

The Men of Iascoileán - Part 1

The dispute of Grimm Sigurdsson

Fisherman Grimm Sigurdsson (6 feet 8 inches, blond, beard with braids, Brb1) and 3 fishermen (com2) from Valaeyur arrive at the island; they accuse Hrein Ragnarsson of Iascoileán of having stolen their fishing nets.

Hrein Ragnarsson believes that he has just taken what belongs to him – for Grimm and his scoundrel-lads had made it impossible for Hrein and his men to fish the previous week by throwing stones at them.

Grimm is likely to challenge the Iascoilean men to a fight.

The Útlendingar

One day smoke rises from one of the neighboring islands. People talk about Grimm Sigurdsson possibly going off to war.

But in the dark of the night, the day after, the pirates land (hobgoblin troops and human commanders) at Iascoileán. The islanders call the pirates the Útlendingar. The útlendingar are many and are hunting for slaves.

The útlendingar are wearing robes, turbans and veils. They carry scythes (AC 16) and falchions (2d4+3), some of them have longswords and torches (AC 15). They use the torches to set fire to the thatched and seaweed covered roofs.

Perhaps it is better to hide and guard your siblings?

When they have caught a bunch of islanders, they'll sail away to foreign lands.

The Quest for the Sage

The next day the islanders hold a council to decide what to do about the missing kinsmen. At the council, a tipsy old fisherman by the name of Knut the Old says that the dwarf Leifur knows where the Sage lives.

The Sage is the only one that will be able to find the útlendingar. Most of the adult council members don't believe in dwarfs or sages so they'll say that Knut has drunk too much brandy again.

Knut says he's too old to go adventuring, but is willing to sail some brave volunteers to see Leifur in The Land of the Sage.

It takes a couple of weeks to sail over there in Knut's fishingboat through storms and high seas.

During the storm the boat is attacked by a sea serpent (Used stats from Viper, Huge MM 3.5 p.280, in addition the serpent has SQ Darkvision, and Water Breathing).

There's a chance that Knut has got an antidote against the serpents poison, in case someone gets bitten.

Morthwyl

The Sage dwells in Gloomheimen, a land of mountains and rocks. By the coast dwells a dwarf named Leifur (exp5). But Augirr, an ogre, has stolen Morthwyl (his hammer), and Augirr's cousin Ioki (ogre) has stolen his forge, so Leifur cannot work.

If Leifur can have his hammer and forge back, he will gratefully forge a dwarf chainshirt, as well as inform about where to find the Sage.

Augirr lives about an hours walk from Leifur's cottage, and Ioki lives about half an hour's walk from Augirr. Leifur will offer a magic potion as help (*Potion of Bulls Strength*).

On the way to the ogre's place there's a random encounter.

4 goblins (MM3.5 p.133)

Augirr (MM3.5 p.199) dwells in a stone cottage on the top of a hill. Light comes from the windows and smoke is rising from the chimney. Augirr has a chained guard dog named Hrafder (the chain is

not strong enough to restrain the dog at all). Augirr is upset at Leifur because he would not forge a new chain for Hrafdur for free.

Hrafdur is a hell hound and always hungry and angry (MM3.5 p. 151).

Augirr is home and is stirring a pot of stew, if he hears noise or his dog barking he will become alert and go outside together with his large greatclub, named Slamnir; his general plan is to beat up whatever is disturbing him.

Morthwyl is hidden beneath all the mess in the cottage, so it will take some time to search the whole thing. In addition Augirr has a *Potion of Cure Light Wounds*.

Ioki (MM3.5 p. 199) dwells in a 30 ft- tall tower made of stone on a rocky coast. There is a 40 ft. vertical drop into a reef. If you fall down and are lucky, you'll hit the water instead of the rocks. 40 ft. from the entrance of the tower, there is a sentry with 5 goblin guards (MM3.5 p. 133). The guards will not attack at first – the strangers could be someone who needs to talk business with Ioki – even if the last humans visiting; possibly ended up in the soup pot. One of the guards will run to the tower to announce the visitors for Ioki.

Ioki spends his time counting coins. He has a bag with 100 gold coins which he loves to stack and count. The project is complicated by the fact that Ioki has never learned to count further than 10. In the tower there are also 2 potions of *Cure Light Wounds*.

Ioki likes to stand at the top of his tower and throw rocks at enemies and other things. He couldn't care less if he hits one of his goblin followers, goblins are abundant and a new one soon appears.

Another favorite tactic is to push enemies down the cliff.

At the back of the tower there's a wooden shed. Inside the shed, there is a sturdily built cart in large size. The cart is loaded with Leifur's forge. The leathery slough of a large bull is casually thrown over the cart.

