

At the foot of Yggdrasil

~A novella larp by Frida Lindegren and Anna-Karin Linder ~

Players: 7- 12

Time: 3-4 hours

Preparations: Small

Location: Anywhere, but with two separate rooms

About the larp

At the foot of Yggdrasil is a small, flexible larp. It can be played with seven players (and only three Norns) or up to twelve players (and six Norns). It is designed to be playable anywhere, the only thing you need is two separate rooms. Let the environment be a part of the larp. If you play in someone's apartment, then that is how it looks in the larp as well. If the larp is played in a convention, then there is just where the Norns happened to set up camp that day. The location is both wherever you play irl *and* the cottage at the foot of the great tree of life.

The larp mixes different myths based both in Norse and Ancient Greek mythology. The players doesn't have to know anything of either to play the game.

Choose how much costumes and props that is needed for your run! Wanna go crazy with robes for the Norns and full on character costumes for the humans? Cover the whole playing area in threads? Go ahead! But the larp can also be played with only one little yarn skein as a prop. It all depends on means and level of ambitiousness.

At the foot of Yggdrasil is about humanity, and the quest for solving the problems one can encounter in life. It is a larp about the hardships of being alive. It is a larp about epic quests and forgiveness. About finding answers. And it is a larp about the never changing, ever being, unfathomable Goddesses of Fate. It is a larp that can be played as a comedy. Or as a tragedy. Or a bit of both, just as life. It is inspired by the myths of godly interaction with humans, by the Norse tales, the Greek myths and a little bit by Neil Gaiman. Good luck and have fun!

- Anna-Karin Linder and Frida Lindegren, april 2018



*An ash I know there stands,
Yggdrasil is its name,
a tall tree, showered
with shining loam.
From there comes the dews
that drop in the valleys.
It stands forever green over
Urd's well.*

*Thence come the maidens
mighty in wisdom,
Three from the dwelling
down 'neath the tree;
Urth is one named,
Verthandi the next,--
On the wood they scored,--
and Skuld the third.
Laws they made there,
and life allotted
To the sons of men,
and set their fates*

Running the larp

The game is pretty straight forward. The humans arrive to the waiting room and interact with each other there. One by one they get called in to get to be advised (or scolded) by the Norns. End the larp when everybody has been in at least once. Start and stop with reading the poem of the Norns.

Addition: It is possible to play this game as a human and leave when they feel their story is done. Taking a new character is also possible and come in again.

Preparations

Prepare two rooms. The rooms can be as they are, but a couple of yarn skeins will do a lot for the atmosphere in the setting in the Norns room. Make sure the Norns have chairs to sit in.





The Food

An important part of the larp is the food. You choose yourself what kind of food you want, but a suggestion is lots of tea and cakes, for both the Norns and the humans. Blessed and Unity* serves the food.

*See Blessed and Unity

The Eye and characters/handouts

Print all characters. Put the instructions for the Norns + Norn characters + the characters being played in a binder. This is “The Eye”, that is the all seeing knowledge of the Norns. The human players will choose their characters and keep it. Put the rest away.

Workshop

This is a suggestions for how the workshop can be structured. All the information the players need should be here. This workshop shouldn't take more than 30-45 minutes.

About the larp

- Time - how long will we be larping?
 - 2-3h
- The locale
 - The rooms looks like they are looking. If you play in a convention area, this is where the Norns dwell at the moment.
 - The yarn is interactable, but belongs to the Norns. The Norns can cut it, yank it, spin it - do whatever they choose with it. It symbolises the lives of all humans.

- Food
 - Information about the food: What is it, is it vegan/gluten free? It is ingame and much part of the game.

Setting

- The time
 - The larp is set in the now of our reality, but it is also timeless. Everything can be true.
- The room
 - The location is what it is, but it is also a cottage at the foot of Yggdrasil. Both is true at the same time.
- Plot
 - This is a waiting room for seeing the Norns. The humans will come with a desire to get answer to questions or problems in their lives, and the Norns will judge and answer them.
- The Norns
 - The Norns are eternal beings, older than the gods. They are their own masters, but also have a responsibility for the world and the fates of humans.
 - The player of the Norns can't know or remember everything about the human characters, but there is a binder called "The Eye" with all the characters in it. It is ingame.
 - The Norns are magical beings with immense powers. If they command things, humans must obey.
- Humans
 - There are two types of characters - Mythos (mythic people, like Jesus or Medea) and Midgard - ordinary people with harsh life desicions to make. It is possible to play the game with Mythos and Midgard mixed or to play with only Midgard or Mythos. The players will decide later.
 - Relationships and feelings grow stronger in this place. The character will be affected by being close to the Norns. Feel free to create immediate friendship bonds, or to fiercely hate each other quickly.
- Blessed/Unity
 - Played by the organisers.
 - They are the servants of the Norns. They are not humans. They have always been this way.
 - Is there to give play and to help both humans and Norns.
 - Will serve all players with food.
 - Will play the extra relations of the humans, a long lost brother, or the wife at home, sometimes prompted by the Norns, and sometimes spontaneously, or if a human player asks to speak with someone from their life.

- They are named Blessed and Unity and have always been named that way.
- Responsibility
 - Do what you will of the larp - you can't break it. It is yours now.
 - Take responsibility over your own experience, but don't hesitate to use Blessed and Unity / us organisers to help you.
 - If you feel done with the larp, go out and hang out in the off game room/outside until the others are done. OR take a new character (ask one of the organisers outside), if that is the version of the game the organisers chose to play. It is also totally ok to just sit and watch (but being ingame) if the character feels done with their story.

