
SCION
RAGNARÖK

SCION™

RAGNARÖK



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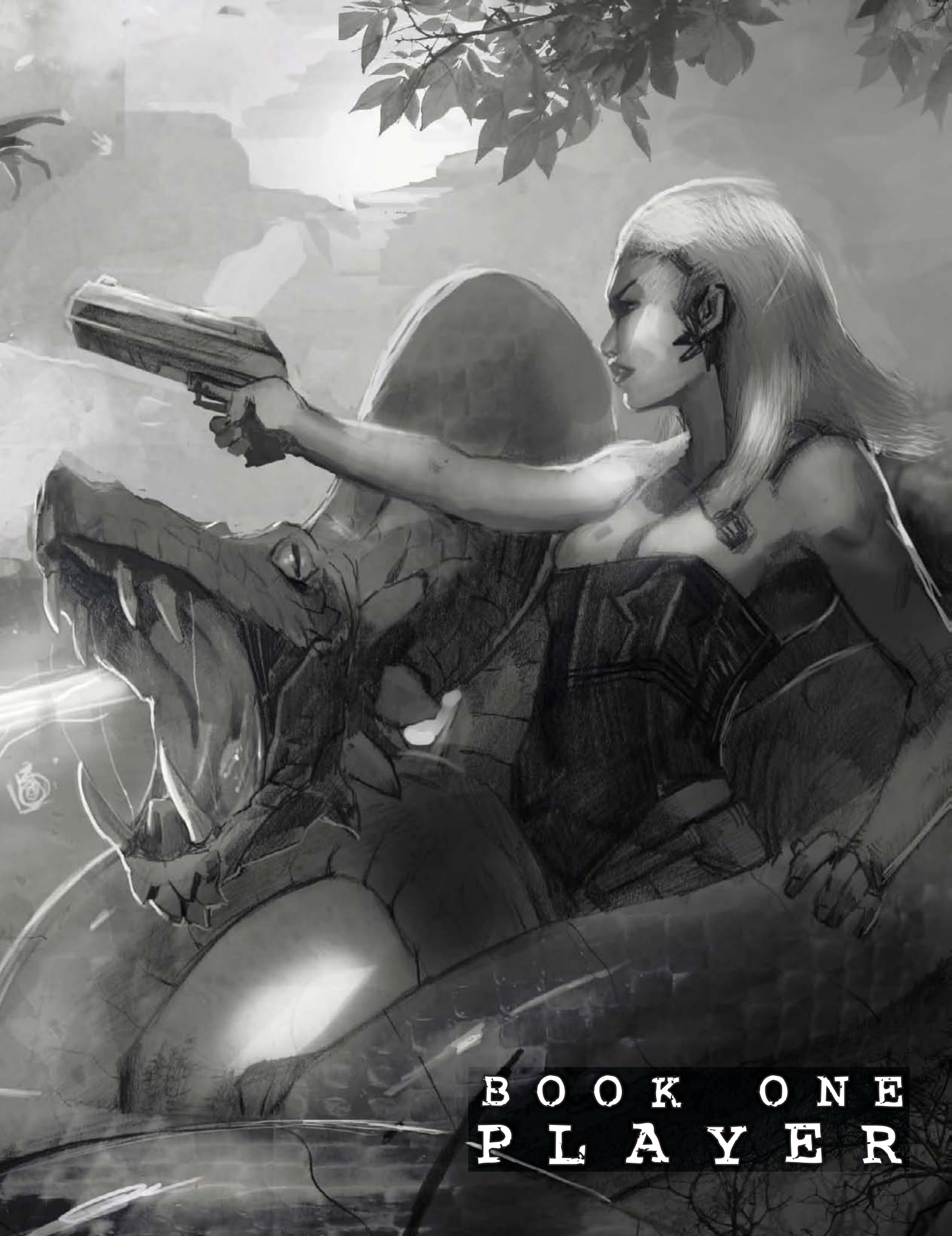
SCION

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BOOK ONE
PLAYER



RAGNARÖK

Loud bays Garm
Before Gnipa cave;
The bonds shall break,
The Wolf run free!
Hidden things I know:
Still onward I see
The Doom of the Powers,
the Gods of war.

—Völuspá

Welcome to the end of the World.

Most mythologies include some story about how the World began. Not so many provide a story about how it ends. The Norse, however, made the end of the World the centerpiece of their mythology. At Ragnarök, the Doom of the Powers, old enemies meet in final battle and prophecies find their fulfillment. Gods and monsters fight to mutual annihilation. The World itself burns. Out of all this destruction, however, emerges a new World purged of past evils, offering a second chance for humanity and a new race of Gods. It's one of the greatest, most epic tales in all of mythology, with a sprawling cast of memorable characters.

Scion: Ragnarök takes its name from this magnificent myth. It differs from the three core books, **Scion: Hero**, **Scion: Demigod** and **Scion: God**, in that it deals with just one pantheon, the Aesir. You'll find nothing here about the Dodekatheon, the Loa or any other pantheon.

THIS ISN'T A COMPLETE GAME!

Scion: Ragnarök is not a complete game. It's a supplement for White Wolf's **Scion**, a game of modern fantasy about latter-day children of the Gods. The core trilogy of **Scion: Hero**, **Scion: Demigod** and **Scion: God** describes this new generation of mythic heroes at three levels of power. This supplement doesn't describe the game's various core traits, rules for conflict resolution or a complete setting. It deals only with the Aesir and the settings, creatures and powers associated with them. You'll need to consult the core **Scion** books (especially **Scion: Hero**) to create your characters and learn the game's rules.

What's in this Book

The first half of **Scion: Ragnarök** provides general material about the Aesir and the creatures and places associated with them. This material could become part of a standard **Scion** game involving multiple pantheons:

Chapter One: Courage and Doom provides a summary of Norse myths and heroic epics, just in case you haven't read the Prose Edda or the Volsung Saga. These myths and legends form the Aesir's history, biography and prophecy. Scions can learn from the examples (and mistakes) of those who came before them.

Chapter Two: Runes of Wisdom supplies new Knacks, Boons, spells and Birthright items for Scions of the Aesir.

Chapter Three: The Aesir describes the Norse Gods themselves, including full traits, and new members of the pantheon who could become parents, allies or enemies of Scions.

Chapter Four: Strange Ports of Call gives Storytellers additional Touchstones, terrae incognitae and other mythic locations associated with the Aesir.

Chapter Five: Creatures of the Nine Worlds provides additional creatures who could become adversaries, guides or minions to the Aesir and their Scions, from minor nature spirits to the Midgard Serpent.

The second half of **Scion: Ragnarök** presents a trilogy of epic stories for Aesir characters. These stories differ from the core trilogy's epic cycle in two important ways. Those scenarios did not use any particular myths as their models. The Ragnarök saga, however, lets the players' characters take part in some of the most famous of the Norse myths—and try to change them. The Ragnarök saga also takes place in a variant setting in which the Aesir compose the only pantheon.

Chapter Six: The Ragnarök Saga brings the players' characters together to form a Band of Heroes in a story called "The Coming of Winter." The Band pursues a powerfully magical relic and sees the start of Fimbulvetr, the Great Winter that heralds the end of the World.

Chapter Seven: Highway to Hel enmeshes the characters, now Demigods, in the long-prophecied death of Baldur. The Scions journey to the Underworld in an attempt to restore Baldur to life. The famous myth says they fail... but perhaps the Scions can escape the grip of prophecy. After all, the real story behind Baldur's death turns out to be quite different than the myth they knew.

Chapter Eight: Twilight of the Gods brings the saga to a close with Ragnarök itself. The Scions, now Gods, embark on a desperate, last-minute quest to change the Aesir's Fate, and then participate in the final, doomsday battle itself. The destiny of the Nine Worlds depends on their courage and prowess in battle, but also on their judgment and powers of persuasion.

Matters Norse

Despite its length, **Scion: Ragnarök** can only offer a taste of Norse mythology. Readers are highly recommended to go to the source and learn more themselves. You can find many fine adaptations of Norse myths, written for all ages. The single best source, however, remains the *Prose Edda* written by Snorri Sturluson back in the 13th century and available in many different translations. We would know much less about Norse mythology if not for this author. Readers who want to go further can seek out the *Elder Edda*, also called the *Poetic Edda* or *Saemund's Edda*. This collection of poems ranges from epics about Sigurd and other heroes, to proverbs and maxims delivered in first person by Odin, to the *Völuspá*, "Sayings of the Seeress," which lays out the prophecies about Ragnarök. If you want to have your Aesir quote authentic Norse poems and prophecies, the *Elder Edda* can't be beat. Again, there are many translations—just searching the Internet can provide several versions in different styles.

When pronouncing Norse names, remember that a J is pronounced as a Y and V is pronounced as a W. Thus, "jotun" is pronounced "yotun," while "Fimbulvetr" is "Fimble-wetter," the Great Winter.

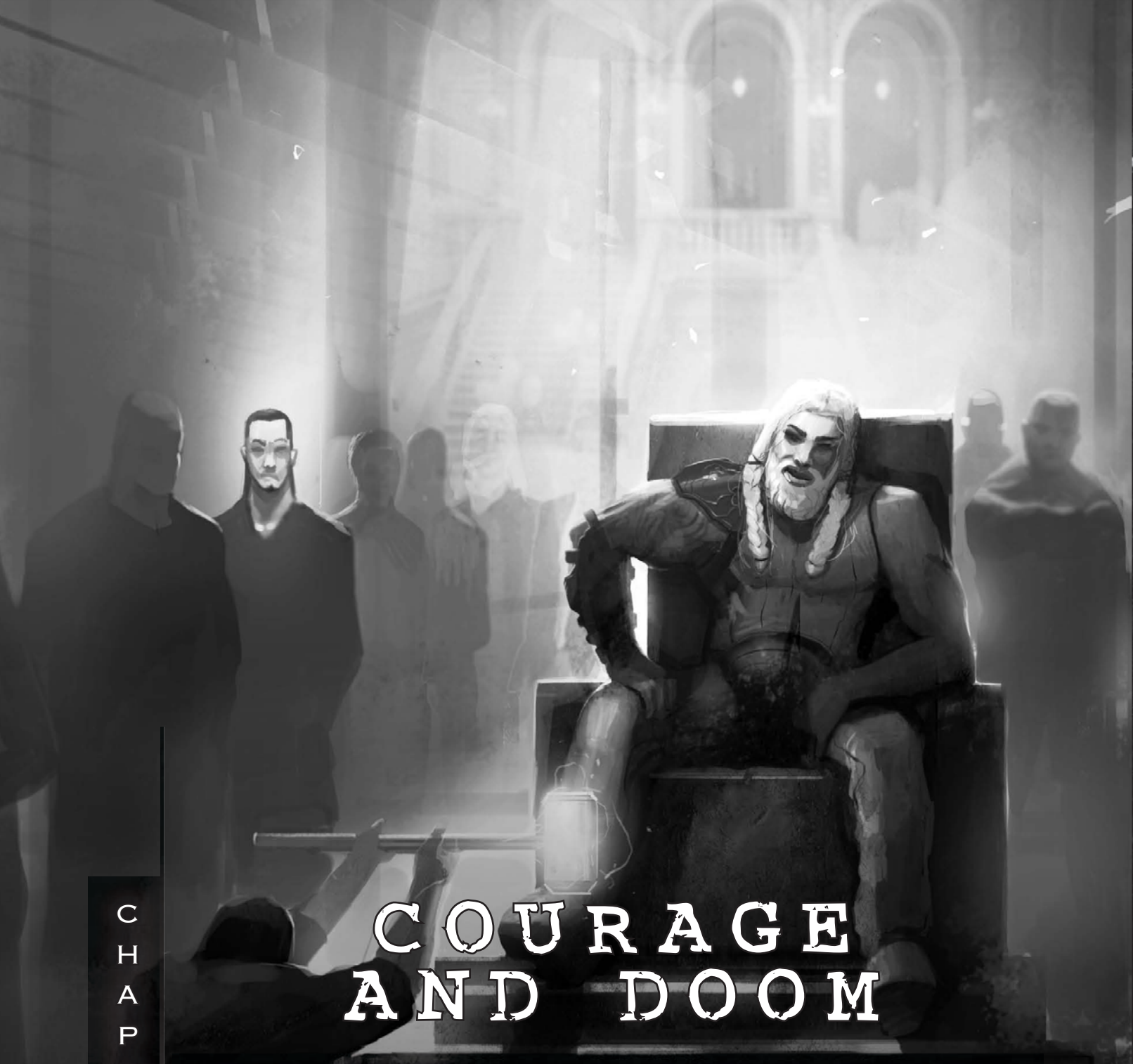
Now death is the portion of doomed men;

Red with blood the buildings of Gods.

The sun burns black in the summer after.

Winds whine. Well, would you know more?

—Völuspá



CHAPTER ONE

COURAGE AND DOOM

The single feature that most defines the Aesir pantheon is the Gods' knowledge of their destiny. They know they're doomed. No matter what they do, most of them are fated to die at Ragnarök. Yet they don't surrender to despair. Instead, the Aesir bravely face the perils Fate sends their way, fighting the good fight. Maybe they can find a way to change Fate—but if they can't, at least they'll die without shame.

The following myths offer players and Storytellers a view into how the Aesir think and behave, which can only help in playing Aesir characters. What's more, Scions might find themselves playing out variations or recapitulations of these myths, as their growing Legend draws in characters who resemble the friends and foes of their divine forebears. Maybe they can achieve better results than their parents. Or perhaps not.

The Beginning and the End

Many pantheons have legends of how they and the World began. Very few tell stories about their own fated ending. The Aesir bracket all their legends with two grand tales of creation and destruction.

The Creation of the World

Before the age of the Aesir, only three regions were known. To the south lay Muspelheim (Home of Desolation), the realm of heat and flame, where dwells Surtr, the giant destined to burn all the worlds with his flaming sword at the end of Ragnarök. To the north lay Niflheim (Home of Fog), the realm of ice and frost. Between them spread the infinite emptiness of Ginnungagap (the Yawning Void). Muspelheim's great heat eventually melted some of Niflheim's ice, and a venomous river fell into Ginnungagap. From this union of fire and ice sprang two beings: the giant Ymir, or Aurgelmir, and the cow Audhumla who fed Ymir with her milk. Ymir brought forth other giants, becoming the progenitor of the evil race. The cow, too, brought forth other life. She licked the salt boulders encased in the ice of Niflheim and released a being called Buri. Buri took to wife the giantess Bestla, daughter of the frost giant Bolthur, and had a son named Borr. Borr produced three strong sons: Odin, Vili (also called Hoenir) and Ve (or Lodur).

The sons of Borr were handsome and good, and they were the first Aesir. They found the giant population both overwhelming and objectionable and took it upon themselves to slay Ymir, father of that vile race. Their deathblows released a torrent of blood from Ymir's body. The bloody flood drowned all the giants except Ymir's grandson Bergelmir and his family, who rode out the flood in the first ship. (In time, they would breed a new race of giants.)

Borr's sons dragged Ymir's body to Ginnungagap and used it to create the World. His blood became the sea, his flesh the land. His bones formed all mountains and stones. With his hair, the sons of Borr crafted trees and grass. The maggots within his body became dwarves, who would toil below the newly formed World's surface.

The sons of Borr made the heavens from Ymir's skull, setting it over the earth, and charging four dwarves named Austri (East), Vestri (West), Nordri (North) and Sudri (South) to stand at the World's four corners and hold it aloft. They then formed clouds from Ymir's brain matter.

When the three Gods finished making the World's plants and animals, they made the first mortal man and woman from two trees and named them Ask (Ash) and Embla (Elm). Odin gave the first humans breath and life; Vili gave them understanding and feeling; Ve gave them speech, hearing and sight. From these two came the rest of humanity.

Next, the sons of Borr created the heavens. They took burning embers from Muspelheim and flung them in the Yawning Void, creating the sun, moon and stars. They appointed Mundilfari's two beautiful children, Sun and Moon, to carry the two lights that shared their names in horse-drawn chariots. The hrimthurssar (frost giants, spawn of Bergelmir) wanted to disrupt the Gods' labors, so they sent Skoll and Hati, werewolves, to pursue the children across the sky. Sun and Moon had to make haste across the heavens, lest they be eaten.



Because the giants continued to fight the Aesir, the Gods took Ymir's eyebrows and constructed a fortress to encompass the middle region of the World. The fortress and all within it they named Midgard and gave it to humanity. The lands of giants became called Jotunheim, or Utgard.

Finally, the Gods created their own home, the fortress realm of Asgard. Within this land they constructed several splendid halls. In the hall of Gladsheim they raised the high seats for Odin and his divine peers. Another hall, Vingolf, holds the high seats for Frigg and the other Goddesses of the Aesir (called the Asynjur). Their great feasting hall they named Valhalla. Here, the fallen warriors chosen by the valkyries feast with the Gods and train for the final battle of Ragnarök. In his own hall of Valaskjálf, Odin built a high seat from which he could see every place in the Nine Worlds. This high seat he named Hlidskjalf.

Between Asgard and Midgard, the Gods constructed the Rainbow Bridge called Bifröst. The burning bridge would enable the Aesir to ride to and from the World, but it would burn to death any giants who tried to cross it. The Gods set Heimdall to guard over the bridge, for though it was the strongest of all bridges, they knew it would one day fall asunder at the Twilight of the Gods. Heimdall would then warn them of danger.

The World Tree

In the center of the universe grows a gigantic ash tree known as Yggdrasil, the World Tree. Its limbs spread above the World and into the heavens. One of the tree's three great roots enters the realm of the Aesir, another extends into the realm of the giants, and the last one reaches into the depths of Niflheim. When the Gods created the various other worlds, they hung them upon the World Tree's limbs and roots.

A well rests beneath each root in the various regions. The well in Niflheim is called Hvergelmir, and beside it rests the serpent called Nidhogg, along with countless smaller serpents. Beneath the root in Jotunheim bubbles the Well (or Spring) of Mimir. The waters of this well confer great wisdom. Mimir, the well's keeper, possesses vast knowledge. When Odin wanted to drink from the well, Mimir required him to forfeit one of his eyes. Odin gladly plucked out an eye and cast it into the well in order to gain understanding of everything.

Yggdrasil's root in Asgard leads to the sacred Well of Urd—the Well of Fate. This is the Gods' principal sanctuary, where they assemble to hold court, settle disputes and discuss their problems. Near this spring live the three Norns, maidens who see and perhaps rule the destinies of all other things. The Norns are Urd (Fate), Verdandi (Being), and Skuld (Necessity). To preserve the life of Yggdrasil, the three Norns water it daily and whiten its bark with clay from their well.

Living creatures prey upon Yggdrasil. In its uppermost branches resides an eagle with a hawk perched on its forehead. Some believe that the flapping of the eagle's wings causes the winds to blow. In Niflheim, the great serpent Nidhogg gnaws unceasingly upon the World Tree's roots. The squirrel Ratatosk runs up and down the World Tree's trunk, carrying insults between Nidhogg and the eagle. The dragon cannot reach the eagle, so he gnaws the World Tree in hopes of bringing the eagle crashing down to himself. Meanwhile, four harts also leap about the branches of Yggdrasil, devouring its twigs and leaves.

THE NINE WORLDS

The Nine Worlds of the Aesir hang from the branches and roots of Yggdrasil. The usual list of worlds includes Asgard, Muspelheim, Vanaheim, Midgard, Jotunheim, Niflheim, Alfheim, Svartalfheim, and Helheim. Asgard is the heaven of the Aesir. The fire giants live in Muspelheim. Vanaheim is the old home of the Vanir. Humanity lives in Midgard (or "Middle Earth"); the frost giants live in Jotunheim. Niflheim is the land of cold. It surrounds Helheim, the realm of the dead. Alfheim is home to the alfar, while Svartalfheim is home to the svartalfar and the dwarves.

The Nine Worlds fit into **Scion**'s cosmology thusly: Asgard, Vanaheim and Alfheim are in the Overworld. So is Muspelheim, but this realm is itself the Greater Titan of Fire, with Surtr as its avatar. Midgard is the mortal World, with Jotunheim and Svartalfheim as terrae incognitae. Niflheim and Helheim are in the Underworld. In an all-Norse cosmology, they make up the entire Underworld.

Norse myths include other significant regions, though, such as the Iron Wood (described in Chapter Five) and the oceanic realm of the sea-Titan Rán. The dwarves call their domain Nidavellir and prefer to think of it as separate. The nine realms listed here, however, hold the most importance for Norse mythology.

Ragnarök: Foreshadowing the End

Several signs foretell the Twilight of the Gods. The most dramatic is the death of Baldur. Baldur's death, in fact, initiates a whole cycle of events nestled within the greater epic of Ragnarök.

The Death of Baldur

Baldur the Beautiful, son of Odin and Frigg, suffered terrible dreams of death and doom. The Gods feared that Baldur's dreams indicated he was in danger. Frigg extracted oaths from everything in the Nine Worlds that they would not harm Baldur. Not just Gods, mortals and other people gave their oath. Plants and animals, metals, stones, *everything* swore not to harm her shining son. After that, the Aesir

amused themselves by hurling various objects at Baldur, knowing they could not hurt him. This sport is integral to the Doom of Baldur. Thus is it prophecied to occur:

The spiteful Loki, who never liked what Frigg had done for Baldur, disguises himself as an old woman and talks with Frigg about the oaths. Loki learns that Frigg has gained oaths from all things except one little plant, the mistletoe, for she thought it too young to pose any threat to Baldur. Loki pulls up the plant and makes a dart from it. He then finds blind Hod and persuades Hod to join in the sport with Baldur. Loki guides his aim, and Hod lets fly. The mistletoe dart strikes true, and Baldur falls over dead.

The Aesir grieve for Baldur's death, Odin most of all because he knows that his son's death portends the Aesir's destruction. Frigg begs for one of the Gods to ride to Hel's abode to plead for Baldur's return. Odin's son Hermod accepts the dangerous journey. Odin gives him Sleipnir, Odin's eight-legged steed, to aid his travel.

The Gods then build a funeral pyre on Baldur's ship, *Hringhorni*, and place his body upon it, along with his horse and his wife, Nanna, struck dead by grief. Odin places his golden arm-ring, Draupnir, on the pyre as a final gift. Odin whispers something into Baldur's dead ear, though none hear what it is. The giantess Hyrrokin pushes the pyre into the sea, and all the Gods watch it burn.

Saxo Grammaticus' Version of Baldur's Death

The Medieval Danish historian Saxo told his own account of Baldur's death. It's quite different from the better-known version told by Snorri Sturluson's *Prose Edda.* In Saxo's account, Hother, a well-favored prince and son of Hotbrod, killed Baldur, a mortal hero sprung of divine blood.

Hother was known for his strength and skill at sports. He had no equal as an archer, swimmer or harpist. Hother loved Nanna, daughter of his foster father, Gevar, and she returned his love.

Odin's son Baldur saw Nanna one day and went to court her. When she told him of her love for Hother, Baldur sulked and thought to kill Hother. Some forest-maidens informed Hother of Baldur's intent, so Hother went to Gevar to learn how he might kill Baldur. Gevar told him that only the sword of the forest-troll Miming could wound Baldur.

After some difficulty, Hother had gained the sword from the troll, and Baldur made war on Hother and Gevar at sea. Although the Gods aided Baldur in his fight, he lost the battle to Hother. Hother then married Nanna and became Sweden's king.

Baldur was a bad loser. He continued to struggle against Hother and won two later battles against him. Baldur's unrequited love for Nanna eventually drained him of his strength, though, and he had to travel in a chariot. Three celestial maidens set about to brew Baldur a potion made from poisonous serpents that would restore his vigor.

Hother learned of the situation once again through the same forest-maidens who'd originally warned him about Baldur, and he hastened to battle Baldur before the potion could be completed. The two struggled in combat a whole day, but neither came forth as a victor. That night, Hother went to the celestial maidens preparing the potion and asked them to let him drink some of it. They would not allow it.

On his return to the battlefield, Hother happened upon Baldur alone, and stabbed him with the troll's sword. Baldur died three days later.

Odin sought the advice of soothsayers, who told him that Rind, a daughter of the king of Ruthenia (Russia), would bear him a son who would avenge Baldur's death. Odin then offered himself to the king of Ruthenia as a soldier. He performed such great deeds of valor that the king made Odin his most trusted henchmen and allowed him to court his daughter. Rind did not consent. Instead, she boxed the disguised Odin on the ear and sent him away.

The next year, Odin returned to the king's court in the guise of a smith. He fashioned beautiful ornaments of gold and silver for the princess. His jewelry delighted the princess and he asked her for a kiss. She boxed him on the ear a second time, telling him she could not love such an old man.

A third time Odin came to the king's court as a knight, but his attempts to court Rind fared no better. As a final ploy, he returned in the likeness of a young girl, assumed a position among Rind's handmaidens and pretended to be skilled in healing. When Rind fell dangerously ill, her handmaidens sent the disguised Odin to heal their princess. He healed her for her promise of love, and she became his consort and bore him a son called Bous.

When he was old enough, Bous went on to war against Hother and killed him. Bous fell dead the following day from mortal wounds he received in the battle, but he fulfilled his destiny and avenged Baldur as Odin had wished.

Hermod's Plea to Hel

But returning to the better-known prophetic version...

Hermod rides Sleipnir down the dark northward road toward Hel's realm. When the eight-legged horse clatters onto the bridge Gjöll, the bridge's giantess guardian, Modgud, hails him. She can tell that Hermod is not one of the dead, so she asks what brings the living to this realm. When Hermod tells her he has come in search of Baldur, Modgud responds that Baldur has already gone to Hel's Hall. She lets Hermod pass.

Eventually, Hermod comes to the Hel-gate and Sleipnir jumps it easily. Eliudnir, the hall of Hel, lies before him, open for him to see, and Baldur sits upon the high seat within. Hermod enters and begs Hel to let Baldur return with him to Asgard.

Unwilling to release Baldur, Hel tells Hermod that she will return Baldur only if everything in the World, living or dead, weeps for him. If anyone or anything refuses to weep, Baldur will remain with her, never to return to Asgard.

Hermod leaves the realm with many gifts from Baldur and Nanna, including Draupnir. He rides back to the Gods and gives them Hel's answer. Thereupon, the Aesir ask that all things weep for Baldur. People weep, animals weep, trees weep, even the stones weep. Of everything in existence, a lone giantess in a cave, who calls herself Thokk, refuses to weep for Baldur. She says, "Alive or dead, the old man's son has been no use to me. Let Hel hold what she has!"

Loki's Punishment

The Gods believe that Loki has taken the form of the giantess and refused to weep for Baldur as a means of keeping him in Hel. They are angered beyond any hope of mercy. Realizing this, Loki flees before they can corner him. He builds a house with four doors looking out in all directions. Later, he transforms himself into a salmon and jumps in the river.

The Gods make a net to fit Loki's new form and wade through the river to capture him. It takes them three tries to snag him. The Aesir then bind Loki across three flat stones (using the entrails of his son Narfi) beneath a serpent with venom dripping from its fangs. They position him so that the venom falls on his face.

Loki is fated to remain bound in the cave until Ragnarök. His wife, Sigyn, sits beside him holding a bowl to catch the dripping venom before it can fall on him. When she leaves his side to empty the bowl, however, Loki's great thrashing from the pain causes the earth to tremble.

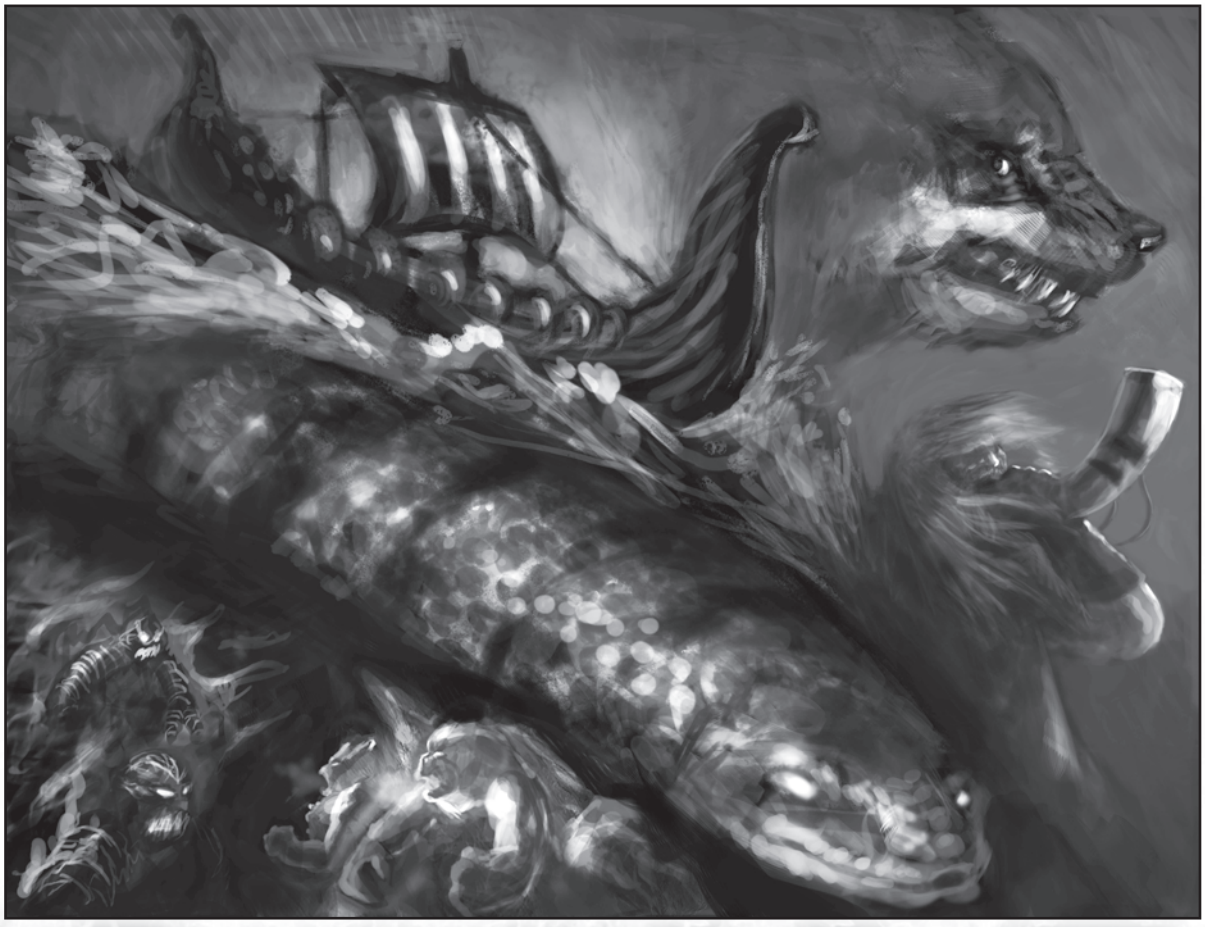
Thus is the death of Baldur and its consequences prophecied to play out.

Ragnarök: The Doom of the Gods

The Doom of the Gods is prophecied to come about when humanity has lost all virtue. Brother kills brother, kinfolk commit incest, and no deed seems too shameful. According to prophecy, it plays out thus:

It begins when Gullinkambi, the Aesir's rooster with a golden comb, crows to awaken Odin's heroes to the Doom of the Gods. Gullinkambi's crow is echoed by Fjalar, a red cock in Jotunheim, and a black cock in Helheim.

The cataclysm begins with Fimbulvetr (or Fimbulwinter), the Great Winter, which lasts three years. At the end of this dire time, Skoll swallows the sun, and Hati swallows the moon. The stars die too, leaving the World in darkness. Earthquakes rumble across the earth, uprooting trees and towns. The bonds that hold Fenris and Loki shatter, releasing them both. Jörmungandr, the Midgard Serpent, heads for the land, and his immense bulk sends the seas sloshing over the land. Loki steers *Naglfar*, a ship made



of dead men's nails, over the floods. His crewmen are the damned from Helheim. The giant Hrym leads the frost giants out of Jotunheim. Eyes lit with flame, Fenris rushes forth. His upper jaw touches the heavens, his lower jaw the earth. While Fenris chews upon the World, the Midgard Serpent spews venom over the sky and sea.

Meanwhile, Heimdall, guardian of Bifröst, sounds the Gjallarhorn to alert the Gods to the beginning of the end. Odin rides to the Well of Mimir to seek Mimir's guidance, and the Gods assemble at the Well of Urd. Yggdrasil, the World Tree, trembles.

The fire giants of Muspelheim ride from the south, led by Surtr with his flaming sword. They ride over Bifröst, breaking the great bridge to Asgard beneath their feet. Fenris, the Midgard Serpent, Loki, Hrym and all the frost giants spill into Asgard, heading toward the Plain of Idavoll. Here, brandishing the spear Gungnir, Odin leads the Aesir and their heroes into battle. He faces off against the Fenris Wolf. Thor strides by his side, hoping to give his father aid, but is forced into battle with the Midgard Serpent.

Freyr, swordless, joins battle with Surtr, while Tyr fights the dog Garm, who has also broken free of his fetters. Heimdall faces off against Loki.

Thor struggles mightily with the Midgard Serpent and finally kills the monster with a great blow from his hammer, Mjolnir. As he leaves its corpse to aid the others, he walks only nine steps before he falls dead himself, a victim of the serpent's venom. The Fenris Wolf swallows Odin. Vidar, Odin's son by the giantess Grid, jumps into the wolf's mouth, pins its lower jaw to the ground with his shoe, and rips its head apart, killing the beast. Tyr and Garm kill one another. Loki and Heimdall likewise fall at each other's hands. Without his great sword, Freyr falls to Surtr's flaming blade. After Freyr falls, Surtr throws fire over Asgard, Midgard and perhaps the rest of the Nine Worlds. Everyone not slain in the battle dies in flames—Gods, mortals, dwarves, alfar, giants and all.

Thus is the Doom of the Gods prophecied to play out.

After Ragnarök: A New Beginning

As Surtr's fires burn, however, they consume all evil, allowing a green and fertile World to rise out of the sea. The children of Sun and Moon, as bright and beautiful as their parents, give light to the new land. Lif and Lifthrasir, humans who survive Surtr's fires by hiding in Yggdrasil's branches, replenish the race of men.

The remaining Aesir—Vidar, Vali, Modi, Magni and a few others—assemble on the Plains of Idavoll. Baldur and Hod return from Helheim, and Hoenir leaves Vanaheim to join them. They make their home in the plains where Asgard once stood. The great battles and tragedies of the past seem to them like an evil dream, from which the World now awakens.

Tales of the Gods

Although many tales of the Aesir involve their battles, the Norse also told many other stories that describe what moved the Gods to action, what they desired and what they enjoyed.

Thor and the Giants

The following legends describe Thor's adventures in defending Asgard—and, by extension, Midgard—against the giants of Jotunheim. Some of his adventures are great, heroic battles. Some are... not.

Thor's Visit to Geirrod

The giant Geirrod captured Loki when that God went out flying in falcon form. The giant recognized by the falcon's eyes that this was no simple bird but a shapeshifter, so he locked Loki in a chest for three months without food until the bird revealed its true identity. In exchange for his release, Loki promised to bring Thor to Geirrod's farmstead unarmed.

Upon his return home, Loki convinced Thor to make the journey just as Geirrod wanted. Along the way, however, Thor met the giantess Grid (the mother of Odin's son Vidar). Grid warned Thor of the trap that awaited him. She lent him her magic iron staff, a belt of strength and some iron gloves.

Later, Thor waded across the river Vimur. Halfway across, the water suddenly rose to his shoulders, but Thor braced himself against the currents with the magical staff. Then he saw Geirrod's daughter upstream, trying to use her magic to swell the river and drown him. Thor grabbed a boulder from the streambed and threw it at her, striking her down. He finished crossing the river.

Thor then made his way to Geirrod's hall and sat down. Almost immediately, his seat began to rise toward the ceiling. Thor pushed the borrowed staff against a ceiling beam with all his might. The chair crashed down again and a great wailing rose from two giantesses, Geirrod's daughters, who lay beneath it. Their backs were broken. They had tried to crush Thor against the ceiling, but the God had turned their trap against them.

Thor then confronted Geirrod himself. The giant flung a ball of red-hot iron at him, but Thor caught the ball with his iron gloves. Frightened, Geirrod ducked behind a pillar. Thor threw the ball with such force at Geirrod that it blasted through the pillar, through Geirrod and through the far wall. With the giant and his family defeated, Thor returned to Asgard unscathed.

Thor's Visit to Hymir

Thor once disguised himself as a youth and visited the giant Hymir to go fishing with him. Hymir sent him to get bait, and Thor cut off the head of Hymir's biggest ox to take with them. Thor rowed them out to where Hymir fished for whales, then farther out still. Hymir didn't want him to go any farther, fearing they would disturb the Midgard Serpent, but Thor kept rowing. Finally, he wedged the ox head on his hook and cast his line into the sea... and the Midgard Serpent took the bait!

Thor pulled mightily on the line, digging his heels into the boat so hard that his feet went through the deck and struck the sea bottom. He dragged the monster's head out of the water. Thor and the serpent stared fiercely at each other, but the sight of the great serpent sent Hymir into a panic. As Thor raised his hammer to crush the Midgard Serpent's head, Hymir cut the fishing line, enabling the serpent to escape into the depths of the sea.

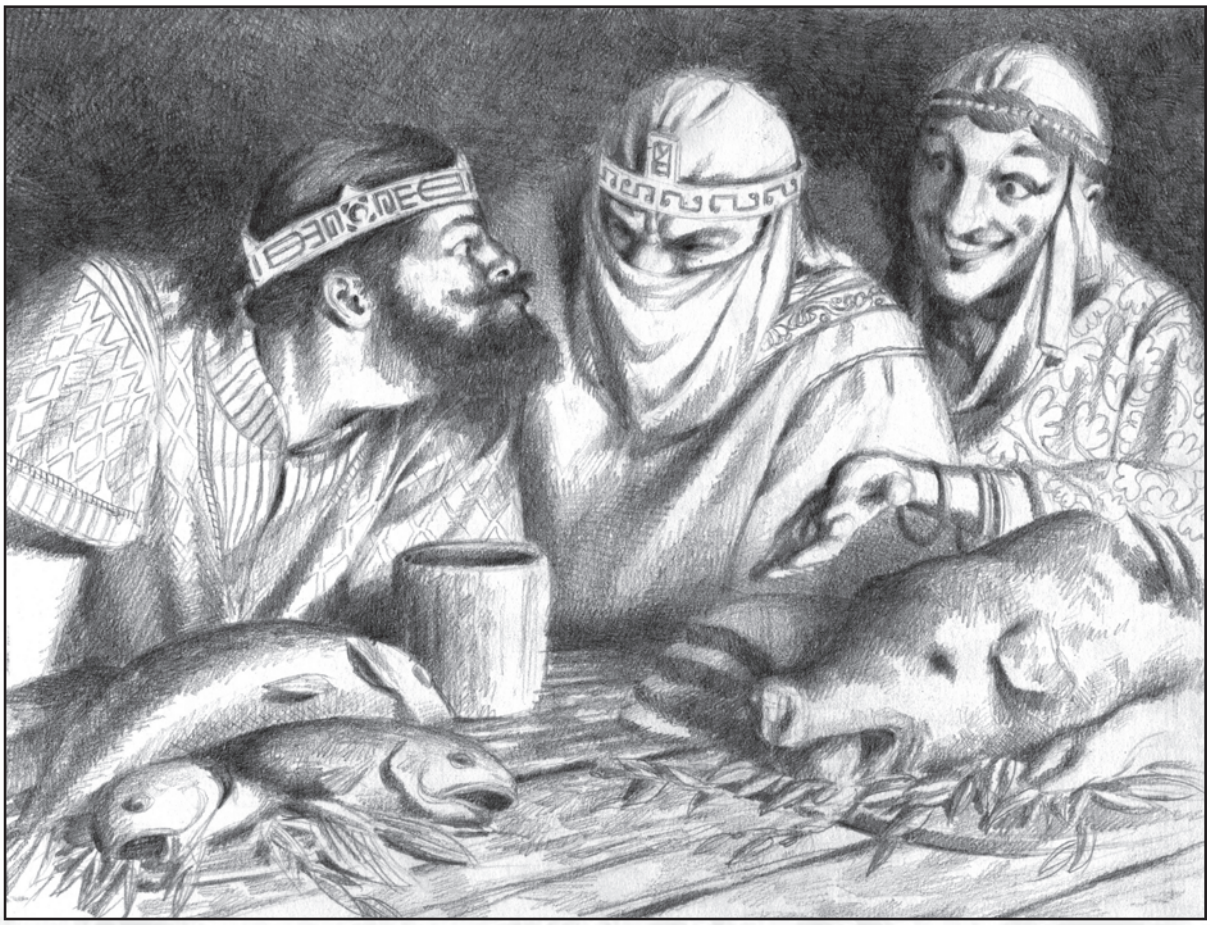
Angered that the cowardly Hymir had cost him his prize, Thor punched the giant so hard that Hymir fell overboard. Thor waded back to shore. Nobody knows what happened to Hymir.

Thor's Visit to Thrym

One morning, Thor woke up to find his hammer, Mjolnir, missing. He called Loki to help him locate it. Loki borrowed Frigg's falcon-form cloak to go out in search of it. Loki's flight took him to the jotun king Thrym, whom he found had stolen Thor's hammer and hidden it deep within the earth. Thrym told Loki he would return the hammer only if the Aesir gave him Freya as his wife.

Loki brought this message to Asgard. Freya went into a rage and said that she absolutely, definitely, would *not* marry Thrym! The Gods discussed alternatives means of retrieving the hammer. For once, Loki didn't come up with a clever plan. Instead Heimdall, of all Gods, suggested they dress up Thor as Freya, complete with her beautiful golden necklace, Brisingamen, and send him to Thrym. Thor thought this was a horrible idea, but he eventually relented.

The Aesir wrapped Thor in bridal linen and a veil, and Loki accompanied him disguised as Freya's handmaiden. Thunder and lightning rent the sky as the two traveled in Thor's chariot. When they arrived in Jotunheim, Thrym's people laid out a wedding feast. Thor ate an entire ox, eight salmon and numerous other delicacies, washing them down with three crocks of mead. Loki explained to Thrym that Freya had not eaten for eight nights, such was her longing to be his wife. Thrym then tried to kiss Freya, and stopped when he saw Thor's terrible burning eyes. Loki quickly said that Freya had not slept for eight nights, such was her longing to be with Thrym in Jotunheim.



At last, an old granny-giant brought forth Mjolnir and placed it on the bride's lap to seal the marriage deal. Thor's heart leapt as he closed his hands upon his hammer. In a trice, he killed Thrym and the giant-crone who had brought the hammer. Then he killed the other giants who had come to witness the wedding (and who'd seen him in a dress). He and Loki returned to Asgard.

Thor's Visit to Utgard-Loki

On a journey one day, Thor and Loki stopped at a farm to eat. The farmers, however, were very poor and had very little food, so Thor slaughtered the goats that drove his chariot. He invited the farmer and his family to share the meal with them, instructing them to throw the bones onto the goats' hides when they were done. The farmer's son, Thjálfi, however, broke one of the bones to drain its marrow.

At dawn, Thor blessed the goats' bones with Mjolnir, and the blessing restored the goats to life. When the goats stood up, he saw that one was lame, which made Thor very angry. When the farmer and his family saw Thor's fury, they begged for their lives. Their fear cooled Thor's temper. To compensate Thor, the farmer offered Thor his daughter, Roskva, and his son, Thjálfi, as servants.

Thor left his goats with the family to heal, and continued on his journey to Jotunheim. As darkness fell, the little company found shelter in an immense building with an open end. Late at night, however, an earthquake shook their building and awoke them. Thor's fearful companions moved deeper into the building. Thor moved to the front of the building to protect them.

In the morning, Thor and his companions left the building, and they discovered a sleeping giant nearby. It was that giant's snoring that had caused the building to shake.

Thor buckled on his belt of strength and raised his hammer to strike the sleeping giant, but the giant awoke and stood up. Thor put down his hammer and asked the giant's name. The giant called himself Skrymir. He picked up the long, low hall where Thor's companions had sought shelter... and stuffed one hand into it. It was the giant's glove!

Skrymir asked if they might travel together, and he offered to carry their provisions in his own bag. Thor consented. Skrymir's great strides carried him far ahead of Thor's party. When the Gods and mortals caught up to Skrymir that night, they found the giant already fast asleep by an oak tree. The four companions decided to have their supper. When Thor tried to open the giant's bag and retrieve their provisions, though, he found he could not open it, no matter how hard he struggled. Thor became so angry that he seized Mjolnir with both hands and struck the sleeping giant on the head. Skrymir opened an eye and nonchalantly asked if a leaf had fallen upon his head.

The companions lay down to sleep without supper, but Skrymir's snores kept them awake and shook the whole forest. Irritated, Thor hefted Mjolnir and sunk the hammer into Skrymir's skull, awakening the giant once more. This time, Skrymir asked if an acorn had dropped on his head. Thor waited until near dawn then struck the giant a third time. His hammer sunk all the way to its handle in Skrymir's head. The giant awakened unharmed and asked if a bird had dropped something on him from above.

Skrymir then took his leave from the companions. Before he left, he warned Thor that Utgard held giants much bigger than himself and assured him they did not like little men who bragged about themselves.

Thor and his band traveled on until midday, when they came upon a castle and squeezed in through the bars of its enormous gates. They made their way into an open hall, where they saw massive giants seated on benches. King Utgard-Loki sat at the end of the hall. Some minutes passed before the gigantic king noticed the small visitors in his hall. Utgard-Loki scornfully asked if the travelers had any special gifts to display, for he allowed no one in his hall who was not the best at something.

Loki spoke up first, boasting that he could eat faster than anyone. Utgard-Loki's servants placed a platter of meat before the God, and the king challenged him to compete against a giant named Logi. The two sat down at either end of the trencher and ate their way through until they met in the middle. But, while Loki had consumed only the meat, Logi consumed the meat, the bones and the platter as well. Logi won the contest.

The king then asked what the boy Thjálfi could do. Thjálfi said he had no special skills, but he could run quickly and would test his speed against any giant in the hall. Utgard-Loki called a lad named Hugi to race against him. The young giant outran Thjálfi in three races—running to the other end of the hall and back before Thjálfi was barely off his mark.

The king then asked Thor what kind of sport he favored. Thor responded that he could out-drink anyone among them. The king's cup-bearer brought Thor a great drinking horn, and Utgard-Loki told Thor that any giant in the hall could easily drain the horn in a single draught. Thor drank deeply from the horn, but when he stopped to see how much he had drunk, he saw that the level of the mead had dropped only a little. Utgard-Loki suggested that even though Thor was a little fellow, he could surely finish the horn with a second drink. Thor took an even longer pull on the horn. When he stopped again, he saw the mead had barely dropped any further. Utgard-Loki chided Thor, saying that if Thor was no more skilled in other games than at his drinking, then he would not earn any fame among the giants. Angered, Thor chugged from the horn as long as he could. But when he lowered the horn from his lips, he still had not drained it dry. And with that, Utgard-Loki sneered that Thor was not so great a man as he had heard.

Utgard-Loki then asked Thor to try his hand at another challenge, one many young giants enjoyed: lifting Utgard-Loki's cat. A large gray cat sauntered into the hall. Thor placed a hand under its belly and tried to lift it. The more he pulled, the more the cat arched its back, bending like a bow. When Thor lifted his hand as high as he could, the cat had raised only one of its paws from the floor. So Thor had failed at this game as well.

Utgard-Loki then laughed, saying he should not have expected so much from a small man. Thor angrily shouted that he would wrestle any giant the king sent forth. The king said that no man among his people would demean himself so much as to wrestle Thor, so he sent out the withered crone Elli instead. The crone grappled Thor and wrestled with him, and Thor could not best her. Before long, the old woman had him upon his knee, and the match ended. Utgard-Loki laughed but gave the Aesir and their companions a feast anyway and put them up for the night.

In the morning, the king had a breakfast table prepared for them and accompanied them from the castle to walk with them a little ways. Outside the castle's walls, Utgard-Loki asked Thor what he thought of his journey so far. Thor said he was disappointed at leaving the castle with a reputation as a weakling. Utgard-Loki laughed. He said that he would never again allow Thor into his castle, and he would have never allowed him in if had known how strong Thor was. Utgard-Loki revealed that he had been Skrymir in the forest. He had tied his provision bag with troll-iron so Thor would not know how to open it. Each blow Thor had struck with Mjolnir would have killed him if he had not interposed a mountain for his protection. As he showed the God, the mountain now held three valleys where Thor's hammer had struck.

Then Utgard-Loki informed Thor that he had played a similar trick with each game. Logi, who had won the eating contest by eating the bones and the platter, was really fire itself. Hugi, who ran the race against Thjálfi, was actually Utgard-Loki's thought, which travels quicker than anything. The other end of the drinking-horn actually lay within the ocean, and Thor's great draughts had lowered the level of the water considerably. The cat was actually the Midgard Serpent. When Thor had lifted the monster, the king and his men had trembled to realize that with such strength, Thor might crack the entire World. Finally, the old woman Thor had wrestled was no granny, but old age itself, before which all men must fall.

The giant king told Thor it was time to part, and he bade Thor never to return. Thor lifted his hammer to smite the deceptive giant. Before he could strike, however, Utgard-Loki disappeared. The four companions stood in the wilderness, with no sign that a castle had ever been there at all.

Thor's Duel with Hrungnir

Once while Thor had gone off to the east to kill trolls, Odin rode Sleipnir into Jotunheim and came to the dwelling of the giant Hrungnir. When Hrungnir admired Odin's steed, Odin wagered him that there was not a finer horse than Sleipnir in all of Jotunheim. Odin rode off, but the giant followed him on his own horse, Goldmane. Hrungnir's chase brought him inadvertently to the gates of Asgard. Well, a guest's a guest, however unexpected, and Odin invited Hrungnir to sit down in Gladsheim to have a drink. The giant drank the mead of the Gods, and before long he drunkenly boasted that he would sink Asgard into the sea and kill all the Gods except Freya and Sif, whom he would instead carry off to his own kingdom.

Thor returned to Asgard at this time and did not like seeing a drunken giant insulting the Gods in their own hall. He brandished his hammer at Hrungnir and demanded to know who had allowed such a trespasser. Hrungnir told Thor he had safe passage from Odin. He challenged Thor to a duel away from Asgard, which Thor immediately accepted.

To aid Hrungnir in his duel, the other giants crafted a clay man, which they called Mökkurkálfi (Mooncalf). To bring it to life, however, they needed a heart and the biggest heart they could find was that of a mare.

Hrungnir came to meet Thor armed with a stone shield and a whetstone. His head and heart were both made of stone, as well. Thor brought his servant Thjálfi to the battle. Thjálfi drew Hrungnir aside and told the giant that he should stand upon his shield, for Thor might pound his way through the ground and attack him from below. The giant did so, but Thor came down on the giant with thunder and lightning. As he threw Mjolnir at the giant, Hrungnir cast his whetstone. The weapons collided and the whetstone broke into pieces. One of the pieces lodged into Thor's forehead. The hammer struck Hrungnir's skull and shattered his head, killing him at once.

Meanwhile, Thjálfi fought the clay man. Though gigantic, Mökkurkálfi had a timid and skittish heart. Thjálfi easily defeated him. As Thjálfi finished his kill, he turned to see Hrungnir's body fall on top of Thor, his large foot resting on Thor's neck. None of the Aesir could raise the giant's foot off Thor. Then Magni, the three-year-old son of Thor and the giantess Jarnsaxa, happened by and lifted the foot as if it were a toy. For his life-saving feat, Thor gave the boy Hrungnir's horse, Goldmane.

The Aesir then called the seeress Gróa to remove the whetstone from Thor's head with her magic. While Gróa chanted her spells, Thor regaled her with a story about how he had once carried her husband, Aurvandil, out of Jotunheim in a basket. When her husband's toe had frozen on the way and fallen off, he had flung it into the sky to become the star called Aurvandil's Toe. Thor's tale so enthralled the seeress that she never completed her spell, so the whetstone remains in Thor's head to this day.

GIANT AND TROLL-WIFE NAMES

Here are many names for giants and troll-wives, culled from Norse mythology (including names from the stories recounted or mentioned in this book):

Female: Ama, Amgerd, Atla, Bakrauf, Bestla, Bryja, Eisurfala, Fala, Forad, Fjolvor, Fjorgyn, Geitla, Gerda, Gestilia, Geysa, Gjalp, Glumra, Gneip, Gnepia, Gnissa, Greip, Grid, Grima, Grottintanna, Gryla, Guma, Gunnlod, Haera, Hala, Hardgreip, Hengiklepta, Herkia, Holgabrud, Horn, Hrimgerd, Hruga, Hryggda, Hvedra, Hyndla, Hyrrokkin, Ima, Imd, Imgerd, Ividja, Jarnglumra, Jarnsaxa, Jarnvidja, Kjallandi, Kraka, Laufey, Leikn, Leirvor, Ljota, Lodinfingra, Margerd, Menglod, Modgud, Morn, Munnharpa, Myrkrida, Nal, Nott, Oflugbarda, Rifingafla, Ryg, Simul, Sivor, Skadi, Skrikja, Sveipinfalda, Thokk, Thurbord, Vardrun, Vigglod

Male: Alfarin, Alsvart, Am, Annar, Aud, Aurgelmir, Aurgrimnir, Aurnir, Baugi, Beinvid, Beli, Bergelmir, Bjorgolf, Blapthvari, Bolthur, Branding, Dofri, Durnir, Eggther, Eimgeitir, Eld, Farbauti, Fenrir, Fjolsvid, Fjolverk, Fjorgyn, Fleg, Fornjot, Fyrnir, Galar, Gang, Ganglati, Geirrod, Geiter, Gilling, Glam, Glaumar, Grimling, Grimnir, Gusir, Gyllir, Gymir, Hafli, Hardverk, Hastigi, Helregin, Herker,Hloi, Hraesvelg, Hraudnir, Hraudung, Hrimgrimnir, Hrimthurs, Hringvoldir, Hripstod, Hroar, Hrokkvir, Hrossthjof, Hrungnir, Hrym, Hugi, Hundalf, Hval, Hvedrung, Hymir, Idi, Im, Jokull, Kaldgrani, Kott, Kyrmir, Leifi, Midi, Midjung, Naglfari, Nati, Norfi, Ofoti, Ogladnir, Olvaldi, Ondud, Osgrui, Rangbein, Saekarlsmuli, Salfang, Samendil, Skaerir, Skalli, Skerkir, Skrati, Skrymir, Sokmimir, Som, Spretting, Starkad, Stigandi, Storverk, Stumi, Suttung, Svarang, Svart, Thistilbardi, Thjazi, Thrigeiter, Thrivaldi, Thrudgelmir, Thrym, Vafthrudnir, Vagnhofdi, Vandil, Ver, Vidblindi, Viddi, Vind, Vindsval, Vingnir, Vingrip, Vipar, Vornir

PEACE: THE VANIR JOIN THE AESIR

Some of the Gods among the Aesir were not born into the Aesir's ranks. Instead, they come from another group called the Vanir, who hold sway over the forces of nature and fertility and who lived in the Overworld realm of Vanaheim. As the story goes, antagonism arose between the Vanir and the Aesir when a troublemaking temptress called Gullveig came out of Vanaheim. (Some mortal scholars think that Gullveig was Freya.)

The Aesir tried to burn Gullveig three times. They failed, but the incident still angered the Vanir. The rival pantheon stormed Asgard to retrieve her. Odin declared all-out war on the Vanir by throwing his spear over their ranks, inciting the first battle. The Vanir wrecked Asgard's defenses, but neither side could gain a decisive victory. Eventually, the Aesir decided they should make peace with the Vanir. As part of their peace treaty, the two tribes agreed to exchange hostages. The Aesir sent Hoenir and Mimir to the Vanir. In return, the Vanir sent Njord and his son Freyr to Asgard.

At first, the Vanir thought themselves well served by their exchange, for Hoenir seemed not only tall, strong and handsome, but a wise counselor as well. The Vanir eventually realized, however, that Hoenir was little more than a pretty mouthpiece for Mimir. On his own, he invariably said, "Let others decide." The angry Vanir knew that killing Hoenir would start a war that could not end until one clan destroyed the other. Instead, they cut off Mimir's head and sent it back to the Aesir as a sign of their displeasure.

Despite their anger, the Vanir did not recall Njord and Freyr to Vanaheim. Later, for reasons known only to her, Freyr's sister Freya came to live in Asgard as well.

TRICKERY

The Aesir love a good bet and often they wager over their heads (or actually wager their heads, in the case of Loki). In such cases, they try to trick their way out of settling up.

THE GIANT MASON AND THE CITADEL OF ASGARD

Not long after the war of the Aesir and Vanir, the Gods wondered how to rebuild Asgard's defenses. They seemed to have a stroke of luck when a workman came to the Aesir. (The workman's name is unknown.) He claimed that in a mere three seasons he could build them a strong citadel that would withstand assaults from the frost giants. For payment, he wanted the Goddess Freya or the sun and the moon. After some deliberation, the Gods made a counter offer: If the artisan could build the fortress in one winter alone, with no help from anyone, they would give him Freya. The stonemason agreed to do so, if they allowed him the assistance of his stallion, Svadilfari, to help him carry heavy loads. On Loki's advice, the Aesir granted the request.

The mason started work on the first day of winter. He quarried enormous blocks of stone and Svadilfari hauled them to the work site. The Gods were amazed by the strength of both man and horse, and they realized that the workman must be a giant in disguise.

As winter drew to a close, the walls of Asgard were almost complete—and the Aesir, particularly Freya, had harsh words for Loki about his "safe bet." In fact, they

threatened to kill Loki if he could not find a way to cheat the workman out of his price. Loki assured the Aesir he would find a way to prevent the workman from finishing the walls on time.

Later that evening, when the mason took Svadilfari to gather more stone, a mare crossed their path. She whinnied to Svadilfari and whisked her tail, and the stallion broke free from his master and ran into the nearby forest with the mare. The giant lost a whole day's work while Svadilfari frolicked with the mare. And so, on the first day of spring, the walls of Asgard were just a few blocks short of completion. The Aesir, no longer bound to their oath, bade Thor to deal with the giant mason. Thor killed him.

And what of Loki? The Lie-Smith had taken the form of the mare to lure Svadilfari away from his work. Loki remained in the mare's form long enough to birth the offspring of his union with Svadilfari. That offspring was Sleipnir, Odin's famous eight-legged steed—the fastest horse in all the Nine Worlds.

The Theft of Idun and Her Apples

The Gods Loki, Thor and Hoenir stopped one day along their journey to roast an ox for dinner. They could not get the meat to cook, no matter how long they held it over flame. An eagle perched in an oak above them said that he could get the meat to cook if the three travelers gave him a share. The Gods gave their promise and now the meat cooked properly. The eagle, however, took most of the ox as his share. Loki angrily tried to beat the eagle with a stick. The eagle caught the stick and took wing—and Loki found he could not let go! The eagle bore Loki into the sky and told him that he would not return him to the ground safely until Loki swore to bring the eagle the Goddess Idun (who was Bragi's wife) and her golden apples of youth.

The frightened God agreed. And so, when Loki was returned to Asgard, he lured Idun away from the other Gods. The eagle, who was really the giant Thjazi in disguise, carried the Goddess away to his home.

Without Idun and her apples to keep them young, the Aesir grew old and weak. When they learned that Loki had helped the giant abduct Idun, though, they all said they had strength enough to kill him unless he got her back. To do so, Loki borrowed Freya's falcon shape and flew off to rescue Idun from Thjazi. While Thjazi was out fishing, Loki entered his fortress, changed Idun into a nut and carried her away in his claws. Thjazi soon realized what had happened and changed into an eagle again to pursue Loki. The trickster managed to reach Asgard first, where the other Gods waited with a pile of wood shavings. As soon as Loki cleared the walls of Asgard, the Gods set fire to the shavings. Thjazi flew straight into the sudden blaze, singing his eagle feathers so he crashed into the ground. The Gods made short work of him after that.

Six Treasures for the Gods

When Loki cut off all the Goddess Sif's hair for a prank, Thor (her husband) threatened to break his bones. Loki hurriedly promised to get Sif better hair from the dwarves. Thor relented, and Loki set off to find the dwarves known as the Sons of Ivaldi. The dwarves made hair of spun gold that they promised would join to Sif and henceforth live and grow. They also produced the magic ship *Skidbladnir* and the spear Gungnir.

Seeing what great treasures the dwarves could produce, Loki decided to wager his own head with the dwarf named Brokk that he and his brother Eitri could not create more items of even greater value than the hair, ship and spear.

The dwarves took the bet. First, Brokk and Eitri laid a pig's hide in the smithy fire. As Brokk pumped the bellows, however, a fly landed on his arm and stung him. The sting did not stop Brokk from his work, and Eitri lifted his work, a boar with glowing golden bristles, from the forge.

Eitri next placed gold in the forge, and once again his brother Brokk worked the bellows. Once again, the fly came back to harass the dwarf. It landed on his neck and bit him twice as hard as before. Withstanding the pain, the dwarf continued his task to completion. From the fire, Eitri lifted the golden arm-ring Draupnir.

Finally, Eitri laid iron in the forge and once more bade his brother to pump the bellows without ceasing, lest the work be ruined. This time, the fly landed between Brokk's eyes and stung him on the eyelid. Blood ran from the wound, blinding the dwarf. He lifted one hand from the bellows to swat at the fly. His brother returned at that moment, and scolded him for almost ruining the work. Eitri lifted the iron from the forge, and it had become a mighty hammer.

Eitri then gave all the items to his brother and bade him take them to Asgard for the Gods to judge. Loki gave Odin the spear Gungnir, which always hit its mark. He gave Thor the golden hair, which immediately took root when placed on Sif's head. He gave the Freyr the ship *Skidbladnir*, which always has favorable winds and could fold up to the size of a napkin.

Then it was Brokk's turn. The dwarf gave Draupnir to Odin. Every ninth night, he said, the arm-ring would drop eight other rings as heavy in gold as itself. He gave the boar Gullinbursti to Freyr. The boar could run through the air and over the sea faster than any steed, and his glowing bristles would light the way on even the darkest nights. Then to Thor he gave the hammer, Mjolnir. The hammer could be thrown at anything and always hit its mark, and would then return to his hand. Thor liked the hammer a great deal and thought it would do well against the giants, even if the handle was a little short.

Odin, Thor and Freyr decided that Brokk and Eitri had crafted treasures at least as great as those wrought by the Sons of Ivaldi, and Brokk had won his wager. Loki tried to flee using his magic shoes that carried him quickly over the air and seas, but Thor seized him out of the air at Brokk's swift request. Clever Loki then thought of a loophole in the bet: He had promised the two dwarves his head, but he never said anything about his neck. Foiled by Loki's sophistry, Brokk settled for sewing Loki's lips together.

DWARF NAMES

Norse mythology supplies these names for dwarves, some of whom appear in this or other **Scion** books:

Ai, Alfrig, Althjolf, Alvis, Andvari, Aurvang, Bafur, Bari, Bifur, Bombur, Brokk, Dain, Dolgthvari, Dori, Duf, Durin, Dvalin, Eikinskjaldi, Eitri, Fal, Fid, Fili, Frag, Frar, Frosti, Fundin, Gandalf, Ginnar, Gloin, Har, Heptifili, Hledjolf, Hornbori, Hugstari, Ingi, Iri, Ivaldi, Jari, Kili, Lit, Loni, Modsognir, Modvitnir, Nain, Nar, Nidi, Niping, Nori, Nyi, Nyr, Nyrad, Oinn, Onar, Ori, Radsvid, Rekk, Sindri, Skafinn, Skavid, Skirfir, Sviar, Thekk, Thorin, Thrain, Thror, Uni, Vali, Var, Vegdrasil, Vig, Vindalf, Virfir, Vit

Love: Freyr and the Wooing of Gerd

Odin does not let other Gods sit on his high seat of Hlidskjalf. One day Freyr, the Vanir God of Prosperity, broke that rule. While looking throughout the Nine Worlds, he glimpsed the giantess Gerd entering the door of her estate. As she reached for the door, brightness radiated from her, illuminating both the sky and the sea... and Freyr fell madly in love.

Freyr returned home with great sorrow. He had seen the fairest of all women, and he desperately wanted her for himself. He could think of nothing but Gerd's beauty, so much so that he would not speak, eat, drink or sleep.

None of the other Gods wanted to push Freyr about his odd behavior, so Njord sent Freyr's shield-man, Skirnir, to learn why his son was pining away. Freyr revealed to Skirnir that he had lost his heart to the beautiful Gerd in one glimpse and would not live long if he could not have her. Freyr offered to reward Skirnir handsomely if he would go to Gerd, woo her on his behalf and bring Gerd back to him—with or without her father's approval.

Skirnir agreed to go on Freyr's mission, but he asked that Freyr give him his self-fighting sword as a gift for doing so. (Not to mention to get him past all the dangers he would face on his quest into Jotunheim.) Freyr gladly did so, trading the sword to acquire the woman he desired, not caring that he would lack the great weapon when the Gods fought for their lives during Ragnarök.

Skirnir found his way to Gerd's home, but wooing her proved difficult. In the end, he had to threaten Gerd with a curse that she would never know any love but that of a hideous, three-headed giant of Helheim if she refused Freyr's proposal. Gerd finally agreed to meet Freyr in the pine-forest of Barri. When she saw the handsomest of the Vanir, she was as smitten with Freyr as he was with her. Since then, they have been one of the happiest couples in Asgard.

Slapstick: The Marriage of Skadi

Freyr wasn't the only God to dally with a giantess, but the myths tell of only one other marriage. After the death of her father, Thjazi, the giant's daughter Skadi came to Asgard seeking revenge. Instead of fighting Skadi, the Aesir offered to pay compensation. Skadi refused gold, for she had inherited all the wealth she wanted from her grandfather, the giant Olvaldi. Instead, she demanded that the Aesir relive her grief by making her laugh and giving her a husband.

Loki undertook the first challenge. He tied one end of a rope around his genitals and the other end to a billy goat 's beard. The goat, understandably, tried to get away. When the rope between them tightened, the goat bleated and Loki shrieked and gasped in pain. As Skadi watched the goat try to get away without pulling too hard on its beard, with Loki scrambling to keep up, she cracked a smile. When the rope finally broke and Loki pitched forward into her lap, Skadi laughed.

The Aesir also agreed to let Skadi marry one of them, with one condition: She would have to choose her husband only by looking at his feet. The Gods lined up behind a curtain with only their bare feet showing. Skadi chose the handsomest feet along the line, thinking she surely had chosen the handsome young Baldur as her husband. Instead, her choice gained her marriage to Njord, the elderly lord of the Vanir. After the marriage, to further please Skadi, Odin placed Thjazi's eyes in the heavens, where they became stars.

The marriage didn't work out. First the couple tried living at Njord's shipyard home of Noatun, but Skadi disliked the damp and the sound of the waves and gulls. Then they tried living in Skadi's mountain fortress of Thrymheim, but Njord disliked the cold and the howling of the winds and wolves about the place. They agreed to alternate, nine days each in Noatun and Thrymheim, but Skadi spent more and more time in the cold, dark mountains of Jotunheim, running on her snowshoes and hunting the wolves and bears. At last, they agreed that the marriage just didn't work and separated permanently.

Skadi remained on good terms with the Aesir, though, for after the death of Baldur she will set the snake that drops poison on Loki's face. The stories do not say how Skadi feels about so torturing the God who once made her laugh.



Loyalty: Tyr and the Fenris Wolf

In Jotunheim, Loki sired three children on the giantess Angrboda: Hel, the Fenris Wolf and the Midgard Serpent. When Odin learned from prophecy that Loki's progeny would be the death of the Aesir—literally—Odin sent the Gods to bring them out of Jotunheim. Odin consigned Hel to Niflheim but gave her rule over that realm and the dead. He cast the Midgard Serpent into the sea, where it continued to grow so huge that it wrapped across the land. It lies there biting its own tail.

Odin kept the Fenris Wolf in Asgard, and only Tyr dared to feed the beast. Fenris kept growing, and soon all the Gods feared the prophecies that the great beast would be their doom. So they set about to chain him.

First they challenged Fenris to test his strength against a strong chain they called Laeding. The wolf snapped the fetter with ease. Undaunted, the Aesir brought forth a second, even stronger chain called Dromi. They played upon Fenris' pride, claiming that if he could break this mighty fetter, he would be renowned throughout the Nine Worlds for his strength. Fenris believed the chain was indeed stronger, but he wanted the fame the Aesir promised. With some trepidation, he allowed the Gods to place the chain upon him. The Aesir held their breath as Fenris struggled fiercely against Dromi. It broke too, scattering its fragments afar.

In desperation, Odin sent Freyr's shield-man, Skirnir, to the dwarves. The dwarves forged a fetter called Gleipnir from the sound of a cat's footfall, a woman's beard, the roots of a rock, a bear's sinews, a fish's breath and a bird's spittle. Though the dwarves assured Skirnir of the fetter's strength, it looked like nothing more than a silken ribbon.

The Gods took the band to an island called Lyngvi and summoned the Fenris Wolf to them. They showed him the ribbon and asked him to try to break it. This time, Fenris got suspicious. He said he would let the Aesir tie the ribbon around him if one of them would agree to place his hand in his mouth as a show of faith that the Gods would release him if the binding held. Without hesitation, Tyr stepped forward and placed his right hand between the wolf's jaws

Appeased, the Fenris Wolf allowed the Gods to bind him. When he strained against the ribbon, it hardened and became even stronger. The more Fenris struggled, the tighter and stronger it held him. The Aesir laughed at the sight of his struggling, all happy they had finally found something that could hold him.

Tyr did not laugh, for the angered Fenris bit off his hand. He did not complain either. Through his sacrifice, he had delayed the Doom of the Gods.

Thereafter, the Aesir took the end of Gleipnir and passed it through a massive stone. Satisfied that Fenris wouldn't go anywhere, they thrust a sword into the Fenris Wolf's mouth so he couldn't close his jaws and bite at his bindings. He is held there to this day, thrashing to free himself, while slaver runs from his mouth to form the river Van.

Heroic Legends and Legendary Weapons

These legends recount the deeds of mortal or near-mortal heroes among the ancient Norse and Germanic peoples. The World has changed a great deal since the time of these heroes, but Fate might send modern Scions of the Aesir into similar situations. These tales also illustrate the importance of named weapons, which carry their own considerable weight of legend. Anyone who claims such a weapon might Fatebind himself to become part of the weapon's ongoing legend and abide by certain rules that form the price for the weapon's power.

Battle of the Hjadnings

King Hogni had a daughter named Hild. When King Hogni went abroad for a meeting of kings, his neighbor King Hedin Hjarrandason sacked Hogni's lands and took Hild captive. As soon as Hogni learned what had happened, he led an army in pursuit of Hedin. By then, Hedin had traveled up to Norway and taken to ship. Hogni and his men followed, setting sail themselves.

Hogni caught up to Hedin off the island of Haey in the Orkneys. Hild came to her father and offered up Hedin's terms of peace, but her father did not want to reconcile with Hedin. Instead, the kings landed their armies on Haey and set forth to do battle. Once again, Hedin tried to make peace, offering Hogni a mound of gold. Hogni replied, "It is too late. I have already drawn the sword Dainsleif, forged in the smithy of the dwarves. Each time it is bared, some man must lose his life; its stroke can never be arrested; and the wounds it makes are never healed."

Hedin replied that while Hogni might boast about his sword, that did not mean he could boast about victory, for the sword still had to succeed for its master. Then the two kings fought the battle that would become called the Battle of Hjadnings. They fought all day and retired to their ships to rest at night. In the middle of the night, Hild went out upon the battlefield and used her magic to bring all the fallen warriors back to life.

The next morning, the kings' battle began anew, re-supplied with men from the previous day's slaughter. As evening fell, each weapon and each body left on the field turned to stone. Each morning, the dead rose and picked up their weapons and re-entered the fight.

Thus do the warriors on both sides continue their eternal fight to this day. And thus will they fight until the coming of Ragnarök.

Sigmund

Some of the Norse sagas exist in only one form. The *Volsung Saga* of Sigmund and his son Sigurd is not one of them. The following tales are a compromise between the *Volsung Saga* itself, written by an unknown author, and a collection of earlier poems (some of them fragmentary) that tell somewhat different versions of the story.

Sigmund was the son of King Volsung and his wife Ljod, a valkyrie. He was the eldest and strongest of Volsung's 10 sons, and he excelled in sports and battle alike.

King Volsung also had a daughter named Signy. Volsung promised Signy's hand in marriage to King Siggeir of Gautland, against Signy's will. During their wedding feast in King Volsung's great hall, an old, one-eyed man—Odin in disguise—entered the hall and plunged a sword into the tree called the Stem of the Children, which stood in the middle of the hall. Odin then said to the attendees that he who could draw the sword out of the tree could have it for himself, and he would find that he had never laid eyes on a better sword. With that, the old man departed.

All the guests then tried to draw the sword, but none could release it from the tree. Sigmund tried, and he pulled it out at once. He held it aloft, and all the men in the hall agreed it was a very fine sword. King Siggeir admired it so much that he offered Sigmund three times the sword's weight in gold. Sigmund reminded Siggeir that he could have tried pulling the sword out himself. This reply enraged King Siggeir, who deeply envied Sigmund's feat. He began plotting against Sigmund.

When Siggeir left the next day, he invited Sigmund, Volsung and Sigmund's nine brothers to visit the newlyweds in Gautland three months later. Before Signy and Siggeir left, Signy told her father that she foresaw only misfortune coming from their wedding. Volsung refused to listen to her misgivings and sent her on her way.

When the Volsungs arrived in Gautland, Siggeir's warriors attacked them, killing Volsung and capturing his sons. Siggeir planned to kill them, but Signy begged her husband to spare her brothers and bind them in the forest instead. Siggeir did so but allowed his old mother, a skilled sorceress, to visit them in wolf form. Every few nights, Siggeir's mother killed one of the brothers and devoured his body until only Sigmund remained.

Signy had a watchman keep her informed about her brothers. She had the servant smear honey on Sigmund's face. When the old werewolf visited him the

next night, the wolf smelled the honey and lapped it from his face. When she reached his mouth, Sigmund seized her tongue between his teeth and tore it out so she bled to death. Sigmund then was able to escape and hide in the forest, though Siggeir believed him dead.

Signy came out to visit her brother. She told him to build a house in the forest, where she would bring him what he needed to survive and to gain his revenge for their family.

Signy bore two sons to Siggeir. When the oldest was 10 years old, she sent him into the forest to help Sigmund. Sigmund gave the boy a sack of meal and asked him to knead bread for him while he was out. When Sigmund returned, he found the boy had not touched the sack because it wriggled and he feared whatever living thing was inside it. Sigmund informed Signy that the boy lacked the courage to follow through on their plans for revenge. Signy told her brother to kill the boy, which he did.

The next year, Signy sent her second son to Sigmund. This boy, too, feared to perform the task assigned to him, so Sigmund killed him as well. Signy then had a witch exchange likenesses with her. In this disguise, she went to her brother and lay with him for three nights. Nine months later, she gave birth to a strong, handsome son she named Sinfjotli. The boy very much resembled the Volsungs. Signy put Sinfjotli through many tests, which he passed. When Sinfjotli turned 10, she sent him to Sigmund.

Sigmund set the boy to knead dough, as he had the other boys. When Sigmund returned this time, he found that Sinfjotli had already baked the bread. Sigmund asked Sinfjotli if he had not found something living in the meal-sack, and the boy said he had, but he kneaded the dough anyway. Sigmund informed the lad that he had baked a venomous snake into the bread.

Although Sinfjotli passed Sigmund's test, he was still too young to help in Sigmund's revenge, so Sigmund set about teaching the boy how to fight and deal with danger. The two spent several summers as robbers. In one of their travels, they came across two sleeping princes in a house. The princes had gold rings and wolf pelts with them. Sigmund and Sinfjotli killed the men and took their treasures and pelts. When they donned the wolf skins, they transformed into wolves for nine days and returned to their human forms on the tenth. They spent some time roving Siggeir's lands as wolves, causing what harm they could while in the king's domains. When they finally grew tired of this game, they burned the skins and returned to their normal pursuits. While all this was going on, Signy had two more sons by Siggeir.

At last, Sigmund and Sinfjotli made their way to Siggeir's hall to avenge the murdered Volsungs. They hid in an anteroom of the house and waited for night to fall, but Signy's two young children spotted the men and rushed to tell their father. Siggeir did not believe the boys, so he did nothing at first. Signy then took the "lying" children down to the anteroom and asked Sigmund to kill them as he had her other children. This time Sigmund refused to do so. Sinfjotli killed them instead and threw their bodies out into the hall, where their father found them.

This was not the brightest move for the two avengers. Siggeir's soldiers overpowered the two. The king ordered Sigmund and Sinfjotli to be bound on a slab and buried alive. Just before the earth covered the two, Signy threw an armful of straw to Sinfjotli. Inside the bundle she had hidden Sigurd's sword, which could easily cut through stone. Together, Sigmund and Sinfjotli freed themselves from the stone, their bonds and the grave Siggeir had planned for them.

Once freed, Sigmund and Sinfjotli went to the king's hall and set it on fire. Sigmund tried to get Signy to flee the fire, but she would not go. She replied, "I have done all in my power to end the days of Siggeir. Now I will die with him as gladly as I once lived with him unwillingly." Signy then kissed Sigmund and their son and went into the flames to die with her husband and his retinue.

Sigmund and Sinfjotli left Gautland and set sail to the kingdom of the Volsungs, where Sigmund regained his rightful crown. Sigmund ruled for many years as a mighty and famous king.

In his later years, Sigmund courted Hjordis, the daughter of a powerful king named Eylimi. Another king, Lyngvi, also wanted to marry Hjordis. Eylimi let his daughter choose her husband, and she chose the more famous Sigmund despite his age. Sigmund wedded Hjordis and took her to his kingdom.

King Lyngvi did not accept this turn of events. He marched his army against Sigmund and challenged him to battle. Sigmund accepted the challenge, but he sent Hjordis and her handmaiden to safety in a nearby forest before taking the field.

Sigmund fought bravely in battle, and no man could defeat him. Then, a one-eyed man in a broad-rimmed hat and blue cloak approached him. In his hand he carried a spear, and he advanced with the weapon on Sigmund. The old man easily parried Sigmund's blows and split Sigmund's fine sword in two. After his sword broke, the battle turned against Sigmund and his warriors. Sigmund and King Eylimi fell, as did many of their men. King Lyngvi rushed to find Hjordis at Sigmund's hall, but he couldn't find her. Instead, he took Sigmund's realm as part of his own and returned to his own homeland.

That evening after the battle, Hjordis came out of the forest and onto the battlefield. She found the wounded Sigmund, but he told Hjordis he would not live much longer. Sigmund told Hjordis that she was pregnant with his son, a son who would grow to greatness. He asked her to take his broken sword and have it forged anew for his son. The new sword would be called Gram, and his son would perform great deeds with it.

Hjordis remained with Sigmund until he died. Then she took up the sword fragments, exchanged clothes with her handmaiden and made her way on a ship to Denmark. She later married the Danish king, King Hjalprek.

Sigurd Fafnirsbane

Sigurd's story forms the second part of the *Volsung Saga*. As with the story of Sigmund, there are other versions of the story, where the main characters appear under different names and with different relationships, but the core of the legend remains: a dragon, a ring, a magic helm, treacherous and tangled love, murder and revenge.

Sigmund's widow, Hjordis, bore a son she named Sigurd. Sigurd grew up in the court of his stepfather, King Hjalprek of Denmark, to become a tall and powerful young man as his father had been. In time, though, Sigurd was fostered to a cunning smith named Regin who knew rune-magic as well as smith-craft and combat... and we interrupt this legend for a flashback to another legend of the Aesir.

The Otter's Ransom

Regin was the son of Hreidmar and had two brothers named Oter and Fafnir. They were all powerful magicians. Oter could change shape into an otter and enjoyed passing his time in that form, fishing for salmon in a waterfall that lay near his father's house. This waterfall was known as Andvari's Cataract because the dwarf Andvari, also a shapeshifter, often swam in the waterfall in the form of a pike.

One day Loki, Odin and Hoenir passed the waterfall in their travels and saw the otter—actually Oter—feeding on salmon. Loki threw a stone at the otter and killed it. He then boasted to his fellow Gods that he had killed both the otter and the salmon with one stone. The Gods skinned the otter's pelt and took the salmon with them.

The Gods, taking their catch with them, asked for a night's lodging at Hreidmar's house. Naturally, Loki could not resist showing their host his prize and telling how he gained it. Hreidmar recognized his son's pelt. With his other sons' aid, Hreidmar captured the Gods and bound them.

The Aesir offered Hreidmar a boon of his choosing if he would spare their lives and release them. Hreidmar ordered that they fill the otter's skin with gold and cover its outside with gold as well. Once Hreidmar had their oath, he set them free.

To gain the promised gold, Loki decided to make a net and catch the dwarf Andvari in the waterfall. Loki threatened to kill Andvari unless the dwarf surrendered all his treasures. The dwarf capitulated, handing over all his gold except for one gold ring. The keen-eyed Loki noticed the ring. Andvari pleaded that he could recover all his fortune and more with that ring, but that just made Loki more determined to take it. While Loki examined the ring, Andvari tarried just long enough to curse the golden hoard thus: "The dwarf's gold shall be the death of two brothers and a sign of division to eight athelings; no one shall find joy in the holding of my treasure." Of course, Loki didn't care that the dwarf had cursed the gold, as it was not to be his. Instead, Loki found it amusing that the gold would bring no good to Hreidmar and his remaining sons.

Loki brought back Andvari's gold. The Gods stuffed the otter-skin—which proved to be remarkably stretchy—and heaped gold about it. At last only one whisker showed, and Loki covered it with the last bit of gold... Andvari's ring. The three Gods went on their way, but not before Loki told the family about Andvari's curse.

Regin and Fafnir both asked for a cut of the treasure, but their father refused them. That night, Fafnir killed his sleeping father. Fafnir then took all the gold to a cave on Gnita Heath, along with his magical helmet, the Tarnhelm. There, Fafnir transformed himself into a dragon, the better to guard his treasure. Bereft of his inheritance, Regin went to the court of King Hjalprek to serve as his smith—where he met Sigurd.

Treasure and Treachery

Regin taught the young Sigurd some of his magical secrets, as well as how to be a mighty warrior. He convinced Sigurd that he could win great renown by killing the dragon Fafnir. Of course, Regin didn't say that Fafnir was actually his brother. To help Sigurd in his quest, King Hjalprek gave Sigurd an excellent horse named Grani, who was of Sleipnir's lineage. Regin forged a sword for Sigurd, but the sword broke when the young hero tested it against Regin's anvil. Regin wrought another sword, but it broke too. Then Sigurd's mother gave Regin the two pieces of Sigmund's sword. She commanded him to forge a new sword from the pieces and name the sword Gram. Sigurd tested Gram against the anvil as well, and the sword remained strong and its edge sharp. Regin felt sure that Gram would do well against Fafnir and sent Sigurd off to kill him.

Sigurd agreed to do the task, but first he wanted to seek revenge for his father's death. After receiving counsel from the queen's wise brother Gripir, Sigurd requested men and ships from King Hjalprek, and the king granted Sigurd his every wish.

Sigurd then set sail and eventually found King Lyngvi and the sons of Hunding. Sigurd killed the brothers in battle but took Lyngvi captive. Sigurd cut the ribs from Lyngvi's spine and spread them out, then pulled out Lyngvi's lungs—a form of execution called carving a blood eagle. His revenge complete, Sigurd returned to deal with Fafnir as he had promised his tutor.

Sigurd and Regin made their way to Gnita Heath, where Regin advised Sigurd to dig a great ditch along the path between the dragon's lair and where it drank. Regin then hid himself. As Sigurd dug the trench, a one-eyed old man (guess who) approached him. Odin advised Sigurd to dig a series of trenches instead.



He needed only one trench to lie in wait for Fafnir; he would need the others to catch the serpent's overflowing venom. If he did not take such precautions, the old man said, Sigurd would likely die. Sigurd then realized that Regin might not have his best interests at heart. Sigurd dug the various ditches as directed and hid himself in one of them.

The dragon eventually came forth, spewing venom as the old man had warned and shaking the earth with his bulk. Sigurd stabbed up into Fafnir with Gram, driving the sword in to the hilt. Sigurd then sprang out of hiding to finish off Fafnir.

Fafnir already knew that Sigurd had fatally wounded him. He tried to get Sigurd to reveal his name. Sigurd hesitated at first, so Fafnir taunted him with accusations of cowardice until Sigurd angrily named himself. Thereupon, Fafnir repeated the curse the dwarf had placed upon the gold, and he died.

While Sigurd stood wiping Fafnir's blood from his sword, Regin emerged from hiding. He asked Sigurd if he might have his brother's heart as payment for his brother's death, and Sigurd let Regin cut it from Fafnir's body. While Regin slept, Sigurd cooked the heart on a spit as Regin asked. At one point, Sigurd touched the heart with his finger to see if it was done, and burned himself. Sigurd put his burned finger in his mouth to cool it—and when Fafnir's blood touched his tongue, Sigurd gained the power to understand the birds singing around him. The birds warned Sigurd that Regin planned to betray him and take all the gold for himself. He would be wise to kill Regin and eat Fafnir's heart himself.

Sigurd beheaded the sleeping Regin. He then ate the dragon's heart and drank his blood. Once he had done so, the birds told him he should ride to Mount Hindarfjall, where he would find a hall wherein lay a shield-maiden entranced by magic. Sigurd bound two chests of gold to Grani, took Fafnir's magical helm and set off for the mountain.

Love and Learning

When Sigurd reached the mountain, he saw a great light upon it. Drawing closer, he found a stronghold built of shields. Inside he found a fully armored woman lying asleep, just as the birds had said. Sigurd tried to remove the woman's armor, but it held fast to her flesh, and he had to use Gram to cut it from her. The woman then sat up and asked Sigurd who he was. Sigurd told her his name and asked the woman to reveal her own. She called herself Sigrdrifa, a valkyrie. Odin had ensorcelled her with sleep because she had killed a king to whom Odin had promised victory.

At Sigurd's request, the valkyrie taught him the power of all types of runes. She also offered him advice on various situations that he would encounter through his lifetime. Then Sigurd departed.

Sigurd journeyed to the Dales of Lym, where he chanced to see Brynhildr, a shield-maiden and daughter of King Budli and foster-daughter to Heimir. She was so beautiful that Sigurd quickly fell in love with her. When Sigurd courted her, she told him Fate would not allow them to be together, but she would marry him anyway. Sigurd placed the ring of Andvari on her finger.

ONE MAIDEN OR TWO?

This sequence of events is an example of versions of Sigurd's legend diverging. The *Volsung Saga* itself has Sigurd find Brynhildr in the hall of shields and wake her. She teaches him, they pledge their love though they know it to be doomed, Sigurd rides away and… he comes to King Heimir's home, meets Brynhildr again, falls in love and courts her again. Huh?

The older poem, called "The Lay of Sigrdrifa," tells how Sigurd finds and wakes the valkyrie Sigrdrifa. She teaches him, as described here, and then… eight pages of the manuscript are missing. No one knows how the poem ended, or what circumstances led to Sigurd's departure. The *Volsung Saga* author seems to think that Sigrdrifa and Brynhildr were the same person—but then the story makes no sense.

Wife-Swapping

In time, Sigurd had reason to visit King Gjuki, whose lands lay south along the Rhine. Gjuki's children, the Gjukungs (also called Niflungs), were both strong and handsome. The king had several sons and a daughter named Gudrun, while his wife, Grimhild, was skilled at magic. She wanted Sigurd for her son-in-law. Sigurd loved Brynhildr and would not betray her, so Grimhild brewed a magic potion to take away Sigurd's memory. Once she slipped Sigurd the potion, he forgot about Brynhildr and soon came to love Grimhild's daughter, Gudrun. After they married, Sigurd let Gudrun eat the rest of Fafnir's heart, which he still carried with him. After tasting it, Gudrun grew very grim.

Grimhild then ordered her son Gunnar to court Brynhildr. The Gjukungs traveled with Sigurd to the Dales of Lym, where Brynhildr now lived with her foster-father, Heimir. Heimir received Gunnar's request but told him that Brynhildr should choose for herself. Brynhildr said she would only marry the man who could ride to her through a magical ring of fire.

Gunnar rode his horse toward the fire, but his horse would not enter the flames. Sigurd then loaned Gunnar his own horse Grani, who would not recoil from the task, but the horse would not budge for Gunnar. Sigurd and Gunnar then exchanged likenesses by magic. Sigurd-as-Gunnar climbed upon Grani, and the horse carried him through the flames. The two were married that evening and exchanged rings, whereby Sigurd once again came into possession of Andvari's ring. Sigurd left Brynhildr after three nights, and returned his visage to his own. Brynhildr later gave birth to Sigurd's daughter Anslaug, whom she gave to Heimir to foster. Some time later, Brynhildr traveled to the lands of the Gjukungs to be with Gunnar.

The Curse Fulfilled

One day Gudrun and Brynhildr went wading in the Rhine to wash their hair. Brynhildr waded out farther than Gudrun, teasing her that she had the braver husband and so she need not wash her own hair in Gudrun's rinsings. Gudrun then waded out past her, saying that no man was braver than her own Sigurd Fafnirsbane. Brynhildr chided her, saying that the braver deed was riding through the flames to her, and that deed even Sigurd had feared to perform. At this point, Gudrun told Brynhildr how her brother had not really braved the flames. She held up the ring of Andvari to prove this fact. Brynhildr recognized the ring and realized Gudrun spoke the truth, but she held her tongue.

Over the next few days, Brynhildr remained silent and downcast. Her sister-in-law approached her to find out what was behind her mood, and Brynhildr told her that Sigurd should have been hers, but she had been deceived. Brynhildr then retreated to her bed for some time. Gunnar tried to get Brynhildr to tell him what troubled her. Brynhildr would not, so Gunnar sent Sigurd to speak to her. While with Brynhildr, Sigurd confessed his love to her. He even promised to rid himself of Gudrun so that he could marry her instead. Brynhildr would not listen to him. Instead, she decided that Sigurd must die, so that neither she nor Gudrun could have him.

Brynhildr entreated her husband to kill Sigurd, but Gunnar could not because of the oaths he had sworn to Sigurd. Still, that didn't stop Gunnar from persuading the youth Guttorm to kill Sigurd in his stead. Guttorm went to Sigurd's bedchamber and stabbed him in the side with his sword. Sigurd awakened at the wound and threw Gram at Guttorm, splitting him in two. Sigurd then fell dead.

Brynhildr laughed mightily upon hearing of Sigurd's death, while Gudrun wept. Brynhildr still loved Sigurd as much as she hated him, however, and she could not stand to live without him. Before Brynhildr killed herself on a sword, she asked Gunnar to burn her beside Sigurd on a pyre and to cover it with splendid shields, garments, jewels and thralls, so that Sigurd might go out proudly as befit a hero.

The *Volsung Saga* goes on to tell the fate of Gudrun and Sigurd's children. They all died tragically, except for Anslaug. She married another hero, Ragnar Lódbrek, who became the ancestor of the ancient kings of Norway.

Another View: Siegfried and the Nibelungs

The Germans recorded their own version of the Volsung legends in a well-known heroic poem called the *Nibelungenlied*, written about AD 1200, the poem included Christian knights and medieval pageantry.

Does that make the *Nibelungenlied* "wrong"? Of course not! Fate and Legend don't care about what people really did. Different versions of the *Volsung Saga* disagree too. The power of Fate might guide Scions into any version—including newer versions such as Richard Wagner's *Ring of the Nibelungs,* or even the recent TV mini-series *Dark Kingdom*. Through their actions, Scions caught up in a recapitulation of the myth create a new version, which is just as valid as any of the ones that came before.

In this *Nibelungenlied*, Sigurd is called Siegfried. He was the son of Sigmund and Queen Sigelind. Siegfried distinguished himself in his youth through many dangerous deeds, including the slaying of a dragon named Fafnir. After killing the creature, he bathed himself in the dragon's blood. This made Siegfried's body immune to all wounds... except for one small spot, where a leaf had clung to him during his bath of blood.

Siegfried conquered King Nibelung and took for himself the king's treasure, including the sword Balmung and a hat of invisibility taken from the dwarf Alberich. Siegfried then went to the city of Worms, where Gunther, King of the Burgundians, held court. While there, Siegfried heard of the great beauty of the king's sister, Kriemhild, and he asked Gunther for her hand in marriage. King Gunther treated Siegfried with kindness, but he did not let Siegfried marry his sister. Indeed, he did not let Siegfried even see Kriemhild for the entire year he spent in Worms.

Then a war broke out. Siegfried's valor led to the Burgundians' victory. At the victory banquet, Siegfried finally caught sight of Kriemhild and found her as beautiful as he had heard. Siegfried knew he could not hope to win her, but he stayed in Worms just the same.

Not long afterward, King Gunther received news of another marvelous beauty, queen Brunhild of Iceland. The rumors said she would marry no man who could not pass her trials of strength, and she had put many a suitor to death after he failed such tests. Gunther wanted to court Brunhild, but he did not believe he could pass her tests. He asked Siegfried for help. Siegfried saw an opportunity to marry Kriemhild. He promised to help the king if Gunther promised him Kriemhild in return.

Gunther and Siegfried then traveled to Iceland. When Queen Brunhild saw Siegfried, whose fame had already reached her ears, she was delighted. Then she learned that Siegfried was only serving as vassal for King Gunther, who had come to claim her hand. Siegfried stayed at the king's side through all the trials, invisible. With Siegfried's help, the king achieved victory.

Siegfried and Gunther planned to marry their brides in Worms. Brunhild demanded one more feat of strength from Gunther. Once more, Gunther received help from the invisible Siegfried and took the queen's ring. Siegfried then returned home to his own kingdom with Kriemhild as his bride.

Brunhild, who thought Siegfried was her husband's vassal, was surprised to learn that Siegfried owed no feudal obligations. She suspected something was afoot, so she had Gunther invite Siegfried and Kriemhild to visit them in Worms. While on their way to church one day, the two queens argued about who had the right of precedence in their proceedings. Kriemhild then taunted Brunhild, and revealed that Siegfried had, in fact, won her hand for Gunther. She showed Brunhild her stolen ring as proof of her words.

Shamed by the trickery played upon her, Brunhild plotted her revenge. She persuaded Hagen, a kinsman and one of Gunther's chief vassals, to kill Siegfried.

Hagen tricked Kriemhild into thinking he wanted to help protect Siegfried. She revealed the once vulnerable spot on her husband's body. When Hagen and Siegfried went hunting in the forest of Odenwald, Hagen waited until Siegfried bent down to drink from a spring. Hagen then stabbed Siegfried with his spear. Gunther witnessed the murder.

Hagen had Siegfried's body laid before Kriemhild's door that night. She soon realized who had slain him. She accused both Hagen and Gunther of her husband's murder, then hid herself in sorrow, never speaking another word to Gunther.

For 13 years, Kriemhild plotted against Gunther and Hagen. She found her chance for revenge when Etzel, king of the Huns, came courting. Kriemhild agreed to marry him. Etzel took Kriemhild to live with him in Hungary. After many years together, Kriemhild convinced Etzel to invite her brother and Hagen to visit them. Though wary, Hagen came. While at Etzel's court, Hagen carried Siegfried's sword and rather foolishly bragged about his murder. Kriemhild convinced her husband's brother Blodel to declare war on the Burgundians. Hagen countered by killing Ortlieb, the queen's son. His act brought all-out war, and a terrible battle ensued. Gunther and Kriemhild's other brothers were put to death, and Kriemhild killed Hagen herself with a thrust of a sword through his chest. Kriemhild did not live to enjoy her revenge, however, for one of her brother's men stabbed her through the heart after she killed Hagen.

Tyrfing

Odin's grandson Svafrlami lay in wait for the dwarves Dulin and Dvalin outside their rock home and cast spells upon them to prevent them from re-entering their stone. Svafrlami threatened to kill them if they did not forge him a sword with a hilt of gold. He asked that the sword never rust, that it cut through iron with ease, and that it always bring him victory.

When Dvalin delivered the sword Tyrfing into Svafrlami's hands, however, he cursed it. The sword would always take a man's life every time it was unsheathed, it would commit three dastardly deeds, and it would be the death of Svafrlami himself. Upon hearing the curses, Svafrlami tried to kill the dwarf, but Dvalin disappeared into the stone.

Svafrlami wielded Tyrfing for many years and won many victories with it. One day, however, a great berserker named Arngrim harried Svafrlami's realm and the two heroes came face to face. Svafrlami tried to strike Arngrim with Tyrfing, but the sword only sliced through the Viking's shield and stuck in the earth. In that moment, Arngrim sliced off Svafrlami's hand and seized Tyrfing. Arngrim cut Svafrlami's body in two from head to foot, fulfilling Dvalin's curse.

Arngrim took Svafrlami's daughter Eyfura and made her his wife, carrying her off to Bolm. They had 12 tall, strong, warlike sons together. The oldest, Angantyr, became the heir of Tyrfing.

Angantyr wanted to marry Ingeborg, the beautiful daughter of King Yngvi of Uppsala. In the summer, he traveled to the king's court and demanded her from the king. Another suitor named Hjalmar the Haughty insisted that he receive Yngvi for the services he had already given. Yngvi told Ingeborg to decide whom she would marry. She chose Hjalmar.

Angantyr then challenged Hjalmar to single combat upon the next summer, choosing the island of Samsey as the place for the duel. In between that year, Angantyr married Svava, daughter of Earl Bjartmar. When the year was up, the two men met on the island to battle as agreed, and Hjalmar brought with him a famous Norse warrior named Orvar-Odd. Angantyr brought with him his 11 brothers. While Hjalmar and Angantyr fought, Orvar-Odd killed the 11 brothers. When he went to see how Hjalmar fared, he found his wounded friend sitting upon a rock with Angantyr dead at his feet. Tyrfing had dealt Hjalmar a mortal wound. Before death overtook him, though, Hjalmar gave his friend a ring to take back to Ingeborg as a sign of his love.

Orvar-Odd buried the berserker brothers in barrows with their weapons and armor, and then carried Hjalmar's body back to Sweden. When Ingeborg saw his body, she died of a broken heart. She was buried in the same mound as her husband.

Meanwhile, Angantyr's wife, Svava, gave birth to a daughter she named Hervor. Svava's father, Earl Bjartmar, took the girl in as his foster child. Hervor grew up to be a headstrong child, and learned to use the sword and shield as a warrior-woman. When she was fully grown, Hervor dressed in men's clothes and took the name Hervard. Journeying with a band of Vikings, she traveled to Samsey to find her father's barrow and to reclaim Tyrfing. Hervor went onto the island alone, for her companions feared the ghosts and spirits said to haunt the place. Although Angantyr's daughter met such evil spirits along the way, she did not let them deter her from her task. She found the barrows and called up her father's ghost with incantations.

Angantyr came at his daughter's summons but did not want to give her the cursed sword. He warned her that it would only bring more death to their lineage. Hervor threatened that the Aesir would not grant Angantyr's soul its desired rest if he did not release the sword to his own daughter, and Angantyr reluctantly gave in. Hervor found the sword lying under Angantyr's shoulders in the barrow, magically aflame. When Hervor held out her hand for it, Tyrfing flew to her. Angantyr repeated his warning, but Hervor assured him that she cared not what fate lay in store for any sons she might have.

Hervor returned to her Viking friends and their ship, but found they had fled in fear of the haunted isle. Later, Hervor found her way to Glaesisvoll. Still disguised as a man, she visited with King Gudmund and played several games of chess with him. During one such match, she laid Tyrfing on a table beside her, and one of the king's men unsheathed it to admire the blade. Because Hervor knew the blade's curses demanded a death once drawn, she took the sword from the man and drove it through his body, killing him.

Despite having killed the man, Hervor left Glaesisvoll without further incident. She joined another Viking band but eventually returned home and settled down to pursue more ladylike pursuits such as needlework and tapestry-making. In the meantime, her beauty's renown spread far and wide. Hofund, son of Gudmund, came to court her and won her as his wife. They had two tall, handsome sons together: one named Heidrek and one named Angantyr for his grandfather. Hofund favored Angantyr, who was gentle and charming, while Hervor loved Heidrek, the malicious one of the two.

One day, Hofund held a banquet and did not invite his son Heidrek. Offended, Heidrek showed up anyway. He incited two guests into an argument that escalated into a duel in which one of the guests killed the other. Hofund accused his son of being an outlaw. Heidrek drew Tyrfing, which his mother had gifted to him, and he killed Angantyr with a quick thrust, performing the first dastardly deed of Dvalin's curse.

Heidrek then fled the banquet hall and joined a Viking band. He became their captain and offered his band's services to Harold of Reidgotaland, a king of the Goths. For the king, he defeated two troublesome earls. Harold rewarded Heidrek's service with his beautiful daughter Helga and half his kingdom. Heidrek and Helga had a son together, whom they named (once again) Angantyr. King Harold's son Halfdan was born about the same time, so the sons were equal in age.

Some years passed, and a famine descended upon Harold's kingdom. The king's wise men asked the Gods what they might do to quell the famine, and they received an answer: They must offer up the most highborn youth of the land as a sacrifice. Of course,

none of Harold's men wanted to offer up his own son as sacrifice, so Harold decreed that Heidrek's son Angantyr was the noblest child among them. Heidrek pointed out to Harold that Halfdan was the more nobly born of the two sons. Harold disliked this logic, so he told Heidrek to allow his father, Hofund, to make the choice.

Heidrek then visited his father, and Hofund told him that Angantyr was the one who should be sacrificed. At the same time, Hofund advised him of a way to avoid the sacrifice altogether.

When Heidrek returned home, he told King Harold he would offer his Angantyr as a sacrifice if every other man in Harold's retinue would swear fealty to himself. The king allowed his men to do so, and Heidrek then used the men to sow dissension between the king and Halfdan. He also advised the king that a better appeasement to Odin would be to offer up the king, Halfdan and a number of his men as sacrifice. A battle ensued, and Heidrek killed his kinsman Halfdan with Tyrfing, performing the second dastardly deed prophesied in Dvalin's curse. Heidrek offered Harold and Halfdan's blood as a sacrifice to Odin and dedicated all those slain that day to him as well. Upon learning of her husband's despicable deeds against her family, Helga hanged herself.

Heidrek then took over the reign of all Harold's kingdom. He attacked many neighboring countries. He defeated King Humli of the Huns and took his daughter Sifka as his mistress. She bore Heidrek a son called Lod. Heidrek created laws and appointed 12 sages to sit in judgment of crimes. He also decreed that any man might escape the sages' proscribed punishment if he could stump the king with riddles.

A man named Gestumblindi was summoned before the sages to receive punishment for offending the king. Gestumblindi made a sacrifice to Odin to save him from his fate. Odin appeared before him and promised to help Gestumblindi by appearing before Heidrek in his place. Odin took the man's likeness and came before Heidrek for the contest of riddles. Odin then put forth a number of riddles about nature and divinity, but Heidrek was wise and answered them all.

As a final riddle, Odin-as-Gestumblindi asked the king what words Odin had whispered to Balder on his funeral pyre. Heidrek became angered, and responded, "No man knows your words but yourself alone, wretched, malevolent spirit." He then drew Tyrfing and would have struck Odin, but the God turned into a falcon and the sword cut off only a part of his tail. Before he flew away, Odin cursed Heidrek, telling him that his most miserable thralls would bring about his death.

Not long afterward, nine of Heidrek's thralls broke into his bedchamber and slew him with his own sword, Tyrfing, completing the third dastardly deed of the sword's curse, thereby lifting it.

Heidrek's son Angantyr chased down the thralls and killed them, avenging his father's death. He took Tyrfing for his own and kingship of the Goths. When his half-Hun half-brother Lod learned of Heidrek's death, he came to Angantyr to claim half his father's kingdom as his own. Angantyr refused to relinquish half his inheritance to a bastard son of a slave-girl but offered Lod riches instead. Humiliated, Lod returned to battle Angantyr with a Hun army at the Heaths of Dun. On the battlefield, the Huns outnumbered the Goths two to one, but more Goths joined Angantyr's ranks as the day went by. By evening, Angantyr gained the upper hand, and he strode forth with Tyrfing and killed Lod and his Hun grandfather, Humli. So many Huns died that day that their bodies choked the rivers, damming them.

So ends the legend of Tyrfing... or maybe not. (See **Scion: Hero**, p. 167.)

Wayland

In Finland were three princes: Slagfinn, Egil and Wayland. One day, they went out on their skis to hunt in a place called the Wolf Dales. In time, the three brothers decided to build themselves a house in the Wolf Dales, beside the Wolf Lake. One morning thereafter, they chanced upon three beautiful women sitting on the lake's shoreline and weaving linen. Beside the women lay swan-feather cloaks, so the brothers knew them to be valkyries. They took the three women home and made them their wives.

Slagfinn married Ladgunn Swanwhite, and Egil wedded Olrun; these were both daughters of King Lodvi. Wayland took Hervor Allwise, daughter of King Kiar of Valland, as his wife. The couples lived together in harmony for seven years. Eventually, though, a yearning for battle overcame the three valkyries and they flew away one day when the brothers left them alone.

When the brothers returned home, they learned their wives had deserted them. Egil and Slagfinn immediately left in search of their wives, but Wayland stayed home in the Wolf Dales to wait for his wife to return. In the meantime, he busied himself forging magnificent rings of precious stones and gold in his smithy. Word of his craftsmanship reached the ears of Nidud, the evil king of Njarir. The king marched a band of armed men into the Wolf Dales to seize the smith. Wayland was out hunting when they arrived, but the war band discovered 700 golden rings strung along a rope in his smithy. Nidud took one of them and waited for Wayland to return home.

Wayland came home with some bear's meat and set about roasting it. While it cooked, he counted his rings. When he discovered one missing, he thought that Hervor must have returned and taken it. His heart lightened. Tired, he sat down and fell asleep. He woke up not to his wife, but to heavy shackles placed on his hands and feet.

Wayland demanded to know who had captured him. Nidud revealed himself and accused Wayland of seizing his treasures and hiding them in the Wolf Dales,

but Wayland retorted that the rings were his by right as he had made them himself. Nidud's response was to take Wayland's own sword and to carry off the prince-smith to his court in Njarir. Once there, the king gave the stolen ring to his daughter Bodvild.

Nidud's queen did not like the situation. She saw the way Wayland's eyes glittered like a serpent's whenever he caught sight of his sword or the ring on Bodvild's finger. She warned her husband that no good would come of his capture. She begged Nidud to sever Wayland's tendons and strand him on the island of Saevarstead.

Nidud had his men do as his wife suggested. The men severed Wayland's sinews at the knees, and they left him at a forge on the island, so that he could continue to make precious items for the king. Only Nidud was allowed to visit him there.

Wayland whiled away his time on the island at the forge. While his hands worked night and day, his mind sought a way to gain vengeance against the king.

It happened one day that the king's two sons broke their father's rule and came to the island to see Wayland's handiwork. Wayland opened a chest to show them the magnificent items of his creation, and the sons were duly impressed. Seeing a means for his revenge, Wayland promised the sons they could have all the treasure if they would return in secret upon the next day. The sons did so, telling no one of their travels. The next day, Wayland once more opened the chest to show them his riches. While the two princes leaned over to examine the fine items, Wayland smashed the heavy lid onto their necks, chopping off their heads.

Wayland hid the king's sons' bodies beneath his smithy's floorboards. He plated their skulls with silver and sent them to the king for drinking vessels. He placed their eyeballs in jeweled ornaments for the queen and made fancy brooches from their teeth for Bodvild.

Another chance for revenge came when Bodvild cracked the stolen ring her father had given her. Not wanting her father to know that she had broken the treasure, she set off in secret to the island to have Wayland fix it for her. He promised to do so, treating her kindly while she waited for him to repair it. Wayland was so kind and gentle that she did not suspect any treachery when he offered her a drink. The drink was drugged. Bodvild fell asleep and Wayland raped her.

Wayland then donned a feathered cloak and flew into Nidud's courtyard, where he found Nidud sitting and brooding over the fate of his sons. Having divined that Wayland had killed them, the king confronted Wayland in the courtyard. Wayland not only admitted that he killed them, he boasted how he fashioned their skulls into drinking cups and made jewelry from their eyes and teeth. He then told how he had drugged Bodvild and dishonored her on the island.

Wayland revealed all to the king, happy that he had finally gained his revenge. Instead of attacking the king, he laughed at the king's misery and flew away, leaving the king to stew at his inability to stop his escape.

Beowulf

The Anglo-Saxon epic poem *Beowulf* begins with the story of King Hrothgar of Denmark. Hrothgar won many honors in battle and wanted to share his wealth with his supporters, so he built a magnificent feasting hall adorned with gold and named it Herot. In due time, Herot was completed and the king held great banquets for his people within and gifted them with treasures as he had promised.

For some time, Hrothgar's people enjoyed peace and prosperity. One night, however, a monster from the fens came to Hrothgar's hall. As Hrothgar's men lay sleeping off the strong drink of their celebrations, the creature (named Grendel) slew 30 of Hrothgar's men and took the slain warriors to his lair for his own horrid feast. The morning light revealed the slaughter to the Danes, and a great lament went up among the people. Seeing the creature's footprints, Hrothgar knew what had befallen his men.

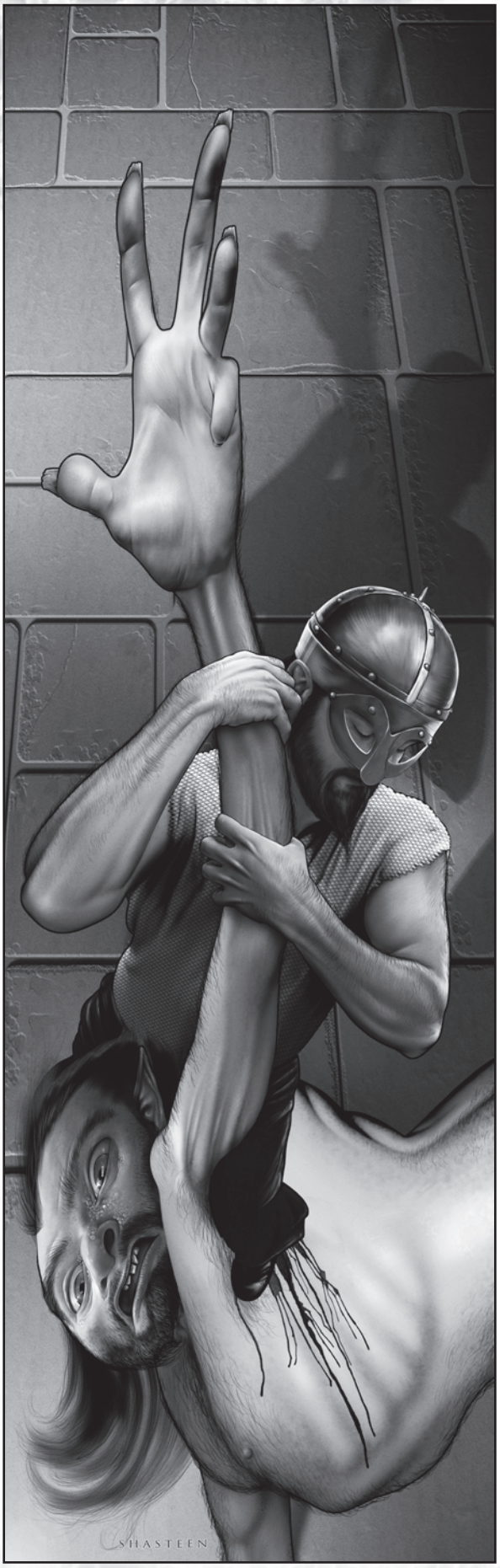
The next night, Grendel attacked again, and he killed many more of Hrothgar's men. Thereafter, the king's people deserted Herot, fearing too much for their own lives if they should come near it. For 12 long winters, the hall stood abandoned. That didn't stop Grendel. The monster hunted and killed throughout the king's lands. He prowled their moors, ambushed the young and the old, and slept in the deserted Herot on cloudless nights.

The tale of Hrothgar's woes reached the land of the Geats, in what is now Sweden. A young warrior of the Geats named Beowulf, said to be as strong as 30 men and already renowned among his own people for great deeds, begged his own king for permission to help Hrothgar. Beowulf set sail for Denmark with 14 thanes. One of Hrothgar's men, a watchman, confronted the armored men as they marched toward his king's lands. When the Geats said they had come to help Hrothgar defeat the monster who harried his lands, the watchman quickly led them to Herot. Hrothgar then granted Beowulf and his men leave to remain in the great hall to take on the creature. If Beowulf killed the beast, Hrothgar would give him all he desired.

When the Geats fell asleep in Herot, Grendel crept down from the moors and entered the hall. Beowulf, however, only feigned sleep. He watched the monster to see how he would attack. Grendel seized one of the sleeping Geats, bit into him, drank his blood and then devoured his entire body.

Grendel then spied Beowulf and tried to grab him, but Beowulf was faster. With his great strength, he managed to wrestle the monster. Beowulf's men leapt up with their swords and rushed to help their leader, but the monster was bespelled against weapons. The swords could not penetrate Grendel's skin.

Beowulf did not need a weapon to kill Grendel. He fought the monster with his bare hands. After a long



battle, Beowulf ripped Grendel's arm from his body at the shoulder. The mortally wounded Grendel fled from the hall and returned to his fens to die.

The next night, the Danes and Geats celebrated with a great feast in Herot. Hrothgar rewarded his victorious guest with weapons and great treasures for freeing them from the terror of Grendel. The feast went late into the night, and many warriors fell asleep in the hall afterward, no longer afraid of monsters.

But they should have been. Grendel had not been the only monster in the fens. His mother lived there too. That very night, Grendel's mother crept into Herot to seek her revenge. She was not as stealthy as her son, and several warriors woke up and began donning armor and grabbing weapons as fast as they could. Grendel's mother did not want to meet the same fate as her son, so she grabbed the closest sleeping warrior and fled with him. The warrior she killed that night was Hrothgar's favorite retainer, Aeschere.

Beowulf and his men tracked Grendel's mother to her lair beneath an eerie lake. Just before Beowulf entered the water to seek her out, his comrade Unferth gave him an iron sword with a long hilt, called Hrunting. With the sword in hand, Beowulf dove into the lake. Grendel's mother soon attacked him, but Beowulf's mail coat saved him from her blows. Frustrated by her inability to harm the armored warrior, Grendel's mother dragged him to the bottom of the lake and into her cavern lair, where rested the bones of many men. Hero and monster fought long inside the cavern. Beowulf swung an excellent blow at the monster's head with Hrunting, but the sword failed to bite through her flesh—she too knew magic. He realized that he would have to fight her as he had her son: with his hands alone. Beowulf threw down the sword and advanced on Grendel's mother. She stabbed at Beowulf with a dagger, but his armor protected him once again.

