

# The Reavers

## Description

Short humanoids with furry hands and feet. When traveling abroad, hobblings generally wear heavy armor and horned Viking-style helmets. Plot note, do not play this race unless you are able to phys-rep fully.

## Society

Hobblings have a very mobile society, meaning a person has the ability to move socially up or down. It is possible for a person to be born into slavery, be freed as an adult, and eventually become a very powerful person in the district.

Each and every person in hobbling society had a price fixed to them at birth. This is called a blood-price. This was the amount of silver that a person is worth based on what social level they belonged to when they were born. This amount is fixed only in that a person's worth could never go below this amount. Thus, if a person was born, say, into the level of a landless freeman, he or she would be worth two silver. This means two things: one, if the person is killed the family is entitled to two marks of silver from the killer (or the killer's family) as long as the death did not occur as part of a battle during war or from a duel. Two, a person could not put themselves into more debt than their bloodprice unless they were in a thriving business. If this freeman borrowed two marks silver and was unable to repay the loan at the specified time, he or she could be made a slave to the lender until such time as the amount of the loan was repaid.

The more skills and knowledge a person had, the higher their bloodprice is raised. If someone was born a slave, worked themselves out of slavery, and continued to gain desirable knowledge and skills, they can conceivably gain positions of great power and wealth.

Most hobblings do not recognize unproven foreigners as having a bloodprice.

## Home Life

Hobblings in general live in peaceful communities and share their home with their extended family, the elders taking care of the small children and household needs while the rest of the family sees to the family farm and/or business. Most hobbling communities are dependent on the sea for fishing, travel and trade.

The older a hobbling gets, the more they tend to look to their creature comforts. Elders are looked to as a source of guidance and wisdom, and generally stay close to hearth and home. Having had more years to add to their knowledge, their blood-price is generally counted very high and are often sought out to share their wisdom with younglings.

Children are taught first by their parents and immediate family. As they show skill and talent, they are often fostered out to learn skills not easily available within his or her family. Such fostering builds strong bonds within the community.

Because of the importance a hobbling places on his or her belly staying filled, every village can boast a number of master cooks and brewers. Training in arms is standard for every hobbling, and most have at least some education rousing skills. Most villages have at least one specific craft that they are renowned for.

Because most villages are at least partially dependent on the sea, at least some education on sailing, navigation, boat building or repair and raving is taught.

Travel is considered an important part of any young hobblings education. In this way young men and women can explore other cultures, learn new things, and most importantly garner presents to impress

their prospective in-laws. Tradition decrees that it is unlucky to pay for such presents, which perhaps explains why groups of traveling hobblings are referred to as Reavers by other cultures.

### **Slaves**

The hobbling concept of slavery is slightly different from most cultures, more of an indentured servitude. Adult freemen can become bonded as slaves by failing to pay their debts and in some cases will bond themselves into slavery for a period of time to learn particular skills and crafts. While bonded, they lose the rights of dueling and speaking as freemen, but the holder of the slave contract is responsible for seeing to their basic needs and defending them. As soon as the contract is paid off, the slave again has status as a freeman.

Occasionally people from other cultures are captured during raids. These captives generally are not considered to have a bloodprice. If they are not ransomed back to their homelands, they are generally offered a contract to work off if they have useful skills; otherwise they are traded off elsewhere, usually to the Barbarian tribes.

### **Government**

Each village is looked after by a chieftain, usually appointed by the king due to that person's wisdom, experience, leadership, and popularity within the village. In turn, when a new king is required, he is chosen by the collected chieftains.

The king is responsible for governing rights between villages and matters that affect all hobblings as a whole. On a quarterly basis, a gathering of chieftains is called so that village opinions and needs can be heard and any disputes between villages can be settled. The king along with the lawspeaker oversees these gatherings and decisions are voted on by all chieftains. The king was responsible for deciding a tied vote if a decision could not come about in 3 rounds of votes.

Day to day governing in a village is handled by the chieftain, but on a quarterly basis a gathering of all freemen is held so that the local populace can give their opinions of laws and other matters. Matters of law are judged at this time, with the chieftain presiding over a jury of 20 freemen of good standing. The village lawspeaker is always in attendance at these trials, it is his or her job to have every law and precedent memorized and speaks as to the matter of the law in each case.

In general, few matters of law are brought up before the village gathers. At least in theory, any freeman offended could challenge the other party to duel regardless of their differences in social status. This could be a matter of honor, ownership or property, demand of restitution or debt, legal disagreement or intention to help a relative or avenge a friend.

Duels were fought within 2 days after the challenge. Refusing the challenge means that one is a coward and is sentenced to outlawry. In effect, if the other party was not willing or able to defend their claim, they had no honor or value. Sometimes a capable warrior volunteers to fight in the place of a clearly outclassed friend, but all freemen are expected to have at least some skill at arms.