

UNDER THE TEMPLE OF UTHIN



THE ICE KINGDOMS

ROLE PLAYING ADVENTURES IN THE FROZEN NORTH

by Ryan Lynn

MAD MARTIAN GAMES PRESENTS
UNDER THE TEMPLE OF
UTHIN



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THE STORY SO FAR

Under the Temple of Uthin is a story of revenge and salvation. It all began when a Huirdu family of some esteem, well respected as advisors and seers in the houses of the lords and jarls in Thron, welcomed home their firstborn child, a girl named Ysja. When the family took Ysja to the local Temple of Uthin to be seen by the chief Godi and have her doomed and fortune divined, the head priest, Vadid, declared the child cursed and tainted by the touch of Pohjola. He demanded the child be cast outside into the wildlands and let the beasts of Erdegard finish the child before she could rain curses upon the people of Thron. Naturally the parents refused, and their good friend and ally, Thane Huldur of Thron, declared it forbidden that any shall raise hand against the family or child.

And thus the child lived in the same court as the future rulers of the people of Thron. But the rumors and gossip of the cursed child took its toll on her mother who took her own life before the girl reach five winters. The father began to lose the trust and confidence in his abilities as an advisor and seer for the court, his wealth evaporated leaving him destitute until he was so desperate for money that he resorted to theft. This crime led to his execution. Ysja became a ward of the court of Thane Huldur. When she was in her teens she and the Thane's eldest son, Egil, fell madly in love with one another and soon she was with child of her own. Enraged Thane Huldur finally cast the Ysja out of Thron and forbade her to return.

It was then that she learned that Vadid was the one responsible for her misfortunes and she vowed vengeance on the aged priest. She sought out powers that rivaled that of the priest of Uthin and made a pact with the Hag Mothers of the Pohjola. Using her newfound magicks she tricked Vadid into participating in a ritual that would bind a powerful fiend to the soul of her son and through her demon spawn child she would be able to exact her revenge against Vadid, the heirs of Thane Huldur, the people of Thron, and the Temple of Uthin. For only beneath the Temple of Uthin can the demon be released from her son's soul and then it will be powerful enough to destroy the sacred shrine of the god who doomed her.

Over the years Ysja has set up her revenge. She has created allies in the men of Thane Rollo of Tenebrous and bribed the greedy Thane Ornaulf with opportunity to take

over the trade routes of Thron and with the temptation of expanding his Thanedom to include the court of Thron. And now that she has learned of the death of Thane Huldur of Thron she has an opening to return to Thron and reunite with her beloved Egil, now Thane of Thron. But even as she persuades her way back into power within the court of Thron, she begins to turn Thane Egil's brother, Eerikki, against him.

Her plan to return and unleash her son's demon upon Thron were near complete when the one thing she did not expect happened.

Vadid was still alive, in Thron, still the high Godi and guardian of her son.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

The following stats are for the primary NPCs of the adventure. These characters appear in more than one encounter or scene and instead of repeating their stats every time they are located here for ease of use. These are also the characters that are most likely to be used in any special encounters the GM may have to improvise or add to suit the adventure and actions of the players.

LADY YSJA FREYDOTTIR

Lady Ysja Freydottir: AC 0 (*bracers of defense AC 3*), **Move** 12, **HD** 3d8 + 4d4 (23 hit points), **THACO** 18*, **Attack** 1 dagger (1d4), **Size** M, **Morale** 20, **XP** 5,000: 3rd level Pohjolan-touched Huirdu cleric, 7th level illusionist, **Ability Scores** Strength 7, Dexterity 17, Constitution 7, Intelligence 17, Wisdom 15, Charisma 17.

Illusionist Spells :

1st level: *change self, find familiar, friends, phantasmal force*

2nd level: *alter self, improved phantasmal force, ESP*

3rd level: *spectral force, vampiric touch*

4th level: *dimension door*

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Cleric Spells :

1st level: *faerie fire, sanctuary*

2nd level: *augury*

Other Treasure: *ring of misdirection, 2 scrolls of animate dead, staff of command*

Note: Ysja is a sorcerer (see *Ice Kingdoms Campaign Setting* page 54) meaning her clerical levels and abilities are in liege with dark powers that have in turn trained her to use arcane magic. Her arcane spells are supported, fueled, and strengthened by the "divine" powers of Pohjola. Therefore her spells are cast as if her spellcaster levels were combined (i.e. her spells are cast at up to the 10th level of ability). Her number of spells is still dictated by her levels of cleric and illusionist respectfully, modified by her intelligence and wisdom.

Lady Ysja Freydottir was born a Pohjolan touched Huirdu and suffered for years because of her affliction. In hopes of gaining revenge on the mistreatment she and her family suffered at the hands of the rulers of Thron she made a pact with a coven of hags and has become a hag-witch in order to corrupt as many Thanic souls as possible.

As a diabolic seductress, she can be stunningly beautiful and knows it. However, she knows that being too beautiful and acting vain and superior can turn off many potential victims, whereas acting innocent and nice will endear her to most, so that is the role she plays. Anya is clueless about Lady Ysja's true identity.

Tactics: If at any point, she sees an opportunity to "push" a PC into an evil act (in a way that wouldn't blow her cover, of course), Ysja will attempt to do so. That is her job, after all, and she loves her job.

Ysja does not want to fight PCs, and *should be a noncombatant* for this adventure. She vastly prefers to dimension door away if discovered (though she might toy with the PCs a bit first). She will *never* attack first, though if attacked she will reciprocate. If it does come to a fight, she prefers to get others to do her fighting for her, and will never fight to the death, vastly preferring to dimension door away.

Remember that Ysja will keep her ruse active at all times, and that any divinatory spells or abilities focused on her will register as if they were focused on Anya (as per the *misdirection* spell) because of her *ring of misdirection*.

Her expertise at telling enough of the truth to foil most *discern lies* and *zone of truth* spells, and her constant *disguise self* and *misdirection* spells, the only things she really fears during this adventure are *antimagic*, *dispel magic* and the like.

ANYA

Anya: AC 10, Move 12, HD 1d6 (4 hit points), THACO 20, Attack 1 knife (1d3), Size M, Morale 10, XP 15: 1st level Einheriar bard, **Special** pick pockets 15%, detect noise 25%, climb walls 55%, read languages 10%.

Anya is the daughter of Ysja's mother's favorite servant. She has served Ysja her entire life. She doesn't know anything else. She trusts and believes in Ysja and firmly believes they are in Thron to reunite her with Egil and to bring Aaront back into her life. However Anya does suspect Ysja has had dealings with evil spirits and does plan to warn Vadid that Ysja needs another intervention before she can wed Egil. This is why Ysja has decided Anya has to die. She tries this first by sending the ruffians after her, and after that fails she will use her zombies during the outing with Thane Egil.

BROTE

Brote: AC 5 (chain mail), Move 12, HD 3d10 + 3 (24 hit points), THACO 18, Attack 3/2 two-handed hammer (1d10 + 3), Size M, Morale 12, XP 175: 3rd level Einheriar fighter, **Ability Scores** Strength 16, Constitution 15.

Note: Brote is specialized in the Two-Handed Hammer giving him +1 to hit and +2 to damage with 3/2 attacks. Brote's hammer uses the size, damage, and speed statistics of a Two-Handed Sword but the attack properties (such as modifiers vs armor) of a War Hammer. With all other weapons Brote has 1 attack. His strength gives him +1 to damage. All damage bonuses are calculated in his attack listed above.

Brote is the son of a ship builder from the docks of Thron. His family was instrumental in getting Ysja out of Thron years ago. Ysja has used and manipulated Brote for years. Brote is a giant of a man who speaks very little and when given a chance is a bully. He loves and lusts after Ysja and while he currently isn't under her magical influence, he has been in the past. Many times. He will do almost anything for her. Ysja has been manipulating him more lately, pushing him to a breaking point so she can use him in her revenge against Thron and Vadid, but she has decided he may be more useful as a distraction for the characters.



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THANE EGIL

Thane Egil: AC 4 (chain mail and medium shield), **Move** 12, **HD** 6d10 + 6 (44 hit points), **THACO** 15, **Attack** 1 long sword (1d8 + 1), **Size** M, **Morale** 17, **XP** 420: 6th level Einheriar fighter, **Ability Scores** Strength 16, Dexterity 9, Constitution 15, Intelligence 13, Wisdom 9, Charisma 14.

Thane Egil has the heart of a champion. His goals are on the right path to unite the southern Thanes into something more powerful and beneficial to the Thanelands as a whole. He only recently has become Thane of Thron after the death of his father. He truly loves Ysja and his son. He also trusts Vadid.

EERIKKI

Eerikki: AC 4 (chain mail and medium shield), **Move** 12, **HD** 5d10 (32 hit points), **THACO** 16, **Attack** 1 long sword (1d8), **Size** M, **Morale** 15, **XP** 175: 5th level Einheriar fighter, **Ability Scores** Strength 13, Intelligence 15, Charisma 15.

Eerikki is the younger brother of Thane Egil. He is Egil's trusted lieutenant and advisor. Ysja thinks she can use Eerikki against Egil but she is mistaken. Eerikki mistrusts Ysja and the characters in her employ and will do what he can to hinder them while in Thron. Though he will not take up arms against them unless they do so first.

GODI VADID

Godi Vadid: AC 10, **Move** 12, **HD** 8d8 – 8 (32 hit points), **THACO** 20*, **Attack** none, **Size** M, **Morale** 12, **XP** 1400: 8th level Einheriar cleric, **Ability Scores** Strength 7, Constitution 6, Wisdom 16, Charisma 15.

Cleric Spells :

- 1st level: 4 (+2)
- 2nd level: 3 (+2)
- 3rd level: 3
- 4th level: 2

Note: Vadid is a non combatant and generally a pacifist, which is rare for a priest of Uthin.



CHAPTER 1: THRON, CITY OF STONE

THRON, CITY OF STONE

Thron, The City of Stone, earns its nickname from the giant stone wall that protects the city. This mammoth wall is up to sixty feet thick in some areas with many portions having internal halls, gates, and towers of their own. This ancient wall was built centuries before the first Thane of Thron settled in the area. No one is exactly sure who built it. Some theorize it was the dwarves of old, but the physical aspects of the wall would suggest otherwise. The scholarly work of Carn Azotea suggests that simple aspects of the wall such as the size of the stone stairs or the interior rooms would suggest the original architects were not only much larger than dwarves, but larger than

even humans.

Thron itself sits on the Atalac Sea, with a rather large harbor and dock area unusual in the Ice Kingdoms. In fact, Thron is one of the few city states that has a thriving trade relationship with foreign nations and kingdoms, though this relationship is still small compared to the other major cities of Adierolf.

Two major roads lead to Thron and pass through the majority of the city before converging into the great Gales Market. The Gales Market is a large marketplace where merchants from all over the south-east of the Thanelands come to trade, sale and barter. It stands in the shadows of the Hall of Heim where the Thanes of Thron live and work.