Beowulf then spied a giant-sized, double-edged sword among the monster's treasures. The sword was so large that only a man of Beowulf's strength could heft it. He grabbed the sword and landed a mighty blow across the monster's neck. The sword sank through, beheading Grendel's mother, ending the reign of terror for the Danes.

Beowulf returned to the land of the Geats. In time, he fought a dragon and became king of his people. Great as were the golden treasures he won through his deeds, greater still was his honor and fame as one of the bravest and noblest heroes of the North.



RUNES OF WISDOM

CHAPTER TWO

The core trilogy of **Scion: Hero**, **Scion: Demigod** and **Scion: God** supplies a wealth of Knacks and Boons and representative samples of relics and spells. Nevertheless, there's always room for more. This chapter supplies additional Knacks and Boons for **Scion** characters, including two entire new Purviews. While these powers are particularly appropriate for characters connected to Norse myth, any Scion may learn them. Players and Storytellers also receive new spells inspired by the magic described in Norse legends and folklore, with a special discussion of runes and other mysteries of Norse magic. A selection of new relics tailored for Aesir characters rounds out the chapter.

New Knacks

The following new Epic Attribute Knacks are particularly appropriate for Aesir Scions. Unless otherwise noted, however, Scions of any pantheon can learn these Knacks provided they possess the proper Epic Attributes and any other prerequisites listed.

HOW TO STUNT THE MARVEL WAY

Readers familiar with a certain modern superhero version of Thor might want to try a stunt that enables their characters to "fly" by throwing something (say, a hammer) and holding or fastening themselves to it. Since Gods turn the laws of physics into mere suggestions, there's no reason why this shouldn't work. A Scion with Epic Strength can "fly" as far as he can throw his own weight combined with the weight of the item he threw.

The problems are landing and aiming. If someone throws you a mile—even if that someone is yourself—landing is going to hurt. A Scion with enough Epic Stamina might not care. A Scion with Epic Dexterity could reduce or negate any crash damage with another well-described stunt. Certain Boons that prevent falling damage (such as Sky's Grace) would likewise counter any harm from landing. Even so, trying to "fly" to exactly where you want to go calls for a (Dexterity + Thrown) roll with a difficulty based on range, visibility and any other factors the Storyteller considers appropriate—but at least difficulty 3. Scions who fail such rolls or who are simply not sturdy enough to survive this form of travel could find themselves killed, seriously injured or (at least) way off course.

Then again, if you can pull it off, it looks really cool.

Epic Strength

Hang On

This Knack allows the Scion to plant her feet, tighten her muscles or otherwise commit to performing a feat of strength for an extended period of time. By spending a point of Legend to activate the Knack, the Scion can extend this feat for a maximum number of days equal to her Legend rating. As long as she continues this specific feat of strength, she ignores hunger, thirst, exhaustion and other factors that might otherwise interrupt her. Without this Knack, a Scion cannot possibly continue a feat of strength longer than a single scene.

A Scion can use this Knack to hold up any weight she can lift or keep a creature that's fastened to a rope or line from getting away. By tightening her neck muscles, she could even hang by her neck without suffocating. The Scion must stay virtually immobile, however. A Scion could keep a mine from caving in, hang from a noose for days or drag a chained beast slowly toward her, but she could not run, jump or perform most combat actions. A Scion is still limited by her normal and Epic Strength ratings, though she can perform feats at the top of her capabilities for days using this Knack. If she lacks Epic Stamina Knacks such as Holy Fortitude, though, she will probably collapse in helpless exhaustion the moment she finally ends the feat of strength.

Epic Dexterity

Fast As Thought

Prerequisite Knack: Lightning Sprinter (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 127)

A Scion who possesses this Knack becomes extraordinarily fleet of foot. She can outrun nearly anything that lacks divinely empowered speed and has a good chance of winning most races against such opponents as well. This Knack doubles the distance she can cover in a Dash action, after calculating the bonus for Epic Dexterity and the prerequisite Knack. Her long term running speed is similarly increased, allowing her to cross large distances on foot quickly.

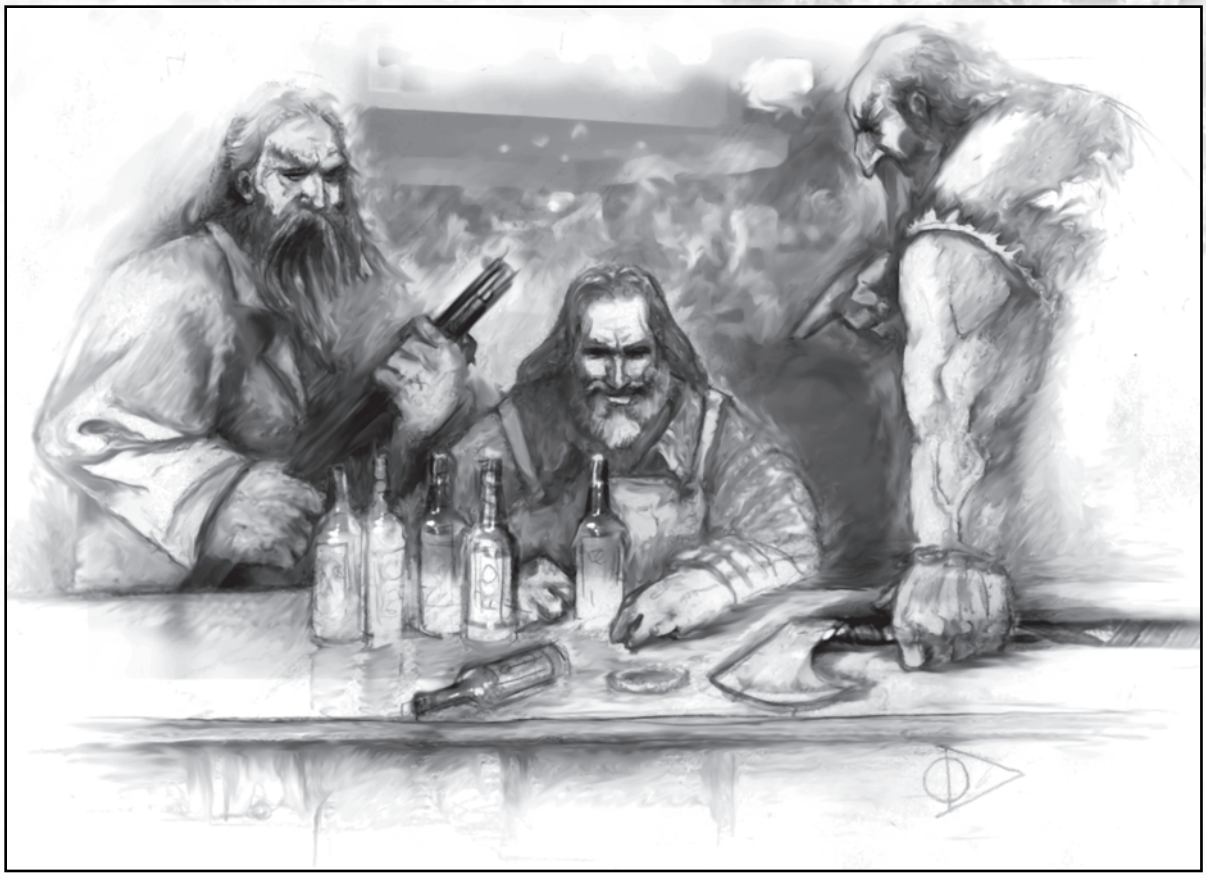
In addition, the Scion's prodigious speed enables her to defy gravity for short periods. She can run across short gaps, up steep inclines and even over low walls without pause. With this knack, a Scion can traverse any incline of less than 60 degrees for any distance and travel up a wall or across a gap of (Legend x 5) feet. She must already be running to traverse these obstacles. If she should slow down or stop, she falls or otherwise cannot scale the wall or pass the obstacle. Activating this Knack costs one point of Legend, and its effects last one scene.

Epic Stamina

Raise Your Glass

A Scion with this Knack isn't just a power drinker, he takes power from drink. Once per scene, the Scion can restore a spent Legend point by downing a single serving of alcohol: a shot of hard liquor, a bottle or can of beer, a large glass of wine or a flagon of mead, for instance. To gain the Legend, the Scion must down the drink quickly and with at least a bit of flair. Nursing a beer for an hour isn't worth Legend, though downing a pint of ale in one long pull and slamming the tankard down on the bar might be. Effectively, the character must turn drinking into a stunt performed for no purpose except to impress onlookers.

This Knack does not protect the Scion from the normal effects of consuming alcohol, including any drugs or poisons the beverage might contain. In fact, activating this Knack bars a Scion from using his Epic



Stamina to resist intoxication. Only normal Stamina applies. Also, characters cannot double-dip for Legend by taking a drink as part of a stunt performed for some other purpose (such a draining a mug of beer then throwing the mug at an enemy's head as a distraction before an attack).

Whale's Breath

This Knack magnifies the time a Scion can hold her breath. After inhaling deeply and expending a point of Legend, the Scion can triple the duration she can hold her breath after calculating extended duration due to Epic Stamina. In addition, she becomes immune to pressure changes that come from diving to extreme depths underwater. This Knack doesn't affect swimming speeds, visibility or other aspects of moving underwater.

As a useful side effect, a Scion using this Knack has such great breath control that she can speak when underwater (or otherwise holding her breath) by releasing only a minimal amount of air. The character can easily manage short sentences and brief conversations. Extended speech, such as giving an academic lecture while underwater, is either too difficult or at least would drastically reduce the time the Scion can hold her breath (at the discretion of the Storyteller). This Knack also makes combat underwater much easier, since being struck or injured cannot cause the Scion to lose her breath unless someone makes a deliberate effort to squeeze the air from her lungs.

Epic Appearance

Game Face

This Knack functions identically to Dreadful Mien (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 133), but functions for characters with positive Epic Appearance. Just because they're handsome or beautiful doesn't mean they can't be scary as hell when they snarl at their foes or flash a razor-edged, you-know-I'm-going-to-kill-you smile.

Epic Perception

Fool Me Once...

Scions with this Knack are particularly adept at seeing through illusions and other supernatural masking effects. By spending two Legend points, the Scion can, for the rest of the scene, automatically see through all illusions created by a being whose Legend is less than her own.

In addition, the Scion can recognize the telltale signs of the illusionist's signature, if she has encountered that character's deceptions before. She can't sense an illusion and pull information from nowhere about its creator (that requires the Mystery Purview), but she could sense, "This is one of Loki's tricks," if the Lie-Smith had fooled her before.

The one exception to the use of this Knack is trying to see through illusions and supernatural deceptions created by beings with either Ultimate Manipulation or the avatar expression of the Illusion Purview. The abilities of these divine tricksters transcend normal means of detection. A God who employs Ultimate Perception, however, has

a chance to see through such illusions anyway. Ultimate Perception *and* use of this Knack guarantees success.

Epic Intelligence
Fight With Your Head

A Scion with this Knack possesses a truly superhuman sense of strategy. He anticipates an enemy's evasions, counter-strategies and gambits with ease. He can reason around a berserker's shock and awe or calculate a dodging foe's final location to slip past that foe's defenses. He can find just the right angle to slip from an opponent's grasp, and he can see through feints and other ploys with ease.

The Scion activates this Knack by selecting an opponent and spending one point of Legend. For the rest of the scene, he counteracts the automatic successes, bonus dice and similar benefits conferred by other Knacks and Boons. The total number of such bonuses counteracted cannot exceed the Scion's automatic success from Epic Intelligence. This Knack can negate bonuses from Knacks and Boons, as well as automatic successes and bonuses from Epic Attributes themselves. It does not affect stunt bonuses or extra dice from invoking Virtues. If an opponent receives more bonuses than a Scion can counteract, the user of this Knack picks what he will negate.

This Knack might seem an odd one to include in a book about the Norse and their Gods. In truth, despite their famed fury and aggression, Norse warriors valued a cunning fighter at least as much as a frenzied powerhouse.

New Boons

Storytellers can invent additional Purview Boons besides the standard set described in **Scion: Hero**, **Scion: Demigod** and **Scion: God**. Each Boon has a dot rating, which indicates how many bonus points or experience points it costs. Buying a character a particular Boon does not prevent a character from acquiring other Boons from the Purview that share the same dot rating. The following Boons have particular connections to the Aesir, but characters from other pantheons may learn them at the Storyteller's discretion.



Guardian
I Say Thee Nay! (Guardian •••••)

Dice Pool: Stamina + Integrity

Cost: 3 Legend + 1 Willpower

The Scion using this Boon commits to the unwavering defense of a mortal, a helpless supernatural being or a specific location. Until the scene ends, nothing can sway the Scion from her commitment to protecting her charge. She could still die during her defense, but she can otherwise stand her ground in the face of even the most horrible foes, overwhelming odds, gruesome threats or insidious persuasions.

To activate this Boon, the Scion names what she wants to defend and spends the required Legend and Willpower. Her player rolls (Stamina + Integrity). Every success on this roll adds one to the difficulty of any attempt to fool, intimidate or distract her from her chosen duty. Each success also reduces penalties suffered from wounds, poisons, drugs and anything else that might hinder her defense, though all other effects of these substances remain, and fatal wounds still result in death.

What's more, the Scion gains a DV bonus equal to the successes rolled against anyone who would try to fight past her or attack her charge. Indeed, any attack on the person the Scion protects must overcome the Scion's enhanced DV. For instance, a group of giants could fire machine guns at a fallen Scion, and even though the Scion is inactive, he would still gain the enhanced Dodge DV of the comrade protectively standing over him. This final benefit, however, applies only if the Scion on guard could defend against the attack herself. She still cannot defend her charge against unexpected attacks or against a sufficient number of massed attackers (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 193). All of these benefits last until the scene ends or the protecting Scion dies or willingly removes her protection.



Health
Virility/Muliebrity (Health ••••)

Dice Pool: Stamina + Medicine

Cost: 3 Legend

By touching a male or female, the Scion guarantees that the next act of sexual intercourse in which that the person engages that *could* result in offspring *does* result in offspring. An affected male definitely impregnates the next female he has sex with if she is even theoretically capable of having children; an affected female definitely becomes pregnant from the next male with whom she has sex. Even infertile participants become temporarily fertile, and birth control devices fail. A Scion may use this Boon automatically on himself or any unresisting mortal animal or human. Consciously unwilling subjects may resist with a (Stamina + Fortitude) roll against the Scion's (Stamina + Medicine). Titanspawn, Scions other than the user, and other supernatural beings are always considered unwilling even if they would welcome the Boon's effect, for their supernatural aspect inherently resists the power. Undead and similar creatures are (thankfully) unaffected.



War

Fury of War (War ••••)

Dice Pool: Stamina + Fortitude

Cost: 3 Legend + 1 Willpower

The Scion can summon up a bloodlust and battle rage within her to shame the legendary berserkers. Her hair becomes wilder, her eyes blaze, she laughs and screams as she rips her foes limb from limb. She thinks of little else but battle and victory.

The Scion spends two miscellaneous actions (Speed 5, DV -1) and the requisite Legend and Willpower to whip herself into a frenzy. Her player then rolls (Stamina + Fortitude). For each success on the roll, the player receives one bonus die she can add to any attack rolls, damage rolls or tests to intimidate for the rest of the combat. These bonus dice can be used as needed in any combination, but they don't refresh. Once the player spends a bonus die, it's gone and cannot be reused.

The enraged Scion can distinguish friend from foe and does not attack allies, but the Boon does suffer two drawbacks. The Scion cannot use any Knacks or take any actions that require calm, negotiation or a friendly demeanor. She is simply too furious and her countenance too terrifying even to attempt such actions. The Scion's player must spend the entire pool of bonus dice on violent actions before the character can calm down. If all the Scion's foes have fallen and bonus dice remain, she must spend them on *some* violent action. This action need not be an attack against allies or innocents, but must be obvious and aggressive. For example, she could put her head through a nearby wall, cleave a parked car in two or uproot a tree.

The Care and Feeding of Jotunblut Beasties

Scions who particularly like having powerful pets might find Jotunblut's limited ability to boost animals a bit frustrating. Most Jotunblut Boons, including the highest level of the Purview, do not work on animals. Furthermore, since you have to buy the Boons in order, Scions who only want to enhance their favorite pets cannot select only those Boons that work with animals. On the upside, these restrictions do prevent a Scion from simply sending a giant fanatic parakeet after her foes instead of dealing with them personally. On the downside, they can dishearten the player who wants his Scion to become the Norse God of Wolves or something of a similar theme.

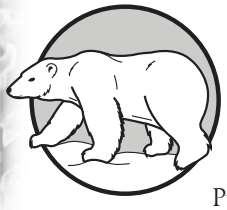
To remedy this, Storytellers can implement the following optional rule: A Scion can use his Jotunblut (or any similar Boons that boost a human mortal) on a normal animal as if it were a human, provided he also knows the appropriate Animal Purview. He cannot do so with any Jotunblut Boon whose dot rating exceeds his highest-rated Animal Boon. Therefore, to use Giant (Jotunblut ••••• ••••) on his pet dog, the Scion must also know a nine-dot Animal (Dog) Boon.

To help balance the potential increase in power this option provides, Storytellers might wish to make animals empowered by Jotunblut a bit more independent and less tractable than normal. The Storyteller might also consider making the player buy such animals with experience points as Creatures.

These Boons do not stack with any Jotunblut Boons that normally work on animals. Only the most powerful Jotunblut endowment affects a given animal.

New Purviews

The new Purviews of Frost and Illusion are both all-purpose Purviews. Scions from any pantheon can learn them, though no attempt is made here to associate them with any Gods outside the Norse pantheon.



Frost

The old Norse knew well the dread power of the long, cold winters of the North, and so do their Gods. Scions and Gods who access the Frost Purview understand the true nature of that grave chill and can draw in all the warmth around them to leave a still, frozen silence. Nevertheless, the Aesir associate this Purview more with their old enemies, the hrimthurssar (a.k.a. frost giants). Storytellers can use these Boons to expand elder giants' frigid power.

Associated With: *Uller*

Frost Immunity (Frost •)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: None

The cold of winter has no effect on the Scion. She never suffers damage from exposure to ice, frost, chilling wind, freezing water—or other Boons of this Purview. While the Scion's possessions still suffer the effects of cold, the Scion herself need not fear the most extreme cold in the World

(or even beyond). This immunity extends to whatever Birthright the Scion uses to access the Frost Purview. The Scion also never slips or loses her balance on bare ice. If someone pours another slippery substance (such as oil) on top of it, however, the Scion could still slip on that.

Note that if the Scion does not possess Frost Immunity, she could well injure or kill herself by using other Boons in this Purview!

Uller's Stride (Frost ••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Legend

Like the God of Skis who gives this Boon its name, the Scion can speed his travel by gliding on a thin layer of snow. Hoarfrost coalesces into ice around his feet or his shoes, allowing him to skate over nearly any flat surface. As long as the Scion can slide along the ground, he can move quickly and easily. Grassy fields, liquid water (or other substances), and pavement or concrete are all ideal surfaces for this sort of motion. The Scion leaves a thin, wavering trail of ice that soon melts in warm surroundings.

As long as the Scion stays on a reasonably flat (though not necessarily level) surface, he gains a five-yard bonus to his Move and Dash actions. Uller's Stride cannot take the Scion up into the air, but he can skate over water. Tricks such as skating off the end of an inclined tree and landing on the lip of a nearby hillside count as stunts that apply the five-yard bonus to Jump actions. Players can use Uller's Stride with many other stunts too, such as maneuvering a foe onto a not-yet-melted patch of ice so she slips for a moment, giving the Scion a bonus to attack.

Once activated, Uller's Stride lasts for the rest of the scene unless the Scion deactivates the power prematurely. He can walk or skate interchangeably, depending upon what seems useful at the moment. The Scion never slips or falls from losing traction, though he can still be knocked down He can also trip over difficult terrain or crash into an obstacle if he's clumsy.

Hrimthurssar's Touch (Frost •••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Willpower + 1 Legend

By calling upon the cold of Ymir, the Scion suffuses her hands with deathly cold. When she touches water, a skin of ice freezes across it; when she caresses plants, they wither. The Scion's unarmed attacks inflict extra dice of bashing damage equal to half her Legend (rounded up), except against opponents immune to cold. Holding an easily chilled object, such as a cup or a metal blade, causes it to frost over. (A metal weapon affected by this Boon adds the above damage to a successful attack, but that damage is either bashing or



lethal as appropriate to the weapon type.) A bottle of liquid the size of a typical soft drink will freeze through—likely bursting the container—with just a few seconds of contact. Through a special expenditure of an extra point of Legend, the Scion can instantly freeze a large quantity of liquid, equal to her Legend rating in cubic yards.

This Boon lasts for an entire scene after its activation, though the Scion can end it prematurely (to avoid injuring a companion by touch, for instance).

Frozen Panoply (Frost ••••)

Dice Pool: Varies

Cost: 1 Legend per creation

The Scion summons cold air around his hands and conjures objects made of ice. Certain standardized applications call for various dice rolls; simply conjuring sheets or blocks of ice do not. See pages. 202–203 of **Scion: Hero** for the weapon templates.

- **Armor of Ymir** (Wits + Athletics): Frost spreads across the Scion's body and crystallizes into plates of armor equal to riot gear (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 204). The armor holds together by magic, but Athletics is needed to fashion the armor so its joints match those of its wearer. Armor of Ymir does not stack with other armor.
- **Ice Sculpture** (Wits + Craft): A catchall for shaping moderately complex structures out of ice—anything from a functional ladder to a fanciful statue.
- **Instant Igloo** (Wits + Survival): The Scion shapes ice into a small shelter. Doing so costs one Legend point per person who can fit inside the igloo.
- **Skadi's Bow** (Wits + Marksmanship): The Scion creates a massive bow of knobby ice with 20 glittering icicles as arrows. The bow is equal to a daikyu.
- **Uller's Spear** (Wits + Melee): A tremendous jagged and pointed icicle forms in the Scion's hands, which he can wield as a club, spear, sword or javelin (treat as a macana, kontos, spatha, pilum or yaomitl, respectively). All forms share the maquahuitl's property of inflicting lethal or bashing damage without using the "flat of the blade" rule.

Note that while Frozen Panoply weapons are made of ice, they deal damage through ordinary crushing, cutting or piercing, and Frost Immunity does not protect against this damage. The Scion can, however, channel Hrimthurssar's Touch through the melee weapons to add dice of damage (bashing or lethal, as appropriate to the weapon)—and Frost Immunity *does* block this bonus damage.

Since the ice coalesces out of ichor and Legend, Scions can conjure it anywhere—even on the lip of an erupting volcano—and it does not melt unless the Scion decides to banish it whence it came (as a reflexive action). Icy articles last a scene in any case. When the scene ends or the Scion dismisses his creation, it dissipates in a sprinkle of snow.

A Scion can extend Frozen Panoply's duration by spending an additional point of Legend for each additional scene, but his player does not need to reroll. A Scion could even conjure weapons of ice and hand them out to his allies in a pinch, though his allies would need to have Frost Immunity or thick gloves to use them without suffering frostbite. Such items dissipate instantly if stolen or broken by enemies.

Winter's Mercy (Frost •••••)

Dice Pool: None

Cost: 1 Legend per recipient

This Boon extends the effect of Frost Immunity to other beings. Each Legend point confers one scene of Frost Immunity to one creature. A Scion does not need to know Frost Immunity already to gain this Boon, but if she doesn't, placing Winter's Mercy on herself costs the same as giving it to anyone else.

Chill the Blood (Frost ••••• •)

Dice Pool: Perception + Marksmanship

Cost: 1 Legend

Having internalized the power of frost, the Scion learns to internalize it in other people... against their will, setting them shivering with a chill no fire can warm. The Scion picks any target he can see and spends a point of Legend. His player rolls the dice (with bonus successes if applicable), at a difficulty equal to the target's Legend. If the roll succeeds, every non-reflexive action takes the victim one tick longer, and her Dexterity drops by one. These effects last the rest of the scene. Repeated attacks cause further loss of Dexterity but do not add more ticks to the Speed of actions. Reducing a victim's Dexterity to 0 renders her inactive.

Blizzard Call (Frost ••••• ••)

Dice Pool: Stamina + Craft

Cost: 1 Willpower + 3 Legend

Winter's power responds to the Scion's commands. She can summon snow, sleet, hail and ice. In an area up to five yards in radius per success, at a maximum range equal to (Legend x 50) yards, the Scion can make the temperature plummet, create or shift ice and snow, and even create avalanches and crevasses.

Used to drop the temperature, this Boon causes the ambient temperature to drop by a number of degrees (Celsius) equal to the successes scored *every tick*. Such a rapid and severe freezing can cause ceramics to crack and metals to turn brittle (such objects lose all their soak), and lead to exposure and frostbite in living tissue. Once the temperature reaches freezing (zero degrees Celsius), the drop slows to a rate of degrees per success every minute, instead. While the Scion cannot liquefy the air, she can inflict numbing cold (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 184) over the area. The Scion may also choose to keep the temperature hovering around a specific point. Doing so is especially useful to keep the temperature between 0 and -20 degrees, which causes snow to precipitate out of the atmosphere. At that point, the Scion can evoke anything from a light dusting of flakes to a heavy snow. (See pp. 185–186 of **Scion: Hero** for visibility rules.) Liquid water also rapidly freezes unless it is heavily cut with other substances, such as salt or alcohol. (Sea water doesn't freeze until about -2.2 degrees.)

When the Scion uses Blizzard Call in an area with existing snow and ice—or one where she already flash-froze

the moisture from the air—she can sculpt the ice or snow with precision, simply by gesturing (often with the appropriate relic). The ice cracks, breaks and splinters as the Scion shapes it, but it follows her direction, whether to split into a crevasse, rise in a spiky pillar or form a hulking, glistening statue. She can cause spikes to shoot up to attack her enemies, she can raise walls of deflecting ice, she can even try to trap someone in a cage of ice—indeed, any feat she could perform with Frozen Panoply, but at range. Pit the dice pool of the Scion with this power against the victim's appropriate DV or a (Dexterity + Athletics) roll to see if the subject can avoid icy spears, imprisoning walls or similar hazards.

Just as importantly, a Scion can use Blizzard's Call to *alleviate* cold. Instead of freezing an area, she can raise the temperature to the chill of a late autumn or early spring day: comfortable with a warm coat; bearable with a jacket and flannel shirt.

The Scion's mental dominion over the chosen area lasts the rest of the scene. Should another Scion or creature with control of ice try to wrest control from her, the players of both parties engage in a contested roll, with the victor taking charge of the targeted frost.

Frozen Heart (Frost ••••• •••)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Empathy

Cost: 4 Legend

Once a Scion passes mastery of physical cold, he can send that chill seeping into souls to freeze and quell passions. When the Scion invokes Frozen Heart on a target, his player pits his dice pool in a contested roll against the target's (Willpower + Legend). If the user wins, he can apply his net successes toward quelling his victim's Virtues and Willpower as follows:

• He can spend his successes at a one-for-one ratio to temporarily reduce the subject's Virtues, thereby dampening her passions. The target simply can't feel the fire of her emotions anymore. One success reduces a single Virtue by one dot. To reduce four different Virtues by one dot each, the Scion would need to spend four of his net successes.

• If he spends successes equal to the target's Willpower dots, the Scion can render the subject unable to spend Willpower points at all. (The Scion must spend the successes specifically for this purpose.) In so doing, he dampens the target's inner fire and makes her unable to muster her hidden reserves of strength.

Any use of Frozen Heart lasts for a number of ticks equal to (user's Legend x 5). Effects from multiple applications do not stack, but more powerful applications can override lesser ones.

Flash Freeze (Frost ••••• ••••)

Dice Pool: Stamina + Survival

Cost: 5 Legend

The Scion's command of frost enables her to freeze a single item or creature in an instant. If she can see a target, she can freeze it with a wave of her hand. Her player rolls the dice pool against a difficulty equal to the target's Legend. If the roll succeeds, the target's temperature drops nearly to absolute zero. Objects treated in this fashion generally freeze solid and shatter; living creatures usually die. The freezing attack inflicts levels of bashing damage equal to (threshold successes + Scion's Legend), that ignore soak. A creature or object reduced to zero health levels by this power freezes solid. If that target is subjected to even a slight but sharp strike, it shatters into tiny fragments.

Ymir's Hand (Frost ••••• •••••)

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Craft

Cost: 15 Legend

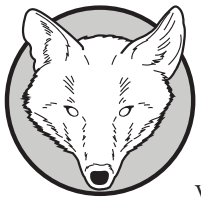
The Scion's mastery of cold is now almost complete. He can inflict glacial cold over an area whose radius in miles equals his Legend rating. For the next day, the area suffers numbing cold (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 184) with up to a foot of snow; adding a stiff breeze for a wind chill factor is optional.

The supernatural chill inflicted by this Boon has a numbing effect on living creatures and even causes walking dead to stagger and slow as their flesh freezes. Beings within the area of Ymir's Hand suffer a one-point Dexterity penalty and add one tick to the Speed of all actions, just as if they'd been subjected to Chill the Blood (Frost ••••• •), if they do not stay close to a source of warmth.

Avatar of Frost (The Cold)

Cost: 1 Willpower + 30 Legend

For one scene, the character becomes The Cold. While The Cold resembles an immobile statue of ice, its influence extends through tendrils of utter stillness and freezing wind, like invisible limbs of absolute zero. Anything touched by The Cold instantly stops and freezes through. The Cold can send a wind over a city to blanket it in snow and ice, instantly freezing every mortal into an immobile statue. Liquids and gases turn into frozen solids when caressed by The Cold, and solids crack with brittleness from its touch. All sound seems to fade away and vanish into The Cold, so that anything it encounters makes only the briefest, momentary noise before it becomes utterly still. The Cold can act subtly, too, insinuating itself into hearts and souls to quell passions or freeze them into rigid monomania. The Cold can even freeze a Titan in place for a short time, enabling other beings to flee or fight while the Titan struggles to shrug off the loss of warmth, motion and life.



Illusion

Throughout the epics of the Aesir, giants—and occasionally the Gods themselves—use a variety of tricks to deceive their enemies. Whether concealing a dangerous threat or indulging in a bit of comedy at the expense of the Gods, such misdirection can tip the scales of a conflict (physical or otherwise). Most Gods who rely on illusions use them less for battle and more for a means of escaping from dangerous scenarios. Some even use deceit as a way to subtly enlighten (i.e., humiliate) the rash, the inept, the arrogant and the meddlesome.

The Aesir are far from the only users of Illusion, though. Coyote and Raven from the Native American mythos, as well as many of the Hindu deities, also use Illusion frequently. Storytellers may also add it to the associated Purviews of trickster Gods such as Hermes or Kalfu.

More ominously, almost every elder jotun is a master of illusion. At their discretion, Storytellers can use these Boons to flesh out the quick-and-dirty treatment of jotun illusions described on page. 270 of **Scion: Demigod**. A jotun can be treated as having all Illusion Boons up to his (Legend – 1). The story of the encounter between Thor and Utgard-Loki (recounted starting on p. 15) suggests how completely a powerful and cunning trickster can trap and delude even a God through a well-chosen series of layered illusions.

Illusion powers are especially potent against mortals without a Legend rating. Against any character or creature without a Legend rating, no roll is necessary. The Illusion is undetectable unless the creature somehow gains a supernatural ability to pierce illusions (such as from a stolen relic).

Any illusion can be dismissed by the Scion who created it, with but a moment's thought. Illusions also disappear if the Scion is rendered unconscious or dead.

Associated With: Loki, Odin

The Subtle Knife (Illusion •)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Larceny

Cost: 1 Legend per item

The Scion concentrates on an item that he touches or carries, and the item becomes unobtrusive even to a concentrated search. As long as the Scion doesn't manipulate the item in an obvious fashion, other creatures simply ignore its existence. The object must be small enough to hold in one hand and conceal under a jacket, such as a pistol, a rose or a wallet. (Even a Scion with Epic Strength cannot conceal a larger object, despite the fact that he might be able to hold, say, a motorcycle behind his back in one hand.) Once the Scion uses the object in an obvious fashion, such as taking money out of the wallet or drawing and cocking a gun, it becomes evident to everyone. The concealment lasts at most a single scene in any case.

Items hidden by this power are neither invisible nor transparent. If an object is placed in such a way that a person *must* see it—if it's taped to the screen of a television he's watching, for instance—the object becomes immediately visible. Conversely, potential observers' minds ignore and rationalize away small inconsistencies, such as failing to notice the scent of a hidden rose or missing the bulge in a jacket pocket that holds a small relic.

Observers with a Legend score pit their (Perception + Awareness) against the hiding Scion's (Manipulation + Stealth). If the Scion's player scores more net successes, his item remains hidden; otherwise, it is spotted. The Scion can hide multiple small items at once by paying the Legend cost for each, and a viewer tests against each one separately. The Subtle Knife can conceal living creatures, but they must be small enough to fit under a person's jacket, such as a rabbit or a young raven. The Scion does not actually need to stuff an animal, or any other object, under his jacket to hide it—using this Boon hides the object even if he's holding it in his hand or it's sitting on his shoulder.

Stolen Face (Illusion ••)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Presence

Cost: 1 Willpower + 1 Legend

Tricksters in myth often take on someone else's appearance, generally to further a special plot or to bring humiliation to a rival. This Boon makes such a disguise supernaturally believable. The trickster simply dons a cursory disguise—a piece of clothing, a fake wig, a mask or some make-up—and the power of Illusion does the rest.

If the Scion tries to impersonate a particular person, the dice roll gains a +2 bonus if the Scion carries some item the emulated individual owned. A sample of the subject's hair, skin or nails raises the bonus to +5. (Having body sample and an object, or having multiple objects, does not give multiple bonuses.) The Scion's player rolls to set the Boon's success level when it's activated. Anyone who deliberately tries to see through the disguise must best the Scion's total successes with a (Perception + Awareness) roll. Having only a brief, momentary interaction imposes a -2 penalty on the observer's roll. A lengthy interaction (lasting several minutes) when the observer knows the emulated subject well grants a +2 bonus. If the observer scores more successes than the trickster, the observer realizes that the Scion is not who she seems to be, though the true identity of the disguised Scion remains unclear unless the disguise is actually removed.

Stolen Face doesn't prevent people from suspecting that the Scion might not be who she seems if she does something wildly out of character. A Scion disguised as Ronald Reagan who breaks into a bank, paints the vault red and flies away on camera will probably not be mistaken for the dead president in question. Mortal onlookers certainly won't figure out who it really was, though, or how she managed to do such a convincing Reagan imitation!

A Scion can also use Stolen Face to create a false identity of her own invention. Such a false identity can be as rudimentary as an anonymous old man, as Odin advised Sigurd on how to deal with the dragon Fafnir, or as elaborate as a whole second life as a reporter at a major metropolitan newspaper. Mortal onlookers tend to overlook flaws in such false identities. Even most Scions remain unsuspecting of such a deception unless they specifically think there's an imposter around or someone has a secret identity.

Regardless of the successes scored, some element of the disguise always leaves a hint of the Scion's true nature. A Scion disguised as Ronald Reagan might still appear to wear sneakers that clash with his presidential suit. A Scion pretending to be Artemis might forget to change her eye color to match. A relic might retain its true appearance. Such omissions usually go overlooked unless the disguise

is penetrated, in which case it's generally the first thing that the viewer spots—such as the propensity for watchful onlookers to notice the hastily concealed tail of a kitsune who's masquerading as a human woman.

Stolen Face remains in effect for an entire scene; spending a Willpower point extends the illusion to another scene. Anyone who fails to penetrate the disguise during that time cannot try again. If one person sees through the illusion, he need merely perform some action to expose the fraud—yank off the wig, smear the make-up—and everyone else instantly sees through it as well.

Fool's Gold (Illusion •••)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Art

Cost: 2 Legend per item

Beyond simply concealing items, tricksters occasionally make worthless leaves, rocks or sticks seem valuable—or otherwise make objects seem like things they're not. The Scion must conceal the item in some way, from closing his hand around it to draping it with a scarf. He can then reveal the item as something else. (The Scion could place a convenient object in a pocket or satchel where it can't be seen and then activate the power at a later time, seeming to pull out something else that's just the thing he needs.)

The source object must be about the same size as the illusory object and have some other trait in common, such as its shape, color or composition. For instance, the Scion could make a rubber band gun look like a real pistol, or he could make a sack of yellow autumn leaves seem to be a sack of gold coins. He couldn't disguise a plastic pop bottle as a huge diamond or a bazooka.

Casual handling of the illusory item does not reveal its true nature, though breaking it or other violence does so. The object does not actually have the physical properties of the real object, but it *appears* to function as expected. Golden leaf-coins will fall, not flutter, and land with a heavy clink. A rubber band gun fires with a bang and a smell of cordite (though it cannot inflict more harm than a rubber band gun would).

The item remains disguised for a full scene. As with Stolen Face, the player makes an initial roll when the Scion activates the power. If any onlooker suspects a fraud, her player must roll (Perception + Awareness) and exceed the Scion's total successes to see through the deception. For purposes of this power, anything that the Scion can hold in one hand counts as one "item," so a handful of leaves could all be disguised at once. Fool's Gold cannot make an item appear as a living creature, nor can it disguise a living creature. It affects only inanimate objects.

Dreamcraft (Illusion ••••)

Dice Pool: Wits + Art

Cost: 2 Legend per subject

The Illusion Boons available to heroes still need a real subject upon which to work. A demigod can craft hallucinations that do not correlate with anything real. Only the individuals whom the Scion wants to fool can perceive them.

Each person the Scion wishes to perceive the hallucination costs the Scion three Legend points when she activates the Boon. Her player's (Wits + Art) roll has a difficulty set by the number of senses the Scion wants to affect and the complexity of the illusion (see the sidebar). Note the final number of successes. If any subject has any reason to doubt the illusion, his player must beat that number on a (Perception + Awareness) roll.

Dreamcraft can add, subtract or transform one discrete entity or element in the target's sensations. For instance, she could make a person imagine the sky turned green, *or* see a snarling dog running toward him, *or* not see the Scion standing nearby. To make a person suffer *all* these hallucinations, the Scion would have to use this Boon three times on successive actions.

A Dreamcraft illusion lasts only as long as the Scion specifically concentrates on maintaining it. She cannot also engage in combat or other challenging activities (i.e., any task that would call for a dice roll). A Scion cannot maintain more illusions at once than she has dots of Intelligence. Every subject affected counts as a separate illusion, though a character can attack more than one person at a time.

Note that Dreamcraft cannot create an illusion of something the Scion herself cannot imagine. If you've never seen Thor, for instance, you can't create an accurate hallucination of him. Of course, if your subject has never seen Thor either, you can just create an image of a big red-haired guy swinging a stone hammer and that might be enough.

Dreamcraft Difficulties

Difficulty	Illusion Factors
1	One sense (sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch)
2	Two senses
3+	Three+ senses
+1	Changing entity (a moving car, fire, music, intelligible speech)
+1	Complex entity (paisley, a symphony, anything that interacts significantly with its environment)

Example: Creating the illusion of a car driving full-tilt at a person, its horn blaring, would have a difficulty of 4: two senses (sight and hearing), +1 because the illusion is in motion, +1 for complexity to supply the car with a driver and have its wake blow leaves around and otherwise interact with its surroundings.

Loaned Identity (Illusion •••••)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Presence

Cost: 5 Legend

The lesser Boons of Illusion functions only on the Scion or on small items. With Loaned Identity, the Scion can disguise a person or a significant object as something else. In the *Prose Edda*, Utgard-Loki disguises fire as a person for an eating contest and disguised the Midgard Serpent as a cat for a test of strength. By the same token, a Scion with this Boon can provide a false face to a person, creature or object and make it appear to behave in a consistent fashion. Each target so disguised costs five Legend and requires a roll of (Manipulation + Presence) to establish the Scion's threshold of success. Those who suspect treachery can use (Perception + Awareness) to try to defeat the illusion, though a careful Scion arranges situations so that onlookers have no reason to suspect deceit.

In other ways, Loaned Identity functions like Stolen Face, with the onlookers rationalizing or overlooking inconsistencies in the behavior and appearance of the disguised subject. (As the case of Jörmungandr-as-cat shows, however, Loaned Identity ignores differences in size between the real object and the image.) A disguised fire made to look like a person (as in the case of Logi) would seem like a quiet but ravenous man, quick, red-haired and surly. Others would find him eccentric but fail to realize that he was anything other than what he appeared to be. The Loaned Identity does not give the subject any special powers, but a clever Scion can use other Boons to support the illusion—such as using the Fire Purview to make a disguised fire move as ordered and devour items appropriately. An item's or creature's doing something patently impossible for its appearance immediately breaks the illusion.

Fantastic Vista (Illusion ••••• •)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Survival

Cost: 1 Willpower + 3 Legend

The illusionist's powers of deception allow her to conceal entire landscapes. With this illusion, the Scion conceals an entire building or natural feature. A forest can appear as a glittering faerie glade; a ruined hovel can appear as a golden castle. Through two uses of the Boon, a giant could trade appearances with a convenient mountain. While the physical dimensions of the area remain roughly the same, the features and ostensible boundaries take on whatever characteristics the Scion imagines. Trees can fade into stone walls, or existing walls can look cracked and cobwebby or polished and painted. While items and creatures in the area are not necessarily disguised, they can be further concealed by other illusions, so a demure housecat might resemble a lion via Loaned Identity while a rotting plate of spoiled food could resemble a feast thanks to Fool's Gold.

Fantastic Vista can cover an area up to 50 cubic yards per Legend dot of the user has. Interacting with the area is not enough to banish the illusion. To onlookers, the



area seems to react as appropriate to its appearance. For example, a man hurled through a non-existent wall would cause onlookers to see that wall break apart as he flew through it, and everyone would agree on the particulars of how the wall seemed to shatter. As always, only characters or creatures with a Legend score or a supernatural means of piercing illusions have any chance to see through the deception. They must best the initial successes rolled for the invoking Scion. Fantastic Vista lasts for a full scene. At the end of that scene, spending three more Legend points extends the illusion into the next scene.

Hidden Name (Illusion ••••• ••)

Dice Pool: Wits + Stealth

Cost: 1 Willpower + 4 Legend

Detection by various magics or the use of the Psychopomp Purview presents a problem for tricksters. After all, what good is your best trick if you're discovered later and beaten to a pulp? This Boon helps a trickster lie low and avoid detection.

After activating Hidden Name, the player rolls (Wits + Stealth). For the rest of the scene, any power or Ability that would detect the Scion must overcome the successes scored for this Boon. This Boon doesn't make the Scion invisible—he can still be easily seen if someone has a line of sight to him—but it makes him extremely difficult to track, and harder to locate via the use of the Psychopomp Purview. Likewise, the Boon can block use of Mystery or Prophecy to find information about the Scion... at least about events that happen while the Hidden Name is active. (To be fair, though, when one character pits Mystery or Prophecy against Hidden Name, ignore the trickster's bonus successes from Epic Wits for purposes of determining whether the divination succeeds.) Powers that normally require no roll now require that users best the Scion's successes with a roll of (Perception + Awareness). Otherwise, they receive no information whatsoever.

Alternatively, the trickster can redirect Mystery, Prophecy, Psychopomp or mundane attempts to gain information about him to another person. To do so, the trickster needs an item with some reasonably intimate connection to the desired surrogate, such as a prized possession, a clipping of hair, a footprint or a personal phone number. The trickster must perform some act with a reasonable connection to a mundane search that he wants to redirect. For instance, he could cross a person's path to redirect attempts at tracking or use the phone number while setting up a grocery store discount card to throw off financial inquiries. Against supernatural searches, any sympathetic link to another person will do, no matter how absurd. Get an autographed baseball, for instance, and you can make a Mystery-using searcher believe that Hank Aaron snapped those nude photos of Freya.

Dreamworld (Illusion ••••• •••)

Dice Pool: Varies

Cost: 1 Willpower + 5 Legend per participant

This Boon extends Dreamcraft (Illusion ••••) to hurl its subject into a complete imaginary world—in his mind, anyway. This illusion can mimic the subject's real surroundings with just a few carefully selected alterations, or the trickster can evoke a fantasy world as bizarre as anything in dreams.

The attacking trickster can make *anything* happen in the Dreamworld and do anything to her target. All interaction, however, becomes social, as a contest of imaginative persuasion and force of will. Beyond pure character interaction that can be roleplayed by the participants' players, attempts to control the dream are resolved through a variation of working the crowd (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 184). The trickster's player rolls a dice pool based on social traits that represent whatever event she wants to impose on her target. Her target's player rolls (Willpower + Integrity + Legend) to resist. For example, if a trickster tries to impose a dream of being burned at the stake, her player might roll (Charisma + Command) to represent an attempt to overpower the target's will through sheer pain and terror. If the trickster tried to extract a secret through a dream in which the target's lover begs to be told, her player would roll (Manipulation + Investigation). If the attacking trickster succeeds, her target either accedes to whatever the trickster attempted or loses a point of Willpower. If the defending target wins the contested roll, the target snaps out of the Dreamworld.

Neither party can apply Epic Attributes or Knacks to the dream-contest. They cannot spend Legend to enhance their players' dice rolls. In dreams, everyone has the power of a God, so Legend offers no advantage. This does tend to favor the defender, whose dice pool has a maximum of 27, over the trickster, whose dice pool cannot exceed 16. It's very hard to fool or compel a God using Dreamworld, and even a strong-willed hero might resist. Both sides can still attempt stunts for bonuses to their dice pools.

If the attacking trickster can strip away all her target's Willpower, she can brainwash her subject to follow a certain course of action until he regains at least one Willpower point. She could alternatively trap him in a dream until that point or impose similarly dire fates at the Storyteller's discretion. The one thing she *can't* do is cause real, physical harm. (If a victim is left inactive because he's trapped in his own head, however, the distinction could be moot.)

When characters interact in a Dreamworld, events that seem to take minutes or hours actually pass in seconds. Social interactions normally take minutes or longer, but the events represented by each contested roll within a Dreamworld take just five ticks. During this miscellaneous action, the attacking trickster suffers a -2 DV penalty, while her subject stays inactive until he breaks out of the illusion or the trickster releases him.

In many cases, a trickster engages just one person in a Dreamworld. The trickster can, however, extend the illusion to as many people as she likes, just by spending five extra Legend for each. Each subject caught in the illusion must break himself out, though a well-designed stunt can extend its benefits to an entire group of characters.

False Pretenses (Illusion ••••• ••••)

Dice Pool: Wits + Presence

Cost: 5 Legend per scene

The Scion casts away his own appearance and assumes the likeness of some other creature or object, as with Stolen Face. Unlike that power, however, his ability to shift identities is not limited by size, props or mobility. The Scion could appear to be Odin one moment, then gallop into the woods in the illusory form of a stag, then become a large boulder. For the rest of the scene, the Scion can appear to be whatever he likes, down to the size of a flea or up to the size of a mountain.

Onlookers who fail to penetrate the illusion with the usual (Perception + Awareness) roll automatically believe the deception. Even if the Scion performs a feat that is patently impossible for his given form, anyone who cannot penetrate the illusion simply sees the impossible with no explanation.

The Scion may also freely shift his appearance at any time, simply by concentrating on the appropriate new form (which, for timing purposes in combat, counts as activating a Boon). Doing so does not necessarily conceal his actions or his words, but it does afford wide leeway in pretending to be other people or other things.

A God can apply False Pretenses when materializing a body of ichor in order truly to become the entity he impersonates, at least physically. This is how Loki became a mare to lure the stallion Svadilfari from his work. Unfortunately, this use of False Pretenses has some drawbacks, as Loki found, for the God can alter only his *own* shape in this manner... which also applies for when he would normally resume his default form a scene later. By the time equine-curious Loki decided to resume his own form, he carried a second life which he had no power to alter—and so he had to stay a mare until he gave birth to Sleipnir. (Granted, this is not a circumstance most Scions will ever face, but... well, you've been warned.)

The Best Trick (Illusion ••••• •••••)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Craft

Cost: 15 Legend

The greatest trick, for an illusionist, is to make an illusion that is indistinguishable from reality. Using this Boon, the Scion conjures an illusion from nothing of some item or creature that does not exist at all. For a short time, that illusion becomes real in all ways. The Scion needs only the tiniest bit of matter as a foundation—a drop of blood to make a person, a pebble to make a stone castle, a shaving of metal to create a sword—and the item springs into existence fully formed. (It's generally best if the Scion seems to make the item or creature appear from a container or a nearby room if she's trying to fool onlookers into thinking it's real. People usually get suspicious when things spring into existence from nowhere.)

An item or creature formed from The Best Trick behaves in all ways like the true thing, though it behaves as directed by its creator. Left undirected, it reacts in a manner befitting its apparent nature. Anything created by The Best Trick can *appear* to perform feats and actions just like one would expect from the real thing, and these actions in all ways *appear* to be real until the illusion is undone. In fact, the trickery of the illusion is so powerful and solipsistic that it actually suspends reality to a degree until the illusion expires. The only limitation is that the illusion cannot perform any feat or effect that would require Legend greater than half the user's Legend score.

Therefore, a Scion could use The Best Trick to create the illusion of another Scion. That illusory Scion could fight, use Purviews and interact with other people just like the real person, *even causing real injuries and altering the environment*, until The Best Trick expired. At that point, truth would re-assert itself. If an illusionary Scion saved a falling mortal by flying up and catching her, for instance, the mortal would actually be alive and safe until the illusion ended. At that point, however, the guise of normalcy would fade, the reality of her crushed and mangled condition would appear, and she would probably messily expire. Similarly, a person killed by an illusion is well and truly dead until The Best Trick ends, at which point he suddenly awakens and realizes that he isn't dead after all.

The creation of The Best Trick lasts five ticks per success scored on the activation roll. While in existence, the creation functions in all ways like the real thing. It cannot be "disbelieved" as an illusion, although the limitations of its powers might cause onlookers to realize that it cannot actually be what it purports (such as an illusion of a God who cannot use his normal range of powers due to the Legend limitations).

The Even Better Trick

At the Storyteller's option, any sentient creature whose life is (temporarily) saved using The Best Trick has a chance to continue living when the illusion ends. Supernatural creatures can live because their Legend overpowers reality. Mortals can live because they are the prime movers and instruments of Fate, at least in a collective sense. Roll the creature's Legend score at difficulty 1, or her Willpower at difficulty 3. Success means that the creature's belief in its own life sustains it past the illusion's end.

A mortal who escapes death in this manner immediately becomes a legendary mortal (discussed in **Scion: Demigod**) and is permanently Fatebound to the character who used The Best Trick.

Avatar of Illusion (The Trickster)

Cost: 1 Willpower + 30 Legend

For one scene, the character becomes The Trickster. The Trickster can appear to be anyone or anything and cannot be distinguished from the real thing if it does not wish to be. Although The Trickster cannot actually use the powers of other beings, it can appear to do so in a fashion that mortals find so convincing that they can simply die as their minds believe themselves to be overwhelmed and killed. It can trap whole cities in dreamworlds. Even Gods have difficulty separating the lines between reality and fantasy. The Trickster can make any lie sound plausible or make any plan seem to be a good idea. The Trickster can even fool a Titan, causing the Titan to agree to a plot or even perceive The Trickster as a fellow Titan.

Runes and Magic

Like many ancient people, the Norse saw writing as magical. Their alphabet consisted of runes, which they used for protection, divination, enchantments upon weapons and many other purposes. In **Scion**, the Aesir often use runes to access the Magic, Mystery and Prophecy Purviews. For example, a seeress might predict the future by dropping a handful of wooden plaques inscribed with runes and inspecting the patterns they formed. A magician might cast a spell by drawing a rune on an item or person.

Runes themselves hold no power. If they did, any New Age pagan or curious occultist could channel the power of the Gods. Instead, the Aesir use runes to channel and focus their innate power.

The Norse and the Aesir also sometimes use a form of blood magic known as seidhr. This magic involves entering a deep trance followed by a sacrifice of blood. A seidhr practitioner usually offers animal blood, though human sacrifice did take place in the old days. Mechanically, seidhr works using sacrifice to power spells (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 155).

Seidhr is an old, fearsome power that the Aesir view with a touch of awe. Odin himself practiced the greatest of all seidhr rites when he hung bleeding on the World Tree for nine days to obtain knowledge of the runes. Traditionally, however, the Norse view female seidhr practitioners—called seidhkona—as wielding greater power, with Frigg and Freya as their special patrons.

Many Aesir never embraced the power of human sacrifice and would frown upon Scions who engage in such practices. Chief among these Gods is Thor, whose worshipers avoided such practices even during the heyday of the Norsemen.

The third form of Norse magic is galdr, or incantations. The Norse regarded poetry itself as somewhat magical, so many spells take the form of poems that the magician chants or sings. (As one of the greatest magicians among the Aesir, Odin is necessarily also one of their greatest and most eloquent skalds.)

A spell might include runes, poems and blood-offerings. The Norse sagas describe many instances when a hero casts a spell by carving runes on an object, then smearing the runes with his own blood and chanting a rhyme.



New Spells

The following spells grant powers often found in Norse myths. Gods, Scions and other magicians often perform them using runes, though modern Scions might use alternative methods.

Peaceful Meeting (Magic •)

Dice Pool: Charisma + Command

Cost: 1 Legend

Odin himself described this as one of the spells he knew. It keeps meetings with strangers from erupting in violence. The Scion must show some symbol of truce, such as a white flag, or otherwise let everyone know they enter a place of truce. Anyone who enters the scene with malicious intent must spend a Willpower point to initiate violence, which breaks the spell. More importantly, the spell prevents accidental quarrels and flashes of temper, of the sort that so often caused Nordic feasts to end in drunken murders and battles. The spell lasts for one scene. If anyone deliberately breaks the truce, the spell Fatebinds the offender to the Scion. Otherwise, the Scion is Fatebound to a random person who becomes a friend while Fatebound, or the Fatebinding lodges to the place of truce itself.

Traitor's Toast (Magic •)

Dice Pool: Wits + Art

Cost: 1 Legend, 1 lethal health level

This spell comes from *Egil's Saga*. It provides an example of typical Norse magic, using all three of the basic techniques. A Scion uses it if she suspects poison in her drink. She scratches symbols on her cup (rune-magic), jabs herself and smears her blood on the runes (seidhr), then chants a rhyme asking that Fate reveal any malice and treachery (galdr). Finally, she spends a point of Legend. If the drink contains poison, the vessel breaks. The Scion certainly gains a hostile Fatebinding to whoever poisoned the drink.

Illwind Curse (Magic ••)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Medicine

Cost: 1 Legend

Anglo-Saxon witches devised this appalling curse to place on another person's Fate. It renders its victim both

unpleasant to be around and impossible to take seriously. Whenever the victim attempts a social feat that calls for her player to roll a dice pool, the victim breaks wind. Loudly. *Odorously*. Remove two successes from whatever the player rolled. This reduction can potentially turn a formerly successful roll into a botch. The curse takes effect once for every success rolled by the magician's player. The Fatebinding from being the target of this curse might last only a scene, but the enmity most likely lasts forever.

Blood Mead (Magic •••)

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Craft (Brewing/Cooking)
Cost: 1 Legend

The fabled Mead of Poetry is one of the greatest treasures of the Aesir. One sip of this magical mead can turn any man into a wise counselor or an eloquent skald. Two murderous dwarves made it from the blood of Kvasir, the wisest man who ever lived. Since then, other magicians have duplicated the recipe, though their results are far inferior to the original.

A person's skills are part of his Fate. Blood Mead acts as a vessel to entangle the Fates of the drinker and the person from whose blood the mead was made, transferring aptitudes from one person to another. To become a proper source for making Blood Mead, a victim needs at least one Attribute and one Ability rated 4 or higher.

Brewing the magic mead requires at least one lethal health level's worth of blood from a legendary mortal or Scion. The magician mixes the blood with honey and ferments it. The process takes a week and produces three pints of mead. Whoever drinks a pint of the mead temporarily gains one dot each of an Attribute and Ability from the blood donor's highest (Attribute + Ability) dice pool. If the donor has more than one equally rated high pool, pick a dice pool at random. The imbiber gains the bonus Attribute and Ability for one day.

Killing a Scion or legendary mortal and brewing the mead from her heart's blood produces a brew of greater potency. Doing so produces a number of pints of Blood Mead equal to (victim's Legend + 2), and the bonus Attribute and Ability dots last for one month. An imbiber who has experience points to spend can make these bonus dots permanent, at half the normal experience cost. Whether drinking the lesser or greater Blood Meads, however, the benefits do not stack. Drinking two pints of a given Blood Mead do not add two bonus dots. Nor can a person spend experience points to make one trait boost permanent, then drink again for a further bonus.

Fate incidentally forbids a Scion to brew more than one Blood Mead at a time. Unless every dose of the first batch of Blood Mead is imbibed, all further attempts to brew the enchanted drink fail. Lesser mead spoils after a week, but the greater mead lasts indefinitely if stored in an airtight container. A pint of greater Blood Mead counts as a two-dot relic.

Avoid a Fate (Magic ••••• •)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Occult
Cost: 3 Legend + 1 Willpower

The spell's caster defines a harmful incident and a person. Until the next full moon, the person becomes immune to that particular Fate. The Scion usually chooses some event that could kill or maim the spell's target, though the spell could protect against some other calamity. The caster must designate a specific Fate. For instance, the spell could avert "death by drowning" or "death by bullets," but not "death" in all its forms.

Note that while this spell protects the target from a specific Fate, it does not protect against related unpleasantness. A person protected from "being killed by giants" might still be captured, harassed, tortured or even maimed by those titanspawn. A person protected from "death by drowning" could still suffer a shipwreck. Fate does not go out of its way to assault a protected person with other dangers, but people tend to get cocky when they know they're protected from certain dangers, which makes them less likely to recognize other dangers.

A Scion can cast this spell on objects and animals. She could protect a house from burning down or protect a cat from being hit by a car. As usual for spells, anything the Scion protects with this spell becomes Fatebound to her. A character can cast the spell multiple times to avoid multiple Fates, but each casting strengthens the Fatebinding. The seeress Gróa cast this spell repeatedly over Svipdag, her son, before he undertook a dangerous quest, but few people besides parents and devoted lovers would tempt Fate by binding themselves so closely to another person, place or thing.

Beast Shape (Magic ••••• •)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Animal Ken
Cost: 3 Legend

Using this spell, a Scion can use Magic to assume the form of a normal animal. This spell resembles the Animal Form (Animal ••••• •) Boon—see **Scion: Demigod**, page 70. Like Animal Form, the Scion can assume the animal's physical traits while retaining his own mental abilities, including Epic Attributes. Unlike Animal Form, the Beast Shape spell does not give him the power to communicate with the animal whose shape he assumes. In fact, animals of that type sense something odd about the character and grow agitated near him unless he uses some other power to charm or fool them.

The spell's other chief difference from Animal Form is time. Casting the spell takes one minute, and it wears off at the next sunrise, though the caster may end the spell prematurely. The character may also elect to recast the spell while still in the form of an animal, spending the necessary Legend while his player repeats the dice roll at difficulty 3. A character must learn Beast Shape multiple times to take the form of different animals, though a character with Knacks such as Detail Variation (see **Scion: God,** p. 71) could use them to adjust an animal form's appearance.

New Relics

The following relics have strong ties to the Aesir and would make suitable Birthrights for their Scions. For more inspiration on suitable relics for the Aesir, see the individual Gods' entries in Chapter Three.

Fenris Arms Weaponry (Relic • to •••••)

Though he's usually somewhat grim, let it not be said that Tyr doesn't have a sense of humor, as evidenced by the name of this line of weaponry designed by the God himself. In his guise as a mortal engineer and arms dealer, Tyr develops small arms for various governments in Midgard. In addition to the mundane weapons manufacturing, an elite cadre of dwarves and other supernatural creatures work for the God to create weapons suitable for use by Aesir Scions. Even some of Tyr's fellow Aesir use these weapons on occasion.

A Fenris Arms relic uses the default traits of the mortal firearm it most resembles. For example, a Fenris Arms shotgun would use the Mossberg traits (see **Scion: Hero,** p. 203). The default Fenris Arms relic gives access to the War Purview, though these firearms often deal additional damage or have enhanced Accuracy (+1 per additional point spent on the Birthright). Some special models allow access to the Justice Purview as well, though Tyr usually reserves these for his own children or adopted Scions he especially favors.

Freyr's Sword (Relic •••••)

Once upon a time, Freyr gave his sword to his shield-man, Skirnir, as a reward for undertaking the quest to win Freyr his bride, Gerd. The sword eventually disappeared from myth, though its absence is foretold to doom Freyr at Ragnrök. If a Scion ends up with the sword, she would certainly draw the attention of its former owner. Freyr would like his sword back but is too honorable and valiant to demand it. He gave it up willingly to win the love of the most beautiful woman he'd ever seen; he won't compromise a deed that became such a part of his Legend.

The sword looks like fine spatha with a golden hilt and golden tracery along the blade. The sword grants access to the War Purview and deals +1L damage above the spatha template. More importantly, the sword can fly from its wielder's hand and fight by itself. To use this ability, the wielder spends a point of Legend and says whom she wants the sword to attack. The sword then attacks as if wielded by a character with Dexterity and Strength equal to its owner's Intelligence and Wits. Treat Epic Intelligence and Wits as Epic Dexterity and Strength respectively, though the sword has no Knacks. In place of Melee, the sword uses the highest of its owner's Academics, Awareness or Investigation. The sword's Join Battle equals the Join Battle of its owner. The sword does not take damage as a normal combatant does, but it can be grabbed or struck to the ground using grapple or disarm attacks. Once sent into battle, the sword fights until it defeats its target, its owner calls it back or it is somehow rendered unable to move.

No one knows if the sword would attack Freyr if commanded. One interpretation of an enigmatic phrase in the *Völuspá*, however, suggests that Surtr will wield Freyr's sword against its former master at Ragnarök.

Reginnaglar (Relic • to •••••)

Literally meaning "god-nails," the Reginnaglar were sacred iron nails hammered into the pillars of the temples of the Aesir. When empowered by the Gods, these nails become relics. They allow a Scion to access one or more of the God's associated Purviews.

Each Reginnaglar need not be empowered with the God's entire range of Purviews. For example, a Reginnaglar taken from a temple of Thor may give access to the Sky Purview or the Guardian Purview or both.

Rune-Inscribed Relics (Relic • or ••, Purviews)

Many Scions possess divinely created items inscribed with various runes. These items can take the form of pendants, carved bones or stones, jewelry or even tattoos. Each rune inscribed in this way allows access to one or two Purviews to which the rune's meaning relates. For example, a bracelet inscribed with the sun rune *sowilo* would provide access to the Sun Purview. For another example, see Eric Donner's *algiz* rune ring, which gives him access to the Guardian Purview (see **Scion: Hero**, pp. 73–74).

Sword of Atli (Relic •••••)

Atli was a Scion of Loki. In the Norse *Volsung Saga*, he appears as the evil lord who steals Gudrun, the widow of Sigurd, to gain the dead hero's treasure hoard. Gudrun took revenge by feeding him his two sons, then killing him. In stories of the Germanic people, Atli appears as a powerful king with many vassals.

Historically, Atli is best known as Attila the Hun, who led his hordes across Europe in the fifth century. Atli grew in power and influence as he became a force of terror and chaos in Midgard. His new bride, whom historians call Ildico, eventually killed him. She really was Gudrun, wife of the Scion Sigurd, and Atli wronged her by killing her brothers, robbing her husband's treasure and assaulting her. The part about feeding him his own sons was added later by storytellers, but Gudrun probably would have done it if she'd had the time. Thus ended the story of the Scion Atli, a great cautionary tale to Scions about the dangers of mortals Fatebound into enemies, if nothing else.

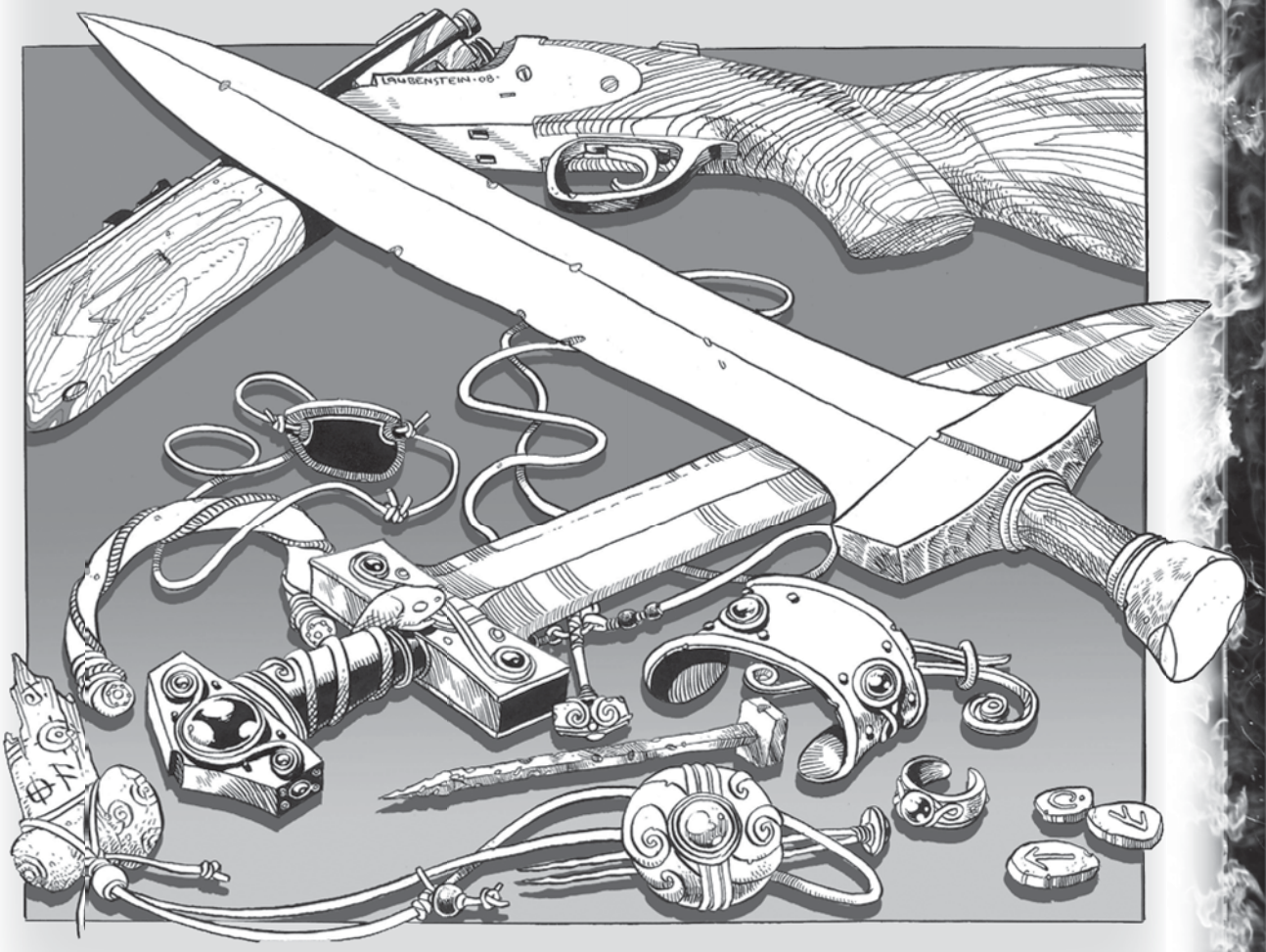
Atli's sword probably wasn't his originally. He claimed he took it off the body of a Scion of the Roman God Mars (a.k.a. Ares) after a battle and declared it a sign that he was destined to become a scourge of the Gods themselves. Of course, as a son of Loki and a great liar in his own right, this story might have been a line. In any case, treat the Sword of Atli as a xiphos that allows access to the War, Fire and Chaos Purviews and deals +2L damage.

LOSS AND MAIMING AS RELICS

Readers familiar with the themes of maiming in Norse myths—or readers who skipped ahead to Chapter Three—might notice that in place of traditional relics, some Aesir instead lost a body part to gain access to their various powers. Odin's loss of his eye to gain wisdom and Tyr's sacrifice of his hand to bind Fenris are the best known of such sacrifices, though disabilities such as Hod's blindness also play a role in Norse myths. These themes, while at the core of several Norse legends, also feature in the legends of other cultures, such as Osiris' loss of his phallus or the Inuit Goddess Sedna's lost fingers.

Scions may elect to follow the example of Odin and Tyr. Instead of owning a relic that gives them access to their Purviews, they lose some part of themselves. The advantages of not having to worry about losing the relic are obvious, as are the limitations caused by losing an eye, hand or other body part. Mechanically, this option functions the same way as a relic, with the character taking dots in the Birthright to gain access to various Purviews. As long as the Scion does not counter the disability through some special item or circumstance (such as Tyr wearing a prosthetic hand), treat him as owning and physically possessing his relic at all times. The loss becomes so much a part of the Scion's legend, however, that even should he reach the point where he no longer needs to use a relic (see **Scion: God**, p. 79), he cannot be made whole without sacrificing his Boons in the respective Purviews. For this reason, Odin *always* manifests missing his eye, and *all* of Tyr's incarnations lack one hand.

Players who select this option for their Scions are encouraged to pick a disability that is both symbolic and original. Odin already paid the price of an eye for knowledge of the mysteries of life and death, and Tyr sacrificed his hand for Justice. Fate expects new offerings from new Gods.





CHAPTER THREE

THE AESIR

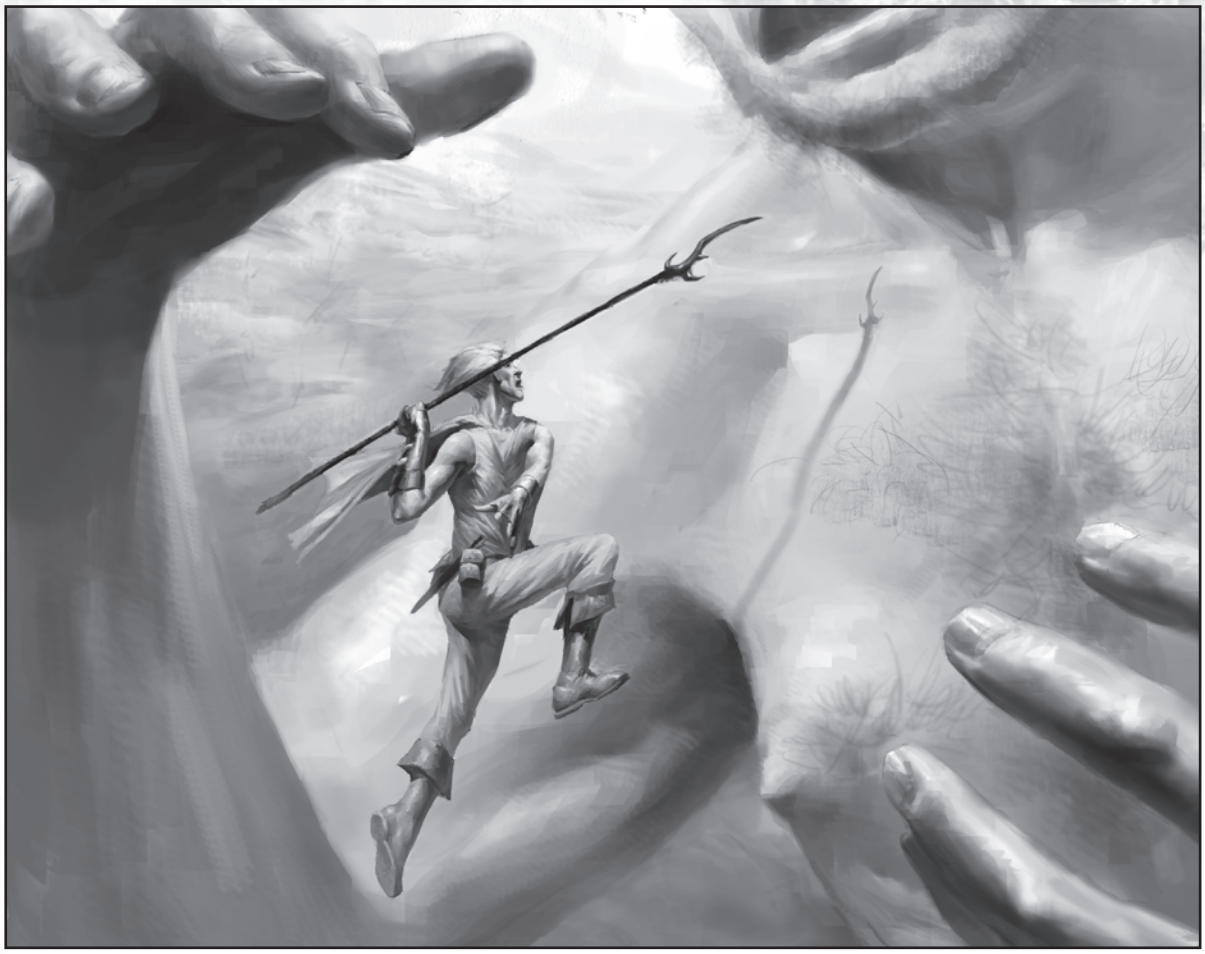
The most important element of any Aesir-centric **Scion** series is, of course, the Aesir themselves. The Norse Gods share a distinctive point of view. Even in series where the Aesir share the stage with other pantheons, players and Storytellers can play up the Aesir's cultural quirks to make the Norse Gods and their Scions stand out as interesting characters.

The Importance of Being Aesir

The Aesir differ from the other pantheons presented in **Scion** in one very important way: They know they're going to die. Indeed they are *fated* to die, most of them in a glorious battle that is at best a stalemate of mutually assured destruction. This realization affects how they interact with each other, mortals and other supernatural beings. In particular, it defines the Virtues treasured by the pantheon.

Aesir Virtues

The Gods prefer to say that they shaped the attitudes of their mortal worshipers, but the power of Fatebinding suggests the influence could go the other way. Or maybe the timeless power of Fate makes this distinction meaningless. Perhaps the Aesir and the ancient tribes of Northern Europe were destined for each other. Metaphysics aside, the Aesir embrace the Virtues needed for life in a hard and unforgiving land, where most fates are grim.



COURAGE

It might seem strange, but knowledge of their inevitable doom makes the Aesir brave. On one hand, they must steel themselves for their eventual end. On the other hand, they know that their next fight is likely *not* their last as long as their next fight is not Ragnarök. For example, Thor doesn't pause or doubt before he goes into battle against giants, monsters, other Gods or even Titans. Instead, he enters those conflicts knowing what his last battle must be. That knowledge strengthens his resolve and gives him confidence.

Unsurprisingly, most Aesir expect similar attitudes from their Scions. Scions should fight hard and act boldly until such a time as Fate decrees they must fall. As Freyr's envoy, Skirnir, trenchantly put it, "Fearlessness is better than a faint heart for any man who sticks his nose out-of-doors. The length of my life and the day of my death were fated long ago."

ENDURANCE

Of course, you can't reach the end of your tale if you give up midway. The Aesir persevere through hardships, adversity and conflicts. They do this because it is their Fate to endure until such time as they fall. Therefore, Aesir don't usually give up without a struggle, an attitude they shared with their mortal worshipers. Quitters and whiners couldn't wrest a living from the harsh North.

The Aesir expect everyone else to show the same stubborn persistence, especially their own kin. Most Aesir don't respect anyone who gives up and surrenders before the battle ends, be it an actual fight, a love affair or a friendly drinking contest. The Aesir hate losing, but they see less shame in failure than in not trying in the first place. When bested fairly and honorably, one should raise a cup to the victor and strive to do better next time—and not worry whether there will be a next time.

EXPRESSION

The Aesir rarely advocate a quiet and retiring lifestyle. They boast, they feast, they speak their minds. Even when they set out to deceive, their plans show a flair for the dramatic. Habitual tricksters such as Loki love the big reveal at the end of a ruse. Letting the mark know he was gulled is half the fun! The Aesir love a good story or song almost as much as a good fight, and they respect the tale-tellers and balladeers who create them.

A love of high-flown speech (including kennings) is balanced by a taste for straight talk. As the *Loddfafnirsmál* advises, "No true friend tells you only what you want to hear." This straightforwardness

occasionally gets the Aesir (and their Scions) into trouble, especially when they can't resist saying what they *really* think to someone who does *not* appreciate honesty. For instance, if you lust for the wife of your clan chief—or your supervisor at work—declaring your passion openly, however eloquently, can only cause problems for everyone involved.

Many Aesir respect a good liar, provided he can lie in creative and crowd-pleasing ways. Even brusque, blunt Thor could cunningly flatter and string along the greedy dwarf Alvis until the sun rose. The Aesir make a distinction, however, between someone who tricks and lies for pure mischief or to help the community, and an outright betrayer. A good liar and practical joker can be a valuable ally and an entertaining companion. An outright traitor deserves bloody vengeance and all the horrors of Helheim. With this distinction in mind, you can see how Thor tolerates and sometimes even likes having Loki around. Yet, this also explains why he and Odin both watch the Lie-Smith so closely as Ragnarök approaches.

Loyalty

While no one would call the Aesir a perfect family, their mutual doom gives them a special camaraderie. Nearly all of them will die in Ragnarök and this knowledge binds them together. Thor and Tyr might argue now and then, or Sif might feel a bit jealous of Freya at times, but they all know they will stand side by side against their foes to fight and die. Therefore, few rivalries and conflicts between the Aesir escalate to severe violence or long feuds. Of course, those few enduring animosities become legendary, such as the longstanding hatred between Heimdall and Loki, but such feuds are not the norm. In fact, many Aesir treat their fellows as honored companions and allies.

That is not to say that the Aesir don't battle, scheme and plot against one another. They do so quite frequently. They just remember that the God on the other side of a feud is a fellow warrior in the last battle. They also keep in mind that any of them might somehow find a way around their mutual doom, however slim that chance might seem. For this reason, most Aesir rarely interfere with the plans of their fellow Norse Gods (and their Scions). It also means that when they do interfere, it is often to further their own plans and plots to save their collective skins, not out of spite or jealously.

Old World Rules for New World Scions

The Aesir follow a number of traditions that can affect their Scions. A prudent Scion learns the customs of the Gods. Even if she doesn't like them, at least she'd better prepare to work around them.

Irreverence

In the harsh North, everyone from thrall to king had to pull his weight, whether through work, weapon-skill or wisdom. The Norse felt little awe for their kings or even their Gods, and little tolerance for the arrogant or the pompous. The Aesir share that view. Odin has to prove

That Magnificent Bastard

Perceptive readers might notice a lot of qualifying language in the descriptions of how the Aesir relate to one another. And while Odin might scheme, Thor might lose his temper, and Gods such as Vidar, Hel or Frigg keep their own priorities, one God causes nearly all of the "*usually* the Aesir do this" and "*often* they do that."

Loki.

Loki is not on the Aesir's side. In fact, he is fated to end up on the opposite side and bring about their fall. Loki knows it. The rest of the Aesir know it—they've read the *Eddas* (or heard them recited). Likely, all of the Aesir's Scions know it. Certainly, **Scion** Storytellers and players know it. That the Aesir keep him around at all is a testament to the trickster's charm, his usefulness in past troubles and the powers of Fate.

So remember, along with the classically Aesirish battle-brothers, feasting and quests to save Baldur, one powerful and very active God is having none of that. Loki's out for himself, and he doesn't care who gets hurt as long as it isn't him. Of all the Aesir, only Odin comes close to equaling Loki as a deceptive, double-talking bastard. At least to his credit, Odin wants to save the Aesir and works most of his deceits to advance their power and chance of survival.

Don't assume, however, that Loki just wants things to happen just as they are foretold. The *Eddas* say he dies by Heimdall's sword at Ragnarök, and to him, any trick where *he* gets hurt is a lousy one. So he tries to change things too. He might even have some plans that could stop Ragnarök altogether. It would be wise to remember, though, that he really doesn't care how things work out for his fellow Aesir.

his right to rule daily, by doing it well. Thor doesn't rest on his past glories, he still fights giants personally.

For Scions, this means that while their divine parents expect obedience, they don't expect anyone to bow, scrape and flatter. In fact, they'll put up with a lot of lip if you can prove your competence by getting results.

The Aesir also expect their Scions not to balk at embarrassment. In one famous incident (still a favorite story in Asgard and recounted in Chapter One), Thor put on a dress and pretended to be Freya in order to retrieve his hammer from the giant who stole it. He can laugh about it himself now, since he *did* get Mjolnir back—and the giant was dim enough to fall for the ruse! The giant died for his crime and stupidity too, so who gets the last laugh, hmm?

Kennings

One other aspect of Norse and Aesir culture that the Gods still use is kennings. A kenning is a cross between a metaphor and literary reference. It uses a term, perhaps taken from a famous story or saga, to refer to something else entirely, trusting those who hear it to know the tale or otherwise appreciate the significance of the reference. For example, when Freya cries, her tears turn to gold. Thus, "Freya's tears" is a kenning for gold. Likewise, someone who lost an eye might be told they paid "Odin's price," a reference to Odin plucking out his eye for a drink from Mimir's Well.

Modern Scions might find kennings interesting. Since their divine parents often use kennings, knowing about them helps in understanding already cryptic beings. More than any other time, the Aesir resort to kennings as part of warnings, prophecies and portents. Some do it for dramatic effect, others to make their words seem more mysterious, and some do it just to make things a bit tougher on their kids. However modern they talk most of the time, many an Aesir would not tell her child, "Go down to the marina," when she could say, "You will find what you seek where the wave steeds stable."

Scions can tell their Legend is growing when they find kennings about themselves. While few Norse skalds practice their craft in Midgard these days, the Aesir themselves work up kennings based on the quests, exceptional deeds or even spectacular failures of their progeny. A Scion named Sven who killed a giant by blowing it up with plastic explosive might find that some Aesir now refer to C-4 as "Sven's Hammer." A kenning can remind Scions (and their players) of great victories or embarrassing defeats, adding color to interactions with the Aesir and other creatures of Legend—though they can get old if overused.

Wergild

Historically, wergild was a system of compensation for causing another person serious harm, especially the death of a relative. It acted as a sort of life insurance. Having denied the dead man's relatives his labor, you supported them yourself by giving them money. If you didn't pay the price, then the injured family declared a blood feud against you. The price paid depended on the person's social status. A family might reject a price they felt was too low, or simply go straight for the bloody revenge, but the community at large preferred to avoid such a messy affair. The Norse felt great respect for arbitrators who could negotiate a wergild that all sides found equitable.

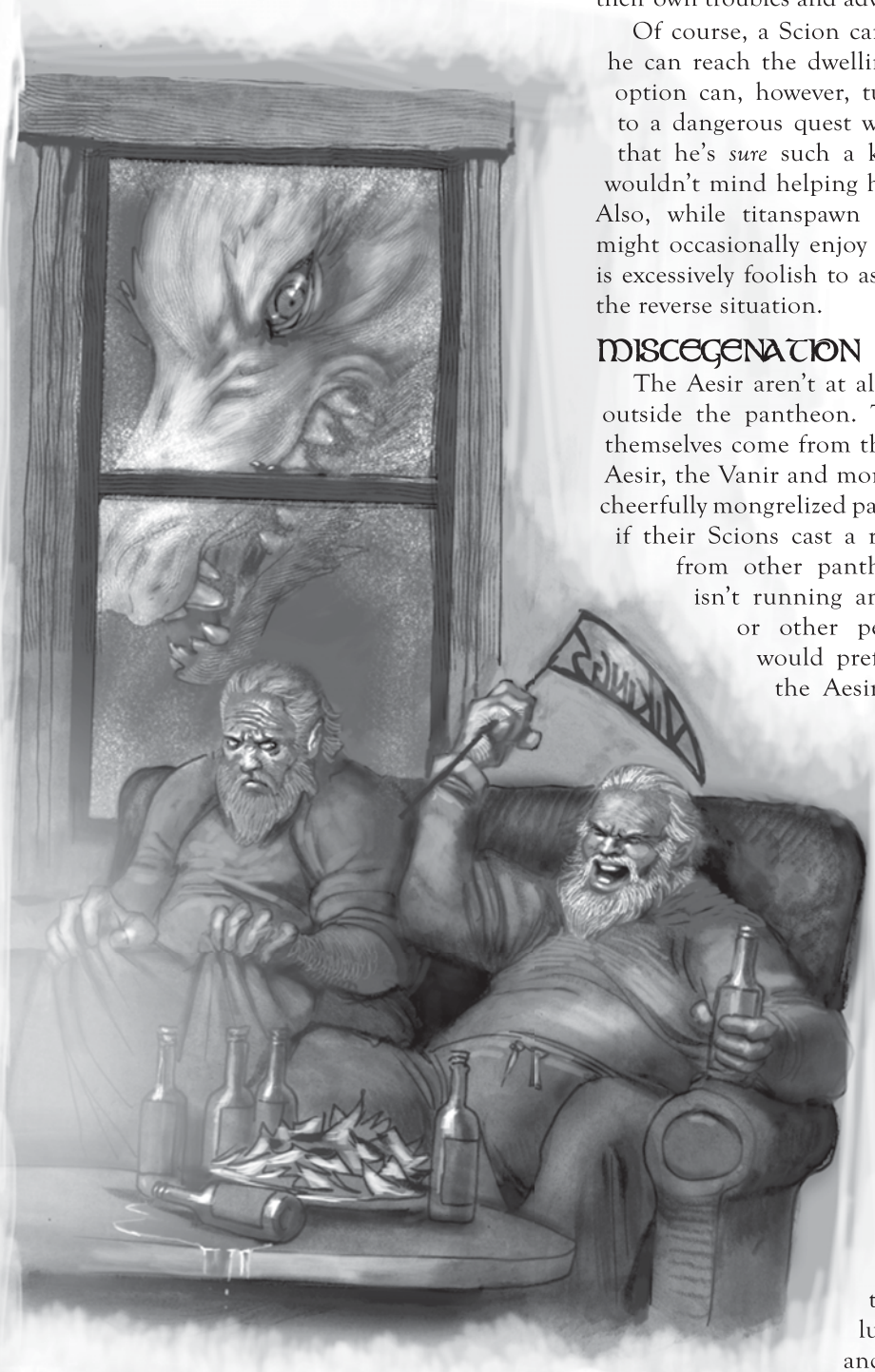
The Aesir handle wergild a bit differently than mortals did. Since they are mostly family, many conflicts and squabbles happen among siblings, cousins, parents and the like. More importantly, a God seldom dies at the hands of anyone but a Titan or other sworn enemies whom no one expects to follow the rules. In those rare cases when Aesir do kill each other, tempers are usually so inflamed that the injured party's friends almost certainly skip right past the wergild to revenge. When that happens, Odin takes care to put his foot down and stop a grudge before it escalates to lethal force.

Therefore, incidents of wergild among the Aesir usually involve their Scions. If a God harms another's Scion and that harm comes to light, the offending God must pay compensation. Likewise, if a Scion murders another Scion of the Aesir, they expect him to make amends to that Scion's family—namely, the divine parent. This system keeps the Aesir from wasting their Scions on silly feuds and keeps them focused on the Titans and Ragnarök. In some rare cases, an Aesir gives his own child in exchange for a Scion he killed. Most other times, Gods pay valuable treasures and servants to the injured party.

Wergild does not apply when the killing is just, or at least just by Aesir standards. If a newly minted Scion of Freyr challenges Thor to a fight to the death and the God strikes him dead with one blow, most Aesir agree the victim was a fool and everyone is well rid of him. Self-defense, wartime and killing any who serve the Titans are also usually free of any expectations of wergild. The Aesir typically invoke the custom in cases of death or injury from a moment of lost temper, or when death is accidental—as when Loki killed an otter that turned out to be the magician Hreidmar's shapeshifting son, and the Gods paid with the dwarf Andvari's cursed gold. Still, the death of the giant Thjazi was more or less an act of war, and the Aesir still paid wergild (of a sort) to his daughter Skadi.

hospitality

A more pleasant and amusing tradition among the Aesir is hospitality. Simply put, travelers who come to a person's home and act as guests should be treated as guests. A host should give the best hospitality he can, and the guest should accept it graciously. A host who insults or injures a guest should make amends, and vice-versa. Hosts ought to defend their guests in case of attack, while guests help to defend their hosts. Guests often give their hosts a gift before departing, but it is somewhat rude for a host to say he expects such consideration.



Even giants and Titans used to visit the Gods and were treated well, provided they came and left in peace. The Titan avatars Aegir and Rán hosted a legendary feast for the Aesir where the only trouble came from Loki.

For Scions, this means that various Aesir, their servants, other Scions and even some uncharacteristically civil titanspawn can show up and expect room and board for the night. Once in a while, a Scion of the Aesir could find Odin sitting on his couch in the Scion's pajamas, watching his HDTV. As one can imagine, such houseguests tend to bring their own troubles and adventures with them.

Of course, a Scion can do the same, assuming he can reach the dwellings of such beings. That option can, however, turn from a fun vacation to a dangerous quest when your host mentions that he's *sure* such a kind and generous guest wouldn't mind helping him with a *little* problem. Also, while titanspawn and even Titan avatars might occasionally enjoy the Aesir's hospitality, it is excessively foolish to assume similar courtesy in the reverse situation.

miscegenation

The Aesir aren't at all snobbish about mating outside the pantheon. The contemporary Aesir themselves come from three sources: the original Aesir, the Vanir and more than a few giants. As a cheerfully mongrelized pantheon, they don't object if their Scions cast a roving eye at individuals from other pantheons (if the Storyteller isn't running an all-Aesir series), giants or other people of Legend. They would prefer that such mates join the Aesir wholeheartedly and, if applicable, reject Dark Virtues. After all, even Loki's daughter Hel found a place in the pantheon... not loved, but part of the system.

Indeed, the Aesir seem to excel at changing the minds of titanspawn. They adopted the Muspel-spawned Loki (though some of them regret it). The giantesses Gerd and Skadi married into the pantheon (and no one regrets it). Perhaps the Titans loathe the Aesir so much because the Norse Gods keep luring away their offspring and emanations.

Changing Virtues

Norse mythology includes several examples of giants whom the Aesir count as friends, allies or spouses. Their subsequent behavior suggests divine Virtues rather than the Dark Virtues of the Titans. Characters might wonder if they can bring giants or other titanspawn to the Aesir's side themselves. Storytellers have various ways to handle such possibilities. None of these methods are exclusive, though all are optional.

• **Storyteller Fiat.** Titanspawn change when the Storyteller thinks their behavior indicates a clear rejection of Dark Virtues and replacement by pantheon Virtues. Since titanspawn are, by definition, Storyteller characters, there would seem to be no real issue. Still, players might want something a bit more objective in case their Scions actively set out to recruit titanspawn to the side of their pantheon.

• **Magic.** Fatebinding can influence behavior and identity itself; magic can strengthen these effects. The Storyteller can define a spell that severs a creature's connection to its source Titan and convert its Virtues. This act should involve some sort of reciprocal, Fate-bound oath between the titanspawn and a pantheon member. (The marriage between Freyr and Gerd represents such an arrangement.) The titanspawn must willingly accept this fundamental change to its nature, however, which surely requires a failed Zealotry roll for the titanspawn.

• **Fatebinding.** The Gods allegedly began as titanspawn who accidentally bound themselves to humanity. Storytellers can decide that if it happened once, it can happen again. As a suggestion, Virtues might shift when titanspawn strongly or extensively Fatebind themselves to mortals, in circumstances appropriate to the new Virtue that give the mortals a favorable reverence for the titanspawn.

For instance, suppose a group of gangbangers tries to mug some people, not realizing that the *very large* man is a frost giant. The giant uses Legend in the course of trashing the punks. Fatebinding occurs, and the mortals think the giant was incredibly brave in taking on the thugs. Ka-bing! One Dark Virtue switches to Courage.

The threshold for Fatebinding should be fairly high—perhaps a minimum number of Fatebinding points equal to the sum of the titanspawn's Legend and highest Dark Virtue. The total number of Fatebinding points, however, could come from multiple weak Fatebindings in a scene, or Fatebindings to many people at once, as well as one, single, powerful Fatebinding.

• **Deliberate Change of Legend.** An exceptionally persuasive Scion might convince a titanspawn to perform acts that contradict a Dark Virtue, support a divine Virtue and involve using Legend. If the creature does this enough times, Virtues can change. One deed is never enough, though. A titanspawn must establish a pattern of acting against its Titan nature. Once a creature performs acts that directly contradict all its Dark Virtues and support four pantheon Virtues, that new set of Virtues replaces all four Dark Virtues at once.

Spending Legend is vital in this process. Legend is not just a power resource to manage, it says what you *are*, in the story woven by Fate. A titanspawn who devotes Legend points to counter-Titanish deeds asserts a fundamental change in its nature.

For example, an eloquent Aesir Scion (such as Vali; see pp. 87-91) might convince a svartalf to join her in battling fire giants. Perhaps she argues that the giants threaten something the svartalf holds dear; perhaps the svartalf is simply smitten with her. Whatever the reason, the Scion persuades the svartalf to perform at least four deeds that each requires failing a Dark Virtue roll—each of which would suffice to put him on the Titans' collective shit list. The svartalf gives up an opportunity for personal power (violating Ambition). He helps an endangered person instead of taking the opportunity for a bit of torment (violating Malice). He passes up a chance to get it on with an attractive fellow svartalf working for the Scion's enemies (violating Rapacity). In the course of these actions, he helps thwart a plan that he knew came from Surtr himself (violating Zealotry). Throughout the story arc—and with much drama and episodes of backsliding—he demonstrates Courage, Endurance, Expression and Loyalty... Ka-bing! *All* his Dark Virtues disappear at once, replaced by Aesir Virtues.

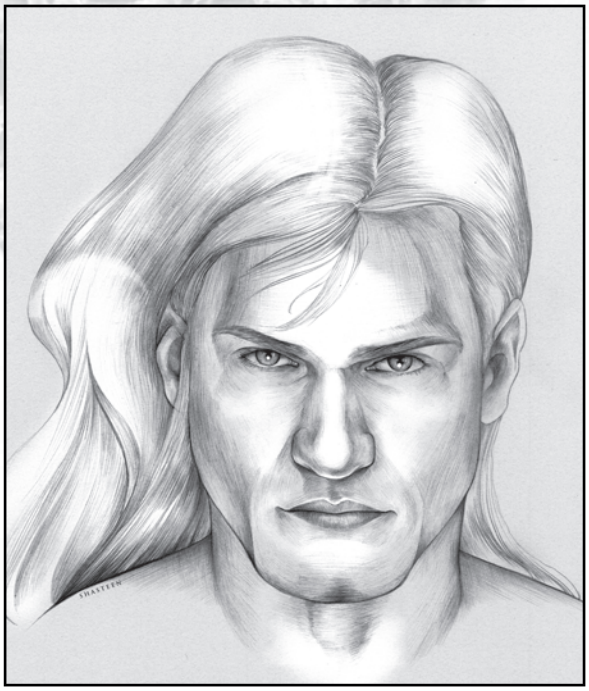
The latter two methods are not exclusive. At the Storyteller's option, an episode of Fatebinding could convert one of the svartalf's Dark Virtues on the spot and reduce by one the number of Dark Virtue-rejecting deeds that became necessary for the Legend-altering method.

Major Gods of the Aesir

What follows are traits for the major Aesir. Since the older and more powerful Aesir are so far beyond hero-level Scions, in many cases Storytellers can hand-wave game mechanics involving the likes of Thor and Odin. However, Storytellers running demigod- and God-level games should find this information useful when characters deal closely with these deities and the events that surround them (such as the demigod- and God-level stories in this book). Nothing here replaces the information about the Aesir from **Scion: Hero**. Rather, it supplements what that book provides. Enjoy.

Baldur

Bright, beautiful, beloved Baldur. No God among the Aesir is more cherished. Most Aesir love him for his cheerful demeanor, fair dealings and kind nature. Even those who do not care about such things appreciate his beauty... and remember that as long as he lives, the Gods might still avoid their fate.



In battle, Baldur is bold and brave and blinds his enemies with his glory. He often tries to charm his way out of fights, which usually works, but none who see him in battle would mistake his forbearance for cowardice. Baldur fights with grace and power, and without fear or despair. He seems more like a swashbuckling movie hero than a wild Norse warrior. In addition to his own prowess, and thanks primarily to the dealings of his mother, he has gained a variety of Boons that protect him from a myriad of harms.

Like his fellow God Vidar, Baldur is rumored to be a Scion who became a God through great deeds. Whoever his true divine parent might have been, Odin and Frigg recognized him as their son, and Frigg loves him dearly. Of course, since *everyone* loves Baldur (with the possible exception of Loki), it is unsurprising that even his stepparents or foster-parents would claim him as their offspring.

Baldur's cheerful demeanor is not always genuine. Sometimes he suffers dark dreams of his future death and the destruction of the Gods. Yet he also knows that should everything foretold come to pass, he will be reborn and outlive nearly all his fellow Aesir. These thoughts trouble him more often of late, though he usually tries to keep them hidden. In a way, he acts like a man dying of a terminal disease who doesn't want his family and friends to worry.

Attributes: Strength 9, Dexterity 10, Stamina 10; Charisma 11, Manipulation 9, Appearance 11; Perception 9, Intelligence 9, Wits 9

Virtues: Courage 5, Endurance 4, Expression 5, Loyalty 4

Abilities: Academics 3, Animal Ken 3, Art 5, Athletics 5, Awareness 4, Brawl 5, Command 3, Control 5, Empathy 3, Fortitude 4, Integrity 3, Marksmanship 5, Medicine 3, Melee 5, Politics 2, Presence 5, Science 3, Survival 3, Thrown 4

Birthrights: Avatar 4, Relic 5 (Mistletoe—War), Relic 5 (*Hringhorni*—Sun, Guardian), Sanctum 3 (Baldur's Hall, Breidablik)

Supernatural Powers:

Avatars: The Glory, The Sentinel

Boons: Aegis, Appropriated Vigil, Battle Cry, Bestial Endowment, Bleach, Blessing of Bravery, Burn, Come Running, Confer Immunity, Confer Knack, Dire Endowment, Divine Endowment, Divine Radiance, Divine Resolve, Eitr Antivenin, Epic Endowment, Eye of the Storm, Fire Immunity, Flare Missile, Giant, Heavenly Flare, Heroic Endowment, Human Endowment, I Say Thee Nay!, Inexorable Gravity, Morale Failure, Penetrating Glare, Safely Interred, Salvation Sacrifice, Sky's Grace, Solar Crown, Solar Prominence, Sun Chariot, Supernal Bestial Endowment, Supernal Human Endowment, Unseen Shield, Vigil Brand, Ward, Warrior Ideal (Swashbuckling Hero), Water Breathing

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 7 (Crushing Grip, Disfiguring Attack, Divine Bound, Divine Wrath, Holy Bound, Hurl to the Horizon, Making It Look Easy) Epic Dexterity 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**, And the Crowd Goes Wild, Fast As Thought, Roll With It), Epic Stamina 7 (all Knacks), Epic Charisma 10 (all Knacks), Epic Manipulation 6 (Gods' Honest, Implant False Memory, Hard Sell, Instant Hypnosis, Overt Order, Rumor Mill, Trendsetter), Epic Appearance 10 (all Knacks), Epic Perception 3 (Broad-Spectrum Reception, Perfect Pitch, Refined Palate), Epic Intelligence 4 (Know-It-All, Fast Learner, Star Pupil, Well-Read Virgin), Epic Wits 4 (Rabbit Reflexes, Monkey in the Middle, Perfect Imposter, Social Chameleon)

Unique Stamina Knack (Unkillable): Baldur has a special Knack gained through the workings of the Goddess Frigg. Simply put, the already quite resilient Baldur cannot be killed. Any damage that would kill him simply does not. He can still be damaged as much any God with his abilities can be, but he will not suffer true death. The exceptions are his sword, Mistletoe, which is rumored to have struck him down before he became a God, and the plant mistletoe. Such sources of damage ignore his divine soak, though the plant gains no supernatural power to harm him. This Knack also allows him to possess the "defensive" Boons he has listed, such as Fire Immunity and Eye of the Storm, without needing a Birthright for those Purviews.

More importantly, perhaps, all weapons are sworn not to harm Baldur. Whenever Baldur is aware of an attack, he can spend a point of Legend to have the weapon just bounce off him without inflicting any harm. Out of combat, Baldur can invite someone to attack him and immediately regain the point of Legend, because this peculiar "game" is itself a fundamental aspect of Baldur's legendary identity. This aspect of Baldur's invulnerability does not protect him against unexpected attacks, attacks made using mistletoe weapons or, again, Baldur's sword. As a final, odd condition, Baldur cannot use this defense if he disguises himself as another person or creature. If weapons don't recognize him, they don't know not to harm him.

Ultimate Attributes: Ultimate Charisma, Ultimate Appearance

Join Battle: 13

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 15, Damage 10L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed Heavy: Accuracy 14, Damage 13L, Parry DV 29, Speed 5

Unarmed Light: Accuracy 16, Damage 10L, Parry DV 30, Speed 4

Mistletoe: Accuracy 18, Damage 16L, Parry DV 30, Speed 3

Soak: 7A/27L/32B

Health Levels: -0x28/Incap

Dodge DV: 36 **Willpower:** 10

Legend: 12

Legend Points: 144

Other Notes: Baldur's spatha, Mistletoe, allows access to the War Purview and has Accuracy +3, Damage +6L, Defense +1 and Speed -1. It is also the only weapon that can truly kill Baldur due to various bargains and manipulations by Goddess Frigg. *Hringhorni* is a huge, shining longship that grants access to the Sun and Guardian Purviews. It can also assume the form of a 1956 Mercedes-Benz 190 SL Convertible. In either form, it has +1 Maneuverability and +1 Armor over the regular traits. (For traits on a longship, use the traits for a semi on p. 205 of **Scion: Hero**.)

Freya

As both leader of the valkyries and Goddess of Love and Fertility, Freya is a complex individual. She can be covetous and cruel, but she can also be forgiving and merciful. She loves the din of battle but also appreciates gentler things. As one of the first feminists, she doesn't bow to any man simply for being male, though she does recognize the authority, talent and wisdom of her fellow Gods regardless of sex. She has skill at magic and some gift of prophecy, though her powers pale compared to those of Odin or Frigg.

In battle, Freya becomes as terrible as she is beautiful. She often fights with an honor guard of valkyries, admirers among the Gods and other supernatural creatures, or her brother Freyr. (Freya might even recruit allies and lovers from other pantheons.) These affairs rarely last long, but Freya's suitors of the moment fight fiercely to please her. Like her brother, she also has a close relationship with the alfar and sometimes shares their company.

Freya often travels in her chariot drawn by two great cats and rarely appears without her beautiful necklace, Brisingamen. She once owned Frigg's falcon cloak but traded it to that Goddess long ago for some unknown favor. Though Freya leads the valkyries and lays claim to half the souls they bring to Valhalla, she usually leaves their administration to Odin.

Attributes: Strength 8, Dexterity 9, Stamina 9; Charisma 11, Manipulation 10, Appearance 11; Perception 8, Intelligence 8, Wits 8

Virtues: Courage 4, Endurance 4, Expression 5, Loyalty 4

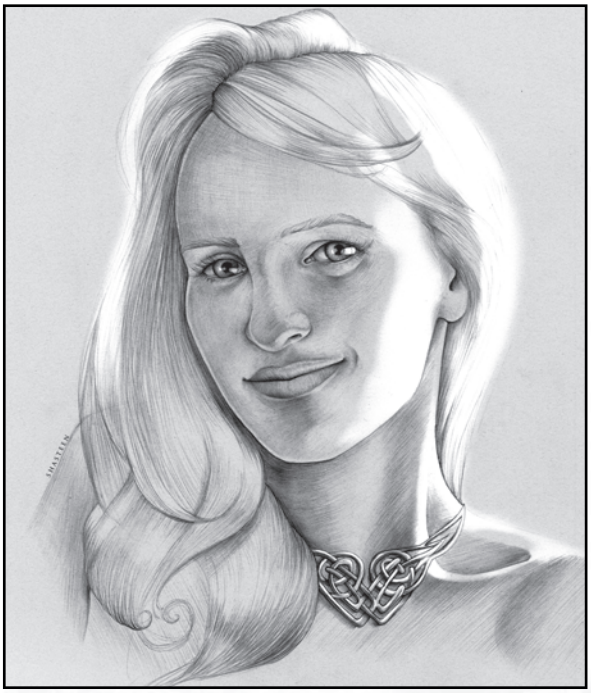
Abilities: Academics 3, Animal Ken 4, Art 5, Athletics 4, Awareness 4, Brawl 3, Command 5, Control 5, Craft 5, Empathy 5, Fortitude 3, Integrity 5, Marksmanship 4, Melee 5, Occult 5, Politics 2, Presence 5, Stealth 2, Survival 2, Thrown 4

Birthrights: Avatar 5, Creature 4 (Cats), Followers 5 (Valkyrie), Relic 5 (Chariot—Psychopomp), Relic 5 (Brisingamen—Health, Fertility, Animal, +2 on Magic Rolls), Relic 5 (Valkyrie Spear—Death), Sanctum 4 (Freya's Hall, Sessrumnir)

Supernatural Powers:

Avatars: The General, The Green, The Savior/The Scourge

Boons: Accelerate Growth, Animal Command (Dove, Falcon), Animal Communication (Dove, Falcon), Animal Form (Dove, Falcon), Army of One, Assess Health, Battle Cry, Battle Map, Bestial Endowment, Bless or Blight, Blessing of Ammunition, Blessing of Bravery, Blessing of Health/Curse of Frailty, Cleanse, Colossus Armor, Come Along, Control Aging, Cradlesong, Death Senses, Dire Endowment, Divine Endowment, Eitr Antivenin, Endless Season, Epic Endowment, Eternal Bloom, Euthanasia, Follower Army, Fury of War, Giant, Green Thumb, Heal/Infect, Heroic Endowment, Holy Font/Epidemic, Human Clay, Human Endowment, Human Hybrid, Impossible Hybrid, Magic 7, Morale Failure, Natural Camouflage, Plague/Cure, Prophecy 9, Rainbow Bridge, Restore/Wither, Ride Along, Ride Animal (Dove, Falcon), Supernal Bestial Endowment, Supernal Human Endowment, Surreal Draft, Terra Incognita, Twist Plants, Verdant Creation, Summon Ghost, Unbarred Entry, Unerring Orientation, Virility/Muliebrity, Warrior Ideal (Hot Valkyrie), Where Are You?



Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 6 (Crushing Grip, Disfiguring Attack, Divine Rampage, Divine Wrath, Holy Bound, Holy Rampage, Knockback Attack, Knockback Wave), Epic Dexterity 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**, Photographic Penmanship, Perfect Partner), Epic Stamina 6 (Body Armor, Damage Conversion, Holy Fortitude, Regeneration, Self-Healing, Skin-Shedding), Epic Charisma 10 (all Knacks), Epic Manipulation 7 (Advantageous Circumstances, Blurt It Out, Gods' Honest, Kill the Messenger, Overt Order, Rumor Mill, Trendsetter), Epic Appearance 10 (all Knacks that do not require negative appearance), Epic Perception 3 (Perfect Pitch, Refined Palate, Subliminal Warning, Sense Fatebond), Epic Intelligence 2 (Perfect Memory, Telepathy), Epic Wits 4 (Instant Assessment, Meditative Focus, Perfect Imposter, Psychic Profiler, Social Chameleon)

Spells: All from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod** plus others learned from various suitors and lovers.

Ultimate Attributes: Ultimate Charisma, Ultimate Appearance

Join Battle: 12

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 12, Damage 9L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed Heavy: Accuracy 11, Damage 12L, Parry DV 27, Speed 5

Unarmed Light: Accuracy 13, Damage 9L, Parry DV 29, Speed 4

Valkyrie Spear: Accuracy 18, Damage 13L, Parry DV 31, Speed 3

Soak: 6A/21L/25B

Health Levels: -0x22/Incap

Dodge DV: 35 **Willpower:** 9

Legend: 12 **Legend Points:** 144

Other Notes: Freya's chariot allows access to the Psychopomp Purview and can fly through the air when pulled by her cats or some similar supernatural creature. Freya's spear is identical to the valkyrie spears found on page 247 of **Scion: Demigod,** save that it also allows access to the Death Purview. Freya's Cats are giant sleek animals; treat them as big cats (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 330) with +1 to all Attributes, on top of the benefits of the Jotunblut Dire Endowment (see **Scion: God**, p. 108) given by Freya.

Freyr

Generally good natured and full of life, the Vanir Freyr is like a one-man party. Where he goes, wealth, sex and joy follow. He often accompanies Freya, though he rarely stays in one place for long. He has a great love for the alfar, who consider him their lord. He now seeks to learn what became of Alfheim since that realm's severance from Yggdrasil (see **Scion: God**, p. 123).

Freyr exults in battle as he exults in everything, and his ferocious energy inspires all who follow him. He once owned a magic sword that could fight on its own, but he gave it up as part of a plan to win his bride, the stunningly beautiful giantess Gerd. Though he tries not to let this bother him, he suspects the sword's loss will allow the Titan Surtr to kill him at Ragnarök. For now, Freyr uses an antler-tipped spear that serves him well in battle against many foes. As the male Aesir second only to Baldur in beauty and charm, though, Freyr often finds he does not need to fight to resolve matters.

Of all the major Aesir, Freyr spends the most time outside Asgard. He finds too much to occupy him in Midgard and other realms, though he hurries back should Asgard face danger from the Titans or their minions. As befits a traveler such as he, Freyr is rarely without his riding boar, Gullinbursti, or his size-changing ship, *Skidbladnir*.

Attributes: Strength 9, Dexterity 10, Stamina 9; Charisma 11, Manipulation 9, Appearance 11; Perception 8, Intelligence 7, Wits 9

Virtues: Courage 4, Endurance 4, Expression 5, Loyalty 5

Abilities: Academics 2, Animal Ken 5, Art 3, Athletics 5, Awareness 4, Brawl 5, Command 4, Control 5, Craft 4, Empathy 4, Fortitude 5, Integrity 3, Investigation 5, Larceny 3, Marksmanship 3, Medicine 2, Melee 4, Occult 2, Politics 3, Presence 5, Science 2, Survival 4, Thrown 4

Birthrights: Avatar 5, Followers 5 (Alfar), Relic 5 (*Skidbladnir*—Health, Fertility), Creature/Relic 5 [Gullinbursti—Animal (Boar), Sun], Relic 2 (Antler-tipped Spear—War)

Supernatural Powers:

Avatars: The General, The Glory, The Green, The Savior/Scourge

Boons: Accelerate Growth, Animal Command (Boar), Animal Communication (Boar), Army of One, Assess Health, Battle Cry, Battle Map, Bestial Endowment, Bleach, Bless or Blight, Blessing of Ammunition, Blessing of Bravery, Blessing of Health/Curse of Frailty, Burn, Cleanse, Colossus Armor, Come Along, Control Aging, Cradlesong, Dire Endowment, Divine Endowment, Divine Radiance, Eitr Antivenin, Endless Season, Epic Endowment, Eternal Bloom, Flare Missile, Follower Army, Giant, Green Thumb, Heal/Infect, Heavenly Flare, Heroic Endowment, Holy Font/Epidemic, Human Clay, Human Endowment, Human Hybrid, Impossible Hybrid, Inexorable Gravity, Marathon Sprinter, Morale Failure, Natural Camouflage, Otherworldly Portal, Penetrating Glare, Plague/Cure, Rainbow Bridge, Restore/Wither, Ride Along, Ride Animal (Boar), Solar Crown, Solar Prominence, Sun Chariot, Supernal Bestial Endowment, Supernal Human Endowment, Surreal Draft, Terra Incognita, Twist Plants, Unbarred Entry, Unerring Orientation,



Verdant Creation, Virility/Muliebrity, Warrior Ideal (Front-Line Commander), Where Are You?

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**, Making it Look Easy), Epic Dexterity 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**, Perfect Partner), Epic Stamina 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**, Divine Damage Conversion, Tireless Worker), Epic Charisma 10 (all Knacks), Epic Manipulation 5 (Blurt It Out, Gods' Honest, Knowing Glance, Overt Order, Rumor Mill, Takes One To Know One, Trendsetter), Epic Appearance 7 (all Knacks that do not require negative appearance), Epic Perception 4 (Broad-Spectrum Reception, Hear Prayers, Perfect Pitch, Predatory Focus, Refined Palate, Subliminal Warning), Epic Intelligence 4 (Fast Learner, Know-It-All, Language Mastery, Multitasking, Perfect Memory), Epic Wits 6 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**, Jack of All Trades, Talent Mirror)

Ultimate Attributes: Ultimate Charisma

Join Battle: 13

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 15, Damage 10L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed Heavy: Accuracy 14, Damage 13L, Parry DV 29, Speed 5

Unarmed Light: Accuracy 16, Damage 10L, Parry DV 30, Speed 4

Antler-tipped Spear: Accuracy 15, Damage 14L, Parry DV 29, Speed 5

Soak: 7A/27L/31B

Health Levels: -0x28/Incap

Dodge DV: 36 **Willpower:** 10

Legend: 12 **Legend Points:** 144

Other Notes: Freyr's ship, *Skidbladnir*, allows access to the Health and Fertility Purviews and can shrink from a massive sailing ship to fit into Freyr's pocket. Gullinbursti is a magical boar crafted from gold by the dwarves. It functions as a nemean boar with Legend 5 (See **Scion: Hero**, pp. 312 and 329) but also serves as a relic that allows access to the Sun and Animal Purviews. Freyr's spear is Accuracy +1, Damage +4, Defense +0 and Speed 5, and allows access to the War Purview. His sword, now no longer in his possession, was far more powerful and could fight on its own.

FRIGG

Though she doesn't look it, Frigg is one of the most powerful of the Aesir. Thanks to her prowess in magic and prophecy, Frigg doesn't usually need to fight to defend herself or anyone under her protection. She's an excellent shot, however, and not bad with a spear—skills she learned while hunting with Odin and her children.

