



Wardensaga



BY ODIN'S BEARD RPG



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**BY ODIN'S
BEARD RPG**

**EXALTED
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Runecairn is based on Cairn by Yochai Gal

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Inspiration:

- Dark Souls
- Icelandic Sagas
- Old School Essentials
- Valheim

Special Thanks:

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PART 1: CORE RULES

ÞAR MUNU EFTIR UNDRSAMLIGAR,
GULLNAR TÖFLUR Í GRASI FINNASK,
ÞÆRS Í ÁRDAGA ÁTTAR HÖFÐU.
MUNU ÓSÁNIR AKRAR VAXA
BÖLS MUN ALLS BATNA

*In the wondrous beauty of the aftermath,
Golden tables found among the grass,
Held by the gods in days of old.
Then barren fields will bloom and grow,
All harm shall be undone.
— Voluspá, 61-62*



What is Runecairn?

Runecairn is a Norse fantasy tabletop roleplaying game intended for two players, the **Warden** (the facilitator or game master) and the **Adventurer**.

For **solo play** or two or more Adventurers, please see **Advanced Rules**.

Design Philosophy

Neutrality. The Warden's role is to portray the rules, situations, NPCs, and narrative clearly, while acting as a neutral arbiter.

Classless. An Adventurer's role or skills are not limited by a single class. Instead, the equipment they carry and their experiences defines their specialty.

Death. An Adventurer may be powerful, but they are also vulnerable to harm in its many forms. Death is always around the corner, but it is never random or without warning.

Fiction first. Dice do not always reflect an obstacle's difficulty or its outcome. Instead, success and failure are arbitrated by the Warden in dialogue with the player, based on in-world elements.

Growth. An Adventurer is changed through in-world advancement, gaining new skills and abilities by surviving hazards and overcoming obstacles.

Player choice. A player should always understand the reasons behind the choices they've made, and information about potential risks should be provided freely and frequently.

Principles. The Warden and Adventurer each have guidelines that help foster a specific play experience defined by critical thinking, exploration, and an emergent

narrative.

Adventures

What type of adventures can a player character expect?

- **Defend** a village against roving invaders
- **Hunt** a monstrous creature stealing children
- **Reclaim** a family cairn overwhelmed by the dead
- **Retrieve** a powerful relic lost in the mountains
- **Confront** a raging jotunn blocking supplies reaching an isolated settlement
- **Broker** peace between two warring clans
- **Protect** a caravan journey travelling through dangerous territory
- **Infiltrate** a secretive cult worshipping forgotten gods
- **Explore** newly discovered lands in search of a mythical beast



Principles for Wardens

Information

- Provide useful information about the game world as the Adventurer explores
- A player does not need to roll dice to learn about their circumstances
- Be helpful and direct with your answers to their questions
- Respond honestly, describe consistently, and always let them know they can keep asking questions

Difficulty

- Default to context and realism rather than numbers and mechanics
- If something the player wants to do is sincerely impossible, no roll will allow them to do it
- Is what the player describes and how they leverage the situation sensible? Let it happen
- Saves cover a great deal of uncertain situations and are often all that is necessary for risky actions

Preparation

- The game world is organic, malleable and random - it intuitively turns sharply
- Use random tables and generators to develop situations, not stories or plots
- NPCs remember what the Adventurers say and do, and how they affect the world
- NPCs don't want to die - infuse their own self-interest and will to live into every personality

Narrative Focus

- Emergent experience of play is what matters, not math or Adventurer abilities - give the player weapon trainers and personal quests to facilitate improvement and specialisation
- Pay attention to the needs and wants of the player, then put realistic opportunities in their path
- A dagger to your throat will kill you, regardless of your heavy armour and impressive training

Danger

- The game world produces real risk of pain and death for the Adventurer
- Telegraph serious danger to the player when it is present - the more dangerous, the more obvious
- Put traps in plain sight and let the player take time to discover a solution
- Give the player opportunities to solve problems and interact with the world

Choice

- Give the player a solid choice to force outcomes when the situation lulls
- Use binary "so, A or B?" responses when their intentions are vague
- Work together with this conversational progress to keep the game moving
- Ensure that the Adventurer's actions leave their mark on the game world

Die of Fate

- Occasionally you will want an element of randomness (e.g. the weather, unique character knowledge, etc.)
- At these times, roll d6 - 4 or more favours the player while 3 or under means bad luck





Principles for the Player

Agency

- Attributes and related saves do not define your Adventurer - they are tools
- Don't ask only what your character would do, ask what you would do, too
- Be creative with your intuition, items, and connections

Exploration

- Asking questions and listening to detail is more useful than any stats, items, or skills you have
- Take the Warden's description without suspicion, but don't shy away from seeking more information
- There is no single correct way forward

Talking

- Treat NPCs as if they were real people and rely on your curiosity to safely gain information and solve problems
- You'll find that most people are interesting and will want to talk things through before getting violent

Caution

- Fighting is a choice and rarely a wise one; consider whether violence is the best way to achieve your goals
- Try to stack the odds in your favour and retreat when things seem unfavourable

Planning

- Think of ways to avoid your obstacles through reconnaissance, subtlety, and fact-finding
- Do some research and ask around about your objectives

Ambition

- Set goals and use your meagre means to take steps forward
- Expect nothing - earn your reputation
- Keep things moving forward and play to see what happens

Principles of the World

The Nine Realms

- The battle of Ragnarok is done and the world is broken
- The realms are full of danger and wonder
- There are echoes of the old world everywhere
- Travel between the realms is perilous and rare

The Gods

- The Aesir and the Vanir are all dead or missing
- Mjöltnir is lost and Gungnir is broken
- The Jotunn are scattered, most fled to Jotunheim

The Titans

- The Sons of Fenrir wander hungry and feral
- Jörmungandr is dead, their skeleton long picked clean
- Strange new titans roam unchallenged and dominant

Bonfires

- The light of a bonfire will always lead you to safety
- Bonfires link the Nine Realms
- The flames of a bonfire never dwindle

Secrets

- Secrets are worth seeking out but all are well guarded and dangerous
- Some mysteries will never be solved

Magic

- Magic is wild and unpredictable, with behaviour changing from one realm to another
- The use of magic draws unwanted attention

Defeat

- If one path leads to defeat, try another
- Some obstacles cannot be overcome immediately
- With every defeat comes new knowledge and opportunities

Death

- Spirits gather in places of the dead
- Remnants of the wars wander as shades, all humanity and vigour lost
- Death is not the end

Viking Age

Though inspired by the historical Viking Age (roughly 8th-11th century CE), the realms of Runecairn exist in a Norse fantasy world brimming with mythology and folklore, ever changing and evolving.



ADVENTURER CREATION

Creating a new Adventurer

1. Name

Choose or roll to find a name for your Adventurer from the **Names table** (page 82).

Next, roll for your Adventurer's traits (appearance, speech, personality, etc.) on the **Adventurer Traits** tables (page 82).

2. Ability scores

Roll **3d6** for each ability in order, swap any two.

Strength (Str): Used for saves requiring physical power, like lifting gates, bending bars, resisting poison, etc.

Dexterity (Dex): Used for saves requiring agility, speed, and reflexes like dodging, climbing, sneaking, balancing, etc.

Wits (Wit): Used for saves to interrogate, investigate, provoke, manipulate spells, etc.

Spirit (Spi): Used for saves to charm, self-control, intimidate, persuade, belief, etc.

3. Vigour

Roll **d6** for your starting **Vigour** score.

Vigour determines your self-determination, drive, and focus and is what stands between you and the hollow void.

You lose one point of vigour at death. If your vigour drops to 0, you become a **shade**, a hollow being neither dead nor alive, and are lost to the darkness.

4. Vitality

Roll **d6** to determine your **Vitality**, how hale and hearty you are.

5. Resilience (Res)

Resilience is your ability to avoid damage in combat. **Resilience** is made up of **Vitality** and **Vigour**. Add the two stats together to get your **Resilience**.

If your **Resilience** drops below 0, you start taking **Str** damage. If that happens, prepare to die.

6. Starting class

Determines **initial equipment** and **skills**.

Each background has a **key ability** and **key item**. Your key item adds new **skills**. Change your class by picking up a new key item, if you meet the requirements.

You can only carry **one** key item at a time.

Your starting class does not determine what type of Adventurer you are.

What you were does not dictate who you can be.





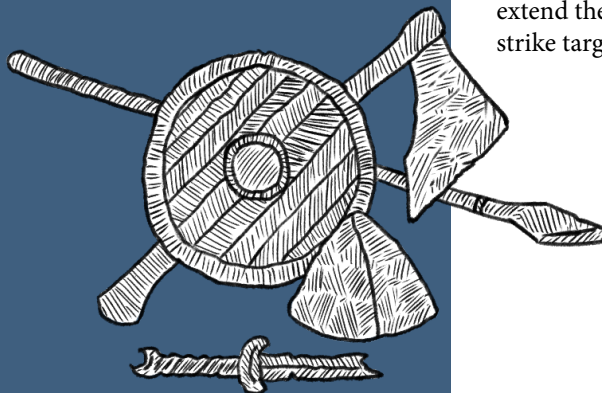
WARRIOR

In another life you might have been a soldier, a guardsman, a shieldmaiden, or a raider. Your shield was always strapped to your arm and your axe and spear always to hand.

You sang the songs of battle and drank to victory and defeat in smoke-filled halls.

In combat, you favoured the direct approach, relying on your sturdy armour to deflect any blows while giving you time to land your own.

In the time before you prayed to Oðinn for a glorious death but now your fate is your own to choose.



Warrior (Str, 3 Def)

Linden wood shield key, +1 Def

Chain mail bulky, 2 Def

Bearded axe d8

Ash wood spear d6, 20'

Memento of defeat

Free slots 4

Skills

Block (reaction, key item): Raise shield; **Str** save to avoid all **physical damage** (**Fatigue**)

Parry (reaction, key item): Deflect attack and riposte; **Str** save to avoid all **physical damage** and retaliate with **damage advantage** - failure results in the attack against you gaining **damage advantage**

Disarm (axe): Hook your opponent's weapon hand; target needs to make a **Dex** save or be disarmed (**Fatigue**)

Hack (axe): Attack your opponent in a frenzy for **double damage** (**Fatigue**)

→ **Dire strike:** Your opponent needs to make a **Str** save or stagger back from the ferocity of the attack, moving back 5 feet and losing their next turn

Thrust (spear): Lunge forward to extend the range of your weapon and strike targets up to **10 feet** away (**Fatigue**)

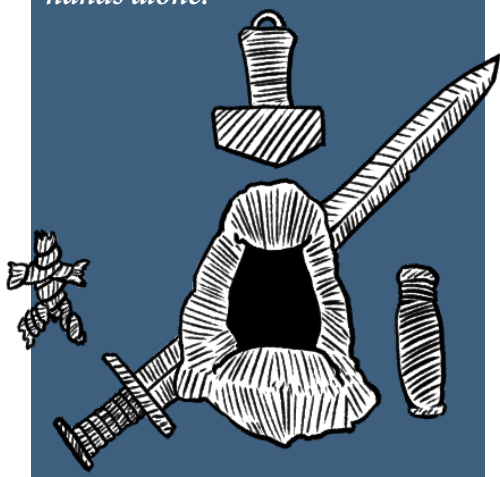
SKALD

In another life you might have spoken for the dead, burned sweet sacrifices to the gods, wandered the land weaving tales of myth and legend.

Your voice spoke for all and none. You deciphered the will of the gods and shone their light on the people of the realms.

In combat, you wielded the fury of the gods, whether thunder or steel. Your toughened reindeer hide helped deflect all but the sharpest spears and your voice itself was said to shake mountains.

Although the time of the gods is done, you still work their will and wield their power. How you choose to use it is now in your hands alone.



Skald (Spi, 2 Def)

Runic focus	key, small
Reindeer hide	1 Def
Leather hood	+1 Def
Steel sword	d6
Saga	Heal or Lightning Spear
Sacred waters	d10
Sacrificial bundle	small
Free slots	5

Skills

Lightning knife (key item): Manifest and wield or throw a dagger made of lightning for **d4** damage, 20ft range

Shout (reaction, key item): Your voice propels a shockwave that staggers a foe within **melee range**; **Spi** save to disrupt an attack and take no damage (**Fatigue**)

Heal (spell): Call upon the remaining power of the gods to heal your wounds; restore **10 Resilience** and clear the **Deprived** condition (**Fatigue**)

Lightning Spear (spell): Summon a crackling bolt of lightning; strike your foe for **d8 damage**, 60ft range (**Fatigue**)

Sunder (sword): Tear through your opponent's armour for **d6 damage**; first occurrence causes target to lose **1 Def** (**Fatigue**)

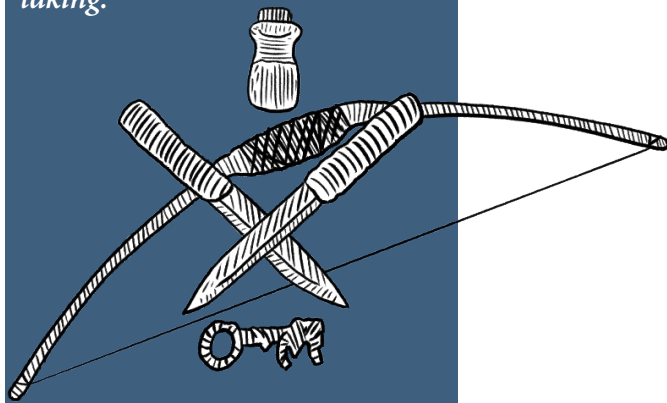
SCOUT

In another life you might have been a hunter, an archer, a scoundrel, or an explorer. With a pair of sharp knives and a trusty shortbow, you easily made your way in the world, whether in untamed wilderness or cut-throat civilisation.

You found the paths and trails no-one else could, weaving your way through danger and adventure at every turn. Your fast reflexes helped save you in situations where your quick tongue could not.

In combat, you either slipped in close, unnoticed, or struck silently from afar with unerring accuracy.

Even in the time before you forged your own path. Now that your fate is truly unwritten, the Nine Realms are yours for the taking.



Scout (Dex, 1 Def)

Hunting knives	key, d6
Quilted cloth	1 Def
Elm shortbow	bulky, d6, 60'
Fire oil	blast, d8
Skeleton key	small
Free slots	5

Skills

Dash (reaction, key item): Deftly evade an attack; **Dex** save to avoid all damage – failing the save **impairs** the enemy's attack, reducing it to **d4 (Fatigue)**

Backstab (key item): Dash behind your enemy and inflict a critical strike; **Dex** save to strike for **double damage (2d6)** - failure results in an attack from the target with **damage advantage**

Lacerate (knives): Slice a deep wound in your enemy for an initial **d6 damage**; roll **d4** to determine bleed damage and duration (**Fatigue**)

Volley (shortbow): Fire two arrows without hesitation -- roll damage die twice (**Fatigue**)

→ **Dire strike:** Fire another arrow and roll another damage die

SEER

In another life you might have been a wise woman, an augur, a trickster, or a conjurer. The only things you needed were your wits and a hunger for knowledge. You sought to delve the mysteries of the realms and pluck forth the secrets within.

