

THE JOAGUNDR

Guardians of the Glacial Sanctum



"EMBRACE THE BITING WINDS, FOR THEY SHARPEN OUR RESOLVE"



bove the heart of Erimus, yet under the shadows of looming, icy peaks, lies the unforgiving home of the Joagundr.

They are primarily Svelds, living under the watchful eyes of their Elden Brothers. There's a grueling harmony they've forged between their ironclad traditions and an insatiable hunger for enlightenment. It's a hunger stirred not by lofty dreams, but by the secrets frozen within their merciless homeland.

Deadly snowstorms lie mysteries as deep and dark as the winters themselves. Each glacial gust carries hidden riddles, and every rare, fleeting starfall is a haunting revelation.

Such is the paradox that embodies the Joagundr, bound by their harsh land, on the edge of a primal, ancestral past and the abyss of cosmic mystery.



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VALUES & ATTITUDES



Joagundr are born warriors, brought into the world in a land where those who are strong persevere against all odds. Fiercely protective of their culture and independent of others, the Sveldic humans are considered tribal, uncivilized, and rude by those on the mainland of Akand, but outsiders are unfamiliar with the life-changing effect of the chilled winds.

Joagundr are distrustful of all things strange and foreign. While new ideas are readily taken whenever offered, they are framed in the traditional lens of their people; knowing that a new magic has been discovered in distant lands would be considered a new manipulation of the Vita Vindär for example. They also crave knowledge, in whatever form that may be. Outsiders to Erimus may find Joagundr to be rude, crass, or even ignorant of their presence, but Joagundr personalities are no-nonsense, cut of frivolity and excess.

⚔ THE BONDED HEARTH ⚔

Fiercely defensive of their cultural practices and way of life, they view their community in a very fond light, and a very strong sense of comradeship forged from experiencing hard times together keeps the villages together stronger than nearly any other culture. In the case of those who turn against tradition, very strict punishments are demanded.

⚙ THE VEILED CONUNDRUM ⚙

In turn, their repressive social system often ensures nobody ever commits an evil act in the first place, with the heavy-handed social stigma against such being a weight few can bear. While lawless, they are not without rules. Rarely, they exile their own to the frost by their lonesome, a fate seen worse than death; a beheading in the town square means you die warm. The inhabitants of this frost-bound society live under a paradoxical form of anarchy. Despite the absence of a formal legal system, they are tightly bound by an intricate code of conduct, one deeply ingrained in their culture and passed down through generations.



🏰 THE RESOLUTE VIGIL 🏰

They also believe that their struggle against life suffices them, and they do not care to struggle against other cultures or factions. While a Joagundr does not flinch away from defending their values with sharp wit and strong muscle against those who would slander the Sacred Lands, they do not necessarily find other cultures to be their enemies. Joagundr remain xenophobic however, thinking those who aren't native to Erimus are weak-willed, without the Vita Vindär flowing through them, and do not understand their values and traditions. Through exhibits of strength or fortitude both emotional and physical, an outsider may earn the respect of a Joagundr.

THE BESTÄMDEN MERITOCRACY -



In Joagundr society, fluid gender norms yield versatile individuals. Everyone contributes according to their skills, fostering a merit-based culture known as bestämden. Here, survival and respect hinge on shared labor and achievement, from scientific study to culinary tasks, nurturing an egalitarian ethos of communal resilience. This egalitarian system is known by the Joagundr as bestämden and serves as a facet of their meritocracy society that enables those who achieve to have the most respect and power.

BLOOD-BOUND TRADITIONS -



The Joagundr culture, shaped by harsh climates, values hunting. It permeates their traditions, from clothing and religion to cuisine and architecture. Hunting symbolizes victory and the transfer of Vita Vindär from quarry to the hunter, marked by blood and pigment adornments. A solo hunt rite of passage transitions Joagundr youth into adulthood, securing their role as full village contributors.

FEASTS OF KNOWLEDGE -



Alongside Joagundr's hunting heritage thrives a deep respect for scholarship and sciences. Transitioning to adulthood necessitates not just a solo hunt but an original scientific study presentation. Their decentralized culture prizes collaborative science, fostering inter-village knowledge exchanges. Significant discoveries, passing the shaman's tests, warrant grand feasts and the award of a Shweul, a symbolic scroll signifying the scientist's contribution.

DUALISTIC PURSUITS -



Joagundr culture, a unique fusion of tribalism and scientific curiosity, shapes a dualistic identity recognized by outsiders as 'wild scholars'. Seeing the world through a lens of opposition — modern versus traditional, subjective versus objective — Joagundr tribe relations pivot on familial, village, or scientific group affiliations. Science, rather than challenging beliefs, reinforces tribal values and convictions. As eager to study frigid glacier downdrafts as to undertake pilgrimages for wisdom from the Elden Brothers, Joagundr are fearless explorers of the unknown — be it science or wilderness.

