

The Icelandic Wars

A Digital Supplement to Land of Fire and Ice



Introduction

Welcome to *The Icelandic Wars*. This PDF download is written to complement material in *Land of Fire and Ice* (stock number AG0270, ISBN 1-58978-032-9), a supplement on Mythic Iceland for *Ars Magica*[™]. As the possibility of conflict between Iceland and the Order of Hermes is mentioned in the book, we decided that a more extensive exploration of the possibilities was called for. This PDF therefore provides an outline of how such a conflict might arise and develop.

Such an exercise can never accommodate all troupe styles and all circumstances, including the myriad of possible power levels. Therefore, storyguides are encouraged to adapt and tailor this material to the taste and abilities of their players.

The outline below is written primarily for storyguides using the Toframanna Saga setting as detailed in *Land of Fire and Ice*, but story seeds are provided for use by player characters on either side of the conflict. This story arc is intended to involve the player characters in mainly political and tactical ways, rather than in simple magical combat. Magical leviathans are going to war, Hermetic archmagi against the Icelandic guardians, landvaettir and giant clans; unless the player characters are equally powerful they would be wise to avoid being caught directly in this struggle. For magi playing the Toframanna Saga, their task is to safeguard their long-term interests and minimize the destruction.

Also be aware that the momentous events that occur in this story, while having a minor

effect in mainland Europe, could potentially affect (or be affected by) the mundane history of Iceland. If you wish to include such effects into your story, consult the brief description of the future of Icelandic politics given on page 18 of *Land of Fire and Ice*.

The Bergen Expedition

For over a century rumors of a powerful rival order of Norse wizards have circulated within the Order of Hermes. These rumors were given credence by the mysterious destruction of a number of spring covenants founded in Scandinavian lands. A number of Hermetic investigations headed to the northlands, only to find the occasional weak hedge wizard who knew nothing of any "Order of Odin." This lack of success only heightened the paranoia among many Hermetics. It seems as if this Order of Odin possessed potent powers of disguise and concealment, perhaps even infernally granted.

In 1214 AD the archmagus Hadrianus of House Flambeau heard rumors of a powerful organization of magicians operating from the remote Norse colony of Iceland. Thinking he had at last found the viper's nest, he took sail with his two filii on a ship from the port of Bergen. However, as they approached the Icelandic coast their hostile intent triggered the landvaettir watchers who then informed Pan Caudarax, the first guardian of Iceland.



Never a creature to waste time, the dragon engulfed the ship in flame and sent in his attendant host to dispatch any survivors. Hadrianus's filii were slain immediately. Hadrianus himself withstood Pan Caudarax's flame and managed to slay a group of landvaettir, before botching a spell and falling into temporary Twilight. While incapacitated Hadrianus was thrown into the sea and drowned.

The body of Hadrianus eventually washed up on the shores of a Scottish island, which his spirit began to haunt.

Prelude to War

In 1224 a magus from Loch Leglean investigates the haunting and meets Hadrianus's ghost. Hadrianus gives an incoherent account of the battle, but makes it clear that he was slain by forces summoned by the Order of Odin. Having delivered this message his spirit rests. An



Illustration by Grey Thornberry

attempt to summon up his spirit for further information leads to his final Twilight. News of the dragon's attack spreads quickly through the Order: the primus of House Flambeau demands vengeance for his fallen comrades, and members of House Guernicus, who have long lobbied for action, press their case.

Two archmagi rise to prominence, Julius of House Flambeau and Lavinia of House Guernicus. Together they begin preparations for a Hermetic invasion of Iceland.

This conflict can be foreshadowed in a number of ways. Firstly, the covenant's local redcap reports the discovery of Hadrianus's ghost and its account blaming the Order of Odin for his slaying. Over the next couple of years, there is a growing opinion among magi that something must be done.

Story Seed (pro-crusader): While on an expedition to the Scottish Isles the player characters discover the ghost of Hadrianus. It is they who bring word to the Order of the Icelandic threat and they may become heavily involved in the crusader faction.

Story Seed (Vindolanda): The magi hear of Hadrianus's death and may ask Pan Caudarax why he killed the archmagus. The dragon dimly recalls the incident and says that the landvaettir watchers reported a very powerful and extremely hostile group of magicians approaching Iceland. Pan Caudarax decided not to take any chances and brought his whole might against the vessel. As he was acting as guardian and the slain magi were clearly on some sort of raid, he does not consider it necessary to offer any compensation for the killings. He finds the suggestion that he is under the command of some order of wizards offensive. Pan Caudarax knows nothing about any Order of Odin and claims he has never taken much interest Norse wizards.

The War Tribunal

A few years later Julius and Lavinia take the first step of seeking volunteers for a campaign. Letters are sent to all covenants in the northern tribunals asking for aid and knowledge of Iceland. In 1230 the archmaga Lavinia calls a special Tribunal at Durenmar to debate and organize the proposed Hermetic Crusade. All interested parties are invited to attend.

At this point the player characters have a number of options.

Keep Quiet

The cautious option may initially be the best. Nevertheless, in the long term this strategy may bring ruin as whoever wins the resulting conflict will not appreciate the covenant's neutrality.

Story Seed (Vindolanda, anti-crusader): These developments place the covenant of Vindolanda in an extremely difficult position. Assuming that Vindolanda's secrecy has been maintained, no magus outside the covenant suspects that Vindolanda is located in Iceland. Do the magi maintain their secrecy or do they reveal their hand and try to convince the Order that the death of Hadrianus was nothing to do with the Order of Odin?

Aid the Hermetic Campaign

This may be the natural choice for characters ignorant of the true situation in Iceland. Even if they have had friendly contact with the *galdramen hreppur*, the player characters might decide that their duty to the Order overrides any concerns over the justice of the conflict. On the other hand, they may simply assume that the Order will be victorious and wish to be on the winning side. Alternatively, fear is a contagious thing. The destruction of Hermetic covenants in Norse lands happened and who caused these events if not the Order of Odin? The *galdramen hreppur* might seem harmless, but perhaps this is just a cover.