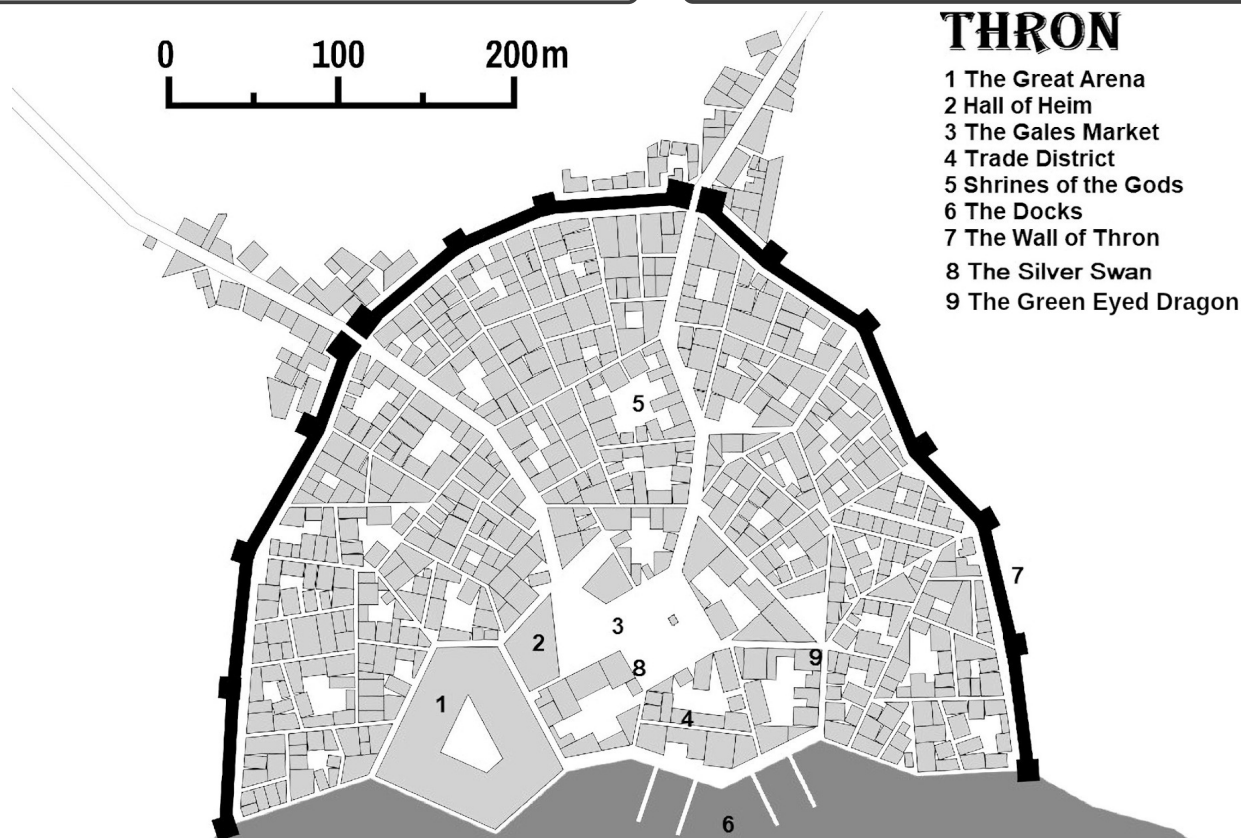


Figure 1.1: The City of Thron



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The Hall of Heim (Heimhall) is the second largest building in Thron, dwarfed by the Great Arena. The Great Arena is home of the famous Thron Gladiatorial Games. Located on the shores of the Atalac Sea the Great Arena hosts all sorts of spectacles ranging from animal fights, to executions, trials, sporting events, gladiatorial matches, and even naval warfare (though on a limited scale). Currently the famed gladiator lanista and doctor Heimnar Vossan and his legendary gladiator Uuk are fighting in the arena.

The trade district is near the Great Arena, just south of the Gales Market. Here merchants, adventurers, and explorers from the lands outside of the Ice Kingdoms are common. The trade district is where these travelers tend to stay and eat, allowing them to avoid the harshness of the Ice Kingdoms, at least to a certain degree. The trade district is also where the Thane of Thron houses the majority of his personal guards and soldiers.

Unlike many other major cities, Thron does not have a major temple to the gods, relying on the Temple of Uthin to the north for their "divine" needs, though the city does have a Shrine to Uthin and other gods, these are small and clustered together in one area. These shrines have

seen more use in the past seven years since the rock slide that buried a portion of the Temple of Uthin.

The rest of Thron is filled with curio shops (but no magic shops, outside a few charlatans and herbal medicine men), stores, a dozen or so inns, homes, and abandoned buildings. What little law enforcement there is comes from personal guards hired by local merchants, gladiator managers, and the Thane's own household guard. However there is a fairly strong, yet uncharacteristically tame, underworld of crime, centered mainly on smuggling, gambling, and illegal gladiators.

When the characters first arrive in Thron they will be at the docks (6) and move to meet Ysja at the Cooked Goose (4). Later the characters will accompany Ysja to meet Thane Egil at Heimhall (2).

If the PCs wish to Gather Information, use the following points. Information on Ysja is ONLY revealed if the PCs are specifically asking about her.

Use Table 1.1 below for characters to learn a little about what is going on in Thron while they are there, they can also learn some information about Ysja. The GM should use this information to concoct their own encounters to keep the characters busy during Encounter 7.

Table 1.1: Things to do in Thron

| Success Level | Information Learned |
|---------------|--|
| Failure | "Trade's going to suffer if those Fenrir get their war. One of those Fenrir lives near those ancient stones north of here. Hag lover I say, he deals with sorcery and magicks of the old ways." ◦ No information about Ysja. |
| Success | "I tell you, the gladiator pits are always looking for more action. Make you some money there, you will." ◦ Re: Ysja: "Name sounds familiar—one of the Thane's passing fancies?" |
| Succeed by 3 | "Way I heard it, some map was stolen from a dancer by some thieves at one of those run down brothels near the docks." ◦ Re: Ysja: "Ysja? Yeah, I know that name. Her father was a witch if I remember right." |
| Succeed by 6 | "I hear tell that some goblin called Sam is working for a ghost in a horn crown with a silver arm. He's sitting in some inn, as we speak!" ◦ Re: Ysja: "Seems to me she was the Thane's maid—no, her mother was the maid, or something. She moved off before she could get the former Thane's sons in too much trouble. Something about her father being cursed. Very tempting, that one. Very nice, but tempting." |
| Succeed by 10 | "I saw an old Fenrir priest. He was a very quiet type. Was nice enough though. Gave my wagon a blessing before we continued on our way. I asked him what his rush was and he said something about meeting Sam." ◦ Re: Ysja: "From what I've heard, that kid of hers would be the closest thing to an heir that the Thane's got. Not surprised she's come back." |

Other Information (use as needed)

"Rumor has it that one of the local lords has become a priest, and is going to donate his family lands to the Temple. I wouldn't want to stay here if that happens! Mark my words—if that happens, there's going to be trouble."

"I told my family that letting the Steward marry his daughter off to the Havildur, Son of Cnut, was a political thing. The old dog's positioning himself to be the next elder. Course he's going to need a new wife. I hear he had a visitor there yesterday that was pretty as sin. No idea what family she's from though."

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ENCOUNTER 1: RUFFIANS

The city state of Thron. It is the one of the few cities in the Thanegard, and as such reflects as much of the “southern lands” as it does Thanic culture. Thron may not be as majestic or fortified as the cities of the south. Factions are always jockeying for position in a game of war and politics. Perhaps that is why many have fled the village—then again, perhaps that is why you have come.

For now, daily life goes on—albeit without the sense of calm and order that characterized Thron in years past. Citizens go about their business with purpose, and with a wary eye turned to possible threats. The streets bustle with activity—porters bent under their loads, street vendors hawking their wares to passersby, entertainers seeking audiences, and many others, their purposes unknown.

Each of you find yourselves in the street near the marketplace—perhaps looking in a merchant’s shop, perhaps heading to a nearby temple, perhaps just strolling along.

The PCs have not come together as a group yet (unless they normally travel together).

Three rough-looking youths round a corner and run down the street, laughing at some unknown joke, quickly passing by where you stand. Hardly any of the other people on the street take any notice, and those that do disinterestedly return to what they were doing.

Shortly thereafter, from around the same corner, comes an slightly older woman, running as best she can in her simple blue dress, crying, “Stop! Thieves!” There doesn’t seem to be much intention among the bystanders to offer any help.

Tactics: The ruffians do not fight to the death, and in fact will attempt to flee when half of them have been hurt or when one drops.

The bystanders will flee the area at the outbreak of violence. Some Thron guards (known as the Steel Watch) will eventually arrive on scene. They will take the ruffians into custody if told what happened, though no promise will be made of how long they will remain there.

Ruffians: AC 9, Move 12, HD 1 (4 hit points), THACO 20, Attack 1 dagger (1d4), Size M, Morale 10, XP 15: 1st level Einheriar thieves, Ability Scores Dexterity 15, Special pick pockets 20%, open locks



15%, find/remove traps 10%, move stealthily 15%, hide in shadows 10%, detect noise 15%, climb walls 65%.

Steel Watchmen: AC 7 (leather armor and shield), Move 12, HD 1 (6 hit points), THACO 20, Attack 1 short sword (1d6) or 1 spear (1d6), Size M, Morale 10, XP 15: 1st level Einheriar fighters, Ability Scores Dexterity 15, Special pick pockets 20%, open locks 15%, find/remove traps 10%, move stealthily 15%, hide in shadows 10%, detect noise 15%, climb walls 65%.



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DEVELOPMENT

The lady in distress is Anya, the handmaiden of Lady Ysja Freydottir (detailed in **Encounter 2**, see page 4). Anya thanks the adventurers for helping her, and inquires if they might be willing to help her out even more.

Anya tells them that she has been tasked with hiring escorts for her mistress's business with the Court of Thron, and apparently did not choose well. The ruffians feigned interest then stole the pouch her mistress had entrusted to her (50 gold). Any other questions (like why they need escorts) need to be asked of the Lady herself.

If the PCs decline, they are done with the adventure. If they accept, Anya will tell them to meet her at the Cooked Goose Inn, and to dress well. If asked about this, she explains that it's a fancy place and the proprietor is rather picky. She can make wardrobe suggestions if need be.

When the PCs go to the Cooked Goose, proceed to **Encounter 2**.

ENCOUNTER 2: THE COOKED GOOSE

After a short, but interesting trip through the streets, you arrive at a finely appointed inn called The Cooked Goose.

Even from the street, the Cooked Goose has an aura of luxury about it. The stone and wood facade is meticulously clean; there are colorful draperies in the windows, and silver lanterns burn brightly on either side of the green-painted door. The place seems like an island of civility within the sea of disorder that Thron has become.

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A small plaque at one side of the door reads: "The Cooked Goose—No weapons, no magic, no disturbing your rest." Tacked under the plaque is a hand-written sign: "Guards on premises. Violence will not be tolerated," and, in a different hand, "No dwarves."

The following text assumes the PCs are "dressed nice", as Anya suggested. Adjust the text as needed if they disregarded her request (the innkeeper will ask they leave—he doesn't want ruffians and rabble-rousers in his establishment).

A bell rings as you pass through the heavy wooden door to find a sitting room full of overstuffed chairs and benches. A warm fire roars in the fireplace, and quiet music plays from a skald's lute.

There are very few people here at the moment, just an elderly couple seated by the fire, and a middle-aged man sitting near the manager's desk. All three glance over at you as you enter, then go back to whatever it was they

were doing.

A door behind the main desk opens, a portly human, pipe in hand, an embroidered vest over his white shirt, sits behind the desk.

"Greetings, friends," the innkeeper says, "Welcome to the Cooked Goose. My name is Balto Goose. How may we be of service?"

Balto, the proprietor of the Cooked Goose, tries to affect an upper-crust speaking manner—like pronouncing privacy with a short i—but will drop it if he gets excited. He is normally a gregarious (if fairly unctuous) innkeeper who is cognizant of how well being nice to the customer pays off.

However, he is very image conscious, and wants to protect the high-class reputation he has cultivated for the Goose. He is also very wary of adventurers and ruffians right now. They usually have a reputation of causing trouble.

As long as the PCs are dressed well and act in an appropriate manner, Balto will send a page up to Lady Freydottir's room for them. If not, he will ask them to leave so as not to "disturb his clientele". Shortly afterward, the page returns to lead them upstairs and into Freydottir's room.