You stayed in the shadows, called on for your counsel and power. Mistrusted by some, feared by others, and respected by all.

You were never much for combat, preferring to work your cunning to rain destruction or mischief on your foes from a safe distance.

The gods are dead but their secrets are still waiting under ash and weald. You've seen your future and it's filled with endless possibilities.



Seer (Wit, 0 Def)

Yew staff	key, d4
Stout linen	small, 0 Def
Runestone	Slow or seiðr spear
Bleached jawbone	
Free slots	7

Skills

Greystone (key item): Cast a magical stone as if from a sling for **d4** damage, 30' range

Barrier (reaction, key item): Cast a barrier spell; **Wit** save to raise a magical shield to negate all damage from the attack – failing the save imposes **damage disadvantage** on the target's attack (**Fatigue**)

Slow (spell): Slows nearby enemies (**Fatigue**)

Seiðr spear (spell): Propel a spear of pure energy; strike your foe with the spear for **d10 damage**, 60' range (**Fatigue**)

Clobber (staff): Smash the enemy's head with **damage advantage**; target needs to make a **Str** save or be dazed, losing their next turn (**Fatigue**)

Adventurer creation example

New tabletop role-playing gamer
Amy wants to create an Adventurer in *Runecairn*.

Amy starts by rolling on the names table and gets **54**, *Lind*. Amy likes the sounds so decides to keep it.

Amy doesn't know much about Lind at this point, so she rolls on the Adventurer traits tables and gets the following results:

She's **brawny**, with **dark skin**, **braided hair**, and a **sharp face**. She's **eloquent**, **ambitious**, and **deceitful**.

Lind is starting to take shape in Amy's mind.

Amy rolls **3d6** four times and assigns the results to her abilities:

Str 9

Dex 10

Wit 14

Spi 16

With a Spirit of 16 Lind would make a good **skald**, so Amy chooses that starting class.

She switches her **Dex** and **Wit** scores to give her Skald more dexterity and ends up with these final abilities:

Str 9

Dex 14

Wit 10

Spi 16

Amy generates Lind's **Resilience (Res)** score next. She rolls a **d6** for Lind's **Vigour** and gets 3.

Amy then rolls a **d6** for **Vitality** and gets 4.

Adding the two rolls up, Lind the Skald has **7 Resilience**.

The Skald class starts with the following equipment:

- Runic focus (key item) (small)
- Reindeer hide armour (1 Defence)
- Leather hood (+1 Defence)
- Steel sword (d6)
- Saga: *heal* or *lightning spear* (choose 1)
- Sacred waters
- Sacrificial bundle (small)

Her two pieces of armour (*reindeer hide* and *leather hood*) gives her a total **defence** of **2**.

Her **key item** is a *runic focus*, which allows her to cast magic in the form of **sagas**. Amy has the choice of either a healing tale (*Heal*) or a tale of Thor the thunder god (*Lightning Spear*). She thinks that Lind would be a follower of Thor and takes lightning spear.

Lind wields a *steel sword* that does d6 damage and fills out the rest of her inventory with helpful items like *sacred waters* and a *sacrificial bundle*.

With her starting equipment stowed or worn, Lind has **5 free inventory** slots that she can use to **loot items**, **cast spells**, or **take reactions** in combat. None of her items are **bulky** so they only take up one slot each. **Small** items don't take up any space.

Sagas don't take up physical slots but instead take up space in Lind's mind as the tales are dense and elaborate.

Lind also has a flask filled with **Iðunn's mead**, which heals her injuries and helps to clear fatigue. She starts with **two sips** of mead.

Amy's now finished creating her new skald, Lind, who's equipped and ready to set off into a strange new world.



Lind the Skald

RESILIENCE

/ 9

VIGOUR 4

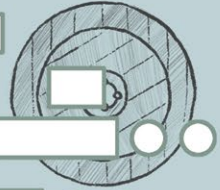
VITALITY 5

SPEED DEF

40

2

SHIELD



ARMOUR

2

Reindeer hide and leather hood

KEY ITEM

Runic focus

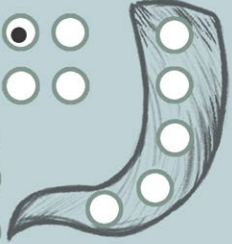


WEAPONS

Steel sword

d6

MEAD



SKILLS/ SPELLS

Lightning knife d4

Shout

Lightning spear d8

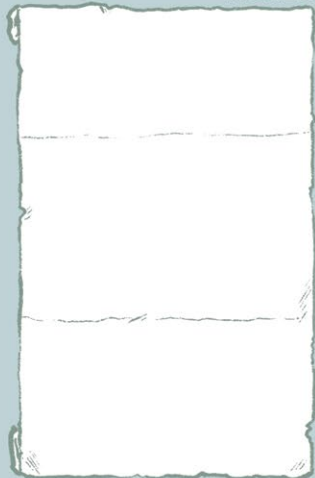
Sunder d6



SOULS



NOTES



STR 9 / 9

DEX 14 / 14

WIT 10 / 10

SPI 16 / 16



CURSED

FATIGUE §§§

DEPRIVED



POISONED



INVENTORY 5 / 10

Saga: Lightning spear

Sacred waters

Sacrificial bundle (small)



SLOT



REACTION



CAUSES FATIGUE

CONCEPTS OF PLAY

Resilience

Resilience (Res) is the ability to avoid damage in combat, representing your personal drive, toughness, instinct and survivability.

Resilience is calculated by adding two stats: **Vigour (d6)** and **Vitality (d6)**. Damage reduces your **Resilience** and **drinking mead** or **resting at a bonfire** restores it.

If an attack takes your **Resilience** exactly to 0, roll on the **Omens** table (page 35).

Defence

Before calculating damage to **Resilience**, subtract the target's **Defence** value from the result of **physical damage** rolls. Shields and similar armour provide a bonus (e.g. +1 Defence), but only while the item is held or worn.

Magic bypasses mundane armour - **Defence** doesn't reduce **magical damage**.

Wearing heavy armour weighs you down. If you're wearing **bulky** armour, make all **Dex** saves at **disadvantage** due to the cumbersome nature.

Inventory

- You start with **10 inventory slots**
- Most items take up **1 slot** and **small** items don't take up any
- **Bulky** items take up **2 slots** and are two-handed or awkward to carry
- Anyone with a **full inventory** (all slots filled) is reduced to **0 Resilience**
- You can't carry more items than your inventory allows

Saves

A save is a roll to avoid bad outcomes from risky choices and circumstances.

Roll a d20 for an appropriate ability score. If you roll *equal to or under that ability score*, you pass. Otherwise, you fail. A 1 is always a success, and a 20 is always a failure.

In some situations, saves are made with a bonus (**advantage**) or penalty (**disadvantage**).

Roll two d20s, take the lower result for **advantage** and the higher for **disadvantage**.

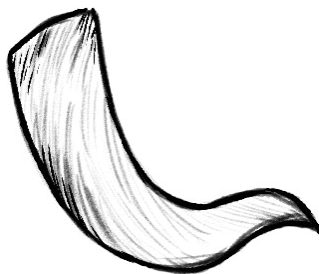
Mead flask & healing

Filled with mead brewed by the gods and infused with the goddess Iðunn's everlasting apples; sipping this mead restores health and heals injuries.

One sip takes an action and restores **10 Res** and clears **2 points of Fatigue**. The flask is replenished when resting at a bonfire.

You start with **2 sips**. The amount of mead in the flask can be increased under the right circumstances.

Your **mead flask** does not take up any inventory slots.





Status effects

- **Cursed:** **Resilience** is halved until the curse is lifted or otherwise dispelled
- **Deprived:** You can't **recover Resilience** or take **reactions** until you rest at a bonfire
- **Poisoned:** Take damage every turn, bypassing **Def**; a successful **Str** save or resting at a **bonfire** cleanses the poison

Fatigue

Your actions and items weigh heavily on you and fatigue can easily overwhelm.

Fatigue is caused by casting **spells**, using certain **skills**, and rare **monster abilities**.

Each **Fatigue** occupies **1 inventory slot** and lasts until the Adventurer rests at a **bonfire**.

Clearing fatigue

During a moment of calm, you can spend **1 soul** to clear **d4** points of **Fatigue** (see **Souls**).

You can also attempt to clear **Fatigue** through introspection, such as reflecting on your ancestors, meditating in nature, or singing a song to lift your spirits.

Roll a **d6** and compare the result to your current **Vigour** score. If you roll under (**success**), clear that many points of **Fatigue**. If you roll over (**failure**), you lose **1 point** of **Vigour**.

You can attempt to **clear Fatigue** in this manner once per day.

Bonfires

Bonfires link the Nine Realms and offer a beacon of hope to souls lost in the dark.

Resting at a bonfire restores all lost **Resilience**, clears all **Fatigue** from your inventory, and resets **ability score loss**.

Resting at a bonfire also causes most slain foes to return to life. Powerful or intelligent foes such as **gods**, **jotunn**, or **dragons** are not reborn in this manner and remain dead when defeated.

When resting at a bonfire, you can choose to spend **Souls** to grow your power.

Death

Prepare to die often. Upon death, you wake at the last bonfire rested at with all your current items.

Lose one point of total **Vigour** for every death. If your total **Vigour** reaches 0, your Adventurer is forever lost to the darkness.

One point of **Vigour** can be restored by a full day communing with a **skald** or by burning a **sacrificial bundle** at a bonfire.

Souls

The might of the gods has been scattered across the Nine Realms. Fragments of this power exist as **soul remnants**, energy manifested and crystallised into physical form.

You may discover **Soul remnants** in hidden and secret places, in areas of great power, or under the watch of fearsome guardians. **Soul remnants** are **small** and take up no inventory space.

Powerful beings such as **jotunn**, **dragons**, or **demons** may also be imbued with the scattered essence of the gods. Overcoming these foes, through combat or other means, grants you ephemeral slivers of this power: **souls**.

Breaking a **soul remnant** will imbue you with the **souls** held within.

Souls are delicate and are discarded when you die. You have one chance to recover dropped **souls** after you wake up at the bonfire. Die again before retrieving them and they're lost forever.

Spending souls

As **souls** represent the innate power of the gods, you can absorb this power to grow stronger.

When resting at a bonfire, you can focus on the imbued power and enhance your might.

While resting, spend 1 soul to permanently increase one of the following attributes: **Strength**, **Dexterity**, **Wits**, **Spirit**, or **Vitality**.

Rare merchants and travellers trade in souls and you can barter for goods and services with **soul remnants**. Certain spells or relics can also coalesce **soul remnants** from imbued **souls**.

Wealth & treasure

Gold and most coins have little value and most trade is through barter.

Treasure takes the form of weapons, armour, spells, or relics. It can be a lure, taking Adventurers to exotic and even dangerous locations, and is often under the protection of intimidating foes.

ITEMS & EQUIPMENT

Armour

Chain mail: Heavy mail shirt made up of riveted rings, worn over thick clothing

Fur cloak: Dense, coarse fur treated and sewn into a thick cloak with a fierce bear or wolf headdress

Iron helmet: Curved helmet made of riveted iron plates; uncomfortable but offers good protection

Laced iron plate: Small iron plates laced together over a leather shirt

Leather hood: Fine leather hood with wolfskin cloak

Plated leather: Charred and soot-blackened leather smock, reinforced with sewn iron plates

Quilted cloth: Padded wool defensive jacket helps deflect slashes

Reindeer hide: Cured and toughened leather hide; a symbol of wealth and status

Stout linen: Comfortable and well-made, allows free movement but offers no protection from attack

Shields

Buckler: Small leather-wrapped shield used to protect the weapon hand

Kite Shield: Large, almond-shaped shield made from wood and iron

Linden wood shield: Made from dense wood, round shield reinforced with iron

Armour

Name	Def	Qualities
Fur cloak	0	rare, small
Stout linen	0	small
Plated leather	1	rare
Quilted cloth	1	
Reindeer hide	1	rare
Chain mail	2	bulky
Laced iron plate	3	rare, bulky, Str 14
Iron helmet	+1	
Leather hood	+1	rare

Shields

Name	Def	Qualities
Buckler	+1	rare
Linden wood shield	+1	key, block, parry, Str 12
Kite shield	+2	key, bulky, block, parry

Weapons

Ash spear: Wood shaft fitted with sharp iron head, used for thrusting or throwing

Bearded axe: Wrought iron head with hooked steel cutting edge attached to an oak haft

Blacksmith hammer: Short oak haft fitted with dense iron head

Breaking maul: Heavy two-handed maul with dense iron head fixed to reinforced oak shaft

Broad axe: Longer version of the bearded axe, held with two hands and requiring great strength

Weapons

Name	Dmg	Qualities	Weapon Skills
Spear, ash	d6	ranged, 20'	thrust 10'
Axe, bearded	d8	Str 10	hack 2d8, disarm
Axe, broad	d10	key, bulky, Str 16	shove, cleave, disarm
Axe, hand	d6	dual, ranged, 30'	hack 2d6
Cudgel	d6		clobber d6 (adv)
Fire grippers	d6	key, rare	flameshield, ignite
Hammer, blacksmith	d6	rare	smash d6 (adv)
Hunting knives	d6	key, dual	dash, backstab, lacerate
Longbow, elm	d8	bulky, ranged, 100'	volley 2d8
Maul, breaking	d10	key, rare, bulky, Str 17	shove, smash d10 (adv)
Seax	d6		rend
Shortbow, elm	d6	bulky, ranged, 60'	volley 2d6
Sling, stone	d4	ranged, 30'	flurry 2d4
Spear, hewing	d10	key, bulky, Str 14	shove, cleave, lacerate
Staff, yew	d4	key, Wit 12	greystone, barrier, clobber d4 (adv)
Sword, grave	d10	rare, bulky	frenzy, sunder
Sword, steel	d6	rare	sunder

Cudgel: Stout piece of wood used for clubbing

Elm longbow: Long curved bow made from elm wood, tied with strong flax

Elm shortbow: Curved bow made from elm wood, tied with strong flax

Fire grippers: Leather gloves reinforced with iron plates etched with fiery runes; can be used to bolster unarmed attacks

Grave sword: Long, wide double-edged blade, held with two hands; unusual design, extremely heavy

Hand axe: Balanced axe, light enough to be thrown or wield in both hands

Hewing spear: Long oak shaft with curved iron blade

Hunting knives: A pair of versatile knives, straight blade with sweeping edge sharpened to a fine point

Seax: Broad, single-edged blade fixed to a horn hilt and worn on a belt

Steel sword: Double-edged blade, held single-handed; ownership is a matter of high honour

Stone sling: Rope and leather cup used to propel stones with dangerous accuracy

Yew staff: Long, curved wooden staff, carved with intricate runes and figures

Equipment skills

Backstab: Dash behind your enemy and inflict a critical strike (**Dex**)