Negotiate Peace

If the characters enjoy a friendly relationship with the *galdramen hreppur*, they may wish to calm the Order's fears and negotiate a peace. This is extremely difficult, especially for young magi without a great deal of political or magical power. For Vindolanda, making the attempt necessitates revealing that the covenant continues to exist over three hundred years after its reported destruction. However, if magi of Vindolanda stand up to be heard, others stand with them. A number of magi have already claimed that the Order of Odin is a myth, only to be threatened and accused of

betraying the Order by members of Houses Flambeau and Guernicus.

It is possible that the player characters convince some senior magi that the dragon's attack on Hadrianus was nothing to do with the Order of Odin. They may be able to convince some that Icelandic magicians know little or nothing of the Order of Hermes and certainly have no enmity towards it. In doing so support for the invasion is diminished. However, many of the gathered magi will not be swayed, regardless of the strength of the arguments. For some, the chance to hunt down a group of hedge wizards is too good to let pass; the Order was formed on a "join or die" policy and giving hedge wizards the choice is optional. Many hope to make their name in the glory of battle, and as the Order of Odin is a convenient pretext they will not entertain the notion that it is a myth. Others see a chance to find new vis sources, once the current owners have been dealt with. Whether motivated by idealism, glory or greed, those lobbying for invasion have the loudest voice.

Although the pro-war faction pushes through their agenda, the arguments of Vindolanda (or any other anti-crusade faction) are heard. These arguments place the seed of doubt in the minds of many. The nobility of those lobbying for war is called into question, as is the necessity for it. Among the less belligerent magi there is a growing disquiet. If the player characters are effective, many powerful magi withdraw their support. These older magi stand ready to defend the Order from a real threat, but are uninterested in childish adventures. Hadrianus went out looking for a fight and he found one; a season wasted discussing his incompetence is enough.

Story Seed (pro-crusader): One or more magi claim that the Order of Odin is a myth and that Hadrianus's killing had nothing to do with Norse wizards. Obviously these magi are deluded or in league with the enemy. It is the duty of loyal magi to investigate their contacts. Given the threat against the Order a little scrying may be justified.

Story Seed (Vindolanda, anti-crusader): Before the War Tribunal begins the player characters may hit on an idea that might pull the rug from beneath the crusade's feet. The player characters may suggest that the *hreppur* join the Order en masse. This would bring them under the protection of the Code and make the conflict illegal. However, the proud Norsemen are





very reluctant to surrender their independence: just as they refuse to serve a jarl or a king, so they balk at serving a primus.

If the player characters manage to convince the hreppur to swear the Oath and present this fact at the War Tribunal, Julius and Lavinia are caught flat-footed. However, Lavinia recovers quickly, pointing out that members of the Order are required to join a House and this technically requires the agreement of the House primus. Normally this is taken for granted if a magician joins House Ex Miscellanea. However, the arch-maga Lavinia insists that the prima of House Ex Miscellanea approve each candidate before accepting them as members. This is an impossible request as the prima of Ex Miscellanea is currently refusing all contact with the outside world as she prepares for the apocalypse she has been predicting for decades. Therefore, Lavinia declares their membership invalid.

This ruling causes uproar, with several senior magi disputing it passionately. Julius and Lavinia maintain their junior supporters, but all their peers desert them. Out of respect for Julius and Lavinia, most simply depart the Tribunal rather than actively oppose them. Eventually the matter is decided by certámen between Julius and the most senior magus to actively oppose the conflict. Julius wins.

The Choice

The War Tribunal ends with the declaration that, in revenge for the death of Hadrianus, all Icelandic magicians are enemies of the Order and their lives are forfeit. Quaesitor Lavinia declares the tribunal legal and binding. Depending on events driven by player characters, the crusade may still have the support of many senior magi or it may be reduced to a very controversial venture. In the latter case, a number of elder magi pledge to take the matter to the Grand Tribunal.

The player characters are now left with a decision. The arguments presented during the debate may have changed their position. Pro-crusaders could now be in doubt over the very existence of the Order of Odin; a simple campaign of murderous conquest may not be to their taste. Anti-crusaders may now

believe the threat is real or that opposing the war is suicidal.

Story Seed (Vindolanda, pro-crusader): With Vindolanda as a base an immediate confrontation with the guardians is avoided. With the information the player characters can provide, the Hermetic expedition is able to slay many of Iceland's leading magicians in the first strike. Bard's counterattack (see below) is likely to fail against Scartaris and in this event Iceland quickly falls to the crusader force. Should this occur the "Crusader Victory" sections should be consulted.

Alternatively, if the player characters do not suggest that the *Aegis of the Heath* is re-cast at 75th level then Bard may be able to violently flood Scartaris. This should be done while the player characters are away, so as to avoid killing them all. In this case the "Bard is Victorious" sections should be consulted.

Bishop Magnus's delegation sets out in either event.

Story Seed (Vindolanda, anti-crusader): If the player characters revealed their connection to Iceland, Lavinia demands their cooperation and gives them a season to comply. If the Vindolanda council decides to defy Lavinia, they face the abandonment of their mainland site. Iain can command the gate spirit to swallow the gatestone on one side and deliver it to the other; thus sealing off the Scartaris complex from the mainland.

However, if the characters never reveal their location this is unnecessary. Maintaining the mainland site enables the characters to keep informed as to the progress of the Hermetic forces.

If Bard and Pan Caudarax are informed of the invasion, they are better prepared to confront it. They in turn inform Vindsvall and the Gray Bull (if free). This may prompt the magi to free the Gray Bull and Bard suggests this, if it has not already been done.

Given that foresight talents are not uncommon among Icelandic magicians (Premonitions, Visions, Divination), there is a great disquiet over predictions of death and destruction. The report by the player characters gives firm information on the nature of the threat. The magi are asked what the galdramen hreppur might expect from Hermetic magi and why they are to be attacked.

Vindsvall

Characteristics: Cun +5, Per +10, Str +10, Sta +15, Dex +15, Qik +15

Magic Might: 75

Size: +6

Personality Traits: Fierce +3, Brave +6, Cunning +3

Reputations: Guardian 3 (Icelandic magicians)

Weapon / Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam	Fat
Bite*	+25	+20	+14	+30	+20
1st Claw*	+20	+20	+14	+20	+20
2nd Claw*	+20	+20	+14	+20	+20

* Furious Attacks that can be used to attack multiple opponents in a single round without penalty.