Frigg matches Odin as a parental figure among the Aesir. She cares for all her children, grandchildren and the younger Gods, often giving them motherly advice or aiding them in minor ways when she meets them. She reserves the largest share of her maternal affection for Baldur, though,

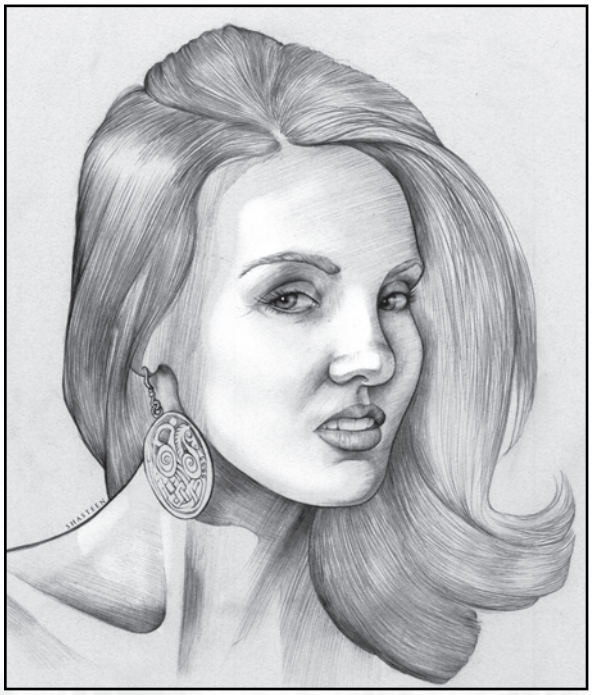
her "dear bright boy." Her son's tragic fate preoccupies her thoughts. Since the day Frigg foresaw Baldur's death, she has plotted and schemed to find some way to save him and incidentally prevent Ragnarök. If Frigg cannot definitely prevent his death, however, she decided long ago that she would rather see Ragnarök come to pass and the Gods die, since Baldur is fated to live again afterward. She also decided to work against any plans to prevent the last battle that do not also protect her son or assure his resurrection. She does not share this decision with the other Aesir. None of them suspect that Frigg would help destroy them to save her beloved Baldur.

Eleven lesser Goddesses attend Frigg and undertake tasks for her. The principle three are Fulla, her lady-in-waiting; Hlin, her bodyguard; and Gna, her messenger. The three are completely loyal to Frigg and would even defy Odin's wishes to obey the will of their mistress. The others are named Lofn, Sojfn, Syn, Gefjon, Snetra, Eir, Var and Vor. Those eight have a secret known only to Frigg and her other three attendants: They don't actually exist. They are aspects of Frigg herself, projected using her magic and the Co-Location Boon, that she uses to convey messages and perform tasks where her own presence would attract too much attention. Frigg can pose as any of these other attendants as needed, even more than one at once.

Attributes: Strength 7, Dexterity 7, Stamina 8; Charisma 11, Manipulation 10, Appearance 9; Perception 10, Intelligence 11, Wits 10

Virtues: Courage 3, Endurance 5, Expression 5, Loyalty 4

Abilities: Academics 5, Animal Ken 3, Art 4, Athletics 2, Awareness 5, Brawl 2, Command 5, Control 3, Craft 5, Empathy 4, Fortitude 5, Integrity 3, Investigation 3, Marksmanship 4, Medicine 5, Melee 3, Occult 5, Politics 4, Presence 4, Science 5, Stealth 3, Survival 3



Birthrights: Avatar 5, Sanctum 3 (Frigg's Hall, Fensalir), Relic 5 (Feathered Cloak—Sky, Animal)

Supernatural Powers:

Avatars: The Storm, The Wyrd

Boons: Animal Aspect (Falcon), Animal Command (Falcon), Animal Communication (Falcon), Animal Form (Falcon), Assess Health, Bestial Endowment, Bless or Blight, Blessing of Health/Curse of Frailty, Cleanse, Cloud Body, Cloud Sculptor, Co-Location, Come Along, Cradlesong, Create Air, Create Animal (Falcon), Dire Endowment, Divine Endowment, Earth Armor, Earth Travel, Echo Sounding, Eitr Antivenin, Epic Endowment, Giant, Heal/Infect, Heroic Endowment, Human Endowment, Levin Fury, Magic 10, Marathon Sprinter, Mystery 9, Otherworldly Portal, Prophecy 10, Rainbow Bridge, Ride Along, Ride Animal (Falcon), Safely Interred, Shaping, Sky's Grace, Storm Augmentation, Supernal Bestial Endowment, Supernal Human Endowment, Terra Incognita, Tornado Tamer, Unbarred Entry, Unerring Orientation, Weather Husbandry, Where Are You?, Wind Grapple, Wind's Freedom

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 1 (Crushing Grip), Epic Dexterity 3 (Untouchable Opponent, Trick Shooter, Cat's Grace), Epic Stamina 4 (Damage Conversion, Regeneration, Self-Healing, Solipsistic Well-Being), Epic Charisma 10 (all Knacks), Epic Manipulation 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**, Implant False Memory, Kill the Messenger, Secondhand Persuasion), Epic Appearance 7 (Compelling Presence, Detail Variation, Lasting Impression, My Eyes are Up Here, Perfect Actor, Serpent's Gaze, Tailor Made, Undeniable Resemblance), Epic Perception 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**, Clairvoyance, Sense Fatebond), Epic Intelligence 10 (all Knacks), Epic Wits 10 (all Knacks)

Spells: All listed in **Scion: Hero**, **Scion: Demigod** and **Scion: God**, as well as many more.

Ultimate Attributes: Ultimate Charisma, Ultimate Intelligence

Join Battle: 15

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 9, Damage 8L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed Heavy: Accuracy 8, Damage 11B, Parry DV 8, Speed 5

Unarmed Light: Accuracy 10, Damage 8B, Parry DV 9, Speed 4

Soak: 4A/11L/15B

Health Levels: -0x13/Incap

Dodge DV: 15 **Willpower:** 10

Legend: 12 **Legend Points:** 144

Other Notes: Frigg's feathered cloak allows the wearer to access the Sky and Animal Purviews. In addition, the cloak's wearer can assume the form of a falcon as if he possessed the Animal Form (Falcon) Boon (see **Scion: Demigod**, p. 70).

Heimdall

Heimdall is the first God to greet visitors who cross Bifröst, the Rainbow Bridge that leads to Asgard. He's also a formidable warrior with keen senses and a cunning mind. Few creatures can fool or sneak past Heimdall, and fighting through him is no easy prospect either. Even when Heimdall does not stand watch over Bifröst, his divine abilities let him keep tabs on the various pathways in and out of Asgard. Heimdall isn't simply Asgard's watchman, he serves as its ultimate counter-intelligence and anti-intrusion expert. This keen-witted God readily adopts the latest mortal technology and ideas, even the relics and magic of other pantheons if they help him keep Asgard safe. He often seems paranoid, but—as he dryly reminds accusers—Asgard really does have enemies.

Heimdall and Loki are fated to slay each other at Ragnarök. Asgard's watchman does not look forward to this fate, but neither does he waste time fretting about it. If anyone could somehow avert his fate in Ragnarök, Heimdall would happily continue as he always has, perhaps taking a deserved break from his duties. If not, he is satisfied to kill such a troublesome and dishonorable foe as Loki.

Legend calls Heimdall the child of the nine daughters of the Titan avatars Aegir and Rán. He has no strong attachment to his mothers or grandparents or the aquatic realms they favor, though. Another legend says that as Rig, he fathered (or at least defined) the various classes of Nordic society.

In addition to whatever arms and armor he deems necessary or appropriate, Heimdall usually carries his Gjallarhorn and his sword, Höfud, or "Head." He always carries these items while guarding Bifröst. He sounds the horn softly when a welcome God or Scion arrives in Asgard. He sounds a louder tone when giants or other threats approach. On the day of Ragnarök, Heimdall will sound his horn so loudly that all with Aesir blood will hear the call no matter where they are in the Nine Worlds.

Attributes: Strength 10, Dexterity 10, Stamina 10; Charisma 8, Manipulation 8, Appearance 9; Perception 11, Intelligence 8, Wits 10

Virtues: Courage 5, Endurance 5, Expression 3, Loyalty 5

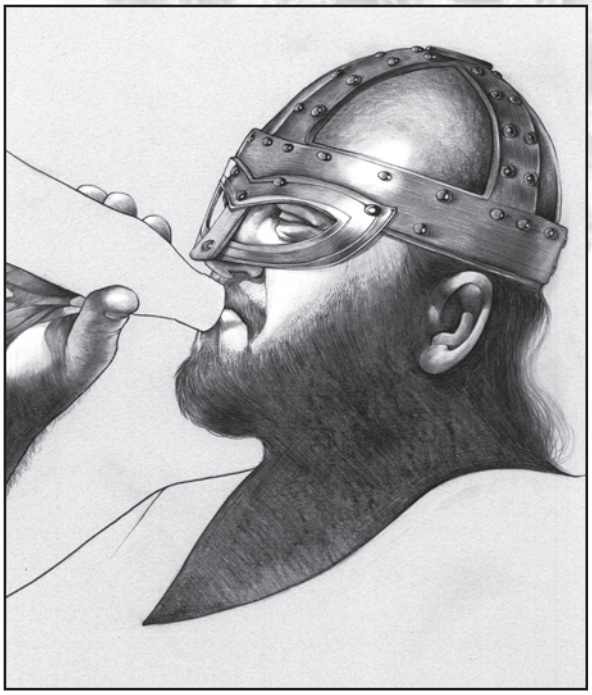
Abilities: Academics 3, Animal Ken 3, Athletics 5, Awareness 5, Brawl 4, Command 5, Control 4, Empathy 2, Fortitude 5, Integrity 5, Investigation 5, Larceny 2, Marksmanship 5, Melee 5, Occult 2, Presence 3, Stealth 5, Survival 4, Thrown 4

Birthrights: Avatar 5, Creature 4 (horse, Gulltoppr), Relic 5 (Höfud—Sun), Relic 5 (Gjallarhorn—Animal, Guardian), Sanctum 4 (Heimdall's Hall, Himinbjörg)

Supernatural Powers:

Avatars: The Glory, The Sentinel

Boons: Aegis, Animal Command (Ram, Seal), Animal Communication (Ram, Seal), Animal Form (Seal), Appropriated Vigil, Army of One, Battle Cry, Bestial Endowment, Bleach, Burn, Colossus Armor, Come Along, Come Running, Confer Immunity, Confer Knack, Dire Endowment, Divine Endowment, Divine Radiance, Divine Resolve, Eitr Antivenin, Epic Endowment, Flare Missile,



Giant, Heavenly Flare, Heroic Endowment, Human Endowment, I Say Thee Nay!, Inexorable Gravity, Marathon Sprinter, Otherworldly Portal, Penetrating Glare, Rainbow Bridge, Ride Along, Salvation Sacrifice, Solar Crown, Solar Prominence, Sun Chariot, Supernal Bestial Endowment, Supernal Human Endowment, Terra Incognita, Unbarred Entry, Unerring Orientation, Unseen Shield, Vigil Brand, Ward, Warrior Ideal (Steadfast Defender), Water Breathing, Water Control, Where Are You?

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**, Knockback Wave), Epic Dexterity 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**, Anti-Gravity Climber, Perfect Partner), Epic Stamina 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**, Tireless Worker), Epic Charisma 2 (Benefit of the Doubt, Inspirational Figure, Never Say Die), Epic Manipulation 4 (Knowing Glance, Overt Order, Takes One to Know One, Stench of Guilt), Epic Appearance 3 (Blinding Visage, Compelling Presence, Serpent's Gaze), Epic Perception 10 (all Knacks), Epic Intelligence 6 (Blockade of Reason, Cipher, Fight with Your Head, Know-It-All, Language Mastery, Multitasking, Perfect Memory), Epic Wits 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**)

Ultimate Attributes: Ultimate Perception

Join Battle: 15

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 14, Damage 11L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed Heavy: Accuracy 13, Damage 14L, Parry DV 28, Speed 5

Unarmed Light: Accuracy 15, Damage 11L, Parry DV 30, Speed 4

Höfud: Accuracy 17, Damage 16L, Parry DV 31, Speed 3

Soak: 7A/27L/32B

Health Levels: -0x28/Incap
Dodge DV: 36 **Willpower:** 10
Legend: 12 **Legend Points:** 144
Other Notes: Heimdall's sword, Höfud, is a spatha with Accuracy +2, Damage +5L, Defense +2 and Speed 3. Heimdall's Gjallarhorn in addition to allowing access to the Animal and Guardian Purviews, can be heard by whoever the blower wishes. Anyone who hears the horn can also receive a short message from the blower, such as, "Thor comes to Asgard and he is alone," or, "The giants come; the end battle comes!" The message is not spoken, simply understood. Heimdall's horse, Gulltoppr, "Gold-Top," is treated as a horse (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 331) with +1 to all Attributes on top of the benefits of the Jotunblut Dire Endowment (see **Scion: God**, p. 108) given by Heimdall.

hel

Dour, gloomy and generally not much fun at parties, Hel rules over the realm of the dead and keeps her distance from her fellow Aesir. She doesn't have a particularly warm relationship with her father (Loki), with her monstrous brothers (Fenris and Jörmungandr) or with anyone else. Her only pleasure is tormenting the dead souls trapped in her realm, and even that gets old with the lack of newly deceased entering her realm over the recent centuries. Even other Gods of Death find Hel depressing.

Hel seldom bothers to enter combat herself. She rarely sees the point of fighting when she has whole legions of the dead to do her dirty work. In most cases, the mere sight of her half-rotted, corpselike body as well as her status as the Queen of Helheim sends most enemies running. Should Hel need to fight, she wields a dagger called Famine with terrible grace, and enemies find her incredibly difficult to injure.



Some Gods wonder if Hel's mean-spirited, gloomy, harsh exterior hides an unloved child who never truly knew warmth and could somehow be reached—through the power of true love, perhaps. These people should probably stop watching 1980s teenage romances. Hel is a bitter, arrogant Goddess whose best feature just might be her uncaring neutrality in most affairs. Her façade of cold, impartial cruelty hides a heart filled with... more cold, impartial cruelty. Anyone who tries to find anything else in Hel pretty much deserves whatever he gets.

Attributes: Strength 8, Dexterity 10, Stamina 10; Charisma 5, Manipulation 11, Appearance 11; Perception 9, Intelligence 9, Wits 10

Virtues: Courage 4, Endurance 5, Expression 3, Loyalty 3

Abilities: Academics 3, Art 3, Athletics 3, Awareness 4, Brawl 3, Command 5, Control 5, Fortitude 5, Integrity 5, Investigation 5, Melee 5, Occult 4, Politics 4, Presence 5, Science 3, Stealth 5, Survival 3

Birthrights: Avatar 3, Followers 5 (Undead Legions), Guide 4 (Ganglati and Ganglot), Relic 5 (Famine—Death, Health), Sanctum 5 (Hel's Hall, Eliudnir)

Supernatural Powers:

Avatars: The Reaper

Boons: Battle Cry, Bestial Endowment, Blessing of Health/Curse of Frailty, Control Aging, Death Senses, Dire Endowment, Divine Endowment, Eitr Antivenin, Epic Endowment, Euthanasia, Exorcism, Follower Army, Ghost Control, Giant, Haunted Mists, Heroic Endowment, Holy Font/Epidemic, Human Endowment, Magic 5, Morale Failure, Mother's Touch, Mystery 8, Open Underworld Portal, Plague/Cure, Restore/Wither, Strike Dead/Deny Death, Summon Ghost, Supernal Bestial Endowment, Supernal Human Endowment, Unquiet Corpse, Warrior Ideal (Grim Reaper). ***Note:*** Hel's never been known to use the positive applications of the Health Purview and probably can't.

Spells: All from **Scion: Hero**, as well as Fateful Connection and Fate Prison

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 2 (Crushing Grip, Divine Wrath), Epic Dexterity 5 (Cat's Grace, Escape Artist, Monkey Climber, Untouchable Opponent, Whirlwind Shield), Epic Stamina 7 (all Knacks), Epic Charisma 2 (Charmer, Crowd Control), Epic Manipulation 10 (all Knacks), Epic Appearance 10 (all Knacks that do not require divine beauty), Epic Perception 3 (Predatory Focus, Sense Fatebond, Unfailing Recognition), Epic Intelligence 5 (Blockade of Reason, Cipher, Instant Translation, Know-It-All, Language Mastery, Perfect Memory), Epic Wits 6 (Eternal Vigilance, Instant Assessment, Meditative Focus, Opening Gambit, Opening Salvo, Scathing Retort)

Ultimate Attributes: Ultimate Manipulation, Ultimate Appearance (Negative)

Join Battle: 14

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 13, Damage 9L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed Heavy: Accuracy 12, Damage 12L, Parry DV 17, Speed 5

Unarmed Light: Accuracy 14, Damage 9L, Parry DV 18, Speed 4

Famine: Accuracy 17, Damage 12L, Parry DV 19, Speed 3

Soak: 7A/27L/32B

Health Levels: -0x28/Incap

Dodge DV: 24 **Willpower:** 9

Legend: 12 **Legend Points:** 144

Other Notes: Treat Hel's dagger, Famine, as a hadseax, but add +1 Accuracy and +1 Damage to the template (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 202), and make its Speed 3. It allows use of the Death Purview as well as the negative aspects of Health Boons such as Blessing of Health/Curse of Frailty and Restore/Wither. Hel does not bother carrying a relic to channel her War Boons. For Information about Helheim, see **Scion: Demigod,** pages 157–160.

In her hall, Eliudnir, Hel's maidservant and manservant, Ganglati and Ganglot (loosely translated, Slowpoke and Idler), attend her. Use the traits for undead in **Scion: Demigod** to represent them; remove all the Epic Appearance Knacks except for those based on negative Appearance and add one dot of Epic Strength and Stamina. They may serve as four-dot Guides for her Scions. (They'd be worth five dots for their position and knowledge, but they *never* answer questions or assist in a timely manner.)

Loki

Loki is detailed in **Scion: God**, page 254**.** Storytellers who grant him mastery of the Illusion Purview, however, should add all that Purview's Boons to his character write-up, plus The Trickster. See Chapter One for his role in Ragnarök and other major events in Norse mythology.

In the tales of the Aesir, Loki becomes more sinister and less capricious as time progresses. He goes from a lovable (if sometimes irritating) trickster in the earliest stories to a betrayer of the Gods and engineer of murder and mayhem. Storytellers must decide for themselves whether this is his true nature finally revealing itself, Fate binding him to darker deeds or a personality change due to other events.

Odin

The All-Father. The One-Eyed. The Gray Wanderer. Lord of the Gallows. Odin has many names and epithets. All are appropriate and yet all fall short of aptly describing one of the oldest and most powerful of all Gods. Odin rules the Aesir not because he is the best warrior, the wisest thinker or even the most cunning schemer. He rules because he is *nearly* all of those things, and many more, all at once. Thor and others could best him in a straight fight, but none of them can match his keen wits and other powers. His own wife bears greater gifts of magic and prophecy, but she cannot equal him in battle. Loki devises tricks and ploys that put Odin's to shame, but he lacks Odin's discretion and strength at arms. Odin's rule, in truth his very existence, is a constant balancing act. He must temper strength with prudence and guile. He must know when to do battle, when to advise and when to deceive. These truths of his nature, plus the ever-approaching doom of the Aesir, weigh heavily on the All-Father. These days, even his most cunning disguises betray a sense of weariness just below the surface.

In battle, Odin acts as appropriate to his needs. He might overpower foes completely to teach them (or someone else) a necessary lesson. He might fight fairly to show respect for a potential ally—or he might use every dirty trick in the book (and invent new ones) to show his contempt for a foe before killing him. Odin fights the way he lives: *doing what must be done*.

At the center of Odin's being lies his awareness of cost and sacrifice. He paid dearly for his gift of foresight so that he might protect the Aesir and his own rule, and he is paying still. He has manipulated, used and abused his children, his allies and himself to do what he feels must be done. In the days of old, he encouraged mortals to feed his altars with human blood. In modern times, he manipulates God and Scion alike to try to prevent Ragnarök and defeat the escaped Titans. He can perform great evil and cruelty, but this grim and often deceitful God offers no apology for those actions he considers necessary to assure the survival of the Aesir and the World.

Attributes: Strength 10, Dexterity 8, Stamina 11; Charisma 11, Manipulation 11, Appearance 8; Perception 11, Intelligence 11, Wits 11

Virtues: Courage 5, Endurance 5, Expression 4, Loyalty 4

Abilities: Academics 5, Animal Ken 5, Art 5, Athletics 4, Awareness 5, Brawl 5, Command 5, Control 4, Craft 4, Fortitude 5, Integrity 5, Investigation 5, Larceny 2, Marksmanship 2, Medicine 1, Melee 5, Occult 5, Politics 5, Presence 4, Science 3, Stealth 3, Survival 4, Thrown 4

Birthrights: Avatar 5, Creature 5/Relic 1 (Sleipnir—Psychopomp), Creature 5 (Freki and Geri), Guide 5 (Hugin and Munin), Relic 5 (Gungnir—Sky, Justice), Relic 5 (Draupnir), Relic 5 (Aegishjalmarr—War), Sanctum 5 (Odin's Hall, Valaskjálf, and other holdings in Asgard)

Supernatural Powers:

Avatars: The General, The Reaper, The Trickster, The Way, The Wyrd



Boons: Animal Communication (Horse, Raven, Wolf), Animal Control (Horse, Raven, Wolf), Animal Form (Raven, Wolf), Army of One, Battle Cry, Battle Map, Bestial Endowment, Blessing of Ammunition, Blessing of Bravery, Cloud Body, Cloud Sculptor, Co-Location, Colossus Armor, Come Along, Create Air, Create Animal (Raven), Death Senses, Dire Endowment, Divine Endowment, Dream Wrack, Dreamcraft, Dreamworld, Eitr Antivenin, Epic Endowment, Euthanasia, Exorcism, False Pretenses, Fantastic Vista, Follower Army, Fool's Gold, Fury of War, Ghost Control, Giant, Guilt Apparitions, Haunted Mists, Heroic Endowment, Hidden Name, Human Endowment, Judgment, Levin Fury, Loaned Identity, Magic 10, Marathon Sprinter, Morale Failure, Mother's Touch, Mystery 10, Open Underworld Portal, Otherworldly Portal, Overworld Judgment, Prophecy 10, Psychic Prison, Rainbow Bridge, Ride Along, Ride Animal (Raven, Wolf), Sanctify Oath, Scarlet Letter, Shield of Righteousness, Sky's Grace, Stolen Face, Storm Augmentation, Strike Dead/Deny Death, Summon Ghost, Supernal Bestial Endowment, Supernal Human Endowment, Surreal Draft, Sympathy Pains, Terra Incognita, The Best Trick, The Subtle Knife, Tornado Tamer, Unbarred Entry, Unerring Orientation, Unquiet Corpse, Warrior Ideal (numerous), Weather Husbandry, Where Are You?, Wind Grapple, Wind's Freedom

Spells: All listed in **Scion: Hero**, **Scion: Demigod** and **Scion: God**, and many more.

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 7 (all Knacks), Epic Dexterity 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**), Epic Stamina 10 (all Knacks), Epic Charisma 10 (all Knacks), Epic Manipulation 10 (all Knacks), Epic Appearance 2 (Blinding Visage, Compelling Presence, Detail Variation, My Eyes are Up Here, Serpent's Gaze, Tailor Made, Undeniable Resemblance), Epic Perception 10 (all Knacks), Epic Intelligence 10 (all Knacks), Epic Wits 10 (all Knacks)

Ultimate Attributes: Ultimate Stamina, Ultimate Charisma, Ultimate Manipulation, Ultimate Perception, Ultimate Intelligence, Ultimate Wits

Join Battle: 16

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 13, Damage 11L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed Heavy: Accuracy 12, Damage 14L, Parry DV 28, Speed 5

Unarmed Light: Accuracy 14, Damage 11L, Parry DV 29, Speed 4

Gungnir: Accuracy 16, Damage 16L, Parry DV 29, Speed 5

Soak: 14A/58L/63B (Aegishjalmarr, +4A/4L/6B)

Health Levels: -0x52/Incap

Dodge DV: 34 **Willpower:** 10

Legend: 12 **Legend Points:** 144

Other Notes: Treat Odin's spear, Gungnir, as a hasta with Accuracy +3, Damage +5L, Defense +0 and Speed 5. It allows access to the Sky and Justice Purviews. The oaths and treaties of the Aesir are carved on its shaft. Odin's helm, Aegishjalmarr, provides access to the War Purview. Odin' golden arm-ring, Draupnir, makes eight copies of itself every ninth day, providing unlimited wealth for its owner. (The copies do not have the self-duplication ability.) The link of Fate between the arm-ring and its duplicates incidentally enables Odin to speak across the Worlds to anyone else who wears a copy of the ring. Odin's needs no Birthright for his use of Death, Magic, Mystery, Prophecy and the ways of the Animal Purview. Instead, the loss of his eye acts as a Birthright for those Purviews. Should someone ever return Odin's eye to him, it would be as if he lost a Birthright for those Purviews. At the moment, Odin lacks a suitable Birthright through which to channel Illusion Boons.

For Sleipnir, Odin's horse, start with the horse template from p. 331 of **Scion: Hero** but add two dots to all Physical and Social Attributes. Then give the steed Legend 6, Epic Dexterity 5 (Lightning Sprinter), Epic Stamina 5 and the benefits of the Jotunblut Dire Endowment (see **Scion: God**, page 108) conferred by Odin. Sleipnir can also use any Psychopomp Boon as long as Odin desires it, to carry other riders anywhere in the Nine Worlds. Treat Odin's wolves, Freki and Geri, as Legend 3 nemean wolves (see **Scion: Hero,** pp. 312 and 332).

Sif

Unlike Thor, her hot-tempered husband, Sif is more likely to cause trouble by accident than design. In particular, her beauty and friendly demeanor attracts unwanted affections from giants, other Gods, mortals, dwarves and svartalfar, among others. At times, she indulges in a tumble with some handsome mortal or supernatural creature—she is a fertility Goddess. Just as often though, she lets her husband scare off her would-be suitors or beat them down. After all, it makes the big guy happy, and it's easier than doing it herself if things get messy. Sif can deliver a beat-down, though. Every member of the Aesir pantheon is a warrior to some degree, and Sif is Aesir through and through.

Sif is neither the wisest nor most intelligent of the Aesir, but she tops her husband by a fair amount. People who look beyond her beauty and bubbly demeanor realize that she is often the brains behind Thor's brawn (though Odin is sometimes the brains behind Sif, with her active cooperation.) Sif sometimes plays the ditz so the Aesir's foes underestimate her. What's more, few of the Aesir's enemies realize that Sif knows a fair bit of her husband's Purviews. Yet Sif sometimes feels a bit left out because of the attention scholars and historians give to Freya and Frigg. As a result, she has a soft spot for people who flatter her or accord her equal or greater importance among the Aesir.

Attributes: Strength 8, Dexterity 9, Stamina 9; Charisma 11, Manipulation 9, Appearance 11; Perception 8, Intelligence 6, Wits 6

Virtues: Courage 4, Endurance 3, Expression 4, Loyalty 5

Abilities: Academics 3, Animal Ken 3, Art 5, Athletics 5, Awareness 3, Brawl 3, Command 2, Control 4, Empathy 5, Fortitude 3, Integrity 5, Medicine 3, Melee 5, Occult 2, Politics 2, Presence 4, Science 5, Survival 5

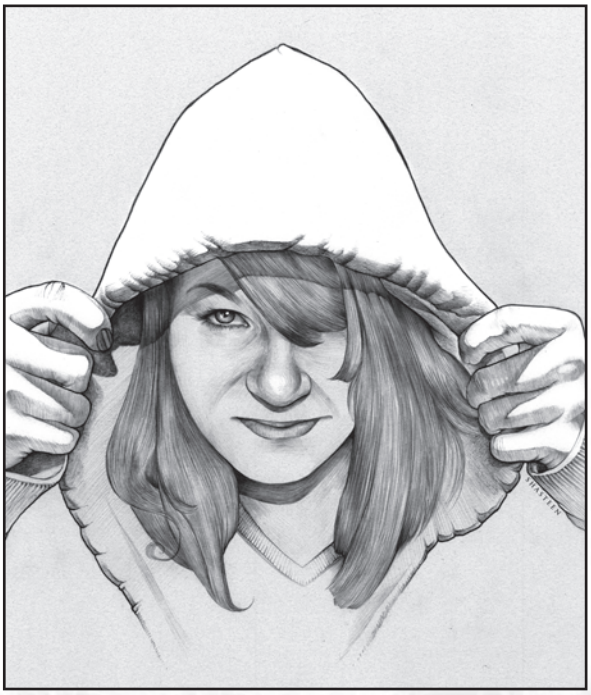
Birthrights: Avatar 5, Relic 5 (Sif's Spatha—Guardian, Sky, War), Relic 5 (Sif's Hair—Fertility, Health), Sanctum 3 (Sif's Hall, Bilskirnir, shared with Thor)

Supernatural Powers:

Avatars: The Green

Boons: Accelerate Growth, Aegis, Assess Health, Battle Cry, Bestial Endowment, Bless or Blight, Blessing of Bravery, Blessing of Health/Curse of Frailty, Cleanse, Cloud Sculptor, Come Running, Dire Endowment, Divine Endowment, Eitr Antivenin, Endless Season, Epic Endowment, Eternal Bloom, Giant, Heroic Endowment, Human Endowment, Impossible Hybrid, Green Thumb, I Say Thee Nay!, Levin Fury, Natural Camouflage, Sky's Grace, Storm Augmentation, Supernal Bestial Endowment, Supernal Human Endowment, Twist Plants, Unseen Shield, Verdant Creation, Vigil Brand, Virility/Muliebrity, Ward, Warrior Ideal (Norse Shield-maiden), Wind Grapple, Wind's Freedom

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 5 (Divine Rampage, Divine Bound, Holy Bound, Holy Rampage, Hurl



to the Horizon), Epic Dexterity 7 (And the Crowd Goes Wild, Cat's Grace, Lightning Sprinter, Perfect Partner, Roll With It, Untouchable Opponent, Whirlwind Shield), Epic Stamina 6 (Body Armor, Damage Conversion, Divine Fortitude, Holy Fortitude, Regeneration, Self-Healing, Tireless Worker), Epic Charisma 10 (all Knacks), Epic Manipulation 7 (Advantageous Circumstances, Blurt It Out, Gods' Honest, Instant Hypnosis, Knowing Glance, Rumor Mill, Overt Order, Trendsetter), Epic Appearance 10 (all Knacks), Epic Perception 2 (Perfect Pitch, Subliminal Warning, Unfailing Recognition), Epic Intelligence 4 (Know-It-All, Language Mastery, Perfect Memory, Well-Read Virgin), Epic Wits 4 (Rabbit Reflexes, Social Chameleon, Opening Salvo, Perfect Imposter)

Ultimate Attributes: Ultimate Charisma, Ultimate Appearance

Join Battle: 12

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 12, Damage 9B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed Heavy: Accuracy 11, Damage 12B, Parry DV 27, Speed 5

Unarmed Light: Accuracy 13, Damage 9B, Parry DV 29, Speed 4

Spatha: Accuracy 16, Damage 14L, Parry DV 30, Speed 4

Soak: 6A/21L/25B

Health Levels: -0x22/Incap

Dodge DV: 35 **Willpower:** 9

Legend: 12 **Legend Points:** 144

Other Notes: Sif's spatha has Accuracy +2, Damage +5, Defense +1 and Speed 4, and it allows access to the Guardian, Sky and War Purviews. Sif's Hair is a gift of dwarven gold that allows access to the Fertility Purview and grants a three-die bonus to all rolls to charm or seduce. Sif can pull out a single hair to bestow this Birthright on someone else. Such a hair grants access to the Purviews but has no other powers.

Thor

Norse mythology recounts many tales of the Thunder God's battles against giants, monsters, even old age and the elements. Gods such as Vidar and Tyr can crush armies of lesser foes, and no Aesir exceeds Heimdall's skill at defense—but no Aesir, even Odin, can match Thor's combination of might, fury and raw power. He can summon storms with a thought and idly grind a giant's skull beneath his boot. He protects humanity from fiends, giants and monsters both personally and as the patron of the common but freeborn warrior. Of all the Aesir, only Thor received the epithet "Friend of Man."

OBLIGATORY POP CULTURAL REFERENCE

A certain well-known comic book company publishes a title about a certain well-known Thunder God, in which other members of the Aesir frequently appear as well. Those Aesir who know of the comic book generally dislike the liberties it takes in their portrayals. Sif, however, likes it a fair bit—perhaps because her husband is the hero, perhaps because it portrays her as a fierce and independent warrior woman and a hero in her own right, while Freya and Frigg are generally ignored.

Odin forbids any Aesir to influence the comic's writers, artists or editors to make it more "authentic." Sif certainly appears to have obeyed the All-Father's command. As she says, "Look, they got my hair *all wrong*."

Thor's panoply illustrates the wildness of his own power. Most famously, Thor bears Mjolnir, the hammer of lightning that returns when thrown and whose blows cleave mountains. Mjolnir embodies the untamed fury of nature and the raw power of the storm. Thor also wears his girdle of strength, Megingjord, and his iron gauntlets, Jarn Griepr, so that he can wield his hammer safely when Mjolnir courses with such power as to burn even a God. Even if Thor himself were not the most fearsome force on the battlefields of the Aesir, Mjolnir would make him so.

In battle or simply in life, Thor is never subtle. When trouble comes, he wades in, all red-bearded fury and divine might. He is not actually stupid, but he isn't particularly cunning or interested in sly solutions to problems either. Even those times when he fibs or schemes, he does it to place himself in a better position to strike down his foes. Truly, when you are Thor and wield Mjolnir, every problem is a nail—an itty-bitty nail.

Thor enjoys traveling in his chariot pulled by two monstrous goats called Tanngrisni (Gap Tooth) and Tanngnost (Toothgrinder). Thor can butcher these goats for supper, then resurrect them the next morning by gathering together the bones and skins and blessing them with his hammer. The bones must be unbroken or the goats reform with similar injuries, so when Thor feeds his friends in this manner he gives strict instructions neither to discard nor break his pets' bones. He becomes

terribly angry at those who disobey his instructions, and expects compensation for the injury and insult in these cases.

Attributes: Strength 11, Dexterity 10, Stamina 11; Charisma 11, Manipulation 6, Appearance 9; Perception 9, Intelligence 3, Wits 6

Virtues: Courage 5, Endurance 5, Expression 4, Loyalty 5

Abilities: Academics 1, Animal Ken 3, Athletics 5, Awareness 4, Brawl 5, Command 4, Control (Wheeled Vehicles) 5, Craft (Metalwork, Carpentry) 3, Fortitude 5, Integrity 5, Marksmanship 3, Melee 5, Presence 5, Survival 4, Thrown 5

Birthrights: Avatar 4, Creature 5 (Tanngrisni and Tanngnost), Relic 2 (Jarn Griepr), Relic 5 (Megingjord—War), Relic 5 (Mjolnir—Guardian, Justice, Sky), Relic 1 (Chariot—Psychopomp), Sanctum 3 (Thor's Hall, Bilskirnir)

Supernatural Powers:

Avatars: The Sentinel, The Storm

Boons: Aegis, Appropriated Vigil, Assess Health, Battle Cry, Bestial Endowment, Bless or Blight, Blessing of Bravery, Blessing of Health/Curse of Frailty, Cleanse, Cloud Body, Cloud Sculptor, Colossus Armor, Come Along, Come Running, Confer Immunity, Confer Knack, Create Air, Dire Endowment, Divine Endowment, Divine Resolve, Dream Wrack, Eitr Antivenin, Epic Endowment, Giant, Green Thumb, Guilt Apparitions, Heroic Endowment, Human Endowment, I Say Thee Nay!, Judgment, Levin Fury, Marathon Sprinter, Morale Failure, Otherworldly Portal, Rainbow Bridge, Ride Along, Salvation Sacrifice, Sanctify Oath, Scarlet Letter, Shield of Righteousness, Sky's Grace, Storm Augmentation, Supernal Bestial Endowment, Supernal Human Endowment, Sympathy Pains, Terra Incognita, Tornado Tamer, Unbarred Entry, Unerring Orientation, Unseen Shield, Vigil Brand, Ward, Warrior Ideal (Viking Warrior), Weather Husbandry, Where Are You?, Wind Grapple, Wind's Freedom

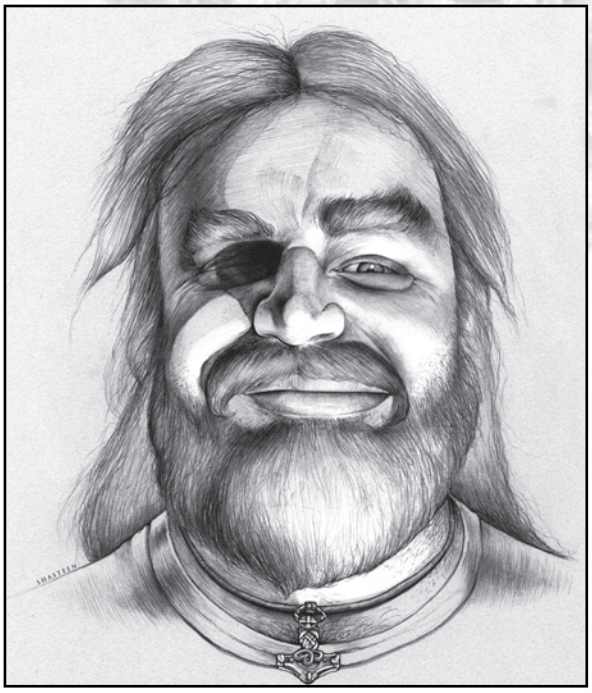
Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 10 (all Knacks), Epic Dexterity 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**, And the Crowd Goes Wild), Epic Stamina 10 (all Knacks), Epic Charisma 10 (all Knacks), Epic Manipulation 1 (Blurt It Out), Epic Appearance 4 (Center of Attention, Come Hither, Compelling Presence, Doin' Fine, Lasting Impression, Serpent's Gaze), Epic Perception 2 (Predatory Focus, Broad-Spectrum Reception, Unfailing Recognition), Epic Intelligence 1 (Language Mastery), Epic Wits 3 (Eternal Vigilance, Instant Assessment, Opening Gambit)

Ultimate Attributes: Ultimate Strength, Ultimate Stamina, Ultimate Charisma

Join Battle: 10

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 15, Damage 12L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P



Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 14, Damage 15L, Parry DV 29, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 16, Damage 12L, Parry DV 30, Speed 4

Mjolnir: Accuracy 15, Damage 26L, Parry DV 30, Speed 5, P

Soak: 10A/52L/57B

Health Levels: -0x52/Incap

Dodge DV: 36 **Willpower:** 10

Legend: 12 **Legend Points:** 144

Other Notes: Because of its weight and power, Mjolnir is treated as a giant skeggox (Accuracy +0, Damage +12L, Defense -1, Speed 5; -2 Accuracy unless used by someone giant-sized) that has an extra +2L Damage and +1 Defense. It also allows access to the Guardian, Justice and Sky Purviews. Mjolnir might be even more potent, however. Thor's goats are treated as a pair of Legend 3 nemean boars (see **Scion: Hero**, pp. 312 and 329) with the ability to run or fly at 40 mph (triple that out of combat). They can be resurrected after being slaughtered and devoured if all their bones are placed on their skins. Thor's iron gauntlets, Jarn Griepr, grant power identical to the Fire Immunity (Fire •) Boon. In addition to granting access to the War Purview, his girdle of strength, Megingjord, gives him two extra dice on all Strength rolls and offsets the -2 Accuracy penalty for Mjolnir.

Note that Thor uses no relics to help him channel his modest facility with the Fertility and Health Purviews, so he cannot wield these Purviews as effectively as he might. Whatever relics he might once have used for those Purviews are hidden away somewhere in Bilskirnir.

THE MJOLNIR PROBLEM

As shown in **Scion: God**, once a deity reaches the apex of Legend, many Birthrights that heroes, demigods and even lowered-powered Gods use to channel their power become unimportant. After all, if you have Ultimate Strength and can strike nearly any foe dead, then what makes a magic hammer so special? And even if you really like your Birthrights, why would you need special gloves or a belt to use a weapon like Mjolnir when you can become an avatar of a living storm? As Gods appear in **Scion**, such items as Mjolnir, Megingjord and Jarn Griepr raise a question: What exactly are these things really good for?

One possible answer is that the potency of a God's own Birthrights are largely metaphorical. In this case, much of Mjolnir's power (and all of Megingjord and Jarn Griepr's utility) is pure window dressing. Thor uses them because *that's his legend,* which humanity Fatebound into his being. So, while Mjolnir is powerful and its companion items are somewhat useful for other reasons, the hammer is not nearly so mighty as the God who wields it. Mjolnir seems like an ultimate weapon because Thor is the Aesir's ultimate warrior. When Thor splits mountains with Mjolnir, that's just him performing a feat of Ultimate Strength.

Another option is that some items are so powerful that even the mightiest Gods cannot harness them without aid. Under this theory, Thor's hammer (and perhaps a few other items in Norse myth) are the **Scion** equivalent of WMDs. Their power doesn't really work on an individual scale, so Mjolnir's full might is something akin to a Birthright version of an Epic Attribute at 11 or an avatar expression of a Purview (see **Scion: God** for more details on both). This suggests that in **Scion: God**, where so much "goes to 11," Thor wielding Mjolnir can sometimes go to 12.

Storytellers can use either option, but they both raise questions about the Gods and their most powerful toys. The traits for Mjolnir, Megingjord and Jarn Griepr in Thor's entry favor the first option, treating them as fairly normal relics (apart from their potential value as Birthrights). This is, however, only because any additional powers and abilities attributed to Mjolnir and its companion items are best left up to individual Storytellers.

As a final note, Mjolnir is incidentally the premier religious symbol of the Aesir. At weddings or funerals, Thor's hammer hallows the ceremony. In Asgard, Thor himself oversees these rites. It also consecrates oaths, though Gungnir remains the Aesir's supreme symbol of law and contract. This could justify Mjolnir's use as a Birthright for a variety of Purviews, as described in Thor's write-up.

TYR

Stern, one-handed Tyr offers a study in costs and compromise. To chain the Fenris Wolf, he sacrificed a hand without hesitation or complaint. At Ragnarök, he will fall but in doing so will slay the hellhound Garm. Of the three Aesir most concerned with justice, retribution and laws, he is more violent and judgmental than Forseti, but less vengeful than Vidar. Of the great warriors among the Aesir, he tempers power with strategy. He never sacrifices resources or followers needlessly, but he does not hesitate to do so when necessary. He can be cold, but he's never cruel. The other Norse Gods know he does not ask any sacrifice of them that he does not offer himself. That missing hand gives his strategic and moral judgments... teeth.

This brilliant warrior and general traditionally favors the spear in personal combat. As God of War, though, Tyr can wield everything from daggers to surface-to-air missiles. Tyr always aspires to a fair fight, but he also sees nothing wrong with outmaneuvering or deceiving an opponent who should have known better. He is typically one of the first in and last out when conflict arises.

Attributes: Strength 11, Dexterity 9, Stamina 11; Charisma 11, Manipulation 8, Appearance 7; Perception 8, Intelligence 8, Wits 11

Virtues: Courage 5, Endurance 5, Expression 4, Loyalty 4

Abilities: Academics 5, Animal Ken 4, Athletics 4, Awareness 5, Brawl 5, Command 5, Control 4, Empathy 4, Fortitude 5, Integrity 5, Investigation 5, Larceny 1, Marksmanship 5, Melee 5, Politics 5, Presence 4, Survival 4, Thrown 5

Birthrights: Relic 5 (Hasta—War), Relic 1 (Rune-Staves—Mystery)

Supernatural Powers:

Avatars: The Arbiter, The General

Boons: Aegis, Animal Communication (Wolf), Army of One, Battle Cry, Battle Map, Bestial Endowment, Blessing of Ammunition, Blessing of Bravery, Colossus Armor, Dire Endowment, Divine Endowment, Divine

Enforcement, Dream Wrack, Eitr Antivenin, Epic Endowment, Follower Army, Giant, Guilt Apparitions, Heroic Endowment, Human Endowment, Judgment, Morale Failure, Mystery 6, Overworld Judgment, Psychic Prison, Sanctify Oath, Scarlet Letter, Shield of Righteousness, Supernal Bestial Endowment, Supernal Human Endowment, Surreal Draft, Sympathy Pains, Unseen Shield, Vigil Brand, Ward, Warrior Ideal (Grim Executioner)

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 10 (all Knacks), Epic Dexterity 7 (Cat's Grace, Escape Artist, Fast as Thought, Lightning Sprinter, Monkey Climber, Roll With It, Perfect Partner, Untouchable Opponent, Whirlwind Shield), Epic Stamina 10 (all Knacks), Epic Charisma 10 (all Knacks), Epic Manipulation 5 (Advantageous Circumstances, Blurt It Out, Knowing Glance, Overt Order, Secondhand Persuasion, Stench of Guilt, Takes One to Know One), Epic Appearance 1 (Lasting Impression, Inescapable Visage), Epic Perception 4 (Environmental Awareness, Parallel Attention, Predatory Focus, Subliminal Warning, Unfailing Recognition), Epic Intelligence 4 (Blockade of Reason, Fight With Your Head, Know-It-All, Language Mastery, Perfect Memory, Speed Reader), Epic Wits 10 (all Knacks)

Ultimate Attributes: Ultimate Strength, Ultimate Stamina, Ultimate Charisma, Ultimate Wits

Join Battle: 16

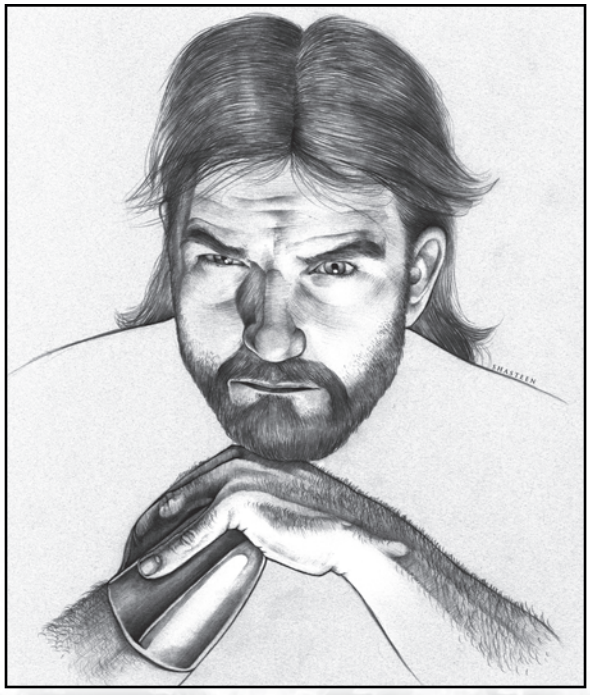
Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 11*, Damage 12L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed Heavy: Accuracy 13, Damage 15L, Parry DV 28, Speed 5

Unarmed Light: Accuracy 15, Damage 12L, Parry DV 30, Speed 4

Hasta: Accuracy 16, Damage 17L, Parry DV 29, Speed 4



* Tyr's lack of a hand impairs his ability to clinch effectively.

Soak: 10A/51L/57B

Health Levels: -0x52/Incap

Dodge DV: 35 **Willpower:** 10

Legend: 12 **Legend Points:** 144

Other Notes: Tyr's hasta allows access to the War Purview, and its traits are as follows: Accuracy +2, Damage +5, Defense +0 Speed 4. It has a shorter haft than many spears so that Tyr can better use it one-handed. Tyr has no Birthright for the Justice Purview. Instead, his lack of a hand functions as a Birthright that allows access to that Purview and his minor Boon to understand the speech of wolves. Should Tyr's hand ever be restored or replaced, it would be as if he had abandoned or lost a Birthright. Tyr also owns a box of wooden slips inscribed with runes that he employs for rune divinations.

VIDAR

Simply put, Vidar knows he's a badass. He is fated to kill the Fenris Wolf and survive Ragnarök to see the golden age that supposedly follows. As such, he doesn't spare much kindness or understanding for people who get in his way. He also doesn't talk much, preferring to let his actions speak for him. He is the God of Vengeance, and he expects others to understand that they should not cross him.

In combat, Vidar is an imaginative and savage opponent. He prefers to use his hands when practical, and expresses a grim sense of humor on the bodies of his foes. He might rip off the arms of a giant who makes rude gestures at him or use a coward's own guts to garrote him. For serious fights, Vidar pulls out his boots. This set of thick, heavy footwear is made from the leather and metal cast off from good men's shoes. With them, Vidar can stomp a crater in nearly anything. Originally, Vidar had only one boot and it was actually more of a shoe, but over the centuries enough material accumulated for Vidar to own a matched set of high-topped, metal-toed footwear.

Vidar doesn't worry much about Ragnarök because, well, he's supposed to live. He cares more about defeating the Titans decisively and wreaking vengeance on those deserving it. If avoiding Ragnarök helps the Aesir crush the Titans, he's on board. If it takes a final battle of the Aesir to achieve those goals, then he's never been one to turn away from a fight.

Attributes: Strength 11, Dexterity 10, Stamina 11; Charisma 7, Manipulation 9, Appearance 8; Perception 8, Intelligence 8, Wits 9

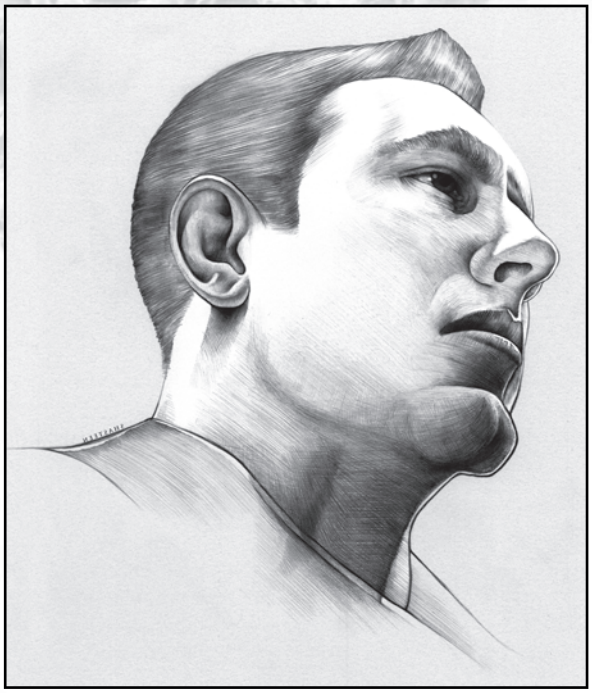
Virtues: Courage 5, Endurance 5, Expression 4, Loyalty 4

Abilities: Animal Ken 2, Athletics 5, Awareness 5, Brawl 5, Command 3, Control 4, Craft 4, Fortitude 5, Integrity 4, Investigation 5, Marksmanship 2, Melee 4, Politics 5, Presence 3, Stealth 5, Survival 5, Thrown 4

Birthrights: Avatar 4, Relic 5 (Boots—Justice, War)

Supernatural Powers:

Avatars: The Arbiter



Boons: Battle Cry, Bestial Endowment, Blessing of Bravery, Colossus Armor, Dire Endowment, Divine Endowment, Divine Enforcement, Dream Wrack, Eitr Antivenin, Epic Endowment, Giant, Guilt Apparitions, Heroic Endowment, Human Endowment, Judgment, Morale Failure, Overworld Judgment, Psychic Prison, Sanctify Oath, Scarlet Letter, Shield of Righteousness, Supernal Bestial Endowment, Supernal Human Endowment, Sympathy Pains, Warrior Ideal (Powerful Brawler)

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 10 (all Knacks), Epic Dexterity 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**, And the Crowd Goes Wild, Roll With It), Epic Stamina 10 (all Knacks), Epic Charisma 4 (Blessing of Importance, Boys Will Be Boys, Hapless Cool, Never Say Die, Unimpeachable Reference), Epic Manipulation 4 (Blurt It Out, Hard Sell, Knowing Glance, Overt Order, Stench of Guilt, Takes One to Know One), Epic Appearance 2 (Doin' Fine, Compelling Presence, Serpent's Gaze), Epic Perception 3 (Predatory Focus, Subliminal Warning, Supernal Hunter), Epic Intelligence 2 (Blockade of Reason, Multitasking, Perfect Memory), Epic Wits 7 (Cobra Reflexes, Eternal Vigilance, Instant Investigator, Meditative Focus, Monkey in the Middle, Opening Gambit, Psychic Profiler, Rabbit Reflexes)
Ultimate Attributes: Ultimate Strength, Ultimate Stamina
Join Battle: 14
Attacks:
Clinch: Accuracy 15, Damage 12B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P
Unarmed Heavy: Accuracy 14, Damage 15B, Parry DV 29, Speed 5
Unarmed Light: Accuracy 16, Damage 12B, Parry DV 30, Speed 4
Soak: 10A/52L/57B
Health Levels: -0x52/Incap
Dodge DV: 36 **Willpower:** 10
Legend: 12 **Legend Points:** 144
Other Notes: Kicks delivered with Vidar's boots are treated as unarmed strikes that deal two extra dice of damage over the normal amount, and converted into lethal damage. They also allow the use of War and Justice Boons.

TOOLS OF THE AESIR

The entries for the major Aesir include those relics and other Birthrights that myths most often associated with the Gods. The Aesir also receive some items that simply make sense for such characters to own and that allow them access to Purviews that seem like plausible extrapolations of their myths.

These ancient and powerful beings have also had time to gather any number of magical items. Storytellers should feel free to add any other creatures or relics they feel the major Aesir should own. For example, maybe Tyr asked a group of dwarves to make him an enchanted shotgun (see "Fenris Arms Weaponry" on p. 46), or Heimdall also carries a God-crafted sniper rifle. Adventurous Gods such as Thor probably keep many trophies from past battles, which they might use themselves or bestow on worthy Scions.

In a chronicle where the Aesir are not the only Gods, some Gods might even carry items they traded, stole or received as gifts from other pantheons. Loki, Odin and Freya seem particularly likely to acquire "foreign" treasures, albeit for different reasons. The major Gods of any pantheon should be a veritable treasure trove of mystical items, trophies and strange pets. The Aesir are no different.

Nonetheless, astute readers might have noticed that certain Gods have a handful of Boons but no accompanying relics that allow them to channel the Purviews whence those Boons come. For some Gods, such as Odin or Tyr, legendary sacrificial mutilations serve as "relics"—as described in the sidebar at the end of Chapter Two. For other Gods, such as Frigg or Heimdall, you can assume those Gods own appropriate relics but don't carry them around all the time. Those relics (and other treasures of the Storyteller's creation) are locked away instead in the Gods' respective halls or favorite hidey-holes scattered across the Nine Worlds.

Additional Gods of the Aesir

Scion: Hero provided 12 major Gods of the Aesir that players can choose as their Scion's divine parent. Here are additional Gods who can also serve in that capacity. All of these deities are greater Gods with their own associated Purviews, Epic Attributes and Abilities.

Bragi

AKA: Braga, Bragr

Description: Bragi, the God of Poetry, Eloquence and Performance, usually has white hair and beard, though he looks young and energetic. He inspires humans to create poetry and was a patron of the Norse skalds. When not wandering or spending time with his lovely wife, Idun, he still sometimes greets einherjar or other guests as they enter Valhalla. Bragi uses his talents to lift spirits, to give weight to significant deeds and to ease tensions. Of course, being Aesir, he also understands the need for a good brawl and might stir things up from time to time. Though he's generally good natured, he still holds a grudge against Loki for an old plot to kidnap his wife.

In modern times, Bragi has been a beat poet, a Shakespearean actor, an etiquette coach, a street performer and a rock star. His way with words and his understanding of what makes a great performance lets him glide in and out of whatever creative scene currently interests him.

Bragi's Scions usually come about from one-night stands with women he meets during his bardic wanderings. They all share his talents to some degree, and many become accomplished and famous performers in their own right. As children tied to Fate and grand stories, Bragi's Scions often find themselves in the middle of great adventures whether they want it or not.

Associated Powers: Epic Charisma, Epic Perception, Epic Wits, Jotunblut, Magic

Abilities: Art, Awareness, Brawl, Empathy, Integrity, Presence

Rivals: Loki; Apollo, Izanami, Thoth, Tlazoltéotl

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 10, Stamina 8; Charisma 11, Manipulation 10, Appearance 6; Perception 11, Intelligence 8, Wits 11

Virtues: Courage 3, Endurance 3, Expression 5, Loyalty 4

Abilities: Academics 4, Animal Ken 3, Art (Acting, Poetry, Singing, Storytelling, numerous musical instruments) 5, Athletics 4, Awareness 5, Brawl 5, Command 4, Control 2, Craft (musical instruments) 3, Empathy 5, Fortitude 3, Integrity 5, Investigation 3, Larceny 2, Marksmanship 1, Melee 3, Occult 4, Presence 5, Stealth 2, Survival 2, Thrown 4

Birthrights: Followers 5 (five modern-era einherjar), Relic 3 (hip flask), Relic 5 (Bragi's Harp—Chaos, Fertility, Magic, Prophecy)

Supernatural Powers:

Avatars: The Wyrd

Boons: Accelerate Growth, Battle Cry, Bestial Endowment, Bless or Blight, Blessing of Bravery, Cleanse, Crawling Chaos, Dire Endowment, Divine Endowment, Eitr Antivenin, Epic Endowment, Eternal Bloom, Eye of the Storm, Giant, Green Thumb, Heroic Endowment, Hornet's Nest, Human Endowment, Instant Riot, Magic 10, Morale Failure, Paralyzing Confusion, Prophecy 6, Recurring Distraction, Supernal Bestial Endowment, Supernal Human Endowment, Twist Plants, Verdant Creation

Epic Attributes: Epic Dexterity 7 (Cat's Grace, Divine Balance, Escape Artist, Lightning Sprinter, Perfect Partner, Roll With It, Untouchable Opponent), Epic Stamina 7 (all from **Scion: Hero**, Devourer, Internal Refinery, Raise Your Glass, Regeneration), Epic Charisma 10 (all Knacks), Epic Manipulation 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**, Trendsetter), Epic Appearance 5 (Center of Attention, Detail Variation, My Eyes Are Up Here, Perfect Actor, Tailor Made), Epic Perception 10 (all Knacks), Epic Intelligence 5 (Fast Learner, Know-It-All, Perfect Memory, Language Mastery, Multitasking), Epic Wits 10 (all Knacks)

Ultimate Attributes: Ultimate Charisma, Ultimate Perception, Ultimate Wits

Join Battle: 16

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 15, Damage 5B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 14, Damage 8B, Parry DV 29, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 16, Damage 5B, Parry DV 30, Speed 4

Hadseax: Accuracy 14, Damage 7L, Parry DV 29, Speed 4

Soak: 7A/26L/30B

Health Levels: -0x28/Incap

Dodge DV: 35 **Willpower:** 9

Legend: 12 **Legend Points:** 144

Other Notes: Bragi summons a squad of einherjar equipped as per World War One or Two by waving his hip flask and singing a bit of song from those periods ("Over There," "Der Führer's Face," etc.). The small flask holds several gallons of mead fortified with Everclear, so he can at least supply the drink needed to repay the einherjar. Bragi's golden harp grants access to the Chaos, Fertility, Magic and Prophecy Purviews, but a character must actually be able to play it to access those Purviews. It also changes shape to become anything from a harmonica to a Fender Stratocaster, so Bragi can take it nearly anywhere. Bragi does not bother to carry a relic for his few War Boons, so note the reduction in his effective Legend whenever he uses that Purview.

Forseti

AKA: Foresite, Forseta

Description: As the God of Peace, Compromise and Just Resolutions, Forseti stands out among the often warlike and carnal Aesir. No tales of Forseti survive in Midgard, but many Scandinavian place-names refer to him, showing his importance to the Norse. Much like his father, Baldur, Forseti shows a bright and friendly demeanor. His silver-and-gold hall, Glitnir, is a place of truth and peace, where he mediates disputes peacefully. The Aesir account him as perhaps the wisest of their number, save for Odin himself. They all know to listen to his counsel. Forseti cannot equal Vidar and Tyr as a warrior, but he is still Aesir. If pressed, he can defend himself and the innocent. Many Aesir believe, however, that Forseti will not engage in the final battle of Ragnarök. Forseti himself says that he would negotiate fairly with anyone, even the Titans, and do his best to resolve any *legitimate* grievances. So far, no Titan ever accepted his offer.

In modern times, Forseti is the impartial judge, the stalwart public defender, the eloquent academic or the experienced referee. He is handsome and fair-haired, with kind eyes and an easy smile. Forseti judges without seeming judgmental and picks sides without playing favorites. Like his fellow God Tyr, he always turns out to be on the right side of an issue. Unlike Tyr, his easygoing nature and careful weighing of all sides of an issue make even his opponents tend to like him and accept that they received a fair hearing.

Forseti's Scions, like the God himself, often follow Tyr's in purpose but not in method. They champion justice and fairness, though youthful idealism and a lack of their father's divine wisdom sometimes leads them into error. Forseti's Scions often work toward nonviolent solutions and risk much to aid the unjustly accused or persecuted.

Associated Powers: Epic Manipulation, Epic Intelligence, Jotunblut, Justice, Mystery

Abilities: Academics, Empathy, Integrity, Investigation, Politics, Presence

Rivals: Vidar; Horus, Ogoun, Quetzalcoátl, Thoth

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 6, Stamina 8; Charisma 9, Manipulation 11, Appearance 10; Perception 10, Intelligence 11, Wits 8

Virtues: Courage 3, Endurance 4, Expression 4, Loyalty 3

Abilities: Academics 5, Animal Ken 2, Athletics 4, Awareness 4, Brawl 4, Command 3, Control 2, Empathy 5, Fortitude 4, Integrity 5, Investigation 5, Marksmanship 2, Medicine 2, Melee 2, Occult 2, Politics 5, Presence 5, Science 1, Survival 3, Thrown 2

Birthrights: Followers 5 (Einherjar), Relic 5 (Gambantein—Justice, Mystery, Psychopomp), Relic 2 (clasp—Moon, Sun)

Supernatural Powers:

Avatars: The Arbiter, The Wyrd

Boons: Bestial Endowment, Dire Endowment, Divine Endowment, Divine Enforcement, Divine Radiance, Dream Wrack, Eitr Antivenin, Epic Endowment, Flare Missile, Giant, Guilt Apparitions, Heavenly Flare, Heroic Endowment, Human Endowment, Judgment, Overworld Judgment, Mystery 10, Penetrating Glare, Phase Cloak, Psychic Prison, Rainbow Bridge, Sanctify Oath, Scarlet Letter, Shield of Righteousness, Smoking Mirror, Sun Chariot, Supernal Bestial Endowment, Supernal Human Endowment, Sympathy Pains, Tidal Interference, Unbarred Entry, Unerring Orientation, Where Are You?

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 2 (Holy Bound, Uplifting Might), Epic Dexterity 6 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**), Epic Stamina 6 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**, Divine Damage Conversion), Epic Charisma 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**), Epic Manipulation 10 (all Knacks), Epic Appearance 4 (Detail Variation, Doin' Fine, My Eyes Are Up Here, Tailor Made), Epic Perception 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**, Hear Prayers, Parallel Attention), Epic Intelligence 10 (all Knacks), Epic Wits 5 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero**, Instant Assessment, Psychic Profiler)

Ultimate Attributes: Ultimate Manipulation, Ultimate Intelligence

Join Battle: 12

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 10, Damage 5B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 9, Damage 8B, Parry DV 20, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 11, Damage 5B, Parry DV 22, Speed 4

Gambantein: Accuracy 10, Damage 9B, Parry DV 21, Speed 6

Soak: 6A/20L/24B

Health Levels: -0x22/Incap

Dodge DV: 27 **Willpower:** 10

Legend: 12 **Legend Points:** 144

Other Notes: Forseti's principle relic is a *gambantein,* or rune-carved herald's staff. In combat, it acts like a bo (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 202) that deals an additional +1B damage. It also permits the use of the Justice, Mystery and Psychopomp Purviews and enables Forseti to call a squad of Vietnam-era einherjar (all former MPs with no patience for nonsense or resisting arrest). Forseti also wears a clasp (it might take the form of a cloak clasp or belt buckle) depicting the sun and the moon. It lets a character channel the Sun and Moon Purviews. Forseti inherited an affinity for the sun from Baldur, and with the moon from Nanna, his mother.

Idun

AKA: Iduna, Idhunna

Description: Forever a young and beautiful maid, Idun holds sway over youth, fertility and longevity. She keeps the golden apples of the Aesir, which can hold off old age and restore youthful vigor even in the Gods themselves. This duty makes her a frequent target for abduction and assault by giants and other agents of the Titans, who wish either to steal Idun's apples for themselves or ransom her back to the Aesir for other rewards. Although Idun was once rather naïve and gullible, this cycle eventually gave her a rather cynical humor about such dangers. Any would-be kidnapper or thief is more likely to elicit a roll of her eyes and a sigh than any real fear or anxiety. Even then, however, Idun manages to seem bright, young and full of life, and she shows full gratitude to anyone who aids her in these times of need. Her husband is Bragi, the God of Poetry.

In the modern day, Idun has been a health food guru, an organic farmer, the young actress who never quite becomes a superstar and the mother whom everyone thinks is your slightly older sister. She's always a lot tougher than she looks. Most of her guises involve surrounding herself with life and youthful energy. Sometimes she tries to bring those qualities to places where they are lacking. For example, she might become the celebrity who comes to aid starving children and raise awareness, but probably not the relief worker who toils for years to effect change.

Idun's Scions look young and beautiful all their lives, even without a Visitation. Even when they are not drop-dead gorgeous, their youthful energy inspires both a protective urge and a bit of envy in older and less blessed individuals. They often engage in careers and activities that suggest their mother's influence. Sometimes, however, Idun sets her Scions to seeking out and heading off threats to her person and her precious apples. Idun's children often find themselves acting as protective screens for their divine parent, a job they find neither easy nor safe.

Associated Powers: Epic Appearance, Epic Stamina, Jotunblut, Fertility, Health

Abilities: Animal Ken, Empathy, Fortitude, Presence, Science, Survival

Rivals: Hel; Aphrodite, Erzulie, Geb, Xipe Totec

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 8, Stamina 11; Charisma 10, Manipulation 6, Appearance 11; Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Virtues: Courage 2, Endurance 4, Expression 4, Loyalty 3

Abilities: Animal Ken 5, Art (Flower-Arranging, Singing) 3, Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Brawl 2, Command 3, Control 1, Craft (Gardening) 4, Empathy 5, Fortitude 5, Integrity 3, Larceny 2, Marksmanship 4, Medicine 3, Melee 3, Occult 2, Presence 5, Science 5, Stealth 1, Survival 5

Birthrights: Creature 5 (varies; see below), Relic 5 (Grafting Knife—Fertility, Health)

Supernatural Powers:

Avatars: The Green, The Savior/The Scourge

Boons: Accelerate Growth, Animal Communication (Boar, Cat, Horse, Raven, Wolf), Animal Control (Boar, Cat, Horse, Raven, Wolf), Assess Health, Bestial Endowment, Bless or Blight, Blessing of Health/Curse of Frailty, Cleanse, Control Aging, Cradlesong, Dire Endowment, Divine Endowment, Divine Radiance, Echo Sounding, Eitr Antivenin, Endless Season, Epic Endowment, Eternal Bloom, Flare Missile, Giant, Green Thumb, Heal/Infect, Heavenly Flare, Heroic Endowment, Holy Font/Epidemic, Human Clay, Human Endowment, Human Hybrid, Impossible Hybrid, Natural Camouflage, Penetrating Glare, Plague/Cure, Restore/Wither, Safely Interred, Sky's Grace, Supernal Bestial Endowment, Supernal Human Endowment, Twist Plants, Unerring Orientation, Verdant Creation, Virility/Muliebrity. ***Note:*** Even at her angriest, Idun would never use the harmful forms of her Health Boons.

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 2 (Divine Rampage, Holy Rampage), Epic Dexterity 4 (Escape Artist, Perfect Partner, Trick Shooter, Untouchable Opponent), Epic Stamina 10 (all Knacks), Epic Charisma 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**, Engender Love), Epic Appearance 10 (all Knacks)

Ultimate Attributes: Ultimate Stamina, Ultimate Appearance

Join Battle: 11

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 10, Damage 4B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 9, Damage 7B, Parry DV 11, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 11, Damage 4B, Parry DV 13, Speed 4

Grafting Knife: Accuracy 12, Damage 6L, Parry DV 13, Speed 4

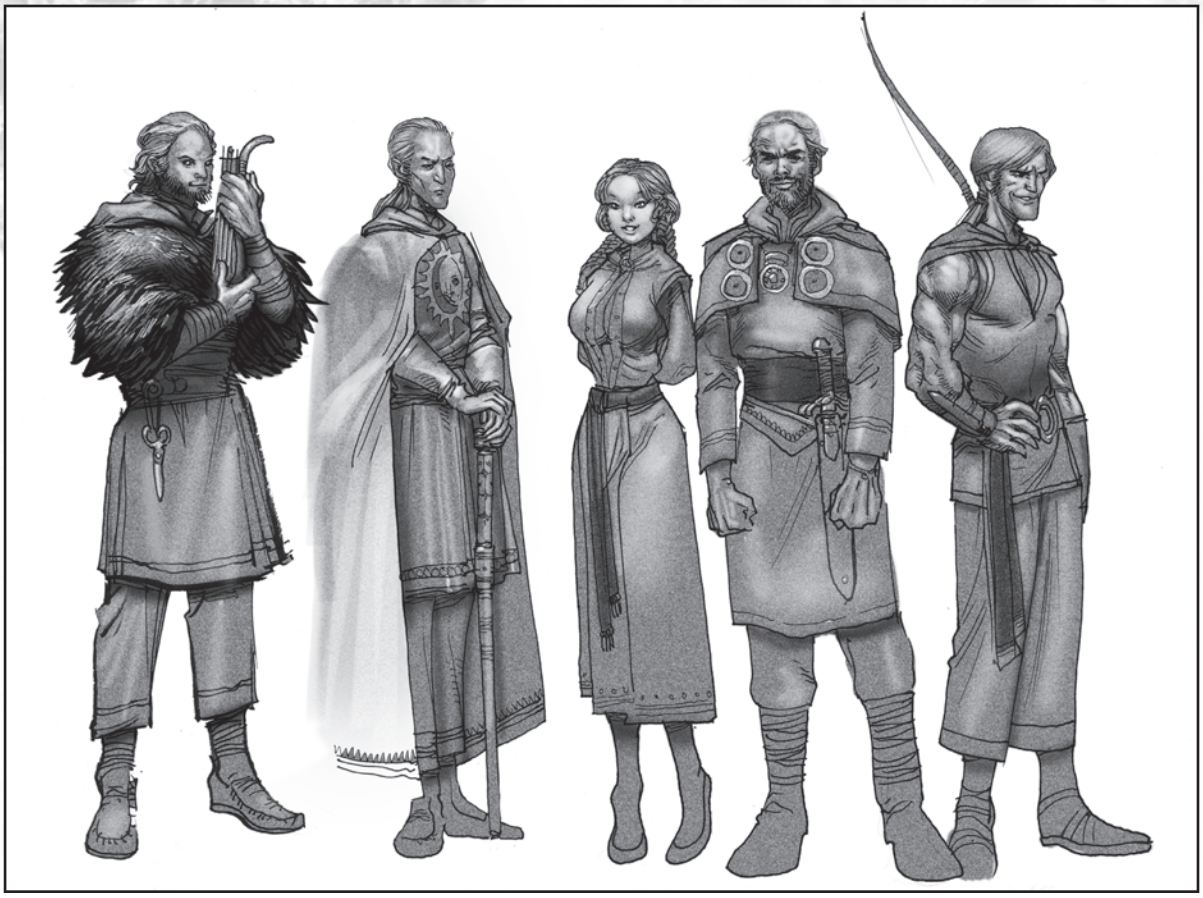
Soak: 10A/52L/57B

Health Levels: -0x52/Incap

Dodge DV: 19 **Willpower:** 8

Legend: 12 **Legend Points:** 144

Other Notes: Idun carries a grafting knife (an indispensable tool for pomiculture) that acts as a hadseax in combat. It also permits the use of the Fertility and Health Purviews. What's more, Idun (and no one else) can use it to summon any one of the animal companions of any of the Aesir, once per story. Most likely, she calls Sleipnir or Gullinbursti for a fast getaway. If she's really pissed, she might call Freki and Geri (the wolves are inseparable) to eat whoever offended her. Idun doesn't bother lugging around her relics for her peripheral Purviews, with the usual reduction in her effective Legend when she uses their Boons.



NJORD

AKA: Njordr, Niord

Description: The father of Freyr and Freya is a God of the sea, a tamer of fire and the eldest of the Vanir. Like his children, Njord has a fertility aspect. He never speaks of Freyr's and Freya's mother. Although none among the Aesir claim to know her identity, a scandalous rumor says she was Njord's own sister. Njord once gained the giantess Skadi as a bride (see p. 19 for the bizarre circumstances), but he eventually lost her to Uller due to his dislike for the wintry inland mountains his wife favored and her dislike for living by the sea. He sometimes pines for his lost wives but seems disinclined to marry again. Njord rarely seeks battle these days, but defeated Titan and God alike in his day. Under his leadership, the Vanir wrecked Asgard's walls in their primal war, despite the prowess of mighty warriors such as Odin, Thor and Tyr. Few Aesir can match his broad experience and skill.

In the modern day, Njord has been a charter boat captain, a merchant marine, a climatologist studying global warming and the owner of an island plantation. In all his guises, he protects the sea and has little patience for those who disrespect or needlessly harm the oceans or its inhabitants. Njord rarely ventures far from the sea and shows a distinctly worse mood at those times. He often appears as a bearded, middle-aged man with dark hair streaked with gray. Njord is handsome, but not as much as his children. He likes to go barefoot but isn't obsessive about it.

Njord's Scions usually come as a result of his brief periods of missing female companionship. He is not a very attentive parent, but neither does he completely reject his children. Instead, Njord usually leaves them to their own devices and trusts they will come to him for aid if they need it. His Scions tend to develop an affinity with the sea and often embrace causes and careers involving oceans, water, shipping or marine life.

Associated Powers: Epic Perception, Epic Stamina, Epic Strength, Fertility, Fire, Jotunblut, Sky, War, Water

Abilities: Awareness, Brawl, Command, Control, Fortitude, Politics

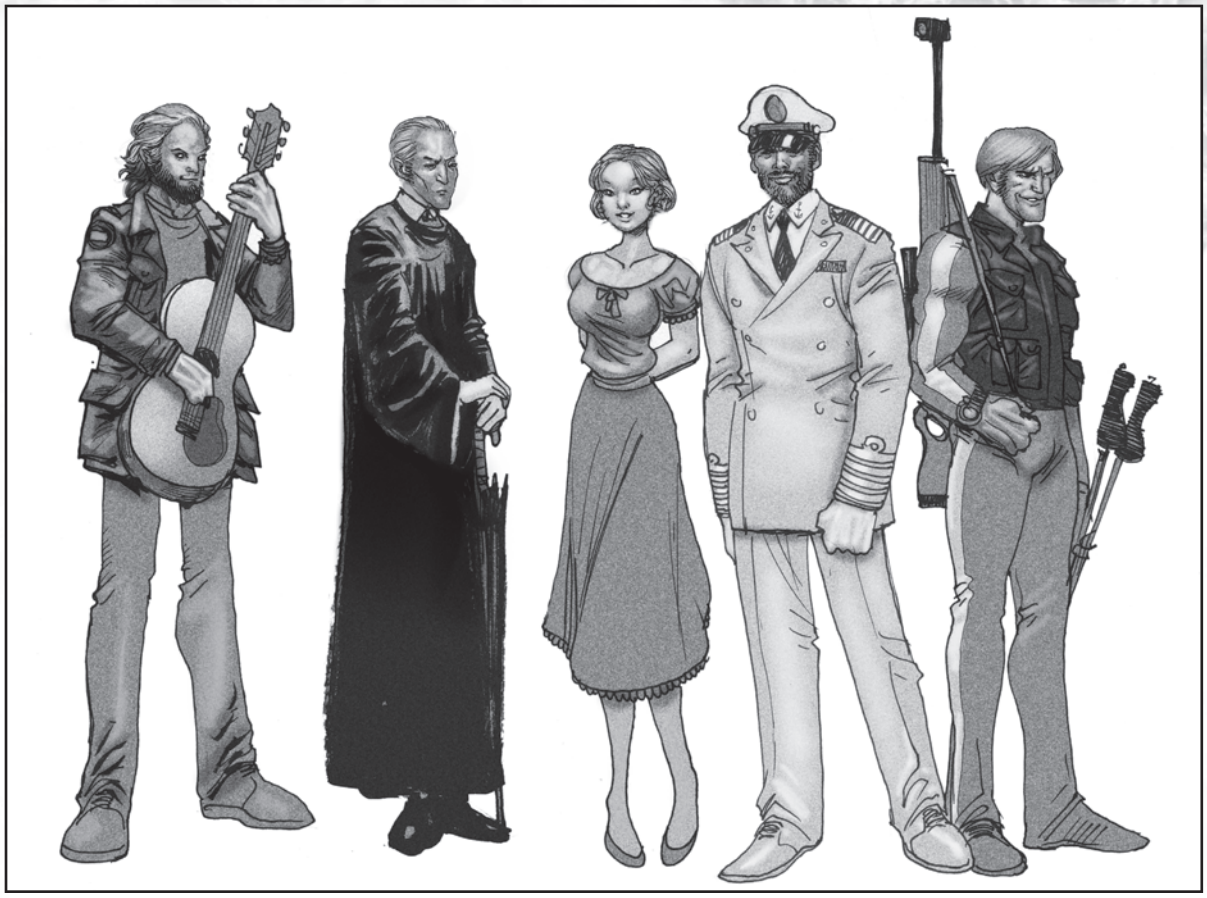
Rivals: Uller; Poseidon, Sobek, Susano-o, Tlaloc

Attributes: Strength 11, Dexterity 9, Stamina 11; Charisma 10, Manipulation 8, Appearance 8; Perception 11, Intelligence 8, Wits 8

Virtues: Courage 3, Endurance 4, Expression 2, Loyalty 2

Abilities: Academics 1, Animal Ken 2, Athletics 4, Awareness 5, Brawl 5, Command 5, Control (Ships) 5, Craft (Shipbuilding) 4, Empathy 2, Fortitude 5, Integrity 4, Investigation 2, Marksmanship 3, Melee 4, Politics 5, Presence 4, Science (Meteorology, Oceanography) 2, Survival 3, Thrown 3

Birthrights: Avatar 5, Relic 5 (Njord's Sword—Fire, War, Water), Relic 3 (Runestones—Fertility, Frost, Sky), Relic 1 (Moonstone—Psychopomp), Sanctum 4 (Noatun)



Supernatural Powers:

Avatars: The Devourer, The Flood, The General, The Green, The Storm

Boons: Accelerate Growth, Army of One, Battle Cry, Battle Map, Bestial Endowment, Blazing Weapon, Bless or Blight, Blessing of Ammunition, Blessing of Bravery, Bolster Fire, Changing States, Cleanse, Cloud Body, Cloud Sculptor, Colossus Armor, Come Along, Control Fire, Create Air, Create Water, Desiccate, Devil Body, Dire Endowment, Divine Endowment, Eitr Antivenin, Endless Season, Epic Endowment, Eternal Bloom, Fire Immunity, Fire's Eye, Flame Travel, Follower Army, Frost Immunity, Frozen Panoply, Giant, Green Thumb, Heroic Endowment, Human Endowment, Ifrit, Impossible Hybrid, Inferno, Levin Fury, Liquid Form, Morale Failure, Natural Camouflage, Otherworldly Portal, Purify Water, Rainbow Bridge, Rain of Fire, Ride Along, Sky's Grace, Storm Augmentation, Supernal Bestial Endowment, Supernal Human Endowment, Surreal Draft, Terra Incognita, Tornado Tamer, Tsunami, Twist Plants, Uller's Stride, Unbarred Entry, Unerring Orientation, Verdant Creation, Virility/Muliebrity, Warrior Ideal (Dashing Sea Captain), Water Breathing, Water Control, Water Mastery, Water Vortex, Weather Husbandry, Where Are You?, Wind Grapple, Wind's Freedom, Winter's Mercy

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 9 (all Knacks), Epic Dexterity 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**), Epic Stamina 10 (all Knacks), Epic Charisma 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**), Epic Manipulation 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**), Epic Appearance 5 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero**, My Eyes Are Up Here, Detail Variation), Epic Perception 10 (all Knacks), Epic Intelligence 4 (Instant Translation, Language Mastery, Multitasking, Perfect Memory), Epic Wits 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**, Psychic Profiler)

Ultimate Attributes: Ultimate Stamina, Ultimate Perception

Join Battle: 13

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 14, Damage 11L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 13, Damage 14L, Parry DV 28, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 15, Damage 11L, Parry DV 30, Speed 4

Sword: Accuracy 15, Damage 14L, Parry DV 29, Speed 3

Soak: 10A/52L/57B

Health Levels: -0x52/Incap

Dodge DV: 35 **Willpower:** 9

Legend: 12 **Legend Points:** 144

Other Notes: Njord's sword is a short weapon with Accuracy +2, Damage +3L, Defense +1, Speed 3. It allows the use of the Fire, Water and War Purviews. A moonstone pendant (a Norse device for telling direction in cloudy weather, based on light polarization) enables

use of Psychopomp. Various rune-engraved items of jewelry allow use of Fertility, Sky and Frost Boons. Many of the ships Njord has built at Noatun are also relics for channeling various Water, Psychopomp, War or even Sky Boons.

Uller

AKA: Ull, Ullin, Holler, Vulder

Description: Legends variously describe Uller as one of the Vanir or a son of Sif (though not of Thor). Though he's little known in the modern World, his appearance in many Scandinavian place-names shows his important place in the pantheon. He is the God of Archery, Skiing and Hunting. Uller also holds special sway over the winter months, as well as duels and sworn oaths. Odin trusts Uller enough to leave him sometimes as his deputy when the All-Father must be away from Asgard. Uller's wife, the giantess Skadi, originally married Njord but left him for Uller due to greater shared interests. Relations between the two Gods remain cool.

In modern times Uller has been an Olympic biathlete, a Finnish special forces commander, a bowhunting champion and a ski instructor at a high-class resort. He is focused and driven, but his deep enjoyment of his various careers shines through. While his appearance changes, Uller is always lean and well muscled, with a sharp gaze and a killer smile. Uller most often visits the World for the thrill of competition and the hunt. He loves to test himself to see what new tasks he can accomplish and what new foes he can bring down.

Uller's Scions often share their father's competitive drive and physical prowess. They become daredevil snowboarders, big-game hunters and other athletes and sportsmen who enjoy taking risks and pushing themselves to their limits. Personal relations and justice might interest them on an individual level, but they rarely become "joiners" and often prefer to work alone or with a small group of trusted friends.

Associated Powers: Epic Dexterity, Epic Perception, Epic Stamina, Frost, Jotunblut, Justice

Abilities: Animal Ken, Athletics, Marksmanship, Melee, Stealth, Survival

Rivals: Njord; Artemis, Hachiman, Horus, Huitzilopochtli

Attributes: Strength 9, Dexterity 11, Stamina 11; Charisma 7, Manipulation 9, Appearance 10; Perception 10, Intelligence 6, Wits 9

Virtues: Courage 4, Endurance 3, Expression 2, Loyalty 3

Abilities: Animal Ken 5, Athletics 5, Awareness 4, Brawl 4, Command 3, Control (Skis) 5, Craft (Skis) 3, Fortitude 4, Larceny 2, Marksmanship 5, Medicine 2, Melee 5, Politics 2, Presence 2, Stealth 5, Survival 5, Thrown 4

Birthrights: Avatar 5, Relic 5 (Spear—Justice, War), Relic 3 (Skis—Frost, Psychopomp, Sky)

Supernatural Powers:

Avatars: The Arbiter, The Cold

Boons: Army of One, Battle Cry, Battle Map, Bestial Endowment, Blessing of Ammunition, Blessing of Bravery, Blizzard Call, Chill the Blood, Cloud Sculptor, Colossus Armor, Come Along, Dire Endowment, Divine Endowment, Divine Enforcement, Dream Wrack, Eitr Antivenin, Epic Endowment, Flash Freeze, Frost Immunity, Frozen Heart, Frozen Panoply, Giant, Guilt Apparitions, Heroic Endowment, Hrimthurssar's Touch, Human Endowment, Judgment, Levin Fury, Marathon Sprinter, Morale Failure, Overworld Judgment, Psychic Prison, Rainbow Bridge, Sanctify Oath, Scarlet Letter, Shield of Righteousness, Supernal Bestial Endowment, Supernal Human Endowment, Sympathy Pains, Terra Incognita, Tornado Tamer, Uller's Stride, Unbarred Entry, Unerring Orientation, Warrior Ideal (Huntsman), Where Are You?, Sky's Grace, Wind Grapple, Wind's Freedom, Winter's Mercy, Ymir's Hand

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**), Epic Dexterity 10 (all Knacks), Epic Stamina 10 (all Knacks), Epic Charisma 5 (Benefit of the Doubt, Charmer, Crowd Control, Hapless Cool, Inspirational Figure), Epic Manipulation 6 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**), Epic Appearance 7 (Center of Attention, Detail Variation, Doin' Fine, Game Face, Lasting Impression, My Eyes Are Up Here, Tailor Made), Epic Perception 9 (all Knacks), Epic Wits 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**)

Ultimate Attributes: Ultimate Dexterity, Ultimate Stamina

Join Battle: 13

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 15, Damage 10L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 14, Damage 13L, Parry DV 53, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 16, Damage 10L, Parry DV 54, Speed 4

Spear: Accuracy 18, Damage 13L, Parry DV 54, Speed 4

Longbow: Accuracy 16, Damage 13L, Range 40, Speed 6

Remington: Accuracy 19, Damage 8L, Range 200, Speed 6, P

Soak: 10A/52L/57B

Health Levels: -0x52/Incap

Dodge DV: 60 **Willpower:** 8

Legend: 12 **Legend Points:** 144

Other Notes: Uller frequently uses a pair of skis carved from bone to channel his Frost, Psychopomp and Sky Boons. His favorite hunting spear is an improved hasta with Accuracy +2, Damage +3L, Defense +0, Speed 4. It allows use of the Justice and War Purviews. It also enables him to call his squad of einherjar.

MISSING PURVIEWS?

Readers might notice a few odd holes in the Purviews of the Aesir. For example, while they include multiple Gods of Fertility, Guardian, Justice, Sky and War, there are no Earth Gods. Although many Aesir have animal companions or allies, none of them possess Animal as an associated Purview.

Consider their background, however. In Norse mythology, beings connected strongly to the Earth are either plant or fertility Gods—or not Gods at all, but fearsome giants, cunning dwarves and terrible monsters. Also, animals in their ultimate form are usually antagonists for the Gods, such as the Fenris Wolf and the Midgard Serpent, not the Gods themselves. Therefore, while many Aesir have the Animal Purview, none of them *incarnate* that Purview.

Storytellers who wish to cover more bases with the Aesir can find support for adding these Purviews to existing Aesir. Odin's epithets include Raven-God; as companions he also has magical wolves and an eight-legged horse. Loki spawned the archetypal monstrous wolf and sea serpent and often changed into various animals. Freya and Frigg can turn into birds. Some stories suggest that Frigg is an Earth Goddess. The Gods' traits for **Scion: Ragnarök** include such Purviews as minor aspects, but nothing prevents a Storyteller from raising them to associated Purviews.

Also, the lack of influence over an area might make great fodder for players' concepts. If the Aesir have no true Wolf-God or Goddess of Stone and Metal, that's an excellent goal for a Scion.

Other Beings among the Aesir

The following characters are lesser (or lesser known) Gods, demigods and other beings who are important to the Aesir's efforts against the Titans and to the Gods' fate at Ragnarök.

Norse mythology mentions several other Gods and lesser immortals without providing enough information for any plausible attempt to describe them in game terms. Odin's own brothers, Vili and Ve, drop out after the World's creation. If Vili is indeed Hoenir, then all that's known is that he is indecisive and has long legs. About Ve, or Lodur, nothing is known at all.

Loki's wife, Sigyn, certainly has extremely strong Loyalty, but she appears only in the tale of Loki's imprisonment. Their children Narfi and Vali (no connection to Odin's Scion Vali) are even more nebulous. The *Prose Edda* additionally mentions the names of several Asynjur (i.e., Aesir Goddesses) with no explanation at all. Storytellers who want to write up these shadowy figures must rely on their own imagination. At least, no one can tell you you're wrong.

Beowulf, Patron of Heroes

The heroic Beowulf came from Geatland, in what is now Sweden. He traveled throughout Northern Europe and faced countless foes. He fought sea serpents, the troll-thing Grendel, Grendel's demonic mother and a dragon—and that's just in the stories that survived to the modern day.

Beowulf's parentage explains some of his success. The son of Prince Edgetho was also a Scion of Freya. The events in the famed Old English poem *Beowulf* actually recount the greatest battles of the Scion's life as he ascended from hero to God. As a young hero, he faced the monster Grendel and slew the beast by tearing off its arm so the creature bled out. Later, he established himself as a Demigod by defeating Grendel's mother. Finally, he ascended to divinity by besting a marauding dragon. After passing his mortal kingdom to his nephew Wiglaf, Beowulf "died" (as far as anyone at the time knew), passing into legend.

Although the Aesir count him among their number, Beowulf spends little time in Asgard. Instead, he prefers to aid heroes of any origin to oppose not only the Titans and their spawn, but various schemes of the Gods themselves. The Keepers of the World (see **Scion: God**, p. 258) have asked him to join their ranks, but while he sympathizes with their goal of protecting humanity from all Overworld influence, he also doubts their motives and has unanswered questions about their methods. He has yet to accept.

For now, Beowulf wanders the World using avatars of reduced power and Legend, fighting monsters and occasionally advising Scions about being heroic. When Beowulf feels like settling down for awhile, he adopts the guise of anything from a biker bar owner to a professor of early English Literature (specializing, of

course, in *Beowulf*). He has no acknowledged children, though he is far from celibate and probably has a few potential Scions running around. With Ragnarök so close, though, Beowulf might decide to come out of retirement in a big way and let his Scions know their parentage, power and need to save Midgard.

Beowulf also would rather help inexperienced Scions as a guide, using a pseudonym, than lead a Band. He wants Scions to win their own fame and glory, not limit themselves as adjuncts to his own. What's more, he's noticed a pattern in his exploits—a binding of Fate that has become inextricably tied to him. Whenever Beowulf defeats a new enemy, there's usually a second foe of greater power waiting in the wings to take offense and slaughter his allies, forcing him to avenge them. Beowulf would rather not doom inexperienced Scions to fight enemies beyond their power.

Beowulf is hard to miss. He appears as a handsome man apparently in his 40s, still rippling with muscles and well over six feet tall. He favors casual clothing and usually sports a short, well-trimmed beard streaked with gray.

Associated Powers: Epic Strength, Epic Stamina, Guardian, Jotunblut, War

Abilities: Athletics, Brawl, Fortitude, Melee, Survival, Thrown

Rivals: Loki, Odin; Hera, Susano-o, Tezcatlipoca

Attributes: Strength 11, Dexterity 7, Stamina 10; Charisma 7, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4; Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 6

Virtues: Courage 5, Endurance 5, Expression 4, Loyalty 4

Abilities: Academics 4, Animal Ken 3, Athletics 5, Awareness 4, Brawl 5, Command 2, Control 3, Fortitude 5, Integrity 4, Investigation 3, Marksmanship 4, Melee 5, Occult 1, Politics 1, Presence 4, Stealth 2, Survival 5, Thrown 5

Birthrights: Avatar 5, Relic 5 (Sword Hilt—Guardian, War), Followers (10 Einherjar: Geat Warriors)

Supernatural Powers:

Avatars: The General, The Sentinel

Boons: Aegis, Appropriated Vigil, Army of One, Battle Cry, Battle Map, Bestial Endowment, Blessing of Ammunition, Blessing of Bravery, Colossus Armor, Come Running, Confer Immunity, Confer Knack, Dire Endowment, Divine Endowment, Divine Resolve, Eitr Antivenin, Epic Endowment, Follower Army, Giant, Heroic Endowment, Human Endowment, I Say Thee Nay!, Morale Failure, Salvation Sacrifice, Supernal Bestial Endowment, Supernal Human Endowment, Surreal Draft, Unseen Shield, Vigil Brand, Ward, Warrior Ideal (Barbarian Hero)

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 10 (all Knacks), Epic Dexterity 5 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero**, And the Crowd Goes Wild, Fast as Thought, Roll With It), Epic Stamina 10 (all Knacks), Epic Charisma 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero**, Boys Will Be Boys, Hapless Cool), Epic Manipulation 1 (Gods' Honest, Overt Order, Takes One to Know One), Epic Appearance 1 (Center of Attention), Epic Perception 2 (Predatory Focus, Subliminal Warning), Epic Intelligence 2 (Fight With Your Head, Teaching Prodigy), Epic Wits 3 (Cobra Reflexes, Opening Gambit, Opening Salvo, Rabbit Reflexes)

Ultimate Attributes: Ultimate Strength

Join Battle: 10

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 12, Damage 12L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed Heavy: Accuracy 11, Damage 15L, Parry DV 16, Speed 5

Unarmed Light: Accuracy 13, Damage 12L, Parry DV 18, Speed 4

Soak: 12A/55L/60B (Relic sword hilt, +2A/4L/4B)

Health Levels: -0x52/Incap

Dodge DV: 23 **Willpower:** 10

Legend: 12 **Legend Points:** 144

Other Notes: Beowulf's relic is the hilt of one of the many swords broken during his adventures. Depending on his mood, he says it's either Unferth's sword Hrunting, the blade he took from the cave of Grendel's Mother or the sword Naegling he used to fight the dragon. He often wears the hilt on a chain around his neck. When so worn, this "lucky charm" provides an extra +2A/4L/4B soak.

Magni and Modi

In Norse legend, Magni ("Mighty") and Modi ("Courage") are Thor's sons by the giantess Jarnsaxa. While still a toddler, Magni helped Thor defeat the giant Hrungnir. Modi's early childhood was less distinguished, but his battle lust inspired the classic Norse berserkers. Both are among the few Aesir fated to survive Ragnarök. Neither of them attained the heights of Legend, Epic Attributes and Purviews needed to sire distinguished Scions—and they *can't*, until Ragnarök happens and they fulfill their fated roles, which annoys them both. Any Scions they father are adopted by Thor or, less often, other Aesir.

Both brothers are physically powerful, red-haired, handsome and full of youthful vigor. They look quite alike, though they differ in demeanor. Both have adventured in Midgard and helped their father in battles against the Titans.

Magni is a bit shorter and broader and tends to keep himself well groomed. He personifies strength. In fact, he might equal his father in this respect, despite his lower Legend. Other people find him stable, powerful and persistent. In modern Midgard, he often wears practical, sporty clothes, such as a tracksuit or a football jersey. In battle, Magni takes a page from his cousin Vidar and prefers to wade into the fray barehanded.

Modi is leaner than his brother and wears his hair longer and wilder, and his eyes hold a fierce, predatory gleam. He personifies battle rage and wrath. When Modi comes to Midgard (and even sometimes in the Overworld), he favors "punk" clothes such as torn pants, studded leather jackets and T-shirts displaying the names of Norwegian death-metal bands. At other times, he appears as a lean, wild-eyed Viking berserker. He often wields a huge skeggox he took from a slain giant years ago.

Magni and Modi are not Scions, since they have no mortal parent. Their youth (in personality, and from their Fate-limited Legend) keeps the older Aesir from accepting them as independent Gods. Yet they don't really fit in with contemporary Scions because they were never mortal. They are in many ways the middle children of the Aesir. Magni tries to please his father and act as an older brother to Thor's Scions. Modi is the angry child who feels neglected and forgotten in favor of the Scion "babies" of the family. While neither actively tries to hurt any Scion of Thor they encounter, their ideas of help might not exactly mesh with what the Scion desires, since they both believe they must "toughen up" their kid brothers and sisters for the battles to come.

Knowing that they will survive Ragnarök makes the brothers overconfident. Either will throw himself into danger at a moment's notice, trusting Fate to protect him. It has thus far, which only prompts Thor's sons to chase after bigger and deadlier adventures, hoping somehow to establish grand Legends of their own.

Magni

Attributes: Strength 10, Dexterity 5, Stamina 8; Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4; Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Virtues: Courage 4, Endurance 5, Expression 3, Loyalty 4

Abilities: Academics 1, Athletics 5, Awareness 3, Brawl 5, Control 3, Fortitude 5, Integrity 5, Melee 5, Presence 4, Survival 1, Thrown 4

Birthright: Creature 5 (Gullfaxi), Relic 2 (Giant-Bone Pendant—Guardian, War)

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Aegis, Appropriated Vigil, Battle Cry, Bestial Endowment, Blessing of Bravery, Colossus Armor, Come Running, Confer Immunity, Confer Knack, Dire Endowment, Divine Endowment, Divine Resolve, Epic Endowment, Giant, Heroic Endowment, Human Endowment, I Say thee Nay!, Supernal Bestial Endowment, Supernal Human Endowment, Unseen Shield, Vigil Brand, Ward

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 9 (all Knacks), Epic Dexterity 3 (And the Crowd Goes Wild, Lightning Sprinter, Monkey Climber), Epic Stamina 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**, Whale's Breath), Epic Charisma 3 (Blessing of Importance, Inspirational Figure, BFF), Epic Manipulation 1 (Gods' Honest), Epic Appearance 2 (Center of Attention, Serpent's Gaze), Epic Perception 1 (Unfailing Recognition), Epic Intelligence 1 (Language Mastery), Epic Wits 1 (Social Chameleon)

Strongest of all the Aesir: In addition to the bonuses granted by Magni's Epic Strength, he also receives additional successes on all Strength-related tests equal to his Strength Attribute (currently 10) and doubles his throwing ranges and lifting limits.

Join Battle: 6

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 10, Damage 11L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed Heavy: Accuracy 9, Damage 14L, Parry DV 8, Speed 5

Unarmed Light: Accuracy 11, Damage 11L, Parry DV 10, Speed 4

Soak: 7A/26L/30B

Health Levels: -0x28/Incap

Dodge DV: 14 **Willpower:** 9

Legend: 10 **Legend Points:** 100

Other Notes: Magni's horse, Gullfaxi, is a mystical creature with a golden mane, which once belonged to a giant. It has the same traits as a valkyrie horse (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 328) with one extra dot in all of its Attributes, its Legend and its Abilities.

Since Modi and Magni are fated to survive Ragnarök, Storytellers might wish to consider them as unable to die until after that great battle takes place. In any case, if either of Thor's sons perishes before Ragnarök, it should be a clear signal that Fate has somehow gone off the rails.

Modi

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 7, Stamina 10; Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4; Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Virtues: Courage 5, Endurance 3, Expression 4, Loyalty 3

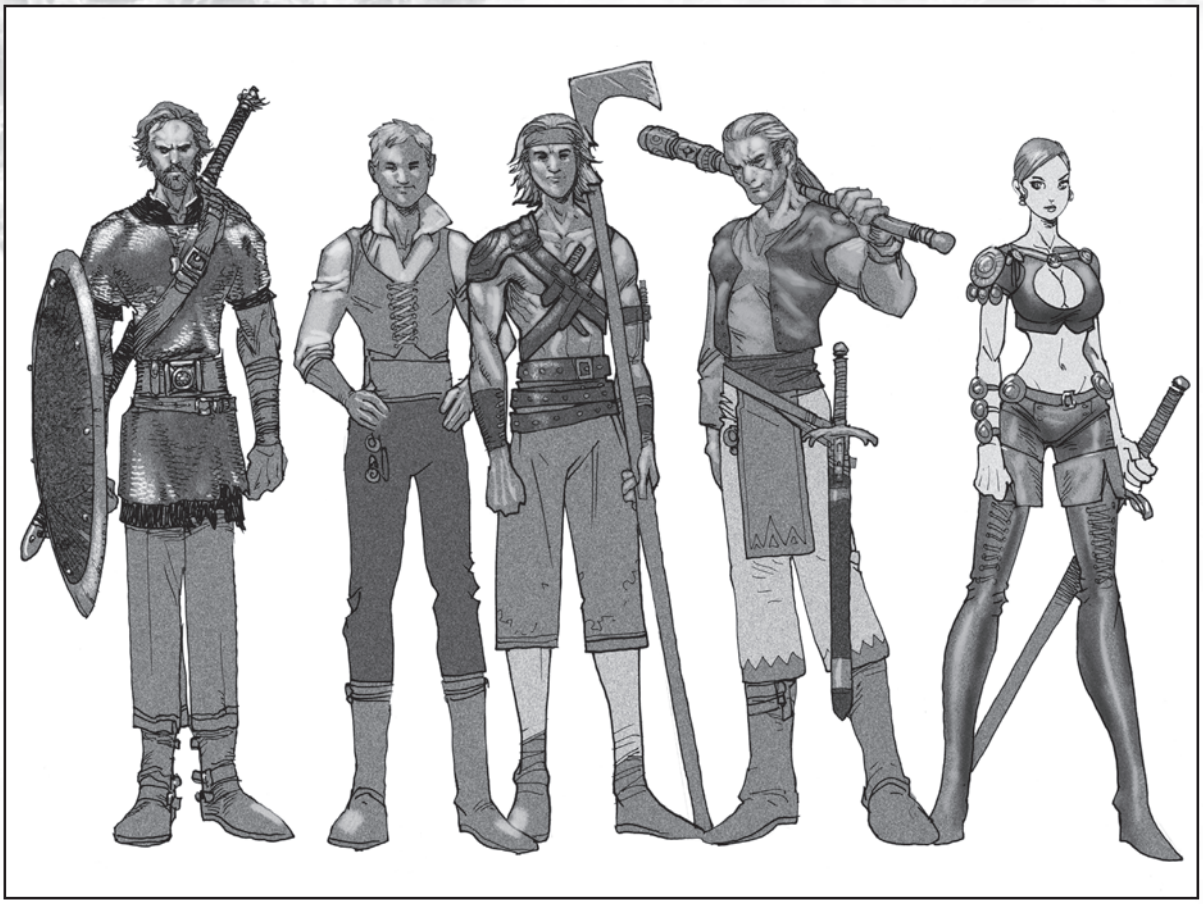
Abilities: Art (Thrash Guitar) 2, Athletics 5, Awareness 5, Brawl 5, Control 3, Fortitude 5, Integrity 5, Investigation 2, Larceny 4, Melee 5, Presence 5, Thrown 3, Stealth 3, Survival 4

Birthright: Relic 5 (Giant Skeggox—War, Chaos), Followers 5 (Berserkers)

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Army of One, Battle Cry, Bestial Endowment, Blessing of Bravery, Dire Endowment, Divine Endowment, Epic Endowment, Eye of the Storm, Fury of War, Giant, Hornet's Nest, Heroic Endowment, Human Endowment, Insanity, Instant Riot, Morale Failure, Paralyzing Confusion, Supernal Bestial Endowment, Supernal Human Endowment, Warrior Ideal (Berserker)

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 6 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**) Epic Dexterity 6 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero**, Fast As Thought, Whirlwind Shield), Epic Stamina 9 (all Knacks), Epic



Charisma 1 (Never Say Die), Epic Manipulation 1 (Blurt It Out), Epic Appearance 1 (Lasting Impression), Epic Perception 1 (Predatory Focus), Epic Intelligence 1 (Fast Learner), Epic Wits 3 (Cobra Reflexes, Eternal Vigilance, Rabbit Reflexes)

Join Battle: 9

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 12, Damage 7L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed Heavy: Accuracy 11, Damage 10L, Parry DV 21, Speed 5

Unarmed Light: Accuracy 13, Damage 7L, Parry DV 23, Speed 4

Giant Skeggox: Accuracy 13, Damage 20L Parry DV 22, Speed 5

Soak: 9A/42L/47B

Health Levels: -0 x43/Incap

Dodge DV: 27 **Willpower:** 9

Legend: 10 **Legend Points:** 100

Other Notes: Modi's skeggox is a now-deceased giant's weapon, with the following traits: Accuracy +3, Damage +13L, Defense +0, Speed 5. He wields the weapon at a -2 Accuracy penalty because he's not a giant himself.

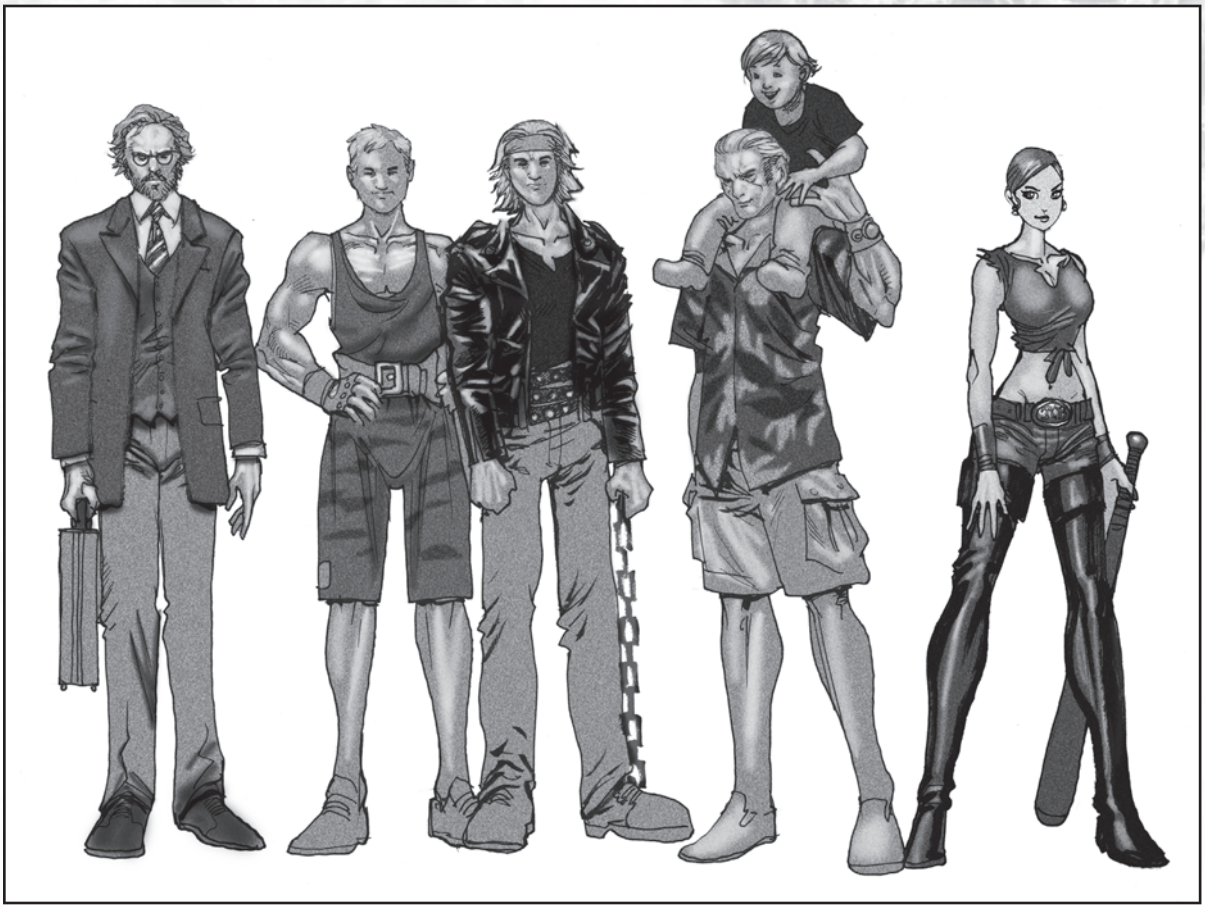
Since Modi and Magni are fated to survive Ragnarök, Storytellers might wish to consider them as unable to die until after that great battle takes place. In any case, if either of Thor's sons perishes before Ragnarök, it should be a clear signal that Fate has somehow gone off the rails.

Skirnir

Skirnir, Freyr's "go-to" guy, was originally a Scion who impressed the God so much with his cleverness and valor that he received a position as Freyr's shield-man. He worked with Freyr for centuries, delivering messages and running errands. He rose to the status of lesser God and helped sort out various affairs for Odin and some of the other Aesir, but primarily stayed at Freyr's side. That is, until the God wanted to get married.

Skirnir didn't mind that Freyr wanted to marry the giantess Gerd. Sure, Skirnir didn't much like her or her family, but she was very pretty, and he wanted his lord to be happy. No, what bothered Skirnir was that Freyr expected him to travel *alone* into deepest Jotunheim to seal the deal. Still, Skirnir agreed, provided that Freyr equip him with a magic horse and Freyr's own magic sword. Desperately in love, Freyr agreed. Skirnir made the journey, talked Gerd into marrying Freyr... and the legends never mention either Skirnir or Freyr's sword again.

After the mission to woo Gerd, Skirnir distanced himself from Freyr and the Aesir in general, embittered by the incredibly dangerous tasks they so casually assigned to him. There comes a time, he decided, when courage becomes suicidal and loyal service deserves a little loyalty in return. So, Skirnir quit while he was in one piece and in relatively good humor.



Skirnir now lives a quiet life on Midgard as shipping company executive Skip Nears of Portland, Oregon. He has a wife and five kids. He goes to soccer games and PTA meetings. He gardens, and he watches the game on Sundays. Skirnir now uses his supernatural powers only when absolutely necessary and finds he really doesn't miss his old life. He aged somewhat and put on a good deal of weight since his days as a young adventurer, though he remains handsome for a man of his girth.

Every few decades, some creature of Legend tracks Skirnir down, searching for Freyr's missing sword. Some come from the Aesir; some serve the Titans. Skirnir tells some that he gave the sword to Gerd's father as her bride-price, others that he kept the sword but lost it later, and a variety of other stories. All that the Aesir's seers know for sure is that Skirnir doesn't have the sword, but Fate refuses to say (so far) where it might be.

Fate also does not say what role Skirnir will play in Ragnarök. Skirnir himself does not know. He loves his mortal life and would rather avoid the affairs of the Gods, but he realizes it must all end like everything else when the last battle comes.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5; Charisma 6, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4; Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Virtues: Courage 3, Endurance 4, Expression 3, Loyalty 4

Abilities: Academics 3, Animal Ken 2, Athletics 4, Awareness 4, Brawl 4, Command 1, Control 4, Empathy 2, Fortitude 4, Integrity 4, Investigation 3, Marksmanship 2, Melee 4, Occult 4, Politics 1, Presence 5, Stealth 2, Survival 4, Thrown 2

Birthrights: Relic 5 (Shield—Sun, Health, Fertility), Relic 3 (Herald's Badge—Psychopomp)

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Assess Health, Blessing of Health/Curse of Frailty, Come Along, Divine Radiance, Flare Missile, Green Thumb, Heavenly Flare, Penetrating Glare, Unerring Orientation, Terra Incognita, Where Are You?

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 2 (Crushing Grip, Holy Bound), Epic Dexterity 2 (Lightning Sprinter, Monkey Climber), Epic Stamina 4 (Devourer, Divine Fortitude, Extended Youth, Holy Fortitude, Inner Furnace, Self-Healing), Epic Charisma 4 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero**), Epic Manipulation 4 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero**, Hard Sell), Epic Appearance 1 (Blinding Visage, My Eyes Are Up Here), Epic Wits 2 (Social Chameleon, Rabbit Reflexes)

Join Battle: 8

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 8, Damage 6L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed Heavy: Accuracy 7, Damage 9B, Parry DV 5, Speed 5,

Unarmed Light: Accuracy 9, Damage 6B, Parry DV 7, Speed 4

Shield Bash: Accuracy 7, Damage 7B, Parry 7, Speed 6

Mossberg Shotgun: Accuracy 6, Damage 6L, Range 20, Clip 8, Speed 5, P

Soak: 4A/10L/12B

Health Levels: -0x13/Incap

Dodge DV: 12 **Willpower:** 8

Legend: 7 **Legend Points:** 49

Other Notes: Skirnir's shield is gold and decorated with various scenes from Norse myth. It provides access to the Sun, Health and Fertility Purviews as well as providing +2 DV when uses defensively. Skirnir's Herald's Badge shows him to be an official representative of the Aesir and grants access to the Psychopomp Purviews. Both are currently buried in his backyard under his kids' swing-set.

Thrud

This daughter of Thor and Sif is often confused with her valkyrie half-sister Pruor. Thrud ("Strength") is a curvy, athletic young woman with red-gold hair who combines her father's battle prowess with her mother's beauty and association with fertility. Despite sometimes looking and acting like an odd cross between a New Age pagan and a sorority girl, Thrud is a frontline soldier in the war against the giants, titanspawn and Titans. The Aesir often assign her to slay various beasts and aid novice Gods on quests.

Thrud spends a lot of her time on Midgard, having fallen in love with the modern World in ways that many of the Aesir have not. She prefers to wander from party to battle, and vice-versa. Sometimes she comes to Midgard on a mission for her father or mother but just as often she visits for a good time. She contemplates settling down and briefly had a fling with a dwarf ages ago, but the warrior woman in her knows that only a great God (or a really promising demigod) can satisfy her as a mate. Of course, Thrud feels sure she'll know this person when she sees him (or her) and doesn't worry about them not realizing it as well.

In battle and life, Thrud is far from subtle. If she wants something, she takes it. If she wants something dead, she takes it down.

Attributes: Strength 9, Dexterity 6, Stamina 6; Charisma 6, Manipulation 3, Appearance 8; Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Virtues: Courage 5, Endurance 4, Expression 4, Loyalty 3

Abilities: Animal Ken 1, Athletics 5, Awareness 2, Brawl 5, Command 1, Control 3, Fortitude 4, Integrity 3, Marksmanship 3, Melee 5, Presence 5, Thrown 5, Survival 5

Birthright: Avatar 4, Relic 5 (Underbarn—Fertility, Guardian), Followers 3 (5 amazon/skjalmö)

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Aegis, Accelerate Growth, Bless of Blight, Cleanse, Come Running, Eternal Bloom, Green Thumb, Verdant Creation, Vigil Brand, Virility/Muliebrity

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**, Knockback Wave, Hurl to the Moon), Epic Dexterity 3 (And the Crowd Goes Wild, Lightning Sprinter, Untouchable Opponent, Whirlwind Shield), Epic Stamina 5 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**), Epic Charisma 5 (BFF, Blessing of Importance, Charmer, Engender Love, Girls Just Wanna Have Fun, Pied Piper), Epic Manipulation 1 (God's Honest), Epic Appearance 5 (Center of Attention, Come Hither, Detail Variation, Inescapable Visage, Lasting Impression, My Eyes Are Up Here), Epic Perception 1 (Environmental Awareness), Epic Intelligence 1 (Perfect Memory), Epic Wits 2 (Cobra Reflexes, Opening Gambit, Social Chameleon)

Join Battle: 6

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 11, Damage 10L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed Heavy: Accuracy 10, Damage 13L, Parry DV 9, Speed 5

Unarmed Light: Accuracy 12, Damage 10L, Parry DV 10, Speed 4

Underbarn: Accuracy 12, Damage 16B, Parry DV 10, Speed 4

Soak: 5A/14L/17B

Health Levels: -0 x17/Incap

Dodge DV: 14 **Willpower:** 9

Legend: 9 **Legend Points:** 81

Other Notes: Underbarn is a baseball bat carved from a branch of Yggdrasil, with the following traits: Accuracy +1, Damage +6, Defense +0, Speed 4. It allows access to the Guardian and Fertility Purviews.

