

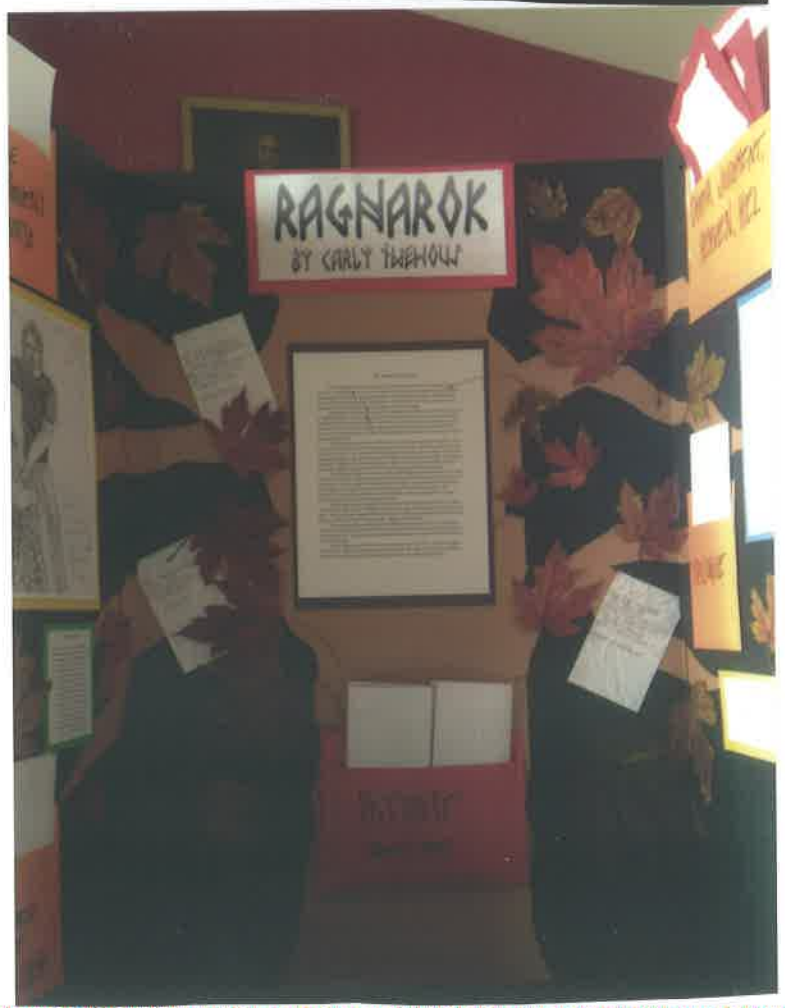
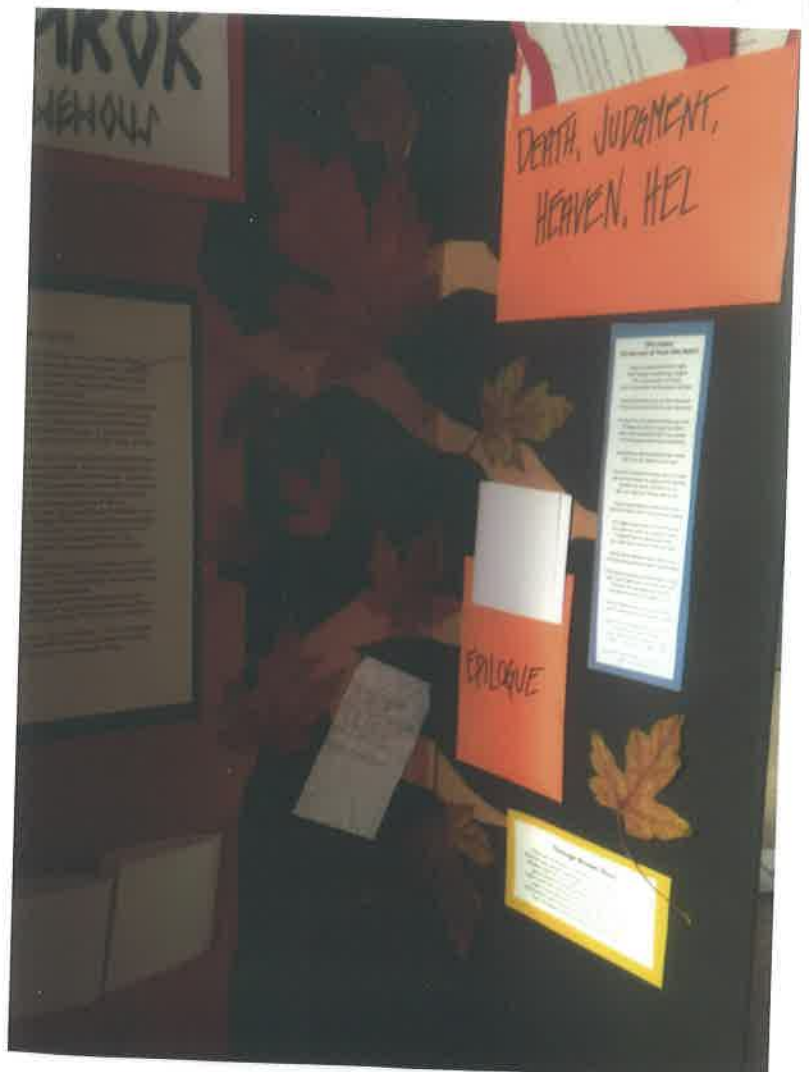
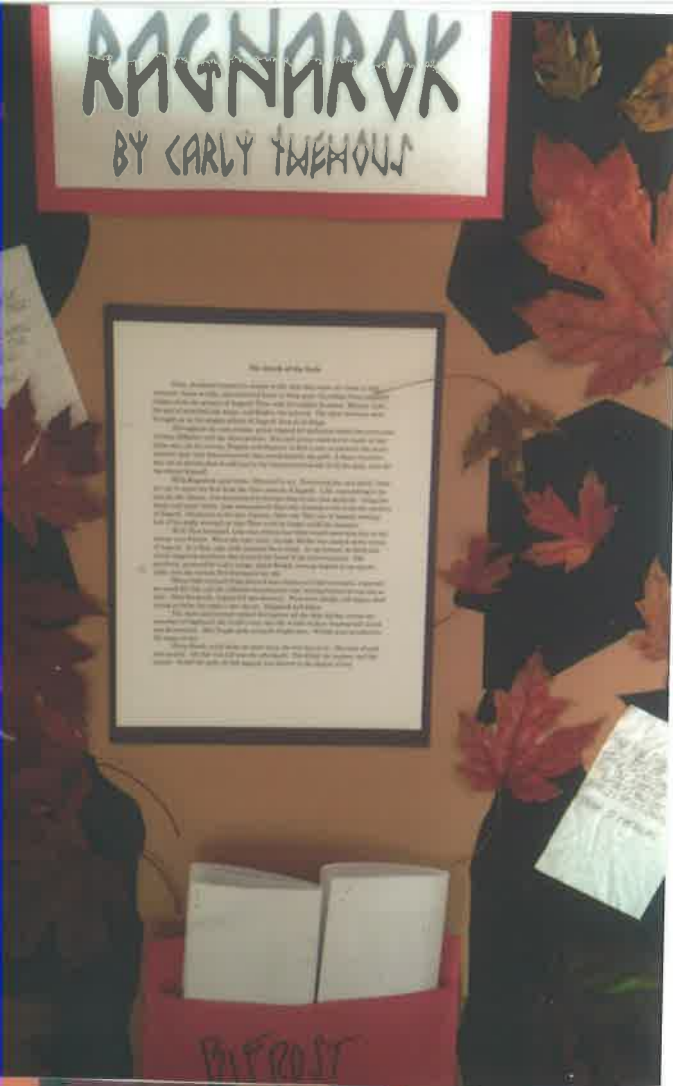
# RAGNAROK