Soak: +41

Fatigue levels: OK, 0, 0, 0, -1, -1, -1, -3, -3, -5, -5 Unconscious

Body levels: OK, 0, 0, 0, -1, -1, -1, -3, -3, -5, -5 Incapacitated

Powers:

Weather Mastery, CrAu, ReAu 60, 0 magic points: Vindsvall can generate any weather effect up to 12th magnitude.

Spiritual Form, MuVi 40, 0 magic points: Vindsvall may choose to be material or immaterial at will. While immaterial he may travel at 100 times his normal flying speed.

Roleplaying Notes: Vindsvall is Iceland's second guardian, a spirit as old as the land itself and bound by the ancients to protect the island from hostile magic. Although superbly cunning Vindsvall still has the mind of an animal. If a way is found to communicate with Vindsvall, he will only be interested in information relevant to his duties. He does not have any patience for idle conversation.

Appearance: An immense eagle whose wing tips seem to brush either side of the sky. He is the color of a stormy sky, with a beak and talons that appear lightning-bright. The beating of his wings seems to be the sound of thunder itself.



If they wish, the magi can teach galdramen Parma fairly quickly. However, they do not have much time to practice it before the initial invasion. Alternatively, many galdramen are able to give themselves good magic resistance by landvaettir bargains. Even so, direct confrontation with experienced Hermetic magi is suicidal. The best advice the magi can give is to hide. If they remain concealed, the Hermetic magi are left chasing shadows.

Story Seed (pro-crusader): The exact nature of the opposition on Iceland is currently unknown. The crusade would greatly benefit from more information. It is proposed that a number of scouting parties attempt to reach Iceland and investigate the opposition.

Magi who make this attempt are confronted by Pan Caudarax and may suffer the same fate as Hadrianus. However, Pan Caudarax is a mercurial creature and if he perceives the magi

as weak, he does not kill them immediately. He inquires as to their business on Iceland. From this conversation, the magi may learn that Pan Caudarax denies being a pawn of the Order of Odin and claims that his decision to kill Hadrianus was his alone. He also claims that their lives are forfeit and asks why he should spare them. However, the dragon is toying with the magi and agrees to let them return to the mainland. If the player characters are particularly persuasive, he may allow them to continue to Iceland, if they swear to their good conduct.

If only grogs and companions are sent, they escape the attention of the landvaettir watchers. They can then investigate Iceland and its wizards as much as they wish. If the storyguide has Vindolanda exist as a non-player character covenant, the player characters may be able to identify its presence on the Snaefellsnes.



The Gray Bull

Characteristics: Cun +0, Per +5, Str +30, Sta +30, Dex +5, Qik +5

Magic Might: 80 (currently 20)

Size: +8 (currently +2)

Personality Traits: Fierce +6, Brave +6, Single Minded +6

Reputations: Guardian 3 (Icelandic magicians)

Weapon / Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam	Fat
Gore	+20	+20	+7	+58	n/a
1 st Kick*	+15	+20	+7	+48	n/a
2 nd Kick*	+15	+20	+7	+48	n/a

* Furious Attacks that can be used to attack multiple opponents in a single round without penalty.

Soak: +68

Fatigue levels: Tireless

Body levels: OK, 0, 0, 0, -1, -1, -1, -3, -3, -3, -5, -5, -5 Incapacitated

Powers:

Shapeshift, MuAn 40, 0 magic points: The Gray Bull can change his size at will, from +2 to +8.

When not acting as guardian he wanders the Icelandic highlands as a Size +2 bull.

Spiritual Form, MuVi 40, 0 magic points: The Gray Bull may choose to be material or immaterial at will. While immaterial he may travel at 100 times its normal running speed.

Roleplaying Notes: The Gray Bull is Iceland's third guardian. Bound by the ancients to protect the island from hostile magic, for millennia it wandered lonely over the highlands. Once the Norse brought cattle to the island the Gray Bull would often seek out their herds. However, in 1105 AD this mighty spirit wandered into the fields surrounding the cathedral of Skalholt, attracted by the bishop's cows. He tarried too long in the Dominion and lost much of his power and size, before being captured by herdsmen. Being strong and virile, the Gray Bull has produced many strong calves. The bull now ages and dies, but produces a gray male calf to host his spirit; in this way it endures. The Gray Bull's power lies dormant, tamed by the Dominion. His size is +2 and is Magic Might 20 while he remains in the Dominion.

Appearance: The Gray Bull currently looks like a large bull of the usual Norse breed, except for his near white coat. If freed from the dominion, he will grow to a vast size in the form of an aurochs.

The Hermetic Armada

If the player characters have offered Vindolanda as a base to the Hermetic force, then this section can be ignored.

The armada consists of two large ships. A modified *Aegis of the Hearth* ritual, providing +75 magic resistance, has been cast on both. They are also protected by powerful wards against fire, and a Muto Herbam spell giving the ships +20 soak.

Unless informed by player characters, none of the crusaders is aware of the nature of the Icelandic guardians or their attendant host. Hadrianus spoke of a dragon and other beasts; the landvaettir materialized to attack him since his Parma was so strong. He did not mention spirits.

Julius is primarily an Ignem specialist, and his most powerful spells are designed for hunting renounced magi. However, his knowledge of Vim is no more than average and he has only learnt Perdo Vim spells against demons. Similarly, Lavinia is an Intéllego specialist, and although skilled at wards and necromantic magic, she has no offense spells against magical spirits.

The Host

Characteristics: Varies

Magic Might: 20 to 50

Size: -5 to +3

Personality Traits: Fierce +6

Powers:

Spell Powers, Varies, Varies: The individual spirits of the Host can create a spell effect of a level equal to their permanent Might.

Grant Might, CrVi, Varies: The individual spirits can grant the guardian temporary Might points.

Heal Guardian, CrAn or CrCo, Varies: For every 10 points of Might expended the spirit can heal the guardian one Health level. The spirit must touch the guardian to use this power.

Spiritual Form, MuVi 40, 0 magic points: Members of the guardian Host may choose to be material or immaterial at will. While immaterial they may travel at 100 times their normal speed.

