fired
Damassian Gun-Glaive	2d8-1	1	12/24/48	1	d10	24 lbs	1540 gp	AP4, Snapfire, Treat as a Halberd in Melee
Damassian Shield Breaker	2d8+1	1	12/24/48	1	d8	12 lbs	1000 gp	AP2, Snapfire, Treat as a Long Sword in Melee
Dwarven Great Pistol	2d8	1	12/24/48	6	d6	8 lbs	750 gp	AP2, 3 actions to reload
Dwarven Hammer-lock	2d8+1	1	24/48/96	2	d10	18 lbs	1200 gp	AP3, Snapfire
Dwarven Stinger	2d8-1	1	10/20/40	4	d6	6 lbs	320 gp	2 actions to reload
Hammerfall Striker	2d8-1	1	20/40/80	2	d6	8 lbs	840 gp	Snapfire
Lightning Coil	2d6 elec (Low)/ 2d10 elec (High)	1	Cone Template	Varies	d8	8 lbs	1700gp	Ignores cover, +2 damage vs. targets in metal armor
Redwall Cutter	2d8+2	1	15/30/60	1	d12	24 lbs	1540 gp	AP6, Snapfire
Redwall Warbine	2d8+1	1	20/40/80	6	d8	12 lbs	1480 gp	AP4, Snapfire, 2 actions to reload
Scattergun	1-3d6	1	10/20/40	1	d6	8 lbs	650 gp	2 actions to reload
Scattergun, Double-Barreled	1-3d6	1	10/20/40	2	d6	10 lbs	800 gp	3 actions to reload
Scout's Half Rifle	2d8	1	20/40/80	4	d6	6 lbs	550 gp	
Sigrún War Cannon	2d8+2	1	15/30/60	1	d12	30lbs	1600gp	AP4, LBT, Snapfire
Vallinar Assault Warbine	2d8	1	20/40/80	6	d8	12 lbs	800 gp	2 actions to reload
Vallinar Long Rifle	2d8	1	24/48/96	1	d6	9 lbs	950 gp	Snapfire
Vallinar Noble	2d6	1	4/8/16	1	d4	3 lbs	450 gp	+2 Stealth when concealing

Dwarves often use Scatterguns to clear the tunnels that connect their subterranean homes.



## Languages of Rhune...

Rhune: Dawn of Twilight encompasses a number of cultures, races, and groups. Many of these peoples possess unique languages or dialects, which are outlined briefly below. Heroes begin play knowing a number of languages equal to half their Smarts die. Additional languages can be learned through the use of the Linguistics skill (see Chapter 2).

### Common Tongues

The following languages are common to the people of Rhune and all of the following tongues are taught throughout the City-States of Vallinar.

**Ash Tongue** The dark language spoken by the followers of the Thrall Lords, hags and many of the Thrall Lords' clerics. Ash Tongue is a corrupt language that shares its alphabet with runic, even though many of the alphabet's characters are twisted and broken. The Dokkálfir (black-skin ælves) also speak it.

**Aquan** The language spoken by many of the ocean-bound fey, the Sea Wardens, most mariners, and many of the coastal people east of the Redwall Mountains. Aquan is a flowing, singsong language that carries easily over (or under) the waves. It incorporates a great deal of body language.

**Celestial** The divine tongue spoken by the *Æssinyr* and their servants. Most of the *Æssinyrs'* clerics conduct their observances and rituals in Celestial, especially on the High Holidays. Celestial is commonly spoken in both Briglæss and Sommerfæth. Celestial shares some words with *Ælven*, as well.

**Clockspeak** The technical language of the automata, clockwork adepts, and most craftsmen or engineers. It incorporates language from both Low and High Common, but includes a plethora of specialized terms that make its use outside of the guilds all but useless for laymen.

**Common, Low** The common tongue of the City-States of Vallinar and racial language of most humans. It is also known as Trader's Tongue. Nearly all business is conducted in this language, and unless otherwise noted, it is the default language for humans encountered in any land (commoners, warriors, experts, etc.).

**Common, High** A refined version of the common tongue of the humans that borrows from both Celestial and Runic. Scholars, Vitkarr, skalds, and the Trade Families frequently speak it. It was the official language of the Kingdom of Vallinar before it fell. Many of the Rune Poems are written in High Common.

**Dwarven** The common language of the dwarven people. It is sometimes known as the Red Tongue, in honor of those who have fought and died for Redwall. It uses the Runic alphabet.

**Dwarven, High** The royal language of the dwarven people. It is spoken by the Great Clans (Hammerfall, Redwall, and Runesinger) and uses the Runic alphabet as its base.

**Elven, Low** The common language of the Clockwork Elves and some exile ælves. Most ælves refuse to speak this language, as they consider its knowledge a mark of shame.

**Futhark** The common, spoken version of Runic. Most skalds and storytellers learn this language in conjunction with Runic, as the two are closely related.

**Giant** The language of the Thrall Lords and their giant servants. It is spoken almost exclusively in the North, although the Grey Trolls of the Redwall Mountains and some of the jötunfolk also speak it. It uses a corrupted version of the Runic alphabet.

**Goblin** A guttural, deep-throated language common to the goblins, gnolls, and hobgoblins of the North. Although most of giants and the trolls of the North also understand it, many refuse to speak it. While it uses a very broken version of Runic as its alphabet, it is rarely written down.



**Gutnish** A variant of Jarlund that is spoken in coastal lands east of the Icewall Mountains.

**Jarlund** Spoken by the people north of the Icewall Mountains, this tongue is a variant of Low Common. It borrows from both Goblin and Undercommon.

**Norn** This language is a variant of Low Common that incorporates small bits of Sylvan. It is spoken west of the Old Holds.

**Runic** This ancient language is the base of several languages, including Dwarven, Futhark, and Giant. Some swear it is the oldest language in existence, reportedly penned by Oridynn himself and predating Ælven. Whether or not this is true, The Grand Galdr was written in Runic, as are a great number of rune stones. Most Vitkarr read and write it. It is never spoken, however. Most people that learn to read Runic also learn to speak Futhark alongside it.

**Ignan** The hard, guttural language spoken by creatures of fire and those who dwell in Thodheim. A great many dark rituals are penned in Ignan.

**Sylvan** The light and delicate language of the noble fey and their trusted allies. Many of Nayadia's clerics sing her prayers in Sylvan. Sylvan is commonly spoken in Briglæss as well.

**Terran** The language of the creatures that dwell in the earth. Many dwarves, miners, and those who dwell deep in Tieferhæm learn to speak it. A number of skalds' tales about the mountains are penned and sung in Terran.

**Umbral** Umbral is a soft, silky language that is spoken almost exclusively on Nachtland. It is a variant of Low Common.

## Uncommon Tongues

The following languages are generally uncommon, in some cases, exceptionally rare, among the people of Rhune. While heroes can learn these languages, they must be learned in game (the result of special training) and with the GMs approval. Unless learned as a racial language, player characters should not begin play with any of these languages.

**Ælven** The ancient language by the ælves. Very few people outside of Ælveheim speak this rare tongue. It is considered a great honor among the ælves to be taught it, but a death sentence to those who learn it otherwise. It shares some root words with Celestial.

**Aryandai** The soft, clicking language spoken by the aryandai. Although it is the racial language of its people, very few outside of the Aryandai Peninsula speak it and even fewer aryandai teach it to outsiders. It is sometimes known as Spiderspeak.

**Auran** The rare, wispy language spoken by the creatures of air. Both the Air Marshals of Damas and the Storm Shepherds of Redwall speak it.

**Druidic** This complex language is a very specific dialect of High Common with a unique lexicon known only to the druids. It freely incorporates all the elemental languages and changes dialects with the seasons, making it all the harder for outsiders to understand. It is sometimes called Stormtongue.

**Dulamu** A specific variant of Ælven, spoken in the wilds, intended to mislead those suspected of understanding the mother tongue. It is never taught to outsiders and is widely used by ælven combat patrols.

**Garo** Spoken almost exclusively by merchants and western wanderers, this argot incorporates Low Common and elements of Shadowspeak. It is common in and around the Old Holds.

**Glittertongue** A refined and flowing offshoot of Goblin. The glitterfane and their trusted allies speak it. Alnara occasionally communicates to her priestesses in it as well. It is sometimes referred to as High Goblin, but only as an insult to those who speak it.

**ShadowSpeak** The dark, smooth language spoken by the Black Hand and its agents. This language shares a lot with Low Common, but the inferences incorporated into it truly reflect its complexity. Some common thieves, especially those with strong ties to the Black Hand, also learn to speak it.

**Umbral, High** The refined version of the common tongue of Nachtland, this language is spoken solely by those who serve the Black Court of Dark Leighanna.

**Undercommon** A rare corruption of the dwarven tongue, Undercommon contains elements from Runic, Goblin, and Terran. The dark races that live under the mountains, especially those who serve the Thrall Lords, speak it.

**Val** The Valkyries and their trusted champions speak this tongue, which is a rare variant of Celestial. It is said that the dead always understand Val, and as a result, many necromancers learn to speak it in order to command the dead.








# Chapter 3

## Races of Rhune



The races that walk Midgard are many. In south-central Midgard, both the ælves and the aryandai rule the forests – each in their own way – hunting the enemies of their beloved *Æssinyr*. In the City-States of Vallinar, automata, clockwork elves, dwarves and humans build grand machines and the cities that contain them. Throughout southern Midgard, the glitterfane – divine servants of Alnara – wander the lands bringing healing and redemption to those that accept her path.

## Ælves

*Ashlynn inched forward. She pressed close to the ground, letting the tall grass shroud her from the tree-bound sentries that stood a few feet ahead. From their alert postures she could tell they sensed her, but, from their occasional frustrated glance, she could also tell they couldn't see her. One shifted a makeshift spear from his shoulder, weighing it with a practiced hand. She wasn't keen on becoming its target, so she held deathly still. They continued to scan.*

*Ashlynn let the minutes pass. The sentries relaxed. She inched forward, again.*

*Her approach took an hour. She could see the sentries' bright green pupils reflecting the moonlight as they subtly shifted. Minutes later, she readied herself, sliding her arm behind her, reaching for Scryer's globe. As she did, a weight rested gently on her wrist. She slowly turned her head.*

*Another sentry stood over her, spear pointed down at the base of her neck.*

*"Rise slowly and without aggression," he said.*

*Ashlynn grunted to herself.*

*"I am Greengard Theynn. You are in ælven lands, without invitation. Explain yourself, Dirge Elf." Ashlynn cringed at the insult.*

*"Quickly," he added, his sky-blue eyes narrowing in the moonlight.*

*Ashlynn stood, opened her hands, and turned to face the sentry. He leveled his spear to her throat in response. He didn't blink. Ashlynn noted his posture; his foot pitched in such a way as to spring at a moment's notice. She didn't envy her chances if he did. She sighed.*

*"I am Lady Ashlynn Arcwe'..." She trailed off, leaving her full name out. "I'm Ashlynn. I'm looking for a rare herb, said to grow in your lands, to heal a close friend. In the City-States of Vallinar, it is called the Dawning Flower. I do not know the ælven name for it."*

*Greengard Theynn held his hand up, cutting Ashlynn off.*

*"What you seek is sacred, in our lands, like all things that grow. What you seek we will not provide. If your friend is to pass, then it is the will of Velluna-Akka. If he is to stay, thank Alnara for her endless mercy. But do not seek such in our lands again."*

*Ashlynn shifted her weight to her right foot, and shrugged her shoulders.*



*“So, he is to die, then? Because you cannot spare a petal from a single flower! Because you are so removed from the cycle of life and death of those who live and love? Because you are....”*

*Ashlynn squared her shoulders and leaned into the spear’s tip, pressing it against her throat to make her point. She felt the razor sharp stone cut her slightly. Blood trickled.*

*Greengard Theynn held firm, letting the tip slide further into her throat. More blood trickled. He sighed.*

*“You believe your friend will die. We know he will not. He will simply change forms, returning to Yggdrasil. Do not ask us to challenge the will of the Æssinyr, as we will not. If he is to stay, you will find your flower. But you will not find it on our lands. It is forbidden.”*

*Ashlynn stared into the Greengard’s eye. Sadly, he would slay her without a second thought if she pushed this. She would have to turn back and hope, on her return journey, she might find the rare flower. She had to.*

Called “The Ageless Ones” or “The Shining Ones” by other races, ælves are the oldest living race on Midgard. In fact, ælves are Rhune’s only truly immortal race, having walked her primordial forests with the Æssinyr long before even the dwarves came into being. To outsiders, ælves sound like beings born of pure myth. In a sense, they are. Where other races embrace the current age, the ælves have not. They continue to live as they did during the Age of Myth. They contest the technology others call progress, claiming it is the catalyst that leads to Ragnarök. Moreover, they refuse to take an active part in preparing for Ragnarök, a stance that puts them at odds with the other races surrounding them. Instead, they live day to day, aspiring to master their relationship with the Æssinyr.

