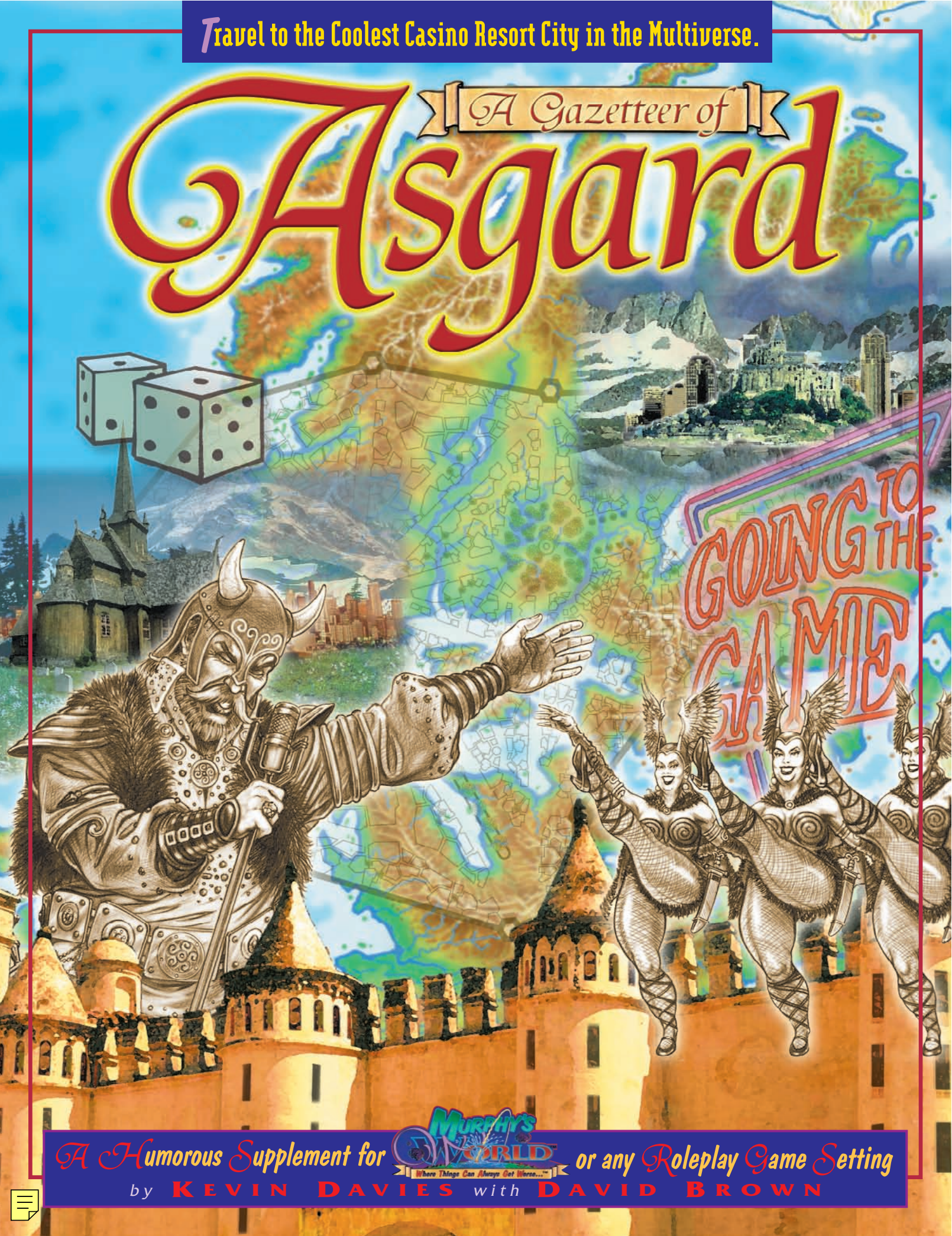
Travel to the Coolest Casino Resort City in the Multiverse.

A Gazetteer of Asgard



A Humorous Supplement for Murphy's World — Where Things Can Always Get Worse... — or any Roleplay Game Setting

by KEVIN DAVIES with DAVID BROWN



The Ice Country
Mt. Top
Mt. Tip
The Thurses Kingdom
The Misty Mountains
The Not-So Misty Mountains
Great White North
The Frozen Sea
Land of Spirits
Country of the Ghosts
Castle Icepeak
Jotunheim
Kumminost
Mt. Sapsago
The Idawold Plane
The Vast Wasteland
Quargel
Havarti Isle
City of Mists
The Northlands
Nunne Chaha
Teleme
Elam Island
Asgard
Jarlsberg
Cheshire
Acarugi Mountains
The Accidental Ocean
Ironwold Forest
Cacciocavallo
Stilton
Place of Caves
Vanaheim
Sweet Grass Hills
Lodge of the Peace Queen
Sheepcheese
Niflheim
Svartalfheim
Natalie Wood
Edam
Limburger
Danica
Ricotta
The Snaredrum Current
The Turtle Lands
The Snake Lands
The Pleasant Plain
The Isles of Avalon
Midgard
Upper Dentures
State of Disorder
The Flooded Lands
Picturesque Park
Land of Argyle
The Ice Sea
The Tucker Forest
Fish Pond
Land of Angora
Muspellheim
State of Datorder
Niceville
The Kringarra Mountains
Po-pau-ole Land
Land of Lyonesse
Whitethorn
Avalon Harbor
The Avalon Channel
Castle Abaton
Land of The Sun
Notsoniceville
Hamlet City
The Modest Lands
Ed Wood
Arbray
Slobbovia
The Gulf of Chihli
Castle Filthy
Myton Manor
Castle Greedy
Castle Kleen
Lyonesse
Chryslerford
East Wood
Lower Lower Sluggonia
Escrow
Castle Grime
Poop Tower
New South Plympton
North Wimbley
The Favonius Plain
Ack-Poof
Beerbloat
Deskbound
This Is It
Seer-sucker
Castle Plympton
Verdentia
The Forest of Phobias
Domino
Sluggonia
Lower Sluggonia
Off to one side Lower Sluggonia
The Lonely Land
The Minerva Mountains
The Darn Dam
Kumquat
Slum Lord
The Rose Bowl
Upper Lower Sluggonia
Noodle Pass
Veeblefetzer
Atemoya Isle
Ananas Island
Loquat
Rambutan
The Hollywood Bowl
The Melacaaco Mountains
The Pops
Top of the Pops
Naartje
Commercia
Kreplach
Rigatoni
Tortellini
Wind Pass
The Bassdrum Current
The Edge of Reality
The Salad Bowl
Betel Island
Ziti
Chrysoplasia
Feminazi
Quinoa Sea
Knodel
Gnocchi
The Barenaked Art Museum
Pummelo
Mt. Fusilli
Touchdown
What's The Point
Mt. Penne
Vermicelli
The Dusky Mountains
Ruritania
Rheum Sea
Mt. Filbert
Pepino
Farfel
Land of Punt
Hypopraxia
Macadamia
Febrile
The Lawn Bowl
Bay of Piglet
Castle Precarious
Left of Center
Mert Sea
Lands of Set
Mt. Rere
Realm of Seker
Vee-Six
No Point at All
Corozo
Souari
Point of No Return
Sane
Mt. Syncope
Litchi Pass
Dika
Mountains of Eternity
Region of Urnes
Amhet
Hysteria
Poliosis
Sekhet-Aaru
Vee-Ate
The Gump Forest
Provberbia
Amenta
Region of Amentet
Lumbago
Dhaa
Gaggh
Land of Confusion
The Eternal Dry
Mt. Shu
The Yukkie Peninsula
Land of Loose Change
Ahh
Land of Duat
Insomnia
Rust
Blah
Urr
Out Where the Buses Don't Run
Sea of Nu
The Doldrum Current
Land of 1,000 Dances
Four Rivers
Land Ho!
Lawyer Commune
The Sea of Milk
Mt. Fubsy
The Living Lands
Sunset Hill
Aditya Varuna's Lands
Danger Bay
Mt. Meru
The Land of Swarga
Shark Bay
Kuvera's Lands
Bagwash
Patala Lowlands
The Muddy Waters
The Rhibus Mountains
Nara Sea
Bagatelle
Mt. Rishyamukha
Mt. Malyavana
Du-Wop
Whiffet
Vomiting Volcano
Despot
Castle Ghastly
Lanka Isle
Aubade
Castle Grotesque
Mt. Lumpy
The Great Wet Desert
Castle Crooked
Illgotten Gains
Yokel
Opus
The Putrid Palace
Mt. Frowzy
Mt. Runty
Mt. Scabby
Castle Awful
Tithlandia
Mt. Gawky
Ode
The Realm of Rhyme
West Eastland
Carline
East Westland
Interlude Sea
The Great Middle Empire
Malkin
Mt. Droopy
Castle Gnarley
Trouble
Malice
Mt. Bottom
Waif Isle
Rock Bottom
Ice Station Wonderbra
The Frozen Waste
Murphy's World
Where Things Can Always Get Worse...™
Map Legend
Capital City
City
Town/Village
Building/Site
Geographic Site
Mountain Peak
N

Asgard — The Vacation Pick of the Multiverse!

(or Sean Murphy Tries to Pitch a Marketing Plan)

Hi. My name is Murphy. Sean Murphy. I'm a independent developer of intergalactic real-estate properties — an entrepreneur you might say, just a regular fella out to make a living like yourself. At least that's what I was until recently, before I became marooned on this crazy planet.

I was touring the systems, scanning the sectors in an area I was sure few starships had visited, and suddenly, BANG, there it was, the answer to my early retirement: an entire planet, unclaimed and ripe for development. As I ran through the formalities of an all bands inquiry to see if anyone was home, I could hardly believe it. Well, my scanners did indicate that someone was there all right, but since nobody was capable of responding to my electronic overtures, by intergalactic law, the planet was available for claiming. Naturally, I processed the necessary forms and sent them off pronto to the Claims Office at Galactic Central. Then I cruised in for a closer look.

There are moments in life when you finally think you've got the universe licked. When all significant problems are behind you, and everything ahead is gravy. Up until this time I had seen others experience such joy, but never had I the pleasure of doing so myself. This was my moment.

Unfortunately, a moment was just about how long it lasted. I told the auto-pilot to fire the impulse boosters to take me through the pinkish atmosphere to a desirable landing sight while I hopped into the shower. Suddenly, all hell broke loose.

I won't go into the details; suffice it to say my ship and most of my supplies ended up in a small body of water the natives call the Sea of Tranquillity.

Thus began my current existence as a refugee-tourist on this, for what it's worth, officially my planet, Murphy's World.

What follows is an account of a trip I took to, believe it or not, Asgard.

— Sean Murphy

Asgard — Showplace of the Universe!

When someone mentioned the name Asgard in passing during a tavern conversation I almost choked on my beer.

"Asgard?" I said like an idiot, "You mean the home of the Norse Gods?!!"

"Well, I wouldn't go as far as to call them gods," replied my drinking partner, a Dwarf named Tyrrell Banister. "However, they do like to throw money about. They're forever building, and order loads of construction goods and services. They've done a hell of a job transforming a godforsaken wasteland into a top notch holiday resort. It's really a great place; I've even taken the wife and kids. Lots of bright lights, glitzy colors, people of all types running about half naked; spending money like someone else is picking up the tab — plus, the drinks are free!"

He continued like this for the better part of an hour, talking about the people and sights, and the fond memories of bets lost and opportunities missed. I was intrigued. Here was a place where people seemed to think like me. People who knew how build a business up from nothing; how to turn a profit. I wanted to see this Asgard, and meet its builders.



Sean Murphy

"One bit of advice if I might, before you book your travel plans," offered my acquaintance, "get an AGC."

I Acquire an Aesir Gold Card (AGC)

After making a few inquiries I finally stumbled upon a local merchant who could explain the details of an AGC.

"Well Mr. Murphy, if ya plan ta travel in that neck of the woods, an Aesir Gold Card is sure to prove a real lifesaver; and I mean more than just your financial well-being. As Mr. Loki says, "Don't get raided with it, get caught dead without it."