*Platte Grouse*



*"This is the way the world ends. Not with a bang, but a whimper!"*

**T.S. Eliot**



# RAGNAROK

## BY CARLY TWENHOUT

### ENDURING IMAGE

Finding the meaning in the contradictory nightmares of the end of the world according to the Norse people.

### DIRECTIONS FOR READING:

Start in the middle of the tri-fold, then go to the bottom left corner and proceed clockwise.

### THE FIRST REALM: "DEATH OF THE GODS" MYTH

- A) Outline of Approach: This will be a third person narrative of the basic concepts of the end of the world according to the Norse. It is told in a myth like fashion to give an overview of the mythology.
- B) Justification of Genre Choice: I thought that since I am telling the story of the end of the world according to the Norse myths, I figured it might be a good idea to include a myth in the story. It's important to establish the basic story of Ragnarok for the coming pieces, just to give perspective on the confusion and calamity. This is the beginning of the nightmare. Also, it should be noted that I took some liberties with this story. It is not exactly how the Norse believed, but it is heavily based on their myths.

### THE SECOND REALM: "THE DEATH OF BALDER" SCRIPT

- A) Outline of Approach: This is a vague description of the tragic death of Balder, the Norse god of light, narrated by the ravens who will continually appear throughout the tale. It is said that his death marked the beginning of Ragnarok.
- B) Justification of Genre Choice: The script of the ravens is used throughout the piece to depict their strange way of communicating and telling a story. The ravens are the constant observers throughout all the realms. They would be the first to know if the end of the world were starting.