"Lady Freydottir awaits you," says the page, who knocks, then departs.

The door opens, and Anya smiles when she sees you, but her companion, a large bearded man, merely scowls in your general direction. "Thank you for coming—come in. Come in." She steps aside to reveal a well-appointed but not overly plush room. "Lady Freydottir will be with you shortly." Shoe turns toward the bearded man "This is Lady Ysja's personal guard Brote." With that Brote turns and passes you and leaves the room.

Anya frowns but she offers you seats—though there are not enough for all of you—and wine. As she is passing out the drinks, the bedchamber door opens and a beautiful young woman steps into view.

Her auburn hair is fixed up—in a series of tangled, yet intricately woven braids, each adorned with beads, jewels, and metal trinkets, framing a perfect porcelain face highlighted by blazing green eyes. Her smile is demure but confident, accented by a small freckle at the left corner.

Still in the flush of youth, yet with the air of sophistication and experience, she cuts a stunning figure in a pine-green leather bodice, a creamy white silk peasant's head-dress, and a multi-colored skirt made in the latest style, but sewn from silk, satin and other rich fabrics. Bands of leather, silver, steel, and gold dangle from her arms and wrists, while what appears to be a sacred medicine



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bag hangs across her hips, complete with vials, flasks, pouches, and an ivory drinking horn.

Emeralds flash from her ears, gold from her neckline and fingers. Even the wooden staff she carries sports jeweled streamers and a leather bound crystal ball topper.

"Thank you for waiting, I am so sorry I wasn't ready to welcome you in myself. Anya has made you comfortable, yes?" She pauses, realizing she has nowhere for herself to sit.

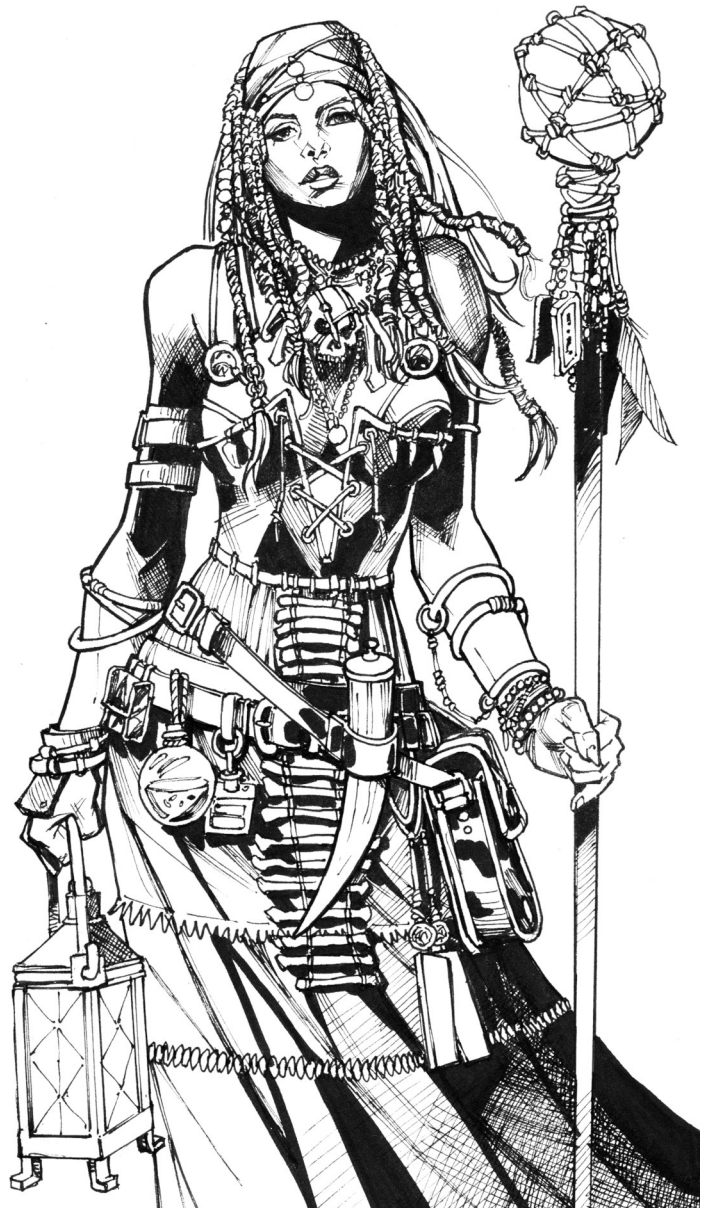
Whoever offers her their seat will receive a polite thank you, a shy smile and a nod. She will gracefully sit, and then continue. If no one offers her their seat, she will continue anyway (obviously without thanking someone), but will add some flourishes and drama to her tale, playing for sympathy in order to start the process of putting the PCs under her influence.

Below is some general information that will help the DM in conversing with the PCs:

- **What's the job?** Ysja wants escorts to take her to see the new Thane of Thron and serve as her guard for a few days until she feels safe.
- **How much?** The rate she offers to pay is (25 gold pieces each), but she will allow the PCs to barter her up to twice that. Have them make Charisma checks to succeed, but tell them they just made it regardless of how well they roll. She authorized Anya to hire escorts and gave her the base "up front half" already (the coins from Encounter 1), so the PCs may already have all or part of their "down payment".
- **Why does she need escorts?** She is returning to the Court of Thron after many years absence and she has many enemies still within the court. The situation here in Thron made her worried for the safety of her son Aaront as well, he is currently being tutored by the high Godi of the Court of Thron where he should be safe.
- **Who else is going?** Only Ysja, Anya, and her servant Brote.
- **Why is she going to the Court of Thron?** She is going to see the Thane Egil of Thron, an old acquaintance. (Any attempt at a discern truth will reveal she is "hiding" something. In actuality, she hopes the PCs will push for more information on the relationship.)
 - If pushed on the matter, she will admit their previous dalliance, and that Aaront is his son. She will admit that perhaps he will take in Aaront and herself. If pushed about that, she will admit to hoping that she will be able to marry the thane.
- **Does The Thane Egil of Thron know she is coming?** She hesitates, then admits that he does not. She hopes

that she will be able to get in to see him (or at least get him a message) once she is there. (She will play up her hope for sympathy.)

- **What is she doing in Arfhrdheim?** She was just passing through, but was worried about the unrest. She also stopped to pay respects to friends in the Thane-Hold.



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Ysja gets a room for herself and two for the party. She bids them wash up, and dispatches a messenger boy to the Thane's estate to inquire as to an invitation. One for dinner is sent for that evening. If the PCs wish to skip ahead to that, proceed with the read-aloud text below. If they wish to spend some time wandering the city, that is fine too.

ANYA AND BROTE

Anya and Brote have little to reveal other than that Lady Ysja is a fine employer, kind and generous. Anya has been with her for nearly a year, Brote was just hired recently (Discerning players can tell Brote is a bit smitten with the lady).

As far as Lady Ysja herself, listed below are some "highlights" of what PCs can learn. (This information can be learned from Anya or Brote. However Lady Ysja could also be the source of the information. She does not just blab everything out—she is, after all, a "lady"—PCs need to talk and "cajole" her.) If you need to ad-lib an answer to an unexpected question, but remember that Ysja is a gifted liar and both Brote and Anya are under her enthralling powers. (And a big part of that skill is using as much of the truth as you can without compromising what you want the listener to hear. The notes in parentheses can help the DM lie convincingly.)

- Freydottir grew up in Thron's court, and had a decent life. Her mother was a maid, her father an advisor. She played with the Thane's son, Egil, as a child. She and her family are members of the Huirdu clans.
- So when she was a teen she secured a position in Thron's court, performing tricks of divination and palmistry. Events led to happenings, and she and Egil, the Thane's, son had an affair—Aaront was the result. When the thane found out, rather than letting his son marry Ysja, he sent her away (with a large sum of money), making her promise to keep the affair (and child) a secret.
- At first she was very upset, but she came to accept the circumstances, and eventually she no longer felt the anger towards him. (The first part is absolutely true, as the "real" Ysja hated him. The second part is technically true, since the "new" Ysja has no feeling towards him whatsoever—beyond a potential tool for revenge.)
- Ysja will not reveal the true reasons she was exiled. When she was born the local Godi of Uthin, Vadid, read her doom and realized she was touched by the forces of the Pohjola and thus was tainted by the influence of the hag-mothers. This revelation resulted in her family losing status and them being reduced to servants within the houses they once ruled over. This loss of status led to her mother's suicide and her father's disgrace which sent him down the path of an outlaw

and eventually he was executed for murder. Ysja was only spared a worse fate because of her friendship with Egil.

- Since the affair has now become public knowledge, she has decided to return. She only wants the best for Aaront, even if that means marrying the man who sent her away once before. (The only somewhat false statement here is her desire for the best for Aaront. She couldn't care less for him as a person—however, as a pawn she can use for political and revenge plots, she does want him in the best position possible.)
- If asked about Aaront's inheritances and being a potential heir, she will pause to think about it, and then "realize" that he may very well be in such a position. She will not deny that becoming the wife of a Thane would be nice, but tries to play it off as not her main ambition. (True—the position itself means nothing to her; she wants to maneuver her position to extract the greatest revenge.)

ENCOUNTER 3: THE COURTING OF YSJA

That evening, you escort Ysja to Heimhall, one of Thane Egil's estates. Passing through the gate, into the garden, with the large manor house so brightly lit, servants coming and going, and a musician playing a lovely tune in a room somewhere nearby, it seems as if you have been invited to a party of some sort.

Ysja and you are led to a sitting room, where Thane Egil, a powerfully built Einheriar lord with red hair wearing a crown of steel, and his brother, Eerikki, who looks like a slimmer version of his brother, sit, drinking a dark red wine at a table set for three. They are joined by a third man, older than the brothers by at least twenty years. He appears to be a priest of Uthin and his grey beard and bright eyes contrast each other like the sun and moon, but both give him an air of authority. At your arrival, they rise and greet Ysja, bowing slightly. There are hugs and polite kisses, and you suddenly feel a bit out of place.

PCs can make a perception (wisdom) check here. A successful check notes that Thane Egil seems much happier with Ysja's arrival than he lets on. If the check succeeds by 3 or more it reveals that the brother may feel a bit imposed upon, but is "doing the right thing". If the check succeeds by 6 or more it tells the viewer that Thane Egil isn't just glad to see an old playmate, and is probably already plotting how to seduce Ysja. However Eerikki seems less enthusiastic of her return and the priest, Vadid, seems fairly distrustful of Ysja.



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It is not too long before Ysja apologizes for being so rude and introduces you to Thane Egil, his brother, Eerikki and Vadid. They nod and smile.

"Unfortunately, we were only expecting Ysja..." begins Eerikki, "Can I have the cooks fix you something up in the kitchen?"

"Or perhaps I can recommend a tavern?" offers Thane Egil, sidling up to Ysja.

Ysja embarrassedly apologizes to the PCs for the misunderstanding, and offers to pay for their dinner in amends. Assuming the PCs accept the offer, Thane Egil gives them directions to a fine restaurant (the "Silver Swan") and some money. Ysja apologizes again.

PCs that insist on staying will get rebuffed. Any belligerence will result in them being kicked out of the estate, possibly in chains (Thane Egil is well protected in his own estate).

ENCOUNTER 4: DEAD RINGERS

The next day, over lunch, Ysja tells you that dinner was nice, but there is still much catching up to do. In fact, Thane Egil has invited her to go on a ride today and accompany him to a dinner tomorrow. She would like for the characters to act as her escort during the ride.

"I think he might like me," she confides, blushing. "I think we can spend a bit more time here in Thron, don't you? You can stay in the inn; I'll bet the Thane would even pay."