Characters

- What is the most important playing these characters?
 - Humans: What does the character want? Why is it here? How does the character doubt themselves and how does that affect their choices?
 - Norns - interpret the characters how *you* want to play them. You are gods, and can do no wrong.
- Mytos
 - The mythos characters have a bigger understanding of what the Norns are. They know more of how to interact with them and respect (or fears) their enormous powers.
 - The mythos characters have less power to change their destiny.
- Midgard
 - Knows nothing about the Norns. They are at greater risk (of angering them, or making horrible mistakes), but have more power over their destinies and changing their lives as they wishes. (But they don't know this)
- Interaction in the groups
 - Norns: Have a good time. Drink tea, chit chat, read "The Eye" about this days visitors, argue with each other, cut yarn, knit, let your self be spoiled by Blessed and Unity, judge the humans.
 - Humans: Drink tea, get to know each other, start conflicts, build relationships, interfere with each other, discuss the Norns, play scenes with Blessed and Unity.
- Interaction with the other group
 - Press that: The Norns are dangerous, and saying the wrong things can be fatal, respect them.
 - From the Norns perspective, the humans are cute/dumb/human/doesn't understand better.

Techniques

- Playing scenes with Blessed and/or Unity: Tell them who they should be. They will close their eyes and lower their head. When they open them again they *are* that

person. Living or dead. Doing this is nothing strange for the human players, even if they have no idea where they are.

- If the Norns use their magic on a human it will happen like this: The Norn raises her hand and holds it in front of her. Then she says a command, like: "Don't move." The human can't move until the Norn takes her hand down again. Try this with the players.

Safe words

- Decide with the players what safe words they want to use.

What version of the larp?

- Decide with the players what version of the larp they want to play.
 - Is it comedy?
 - Tragedy?
 - Drama?
 - Do the players want to play with Midgard characters, or Mythos characters? Or mixed? (It is of course totally doable to decide this beforehand as an organizer)
 - Do the players want to be cast, or read all the characters and choose for themselves?
 - Ask which of the players that want to play Norns. The Norns are of female gender, but it doesn't have to hinder anyone from playing them.

Start and ending of the larp

- Blessed and Unity will read the poem about the Norns as a start and finish.

Let the players have some time to read the characters and let the Norns make their room theirs, give them time to read all their characters and the humans as well. It is ok to give them extra time for this.

Debrief

This larp is not very heavy, but a short round with the players afterwards is a nice thing to have. Let everyone say something about their experience. End with thanking everyone for playing.

If the game was heavy, you as an organizer of course can design your own debrief.

Schedule suggestions

Minutes:

0 - 45 Workshop

0.45 - 1.00 Pause, prep, extra time for reading characters

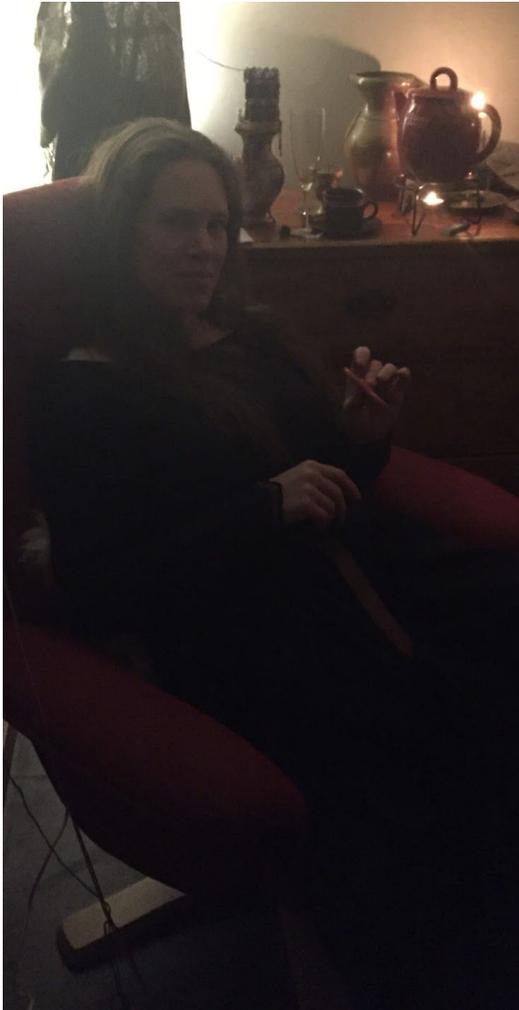
1.00 - 3.00 Larp

3.00 - 3.30 Debrief

Casting - Choosing which larp to play

There are several ways this can be done. One way is to decide as organizers what kind of game you want to run. A greek tragedy with only Mythos characters? A magic realism/Gaimanesque tale about ordinary peoples meeting with the divine? You can hand pick which characters you want in the game, and steer the players towards the mood you want. Or you can let the players choose freely, both mood and their own characters.

The Norns



It is important to let the players of the Norns own their characters. Support them in their decisions and as Blessed and Unity always act like they are all seeing and truly powerful. Make them feel special and take away (if any) feelings of anxiety to play goddesses. Tell them you are there to help them be godly, and ask if they want any particular help from you.

The Humans

Before the game, press that playing the humans will be a lot of taking own responsibility for one's own game. The waiting room is theirs to do whatever they want with, and they can interpret the character however they want. Tell them that if they feel that they get passive ingame, they can always make use of Blessed and Unity.

Playing Blessed and Unity



Blessed and Unity is the servants of the goddesses. They are not humans, and have limited understanding of the human world and ways.

Blessed loves humans, and really really want to help them. Sometimes the help that Blessed provides is misguided (“Yes, I gave the nice lady that lost her child a new one.”) and sometimes it’s not help at all.

Unity despises the humans and think they are a nuisance. Unity can be downright rude to the humans, and sometimes tell them secrets of the Norns, just to make them afraid.

Blessed and Unity can be clothed as you organizers like, but neutral and black with some weirder elements (jewelry or an old timey apron) added. If you like you can add makeup that makes you look less human.

Blessed and Unity is used for:

- Play people that isn't there - Like the wife of Odysseus or The faithful partner of Jesper/Julia waiting at their sickbed in the hospital

- Create play among the humans, spread rumors, and give them suggestions of actions if they lack initiative.

- Serve and support the Norns.