THE THIRD REALM:  
"FALL FOR THE ENEMY"  
POEM

- A) Outline of Approach: This is a poem about the Norse god Loki, who is the god of mischief and evil. It is narrated by an outside force who knows who he is. It doesn't explicitly name him, but it gives a pretty good hint. This will be about the confusion of not knowing if he's the enemy or if he's playing a trick.
- B) Justification of Genre Choice: I think this is one of the more complicated contradictions I'm taking a stab at, so I thought it would be best described in poetry.

THE FOURTH REALM:  
"IF HE BE WORTHY"  
PENCIL DRAWING

- A) Outline of Approach: This is a depiction of the god Thor admittedly stolen from the recent movie. I drew the picture though. Basically, Thor is the god of thunder and the favorite son of Odin. He makes a mistake and is cast out of Asgard and is found unworthy of his prized hammer, Mjolnir. This time, the nightmare is his unworthiness. His inability to be strong enough to lift his hammer to defend those he loves at the end of the world.
- B) Justification of Genre Choice: Basically, I didn't know another way to convey the emotion and significance Thor's banishment from Asgard. I had to draw it to get the full effect.

THE FIFTH REALM:  
"ODIN'S RAVENS"  
SCRIPT

- A) Outline of Approach: This script is basically Odin's two ravens overlooking Midgard at the end of the world or slightly before. They discuss price of understanding and the end of the world. It is meant to show their contradictions and serve as a start to the nightmare that actually is the end of the world.
- B) Justification of Genre Choice: I chose to continue script because it seemed the best way to convey the back and forth conversation question/answer thing that these ravens seem to fall into. Also, I was able to have Huginn rhyme quite often and I felt that this was the best way to portray his randomness.

THE SIXTH REALM:  
"DEATH, JUDGMENT, HEAVEN, HEL"  
JOURNAL ENTRIES

- A) Outline of Approach: Basically, Hel is the daughter of Loki. From the waist down, she is nothing more than a rotting corpse, but from the waist up, she is a beautiful woman. This is meant to demonstrate her confusion with the death around her and her own identity as either a dead person or a living person.
- B) Justification of Genre Choice: These are bits from her journal, burned in hell, more than likely. I thought it best to present it that way anyway and I thought that this topic would be best illustrated from her perspective. She is the goddess of death after all. I thought it best to personify Death to add to her confusion as well as symbolize the death around her at the end of the world.

THE SEVENTH REALM:  
"HIF'S LULLABY"  
A SONG TO THE TUNE OF "HUSH LITTLE BABY"

- A) Outline of Approach: Sif is Thor's wife and a warrior woman. She is often portrayed going into battle, but she knows the kindness of a mother. This is supposed to show her fear of the end but her bravery to her figurative children, including the reader.
- B) Justification of Genre Choice: A lullaby is usually supposed to come before one goes to sleep in order to ward off nightmares. Sif gives this lullaby recognizing that the waking world is full of its own nightmares, especially at the end of the world. That is the contradiction that I believe this piece portrays.

THE EIGHTH REALM:  
"EPILOGUE"  
SCRIPT

- A) Outline of Approach: This takes place after all of the events of Ragnarok have come to pass and all the gods are dead. Huginn and Muninn remain, commenting on the irony of all that has happened, especially the role that Loki played.
- B) Justification of Genre Choice: I thought it was important to bring the ravens back at the end and describe what happened and the nightmares of the end of the world. Although they are mildly insane, they are the seers and observers. They know what's happening and how the world ended.

THE NINTH REALM:  
"THROUGH BROKEN GLASS"  
FLASH FICTION

- A) Outline of Approach: This is sort of an epilogue piece and the only semblance of hope after the end of the world. It is told by the Norns, which are basically Norse mythology's version of the Fates. The point is that if one god survives—even if it's *him*—then there is still hope. This is the beginning of the end of Ragnarok.
- B) Justification of Genre Choice: There wasn't much else left to say. I wanted it short and sweet and to the point. The world has ended, but there's still some hope.

OTHER REALMS:  
VARIOUS QUOTES

- A) Outline of Approach: These are basically various quotes from various authors that are placed strategically throughout the piece in order to enhance the meaning of some things.
- B) Justification of Genre Choice: Other people's words sometimes describe what's going on in my head better than I can. They made sense and they fit.

## The Death of the Gods

Once, mankind accepted a simple truth: that they were not alone in this universe. Some worlds, man believed home to their gods. Guarding these peaceful realms were the princes of Asgard: Thor, with his mighty hammer, Mjolnir, Loki, the god of mischief and magic, and Balder, the beloved. The three brothers were brought up in the mighty pillars of Asgard, born to be kings.

Throughout the nine realms, peace reigned for millennia under the protection of Odin Allfather and the three princes. But such peace could not be made to last. Odin sent out his ravens, Huginn and Muninn, to find a way to preserve the peace. Instead, they only learned secrets that would destroy the gods. A chain of events was set in motion that would lead to the betrayal and death of all the gods, save for the traitor himself.