- **Success:** Strike your target for **double damage**
 - **Failure:** Retaliatory attack from the target at **double damage**
- **Dire strike:** Follow up with an extra attack that bypasses defence

Barrier (reaction): Raise a magical shield to negate all **damage** from the attack (**Wit, Fatigue**)

Block (reaction): Raise your shield to block an incoming attack (**Str, Fatigue**)

Charge (reaction, figurine): Drive your shoulder into your opponent; **Str** save to disrupt the attack and take no damage (**Fatigue**)

Cleave: Deliver a devastating sweeping attack (**Str, Fatigue**)

- **Success:** Strike your target for **double damage**
 - **Failure:** Retaliatory attack from the target at **double damage**
- **Dire strike:** Make an extra attack against the nearest target within 10ft

Clobber: Smash the enemy's head with **damage advantage**; target needs to make a **Str** save or be dazed, losing their next turn (**Fatigue**)

Dash (reaction): Deftly dodge to evade an attack (**Dex, Fatigue**)

- **Success:** Avoid **all damage**
- **Failure:** **Impair** the enemy's attack, reducing to **d4 damage**

Disarm: Hook your opponent's weapon hand; target needs to make a **Dex** save or be disarmed (**Fatigue**)

Flameshield (reaction): Manifest a fiery shield in your offhand to deflect an attack; **Spi** save to avoid all damage (**Fatigue**)

Flurry: Sling two stones rapidly -- roll **damage** twice (**Fatigue**)

- **Dire strike:** Sling a third stone and roll an extra damage die

Frenzy: The ferocity of your attack staggers your opponent; non-undead targets need to make a **Spi** save or falter momentarily, allowing you to make an **extra attack (Fatigue)**

Greystone: Cast a magical stone as if from a sling for **d4 damage**

Hack: Attack your opponent in a frenzy for **double damage (Fatigue)**

- **Dire strike:** Your opponent needs to make a **Str** save or stagger from the ferocity of the attack, moving back 5 ft. and losing their next turn

Ignite: Channel ancient magic to ignite your weapon (or the gloves themselves) in blazing fire; for the duration of the fight, melee attacks now do **double damage** and bypass **mundane armour**, ignoring **Def (Fatigue)**

Lacerate: Slice a deep wound in your enemy for an initial **d6 damage**; roll **d4** to determine bleed damage and duration (**Fatigue**)

Parry (reaction): Deflect an incoming attack and riposte (**Str**)

- **Success:** Avoid all **physical damage** and retaliate for **double damage**
- **Failure:** Retaliatory attack from the target at **double damage**

Rage: Call upon your animal spirit which imbues you with bestial strength; for **d4** rounds, gain **3 Def** and make all melee attacks at **double damage**. When the rage ends, make a **Spi** save (you can choose to fail):

- **Success:** The animal spirit departs and you regain control; add **2 Fatigue**
- **Failure:** The beast takes control; lose **1**

Spirit and continue to rage with a **50% chance** to attack **friendly targets**

Rend: Inflict a vital wound for **d6 damage**; target needs to make a **Dex** save or be reduced to **half speed** for the duration of the fight (**Fatigue**)

Shout (reaction): Your voice propels a shockwave that staggers your foe; you deflect the attack and take no **physical damage** (**Spi, Fatigue**)

Shove (reaction): Take your weapon in both hands and push back against an enemy, halting their strike (**Str, Fatigue**)

Smash: Bludgeon your opponent with **damage advantage**; target needs to make **Str** save or be knocked down (**Fatigue**)

Sunder: Tear through your opponent's armour for **d4 damage**; causes target to lose **1 Def** (**Fatigue**)

Thrust: Lunge forward to extend the range of your weapon and strike targets up to 10 feet away (**Fatigue**)

Volley: Fire two arrows without hesitation -- roll **damage** twice (**Fatigue**)

→ **Dire strike:** Fire another arrow and roll an extra damage die

Items

Apple, dried: A slice of one of Iðunn's apples, dried in the sun. Eating one clears **1 point of Fatigue**

Beaststone: Crudely chiselled from black stone, in the form of a bear or wolf; calling upon the spirit of the animal imbues you with bestial rage

Bleached jawbone: Cleaned human jawbone; low chance to commune with the spirits of your ancestors (**1** on a **d20**) or summon a vengeful spirit (**20** on a **d20**)

Effigy stone: Ornate limestone figure, carved in the likeness of a great hero. Calls to the spirit of a hero to join you in the physical world. Spend a point of **Vigour** to summon a hero to fight by your side.

Fire oil: Faded glass bottle filled with viscous orange liquid; breaks when thrown and erupts into flame for **d8** blast damage

Kindled bale: Bones, broken sword, and pine resin wrapped in twine; place and set alight to create a **bonfire**

Memento of defeat: Broken and rusted sword; by holding and focusing on past failures lose all your held souls and awaken at the last bonfire rested at

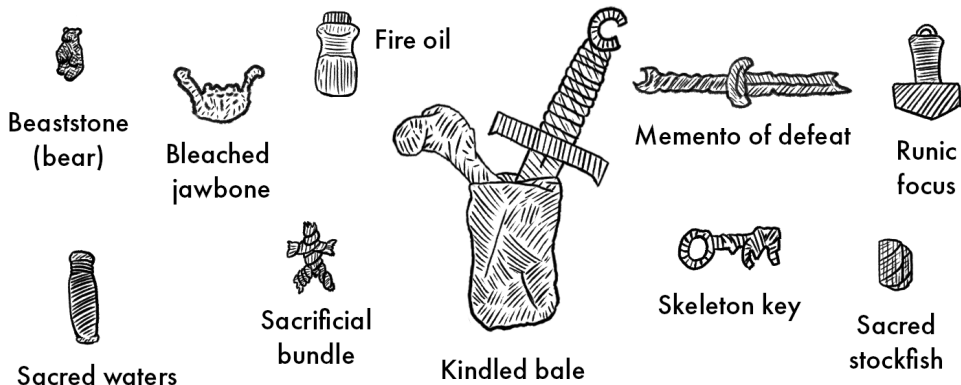
Runic focus: Hand-carved from ash wood, decorated with runes; can be any number of shapes associated with the gods and bestows different powers accordingly

Sacred stockfish: Dried cod fished from a sacred river; eat to restore **1 point of Spirit** or feed to a wild animal to **befriend** them until sunset

Sacred waters: Water from the well of fate; drink to regain **8 Res** or throw to cause **d10** blast damage to undead

Sacrificial bundle: Crude figure of a person made from moss, twine, and ash; burn at a bonfire to restore **1 point of Vigour**

Skeleton key: Ancient key crafted from the finger bones of a thief; low chance of opening any locked door (**1-2** on a **d20**, breaks on a **20**)



Items	
Name	Qualities
Apple, dried	small
Beaststone	key, rare
Bleached jawbone	rare
Chalk	small
Chisel	-
Effigy stone	rare
Face paint	small
Fire oil	rare
Horn	-
Kindled pyre	rare
Lantern & oil	-
Large trap	bulky
Leather rucksack	rare, bulky, 4 slots
Lockpicks	small
Memento of defeat	rare
Net	-
Pick	-
Pole (10ft)	bulky
Quill & ink	small
Rope (25ft)	-
Runic focus	key, small, Spi 12
Sack	2 slots
Sacred stockfish	rare
Sacred waters	rare
Sacrificial bundle	small
Saw	-
Skeleton key	rare, small
Spike	small
Tar	-
Torch	-

Rounds

- Roughly ten seconds of in-game time
- Comprised of **turns**

Actions

- **Move up to 40ft, cast a spell, attack, move again**, or other reasonable action
- Declare actions before rolling dice; if risky, the Warden calls for a save
- All actions, attacks, and movements occur simultaneously

Reactions

- Adventurers can **react** to an enemy attack and attempt to either **block, deflect, avoid**, or otherwise mitigate damage
- Some reactions are only available through **key items** or **relics**

All Adventurers have the following reactions:

- **Roll**: Make a **Dex** save to roll away from an enemy's attack, **avoiding all physical damage** (causes **Fatigue**)
- **Withdraw**: Make a **Dex** save to disengage from combat and retreat, **avoiding all damage**; failing the save means you escape but still take damage from the attack

Turns

The Warden telegraphs the actions taken by NPCs or monsters.

If surprised at the start of combat, the Adventurer makes a **Dex save** to act before their opponents.

Failing this save also means Adventurers can't use a **Reaction** in their first turn.

Attacking & damage

- Attacks lower **Resilience** but damage is reduced by **Defence (Def)**
- Roll weapon die and subtract **Def**; deal remaining to the target's **Resilience**
- **Magic** bypasses **mundane armour** but not **magical armour**
- Unarmed attacks always do **1d4** damage.

Attack modifiers

Damage advantage. Attacks from a position of strength (against a helpless foe or through a daring manoeuvre). Roll for damage twice and take the **higher result**.

Damage disadvantage. Attacks from a position of weakness (through cover or with bound hands). Roll for damage twice and take the **lower result**.

Certain skills or items can also grant **damage advantage** or **disadvantage**.

Multiple attackers. If multiple attackers target the same foe, roll all damage dice and keep the single highest result (**damage advantage**).

Dual and 2-handed weapons. If attacking with two weapons at the same time or one weapon held in both hands, gain damage advantage.

Dire strike

Some weapons or enemies have special abilities that are triggered when rolling **max damage**, such as rolling 10 on a d10.

The Warden can also decide the effect of a **dire strike**.





Blast

Blast attacks affect all targets in the area, rolling separately for each affected target. Blast refers to anything from explosions to huge cleaving onslaughts to the impact of a meteorite.

If unsure how many targets can be affected, roll the damage die for a result.

Ability score loss

If any of a Adventurer's **ability scores** are reduced to 0, they die.

Ability loss is reset when resting at a bonfire or by certain magic or items.

Critical damage

- Once a target reaches **0 Res**, any additional damage reduces **Str** directly and triggers a **critical damage** save
- The target must roll under **Str** to avoid **critical damage** (this includes Adventurers, NPCs, and monsters); any target that fails a **critical damage** save **dies**

Death

On death, Adventurers wake up at the last bonfire rested at. They keep all inventory items but drop unspent **souls** at the location of their death.

Resurrected Adventurers can retrieve these dropped **souls** if they reach this location without dying again. Dropped **souls** are permanently lost at death if not retrieved.

Omens

Omens are messages from spirits, the gods, or the land and can represent fortune or favour.

When an attack reduces a Adventurer's **Resilience** to exactly 0, this triggers an omen. Roll a d8 on the Omens table to determine the event and outcome.

Omens

- 1 A spirit appears to you in the form of an animal. Make a **Spi** save. If you pass, the animal accompanies you until dawn of the next day.
- 2 Roiling storm clouds gather overhead and a you glimpse a winged shape within. Make an **Wit** save. If you fail, you flee from the shape in terror.
- 3 The ground trembles and shakes as if a titan approaches. Make a **Dex** save. If you fail, you're knocked to the ground.
- 4 A ghostly figure emerges from the wilderness and shrieks before fading away. Make a **Str** save. If you fail, you lose most of your hearing until the next day.
- 5 You hear the hushed murmur of a thousand voices whispering in unknown tongues. Make an **Wit** save. If you pass, you gain insight into the future.
- 6 As if the dead of winter, you see your breath billow in a misty cloud as the heat drains from your body. Make a **Str** save. If you fail, gain 2 points of fatigue from the cold.
- 7 A lank hooded man in a wide-brimmed hat appears on the horizon, beckoning you forward. Make a **Spi** save. If you fail, you follow the hooded man into a trap.
- 8 You hear the howl of an enormous wolf rolling across the landscape, followed by echoing calls in response. Make a **Dex** save. If you pass, the wolves can't find you.

Combat example

Lind the skald enters a darkened ruin, overgrown and ancient. The corridor leads north and figures are heard shuffling.

Amy: I walk further down the corridor, *steel sword* in one hand and *runic focus* in the other.

Warden: Further down the ruin you see an armoured form wandering aimlessly. Its skin is decayed and drawn and it's holding a rusted spear. It's a **draugr** and it hasn't spotted you yet.

Amy: I'm going to run up and cut it down with my sword!

Warden: OK, you rush forward and slash at the undead warrior. Roll your damage.

Amy rolls a 5 on her d6.

Warden: The draugr has 1 **defence** from its armour so it takes 4 damage. The draugr turns and raises its spear to attack!

Amy: I gather my will and unleash the power of the gods through my voice! I shout NO!

Choosing to use Lind's shout skill as a reaction to avoid the attack, Amy rolls a d20 and attempts to roll under her Spi of 16. She gets 5, a success!

Warden: You emit a shockwave and knock the draugr off balance, deflecting the attack! Tick one **fatigue** for the shout.

Amy does and she now has 4 slots left.

Amy: This thing's not so tough. I strike out with my sword!

Amy rolls a 4 on her d6 for the attack.

Warden: The draugr takes 3 damage -- it's not looking very good! It snarls and thrusts its spear.

Amy: I'll take the hit since I've got decent **defence**.

The Warden rolls a 5 on their d6 for damage. They subtract Lind's defence rating of 2 from the damage.

Warden: Oof! You take 3 points of damage.

Amy: Grr, that's it. I clutch the *runic focus* tightly and weave a tale of Thor the thunderer. **Lightning spear!**

Amy rolls a d8 for damage for her spell and gets a 5. She marks another point of fatigue for the spell.

Warden: **Magic** bypasses the draugr's armour therefore it takes full damage. Because the attack reduces its **Res** below 0, it takes the remaining 4 damage to its **Str**. The draugr now needs to make a **critical damage** Str save or die!

The warden rolls 16 on a d20, failing to roll under the draugr's new Str score of 7.

Warden: It crumples to the ground, a blackened husk from the lightning strike. You've defeated it!

Amy: Yes! Does the body have anything on it?

Warden: Before you can search, the spell you just cast draws the attention of another **draugr**. It shuffles out of the darkness, holding a rotted **shortbow**. Roll a **Dex** save to see if you can react quick enough to avoid it!

Amy rolls a 16 on her d20. Failure, since her Dex is 14!

Warden: You try to step back but aren't quick enough and the arrow strikes you in the arm.

The warden rolls a d6 for damage and gets 4. They subtract Lind's defence.

Warden: You take 2 damage. A second draugr shambles out next to the first, spear in hand. What do you do?

Amy: They're undead right? I throw my bottle of *sacred waters* at them!

*Amy rolls a **d10** twice for damage, one for each draugr, and gets 9 and 4. Amy updates her character sheet to remove the sacred waters from her **inventory**, freeing up a **slot**.*

Warden: The bottle breaks on the first draugr's armour and splashes over them both for magic **blast** damage. The first takes 9 points, bringing it under 0 and reducing its **Str** by 1.

The warden rolls a 1 on the draugr's critical damage save.

Warden: A critical success! The first draugr is still up but at -1 Res. The second sizzles as it takes 4 points of damage. Both lurch forward, spears raised! Unless you avoid it, they'll hit with **damage advantage** since its two on one.