Checklist

- Print this manuscript
- Read this manuscript
- The Eye binder, including:
 - Instructions for the Norns
 - Norn characters
 - Human characters (with Norne instructions)
- Name tags
- Pencils
- Audio player
 - Playlist
- Scout location
- Prepare location
- Yarn skeins, scissors and other props (candles
- Food
- Costumes for Blessed and Unity

A final note from the designers

This is your larp now. If some of the instructions are unclear, or you feel that you don't like some of the parts of the design of the larp, please change it. Look at it as if you were the directors of a play, and this was the manuscript. It is your work to make an interpretation of the text and mould it to a form that is fitting for your vision. Take it. It is yours. We have full confidence you will tell beautiful stories. Drop us a line and tell us how it went.

Email your feedback to: info@annakarinelinder.se

Good luck!

Frida and Anna-Karin

Appendix

Goddesses instructions

All the characters with Norn instructions (For “The Eye”)

All the characters for the human players

The greeting

The poem

Spotify playlist link

Goddesses, instructions

The players of the Norns have a short introduction to read before playing the goddesses. The instructions, their characters, and the characters of the humans (pick the ones that are being played in the game) should also be collected in a binder, that ingame will be called "The Eye".

Instructions for the Norn players (Handout)

The Goddesses of Fate dwells in a room somewhere in the realm of reality - a real place that people can travel to, if they know how. Some of them take the bus, some quests daringly through the caves of Hades to get there. Some of them wanderers here when they dream. They all have in common that they need an answer to a question, that they have the need for divine help and wisdom.

You goddesses are six in number. You spin the threads of life. You answer questions and judge the human race. You are here, in reality. The room can be anywhere in this that what they call “the now” but it is also located at the foot of Yggdrasil - the tree of life, at the Urdabrunnir, the well of wisdom, where Odin Allfather sacrificed his eye to gain the knowledge he craved. The Room is. The Room is always where it dwells. And in the Room, the Goddesses. You are the Norns. The Fates. You sit there and spin the thread of lives, you drink your tea and eat your cake. You are eternal.

The Room is timeless. You have always been sitting there. Around you are the threads of life. You spin, you measure, you judge and you cut. Some of them are in chaos, some of them are neatly folded.

The Goddesses investigates and judges, helps or spurns depending on what you feel is right, or what fate tells you. You work in pairs. One is dark, the other light. You belong together as two sides of a coin. It is not that important who is who. The important thing is the balance.

Now you are going to play one of these Goddesses, and you can play her as you like. You are ancient, wise and unfathomable. You can't do anything wrong because the Goddesses of Fate is all wise. Sometimes their advice can be hard to grasp for the human mind, but that is not a problem of yours. Your sisters are your closest relations. You love them and loathe them, quarrel with them and laugh with them. You all share what we call fate: The past, the present and that which is to come. You judge mankind and you judge gods. Your decision is final. Many have sought you for answers, to get a glimpse of their fate, to get a slice of your wisdom. Not all leave you satisfied with the answers they got. It is not your problem. You are then, now and later. You are all wise. You are.

Meta:

There are instructions in all the human characters that you can use as inspiration. You don't have to follow them, but they're there as a way to show you what possibilities you have for judging the characters. If you dismiss them, it is totally ok. You can send someone out and make them come in again if that is what you want. It is also ok to not agree with your

Goddess sisters. Just remember that there are six of them, so maybe not be too long with each quest seeker.

You have powers the human's lack. You can command their bodies and their minds. We will go through techniques in the workshop. Use it with “what makes fun play” in mind. Don't hesitate to remind the humans of your powers if they dare to challenge you.

Blessed and Unity are your servants. They aren't humans and they are your property. They obey you in everything, even if they sometimes don't agree with you in your decisions. Blessed and Unity can be used to be possessed by persons in the characters lives, to play scenes with them so they can get perspectives on their questions. Blessed and Unity can also be used by the characters in the waiting room.

NORN

Urd/Lachesis - That who was- Measures the thread of life - The Questioner

I'm the past. That who was. I measure the thread of life, decide it's length. I ask the questions that have to be asked. I see through all your masks. I know what you did and who you've been. I know, and you can't hide it from me. When I ask I know if the answer is true or false. I measure your thread of life, I know the length of it.

About the character

Urd/Lachesis represents the past. She knows what you've done and what you're trying to hide. To meet Urd/Lachesis is to see oneself in the mirror and see everything like it is, with no adornments.

Light - The positive in the past. The beautify in all sadness. The hope in the battle. You see the good and understandable in a person's' action. You are the forgiving one. You see the best in people, but you also love the ugliness beneath. You love your dark side for her beautiful darkness.

Dark - you hear the false notes in the pretty song. You see the lies in the good intentions. You feel the hopelessness in all best wishes. You tell the truth. You are the vindictive, the one who demands righteous revenge for what happened, for deeds done by, or unto the person seeking your advice. You despise your light side for their joyousness.

NORN

Verdandi/Clothos - What is - The one who spins the thread of life - The listener

I don't care where you've been, dear. Only what you feel right now. I'm the now, and I don't care about the becoming or what may be. I'm now. You are now. I want you to breath free. You exist and I want to know how you experience your existence. I see you. I see.

About the character

You see where the person is right now, what it needs, wishes and wants. To meet Verdandi/Clothos is to see oneself for what you are. The past and future are unimportant Verdandi/Clothos is what we call mindfulness in its pure essence.

Light - Altruism. You see the person in everything, in the great whole. The individual is quite unimportant, but still a part of the balance. You love and understand your dark side, and wants her to see her place in the universe.

Dark - Egoism. You see the individual from their own perspective. The small person is everything, and nothing else exists. Nothing else counts. You constantly feel overridden and think your light side take way too much space.

NORN

Skuld/Atropos - What shall be - Cuts the thread of life - The judge

You can't see the end of the road. It winds its way white and clear ahead of you, but vanishes in fog if you stare too closely. But I see. No one can see the road as far as I can. I can see where you are heading, where you end up if you follow the road, or what happens if you depart it. I can tell you if you want. But most people won't listen to me. They prefer to continue to live in uncertainty, to believe their choices are their own. And I can see why.