If Ysja's statement about Thane Egil liking her gets one of the PCs upset (like the one who was "targeted" in Encounter 5), she will apologize to him and say something about destiny bringing her and the Thane together again... and who can stop destiny? She is trying to get the PC angry enough to do something evil to the Thane, but it is assumed here that nothing will be done about it.

Assuming the PCs have no great objections, they are free to roam about Thron for a bit or accompany Ysja and Egil on their ride. It is possible, and encouraged for the party to split up and do both if they wish.

The ride Thane Egil and Ysja take is along one of the minor rivers that flows into Thron. It is a simple and easy ride and you manage to keep yourself mildly entertained with quick and brief horse runs and jumps over various obstacles, such as logs, stumps, and small bushes

or rocks. But the duty of escorting Lady Ysja is tedious at best. Eventually Thane Egil signals that it's time for a break. He pulls his horse to the bank of the river and stops in a clearing, near some bushes and a pretty little apple tree that leans over the river. After a few minutes of treating the horses and securing them to the bank, Lady Ysja and Any begin to walk over the embankment to the riverbed below.

"Thank you, dear. I think this is a wonderful spot," Lady Ysja says. "Now, if you gentlemen will excuse us..." She blushes a bit, and the two ladies disappear upstairs.

The PCs can talk with Thane Egil or among themselves, but the ladies want a little privacy. If a female PC wishes to go along, she may. She gets a chance to notice the zombies before the attack.

Suddenly, screams! Lady Ysja comes running back from the river bank followed by several leather clad warriors bearing shields, spears and swords. Six in all. Their shields carrying the emblem of the house of Thane Rollo of Tenebrous.

Freydottir comes running back towards the party, yelling to the PCs to save Anya from the raiders, which are actually zombies disguised by Lady Ysja's illusion magic. Only a character with special senses or who uses some sort of magic detection will realize this. A Huirdu character or Pohjolan character will sense something is wrong.

Zombies: AC 8, Move 6, HD 2d8 (9 hit points), THACO 19, Attack 1 slam (1d8), Size M, Morale NA, XP 65, **Special** spell immunities, slow movement, holy water vulnerability, never check for morale.

The Zombies are the animated corpses of recently killed warriors of Thane Rollo of Tenebrous. They were led into a trap by Lady Ysja and Brote. Brote transported their bodies to this location for this ambush. They still bear the same weapons, armor, and symbols easily identifying them as such. They were only killed a few days ago and with the help of Ysja's illusion magic they look to be alive.

Tactics: Note that the zombies do not attack Ysja at first. If a PC is present at the attack, roll "randomly" to determine their targets—Anya and the PC.

DEVELOPMENT

It is assumed that Anya is not going to survive this attack; but if she somehow does, then she and Ysja will thank the

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PCs profusely, with Ysja even kissing a high-Charisma human that performed particularly heroically (assuming such a PC is present). This should make Brote and Thane Egil both a bit jealous. However Brote is not present, he is watching from a distance. An extremely perception character may notice him watching from afar. In order for this to happen a character has to declare they are looking around for something or someone and will notice Brote if they make a successful perception (Wisdom test) but will only realize it is Brote if they make it by 10 or more, otherwise they just see someone watching from the distance.

ENCOUNTER 5: GREEN EYED DRAGON

Two days later, Ysja contacts the party.

"I apologize for this, but I wonder if I could impose upon you to enjoy Thron just a bit longer?" She blushes more than a bit.

"It seems that he wishes to escort me to a feast in my honor."

If the PCs decline, she will fret, but accept their decision, even paying them the remainder of the agreed-upon fee. The adventure is then over for them.

If they agree to wait, then she thanks them, and buys them a luxury dinner at a local tavern called the Green-Eyed Dragon.

Ysja's plan involves setting the characters up as her "champions" and in order to do so she has decided to "play" with one (or more) of the PCs. She will flirt with all of them (even the ugly), though she will only "make a move" on humans with a Charisma of at least 14 (perhaps someone who was "heroic" in Encounter 4). If there is a Valagard Paladin or LG priest in the party, she will focus her efforts on that PC. Her hopes is to get Thane Egil jealous and to lure him deeper into her clutches. She has also been making these passes at Egil's brother. Though nothing will come of that (unless the GM decides otherwise). These teases and tricks will come to fruition during dinner at the Green-Eyed Dragon.

She will not use any magic to get her way, but will use all the feminine wiles she can muster (and that is quite a lot). She wants to tempt them, get them to do something they might regret later, maybe get them to come to her side of things later.

It is up to the DM to play this in a way that (a) is appropriate to the maturity level of the table and (b) will not cause time problems later. It may be best to omit this in such a setting.

Whether Ysja's advances are fully played out or not, make sure that at least one PC is targeted with flirtation when Brote can see it after the battle with the Zombies. At an opportune moment (either during the flirtation or after), Brote will confront the PC over their "inappropriate advances" towards Ysja. (Brote is very much under her power, is very much in love with her, and is very jealous.)



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If the PC in question apologizes quickly and without argument, Brote will let the matter die with a warning. If the PC accuses Ysja of making the advances, Brote will threaten to kill the PC (for besmirching her honor). If it seems likely to escalate to a fight at this point, Ysja will step in to stop it. (If the PC insists on fighting, so be it—Brote will start with non-lethal attacks. If the PC is the first to use lethal attacks that is an evil act.)

If the fight was averted by Ysja (or other PCs), or if it still happened and Brote is not dead, then that night (or the next), Brote goes to speak with Ysja, and gets rejected in a way that makes it seem that it's the PC's fault. He goes a

little crazy and tries to club the PC to death in their sleep. (Easy to foil if there is anyone on watch, and if there isn't anyone, he comes close, but fails at his coup de grace attempt.)

If the feud continues Brote will challenge the PC in question to a holmgang or even to a match in the Grand Arena.

DEVELOPMENT

Should the PCs question Brote (or his corpse) or Ysja after the fact, they will not get much. Ysja did not tell him to do it, nor did she use magic to force him, but she did play

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him very well—"hinted" him into it—and therefore Brote will not blame her, and the "truth" is only that she denied his advances. She is of course, terribly shocked and disappointed when she "finds out" what happened.

If Brote is alive after this, it is assumed that the PCs are going to "turn him in" in Thron. If, for some reason, he is allowed to stay with the party, he still pines for Ysja, but has learned to keep his desires hidden, and also stay away from the PCs. He will try to drink his unrequited love away, and he will wind up in jail anyway.

ENCOUNTER 6: BIRTHRIGHTS AND BLOODLINES

Two mornings after learning of your delay, you are called to Thane Egil's estate of Heimhall. Upon arrival, you are met by the Thane.

"Thank you for coming, I'll get right to the point. My son Aaront has gone missing. I entrusted his education and care to Godi Vadid who is also missing. I believe Vadid is working for a rival of mine who seeks to stake a claim to my hereditary lands and titles."

"The attack the other day by Thane Rollo's men all but confirm he is to blame here, but alas the last Vadid was seen he was not headed north toward Tenebrous, but east toward the temple"

"I am willing to offer you a large sum of money to find Vadid. I need you to find out where Vadid has taken my son and return him."

"I fear they will try to use him as ransom to usurp my claim and move to steal me of my birthright as Thane of Thron."

"However, I must be clear that I expect you to be working for me and me only. Lady Freydottr cannot know about this. I can occupy the attention of Lady Freydottr. I wish to surprise her with some of my family's treasures when I propose to her. I require your personal pledge that once you accept this task you will see it through. Do this for me, and I will see you are well rewarded. Land. Titles. Gold."

When the players come to an agreement for payment for this job, Thane Egil produces a talisman that depicts his family crest. He says they can use this family crest to prove that they are working for him directly. He will also give a map to the area. He will also provide some horses, and provisions, if asked. If the players ask for payment up front, the Thane can be persuaded to give a quarter of the payment up front. If the players just split with the partial payments may find themselves as wanted men from Thane's justice.

DEVELOPMENTS

What the adventurers do not know is that it was really Ysja that suggested to the Thane that he use them for this task. Ysja almost has the Thane fully under her influence. Vadid has taken Aaront in an attempt to save him from his mother's machinations. He plans to reverse the possession and exorcise the demon before Ysja can complete the ritual and summon K'Hargaroth. She cannot do this until she has recovered Aaront from Vadid.

ENCOUNTER 7: THE SEARCH

It takes couple hours of work to search the various shops and taverns in Thron searching for Vadid and the boy. The characters, of course, find nothing.

At this point Vadid and Aaront have not headed to the Temple of Uthin yet but the characters do not know this. However Vadid does normally live at the local Shrine of Uthin in Thron. It is a logical place to begin their search.

Upon entering the Shrine Guards with question the characters. The Shrine Guards appear very nervous and ask a lot of questions about where the characters have been and what their business is with Vadid. As long as they have a reason that is reasonable they are allowed entry. Adjust what they see based on their arrival time. The Shrine Guards are all Brides of Uthin.

Brides of Uthin (5): AC 5 (scale mail and shield), Move 12, HD 3d10 (22 hit points), THACO 18, Attack 1 broad sword (2d4) or 1 spear (1d6), Size M, Morale 16, XP 65: 3rd level fighters.

Through role playing and investigation the characters can learn that Vadid recently left for the woods with a young boy in tow. However, for those who are more blunt, or don't overly role play, or just miss the information, a successful Gather Information check turns up some information, though. If they succeed the check they find a parish priest at the temple who saw Vadid earlier that morning leave the temple with a small boy heading towards the woods, near the tree split by lightning with a small animal trail next to it. The priest didn't pay much attention to the incident, as he had better things to do than deal with the high priest disciplining his student or servant. He is more than happy to tell the characters where he saw Vadid with the child, go to **Encounter 8**.

If characters decide to search Vadid's room at the Shrine of Uthin they find that it is a wreck. Vadid's room is mostly intact though severely burnt. They find a 3-foot circle of the floor is totally untouched by fire or anything else. Inside the circle sits a ball of twine untouched by the flames as



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well. Just outside that circle sits a dagger that when touched turns to dust. With a successful Search check characters find three piles of human shaped dust near the door.

Vadid left Thron the day before the characters met with Thane Egil. He strolled through the main gate with Aaront at around noon and headed north to the Temple of Uthin. He hopes to meet with the Druids of Wuth and secure their aid in saving the boy.

ENCOUNTER 8: DRUIDIC CIRCLE

Following the directions given to you by the priest, you have no trouble finding the wooded area north of town. After searching along the road for several minutes you find the tree split by lightning he told you about and the small animal trail next to it.

A Search check finds many animal tracks on the trail, while a succeeding Wilderness Lore (tracking) check determines they are bear tracks and some of them are larger than normal size.

Continuing down the animal trail as it winds its way back into the woods it comes into a clearing after fifteen minutes or so. In the center of the clearing is a large circle of stones. The circle is comprised of six tall thin spires of stone that look almost like fingers sticking out of the ground. Each one is from 12-15 feet tall and comes to a tapered point. You also notice burn marks on the stones of the circle as well though they seem to have held up fairly well.

There are several clues that can be found here but the most important one is Benot. He is the only surviving druid of the circle. The demon has turned all of his brethren to piles of ash.

As you look around the clearing you see five human-size piles of ash and bone scattered about the clearing and several large animal size piles as well. Charred wolf skins litter the ground.

A Listen check hears a cough from a bush on the edge of the clearing. In that bush, the characters find Benot, a Fenrir Druid. Benot looks nearly starved to death, his skin stretch tightly over his bones. His Fenrir robes and wolf-head mantle are singed and disheveled. Burns run his body. The demon failed his possession attempt on him and instead just sucked the levels right out of him. His talisman of the hearth is the only thing that saved his life.

Benot was the leader of this circle of Fenrir druids and they were in the middle of a ceremony of communion when Vadid and Aaront arrived.

