

# DEATH BY NEXUS

A Level 0 Tournament Adventure by the DCCabal

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## INTRODUCTION



Death by Nexus is a DCC RPG Tournament adventure based on the character funnel format. This adventure is designed for 9 players, with each player having only 1 level-0 PC. As each PC dies, the controlling player taps out of the game, and a new player rotates into the game with a brand new PC. The tournament adventure is scored by ranking individual PCs by largest number of encounters survived. Players eliminated from play may re-enter the game with a new PC when another seat opens up at the table.

The tournament will be played for a pre-designated amount of time. Players are scored in the tournament as follows: For each encounter survived (an encounter being defined as any time in which initiative is rolled to begin a combat), stamp the player's character sheet once with the "I Survived!" stamp. When a PC dies, likewise stamp that player's character sheet with the "Dead" stamp. Remind players to hang onto their character sheets for later event scoring. At the end of the event, the players with character sheets that show the most stamps for encounters survived will be ranked, and the top three numerical survival totals will be awarded 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place respectively. Any ties will be settled by a d20 dice-off between the tying players.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND



The Nexus of the Planes is the still-point between all the varied planes of reality. Here live The Prime Ones — those that are and have always been, that exist above and beyond the gods. Embodying the Multiverse, in all its inconceivable infinities, The Prime Ones regard the concepts of Law, Neutrality, and Chaos as quaint ideological curiosities no more worthy of serious thought or debate than those of existence versus non-existence. Still, once in every  $10^9$  years, even the eternally laconic Prime Ones consider the alignments of gods, demons, and even mortals as worthy of casual examination, and perhaps their sporting entertainment.

Deciding that their multi-planar wagers are most fairly settled by a contest not of the mightiest representatives of these concepts, but by the lowliest, The Prime Ones have selected level-0 representatives from each of the three alignments and brought them to the Nexus of the Planes in order to pit them against each other in bouts of gladiatorial combat. In a Hyper-Arena especially reduced to the first three dimensions for the comfort of the combatants, each side is pitted against the others in six rounds of gradually escalating matches.

Multi-dimensional weapons and arms are supplied to all sides, and each round is fought on a separate and distinct playing field that offers certain advantages and disadvantages of movement and cover. Outside the Hyper-Arena is a planar viewing gallery (which resolves itself to the PCs' eyes as the vague impression of stadium seating in the sky) that hosts an audience of thousands of Prime Ones, along with their more familiar gods and patrons sitting in the "cheap seats."

## ADVENTURE SUMMARY



Death by Nexus accommodates 9 players at a time divided into three teams, with each team consisting of one of the three alignments. Each team is overseen by a god of that alignment, who is responsible for doling out weapons and magic items to be used, as well as sending in new level-0 player characters when a PC on his team is killed.

Each round of the 6-round tournament is played on a different specially-constructed arena field, with its own set of terrain features, weapons, and magic items. Unless otherwise specified, a tournament round only ends when all three PCs on the same team die within the same melee round, defeating that team. When this happens, the PCs on the other two teams (who lived through that combat round) are declared winners of that tournament round and receive "I Survived!" stamps on their character sheets.

Otherwise, PCs that die during any given tournament round are merely replaced by new player characters as a new player taps into the tournament.

## Tournament Team Coaches

Law	Yddgrrl, The World Root
Neutrality	Ithaa, Prince of Elemental Wind
Chaos	Obitu-Que, Lord of the Five

(Information on these patrons can be found in the DCC RPG core rulebook, pages 354-356.)

## STARTING THE ADVENTURE

*As you are going about your mundane lives as peasants in your local village, you feel something within you shift and change. Looking up from the ditch you are digging, the plowshare you are pulling, or the caldron of gruel you are stirring, you feel a strange warmth begin at your chest, where the crude talisman of the god you worship is suspended on a hemp twine necklace. The warmth quickly blossoms into a searing heat, as you reflexively clasp the phylactery tied about your neck. The man-shaped tree root that is your symbol of Yddgrrl, the small pouch of desert sand said to contain a gust of Ithaa's breath, the tiny finger bone of a child sacrificed in flames to the Lord of the Five, Obitu-Que – all these things glow white hot, and in a flash you are not where you were.*

*You appear alongside many others in what at first appears to be a blinding maelstrom of twisted colors and light. You feel the inside of your head begin to overheat with the threat of bursting into flames, when the sights before you begin to resolve themselves into less maddening shapes. You see a flat and nearly infinite plane stretched out before you. Standing nearby are the deities that you worship, gigantic in all their majesty and glory. An immeasurable distance further still, you see a ring of shining metal galleries filled with hundreds of what you imagine must be your lords' fellow godlings and deities, all apparently quite animated and interested in the proceedings that are about to take place. And towering into the sky above them are... The Prime Ones. You do not understand how this name came suddenly to your mind. You are certain you did not know this moments ago, yet the memory of it seems to have been with you always.*

*"Welcome to the Nexus of the Planes!" a voice booms from within your mind, seeming to come from everywhere at once. "Here we will conduct games to determine which of your petty gods' so-called alignments is the superior universal philosophy. We do you great honor by bringing you here. Your linear existences will come to their natural conclusion here, but you may yet participate in matters that decide the fates of dimensions in the multiverse beyond your ken. Let the games begin!"*

## ICE, WIND, AND FIRE

**Area 1-1 – Ice, Wind and Fire:** *In a burst of blue-white light you now find yourself in an arena composed of two drastically different environments. On one side, there is a field of jagged, black volcanic rock cut through by streams of molten lava and twisting vortexes of fire. On the other side, torrents of ice pellets and snow blow down upon a frozen glacial plain pitted by ice rifts and ice bridges. Cut into both the ice and lava, an emerald path winds towards a low mound where three elemental creatures are engaged in a raging combat. A living column of fire pounds flames against an ice creature with crystalline limbs like a tree,*