**Physical** – The ælves are a silent lot, towering above most races. They tend to be thin and fair-skinned with hair colors ranging from black to green. Most ælves dye their skin and hair with wild berries, so colors (from pinks to purples to even bright yellows) of any combination are possible. Ælves are effectively immortal, though they begin to “wither” (age naturally) when outside of their primordial kingdoms for long periods. Accordingly, most ælves appear youthful, even though most of them are several centuries old.

**Society** – The ælves consider themselves to be an open people. Their rejection of modern times and technology – a stance tied to their history – often isolates them. In addition, ælves rarely share their native tongue – which they hold sacred – and this clearly worsens their relationship with outsiders. Accordingly, the ælven kingdom tends to be a wild, primordial land devoid of agriculture, infrastructure, or other races.

While some races do spend time among them, all must abide by ælven laws while in their kingdoms, adopting their simple, vegetarian lifestyles. Often misunderstood, most ælves find it is far easier to embrace their xenophobic stereotypes, remaining aloof and alien to outsiders. Outside of Ælveheim, ælves gather into small, semi-permanent communities called ‘Sils’.

**Relations** – The ælves mistrust a number of the younger races, condemning them alone on

their youth and ignorance. They look down on the clockwork elves, viewing their ancestral transgression – the activation of the Clockwork Gates – with sadness and regret. They have little love for the dwarves, who they know have embraced technology in an attempt to win Ragnarök. However, they treat them fairly when they do interact. They are curious about the glitterfane, yet keep them at arm's length. They share a strange kinship with the aryandai, who they view as fellow servants of their Starry Goddess, Velluna-Akka.



**Religion** – Religion is straightforward for the ælves, who have had intimate knowledge of the *Æssinyr* since the Age of Myth. There are no “unbelievers” among them. Although the gods rarely manifest for them directly, they recall fondly when they did. Most ælves see it as their sacred duty to serve in the holy places and very few claim to have passed on the chance.

**Adventuring** - Naturally, most ælves prefer to stay in their forest kingdom and avoid adventuring altogether. Occasionally they travel to bordering lands, reclaiming ruins and eradicating small settlements of evil humanoids in an attempt to reclaim those lands in Velluna-Akka’s name. Ælves excel when serving Alnara, the All-Mother, where their connection to nature is



best served. On occasion, individual ælves are called “to Quest”. When this happens, they do not share the details with outsiders.

**Male Names:** Shenylvian, Calloriynn, Theynn, Vennyll, and Arveiyannis

**Female Names:** Ahlanna, Eliynna, Nayyia, Cynnicca, Synnvii, and Delyinnia

**Last Names:** A’Airrona, E’Chennitha, I’Fellyn, O’Verianna, U’Stellinna

### Ælven Racial Traits

**Agile:** Graceful and quick, they start with a d6 in Agility instead of a d4.

**All Thumbs:** With their strong dislike of technology, they have the All Thumbs hindrance when it comes to anything mechanical.

**Languages:** Ælves begin play speaking Ælven and Sylvan. Other languages they frequently know include: Celestial, Low Common, High Common, Glittertongue and Goblin.

**Low Light Vision:** Ælven eyes are accustomed to the darkness under the mountains, and they ignore attack penalties for Dim and Dark lighting.

**Survivalists:** Ælves gain a d6 in Survival

**Unwelcome:** Ælves are rarely welcome outside of their lands, and count as having the Outsider Hindrance when dealing with any other race.

## Aryandai

*Venthar closed his eyes and let the music and laughter wash over him. The skalds’ hornpipes dueled as he felt the mead warm his blood. He had been too long out of the grand hall of his family and was relishing every moment. Even after so long, he could easily identify the voices of all of them. His sister Rayne, with her high-pitched giggle, was talking to his boyhood friend Auldin. His father and mother were boasting to the neighbors of his journeys. Cousins, Heirnn and Strunn asked questions at every lull in the conversation. All this floated around him, whirling vividly in his mind’s eye. He smiled to himself.*

*After several more songs, the announcement came.*

*“Lords and ladies, family and friends, it is my distinct honor to welcome home young Venthar Entwode. He has traveled long and far, to distant lands, in the service of beloved lord Dhungar the Balanced. And now he returns to taste homemade mead and relax by his hearth,” said Auldin.*

*The room exploded with applause and cheering, requiring nothing less than a toast from Venthar before his friend could continue.*

*“Venthar has been silent a great deal, but I have no doubt of his good cheer. He’s a mug of mead, good fellows and family about him, and a warm fire! And look at him smile! I dare say nothing could wipe off that grin,” Auldin teased, tossing a bit of bread at Venthar.*

*“So, old friend, recount for us. Tell us what wonders you saw. Make us marvel at your adventure!” Auldin leaned forward, giving Venthar all of his attention and, by doing so, commanding the rest of the room to do the same.*

*Venthar stood and slammed his mug down on the table with a loud bang, letting the sound echo*

throughout the hall. When it died, he cleared his throat then spoke.

*“Kith, give me your hearts for a night and I will tell you a tale both terrible and marvelous. I will tell you of my journey south and how I came to meet the Spiderkin...”*

Alien and ancient, aryandai are a race of shape changers that can assume the form of spiders. Known as “Spiderkin” to the humans of the City-States of Vallinar (and as Weavers to the ælves and dwarves), they dwell primarily on the Aryandai Peninsula and have so since the Age of Myth. While they have strong ties to their forests, they are oath bound hunters that are dedicated to the destruction of the Thrall Lords and their servants.

**Physical** – Most aryandai look like short, primitive humans with a slightly bowed posture. They tend to have darker skin tones and nearly all are covered in fine, dark hair. Most grow their hair long, although few are capable of growing facial hair. Almost all aryandai have skin discolorations that form strange patterns – many of these ranging in coloration from light to dark. They have striking eyes with colors ranging from red to amber.

**Society** – The aryandai are a tribal people living in large groups that resemble extended families, gathering in massive villages covered in webs. Most of these villages appear (at least to outsiders) to be abandoned human settlements. These villages, however, are really nests and often contain subterranean chambers that run for miles (sometimes connecting them to other villages). At the heart of each of these nests is a hatchery, where they keep the eggs of the youngest under constant guard.

The aryandai do not have strong political or social structures. Instead, they tend to defer to the elders of their tribes. These elders make important decisions.



**Relations** – The aryandai hold a special place in Midgard’s distinct social order. Unlike the majority of the other races, the aryandai are hunter-killers that appear alien to the other races. This sometimes isolates them. Aside from the ælves, the other races tend to view them with trepidation. But they are not aliens. In fact, they are nearly as ancient and natural as the other mythic races. Their ability to take the form of spiders is their most striking difference, but most of Midgard’s scholars know this is a combination of time, adaptation and Velluna-Akka’s divine will.

While the aryandai prefer racial solitude, they are not xenophobes and welcome outsiders into their land in small



groups. They don't encourage outsiders to dwell among them for long periods of time, but they occasionally allow Velluna-Akka's favored servants small havens.

**Religion** – Aryandai have little use for the north's social laws, considering the natural laws of their lands more than enough to guide them. They worship Velluna-Akka almost exclusively, whom they call the Grand Weaver.

The aryandai don't have a particular problem with technology, but they don't use it, either. Accordingly, they take a neutral stance when dealing with both ælves and dwarves. While they are not opposed to peaceful living, the aryandai have vowed not to rest until the offspring of the Thrall Lords have been dealt with. Accordingly, they tend to be more aggressive than the other races.

**Adventuring** – Nearly all aryandai are compelled to hunt the Thrall Lords' offspring. While many travel solo, some will align themselves with groups that oppose the Thrall Lords. Many younger aryandai travel to the City-States of Vallinar for just this reason.

**Male Names:** Andrei, Danii, Vhlad, Zahkar

**Female Names:** Anfisna, Radja, Fheginna, and Vera

**Last Names:** Aryandai avoid formal last names and simply add their tribal title as a suffix. Examples include: 'of the redstalkers, 'of the widowwalkers, 'of the bloodwebs, and 'of the darkwoods."

### Aryandai Racial Traits

**Languages:** Aryandai begin play speaking Aryandai and Low Common. Other languages they frequently know include: Auran, Glittertongue, Goblin, Low elven, and Sylvan.

**Limited Education:** Aryandai are strong and vigorous, but have limited opportunities for formalized education. As a result, it requires two points to raise their Smarts die during character creation.

**Low Light Vision:** Aryandai eyes are accustomed to the darkness under the mountains, and they ignore attack penalties for Dim and Dark lighting.

**Spider Empathy:** The Aryandai have 5 Power Points they can use on the *Beast Friend* power. These points recover at a rate of 1 per hour and are not affected by Edges or items that increase this. Their use of *Beast Friend* is limited to the Spiders (see **Savage Worlds** rulebook).

**Spider Form:** The Aryandai have 5 Power Points they can use on the *Shape Change* power. These points recover at a rate of 1 per hour and are not affected by Edges or items that increase this. Their use of *Shape Change* is limited to the Giant Spider (see **Savage Worlds** rulebook) and they do not gain the **Poison** ability.

**Unusual Form:** Aryandai have a -2 Charisma penalty for their otherworldly appearance.

## Automata

A unique blend of clockworks, magic, and curiosity made the automata what they are today. An extremely scarce race, they are the former servants of the humans of the City-States of Vallinar. Automata appear as finely crafted, delicate reflections of humans or clockwork elves. Although some have particular designs that augment their original functions – some as servants, some as laborers, and some as guardians – many automata today altered themselves to fulfill their professions or to satisfy their own craving for individuality.

The automata will appear as a playable race in future supplements.



## Clockwork Elves

*"I don't know how others tell this story, but I'll recite it as best I recall," Jainynn sighed. He hefted his tankard high, letting a bit of lager spill out, and silently toasted some unseen ally. Then, he continued.*

*"We know the ælves built the Clockwork Gates, deep in the heart of their homelands, during the Time of Silence. What historians continue to speculate is as to why. Some believe the ælves, concerned by their beloved Æssinyr's silence, built the gates in order to travel to the heavens. Others, however, suggest the Thrall Lords tricked them into building them. In either case, we know that they locked them away and forbade their use shortly after completing them.*

*"Some of them went and studied the gates in secret. Several of their priests, servants of the Starry Lady, attended. Throughout the process, they communed with their goddess, hoping to know her will. After a time, she answered." Jainynn sipped his drink then closed his eyes, pulling some forgotten memory from deep within.*

*"We can't be sure of what She said, but there was a great debate. Some of the ælves wanted to reactivate the gates, which they had determined were part of a greater device. Others swore it would only bring sorrow. Even among the priesthood, there was strife.*

*"That didn't stop those that lusted after this great mystery. Traveling by unseen routes, several came again to the Clockwork Gates. They say it was Magistra Y'dhara that unlocked the gates and opened them, revealing a starry chamber. In its center, there stood a single gear, attached to countless cogs and wheels that descended deep into the earth below it. She touched it and set it in motion."*

*Jainynn sighed, straightening his purple-and-black vest distractedly. Again, he looked away from his students, closing his eyes. After a time, he spoke again.*

*"It is important to note that before this event, all of the ælves were immortal. They were creatures who lived solely in the Age of Myth, free from the constraints of the cycles of time that others did their best to measure. Some say that it was a divine gift. Others say it was a refusal of all progress, an act of sheer will that bound them to their timeless lands. Whatever the reason, those who activated this device set something far greater into motion.*

*"With a sudden flash, runes lit along the device. Everything resembling color or vitality drained from the ælves present. Some collapsed, dead before they touched the chamber floor. Others staggered and weak, fled the place.*

*"Some say there were only a few dozen gathered when Y'dhara activated the Clockwork Gate. Some tales speak of hundreds. It didn't matter. What we do know is this – the ælves gathered all that still lived that had entered the chamber and isolated them. Their brethren communed, again with their goddess."*

*Jainynn turned toward his students, his face stern and solemn. A few of them, drawn into the story, gave a little start. Others observed him attentively. He let his gaze fall across them before he slowly finished his story.*



*“The ælves always knew Ragnarök would come. They held, however, a particular view. This ideology, which many still hold, was simple; that only by living in complete harmony with the world could they hope to postpone this dark end. They didn’t suffer any form of technology or agriculture. Although they sometimes gathered in grand cities, they did so in a manner that was symbiotic with their environments.*

*“Those who had gathered in the chamber changed. A burning passion replaced their immortality. They wanted to know, to see, to wander and to create. They embraced time, technology and the fact that Ragnarök was inevitable. In short, they embraced their mortality. In a show of solidarity, they left Ælveheim as a single family. This, my students, was the Great Rivening and the birth of the clockwork elves.”*




Called “Ash Elves,” “Dirge Elves,” or simply “The Dying” by their immortal cousins, clockwork elves are an interesting combination of ælven frailty, history, and unnatural desire. Unlike the other races, the clockwork elves are historically nomads.