Gerd and Skadi

These two giantesses married Gods, and the Aesir now treat them as pantheon members in good standing. Norse legend does not say if they had any children by their divine husbands, but it seems fairly plausible that Freyr and Uller might have half-giant offspring comparable to Magni and Modi, who were simply born too late to appear in the legends known to mortals.

While Storytellers can write up Gerd and Skadi from scratch, you can adequately represent them using the Attributes, Abilities, Epic Abilities and Legend of Sinmore (see **Scion: God**, p. 324); but remove Art (Pyrography), Control (Dragon) and Craft (Smithing). Instead, Gerd is unusually empathetic and a remarkable beauty even by divine standards (reduce Manipulation to 5 and raise Appearance to 8; replace Epic Manipulation with Epic Appearance), while Skadi is a superb huntress, but a very tough audience for any entertainer (Integrity 5 and Survival 5). They have whatever Aesir Virtue ratings you feel appropriate.

Each has all the Jotunblut Boons that their Legend permits. Skadi additionally has all Frost Boons permitted by her Legend, plus the innate powers of a frost giant. Gerd has a smattering of Fertility Boons and Divine Radiance. (Maybe Freyr's seeing her "light up the world" wasn't just his smitten imagination.) They are not Gods, however, and so cannot become parents of Scions.

SAMPLE SCIONS

Two of Odin's Scions, Hermod and Vali, are destined to play important roles in the death of Baldur and the outcome of Ragnarök. Hermod the messenger will brave the pathways to Helheim to try to negotiate the resurrection of Baldur. Vali will strike down Hod, the blind God of Darkness whom Loki tricks into slaying Baldur. They are among the few Gods fated to survive Ragnarök.

Odin's treatment of his two children is worth noting. The All-Father keeps a close watch on Hermod and Vali. He knows that they both have important roles to play in the saga of the Aesir, and he doesn't like the idea of them wandering around unsupervised. No one but Odin himself knows whether he plans to use his children somehow to cheat the Aesir's fate at Ragnarök or if he simply wants to make sure things go as planned... and only Fate knows whether Odin's plans will succeed.

The following entries for Hermod and Vali portray them at all three levels of play: as starting heroes, as demigods and as Gods newly come to their divinity.



HERMOD
SCION OF ODIN



Herman Odson had a normal life. He lived with his mother, Charlotte, in Topeka, Kansas. He looked forward to graduating from high school. On weekends, he worked as a delivery boy for extra cash. He won a few trophies in track and field and had the occasional girlfriend. Herman never thought much about his father, who wandered in and out of Charlotte's life 18 years before, leaving an old motorcycle and Herman for the young woman to remember him by.

So, Herman was surprised when a man claiming to be his father showed up at his high school graduation. Herman thought this strange, one-eyed old man didn't look like he could have seduced a 20-year old co-ed. Nor did he look like he rode a Harley.

The old man also said he was really Odin, the father of the Norse Gods. Herman didn't know much about Odin beyond what he'd read in a couple of comic books and learned in a two-week unit on mythology in middle school, but he knew crazy. So he gave his father a rather insincere "thank you" for coming to see him after all those years, offered to return the old guy's bike (which his father refused), and left the old man standing in a cloud of dust as he rode off to his graduation camping trip. He expected to celebrate with his friends and forget once again about his old man, whom his mom certainly had been better off without.

And then, Herman Odson's graduation party was crashed by two giants and a wolf the size of his mom's car. Herman threw rocks to draw the impossible creatures from his friends and grabbed a stout branch to defend himself. As the monstrous crashers loomed over Herman, who wondered what it would feel like to be crushed to death by something that clearly couldn't exist, Herman's father stepped in front of him (from where?) and stabbed the larger giant with a glowing spear. The giant fell dead. The other giant soon followed, and the huge wolf ran away. Herman decided two things. One, his father wasn't so bad. Two, it was time to rethink the likelihood that his father was who he claimed to be.

Herman's life isn't so normal anymore. He helps his father as part of learning about his divine heritage. To date, this mostly means delivering messages to strange folks in strange places. This irritates him slightly, given that it feels too much like a weirder version of his old, boring, part-time job. Still, his father hinted at some great task ahead of him. Herman can't shake the feeling that he might find himself longing for the days of going to class and delivering pizzas.

Herman stands six feet tall, with a slim, fit build. He has short, ash-blond hair, a long face and a goofy smile that most people find engaging. While riding, he wears sturdy black leather clothing with a raven outlined in gold on the back of his jacket. He also wears a golden helmet.

Join Battle: 5

Dodge DV: 8

Birthrights: Herman's hand-me-down Harley, which he waggishly dubbed "Sleipnir," lets him channel the Psychopomp and Sky Purviews. It has the further benefit that any Knacks that increase running speed or mobility apply to the motorcycle's movement too. Odin also gave Herman a *gambantein*, or rune-carved staff, that allows access to the Mystery Purview. It functions as a bo in combat, and can shrink down to a foot long for convenient carrying. When he expects trouble (usually, on a mission), Herman slings a quiver of six sport javelins on his back. Treat his javelins as yaomitls (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 203).

Hermod as Demigod

This is Herman after spending 150 experience points and promotion to demigod. By this point in his adventures, Herman has pumped iron for a year and developed most of his Attributes to some degree. While Herman still wears his biker leathers, he doesn't mind when combat shreds them to show his chiseled new physique (especially when he's activated Body Armor).

Herman accepts his roles as messenger and as nascent deity. Although he concentrates on developing his Attributes and Epic Attributes, Herman also develops additional skill at Mystery along with movement-related Boons. For instance, he can make his motorcycle fly and ride it through walls. Since he often needs to deliver messages or persuade as well as deliver or pick up items or people, with Vali's help he has developed his natural charm and communication skills too. The other Aesir now refer to him as Hermod.

Join Battle: 7

Dodge DV: 20

Birthrights: Herman still has his *gambantein* and Harley. The dwarves of Bixby Knoll (described in Chapter Six) rewarded him for his help by forging him a pair of javelins that enjoy the Piercing quality and, like Mjolnir, return to his hand when thrown. Returning takes six ticks, so Herman throws one javelin while the other flies back to him. The wise dwarf Radsvid now acts as Herman's guide. Radsvid knows a great deal and can perform a variety of magical rites and artifice, but he stays in Bixby Knoll. The Tinytown keeps satellite phone coverage throughout Ragnarök, but that's no help if Herman goes off Midgard. Finally, the dwarves also switched out the Harley's gas tank for a box of complex springs and clockwork—a perpetual motion machine that lets his motorcycle run without fuel, at cost of one Legend per day.

Hermod, God of Couriers

As a demigod, Herman concentrated on advancing his mastery of the Psychopomp Purview, while acquiring a smattering of additional Abilities, Epic Attributes and minor Boons that made him a more effective courier and warrior. Three hundred points of experience later, he became a God. In his transition, he concentrated on his Physical Attributes and Epic Attributes, the better to prepare for the final battle. Hermod can now carry his Band almost anywhere in the Nine Worlds and survive in a variety of hostile environments. He remains a second-tier fighter, though. Even enhancing his attacks with Storm Augmentation and various Knacks, he just can't dish out enough damage to fight toe-to-toe with other Gods, Titan avatars or other entities of comparable power.

Join Battle: 7

Dodge DV: 27

Birthrights: To his *gambantein*, javelins and Harley, Hermod adds a cell phone modified by the dwarves of Bixby Knoll so that it makes calls between realms. This enables Hermod to phone his guide for advice when he's in the Overworld or the Underworld. Hermod can also access his Psychopomp Boons using an enchanted ignition key, for circumstances when the presence of an entire motorcycle would be awkward. As a demigod, Hermod used various titanspawn trophies and scavenged relics to channel his new Fire, Frost and Water Boons. As a God, he does not bother carrying these relics. That might change if Hermod develops these Purviews further.

SCION
HERO

Herman Odson — Name	Delivery Boy — Calling	Aesir — Pantheon
Player	Gallant — Nature	Odin — God

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●●○○○○○○○	Charisma	●●●●○○○○○○	Perception	●●●○○○○○○○
Dexterity	●●●●●○○○○○	Manipulation	●●○○○○○○○○	Intelligence	●●○○○○○○○○
Stamina	●●●○○○○○○○	Appearance	●●●○○○○○○○	Wits	●●●○○○○○○○

ABILITIES

□ Academics	●○○○○	□ Craft (Bike Repair)	●●●○○	□ Melee	●●●○○
□ Animal Ken	○○○○○	□	○○○○○	■ Occult	●○○○○
■ Art	○○○○○	□	○○○○○	□ Politics	○○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Empathy	○○○○○	■ Presence	●●○○○
□ Athletics	●●●●○	■ Fortitude	●●●○○	□ Science	○○○○○
□ Awareness	●●○○○	■ Integrity	●●○○○	□	○○○○○
□ Brawl	●●○○○	■ Investigation	○○○○○	□	○○○○○
□ Command	○○○○○	□ Larceny	○○○○○	□ Stealth	○○○○○
□ Control (Motorcycle)	●●●●○	□ Marksmanship	○○○○○	□ Survival	●●○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Medicine	○○○○○	□ Thrown	●●●○○

BIRTHRIGHTS

Relic (Gambanteir—Mystery) 2

Relic (Harley Davidson "Sleipnir"—Psychopomp, Sky) 3

WEAPONS

Gambanteir: Acc 10, Dmg 7B, Parry DV 7, Spd 6

Javelin: Acc 9, Dmg 6L, Parry DV 6, Spd 6, P

(thrown): Acc 9, Dam 6L, Rng 15, Spd 6, P

KNACKS

Cat's Grace

Holy Fortitude

Lightning Sprinter

Rabbit Reflexes

Self-Healing

BOONS

Mystery 1

Sky's Grace

Unerring Orientation

Where Are You?

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●○○○○

□□□□□□□□□□

SOAK

A 2 L 4 B 7

ARMOR

Biker Gear

A ____ L ____ B 2

HEALTH

-0	-0	-0	-0	-0	-4	I
□	□	□	□	□	□	□

VIRTUES

Courage	●●●○○
Endurance	●●●○○
Expression	●○○○○
Loyalty	●●○○○

LEGEND

●●●○○○

○○○○○○

Legend Points 9 | ____

EXPERIENCE

HERMAN ODSON

HERMAN ODSON

SCION
DEMIGOD

HERMAN ODSON

Herman Odson	Delivery Boy	Aesir
Name	Calling	Pantheon
	Gallant	Odin
Player	Nature	God

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●●●●○○○○○	Charisma	●●●●●○○○○○	Perception	●●●○○○○○○○
Dexterity	●●●●●●○○○○	Manipulation	●●●○○○○○○○	Intelligence	●●●○○○○○○○
Stamina	●●●●○○○○○○	Appearance	●●●●○○○○○○	Wits	●●●●●○○○○○

ABILITIES

□ Academics	●○○○○	□ Craft (Bike Repair)	●●●○○	□ Melee	●●●●○
□ Animal Ken	○○○○○	□	○○○○○	■ Occult	●●○○○
■ Art	○○○○○	□	○○○○○	□ Politics	○○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Empathy	○○○○○	■ Presence	●●●●○
□ Athletics	●●●●○	■ Fortitude	●●●○○	□ Science	○○○○○
□ Awareness	●●○○○	■ Integrity	●●○○○	□	○○○○○
□ Brawl	●●○○○	■ Investigation	○○○○○	□	○○○○○
□ Command	○○○○○	□ Larceny	○○○○○	□ Stealth	○○○○○
□ Control (Motorcycle)	●●●●○	□ Marksmanship	○○○○○	□ Survival	●●●○○
□	○○○○○	□ Medicine	○○○○○	□ Thrown	●●●●○

BIRTHRIGHTS

Guide (Dwarven Sage "Radsvid") 3
Relic (Gambantein–Mystery) 2
Relic (Harley Davidson "Sleipnir"–Psychopomp, Sky) 3
Relic (Perpetual Motion "Gas Tank") 1
Relic (Returning Javelins) 2

WEAPONS

Gambantein: Acc 12, Dmg 9B, Parry DV 17, Spd 6
Javelin: Acc 11, Dmg 8L, Parry DV 16, Spd 6, P
(thrown): Acc 11, Dam 8L, Rng 15, Spd 6, P

KNACKS

Benefit of the Doubt, Body Armor, Cat's Grace, Charmer, Divine Balance, Holy Fortitude, Lightning Sprinter, Predatory Focus, Rabbit Reflexes, Regeneration, Ricochet Symphony, Self-Healing, Untouchable Opponent

BOONS

Mystery 3, Sky's Grace, Unbarred Entry, Unerring Orientation, Where Are You?, Wind's Freedom

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●○○○○
□□□□□□□□□□

SOAK

A 4 L 9 B 13

ARMOR

Biker Gear
A ____ L ____ B 2

EXPERIENCE

150

VIRTUES

Courage	●●●○○
Endurance	●●●○○
Expression	●○○○○
Loyalty	●●○○○

LEGEND

●●●●●●
●○○○○○
49 Legend Points

HEALTH

0	0	0	0	0	0	I
□	□	□	□	□	□	□
□	□	□	□	□	□	
□	■	■	■	■	■	
■	■	■	■	■	■	

HERMAN ODSON

SCION
GOD

Hermod	Delivery Boy	Aesir
Name	Calling	Pantheon
	Gallant	God of Couriers
Player	Nature	Role

HERMOD

GOD OF COURIERS

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●●●●○○○○○ ■■□□□□□□□□ ☆	Charisma	●●●●●○○○○○ ■■□□□□□□□□ ☆	Perception	●●●●●○○○○○ ■□□□□□□□□□ ☆
Dexterity	●●●●●●●○○○ ■■■□□□□□□□ ☆	Manipulation	●●●●○○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□□ ☆	Intelligence	●●●○○○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□□ ☆
Stamina	●●●●●●●○○○ ■■■■□□□□□□ ☆	Appearance	●●●○○○○○○○ ■□□□□□□□□□ ☆	Wits	●●●○○○○○○○ ■■□□□□□□□□ ☆

ABILITIES

□ Academics	●○○○○	□ Craft (Bike Repair)	●●●○○	□ Melee	●●●●○
□ Animal Ken	●○○○○	□	○○○○○	■ Occult	●●○○○
■ Art	○○○○○	□	○○○○○	□ Politics	○○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Empathy	○○○○○	■ Presence	●●●●○
□ Athletics	●●●●○	■ Fortitude	●●●○○	□ Science	○○○○○
□ Awareness	●●○○○	■ Integrity	●●○○○	□	○○○○○
□ Brawl	●●○○○	■ Investigation	●○○○○	□	○○○○○
□ Command	○○○○○	□ Larceny	○○○○○	□ Stealth	●○○○○
□ Control (Horse)	●○○○○	□ Marksmanship	○○○○○	□ Survival	●●●○○
□ (Motorcyle)	●●●●○	□ Medicine	○○○○○	□ Thrown	●●●●○

BIRTHRIGHTS

Avatar 3, Guide (Dwarven Sage "Radsvid") 3, Relic (Cell Phone to Radsvid) 1, Relic (Gámbanteinn-Mystery) 2, Relic (Harley Davidson "Sleipnir"-Psychopomp, Sky) 3, Relic (Ignition Key-Psychopomp) 1, Relic (Perpetual Motion "Gas Tank") 1, Relic (Returning Javelins) 2

WEAPONS

Gámbanteinn: Acc 14, Dmg 10B, Parry DV 23, Spd 6

Javelin: Acc 13, Dmg 9L, Parry DV 22, Spd 6, P

(thrown): Acc 13, Dam 9L, Rng 15, Spd 6, P

KNACKS

Benefit of the Doubt, Body Armor, Cat's Grace, Charmer, Cobra Reflexes, Damage Conversion, Divine Balance, Eternal Vigilance, Fast as Thought, Game Face, Holy Bound, Holy Fortitude, Hurl to the Horizon, Hurl to the Moon, Impenetrable, Lightning Sprinter, Mighty Heave, Predatory Focus, Rabbit Reflexes, Regeneration, Ricochet Symphony, Self-Healing, Untouchable Opponent

BOONS

Come Along, Fire Immunity, Frost Immunity, Mystery 3, Otherworldly Portal, Rainbow Bridge, Sky's Grace, Storm Augmentation, Terra Incognita, Unbarred Entry, Unerring Orientation, Water Breathing, Where Are You?, Wind's Freedom,

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●○○○○

□□□□□□□□□□

SOAK

A 6 L 20 B 23

ARMOR

A____ L____ B____

EXPERIENCE

300

VIRTUES

Courage	●●●○○
Endurance	●●●○○
Expression	●○○○○
Loyalty	●●○○○

LEGEND

●●●●●●
●●●●○○

100 Legend Pts

HEALTH

0	□	□	□	□	■	■	■	■		
0	□	□	□	□	■	■	■	■	■	
0	□	□	□	□	■	■	■	■	■	
0	□	□	□	□	■	■	■	■	■	
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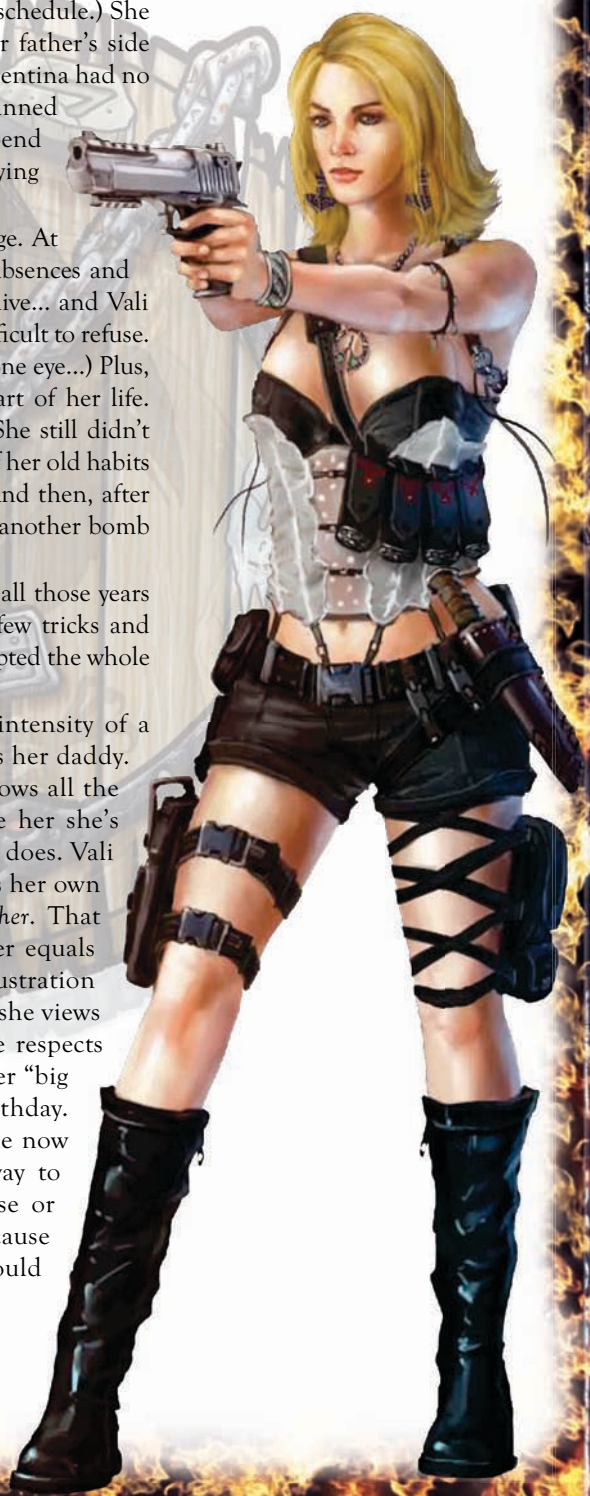
VALI
SCION OF ODIN

Valentina Wednesday was a spoiled rich kid who never had to grow up. Her father set up a sizeable trust fund for Valentina shortly after her birth and shortly before his untimely death. Her mother had money of her own too. Valentina's mother had no idea about how to raise a child and no inclination to learn. (It would have interfered with her social schedule.) She did give her daughter a pony, though. A few relatives on her father's side visited now and then, but none of them stayed long. By 18, Valentina had no direction, no goals and no real need to develop them. She planned to enroll in whatever university threw the best parties and spend the next four years doing anything and everything except applying herself before she had an entertaining public meltdown.

This all changed during Valentina's freshman year of college. At a meeting with the dean of students to discuss her excessive absences and alcohol citations, her father suddenly resurfaced, very much alive... and Vali found herself expected to behave. She soon found her father difficult to refuse. (Something in the way he frowned at her, and that patch over one eye...) Plus, Valentina had often wished that her father were alive and part of her life. Vali decided to dry out and straighten up. It wasn't perfect. She still didn't know how things usually worked with "grown-ups," and some of her old habits took a long time dying. Still, she came a long way in a year. And then, after complimenting Valentina on her progress, her father dropped another bomb on Vali's life.

At first, Valentina assumed that Dad had really been gone all those years because he was deeply insane. But then her old man did a few tricks and showed Vali she could do a few of her own. After that, Vali accepted the whole Scion of Odin thing easily and completely.

Vali attacks everything about being a Scion with the intensity of a zealot, or at least of a little girl trying desperately to impress her daddy. She is quick to act and rarely bothers to make sure she knows all the facts of a situation. If people try to stop her or convince her she's wrong, she figures they don't understand things the way she does. Vali tends to cut other Scions a break, but even then, she favor's her own opinions and methods. After all, her father is *the All-Father*. That means Scions of Thor and the other Aesir aren't really her equals and should do what she says, right? Vali can charm, but frustration makes her cop a 'tude like nobody's business. Nonetheless, she views Thor, Baldur, Vidar and the rest as older brothers, so she respects and usually listens to them. Vali feels particularly fond of her "big bro" Baldur, who gave her a totally cool gun for her birthday. Vali found she had a natural talent for shooting, which she now develops through fanatical practice. She's well on her way to becoming a gun-bunny. She also hopes to acquire a horse or other useful pet she can enhance through Jotunblut, because "it's just so Aesir." Her party-girl social skills, however, could prove more important than she expects.



Valentina is five-foot-four, with wavy, golden hair, a heart-shaped face and a figure that curves in all the right places. She could model, or at least sell sleazy tabloids by appearing on the cover—not that she wants to be a debauched minor celebrity anymore. She tends to dress in tight shorts, midriff-baring bustiers and other sport-tramp clothing, now accessorized with her rune pendant, tiny Mjolnir earrings, and whatever other Norse-themed jewelry she can find. Oh, and a gun belt with a dagger sheath when she's "on the job."

Join Battle: 5

Dodge DV: 7

Birthrights: Vali wears a pendant carrying the rune *ansuz*. It gives access to the Death Purview. She also carries the Avenger, a large automatic pistol with the following traits: Accuracy +1, Damage +7L, Range 50, Clip 7, Speed 4, P. It lets her channel the War Purview.

Vali as Demigod

After spending 150 experience points, Vali's Legend increases to 6. She has grown up a bit more, gaining Attributes and Epic Attributes across the board. She still concentrates on Dexterity (becoming a true gun-bunny), as well as Social Attributes to command or cajole.

Vali has become a skilled equestrian, and Odin gave her an Asgardian horse that she can summon at a cost of one Legend per day. She also learned more about the Death Purview to become a powerful ghost-fighter. Most importantly, perhaps, Vali now knows how to cooperate with her Band instead of trying to boss everyone around.

Join Battle: 8

Dodge DV: 18

Birthrights: Vali still has her rune-pendant and Avenger. She has added a ring marked with the rune *ehwo*, which lets her summon her horse and use the Animal Purview.

Vali: God of Assassins

Three hundred experience points after becoming a demigod, the daughter of Odin has attained true divinity. Vali makes the other Aesir nervous. She concentrated equally on pistol prowess and social dissimulation, becoming terribly skilled at gaining people's trust and then killing them. Vali has seduced and destroyed mortals, titanspawn and lesser immortals at the All-Father's command. She even started learning the Illusion Purview, the better to carry a weapon where others don't want her to or to pose as people trusted by her victims. Since coming to Asgard, Vali has fallen for Modi's bad-boy looks and attitude, though his temper makes their love affair as turbulent as it is passionate.

Join Battle: 10

Dodge DV: 40

Birthrights: Vali's Birthrights have not significantly changed. She added another runestone to her necklace so she could access the Illusion Purview, and use of Supernal Bestial Endowment raised her horse's Creature rating.

SCION
HERO

Valentina Wednesday	Spoiled Rich Girl	Aesir
Name	Calling	Pantheon
	Autocrat	Odin
Player	Nature	God

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●○○○○○○○○	Charisma	●●●○○○○○○○	Perception	●●○○○○○○○○
Dexterity	●●●●○○○○○○	Manipulation	●●●●○○○○○○	Intelligence	●●○○○○○○○○
Stamina	●●●○○○○○○○	Appearance	●●●●○○○○○○	Wits	●●●○○○○○○○

ABILITIES

□ Academics	●○○○○	□ Craft	○○○○○	□ Melee	●●○○○
□ Animal Ken	●●○○○	□	○○○○○	■ Occult	●○○○○
■ Art (Singing)	●●●○○	□	○○○○○	□ Politics	●○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Empathy	○○○○○	■ Presence	●●●○○
□ Athletics	●●●○○	■ Fortitude	●○○○○	□ Science	○○○○○
□ Awareness	●●○○○	■ Integrity	●○○○○	□	○○○○○
□ Brawl	○○○○○	■ Investigation	●●○○○	□	○○○○○
□ Command	●●○○○	□ Larceny	●○○○○	□ Stealth	●○○○○
□ Control (Horse)	●●○○○	□ Marksmanship	●●●○○	□ Survival	○○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Medicine	○○○○○	□ Thrown	○○○○○

BIRTHRIGHTS

Relic (Ansuz Rune Pendant—Death) 1

Relic (Avenger—War) 5

WEAPONS

Hadseax: Acc 7, Dmg 5L, Parry DV 5, Spd 4

Avenger: Acc 8, Dmg 8L, Rng 50, Clip 7, Spd 4, P

KNACKS

Center of Attention, Gods' Honest,

Opening Gambit, Solipsistic

Well-Being, Trick Shooter,

Untouchable Opponent

BOONS

Battle Cry

Bestial Endowment

Death Senses

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●○○○○

□□□□□□□□□□

SOAK

A 1 L 3 B 4

ARMOR

A____ L____ B____

HEALTH

-0	-0	-0	-2	-2	-4	I
□	□	□	□	□	□	□

VIRTUES

Courage	●●○○○
Endurance	●●○○○
Expression	●●○○○
Loyalty	●●●●○

LEGEND

●●●○○○

○○○○○○

Legend Points 9 | ____

EXPERIENCE

VALENTINA WEDNESDAY

VALENTINA WEDNESDAY

SCION
DEMIGOD

Valentina Wednesday (Name)	Spoiled Rich Girl (Calling)	Aesir (Pantheon)
(Player)	Autocrat (Nature)	Odin (God)

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●●○○○○○○○	Charisma	●●●●●○○○○○	Perception	●●○○○○○○○○
Dexterity	●●●●●○○○○○	Manipulation	●●●●●●○○○○	Intelligence	●●●○○○○○○○
Stamina	●●●●○○○○○○	Appearance	●●●●○○○○○○	Wits	●●●●●○○○○○

ABILITIES

□ Academics	●○○○○	□ Craft	○○○○○	□ Melee	●●○○○
□ Animal Ken	●●●○○	□	○○○○○	■ Occult	●●○○○
■ Art (Singing)	●●●○○	□	○○○○○	□ Politics	●○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Empathy	○○○○○	■ Presence	●●●●○
□ Athletics	●●●○○	■ Fortitude	●●○○○	□ Science	○○○○○
□ Awareness	●●●○○	■ Integrity	●●○○○	□	○○○○○
□ Brawl	○○○○○	■ Investigation	●●○○○	□	○○○○○
□ Command	●●○○○	□ Larceny	●○○○○	□ Stealth	●○○○○
□ Control (Horse)	●●●○○	□ Marksmanship	●●●●○	□ Survival	●○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Medicine	○○○○○	□ Thrown	○○○○○

BIRTHRIGHTS

Creature (Horse) 2

Relic (Ansuz Rune Pendant—Death) 1

Relic (Avenger—War) 5

Relic (Ehwo Rune Ring—Animal) 2

WEAPONS

Hadseax: Acc 8, Dmg 6L, Parry DV 15, Spd 4

Avenger: Acc 10, Dmg 8L, Rng 50, Clip 7, Spd 4, P

KNACKS

Center of Attention, Compelling Presence, Escape Artist, Gods' Honest, Hard Sell, Opening Gambit, Overt Order, Perfect Partner, Roll With It, Self-Healing, Serpent's Grace, Social Chameleon, Solipsistic Well-Being, Subliminal Warning, Trick Shooter, Unteachable Opponent

BOONS

Animal Communication (Horse), Battle Cry, Bestial Endowment, Blessing of Bravery, Death Senses, Mother's Touch, Warrior Ideal (Gun Bunny)

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●○○○○

□□□□□□□□□□

SOAK

A 2 L 4 B 6

ARMOR

A____ L____ B____

EXPERIENCE

150

VIRTUES

Courage	●●○○○
Endurance	●●○○○
Expression	●●○○○
Loyalty	●●●●○

LEGEND

●●●●●●

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36 Legend Points

HEALTH

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■	■	■	■	■	■	
■	■	■	■	■	■	
■	■	■	■	■		
■	■	■	■	■		

VALENTINA WEDNESDAY

VALENTINA WEDNESDAY

SCION
GOD

Name	Calling	Pantheon
Vali	Spoiled Rich Girl	Aesir
Player	**Nature**	**Role**
	Autocrat	God of Assassins

ATTRIBUTES

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●●○○○○○○○ ■□□□□□□□□□ ☆	Charisma	●●●●●○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□□ ☆	Perception	●●●○○○○○○○ ■■□□□□□□□□ ☆
Dexterity	●●●●●●●●●○ ■■■■■■■■□□ ☆	Manipulation	●●●●●●●●○○ ■■■■■■□□□□ ☆	Intelligence	●●○○○○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□□ ☆
Stamina	●●●●●○○○○○ ■■■■■□□□□□ ☆	Appearance	●●●●●○○○○○ ■■■■■□□□□□ ☆	Wits	●●●●●●○○○○ ■■■■■□□□□□ ☆

ABILITIES

□ Academics	●○○○○	□ Craft	○○○○○	□ Melee	●●○○○
□ Animal Ken	●●●○○	□	○○○○○	■ Occult	●●○○○
■ Art (Singing)	●●●○○	□	○○○○○	□ Politics	●○○○○
□	○○○○○	□ Empathy	○○○○○	■ Presence	●●●●○
□ Athletics	●●●○○	■ Fortitude	●●○○○	□ Science	○○○○○
□ Awareness	●●●○○	■ Integrity	●●○○○	□	○○○○○
□ Brawl	●○○○○	■ Investigation	●●●○○	□	○○○○○
□ Command	●●○○○	□ Larceny	●○○○○	□ Stealth	●○○○○
□ Control (Horse)	●●●●○	□ Marksmanship	●●●●●	□ Survival	●○○○○
□ Control	○○○○○	□ Medicine	○○○○○	□ Thrown	○○○○○

BIRTHRIGHTS

Avatar 3, Creature (Horse) 3
Relic (Avenger—War) 5
Relic (Ehwo Rune Ring—Animal) 2
Relic (Rune pendants—Death, Illusion) 2

WEAPONS

Hadseax: Acc 12, Dmg 7L, Parry DV 35, Spd 4
Avenger: Acc 15, Dmg 8L, Rng 50, Clip 7, Spd 4, P

KNACKS

And the Crowd Goes Wild, Blurt It Out, Center of Attention, Come Hither, Compelling Presence, Damage Conversion, Divine Damage Conversion, Environmental Awareness, Escape Artist, Gods' Honest, Hard Sell, Holy Bound, Instant Assessment, Monkey Climber, Monkey in the Middle, My Eyes Are Up Here, Opening Gambit, Overt Order, Perfect Imposter, Perfect Partner, Regeneration, Roll With It, Self-Healing, Serpent's Grace, Social Chameleon, Solipsistic Well-Being, Spider Climber, Stench of Guilt, Subliminal Warning, Takes One to Know One, Trick Shooter, Untouchable Opponent

BOONS

Animal Communication (Horse), Battle Cry, Bestial Endowment, Blessing of Ammunition, Blessing of Bravery, Death Senses, Heroic Endowment, Human Endowment, Mother's Touch, Stolen Face, Supernal Bestial Endowment, The Subtle Knife, Warrior Ideal (Gun Bunny)

WILLPOWER

●●●●●●●○○○
□□□□□□□□□□

SOAK

A 5 L 14 B 17

ARMOR

A____ L____ B____

EXPERIENCE

300

VIRTUES

Courage	●●●○○
Endurance	●●○○○
Expression	●●○○○
Loyalty	●●●●○

LEGEND

●●●●●●
●●●●○○

100 Legend Pts

HEALTH

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VALI

GOD OF ASSASSINS





BOOK TWO
STORYTELLER



CHAPTER FOUR

STRANGE PORTS OF CALL

In **Scion**, mortals do not realize what a strange place they live in. In Midgard—the Aesir's name for the World—amazing creatures lurk in seemingly mundane locales, while out-of-the-way spots hide truly unimaginable wonders and horrors. The Overworld and Underworld are stranger still. Asgard is a realm of glory and power as befits the home of the Gods. Jotunheim—in the World yet out of it—is a land of ice and death populated by giants. Helheim is a terrible place of torment, loss and despair.

Scion: Hero, **Scion: Demigod** and **Scion: God** already describe much of Asgard, Jotunheim, Helheim and other places of interest to the Aesir and their Scions. Here are additional strange places and odd sites where Scions can do their heroic deeds, fight their fearsome foes and embrace their final fates.

Touchstones

Touchstones are places that resonate with many cultures of the World—archetypal places that humanity seems to create over and over again. A Touchstone's ideal representation in the Overworld is not generally tied to any particular pantheon. Nevertheless, certain Touchstones have a particular significance for the Aesir and their Scions.

The Great Hall



Aesir life revolves around several great halls built for revelry. Each God has a hall. The Aesir meet in the great hall of Gladsheim; the einherjar feast in Valhalla; travelers from Helheim to Asgard sojourn in another hall; and Hel's own hall of Eliudnir offers a grim reversal of the pattern, where the damned receive filth and torment under Hel's unforgiving gaze. Many other cultures, however, also built grand chambers where leaders gathered their people to celebrate and honor the great, the good and the brave. Thus do all the magnificent halls of the Aesir but reflect the primal Great Hall.

In a mist-shrouded corner of the Overworld, a long building of fine wood and stone stands atop a hill. The mist clears to let the sun or moon shine on the hall alone. The heavy wooden doors bear carved scenes of great battles and heroic deeds, but they swing open easily. Inside, the huge structure surpasses even famed Herot or the Round Table Chamber of Camelot. Its tables strain under loads of delicious food and drink that never spoil and that outside hands cannot poison, be they God or Titan. Faint festive music echoes throughout, and one can hear distant sounds of laughter and revelry. On its walls hang tapestries that depict the histories of famed halls from the World's legends. Most begin bright and fine, but fade and tear toward the end to represent Touchstones once connected to the Great Hall that have fallen into ruin.

To reach the Great Hall, one must pass through the entrance of one of its Touchstones. Travelers then find themselves on the steps up to its doors. Anyone who enters the hall and spends at least an hour feasting and resting therein finds his spirits lifted, his resolve strengthened and his fatigue assuaged. Players roll their Scions' highest Virtue. For each success, each Scion either regains a number of Legend points equal to the value of the Virtue rolled or regains a point of Willpower. Botching this roll results in a feeling of unrest and unease, as well as the loss of one Willpower point.

Scions cannot leave this place until they climb the steps, enter the hall and partake of its comforts within. This stay need not be a lengthy one, but no one can leave without at least sitting briefly to rest and have a meal. Afterward, one need only step into one of the tapestries to leave. The Aesir can use the tapestries of Gladsheim, Valhalla, Eliudnir or the Feasting Hall of Helheim to reach those places, but as an Axis Mundi rather than a Touchstone. Other pantheons can use the Great Hall as a backdoor into analogous locations in their Underworld and Overworld realms.

Herot: The famed hall of Hrothgar of the Danes is where Beowulf ripped the arm from the titanspawn Grendel. Scholars and archeologists debate the exact location of Herot, and indeed whether it existed at all. Some believe that the remains of an old hall near Lejre in Denmark are Herot; others suggest that the hall was actually on an island off the coast in Kent, England. Herot carries such a weight of Legend that if anyone could find its true location, just stepping across the ruins of its threshold might enable travel to the Great Hall.

1st and I: The Marine Barracks in Washington, DC is the founding base of the US Marine Corps. The Commandant of the Corps has resided here since 1806. President Jefferson personally selected the site. For marines, no posting carries a greater weight of history and tradition.

Wherever they are in the World, serving and former marines gather on November 10 to celebrate the birthday of the Corps. On this day, the Marine Barracks becomes a Touchstone to the Great Hall. Visiting Scions must, however, observe the proper ceremony by eating a slice of cake (cut with a sword) and drinking several toasts of rum punch, the beverage served at the first Marine Corps recruitment party. Scions who lack Epic Stamina should exercise caution, for rum punch (recipe: one part lime juice, two parts maple syrup, three parts dark rum and a splash of grenadine) has been described as like drinking a sweet sledgehammer.

Ruatepupuke: The Field Museum in Chicago houses an authentic 19th century Maori meeting house, originally found at Tokomoru Bay, New Zealand and now part of the Pacific Island exhibits. The hall takes its name from Ruatepupuke, a famed Maori warrior who faced down the Maori deity Tangaroa. For a time, this Touchstone did not function due to improper presentation of the exhibit, but Ruatepupuke has been redesigned to properly reflect the hall's original layout and to function once again as a meeting house.

The Great Mound

Even the Gods don't know when this ancient Touchstone appeared. The Great Mound is a massive landmark of piled and compacted earth. Its appearance changes at random. On one visit, the mound might be a great square hill tapering to a flat top. At other times, it takes the shape of a great man or beast. Occasionally, it manifests as a series of huge earthen piles arranged in some patterns visible only from above. In every form, however, the Great Mound rises above an empty, flat plain that continues for as far as the eye can see.

These simple structures express the earliest impulses of human beings to shape their environment and the power they felt for having done so. It is the first monument humanity built to honor the Gods, its ancestry and other things mightier than itself. It holds the grave of kings and long-lost treasures. Here, the tribe or nation gathers for great ceremonies and sacrifices.

Reaching the Great Mound always involves climbing one of its Touchstones in the World. A particular monument might need to be climbed at a particular, significant time of day. Other Touchstones require that a traveler navigate a series of earthen structures. Just before you would reach the apex of the mundane earthwork, you find yourself halfway up the Great Mound. You cannot leave the Great Mound until you reach the summit. It is never a difficult ascent, but those who aren't athletic will certainly find it a long and tiring climb. Once you reach the top of the Great Mound, you can depart simply by descending and traveling to your desired location.

Any Scion who knows the Earth Purview can spend a Willpower point to replenish all of his Legend points at the Great Mound. Scions who use the Mystery Purview while atop the Great Mound receive a three-die bonus to all rolls.

King Björn's Barrow, Haug, Sweden: This barrow near Uppsala holds the grave of King Björn Ironside, a great Swedish king from the ninth century. To reach the Great Mound, just climb to the top of the seven-meter mound. King Björn's Barrow is merely one of the more famous grave-mounds in Scandinavia and beyond that can be used in this fashion.

The Great Serpent Mound, Adams County, Ohio: The largest earthwork of its type in the World depicts an immense serpent swallowing a large, round object that might be an egg, an eye or something else. Archeologists do not agree upon its age; estimates span thousands of years. The serpent portion of the mound stretches about a quarter of a mile, though the mound rises only about three feet off the ground. Those wishing to use the Great Serpent Mound to travel to the Great Mound must walk along its entire length to the head of the Serpent.

Cahokia Mounds, near Collinsville, Illinois: About 1,000 years ago, the people of this region built an extensive system of mounds. No one in the World knows the name of the builders, for their culture disappeared and the mounds were abandoned six centuries ago. Excavations show that the area held a great city and the mounds held the remains of important figures. The centerpiece of the complex is Monk's Mound, 100 feet high, 700 feet wide and over 1,000 feet long. To travel from the Cahokia Mounds to the Great Mound, one must climb Monk's Mound.

The Cahokia Mounds hold special interest to Scions: The mound complex also holds an area known as "Woodhenge," which connects to the Great Henge (see **Scion: Demigod**, p. 103).

Natural Touchstones

Most Touchstones are of human creation, but humans created myths long before they created buildings. Certain natural regions and environments impressed themselves on early humanity so powerfully that their locations in Midgard might lead to primordial, archetypal versions of them in the Overworld. To function as a natural Touchstone, a location in the World must stay partly unexplored and undeveloped. A place that stays wild because people actively avoid it has a good chance of being a natural Touchstone. Sensitive mortals can feel the connection to the Overworld, and that sense of sacred immanence both draws and frightens them.

Natural Touchstones often resemble certain Axes Mundi. Those divine portals lead to the realms of particular pantheons or Gods, however, and lesser beings

cannot travel them. Natural Touchstones exist outside any particular pantheon, though certain cultures might have legends and landmarks tied to them.

Mechanically, these Touchstones function much like manmade Touchstones. Creatures of Legend who know their secrets can travel between an exemplar of the Touchstone in the World and its archetype in the Overworld, and then back to the World. There is one big difference, though. Natural Touchstones are rarely uninhabited or unguarded. As places that inspire dread and lurk in the shadows of humanity's subconscious, they nurture, attract and host a variety of monsters. Things live in these uncanny places that do not take kindly to a Scion trespassing in their home. Natural Touchstones also rarely offer the sort of easy benefits to visiting Scions as their constructed cousins. These mystic locations carry power, but gaining that power often requires dangerous tests or quests.

Prudent Gods observe that natural Touchstones often bear a strong connection to the primal power of the Titans, especially the Earth-Titan whose avatar Jord is well known to the Aesir. Natural Touchstones are not actually part of a Titan-realm, but the Titans' power suffuses them and shapes their inhabitants. Before the Titans were bound, perhaps natural Touchstones offered routes into the Titan-realms. But if so, the Titans' imprisonment broke those connections, and the Titans have not re-established them.

The Dark Forest

A forsaken corner of the Overworld holds the place in the woods where the monsters live. The Norsemen and their Aesir Gods call it Jarnvid, the Iron Wood east of Midgard, though others know it simply as the Dark Forest. It is the primordial woodland far from towns, where you find secrets, danger, the witch's cottage and the Big Bad Wolf. Strange and terrible things live in the Dark Forest, waiting to harm you as soon as you stray from the path.

To reach the Dark Forest, creatures of Legend must venture deep into one of the many mortal forests to which it connects. They must become thoroughly lost but keep their desire to find the way and reach the destination. They must ignore any temptations and distractions along the way. If they travel far enough and deep enough into the woods, they may reach the Dark Forest.

The Dark Forest always stands in dim light. It is never night there, but the heavy foliage blocks the sky to leave the forest floor illuminated no better than a moonlit night. Travelers in the Dark Forest can always feel eyes watching them, and any effort to reach the edge of the woods is doomed to fail.

Goblins, wild beasts (that might talk), ghostly apparitions, giants and other strange folk dwell in the Dark Forest. Many of these creatures found their way into Norse, Germanic or other Northern European folklore, myths and fairy tales. Monsters and fiends from other cultures also travel and dwell here at times, but like calls to like. Scions of the Aesir tend to encounter trolls, giants, huge beasts and malevolent hags. The Aesir hear tales of similar woods that resemble great jungles or rainforests where creatures from other myths and legends dwell in greater numbers, but the Dark Forest known to the Aesir takes its shape from the boreal forest that once stretched from the English Channel to the Bering Sea.

Scions who want to use the Dark Forest to travel can do so, provided they can survive any dangers and temptations they meet along the way. As when reaching the Dark Forest, Scions must stay thoroughly lost—no use of Psychopomp Boons to know where they are or where anyone else is or to speed themselves to their goal. (Characters can use advanced Psychopomp to *reach* the Dark Forest, but mystery is a fundamental aspect of this otherworldly woodland. If you knew where you were, you wouldn't be in the forest of legend.) Nevertheless, visitors must keep their destination always in mind even though they don't know how to reach it. Doing so requires success on a Willpower roll and takes anywhere from half an hour to the better part of a day, depending on the margin of success on the roll. At the Storyteller's discretion, some locations might call for multiple Willpower rolls. Failing the roll means that the character has lost the purpose that guided him. Players may attempt another roll after their characters spend another hour traveling, but the difficulty on the roll increases by one for each failed attempt. Fortunately, when characters travel in a group, only one of their players needs to succeed at the roll.

Travelers must also find their way past any obstacles and threats they encounter in the Dark Forest. Scions might encounter anything from a troll lurking under a bridge to a lonely ghost maiden who seeks to charm them into keeping her company for eternity. The power of Legend that infuses the Dark Forest has an odd sense of fair play in these encounters. No traveler ever faces a challenge or obstacle that he flat-out cannot overcome... though success is far from assured. The Dark Forest holds the bones of many poor souls who tried and failed to pass through its depths.

While Scions can use the Dark Forest as a treacherous shortcut around the World, this woodland also holds its share of secrets. Ghosts who dwell in its groves know the answers to great mysteries. Beasts who sleep in its trees guard fantastic treasures. Gods and titanspawn sometimes hide things of great importance in the Dark Forest—and so can the Scions, if they choose.

HIDE AND SEEK

As a place of pure Legend, the Dark Forest has no geography that anyone could map. This property makes it a good place to hide things—but what one person can hide, another person can find, with sufficient resolve and Legend.

If a character wants to hide something in the Dark Forest, she must choose a method of concealment that her player can define through an (Attribute + Ability) dice pool. For instance, a giant could hide the casket containing his heart beneath a huge and heavy boulder (Strength + Athletics), and hang the key to the casket around the neck of a swift and fierce eagle (Wits + Animal Ken). The player rolls the dice pool and adds successes from Epic Attributes.

The character who hid the object can find that location (or creature, whatever) again with a simple Willpower roll. For any other character, finding the hidden object calls for an extended Willpower roll to accumulate as many successes as the roll to hide the object. For a player whose character already has some guidance to the object, such as a clue obtained through Mystery or Prophecy, the Willpower rolls are only difficulty 1. If the character knows only that the object might be in the Dark Forest, the rolls are difficulty 3. As usual when traveling in the Forest, failing a roll means losing your purpose. Therefore, heroes who enter the Dark Forest to find a long-lost magic weapon, rescue a princess held captive by an ogre or the like might do well first to seek some legendary seeress, sage or oracle for guidance.

Characters can spend Willpower or Legend on these rolls. Storytellers can represent notable successes by improvising incidents that speed the character to her goal. For instance, a Scion could meet a friendly talking animal who guides her partway to her goal in exchange for some act of kindness and generosity.



The Black Forest, Germany: The best-known route to the Dark Forest passes through its similarly named cousin on Midgard. This forest, mostly of pine, fir and other evergreens, covers well over 4,000 square miles. Acid rain has ravaged the Black Forest, on top of heavy logging and tourism, but it still holds dark, remote places where one can become suitably lost, with suitably Grimm results.

Beloveshskaya Pushcha/Puszcza Bialowieska, Belarus and Poland: This World Heritage Site is the last remnant of primeval deciduous forest in Eastern Europe. Although it has sustained damage from hunters, railroads, war and (on the Belarus side) a tacky theme park, the forest still contains immense, centuries-old oak trees, wisents (European bison), boars, wildcats and the other beasts of Old Europe. People who'd never seen the forest before find it weirdly familiar. This is the landscape of Little Red Riding Hood and Hansel and Gretel that they saw in childhood dreams. Scions who wish to freshen up before an excursion—or recover afterward—can stay at a hotel that used to be a hunting lodge for the Russian Tsars.

To the south, the dense pine forest of the immense Pripyat Marsh supplies another likely path to the Dark Forest.

The Pine Barrens, New Jersey, USA: The middle of the urbanized American East Coast holds a surprising patch of forest that remains almost untouched thanks to its bogs and poor soil. Over the centuries, the Pine Barrens have even reclaimed towns and industrial mills, leaving only abandoned buildings and ghosts. The forest is also the home of the creature known as the Jersey Devil or the Leeds Devil.

The Primal Cavern

The Primal Cavern is the gaping entrance to the dark secrets of the earth. Here dwell dragons, trolls and other monsters. The Overworld includes the archetypal cave: immense, labyrinthine and full of creatures that prefer the cold and dark under the ground to the sunlit surface. The Aesir know the Primal Cavern as home to the dwarves and svartalfar, but even these creatures drew the inspiration for their homes from this ancient place. (Indeed, their realms connect to it.)

To reach the Primal Cavern, Scions must simply go far enough into one of the caves in Midgard to which it connects. A few exceptionally large and deep mines also connect to the Cavern. Caves and mines, of course, are dangerous places to poke around in, especially if one doesn't know the proper way of doing so. Even experienced spelunkers sometimes find themselves lost, stuck, injured or stranded far below the surface. The Primal Cavern has plenty of flooded passages, cave-ins, dead ends and sudden drops. To these mundane hazards, this mythic realm adds the chance of encounters with legendary creatures, some of them terribly unfriendly to interlopers.

The Primal Cavern has no light of its own, and no illumination less potent than The Glory can reveal more than a tiny portion of its twisting tunnels. Visitors remain intensely conscious of how much they do *not* see, no matter how bright their light is. They hear strange things scurrying just out of sight, lurking in the dark. The natural Touchstone's side passages and chambers go on forever. At least, no one has mapped the entirety of the Primal Cavern, not even the dwarves or svartalfar who have traveled the Cavern for millennia.

Story Seed: Mrs. Leeds' Baby Boy

Garfield Roth, mayor of Leeds Point, hoped to revitalize his fading town. Now, however, people aren't just moving away from his dying town; a terrible beast is killing the remaining inhabitants. Roth believes it is the infamous Jersey Devil. New Jersey's state authorities think Roth is crazy. Nevertheless, he is quite correct. The Pine Barrens *do* hold a Jersey Devil, a.k.a. the Leeds Devil, a latter-day Grendel. The old settlement of Leeds Point drove out this titanspawn's mother nearly 300 years ago after she gave birth to a monster. The beast is back once more to stop Roth's attempt to make the ghost town live again.

Even if brave heroes can kill the Leeds Devil, they still face the dark vengeance of Mrs. Leeds. The Devil's mother is a troll-wife (see pp. 125-126). The pair lives deep within the Pine Barrens where only the very brave or very lost venture. Both the Devil and Mrs. Leeds know the secrets of traveling to the Dark Forest and might flee there if pursued, either to escape or to lure their foes into a trap. The bloodthirsty Jersey Devil itself is beyond reason. Scions who can reach Mrs. Leeds might be able to bargain with her to leave humans alone, and no one else can calm or control her offspring. Trying to reach an agreement with such creatures, however, might be quite a challenge in itself.

Storytellers could also consider the possibility that Mrs. Leeds has other monstrous children. Scions who protect the people of the Pine Barrens might face a whole clan of monsters.

While most dwarves live in their own realm of Nidavellir and the svartalfar dwell in Svartalfheim, small colonies of both creatures live in the Primal Cavern. More than a few dragons and trolls live there too. The Primal Cavern holds great treasures, but they are always guarded, and "X" never marks the spot. Seekers must recruit local guides (good luck) or follow slender clues from ancient rhymes, rumors or oracles, augmented (but never to perfect clarity) by the Mystery Purview. The Purviews of Earth and Darkness provide great assistance to visitors but hardly solve all the problems of travel through the Cavern.

Travel to, from and within the Primal Cavern works in the opposite manner from the Dark Forest. Instead of losing your way but keeping your destination in mind, a Scion who would enter the Primal Cavern must pay attention to her path without caring where it leads. The drive to explore enables passage from a cave in Midgard to this natural Touchstone. Getting out is a little more delicate, since caring *which* exit you find can prevent you from escaping at all. If Scions don't care where they arrive in Midgard, they leave as easily as they entered. Reaching a specific location requires a Willpower roll at difficulty 3 to perform the necessary act of doublethink, aiming at a destination but staying more interested in exploring the path itself. Boons such as Unerring Orientation or Echo Sounding can prevent characters from becoming truly lost, but chalking marks on the wall to show your way back also counts as minding the path. Reaching the connections to other places in the Overworld requires similar discretion, but the difficulty drops to 1 for characters who have visited a location before. A single character who has visited Nidavellir or Svartalfheim can guide other characters to those terrae incognitae.

Steinbrückenhöhle, Austria: Although it was discovered in only 1999, this cave in the Totes Gebirge range of the Northern Alps already has six known entrances and nearly 400 unexplored leads and possible passageways. Like most places that allow access to the Cavern, it is a "wild cave" with no provisions for the visiting public. This makes locations such as Steinbrückenhöhle suitably untouched and remote enough for use as a Touchstone, but it also makes them more dangerous.

Hellhole, West Virginia, USA: This cave is home to two protected species of bats. It contains miles of charted and explored passages and many deep, unexplored chambers. Due to a mix of environmental concerns and local issues with quarry operations, the Hellhole is currently closed to spelunkers. In the past, its 28 miles of *known* passages were open to various explorers. New areas were discovered as recently as 10 years ago.

Dahl Sultan, Saudi Arabia: This network of caves recently discovered beneath the Saudi Arabian desert is also called Dharb al Najem ("the Place where the Stars fell to Earth"). Dahl Sultan's known entrance is not much larger than a dinner plate. Shortly thereafter, the system opens up into a huge network of tunnels and caverns that are still largely unexplored.

Strange Places of Midgard

The following locations in the World hold special significance to Scions of the Aesir, various creatures from Norse legend and sometimes even the Gods themselves.

Tinytowns

Throughout the United States, people tell rumors of strange towns where "little people" live. Some say these places are myths, but those who believe in them or even claim to have visited them offer various explanations. These places, often called Tinytowns, feature scaled-down houses and other buildings. Most urban legends about these settlements say they began when people who possess congenital dwarfism gathered to live away from the stares and gawking of regular-sized folk. Those stories are mostly wrong.

Actual Tinytowns are settlements of titanspawn dwarves (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 318). These supernatural folk gathered for the reason attributed to their human counterparts: to be left alone. Given dwarven tendencies to petrify in sunlight, such communities are necessarily nocturnal, with tunnels and hidden subterranean chambers for daylight activities. These places rarely welcome outsiders, though Scions of the Aesir might convince their inhabitants to aid them. The settlements occur in Scandinavia and the United States, most notably in Minnesota, New Jersey, California and Kentucky. One settlement near New Britain, Connecticut claims the honor of several visits from Thor. The Aesir suggest that when mundane folk are around, Scions should refer to these settlements only as Tinytowns. Eavesdroppers will simply think they're talking about a very small town.

Most dwarves who live in Midgard respect the Aesir, even if they don't exactly like them (or anyone else). On the other hand, a few communities of dwarves still serve their original Titan masters. These communities occupy *very* remote places, though urban legends spread of "normal people" being assaulted or even killed if they find the malign Tinytown. Any Scion venturing too close to one of these settlements risks attack. Any Scion captured by such dwarves should count himself lucky merely to be tortured and killed.

Sleipner Oil Platform, The North Sea

This gigantic marvel of human engineering hides a supernatural secret. The platform is one of the few places on Midgard where one can travel directly to the Norse Underworld with relative ease. The stormy and treacherous North Sea makes Sleipner hard to reach except by helicopter or large boat, neither of which makes for an especially safe trip. What's worse, as a conduit between Worlds, the platform attracts various supernatural creatures. Sea serpents lurk in the deep nearby, and the drowned ghosts of unlucky sailors and oil workers often manifest to bemoan their fate and trouble the living.

Scions wishing to travel to Helheim from Sleipner have a few options. The platform has drilled deep enough to weaken the otherworldly barrier between Midgard and the Underworld. Scions with the strength, endurance and courage could dive deep beneath the platform and seek the cracks in the ocean floor that lead to Helheim's rivers. Even if one can survive the frigid waters, monsters and unquiet ghosts, it is still incredibly difficult to find these passageways unaided. Scions with Psychopomp Boon such as Terra Incognita can likely locate them, and some of the ghosts in the area might guide interested parties for a price.

For a somewhat safer route to Hel's realm, Scions can instead take advantage of the platform's namesake. Odin's horse Sleipnir, or other steeds of similar legend, can gallop off the platform directly into Helheim. Of course, the All-Father seldom loans out his prized steed.

The North Sea holds dozens of other oil-drilling platforms. Many of the Norwegian platforms bear Aesir names, such as Frigg and Balder (though they do not always follow the spellings used in **Scion**). Such naming is never coincidental. If the Gods did not arrange it, Fate did, for reasons that could become clear in time.

Wewelsburg Castle, Germany

Heinrich Himmler made this castle infamous as the ritual center for the Nazi Schutzstaffel (SS) during World War II. Himmler was nuts for all things Nordic (as well as just plain nuts). Nevertheless, his favorite castle became important not because of its connections to the Aesir, but for its curious lack of them.

Oh yes, Himmler conducted rituals meant to invoke and contact the Norse Gods. Even mundane historians know that much. If any of the Aesir responded to Himmler's fumbling attempts at magic, none of them admit it now. Conspiracy theorists and paranoid occultists claim, however, that the SS inner circle turned to lost, forbidden rites of perversion, blood and pain in the darkest days of the war, and that *something* answered.

Whatever the Nazis contacted assisted them (or exploited them) in various occult projects, though none bore fruit before Germany surrendered in 1945. Occult relics, ancient texts and ritual materials fell into the hands of the Allied military, whether by order or taken as souvenirs by individual soldiers. These relics of vile sorcery now sit buried in attics or warehouses in Russia, the UK and the USA.

Whatever the Nazis hoped to do at Wewelsburg, they made the place a weak point between Midgard and other realms. Some SS experiments were undeniably necromantic (such as having SS officers and their brides couple in graveyards, in hope of reincarnating long-dead Teutonic heroes). There is likely a pathway to Helheim or some other part of the Underworld in or around the castle. Sightings of large, looming figures and strange animals in the area suggest that passages might open to Jotunheim or similar realms under the right circumstances. Certainly, nothing good can come from the occult workings at Wewelsburg.

Story Seed: Nazis... I Hate These Guys

Having Nazis unearth ancient items of occult power or calling up dire forces from beyond is an old staple of books, films and games. Just because something is old, though, doesn't mean it can't be awesome. Wewelsburg Castle makes a great location for heroic Scions to confront vicious Nazi cultists of ancient, forgotten Gods or the Titans themselves, complete with giants, monsters, spectres, corrupted Scions or even a Titan avatar. This setting also give Storytellers an excuse to pull out undead SS troopers, the *real* results of Hitler's secret Project Werewolf, and other mythic bad guys inspired by the Axis powers of World War II.

Admittedly, players and Storytellers who like themes of moral ambiguity won't find them here, but then nobody ever doubted that the Hydra or Minotaur were bad news either. For many players, there's just nothing quite so satisfying as waling on Nazis.

SITES OF ASGARD

While many of the sights and wonders of Asgard are described in **Scion: God** (starting on p. 121), there are many more fantastic places in the home of the Aesir that can appear in a **Scion** series. Asgard is a place of wonder, even with the doom of Ragnarök hanging over it. A testament to the power and courage of its residents, it has endless halls, landmarks and natural wonders that put the wonders of the World to shame. The following is merely a sample of what can be found in the Godrealm of the Aesir.

Halls and Homes of the Aesir

Scion: God details several domiciles of important Aesir, but these places are not the only great halls and dwellings found with Asgard. Some other such dwellings follow.

Glitnir: Forseti's Hall

In the middle of a lush, green pasture rises a majestic hall with golden pillars and a silver roof. Here in Glitnir lives Forseti, God of Justice. All who come to Asgard are welcome in Glitnir, and the God himself enjoys using his home as a place to resolve disputes and hear grievances.

Noatun: Njord's Hall

The Vanir sea God, Njord, built his beachfront home on the edge of a great sea that borders the southern part of Asgard. It doubles as a shipyard. Noatun's name means "ship haven." Njord spends most of his time here when he is in Asgard, which is not so often these days. Various water creatures connected to the Aesir maintain the God's hall when he's not at home. The docks of Noatun feature a collection of fantastic ships from around the Worlds, many of them magical in some way. Other Aesir frequently use Njord's hall and the bay it borders for their anchorage, when they don't seek adventure on the Overworld's seas.

Vingol: Hall of the Goddesses

This hall occupies a sacred grove between Frigg's Hall and the City of Asgard. The Asynjur—i.e., the Aesir Goddesses—use Vingol as their special meeting place when they want to discuss matters without men around. No male creature (animal, mortal, spirit or divine) can enter the hall. Attempts to scry or spy upon Vingol's interior always fail. (If Odin has cracked the wards erected by his wife, he prudently does not say so.) Vingol holds seats of honor for all the Asynjur, both greater and lesser. It is rare for all or even a majority of the Asynjur to meet at Vingol. Frigg or Freya are the Goddesses most likely to call such a major convocation.

Ydalir: Uller's Hall

Uller's hall stands in the snow-covered lands on the borders of Asgard. Ydalir is a plain hunting lodge built of great yew logs. More yew trees grow around the hall. From these trees, Uller makes the finest bowstaves found among the Aesir. Uller often resides at Ydalir, preferring the frozen wilderness to the warmer lowlands. His wife, the giantess Skadi, also stays here when she visits Asgard, though she also retains possession of the vast castle in Jotunheim she inherited from her father, Thjazi.

THE APPLES OF IMMORTALITY

Idun's apples bestow youth and long life on those who eat them. The story that the Gods grow old and weak without Idun's apples somewhat exaggerates the truth, or perhaps a cunning God spread the legend as disinformation. They do offer benefits even to Gods, though.

Within seconds of eating one of Idun's apples, a mortal returns to the biological state of his early 20s, provided he's older than that, of course. Gods and other unaging, immortal creatures do not become younger, though they do seem a bit more vital for weeks after eating an apple. For both mortals and immortals, eating an apple also heals all current wounds and cures all physical ailments or diseases, placing the person in a state of perfect health. The apple incidentally restores any spent points of Legend and Willpower. On top of all that, the Legend costs to activate any Boons or Epic Attribute Knacks less powerful than an Ultimate Attribute or avatar power are waived for a number of total uses equal to the eater's own Legend. Thus, after eating one of Idun's apples, a Legend 12 God such as Odin could use his divine powers a dozen times before he had to expend Legend to power his abilities.

The Gods sometimes use Idun's apples to keep important mortals young and active for much longer than a human life span normally allows. Since the Aesir usually bring such mortals into Valhalla when they die, however, they prefer to keep the apples for their own use. Mortals who receive Idun's apples tend to be legendary. If they weren't before, they will be from the infusion of divine power and entanglement in pantheon affairs.

Bragi's Hall and Idun's Orchard

The hall of Bragi and his wife stands near the plain of Folkvangr on the border of a vast orchard. Bragi's hall sees a steady stream of visitors eager to enjoy the God's tales, poems and songs. The orchard belongs to Bragi's wife, Idun. It supplies one of the most valued items in the Overworld, the apples of immortality.

The power of Idun herself nurtures the orchard. No one but the Goddess can make the apples grow in such a way that they bestow their power on those who eat them. (The apples might be created by a divine process resembling that which imbues the apples of the Garden of the Hesperides—see **Scion: Demigod**, pp. 110–111—though the effects are somewhat different.)

No fearsome guards or traps protect Idun's orchard from interlopers. They would disturb Idun's mood and thereby disrupt the divine joy that empowers her apples. The lax security has caused problems in the past. Still, the orchard's location in the heart of Asgard deters most would-be thieves—and Idun's yearly gift of one apple to each of the Aesir deters even more. Anyone who harms Idun or her orchard incurs the wrath of the entire pantheon.

Lake Amsvartnir

This lonely lake in the wilderness holds a dubious honor as the place in Asgard the Aesir fear most. Odin and Frigg surrounded Lake Amsvartnir with a triple band of Fate and illusion to prevent servants of the Titans or unwary fools from finding it and releasing the horror within. In the murky lake rises a rocky island and from the island descends a vast cave. In the cave is the Fenris Wolf. The silken ribbon of Gleipnir still binds the monster, though keen eyes might notice that the magic bonds show signs of wear. The sword placed long ago to keep Fenris' jaws from biting lies broken in a corner of the cave, another sign that Ragnarök is closer than the Aesir would like. One should not come too close to inspect the fabled cord, or the chain Gelgja that connects it to its massive rock, for Fenris is very angry and very, very hungry.

Jotunheim

Scion: Demigod gives a brief description of the home of the giants. Here are some additional significant locations in that cold and hostile terra incognita. Like all of Jotunheim, Scions who are not at least of demigod power would find these locations extremely dangerous.

Eggther's Camp

On a hill overlooking the Iving, the border river between Asgard and Jotunheim, stands a clusters of at least 30 giant-sized halls roughly built of logs and roofed with pine boughs and thatch. Hundreds of giants bustle about the camp, hauling in logs from the surrounding forests. A few fire giants work at open-air smithies, forging huge iron bolts and bands. Along the Iving's shore, the giants assemble enormous log platforms and ironbound bundles of the largest logs, with their ends whittled to sharp points. A bit farther downstream, a log pen holds the camp's chief food supply, an entire herd of nemean pigs—every one of them equal to Hogzilla (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 312).

The leader of the camp, the elder jotun Eggther, might just be the largest bard anywhere. This skilled musician and tale-teller amuses his company and the occasional visitor with stories that Scions might recognize from Norse legend... but given a very different tone considering the audience. "How Utgard-Loki Bested Thor the Bully" is always popular, while "How Lying Tyr Betrayed the Trust of Great Fenris" gets the giants eager to kill Aesir. For all his show-biz talent, though, Eggther and his camp serve a practical purpose. For centuries, Eggther's garrison watched for any invasion from Asgard. Should the giants' scouts spot anything unusual, Eggther sends out patrols to investigate. If the scouts find definite proof of intruders, Eggther turns a giant into an eagle (Eggther's a magician too) and sends him flying back to Utgard-Loki with a report, while the garrison itself attempts to capture the intruder.

The camp recently gained a second purpose: building a massive pre-fab bridge to cross the Iving. When the day of the final battle comes, the giant rooster Fjalar who makes his home in the nearby forest of Galgvid will crow out and be heard by all of giantkind. This crowing heralds the beginning of the invasion of Asgard and the last battle of the Aesir. The giants will pound the enormous pilings into the river and bolt the platforms between them. As the giants march across, building as they go, their massed Legend and force of doom will breach the barriers between Asgard and Jotunheim.

Treat Eggther as an elder jotun with Legend 8 and Art 5. For all his skaldic talents, though, he remains a loyal servant of the Titans and a sworn enemy of all the Aesir. His garrison chiefly consists of frost giants and rock giants (the "generic" giant from **Scion: Hero**, p. 314, with no additional powers), with elder giant thanes and huskarls.



Fjalar is one of three roosters who herald Ragnarök in Helheim and Asgard as well as Jotunheim. He appears as a monstrous rooster the size of a tyrannosaurus rex and regards Scions as tasty bugs to eat. Fjalar is not particularly bright, though he is somewhat cunning and very dangerous for a humongous chicken.

Fjalar

Attributes: Strength 12, Dexterity 4, Stamina 10; Charisma 3, Manipulation 1, Appearance 3; Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Virtues: Ambition 1, Malice 3, Rapacity 4, Zealotry 5

Abilities: Animal Ken 3, Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Brawl 4, Fortitude 3, Integrity 4, Presence 4, Stealth 1, Survival 3

Supernatural Powers:

Crow: Fjalar's crow, which he can belt out loudly enough to be heard all over Jotunheim, can also function as a weapon. The fantastic blast of sound deals six dice of aggravated damage in a 10-yard-wide cone that extends for 50 yards. In addition, the crow deafens anyone struck by it whose player fails a (Stamina + Fortitude) roll at difficulty 3. This deafness is permanent but can be supernaturally cured. Beyond that cone, but extending 50 yards in a full circle around Fjalar, the damage drops to six dice of lethal damage and the deafening effect lasts only until the end of the scene.

Limited Flight: Like most normal roosters, Fjalar can't so much fly as make extended leaps by flapping furiously. Treat these short flights as jumps that double the normal distance.

Invulnerability: As a central figure to the events of Ragnarök, the power of Fate protects Fjalar. As such, he cannot be killed by any creature whose Legend rating is lower than his own.

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 4 (Divine Rampage, Holy Rampage, Knockback Attack, Knockback Wave), Epic Dexterity 3 (Lightning Sprinter, Cat's Grace, Untouchable Opponent, Whirlwind Shield), Epic Stamina 5 (All Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**), Epic Appearance 1 (Dreadful Mien, Serpent's Gaze)

Join Battle: 6

Attacks:

Peck: Accuracy 8, Damage 18L, Parry DV —, Speed 5

Kick/Claw: Accuracy 9, Damage 14L, Parry DV —, Speed 4

Wing Beat: Accuracy 7, Damage 15B, Parry DV —, Speed 5

Soak: 21B/16L/5A

Health Levels: -0x18/Incap

Dodge DV: 11 **Willpower:** 9

Legend: 6 **Legend Points:** 36

Other Notes: None

STORY SEED: THE ROOSTER CROWS AT RAGNARÖK

Ambitious Scions might try to delay or prevent Ragnarök by capturing or killing Fjalar, thus preventing the giants from knowing that the day of doom has come. Such a plan has a sort of "steal the mascot before the big game" quality to it, but that doesn't mean it wouldn't work and give the Aesir one less Titan horde to fight.

Eggther's Camp offers a formidable obstacle to such a plan, but with surprise and luck, a Band might overcome the giants or temporarily incapacitate them. Even if they send a warning to Utgard-Loki, any response is hours away. Fjalar is another matter. A carnivorous titanspawn rooster who knows the terrain better than you do is no easy foe to defeat, especially before it can crow out any warning.

And then, there's a herd of nemean pigs just waiting to stampede and get in *everyone's* way…

Gastropnir

In the mighty fortress Gastropnir lived the giantess Mengloth, a powerful jotun maiden. Like many of her kind, Mengloth was a sworn enemy of Gods and men and somewhat of a zealot on the subject. Through a mixture of magic, charisma and Fate, however, the hero Svipdag charmed the giantess out of her fortress and took her for his bride. Mengloth abandoned both hatred and her realm, and the happy couple ran off together to Midgard. Gastropnir lay empty for some time due to rumors that it bore a curse to soften the hearts of the giants against their enemies.

As portents of Ragnarök multiplied, Utgard-Loki could no longer ignore the tactical significance and utility of the fortress. Jotunheim's king sent some of his thanes to garrison the fortress and prepare for war. Settled on the mountain peak and crafted from flesh and bone taken from great Ymir, the fortress has great power and many secrets that the giants hope to harness and use against the Gods.

The fortress itself is said to be all but impregnable. Even Svipdag never bested its defense. Instead, he coaxed his love out from behind its walls. Of course, if there is any way to infiltrate or breach Gastropnir, the giantess Mengloth would likely know it. And of course, no one knows her whereabouts or even if she and her husband still live.

Thrymheim

The immense castle of Skadi, and Thjazi before her, occupies a bleak and storm-wracked mountaintop in Jotunheim. The massive fortress of stone and timbers still remains in Skadi's possession, and she still frequently lives there when she isn't with Uller in Asgard. Uller often visits his wife's old home as well. The hunting is extremely good in the evergreen forests and high snowfields around Thrymheim's mountain, though any hunter must compete with the wolves. Thrymheim retains a complete staff of frost giant servants, who stay loyal to their mistress despite her friendliness with the Aesir. The hall, indeed, now offers a defensible beachhead for the Aesir within Jotunheim. Unfortunately, its remote location reduces its strategic value.

Other Realms

Asgard, Helheim, Jotunheim and Midgard form the setting for most of the Aesir's adventures, but the sagas mention other realms in the Overworld.

Svartalfheim

The svartalfar, twisted parodies of the alfar, shun light and the surface. Svartalfheim consists entirely of tunnels and caverns. The roots of Yggdrasil run through the earth surrounding the realm and can be used to reach Svartalfheim, as can various portals and gates constructed by the svartalfar (including portals to the Primal Cavern). Powerful svartalfar warriors guard these entrances using weapons that can harm even Gods. The greatest svartalfar lords and ladies certainly devised routes into and out of Svartalfheim known only to themselves, but these routes are just as certainly guarded by devious traps, terrible beasts and dire curses.

Svartalfheim is a terra incognita—technically part of the World, but set apart from mortal knowledge. This mythic realm intersects Midgard anywhere the svartalfar choose, though the nexus always involves a tunnel or cavern far underground. The svartalfar traditionally entered the mortal World only in Northern Europe. Of late, though, the svartalfar open portals anywhere around the World a lord sees opportunities to gain power, curry favor with the Titans or simply indulge sadistic whims.

As perfected titanspawn of their prototype dwarf cousins, the svartalfar fill their realm with wondrous artifice. Svartalfar cities consist of large caverns where great halls and dwellings are carved from the rock walls or seemingly shaped from clusters of immense stalagmites. Their dwellings often feature high ceilings and large spaces. Seemingly impossible wonders, such as vast automated sculptures and gardens of edible gold and gems, showcase their greatness and power. Extensive mines and quarries supply raw materials for their wondrous items. When the svartalfar bother to supply light, it is always pale and cold, coming from either huge, glowing jewels or thin air. Much of the menial work is done by magic or clockwork servants crafted by the svartalfar. They keep slaves and captives as a show of power and cruelty rather than any real need for their labor, as there is little the svartalfar cannot achieve on their own.

The center of the realm holds the palace of King Fafnir (see **Scion: Demigod,** pp. 284–285). The palace puts even the

most impressive lesser svartalfar's home to shame. Anyone who wants to meet Fafnir on his home territory must meet him here. Though he is devious and cruel, Fafnir receives guests with opulent hospitality. Like most of his kind, he makes bargains and trades, but only when he assumes he will benefit the most—and usually as a means to lead his supplicant to destruction through a curse of treachery. Cabals of Fafnir's subjects regularly scheme to overthrow their king, but Fafnir's power and cunning usually results in these would-be conspirators turning against each other long before they present any danger to his rule.

Nidavellir

The terra incognita of the dwarves likewise exists entirely underground and indeed, intersects so extensively with Svartalfheim that they are effectively one realm. The dwarves try to close tunnels between their territories and those of the svartalfar, though, since the svartalfar take particular pleasure in capturing and breaking dwarves as slaves.

While the svartalfar obey a single king, the dwarves have no such central authority. Each community might follow its own king or jarl, and recently founded communities often eschew aristocracy for elected mayors or informal councils of elders. The few dwarves who achieved great power among their kind, such as the legendary Andvari, were generally tyrants and Titan-followers, so the dwarves as a whole don't care much for centralized power.

Nidavellir is best known for intersecting the mortal World in Northern Europe, where the dwarves made secret entrances into many mines. The mortal miners heard the rapping of the dwarves' picks and knew to leave those sections of the mine strictly alone. Dwarves explored widely in search of ores and gems, however, so places all around the World have tales about little men who guard and mine the earth's treasures. Nidavellir now reaches from the Mesabi Range of Minnesota to the diamond pipes of South Africa.

The dwarves eschew the grandiose and rococo illusions of the svartalfar. Their subterranean communities are plain, functional but comfortable. Nevertheless, their magical artifice often equals that of their svartalfar kin, and the greatest wonder-smiths of their kind can still produce relics of stunning power—which they readily deploy if they face attack from titanspawn or Gods.

Vanaheim

After the Vanir resolved their war with the Aesir, they sought the increased security that Asgard offered against the Titans and their spawn. The Vanir tried to maintain their original realm through visits, but you know how it goes: out of sight, out of mind, even for Gods. The visits to check on the old place became less frequent and finally stopped. Vanaheim was left empty, though not destroyed.

The Titans never razed Vanaheim, and no invaders wrested it from its absentee landlords. The Vanir left it pristine and empty long before that could happen. Today, Vanaheim consists of a collection of grand halls and sacred groves surrounded by golden fields. Only the emptiness of the place and withered branches of Yggdrasil around the borders of the realm suggest anything that is not blooming and vibrant.

After the Titans escaped their prison, the Aesir debated what to do with Vanaheim. Some believe it would make an excellent staging area for sorties against the Titans. Others believe the realm could serve as a last-ditch retreat should Asgard fall before Ragnarök. Most Aesir however, scoff at this second option, believing that if Asgard falls, it *is* Ragnarök.

A third contingent (mostly of Vanir) believes the Aesir should try to reclaim and repopulate Vanaheim as a colony. These Gods and their supporters point out that new Scions could do most of the work, then they could live there to keep Asgard from getting too crowded. None of the major Gods among the Aesir openly support this idea, though—not even Vanir such as Freyr and Freya. Most likely, none of them wish to be responsible for establishing a colony of young Aesir who could be slaughtered or corrupted or who could one day grow powerful enough to renew conflicts between the two Godrealms. The matter is moot for the time being, as scouts from Asgard found that Vanaheim's connection to Yggdrasil, and thereby to Asgard, withered some time ago when nobody was paying attention. At least some among the Gods, though, suggest this as the most important reason to find Vanaheim: What happened? Is Vanaheim really still vacant?

Perhaps any Gods who rediscovered Vanaheim could easily take it for their own. Someone merely needs to find the Godrealm's long-forgotten Axis Mundi on Midgard, and they could move right into the empty halls of the Vanir. Perhaps this has already happened. It is also possible that the recent severing of Alfheim from Yggdrasil has something to do with Vanaheim, as the alfar always held stronger connections to the Vanir than to their Aesir cousins.

This Used to Be Such a Nice Place

Gods who reach Vanaheim might find something quite unlike the fertile, golden realm the Vanir remember. Some Titan avatar or dark God from a forgotten pantheon might have claimed the land for his own, warping and twisting it to his own needs. In this case, Vanaheim could look like nearly anything—and could offer powerful enemies a base located perilously close to Asgard.

For another option, Vanaheim might have reverted from peaceful and idyllic to its original wilder state without the Vanir to keep it in check. In this case, Vanaheim might be a place of monstrous creatures of unchecked fertility and endless appetites, more like the Dark Forest than what the Vanir recall. Indeed, perhaps the Dark Forest itself has swallowed up Vanaheim and the routes to Vanaheim are closed because Vanaheim no longer exists.



CREATURES OF THE NINE WORLDS

CHAPTER FIVE

The Nine Worlds hold many strange creatures, from loyal steeds of the Gods to monsters dedicated to the Aesir's destruction. Some of these monsters, like the titanspawn, oppose the Aesir because of their upbringing or because they belong to one of the great armies massing on the borders of Asgard. Others oppose the pantheon because of some sleight the Norse Gods perpetrated, real or imagined. Few entities can match the arrogance of divinities in the fullness of their power, and Odin and his family have spent millennia making enemies.

GODS AND SUCH ILK

Over the centuries, the Aesir have encountered other pantheons and mystical beings whose power approaches their own. Some, such as the Vanir, joined the Aesir to the point that outsiders can barely tell the difference between them. Others are the offspring of the Aesir themselves, such as the titanic brood of Loki. Yet the Nine Worlds also hold many other creatures who defy easy categorization, such as the alfar, the fairytale creatures that lurk in the Dark Forest and the immensely powerful land-vettir who guard the mortal lands the Aesir claimed of old.

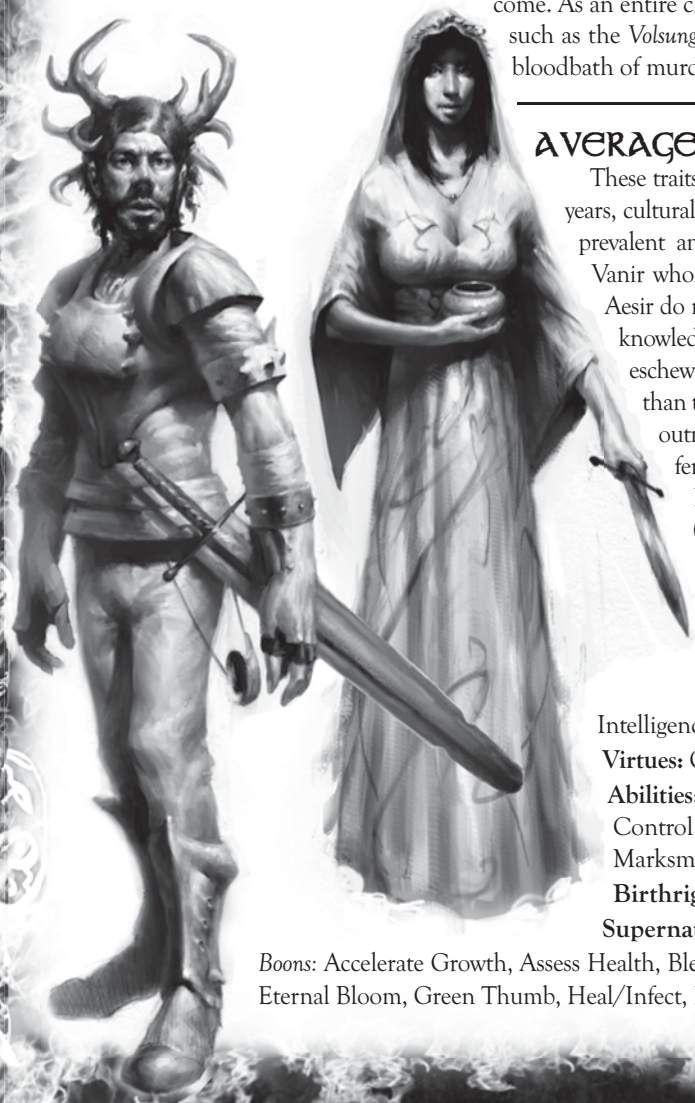
The Vanir

Before the ascendancy of the Aesir, a pantheon called the Vanir ruled over Midgard. Unlike the warlike and wide-ranging Gods of Asgard, the Vanir mainly concerned themselves with the doings of the primitive hunter-gatherer cultures that paid them homage. They oversaw the weather, the fertility of the land and the turning of the seasons. They were also powerful magicians, deeply learned in the secrets of Fate.

Perhaps the war between the Aesir and Vanir was fated. Mortals can barely guess how the war began (though see p. 17 for one story about its origin). The Aesir assumed they would quickly win the war, but they underestimated the power and ferocity of their foes. During one period of truce, the Aesir and Vanir exchanged hostages, and the Vanir received the warrior Hoenir and the advisor Mimir. (Contrary to the accounts known to mortals, the war actually continued for some time after this abortive peace attempt.) The exchange ended badly. The Aesir and Vanir made peace only when both sides reached exhaustion.

Since the final peace, the Aesir steadily gained power (chiefly through Odin's schemes to gain magical power and knowledge), until they effectively absorbed the Vanir in their numbers. The Vanir moved their possessions and homes to Asgard. Vanaheim, their traditional home among the Nine Worlds, has been closed off to God and Titan alike for centuries. The Aesir themselves now regard the Vanir as part of their pantheon and as part of the family. Many Aesir and Vanir have even married each other. Few among the older Vanir, however, forget the ages they reigned over much of the World, or the many slights (often unthinking) the Aesir made them suffer over the years. Some of the Vanir never joined the peace those ages ago and might haunt the halls of Vanaheim still. Others threw in their lot with the Titans rather than surrender, while a few Vanir—such as Elli, Goddess of Old Age—aid other factions as Ragnarök approaches.

In recent years, as the war with the Titans escalated and Ragnarök looked more certain, some Vanir wondered if they made the right decision in joining the doomed Aesir. Many of these Gods, such as Freya and Freyr, would never dream of abandoning their new families, but others wonder if they really need to share the doom of their cousins. A few think that if they can restore Vanaheim and sever it from Yggdrasil as Alfheim apparently has been, they might survive the Twilight of the Gods. Others think back to the oaths of fellowship they have sworn and wonder at what price such survival would come. As an entire clan, they effectively made the Aesir their in-laws, and epics such as the *Volsung Saga* suggest that betraying your in-laws always leads to a bloodbath of murder and revenge.



Average Vanir, (Guide ••••)

These traits describe an average lesser God of the Vanir tribe. Over the years, cultural mingling has resulted in the Virtues of the Aesir becoming prevalent among the Vanir. Unlike the Aesir, however, many of the Vanir who did not intermarry with or become blood-brothers of the Aesir do not possess the Jotunblut Purview. Their elders possess great knowledge of Magic, though not the equal of Odin, but they generally eschew Prophecy as they deal with the eternal cycles of nature rather than the vagaries of the future. This is one reason why Odin could outmaneuver them for so long (thus sealing his own fate). As fertility deities of old, many Vanir have powers over Fertility and Health. Some of them also command the natural elements (such as Njord's mastery of the sea). Vanir of greater power might also wield dominion over death, age, war and other aspects of mortal life, but they are essentially Gods of nature and the cycle of life.

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 8, Stamina 6; Charisma 8, Manipulation 6, Appearance 7; Perception 6, Intelligence 7, Wits 8

Virtues: Courage 2, Endurance 3, Expression 4, Loyalty 2

Abilities: Animal Ken 4, Art 2, Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Brawl 3, Control 3, Craft 2, Empathy 2, Fortitude 4, Integrity 3, Marksmanship 3, Melee 3, Presence 3, Survival 2, Thrown 2

Birthrights: Avatar 2, Relic 2 (Fertility, Health)

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Accelerate Growth, Assess Health, Bless or Blight, Blessing of Health/Curse of Frailty, Cleanse, Eternal Bloom, Green Thumb, Heal/Infect, Human Clay, Restore/Wither, Twist Plants

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 3 (Crushing Grip, Holy Bound, Holy Rampage), Epic Dexterity 4 (Cat's Grace, Divine Balance, Monkey Climber, Perfect Partner), Epic Stamina 4 (Damage Conversion, Holy Fortitude, Inner Furnace, Regeneration, Self-Healing), Epic Charisma 5 (Benefit of the Doubt, BFF, Blessing of Importance, Inspirational Figure, Preach On), Epic Manipulation 1 (Blurt It Out, Overt Order), Epic Appearance 2 (Come Hither, Serpent's Gaze), Epic Perception 1 (Refined Palate), Epic Intelligence 2 (Know-It-All, Perfect Memory), Epic Wits 3 (Opening Gambit, Jack of All Trades, Rabbit Reflexes, Social Chameleon)

Join Battle: 11

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 11, Damage 7L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 10, Damage 10B, Parry DV 12, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 12, Damage 10B, Parry DV 13, Speed 4

Spatha: Accuracy 12, Damage 11L, Parry DV 13, Speed 4

Soak: 4A/10L/13B

Health Levels: -0x13/Incap

Dodge DV: 17 **Willpower:** 7

Legend: 9 **Legend Points:** 81

Other Notes: Vanir relics vary from God to God. Weapons, pieces of jewelry, armor or other objects could qualify. Some relics are more powerful, particularly if the Vanir himself is more powerful or respected. Vanir might have additional relics with which to channel additional Purviews. Creatures are also common among them. For Followers, they tend to attract minor nature-spirits, while they might supply greater nature-spirits (comparable to nymphs) as guides, if they do not serve as guides themselves.

Note also that while the Vanir are primarily Gods of fertility and life, they are far from passive. They use their divine powers aggressively against their foes and engage in battle without pause. Many Vanir, in addition to the listed Boons, know the War Purview quite well. These Gods fought the Aesir to a draw before they joined forces, so they should not be underestimated.

Delling, All-Father of the Vanir (Guide •••••)

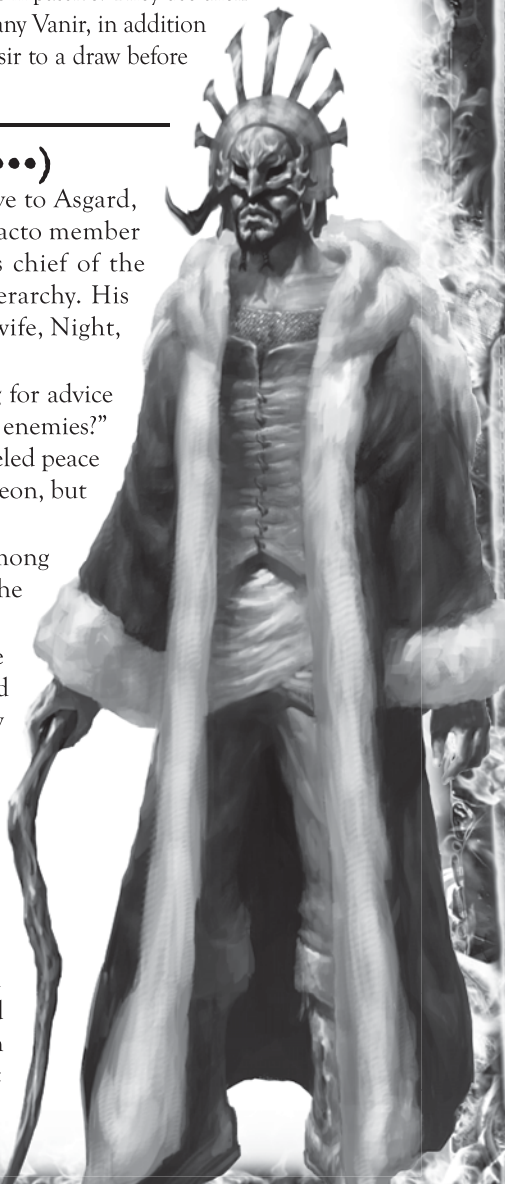
Delling is the king, leader and All-Father of the Vanir. After the move to Asgard, Delling retired from active leadership over his people. He has been a de facto member of the Aesir for so long that mortals no longer even remember him as chief of the Vanir; chroniclers ascribe to him a minor position in the Asgardian hierarchy. His child Day wanders the skies and illuminates the sky of Asgard, while his wife, Night, oversees the evening hours and Delling rests in his hall.

Or he did, anyway, until the Vanir began stealthily approaching Delling for advice about dealing with Ragnarök. "Why should we die here with our ancient enemies?" they asked. "Why should we share in the Doom of the Aesir?" Delling counseled peace and pointed to the ancient oaths his people had sworn to the younger pantheon, but to no avail. Unrest now troubles the Vanir.

The worst part is, Delling knows his people have a point. Delling alone among most of the Gods (including Odin himself) knows how Odin brought on the Doom of the Aesir by attempting to control the future. It happened thus:

In his rage after beheading Mimir, Delling laid a powerful curse on the head of the wise advisor. While the Vanir avoided meddling in Fate, they did so not because they were ignorant, but because they were wise. They knew the risks of Fatebinding far better than the brave and heedless Aesir did. Delling knew that Odin would try to use the wisdom of Mimir even after the latter's death. He manipulated Fate so that every time Odin sought Mimir's counsel for some insight in battle against the Vanir (or later, the Titans), he would seal his own doom. Every time Mimir foresaw the future and whispered it to Odin, the future would have one less path to choose from, and the Doom of the Aesir would grow inevitable.

By the time the Vanir and Aesir declared a lasting peace, Delling feared to reveal what he'd done to Odin or the Aesir. He hoped the matter would simply resolve itself, but it hasn't. For all his supernatural cleverness, Odin never considered the possibility that he could escape predestination just by *not knowing.* Now that Ragnarök approaches, Delling panics. He takes the Scions of other Gods under his wing, acting as a mentor and advisor when necessary,



hoping to guide them into finding some solution to the Ragnarök question. In addition, Delling has secretly opened byways into Vanaheim again, convincing Scions and other minions to explore the long-vacant realm in order to clear out any dangers—titanspawn or otherwise—that might lurk there.

Delling has the same general traits as Odin (see pp. 61-62). He lacks Odin's Boons with Death, Animal, Psychopomp and Prophecy as well as the Aesir All-Father's relics. He has, however, all the Boons (including the avatar expressions) for the Fertility, Health and Sun Purviews instead.

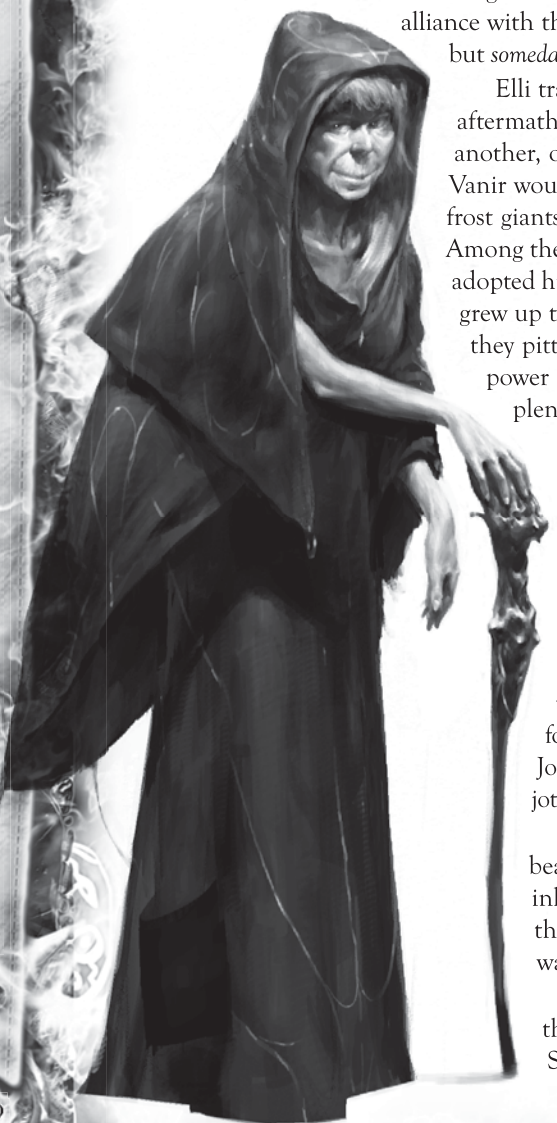
Elli, (Guide •••••)

This ancient deity advises and assists Utgard-Loki. She personifies old age and decrepitude. Even Thor could not resist her powers the one time they met in single combat (for which tale, see p. 16).

Many among the Aesir believe that Thor fought a mere illusion created by Utgard-Loki. Those who know the truth—including Odin—prefer to remain silent. Elli raised Utgard-Loki from childhood, and he presumably knows her history... but the Jotun King keeps his cards close to his chest. As Utgard-Loki's foster-mother, Elli taught him and aided his ascent as ruler of the jotnar (the proper plural of jotun), although she appears to have no giant blood in her own veins.

Elli is one of the oldest and most powerful of the Vanir. She was the Goddess of Grandmothers, the power of the old woman who had birthed warriors and buried them, the keeper of wisdom whose mere presence reminded others of the grim inevitability of weakness, age and death. She watched her sons and grandsons die on the spears of the Odin's warriors, saw her daughters promised to the Aesir as broodmares in hopes of a lasting peace and an alliance against the Titans, and she refused to be a part of that peace.

Elli confronted Delling, All-Father of the Vanir. She warned that the peace would not last, that they could not trust the Aesir. Odin was too cunning by half, and his blood-brother Loki was twice as treacherous. Worst of all, Odin's willingness to meddle with Fate held the seeds of the Aesir's own destruction. Any alliance with that pantheon was surely doomed. Maybe not today, maybe not tomorrow, but *someday*... Delling ignored her, and Elli walked out.



Elli traveled to Jotunheim, which was still wracked with chaos at the time in the aftermath of the death of Ymir. She found the jotnar flocking to one warlord after another, only to have that leader dispatched by Thor or Tyr. Elli decided that if the Vanir would not have her wisdom—the literal wisdom of Old Age—then perhaps the frost giants would. After all, they now were free from direct domination by a Titan. Among their number, Elli found an orphaned boy of great cunning and courage. She adopted him as her own and trained him to become the leader of the jotnar. That boy grew up to become Utgard-Loki. Where other warlords of Jotunheim failed because they pitted their strength against the strength of the Aesir, Utgard-Loki held onto power because he could match wits with the Gods on their own terms. He had plenty of strong soldiers, but few of them—none, honestly—had his cunning.

Since the days when she guided Utgard-Loki to power, Elli has served him as an advisor and secret weapon. Despite her aged appearance, Elli can stand up to the strength of any being but the mightiest of the Gods, not by matching their power, but by weakening it. Her touch drains the vitality from her foes, causing their muscles to atrophy and their wits to leave them, softening them up for one of the frost-giants or for Utgard-Loki to defeat them.

Elli no longer feels any loyalty to the Vanir. They threw in their lot with the Aesir and can suffer the Aesir's doom for all she cares. She has no plans for Ragnarök herself, trusting that her foster-son can think of some way to save Jotunheim and the frost giants he rules. After Ragnarök... she'll see. Perhaps the jotnar can become the Gods of the new World.

Elli looks like a shriveled old woman in black, homespun robes that bear the faintest tracing of gold thread. She is neither divinely striking nor inhumanly ugly. Elli bears the glow of health and glint of sharp intelligence that the more vital of the elderly sometimes possess, but she seems in every way to be simply a harmless old crone.

Elli's childbearing millennia are far behind her, so she could not become the mother of any Scions. It is conceivable, however, that she could act as a Scion's guide... though only for her own purposes.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 5, Stamina 11; Charisma 8, Manipulation 9, Appearance 2; Perception 10, Intelligence 11, Wits 11

Virtues: Ambition 3, Courage 2, Endurance 5, Zealotry 3

Abilities: Academics 5, Animal Ken 4, Athletics 4, Awareness 5, Brawl 4, Command 2, Craft 5, Fortitude 4, Integrity 5, Investigation 5, Medicine 5, Melee 2, Occult 5, Politics 3, Presence 2, Stealth 2

Birthrights: Avatar 5, Relic 5 (Robes—Frost, Health), Relic 5 (Runestones—Magic, Mystery, Prophecy)

Supernatural Powers:

Avatars: The Cold, The Savior/The Scourge, The Wyrd

Boons: Assess Health, Blessing of Health/Curse of Frailty, Blizzard Call, Chill the Blood, Control Aging, Cradlesong, Flash Freeze, Frost Immunity, Frozen Heart, Frozen Panoply, Heal/Infect, Holy Font/Epidemic, Hrimthurssar's Touch, Human Clay, Human Hybrid, Plague/Cure, Restore/Wither, Magic 10, Mystery 10, Uller's Stride, Winter's Mercy, Ymir's Hand

Spells: All listed in **Scion: Hero**, **Scion: Demigod**, **Scion: God** and this book, and many more.

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 3 (Crushing Grip, Disfiguring Attack, Divine Wrath), Epic Dexterity 1 (Untouchable Opponent), Epic Stamina 10 (all Knacks), Epic Charisma 6 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**), Epic Manipulation 7 (all Knacks), Epic Appearance 1 (Detail Variation, My Eyes Are Up Here, Tailor Made), Epic Perception 8 (all Knacks), Epic Intelligence 10 (all Knacks), Epic Wits 10 (all Knacks)

Ultimate Attributes: Ultimate Stamina, Ultimate Intelligence, Ultimate Wits

Touch of Decrepitude: This special Boon (Health ••••• •••••) enables Elli to counter the Epic Attributes of other beings. Every two points of Legend she invests in this Boon negates one dot of an Epic Attribute. If she also spends a point of Willpower, she reduces her target's corresponding normal Attribute by one dot per four points of Legend spent. She can suppress only one Attribute and Epic Attribute per use of this Boon, in one target. The effects last only as long as Elli touches her target. While she does so, however, she can strip Thor of his strength, reduce Odin to mumbling senility or turn Freya into a hag as plain as Elli herself.

Join Battle: 16

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 9, Damage 6L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 8, Damage 9L, Parry DV 5, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 10, Damage 6L, Parry DV 6, Speed 4

Soak: 13A/55L/60B (Robes, +3A/3L/3B)

Health Levels: -0x52/Incap

Dodge DV: 12 **Willpower:** 10

Legend: 12 **Legend Points:** 144

Other Notes: Since Elli is not titanspawn, she has no trophy. Her robes, however, allow a Scion to access the Frost and Health Purviews; they also act as armor. Her necklace of rune stones allows access to the Magic, Mystery and Prophecy Purviews and adds two dice to rolls for Mystery. Those who slay Elli can take these relics. Since Elli possesses Ultimate Stamina, however, she is not only very hard to kill but likely to return from "death" to seek revenge. Those who hold their own against Elli but do not seek to kill the "old woman" might find that she grants them a favor at a later date. In addition to her own abilities, Elli has the support of Utgard-Loki and many of his frost giant subjects, to an extent that is not easily represented through Guide or Followers.

The Wolf and the Serpent

The following creatures deserve special attention due to their power and importance. The Midgard Serpent and the Fenris Wolf are titanic powers in their own right, who have only been gainsaid by the power of the greatest of the Aesir working in concert. When Ragnarök arrives, they will free themselves from their bonds and rampage across the World and Overworld until they arrive on the Plain of Idavoll to seal the fate of the Gods themselves.

Given their nature and importance in the Norse myth cycle, Jörmungandr's and Fenris' traits follow the same model as Titan avatars. They do not emanate from a Greater Titan, but they manifest and exist in much the same way as avatars. In a sense, these monsters are avatars of Fate itself. They exist to execute the Doom of the Aesir and the end of the Aesir's age at the appointed time. While Wolf and Serpent serve the same goal as the Titans, they do not serve the Titans directly. Whether slaying one or both of these creatures would save the Gods or simply raise up other beasts in their place is left for individual Storytellers to decide.

WE'RE GONNA NEED A BIGGER BOAT

The legends say that Jörmungandr can encircle the World, while Fenris cannot open his jaws all the way because there isn't enough room between the earth and sky. One can argue that mortal minds simply cannot comprehend living entities of such prodigious size. How do you even represent such enormous creatures through game mechanics? In addition, some players might feel that there's something distinctly un-epic about their characters' being fleas against the backdrop of an incomprehensibly big monster, no matter what the rules say about the damage those fleas can dish out. This is less of a problem with the versions of the Fenris Wolf and the Midgard Serpent presented here, as they're massive and terrifying but still manageable on some level. Storytellers who wish to employ real, no-kidding, World-encircling, moon-swallowing versions of these creatures can try something else, though.

For an alternative, treat the monstrous offspring of Loki not as foes to fight face to face but as locations to be fought in, rather like the Greater Titans themselves. In such an encounter, different parts of the monster would each form a different scene and setting. Each scene revolves around a different goal, and completing each goal leads the Band closer to its ultimate goal of defeating the monster.

Example: Zach decides to release the Midgard Serpent early and have it rampage across the South Pacific like Godzilla. The Scions want to take Jörmungandr out, thus removing one prophecied threat to the Aesir. In order to make the story not simply revolve around one fight against a big monster, Zach creates three scenes set on or inside Jörmungandr. The first scene involves the Scions fighting on the surface of Jörmungandr's body, which is infested with gigantic, poisonous parasites grown to enormous size by feeding on the sleeping monster's blood. The second scene features a battle fought on the surface of Jörmungandr's eye. The Scions must deal enough damage to force the Midgard Serpent to roar in pain, and blind it to keep it from traveling to Beijing, where it hopes to sup on a nascent World power. Once the Band breaches the surface of the eye and Jörmungandr begins to roar in pain, the third scene begins. The Scions must leap into Jörmungandr's maw and travel within its body (in a *Fantastic Voyage* homage) until they can find Jörmungandr's heart, which they hope to destroy.

If you use this option and stick strictly to Norse myths about Ragnarök, keep in mind that you present the Scions with a foe that they likely cannot defeat, but which supposedly some elder Aesir can destroy, such as Vidar does with the Fenris Wolf. This might cause problems in chronicles where the theme focuses on the players' Scions matching and even surpassing their divine parents.

JÖRMUNGANDR, THE MIDGARD SERPENT

Favored Purviews: Animal (Snake), Chaos, Water

Banned Purviews: Fertility, Guardian, Sun

Jörmungandr, the divine son of Loki and Angrboda, is a massive serpent so large that his coils can encircle the World. Only Thor, the strongest warrior of the Aesir, can hope to slay him on the day of Ragnarök.

Jörmungandr can change his size and shape but rarely does so. He can be as small as 100 feet long or so large that his length on the edge of the World can be mistaken for the horizon. Over the last few centuries, his size has remained constant as he slumbers beneath the earth in Midgard, although his exact location (latitude?) is unknown. Some Gods say he lurks within the deepest trenches of the ocean, while others claim that he hides his length beneath various mountain ranges. A few Gods think he does both, Jörmungandr's size being so incomprehensible that one part shifts occasionally beneath the length of the Rocky Mountains while another part lies in the Marianas Trench. These Gods also point out that most of the mid-oceanic ridges connect in a single undersea mountain range tens of thousands of miles long. All agree that when Jörmungandr turns in his slumber, he causes the earthquakes and tsunamis that mortal geologists blame on continental drift. Even Titan avatars such as Surtr fear to encounter a beast of such size and power, so they avoid the Midgard Serpent whenever possible.

Yet Jörmungandr is not simply a mindless, ravening beast, no matter how quickly he dispenses with rational thought when angered. No, the child of the God of Cunning and the Mother of Monsters is quite intelligent when he needs to be. On rare occasions, Jörmungandr conspires with one faction or another when he doesn't slumber.



Seers and prophets disagree on whether the awakening of the Midgard Serpent signals the start of Ragnarök, or whether the Twilight of the Gods rouses Jörmungandr from sleep. Regardless, it is prophecied that Thor will kill the Midgard Serpent in the final battle and then perish in the creature's death-throes.

Jörmungandr has a base pool of 24 dice for all actions. He favors Physical Attributes and prefers to encircle, surround or simply swallow his foes whole.

Virtues: Ambition 4, Malice 5, Rapacity 5, Zealotry 3

Supernatural Powers:

Avatars: The Beast (Serpent), The Flood, The Void

Boons: Jörmungandr has all Boons from the Animal, Chaos and Water Purviews. He also has every one- through eight-dot Boon from all other Purviews *except* Fertility, Guardian and Sun, which are forbidden to him.

Epic Attributes: Epic Physical Attributes at 10, with all appropriate Knacks. All other Epic Attributes at eight dots, with all appropriate Knacks.

Poison: See page 182 of **Scion: Hero** for the venom delivered by Jörmungandr's bite. Each successful bite that deals damage also inflicts another dose of the poison on the target. If desired, the Midgard Serpent can also exhale this venom in a cloud that covers around 5,000 square yards (about the size of a football field). This effect is less concentrated but is still treated as a poison with these effects: Tolerance —, Damage 6A/minute, Toxicity 3L, Penalty -3. Being immersed in Jörmungandr's blood or other bodily fluids (such as from being swallowed) also has the same effect as the venomous spit.

Join Battle: 24

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 24, Damage 13L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Crush/Bash: Accuracy 23, Damage 27L, Parry DV —, Speed 5

Bite: Accuracy 27, Damage 27L, Parry DV —, Speed 5,P

Soak: 10A/52L/58B

Health Levels: -0x57/Incap

Dodge DV: 64 **Willpower:** 10

Legend: 12 **Legend Points:** 144

Trophy: Anyone able to slay Jörmungandr and survive can attempt to contain some of the creature's venom or toxic bodily fluids for later use. The toxicity of these substances is so great, however, that they dissolve most containers, as well as poison anyone trying to handle the substance.

Other Notes: Jörmungandr rarely assumes any avatar except for The Beast. Even when he does, there is always some ophidian quality to his appearance. The Midgard Serpent becomes The Beast only when he wants to do something he cannot achieve through his sheer bulk and Ultimate Strength.

The Fenris Wolf

Favored Purviews: Animal (Wolf), Chaos, Fire

Banned Purviews: Frost, Justice, Water

Like Jörmungandr, Fenris is a massive creature that can change size at will. At his smallest, he appears as a wolf the size of an elephant. At his largest, he stands higher than mountains at the shoulder. Regardless of his size, Fenris appears as a powerfully built black wolf whose red eyes glow and shimmer with a maddened, rabid light. His slavering jaws can crush battle tanks like eggs, while his claws tear stone with ease. A shake of his head can toss an opponent miles through the air. When Fenris wishes to, he can summon forth huge jets of scorching flame from his mouth, nostrils and eyes.

Like Jörmungandr, Fenris has normal intelligence (or greater than normal when he wants), but shares more of his father's cunning. For a time, the Aesir permitted Fenris to live in Asgard, but the fearful Gods eventually trapped and bound him at the expense of Tyr's hand. The Gods then levered a dwarf-made sword inside the wolf's mouth, which he supposedly could not snap without severing his own lower jaw. Fenris can neither forget nor forgive the Aesir for binding him. While he has no special desire to destroy the cosmos in Ragnarök, if wreaking his revenge on the Gods leads to that end, so be it. The Nine Worlds were not built for Fenris and his brother. If nothing but universal annihilation can bring him peace, then Fenris goes to it willingly.

The Fenris Wolf has a base dice pool of 24 for all actions. He favors Physical Attributes. Fenris prefers to size up his prey first then attack with unmatched ferocity and power at the appropriate time.

Virtues: Ambition 3, Malice 5, Rapacity 5, Zealotry 3

Supernatural Powers:

Avatars: The Beast, The Devourer, The Void

Boons: Every one- to eight-dot Boon from every Purview *except* Justice, Water and Frost, which are forbidden to him. Fenris also has all Boons from the Animal, Chaos and Fire Purviews.

Epic Attributes: Epic Physical Attributes at 10 with all appropriate Knacks; all other Epic Attributes at eight dots with all appropriate Knacks.



Terrible Bite: If given the chance to bring his full fury to bear upon a person or object, the Fenris Wolf's bite becomes even more terrible than usual. If the wolf's target is denied his DV, whether through surprise or other means, Fenris' Bite attack inflicts aggravated damage instead of lethal.

Join Battle: 24

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 24, Damage 12L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy (claw): Accuracy 23, Damage 27L, Parry DV 57, Speed 5, P

Unarmed, Light (claw): Accuracy 25, Damage 24L, Parry DV 59, Speed 4, P

Bite: Accuracy 25, Damage 26L, Parry DV 58, Speed 5, P

Soak: 10A/52L/58B

Health Levels: -0x57/Incap

Dodge DV: 64 **Willpower:** 10

Legend: 12 **Legend Points:** 144

Trophy: The wolf's hide, if one can obtain it, can be made into a cloak that allows access to the Animal Purview and provides +6A/+12L/+12B soak. The wolf's fangs can also be used in the same way a fenrir's can (see **Scion: Hero,** p. 318)

Other Notes: The Fenris Wolf rarely assumes any avatar except for The Beast. Even when he does, there is always some lupine quality to his appearance. Of course, it's hard to tell Fenris as The Beast from Fenris as a wolf that could dig up Mount Everest. Note that all of the Fenris Wolf's attacks have the Piercing quality.

Fenris and Jörmungandr can be seen as tragic creatures. They are literally too big for the Nine Worlds—too dangerous to leave free, in the Aesir's opinion, but not necessarily born to the hate they feel inside them. They are not exactly Titans, but neither are they mere titanspawn. They are scions of a God, but not *Scions*. They are truly bastard sons of the cosmos, and they loathe that status and Fate's way of constantly reminding them of it. Still, Hel's example proves that Jörmungandr and Fenris did not *have* to turn out evil, or at least not so evil that the Aesir couldn't find roles for Loki's monstrous brood (if only at arm's length, in exile).

While the story "Twilight of the Gods" assumes that Jörmungandr awakes and Fenris is freed just as Ragnarök begins, it could happen in your own saga that a Band of Scions tries to salve their burning hatred and subvert those particular prophecies of the end of days. Completing such a task would come only at the end of an epic quest, of course, and there's still the matter of finding someplace for the two to live where they would not constantly destroy pieces of the landscape merely by existing.

This tactic also does not guarantee that some other doomsday monster won't rise up to fill the place of Loki's spawn. Even if this happened, though, the Scions might gain powerful new allies to face such threats.

Spirits of Nature and the Land

The land is a living thing—or more properly, it is many living things. Spirits of groves, springs, lakes and valleys have lurked just outside the perception of humanity for as long as anyone can remember. Even the wind and the seasons have their spirits. The Norse, like many other cultures around the World, believed in a wide variety of nature spirits. What's more, they knew that if the land was alive, then it could be angered, awakened or placated to sleep once more. They both respected and feared these forces and looked to the Aesir to protect them from the most powerful of these creatures.

Land-vettir

The mightiest spirits of the land typically embody one of the four classical elements: earth, fire, water and air. Each land-vettir has its own distinctive shape, which could be almost anything but is usually human(ish) or animal. Land-vettir have an ancient enmity with dragons, so the Viking sailors had to take their dragon-headed figures off the prows of their ships when they landed within the territory of a land-vettir.

During the Aesir-Vanir War, the land-vettir sided with the chthonic fertility Gods of the Vanir and fought the Aesir mercilessly when the Aesir's peoples trespassed on the lands guarded by these primal spirits. When the two pantheons finally brokered a truce, the land-vettir ceased their wrath as well. For centuries, land-vettir defended the Northlands from titanspawn and other monsters... not because they loved the Aesir, but because the common people prayed for their help and the land-vettir oppose all intruders who would challenge their dominion over Midgard.

As the wheel of ages turned, however, the land-vettir found it more soothing to sleep. None of the land-vettir have roused themselves in centuries. The Aesir—especially Tyr and Heimdall—know how to wake them, as do most of the leading Vanir, but they do so only in moments of great danger. Since these spirits cannot leave Midgard, they cannot directly aid the Aesir and Vanir during Ragnarök. Whether they can aid indirectly by resuming their ancient guardianship against the Titans, remains to be seen... but bold and persuasive Scions might influence their choices. Yet some servants of the Titans also ponder ways to rouse the land-vettir and dupe them into wrath against the Aesir or mortal kind. An angry land-vettir rampaging across Scandinavia would provide a challenge for even a demigod.

The Bird of Ejyafjordur

This exceptionally powerful land-vettir is nearly a God in its own right. The Bird of Ejyafjordur is one of the four land-vettir that once guarded Iceland from threats and invasion. All four land-vettir sleep, though with the escape of the Titans and the end battle of the Gods approaching, it seems likely they could rise again. The land-vettir takes the form of an immense eagle with a 60-foot wingspan. Great winds and storms follow wherever it flies, and it can cover vast distances in mere hours. As one might expect, the Bird is tied to the skies and winds over Iceland and does not willingly range far from its home.

