

# ONCE I WAS A WARRIOR

A ROLEPLAYING GAME

BY NICK WEDIG

A brave young warrior stands before the three witches of fate. He wishes to see his future, how he will grow up and grow old, and how he will be remembered after his death. But only rarely does the youth see the future that he hopes for.

Made as a birthday present  
for Sean Wedig's 30<sup>th</sup> birthday.

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## EVERYONE

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Reading these rules ahead of play is not required.

Simply read the rules aloud as you play, beginning with the following paragraph.

This is a game for four or more players. Three players will play the three Witches of Fate: Urthr, Verthandi and Skuld. The other player(s) will form a lineage of noble Norse warriors, who one after the other come to the Witches of Fate to divine their future.

Choose one player to be the first brave warrior. Give the warrior a mighty name, suitable for a warrior chieftain of the northern tribes.

## BRAVE WARRIOR

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Name five skills or abilities that you wish to master.

You may wish to become as *strong as an ox*, or learn *the Way of the Spinning Axe*, or the secret of *Spiritsight* or any other cool, Norse-warrior things you'd like to see in the game.

## URTHR, THE WITCH OF BEGINNINGS

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Choose three of these skills that the brave warrior masters in his youth. Tell us how he masters those three. The other two skills he never masters. Then tell us why he never learns these abilities.

## BRAVE WARRIOR

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Based on Urthr's narration, name the two failings that prevented you learning your chosen skills.

## **VERTHANDI, THE WITCH OF THE PRESENT**

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It is now ten years later, and the brave youth is now a mighty man. Name five challenges that the brave warrior will face in his life. These may be heroic, action oriented events, like outwitting a dragon, swimming for days across the Great Northern Sea or wrestling an ogre with his bare hands. They also may be more earthly, dramatic or mundane challenges, such as convincing Chieftain Hretel's daughter to marry him, teaching his son the meaning of justice, or finding the right words to speak at a noble warrior's funeral.

### **BRAVE WARRIOR**

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You have five tasks before you, and five traits to choose from (your three skills and two failings). Assign each task a trait, but you can only use each trait once. Explain how you will face each challenge using that skill to the best of your ability, or how your failings will impact the task at hand.

## **SKULD, THE WITCH OF THE FUTURE**

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Of the two tasks to which the brave warrior assigned a flaw, one will fail. Describe how he fails because of that flaw. The other, though, will succeed, and the noble warrior learns an important lesson from his own failings.

Tell us what lessons he learns and how his flaw leads to future success. Then describe how the tasks he assigned a skill to succeed or fail, using your best judgment. Two of these tasks will succeed, while the third will fail. The failed task does not fail because the warrior's skills are lacking, though. The warrior fails the task because he overdoes it: his skill is too vast, too strong for the challenge he attempts.

## **WHITEHAIRD WARRIOR**

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It is now thirty years later, and our brave is now old and weary. Tell us how two of your three skills twisted over time into your worst failings. Then tell us what you learned from your failures and flaws. Narrate appropriate vignettes to describe these transformations over the years.

## **WHITEHAIRD WARRIOR**

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Now you are now old and grey. You have seen many things in your life, and attempted much. You now stand ready to lead your son, himself a brave young warrior, to meet the Witches of Fate, as you once did. Name your son, a name that fits the virtues that you now value. Give him the advice that he needs to hear. Base your advice on the challenges, successes and failures that life has presented you.

## **NEXT YOUNG WARRIOR**

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Listen to your father's advice. Think carefully on what he can teach you, before going to face the Witches of Fate. Will you follow his hard-won wisdom, or strike out on your own path? Tell us of your father's death and funeral. Then return to the Brave Warrior's first instruction, above, and repeat this cycle.

## **EVERYONE**

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Repeat the cycle until everyone has had a chance to play in some way. Or play until you reach an appropriate ending, or until everyone is satisfied.