The application form was simple. It consisted of one question: "Do you have lots of money?" I lied and checked the 'Yes' box. Within eighteen weeks, I received the card and the first bill for five items I hadn't bought. It was interesting to note that AGC Corporation doesn't charge any interest on the card; it just doubles any overdue principal every two weeks.

As I approached Asgard as a member of a caravan of Dwarvish merchants and Elvish tourists, the card came in handy. One night, no more than 20 miles

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[32 km] from Asgard, our encampment was raided by a party of Giant berserkers.

Screaming in fury, frothing at the mouth, with muscles flexed and veins standing out like SCSI cables on his forehead and chest, a berserker waving what looked like a huge double-headed corkscrew ran towards me. Undaunted, I stood erect, thrust out my jaw, and eyed him with a steely gaze — while I thrust my hand deep into the breast pocket of my jacket.

"All right… I'll show you…," I said, withdrawing my hand from my pocket.

Eyes wide, the berserker stopped dead in his tracks. In my hand I held my AGC (I hoped this was going to work as described in the contract…). I thrust the card forward so he could get a better look at my picture. "I don't leave home without it."

Smiling, the berserker put his weapon aside and wiped the foam from his mouth. "Dat's good. You had me scared for a minute, dere. I thought I was gonna have to pillage you along wid all de others. You must be going to Asgard."

I nodded, as carnage reigned around me.

"Here, let me give you some money-saving coupons." He began to reach into his fur loincloth, then his cheeks grew red. "Excuse me a moment." He turned his back to me and began to do a strange little dance while trying to pull the coupons from deep within his loincloth. In the background I could hear the screams of those in my caravan who had not had the foresight to get an AGC, or had left their card at home.



With a triumphant smile, the berserker gave me a handful of sweat-soaked, musky smelling pieces of paper. "Dere. You haf fun now in Asgard. If you need anything, just ask for Sven!" (I found out later that asking for Sven is probably the single most useless thing you can do in Asgard.) With that, he picked up his weapon, rolled his eyes wildly, foamed at the mouth, and ran off into the distance, yelling at the top of his copious lungs.

I cannot emphasize enough, Fellow Traveler, the importance of carrying an AGC — at all times.

Bifrost – the Rainbow Toll Bridge

Fortunately the remainder of the trip was not very eventful. Adventures may be fun to read about, but when you're in the thick of things, there's nothing you want more that a nice warm bath. And as our caravan approached the last leg of our journey and the great towers of Asgard came into view, that was precisely what was on my mind.

All that remained between me and bathtub bliss was a quick passage over the wide and turbulent River Ifing via the Rainbow Toll Bridge.

Now, Bifrost (as the locals have personalized the structure) is a marvel of engineering and design. When I first saw it rise up out of the morning mist, it shimmered and sparkled in a multitude of delicate hues. Which was all very nice, though it failed to inspire confidence in its solidity and tensile strength. I wondered, "Is it safe to cross?"

The Bridge is more solid that it looks. The insubstantial, shimmering effect is caused by millions of rhinestones and sequins glued to very solid iron girders. Unfortunately, the nearer one gets the more the illusion is dispelled. On closer inspection the paint is peeling and there are entire sections where the rhinestones have either fallen off or have been stolen for souvenirs. I learned that these days the color scheme now depends more on which brand of paint is on sale than on any desire to emulate the wonders of nature. I gather that the last big bargains down at the paint store were for Pusillanimous Pink and Cheese Blue.

The first thing one must do when advancing upon Bifrost is to toss a couple of coins into a bin mounted on the side of a cubicle where a rather large but board Aesir sits sorting change. Failure to do so and a loud horn will blow, causing 'really bad' things to happen (so I've been told). The toll is not refundable even if you are rejected by Asgard Customs Officials upon reaching the other side. Such is life.

Crossing Bifrost is quite a trip in itself. It is by far the largest bridge I've been on since becoming an involuntary resident of this planet. The River Ifing moves at quite a pace and if one is lucky, they might happen to catch a glimpse of a heavy debtor going by before the weights attached to his legs drag him under.

Upon reaching the other side, and before you are permitted to enter Odin's Gate, the official entrance to Asgard, you must pass through a Customs Booth. Once the Officer has taken a moment to size you up, you're asked to answer Three Questions. It is important Fellow Traveler that you not do anything rash at this time, and try to look as normal (or at least as willing to spend a lot of money on the craps table) as possible. For not only does the Customs Officer have the power to turn you away, but he also has the brute strength to physically toss you off the bridge and into the river. I decided to wait patiently for my turn.

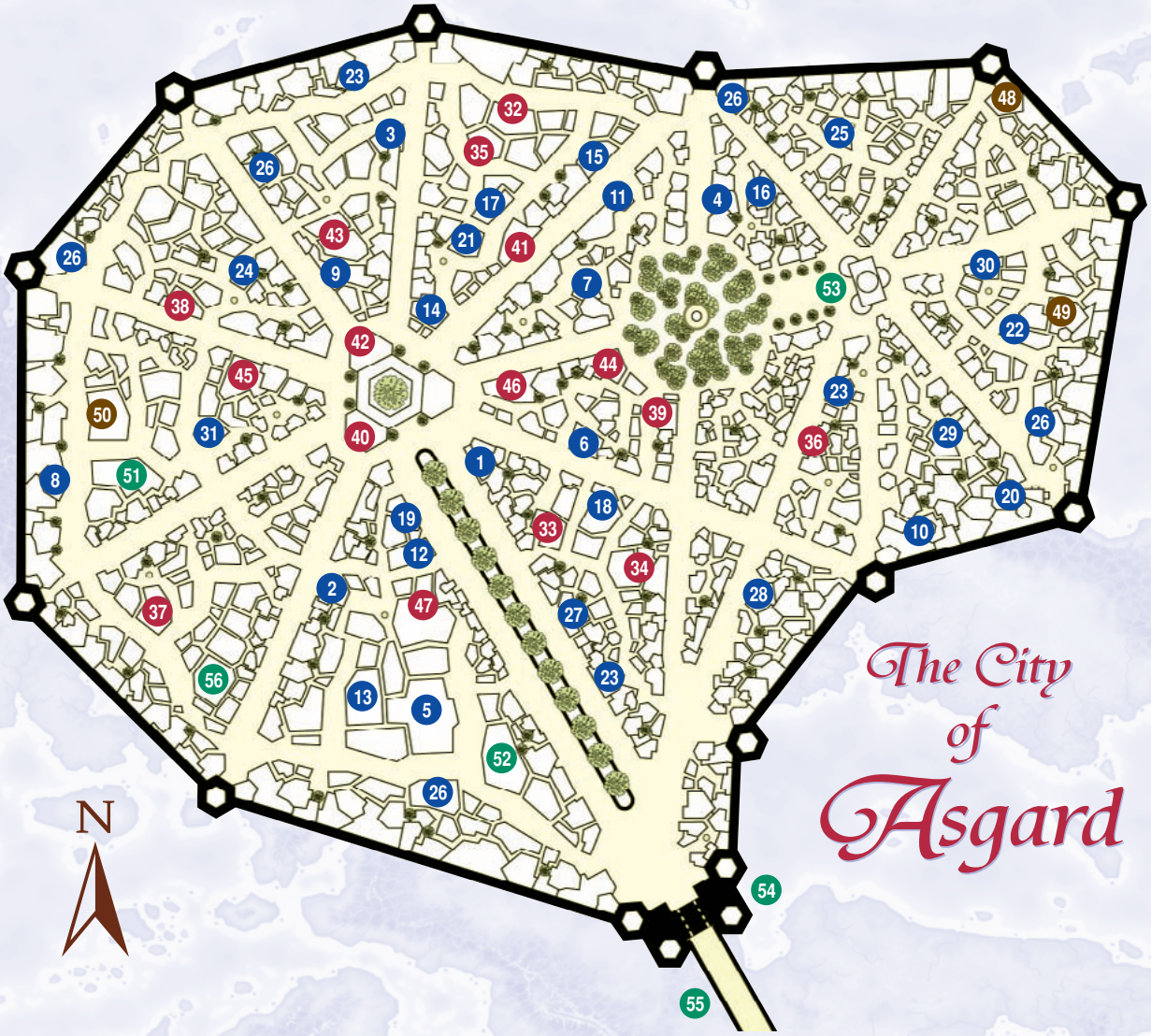
Eventually the Officer, which in this case was a female Aesir, asked me the Three Questions: "Have you got money with you?" "Anything to declare?" and "What is your favorite color?"

I was told in advance that answering 'No' to the first question is the only bad move. Declaring something of value is not exactly a 'wrong' answer, but it can lead to long and involved conversations with Customs Officials and your ending up on the other side of the Bridge with fewer items than you started with.

Odin's Gate – Tourist Information

Odin's Gate is the first thing anyone sees of Asgard. From a distance it is massive and gives the impression of a triumphal marble arch. The main archway is ten times the height of a Giant or about 120' [36.6 m], while two smaller archways on either side are only half that size.

The *ignorant* are most likely to travel the path to prosperity.



Directory: Asgard's Departments & Establishments

Entertainment Services

1. Alfrigg Jewelry
2. Asgard Taxi (head office)
3. Aesirheim Temp Employment (job placement service)
4. Confidential Counseling Services
5. Einherjar Coliseum (sporting arena)
6. Folkvang Shopping Center (food, armories, funeral parlors)
7. Frey's Escort Services (discrete)
8. Gleipnir Veterinary Center (pet store & dog pound)
9. Golden Locks (beauty parlor)
10. Grid Ironworks (iron and metal fashions; manufacturing & retail)
11. Hermod's Courier Service
12. Honest Otto's (the Autobahn, a discount retail store)
13. Hrungnir's Racetrack (horse & dog racing, betting)
14. Idun's Beauty Emporium
15. Lightning Legal Services (in the Bilskirnir Building)
16. Lodur's Dermatology & Plastic Surgery
17. Loki Marketing Services
18. The Lorelei Opera Center
19. Njord Water Sports (retail)
20. Norn Textiles
21. Ratatosk Daily (Asgard newspaper)
22. Regin Educational Institute (school)
23. Rhine Records (retail chain, studio, & concert promotions)
24. Skinfaxi Limousine Service
25. The Aesirheim School for Young Ladies (school & escort service)
26. Tutons (grocery store chain)
27. Ull's Sporting Goods (winter wear)
28. Holler's Lighting Effects
29. Viking Counseling (marriage)
30. Vor Consulting (private statistics and research institute)
31. Vulder's Funeral Services

Restaurants/Nightclubs/ Hotels/B&B's

32. The Asgard Casino & Hotel (4 Hammer upper class)
33. Asgard Discotheque (nightclub; dining, dancing, live bands)
34. Balder's Buffet (Rotating Rooftop Restaurant in Breidablik Tower)
35. The Bland Tower (2 Hammer, middle class hotel & casino)
36. Dellinger's Digs (3 Hammer B&B)
37. Freki's Flophouse (1 Hammer)
38. Geezer's Palace (3 Hammer, middle class hotel & casino)
39. Gungnir Grand (4 Hammer, upper class hotel & casino)
40. Mimir's Well (popular tavern in lower level of Odin's Palace)
41. The Miölnir Club (nightclub)
42. Odin's Palace (6 Hammer hotel & casino)
43. Okolnir Pleasure Palace (hotel, casino, nightclub, bar)
44. The Runes Casino & Hotel (4 Hammer, middle class)
45. Sokvabek (nightclub)
46. Valhalla (restaurant & nightclub)
47. Vingolf (casino, pleasure palace, exercise & golf center)

Manufacturing Services

48. Audhumla Refreshments (manufacturers of popular natural drinks)
49. Dvalin Goldworks
50. Gunlod's Brewery

Government Services

51. Emergency Medical (hospital)
52. Glitnir Justice Hall
53. Idavol, High Thingstead (City Hall)
54. Odin's Gate (main entry to Asgard)
55. Rainbow Toll Bridge
56. Security Operations HQ

Above the massive central arch a huge picture of Odin himself scrutinizes all who enter his realm. It's a bit unnerving, being painted so that his single eye always seems to be looking at you, no matter where you stand in front of the Gate. The other pictures adorning the Gate are also of Odin: Odin opening Asgard to the public, Odin signing a trade agreement with the Elves, Odin vanquishing the Frost Giants single-handed, Odin getting a royal flush in poker, etc. — all finely crafted images of state propaganda.