*while a sentient tornado whirls around them both. The sounds of cracking ice, roaring flame, and howling wind peals through the chamber as the creatures strike at each other.*

*Each of your teams sees a unique set of weapons displayed in ornate racks near them, beckoning you to enter the fray and slay elemental and opposing team members alike.*

**The Hyper-Arena:** The playing area is shaped like a broad ellipse 125' long and 75' wide. The area is divided roughly in half with one end being a wasteland of basalt rock and magma vents, with the other side comprised of snow-covered granite. The PCs associated with fire (Chaos) and ice (Law) enter from opposite sides of the arena at the head of emerald-colored paths winding through their respective volcanic and ice terrain. The PCs aligned with air (Neutral) begin on a silvery cloud platform 30' above the floor over the center of the arena; the cloud is capable of supporting even non-flying creatures. A rack holding three weapons is located in each team's starting area (see map).

The emerald-colored paths meet at the center of the arena atop a low mound of basalt rock. The mound is roughly 30' in diameter. A twisting moat of lava partially circles the mound on the fire side. The molten red lava pours into a bottomless ice crevasse circling the ice side of the mound. Crossing either moat without aid of the emerald path requires a DC 12 Agility check to avoid a fiery death or plunging into the icy crevasse.

The environmental effects are uncomfortable but bearable at the center of the arena. In all other places, unless protected by magical resistance (offered by the elemental weapons), leaving the starting area or the emerald path requires the characters to make a DC 10 Fort Save or take 1d3 hit points of damage.

**The Weapons:** The weapons in the racks are magical in nature, but their enchantment is solely powered by the corresponding elemental type. As the battling elementals weaken, so do their associated weapons. Start tracking combat rounds when the first weapon is plucked by a PC from the rack. For every round after the first, the battling elementals will begin damaging each other for 5 hit points per round. When an elemental reaches 20 hit points or lower, their corresponding weapons lose their +1 attack bonus. At 10 hit points or lower, their corresponding weapon loses its resistance and glide special ability (if applicable). When an elemental is killed, its associated weapons lose any remaining powers and become non-magical.

Note that if the PCs begin to damage the elementals, these effects may be accelerated.

### Fire Weapons (Chaos)

**Finger of Fire** (javelin +1): melee (1d6+1) ranged (1d6+1); SP resist heat (up to 15 points per round); *Fiery Ray*: once per round shoot a narrow jet of fire for 1d4 damage (60' range).

**Srinka's Searing Brand** (red hot poker +1): melee (1d8+1); SP resist heat (up to 15 points per round); *Searing Heat*: successful hit inflicts +1d4 melee damage.

**Brimstone Cleaver** (molten battle axe +1): melee (1d10+1); SP resist heat (up to 15 points per round); *Flaming Strike*: on a critical hit, roll 1d14 on Crit Table III (DCC RPG rulebook, p. 84).

### Ice Weapons (Law)

**The Ice Fang** (ice pick +1): melee (1d8+1); SP resist cold (up to 15 points per round); *Frostburn*: successful hit causes +1d4 melee damage.

**Frozen Shard** (spear +1): melee (1d8+1); SP resist cold (up to 15 points per round); *Freezing Ray*: once per round shoot a ray of ice for 1d4 damage (60' range).

**Icy Death** (polearm +1): melee (1d10+1); SP resist cold (up to 15 points per round); *Chilling Strike*: on a critical hit, roll 1d12 on Crit Table IV (DCC RPG rulebook, p. 85).

### Air Weapons (Neutral)

**Byzons's Breath** (bow with 12 miasma arrows +1): ranged (1d6+1, range 60' ); SP glide (use air current to glide up to 30' vertically, move 60' per round); *Sonic Shock*: successful hit causes +1d4 damage.

**Cynactra's Storm** (lightning staff +1): melee (1d8+1); SP glide (use air current to glide up to 30' vertically, move 60' per round); *Sonic Blast*: on a successful hit, target must make DC 10 Fort save or take -1 penalty on attack rolls.

**Cloud Burst** (cloud mace +1): melee (1d6+1); SP glide (use air current to glide up to 10' vertically, move 60' per round); *Sonic Boom*: critical hit range expanded to 17-20, roll 1d8 on Crit Table II (DCC RPG rulebook, p. 83).

**The Elementals**: The elementals battle at the center of the arena where the fire, ice, and air converge, and will continue to battle and weaken each other if left unmolested (note the effects of this on elemental weapons above). If an elemental is attacked by the PCs, roll on the table below to determine its reaction.

**Table 1-1: Elemental Reactions**

Roll 1d5 Reaction to Attack

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | <b>Elemental goes berserk!</b> The elemental gains a one-time triple attack and attacks the three nearest PCs simultaneously.                                    |
| 2 | <b>Elemental takes a swing at you!</b> The elemental attacks the PC that attacked it first.  |
| 3 | <b>Elemental is enraged!</b> The elemental attacks whichever PC attacked it last.  |
| 4 | <b>Elemental ignores your puny attack!</b> The elemental continues to attack another elemental. Roll 1d3 (reroll if result is self): (1) Ice; (2) Air; (3) Fire. |
| 5 | <b>Elemental Fury!</b> The elemental gains a one-time double attack and attacks the other two elementals simultaneously.   |

**Elemental, Ice**: Init +6; Atk freezing touch +10 melee (2d6) or ice bolt +8 missile fire (2d6, range 40'); AC 16; HD 8d8; hp 30; MV 40'; Act 1d20; SP freezing touch, vulnerable to fire and heat, elemental traits; SV Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +8; AL N.