A humanoid that wears the magic slough, will change shape into a 10ft. Dire Bull. The Int and Wis score remains the same. In addition the wearer will be able to speak. When the wearer has completed his task, for instance pulling a large cart, he can remove the slough to change shape back to normal.

When Leifur has got his forge and hammer back, he will forge a chainshirt by the name

Steinrudmer. The work is hard and Leifur is sweating; his face is blushing, though he works at an unnatural pace and with ease. But it still takes the whole night before the armor is completed (*Steinrudmer* has Damage Reduction 3, and offers +1 Resistance bonus to all saving throws).

Leifur says that the Sage dwells at the summit of the middle of The Three Spires and points into the air. A successful Spot DC 20 gives a glimpse of the mountains in the horizon. He explains further that it is not so difficult to find it. Just follow the road from here and you'll eventually get to the mountains. You'll possibly meet a dwarf with a cart along the road. His name is Hringur and he will surely try to foist some of his old junk upon you. But Hringur may also be so kind to help you with the direction for The Three Spires – if you hand him a coin.

The Road to the Sage – Ugrimm and Hrasmer

After some time hiking, the party sees a muscular man wearing a chainshirt kneeling by another man on the ground, the man on the ground is wearing normal clothes and his body is pierced by arrows.

Also, there are 7 dead goblin bodies scattered around and a big cart loaded with a huge fish. The fish is 12 ft. long and 5 ft. wide.

The kneeling man is Ugrimm (he's a paladin), when the party approaches he will stare at them intently (to detect evil – the party in my game had no evil characters, so he would not be hostile). The party can see tears in his face. When they get within 20 ft., he will cry out at them, "Stop! Who are you and what are you doing here, young lads and, uh.. lass?" (The party in my game had a female warrior).

After the party has introduced themselves, he will respond,

"I am the warrior Ugrimm! And this was Thorvald, the bravest man in the world! Many a kinsman of mine has fallen by the hand of Hrasmer and his lackeys. But this is the end – Hrasmer will pay for what he has done! Hrasmer must die!"

If Ugrimm is convinced that the party is not associated with Hrasmer, he will talk about his plan. The plan was that Ugrimm would hide inside the big fish and Thorvald deliver it to Hrasmer's yard. When Hrasmer's servants brought the fish into Hrasmer's home, Ugrimm was to leap out of the fish and cut down Hrasmer and all his kinsfolk.

But they were ambushed by goblins and Thorvald fell before they could carry out the plan. Ugrimm can't just charge in and attack as Hrasmer would be warned by his sentries and escape far away, long before Ugrimm could enter his house.

Ugrimm asks the group to help him prepare Torvald's pyre-fare, ie. gather some wood for the fire (there are some contorted and withered shrubs and small trees nearby).

When it is done, Ugrimm asks if the group will help him to deliver the fish. It is said that Hrasmer has a pot of gold hidden in his house, that the party may get if they can find it. He offers them also Torvald's leather armor and greataxe if they are interested.

Some hours of walking later, when they approach the road to the Hall of Hrasmer's, Ugrimm says that it is time and climbs inside the fish. Now it is up to the party to deliver it. There are about five hundred yds. from the main road down to the house.

Outside Hrasmer's house stand 4 goblins on guard. They are not hostile, but not exactly polite either. However, after some bickering (or perhaps fighting) the party is allowed to push the wagon with the fish through the gate to the hall. The gate is 35 ft. high.

Hrasmer's house is very large, with very high ceilings in the hall. There are 15 goblins eating and drinking and shouting and misbehaving. Hrasmer (a giant, using ogre stats, except Int which is 14) sits in his high seat scheming his cunning plans. His bodyguard giant (use ogre stats) is standing at his right side.

The most striking figure present is a 30-ft. giant (named Gronk) - the top of his head reaches almost to the ceiling of the hall. But as Gronk sees the big fish, he licks his lips, salivating all over the place, then he grabs the fish with both hands and swallows it whole in one big mouthful!

If a successful Listen check (DC 15) is made, the adventurers can hear a muffled voice saying "what..." coming from inside the fish before it is swallowed and disappears down into the belly of Gronk.

Hrasmer looks astonished at what is going on and says ... "Look, Gronk - you ate our food - what should we eat now?" And then he looks at the party-members with a horrid grin. All the minions in the hall are snickering and cackling over the wise words from the mouth of Hrasmer.