Below the portraits at are a number of posters advertising the goods and services of Asgard. From these ads you can discover such things as who's playing at Balder's Buffet, exactly how many albums Sven Sicilio and the Swinging Svelte Sisters have sold this week, and what the best buys at Honest Otto's are.

Having gotten this close to Odin's Gate it suddenly becomes apparent that it isn't made of marble after all. To be fair, the foundation is made of stone, but the rest of the Gate is made of wooden timbers and painted canvas. Rumor has it that Odin just about had a heart attack when he learned what making the Gate from stone blocks would cost. Meanwhile, at about one ten-thousandth the price of the real thing, a canvas covered frame has the added advantage of being easy to change whenever Odin, or the advertisers, feel like it. And it does do the trick.



Odin maintains a guard of crack bouncers around the Gate at all times, since it's embarrassing, not to mention costly, when drunks stagger up against the structure and try to climb it, breaking through the canvas. There is a small group of sailmakers on call 24 hours a day to repair any rents made in the Gate by natural forces or idiots.

Main Street – A Great Place to Meet New People

Upon passing through Odin's Gate I bid farewell to my traveling companions and headed off toward what I quickly determined must be the main drag.

Lining the street were shops and entertainment centers. Colored lanterns hung on cables criss-crossing the street, signs advertised just about every type of amusement you could want — and some you might rather pass on. In the distance I could see the towers representing the great casino-hotels that I had heard so much about — the largest, Odin's Palace being where Odin himself is rumored to have his private apartments and offices.

Immediately I recognized this place had potential. People were everywhere, eating, laughing, carousing, and spending money. Lots of it.

Why hadn't I heard about this Asgard place earlier? I thought back to my earlier travels. Never do I recall seeing a pamphlet, a brochure, or even a town crier. They do all this business simply by word of mouth?

Now my mind was really churning. What if there is a recession? Or if people simply fail to spread the word. Haven't they heard of advertising?!!! Then it hit me; I could provide the marketing savvy to ensure that Asgard has a regular flow of clientèle and claim for a piece of the action in the process. I began to formulate a strategy.

An Encounter With Blorg the Ogre

At that very moment I was struck down by a mountain in the guise of an Ogre holding a cone something like green cotton-candy in one hand and a jug of something wet and sticky in the other. Then a score of tiny feet trundled across my back and sprung off my head.

"Uggh, oops, sorry, mista… my mistake. Here, let me help you…."

Suddenly I felt a massive hand grasp the collar of my jacket and lift me to my feet. As I looked up and into the horrible countenance of my attacker, while muttering something incoherent like "who… what… ahh, I'm all wet…", a small kitten jumped from the Ogre's shoulder to my chest and began lapping the gooey liquid from my chin.

"Hey… dat little fella likes you!", announced the beast.

I'm not sure why but I've always seemed to attract the affections of small animals and little children. Lord knows I don't seek it out….

"Boy, look at you. Mista, I've done a bad thing. Blorg didn't mean to smunch you…."

"Ah, that's ok," I quickly replied, then half to myself "I've just arrived and I've got to find a hotel…." By now his entourage of small critters were all around and over me, purring and wagging their little tails.

"Well, you stay with Blorg tonight! Blorg got you all sticky and hurt, and you are friend of leetle animals. You will be Blorg's guest!"

I'm sure you can see that I was in no position to turn this madman down. I followed the Ogre back to his hotel room.

The Asgard Casino and Hotel

One thing I can say about Blorg, he sure is good to his word. I followed him through a few back streets to his room in The Asgard Casino and Hotel. Though it was clear that the 'Asgard' was one of the older resorts in town, I was impressed by the suite of rooms assigned to my new companion. Obviously even an Ogre can win in Asgard. I certainly wouldn't want to be the card dealer to tell him he'd lost.

After formal introductions, a warm bath, and sending my clothes out to be cleaned, Blorg insisted he treat me to dinner. Again I was not going to turn down anything this fellow offered other than a knuckle sandwich. Besides, I was sure to be safe from muggers with Blorg by my side. My marketing plans could wait for tomorrow; tonight R&R (research and refreshment)!

Balder's Buffet

Balder's Buffet, located in the Breidablik Tower, is a truly place you shouldn't miss during your stay in Asgard. To be honest, I was originally going to give it a miss; I happen to think revolving restaurants are tacky, and their food is generally substandard. Not that this isn't true of Balder's Buffet, but the place has significant other benefits. In any case, I was a guest of my Ogerish companion. When I

mentioned that I had a coupon for 2 free trips to the salad bar, I think I made a friend for life.

Though Balder's Buffet is atop the highest tower in Asgard, that still only puts it six Giant-sized stories up (about 150' [45.7 m]. (Until someone on this planet figures out a way to get elevators to work consistently, skyscrapers just aren't going to be popular).

Thus the view is nice, but not particularly spectacular. Especially since Asgard sits in the middle of a sub-Arctic plain — it's pretty monotonous. (Though our host assured us it is the best place to watch the great Tundra Worm migration every near. From what I've heard about these migrations, Balder's Buffet is about as close as I would want to get.)

Balder himself greets you at the entrance when you arrive. He's very personable, and usually tries not to crush your hand when he shakes it. He's tall, blonde, handsome, and unfortunately, punch-drunk — the result, I've been told, of having too many Frost Giant war hammers connect with his skull over the years. However, the position of cordial greeter doesn't seem to tax his abilities too badly.

The evening I was there, the restaurant was revolving fast enough to make walking to our table a bit tricky. I commented on this to my waiter, and he informed me that a larger-than-usual number of individuals had been unable to cover their bets this last week. I heartily suggest, Fellow Traveler, that you ensure enough money to cover your bets is always at hand while in Asgard.

My meal was typical Asgardian fare: a large hunk of rare meat torn off a carcass revolving on a spit, heavy black bread, and a tankard of Asgard Pilsener. The salad bar consisted of thistle leaves drenched in 'special sauce'. So far, nothing to write home about. Blorg was in culinary heaven. Then came the entertainment.

Fellow Traveler, I don't know if you are Earth-born, or from some other distant part of the multiverse. It doesn't matter; you should consider yourself lucky to obtain a glimpse of the King. Yes, Elvis Presley himself was the headliner at Balder's Buffet!

I was stunned. Elvis passed into legend, and then religion, generations before my birth, but like every member of the 'True Faith', I knew all his songs by heart. When I was a child, I wondered whether the myths were true, that Elvis still wandered the world of the living, working in fast-food restaurants, bringing joy, peace, and great rockabilly music wherever he went. Like everyone else, I lost that illusion as I grew up, but now he stood before me in the flesh — and oh, what flesh! Elvis lives! And from what I hear on a diet too horrible for any mere mortal to contemplate. Thus, like so many others, including myself, it seems he had ended up a refugee on this strange planet.

Actually he didn't look all that bad, thought he stopped by the dessert cart twice during his performance. For the first set he was crammed into tight black jeans and a black leather jacket. After a brief break he emerged dressed as he is known best, in a white jumpsuit, with gold chains, a belt, and a cape. But his voice — ah, that voice — it was better than any recording I've ever heard. True, some of his songs were slightly changed to fit the local audience —

You ain't nothing but a Frostie,
Just meltin' all the time.

— but the music still spoke volumes to me.

When he finished his set, he wandered over to the dessert cart again. My heart in my throat, I walked over to exchange a few words.

He smiled at me as I stood beside him, trying to think of something worthy and intelligent to say. "You all should close yer mouth, son, you'll attract flies. 'Specially in this place," he offered kindly.

"Mr. Presley, it's an honor and a privilege to meet you!" I burbled like a fool.

"Yeah, folks from all over have told me that so often son, Ah'm beginnin' to believe it. Enjoy the show?"

"Oh, yes sir, Mr. Presley, er, Elvis sir. I never thought I'd have the chance to hear you… live!"

"Son, all sorts of weird stuff happens in this place. Fact is, I have no idea just how long I've been on this rock. Want some pie?"

"Ah, no thank you sir, ah, Elvis… I've already eaten."

"That's fine, it just leaves more for me. Well, if you all are from back home, hang around son. You'll enjoy the rest of the show. Be good now, ya hear?"

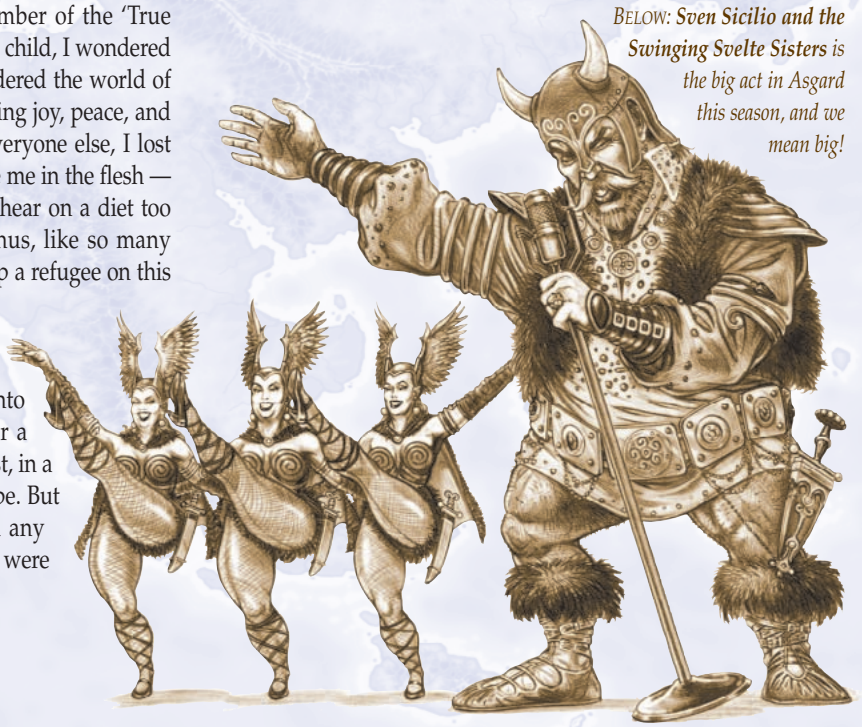
"Oh, yes sir, Mr. Presley," and with that, he turned and began walking off. I heard him responding to the praise of others with: "Thank you. Thank you, very much."

In a daze, I staggered back to my seat. Thus it took me a few moments longer to realize that the figure now singing on stage was none other than Jim Morrison belting out the tune L.A. Woman (actually, he sang Asgard Woman, but it was close enough for me.)

I spent every remaining evening during my stay in Asgard at Balder's Buffet. (I later learned that Buddy Holly was the only singer banned from playing at Balder's Buffet.)

A Quick Tour of the Town

After leaving the restaurant, I figured I'd look around a bit before heading back to the hotel. Blorg, ever curious and a tad desperate for companionship, but very flush with recent winnings, decided to tag along.



BELOW: ***Sven Sicilio and the Swinging Svelte Sisters*** *is the big act in Asgard this season, and we mean big!*

Souvenir Shops

The tourist shops in Asgard are many and varied. Some cater to children, some to casual tourists, others to hard-core kinks. One favorite T-shirt says, "My parents went to Asgard, and all they brought me was this lousy T-shirt, but next time they're going to bring me, or the Aesir will pound them to a pulp."

Children's toys are popular. The Frost Giant doll with detachable head and limbs (spurting watery blood optional) sells well, as does the miniature roulette wheel, complete with toy croupier, bouncers, and shackles for tapped-out gamblers.