Shapeshift, MuVi 20, 0 points: Members of the guardian Host can transform themselves into any form they wish. While material, they have combat characteristics equal to a Beast of Virtue of that type. Particularly powerful landvaettir (Might 40+) are able to transform into fantastic beasts of equivalent Might. Even if their spell powers are ineffective, teeth and claws may be.

Roleplaying Notes: Members of the guardian Host obey the current guardian without question. They have no regard for their own existence and will aid the guardian in whatever manner possible. They can heal the current guardian, give it temporary Might points if required or fight directly.

Appearance: The appearance of the Host changes for each guardian, see chapter two of *Land of Fire and Ice* for details. Around two thousand landvaettir form the Host, but for all intents and purposes there are endless numbers waiting to replace any slain.



Apart from Julius and Lavinia, the makeup of the Hermetic force depends on the events at the War Tribunal.

If support is still strong, the force consists of twelve powerful hoplites and twenty moderately powerful magi, mostly from House Flambeau. A third archmagus also joins the expedition, a Theban spirit master called Albinus of House Ex Miscellanea. Albinus has spells capable of defeating the guardians. They also have any player characters that join up and 100 well-equipped grogs for each ship (in addition to crew).

If support has been undermined Albinus withdraws his assistance, as do six of the hoplites and five other magi.

If the hreppur tried to join the Order only to be rebuffed by Lavinia's doubtful ruling, the expedition loses eight hoplites and ten other magi. Outraged, Albinus travels to Iceland and meets with the guardians and Biorn Egilsson (leader of the hreppur). Albinus affirms the

hreppur's membership of the Order and pledges his support against the invasion. If given a lab by Vindolanda, Albinus can provide the guardians with magics to help them against the crusader forces.

The armada sails in the summer of 1232 AD.

Story Seed (Vindolanda, anti-crusade): If the magi of Vindolanda have kept their connections to Iceland secret, they may be able to place magi, companions or grogs on one or both crusader vessels. If a magus manages to participate in one or both *Aegis of the Hearth* wards, secures casting tokens and gets them to Pan Caudarax, the armada is in serious danger.

Story Seed (Vindolanda, anti-crusade): The magi are asked to free the Gray Bull from its domestication. Bishop Magnus is unwilling to lose his prize stud bull and so unless the magi make an irresistible offer they have to take it in a raid. Once outside of the Dominion, the Gray Bull bellows and the host flocks to him, feeding



him Might points. Within a few minutes he recovers his full size and strength. He then strides into the highlands.

Although a raid is not normally dishonorable, a raid on the bishop's herds is slightly inappropriate as an active defense is unlikely. It therefore risks being seen as cowardly. However, Bishop Magnus is as powerful as a storgodi in legal terms and provoking a case from him may be seen as bold. It will certainly be a hot talking point for years to come. The magi should begin securing support from the legal case as soon as possible to avoid outlawry for the raid's leader. Even if the settlement avoids outlawry the compensation paid is likely to make this a very expensive transaction.

Story Seed (crusade): There are traitors infiltrating the expedition. Can the player characters discover them and their plan in time to save the fleet?

Assault on the Guardians

As the Icelandic coast is first sighted, Pan Caudarax approaches the ships with his host. He first sends in drake images to assess the strength of the opposition. The blaze of magic from both boats gives him pause.

Pan Caudarax shapeshifts into a lindorm and dives into the sea, while the host makes its way to the ships. The host is unable to penetrate the *Aegis of the Hearth* wards and present easy targets for the Hermetic magi. However, not being physical presents a problem. Some magi have specific spirit killing *Perdo Vim* spells, but most do not. Even so, these spells normally target individuals rather than groups. Even group target spells cannot affect more than a dozen *landvaettir* at a time and there are thousands. As the Hermetic magi attempt to slay the host, Pan Caudarax attacks the ships from below in the form of a kraken. However, the *Aegis of the Hearth* wards should repel him, leading to a counterattack.

It is possible that Pan Caudarax is slain in this encounter. This depends on the makeup of the crusader forces and any aid Pan Caudarax is given. Having known they would face a dragon, the crusaders have spells designed to slay huge beasts and vis enough to penetrate any Magic Resistance. Nevertheless, with the host healing any injury Pan Caudarax takes, he may escape.

If Albinus is part of the crusader force, the host is driven off by his magic; this leaves Pan Caudarax extremely vulnerable.

Next Vindsvall leads an attack. If Albinus is present, he again drives off the host, leaving Vindsvall without his normal assistance. Once Vindsvall is spotted Albinus is able to capture him in a spirit bottle.

If Albinus is not present, Vindsvall creates a massive storm and the ships are struck again and again by huge thunderbolts. Eventually a thunderbolt penetrates the *Aegis of the Hearth* ward on one vessel. Even with its other protections the ship is badly damaged and a number of people are slain. Vindsvall commands the host to concentrate on this vessel. They blow powerful gusts of wind onto waters surrounding the damaged ship, causing huge waves to crash over it. Many are swept overboard and the ship begins to sink. Eventually a magus spots Vindsvall through the clouds and casts a spontaneous *Kill the Living Air* with a two rooks of vis. Vindsvall is badly drained of Might and is only saved and helped to retreat by the host. However, the stricken vessel sinks with the loss of about seven magi and most of the mundanes.

The remaining Hermetic vessel then makes it to the Icelandic coast and begins looking for a harbor. They find one on the southeastern quarter, where they drop anchor. If it has been freed, the Gray Bull now attacks.

Again the presence of Albinus makes the difference, but even he may not prevail against the Gray Bull. Now standing over 120 feet at the shoulder, the Gray Bull appears without warning and charges into the bay. Albinus has an even chance of casting a spell in time to stop the charge (this may be modified by player action). If he is unsuccessful or simply not present, the Gray Bull moves straight through the ship's ward and it is smashed. The impact knocks Albinus unconscious and into the sea. Others are killed outright.

The third guardian is virtually invulnerable (+68 soak) and even if magi manage to penetrate its Magic Resistance, they are unlikely to do any damage. Even spells designed to slay dragons may be useless against this Size +8 spiritual beast. Its huge natural resistance simply defeats any such effect.

