

# Roleplaying in the Mythic North

## Player Advice Handout

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THE OUTCAST SILVER RAIDERS RULESET assumes that the rules will evoke a certain style of play but are intended to be universally useful in a variety of settings. As such, the rules do not include details to tie outcasts to a specific setting. While most of this book is intended strictly for referees, **this section is intended as a handout to give players ideas for roleplaying specifically in the Mythic North.**

The Mythic North is medieval society seen through a dark mirror. It is not a simulation, and uses medieval Europe as an inspiration, not a rule-book. The entire group will have a better time if every participant (not just the referee) does their best to work within the boundaries of that dark mirror.

### ·Religion·

THE MYTHIC NORTH IS A THEOCRACY. Temporal power flows from the Church. Kings and lords rule by divine right. The Church is therefore the ultimate authority, held in balance with the nobility only by their lack of directly controlled military strength.

Every person the outcasts encounter in the Mythic North will be religious in some way. Some people may follow ancient or forbidden religions. Others may practice heresies: philosophies that are outside the official teachings of the Church. Both beliefs are punishable by death, and few people would decry such a punishment, seeing it as right and correct.

There is no concept of atheism, which the inhabitants of the Mythic North would see as a type of mental affliction more than a moral or philosophical stance. The people see evidence of God and His works all around them. The movements of the sun and the seasons, the facts of birth and death are all seen in a religious context and not a scientific one.

Magic is seen as undeniably real but is divided strictly into sanctioned and forbidden categories. Sanctioned magic is the sacraments of the church and the miracles of its saints. Coincidences are interpreted as being evidence of the miraculous na-

ture of God. Forbidden magic is that practiced by the enemies of God. Its practice must be hidden (another meaning for the word "occult") lest its practitioners be put to the sword or the flames.

The Reformation is hundreds of years distant from the era of the Mythic North and such questioning of the status quo has not begun to develop. God and His Church are the beginning and end of life in the Mythic North, and religion impacts the large and small decisions of its populace.

For players, this will be an alien society, and one that will take some effort and creativity to inhabit. Even the most religious modern players of this game will not be religious in the same way as the typical medieval person. Many players will not be religious at all, or may even be anti-religious.

But all roleplaying is alien. None of us are Warriors or Rogues or Sorcerers. We don't live in a fantasy world, slay monsters, or explore forgotten crypts. These experiences are in most ways just as alien as living in a theocratic society.

Players will ideally see the religiousness of this society as a roleplaying opportunity. Struggling constantly against the Church and its society can create a campaign of violent rebellion where the outcasts are beset constantly on all sides. This may appeal to some players, and their games are of course valid... But there are other options.

Consider the roleplaying opportunities of embracing the Church. Consider playing a Sorcerer as devout, someone who sees their blood magic as a kind of veneration. Consider a Rogue who worries constantly about what their thieving will do to their chances of getting into Heaven. Consider playing a Warrior who requires prayer before battle and confession after. Consider praying for the souls of those you slay in battle and worrying about the impact of the outcast life on your character's own soul.

This setting offers all these and many more fascinating roleplaying opportunities should you choose to embrace them.

### ·Society·

THE CHURCH ENFORCES a strict social stratification. Power flows from the church to the monarch, and from them to their vassals, who swear allegiance to the monarch. The Church teaches that the noble classes are divinely appointed to rule. The other side of that coin is the peasant classes who are divinely created to serve. In between the two are the clergy, who serve God and act as His intercessors.

Outcasts exist apart from this social structure. Lords, knights, and other nobility will expect deference from outcasts and respond poorly to disrespect or disobedience. Clergy will expect respect, and church leaders will expect deference similar to the nobility. Peasants will be wary of outcasts, uncertain as to how they fit into the strict social order.

Interactions with outcasts offer all social classes an opportunity. Outcasts can be powerful allies and useful tools simply because they are not bound by the strictures of the other classes. Similarly to religion, players can explore the roleplaying opportunities inherent in this stratified social system.

### ·Geographic boundaries·

THE MYTHIC NORTH IS BOUNDED by ice to the north, mountains to the east, a wall to the south, and the sea to the west. Players should make a conscious effort to keep their characters tied within these boundaries unless specifically agreed upon with their referee. If the referee has plans for the regions beyond these borders, well and good, but players could upend the campaign and make things rough on their referee by trying to push beyond these boundaries.

### ·Gender considerations·

IN THE SPIRIT of using medieval Europe as an inspiration and not restriction for the Mythic North, it is strongly suggested that roleplaying groups consider a modern take on gender roles for their campaigns.

Historically, non-male genders were treated in ways that our society would consider highly abusive. This is perhaps realistic, but just like tracking the complex tax systems of medieval times wouldn't

make for fun roleplaying, following realistic historical gender roles would similarly make for a piss poor experience. Our strong suggestion is to embrace the fantasy of a medieval world with a more humane and egalitarian approach to gender.

### ·Who are you? (1d20)·

1. A monk or nun who left or was dispelled from your convent or monastery.
2. A peasant accused of theft or murder, who fled the village of your birth.
3. An infidel born into a heretical group or religion outside the Church.
4. A merchant accused of sexual deviancy, your tools destroyed, your wares stolen.
5. A trader, sole survivor of a shipwreck that cast you onto unknown shores.
6. A priest excommunicated for political reasons.
7. A serf, your village destroyed by plague, fire, raiders, knights, or another natural disaster.
8. A beautiful commoner taken as a lordling's lover before being abandoned and exiled.
9. A mercenary whose company was utterly destroyed in battle.
10. A latter child of a minor lord, you have no prospects, fortune, or future.
11. A tradesperson expelled from an apprenticeship due to real or perceived incompetence.
12. A wandering ascetic eschewing the trappings of society to attempt closeness with God.
13. A farmer's child fleeing an abusive home.
14. A former knight who supported the wrong lord and got away only with your life.
15. A member of the gentry taking flight from a betrothal to someone you abhor.
16. A servant scarred by illness or accident, or born with an unusual physical appearance.
17. A deacon accused of witchcraft or sorcery.
18. A member of a gang of bandits or brigands that fell apart due to infighting.
19. A minstrel or jester who offended your liege lord and was driven off by threats of violence.
20. A priest disgusted with the hypocrisy and hedonism of your fellows.