King's Justice

Summary

A **King's Justice** is a senior judicial official within the Kingdom of Skyss who is sworn by a magical geas to uphold the laws of the realm and maintain social harmony. These officials possess the delegated authority of the monarch to hear legal cases, discern the truth through specialized rituals, and pass binding sentences. Their primary role is the administration of justice across Skyssian territories and waters, ensuring that the King's peace is preserved through scrupulous fairness and the resolution of blood prices.

Description

Judicial Authority and Function

The office of the King's Justice is one of the most respected and feared positions in Skyssian society. A Justice has the legal authority to pass sentence at any time and in any location, including aboard ships in Skyssian waters. Their mandates include the power to:

- Sentence individuals to death for capital crimes, such as leading a raiding crew.
- Bind convicted individuals into crown service through a magical geas.
- Impose fines or requirements for goods and services as restitution for legal breaches.
- Act as a senior arbiter in inheritance disputes, contractual disagreements, and clemency petitions.

The Power of Truth

The most distinctive capability of a King's Justice is the supernatural ability to extract the truth from petitioners and the accused. It is a common Skyssian maxim that “you cannot lie to a King's Justice and live.” While not strictly literal, a person can attempt a lie, the Justice will immediately perceive the deception. This is achieved through the use of Words of Power and an intense focus on the motivations and intentions of others. If a subject refuses to speak voluntarily, a Justice can use these words to compel a confession, a process that is described as being significantly more painful than a voluntary statement.

Relation to the Pantheon

The order of Justices is closely associated with the mystery cult of Fafnir, the God of Justice and Equality. Many high-ranking Justices exhibit physical manifestations of this divine connection, such as eyes that shift to purple or violet when they are channelling their power to discern the truth. In formal legal proceedings, a Justice may use a relic, such as the sword Jafnadr, to serve as a conduit for the god's sight. A death resulting from a judgement involving such relics is viewed as a divine judgement directly from Fafnir, which legally waives the requirement for a blood price.

Headquarters and Administration

While Justices often operate as itinerant special agents, particularly those attached to the Board of Trade or the Department of Resolutions, their administrative heart is the House of Justice in the capital city of Kronstadt. This facility serves as the primate repository for legal records, such as the ledger of outgoing ships and records of sentencing. The House of Justice is managed by the Keeper of the Rolls, who coordinates with the Council of Electors to ensure that standardisation is maintained across the kingdom's legal framework.

Relationships

People

- Old Bjorn: A veteran hero and former King's Justice who has retired to a peaceful life on Straven.
- Oddmundr: A deceased King's Justice and former BoT special agent who was the father of Yngvild the Fierce.
- Hilda Helgasdottir: The current Keeper of the Rolls and a senior officer within the House of Justice.
- King Thirfinn: The elective monarch who serves as the senior arbiter and to whom all Justices ultimately report.
- Yngvild the Fierce: The current bearer of Jafnadr, whose combat actions are interpreted through the lens of a Justice's divine judgement.

Places

- House of Justice: The primary administrative building for the order in the capital.
- Kronstadt: The primate city where the most significant legal judgements are formalised.
- Trollheim: A northern region where Justices like Oddmundr were frequently dispatched to provide oversight for heroic missions.

Concepts

- Words of Power: The specific tier of magic used by Justices to compel truth.
- Geas: The magical bond Justices use to bind criminals into crown service.
- Blood Price: The legal debt that Justices are tasked with resolving or waiving.
- Book of Heroes: The genealogical record used by Justices to verify the divine lineages of those they judge.

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

fantasy, world-building, skyss chars, Skyss, Kings, Justice, Other, 2026, Player: James

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Last update: **15 Apr 2026 16:30**