They were forced from their homeland after they passed through the Clockwork Gates and activated the Ragnarök Clock. Since then, they have wandered Midgard as a race of curious mortals, embracing the technology that cost them their immortal lives.

**Physical** – Clockwork elves look like tall, lithe humans with dark eyes, pale skin, and dark hair. Over the centuries, they have lost many of their ælven features. Some of them can pass as humans. Because most clockwork elves are craftsmen or inventors, they favor heavy, practical clothing. Nearly all clockwork elves have some sort of technology they embrace. They tote gadgets, trinkets, and clockworks of all kinds.

**Society** – Clockwork elves live similar to humans. Although some of them maintain solitary lifestyles, most prefer the company of other clockwork elves and frequently band together – many forming groups that are part collective, part research party. They easily form long friendships with people from other races. Clockwork elves have a hard time forming bonds with animals, but love the



companionship they offer when they manage to do so. Those with the talent often build their own companions, with Droggs being a favorite. (Droggs will appear in future supplements.)

**Relations** – Clockwork elves get along well with humans and dwarves. They avoid *ælfes*, who they view as aloof, distant, and often cruel. Many clockwork elves look up to the glitterfane, who they view as an example of redemption. Just as many, however, regret them for the same reasons. Clockwork elves rarely cross paths with the aryandai and view them with apprehension when they do.

**Religion** – Clockwork elves are free spirits that obey laws only when it serves them. They are an introspective and inventive lot. In general, clockwork elves aren't particularly religious, viewing their position in history as a cruel, divine joke. For them, religion is a highly personal matter.

**Adventuring** – Clockwork elves find adventuring an interesting exercise, provided it does not take them too far from their projects or gadgets. When it does, they tend to be looking for technology to add to their collections.

**Male Names:** Asrynn, Ferrok, Justynn, Mannyn, Prikyll, Renthrysk, Shent

**Female Names:** Bella, Chindra, Ellena, Isanna, Ninna, Quille, Wynn

**Last Names:** Clocker, Clockwright, Droggman, Gearsmith, Steamsmith, Tinkerer, Widget, Zealous.

### **Clockwork Elf Racial Traits**

**Languages:** Clockwork elves begin play speaking Low Common and Low Elven. Other languages they frequently know include: Dwarven, Giant, Goblin and High common.

**Low Light Vision:** Clockwork Elf eyes are accustomed to the darkness under the mountains, and they ignore attack penalties for Dim and Dark lighting.

**Technical Affinity:** Clockwork elves start with a Repair (Clockworks) of d6.

## **Dwarves**

The dwarves of Rhune are a hardy, stoic lot that are nearly as old as the *ælfes*. Created from the “bones of the earth” by Old Forge Father, the dwarves rarely venture far from the places of stone – be they deep earth or tall mountains – unless in service of the *Æssinyr*. Most dwarves embrace technology, believing that they will master then use it to defeat the Thrall Lords at Ragnarök. Accordingly, most dwarves spend their days crafting, training, and preparing for Ragnarök.

**Physical** – Robust and stocky, dwarves are as tough as the stone of the mountain homes they favor. Dwarves of all clans, as they age, grow to resemble their beloved stone more and more closely. Their skin takes on a craggy appearance and becomes harder, while their hair becomes white as limestone or marble. It is said that an elder dwarf lord is hard to tell apart from the statues of his forefathers.

**Society** – Dwarven leaders see their society as a great mechanism designed and set into motion



by the *Æssinyr* themselves. They liken it to a great clockwork contrivance in which every dwarf is a cog that must play a precise role if the whole mechanism is to work smoothly. This view of their society emphasizes the value of duty and responsibility in surviving the harsh world of Rhune.

**Relations** - Their historical connection with artifice and technology, and their deep store of crafting lore, makes dwarves the natural allies of clockwork elves and humans. Dwarves have been close friends with the clockwork elves for nigh a thousand years, since the creation of the Bilröst Gate, and the founder of the clockwork elves herself is laid to rest in the great dwarven city of Rhuneheim. All dwarf loremasters see technology as a sacred gift, designs established by Velash and the other *Æssinyr*, perfected by the slow grind of use down long generations. Of late, they have become more experimental, making extensive use of storm-tech, therma-torque engines, and alchemical blasting powders. Dwarves played a key role in the development and eventual emancipation of the automata, and bear them great love, seeing in this creation a tool for victory in the coming war.

**Religion** - They worship all of the *Æssinyr*, holding a special reverence for Velash and Hrothur.

**Adventuring** - Adventuring comes naturally to dwarves. While not all set out on grand quests, nearly all dwarves, once they reach adulthood, feel the compulsion to ‘carve their rune.’ This drive, which is very much a rite of passage for them, pushes them out into the world to seek glory, fame, and wisdom. Many dwarves set out as groups, heading north to bring the fight to the Fel Kingdom. Other dwarves, especially those with a strong pull toward the runes, travel wherever prophecy and skald’s tales take them, some going so far west as their first home—Rhuneheim.



**Male Names:** Ash, Bjorn, Gnorri, Hárjick, Lórthrin, Odlfrethur, Salgárd, or Valgeir

**Female Names:** Abela, Aslaug, Dathina, Elna, Njála, Rósanna, or Yia

**Last Names:** Blackstone, Forgefire, Hammerfall, Redwall, Runesinger, Watchwarden

### **Dwarf Racial Traits**

**Languages:** Dwarves begin play speaking Low Common and Low Dwarven. Other languages they frequently know include: High Dwarven, Giant, Goblin and High Common.

**Low Light Vision:** Dwarven eyes are accustomed to the darkness under the mountains, and they ignore attack penalties for Dim and Dark lighting.

**Slow:** Dwarves have a Pace of 5.

**Tough:** Dwarves are stout beings and start with a d6 Vigor instead of a d4.

## **The Glitterfane**

*“So, what about these ‘Redeemed’ missionaries? What’s their story?” Tev asked, his tone a shade sarcastic.*

*Jainynn didn’t really like the haughty Tev, but this was a topic he held dear. He straightened his vest and continued. “We all know the servants of the Thrall Lords are a vile lot, filled with a thirst for all things bestial. Their dark rites include incest, bloodletting, mortal sacrifice and cannibalism. They leave little room for health, comfort, civility or love. While it may not be fair, it’s a safe assumption that their kind live the way of the beast.”*

*A few of Jainynn’s students touched their forefingers to their foreheads, making Alnara’s sign to ward away evil. He stopped, did the same, and continued.*

*“We do know that not all of the Thrall Lord’s servants embraced these ways freely. Many of the lesser races were forced into service. Those who did not conform died. Those who adapted to their twisted evil eventually became what we fight today. Some, however, escaped.*

*“Several goblin tribes escaped and formed colonies, like Farsil of Blackblood Bay – which interestingly enough, was named after those who died fleeing the first Fel Horde – and sought to live peaceful lives. Alnara, Blessed Queen of Mercy took notice of this, and in time, came to believe their choice was genuine. Not to be fooled by the Thrall Lords, she sought to test the sincerity of these colonists.” Jainynn made Alnara’s sign again.*

*“We know that first among the Thrall Lords’ many rites and challenges is the ‘Test of the Meek,’ meant to weed out the passive, the weak, and those that don’t have the stomach for the dark life their comrades live. Alnara knew this and tested them thus. She didn’t, however, frame it so blatantly. Instead, she presented the goblins with all the easy targets they would normally spring upon.”*

*“When a storm-tossed vessel, full of the weak and wounded washed up on the beach of their small colony, they didn’t kill and maim. Instead, they tended to them, gave them succor and helped them repair their boat. Alnara saw this and blessed them.*



*“When their enemies came to their small island, instead of taking up arms, they hid. They used illusions, tricks, and simple charms to lead them away. Only on a single night, in defense of one of their young, did they strike down one of their enemy. Alnara saw this, too.”*

*Jainynnn made Alnara’s sign again. He looked at his students, leaning forward attentively – even the occasionally arrogant Tev – and continued. “The last test, which the glitterfane today call the ‘Test of Spirit’, was given to each in the colony as they dreamt. Each was tested individually, according to his heart, and those that passed awoke as glitterfane. Those that failed passed away.” Jainynnn looked around, smiling at his students. He knew there was a little more to the story. This was enough for their purposes.*

*“Today, very few glitterfane are born. Because the glitterfane have all but sworn off the carnal life, very few engage in the act of physical love. Their birthrate is all but nonexistent.*

*“Occasionally, a goblin abandons the dark ways and seeks out the glitterfane to study with them, hoping that the Blessed Queen of Mercy will test them, although these cases are rare.”*

*With that, Jainynnn stood, bowed slightly, and dismissed his students.*

The glitterfane are an interesting and magical race of fey-like creatures with a natural predisposition toward healing. Unbound by the normal biological and behavioral traits that restrict their forefathers, the goblins, they cast off their dark history nearly two centuries ago with the help of Alnara, Blessed Queen of Mercy. They are most commonly known as “the Forgiven,” “the Redeemed” or “the Lady’s Gift.

**Physical** – Glitterfane are small, nimble creatures with frail bodies and light, shimmering wings. They are light-skinned creatures with hair ranging from silver to gold. They tend to have light-colored, bright eyes. Most have soft, child-like features.

**Society** – Glitterfane society is tight and well ordered. Most glitterfane are either born in a colony or seek out an existing one.





Upon entering, they embrace a communal life. Glitterfane outside of their own colonies tend to be wandering missionaries. In larger cities, they may be clerical acolytes at temples dedicated to Alnara.

**Relations** – Glitterfane get along well with the ælves and aryandai, both of whom share strong ties with the *Æssinyr*. Dwarves tend to distrust the glitterfane, although the glitterfane do not bear them ill will. Instead, they steer clear of them unless an opportunity to improve that relationship is evident. The glitterfane have diverse opinions about humans and the glitterfane judge them according to the social values they display. They treat the clockwork elves like they do humans, but with a reserved pity they sometimes fail to hide.

**Religion** – Although the glitterfane honor all of the *Æssinyr*, they all hold a special place in their hearts for Alnara. Most become her servants, acting as clerics, lay priests, missionaries, and oracles.

**Adventuring** – Very few glitterfane adventure, and when they do, it is ultimately in the service of the Queen of Mercy. Some form bonds with adventurers, especially if they are champions for good. While many believe the glitterfane are pacifists – and a lot are – this is not true for all of them.

**Male Names:** Ardwell, Braen, Kegan, Lorne and Tristan.

**Female Names:** Breigh, Caitell, Leighha, Morgynn, Shai and Vella.

**Last Names:** Dawn, Kyndle, Lightwell, Luxe and Spring.

#### **Glitterfane Racial Traits**

**Alnara's Blessing:** Glitterfane receive the Healer edge, whether they have the prerequisites or not.

**Healers:** With Alnara's blessing, they gain a d6 in Healing.

**Languages:** Glitterfane begin play speaking Low Common and Glittertongue. Other languages they frequently know include: Celestial, Goblin, High Common and Sylvan.