Attributes: Strength 9, Dexterity 8, Stamina 9; Charisma 4, Manipulation 2, Appearance 4; Perception 9, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Virtues: None as Gods or mortals understand them

Abilities: Animal Ken 4, Athletics 5, Awareness 5, Brawl 3, Fortitude 3, Integrity 4, Stealth 3, Survival 4

Supernatural Powers:

Epic Attributes: When it manifests, the Bird possesses Epic Strength, Epic Stamina and Epic Dexterity rated at six dots each. It does not possess Knacks for these Attributes.

Invulnerability: The Bird cannot be destroyed by any creature with a Legend rating less than its own. If it is brought down by such a being, it simply re-forms at the next sunrise, with full Legend points.

Merging with Midgard: As a spirit of Midgard, the Bird can dissolve itself into the air that is its element and domain of control. Doing so does not cost any Legend; neither does re-materializing. In this state, Epic Social Attributes and use of the Sky Purview might attract the Bird's attention and prompt it to materialize, but nothing short of The Storm can harm or control it. While dematerialized, the Bird cannot affect anything else.

Wind Mastery: The Bird of Ejyafjordur has powers equivalent to all the Boons of the Sky Purview, except the avatar expression. Short of becoming The Storm, however, it can produce and direct any mundane weather condition it wants, over an area miles wide.

Join Battle: 9

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 11, Damage 10B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Claw: Accuracy 12, Damage 12L, Parry DV —, Speed 4, P

Beak: Accuracy 12, Damage 15L, Parry DV —, Speed 5, P

Soak: 6A/21L/25B

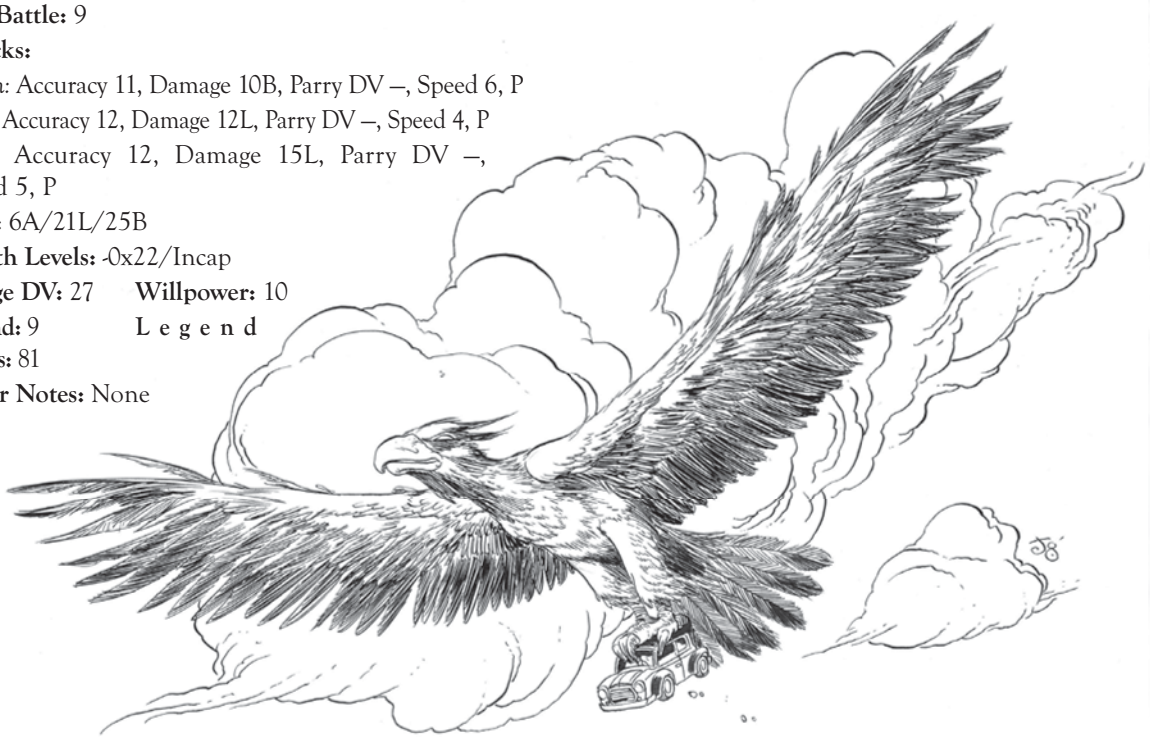
Health Levels: -0x22/Incap

Dodge DV: 27 **Willpower:** 10

Legend: 9 **L e g e n d**

Points: 81

Other Notes: None



Jack Frost

Jack Frost, the spirit of winter's chill, has always existed; the Norse merely gave him a name. They called him Jokul Frosti, whose names mean "icicle/glacier" and "frost." He is not exactly a land-vettir since he can alter his appearance and is not bound to a particular place, but neither is he a God or monster. He is himself, and nothing else.

Jack Frost usually manifests as a young man with pale skin tinged with blue, almost as if he suffered from severe hypothermia, though he seems healthy and vital otherwise. He wears a variety of outfits depending on his whim and the culture of those he meets, but people who know him can always recognize him. Jack usually seems cheerful and friendly, though he has no real sympathy or understanding of the hardship that cold inflicts on mortals. The schemes of Gods, Titans and other powers do not interest him at all. Now and then, Jack assists those caught up in such plots for reasons known only to himself—perhaps just to assert his independence. Jack prefers to sleep in the wintry wastes of the poles or high glaciers until he feels compelled to wander. Despite his apparent friendliness, Jack is far more alien than the Gods, since he has never tried to be human.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 5, Stamina 7; Charisma 5, Manipulation 6, Appearance 5; Perception 6, Intelligence 6, Wits 7

Virtues: None as Gods or mortals understand them

Abilities: Academics 3, Art 3, Animal Ken 4, Athletics 4, Awareness 5, Brawl 2, Craft (Ice) 4, Occult 4, Stealth 3

Supernatural Powers:

Epic Attributes: Epic Dexterity 5 (Cat's Grace, Divine Balance, Escape Artist, Monkey Climber, Spider Climber), Epic Stamina 5 (Damage Conversion, Divine Damage Conversion, Regeneration, Self-Healing, Solipsistic Well-Being) Epic Wits 3 (Instant Assessment, Monkey in the Middle, Rabbit Reflexes)

Invulnerability: Jack Frost cannot be destroyed by any creature with a Legend rating less than his own. If such a being brings him down, he simply re-forms at the next sunrise with a full Legend pool.

Merging with Midgard: Jack Frost can dissolve himself into any region of ice and cold, from the Antarctic ice cap to a frost-encrusted freezer. Doing so costs no Legend; neither does re-materializing. In this state, Epic Social Attributes and use of the Frost Purview might attract his attention and prompt him to materialize, but nothing short of The Cold can harm or control him. While dematerialized in this way, Jack cannot affect anything else.

Winter Spirit: As an embodiment of ice and winter, Jack Frost possesses powers similar to the Frost Purview. He can use all that Purview's Boons up to 10 dots without regard for his Legend rating, though he cannot achieve the avatar expression of that Purview.

Join Battle: 10

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 7, Damage 6B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 6, Damage 9B, Parry DV 14, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 8, Damage 6B, Parry DV 15, Speed 4

Soak: 5A/15L/18B

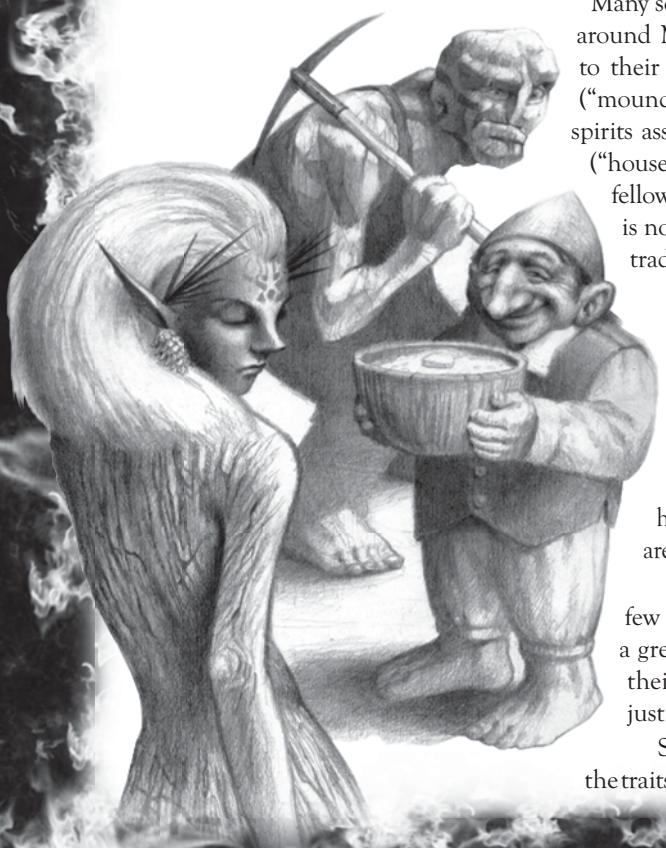
Health Levels: -0x17/Incap

Dodge DV: 20 **Willpower:** 10

Legend: 8 **Legend Points:** 64

Other Notes: None

The Hidden Folk (Follower •••, Guide ••)



Many sorts of minor nature-spirits exist and are known by many names around Midgard. In Scandinavia, the names given to them often refer to their capacity to vanish into the phenomena they embody: *haugbo* ("mound-dweller"), *huldre-folk* ("hidden people") and so on. Other spirits associate themselves with farms or households, such as the *tomte* ("household man"), *gardvord* ("farm guardian") and *tunkall* ("yard fellow"). The most common name for a household spirit, however, is now *nisse* (from the name Nicholas). Germany has its own, related traditions of Hidden Folk such as the *kobold* of the mines.

Some of these spirits are nymphs, as described on page 298 of **Scion: Hero**. For instance, a *gruwfroken* ("lady of the mine") or *solvmora* ("silver mother") might guide miners to ore, but she might also guard the earth's treasures jealously or take a terrible price, such as a prospector's eyesight. The *skogsra* ("forest spirit") might take a mortal lover, but such affairs often had perils of their own. Nordic nymphs usually have some feature that marks them as other than human, such as a cow's tail, or they look beautiful from the front but are hollow from the back or have skin like a fir tree's bark.

Lesser spirits often have diminutive stature—anywhere from a few feet to less than an inch. They can be very strong, though, with a great capacity for hard work. Benign spirits might help people at their work for a bowl of porridge and butter. Malicious spirits work just as hard to ruin everything.

Storytellers can represent a wide variety of such minor spirits with the traits for a generic thug or grunt soldier (see **Scion: Hero**, pp. 281–283),

with the addition of one dot each of Epic Strength and Epic Stamina. They are Legend 3, with the first two Boons of a single, appropriate Purview such as Fertility for a forest- or farm-spirit, Earth for a mine- or mountain-spirit, or Chaos for a nisse who acts as a household's luck—good or bad. Wilderness-spirits might have Animal Ken or Survival at 3 or higher; other spirits have a suitable version of Craft.

A nisse, kobold or hulder could serve as a guide; not as knowledgeable and powerful as a nymph or alfar, but nothing to sneeze at. The Hidden Folk often know many secrets of the Gods and creatures of Legend. Such creatures rarely fight on another's behalf, but a Scion who persuaded a squad of Hidden Folk to become followers (per the Birthright)—or received their loyalty as a gift—might find innovative ways to use their talents for combat support, espionage and non-union skilled labor.

Fairy Troop (Various Purviews ••••• •••)

Dice Pool: Willpower + Occult

Cost: 5 Legend

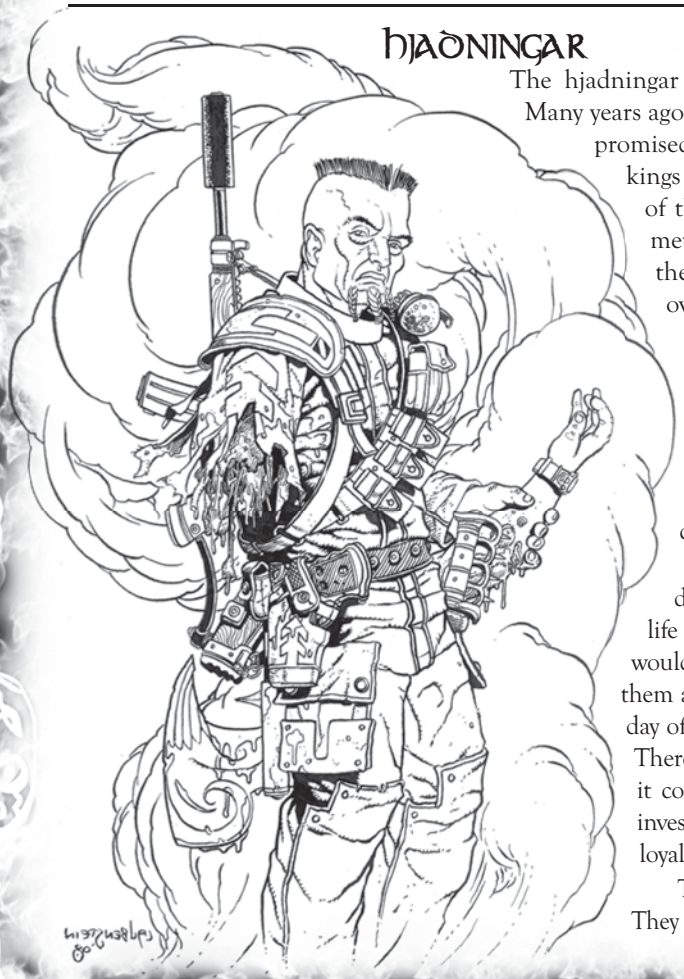
This Boon exists in several versions, for different Purviews. Each version summons five minor Hidden Folk and places them under the God's command for a short time. The troop of minor nature spirits serves for one day per success rolled. The Legend points are payment to the spirits. The God must also provide them some material fee, such as porridge, cloth or a silver coin for each (real silver, not modern coinage). The spirits serve loyally, but not to the extent of risking their lives.

A God can have only one troop in his service at once—at least using this Boon.

The Dead, Undead, and Stranger Things

All Aesir know well the draugr, or walking dead, who serve the Titans with mindless ferocity. They also know the einherjar who feast and skirmish in Valhalla, awaiting the arrival of Ragnarök. The Nine Worlds hold other creatures, however, who blur the boundary between the living and the dead and bear some connection to the human soul.

Hjadningar



The hjadningar compose the personal war band of the All-Father. Many years ago, Odin stole Freya's prized necklace, Brisingamen, and promised to return it only after she started a war between two kings who were equally famous for the strength and bravery of their armies. Deep within a fell wood, the two armies met and began slaughtering each other. At the height of the battle's intensity, Odin appeared and threw his spear over the combatants, taking their souls for his own.

Since then, the hjadningar have been doomed to eternal life. They can suffer wounds—gashes, maiming, even decapitation—but they cannot die. A powerful Goddess oversees the hjadningar. When they fall to their wounds, she pours a magical potion over them that regenerates severed and lost limbs, reattaches the head to the body and cures any disease or infection.

Because they never properly died, as the einherjar did, the hjadningar are trapped in a half-existence between life and death. They crave the release that a death in combat would bring, but they are forever denied it. Odin promised them all that the spell that binds them to him will end on the day of Ragnarök when he shall release them all to the afterlife. Therefore, all of the hjadningar hope for that final battle. Until it comes to pass, the promise of their freedom and Odin's investment of his own blood in them keeps his guard utterly loyal to him.

The hjadningar staff Valaskjálf (Odin's hall) and his holdings. They also serve as the All-Father's messengers and troops and

occasionally battle alongside him in Asgard or elsewhere. Odin has placed some hjadningar in the militaries of Midgard as spies, feeding Odin information and awaiting his orders. Odin particularly tries to place these undying warriors within the militaries of Midgard's nuclear powers. Their centuries of experience at down-and-dirty combat suits them for special forces such as the Green Berets or Spetznaz, but Odin directs them (with limited success) to seek positions where they become the hands on the nuclear triggers. Whether he did so to prevent their use or to make the keys turn at his command, only the All-Father's himself knows.

Attributes: Strength 8, Dexterity 4, Stamina 8; Charisma 4, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3; Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Virtues: Courage 5, Endurance 3, Expression 1, Loyalty 5

Abilities: Athletics 4, Awareness 2, Brawl 4, Command 2, Control 3, Fortitude 4, Integrity 4, Marksmanship 4, Melee 5, Survival 2, Thrown 4

Supernatural Powers:

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 2 (Holy Rampage, Uplifting Might), Epic Stamina 2 (Damage Conversion, Self-Healing)

Undying: No hjadningar can die before Odin permits it. They can be "killed" normally with attacks, but they always regenerate and rise again at every sunrise.

Join Battle: 6

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 8, Damage 9B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 7, Damage 12B, Parry DV 3, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 9, Damage 9B, Parry DV 5, Speed 4

Spatha: Accuracy 10, Damage 13L, Parry DV 5, Speed 4

Skeggox: Accuracy 10, Damage 15L, Parry DV 5, Speed 5

M16: Accuracy 8, Damage 6L, Range 150, Clip 30, Speed 5, P

Soak: 2A/8L/14B (Armor, +2L/4B)

Health Levels: -0x13/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 6 **Willpower:** 10

Legend: 3 **Legend Points:** 9

Other Notes: Odin's empowerment of the hjadningar is identical to the Jotunblut Boon Giant (see **Scion: God**, p. 108). Due to their curse to be unchanged and undying until Ragnarök, however, the hjadningar do not grow in size as is normal for the use of this Boon. Giant's eitr can neither enthrall them nor turn them into true, titanspawn giants.

Aptrganger

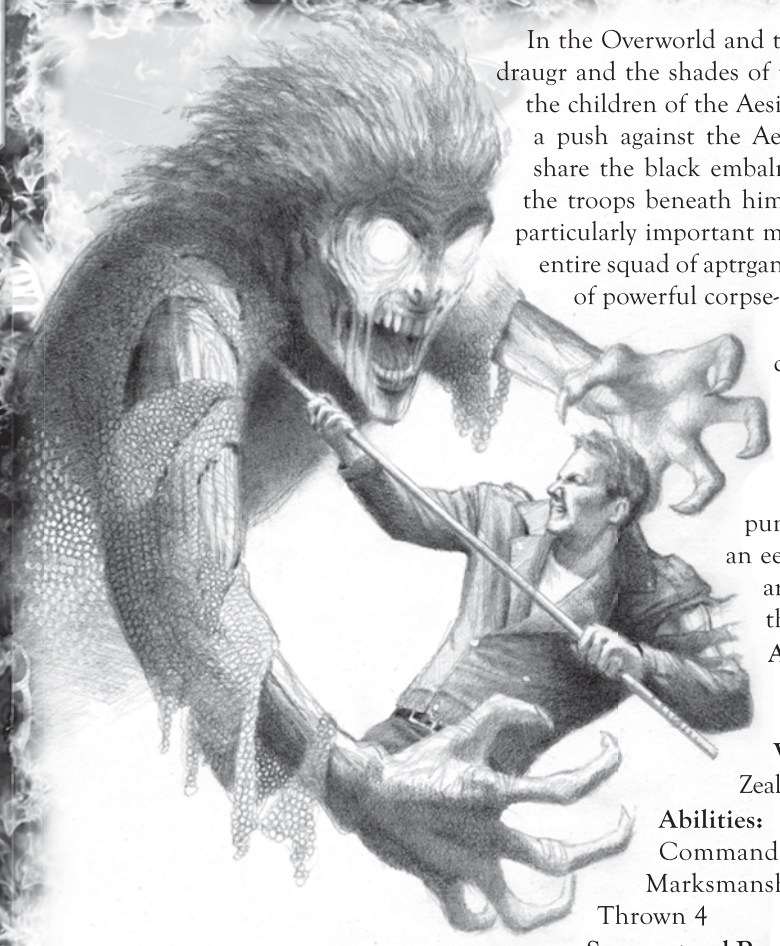
The aptrgangers, called corpse-demons by the soldiers of the Aesir, command the forces of the unworthy dead whom the Titans use as shock troops. Long ago, the generals of the Titans' armies (and other foes of the Gods) realized that vast numbers of animate corpses or the ghosts of Helheim's unworthy dead could swamp the Aesir's einherjar. In fact, one of the core battle-plans for the Ragnarök is to throw open the gates of Eliudnir and unleash an army of the unworthy dead against the soldiers of the Gods.

The problem, of course, is that if the unworthy dead were worth a fig, they'd be einherjar themselves. Titanspawn who tried to use these shades in battle usually watched in disappointment as the shrieking dead were thrown about like tenpins by the strength of the Aesir or their Scions. A few of the dead showed promise: criminals and honorless brutes, for instance, and the odd blackguard of the kind that appears in sagas. Centuries of dwelling in Hel's Hall, however, often left these villains in poor condition for war, if they could be liberated from their place of punishment at all. Although the Aesir give Hel little reason to love them, she shows little interest in releasing her captives for use against them.

The Titans came up with a solution. They made sure that the most evil men they could lay hands on never reached the Underworld. Their spirits were bound within their corpses, and the corpses themselves were embalmed with giants' blood and the magic of the Titans. Thus they created the aptrgangers, who arose from their barrows with a renewed purpose: to work the evil will of the Titans. Capable of immense destruction and empowered with various gifts, the aptrgangers serve as leaders and heroes in the armies of the dead, battling the Aesir's Scions and the greatest of the einherjar.

In the World, aptrgangers rise from their graves and wreak horrific evil across the land. Their atrocities draw out heroes and demigods to fight them. Sometimes, an aptrganger acts alone; other times, the aptrganger merely serves as bait for a trap. A single aptrganger matches a demigod in might and can challenge a Band of heroes. The eitr poured into their veins gives them immense strength, which they can share with the walking corpses that follow them.

Many aptrgangers have other powers too. Some of them carry plagues so that when they arrive in a region, the mortals fall sick, and the crops and cattle die. Others wield powerful weapons forged in Surtr's factories in Muspelheim.



In the Overworld and the Underworld, aptrgangers lead platoons of draugr and the shades of the unworthy dead against the einherjar and the children of the Aesir. An aptrganger leads from the front. Before a push against the Aesir's forces and allies, the aptrganger might share the black embalming fluid that roars through his veins with the troops beneath him, temporarily magnifying their strength. For particularly important missions, a Titan's generals might assemble an entire squad of aptrgangers, eschewing the weaker dead for a handful of powerful corpse-demons.

Aptrgangers appear as gigantic animate corpses, twice as large as a man. Their eyes glow with an unholy light, and their bodies either radiate great heat or are intensely cold to the touch. Their flesh can be pale as the moon or black with decay and the vile fluids pumping through their veins. Some have flesh of an eerie and wretched blue. The blue aptrgangers are most often the ones that carry disease, but there's no hard or fast rule.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5; Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3; Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Virtues: Ambition 3, Malice 4, Rapacity 2, Zealotry 4

Abilities: Athletics 4, Awareness 2, Brawl 4, Command 3, Control 3, Fortitude 4, Integrity 2, Marksmanship 3, Melee 4, Presence 2, Stealth 2, Thrown 4

Supernatural Powers:

Epic Attributes: Aptrgangers possess Epic Strength and Epic Stamina ratings one less than their Legend rating (in this case, five dots each) and Epic Dexterity equal to half their Legend Rating, rounded down (three dots in this case). Yet the hollow and twisted nature of their existences means that aptrgangers do not possess any Knacks for their Epic Attributes.

Dead, Yet Undying: Aptrgangers are immune to drowning, pressure and all but the most supernaturally potent poisons and diseases (those that deal aggravated damage). Neither searing desert heat nor Antarctic cold can harm them.

Jotunblut: An aptrgangers possesses the equivalent of the Jotunblut Purview at a level equal to one less than its Legend rating (five dots in this case). The eitr in their veins is corrupted and toxic to living flesh, however (Tolerance —, Damage 3L/hour, Toxicity 3L, Penalty -4). It works just fine on the dead or undead, though. Either way, its benefits last for only a single day. Any living creature killed by exposure to an aptrganger's eitr rises as a hungry corpse after death.

Special Boon: An aptrganger might possess a single Boon with which to inflict some special horror on the World. The Boon's rating cannot exceed three dots. For example, an aptrganger might use Heal/Infect (Health • • •) to induce disease, or an aptrganger empowered by hrimthurssar blood might wield Hrimthurssar's Touch (Frost • • •).

Join Battle: 6

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 8, Damage 6B, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 7, Damage 9B, Parry DV 7, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 9, Damage 6B, Parry DV 9, Speed 4

Soak: 5A/14L/16B

Health Levels: -0x17/Incap

Dodge DV: 11 **Willpower:** 8

Legend: 6 **Legend Points:** 36

Other Notes: A rare and powerful aptrganger might possess Knacks in his Epic Attributes, as well as additional Epic Attributes. The Titans usually reserve this level of power for their most valued and potent warriors. Aptrgangers are typically equipped with an assortment of armor and weaponry based on personal preference from life and the needs of their current mission. Some few possess relics taken from murdered Scions.

Vardøger and Fylgje (Guide • to •••)

Scandinavians tell many stories about the vardøger, or vård, a spiritual double of a person. In these tales, a person seems to come home early, then disappears before the real person shows up, or a person comes to a new town to find that people already think they know him. Usually, a vardøger has no particular purpose and the Gods themselves don't know why one person has a spirit-double. Other times, however, the Aesir bind a vardøger to a person of exceptional talents. These mortals are not fated to die in battle and serve the Aesir as einherjar, but the Gods also do not wish to see them end existence in Helheim. The vardøgers accompany these people through life. When the people die, the vardøgers guide their souls to Asgard. Thus does Bragi collect the ghosts of great poets, singers and musicians, while Forseti rewards wise judges and lawgivers and other Aesir acquire other mortals they consider worthy.

Most of the time, a vardøger stays invisible and intangible, though spells such as The Unlidded Eye register its presence. Now and then, it performs the actions its host intends to do in the near future. On rare occasions, however, a vardøger manifests as a glowing light or the person's own silhouette to guide its host out of trouble, giving it simple hints and leading it to important clues—and incidentally inspiring tales about guardian angels.

The fylgje, or fetch, resembles the vardøger but takes an animal form. The fylgje's form often reveals aspects of its host's character, usually in unflattering ways. For instance, a glutton might be accompanied by a fylgje in the form of a fat pig, while a preening skirt-chaser might have a rooster fylgje. Such a fylgje usually exists to make sure its host's spirit *does* reach Helheim instead of troubling the living as a ghost.

Scions do not normally have or need vardøgers; their spirits can find their eternal reward (or punishment) on their own. A Scion could take *another person's* vardøger as a guide, however, as a way to consult this mortal ally even when far away. The Scion merely needs a relic with which to summon the vardøger, which appears in the mortal's form. Such a "ghost of the living" has Guide value equal to that of the mortal herself.

Doppelgangers

Naturally, the Titans tried to corrupt and co-opt the vardøger, resulting in spirits known as doppelgangers. When a mortal with a vardøger encounters the energies of the Titans or the presence of a titanspawn of Legend 3 or higher, that power can twist the vardøger into a malign doppelganger. (Roll the titanspawn's Legend against a difficulty of 3. On a success, the vardøger is corrupted and becomes a doppelganger.)

Doppelgangers manifest as exact duplicates of their mortal hosts. Doppelgangers do not content themselves with waiting for the mortal to die so they can bring their spirit to the afterlife, though. No, the evil doppelganger seeks to ruin its host's life as an "evil twin" who commits crimes, says (and does) horrible things to friends and family, and finally murders its host before disappearing to seek another victim. A doppelganger that manages to kill its host absorbs much of its host's life energies and adds them to its own, growing in power and becoming a truly terrible creature.

Although they serve the Titans—to the extent that everything destructive to human society and the normal passage of souls through life and death serves the Titans—doppelgangers are not titanspawn and have no trophies. A destroyed doppelganger simply disintegrates.

Bloody Mary

One of the worst doppelgangers survived the death of its host and became a legend in its own right. The urban legends surrounding "Bloody Mary" stem from a young woman driven to suicide by a doppelganger that tormented her whenever she saw her reflection. The doppelganger used its new powers to travel from mirror to mirror and kept on killing. Eventually, the spirit grew so powerful that foolish teenagers could summon it through a simple ritual.

Bloody Mary has amassed an impressive Legend rating through her murders. She is all the more deadly because she often strikes at her target's family before attacking directly. She also enjoys taking a person's appearance and committing murders and other crimes for which the original will be blamed.

This cunning and potent doppelganger sometimes performs services for her summoner, or at least appears to do so. She is quite willing to kill the enemies of spiteful teenage girls, before ruining their lives and killing them in turn. Bloody Mary also occasionally assists Titan cultists and other evil folks, if it suits her sadistic whim.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 5, Stamina 4; Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 5; Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Virtues: Ambition 4, Malice 5, Rapacity 3, Zealotry 2

Abilities: Academics 2, Art 2, Athletics 2, Awareness 3, Brawl 3, Occult 3, Melee 3, Stealth 4

Supernatural Powers:

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 2 (Crushing Grip, Divine Wrath, Disfiguring Attack), Epic Dexterity 2 (Untouchable Opponent, Monkey Climber, Spider Climber), Epic Stamina 2 (Self-Healing, Regeneration), Epic Appearance 3 (My Eyes Are Up Here, Detail Variation, Dreadful Mien, Lasting Impression, Serpent's Gaze, Undeniable Resemblance)

Mirror Travel: Bloody Mary can travel between any two mirrors or other highly reflective surfaces by spending one Legend point as a Speed 4 action. She can also hear her name across any distance when a person speaks it three times while looking into such a surface and can transport herself to that location if she so chooses.

Join Battle: 7

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 8, Damage 5L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 7, Damage 8L, Parry DV 5, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 9, Damage 5L, Parry DV 7, Speed 4

Shard of Mirrored Glass: Accuracy 9, Damage 6L, Parry DV 6, Speed 4

Soak: 2A/4L/6B

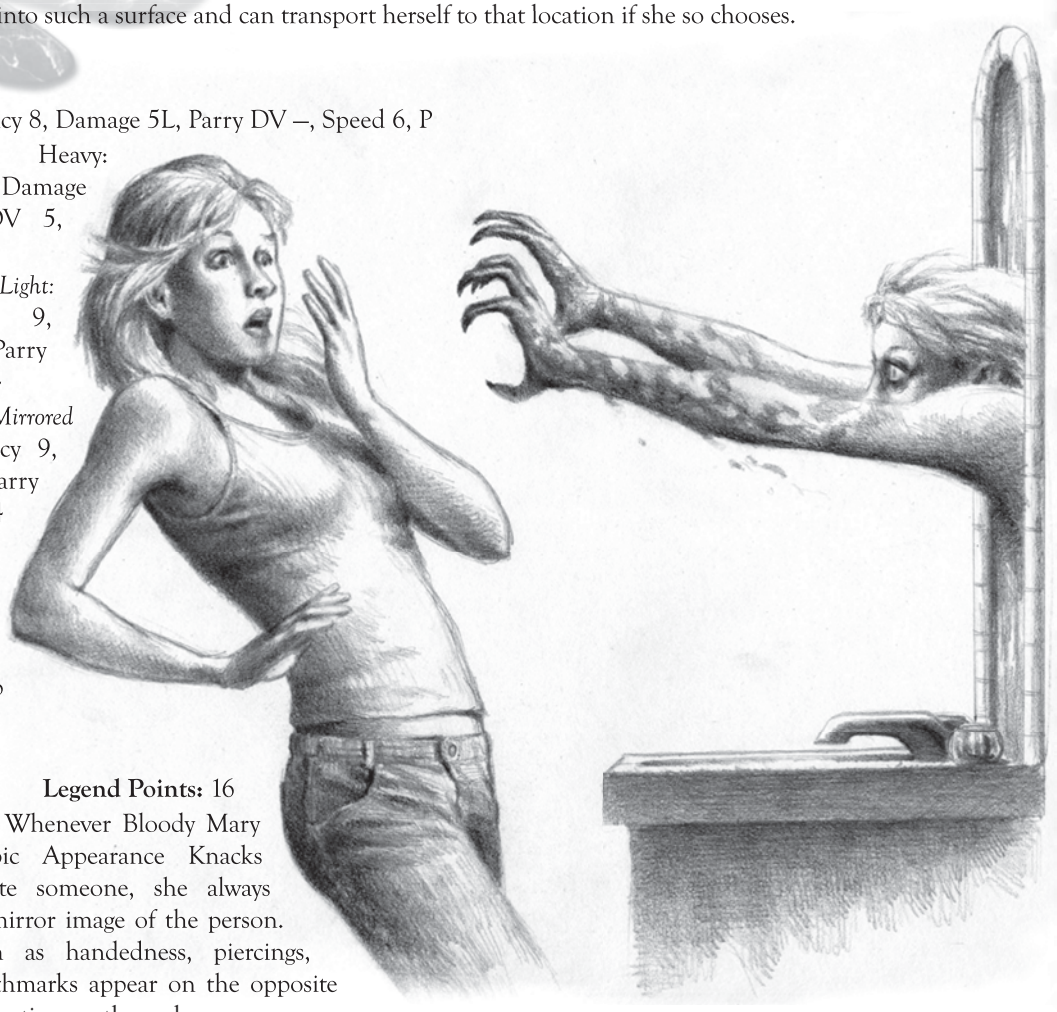
Health Levels: -0x5/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 8

Willpower: 9

Legend: 4 **Legend Points:** 16

Other Notes: Whenever Bloody Mary uses her Epic Appearance Knacks to impersonate someone, she always appears as a mirror image of the person. Features such as handedness, piercings, tattoos or birthmarks appear on the opposite side of their location on the real person.



TITANSPAWN

Chimerae seldom (if ever) appear in Norse mythology. The kraken (see p. 265 of **Scion: Demigod**), however, is only the most spectacular example of nemean beasts. Giants, however, are far and away the most numerous and persistent titanspawn foes of the Aesir.

GIANTS

The **Scion** core rulebooks describe the forces of the frost and fire giants; several other notable giants appear elsewhere in this book. A few more giants deserve special mention, however, due to their special roles in the final battle of Ragnarök.

NOMENCLATURE OF GIANTS

In Old Norse, *jotun* can refer to any sort of giant; the plural of *jotun* is *jotnar*. The Germanic Anglo-Saxons referred to giants as *eoten, ettin* or *ent, fifel* or *thyrs*. Frost giants are called *hrimthurssar*—literally, rime-giants.

Hrym

Hrym is a giant among giants. At Ragnarök, he will captain *Naglfar*, the great ship of the dead, with Loki as his steersman. As one of the most powerful and terrible of the jotnar, Hrym rivals his lord, Utgard-Loki, in raw power if not in cunning. Hrym stands about 55 feet tall and is a potent foe with both weapons and magic. He desires to bring war to the Gods more than does Utgard-Loki, but he will not throw his fellow giants into battle without reason.

Hrym uses Utgard-Loki's traits (see **Scion: Demigod,** pp. 270–273) except that he has no Illusion powers. He also has five dots of Control (Ship) and possesses all the Water Purview Boons from one to seven dots.

Hati and Skoll

These two fenrir, sons of the Fenris Wolf, are among the most powerful of their breed. Only their half-brother Garm matches them for power, ferocity and appetite. So ravenous are Hati and Skoll that they aspire to swallow the sun and moon at Ragnarök. This is not entirely impossible, as the sun and moon of Asgard are driven across the Overworld sky in chariots. Whether they can swallow *Midgard's* sun and moon is another matter—but after devouring the hearts of Delling's children and many other Gods and Scions in the final battle, who knows how powerful they might become?

Hati and Skoll are great black wolves standing 15 feet tall at the shoulder. They can run so swiftly that they can tread upon the very air: Treat them as having the Boon Wind's Freedom. They have the traits of a typical fenrir (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 317) but with the following bonuses: Strength +4, Dexterity +4, Stamina +4, Intelligence +1, Wits +1, Epic Strength +3, Epic Dexterity +4, and Epic Stamina +3. Increase their Legend Rating to 7. Also, raise their Rapacity to 5, their Malice to 3 and their Willpower to 9.

IT'S NOT THE SIZE OF THE DOG IN THE FIGHT...

Storytellers looking at the traits of the Fenris Wolf, Hati and Skoll might feel as if the traits given for the hellhound Garm (on p. 270 of **Scion: Demigod**) seem to fall a bit short of what one might expect for a creature fated to kill Tyr. While the hound might simply finish off the Aesir after he is otherwise gravely wounded, Storytellers could also boost Garm to make the hellhound a worthy foe for a God. In this case, raise Garm's traits thus: +2 Strength, +3 Dexterity, +2 Stamina, +2 Wits, Epic Strength +3, Epic Dexterity +3 and Epic Stamina +3. Increase his Legend to 9. Also raise Garm's Rapacity to 5, his Malice to 4 and his Willpower to 10. While this still does not make Garm strictly equal to the half-handed God in combat, it makes it far more plausible that he can bring Tyr down when Fate so decrees.

Storytellers who already used Garm's old traits in their games can easily explain the jump in power. After Garm breaks free from Helheim, he feasts upon the hearts of many a Scion and minor God on the way to Ragnarök and gains power because of it.

Nemeans and Other Beasts

The kraken (see **Scion: Demigod**, p. 265) is only the most powerful nemean monster of Norse legend. Lindwurms and tatzelwurms (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 313) come from Aesir country too, at least in their names. Any of the animals that the folk of Northern Europe considered powerful and dangerous would make an excellent nemean foe for Aesir Scions. The Norse admired the boar's strength and ferocity (as well as using it as a fertility symbol), so nemean swine such as Hogzilla (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 312) turn the totem beast of Freyr into appropriate foes. The Norse also respected the power of bears and eagles, while cats were Freya's favored animal. Fenrir might seem to make nemean wolves redundant, but such beasts might still occur (and lead to overconfidence, if a Band faces its first fenrir and expects nothing more than an extra-large wolf).

Stórrvurm

Norse legends are lousy with monstrous serpents; lindwurms and tatzelwurms are only the simplest and weakest examples. From the famous monsters such as Jörmungandr and the dragon fought by Beowulf to minor lake monsters and other threats, many Scions of the Aesir find themselves face to toothy maw with snake-like titanspawn of various shapes and sizes. The Aesir collectively refer to these creatures as stórrvurm, which literally means "Great Serpent." Such creatures occur most frequently in Scandinavia and the British Isles, though legends of stórrvurms also appear in the Americas and other places.

Some of these creatures are the offspring of monsters such as Jörmungandr, while others were born to troll-wives. Still others are normal reptiles that the Titans turned into nemeans or typhonians. Some stórrvurms began life as mortals cursed by some God or Titan to live as scaly horrors, or who turned themselves into monsters as Fafnir did. A few are even true dragons (see **Scion: Demigod**), though these are actually quite rare. Most stórrvurms do not have the intelligence or cunning of a true dragon, though many rival or surpass such creatures in raw power.

Most stórrvurms prefer to dwell in or near the sea and other large bodies of water, in Midgard as well as in the Overworld and Underworld. Other great serpents prefer to dwell deep underground (including the Primal Cavern; see pp. 99-100). Stórrvurms who are most at home in fiery infernos or the clouds rarely occur. Any such creatures are most likely other beings such as Muspel-drakes (see **Scion: God,** p. 228)—but you never know.

The traits here represent a typical semi-sentient stórrvurm roughly 40 feet long. Larger, deadlier and more intelligent specimens definitely exist, especially in the Overworld. While most of these creatures are hostile to humanity, the Aesir and their allies, a few stórrvurms simply wish to be left in peace. Many stórrvurms are venomous, though this particular example is not.

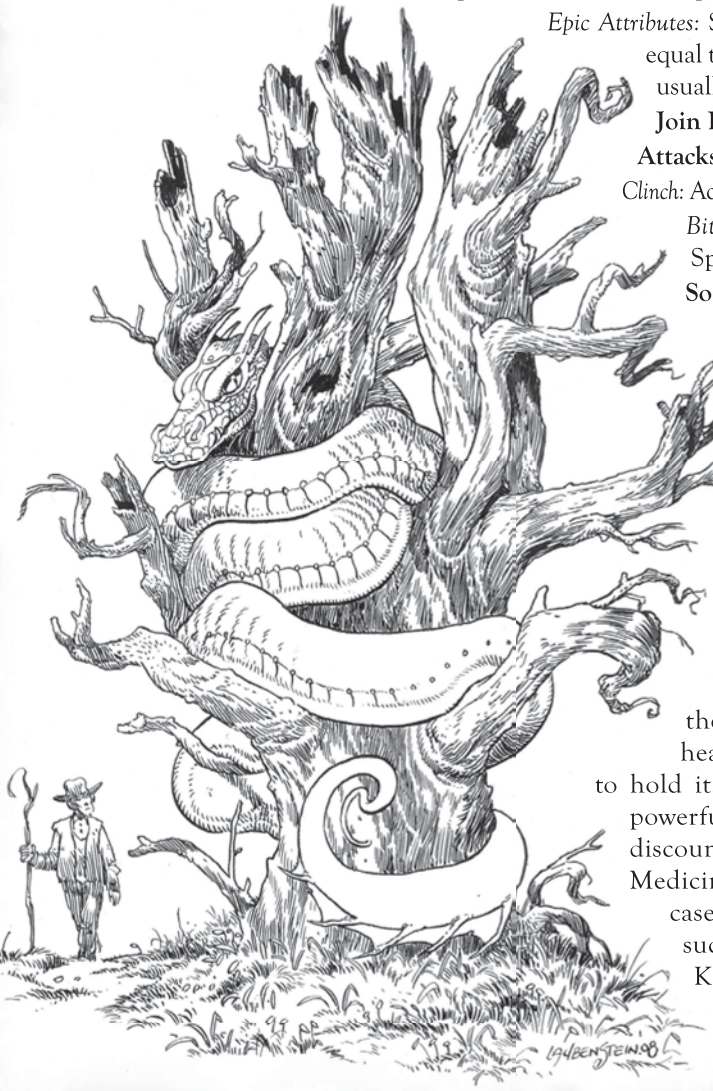
Attributes: Strength 14, Dexterity 5, Stamina 14; Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Appearance 5; Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Virtues: Ambition 2, Malice 3, Rapacity 4, Zealotry 3

Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Brawl 4, Fortitude 4, Stealth 2, Survival 3

Supernatural Powers:

Environmental Affinity: Stórrvurms are completely immune to harm from the environment in which they make their home. For example, an aquatic stórrvurm never suffers any harmful affects from the water, be it drowning or pressure at extreme depths.



Epic Attributes: Stórrvurms possess Epic Strength and Stamina equal to (their Legend – 1)—in this case 5. They do not usually possess Knacks, though.

Join Battle: 5

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 9, Damage 15L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Bite: Accuracy 12, Damage 18L, Parry DV —, Speed 5

Soak: 5A/18L/25B

Health Levels: -0x17/Incap

Dodge DV: 7 **Willpower:** 7

Legend: 6 **Legend Points:** 36

Trophy: The trophy of a slain stórrvurm is its heart. By consuming the heart of a stórrvurm, a Scion can gain the effects of Water Breathing (Water •), Safely Interred (Earth •), Fire Immunity (Fire •) or Sky's Grace (Sky •) for one month, depending on whether the stórrvurm was most at home in water, earth, fire or the air. Characters who do not want to claim the heart's benefits right away can store the heart in any airtight container large enough to hold it, such as a portable cooler. The hearts of powerful stórrvurms might also provide experience discounts to scholarly abilities such as Academics, Medicine, Politics, Science or Occult. In these cases, the Scion may treat his next purchase of such Abilities as if he had the Fast Learner Knack and was taught by someone with the Teaching Prodigy Knack (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 135).

Other Notes: None

Trolls and Troll-wives

Norse legends draw no clear distinction between giants and trolls. These creatures are certainly related in some way, but the troll-wives and their troll offspring form a breed of their own. Spawned from earth, much as the jotnar came from ice or the Muspel giants from fire, these creatures personify unchecked fertility and a twisted form of maternal power.

Jarnvidjur (Troll-wives, Troll-witches)



These powerful, titanspawn witches dwell in the Dark Forest, known to them as the Iron Wood (see pp. 97-99). Although they can appear as giantesses, they are not related directly to the jotnar or Muspel giants. Rather, the power of Terra apparently birthed them long ago. (There might also be a connection to the Titan called Crom Cruach, who has at least one hag avatar. See the **Scion Companion** for more information.) Grendel's mother was one of the jarnvidjur. Hag-like monsters from other mythologies, such as the Slavic Baba Yaga, Japanese Hannya or the Native American Tsonoqua, might also be troll-wives or somehow related to them.

Although they are certainly titanspawn, the jarnvidjur have their own interests and agendas. They pay homage to their powerful queen, Angrboda, but generally avoid her if possible. These creatures of twisted fertility prefer to go their own way, loyal only to their own monstrous offspring. Some troll-witches shun humanity altogether and live as hermits, but most seek out the occasional mortal to use as slaves, food or sperm-donors. On rare occasions, a troll-wife enters human society and lives as a mortal woman for years. They usually pose as midwives, as gardeners or in some other profession dealing with the earth or reproduction. Such stints in the mortal World usually end badly when some event reveals the hag's true nature.

Male children of unions with jarnvidjur are commonly known as trolls and come in a variety of shapes, sizes and temperaments. Female children become jarnvidjur themselves. In cases where jarnvidjur take Scions or Gods to their bed, the resulting offspring are always powerful, monstrous and unique. The famous and fearsome man-beast Grendel was just such a creature. He terrorized humanity and slew many great warriors until he met his end at the hands of Beowulf. Sons of troll-wives and true giants usually become giants, often sporting some grotesquely unique feature such as multiple heads.

Physically, jarnvidjur typically appear as huge hags at least eight feet tall, with stringy hair and needlelike teeth. They can alter their shape at will, however, and live for years in another form. Also, a few jarnvidjur naturally look beautiful and humanlike (positive Epic Appearance instead of negative), though even these rare beauties sport some inhuman feature such as a tail or forked tongue.

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 3, Stamina 6; Charisma 4, Manipulation 5, Appearance 4; Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 6

Virtues: Ambition 4, Malice 3, Rapacity 4, Zealotry 2

Abilities: Academics 3, Animal Ken 2, Awareness 4, Brawl 3, Fortitude 2, Integrity 4, Medicine 4, Occult 4, Presence 4, Science 2, Stealth 2, Survival 5

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Bestial Endowment, Bless or Blight, Blessing of Health/Curse of Frailty, Cradlesong, Earth Armor, Earth Travel, Echo Sounding, Heal/Infect, Heroic Endowment, Human Endowment, Magic 6, Mystery 4, Prophecy 4, Safely Interred, Shaping

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 3 (Crushing Grip, Divine Wrath, Holy Rampage), Epic Stamina 5 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero**), Epic Manipulation 1 (Blurt It Out, Gods' Honest), Epic Appearance 2 (Come Hither, My Eyes Are

Up Here, Detail Variation, Tailor Made, Serpent's Gaze), Epic Intelligence 1 (Teaching Prodigy), Epic Wits 2 (Rabbit Reflexes, Social Chameleon)

Shapeshifting: By spending three Legend and one Willpower, a troll-wife can assume a human or animal shape and remain in that shape indefinitely. This shape must be female and have some small imperfection that gives the disguise away, though more powerful jarnvidjur can cover these flaws.

Spells: All Spells from **Scion: Hero**, Avoid a Fate, Beast Shape, Fateful Connection, Fate Prison, Fate and Switch

Join Battle: 10

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 6, Damage 7L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 5, Damage 10L, Parry DV 3, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 7, Damage 7L, Parry DV 4, Speed 4

Soak: 5A/14L/17B

Health Levels: -0x17/Incap

Dodge DV: 5 **Willpower:** 8

Legend: 7 **Legend Points:** 49

Trophy: Strictly speaking, jarnvidjur have no trophy in the usual titanspawn sense of a body part that carries some aspect of their power after death. Every troll-witch, however, owns at least one relic that she creates as a spontaneous expression of her own power. Exceptionally cunning jarnvidjur also know how to craft relics for Scions in the same manner as dwarven artisans such as Brok (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 319), though such trollish relics tend to come with subtle curses or unpleasant conditions on their use. A troll-witch's own relics usually allow use of the Magic Purview or might themselves carry the effects of a spell, Boon or Knack. Troll-wives can also spawn creatures or supply trollish followers (per the Birthrights of the same names), though only servants of the Titans are likely to receive or want such Birthrights.

Other Notes: If a troll-witch is hag-like or otherwise hideously ugly in appearance, she cannot use Epic Appearance Knacks based on physical beauty unless she shapeshifts.

ANGRBODA



Angrboda is a giantess and seeress of great power. She is the queen of the jarnvidjur, the troll-witches of the Iron Wood, and the mother of Loki's blighted offspring Jörmungandr, Fenris and Hel. Angrboda does more than spawn monsters, though. Like Loki, she rests within the center of the conflict between the Titans and the Aesir, and her true allegiances remain obscure. Indubitably, a Titan spawned her, and she bore two of the Aesir's greatest foes. Yet the Aesir now count her daughter Hel among their number (if reluctantly). The Aesir sometimes, hesitantly, permit her to visit the halls of Asgard, for she can claim kin-right and Odin owes her favors for secrets she has shared.

Her murky motivations and shifting allegiances, combined with her titanspawn lineage, permit Angrboda to wander the Nine Worlds freely and accumulate vast stores of knowledge. As the mother of Hel, she walks the frozen wastes of Niflheim and put her ears to the whispering lips of the dead in Eliudnir. As the concubine of Loki, she eavesdrops on the counsels of the Aesir and riddles with Odin himself. As a giantess, she strides through the mighty fortresses of Jotunheim and shares mead with Utgard-Loki. Only Fate and Angrboda herself know where else she has gone, and from whom she has learned.

Angrboda also visits Midgard. As the consort of geniuses, generals and World leaders, she occasionally amasses temporal power for its own sake. She soon wearies of that game, however, and inevitably turns back to her main love: the creation of monsters. Disguised as many things—a midwife, a doctor, a genetic scientist—she has sought to unravel the secrets of ichor and giant-blood and impart it to mortals for her own purposes. During the Second World War, she assisted the doctors of the Nazi regime and

Japan's Unit 731 in horrific experimentation, disappearing as those organizations were dismantled and their scientists imprisoned or co-opted by other governments.

Angrboda's other strength, in addition to her peerless knowledge of breeding and heredity, is her insight into Fate. She spent long hours staring into the Well of Urd before she ever lay with Loki. In the days after Odin hung from Yggdrasil, he consulted her wisdom tirelessly, until the Vanir returned (some of) Mimir to him. Her knowledge and place in the skein of Fate guaranteed that her children with Loki would find some important destiny. Many suspect that the God of Mischief chose her as a bedmate for that very reason. They might have received more than either expected. Since the birth of her three infamous offspring, she has avoided the gaze of Fate and the attention of the Norns and Mimir, hoping to escape Ragnarök.

When she adopts mortal guise, Angrboda appears as a tall and haughty woman of imperial demeanor, who nevertheless possesses a strangely maternal aura. Men want to sire children on her or obey her instinctively, while women often find themselves seething with hate or trusting her as they do their own mothers—sometimes both at once. As a giantess, Angrboda's height ranges up to 80 feet tall, but always with full and ripe hips and a matronly bosom. Yet even with those curves, Angrboda is unmistakably a warrior of the Titan races, with whipcord muscles playing beneath her ivory skin.

When not wandering the Nine Worlds, Angrboda resides in a massive, moss-covered hall in the Iron Wood, among but always apart from the troll-wives and their witcheries. The troll-wives rarely bother her. They fear entanglement in her schemes even more than her wrath, and shun her monstrous offspring that are always far more powerful than their own. She set up laboratories in Midgard where she seeks to use mortal sciences such as cloning and gene-splicing to create races of monsters loyal only to her but who do not quicken in her womb and require her oversight as they grow to maturity. More recently, Angrboda brought generators and scientific equipment from Midgard to her hall in Jarnvid, and now the rooms hiss with electrical power and the screams of her experiments.

As the Twilight of the Gods approaches, Angrboda's main desire is to find some way to navigate the swelling tides of war and save herself from death. If she can manage that, she hopes to propagate a new line of Gods and monsters from her loins or her mind. She accepts that most of her current children will perish in the coming battle along with her onetime lover Loki. Utgard-Loki's plans to betray the Titans interest her, but she fears that Surtr might discover his treachery and destroy the conspirators out of hand.

Attributes: Strength 10, Dexterity 5, Stamina 10; Charisma 9, Manipulation 9, Appearance 6; Perception 8, Intelligence 9, Wits 9

Virtues: Ambition 5, Malice 5, Rapacity 3, Zealotry 3

Abilities: Academics 5, Animal Ken 4, Art 2, Athletics 2, Awareness 5, Brawl 5, Command 4, Control 3, Craft 5, Empathy 3, Fortitude 4, Integrity 4, Investigation 2, Larceny 2, Marksmanship 2, Medicine 5, Melee 3, Occult 5, Politics 2, Presence 4, Science 5, Stealth 2, Survival 4, Thrown 2

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Bestial Endowment, Bless or Blight, Blessing of Health/Curse of Frailty, Hybrid Chimera, Come Along, Control Aging, Cradlesong, Earth Armor, Earth Body, Earth Travel, Echo Sounding, Heal/Infect, Heroic Endowment, Human Clay, Human Endowment, Human Hybrid, Magic 9, Mystery 6, Otherworldly Portal, Prophecy 6, Restore/Wither, Safely Interred, Shaping, Supernal Bestial Endowment, Supernal Human Endowment, Terra Incognita, Unerring Orientation, Virility/Muliebrity, Where Are You?

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 3 (Crushing Grip, Divine Wrath, Holy Rampage), Epic Dexterity 2 (Cat's Grace, Untouchable Opponent), Epic Stamina 6 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**, Tireless Worker, Whale's Breath), Epic Charisma 4 (Blessing of Importance, BFF, Crowd Control, Charmer, Engender Love, Pied Piper), Epic Manipulation 5 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**, Implant False Memory), Epic Appearance 3 (Center of Attention, Come Hither, My Eyes Are Up Here, Detail Variation, Lasting Impression, Tailor Made, Serpent's Gaze), Epic Perception 2 (Predatory Focus, Subliminal Warning, Fool Me Once), Epic Intelligence 5 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**, Blockade of Reason, Instant Translation, Speed Reading), Epic Wits 7 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero** and **Scion: Demigod**)

Shapeshifting: By spending three Legend and one Willpower, Angrboda can assume a human or animal shape and remain in that shape indefinitely. This shape must be female.

Spells: All from **Scion: Hero**, **Scion: Demigod** and this book, plus others as desired.

Join Battle: 14

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 10, Damage 11L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 9, Damage 14L, Parry DV 6, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 11, Damage 11L, Parry DV 8, Speed 4

Soak: 6A/21L/26B

Health Levels: -0x26/Incap
Dodge DV: 11 **Willpower:** 10
Legend: 10 **Legend Points:** 100
Trophy: Angrboda owns a wide variety of relics, some created by herself and some acquired from various Gods and titanspawn. Most recently, she has devised an apparatus for combining natural and supernatural biology. A Scion of sufficient insight (and moral flexibility) might figure out how to use it and find some purpose beyond breeding horrors.
Other Notes: None



Grendel

Though the original Grendel died long ago, the following traits are provided for Storytellers who wish to resurrect the monster and as an example of a troll of intermediate power. This troll could be the offspring of a jarnvidjur and a Scion or other divinely empowered father, accounting for its anomalous trophy. Note that the following traits depict Grendel when he faced Beowulf centuries ago. If he somehow survived his fate, he would have become much more powerful in the interim.

Attributes: Strength 7, Dexterity 4, Stamina 7; Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 4; Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3
Virtues: Ambition 2, Malice 5, Rapacity 4, Zealotry 4
Abilities: Athletics 5, Awareness 4, Brawl 5, Fortitude 5, Integrity 2, Melee 3, Presence 2, Stealth 4, Survival 5, Thrown 4
Supernatural Powers:
Boons: Battle Cry, Night Eyes, Water Breathing, Warrior Ideal (Berserk Beast), Safely Interred, Shadow Refuge, Shaping
Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 3 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero**), Epic Dexterity 3 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero**), Epic Stamina 3 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero**), Epic Appearance 2 (Dreadful Mien, Lasting Impression, Serpent's Gaze), Epic Wits 1 (Cobra Reflexes, Opening Gambit)
Monstrous: Grendel's skin provides an additional +1A/4L/4B soak, and his inhuman nature and size gives him three additional -0 health levels.
Join Battle: 7
Attacks:
Clinch: Accuracy 9, Damage 7L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P
Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 8, Damage 11L, Parry DV 10, Speed 5
Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 10, Damage 7L, Parry DV 11, Speed 4
Soak: 4A/12L/15B (Monstrous hide, +1A/4L/4B)
Health Levels: -0x10/Incap
Dodge DV: 11 **Willpower:** 9
Legend: 4 **Legend Points:** 16
Trophy: The sight of Grendel's corpse enables all those who see it to recover one extra Willpower point per day, just from knowing that the monster is *dead*. For this effect to occur, the body part must be displayed prominently so all can see it. The corpse takes a week to disintegrate into a mass of swamp-muck and tree roots.
Other Notes: None

The Erl King

Some people call the Erl King the King of the Trolls, although trolls have no true monarchy and he does not claim such a title himself. Erl King is not his name, either, though it is the title he *does* claim. He keeps his name a secret, lest it be used against him.

For centuries, the Erl King has stalked the shadows of the Dark Forest. His true parentage is as obscure as his name, but the wise among alfar, Gods and dwarves believe his mother was Angrboda and his father was a forest deity or perhaps one of the mightiest of the alfar. He is himself a lesser immortal and godling of the forest, though his twisted heritage bars him from true divinity.

The Erl King obsessively needs children. He kidnaps them, holds them hostage and otherwise menaces those who have not yet reached adulthood. In olden times, he sometimes helped mortals in exchange for the offering of a child. While the Erl King takes amusement from seeing desperate or greedy mortals sacrifice their young, he has another reason for his obsession. The Erl King feeds on children: not just physically, but spiritually. He destroys and devours their hopes and dreams, their memories and fears, until nothing remains but an empty, soulless husk that the Erl King either consumes in turn or releases to wander away. These children usually die of exposure in the forest, but sometimes mortals find them. Nowadays, these children languish in institutions where the doctors cannot diagnose their true ailment. A tale of the alfar says that slaying the Erl King would release all the souls he has taken. Obviously, no one has managed to test this theory.

Although the Erl King sometimes conceals himself through illusion, his true form is huge, hulking and unmistakably trollish. Even shambling along, stooped over nearly double in his usual gait, he stands seven feet tall. Moss, lichens and other plant growth sprout on his greenish flesh, while his stringy brown hair resembles roots. If he stands very still, only his red eyes give any hint that he is not an oddly shaped tree stump. The Erl King typically moves with slow deliberation, though he can dash with unexpected speed if he chooses.

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 3, Stamina 8; Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 5; Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Virtues: Ambition 3, Malice 4, Rapacity 4, Zealotry 2

Abilities: Animal Ken 4, Athletics 1, Awareness 2, Brawl 3, Command 4, Control (Troll-Horse) 2, Craft 3, Fortitude 5, Integrity 4, Melee 5, Survival 5, Thrown 2

Birthrights: Relic 5 (Erl King's Axe—Earth, Fertility)

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Accelerate Growth, Bless or Blight, Cleanse, Earth Armor, Earth Travel, Earth Body, Echo Sounding, Fool's Gold, Green Thumb, Loaned Identity, Natural Camouflage, Safely Interred, Shaping, Stolen Face, The Subtle Knife, Twist Plants

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 5 (Crushing Grip, Divine Wrath, Holy Rampage, Mighty Heave, Shock Wave, Uplifting Might), Epic Dexterity 2 (Escape Artist, Monkey Climber, Spider Climber), Epic Stamina 6 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero**, Devourer, Divine Damage Conversion, Regeneration), Epic Appearance 2 (Serpent's Gaze, Dreadful Mien, Lasting Impression), Epic Perception 1 (Predatory Focus)

Join Battle: 6

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 6, Damage 7L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 5, Damage 10L, Parry DV 4, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 7, Damage 7L, Parry DV 6, Speed 4

Axe: Accuracy 10, Damage 15L, Parry DV 6, Speed 5

Soak: 6A/20L/24B

Health Levels: -0x22/Incap

Dodge DV: 8 **Willpower:** 8

Legend: 7 **Legend Points:** 49

Trophy: The trophies of the Erl King are his heart and his axe. His heart is a green crystal that glows with an eerie light. It holds the Erl King's pool of Legend points, and a Scion could draw upon whatever Legend points remain as well... but not replenish them. This crystal also contains the souls of the Erl King's young victims, however, and using up the Legend points destroys the remaining souls. After the Erl King's death, shattering the crystal (equal to a safety window; see **Scion: Hero**, p. 201) frees the remaining souls to seek their bodies, if those bodies yet live. The broken heart becomes useless as a Legend battery.

Treat the Erl King's axe as a skeggox with +1 Accuracy and +2 Damage above the template (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 202). It also allows a Scion to use the Earth and Fertility Purviews.



The Erl King uses no relic for his Illusion Boons. Like a God, however, he does not actually need a relic to employ his Boons. He merely suffers a reduction in his effective Legend when he does so.

Other Notes: None



Lesser Trolls (Followers •••• to •••••)

Trolls come in a variety of shapes and sizes. Some approach giants in size and power, while others seem to be monstrous animals. The following traits reflect a typical human-sized male child of a jarnvidjur. Whatever their form, trolls seem to be made of rough stone or covered in moss, bark or thick scales. Their Epic Appearance is always negative. Trolls grow larger as they gain Legend. According to one story, a hill in Oslo, Norway, is actually a troll that turned to stone. This story is, in fact, true. A dead troll always turns into a boulder, tree stump or mound of earth.

Lesser trolls also result when a giant feeds eitr to a dwarf. Over the course of an hour, the giant's blood warps the dwarf into a gnarled creature. Transformed dwarves gain Strength and Stamina just like a human turned into a thrall, while losing a dot of Intelligence and the ability to craft Birthrights. Sunlight can still turn them to stone. Such trolls stay loyal to the giant that created them. After that giant's death, they become independent monsters.

The Jotunblut Boon called Eitr Antivenin (see **Scion: God**, p. 108) can reverse this transformation if the God uses it before the troll increases its Legend. After that, no power in the Nine Worlds can change a troll back into a dwarf. Other Jotunblut Boons have no effect on dwarves.

Even lesser trolls vary somewhat in their powers. In addition to the listed, standard Boons, every lesser troll has a one-dot Boon from an additional Purview. For onetime dwarfs, this most likely comes from a Purview associated with the giant that transformed them: Fire Immunity for a troll created by a fire giant; Frost Immunity for a frost giant's thrall. With time and greater Legend, trolls can develop additional Boons. Common choices include Animal, Darkness, Fertility, Illusion and War. Trolls need no Birthrights to use their Boons.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 2, Stamina 5; Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2; Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Virtues: Ambition 2, Malice 4, Rapacity 3, Zealotry 3

Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Brawl 4, Fortitude 2, Melee 2, Survival 2, Thrown 2

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Echo Sounding, Night Eyes, Safely Interred

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 2 (Crushing Grip, Divine Wrath, Holy Bound), Epic Dexterity 1 (Monkey Climber), Epic Stamina 2 (Damage Conversion, Inner Furnace, Self-Healing)

Monstrous: A troll's skin provides an additional +1A/2L/2B soak, while his inhuman nature gives him an additional -0 health level.

Join Battle: 4

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 6, Damage 6L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 5, Damage 9L, Parry DV 3, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 7, Damage 6L, Parry DV 5, Speed 4

Soak: 3A/7L/9B (Monstrous hide, +1A/2L/2B)

Health Levels: -0x6/-4/Incap
Dodge DV: 5 **Willpower:** 7
Legend: 3 **Legend Points:** 9
Trophy: Most commonly, one body part of a slain troll remains barely recognizable as having once come from a living creature: a crystal heart, a pebble-like eye, a jagged fang or the like. This remainder acts as a relic that allows use of a single Purview. Naturally, this is the Purview of one of the troll's intrinsic Boons.
Other Notes: None

Corrupted Scions

While most Scions serve the cause of the Gods and fight against the Titans, not all of them are so inclined. Some Scions of the Aesir have fallen to madness and despair and allied themselves with the forces of Muspelheim and Jotunheim.

Amleth, Crazed Scion of Vidar

Amleth was once a beloved and contented prince of Denmark before the death of the man he thought was his father shattered his worldview. With King Horvendil's death, Amleth's uncle Feng took the throne. The young prince had a vision of a man who claimed to be his true father, the Norse God Vidar. The God told Amleth that he must avenge Horvendil's death to prove himself worthy of joining Vidar in battling the forces of the Titans. This revelation unbalanced the already vulnerable Prince Amleth. He did indeed avenge the king's death, killing his usurping uncle and many others whom he suspected of involvement in the plot (or who simply got in his way), but these acts only reinforced his madness. Some stories say Amleth ruled as a great king, while one particularly popular version claims he died as well.

In truth, Amleth neither died nor ascended to the throne. Nor did he join his divine father Vidar as the God intended. Instead Amleth simply slipped away and vanished from a kingdom drenched in blood, alone with his own madness. The forces of the Titans eventually found him. An agent appeared in the form of King Horvendil's ghost. In this guise, the "king" told Amleth his shade still could not rest because the true architects of his demise were never brought to justice. Amleth beseeched the shade to tell him the identity of the murderers so he could punish them. With feigned reluctance, the ghost revealed that the Gods themselves had plotted his death and weakly beseeched Amleth to not pursue such powerful foes. This humble plea had the exact effect the Titans hoped: The dutiful, deranged prince swore to bring down the Aesir themselves to give his father the rest he desired.

Since that time, Amleth has served as a cunning and powerful, if unhinged, servant of the Titans. His father's fake ghost still haunts and directs him, constructing reasons why a particular action will help avenge his murder. Amleth sometimes despairs at this seemingly endless quest for vengeance, but he will not stop as long as he believes his beloved father cannot rest. Those times when Amleth feels the need to travel in mortal guise, he often plays the role of an actor in a stage company.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 6, Stamina 5; Charisma 6, Manipulation 7, Appearance 4; Perception 5, Intelligence 5, Wits 6
Virtues: Courage 4, Endurance 4, Expression 5, Loyalty 5
Abilities: Academics 5, Art (Elocution) 5, Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Brawl 3, Command 2, Control (Horse) 3, Empathy 4, Fortitude 3, Integrity 2, Investigation 3, Larceny 2, Marksmanship 3, Medicine 2, Melee 5, Politics 3, Presence 4, Science (Poisons) 2, Stealth 3
Birthrights: Relic 5 (Spatha—Justice), Guide 5 (Father's Ghost), Followers 3 (Acting Troupe/Agents)

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Bestial Endowment, Dream Wrack, Guilt Apparitions, Heroic Endowment, Human Endowment, Judgment, Psychic Prison, Scarlet Letter, Shield of Righteousness, Sympathy Pains

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 4 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero**), Epic Dexterity 5 (Cat's Grace, Escape Artist, Lightning Sprinter, Untouchable Opponent, Whirlwind Shield), Epic Stamina 4 (Damage Conversion, Holy Fortitude, Regeneration, Self-Healing, Solipsistic Well-Being), Epic Charisma 4 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero**, Crowd Control, Preach On), Epic Manipulation 7 (all Knacks), Epic Appearance 2 (Serpent's Gaze, My Eyes Are Up Here, Detail Variation), Epic Intelligence 2 (Fast Learner, Fight With Your Head, Know-It-All)

Join Battle: 9

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 9, Damage 6L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 8, Damage 9B, Parry DV 15, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 10, Damage 6B, Parry DV 16, Speed 4

Spatha: Accuracy 14, Damage 11L, Parry DV 17, Speed 4

Soak: 4A/10L/12B

Health Levels: -0x13/Incap

Dodge DV: 20 **Willpower:** 10

Legend: 8 **Legend Points:** 64

Other Notes: The identity of Amleth's "ghost" is left up to individual Storytellers to decide. It might be Loki, Utgard-Loki or another such trickster from Norse lore. It might be a God from a rival pantheon seeking to weaken the Aesir. It could even simply be a servant of one of the Titans with no grand scheme beyond turning Amleth against his divine relatives. Prince Amleth receives traits suitable for a powerful demigod, though you could easily make him weaker or more powerful as needed to provide a suitable opponent for your players' Scions.

Amleth's spatha, with which he killed his uncle Feng, allows use of the Justice Purview. It also has +2 Accuracy and +2 Damage above the template (see p. 202 of **Scion: Hero**).

While Amleth's supernatural abilities (particularly his Justice Boons) should allow him to judge the guilt or innocence of a person, his insanity often prevents him from accepting the truth of a situation. Storytellers must decide for themselves whether Amleth's belief in another's guilt is enough to allow his powers to work on them, as this affects both the character and setting. Allowing them to work makes Amleth a more potent foe, but preventing them from doing so suggests a sort of cosmic justice that even Gods must recognize.





THE RAGNARÖK SAGA

CHAPTER SIX

Scions cannot stand idly by while the war against the Titans rages. Norse Scions especially bear a legacy of bloody battle, courage, obligation and doom. To meet the call of destiny, the Scions must dive into the midst of the war, knowing that they might die in battle like their parents. A stout-hearted Aesir would have it no other way.

This half of **Scion: Ragnarök** presents a heroic epic for Scion characters of the Norse pantheon. "The Coming of Winter" brings starting characters together into a Band. The following two chapters build on the story arc, bringing the Scions through the demigod level and all the way to a climax with the Scions as Gods. The saga begins with the end of the mortal World, traverses the classical Norse epics and concludes with the final battle—Ragnarök!

Chapter Three presents two sample Scions, Herman Odson and Valentina Wednesday, a.k.a. Hermod and Vali. The Ragnarök story arc presumes that they form part of the Band, as characters long foretold to participate in some of the major events leading to the Doom of the Gods. They also supply two ready-made characters for players who don't have time or the inclination to write up characters of their own. The plot never demands their presence, though. Your players can run the whole saga with characters of their own. Players who want pre-generated Aesir characters also have Eric Donner and Sly Guiler, from the Scion core books (though Sly needs a bit of an ethics infusion) and Tyrone Norris from **Scion: Demigod** (though he is presented only as a hero).

This chapter and its associated demigod and God stories are for the Storyteller's eyes only. When the text refers to "you," that means the Storyteller. A players' reading too far ahead can spoil his fun. Conversely, Storytellers need not regard everything in these chapters as Holy Writ you dare not change—a concept the Norse would have found ludicrous. Twist things around to suit your own gaming group and their characters, move events to different locations, subtract incidents or add your own. The printed page is only a framework to help you and your players create your own epic.

THE COMING OF WINTER

The Norse *Eddas* say that before the Gods meet their doom, the World suffers the Great Winter, Fimbulvetr—a winter three years long. The Endless Winter comes when humanity loses all laws and morals: a wolf-age, wracked with war, murder, debauchery, rape and pillage. An age, in short, when the Dark Virtues of the Titans become ascendant.

In "The Coming of Winter," the Scions see the start of this terrifying age. They cannot stop the cataclysm that sets civilization crumbling—no one can—but they learn that they might make a difference later on. The Doom of the Gods is fated: The Doom of the World is not.

SYNOPSIS

In brief, "The Coming of Winter" lays the groundwork for the final battle of the Gods and the powers of chaos and destruction, as told in the Norse *Eddas*. The Scions meet under the auspices of Hugin and Munin, sent by Odin to gather them into a Band and prod them into action. After rescuing a pair of unlikely allies, the Band learns that Ragnarök is coming and the Gods need the heroes ready for the end. The heroes confront dangerous enemies to bolster their own Legends and acquire the tools and allies that might prevent the Titans from destroying everything.

In order to determine how best to prepare for the literal Endless Winter and the destruction of human society, the Band consults an ancient seeress but finds its exit beset by the onset of Fimbulvetr, as well as the associated devastation and the slim possibility of escaping via Yggdrasil. In the end, the Scions triumph over giants and trolls, acquire important relics and guides, and discover that they have a key role to play in the upcoming battle for Asgard and the other realms beyond Bifröst.



STORYTELLER'S TOOLBOX: THE WORLD OF MIDGARD

Unlike the World presented in **Scion: Hero**, the cosmology of "The Coming of Winter" omits all realms that have no connection to Norse myth. It is assumed that no Gods exist except the Aesir, that the Overworld consists only of Asgard, Vanaheim and Alfheim, plus realms of the Titans and whatever Touchstones you decide to include. Its terrae incognitae are those of Norse myth as well: Jotunheim, Nidavellir and Svartalfheim. Only the Titan avatars connected to Norse myth—Surtr, Jord, Tuisco and Rán—threaten the Gods. As token of this Norse-exclusive assumption, the World is referred to as Midgard, the middle-earth of Norse cosmology.

You don't *have* to follow this assumption. If you like, you can run the Ragnarök saga in the baseline **Scion** setting, with all the pantheons. It's just that everything and everyone important to the story comes from Norse mythology, so any Scions of the Amatsukami, Atzlánti, Dodekatheon, Loa and Pesedjet might feel a bit awkward and left out. If you want to turn Ragnarök into a mythological mash-up that brings in other pantheons, Titans and creatures of Legend, you'll need to do a bit of work adapting the published material to make room for these other players. More power to you!

GONE A-VIKING

"The Coming of Winter" further assumes that events take place in North America, particularly the United States. Most customers for **Scion: Ragnarök** are American, or at least North American, and that's the region they know best. If you'd prefer to use Scandinavia—real Aesir country—other parts of Europe or places farther afield, you can do so. You simply have to find places that somewhat resemble the locations in the story, if only thematically.

THE DOOM OF THE AESIR

Each scene begins with a short prophecy. Since the concepts of prophecy and doom are so important to the Norse, these sections supply brief ideas on what the Scions might learn if they use the Prophecy Purview for insight. Yet characters who rely on Prophecy like their parents among the Aesir will discover that its threads tend to tie them into specific, fated roles.

Obviously, you don't *have* to doom anyone with Prophecy if you don't want to. We're simply saving you the work of inventing prophecies yourself. The given prophecies also suggest ways you can shake up the players a little and make them wonder about their characters' eventual end—and whether they will be among the chosen few who survive Ragnarök. The key notion is that using Prophecy gives an advantage in the here-and-now, but the user must pay a price down the road as her options narrow and diminish.

Remember that any given Scion can use the Mystery and Prophecy Purviews only once per story, so it's a big deal when the players decide to call on such powers. Deliver those prophecies with a side order of ham!

GOING OUT WITH A BANG

You'll notice, once you reach Act Three of "The Coming of Winter," that events spiral into the territory of high-action movies and marginally ludicrous devastation. By the end of the chapter, Midgard is in ruins, humanity struggles to survive, and the Scions have their hands full preparing for the death of everyone they know.

This is an *opportunity*. Don't worry about pulling any punches or leaving pieces of the World intact. The policy followed by Gods and titanspawn alike of hiding their Legend to avoid Fatebinding no longer matters very much. The Scions can inflict widespread devastation on their surroundings. They can reveal their true natures in public and change the course of nations. Once "The Coming of Winter" concludes, Midgard is no longer anything like we recognize anyway, so don't fret if the Scions' actions lead to revealing the existence of the supernatural or steering your game away from the contemporary world. That's intentional. The Scions are about to participate in the greatest supernatural war *ever*, and nothing can stay the same.

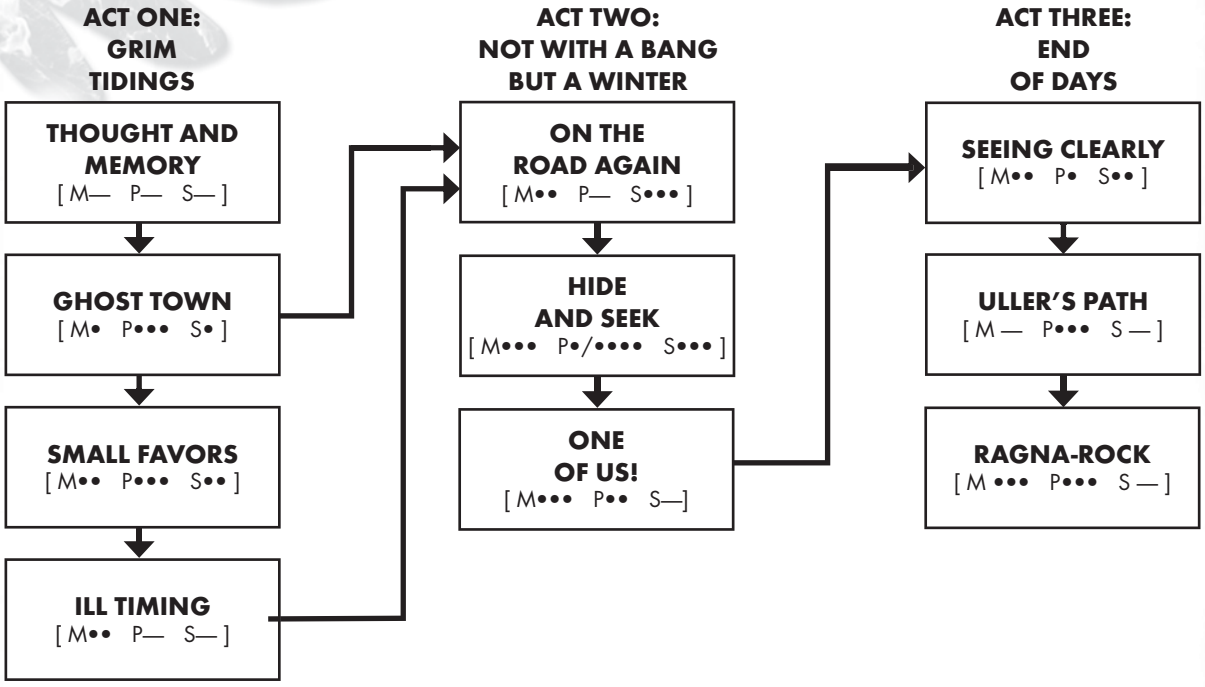
If you decide that you don't want the World wrecked in a literal three years of winter followed by total devastation, you need to make a few tweaks to this story. Your Fimbulvetr can become symbolic rather than literal. Instead of an actual, physical winter blanketing the planet, the Dark Virtues gain an ever-stronger grip on humanity, leading Midgard closer to self-destruction.

THEMATIC ADVERSARIES

If you decide to change up the scenes in these stories or add your own side events, keep in mind the themes that most enemies fulfill. Trolls and gnomes are nasty little brutes and suitable mooks for a straight-up fight, but they're not great as tricksters. Giants can be dull-witted brutes, but the great giant kings who fight the Aesir in Ragnarök are mighty sorcerers and tricksters. Scions need their wits as well as (or instead of) combat prowess to defeat them. Dwarves make reluctant allies, too easily turned by the lure of gold, so characters need a touch of diplomacy to keep them on board. Svartalfar are majestic and cunning, difficult to track down and face, deadly in grace and beauty. Wolves and serpents are beasts, but the titanspawn versions are often brutal and cunning, using their predatory tactics to harry the prey into a trap. With enough appropriate encounters, players will start to recognize the style of each foe—and the opportunities they provide for different kinds of heroism, from raw combat prowess to trickster cunning.

THE COMING OF WINTER

Scenes 10 [Mental •• Physical •• Social •] XP Level 0–34



ACT ONE
GRIM TIDINGS

The first thing to do in any **Scion** story is to bring the heroes together. Your group might have an existing Band, or you might have just decided to make some new Aesir heroes. Either way, the Band needs some direction to help start its heroic journey.

With the escape of the Titans, the Gods suspect that the end of Midgard and Asgard can't be far behind and the Aesir themselves must play out their specific fates. Of course, no one really *wants* to die, and the right steps might yet avert disaster. Enter the heroes. Since the Scions have not yet acquired weighty dooms and extensive Fatebindings, the Gods think they can nudge events to avoid the worst-case scenarios of Ragnarök. Fate must bring Ragnarök eventually, but perhaps the Band can find a way to limit the destruction or save some of the Gods from their prophecied ends.

In this, the Gods face a quandary. The Aesir need to keep their Scions in the dark a bit, as too much foretelling of the future could bind the Scions into specific roles in which they can achieve certain deeds but not others. Therefore, the Gods rely on the Scions' sense of loyalty, their filial duty and their compassion for fellow Scions (along with a taste for adventure) to drive them. Once the Scions acquire enough information to decide how they want to proceed, they're well and truly locked into the pantheon's machinations and have to see matters through. With the end of Midgard nigh, it's not like there's anywhere to hide.

Scene

THOUGHT AND MEMORY

MENTAL – PHYSICAL – SOCIAL –

Prophecy: "Twins of coal bring light to the lost; the messenger bears news dire. When seen again, they herald the northward road." This prophecy hints at Hugin and Munin's delivery of useful but dramatic information. It also establishes that the next time the Scions meet the ravens, someone will probably die (Since the Norse imagined the road to Helheim

as descending and heading to the north). The Band's enemies most likely do the dying, but such a prophecy can make the Band skittish about ever seeing the ravens again.

If the heroes have already formed a Band and work well together, Hugin and Munin simply bring news from Asgard. If the heroes are new characters, the ravens provide a means to bring the Band together. The ravens first visit any hero who has them as guides, but they eventually round up everyone.

Hugin and Munin don't deliver their message with a lot of mortals watching. They shadow the heroes for a little while, waiting for each character to be available alone. If the hero becomes overly suspicious and decides to stay in crowded areas, that's fine. The ravens simply fly off and leave her alone, only to return later when the hero is about to go to bed. They just want to talk, but they do enjoy a good laugh and a dramatic entrance. They might fly behind the hero's car, circle overhead a few times, caw from atop a power line or perform similar forbidding tricks before they finally tire of games and do their job.

Once the ravens corner the first hero, they make introductions and deliver a message and a task from the All-Father, Odin. Hugin has a slight British accent, while Munin speaks with a hint of Brooklyn.

OOPS... MY BAND ATTACKED HUGIN AND MUNIN!

If the players don't know better, their characters might actually attack Hugin and Munin. The ravens, however, are more than capable of evading any attack a hero can dish out. They back off a few hours and return later when the Scions are unprepared—maybe somehow waiting in the living room just after a Scion visits the bathroom or hanging out on the back seat of the car after the Scion picks up some groceries. The ravens will not be deterred, and the longer the Scions make them wait, the more acerbically they phrase their messages.

FIRST-TIME HEROES

If the heroes are new characters, meeting Hugin and Munin can serve as a Visitation. They provide the necessary information about Scions, ichor, the war against the Titans, the grave situation in Asgard and the suspicion that Ragnarök is coming. Hugin speculates that the Gods need all the help they can get and want to prepare their children for the upcoming war. Munin chimes in from time to time with bits of historical information or recitations from the *Eddas*. Both of the ravens enjoy answering questions, but their actual knowledge is limited to the prophecies recorded in the *Poetic Edda* and *Prose Edda*. They stress that, as free agents, the Scions might somehow avert those prophecies. Yet, in typical fashion, Odin has not entrusted all of the particulars of his long-range plan to the help. Nevertheless, the ravens remain cheerful, albeit with a sense of gallows humor. They wryly point out that, if Ragnarök does arrive, at least they'll have a chance to feast on eyeballs before Surtr burns the Nine Worlds out from under them.

Since Hugin and Munin can't exactly carry around relics, they note that the Gods need other messengers for this service. The ravens then give each hero a time and place for this very special delivery. Naturally, this is the same time and place for them all, so the Scions get to meet each other. You should pick a location that seems appropriate. It could be anything from a Scion's home to a Scandinavian gift shop. When the Scions finish their introductions, a package delivery truck pulls up and the delivery guy gives them a set of boxes that hold all the various relics for the heroes. The delivery guy is just a delivery guy who's had a very small brush with Fate and the Gods... which means the Band might see him again, once more caught up in events beyond his comprehension. (That's up to individual Storytellers.)

QUESTING FOR RELICS

If the idea of delivering relics into the laps of the heroes by fiat (and two-day ground) offends your Norse battle-hardened sensibilities, you can give each character a little subplot that lets him work for his relics. After all, a bit of action is a good way to start a story. In this case, the delivery guy hands over a small box with a notepad describing where each hero can find his relics. This method also gives players a chance to test out the combat system before they dive into the cycle proper.

Note that if the heroes have to hunt down and claim their relics, any character built to rely mostly on Purviews has a harder time than characters who focus on Epic Attributes. You might want to give Purview-centered heroes one of their relics up front and have them recover the rest in a separate scene.

...AND HERE'S THE LATEST

Once the various Scions are together and given their relics or other Birthrights, Hugin spells out the particulars of the latest news. Odin and Frigg have consulted their various tools of wisdom and prophecy and concluded that the escape of the Titans portends the Doom of Midgard and the Overworld realms. In order to avert the catastrophes of Fate, the Gods need the heroes to claim the Heart of Winter—a powerful relic gemstone that can be used for all kinds of dastardly weather control—and keep it out of the hands of the giants. Sounds simple enough.

The ravens even give the heroes a location: the abandoned town of Bodie. There, they'll find the Heart of Winter waiting underground. Sure, they might have to do a little digging, but it's a magical artifact of some power.

It'll turn up, especially when creatures of Legend, such as Scions, arrive on the scene.

Once the ravens deliver their message, they settle in to see if the heroes have any other questions. They'll answer questions about the Gods in brief. (They don't want to offend anyone with an ill-chosen remark.) They can also provide clarification on how to use Purviews, the need for relics and the nature of various guides and followers. The ravens point out that the heroes need practice of their own. Scions learn by doing, not by attending lecture sessions. Nevertheless, the ravens like to hear themselves talk, and they're more than happy to while away the hours in idle conversation. Hugin tends to speculate on tangents and unlikely possibilities, while Munin often diverges into anecdotes. The heroes might need to bring the ravens back on track now and then.

Once the Band has its relics and finishes pumping the ravens for information, the characters can get on their way. Time to head to the ghost town of Bodie, in northeastern California. How the heroes get there is up to them. If all else fails, they can at least scrape together enough money for a bus ticket to Lee Vining, the nearest California town by Bodie.

Scene

GHOST TOWN

MENTAL • PHYSICAL ••• SOCIAL •

Prophecy: "In places deep lurk creatures dark, but light may be the foe of your friends." This prophecy hints that the characters need to head down into the mines of Bodie. It also suggests the possibility of alliance with the dwarves.

Titanspawn tend to congregate in places far from mortal eyes. So it is that Bodie, a collapsed village in a state of arrested decay, becomes home to a giant and a pack of trolls. Since the old mines themselves are off-limits to tourists, and even the rangers don't go down there anymore, it's all too easy for titanspawn to pursue their plans without mortals noticing.

HOW THE WEST WAS ONCE

Bodie is a historical site in eastern California, near the border of Nevada. It's situated on a high plateau, about 15 miles from Lake Mono and the small town of Lee Vining and a few hours' drive from Yosemite National Park. The town mostly consists of crumbling wooden buildings and shacks, some one-room homes of corrugated tin and a few large buildings from the mining concerns that dominated Bodie in its later years. After a series of fires devastated the area and the mines played out, the town was abandoned. The rail line to Bodie was torn up for scrap in 1917. By 1932, most of Bodie was empty. Even though there's a museum-cum-gift shop and ranger in residence, the site is closed for most of the winter months. The road into town isn't plowed for snow, and Bodie suffers fierce, sudden snowstorms.

Reaching Bodie probably involves a lengthy drive along State Route 270 for the Band. Several miles of the road leading to the town are unpaved dirt. Wealthy and influential travelers might be able to commission a private helicopter to fly into Bodie, most likely from the town of Bishop, some distance down Highway 395.

Regardless of how they arrive, once the Scions make it to Bodie, they see crumbling shacks, ruined buildings and rusting old mining equipment left out in the weather. Cold wind whips at their clothes. No sightseers have come to Bodie on the same day as the Scions. If the Scions drive up the regular front entrance, they find a small ranger's security post, where the ranger normally charges a nominal fee for parking and offers a color map of the town. The ranger's out as well. Nothing more than a sawhorse blocks the road. The Band can easily move the sawhorse to one side and take a map from the stack on the post (held in place by a fist-sized rock), then hike into Bodie. The only other vehicle in the place is a beaten-up Yamaha motorcycle in the dirt parking

HOW THE WEST WASN'T

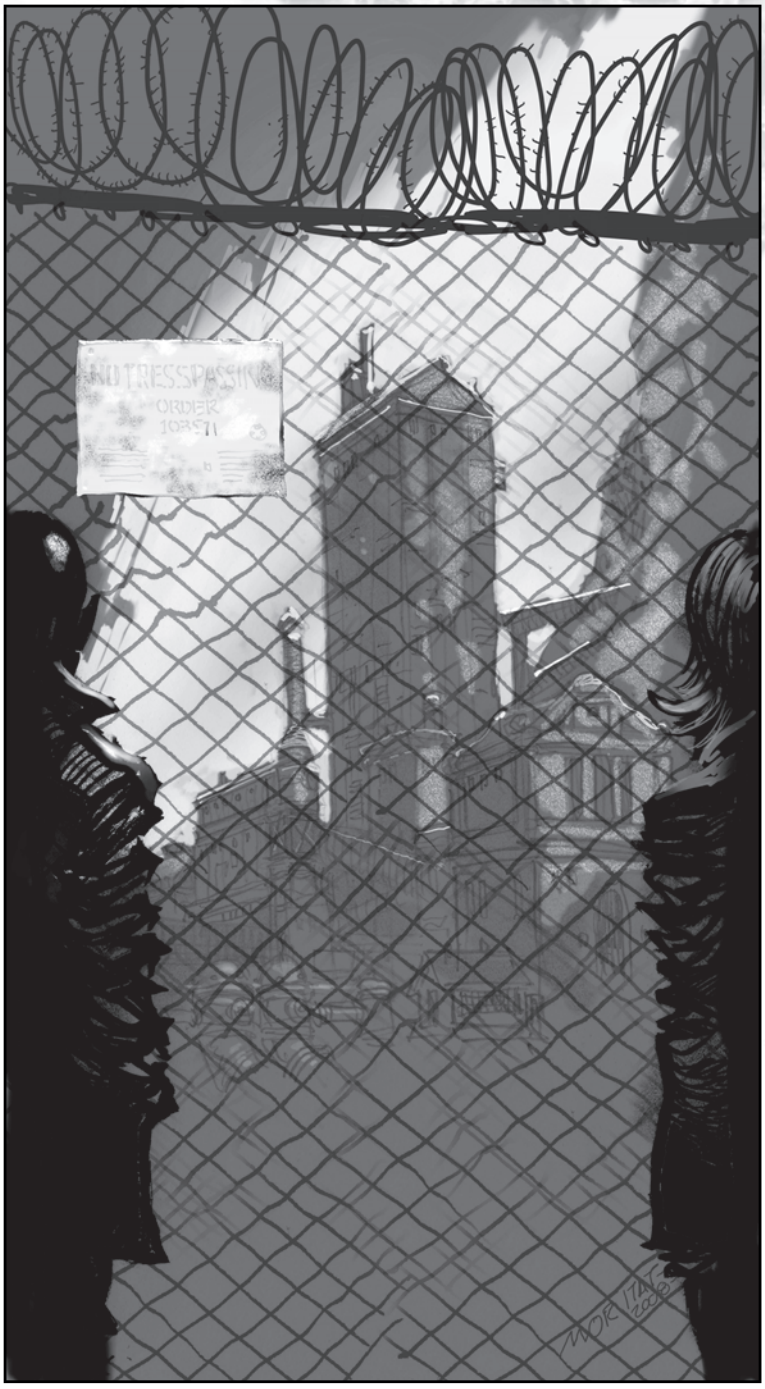
You don't have to use Bodie if you don't want to. You can easily place this scene in another location, such as Deadwood, ND or even a Scandinavian mining town such as Røros. The key elements to retain are:

- **Off the Beaten Path.** Giants and trolls *probably* aren't hanging around in normal folks' basements. Yet.
- **Descent to the Underworld.** The descent to the Underworld is an important symbolic element in the hero's journey, so traveling underground is a good opener to the Band's new legend. Plus, it's not like the trolls do their mining up in a skyscraper.
- **Abandoned.** Since Bodie is abandoned, there's nobody to ask questions, no problem with destroying the scenery, no consequences for chewing up some monsters and leaving bodies behind. This first fight is a consequence-free battle for the Band.

lot, with a light dusting of frost on its metal parts. (Scions who have the means to look up its registration and plate numbers find that it belongs to one Cybil Haldana, registered as living in Los Angeles.)

The streets of Bodie are silent and empty. Some of the buildings have power lines, which lead off to the east into a power substation—a reminder that the place was inhabited as recently as the early 20th century. An abandoned church still stands, with a wire mesh screen over its large front door. Many of the buildings are on raised platforms, and a dry creek bed cuts through the middle of town. No one responds to any calls from the characters.

The ranger's post has the only phone in town. Bodie has no cell service.



WHERE OH WHERE CAN MY TITANSPAWN BE?

After the Band has a chance to take in the creepy atmosphere of Bodie, the characters need to find the Heart of Winter mentioned by Hugin and Munin. If the Band tries to look for tracks, a successful (Intelligence + Survival) roll reveals many, many tracks, several days old, all around the town. With three successes, a character finds a path with signs of booted feet moving in a line that leads over the dry creek bed toward the old Standard Mining Company building. A quick look at the map of Bodie shows that, in addition to the several small houses and the few larger buildings, there's a tremendous mining concern building built into the hillside east of town. This building is the old Standard Mining Co. facility, which still has abandoned tunnels underneath it. This whole area is off-limits to the public, so it should stick out as a likely possibility right away.

Getting into the Standard Mining Co. building isn't hard at all. Nothing blocks the Scions except a fence with barbed wire on top and a large padlock at a gate. These would barely challenge mortals. The barbed wire makes climbing the fence a little tricky, requiring a (Dexterity + Athletics) roll at difficulty 2. On a botch, the Scion becomes embarrassingly tangled in the barbed wire, which deals a level of lethal damage (although soak applies as usual). Picking the lock calls for (Dexterity + Larceny) rolls at difficulty 2. Scions with Epic Strength—or some wire cutters—might just cut a hole in the fence or tear down the gate.

The door of the Standard Mining Co. building offers another small challenge, in that it's padlocked from the inside (which conveniently confirms the location's importance). Scions have many options to get inside. A (Strength + Athletics) total of 10 enables a Scion to rip out the whole door or smash her way through the aging concrete wall. No one hears them, though the players don't need to know that.

IN THE UNDERGROUND

Once the Scions break into the building, a quick examination shows that it is still abandoned but dirty footprints lead straight to the mine elevator. Normally, the elevator wouldn't be operational, but someone has installed a large, shiny new hand-winch that can be cranked to raise or lower the lift. The elevator is a large affair made of rusted metal, very noisy and very dirty. Cautious Scions might check it for traps or decide to remove the elevator or lower it and then find an alternative way down the mineshaft. That's fine. They'll run into the inhabitants soon enough.

Once the Scions reach the bottom of the mine elevator shaft—a drop of just 25 feet—they quickly realize (if they didn't already) that they have no map and no sense of where to head. It's dark, too, so unless the Scions brought flashlights, or they all have the Night Eyes Boon, they cannot see where to go.

The mines comprise a series of twisting tunnels of varying widths, shored up with old, bent timbers and occasionally reinforced with riveted bands of iron. Here and there, a mud puddle gathers under dripping water. A map isn't strictly necessary. Given just a few minutes of exploration, the Band comes across one of the old mining assembly rooms, where miners would gather if a supervisor needed to make an announcement in the middle of a shift. The room is 20 feet across and roughly hewn out of the stone. A row of short wooden cots lines one side of the room. Next to them, a door labeled "Foreman" leads to a side office. Just leaving the foreman's office are three trolls, all carrying picks and buckets. Right behind them looms a single frost giant. None of them look very pleased at the Band's arrival.

FIGHTING IN THE MINES

The frost giant immediately bellows out the order to attack. He seems to have a preconceived notion of why the Band is here, and he doesn't wait for the Scions to announce their attentions. The Band must fight off the trolls and the giant as well. Time for the players to roll Join Battle!

The room is large enough and the ceiling is high enough that no one lacks space to fight. The frost giant wears a mining hat with a light on it, so he can see the Band and they can see him without difficulty.

The giant, Robrek Forson, is a garden-variety frost giant (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 316). His traits differ from those of the Generic Giant template (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 314) only in that he has an Intelligence of 2 (making him moderately bright as giants go). See pp. 130-131 for the traits of the three generic trolls.

Depending upon the characters' mood, the Band might simply kill the giant or try to capture him. The giant resists their attempts to interrogate him, but a little bit of Epic Charisma and Epic Manipulation—such as Takes One to Know One and Overt Order—can quickly solve that problem. The giant can tell the following:

- His name is Robrek Forson. His older brother, Gunnar Forson, sent him to the mines with three other giants.
- Gunnar resides in Colorado Springs, as the head of Fornjót Power Associates, a corporation that makes energy drinks. Gunnar is very rich but doesn't share his money nearly as much as Robrek thinks he should.
- The giants came to seek the Heart of Winter, an icy stone that holds power over cold and frost.
- Robrek has already found the Heart of Winter; in fact, he shipped it to Gunnar just three days ago. He's still here because he plans to turn his last captive dwarf, Ola Kolfaxi, into a troll servant before he decides how he wants to dispose of the nosy Scion Cybil Haldana.
- The other giants left once Gunnar paid them. Robrek doesn't know where they went.
- Robrek has trolls working for him because it's easier to have someone else do the digging.
- The players' Band isn't the first group to show up. A Scion woman came by a week ago and tried to charm him into spilling his plans. She also talked him out of turning one of his dwarf captives into a troll. She decided to stick around and wait for his trolls to find the Heart so that she could take it. When Gunnar phoned Robrek to check on his progress, though, he quickly tumbled to the Scion's plan. Robrek then knocked her out, gagged and bound her so she couldn't use any more Jedi mind tricks on him. (Yes, Robrek uses exactly that phrase.)

If the Scions just kill Robrek, they won't get this information, but they can piece together the necessary bits from evidence and from Robrek's captives.

TO THE RESCUE!

Inside the foreman's office, Robrek has a pair of captives tied up and piled on a bed. One is a dwarf; the other is human—in fact, a Scion. Both are women, both are gagged, and both look mad as hell. Once the Band shows up, they seem relieved. The dwarf, Ola, is quick to thank the characters. The first thing out of Cybil's mouth when the gag is removed is, "Got anything to eat? I'm famished."

Once the two are released from their bonds, they ask the characters' names and quickly request aid in getting out of Bodie. Ola explains that she was one of a group of dwarves whom Robrek and a few other giants kidnapped from their home. She watched Robrek turn her friends into trolls, and she dreaded the same fate. Cybil explains that she's a Scion like the Band members, and she came here trying to rescue her dwarven friends. She was too late to save the others, but her fast-talking convinced Robrek that Ola was pregnant and that turning her into a troll in that condition would have unpredictable (and very terrible) results. When she later found that Robrek sought something called the Heart of Winter, she figured she'd better try to obtain that too. Cybil doesn't know what the Heart of Winter does, but she knows that it matters a great deal—maybe more than anything else in Midgard.

If asked about her heritage, Cybil says she is a Scion of Loki—a fact that helped her ingratiate herself with Robrek. She knows that this must inspire some initial suspicion, but she doesn't lie about anything to the group. As far as anyone can tell, she's earnest and ready to help. Ola also vouches for Cybil and says she has helped her community a few times. Ola knows that Robrek actually found the Heart of Winter just a few days ago and shipped it off to some place called Fornjót Power Associates. Neither Ola nor Cybil knows what that place is.

Once the Scions finish introductions, Ola reminds them that she must wait until nightfall to leave—otherwise, the sun's rays will turn her to stone. She asks the Band to return her to her home in Bixby Knoll, a dwarf town in Long Beach. In return, she says, her grateful community will help the Band with useful items and information.

The Band can choose simply to cut the pair loose to fend for themselves, then head straight to Fornjót Power Associates. It's easy to look up the company on the Internet and find its

headquarters. In the characters do so, skip straight to Act Two, though their haste leaves them under-prepared for the battles ahead. Their loss. If they decide to bring Cybil and Ola along and return Ola to her home in Long Beach, they receive the gratitude of the dwarves and have a chance to get to know this other Scion and how she might help.

OOPS... MY BAND KILLED THE PRISONERS!

Suspicious or bloodthirsty characters might kill Ola and Cybil despite their being obvious captives. Paranoid groups might suspect some sort of trap. The characters might kill Cybil as soon as she mentions Loki, just to avoid problems down the road.

If this happens, you can set the players on the right track by having Ola's wallet include a business card with her residence. The characters can then go to Bixby Knoll and continue dealing with the dwarves. They start with a +3 difficulty penalty for all social rolls in that scene, though (and they have some quick explaining to do when they meet Ola's husband).

If Cybil's out of the picture, Loki sends a few operatives to shadow the characters, to give them some paranoid moments and to burn a home or car or two, just to make his displeasure known. The characters will doubtless prevail in any scuffle with Loki's followers, but then they'll learn that they've made an enemy of that God. Oops indeed!

CYBIL'S PROPHECY

Even if the battle against Robrek did not Fatebind Cybil to any of the Scions, she knows enough about Fate to recognize that being rescued by a Band of Scions shows some linkage of their destinies. Therefore, she retrieves a copper bowl from Robrek's office at her first opportunity and uses the Prophecy Purview. She sees written within:

"Lie-Smith's daughter Aid the Band
Heart replaced By hero's hand
Tree and mountain Twisted fates
Tithe of blood Controls the gates."

Cybil interprets the first line as a clear enough instruction: Help her rescuers however she can. The rest she can't interpret, but she tells the complete prophecy to Ola (and to the Band if anyone notices and asks about her attempt at seercraft).

A member of the Band might attempt his own prophecy to see if accompanying Cybil is a good idea. In this case, successful use of Prophecy leads to most atypical results: "Listen to Cybil's prophecy, idiot!" That's literally what it says. The reason is that a seeress and sorceress named Gróa has hacked into the Scion's reading of Fate to deliver as much aid to her daughter (i.e., Cybil) as is possible.

CYBIL HALDANA (GUIDE ••)

Cybil Haldana came to the orphanage at just one year old. The staff never could tell her anything about her parents, not even their names. The paperwork was lost. Few of the social workers were cruel, but most were distant. No one ever adopted her. She didn't even shuttle from foster home to foster home. She craved acceptance but made no close friends among the other orphans. She did very well in all her classes, though.

When Cybil was 15, she received a Visitation from Loki. He half-apologized for leaving her in the orphanage, saying that she really had been better off without a father like him. Loki also gave Cybil the standard spiel about the need for Scions in the coming war against the Titans. He played up that Cybil was special and destined for greater things than an ordinary life with an ordinary family. Loki also gave her a copper bowl he said had been her mother's. He left out the bit about Cybil actually being the child of a giantess, not a God.

Spurred on by the Trickster God, Cybil practiced her early talents on the staff and the other children at the orphanage, seeing whether she could learn to make them like her or give her other things she wanted. She could... briefly. When the bedazzlement of her Epic Attributes wore off, though, people stopped ignoring Cybil and started hating her. The orphanage's director noticed



Cybil's head-games and ripped her burgeoning self-esteem to shreds, asking if she wanted nothing better than to be a petty grifter or a hooker. Cybil had learned that she could sometimes see flashes of the future in her mother's bowl, so she sought a prophecy regarding the consequences of using her powers to take revenge on the director. She saw the future, clearer than she ever had before. She didn't take her revenge. Instead, she worked hard to graduate high school a year early, emancipate herself from the orphanage and enroll at a Voc-Tech college.

Blood (or divine adoption) tells, though, and Cybil couldn't resist taking a few shortcuts. She became a paralegal, but sometimes offers help and advice beyond her training. Her neglecting to mention that she wasn't really a lawyer sometimes got her or her clients in trouble, though, and she had to hustle and use her powers to get out again. One escapade led to her contact with Bixby Knoll, and that worked out pretty well. Until, that is, giants kidnapped some of her clients and Loki said it was *really*, *really important* she go to Bodie to get them back. Cybil found herself seriously outmatched and in mortal peril. Still, she hopes that she may yet play some great role in the struggle against the Titans.

Cybil has gray eyes and short, red hair. While she's pretty enough, she wouldn't win any beauty contests. She prefers to dress in pants suits, though she also has tough coveralls for riding her motorcycle. She tries to look and act coolly competent and professional unless some other demeanor seems more useful, and she puts on roles (using Social Chameleon) at a moment's notice to manipulate mortals. Around other Scions, her eagerness for approval becomes obvious. Scions who snub, insult or criticize Cybil send her into a moody sulk, while Scions who treat her as a valued friend and colleague find her cheerful, easy to please and a bit clingy. Cybil's combat skills are minimal, but she does whatever she can to help the Band, whether as a full member or simply as a guide.

Calling: Paralegal Prophetess in Peril

Nature: Rogue

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3; Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Virtues: Courage 1, Endurance 3, Expression 2, Loyalty 3

Abilities: Academics 3, Athletics 2, Awareness 3, Brawl 1, Control (Car) 1, Empathy 3, Integrity 2, Investigation 3, Larceny 3, Marksmanship 1, Occult 3, Politics 2, Presence 3, Stealth 2

Birthrights: Guide 3 (Gróa), Relic 3 (Rune-Struck Bowl—Magic, Mystery, Prophecy), Relic 1 (Ring—Chaos)

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Eye of the Storm, Hornet's Nest, Magic 1, Prophecy 1

Epic Attributes: Epic Charisma 1 (Charmer), Epic Manipulation (Blurt It Out, Gods' Honest), Epic Intelligence (Know-It-All), Epic Wits (Social Chameleon)

Spells: The Unlidded Eye

Join Battle:

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 4, Damage 3B, Parry DV —, Speed 6

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 3, Damage 6B, Parry DV 1, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 5, Damage 3B, Parry DV 3, Speed 4

Beretta/Glock: Accuracy 5, Damage 3L, Range 20, Clip 15, Speed 4, P

Soak: 2L/3B

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Dodge DV: 4 **Willpower:** 8

Legend: 3 **Legend Points:** 9

Other Notes: Cybil owns a copper bowl engraved with runes and abstract diagrams that allows her to use the Magic and Prophecy Purviews (Mystery, too, if she should decide to learn that Purview). A ring engraved with the rune *naudhiz* channels the Chaos Purview. Until the events of "The Coming of Winter," Cybil doesn't know she has her true mother, Gróa, as a guide. This mythic seeress would be worth Guide 5, except that Cybil has no way to contact her. Cybil receives her mother's wisdom and foresight when Gróa herself believes it is necessary and fated.

Scene

SMALL FAVORS

MENTAL •• PHYSICAL ••• SOCIAL ••

Prophecy: "Short help is better than no help at all, but tall obstacles stand in your way. Mind well the temptations that darken the hearts of small folk." This prophecy indicates that it's a good idea to listen to the dwarves, that the Band will fight additional giants and that taking the copy of Draupnir (read on) could cause problems down the road. It's up to you to decide what sorts of problems, but remember that dwarves have a tendency to fixate on gold, so if the Scions aren't cautious, this tendency could cause them some grief.

With Cybil and Ola in tow (hopefully), the characters seek out more information. They need to find out about

Fornjót Power Associates and find the Heart of Winter. Naturally, they'll suspect that Gunnar Forson has the relic in question, and they're right, but they first need to get back to civilization. While they're at it, the characters might as well take Ola back to her community in Long Beach. If they seem reluctant to do so, or if they want to go straight to Fornjót Power Associates' offices and kick down the door, Ola suggests that the dwarves in Long Beach might be able to help. While dwarves are naturally suspicious folk, the rescue of one of their own and of Cybil should count for a lot. If they play their cards right, the Scions might come away with some dwarf-crafted relics of their own to help in the upcoming struggles.

LONG ROAD TO LONG BEACH

Assuming that the characters decide to return Ola to her home, they have their work cut out for them. They have to wait until nightfall, leave the mines in Bodie, return to their vehicle, then make their way to Long Beach in southern California all by traveling at night. If they have the money, they can drive through Yosemite to San Francisco, book a flight out of Oakland or SFA and land straight in Long Beach. Driving takes about six hours of time, so they might be able to simply drive straight there. Ola doesn't have much money, but Cybil helpfully offers up the crumpled wad of bills in her pocket—up to $200—in exchange for the Band allowing her to come along and help. At the very least, this cash can cover gas and a hotel room. Cybil also picks up her motorcycle in the dirt parking lot of Bodie, only to discover that it's empty of gas and the regulator's broken—a little bit of casual sabotage by Robrek, to make sure she couldn't leave if she somehow got loose. Repairing the bike is probably not worth the time and effort, since the Band would have to drive all the way out to town, pick up parts, then come back and fix it, but if the characters want to take an extra day or two, they can do so. Cybil doesn't mind ditching the cycle. She can always get another one.

BIXBY KNOLL

The Bixby Knoll neighborhood of Long Beach is in the hillsides inland from the ocean. It's a secluded "Tinytown," a community mostly of dwarves and their immediate families. While some of the dwarves are simply short humans, other residents are actual dwarves like Ola.

Ola provides directions to the community. Along the way, the Band notices that the roads become narrow and winding, then have posted signs reading "No Trespassing" and "No Through Streets." Ola encourages the characters to press on. The signs, she says, are simply to deter outsiders from stumbling across the community.

After several minutes driving through confusing streets in the hills, the Band comes to a street with a large gate across it, much like the wooden barricades at railroad crossings. There's no guardhouse or visible defenses, just a wooden barricade blocking the lane. Ola points out a call box by the gate and instructs the driver to pull up and buzz the box. The box doesn't have a speaker, just a large white button, and the gate opens as soon as the button is pressed. Ola then directs the Band to her home. As the characters enter the neighborhood, they see that many of the homes are quite small, with tiny porches, undersized doors and low rooftops. Since it's night, nobody is out on the lawns or streets. A few properties have a small house attached to a "regular-sized" domicile. If asked, Ola mentions that some of the short humans have normal-sized children, who live next to their parents and occasionally drum out trespassers.

Once the Band arrives at Ola's home—a large, low-roofed building near the center of town that looks like a long barracks—she invites them inside and opens the door. She's immediately met by another surprised dwarf, whose expression turns to joy when he realizes she's back. This dwarf, Lódi, regards the characters with suspicion, but Ola quickly reassures him that they rescued her and can be trusted. She then gestures for the Band to come in and meet with the community. After introducing himself and eyeing the Scions up and down, Lódi leaves to round up the other dwarves so that Ola can relate her tale.

Ola offers to make some coffee for the Scions then leads them down a staircase and into a large basement area. It's well furnished with dwarf-sized couches, overstuffed chairs, a bookcase, fireplace and TV. She asks that everyone make themselves at home, informing the Scions that the other dwarves will probably have questions for them. She assures them they have no reason to worry.

Over the next several minutes, dwarves trickle into the room while Ola makes coffee and brings out plates of cookies. All of the dwarves offer hugs or handshakes to Ola, watching the Band with some wariness. A few take cups of coffee. Lódi finally shows up ten minutes later, and Ola explains that she and three other dwarves were captured by a giant while they were out *shopping*, of all things. They were unceremoniously hog-tied and thrown into the back of a Ford Escalade, then taken to Bodie before sunup. She halts several times in the recitation, and it's clear that she's not a good speaker. With some embarrassment, she turns to one of the more socially adept Scions and asks him to relate the rest of the story of the rescue.

STORY TIME!

At this point, one of the characters—likely the one with the highest Expression rating—can relate the tale of the Scions' discovery of Robrek, their battle against the trolls and the rescue of Ola and Cybil. The speaker's player should roll (Charisma + Presence) to establish how well his story impresses the dwarves. (Make a note of the result—it matters later.) If your player isn't great at reciting stories, just use the roll results. If the player does an adequate roleplaying job of relating the story, treat it as a stunt and add dice to the pool appropriately. If the player imbues the retelling with the panache and flair expected of his character, the stunt could potentially refresh his Legend points. If the Scion refuses to tell the story and tries to pass the buck back to Ola, the player must either spend a Willpower point or fail a roll of his Expression Virtue, per the normal rules for resisting the urging of a Virtue.

The Scions might notice some dismay among the dwarves when the Band mentions fighting trolls. They cannot miss the dwarves' scowls and downcast faces. If the heroes don't realize why the dwarves seem upset and they ask about this, a pause of uncomfortable silence follows. The dwarves then explain that trolls are simply dwarves who've been corrupted by giants' blood. Their neighbors and relatives were turned to the side of evil, and the Band had to fight them. Still, there's nothing more to be done, and the dwarves don't hold this against the Band. "Better dead than a troll," Ola says.

The dwarves seem a bit friendlier toward Cybil. If anyone asks, Lódi explains that over the last year, Cybil has helped Bixby Knoll with a few problems—mostly bureaucratic stuff, like finagling paperwork to hide the community's existence. Bixby Knoll has its own dwarf-made power plant and other utilities, but it's still a chore and a half keeping the town not so much secret as ignored by city, state and federal authorities.

After the story is told, the dwarves chat among themselves for a bit. Lódi asks the Band to head up to the kitchen and wait. Ola smoothes things over if the Band objects—offering fresh pumpkin pie—and if necessary, reminds the characters that they are guests in her house. The dwarves debate what to do with the Scions and whether to help them in their quest.

Assuming that the Scions don't storm out or create a scene, Ola accompanies them up to the kitchen. She re-iterates her thanks for the rescue, and the group has a chance to sit in some undersized wooden chairs of excellent craftsmanship while they eat pumpkin pie and discuss their next move. All deliberations are interrupted, though, as Fate takes a hand.

...THE HARDER THEY FALL

The giants who helped Robrek abduct Ola saw how he turned the other dwarves into troll slaves and decided that they want troll slaves of their own. So, they return to Bixby Knoll—where nervous dwarves no longer walk abroad so confidently at night, and where a group of Scions just showed up. Oops.

As the Scions chat with Ola, a big SUV (a Ford Escalade, as it happens) zooms past Ola's home and screeches to a halt a few blocks away. A minute later, a siren sounds. If the Band isn't already out the door, Ola starts and exclaims, "Oh, Thor and Odin, we must be under attack *again*!"



Assuming the Scions have any desire to get in good with the dwarves—or if they just want a good scrap, or otherwise show that old Aesir courage—they can reach the Escalade just as three giants converge on it. Each giant clutches an unconscious dwarf in one ham-sized fist and an aluminum baseball bat in the other. Nearby, the Scions can see houses with walls smashed in. When the giants see the approaching Scions, they respond with witticisms such as, "Hurr hurr hurr, I guess someone wants a beating!" They throw the dwarves in the open side of the Escalade, and battle is joined!