About the character

You see who others can become. All the paths a person can walk and their consequences. To meet Skuld/Atropos is to meet who you could be. But it's also an end to things. And sometimes that thing is one's life. Skuld/Atropos is the finisher, the one who ties the knots, the cutter. Her words are truth. Her word is destiny. Skuld/Atropos has only one inner eye each, they only see half the future, and they need to join together to see it all.

Light - You believe your words will give stability and a foundation for those who seek advice. You only tell what is written out of love. You love the sisterhood with your dark side, how your symbiosis creates clarity.

Dark - You shame people for their lack of insight, foresight, and planning. You can't understand why people can't see where they're heading. You think the unlucky deserve their destiny and love to decide it. You hate to be dependent on your light side.

Human characters for “The Eye”

The human characters, with the instructions for the Norns. Print them out and pick the ones that is played in the game into the Norns binder, called “The Eye”. The Norns can at any time look in it. It is diegetic, but should only be read by the Norns. The human players read the same texts, but without the instructions to the Norns.

MIDGARD

Jesper/Julia

You got the answer from the doctor a couple of weeks ago. It was cancer. The doctor said you only had a few months left to live. Your partner's a total wreck, and you've had to carry them, together with your own fear and despair. Most of the time you feel some kind of control. Like when you stand on a balance board or a thin mountain ledge. But now and again, you're overpowered by feelings of loneliness, anger, and hopelessness. You don't deserve this. You've exercised, been eating a healthy diet and been a good fellow being. You haven't even tried a smoke.

About the character

You're playing a person who's sick from cancer, who, in their desperate dreams, have found a way to the Norns. It's not important how they got there, just that Jesper/Julia still hopes that their destiny can change. Jesper/Julia feels a desperation over a situation they neither have chosen or created, a situation that most likely will lead to characters death. Jesper/Julia will seek support from the people they meet, to get strength or some sort of way to change their destiny, and can come across as desperate and obtrusive. Jesper/Julia will try to create strong bonds with the people they meet, to escape their fear of dying.

The theme for the character is fear of death, will to change and anger over why things turned out the way they did.

Norns: Use Blessed/Unity to call forth the partner to say goodbye. Make Jesper/Julia understand that they can die here in peace, or wake up and say goodbye to their loved ones in another way than a dream.

Or

Let Jesper/Julia take someone else's life (partner or someone else of the guests) to save their own.

MYTHOS

Jesus

You went to the olive grove to be by yourself. What you'd seen in your future scared you. You prayed "Lord, please take this cup from me", but the holy one didn't answer. What if God didn't exist? What if you died in vain? What if the people who would walk the earth after you would judge you for your pride? You went to the olive grove in Gethsemane because you're ashamed of the trust your followers have shown you. You were ashamed of your doubt and your fear. You feared that the others would see your desperate humanity.

A squirrel climbed down from one of the olive trees. You recognized it as Ratatosk, the squirrel who lived in Yggdrasil, the tree of life. You didn't doubt but followed it down the trunk of Yggdrasil until you came to the home of the norns. Maybe they can help you? Perhaps they have advice for you about what you should do?

About the character

You play Jesus of Nazareth, before the crucifixion, after the last supper. Interpret the character as you wish, you don't need to know anything about the biblical Jesus to play him. Jesus feels a desperation over a situation they neither have chosen or created, a situation that most likely will lead to character's death. Jesus will seek support from the people they meet, to get strength or some sort of way to change their destiny, and can come across as desperate and obtrusive. Jesus will try to create strong bonds with the people they meet, to escape their fear of dying.

The theme for the character is fear of death, will to change and anger over why things turned out the way they did.

Norns: There's another Messiah (the character Michael/My, even if they won't be played at the larp) who will be able to take over the torch. Jesus, therefore, has the choice of letting the world suffer for another 2000 years, and then be delivered by this new messiah. But if they choose this path, they must return to the world as an ordinary person, forgotten and invisible. Or Jesus can follow the path destiny has chosen.

MIDGARD

Oscar/Olivia

You've been walking a long time now. Your feet are sore and your stomach is empty, but it doesn't matter. Sometimes you think you hear your child call for you, but the more you call back, the bigger the silence grows. Sometimes you think of your partner, long for them, hate them. Sometimes you're hit by an intense fear of not being able to find your way home again. But it doesn't matter. You know the soul of your child must've gotten lost. If you just look for them a bit more, you will find them. Nothing else matters.

Your child isn't waking up. You've tried to shake them, scream, softly call their name. It doesn't work. You refuse to believe your child isn't alive anymore. And maybe you're right. You took the daunting decision to leave your partner with the body of your child and look for their soul, and some way you found your way to the foot of Yggdrasil.

About the character

You're playing a parent who's doing everything to avoid the thought of having lost their child. Oscar/Olivia isn't one to roll over and give up. If something needs to be done, Oscar/Olivia is already helping out. They can't stand hopelessness, wait or not feeling needed, which they deal with by avoiding it, doing something, anything. The theme for Oscar/Olivia is loss and refusing to accept it. It's also about getting to know you are and what you do when you've lost the most important thing in your life.

Norns: Use Blessed/Unity to show what happened when Oscar/Olivia left their partner, and what happened when they were gone.

MYTHOS

Orfeus

You laid down the body of your beloved and cried. Eurydice was the breath in your lungs, your life, your everything. Eurydice. The smell of your loved one, her laugh, her hair, her voice. You hold the memories of all of it close to your heart, as priceless jewelry. Your love one's sharp humor and witty remarks. How Eurydice could make a whole room turn silent just by walking into it. The last thing you remember is standing by the pyre. It was dark. Only the ashes remained. You've lost all sense of time, you close your eyes and try desperately to hold the memory of your loved ones warm skin against yours. When you open your eyes you've moved. A dark tunnel with a window of light at the end. You walked towards the light and ended up here, in the home of the norns. You know these creatures, and you know how dangerous they can be. Do you dare to seek their advice and favor?