**Elemental, Air**: Init +8; Atk slam +8 melee (2d6) or hurled object +8 missile fire (1d6, range 100'); AC 16; HD 8d8; hp 30; MV fly 50'; Act 1d20; SP cyclone, pick up opponent, elemental traits; SV Fort +6, Ref +10, Will +6; AL N.

**Elemental, Fire**: Init +6; Atk burning touch +12 melee (3d6) or flaming bolt +8 missile fire (2d6, range 40'); AC 18; HD 8d8; hp 30; MV 40'; Act 1d20; SP burning touch, vulnerable to cold and water, elemental traits; SV Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +8; AL N.

## OVER THE EDGE OF THE WORLD

**Area 1-2 — Over the Edge of the World**: *Reality bends and warps as your last conflict ends, and your next begins. Your lips peel back from your teeth as a guttural howl of agony is wrenched from your throat. You howl in pain and madness as every fragment of your body is torn asunder, and you feel yourself falling sideways through strange dimensions until you emerge into a primordial vortex of light and sound.*

*You find your pain replaced by warm bloodlust as a new body begins to shape itself around your soul. No longer do you carry the weak, mortal, flesh you once knew. Indeed, you are re-born into an image fashioned at the capricious whims of your patron gods. You are no longer wholly mortal, but you are not yet divine.*

*As your dimensional free-fall continues, you look about and take in the surroundings and your opponents. The forces of Chaos have coalesced into bat-winged demons armed with forked glaives that drip hellfire. The unbiased, androgenous forces of Neutrality ride atop celestial mantas and lower their lances which crackle with strange energies. Accompanied by the rapturous cries of the seraphim, the angelic forces of Law float above all, feathered wings slowly beating time to the heartbeat of the universe as they draw swords that shine with divine light.*

**The Hyper-Arena**: The playing area is a 100' wide dimensional vortex which is infinitely long both above and below. The transformed PCs are all falling through the vortex at approximately the same speed so that they appear to float along side each other like sky divers (see map).

It might seem difficult, at first, to track movement in the three dimensional plane of the vortex. However, the battlefield is a sphere, one hundred feet across, within the wormhole and is best viewed as a circle. With all characters capable of flight of some fashion, simply figure that the adversarial groups are clustered along the edge roughly 100' away from each other at the beginning. This means that characters can easily move in for close combat, or stay distant and fire from range.

It should be noted that 50' up or down from the starting positions of the PCs is also the rough maximum vertical distance a character can move. If characters try to stretch the battle too high or low, they exit the protection provided them from the raw forces of creation that they are falling through. Touching the horizontal barrier of the vortex produces the same result. Such an action is instantly fatal as every particle of their newly created soul encasement explodes outward in blinding light. The outer beings have no patience for cowardice — they desire death.

Replacement characters appearing in the midst of the combat appear at their faction's starting point within the spherical battlefield, fully transformed and armed as noted below.

**Transmogrifications**: The physical changes that befall the PCs do not alter their stats or abilities, except as noted below under weapons.

**Weapons:** The weaponry provided the combatants does damage as per the normal DCC RPG rules in addition to the exceptional abilities listed. The eldritch powers of the weapons activate using a d20 spellcheck, and spellburn may be used. While weapons can, in theory, be taken from embattled opponents, the weapons (and mounts) of vanquished combatants dissolve into the void and may not be claimed by other warriors.

### **The Seraphim (Law)**

The chosen of Law are clad in flowing white robes, with long platinum-colored hair and eyes that burn with a radiant blaze. They maneuver within the void using their enormous, white-feathered wings allowing flight at a rate of 60'. They sweep down towards their foes, armed with heavenly long swords that can fire beams of divine light.

**Heavenly Sword** (long sword +1): melee (1d8+1); SP *Divine Light* (per *paralysis* spell, DCC RPG rulebook, p. 264).

### **Acherontic Servitors (Chaos)**

The Acherontic servitors of Chaos have oversized batwings, allowing them flight at a rate of 50', and all have a twisted, chimerical appearance, including ram horns, cloven hooves, horses manes, moose antlers, etc. They are armed with flaming polearms that fire jets of flame.

**Flaming Glaive** (polearm +1): melee (1d10+1); SP *Soul Flame* (per *scorching ray* spell, DCC RPG rulebook, p. 192).

### **The Arbiters (Neutral)**

The Arbiters of Neutrality are hairless, genderless, and raceless humanoids, bearing no signs of distinguishing physical appearance and providing no visual clues of a bias towards Law or Chaos. They are also the only group given a natural protection — a tough rubbery hide (+3 AC bonus). The Arbiters sit astride massive celestial mantas (with a movement of 40' and capable of a charge of 80') while armed with shimmering energy lances that fire bolts of lightning.

**Energy Lance** (lance +1): melee (1d12+1); SP *Energy Bolt* (per *lightning bolt* spell, DCC RPG rulebook, p. 222).

### **Hazards of the Vortex**

**Falling:** Characters paralyzed, knocked unconscious, or dismounted will free-fall through the void at a rate of 25' per round. If this falling action causes a PC to exceed the maximum lower height boundary of the safe zone, instant death befalls that PC (as noted above). Another PC may, of course, attempt to grab a falling comrade before this happens.

**Chaos Storm:** *The rushing of the ethereal winds grows to a howl as the cosmogonic forces build until they erupt into a storm that sweeps through the vortex arena. A shower of stardust, coupled with flashes of promethean fire, wash through the area, causing unpredictable tidal forces. Buffeted, you struggle to retain control of your orientation amidst the storm.*

Every three rounds a whirlwind of raw energies rips through the void. When this happens, all PCs must make a

DC 12 Agility check or be left tumbling out of control by the storm's passage, taking one round to recover.