**Short Legs:** While walking, they only have a Pace of 5.

**Small:** Glitterfane are smaller than most and have the Small hindrance.

**Wings:** Their gossamer wings provide basic flight. They can fly up to a normal pace of 6 and may 'run' while flying.

## **Humans**

Older than only the automata they helped to awaken and the glitterfane, the humans of Rhune are a young, progressive, and diverse race. While most humans exhibit a strong drive toward knowledge, wisdom and civility, some in the more remote regions cannot say the same. In the far north, many who succumbed to a strange disease called *the rage* have devolved into barbaric, hate-filled versions of their southern cousins. In western Midgard, most humans tend to emulate ælven ways and live close to the earth. In the east, they frequently mirror the dwarven mentality and tend to be more technologically advanced.

**Physical** - The people of Midgard sport a wide array of appearances and looks, changing



in accordance with their environment and heritage. In the distant North, most people have pale skin and flaxen hair, with eye colors that range from the color of the sea to the rich purples of early dusk. In the South, the range and complexity of humanity's hues increases, including darker, richer tones. This is especially true in the realms beyond, where humans have appearances that often match the branches of Yggdrasil they call home. In Nachtland, for instance, many humans have pallid skin tones that all but shine against their ebon hair. By contrast, the humans of Thodheim generally have ruddy, almost reddish skin tones and hair the color of ancient wood.



**Society** - In Rhune, human societies are as divided as the regions they live in. This is especially true in the South. In the lands west of the City-States of Vallinar, especially as you move closer to Ælveheim, humans tend to embrace rural, hunter-gatherer lifestyles.

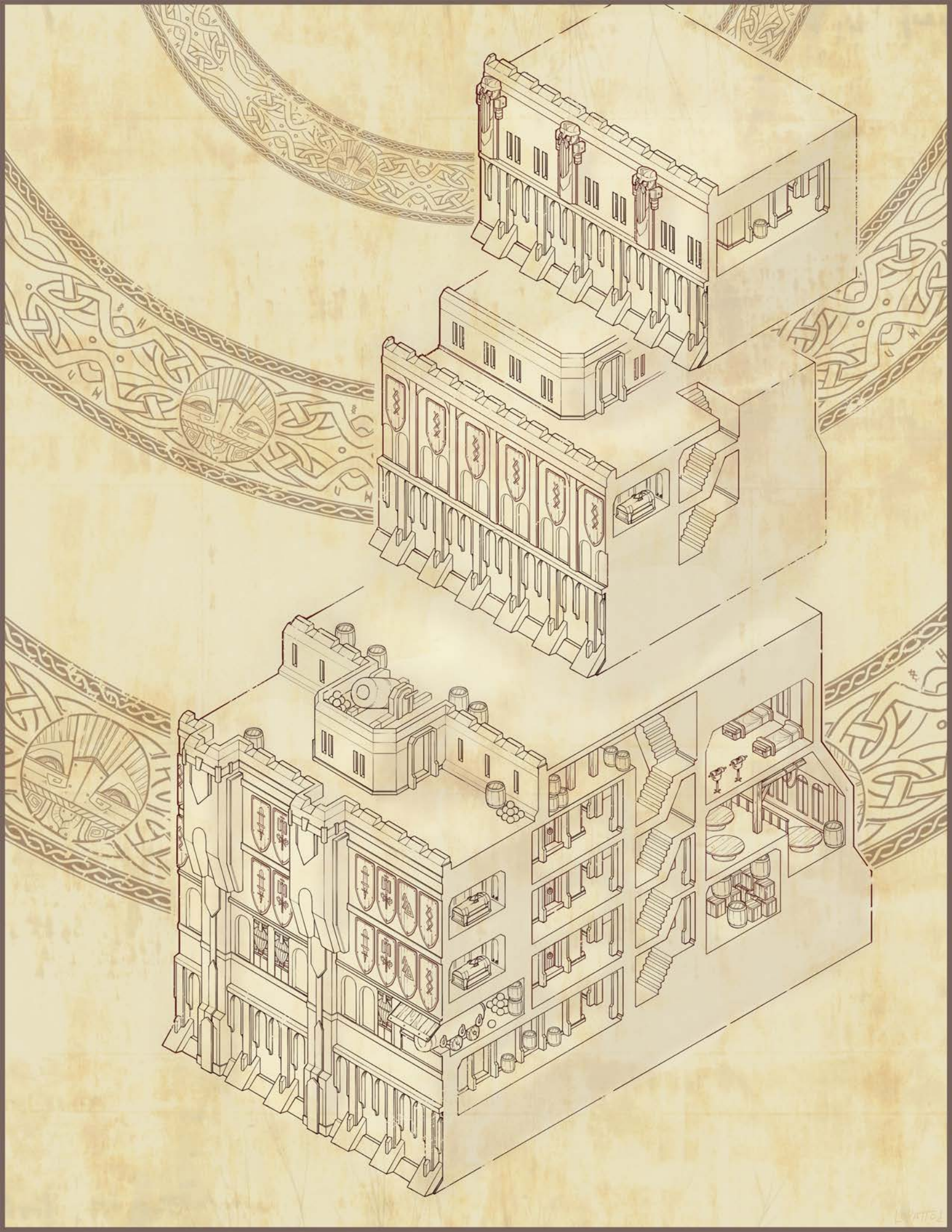
These bucolic humans cut small settlements from the lands around them, but otherwise leave the lands around them in relative peace. These humans have large families or clans, bestowing their loyalty to those with the strength and honor to keep them safe against the darkest parts of the night. As one moves east into the City-States of Vallinar, these clans and families decrease in number, but increase in size. The various Trade Families are a perfect example of this. While some no longer view them as proper clans (in the lands west of the Old Holds, they are sometimes referred to as the 'hollow clans'), their overall social structure behaves in much the same manner.

**Relations** - In Rhune, human relations span the racial spectrum and many groups align themselves to those races with which they share lands, ideologies, and even gods. Although there are strained relations in many places, the rocky relationship that outshines all others is the one the humans share with the automata, who they once lorded over (and in some remote places, still do). In some cities, there is still tension between the two races and the

wounds inflicted during the Summer of Flames are slow to close.

**Religion** - Humanity has numerous religions and humans are as likely to worship one god as they are the next. In the North (and in secret cults in the South), many humans worship the Thrall Lords, casting off civility in favor of the law of the wild – which yields to none but the strongest. For these humans, life is cheap, short, and violent. Few humans in the North walk paths that could be called good, and most fully embrace the darkness that beckons to their souls.







In the South, however, the *Æssinyr* – the Old Gods – still reign and many of their followers are humans. Those who follow the Old Gods tend to walk the path of light, keeping their words and deeds at the fore of their thoughts. While this is not universal among all humans (and the Order of the Black Word is a shining example of this), it tends to be true for most.

**Adventuring** - Humans are clannish, superstitious, and distrustful, especially of those who choose to become ‘adventurers.’ While many heroes arise out of great need, either to defend family and clan, or to best a foe, most of these noble warriors return to their halls when such tasks are complete. Those who do not, however, are an odd lot and their fellows are quick to remind them of that fact. While some wanderers are noble, heroic individuals, their numbers are small. Far more of these wanderers are bandits, thieves, or worse and it is not uncommon for a jarl or chieftain to close his halls to ‘adventurers,’ lest he invite the likes of those into his hall. Those few who do win great fame, however, are welcomed and celebrated across Midgard – a fact that infuses the dreams of many young men and women.

**Male Names:** Fjallar, Gerth, Harn, Jan, Magnus, and Sebjörn

**Female Names:** Alsine, Cara, Erikka, Lova, Nordine, and Yana

**Last Names:** Austri, Fulnir, Helheimr, Jord, Litr, and Svafa

### Human Racial Traits

**Free Edge:** Humans gain a free Novice Edge at character creation.

**Languages:** Humans begin play speaking Low Common. Humans can choose from any other languages based on their Smarts die.

## Jötunfolk

The cursed offspring of giants, the jötunfolk are a twisted, rejected people whose strength is as fearsome as it is dangerous. Born of human mothers and carrying the blood of the Thrall Lords themselves, these individuals are almost always shunned in civilized lands, but welcomed as blessings in the horrid lands of the North. Although they are not slaves to their blood, many – after facing years of hate and alienation – give into their darkness and become the very monsters the people of the South paint them as.

The jötunfolk will appear as a playable race in future supplements.

## Racial height and weight chart

Race	Base Height	Base Weight	Modi- fier	Weight Multiplier
Ælven, female	5 ft 10 inches	115 lbs	3d6	x3 lbs
Ælven, male	5 ft 7 inches	130 lbs	3d6	x4 lbs
Aryandai, female	4 ft 9 inches	90 lbs	2d6	x3 lbs
Aryandai, male	5 ft 2 inches	100 lbs	2d4	x4 lbs
Clockwork elf, female	5 ft 6 inches	105 lbs	1d6	x3 lbs
Clockwork elf, male	5 ft 3 inches	120 lbs	1d8	x4 lbs
Dwarf, female	3 ft 3 inches	85 lbs	2d4	x5 lbs
Dwarf, male	3 ft 6 inches	100 lbs	2d6	x7 lbs
Glitterfane, female	2 ft 6 inches	30 lbs	1d4	x2 lbs
Glitterfane, male	2 ft 6 inches	30 lbs	1d4	x3 lbs
Human, female	4 ft 6 inches	90 lbs	2d10	x5 lbs
Human, male	4 ft 10 inches	120 lbs	2d10	x5 lbs







# Chapter 4

## Factions & Faith



## Cosmology: The sun and seasons

Midgard has a relatively normal (earthlike) physical cosmology. Its single sun – Heidhra – rises in the east each day, setting in the west only after its single moon – Mhyr – comes into view. This is a daily occurrence that lengthens as spring stretches into summer, shortening again in the fall. As summer approaches, Heidhra appears to grow slightly larger (as Rhune rotates closer to it). In general, Heidhra's passage through the sky marks the passing of the seasons, with winter ending on the first day of the month of Lenzme. Spring continues for three months, with summer beginning on the first day of Waldma. It continues for three more months, ending on the first day of Todma. Fall's three months end with the first sign of snow. This generally occurs in early Ashma, but can occur as early as the last week of Vellama.

The thirteen months and their meanings are: Dawsma (Storm's End), Ostaren (Hare's Hide), Lenzme (The Seeding), Shudmu (First Green), Undmid (Under Wake), Waldma (Spring's End), Leichru (First Heat), Siebhi (High Heat), Todma (Death's End), Vaterma (Growth's End), Vellama (Last Harvest), Ashmu (First Snow), and Festfir (Festival's Fire).

Each month divides evenly into four-week periods, each seven days long. The year is 364 days long. The normal workweek lasts six days from spring until fall, with a single day for rest. In winter, this workweek shortens to four days and the weekend lengthens accordingly. The days of the week are: Firstday, Myhrday, Thulsdays, Weansday, Thornsday, Ashday, and Restday.

Mhyr is visible most of the month, slowly waning from the beginning of each month until disappearing completely mid-month. It remains invisible for two to three days before waxing again. It reaches its fullness at the end of each month. While Mhyr remains yellow primarily, its shade shifts to a light blue during the winter months.

While countless stars decorate Rhune's starry night, several notable constellations guide travelers and intrigue scholars. Primary among these are the Seven Stars of Oridynn, a series of unnaturally bright stars in the northern sky that resemble a tree. The Chalice brightens the southern sky, the lowest star hanging lazily over the horizon. The constellation Arbiter is composed of nine stars that resemble a quill resting on a heart. It hangs low in the northern sky. The Ashlord is easily the most northern constellation, hanging high in the sky. Its brightest star is called the Blue Star, notable for its size and color. Twelve additional stars make up this constellation. The Golden Hammer has eight stars and is visible only during the fall and winter. It dwells in the eastern corner of the northern sky. The newest, and likely most mysterious of stars, is the Heart Star, which appeared shortly after the rune Gebo was discovered in ~731





## Walking Yggdrasil, the Great Tree

The Great Tree is composed of nine distinctive realms, each represented by a part of the tree and the potential it holds. Some of these realms exist slightly askew of Midgard's flow of time, representing dark futures or ideal pasts. Others, like Brigræss, are simply homes to the *Æssinyr* and their servants (although others hint even these homes face destruction when Ragnarök finally descends).