Benot: AC 10, Move 6, HD 1d8 (4 hit points), THACO 20, Attack 1 dagger (1d4), Size M, Morale 14, XP 35, Ability Scores Constitution 12, Intelligence 14, Wisdom 17, Charisma 17.

Benot was once an 9th level druid, but after his encounter with K'Hargaroth he has been reduced to 0 level. In his injured state his movement is only 6, though he will eventually recover at a rate of 1 per week until back to 12. He is armed only with a broken staff, a ceremonial dagger, and his tattered and burnt robes.

WHAT BENOT KNOWS

The settlers of Thron have been violating sacred lands. Benot and his fellow Fenrir holy men have been in prayer and communion, seeking answers from Wuth and the great wolf as to what to do. They have been trying to keep their people away from open war with the Einheriar of the city of Thron. Yesterday morning during their fast and ceremony an old priest of Uthin by the name of Vadid and a small boy showed up.

Vadid mentioned something about a curse he was under and needed atonement for his sins. He also kept mentioning that the boy needed divine scrutiny as well, but he was not specific as to why.

We did some divination spells to see what we could find out. Vadid came out clean except for some writing on his arm. It detected as magic but we could not determine what the source was or how to remove them.

The small boy, I believe his name was Aaront, on the other hand did not show up at all. No matter what I tried it was as if he was not really there.

Vadid mentioned leaving the boy with us as he was not his guardian and feared for the boy's safety. He hoped we could take care of him until he was ready. We of course were glad to help, but when we did, that is when things went bad.

A creature of fire seemed to spring from the boy. It was tall and made of reddish-black flames. It howled like the wicked one himself and said he would not be separated from his name again. The creature then dived right into the chest of Brother Samis. Brother Samis convulsed for a second then got this evil look on his face and turned and smacked Brother Filden with his staff. Brother Samis continued to pummel Filden with his staff. As we watched in horror his body disintegrate as the flames burst from him.

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We tried to defend ourselves but the creature just jumped from body to body. At that point Vadid tried to cut the boy and was hastily trying to draw a symbol on the ground with the boy's blood. He was stopped when one of our wolf brothers went after the old man.

Then the rest of our wolf brothers showed up and they had the look of madness in them. Some listened to our cries and leapt to our aid but others fought each other and some just clawed at their faces and rolled around on the ground. It was horrible. Then the creature looked at me and I knew what the face of death looked like at last. I felt his evil touch my soul and I fought for what seemed like an eternity against it. I feel powerless still. Only the boy saved me. Lying there his blood was close to me and the demon turned away.

Then the darkness was gone and I was on my back on the ground staring up at the creature. It laughed at me and disappeared. The animals continued to fight around me and I crawled into a bush and hid. The only thing that saved me I think was my talisman.

The boy Aaront just played with a coin in the middle of the circle the whole time. He seemed totally oblivious to what was going on around him. Vadid just screamed for us to run away before his fate became ours.

Our wolf familiars, crazed and enraged, ran off into the woods howling. I heard them last night still howling in pain but I have not seen one since that fateful morning.

An hour after it was all over I saw Vadid pick himself up off the ground and head out of the clearing, heading towards the Temple of Uthin. The small boy just stood up and followed behind him. I tried to stop Vadid but could not. I fear my soul is damaged.

Benot will offer to try to heal any wounded character, but will discover he can't. His magic is gone. However he can provide the characters with a scroll the old man was asking for, though he has no idea what it does. It is an item the druids of the grove have had for decades.

After 20–30 minutes of discussion some of the crazed familiars return to the clearing. They have been driven insane

by the possession of their masters by the demon. They cannot be soothed, charmed, or otherwise calmed down. They attack until killed.

Enraged Wolves: AC 7, Move 18, HD 2d8 + 2 (11 hit points), THACO 19, Attack 1 bite (1d4 + 1), Size S, Morale NA, XP 120, Special immune to fear, never check for morale, berserker rage (may either attack an extra time each round or one time with a +2 bonus to hit).



CHAPTER 2: THE TEMPLE OF UTHIN

ENCOUNTER 9: THE TEMPLE VILLAGE

When the characters finally reach the Temple of Uthin, they arrive late in the evening. The Temple of Uthin isn't just a single building, it has an entire village surrounding it.

At last the Temple of Uthin comes into view. Perhaps thirty wooden thatch-roofed structures stand protected by a simple wooden stockade on all four sides. The buildings are dominated by two tall structures: a three-story peak-roofed dwelling that appears to be an inn of some sort, and a large stone temple with a tall peaked tower. The temple village sits at the base of a series of rolling rocky hills against a cliff.

It can be seen that at some point in the past a rockslide occurred covering a portion of the temple village in boulders and debris, even the temple itself seems to not have survived the avalanche as portions of the back end of the temple are covered in rubble.

A single female guard dressed in the garb of a Bride of Uthin is outside the stockade.

Bride of Uthin: AC 5 (scale mail and shield), **Move** 12, **HD** 3d10 (22 hit points), **THACO** 18, **Attack** 1 broad sword (2d4) or 1 spear (1d6), **Size** M, **Morale** 16, **XP** 65: 3rd level fighter.

They do notice the guard seems a bit jumpy and takes a lot of notice of what the characters do. Once inside the temple village the characters immediately notice many people. People from the surrounding areas are flocking to the Temple. They have heard of the mysterious creature of fire and want to be near the Temple for safety.

The so called inn is actually the temple hospital. Set up to help those in need, provide shelter to the pious on holy pilgrimage, to tend the sick and wounded, and to provide beds for lay servants of the temple. It takes a bit of searching to find Vadid. He is staying at the hospital. As with other searches in this adventure, characters who are unlucky (or unwilling) in role playing encounters may be permitted to make a Gather Information (or similar) check to

find Vadid. If not they can just check each building until they find him. If the worst happens and they still cannot find him you can always do the pure blind luck method and just have them happen to stay at the hospital.

Entering the hospital the characters will find a very full taproom. Everybody seems to be nervous and worried but it is a pretty mellow crowd. However, over in the corner a group of men are laughing loudly while watching something at a table you cannot see.

If the characters head over:

Pushing your way through the crowd you eventually get to a point where you can see what is happening. To your surprise you see a small boy. Perhaps 6-7 years old. He is just flipping a coin. Every time he flips it he calls out what it will be, heads or tails, and every time he is right. The men at the table are just laughing and keep asking him how it does it. The small boy just shrugs and laughs and flips the coin again.

The small boy is Aaront. Vadid is trying to sleep in his room upstairs but is not having much luck. The men around the table are very protective of Aaront and do not let the characters take him anywhere. They say his father is upstairs and to go and talk with him if they have a problem. If the characters attempt to cause trouble the town guard show up and settle things down quickly. Since the characters have no evidence to support any claims they make they are told to settle down or they will spend a night in the clink.

Guardsmen (5): AC 7 (leather armor and shield), **Move** 12, **HD** 1d10 (10 hit points), **THACO** 20, **Attack** 1 short sword (1d6) or 1 spear (1d6), **Size** M, **Morale** 13, **XP** 35: 1st level fighters.

This encounter can go several ways from here. The characters can be very aggressive in their questions to Vadid in which case he just clams up and tells them to leave while they still can. If they attack him he just curls up into a ball and yells for help. The bouncers from the tavern show up

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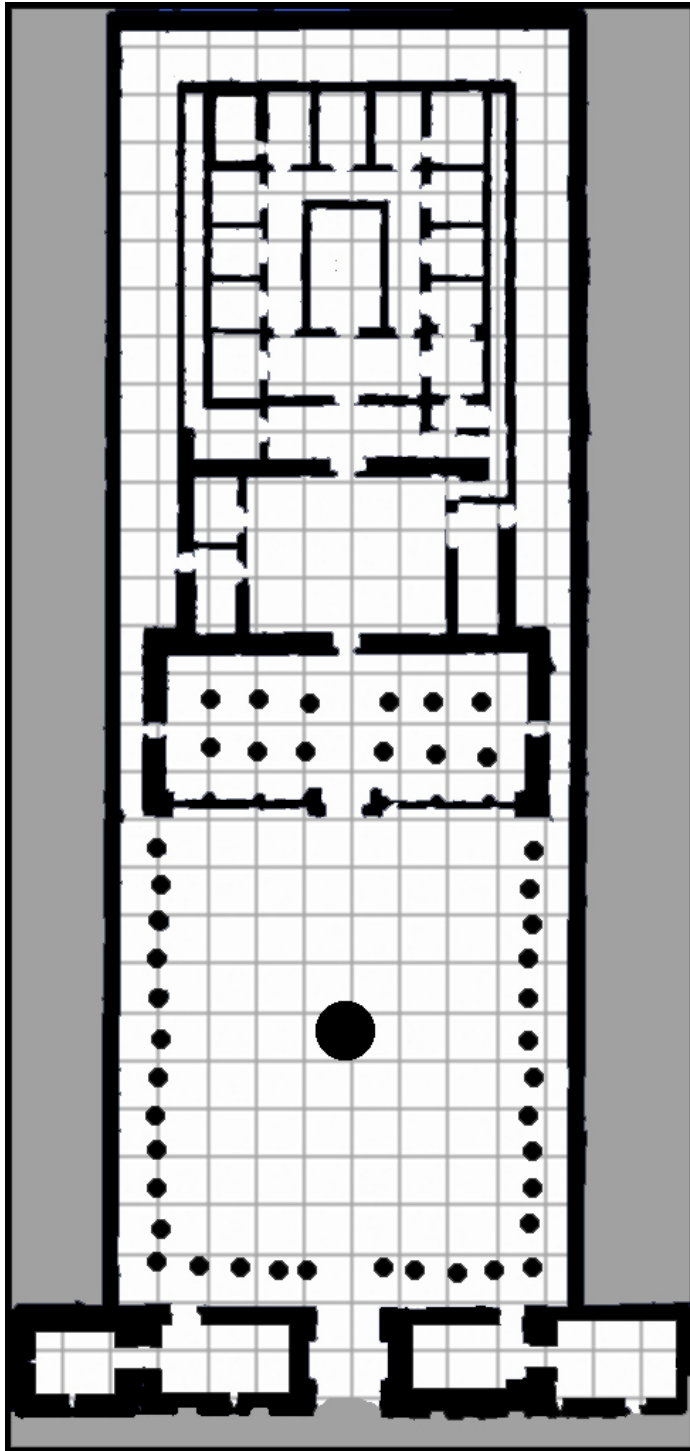


Figure 2.1: The Hosipital of Uthin

shortly along with the town guard. It is important that Vadid does not die here. He has things to do yet.

If the characters are calm when they approach him he will chat for a bit before asking them to leave so he can retire for the night. During the discussion Aaront comes back upstairs and sits down next to Vadid on the floor. He pulls out a coin and starts rolling it through his fingers and flipping it. He does not speak and just smiles at any PC who stares at him for too long. Of course Vadid is only telling half-truths and lies. He wants the characters to leave him alone and go away. He fears for their safety if they remain in his room to long.

If magically probed, he tells the characters that the boy has a strange effect on divination and mind-reading magic, and that he doesn't know why—it's not entirely true, but Vadid is very good at talking himself out of strange situations. No matter the evidence piled up against him, he insists that he just happens to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. If the characters get hostile now skip to **Encounter 13**. They miss out on gaining a lot of information from **Encounter 10** so make sure they have options and do not feel like they are being forced to fight him right there and then.

ENCOUNTER 10: DREAMS AND DEVILS

At this point the characters know something is up with Vadid and Aaront. They may not know exactly what's happening, but they know him and the boy are the keys to the puzzle. They may get a room in the tavern itself or stake out the joint from next door. Regardless of where they go this encounter happens.

