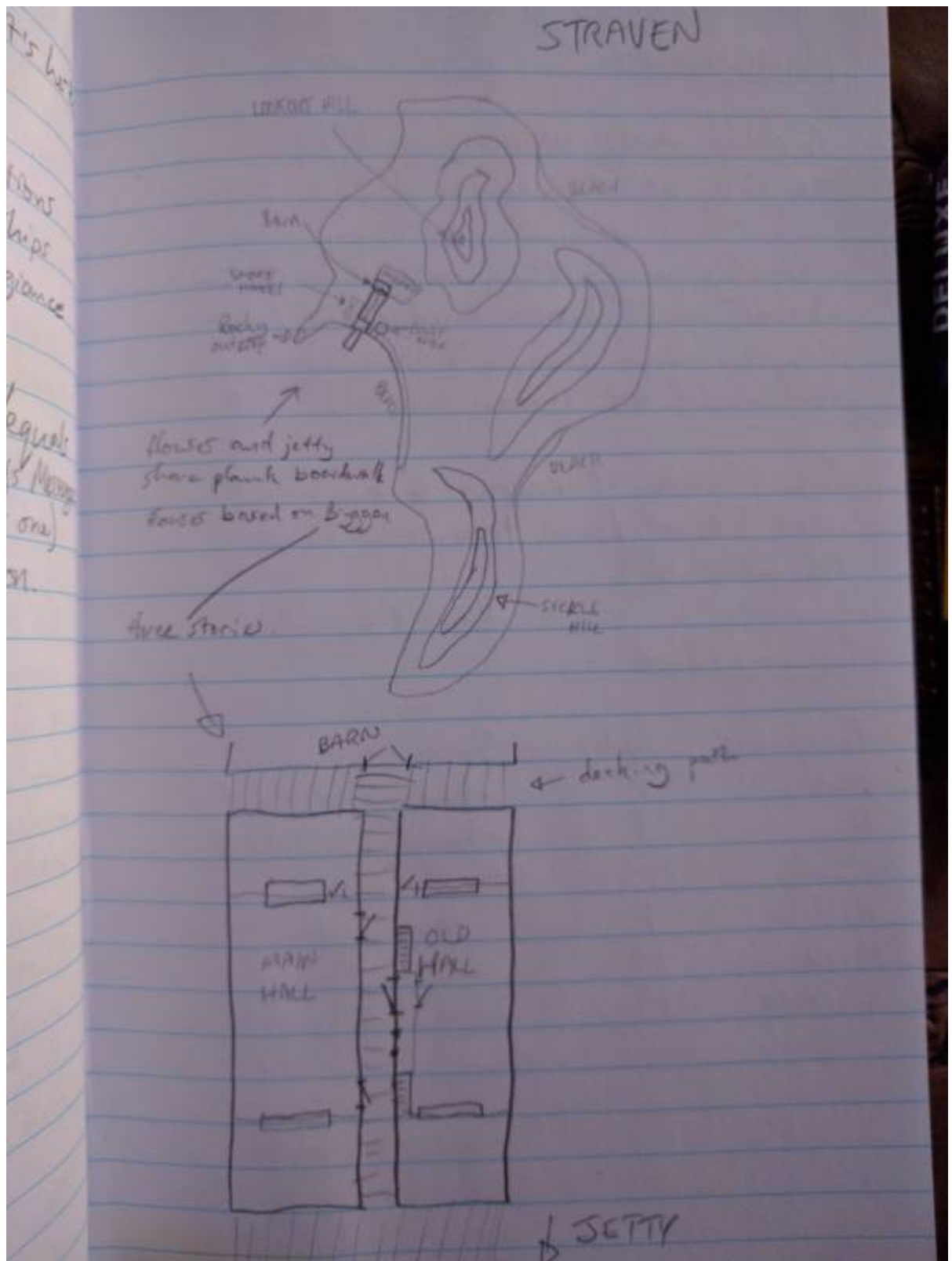


Straven

Straven is a tiny settlement on an island about three or four square miles located off the west coast of [Heimdal](#) (Skyss). Only a little of the island is cultivated, most of it is woodland or rough grazing for the sheep that the community keeps for their wool and milk. Characterised by its extreme northern latitude of 63.5 N, the community is defined by its isolation, self-sufficiency, and adherence to the traditional ways of the North. It serves as the childhood home of [Yngvild the Fierce](#) and [Noren](#) before their departure for [Kronstadt](#).



Community

There are about 60 people living on Straven, from newborn to Old Bjorn. [Old Bjorn](#) is the leader of the community, with [Arne the Slow](#) as the second. They have a single fishing boat with almost enough people to crew a second. Most of their living is from fishing in the seas to the West of the Island, and they are part of the fishing communities of the islands. As their boat captain [Old Bjorn](#) is one of the electors of the [Lord of the Isles](#).