The nine divine realms of Yggdrasil are:

### *The Middle Court*



To planar travelers – who are generally a rare lot in Rhune – Midgard is known as the Middle Realm, Axis of the Nine Worlds. It is the anchor point of these nine worlds and the flow of time on these other realms is relative to Midgard, where it flows like a clockwork river. On Midgard, time is generally measured by the passing of Mhyr, although the *ælfes* of *Ælveheim* keep time according to the Ragnarök Clock, which keeps time with infernal precision, ticking down the time left remaining until the inevitable arrival of the final battle. The average person, however, needs no greater understanding of time than whether it is morning, evening, or the middle of the night, and when the seeds for autumn's harvest must be sown, or when first frost is expected.

### *The Glimmering Lands*

The home of Alnara, Brigræss is a glimmering, gentle realm filled with bubbling brooks, rolling fields, peaceful forests, and open glades. While architecture is rare, the few monuments that do exist here tend to be light and flowing, employing thin arches and even thinner spires. At the heart of the realm rests Alnara's Celestial Court, an open amphitheater filled with creatures of all sorts, including her beloved glitterfane. Giants, forgiven and blessed by the Queen of Mercy, talk quietly and even make merry with friendly goblins, redeemed gnolls, steadfast *vættir*, and noble *ælfes*. In the Glimmering Lands, all folk are made welcome in a spirit of friendship, love, and compassion, and the travails common throughout the rest of the Great Tree are easily put aside and forgotten.



### *The Shadow Realm*



Nachtland is the dark reflection of Midgard and home to Dark Leighhanna, who rules all of the shadows from her hidden stronghold: the Black Court. As visitors soon come to discover, the realm is a strange, haunted place that mirrors much of Midgard, only in twisted and malignant ways. Many of its southern cities are besieged by marauding *ælfes*, while others are completely overrun by the dead. Most folk have turned to wickedness to survive, caring about their fellow men only inasmuch as doing so is of directly personal benefit. Altruism is as rare as bright light in Nachtland. By contrast, however, the North is a place of nearly unimaginable horrors, with only a few bastions of something that might be mockingly called "civilization" interspersed throughout. Rotting giants limp over frozen tundra, mindlessly killing anything that gets within reach of their withered hands, while terrible beings of living darkness slip into homes at night and snatch the breath from young and old, alike.

### *The Outer Void, The Yawning Gap*

Alien dreams and lost desires fill this empty, ethereal realm that many believe is the source of the Thrall Lords' power. A place of chaotic creation and equally rapid decay, Neinferth is the only realm not directly connected to the Great Tree. Instead, it occupies the distant, dark space around the Great Tree, its boundaries marked by the Great Tree's failing light. Few among the *Æssinyr* dare to travel here, for fear that whatever changed their children might also corrupt them, and eventually, change them. Those mortals brave—or insane—enough to venture out into this dark realm are likely to meet with an even darker fate; Felashurann hunts the endless black plains and twisting void storms of this realm.



### *Realm of the Fel & Fallen*

This is the home of Felhorath and the dark future that awaits Rhune should the Thrall Lords win Ragnarök. Filled with burning and smashed ruins, Grimhæm is a hell-swept wasteland of slavery, rape and similar atrocities. Giants roam the realm, feasting on the weak and maddened, casting their wicked spears into anything that tries to escape. It is a realm where the strongest sacrifice the weak to survive, familiar ties dissolve, and nothing but the fires of chaos – sweeping across the ruined lands as Hellwinter Storms – rule the day. Honor and courage are nothing more than bitter lies in the Realm of the Fel and Fallen, and those who attempt to cleave to them learn that they are the only lies despised by Felhorath.



### *Deep Hold, The Underhall of Velash*



Tieferhæm represents a dark, costly win for the Æssinyr and their followers. This realm, poisoned by war and unchecked progress, is all but broken and only a handful of subterranean havens offer refuge to the survivors of Ragnarök. Riddled with trenches, steel-walled forts, checkpoints, killing fields, and broken siege engines, the landscape here barely resembles the Midgard most travelers know and once loved. Whole cities have been reduced to ashes and the land around them so badly ruined that it will never again support life. The deaths of both Æssinyr and Thrall Lords have left the world scarred by bizarre magical phenomena that are likely to persist for eternity. In some places, deadly caustic rain pits stone and steel; in others, the very wind is a venomous fume that sears the eyes and strangles the breath. In a number of places in both North and South, one can walk for an entire day and never step on anything other than the bleached bones of countless dead, or else their corroded arms and armor.

### *Hel – Realm of the Dishonored Dead*

Originally, this realm was a simple place of primordial fire, where the dead gathered around pools of burning lava to warm their cold, dead bodies while they awaited their fate. When D'iessha returned from Neinferth with her siblings, she quickly swept in and claimed this realm, consuming the dead in mass quantities. The Red Queen has since usurped most of this traditional resting place of the dead, turning it into her personal workshop to plan The Final Feast – her consumption of everything in Rhune, her siblings included, at Ragnarök. In this capacity, it represents the worst sort of future, with nothing surviving the complete and utter destruction of all life in Rhune.





### *The Realm of All-Winter*

Niflæhem is a frozen realm encased in primordial ice that mirrors a Midgard seized by an endless winter. Glaciers slowly crush the once proud cities, chocking the heat and life from the frozen, barren lands below them. It is a bitter, white place filled with cold desperation and icy winds – a place where both heroes and gods fear to tread, lest the realm steal the heat and life from even the strongest among them. Nothing in this realm escapes the terribly cold winds that sweep across its icy plains. Not even the Clockwork Gates, normally powered by their own divine magic, are free of the realm's cold embrace.



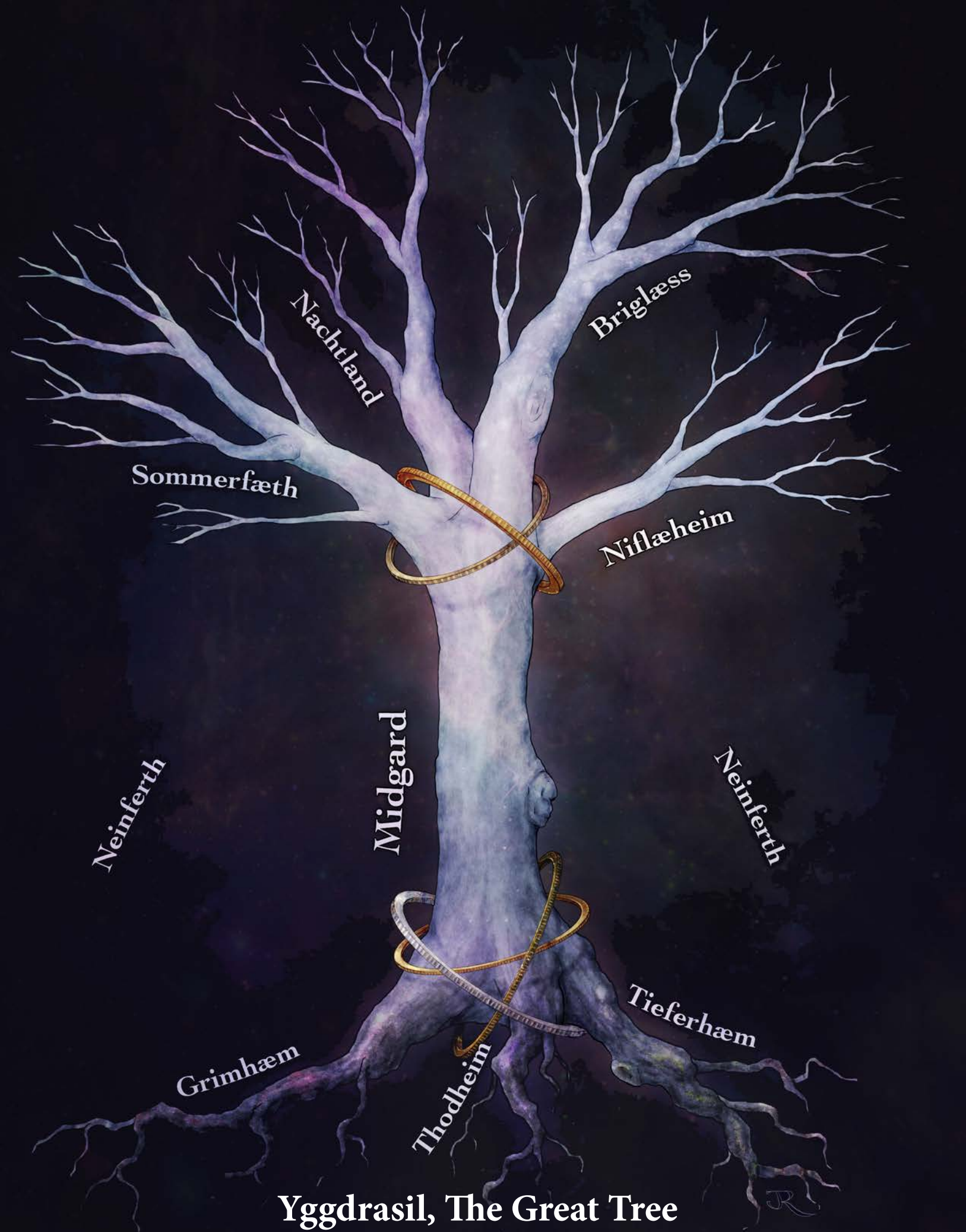
### *The Forest Unburning*

Hidden in the heart of the Great Tree, this is the home of the *Æssinyr* and their most trusted servants. Untouched by the shadow of Ragnarök, this realm is a place of primordial beauty. Its forests are vast and green, its mountains tall and proud, and its waters pure and deep. While much of the realm is unmarred by civilization of any sort, nearly all of the *Æssinyr* have courts here. These courts vary according to their tastes, and all of them remain hidden to everyone but their most trusted followers.



Sommerfæth is the world as it was at its beginnings, pure and unsullied by evil. It is Midgard as it might have been, had the demigods who eventually came to be known as the Thrall Lords never struck out into the Great Void and become twisted by Neinferth's malevolent spiritual energies. It is, however, also a realm largely devoid of the technological progress which has helped to make easier and more productive lives for so many of the Middle Court's peoples – a realm rather more akin to the *ælven* ideal than one which favors the works of dwarves, men, or clockwork elves. Still, it is a world of peace and plenty for all good and honorable folk.







# The Secret of the Runes...



Rhune: Dawn of Twilight has several pivotal concepts that drive it as a setting. Runes are one of the most important. While technology represents the various mortal races' desire to reach the stars and to win Ragnarök, many – like the dwarves – believe it directly ties to the runes, and by extension, the Old Gods themselves.

The runes are both mysterious and prophetic, gifts from the Æssinyr to the ælves, dwarves, giants, and men. The runes are divided equally into three groups of eight. These are the World Runes, the God Runes, and the Heart Runes. According to legend, Oridynn placed the World Runes in the secret places of Midgard for the heroes of the world to discover. He hid the second set of runes among the stars and in the secret places of Yggdrasil, for the wise to find. Finally, he hid the last group in the hearts of men, to be discovered in the final days before the Great War, Ragnarök.

While some of the Thrall Lords' servants have runes, many believe they are corrupt, twisted versions of the originals. The original twenty four runes - known as the Elder Futhark - are described below.