Amy: I grip the *runic focus* and scream a curse from the gods, using my **shout** to deflect the attacks.

*Amy makes a **Spirit** save by rolling a **d20**. A failure at 18! She ticks another fatigue.*

Warden: You struggle to remember the tale and the shout fails to deflect the attack.

*The warden rolls a **d6** twice for the spear attacks and gets 6 and 6.*

Warden: Bad luck, a **dire strike**! One of the spears strikes your abdomen and the other pins you to the ground. You can't move for one turn.

They subtract Lind's defence.

Warden: You take 10 damage.

Amy: I'm at -8!

Warden: You lose 8 points of **Strength**. Make a **critical damage** save to see if you stay on your feet!

*Amy rolls a **d20**, hoping to beat her newly reduced **Str** score of 1. **Natural 20!** A critical failure!*

Warden: You died! The draugr watches your lifeless body collapse to the ground and it slowly lurches away. The world fades to black...

...

... You awaken at a roaring bonfire. Your wounds are healed but you lose 1 point of **Vigour**.

*Amy marks her sheet, cursing her bad luck. She has 3 **Vigour** left. Her total **Resilience** is now reduced to 6.*

Amy: This means the draugr I killed are back alive – er, on their feet again, doesn't it?

Warden: That's right. But at least now you have a better idea what to expect.

Amy furrows her brow and grips her pencil tighter.

Amy: Let's do this!



Magic is a remnant of the gods and draws attention when used. Some see magic as proof the gods live on in the new world.

Runestones. Smooth and delicately polished stones with an inscribed spell hand-etched in runes. Used by **seers** to affect magical change in the world.

Sagas. Not a physical object, but a learned and memorised tale passed down from the gods. Skalds can recite sagas to channel the power of the gods through speech.

Flame runes. Words of power inscribed on fire grippers that allow pyres to shape and control flame.

Runestones and **sagas** contain a single spell and take up one slot. They cannot be transcribed or created; instead they are recovered from places like tombs, dungeons, and ruins. **Fire grippers** can only store one flame rune at a time and they are exceedingly rare.

Scrolls are similar to runestones and sagas, however:

- They do not take up inventory slots.
- They do not cause fatigue.
- They disappear after one use.

Casting spells

Seers cast spells by holding a runestone in one hand and a staff in the other. They read the spell from the runestone and focus the magic through the staff.

Skalds cast spells by holding a **runic focus** and speaking the **saga** aloud.

Pyres cast spells by channelling fire through their **grippers**.

Casting all types of magic takes a toll. After every spell, add a **Fatigue** to inventory, occupying one slot.

Given time and safety, you can *enhance* a spell (e.g., affecting multiple targets, increasing its power, etc.) without any additional cost.

If **deprived** or in danger, the Warden may require you to make either a **Wit** or **Spi** save (depending on the spellcaster) to avoid any ill-effects from casting.

Consequences of failure are on par with the intended effect, and may result in added **Fatigue**, the destruction of the **runestone**, the **saga** slipping from memory, injury, or death.

Only spells that cause **Fatigue** are subject to ill effects.

Relics

Items imbued with a magical spell or power. They do not cause Fatigue. Relics usually have a limited use, as well as a recharge condition.

A few examples:

Eye of Oðinn, 1 charge. Crystalline orb with brilliant red flaw. Grants a glimpse into a chosen realm. **Recharge:** Bathe the Eye in the tears of a god.

Mischief Horn, 3 charges. Delicate curved bronze horn. Blow to cause two random people within the sound of the horn to swap bodies for a day.

Mistletoe Dart, 1 charge. Vibrant leaves conceal a wickedly sharp thistle. When thrown, flies to any named target but lands harmlessly before them. **Recharge:** Witness a kiss of true love.

Skull Beacon, 1 charge. Charred and crumbling skull with a dim glimmer in the sockets. Glows brightly when held. **Recharge:** burn on a roaring bonfire.

Staff of Walking Weald, 1 charge.

Crooked staff speckled with soft moss.

Temporarily animates a plant or tree.

Recharge: bury underneath the oldest tree in the forest for one week.

Rings

Many magical rings may be found but none of them should be used lightly.

Adventurers can wear up to two rings at a time, one on each hand.

A few examples:

Iron Ring. Dense ring wrought from blackened iron. Gain 1 additional defence but lose 10 speed.

Red Berserkr Ring. Crudely shaped bone ring with a glinting rough cut ruby. Re-roll 1s on damage dice for melee attacks but lose all defence bonus from armour.

Ring of the Mists. Exquisite Dwarven-crafted silver ring carved with undecipherable runes. Allows the bearer to travel between the realms of the living and the dead but draws the attention of untold horrors.

Sylva's Ring. Delicate wooden ring entwined by sharp thorns. Gain 2 extra inventory slots but lose 1 vigour.



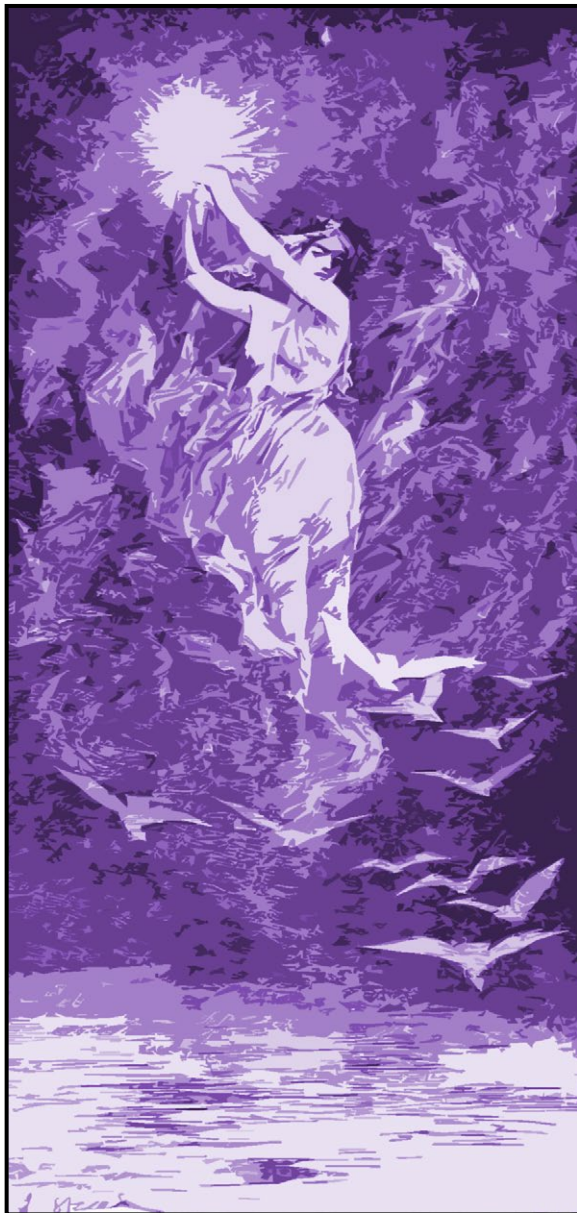
SPELL LISTS

Seer Spells

Spell Name	Description
All-father's Eye	You can see through a magical floating eyeball that flies at your command
Armoured	Gain 2 points of defence
Beast Form	You and your possessions transform into a mundane animal
Cloak of Knives	Dozens of knives rotate around you, slashing anything that approaches for d8 damage; on your word they fly at a chosen target for 3d6 damage
Decoy	Manifest a spectral sound at a location of your choice
Detect Magic	Detect beings or objects imbued with magic
Disappear	Fade from normal sight
Elemental Wall	A straight wall of ice or fire 50ft long and 10ft high rises from the ground
Fade	Blend into the landscape, making detection more difficult
Fireball	Throw a ball of fire that causes d12 blast damage in a 30ft area
Gravity Shift	You can change the direction of gravity, but only for yourself
Haste	Move at double your normal speed and gain an extra action each turn
Illuminate	A floating light moves as you command
Knock	A nearby mundane or magical lock unlocks loudly
Mirror	Conjure a duplicate of yourself who mirrors your actions and movement
Poison Cloud	Dense green fog spreads from a chosen point, causing d4 damage to any living creature entering it
Read Mind	You can hear the surface thoughts of nearby creatures
Reveal	See invisible creatures or objects
Scry	You can see through the eyes of a creature touched earlier that day
Seiðr Shield	Raise a magical shield to negate all physical damage from the next attack
Seiðr Spear	Propel a spear of pure energy that strikes for d10 damage
Seiðr Volley	Flurry of magical arrows, striking creatures within 10ft for d6 blast damage
Shield Wall	A magical 30 ft dome of shields appears at a point you can see
Sleep	A creature you can see falls into a light sleep
Slow	Slows nearby enemies
Slow Fall	Slow your rate of fall and reduce fall damage
Spectacle	A clearly false but impressive illusion of your choice appears, under your control, up to the size of a palace and has full motion and sound
Swarm	You become a swarm of ravens, rats, or fish and can only be harmed by blast attacks

Seer Spells

Spell Name	Description
Ward	A silver circle 50ft across appears on the ground; one species of your choice cannot cross it
Web	Your wrists shoot thick webbing



Skald Spells

Spell	Description
Charm	A creature you can see treats you as a friend
Command	A target obeys a single three-word command that does not cause it harm
Control Weather	You may alter the type of weather at will, but you do not otherwise control it
Fortune	Make your next save with advantage
Guidance	Ask the gods for guidance; they may not answer truthfully or at all
Heal	Restore 10 Res and clear the deprived condition
Homeward	Return to the last bonfire rested at
Justice	The next creature to hit you with a physical attack takes d12 magic damage
Laughter	Your words cause a creature to double over in uncontrollable laughter
Lightning Spear	Summon a crackling bolt of lightning that strikes for d8 damage
Magic Protection	Ignore up to 8 points of magic damage and gain advantage on magical saves
Pacify	A creature near you has an aversion to violence
Purify	Purge poison, toxic, or petrify
Raise Spirit	The spirit of a nearby corpse manifests and answers d4 questions
Rebirth	The next time you fail a critical damage save, regain full Res and clear 2 points of fatigue
Remove Curse	Purge the curse condition from a person or object
Replenishment	Restore 1 Res every turn for 6 turns
Resist Magic	Magical attacks against you are now made at damage disadvantage
Respite	Restore 1 lost ability point
Sanctuary	You and an enemy you can see are unable to attack for one turn
Sense Evil	Detect the presence of evil
Shatter	Your voice echoes with the sound of an earthquake, causing d8 damage to creatures and shattering delicate objects
Silence	No spells may be cast, even your own, in a 30ft area
Swaying Spear	Thunderous magical spear of lightning that strikes a target for d10 damage; attacks against dragons or jotunn are made with damage advantage
Temper Weapon	Imbue weapon with magic and enhance damage to d12
Thunderbolt	A column of magic energy that deflects attacks and does d10 blast damage






Flame Rune Spells

Spell	Description
Inner Fire	Imbue your body with the strength of fire; gain 1 Def and d6 temporary Res
Muspell's Child	Become engulfed in living flame; gain immunity to fire and punish melee attacks against you with d6 fire damage; lasts for d4 rounds
Ring of Fire	A 10 ft burning ring surrounds yourself and allies, causing d8 damage to those who enter it
Sear	Emit a blazing stream of flame, burning a target within 60 ft for d8 damage
Traverse Flame	You erupt in an explosion of fire and emerge from any flame within 60 ft.; roll a d20 — on a 20 you are adrift in the realm of fire for 1d4 rounds
Warp Flame	Shape and control mundane fire within 100 ft.

PART 2: ADVANCED RULES

VÁPNUM SÍNUM SKAL-A MAÐR VELLI Á
FETI GANGA FRAMAR,
ÞVÍ AT ÓVÍST ER AT VITA,
NÆR VERÐR Á VEGUM ÚTI
GEIRS OF ÞÖRF GUMA.



*A wayfarer should not
step one foot with no
weapons to hand,
For none may know when
a spear is needed on a
strange road.
— Hávamál, 38*



OVERVIEW

Introduction

The **Core Rules** of Runecairn are meant for introductory play and fit best with players new to the system or TTRPGs in general.

The **Advanced Rules** are for more experienced players, or those looking for a different type of challenge or playstyle.

Advanced classes

The **Advanced Rules** introduces two new starting classes: **berserkr** and **pyre**.

Berserkr. Ferocious and powerful, wade into battle with no armour upon your back, wielding a massive two-handed sword and call upon the power of beasts to strengthen your attacks.

Pyre. Shape flame as a blacksmith shapes iron, calling upon ravenous fire to burn and purge and channel primal forces through your own two hands.

Beyond two players

Although Runecairn was designed for two players (one **Warden** and one **Adventurer**), you may also choose to play with only one player (**solo**) or with three or more players (one **Warden** and two or more **Adventurers**).

Solo play

Balance favour and sorrow or read the runes to guide your way through a pre-written adventure (such as ***Beneath the Broken Sword***), or conjure a random dungeon crawl with the **delve generator**.

Oracle. Whether you require answers to straight-forward questions or more nuanced interpretations, the provided **Oracle tables** help guide you along the skein and carve your own fate.

Delve generator

Create small, medium, or large dungeons, whether used by solo Adventurers for **one-off dungeon crawls** or by Wardens when populating a **campaign** with new dungeons.

Summoning an ally

Navigating the world of Runecairn can be a lonely endeavour, but thankfully there are kindred spirits available to assist with jolly cooperation.

Useful if the world proves too difficult for one Adventurer, or if a second player wants to join your game, summon another Adventurer from the world of the dead or a distant realm to fight alongside you.

Invasions

Conversely, if the Adventurer seeks a greater challenge or if another player wants to join the game temporarily, vengeful spirits in the form of **black fetches** invade the world of the Adventurer and attempt to defeat them.

Best used judiciously for greatest impact or effect, as the world is a dangerous enough place even without spectral assassins.



BERSERKR

In another life you might have leaped raging into battle, striking fear in friend and foe alike, or hunted the wilderness for death and glory. You refused all armour and blood sang in your ears.

In combat, none could match your ferocity, you howled like a wild beast and gnashed your teeth while striking down opponents twice your size.

In the time before, you were at home on the battlefield but now your home is wherever you wish it to be.



Berserkr (Str, 0 Def)

Beaststone	key, rare
Grave sword	d10, bulky
Fur cloak	0 Def, small
Sacred stockfish	rare
Free slots	6

Skills

Charge (reaction, figurine): Drive your shoulder into your opponent; **Str** save to disrupt the attack and take no damage (**Fatigue**)

Rage (figurine): Call upon your animal spirit which imbues you with bestial strength; for d4 rounds, gain **3 Def** and make all melee attacks at **double damage**. When the rage ends, make a **Spi** save (you can choose to fail):

- **Success:** The animal spirit departs and you regain control; add **2 Fatigue**
- **Failure:** The beast takes control; lose **1 Spirit** and continue to rage with a **50% chance** to attack **friendly targets**

Frenzy (sword): The ferocity of your attack staggers your opponent; non-undead targets need to make a **Spi** save or falter momentarily, allowing you to make an **extra attack (Fatigue)**

Sunder (sword): Tear through your opponent's armour for **d6 damage**; first occurrence causes target to lose **1 Def (Fatigue)**

PYRE

In another life you might have burned spirits from the dead, stoked the smithy's forge, or battled frost demons in the mountains.