FAMILY STRUCTURE & RELATIONSHIPS



The structure of a family is one in which either a single male or female figure is in charge of an entire extended family, called a Klanstyrka. Villages may have only 1 Klanstyrka if it is small, or upwards of 4 if it is a large one. This leader of the Klanstyrka is called a Hävding, is often trained at birth by the existing leadership (who choose their successor based on age and blood relation) on how to run and administer an entire family effectively and rather pragmatically, as well as how to solve disputes.

This dictatorship of the family provides quick decision-making, at the expense of old ideas generally having more sway in their community as opposed to new ones.

In cases where the townsfolk find unacceptable bias in the groomed leader, or ineptitude threatening the safety of the family, they are able to challenge the Hävdingar for their position. Each Klanstyrka does this in different manners, but all challenges to leadership require both a test of skill in survival instincts such as hunting, as well as scholastic aptitude in academia. The Shamans of the tribe, (and in worst cases, Shamans from outside of the tribe) act as the judges, and make the final announcement on who has won the contest.



A family is measured by a shared last name and blood. Any adopted members must be approved by the leader first before being allowed into the family unit. However, while their loyalty must remain with their Klanstyrka, Joagundr peoples are free to live with other families on scientific endeavors if the need arises.

Leading a village is a mix of the Hävdingars of Klanstyrkas, and what Joagundr call Noaidi, which are their Shamans. Noaidi, beyond being guides of the Vita Vindär, give insight into both scientific debates and familial matters. It is often such that a Hävdingar will not make a decision on a matter concerning his Klanstyrka without the contemplation and approval of a Noaidi, although not legally required, as no council exists.

FAITH & BELIEFS

Vita Vindär: The Legacy of Värmelden and Kyleum-Loyce



From the pure white peaks of Erimus's far north fly down the Vita Vindär, or White Winds. Within all things flows this White Wind, as the wind itself is alive, indicative of the goodness and liveliness of the world.

In times of dire straits and woeful occurrences, the Vita Vindär fades from the world, and in times of great success and perseverance, the White Wind flows strongly through all. Controlling the Vita Vindär are the two gods of Joagundr faith, the Elden Brothers.

“THE GENESIS - FROST & FIRE”

To the Joagundr, the universe was an empty void containing nothing but the Vita Vindär. No star, planet, or earth was to be seen, for only pure White Winds filled the inky black. After an immeasurable amount of time, a portion of the White Winds began to warm, and then melt, and then boil. Then, there was Fire, known as Värmelden the Elden Salamander. He heated the White Winds, reshaping them, but to no end, for they dissipated into steam and dispersed with no gain of His. With this Heat, Cold shrank away from him. It fled from the Heat, reaching deeper into the Universe until it was so far away from the Heat that it turned into Ice, which was Kyleum-Loyce the Elden Owl.

“THE CLASH THAT CONCEIVED THE EARTH”

Kyleum-Loyce embodied all that Värmelden was not; where there was life in Värmelden, there was death in Kyleum-Loyce, light and dark. But in this absolute cold, the White Winds could not flow, for they remained eternally frozen in place, unmoving, and unnatural. The two newborn Gods began to crash their manipulations of the White Winds against each other, creating great bouts of matter from their clashing. In this, the Earth was formed, first an icy ball of frozen matter. With time, it was thawed, with the Sun being created to aid Värmelden, with the lands of Erimus being the only place where the powers of Värmelden could not thaw.

“THE HARMONIOUS ACCORD”

The eternal struggle between the Brothers led to the creation of a vibrant world teeming with life. However, their constant clash lacked the finesse required for further creation. It was their shared sense of loneliness in the vastness of space that prompted a change. Värmelden's warmth thawed Kyleum-Loyce's heart, and together they halted their eternal battle. With their refined manipulation of the Vita Vindär, the first humans were born. These beings embodied the balance of Ice and Fire, with the White Winds coursing through them, bringing harmony to the Earth. Both Brothers recognized the success of their collaboration.



“IN FLAMES OF SORROW”

Mankind, with their newfound mortality and balance, began to deviate into extremes, forming opposing factions. This led to conflicts and war among the creations of the Brothers. Värmelden, filled with sadness and regret, unleashed his fiery judgment upon the lands, engulfing them in cleansing flames. Kyleum-Loyce, witnessing the devastation caused by his brother, descended to Earth to assess the situation. A large portion of the world was transformed into a primordial state of fire and magma, with the Vita Vindär ceasing to blow where Värmelden roamed.



The Brothers engaged in an apocalyptic battle on Earth, wreaking havoc and devastation upon the land. Kyleum-Loyce emerged victorious, striking down Värmelden with icy talons. However, this victory came at a great cost, as both sides caused immense destruction and loss of life.

Kyleum-Loyce ascended to the heavens with Värmelden's defeated body, determined to continue their eternal fight. Värmelden, deeply wounded emotionally, swore to eradicate humanity and restore their former friendship.