These frost giants are of the standard variety, as described in **Scion: Hero,** pages 314 and 316. They're as strong as stone and about as smart. Once each giant is reduced to his -2 health levels, roll the giant's Zealotry. On a failed roll, the giant tries to flee, either by stuffing himself into the SUV and

driving away or just running for his life. The latter course is sure to fail. While the Scions fight the giants, more dwarves come out of their homes… armed with rifles, shotguns or, in a few cases, very large crossbows on short, wheeled bipods, plus axes. A giant who runs gets shot repeatedly, then hacked to bits. A giant who tries to flee in the SUV takes six ticks to start it up and get it moving, in which time he cannot attack or dodge, and can parry only with his forearm. Not a good position when you're surrounded by heroes with a dozen or so angry, armed dwarves closing in.

If the Band bothers to take any giants alive and interrogate them, the Scions learn that these are indeed the giants Robrek hired with his brother Gunnar's money. The giants (Hymir, Gymir and Skrymir) don't know what the Heart of Winter can do, just that rich, powerful Gunnar wanted it and paid them well to get it. They hadn't told anyone else about Bixby Knoll—they learned about it from Robrek. Unless the Scions decide, for some reason, to save the lives of these greedy, slave-taking giants, the vengeful dwarves kill them before the night ends.

When the commotion ends, one of the younger dwarves calls the Band back to Ola's house. "Everyone come back down here," he says. "We've made our choice."

AN EARNEST PLEA

When the characters return downstairs, they note that the dwarves have traded out their coffee cups for bottled beer from a mini-fridge. From his easy chair, Lódi speaks up.

"It's clear that you're in the thick of things now," he says, "and as always happens with the Aesir, you will need some help. This is messy business. What do you plan to do, exactly?"

Once again, the characters should formulate a response, detailing their plans. If they don't have a coherent plan, or if they bicker and argue, the dwarves are impassively unimpressed. If the Band makes a good accounting and at least seems to have given a little thought to the next course of action, have the best speaker's player roll (Charisma + Presence) again. Add that roll's successes to those from the previous roll (from the storytelling). Add three successes if the Band handily trounced the giants; subtract three if the characters came without Ola and Cybil or were reluctant to fight the giants. If the Scions showed any trace of heroism, the result cannot avoid being positive.

"Well," says Lódi once the heroes finish speaking, "we're just a small community, but we can maybe help you out a little. Least we can do for you bringing back one of ours.

"First off, you should stay and get some rest, if nothing else. You'll need it so you can be ready for your trip.

"Second, we can tell you a little about Fornjót Power Associates, if you haven't looked it up online yourselves. We'll do some digging and we should have information for you first thing tomorrow night. That should save you a little time."

If the players scored at least five successes on the earlier social rolls, Lódi continues, "Third, we can offer you some weapons we stashed away. Dwarf-make. Maybe not as good as your divine armaments, but quality nonetheless."

If the players scored at least eight successes on the earlier social rolls, Lódi adds, "Fourth, Ola has convinced us of the importance of your cause, so we have something else to help you out a bit." A few of the dwarves glance at one another with a glower, but Lódi glares at them and they remain silent. "There's a special band that we have—one of the copies of Draupnir, left behind by Odin a long time ago. We'd like you to have it. It's gold of the highest quality. You could use it to fund your traveling, or maybe save it for something important. Up to you."

Once Lódi makes his offers, he'll listen to counter-proposals from the Band. He doesn't have anything more useful to add, and he is loath to spare any dwarves to aid the Band. He will, however, consent to letting the characters return to Bixby Knoll if they need healing or need to lie low for a while. "After all," he comments wryly, "the damn giants obviously know we're here already."

If the Scions comport themselves nobly and seem forthright in their dealings, Lódi makes one final request of them before everyone separates to go to bed. "If it isn't too forward… eh, the giants obviously know where we are now. Maybe some time in the future, maybe soon, we might need to fight more of 'em. We're tough people, but we can always use a little extra help. Would you mind if I call you if we have real trouble coming?" While Bixby Knoll doesn't come under attack again in this story, you can always add a siege scene later in your cycle.

THE GOODS

Ola takes the characters to some normal-sized guest rooms and offers to let them sleep there. (If the characters want to drive back to Long Beach and stay in a hotel, they can, but such rampant paranoia won't endear them to their hosts.) She promises that the next evening, they'll have all the help that Lódi promised.

Ola is as good as her word. When the Scions awaken the next day (or night), they can clean up, eat a hearty meal, relax a bit and, if necessary, heal a few wounds. Once the sun sets, Ola shows up with Lódi. The two dwarves make good on their promise. Lódi supplies a dossier on Fornjót Power Associates (see sidebar) if the Scions didn't research it themselves. If Lódi offered dwarf-weapons to the Band, he provides each character with a well-made axe and a mail shirt. (Use the skeggox traits on p. 202 of **Scion: Hero** for the axe. The mail shirt has a soak of +3L/2B, a mobility penalty of -2, and a fatigue rating of 1.) If he offered them the ring of Draupnir, he gives them a small wooden box holding a 24-karat gold armband of elaborate make. Since this is just a copy of the original Draupnir, it has no magical properties of its own. The characters can keep it for sentimental value or save it to make a relic later. It can also be sold for a ridiculous sum of money, providing the Band with the means to finance its travels in style.

When the Band has finished its discussion with Lódi, it's time to saddle up. At this point—if not sooner—the characters might realize that Cybil hasn't shown up for breakfast.

FORNJÓT POWER ASSOCIATES



This company is based in Colorado Springs. It manufactures an energy drink known as *Slam!* It's run by one Gunnar Forson, the giant that the players heard about before. The company website touts the mixture of herbal essences in *Slam!*, but the ingredient list suggests the drink owes its kick more to sugar and caffeine. The company incorporated just two years ago, but it enjoys strong stock growth due to the rising popularity in energy drinks and its aggressive marketing campaign. The Scions have probably seen billboards featuring a muscular, Nordic-looking man with a fierce scowl, holding out a bottle of *Slam!* and accompanied by the logo "Get it in you!" If they haven't, the image is on the website. Whatever else he's been doing, Gunnar sure hasn't been hiding his operation.

Paranoid characters might suspect that *Slam!* represents a dire titanspawn plot against humanity. Does it contain giant's blood to slowly turn everyone who drinks it into a thrall? Or something like that? No. Neither chemical analysis nor use of Mystery or other metaphysical analyses finds anything in the drink but what's in the ingredients list. It's just a beverage, that happens to have made Gunnar Forson very rich.

If the Scions dig a little deeper, they find that Gunnar is a large, well-built man who serves as the CEO for Fornjót Power Associates. He rarely gives interviews, but he's well spoken, handsome and quite intelligent. He also rules the company's board of directors with an iron fist and holds an amazing 44% share in the company's stock. (Scions who want to buy him out will have to find a way to purchase most of the board's stock, which probably won't happen since most of the board members are Gunnar's thralls.) He resides in a large alpine estate high in the Rockies, and enjoys skiing, hiking, baseball, arm-wrestling and cutthroat business. He votes Libertarian. *Business Week* named him one of the Most Eligible CEO-Bachelors of 2007.

Scene

ILL TIMING

MENTAL •• PHYSICAL – SOCIAL –

Prophecy: "Claimed by Aesir but born of other blood, only a change of heart can save the foundling seer." The prophecy refers to the fact that Cybil is not actually a God-spawned Scion, but an adopted titanspawn.

As the Band prepares to hit the road and deal with Fornjót Power Associates, they find Cybil is in her room. She has a terrible fever. Sweat soaks her sheets as she moans and twists in agony. In a lucid

moment, she asks for water. In less lucid moments, she occasionally gasps phrases such as, "the giants' hammer," "winter of the soul" and "blood tells."

A SCION-KILLING DISEASE?

Right away, the heroes might suspect foul play. Many Scions never get sick. Cybil obviously contracted something serious, but it came on quite suddenly. Is she poisoned? Did the giants do something to curse her? Did the dwarves?

If anyone has Assess Health, this Boon immediately determines that Cybil suffers from some sort of autoimmune dysfunction, that the presence of the other Scions makes it worse, and that it will kill her if it goes untreated. Somehow, being near the Band turned her body against itself, and the malady centers on her heart.

Characters who lack Assess Health, or who want a second opinion, can attempt a mundane medical examination. Doing so calls for an (Intelligence + Medicine) roll. A three-success result suggests that Cybil suffers from some sort of autoimmune problem. Her body is destroying itself and she will die without treatment. With at least five successes, the character knows that Cybil's sickness is unnatural. She does not suffer from AIDS, organ rejection, lupus or other mundane diseases.

The actual situation is quite grim. Cybil is not actually a child of the Aesir, but rather a half-mortal child of the giantess Gróa. Loki thought he could adopt her as a Scion—and why not, he's giant-born himself. It seemed to work. Nevertheless, Cybil's ichor is not quite the same as that of a God-born Scion. (True, the Aesir Scions have a bit of giant blood in them, but not to the same degree as Cybil.) Cybil grew into her power like a proper Scion, but contact with *real* Aesir disrupted her metaphysical essence. Part of her demands that she awaken her giant blood. Another part demands that she stay a Scion of the Aesir. The two aspects fight each other, consuming her body in the struggle.

The dwarves feel concern too. Lódi recommends that the characters *not* take Cybil to a mundane hospital. After all, the doctors cannot fix a supernatural problem like this one. She'll stay there on life support, wasting away, until she finally dies. Instead, Lódi consults one of the oldest dwarves in he community, a white-bearded, bald, almost-blind sage named Radsvid. Radsvid inspects Cybil personally, squinting at her, poking occasionally and looking in various tomes of ancient medical lore (complete with descriptions of the humours and the evil spirits and demons that make people sick). Eventually, he concludes that the only way to save Cybil is to quench the fire that consumes her by giving her a frozen heart.

If anyone in the Band has a guide, now is a great time to ask for advice. A guide with suitable supernatural knowledge can confirm Radsvid's advice and recommend that the Band must find something colder than death that can replace a giant's heart.

All of which should give the characters a pretty clear notion that they can save Cybil using the Heart of Winter—which they wanted anyway. Still, let the players talk among themselves about the possibilities. They might come up with some surprising theories, which you can always integrate into the story if you feel like making things up as you go along.

AN OPTIONAL COMPLICATION

If you want to draw out the plot some more, Radsvid and any guides might say it isn't enough to fetch the Heart of Winter. The Band might also need some mystical means of binding together Cybil's heart, her soul and the Heart of Winter—something that can chain the ephemeral. Fortunately dwarves are good at forging supernatural restraints. Lódi, Radsvid and a number of other dwarves confer and say they can craft a soul-binding cord, but need some special raw materials not available in Bixby Knoll.

In short, it's time for the ever-popular scavenger hunt, in which the Scions track down a number of rare objects or substances that are difficult or dangerous to obtain. The dwarves who made Gleipnir, the cord that binds the Fenris Wolf, used the footfalls of a cat, the beard of a woman, the roots of a mountain, the sinews of a bear, the breath of a fish and the spittle of a bird. A cord for Cybil might need fewer, and less metaphysical, ingredients—say, three separate titanspawn trophies. This complication is optional, though.

TAKING LEAVE

Armed with a little knowledge and perhaps with some new dwarf-made chain mail and weapons, the Band should be ready to head out again. Their obvious next stop is Colorado Springs, where the characters can try to shake down Gunnar Forson for a little rock called the Heart of Winter. With the money from the copy of Draupnir, the Scions can travel in style. Allow them to stock up on supplies if they like. If they decide to drive instead of taking a plane, they can buy non-dwarvish weapons, such as, say, a few Remington rifles or M16s. They'll need all the help they can get.

OOPS... THE BAND DECIDED CYBIL CAN FOAD

The Band might not feel a lot of sympathy for Cybil, since she's a Scion of Loki and hasn't actually done a lot to help them. They might not believe her prophecy that she will help them in the future. In this case, they might decide to leave her to die.

This is pretty cruel, and anyone whose player has a Loyalty Virtue might need to spend Willpower of fail a Loyalty roll. She's been nothing but helpful, and she *is* family to the Aesir, after all. Since she's only a recent acquaintance, though, the difficulty of the Loyalty roll is 3. It's easier to abandon someone you neither know nor care about.

If the Band decides to ignore Cybil's illness, this simplifies the characters' mission in the short term. They just need to the Heart of Winter away from the titanspawn. Again, as described earlier, you can have them dogged by some minions of Loki to annoy them for their callous mistreatment of Loki's adopted daughter. They will also find that letting Cybil die makes the dwarves less friendly in the future and makes Gróa even less cooperative. With Ragnarök on the way, they really ought to be nicer to their allies.

ACT TWO
NOT WITH A BANG, BUT A WINTER

Having rescued Ola Kolfaxi and Cybil Haldana, having learned more from the dwarves of Bixby Knolls and having discovered that giants already acquired the Heart of Winter, the Band now has its work cut out for it. Time *might* be critical: How long until the giants use the Heart of Winter? How long can Cybil survive? All the characters know is that Gunnar Forson has the Heart of Winter. They have good reason to believe that they should get this mighty relic *out* of Forson's hands as soon as possible, for the sake of both Cybil and Midgard. It is assumed henceforth that the players understand they are playing *heroes*, not craven wimps who abandon their benefactors, their divine parents and Midgard itself.

OPTIONAL SCENE: HARDENING OF HEARTS

At some point, a Scion might attempt a big-picture prophecy about what will come of Gunnar Forson possessing the Heart of Winter. No matter what her player rolls, this is the result:

"Brothers shall fight, and as murderers be; Sisters' children, their kinship stain. Sickens the world, with fearful whoredom. A wolf-age, a sword-age, shields are cloven: A wind-age, a wolf-age, ere the World crumbles. Never shall man then spare another!"

Any Scion with even a single dot of Academics or Occult recognizes this prophecy: It's a direct quote from the *Völuspá*, the *original* prophecy of Ragnarök. In this act, the Scions see what the ancient seeress foretold. The giants' use of the Heart of Winter infuses the Dark Virtues into every mortal heart… not much, but enough to see the effects. Everyone seems angrier, greedier, more determined to have their own way and contemptuous of everyone else. The Scions themselves aren't *mortal*, exactly, so they avoid this complication among each other—but society still causes them problems.

Scene

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

MENTAL •• PHYSICAL – SOCIAL •••

Once the Scions learn all they can about the Heart of Winter and of Cybil's illness, they need to start traveling again. If they're poor, they can sell the copy of Draupnir for enough money to fund their travels for several months. If they're already well off, hopping a cheap flight out of Long Beach airport shouldn't pose a burden. Sure, the TSA is a pain and the Scions need to find a clever way to transport their relics, but how hard can it be?

As it turns out, it's a real pain in the ass. Although the characters might not know it, the fact that Gunnar beat them to the Heart of Winter means that Fimbulvetr has already begun. Mortal hearts start to feel the effect: brother against brother, president against prime minister, author against publisher... As a result, people become increasingly crabby, bureaucratic paralysis is at an all-time high, and just traveling from one city to another becomes a major chore as the Dark Virtues enter mortal hearts.

To show this scene, ask the players about the characters' preparations for their trip. Wherever they go and whatever they do, they run into little hurdles. There's no monster to battle, just a series of minor frustrations. Rather than provide a specific listing of problems, this scene provides a chance to flex your storytelling skills and improvise according to the Band's predilections. Some possible problems include:

• Selling the copy of Draupnir at a jewelry shop, the characters find themselves in the middle of a stick-up as a disgruntled employee starts shooting his co-workers and trying to steal jewelry.

• Making reservations for plane tickets, they find nobody exactly rushes to answer the phone. When they do make contact, the clerks for the flight companies are bored, slow, prone to making mistakes and snappish when asked to correct them.

• As the characters drive around town picking up food or taking care of business, they spot a pair of crumpled cars by the roadside. The motorists have already gotten out and started a fistfight. Obviously, the Scions have no particular reason to care, but if they intervene and break up the fight, both motorists turn on the Scions. Afterward, the Scions learn the drivers had only a minor fender-bender and simply found themselves unaccountably consumed with road rage.

• One of the characters' (mortal) family members or friends calls. The police have detained her on a trumped-up charge of resisting arrest during a traffic stop. They roughed her up, shot her with a taser and threw her in jail. She's desperate for help, since her public defender told her to cop a plea despite the fact that she's innocent. He actually came out and said that if there's no money in the case, it's not worth his time.

• Checking in at the airport, the Scions find themselves under the tired and suspicious scrutiny of TSA security clerks, who force them to strip down, try to steal some of their possessions and generally abuse their authority.

None of these events involves any sort of supernatural entity, titanspawn or other Scions. Perceptive Scions can realize that while each incident could be the result of a few people having a bad day, the whole pattern is just impossible. A roll of (Intelligence + Occult) at difficulty 3, or appropriate use of Know-It-All, reminds the Scion of the prophetic passage telling how people turn against one another in the coming Fimbulvetr. Any use of Mystery confirms the suspicion and delivers the quote from the *Völuspá.* This is a clue that the Scions are already behind schedule and that the fated end of Midgard is at hand.

Scene

HIDE AND SEEK

MENTAL ••• PHYSICAL •/•••• SOCIAL •••

Prophecy: "Cunning are the great among the giants; cunning are the jotnar who follow the teachings of Utgard-Loki. A visage of ice conceals a Heart of Winter, and every victory comes with a price." This straightforward prophecy indicates that the Band is on the right track looking for the Heart of Winter with the frost giant Gunnar Forson but warns of the illusions and tricks that he'll play.

You might find it handy to read this section two or three times in advance. It's a long scene that relies on some misdirection.

Since the Scions know that Gunnar likely has the Heart of Winter (and has had it for a few days), they know they're behind the curve. From Ola and their encounter with Robrek, they already know that Gunnar is a frost giant.

Colorado Springs is a burgeoning town in central Colorado, situated next to Pike's Peak at the south end of the Rocky Mountains. It's quite cold, thanks to the elevation (a mile or more above sea level) and the weather from the Rockies. Several evangelical Christian organizations make the city their home. They all like

Gunnar Forson, since he gives them money. Fornjót Power Associates' company website gives its address in case the Scions don't already know its location.

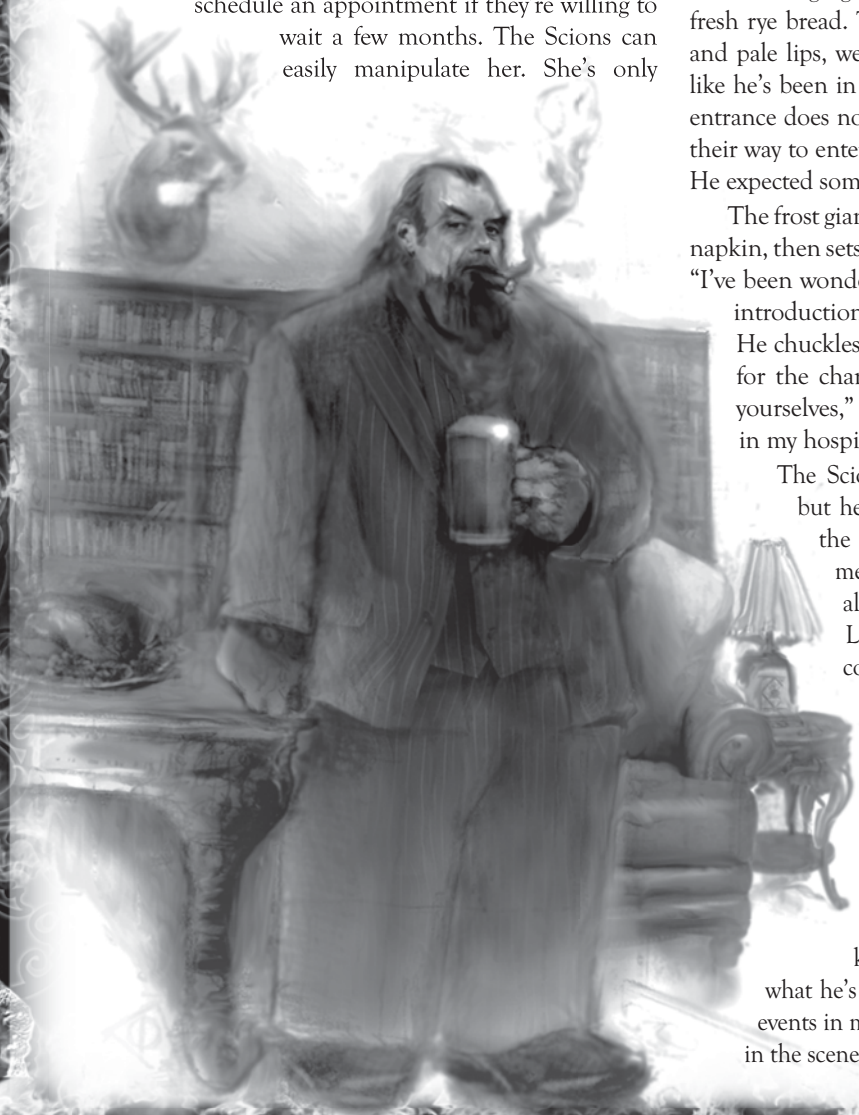
Whether the characters decide to harass Gunnar at home or at work, they will find him a formidable opponent. Worse still, they can't just *kill* him, since he's managed to make himself a fairly important and prominent member of the local business community. If they keep him under surveillance for a few days, they see him go from his home to his office and back in a normal workweek. He doesn't leave his home during the weekend. Seems he has something important keeping him from taking a vacation trip this month. What could *that* be?

CONFRONTING GUNNAR FORSON

If the Scions go after Gunnar at his place of work, they have to find a way into his corporate office. It's a squat, three-story building with black windows and some hefty air conditioning, located just across the street from the *Slam!* bottling plant. The front desk is staffed by a pretty, young Scandinavian receptionist named Hilda, who is more than happy to helpfully tell the heroes that the CEO is a very busy man and that they can always schedule an appointment if they're willing to wait a few months. The Scions can easily manipulate her. She's only mortal, and a little Overt Order or a (Manipulation + Presence) roll at difficulty 4 prompts her to fit the Scions in for a brief window at two o'clock.

If the Scions decide to ambush Gunnar at home, his estate is a ski lodge-like building with a large attached garage, a front gate in the middle of a low stone wall and private security with snowmobiles. Again, since the security precautions are mortal, the Scions should have little trouble letting themselves in. A convincing story combined with a successful (Manipulation + Presence) roll at difficulty 4 can get them past the guards as delivery men or service contractors, if they aren't dressed and armed outlandishly. A (Dexterity + Stealth) roll at difficulty 2 enables them to sneak past the guards at night. During the day, getting into the garage or front door unseen is largely impossible unless the Scions have a way to turn invisible (such as Phase Cloak), or can walk through walls (as with Unbarred Entry).

Either way, the Scions find Gunnar in a large meeting room with a high, wood-beamed ceiling, furnished with a set of plush chairs and a well-crafted table of great size. A wide-screen TV and the heads of animals from various hunting trips adorn the walls. Gunnar already sits in a chair at the end of the table, which bears a large assortment of food ranging from pulled pork to reindeer meat and fresh rye bread. To his right sits a man with grayish skin and pale lips, well dressed in winter clothes and looking like he's been in the snow a bit too long. The characters' entrance does not surprise Gunnar, unless they go out of their way to enter by stealth and then immediately attack. He expected someone to follow the Heart of Winter.



The frost giant delicately wipes his mouth with a white napkin, then sets it down next to his plate as he stands up. "I've been wondering who'd show up," he says by way of introduction. "Somehow, I expected you'd be taller." He chuckles to himself and gestures magnanimously for the characters to seat themselves. "Please, help yourselves," he says. "You're in my domain, so share in my hospitality."

The Scions might object to Gunnar's posturing, but he remains confident as if he's sure he has the upper hand. "You want something from me," he tells them, "so let's discuss it. After all, Thor sat down to feast with Utgard-Loki. Nobody died that time. I'm a man of considerable assets. What can I do for you?"

Note that Gunnar doesn't necessarily know in advance who the Scions are. He plays it like he knows what he's dealing with, but he wants to find out if they're all heroes or if some are just mortals tagging along. He suspects that they want the Heart of Winter—especially if Cybil is with them—but he doesn't know how much *they* know about it, or whether they understand what he's already done with it. (Specifically, he's set events in motion to usher in Fimbulvetr, as described in the scene "Ragna-Rock" in Act Three.)

If the Scions sit down to eat, however grudgingly, Gunnar plays the part of a gracious, arrogant host. He offers the Scions trays of various meats and cheeses, talking up each one in detail. ("Reindeer meat, not exactly common down here; a bit gamy, but wonderful with red potatoes. Oh, and be sure to try some of the toasted rennet. Don't mind the squeaking, you'll find that it's a very mild and creamy cheese.")

If the Scions voice a suspicion that Gunnar poisoned the food, he scoffs at the notion but takes little offense. "Suit yourself. I assure you, I won't let this fine food go to waste." Suggesting that he might have corrupted the food with his eitr in an attempt to subjugate them, *does* make him slightly angry. He says, "Now you're really being ridiculous. What, I'm going to just invite a bunch of Aesir-spawn into my feast and then try to suborn them with that old trick? That only works on *mortals*. I'm not stupid, unlike some giants you may have met."

If the heroes ask about Gunnar's dinner companion, Gunnar introduces him as Klaus, an old soldier and battle companion. Klaus says little, nods slowly when spoken to and eats with great deliberation. He is, in fact, a thrall, and a highly experienced and dangerous one. Scions might suspect that he's a corpse, but the Death Senses Boon can put that misapprehension to rest. Klaus is simply so heavily under the power of Gunnar's eitr that his own body has started to match the arctic chill of his master.

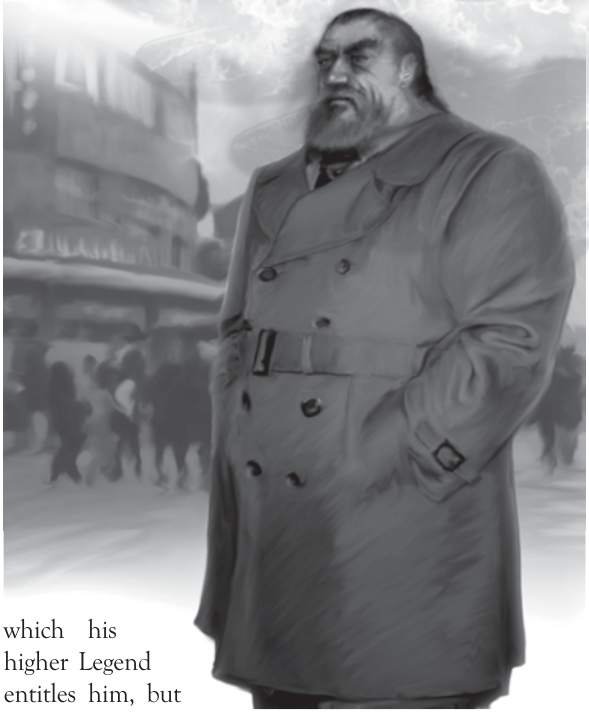
Most importantly, Gunnar makes sure to tell the characters that they are on camera. He's pretty sure that if they attack him, they cannot possibly prevent the police from seeing them trying to kill a pillar of the community. Attacking a millionaire businessman is a good way to become the subject of a nationwide manhunt.

As the heroes eat—or watch Gunnar eat, if they refuse—Gunnar asks politely about their heritage, their parents and their past adventures. He listens well, and he also answers most questions when asked. Importantly, he never actually lies to the Scions. In fact, he wants to brag a little (that Ambition Virtue at work). He relates that his own tale is quite simple. He's been a young up-and-coming frost giant sorcerer for years, and he came to Colorado to make his mark and earn a little influence. He also likes the finer things in life, and set out to show his kin the advantages of money and living in the mortal world. For years, the frost giants knew that the Heart of Winter lay somewhere under the earth in a place of cold and changeable weather, so they've searched in many parts of the world. Gunnar's little expedition just happened to be lucky enough to find the right place.

The Scions might become fed up with Gunnar and decide to throw down with him, security cameras be damned. If battle erupts, Gunnar's very tough, and his *huskarl* (the thrall Klaus) also leaps to his defense.

GUNNAR FORSON

The CEO of Fornjót Power Associates is an example of a non-generic giant—a special character who deviates significantly from the basic giant presented on page 314 of **Scion: Hero**. Gunnar Forson is well on his way to becoming an elder jotun. He does not have all the Epic Strength to which his higher Legend entitles him, but he has other Epic Attributes, a great deal more Attributes and Abilities than the generic giant, and proficiency with the Illusion Purview described in Chapter Two. In battle, he wields a tremendous axe that he keeps under the table, using the traits for a labrys on page 202 of **Scion: Hero**.



This wily frost giant is more than a match for a young Band of heroes. While they might defeat him in a straight-up fight, he also might hand a few Scions their asses. He's the first serious outclassing that the Band likely faces, and he could very well kill one or two characters (or all of them, if they're not very skilled in combat!)

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5; Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3; Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Virtues: Ambition 4, Malice 1, Rapacity 3, Zealotry 2

Abilities: Academics 2, Art 3, Athletics 3, Awareness 4, Brawl 4, Command 2, Empathy 2, Fortitude 4, Integrity 2, Investigation 3, Larceny 4, Marksmanship 2, Melee 4, Politics 2, Presence 3, Survival 2

Birthrights: Followers 5 (lots of security guards, plus Klaus), Relic 1 (Runestone Bracelet—Illusion)

Supernatural Powers:

Eitr: Gunnar has the usual giant's eitr, as described on page 314 of **Scion: Hero**.

Boons: Battle Cry, Battle Map, Blessing of Bravery, Dreamcraft, Fool's Gold, Stolen Face, The Subtle Knife, Warrior Ideal (Giant)

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 3 (Crushing Grip, Holy Rampage, Knockback Attack), Epic Stamina 4 (Damage Conversion, Holy Fortitude, Inner Furnace, Solipsistic Well-Being), Epic Manipulation 2 (Blurt It Out, Stench of Guilt), Epic Wits 3 (Eternal Vigilance, Instant Investigator, Opening Gambit)

Join Battle: 8
Attacks:
Clinch: Accuracy 7, Damage 7L, Parry DV —, Speed 6
Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 6, Damage 10B, Parry DV 3, Speed 5
Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 8, Damage 7B, Parry DV 4, Speed 4
Labrys: Accuracy 8, Damage 15L, Parry DV 4, Speed 6
Soak: 4A/10L/12B
Health Levels: -0x21/Incap
Dodge DV: 6 **Willpower:** 7
Legend: 5 **Legend Points:** 25
Other Notes: On one wrist, Gunnar wears a bracelet of small jasper plaques engraved with runes, linked by interlacing golden serpents. It can serve as a relic allowing the wearer to access the Illusion Purview.

The Scions cannot take Gunnar by surprise because of his Eternal Vigilance. They probably do not see his rune-bracelet because he immediately uses The Subtle Knife on it. He likewise conceals a PDA he props on one thigh and uses to Google the Scions' names while they talk and eat dinner. Finally, Gunnar is a very good cold reader. While they talk, he uses Stench of Guilt to spot sensitive topics and uses Blurt It Out to make the Scions tell more than they realize. He's so good at this that the players need a successful (Wits + Investigation) roll, difficulty 4, even to realize that Gunnar has pumped them for intimate details of their lives. He rather conspicuously does *not* ask them why they came, and actually brushes off any attempt by the Band to bring this up. "Business *after* pleasure!" he insists. Keep track of the Legend points Gunnar spends for these illusions and inquiries.

KLAUS

Gunnar's *huskarl*, by contrast, is just a mortal soldier enthralled by the power of Gunnar's eitr. Still, this makes him stronger and tougher than most other mortals. Outside of battle, Klaus has little to say, but he aids Gunnar in a fight and can complicate matters significantly.

For Klaus, use the traits for an experienced soldier, found on page 283 of **Scion: Hero**. His Strength and Stamina are both 5, due to the effects of the eitr, while his Intelligence drops to 2. Although his mind might be dulled, Klaus has enough experience to know the value in switching tactics based on his opponent. Against a hand-to-hand fighter, he backs off and fires a gun, while he closes to knife-fight or grapple against ranged attackers or social characters.

If your characters engage in a lot of combat and you think they'll find Gunnar and Klaus to be pushovers, simply add several normal soldiers (also under the thrall of eitr) to Gunnar's dinner table. Three to five should be more than enough to start making even a hardened Band of heroes sweat.

AN OFFER YOU CAN'T REFUSE

After dinner, Gunnar wastes no time in getting down to business. Whatever the Band has revealed or learned from him, he considers irrelevant compared to sating his own curiosity. He pushes his plate away, wipes his hands on his napkin and tosses it onto the plate. After examining the Scions from beneath his bushy blond eyebrows one last time, he makes a proposal.

"I'll tell you what," he says. "Let's have a little set of games, shall we? Some challenges of skill to pass the time and to provide a *friendly* competition."

Players being who they are, the characters might balk at this suggestion. They can't trust Gunnar, after all. Games? Norse heroes are supposed to *fight* giants! If the Scions become aggressive, Gunnar sighs and engages in combat if needed, but he would prefer to have a little fun at the Scions' expense.

The best course of action for the Scions is actually to show a little skepticism. Gunnar can't help but try to win them over. He believes he is immensely clever, so he wishes to show his superiority by having the characters agree to the challenges so he can humiliate them. If the Scions hesitate to agree to his challenge, Gunnar ups the ante in an unfortunate fashion, hastily saying, "I'll make it worthwhile. Face my challenges, and if you succeed, you can ask a boon of me. I'll be generous. Ask anything." Convinced he can't lose—because he plans to cheat—Gunnar will make a wager that he might regret.

If the Scions ask what *Gunnar* wins in the challenges, he shrugs and thinks for a moment, then says, "I'll just call it a simple favor. No, nothing like calling upon you at some future point for some unspecified favor. Just this: When Ragnarök does come, you won't fight me. You'll recognize my superior skill and will yield the field of battle to me, if we face one another. I'm sure you'll find plenty of other foes to keep you busy." Gunnar has no way to enforce such an agreement, but that's no real bother. The characters can persuade him to agree to something different if they make a compelling offer, perhaps requesting their services for some mundane or humiliating task.

Gunnar also doesn't hesitate to use his key bargaining asset, adding, "As it happens, I own many unusual items and have access to information that you might desire. If you kill me, you'll never find any of it. Humor me, and perhaps we can all reach a comfortable arrangement."

Assuming that the Band accepts Gunnar's challenges, he claps his hands excitedly. "Three challenges, as traditional," he says. "Nothing fatal. Are you ready?"

COLORADO ARM-RASSLIN'

Gunnar's first challenge is a straightforward arm-wrestling contest. He clears away some of the plates from the table and rolls up the sleeves of his enormous suit. He flexes his right hand and places his arms on the table in a traditional arm-wrestling pose. "Let's test our strength. We giants pride ourselves on our strength, after all!"

If one of the characters suggests some ridiculous addition to the contest—such as arm-wrestling over knives or hot coals—Gunnar chuckles and agrees, complimenting such delightful pluck.

Arm-wrestling with Gunnar involves an extended challenge. The players of both sides roll (Strength + Athletics) to represent every six ticks of arm-wrestling. Whoever scores more successes makes headway in winning the contest. The contest continues until one side accumulates 10 successes more than his opponent.

The characters obviously have the best chance of coming through if one of their number has Epic Strength. If nobody has Epic Strength, Gunnar simply arm-wrestles with his mundane Strength. Against heroes, he has a good chance of winning fair and square.

But, Gunnar's a giant. He's evil. If Gunnar feels that his opponent has Epic Strength, he cheats using his Dreamcraft Boon. Gunnar projects an illusion to make his opponent feel that her arm is weakening. This is difficulty 1, for a single sense and a simple illusion, and costs two Legend for a single target. Gunnar cannot *actually* weaken his opponent's arm, but if it succeeds, his illusion gives a three-die stunt bonus to his player's dice rolls.

If Gunnar loses, honestly or because his opponent resisted the illusion, he's naturally shocked. If the challenging hero makes even a good showing, he seems genuinely surprised by the hero's vigor, and congratulates him on his strength. "That's quite an arm you have," he notes, "I sure wouldn't want to face you in hand-to-hand combat."

If Gunnar wins, he grins widely, then assumes a more modest tone and acts like a gracious winner. "Well, best two out of three, hmm?"

SPEECH! SPEECH!

Gunnar's second contest is to relate a clever anecdote. The characters might groan at the idea of *story time*, but their Expression Virtue should cause them to rise to the occasion. Gunnar, naturally, has an ace hidden away. He lets the Scion's representative go first. The players' performance in telling a gripping Norse epic story will determine how well they fare against Gunnar's verbal onslaught.

Once he has the opportunity to tell his story, Gunnar opens up a laptop computer. "I try to keep abreast of modern developments, so I have devised a small PowerPoint presentation to showcase this tale," he says. He dims the lights of the room, turns on a large television mounted in the wall behind him and sets up his laptop to project to the TV via his wireless network. (As giants go, Gunnar's quite well adapted to the times.)

Over the course of several slides, Gunnar gives a PowerPoint presentation showcasing each of the Scions, their notable failures and their fumbles en route to the current encounter. In brief, Gunnar tells the story of the Band's adventures to date, always with a slightly condescending tone. The Scions can't help it that they're one step behind. He's just a little too smart for them, naturally.

This is more Dreamcraft. Actually, his PowerPoint presentation is just a rehash of what he learned by Googling their names... but he's using the information he gained earlier through his Manipulation Knacks to shape an illusion that his presentation includes information he can't possibly know about. And, he doesn't—but he can plant enough information in the hallucination that he prompts the Scions' own minds to fill in the gaps. The illusion costs two Legend points per Scion, and it's difficulty 4 to create (neatly consuming the four bonus successes granted by Gunnar's Epic Wits). Gunnar's previous inquiries give him a three-die stunt bonus again, however. The Scions' players must beat five successes with a (Perception + Awareness) roll to see through the illusion.

Through this stratagem, Gunnar hopes to goad the Scions into outrage. If the Scions lose their tempers and attack, Gunnar quickly grabs his axe and reminds them that only he can sate their curiosity regarding... well, whatever it is they came looking for. And they're still on camera. Also, if the Band does burst into violence, the characters lose the competition by default.

Once both sides have told their tales, it's up to you, the Storyteller, to determine whose tale was better told. Gunnar, of course, has cheated and made a tale designed to push the heroes' buttons. If the characters keep their temper and make at least a token effort—and the player whose character tells the story doesn't totally fail a (Charisma + Presence) roll—they should come out on top. Gunnar even recognizes their success, seeming a bit nonplussed if he's unable to bait them into quickly aborted violence.

THE OL' AMERICAN PASTIME

Having finished the first two competitions, Gunnar stands up, heads over to a small shelf underneath the wall-mounted television and produces an aluminum baseball bat. "You know, I really like baseball. I couldn't tell you why. You'd think someone like me would be more impressed by the violence of football or rugby. But no, it's the old American pastime for me. What can I say? I'm sentimental at heart. So... fancy a few swings?"

Gunnar gestures for the group to exit the dining room and join him in an accompanying gymnasium. (The level of opulence in his home or office will probably start to get on the Scions' nerves at this point too.) There, he offers up the baseball bat or a pitcher's glove, depending upon which side the heroes decide to play first. "You pitch three balls, I'll pitch three balls, and we take turns batting."

The heroes might balk at Gunnar's attempts to rope them into baseball. If they complain that it's undignified or a waste of time, Gunnar stares at them archly for a moment and reminds them, "Thor and Loki never backed down from a challenge, whether it was a drinking contest, a foot race or even just to lift a cat off the ground. Come on. Humor me. Last task, I promise." If the Scions persist, they can try to pressure Gunnar into forgoing this contest. A (Manipulation + Presence) roll, difficulty 4, could convince the giant to



give ground. Gunnar backs down only if the two sides aren't already tied in the competition. If the heroes won both the arm wrestling match and the story contest, he concedes defeat in a half-bored, half-bitter tone and proceeds to their reward. If the heroes lost both competitions, he offers this as one last chance to redeem their tarnished reputations, but he doesn't press the issue. If the heroes won one contest and lost the other, Gunnar insists: "This is the only way we'll settle who's coming out on top, hmm? Aside from old-fashioned swordplay, that is."

When Gunnar pitches, he gets his baseballs from a locker on one side of the gymnasium. These are not actually baseballs, though. Gunnar actually pitches ice-covered boulders, concealed using Fool's Gold. This means that connecting with a ball and making it do more than drop feebly to the ground a few feet away requires a ([lowest of Strength, Dexterity or Stamina] + Athletics) roll at difficulty 3. Depending on which Attribute is lowest, the character misses the baseball (Dexterity), can't hit it more than a few feet (Strength) or drops the bat from the unexpected shock of impact (Stamina).

When Gunnar swings, he gives the heroes a bucket of normal baseballs to pitch. Here, Gunnar's pride pushes him to play ball without cheating. He wants to really crush the ball just to show the Scions who's boss. Getting one past Gunnar's strike zone takes a (Dexterity + Athletics) roll, difficulty 5—Gunnar's pretty damn good at baseball. On a failed roll, Gunnar sends the ball flying across the room. On a botch, he actually slams the ball straight back into the pitcher, inflicting a level of bashing damage.

Note that this contest doesn't rely on opposed tests. This is just to speed things along. Giving the tests a static difficulty prevents the heroes from suffering under the vagaries of randomness and keeps Gunnar from accidentally looking like an amateur. If you want to make the contest a little more dicey, you can use Gunnar's (Dexterity + Athletics) in a contested roll against the Scion on the other side of the gym room.

Regardless of the outcome, Gunnar picks up a towel, wipes his brow and asks the Scions what they want.

I SAW THAT!

One or more characters might spot and expose Gunnar's illusions. The first time, Gunnar concedes defeat with a broad grin, saying, "What did you expect? *Evil*… you know?" He tries to lead the Band into the second test. If the Scions catch him again, he really starts to sweat. At this point, he calls off the challenges and gets straight down to business. Instead of testing the heroes with his little games, he realizes that they are too crafty for him, and he tries to haggle with them. In exchange for their promise not to fight him at Ragnarök, he will give them the Heart of Winter and answer all of their questions about it.

JUST DESSERTS

Gunnar's curious to know how much the Scions have figured out, his query about their motives is an attempt to elicit more information. If the heroes managed to best Gunnar in his various trials, he also has to cough up a reward for them.

Once the heroes ask about the Heart of Winter (and there's no reason they shouldn't), Gunnar becomes downright garrulous. He explains that the giants needed it to bring about Fimbulvetr, though he doesn't especially *want* the World to end. He's got a great business going, life is good, why risk it all? Gunnar's not the man in charge, though. He still has to answer to Utgard-Loki, and Utgard-Loki wants a good winter to come on, so what's a giant to do? Fimbulvetr is on its way, and Ragnarök is at hand. The children of the Gods failed to stop them in time. Gunnar himself was key to the effort, so he's sure to reap some sort of reward. Perhaps he'll die at Ragnarök, but that's all the more reason to live well in the present.

If the heroes bested Gunnar's trials, the giant is a bit shaken. He does his best to maintain his composure, but he clearly fears the prowess of this Band. He upholds his original bargain and offers to provide the heroes with a good or service of their choosing.

The heroes can request a great many things, naturally... most of which could be considered trivial or pointless, even by Gunnar. If the Band asks for something with the expectation that Gunnar will somehow sully the deal—the typical boilerplate attempt to make a legalese-sounding contract—Gunnar halts them and assures them that he will uphold his part of the bargain as befits a gentleman. Again, he's telling the truth and dealing fairly with the Scions. After all, if they beat his illusions and tricks, they can probably take his head off any time they like, so why mess with fire?

Some of the things the heroes might request include:

• **Gunnar's life.** If the characters make this request, Gunnar pales noticeably (which is a neat trick for a frost giant). He asks that they reconsider, reminding them that they might never learn some of the other useful secrets he holds.

• **Gunnar's secrets.** If the Band makes this request, Gunnar grumbles slightly but complies. He tells the Band the location of the Heart of Winter and agrees to teach the Illusion that he knows—giving up his bracelet as a relic. Note that if one of the characters accepts such tutelage, her doing so might cause a little suspicion from other Aesir. Having a giant for a mentor isn't socially acceptable in some circles, after all.

• **The Heart of Winter.** A likely choice. If the Band requests this, Gunnar makes a show of grumbling and seeming annoyed, but he doesn't really care. The Heart's power has already worked its magic, so it's not particularly valuable to the giants any longer. Gunnar fetches the Heart for the Band, and the Scions can come along if they want. Whatever.

• **A service.** Gunnar readily agrees to perform some service at a future date.

Other requests likely aren't too useful for the conclusion of this story arc, but it's possible that the players can think of something particularly clever. Reward this cleverness. A Band that manages to trick Gunnar in return for his tasks might be able to wrangle possession of the Heart of Winter as well as some other benefit or favor.

Note that Gunnar does not have the Heart of Winter on his person. It's stored in a floor safe under a rug in his mountain chateau. Also note that if the Band at any point becomes particularly violent, Gunnar activates a small alarm buzzer in his pocket. When the characters try to leave the building where they attacked Gunnar, they find the place surrounded by police. They'll likely have to rely on stealth to escape. The particulars of such an escape aren't terribly important, unless the characters find themselves arrested, in which case you must arrange the side scene of their jail time and their attempt to extricate themselves from charges of assaulting or murdering an upstanding member of the community.

...AND THEN WE RANSACK THE PLACE

Bands focused solely on combat might scoff at Gunnar's various "tests" and move straight into battle. That's perfectly legitimate, although it does raise a problem. Even if the Scions beat the frost giant, how do they find the Heart of Winter? Gunnar doesn't carry it. It's safely stored away.

When the fighting is over, the characters might try to ransack Gunnar's home. (They might, alternatively, search his home while he's away at work.) Finding the floor safe takes a (Perception + Investigation) roll, difficulty 3. Cracking it requires a (Dexterity + Larceny) roll, difficulty 6. Scions with Epic Strength could go straight to ripping it open.

The safe has an alarm that signals the police. Each time Gunnar opens the safe, he needs to call a special number within five minutes or the security company alerts the police. If they're not careful, the heroes find themselves in a surrounded house, as described in the main text. Finding the alarm in the first place requires a (Perception + Investigation) roll, but only one success is necessary. Disabling it uses (Intelligence + Larceny), difficulty 4.

If the characters manage to accomplish all of this, more power to them. They're like a bunch of Viking ninjas.

THE HEART OF WINTER

Once the characters finish their battle—of wits or of weapons—with Gunnar and his entourage, they most likely acquire the Heart of Winter. Gunnar probably already clued them in that the giants used its greatest power and the frost giants invoked the Fimbulvetr. Still, the characters need the Heart to save Cybil, and why leave a magical relic in the hands of some filthy giants, anyway?

The Heart of Winter is a blue stone the size of a man's fist, shaped vaguely like a human heart. It feels cold to the touch, and white veins run across its surface. Clearly, it's an unwholesome object, but much of its power has already been tapped.

What the Scions don't know, unless they manage to wrangle this knowledge out of Gunnar, is that the Heart has already served its appointed purpose. Immediately after acquiring the Heart, Gunnar sent it to Jotunheim so the mighty magicians of the frost giants could use its power to call down Fimbulvetr. Once in the hands of the frost giants, its fate was decided. The Heart has "called the Jotunhammer"—about which Gunnar knows nothing but the name. (It is this "Jotunhammer" that will somehow usher in Fimbulvetr and herald the coming of Ragnarök.) When that work was done, Utgard-Loki magnanimously sent the Heart of Winter back for Gunnar to keep as a trophy.

If pressed (or if the heroes demanded answers from Gunnar as part and parcel of their victories), Gunnar can explain these facts to the Band. This is part of why he's so flippant and casual. As far as he's concerned, the game is already over, the prophecies are coming true, and the heroes were too late to do anything about it.

Still, the Heart carries a residue of magic. It can serve as a relic for access to the Frost Purview (in Chapter Two). It also gives whoever holds it the benefits of Frost Immunity (Frost •). The more important use of the Heart, however, is to save the life of Cybil Haldana. The Heart is aptly named. Since the frost giants awakened its greatest power, it carries a spark of their essence. When the heroes touch it, it responds to them too. A faint pink flush spreads from the point of contact to cover half the Heart, and it beats a few times. The Heart becomes a bridge between the Scions and the giants—the two sides of Aesir heritage—which is just what the Band needs to heal Cybil's rift of body and spirit.

LEAVING COLORADO

If the heroes played along the entire time during their visit to Gunnar, then the giant does not bar their departure. In fact, he offers to fund their flight to their next destination... so he can learn where they're going, and relay that information back to Jotunheim. Everything Gunnar learned from the Scions, or about them from their conversations and contests, becomes part of a dossier that he passes to frost giants and other servants of the Titans. The characters gained the Heart of Winter, but at a price they will not discover for quite some time.

Scene

ONE OF US!

MENTAL •• PHYSICAL •• SOCIAL –

Prophecy: "Winter is lost, but hope is not. The bonds that tie friends together are stronger than the Fates that push them apart." Curing Cybil will help the Band to deal with the threat of Fimbulvetr, and even losing the Heart of Winter is a reasonable price to pay.

With the Heart of Winter in hand, the Band can heal its new ally, Cybil Haldana. Since the characters have no other leads at this point, they can only hope that healing her will provide them with some opportunity or new direction.

The Band's journey back to Long Beach has to deal with the usual problems of mortal society slowly disintegrating under the pressure of oncoming Fimbulvetr. With all that the Scions have dealt with so far, a few angry flight attendants and morose barristas should be a cakewalk.

When the Band returns to Bixby Knoll, Lódi appears grave. Cybil's condition has deteriorated. They must see her immediately and perform the spell of binding in order to save her life. Otherwise, she will not survive the night.

BACK IN BIXBY KNOLL

The heroes return to Ola's home in Bixby Knoll. Cybil lies on a bed behind a screen. Greenish scales crawl up the sides of her neck and head. Her feet are twisted and clawed, her hands gnarled, her eyes narrow slits. Her head thrashes back and forth in the fits of fever. A simple roll of (Intelligence + Occult) reminds the heroes that the children of giants are often monsters like Fenris and the Midgard Serpent, so Cybil's inhuman features are probably signs of her heritage.

A quick diagnosis of Cybil's condition, with (Perception + Medicine), determines that her body is undergoing a metamorphosis into a pseudo-reptilian form. She might die, or she might turn into some kind of monster. Either outcome is undesirable.

In spite of the horrible changes wracking her body, Cybil fades in and out of lucidity. A few minutes after the heroes arrive to check up on her, she stills a bit, her eyes flutter open, and she gazes up at them.

If anyone established a particular connection with Cybil via a heart-to-heart talk, some friendly support when she first fell ill or similar roleplaying with the character, now's the time to tug on those heartstrings. Cybil knows that something is horribly wrong, and she pleads with the Band either to cure her or put her out of her misery. She can feel her body twisting and warping into a monstrous shape, and she's terrified. Cybil's very vulnerable at this point, gesturing feebly as she seeks even the smallest reassurance of human contact to help her through the agony of her unwanted transformation. If one of the heroes sincerely reassures her, she calms a bit, but spasms of pain still wrack her from time to time. She moans and begs the Band to finish the job... one way or another.

REBIRTH

Wise old Radsvid knows a spell to bind two spiritual or magical entities together. He need only hold them together with a cord or rope, then invoke the spell. In a sense, it's almost like a wedding ceremony. The two objects become one, with the cord as the binding agent that keeps them in place while the ritual is cast. At his age, though, Radsvid isn't sure he has the strength to cast it alone. He needs the Band's help.

To cast the spell, the Band must place the Heart of Winter on Cybil and wrap a dwarf-made rope around her body to secure the Heart in place. Finally, they must join Radsvid in chanting the words from an ancient book of runic lore.

As soon as the Heart touches Cybil, she writhes involuntarily. Someone must hold her down, using (Strength + Athletics) against Cybil's own (Strength + Athletics), so that another hero can loop a cord around her and secure the Heart in place. The Heart itself starts to radiate cold. If the first attempt to hold Cybil down fails, the Heart pulses and suddenly causes the temperature in the room to drop. All the dwarves except Radsvid flee to safer quarters, and everyone in the Band must attempt to soak one level of bashing damage from the sudden freeze.

Once the Heart is tied to Cybil, the Band can perform the rite of binding. At least one hero must hold Cybil in place while the others chant the words supplied by Radsvid, as she hisses and spits and writhes against the ropes.

Casting the spell is an extended action. For Radsvid's own protection, he chants the spell from the next room, but the Scions must repeat the words around Cybil for them to take effect. For each minute of the spell, roll the highest (Charisma + Occult) pool any member of the Band can provide, as they force the Heart of Winter into conjunction with Cybil to realign her body and spirit. With each roll, however, the Heart radiates a fiercer pulse of cold that affects everyone except Cybil herself. The damage rises by one die of lethal damage with each successive casting. One die of cold damage the first time the Scions recite the spell, two dice the second time and so on. The characters soak this damage as normal. The caster must accumulate 10 successes on this extended (Charisma + Occult) roll in order to finish the spell.

If any heroes have the Magic Purview, subtract the highest rating in this Purview from the necessary total successes. For instance, if a hero has Magic 2, the extended roll need accumulate only eight successes. What's more, if one of the heroes thinks to apply the Jotunblut Purview to the ritual, doing so reduces the required successes just like the use of the Magic Purview. Creating a sympathetic tie to Cybil by using the hero's own blood is a powerful ritual act.

If the character who serves as Radsvid's proxy stops, whether due to damage, running away or just plain giving up, another hero can pick up where the caster left off. The waves of cold emanate each time someone tries to advance the ritual. The ritual fails if the Band gives up completely, as Cybil shudders and dies. The Heart of Winter stops pulsating, and the Band is left wondering what to do next.

If the heroes succeed in casting the ritual, however, Cybil lets out a high-pitched screech and lies very still. The Heart of Winter crumbles and melts into her flesh. Cybil's breathing becomes regular once more, and the waves of cold subside. A few moments later, Cybil's eyes flicker open again and she asks the characters to untie her. As soon as she has a hand free, she scratches and tears at the scales on her neck, which peel away like dead snakeskin, revealing new, pink skin underneath. She straightens out her feet with a cracking sound, and finally stretches out, whole once more.

As a note, whoever finishes the spell of binding automatically gains a Fatebond with Cybil with strength of 3.

NEXT STEPS

Assuming the Band managed to heal Cybil, she's full of energy and ready to go right away. She also knows something important, now: her true heritage. Loki adopted her as a Scion, she explains to the Band, but her real mother was Gróa, a giant, a seeress and a witch. During the rite that just cured her, her mother communicated with her by means of a vision. Cybil warns that the giants have already used the power of the Heart of Winter to summon Fimbulvetr, and now it's up to the heroes to prepare for the onslaught. Since Fimbulvetr is on its way, the Band needs the prophecies of Gróa in order to survive it! Fortunately, Gróa told Cybil where to find her lodge.

If Cybil died, the Band is left holding the bag. The Scions know that Fimbulvetr is on the way and that they need some sort of guidance. The dwarves have little to tell, but they can offer a little advice. If Fimbulvetr is on its way, they say, maybe the Band should do what the Gods did in the face of disaster: consult a seer. In her feverish raving, the dwarves reveal, Cybil spoke of a witch named Gróa whose lodge could be found on the slopes of Mount Whitney.

Either way, the Band needs to head up into the Sierra Nevada mountains to Mount Whitney in search of a hidden magical lodge-house. If they saved Cybil, it's time for a family reunion... though Cybil's change of allegiance might cause some friction. If Cybil died, the characters' position is even worse. They have to beg for favors from the giant whose daughter just died under their watch. Even silver-tongued Loki wouldn't envy a job like that.

ACT THREE
END OF DAYS

The characters have finished their early phases of questing and learned, unfortunately, that they were too late to stop Fimbulvetr. Now, three years of winter are fated to set in. Already, the mortal populace suffers the spiritual effects of the coming supernatural winter. Worst of all, the Band doesn't know what to do next. The Gods aren't too forthcoming. They're already locked into their own fates, preparing for the inevitable with Ragnarök on the way. Lesser guides are clueless in this matter as well. The heroes need guidance, and that means consulting a prophet. Or, in this case, a prophetess.

On the upside, Cybil is no longer an issue—whether dead or healed. The Band's confrontation with the giants is over, for the moment. Now the Scions need to learn how they can play a role in the prophesied Doom of Midgard and if they can change anything for the better. It's the little things that make it all worthwhile.

Scene

SEEING CLEARLY

MENTAL •• PHYSICAL • SOCIAL ••

Prophecy: "Greater eyes than thine have seen far afield, but still the jotnar hold no love for the Aesir. Be wary of the sight of those who see your doom." The seeress Gróa has no desire to be helpful to heroes of the Aesir, but she will grudgingly speak to them under the rules of hospitality. Still, her riddlesome advice could do more harm than good.

Once the characters realize that they don't have a handle on what to do about Fimbulvetr, they have little choice: They must seek the advice of someone with greater wisdom. Their guides point them helpfully toward Gróa, just as the dwarves and Cybil did, with the cryptic warning that any of the Aesir who seeks out foreknowledge of the future tends to find himself bound by its tragedies.

The heroes might decide to eschew Gróa and seek other aid, such as trying to reach the Well of Mimir (which is in Jotunheim, so good look with that) or looking for the advice of a different ally... or enemy. They could even go back to Gunnar, if they're ballsy! Most of the people they've met so far have little knowledge they can use. Even Gunnar, who told them that the "Jotunhammer" is coming and that its arrival will bring about Fimbulvetr doesn't know for sure what it is.

So, off to Mount Whitney the Scions must go. They probably want some cold-weather gear by this time. All of the snow must be getting tiresome... but they'll have three years to get used to it.

MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS

Climbing up Mount Whitney is a bit of a chore, but as long as at least one hero has a modicum of Athletics and Epic Strength or Epic Dexterity, the Band can survive it. Mortal mountain-climbers do it all the time.

Expeditions up Mount Whitney usually start from Bishop, back in the eastern Sierra Nevadas of northeastern California. As usual, the Scions find travel somewhat annoying. Mortals continue to act grumpy and suspicious. Abandoned cars, burned-out houses and police scuffles all become more common. The heroes might be happy to get away from mortal society and up into the mountains for a while.

The Scions do face the small problem that they don't know exactly where to find Gróa's home. Sure, it's up on Mount Whitney somewhere, but, as Cybil informs them, it moves. *And* it's supposed to be hidden from prying mortal eyes. They could spend days wandering around up there, freezing their butts off. Fortunately, Gróa isn't trying very hard to hide. (She sent for Cybil to bring the Band to her, after all.) Even if some mortal mountain climbers stumbled across her lodge-house in the meantime, her magic would suffice to erase their memories and send them back down the mountain. She could also simply make bothersome mortals disappear, as she has done on many occasions on many mountain slopes all over the World.

When the characters arrive, Gróa's home stands in one of the nooks of the mountain. It's long and low slung, like an old Nordic lodge-house. Scions with Epic Perception or a good pair of binoculars can even see it from the base of Mount Whitney. There's no mistaking it. The lodge-house stands out from the rest of the undeveloped mountainside. It has a stone front stoop, on which lie several pairs of downhill skis and a congeries of other discarded cold-weather gear (grim trophies testifying to Gróa's unwillingness to be bothered).

You can skip rolls or tribulations in the climb. The point is that the Band must enter the lodge-house and ask Gróa for help.

THE GIANT, THE WITCH AND THE WAR

If the players show Gróa the courtesy of knocking, her door creaks open without a hand to move it. Inside, the lodge-house is one long room with a timbered roof and narrow windows. Fireplaces stand on either side of the room, and a boiling pot hangs over one fireplace. Nooks in the walls to either side hold pallets for sleeping. At the very end is a screened-off section with a large wooden chair. A stooped, hunched, rather *large* old woman tends the boiling stew pot. As soon as the door opens (whether by knocking or by force), she snaps, "Come in and shut that door! I don't need melting snow all over my stoop!" When the last Scion closes the door behind him, the characters all feel a minute lurch under their feet as if the floor shifted a few centimeters back and forth. The sensation does not recur, but if anyone glances out the window at any time during the conversation with Gróa, he's in for a sight. The landscape outside blurs and shifts psychedelically as if the house is moving rapidly and randomly around the World.

Gróa, naturally, recognizes the Scions for what they are at once. As a witch and seeress, she's keen to things like Fateful Auras. She waits, though, to see if the Scions treat her with deference and respect.

Gróa is what you might call an unwilling agent of Fate. While she has useful information for the Scions, she's not on their side. Therefore, she couches her information in cryptic terms. She knows that the heroes have a powerful destiny ahead of them, and she's also a bit afraid of them—though not while they're within her house.

If the characters brought a cured Cybil with them, there's an awkward reunion moment. Gróa recognizes her daughter but says nothing. Cybil hesitantly makes the first attempt at introductions, and Gróa glances back at the stew-pot, then to her daughter again. "What's done is done," the giantess says, "as it was meant to be." Neither side seems much interested in hugs or bonding. Cybil even starts to ask why she was abandoned, but Gróa stops her, saying, "Tut-tut, you're Loki's daughter now. I just wanted to see you're well. There's more important things to deal with now."

The Band can ask Gróa questions. She answers them between cackles and coughs, but always with a bit of a twist or an unpleasant truth. Asking questions of Gróa is a lot like pulling teeth. In fact, each time a hero asks a question, he feels a distinct pounding in his forehead. Gróa then sprinkles some noxious herbs or pours a phial of fluid into her bubbling cauldron, and a puff of black smoke pours out. The Scion who asked the question loses a point of Willpower. If the Scion runs out of Willpower, a stabbing migraine overwhelms him and he finds himself unable to ask another question.

You can use Gróa's advice to seed any number of later story issues. The things that the Band needs to know most are:



• **"Is the Heart of Winter good for anything else?"** The characters might not know what to do with it if Cybil didn't survive. They might, alternatively, think it's somehow attached to Cybil. Either way, Gróa replies with a curt, "No."

• **"Why are you helping us?"** Gróa stirs her pot, then says, "Because we each play the role that Fate has assigned to us." She's Fatebound to act as a seer and prophet, whether she likes it or not.

• **"Is Fimbulvetr actually coming?"** Gróa chuckles at this one. "It'll be here as soon as you step out that door, dearie."

• **"What is the Jotunhammer?"** Groa seems confused at first, then she smiles maliciously as realization dawns. "That must be what they're calling the herald of Fimbulvetr. You'll see that soon enough."

• **"How can we survive Fimbulvetr and Ragnarök?"** This makes Gróa a bit cross. "That's the whole *point* of the exercise. *Nobody* survives, except the fated few. If you want to live, make sure your fates follow the plans laid out by prophecy."

• **"So what do we do next?"** Gróa chuckles at this question as well. "Why don't you ask the Gods? Ah, they're too busy running around seeing to their own funeral arrangements. Don't worry. The World has run itself long enough—it can end itself right on schedule. You want my advice? Get off Midgard before the Jotunhammer falls!"

• **"How do we get off Midgard?"** Gróa sighs and says, "The oldest man at the bottom of the mountain can get you safely away. You'll have to pay his tithe, though."

Gróa can answer other questions, as desired. While she's Fatebound to tell the truth, she can leave out important details, and she looks for painful truths that anger the Scions or force them to confront uncomfortable facts about themselves. If any Scion has conspicuously violated Aesir Virtues (such as by quitting a task that seemed too difficult or slow or by betraying a comrade or the like), Gróa calls them on it.

Once the heroes finish with their questions, Gróa takes a jar of leaves and sprinkles them into the fire. The characters feel that same nigh-imperceptible lurch in the floor and hear howls from outside the door. "It's time to leave, dearies," Gróa chuckles. "With Fimbulvetr coming, this neighborhood isn't as nice as it used to be. As for me, I'm moving my house." Gróa gestures for the door. "You'd better get a move on, unless you want to wind up in Muspelheim!"

The characters can stick around if they like. True to her word, if they don't budge, Gróa transports her house to a mountain in Muspelheim. In that case, the Band is pretty well stuck in the middle of a Greater Titan where *everything* burns, and anyone without Fire Immunity who steps out Gróa's door fries. They can get back on track only if they beg Gróa to return them to Midgard, and bribe her with a suitable gift or an oath of service. Gróa, for her part, *loves* raking people over the coals like this. She'll help, but that help won't come cheap.

OOPS... THE BAND ATTACKED GRÓA

If the characters threaten Gróa, she warns them quite clearly that her house lies under a powerful spell. Anyone who sheds blood within its walls will find herself slaying a loved one within a fortnight. Obviously, two weeks' time is a bit of a ways off right now, but this curse is quite genuine. If anyone *does* shed someone else's blood within the house, the curse takes effect exactly as described. The Scion won't know whom she's fated to kill until Fate weaves its convoluted threads into an inescapable plot.

As an aside, if the Scions are both clever and angry, someone might come up with the bright idea of *strangling* Gróa. Technically, it won't shed her blood in the house, so it won't activate the curse. Yet, for her part, Gróa is as she appears: a shriveled old giantess who can appear youthful only by using magic and potions. She's essentially a helpless old woman who can't stand up to a Band of healthy young Scions bent on courageously holding her down and heroically stuffing a pillow over her face.

Scene

ULLER'S PATH

MENTAL – PHYSICAL ••• SOCIAL –

Prophecy: "Time is your bitterest enemy. Fenris howls and his vargr are loose. Now nipping at your heels, their numbers are too great." This scene is straightforward. The characters have to head downhill as fast as possible. Whoever casts this prophecy becomes the first target for the titanspawn outside.

As the heroes exit Gróa's lodge, they see that they're not on Mount Whitney anymore. (After all its disorienting travels, Gróa's lodge-house has wound up a short distance east, into the White Mountains, some 25 miles from civilization.) From the hills all around come the sounds of wolf howls. As Gróa's door shuts behind the heroes, they see a huge wave

of fenrir crest the mountaintop high above the home. (Gróa has used her magic to lure them here to make the characters' exit from Midgard... memorable.) Small groups of the giant wolves break off and charge the Band! Make it clear that even the heroes can't fight this many creatures. A heroic stand against a dozen would be awesome, but the *hundreds* thundering down toward them are just too much.

Adding to the chaos, a bright point of light is visible in the sky, even if it's daytime. That's the incoming sign of Fimbulvetr, specifically the Jotunhammer.

SKI LIKE YOU'RE JAMES BOND

At this point, if the players ask for anything that stands out about their surroundings, remind them of the large pile of skis and other equipment on the front stoop (assuming they don't already have skis of their own, or the Wind's Freedom Boon, or Uller's Stride...). The heroes have just enough time to get some skis on and start schussbooming down the mountainside if they want to evade the fenrir. Alternatively, they can just run for it and try not to break their necks on the way down.

But if they can get away from the fenrir, what do they do? Well, Gróa *did* mention something about "the oldest man" who's apparently "at the bottom of the mountain" and can get them safely away. That's a huge hint about a noteworthy aspect of their surroundings. Strange pine trees with short but thick and immensely gnarled trunks dot the landscape a few hundred feet downslope from the Scions' present position. A successful (Intelligence + Academics) roll at difficulty 4 (or the Know-It-All Knack or perhaps other means) tells the characters that Gróa brought them to the ancient bristlecone pine forest. This stand of trees is famous for the trees' age and their ability to survive with only a tiny fraction of a tree alive at any one time. (Most of the trees look dead except for a few twigs that bear sprays of needles.) This stand is also the home of Methuselah—an ancient bristlecone pine tree of tremendous age and girth, named for the oldest man in the Bible. That's where the Scions need to go.

See page 317 of **Scion: Hero** for fenrir traits. As the heroes make their way toward the bristlecone pine stand, small groups of fenrir come tearing down the hill toward them. Scions on foot make it down the hillside to the pine forest after accumulating 30 successes on an extended roll of (Dexterity + Athletics). Scions on skis or using Uller's Stride get there after accumulating only 20 successes. Fenrir, easily able to run fast enough to chase the Scions, nip at their heels the whole time. The Scions can strike back—especially effective if someone has a gun and a little biathlon training—but any action a character takes other than fleeing downhill suffers the penalty for multiple actions, unless a character stops fleeing. If they stop, more and more fenrir have time to reach them. When a fleeing character stops—either as a result of a botched (Dexterity + Athletics) roll, or just to take a different action without penalties—he has 10 ticks before the nearest fenrir reach him. If he doesn't get moving again before then, call for Join Battle rolls from his player versus those of the nearest fenrir. And make it clear that the longer he takes, the brighter the unusual point of light in the sky becomes.

Keep track of how many successes each Scion amasses during the journey down. If a fenrir manages to knock down or incapacitate a character, someone else might have to go back up the hillside to rescue him. Going up is much harder than skiing down, of course. Compare the difference between the number of successes the downed character has accumulated and the number of successes the would-be rescuer has accumulated. The rescuer's player must roll *twice* that many successes on (Dexterity + Athletics) rolls in order to backtrack uphill. (It's harder to climb than to descend.) The whole time, she must fight off any fenrir between her and her down comrade, which gang up on any would-be rescuer.

(The mechanics of this evacuation and chase might seem a little "rules-lite," even for **Scion**, but that's intentional. This sequence, which is intended primarily as a breathtaking action set-piece, would bog down interminably if you tried to play it out tick-by-tick based on how far the principle characters can travel in Move or Dash actions. You can run it that way if that's your prerogative, but you don't have to if you don't want to. If you like, you can just treat the horde of fenrir as an environmental hazard, chivvying slower characters along toward the scene's inevitable conclusion.)

As the heroes head down the hillside, motes of light and bright streaks cross the sky, seeming to emerge from the unusual point of light the characters noticed when they left Gróa's lodge-house. A successful (Perception + Science) roll determines that they are chunks of meteorite. The unusual point of light, it turns out, is a tremendous meteor breaking up in the atmosphere and very soon to crash into the Earth. Smaller advance chunks of it strike the mountainside and the landscape in the near distance. None of the impacts come close enough to harm the Scions, but they emphasize the urgency of the Band's situation. Between the oncoming horde of fenrir and the big impact of what can only be the Jotunhammer itself, the Band has to get out of Midgard—*now*.

Note that your players might decide that their characters' Courage Virtue urges them to stand and fight, even against these overwhelming odds. Remind them that Courage in this case also means fighting through the waves of fenrir to accomplish their mission. Their Courage won't accomplish a lot if they die without fulfilling their duty to the Aesir.

Scene

RAGNA-ROCK

MENTAL ••• PHYSICAL ••• SOCIAL –

Prophecy: "A sacrifice is necessary to find the path. Wisdom comes always at a painful price." Odin learned magic by hanging on the World Tree. The way to escape Midgard via Methuselah will cost the heroes their blood and perhaps more, depending upon their situation.

It's all coming down now. A huge meteor, the Jotunhammer, is about to slam into the Earth and create three years of winter. Fenrir lured here by Gróa's magic surround the Band and close in. The ancient bristlecone pine tree Methuselah, a natural Touchstone connected to Yggdrasil, is here somewhere but it's no longer labeled by the ranger service because of vandalism. Things look bleak, which is par for the course for the Aesir.

From the bristlecone pine forest of the White Mountains, the Band can see Nevada to the east—a large and featureless desert broken by some mountain peaks and badlands—and the tiny road and parking lot that mark this park site. The trick is to find out which tree is Methuselah and figure out how to use it to escape.

THE OLDEST TREE IN THE BOOK

Having accumulated the successes they need to reach the bristlecone pines, the characters have a quick moment to look around and assess the situation. A successful (Perception + Survival) roll enables a character to spot quite a few tracks in the sparse forest, but it won't give a clue as to which tree is the key. A successful (Perception + Investigation) roll after noticing the tracks, though, reveals that one set of the tracks shows the spikes characteristic of heavy boots for someone who probably works up in this area often—a ranger, who likely has the job of making sure that Methuselah hasn't been vandalized. Instant Investigator has the same effect. (If the characters have interpreted Gróa's "oldest man" hint literally and are searching for an actual human being, these tracks are as good a sign of how to find him as any.)

As they move through the forest, the Scions must fight off one fenrir after another as groups of the wolves catch up to them. Use however many you need to challenge the group. Start with three, then add one or two every 10 ticks after the Band kills one of them. The Band must weave through the trees, follow the tracks and find Methuselah. Meanwhile, the fenrir close in and surround them, keeping a loose circle, trying to attack and tear down one Scion at a time. If the Scions could not find the tracks, they'll eventually stumble across Methuselah anyway as long as they keep moving. Finding Methuselah takes three miscellaneous actions of following the tracks. Otherwise, finding the occult center of the forest involves accumulating 10 successes in an extended (Perception + Occult) roll—all while being nipped at by fenrir.

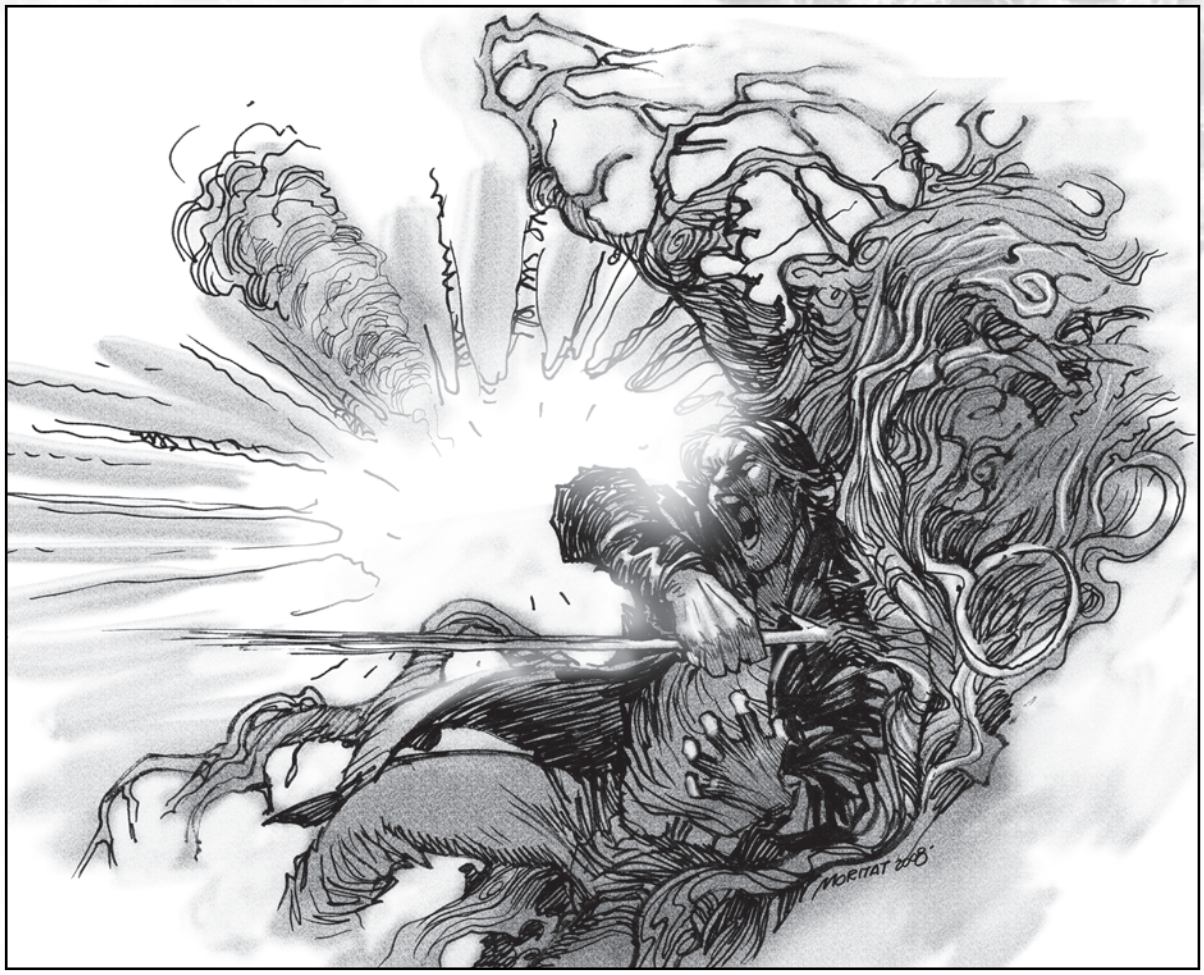
Eventually, the Band finds an old tree with scars on its bark and trunk from people carving their initials or various symbols into it years ago when it bore a sign designating it as the oldest living thing on the planet. Now, decades later, those scars have faded, and they bear a striking resemblance to Norse runes. The Scions have found Methuselah. In it, they have discovered a natural Touchstone connected to Yggdrasil, the World Tree which connects all layers of reality.

YGGDRASIL

The Scions most likely know already that Yggdrasil, the World Tree, is the Axis Mundi that connects Midgard to Asgard (and other realms). They might also know that Yggdrasil provides a passage into Helheim (as described on p. 159 of **Scion: Demigod**), and that any ash tree can serve as a conduit to this passage.

Well, Yggdrasil is also an archetypal feature of the Overworld that can have Touchstones in the World. Many cultures have myths of a tree that connects the mortal World to divine realms. That makes Yggdrasil a prime example of a "natural Touchstone" location. (See Chapter Two for more information on natural Touchstones.)

What would be the Touchstones to reach Yggdrasil? Any ash tree works for the Aesir. Once a God or Scion crawls through an ash tree's roots into Helheim, nothing stops her from climbing the World Tree to other realms—except Scions can't enter Godrealms until they become Gods themselves. (Going from Yggdrasil to the Dark Forest would seem plausible, though.) Especially sacred trees are another possibility, such as the thorn tree on Glastonbury Tor (said to have miraculously sprung from Joseph of Arimathea's staff) or the Bo tree in India where the Buddha achieved enlightenment. And finally, the World Tree is eternal, which makes Methuselah—the oldest tree in the World—a natural Touchstone to the oldest tree in the Nine Worlds.



WATERING THE TREE

Once the Band finds Methuselah, the Scions need to "find the center" in order open the natural Touchstone and disappear into Yggdrasil's boughs. But how? The Scions don't have a lot of time to figure this one out. Not only are they entirely surrounded by slavering fenrir, but broken-off meteorites are coming down thicker and closer than before. What's more, the central Jotunhammer meteor is burning up the sky overhead, its trajectory making its point of impact somewhere very nearby. If they don't leave before the Jotunhammer falls... well, let's just say the whole Ragnarök question will be moot for them.

Using the natural Touchstone to escape requires a blood sacrifice of some sort. The characters might intuitively get the right idea straight away. After all, Odin impaled himself to the World Tree to learn songs of power and the magic of runes. If the mythic resonance of such an act doesn't occur to the characters, Gróa's hint about paying the old man's tithe might spur their imaginations in the right direction. If nothing else, remembering that hint might remind the characters of the prophecy Cybil received shortly after the characters rescued her. It spoke of a "tithe of blood" that "controls the gate." If the players can't seem to put those clues together, you can have one or more of them roll (Intelligence) at difficulty 2 to work it out.

The nature of the blood sacrifice is relatively simple. In order to use Methuselah as a natural Touchstone, a character must shed at least one lethal health level worth of his blood onto the tree. Doing so, the character can then begin to climb, disappearing from the others' sight. If a character sheds his last health level to use this natural Touchstone, the others can use it as well without shedding their own blood—one character's sacrifice ensures the others' safety.

STOP THE PLANET, I WANT TO GET OFF

Once the characters activate the natural Touchstone, they vanish from Midgard and appear in the branches of the World Tree itself. See page 121 of **Scion: God** for information about Yggdrasil and places to which it connects. The important thing is that once the heroes arrive there, they are out of reach of the fenrir and safe for the moment. (The fenrir might have been clever enough to figure out the trick of using the natural Touchstone for themselves, but they didn't have time.) The characters achieve their goal in the nick of time, escaping from Midgard just as the Jotunhammer falls.

And fall it does. As the Scions evacuate, the falling meteor cuts a blazing gash across the sky and strikes in a blinding white flash. Las Vegas is gone. A few minutes later, a tremendous *boom* echoes through the sky. A cloud of smoke and dust rises in a great pillar,

and keeps rising until it hits the top of the atmosphere and spreads out. The mountains themselves shake, and the fenrir howl and run for cover. Moments later, a great avalanche of snow and soil comes roiling down the hillside toward the stand of trees, destroying the ancient forest and the hordes of fenrir thronging all throughout it.

Upon the World Tree, the heroes finally catch their breath, and they find one of the alfar waiting for them. (It could be Auric Broder, from p. 296 of **Scion: Hero**, or a character of your own invention.) Having escaped Midgard, the Band is safe for the moment, able to avoid the worst of the devastation that's flattening the World. Earthquakes, floods, fire from secondary impacts, tsunamis—it's all happening, every bit of devastation foretold in the *Völuspá*. The lesser immortal who meets them sympathizes with the characters and recognizes that they may have left loved ones behind in the lurch. He or she stresses, however, that they must survive to Ragnarök so they can participate in the final battle. Getting off Midgard was the only way to guarantee that when the Jotunhammer hit, the heroes would survive.

The heroes probably have many questions and need much help. Their temporary divine guide can help them navigate the branches of the World Tree to take them somewhere safe. They might want to meet with the Gods, but that's not possible at the moment: They carry too much mortality to enter Asgard. For the time being, the lesser immortal takes the heroes to a cottage nestled in Yggdrasil's boughs where they can feast, rest and relate their tales of glory. After they recuperate a bit, the messenger can return them to Midgard so that they can deal with the aftermath of destruction and perhaps help some of their mortal friends and families.

With that, Fimbulvetr begins. NASA explains that an asteroid intersected Earth's orbit. Its path through space was such that no one spotted it until it skimmed past the moon. Astronomers and satellites spotted it only mere hours before impact. The scientists predict three years of winter from the dust kicked up by the impact.

Within days, people start calling the impact the Jotunhammer, though no one can say exactly who started using that name.

Tensions rise between nations, as they gird themselves for war over food that will become scarce in the ensuing winter. Society teeters on the brink of ruin—just the kind of scenario that will need the heroes at their best, performing great deeds to increase their Legend, until it's time for them to travel to Asgard and take their place among the Gods, at the final battle!

...BUT ARMAGEDDON SUCKED

If you find the idea of a big space rock striking the Earth a bit tired or too science-fictional, you can always usher in your Fimbulvetr in some other way. Maybe the Heart of Winter made dormant volcanoes erupt all around the globe, spreading ash and dust that leads to winter (as in **Scion: Demigod**). Or perhaps the Atlantic currents suddenly shift like in *The Day After Tomorrow*, kicking the Earth's climate suddenly into Ice Age mode. Or, hell, it just *happens* with no material explanation at all, and all those scientists must confront the possibility that the laws of nature were really just strong suggestions. How you end the World is up to you. Whatever happens, the heroes don't want to be caught in the avalanche at the pine forest, surrounded by fenrir!

Perhaps you even want to use a *symbolic* winter. Maybe no great calamity befalls the World physically. Maybe it's just a worsening of the winter that falls over the hearts of men and women everywhere. From presidents and prime ministers to the clerk at the video store, everyone starts acting more ruthless and callous. In this scenario, the Band's future tales are set not in a catastrophe-laden post-disaster World, but in a dystopia in which the bonds of society have disintegrated.

Whichever route you choose, the Scions should have plenty of opportunities to earn their demigod Legend ratings, and then proceed into the next arc of the Ragnarök saga!



HIGHWAY TO HEL

CHAPTER SEVEN

In the course of "The Coming of Winter," the young Scions learned that Ragnarök—the real, no kidding, Doom of the Gods—is about to begin. The impact of a meteor, the Jotunhammer, brought the prophecied Fimbulvetr along with death and destruction on a massive scale. Now, more than any time since the Age of Legend, humanity needs heroes and the help of the Gods. The Aesir are busy mustering for their final war, so protecting Midgard falls to the Scions.

Prophecy, however, speaks of other events that must happen before the Doom of the Gods can occur. Chief among them is the death of Baldur the Bright, most beloved of the Aesir. The next chapter in the Ragnarök saga comes a year into Fimbulvetr, as mortal society crumbles and the minions of the Titans grow ever bolder. As the Scions strive to hold Midgard together, the prophecy of Baldur's death is fulfilled. Odin drafts the Scions on a mission that seems doomed to failure. That tale is already written, even to the Scions' participation, and their failure seems ordained. At least their futile mission gives them a chance to save humanity from a further catastrophe engineered by titanspawn conspirators. As they fulfill their mission, however, the Scions learn that behind the tale that Gods and mortals thought they knew lies a deeper, stranger plot. Perhaps Fate offers the Scions greater freedom than they thought.



SYNOPSIS

After a routine bit of heroism, the Scions receive a surprise visit from Odin's raven Hugin, with a dire message: Baldur the Bright is murdered, and his killer has escaped to Midgard. The Scions happen to be the nearest ones. Odin commands the Scions to find the killer—Hod, the blind God of Night and Winter—and avenge Baldur's slaying. While killing a fugitive God is not easy, the Band can pull it off since Hod isn't very powerful. The characters' success not only burnishes their glory, it reveals their place in Fate. They are indeed the figures prophecied to carry out the next step in Baldur's postmortem saga.

The long-foretold tale of Baldur's death says that the Band (or one member, at least) will ride Odin's horse, Sleipnir, to Helheim and plead for Baldur's resurrection. Unfortunately, the Band's pursuit of Hod reveals that Hel has closed off the normal means of reaching her domain. The wise All-Father has an alternative. He knows of *another* means of access: an oil platform called Sleipner (spelled with an -er instead of an -ir) in the North Sea, that has become a weak place between Midgard and the Underworld. From there, the Scions can enter Helheim.

When the Scions reach the North Sea, they find a war on. As they already saw, Fimbulvetr destroys the bonds of honor and loyalty among mortals. NATO has split into factions that want all the North Sea oil for themselves. To reach Sleipner, the Band must pass a gauntlet of two modern navies... that are about to go nuclear.

More than human greed and desperation is at work, though. Minions of the Titans infiltrate both militaries and push the battle to a nuclear spasm that will fulfill the prophecy of Midgard's destruction by fire and ice—or at least Western Europe, the bulk of the world known to the old Norse. Giants out of Jotunheim also prowl unseen through the North Sea, attacking both sides.

Once the Scions reach Sleipner past the giants who occupy it, they can ride to Helheim. Once the Band reaches Hel's Hall, Baldur reveals the real story behind his death and gives the Scions a powerful weapon that could change the outcome of Ragnarök. Fate, they find, has not yet locked the Scions into a predestined doom. They cannot save the Aesir, but they can save themselves and Midgard. Finally, the Gods attempt a powerful rite to raise Baldur from the dead, only to face interference from an unexpected source.

BEHIND THE SCENES

When Snorri Sturluson told the tale of Baldur's death in the *Prose Edda*, he wrote true prophecy—but he never knew Baldur's full story, which places all the events of the well-known tale in a completely different context. The *Prose Edda* (and "Baldur's Dream" in the earlier *Poetic Edda*) describes Baldur's death as a vicious, premeditated murder by Loki, but it's actually a suicide designed to complete a pattern that began more than 1,000 years before.

In the Dark Ages, Baldur, Hod and Nanna were all Scions in Northern Europe. Baldur and Hod both fell in love with Nanna. Even then, Odin and many other Aesir

favored the handsome Baldur. Hod sought countervailing aid and found it in the Iron Wood, in the form of a doom-haunted sword called Mistletoe. Hod dealt Baldur a mortal blow. The young demigod died a lingering death—a straw death that sent him to Helheim. (See Chapter One for Saxo Grammaticus' version of the story.)

Baldur, however, seduced Hel herself. He persuaded Hel to deny him death this time, promising to rejoin her the next time he died. His victory over death gave Baldur the Legend to become a full God. Hod witnessed his resurrection, when for a moment—so Hod says—Baldur blazed as The Glory, and the sight struck his killer blind. Baldur the Bright claimed Nanna as his wife. While Hod became a God as well, it was only as an adjunct to Baldur's own Legend.

Baldur also claimed the sword Mistletoe for his own, reasoning that the weapon that already killed him once was too dangerous to leave loose. Mistletoe sent many foes of the Aesir to Hel as ransom for Baldur's long-delayed second death. (Or perhaps Hel considered them love-offerings.)

When Frigg extracted (or extorted) promises from all things in the Nine World not to harm Baldur, his vulnerability to mistletoe was no oversight. The *sword* Mistletoe had already slain Baldur. The power of Fate, working through the identity of names, meant that Baldur could never become invulnerable to the plant either. This exception didn't mean very much, though. The plant mistletoe has weak stems that no one could ever turn into an effective weapon. Many times, Baldur reassured the Aesir by poking himself with a twig of mistletoe. Indeed, his divine resilience did not protect him, but the plant could barely harm a mortal. What did he have to fear?

When Baldur saw the start of Fimbulvetr, he knew that he was fated to die again soon. Yet he was also destined to live again after Ragnarök. Rather than fret needlessly, Baldur sought a way to turn his preordained death to the Aesir's advantage. He realized that he could potentially turn his own sword into a tool to alter Fate. A weapon that kills a God (or even a demigod) gains legendary power; a weapon that killed the same God *twice* should gain even greater power. Perhaps it would be great enough to break the chains of Fate that bound the Aesir to their doom. But Baldur could not simply fall on the blade. It had to be murder, and hapless Hod had to replay his role as Baldur's killer.

The *Eddas* even told Baldur whom to use as his pawn: Loki. Despite the God of Mischief's immensely greater cunning, Baldur knew that Loki couldn't resist a practical joke. Baldur easily talked Loki into slipping Hod a dart made of mistletoe plant—a dart that couldn't harm a mortal, let alone a God. As Baldur explained to Loki, he would shout in pretend pain when the dart struck him, clutch himself as if wounded and give his ridiculously overprotective mother a little panic attack. Then he would reveal that he wasn't harmed, and everyone (except Frigg) would have a good laugh at the prank. Loki played his fated part, never stopping to realize—*Fatebound* not to realize—that he fulfilled a lethal prophecy. Or, perhaps his malice toward the Aesir was great enough by that time that he didn't care. The mistletoe dart Baldur gave Loki to give Hod was actually the fateful sword Mistletoe, enchanted into a new shape and resuming its true form the moment it struck Baldur.

And so, Baldur died. The Aesir did not take revenge on Hod right away because the deed happened in the sacred hall of Gladsheim where Odin forbade the shedding of blood, no matter how just the cause. Baldur had also left a note absolving Hod—and even Loki—of blame. Here, however, is where Baldur's plan goes wrong.

The moment Loki sees Mistletoe pierce Balder, the Lie-Smith realizes he's been set up and no one will ever believe him. So he tries to cover his tracks. He poses as Hugin to tell the Scions about Baldur's murder, hoping they can kill Hod before Hod reveals Loki's complicity. Baldur's wife, Nanna, dies of a broken heart when she reads his suicide note, whereupon her body joins his on his funeral pyre. Some time between when she dies and when her body is found, Baldur's note is lost. The Aesir never see it.

Finally, the Bright God doesn't anticipate that while Nanna doesn't want to share her husband with Hel, even less does she want Baldur to live again and leave her bereft in Helheim. She, not Loki, disguises herself as the hag Thokk and refuses to weep for Baldur. But Loki, incriminated by his attempts to cover up his involvement, gets blamed for everything. His anger at being used stokes his growing enmity against the Aesir, and his punishment completes his ruin and defection to the side of the Titans. Baldur gains his weapon, but at a terrible price. Once again, an attempt to interfere with Fate blows back on the Aesir, potentially causing more harm than it is designed to avert.

STORYTELLER'S TOOLKIT: WINTER OF THE WORLD

A WIND-AGE

"Highway to Hel" begins about a year into Fimbulvetr. The Jotunhammer impact kills everyone within 200 miles of Las Vegas, while secondary disasters kill people in locations around the World. But the impact is just the beginning. The dust from the impact darkens the skies. The most severe blockage of sunlight lasts just a week, but the northern temperate latitudes have no real summer, just a few months of milder cold. Through heroic effort and intensive use of smudge pots to warm the fields, regions that normally enjoy warm or mild climates manage poor harvests of cold-tolerant crops such as turnips and barley. Even in the tropics and southern hemisphere, the chill and disrupted weather patterns devastate crops. Food prices skyrocket. Those who can buy food hoard it. Those who can't grow it either steal it or starve. Governments call out their armies to suppress food riots. Some bomb select cities in order to pacify their people and cut down on the number of mouths to feed.

Some countries turn to the sea and feed themselves for several months, but the darkness and cold of Fimbulvetr decimates the plankton that sustain most marine life. The oceans are soon well and truly fished out. One year into Fimbulvetr, famine has already killed 100 times more people than the Jotunhammer itself. Forecasters predict

that before the three-year winter ends, three billion people will starve or die from the plagues that already rip through hunger-weakened populations. Countless millions of refugees head toward the equator in hopes of finding food, overwhelming the armies sent out to stop them.

The wars begin almost at once after the Jotunhammer. In dozens of countries, discontented tribes and factions use the chaos to secede, seize power or settle old scores. Other countries fight each other over food and fuel. China overwhelms Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia to turn them into plantations worked at gunpoint. North Korea extorts food from South Korea and Japan using the threat of nuclear weapons. The United States does not threaten to punish such attacks. It's too busy fighting in Venezuela, Nigeria and the Persian Gulf for control of the oilfields.

The minions of the Titans act ever more boldly. The vast media network that placed so much of Midgard under humanity's Fatebinding gaze shreds with everything else. Satellite phones still work, but other forms of communication become unreliable. If giants sack a town, odds are that only the townsfolk see them. If cultists burn people in their homes as sacrifices to Surtr, the neighbors only try to protect themselves. The lesser creatures of Legend become the first to show themselves. Yet the greater, who have more to fear from Fatebinding, eventually bestir themselves as well. Ghosts and spectres walk most openly of all. The Jotunhammer killed tens of millions in minutes. Many of the slain become ghosts, while the shock wave of death briefly forces open all the passages between World and Underworld, releasing countless spirits from Helheim.

The Scions move through a World filled with ancient myths and legends, all of them dark, terrifying and deadly... except their own.

A WOLF-AGE

Fimbulvetr affects the human soul as well as the weather, making the devastation much worse than it needs to be. More than hardship dissolves the bonds of trust and law. The Dark Virtues of the Titans infect all mortal souls, driving them to ruthless greed, cruelty and fanaticism. Every mortal now carries one dot in one of the Dark Virtues. Therefore, when a person finds an opportunity to gain some advantage at the expense of others, there's a chance that Ambition overpowers any loyalty, morality or sense of long-term consequences. Likewise, mortals find moments of irritation or dislike magnified into vicious Malice, while attraction or avarice becomes blind Rapacity. Even those who hold fast to codes of conduct risk having their ethics corrupted into rigid Zealotry that ignores human costs for blind obedience or abstract principles. Crime becomes universal and frequently monstrous. People kill each other over petty rivalries, passing insults or a bit of food. Rape—sometimes incestuous—becomes immensely more frequent. If the authorities even try to maintain order, they swiftly become tyrants. No one is safe anywhere.

Some people have more than one Dark Virtue, or more than one dot. They accept the Titans' ways wholeheartedly as monsters in human form, with the Zealotry of Torquemada, the Rapacity of Jeffrey Dahmer, the Malice of Vlad the Impaler and the Ambition of Genghis Khan. They might not even stay outwardly human. In dreams, the Titans reveal to them methods of becoming werewolves or other forms of titanspawn.

The Titans' spiritual taint has only one cure: Fatebinding to a God or Scion. The mortal does not need to *like* the Scion, but within the limits of the role that Fate binds to him, he can think for himself and resist the Titans' Dark Virtues. Mortals remain immune to the Titans' taint after the Fatebinding ends. Scions, therefore, face a choice between letting the human race turn monstrous or deliberately binding mortals to themselves... and vice-versa.

BEING THERE

Baldur's death happens "off camera" because the players' characters cannot do anything to stop it—and if heroic characters suspect what's about to happen, they *will* try to intervene. Nevertheless, players also enjoy their characters' presence at big events. If you want to bring the Scions into Baldur's death, you need to set the stage so the event comes as a genuine surprise. The earlier you establish this, the better.

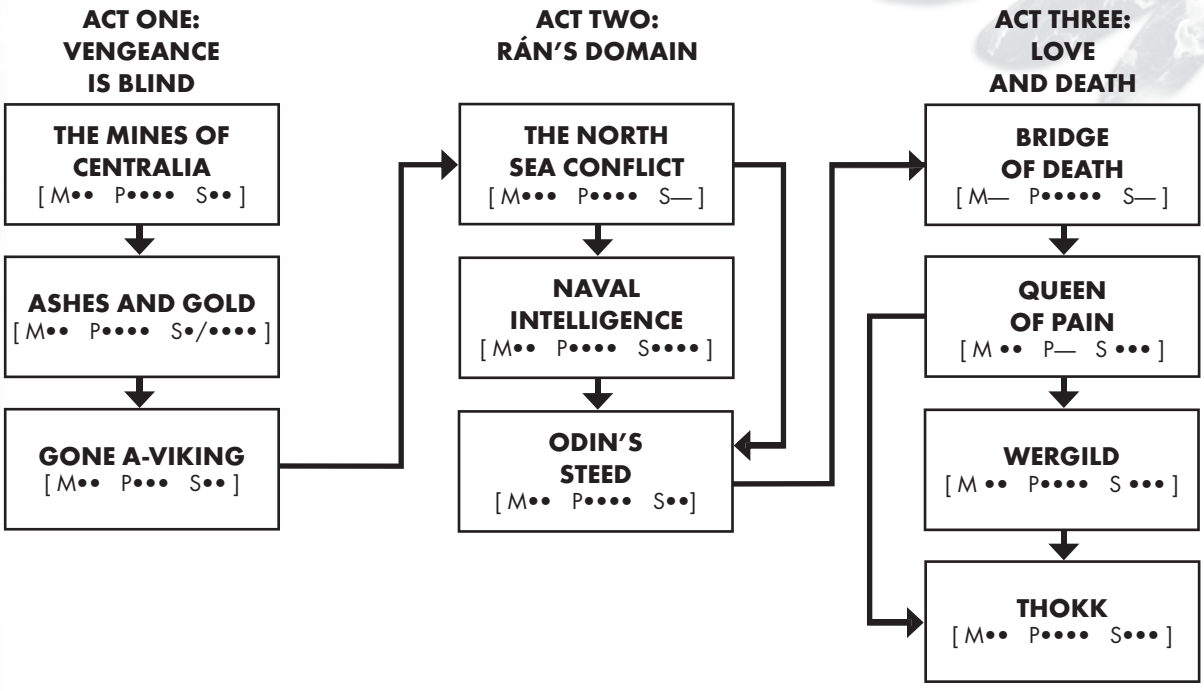
First, you must establish that the *plant* mistletoe cannot harm Baldur. You can do so in an interlude during the Scions' own adventures, in which Baldur visits them briefly for some peripheral reason. The details don't matter, as long as the Scions get to meet the famous God and see that he's a swell guy. Then a titanspawn, cultist or other no-goodnik jumps out and stabs Baldur with a sprig of mistletoe. Baldur isn't hurt. Baldur smacks down his assailant and explains the true conditions of his invulnerability to the Scions. Something like that.

You also need to establish the Aesir's "game" of throwing things at Baldur and watching them bounce off him. This too can happen in the course of the Scions' earlier adventures, in which they meet a group of Aesir and Baldur shows off his invulnerability. Maybe he slips a mistletoe dart to another Aesir, and plays a comically overblown "death scene."

At last, you can bring the now-demigod Scions on a visit to Asgard and maneuver them into Gladsheim. Distract them with some other issue, such as a flirtation with a valkyrie or a debriefing from Odin. And then Baldur dies. Then, however, you need some other way to maneuver the Scions into the confrontation with Hod after the blind God's escape.

HIGHWAY TO HEL

Scenes 10 [Mental •• Physical •••• Social ••] XP Level 120–179



ACT ONE
VENGEANCE IS BLIND

In this act, the Scions confront Baldur's killer, the blind deity Hod. They learn about Baldur's death but receive hints that it did not happen quite the way the stories predicted. They also learn that Hel—or someone—seems determined to keep anyone from following Baldur into the Underworld.

For the last year, the Scions have traveled the country (or perhaps the World), seeking out the servants of the Titans and stomping on them. This chapter of the Scions' saga begins with them facing a force of giants. Players can compare their Scions' prowess as demigods against enemies they once fought as heroes.

Scene

THE MINES OF CENTRALIA

MENTAL •• PHYSICAL •••• SOCIAL ••

Prophecy: "A fallen God of nighted hue walks paths of flame and sorrow. Let not his tinkering consume the promise of tomorrow. The west wind chained to fan their flames makes the villains bold. The sons of Muspel take the town whose center does not hold." The svartalf Blárvaldr seeks to open a passage to Muspelheim in the derelict town of Centralia, Pennsylvania. He and his fire giant minions already brought through a number of beasts from Muspelheim. If they succeed and turn this burned-out town into an outpost for Surtr, the Titans come one step closer to destroying the World. While this has nothing *directly* to do with the quest to Helheim, any chance to foil one of the Titans' plans is worth taking.

The Band passes near Centralia through the mischances of travel... or Fate. Whether they hop a train, steal a truck or ride horses, they end up passing through Pennsylvania. The train detours because somebody tore up the tracks, a destroyed bridge forces them to take a different highway, *whatever*.

THE REFUGEES' TALE

Before the Scions come within 30 miles of Centralia, they encounter refugees fleeing bandits—very *large* bandits with a taste for arson, who dress in chain mail and wield enormous axes and torches. The bandits were obviously fire giants.

The refugees came from the town of Shamokin and hope to find safety in larger Harrisburg. As the refugees tell it, the giant bandits roared into town in large panel trucks. They killed everyone who resisted, burned everyone's homes and carried off able-bodied young men and women. One refugee adds that some of the raiders drove a truck straight to a big-box home-improvement store, though she doesn't know what they wanted. Still, she notes with some satisfaction that the bandits slaughtered the thugs employed by the store's onetime manager, who used his local monopoly of building materials and tools to set himself up as a town strongman. The bandits burned him alive in the parking lot.

It is possible, of course, that the characters might want to just pass on by, ignoring the puzzle of vicious fire giants who loot hardware stores and obviously have *some* evil plan. Time to fail some Courage rolls.

INQUIRIES

Assuming the Scions *do* want to pursue the giants, they need to do some investigation. They have a number of options, both mundane and supernatural.

• **Fiery Places.** If the Scions think to ask the refugees or other local folk about places in the area that are particularly fiery, they immediately hear about Centralia—a town where the ground is literally burning away.

• **Shamokin.** The giants burned whatever they didn't loot, killing whoever couldn't run or wasn't worth enslaving. Searching the still-smoking wreckage reveals that the giants took generators before they burned the town. They also cleared out the home-improvement store's stock of plumbing pipes and tools, as well as air conditioners. In fact, they ripped out the store's own AC compressor. This is obvious with Instant Investigator and similar Knacks. Otherwise, finding this information requires a (Perception + Investigation) roll, difficulty 5.

• **Other Towns.** The town of Mount Carmel lies a few miles up the road from Shamokin. The giants struck here too. (Refugees already passed through Shamokin, but these townsfolk denied them refuge.) Here, the giants concentrated on a company called Zephyr Air Technologies.

Before the Scions even have time to check Ashland, Shenandoah, Pottsville or Mahanoy City, they notice a huge column of smoke rising from Centralia as the giants and their masters assemble and test their infernal device.

CENTRALIA

Centralia, Pennsylvania, was abandoned long before Fimbulvetr. In 1972, the town did its yearly landfill burn, and the fire spread down into veins of coal—the very coal the town once mined. The slow-burning coal fires spread beneath the entire town, sending up sooty smoke, heating and cracking the roads, opening sinkholes and collapsing houses. No conceivable human effort could extinguish the fires, and the coal veins will keep burning for decades more.

KING COAL RE-CROWNED

This part of Pennsylvania is coal-mining country. The mining industry declined through the latter half of the 20th century, as did many Appalachian towns. In Fimbulvetr, however, every source of heat becomes vital. Old coal mines are re-opened, either by government order (and worked by forced labor, if necessary) or by local people who realized they won't get any more heating oil or natural gas. Concerns about acid rain and the dangers of mining no longer apply. As for global warming… you're kidding, right?

As the Scions approach, they know they have come to a bad place. Whole sections of road have collapsed into sinkholes. Animals avoid the region. The air holds an acrid, smoky tang. Long-derelict houses slump over or crumble in on themselves.

Yet new activity fills the center of the town. The old landfill—where the fire began—now holds a giant-sized cabin of tree trunks and salvaged lumber, with a lower shed to the side. Two fire giants lounge around the cabin as guards. Some of the more intact homes are occupied as well, used as barracks for the people captured as slaves. Those captives work around the town, watched by giant overseers, building new giant-sized cabins from salvaged materials, rammed earth and the young trees that have grown between the old buildings. Old garbage cans hold smoky open fires.

All together, the town holds a dozen fire giants, though they are spread out so the Scions never encounter more than two at a time. These are basic fire giants, as described in **Scion: Hero**, pages 314-316. The Scions have a chance to kill foes they once would have considered formidable, if only for their numbers. The giants' Zealotry is such, however, that some of them will run for the cabin to alert their master to the attack—which will make the Scions' job more difficult if they cannot prevent the alarm.

The cabin holds a large pit where a stout ladder leads down to a giant-sized tunnel. The side shed holds a collection of gasoline and diesel-powered generators. The power goes to a cable that enters the cabin and goes down the shaft.

THE SMOKY DEPTHS

The Scions can easily find the master of Centralia by following the cable from the generator shed. If they don't want to hack their way in past the giants, they can find smaller entrances to the old mines and burning coal seams, such as the sinkhole in Pennsylvania Route 61. In that case, finding their destination takes longer (though it does not actually become more difficult). Smoke also rises from the town's hilltop cemetery, revealing the presence of another entrance.

The passages under Centralia are dark, hot and filled with noxious gases. Scions who don't have some sort of

protection from poisonous fumes (such as Epic Stamina to hold their breath a long time) suffer environmental damage (2L/5 minutes, Trauma 3) while they explore the tunnels. Fortunately, following the power cord takes the Band to its destination in just five minutes.

Other routes take longer, but only a few minutes after entering the smoke-filled mines and tunnels, the Band hears metal on stone. Someone, likely not human, still mines these depths. Yet finding the source of the noise is frustrating. A player must succeed at a standard (Perception + Awareness) roll for the Band to find the source. Each roll represents five minutes of search. A single character's player must accumulate seven successes for the Band to find the source of the sound.

The new miners are kobolds—grumpy, twisted little creatures standing two feet high. If traits become necessary, these minor spirits (see pp. 117-118) have the Boons Safely Interred, Echo Sounding and Fire Immunity. (Since they are literally made of living stone, heat and smoke don't bother them.)

The Band's appearance surprises the kobolds. They hold their hammers and pickaxes on guard, but they don't want to fight. At one kobold per Scion, the Band could easily slaughter them all, which the kobolds seem to realize. If the Band attacks, the kobolds run or dematerialize. Polite and patient questioning can elicit useful information, though. The kobolds are slaves of the svartalf Blárvaldr. They dig according to his directions. They don't know why, but they guess it has something to do with "his apparatus," whatever that is. They would be *glad* to lead the Band to their master. The kobolds can lead the Band through the twisting passages to Blárvaldr in another five minutes. Along the way, the Scions see new tunnels as well as walls of rock where old tunnels were sealed off.

One way or another, the Band comes to a large chamber whose walls are veined with smoldering seams of coal and inlaid patterns of skulls and bones. A dull red glow comes from the fires, while the air is even hotter and smokier. Other passages lead off from the chamber. Blárvaldr oversees a crew of three kobolds tinkering with a massive, bizarre contraption of air compressors, pipes and hoppers of powdered coal.

Like all dark elves, Blárvaldr is tall, attractive and has skin as black as the coal around him. When the kobolds bring the characters to him (or if the demigods kill the kobolds and hunt him down), he greets them warmly, asking their names, whether they enjoyed their journey and what brings them to Centralia. He offers them refreshments (sending a kobold to retrieve something to drink, if any kobolds are left) and eagerly explains his purpose. With Fimbulvetr here, Blárvaldr says, it's only a matter of time before Surtr and the fire giants completely destroy Midgard. He hopes to place himself on the winning side and buy Surtr's favor by opening a passage to Muspelheim so the fire giants can invade more easily. His machine will start by opening a small portal using carefully arranged and magically charged flames, and the runic shape of the new passages beneath Centralia will magnify that portal until several square miles of Pennsylvania merge with Muspelheim.



Blárvaldr tries to convince the Scions to switch sides. He's suave, well spoken, charming and able to concede points. He points out, however, that since the giants already summoned Fimbulvetr, it's a bit late to save the World. What's more, everyone knows that the Gods are prophecied to die at Ragnarök—so what difference can the Band's actions possibly make? If the Gods must die anyway before the World can be reborn, why not side with the group that already holds all the cards, from the calling of Fimbulvetr to the fires of Surtr that are fated to blanket all of Midgard?

As usual for long-haired, androgynous villains, Blárvaldr concentrates his efforts on attractive female Scions in the group. He needs a queen, after all. His own power rivals that of a demigod, and he's already developed contacts in Muspelheim, so he suggests he could be a pretty good patron to the Band. The characters just need to accept his offer and swear eternal fealty to the Titans. They'll be treated well and ready to work with the giants at Ragnarök. It's good enough for Loki, so it should be good enough for them, right?

At this point, true heroes of the Aesir put an axe in Blárvaldr's head. Even pretending to play along with Blárvaldr's offer requires a Scion to fail a Loyalty roll or spend a Willpower to overcome the urging of the Virtue. Once a fight breaks out, Blárvaldr sighs and whistles loudly.

The surviving kobolds just run. Out from the side passages, however, emerge several coal-hounds that early tests of the fire-portal called from Muspelheim. Blárvaldr has one coal-hound per Scion. (See **Scion: God**, p. 322, for a description of the coal-hounds, and p. 284 of **Scion: Demigod** for information about the svartalfar.) Blárvaldr isn't as tough as Fafnir, but he's no slouch. Use Fafnir's traits, but reduce his Legend to 5, his Epic Dexterity and Epic Wits to 3 each, and all of his Attributes or Abilities at 6 to 5 (due to his lower Legend rating). Blárvaldr also doesn't have the advantage of Fafnir's various relics. He must do battle with a well-crafted faerie steel sword (a Relic •• item equal to a spatha, but with +1 Accuracy and -1 Speed over the template from p. 202 of **Scion: Hero**).

Once the Scions slay Blárvaldr or force him to surrender, they can wreck his infernal machine and prevent him from building another one. The core of the machine is a fist-sized black diamond from Muspelheim that constantly burns but never shrinks in size. This relic allows use of the Fire Purview and could form the heart of another device to enter Muspelheim... assuming the Scions or their Aesir patrons should ever want to take the battle to the enemy. A side-cave holds Blárvaldr's luxurious private quarters and the plans for his device. It also holds whatever other books of magic, relics or other loot the Storyteller feels appropriate. (Norse heroes traditionally win hoards of golden cups, rings and other treasures for their exploits.) Blárvaldr wears an amulet (Relic •) that renders him immune to the heat and smoke of the mines. If the characters let the svartalfar live, they can extort a promise from him to depart Midgard forever and not interfere with their further efforts, but that's it. He has nothing to do with any wider plan.

Scene

ASHES AND GOLD

MENTAL •• PHYSICAL •••• SOCIAL •/••••

Opening a passage between Midgard and Muspelheim is entirely his own idea.

Prophecy: "A killer's eye does not see Freya's tears. A killer's hand does not find the northward road. A newborn claims the killer's blood; but justice is not done." The Band can find Hod at Gold's Farm. (As mentioned in Chapter Three, "Freya's tears" is a kenning for gold.) Hod cannot complete his plan to offer his own life for Baldur's because Hel has shut the normal passages between Midgard and Helheim. One of the Scions is fated to kill Hod, but not to avenge Baldur's murder, since Baldur arranged his own death.

BALDUR'S BANE

As the Scions congratulate themselves on defeating Blárvaldr, a raven flutters down to them. A *familiar* raven: It's Hugin. Looks like another assignment from the All-Father... but the Scions have never seen the raven so agitated. "Thank the Norns you're so close," he exclaims. "If you hurry, you can catch that murdering bastard before he gets away. Come *on* already!"

Once the Scions get Hugin to calm down a little, Odin's raven explains the situation. Baldur the Bright is dead. Hod, his old rival, murdered him—threw a sword right into Baldur's chest. Hugin speaks:

"It happened like this. Baldur was trying to cheer everyone up with that game the Aesir play, where everyone throws their weapons at him and watches them bounce off. (I don't get it myself, but the Aesir seem to think it's high-larious.) Anyway, one of the lesser Aesir—this joker named Hod—throws this *twig* at Baldur. And just as it touches Baldur, it turns into a *sword* and slices right through his guts. Everybody starts screaming and running every-which-way, and by the time anybody who might've healed Baldur gets to him, he's dead. And where's Hod? Gone. Split. (Not for nothin', but that's pretty slick for a *blind* guy, even if he's a God.)

"And if that wasn't incriminating enough, Baldur and Hod have what you might call a *history*. With a love triangle, no less. When they were Scions like you, they both panted after this other Scion, Nanna. First Hod had the best of it and nearly killed Baldur with this magic sword he found who-knows-where." He shrugs. "Then Baldur bounced back, got the girl and Hod ended up blind.

"A lot of it happened here on Midgard," Hugin continues, "so only those three know all of what happened. Baldur had

been real nice to Hod since then. Stuck up for Hod, helped him with things Hod couldn't do because he was blind. Dying must have been a real life-changing experience for Baldur. (Honestly, he was kind of a prick before then.) Still, I guess Hod was just waiting all these centuries for a chance to finish the job he started with that magic sword.

"But here's the thing. That sword? It was called Mistletoe. Baldur kept it, so no one else could use it against him. But when Hod threw that twig at him, it turned into *that sword*. The same one he used before, see? He killed Baldur with the same sword twice!

"Odin and Frigg already agree it's murder. They also say that Hod ran off to Midgard. Around here, in fact. And isn't it lucky that you're already on the scene? So here are the All-Father's orders: Find Hod and kill him. Avenge Baldur. Killing Baldur like that... The All-Father says Hod's doomed us all. There's no way out of Ragnarök now. At least, don't let the bastard get away with it."