Having an Ogre as a friend is like holding a ticking bomb in your hands — it impresses the hell out of people, but it can blow up in your face at any time.

During our night on the town, I though it would be a fun idea to drop into a comedy club. During intermission I got up and went to the bar to buy a new round; Blorg got lost on the way back from the bathroom. As the show got underway again, I happened to glance toward the door and saw Blorg looking confused and agitated with all the people obscuring his route back to his table... wherever it was. In an attempt to avoid 'situation' I stood up, waived, and hollered, "Hey Blorg, c'mon over here. These guys'll slay ya!"

Bad choice of words.

"Slay me? I not let them slay me!" With an angry roar, Blorg proceeded to trash the club, the stables, the house next door, and most of the block. I did my best to stop him, but couldn't for the life of me think of a way to get the concept of 'figure of speech' across to the Ogre. Blorg finally stopped when a chair leg he was using as a club just missed a small dog. Blorg picked the frightened animal up, and with tears in his eyes, said "Poor puppy needs friends, just like Blorg. Sean save Blorg from bad people. I tell everyone Sean is Blorg's friend."

I'm seriously considering changing my name.

— Sean Murphy.

The Autobahn — Honest Otto's

I was excited at the thought of a seeing a real highway again. The vast majority of roads on this planet are pitiful at best, and few are well suited to vehicular traffic. As it turns out I was misled by a spelling error (Aesir literacy is not high). This should properly be called the 'Ottobon', the 'bon' being short for 'bonafide', or better yet: 'Honest Otto's'.

Honest Otto's is a huge discount store that takes up an entire Asgard city block. Its walls are covered with colored lights and cheesy slogans like, "Otto's crazy, and so are his prices!" "Save money at Otto's, Honest!" and "Buy something at Otto's and his staff won't beat the snot out of you!"

Inside I found the largest collection of cheap junk I have ever seen anywhere. Electric pizza cutters and plaid seersucker socks vie for space with lava lamps and exotic green floor tiles. I found myself tripping over display racks placed strategically in the middle of aisles. Every 37 seconds an unctuous clerk asked me if I needed help. After politely replying 'No' approximately 82 times, I finally freed myself of their attentions by loudly insisting: "No, I'm beyond help!" Instead, the clerks gathered in little knots and stared at me as I moved about the store.

Few others seemed to have problems with the staff. I saw happy customers of all races and cultures wandering about, clutching their electric spatulas and left-handed chain-driven vibraphones. Not all the customers were happy. One heavily armed Pixie complained to me that he was unable to find a clerk who could remember where the Amnesia Grenades were sold.

Otto's is pleased to deal in any currency you happen to have. There is an exchange office deep in the basement of the building, staffed by Otto's largest, toughest-looking, most heavily armed employees. You'll like the exchange rate they give you when converting your simoleons to grupniks — the sign above the wicket says "Like it, or lose a body part."

Otto's Food Hall is most impressive. Imported Gummy Trolls, Eye of Bom-Bom Beast in Guava Jelly, Bramble Beast Briskets, and Preserved Giraffe Giblets are but a few of the delicacies on display. If you look carefully, you may even find a few accurate 'best before' dates on the packaging.

Otto's cashiers are friendly and efficient. At least that's what the sign over the registers said. I found them surly, stupid, and condescending. It took a half hour to check out my bag of Gummy Trolls. First, the closed the checkout line I was in. Then, when I switched to another line, I was told (after reaching the counter) that they couldn't accept food items at that register. When I was finally served, the clerk had to do a price-check, It had to be done twice; the first time they came back with a price for Trolly Gums, an entirely different, significantly more expensive, and rather disgusting product.

Even if you have problems at Otto's, grin and bear it. After leaving the checkout area, I headed towards the Complaints Department. Just before entering the dark doorway, a wild-eyed old man grabbed my arm, and in a loud whisper said, "They go in, but they never come out!" I took another look, and decided to take the old man's word for it.

I'll leave with this passing thought, written by Otto above the exit from his store: "If you can't find it at Otto's, it's probably because Otto doesn't carry it."

The Lorelei Opera Center — Live Theater for the Masses

Finally, I decided to end the evening with what poses as high culture in Asgard. If you don't like heavy-duty, rafters-shaking, Teutonic opera, then you should give Asgard a miss. In this city you can't escape from buxom chainmail clad women waving spears about and singing of the joys of battle, bloodshed, and death. Blorg, of course, was enchanted.

The Lorelei Opera Center is only the largest of many venues for this most popular form of cultural expression. Opera is also common in tavern's and hotel lounges. (I personally believe it's designed to keep people out of the bars and at the gambling tables — the gambling halls are opera-free zones.)

As far as I can tell, there is only one plot for all these operas. In Act I, the female singer is a damsel in distress, kidnapped by evil

When on a trip, the first thing which you decided *not* to take will be the first thing *needed*.

Dwarves, Dragons, or Frost Giants. In Act II, the muscle-bound hero, usually named Sven, comes up with a brilliant plan to rescue her. In his basso-profundo voice, he sings about how he will pound the living snot out of the kidnappers and carry the girl away. In Act III, the climax of the whole performance, Sven proceeds to indeed beat the living snot out of the kidnappers and carry the damsel away. Considering the size of the women playing the damsels, I wouldn't be surprised if all the singers playing the hero have serious hernias.

After the performance we went back to our hotel and crashed.

Vingolf – Casino, Pleasure Palace & Golf Center

The next morning when I awoke I was refreshed and surprisingly alone. I looked around and found no note; not surprising really. Then having gotten dressed I wandered down to the front desk and inquired about messages. It seems that my Ogre friend had left early for the gambling tables and that he wished me well. I left a similar message for him and wandered off to begin my busy day.

I figured I would find Odin and present him with my marketing plan. The trick was, where he be likely to hang out. I made some inquiries and learned that today he was likely to be one of two places: the High Thingstead (where government business is conducted), or Odin's Palace (where he lives and conducts his private business).

I figured I'd head uptown toward the Palace and make further inquiries along the way. However, my attention was immediately captured by the Vingolf complex. Vingolf bills itself as Asgard's premier pleasure palace and exercise center.

What can I say about the building itself? First of all, it's huge. By that I mean vast. I'm talking Really Big. It's constructed on a monumental scale even by Giant standards, in a style that can only be described as scandia-deco. Tall vertical columns and geometric shapes combine in dramatic angles, finished to simulate the grain of natural wood and the appearance of homespun quilts. It takes a bit of getting used to. I've been told that or three centuries in a row, the Elvish Architectural Association has voted Vingolf The Tackiest Building Anywhere'. I'm not sure even that 'distinction' truly does Vingolf justice.

If Asgard didn't already have a Rainbow Bridge, Vingolf might be called the Rainbow Building. The entire structure, inside and out, is painted in bright, garish colors. There is no consistent color scheme that I could fathom; the whole thing looks remarkably like a meal of Keruski Fried Platypus that someone couldn't keep down. Some of the colors are fluorescent, so parts of it glow in the dark. (Again, similar to the remains of a meal from KFP.)

It took me half-an-hour just to find the main entrance. True, it was covered by glowing neon and blinking light bulbs, but so is the rest of the building.

Immediately, one of Asgard's many bouncers presented himself in the doorway, blocking my entry. Inevitably, his nametag said 'My Name is Sven'. "Hi Sven," I offered, "is there a cover charge to get in?"

Sven peered down at me suspiciously and, fingering the hilt of the sword at his side, said, "Vait a minute. How did you know my name?"

I sighed inwardly. You don't have to spend more than a day in Asgard to get used to this kind of thing. "It's on your nametag."

Comprehension dawned on his face. "Oh, ja. That is so. Vell, anyway, you asked about a cover charge. You can pay for each thing separately, or you can pay vunce und get your hand stamped. Either vay, tipping the doorman is always a good idea." He beamed.

I placed a large coin of a small denomination in his hand and hoped that counting was not his forte. "Thanks for the advice. Where can I get my hand stamped?" He pointed toward a kiosk on the left with a short line of tourists and I went off in that direction.

Two visitors from Eastern Akimbo stood in line in front of me; everything about them said 'tourist', this included their shirts which read: 'Hi! I'm a tourist from Eastern Akimbo!' They paid their money to the Giantess behind the wicket and walked over to the Giant bouncer who was waiting to stamp their hands.

The Giantess looked at me, and in between gum chews said, "A day pass is 47 grupniks."

I fumbled with the change in my pocket. Glancing at the coins I asked, "How much is that in simoleons?" Her reply was drowned out by a scream. I looked up and saw the first tourist clutching his hand and writhing in pain. Then, the bouncer grabbed the arm of the second tourist, and placing her hand on a raised platform while ignoring her pleading protests, proceeded to stamp on it with his massive foot. "Dere. Now bof your hands is stamped. Have a happy day." He looked over at me. "Next!"

I smiled meekly, "Ur, I think I adopt the 'pay as you go' strategy, thanks, and exited, stage right.

In times past, the Aesir were mighty warriors, the scourge of the North. Other civilized peoples trembled and paid tribute in fear. This is the official Aesir line. The truth seems to be that the Aesir were a small group of jack-of-all-trades types who fled Muspellheim when Odin cooked the books and ripped of Surtr, boss of the Flame Giants.

Once established in the northern wilderness on the Idawold Plane, to gain a sense of security, they needed some muscle. Thus Odin set about recruiting the young Giants who were wandering about in search of adventure (there's never a shortage of these young toughs). The process continues to this day.

Each recruit goes through an in-depth, fifteen minute training session after which they are pronounced an Asgard 'Bouncer'. They are taught how to spot bankrupt drunks and at a distance, and how to remove troublemakers from the premises without damaging the property or disturbing other patrons.

Interestingly enough, according to Asgard medical records, more people fall down stairs and injure themselves in Asgard than all other places on the planet combined. When the head of Asgard security was asked about this strange statistic, he replied, "It just goes to show dat people must be more careful while on holiday. It is very strange, because our bouncers are specially trained to help people down stairs." Indeed.

— Sean Murphy

Goofy Golf — A Smart Sport

Back in the main foyer, I looked around. There seemed to be quite a commotion at the exit from the 'Nature Trail' exhibit. Two bloodied tourists were supporting a third between them, and I swear one of his legs was missing. Another tourist was screaming something about a Trail Snapper and her vanished husband to a bouncer. Since I'm basically a city boy, I decided to give the 'Nature Trail' a miss.

On the other hand, I've always enjoyed 'Goofy Golf'. I paid the entrance fee (avoided getting my hand stamped), grabbed my club and neon-pink ball, and prepared to do battle with whatever obstacles the diabolical designers had come up with. The 1000 simoleon prize for making par also was a factor in my decision. (Though I'm still not sure how much that is in grupniks….)

Much to my chagrin, I was put with three other people to make up a foursome. It wouldn't have been so bad, except for their T-shirts. The first read, 'I'm With Stupid', the second, 'So Am I', and the third, 'Me Too!' That left only one of us without an appropriate fashion statement.

One of the benefits of travel is that you get to meet new people. One of the dangers of travel is that they might turn out to be complete jerks. These three were complete jerks.

I never did learn their names, but they were quick to inform me that they were the Limburger Mini-Putt Champions. I can only assume they had accomplished this feat by boring their opponents to death. I helped settle an argument about who would go first by offering to play last.

I swear each of them took half-an-hour lining up their shots. First, they discussed the different strategies to take with each hole while engaging in flexing exercises. (Once, they ventured to ask my opinion. "Just knock the damned thing in the hole!" I snarled. They never asked again.) Then, after carefully measured the distance from the ball to the hole, they checked the wind speed, humidity, and temperature. Once the shot was over, and they had missed their target, they conducted an extensive debate over what want wrong.

I, on the other hand, dropped the ball on the ground and hit it toward the hole. The three of them shook their heads over my lack of technique. This annoyed them no end when they realized that I was shooting par, and they were playing each hole in the low teens.