If the other ship is still afloat, the remaining magi have two combat rounds to react before it too is smashed: cutting the anchor and

propelling the ship out the open water should work. The Grey Bull follows them out to the edge of the bay, bellowing as he does so. If both ships are destroyed, only magi with *Leap of Homecoming* spells and other travel magic escape.

If Albinus captures the Gray Bull the crusaders land and set up their base (see below). Bard bides his time, while the giant community prepares for war.

Story Seed (Vindolanda, anti-crusader): The magi of Vindolanda may be able to provide the guardians with an advantage. If they can secure casting tokens for Pan Caudarax, he is able to capsize one ship with ease. The counter-attack by the other vessel may kill him or drive him off. In this case, the Vindsvall or the Gray Bull finishes the job. Alternatively, the magi may be able to create potions powerful enough to allow the dragon to penetrate the crusaders' wards. Level 85 *Creo Vim* or *Rego Vim* potions would enable Pan Caudarax to break through.

Story Seed (pro-crusader): Player characters may be able to save the lives of a number of magi and grogs from certain death. Quick thinking and spontaneous magic may limit the casualties.

Story Seed (pro-crusader): This phase of the campaign depends on the expertise in spirit magic possessed by the crusaders, particularly Albinus. If crusader player characters are extremely knowledgeable in *Vim* and have the appropriate spells, they might shift the balance in a similar way.

Hermetic Foothold

If the guardians repel the Hermetics, they return to the mainland and rethink their strategy. By the next summer, the Hermetics have a new plan. Members of House Bonisagus hypothesize that Bjornaer magi may avoid the attention of the guardians in their animal form. This proves to be the case and once on the land they find themselves unmolested by spirits whatever form they take. They therefore plan to ferry the materials required to create a *Hermes Portal*.

They secretly set this up in a highly remote part of the southeastern highlands. Once established a sizeable force travels through, conjures

a "Mystic Tower" and casts an *Aegis of the Hearth*. From this position, the magi begin their hunt for Icelandic magicians.

If the crusaders made it past the guardians the base described above is set up without a problem.

Story Seed (Vindolanda, anti-crusader): By whatever means, the magi of Vindolanda come to hear of the casting of the *Hermes Portal*. Confronting the Bjornaer magi may be within the ability of the player characters. If the players act decisively, they might be able to disrupt the ritual and prevent the main force moving through.

Story Seed (pro-crusader): The covenant of Sinus Wodinis (from *The Mythic Seas*) is a concentration of magi of House Bjornaer on an island off the southeast coast of Norway. These magi have been out of touch with the Order for many decades, and the characters are sent to request their aid against the Order of Odin. This could be a dangerous visit, as the Bjornaer dislike strangers, and may actually be allied with Norse wizards. Perhaps one of them is a trollson?

Story Seed (pro-crusader): Player character Bjornaer are asked to test the Bonisagus theory. Once the theory is proven, they are asked to help defend the magi conducting the *Hermes Portal* ritual and guard the base while it is being established.

Night of Tears

Under the cover of illusion crusader magi magically question mundanes for information on native magicians. In this manner, they identify the location of several galdramen, witches and seithkona. This group includes the leader of the galdramen hreppur, Biorn Egilsson. In a single night Hermetic magi descend on twelve farmsteads identified as harboring magicians, slaying all within. Having been forewarned moments before the attack Biorn Egilsson stands outside his farmstead and confronts archmagus Julius. Calling out in Latin, he requests a dialog. Julius does not waste an instant casting a spell that rips through Biorn's *Ol-spirit* and incinerates the old galdraman. His companions swiftly destroy the farmstead, killing all within.

After this the magi retreat to their secret base and plan their next attack.





If the player characters of Vindolanda are not with the Hermetics, they may be discovered at this point. Reports of the foreign Latin magi obviously point to a Hermetic covenant on Iceland. It is not long before Julius begins searching for these treacherous magi.

Story Seed (Vindolanda, anti-crusader): Gunnar Loftursson, a neighboring bondi, rides up to Vindolanda's Dagverdara farmstead in the late evening. He asks to see one of the toframen (magi) immediately. If a magus agrees to see him, Gunnar explains that his young daughter is gravely ill. His galdrakona wife Asta has used all her skill to help their daughter and protect the rest of his household. However, despite her efforts the child is near death. Asta sent him to the magi in search of ond (vis) suitable to offer Biarg spirits (Creo, Corpus or Vim in Hermetic terms). Gunnar is the warden of the local church and gaining his favor would enhance (repair?) the magi's reputation. This being Iceland, a gift like this is virtually certain to be repaid. Assuming the magi agree to help, they can either give Gunnar vis or journey back with him to assess the situation themselves.

However, the Hermetic crusaders have targeted Asta and a group has been sent to kill her. Asta's fylgja warns her an hour before the group's arrival and the womenfolk flee into the church. Although exhausted the young galdrakona manages to maintain the spell song that sustains the Biarg spirit keeping her daughter from death, but she cannot last much longer. As Gunnar returns, the Hermetic party is confronting the household men guarding the church...

Story Seed (pro-crusader): The player characters receive orders to kill a witch thought to occupy a farmstead in the western quarter. Lavinia instructs them to bring back the witch's heart so she may interrogate the ghost. They are also commanded to leave no witnesses. Are the players willing to commit cold-blooded murder? Even if they use Mentem magic on the mundanes who will kill the woman? The galdrakona's fylgja warns her of the impending danger about an hour before the magi arrive. The household flees into the nearby church; the galdrakona and the other womenfolk blockade themselves inside with their children, while the able-bodied men prepare to meet the threat. Neither her galdor magic nor the weapons of the household's men present much threat to

Hermetic magi. Do they kill the woman inside the church or do they drag her out to do it?

The Grapes of Wrath

These slayings send tremors through both the mundane and supernatural communities of Iceland. Ten galdramen, twelve seithkona and two trollsnyir lie slain amongst over 120 farmers, laborers, and their families. Three priests are numbered among the slain, including a son of Bishop Magnus Gizurason. As the perpetrators do not make themselves known, to the Icelanders this makes the killings cowardly murder.