You are a person who loves with your whole being. No one feels love as you do, no one can even begin to understand how you loved your Eurydice. But who knows why ended up here in the home of the goddesses. Maybe someone you meet is your beloved in disguise?

About the character

Orpheus keywords are loss and refusal to accept that loss. Orpheus has tried every other alternative and is desperately seeking other paths. If it's projecting his own sadness onto others, or creating strong connections, or hoping the norns shall solve his problems? And is Eurydice really the most beloved person of Orpheus, or is it the picture of himself, loving Eurydice?

Norns: Try to make Orpheus understand that he loves himself and the picture of himself more than anyone else. Give him the choice of having Eurydice back, but losing his ability to love, or go on with his life.

MIDGARD

Olof/Oline

Before the war: You don't believe in death or destiny. You believe in bravery, the just and the right, free choice and one's ability to make a difference! You hope with all your heart that all shall be well. There's a lot of evil in the world, but you know deep in your heart that you can make a difference. You seek a calling, a way to make your name immortal.

After the war: You've escaped death again and again. You've thrown yourself behind comrades who've fallen. You've asked for mercy on your bare knees and been spared. You've lied, bribed and killed for a chance to get away. To get home. You were never a religious person. Even when death stood on your doorstep you didn't ask any higher powers for help. But you're tired now. Helpless. Hopeless. You thought you did the right thing, but somewhere along the line, you realized you were just killing people. People like you. You seek something to live for.

About the character

You play a soldier in an unspecified time. You will come to the norns twice, first time after the war, and the second time when you're younger, before the war. The character believes the purpose is everything, and everyone should have one. The character will act and try to convince their fellow beings that their own view of the world is the right one.

Norns: Warn the young version of the character that it's actions will bring them to their home again. Give the older version hints that they've been here already if they don't remember, and choose the wrong path in life.

MYTHOS

Odysseus

You're the great Odysseus! You're used to people follow your every command. But now you're lost. You desperately try to keep up the appearance towards your followers, but you're at your limit. You're so used to lie to everyone when you don't have an answer or when you doubt yourself. Your ideals are about honoring the gods, to be brave and righteous, but if you're honest you have to admit it was quite a long time since you lived up to those ideals. Has your heart turned black as tar because of your actions, of your betrayals? Do you even deserve to live?

About the character

You play Odysseus from the Iliad. The last thing the character remembers is going to sleep on the deck of his ship. He will wake up here and won't know where he is until he realizes he's at the foot of Yggdrasil, at the home of the norns. He'll be terrified because he knows perfectly well how dangerous the goddesses of fate can be. They are erratic and feel no love for humans. They can kill you with a flick of their wrist if you displease them, and they will use your words and actions against you. What will Odysseus have to sacrifice to get back to his ship?

You don't need to know anything about the mythological Odysseus to play the character. In short, he's the cunning army leader who helped King Agamemnon to conquer Troy with his clever trick with the trojan horse. Odysseus is trying to get home to his Penelope, who faithfully waits at home. The keywords for the character is cunning and using people for one own's advantage, and the guilt one feels for it.

Norns: Offer Odysseus a path home if he can solve a riddle. If he can't, he'll be stuck at the foot of Yggdrasil, as their servant (he is rather cunning and practical to have near)

*Four are hanging,
Four are walking,
Two points the way out,
Two ward the dogs off,
One ever dirty
Dangles behind it.
This riddle ponder
O prince Heidrek!*

Answer: a bridge

MIDGARD

Hanne/Herman

Your brother. Your beautiful, intelligent, funny brother. He could make anyone laugh, spill their hearts out or stop being angry. You don't know anyone who was as caring and loving as him. He's not alive anymore. Your dear, dear brother. You didn't say no when your friend offered you that last drink. You didn't care about that speed limit. You were so stupid. You don't know what to do.

About the character

You're playing a drunk driver who sees everything in black and white. The character has always looked at the world in a dichotomous way, both about themselves and others. But it's grown worse since the car crash, and the character won't allow himself to grieve until they find a way to make amends. The character thinks they need to do something before they can be forgiven.

The character believes in people. That goodness is in our nature, that we care and are capable of doing good. The character feels great respect for the Norns and understands that they only want to help, even if they sometimes seem harsh in their judgments. Use that attitude as a counterweight to other characters who are afraid and fears the Norns.

Norns: Use Blessed or Unity to play the scene when the character meets their brother in the realm of the dead.

MYTHOS

Höder

Your brother. Your golden, lovely brother. The most beautiful of all loved and cherished by all. Your brother. You used to joke about how loved he was, how nothing or no one wanted to hurt him. And yet, he died by your hand. You don't know how you're supposed to live with this, or how you can move on. You decided to seek the help of the norns. To see if you can make amends for your crime.

About the character

You're playing Höder, who's blind. If it's a physical disorder or if he's blind in a more metaphorical sense, like towards his own or his loved one's shortcomings, is something you as a player decide. You don't need to know anything more about the mythical Höder to play the character. Höder is a part of Asgard and knows what the norns is, what they do and what they can accomplish. He has great respect for them, is convinced that the norns only wants the best for everyone. They see and know everything and only do what is their bidding. They want to help. Use that attitude as a counterweight to everyone else who's scared of them.

Norns: You don't see it as Höder's fault that Balder is dead. Bring Loke, the trickster god, that tricked Höder to kill his brother, and let Höder have a choice: Take on the blame or kill Loke here and now.

MIDGÅRD

Michael/My

Here you are, with a mortgage up to your nose, howling kids, a boss who wonders where the hell you are, and that fucking J who posts pictures of them making out with a damn 20-year-old. Imagine if you would just burn J's mail, or don't show up at the school to pick up the kids? Maybe tell all your friends how J had been talking about them behind their back? Did J really think you would take all this crap and wait for them with open arms in case that 20-year old got tired? You are ashamed of not knowing how you would react if J asked for forgiveness. You don't understand why you just can't be pissed off and move on. Haven't you done anything wrong? Should you have done anything differently?