Aaront carries a great power of good within him. What this power is and where it comes from is unknown to you as of right now but let us just say for all intents and purposes it can do whatever it wants to. Right now it wants to try and let the characters know what happened in the past to better understand what is currently happening. It does this through a dream sequence. The characters do not realize it is a dream though until it is over. This is very important. It happens right before dawn so all the characters have rested their eight hours of sleep and have all their spells back. If there are priests present you can have them actually wake up and pray (just dreaming they are doing it) to get their spells back before continuing.

It starts off with a pale blue glow. If the characters are staying in the Blazing Hearth then those on watch see the glow under their door. If they are staying across the street they see the glow form their window. You get the picture. Those on watch wake up their fellow players and check it out. Note that all the characters are currently asleep where they are. They just think they are awake.



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Following the glow you end up at a door outside the Blazing Hearth Inn. Looking in you can see to a staircase heading down.

Get a marching order for going down the stairs. Remember we are playing this like it is real but it is a dream. There is a lot of read-aloud text below. You can phrase it how you want and let the characters do things while it is happening. Do not just read it from start to finish. This is not story time.

Heading down the stairs you can see about 30 feet ahead due to the blue glow that radiates from the walls. As you head down you can hear what sounds like chanting coming from ahead. Finally the staircase ends in a 10-foot wide tunnel that goes 30 feet before opening into a large room.

Moving ahead you see that you are at floor level of a large domed room. In the center of the room there is a priest of Uthin holding what appears to be a large spear. At his feet is a cloaked figure lying on the floor. In a circle around the priest are fourteen robed individuals, each glowing a soft blue as they chant ancient hymns dedicated to the gods. Each one is holding a candle in their right hand and other strange mystical components in their left hand while chanting.

Straining to see past the robed men you can see that the cloaked figure on the floor is Ysja, but a younger Ysja, pregnant and in labor in the center of the circle.

They cannot enter the room or affect what is happening since it is vision of the past.

As you continue to watch you hear somebody speak as if they are standing in front of you but you see nothing. The feminine voice says, "The betrayal happens now". You see three of the priests in the circle on the floor pull out medallions from their robes. The medallions quickly dissolve into smoke and dissipate into the room. A bit of the smoke remains though and enshrouds the priest of Uthin, the smoke climbing up his arm, through his cloak, and over his spear. You see runes appear on the priest's skin for a second before he turns to look behind him and you can now see his face. It looks like a younger Vadid. He turns back to the ritual just as he slams his spear down into Ysja. With a flash of bright light Ysja disappears and a wave of blue light bursts out in all directions from the room.

The wave of light rushes out in all directions. Give the characters a chance to do something if they wish but they are going to be caught up by the wave and taken for a ride.

The blue wave washes over you. You feel yourself being pulled along by the wave and rushed back up the stairs you just came down. You find yourself being carried over the ground away from a large city at speeds that make the landscape below a blur.

You feel yourself sinking for a second as if you are surrounded by water then your feet touch something solid and you are once again in the large domed room. There is light mist around you but the room appears empty. As the last of the mist fades away a voice rings out once more **"I am the boy, the boy is the key, the fire of vengeance burns in his blood, till once again it rests within me"**. That last words echo for a second then absolute silence settles on the room.

The silences vanishes as sudden as it occurred, replaced by the roar of falling rocks and collapsing walls. The chamber begins to collapse, debris falling from the ceiling.

The characters have a few minutes to act here. They have a lot of information to digest. The center section of the room is 60 feet in diameter. The seats are set 20 feet above the floor of the room and extend back another 40 feet. Bringing the room to a total diameter of 140 feet. There are several exits to the room at floor level but the characters cannot pass through them. They are in the room until the upcoming fight is complete.

The Demon has realized what the power of good is trying to do. He has managed to slip a surprise of his own into the dream though. As they are talking they hear a small "clink" noise.

As you are talking you hear a small metallic "clink" noise. A metal medallion rolls lazily into the room and falls over on its side with a metallic rattle. After a few seconds the medallion explodes into demonic creatures of various shapes and sizes.

Minor Fiends: AC 4, Move 9, HD 2d8 (9 hit points), THACO 19, Attack 2 claws (1d4) and 1 bite (1d4 + 1), Size M, Morale NA, XP 120, Special never check for morale.

Once the fiends are reduced to zero hit point they vanish. The characters are standing alone in the domed room once again. The room begins to fade around them and they all wake up from where they were sleeping. Morning has arrived and the sun is just rising. Everything that happened in the dream happened for real. Any items used are gone, any damage taken is still there, and anybody who died is

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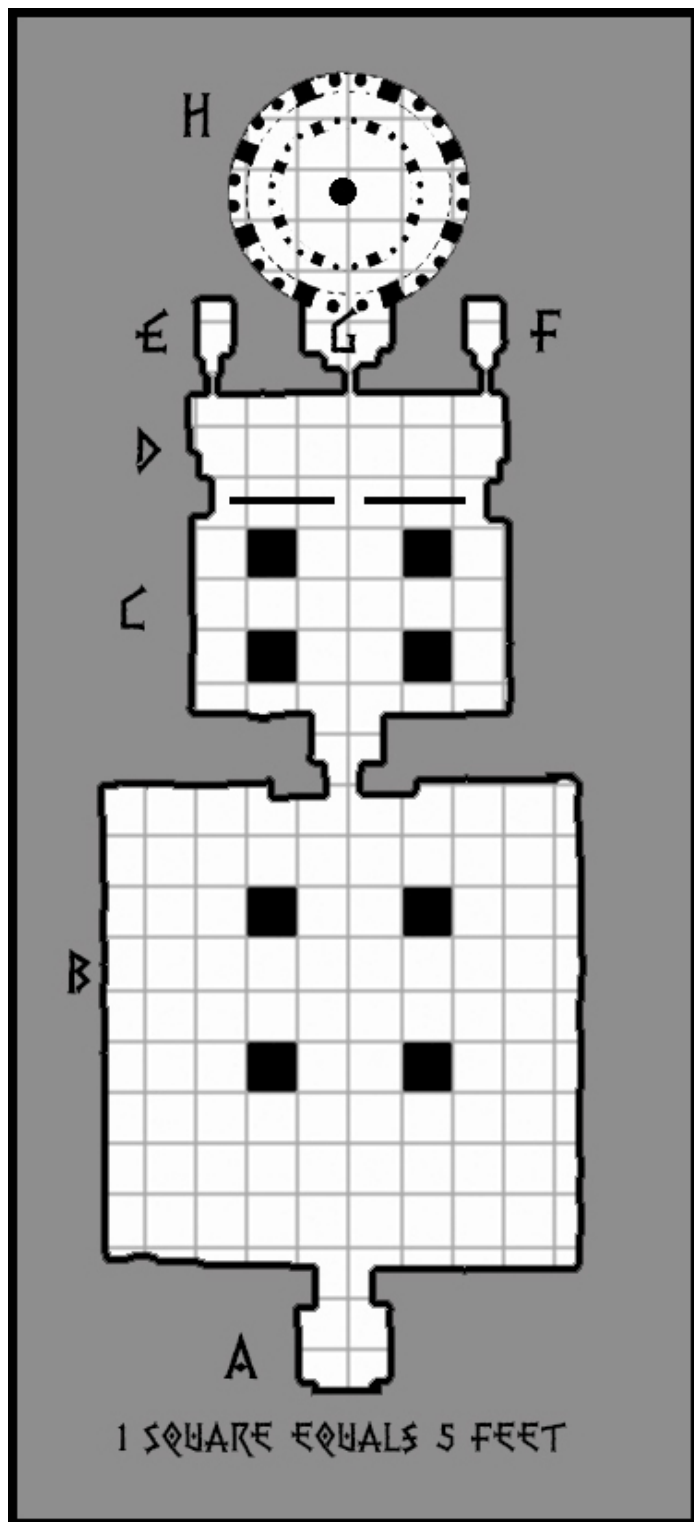
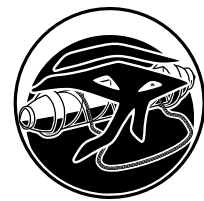


Figure 2.2: The Temple of Uthin

still dead. Since it happened during the night any spells cast cannot be rememorized until 8 hours from the time used has passed.

The Characters are surely going to want to go and pay Vadiid a visit right about now. But Vadiid has already left the hospital and is heading to the Temple of Uthin.

ENCOUNTER 11: INSIDE THE TEMPLE OF UTHIN

The characters now know that Vadiid was part of some betrayal during a ceremony of Uthin. They know he has some sort of markings on his arm as well. But Vadiid has departed the hospital and entered the Temple.

If they head to the Temple after **Encounter 10** it they will arrive at the entrance (area A) after Vadiid has already reached the Temple Passage (area E). If they go before **Encounter 10** then everything will be fairly normal at the Temple. Priests pray, study, perform ceremonies, and minister to their patrons. Section F will still be blocked by rubble.

Depending on when the characters go to the Temple they will have a different set of encounters and events. If they travel to the Temple prior to the events in **Encounter 10** they will run into a variety of clerics and worshippers as well as guards and possibly Brides of Uthin. There will be more clerics and worshippers during the day and more guards at night. At night they guards will be less tolerant of any characters poking around the temple.

The guards and clerics will absolutely tolerate no digging around or attempts to enter the now sealed off Altar of Uthin. Characters who try such tactics will be confronted and arrested. Any fight that happens because of this will gain the attention of the Abbott-Godi of the Temple (a 10th level cleric) and his body guard of Brides of Uthin (6th level fighters).

A. ENTRANCE

The entrance to the temple is a simple 10' × 10' chamber. The east and west walls are adorned with tapestries depicting the deeds of Uthin and his war against the giants. The northern wall is a doorway leading to the courtyard.

B. COURTYARD

The courtyard is a large open area. The area is roughly 50' × 50' in size and houses four large statues of Uthin, Hefreya, Xieros, and Khoss. The entire area is protected by a 15' wall inscribed with runes describing the various constellations so visitors can view them and relate them to the stories of Uthin from within the courtyard. At the north end of the courtyard is a five foot door that leads into the main temple.



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C. CEREMONIAL CHAMBER

The ceremonial chamber is a 30' × 20' area dedicated to the actual worship activities of the temple. Pews, altars, and prayer rugs fill the chamber and surround four large statues of Uthin in his different guises (as father, warrior, king, and rune-master).

D. SANCTUARY

The Sanctuary is the sacred place of the God of Uthin. Only esteemed clerics (3rd+ level) of Uthin and honored Brides of Uthin (5th+ level) are permitted in the Sanctuary. This is where the clerics prepare their sermons and services for the temple. It is full of religious items, such as candles, books, altars, holy symbols, and more.

E. CLERIC'S CHAMBER

The Cleric's Chamber is where the cleric on duty lives. Usually at least one 4th level cleric is here at all times. The GM may use this cleric to help the characters in their initial encounter with Vadid/K'Hargaroht. The chamber is simple, having a sacred tapestry covered in holy runes that tells a story of Uthin conquering the Abyss. There are also scrolls detailing various aspects of the faith of Uthin as well as local law and history. A *potion of healing* can be found under the cleric's bed.

F. BRIDE'S CHAMBER

The Bride's Chamber is where the Bride of Uthin on duty lives. Usually at least one 6th level fighter is here at all times. The GM may use this Bride of Uthin to help the characters in their initial encounter with Vadid/K'Hargaroht. A *potion of healing* can be found under the bride's bed.

G. THE TEMPLE PASSAGE

Peering down this hall you can see that it was once an elaborate temple passageway, no doubt heading to a chamber of great importance. Those days are far in the past now as the hallway is collapsed about halfway down. Large rocks and stone debris clutter the area, some obviously a part of the original building, others from the smashed rocks that came from the rocky hills behind the temple.