In response to this action, three Icelandic groups become personally involved in the conflict. Firstly the landvaettir lords held the galdramen leader in high esteem and they pledge to avenge him. After a number of giants and trollsnyir are slain by Hermetic magi, their extended families (the entire giant community) gather behind Bard to oppose the invasion. The Bishop of Skalholt calls on all Christians to discover the killers and deliver them to God.

From this moment, the landvaettir lords give attendants to all galdramen on Iceland. Galdramen no longer need to summon spirits as they constantly accompany them. For the duration of the conflict, each galdraman is given an attendant with a Might equal to his respective Song Talent x 5. A galdraman merely needs to communicate what effect he desires, effectively reducing his casting time to the spell phase. The landvaettir attendants are prepared to accept bargains for little if any vis.

Story Seed (pro-crusader): Player magi may be uncomfortable with a plan that involves killing dozens of mundanes as well as the Icelandic wizards. After all, this looks dangerously like "interfering with the mundanes", leaving aside any purely ethical concerns. They may convince the crusaders to moderate their actions.

Story Seed (pro-crusader): Julius commands the player characters to seek out a Hermetic covenant rumored to be present in the western quarter. With spirits as well as mundanes on the lookout for foreigners, this task is difficult. Any magus caught outside the protection of the *Aegis of the Hearth* at sunset or sunrise may be attacked by a landvaettir while their Parma is down. Any grog or companion without

Gull Hellirsson

Characteristics: Int +3, Per +1, Pre -1, Com 0, Str +23, Sta +22, Dex +2, Qik +5

Magic Might: 68

Age: Irrelevant

Size: +6

Personality Traits: Friend of Man -2, Calculating +3, Violent +1

Reputations: Leader of fire giants +3, with Icelandic giants; Suicidal to cross +4, with trolls

Important Abilities: Jotunn Affinity with Fire 20 (molten metal), Shapeshift 19 (dragons), Transform 9 (trolls), External Soul, Survival 7 (volcanoes), Climb 5 (mountains), Great Weapon 14 (warhammer), Thrown Weapon 10 (molten metal), Speak Jotunn 12 (Clan of Geirrod), Potency 12 (Jotunn Affinity)

Weapon / Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam	Fat
Warhammer	+30	+27	+19	+48	+37
Thrown Molten Gold	+20	+13	+n/a	+50*	+33

*On the following round apply +35 fire damage, each subsequent round subtracting 5 from this damage. Those within 12 feet of the target receive +20 fire damage the first round, +15 the second and so on. The gold is magical and so magic resistance is effective. The gold turns to dust at sunrise or sunset.

Soak: +48 (with full scale mail armor)

Fatigue levels: OK, 0, 0, 0, -1, -1, -1, -3, -3, -5, -5, Unconscious

Body levels: OK, 0, 0, 0, -1, -1, -1, -3, -3, -5, -5, Incapacitated

Powers:

Jotunn Spells, CrIg, Te Varies, 0 magic points: Gull has become particularly proficient at a number of fire effects. Rather than calling on Jotunn spirits, Gull can invoke some fire magics directly, and when invoking such effects Gull uses his Stamina instead of Communication in his Jotunn Affinity casting total. Gull's favorite effect is to conjure molten gold, which he handles without injury and throws onto foes.

Immunity to Fire: Gull's development of his Jotunn Affinity renders him immune to all heat and flame damage.

Break Wards, PeVi, Te 100, 0 magic points: This power is a function of his dwarf-forged warhammer. The effect dispels wards and breaks any material barrier protected by such a ward. To active the effect, the hammer must be struck against the target. The first strike dispels wards of 8th magnitude or less. Every subsequent strike break wards a magnitude higher, to a maximum of 20th magnitude.

Appearance and Roleplaying Notes: Gull is a stern looking giant, with golden blond hair and strange black eyes. Although not concerned about the deaths of galdramen and humans in general, he is personally seeking vengeance on Julius's forces. A scouting party of Hermetic magi attacked his son's regio dwelling, killing his two granddaughters and taking his son's incapacitated body back to their tower. Having an External Soul his son still lives, but the Hermetic magi are constantly cutting flesh from him in what Gull can only interpret as some depraved game (they are actually harvesting him for vis). His internal rage is palpable in the air around him, but he remains completely in control. When dressed for war he wears a full coat of scale mail, each piece over an inch thick, and carries a dwarf made magical warhammer, its head weighing over 1000 lbs.



magical resistance is vulnerable to this spirit assault at any time. In addition, the party may run into a group of giants or mundanes looking for vengeance.

Story Seed (Vindolanda, anti-crusader): Together with the galdramen and possibly the player characters, Bard organizes a combined assault on the Hermetics. Bard, Gull (leader of the fire giants) and the Norn lady Vigdis (an



Orlog landvaettir lady), visit the player characters. Vigdis warns the magi that Julian has discovered the Scartaris complex and plans to attack in three days.

Bard's plan is to attack the Hermetic tower while archmagus Julius and his hoplites assault Vindolanda. Gull, the leader of the fire giants, brings out a dwarf-forged battle hammer that he claims no ward can stand against. While Julius is busy at Scartaris, Bard, Gull and their vanguard of giants and trollsyrir plan to assume the form of eagles and fly quickly over the surrounding mountains. Gull then plans to use his hammer on the enemy's *Aegis of the Hearth*.

How the player characters plan their defense is up to them. Vigdis can provide each magus with a powerful (Might 50) landvaettir attendant to aid them. They must keep Julius occupied while the crusader base is assaulted. Julius and his retinue are strong, but not invulnerable. They all have powerful Parma, but not so powerful that vis boosted spells cannot penetrate. With their powers of prophecy, the Orlog-spirits may enable the player characters to lay an effective ambush or they could simply abandon Scartaris and set a trap.

The hoplites have wards against mundane weapons, but are there Forms they have not considered? Above Scartaris Sanctum sit thousands of tons of glacial ice. If the magi think to use tunneling spells and *Creo Ignem* magic, they may be able to set up a trap that floods Scartaris in an instant with mundane water. The concussive force alone should be lethal.