With Ragnarok upon them, Odin had to act. Foreseeing his own death, Odin set out to name his heir from the three princes of Asgard. Loki, succumbing to his lust for the throne, was determined to become king by his own methods. Using his magic and petty tricks, Loki manipulated Thor into starting a war with the enemies of Asgard. Infuriated at the loss of peace, Odin cast Thor out of Asgard, robbing him of his godly strength so that Thor could no longer wield his hammer.

With Thor banished, Loki was certain that Odin would name him heir to the throne over Balder. When the time came, though, Balder was named crown prince of Asgard. In a fiery rage, Loki planned his revenge. In an instant, he fired an arrow dipped in mistletoe that pierced the heart of the beloved prince. The mistletoe, poisoned by Loki's magic, killed Balder, leaving Asgard in an uproar. Loki, ever the coward, fled fearing for his life.

When Odin learned of his beloved son's death and Loki's betrayal, it proved too much for him and the Allfather breathed his last, leaving behind no son and no heir. After his death, Asgard fell into disarray. Wars were fought and legions died trying to claim the right to the throne. Ragnarok had fallen.

The chaos and turmoil carried throughout all the nine realms, across the branches of Yggdrasil, the world's tree, into the worlds of men, bearing only death and destruction. Men fought gods and gods fought men. Worlds were ravished by the rages of war.

When Death could claim no more lives, the war was over. The time of gods had passed. All that was left was the aftermath. The blood, the corpses, and the traitor. So fell the gods. So fell Asgard, lost forever to the plague of war.

## THE DEATH OF BALDER

### The Ravens:

Huginn (HOO-gin), thought

Muninn (MOO-nin), memory

### Setting:

In the halls of Asgard.

[The scene opens with the ravens. Sounds of distress and commotion heard in the background.]

Huginn: Here we go round the prickly pear, prickly pear, prickly pear. Here we go round the prickly pear—

Muninn: [Aggravated.] Not this again.

Huginn: At five o'clock in the morning.

Muninn: It's not five in the morning.

Huginn: It's never five in the morning. [A pause.] This is the way the world ends—

Muninn: Or how it is ending.

Huginn: What is ending?

Muninn: The world.

Huginn: How?

Muninn: With a bang. And an arrow.

Huginn: The Dark Prince failed the straight and narrow. Balder died by poison arrow.

Muninn: Not poison. Mistletoe.

Huginn: The Trickster dealt the final blow. Balder died by mistletoe.

[A pause.]

Muninn: He was vain.

Huginn: I cannot hear what he has said. Ravens speak no ill of dead.

Muninn: Not him. The Trickster.

Huginn: Aye. Very vain. Vain Prince, Dark Prince. Killed his kin, haven't seen him since.

Muninn: It's how he did it that makes him vain.

Huginn: Did what?

Muninn: Killed Balder.

[A pause.]

Huginn: We cannot see what lies ahead, when a once loved god here lies dead.

Muninn: [Quietly.] This world is a turbulent place. It is not clear where this may lead.

Huginn: Bind the Trickster to a rock! Balder's death means Ragnarok!

Muninn: It most certainly does.

Huginn: How can he ever face another? The Trickster god has killed his brother.

Muninn: Aye, once his brother. Long before.

Huginn: Quoth the raven, "Nevermore!"

[Exit.]



### **Fall for the Enemy**

In bed, above, the world's asleep  
While shadow's strength lies further deep  
When dreams are broken, nightmares run  
Then rises up the demon's son  
Not clothed in death, but in disguise  
To watch worlds fall to silver lies  
The lines are drawn in ebbing sand  
That god nor man can understand  
The world between the dark and light  
Is where the Trickster longs to fight  
Though know not he what lies ahead  
No silver tongue can turn to lead  
This prince of demons, god of lies  
Has shadows buried in his eyes  
The world has heard the ravens talk  
This man's lies bring Ragnarok

through your arrogance  
and stupidity, you've  
ruined these peaceful  
realms to the honor and  
glorification of war!

You are unworthy  
of these realms,  
you are unworthy of  
your title,  
you are unworthy  
of the loved ones  
you have betrayed!  
The name of my  
father and his  
father before.  
I will bring you out!

For whosoever  
holds this  
hammer, if  
he be worthy,  
shall possess  
the power  
of Thor.

## THE RAVEN'S CURSE

### Setting:

A branch of the world's tree, overlooking the earth, surrounded by the stars, in between worlds.

[The ravens are watching the earth. Scene opens mid-conversation]

Huginn: Is it better to understand or remain in ignorance, I wonder? [A pause.] Which is better, which is worse? Which a blessing, which a curse?

Muninn: Understanding. Understanding is always worse.

Huginn: We understand.

Muninn: [Somberly] Aye.

Huginn: An eye for an eye?

Muninn: Perhaps. To not understand is to never carry the burden of responsibility.