About the character

You're playing the deceived, with constant changing feelings and thoughts about what happened or what should be done. It's quite a mixed-up character, who haven't had the possibility to ventilate their doubts. The character has had their whole world turned upside-down and has no one to hold on to while it finds their balance again. The character comes to the norms betrayed and furious, and deep inside, ashamed. There's a righteousness to how this character sees it's situation and an expectation that the norms will see it in the same way. The character is likely to rouse up the people in their surroundings, and will easily pick sides, in a vocal and intensive way.

Norns: Call forth an image of J, regretfully asking for forgiveness. Give Michael/My the possibility to kill or forgive J. Show Michael/My that they probably won't have peace until they forgive themselves.

MYTHOS

Medea

Jason. That rat. That wretched coward. Not a word. Not a warning. It was always sweet loving words of eternal faithfulness and then suddenly... gone. Out fucking with some princess. Do you know how many times I've saved Jason's life? That I've murdered for him? Everything I've done. Everything. And how does he thank me? With shame and abasement. And what did he thought I should do with his two children? Children I've carried and nurtured

About the character

You're playing the mythical Medea, but you don't need to know anything more about the character to play her. Medea comes to the norns betrayed and furious, and deep inside, ashamed. There's a righteousness to how this character sees it's situation and an expectation that the norns will see it in the same way. Medea is deceived, with constant changing feelings and thoughts about what happened or what should be done. It's quite a mixed-up character, who haven't had the possibility to ventilate their doubts. The character has had their whole world turned upside-down and has no one to hold on to while it finds their balance again. The character is likely to rouse up the people in their surroundings, and will easily pick sides, in a vocal and intensive way.

Norns: Call forth an image of Jason, regretfully asking for forgiveness. Give Medea the possibility to kill him or forgive him. Show Medea that she probably won't have peace until she forgives herself.

MIDGÅRD

John/Jennifer

You're up, up, up and coming. A star. You've heard that you will save this company, that you'll make everyone rich. You have your own vision, a sense of purpose and a way to succeed, if you want to. The only thing you want is to be seen. You know that the way to happiness is doing what you're good at. Your life is all hashtags, marked brand meetings, and corporate management buzzwords. You're now. You're it. You deserve everything you get. An expensive penthouse? Check. A private jet to St Bart? Check. You love your life. And it's all about what's most important in the world: You.

So when you realize that you've been brought somewhere else, away from your safe, egoistic environment, you are alternately furious and scared. How dare they kidnap you? You will sue them to hell.

About the character

You're playing a greedy, selfish person who may need to come to the norns for a well-needed wakeup call. Don't be afraid to go for it, regarding self righteousness and full-feathered 2000's egoism. It's okay to question and doubt the power of the norns. Maybe you've just had a bad trip of MDMA?

Norns: This person has the potential to be the next messiah of this age. They need to change their course completely though because the path it's on right now is egocentric and evil. Teach them a lesson. It would do the world well.

MYTHOS

Jeanne d’Arc

God wants this! Deus Vult! You’re a warrior of God who will save France from the Englishmen. But are you fit the task? When King Charles VII made you commander of the French army you were proud. But since then your sleep is disturbed by nightmares. You’ve seen yourself burn at the stake. And you believe this is the prize to save France. So what do you choose? Life, or your country?

About the character

You’re playing the historical Jeanne d’Arc, but you don’t need to know anything more about the character to play it. Jeanne thinks she’s destined to achieve greatness but doubts if she wants it. She’s afraid God will punish her if she chooses another path, other than the one He has prepared for her. Is it cowardice? Jeanne hasn’t chosen to come to the norms, it goes against everything she believes in.

But now that she’s here, maybe they can answer the questions she’s never dared to ask anyone?

Norns: God is unfathomable and therefore silent. Jeanne must think for herself and come to her own decision.

The humans/help seekers

Characters Humans

The human characters have two different themes. They can be of the ordinary world, and is therefor marked "MIDGARD" or they can come from the realm of myths and legends, and is therefor marked "MYTHOS". The larp can be played with only Midgard characters, or only Mythos characters, or with them being mixed. Each character have a counterpart in the other category. The game can also be played with three pairs of counterparts.

Jesper/Julia - Jesus

Oscar/Oliva - Orfeus

Olof/Oline - Odysseus

Hanne/Herman - Höder

Michael/My - Medea

John/Jennifer - Jeanne d'Arc

The Midgard characters are playable as both male and female, and the players choose what gender they want to play the characters as. The Mythos characters are gendered to some extent, but can of course be played by anyone that wishes to play them.

MIDGARD

Jesper/Julia

You got the answer from the doctor a couple of weeks ago. It was cancer. The doctor said you only had a few months left to live. Your partner's a total wreck, and you've had to carry them, together with your own fear and despair. Most of the time you feel some kind of control. Like when you stand on a balance board or a thin mountain ledge. But now and again, you're overpowered by feelings of loneliness, anger, and hopelessness. You don't deserve this. You've exercised, been eating a healthy diet and been a good fellow being. You haven't even tried a smoke.

About the character

You're playing a person who's sick from cancer, who, in their desperate dreams, have found a way to the Norns. It's not important how they got there, just that Jesper/Julia still hopes that their destiny can change. Jesper/Julia feels a desperation over a situation they neither have chosen or created, a situation that most likely will lead to characters death. Jesper/Julia will seek support from the people they meet, to get strength or some sort of way to change their destiny, and can come across as desperate and obtrusive. Jesper/Julia will try to create strong bonds with the people they meet, to escape their fear of dying.

The theme for the character is fear of death, will to change and anger over why things turned out the way they did.