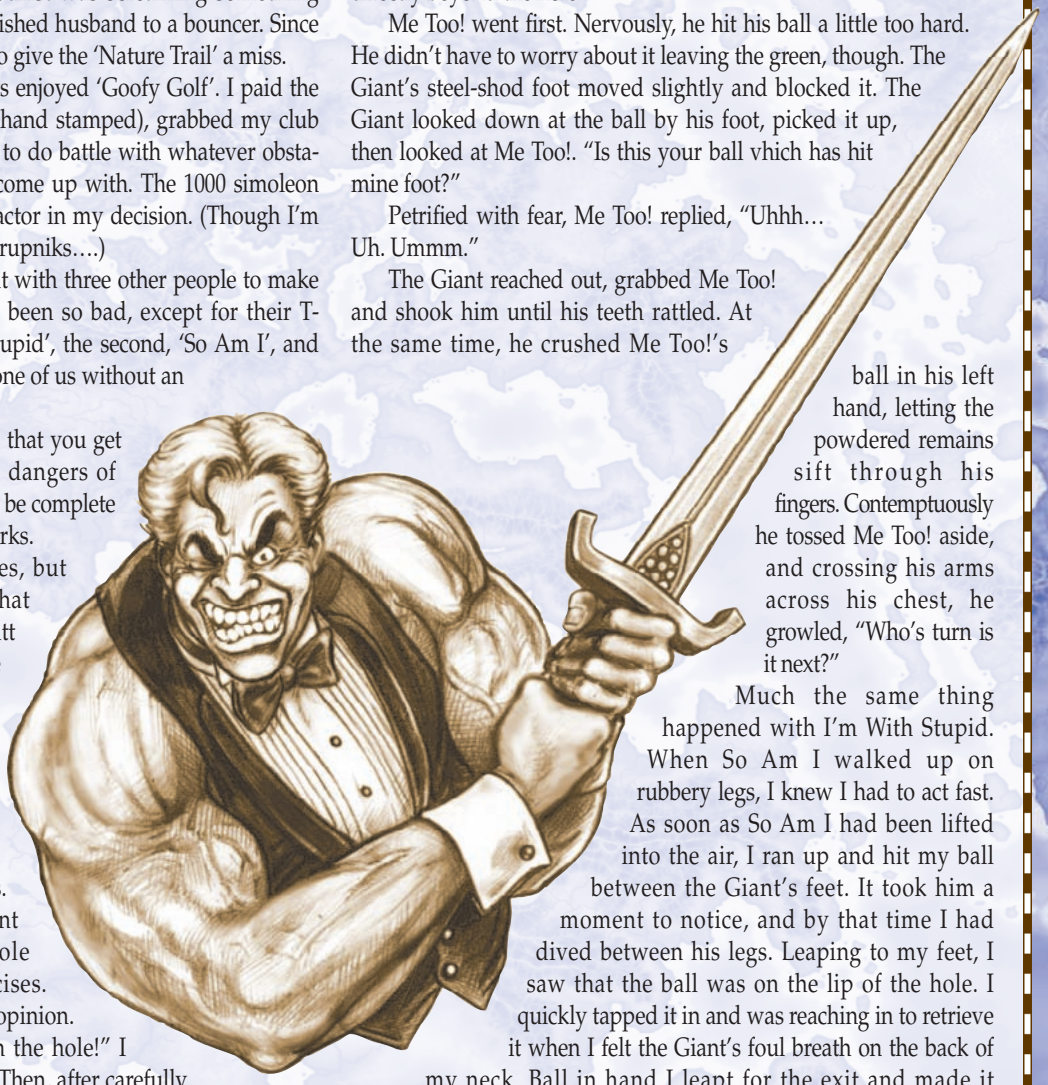
At first I thought the course was unexceptional. There were the usual traps: windmills, bumps, swinging logs, fake holes, and the like. Upon closer examination, I discovered that things were not quite as innocuous as they seemed. So Am I got a nasty cut on the leg when he bumped into the windmill; the windmill's blades had sharp knife-like edges. The water obstacle turned out to have piranha in it. The hollow log shot the ball back at you (Me Too! got a black eye when he failed to dodge his returning ball).

The ninth hole turned out to be the toughest. However, it had nothing to do with the layout; the green was short, wide, and completely flat. Under normal circumstances, I could have sunk the putt easily. What made things complicated was the armored Giant standing in the middle of the green, glaring at us. The exit was directly beyond the hole.

Me Too! went first. Nervously, he hit his ball a little too hard. He didn't have to worry about it leaving the green, though. The Giant's steel-shod foot moved slightly and blocked it. The Giant looked down at the ball by his foot, picked it up, then looked at Me Too!. "Is this your ball vhich has hit mine foot?"

Petrified with fear, Me Too! replied, "Uhhh… Uh. Ummm."

The Giant reached out, grabbed Me Too! and shook him until his teeth rattled. At the same time, he crushed Me Too!'s ball in his left hand, letting the powdered remains sift through his fingers. Contemptuously he tossed Me Too! aside, and crossing his arms across his chest, he growled, "Who's turn is it next?"



Much the same thing happened with I'm With Stupid. When So Am I walked up on rubbery legs, I knew I had to act fast. As soon as So Am I had been lifted into the air, I ran up and hit my ball between the Giant's feet. It took him a moment to notice, and by that time I had dived between his legs. Leaping to my feet, I saw that the ball was on the lip of the hole. I quickly tapped it in and was reaching in to retrieve it when I felt the Giant's foul breath on the back of my neck. Ball in hand I leapt for the exit and made it through just as the Giant's fingernails clicked closed behind me.

On the other side stood a Dwarf with a clipboard. "Whoa. Nice try. Too bad that hole's a par one. Close, but no 1000 simoleons." Panting with exertion, all I could do was stare at him. "Hey, at least you don't have to pay for your ball like your friends there."

I'm With Stupid, So Am I, and Me Too!, still staggering from their shakings, were being verbally thrashed by an irate bouncer. "So, vhere are your balls? Did you leave your balls behind? Do you think balls grow on trees? You must pay for your missing balls!"

I was in dire need of a cold beer.

Bar Hopping

Vingolf has at least eight bars. There may be more but I couldn't find them. The Rooftop Bar may initially sound charming, but without a directory, trying to find the rooftop is a challenge; and without elevators, it is a tiring challenge.

The *shortest road* between two points is always the one most likely to be *washed out*, *dangerous*, or *under repair*.

More than once I stood atop an 'observation deck' and saw the Rooftop Bar below, but I had no way of getting from where I was to where I wanted to be, except by flying (which was out of the question) or tramping up and down more flights of stairs.

When at last I found the Rooftop Bar, it turned out to be a dismal place. The chairs and tables were rust streaked, there were pools of water on the floor (which was simply tar and gravel), and there was huge, noisy equipment everywhere. Over the noise of a fan I complained to the bartender. "What do you expect?" he replied, "This is a roof, after all." With that lucid explanation, I sat down with my beer.

The biggest excitement of the afternoon came when the other half-dozen customers on the roof suddenly put their hands over the tops of their drinks. Wondering what kind of strange ritual I had stumbled across, I was distracted by a honking noise overhead. Looking up, I saw a large flock of Gandy Geese flying by. Looking back down at my drink, I discovered why the rest of the patrons had covered the mouths of their glasses. I left my beer on the table and went off to find a bar less open to the elements.

The Spic & Span Bar conjured up images of a place to drink far different than the dives I typically imbibed at. When I entered, for a moment I thought it was some kind of nudist bar. Throughout the establishment there were a large number of people in various states of undress. Some were partially clothed, others wore only their undies, still others were completely nude.

It turned out to be a laundromat-bar. Everyone here was diligently trying to get their clothes clean, and getting sloshed in the process.

The laundromat portion of the establishment consists of a rocky stream running through the center of the room. Cleaning your clothes is straightforward — you just beat the hell out of them against the rocks in the stream. When you're done, you can hang them on clotheslines by the open windows. While you're doing this, waiters circulate pushing carts loaded with beer steins. Grab a beer, hand them a coin or two, and get back to beating your clothes.

I was amazed to see a set of modern-looking washers and dryers against one wall. Puzzled, I wandered over to examine them. As I approached, an old man sidled up to me. "You looks like a young man who enjoys life. If yer want to stay that way, yer'll stay away from these infernal machines!"

"What do you mean?" I asked. Just then a waiter arrived with a beer cart. The old man took two beers from the cart, handed one to me, and made it clear that I should pay the shot. Sighing, I handed the waiter enough to cover the drinks.

"Well, sometimes they git yer clothes ultrasonic clean, and only rip off a coin or two. But sometimes they turn them into rags, or burn them… or send 'em into another dimension. It's luck o' the draw, I guess."

I have been on the planet long enough to know better than to completely discount such statements. Still, my curiosity helped get me stuck here in the first place. Reaching out toward the handle of the nearest dryer, I said, "They don't look that strange to me..." As I pulled open the door, there was a strange rattle and a pile of bones fell at my feet, the skull grinning up at me.

"Wow," said the old man. "They've been trying to open that one ever since I've been here. Yer must have some special twist of the wrist or sumthin." He gazed down at the pile of bones around my feet. "He thought it'd be fun ta go fer a ride… it seemed like a fun idea at the time!"

I gingerly pulled my feet out from under the bones. "I think I'll take your suggestion and use the stream."

"Oh, aye. Yer clothes won't disappear, it's good exercise, and typically ya git a couple hours warnin' 'bout the chemical spills from upriver. Thanks fer the beer, youngster!"

There and then I decided I'd let the hotel valet continue to be my laundry service.

Your Pleasure is Their Business

That's not all I saw at Vingolf. It certainly lives up to its reputation as a pleasure palace. There are women (and men) of all races available for entertaining encounters at any time of the day or night. Whether you want your toes worshipped, or your grapes peeled, someone will do it for you — for a price, of course. I won't go into detail, except to say that I didn't realize you could have so much fun with a female Elf, a female Pixie, and an entire room full of lime green gelatin. Nor did I realize, until afterwards, just how much it could cost (a big part of the reason I'm writing this travelogue).

Gaming in Asgard

Seeing that I still had some money left, I determined that if I was going to do any gambling while in Asgard, now was as good a time as any. I soon discovered that Asgard has a wide variety of gaming halls and games. I was familiar with a few of them, intrigued by some, and utterly baffled by the rest. Only a couple of games experienced wide appeal; the majority were targeted towards the distinctive tastes of smaller, select groups. Here are a few that I checked out:

Roulette

There are two versions of Roulette in Asgard. The first was obviously imported from Earth, and is identical to the version played in Monte Carlo. The second has far greater appeal to Brownies and Pixies. In this version, the roulette wheel is 50′ [15 m] across. The players climb in and get spun around with the wheel.

Their goal is two-fold: first, to avoid being crushed by the steel ball as it rolls around the wheel; secondly, to be the first in the slot with the ball when the wheel stops moving. Brownies play it to show off their nimbleness. Pixies play it to show off their bloody-mindedness. On a bet I played it… once. Not only was I bruised from head to toe by the ball, but I couldn't walk or see straight for three days afterwards. I recommend this particular game only to those of you with a strong sense of balance and even stronger stomachs.

Spin the Dwarf

Spin the Dwarf is vastly popular amongst Giants and certain jaded Elves. There are a few variations. One involves hanging a Dwarf from the ceiling with a piece of stout cord, and spinning him vigorously. It is important that the Dwarf have a heavy meal just prior to the start of the game. The winner is the person who remains least splattered by the poor Dwarf's inevitable upset. For the losers it's off to a long, hot shower. Great fun.

I once asked one of the Dwarvish participants why he continued to participate. "What!" he replied, "and get out of showbusiness?" Looking around, he pulled me close so no-one else could hear.

"Besides, what other opportunity do I have to show those Giants what I really think of them without having them pound the snot out of me?" I understand now, I think.

Poker

Ahh, my favorite game. During my days at the Space Academy, I learned a few things about cards — or, to be more precise — about people who play cards. I learned to look for a 'tell'. For example, when some people get a good hand, they raise their left eyebrow slightly. When others get a bad hand, they play with one of their rings. You can tell when certain people are bluffing — they unconsciously rub their chin. Thus the key to good card playing is observation. Find the tell, and you've found your opponent's weakness.