Your hands channelled the spark of life and the cleansing fire of death. Your magic is the oldest of all, furious and hungry.

In combat, you sear and scald your foes, madness dancing just behind your eyes. Your charred plated leather marked both your calling and profession.

The age of fire was long ago, but the wheel yet turns. Whether enlightenment or destruction, your path is now yours to forge.



Pyre (Spi, 1 Def)

Fire grippers	key, rare, bulky, d6
Plated leather	1 Def
Blacksmith hammer	rare, d6
Flame rune	Sear
Kindled bale	rare
Free slots	5

Skills

Flameshield (reaction, fire grippers):

Manifest a fiery shield in your offhand to deflect an attack; **Spi** save to avoid all damage (**Fatigue**)

Ignite (fire grippers): Channel ancient magic to ignite your weapon (or the gloves themselves) in blazing fire; for the duration of the fight, melee attacks now do **double damage** and bypass **mundane armour**, ignoring **Def (Fatigue)**

Sear (spell): Emit a blazing stream of violent flame, burning your target for **d8 damage**, 60ft range (**Fatigue**)

Smash (hammer): Bludgeon your opponent with **damage advantage**; target needs to make **Str** save or be knocked down (**Fatigue**)

SOLO PLAY

Introduction

Runecairn can also be played solo, with one player acting as both **Warden** and **Adventurer**.

Journey through an existing adventure such as *Beneath the Broken Sword* or use the random **delve generator** in the next section to build a dungeon crawl.

When you reach a moment of choice or conflict, a time when you'd normally look to the Warden to facilitate the outcome, consider consulting an **Oracle**, a method of deriving meaning from randomness.

An Oracle can be a set of tarot cards, a system from another TTRPG, an online resource, or a mobile app.

Wardensaga includes a set of random tables that serves as Oracle, offering a way to interpret random rolls and the runes of the Younger Futhark to determine the result of a choice or action.

Journaling

Chronicle your journey through the delve in a journal or diary. Be as brief or descriptive as you like — this is a saga of your Adventurer, translated and retold through the ages.

Use the **Delve Generator** sheet (available from the **Runecairn website**) to document your encounters and map out your dungeon.

Favour or Sorrow

If an outcome isn't immediately clear, ask a question of the Oracle. If it's a simple yes or no answer ("Does the troll see me?") or a straight-forward check ("Can I convince the warrior to help me?"), roll **2d6** on the **Favour or Sorrow** table.

An outcome of **favour** is broadly positive while an outcome of **sorrow** is broadly negative. A **complication** adds an extra obstacle or development to the outcome.

For instance, you convince the warrior to help you but they demand one of your weapons in exchange.

Reading the Runes

For more complicated questions, or for more nuanced interactions, consult the runes for an answer.

First, gather your will and determine your **focus**. Narrow that focus to a singular **emotion** and concentrate on the 16 runes of the Younger Futhark. One **runes name** will reveal itself.

Generate your **focus** by rolling a **d10** on the **Focus** table. Generate your **emotion** by rolling a **d8** on the **Emotion** table. Finally, generate your **Rune** by rolling a **d20** on the **Rune** table.

Reflect upon the resulting phrase and turn it over in your mind. Focus your emotion on the name of the rune. Your answer will soon take shape.

For instance, Amy wants to investigate a severed spectral head floating through crumbling ruins. She rolls 3 dice: **d10** for **Focus** (4 – *Overcome*), **d8** for **Emotion** (6 – *Forlorn*), and **d20** for **Rune** (11 – *Ice*).

This gives her *Overcome Forlorn Ice*. She interprets this as a sign to ignore the fear in her heart and approach the cursed head with an open mind.

Favour or Sorrow

2d6	Outcome
2	Favour
3-6	Favour with complication
7	Complication
8-11	Sorrow
12	Sorrow with complication

Focus

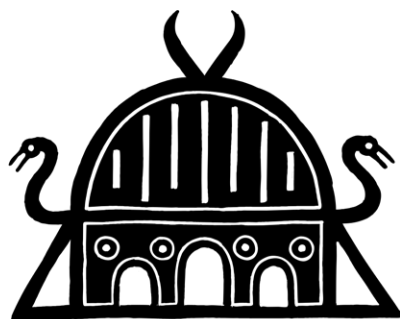
d10	Result
1	Delve
2	Protect
3	Ponder
4	Overcome
5	Surrender
6	Observe
7	Endure
8	Prepare
9	Mourn
10	Stagger

Emotion

d8	Result
1	Wondrous
2	Hopeful
3	Contemplative
4	Melancholy
5	Crestfallen
6	Forlorn
7	Wrathful
8	Bleak

Rune

d20	Rune	Old Norse	Name
1	ᚠ	fé	wealth
2-3	ᚢ	úr	iron
4	ᚦ	Thurs	jötunn
5-6	ᚨ	Aesir	god
7	ᚱ	reið	ride
8	ᚷ	kaun	ulcer
9	ᚹ	hagall	hail
10	ᚺ	nauðr	need
11	ᚼ	ísa	ice
12	ᚾ	ár	plenty
13	ᚿ	sól	sun
14-15	ᛀ	Týr	magic
16	ᛁ	bjarkan	birch
17-18	ᛃ	maðr	human
19	ᛆ	lögr	sea
20	ᚫ	yr	yew



DELVE GENERATOR

1. Roll **d6** on the **Locations** table to determine the dungeon **type** and **size**. Dungeons vary in size but all have at least **10 areas**.

Depending on the dungeon type, roll an extra die to determine how many total areas there are. Note your **dungeon size**.

2. Roll **d6** on your location's **Objectives** table to determine the goal of the delve.

3. Roll **d12** on the **Encounters** table when entering each new area to determine what you see.

4. When first interacting with an NPC or monster, roll **2d6** on the **NPC Reactions** table for their initial reaction.

If not immediately hostile, the NPC may **help** or **hinder** your quest.

5. For more dynamic combat, roll **2d6** on the **Enemy Actions** table to determine the enemy's tactics.

Some enemies fight to the death (such as undead or demons) but most flee if their lives are in legitimate danger, animals especially. Use your best judgment.

6. For every area cleared, subtract 1 from your **dungeon size**. When your dungeon size reaches 1, roll **d6** on the **Resolution** table to see how close you are to your **objective**.

You'll either reach your **objective**, find a **clue** to its location, or encounter a **setback** that halts your progress. If you don't locate your objective, roll again on the **Encounters** table.

For every area you now clear, roll on the **Resolution** table, adding a bonus (-1 for every **clue**) or penalty (+1 for every **setback**). Delves fail after 4 setbacks.

7. Once you've located your objective, the real challenge begins.

Locations

d6 Type and Size

1	Cairn (10)
2	Outpost (+d4)
3	Ruins (+d6)
4	Village (+d8)
5	Cave (+d12)
6	Stronghold (+d20)

Mapping the delve

Record your progress through the dungeon on the **Delve Generator** sheet (available on the **Runecairn website**), with space for a map and encounters.

Objectives

Completing an objective rewards you with **1 Soul**.

Explore. Investigate every room and successfully exit

Retrieve. Locate a particular object and successfully exit with it

Escort. Guide an individual to a particular location

Infiltrate. Achieve the goal by stealth or charm and successfully exit

Escape. Successfully exit the location while avoiding any dangers

Rescue. Locate an individual and successfully exit with them

Defend. Locate and protect an area, object, or person from attackers

Hunt. Locate your target, pursue them through the dungeon, and successfully eliminate or retrieve them

Cleanse. Locate and eradicate the specified infection or invasive element

Slay. Defeat the specified target

Objectives			
d6	Cairn	Outpost	Ruins
1	Retrieve your family's ancestral axe, stolen by a draugr and taken to a hostile land	Escape from a rival clan who've sworn to slay your entire family (d6 warriors)	Explore snowy ruins recently uncovered during a violent storm
2	Rescue your nephew from a group of deranged cultists (d4 scouts)	Defend a solitary outpost's seers from a roving band of d6 skeletons	Infiltrate and disrupt a hive of cultists attempting to summon a fire jotunn
3	Defend your father's remains from a vengeful rival	Hunt a condemned prisoner escaped from your clan's keep	Retrieve a lost relic revealed to you in a dream, located in a hostile land
4	Hunt the rock troll that's attacked your kin and fled to the family tomb	Escort a pair of travellers heading to exile in a hostile frontier	Escape a rampaging colossus awoken by a stranger from another realm
5	Cleanse the tomb of d4 despondent shades yearning to rejoin the living	Cleanse a corrosive organism slowly absorbing the structure	Cleanse a ruined temple tainted by the touch of a mad god
6	Slay the mad dwarf who believes this to be their keep	Slay a gang of d6 scouts who've seized a clan supply point	Slay a stone demon formed when your clan defeated an elemental king
d6	Village	Cave	Stronghold
1	Explore a mysterious settlement that suddenly appeared in a nearby valley	Retrieve the body of a clan elder, stolen by a group of draugr	Retrieve the staff stolen from your clan seer and taken to a rival keep
2	Escort an young seer to train under an unruly elder in a village of exiles	Explore the depths of a newly discovered cavern under your village	Infiltrate a mercenary group and convince them to join your side
3	Infiltrate and disrupt a wedding ceremony joining two warring clans	Escort the spirit of an ancestor to the location of their demise	Escape the lost stronghold before the vampires awaken around you
4	Rescue a long-lost daughter now living with a family in a distant village	Rescue a group of children kidnapped by d4 dwarves and taken underground	Rescue a clan elder who was carried away drunk by the wife of an old rival
5	Defend a meagre village's food stores from a starving band of d8 berserkr s	Hunt a pack of d8 wolves through their sprawling den	Hunt an elf who attacked a group of woodcutters before fleeing
6	Slay a giant skeleton animated from the remains of a slaughtered village	Slay a troll that's terrorised your clan for decades	Slay the treant worshipped by an enclave of druids

Encounters

d12 Encounter

1	Treasure
2-4	Mystery
5-6	Mundane
7-9	Obstacle
10-12	Conflict

Reactions

2d6 Reaction

2	Helpful
3-5	Talkative
6-8	Unsure
9-11	Unfriendly
12	Hostile

Enemy Actions

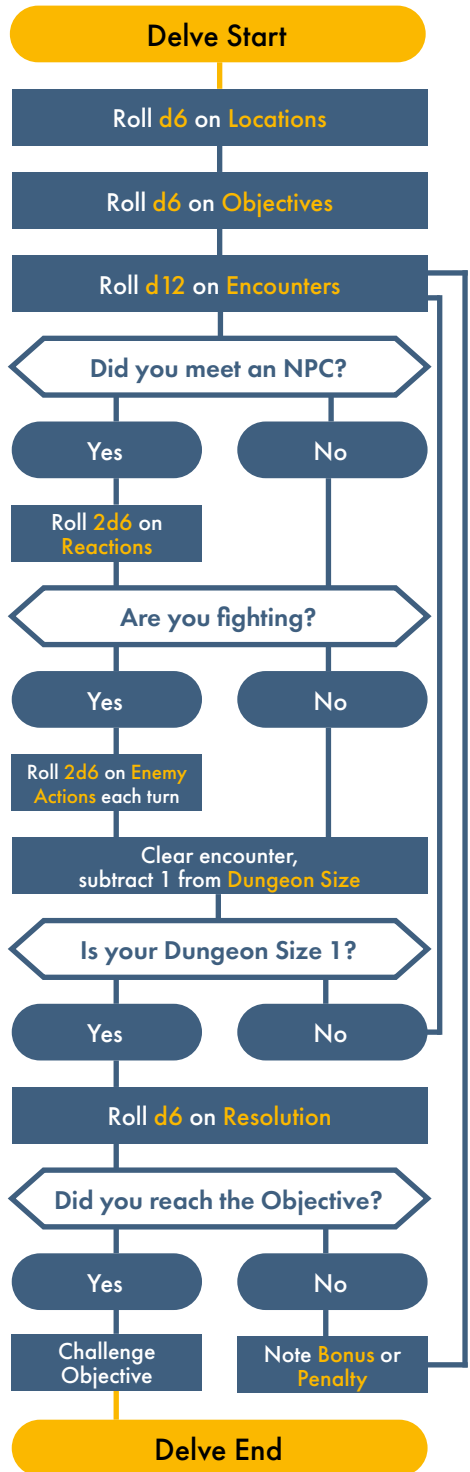
2d6 Action Notes

2	Disarm	Str save or drop weapon/ key item, action to retrieve
3-4	Grab	Dex save or lose Reaction for 1 turn
5-9	Attack	-
10-11	Feint	Wit save or waste a Reaction on a evading a false attack
12	Wild attack	Spi save or falter from ferocious attack, take double damage

Resolution

d6 Discovery Roll Adjustment

1-2	Objective	0
3-4	Clue	-1
5-6	Setback	+1



Cairn Encounters

d6	Treasure	Mystery	Mundane	Obstacle	Conflict
1	Skull beacon (relic) enclosed in a dusty crevice	Ghost weeping in the corner	Yellowed candles melted to the base	Low ceiling, slows movement	Shade stumbles from the darkness, arms reaching
2	Skeleton key sitting atop broken bones	Grinning skull laughs as you enter	Broken skull missing jawbone	Chasm in floor, Dex save to avoid	Skeleton fallen in the corner rises and approaches
3	Scry runestone carved into the walls	Dim light shines from a crack in the stone	Scattered flowers, faded and wilted	Flooded passage, slows movement	Bonewheel skeleton cartwheels near
4	Bleached jawbone jutting from broken skull	Sound of manic laughter from behind you	Child's wooden toy covered in cobwebs	Dense roots bar the path, halts movement	Crouched draugr glares at you from the corner
5	Grave sword driven deep into the stone ground	You surprise a grieving merchant	Long-rusted axe, blade badly dented	Foul-smelling air, Str save to avoid retching	Shades (d4) emerge from the shadows
6	Kindled bale prepared in the corner	Faint piney smell of juniper lingers for a moment	Tidy piles of clothes and beads	Clustered spores, Dex save to avoid poison	Two draugr locked in combat with each other