Huginn: War is peace. Freedom is slavery. Ignorance is strength.

Muninn: Aye. And understanding is pain. But anything less is unacceptable.

Huginn: Unacceptable?

Muninn: Cowardly. Ignorance is fear.

Huginn: Give us this day our daily tears. [A pause] Is it, though?

Muninn: Always. I remember.

Huginn: [To himself] Remember, remember, the fifth of November.

Muninn: [Ignoring him] Understanding is always better. Better pain than cowardice. It is always better to understand.

[A pause.]

Huginn: We understand.

Muninn: Aye.

Huginn: Understand what?

Muninn: The question.

Huginn: To be or not to be—

Muninn: Wrong question.

Huginn: Pour the wine and watch the dancer. Does he know the ask and answer?

Muninn: [Gravely] It must never be answered. Understood, but never answered.

Huginn: Aye. [A pause] Why?

Muninn: For the sake of gods and men.

Huginn: [A pause] I understand.

Muninn: Do you?

Huginn: For if they hear the ravens talk, fall these realms to Ragnarok!

Muninn: Aye.

Huginn: We understand, but we are silent.

Muninn: For a time.

Huginn: Time is subjective.

Muninn: Objective.

Huginn: For the gods, it is subjective.

Muninn: No. Even gods are bound by time.

Huginn: [Aside] And every raven born to rhyme.

Muninn: [Ignoring him] Gods rise and fall and rule and die. Men are born and live and die in the names of their gods. All are bound by time. As are ravens. But ravens know and ravens remember and ravens understand.

[A pause.]

Huginn: Gods and men don't understand.

Muninn: And they never can. If they do—

Huginn: *Secrets lost and then released have brought about the death of peace!*

Muninn: And the death of gods and men.

Huginn: *And how can man die better than facing fearful odds—*

Muninn: [Aside] There are better ways to die, though man might not know it.

Huginn: *—For the ashes of his fathers and the temples of his gods!*

Muninn: There are better ways to die.

Huginn: Are there?

Muninn: Aye. Or there will be, before the end.

Huginn: *This is the way the world ends.*

Muninn: For some, it has already ended.

Huginn: Has it? I forget.

Muninn: And I remember.

Huginn: *Remember, remember—*

Muninn: No. It was not in November.

Huginn: *This is the way the world ends.*

Muninn: It has ended and I remember it. It is not raven's business to own time. It is raven's place to understand and remember.

Huginn: *Remember, remember the last burning ember.*

Muninn: Ravens always remember.

Huginn: *This is the way the world ended—*

Muninn: With more of a bang than a whimper.

[A pause.]

Huginn: We understand.

Muninn: Aye.

Huginn: *Which is better, which is worse? To share a blessing or share a curse?*

Muninn: A blessing. A blessing is always worse.

Huginn: We are cursed.

Muninn: Aye.

Huginn: An eye for an eye?

Muninn: No. Not this time.

Huginn: [Aside] *Every raven born to rhyme and every raven bound by time.*

Muninn: Ravens understand and ravens remember. And so we are cursed. It is easier for a blessing to turn into a curse than for a curse to turn into a blessing.

Huginn: So a curse is better?

Muninn: Aye. Ravens live with curses. Ravens understand. And that is the price. Ravens remember the coming war.

Huginn: *And quoth the raven, "Nevermore!"*

[Exit.]

## Death, Judgment, Heaven, Hell

I never told you how I met our mutual acquaintance. You know who I'm talking about. You've probably met him several times in your life and, frankly, I don't care. I don't want to hear sop stories about how Grandma died when you were a kid or where you were when those two towers fell. Yes, he was there and no, I don't care. More tragic things have happened since then and many more people have died.

See, the world ended with a bang instead of a whimper no matter what that stupid raven will tell you. But trust me, it ain't tragedy until Death follows you around to make sure you're still breathing.

I have, over the past few centuries, come to the realization that I may quite possibly be insane. I don't know if this realization makes me sane or all the more insane. It's quite an ambiguous line of thinking. But I thought it only fair to warn you, seeing as I've been rude and not told you who I am. So this is me warning you. Leave now, if you so desire, before I let the demons loose.

I opened the doors and glanced over my shoulder, just to be sure that Death was still beside me. He used to live here, you know, before the place was a battlefield. Ironic, really, for a battle to have been fought quite literally at Death's doors. Such things are typical for the end of the world, I suppose.

The hall wasn't overly cluttered. Around the outside, there was junk that he had collected from when the world was a better place. An old rusty helmet, the mast of a ship, a three-legged stool, that kind of junk. All the sentimental shit that lost its value when everybody died. I think that's why Death came here in the first place. Sentiment. Consolation. Regret.

Ironic. Death has more of a heart than I do.