But then suddenly, Ugrimm cuts himself out of Gronk – killing Gronk in the process - as most of the minions sees it, they panic while screaming "Ugriiimm! Fleeeee – ruuun, save MEE!" and the like. And so they run as fast as they can towards the exits of the hall. Minion stampede: 1d6 damage per 5 minions, Reflex DC 18 to avoid.

Different things can then happen: For example Ugrimm will try to kill Hrasmer; so Hrasmer runs away with Ugrimm at his heels - perhaps some of the small minions and Hrasmer's bodyguard will attack the party.

Or maybe the party-members will try to get at Hrasmer, then Ugrimm fights against some of the small minions, or maybe the bodyguard.

(If Hrasmer should manage to escape, as he will be encountered later on the Mountain of the Wolf – if he doesn't escape – well, the later encounter can be excluded or replaced with something else).

There is a corridor out of the room leading to a back door. Halfway to the backdoor there is a small

staircase to a room. The staircase is guarded by two goblins. In the room at the end of the stairs there is a lot of junk and a pot of gold with 300GP and a potion of *Mage Armor*, and a *Cure Light Wounds*.

Ugrimm returns and reports that Hrasmer has managed to get away this time yet again. Ugrimm says that if they continue down the road, they will come straight through the Land of Trolls, which is filled with trolls and giants. He would consider traveling over the Mountain of the Wolf instead to reach the Sage; it is a more direct route and it should not be nearly as dangerous. Ugrimm gives them a silver dagger... it's good against werewolves. He believes that the dwarf Hringur also has a silver weapon or arrows for sale, if they meet him - but his prices might be high...

The Road to the Sage – The Mountain of the Wolf

They meet Hringur wandering in the mountains with his cart, he greets them, and asks where the travelers be heading?

Hringur wants to know if they be bringing a present for Lâkë? Lâkë be an olde witch-giant who can turn into a wolf - unless you bring a gift that can soothe her feelings.

There is an old verse that describes what the present should be like, "*Not too small, not too big, not be green, or made of silver...hmm...*" Hringur can not quite remember how the verse goes... but it could be a flute? Hringur is a merchant, and happens to have a flute made of bone from a pig in store for the tidy sum of 10 gold pieces... (Silver arrows costs 2gp a piece, 5 arrows in store, in addition, he's got 2 light weapons of DM choice for sale which costs PHB list price +20gp) (Hringur has forgotten that **each** party member should bring a gift, but if they ask him anyway, he will absentmindedly answer, "no-no", as he's thinking about all the gold he has just made from the flute)

As they continue along the path towards the south-east, after some hours they pass Lâkës cottage, located at the foot of a steep cliff. (Spot DC 22 to notice that the cottage is as tall as the cliff, if you include the chimney 60 ft. or thereabouts).

The cottage is built in stone with a tile roof and there is smoke coming from the chimney, and everything is peace and quiet. Through the door and the shutters are closed, light is bleeding through by the edges of the windows.

If you walk just past the cottage you will in less than a minute be able to see a very large pack of wolves, resting further down the path. The wolves will only let pass those, who have presented a gift to Lâkë.

If you knock on the door, a snickering female voice says, "Who's knocking on my door?"

Inside there are some smaller pots, and a very large pot on the hearth. The pot is big enough to hold 2 medium-sized humanoids.

When Lâkë is presented with the flute she says to the person who delivers it: "A gift, lovely! You may pass along the path..."

Filled with anticipation she says "... and what have the rest of you brought for me?"

Wolves are now drawn to the house, so people who try to flee must fight through the large pack of wolves and Lâkë too.

However, it is possible to climb inside the house using the roof supporting rafters or the chimney and push a couple of roof tiles away, and then with a few succesful climb or balance or jump checks, it should be possible to reach to the plateau at the top of the small cliff next to the cottage. A few rounds later, 2-3 guard wolves shows up on the plateau.

Encounter: 2-3 Wolves (MM p. 283), the wolves came along a path and if the party follows the path forthwith and with haste after dealing with the 2-3 wolves, they should be able to avoid the large pack of wolves.

Lâkë: See appendix.

The day after

Continuing along the path, after a few hours walk there is an ambush by 3-4 wolves. Hrasmer, who managed to escape running up to The Mountain of the Wolf, is curiously attracted by the noise of combat and will show up after a few rounds to check out what is going on.

Hrasmer: 33 hp, AC 17 (large scalemail), Int 14, Large Greataxe (2d8+7), Weapon Focus (greataxe); equipment: potion of endurance, potion of cure light wounds, 7gp, 77sp.

Hrasmer has Int score 14 and is wearing a scale mail, and fighting with a greataxe but is almost otherwise like a normal ogre (MM 199).