Following this recitation of events, Hugin passes on Hod's current description (for those who have never met him) and nags the characters until they hit the road, reminding them that Odin demands Hod's *immediate* death. Fortunately, Fate is on the side of justice. Hugin says that Hod escaped down Yggdrasil to Midgard, where he appeared in the little town of Ashland, just two miles from Centralia. Assuming the Band starts off for Ashland shortly thereafter, the distraught raven flies away to let Odin know the Scions are on the job.

The characters, alas, have no chance whatsoever to detect that Hugin is actually Loki in disguise. They are demigods, whereas Loki is a God who specializes in deception.

ASHLAND

Not many people live in the little town of Ashland, Pennsylvania. Quite apart from the other hardships of Fimbulvetr, the giants from Centralia raided Ashland for slaves and livestock, further encouraging people to leave. Nevertheless, smoke rises from the chimneys of several homes in town. At least a dozen of the small, outlying farms remain inhabited, too.

If any Scion has the Mystery Purview, finding Hod becomes almost trivial. The first datum that Mystery gives is that the divine murderer dwells at a farm overlooked by an ash tree grove. Greater success with Mystery adds further points of description, such as the color of the house and nearby landmarks. An hour's polite inquiries in town can identify the exact farm from such a description, or the Scions themselves can locate the farm in an hour with binoculars and a successful (Perception + Survival) roll. If the Band lacks such supernatural guidance, the characters can simply engage in legwork. Asking the townsfolk if any blind strangers came to Ashland in the last few days does *not* work, though. Hod has not ventured beyond the farm where he arrived in Midgard.

GOLD'S FARM

When Hod fled down Yggdrasil, he hoped to make it to Helheim after Baldur. He hopes that maybe he can trade his life for Baldur's, thus expiating his unwitting crime. Unfortunately for the hapless God, however, Hel does not want anyone coming after Baldur. The moment Baldur died, Hel became The Reaper and used her ultimate authority over Death to close off every route into Helheim of which she knew. When Hod descended Yggdrasil, he found himself shunted to a random ash tree in the woods near the Gold family farm. When he realized what had happened—though not *why* it had happened—he took an axe from the farm and chopped down that ash tree, so the Aesir could not immediately follow him. Ever since, Hod has been trying to open a passage to Helheim by digging under the roots of an ash tree (as described in **Scion: Demigod**, p. 159), but he gets nothing but a muddy hole in the ground every time. Ever more unfortunately for Hod, Loki (who'd covered his escape down Yggdrasil in the first place and followed him) noticed the Scions in the area and set them after Hod.

When the Scions come to Gold's Farm, they find 20 acres of grazing land on a gentle hillside, with a century-old farmhouse and barn, modern carport, chicken coop and two dozen cattle. A road runs past the farm's lower edge. Light forest covers the hilltop and extends down the right side of the farm, almost to the road, with a few copses of trees and brush scattered about the farm itself. The forest consists of mixed pine, maple and a scattering of other trees, including ash trees. A barbed-wire fence surrounds the entire farm.

Before the Jotunhammer impact, the Golds were lifestyle farmers. They belonged to a local dairy co-op and grew pesticide-free, all-organic herbs on a back acre, but Mr. Gold's well-invested severance package from a Philadelphia brokerage house and Mrs. Gold's secretarial job pulled in most of the family's income. Since the Jotunhammer, the Golds replaced the herbs with turnips and potatoes, and they sell milk directly to Ashland townsfolk. Various brothers and sisters have moved in with their children, so 11 people now crowd the farmhouse. Two members of the extended family died defending their cattle from robbers. For the last month, they paid tribute to the giants of Centralia along with the other people of Ashland, counting themselves lucky not to be killed or taken as slaves.

Now the 11 Golds sit in their living room, guarded by five ice-fairies summoned by Hod. These minor spirits look like slender, one-foot-tall, nude girls whose fingers end in delicate, needle-like blades. They have the Frost Purview Boons of Frost Immunity and Uller's Stride (see pp.35-36). When they slash with their fingers, they inflict a base 2L damage with the Piercing quality. The ice-fairies are under orders not to let anyone enter or leave.

All the Golds know is that a strangely dressed man broke down the door and ordered the creatures to hold the family prisoner. When Mr. Gold tried to defend his family, the intruder casually swatted him to the floor. Mr. Gold is mad enough to spit nails. The Golds describe a man with ash-blond hair, dressed in thick wool and leather. Some of them thought the intruder was in his 30s, while others thought he was older. These details are consistent with Hod's appearance as described to the characters by "Hugin."



The ice-fairies won't let the Scions talk to the family, so getting any information requires defeating them first (not difficult for a Band of demigods). The Golds don't know anything more, and they're more than slightly weirded out by the day's events. Anyone who has ways to recognize Fatebinding can detect that Mr. Gold is currently Fatebound—presumably, to Hod.

And where is Baldur's killer? Following Hod's tracks from the farmhouse requires a (Perception + Survival) roll, with no penalties because the tracks are fresh and Hod didn't try to hide his passage. Finding his most recent path, however, takes three successes. His trail begins from an ash tree half a mile from Gold's Farm, cut down earlier that day. More recent trails lead from that tree to two more ash trees with holes dug under their roots, and from there to Hod's current location.

CONFRONTING HOD

The Band finds Hod digging at the foot of another ash tree, shoveling as fast as he can. His relic staff and a wood axe are carelessly cast aside four yards from his location. Approaching without Hod noticing calls for an opposed roll of the lowest (Dexterity + Stealth) total for any member of the Band, against Hod's (Perception + Awareness). Fortunately, Hod is obsessively focused on his work in his haste to finish digging. In fact, he's muttering to himself: "It has to work this time. What could be wrong? It has to work." If the Band successfully approaches without Hod noticing, the characters can attempt unexpected attacks. Considering Hod has Subliminal Warning, though... good luck with that.

Hod expects someone from Asgard to come after him and try to kill him, though he thought it would take longer. If the characters want to talk to him, one of them must announce this intent *immediately,* and that character's player must score at least five successes on a (Charisma + Presence) roll. That's only to prevent Hod from attacking at once. Even if the roll succeeds, Hod is still wary and tautly on guard.

Assuming the Scions want to hear Hod's side of the story, he insists that Baldur's death had to have been some cruel trick of Fate. Baldur was showing off his invulnerability again as a way to cheer up the other Aesir. Hod generally did not join in this little game, for obvious reasons. This time, however, someone pressed a flimsy little dart into Hod's hand, and Baldur himself urged him to take a throw. Hod agreed on a whim and threw the dart toward the sound of Baldur's laughing encouragement. Then he smelled blood. Suddenly Gods were shouting and running around, and he knew that something had gone terribly wrong. He ran and escaped from Asgard down Yggdrasil.

That, however, is as far as any conversation can go. Whether or not the Band dealt with the guards at the farmhouse, Mr. Gold has managed to slip away and follow the Band's trail to Hod. Mr. Gold has a rifle and tries to put a bullet in the God who held his family captive. He *has* to; he's trapped in the Fatebound Role of Hod's Nemesis. Hod instantly assumes that the Band tried to set him up for an ambush, and battle is joined. From now on, any attempt to cease hostilities requires a failed Courage roll from all characters. Not only do they go against the combative nature of the Aesir, they go against Fate

itself, which long ago decreed that Hod would die for killing Baldur. The Band *cannot* get through this scene without fighting Hod, one way or another.

If the Band first stopped to talk to Hod, Hod uses the opportunity to climb out of his hole and edge toward where he left his staff. If the Band attacked immediately, Hod lacks his staff. Since that's his only Birthright item, he is significantly weaker without it. His effective Legend drops by one where his Boons are concerned, and he cannot use his most powerful Boons. Since the staff lies within a Move action of Hod's current location, he recovers it on his first action unless the Band took the precaution of confiscating it or moving it. Lacking his staff, Hod creates a jagged, frozen spatha with Frozen Panoply. He also does not hesitate to use his other various Boons.

Expecting no forbearance in what he assumes is a fight to the death, Hod chooses his tactics accordingly. The Scions cannot disengage without somehow persuading Hod to stop fighting, since he fears the consequences of letting them escape. Should they choose to flee him so as not to have to fight him, his Knacks and Boons let him follow the characters anywhere they might go.

THE VALI EFFECT

According to legend, a child of Odin named Vali will avenge Baldur's death. Vali will do this when just one day old. He toddles into Asgard, immediately turns into an adult and kills Hod.

As happens so often with mythology, the story that mortals know conceals the truth in metaphor. "One day old" is metaphor for a young Scion. To Gods who lived for centuries or millennia, a Scion who received his Visitation just a few years before seems like an infant.

Likewise, being a Scion of Odin is negotiable. Since Odin is the All-Father, any Scion of the Aesir is his child in a certain sense. Metaphor can also conceal times and places. The Scions and Hod just came from a "hall of Gold," which matches the description of various Asgardian locations. They also battle beneath the boughs of an ash tree, like the World Tree that holds Asgard in its branches.

If you use the sample Scion Vali from Chapter Two, why, here she is, ready to do some avenging. If not, pick the Scion who seems most determined to kill Hod and avenge Baldur. That Scion takes Vali's role in the myth now playing out at Gold's farm. Just as Baldur had no defense against the weapon fated to slay him, Hod lacks defense against his fated nemesis. His Epic Stamina does not apply against Vali's attacks, and his Boons do not affect Vali. Odds are, this character strikes the killing blow.

AFTERMATH

Soon after the Scions' fight with Hod, a raven flies in. It's Munin. He says, "Ah, you've found him yourself. How fortunate, although my message is now moot." As Munin collects the characters' report on their fight with Hod (however it turned out), it soon becomes clear that Odin did *not* send Hugin to sic the Scions on Hod. He tasked Munin with that mission, sending Hugin somewhere else entirely. Munin ponders a moment, then says, "I had best let the All-Father know of this. Do please wait." The raven flies away.

Minutes later, Odin himself appears, with Gungnir in hand and both ravens on his shoulders. He takes the Band's report, with requests for clarification whenever the Scions seem vague or evasive. At the end, he merely says, "Hugin?"

"Honest, boss, it wasn't me," the raven replies. "I only go where you send me." Odin frowns so ferociously that even the trees shrink back from his displeasure, and he runs a finger along the runes carved into Gungnir.

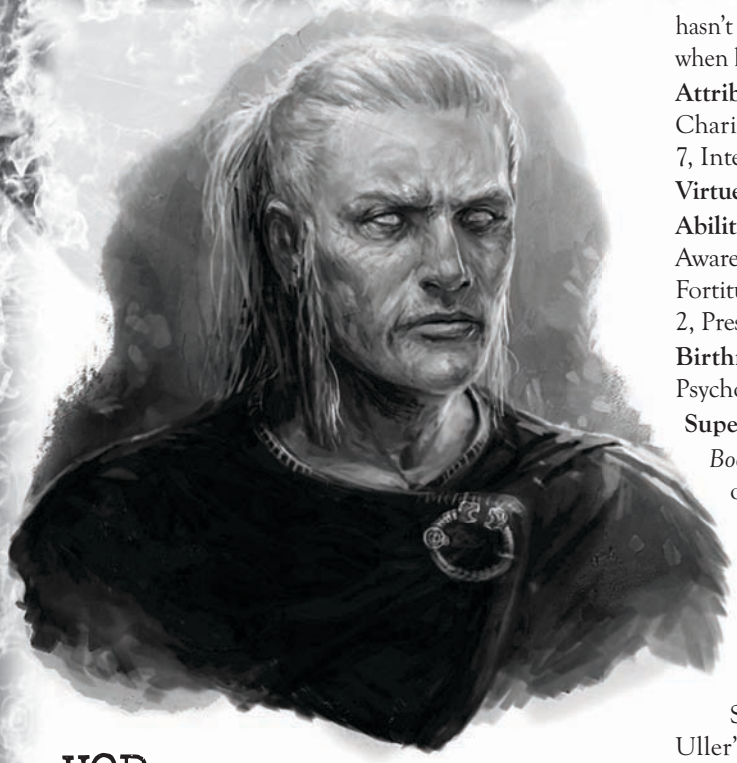
"We have... a meddler," he says in quiet anger. "Await my return at Gold's Farm. I foresee having a special mission for you." And he is gone, taking Hod with him.

At some point, it might occur to the Scions to wonder why Hod, on the run for murder, would spend time digging around ash trees. With a successful (Intelligence + Occult) roll—or if you planted the information earlier in the saga—a Scion knows that Gods and other creatures of Legend can use any ash tree as a passage to Helheim, just by digging a hole under the roots. Only, it evidently didn't work for Hod, who had apparently tried two ash trees already. If the Scions ask Odin, he opines that Hel clearly doesn't want visitors and of *course* she can control access to her domain. Without Hod himself, they can only guess what the blind God hoped to achieve by entering Helheim.

OOPS... MY BAND TOOK HOD ALIVE!

Congratulate your characters: They managed to beat Fate itself. Well, maybe. Hod still faces trial in Asgard, but Loki's role in Baldur's death comes out and the onus falls on him instead. Hod merely needs to pay wergild to Forseti for the death of his father, which the fair-minded Forseti himself sets quite low. Hod also pays minor wergild—a three-dot Birthright—to any Scions of Baldur. If the Band includes such a Scion, they get a nice reward for having the forbearance not to avenge their father's killer on the spot. By the end of "Highway to Hel," the Band's achievement might bear even greater fruit.

Most importantly, the Scions proved that they *can* change Fate. One Aesir lives who was fated to die. Maybe they can save other lives too and change the course of Ragnarök.



HOD

AKA: Hoder, Hotherus

The blind God of Darkness and Winter is dark in nearly all ways that his half-brother Baldur is light. They shared the same mortal mother, but different Aesir sired them. In a rare bit of delicacy, the Aesir do not talk about Hod's real parentage. The Aesir usually remember Hod only to pity him. As demigods, Hod and Baldur fought over the love of fellow Scion Nanna. The conflict left Hod blind and forever Fatebound as an adjunct to Baldur's legend.

Hod keeps to himself out of shame for his blindness and his past. The Aesir hate a kinslayer, and Hod does not forgive himself just because Baldur rose from the dead. That Baldur then strove to become Hod's friend only increases his shame. Worst of all, Hod suspects that he is fated to doom his half-brother once more. The other Aesir try to keep Hod's destiny from him, but the blind God has sharp ears.

Hod rarely visits Midgard. When he does, he takes the form of someone blind and inconspicuous. He is the cataract-ridden old man on the park bench, the homeless veteran with burned-out eyes or the lonely blind child on the edge of the playground. If he has sired any Scions, they take after his unknown father rather than Hod himself. Nevertheless, he is a God and remains a formidable warrior and a capable commander—and an occasional spy for Odin.

In his true form, Hod presents an oddly ambiguous blend of strength and frailty, youth and age. His lined face, pale hair and tapping staff suggest an old man, but he still has the broad shoulders and large, strong hands of an experienced warrior. While he owns a suit of chain mail, he hasn't bothered wearing it in centuries and does not bring it when he escapes to Midgard.

Attributes: Strength 8, Dexterity 6, Stamina 8; Charisma 4, Manipulation 6, Appearance 2; Perception 7, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Virtues: Courage 3, Endurance 4, Expression 1, Loyalty 2

Abilities: Animal Ken 2, Art (Harp) 5, Athletics 2, Awareness 5, Brawl 3, Command 3, Control (Horse) 2, Fortitude 2, Integrity 4, Investigation 4, Melee 5, Politics 2, Presence 2, Stealth 5, Survival 3, Thrown 4

Birthrights: Avatar 4, Relic 4 (Staff—Darkness, Frost, Psychopomp, War)

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Battle Cry, Bestial Endowment, Blessing of Bravery, Blizzard Call, Come Along, Fairy Troop (Ice-Fairies), Frost Immunity, Frozen Heart, Frozen Panoply, Heroic Endowment, Hrimthurssar's Touch, Human Endowment, Morale Failure, Night Eyes, Shadow Mask, Shadow Refuge, Shadow Step, Shadow Shroud, Strike Blind, Supernal Bestial Endowment, Supernal Human Endowment, Terra Incognita, Uller's Stride, Unbarred Entry, Unerring Orientation, Warrior Ideal (Blind Master), Where Are You?, Winter's Mercy

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 6 (Crushing Grip, Hang On, Hurl to the Horizon, Knockback Attack, Making it Look Easy, Mighty Heave), Epic Dexterity 4 (Cat's Grace, Divine Balance, Escape Artist, Ricochet Symphony), Epic Stamina 5 (Damage Conversion, Divine Damage Conversion, Holy Fortitude, Self-Healing, Solipsistic Well-Being, Whale's Breath), Epic Manipulation 3 (Hard Sell, Knowing Glance, Overt Order), Epic Perception 6 (All from **Hero**, Environmental Awareness, Fool Me Once..., Spatial Attunement, Supernal Hunter, Telescopic Senses), Epic Wits 2 (Meditative Focus, Social Chameleon).

Join Battle: 9

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 9, Damage 9L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 8, Damage 12B, Parry DV 11, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 10, Damage 9B, Parry DV 12, Speed 4

Staff: Accuracy 13, Damage 12L, Parry DV 14, Speed 6

Frozen Spatha: Accuracy 12, Damage 13L, Parry DV 13, Speed 5

Soak: 5A/15L/19B

Health Levels: -0x17/Incap

Dodge DV: 16 **Willpower:** 7

Legend: 9 **Legend Points:** 81

Other Notes: Hod's staff allows the use of the Darkness, Frost, Psychopomp and War Purviews. It is otherwise identical to a bo (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 202).

DEFINING HOD AND NANNA

The myths do not actually say anything about Hod to suggest much in the way of his powers. He is sometimes called "Hod of Battles," so he receives War Boons. His blindness and enmity with Baldur lead some mythologists to suppose he is a God of Night or Winter, in contrast to Baldur's solar character. Calling Baldur a solar deity is guesswork too, however, based on a few metaphors in the *Prose Edda* and comparisons with dying Gods from other cultures, most of which had nothing to do with the Norse.

Nanna, the third member of this divine love triangle, is even hazier. Some scholars think she is a Moon Goddess, to complete a trinity with a Sun God and a Night God. Other cultures mythologized the sun, moon and stars, so scholars believe the Norse did the same. Nanna's traits on pages 195-197 follow this assumption, but the Norse myths actually give no support for this view at all—or any other.

Many anthropologists now think that these sorts of cross-cultural comparisons and theories are dubious, to say the least. Still, you use what you have. Even a crackpot theory can supply the basis for a decent story.

Scene

GONE A-VIKING

MENTAL • PHYSICAL •• SOCIAL ••

If the Scions have any sense, they immediately return to Gold's Farm and wait for Odin's return. If they don't have any sense, they wander off and Odin becomes angry at the wasted time spent having his wolves, Freki and Geri, track them down. He still assigns them the intended task because his own use of Prophecy says that they are fated to take it. No one else can handle it better. Eager and dutiful Scions can expect greater rewards from the All-Father, though.

The Golds do not like hosting these odd strangers, considering how the last stranger held them captive in their own house. They are especially hostile if Hod incidentally killed Mr. Gold. How the Scions deal with an angry family of mere mortals is up to them. They will need to clear out the ice-fairies too, if they didn't already.

The next day, Odin barges into the Gold farmhouse (without knocking) to give the Band its task. He immediately tells the Scions that he has very little time and they are not to ask questions. In brief:

"I need you to go to Eliudnir and ask Hel to restore Baldur to life. His death is one of the great portents of Ragnarök. If it can be reversed—and I have reason to believe this is possible—then other prophecies might be broken as well.

"Unfortunately, Hel has closed all the normal routes to the Underworld. Yes, she can do that. I know of one path she cannot block, however, even if she knows about it. She would not block *me* from entering. I could ride Sleipnir to Helheim. Considering what's happening, though, I don't have time.

"So *you* have to reach Helheim using Sleipnir. I can't spare my horse, but there's another way. Sail to the North Sea and use the other Sleipnir instead. Once you get there, mount and ride on the path that descends to the north.

"That's all you need to know, at least from me. So, get moving! Time is short. I foresee dire consequences if you arrive too late in the North Sea."

TRAVEL

A year into Fimbulvetr, travel to the North Sea is not as easy as it once was. The Band cannot simply board a plane for a bordering country and then charter a boat. Planes now fly only when major governments or corporations want them to, due to fuel rationing. Military planes still fly. Certain cargo planes loaded with food still fly. Tourist flights to Europe do not.

Some cargo ships still sail between the Americas and Europe. They don't officially take passengers, but $1,000 under the table can get you a berth. If you carry further wealth on the trip, odds are good that a week out from port, someone will try to slit your throat and dump your body overboard. If you don't carry further wealth, the captain might try to put you to work. (You paid for a berth, but food is extra.) A Band of demigods should have no trouble with such minor incidents. Ah, the romance of the seafaring life!

Anyone with even a single dot of Academics can easily learn the location of "the other Sleipnir" that Odin mentioned. It's a Norwegian oil rig in the North Sea (though its name is spelled with an -er instead of an -ir). The captain of the Band's ship has no intention of sailing directly to the Sleipner oil platform, since this is off his route and the North Sea is very rough. Oh, and there's a war on.

Of course, a Band of demigods could buy a ship, commandeer one or just bedazzle the captain and crew with Epic Social Attributes to the extent that they take the ship wherever the Band wants. If any Scions have Control (Ship), they might dispense with a crew and just sail across the Atlantic themselves.

Except... *there's a war on?*

ADDED COMPLICATIONS

If you like, the Band can have a few more adventures on the way to the North Sea. For instance, the Scions need to go to a major port such as Philadelphia, New York or Boston to obtain passage. Such cities are all under martial law. Aside from offering a chance to show how grim life has become for ordinary people in Fimbulvetr, the Band can battle titanspawn or other horrors that prey on the urban population. The characters might also tangle with a Titan cult—say, a cult of Jord that's breeding lindwurms to unleash on the city.

The crumbling of civilization also means a breakdown of public health. The Band can't do much about an epidemic ripping through the city… unless it's the work of a plague-spreading aptrganger (see pp. 119-120) that associates with the aforementioned cult.

Crossing the Atlantic offers further possibilities for adventure. Considering the Band's destination, an encounter with the kraken (see **Scion: Demigod**, p. 265) might seem appropriate. **Scion: God** also provides a variety of oceanic minions of the Titans who might want to kill a shipload of Scions.

ACT TWO
RÁN'S DOMAIN

Prophecy: "Three roads meet at Odin's stable: North and South and Road of Rán. Three warriors bar the way. Avoiding their wrath brings threefold doom and nations fall 'neath Surtr's sway. Acceptance brings the chains of Wyrd." The Scions already know that the navies of the UK and EU prepare for war in the North Sea. The prophecy hints at the presence of a third navy, from Jotunheim. The Road of Rán is the sea; the North and South Roads refer to Helheim and Muspelheim. Perhaps the Band can slip past all three navies to reach the Sleipner oil rig, but if no one interferes, the giants and other agents provocateurs push the conflict to nuclear war. As if the prophecies of Surtr throwing fire over the World were not warning enough, "threefold doom" is an obscure kenning for nuclear weapons. (The first atomic bomb destroyed a mock-up town dubbed Trinity.) Averting this catastrophe, however, exposes the Scions to Fatebinding. Indeed, this might be the only way to stop the war.

The situation in the North Sea is sufficiently complicated that it is divided into three scenes—one for each setting of open sea, the two mortal navies and the Sleipner oil rig—but characters might not move through them in a linear fashion. The Band might start by sailing its own ship into the North Sea, be taken captive by one of the navies, escape and finally reach the oil rig. Alternatively, the characters might attempt to reach Sleipner by Rainbow Bridge (the Boon, that is), only to find themselves detoured to one of the navies, where they'll have to steal a ship and take to the seas. You'll need to study all three scenes at once to run this act.

Scene

THE NORTH SEA CONFLICT

MENTAL ••• PHYSICAL •••• SOCIAL –

Fimbulvetr leaves Western Europe desperate for fuel. The region has lots of coal, but a great deal of modern society needs petroleum. In the scramble to secure (and monopolize) energy for the three-year winter, Europe found itself cut off from most suppliers. Fortunately, Western Europe has one major oil-producing region of its own: the North Sea. *Un*fortunately, North Sea oil is running low. Norway, the United Kingdom and Denmark used to divide the North Sea oilfield among themselves, with a little going to Germany and the Netherlands. Now there isn't enough to go around. France and Germany force a deal on Denmark to seize the entire oilfield in the name of the European Union, cutting out Norway and Great Britain. The UK, meanwhile, wants the whole oilfield for itself. Very little news comes out of Norway anymore, but both sides know that the country lacks the naval power to resist them.

The British Navy quickly occupied and armed every British oil rig, while EU forces occupied the oil platforms of Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands, as well as the tiny island of Helgoland. For the last six months, leaders on both sides have traded threats and accusations of piracy while finding pretexts to seize one Norwegian platform after another. Only Sleipner is left, and the two factions gather their forces to wrest oil rigs away from each other.

No one finds it easy to pull oil from the North Sea. This shallow sea between Britain and Scandinavia suffers hard winds and fierce storms at the best of times. Fimbulvetr seems to have made the weather even worse. A ceaseless gale has blown for months, with interludes of squall and blizzard among the *normal* 30-foot waves.

Neither the British nor the Europeans could imagine that a third navy sails through the storm-wracked North Sea: longships out of Jotunheim. The giants find the icy, gale-tossed sea a bracing challenge to their strength and seamanship. Their elders use illusions to hide their ships from mortal eyes. The storms make radar and other forms of high-tech observation nearly useless. The giants use Sleipner as their forward base. Their magic makes sure that expeditions to seize the oil rig do not return.

The giants feel sure that mortal eyes and ships cannot find them. Their longships prowl between the British and EU navies, attacking couriers, supply ships and other isolated vessels. Rán's fabled net catches the corpses of many a mariner. Both sides' commanders recognize that more than foul weather explains their increasing losses. Each side thinks the other is responsible and sends raids of their own, turning the jotnar's lie into truth.

Worst of all, servants of the Titans infiltrate both sides. They pose as naval officers or civilian support personnel on the oil rigs. They hardly need to feed lies to the commanders: The conflict feeds on itself, inflamed by Dark Virtues. As their losses mount, hatred and revenge seems rational, rather than whispers of Malice, Ambition and Zealotry. Before long, one side or the other starts shooting in earnest—and then, the first side to suffer a major setback must choose between nuclear escalation and freezing in the dark. Both the British and French have hundreds of nuclear weapons... more than enough to turn Western Europe into a radiation-scarred wasteland.

The Scions must sail into this maelstrom of hate, fear, deception and battle. Their expected safe haven already lies in enemy hands. They have no way to know the details of naval deployments so as to avoid all ships—though if they want to *find* a ship, use of Mystery can guide them.

THE SEA OF STORMS

The Band's first challenge comes from the cold, the waves and the gale-force winds. People normally reach the oil rigs by helicopter. That is no longer possible... at least for merely mortal pilots. With a successful (Dexterity + Control [Helicopter]) roll at difficulty 6 for every hour of travel, however, a Scion could make it through the storm. Landing the whirlybird safely calls for another roll at the same difficulty. Failure means a crash, dealing 4L damage per success by which the roll fell short. The most powerful military helicopters



(used by Coast Guard rescue missions, for instance) reduce the difficulty to 4. Obtaining such machines is left as a challenge to the Scions' ingenuity.

The challenge of sailing through a hurricane-strength gale depends on the size of the ship. Nuclear-powered aircraft carriers ignore the storm, but anything smaller faces significant difficulties. For a 70-foot fishing trawler or similar ship with good engines, making the trip requires a simple success on one (Wits + Control [Ship]) roll per day of sailing. Every 10 feet less of ship length increases the difficulty by one. A boat powered by sails raises the difficulty by one.

A small, *rowed* ship actually offers some advantages. A sailing ship's mast easily overbalances it, while breakers can flood and stall engines. Steering a rowboat 10 to 15 feet long through the gale calls for one (Strength + Control [Ship]) roll at difficulty 5 per hour of travel—which Legend and Epic Strength make feasible. Several people can row, of course. In this case, add one to the dice pool for each additional rower, or one extra success for each additional rower with Epic Strength. Any attempt to penetrate the gale to reach Sleipner takes one hour per 10 miles, though, so even demigods need to get as close as possible before they abandon other transport and take to their oars.

In the event that the Band can somehow acquire an actual Viking-style longship, the difficulty drops to 4 as the force of Legend helps the Scions on their way.

At any point, a failed roll means wrecking a helicopter, inflicting serious damage to a ship or capsizing a small boat. Helicopters sink rapidly, leaving the Scions swimming in a freezing cold sea with gigantic, crashing waves. A ship can sustain damage once, but a second failure sends it down to Rán. Scions who tethered themselves to a rowboat can right it and continue their journey if someone's player manages another (Strength + Control [Ship]) roll at difficulty 6, though characters can gain the same cooperation bonus as for sailing. Anyone who ends up in the frigid, turbulent water faces swift death without the use of Epic Attributes or Boons such as Frost Immunity or Water Breathing—and finding some way to attract the attention of one of the ships in the area.

Players being the creative sorts they are, they might think of other ways to cross the stormy sea, such as surfing or jet-skis. Nothing should be *more* difficult than rowing a dory or steaming in on a fishing boat. As demigods, the characters can do things that mortals would find suicidal. Their nascent divinity turns lunacy into Legend.

NAVAL HAZARDS

The Band's next challenge comes from the British and European navies. Scions with radar detectors (or Broad-Spectrum Reception) can sense naval radar. In this case, avoiding the navies requires success at (Intelligence + Control) rolls for every hour in the North Sea. Without such ability to detect radar, the difficulty rises to 3. A small craft, such as a rowed lifeboat, reduces the difficulty to 2.

Naval ships radio any vehicle they don't identify as one of their own, challenging them to identify themselves or be destroyed. Military vessels all have coded transponders and passwords, so bluffing past nervous and deeply suspicious naval officers presents a great but not insurmountable challenge (minimum difficulty 5 for any attempt). Anyone who cannot pose as a legitimate member of the proper navy must surrender quickly or be shot at.

There is no need to supply game traits for the guns, missiles and other weapons of the navies. Only the random tossing of wind and waves can prevent a ship from shooting a Band's vehicle. Roll a single 10-sided die and divide the result in half: That's the number of miscellaneous actions the characters have before their vehicle blows up and they go in the water. The Scions' one consolation is that the ship that destroyed them then sails over to collect survivors for interrogation.

SUPERNATURAL HAZARDS

Until they approach Sleipner itself, the Scions face little risk of encountering giants. Only a few longships patrol the North Sea. Yet anyone who looks at a giant's ship doesn't see it, thanks to jotun magic. (This is standard jotun illusion, as described on p. 270 of **Scion: Demigod**, rather than the Illusion Purview.)

Your Band might deliberately search for giants, though. After all, the characters might know that Jotunheim is not far away, and any use of Prophecy or Mystery to investigate the military situation warns of a third force at work. In that case, the Band basically wanders around the North Sea dodging naval ships until a shipload of giants spots it and attacks. The Band doesn't need to spot the giants first. The giants have no missile weapons that can function in the gale. The Scions discover they have found the giants when grappling hooks catch their boat and the huge longship fades into view. Each longship carries 20 generic frost giants armed with skeggoxes, as well as one elder jotun. They do not expect to face demigods. Of course, the Scions might not expect to face the power of an elder jotun either.

Once the Scions establish their credentials as Aesir-spawn, they can actually talk their way onto Sleipner if they're so inclined. The jotun has no intention of honoring any truce or request for hospitality, but he's intrigued enough to carry the Scions to the oil platform and let his own superiors deal with the situation.

OCEANIC OIL RIGS

The typical oil-drilling platform consists of a boxy, multi-story structure raised on steel or concrete legs above the ocean surface. (Some oil rigs float, held in place by anchor cables, but North Sea platforms lodge firmly on the sea floor.) Several cranes typically sprout from the upper surface of the rig. The top level also holds a helipad. A smaller box on its own leg holds the crew's quarters, kept well away from the main rig for safety. (Huge volumes of petroleum combined with heavy machinery can sometimes produce spectacular explosions.) An enclosed truss bridge connects the crew quarters to the drilling rig.

As many as 30 wellheads might converge at a rig. Thanks to sideways drilling, a single rig can siphon oil from many miles of an oilfield. Underwater, the legs might also support huge tanks for storing the oil for a tanker to collect, or the oil might go directly into a pipeline to shore.

By necessity, oil rigs are built to be as self-sufficient as possible. They generate their own electricity (since fuel isn't a problem) and treat their own waste water for recycling. Workers live on a platform for months at a time, importing nothing but food.

Scene

NAVAL INTELLIGENCE

MENTAL •• PHYSICAL •••• SOCIAL ••••

The characters have three ways to encounter the mortal navies in the North Sea. Either a warship can blow them out of the air or water, they can surrender, or they can deliberately seek the British or Europeans. In any case, the officers believe the Scions are enemy agents. Reason and evidence cannot sway them, for they expect their enemies to lie. The Scions face torture until they say what their captors want to hear. More than military paranoia is at work, though. The Scions find agents of the Titans placed near the high command, twisting their thoughts and ready to kill any agents of the Gods who fall into their hands.

Most of the characters who appear in this scene are grunt soldier extras (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 282). Their officers are non-extra grunt soldiers with additional skills (among them Command 3 and some administrative and technical Abilities of no great importance).

TAKEN PRISONER

As soon as possible, sailors level automatic rifles at the Scions as an officer tells them to get down on the deck with their hands behind their heads. Two sailors aim at each Scion. British sailors carry the L85A2, while the Europeans chiefly use the FAMAS. (The traits for an M16—**Scion: Hero**, p. 203—will suffice for either.) They're not bluffing. The characters have one action in which to talk to the officer before he orders the sailors to fire. Under the circumstances, a player must roll at least five successes, or the character must use Knacks such as Benefit of the Doubt, Charmer or Instant Hypnosis. Any attempt at persuasion proves fleeting, however, for other officers soon appear wanting to follow SOP and place the characters under arrest, with threats of lethal force if the Scions do not obey.

Once the Scions are down on the deck, sailors shackle their wrists, strip them naked (cutting their clothes off them, if necessary) and confiscate everything they carry. Strange relics provoke much comment, but the officer in charge puts off questions for the formal interrogation. If a character tries to explain a relic or talk for any reason, an attentive guard slams a rifle butt into that character's stomach. Scowling or jeering guards (one per character) chivvy them to the brig.

On the trip to the brig, at least one guard succumbs to a Dark Virtue. Perhaps a guard who earlier merely leered at a female Scion suddenly shoves her against the wall and presses against her, determined to have his way. Perhaps a guard, irritated by characters' attempts to talk, goes crazy and tries to beat one of them to death. The other guards hesitate for two actions, military discipline struggling with their own Dark Virtues, before they break it up. (Assuming the Scions don't deal with it themselves, of course... and unless they *immediately* take some action to reassure, bamboozle or subdue their guards, the sailors try first to club them and then to shoot these unruly and dangerous prisoners.)

At the brig, each character receives his or her own cell. Since this is a warship, the doors, walls, floors and ceilings are all metal, equal to an iron door (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 201).

PRELIMINARY INTERROGATION

Their captors leave the Scions to shiver for several hours before a senior officer comes to question them. A junior officer orders a pair of watchful and visibly trigger-happy guards to take the characters to a nearby room and strap them into chairs side by side. A trained interrogator would question each character separately rather than all as a group, but the questioner is not a trained interrogator. He's just a ship's captain caught between fear that the Band's appearance portends an attack and eagerness to advance his career by exposing an enemy plot.

OOPS... THE BAND WANTS TO FIGHT

As demigods, the Scions could probably defeat the ship's entire crew. Still, how does this advance them toward their goal? If anyone on the ship gets a message out, other ships come in response to the attack and the fight escalates. Such could even become the trigger that sets the nukes flying, if the characters cannot quickly convince both sides that they represent a third force. (Which could itself defuse or at least delay all-out war, as the British and Europeans hunt for this new foe.) If the ship simply sets off a new course with no explanation—say, toward Sleipner—the high command first orders the ship back to its assigned mission, then sends more ships in pursuit.

Then again, the Band might be able to put the whammy on enough officers to take over the ship. Since each navy has more than 30 ships in the North Sea, doing so would not significantly alter the strategic situation. At best, the characters could use the ship as a stepping-stone to some greater goal, such as the navy's admiral in command.

And besides, it's more dramatic for the players (and takes less time for the Storyteller) if the characters stay together. The Scions' Legend grants them this small favor, at least.

Four naval personnel attend the interrogation: the captain, the midshipman who records the proceedings and the two guards who stand ready with automatic rifles. The captain asks the characters' names, their nationalities, who they work for and what sort of attack they planned. Whenever he doesn't like an answer, a guard slams a rifle butt into the respondent's gut. Treat the damage as a nightstick attack dealing 4B damage. As the characters resist, the guards hit them with greater force, going up to 7B (they have automatic success with their attacks, after all). That still probably doesn't hurt Scions with high Stamina (especially Epic Stamina)—and *pretending* to be hurt requires failing an Endurance roll! (Damn that stubborn Viking temper.) As at least some of the Scions visibly do not break, the captain becomes angrier and angrier. Even if the Scions spin a story to confirm all his preconceptions, he can't believe them and thinks they're holding something back. Once again, only Knacks can force this patriotic idiot to listen and take seriously anything the Band says.

In the end, though, convincing the captain doesn't much matter. An hour into the interrogation, the captain's first officer enters with new orders. The ship must deliver the prisoners to the high command at one of the oil platforms. Unless the characters hope to take control of the ship's entire officer corps, they get delivered up the chain of command.

The ship moves slowly through the storm and finally arrives at an oil platform. This huge structure consists of a large steel and concrete box on reinforced concrete pillars driven into the sea floor. Most of the platform stays above even the highest waves.

Docking is an elaborate procedure. The smaller ship moves into the lee of a larger vessel, where the waves are low enough to drop a rope ladder from the platform, while thick rubber rolls, like bumpers, prevent the edge of the ship from crashing into the massive pillars of the platform. The Scions do not have their hands unbound to climb. The sailors on the platform lower a cargo net to haul them up. In this undignified way do the children of the Gods arrive at the task force's headquarters. Once aboard, they face the same choices as during their initial capture, only magnified by larger numbers of soldiers and higher-ranking officers. This time, experienced, elite soldiers (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 283) keep automatic weapons trained on the Scions.

THE TWO NAVIES

Until this point, the navies have been functionally identical. Once the characters reach a task force headquarters, however, they deal with important characters—especially the titanspawn who seek to drive the conflict. The latter are not the same.

The EU navy is commanded by Admiral Villeneuve, a lean, elderly Frenchman with short, graying hair and a small gray mustache. He saw combat in his youth, during interventions in former French colonies in Africa. Villeneuve is neither a coward nor a fool. His Dark Virtue is two dots of Zealotry. He sees this mission as a chance to assert French dominance in Europe, as is only right and proper since they have the nukes. Villeneuve despises the British as lapdogs of the Americans. He merely feels impatient at Americans because they wield their global power like insecure children—first lashing out, then tiptoeing in fear that someone, somewhere, might not love them. *La Belle France* really should lead the World instead.

The European flagship is the *Charles de Gaulle,* the only nuclear aircraft carrier outside the US navy. The French add two *Mistral*-class amphibious assault ships, six of their 12 destroyers, five of their 11 frigates and three of their six nuclear attack submarines. The Germans contribute all 15 of their frigates but keep their seven non-nuclear subs in reserve.

The resident titanspawn consist of a pack of six werewolves led by Werner Krieger (see **Scion: Demigod**, p. 288). Krieger Munitions supplies many of the arms used by the task force, and Krieger used his political connections to obtain a vaguely defined authority as a representative of the German government. The lesser werewolves (all sailors in the combined navy) are experienced soldiers with one dot each of Epic Strength, Epic Stamina and Epic Perception. They have a hybrid form, with the same effects on their Attributes and claw damage as Krieger himself.

The British navy is commanded by Admiral Jarrett, a man in his 40s who saw action in both Gulf Wars. Like Villeneuve, Jarrett is neither a coward nor a fool. His Dark Virtue is two dots of Ambition. He sees the North Sea mission as a stepping-stone to even higher rank, and from there to political power. Jarrett sometimes thinks about the possibility of mounting a coup. He comes from a working-class background and imagines abolishing upper-class anachronisms such as the House of Lords and the monarchy, preferably by firing squad. Jarrett's opinions about "Eurowimps" who lack the stomach for real war match those of Rush Limbaugh. He does not believe his enemies would really let missiles fly, either in a first strike or in retaliation.

The British sent one of their three *Invincible*-class aircraft carriers in case the weather ever lets up, along with an amphibious assault ship, all eight of their destroyers, 10 of their 13 frigates, eight anti-mine vessels and four of their nuclear attack submarines.

The resident titanspawn consist of six frost giants who work as support personnel such as the platform's weather officer and a radar technician. They are led by… Gunnar Forson! The tycoon branched out from energy drinks to war profiteering, as a provisioner. He has contacts, and contracts, throughout both the American and British militaries. Just as every American GI in World War Two was assured of a Coke, every sailor in the British Navy can enjoy a *Slam!*

The European navy operates from the Halfdan Platform, contributed by the Danes, in the southern part of the North Sea. The British operate from the Claymore Platform farther west.



INTENSIVE INTERROGATION

If the Scions let the navy have its way, they go to the platform's infirmary, where they undergo medically supervised torture. Let us gloss over the details. Suffice to say that the first round involves chemical interrogation (so-called "truth drugs," which really just disorient and tranquilize the subject to reduce his inhibitions and self-control). The second and subsequent rounds involve waterboarding, burns and electric shocks to sensitive regions of the anatomy.

Each round this goes on calls for a contested roll between the players of the torturer and the victim: (Manipulation + Investigation) versus the Scion's (Stamina + Integrity). In the chemical interrogation round, the roll for the torturer takes a three-die bonus for the drug. In the second and subsequent rounds, the roll for the torturer takes a bonus equal to the number of health levels inflicted thus far. Each round starts by inflicting two levels of bashing damage. The semi-divine toughness of the Scions puzzles the interrogators a bit, but they just ramp up the current or the flames until they see damage.

As before, a demigod with Epic Stamina or a high Endurance Virtue can resist this torture, either to keep silent or to tell lies. Unfortunately, nothing really satisfies the officer who conducts the torture. Indeed, the Scions can soon tell that the officer has lost control. After a while, he just screams "Talk!" again and again while trying to inflict more damage. He shoves away the medic who tries to stop him. If he isn't stopped, his Malice drives him to try to kill at least one prisoner. The Scions presumably do not let it go that far. They had better use Epic Attributes, Knacks and Boons to escape or subvert the medic or interrogator… either of which shows them as unusual and dangerous people.

Before things get that far, Scions strapped in for interrogation might try to turn the tables and wangle information from their captors. In this case, the Scion's player rolls (Manipulation + Investigation) as the interrogator's player rolls (Manipulation + Integrity)—assuming the Scions didn't turn the tables so completely that their erstwhile captors are now in the straps while the Scions hold the stripped electric cord and the lit cigarette. Any attempt to trick information from the naval personnel requires at least three net successes on the resisted roll (or use of Knacks such as Blurt It Out), since the Scions must overcome military discipline, a disadvantageous starting position and near-lunacy on the part of their interrogator.

If the Scions didn't stay captured, they might capture a sailor and attempt a little interrogation on their own initiative. Use the resisted roll that seems appropriate, depending on whether the Band employs force of personality or force of pain. They can learn three important pieces of information:

- Someone is attacking and sinking their side's ships in such a manner that the victims cannot radio an alarm. The sailors believe it's the opposing navy.
- Their own navy has tactical nuclear weapons.
- They believe their respective government will soon authorize the use of those nukes (and most sailors think it's about damn time).

THE HIGH COMMAND

One way or another, the Scions come to the attention of the fleet's admiral. Maybe he wants to get answers from their interrogator; maybe the Scions say they have important information for his ears only; maybe they slip their guards the moment they board the platform and go looking for him. The details matter only insofar as they influence how the fleet's admiral perceives them.

In game terms, either admiral is a physically average soldier with above-average Social and Mental Attributes and a passel of administrative skills that you might represent as Craft (Naval Operations) 4. Each also has Command 4, Integrity 3 and Willpower 6.

Exactly how the encounter between the Band and the admiral plays out depends entirely on the approach the players take. If the Scions try to overpower the admirals, they can probably do so—but only Knacks can make these strong-willed patriots submit (and their junior officers no longer obey an admiral whom they know is held prisoner).

Neither rational persuasion nor eloquent oratory can penetrate an admiral's mind, though. They sound superficially rational… except that they plan to nuke an oil platform to destroy the opposing command, and they recognize that once that happens, they need to nuke the other side's capitals as well, to prevent their civilian leadership from ordering a counterstrike. The admirals' Dark Virtues are strong enough that they *cannot* see the moral or even the tactical flaws in the plan.

Only an exercise of Legend that Fatebinds the admiral to a Scion can purge the offending Dark Virtue. Then the Scions merely have to convince the admiral that they are not spies from the other side, that the confrontation in the North Sea is not what it seems and that their own civilian leaders might be suffering from thinking that is as twisted as theirs was.

THE ENEMY WITHIN

One factor works in the Band's favor. As mentioned, Titan minions have infiltrated each naval headquarters. As soon as they learn that people with superhuman powers are on the platform and disrupting the progress toward nuclear war, the minions' leader calls them together for an assault on the Band. They intend to kill the admiral, blame the whole thing on the Scions and push for immediate nuclear retaliation for the "assassination." Therefore, whatever the Band attempts with an admiral gets interrupted by an attempt to kill them. On the European side, they face a pack of werewolves; on the British side, an old foe with a lot more backup than he had last time but, ha-ha, no cameras showing the Band's actions to the police!

Either group of enemies has not only various innate powers, but M16s (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 203) as well. The titanspawn initiate their attack with long bursts of autofire (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 199) and multiple attack actions, each combatant trying to attack two different Scions. Each Scion, therefore, comes under attack from multiple enemies. The giants or werewolves *hope* to gain onslaught

penalties... probably a vain hope, against demigods. After that, the assailants stick to short bursts or discard their guns to attack hand-to-hand.

Remember, though, the bad guys also want to kill the admiral. If they succeed, they Band's position becomes utterly precarious as the fog of war takes over, some captains in the fleet try to engage the other navy, and a full-scale shooting war develops. If the Scions cannot figure out a way to seize control of *both* fleets and force a cease-fire, the battle escalates to a nuclear exchange within three days.

If the Scions not only win but can show the admiral he has real live *werewolves* or *frost giants* infiltrating his command, anything else the Scions say suddenly seems far more plausible, even without Fatebinding or Knacks such as Benefit of the Doubt.

ALTERNATIVE CONFRONTATIONS

If the Scions were gracious winners when they faced Gunnar before, they might be able to talk their way out of a brawl again. Gunnar would be willing to stake everything on another game or contest… at least as long as the Band left him a way out.

It's also possible the Band slew Gunnar in "The Coming of Winter." In that case, replace him with a frost giant of similar power, who has no interest whatsoever in negotiation or wagers.

PREVENTING A HOLOCAUST

With one tense situation resolved, the Scions face a final problem. It isn't enough to convince one admiral, they have to convince several of the admiral's subordinates as well. Otherwise, those officers might decide that their commanding officer has gone mad and needs to be replaced. Once that's done, the Band needs to deal with the other fleet's high command, and convince *them* to stand down too.

Fortunately, the Scions have three advantages in this second phase. They (hopefully) have an admiral who wants to talk to his counterpart and lower tensions. They know that Titan servants have infiltrated the other side too. If they capture Gunnar Forson or Werner Krieger, they might be able to learn who's infiltrated the other side's headquarters. Perhaps most importantly, both Forson and Krieger own enchanted walkie-talkies (Relic •) that communicate through even the worst radio static, and which mundane radio cannot detect. Each leader was oath-bound to warn his counterpart when the nukes would fly, so both could get away in time. If the characters have one of these devices, they might figure out a way to use it to draw the enemy leader into a trap.

If the Band can merely convince both fleet commands that North Sea oil is not worth a nuclear war, and keep their fleets from attacking each other, the Scions have at least delayed a holocaust. Clever Scions might even get the two admirals on guard against the invisible longships of the giants. While the giants enjoy a great advantage through their illusions, the situation resembles submarine warfare in many ways. Both admirals know all about anti-submarine tactics and can think of ways to detect an invisible ship. Indeed, the Band might turn both fleets against Sleipner—the one platform that neither side could occupy—and use them both as a mammoth distraction while the Scions board the platform and confront the giants.

Scene

ODIN'S STEED

MENTAL •• PHYSICAL •••• SOCIAL ••

If the Scions coped with the stormy sea and evaded both mortal navies (or otherwise dealt with them), they still face one minor hurdle in reaching Sleipner: The elder jotnar who occupy the platform made it invisible. No one can see the drilling rig from more than 50 feet away. The giants did discover that invisibility offers less protection than they thought, since both navies have GPS coordinates for the platform. Scions who did not think to obtain such coordinates (or whose GPS device went down with their ship) can rely instead on the Mystery Purview. Each success gives one coordinate, starting with degrees, then minutes, then seconds. (Or, the Band can hijack a naval vessel.) Scions can also penetrate the veil of concealment if players succeed at the usual (Perception + Awareness + Legend) roll, difficulty 12.

The perpetual storm fades just 50 feet short of the drilling platform—the same limit as the cloak of concealment—leaving a rectangle of relatively calm water under the rig. A pair of oversized longships moors beneath the platform. A giant busies himself on one longship, performing some nautical task such as caulking the seams.

The giants who occupy Sleipner have changed the oil rig a bit. The pillars rising out of the North Sea stay the same; so does the ancillary box of the crew quarters and the bridge between them. Ice now encrusts the oil rig, however, while the top of the rig now supports the turrets, gables and battlements of an ice castle. Frost giants walk the parapets, keeping watch for intruders.

So, nothing stands between the Band and the passage to Helheim except finding it. Oh, and a fortress full of giants. How hard could it be?

NOWHERE OVER THE RAINBOW

If any Scions know the Psychopomp Boons called Come Along and Rainbow Bridge, the Band might try to simply teleport to Sleipner. Unfortunately, that won't work. The elder jotun magicians on the rig thought of that. Any attempt to reach Sleipner by magic instead shunts the Scions to another oil platform—say, one used as a headquarters by one of the navies, leaving the Band with the small problem of explaining to a paranoid admiral how they got on the rig undetected.

For extra fun, split the Band so half go to one navy's headquarters, and half to the other. Doing so presents a narrative challenge, though. Be sure to switch scenes between the two groups frequently, so you don't leave half the players bored with nothing to do.

THE SLEIPNER GARRISON

Sleipner's interior has changed even more than its exterior. For one thing, the main rooms and passages have become much bigger. This isn't illusion; the giants cast spells to expand the interior to their scale. The lower areas of Sleipner still hold all the machinery for pumping oil, and the workers still keep it all running. They are now all thralls. The top of Sleipner now holds a giant-sized feasting-hall made entirely of ice.

In addition to whatever giants are out on patrol, 40 generic frost giants now occupy the rig. Half of them have Intelligence 2, so they are not completely dim. Even with its magical expansion, though, the platform remains sufficiently cramped that no more than 10 could gather in any chamber, or two stand abreast in any corridor. Two generic elder jotnar also stay on the platform at all times. Finally, two special characters lead the garrison.

Hrimgrimnir commands the garrison as its jarl, or chief. This jotun is a legendary personage. In the "Lay of Skirnir," Freyr's envoy threatens Gerd that if she does not agree to meet his master, he will curse her to know no love except that of Hrimgrimnir, a three-headed giant of monstrous ugliness. Skirnir did not exaggerate: Hrimgrimnir is truly hideous, and he really does have three heads. Use Utgard-Loki's traits (see **Scion: Demigod**, p. 271) but reduce his Legend to 7 and his Epic Strength and Stamina to 6. Do, however, raise his Perception and Appearance to 5 and add Epic Appearance 3 (Compelling Presence, Lasting Impression, Serpent's Gaze). Finally, Hrimgrimnir adds the Boons of Death Senses, Summon Ghost, Exorcism and Frozen Panoply (Frost • • • •; see p. 37) to the usual Boons for elder jotnar.

Utgard-Loki assigned Hrimgrimnir to attack naval vessels with the express purpose of starting a war. He rather likes the idea. Stopping the war makes him even angrier than the mere fact of Scions invading his garrison.

Only one thing could possibly turn aside his wrath and make him cooperate with the Band: A female Scion must spend the night with him, and use the Virility/Muliebrity Boon (Health • • • •; see p. 34) to make their union fruitful. (One of the elder jotnar knows this Boon.) Hrimgrimnir is so ugly that even troll-wives won't have him—not even if he hides his appearance using illusion—and it makes him bitter. Hrimgrimnir suggests this only if one of the members of the Band is a female and if the characters collectively ask if there's *anything* they can do to keep peace between them.

Fjolvor is another elder jotun, with special mastery of the Sky Purview. She has all Sky Boons from one to five dots, the most permitted by her Legend of 6. She also has Charisma, Manipulation and Intelligence of 4, and adds the first five Illusion Boons (starting p. 38) and Mystery 5 to her elder jotun Boons and innate magical powers. She is the mother of Gunnar and Robrek Forson. As soon as she learns about Scions in the North Sea—or especially, on Sleipner itself—she casts the runes to learn about their past interactions with Jotunheim. If the Band has slain any of her children (very likely, at this point), she knows about it—and she wants revenge.

No conceivable wergild can appease Fjolvor. She wants to bathe in the Scions' blood and wear their heads on a necklace. In the unlikely event that Hrimgrimnir forbids her to attack the Band, she settles for casting Evil Eye on as many of the Scions as possible.

FINDING THE PASSAGE

The passage to Helheim lies on the sea floor beneath Sleipner. The Band must somehow descend through 100 feet or so of icy water and find the cracks that lead to the Underworld.

See the sidebar "Brrrrr!" on page 139 of **Scion: Demigod** on diving in frigid water. A year into Fimbulvetr, the North Sea is now as cold as the Antarctic Ocean. Diving without a high degree of Epic Stamina or Boons such as Water Breathing or Frost Immunity means swift death. Sleipner holds diving suits that reduce the environmental hazard to "Numbing Cold." It also carries sufficient SCUBA gear for the Band, as well as highly trained divers who could brief the Scions on how to use it. Too bad those divers are all thralls.

Even during the day, the floor of the North Sea is deep enough that visibility equals a foggy night. (See **Scion: Hero**, p. 185, for visibility conditions.) The most powerful ordinary flashlights act as torches;



Sleipner holds floodlights equal to headlights, which can be powered from the rig itself. Finding the cracks in the darkness underwater calls for a (Perception + [Awareness, Occult or Science]) roll at difficulty 8: Awareness for raw attentiveness, Occult to sense the uncanny taint from the Underworld, or Science to notice anomalous currents. Floodlights or Boons that grant supernatural perception, such as Death Senses or Night Eyes reduce the difficulty to 5. In any case, finding the cracks takes one hour per attempt. Terra Incognita (Psychopomp 5) leads the Band straight to a fissure, with no more time in the water than it takes to descend to the sea floor. Wriggling through a fissure takes a Scion to Hvergelmir (as described on p. 157 of **Scion: Demigod**).

The Band doesn't actually *need* to enter the water, though. Sleipner itself acts like a Touchstone, and any Scion can figure out how to use it through an extended (Perception + Occult) roll. They just have to ride northward off the oil rig and spend a point of Legend. Of course, this now means getting steeds or vehicles into a castle full of giants, and then riding them out a window. Fortunately, a mere sled will do. As the Scions exit Sleipner and spend their Legend, they plummet into the North Sea... and find themselves splashing into Hvergelmir.

Welcome to Helheim.

ACT THREE
LOVE AND DEATH

Prophecy: "Spite and love spoil all plans. A dead queen seals the sun-lord's fate." Fate decrees that Baldur will stay dead until after Ragnarök. But who dooms Baldur, and why? The prophecy hints obliquely, but it *isn't* the usual suspect, Loki. And maybe, just maybe, the Band can defy Fate after all.

One prophecy covers all of Act Three, for the entire act deals with only one issue: whether the Band can bring Baldur back from the dead. There are just two scenes—one in Eliudnir, where the Scions present the plea for Baldur's resurrection; one in which they try to fulfill the conditions set by Hel. The latter is actually two scenes, but you use only one of them, based on the Band's deeds back in Act One.

DEATH AND DIVINITY

The dead in Helheim, including Baldur and Nanna, seem quite corporeal. Einherjar are dead too but lose none of the strength and prowess they had in life. Actually, quite a few dead people "live" in Asgard. So why does Baldur need to live at all?

Dead Gods seem solid and retain *most* of their powers as long as they stay in the Overworld or Underworld. They cannot, however, use Ultimate Attributes or become avatar expressions. In the World, they become as intangible as any other ghost, and materializing costs a *dot* of Legend.

At least, that's how it works in the all-Aesir setting of the Ragnarök saga. In the "vanilla" **Scion** setting, other pantheons follow their own systems, or at least find their own special exceptions. Among the Pesedjet, for instance, Osiris came back from death with nothing worse than a bit of mutilation.

Scene

BRIDGE OF DEATH

MENTAL – PHYSICAL ••••• SOCIAL –

Once more, the characters experience an interlude of travel. Whether they dove through the cracks in the sea floor or rode off the edge of Sleipner, they find themselves on a track heading north through the icy wastes of Niflheim.

Without the use of Psychopomp Boons such as Rainbow Bridge, the road takes nine days to travel. It doesn't matter how hard the Scions push themselves, their mounts or their vehicles. They have entered a realm of pure myth, and traveling the road to Eliudnir takes *nine days*, whether they walk, ride horses or drive Ferraris.

OPTIONAL ENCOUNTERS

Along the way, the Band can have a variety of exploits, though these are all optional. As Storyteller, determine whether your players want to proceed straight to the meeting with Hel and Baldur or would appreciate some excitement along the way. After all, this might be the Band's first visit to the Underworld. It's a big event. Either way, brush up on the description of Helheim on pages 157–160 of **Scion: Demigod**.

• **Still More Frost Giants.** Many frost giants live in Helheim. If the Scions are brave (or foolish), they could try to invoke codes of hospitality to rest at a giant's hall. If they do, they find these giants even more brutal and savage than the worst giants they encountered back in Midgard. When these giants encounter Scions, they try to kill and eat them. Raw.

All the giants the Band encountered in Midgard had to learn to make at least some minimal accommodation to operating in the World of mortals. The giants of Helheim never had to worry about being found out. They also lack a king comparable to Utgard-Loki to force them to get along with each other. These brutes fear Hel, but no one else. Fortunately, their squalid isolation leaves these giants as stupid as they are vicious.

• **Dragons and Serpents.** Many of these creatures live in Helheim too. The mightiest (Nidhogg, from **Scion: Demigod**, p. 233) spends most of his time at Hvergelmir, gnawing on corpses and the roots of Yggdrasil, but he can fly and so might turn up just about anywhere in Helheim. The same goes for Nidhogg's four principal offspring.

The Band might also encounter other serpentine monsters. The stórrvurm described on pages 123-124 can represent such creatures. They might be venomous or have cold-based powers such as the power to exhale streams of supercooled frost.

• **Old Friends and Otherwise.** Do the Scions have any dead enemies who could reappear in Helheim? Almost certainly! Most likely, their ghosts can do nothing but revile the Band, but powerful enemies might be able to make trouble—especially if they received power from the Titans. For instance, a mortal enemy of exceptional evil might reappear as an aptrganger (see pp. 119-120) leading a band of ghostly warriors or a squad of the hungry dead. Lesser foes might simply find some way to sic giants or a dragon on the Band.

Dead allies offer a chance for poignant meetings. If someone such as Cybil (from Chapter Six) died while associating with the Band, the Scions might encounter her ghost. Mortal friends and family could show up too. This could be a chance for Band members to work out some personal issues, or a chance for some pathos as the dead ask the Scions to win them a resurrection or a place in Asgard.

BRIDGE OF DEATH

One encounter is *not* optional. On the last day of travel, the Band comes to the river Gjöll. The giantess Modgud (see **Scion: Demigod**, p. 272) stands guard at the gold-thatched bridge called Gjallurbrú. She has her immense skeggox handy. Near her stands a rack of six riot shields and a variety of melee weapons—skeggoxes, spathas and the like.

Modgud hails the characters, but not in friendship. She challenges them to a game called *holmganga,* as a test of their courage. Sure, they've fought many battles before... but living creatures just don't visit the Queen of Death in her own hall and return—not unless they are the bravest of the brave and truly worthy of divinity. Really, this is a favor from Hel. They can turn back now, and she will let them leave the Underworld to see the sun and their loved ones again.

Well, what Scion of the Aesir could turn down a challenge like that? Besides, the Scions would have to explain to Odin why they chickened out. Fortunately, only one Scion has to play this "game" with Modgud. The others can pick their champion however they like.

HOLMGANGA

Scions who know their Norse culture—or who have the Know-It-All Knack, or whose players score at least three successes on an (Intelligence + Academics) roll—recall that *holmganga* is a traditional way of settling disputes. In this ritual combat, two warriors stand inside a battle square 10 feet on a side. Traditionally, a large cloak or blanket defines the battle square. Modgud has an athletic mat of the proper size leaning against the side of Gjallurbrú.

Each warrior has three wooden shields and one melee weapon for the duel—no guns, no unarmed strikes, no thrown weapons. Modgud offers to provide weapons and shields for Scions who don't have them. Of course, plain wooden shields are far too flimsy for dueling demigods, so she offers the riot shields instead. Well-prepared Scions may use their own relic weapons, but she insists the Scions use the riot shields to keep the fight as even as possible. She puts aside her own giant-size skeggox to wield a normal skeggox, so she has no advantage from her equipment, either.

Unlike a normal fight, though, the participants take turns swinging at one another. Each warrior takes a single swing, then lets his opponent attack once. If a shield breaks, the warrior can drop it and take one from his spares. If all three shields break, the warrior has no choice but to defend with his weapon or hope that he can take a hit without collapsing!

Combatants traditionally do not wear armor in *holmganga*, but Modgud breaks tradition by allowing her opponent to wear any relic armor he owns. "It won't make any difference," she says with an evil grin. If the Scion goes without armor, Modgud does too.

Holmganga works much like regular combat, but without using ticks. Each warrior must strike once, then wait for the opponent to strike. Therefore, weapon speed becomes irrelevant. The defender can use his shield to try to block the incoming blow, but he may parry with a weapon or try to evade the blow. Due to the constrained battle space, both participants suffer a -2 penalty to Dodge DV. It's hard to dodge without accidentally stepping off the mat and forfeiting the bout. Modgud suggests a coin toss to see who strikes first.

On her turns, Modgud deliberately strikes at her opponent's shield. The riot shields have 6L/8B soak and 10 health levels. With her Epic Strength, however, she deals *22 dice* with every strike, not counting successes from her player's attack roll, which is more than enough to smash the tough polycarbonate to flinders. Unless her opponent deliberately tries to protect his shield by dodging or parrying some other way, Modgud quickly smashes all three of his shields. "Had enough?" she asks. "You can still forfeit and turn back."

Presumably, the Scion does not cave in. Modgud's next successful strike—which could easily cleave the Scion in twain, or at least give him a really bad gash—stops an inch short of his body. "You pass," Modgud says. "You're brave enough."

OOPS... THE BAND DOESN'T WANT TO PLAY

The Scions' players need to fail Courage rolls or spend Willpower points to opt out of this direct challenge to their bravery, but maybe some or all of them do so. The simplest approach is that while one Scion engages in *holmganga,* the others sneak across Gjallurbrú. If her opponent continues to play by the rules and passes the test, Modgud just raises an eyebrow and asks how many of them are Scions of Loki. Flat-out cheating, such as waiting until the rest of the Band has crossed and then making a run for the bridge, results in Modgud attempting a genuine, killing blow at the treacherous Scion… and then she teleports to the other end of Gjallurbrú to engage him there.

Rather stupid Bands can simply fight Modgud. She's one elder giant against a Band of demigods, so the contest isn't impossible. It's merely unnecessary.

The Band can also try to cross the Gjöll without using the bridge. The river is 30 yards wide, it's so cold that immersion deals environmental damage equal to a bonfire, and it flows rapidly enough that the (Dexterity + Athletics) rolls to cross it are difficulty 3. Have fun.

Or, of course, the Band can try to think of something terribly clever. Tests of courage and battles at bridges are very mythic, though, so the Scions have passed up an excellent chance to build their Legend—even though in the version of the story known to mortals, Odin's messenger, Hermod, gets waved on through by Modgud.

Scene

QUEEN OF PAIN

MENTAL •• PHYSICAL – SOCIAL •••

At last, the Scions enter Hel's grim hall. Ganglot promises to see that any steeds or vehicles receive proper care. Ganglati says she will lead the Band to Hel. The doors of Eliudnir open by themselves. Ganglati shuffles in with a rasping, "This way, guests of Hel." First the Band comes to a small vestibule that looks very much like the front desk of a down-at-the-heels motel, complete with shabby couch and chairs, a single, forlorn pot of aspidistras and an end-table bearing a few long-out-of-date issues of *Newsweek, Woman's Day* and *Motor Trend.* Only the rusting swords and axes hung on the walls look out of place. Ganglati shuffles behind the battered wooden counter, opens a thick, dusty book and pushes it toward the Scions. "Sign, please," she says. The ballpoint doesn't work, so the undead servitor spends five minutes slowly hunting up another one. After that, Ganglati shows the Scions to a small, musty coatroom and a small, dilapidated bathroom where they can freshen up. Ganglati will not be hurried, but she finally ushers the Band to grimly magnificent double-doors of ironbound oak that appear in the vestibule's far wall, bidding them enter the presence of Hel, Queen over the Damned.

As described in **Scion: Demigod**, the interior of Hel's Hall runs neck-deep in stale blood and the venom that drips from the serpents woven into the ceiling. Hel sits on her dark throne about 500 feet away from the entrance. A second throne, similar but ornamented with gold, stands next to her. The hall stretches off to either side as far as any Scion can see. It is, of course, much larger than the hall seemed from outside. The dead stand or wade slowly through the blood. They have been here so long they no longer notice each other.

"Follow, please," Ganglati says. She shuffles straight toward Hel, traveling an inch over the lake of blood. A few of the damned glare at her for a moment. When the Scions follow, they splash into the stinking blood along with the dead. "Follow, please," Ganglati repeats.

When the Scions reach the other end of the hall, they can climb steps out of the blood to stand before Hel. The blood drains from them without leaving any trace. This was just a final bit of petty harassment to show the characters how little Hel cares for them, not a serious attempt at humiliation. Hel does not care whether they kneel or make any other gestures of respect. She has made her point.

"I suspect I know why you've come," she says with icy hauteur. "But you may say it anyway." She listens to the characters' explanation of their mission without showing the slightest interest. Hel doesn't even look bored. It's like talking to a corpse posed in a position of paying attention. When they finish, she says, "Since you were sent by the All-Father"—Hel speaks the title with just the faintest hint of irony—"I suppose you must see Baldur." She gestures slightly at Ganglati, who shuffles toward a door in the wall behind Hel's throne. As soon as Ganglati opens the door, Baldur pushes his way through.

"At last," he says, smiling, and suddenly Eliudnir doesn't seem like such a bad place. "Well met. Well met indeed!" He hugs any Scions he already knows and shakes hands with those he doesn't. He asks for introductions, and then, still smiling, asks Hel if she would mind extending the hospitality of her hall to these guests.

And when Baldur smiles at Hel, she is transformed. Hel is still cold, cruel and haughty, but she looks *alive,* and suddenly every male Scion knows why so many men have courted death. She promises nothing but pain, but oh, it might hurt so good.

Anyone who looks away from Baldur and Hel sees one more person enter the hall, a woman dressed in black and silver-gray. Her face tightens in anger and bitterness for an instant when she looks at the two Gods, before she smoothes her features into a pleasant, unrevealing smile. This is Nanna, Baldur's wife. She asks, "Won't you introduce your guests, dear?" Hel glances at Nanna and becomes her usual, hideous self again. Baldur doesn't seem to notice. If the Band slew Hod in Act One, Baldur also asks Hel if Hod may join them since he's part of this as well.

DINNER WITH THE DEAD

Hel claps her hands once and a table appears, with a feast already prepared. Out of regard for Baldur, it's a real feast instead of some ghastly mockery. Ganglati and the returned Ganglot serve slowly but politely. While the Scions dine, Baldur explains the real story behind his death, beginning with his first sojourn in Helheim. Hod, Hel and Nanna speak only when Baldur asks them fill in some detail about their own actions so long ago, but otherwise they stay silent. Baldur apologizes for setting up Hod as his killer, but he tried to make sure no blame would come to him. Hod smiles bitterly and says he's used to being the goat. An awkward silence follows until Nanna interjects that *of course* Loki would find a way to make it go wrong.

After filling in the background, Baldur explains what he sought: a weapon that would kill Titan avatars. Mistletoe, having slain him twice, should now fill the bill. The Scions must return Mistletoe to the Aesir so they can use it against Surtr in the last battle.

Interesting as the Scions might find the true story behind Baldur's death, they might find equal interest in their dinner companions. Keeping an eye on Hel,



Hod and Nanna reveals fairly heavy emotional currents. Some are obvious; others require success at a contested roll of (Perception + Empathy) against the target's (Manipulation + Integrity).

Hel is easy. Every time Baldur pays attention to her, she becomes beautiful for a moment. Her Appearance and Epic Appearance flip from negative to positive. Baldur makes Hel feel beautiful—and so she is. Hel pretends disinterest while she eats her dinner, but any character who has the Empathy Ability *at all* can tell she loves Baldur.

Hod presents a somewhat greater challenge to read. He waves away any apologies the Scions make for killing him at Loki's behest, but in such a snide manner that his anger is plain to see. Anyone with Empathy can also tell that Hod's self-deprecating sarcasm comes from genuine resentment of Baldur. Anyone whose player succeeds at the contested roll can tell, however, that Hod's own self-pity and anger at Baldur disgust him. Yet Nanna receives none of Hod's passive-aggressive bitterness. Hod comes closest to showing true anger—and anguish—when Nanna tells how she died of grief. He's angry because still loves her.

Baldur seems to present a surprising kindness to his double murderer and to Hel. A successfully contested roll reveals hints of distress, though. Baldur the Bright, beloved by all, really does feel like a scumbag for all the harm he's brought to Hod. While he genuinely loves Nanna, there's a bit of shame there too. His apparent affection for Hel is as genuine as it seems, but it's no greater than his friendliness to the Scions.

Nanna is the hardest to read. Seeing anything beyond her façade of polite charm requires a successful contested roll. She is almost desperately fixated on Baldur. She fears and despises Hel... as a rival. She hardly notices Hod at all.

Anyone who can sense these undercurrents of longing, resentment and guilt finds the dinner incredibly uncomfortable. Expression, after all, is an Aesir Virtue. They speak their minds and wear their hearts on their sleeves. The four Gods all hold back their feelings to some degree, whether from pride, guilt or a desire not to hurt someone else. A player must fail an Expression roll or spend a Willpower point to keep her character from blurting out the Gods' secrets—which the character knows would create a social disaster. No one would feel better for the truth coming out, and they would surely take out their anger on the Band. Knowing this, however, a character can attempt a stunt to keep from talking, and her player can apply the stunt dice total toward *reducing* the Expression dice pool.

After dinner, Hel puts the Band up for the night. Hel says truly that the Scions will sleep in beds as fine as her own... but her own bed is called Disease and its hangings, Glimmering Misfortune. The Scions do not sleep well.

OOPS... SOCIAL DISASTER

So, what if the Scion who reads all the emotional rip currents feels compelled to speak, or the player wants his character to bring it all out in the open anyway? ("I was just trying to *help*…") In Norse sagas, ill-considered speech at the feasting-table often led to murders and vendettas. The Scions can prevent this unhappy fate from befalling any of their number, but they'll have to think quickly and push their charm and social skills to the limit to make up for the faux pas. In rules terms, the players will certainly need multiple epic successes on social rolls.

The Scions' basic choices are to seek forgiveness and change the subject, or to try to get the four Gods to work out some of their issues. Admittedly, Norse myths and sagas do not usually feature group therapy sessions, but what the heck? The Scions' purpose is to make *new* legends, after all, not just to relive old ones. Indeed, a major goal for the Band is to derail Ragnarök. If the characters can somehow, amazingly, alter the relationships of the four Gods—say, Nanna decides to let go of Baldur, or Hel and Hod stop panting after people they can never have and turn to each other instead—that would certainly qualify.

It would also render the rest of this story moot, unless you want to do a quick rewrite and have Thokk be Loki after all… or some other enemy of Baldur's… or some enemy of Loki's trying to frame him. Play with the possibilities.

GIFTS, EXPOSITION AND ULTIMATUM

When the Scions rise, Ganglati and Ganglot lead them to Hel's throne room. Baldur, Nanna and Hod soon join them. Breakfast features rømmegrøt (a pudding made from flour, milk, cream and sugar) and other Scandinavian delicacies guaranteed to harden arteries.

After breakfast, Baldur and Nanna give the Scions a few gifts to deliver to the Gods back in Asgard. Baldur asks them to return Draupnir to Odin. Placing the great arm-ring on Baldur's pyre was a magnificent honor, but the All-Father needs this powerful relic to help coordinate the fighting in Ragnarök. He also gives them Mistletoe. Nanna has a linen blouse for Frigg and a gold finger-ring for Frigg's maid Fulla. (If anyone notes the incongruity of cloth for a queen and gold for a servant, Nanna coolly replies, "These gifts have personal meanings for their recipients." Her manner makes it unnecessary for her to add, "which are none of your damn business.")

The pleasantries done, Hel issues her response to the Aesir's plea. "The tales say I offer to let Baldur go if everyone and everything else in the Nine Worlds weeps for him, to show their grief at his death. The suggestion is excellent, for I see only one alternative. Another God would have to die as Baldur's ransom. Do not think me arbitrary or grasping in this. Raising the dead is a... grave matter. There are rules that even Gods must follow. As usual for him, Odin has not bothered to explain the details. Therefore, I must."

As briefly as possible: To raise the dead, a God must become The Reaper, the Avatar of Death. Hel can do so, enabling her to resurrect any of the damned within Eliudnir. Though she won't. She takes a moment to remind the dead of Eliudnir of this fact. Resurrecting mortals is meaningless, because they receive only a respite before they die again.

Scions and Gods are another matter. Death is *not* inevitable for them. Returning them to life, therefore, carries much greater metaphysical importance. Hel could resurrect Baldur, but doing so would run directly counter to the essential nature of The Reaper. She would diminish her own Legend and sacrifice that avatar. Even if she regained her Legend, Fate would probably never let her attain supreme mastery of Death again. She will not make such a sacrifice for Baldur or any God, and Odin would not bother asking her to. He knows well enough that leaving Helheim with a diminished mistress is as good as handing the domain to the Titans. As it is, Hel has not yet decided whether to side with the Aesir, to side with the Titans or to remain neutral.

No, resurrecting a slain immortal calls for special circumstances—a deed of Legend. The first time Baldur came to Hel's attention, he was on the verge of becoming a God. He bought her forbearance through his pledge that he would die for certain before the Doom of the Gods. His ascension as a God supplied the final element. That won't work again, not least because it would invalidate his previous pledge. Death is not a revolving door.

One option is for another God, Baldur's equal or intimately bound to his Fate, to die in Baldur's place. Any God whose Legend equals Baldur's would do. Nanna would have qualified, except she carelessly died before Hel could make the offer. (If the Scions bring it up, Hel admits she sealed off Helheim precisely to avert such possibilities coming too soon. She doesn't like to make decisions hastily. Any more *personal* reasons remain unsaid.) Hel does not think any of the great among the Aesir will show such selflessness—not even Frigg. Not with the final battle so close.

Without a God's willing death, the only remaining alternative is some transcendent act of defiance against Fate. For all things in the Nine Worlds to weep for Baldur would constitute such an act. This would show that Baldur is something more than even a God—that he is woven into the Loom of Fate so tightly that his existence is not optional. In that case, even The Reaper, Avatar of Death itself, has no choice but to let him live again. Indeed, Baldur never could have died in the first place.

So those are the choices: a willing, divine sacrifice or universal mourning. Still, if the Doom of the Gods happens, Baldur gets another chance in the World to come. (So does Hod, in fact.) Odin and the rest of the Aesir must decide which course to attempt.

DEPARTURE AND ARRIVAL

With that, Hel declares the audience over. She walks with them to the door of Eliudnir. This time, the Scions tread an inch above the blood and venom, as does Hel herself. They step outside Eliudnir's door and find themselves in the Feasting Hall (see **Scion: Demigod,** p. 158, and **Scion: God,** p. 127). Ganglot and Ganglati are there too, with any steeds or vehicles the Scions brought to Niflheim. There's also a bored valkyrie with her feet on the table, reading an issue of *Guns & Ammo*. She immediately scrambles to her feet.

Hel offers a final toast to the Scions for their courage in entering the Underworld and tells the valkyrie to guide them to Valhalla. The valkyrie protests that the Scions still live and the Feasting Hall doesn't work that way. Hel icily tells the valkyrie that Helheim works any damn way she says it does. "These demigods have trodden the northward road from the mortal World," she says. "They have dined in Eliudnir. They have met enough of the conditions to qualify as dead heroes, so *take them to Valhalla, little girl, before I become angry*."

The valkyrie hustles the Band down the long stone corridor lined with tapestries of battle, and through the door to Valhalla. The Scions have reached Asgard, long before they probably thought they could.

A CHOICE OF ENDINGS

The final scene of "Highway to Hel" depends on whether the Band slew Hod back in Act One or captured him and delivered him to Odin. The latter course is not very likely, but it *could* have happened. As a Storyteller, you should always consider alternative plot lines in case the players make unexpected choices, especially when their refusal to follow the obvious plot line could have far-reaching consequences. Use the first ending, "Wergild," if the Scions only captured Hod. Use the second ending, "Thokk," if they killed him.

Scene

WERGILD

MENTAL •• PHYSICAL •••• SOCIAL •••

After Odin debriefs the returned Scions, he sends for Hod. Vidar brings Hod to Gladsheim. Baldur's killer wears no chains, for none are needed with Vidar as his guard. Odin tells Hod that he gets his chance to trade his life for Baldur's after all.

The next day, the Band sets out for Helheim again, as Hod's escort, both to see him safely to Eliudnir and to make sure he does not change his mind. The Scions unfortunately lack the Legend to use Yggdrasil as an Axis Mundi out of Asgard, so they need to undergo another nine-day ride to Niflheim.

On the eighth day, the dragon Nidhogg (see **Scion: Demigod**, p. 234) swoops in and attacks, backed up by one of its lesser offspring for every two Scions. Use the xiuhcoatl from page 235 of **Scion: Demigod** for these wurms, but remove their fire-breathing ability and reduce their Intelligence to 1.

Nidhogg starts by attacking from the air with its Entropy Breath, quite probably striking the entire group. Then it lands to try to kill Hod. The lesser wurms, meanwhile, engage the Scions. Between attempts to gut the blind God, Nidhogg roars, "Murderer! I will have vengeance for my son!"

Hod has no idea what Nidhogg is talking about. Neither does Nidhogg, really. He remembers how Hod slew its child Graback a hundred years ago. If anyone can calm Nidhogg enough to interrogate the dragon, it also remembers sending Graback to Midgard a week ago to kill a Scion of Tyr. Huh?

And how did Nidhogg know about the Band and Hod in the first place? Why, it learned about them from an old giantess who passed by Hvergelmir earlier that day. She gave her name as Thokk. They got to talking about dead kinfolk, Nidhogg remembered Graback's death, and Thokk said that by coincidence, she had seen Hod on the road to Eliudnir, with friends.

The Scions can also extract this story from any of the lesser wurms, if they leave any alive. These dragons, however, are too stupid to comprehend the contradictions in their story. If the characters kill or drive off all the dragons, Mystery provides a third opportunity to get the story. ("Hey, Fate, why did these lunatics try to kill us?") However the Scions get the story—assuming they do—the fairly obvious conclusion is that this Thokk, whoever she is, tampered with Nidhogg's memory. The stories name Loki as the prime suspect for being Thokk, but if so, the plot seems fairly insane and counterproductive.

When the Band reaches Eliudnir, Hel, Baldur and Nanna greet them. Standing before her throne, with the accursed dead as witnesses, Hel carefully asks Hod if he is *absolutely sure* about his sacrifice, because she doesn't want to have him back out just as she's become The Reaper. Hod smiles and says yes, he's never been more certain of anything. Baldur hugs him and says his Legend will last forever. Nanna tries to stab Hod with a magical hadseax that drips with Jörmungandr's venom.

Hang on... *WHAT?*

This attack is unexpected unless characters' players succeed at contested rolls against Nanna's (Dexterity + Stealth), as described on page 199 of **Scion: Hero**. Hel, Baldur and Hod all fail despite their Knacks, for their minds are all focused on the tremendous twisting of Fate they are about to perform. If anyone stops Nanna, it must

be the Scions. If they cannot, the blade plunges into Hod's gut, mortally wounding him. The blade deals aggravated damage because of the supernatural toxin that coats it, even as that toxin eats away the blade.

"You won't take Baldur from me!" Nanna screams. She can only attempt this one attack, though, for she is outnumbered and facing Gods whose power far exceeds her own. Yet Baldur and Hel are now on the clock to perform the sacrifice before Hod dies from the venom. Nanna flees. The Scions can chase her if they want. They have 15 ticks to catch her before she cries out, "I have lost all! Dread powers, take me!" When she says that, an immense hand of earth and stone erupts from the ground to close around her and drag her into the depths.

One way or another, though, Hod's sacrifice succeeds. Hel becomes The Reaper, and Hod laughs triumphantly as her scythe sweeps through him and Baldur. Hod falls dead, leaving not even a ghost, and Baldur lives. First he is flesh, then he becomes The Glory and illuminates all of Helheim in a brief wave of summer warmth before carrying the Band and Hod's body back to Asgard. The Band has defeated Fate on a grand scale.

Scene

THOKK

MENTAL •• PHYSICAL •••• SOCIAL •••

This scene supplies the more likely resolution to "Highway to Hel"—though even here, matters can end in various ways, depending on the choices of the characters and their success in their endeavors. It begins with the assumption that the Band slew Hod. Despite Hel's generous offer, none of the other Aesir are willing to sacrifice themselves for Baldur. Hey, they like the guy, but not quite that much. Frigg might do it, but she believes that the alternative plan—bringing him back through a universal mourning—can work, despite the tales and prophecies that say it doesn't.

She believes this because Loki returned to Asgard. The Band's message from Baldur and the true story behind his death cleared Loki of arranging Baldur's murder... though Odin now holds Hod's death over Loki's head. Loki argues, however, that asking everyone in the Nine Worlds to weep for Baldur has got to work, because the stories all blame him for spoiling the plot and, well, he's here and no one will give a bigger boo-hoo for Baldur than he will! What could possibly go wrong?

The Scions might believe that Loki is so full of shit it would squirt out his ears if they squeezed him, and they're not far wrong. Loki has no love of Baldur. Loki loves *Loki* a great deal, though, and he really doesn't want to end up chained in a cave with a snake dripping venom on his face. This is his big chance to break one of the Ragnarök prophecies and save his own precious skin.

Odin knows his blood-brother's heart in full. He also knows how hard it is to challenge Fate directly. So far, every attempt has only bound the Aesir's doom to them more tightly. His wife and his old partner in crime talk him into it, though. He bids Loki to swear on Gungnir that he will weep for Baldur and otherwise do all in his power to see Baldur risen from the dead. In return, Odin swears to pardon Loki for Hod's death. He also swears, however, that if Baldur does *not* return from the dead, it's the cave and the snake for Loki. Loki turns pale but places his hand on Odin's spear and gives his oath.

THE MOURNING PRAYER

So, how *do* you get everything and everyone in the Nine Worlds to weep for Baldur? Including the inanimate?

In the first place, not *everything* needs to weep. The Greater Titans are exempt because they are powers equal to Fate and death, though not outside them. Their avatars and bound titanspawn need not weep, either, since they must obey their progenitors. Titanspawn who follow their own will, such as frost giants and trolls, must weep, but many giants and trolls already paid their respects at Baldur's funeral. Odin thinks it likely that they'll mourn.

Actual trees, rocks, sports cars and other inanimate objects cannot literally weep for Baldur. Such entities have spirits, however, and these spirits can mourn in their own ways. The Aesir will ask all the nymphs, fairies and land-vettir to weep on behalf of the phenomena and entities they embody.

The final challenge lies in getting the plea to every creature who could possibly qualify as a mourner. Odin and Frigg handle this the same way they obtained a pledge from everything in the Nine Worlds not to harm Baldur. Odin becomes The Way (which can be everywhere at once) while Frigg becomes The Wyrd (which can communicate with all the potential mourners and make their responses binding within Fate).

So who shall ask reality itself to mourn? Why, the Band, of course. The characters have a fatefully significant connection to Baldur, since they journeyed to the Underworld for his sake. On the other hand, they are not so intimately connected that anyone could accuse them of merely personal motives (which is why someone like Forseti doesn't make the pitch).

If you want, you can now ask the players themselves to compose a short plea for Baldur's resurrection—the pitch their characters make to the Nine Worlds. While the players could just roll the highest ([Charisma or Manipulation] + Presence) total provided by any single character, with a point of Willpower channeled through that character's Expression, they can gain a stunt bonus for a well-written appeal.

THE LAST WORD

The ceremony takes place at the Well of Urd, where the Aesir customarily hold their councils beneath the mighty boughs of Yggdrasil. The three Norns stand to one side, silent and inscrutable, as impartial witnesses for Fate. Odin, Frigg and Loki stand before the Scions. The king and queen of Asgard look very grave, while Loki shifts from foot to foot and tries to keep from grinning. All the Gods, alfar, einherjar and other citizens of Asgard who can be spared from defending the realm attend as audience and witnesses, all dressed their best for this solemn occasion. The All-Father also sent word to every Scion and other ally of the Aesir in the Nine Worlds to gather everyone they can persuade to weep for Baldur, wherever they are. Hugin and Munin are exhausted.

The Norns make a brief statement that what happens in the next few minutes will be binding for all creatures, until the end of the Nine Worlds. There shall be no further appeals. Then Frigg becomes The Wyrd, Odin becomes The Way, and the Scions find themselves face-to-face with every sentient creature—living, dead or spirit—in the Nine Worlds. They stand by the Well of Urd, but also on ships in the North Sea, in the bloody flow of Eliudnir, the living rooms of Bixby Knoll, Third-World hovels, presidential offices, bare hillsides and crowded city streets. They address farmers in their fields, rich men in their penthouse suites and vagrants under bridges. Giants, ghosts and Gods hear their words. River-nixies and land-vettir emerge from their elements to pay them heed. Old people ravaged by Alzheimer's regain their wits, and newborn infants regard them with knowing eyes, called by Fate to render their verdict on Baldur's life.

Let the Scions make their pitch. Let the players roll the dice. The difficulty is 5. If the roll succeeds, everyone in the Nine Worlds who never met Baldur receives the memories of those who have. They realize what they have lost through his death, and they weep...

...except one. A giant-hag squatting in one of Niflheim's icy caves remains dry-eyed. She looks troubled for a moment, then sets her jaw and speaks. "What has the old man's son ever done for me?"

At this point, call for each player to roll (Perception + Awareness) against difficulty 3, as if detecting an unexpected attack. Those who succeed can have their characters react and try to prevent the giantess from completing the fatal, fateful words. After each character completes his action, the other Scions' players roll to Join Battle.

Because of The Way, the entire Band already stands in the cave along with the giantess whom they know must be Thokk, the one destined to doom Baldur. Apparently, the *Eddas* were wrong about Thokk being Loki in disguise. As the Scions focus their attention on Thokk, ending their omnipresence through the Nine Worlds, they hear Loki screaming, "It wasn't me! *It's not my fault!*"

Thokk fights with her bare hands. She's not as strong as the Scions might expect for an elder jotun, but she's a lot quicker than any giant they've ever met. She delivers terrible wounds with her long nails, using the Disfiguring Attack Knack. Silvery ice coats her body—a form of Body Armor, and an unusual Knack for a giant. Thokk also has an ally: a rime-encrusted stórrvurm (see pp. 123-124) she evokes from a silver and ice-crystal necklace she wears under a shawl that looks like dusty cobwebs. The stórrvurm differs from the basic version only in having the Boons Frost Immunity and Hrimthurssar's Touch.

If Thokk ever gets three ticks free in which no one can attack her—that is, her own DV refreshes but no one can possibly attack her for the next three ticks—she takes a Guard action and completes the lines that condemn Baldur to stay dead. "What has the old man's son ever done for me?" she says. "Let Hel keep what she has!" The spell breaks, and Baldur must stay dead until after Ragnarök. All the Band can do is try to kill or capture Thokk to punish her for her deed.

In the event that the Band can kill Thokk, capture her or at least force her to flee, they find she is not a giantess at all. Her illusory appearance fades to reveal her as Nanna, Baldur's dead wife. "Why couldn't you let me keep him?" she shrieks. "Why should he get to live while I must stay a ghost? Let Ragnarök come and the Titans take you all! *I want my husband!*" And if the Scions kept her from saying the fatal words, angry tears spring in her eyes. She weeps for Baldur, if not exactly in the intended fashion, and the Bright God can live again.

Even if Nanna does manage to say the evil words before the Band's victory, she realizes that she has doomed herself. The Gods cannot allow her to stay with Baldur, in Asgard or in Helheim. She faces a second death of total annihilation or a punishment as terrible as that the tales foretell for Loki. In utter despair, she cries, "I have lost all! Dread powers, take me!" When she says that, an immense hand of earth and stone erupts from the ground to close around her and drag her into the depths.

If the characters stopped Nanna from her mad, jealous plan to hold Baldur in the Underworld, however, the tail-end of Odin's and Frigg's spell shunts them to Eliudnir. They see Hel become The Reaper and break the scythe whose name is Inevitability. She tells Baldur that his death is rescinded for truly, he can never die as long as life endures in any World. Baldur becomes The Glory and carries the Band back to Asgard. The last thing they see before Baldur's light dazzles them is Hel's ravaged face turning away from the glare of Baldur's visage, wet with tears.

NANNA

This secretive Goddess seems content to attend to Baldur and let Asynjur such as Freya, Frigg and Sif overshadow her. Nanna is beautiful, though even her beauty pales somewhat next to the brilliance of her husband. She too is fated to die before Ragnarök, struck down by grief over her husband's death. Nanna does not like this fate and works to save both her husband and herself. Her feelings about Hod are... complicated, because of the love triangle between herself, Hod and Baldur long ago. She knows Hod is prophecied to kill Baldur, and therefore her, so she watches him closely.



In the modern day, Nanna has been an astronomer, a Wiccan priestess, a massage therapist and a self-help book author. She stays out of the public eye, though. Nanna usually assumes roles that enable her to give support and aid to others without seeking attention for herself. Like Hod, her Legend is bound to Baldur's. She cannot raise it until some drastic event alters her place in Fate.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 7, Stamina 6; Charisma 7, Manipulation 7, Appearance 6; Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 5

Virtues: Courage 3, Endurance 5, Expression 1, Loyalty 4

Abilities: Academics 5, Animal Ken 2, Athletics 2, Awareness 5, Brawl 3, Command 3, Craft (Tapestry) 3, Empathy 5, Integrity 5, Investigation 3, Medicine 2, Melee 4, Occult 4, Politics 3, Presence 4, Science 3, Stealth 5, Survival 1

Birthrights: Creature 5 (Stórrvurm), Relic 2 (Necklace—Frost), Relic 2 (Brooch—Moon, Sun), Relic 2 (Pyxides—Magic, Mystery)

Supernatural Powers:

Boons: Divine Radiance, Eclipse Halo, Frost Immunity, Heavenly Flare, Hrimthurssar's Touch, Lunacy, Magic 8, Mystery 8, Moon Chariot, Penetrating Glare, Phase Body, Phase Cloak, Smoking Mirror, Tidal Interference, Tranquility, Uller's Stride

Epic Attributes: Epic Strength 4 (Crushing Grip, Disfiguring Attack, Divine Wrath, Making It Look Easy, Shock Wave), Epic Dexterity 5 (Cat's Grace, Escape Artist, Lightning Sprinter, Perfect Partner, Photographic Penmanship, Roll With It), Epic Stamina 5 (Body Armor, Damage Conversion, Impenetrable, Inner Furnace, Self-Healing, Skin-Shedding), Epic Charisma 5 (all Knacks from **Scion: Hero**, Preach On), Epic Manipulation 7 (All Knacks from **Scion: Hero**, Instant Hypnosis, Knowing Glance, Implant False Memory), Epic Appearance 6 (Come Hither, Detail Variation, Inescapable Visage, Lasting Impression, My Eyes Are Up Here, Undeniable Resemblance), Epic Perception 4 (Clairvoyance, Sense Fatebond, Subliminal Warning, Telescopic Senses, Unfailing Recognition), Epic Wits 3 (Instant Assessment, Meditative Focus, Social Chameleon)

Spells: All from **Scion: Hero**, **Scion: Demigod** and this book, plus others as desired.

Join Battle: 10

Attacks:

Clinch: Accuracy 10, Damage 5L, Parry DV —, Speed 6, P

Unarmed, Heavy: Accuracy 9, Damage 8L, Parry DV 15, Speed 5

Unarmed, Light: Accuracy 11, Damage 5L, Parry DV 17, Speed 4

Soak: 5A/14L/17B

Health Levels: -0x17/Incap

Dodge DV: 20 **Willpower:** 9

Legend: 9 **Legend Points:** 81

Other Notes: Nanna owns a necklace of ice and silver (a gift from Hod, long ago) that allows her to channel the Frost

Purview and lets her summon her stórrvurm for a cost of one Legend point. A silver and gold brooch depicting the sun and moon conjoined (a gift from Baldur and identical to the one he wears) allows her to channel Moon and Sun Boons. A small bronze box hung on her belt—the sort that Norse and Anglo-Saxon women used to hold needles, thread and other household oddments—allows use of the Magic and Mystery Purviews, through a form of drawing lots.

EPILOGUE

If the Band succeeded in bringing Baldur back—by whatever means—then all Asgard rejoices. Not only has the most beloved of the Gods returned, but the Band has defeated Fate on an epic scale. If the demigods could break the prophecy of Baldur's death, then all the prophecies of Ragnarök might be broken as well. Odin orders a feast in the characters' honor—the greatest feast Gladsheim has seen in a thousand years. Odin, Frigg, Baldur and many other Aesir give the Band many gifts, such that each character receives at least five dots' worth of new Birthrights.

Hod receives a burning ship funeral. If the Band slew him back in Act One, this is a somber, modest affair done from pity for a God destroyed by Fate. If Hod traded his life for Baldur's, half of Asgard comes and hears Odin describe him as the bravest God of all.

Loki does not fare well. Even if the Band saved Baldur, Odin does not forget that Loki almost ruined everything by setting the Band after Hod. Before the final battle comes, Loki will manage to get himself chained in the cave. If the Band failed, Loki flees. It doesn't work, though. The Aesir still catch him and chain him. He might not have planned Baldur's death, but in arranging Hod's death, he took away the Aesir's best chance to get Baldur back. Odin swore that Loki would pay the price if the plan to resurrect Baldur failed—and so he does, which locks him into hatred of the Aesir and his own Fate in Ragnarök.

Nanna is gone, quite possibly taken by the Titans. She might reappear later, given power by her new masters and turned against the Nine Worlds. If so, she could become a recurring nemesis for the Scions, for she hates them beyond all other creatures. She is trapped in the form of Thokk, however, and she uses that name from then on.

Even if the characters achieved nothing else, they brought the sword Mistletoe back to Asgard. The sword now carries a terrible, baneful power. It deals aggravated damage to Gods and creatures of comparable Legend, such as Titan avatars. Indeed, slaying the chief avatar of a Greater Titan could kill the Greater Titan itself.

If the Band achieved Baldur's resurrection, Mistletoe gains an even greater and stranger power, as the weapon that twice slew a God who then twice came back from death. Victims of Mistletoe are caught between life and death. The wielder can then decide the victim's fate: to die or to live. The wielder can demand a condition on the victim's resurrection, though—an oath that even the Titans could not break, for this sword has been the nexus of fates beyond the power of even these primal entities. Either way, Mistletoe now has a rating of Relic N/A. It's a weapon in the Aesir's arsenal equal to Mjolnir.

Simply by surviving its quest through Midgard and the Underworld, the Band has shown its mettle. The characters become Odin's go-to guys for difficult, dangerous or just plain peculiar missions. The Band also has a number of loose ends to tie up in Midgard.

For one thing, what about the fleets in the North Sea? Even if the Band stopped a nuclear war from breaking out right away, the governments involved are still greedy for oil to tide them through Fimbulvetr, and are run by people driven to the brink of insanity by Dark Virtues. (People who were Fatebound by Odin and Frigg's efforts in the scene "Thokk" and no longer harboring Dark Virtues can still be cruel, greedy and paranoid enough to go to war. Plus, who knows how many more titanspawn infiltrate the governments of the World, pushing them toward mutual destruction?) The heroes of old became kings; the Scions might need to conquer entire nations to prevent greater calamities, or at least bind the wills—and the fates—of their leaders to save them from themselves.

Blárvaldr the svartalf and the raiders from Jotunheim are not the only supernatural creatures who now dare to act in the ravaged World. Other potent creatures now declare themselves. Some are mere predators and destroyers. Others seek power over a weakened, divided humanity. The Band might need to protect villages, towns or entire regions from such monsters and villains, building their Legends along the way... and hope that someone will survive the end of Ragnarök to remember their deeds.

More and more, though, the Scions' duties take them off Midgard and into supernatural realms such as Jotunheim, Svartalfheim and the Dark Forest. Such places hold power for the Aesir, in the form of legendary weapons and magical treasures, creatures and spirits who might join the Aesir's side if properly persuaded, and prophecies and lore about the Titans. Otherworldly realms also hold prophecied or potential foes, from giants to dragons. Odin might decide that every foe of the Aesir who dies before Ragnarök is one less foe they have to face in the final battle.

The Nine Worlds gather their forces for war. The Scions must prepare themselves for the Twilight of the Gods.



CHAPTER EIGHT

TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Every story has an ending, and here the story of the Aesir finally reaches its inevitable and glorious conclusion. The forces of chaos finally breach the walls of Asgard. Surtr and an army of giants and the unworthy dead join the Midgard Serpent and the Fenris Wolf on the Plain of Idavoll. There, the Aesir and the spawn of the Titans face one another in a final battle that destroys both the Godrealm of Asgard and the mortal World.

That is, unless someone can do something to stop it.

This chapter presents the climactic story arc that places the Scions at the forefront of the Aesir's final battle. It is designed for a Band of Scions who have achieved true divinity. As novice Gods, they possess a limited number of formidable powers but cannot yet wield Ultimate Attributes or become the avatar expressions of any Purviews. If you wish to use this story for Scions of different power levels, you should reframe the Band's opposition accordingly or use events in this story as a springboard for your own ideas.



SYNOPSIS

"Twilight of the Gods" takes place in three acts, with a prologue and an epilogue. In the prologue, the Scions accompany the chiefs of the Aesir to see the Norns and hear whether Ragnarök has begun. The Norns decree that the final battle is, indeed, underway.

In Act One ("The Wolf Runs Free"), Odin sends the Band on another attempt to change the Fate of the Aesir. Odin tells the Scions that his death at the jaws of the Fenris Wolf is the heart of the Aesir's doom. He asks them to try to convince the Wolf not to attack Asgard. The Fenris Wolf seems surprisingly open to such an idea... if the Scions can find him a home where he can live unmolested. He suggests the Iron Wood, also known as the Dark Forest. For this to happen, though, the Band needs the cooperation of the troll-wives who control much of the wood.

The troll-wives, in turn, agree to let the Fenris Wolf live in the Dark Forest provided the Band can free them from the tyranny of their leader, Angrboda. Too bad no one knows where she is. To find Angrboda, the troll-wives say the Band must treat with the individual who helped her hide, namely Utgard-Loki. The Jotun King has his own price for cooperation, though.

At last, the Scions find Angrboda breeding an army of monsters with which to overrun the fields of Asgard and destroy the giants and the Gods when they are at their weakest. The Band must destroy Angrboda's nearly complete army of monsters and battle the Troll Queen herself. If they defeat these forces, the Scions can fulfill their bargains so the Fenris Wolf can pledge to remove himself from the coming battle. The characters receive warning, however, that while Odin's death is indeed the central event of Ragnarök, it might not be central in the way they thought.

In Act Two ("One More Thing..."), the victorious Band returns to Asgard in time to discuss certain revelations with Odin and to participate in the great feast before the final battle. During the feast, the Scions have a brief social encounter with Loki and can say their farewells to their parents and friends. Odin then asks for one final service. The Band can also share its knowledge of the nature of Fate and Ragnarök with Odin or the assembled Aesir. The next morning, the Scions travel to Helheim to treat with Hel—and discover that Loki's forces are already on the move.

In Act Three ("Ragnarök"), the Band joins the clash of armies on the Plain of Idavoll. The characters start by trying to stall the march of Surtr's army onto the field of battle. The Scions witness the fall of one God after another, ending with the death of the Midgard Serpent—but Jörmungandr's death also spells the end of the World, unless the Scions can stop it. At last, the Scions face Surtr himself in combat as Asgard collapses around them, climaxing in a duel in a great city of ruined Midgard. Here, the Band decides the Fate of the Nine Worlds.

The epilogue gives the Scions a glimpse of the World's rebirth—or continued survival—and a chance to face a future as the new chiefs of the Aesir.

DOOMING THE SCIONS

"Twilight of the Gods" is designed to give the characters choices. They can save the World or let it be reborn anew. They can make peace with the jotnar, sparing their loved ones in so doing, or end the existence of these hated foes forever. Even the survival of the Scions is left up to the players. But it could be that you or your individual players don't relish the idea of life in an age of rebirth, rebuilding Asgard and the World in a new Mythic Age. You might not want a happy ending. (This is Ragnarök, after all!)

Instead, these players might want their character to go out like Norse Gods should, with a weapon in one hand and the broken skull of an enemy in the other, bound by the implacable Fate spelled out for both of them.

If that's the case, give the players what they want. Several Gods and Titans show up in the tales of Ragnarök whose fates are not spelled out in the legends. If the players want to seal their own Fates, "Twilight of the Gods" gives them chances to do so.

In addition, "Twilight of the Gods" is designed to be the finale of an epic cycle centering on the Aesir. If you run this story after other stories (such as the previous two chapters), look back to those exploits and look for enemies who have dogged the Scion's footsteps or truly tested their limits. If they're still around, bring back those rivals for one last, explosive battle on Idavoll, and allow Scion and foe to experience one last, glorious battle together.

BEHIND THE SCENES

To understand what's going on in "Twilight of the Gods," you must know several facts that underlie the history of the Aesir and have sealed their Fates.

For millennia, Odin has sought greater knowledge of the future in hopes of discovering how to avoid Ragnarök. One of his tools has been the Well of Mimir, in which he kept the head of his decapitated advisor. See page 17 in Chapter One for the story known to the Aesir at large. Most Aesir *don't* know that Odin sent Mimir to the Vanir with full knowledge that Mimir's death would give him unmatched insight into the future and Fate's plans. Odin only feigned distress when he learned of Mimir's death.

As mentioned in Delling's description (page 109), however, Mimir's insight is cursed. Odin revived Mimir's head as a pawn of Fate, but not an honest or disinterested one. Mimir never told Odin that his absolute knowledge of the skeins of past, present and future was cursed—that every time his powers were used to view the future, another piece of that future was locked into place. Mimir's guidance enabled Odin to avoid one threat to the Aesir after another, but the steps the All-Father took to achieve victory set in motion another chain of events that would end in another fragment of the story of Ragnarök.

What's more, the curse passed to Odin himself. Every time Odin used his own powers to look ahead and witness the Twilight of the Gods itself, he sealed his own fate and the fates of the Aesir. Odin's own reliance on visions of the future has doomed the Aesir to face the end they now face. The All-Father has pushed Fate for so long and so hard that, at Ragnarök, Fate will push back.

Within the last century or two, Odin realized the trap of predestination that has sprung around him and has avoided using the Well of Mimir. Unfortunately, it's too late. Odin and the other Aesir are already doomed. The only beings safe from the iron prison that Fate has built around the Norse Gods are those who were born later. They can still die in the coming conflagration, but Fate does not demand it... unless they do something to tie themselves into the story of Ragnarök.

Because of this freedom of movement, and their relative youth and the attendant lack of Fatebonds that go with it, Odin sees the Scions as his perfect tools for a last-ditch attempt to cheat Fate. Unfortunately, other Gods and similarly potent entities realize this as well.

STORYTELLER'S TOOLBOX: END OF THE WORLD

"Twilight of the Gods" is fundamentally about choices in the face of World-threatening conflict. Fate gives the Scions a chance to survive Ragnarök and oversee the rise of a new Midgard and Asgard. On the way, however, they must navigate a story where many members of their supporting cast are locked into certain roles and events. This can create some problems.

THE SCIONS MATTER... A LOT

One risk is that the characters get relegated to the position of messengers—or passengers. Although the Scions have become Gods, they still move among entities older and mightier than themselves, with driving goals they want the Band to serve. Most notably, Odin and other divine parents still set them on missions. Players can easily feel that their characters, though Gods, are still flunkies or puppets.

Make sure to show the characters, and players, that none of these old and mighty forces—not Utgard-Loki, not Hel, not Angrboda, not Loki or even Odin—get to decide how the Twilight of the Gods plays out. They might act like puppet-masters, but *they* are really the puppets. They need the Scions to cut their strings, if only by stepping aside and letting them implement plans the Scions find themselves positioned to thwart.

The Scions, however, cannot shirk the demands of Fate without consequence. Every decision the characters make echoes out in the final battle and in the new World to come. If the Scions decide to save the World during their final battle with Surtr, they save a World wracked by Fimbulvetr, the Sons of Muspel and the toxic rain of Jörmungandr's venom. Yet, by saving the World, the Scions save their loved ones and billions of lives that would otherwise end in Muspelheim's fire. The Band's decisions should be the ones that matter most. These Gods can spare the lives of the jotnar in exchange for a potentially lasting peace. They can free Hel from the taint of her father and let her rule in Asgard alongside them.

WHAT THEY WANT

Utgard-Loki and Hel, for instance, hope to use the Scions' place in the World's rebirth to find some way to guarantee their own survival. These beings offer the Scions anything in their power in order to gain a perceived edge when the pieces begin to fall.

Other beings seek to subvert Fate's plans entirely. They feel that if they can pit enough power against the end-time narrative, they can break the story and Ragnarök will end in some unexpected fashion—possibly with these renegade beings on top. Most of the persons who seek to wrench aside the course of Fate are morally dubious, to say the least: Loki, Angrboda and Odin himself.

Still other figures acknowledge the parts decreed by Fate and march toward their dooms with varied emotions, from the stoic resignation of Heimdall to the joyous acceptance of Thor. Some of the enemies of the Gods similarly accept the ending Fate has written for the Aesir and themselves. Surtr knows Ragnarök could spell his doom, but by destroying the Aesir he frees the resurgent World from the endless conflict that chained the Titans and Gods together for all history. Powers such as these see Ragnarök as a natural part of the cycle decreed at the beginning of time by Fate.

RESOLVING OLD BUSINESS

The plot of "Twilight of the Gods" leaves room for scenes other than the ones described in this book. Take this framework and add details peculiar to your Band. Did one character love some mortal during her days as a hero? Take a moment to have the Scion say goodbye to him or desperately seek some way to spare him from the conflagration to come. Did another have a hated rival among the pantheon? Arrange a final meeting between the two in Gladsheim where they can resolve their personal conflict, for better or worse. How was the relationship between the Scion and her parent? Work in a few last chances for them to interact, to bond or to battle. What about the Scion's followers? Friends? Allies? Each relationship offers a potential encounter in the opening acts of the story.

Most Aesir know they have no future. The characters might find themselves among the slain. This story constitutes the last thing the Band will ever do. Now is the time to resolve any dangling subplots. If there are adversaries you've wanted the characters to face, throw them at the Band before this story begins or find a way to work them into one of the scenes.

DOOMING THE SCIONS, AGAIN

More than the previous two stories, "Twilight of the Gods" is built around the idea that Odin's attempts to forestall Ragnarök actually helped bring it about. Now's the time to apply that conceit to the players' characters as well. If the Scions ever use Prophecy in hopes of finding an easy way to defeat an enemy, rig the scene so the Band achieves its immediate objective... yet either its enemy survives to reappear in the final battle, or some new foe tries to take vengeance. Maybe the Scions are careful and clever enough to leave no reasonable way for you to screw them over later. If so, that's *great*. They were smarter than the Aesir before them. Don't arbitrarily doom them for taking advantage of Prophecy—they aren't cursed the way Odin is—but look for the opportunities and tailor prophecies to leave gaps that you can exploit later. See the battle with Angrboda (starting p. 209) for a specific example.

COMBAT BECOMES BORING?

The final act of "Twilight of the Gods" could be construed as one big fight. The players might tire of having their characters fight through an army of fire and frost giants in order to reach another section of the battlefield and another important scene. Foes that were deadly opponents when the Scions were heroes and demigods can get tiresome in the hundreds when the players just want their characters to move a mile across Idavoll and get a few shots in on *Naglfar* before it disgorges its hordes of unworthy dead.

Possible solutions to this problem include:

• **Player Fiat.** If the Scion has an Epic Attribute or Boon rated eight dots or higher, any colorful bit of description involving that Boon or Attribute automatically happens to beings of Legend 6 or less whom the Scion encounters on the battlefield. Treat the description for a one-die stunt as a minimal standard for such narrative combat. For instance, a player whose Scion has Epic Strength 9 can describe her sweeping a squad of fire giants out of her path with a dramatic gesture. Another Scion with Epic Charisma (or Appearance) 8 sends a battalion of the dead falling back in fear of his wrathful glory. A Scion with Weather Husbandry stalks across the battlefield in a hurricane of her own making, blowing frost giants from her path.

• **Extras.** If you still want to play out at least a few combats with low foes but want to minimize the potential delays due to random dice rolls, treat all beings below a certain Legend value (6 is recommended) as extras, as per the rules on page 197 of **Scion: Hero**. After all, Fate and

Legend decree that the Gods are not gainsaid by mere spear-carriers in the final battle. While the Scions might eventually be overwhelmed by an army of their foes, no single jotun warrior will bring one of them down.

• **Storyteller Fiat.** If you and your players agree, you can simply narrate the effect on lesser foes of the Scions stomping across the battlefield. Einherjar and giants spar with one another around the Gods' feet but are as ants to the true conflict between the Aesir and their equals.

CREATING A NEW NARRATIVE

The players might treat the fated outline of Ragnarök as a challenge to overcome, rather a narrative to exploit. After all, Odin and most of their foes take this approach! Indeed, "Highway to Hel" set the Band with the task of derailing Fate's plan. Instead of dealing with the tasks put in their way, perhaps the Scions decide to travel to the Well of Mimir to find some way to help the Aesir avoid their fates, or they try to enlist the aid of Loki in attempting to subvert the plan for Ragnarök. The combination of the players' ingenuity with the characters' raw power can result in several places where the story can go completely off the rails.

You can show the Scions that most of the Aesir accept their doom and simply want to clear the Nine Worlds of evil powers so the new World can get a clean start. You can use the Well of Mimir or other prophets to show that, really, there's no better course than to meet destiny on the Plain of Idavoll.

Really, though, the answer is simple—the Scions are *Gods*. Let them perform epic deeds, even if they aren't the deeds you expect. If they'd rather try to forestall Fate by storming Muspelheim to drive the sword Mistletoe into the Greater Titan's heart, indulge them. Simply make sure the Scions know, through the supporting cast, that their choices do remove the certainty of a purged new World. If the characters decide to save the World at any cost, optional scenes at the story's end are designed to let them spare the World from destruction.

Keep in mind that even the strangest deviations from this plot are not a problem if you are willing and able to go along with the players on their romp through the setting. The possible changes, fixes and plots to circumvent Ragnarök are far too diverse for any conceivable planning. Unlike the characters in the game, the people playing it are only human. If your ability to improvise a new plot fails, just call a break and ask the players for time to work out what comes next.

THE STATE OF MIDGARD

"Twilight of the Gods" takes place in the third year after the Jotunhammer meteor's fall. The worst of Fimbulvetr's cold came in the first year. Since then, skies have slowly cleared... unless the Band failed to stop the war in the North Sea, in which case the nuking of Western Europe made things worse again.

The easing of the cold, however, does not mean an easing of the famine, plague and other hardships. Social disintegration is nearly complete. Cities become refugee camps run by warlords who keep power through their control over weapons and food, while small towns and rural folk fend for themselves and suffer frequent attack from brigands or the hungry troops of the warlords. National governments are merely gangs with an especially broad reach. Indeed, the chaos greatly resembles Dark Ages Europe... the age that gave the World its tales of the Aesir and sagas of Beowulf and the Volsungs.

Giants, trolls and other titanspawn maraud openly. More than a few of the warlords and brigand chiefs are not human.

Scene

PROLOGUE: PRELUDE TO WAR

MENTAL •• PHYSICAL – SOCIAL –

Odin calls the Vanir and Aesir together at Gladsheim. This includes the Scions, who have served the Aesir so well in the past. Odin declares that the signs show that Ragnarök has indubitably begun and the final battle approaches. They can only prepare for battle as best they can. Still, he would ask the Norns if Fate permits them any stratagem or chance for victory that they have not yet imagined. Odin then leads the Gods to the Well of Urd. Before he can even put his question to the Norns, however, the three enigmatic Gods utter the following:

"We know why you have come, Odin Half-Blind. The time of your ending is upon you. Prepare. We shall speak no more."