I knelt on the stone floor in the center of the hall. It was pristine. Not a speck of dust or grime or blood or anything. Just perfect, hard, gray stone. I set the bucket next to me and dunked the rag in the water. The rag was stained a pinkish color. Perhaps it was because of the dim lighting in the hall from the torches. Or maybe I was just crazy. That is, at this point in my misery, a distinct possibility. Nonetheless, I dunked the pinkish rag into the water and went about scrubbing the clean floor.

I felt Death's gaze on me as I scrubbed. He always watched me. There's a part of me that thinks that this amuses him. That maybe he thinks this is my way of being sentimental. Of showing grief and of coping with all that he's taken from me. He watches me every day scrub the imaginary blood from the floor of the shed until my hands are raw from the bleach. We both know the floor is clean and has been clean for nearly a century. But I still scrub it clean every day, still mopping up the blood of the long dead. It looks like insanity. He calls it sentiment.

He's wrong, you know. It's not sentiment. Not coping. This is my way of staying angry at him. At getting back at him. See, coping would imply a sense of helplessness. Revenge implies an irreconcilable sense of hatred.

And I know Death. He's that caped figure whose face is covered in blood that lives in the shadows and sneaks into my room every night after dark. He's that shadow standing behind me that no one can quite make out. But he's there, looking over my shoulder, asking, begging me to join him.

Dammit, I live Death.

We're the same, really, him and me. We share a curse. The ravens would say that's not necessarily a bad thing. I disagree. We're cursed and we are both damned along with everyone else.

I sometimes listen to him talk about a world once full of liars and killers. Of blood and death and pain that never go away. About life that seems like death and that weird feeling when death feels like life. He tells it as if I'm the only one who'd understand the sentiment. Because I know what it feels like to see blood pouring out of a body, unable to scrub it or the guilt away no matter how hard you try. I know what it's like to see whole realms reduced to nothing more than a pile of rotting corpses and a river of blood.

I was *there* at the end of the world. And so was he. We counted the bodies of gods and men, unable to stop the slaughter. I remember when the world still had liars and killers, before it was reduced to ash. We're the same, Death and me. That's the real tragedy.

**Sif's Lullaby**  
**(To the tune of 'Hush Little Baby')**

Take my hand and hold it tight  
Don't let go, everything's alright  
I'm no hero and I'm afraid  
But I'll stay here 'til the ghosts all fade

*And if these demons run like the wind  
I'll hold your hand 'til the stars descend*

I'll stand by you when the skies go dark  
I'll keep my word, I cross my heart  
Don't be scared and don't you weep  
I'll stand guard when you fall asleep

*And if these demons break their chain  
We'll run for shelter in the rain*

I know it's dark and I know you're scared  
No one can know the pain we've shared  
So take my hand, it's time to run  
We can't give up 'til the war is won

*And if these demons show their face  
We'll run from them 'til we find our place*

The night is dark and the road is long  
But hear my voice as I sing this song  
I'll stand close to wipe your tears  
But close your eyes as I face my fears

*And if these demons name their price  
I'll draw my sword and won't think twice*

The wound is deep and the dream is lost  
But I can't take time to count the cost  
The time for courage now is done  
Just take my hand and watch us run

*And if these demons can break loose  
I won't leave you the hangman's noose*

Hush, my love, please don't you cry  
Just let me sing this lullaby  
Then take my hand and hold it tight  
I swear to you that I'll make it right

*And when these demons come for me  
I'll fight them for eternity*

## EPilogue

### Setting:

On a fallen branch of the world's tree. The realms and stars around them are burning and leaves are falling off of the tree.

[The ravens look out over the devastation.]

Huginn: All the gods are dead and all faith in men is shaken.

Muninn: Not all the gods.

Huginn: He still lives?

Muninn: Aye. The last god standing.

Huginn: The one who lied can lie no more. When this man lies, so ends the war.

Muninn: And so it ended.

Huginn: Not with a bang, but a whimper.

Muninn: No, it was a bang. Gods are too proud to whimper.

[A pause.]

Huginn: The Dark Prince lives?

Muninn: [Somberly] Aye.

Huginn: An eye for an eye?

Muninn: [Impatiently] No. Not anymore. There is no justice left. Just peace.

Huginn: I remember death's release but what's he mean when he says peace?

Muninn: An end to our curse.

Huginn: Is it better or is it worse—

Muninn: Worse. Peace comes at the cost of war. That is the price. It is better to be cursed. There is little left to say.

[A pause.]

Huginn: No one knows what lies ahead when gods and kings and men are dead.

Muninn: Not all are dead. He still lives and we still remember.

Huginn: [Confused.] It was not in November.

Muninn: No.

[A pause.]

Huginn: The Trickster lives.

Muninn: And we are dead.

Huginn: Are we?

Muninn: Yes. We lost.

Huginn: The gods have heard the ravens talk. So falls this world to Ragnarok.