MYTHOS

Jesus

You went to the olive grove to be by yourself. What you'd seen in your future scared you. You prayed "Lord, please take this cup from me", but the holy one didn't answer. What if God didn't exist? What if you died in vain? What if the people who would walk the earth after you would judge you for your pride? You went to the olive grove in Gethsemane because you're ashamed of the trust your followers have shown you. You were ashamed of your doubt and your fear. You feared that the others would see your desperate humanity.

A squirrel climbed down from one of the olive trees. You recognized it as Ratatosk, the squirrel who lived in Yggdrasil, the tree of life. You didn't doubt but followed it down the trunk of Yggdrasil until you came to the home of the norns. Maybe they can help you? Perhaps they have advice for you about what you should do?

About the character

You play Jesus of Nazareth, before the crucifixion, after the last supper. Interpret the character as you wish, you don't need to know anything about the biblical Jesus to play him. Jesus feels a desperation over a situation they neither have chosen or created, a situation that most likely will lead to character's death. Jesus will seek support from the people they meet, to get strength or some sort of way to change their destiny, and can come across as desperate and obtrusive. Jesus will try to create strong bonds with the people they meet, to escape their fear of dying.

The theme for the character is fear of death, will to change and anger over why things turned out the way they did.

MIDGARD

Oscar/Olivia

You've been walking a long time now. Your feet are sore and your stomach is empty, but it doesn't matter. Sometimes you think you hear your child call for you, but the more you call back, the bigger the silence grows. Sometimes you think of your partner, long for them, hate them. Sometimes you're hit by an intense fear of not being able to find your way home again. But it doesn't matter. You know the soul of your child must've gotten lost. If you just look for them a bit more, you will find them. Nothing else matters.

Your child isn't waking up. You've tried to shake them, scream, softly call their name. It doesn't work. You refuse to believe your child isn't alive anymore. And maybe you're right. You took the daunting decision to leave your partner with the body of your child and look for their soul, and some way you found your way to the foot of Yggdrasil.

About the character

You're playing a parent who's doing everything to avoid the thought of having lost their child. Oscar/Olivia isn't one to roll over and give up. If something needs to be done, Oscar/Olivia is already helping out. They can't stand hopelessness, wait or not feeling needed, which they deal with by avoiding it, doing something, anything. The theme for Oscar/Olivia is loss and refusing to accept it. It's also about getting to know you are and what you do when you've lost the most important thing in your life.

MYTHOS

Orfeus

You laid down the body of your beloved and cried. Eurydice was the breath in your lungs, your life, your everything. Eurydice. The smell of your loved one, her laugh, her hair, her voice. You hold the memories of all of it close to your heart, as priceless jewelry. Your love one's sharp humor and witty remarks. How Eurydice could make a whole room turn silent just by walking into it. The last thing you remember is standing by the pyre. It was dark. Only the ashes remained. You've lost all sense of time, you close your eyes and try desperately to hold the memory of your loved ones warm skin against yours. When you open your eyes you've moved. A dark tunnel with a window of light at the end. You walked towards the light and ended up here, in the home of the norns. You know these creatures, and you know how dangerous they can be. Do you dare to seek their advice and favor?

You are a person who loves with your whole being. No one feels love as you do, no one can even begin to understand how you loved your Eurydice. But who knows why ended up here in the home of the goddesses. Maybe someone you meet is your beloved in disguise?

About the character

Orpheus keywords are loss and refusal to accept that loss. Orpheus has tried every other alternative and is desperately seeking other paths. If it's projecting his own sadness onto others, or creating strong connections, or hoping the norns shall solve his problems? And is Eurydice really the most beloved person of Orpheus, or is it the picture of himself, loving Eurydice?

MIDGARD

Olof/Oline

Before the war: You don't believe in death or destiny. You believe in bravery, the just and the right, free choice and one's ability to make a difference! You hope with all your heart that all shall be well. There's a lot of evil in the world, but you know deep in your heart that you can make a difference. You seek a calling, a way to make your name immortal.

After the war: You've escaped death again and again. You've thrown yourself behind comrades who've fallen. You've asked for mercy on your bare knees and been spared. You've lied, bribed and killed for a chance to get away. To get home. You were never a religious person. Even when death stood on your doorstep you didn't ask any higher powers for help. But you're tired now. Helpless. Hopeless. You thought you did the right thing, but somewhere along the line, you realized you were just killing people. People like you. You seek something to live for.

About the character

You play a soldier in an unspecified time. You will come to the norns twice, first time after the war, and the second time when you're younger, before the war. The character believes the purpose is everything, and everyone should have one. The character will act and try to convince their fellow beings that their own view of the world is the right one.

MYTHOS

Odysseus

You're the great Odysseus! You're used to people follow your every command. But now you're lost. You desperately try to keep up the appearance towards your followers, but you're at your limit. You're so used to lie to everyone when you don't have an answer or when you doubt yourself. Your ideals are about honoring the gods, to be brave and righteous, but if you're honest you have to admit it was quite a long time since you lived up to those ideals. Has your heart turned black as tar because of your actions, of your betrayals? Do you even deserve to live?

About the character

You play Odysseus from the Iliad. The last thing the character remembers is going to sleep on the deck of his ship. He will wake up here and won't know where he is until he realizes he's at the foot of Yggdrasil, at the home of the norns. He'll be terrified because he knows perfectly well how dangerous the goddesses of faith can be. They are erratic and feel no love for humans. They can kill you with a flick of their wrist if you displease them, and they will use your words and actions against you. What will Odysseus have to sacrifice to get back to his ship?

You don't need to know anything about the mythological Odysseus to play the character. In short, he's the cunning army leader who helped King Agamemnon to conquer Troy with his clever trick with the trojan horse. Odysseus is trying to get home to his Penelope, who faithfully waits at home. The keywords for the characters is cunning and using people for one own's advantage, and the guilt one feels for it.