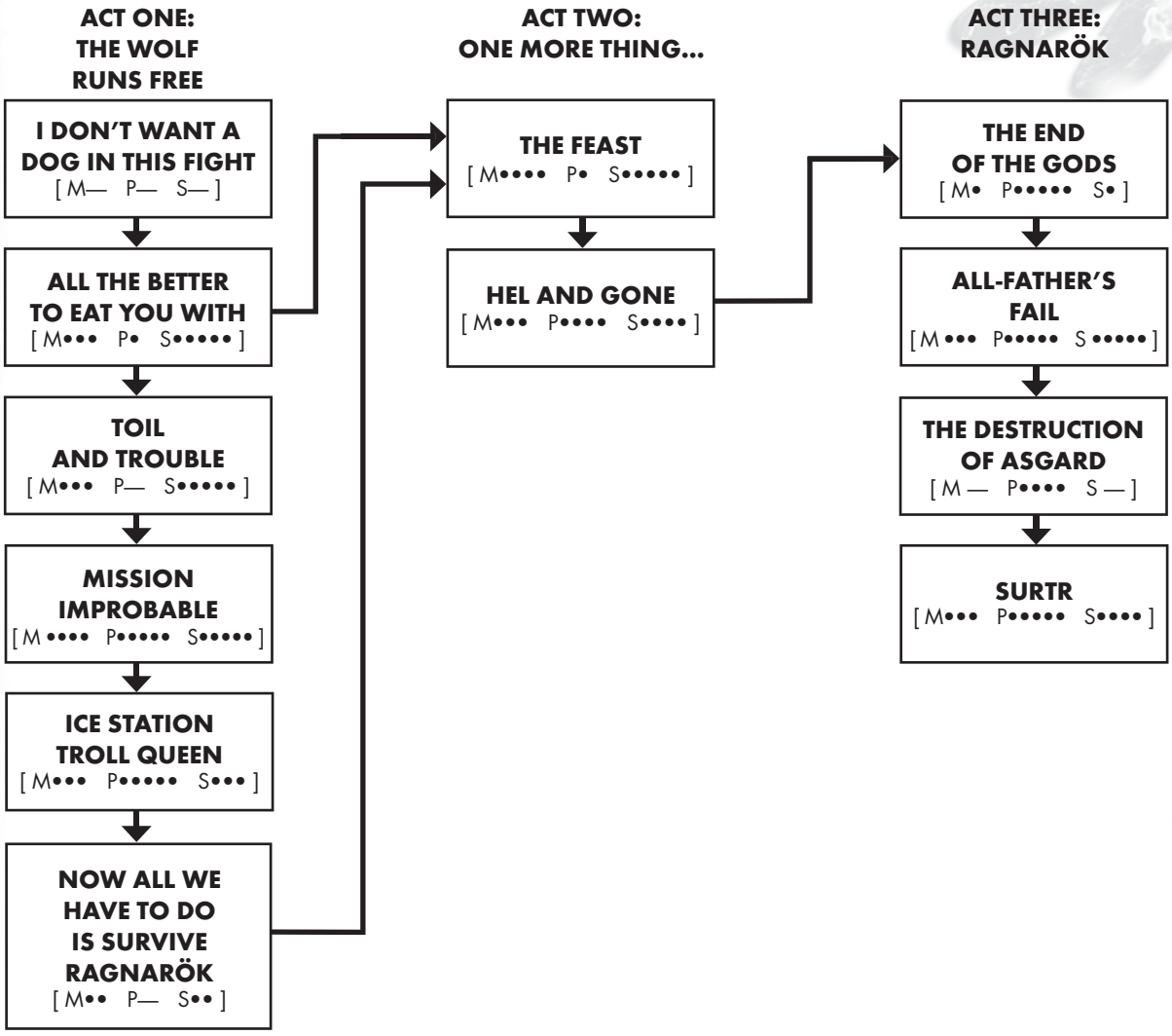
With that, the Norns nod to the assembled Gods and retire. The assembled Gods react with a mix of acceptance and agitation as Odin nods to himself and calls the Scions to attend him in Valaskjálf upon returning to Asgard.

HEY! THEY SAID...

Perceptive Scions might notice that what the Norns said need not apply to all the Aesir. In fact, it could be that the Norns addressed only Odin himself. The Norns ignore any attempt to make them clarify their statement. They meant it when they said they would say nothing more. While the Scions have nothing but the Norns' grammar to support this theory, such ideas are on the right track. This line of thinking could serve the Band well in the future.

TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Scenes 10 [Mental ••• Physical ••• Social •••] XP Level 120–179



ACT ONE
THE WOLF RUNS FREE

In this act, Odin sets the Band on one more attempt to derail the course of Ragnarök: in this case, by persuading the Fenris Wolf to sit out the battle. To do so, however, the Band must obtain consent from the troll-wives of the Dark Forest—who also want something, leading the characters further afield in a lengthening chain of promises and tasks.

At any time, the Scions can simply say, "Screw it!" and abandon the task. If they do, however, the Fenris Wolf shows up for Ragnarök and another part of prophecy plays out to its grim conclusion.

Scene

I DON'T WANT A DOG IN THIS FIGHT

MENTAL – PHYSICAL – SOCIAL –

Prophecy: "Bonds shall break and the Wolf run free!" An almost useless Prophecy that quotes directly from *Völuspá.* One way or another, the Fenris Wolf escapes confinement very soon. The Band can choose only the form of the Wolf's release and Fenris' resulting attitude toward the Aesir.

Odin calls the Band to his hall, Valaskjálf. The God meets them in a lonely corner of the hall that looks out at the Plain of Idavoll. At first, Odin speaks of the coming battle and gives a quick run-down of prophecied events for any Scion (or player) who might not know the details. He speaks of how the hordes of Jotunheim, Niflheim and Muspelheim join to destroy the Gods and how Surtr burns the Nine Worlds. He tells how Jörmungandr and Thor kill each other. He tells of Tyr's death by Garm, Freyr's by Surtr and so on.

Odin finally reaches his own death in the jaws of the Fenris Wolf and turns to the characters. They have never seen him look so tired. He tells the Scions that these events need not come to pass. He believes he can prevent the deaths of many Aesir if the Scions can help save his life. In particular, Odin mentions any divine parents of the Scions as those he can save if the Wolf doesn't kill him. If a Scion has a negative relationship with his divine parent, then Odin instead speaks of the Scions themselves or their loved ones on Midgard who could survive if the Band can alter the fated sequence of events.

After this preamble, Odin asks the Band to travel to the cave where the Fenris Wolf still lies imprisoned and ask the Wolf what wergild the Aesir can pay for him to refuse the call to war. The All-Father feels that if the beast does not participate in Ragnarök, he will live to rally the forces of Asgard to victory. Trying to remove entire nations of giants from the battle is probably hopeless; likewise the Midgard Serpent. Fenris dwelled for a time among the Aesir, however, so Odin thinks he has a better grasp of the Wolf's mind. Persuading him would be difficult but not impossible. Odin gives the Band a small golden cord, an unused fragment of Gleipnir, the cord used to bind the Fenris Wolf. This will prove to the Wolf that they speak in the All-Father's name and that their words are binding. Burning it also destroys the rest of Gleipnir, freeing the Wolf once they make a deal. With that, Odin dismisses the Scions, saying he has much to prepare.

Assuming the Scions accept the All-Father's mission, they find themselves bound for Lake Amsvartnir and the cave of the Fenris Wolf. One of Odin's hjadningar briefs them on reaching the lake, passing the circles of illusion that keep out intruders and the location of a rowboat to cross the lake. The Scions might also wish to speak with their divine parents before they leave and might even receive gifts to aid them on their mission.

LOKI'S PLACE

If the Band managed to resurrect Baldur in the course of "Highway to Hel," Loki remains free, albeit openly distrusted in Asgard. If this did not occur, then the Aesir have imprisoned Loki as the tales describe (see p. 12) for his part in the deaths of Baldur and Hod. As of the beginning of "Twilight of the Gods," Loki has recently escaped, though he has not told the Aesir—even his own Scions.

Scions of Loki who can somehow communicate with their absent father might inform the trickster of the All-Father's plan. This guarantees that Loki shadows the Scions every step of their journey through the first two acts of this story.

Scene

ALL THE BETTER TO EAT YOU WITH

MENTAL ••• PHYSICAL • SOCIAL •••••

The Band travels to Lake Amsvartnir, crosses to the island of Lyngvi and enters the cave that leads to Fenris. The Scions find that the cave is a bit longer and twistier than they were led to believe. In the centuries since the binding of Fenris, this neglected part of the Overworld has changed and connected to both the Underworld cave of Garm and the Primal Cavern. If you want to spice things up, the Band can encounter some undead or other threat on the way to Fenris, but you don't *have* to do this. The Band should not encounter any major threats.

At last the Gods reach the chamber where the great wolf lies bound. Fenris has grown over the ages to fill nearly the whole of the immense cavern. The cord Gleipnir has

clearly frayed. The sword the Aesir thrust between his jaws to keep Fenris from biting lies broken and rusty in a corner. The Scions have no trouble seeing piles of bones and other remains from a variety of creatures that wandered into Fenris' cave and died. The Wolf gives the Scions a hungry but curious look. He comments that he can smell the stink of Aesir upon them, but he makes no move to attack them at this time. If the Scions attack, however, Fenris readily defends himself as best he can (see "Fighting the Fenris Wolf").

THE WOLF'S DEAL

Presenting the All-Father's request that the Wolf not rise up and attack the Aesir brings two responses the Scions might not expect. Fenris genuinely hates the Aesir, but persuading him to look at other options takes a mere five successes on a ([Charisma or Manipulation] + Presence) roll—child's play for anyone with decent Epic Social Attributes!

The great beast lets out an unsettling, growling and somewhat bitter laugh that shakes the very earth around the Band. He says, "Oh, *now* the Aesir want to make a deal?" Then he sighs wearily and agrees to listen to their offer. If the Scions have thought about what to offer the Fenris Wolf to abstain from Ragnarök, now is the time to bring it up. If they did not considered this or their offer is a rather weak or impossible one, the beast shakes his head and growls slightly. Then Fenris gives his own terms. He will buck the forces of Fate and stay out of Ragnarök if the Scions secure a new home for him where he may roam unfettered.

Assuming the Band doesn't have a vast, primordial wilderness-realm handy, Fenris even has a suitable spot picked out: the Dark Forest (see pp. 97-99). The Dark Forest, also known to the Aesir as the Iron Wood, is the home of the powerful jarnvidjur, or troll-wives. As a forest that exists in some ways outside the Nine Worlds, Fenris believes it will escape much of the devastation of Ragnarök. It would make a fine hunting ground for him. The Wolf remains leery of magic, however, so Fenris wants an oath from the jarnvidjur that they will not try to kill him or bind him. If the Band can obtain such an oath—sworn by them on Gleipnir, and by their secret names—then Fenris will refrain from attacking Asgard.

Assuming the Band agrees to seek permission from the jarnvidjur, the beast tells them to hurry. The end-time approaches and he can feel the hold of Gleipnir weakening. He makes no promises to ignore the call to battle if the Band cannot meet his terms in time.

The Band's travel to treat with the Fenris Wolf does not go unnoticed. Agents of Loki—or perhaps even the God himself—watch Fenris for signs of the beast's release. Unless the Scions are particularly sneaky or perceptive enough to see through the Loki's tricks, (a suitable roll at a *minimum* difficulty of 15 to spot the spies or bar them from eavesdropping), the Lie-Smith learns about their meeting with his son. Storytellers should give Loki the benefit of the doubt in this case, not hinting that anything is amiss unless players specifically ask about being watched.



FIGHTING THE FENRIS WOLF

Seeing the Fenris Wolf bound, one or more of the Scions might get it into his head that the best way to prevent the Fenris Wolf's appearance in Ragnarök is to kill him now.

Golly, to think that Odin, Loki and the other Aesir with Ultimate Intelligence *never thought of this*. Yes, this is a bad idea. Let the Scions find out the hard way.

On one hand, the cramped setting and the binding on Fenris helps the characters. They reduce all of Fenris' dice pools by half, and he can apply only half his Epic Dexterity bonus successes. On the other hand, the Scions have virtually no room to maneuver. Effectively, they face the huge jaws and a paw of the Wolf. If they move around to attack anywhere else, Fenris can simply shift his bulk to crush them against the cavern wall, an attack that cannot fail (barring use of Knacks to get out of the way really fast) and deals the Wolf's full Epic Strength in bashing damage. The Wolf can also breathe fire or use other Boons that would be difficult to avoid in such close quarters—reduce the Scions' DVs by at least two.

With each attack by Fenris, roll a single die. On a 1, Gleipnir rips and Fenris is free. At this point, nothing the Band says or does can persuade the Wolf to sit out Ragnarök. Fenris swells to burst out of Lyngvi like a volcanic eruption, incidentally inflicting his full Strength and Epic Strength in bashing damage against every member of the Band before leaping away.

The Scions still might win the fight, but when they strike the mortal blow, the Wolf's body *rips*, and out of his skin pours a stream of fenrir, each one of them equal to Garm (see **Scion: Demigod**, p. 270). The Scions can't stop them all, or even very many of them, before they race into the network of caves and are gone. At Ragnarök they will merge again to re-create Fenris—the particular manifestation of his Ultimate Stamina—and fulfill their destiny.

Scene

TOIL AND TROUBLE

MENTAL •••• PHYSICAL – SOCIAL •••••

Prophecy: "Fair welcome waits, but little rest. The journey does not end yet." This prophecy has no hidden meanings. The troll-wives give the Band a friendly meeting, but their demands send the Scions on another stage of their quest.

The Band can reach the Dark Forest easily enough through various forests in Midgard (see p. 99). Even if none of the Scions have heard of the Dark Forest before, most supernatural guides know about it and how to reach it.

Locating the jarnvidjur turns out to be easy as well. After only an hour or so of wandering the forest trails, the Band comes upon a clearing where six troll-wives gather. These beings are among the most powerful and ancient of their race. They have spawned legions of powerful monsters over the centuries. Some of their spawn now attend them, should the Band make trouble. Each troll-wife has two of her children in attendance, each of them comparable to Grendel or the Erl King (see Chapter Five). It doesn't take Epic Perception to tell from the rustlings and shadows in the surrounding forest that many, many more trolls lie in wait. Not that this should *frighten* Scions of the Aesir, especially since they came on a peaceful diplomatic mission.

The jarnvidjur greet the Scions warmly, offer them food and drink and ask them to sit for a time. Some of the more attractive jarnvidjur flirt in a rather lewd and forward fashion with any particularly strong or attractive male Scions.

After everyone has established that they aren't there to fight, the Scions are told (not asked) why they came. The jarnvidjur foresaw the Scion's coming with their magic. The greatest of them assembled to discuss the matter, and here they are.

The troll-wives don't want to talk business right away, though. Instead, they insist the Scions share their hospitality. Assuming the Scions do not become rude or disruptive, an evening passes with idle chatter, food and perhaps an intimate encounter or two if the Scions are so inclined. Any Scions who discuss trying to aid the Aesir in avoiding their fated deaths are met with a laugh and a condescending, "Of course you will, dearie." Scions who press the issue further are told straight out that Odin, Thor and many of the other Aesir cannot possibly avoid their deaths. Saving Asgard is nearly impossible too, given the place's ties to Odin and the major Aesir. Still, someone might save Midgard from destruction, as well as those not so tied to the Fate of the leading Aesir. Whether the Scions believe this or not is up to them, for the troll-wives don't say how they can be so sure. "We *know,* my sweetlings," is all they say. "We *know*."

Eventually the Scions fall asleep. Never mind Boons that should let them stay awake. If necessary, the six troll-wives craft an illusion that the Scions dozed off. When they wake up, only one ancient troll-hag remains. She does not give her name—"Names have power, dearies."—but she gives her sisters' answer. They recognize the Fenris Wolf as the greatest of jarnvidjur-spawn. He can live in the Dark Forest "as long as he behaves." Yet the jarnvidjur want something in return for granting this favor.

WHO IS THIS OLD LADY?

The identity of the jarnvidjur crone who speaks for her sisters is left up to the Storyteller. She could be Grendel's Mother, Mrs. Leeds (see p. 99), Baba Yaga or some other legendary hag. Maybe she's a troll-witch lost to mortal legend. If the Scion tangled with a troll-wife before, the crone is most likely related to her in some fashion, as an ally or enemy.

THE WITCHES' DEAL

In case the Scions don't know it already, the crone tells them that the jarnvidjur have a queen, Angrboda, the former mate of Loki and mother of the Fenris Wolf—not to mention Jörmungandr and many others lost to legend. She is the greatest and most powerful of all jarnvidjur, a literal giantess among them. She is also a royal pain in her subjects' and sisters' asses. The jarnvidjur want her gone. They prefer dead but would settle for defeated and broken. If the Scions can accomplish that, they have their deal.

So, where to find Angrboda? The crone knows only that Angrboda left the Iron Wood some time ago. The jarnvidjur's magic cannot reveal her location. They did, however, learn the reason for this occlusion. Wherever she is, Angrboda is masked by an illusion created by the great jotun Utgard-Loki. Therefore, to locate and defeat Angrboda, the Band must deal with the king of Jotunheim. The jarnvidjur also know that Utgard-Loki has holed up in the fortress of Gastropnir.

The troll-hag then invites the Scions to get on their way. If they ask, she guides them to a path that leads from the Dark Forest to Galvid in Jotunheim. If they don't ask, she asks how they plan to reach Gastropnir. If the Scions describe a sound plan, the crone nods, smiles and says, "Well, that sounds nice, dears," and pinches the Band's apparent leader on the cheek in a grandmotherly way. If the Band has a less than solid notion, the hag nods, smiles and says, "Well, best be following me, then, dears." They can follow her on a path that leads to Galvid, but she goes no farther and offers no more aid.

Loki or his spies, assuming they still trail the Scions after their meeting with Fenris, know better than to mess with the jarnvidjur on their home turf. They simply observe and follow the Band when it is safe to do so.

GETTING THERE IS HALF THE FUN

The Band can find Gastropnir and Utgard-Loki without much trouble. The fortress is well known in Jotunheim, and common frost giants offer no threat to Gods who use their full power. Give a brief narration about the wintry, mountainous terrain of Jotunheim, with a few giant-sized halls in the distance, and ask the players what the Scions do to find the fortress, and it's done.

If you like, though, you can interpolate scenes of your own to give the Band some excitement along the way. For instance, the path through the Jotunheim forest might take the characters near the camp of Eggther (see p. 103) and the giant rooster Fjalar. Not that a giant chicken is much threat to Gods either, but silencing Fjalar before he rouses the whole camp might present some small challenge.

Scene

MISSION IMPROBABLE

MENTAL •••• PHYSICAL ••••• SOCIAL ••••

Prophecy: "Amid the captains and the kings, treachery awaits. Expect false faces, an honest tongue and a slayer's hand." The Band has done a lot of work for Odin in hopes of averting or mitigating Ragnarök, and Odin's curse starts to rub off. The prophecy warns of treachery, but it doesn't come from Utgard-Loki. The Jotun King has the honest tongue to which the prophecy alludes (though he does use a false face). *Loki* has the slayer's hand and also adopts a false face. If the Scions misinterpret the prophecy, they could turn Utgard-Loki into an enemy who seeks their death at Ragnarök (assuming he can't kill them now).

Gastropnir is a vast fortress in the mountains of Jotunheim. A narrow pathway leads up to its gates, with no other visible method of entry unless the Band can fly. (Not out of the question.) Legend holds that dwarves carved Gastropnir from the bones and flesh of the primordial giant Ymir and still keep some of the Titan's vitality.

Any God with at least two dots in Academics or Occult knows about Gastropnir. Any giants can also recount the fortress's legend... including that it is prophecied to repel every attack. Legend neglects to mention that Gastropnir carries the same enchantment the jotnar placed on the Sleipner oil rig, barring entry by any Psychopomp Boon less potent than The Way. Nevertheless, the Band has a number of ways inside. Options include:

- **Be captured.** The giants truss them up and take them to Utgard-Loki for judgment. A bit embarrassing (the giants mock and insult the Band), but it gets the job done.
- **Fly.** The slit windows of Gastropnir are plenty large enough for human-sized creatures to squeeze through.
- **Sneak in with the hired help.** Every now and then, groups of giants enter or leave the fortress. Some of these groups seem to be important giants and their entourages, but most seem to be lesser giants ferrying supplies into the fortress. Moderately sneaky Scions can hide among carts of food and clothing bound for the fortress. Avoiding notice by the guards who inspect each cargo calls for a (Wits + [Stealth or Larceny]) roll at difficulty 3. Sneaking past the frost giant guards calls for (Dexterity + Stealth) rolls at the same difficulty.
- **Just walk up to the gates and ask to see Utgard-Loki.** The giants guarding the gates look surprised, even a bit scared if any of the Scions have reputations as fierce warriors. They ask the Scions to wait at the gate for a moment. A few minutes later, Utgard-Loki appears at the battlements and calls down to ask the Scions what they want.

THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS

One way or another, the Scions reach the high council chamber of Utgard-Loki. Advisors and chiefs of the jotun tribes accompany him. Utgard-Loki hears the Band's request for Angrboda's location. The Jotun King makes a great show of hemming, hawing and scowling as he considers the Band's request.

In fact, Utgard-Loki doesn't give a damn about Angrboda. In front of his cronies, however, he must drive a hard bargain. He agrees to tell the characters how to find Angrboda, but he wants something in return.

At this point, the Scions are in for some hard-nosed dickering as Utgard-Loki tries to extract as many concessions as he can without driving the Gods to fight him. Do they have powerful and famous Birthrights or legendary treasures? Utgard-Loki wants one, or more. Secret information of their own? Spill it.

Luckily, Utgard-Loki will settle for just one favor, at least for now, and it has to do with why he's at Gastropnir. He tells the Band that he and his cronies have decided they're tired of being "Fate's finger puppets." They know that most of the jotnar and other giants will die in Ragnarök and nothing can stop this. ("And good riddance to those louts in Niflheim," sniffs one somewhat dandyish giant.) The Jotun King has gathered the least violent, most cunning and even-tempered giants inside Gastropnir. Here, they hope to wait out Ragnarök and let the Titans, Gods and their lackeys work the whole mess out among themselves.

Utgard-Loki does admit that he and his general are working out how best to swoop down upon the survivors of Ragnarök and destroy them. They did not particularly wish to do this, he explains, but he saw no other course as he feared the new Gods would be no friendlier than the old ones. That is, until the Band arrived. Now, Utgard-Loki asks the Scions for a peace treaty between the Aesir—represented by the Band—and his band of giants. If they're willing, he will begin the alliance by revealing what he knows of Angrboda and will refrain from attacking any who survive Ragnarök. In return, the Scions must pledge to marry sons and daughters of the surviving jotun chiefs. Of course, if Utgard-Loki can get the characters to promise more, he pushes them all he can.

The Scions can take the deal and swear magically binding oaths to that effect, or they can fight a whole castle full of the most powerful of the jotnar on their own turf. If they fight, feel free to throw as many elder jotnar and nemean war beasts at the Scions as seems sensible, as well as the crone Elli (see pp.110-111). The characters still might win. If they do, Utgard-Loki buys his life with his secrets, including the location of Angrboda's hideout.

A BIT OF OLD BUSINESS

Scions might have some hard feelings about Utgard-Loki's part in beginning Fimbulvetr (from "The Coming of Winter") and pushing for a nuclear war in Europe (in "Highway to Hel"). If the Band brings it up, Utgard-Loki offers his justifications. He could not break with the other servants of the Titans that early, and a frozen World made it much easier for his agents to prepare for his current plan. The North Sea War was an attempt to anticipate Fate by playing out Ragnarök in the part of the World the Aesir claimed of old, in hopes that this would satisfy Fate and spare the rest of Midgard. Sure, it's been hard on the mortals who starved (or burned in the nuclear exchange, if the Scions didn't stop it), but what's that mortal saying about omelets and eggs?

Yes, Utgard-Loki is unusually reasonable for titanspawn, but he's still titanspawn. Mere human life means nothing to him.

LOKI'S PLOT

At this point, a complication arises. Loki now dogs the characters personally and watches the Band's meeting from hiding. Utgard-Loki's own illusions and magic make the trickster even harder to detect, though perceptive Scions should receive the chance. Noticing the illusion-cloaked Loki skulking about requires a (Perception + Alertness) roll at difficulty 30.

Loki doesn't want this alliance. At this point, he has chosen to seek the Aesir's destruction. He can't have the Band removing both Utgard-Loki and the Fenris Wolf from the battlefield. Right as the Band seems about to cement a deal, he tries to frame the Band for an assassination attempt.

From the shadows, Loki hurls a dagger at Utgard-Loki. The trickster then allows himself to be seen in the form of a God or other known ally of the Band before using his powers to escape. He hopes this leaves the giants and Scions at each other's throats.

When Loki throws the dagger, the Scions get another chance to spot the attack and render it no longer unexpected. Again, the difficulty is 30, assuming an average roll for Loki's (Dexterity + Stealth) of 15 with 22 bonus successes. If a Scion spots the attack, she can try to shout a warning, or parry or block the dagger using her own DV. She can even leap in front of it and take the attack for the Jotun King (treat her DV as 0 in this case). Loki's Thrown attack has 13 dice and 22 automatic successes, while the dagger inflicts a base damage of 8L plus one success for Loki's Epic Strength. (See Loki's traits on p. 254 of **Scion: God**.) Any action to stop the attack exonerates the Band after the initial chaos dies down, especially if saving Utgard-Loki results in a Scion's wounding.

If they do not spot or stop the attack, the Scions need to do some mighty smooth talking to iron things out. Luckily for the Band, Utgard-Loki is still willing at least to listen to them. He suspects Loki's hand in the attempt already. Even if the dagger strikes home, it slays not the jotun leader, but a trusted aide whom Utgard-Loki disguised through illusion. The characters might need to offer more concessions to the giants, but they can still achieve their goals through diplomacy.

GETTING BACK TO BUSINESS

Whether motivated by treaty or threat, Utgard-Loki declares that he cloaked both the Troll Queen and several thousand acres of land in a particularly remote section of Greenland. After a toast to their new alliance, Utgard-Loki casts a spell on the Scions to render them immune to the illusion. Scions who can detect truthfulness in others discern that the giants in Gastropnir have every intention of keeping their word. They have no wish to fight beside the forces of Loki and the Titans in Ragnarök.

UTGARD-LOKI'S DEAL WITH ANGRBODA

The specifics of Utgard-Loki's deal with Angrboda fall outside the scope of this story. The Jotun King probably received some method or relic that would help a small number of his people avoid the doom of Ragnarök. Any number of other possible bargains could have been made, though, including the breeding of a monster army to serve post-Ragnarök Jotunheim.

Scene

ICE STATION TROLL QUEEN

MENTAL ••• PHYSICAL ••••• SOCIAL •••

Prophecy: "The mother of monsters breeds 10,000 young, but thunder caught in clay can break her hall. She warms her brood with strange fire taken beneath the sea; escaping the hearth, it burns forever. Unchecked, she conquers all. Dreadful her vengeance!" This dire prophecy warns the Band about what awaits in Greenland, as well as the consequences for leaving Angrboda to complete her plans. The Troll Queen wishes to throw a powerful wild card into the coming battle: a loyal army of twisted offspring bred through a blending of divine magic and the new myth of twisted, Frankensteinian science. Like Utgard-Loki, she plans to attack both sides at Ragnarök after the Gods and giants weaken each other. Unlike Utgard-Loki, the Band cannot offer her a better deal. Whoever wins the final battle and whatever happens to the Nine Worlds, she has a plan to exploit the results, conquer the survivors and remake the cosmos in her own monstrous image—unless the Band can stop her.

Conveniently, the prophecy hints at two methods to destroy Angrboda's army of monsters. Yet *this* prophecy is a trap of the sort Odin fell into time and again. If the Band destroys Angrboda's lab complex without killing the Troll Queen herself, she escapes to seek revenge in the final battle.

ANGRBODA'S COMPLEX

Utgard-Loki directs the Band to the fjords of northeastern Greenland, where barren mountains thrust from the icecap and plunge into the sea. Getting there is left as an exercise for divine might and the players' ingenuity. Once again, refer to the discussion of operating in extreme cold found in **Scion: Demigod**. It's that cold here.

However they arrive, the Scions see a huge complex situated at the center of the area masked by Utgard-Loki's spells. Angrboda has molded the stone like clay to form domes and half-cylinders. Some of these structures sprout communication arrays and other technical equipment.

Dozens of Angrboda's monstrous spawn guard the complex. Hairless, gigantic houndlike beasts prowl the perimeter and between the buildings, while lumpy, malformed man-beasts stand guard at the entrances. Treat the dozen "guard dogs" as fenrir (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 317) and the monstrous guardsmen as minotaurs (see **Scion: Demigod**, p. 251). Since the characters are Gods, these creatures pose



little threat to them. Angrboda posted them to deal with any frost giants or rival troll-wives (or mortals, before Fimbulvetr made that a non-issue) who might discover her little project. The Band can fight past the guards or sneak in with almost trivial ease. The only difference is that if the Scions fight, Angrboda is ready for them when they come for her.

The central stone dome is the largest and has the most technical gear attached. It also has a small dome erupting from its side, holding Angrboda's laboratory. The characters find her here whether she is aware of their presence or not.

Most of the other structures in the complex hold supplies such as chemicals, foodstuffs (mostly MREs) and empty fuel-oil barrels. Two are kennels for the guards. One contains enough small arms and other weapons to outfit a small army. Some of the weapons are sized for giants. Another holds junk, which a few minutes of search reveal as fragments of Russian submarines and NATO military hardware.

Still another warehouse-like building is filled with jars holding monstrous corpses in varying states of growth, all tagged, labeled and catalogued. All show evidence of twisted experiments both pre- and post-mortem. These are Angrboda's failed past attempts to create her army. Various files stored with these experiments provide a decent idea of Angrboda's goals.

The Scions can help themselves to anything they find—most notably, the weapons. Decide for yourself if any truly outstanding weapons are available. At the very least, the Scions can scare up a large quantity of high explosives and perhaps some anti-tank rockets or Stinger SAMs. Also, tunnels run just beneath the ground's surface between all the various buildings. The Band can use them to reach the central structure and Angrboda's main lab. To enter covertly, someone must bypass the electronic lock, which calls for an (Intelligence + Larceny) roll at difficulty 10. To enter in proper *Aesir* style, the reinforced blast doors have 18L/30B soak and 80 health levels; the stone dome itself has 12L/18B soak and 80 health levels.

ANGRBODA'S HOUSE OF HORRORS

Upon entering the central structure, the Scions are in for an impressive and disturbing sight. Rows of computers and other scientific equipment ring a huge shaft that drops thousands of feet below the surface of Greenland. Support struts brace the shaft. The walls hold vast fluid-filled tanks and cocoon-like sacs of size varying from human to blue whale. The top of the shaft holds the smaller cocoons. Organic vine-like tubes run through the shaft like arteries feeding nutrients and unknown chemicals to each sac. Inside each cocoon twitches a single creature, twisted and monstrous in form, sired by genetic engineering and the horrible fertility of Angrboda. Overhead are gantries and pulleys for moving equipment about. A large chamber off to one side has a heavy blast door marked with the radiation hazard symbol.

Angrboda overlooks her army in her mortal guise of an attractive but stern matriarch in a lab coat. She is assisted by large, hunched-over, troll-like creatures that show a mix of human and animal features. If she has been alerted to the Scions' presence, she smiles victoriously and tells the

Scions they are too late. As she says this, the first of her creatures breaks free of its cocoon. Its brothers and sisters join it and pour out of the shaft in waves.

If the Band's arrival surprises Angrboda, she screams in frustration and hits a switch on a nearby console. Within 15 ticks, her monstrous spawn hatch and move to defend their mother.

Angrboda's assistants also defend her in any case. They have the same traits as Legend 7 generic elder giants (see **Scion: Demigod**, p. 268). Give Angrboda one and a half such assistants for every Scion, rounding up. See pages 126-128 of this book for Angrboda's traits.

As horrors boil out of the shaft, Angrboda taunts the characters, saying they are too late to stop her and that her "children" will wipe the Overworld of Gods and giants. She will replace Odin, Surtr and the other fathers of their races with a glorious, terrible mother—herself! It's a primo Demented Supervillain Rant. If the Scions mention their plans to her, or she otherwise knows of them, she also mocks the Scions for thinking they can save the old Gods by convincing the Fenris Wolf (her son) to avoid battle. She says that some other threat will devour Odin on the appointed day.

DEFEATING ANGRBODA

The Scions have several ways to resolve this fight. Here are a few:

• **Collapse the Shaft.** By destroying at least four major support struts bracing the shaft (20L/35B soak, 40 health levels), the weight of the army of monsters collapses the balconies that ring the shaft and pulls the whole thing down on them, burying the army. Enough monsters still reach the surface to give the Band a decent brawl, but most of the army dies. Of course, the Band still must fight Angrboda, her assistants and whatever monsters reach the surface first, and they try everything in their power to prevent the Scions from collapsing the shaft.

• **Collapse the Dome.** The Scions can rustle up enough plastic explosives to break the main dome so it caves in and buries Angrboda and her army. Scions with eight or more dots of Epic Strength can achieve the same result without explosives. Either way, pulling this trick off takes an [Intelligence + Craft (Demolitions)] roll at difficulty 15 or (Intelligence + Science) roll at difficulty 20 to work out where to set the explosives or punch the dome. Unless someone has Ultimate Strength, collapsing the dome takes four carefully placed strikes or detonations spaced over four miscellaneous actions. Done properly, though, it's a wonderful collapse. Rubble crashes down into the shaft, crushing cocoons by the hundreds before overloading the support struts. Half an hour later, Angrboda's nuclear reactor melts down to complete the extermination.

• **Poison the Well.** Sneaky Scions might poison the army in its last stages of growth by tainting the chemical solution pumped into the cocoons. To do so with the chemicals available in the base calls for an (Intelligence + Science) roll at difficulty 7, though a particularly toxic substance could be placed in a tank to disrupt the mixture. It is somewhat unlikely that the characters just happen to have a few pints of Jörmungandr's venom or something similar, but stranger things have happened. In this case, they have only Angrboda and her assistants to fight, once she notices their sabotage.

For a variation, the Scions might set Angrboda's nuclear reactor to melt down. Doing so isn't difficult, as it's an aging Soviet model that was held together by spit and baling wire *before* trolls scavenged it from a submarine. It takes only an (Intelligence + Science) roll at difficulty 3. The challenge is doing it without killing themselves. In the absence of a specific Knack for radiation immunity, assume that Epic Stamina 8 suffices, or Epic Stamina 6 with the Impenetrable Knack.

• **Fight the Whole Damned Mess.** Particularly powerful Scions might decide just to battle the whole army right then and there. This is a bit suicidal without Ultimate Attributes or avatar expressions, but if the characters think they can take a huge army of terrible monsters, then let them, by all means. They can no doubt defeat dozens, maybe even hundreds of creatures, but Angrboda has thousands. It should become apparent eventually that the Scions do not have enough *time* before Ragnarök to finish such a battle, even if they can win.

• **Ignore the Whole Damned Mess.** Alternatively, the Scions might simply leap on Angrboda, slay her and run for it. This satisfies the deal they made with the jarnvidjur. It does leave an army of monsters to cope with later, if the Earth survives Ragnarök. Of course, if the World burns, the monsters won't be a problem.

THE PROPHECY TRAP

The prophecy for this scene hints at ways the characters can defeat Angrboda without the risk of fighting her and her army directly. If they do this, however, the Band will *not* kill Angrboda herself or all her army. Instead, she turns up on the Plains of Idavoll with a shrunken but still powerful force of monsters, with one goal: to kill the Band. The smart, easy solution nets the Scions a nemesis as powerful, in her way, as Surtr or Jörmungandr.

ANGRBODA'S ARMY OF MONSTERS

For the monsters in Angrboda's army, use traits from all three **Scion** core books and this volume to represent her freakish spawn. For example, a giant lizard with a human head that spits acid might be represented by a tatsu (**Scion: Demigod**, page 234), while a whale-sized mass of melded troll-like creatures set on spider's legs might use the traits of a Hekatonkheire (**Scion: God**, page 333). Work up several creatures in advance. Be creative with your descriptions and impress upon the players and characters what horrors Angrboda would bring to the Nine Worlds.

In any event, the characters must kill Angrboda, or at least utterly defeat her and force her to pledge never

to return to the Iron Wood, in order to fulfill their bargain with the jarnvidjur.

LOKI'S INTERFERENCE

It is possible that Loki still follows the Band and aids Angrboda. He hopes to win her over so that he can use her army in Ragnarök. Loki does not fight with the Band here, nor does he directly aid his old lover, but he may warn her of the Band's arrival. If so, Angrboda taunts the Scions with this fact when they encounter her.

BIG BADA-BOOM

Here are traits for some of the explosives and heavy weapons the Scions might find in Angrboda's armory:

Anti-Tank Rocket: Accuracy +0, Damage 30L, Range 100, Shots 1, Speed 8, P

Anti-Air Missile: Accuracy +2, Damage 25L, Range 100, Shots 1, Speed 8, P

C-4 (per pound): Accuracy N/A, Damage 15L, Range 0, Speed 6 (to use preset charge)/30 to set up charge and arm, P (for shaped charges)

Explosive weapons also harm targets caught near the blast. For missiles and shaped explosive charges, this area is somewhat small (one yard per 5L damage, dealing half the normal damage in that area). For high explosives, the radius is much larger. Explosives lose two dice of damage per yard. Therefore, a pound of C-4 would deal 15L damage at ground zero, 13L one yard away from ground zero, and so on.

Also, Scions who wish to keep some heavy ordnance for use at Ragnarök may certainly do so. After all, the final battle is nigh and nothing should be held back, be it divine thunderbolts or laser-guided missiles.

For *really* big bada-boom, Angrboda might have a nuclear warhead she took from the same submarine that provided her nuclear reactor. The captain is still alive, sort of, in a jar among Angrboda's warehouse of failed experiments. (Scions who can call ghosts might find his body and summon him.) He can supply the codes to arm and trigger the nuke (though the Scions might need supernatural means to restore his sanity after what Angrboda did to him). Ghost or horribly mutated thing in a jar, he begs the Band to avenge his crew.

Scene

NOW ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS SURVIVE RAGNARÖK

MENTAL •• PHYSICAL – SOCIAL ••

Assuming the Scions achieved some success at knocking down Angrboda, they can now return to the Dark Forest and tell the jarnvidjur that they've met their side of the bargain. The crone who spoke with them before greets them and says that her sisters sensed Angrboda's defeat. They have let the Fenris Wolf know he is welcome in their forest. All the Band must do now is burn the snippet of Gleipnir to free the Wolf.

Mere seconds after the Band does so, Fenris trots in through the paths between worlds. He seems to shrink a bit with each footfall until he stands no larger than a grizzly bear, far smaller than his previous manifestation. Fenris thanks the Scions rather hesitantly—he has little practice at gratitude—and says that in finding him a home, they enabled him to be part of the Nine Worlds in a way he previously never could. Indeed, Fenris now seems more like a wolf-God than a primordial force of destruction, having undergone a transformation not unlike what the Gods experienced so long ago (though he still seems quite terrifying and powerful).

Before he goes, though, the Wolf has a final question for the Band.

First the question: "When the Gods tricked and bound me, Tyr looked me in the eye and smiled as he placed his hand in my mouth. He was the only God I trusted, and he *lied* to me. He *betrayed* me. So... *why is he now God of Justice?*" The flames burn brighter in Fenris' eyes, and every character can tell that the Wolf is still very angry. They'd better give him a serious answer, or he could still likely kill them all.

We do not provide an answer here. Let the players mull this over themselves.

If the Band can give the Wolf a serious, thoughtful answer, the Wolf repays them with a word of warning. He says that through his epochs in the dark, he heard things whispered by powers older and stranger than the Gods. Fate decreed for Odin and the greatest of the Aesir to fall at Ragnarök. These things must come to pass or the cycle begins again, leading in time to a new Doom of the Gods that probably involves the Scions' deaths as well. With its final words, Fenris says, "I think you made a chance for some to live. But some must die, or eventually all will perish. Wolves know that is the way of things. Remember that."

With that, the Fenris Wolf leaps into the woods and departs. When he's gone, the old crone nods and says, "You'd best listen to that one, dears. He's wiser than I thought. Old One-Eye and his kin are doomed, and there's nothing to be done for it. Sad but as true today as it was ages ago." The crone then scratches her chin and adds, almost idly, "Course, that don't mean you didn't save nobody." With that, the troll-hag shrugs and disappears back into the Iron Wood, leaving the Scions to ponder her words.

ACT TWO
ONE MORE THING...

The Band returns to Asgard, having made peace with the Fenris Wolf, confirmed Utgard-Loki in his desire to avoid battle and quashed the threat of Angrboda. Or not. Even if they succeeded, though, the characters also received warnings that the greatest Gods of the Aesir will still die. In fact, the consequences if they *don't* die might be worse than if they do. It's the Scions' own choice what they do about these warnings. In the meantime, though, Odin throws a final great feast and comes up with one last mission to change the balances of forces at Ragnarök... and one final scheme to cheat Fate.

Scene
THE FEAST
MENTAL •••• PHYSICAL • SOCIAL •••••

Prophecy: "A wicked tongue taints the feast with bile, and death awaits you at the king's command." The last phrase might cause some worry until the Scions hear Odin's mission for them. Actually, matters are far worse than the Scions think, for Odin plans to have one of them die in his place.

The night before the Aesir muster for the final battle, Odin orders a great feast in Valhalla, for the dead and the divine alike. This event gives the Scions a chance to talk to the other Gods and say farewell to their parents.

GUESS WHAT WE FOUND OUT

By now, the Scions probably know that only the deaths of Odin and other select Aesir are bound into Fate as necessary to make way for the future. Realizing this, the Scions might want to discuss this with those Gods. Whether they announce this privately or publicly has little effect on these Gods' reaction. Thor, Tyr, Heimdall, Freyr and many others have long accepted their deaths and plan on fighting just as fiercely when the battle begins. In fact, this news gives them hope that more than the fated few might survive through combination of the Band's actions and their own divine efforts. They praise the Scions for their own deeds but still prepare to face their own end in the coming battle.

Odin thanks the Scions for their pains despite the information they bring. He adds, though, almost as an afterthought, that they might have done the lesser Gods and the people of Midgard a great service.

ONE MORE THING...

Midway through the evening, Odin gathers the Band and says he's thought of one more task that might shift the odds a little further in Ragnarök. He wants the Scions to go to Niflheim and ask Hel to help Asgard instead of helping Loki. If the characters succeeded in past attempts to change events in Ragnarök, Odin says that Fate clearly is with them. If not, Odin suggests the mission as a final, defiant attempt to shift Fate and save more lives in Midgard and Asgard. In any case, there is too much bitterness between the older Aesir and Loki's daughter, dooming any efforts from him or the other Gods. Even if the Band had less than favorable run-ins with Hel in the past, Odin brushes them off as "minor scuffles" compared to the centuries of resentment between Hel and the older Aesir. Odds of success are low, but it couldn't hurt to try. Assuming the Scions agree, Odin asks them to leave at first light but insists they enjoy the rest of the feast. They've earned it.

A GOING-AWAY PRESENT

Odin also gives one of the Scions (preferably one of his children if one is a member of the Band) a gift as a token of his esteem and an advance on her inheritance. He hates the idea of any of the Aesir's legendary treasures burning in Surtr's fires or looted by some slovenly giant. This could be Draupnir or the Aegishjalmar ("If I'm doomed to die, a little extra protection won't help me.") or some other relic—preferably one that the Scion herself can use. The only relic he *won't* give is Gungnir, since he needs that to kill giants and monsters!

In truth, Odin has another purpose that he can hide from Knacks and Fate itself. The token will enable him to switch Fates with his "heir," putting that person's soul in his body and vice versa. The mission to Helheim is more to keep the Band far away while he makes the final preparations for this spell. The All-Father plans to make this switch at Ragnarök to avoid death at the hands of any force that might rise up to replace the Fenris Wolf as his destroyer.

PARTY CRASHER

Shortly after Odin praises the Band and gives his gift, Loki swaggers into the feasting hall uninvited. If nobody knew he'd escaped from the cave and the snake, they find out now. Bragi, the God of Poetry, stands and tells Loki he is not welcome since throwing in his lot with Asgard's enemies. Several more Aesir move toward the Lie-Smith. Loki feigns shocked offense and calls out to Odin, reminding him of an old pledge they made that one would take no drink unless a cup was there for the other as well. Odin glowers but admits that he did make such a pledge long ago. As long as Loki does no violence at the feast, he receives the hospitality and protection due to a guest.

The feast continues, with the Gods now noticeably more uncomfortable and agitated. Most of them avoid Loki, who carries on as if he's having a grand old time.

Any Scions who want to speak with the trickster have their chance. Attempts to convince Loki not to aid the giants and Muspelheim do not get very far. He says he's made his bed and will lie in it. Whatever he really thinks and feels, he shows a melancholy acceptance to the Scions, even as he smiles and waves to Aesir who frown back and turn away. He even suggests to any Scions of his, or who foiled his plans in the past, that their death is not foretold so they might yet live if they simply walk away.

Any Scions who suspect that Loki does this in part to remove some "wild-card" forces who might tip the battle in favor of the Aesir are correct, though Loki is sincere in his own strange way. He wants something of himself to survive, even if it is a wayward offspring or just someone who will tell tales of his old deeds.

Oddly, Loki does not try to convince any children of his among the Scions to join him against the Gods. In fact, he refuses any such Loyalty-inspired offer. Loki does this in part because he does not trust such an offer and partly because he doesn't believe the Titans will fare much better than the Aesir.

WORST. TOAST. EVER.

Eventually, Loki stands to address the assembled Gods. He says he wants to give a toast. He smiles, raises his drinking horn and proceeds to insult every God in turn. As poetically as possible, he calls Thor a braggart and an oaf. He chastises Tyr for being so incompetent as to lose something attached to him. He accuses Njord of incest and claims all the Asynjur are sluts and whores who have lain with every God, ghost and beast in Asgard. He calls Bragi's poetry derivative and calls Forseti a coward who uses peace as a shield to hide behind. Every God present receives such scorn and vitriol. Loki does not spare the Scions either. He picks barbs calculated to hurt their pride and attack what they feel are their strongest abilities. Regardless of any discussion with him previously, Loki calls his own Scions faithless children who betrayed their father for Gods who will never really trust them.

(If you need more details, just consult "Lokasenna," in the *Elder Edda*.)



Loki's words incense the Gods so greatly that some are about to break their hospitality and attack the trickster, even peaceful gods such as Forseti, Idun and Bragi. Then, in one flamboyant gesture, Loki drains his mead, bows and walks out the door of Valhalla. Some Gods move to chase after him, but Odin calls for them to stop. They shouldn't, he counsels, let the Lie-Smith poison them with his words. This calms the Gods and likely stops most Scions who might feel moved to assault Loki, though the mood of the feast is ruined. Everyone now drinks and eats in angry excess. Perceptive Scions might guess this was exactly Loki's intent and may voluntarily curtail their feasting. If they do so, let them recover a Willpower point if they are down any.

Early the next day, Odin rouses the Scions for their journey to Helheim. He gives them divine horses if they lack other forms of transportation. Few of the other Gods are up and about yet, so hopefully the Scions used the feast to make their farewells to those fated to fall in the coming battle.

Scene

HEL AND GONE

MENTAL ••• PHYSICAL •••• SOCIAL ••••

Prophecy no longer works. This day, all Fates end—one way or another.

Normally, riding to Helheim takes nine days. The Band completes the journey in an hour, even without using special Knacks or Boons. This day shall see so much travel between realms that everyone gets to move quickly.

Helheim lies empty and Garm's chain lies broken. All gates are fallen; all guards are gone. Most of the dead are gone too, and the halls of the frost giants are empty.

BALDUR AND HOD

If the Band did not arrange Baldur's resurrection in "Highway to Hel," he is still at Eliudnir. So is Hod, if he did not sacrifice his existence for Baldur. The two Gods fought valiantly, but they and Hel could not be everywhere to stop Loki's army.

COMING TO THE LAND OF THE DEAD

Eliudnir and Helheim appears much as it is described in **Scion: Demigod** (starting on p. 157)... except for the lack of dead people. Upon entering Eliudnir, the Scions find the Queen over the Damned sulking on her throne in an empty hall. The blood that once flowed there has clotted into foul-smelling mud, and the tables of the hall are empty. Hel's servants, Ganglati and Ganglot, still attend Hel, but they give their mistress plenty of space.

Hel barely acknowledges the Scions when they enter, though she speaks to them if they address her. If they ask what happened to Helheim, she informs them with icy fury that her father came the night before to raise an army from among her subjects. He took at least two-thirds of her spectral host as well as Garm. Almost as an aside, she mentions that they commandeered her ship, *Naglfar*, to transport the deathly army and the forces of the frost giants from Niflheim to Asgard. The only dead who remain are her own servants, some cowards who feared battle and a surprising few who refused to attack the Aesir.

Seeing that they did not stop Loki from taking the bulk of Hel's forces with him, the Scions might simply turn to leave. If so, that's pretty much the end of this scene and the Scions can rush back to Asgard to join the final battle. The Scions might still try to recruit Hel and her remaining forces to assist the Aesir, though. After all, a single Goddess of Hel's power is a not inconsiderable asset, and she still has enough ghosts and other creatures that they might turn at least a few battles to Asgard's favor.

A HEL OF A DEAL

The problem is that Hel sees no reason to commit herself or her remaining forces to help the Aesir, whom she feels have done nothing to deserve her loyalty. She cruelly hints that she might even have been able to delay some of Loki's army here in Niflheim if she'd wanted to—but she didn't. If the characters plead with Hel and ask what could make her change her mind, she gives a most unpleasant smile and says they really won't like her offer.

Hel's price for her aid revolves around the fact that the prophecies of Ragnarök do not speak of Hel's death. They do mention a new hall of the dead but do not say she rules this new Underworld realm. Hel sees this as a chance for freedom. She offers to commit her remaining forces to the Aesir if some other surviving God—say, one of the Scions—swears to take up her mantle as master and torturer of the unworthy dead in the new World that comes after Ragnarök. If one of the Scions agrees to these terms (or somehow communicates with and convinces a God prophecied to survive, such as Vidar), she gives command of her forces to the Band.

The Band might fancy fighting Hel for control of her forces, which might work. Even though Hel is a fearsome opponent and has Nidhogg to help her, she won't become The Reaper to defeat the Band. In fact, she'll throw the fight. She surrenders once the Band gets a few good licks in, and names one member new ruler of the dead. That Scion feels Fate lock around him, ordaining his place in the world after Ragnarök.

The Scions do not have much time to negotiate or fight. A few hours after they arrive, the Scions hear the call of Heimdall's Gjallarhorn. This signals that the enemies of Asgard approach and the final battle is at hand.

Scions who have the proper Boons or Knacks can travel back to Asgard quickly with whatever allies they can carry. Other Scions (and whatever forces accompany them) must travel back toward Asgard the way they came, meaning that they most likely arrive with the great battle in its full fury. If they have done well in dealing with Hel, however, then the brief delay is more than made up for by the forces they bring to the fight.

AN INCIDENTAL REVELATION

Whether or not the Scions convince Hel to lend aid, she spots the token Odin gave one of the Scions at the feast. She laughs wickedly as she tells the Band of its true purpose. Hel has no desire to see the new World lorded over by the All-Father who consigned her to Niflheim. She does not do this if the Scions angered or offended her in any way, leaving them to find out the hard way.

TRADING PLACES

Storytellers who wish their players' characters to gain Hel's bargain without forcing a Scion to accept the position of new monarch of the dead might use Baldur or Hod as replacements. Either God, if still dead and in Hel, could step forth and offer to become the replacement Lord of Helheim. Hel would rather Hod take the role than Baldur, whom she loves like so many others do, but she accepts either if it means freeing her from her commitments to lording over the dead.

If you employ this option, think about what sort of Lord of Helheim you want. Baldur would make an unexpected Lord of the Underworld. Bright, friendly and good-natured, he would punish the dead with a fatherly "this hurts me more than it hurts you" demeanor that would likely seem pretty creepy. Perhaps even creepier would be the tendency of the dead to happily accept their torments because beloved Baldur orders it. Considering Baldur's solar associations, his Helheim might brighten to reveal, rather than hide, the punishments of the dead.

Hod would become a more "typical" God of Death, literally blind to the suffering that goes on around him. His Helheim would turn even darker to reflect his lack of sight and affinity with the dark. Still, he would do his duty. The new Aesir would no longer regard him as a crippled nobody, which might empower and inspire the God to new highs (or lows, as the case may be).

Whatever the case, this new Lord of Hel could become a valuable ally or terrible foe to the Gods of the World after Ragnarök, so take some care in deciding who assumes Hel's mantle.

ACT THREE
RAGNARÖK

Regardless of what the Scions accomplish leading up to Ragnarök, the forces of Muspelheim with Surtr in command—as well as much of Jotunheim, the great serpent Jörmungandr, an army of spectres and collections of other titanspawn—invade the home of the Aesir. Surtr leads the Muspel-hordes across Bifröst, the Rainbow Bridge. The giants of Jotunheim cross the Iving River that separates their terra incognita from the Overworld. Loki's forces of the dead sail in Hel's ship, *Naglfar*, along with additional giants under the command of Hrym. Ragnarök begins and the Doom of the Aesir is upon them.

The good news is that if the Scions did well earlier in this story, the terrible Fenris Wolf is absent from the fray and a third of Hel's forces come to the aid of Asgard, led by the Scions themselves. Also, most of the best generals and leaders of the frost giants are suspiciously absent as well. This suggests that the battle might not go exactly as prophecy states and that at least some of the Gods could survive.

Exactly how the Scions arrive on the scene depends largely on their powers and personal decisions. Using high-powered Psychopomp Boons, they can travel directly from Helheim to Asgard and arrive in time to face the initial assault. Lacking such powers, they have to climb up Yggdrasil and cross Bifröst to Asgard. (As Gods, they could use Yggdrasil as an Axis Mundi and climb all the way to the Godrealm... but Hel's ghostly legion cannot do this.)

RETURN TO ASGARD

Scions who can return to Asgard quickly receive a bit of time before the battle starts. They may use this time to rest, prepare any last-minute plans (or tricks), arrange whatever troops they command or perhaps have a quick word with their parents or other Gods. Interested Scions might even move to join Heimdall at Bifröst to hold back the enemy or watch the coast for sign of *Naglfar* landing so that they can rush to meet Loki and his forces in battle. If the Scion acquired powerful allies—in fact, *any* allies—in other realms, Heimdall or other Gods help bring them in. In this time of cosmic crisis, even mortals can enter the Overworld. (For instance, the Aesir would appreciate having the North Sea fleets from "Highway

to Hel" stationed off Asgard's coast. NATO versus *Naglfar*, anyone?) In any event, they should then be present to witness the coming of the enemy into Asgard.

Scions who cross Bifröst to Asgard arrive in time to see the hordes of Muspel crossing the bridge on the other side, pushing Heimdall and other defenders back as they press forward. Surtr turns from the battle briefly and brings his flaming sword down upon the Rainbow Bridge. Again and again he strikes the bridge and the Scions see the structure begin to burn and crack, prismatic bits falling from it with every blow. Satisfied at the destruction he has wrought, Surtr then turns to rejoin his armies.

Unless they know of another way to reach Asgard quickly and decide to take it, the Scions should try to get their forces moving across the bridge at full speed in hopes they cross it before it collapses. If this doesn't occur to them, feel free to have a Storyteller character shout out that they must hurry. Scions who push forward engage in a harrowing and dramatic race across the crumbling bridge. You might wish to interject some dice rolling to avoid falls or stumbles, just to add dramatic tension, and some of the ghostly army could fall into the nothingness below, but the Scions should all reach the other side if they make any effort at all. In part, this is because Fate appoints them to bear witness to Ragnarök, but mostly it's because letting the Scions get this far only to fall to their deaths right before the big fight is lame.

As the last of the Scions and their followers cross Bifröst, the bridge crumbles at last. It falls burning and broken into space. The Scions have now arrived on the battlefield. The great ship *Naglfar* beaches itself on the coast nearby and hordes of dead men pour out, led by Loki and the ship's crew of elder jotnar. Surtr swings his massive sword up and then casts it out over the heads of his army, the blade pointing menacingly at his opponents. In a voice like earthquakes and thunder he shouts, "To battle!" The forces of chaos, fire, frost and death surge forward.

Scene

THE END OF THE GODS

MENTAL • PHYSICAL ••••• SOCIAL •

Whether they enter behind the forces of the enemy or meet them head on with the rest of the Aesir, the Scions find themselves at war. Giants, undead and monsters of all sorts rampage across the Plain of Idavoll. The Aesir and their followers meet them head on.

Tyr leads a force of einherjar head on into a force of titanspawn horrors, his lone hand gripping his sword tight as it cleaves through the enemy. He ignores wounds taken as he pushes forward grimly, cutting down the enemy whenever they dare face him.

Heimdall rallies his few remaining guardsmen from the defense of Bifröst and pushes forward once again, shining like the sun as he rushes to meet Loki and his ghostly legions in battle. Loki gives the bright God a mock salute, then orders his spectres to swarm over Heimdall and his men.

Freyr speeds forward mounted on the golden boar, Gullinbursti. The animal leaps over friend and foe alike as Freyr charges toward Surtr and his giants. He couches his antler-tipped spear like a lance and gives a great shout full of life and defiance.

Thor's children (Magni, Modi and Thrud) tear into frost giants as other Gods rise to face giant, corpse and monster. Vidar laughs fiercely as he tears apart enemies with his bare hands. Thor himself calls down thunder and lightning, scattering giants and monsters left and right. Everywhere the Scions look, the Aesir and their followers fight and die. Valkyries lie broken under the feet of giants, einherjar drag jotnar and hrimthurssar to the ground through sheer numbers, shining alfar cross swords with aptrgangers, and still more on each side rise up to take the place of the fallen. Even Bragi's poets and the artisans of Asgard march out with whatever weapons they can find. With all of reality at stake, they know that if they don't fight now they might as well never have lived!

The Scions have many choices about where and how to fight. They may even split up to accomplish different things if they are confident enough in their ability. Most importantly, this scene gives interested Scions a chance to play a part in the fates of various Aesir. They might take the place of an Aesir if they wish or even annul a God's fated end as reward for their previous efforts to change Ragnarök.

TAPPING LEGEND

The end of the World has been decreed by Fate and myth as the time when the Gods die in a glorious holocaust against their most hated foes. Because of this position in mortal myth, Ragnarök is a time saturated in Legend. Once every half hour of battle, beings of Legend can attempt to harvest Legend points (as per **Scion: Demigod**, p. 106). Some creatures hardly find this harvesting worth the effort, but to beings that rely heavily on large Legend pools (such as Scions, Gods and Titans), it offers a way to keep fighting beyond what their power would normally allow.

In addition, after the death of each major God and his nemesis—that is, at the deaths of Loki and Heimdall, Thor and Jörmungandr, each other God that you feel is appropriate, and certainly the death of a player's character—those beings who witness the fulfillment of prophecy have an additional chance to harvest Legend.

The Scions have time to explore only one or two of the options that follow. Fate might let them save Freyr, Heimdall, Tyr or some other important figure, but the Scions can bend Fate only so far before it refuses to yield further.

SAVING HEIMDALL

This option has two difficulties: It puts the characters in direct conflict with Loki, and Heimdall pushes hard to deal with the Lie-Smith once and for all. Still, a quick or persistent Scion (or Band thereof) could move to confront the trickster before Heimdall does. If they do, Heimdall shouts for the Scions to stand down. Loki is *his* foe to face, and it is his fate to fall at no other hand.

If the Scions stand aside, Heimdall steps forward and assumes the shining form of The Glory. Loki's smile shines from the darkness that swells around him as he becomes The Void. The two Gods clash in a battle of pure divine power that pushes away anyone who tries to interfere. In the end, a light flares and the Gods again assume human form. Loki has lost his spatha. Heimdall's sun-bright sword lashes out to take Loki's head... and passes through a phantom. The master of illusion has finally fooled the most perceptive of the Aesir. Loki reveals an illusion-cloaked boar spear and runs Heimdall through. Heimdall's head slumps as he drops to his knees. "The prophets were wrong!" Loki crows. "See? Loki the Giant's Son has slain his fated foe and lives!"

Heimdall raises his head and looks across the bloodied haft of Loki's spear. He surges forward, toward Loki, snapping the spear's crossbar and tearing his own body. Loki's eyes widen. Before he can do anything more, Heimdall grabs Loki's wrist with one hand and raises Höfud in the other. He shouts, "Loki, for once in your miserable existence... *Hold! Your! Tongue!*" This time, his sword strikes true and cuts off Loki's head.

If the Scions do not stand aside, they too can battle Loki. The Lie-Smith uses every dirty trick he can imagine to kill them, without any attempt to humiliate or wound. He assumes one of his avatar expressions if the outcome of the battle looks even slightly in doubt, unleashing its power upon the Scions.

Loki tries to flee if the Scions bring him near defeat. What happens next depends on whether they can catch and kill the trickster before he escapes. Slaying Loki breaks the Doom of Heimdall. If the Scions cannot stop Loki themselves, they see Heimdall appear again on the scene to leap upon the trickster, stabbing Loki fatally just as he takes Loki's blade through his own heart.

If a Scion dies or lies dying during this battle, then Loki disengages from the others and pulls back to gloat. At this time, give the dying Scion one last attack upon the sneering God. This final attack slays Loki, but the Scion succumbs to his wounds. In such a case, the Scion has taken Heimdall's fate upon himself. Heimdall survives at the cost of the Scion who took his place.

SAVING FREYR

Freyr charges through the air on Gullinbursti to cast his spear at Surtr's eye. The spear speeds toward its mark, only to burst into flames, the antler and wooden weapon burning to ash before it can wound the Titan. Surtr laughs as he swats



Freyr out of the air with his burning sword. Freyr falls before Surtr, charred and wounded but alive. Unarmed, he now stands before the Titan. If the Scions rush to aid him, Freyr shouts for them to save themselves. He turns again to face his foe with whatever weapon he can pull from one of the fallen.

If the Scions allow Freyr to face Surtr alone, they see the God battle valiantly with the Titan before Surtr's gigantic blade kills him—but as Freyr dies, he assumes his avatar expressions in sequence. Trees and vines crawl along Surtr's rocky skin, holding the Titan immobile for almost 10 seconds even as they burn. Then The Scourge casts illness on Surtr, forcing him to stumble away, though again, not for long. The Glory blinds everyone nearby, but Surtr's head is too far above it to be affected. Out of control, The General sends troops charging every which way.

Fighting Surtr to save Freyr means joining in one of hell of a brawl. See Surtr's traits on page 320 of **Scion: God**. Not only is the Fire Titan perhaps the mightiest foe the Band has ever faced, he has the bulk of his forces around him. While the Scions might best the Titan at this time if they could face him alone, odds are against their surviving a clash with him now. If the Scions try anyway, they fight Surtr and an additional three Legend 6 Muspel giants per character. In the unlikely event the characters win this fight, they deserve victory. If not, Freyr reaches out his hand and a great tree bursts from the ground beneath their feet, carrying them away before Surtr can kill them. The tree ignites and crumbles to ash under Surtr's flames, but not before it bends over and deposits the Scions away from the fray. Surtr strikes down Freyr as he does this, the Titan's gigantic blade cleaving Freyr in two.

Speaking of swords, it is possible one of the Scions obtained Freyr's sword (see p. 46). In this case, the Scion may return it to the God. This enables Freyr to hold off Surtr until help arrives. If Surtr sees this, however, the Scion finds herself attacked by the outraged Titan. If the Scion dies, she takes the Doom of Freyr upon herself. If she survives, the Scions are rewarded for their actions by saving one of the most beloved of the Gods.

CONFRONTING SURTR

It could be that the Scions decide to confront Surtr early on, regardless of what happens with Freyr, as a way to stop the destruction of Midgard. See the upcoming scene ("Surtr") for how to resolve this. The only immediate change is that the Scions have the battle in the ruins of Asgard, rather than in a city in Midgard. In the long run, this would likely result in less devastation from the battle reaching the mortal World. This might come at the expense of greater loss of life among the Aesir, but since the Scions likely tipped the odds to favor the Aesir through this story, the final impact upon the Gods might be no worse than Ragnarök was originally supposed to be.

SAVING TYR

Though no easy feat, Tyr is the easiest of the major Aesir to save. Individually, no foe matches the God of Justice. Brief clashes with several thousand minor foes, however, leave him bleeding from many minor wounds. Surrounded by the spectres of Helheim, Tyr finds himself face to face with the hellhound Garm, who now leads a pack of other fenrir in a rampage across the battlefield. Normally, Tyr would defeat such a foe—but the God is wounded and tired, and his fated time approaches. Tyr tells Scions who want to aid him that he is fine and that his wounds are mere scratches. With a rare smile, he turns to face his doom.

If the Scions rush to aid Tyr, they battle Garm and one additional Legend 5 fenrir per Scion. See page 317 of **Scion: Hero** for fenrir. These beasts have Epic Strength 4, Epic Dexterity 3 and Epic Stamina 4. Garm's traits appear on page 270 of **Scion: Demigod**; optional boosts to the beast's power appear on page 123 of this book. Defeating these foes means the Scions can drag the wounded Tyr to safety, changing Fate through their efforts. A Scion who dies in this battle assumes the Doom of Tyr and the God of Justice survives.

Note that by weakening the Fenris Wolf's ties to Ragnarök, the Band also weakened Tyr's fated ties to the same battle. Tyr is largely the God he is because of the Wolf's maiming; the Wolf is such a part of Tyr's legend that Fenris' defection unmoors Tyr's fate as well. Had the Band not removed Fenris from Ragnarök, Tyr would likely fall to the Wolf before the battle's end even if the Band saved him from Garm.

If the Scions leave Tyr to his fight, the God sweeps aside the other fenrir to face Garm. After several minutes of struggle, the God drives his sword through Garm's mouth and into his brain. The hound then shuts his jaws in death, severing Tyr's remaining hand. Tyr falls to the ground and the rest of Garm's pack tears him apart.

SAVING OTHER GODS

While the stories known to mortals describe the deaths of only Freyr, Heimdall, Odin and Tyr, the rest of the Aesir remain doomed by implication, since the stories do not say they survive. (Thor will be addressed in a minute.) The Scions might want to ensure the survival of other Aesir, Scions or other beings. If so, give them a chance. For example, Magni and Modi are supposed to survive Ragnarök, but what about their sister Thrud? A character involved romantically (or just friendly) with Thrud might wish to fight by her side to make sure she comes out okay. If a player decides she wants her character to protect members of the supporting cast, you should put the targets of the Scion's protection in some grave danger so the Scion can rescue them.

This is also a great opportunity to save an elder Aesir who is presumed not to survive the final battle but whose death was never described. For example, the canonical list of survivors does not include Freya, but no surviving story describes her valiant death in battle with a particular foe.

Maybe Freya dies fighting Sinmore as her brother does Surtr, and the Scions can save her.

One way or another, the battles in this scene offer the Scions a chance to save a character among the Aesir whom they care about in some way. Adapt the specifics of the scene to make that possible.

TAKE ALL COMERS

Alternatively, the Scions might ignore any chance to alter Fate's course and simply battle any foes who come to them. In this case, send wave after wave of enemies against the characters—nothing they can't handle, but dangerous enough to make the fight interesting. Muspel giants, dragons and other creatures of Muspelheim make good foes for most Gods. Vast armies of lesser undead or giants present less of a challenge, but might threaten the Scions with their numbers. More importantly, they offer a chance for the Scions to show off as they cut them down. Any foes the Scions made during previous stories can also seek them out at this time, giving the Band a truly epic duel against many nemeses.

CONFRONT ODIN

If the Scions discovered Odin's plot to switch his fate with another God, they might track down the All-Father now to deal with this issue. The next scene covers this eventuality, but the Scions might wish to get it out of the way early. If so, hold off some of the events in this scene for later. The Band can jump ahead to the confrontation with Odin, return to this scene for more battle, then finally return to the destruction of Asgard.

WHAT ABOUT BALDUR?

If the Band brought Baldur back in "Highway to Hel," he fights on Idavoll as well. His invulnerability seems as complete as ever. If a Scion agreed to take Hel's place, she accompanies the others to Asgard and immediately moves to Baldur's side. The two Gods fight together, life and death, perfect beauty and perfect horror, and none of Asgard's foes can stand against them.

Before the end, however, the tide of battle briefly reunites Baldur and the Band. He gives one member the sword Mistletoe, saying he thinks she'll need it. Baldur and Hel survive Ragnarök, but when Asgard crumbles (wait for it) they fall past Midgard and into Helheim. They can't reach Midgard quickly enough to join the Scions in fighting Surtr.

Scene

ALL-FATHER'S FALL

MENTAL ••• PHYSICAL ••••• SOCIAL •••••

The eruptions of divine power that resulted from dying Aesir briefly assuming their avatar expressions have only just subsided when new threats appear. On the ground, shadows ripple across Idavoll as Jörmungandr twists and ripples through the air, fighting with flying Gods and seeking out Thor. More shadows race as the Fenris Wolf's spawn Hati and Skoll lope across the sky as well, pursuing the sun and moon. Not only do these twin monsters of hunger and hate fulfill their own destiny, they embrace their father's fate. The light on the battlefield shifts wildly as the sun and moon careen across the sky, fleeing the great wolves. In a final burst of speed, the arch-fenrir catch their prey and devour Delling's children. The only light left on the battlefield comes from Surtr and his Muspel-hordes.

The two wolves, now grown hundreds of feet tall, leap down to Asgard's surface. Each fall of their enormous paws shakes the earth. Their eyes glow a baleful red, rimed with flames, as they search out the prey their father rejected. From across the battlefield, Odin rises to meet the monstrous pair on Sleipnir, his spear in hand. The rune-written oaths of the Aesir shine golden along its length... at least, the oaths they kept with honor. The oaths and pacts they escaped through trickery remain dark.

HATI, SKOLL AND THE FENRIS WOLF

If the Scions botched the deal with Fenris, then the Fenris Wolf himself comes to devour Odin and fight the Aesir. Hati and Skoll devour the sun and the moon… then die from the uncontrolled avatar expressions of Delling's children in their bellies.

Otherwise, Hati and Skoll increase in power beyond their normal traits (see p. 123). Raise their Legend to 11, give them all Fire and Sky Boons up to 10 dots and increase their physical Attributes, both regular and Epic, to 10. Likely, you need to do this only if the Scions confront the creatures directly. Otherwise, the pair's power increase can simply be described.

ODIN'S TREACHERY

Now is the last chance for the Scions to confront Odin about his plan to trade bodies—and fates—with one of his children. He is surrounded by his hjadningar, barking orders at several battalions of einherjar and trying to stem the advance of several units of fire giants. Remember that if the Scions learned of his plan to usurp one of them and avoided it, Odin switches bodies with Vidar instead.

If Odin has already switched places with Vidar, Odin-in-Vidar's-body stands mutely near Vidar-in-Odin's-body, controlling the Odin-body's every move, girding himself for the opportunity to send that body—and Vidar's soul—into the jaws of the approaching wolves.

If Odin switches places with one of the Scions, however, that Scion should not stand mutely about. You and the player of the affected character should make every effort to keep up the masquerade for as long as possible. Work this out with the player in advance, once it's clear that Odin's treachery succeeds. Let the player play her character as she normally would, but encourage her to slip in certain changes in behavior, such as using phrases you've already established as characteristic for Odin. In turn, you should try to give some "tells" or clues in the Odin-body's behavior that enable the Scions to figure out that their friend is in that body (though forced by magic to keep up the imposture).

The Scions face yet another difficult challenge. Before they can make Odin switch back to his own body, the Band needs to get close to him. That means facing down his hjadningar. The hjadningar are not particularly interested in harming the Scions—the characters are Aesir, after all—but they throw themselves, heedless of their own survival, at anyone who attacks either Odin or the God whom Odin has usurped. These warriors waited centuries for a chance to die, and if it happens on the blade of an Aesir rather than a frost or fire giant, so be it. (See the hjadningar traits on pp. 118-119.)

The hjadningar aside, the Scions then must find a way to make the mightiest of the Aesir accept his own death. To consider some of the more likely options:

• **The Social Option.** In this option, the Scions use logic or emotion to appeal to Odin's better nature. All of the parties involved probably have powerful magical effects to call on, but those don't matter. Nothing less than Ultimate Charisma or Ultimate Manipulation has a chance to compel the All-Father. Odin, conversely, must conserve his power so as to destroy the killers of his body and so cheat Fate. Effectively, Epic Attributes and social Knacks no longer count.

If you need dice rolling at all, the Scions are reduced to their non-Epic Charisma and Manipulation, as well as Willpower channeled through Expression and stunt bonuses for well-roleplayed appeals. You can let a Scion trapped in Odin's body spend Willpower to speak past the bindings upon him and add his own voice. Players need at least five successes to get past Odin's ruthless determination, prod his Virtues and so compel him to accept his Fate.

Odin fears death so much, however, that the Virtue roll difficulty increases to 3. If you roll for Odin and get two or fewer successes, the All-Father brushes off the appeal. Still, the Scions have plenty to work with. By shirking his fated death, Odin shows cowardice. In sacrificing one of his children (as All-Father, *every* Scion is one of his children in some sense) he betrays Loyalty and indeed becomes a kinslayer—the lowest, most despicable villain from the Norse point of view.

While they orate, of course, the Scions might be fighting hjadningar and possibly Odin himself, in which case you should make the duel as showy as possible. Let major blows punctuate rhetorical flourishes and important points being made in the debate. Don't give the Band more than three attempts at persuasion before Hati and Skoll arrive and render the discussion moot.

Threats to expose Odin's trickery to the Aesir who survive Ragnarök don't work at all. That tactic just convinces Odin that the Scions must die to preserve his secret, and the conflict becomes purely physical (and magical, as Odin uses Boons and spells against the Scions).

• **The Magical Option.** This option is simple: The Scions use spells of their own to force Odin back into his own body. Divine Unweaving (see **Scion: God**, p. 111) enables a Scion to end the version of Fate and Switch that Odin used. Certain avatar expressions, such as those of Chaos or Justice, can also force Odin to undo his magic, but the Scions most likely need an older God to perform this feat—perhaps one of the Aesir they saved earlier in the battle?

• **The Physical Option.** If the Band can defeat Odin in his stolen body, he surrenders before the Scions kill him. The risk here is that the Scions cannot match Odin's might, even in his new body. Yet, as stated before, Odin is conserving his power. He does not use avatar expressions or Ultimate Attribute effects against the Band, or even any Boon that costs more than a few points of Legend. If his Legend pool or health levels dip below half normal, he yields to the Scions. Numbers are on their side here, since Odin cannot call for help from other Gods. Indeed, he dares not. He must rely on lesser combatants such as the hjadningar to assist him.

THE DOOM OF ODIN

The Scions do not have much time to make Odin accept his Fate—say, five minutes before Hati and Skoll find him. Whether or not the Band succeeds, the two wolves finally scent Odin's position. The wolves howl out their challenge. As Odin dons his helmet, he whispers, "Never enough time."

Odin—or the dupe within his body, if the Scions did not stop the plan—then mounts Sleipnir and races toward his foe. The doomsday wolves spit fire at the All-Father's form as he zips around them, stabbing here and there. The wolves roar in pain,

snapping at empty air. Skoll eventually come up from underneath Sleipnir and rips out the horse's throat. The great steed falls, forcing Odin to face the pair on foot. Still he fights, greeting every bite or charge with a stab of Gungnir. Finally Hati brings his jaws down upon the All-Father's arm. Skoll quickly seizes the old God's leg and the two pull and twist, tearing Odin limb from limb.

The wolves lift their heads to the darkened sky and howl in triumph, fire and smoke issuing from their mouths. The wolves grin wickedly at each other, savoring their victory for a moment, whereupon Vidar comes from out of the smoke and fires of the battlefield (assuming a Scion is not now fated to avenge the Odin's death). Vidar grips Skoll by his grinning bottom jaw and pulls the wolf to the ground. Planting his foot in the wolf's mouth he rips the jaw from Skoll's head then swings the wolf's massive corpse up, over and down across the back of Hati, crushing the spines of both beasts.

The slain All-Father's power erupts as The Reaper, slaying all the remaining hjadningar and leaving only Vidar standing amid the carnage. From across the battlefield a roar comes as Surtr's voice echoes and shouts, "The All-Father is dead! Odin is dead! Press them, Sons of Muspel! BURN THEM ALL!"

DARK ODIN?

What if Odin's plan succeeds and another God dies in his body? This is very bad. Odin has done more than violate at least two Aesir Virtues. Through treachery and major expenditure of Legend, he has effected his own survival and continued power—surely an act of Ambition. Setting up another God to die so horribly shows Malice. Going to such lengths surely constitutes a form of Zealotry, albeit not to any Titan. Rapacity… Maybe not that one, but three Dark Virtues are bad enough.

The All-Father just committed an irrevocable, unforgivable crime, worse than any ruthless scheme he employed before. Dark Virtues replace his Aesir Virtues. He becomes an unequivocal villain, as vicious and power-mad as any Titan avatar. If the Band cannot kill him on Idavoll, he will taint the World to come and become their deadliest foe. If he succeeds in his imposture for long, he taints the new Aesir pantheon at its heart, with what dire consequences no one can guess.

Scene

THE DESTRUCTION OF ASGARD

MENTAL – PHYSICAL •••• SOCIAL –

Above the rest of the fray, Thor and Jörmungandr battle. The Lord of Storms rains lightning down on the Midgard Serpent, which takes to the air itself to confront its nemesis. Or maybe it just rears up. Jörmungandr is so enormous that a single coil could arch over the entire battlefield.

Thor lands on the Midgard Serpent's brow, raises his hammer and strikes—once, twice, three times. With each strike, Thor becomes bigger, swelling with the power of his Ultimate Strength. The third blow ripples like thunder across the battlefield. The shock wave of the final blow knocks down anyone within a mile of the Midgard Serpent's head, including the Scions and their current foes.

There is a crack like the World bursting open, and the Midgard Serpent screeches its death-cry. Blood and venom sprays from its shattered skull in an expanding cloud over Idavoll and falls like rain. The Midgard Serpent seems to hang in the air for a moment, then its massive length collapses toward the ground. The body crushes whole armies when it hits the plain, and a cloud of dust roils out from the impact points. The ground rumbles and cracks from the tremendous impact. The cracks spread and widen. Asgard is falling apart, already weakened by Odin's death and the spraying venom of Jörmungandr. The titanic crash of the Midgard Serpent is the deathblow to Asgard itself, and massive chunks of the earth fall away.

The head of the Midgard Serpent crashes near the Scions. Thor staggers toward them, covered in blood and venom. He doesn't have his hammer. Thor shouts, "I did it! I killed the Midgard Serpent!" before dropping dead. A crack opens beneath him, and he is gone—but as he becomes The Storm, he tears apart the rest of the ground in the area.

As the earth breaks apart, the Scions notice Surtr and his personal guard of fire giants and creatures of Muspelheim rushing toward the head and clambering onto Jörmungandr's body. Another God—Vidar, for instance—reminds the Scions that someone needs to retrieve Thor's hammer from Jörmungandr's corpse to fulfill all the prophecies of Ragnarök.

The Scions can reach the Midgard Serpent's body and climb aboard if they don't waste time doing anything else. Just as they reach it, the whole of Asgard crumbles, leaving the Scions standing on Jörmungandr as it falls down Yggdrasil. If the Scions *don't* make it to Jörmungandr, they stand on a chunk of earth the size of a football field as it separates from the rest of the crumbling plain and plummets toward Midgard, miles below. As everything

falls, a coil of Jörmungandr's body twists near their disintegrating platform, so the characters can jump across.

FALLING

The Scions have two options. They can try to secure Thor's hammer, Mjolnir, or they can try to weaken Surtr's forces before they hit Midgard. Surtr is too far away to confront before Jörmungandr's corpse hits, but they could still put Surtr at a disadvantage for the final stage of the battle. Of course, having one of the Scions wield Mjolnir would likely tilt things in the Scions' favor as well. Either way, they face a battle like none ever witnessed.

The Scions stand on the body of the Midgard Serpent as it falls a dozen miles to the surface of Midgard. Around them tumble huge chunks of Asgardian terrain, some of it still covered in turf or woodland. Occasionally, a piece of ground spins and hits another, sending them both flying. Lightning flashes all around them, and ribbons of fire streak down from the smoky clouds above. The entire top of Yggdrasil burns, coating the heavens in smoke and soot. Like a baleful eye, the disk of Muspel, the Greater Titan, burns in the heavens like a sun in the blackened sky. The trunk of the World Tree is charred and smoldering. Around them falls a haze of rain made up of blood and poison from the death-throes of Jörmungandr.

Two groups of two dozen Muspel giants stand on the body of Jörmungandr. One group, along with a dragon of Muspelheim, protects Surtr as he waits to make landfall and begin the destruction of Midgard. Another group, led by Surtr's bride-daughter, Sinmore, runs toward the Midgard Serpent's head to retrieve Thor's hammer. Surtr knows the prophecies concerning the rebirth of the World, and while he doesn't seek to subvert them as others have, he's certainly not going to make it easy on the Scions by letting them take Mjolnir for themselves.

Muspel giants appear in **Scion: Demigod**, pages 272–273. Each unit has a sergeant of Legend 7; the normal troops are Legend 6. For Sinmore's traits, see **Scion: God**, pages 324-325. As described on page 228 of **Scion: God**, the dragon of Muspelheim that circles the fray uses the traits of a xiuhcoatl (see **Scion: Demigod**, pp. 235–236) but looks like a classic, bat-winged European dragon. Its heart provides Fire Immunity, which may come in handy if the Scions do not already have this Boon before they battle Surtr. For Storytellers who wish to emphasize **Scion**'s mix of old and new, any or all of these forces might wield modern firearms of the type described in **Scion: God** on page 199, or the same heavy weapons described in "Ice Station Troll Queen" (see p. 212).

Thor's hammer lies in the center of a vast crater in the top of Jörmungandr's crushed skull. Pools of poison smoke within the crater of bare bone. Retrieving the hammer is not essential. After all, if the Scions survive combat with the giants and later Surtr, the hammer will be available somewhere on Earth. Using the hammer themselves or giving it to one of Thor's surviving children, however, might provide an edge during the rest of the battle.

For the final scene of Ragnarök, the Band faces its last major combatant: Surtr, avatar of Muspelheim, who is prophecied to end the World in fire.



PHYSICS? HA!

The laws of physics do not apply in this scene, as the Scions fall through metaphorical space from the Overworld to Midgard. After all, Asgard is only a few dozen miles above Midgard here, though if one were to stand on the World and look up, the sky would be empty… until Asgard falls.

Feel free to play up the idea that Jörmungandr's swiftly rotting body has its own kind of gravity. If someone leaves the body—say, thrown by an opponent—then they come unmoored from that local gravity and fall on their own, unless they encounter and grab one of the dozens of miles of the Midgard Serpent's trailing coils. A character can also leap off her part of the corpse and find herself free of that local gravity, falling alongside it until she finds a way to regain her place or land on another coil.

Alongside the body fall huge chunks of earth—the remains of Asgard—and globes of poison, some as small as raindrops and others as large as cars. It's entirely possible for Scions or their foes to throw opponents off Jörmungandr and into a piece of terrain or drop of poison.

An experienced skydiver can angle her body so the air resistance steers her one way or another. In case a Scion lacks Control (Parachute), substitute a (Wits + Athletics) roll, difficulty 3.

Scene

SURTR

MENTAL ••• PHYSICAL ••••• SOCIAL ••••

LANDFALL!

The body of the Midgard Serpent smashes into the heart of a major city on Midgard. Pick a large city that the players know something about if you want to add a personal touch to the scene. Most people know a bit about major cities such as New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, London or Paris, but you can use any major population center with enough noticeable landmarks to make the scene dramatic and effective.

Jörmungandr's body crushes a winding line of skyscrapers and other buildings as it falls. The rest of the city shudders from the shock wave, and the tallest buildings seem almost to wave in the air before they fall apart in slow motion.

The force of the impact knocks the Scions off their feet unless they have Boons or Knacks that prevent this occurrence. Nothing worse happens to them, as Jörmungandr's body acts like a shock absorber. Surtr and his remaining troops land a mile away. The Titan spends the time until the Scions reach him increasing in size until he stands a mile high, towering over the half-wrecked skyscrapers around him.

While Surtr increases in height, his honor guard of Muspel giants advances to discover whether the Scions survived. The same atmosphere that enabled Scions to absorb Legend easily during the battle in Asgard saturates the environment here too. This is the final showdown between the remaining Scions of the Aesir and Surtr himself, so the Scions can call upon Legend easily. (See the "Tapping Legend" sidebar on p. 217 for more information.)

When the Scions confront Surtr, he stands above the urban core. "See?" he shouts, as a drizzle of poison and blood rains down around him, hissing as it touches his red-hot skin. "The storm of blood and fire and poison will spread out from this city to engulf the entire World. Midgard dies, and then Muspel shall embrace the World in fire, completing the prophecies and settling all scores!" As if in response to Surtr's statement, the fiery sphere of Muspel shines in the sky, a second sun spitting streamers of flame. Fimbulvetr is over. The entire World rapidly becomes warm, then hot. Where a tendril of fire from Muspelheim touches, the land burns and the sea boils. A few wisps of flame descend on the city to set whole neighborhoods burning.

Once again, the Scions have many options here. The first, and most obvious, option is simply to duke it out with Surtr. While he is a powerful being, the Scions are Gods of the Aesir in a Legend-rich environment. They might also have access to such items as Thor's hammer or the sword Mistletoe. In a pinch, they might have the aid of other surviving Aesir should it seem that they need assistance.

SCORCHED EARTH

If the Band fights Surtr, the result is the last battle that Midgard might ever see: Surtr versus the Scions, a mile-high Titan against a handful of Gods in the middle of one of Earth's greatest cities. Meanwhile, arcs of flame spit out from an ever-closer Muspelheim and a rain of poison spreads out from the city to destroy the World. The Scions have time to save much of Midgard, however, if they can defeat the Titan.

In this brawl for it all, Scions can go nuts. Use local monuments as melee weapons; hurl cars like so many pebbles; rip apart skyscrapers for girders to hurl like javelins. Once again, if Surtr comes near death and has the opportunity, he summons up an avatar expression and destroys himself, enabling Muspelheim itself to battle the Scions in the form of The Devourer.

When this happens, the Scions dare not leave Muspelheim with a miscellaneous action free in which it does not suffer attack. Surtr's traits and health levels do not change when he becomes Muspelheim, but given a miscellaneous action free, Muspelheim sends waves of flame rippling across the globe, snuffing out all life. If this occurs, see "What if Muspelheim Wins?"

Killing the Titan before he can destroy Midgard could have various World-changing effects. For instance:

• **Surtr's death effectively lobotomizes Muspelheim.** The Greater Titan becomes a second sun in the heavens, devoid of its former wicked purpose and now heating the ruined and devastated Earth. This radically changes Earth's climate—comparable to the end of the Ice Age brought about by Ymir's death—and plays havoc with planetary orbits but does not destroy Midgard. If you make the sun and Muspelheim a close binary, Mercury and Venus go away but Earth's orbit remains stable. If you place Muspelheim in the outer solar system, at least one of the outer planets goes away but the inner planets remain stable if this second sun is remote enough. Or just throw out the laws of physics and place Muspelheim where you like!

• **Muspelheim vanishes in a great explosion that starts fires over half the World but leaves the planet more or less intact.** The nature and place of fire has fundamentally changed, though, in ways the Scions must discover for themselves.

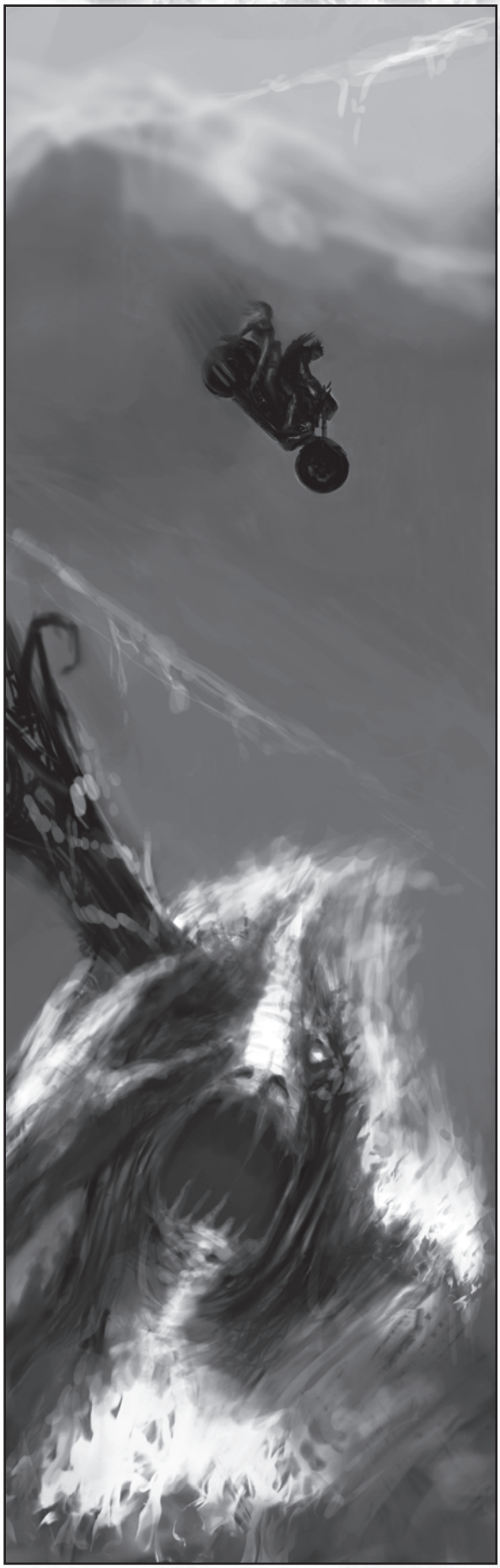
Pick an ending that seems most epic and satisfying for yourself, your players and their characters. They've earned it.

PARLEY!

Another alternative is to force Surtr into parleying, which he is surprisingly willing to do. He can afford to let these little Scions speak while he awaits the arrival of his master. What's a few minutes more as the World dies under ribbons of flame and rains of poison?

Most threats merely amuse the Titan. While Surtr's Zealotry is not the highest, he does not fear dissolving himself back into Muspelheim to complete the World's destruction. His Ambition is very strong, though, and the prophecies of Ragnarök do not say whether the Titan survives. The Scions must present some highly plausible threat of swift extinction to force a negotiation... or they must play on another Dark Virtue, such as Surtr's desire to continue as Muspelheim's ruling avatar. And so, Surtr hears the Scions out if they offer some alternative to fighting to the bitter end.

If the Scions ask for Surtr to sever Midgard from the rest of the cosmos before the rain of poison spreads past the limits of this city, he points out that the Scions are resisting the cycle of Fate. The World is *supposed* to perish. Already, it has seen war, the Great Winter and soon, the poisonous rain of Jörmungandr's venomous blood. Is this what they want to save? The World will be a long time in rebuilding, Surtr thinks, and the effort might not be worth it. The Band must present *both* a plausible threat of total destruction and some way in which preserving the World serves Surtr's own desires if it hopes to counteract his zealous desire to fulfill his destiny.



Moreover, any negotiation with Surtr merely wins the Band a chance to speak to the super-consciousness of Muspelheim itself. The Greater Titan demands a permanent truce between the Gods and the Titans. No more warfare, no more binding or imprisonment. Muspelheim can fulfill its destiny and become the new sun in the heavens, the Gods oversee the rebirth of Asgard and the fate of the World, and neither side will raise hand against the other. They now stand stalemated: Muspelheim surely has the power to destroy the Earth and the nascent Aesir pantheon, whereas the Scions can still bring enough power to bear against the remains of Muspelheim's forces, including Surtr, to render such a victory bittersweet at best. Neither side is bound by Fate to destroy the other, so peace becomes possible, free of prophecies of mutual destruction.

If the Scions agree to this treaty, each side pronounces an oath. Muspelheim glows brightly, even as it pulls away from Midgard, its light burning the poison from the sky. The Greater Titan temporarily severs Midgard from the rest of the Nine Worlds to weather the coming destruction. Surtr clasps his great sword and a wave of fire immolates the city and the corpse of Jörmungandr, destroying all evidence of the epic events, including the ocean of poison spilling out of the monstrous corpse.

WHAT IF MUSPELHEIM WINS?

Scions killed in battle by Surtr are simply dead. If the Band cannot defeat Surtr, he becomes The Devourer and channels the entire power of Muspelheim through his form. The Scions are tossed about in the firestorm that signals the death of the World. This environmental effect deals 24L/action, Trauma 8. It lasts until every Scion is at least unconscious.

MISTLETOE

If the Scions went through "Highway to Hel," they have a weapon that Surtr fears: Mistletoe, the sword that slew a God twice. Surtr senses that this weapon bears a fate to slay entities of ultimate power, and it could end him. Mistletoe and Mjolnir, both held by the Band, present a danger great enough to convince Surtr to at least consider a parley.

If the Band succeeded in returning Baldur from the dead, Mistletoe gains an even greater power: to hold its victim in a state between life and death, with resolution at the wielder's whim. "Slain" by Mistletoe, Surtr offers any oath to preserve his existence. Muspelheim goes along to prevent the change to its fundamental nature that would result from the death of an avatar.

Believe it or not, Muspelheim's destruction of the World does not have to result in the Scions' deaths. Remember that this is the appointed end of Midgard, Asgard and the cosmos as the Scions know it. Muspelheim destroys the World in order to create a new World suitable for a new golden age. In this way, satisfied with the destruction of the old Gods who dared to bind it, Muspelheim can withdraw back into the Overworld, its revenge complete.

EPILOGUE: NEW WORLDS

Scions who can survive the holocaust awaken under the golden sun in Idavoll, next to the other Scions. If they do not, then they have the dubious honor of being the last Gods to fall.

If you want to save defeated Scions, you might decide that no matter the fate of Asgard and Midgard, the Scions survive to bear witness to the dawning of a new World. Perhaps Baldur protects them, either emerging from the burning Underworld or as one of the last survivors of Ragnarök. Use this option carefully, though. Some players might not want their Scions to survive unless it is on their own merits.

Scions who survive the final battle wake up on the Plain of Idavoll alongside Magni and Modi, possibly Thrud as well, and Vidar. If the Scions did well in lessening the effects of Ragnarök, several lesser Vanir and Aesir are also present, along with any of the older Gods whose fates they averted. No trace of battle mars this green and gorgeous field. The only sign that the Gods ever feasted here are a few golden chess-pieces.

If Midgard has fallen, then the sun that lights the sky shines gold and red. It is Muspelheim, for now at peace with the cosmos and its hatred quenched by the bloodshed of Ragnarök. If the Band stopped Muspelheim, the sun looks much the same as it used to. Although Idavoll is green and bright, much of Midgard is likely devastated by the events leading up to Ragnarök.

Baldur and Hod return from the dead (if they were still dead, that is) to Idavoll to discuss the future with the Scions. Baldur informs the Scion who agreed to take Hel's place (if any did) that his new home in Helheim is complete, where the rafters are made of serpents and drip venom all day on the unworthy dead. If the Scion who agreed to this deal fell in place of another God, then that God learns that by trading fates, he inherited the Scion's oath-sworn place.

Eliudnir is not the only home that awaits these remaining Aesir. Gimle, Brimir and Sindri await the new Gods to take residence in, shining and filled with food and drink. If the Band saved Midgard, then any mortal loved ones of the Scions arrive, escorted by other young Scions and Gods who survived the end battle.

THE FUTURE

All in this golden age is not perfect, or at least not permanently so.

Whether or not the Band made a deal with the giants, it could happen that Utgard-Loki eventually reneges and renews hostilities, or some other giant could supplant him and begin the conflict anew. This isn't likely soon. For a long while, the remaining jotun leaders are tired of fighting. Still, war bands of renegade giants might have survived Ragnarök to prey on the people of Midgard.

If the Band didn't kill her in her lab or in Idavoll, Angrboda still lives. If the Band didn't see a corpse and know it was her, she lives, hidden for now in some realm cut off from Muspelheim's destruction, such as Alfheim. She is one of the most powerful beings to survive Ragnarök, and she still dreams of propagating a new race of monsters. In addition, she surely holds a grudge against the Scions for their actions against her. Angrboda could become a major threat in the future, if you wish it so. It is also possible that her army of monsters still roams Midgard, either as a marauding horde spreading out from Greenland or simply as small pockets of beasts to be dealt with.

The peace between Muspelheim and the new Gods lasts only as long as both sides wish it. If the Greater Titan survives, Muspelheim feels content to light the Nine Worlds. Its surviving components, however, might hold grudges. Surtr himself abides by his master's wishes, but nonetheless broods in his fortress. His giants man the factories, churning out war-machines and weapons in preparation for the day when either the Gods go back on their word or Muspelheim decides the time for peace has ended. Surtr knows that such a day must come (he is sure of it), and he can be patient. If Muspelheim perished with Surtr in the last battle, then either the Titan becomes a mindless sun in the heavens or some other force rises up to take its place.

There's also the problem of Midgard. If it was destroyed in Ragnarök, then a new World dawns. Men and women form the first hunter-gatherer societies. They need someone to guide them, give them laws and shape their future. They need protection from the elements and from Fate. In short, they need Gods.

If Midgard survived Muspelheim, the old World needs the Aesir even more. People chalk up the destruction of the major metropolis to a limited nuclear strike by parties unknown. This sobers the governments of the World, to the extent that they still exist and wield any real power. Their leaders are willing to discuss peace. It helps that the end of Fimbulvetr also means the end of the Dark Virtues tainting mortal souls. The great winter and Surtr's fires both ended and the World's weather returns to normal. Jörmungandr's toxic blood slowly washes away, though large areas remain barren for decades to come. But still, the World was on the edge of destruction. The people of the World are scared, and scared people do dangerous things. If the Scions bothered to save Midgard, they must take responsibility for its continued survival.

The World's creatures of Legend also survive. The dwarves prefer to keep to themselves, as always, but the alfar, nymphs and other spirits and lesser immortals might seek to reclaim their ancient power over weak and frightened mortals. The Scions must decide whether or not to let them.

The Norns also survived, and while the World Tree suffered great damage, Yggdrasil survives as well. The Norns rebuild their looms by the restored Well or Urd and watch the patterns of Fate with the same disinterest as always. Mimir, however, died in the final holocaust—gratefully—and his end also ends the cage of Fate around the Aesir... unless the survivors decide to repeat the mistakes of their forebears.

Regardless of how Ragnarök ended, it is now the Scions' place to decide the course of the Nine Worlds. They can sire children of their own, create a new pantheon, guide the survivors of Ragnarök, face old foes—and surely new ones—and create new legends as the myths of the old World fade away.

SCENE: THOUGHT AND MEMORY

MENTAL	—
PHYSICAL	—
SOCIAL	—

HINDRANCES	HELP
	Hugin and Munin

STs	Bring the Band together for warnings of Ragnarök.
PCs	Meet fellow Scions.

SCENE: GHOST TOWN

MENTAL	•
PHYSICAL	• • •
SOCIAL	•

HINDRANCES	HELP
Remote location, and where is everybody? A frost giant and some trolls.	Ola Kolfaxi Cybil Haldana

STs	Challenge the Band with trolls and a frost giant.
PCs	Rescue Cybil Haldana and Ola Kolfaxi.

SCENE: SMALL FAVORS

MENTAL	• •
PHYSICAL	• • •
SOCIAL	• •

HINDRANCES	HELP
Social difficulties with insular dwarfs of Bixby Knoll. More frost giants.	Ola Kolfaxi

STs	Elaborate on Forson and his plans.
PCs	Defeat some more giants; acquire aid and advice to prepare for Ragnarök.

SCENE: ILL TIMING

MENTAL	• •
PHYSICAL	—
SOCIAL	—

HINDRANCES	HELP
Lack of knowledge about Cybil.	The wise dwarf Radsvid diagnoses Cybil's illness.

STs	Introduce complication with Cybil's supernatural illness.
PCs	Try to determine how to aid Cybil.

SCENE: ON THE ROAD AGAIN

MENTAL ••
PHYSICAL —
SOCIAL •••

HINDRANCES	HELP
Difficulties of social tasks rise as scene progresses.	Cybil Haldana

STs	Confront Band with looming disintegration of mortal society.
PCs	Get to Colorado in an increasingly aggravating World.

SCENE: HIDE AND SEEK

MENTAL •••
PHYSICAL •/••••
SOCIAL •••

HINDRANCES	HELP
Gunnar Forson, giant and CEO of Fornjót Power Associates. Klaus, his thrall. The best security system money can buy.	Gunnar doesn't want to reveal he's a giant.

STs	Challenge the Band with illusions and tricks.
PCs	Confront the giant Gunnar Forson, and force him to surrender the Heart of Winter.

SCENE: ONE OF US!

MENTAL ••
PHYSICAL ••
SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES	HELP
Learning how to cure Cybil. Environmental hazard from the Heart of Winter.	Radsvid supplies the needed spell.

STs	Challenge Band to choose between a relic and a person; bind Cybil to the Band.
PCs	Cure Cybil using the Heart of Winter.

SCENE: SEEING CLEARLY

MENTAL ••
PHYSICAL •
SOCIAL ••

HINDRANCES	HELP
Riddles of the witch.	Riddles of the witch.

STs	Challenge the Band with cryptic advice from Cybil's unhelpful mother, the seeress Gróa.
PCs	Learn how to escape Midgard before Fimbulvetr begins.

SCENE: ULLER'S PATH

MENTAL —
PHYSICAL •••
SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES	HELP
Unconventional fighting on skis. A whole lot of fenrir.	

STs	Epic battle with a tight time limit.
PCs	Evade the fenrir and make it to Methuselah, a natural Touchstone, without getting killed.

SCENE: RAGNA-ROCK

MENTAL •••
PHYSICAL •••
SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES	HELP
Still more fenrir. Puzzle of Methuselah.	Cybil Haldana.

STs	DESTROY THE WORLD!
PCs	Figure out how to escape using Methuselah, before the fenrir or the meteor impact kills them all.

SCENE: THE MINES OF CENTRALIA

MENTAL ••
PHYSICAL ••••
SOCIAL ••

HINDRANCES

A whole bunch of fire giant thugs.

Blárvaldr the svartalf wants to build his infernal machine.

Blárvaldr's coal-hound "pets."

HELP

Refugees tell the Band about the problem and give clues to what's going on.

Kobolds who may act as guides and don't want to fight.

STs	Introduce the characters to their demigod powers. Show how the World's falling apart.
PCs	The Titans' minions grow bold. Smack 'em down!

SCENE: ASHES AND GOLD

MENTAL ••
PHYSICAL ••••
SOCIAL •/••••

HINDRANCES

Hod is the most dangerous foe the Band has yet faced.

Mr. Gold spoils attempts at peaceful resolution.

The mystery of what Hod attempted.

Fate wants Hod dead.

HELP

Loki (as Hugin) tells where to find Hod.

Fate wants Hod dead.

STs	Introduce the death of Baldur; set the Band up to kill Hod.
PCs	Avenge Baldur's death.

SCENE: GONE A-VIKING

MENTAL •
PHYSICAL ••
SOCIAL ••

HINDRANCES

The Golds don't want the Scions at their farm.

Social collapse interferes with reaching the North Sea.

HELP

Odin explains what Hod tried to do and tells how to reach Helheim.

STs	Send the Band to the next stage of the story.
PCs	Embark on a quest; but finding transportation is a problem.

SCENE: THE NORTH SEA CONFLICT

MENTAL • • •
PHYSICAL • • • •
SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES

Perpetual storm makes travel difficult and dangerous.

The Band must avoid hostile navies.

Sleipner Platform is warded against Psychopomp Boons.

HELP

Bad weather hides the Band from naval patrols.

STs	Present dual challenges of natural and military hazards.
PCs	Get through the storm without being wrecked or shot.

SCENE: NAVAL INTELLIGENCE

MENTAL • •
PHYSICAL • • • •
SOCIAL • • • •

HINDRANCES

Two trigger-happy militaries, about to go nuclear.

Dark Virtues driving people insane.

Titan agents pushing the conflict.

HELP

The Fatebinding of mortals overcomes their Dark Virtues.

STs	Challenge the Scions with a chance to shape World events.
PCs	Get the two navies to stand down, if only to get past them.

SCENE: ODIN'S STEED

MENTAL • •
PHYSICAL • • • •
SOCIAL • •

HINDRANCES

Sleipner is hidden by illusion.

A garrison of frost giants, elder jotnar and thralls.

Fjolvor seeks personal revenge on the Band.

HELP

Sleipner has diving gear.

Hrimgrimnir has a rather awful price for cooperation.

STs	A final challenge before the Band leaves Midgard.
PCs	Find a way past the giants and into Helheim.

SCENE: BRIDGE OF DEATH

MENTAL —
PHYSICAL •••••
SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES

Modgud is a tough foe, whom one Scion must fight alone.

Holmganga rules greatly limit the character's options.

HELP

Holmganga is a duel, not a fight to the death.

STs	Set the Band to a test of courage and honor.
PCs	Get past Modgud.

SCENE: QUEEN OF PAIN

MENTAL ••
PHYSICAL —
SOCIAL •••

HINDRANCES

Hidden emotions and obsessions.

Hel could kill the entire Band if the characters offend her.

HELP

Hel honestly explains the fateful requirements for resurrecting a God.

STs	Present a chance for social disaster; lay out how Baldur can live again.
PCs	Learn how Baldur can live again and why the methods are necessary.

SCENE: WERGILD

MENTAL ••
PHYSICAL ••••
SOCIAL •••

HINDRANCES

An angry and deluded Nidhogg and its lesser spawn.

Nanna/Thokk doesn't want Baldur resurrected.

HELP

Hod wants to give his life for Baldur's.

STs	Give the Band a chance to arrange a glorious, tragic-heroic finale.
PCs	Get Hod to Eliudnir alive.

SCENE: THOKK

MENTAL ••
PHYSICAL ••••
SOCIAL •••

HINDRANCES

Nanna/Thokk doesn't want Baldur resurrected.

HELP

Divine magic ensures a meeting with Nanna/Thokk.

STs	Give the Band a chance to arrange a glorious, tragic-heroic finale.
PCs	Persuade everyone in the Nine Worlds to weep for Baldur; prevent Thokk from saying the words that doom Baldur to stay dead.

SCENE: PRELUDE TO WAR

MENTAL ••
PHYSICAL —
SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES
Only the slightly ambiguous phrasing of the Norns.

HELP

STs	Plant the idea that Odin is doomed but other Aesir might not be.
PCs	Learn that this is it—the great battle is almost at hand.

SCENE: I DON'T WANT A DOG IN THIS FIGHT

MENTAL —
PHYSICAL —
SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES
Odin isn't telling everything.

HELP
Odin supplies guidance to Fenris' cave.

STs	Exposition; send the Band on a new mission.
PCs	Start on a new mission to change the course of Ragnarök.

SCENE: ALL THE BETTER TO EAT YOU WITH

MENTAL •••
PHYSICAL •
SOCIAL •••••

HINDRANCES
Even bound, Fenris is extremely dangerous.

Loki's spies.

HELP
Fenris wants freedom more than revenge on the Aesir.

STs	Point the Scions toward various forces who may reveal Odin's relation with Ragnarök.
PCs	Make a deal with Fenris.

SCENE: TOIL AND TROUBLE

MENTAL ••••
PHYSICAL —
SOCIAL •••••

HINDRANCES
The jarnvidjur don't want to let a creature such as the Fenris Wolf dwell among them.

HELP
The jarnvidjur realize Angrboda can spawn even worse horrors than Fenris.

The troll-wives can share their knowledge of Fate and the Doom of the Gods, if asked.

STs	The Scions receive a chance to preemptively foil a great threat.
PCs	Make a deal with the troll-wives.

SCENE: MISSION IMPROBABLE

MENTAL	••••
PHYSICAL	•••••
SOCIAL	••••

HINDRANCES

Gastropnir is supposedly impregnable.

A small army of elder jotnar.

Loki.

HELP

Utgard-Loki doesn't want to fight. At all.

STs	Show that many of the forces trapped into Ragnarök by Fate have little or no interest in it, and that some events need not come to pass.
PCs	Make a deal with Utgard-Loki.

SCENE: ICE STATION TROLL QUEEN

MENTAL	•••
PHYSICAL	•••••
SOCIAL	•••

HINDRANCES

A monstrous army of horrible creatures as well as Angrboda herself.

HELP

Access to high explosives if the Scions do a bit of searching. Oh, and a nuclear reactor.

STs	Show that other forces unknown to the old legends might be at work; give the characters a huge physical challenge… and a chance to gain their own nemesis for Ragnarök.
PCs	Fulfill their deals and KILL MONSTERS!

SCENE: NOW ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS SURVIVE RAGNAROK

MENTAL	••
PHYSICAL	—
SOCIAL	••

HINDRANCES

Fenris wants an answer before he sets aside his main grudge.

HELP

STs	Show that through thoughtful negotiation and selective violence, the Band can alter Ragnarök.
PCs	Fulfill all deals and see if Fenris fulfills his.

SCENE: THE FEAST

MENTAL	••••
PHYSICAL	•
SOCIAL	•••••

HINDRANCES

Most Gods accept their Fates.

Odin is setting up a Scion to die for him.

Loki tries to ruin the feast.

HELP

Most Gods appreciate what the Band has done for them.

STs	The Scions need a shot at convincing the Gods to buck the will of Fate.
PCs	A chance for the Scions to rest, consult the other Gods and say farewell to their parents.

SCENE: HEL AND GONE

MENTAL	•••
PHYSICAL	••••
SOCIAL	••••

HINDRANCES

Hel is protected by Nidhogg and an army of the dead.

Hel is a powerful foe in her own right, and seeks guarantees as to her future.

HELP

If properly persuaded, Hel adds her forces to those of Asgard.

Hel spots any talisman Odin intends to use for his body-switching spell.

STs	Give the Band a final chance to alter events before the last battle, through a difficult choice.
PCs	Recruit additional forces for Ragnarök.

SCENE: THE END OF THE GODS

MENTAL	•
PHYSICAL	•••••
SOCIAL	•

HINDRANCES

Armies of giants, monsters and the dead.

Trying to avert one God's death could result in a Scion's death.

HELP

Other Gods can help overmatched Scions.

If the Scions made deals with Utgard-Loki and the Fenris Wolf, the forces of the enemy are diminished.

STs	Give the characters as cool and as epic a battle as possible, in which they show off their powers and abilities.
PCs	Save other Aesir and defeat the savage hordes.

SCENE: ALL-FATHER'S FALL

MENTAL	•••
PHYSICAL	•••••
SOCIAL	•••••

HINDRANCES

Odin is determined to live at all costs.

Hati and Skoll replace the Fenris Wolf.

HELP

Odin dares not let the other Gods know what he did.

STs	Show the full magnitude of Odin's treachery, with one chance to avert it.
PCs	Make sure one God's death happens as Fated.

SCENE: THE DESTRUCTION OF ASGARD

MENTAL	–
PHYSICAL	••••
SOCIAL	–

HINDRANCES

Asgard's falling apart!

Sinmore and a platoon of Muspel giants

HELP

Other Gods can remind the Scions to retrieve Thor's hammer from the body of Jörmungandr.

STs	Set the epic action going to 11, with the destruction of Asgard, Yggdrasil's smoldering husk and a fight on the plummeting body of Jörmungandr.
PCs	Be the last Gods standing.

SCENE: SURTR

MENTAL	•••
PHYSICAL	•••••
SOCIAL	••••

HINDRANCES

Surtr and Muspelheim itself

HELP

If the Scions start losing very badly, surviving Aesir may show up to aid them.

STs	Present the Scions with ultimate responsibility for the Fate of reality itself.
PCs	Assume ultimate, divine responsibility for the Worlds, whether through battle or treaty.

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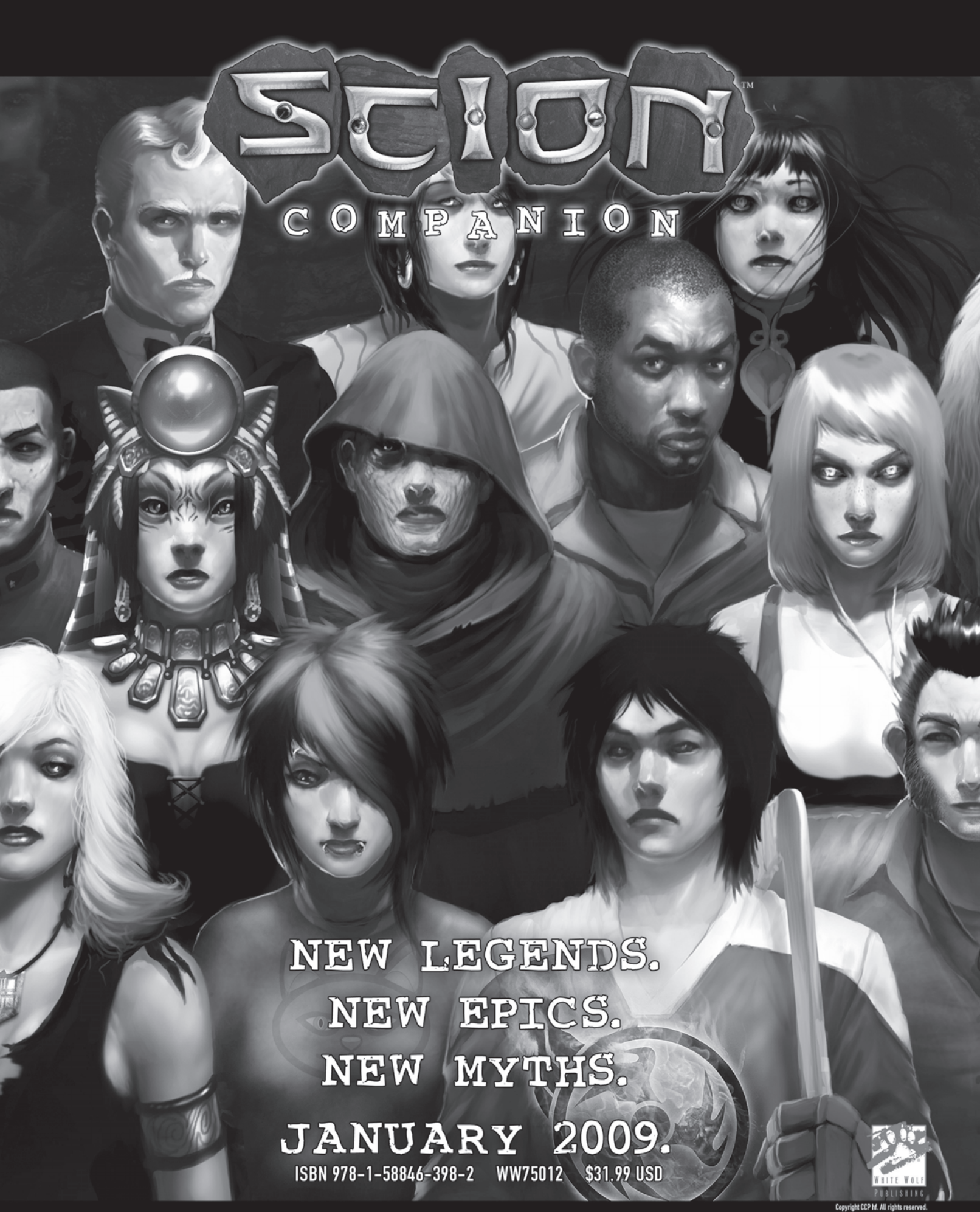
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