## **Fehu (World Rune) – Rune of Wealth**

*“And from Midgard the Dwarves did bring treasures untold. And with forges red and bright did they turn them into art of mithral and gold. And the kings and princes bore them with pride. With these little treasures did men ride.”*



## **Uruz (World Rune) – Rune of the Wild Beast**

*“The Wild Aurachs, roving through bog and moor. Tearing at the underbrush, raging wild and free, the great beasts tore the land with their mighty horns.”*



## **Thurisaz (World Rune) – Rune of the Giants**

*“The faithful of the Thrall Lords come swinging mighty hammers. They make war on men and they make war on the Æssinyr. They make war on the Heavens, cursing all with blows from their mighty clubs.”*



## **Ansuz (God Rune) – Rune of the Sovereign God**

*“The All-Father smiled and the Sun and Stars were born. The All-Father smiled and buried in the earth the secret runes. The All-Father smiled and the sun burst aflame. The Lord of Light and of the Deep Places, eternal remains.”*



## **Raidho (Heart Rune) – Rune of the Journey**

*“They have journeyed near and they have traveled far. By horse, by wagon and by boat do they search Midgard, ever expanding. Ever onward they journey, ever onward they journey.”*



## **Kenaz (Heart Rune) – Rune of the Torch**

*“The Flame of Inspiration is the torch of the hallowed hall. In every kingdom and in every noble place, it burns bright. By the will of the heroes it burns ever brighter.”*



## **Gebo (Heart Rune) – Rune of the Hidden Gift**

*“In the secret places of Midgard and in the secret places of the stars, they hid the gifts. Gifts for the ælves, gifts for the dwarves, and gifts for the men. They hid the gifts of beauty and the gifts of darkness in strange forests.”*





**Wunjo (God Rune) – Rune of Joy**

*“Ever happy is he that knows harmony. Ever joyful is the hero who does the good. Ever happy is the clan that does not bend on broken knee.”*



**Hagalaz (World Rune) – Rune of Midgard**

*“For all the World is hidden in the seed of the hailstone, the dawn of winter. From the Great Tree does the world spring, and to the World does the Great Tree go in the dawn of twilight.”*



**Nauthiz (Heart Rune) – Rune of Struggle**

*“Great need commands the hero to rise above the common man. To search the ancient places, to uncover the way, and to stand like a shining one in the final days.”*



**Isa (God Rune) – Rune of Ice**

*“In stillness and dark, beyond death and the pale, the Long Winter’s reign prevails. With the coming of fire, the landscape is changed, but the secrets of winter forever remain.”*



**Jera (World Rune) – Rune of the Seasons**

*“From spring to summer and back again, the sun does wax and wane forever. Until the Long Winter takes all of Midgard, so will the seasons mark the passing.”*



**Eihwaz (Heart Rune) – Rune of the Great Tree**

*“Its roots dig deep into the realm under Midgard. Its limbs climb toward the Heavens. It stands betwixt and between the all and the nothing. It stands on the horizon of dusk eternal.”*



**Perthro (God Rune) – Rune of the Deep Well**

*“Buried deep in the darkness, it is the source of many mysteries. From this well, the Æssinyr draw inspiration. Into this well men and skalds gaze, seeking to know.”*



**Elhaz (Heart Rune) – Rune of the Bridge**

*“It joins places, rent from birth or war, and brings servants to their masters. It connects the heavens to Midgard, and promises men many journeys.”*



**Sowilo (God Rune) – Rune of the Sun**

*“Ever bright the sun does shine, leading the way for those who seek perfection. Ever bright the sun does shine for the humble farmer, able soldier, and pious warden. Ever bright the sun does shine, on all of Midgard and beyond. Dægr smiles.”*



**Tiwaz (God Rune) – Rune of the Star**

*“The Star shines and lights the way, by night but not by day. Alnara rules Heaven’s night, and all her creatures smile. In dancing and in drinking, from dusk until the dawn, all under the star, her justice is on the hearts of every noble.”*



**Berkano (God Rune) – Rune of the Triple Goddess**

*“Nayadia in the chalice, Alnara of the ælves and night’s secret embrace. She is ever the lover, to kindred and kin alike. Velluna-Akka is her vengeance, when she is angered and out of sorts.”*



### **Ehwaz (World Rune) – Rune of the Horse**

*“Upon the plains and the fields the many run, spirit of the earth in their bones. Before men walked Midgard, the horse was a noble creature still.”*

### **Mannaz (Heart Rune) – Rune of Men**

*“Of runes and men so do the skalds sing, children of the Noble Æssinyr, ever onward do they spring. After dwarves and ælves, men did come. To stand like stones in the river of chaos, to turn back the Fel Horde at the end of a long winter.”*

### **Laguz (World Rune) – Rune of the Deep Water**

*“They are buried in chaotic, cold places. Ever changing drowned in its depth. It is a constant that even Mhamnoch fears.”*

### **Ingwaz (God Rune) – Rune of the Temple**

*“Held high in his honor, the Great Builder builds. He crafts day and night, for the perfect place, to honor the Æssinyr above men. A sanctuary comes into being.”*

### **Dagaz (World Rune) – Rune of the Day**

*“Bright comes the sun, the light of morning to cheer our faces. He warms the earth and makes her green with joy. He burns those that anger him.”*

### **Othala (Heart Rune) – Rune of the Old Lands**


*“From the Old Lands we come. From deep mountains, ancient seas, and cold ground we hail! Our hearts shall seek these places again. We shall ever seek these places again.”*

## **The Grand Galdr**

Skalds tell of an ancient time when all runic lore was one. A time when the Old Gods gave the dwarves, ælves, and giants a piece of their divine secrets, a sacred text called the *Grand Galdr*. It was a collection of poetry, songs, and spells that taught them the secrets of the elder runes. It gave them power – some say unbelievable power – and was the foundation of all the runic lore and magic known today. Those same skalds, however, say this glorious gift was ultimately a burden too tempting to keep peacefully. Over time, each of the three races began to covet it. Eventually, it drove them apart. Before it did, however, each copied a portion of it. The giants and their kin, ever primordial and chaotic, copied the elemental runes into a tome they called the *Galdrasvid*. The ælves, delicate and graceful, copied the runes of beauty and travel into a tome they called *Galdrdain*. The dwarves copied the runes closest to their hearts, creating a tome called *Galdrdvalin*. It contained runes of crafting, forging, and lore.



Today, the truth of this is lost to the Age of Myth. What is known, however, is this; the ælves have *Galdrdain*, hidden deep within the Moodwalde. The giants, now dark servants bound to the Thrall Lords, have *Galdrasvid* hidden far in the north, likely in the Black Ice Wastes.







The dwarves safeguard *Galdrdvalin* in the deepest of their halls. It is from these three books that the three primordial races craft their runes, creating magic in their homes, on their weapons, and in their temples.

Perhaps the most famous among these three, especially in the places under the mountains, is the *Galdrdvalin*. Those lucky enough to study from the text (or one of its lesser copies; mithral tomes called *Codex Runar*) can expect to learn much, including how to identify and activate the rune stones.



The runes are based off of the Elder Futhark, an ancient Germanic runic alphabet. This alphabet existed between the second and eighth centuries CE, and unlike the Younger Futhark – which was used continuously in Scandinavia from the late eighth century on – was rediscovered in the 19th century. Players and Game Masters looking to enrich their games might find *The Poetic Edda* and *Prose Edda*, as well as countless books about Runology to be beneficial.




## Factions

In Rhune: Dawn of Twilight, competing organizations are a major theme. A number of factions offer heroes unique opportunities to move their agendas forward. Some, like the **Clockwork Accord**, champion technology and actively look for opportunities to develop it. Several knighthood orders also exist, each pursuing goals that range from protecting the priestesses of Velluna-Akka to hunting down diabolists. Others, like the **Greengard**, work to protect ælven interests and frequently find themselves at odds with other nations and their people.


Details on these organizations will be released online in the future. Secret societies, cults, universities, orders and trade families will all vie for attention, presenting players with options that are both easy to role-play and pivotal to Rhune's future.

A short list of some prominent organizations follows:



**The Brotherhood of the Wraith** – Formed from a cabal of wizards, this cult summons and binds wraiths in the name of the Thrall Lords. While their acts appear selfish and disordered, some believe they advance a much grander plot.

**The Children of Passion** – This group began as a collection of fans dedicated to a book called *Self First*. Initially believed to be little more than a philosophical society, it eventually became an outlet for wealthy debauchers and their ilk.



**The Clockwork Accord** – Members of the Accord agree that technological advancement is the product of rational understanding. They believe it is only by completely mastering clockwork technology that mankind can hope to stop the Ragnarök Clock.



**The Dawngard** – This elite collection of cavaliers, paladins, and warriors defend Vallingard from its enemies. It gained much acclaim when it fought back the second Fel Horde, routing the barbarians and their Thrall-bound allies just south of the city.

**The Green Way** – Founded by Dvain Carraunt, this group of activists includes ælves, druids, rangers, and oracles dedicated to completely eradicating the industrialized state and the pollution it produces.

**The Greengard** – This is one of the oldest military orders on Midgard. It is composed entirely of ælves who pursue their homeland's interests above all else. While it is responsible for Ælveheim's defense, rumor has it that it frequently works outside its borders, as well.

**House Scræ** – This former trade family refines both the arts of alchemy and brewing, operating a number of prominent western vineyards. Many whisper, however, that they have darker interests that include necromancy.

**The Order of the Grand Lodge** – Dedicated to protecting commerce and travelers, Jae'n Tre'Vallinar founded this order to encourage the expansion of the Kingdom of Vallinar. Today, it serves much the same role, albeit with some interesting views on how to do so.

**The Veiled** – Known as the Veiled, these priestesses cover themselves from head to toe in black, hiding even their faces from all but their sisters. Although there are many rumors about them, they are an order dedicated to Velluna-Akka and her mysteries.

## Religion

In Rhune: Dawn of Twilight, religion is straightforward. Nearly all of the people of Midgard are theists of some variety and religious expressions touch every aspect of culture. Technology, runic lore, and social laws all share relevant ties to the various churches and their followers. While clerics frequently do not serve in social roles outside of their churches, people commonly call upon them for their wisdom. Even arcane magic, traditionally unconnected to the divine, shares bonds with the *Æssinyr* through the runes.

Suffice it to say, religion plays a big role in Rhune. As Ragnarök approaches, the gods and their servants ready themselves for the final conflict. Few can be said to be neutral in the conflict. Even the lowliest farmer has religious views he's willing to fight for. With hordes of blighted dead to the south and cannibalistic barbarians to the north, he's likely to have to do just that. Additionally, numerous dark cults work across Mid-



gards; many of them invariably serving the Thrall Lords.

Of course, this does not mean everyone must be religious in nature or that campaigns must have religious themes. Many will not. But ultimately, the final battle between the gods – Ragnarök – is religious in nature.

## The Rhunic Pantheon: The Old Gods

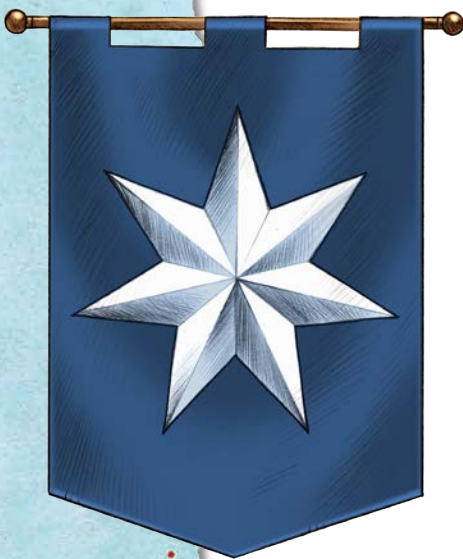
Two sets of divine powers vie for control of the Great Tree and the realms between, granting spells and special abilities to their followers. The seven *Æssinyr* are the oldest gods worshipped in Rhune. Known as the Old Gods, they are divided into two smaller groups: the four noble lords and the three noble ladies. While the *ælves*, *aryandai*, *dwarves*, and humans worship them almost universally; most of them carry distinctively different names and titles. While the automata pay respect, they tend to honor only Old Forge Father, whom they view as their ultimate creator. The glitterfane view Alnara in much the same light.

The **Thrall Lords** are a group of five renegade demigods that left the comfort of the Great Tree and delved into the unnatural darkness of the Void during the earliest days of the Age of Myth. Changed, these powers seek to usurp the traditional powers – namely their parents the *Æssinyr* – and rule all of Rhune as they see fit. The Thrall Lords are dark gods dedicated to the worst aspects of humanity, enshrining the traditional sins of the created races. These sins, their followers say, are the true paths to power. The Thrall Lords do little to dissuade this view.

In the overview of each deity provided below, the following entries are important to their priests – those who have the Arcane Background (Miracles) Edge and a vow to that deity.

**Trappings:** The trappings listed for each deity indicate typical effects on the powers called by their followers.

**Favored Weapon:** A servant of the listed deity who has the Arcane Background (Miracles) Edge and is using the listed weapon counts as having the Trademark Weapon Edge for that weapon.