The flickering of torchlight is the only illumination in the hall, the cold wind from outside the temple fades quickly, only to be replaced by the high pitch wine of some chirping beast. Suddenly some of the rubble moves as ghostly pink and purple light spills forth filling the

hall. The light eventually reveals its source, floating ethereal blurs smaller than clenched fists. Dancing in a dazzling pattern or erratic movements while their color ebbs from pink to purple, these ethereal insects swarm with eerie precision toward you. Their oscillating color is matched by a strange and ethereal humming noise.

This passage is a tunnel, but it is caved in about 20 feet down the passage. Anyone venturing down this tunnel will be mercilessly attacked by Floating Medusas, the source of the colors. The creatures are attempting to protect their nest, which is buried deeper beneath the ancient temple now lying under the collapsed temple.

Floating Medusa: AC 5, Move fly 12, HD 1/8 (1 hit point), THACO 20, Attack 1 touch (1), Size S, Morale N/A, XP 35, Special cold immunity, magic resistance 25%, immune to mind control spells, *dimension door* 1/hour.

After a round of combat read the following.

In the chaos of battle you make out another movement within the collapsed structure. Standing over the rocks, trying desperately to dig his way through the mess, is Vadid. The infernal dancing lights seem to be ignoring him.

While the Floating Medusas may be ignoring Vadid, anyone who goes near him, or tries to help him, is attacked by 1d10 of them.

Initially there are only 10 Floating Medusa, but, with each round the characters stay, another ant will crawl out from under the rubble and join the attack. Until the characters make it into area F: The Temple of Uthin, there are an unlimited number of Floating Medusa.

Vadid digs with the strength of a mad man. Eventually he makes some head way into the collapsed tunnel when he drops to his knees, and begins to chant. After three rounds of chanting he begins to glow blue and the rocks begin to warp, slowly reshaping themselves until an entry-way is made into the next area, The Temple of Uthin.

H. THE ALTAR OF UTHIN

The unblocked passage leads to a 20 foot wide, 15 foot high, white marble hallway that extends roughly 30 feet into a giant circular room. The room has a domed ceiling that peaks at about 50 feet high. While hard to notice

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at times under the scurrying forms of the giant ants that infest the chamber, the entire room is made of white marble inlaid with a variety of colored stones and gems for decoration. Even the runes carved into the structure are inlaid with silver and gold. The runes and statues embedded around the wall match the childhood descriptions of The Temple of Uthin from bedtime stories and folk tales you learned in your youth.

The center of the room is a large circular altar adorned with spears and shields along with engravings and decorations. A winged female warrior statue extends from the peak of the ceiling, appearing to hover 25 feet above the altar. The altar has a well like hole in the center.

The room would be amazing and beautiful and the most peaceful and serene scene the characters have ever seen if it wasn't for all the Floating Medusa. Dozens of them scurry about the temple, and from the well at the

center of the altar rises a pus covered, white flesh colored, red eyed, fat and slimy Floating Medusa easily hundreds of times the size of the others. Her white chitin limbs look almost like skeletal bone, while her abdomen, fat with fluid, pus, and eggs, pulsates in sickly seizures. She lunges forward at the party as a host of the other Floating Medusa rush in to defend her and aid in her rampage.

The Medusa Queen is the size of a small pony, covered in a thick, white exoskeleton, and possessed of a rage that shames the greatest berserker. She will defend her hive to the death. She is protected by six Floating Medusa with 2 hit points and there are 8 other Floating Medusas in the chamber. One additional Floating Medusa joins every round until the queen is dead. After that one Floating Medusa flees per round until all are dead or gone.

During the fight, Vadid is ignored by the Floating Medusas. The Floating Medusas inadvertently prevent the





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characters from getting to Vadid while he climbs into the well at the center of the altar and vanishes below.

Floating Medusa: AC 5, Move fly 12, HD ⅛ (1 hit point), THACO 20, Attack 1 touch (1), Size S, Morale N/A, XP 35, **Special** cold immunity, magic resistance 25%, immune to mind control spells, *dimension door* 1/hour.

Bodyguard Floating Medusa: AC 5, Move fly 12, HD 1 (5 hit points), THACO 19, Attack 1 touch (1d2), Size S, Morale N/A, XP 35, **Special** cold immunity, magic resistance 25%, immune to mind control spells, *dimension door* 1/hour.

Floating Medusa Queen: AC 0, Move fly 18, HD 8 (36 hit points), THACO 13, Attack 1 touch (1d8), Size M, Morale 16, XP 975, **Special** berserker rage (may either attack an extra time each round or one time with a +2 bonus to hit), cold immunity, magic resistance 25%, immune to mind control spells, *dimension door* 1/hour.

After defeating the Floating Medusa the characters can follow Vadid to **Encounter 12**.

The unending squealing and screeching of the Floating Medusas is finally over. The last of their kind crushed under your attacks or fled into the walls of the temple room. Finally you can see the room for what it is. The statues in the recesses are of ancient titans and elder gods such as Khoss and Xeiros, while the inner circle are the sons of Syf: Urs, Kanis, Hawkric, Helmstag, Leoric, Churn, and Donar. Each adorned in battle armor and decorated with the images of their totem animals.

The center of the altar lies the well, a rope hastily tied to one end of the altar now hangs in the well is the only evidence of Vadid's passing into whatever lies beneath.

ENCOUNTER 12: UNDER THE TEMPLE OF UTHIN

Following Vadid will lead the characters to a large subterranean room located directly beneath the Altar of Uthin. This new room is identical to the Altar of Uthin above, but in the opposite ways. It is black volcanic rock,

with runes and decorations inlaid from some sort of red metal and copper. Where the altar is above is a pool of pulsating red liquid. Holes are dug in the upper walls and the food stores and eggs of the Floating Medusas can be glimpsed within. Floating Medusas dart in and out of these holes but ignore and avoid the characters.

At the edge of the chamber, near the east wall, Vadid stands. He holds a broken spear, taken from one of the smashed statues scattered about the room. He begins to chant, but his chants is interrupted by sobbing and quivering. He turns and looks at you all. Tears stream down his eyes.

Now the characters have the chance to confront Vadid. They can talk to him, restrain him, or attack him. At this point he will not defend himself. When confronted with the knowledge that they know he was part of some betrayal or about his markings on his arm he just collapses on the floor and sobs to himself. He is a wreck but can answers some questions and is a bit more truthful this time. Vadid needs to be played as a victim here. The characters may not see him as such but that is how he tries to come across. He just wants to find peace and no matter what he does he just brings death to those around him.

VADID'S ANSWERS TO COMMON QUESTIONS

- **Q:** Who were the three in your group who betrayed the ceremony?
A: Servants of Ysja. She seduced them and convinced them to do her bidding, and the bidding of the hag.
- **Q:** What was this betrayal?
A: I sought to undo the evil of Pohjola within Ysja, to save the son of Egil, the grandson of my friend the Thane Huldur. I did not think the Temple was strong enough to do what we wanted. I should have known better though. I just wanted to help. But somehow she corrupted the ritual of cleansing and invested into her child the soul of a dark denizen of the Abyss.
- **Q:** What (or who) is the boy?
A: Aaront son of Ysja. He has a dark secret...dark (pauses for a second), I do not want to hurt the boy though. He is a good child. He just carries darkness within. I tried leaving him behind a few times and the next morning when I awoke he would be standing there again. He is my penance—a burden for my failure.
- **Q:** Where are you really going?
A: Here, Under the Temple of Uthin. To undo this evil!
- **Q:** What is this creature of fire?
A: It is K'Hargaroth. The demon lives within Aaront or he summons it or something. I don't know for sure.

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All I know is it wants me dead but cannot touch me so it tries to get others to do it for him. If you see it run. It is death itself taken form.

- **Q:** What are those markings on your arm?

A: (He shows his arm to the characters.) I believe it is the Mark of Brass. This writing is in some infernal ancient language I do not know and moves all the time. It spells out words now and then but that is all I know. Though I believe it was Ysja's way of marking me for revenge.

- **Q:** What really happened at the druids' grove?

A: I took the boy there. I was hoping they could find him a good home and perhaps deal with his "friend". The druids are said to have a scroll that can keep the demon at bay. Now even that is lost. Next thing I know one of the druids just turns and starts beating his brother with his staff. Flames starting coming out of his body and I knew what was happening. I yelled for everybody to run and hid in the bushes.

- **Q:** How do we stop the fiend?

A: The boy. Only the boy. He is the key. The demon lives in his blood and it must be spilt and used, first to ward off the demon, then to trap him, and finally to drown him.

- **Q:** What is with the spear?

A: This spear, it isn't an artifact, but it is symbolic of my god, Uthin. I have blessed it. Now all it needs is the blood of Aaront to destroy the demon and banish it back to the Abyss forever.

(The spear acts as a +2 magical weapon that normally does 1d4 damage, but does 1d10 against demons and any bonuses gained from Aaront's blood are doubled, see **Encounter 13**. After slaying the demon the spear loses all magical properties and turns to dust.)

Vadid appears shaken, he shivers, tears stream from his eyes. "This is my fault, and mine alone!" He cries. His eyes flashing, almost red. "But I was tricked, cursed by that woman and her child, the demon!" His skin becomes cold, white, sweaty and then red, like a rash suddenly ruptures over his face. His lips bleed and flecks of spit spray from his mouth as he continues. "I am not to blame for what I have caused!"

As Vadid rants, a mist like steam begins to coalesce into a rough humanoid shape, slightly behind the old priest, partly hovering in the air. A horned and spine covered beast with massive arms, flame-like flesh, and eyes the color of endless night. Slowly it floats above the old priest, but he does not see it. "Vadid lies to you. He is the one. His existence condemns me to this place, this land of night beyond Pohjola. Rid the world of me and

him, shatter his body and break his soul free so I shall consume him and return to my pit and despair!"

At this point Vadid cannot hear nor see the demon. The beast does his best to convince the characters to kill Vadid. When that fails he gets very upset and starts assuming a very real and very solid form in the room. When complete Vadid can see the demon fully and he scurries away and tries to hide behind the characters. K'Hargarothen then speaks:

"I shall destroy this Temple person by person until you do as I ask. The old priest must die or all shall go before him." The demon grins and laughs, slowly rising higher from the ground.

Vadid screams "The boy is the only way to make K'Hargarothen go away!" as the Demon then burns straight up through the well and vanishes.

"No!" Vadid screams loudly and crumples into a ball on the ground.

ENCOUNTER 13: THE DEVIL AND THE BOY

There are two ways to get to this encounter. The first is if the characters just outright attack Vadid at the start of **Encounter 9**. If they do this the demon shows up as in the previous encounter and starts cheering the characters on. This should cause the characters to stop and reevaluate what they are doing. The demon becomes angry if they will not finish off Vadid and starts killing off innocents. The second way is they refuse to kill Vadid while in the Temple of Uthin leading to the demon's rampage in Thron.

If coming from the Temple of Uthin read the following. If coming straight from **Encounter 9** adjust as needed.

You exit the hidden temple with Vadid right behind you. As you rush out the gates to you see total chaos. The city is on fire and you hear screaming from the streets. You see people running everywhere but no sign of the creature of flame.

The Demon K'Hargarothen: AC 0, Move 12, fly 18, HD 8 (48 hit points), THACO 13, **Attack** 2 claws (1d6) and 1 bite (1d6), **Size** M, **Morale** NA, XP 2000, **Special** spells and spell-like abilities (see below), regener-



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ation, energy drain, hit only by +4 or better weapons, summon demons (see below), energy drain.

K'Hargaroath has the spell casting ability of a 5th level illusionist, can cast burning hands every three rounds as if cast by a 7th level mage, and can gate in 1d8 minor demons once per day (50% success). He also has telekinesis as if he were 10th level and regenerates 1 hit point per round (except from damage suffered from the blood of Aaront). K'Hargaroath can cast *magic missile* once per day as if he were a 5th level caster. If he hits a victim with 2 or more of his melee attacks in one round they suffer a 1 level energy drain. He is immune to anything less than a +4 weapon (see below).