**Typhonic Armageddon:** After the ever worsening Chaos Storm has raged through the vortex three times (nine rounds), on its next appearance (round 12) it escalates into a nightmarish explosion of colliding anti-matter and matter. In the spirit of a DCC RPG funnel tournament — and acting as an all-important stop-gap if the scenario drags on too long — the Typhonic Armageddon slays all combatants. The Prime Ones do not like cowards and they certainly do not like sluggards who refuse to promptly cater to their alien desires. Should this happen, read the following to the players, then award every remaining PC a "Death" stamp.

*The worsening storm grows quiet for a moment, and there is calm all around you. Even the buffeting caused by your fall through the cosmic whirlpool seems to still itself for a moment as the very multiverse holds its breath. Then, as the eye of the storm passes, the celestial winds return, raging in a hellish frenzy. Some of your foes are hurled away from the combat, exploding into a cascade of blinding light as they cross the boundaries of the battlefield; others are torn asunder by the gale as it strips away their soul's material casing. All of you die screaming.*

## **TAKE ONE FOR THE TEAM**

**Area 1-3 — Take One for the Team:** *Your team emerges onto a rocky platform, your vision obscured by a swirling pinkish-gray smoke. A slight wind builds and begins blowing the wispy fog away. You see before you two rough-carved, crystalline columns standing inside a circle of blood splashed onto the ground in a 20-foot diameter. Each of the translucent columns contains a barely discernible glowing artifact.*

*As you slowly approach to examine the devices trapped inside the column, you hear a spectral voice speak to you in your alignment tongue:*

*"It amuses the Prime Ones to observe which of your pointless and archaic mortal motivations drives what you flesh-wearers call "strategy." Will it be Cooperation? Aggression? Self Preservation? Or perhaps Greed? To help you know your true selves, we have offered each team two implements — one offensive and one defensive. And all that you need to do to unlock one of these items is to kill someone within the blood circle. That person could be foe... or ally."*

**The Hyper-Arena:** The playing area is an equilateral triangle 75' long on a side. Each corner of the triangle features two crystalline columns standing within a 20' circle of freshly splashed blood. The PCs of each alignment team appear in their respective corners of the playing area just outside the blood circle. Replacement PCs appear at these same points (see map).

**Weapons:** Each team has two items available for capture — one offensive and one defensive, as detailed below.

**The Blood Circle:** If a PC kills another character while both are standing within a blood circle, the PC striking the killing blow will hear the same spectral voice ask him to "choose your Implement of Motivation." Once the PC makes that choice, declaring that he desires either the offensive or de-

fensive item, the appropriate column shatters and the item immediately appears in the PC's hands. The PC then immediately undergoes major corruption. The judge may use one of the corruptions provided in the appropriate sections below, or use the Major Corruption table (DCC RPG rulebook, p. 118).

**The Implements of Motivation:** Each item has a unique ability but to optimize for gameplay all have the same mechanical benefits: offensive weapons offer +2 attack modifier, and defensive weapons provide a +2 AC bonus.

### The Implements of Law

**The Sword of Purity:** A great two-handed, golden sword which trails flames as it swings.

(Two-handed sword +2): melee (1d6); SP target must make DC 12 Agility check or catch fire for +1d6 fire damage the following round.

**The Shield of Order:** A flawless great shield made of magical translucent material which makes a deep booming note when struck.

(Shield +2 AC): SP attackers who strike wielder and miss must make DC 12 Fort save or make attacks at -2 penalty for next 1d4 rounds.

#### Major Corruption of Law:

- PC's skin color becomes a shining, reflective silver.
- PC's head and shoulders become perfectly rectilinear.

### The Implements of Chaos

**The Jaws of Silgard The Profane:** A pair of bloody jaws affixed to the end of a staff; the jaws continuously bite "zombie style."

(Staff +2): melee (1d6); SP targets hit by staff must make DC 12 Will save or uncontrollably start screaming obscenities.

**Cloak of the Ghoul:** A cloak made of desiccated human flesh.

(Cloak +2 AC): SP wearer has a one-time ability to spread the cloak with both arms (Dracula style) to turn Lawful PCs using a d16 + Personality modifier turn check (DCC RPG rulebook, p. 97).

#### Corruption of Chaos:

- PC's skin transforms into a soft, rubbery, hairless, gray substance like putty.
- A talking, demonic parasitic head forms on the chest of the PC. It constantly criticizes the PC's decisions and actions.

### The Implements of Neutrality

**Scythe of Withering:** Old age eventually claims both the Lawful and Chaotic alike. This scythe, whose handle is composed of a petrified strand of intertwined coarse gray hair, has the ability to immediately age any target struck with it.

(Scythe +2): melee (1d6); SP DC 12 Fort save or age 1d4 x 10 years, -1 hit point for every 20 years aged (the judge is also encouraged to come up with creative effects of aging such as mottled skin, teeth fall out, hair falls out in clumps, sagging flesh, etc.).

**Snakeskin Jacket:** The wearer of this jacket receives a +2 AC bonus due to its hypnotizing patterns, making the wearer difficult to target.

(Jacket +2 AC): SP wearer has a one-time ability to start crooning using the hymnal voice of the patron god L-Viz, causing all who hear his voice to swoon and bringing this PC to the top of the initiative order.

#### Corruption of Neutrality:

- The PC grows a long, pointed tail like that of a sting ray.
- The PC's skin becomes covered with unremovable sea barnacles.