### Alnara

Our Lady of Mercy

**Other titles:** The All Mother, Bright Star, Queen of Heaven

**Trappings:** Light, Sound

**Favored Weapon:** birthing dagger

While Alnara is known by many names, her title “The Lady of Mercy,” sees the widest use. Throughout the City-States of Vallinar she is famous as a protector of women, young children, and those dealt unfortunate lots in life. Her churches frequently serve as clinics, shelters and, in some cases, orphanages. Her clerics also travel, spreading peace wherever possible. They sometimes act as diplomats, resolving conflicts requiring mediation. They are famous as healers.

Alnara is also the mother of the Glitterfane, a role she enjoys. Acting as their divine matron, she guides the relatively small race toward increasing peace, hope, and healing across Midgard. Where possible, she encourages her followers to live



as pacifists, acting as examples of her mercy in the physical world. She prefers a passive role and frequently lets her followers act on her behalf.

The ælves see Alnara as the glorious queen of heaven. She represents the second portion of their long lives, where those slain in her name become truly immortal spirits.

Alnara's clerics honor her at dusk, when the stars first appear. Her symbol is a bright seven-pointed star on a dark blue banner. Her motto is "Alnara's mercy upon thee."

## Dægr

The Holy Sun

**Other titles:** Lord of the First Light, The White God

**Trappings:** Fire, Light

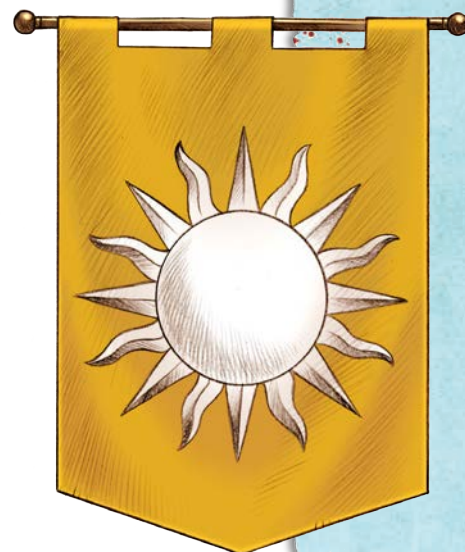
**Favored Weapon:** long sword

Dægr is beloved by many, but primarily the people of the City-States of Vallinar worship him. He is the city of Vallingard's patron deity and the Tre'Vallinar family has long held him in high regard. Among the common people of the City-States, he represents knowledge, glory, and liberation from the Thrall Lords. He is also the patron of scribes, guards, and nobles. Most villas include a small shrine or chapel to him. His temples and halls commonly serve as libraries and places of learning. When built outside of the city, his temples are situated where the sun can shine of them for the majority of the day.

Dægr's clerics are a diverse lot, focusing on his many aspects. Primarily, they seek, enshrine and protect knowledge, which they teach leads to freedom. While they focus on strength of arms, they also teach that emotional, intellectual and spiritual strength are equally important to individual growth.

The ælves honor Dægr quite differently than the humans, dwarves, and other races of southern Rhune. They view Dægr as a warrior god, represented by fire and the sun. He also stands for the fire of inner being and the will to power that arises from that.

Dægr's symbol is a white sun on a deep-yellow banner. His motto is "Through knowledge you find power."



## Dark Leighhanna

Mistress of the Grave

**Other titles:** Lady of Vultures, Queen of the Winds

**Trappings:** Cold, Necromancy

**Favored Weapon:** scythe

Known as the Mistress of the Grave and the Lady of Vultures, Dark Leighhanna occupies a strange place in Rhune's cosmology. While most sane people would never dream of worshipping her, the mortal races see her as the matron of death and, as such, a cruel part of natural life. She is rarely invoked, but those seeking her mercy sometimes honor her at funerals. To the ælves, she represents the worst possible fate – the loss of their immortality. They never utter her name in **Ælveheim**. The dwarves know her as one of the Thurses, but never

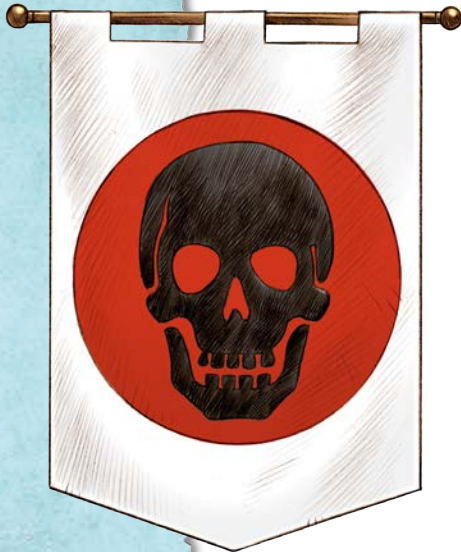


invoke her, preferring to leave their dead in the capable hands of the All-Father.

Dark Leighhanna is widely worshipped in the harsh north. She has several temples in the Fel Kingdom. The most notable is in Blackstone, high atop a blackened pillar called the Claw. Most of her followers are drawn from the various barbarian tribes in the west. While her clerics are mostly tribal shamans or giants, assassins and learned men have been known to adopt her as a matron.

Her clerics are infamous for practicing a corrupted form of apantomancy where they divine omens from her sacred animal, the vulture, as it feeds.

Her symbol is a black vulture on a white banner. Her motto is "All embrace death."



### **D'Iessha**

Queen of the Feast

**Other titles:** The Cursed Queen, The Red Lady of Haverghast

**Trappings:** Darkness, Necromancy

**Favored Weapon:** whip

Known throughout Rhune as the Queen of the Feast, D'Iessha represents a depraved mixture of cannibalism, decay, gluttony and madness. She is feared in southern Rhune, **especially in the City-States of Vallinar**. When rumors of her cults arise, inquisitors are quick to follow. In Haverghast, they honor her as the Matron of Ruin or as the Red Queen, and then only to ward off her wrath. To the dwarves, D'Iessha is known as the Ghoulish Queen and she represents the darkest greed, consuming flesh, bone and mineral alike.

To her servants in the far north, she represents a giant of untamed power. They frequently depict her as an ancient woman who consumes her enemies and grows stronger with each meal. She is worshipped almost universally in the Fel Kingdoms, and her sacred animals are corrupted bears, rabid wolves and horde hounds. Barbaric tribal shamans venerate her, invoking her before they feast on the remains of their conquered enemies.

Although D'Iessha has no sacred texts, her followers – especially duskwrights (appearing in a future supplement) – claim she gains the knowledge of those who she consumes. If this is so, then her secrets rival some of the *Æssinyr* themselves, a fact no sane being would draw comfort from.

Her symbol is a black skull resting on a red circle. Her motto is "Consume the weak."

### **Felashurann**

The Wraith King

**Other titles:** The Fire Lord, Son of the Void, The Dark Flame, The Black Forge

**Trappings:** Fire, Necromancy

**Favored Weapon:** mace

Few people in southern Rhune worship Felashurann and, where they do, it is in secret. To some he is venerated as the Son of the Void; he represents unbridled pride and vengeance. He is especially popular with the downtrodden and those wronged by nobility. To some eccentric individuals of southern Rhune, they venerate Felashurann as the Wraith King. To them, he

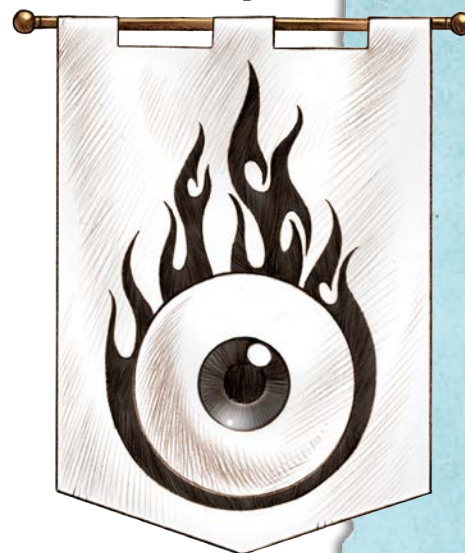


represents continuation beyond death, defying the *Æssinyr* unto the end. However, most people in southern Rhune know better than to fall for such disguises. In *Ælveheim*, they know him as one of the Ash Lords. To the dwarves, however, he takes on an interesting role as the Black Forge.

The Fel Kingdom worships Felashurann throughout as the Fire Lord. He is often depicted as a giant sheathed in black flames, hoisting his hammer toward the heavens, accompanied by a large white snake. In such images, he commonly crushes the weak and timid underfoot. He is the patron god of Blackstone, where the giants worship him. Those barbarians strong enough to dare the city's walls venerate him as well.

Felashurann demands that his clerics seek vengeance when wronged (and in a land where pride is king, there is no end of enemies). He also commands that his followers crush those weaker than them, taking slaves in his name. His followers brand themselves as a sign of devotion, creating terrifying vistas on their own bodies.

His symbol is a white eye sheathed in black flames. His motto is "Make the slaves serve."



### Felhorath

Cursed One of the Deep

**Other titles:** Son of Deceit, The Wicked Storm, The Black Sun

**Trappings:** Acid, Electricity

**Favored Weapon:** dagger

Felhorath is a complex god fluctuating between extreme recklessness and elaborate, well-designed plots. He is most commonly recognized as the Cursed One of the Deep, a power waiting to erupt into a violent storm. In this aspect, he represents the unknown mysteries of the vast oceans. While many sailors call upon Nayadia's grace before they travel, some older ones whisper fearful prayers to Felhorath, hoping to quell the storm before it comes into being.

As the Wicked Storm, Felhorath represents nature's fury unleashed. He stands for chaos, lightning, water, and the wicked storm that drags men beneath the waves. He is a bane to sailors, fishermen and coastal towns. When men make his sign, it is generally out of a grudging respect, hoping to ward off his wrath.

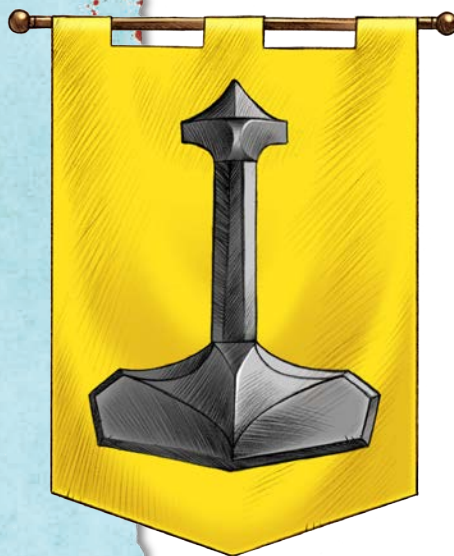
In southern Midgard, he is known as the Son of Deceit. Assassins, poisoners, and those who rely on deceit to ply their trades, secretly worship him. He is also known as the Black Sun and is loosely associated with the new moon and thieves.

Felhorath's clerics tend to travel frequently. Few stay in one location long enough to construct proper temples. Instead, they set up safe houses with cults caring for small shrines. The safe houses appear to be other businesses, with special chambers hidden under base-

ments. Some cults also occupy seaside caves.

Felhorath commands his clerics to perfect the arts of deception and many take great pleasure in doing so. Quite a few work behind the scenes, shaping the policies and practices of governments, both large and small. They must each make an annual sacrifice of a sentient creature to Felhorath. Drowning is the preferred method.

Felhorath's symbol is a pale gray hand, fingers apart, reaching up from the deep-blue ocean. His motto is, "Every lie is sacred."



### **Hothur**

Old Thorn Hammer

**Other titles:** The Fury, The Golden Knight, Arensyl the Mistlord

**Trappings:** Acid, Sound

**Favored Weapon:** war hammer

Hothur is a popular deity, especially among the dwarves of the Forgestone Mountains. Dwarves and humans worship Hothur as a god of nobility, protection, strength and war. Some worship Hothur as the Fury, calling on him for luck in battle. He is the patron of good deeds and travel. While the *ælfes* honor him as one of the noble *Æssinyr*, few worship him.

As Old Thorn Hammer, Hothur is the patron god of dwarven warriors and those who wield the hammer to destroy. In this form, he is the chaotic twin of Velash (who wields his hammer to create). He is sometimes depicted as the son of Velash. Hothur is an old god, occasionally associated with the fires of destruction and the need to cleanse the old.