The characters can try and physically stop the demon but that is probably not possible. Unless they have magic weapons and an array of magic uncommon in the Ice Kingdoms. Remember the Demon is powerful enough to wipe out the entire party without batting an eye.

If the characters cause the demon too much trouble, then the fiend will dimension door himself away and start his orgy of chaos in a different location. Their only hope is to find Aaront and use him to stop the demon.

Regardless of how they got to this point, they now have a rampaging fiend killing townsfolk at random. They must find Aaront and convince him to make The Demon stop.

Aaront is in the stable sitting near the back wall in a stall. He is flipping his coin. The characters can hear the demon's laughter from the street as they speak with Aaront.

When playing Aaront for this part, play him as very innocent and scared. He does not want the demon to come back and wants the bad man to go away forever. It should be gut wrenching for the characters to ask this small child to bear such a heavy burden but it is the only way to stop him.

If they succeed continue with the following:

Aaront stands up and closes his eyes. You see the muscles in his neck strain for a moment then relax. He opens his eyes and for a second you can see fire flicker across them then they return to normal. "Vadid says my blood can hurt the demon. He says it can make weapon special, and magic powerful." The street outside is now quiet. As if the demon knows. The boy looks at you and smiles. "Please don't make it hurt." He says. "Promise?" With that he reaches out his arm toward you and looks away.

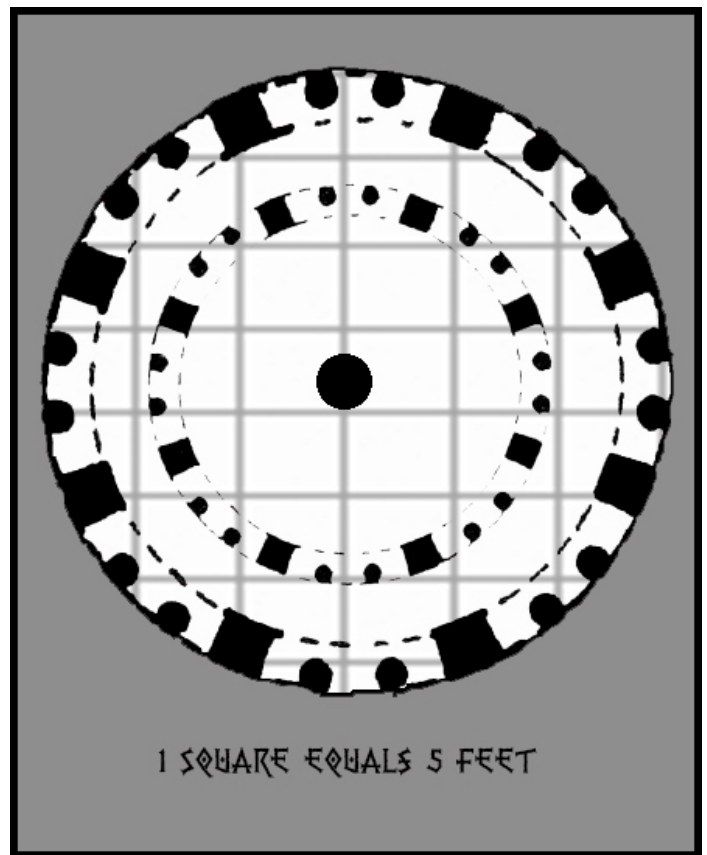


Figure 2.3: The Secret Altar

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The only way to truly hurt the demon is with Aaront's blood. Using his blood to augment any spell inflicts 1 hit point of permanent damage to the boy. While he may only be a child, he is a special individual with 10 hit points. Each extra hit point used in a spell components increases the spell effect by 1 level. Each hit point used on a weapon gives that weapon a +1 bonus against demons, up to a maximum of +6. Each successful hit reduces this bonus by 1. At 0 hit points Aaront goes unconscious, once he is a -5 or lower he will begin to die, at -10 he is dead.

If they fail then the demon runs rampant for a while then grows tired and returns to Aaront. Continue on to **Encounter 14**.

ENCOUNTER 14: THE DEVIL'S DUE

Vadid has slipped over the edge. He now believes that he is the one who should punish everybody with fiery death. To add to his delusion K'Hargarothe summons some devils to work with Vadid. Vadid's delusional state has him seeing them as his Uthin's Maidens of Vengeance come to serve justice with him. He is beyond the point of reasoning. The toils of the last seven years were just too much for him and he is gone way around the bend.



Now the demon is very upset that the Characters have found a way to harm him. He sees this situation as an opportunity to kill two birds with one stone. When he senses Vadid conversion to evil he summons a couple of fiends to help Vadid destroy the characters. He hopes the characters kill Vadid then in turn are destroyed themselves by his devils. Vadid runs into the area with the demons chasing him screaming at the Characters. Once they turn to fight the demons he strikes the nearest characters.

You barely have time to catch your breath when Vadid runs into the area. Chasing him are five short, twisted, bloated humanoids with hideous features, fish-belly white skin, and patchy hair covered in spikes and sporting leathery wings. They are each less than two feet in height. Vadid screams as his body twists and contorts. His flesh goes pale, and he seems to grow younger as his flesh ripples. A sick ripping sound fills the air as two large feathered wings erupt from his back. His eyes go white and a hideous laughter escapes from his throat. His face, now smooth, young, and beardless. A grim smile forms. Suddenly he runs towards you, his hands extended, like daggers in the night.

Vadid Possessed: AC 10, Move 12, HD 8 (40 hit points), THACO 11, Attack 1 morningstar (2d4 + 7), Size M, Morale N/A, XP 975, Ability Scores Strength 19, Constitution 13, Special +2 to all saves; berserker rage (may either attack an extra time each round or one time with a +2 bonus to hit); immune to *sleep*, *charm*, and *hold spells*; never checks for morale; summon demons (see below).

At this point Vadid has been abandoned by Uthin and has no clerical powers. However he is feeding off the evil corruption of K'Hargarothe. Every time he is hit there is a chance of gating in 1d3 minor fiends equal to the amount of damage he has suffered times 5%. These demons erupt from his blood splatter as it sprays through the air or forms from his blood as it bleeds from the wounds he has suffered.

Minor Fiends (5): AC 4, Move 9, HD 2 (9 hit points), THACO 19, Attack 2 claws (1d4) and 1 bite (1d4 + 1), Size M, Morale N/A, XP 120, Special never check for morale.

The fiends attack immediately and as mentioned above Vadid takes the first opportunity to cast spells. As long as they did not watch Vadid non-stop he has had plenty of time to precast spells on himself and the devils so take advantage of that. Remember Aaront is in the area as well.



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He cannot be harmed by anything going on but the characters do not know this yet. So catch him with an area of affect spell or two just to get the characters worried for a bit. They shortly realize he cannot be harmed. Vadid dies when he hits 0 hit points. It is due to the runes marking his arm and he is supposed to die.

When the killing blow is struck he says "thank you" before collapsing to the ground. Then the runes on his arm become smoke and go after the nearest character (most likely the one who killed him). That character must make a save to resist. If he makes the save the smoke move to the next closest and so on until one of the Characters fail the save. The mist has a movement of 80 feet and makes an attempt on one character per round as a standard action. When a character finally fails the mist wraps around their arm and the runes reform on that character. That character receives the cursed Mark of Brass.

CURSE: MARK OF BRASS

These runes appear as tattoos on the left arm and chest of the person cursed with them. The runes are in infernal and spell out the true names of 101 devils. The runes crawl over the afflicted person's skin forming new names constantly. The curse provides several benefits as well as drawbacks. The bearer of the curse is granted a permanent AC bonus of 1, +1 on all saves, and a bonus +1 hit point per hit die. Any wounds suffered by the person inflicted with this curse cannot be healed by non-magical means and if the character ever dropped to 0 hit points or less he dies.

Also the character has an aura of evil around him now, not that the curse changes their personal alignment but their location will radiate evil.

The runes cannot be removed by any known means to mortals.

Once Vadid and the fiends are destroyed continue on.

Aaront walks out into the center of the now quiet village. He looks at Vadid for a second then up at <insert character with runes on his arms name here>. You hear a howl of frustration echo throughout the stable area as fire flickers over Aaront's eyes for a second. He then smiles up at you and shrugs his shoulders. "I have to go now. My friend says thank you." Aaront hands his silver coin to (name of character) and then slowly fades away. Seconds later Vadid and the bodies of the abominations crumble into dust and start blowing away in the breeze.

The coin is made of an alloy of gold, silver, and platinum and is inlaid with mythral designs of a ship at sea on one

side and a wolf's head on the other side. The coin is unnaturally heavy, and whoever has it will not let anyone else have it or trade it for anything. The bearer of the coin gains a +1 on all saves.

The Temple, Thron, and the Ice Kingdoms are saved though there is no solid evidence of what caused the fires and the deaths.

AFTERMATH

Returning to Thron the characters will learn that Lady Ysja has vanished leaving behind a distraught Thane Egil. After he learns the truth about Ysja and his son, he will be angry, blaming the characters and his brother for the loss of his son.

He will pay the characters in silver, 1000 coins each, and only offer them the chance to serve him as members of his household guard in the future.

If the Game Master wishes they may set up a final encounter between Ysja and the characters. This will probably be in Engil's Throne Room at Heimhall. She will fight the characters using charmed guards from Engil's retinue and with her illusion powers. She will make every attempt to escape and is not above using her Animate Dead scrolls to re-use her charmed guards once they are killed.

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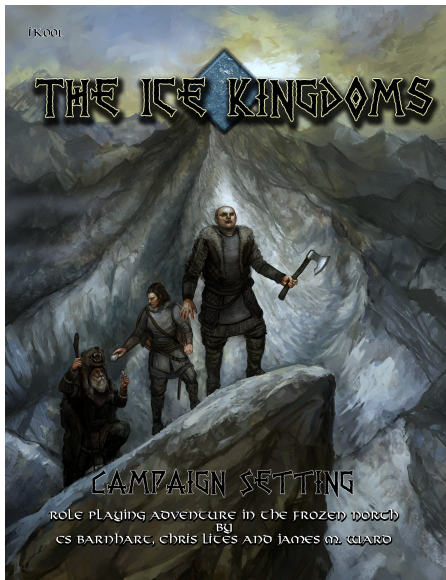
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CAMPAIGN SETTING



THE ICE KINGDOMS CAMPAIGN SETTING

Far to the north of the known world, at the edge of civilization, lies a collection of borderlands stretching between fair Adierolf and vile Dargogran, a mountainous and savage untamed wilderness of marauders, monsters, and mysteries known to the world as the Land Bridge. But the Land Bridge holds more than just chaos and danger, for it is home to the savage and misunderstood Ice Kingdoms!

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ADVENTURES



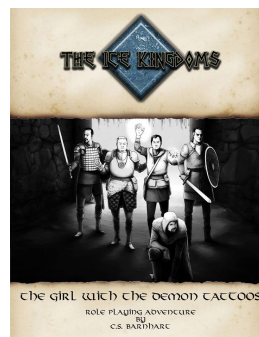
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The Hagwood has long been avoided by rational men; even thanes dare not walk the woods. Only the desperate, the insane, and the dark souls of Pohjola travel the paths of the forest by choice. But destiny calls the brave and the fool, the greedy and the heroic. Can you face the dangers of the haunted wood?



THE LAIR OF THE WHITE WYVERN

Something is amiss in the village of Ainhild. A sickness sweeps through the people and no cure can be found. Rumors and tall tales lead the desperate to blame a long-vanished wyvern for the illness. Can your adventurers unravel the secrets of The Lair of the White Wyvern?



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