Playing cards with Giants can be an enriching experience. With Giants, you'd have to be blind or dead three days not to see their tells. Giants who get bad hands say things like, "Damn! A bad hand!" Giants with good hands snicker a lot. Giants who bluff look as guilty as hell. I made more money one night out of a game of poker with six Giants than I did in my last four years of space exploration. (I think — I'm not precisely sure how many grupniks there are to a galactic dollar.) Be warned: Giants are very sore losers. Only quick thinking — "Hey, all your shoelaces are untied!" — and good legs got me out of that one.

There is a corollary to this, though. Don't play cards with Elves… ever. People who live up to 10,000 years get really good at hiding their true intentions. It took me seven hours to get a serious pile of loot off those Giants. It took half-a-dozen Elves nineteen minutes to clean me out, and they stuck me with the bar bill.

Blort

It took me a long time to understand the appeal of Blort. It consists of splashing paint on a wall and watching it dry. That's it. All players place bets on just when the paint will dry. (I've been told a truly seasoned Blort player can guess within a two minute period of when the paint will dry.) It stands as a definition for boredom. I couldn't understand its appeal until I realized that the only people playing it were Poughvidd. Since Poughvidds drop dead when they laugh, they try to avoid anything that even remotely resembles fun. Blort certainly fills the bill on that count. Besides, I'm awful at it.

Shoot the Drow – Catch the Arrow

The Aesir are very good at saving money by combining games. Shoot the Drow seemed at first to be an excessively cruel game. The object is to use a bow and arrow to ventilate a Drow warrior. Then I found that the Drow love to play Catch the Arrow. If they happen to catch an arrow in the chest instead of their hand, they just consider it part of a warrior's training (the final part, I suppose). Thus the Aesir pander to both the cruelty of some and the stupidity of others, and only have to set up one facility. That's awesome business sense.

Rocket Darts

Rocket Darts is a recent Technocratic innovation. The rules are very similar to standard darts, but these darts are shoulder fired and rocket propelled. Originally the target stood just a few feet away. However, it was quickly discovered that increasing the distance to the target was a very good idea. The target is 1.2 miles [2 km] away, and increased in size to compensate. It runs a little slower than standard darts since any judge not completely insane stands well away from the target.

The only serious drawback to Rocket Darts is the unreliability of the equipment. Rumor has it that the darts are manufactured by the Reagombie firm GDM, but since they only fail one time in ten, that rumor is very unlikely. Whatever else you do, make sure that you don't wear any long, loose clothing. Getting dragged half way to the target by a Rocket Dart is not only very bad for your health, but it makes you the laughing stock of every Rocket Dart player on the planet. That's all I have to say on that subject!

Once I had the mixed pleasure of attending the Aesirheim Super-Stein featuring the Niflheim Vikings and the Fenris Wolves.

I was amazed at the display of intricate maneuvers, violence, and frenzied masses of palpitating flesh — and that was just the cheerleaders!

While the strategy of the game eluded me, the fun apparently to be gained lies in betting on how long each player will live, and who will survive the game.

Each side fields 13 combatants who are charged with the task of transporting a keg of rot-gut across their opponent's hostile territory, through a massive stone gatehouse, and into their 'end zone'.

The Vikings, the hometown favorites, seemed to be cruising — literally, since they somehow diverted a river and flooded the field — to an early victory in their longboats, took a spill when a cascade of catapulted boulders sank their spirits along with their ships. Thus, they had to send in a slew of subs.

By the close of the second half, I was uncertain whether 45 - 0 represented the score, or the casualty rate. However, with the many battles taking place around me in the stands, it was all I could do to avoid being crushed, let alone keep a tally.

Little did it matter however, since it seemed that my team won. While collecting my winnings, the debauched victors mistook me for their mascot, and bore me away to the post-game festivities. I awoke the next morning bruised and hung over, in the arms of a Valkyrie who declared her willingness to abandon her well-paying career to bear our love-child. With visions in mind of a 200 lb toddler wanting daddy to play 'horsey', I quickly remembered I had a dental appointment on the other side of the planet. To this day I panic every time I hear a woman in chainmail sing Wagner.

— Sean Murphy.

When you finally arrive at your intended destination/chosen campsite it will already be *occupied*.

Punch the Heck Out of the Wall

Ogres and Rakshasas tend to play games like Punch the Heck Out of the Wall. It's a simple game. The players lay bets on who will be the first to punch their way through a 12' [30 cm] thick stone wall. Bare-knuckles only. I can only assume that to Ogres and Rakshasas the game represents the eternal struggle of sentient beings with the obstinacy of an unfeeling universe. Either that or they're even more stupid than I had previously believed.

I once ran across two Ogres playing this game. Unfortunately, they had chosen to play it on Asgard's defense wall, which is a full 40' [12 m] thick. They had obviously been at it a while, given the flakes of stone surrounding their feet and the condition of their hands.

"Uh, gentlemen… I hate to interrupt, but that's the outer defense wall you are attempting to punch your way through."

The two Ogres stopped punching, looked at me, then looked at each other. One rubbed his chin thoughtfully for about two full minutes, then nodded. "We'll have to change our bets then." With that, they agreed to lengthen their bets, and went back to punching the wall.

Other Popular Pastimes

People in Asgard bet on almost anything. Thus a wide range of sports and contests are popular in Asgard. Full-Contact Backgammon, Amputation Chess, and Bowling for Simoleons are just a few of the standards that both visitors and natives of Asgard alike are addicted to. I suggest that unless you have the size and strength (and intelligence) of a Giant, that you avoid playing Caber Catching. Also watch out for the One-Armed Berserkers, located everywhere, including washrooms.

The Keg Dome

By now I'd figured I'd seen enough of what Asgard had to offer and was ready to make my pitch to Odin and company. After additional inquiries and a hefty tip to a voluptuous casino attendant I was given a tip that Odin would be attending his private box to watch a game of Kegball at the Keg Dome, a massive sports arena in the center of town. That was my new destination.

This magnificent indoor stadium is another don't miss site. As might be expected, the stadium is huge. The stands rise up in a series of tiered balconies and hold up to 60,000 fans. The stadium is built very sturdily — it has to be otherwise it would never survive a game.

I inquired why the cheap seats are those closest to the field. It seems that Kegball fans make a habit of expressing their sportsmanship by bombarding the field with rotten tomatoes, eggs, rocks, Dwarves, plumbing fixtures — anything they can get their hands on. Fans also have a habit of drinking very heavily before, during, and after games — they have lousy aim. You get the picture, pay extra and sit on the first balcony.

The concession stands are surrounded by thick iron bars, and are heavily guarded during games. They sell only two things: beer and McLemming Burgers; both at outrageous prices. However, if you've ever seen the remains of one of these stands after the home team loses a game, you might just begin to imagine what the owners pay for insurance.

When not running Kegball games, the stadium is used for lemming herder trade shows, Dwarf-tossing contests, rock concerts, and marching band tattoos. The Giants are one of only two races on the planet who actually enjoy marching bands. (The other is the Drow, but each and every one of them is profoundly tone-deaf, so at least they have an excuse).

The Aesirheim Giants vs The Fafnir Dragons

Asgardians love their sport; games occur year round. However, watch out, sometimes the action of the fans in the stands is far more engaging and dangerous than what is taking place on the field.

The hometown team, the Aesirheim Giants (a uniquely original name), has a fanatical following. The local fans have been known to form gangs and beat up groups of opposing fans whom they outnumber at least three to one. So, either root for the Vikings, or go to the games with a small army.

Today's game was between the Giants and the Fafnir Dragons, but I could care less, my mission was to confront Odin in his private box. I paid my grupniks and began my quest, but an usher noticed my ticket and herded me to my designated seat. I could see Odin in his box from where I sat, but had no way to reach him. I figured I'd sneak off once the game started and the usher became distracted.

I soon discovered my seat was in the middle of a gang of female groupies who follow the Dragons from game to game. When they determined that I had no team preference, they became determined to make a Dragon convert out of me. As it happened, the Dragons took an early lead. Hugging me with massive arms and tossing pop-lemmings into the air, I observed they had entered a special mental state that only true sports fans can achieve. I had to get away.

Finally, at half time, I was able to get away and begin my mission. Unfortunately, I discovered that Odin, disgusted that his team was losing, had left early. No one could tell me where he went.

I left the stadium and began a quest for a place to stay for the evening. I figured I'd start with Odin's Palace.

Accommodation in Asgard

Asgard has a wide variety of lodging, catering to all tastes and pocketbooks. Accommodations range from Freki's Flophouse to Odin's Palace; from the comfiest of down-filled beds to wet, flea-ridden straw tossed on a dirt floor; from fine champagne and the choicest of meats to lemming heads barbecued with a blow-torch. Whatever your budget, Asgard can accommodate you.

If you do intend to check out the high end, make sure you have plenty of cash. I was foolish enough to walk into Odin's Palace without a suitcase full of gemstones.

As soon as I strolled in the door, a bouncer intercepted me. Impeccably dressed in a dove-gray morning coat with a two-handed sword slung over his back, he raised an eyebrow and said, "Can I help you? Did you perhaps want the tradesfolk's entrance at the rear?"

Miffed, I flashed my Aesir Gold Card at him and said, "I was intending to check this place out, and, if I liked it, was considering spending a few nights here."

Just as I finished speaking, an Aesir with a Valkyrie on his arm strode into the lobby. He reached into his jacket pocket and flipped something shiny at the doorkeeper. "Here you are, Sven. Kindly book my usual room, table, and chorus-line for me like a good boy. Oh, and keep the change."

The doorkeeper deftly caught the shiny object, and I managed to

catch a glimpse of it. It was an Aesir Diamond Studded Platinum Card, and it was indeed studded with real diamonds. I could tell at that moment that Sven was unimpressed with my mere Gold Card.

Sven bowed low for a moment, then returned his attention to me. I hastily put my card away. He smiled. "You just vant to look around for a moment? I don't have a problem vith that. Come right this vay, sir." With a wave of his hand, he indicated a corridor to our left.

I walked ahead of him, thinking that perhaps he wasn't such a bad guy after all, looking for a way to ditch him and then check to see if Odin had arrived… suddenly, the floor dropped out from under me. Without even time to scream, I dropped onto a pile of fetid rags and kitchen leavings. Looking up from where I had come to a sudden, sitting halt, I saw Sven's face outlined in the trap door above me. He shouted down, "Und stay out!" With that, he slammed the trap door shut.

What I'm going to tell you about Asgard's better accommodations comes second hand. I got most of my information from a well-off Giant who was slumming in a seedy bar. I personally didn't get any further than the lobby of the Breidablik Tower either, but the bouncer there was kind enough to simply throw me out the front door rather than into a pile of garbage.

Odin's Palace

Odin's Palace is the finest hotel in Asgard; it's the only one rated 6 Hammers. It is built in the style of an enormous atrium with the interior balconies overlooking an indoor park which contains a small spring and a stream filled with fish. An enormous tree, Yggdrasil, rises the full height of the hotel, filtering light from the skylight above. Odin himself lives in the penthouse, and can sometimes be seen paddling around in the glass-enclosed pancreas-shaped pool on the roof.

The typical guest room is large enough to get lost in. Everything about them is huge. Unfortunately, this includes tackiness. The floors are covered with rich, red plush carpeting. So are the walls and ceilings. Oversized lava lamps and velour black-light pictures of Giantish heroes cover the walls and provide atmosphere. The bathroom taps are not gold-plated — they are solid gold. The beds vibrate at the flick of a switch. The tubs are heart-shaped and the same color as the carpets. All the chairs have built-in massage action.

Dwarvish servants are at everyone's beck and call, 24 hours a day. Room service will bring your food, wash your clothes, clean your toenails, and brush your teeth for you — all you have to do is ask. Forgot your favorite servant at home? No problem. You can beat up one of the hotel staff instead. Need a few escorts for a night out on the town? Easy as pie. The hotel will provide you with the biggest, meanest, fastest, and best dressed, bouncers in town.