Muninn: It has already fallen.

Huginn: All the gods are dead and all faith in men is shaken. None shall live but the son of the forsaken.

Muninn: Aye. We remember it. He lives on while gods and men and ravens fall. The last god standing.

Huginn: Well then, soldier, how goes the war? Quoth the raven, "Forevermore."

[Exit.]

## **Through Broken Glass**

There are moments in life when your greatest dreams become your worst nightmares, so often when a sliver of ice impales itself on your heart, morphing good memories of good deeds into the terrible, unconquerable fear of nightmares. But there are moments, very rarely, when your nightmares become your dreams, when hope in the impossible overcomes even the most primal fears. And for that incredibly rare moment, everything is beautiful.



## **Author's Notes**

### **Multi-Genre—Ragnarok**

(As it stands now, the author's notes should be read after the entire project. The project map serves as a brief guide to how to read the piece and gives basic insights into the piece. This is dually serving as more extensive notes that didn't fit the map and as a bibliography of sorts.)

Admittedly, I did do most of this the night before it was due. My father referred to me as a habitual procrastinator with a slight tendency towards self-diagnosed OCD, meaning simply, I couldn't have done it any other way. Planning ahead doesn't always work for me. Sometimes it does, like in my reflective piece, but other times, I tend to work best under pressure.

I had the idea of a multi-genre piece on external nightmares fairly early and completed three pieces right off the bat. Then, inspiration left and I pretended to edit them for the majority of two weeks. I continued with the plan of nightmares and wrote two more pieces, both of which I tore up and threw away. They were dreadful. That's basically when I decided to change my focus, less than 48 hours before the due date. Procrastination at its best.

(I had a feeling I would do this, by the way—change my focus. I did it last year for my multi-genre project as well. I spent three weeks working on one topic and then the weekend before it was due, I scrapped everything and started over. This time, I didn't scrap everything, just a few. And I did it all in one night instead of a weekend. It turned out much better than last year's, if I'm allowed to say that.)

This idea of Ragnarok came out of my unusual obsession with Norse mythology stemming from my love of Marvel's Thor comic books. Nerdy, I know. I also don't really care. Norse mythology fascinates me and that's the end of it. It's much more interesting than Greek or Roman mythology. I thought that Ragnarok, being the end of the world, would consist of some aspects of nightmares, and therefore I wouldn't have to scrap the three pieces I'd already completed and kept. Instead, I just shifted my focus, I guess, from just telling the story of various nightmares to telling the story of Ragnarok through the eyes of different gods and goddesses living nightmares.

I'll admit, I cranked out four pieces the night before it was due and had my loyal family edit them and give opinions. Though it's tacky, they're about as nerdy as I am so they didn't really mind. In the end, the piece came together fairly nicely.

(I am going to include author's notes on each of the various pieces because some of the things I wanted to say about them didn't really fit on the map. So sorry. This is going to be long again.)

## **The Death of the Gods: A Myth**

This is meant to give a basic overview of the story of Ragnarok. It is not meant, however, to necessarily connect to the other pieces. Everything following this is narrated differently, by outside forces. The gods and goddesses are not explicitly named in other pieces. This is giving the outline and telling the story. Every piece following it is being seen through a window.

I meant this to be narrated in a myth-like fashion. An abstract narrator talking about the beliefs of ancient people. But it's meant to be real and present, not something that necessarily happened long ago. The time is meant to be ambiguous. By telling the story up front, I am able to use the voices of different gods from different perspectives to show what Ragnarok actually entails. That, I guess, is the most important part of this piece.

## **The Death of Balder, The Ravens Curse, & Epilogue: Scripts**

I have to admit, I really enjoyed writing from the ravens' perspective. They were weird and ominous and quirky and witty and fun. This is one of the main reasons I changed the focus of the whole piece: to incorporate more of the ravens. One of the first pieces I wrote was 'The Ravens' Curse' and I didn't scrap it. I really liked it. My group mates had a difficult time grasping what I was saying, but that was part of the point with all of them. The ravens don't ever come out and say things as they are. They dance around them with their strange conversation question/answer style. That was really fun to write.

Basically, as I think I explained in my map, more or less, these ravens are Odin's eyes and ears in the nine realms. They know what's going on and they see what's going to happen. Muninn is memory. He remembers what happened and knows what is going to happen. Huginn is thought. Basically, he says whatever he's thinking and can't always think too far into the future. He also has an unusual tendency to rhyme and quote things mostly because, quite frankly, that's how I think. His character was incredibly fun to write. (Plus, I could get away with rhyming without necessarily creating a poem.)

The conversation style, I think, really works for the ravens' perspective on Ragnarok. It was interesting to write. Admittedly, there are some similar themes between some of their conversations and conversations from *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, mostly because I saw the play a few times seeing as my brother was dressed up as a girl. Nothing was plagiarized from it, though. (I did borrow some quotes from famous things, though, which I cited in the attached bibliography.)