As well as fishing there are as many sheep as people on the island, they roam over the island and eat the grass and heather. The wool and milk form a major part of keeping Straven self-sufficient. There's also meat from the spare sheep, most of the male lambs being used for various sacrifices, and mutton forms part of the winter diet when the weather is too bad for fishing.

The fish are mostly smoked, there are three smokehouses downwind of the main halls that the community lives in. These run most of the summer to ensure that there are enough fish to keep the community going all winter. Fresh fish are eaten when the boats come in too. Surplus is sold through the market at Portree, which is the major port for the Isles. It is within line of sight from Lookout Hill on Straven, and is about four hours away by boat (depending on the weather & tides).

The houses are two parallel tenements running inland from the jetty. The boat shed on one side with a ramp into the beach. There's a barn at the back with a fenced paddock for when the sheep are brought in.

The total population of Straven is approximately fifty individuals. The social structure is led by [Old Bjorn](#), the boat captain and community leader, with Arne serving as his second.

Security and Raids

Due to the seasonal threat of [Daelian Raiders](#), the adults of Straven maintain a rigorous military readiness. Standardised drills are practiced regularly, where adults take up arms—including bows and woven shields—to hold the jetty whilst non-combatants evacuate to Lookout Hill.

Theology

The community observes the transition of the seasons with communal rituals. The most significant is the celebration of the return of the night, where the people make homage to [Malfin](#), the Lady of Darkness. These gatherings are held around central fires as the sun touches the horizon, marking the beginning of the winter preparations.

Geography and Infrastructure

The island covers approximately three to four square miles of territory. Much of the land is uncultivated, consisting of dense woodland and rough grazing used for livestock. Key geographical landmarks include:

- **Lookout Hill:** The highest point on the island, used as a primary observation post and a retreat point for non-combatants during maritime threats.
- **Sickle Hill:** A secondary elevation located on the southern portion of the island.
- **The Beach:** Two distinct sandy areas suitable for landing small craft, though the primary maritime interface is the stone and timber jetty.

The settlement's infrastructure is concentrated near the rocky outcrop on the western coast. The buildings are constructed based on traditional timber-frame designs with overlapping upper storeys to protect against the harsh maritime climate.

Structure	Function
Main Hall	The primary communal living and dining space for the adult population.
Old Hall	The original hall, now utilised as the living and eating area for the children.
The Barn	A multi-purpose facility for storing cheese and skyr barrels, as well as providing winter shelter for sheep.
Smokehouses	Three dedicated buildings positioned downwind to process the seasonal fish catch.
Workshops	A cluster of industrial buildings including a forge and a boat shed for vessel maintenance.

Economy and Labour

The economy of Straven is almost entirely maritime and pastoral. The community operates a single fishing boat that exploits the rich waters to the west. A high degree of literacy exists on the island, largely due to the influence of [Old Bjorn](#), who has prioritised knowledge as a tool for survival.

Primary Industries

- **Fishing:** The central pillar of the island's subsistence. Fish are salted or smoked throughout the summer to provide a stable food supply for the “dark time” of winter.
- **Sheep Farming:** The island maintains a sheep population roughly equal to the human population. These animals provide wool for home-woven clothing, as well as milk and meat.
- **Trade:** Surplus smoked fish and wool are transported to the market at [Portree](#), which is located roughly four hours away by boat. These exports fund the purchase of essential ironwork, herbs, and spices.

Relationships

People

- [Old Bjorn](#): Community leader and boat captain.
- [Yngvild Helgasdottir](#): Protagonist and former resident.
- [Noren](#): Protagonist and former resident.
- [Helga the Red](#): A prominent hero and former resident.
- [Arne the Slow](#) - the steersman on the boat, de facto second in command to [Old Bjorn](#)
- [Alwilda](#) - Arne's partner
- [olaf](#) - one of the boat crew
- [Helga the Red](#) - Old Bjorn's partner
- [Leif](#) - another member of the boat crew
- [Birgitta](#) - member of the boat crew
- [Gunnar](#) - also on the boat crew
- [Erik the Dark](#) - member of the boat crew
- [Freya](#)

Places

- [Portree](#): The nearest major trading terminal and administrative hub for the Isles.
- [Heimdal](#): The mainland kingdom of which Straven is a remote dependency.
- [Kronstadt](#): The destination for the island's rare diplomatic and heroic despatches.

Concepts

- [Daelian Raiders](#): The primary external threat to island security.
- [Heroes](#): Several residents possess divine blood, though this was largely kept secret until the arrival of the *Seagull*.

Skyss - Story Background	Characters	Skyss - Places	Pantheons of the World	Other Background
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fantasy, NaNoWriMo, 2016, Noren, Skyss, Straven, places

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