## THE OCTOBER WOOD

**Area 1-4 – The October Wood:** *Your teams are assembled in a forest of skeletal black oak trees, the ground thick with the fallen leaves of countless seasons gone by. The air is crisp and cold, with the taste of oncoming winter. The iron-grey banded clouds in the sky resolve themselves into rows of seating, where patrons, gods, and other strange beings sit looking down at you. The seats seem to have a different plane of gravity, 90° to your own, so that the creatures stare straight down at you, their strange faces filling the sky from horizon to horizon. The woods are endless. Thousands of dark grey urns populate the spaces between the trees, each tilted haphazardly like long abandoned tombstones.*

**The Hyper-Arena:** The playing area is a heavily wooded forest roughly 125' square, beyond which lie only unscalable and towering cliff faces. Each team randomly appears in one of the four corners of the wooded landscape. Replacement characters will arrive in these same spots, landing in the same area of those of their alignment (see map).

Upon arrival, each team will hear their respective patrons whisper into their ears in their own alignment tongue, "*Do not break the urns unless you feel lucky – each contains a sacrifice to the Lord of Samhain, and may bring weal or woe upon whosoever frees it.*"

If used as such, the trees provide cover (-2 penalty to all ranged attacks). Thick, gnarled roots thrust up everywhere beneath the thick carpet of leaves. Anyone attempting to run or charge through the woods must succeed in a DC 10 Reflex save or fall prone while taking 1d3 damage.

**Weapons:** At each starting point lies a pile of weapons and equipment, with enough for each PC to have one of everything. The equipment heap contains three each of the following:

- Chainmail armor (+5 AC), sized for whoever picks it up
- Shield (+1 AC)
- Longbow and quiver with 12 arrows (ranged 1d6, 70/140/210)
- Long sword (melee 1d8)

Note: Donning chainmail requires 3 rounds (2 for caravan guards, mercenaries, and the like). A character cannot use both a long bow and a shield, nor can dwarves or halflings use a long bow at all.

## The Urns of the October Wood

The Urns of the October Wood can be broken automatically by a melee attack, or by a successful ranged attack against AC 16.

Melee attacks made against any other person or creature that result in a natural "1" always inadvertently break an urn. On a natural "20", in addition to any other critical hit effects, the attacker may additionally choose to have his attack shatter a nearby urn.

Whoever breaks an urn rolls 1d30, modified by Luck, and consults the table below.

Monsters summoned in this way do not act immediately unless noted in the table result below. These summoned monsters roll initiative at the beginning of the next round, and act accordingly thereafter. Summoned monsters only last 1d3 rounds. When their summoning time is up, or when they are reduced to 0 hit points, they collapse and transform into a pile of rotten leaves.

**Table 1-4: Urns of October Wood Contents**

Roll 1d30 +  
Luck mod

-2	A baleful red light surrounds the PC, rapidly consuming him until only a skeleton remains. The skeleton attacks the nearest ally immediately, and remains until itself or all its allies are vanquished (DCC RPG rulebook, p. 426).
-1	As "-2", above, but the light only causes 1d6 damage, and the PC is not transformed if she survives.
0	As result above, but the light only causes 1d3 damage.
1	<b>Rhinoceros!</b> Targets PC first, and then closest allies. Init +2; Atk gore +5 melee (1d5+3) or trample +2 melee (3d6); AC 18; HD 5d8; hp 31; MV 40'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will -2; AL N.
2	<b>Captive spell:</b> Emerikol's entropic maelstrom. Spell check +6, PC is center of target area (DCC RPG rulebook, p. 213).
3	Poisonous serpent immediately bites PC! Fort DC 15 or die; 1d3 hp damage on success.
4	<b>Black flames set PC on fire!</b> (DC 10 Reflex save avoids, otherwise 1d6 damage)
5	<b>Ghoul!</b> Targets closest creature, then stops to feed for 1d3 rounds before targeting next-closest creature. Special: Lasts 2d5 rounds, collapses into pile of tiny bones rather than leaves (DCC RPG rulebook, p. 414).
6	<b>Captive spell:</b> <i>Magic missile</i> . Spell check +3, PC is target (DCC RPG rulebook, p. 144).
7	<b>Giant vampire bat!</b> Targets PC's nearest ally (DCC RPG rulebook, p. 396).
8	<b>White ape-man!</b> Targets (1d7): (1-4) PC; (5-6) PC's nearest ally; or (7) PC's nearest foe (DCC RPG rulebook, p. 395).
9	<b>Cave octopus!</b> Targets closest creatures (DCC RPG rulebook, p. 398).
10	<b>Captive spell:</b> <i>Enlarge</i> . Spell check +0, PC is target (DCC RPG rulebook, p. 139).
11	<b>Stone giant!</b> Does nothing unless attacked; attacks those foolish enough to attack it (DCC RPG rulebook, p. 414).
12	All monsters on the field immediately turn into piles of leaves.
13	PC gains a 1d5 Deed Die for his next attack only.
14	<b>Skeleton!</b> Immediately targets and attacks PC (DCC RPG rulebook, p. 426).
15	<b>Skeleton!</b> Immediately targets closest ally of PC (or PC if no allies remain), (DCC RPG rulebook, p. 426).
16	All enemy monsters on the field immediately collapse into leaves.
17	PC that breaks urn granted is two attacks per round until PC dies or moves on to a second opponent after the first.
18	<b>Captive spell:</b> <i>Paralysis</i> . Spell check +3, PC determines targets (DCC RPG rulebook p. 264).
19	PC gains a 1d3 Deed Die for 1d6 rounds. If granted another Deed Die, this Deed Die is instead moved +1d on the dice chain.
20	<b>Hell hound!</b> Attacks PC's nearest foe (DCC RPG rulebook, p. 417).
21	An emerald light heals PC of up to 1d3 damage.
22	All enemy monsters on the field switch targets as the PC directs.
23	<b>Captive spell:</b> <i>Strength</i> . Spell check +6, PC is target (DCC RPG rulebook, p. 198).
24	PC gains a 1d3 Deed Die for the rest of this combat. If granted another Deed Die, this Deed Die is instead moved +1d on the dice chain.
25	An emerald light heals PC and PC's allies of up 1d3 damage.
26	<b>Ogre!</b> Attacks as directed by PC (DCC RPG rulebook, p. 422).
27	An emerald light heals the PC, or any character chosen by the PC, for up to 1d7 damage.
28	<b>Captive spell:</b> <i>Magic shield</i> . Spell check +6, PC is the target. Other team members may be affected if spell check is high enough (DCC RPG rulebook, p. 146).
29	<b>Captive spell:</b> <i>Magic missile</i> . Spell check +6, PC determines targets (DCC RPG rulebook, p. 144).
30	PC is surrounded by a green-gold glow that grants +1d3 additional hit points to the PC and raises AC by +1 for 1d3 rounds.
31	As "30", above, but all surviving team members gain this benefit.
32	As above, but all surviving team members gain +1d5 hp and +2 AC until the October Wood scenario is resolved.
33	The next member of the PC's team (including the PC) to be slain is instead fully restored to life with full hit points.