Further down the path lay three dead wolves - they look as if they have been cut down with a big greataxe.

After several hours of walking, they see some goblins sitting by a Y-fork of the road. They giggle, snicker, and one is slumbering. They are roasting a toad over a camp fire, which by closer inspection (Spot DC 16) turns out to be made from a signpost).

The road to the right leads up a hill and the road to the left is apparently around the hill. Up on the hill is a circle of 10 standing stones. The radius of the circle is about 30 ft. This is an ancient place. 5 small fire elementals guards this place. The elementals are moving around in a 10 ft. circle, but will leave the circle and attack any trespassers. Slain elementals will reappear in 1d6 rounds.

Small fire elemental, hp 10. MM. 99.

After a few days of hiking, the party comes to a bridge apparently carved out of the rock. A sign written in runes indicates that "Point of No Return ahead."

There is a dense fog in the gorge and visibility is only about 25 ft. - what happens further out on the bridge is a mystery.

The bridge is apparently guarded by an old man with a staff and a pointy broad-brimmed hat (Gandalf-type). As the party approaches, however, it seems to be a 6 ft. tall figure carved in wood. But when the party comes within 10 ft., the wooden figure begins to move and speak. It says that the one passing this bridge must choose between 4 ways.

The first way is The Way of Force, here you will either get stronger or become weaker.

The second way is The Way of Magic, here you will be either smarter or more foolish.

The third way is The Way of Agility, here you will either become more agile, or more clumsy.

The fourth way is The Way of the Fortunate, here you will pay a random amount of gold, or you must suffer pain.

Each party member should choose one way before they will be allowed to enter the bridge. It is not possible to enter the bridge without choosing one of the ways, and it is not possible for two persons to enter at the same time – also the wooden man is immune to any damage.

When a player character enters the bridge, he or she will quickly disappear into the fog. There is no turning back when on the bridge – the world behind will disappear in the fog.

The first way leads to melee-fighting. Here, he or she will be attacked by a copy of the wooden man on the bridge – but at the same level as the player character. For instance, if the player is a 2nd level the wooden man is a 2nd level fighter or barbarian or ranger (your choice), or if it makes it easier for you, use stats identical to the player character. If the party member wins the combat he or she

permanently gains +1 Str and suddenly appears on the other side of the bridge.

If the the party member is defeated, he or she falls off the bridge and plunges into the fog and loses 1 Str permanently and suddenly wakes up on the other side in otherwise the same state as when entering the bridge.

The second way leads to spell-casting combat. Here he or she will meet a copy of the wooden man on the bridge 100ft. away (strangely enough visible through the fog) – but at the same level as the player character. For instance, if the player is a 2nd level the wooden man is a 2nd level wizard or sorcerer or cleric or druid (your choice), or if it makes it easier for you, use stats identical to the player character. If the party member wins the combat, he or she permanently gains +1 Int or Wis or Cha (depending on character class, non spell-casters gets to chose) and suddenly appears on the other side of the bridge.

If the the party member is defeated, he or she falls off the bridge and plunges into the fog and loses 1 either Int, Wis or Cha permanently (depending on character class, non spell-casters gets to chose) and suddenly wakes up on the other side in otherwise the same state as when entering the bridge.

The third way leads to a few (for instance 3) traps and pick-pocket checks. For instance, a challenge could be stealing a key from a guardian to open a gate (DMG p.67-76 + p82)..

Completing the challenges without being defeated by the guardians or traps (poisons, pits etc.), the character gains permanently +1 Dex and suddenly appears on the other side of the bridge.

(This was the most complex challenge when I ran the scenario)

If the party member is defeated, he or she falls off the bridge and plunges into the fog and loses 1 Dex permanently and suddenly wakes up on the other side in otherwise the same state as when entering the bridge.

On the forth way, the passer meets in the fog a copy of the wooden man asking for an amount of money equal to or more than 4d12 gold pieces (silver, platinum, gem stones etc. are valid too).

When the payment is done, the passer suddenly appears on the other side of the bridge.

If unable or unwilling to pay the least amount, the passer falls off the bridge and plunges into the fog and loses 1d4 Con permanently, and then wakes up on the other side in otherwise the same state as when entering the bridge.

On the other side of the bridge, one can see the bridge disappearing into the fog. Attempting to cross the bridge back will not be succesful, even after hours of walking and then turning and looking back one has just gotten a few feet away from the cliff.

The Three Spires

But continuing along the path as it begins to ascend and steepen and the rocks become gradually covered with snow and ice...