On a more somber note, I'd like to add the disclaimer that none of these scripts or any other piece in this project have any relation to the events that occurred at Pius on October 7. This is my own creation based on Norse mythology, nothing more.

## **Fall for the Enemy: Poem**

This is a couplet rhyming poem about Loki, though, as I previously stated, it doesn't specifically say it's about Loki. It drops a pretty good hint, though. It's meant to show the ambiguity of his character. He's sly and manipulative and killed his brother and started the end of the world. But he's a pretty great liar. That's basically what I wanted this to convey. It's short and sweet and has a hammering beat. And I hope it conveys the message that sometimes, it's easy to fall for the enemy's tricks.

### **If He Be Worthy: Pencil Drawing**

This is a drawing based off of Marvel's *Thor*, when said god is cast out of Asgard and unable to wield his hammer. The quote is likewise from the movie. I drew this scene because I thought it best represented Thor's greatest nightmare: his inability to protect and defend his home from the desolation of war, even if, as Odin says, he played a part in starting the war. That's his nightmare. He is unworthy of the throne and not strong enough to protect it, so the world falls further into Ragnarok. Their hero has been found unworthy.

### **Death, Judgment, Heaven, Hel: Journal Entries**

As I explain (sort of) in my map, these are the part of the journal that belongs to the Norse goddess Hel, who is the daughter of Loki. She's half rotting corpse and half beautiful woman. Therefore, I decided she is probably having a bit of an identity crisis. These clippings are from her journal, around the time of Ragnarok, burned in the pits of hell and therefore incomplete.

Obviously, it is Hel's first person narrative. I decided to make her a bit looser with her language, because she is the goddess of death and horror. She's probably got more than a few issues anyways. She uses a very sarcastic tone of voice and she's quite angry most of the time. It was interesting to write. Because of her nature, she personifies Death into a physical person, not just part of herself. That's part of her insanity, I suppose.

The point of having the journal entries is to show what Death's and Hel's role is at the end of the world. For her, it's a nightmare. Part of her hates it. The other part recognizes that it has to happen and someone's got to clean up the mess.

As for the title of the piece, that is from the Catholic teaching of the four last things after one dies. Death, judgment, heaven, or hell. I saw it as a fitting title for Hel's journal at the end of the world, especially with her personification of Death.

### **Sif's Lullaby: Song**

This is not meant to be a lullaby as most people think of one. The world is ending, after all. It's told through the voice of Sif, a warrior goddess but also a mother. She is trying to give hope at the end of the world but knows that it's not going to end well. Ragnarok is not an easy thing. But she recognizes, I think, that sometimes waking up is only the beginning of nightmares. So she still strives to be brave.

This originally was my stem poem from earlier this semester. Obviously, I changed some things and made it considerably darker, seeing as the world was ending. It was quite fun, really. I had intended, originally, to have my musically inclined friends sing it, but I was busy and couldn't work out a time with them. So, when reading it, just sing it in a motherly voice to the tune of 'Hush Little Baby.'

### **Through Broken Glass: Flash Fiction**

This, as my map says, is a prediction/observation of the Norns and is the only source of hope in the project. It's supposed to be brief and to the point. Sometimes good comes out of bad, even if the bad is the end of the world and all that's left is the traitor.

## **Presentation**

I presented my piece on a tri-fold. On the tri-fold, I cut out the world's tree, Yggdrasil (Yeah, you try pronouncing that!), that connects the nine realms, in this case my nine pieces. That was supposed to be symbolic, I suppose. The Bifrost, the folder that contains my map and author's note, is the rainbow bridge that the gods used to travel between worlds, so the name fit.

The leaves are all real and came from the trees in my backyard. I had a difficult time gluing them to the board, so if they fall off, that's fine. It's the sentiment that counts. I included the leaves for a two reasons. A) Because it's a tree. B) Well, this is complicated. To me, the leaves are extremely symbolic so I'll try to explain it. It is from a *Doctor Who* episode, so if that makes me weird, I apologize. The leaf represented a life that never was. It's complicated. Sorry. The Doctor said, "There's quite a difference isn't there? Between what was and what should have been. There's an awful lot of one but there's an infinity of the other. And infinity is too much." So basically, in a nutshell, to me the leaves represent all that could have been but can never be. Hope that makes sort of sense.

## **Grade Rationale**

I know I didn't get it peer edited and procrastinated a lot, but I put in a fair amount of effort and I think it turned out rather nicely. Much better than I'd hoped for. I really enjoyed it, actually. I eventually told the story that I wanted to tell and I created the ambiguity I'd aimed for in the nightmares. That's really what I wanted to get across in the first place. The world just had to end for me to do it. The project surpassed my expectations and I got to push my creativity a little past its limits. I hope that still earns an A.