Outpost Encounters

d6	Treasure	Mystery	Mundane	Obstacle	Conflict
1	Iron ring adorns a smashed skeletal arm	Huddled form hiding in the corner	Faded bedrolls and discarded clothing	Fallen beam halts movement until cleared	Warrior sharpens their axe, startled to see you
2	Weary skald teaches you Hörgr <i>saga</i> (sanctuary)	Weary group of exiles take shelter	Mud-spattered cloak hangs, tattered and worn	Starving dogs bark menacingly, Spi save to calm	Scout re-strings their bow, knives sheathed
3	Fire oil tucked underneath tattered bedroll	Two armoured ghosts locked in combat	Discarded chainmail, rusted and dented	Floor gives way, Dex save to avoid falling	Mad skald screams as you enter
4	Sacred waters wrapped inside threadbare blanket	Ancient seer reads by candlelight, eyes glowing white	Cold fire pit with dried out chicken bones	Bones strung up crudely, Wit save to untangle without alarm	Wolves (d4) fight over a fresh deer carcass
5	Dried apple inside a faded leather pouch	Shimmering blue portal flickers and vanishes	Scattered spear shafts lying beside dull iron tips	Broken wall reveals sleeping sentry, Dex save to pass unseen	Lone cloaked elf stalks the perimeter, swords drawn
6	Ash spear hidden behind a dense door	Room begins to fill with harmless spectral green flame	Empty mead jugs, sticky and sweet-smelling	Discarded furniture and debris slows movement	Warriors (d4) laugh and drink watery ale

Ruins Encounters

d6	Treasure	Mystery	Mundane	Obstacle	Conflict
1	Sleep runestone partially covered by human remains	Hoof prints seared into the stone ground	Piles of broken bones and picked carcasses	Enormous nest built from debris blocks passage	Rock troll dozes next to a corpse in a shallow grave
2	Breaking maul discarded with broken haft	Spectral arm waves from within a stone wall	Remains of a crude campsite, shredded bedroll	Obvious falling rock trap, save to avoid d10 damage	Dwarf examines ancient carvings on a low wall
3	Leather hood on the corpse of a long-dead hunter	Your exact double appears, shrieks, and runs away	Young fox sniffs at a crack in the walls, then flees	Yawning rock pool slows movement	Wolves (d4) make their den here and protect cubs
4	Whispering voice fills your mind with Hlátr saga (laughter)	An old man in a broad hat smoking a pipe greets you	Brilliant wildflowers spread unchecked from a crack in the wall	Unstable ceiling trembles with motion, Dex save to avoid collapse	Cultists (d4) scry with fresh entrails, seeking answers
5	Leather rucksack buried in a crude hole, contents now dust	Enormous spectral elk bounds into view	Wind whistles through a gap in the stone floor	Hundreds of fat spiders cling to the walls	Treant guards green growth, long limbs crossed
6	Mistletoe Dart (relic) embedded in the stone ceiling	Craggy stone walls fade from sight, replaced with a lush forest	Water drips from a gap in the roof, turning the stone green	Viscous mud slows movement, Str save to navigate	Troll tears chunks out of the worked stone walls, forming tools

Village Encounters

d6	Treasure	Mystery	Mundane	Obstacle	Conflict
1	Effigy stone (Bjarn, berserkr) swaddled in baby clothes	Shrouded figure turns to face you; it has no head	An old woman knits and eats dried fish	Hungry dog looks at you with baleful eyes	Bandits (scout) roam the village looking for valuables to pilfer
2	Blacksmith hammer resting on an ancient and pitted anvil	The shadow of an enormous wolf falls over you	Salted meat hanging from the ceiling	Wandering sheep block the way, slowing movement	Mad warrior stripped naked to the waist wields a broad axe
3	Sack filled with dried grains and salt	Spindly man floats down from the sky and greets you	Sunken fire pit glows with dull embers	Group of locals gathers before you, save to avoid	Skeleton pulls itself out of a shallow grave
4	Delicate lockpicks hidden in oiled leather pouch	The longhouse before you flickers and vanishes	Ring of iron on an anvil and the hiss of water	River burst its banks, flooding the path	Pyre blacksmith sits crestfallen beside cold forge
5	Chain mail covered in blood and wrapped in linen	A luminous, tentacle emerges dripping from a wooden bucket	Two fishermen with cod slung on their shoulders	Eerie merchant accosts you, offering to show you their wares	Seer with <i>haste</i> runestone patrols the area
6	Lifs né dauða saga (rebirth), spoken by a talking raven	A cluster of cats runs by, each one with 3 tails	Thin horse whinnies, well-ridden and flea-bitten	Structures indistinguishable, Wit save to maintain direction	Cultists (d6) attempt to summon a dread being with ritual

Cave Encounters

d6	Treasure	Mystery	Mundane	Obstacle	Conflict
1	<i>Disappear</i> runestone barely visible on wall	Whispers in the dark, Spi save to maintain focus	Glowing mushrooms shroud the walls	Pit leads to darkness below, Dex save to avoid	Rock troll collects worthless trinkets from travellers
2	Mischief Horn (relic) atop a precarious stone outcropping	Rictus face in the stone mocks your ancestors	Brackish water drips into an enormous black pond	Narrow tunnel hinders movement and visibility	Skeletons (d4) dance around a mysterious carved figure
3	Sacrificial bundle wrapped in lambskin and placed under rock	Gleaming black stone wall shimmers and warps	Pair of emaciated corpses, legs broken and huddled together	Roaring waterfall rushes over path, Str save to ford	Two dwarves debate the survival of the world serpent
4	Fur cloak resting at the bottom of a black pond	Lost dwarven child with downy beard cries out for aid	Sprawling cavern, cold wind tears against your skin	Crush of stone walls overwhelm, Spi save to avoid panic	Cultists attempt to convince a fire jotunn to join their cause
5	Broad axe buried in the skull of a rock troll corpse	Blinding light pulses from a crystal embedded in the stone wall	Abandoned dig site, rusted tools broken and discarded	Troll family slumbers before you, two adults and two young	Draugr stares into their reflection in a cave pool
6	Fire grippers wrapped in white linen	Foul breath of a beast and jagged walls close on you	Sunlight streams through a break in the craggy stone	Crumbling outcropping above gaping chasm	Stone demon eats the remains of a troll

Stronghold Encounters

d6	Treasure	Mystery	Mundane	Obstacle	Conflict
1	Eye of Odinn (relic), inside a broken skull	Towering ethereal figure cloaked in shadows beckons	Raided weapons rack, a spear and axe remain	Weathered door barred from the other side	Two elves study a man's body strung upside down
2	<i>Ring of Fire</i> flame rune burns at the heart of a forge	Lone axe hangs from the wall and bades you wield it	Dented table covered in maps and parchment	Guards laugh raucously and stumble drunk	Shades (d4) sit around a circular stone table
3	Steel sword found mounted on the wall of a great hall	Chained jotunn youth spots you and slowly smiles	Ale and mead storage, barrels stacked high	Two men whisper conspiratorially and turn to face you	Warriors (d6) assault a barricaded house
4	Elder skald recounts Láta saga (<i>command</i>)	Ghost of an elder stares forlornly into the fire	Crude barracks scattered with sloppy bedrolls	Bare chested giant of a man challenges you	Cultists flee in terror from a raging lindworm
5	Kite shield wrapped in leather furs	Fresh blood seeps from the walls, steam rising	Great hall covered in a thin layer of smoke, fire dying	Iron gate crashes down, Str save to lift and traverse	Berserkr s (d6) take turns fighting each other
6	Red face paint stored in ceramic jar	Three figures weave a glowing, delicate tapestry	Exquisite balcony overlooks the surrounding land	Sly merchant offers you rare goods, Spi save to avoid temptation	Giant skeleton patrols the area, attacking anything it spots

COOPERATION

The world of **Runecairn** can be a solitary one, but a helping hand can be a ray of hope in even the darkest place.

If you want to traverse the world with a friend by your side, seek out an **effigy stone**.

Summoning an ally

When resting at a bonfire, you can use an **effigy stone** to call out to a fallen hero and summon them for aid at the cost of **1 Vigour**.

Effigy stones are exceedingly rare and finding one is an adventure itself. Each stone corresponds to a specific hero, as their name and history is carved upon the limestone figure.

The effigy stone reaches out across the realms and summons a physical manifestation of the hero's spirit, who joins the Adventurer at the bonfire.

Summoned allies can be past or future Adventurers run by a **second player** or an additional **hero** controlled by the **player**.

Combat and healing

The summoned ally fights alongside the Adventurer. When attacking the same target, roll damage for both attackers and take the higher result (**damage advantage**). This applies to monsters as well as Adventurers.

On enemies' turns, the Warden states who is targeted in each attack, giving each Adventurer an opportunity for a **Reaction**.

Summoned allies have flasks with **1 sip of mead**, refilled as normal at bonfires.

Death and rebirth

Summoned allies are tied to the Adventurer who summoned them. If the **Adventurer** dies, the summoned ally returns to their home.

They can be summoned again in the same manner, but with the same cost.

The ally's physical body is a mortal shape. If a **summoned ally** dies, their spirit dissipates into mist and they return home.



Just as there are benevolent heroes across the realms willing to help out an adventurer in need, so are there malevolent forces who seek to sow chaos and destruction.

A **black fetch** invades an adventurer's world and stalks them, seeking to strip their humanity and vigour.

Black fetch

Much like summoned allies, a **black fetch** is a physical manifestation of a spectral form, often the crestfallen spirit of a dead adventurer or projection of a powerful figure from another realm.

A black fetch can be a fallen Adventurer run by a **second player** or invading spirit controlled by the **Warden**.

Consider confronting a player with a previously slain Adventurer or NPC returned as a black fetch.

Combat, healing, and death

Fetches follow the same rules as **summoned allies** and also have a mead flask with 1 sip.

Fetches will continue to invade in the same area unless defeated. As they are spectral beings and do not fear death, they will not flee from combat.

When a black fetch is defeated, their spectral form dissipates and their spirit is forever banished from the area.

Repelling an invader

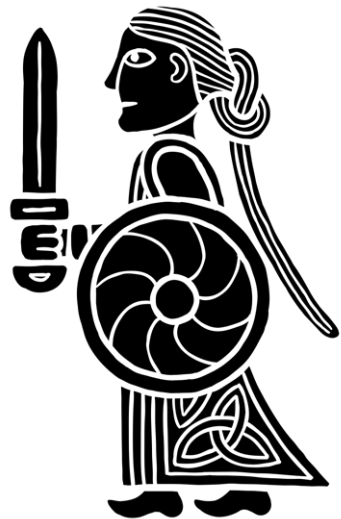
If a black fetch is successfully defeated, they reward **1 Soul** or an important item they held in life, such as a weapon, spell, or relic.

Safety check

As with any situation with potential conflict between players, check with everyone at the table first.

Is everyone aware of the possible player vs. player scenario and comfortable with combat between players?

If not, reconsider player Invasions.





PART 3: BENEATH THE BROKEN SWORD

FJÖLD EK ÞÉR SAGÐAK,
EN ÞÚ FÁTT OF MANT;
OF ÞIK VÉLA VINIR;
MÆKI LIGGJA EK SÉ MÍNS VINAR
ALLAN Í DREYRA DRIFINN

*Much have I told but nowt heeded,
Words of your friends fell false.
I see my friend's sword lies broken,
Spattered and waiting in blood.*

— *Grímnismál, 52*



INTRODUCTORY ADVENTURE

Beneath the Broken Sword is a starting adventure intended to introduce new wardens and players to the world and setting of Runecairn.

This adventure is recommended as the **start** of a one-shot or longer campaign and can be finished in **2-3 hours**.

Characters

This adventure is suitable for **fresh** Adventurers of any **starting class**, though characters with **1 Vigour** are lost quickly.

Four pre-made Adventurers are included on **the next page**.

Death is not the end

Slain Adventurers wake at the last bonfire rested at, but lose **1 Vigour**. They keep all items and all physical changes in the cave are **not** reset.

Enemies previously killed respawn in their original location with no memory of their deaths. Stronger enemies (such as the **stone demon**) do not return once slain.

Bonfires

Resting at a bonfire heals an Adventurer's **Resilience**, re-fills their **mead flask**, and restores any **temporary ability damage**.

Resting at a bonfire also revives any defeated enemies, who retain no memory of their deaths. Stronger monsters (such as the stone demon) are **not** revived.

Overview

Background

In a long forgotten age, a raging war shattered and devastated the worlds of gods and men.

Now green life blooms amidst the ruins. Wondrous and terrible beings roam the Nine Realms. Civilisation stumbles forward, fresh and reaching.

Fate carves the skein anew but there are loose threads, lost long ago in the wars, with no place in the tapestry. These threads must seek the fire within and carve their own path.

The Adventurer

You wake in an echoing cave lit by a waning bonfire, with little memory of who you are or how you arrived here. You wear your armour but carry no weapons or items.

Goal

The Adventurer must **navigate** the **Cave of Echoes**, **retrieve** their **weapons and items**, **acquire** their **mead flask**, and **overcome** the **stone demon** to **escape** further into **the Nine Realms**.

The Cave of Echoes

One of the crossroads of the Nine Realms, the cave is a knot in the skein of fate. Time flows differently and magic bleeds from the other planes.

Because of this, **omens** are triggered in an additional way in the cave. Roll **d6** when the Adventurer enters a new room - a **6** triggers an **Omen**. Consult the new **Omens table** found on the **next page**.

Omens in The Cave of Echoes

- 1 A piece of the cave ceiling crumbles away, revealing a shaft of sunlight that bathes you in brilliance; your **mead flask** gains **1 temporary sip**
- 2 A spectral apparition appears before you, an echo of another life and death; it runs past but you soon see the phantom die horribly *[to the dangers of the cave]* before vanishing
- 3 A pair of luminescent spectral ravens appear, circle your head, and fly toward *[the nearest secret or hidden danger]*
- 4 Flickering ghostly writing appears on the walls of the cave: "Don't give up, skeleton!" or "Praise the sun!" - gain **advantage** on your next **save**
- 5 The entire cave rocks back and forth, as if a ship on the sea, and you struggle to keep balance; **Str save** to avoid being thrown to the ground
- 6 You suddenly hear the voices of the dead echoing around the cave, screaming in terror, and you struggle to maintain courage; **Spi save** to avoid **disadvantage** on your next **save**
- 7 A fiery floating spectral skull appears, screams, and explodes; **Dex save** to avoid **d6 blast damage** (affects all targets)
- 8 Invasion by a dark spirit: A red spectral form materialises next to you, hatred etched on its features; roll **d4** on the **NPCs** table below for invader



1. Bodil (Warrior)

3 Def, 4 Res (2 Vigour and 2 Vitality), 12 Str, 10 Dex, 6 Wit, 11 Spi

Bearded axe (d8), ash wood spear (d6, 20'), 5 slots free



2. Ingólfur (Skald)

2 Def, 3 Res (2 Vigour and 1 Vitality), 8 Str, 12 Dex, 6 Wit, 12 Spi

Steel sword (d6), lightning spear (d8), 5 slots free



3. Arne (Seer)

0 Def, 4 Res (2 Vigour and 2 Vitality), 8 Str, 9 Dex, 12 Wit, 9 Spi

Yew staff (d6), seiðr spear (d10), 7 free slots



4. Gunhild (Scout)








1 Def, 5 Res (2 Vigour and 3 Vitality), 8 Str, 12 Dex, 8 Wit, 11 Spi

Hunting knives (d6), elm shortbow (d6, 60'), 5 slots free

The Cave of Echoes

1. Resumption
2. Winding Corridor
3. Jagged Chamber
4. Quiet Respite
5. The Murky Pool
6. Broken Arrow Bend
7. Lost Soul (Secret)
8. Iðunn's Grotto
9. Arched Tunnel
10. Demon's Ledge
11. Whistling Channel
12. The Raven Flies

1 square = 5 feet

-  Bonfire
-  Enemy
-  Boss
-  Door
-  Locked door
-  Secret
-  Ledge

1. Resumption

Embers from a waning bonfire crackle and drift around the echoing cave, flickering on the jagged walls damp with condensation. You slowly wake, with no memory of who you are or how you got here.