Spells contained in the urns go off immediately when the urn is broken. If a "1" is rolled on the spell check, the PC breaking the urn suffers the effects, regardless of the result shown in the table result.

## ANY GIVEN THORSDAY

**Area 1-5 — Any Given Thorsday:** *You have been transported to the End Times. The red skies above you rain fire, punctuated by flashes of heat lightning, as the snow-covered ground below you quakes. It's as if the entire planet is preparing to break apart. There is an unmet call to battle hanging in the very air, as you are suddenly transformed, the better to meet this ancient challenge.*

*The Lawful team have been changed into a semblance of the Aesir, as each one of you takes on the aspects of Thor, Heimdallr, and Tyr. The Neutral team are changed into the trickster god Loki and his children, the monstrous wolf Fenrir and the Midgard Serpent Jörmungandr. The Chaotic team finds themselves changed into the Jötunn — the men-devourers Surtr the fire giant, Ymir the frost giant, and Hymir the mountain giant. The rolling thunderclaps seem to be singing a Wagnerian chorus in the sky above you, as Ragnarök begins with the first blow struck...*

**The Hyper-Arena:** The playing area is divided into three zones which represent each side's starting position. The Lawful team begins outside the golden gates of Asgard, the Chaotic team begins next to the World Tree Yggdrasil in an endless wasteland of snow-covered volcanic rock, and the Neutral team begins in the middle of Bifrost (the rainbow bridge), which spans the first two areas for 120' (see map).

**Hel's Tears:** Once every 3 rounds, the sky rains liquid fire, as Loki's daughter cries for the passing of the old gods. Randomly target one PC, who must then make a DC 16 Reflex save or be struck and killed by a flaming meteor.

**Weapons:** All PCs receive weapons, attacks, and special abilities appropriate for the god into which they are transformed. All weapons and items are tied to their god, and cannot be used by other PCs. When a PC dies and a replacement PC is brought in, that PC always possesses his given weapon or item.

**Transmogrifications:** At the beginning of the scenario, all PCs are transformed into one of the Norse gods. Assign these transformations randomly by alignment. When a PC dies, his transformed role is assumed by the incoming player with a new level-0 PC (see PC deaths below). Transformed level-0 PCs temporarily lose their starting equipment, but keep their ability scores, bonuses, saving throws, hit point totals, and armor class, except as noted in the individual god descriptions.

**Goals of the Gods:** The Lawful team must defend the gates of Asgard and allow no members of the other two teams to touch the gates. The Chaotic team must likewise defend the world tree Yggdrasil, located at the rear of their area. The Neutral team may make a run for either side, or attempt to act as gatekeepers on the bridge, whichever they deem most appropriate as a strategy.

**Rangnorok victory conditions:** The scenario ends if one of two conditions is met. As is true throughout the tournament,

if all three PCs of a team die within the same combat round, the surviving members of the other two teams are declared victors and the scenario ends with a survival stamp awarded to all PCs still alive at the end of that round. The scenario also ends if any PC belonging to the Lawful or Chaotic teams is able to reach and touch the other side's defense goal (the Gates of Asgard or Yggdrasil), at which time the side who failed to defend their goal are instantly killed and the surviving players awarded survival stamps.

**PC deaths:** When each PC dies in this scenario, after the combat round ends, the action is momentarily frozen as a Valkyrie mounted on a winged pegasus flies down from the thunderheads above. The Valkyrie will dismount, reach into the body of the fallen god, and draw forth the PC's spirit, as the sky above sings in a chorus of a thousand voices for the fallen hero. The Valkyrie then carries the dead PC's spirit away to its final destination (Valhalla for the Lawful team, the holy mountain Helgafjell for the Neutral team, and dark realms of Hel for the Chaotic team). Play resumes when the spirit of the next PC entering the tournament re-animates the fallen godling. Gods revived in this way have full abilities and are restored from any in-game effects (such as a severed appendage).

### Armaments of the Gods

The following weapons and magic items are given to the PCs at the start of the scenario. No weapon or magic item may be used by any PC other than the one for which it is intended. All weapon power or ability spell checks are 1d20.

#### Thor, god of thunder (Law)

**Mjölfnir** (war hammer +10) melee (1d16+10), missile fire (1d14+10, range: line of sight); SP hammer always returns to owner within 1 round, target deafened by thunderclap (even on a miss) for 1d3 rounds, +18 hit points.

#### Heimdallr, the all-seeing (Law)

**Gjallarhorn** (great horn +8) horn blast attack (1d20, range 100'); SP *wizard sense* (DCC RPG rulebook, p. 245), possess-or cannot be surprised; +16 hit points.