As the Golden Knight, Hothur is seen as a noble human lord, encased in shining armor, which wards civilized lands against the Thrall Lords. As such, he is patron of those who defend the meek, patrol borders, and tear down the wicked. In the City-States of Val-linar, he is the patron of cavaliers, paladins, and warriors of noble birth. While few *ælfes* worship him, Hothur is known as Arensyl the Mistlord. In this aspect, he is the patron of those who patrol *ælven* lands. He is also the patron of bowyers.

Hothur demands his followers fight the good fight, protect the weak, and aspire to noble actions, regardless of their station. His clerics must do the same, working aside the nobility of civilized places to create safe lands. Hothur's clerics rarely build large churches. Instead, they favor fortified inns (called battle shrines) in remote places, especially on the borders of kingdoms.

Hothur's symbol is gray hammer, pointed down, on a yellow banner. His motto is "Fortune favors the noble and brave heart."

### **Mhamnoch**

Lord of the Long Winter

**Other titles:** The Sleeping Prince, The Wasting Darkness

**Trappings:** Cold, Darkness

**Favored Weapon:** spear

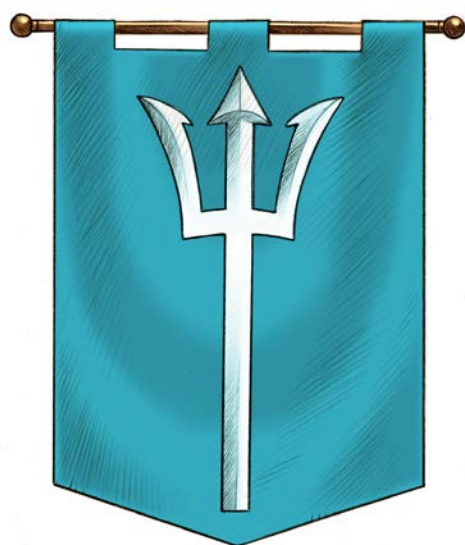
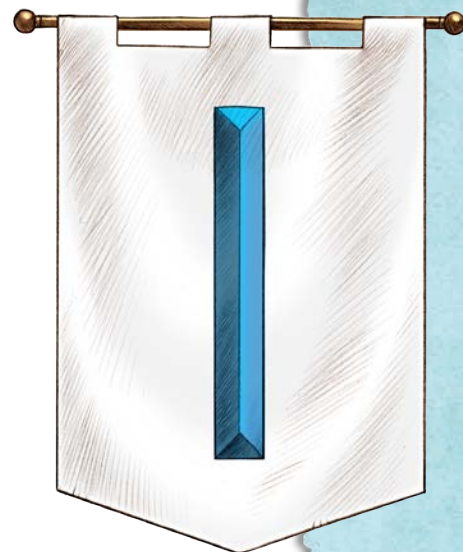


Formerly the patron of art, reflection, and spiritual wellbeing, Mhamnoch represents greed and desire in all their extreme forms. Known as the Lord of the Long Winter, he is a complex god with several faces. In the southern parts of Midgard, he is secretly worshipped as the Sleeping Prince, where he represents the return to power, nobility, and vengeance. Some believe his form as the Winter King is a direct reference to stasis, which he slowly picks away at. In northern Midgard, however, he is seen as either The Wasting Darkness or the Lord of the Long Winter. Both of these aspects are tied to the inevitability of Ragnarök. Many of the Thrall Lords' servants believe it is Mhamnoch who shall call them to the final battle. In his form as The Wasting Darkness, he represents the icy realms of the unknown places. He is also seen as a god of the night. In his most popular form, however, he is the king of winter. All of Rhune honors him in this aspect while it suffers under the weight of the long winter leading to Ragnarök.

Mhamnoch, unlike many of his siblings, is generally uninterested in what happens on Midgard. He concerns himself only with the long winter to come. His clerics still receive spells and visions, but the latter are almost always concerned with harsh places of the far north. Many, in fact, travel to places where the weather is the worst, testing their mettle in preparation for the long winter to come.

Mhamnoch has few temples. The most notable is the Pale Tower, a place carved from white stone and covered completely in ice. While there is no direct tie to Mhamnoch (other than its appearance), his clerics seem to be the only ones unaffected by the tower's powers.

His symbol is the Isa rune, colored blue, on a white banner. His motto is "Winter comes! All hail the Winter King!"



### Nayadia

The Blue Maiden

**Other titles:** Queen of the Waters, Lady Luck, Champion of the Chalice

**Trappings:** Cold, Sound

**Favored Weapon:** trident

Nayadia is the youngest of the three goddesses of the *Æssinyr*. She represents youth, vitality, luck, charm, and unearthly grace. She is frequently depicted rising from the waves, atop dolphins, hoisting a shining trident to the sun. While she is not aggressive, she is fickle and quick to temper when slighted. Fortunately, she is as quick to heal as she is to harm.

In the City-States of Vallinar, Nayadia is known by two names. To the more idealistic, she is the Champion of the Chalice and the matron of good actions, vitality, and youthful purity. Her clerics encourage people to seek the good in themselves. Her sign is a chalice representing their hidden, ideal selves. As Lady Luck,

she is the matron of wild actions, lovers, luck, and youthful vitality. While she has fewer clerics favoring this aspect, she is incredibly popular with the young.

Among the dwarves, Nayadia is the Queen of the Waters. She is depicted as a young female dwarf, carrying a cup filled with amber-colored mead. Older dwarves, to their wives' dismay, trip over themselves to impress her. She is frequently seen winking with a mischievous grin.

Nayadia's clerics are commanded to encourage the young to break traditions (a theme downplayed considerably by her dwarven followers), to travel, and to find true love. They rarely construct shrines. When they do, they are in places of pristine beauty close to the ocean. They favor beaches, secret coves and cliffs overlooking the sea.

Nayadia's symbol is a white trident on a blue banner. Her motto is, "Love as you will."



### Oridynn

The Oak King

**Other titles:** The All Father, The Stave Master, The Hanged God, Ardwynn

**Trappings:** Electricity, Fire

**Favored Weapon:** quarterstaff

Oridynn is one of the strangest gods among the *Æssinyr*. He occupies many roles, but is especially popular as the Hanged God, where he fills the role of "he who sacrifices himself on the Great Tree." He is a god of self-knowledge, magic, secrets and, most notably, runes.

Among the dwarves, he is known as the All Father, a title that commonly confuses outsiders who think he is identical to Velash. In this form, he is the father of all the mysteries buried deep in the earth (and some say, in the hearts of dwarves, as well). He is also the patron of knowledge, noble titles, and fate.

In the City-States of Vallinar, people worship Oridynn in several forms. He is commonly known as the Stave Master. Wizards, skalds and those who seek after hidden knowledge favor him. Many see their sacrifices mirrored in his, understanding that for everything they gain studying the runes, they trade some small comfort.

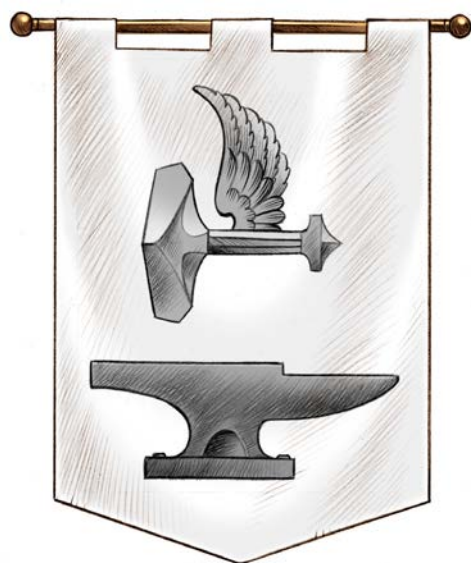
Outside of civilized lands, he is worshipped as the Oak King (sometimes the Ash King) and credited for maintaining nature's careful balance. In this form, he is popular among druids, rangers and scouts.

To the aelves, Oridynn is the god of nature and magic. He has many titles, but "Ardwynn" is the most popular. Because the aelves tend to seamlessly blend magic, community, and nature, little distinction is made as to whether Oridynn is a god of nature, magic, or both.

Oridynn commands his clerics to unearth the runes, to uncover secrets (both inner and outer), and to practice magic in some form. Consequently most clerics divide their time between their divine and arcane studies, developing impressive abilities as a result. Oridynn's clerics favor small, simple schools to elaborate churches. Many build these small schools in remote places. The Grand Hall of the Vitkarr, deep in the Redwall Mountains, is one example.

Oridynn's symbol is a half-circle of runes above an Ash or oak tree. His motto is, "Seek the mysteries."





## Velash

Old Forge Father

**Other titles:** The Even Handed, The Old Inn Keeper in the Sky, The Shining First

**Trappings:** Fire, Light

**Favored Weapon:** war hammer

Velash is one of the oldest among the *Æssinyr*. To the dwarves, he is Old Forge Father, credited with the creation of the dwarven race. He is frequently depicted as the twin of Hothur. As Old Forge Father, Velash is the patron god of dwarven smiths and those who wield the hammer to create. He is also the patron of dwarven communities, liberation, fire, and law.

Among the *ælves*, he is known as Vel Ashr Dallr, the Shining First, the consort to Velluna-Akka. He is also known as the Even Handed, acting as the final judge when Ragnarök has passed. In *ælven* lands, they frequently honor him as the symmetry of inspiration. His clerics there spend decades planning elaborate community projects.

In the City-States of Vallinar, Velash has a curious position. He is frequently honored as ‘The Old Man Upstairs’ or “The Old Inn Keeper in the Sky.” They honor him as the creator of all of Rhune, including the other *Æssinyr*. His clerics concern themselves less with divine affairs and focus instead on the community. Most inns have shrines to Velash.

Velash has, in most lands, a very loose dogma. His clerics concern themselves primarily with maintaining their respective communities, healing the sick, doing good deeds, and maintaining lawful lands. They concentrate on social roles, acting in positions ranging from judge to farmer.

Velash’s symbol is a grey hammer with white wings. His motto is, “For kith, kin, and those who dine in the grand hall.”



## Velluna-Akka

The Crone

**Other titles:** The Veiled Lady, The Lady of Night, Queen of the Moon

**Trappings:** Darkness, Necromantic

**Favored Weapon:** sickle

Velluna-Akka is arguably the darkest of the *Æssinyr*, a reputation she does little to dissuade. Her title, in *ælven*, means “his dark reflection”. Many believe that she is the black space that gave birth to the very stars. Velluna-Akka has many titles and, unlike the other *Æssinyr*, these are frequently shared regardless of social or racial boundaries. Velluna-Akka is, for instance, the Lady of the Night in *ælven*, dwarven and human lands. The *aryandai* honor

her with this title, as well. If her titles shift at all, it is to honor a particular aspect.

As The Veiled Lady, Velluna-Akka represents the mystery of death. An entire order of her clerics goes veiled (by their choice, not another's). They believe this does Velluna-Akka the ultimate honor.

As the Lady of the Night, this goddess represents the unknown that exists beyond the physical universe. In some schools of thought, she is the veil shielding the Great Tree from the Great Void beyond. Some, however, see her as the void itself – a rumor she fails to correct. In either case, she is the great darkness that embraces the points of light, the stars. She is the mother and sister of Alnara in this form, looking down with a knowing smile on the youthful Nayadia.

She is especially popular in the City-States of Vallinar as the Crone, representing the old wise women of civilization. In this aspect, she is the grandmother of secrets, passing on her wisdom to those who deserve it. The Crone is frequently cruel, sending halfwits to die rather than spread their seed. In this, she is seen as “the one who culls” and her sickle is slick with the blood of fools.

As the Queen of the Moon, Velluna-Akka is the celestial reflection of Dægr, a position that some confuse with divine infidelity. In truth, she reflects all light, whether it is from her daughters, the stars, the holy sun, or her divine lover. As the Queen of the Moon, she is the mother of all magic. Unlike Oridynn, however, she does not encourage others to seek out this secret. She posits

that magic is a secret for the few and her clerics whisper that her magic is far more potent because of it.

Velluna-Akka commands her clerics to honor the dead, to comfort the living, to slay fools, to share her wisdom with the worthy and to keep their magic secret. Velluna-Akka grants spells to her female clerics only. Accordingly, she has few male followers.

Her symbol is a silver crescent, turned end-points upward, on a deep-blue banner. Her motto is “I am the mystery.”





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