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1 Wintermark



?The storm can never break us.?

Here is Wintermark, where the frozen wind howls down from the eternal storm of Sydanjaa to face men and women stood shoulder to shoulder, holding steadfast against the cold. Revelling in battle, the indomitable Winterfolk stare down every threat with their heads unbowed, for they know that death is only the long sleep before the dawn. Always courageous, they commit themselves to every challenge, matching wits and weapons against worthy foes, forging victory from adversity on the anvil of the north.

The Winterfolk are three great tribes - the wise **Kallavesi**, the bold **Steinr** and the clever **Suaq** - wrought into a single mighty nation. Their banner flies the three rings joined together - three peoples bound with one breath, three voices raised together against the storm. Strength, wisdom, cunning, entwined together to form an unbreakable cord.

Wise Shamans untangle the skins to peer into the future. The Thanes appoint bannermen to lead the warriors to battle. The Grimmirs, forbidden from battle by sacred oath, minister to the wounded. All the while, the **stormcrows** watch, keeping the people's **Courage** in place and ensuring that no oath goes unheard or unkept. At the end, the scops gather up the dead, raising them up in song and poem, so that their deeds will echo through the halls of the dead.

This can be a harsh land, but it does not breed harsh people. They hone their minds with riddles and mysteries and their souls sing with poetry. They craft beauty for the dreadful arts of war, weaving **runes** into every axe, shield and helmet. Their wise traditions of weregild and moot laid the foundations of the Empire's law and governance. They are the beating heart of the Empire, and they know that if only the other nations followed their example, the Empire would rule the world.

1.1 Five things about Wintermark

- **Scions sired by a storm.** Wintermark is a harsh land. Mastering it has made us strong.
- **A hero's tale ends with a good death.** We glory in battle; we stand tall and do not skulk from danger.
- **Cold cannot compromise.** We do not compromise even with ourselves. Not even age or injury turn us from our undertaking.
- **A hero has a name.** We prize individuality; your name is the beginning of your story.
- **Three tears entwined.** The three peoples of the Wintermark are indivisible; they live together and fight as one.

1.2 What the Winterfolk are not

- **Vikings.** The Steinr are inspired by the Saxons and the Rohirrim from Lord of the Rings and they follow the Imperial Religion. There are no longships, raiders or horned helmets, and Thor and the Norse pantheon are actively excluded from the brief.

1.3 The nation



1.3.1 Core brief

- The people
- Culture and customs
- Look and feel

1.3.2 Further reading

- History
- Political leadership
- Economic interests
- Military concerns
- Religious beliefs
- Magical traditions
- Hearth magic
- Lineage and species attitudes
- Territories
- Children
- Music
- Costumes

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