The Battle for Iceland

Coordinated by Norns, the Icelandic assault begins with Gull's vanguard surrounding the mystic tower, followed swiftly by Bard's landvaettir host. Gull's battle hammer takes seven strikes to break the crusaders' *Aegis of the Hearth*. As he strikes the ward, Hermetic magi attempt to bring him down despite his huge magical resistance. Eventually he is incapacitated by six *Clenching Hand of the Crushed Heart* spells backed with vis. Bard takes up the hammer and continues Gull's work. Spells rain in on Bard, lightning, fire, huge steel javelins and *Perdo Corpus* effects. If able the host moves to heal Bard or place themselves before any attack. They do the same for any other injured

giant, but if Albinus is present the host is quickly banished.

The balance of this battle depends greatly on the crusader forces and any player character involvement. If the crusader force is strong, they are able to bring Bard and the other giants down. Otherwise, a heavily wounded Bard brings the hammer down on the *Aegis of the Hearth* for the seventh time and the ward shatters.

If this happens over a hundred giants storm across the valley and attack the crusaders. The host floods into the tower and tears it apart. Some magi manage to escape back through the Hermes Portal before it is destroyed or use *Leap of Homecoming* spells. A number of giants are slain, but the Icelandic victory is total.

At Vindolanda, the player characters either defeat Julius or escape. Landvaettir aid the player characters by throwing themselves before the spells of the Hermetic raiders. If the players are still losing, earth landvaettir may be able take them away through the mountain. Alternately they might be captured or it could be good old-fashioned "total party kill".

Crusader Victory

If Bard is defeated the Hermetic forces continue their campaign and clear Iceland of its native magicians. During this exercise Lavinia becomes increasingly anxious as all her magical investigations lead to the conclusion that none of the Icelandic magicians knew anything of an Order of Odin and had never made any attack on the Hermetic covenants. Depending on player character actions, policy may change and the remaining Icelandic magicians be offered membership of the Order of Hermes. Whether any Icelandic magicians are left to accept at this point is for the storyguide to decide.

If the hreppur did not initially attempt to join the Order, the crusade is Hermetically legal. However, the mundane outrage generated by the attacks eventually gets back to the crusaders. The fact that it is now common knowledge among Icelanders that the Order of Hermes was responsible shocks many magi. Bringing such public condemnation on the Order itself constitutes a Hermetic crime.

If the hreppur attempted to join the Order the Grand Tribunal may eventually recognize their membership and rule the crusade illegal. Given that Lavinia can present no evidence of

a real threat, the crusaders have no effective defense. Whether Julius and Lavinia are later renounced, punished or just pardoned is up to the storyguide. Player characters who followed the archmagi potentially share their punishment in proportion to their rank.

Story Seed (Vindolanda, anti-crusader): Surviving members of Vindolanda may be able to use the gateway to smuggle as many galdramen out of Iceland as possible. Trollsyrnir and giants can use their shapeshifting powers to flee (many to Helluland). Only by seeking Hermetic support on the mainland can the magi stop the killing. One way such pressure that might be applied is through raising the anger of mundane authorities against the Order. Bishop Magnus's delegation is potentially the greatest single aid in achieving this end. The player characters could attempt to ensure that Magnus succeeds.

Story Seed (pro-crusader): The magical war is over, but a hornet's nest of mundanes and churchmen has been stirred up. Without any evidence of a threat to the Order, the whole basis of the campaign seems empty. The anger of the mundanes may prompt Hermetic charges. If the hreppur attempted to join the Order then without evidence that they were a threat, all the crusader magi may be in serious trouble. Perhaps it is time to mitigate responsibility by negotiating a peace?

Bard is Victorious

If Bard succeeds and Julius still lives, the archmagus finds himself without a base. At sunset he is attacked and captured by Bard's forces. Yfel lords then take him away for their long and inventive amusement.

Story Seed (Vindolanda, anti-crusader): If the magi wish, they can aid in the assault on the mystic tower. Not being magical creatures they can take the battle inside the Aegis (albeit with penalties). They may also be able to provide potions or other magics of benefit to Bard's forces.

Story Seed (pro-crusader): The player characters are away scouting when the base is attacked. They must find their way off the island, before they meet the same fate as their comrades.

Story Seed (pro-crusader): The player characters fail to escape the island; they are captured by a group of galdramen and attendant

landvaettir. They are taken prisoner and Yfel spirits temporarily suppress the player character's Gifts. If the characters swear to their good conduct, they are allowed to live. There is no such thing as a prison in Iceland and the player characters are assigned to a household. They are expected to contribute to household tasks, if they wish to eat. As long as they behave themselves, they are well treated. Magi who keep their word may be asked to teach the household's children Latin and letters as their household task. Such characters may eventually find themselves more honored guests than hostages.

Those who constantly attempt to escape (an impossible task without outside help) or defy their captors, suffer from an empty stomach at least. Unless the character is tired of life, assaulting the householder or his family should not be attempted.

(This scenario is not appropriate for many players, who joined the game to play powerful magi not powerless captives. It is also incompatible with those guilty of cowardly butchery, who would be killed once identified. However, for those who might appreciate an unusual opportunity for character development it may work well.)

The Battle Comes Home

If Bard is victorious, a number of galdramen and giants plan attacks against Hermetic covenants. If Pan Caudarax has been slain, his mate assumes the mantle of guardian and joins this effort. Unless dissuaded the raids provoke a full-blooded response from the Order. Now the Order knows the nature of its Icelandic foe, magi can quickly develop the necessary spells. Iceland cannot hope to repel an attack of this magnitude. Hopefully the galdramen and giants can be persuaded to target only responsible individuals.

If Bard is victorious due to the assistance of Albinus and other Hermetic magi, it may well be possible to persuade the Icelanders to seek justice through Hermetic tribunals, rather than through raids (see below).





If Bard was defeated, the crusaders only have to worry about the mundane and the possible Hermetic legal situation. Whether Bard is defeated or not Bishop Magnus Gizurason journeys to Bremen and together with the archbishop set out on a delegation to Rome. There he petitions the Pope for action against the Order of Hermes. If successful, the Pope excommunicates all Christian members of the Order of Hermes and forbids Christians from serving or trading with them.