The Aesir who run these hotels seem to have taken their cue from the Pixie way of life: anything worth doing is worth overdoing. However, excess is what the customers want, and excess is what they get. Including the size of the bill. If the bill isn't large enough to bankrupt a small country, the customers will believe they didn't get the 'best'.

The Budget Hotels

As impressive and showy as the top end hotels are, Asgard couldn't survive on the high-rollers alone. There just aren't enough of them. The backbone of the casinos and service industry in Asgard is the middle class. (That's an interesting term to use — but I'm not sure what else to say. Is there anything that can be considered a middle class on this post-modern, anarchic, medieval, chaotic, pseudo-fascist, pre-industrial planet? Let's just call them the people who are richer than the poor, but poorer than the rich, and leave it at that.)

They come in droves to spend money and have a good time. The Aesir who run Asgard don't particularly care if their customers have a good time, but it sunk in some time ago that if visitors to the city don't have a good time, they stop coming, and therefore stop spending money. Thus, the casino, hotel, and restaurant owners do their best to make sure you have a good time, and do their best to make sure you pay for every bit of it. There's a saying in Asgard: "Everything's free in Asgard, for a small fee."

At first glance, or if it's dark out, you've had a bit too much to drink, and someone's dropped a bag over your head, you may mistake one of the middle-class hotels for one of the upper-crust ones. Even the names are similar: the two most popular mid-class hotels are Geezer's Palace and The Bland Tower.

The Gungnir Grand puts fresh flowers in your room — The Bland puts a single bouquet of plastic daisies on your rickety dresser. (This has been known to cause severe stomach pains in Giant guests who can't tell the difference, but seems to make no difference to hungry Ogres.)

The Grand has its walls and ceilings covered in carpet — The Bland has fuzzy wallpaper. The Grand has hot tubs and a sauna — The Bland sits beside the river and allows you to hang around the kitchen stove. The Grand has massive lava lamps — The Bland has soap bubbles in colored water. And so on.

Since I couldn't even walk into the high class establishments, let alone afford them, I stayed a couple of nights at Geezer's Palace. The place is well named. I was probably the only guest under the age of 127. Even the staff is getting on in years. I soon learned that if I wanted room service to deliver my breakfast before noon, I had to order it the night before, and not to order anything hot.

When I went to turn in after a night of carousing, I found the maid changing my sheets. When I asked her why they changed the sheets at 2 in the morning, she informed me that they started at 9 am. I was foolish enough to let the bellboy carry my bags up to my room. I had to do without fresh clothes for two days.

I only ate once in the dining room. By that time, I learned to take a table near the kitchen to improve my chances of getting a hot meat. I order steak, baked potatoes, and peas. What I received was a plate with three piles of mush. "Waiter!" I called, "I ordered steak, potatoes, and peas, not whatever this is."

After what seemed a lifetime, the waiter shuffled over to my table. "But sir, that is what you ordered. The white colored mush is the potatoes, the green colored mush is the peas, and the dark colored mush is your steak. Our typical clientele is not quite up to chewing, as such."

Since I don't particularly like steak I can suck through a straw, I had the rest of my meals elsewhere.

When I left, my itemized bill was six pages long. Every possible charge was there:

Gratuity, Bell Boy	*6 grupniks*
Gratuity, Maid	*5 grupniks*
Swimming in River	*2 dinero*
Sitting by Kitchen Stove	*4 simoleons*
Asking Waiter About Food	*1 grupnik*
Tiny Umbrella in Fancy Drink	*3 dinero*
Wear and Tear on Carpets	*4 dinero*
Air Breathed in Hotel	*2 simoleons*

and so on….

It was light-years cheaper than the upper-crust places, but it still strained my wallet.

The Dives

The no-star establishments are many, but not particularly varied. Freki's Flophouse is typical of the genre. Freki's is a large, ramshackle building in the low-rent district of town. The bottom floor is one huge room with an open kitchen and large eating and party area. 'Kitchen' is too polite a word. 'Greasy open fire with hacked up beasts and huge iron pots hanging over it' is a far better term. The combination of the open fire and the straw scattered about the floor means that one of these places burns down every week (incidentally providing the neighborhood with free entertainment.)

Things are informal at Freki's. You walk in, toss a few coins to the attendant, grab a hunk of meet and a bowl of unidentifiable 'stew' from a pot, find a place to sit, and get to know your fellow travelers.

The people who hang around Freki's are a varied bunch. Some enter Asgard poor, and leave flat broke. Others enter rich, and leave flat broke. A very, very few enter poor and leave rich. This faint possibility of instant wealth draws people from all over the planet to Asgard.

No-one enters Asgard flat broke. If you can't even afford the Rainbow Toll Bridge, you don't get in. Asgard does have a method of dealing with poor people, however. The city gives them a one-way ticket to the next town.

Not having been as lucky at the gaming tables as I had wished, I spent a few nights at Freki's. The entertainment isn't up to the level of Balder's Buffet, but it does have a certain charm. One night, I watched Gorath the Gargantuan and six Dwarves tag-team wrestle an Ogre, a Rakshasa, and an insurance salesman. I had my money on Gorath, but when the salesman sidelined the Dwarves by getting them into a debate about group whole life insurance, I thought it was over. Luckily for me (but not for the participants), the Rakshasa became a little peckish, and tried to eat his partner the Ogre. The Ogre naturally responded by trying to eat the Rakshasa. The crowd went wild watching those two try to stuff each others' body parts down their throats. When it was all over, there was surprisingly little left of either the Ogre or the Rakshasa. Gorath, who had been watching bemusedly from the sidelines for most of this time, put an end to the Dwarves' debate by drop kicking the insurance salesman into the next block. I pocketed over 500 dinero (though I'm just not sure how much that is in grupniks).

Rumor had it that Gorath was going to face Ron the Vaguely Competent in a return Iron Cage Death Match the next night, but I missed it.

Sleeping arrangements at places like Freki's are simple. Find an open space on a floor in one of the upstairs rooms, put your valuables under your head for a pillow, then spend the entire night wide awake listening to screams and gurgles, the sounds of knives being sharpened, and the digestive processes of your neighbor. If you are of a nervous disposition, can't go six days without sleep, or aren't armed to the teeth, I'd advise you to avoid the lower-class establishments entirely.

The Idavol – Asgard's Management Center

The next morning, I determined to arrange an appointment with Asgard's ruler. I determined that I might as well give the formal channels a chance and headed over to the Idavol, the seat of Asgard government. I walked up the great stone steps, past the massive golden dragons cast in positions of aggressive alertness, and toward the row of massive oak doors. I reached for a door and… WHAM!

I was rudely awakened from a deep sleep by an Aesir bouncer in an official government-like uniform. Poking me none-too-gently with the end of his broadsword, he said "Hey, you can't sleep on der steps like dis! I'm giving you a ticket, und if you don't pay der fine by sundown, ve are going to be tossing you over der walls und into der river."

I tenderly touched the bump on forehead and got up while trying to explain to the lout that I had been the victim of an accident with a door. Of course it was useless. It just made him testy. I took the ticket.

By now my cash reserves were running low so I began to wonder how I would get the money to pay the fine. I certainly didn't want to leave Asgard just yet.

I decided my first consideration was still to book an audience with Odin; hopefully while inside the government building, I would find a nice reasonable bureaucrat who would write off the ticket. Hopefully.

The Idavol building is one of the first erected in Asgard, and although it has undergone a few renovations over the years, it essentially looks like an ornate multileveled longhouse on steroids.

The walls said to be made of solid gold, and the roof tiled in silver. This is an exaggeration. No, a better term would be 'lie'. The

walls are covered in gold foil, and the roof in a silvery substance, most likely tinfoil. The walls at ground level have been picked almost bare by people trying to discover whether it really is solid gold, and get an extra stake for the betting tables.

Idavol is the nerve center of Asgard. This is where the decisions are made, the orders given, and where the first misinterpretations of those orders take place. Like most other bureaucratic centers, Idavol is full of gray, faceless bureaucrats, who spend their lives shuffling paper from the in-box to the out-box, and saying things like, "That's not my department," or "I can't possibly authorize that without the proper signature and stamp."

There are two key differences. Because Idavol is staffed with Giants, the bureaucracy is even more corrupt and unresponsive than usual, and since every bureaucrat wears a broadsword to work expediting a problem situation often means cutting through red tape at the source; this tends to make for lively staff meetings and rapid promotion through the ranks.

Getting caught up in this bureaucratic morass can be a nightmare. I have met people who have been wandering the halls of Idavol trying to obtain the proper signatures, stamps, and approvals for years. They all have a lost, haunted, and somewhat vacant stare.

On the other hand, I trained at Space Academy on Earth. There's no better education anywhere in the universe for dealing with the machinery of authority.

A Giant Bureaucracy

I entered the Idavol, and asked an official looking fellow where I could book an appointment to see his glorious ruler. Mistake. He saw my ticket and directed me to the 'Fines and Tickets Department'. Fine, I thought, one thing at a time. As soon as he was out of sight, I wandered into the 'Streets, Lanes, and Byways Department'. I strode up to the first desk I saw, and with a look of complete disdain on my face, and put it down in front of the gray-haired Giant sitting there.

"Vas is dis?" she said. "Dis is a sleeping in der street ticket. You must pay dis in der Fines ud Tickets Department."

"They sent me down here." I lied. "Something about it being invalid without the proper 'Streets, Lanes and Byways' counterstamp."

"Ah, I see. Before I counterstamp this, I need to know if you are a native of Asgard?"

"No." I replied.

"Ah, then you must go to der 'Department of External Affairs und Other People Like That' first." Satisfied with herself for avoiding having to stamp yet another piece of paper, she leaned back in her chair with a triumphal smile.

"Ah," I said, "but before I do that, I'll need an initial signature and stamp from you regarding the situation."

"Oh, ja." she looked puzzled for a moment. "Just vhat category do I put this under?"

Stroking my chin as though I was deep in thought, I replied, "I believe it comes under the heading, 'Permission for Foreigner to Sleep in the Streets'. This ticket refers to the lack of such permission, but because I'm a foreigner, the 'External Affairs' people have to put the 'denied' stamp on it."

"Good. As long as dey take der responsibility." With that, she wrote 'Permission for Foreigner to Sleep in the Street' on a sheet of 'Streets, Lamps, and Byways Department' stationery, and signed and stamped it. With lordly disdain (bureaucrats get suspicious when you thank them for something) I left and headed for the 'Department of External Affairs and Other Such People'. Within a few minutes I had the word 'Granted', along with the proper counter stamps and signatures on my precious piece of paper. There was only one thing left to do.

I strode up to the pimply, teenage Giant pushing a mail cart down the hall. "Here Sven," I said gruffly, pushing my ticket into his hands, "this goes to the 'Janitorial Pensions and Sewer Workers Recruitment Department'. Make sure it gets there this afternoon!" With that, I strode away.

Clutching the ticket, the Giant turned and in a geeky voice said, "Hey, how did you know my name vas Sven?"

I only shook my head and muttered under my breath, "Isn't everyones' name Sven?"

From that day on, whether found sleeping in the streets or knocked senseless by some random act of violence, after one look at my properly signed, stamped, and counter signed paper on 'Streets, Lamps, and Byways Department' stationery, the bouncers no longer threatened me with expulsion from Asgard.

An Od Looking Fellow

As I rounded a corner on my way back to the appointments area, I saw someone who could not be anyone other than the ruler of Asgard himself, walking briskly out of the building with the brim of a fedora pulled low, and the lapels of a trench coat pulled up.

I ran out after him and called "Wait, your liege!"

He hesitated long enough for me to catch up and quickly turned his massive frame and looked down to me, speaking in a rather disappointed and whispered voice, "Dammit all to Niflheim! How in Hel's name could you tell it vas me — I'm supposed to be in disguise as Mr. Od!"