- Warmth of the **waning bonfire** fills the area
- Light from the fire dances on a **broken sword** leaning against the cave wall
- Smoke trails towards the **opening to the East**, masking the damp scent of the cave
- **Moss and lichen** line the rough walls, growing with abandon

Waning bonfire. Flickers and crackles but flames never go out. Charred and blackened spear driven into the stone floor at the centre of the flames.

Rather than wood, **bones** burn in the fire - bleached skulls and femurs.

Broken sword. Rusted and dented, iron blade snapped near the hilt, nearly dull but better than nothing (**d3 damage**, no **skills**).

Exits

→ North to the Winding Corridor (2):

Opening to the East. Gradual incline. Intermittent sound of metal scraping on stone.

2. Winding Corridor

Two ragged, emaciated forms stagger languidly from one side of the cave to the other, occasionally raising a withered arm to strike the jagged wall with a ruined sword hilt. They see you but their eyes are empty voids.

- **Ragged forms** look like men but their movement is empty and listless, skin dried and worn like faded leather; sharp sound of their hilts as they strike the stone walls
- Corridor narrows and winds to the North, leading to a set of **stone double doors** reaching from floor to ceiling

Exits

→ North to the Jagged Chamber (3)

Stone double doors. Hewn from the cave walls, two enormous handles. Doors open easily, revealing an enormous chamber filled with stalactites and stalagmites.

Encounters

The ragged forms are **shades** but do not react if provoked or attacked. They die silently with no fight.

3. The Jagged Chamber

Sharp wind shrieks through the vast chamber as you enter. Craggy stalactites reach from the sunken ceiling and gnarled stalagmites collect green water in shallow pools.

- At the opposite end of the chamber, set of towering **carved doors**
- **Smashed crater** in the centre, strewn with broken chunks of stone
- **Obscured ledge** visible behind jagged stone outcropping
- **Cramped tunnel** behind a cluster of stalagmites
- Heavy, **piercing stalactites** hang from the ceiling, precarious and barbed

Smashed crater. Radiating cracks within deep indentation filled with broken stalagmites and shattered yellowed bones.

Obscured ledge. Far above the floor, wind howls from an unseen alcove. Hulking shadow occasionally visible.

Exits

→ **North to Whistling Channel (11)**
[locked]

Carved doors. Intricate raven reliefs faded by time and wind. Two round keyholes the size of a fist at the centre of each. Cold wind whistles through the keyholes.

Two keys are required: the **stone demon** holds one key and the other is found on **Demon's Ledge (10)**. Unlocks with a resounding chunk. The heavy doors swing open and piercing wind howls.

→ **South to Winding Corridor (2)**

→ **West to Quiet Respite (4)**

Cramped tunnel. Just large enough to fit through. Flickering light reveals a path.

Encounters

Above the room, the **stone demon** emerges from Demon's Ledge and jumps down into the smashed crater.

You hear the thundering sound of an avalanche. A massive grey blur crashes down into the chamber in front of you, revealing a hulking humanoid shape, rocky and misshapen.

A large bronze key hangs from its neck and it wields an enormous stone club.

1st encounter. The demon likely kills the Adventurer, as they have no **key item**, **mead flask**, or available **skills**.

If they run, the demon smashes the stone above the tunnel, collapsing it and blocking entry to the **Jagged Chamber**. If they die, they'll respawn at the bonfire in **Cave of Echoes (1)**.

2nd encounter. When coming from **Demon's Ledge**, the Adventurer should be better prepared.

Stone demon

9 **Res**, 2 **Def**, 13 **Str**, 6 **Dex**, 6 **Wit**, 6 **Spi**, 20ft, club (d6), ground slam (d8), grab

- **Grab: Dex** save to avoid losing next turn and d6 damage from stone grip
- **Dire strike (ground slam): Str** save to avoid broken bones and **d4 Dex** damage
- Can be overcome through combat, stealth, guile, or magic and all methods reward a Soul
- Crumbles into dust when defeated, granting 1 Soul and dropping the **Wanderer's Key** (unlocks the first lock in the **carved doors**)



4. Quiet Respite

The soft, flickering light of a bonfire dances on the smooth stone walls of the hushed corridor.

- Warm and **comforting bonfire** burns, charred bones fuelling the flame
- **Wolfskin wrap** rests on a rectangular flat stone at the centre of the corridor
- Corridor continues to the **North**

Comforting bonfire. Resting here for a few moments heals any injuries and rejuvenates the spirit.

Wolfskin wrap. Wrapped in the wolfskin is a *sacrificial bundle* and the **main weapons** of the Adventurer.

Starting class	Weapon
Warrior	Bearded axe
Skald	Steel sword
Scout	Hunting knives
Seer	Yew staff

Upon seeing them, memories of a previous life flood back, including who they were and what fate befell them.

The Adventurer regains the ability to use **weapon** and **item skills**.

Exits

➔ **North to the Murky Pool (5)**

Northern corridor. Dim, echoing sounds of water. Corridor opens to a circular hollow.



5. The Murky Pool

The narrow corridor opens to a broad cavern with a high curved dome ceiling covered in mushrooms and lichen. At the centre of the cavern lies a murky pool. A dusty skeleton sits against the Eastern wall.

- **Pungent smell** of wet rot and decay
- **Dripping sound** as condensation trickles into the **murky pool**
- **Crumbling skeleton** slouches, skull lolling with one leg outstretched
- Jagged stone corridor to the **North**

Murky pool. Depth impossible to gauge, sides slick with green algae. A **skeleton** hides inside the pool, bony fingers barely visible clinging onto the sides.

Exits

➔ **North to Broken Arrow Bend (6)**

➔ **South to Quiet Respite (4)**

Encounters

Lounging **skeleton** stands up and attacks the Adventurer when they get close.

The second **skeleton** inside the pool climbs out and attacks from behind.

Skeleton

8 **Res**, 10 **Str**, 8 **Dex**, 4 **Wit**, 4 **Spi**, 30ft, spear (d6)

- Pale bones picked clean, maniacal grin underneath empty sockets
- Hollow clatter warns when they're near
- Roll d12 when defeated; on a 1, reforms at **4 Res**

Treasure

A glowing **soul remnant** rests at the bottom of the murky pool.

6. Broken Arrow Bend

The irregular rocky ground slants upward and the corridor curves, revealing a long flat tunnel.

- Handful of **broken arrows** litter the ground at a bend in the cave
- **Ragged bowman** waits at the end, holding a bow with a nocked arrow
- **Cramped alcove** halfway along
- Rising **Southeast path** at the end

Ragged bowman. Dressed in tattered clothing, dim aggression in its eyes. Spots the Adventurer unless hidden; similar to the previous shades but more aggressive.

Cramped alcove. Offers protection from the archer's arrows. Resting against the rear wall is another **wolfskin wrap**. Cracks criss-cross the stone wall behind the wrap.

Removing the wolfskin causes a loose stone to clatter to the ground. Pushing the stone aside reveals a **secret room**.

Wolfskin wrap. Wrapped inside are the Adventurer's **remaining items**.

Retrieving the items results in another flood of memories, including what the Adventurer seeks in the lush new world.

Exits

➔ **South to Lost Cell (7) (Secret)**

➔ **Southeast to Iðunn's Grotto (8)**

Southeast path. Fresh breeze blows, bringing with it the soft scent of blossoms.

➔ **Southwest to the Murky Pool (5)**

Encounters

The **shade** bowman fires at the Adventurer if not hidden (20 poor arrows, d3). Switches to unarmed if confronted in melee.



Shade

Shade

3 **Res**, 10 **Str**, 8 **Dex**, 9 **Wit**, 4 **Spi**, 20ft, claw (d4)

- Hollow dead devoid of humanity; a shadow of the person that was

7. Lost Cell (Secret)

The broken stones clatter as you enter the chamber. The ceiling is low and the air old and stale. Sitting on the stone floor in front of you is a battered wooden chest.

- Oak **weathered chest**, covered in two large gouges and banded in rusted iron

Weathered chest. Damage looks to be from an axe. Unlocked, opens easily and reveals a relic, the **Armband of the Fylgja**.

Treasure

Armband of the Fylgja, 3 charges. Hammered bronze armband etched with animal likenesses. Summons an animal spirit that leads to fate or fortune. Recharge: Bury a spiced parcel of meat with a coin under a fallen tree.

8. Iðunn's Grotto

The cramped path opens to reveal a lush grotto exposed to the sky. Radiant beams of sunlight bathe the cavern in golden glow. A sprawling tree flourishes at the centre, brilliant red apples dotted amongst the green. A hooded woman tends to the tree, holding a wooden basket.

- **Fresh breeze** caresses exposed skin, the **smell of apple and honey** fills the senses
- Vast **apple tree** reaches up to the clear blue sky
- **Hooded woman** harvests apples from the tree, placing them in her basket
- Daylight returns to shadow in the **southern passage**

Apple tree. Ancient and gnarled, covered in countless red apples. Grows far above the cave's stone walls.

Hooded woman. Stooped, small and frail. Simple white cloak, hood drawn around her head. She turns and greets the Adventurer.

Idis:

- *Soft spoken, dialect antiquated, piercing eyes*
- Simple orchard tender, has been tending trees like this for as long as she can remember
- The apples heal and rejuvenate; she brews them into apple mead that refreshes the spirit
- To leave the cave, the demon of stone must be overcome

She gives the Adventurer a leather belt and **mead flask**, a horn filled with apple mead.



Idis

Once she presents the flask, the tree and the hooded woman disappear from the grotto, leaving only beams of sunlight and the faint scent of apples.

Mead flask:

- Starts with **2 sips**, replenishes when resting at a bonfire
- Each sip restores **10 Res** and clears **2 points** of **Fatigue**

Exits

➔ **North to Broken Arrow Bend (6)**

➔ **South to Arched Tunnel (9)**

Southern passage. Heavily shadowed, path leading up over jagged stone.

9. Arched Tunnel

The rocky terrain forms a crude natural staircase, obscured in heavy shadow. The path climbs further up, leading to a shallow arch.

- Soft **whistling sound** coming from somewhere far under the stone
- **Crumpled form** in a heap at the peak of the arch
- **Smooth incline** at the end of the tunnel
- **Broken and shattered bones** at the base of the incline

Crumpled form. Wearing tattered clothing, lifeless and curled up around a spear. A **shade**, feigning death.

Broken and shattered bones. Crushed to powder from some massive object, scattered and strewn down the path.

Exits

→ **North to Iðunn's Grotto (8)**

→ **South to Demon's Ledge (10)**

Smooth incline. Further ahead the jagged ground smooths out and becomes a gradual ascent.

Encounters

The **shade** attacks if disturbed or if the Adventurer moves away.

Once the Adventurer approaches, another **shade** at the top of the incline rolls down a **massive boulder**.

- **Dex save** to avoid **d8 damage**

Shade

3 **Res**, 10 **Str**, 8 **Dex**, 9 **Wit**, 4 **Spi**, 20ft, claw (d4)

- Hollow dead devoid of humanity; a shadow of the person that was

10. Demon's Ledge

Flat, broad room littered with piles of broken and smashed bones, shattered weaponry, and crushed armour. Massive cracks litter the stone ground and jagged walls, as if smashed by something immense.

- **Crashing echoes** of something huge moving around nearby
- Compacted stone ground, covered in a dense layer of **fine dust**
- On the western side, the ground leads to an overhanging **rocky ledge**
- **Heavy iron key** hangs from a hook on the southern wall

Fine dust. Stalactites hang overhead but the only remaining stalagmites are on the edges, all others crushed to powder.

Rocky ledge. Overlooks the **Jagged Chamber** and the **stone demon** below. The crashing sound is the demon pacing.

Heavy iron key. Explorer's Key. Unlocks the second lock in the **carved doors** in the **Jagged Chamber**.

Exits

→ **Down to the Jagged Chamber (3)**

Plunging attack. If they choose to be so bold, the Adventurer gains *damage advantage* in a plunging attack on the demon (with axe, sword, or knives).

Encounters

The demon ignores the Adventurer unless provoked, allowing for a surprise attack.

If attacked at range the **stone demon** leaps from the **Jagged Chamber** to **Demon's Ledge**.

- **Dex save** to avoid d8 crushing damage

11. Whistling Channel

Violent, piercing wind shrieks through the narrow stone channel, cold tearing at your skin and chilling your breath. Ice gathers on the stone walls and the path is perilous.

- The wind carries a **foul stench** and drowns out most sound
- **Frozen stream** crosses the ground, water running from deeper inside the cave
- **Mist and fog** gathers near the end, obscuring the path

Exits

→ East to the Raven Flies (12)

Mist and fog. Stationary even through the violent wind. Daylight just visible in the distance.

12. The Raven Flies

Pushing through the fog, you find a plateau exposed to the sky. An enormous raven is perched on a broad ash stump, black eyes staring. Between you and the raven is a dead thing, clad in broken and rusted armour, wielding a bearded axe, eyes glowing with red malevolence.

- **Stinging wind** even stronger, lashing exposed skin and carrying a **putrid stench**
- Death-blue **dead warrior** waits, red eyes scanning
- The **enormous raven** shuffles on its perch, watching

Enormous raven. 10 feet tall, pitch black feathers, enormous grasping talons. Cocks its head at the Adventurer.

Exposed plateau. The cave is revealed to be flying hundreds of feet above the ground, forests and mountains visible through cold mist.





Draugr

Encounters

Draugr. The dead warrior is a **draugr**. Its lips peel back in a smile when it sees the Adventurer.

- Speaks with a cold guttural voice full of hatred and bile
- Fought the living in the war that was
- Demands the Adventurer forfeit the **Soul** they earned from overcoming the demon or forfeit 1 point of **Vigour**; attacks if refused
- The freezing wind stops once the draugr is defeated or placated, replaced by brilliant sunshine

Draugr

8 **Res**, 1 **Def**, 11 **Str**, 8 **Dex**, 9 **Wit**, 6 **Spi**,
20ft, spear/axe (d6)

- Death-blue corpse driven by hatred for the living, eyes burn with red malice
- Emit a reeking stench that marks their presence
- At close range, **Str** save to avoid losing a turn to vomit

Raven. Bows head when approached.

Beckons to the air with its wing, in essence asking if they are ready to journey to the land beyond.