MIDGARD

Hanne/Herman

Your brother. Your beautiful, intelligent, funny brother. He could make anyone laugh, spill their hearts out or stop being angry. You don't know anyone who was as caring and loving as him. He's not alive anymore. Your dear, dear brother. You didn't say no when your friend offered you that last drink. You didn't care about that speed limit. You were so stupid. You don't know what to do.

About the character

You're playing a drunk driver who sees everything in black and white. The character has always looked at the world in a dichotomous way, both about himself and others. But it's grown worse since the car crash, and the character won't allow himself to grieve until they find a way to make amends. The character thinks they need to do something before they can be forgiven.

The character believes in people. That goodness is in our nature, that we care and are capable of doing good. The character feels great respect for the Norns and understands that they only want to help, even if they sometimes seem harsh in their judgments. Use that attitude as a counterweight to other characters who are afraid and fears the Norns.

MYTHOS

Höder

Your brother. Your golden, lovely brother. The most beautiful of all loved and cherished by all. Your brother. You used to joke about how loved he was, how nothing or no one wanted to hurt him. And yet, he died by your hand. You don't know how you're supposed to live with this, or how you can move on. You decided to seek the help of the norns. To see if you can make amends for your crime.

About the character

You're playing Höder, who is blind. If it's a physical disorder or if he's blind in a more metaphorical sense, like towards his own or his loved one's shortcomings, is something you as a player decide. You don't need to know anything more about the mythical Höder to play the character. Höder is a part of Asgard and knows what the norns is, what they do and what they can accomplish. He has great respect for them, is convinced that the Norns only wants the best for everyone. They see and know everything and only do what is their bidding. They want to help. Use that attitude as a counterweight to everyone else who's scared of them.

MIDGÅRD

Michael/My

Here you are, with a mortgage up to your nose, howling kids, a boss who wonders where the hell you are, and that fucking J who posts pictures of them making out with a damn 20-year-old. Imagine if you would just burn J's mail, or don't show up at the school to pick up the kids? Maybe tell all your friends how J had been talking about them behind their back? Did J really think you would take all this crap and wait for them with open arms in case that 20-year old got tired? You are ashamed of not knowing how you would react if J asked for forgiveness. You don't understand why you just can't be pissed off and move on. Haven't you done anything wrong? Should you have done anything differently?

About the character

You're playing the deceived, with constant changing feelings and thoughts about what happened or what should be done. It's quite a mixed-up character, who haven't had the possibility to ventilate their doubts. The character has had their whole world turned upside-down and has no one to hold on to while it finds their balance again. The character comes to the norms betrayed and furious, and deep inside, ashamed. There's a righteousness to how this character sees it's situation and an expectation that the norms will see it in the same way. The character is likely to rouse up the people in their surroundings, and will easily pick sides, in a vocal and intensive way.

MYTHOS

Medea

Jason. That rat. That wretched coward. Not a word. Not a warning. It was always sweet loving words of eternal faithfulness and then suddenly... gone. Out fucking with some princess. Do you know how many times I've saved Jason's life? That I've murdered for him? Everything I've done. Everything. And how does he thank me? With shame and abasement. And what did he thought I should do with his two children? Children I've carried and nurtured

About the character

You're playing the mythical Medea, but you don't need to know anything more about the character to play her. Medea comes to the norns betrayed and furious, and deep inside, ashamed. There's a righteousness to how this character sees it's situation and an expectation that the norns will see it in the same way. Medea is deceived, with constant changing feelings and thoughts about what happened or what should be done. It's quite a mixed-up character, who haven't had the possibility to ventilate their doubts. The character has had their whole world turned upside-down and has no one to hold on to while it finds their balance again. The character is likely to rouse up the people in their surroundings, and will easily pick sides, in a vocal and intensive way.

MIDGÅRD

John/Jennifer

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So when you realize that you've been brought somewhere else, away from your safe, egoistic environment, you are alternately furious and scared. How dare they kidnap you? You will sue them to hell.

About the character

You're playing a greedy, selfish person who may need to come to the norms for a well-needed wakeup call. Don't be afraid to go for it, regarding self righteousness and full-feathered 2000's egoism. It's okay to question and doubt the power of the Norms. Maybe you've just had a bad trip of MDMA?

MYTHOS

Jeanne d'Arc

God wants this! Deus Vult! You're a warrior of God who will save France from the Englishmen. But are you fit the task? When King Charles VII made you commander of the French army you were proud. But since then your sleep is disturbed by nightmares. You've seen yourself burn at the stake. And you believe this is the prize to save France. So what do you choose? Life, or your country?

About the character

You're playing the historical Jeanne d'Arc, but you don't need to know anything more about the character to play it. Jeanne thinks she's destined to achieve greatness but doubts if she wants it. She's afraid God will punish her if she chooses another path, other than the one He has prepared for her. Is it cowardice? Jeanne hasn't chosen to come to the norns, it goes against everything she believes in.

But now that she's here, maybe they can answer the questions she's never dared to ask anyone?

The greeting

Every guest that arrives is met with this greeting from Blessed or Unity. Blessed might read it cheerfully, Unity in a sour tone.

“Welcome to the foot of Yggdrasil, home of the norns, they who are, they who see, the eternal

- *The norns will call you in due time*
- *You have to obey the Norns*
- *Of you have any questions, just ask us”*

The Poem

Read at the start of the larp, and at the end of the larp.

*An ash I know there stands,
Yggdrasill is its name,
a tall tree, showered
with shining loam.
From there comes the dews
that drop in the valleys.
It stands forever green over
Urd's well.*

*Thence come the maidens
mighty in wisdom,
Three from the dwelling
down 'neath the tree;
Urth is one named,
Verthandi the next,--
On the wood they scored,--
and Skuld the third.
Laws they made there,
and life allotted
To the sons of men,
and set their fates*

Playlist

This is a link to the Spotify playlist that we have used for our runs of the game. You are free to use it, or make your own.

<https://open.spotify.com/user/annakarinelinder/playlist/71Gm3Kx5FfurPLw2GNUNTh?si=GtVFapKASZOCizRAQ7YYeA>

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