After a few days of hiking, the party can suddenly hear the noise of battle ahead, if they run forward they can see that by the foot of the stairs leading up, a 10 ft. tall human (supposedly some kind of giant) with a flaming spear is fighting 3 adversaries, a human (ftr3), a human (src2) and a utlendingar with turban (hobgoblin ftr2). On the rocks lies a dead utlendingar with a turban, and two dead fuglarhestar (hippogriffs) on the rock. The fighter and the sorcerer are located on the backs of their own fuglarhestur hippogriff flying 15 ft. away, while the utlendingar fights in melee with the giant.

The giant is a Vordur, one of Those Who Guards the The Three Spires and The Sage. But just as the party comes forth, he falls by the enemy's hand, and now they are paying attention to the party.

The sorcerer shoots with a crossbow, he also has 2 scrolls and 3 spells left.

The spear the Vordur was wielding is *Grillnir the Firespear; Flaming Burst Spear 1d8 +1d6 fire, +2d10 critical, the blade looks as if it is made of fire, and can be used as a torch; the flame blade*

cannot be switched off, which makes it a bit impractical indoors.

Hastein, male human Ftr3: CR 3; Size M (5 ft., 11 in. tall); HD 3d10+3; hp 35; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (+1 Dex, +5 chainmail, +2 magic buckler); Attack +4 melee, or +4 ranged (longsword 1d8+1); SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0; AL LE; Str 13, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills and feats: Climb +7, Jump +10, Ride +3; Weapon Focus (longsword, dire), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Ride by Attack, Mounted Combat.

Equipment: longsword, chainmail, +1 buckler (acid resistance 5, Shield 1/day, lvl 1).

Mahmud, male human Sor2: CR 2; Size M (6 ft., 0 in. Tall); HD 2d4-2; hp 6; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11; Attack +3 melee, or +2 ranged; SV Fort -1, Ref +1, Will +4; AL LE; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 8, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 18.

Skills and feats: Ride +3; Combat Casting, Mounted Combat.

Equipment: crossbow, 34 bolts, *Scroll of Mage Armor (lvl 1)*, *Scroll of Burning Hands (lvl 1)*.

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/5): 0th -- Detect Magic, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Read Magic. 1st – Magic Missile, Ray of Enfeeblement. (Currently 3 1st level spells remaining for today)

Yarkhrow, male hobgoblin Ftr2: CR 2; Size M (5 ft., 5 in. Tall); HD 2d10+2; hp 29; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 scale mail); Attack +3; melee, or +2 ranged; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +2; AL LE; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 13.

Skills and feats: Craft (Trapmaking) +6, Hide +0, Listen +0, Move Silently +0, Perform (Keyboard Instruments) +3, Ride +5, Sleight of Hand +1, Spot +0, Use Rope +2; Iron Will, Weapon Focus (longsword), Power Attack, Quick Draw.

Equipment: longsword, scalemail

2 Hippogriffs MM p. 152. Hp 30, 31.

The staircase is very long with thousands of steps leading up to the summit. Here dwells the Sage in a wooden hut, located in the treetop of a hundred feet tall oak tree. The trunk is 20 ft. wide, this is the tree Storeik that grows on the middle peak of The Three Spires. The oak has fine powder snow gently sprinkled over its bright green leaves.

There is a stair around the trunk leading up to the hut. Venturing up the stairs and into the hut, the party will be greeted by the Sage with "I've been expecting you." The Sage has an extra eye in his forehead, and sits and looks at his big crystal ball about 3 ft. in diameter.

The Sage begins with doing a sort of *Identify* on the party's magic items so they will be able to use the items they found on their way here; this process only takes a few minutes.

The Sage had foreseen that the party would show up, so he can tell them that the enemy encountered on the stairs - those with the fuglarhestar - are emissaries from the Empire of Surivalta. He also says that the útlendingar who attacked their island and kidnapped their kinsmen were from Surivalta. But a norn (a prophetess) of Surivalta predicted that there would be men from the North coming forth to find their kin so she sent out the emissaries and fuglarhestar in attempt to kill him (the sage) before the party reached him.

He asks the party to blow the large horn; that hangs in the next room to summon the flying ship, Himinnskip (a Vordur, by name of Thrain, who dwells on another summit, is captain of the Himinnskip – there is no other crew), this ship will bring them to Surivalta.

Himinnskip is a flying longship. It will take 5 days of flying to Surivalta.

(Optional encounter) Attack by great black evil eagles... emissaries of Surivalta.

4 black eagles MM p. 93. As described but neutral evil instead of neutral good. 30 hp each.

The ship descends from the sky into the sea in the middle of the night off the coast of Surivalta.

End of Part One