

Heroes

Summary

In the world of [Skyss](#) and the wider continent of [Osnines](#), Heroes, also known by the more traditionalist term [Godbloods](#), are individuals who possess a measurable degree of divine lineage. They are the descendants of the Nine Gods and Goddesses of the Skyssian [Pantheon](#), though some may trace their ancestry to deities from other regions. A Hero is formally defined as any individual possessing one-sixteenth (1/16th) or more divine blood, whereas those with at least one-eighth (1/8th) are eligible for inclusion in the [Book of Heroes](#). Currently, there are approximately 50 active Heroes living within Skyssian influenced territories.

Biological and Metaphysical Traits

Longevity and Health

Heroes possess an extended lifespan that far exceeds that of ordinary mortals. While they reach physical maturity at the same rate as humans, their aging process slows dramatically upon reaching adulthood. It is common for a Hero to maintain the physical appearance of an individual in their twenties for several decades or even centuries. [Old Bjorn](#), the oldest living Hero, is recorded as being over 900 years old, while [Alfarinn](#) is over five centuries old. Furthermore, Heroes are generally immune to common human diseases and can survive wounds that would prove fatal to others, though they are not truly immortal and can be killed through decapitation or the total destruction of their physical vessel.

Inheritance of Divine Blood

The potency of a Hero's divine abilities is determined by the "strength" of their bloodline rather than the number of divine ancestors. Generally, a child inherits the average of their parents' divine potency. For example, the offspring of a demi-god and a mortal human would possess significantly more power than the child of two low-level Heroes. This bloodline allows them to manifest abilities associated with the divine domains of their ancestors, such as [Yngvild Helgasdotir](#)'s affinity for darkness and justice inherited from [Malfin - Goddess of the Darkness](#) and [Fafnir](#), or [Noren](#)'s connection to [Jorunn](#).

The Book of Heroes

The [Book of Heroes](#) serves as the formal registry for all recognised Godbloods. It is a massive, hand-bound ledger fastened with string, featuring stiffened leather covers that date back four hundred years to the era when individual records were first consolidated. The pages vary in age and colour, ranging from pristine white to ancient mustard-yellow.

- **Security:** To prevent the manipulation of lineages or the hiding of specific deeds, several copies of the Book are maintained in disparate locations, ensuring that no single individual can alter the historical record of the Heroic lines.
- **Function:** Inclusion in the Book is a prerequisite for certain constitutional roles, such as serving as the [Herald of Heroes](#) during the election of a new King.

The Three Tiers of Magic

Heroes categorise magical practice into three distinct tiers based on the requirement of divine blood and the intensity of belief:

1. Rituals

The most common form of magic, rituals can be performed by any individual with sufficient belief, including priests and ordinary citizens. These often involve carving ancient [Runes](#) and imbuing them with power, sometimes utilising freely given human blood to amplify the effect.

2. Words of Power

Requiring either intense devotion or Heroic levels of divine blood, Words of Power cause direct, irresistible effects. Examples include the laying of an involuntary [Geas](#) or the ability of a [King's Justice](#) to compel truth from a prisoner. [Oddmundr](#) was noted for his ability to use such powers as a Justice before his death.

3. Divine Intervention

The highest tier of magic, available only to those with significant divine blood. A Hero can achieve nearly any imagined effect within their specific divine domain. This is subject only to the Hero's imaginative clarity and the overall strength of their bloodline. [helga_trollslayer](#), for instance, can utilise her connection to [Kari](#) to ensure favourable wind and sea conditions regardless of the weather.

The Great Schism and the Covenant

The current Heroic population is significantly smaller than in antiquity due to [The Great Schism](#), an internal conflict that occurred roughly eighty years ago.

- **The Factions:** The conflict split Heroes into the **Silent Service** (who favoured staying out of public life), the [Godbloods](#) (who believed Heroes should rule), and the **Covenanters** (who favoured limited public service with term limits).
- **The Covenant:** In 694, [Old Bjorn](#) introduced the [Covenant of Heroes](#) to halt the assassinations thinning their ranks. Most surviving Heroes are now signatories, agreeing to laws that govern their conduct and prevent them from destabilising the realm for personal gain.

Relationships

Notable Heroes

- **The Elders:** [Old Bjorn](#), [Alfarinn](#), [Oddmundr](#) (deceased)
- **The New Generation:** [Yngvild Helgasdotir](#) (Bearer of Jafnadr), [Noren](#) (Initiate of Jorunn)
- **The Renegade:** [Rojden](#) (Leader of Cottalem)
- **Commanders and Agents:** [Helga Trollslayer](#), [olaf_ragnarson](#), [radulf](#), [Alfinna](#)

Concepts and Objects

- [Book of Heroes](#)
- [Jafnadr the Sword](#) (Sentient Sword of Justice)
- [Amulets](#) (Ritual items for protection and communication)
- [Geas](#)
- [The Great Schism](#)

Skyss - Story Background	Characters	Skyss - Places	Pantheons of the World	Other Background
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