This situation may continue for years. Eventually pressure builds for a settlement.

Story Seed (Vindolanda, anti-crusader): The player characters are asked to join a raiding party. Are these magi willing to take part in a campaign of murderous vengeance? The opportunities for loot are very attractive. Refusal may offend those making the offer and might lead to suspicion. However, more foresighted magi may realize the long term folly of such a move. Indiscriminate attacks against random targets would bring ruin.

However, vengeance is possible; most neutral magi would accept a counterattack against the responsible parties as natural justice. With the assistance of Orlog spirits, ambushes for particular magi might be arranged. Such a precise vendetta would not significantly undermine any anti-crusader support among the Order, although it would greatly reduce the chances of any crusaders facing Hermetic justice.

Player characters may also suggest that the Icelanders not take revenge, rather seeking to have the invading magi brought to Hermetic justice. The landvaettir could be presented as faeries, and the crusaders certainly interfered with the mundanes, so there is a strong case to be made for renouncing the crusaders. The Icelanders will not be keen on this solution, however, unless their victory was made possible by Hermetic assistance.

Story Seed (pro-crusader): Reports come in of expedition members being ambushed and killed while traveling. The player characters must be on their guard. However, what form the attack may take they do not know.

Story Seed (general): The player characters get to hear of Bishop Magnus's delegation. They may wish to stop it, but how can this be achieved without making the situation worse?

Resolution

Hermetic Domination

If Julius and Lavinia defeat Bard they are only forced to a compromise if significant mundane or Hermetic pressure is applied. Without this, the clearance continues and Iceland becomes an empty territory, ripe for a Hermetic land-rush. The hostility of mundane Icelanders probably endures for decades if not centuries, although if the player characters moderated the raids this may be easier to overcome. The landvaettir never forgive the invaders, making life as difficult and as dangerous as possible for new covenants. New Hermetic immigrants who had nothing to do with the crusade may be able to negotiate personal treaties, albeit in the face of initial hostility.

If significant pressure is applied to Julius and Lavinia then some sort of peace negotiation is attempted with any surviving Icelandic magicians, bishops and godar. In this case, the Settlement section (see below) may be adapted to suit.

Hermetic Failure

The Hermetic reaction to failure depends on the actions of the Icelandic magicians. If they launch indiscriminate raids of vengeance, the Order decides that the crusade was justified, and launches a punitive attack backed by its full strength. As noted above, the Order, acting as a whole, is far stronger than the Icelandic wizards, and Hermetic victory is all but inevitable. House Jerbiton engages with the church, and succeeds in having the excommunication lifted. An investigation into the use of sorcery by Icelandic clergymen is begun and succeeds in closing both cathedral magic schools.

If the Icelandic magicians refrain from launching any raids of vengeance, or target only the perpetrators, the Order of Hermes sooner or later decides to negotiate a peace treaty. The speed with which this decision is made depends largely on the political activities of the player characters.

The primi of House Guernicus, Bonisagus and Jerbiton send emissaries to Iceland to negotiate a peace treaty. Being without hostile intent they reach the shore unchallenged. From there, the player characters hear that they have been brought before Bishop Magnus Gizurarson.

Settlement

Chaired by Bishop Magnus, the meeting with the Hermetic emissaries tries to bring the hreppur within the Order.

The options are.

1) Integration of the galdramen hreppur into the Order within House Ex Miscellanea. This is the option favored by the Order if there were any retaliatory raids. However, if the hreppur had attempted to do this before the start of the conflict, the emissaries find their position undermined by the previous denial of admission.

2) Recognition of the galdramen hreppur and a peace treaty guaranteeing mutual protection from attack. The option favored by the hreppur, and by the Order if there were no retaliatory raids at all. If there were raids, the Order's emissaries strongly oppose such a solution.

3) Integrate into the Order of Hermes as a new House, with assurances that they may follow their own laws within Iceland. This compromise solution might be obtained through skilled negotiation.

Whatever long-term position is reached, the Icelanders demand compensation for all of their dead or injured countrymen. Bard also demands compensation for the giants slain and a separate treaty between the Order and the giants. The new leader of the galdramen supports Bard's demand and it is made a condition on any deal to join the Order. Again, the Order's attitude depends on whether there were retaliatory raids. If there were, the Order demands compensation for its losses.

Negotiations on the balance of bodies may take days, as the relative rank and status of each must be considered. It is also suggested that any Hermetic magi who killed or injured an Ice-lander be considered an outlaw if they return to the island. In return, the Icelanders offer that any Ice-lander who killed or injured a magus not under *forfeit immunity* is considered an outlaw if they travel within a league of a covenant they

attacked. The Order pushes for outlawry to be restricted to those magi who killed mundanes, and for Icelanders who killed or injured magi or covenfolk to be considered outlaws if they enter any tribunal. Compromise is possible. Obviously, the side that engaged in the least wanton slaughter has a strong advantage.

If the bishop managed to get the Pope to excommunicate the Order, once a settlement is reached, he sends a letter to the Pope asking for absolution to be granted.

Story Seed (Vindolanda): If the magi threw their lot wholeheartedly with the galdramen hreppur they have great influence. If they have taught galdramen Parma or even Hermetic magic, then the Hermetic emissaries insist that the galdramen join the Order. If the magi of Vindolanda have been renounced, they are reinstated (if requested).

If the player characters supported the crusade, the settlement allows them to return to the Scartaris sanctum, but they lose any vis source granted by the hreppur.

Story Seed (pro-crusader): The player characters may be sent on the envoy mission if they have shown themselves capable in the past. It is possible that player characters have been taken prisoner during the conflict, in which case their acquired knowledge of Icelandic ways would be of benefit to the Hermetic envoys; once released they may be offered a place at the negotiating table.

Story Seed (general): If the galdramen hreppur joins the Order, Albinus works to integrate galdor magic into Hermetic Theory. Should he succeed galdramen may be taught Hermetic Theurgy and Hermetic theurgists may learn to summon landvaettir.



Credits

Writing: Mark Shirley and David Woods

Editing: David Chart

Layout and Proofreading: John Nephew

Woodcuts: Eric Hotz

Illustration: Grey Thornberry

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