#### Tyr, one-handed god of war (Law)

**Teiwaz** (rune sword +9) melee (1d12+9); SP (versus Fenrir only: rune sword +12 melee (1d12+12)); +14 hit points.

#### Loki, the trickster god (Neutral)

**Guggnir** (Odin Spear +4) melee (1d8+4); SP *polymorph* (self only), (DCC RPG rulebook p. 243); +12 hit points.

#### Fenrir, the monstrous wolf (Neutral)

**Magic item:** Tyr's left hand on a ribboned chain

Atk wolf bite +8 melee (4d4, critical hit severs an appendage); SP +14 hit points; versus Tyr only: wolf bite +10 melee (5d6, critical hit severs Tyr's right hand).

#### Jörmungandr, the Midgard Serpent (Neutral)

Atk venomous bite +8 melee (1d10, DC 12 Fort save or in-



stant death from poison); SP +18 hit points; versus Thor only: venomous bite +10 melee (4d4, DC 15 Fort save or instant death from poison).

#### Surtr, the fire giant (Chaos)

Atk flaming sword +10 melee (1d14, DC 14 Reflex save or target catches fire for 1d6 damage per round), boulder throw missile fire (1d16, range 100'); SP +18 hit points.

#### Ymir, the frost giant (Chaos)

Atk ice club +9 melee (1d12, DC 12 Reflex save or target is frozen for 1 round and takes 1d3 ice damage), boulder throw missile fire (1d14, range 80'); SP +16 hit points.

#### Hymir, the mountain giant (Chaos)

Atk tree club +8 melee (1d10, DC 10 Reflex save or target is knocked prone), boulder throw missile fire (1d14, range 80'); SP +14 hit points.

## THE GARDEN OF FORBIDDEN POWER

**Area 1-6 — The Garden of Forbidden Power:** You find yourselves in a large rectangular garden of raked white sand and enormous smooth stones. Three ornate wooden bridges cross a pool which divides the garden in half. Six-foot wide brass bowls filled with fist-sized pearl-white stones rest at opposite sides, one accompanied by a wooden statue of Yddgrrl some 15 feet away,

the other by a bronze statue of Obitu-Que, also 15 feet from the brass bowl. An air sculpture of Ithaa hovers high above the garden, surrounded by dozens of flitting, ethereal shapes. The garden is encompassed by a thick mist, but you can just detect a purple undulating hill to one side of the garden, and a number of terraced hills to the other. A four-foot tall wall surrounds the garden, guarding against a fall of at least 40 feet into the mists below.

**The Hyper-Arena:** Though not immediately apparent to the players, the PCs have been shrunk to an inch in height and have been transported to a tabletop zen garden on the cluttered desk of a mad sorcerer (the purple hill is the wizard's cloak, and the terraced hills large tomes). The sorcerer's zen garden features:

**Brass Bowls:** The stones filling the bowl next to the statue of Yddgrrl are marked with the symbol of Chaos which glows a dull red. Those next to the Obitu-Que statue are emblazoned with the glowing blue symbol of Law. Note that the stones provided near each statue are of opposite alignment to that nearest statue. When a character lifts a stone of like alignment, they hear an ethereal voice utter, "Feed your master and gain a blessing of power." Picking up a stone of the opposite alignment results in the PC receiving a shock for 1d4 points of damage.

**The Statues of Law and Chaos:** The statues of Yddgrrl and Obitu-Que have exaggerated mouths that are forced wide open. Transporting stones from the brass bowl across the garden, and dropping them into the open mouths of the



**Table 1-6A: Blessings of Power**

Roll 1d20 (x3)	Weapon Type	Weapon Bonus	Special Power
1	Battle axe	-1 to hit	<b>Mutually Assured Destruction:</b> On the first successful strike wielder and target both detonate and are killed. Everyone within 5 feet takes 1d4 damage.
2	Blowgun	(no bonus)	<b>Pop Goes the Weasel:</b> +1d6 damage on hit, but excited wielder must make DC 12 Will save or have head pop off in a fountain of blood.
3	Club	(no bonus)	<b>Ring Around the Rosie:</b> On a hit all within 10 feet (including wielder) must succeed on a DC 10 Reflex save or fall down.
4	Crossbow w/8 bolts	(no bonus)	<b>Stick and Move:</b> +1d3 damage on hit, wielder teleported to random location in area.
5	Dagger	(no bonus)	<b>Turncoat:</b> +1d3 damage on hit, but wielder must succeed on DC 12 Will save or randomly switch factions next round. Roll 1d3: (1) Law: (2) Neutrality: (3) Chaos.
6	Dart	(no bonus)	(no special power)
7	Flail	(no bonus)	(no special power)
8	Hand axe	(no bonus)	(no special power)
9	Javelin	(no bonus)	(no special power)
10	Longbow w/8 arrows	(no bonus)	(no special power)
11	Long sword	+1 to hit	+1d3 damage
12	Mace	+1 to hit	+1d4 damage
13	Polearm	+1 to hit	<b>Bloodtaker:</b> Wielder is healed for 1/2 of damage delivered on a hit.
14	Shortbow w/8 arrows	+1 to hit	<b>Chicken Summoner:</b> On successful hit a brood of chickens are summoned, wildly pecking the target for 1d4 rounds. (No damage, but target is -2 to all activities.)
15	Short sword	+1 to hit	<b>Fireburst:</b> +1d6 fire damage on hit.
16	Sling	+2 to hit	<b>Death Scythe:</b> On a successful hit, wielder can immediately attempt an attack on a second target within 5 feet.
17	Spear	+2 to hit	<b>I'm Huge!</b> With each hit wielder grows a foot, gaining +1 to attacks and damage. If +6 is reached the wielder's skin pops and he dies in a messy spray of gore.
18	Staff	+2 to hit	<b>Every Rose Has Its Thorns:</b> +1d3 to damage, and all foes within 10 feet must make DC 8 Reflex save or be wrapped by thorns for 1d4 rounds. Trapped targets can attempt to make another save on subsequent rounds and thereby free themselves, but failing these saves causes 1d3 thorn damage.
19	Two-handed sword	+2 to hit	<b>Power of Grey Skulls!</b> On a successful hit, lightning strikes for +1d6 damage, and all foes within 10 feet must make DC 10 Fort save or take 1d3 electrical damage.
20	Warhammer	+3 to hit	<b>Vorpal Blade:</b> On a successful hit, the weapon decapitates all zero-level foes; or does +1d8 damage to creatures with more than 1HD