I looked at the muscled figure before me, dressed like a cross between an accountant and a detective; his snow white beard flowing down over the trench coat… only a bit odd. "Uh, it must have been the eye patch, sir, ah… your highness."

I made the most of my lucky encounter and explained that I had a plan to help bring even more people to Asgard, thus increasing his profits. He thought for a moment, sizing me up, then suggested we retire to his private apartments where I could explain my proposal to both he and Loki, his vice-president, in charge of marketing. I could have danced.

The Opportunity of a Lifetime

When we got to the penthouse I had to concentrate very hard not to laugh at the decor, and the fashions on the people occupying the rooms; it seems that Thor, Odin's playboy son had thrown another of his famous impromptu parties. Bouncers in tuxedo loincloths served drinks and snacks on ornate gilded trays, 'beautiful people' stood chatting about their real estate properties and the 'problem of the idle poor', while several Opera stars and other 'personalities' lounged around the pool.

Odin made his way through the room, and catching Loki's eye, invited us both into a private office with soundproof walls. I began my pitch.

They listened intently until I had finished completely. Then they asked questions for about 30 minutes. I explained how they could produce brochures, assemble various ad campaigns, conduct marketing surveys to target new services. Drinks were brought in. We ate dinner. Their interest did not waver.

Finally, I outlined my terms, "…and for a fee of 10% of the net profits gleaned from my efforts, you can retain my continued marketing services for these and future projects…."

"But why would we want to pay you 10%?" interrupted Loki. "I handle the marketing for Asgard."

"Well… for my ongoing consulting assistance," I offered.

"But you've outlined everything we need to do very effectively," pointed out Loki, rather effectively.

I was stunned. I had just outlined myself out of 10% of the hottest business concern on the planet. "But, you'll need someone to think up the ideas, and to make sure those ideas are implemented correctly," I pleaded.

"Don't you worry, Mr. Murphy. We'll do fine," interrupted Odin. "Now, you've been very nice to have explained all these things to us, and just to show how grateful we are, why don't you accept this Aesir Diamond Studded Platinum Card, compliments of the house, and call us even."

I looked at the card he held out before me. I thought of the wealth that like an idiot I had just talked myself out of. I took the card, and quietly thanked my benefactors for their generosity.

"Excellent. Now Mr. Murphy, if you don't mind, we have a party to attend. Please use the *rear* stairwell. And enjoy your stay in Asgard."

Typical Aesir Giant Clan Names (roll 1d100)

Number Rolled	Male Names	Female Names	Last Names
1 – 3	Alrik	Arla	al Dente
4 – 6	Arni	Astrid	Antipasto
7 – 9	Audun	Aud	Besciamella
10 – 12	Björn	Beda	Brodo
13 – 15	Bodil	Birgitta	Cannelloni
16 – 18	Borg	Britta	Capellini
19 – 21	Brede	Dagny	Carbonara
22 – 24	Dag	Disa	Carducci
25 – 27	Dolfe	Elsa	Conchigliette
28 – 30	Dreng	Erika	Divanetto
31 – 33	Egen	Gleda	Fettuccine
34 – 36	Erik	Gressa	Fontina
37 – 39	Faxon	Greta	Frittata
40 – 42	Goran	Gunda	Gazpacho
43 – 45	Hakon	Helga	Gorgonzola
46 – 48	Hilmar	Helli	Lasagna
49 – 51	Inger	Hertha	Linguine
52 – 54	Jorgen	Ilka	Macaroni
55 – 57	Jukka	Ingrid	Manicotti
58 – 60	Knud	Ivanka	Mozzarella
61 – 63	Kosti	Jonina	Oregano
64 – 66	Lars	Judit	Panzerotti
67 – 69	Leif	Karin	Pastitsio
70 – 72	Lukas	Katrina	Penne
73 – 75	Nils	Kelda	Pesto
76 – 78	Olaf	Kirsten	Pistachio
79 – 81	Rikard	Kolina	Porcine
82 – 84	Sigvard	Olga	Prosciutto
85 – 87	Sven	Signe	Ricotta
88 – 90	Thorvald	Sigrid	Rigatoni
91 – 93	Vann	Vilma	Tortellini
94 – 96	Zakris	Wera	Vongole
97 – 100	Ziven	Zora	Zucchini

Sean Murphy

Quote: "Dammit, not again…."
Vocation: Intergalactic Property Developer & Opportunist
Race/Gender: Human, Male
Intelligence: 15 Bright
Willpower: 16 Willful
Charisma: 17 Charming
Mystic: 8 Undiscerning
Strength: 14 Stalwart
Dexterity: 17 Nimble
Fitness: 15 Sturdy
Appearance: 17 Handsome
Health Points: 15
Height: 5'8" [1.7 m]
Weight: 140 lbs [64 kg]
Age: 38
Traits: Gullible, Obsessive, Slightly Uneasy in the Presence of Authority, Wary of Long-Term Commitments.

Skills:

Sprint	85%	Masterful
Fix Devices	50%	Proficient
Pilot Space-Ship	70%	Expert
Program Computer	40%	Capable
Project Confidence	75%	Expert

Blorg

Quote: "D'aaah, sure… I kill him for you…."
Vocation: Mercenary, Deranged Killer
Race/Gender: Ogre, Male
Intelligence: 4 Thick
Willpower: 5 Susceptible
Charisma: 5 Nauseating
Mystic: 1 Oblivious
Strength: 31 Formidable
Dexterity: 16 Dextrous
Fitness: 26 Robust
Appearance: 4 Repulsive
Health Points: 30
Height: 11'3" [3.4 m]
Weight: 983 lbs [446 kg]
Age: 26
Traits: Loves Small Furry Animals, Fear of Fish, Easily Confused, Ambition: Wants to Establish a Petting Zoo.

Skills:

Club	85%	Masterful
Calm Animals	90%	Paramount
Throw Rocks	60%	Adept
Unarmed Combat	70%	Expert

The Story Behind Asgard
(or Odin Cooks the Books)

The Aesir Giant Clan

The most spectacular Giant settlement was founded by the Aesir Clan. Its name is **Asgard.** Asgard is located on a large island in the middle of the wide and never freezing River Ifing. The river winds through the vast Idawold plain in the northern arctic waste of Niflheim.

The origins of the Aesir are shrouded in mystery. Local Dwarvish elders claim that one day a Giant named Odin and several wagons of family and hangers-on emerged from out of the south and began spreading money around. The Aesir, on the other hand, claim that their ancestors were the creators of the world, and that they are invincible. Everyone else thinks that is just plain *silly* — at least the creation part.



Asgard was originally a difficult place to reach. Some think this was part of Odin's plan, since rumor had it the Aesir left Muspellheim in a hurry when Odin cooked the books and ripped off Surtr, boss of the Flame Giants.

Asgard originally consisted of a simple stockade, dirt road, and bingo hall used to generate liquid capital from the locals. This venture proved such a success that it attracted other investors and soon buildings were going up everywhere. Odin claims to have experienced a *vision* in which he was informed: "If you build it... they will come."

As more money flowed in, local Dwarves were hired to improve the facilities and infrastructure. Additional monies were raised for expansion by raiding the surrounding settlements and delivering the booty to the Dwarves, who in turn, fashioned the Aesir weapons, and sent them off for more goodies.

One of the first buildings completed was the **Idavol,** the High Thingstead (council chamber) of the Aesir. The Aesir boast that its walls are *solid gold,* and its roof is tiled in silver. In Dwarvish circles it is well known that the Aesir could only afford wood and stone, and had it covered with silver and gold *foil,* a decorating request which Invalde, the Dwarvish contractor, was heard to describe as 'tacky'. Within Idavol, twelve golden (foil) thrones were constructed for Odin, his sons, and the other favored Aesir.

A great dark stone wall was erected on the perimeter of the island, permitting only one safe entry to Asgard via Odin's Gate. An autobahn and Rainbow (toll) Bridge brings tourists to the site. Vingolf, a giant casino and pleasure palace (voted 'Tackiest Building' by the Elvish Architectural Association three centuries in a row), attracts visitors from as far away as Eastern Akimbo. Parks and Games Gardens pull in cash, along with five-star hotels and tourist shops. The construction of new facilities continues.

Once other races heard about this clan of ambitious consumers, they sent envoys to this prosperous realm with offers for interior decorating, fashion designs, night club acts, and decent food. Since to even a Giant's intellect it is plain that you can't get rich preying on your suppliers and customers, a new strategy was needed. Loki, Odin's oath-brother and head of marketing, figured out a way the Aesir could easily distinguish friend from foe: the **Aesir Gold Card (AGC)**. Now everyone who patronizes Asgard is issued an AGC. Should someone happen to be raided by an Aesir warband, they simply flash their AGC card and the berserkers will pass them by, going on to pillage the home of someone who failed to have the foresight to vacation in Asgard. As Loki says: "Don't get raided with it; get caught dead without it."

The Average Giant

Quote:	"Just fer dat, I'ma goin' ta hafta, beat yer head in. Nothin' personal."	
Vocations:	Lemming Herder, Casino Worker, Mercenary, Chariot Repairer, Kegball Player.	
Intelligence:	7	Stupid
Willpower:	10	Indecisive
Charisma:	6	Obnoxious
Mystic:	4	Incognizant
Strength:	28	Powerful
Dexterity:	9	Awkward
Fitness:	36	Vigorous
Appearance:	8	Homely
Health Points:	40	
Height:	14' [4.3 m]	
Weight:	950 lbs [431 kg]	
Traits:	Power Hungry, Just Plain Hungry, Argumentative, Pushy, Loud, Demanding, Violent, Attracted to Kitsch, Macho Posturing.	

Player Name:

Character Name:

Race (or Species) & Gender (as applicable):

Height: **Weight:** **Age:**

Murphy's World™
Where Things Can Always Get Worse...™

Character Sheet

Character Portrait

Peregrine
40 Seymour Avenue, Toronto
Ontario M4J 3Y4 Canada
Email: peregrine@peregrine-net.com
Check Out Our Web Site!
www.peregrine-net.com

Action Initiative (AI): (Willpower [WIL] + Dexterity [DEX])	**Action Points (AP) Stored:**	Current Total	Earned Today	Spent Today

Health Points (HP) Totals:	Normal Total	Current (Temp. Reduced) Total	Current (Temp. Enhanced) Total

Character Attributes (Stats)

Character Attribute Name	Stat Value	(Temporarily Reduced)	BAV (%)	(Temporarily Reduced)	Attribute Notes
Intelligence: (INT)					
Willpower: (WIL)					
Charisma: (CHA)					
Mystic: (MYS)					
Strength: (STR)					
Dexterity: (DEX)					
Fitness: (FIT)					
Appearance: (APP)					

Character Traits:

Positive Traits & Abilities (Including Supernatural Powers):

Negative Traits & Disabilities (Including Neuroses):

Wound & Damage Notes:

Temporary Wound Effects (Including Location):

Permanent Wound Effects (Including Location):

Possessions & Other Notes

Attribute/BAV Table

Attribute (Stat) Value	Base Action Value (BAV)
1	5 %
2	10 %
3	15 %
4	18 %
5	20 %
6	22 %
7	24 %
8	26 %
9	28 %
10	30 %
11	32 %
12	34 %
13	36 %
14	38 %
15	40 %
16	42 %
17	44 %
18	46 %
19	48 %
20	50 %
21 – 22	52 %
23 – 24	54 %
25 – 26	56 %
27 – 28	58 %
29 – 30	60 %
31 – 32	62 %
33 – 34	64 %
35 – 36	66 %
37 – 38	68 %
39 – 40	70 %
41 – 42	72 %
43 – 44	74 %
45 – 46	76 %
47 – 48	78 %
49 – 50	80 %
51 – 54	82 %
55 – 59	84 %
60 – 64	86 %
65 – 69	88 %
70 – 74	90 %
75 – 79	92 %
80 – 84	94 %
85 – 89	96 %
90 – 94	98 %
≥ 95	100 %

Skills (Non-Combat)

Skill Name	BAV (%)	Temp. Penalty	Temp. Bonus	Skill Notes