And so it is today, such that Värmelden the Elden Salamander is locked in deep combat with

Kyleum-Loyce the Elden Owl in the heavens above, with the sun bearing down by Värmelden's will and the frigid chill of the White Wind coming down from Erium on the frigid blasts of Kyleum-Loyce's white wings.

The Joagundr worship both Elden Brothers and teach that both are necessary in a perpetual balance. This takes on a metaphysical meaning for the people, as their actions can embody both Gods. To be separated from things, cold, apathetic, unyielding, and scientific are to emulate Kyleum-Loyce, and to be brutal, proud, powerful, passionate, and tribal are to emulate Värmelden, but both are needed in balance. Should either be out of balance and quell the Vita Vindär, the world would be scorched into a molten wasteland or frozen in an inhospitable icy place depending on which excess is done.



In reverence to the Brothers and the Vita Vindär, the Joagundr carry wind instruments with them and wind catchers on their homes, to sound when the White Winds flow through their lands. Shamans may take long pilgrimages up the white peaks of Erimus where the Vita Vindär propagate themselves, blown down from on high by Kyleum-Loyce from the universe above.

Joagundr peoples are expected to live their life in balance, emulating the eternal struggle of the Brothers born of the Vita Vindär; where there is too much comfort, weak men are created, and where there is too much strife, no advancement can be made.

The Joagundr believe in three afterlife realms based on one's conduct in life. The cold-hearted are consigned to Kyleum-Loyce's icy plane, experiencing eternal freeze and solitude. Those consumed by indulgence, passion, and anger reside in Värmelden's fiery realm, plagued by unquenchable thirst and the need to run ceaselessly. Those who live a balanced life, valuing tribalism, science, love, and ideals, dwell in Fornhemroth, a white plane of eternal bliss embraced by the Vita Vindär.

MUSIC & ART



Art and music are not exempt from the mixing of cultural aspects that define Joagundr and often have tribal art with modern skills or techniques, or vice-versa. Sculptures of wood and stone carved in abstract and thoughtful shapes, or complex and geometric paintings composed of antler and bone bits make up some examples of Joagundr art.

There's a tangible obsession with beauty in the form of geometry, with everything from their buildings to the types of plants they use in bouquets all being related to some sort of geometric theorem or scientific intrigue. Their music employs a very measured stanza structure, with a beat ever-present in their songs. Within these stanzas are oral music with bone instruments like flutes, or whistles.

FASHION & BATTLEGARB



The Joagundr people, living in a harsh and cold climate, wear layers of heavy, overlapping clothing, favoring hoods and coifs over hats. They consider exposed skin a taboo unless it serves a purpose. Social status is not determined by wealth or ostentatious displays of jewelry, but rather by personal achievements.

These accomplishments are signified by tangible symbols like skulls, bones, hides, scrolls, and books - each representing a victorious hunt or significant scholarly discovery. Hence, their attire serves as a protective armor against the elements, a reflection of individual survival, and a living testament to their contribution to their society.

The Joagundr's battle garb features pragmatic quilted armor, which is layered and padded for protection against both the cold and enemy blows. The outer shell is reinforced with hide and leather, while the inside is filled with warm, cushioned fabric. Joagundr warriors display their personal achievements on their armor, using symbols such as skulls, bones, scrolls, and books to represent their individual victories and contributions.

COLDER WEATHER CLOTHING MALE



COLDER WEATHER CLOTHING FEMALE



WARMER WEATHER CLOTHING MALE



BATTLE GARB



NOTEWORTHY MEMBERS OF CULTURE



Vidarve Trädholt - was a key figure in the Joagundr culture who promoted a balance between the gods Värmelden and Kyleum-Loyce. She organized community feasts in the coldest times, fostering unity and respect for the icy domain of Kyleum-Loyce, thereby restoring the spiritual equilibrium among her people.



Signid Hävidak - widely known as "The Flame's Shepherd," Signildol was a fervent devotee of Värmelden, who ignited a contentious crusade urging his kinfolk, the Joagundr, to renounce their societal advancements. His fiery oratory instigated both strife and reflection, leading many to reassess their deeds within the mirror of their faith's fundamental doctrines.



Dag Blais - a simple craftsman known as "The Windweaver," held a singular kinship with the Vita Vindär, sensing their subtle currents and gusts. In his skilled hands, he wrought windcatchers that sang out harmonies seeming to speak to the very soul of the wind. Some even believe that the melodies produced by these windcatchers harbored a time of peace.



Avrarit Häsvidan - In a bygone age, a merciless blizzard, thought to be Kyleum-Loyce's fury, froze the Joagundr lands. Yet, Gunnar, suffused with Värmelden's spirit, stood against the icy onslaught. For nine days and nights, he prayed and fasted within the storm's heart. As the tempest subsided on the tenth day, Gunnar, unharmed, emerged as a beacon of balance against such overwhelming adversities.

CREDITS

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