appropriate patron will result in a powerful new weapon appearing in the hand of the transporter (see **Table 1-6A: Blessings of Power** below).

Lawful and Chaotic PCs appear weaponless next to the brass bowl filled with the stones marked with the symbol of their alignment. The statue of their patron on the far side of the garden is clearly visible. Taking a like-aligned stone across the garden and dropping it into the mouth of their patron god's statue results in a weapon of power appearing in their hands, a gift from their patron!

Characters of a differing alignment from a patron statue who approach within 10 feet of that statue will feel a growing electric charge. If they come within 5 feet they suffer a shock for 1d3 damage.

**The Air Sculpture of Neutrality:** Neutral characters appear on one of the three bridges, equipped with the normal items created during character generation, including weapons (if any). When they first appear, one of the ghostly servants flitting about near the avatar sculpture of Ithaa de-

scends and whispers: "We exist to serve, oh wise one. Command us!"

Rather than attacking during a round, Neutral players can elect to command the servants to act. Judges should be prepared to handle a variety of clever requests, but in general, the servants powers are constrained to these abilities:

**Attack:** The servants can attack anywhere in the garden, but their shocks are weak. (+0 to attack, 1d3-1 damage)

**Push:** Servants can deliver a strong shove, capable of triggering a Reflex save for someone on top of a stone or in some other precarious position.

**Trip:** Characters in the process of moving can be tripped: failing a DC 8 Reflex save causes the character to tumble to the ground. Failing a DC 10 Strength check causes any carried item to fall from their hands.

**Carry:** Servants can carry a willing target up to full move through the air, and are able to cross the pool, pull a character out of the water, or raise them to the top of a stone.

**Bridges and Pool:** Each bridge is some 30 feet in length and 8 feet wide, arching gracefully over the pool. Falls into the water 20 feet below only deal 1d4-2 points of damage. But a DC 8 Agility check is required to climb out onto the slippery sand bank, and for each round in the water there is a 1 in 6 chance the character will be swallowed whole by the giant goldfish inhabiting the pool!

**Tall Stones:** Each tall stone can be climbed with a DC 8 Strength or Agility check. Characters on top of the stones can only be attacked by ranged weapons or pole arms, and receive a +1 bonus to ranged attacks on those below. However, if the character takes damage or is pushed, they must make a DC 10 reflex save or fall to the sand below, suffering 1d4 damage.

**The Surrounding Wall:** Characters who cross the wall and attempt to leave the garden fall to their death through the mists onto the hardwood desk below.

## Inhabitants of the Study

To complicate matters, a number of (to the PCs) gigantic occupants of the sorcerer's study can appear either randomly or whenever a judge wants to liven up the action!

**Table 1-6B: Inhabitants of the Study**

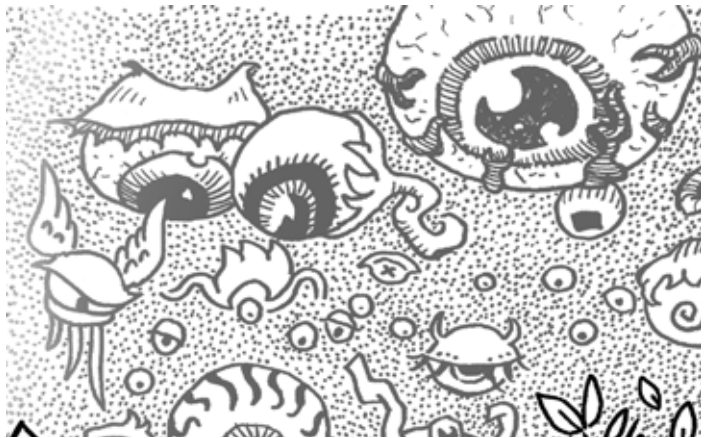
Roll 1d10	Result
1-5	<b>Giant Army Ants:</b> A mob of ants appear and cross the battlefield. Each ant appears 3' long. They move in a fairly straight line without lingering, attacking anything in range.

6-8 **Giant Dragonfly:** A seemingly enormous Dragonfly swoops in and attempts to acquire a quick meal.

9-10 **Grim Paws the Cat:** Appearing as a titan-sized beast, Grim Paws bats at a random character with a huge paw before bounding out of view. If the character fails at a DC 14 Reflex save he is immediately crushed! All characters on the battlefield must succeed at a DC 8 Reflex save or fall down; those on the stones must pass a DC 10 save.

**Giant Army Ant Mob:** Init +2; Atk mob bites +3 melee (1d4); AC 12; HD 1; hp 8; MV 30; Act 1d20; SP driven off when hp reach zero; SV Fort =1, Ref +0, Will +0; AL N.

**Giant Dragonfly:** Init +3; Atk grab +3 melee (1 hp); AC 10; HD 1; hp 7; MV fly 30'; Act 1d20; SP on hit, target must make DC 11 Reflex save or be carried away; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +0; AL N.



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