The raven crouches and springs up off the tree stump, taking to the air with a gust from its wings. Circling around, it hovers for a moment before grasping you firmly in wicked talons. You fly off into the unknown sky, onward into the new world below.

- The Adventurer has successfully escaped the **Cave of Echoes**

Further Into the Nine Realms

Now suitably prepared, the journey continues for the Adventurer.

Potential future adventure hooks:

- **Unearth** the source of the **rekindling bonfires**
- **Traverse** the planes to locate your remaining **kin**
- **Hunt** the wandering **titans**
- **Slay** the furtive Aesir and **achieve godhood**

PART 4: APPENDICES



EN EINN VÖLUNDR SAT Í ULFDÖLUM,
HANN SLÓ GULL RAUTT VIÐ GIM FASTAN,
LUKÐI HANN ALLA LIND BAUGUM VEL;
SVÁ BEIÐ HANN SINNAR LJÓSSAR KVÁNAR,
EF HÁNUM KOMA GERÐI

*But Volund sat alone in Wolfdale,
Forging red rings sealed with skill and
threaded like serpents.
And he waited for the shining woman,
faring her way back to him.*

— Völundarkviða, 5





MONSTERS



Draugr

Cultist

6 **Res**, 1 **Def**, 10 **Str**, 8 **Dex**, 10 **Wit**, 12 **Spi**, 40ft, seax (d6)

- Fanatical zeal burns behind the eyes in worship to lost gods.
- Refuses to retreat, fights to the death.
- Roll d20 when defeated; on a 1, a black tentacle bursts from the corpse & strikes for d6 magic damage.

Draugr

8 **Res**, 1 **Def**, 11 **Str**, 8 **Dex**, 9 **Wit**, 6 **Spi**, 20ft, spear/axe (d6)

- Death-blue corpse driven by hatred for the living, eyes burn with red malice.
- Emits a reeking stench that marks their presence.
- At close range, Str save to avoid losing a turn to vomit.

Dwarf

10 **Res**, 2 **Def**, 13 **Str**, 9 **Dex**, 10 **Wit**, 12 **Spi**, 25ft, hammer (d8)

- Short & stocky with long beard; gruff & stand-offish.
- Weathered skin resembles stone.
- Strongest in mountains or underground.
- Resistant to most magic & poison.

Elf

8 **Res**, 1 **Def**, 8 **Str**, 14 **Dex**, 14 **Wit**, 12 **Spi**, 40ft, dual swords (d6)

- Beautiful, amoral, & long-lived; ruthless & arrogant.
- Rarely reveal themselves to non-elves.
- Resistant to most magic.



Elf



Wildwood jotunn

Jotunn, fire

20 **Res**, 4 **Def**, 18 **Str**, 12 **Dex**, 13 **Wit**, 14 **Spi**, 25ft, flaming sword (d10)

- Tall & broad like other jotunn, with flaming hair & eyes; arrogant & quick to anger.
 - Emotions dictate strength & colour of visible flame.
 - Immune to fire; weak to ice.
- Dire strike: Targets ignites in fire for d4 Str damage.

Jotunn, wildwood

18 **Res**, 3 **Def**, 16 **Str**, 12 **Dex**, 10 **Wit**, 14 **Spi**, 20ft, broad axe (d10)

- Human-like, but much taller & broader; intelligent & peaceful, slow to anger.
- Rarely gather in large numbers, even small settlements are rare.
- Grab: Blocks all movement & reactions; Str save to break free.

Lindworm

20 **Res**, 2 **Def**, 16 **Str**, 16 **Dex**, 16 **Wit**, 14 **Spi**, 40ft, slash (d8), bite (d10)

- Enormous serpent the length of a river, with two powerful forelegs.
 - Balances on one leg to slash with the other.
 - Weak to lightning.
- Dire strike: Swallows the target, Str save to escape.

Rock troll

4 **Res**, 2 **Def**, 12 **Str**, 6 **Dex**, 6 **Wit**, 10 **Spi**, 20ft, claw (d4)

- Hunched form with dragging arms & skin of rocky grey stone.
 - Shunned by all for their brutish nature, even their green kin.
- Dire strike: Red lichen oozes from target's wounds, Str save to avoid moving at half speed.

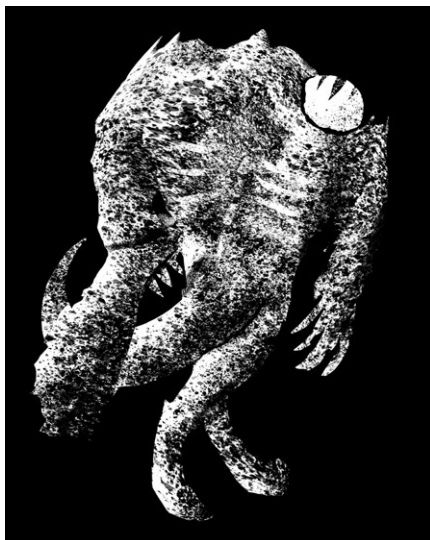
Shade

3 **Res**, 10 **Str**, 8 **Dex**, 9 **Wit**, 4 **Spi**, 20ft, claw (d4)

- Hollow dead devoid of humanity; a shadow of the person that was.
- Drawn to the living, gathers in hordes.



Shade



Stone demon

Skeleton

8 **Res**, 10 **Str**, 8 **Dex**, 4 **Wit**, 4 **Spi**, 30ft, spear (d6)

- Pale bones picked clean, maniacal grin underneath empty sockets.
- A hollow clatter warns when they're near.
- Roll d12 when defeated; on a 1, reforms at half max Res.

Skeleton, bonewheel

6 **Res**, 8 **Str**, 12 **Dex**, 4 **Wit**, 4 **Spi**, 40ft, spikes (d6), roll

- Laughing skeleton carrying a vicious spiked wheel.
- Rolling attack shreds anything in its path.
- Roll: Roll d6 3 times & take the highest result for damage.

Skeleton, giant

16 **Res**, 14 **Str**, 9 **Dex**, 4 **Wit**, 4 **Spi**, 20ft, greatsword (d10)

- Colossal skeleton towers with slow malice.
- Wind shrieks through hollow bones.
- Roll d12 when defeated; on a 1-2, reforms at half max Res.

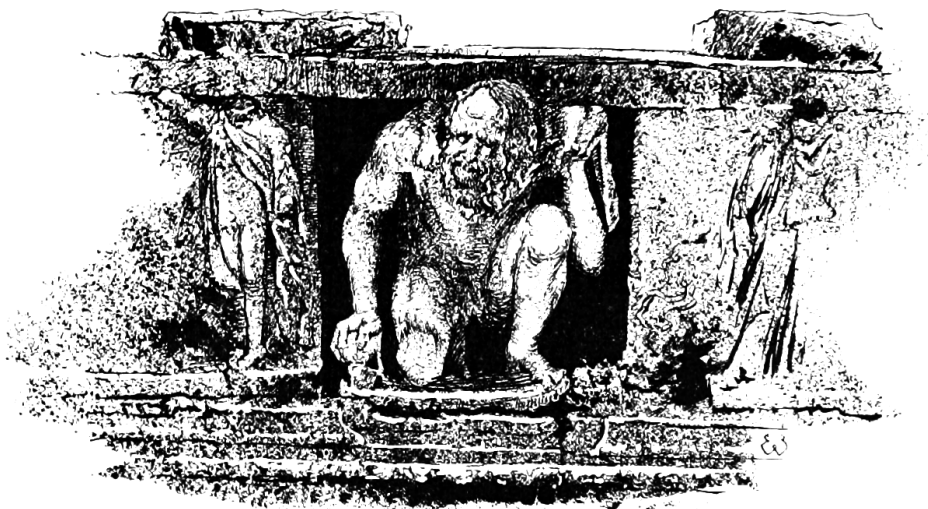
Stone demon

9 **Res**, 2 **Def**, 13 **Str**, 6 **Dex**, 6 **Wit**, 6 **Spi**, 20ft, club (d6), ground slam (d8), grab

- Hulking humanoid shape, rocky, pitted flesh bloated & deformed.
 - Keeper of lost & forgotten places.
 - Grab: Dex save to avoid losing next turn & d6 damage from stone grip.
- ➔ Dire strike (ground slam): Str save to avoid broken bones & d4 Dex damage.



Treant



Troll

Treant

10 **Res**, 1 **Def**, 12 **Str**, 6 **Dex**, 5 **Wit**, 12 **Spi**, 15ft, slam (d6)

- Lumbering & gangly, toughened bark & lush green foliage.
- Watches silently from the forests for those who cut or burn too much.
- Weak to fire but risks drawing the attention of others.

Troll

12 **Res**, 1 **Def**, 14 **Str**, 9 **Dex**, 10 **Wit**, 12 **Spi**, 20ft, club (d8)

- Appearance & size varies with age, region, and temperament. Common trolls are larger than most humans, with long hair & pale skin; rarely helpful or friendly.
- Lives in close families in caves, protects the land around them.
- As an action, recover lost Res when standing on rock or stone.

Warg

18 **Res**, 14 **Str**, 12 **Dex**, 9 **Wit**, 8 **Spi**, 30ft, bite (d12)

- Hill-sized wolf with burning eyes & deadly bite.
 - One of the Sons of Fenrir, filled with hunger & vengeance towards men.
- Dire strike: As enormous jaws can easily main, target's arm is dismembered.

Wolf

4 **Res**, 9 **Str**, 10 **Dex**, 4 **Wit**, 8 **Spi**, 40ft, bite (d4)

- Dense black & grey fur, yellow eyes; territorial & dangerous in any number.
 - Attuned to the rhythm of nature & can sense those that disrupt the balance.
 - When in a pack, 1 in 10 chance one is a wolfskin.
- Dire strike: Howls to signal the pack; 1 in 6 chance another wolf appears.

ADVENTURER OPTIONS

Names

1	Áge	26	Funi
2	Alvar	27	Gertrud
3	Anna	28	Gorm
4	Anri	29	Gro
5	Ari	30	Guðmundr
6	Arne	31	Guðrún
7	Arnkatla	32	Gunhild
8	Áse	33	Gunnar
9	Astrid	34	Halfdan
10	Auður	35	Hallbera
11	Birger	36	Harald
12	Björn	37	Harpa
13	Bo	38	Hekla
14	Bodil	39	Helgi
15	Darri	40	Hilda
16	Edda	41	Hilmir
17	Einar	42	Hrefna
18	Emil	43	Inga
19	Erik	44	Ingibjörg
20	Estrid	45	Ingólfur
21	Flóki	46	Jóhanna
22	Flosi	47	Jón
23	Freyja	48	Kaðlín
24	Frida	49	Kåre
25	Frode	50	Karitas

Physique

1	Athletic	6	Slim
2	Brawny	7	Short
3	Diminutive	8	Statuesque
4	Lanky	9	Stout
5	Rugged	10	Towering

Names

51	Katla	76	Sigmar
52	Ketill	77	Signe
53	Knud	78	Sigríð
54	Kristín	79	Sigríður
55	Kristján	80	Sigrún
56	Leif	81	Skarde
57	Lind	82	Stefán
58	Liv	83	Sten
59	Logi	84	Sune
60	Lukka	85	Sunna
61	Magnús	86	Svend
62	Margrét	87	Thurid
63	María	88	Þuríður
64	Njal	89	Thyra
65	Nói	90	Toke
66	Ødger	91	Tora
67	Ólafur	92	Torsten
68	Orri	93	Tove
69	Randi	94	Troels
70	Revna	95	Trygve
71	Roar	96	Ulfhild
72	Rune	97	Valgerður
73	Saga	98	Vilmar
74	Salvar	99	Von
75	Sif	100	Yrsa

Skin

1	Birthmark	6	Rough
2	Drawn	7	Smooth
3	Mottled	8	Freckled
4	Pockmarked	9	Scarred
5	Rosy	10	Weathered

Hair			
1	Shaved	6	Flowing
2	Braided	7	Luxurious
3	Curly	8	Oily
4	Matted	9	Wavy
5	Frizzy	10	Wispy

Face			
1	Bony	6	Symmetrical
2	Damaged	7	Fierce
3	Chiselled	8	Sharp
4	Elongated	9	Square
5	Pale	10	Sunken

Speech			
1	Blunt	6	Gravelly
2	Booming	7	Precise
3	Cryptic	8	Squeaky
4	Droning	9	Eloquent
5	Formal	10	Whispery

Virtue			
1	Ambitious	6	Honourable
2	Cautious	7	Humble
3	Courageous	8	Merciful
4	Disciplined	9	Serene
5	Gregarious	10	Tolerant

Vice			
1	Aggressive	6	Lazy
2	Bitter	7	Nervous
3	Craven	8	Rude
4	Deceitful	9	Vain
5	Greedy	10	Vengeful



PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

Please note, modern Icelandic is close to Old Norse in structure but different in pronunciation. For simplicity, the Icelandic spelling and pronunciation is used for non-English words in this text.

Letter	Explanation
Á	is like "ou" in "house", "about" and "shout"
Ð	is like "th" in "feather", "father" and "that", but as the last letter of a word it is like "th" in
É	same as English "yay"
Í	like an English "ee" and the "i" in "Maria" and the "y" in "diary"
Ó	is like "o" in "sole" and like "oa" in "goat" and "soap"
Ú	like English "oo" as in "zoo"
Ý	exactly like Icelandic "i", it's only a matter of spelling
Þ	like English "th" in "thunder", "theatre" and "thong"
Æ	is like the name of the letter "i" in English or the sound of the letters "ai" in the words "Thai food". Hi/ hæ & bye/bæ are the same in English and Icelandic.
Ö	like German "ö" and English "u" in "urgent" or "fur". Equivalent to English "e" as in "bed", but with the lips rounded.

RUNECAIRN

RESILIENCE

 /

SPEED

DEF

VIGOUR

SHIELD

VITALITY

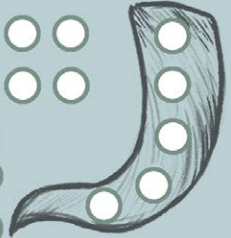
ARMOUR

KEY ITEM

WEAPONS

SKILLS/ SPELLS

MEAD



SOULS

NOTES

STR

 /

DEX

 /

WIT

 /

SPI

 /

CURSED



FATIGUE \$\$\$

DEPRIVED

POISONED

INVENTORY

 /

○ SLOT ↺ REACTION \$\$\$ CAUSES FATIGUE



Wardensaga

Runecairn is a Norse fantasy role-playing game inspired by *Cairn*, *Knave*, and *Into the Odd*. Slay fearsome creatures, delve into crumbling ruins, and navigate an untamed wilderness. Contains everything you need to run a *Runecairn* game with one Warden and one or more Adventurers.

Advanced Rules:

- Two new starting classes, Berserkr and Pyre
 - Oracle for Solo Play
 - Delve Generator
 - Allies and Invasions

Collects *Runecairn Core Rules*, introductory dungeon crawl *Beneath the Broken Sword*, and *Runecairn: Advanced Rules*



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